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— Disclaimer —

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.

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SECTION: A
(MAINS)

CURRENT AFFAIRS

HEATWAVES IN INDIA

CONTEXT:

New research has found that the regions of central, northwest and south-central India are the new hotspots of intense heat waves in the country in the last 50 years. They also found that there has been an increase in severe heat waves in the country, in recent years.

⊙ ABOUT HEAT WAVE:

- A heat wave is a period of unusually hot weather that typically lasts two or more days. To be considered a heat wave, the temperatures have to be outside the historical averages for a given area.

- Criteria for declaring Heat Wave: Heat wave is considered if the maximum temperature of a station reaches at least 40 degree Celsius or more for Plains and at least 30 degree Celsius or more for Hilly regions.

- Period of Heat Wave in India: It is occurring mainly during March to June and in some rare cases even in July. The peak month of the heat wave over India is May.

- The heat wave prone states over India: Heat waves generally occur over plains of northwest India, Central, East & north Peninsular India during March to June. It covers Punjab, Haryana, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, West Bengal, Odisha, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Gujarat, parts of Maharashtra & Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. Sometimes it occurs over Tamilnadu & Kerala also.

- Favorable conditions for Heat wave:

  ➤ Transportation / Prevalence of hot dry air over a region

  ➤ Absence of moisture in the upper atmosphere

  ➤ The sky should be practically cloudless

  ➤ Large amplitude anticyclonic flow over the area.

- Heat Index: The heat index is the combination of air temperature and relative humidity, it measures how hot it really feels when relative humidity is factored in with the actual air temperature.

- Health Impacts of Heat Waves: The health impacts of Heat Waves typically involve dehydration, heat cramps, heat exhaustion and/or heat stroke.

- Impact based heat wave warning issue by India Meteorological Department (IMD):

Key Observations in the Recent Research:

- Change in Spatial and Temporal Trends: A team of researchers studied the change in spatial and temporal trends in Heatwaves (HW) and Severe heatwaves (SHW) over the past seven decades in different meteorological subdivisions of India.

Colour Code	Alert	Warning	Impact	Suggested Actions
Green (No action)	Normal Day	Imximum temperatures are near normal	Comfortable temperature. No cautionary action required.	Nil
Yellow Alert (Be updated)	Heat Alert	Heat wave conditions at isolated pockets persists on days	Moderated temperature. Heat is tolerable for general public but moderated health concern for vulnerable people e.g. infants, elderly, people with chronic diseases	(a) Avoid heat exposure. (b) Wear lightweight, light-coloured, loose, cotton clothes. (c) Cover your head: Use a cloth, hat or umbrella
Orange Alert (Be prepared)	Severe heat Alert for the day	(i) Severe heat wave conditions persists for 2 days (ii) Through not severe, but heat wave persists for 4days or more	High temperature. Increased likelihood of heat illness symptoms in people who are either exposed to sun for a prolonged period or doing heavy work. High health concern for vulnerable people e.g. infants, elderly, people with chronic diseases.	(a) Avoid heat exposure-keep cool. Avoid dehydration. (b) Drink sufficient water-even (rice water), lemon water, buttermilk, etc. to keep yourself hydrated.

- Shift in the Spatio-temporal trend of HW: The study showed a shift in the Spatio-temporal trend of HW events from the eastern region of Gangetic West Bengal and Bihar to North-Western, Central and further to the south-central region of India.

- Expansion and a Spatial Surge in SHW Events: The research also observed an alarming southward expansion and a spatial surge in SHW events in the last few decades that may put a greater population at additional risk of heat stress in a region already characterized by low Diurnal temperature range (DTR), or the difference between the maximum and minimum temperatures within one day and high humidity.

- Correlated with Mortality in Odisha and Andhra Pradesh: Importantly, the HW/SHW events were found to be positively correlated with mortality in Odisha and Andhra Pradesh, highlighting that human health is highly susceptible to severe heatwave disasters.

Additional Information:
- Between 2000 and 2016, the number of people exposed to heat waves increased by around 125 million. In 2015 alone, 175 million additional people were exposed to heat waves compared to average years.

- Single events can last weeks, occur consecutively, and result in significant excess mortality. In 2003, 70,000 people in Europe died as a result of the June-August event, in 2010, 56,000 excess deaths occurred during a 44-day heatwave in the Russian Federation.

⦿ WAY FORWARD:

Heatwaves emerged as a deadly health hazard, claiming thousands of lives across the globe in recent decades, with episodes strengthening in frequency, intensity, and duration in the past half-century in India as well. This has caused severe impacts on health, agriculture, economy, and infrastructure. With an ever-increasing extreme-temperature threshold, a heat resilient future is the need of the hour. Dense population with an intensive outdoor work culture calls for an equitable heat resilient mitigation and adaptation strategies covering each section of the society depending on their vulnerability.

To mitigate future disastrous implications of exacerbated heat extremes and frame adequate adaptation measures in the wake of possible emergence of new hotspots, reliable future projections are needed.

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EMPOWERING MISSION POSHAN 2.0

CONTEXT:

Recently, the Department of Women and Child Development launched Poshan 2.0 and urged all Aspirational districts to establish Poshan Vatika (healthy food garden) during Food Month (Poshan Mah) from 1 September.

