

[www.vishnuias.com](http://www.vishnuias.com)



**AUGUST**

**10.08.2021**

# **CURRENT AFFAIRS**

A MAGAZINE FOR CIVIL SERVICES PREPARATION

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

**Articles of the day  
THE HINDU & INDIAN EXPRESS**

**UPSC**

General Studies

**Test Series**

**Online &  
Offline  
classes**

**One-Stop  
Solution**

**Free daily  
materials**

## **GS 2 : Polity, Governance, International Relations**

### **1. Tribals in Rajasthan seek more panchayats in scheduled areas**

**In news** The tribal outfits in Rajasthan have demanded inclusion of over 165 village panchayats of seven districts in **the scheduled areas under the Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP)**.

- The tribal groups said the population of Scheduled Tribes in these panchayats had crossed 50%, making them eligible to be declared as **scheduled areas**.
- The objective of the demand is to facilitate the control of local communities over minor minerals and minor forest produce as well as development activities in the region.
- It will also ensure statutory protection of the tribal population.
- Consequently, the provisions of the Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996, will apply to these areas.
  - The Provisions of the Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996 or PESA is a law enacted by the Government of India for ensuring self-governance through traditional Gram Sabhas for people living in the Scheduled Areas of India.
- The tribal groups have also been spearheading a movement for creation of a separate State, **Bhil Pradesh**, to be carved out of the tribal-dominated areas of Rajasthan, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra.

### **2. Government e-Marketplace (GeM) System**

The Government e-Marketplace (GeM) system has resulted in a 10% savings in public procurement costs in five years.

#### **Government e-Marketplace**

- GeM is an online platform for public procurement in India by various Government Departments / Organizations / PSUs.
- The initiative was launched on August 9, 2016 by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry with the objective to create an open and transparent procurement platform for government buyers.

- It is owned by GeM SPV (Special Purpose Vehicle) which is a 100 per cent Government-owned, non-profit company under the Ministry of Commerce and Industries
- GeM aims to enhance transparency, efficiency and speed in public procurement.
- It provides the tools of e-bidding, reverse e-auction and demand aggregation to facilitate the government users achieve the best value for their money.
- The purchases through GeM by Government users have been authorized and made mandatory by Ministry of Finance.

### **Advantages for Buyers**

- Offers rich listing of products for individual categories of Goods/Services
- Makes available search, compare, select and buy facility
- Enables buying Goods and Services online, as and when required.
- Provides transparency and ease of buying
- Ensures continuous vendor rating system
- Up-to-date user-friendly dashboard for buying, monitoring supplies and payments
- Provision of easy return policy

### **Advantages for Sellers**

- Direct access to all Government departments.
- One-stop shop for marketing with minimal efforts
- One-stop shop for bids / reverse auction on products / services
- New Product Suggestion facility available to Sellers
- Dynamic pricing: Price can be changed based on market conditions
- Seller friendly dashboard for selling, and monitoring of supplies and payments
- Consistent and uniform purchase procedures

## **3. Five-point Framework for Maritime Security**

A week into India's United Nations Security Council (UNSC) presidency, PM Modi has outlined a five-point framework for maritime security debate at UNSC.

### **Maritime Security**

- Maritime security is one of the latest buzzwords of international relations.

- Major actors in maritime policy, ocean governance and international security have in the past decade started to include maritime security in their mandate or reframed their work in such terms.
- Core dimensions of maritime security involves the concept of blue economy, food security and the resilience of coastal populations.
- A secure maritime environment provides the precondition for managing marine resources.

## **Threats to maritime security**

### **Need for an agenda**

- In today's economy, the oceans have an increased importance, allowing all countries to participate in the global marketplace.
- More than 80 percent of the world's trade travels by water and forges a global maritime link.
- About half the world's trade by value, and 90 percent of the general cargo, are transported in containers.
- Many countries have invested significant resources in maritime infrastructure, trade, energy supply chains, cargo movements and processes.
- China, undeniably a continental country, claims sovereignty over all of the South China Sea islands and their adjacent waters.

## **5-point agenda for enhancing maritime cooperation**

### **[1] Removal of barriers to legitimate maritime trade:**

- Global prosperity depends on the active flow of maritime trade. Any hindrance in maritime trade can threaten the global economy, PM said.
- Maritime trade has always been part of the civilizational ethos of India.
- PM termed this principle as 'SAGAR' Security and Growth for All in the Region.

### **[2] Resolution of maritime disputes peacefully in accordance with international law:**

- Citing the example of the resolution of India's maritime dispute with Bangladesh, PM Modi said it is necessary for free maritime trade to fully respect the rights of seafarers of other countries.

### **[3] Fight threats from natural disasters, non-state actors:**

- PM said the Indian Navy has been patrolling to counter piracy in the Indian Ocean since 2008.

- It is enhancing the common maritime domain awareness of the region through our White Shipping Information Fusion Centre.
- India has provided support for hydrographic surveying and training of maritime security personnel to several countries.

#### [4] Conservation of marine resources:

- Our oceans directly impact our climate. Hence, it is very important that we keep our maritime environment free of pollutants like plastic waste and oil spills.
- We also need to take joint steps against over-fishing and marine poaching, PM said.
- He also emphasized the need for increased mutual cooperation in Ocean Science research.

