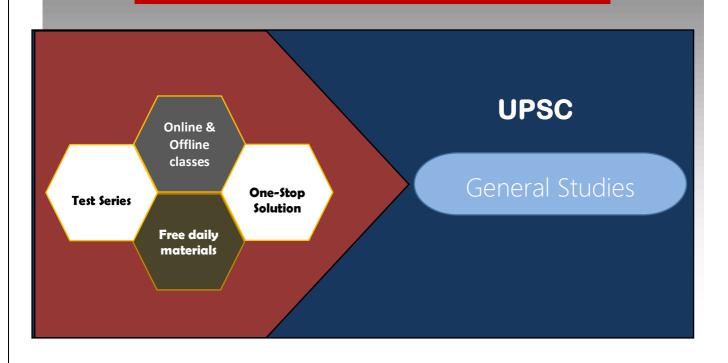**V | VISHNU**
★ **I A S** ★

JULY
13.07.2021

CURRENT AFFAIRS

A MAGAZINEFOR CIVILSERVICESPREPARATION

JOIN OUR TELEGRAM: https://t.me/vishnuiasmentor

Articles of the day
THE HINDU & INDIAN EXPRESS

UPSC

Online & Offline classes

Test Series

One-Stop Solution

Free daily materials

General Studies

THE HINDU

GS 2 : Polity, Governance, International Relations

1. A Kerala model for an anti-discrimination law

Background:

Discrimination in India:

- Incidents of **discrimination against individuals based on religion, caste, ethnicity, marital status, gender, sexual orientation and even eating preferences** have become common in society.
- This manifests itself in various forms including housing discrimination, discrimination in employment, etc.

Challenges:

Lack of legal recourse:

- The absence of proper legal recourse for those who suffer from discrimination only makes matters worse for the victim.

Social stigma:

- Despite some existing laws and judicial precedents, the **existing social stigmas act as a hurdle in countering the existing discriminational attitude in Indian society.**
  - Example – Even though **Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code** was watered down by the Supreme Court of India to exclude consensual relations between adults of the same sex, social prejudice against members of the LGBTQIA+ community remains strong.

Lacunae in existing provisions:

- While **Article 15(1) of the Constitution of India** prohibits the state from discriminating against individuals on the basis of characteristics such as religion, race, caste, sex and place of birth, it **does not bar private individuals or institutions** from doing so.
- Also, it **does not expressly list ethnicity, linguistic identity, nationality, marital status, sexual orientation, disability,** physical appearance and other personal characteristics as prohibited grounds of discrimination.

New forms of discrimination:

- **Intersectional discrimination** – discrimination on the basis of the intersection of personal characteristics, such as that faced by Dalit women, has a bigger impact on the victims.

- Discrimination operates on a wide variety of grounds in which while some have a direct impact, others have an indirect impact that is hard to notice. Such **indirect discriminations are hard to address.**

Recommendations:

Anti-discrimination law:

- A **comprehensive anti-discrimination legal framework** is required to fill the existing legal lacunae.
  - It should bring within its mandates **both private and public entities.**
  - **All forms of discrimination** should be acknowledged and dealt with in the law.
- Such a bill must balance the anti-discrimination mandate with other rights guaranteed by the Constitution and it could be restricted in pursuance of a legitimate objective.
- The article suggests that the States should lead the way, by enacting anti-discrimination laws in their respective jurisdictions. The anti-discrimination law should **prescribe civil penalties for those who engage in discriminatory practices.**

Institutional set up:

- There should be **appropriate institutions outside the judiciary to adjudicate complaints of discrimination and to provide policy recommendations to the State government.**

Affirmative action:

- The anti-discrimination efforts should be complemented via **affirmative action to empower the historically marginalised sections of society.**

Conclusion:

- Though an anti-discrimination law is not a panacea for the **problems of inequality and social prejudice that are deeply rooted in our society**, it is still a necessary step in this direction.

2. Shaping a trilateral as Rome looks to the Indo-Pacific

Context:

- The recent **India-Italy-Japan trilateral**, organised by the Italian embassies in India and Japan.

Background:

Indo-Pacific region dynamics:

- The Indo-Pacific region is marked by challenges such as the geographical vastness of the area, **complex regional geopolitical problems, increasingly assertive behaviour of the Chinese in the region** and beyond and the **lack of robust multilateral organizations** to deal with the existing challenges.
- More and more countries have been reaching out to India as part of their Indo-Pacific strategy. India has also expressed great interest in forging new partnerships with like-minded countries interested in preserving peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific. **India has been engaging with key western nations as part of its own Indo-Pacific strategy** which is not only aimed at enhancing India's centrality in the region but also an attempt to counter China's increasing assertiveness.
- Countries that share similar values and face similar challenges are coming together to create purpose-oriented partnerships based on trade and security interests.