⊙ BACKGROUND

- For effective implementation of various schemes and programmes of the Ministry of Women and Child Development, all major schemes of the Ministry have been classified under 3 umbrella schemes viz. Mission Poshan 2.0, Mission Vatsalya and Mission Shakti.

- A month-long celebration of the POSHAN Abhiyan mission places special attention on Severe Acute Malnourished (SAM) children.

- In 2008, when well-respected international economists, including many Nobel laureates, were asked by the Copenhagen Center to formulate an agreement on a very important development plan in which policymakers and disaster risk workers should invest, 'fighting malnutrition' emerged as the most important.

- It has taken time for this to sink into our country. For generations, malnutrition and malnutrition remained a full-fledged but less visible issue in India and did not receive the attention it deserved.

What is POSHAN Abhiyaan?

- POSHAN (Prime Minister's Holistic Nutrition Scheme) Abhiyaan was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on March 8, 2018, in Rajasthan.

- Abhiyaan is India's leading program to improve the effects of healthy eating on children, pregnant women, women, and breastfeeding mothers.

- POSHAN Abhiyaan aims to make India a world without malnutrition by 2022. Abhiyaan aims to reduce stumbling in children from 38.4 percent to 25 percent by 2022.

- Under POSHAN Abhiyaan, the first POSHAN Maah was celebrated in September 2018 with a strong focus on Social Behavioural Change and Communication (SBCC).

- Themes included eating a healthy diet - strengthening the diet, hygiene and hygiene, appropriate marriage age, maternal care, proper breastfeeding, anemia and education for girls.

Malnutrition in India:

- About 68 percent of deaths in children under the age of five in India could be attributed to malnutrition in children and mothers, Lancet said in 2019.

- This basically means that dealing with total malnutrition, instead of dealing with one disease at a time, will keep our children more secure and make their future brighter.

- According to the Global Nutrition Report 2020, India is among the 88 countries that are likely to lose the standards of healthy eating in the world by 2025.

- More than half of our children under the age of five have been found to be frustrated (too short for their age) or wasted (too young for their age) or both, according to the Comprehensive National Nutrition Study, released in 2019.

- The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) estimates that 194.4 million people in India (about 14.5% of the population) are malnourished.

- Covid-19 poses significant threats to children and their rights to health and nutrition.

- According to the latest figures, even in the best of circumstances and accounting for changes in the provision of essential health and nutrition services as a result of COVID-19, India could have an additional 60,000 deaths (approximately 3,00,000 in the worst case) in the next six months.

- The results were alarming what it meant for the future of our children, but it was very much in line with other independent estimates of the prevalence of malnutrition.

- Malnutrition adversely affects a child's physical and mental development and is one of the most important risk factors for other diseases.

- Studies also show that malnourished children are less likely to go to school and more likely to drop out.

- This means that half of our children fall behind in silence, and no development can have real meaning without ensuring that our children and mothers are nourished and healthy.

How is the Poshan scheme affected by the Covid-19?

- Covid-related shocks could lead to another 9 million children under the age of five suffering

from dementia, two-thirds of which will be in South Asia, a study predicted in Nature.

- Therefore, it is important that we not only renew but also redouble our efforts to go to Poshan 2.0 with full vigor while practicing distance walking, wearing a mask and hand hygiene.

- Under Poshan 2.0, a number of related schemes have been put together to facilitate collaboration, key malnutrition sites are available and 112 aspiring districts will be considered.

- Under the current Poshan Maah, efforts to identify children suffering from severe malnutrition have been intensified and Anganwadi staffs have been asked to refer those with health problems to health facilities and NRCs.

- For those who are experiencing severe malnutrition without medical problems, the principles of public administration should be strengthened, so that they do not continue to create medical problems during epidemics.

- The new Covid waves can't be released soon, and we have to adjust our nutrition interventions for such recurring shocks.

- The pressure put on by this whole nutrition organization was disrupted when the closure of Covid led to the closure of schools, Anganwadi centers, Food Rehabilitation Centers;

- In addition, the leading workers had to participate in Covid-related activities that were more important than their daily activities, which included identifying, targeting and monitoring children suffering from severe malnutrition and moderate malnutrition among other nutritional activities.

- Countries have tried to address their potential by importing hot meals on dry land or by transfers.

Further steps to reduce India's malnutrition by 2022:

- Poshan Abhiyan, who promised to make India free from malnutrition by 2022, re-introduced nutrition as a key to development and emphasized its multi-sectoral nature.

- First, movement is structured in such a way that, in addition to direct intervention, nutrition can be improved in many ways, including:

  ➤ Better sanitation for intestinal infections as well

  ➤ It allows people to absorb many nutrients;

  ➤ Increasing food diversity;

  ➤ Vaccination of children against diseases;

  ➤ Advising more women to breastfeed for longer periods, this improves the immune system.

- Second, by involving many departments and departments outside of these dignitaries, as well as bringing in other stakeholders including communities, Poshan Abhiyan helped create a comprehensive food response, unprecedented in the country's history.