#### [5] Promoting responsible maritime connectivity:

- PM said it is well understood that the creation of infrastructure is necessary to boost maritime trade.
- He advocated for appropriate global norms and standards to ensure that such infrastructure projects are carried out as per the fiscal sustainability and absorption capacity of the host countries.

### 4. Misinformation through a feminist lens

#### Online abuse of women:

- To add to the gender disparity in access to the internet, women are having to face online abuse.
- Though even men are targeted online, the attacks faced by both sexes are vastly different. Misinformation/ disinformation targets men and women differently. **A large number of young women and girls have experienced online abuse and they are more vulnerable to such abuse.**

#### Forms of online abuse:

- According to a recent report of the **Special Rapporteur on violence against women for the United Nations Commission on Human Rights**, online abuse can involve a variety of activities.
- It can include actions like bullying, trolling, cyberstalking, defamation and hate speech, public shaming, and identity theft and hacking, sexual

harassment and threats of sexual violence, or the sharing of intimate images and videos without permission.

### Gendered disinformation:

- **Women are more prone to gendered disinformation.**
- **Misinformation and sexism have a symbiotic relationship.** Misinformation piggybacks on sexism to discredit vocal women and sexism uses misinformation to reinforce patriarchal norms.

### Inter-sectional challenges:

- **Misinformation like other forms of abuse and discrimination has inter-sectional challenges.**
- Organised disinformation and sexism intersect with Islamophobia, casteism, religious bigotry and other forms of discrimination. This only increases the impact on women from such vulnerable sections.

### Vulnerability of women even in high positions:

- Even women in high positions are not spared from online abuse.
  - A 2020 report by Amnesty International noted a considerable number of female politicians receiving hateful mentions on social media platforms like Twitter. A substantial proportion of them was either sexist or misogynistic.
  - Women journalists are at great risk of being under such attacks on their social media platforms. A recent report by UNESCO on online harassment faced by women journalists says that political actors instigate and fuel online violence campaigns against women journalists.
- This is indicative of the extent of online abuse against women and girls and their vulnerability to it.

### Concerns:

#### Impact on the girls and women:

- Online abuse can have a devastating impact on the girl or woman who faces such abuse.
- It causes tremendous distress. It **affects their emotional or physical wellbeing**. It results in physical, sexual, psychological or economic harm, and erodes self-esteem among the girls and women who face such abuse.
- It can **potentially silence women and force women – including journalists and politicians – out of jobs.**

### Impact on society:

- While organised misinformation and trolling affect women on a personal level, it also has a **significant impact on society**.
  - A healthy democracy is participatory and promotes gender inclusiveness. Sexism and misinformation intimidate women from taking vocal stands and silences them. As a result of this increasingly hostile online environment, **many women self-censor or are driven offline entirely**, out of fears for their safety. This would deprive society of any progressive ideas coming from such women. This would be **antithetical to a progressive society**.
  - With the advent of a virtual society, offline violence against women has extended to online, which makes it easier for people to commit violence without consequences. **Online abuse is a part of gender-based violence (GBV)**.
  - The online crisis facing women and girls **threatens global progress on gender equality**.

### Lack of measures to address the challenge:

- Rather than addressing such behaviour, **often women are asked to either ignore the abusers or block such handles**.
- The author also criticizes the social media platforms of not doing enough to stop such incidents.

### Conclusion:

- Online gender-based violence is just as destructive as offline violence.
- Online violence against women and girls should be accorded necessary attention and **addressing online abuse should become a part of the feminist discourse**.

## GS 3 : Economy, Science and Technology, Environment

### 5. National Mission on Edible Oil-Oil Palm (NMEO-OP)

**In news** Indian Prime Minister recently announced National Mission on Edible Oil-Oil Palm (NMEO-OP) initiative on palm oil production to help increase farm incomes.

- Rs. 11,000 crores over five year period will be invested in the edible oil ecosystem through this mission

### What are the key features of the Scheme?

- **Objective:** To ensure self-sufficiency in edible oil production.
- **Aim:** To reduce import dependence from 60% to 45% by 2024-25, by increasing domestic edible oil production from 10.5 million tonnes to 18 million tonnes which is a 70% growth target.
- Farmers will get all needed facilities, from quality seeds to technology.
- Along with promoting the cultivation of oil palm, this mission will also expand the cultivation of our other traditional oilseed crops.

### What is the need for such schemes?

- India is the largest consumer of vegetable oil in the world.
- India's Palm oil imports are almost 60% of its total vegetable oil imports.
- Recently, India's dependence on expensive imports has driven retail oil prices to new highs.
- In India, 94.1% of its palm oil is used in food products, especially for cooking. Thus, palm oil is extremely important to India's edible oils economy.
  - The oil is used in food manufacturing, in beauty products, and as biofuel.
  - Palm oil accounted for about 33% of global oils produced from oil crops in 2014.
  - **Top consumers:** India, China, and the European Union (EU).

### Do you know?

- The NMEO-OP's predecessor was the National Mission on Oil Seeds and Oil Palm.
- In May 2020, oilseed production had grown 35% from 27.5 million tonnes in 2014-15 to 37.3 million tonnes by 2020-21.

## 6. IPCC's Sixth Assessment Report, "Climate Change 2021: The Physical Science Basis"

The **Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)**'s Sixth Assessment Report has been released.

- The Sixth Assessment Report **updates the scientific consensus on extreme weather, human attribution, the carbon budget**, feedback cycles, and charts the future state of the climate since the 5th Assessment Report of 2014.