Details:

- Recently, **Italy** too, shedding its historic neglect of the region in its foreign policy realm has **signalled its intention to enter the Indo-Pacific geography, by seeking to join India and Japan in a trilateral partnership**.
- Italy has also expressed its intention to strengthen its otherwise below potential bilateral relations with India.
- This marked change in Italy's actions is based on the following factors:
  - **Risks emanating from China's strategic competitive initiatives** and the threat it poses to the EU in general and Italy in specific.
  - The **potential benefits that could accrue from a robust India-Italy bilateral relation**.

Significance:

- The India, Italy and Japan trilateral initiative could be used as a forum to foster and consolidate a strategic relationship between the three countries, and specifically, expand India-Italy bilateral relations. The **strengthening of the India-Italy partnership can help consolidate the EU-India strategic relationship further.**
- A strategic trilateral between India, Italy and Japan has, in the medium to long term, a lot of potential.
  - The **compatible economic systems** of the three countries could help create a virtuous and mutually beneficial contribution to the reorganisation of the global supply chains.
  - In the **security realm,** Italy, through its presence in the western Indian Ocean (anti-piracy operations off the coast of Somalia), could easily complement the India-Japan Indo-Pacific partnership.
  - That all three countries share the same values and the same rules-based world view could help them **coordinate at multilateral organizations.**

Recommendations:

Need for a clear strategy:

- Though the efforts towards the trilateral are welcome, they should be backed by appropriate efforts to institutionalize it. The three countries need to **define a common economic and strategic agenda.**

Comprehensive engagement:

- The trilateral cooperation should induce a strategic dialogue that should **include the economic, security and political dimensions.**

Conclusion:

- In the pushback against China, strategic cooperation between India, Italy and Japan can ensure a free and open Indo-Pacific.

3. Tapping on the potential of the youth

Context:

- In the context of **World Population Day on July 11**, the article analyzes India's demographic dividend.
  - World Population Day is marked on July 11 every year to focus attention on the importance of population-related issues. It was first

observed by **the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)** in 1989.

Demographic dividend of India:

- India's 'demographic dividend' **represents the potential for economic growth based on the age structure of the population.**
    - **Over 62% of India is aged between 15 and 59 years**, and the median age of the Indian population is less than 30 years. This significant proportion of young people in the total population will help drive India's economic growth.
- The 2020 UNDP report as well as a study conducted by The Lancet point out that as against the earlier fears of population explosion, **the Indian population would stabilize earlier than expected most likely in the next 12 years.**
- Thus the window available to India to leverage its 'demographic dividend' is narrower than earlier estimates and it is thus critical that India focuses its attention on safeguarding adolescents and young people's well-being to reap the benefits of the demographic dividend.
    - **At 253 million, India's adolescent population is among the largest in the world.**

Challenges in reaping demographic dividend:

Underfunded education sector:

- India's underfunded education system is inadequately equipped to provide the right education and skills to young people.
    - **Public expenditure on education in India constituted 4.4% of GDP in 2019 and only 3.4% of GDP in 2020.**
    - India stands 62nd in terms of public expenditure per student.
- Such an underfunded system would be plagued **by issues such as poor infrastructure, poor teacher-student ratio** which will, in turn, have a negative **impact on the learning outcome of the children.** This would adversely impact their employability or productivity.

Poor health indicators:

- Despite some commendable progress with respect to health indicators such as **infant mortality, stunting and under-nutrition levels in the child population of India**, the number continues to be higher than the global average or in comparison to countries at similar developmental stages as India.

- Unhealthy children would grow up to become unhealthy citizens which will not only impede their ability to a good living but also have a marked impact on the nation's progress.

Impact of the pandemic lockdowns:

- The impact of the pandemic on adolescents has been severe.
  - In India, more than 32 crore students have been affected by the **shutdown of schools** due to the pandemic induced lockdowns. This has severely **impacted the learning process of the students.**
  - The school lockdowns have also **affected the nutritional security** of a large number of children from poor households who are dependent on the mid-day meal scheme for their nutrition.
  - Studies have indicated that school closures have had a serious **impact on the mental well-being of children**, with around 17% of young people likely to be suffering from anxiety and depression during the pandemic.

Gender perspective:

- The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic-induced crisis on adolescent girls has been huge.
  - Around 158 million school girls have been impacted by the closure of schools. Many of those who have dropped out are unlikely to go back to school.
  - India has registered an alarming **rise in the early marriage of girls** during the pandemic which could be attributed to the increased poverty levels during the pandemic.
  - There has also been an **increase in gender-based violence**. Restricted mobility due to lockdowns puts girls at risk of violence at home at the hands of caregivers or partners.
  - Adolescent girls continue to be at high risk during current times, given their vulnerability to abuse and trafficking.

Recommendations:

Ensuring continuum of the education process:

- The administration should balance the risks of transmission through children with the harm of prolonged school closures and **plan for a gradual re-opening of schools with appropriate precautions in place.**
- Opening schools with a **mix of online and offline options** could be an important step to addressing the learning needs and mental well-being of adolescents.

