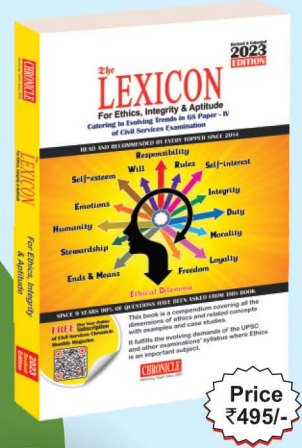


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Prelims 2023 Special-8

Current Affairs Reminder 2022-23

A comprehensive, exam-oriented ready reckoner of contemporary events for GS Paper-I incorporating all important facts & dimensions



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- India and the Global South ●
- Climate Resilient Agriculture ●
- Preventive Healthcare in India ●
- India's New Space Policy ●
- National Quantum Mission ●
- Logistics Performance Index 2023 ●
- The State of the World's Children 2023 ●
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India and the Global South

Towards an Equitable World Order

The challenges of the COVID pandemic, rising prices of fuel, fertilizer, food grains and rising geopolitical tensions have affected development efforts for the Global South. India has always shared its development experience with the countries of the Global South, which makes India an important linchpin for articulating the concerns of the Global South. Considering India's important role in the international system and diplomatic dialogues, it can be said that, it will play a major role in shaping the emerging 'New Global Order'. The impact of these efforts of India will also be visible on international relations and world politics in the 21st century.

■ Dr. Amarjeet Bhargava

On April 20, 2023 India's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Ruchira Kamboj discussed India's efforts for the Global South and developing countries through G20 presidency at the 'United Nations Economic and Social Council' (ECOSOC) meeting.

According to Ruchira Kamboj, India is currently more sensitive to the voices and concerns of the Global South and developing countries during its G-20 presidency.

Similarly, while presiding over the 'Voice of the Global South Summit' in March 2023, the Indian Prime Minister called for greater cooperation among developing countries to address common challenges such as climate change, poverty and inequality to strengthen the Global South. During this, the need to reform global governance structures to better reflect the interests of the Global South was discussed.

The countries identified as the Global South are home to the world's most significant population and the region has enormous potential for economic growth as well as the potential to contribute significantly to the global economy and reduce poverty and inequality.

However, there is a wide disparity in economic development and other regions between the Global North and South. Nevertheless, the development of the Global South is critical to achieving a more equitable and sustainable global economic order.

India is an important country in the grouping identified as the Global South. India as a country has made extraordinary progress in recent years. For example, India has long remained the world's third largest economy in terms of 'purchasing power parity'.

At present, almost all the important countries of the world are building their better relations with India. In the last few years, India has played an important role in global politics, especially in important diplomatic relations in the Pacific region. Therefore, developing countries need strong political

will and commitment to develop the Global South and build a new world order in the coming times and India will play an important role in this.

Understanding the Global South

Context: The Global South is a term used to describe the countries and regions of the world that are considered to be less developed and economically disadvantaged. It includes countries in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, among others. The concept of the Global South emerged as a response to the historical imbalances in the global economy and the need for greater equity in the distribution of power and resources.

Significance: The significance of the Global South lies in the fact that it represents the majority of the world's population, and its economic and political influence is growing. The Global South is also home to many of the world's fastest-growing economies, and it has the potential to drive global economic growth and development in the future.

Evolution of Global North and Global South Debate

- **Historical Context:** The emergence of the Global North and South debate can be traced back to the historical and structural imbalances in the global economy and the distribution of power and resources. The roots of this debate can be traced back to the colonial era, when European powers established colonies in Africa, Asia, and Latin America to extract resources and exploit cheap labor. This resulted in the transfer of wealth and resources from the Global South to the Global North.
- **After the Colonial Era:** The newly independent countries of the Global South continued to be exploited and marginalized in the global economy. The global economic order was dominated by Western powers, who controlled the institutions and rules that governed the international economic system. This included the Inter-

India's New Space Policy

Boosting Space Economy through Private Sector Participation

The Indian Space Sector is one of the rapidly growing industries in the world with more investment opportunities. Now, it has opened its economy to the private sector with the vision of becoming a major player in the global space market. The Indian space economy is expected to reach US\$12.8466 billion by 2025, according to a joint report by Ernst & Young (EY) and the Indian Space Association (ISPA), the primary industry organisation founded to represent the Indian space industry as a whole.

■ **Sharmila Senthil Kumar**

The Government of India unleashed reforms in space domain in 2020, opening the doors for enhanced participation of Non-Government Entities (NGEs) in carrying out end-to-end activities in the space domain and with an aim to provide them a level playing field.

Subsequent to these reforms, the Government seeks to provide regulatory certainty to space activities by various stakeholders, in order to create a thriving space ecosystem.

In order to implement space sector reforms, the Cabinet Committee on Security on 6th April 2023 approved the Indian Space Policy-2023.

Indian Space Policy-2023

The Policy is a comprehensive set of guidelines that outlines the roles and responsibilities of different entities in the Indian Space sector. The policy is expected to pave way for clarity in space reforms and encourage private industry participation in the space economy.

The Policy is expected to have a significant impact on the Indian space economy. It aims to increase India's share in the global space economy from less than 2% to 10%.