### Highlights of the report:

- The current global warming trends overall are likely to lead **an increase in annual mean precipitation over India**, with more **severe rains expected over southern India** in the coming decades.
- The planet was irrevocably headed towards **warming by 1.5° Celsius over pre-industrial times** in the next two decades.
- **Extremely deep emission cuts** need to be undertaken by all countries immediately to limit it to 1.5°C.
- Warming is already accelerating **sea level rise** and worsening extremes such as **heat waves, droughts, floods and storms**.
- **Tropical cyclones are getting stronger and wetter**, while Arctic Sea ice is dwindling in the summer and permafrost is thawing and all of these trends will get worse.
- Based on existing commitments by countries to curb their emission, the world is on track for global temperature warming by at least **2.7°C by 2100**, calling it 'Code red for humanity'.

### Recommendations of the IPCC:

- The countries should strive to achieve **net zero emissions** – that is, no additional greenhouse gases were emitted – **by 2050**.
  - In the most ambitious emissions pathway, the projection is that **globe would reach the 1.5°C in the 2030s**, overshoot to 1.6°C, with temperatures dropping back down to 1.4°C at the end of the century.

### India's emission and its impacts:

- India has **not yet committed to a net zero timeline**.
- **India is currently the world's third largest greenhouse gas emitter**, but per capita emissions are much lower.
- The U.S. emitted nearly 9 times more greenhouse gases per capita than India in 2018.
- The report warns that with a 7,517 km coastline, India will face significant **threats from rising seas**.
- Across six Indian port cities – **Chennai, Kochi, Kolkata, Mumbai, Surat and Visakhapatnam** – 28.6 million people will be exposed to coastal flooding if sea levels rise 50cm.

### The Assessment Reports of IPCC:

- The **five previous assessment reports that have come out since the IPCC was established in 1988**.

- These reports have formed the **basis of international climate change negotiations**, and the actions that governments across the world have been taking in the last three decades to restrict the rise of global temperatures.
- Their value has been **globally acknowledged**.
- The fourth assessment report of 2007 won the IPCC the **Nobel Peace Prize**.
- Each of these reports have built upon the previous ones with updated knowledge and understanding of the climate system.
- All of them, starting from the **first one in 1990**, have been categorical in stating that the rise in global surface temperatures since the 1950s was most likely caused by human activities.
- The reports have also presented **projections for temperature rise till 2100** under different scenarios and the kind of impacts that can be expected under each of these pathways.

### Why IPCC reports matters?

- The IPCC assessment reports have been **extremely influential in directing the dialogue and action on climate change**.
- The **First Assessment Report led to the setting up of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change**, the umbrella agreement under which international negotiations on climate change take place every year.
- The **Second Assessment Report was the basis for the 1997 Kyoto Protocol** that ran till last year, and the **Fifth Assessment Report, which came out in 2014, guided the Paris Agreement**.
- In the immediate future, the IPCC report could serve as the most important warning towards the rise in temperatures to unacceptable levels, and **propel the governments to take more urgent actions**.

## 7. A circular economy for plastic

### Context

The India Plastics Pact, the first in Asia, will be launched in September at the CII Annual Sustainability Summit.

### Issue of plastic waste

- A 2019 report by the **Center for International Environmental Law** suggests that by 2050, greenhouse gas emissions from plastic could reach over 56 gigatonnes, 10-13% of the remaining carbon budget.

- **Connection with livelihood:** Viewed from the angle of livelihoods, post-consumer segregation, collection and disposal of plastics make up about half of the **income of 1.5- 4 million waste-pickers in India.**
- For India, the solution must be **multi-pronged, systemic, and large scale**, to create a visible impact. The Plastics Pacts model offers such a solution.

### About Plastics Pacts model

- **Business-led initiative:** The Plastics Pacts are business-led initiatives and transform the plastics packaging value chain for all formats and products.
- The Pacts bring together everyone from across the **plastics value chain** to implement practical solutions.
- Integral to the Pact's framework is the involvement of the informal waste sector crucial to **post-consumer segregation, collection and processing of plastic waste.**
- All Pacts unite behind four targets:
  - 1) To eliminate **unnecessary and problematic plastic packaging** through redesign and innovation.
  - 2) To ensure all plastic packaging is **reusable or recyclable.**
  - 3) To increase the reuse, collection, and recycling of plastic packaging.
  - 4) To **increase recycled content** in plastic packaging.
- It is active in a number of countries including the U.K., South Africa, and Australia.
- The first Plastics Pact was launched in the U.K. in 2018, by WRAP, a global NGO based in the U.K.
- It is now being brought to India by **CII and WWF India.**

### Advantages

- **Economic advantage:** It can be expected to boost demand for recycled content, investments in recycling infrastructure, jobs in the waste sector, and beyond.
- **Support EPR framework:** The Pact will support the **Extended Producer Responsibility** framework of the government and improve solid waste management as envisioned in the **Swachh Bharat Abhiyan.**
- The India Plastics Pact focuses on **solutions and innovation.**
- **Plastic production and management development:** The Pact will encourage the development and maturing of the entire plastics production and management ecosystem.
- **Drive circulatory of plastic:** Apart from benefits to society and economy, delivering the targets will drive the circularity of plastics and help tackle pollution.

## Conclusion

The India Plastics Pact will benefit society, the economy and the environment.