Collaborative efforts:

- Recognizing the long-standing effects that the pandemic could have on adolescents and youth, **collaborative actions by key ministries, government agencies, and civil society** is the need of the hour with special emphasis on inter-sectoral collaboration.
  - o Example – Collaboration between the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and the Education Ministry.
- Coordination across departments can enable better solutions and greater efficiencies in tackling the challenges that our adolescents face.

Focussed efforts directed at adolescent girls:

- The Ministry of Education should take necessary steps to **ensure that adolescents girls continue their education during the pandemic and return to schools when they reopen.**
- The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare must take appropriate steps to help adolescents safeguard their health through **continued access to menstrual hygiene products and strengthening outreach to girls in need via existing helplines.**

Conclusion:

- For India to be able to enjoy the fruits of this demographic dividend, the young population must be healthy, knowledgeable and skilled.
- Improving the lives of our adolescents in mission mode would not only improve their lives but also generate a virtuous cycle with healthier and educated young adults contributing substantially to securing India's future. Thus **India's welfare hinges on its young people's well-being.**

4. Lok Adalat resolves over 7,500 cases in Gurugram

Context:

More than 7,500 cases were disposed of at the Lok Adalats held in Gurugram as part of the second National Lok Adalat in 2021.

Lok Adalats:

- The establishment of the Lok Adalat **system of dispute settlement system** was brought about with the **Legal Services Authorities Act 1987** for expediting the system of dispute settlement.

- In Lok Adalats, disputes in the **pre-litigation stage could be settled amicably.**
- The Lok Adalats are formed to **fulfill the promise given by the preamble of the Indian Constitution**– securing **Justice** – social, economic, and political of every citizen of India.

5. New population policy keeps all sections in mind: Adityanath

Context:

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister launched the State's **population policy for 2021-2030.**

Key highlights:

- The new policy aims at:
    - **Decreasing the total fertility rate** from 2.7 to 2.1 by 2026 and 1.7 by 2030.
    - **Increasing modern contraceptive** prevalence rate from 31.7% to 45% by 2026 and 52% by 2030.
    - **Increase male methods of contraception** use from 10.8% to 15.1% by 2026 and 16.4% by 2030.
    - **Decrease maternal mortality rate** from 197 to 150 to 98, and **infant mortality rate** from 43 to 32 to 22, and **under 5 infant mortality rate** from 47 to 35 to 25.
- It **targets stabilisation** and states that the State would attempt to **maintain a balance of population among the various communities.**
- The policy comes at a time when the Uttar Pradesh State Law Commission has prepared the proposed draft Bill under which a two-child norm would be implemented and promoted.
- A person who will have more than two children after the law comes into force would be debarred from several benefits such as government-sponsored welfare schemes and from contesting elections to the local authority or any body of the local self-government.
- According to the draft, **ration card units would be limited to four members of a family**.

Impact of rising population:

Across the world, concerns have been raised from time to time about the **increasing population being a hurdle in development.**

- In the Indian context, the **rising population is considered the root of major problems and prevailing inequality in society.**
- An increasing population can be an **obstacle to development.**
- The rising population **increases poverty.**
- People have to spend a large portion of their resources for bringing up their wards. It results in **less savings and a low rate of capital formation.**
- Besides, if there is no gap between the birth of two children, it will naturally **affect their nutrition.**

6. Kabul airport gets anti-missile system

Context:

Afghan authorities have installed an anti-missile system at Kabul airport to counter incoming rockets.

Details:

- The Taliban **have regularly launched rockets and mortars at government forces** across the countryside in Afghanistan.
- Over the years, the U.S. military installed several **C-RAMS (Counter Rocket, Artillery and Mortar Systems)** across its bases, including at Bagram, **to destroy incoming rockets targeting the facilities.**
- The USA and NATO are **due to end their military mission in Afghanistan.**
- In this backdrop, the Islamic fundamentalist group **Taliban's rapid gains in recent weeks have raised fears about the security of the capital and its airport.**
- The anti-missile system has proven useful in the world in repelling rocket and missile attacks.

GS 3 : Economy, Science and Technology,Environment

7. HAL set to deliver first batch of 3 LCH

What's in News?

Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) is gearing up to deliver the first batch of three **Light Combat Helicopters (LCH) to the Indian Air Force (IAF).**

- These are part of the **15 Limited Series Production (LSP) helicopters approved for the Army and the IAF.**
- Of the 15 LSP helicopters, 10 are for the IAF and five for the Army.
- The LCH is the **lightest attack helicopter in the world** weighing **5 tonnes.**
- It has been designed and developed by the HAL to meet the specific and unique requirements of the Indian armed forces and can operate at heights of 12,000 feet.