- Given that malnutrition that occurred during the first 1,000 days of life is irreversible, it has highlighted a strong focus on food-related interventions to improve maternal and child health in that window since birth.

- The nutritionist also evaluated and monitored the indicators in real-time of the program using technology, in order to make timely adjustments to lessons in a variety of situations.

- However, what stands out as the best achievement of Poshan Abhiyan is the way senior political leaders have committed themselves to eradicating malnutrition and making it a people's organization, celebrating Poshan Maah in September and Poshan Pakhwara in March, and a few other activities.

- **CONCLUSION:**

A safe and bright future for our children will be a safe and bright future in the world and that is the message we want every fellow citizen to put in - Sahi Poshan, Desh Roshan. Other activities, such as making new mothers breastfeed longer, are controlling diarrhea in childhood, distributing deworming pills and iron and folic acid with determination while convincing target groups to take it seriously will go a long way in improving the nutrition of babies and young mothers. It is important to read and study in provinces such as Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan, which have raised the standard of care management in recent times, so that good practices are accepted and incorporated.

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GEOPOLITICS OF OUTER SPACE

CONTEXT:

It is in the interest of India's new strategies in outer space and also about the urgency of drafting new rules for the road to peace and stability in the atmosphere.

Space Geo-strategy

◉ The US traditionally held a foreign position in the commercial sector. Its military rivalry with Russia set a precedent in the security sector.

◉ The emergence of China as a major space force - both socially and militarily - reshapes astro politics.

◉ Significant expansion of China's spatial capabilities and China's desire for foreign domination has provided a new urgency for democratic powers to come together to protect their national interests and promote sustainable order in the upper atmosphere.

Importance for India

◉ Space has emerged as the fourth possible arm of the country's defense.

◉ With the US, Russia and China already seeking to become a Space Force, India will need to be properly equipped to deal with emerging security challenges.

◉ Space power has the power to use space while denying reliable use to any enemy.

◉ India already has a significant ability to use space. But it is the ability to deny the use of space to the opponent, understandably, is a small thing.

◉ Speaking of satellites, India has active satellite military satellites, compared to more than 40 civilians. Our first military satellite was launched in 2013 only.

◉ However, India has made some progress in the pursuit of space power.

◉ The newly commissioned Mission Shakti demonstrated India's ability to identify enemy satellites.

◉ The newly formed DSA (space defense agency) will be supported by the Defense Space Research Organization (DSRO) with the mandate to develop weapons to "degrade, disrupt, destroy or defraud an opponent's space".

Issues associated with Outdoor Space Geopolitics

◉ **Space Naming:** The war and the equipping of space are in stark contrast to the constructive commercial and scientific projects. Space warfare will undermine the internal trust and cooperation needed to maintain systems deployed in space for the purpose of peace.

➤ Despite these realities, military development and space warfare projects in the air have been on the rise for the purpose of one country.

➤ **Atmospheric Disposal:** Satellite-destroyed satellites disperse into smaller pieces, then add to space debris. Freeway floating debris is a potential hazard to active satellites and collisions with them can leave satellites inactive.

➤ As countries introduce more and more satellites, each of which is a strategic or commercial asset, avoiding collisions could be a challenge in the future.

◉ **Demand for Space Mines:** This demand for space mines will create a new era of conflict and cooperation and lead to a new space race.

➤ According to the US Chamber of Commerce, the trade space industry is estimated to be USD 1.5 trillion by 2040.

◉ **Moon Rush:** After the discovery of the water on the moon and the "Peaks of Eternal Light", the moon is moving faster towards the southern moon, it is a new phenomenon. For example: China's Chang'e 4 has softened down the Von Karman crater on the dark side of the southern polar region.

➤ The American lunar system now aims to bring man back to the moon for the next ten years.

➤ NASA's focus is on the southern poles and, if successful, will be the first personnel to reach the South Pole.

➤ Jeff Bezos (owner of Amazon) has launched a Blue Moon project that seeks to house men and women on the moon over the next few years.

◉ Atmospheric Awareness (SSA) involves monitoring the movement of all objects - natural (meteorites) and man-made satellites - and tracking the weather.

➤ Today, space is important in our lives and disruptions to space-based communications and world views will have negative consequences.

◉ **Spatial Awareness (SSA)**

➤ There are tens of thousands of objects in Earth

orbit that could be harmful to satellites and presentations. Spatial Awareness (SSA) refers to keeping track of things in their path and predicting where they will be at any given time.

Possibility of India's Outer Space Destiny

- India, which has developed significant spatial skills for decades, is a highly invested group. The US realizes it can no longer unilaterally define space order and seeks partners.
  - ➤ The India-US joint statement issued in Washington highlighted the graduation plans, "A Space Memorandum of Understanding that will assist in the sharing of information and services in ensuring the long-term sustainability of space operations by the end of the year".

- International cooperation on climate awareness is similar to maritime awareness agreements - which allow for the distribution of information across maritime metrics.