## GS 2 : Polity, Governance, International Relations

### 1. Climate Change 2021 Report: IPCC

#### Why in News

Recently, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) released the first part of its **Sixth Assessment Report (AR6)** titled **Climate Change 2021: The Physical Science Basis**.

- It is prepared by the scientists of **Working Group-I**. The **two remaining parts would be released in 2022**.
- It noted that global **net-zero by 2050** was the **minimum required to keep the temperature rise to 1.5 degree Celsius**.
- It sets the stage for the **Conference of Parties (CoP) 26** conference in **November 2021**.

#### Key Points

- **Average Surface Temperature:**
  - The average surface temperature of the Earth will **cross 1.5 °C over pre-industrial levels in the next 20 years** (By 2040) and **2°C by the middle of the century** without sharp reduction of emissions.
    - In 2018, the IPCC's **Special Report Global Warming of 1.5°C** had estimated that two-fifths of the global population lived in regions with warming above 1.5°C.
  - The **last decade was hotter than any period of time in the past 1,25,000 years**. Global surface temperature was 1.09°C higher in the decade between 2011-2020 than between 1850-1900.
  - This is the **first time** that the IPCC has said that the **1.5°C warming was inevitable even in the best case scenario**.
- **Carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) Concentrations:**
  - They are the **highest in at least two million years**. Humans have emitted 2,400 billion tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> since the late 1800s.
  - Most of this can be **attributed to human activities, particularly the burning of fossil fuels**.
    - The effect of human activities has **warmed the climate at a rate unprecedented in 2,000 years**.
  - The world has already **depleted 86% of its available carbon budget**.

- **Impact of Global Warming:**
  - **Sea- Level Rise:**
    - **Sea-level rise has tripled compared with 1901-1971.** The Arctic Sea ice is the lowest it has been in 1,000 years.
    - Coastal areas will see continued sea-level rise throughout the 21<sup>st</sup> century, resulting in **coastal erosion and more frequent and severe flooding in low-lying areas.**
    - About 50% of the sea level rise is **due to thermal expansion** (when water heats up, it expands, thus warmer oceans simply occupy more space).
  - **Precipitation & Drought:**
    - Every additional 0.5 °C of warming will **increase hot extremes, extreme precipitation and drought.** Additional warming will also weaken the Earth's carbon sinks present in plants, soils, and the ocean.
  - **Heat Extremes:**
    - Heat extremes have increased while cold extremes have decreased, and these trends will continue over the coming decades over Asia.
  - **Receding Snowline & Melting Glaciers:**
    - Global Warming will have a **serious impact on mountain ranges across the world, including the Himalayas.**
    - The freezing level of mountains are likely to change and snowlines will retreat over the coming decades.
    - Retreating snowlines and melting glaciers is a cause for alarm as **this can cause a change in the water cycle, the precipitation patterns, increased floods as well as an increased scarcity of water** in the future in the states across the Himalayas.
    - The level of temperature rise in the mountains and glacial melt is unprecedented in 2,000 years. The retreat of glaciers is now attributed to anthropogenic factors and human influence.
- **Indian Sub-continent Specific Findings:**
  - **Heatwaves:** Heatwaves and humid heat stress **will be more intense and frequent during the 21<sup>st</sup> century** over South Asia.
  - **Monsoon:** Changes in monsoon precipitation are also expected, with both annual and summer monsoon precipitation projected to increase.
    - The **South West Monsoon has declined** over the past few decades **because of the increase of aerosols, but once this reduces, we will experience heavy monsoon rainfall.**
  - **Sea Temperature:** The **Indian Ocean**, which includes the Arabian Sea and Bay of Bengal, has **warmed faster than the global average.**
    - The **sea surface temperature over Indian ocean is likely to increase by 1 to 2 °C** when there is 1.5°C to 2°C global warming.

- In the Indian Ocean, the sea temperature is heating at a higher rate than other areas, and therefore may influence other regions.
- **Net- Zero Emissions:**
  - **About:**
    - It means that **all man-made greenhouse gas emissions must be removed from the atmosphere through reduction measures**, thus reducing the Earth's net climate balance, after removal via natural and artificial sink, to zero.
    - This way humankind would be **carbon neutral and global temperature would stabilise.**
  - **Current Situation:**
    - Several countries, **more than 100, have already announced their intentions to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050.** These include major emitters like the United States, China and the **European Union.**
    - **India, the third largest emitter in the world,** has been holding out, arguing that it was already doing much more than it was required to do, performing better, in relative terms, than other countries.
      - Any further burden would **jeopardise its continuing efforts to pull its millions out of poverty.**
    - IPCC has informed that a global net-zero by 2050 was the minimum required to keep the temperature rise to 1.5°C. **Without India, this would not be possible.**
      - **Even China, the world's biggest emitter, has a net-zero goal for 2060.**

### Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change

- It is the **international body for assessing the science related to climate change.**
- It was **set up in 1988** by the **World Meteorological Organization (WMO)** and **United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)** to provide policymakers with regular assessments of the scientific basis of climate change, its impacts and future risks, and options for adaptation and mitigation.
- IPCC assessments **provide a scientific basis for governments at all levels to develop climate related policies,** and they underlie negotiations at the UN Climate Conference – the **United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).**

### IPCC Assessment Reports

- Every few years (about 7 years), the IPCC produces assessment reports that are the most **comprehensive scientific evaluations of the state of earth's climate**.
- So far, five assessment reports have been produced, the **first one being released in 1990**. The **fifth assessment report had come out in 2014** in the run up to the **climate change conference in Paris**.
- The Assessment Reports - by **three working groups of scientists**.
  - **Working Group-I** - Deals with the scientific basis for climate change.
  - **Working Group-II** - Looks at the likely impacts, vulnerabilities and adaptation issues.
  - **Working Group-III** - Deals with actions that can be taken to combat climate change.