Key Features of India's New Space Policy

- **Role and Responsibilities of Space Agencies:** The role and responsibilities of the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO), NewSpace India Limited (NSIL), and the Indian National Space Promotion and Authorization Center (IN-SPACE), as well as that of the private players in the Indian space sector are clarified.
- **Commercialisation of Space Sector:** It opens up the Indian space sector, providing a place for the private sector to play an active role in augmenting the development and competitiveness of the Indian space program.
- **Changing Role of ISRO:** The role of Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) will transition out from manufacturing operational space systems and focus its energies on research and development in advanced technologies.
- **Areas of Operation:** The new policy permits non-government entities (NGEs) to offer national and international space-based communication services, through

self-owned, procured or leased geostationary orbit (GSO) and non-geostationary satellite orbit (NGSO) satellite systems. NGSO is a reference to low earth orbit or medium earth orbits that are home to satellites providing broadband internet services from space.

- **Functions of NGEs:** The policy encourages NGEs to establish and operate ground facilities for space objects operations, such as telemetry, tracking and command (TT&C) Earth Stations and Satellite Control Centres (SCCs).
- **Functions of IN-SPACE:** The Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre (IN-SPACE) shall function as an autonomous government organization, mandated to promote, hand-hold, guide, and authorise space activities in the country.
- **Functions of NSIL:** The New Space India Limited (NSIL), as the public sector undertaking under the Department of Space, shall be responsible for commercialising space technologies and platforms created through public expenditure. It also mandated NSIL to manufacture, lease or procure space components, technologies, platforms and other assets from the private or the public sector on sound commercial principles.
- **Process of Service Procurement:** Indian consumers of space technology or services such as communication, remote sensing, data services and launch services whether from the public or the private sector, shall be free to directly procure them from any source.

Indian Space Sector: An Overview

India is renowned for producing affordable satellites and launch vehicles. Despite having the most advanced space program in the world, the space sector in India makes up only 2.1% of the global space economy.

The Government of India has started space sector reforms to encourage, support, regulate, and provide start-ups and private companies, an opportunity to engage in space operations to grow their market share globally.

As of May 2021, India had a total of 368 space tech businesses, placing it fifth in the global arena.

Preventive Healthcare in India Infrastructure & Technologies

Over the past three decades, non-communicable diseases (NCDs) have become the leading cause of death and suffering, contributing to 65 per cent of deaths in India. NCDs affect not just health but also productivity and economic growth. As the youngest and fastest growing major economy in the world, the health of our nation is a critical indicator of our future, and the health of our people will determine how effectively we live up to our full potential.

■ Ranjeet Shah

A recent report suggests that India's preventive healthcare sector is projected to reach USD 197 billion by 2025, growing at a CAGR of 22 per cent. The Indian consumer is also expected to benefit from the shift from curative to preventive, with the delivery of better health outcomes and lower healthcare costs.

There is an old saying: "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." While many of us are used to this saying in non-medical contexts, it holds very much true in the literal sense. The domain of preventive healthcare has long been neglected and there is only a marginal increase in the Union Budget 2023-24 for the healthcare sector. Even so, the rise of preventive healthcare startups and the latest developments in technology sound very much promising in reimagining the future of the healthcare system and making it conducive to our needs of awareness, accessibility, and affordability.

The increasing incidence of cardiac diseases, hypertension, diabetes and other non-communicable diseases at a much younger age across the globe vis-a vis India specifically, people are grasping the need to take charge of their health and, over the last few years, have been increasingly adopting preventive monitoring as an effective tool. So, turning to preventive healthcare is inevitable and the need of the hour.

What is Preventive Health Care?

Preventive health care involves taking proactive steps to reduce a person's risk of developing major illnesses or diseases. In other words, it helps prevent illnesses, diseases, or medical conditions before they occur. This can mean anything from getting regular check-ups at the doctor's office to eating a balanced diet and exercising regularly. It also includes activities such as getting vaccinations, using sunscreen, avoiding smoking or exposure to secondhand smoke and many more measures that are designed to help people maintain their overall health and well-being. Furthermore, it's not just preventing illness or reducing the chances of it, rather preventive health care can in identifying potential problems before they become a grave issue. *Prophylaxis* is another term for preventive healthcare.

Importance of Preventive Healthcare

Preventive health care is an essential part of a comprehensive

approach to improving public health outcomes. It should be a priority for everyone to ensure that they are able to lead healthier lives.

Here are some of benefits of preventive health care:

- **Fewer Health Problems:** Preventive health care can help to reduce the number of health problems that people experience. By receiving regular check-ups and screenings, potential health problems can be detected early, when they are most treatable. Additionally, preventive measures such as vaccinations can help to protect people from developing certain diseases altogether.
- **Lower Health Care Costs:** Preventive care can also save money in the long run by avoiding expensive treatments for serious health problems. *For example*, a simple vaccination can prevent from getting a potentially deadly disease, like pneumonia.
- **More Productive Life:** By staying healthy, one can do the things he/she enjoys and be more productive at work or school. He/she will also have more energy to spend time with his/her family and friends.
- **Better Overall Health:** When one receives preventive care, he/she will not only avoid developing serious health problems, but also improve overall health. *For example*, quitting smoking not only reduces risk of lung cancer but also lowers blood pressure and improves cholesterol levels.
- **Lower Stress Levels:** Receiving regular preventive care can also provide peace of mind for both individuals and their families. Knowing that one is doing everything possible to stay healthy can help to reduce stress and anxiety levels. Additionally, having a regular doctor that one trusts can provide a sense of security in knowing that someone is looking out for his/her best interests.
- **Improved Self-esteem:** When one takes care of himself/herself and make healthy choices, it can lead to improved self-esteem and body image. This can boost mood and confidence levels, which can have a positive impact on every aspect of life.
- **Improves Lifespan:** Preventive care can help in living longer by diagnosing problems early, and treating them more easily. *For example*, if one manages his/her weight