- The new space mission team set up by Quad will identify new opportunities for collaboration and share satellite information for peaceful purposes such as monitoring climate change, disaster preparedness and preparedness, sustainable use of seas and marine resources, and addressing shared domain challenges.
  - ➤ Quad leaders also promised to "consult on the rules, procedures, guidelines and guidelines for ensuring the sustainable use of space."

Way Forward

- **Public-Private Partnerships:** India needs to structurally regulate the regulatory, commercial and scientific aspects of the space program.
  - ➤ Funding for Space Research and development should be expanded and independent research institutes should be encouraged to work together.
  - ➤ There is a need to establish an independent regulator to control ISRO and new border operators in the same field.

- Need for a Strong Regulatory Framework: Delhi must also enact a strong regulatory framework to promote India's local work and protect its international interests.
  - ➤ India should take into account the challenges that arise in the current space order, review some of its past political ideas about the external environment and participate in the development of new global systems that will strengthen the context of the Space Agreement.

- In order to effectively protect our spacecraft, India must have a reliable and accurate track record of celestial objects, from debris and spacecraft to celestial bodies.
  - ➤ As precise tracking forms the basis for almost all unimaginable objects in space, therefore, this most important skill must be developed traditionally.

- For space defense to be effective, India must acquire minimum, reliable capabilities for a wide range of space, physical, technological and cyber weapons.

◉ CONCLUSION

The scale of the challenges and opportunities in the outer space, however, requires urgent and very sweeping changes. That can only be justified by the highest political level. Back in 2015, the speech of the Prime Minister in the Indian Ocean focused on national attention in maritime affairs. India can do the same with space interventions today.

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DATA REVOLUTION IN INDIAN AGRICULTURE

CONTEXT:

Recently, a document entitled "Indian Agriculture: Ripe for Disruption" was released by Bain and Company.

Key takeaways from the Report

- Bain report predicts data-based conditions for agribusiness

- It includes identifying the production of other proteins, and food / food-based ingredients and initiating marine farming, etc.

- The agricultural sector (currently valued at $ 370 billion), is estimated to receive another $ 35 billion investment.

- The two conditions that allow such investment opportunities are these

- Changes to the regulatory framework, especially recent changes to the Farm Act

- Digital disruption through the government's IDEA program - 'India Digital Ecosystem for Agriculture'.

- The Indian agricultural sector in the future will put the farm on the fork and open the way to a single national market with a national speaker with better communication between producer and consumer.

- The report satisfactorily reflects the business opportunity available in the supply chain between the farm and the Agricultural Production Market Committee (APMC) and the customer, which can be achieved with the support of digital disruption and the latest agricultural reforms.

- According to the report, to benefit from the huge investment in the agricultural system, double the farmers' wage targets could be achieved in the near future.

IDEA Concept

- Farming and improving the livelihoods of farmers is the goal of the IDEA concept and it is proposed to be achieved through a strong integration of agricultural technological innovations and the agricultural industry environment into agricultural and food systems.

- The IDEA principles speak openly about openness of data, which means openness to businesses and farmers, indicating integration.

- The new services added by the agricultural and start-up industries are an integral part of the IDEA formation.

The purpose of the IDEA

- Enabling the farmer to get higher profits and better profits by getting the right information at the right time, and with new services.

- Enabling better planning and implementation of Central Government and Government policies, programs, and programs, as well as private companies and agricultural producers' organizations (FPOs).

- Improving the efficiency of resources includes land, water, seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, and farming equipment by providing easy access to information.

- Capacity building in all forms of digital agriculture and agricultural accuracy

- Complete R&D and Innovations in agriculture with high quality data access.

- Adopting the best principles of co-operation when working with territories and territories for unions to achieve the IDEA's vision.

- Creating and building PPP frameworks for recognizing 'digital power'.

Challenges

- The IT sector is opposed to IDEA mainly due to the practice of making a unique Farmer ID based on a person's Aadhaar number and the potential for data misuse.

- There is a common perception that large investments in the agricultural sector will benefit farmers; 'But how' was not satisfactorily answered in this report.

- Most small and underprivileged farmers are less educated and less experienced in technology. However, the capacity building of farmers is being ignored amidst these changes of prominence.

- The farmers' protest against the reforms could serve as a barrier or danger that led to the removal of these new farm rules.

Way Forward

- While we agree with the fact that data transformation is inevitable in the agricultural sector, given its social and political complexity, we cannot rely solely on technological reforms and

agricultural enterprises to improve the lives of farmers.

⦿ There needs to be a concerted effort to improve the skills of farmers, by establishing support programs, through FPOs and other farmers' organizations.

⦿ Given the size of the agricultural sector in the country this will not be an easy task but it will require a different system across the country with more investment.

⦿ CONCLUSION

The adoption of a comprehensive natural approach to addressing the many challenges facing the agricultural sector is of paramount importance nationally, achieving aspirations such as Doubling Farmer's Income and achieving the SDGs. The multi-stakeholder approach is important when the government is playing the role of environmental activist.

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CASE STUDY: ETHICS OF INVESTIGATIVE JOURNALISM

CONTEXT:

The IAS officer who caught on camera instructing policemen to "break heads" of farmers who breached a security cordon during a protest, has been transferred from the post of Sub-Divisional Magistrate of Karnal (Haryana) to the post of Additional Secretary in the Citizen Resources Information Department.