### Way Forward

- Climate change is described by many as a far **greater threat to humanity than Covid-19, because of its irreversible impacts**. Many of the impacts such as sea level rise and melting of glaciers will continue for many years.
- There is a **need for a drastic and immediate cut in carbon emissions**, given that the changes to the climate already made are not reversible.
- All nations, especially the **G20** and other major emitters, **need to join the net-zero emissions coalition** and reinforce their commitments with credible, concrete and enhanced **Nationally Determined Contributions** and policies before **COP26 in Glasgow, Scotland**.★

## 2. World Tribal Day, 2021

### Why in News

World Tribal Day or **International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples** is observed on **9<sup>th</sup> August every year**.

- It is aimed at promoting and protecting the rights of the world's indigenous population and to acknowledge the contributions that indigenous people make towards world issues such as environmental protection.

### Key Points

- **Background:**
  - The day **recognizes the first meeting of the United Nations Working Group on Indigenous Populations** in Geneva in 1982.
    - It has been **celebrated every year since 1994**, in accordance with the **declaration by the United Nations**.

- To date, numerous indigenous peoples experience **extreme poverty, marginalization, and other human rights violations.**
- **Theme 2021:**
  - “Leaving no one behind: Indigenous peoples and the call for a new social contract.”
- **Indigenous Peoples:**
  - Indigenous peoples are **inheritors and practitioners of unique cultures** and ways of relating to people and the environment. They have **retained social, cultural, economic and political characteristics** that are **distinct** from those of the **dominant societies in which they live.**
  - There are over **476 million indigenous peoples** living in 90 countries across the world, accounting for **6.2% of the global population.**
- **Significance:**
  - **Protecting Critical Ecosystem:**
    - Around **80% of the world’s biodiversity is inhabited and protected by indigenous populations.**
    - Their innate, diverse knowledge about lands, nature, and its development are extremely crucial to ensure the protection of the critical ecosystem, natural resources.
  - **Preserving Languages:**
    - With 370-500 million indigenous peoples representing the majority of the world’s cultural diversity, they **speak the greater share of almost 7000 languages in the world.**
  - **Contributing to Zero Hunger Goal:**
    - The **crops grown by indigenous people are highly adaptable.** They can **survive drought, altitude, flooding,** and any kind of extremes of temperature. As a result, these crops help **create resilient farms.**
    - Also, quinoa, moringa, and oca are some of the native crops that have the ability to expand and diversify our food base. These would contribute to the goal to attain Zero Hunger.
- **Other Global Efforts:**
  - **Decade of Indigenous Languages (2022-2032):** It aims to **conserve Indigenous languages,** which helps preserve their cultures, world views and visions, as well as expressions of self-determination.
  - **United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP):** It establishes a universal framework of minimum standards for the survival, dignity and well-being of the indigenous peoples of the world.
  - **Permanent UN Forum on Indigenous Issues:** It was established with the mandate to deal with indigenous issues related to economic and social development, culture, the environment, education, health and

human rights. It is an advisory body to the UN Economic and Social Council.

## Tribes in India

- **Data Analysis:**
  - India **hosts around 104 million** (that is almost 8.6% of the country's population).
  - Though there are **705 ethnic groups** that have been formally identified, out of which around **75 are Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs)**.
    - The **Gond** comprise the **largest tribal group of India**.
  - The **largest number of tribal communities** (62) are **found in Odisha**.
  - The **central tribal belt** which comprises the Northeastern states of India (including the region ranging from Rajasthan to West Bengal) boasts of the maximum concentration of indigenous population.
- **Major Constitutional Provisions:**
  - **Article 342 (1)**- The President may with respect to any State or Union Territory, and where it is a State, after consultation with the Governor, by a public notification, specify the tribes or tribal communities or part of or groups within tribes or tribal communities as Scheduled Tribe in relation to that State or Union Territory.
  - **Article 15**- Prohibition of discrimination on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth only.
  - **Article 16**- Equality of opportunity in matters of public employment.
  - **Article 46**- Promotion of educational and economic interests of scheduled castes, Scheduled tribes and other weaker sections.
  - **Article 335**- Claims of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes to services and posts.
  - As per **Article 338-A** of the Constitution of India, the National Commission for Scheduled Tribes has been set-up.
  - **5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Schedule**- Administration and control of Scheduled and Tribal Areas.
- **Legal Provisions:**
  - **Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1955** against Untouchability.
  - **Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989** to prevent the commission of offences of atrocities against the members of the SC and ST.
  - **Provisions of the Panchayats (Extension to the Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996** to provide for the extension of the provisions of Part IX of the Constitution relating to the Panchayats to the Scheduled Areas.
  - **Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006** to recognize and vest the

forest rights and occupation in forest land in forest dwelling scheduled tribes and other traditional forest dwellers.