Climate Resilient Agriculture Essential to tackle Food Insecurity

Climate resilient agriculture (CRA) is an approach to agriculture that aims to increase productivity and sustainability while building resilience to climate change. With agriculture being a vital sector for India's economy, accounting for around 15% of the country's GDP and employing nearly half of the workforce, the impacts of climate change on agriculture have significant implications for food security and livelihoods in India. India is particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, such as droughts, floods, and extreme weather events. These impacts have already begun to affect crop yields, soil fertility, and water availability, making it increasingly challenging for farmers to sustain their livelihoods. In response, there is growing interest and momentum towards implementing CRA practices in India, which can help to build climate resilience in the agriculture sector.

■ Chandrakant Singh

Recently, under the G-20 Presidency of India, the Meeting of Agricultural Chief Scientists (MACS) was held during 17-19 April, 2023 at Varanasi. In the meeting, several countries and international organizations discussed and identified various research and development priorities in agriculture sector to foster transformation towards diverse, resilient and sustainable agriculture and food systems.

Further, MACS recalling the 2030 Agenda and G20 Matera and Bali Declarations, highlighted the importance of research and innovation and called for sharing knowledge, experience and best practices to make food and agriculture system climate resilient.

Moreover, the Synthesis Report, the last of the Sixth Assessment report cycle, done in a collaborative effort between governments and scientists from all over the world, confirms that human activities, mainly through emissions of greenhouse gases, have unequivocally caused global warming and its impact is seen on agricultural yield and production.

FAO also warned that climate change is already impacting yield of crops in arid and semi-arid region leading to food insecurity.

Recently, Bihar became the first state in India where the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) inked a pact with the state government for developing strategies to make agriculture climate resilient.

Thus, various current events unequivocally explain about the impact of climate change on agriculture and highlights the priority of making agriculture resilient to climate change.

What is Climate Resilient Agriculture?

Climate resilient agriculture (CRA) is an approach to agriculture that aims to increase productivity and sustainability while building resilience to climate change.

Vulnerability of Indian Agriculture to Climate Change

Yield Reduction

- ◆ Climate change is perceptible through a rise in all India mean temperature and increased frequency of extreme rainfall events in the last three decades. This causes fluctuation in production of major crops in different years.
- ◆ Impact of climate change on Indian agriculture was studied under National Innovations in Climate Resilient Agriculture (NICRA).
- ◆ Rainfed rice yields in India are projected to reduce marginally (<2.5%) in 2050 and 2080 and irrigated rice yields by 7% in 2050 and 10% in 2080 scenarios.
- ◆ Further, wheat yield projected to reduce by 6-25% in 2100 and maize yields by 18-23%. Future climates are likely to benefit chickpea with increase in productivity (23-54%).
- ◆ Average productivity of apples in the traditional Kullu and Shimla regions of Himachal Pradesh has often been attributed to inadequate chilling in recent decades, crucial for good apple yields.

Reduced Agricultural Income

- ◆ Vulnerability assessment of Indian Agriculture to climate change is undertaken by Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR). Such an assessment was for 573 rural districts of India (excluding the Union Territories of Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Lakshadweep). Based on the vulnerability analysis, 109 districts out of 573 rural districts (19% of total districts) are 'very high-risk' districts, while 201 districts are risk districts.
- ◆ Significant negative impacts have been projected with medium-term (2010-2039) climate change, e.g. yield reduction by 4.5 to 9%, depending on the magnitude

- [The Coastal Aquaculture Authority \(Amendment\) Bill 2023](#)
- [National Quantum Mission](#)
- [Logistics Performance Index 2023](#)
- [The State of the World's Children 2023](#)

The Coastal Aquaculture Authority (Amendment) Bill 2023

On 5th April, 2023, the Central Government introduced the Coastal Aquaculture Authority (Amendment) Bill, 2023.

- The Bill seeks to amend certain provisions of the Coastal Aquaculture Authority Act, 2005.

Key Highlights

Regulation of Allied Coastal Aquaculture Activities

- The Bill adds that any facility that is engaged in coastal aquaculture or any allied activity will be regulated as a coastal aquaculture unit. It provides for the registration and regulation of such units.
- It prohibit coastal aquaculture activities in:
 - ◆ ecologically sensitive areas or in geo-morphological features such as mountains, valleys, or volcanoes,
 - ◆ no-development zones in seas and buffer zones in creeks, rivers, and backwaters, and
 - ◆ creeks, rivers, and backwaters within Coastal Regulation Zones.

Provisions for “Biosecurity”

- The Bill includes new provisions for “biosecurity”, which refers to measures and strategies for analysing, managing, and preventing the risk of introducing or spreading harmful organisms like viruses and bacteria within the coastal aquaculture unit, which could lead to infectious diseases.