⊙ QUESTION

You are a young IAS officer, with just a couple of months' experience of field duty. You are posted as a Sub-Divisional Magistrate in a district where protests have been ongoing since a long period against recently passed law. The situation has gained further gained traction as the Chief Minister is going to visit the district for a rally. You are required to undertake protocol duties for the CM and ensure that his cordon is not breached by the protesters. As a pep talk and action briefing, you instructed the policemen to take harsh actions against the protestors and keep them at bay. You used remarks such as "break their heads". This pep talk was recorded and released to the media. This incident has portrayed you in a very bad light. You are being called an insensitive officer, and your call for violence has initiated debates whether the public protestors should take arms in order to protect themselves. There are demands to lodge FIR against you for incitement of violence and attempt to murder. Eventually, you are transferred from your post of SDM to the post of an additional secretary in the Citizen Resources Information Department.

In this context, answer the following questions:

- ⊙ How would you explain your conduct which has been very unbecoming of an officer?

- ⊙ What would you do to rebuild the public trust in yourself?

- ⊙ What steps should be taken in order to ensure such behaviour is not repeated by other officers?

⊙ ANSWER

Peaceful protests are a form of freedom to expression, protected under Section 19 of the Constitution of India. The democratic right to peaceful protests has been acknowledged in a series of judgments by various High Courts and also the Supreme Court of India. Thus, taking action against such protests, without heeding to the series of steps (such as using tear, gas, opening of water cannon, followed by lathi charge and so on) is a sad default on the part of the state law enforcement body and it against the spirit of the Constitution of India. At the same time, safety and security of the high-risk individuals such as the CM, cannot be compromised. Nevertheless, the use of the language in the incident described in the question is not pardonable because such instructions coming from an authority figure could lead to unwarranted police action and create an atmosphere of fear – that may lead to violent protests.

Explanation of conduct:

At the outset, I will apologize profusely for the wrong choice of words made by myself in the pep talk and briefing. I have following explanation to offer:

- ⊙ The protests have taken a violent turn and stone pelting has started. Some of the policemen have been injured by stones and the morale of security forces has taken a hit, as they have been instructed to not retaliate under any circumstances. Therefore strict action was the need of the hour.

- ⊙ I was under pressure to boost the spirit of security forces, who have been on duty without break for the last 48 hours. As the leader of the forces, it was expected that it was expected of myself that I boost their confidence, energize them to sustain for longer hours of duty, to invoke a sense of service in them – but without asking them to shun their self-respect.

- ⊙ Despite this situation, my choice of word could have been better. Being a young officer, I was inexperienced and emotionally charged, and therefore, got carried away. I sincerely apologize for my conduct, I repent it and I resolve to learn from this mistake and become a better officer in future, for the service of the people and the nation.

Rebuilding of public trust in myself:

Trust is a hard-earned currency. In the given situation, earning of trust is even more challenging. I begin with the premise that the repairing of public trust will take time and delivery of certain good services on my part. I would undertake following steps to rebuild people's trust in my abilities to deliver good public services:

- I will offer apology over various media platforms such as news channels, my social media accounts, apology letter in newspaper – to ensure it reaches wider pubic and my sincere sense of guilt for indulging in such behaviour is communicated well.

- I will offer to resign from my current position or proceed on leave, so that any legal action against me can be taken without any perceived influence

- In my newly assigned role of additional secretary, I see an opportunity to engage with citizen, as it is about 'Citizen Resources Information'. I will make sure that I leave no stone unturned to deliver best services and enhance citizen resources information for better access by the public

- I understand that rebuilding of trust cannot be done in one day; therefore, I will be patient before embarking on any post such as the SDM/ DM again in my career.

- All my actions will be as per the Code of Ethical Conduct. I will also undertake sensitivity training and public-speaking lessons so that I become more aware of use of right language for effective communication

Steps that should be taken to ensure such behaviour are not repeated:

Unfortunately, the incident narrated in the question is not a rare occurrence. Officers are often accused of indulging in conduct that reeks of power-high attitude. They develop a sense of 'ownership' of their positions and offices, instead of a sense of 'service' via these positions and offices. The reasons for such attitude include, but not limited to, the following:

- 'Mai-baap' concept of service delivery

- VIP treatment of all officers by the general public, in various gathering

- Portrayal of larger-than-life sense of position by the subordinates

- Political compulsions and desire for 'choice' postings

Thus, these reasons require redressal to ensure officers do not just please their political bosses but serve the public in the real spirit. Following steps can be undertaken:

- Yearly participation in sensitivity training sessions

- Fixed criteria, such as years in service, ammonal performance ranking etc., before the officer is appointed in a particularly sensitive post

- Restoring the sense of anonymity among public servants – with guidelines about how they can publicize their work on social media and not projecting it as an individual achievement

The above steps will be effective only if the officers evolve a strong sense of public service. Only this inner realization can amend the attitude of civil servants. Public should be empowered with the information on Civil Services Conduct Rules to check attitudinal highhandedness of the public officers.