- **Initiatives:**
  - **TRIFED** is a national-level apex organization functioning under the administrative control of the Ministry of Tribal Affairs. It is involved in schemes such as **MSP for MFP** and **TRIFOOD**.
  - **Pradhan Mantri Van Dhan Yojana:** A market-linked **tribal entrepreneurship development program** for forming clusters of tribal **Self Help Groups (SHGs)** and strengthening them into **Tribal Producer Companies**.
  - **Capacity Building Initiative:** Empowering tribal Panchayati Raj Institution (PRI).
  - **1000 Springs Initiative & Online portal on GIS-based Spring Atlas:** Harnessing Springs, which are natural resources of groundwater discharge.
  - **Digital Transformation of Tribal Schools:** In the first phase, 250 **Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRS)** have been adopted by Microsoft, out of which 50 EMRS schools will be given intensive training and 500 master trainers would be trained.
- **Committees Related to Tribal Communities:**
  - Xaxa Committee (2013)
  - Bhuria Commission (2002-2004)
  - Lokur Committee (1965)

### 3. Definition of Minority

The Ministry of Minority Affairs has provided some useful information about various initiatives for minorities.

#### Defining a minority community

- The Central has notified minority communities at the national level in consultation with various stakeholders under Section 2 (c) of the National Commission for Minorities (NCM), Act,
- The six communities notified as minority communities under Section 2(c) of the NCM Act, 1992 are Christians, Sikhs, Muslims, Buddhists, Parsis, and Jains.
- Notification of any community-specific to a State as a minority community within a State comes under the purview of the **State**
- Article 29 and 30 of the Constitution provide for the protection of interest of minorities which includes linguistic minorities also.

## Who are linguistic minorities?

- Linguistic Minorities are group or collectivities of individuals residing in the territory of India or any part thereof having a distinct language or script of their own.
- The language of the minority group need not be one of the twenty-two languages mentioned in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution.
- In other words, linguistic minorities at the State level mean any group or groups of people whose mother tongues are different from the principal language of the State, and at the district and taluka/tehsil levels, different from the principal language of the district or taluka/tehsil concerned.
- The linguistic minorities are therefore identified by the respective States/UTs.
- The State/UT wise, broad linguistic profile is available in the 52nd Report of the Commissioner for Linguistic Minorities(CLM).

## National Commission for Minorities

- The Government has already enacted the National Commission for Minorities (NCM) Act, 1992 to constitute a National Commission for Minorities.
- The NCM receives petitions/grievances from the aggrieved persons and the said petitions/grievances being received by Commission.
- They are dealt with by calling for reports from the concerned authorities under the Union and State Governments.
- On receipt of the reports, the Commission makes appropriate recommendations to the respective authorities for redressal of the grievances.

## GS 3 : Economy, Science and Technology, Environment

### 4. Atlantic Ocean Current System: AMOC

#### Why in News

According to the recently released IPCC's Report, **Atlantic Meridional Overturning Circulation (AMOC) is losing its stability and is very likely to decline over the 21<sup>st</sup> century.**

- **The ocean has an interconnected current, or circulation, system powered by wind, tides, the Earth's rotation (Coriolis effect), the sun (solar energy), and water density differences.**

## Key Points

- **About AMOC:**
  - It is a **large system of ocean currents**.
  - It is the **Atlantic branch of the ocean conveyor belt or ThermoHaline Circulation (THC)**, and distributes heat and nutrients throughout the world's ocean basins.
- **Working of AMOC:**
  - AMOC carries **warm surface waters from the tropics** towards the Northern Hemisphere, where it cools and sinks.
  - It then **returns to the tropics** and then to the **South Atlantic as a bottom current**. From there it is **distributed to all ocean basins** via the **Antarctic Circumpolar Current**.
    - The ACC is the **most important current in the Southern Ocean**, and the **only current** that flows **completely around the globe**.
- **Implications of decline of AMOC:**
  - **Without a proper AMOC and Gulf Stream**, Europe will be very cold.
    - Gulf Stream, a part of the AMOC, is a **warm current responsible for mild climate** at the Eastern coast of North America as well as Europe.
  - An AMOC shutdown would **cool the northern hemisphere and decrease rainfall over Europe**.
  - It can also have **an effect on the El Nino**.
    - El Nino is a **climate pattern** that describes the **unusual warming of surface waters** in the eastern tropical Pacific Ocean.
  - It can also **shift monsoons in South America and Africa**.
- **Causes:**
  - Climate models have long predicted that **global warming** can cause a **weakening of the major ocean systems of the world**.
  - **Freshwater inflow** from the melting of the Greenland ice sheet.
    - In July 2021, **researchers noted** that a **part of the Arctic's ice called "Last Ice Area" has also melted**.
    - The **freshwater from the melting ice** reduces the **salinity and density of the water**.
    - Now, the water is unable to sink as it used to and weakens the AMOC flow.
  - **Indian Ocean** may also be helping the slowing down of AMOC.
  - **Increasing precipitation** and river run-off.
- **Importance of AMOC:**
  - It plays a **critical role in redistributing heat and regulating weather patterns** around the world.
- **Concerns:**

- The AMOC decline is **not just a fluctuation or a linear response to increasing temperatures** but likely means the **approaching of a critical threshold** beyond which the **circulation system could collapse**.