Promoting Environment-friendly Coastal Aquaculture

- It seek to promote newer forms of environment-friendly coastal aquaculture such as cage culture, seaweed culture, bi-valve culture, marine ornamental fish culture and pearl oyster culture.

Genetically Improved and Disease-free Broodstocks

- It aims to encourage the establishment of facilities in areas having direct access to seawater to produce genetically improved and disease-free broodstocks and seeds for use in coastal aquaculture.

Prohibiting Use of Antibiotics

- It seeks to prevent the use of antibiotics and “pharmacologically active substances”, which are harmful to human health in coastal aquaculture.
- Introduction of “Broodstock Multiplication Centre”
- It provides for the introduction of a “Broodstock Multiplication Centre” to be reared under strict biosecurity and disease surveillance.

COASTAL AQUACULTURE AUTHORITY ACT, 2005

- It came into force on 22nd December 2005.
- The Act implements the mechanism of aquaculture in India. It provides for the establishment of an Aquaculture Authority.
- The term “Authority” for the purpose of the Coastal Aquaculture Authority Act, 2005 is defined under Section 2 (1) (a) of the Act.
- Under Section 2 (1) (d) of the Act, “coastal area” meant the area declared as the Coastal Regulation Zone, for the time being, in the government notification dated February 19, 1991, “to regulate activities in the coastal area under section 3 of India’s Environment Protection Act, 1986.”

Objectives

- To regulate the aquaculture activities in the country.
- To control the coastal environment destruction.
- To produce more protein-rich food for the consumption of the increasing population.
- To provide a livelihood to humans in commercial aquaculture activities.
- To increase the existing species of the aquatic animals and protecting the coastal environment.
- To utilize the aquatic and coastal land in a sustainable way of ensuring enough resources for our future generation.



Polity & Governance

- FIR Provisions under Indian Penal Code
- State Bills and Power of Governor
- Foreign Exchange Management Act 1999

Polity & Governance

FIR Provisions under Indian Penal Code

On 25th April, 2023, the Supreme Court issued notice to Delhi Police on a petition filed by seven wrestlers seeking a First Information Report (FIR) against the president of the Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) on allegations of sexual harassment.

- Sections pertaining to sexual harassment and sexual assault of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) fall within the category of cognizable offences.
- One of the complainants include a minor, therefore, the FIR provisions under Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012 is also applicable.

Laws related to Registration of FIR in Cognizable Offences

- **Section 154 (1) of the Code of Criminal Procedure** enables the police to register an FIR after information is received about a cognizable offence.
- It also has provision for the registration of a 'Zero FIR', where even if the alleged offence has not been committed within the jurisdiction of the police station approached, the police can file an FIR and transfer it to the police station concerned.

FIR Provisions under POCSO Act, 2012

- **Section 19** of the Act states that any person who has an apprehension that an offence under POCSO Act has been committed shall provide such information to the Special Juvenile Police Unit or the local police.
- The section also requires the registration of an FIR in writing.
- **Section 21** of the Act even states that not reporting or recording an offence can result in up to six months of imprisonment, a fine, or both.

Judiciary

- Golden Jubilee of Kesavananda Bharati Judgment
- Discretionary Powers of Supreme Court under Article 142

Plans/Policies

- National Medical Devices Policy 2023

Internal Security

- Dima Hasao Peace Pact

Reports/Surveys

- National Manufacturing Innovation Survey

News Snippets

- The Act, therefore, also makes it mandatory for a report to be filed on receiving a complaint, including from a child.

In case there is Failure to Register an FIR

- Based on the committee's recommendation, section 166A was inserted in the Criminal Law (Amendment) Act, 2013.
- The section states that if a public servant knowingly disobeys any direction of law including failing to record any information given to him in relation to a cognizable offence, rigorous imprisonment for a term of minimum six months and maximum two years can be given, and he shall also be liable to paying a fine.

Other Remedies if Police Refuse to File an FIR

- **Section 154 (3) of CrPC** says that a person who has been aggrieved after a police in-charge refused to file an FIR can send the information to the Superintendent of Police.
- **Section 156 of CrPC** says if a person is aggrieved by the police's refusal to file an FIR, a complaint can be made before a magistrate. The magistrate can then order registration of a case at the police station.

Important Facts

Supreme Court on Section 154 of CrPC

- Supreme Court in *Lalita Kumari vs. Govt of UP and Ors* (2013) case said that registration of an FIR under section 154 CrPC is mandatory if information of a cognizable offence is received.
- Other considerations are not relevant at the stage of registration of FIR, such as, whether the information is falsely given, whether the information is genuine, whether the information is credible etc.
- It gave an illustrative list of categories of cases where such an inquiry can be made, including family disputes, commercial offences, medical negligence and corruption cases or cases where there is an abnormal delay in reporting the matter.
- The court said that the inquiry should not exceed seven days.



Social Issues

- 'Triple Test' for Altruistic Surrogacy

Indian Society

- Menstrual Hygiene in School

Social Justice

- Centre Revises Nutritional Criteria for Children's Food Safety Scheme

Plans/Policies

- Svamitva Scheme
- National Credit Framework
- PM-SHRI Scheme

Reports

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Miscellaneous

- PRET Initiative

News Snippets

Social Issues

'Triple Test' for Altruistic Surrogacy

On 21st April, 2023, the High Court (HC) of Karnataka evolved "triple test" for considering the plea of a couple to have a child through altruistic surrogacy.