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SECTION: B
(PRELIMS)

CURRENT AFFAIRS

NOBEL PRIZE FOR LITERATURE

◉ **CONTEXT:**   Abdulrazak Gurnah became the fifth African writer to win the Nobel Prize for Literature on 7th October 2021.

Key Highlights

- He was awarded for his Contribution "in a non-judgmental sympathy for the effects of colonialism and the fate of the fugitive in the gap between cultures and continents."

- It was taken from his novel famous the premise of 'Paradise' 1994.

- It examines the fate of young African Arabs enlisted for the German occupation in World War I.

- Some of his famous writings: His writing explores the immigrant experience and how exile and loss shape identities and cultures.

  ⊙ Memory of Departure (1987)

  ⊙ Pilgrims Way (1988)

  ⊙ Paradise (1994)

  ⊙ By the Sea (2001)

  ⊙ Desertion (2005)

  ⊙ Gravel Heart (2017)

  ⊙ Afterlives (2020)

- His books contain African characters who are trying to embrace segregation, looking at societies and cultures.

- His work draws attention to the extent to which prejudice and discrimination against communities and religions perpetuate oppressive cultures.

- In 1994, he won the Booker Prize for his fiction 'Paradise'.

- In 2001, He was awarded the Los Angeles Times Book Prize for 'Desertion' and 'By the Sea'.

PM PAYS TRIBUTES TO SHYAMJI KRISHNA VARMA

◉ **CONTEXT:**   Recently Prime Minister paid tribute to freedom fighter Shyamji Krishna Varma on his 164th birth anniversary.

About Shyamji Krishna Varma

- Shyamji Krishna Varma was born in 1857 in Gujarat.

- He was an Indian freedom fighter, lawyer and journalist.

- He was an admirer of **Dayanand Saraswati**, because of that he became the **first President of Bombay Arya Samaj.**

- **Died on:** March 30, 1930.

Major organizations founded by Shyamji Krishna Varma

- **Indian Home Rule Society (IHRS):** The organisation was founded by Shyamji Krishna Varma, with support from Bhikaji Cama, Dadabhai Naoroji and S.R. Rana in London in 1905.

○ It was an Indian organisation that promoted the cause of **self-rule** in **British India.**

- **India House:** Indian House was a student residence that existed between 1905 and 1910 which was opened to promote nationalist views among Indian students in Britain.

  ○ Shyamji inspired Veer Savarkar who was a member of India House in London

- **Indian Sociologist:** The Indian Sociologist in London became an outlet for nationalist ideas.

COMPREHENSIVE HANDICRAFTS CLUSTER DEVELOPMENT SCHEME (CHCDS)

⊙ **CONTEXT:** The Ministry of Textiles has approved continuation of Comprehensive Handicrafts Cluster Development Scheme (CHCDS) with a total outlay of ₹160 crore up to March 2026.

Key-points

- **Presented by:** The program was launched by the Ministry of Textiles.
- **Fund allocation:** The CHCDS scheme has been approved for an amount of Rs 160 crore.
- **Aim:**

  ○ CHCDS schemes were set up to build a world-class infrastructure that would cater to the business needs of local artisans and SMEs to increase production and exports.

  ○ These collections were set up to assist professionals, adequate training, state-of-the-art technology, and the inclusion of human resource development. It is also coupled with market linkages and production diversification.

Objective:

- To raise the living standards of millions of poor artisans located in far flung areas of the country as well as employment generation.
- To provide requisite support in terms of infrastructure, technology, product diversification, design development, marketing and promotion, social security and other components that are necessary for the sustainability of craftsmen/artisans engaged in the Handicrafts sector.
- To create more livelihood opportunities for people through interventions in the industry and to increase the income of professionals / professionals involved in the field.

Significance of the Scheme

- This scheme can also help boost exports of textile handicrafts as the demand for such products from India is worldwide.
- These projects will focus on bringing together scattered professionals, building businesses at grassroots level and linking them with SMEs in the handicraft sector to ensure a quality economy.

  ○ 10,000 artisans will be selected to improve everything under the program.

ELECTION SYMBOLS

⊙ **CONTEXT:** Recently, the Election Commission of India (ECI) decided to freeze the election symbol of a Political Party.

About election symbol

- An election symbol refers to a **standardized symbol** allocated to a **political party.**

- They are used by the parties during their campaigning

- They are shown on Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs), where the voter chooses the symbol and votes for the associated party.

- The concept was introduced for the voting by people, who cannot read the name of the party while casting their votes.

- Since India held its first national polls in 1951-52, symbols have become a crucial part of the electoral process ever.

Types of Election Symbol

- As per the Election Symbols (Reservation and Allotment) (Amendment) Order, 2017, party symbols are either "reserved" or "free".

  - **Reserved:** Eight national parties and 64 state parties across the country have "reserved" symbols

  - **Free:** ECI has a pool of nearly 200 "free" symbols. These symbols are allotted to the thousands of unrecognised regional parties in the country.

Who is empowered to allot election symbol?

- **The Election Symbols (Reservation and Allotment) Order, 1968** empowers the Election Commission of India (ECI) to recognize political parties and allot symbols.