Note:

- The **Army Aviation operates smaller utility helicopters** but does not have attack helicopters in its fleet.
  - However, it has pitched for attack helicopters of its own to operate with its strike corps.
- The **attack helicopter fleet is operated by the Air Force** which provides close air support to the Army.
- The **IAF operates the older Mi-25 and Mi-35 Russian attack helicopters** which are in the process of **being phased out**. It has inducted **22 AH-64E Apache attack helicopters from the U.S.**
- At present, the Army has **90 Advanced Light Helicopters (ALH)** and **75 Rudra**, **weaponised ALH, helicopters in service** which are indigenously designed and developed by the HAL in addition to the **older Cheetah and Chetak utility helicopters** which are in need of urgent replacement.
- The Army will start receiving the **Apache attack helicopters** from 2023, six of which have been contracted under a deal from the **U.S. in February 2020.**

8. Richard Branson takes off first in space tourism race

What's in News?

Virgin Galactic's crew have successfully completed the flight to space.

- Virgin Galactic space tourism company was founded by Richard Branson.

Details:

- Mr. Branson along with his five crewmates from Virgin Galactic space tourism company **hurtled into space aboard a winged rocket ship.**
- It reached an altitude of about 88 kilometres over the New Mexico desert and then safely landed.
- The crew experienced three to four minutes of weightlessness and saw the curvature of the earth.
- It was intended as a confidence-boosting mission for Virgin Galactic, which plans to start taking paying customers on joyrides.
- Ms. Bandla became the third Indian-origin woman to fly into space after Kalpana Chawla and Sunita Williams.
- **Jeff Bezos' Blue Origin company** intends to send tourists past the so-called **Karman line 100 kilometres above the earth.**
  - **Karman Line** is recognised by international aviation and aerospace federations as the threshold of space.
  - The Karman Line is an attempt to define a boundary between Earth's atmosphere and outer space.
- But NASA, the Air Force, the Federal Aviation Administration and some astrophysicists consider the boundary between the atmosphere and space to begin 80 kilometres up.

THE INDIAN EXPRESS

GS 2 : Polity, Governance, International Relations

1. Election of Speaker and Deputy Speaker

Why in News

Maharashtra has been without a Speaker since February, 2021 while **Lok Sabha** and several **State Assemblies** are without a **Deputy Speaker.**

- The Constitution provides that the **office of the Speaker should never be empty.**

Key Points

- **Election of Speaker:**
    - **Criteria:**
        - The Constitution of India requires the **Speaker to be a member of the House.**
        - Although there are **no specific qualifications prescribed for being elected the Speaker,** an understanding of the Constitution and the laws of the country is considered a major asset for the holder of the Office of the Speaker.
        - Usually, a **member belonging to the ruling party** is elected Speaker. The process has evolved over the years where the ruling party nominates its candidate after informal consultations with leaders of other parties and groups in the House.
        - This convention ensures that once elected, the Speaker enjoys the respect of all sections of the House.
    - **Voting:** The **Speaker (along with the Deputy Speaker)** is elected from **among the Lok Sabha members** by a **simple majority of members** present and voting in the House.
        - Once a decision on the candidate is taken, **his/her name is normally proposed by the Prime Minister or the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs.**
    - **Term of Office of the Speaker:** The Speaker holds Office from the **date of his/her election** till immediately **before the first meeting of the next Lok Sabha (for 5 years).**
        - The speaker once elected is **eligible for re-election.**
        - Whenever the **Lok Sabha is dissolved,** the Speaker **does not vacate his office** and continues **till the newly-elected Lok Sabha meets.**
- **Role and Powers of Speaker:**
    - **Interpretation:** He/She is the **final interpreter of the provisions** of the **Constitution of India, the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business of Lok Sabha and the parliamentary precedents,** within the House.
    - **Joint Sitting of Both Houses:** He/She presides over a **joint sitting** of the two Houses of Parliament.
        - Such a sitting is **summoned by the President** to settle a deadlock between the two Houses on a bill.

- o **Adjournment of Sitting:** He/She can adjourn the House or suspend the meeting **in absence one-tenth of the total strength of the House (called the quorum).**
- o **Casting Vote:** The speaker does not vote in the first instance but in the case of a tie; when the House is divided equally on any question, the Speaker is entitled to vote.
  - Such a vote is called a Casting Vote, and its purpose is to resolve a deadlock.
- o **Money Bill:** He/She decides whether a bill is a **money bill** or not and his/her decision on this question is final.
- o **Disqualifying Members:** It is the speaker who decides the questions of disqualification of a member of the Lok Sabha, arising on the ground of defection under the provisions of the **Tenth Schedule.**
  - The **52nd amendment** to the Indian Constitution vests this power in the Speaker.
  - In 1992, the Supreme Court ruled that the decision of the Speaker in this regard is subject to **judicial review.**
- o **Chairing the IPG:** He/She acts as the **ex-officio chairman of the Indian Parliamentary Group (IPG)** which is a link between the **Parliament of India and the various parliaments of the world.**
  - He also acts as the **ex-officio chairman of the conference of presiding officers of legislative bodies in the country.**
- o **Constitution of Committees:** The Committees of the House are constituted by the speaker and function under the speaker's overall direction.
  - The Chairmen of all **Parliamentary Committees are nominated by him/her.**
  - Committees like the **Business Advisory Committee, the General Purposes Committee** and the Rules Committee work directly under his Chairmanship.
- o **Privileges of the House:** The **Speaker is the guardian of the rights** and **privileges of the House**, its Committees and members.
- ▪ **Removal of Speaker:** Under following conditions, the speaker, may have to vacate the office earlier:
  - o If he ceases to be a member of the Lok Sabha.
  - o If he resigns by writing to the Deputy Speaker.
  - o If he is **removed by a resolution passed by a majority of all the members of the Lok Sabha.**
    - Such a resolution can be moved **only after giving 14 days' advance notice.**
    - When a resolution for the removal of the Speaker is under consideration of the House, **he/she may be present at the sitting but not preside.**