About the Case

- The High Court was hearing a petition filed by a couple aged 57 and 45 years, who had lost their son to road accident, and wanted to re-experience the bliss of parenthood via surrogacy but were barred by certain provisions of Surrogacy (Regulation) Act, 2021.

Section 2(1) (zg)

- "Surrogate mother" means a woman who agrees to bear a child (who is genetically related to the intending couple or intending woman) through surrogacy from the implantation of embryo in her womb and fulfils the conditions as provided in sub-clause (b) of clause (iii) of Section 4.

Section 4(iii)

- No surrogacy or surrogacy procedures shall be conducted, undertaken, performed or initiated, unless the Director or in-charge of the surrogacy clinic and the person qualified to do so are satisfied, for reasons to be recorded in writing, that the following conditions have been fulfilled, namely:
- (c) an eligibility certificate for intending couple is issued separately by the appropriate authority on fulfilment of the following conditions,
- (l) the intending couple are married and between the age of 23 to 50 years in case of female and between 26 to 55 years in case of male on the day of certification.

- However, the impugned provisions of the Surrogacy (Regulation) Act, 2021 i.e., Section 2(1) (zg) and Section 4(iii) (c) (I) have prohibited the couple to have a child by way of surrogacy.

What HC Said?

- It has suggested to "iron out the creases" in the Surrogacy (Regulation) Act, 2021, which prohibits men aged above 55 to have a child through surrogacy.
- Also, the court said that the provision in the Act, which states that "surrogate mother should be genetically related" to the couple who wants to have a child through surrogacy "defeats both altruism and logic".

TRIPLE TEST

- The Karnataka High Court has evolved the triple tests: genetic test, physical test, and economic test.
- State Surrogacy Board will consider the "genetic, physical and economical" criteria of a couple while deciding cases of surrogacy.
- **Genetic Test:** It is imperative to test the strength of the sperm as the sperm contains genetic information necessary to make a new individual.
- **Physical Test:** The intending couple must be in a position to take care of the child and cannot abandon the child on the ground that they are themselves infirmed to handle the child.
- **Economic Test:** The intending couple must be economically sound and should not lead the child to penury the moment it is born.

Important Facts

The Surrogacy (Regulation) Act 2021

According to the Surrogacy (Regulation) Act, only a married couple who has a medical condition necessitating gestational surrogacy can avail it. They have to first obtain a certificate of recommendation from a District Medical Board.



Heritage Art & Culture

History

- Uttaramerur Inscription

Art & Culture

- Pushkaralu Festival

History

Uttaramerur Inscription

On 14th April, 2023, the Prime Minister, while discussing India's democratic history, referred to the Uttaramerur inscription.

- While Uttaramerur has multiple inscriptions spanning centuries, the most famous one – being referred to by the PM – is from the reign of **Parantaka Chola I (907-953 AD)**.

About Uttaramerur Village

- Uttaramerur (also known as Uthiramerur) is a panchayat town in Kancheepuram situated 90 km south west of Chennai.
- The Pallava king Nandivarman II established it around 750 A.D.
- The Pallavas, the Cholas, the Pandyas, the Sambuvarayas, the Vijayanagara Rayas, and the Nayaks successively ruled it.

Temples of Uttaramerur

- **Major temples are –**
 - ♦ Vaikuntha Perumal temple
 - ♦ Sundaravarada Perumal temple
 - ♦ Subrahmanya temple
 - ♦ Kailsanatha temple
 - ♦ Kolambesvara temple
 - ♦ Madari Amman temple
 - ♦ Irattaittali –Isvara temple
- All the temples are oriented with reference to the mandapa.
- At Uttaramerur, on the walls of the village assembly (mandapa) itself, we have the earliest inscriptions with complete information about how the elected village assembly functioned.

- GI Tag to Basohli Painting
- Gond Painting Gets GI Tag
- Yangli Festival

Plans/Policies

- Mera Gaon Meri Dharohar Survey
- Language Friendship Bridge Project

Summit/Seminar

- First Global Buddhist Summit

News Snippets

Temple Inscriptions

- The temple inscriptions of Uthiramerur are notable for their historical descriptions of the rural self-governance.
- There are inscriptions from the period of Parantaka Chola I (907–953), Rajaraja Chola I (985–1014), Rajendra Chola I (1012–1044) and Kulothunga Chola I (1070–1120), indicating various gifts to the temples.

Details of Inscriptions

Formation of Sabhas

- Village was divided into 30 wards with one representative elected for each.

Qualification of Members

- **It included-**
 - ♦ Owning land and a house
 - ♦ Being between the ages of 35 and 70
 - ♦ Possessing knowledge of mantras and Brahmanas from the Vedic corpus

Disqualification

- The inscription enumerates several criteria that would make someone and their family ineligible for consideration, with a systematic listing of all their relations.

Selection Process

- Once all those who are eligible and willing have inscribed their names on palm leaf tickets, a representative is selected through an elaborate drawing of lots conducted by priests in the inner hall of the assembly building.