STATE OF THE EDUCATION REPORT FOR INDIA-2021

⊙ **CONTEXT:**   On the occasion of World Teacher's Day, "State of the Education Report (SOER) -2021 of India-" No Teachers, No Class" has been released by UNESCO.

Key-points

- This report is published annually by UNESCO.

- This is the third edition of the Education Report.

- This year, the report focuses on the theme "teachers, teaching and educating teachers", highlighting the challenge of teaching.

- The report seeks to provide insight into key aspects of the teaching profession and provides a profile of 9.6 million teaching staff.

- The report also highlights the challenges of a complex system of teaching and their professional development.

- The findings of this report were prepared on the basis of the data obtained from:

  - Periodic Labor Force Survey (PLFS)

  - Unified District Information System for Education (UDISE)

Key-findings

- As per the report, there are close to 1.2 lakh schools in India. It accounts for 7.15 percent of 11.51 lakh schools. Of this, 89 percent are in rural areas.

- 51% of fotal schools are employing 95 lakh teachers.

- According to the Report's findings, India needs 11.16 more teachers to address the current shortage.

- Countries with the highest percentage of schools with single teachers are
  ◎ Arunachal Pradesh (18.22%)
  ◎ Goa (16.08%)
  ◎ Telangana (15.71%)
  ◎ Andhra Pradesh (14.4%)
  ◎ Jharkhand (13.81%)
  ◎ Uttarakhand (13.64%)
  ◎ Madhya Pradesh (13.08%)
  ◎ Rajasthan (10.08%)

EXERCISE JIMEX

◉ **CONTEXT:** Recently, 5th edition of the bilateral maritime exercise JIMEX, between Japan and India, was conducted in the Arabian Sea from 6 – 8 October 2021.

Key Highlights

- The exercise included ships and aircraft of Japan Maritime Self Defence Force (JMSDF) and Indian Navy.
- Both countries performed operations focused on air, surface, and sub-surface dimensions of maritime operations, and air domain.
- The units have used Indian Army and P8I aircraft (IN) aircraft that provide maritime support for both navies.
- They did the replenishment of the Sea. Exercise involves more intensive exercise and the release of guns in addition to the target that can be used.
- There was also Anti-submarine and anti-aircraft firing exercises as a part of air domain operations.

STATE OF CLIMATE SERVICES REPORT 2021

◉ **CONTEXT:** The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) releases a new **2021 State of the Climate Services report for 2021.**

Key-findings

- In 2018, an estimated 3.6 million people worldwide had less than one month of water a year, expected to exceed five billion by 2050.
  ◎ Rising temperatures are causing global and regional rainfall changes, leading to changes in rainfall patterns and agricultural seasons, which have a significant impact on food security and human health and well-being.
- **Water-related disasters:** Water-related disasters have increased dramatically since 2000
  ◎ Flood-related disasters have increased by 134 percent over the past two decades.
- **Terrestrial water storage (TWS):** TWS decreased by 1 cm per year for 20 years (2002-2021).
  ◎ The biggest losses have occurred in Antarctica and Greenland.

- Over the past year, heavy rains across the continent caused severe flooding in Japan, China, Indonesia, Nepal, Pakistan and India. Millions were displaced and hundreds were killed.

Scenario in India

- India has recorded the highest losses in groundwater storage if the loss of water storage in Antarctica and Greenland is not included.
  - According to the report, India has the highest loss rate for TWS.
  - The northern part of India has suffered the highest losses in the country.
- The average annual water supply was reduced to 1,545 cubic meters in 2011, from 1,816 cubic meters in 2001.
  - It is expected to drop further to 1,367 cubic meters by 2031.
- Five basins of 21 rivers are 'water shortages' (water supply per person less than 1,000 cubic meters) and three 'water pressures' (water supply per person below 1,700 cubic meters).

AERIAL SEEDING CAMPAIGN

⊙ **CONTEXT:** Recently, "**Hara Bhara", India's first aerial seeding campaign** in Telangana using the **Seedcopter drone** was launched.

Key- Points of Hara Bhara Campaign

- This Hara Bhara campaign is started to accelerate the mission of reforestation by planting one billion trees using drones by 2030.
- Drones are used to disperse seed balls over thin, barren, and empty forest lands to turn them into lush green abodes of trees in this project.
- The 'seedcopter' which is a drone developed by Marut Drones is an aerial seeding solution for rapid and scalable reforestation.

> **What is Aerial Seeding technique?**
> - Aerial seeding refers to a technique of plantation wherein seed balls are sprayed on the ground.
> - Seed balls are seeds covered with a mixture of clay, compost, char and other components.
> - Under this aerial devices are used, including planes, helicopters or drones.

DRONE-BASED DRUG DELIVERY MODEL: I-DRONE

⊙ **CONTEXT:** Recently, the **Department of Health and Family Welfare** introduced the Drone vaccine delivery model (Drone Response and Outreach in the Northeast).

About the Drone vaccine delivery model

- **Developed by:** the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)
- **Aim:** To ensure that life-saving drugs reach everyone even in hard and inaccessible areas of India.