## Ocean Currents

- **About:**
  - Ocean currents are **located at the ocean surface and in deep water below 300 meters**. They can **move water horizontally and vertically** and occur **on both local and global scales**.
- **Surface Currents:**
  - Surface currents in the ocean are **driven by global wind systems that are fueled by energy from the sun**. Patterns of surface currents are determined by wind direction, Coriolis forces from the Earth's rotation, and the position of landforms that interact with the currents.
  - Surface wind-driven currents **generate upwelling currents** in conjunction with landforms, creating deepwater currents.
    - **Upwelling** is a process in which deep, cold water rises toward the surface.
  - Along the east coast of the US, the **Gulf Stream carries warm water** from the equatorial region to the North Atlantic Ocean, keeping the southeast coast relatively warm.
    - Along the west coast of the US, the **California Current carries cold water** from the polar region southward, keeping the west coast relatively cooler than the east coast.
  - **Gyre**, is a vast circular system made up of ocean currents that spirals about a central point.
    - Such as the Gulf Stream–North Atlantic–Norway Current in the Atlantic Ocean and the Kuroshio–North Pacific Current in the Pacific Ocean.
- **Deep Water Currents:**
  - Currents may also be **caused by density differences in water masses due to temperature (thermo) and salinity (haline) variations via a process known as thermohaline circulation**.
  - These currents **move water masses through the deep ocean** – taking nutrients, oxygen, and heat with them.
- **Conveyor Belt:**
  - **Density differences in ocean water** contribute to a **global-scale circulation system**, also called the **global conveyor belt**. It includes **both surface and deep ocean currents** that circulate the globe in a 1,000-year cycle.

- The global conveyor belt's circulation is the **result of two simultaneous processes**: warm surface currents carrying less dense water away from the Equator toward the poles, and cold deep ocean currents carrying denser water away from the poles toward the Equator.
- The ocean's global circulation system plays a **key role in distributing heat energy**, regulating weather and climate, and cycling vital nutrients and gases.

## 5.PM-KISAN

### Why in News

Recently, the Prime Minister released the **9<sup>th</sup> instalment of financial benefit under Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN)**.

- Further, the Prime Minister also interacted with farmer beneficiaries during the event.

### Key Points

- **PM-KISAN:**
  - **About:**
    - Under the scheme, the Centre transfers an **amount of Rs 6,000 per year, in three equal instalments**, directly into the bank accounts of all landholding farmers irrespective of the size of their land holdings.
    - It was **launched in February 2019**.
  - **Funding and Implementation:**
    - It is a **Central Sector Scheme** with 100% funding from the Government of India.
    - It is being implemented by the **Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare**.
  - **Identification of Beneficiaries:**
    - The entire responsibility of identification of beneficiary farmer families **rests with the State/UT Governments**.
  - **Objectives:**
    - To supplement the financial needs of the Small and Marginal Farmers in procuring various inputs to ensure proper crop health and appropriate yields, commensurate with the anticipated farm income at the end of each crop cycle.
    - To protect them from falling in the clutches of moneylenders for meeting such expenses and ensure their continuance in the farming activities.
- **Highlights of the Prime Minister's Address:**

- The Prime Minister **launched a National Edible Oil Mission-Oil Palm (NMEO-OP)** as a pledge for **achieving self-reliance in edible oil**.
- For the first time, India has reached **among the top-10 countries of the world in terms of agricultural exports**.
- **Biggest ever purchase** from farmers at **Minimum Support Price (MSP)**, Rs 1,70,000 crore have reached directly into the accounts of rice farmers and about Rs. 85,000 crore to wheat farmers.
- **Small farmers are now being given utmost priority** in the agricultural policies of the country.
  - Initiatives like **Food Parks, Kisan Rails and Kisan Infrastructure Fund** will help small farmers.
  - These steps increase the small farmer's access to market and his bargaining power through **Farmer Produce Organizations (FPOs)**.
- The Prime Minister touched upon initiatives like **Mission Honey-Bee** and making **saffron from Jammu & Kashmir** in the **National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Limited (NAFED)** shops.
- Indian agriculture and farmers have a big role in **determining the condition of India in 2047**, when the country completes 100 years of independence.
- **Other Initiatives for Farmers:**
  - **National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture**
  - **Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana**
  - **Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY)**
  - **Nutrient Based Subsidy (NBS) Programme**
  - **Rashtriya Gokul Mission**
  - **Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana**
  - **Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana**

## 6. Monetary Policy Report: RBI

### Why in News

The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** has released the **Monetary Policy Report (MPR)** for the month of August 2021.

- It kept the **policy rate unchanged for the seventh time in a row**. And **appealed to the centre and states to reduce taxes on fuels** to curb inflationary pressures.

### Monetary Policy Report

- The MPR is published by the **Monetary Policy Committee (MPC)** of RBI.

- The MPC is a statutory and institutionalized framework under the **RBI Act, 1934, for maintaining price stability, while keeping in mind the objective of growth.**
- The MPC **determines the policy interest rate (repo rate) required to achieve the inflation target of 4% with a leeway of 2% points on either side.**
- The **Governor of RBI is ex-officio Chairman** of the MPC.