Responsibilities

- The inscriptions outline various important committees in the sabha, each with its specific duties and responsibilities. These include-
- Garden committee (**Totta-Variyam**)
- Tank committee (**Eri-Variyam**)
- Annual committee (**Samvatsara-Variyam**)
- Gold committee (**Pon-Variyam**)

ECONOMY WATCH

Agriculture

- Farmer Distress Index
- GI Tag for Agricultural Produce
- SATHI Portal
- Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers' Rights Authority

Plans/Policies

- Mission 50K-EV4ECO

Banking & Finance

- Dabba Trading
- India's First REITs and InvITs Index
- ASBA Facility for Secondary Market Trading
- RBI Framework for Green Deposits
- Cost Inflation Index

Infrastructure

- UDAN 5.0
- Draft Sagarmala Innovation and Start-up Policy

Industry

- Revamped CGTMSE Scheme

Reports

- The Status of Women in Agrifood Systems

Agriculture

Farmer Distress Index

Recently, Scientists at the Central Research Institute for Dryland Agriculture (CRIDA), an Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) organ, have developed an early warning system called 'Farmers Distress Index'.

Rationale for the Index

- Farmers' distress is a recurrent problem in dry land areas of India, especially in drought-prone areas of Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, and Maharashtra.
- According to a recent study by National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD), more than 60% of the 'very high' and 'high' distress small and marginal farmers did not get loan waiver benefits in the last many years.

About the Index

- The index was developed as part of the Nabard-funded project on 'Farmers Distress and Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY)'.
- It is built on 21 simple questions, divided into seven blocks of three questions each.
- By getting answers to these questions, it can be predicted whether a farmer is experiencing distress or not.

Modus Operandi

- The institute prepared the questions around seven key pillars that capture their financial, emotional, and other parameters. For this, a web application has been built.
- After identifying a vulnerable village or mandal, the questions are asked from the farmers of that village.
- The data then will be keyed into the app, which will generate a report based on the responses.

Benefits

- Based on the severity of distress, the government and lenders can provide a combination of unconditional grants, crop loan restructuring or complete debt waivers.
- Timely monitoring of distress would help in formulating mitigation measures.
- Instead of focusing just on the aspect of crop damages, the index would provide a more holistic view of farmer distress.

Important Facts

Central Research Institute for Dryland Agriculture (CRIDA)

- It was established in 1985 by upgrading the All India Coordinated Research Project for Dryland Agriculture (AICRPDA), Hyderabad centre to work on development of suitable technologies to enhance the productivity in rainfed areas.
- It is a constituent organisation of Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), an autonomous body of Ministry of Agriculture.
- The Institute is one of the major organisations with in the Natural Resource Management Division of ICAR, responsible for carrying out the research for improvement of rainfed areas through resource management.

GI Tag for Agricultural Produce

Cumbum Grapes

- Cumbum Panneer Thratchai or Cumbum grapes from Tamil Nadu have recently been granted the Geographical Indication (GI) tag.
- The Cumbum valley in Tamil Nadu is popularly known as the 'Grapes City of South India' and is known for cultivating the Panneer Thratchai or Muscat Hamburg variety, which constitutes around 85% of the grape-growing regions in Tamil Nadu.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Space Science

- ISRO Tests Reusable Launch Vehicle
- NASA's TEMPO Instrument

Space Science

ISRO Tests Reusable Launch Vehicle

On April 2, 2023, the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) successfully conducted the Reusable Launch Vehicle Autonomous Landing Mission (RLV LEX) at the Aeronautical Test Range (ATR), Chitradurga, Karnataka.

About the Test

- The test was the second of five tests and part of ISRO's efforts to develop space planes or shuttles that can travel to low earth orbits, deliver payloads and return to earth for use again.

Aims

- To simulate the exact conditions of a space re-entry vehicle's landing through an autonomous landing.
- To test and demonstrate several advanced technologies, such as precise navigation hardware and software, a pseudolite system, a Ka-band radar altimeter, a Navigation with Indian Constellation (NavIC) receiver, indigenous landing gear, Aerofoil honey-comb fins, and a brake parachute system.
- To achieve landing parameters such as ground relative velocity, the sink rate of landing gears, and precise body rates, similar to those experienced by an orbital re-entry space vehicle in its return path.
- To mark a significant milestone in the development of a reusable launch vehicle by ISRO, and a first in the world, as a winged body has been carried to an altitude of 4.5 km by a helicopter and released for carrying out an autonomous landing on a runway.

Significance

- **Advancement in Reusable Launch Vehicle Technology:** The successful completion of the RLV LEX mission demonstrates that India is making significant progress in developing reusable launch vehicles, which will significantly

- ESA's Juice Mission
- Detailed Map of Dark Matter
- LIGO-India: An Advanced Gravitational-Wave Detector

New Technology & Innovations

- Laser Carbon: A Carbon-based Catalyst
- Scientists Fabricate Protein to Aid Study of Multiple Sclerosis

Report

- India Ransomware Report 2022

News Snippets

cantly reduce the cost of accessing space and make space exploration more sustainable.