- The Drone is designed to overcome challenges by moving Unmanned Aerial vehicles (UAV) or drones to remote and hard-to-reach areas.
- This is the first time the "Make in India 'drone has been used in South Asia to deliver the COVID vaccine over a distance of more than 15 kilometers.
- Currently, a drone-based delivery project has been licensed to operate in Manipur and Nagaland, as well as in the Andaman and Nicobar Island unions.
- Permission was granted to ICMR for research into the feasibility of delivering the Covid-19 vaccine using drones, in collaboration with IIT-Kanpur.

Significance

- It will help to fill the gaps in existing vaccination methods and can be used to deliver important life-saving drugs, collect blood samples etc.
- This technology can be used in critical situations. It can be a game changer in addressing challenges in health delivery, especially in the provision of health care in difficult areas.

FIRST MALARIA TREATMENT: MOSQUIRIX

⦿ **CONTEXT:**   **World's first Malaria Vaccine** has been endorsed recently by the World health Organization.

About the Vaccine

- The WHO recommendation is for **RTS, S - or Mosquirix** - a vaccine developed by **British drug maker GlaxoSmithKline.**
- The active ingredient in Mosquirix is made up of proteins found on the surface of **Plasmodium falciparum parasites (PFP).**
- RTS, S aims to start the immune system in the early stages of malaria when PFP enters the bloodstream through a mosquito bite and infects liver cells.
- The RTS malaria vaccine, S / AS01 is used to prevent **P. falciparum malaria** in children living in regions with moderate to high transmission.
    - ⦿ P. falciparum, the most common form of malaria in Africa.
- It is the first vaccine and the only one that shows partial protection against young children.
- The malaria vaccine should be given in a 4-dose program to children from five months of age to reduce the incidence of malaria and the burden.
- The vaccine adds to the development of the malaria tool and can help get malaria control back on track.
- It also helps prevent liver infection with the **Hepatitis B virus.**

> **Malaria**
> - Malaria is a life-threatening disease caused by parasites transmitted to humans through the bite of female **Anopheles mosquitoes**.
> - It is **preventable** and **curable**.
> - Over the past two decades, 11 countries have been WHO-certified free of malaria:
>   ➤ United Arab Emirates (2007)
>   ➤ Morocco (2010)
>   ➤ Turkmenistan (2010)

- ➤ Armenia (2011)
- ➤ Sri Lanka (2016)
- ➤ Kyrgyzstan (2016)
- ➤ Paraguay (2018)
- ➤ Uzbekistan (2018)
- ➤ Algeria (2019)
- ➤ Argentina (2019)
- ➤ El Salvador (2021)

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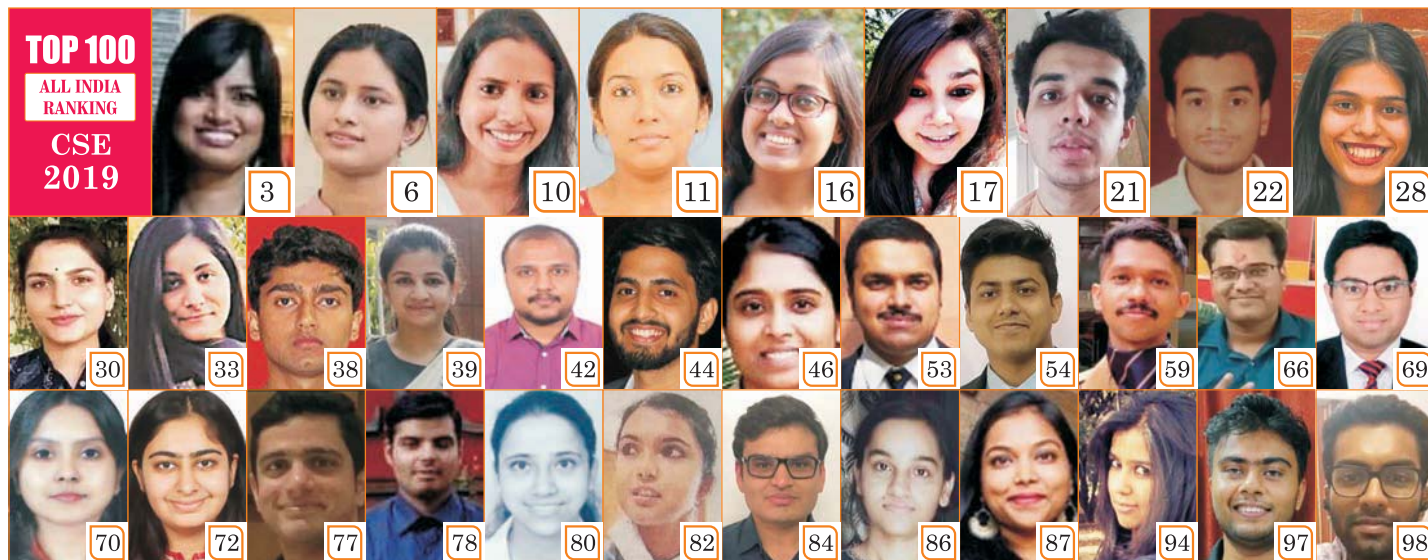
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