- **Deputy Speaker of the Lok Sabha:**
  - **Election:**
    - The Deputy Speaker is also **elected by the Lok Sabha** from amongst its members right after the election of the Speaker has taken place.
    - The date of election of the **Deputy Speaker is fixed by the Speaker (date of election of the Speaker is fixed by the President).**
  - **Term of Office and Removal:**
    - Like the Speaker, the **Deputy Speaker remains in office usually during the life of the Lok Sabha (5 years).**
    - The Deputy Speaker may vacate his/her office earlier in any of the following three cases:
      - If he ceases to be a member of the Lok Sabha.
      - If he resigns by writing to the Speaker.
      - If he is **removed by a resolution passed by a majority of all the then members of the Lok Sabha.**
        - Such a resolution can be moved **only after giving 14 days' advance notice.**
  - **Responsibilities and Powers:**
    - The Deputy Speaker **performs the duties of the Speaker's office when it is vacant.**
      - He/She also acts as the **Speaker when the latter is absent from the sitting of the House.**
      - He/She also **presides over the joint sitting of both the Houses of Parliament,** in case the Speaker is absent from such a sitting.
    - The Deputy Speaker has **one special privilege,** that is, whenever he/she is appointed as a member of a parliamentary committee, he/she automatically becomes its chairman.

2. New Portals on Ayush Sector

Why in News

Five new portals on Ayush Sector have been launched - **CTRI** (Clinical Trial Registry of India), **RMIS** (Research Management Information System), **SAHI** (Showcase of Ayurveda Historical Imprints), **AMAR** (Ayush Manuscripts Advanced Repository), and **e-Medha** (electronic Medical Heritage Accession).

- **Meaning of 'Ayush':** Traditional & Non-Conventional Systems of Health Care and Healing Which Include Ayurveda, Yoga, Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha, Sowa-Rigpa and Homoeopathy etc.

Key Points

- **New Portals:**
  - **Clinical Trial Registry of India (CTRI):** It is a primary Register of **Clinical Trials** under the **World Health Organization**'s International Clinical Trials Registry Platform.
    - Creation of Ayurveda Data Set in CTRI facilitates the usage of Ayurveda Terminologies to record clinical study based on Ayurveda interventions.
    - **Clinical study** is research that studies new tests and treatments and evaluates their effects on human health outcomes.
  - **Research Management Information System (RMIS):** It will be a one stop solution for Research and Development in Ayurveda based studies.
  - **Showcase of Ayurveda Historical Imprints (SAHI):** It showcases inscriptions, Archeo-botanical Information, Sculptures, classical texts and advanced Archeo Genetic studies.
    - It will be of tremendous use in understanding of Indian Knowledge system with a focus on indigenous health care practices.
  - **Ayush Manuscripts Advanced Repository (AMAR):** It has digitized information on rare and hard to find Manuscripts and catalogues of Ayurveda, Yoga, Unani, Siddha, Sowa Rigpa in libraries or in individual collections across India or in other parts of the world.
  - **e-Medha (electronic Medical Heritage Accession):** Online public access catalog for more than 12000 Indian medical heritage books through **NIC's (National Informatics Centre)** e-granthalaya platform.
    - **e-Granthalaya:** It is a Digital Platform developed by NIC for **Government Libraries** for **Automation of In-house activities** as well as member services and Networking for resource sharing.
- **Related Initiatives:**
  - **ACCR Portal and Ayush Sanjivani App:**
    - **Ayush Clinical Case Repository Portal:** To portray the strengths of Ayush systems for treatment of various disease conditions.
    - **AYUSH Sanjivani App Third Version:** It will facilitate a significant study and documentation regarding the efficacy of selected Ayush interventions, including Ayush 64 and Kabasura Kudineer medicines in the management of asymptomatic and mild to moderate Covid-19 patients.

- o **National Ayush Mission**: Government of India is implementing the Centrally Sponsored Scheme of National Ayush Mission (NAM) through States/UTs for development and promotion of Ayush system of medicine.
- o AYUSH **Health and Wellness Centres.**
- o Recently, **government notification listed out specific surgical procedures** that a postgraduate medical student of Ayurveda must be practically trained to acquaint with, as well as to independently perform.