- **Development of Essential Technologies:** The RLV Technology Demonstrator (RLV-TD) project is aimed at developing essential technologies for a fully reusable launch vehicle to enable low-cost access to space.
- The RLV LEX test, which achieved autonomous landing, is a crucial step towards this goal and will help ISRO develop technologies like hypersonic flight, powered cruise flight, and scramjet propulsion experiment.
- **Improved Efficiency of Space Missions:** Reusable vehicles will be able to deliver payloads into space and return to Earth for use again, reducing the cost of manufacturing new rockets for each mission, thus improving efficiency.
- **Boost to India's Space Programme:** The successful completion of the RLV LEX mission is a significant achievement for India's space program and will enhance the country's reputation as a leading spacefaring nation.
- It will also pave the way for future missions, including manned missions to space.
- The new system will further solidify the Indian space agency's position as the most cost-effective launch service provider in the multibillion-dollar satellite launch market.

Important Facts

Pseudolite

- It is a combination of the words "pseudo" and "satellite." While satellites are used in the GPS (Global Positioning System), pseudolites are not in orbit and are not technically satellites.
- This system refers to a set of ground-based transmitters that mimic the GPS signals in a local area to aid in navigation.
- These transmitters can be used when GPS signals are unavailable or blocked, such as in indoor or urban environments, where the GPS signals can be obstructed by buildings and other structures.



ECOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT

Climate Change

- Imbalance in the Earth's Energy Budget
- Adverse Impact of Sea Level Rise on Salt Marshes
- Preservation of Ice Records

Biodiversity

- International Big Cat Alliance

Disaster Management

- 5th International Conference on Disaster Resilient Infrastructure

Sustainable Development

- India's First Water Bodies Census

Reports/Indices

- WMO State of the Global Climate Report 2022
- State Energy Efficiency Index 2021-22

News Snippets

Climate Change

Imbalance in the Earth's Energy Budget

According to a recent study, human-induced climate change has caused an imbalance in the Earth's energy budget, with oceans bearing the majority of the heat accumulation.

Key Findings

- **Earth's Energy Imbalance:** The research indicates that Earth's energy is out of balance, and the planet will continue to warm up if the energy imbalance persists or increases.
- **Earth Energy Imbalance (EEI)** is the difference between incoming and outgoing solar radiation, and it is an indicator of climate change that provides an estimate of how much, how fast, and where the Earth's climate is warming.
- **Heat due to Anthropogenic Emissions:** The accumulated heat was estimated to be about 381 zettajoules from 1971 to 2020 due to anthropogenic emissions. (A zettajoule is a unit of energy equal to one sextillion (10^{21}) joules. It is used to measure the amount of energy involved in global processes such as climate change).
- **Heat Absorption by Oceans:** About 89% of the warming in the last 50 years has been absorbed by the oceans, while the rest has been absorbed by land, atmosphere, and cryosphere.
- **Increased Water Temperatures:** The accumulation of heat in the ocean and the cryosphere is responsible for increased water temperatures, algal blooms, melting glaciers, and the injection of methane and carbon dioxide into the atmosphere.
- **Ocean Heat Content:** The study found that the upper ocean has taken up a major fraction of heat, with the heat content from the surface to the bottom between 1960-2020 estimated to be approximately 0.14 watts per square metre.

- During the most recent period (2006-2020), the heat content was estimated to be approximately 0.68 watts per square metre, and ocean warming rates for the 0-2,000 metres depth reached record rates of roughly 1.03 watts per square metre.
- **Implications for Environment and Human Systems:** The researchers noted that the heat gain in the Earth's system results in changes in the climate system with a variety of implications for the environment and human systems.
- **Urgent Need for Global Action:** The researchers emphasized that if the energy imbalance persists or increases, Earth's energy will keep gaining, leading to more planetary warming. The study underscores the urgent need for global action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and curb human-induced climate change.

Adverse Impact of Sea Level Rise on Salt Marshes

Recently, a study conducted by scientists from the Marine Biological Laboratory (MBL), University of Chicago, highlighted the adverse impact of sea level rise on the world's salt marshes.

- The study was based on the analysis of Great Sippewissett Marsh in Falmouth, Massachusetts, where vegetative cover has been tracked for the past 50 years to understand the effects of higher nitrogen levels on marsh grass species.

What are Salt Marshes?

- Salt marshes are coastal wetlands that are flooded and drained by salt water brought in by the tides. They are marshy because the soil may be composed of deep mud and peat.

Key Points

- **Salt Marshes are Likely to be Submerged:** Even under conservative estimates of future sea level rise, more than 90% of the world's salt marshes are likely to be submerged and disappear or be diminished by the end of the century.



WORLD WATCH

International Relations

- Shanghai Cooperation Organisation Defence Ministers' Meeting

International Relations

Shanghai Cooperation Organisation Defence Ministers' Meeting

On April 28, 2023, India hosted the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Defence Ministers' meeting in New Delhi.

Key Highlights

- **Terrorism:** India urged member states to collectively root out terrorism and hold its supporters accountable.
- India emphasized that any support for terrorist acts is a major crime against humanity that cannot coexist with peace and prosperity.
- **Regional and International Security:** The participants expressed their collective will to make the region secure, peaceful, and prosperous under the SCO charter.
- They discussed issues of regional and international security under the charter of SCO.
- **China's Statement on Bilateral Talks:** China, in a statement on bilateral talks between the Chinese and Indian Defence Ministers, said that both countries share far "more common interests than differences."
- It urged both sides to take a long-term view, place the border issue in an appropriate position in bilateral relations, and promote the transition of the border situation to normalized management.
- **Peace and Security:** India emphasized that it believes in maintaining peace and security based on the provisions of the UN Charter.