3. Election of Speaker and Deputy Speaker

The Maharashtra Legislative Assembly has been without a Speaker for most of this year.

Election of Speakers

- The Constitution specifies offices like those of the President, Vice President, Chief Justice of India, and Comptroller and Auditor General of India, as well as Speakers and Deputy Speakers.
- Article 93 for Lok Sabha and Article 178 for state Assemblies state that these Houses "shall, as soon as may be", choose two of its members to be Speaker and Deputy Speaker.
- In Lok Sabha and state legislatures, the President/Governor sets a date for the election of the Speaker.
- It is the Speaker who decides the date for the election of the Deputy Speaker.
- The legislators of the respective Houses vote to elect one among themselves to these offices.
- The Constitution provides that the office of the Speaker should never be empty.
- So, he/she continues in office until the beginning of the next House, except in the event of death or resignation.

Ruling party or Opposition?

- Usually, the Speaker comes from the ruling party.
- In the case of the Deputy Speaker of Lok Sabha, the position has varied over the years.
- Until the fourth Lok Sabha, the Congress held both the Speaker and Deputy Speakers positions.

- In the fifth Lok Sabha, whose term was extended due to the Emergency, an independent member, Shri G G Swell, was elected the Deputy Speaker.
- The tradition for the post of the Deputy Speaker going to the Opposition party started during the term of Prime Minister Morarji Desai's government.
- The first time the Deputy Speaker's position went to the opposition was during the term of Prime Minister P V Narasimha Rao.

Their roles

- According to the book Practice and Procedure of Parliament, published by the Lok Sabha Secretariat, the Speaker is "the principal spokesman of the House, he represents its collective voice and is its sole representative to the outside world".
- The Speaker presides over the House proceedings and joint sittings of the two Houses of Parliament.
- It is the Speaker's decision that determines whether a Bill is a Money Bill and therefore outside of the purview of the other House.
- The Deputy Speaker is independent of the Speaker, not subordinate to him, as both are elected from among the members of the House.

Why need Dy Speaker?

- The Deputy Speaker ensures the continuity of the Speakers office by acting as the Speaker when the office becomes vacant.
- In addition, when a resolution for removal of the Speaker is up for discussion, the Constitution specifies that the Deputy Speaker presides over the proceedings of the House.

Issue over time limit for election

- The Constitution neither sets a time limit nor specifies the process for these elections.
- It leaves it to the legislatures to decide how to hold these elections.
- Haryana and Uttar Pradesh specify a time frame for holding the election to the Speaker and Deputy Speaker's offices.
- In Haryana, the election of the Speaker has to take place as soon as possible after the election.
- Uttar Pradesh has a 15-day limit for an election to the Speaker's post if it falls vacant during the term of the Assembly.

4. How China eliminated malaria and the road ahead for India

Recently, El Salvador and China were declared malaria-free by the WHO.

What is Malaria?

- Malaria is a disease caused by a parasite called plasmodium vivax, p. filarium.
- The parasite is spread to humans through the bites of infected mosquitoes.
- People who have malaria usually feel very sick with a high fever and shaking chills.
- While the disease is uncommon in temperate climates, malaria is still common in tropical and subtropical countries.

How many countries have successfully eliminated malaria?

- Since 1900, 127 countries have registered malaria elimination. This is definitely not an easy task.
- It needs proper planning and a strategic action plan based on the local situations.
- All these countries followed the existing tools and strategies to achieve the malaria elimination goal.
- The main focus was on surveillance.

How did China eliminate malaria?

- China followed some specific strategies, namely strong surveillance following the '1-3-7'system: malaria diagnosis within 1 day, 3 days for case investigation and by day 7 for public health responses.
- Molecular Malaria Surveillance for drug resistance and genome-based approaches to distinguish between indigenous and imported cases was conducted.
- All borders to the neighboring countries were thoroughly screened to prevent the entry of unwanted malaria into the country.

What is the current scenario of malaria in India?

- As per the Global Malaria Report 2020 by the World Health Organization (WHO) India shared 2% of the total global malaria cases in 2019.
- India has a great history of malaria control.

- The highest incidence of malaria occurred in the 1950s, with an estimated 75 million cases with 0.8 million deaths per year.
- The launch of National Malaria Control Programme in 1953 and the National Malaria Eradication Programme in 1958 made it possible to bring down malaria cases to 100,000 with no reported deaths by 1961.
- This is a great achievement been made so far.

Unexpected resurgence

- But from a nearing stage of elimination, malaria resurged to approximately 6.4 million cases in 1976.
- Since then, confirmed cases have decreased to 1.6 million cases, approximately 1100 deaths in 2009 to less than 0.4 million cases and below 80 deaths in 2019.
- India accounted for 88% of malaria cases and 86% of all malaria deaths in the WHO South-East Asia Region in 2019.
- It is the only country outside Africa among the world's 11 `high burden to high impact' countries.

Road ahead for India

Collaboration:

- India is a signatory to National Framework for Malaria Elimination (NFME) 2016-2030 aiming for malaria elimination by 2030.
- This framework has been outlined with a vision to eliminate the disease from the country which would contribute to improved health with quality of life and poverty alleviation.
- China collaborated with Harvard University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, USA for Molecular Malaria Surveillance.
- In India, there are very dedicated expert scientists who can take up such assignments.

Diagnosis:

- India stands at a very crucial stage. The present challenge is the detection of asymptomatic cases in most endemic areas.
- Molecular Malaria Surveillance must be used to find out the drug-resistant variants and genetic-relatedness studies to find out the imported or indigenous cases.
- The surveillance must be strengthened and using smart digital surveillance devices would be an important step. Real-time and organic surveillance is needed even in remote areas.

Monitoring:

- The results of each malaria case can be registered in a central dashboard at the National Vector Borne Disease Control Programme, as it is done for COVID-19 cases by Indian Council of Medical Research.
- All intervention activities must strictly be monitored.
- Vector biology, site of an actual vector mosquito bite, host shifting behaviour, feeding time, feeding behaviour and insecticide resistance studies need to be carried out to support the elimination efforts.

GS 3 : Economy, Science and Technology,Environment

5. Lemru Elephant Reserve

The proposed Lemru Elephant Reserve in Chhattisgarh, in the pipeline for 20 years, has become the subject of yet another controversy over the reduction of its size.

Lemru Elephant Reserve

- The proposal for the reserve, in Korba district, was passed unanimously by the Assembly in 2005 and got central approval in 2007.
- Lemru is one of two elephant reserves planned to prevent human-animal conflict in the region, with elephants moving into Chhattisgarh from Odisha and Jharkhand.
- Its area was then proposed to be 450 sq km.

Why does the government want to reduce the size of the reserve?

- The area proposed under the reserve is part of the Hasdeo Aranya forests, a very diverse biozone that is also rich in coal deposits.
- Of 22 coal blocks in the area, seven have already been allotted with mines running in three, and in the process of being established in the other four.
- Under the 'No-Go Area' policy from the UPA area, the entire area was considered out of bounds for mines, but in 2020, five coal blocks from the region were put on the auction list.

Why is the reserve important?

- North Chhattisgarh alone is home to over 240 elephants.
- Elephants in Chhattisgarh are relatively new; they started moving into undivided Madhya Pradesh in 1990.
- Since these animals were relatively new, the human-animal conflict started once elephants started straying into inhabited areas, looking for food.

6. New Ministry of Cooperation should enable people to leverage community networks

Context

India now has a Ministry of Cooperation that aims to strengthen the country's cooperative movement. This is an opportune moment to look at the movement's history, examine the potential of cooperatives and analyse the challenges they face.

Development of Farmer Producer Companies in India

- India's significant tryst with dairy cooperatives began in the 1950s with the success of what we know today as Amul.
- The nation took note of this initiative and the National Dairy Development Board was set up in 1965.
- However, the expansion wasn't working the way it had been envisaged.
- The need for a new model was felt soon as cooperatives outside Anand were not holding regular and proper elections.
- Their accounts were not audited.
- As a result, a committee was set up in the Company Affairs Ministry **to allow farmers to set up companies.**
- **The Farmer Producer Companies (FPCs)** would run on the principle of "one share one vote" and the essence of cooperatives would not be diluted.
- The Parliamentary Committee looked into the Bill to give legal backing to FPCs, with this, the Companies Act (Second Amendment), 2002 became law.

Funding the FPCs

- The existing funding vehicles were designed to cater to cooperatives, not FPCs

- Around 2010, the Boston Consulting Group (BCG) had been commissioned to develop **a plan for restructuring NABARD.**
- As a result, the restructured NABARD had a special window for FPCs.

Community-based cooperatives

- The Cheliya community set up a chain of Hearty Mart "cooperative" supermarkets in villages in Gujrat using the franchise model.
- Just as the network of Charotar Patels that Kurien relied on in the case of Amul —Cheliya community have played a key role in the spread of the model.
- The idea of leveraging the community network was tried in some parts of the country in the context of re-imagining economic infrastructure.
- To deal with the electricity board failures, **a distribution company was run on a community basis.**
- This model has, in fact, worked in places like Kanpur, even Kerala.

Social cooperatives

- The concept of **social cooperatives** builds on the idea of communities creating infrastructure by using local material and family labour.
- These can be the village tank, paving the village road — with or without MGNREGA — finishing the last-mile construction of a canal network or even keeping watch on the contractor.
- The pandemic seems to have increased the significance of community effort.
- Reducing vaccine hesitancy, providing food to those waiting outside hospitals and, most importantly, looking after orphaned children are imperatives crying out for the cooperative model.