Important Facts

Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO)

- The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) is a Eurasian political, economic, international security and defence organization.
- It is the world's largest regional organization in terms of geographic scope and population, covering approximate-

- 4th India-CARICOM Ministerial Meeting
- India-Japan Defence Policy Dialogue
- Visit of Bhutan's King to India
- 13th Meeting of India-Thailand Joint Trade Committee
- Meeting of India-Hungary Joint Working Group on Water Management

World Issues

- India Elected to UN Statistical Commission

Report

- World Development Report 2023

ly 60% of the area of Eurasia, 40% of the world population. Its combined GDP is around 20% of global GDP.

- It was created in 2001.
- The SCO Charter was signed in 2002, and entered into force in 2003.

Genesis

- Prior to the creation of SCO in 2001, Kazakhstan, China, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tajikistan were members of the Shanghai Five.
- Shanghai Five (1996) emerged from a series of border demarcation and demilitarization talks which the four former Soviet republics held with China to ensure stability along the borders.
- Following the accession of Uzbekistan to the organization in 2001, the Shanghai Five was renamed the SCO.
- India and Pakistan became members in 2017.

Member States

- Kazakhstan, China, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, India, and Pakistan.

Structure

- **Heads of State Council:** It is the supreme SCO body which decides its internal functioning and its interaction with other States & international organisations, and considers international issues.
- **Heads of Government Council:** It approves the budget, considers and decides upon issues related to economic spheres of interaction within SCO.
- **Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs:** It considers issues related to day-to-day activities.
- **Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS):** It was established to combat terrorism, separatism and extremism.

SCO Secretariat

- Based in Beijing to provide informational, analytical & organizational support.
- Official Language
- The official working language of the SCO Secretariat is Russian and Chinese.

PRELIMS 2023 SPECIAL-8

Current Affairs Reminder 2022-23

In this **Prelims 2023 Special-8** section, we have presented a comprehensive, exam-oriented compilation of all important contemporary events of the year 2022-23 for the upcoming Civil Services Preliminary Examination 2023 of the Union Public Service Commission.

The content has been prepared keeping in mind the trend of questions in the past three years. Accordingly, in this section, with reference to contemporary events, those facts related to various dimensions have been included which are often asked in the preliminary examination. It covers all important areas in a crisp, concise and holistic manner. We hope you find this material helpful in your preparation for General Studies Paper-I of the Preliminary Examination.

We encourage you to send us your **feedback at cscenglish@chronicleindia.in**

Happy reading!

National Affairs

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National Affairs

Indian Polity & Governance

High-Powered Committee on Ladakh

On 2nd January 2023, the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) constituted a 17-member high-powered committee on Ladakh.

About the Committee

- The Committee has been formed under the Chairmanship of Nityanand Rai (Minister of State for Home).

Terms of Reference

- Discuss measures to protect the region's unique culture and language taking into consideration its geographical location and strategic importance with reference to the Sixth Schedule under Article 244 of the Constitution.
- Ensure protection of land and employment for the people of Ladakh;
- Strategize inclusive development and discuss issues related to the empowerment of the Ladakh Autonomous Hill District Councils of Leh and Kargil.

ABOUT SIXTH SCHEDULE

- ◆ The Sixth Schedule under Article 244 provides for the formation of autonomous administrative divisions- Autonomous District Councils (ADCs) that have some legislative, judicial, and administrative autonomy within a state.
- ◆ The Sixth Schedule applies to the North Eastern states of Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram (three Councils each), and Tripura (one Council).
- ◆ The tribal areas in these four states have been constituted as autonomous districts. The governor is empowered to organise and re-organise the autonomous districts.
- ◆ The Acts of Parliament or the state legislature do not apply to autonomous districts or apply with specified modifications and exceptions.
- ◆ The power of direction, in this regard, lies either with the President or Governor.

Corrupt Practices under Representation of People Act, 1951

On 20th February, 2023, the Supreme Court (SC) observed that no one in India votes for a candidate based on their educational qualifications. Therefore, providing false information about an electoral candidate's qualifications cannot be considered a corrupt practice under Sections 123 (2) and Section 123 (4) of the Representation of People Act (RPA), 1951.

About RP Act, 1951

- It was introduced in Parliament by the then Law Minister Dr. B.R. Ambedkar.
- The Act was enacted by the provisional parliament under Article 327 of Indian Constitution, before the first general election.
- **It provides for:**
 - ✓ Conduct of election of the Houses of Parliament and to the House or Houses of the Legislature of each State;
 - ✓ Qualifications and disqualifications for membership of those Houses;
 - ✓ Corrupt practices and other offences at or in connection with such elections; and
 - ✓ Decision of doubts and disputes arising out of or in connection with such elections.

'Corrupt Practices' under RPA, 1951

- **Section 123:** Deals with Corrupt Practices
- **Section 123 (2):** Deals with Undue Influence
- **Section 123 (4):** Extends the Ambit of Corrupt Practices

Section 69(A) of Information Technology Act, 2000

On 10th February, 2023, the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) issued orders to block 138 online betting platforms and 94 money lending apps on an "urgent" and "emergency" basis.