Way forward for new Ministry of Cooperatives

- Keeping in mind social needs while using resources is a large part of the solution to our current predicament.
- The pandemic will not follow the laws of corporate finance, cooperation has a lot to speak for itself, the new ministry should take this message.
- The new work-from-home model will create several problems as well as offer opportunities.
- The new ministry is a recognition of the needs of our times.
- But it should not be **just about pumping in money.**

Conclusion

This is the time to design models that help those who help themselves. We will wait expectantly to see how the new ministry works.

1. Consider the following statements:

1. The largest component of natural gas is methane
2. Sour gas is natural gas containing Hydrogen Sulfide (H2S)
3. Sweet gas is the natural gas that contains very little or no hydrogen sulfide.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

a. 1 only
b. 2 and 3 only
c. 1, 2 and 3
d. None

Answer: c

Explanation:

- Natural gas is a combustible mixture of hydrocarbon gases. While natural gas is formed primarily of methane, it can also include ethane, propane, butane and pentane.
- Natural gas that contains larger amounts of hydrogen sulphide is termed sour gas. Before using it must be "sweetened" by removal of Hydrogen sulphide.

2. Bhumi Panduga is a festival celebrated by which of the following tribes?

- a. Koyas
- b. Seharias
- c. Marram Nagas
- d. Kattu Nayakans

Answer : a

- *Koya Tribes in the Chintoor Agency of East Godavari district is preparing to celebrate last 'Bhumi Panduga' festival in their ancestral villages.*
- The Koya tribes say this is the last time they are celebrating the festival in their ancestral villages in the close vicinity of the Polavaram irrigation project as they are evacuees now and the government is preparing to shift them to the rehabilitation colonies.

Bhumi Panduga Festival

- As traditions have it, the tribals go hunting as part of the 'Bhumi Panduga' celebrations, marking the beginning of farm operations every year.
- Koyas are an Indian tribal community found in the states of Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Odisha.

3. Which of the following Fundamental rights are available only to citizens and not to foreigners?

1. Article 15
2. Article 16
3. Article 19
4. Article 28
5. Article 30

Options:

a. 1, 2 ,3 and 4only
b. 2, 3 , 4 and 5 only
c. 1, 2, 3 and 5 only
d. 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5

Answer: c

Explanation:

- Under the Indian constitution, certain fundamental rights are available only to the citizens, namely: Right against discrimination on the grounds of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth (Article 15); right to equality of opportunity in matter of public employment (Article 16); freedom of speech and expression, assembly, association, movement, residence and profession (Article 19); cultural and educational rights (Article 29 and 30); and right to vote and become members of the union and state legislatures.
- Equality before the law or equal protection of the laws within the territory of India (Article 14) and protection of life or personal liberty (Article 21) are applicable to non-citizens as well. The right to freedom of religion (article 25-28) is available to both citizens and foreigners except enemy aliens.

4. Which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. Article 23 protects an individual not only against the State but also against private persons
2. India has signed the UN Convention against Transnational Organised Crime (UNTOC)

Options:

a. 1 only
b. 2 only
c. Both
d. None

Answer: c

Explanation:

- Article 23 of the Indian Constitution explicitly prohibits and criminalises human trafficking and forced labour. Apart from protecting an individual against the State it also protects against private persons
- India signed the UN Convention against Transnational Organised Crime (UNTOC) and its three Protocols in 2002
    - Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children;
    - Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air; and
    - Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing and Trafficking in firearms. Their Parts and Components and Ammunition.

5. Lemru Elephant Reserve has been proposed in which of the following states?

- a. Maharashtra
- b. Jharkhand
- c. Chhattisgarh
- d. Telangana

Answer : c

Lemru Elephant Reserve

- It is a natural elephant habitat with very few human habitations and has been an elephant bearing area from ancient times.
- The reserve is in a coal-bearing area with an estimated value of Rs 100,000 crore.
- The identified reserve area has very good availability of elephant food and has approximately 27 perennial rivulets of water present inside the forest for the elephants.

6. What was the reason for Mahatma Gandhi to organize a satyagraha on behalf of the peasants of Kheda?

1. The administration did not suspend the land revenue collection in spite of a drought
2. The administration proposed to introduce permanent settlement in Gujarat

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a. 1 only
- b. 2 only
- c. Both 1 and 2
- d. Neither 1 nor 2

Answer: a

Explanation:

- The Kheda Satyagraha of 1918 during the period of the British Raj, is a Satyagraha movement organized in support of peasants of the Kheda district

as they were unable to pay high taxes levied by the British due to crop failure and an epidemic plague.

Mains Practice Questions

1Q. Buddhism constitutes a bridge between India and South-East Asia. Comment. (250 words)

Approach
- Describe briefly Buddhism as soft power available to India.
- Bring out factors that make Buddhism bridge between ASEAN and South-East Asia.
- Give conclusion

2Q. Examine the Stoic's models of ethics in terms of its suitability for modern civil servants? (150 words)

Approach
- Briefly discuss the Stoics ethical models in Introduction.
- In body mention the ethical notions and cardinal virtues of Stoic.
- Inspect the suitability of the model properly in terms of their utility for modern-day civil servants.
- Conclude the answer suitably.