### Key Points

- **Unchanged Policy Rates:**
  - **Repo Rate - 4%.**
  - **Reverse Repo Rate - 3.35%.**
  - **Marginal Standing Facility (MSF) - 4.25%.**
  - **Bank Rate- 4.25%.**
- **GDP Projection:**
  - **Real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth for 2021-22 has been retained at 9.5%.**
- **Inflation:.**
  - **RBI has revised the projection for Consumer Price Index (CPI) inflation to 5.7% from 5.1%.**
- **Variable Rate Reverse Repos:**
  - **In order to absorb additional liquidity in the system, the RBI announced conducting a Variable Rate Reverse Repo (VRRR) program due to the higher yield prospects as compared to the fixed rate overnight reverse repo.**
    - **The RBI has decided to increase the quantum under the VRRR to Rs 4 trillion in a phased manner.**
  - **It also extended the liquidity support to banks to lend to stressed businesses by another three months to 31th December 2021.**
- **Interest Rates:**
  - **Elevated inflation level and delayed recovery in the economy has prompted the panel to keep rates steady. Interest rates in the banking system are expected to remain stable in the next couple of months.**
    - **Recovery faced rough weather due to the Covid second wave and lockdowns in states**
- **Accommodative Stance:**
  - **It decided to continue with an accommodative stance as long as necessary to revive and sustain growth on a durable basis and continue to mitigate the impact of Covid-19 on the economy, while ensuring that inflation remains within the target going forward.**
    - **An accommodative stance means a central bank will cut rates to inject money into the financial system whenever needed.**
- **Optimism For Recovery:**

- **Resilient Demand:**
  - After the **second wave** of infections, domestic economic activity had started to recover with accelerated **vaccination**.
- **Economic Package:**
  - Although investment demand is still anaemic, improving capacity utilisation, rising steel consumption, higher imports of capital goods, congenial monetary and financial conditions and the **economic packages announced by the central government** are expected to kick-start a long-awaited revival.
- **High Frequency Indicators:**
  - High-frequency indicators (electricity consumption, nighttime lights intensity and nitrogen dioxide emissions) suggest that **consumption** (both private and Government), **investment and external demand are all on the path of regaining traction**.
- **Concerns:**
  - Inflation management can pose a **serious challenge when the elevated fuel price pass through starts** to occur and thus inflation shock is unlikely to be transitory even by definition.
- **Suggestions:**
  - **Reduce Taxes:**
    - With crude oil prices at elevated levels, a calibrated **reduction of the indirect tax component of pump prices by the centre and states can help** to substantially lessen cost pressures.
  - **Economic Stimulus:**
    - On the economic front, despite the uptick, **it is important that a stimulus is provided by the government to give a thrust to consumption**. The timing of such measures will be apt at this juncture as the festive season is about to begin.
  - **Policy Use:**
    - The **nascent and hesitant recovery in the economy needs** to be nurtured through **fiscal, monetary and sectoral policy levers**.

## Key Terms

- **Repo and Reverse Repo Rate:**
  - Repo rate is the rate at which the **central bank of a country** (Reserve Bank of India in case of India) **lends money to commercial banks in the event of any shortfall of funds**. Here, the central bank purchases the security.
  - Reverse repo rate is the rate at which the **RBI borrows money from commercial banks within the country**.
- **Bank Rate:**

- It is the rate charged by the RBI for **lending funds to commercial banks.**
- **Marginal Standing Facility (MSF):**
  - MSF is a window for scheduled banks **to borrow overnight from the RBI in an emergency situation when interbank liquidity dries up completely.**
  - Under interbank lending, banks lend funds to one another for a specified term.
- **Inflation:**
  - Inflation refers to the rise in the prices of most goods and services of daily or **common use, such as food, clothing, housing, recreation, transport, consumer staples, etc.**
  - Inflation measures **the average price change in a basket of commodities and services** over time.
  - Inflation is indicative **of the decrease in the purchasing power of a unit of a country's** currency. This could ultimately lead to a deceleration in economic growth.
- **Consumer Price Index:**
  - It measures price changes **from the perspective of a retail buyer.** It is released by the **National Statistical Office (NSO).**
  - The CPI calculates the difference in **the price of commodities and services such as food, medical care, education, electronics etc, which Indian consumers buy for use.**

**Prelims Practice Questions**

**1. With reference to 8888 Uprising, which of the following statements is/are correct?**

1. It was a series of protests and marches in Hong Kong.
2. It was against mainland China's proposal to introduce a new National Security Law.

**Options:**

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

**Answer: d**

**Explanation:**

- Also referred to as the 8888 Uprising, the 1988 pro-democracy uprising was a series of nationwide protests and marches in Myanmar that peaked in August 1988.

**Context:**

- Myanmar marked the anniversary of a 1988 pro-democracy uprising.

**2. With reference to National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT), consider the following statements:**

1. It is a quasi-judicial body established under the Companies Act, 2013.
2. It is bound by the Code of Civil Procedure.
3. Any person aggrieved by any order of the NCLT may file an appeal to the Supreme Court.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- A 1 only
- B 2 only
- C 1 and 2 only
- D 1, 2 and 3 only

Answer : C

Explanation

**National Company Law Tribunal:**

- The Central Government constituted **National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT)** under **section 408 of the Companies Act, 2013** in 2016. Hence, **statement 1 is correct.**
  - It has been set up as a **quasi-judicial body** to govern the companies registered in India and is a **successor to the Company Law Board.**
- It is bound by the rules laid down in the **Code of Civil Procedure** and is guided by the **principles of natural justice**, subject to the other provisions of this Act and of any rules that are made by the Central Government. Hence, **statement 2 is correct.**
- The **National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT)** was constituted under Section 410 of the Companies Act, 2013 to hear appeals against the orders of the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT).
  - Any person aggrieved by any order of the NCLAT may file an appeal to the **Supreme Court.** Hence, **statement 3 is not correct.**

**3. Island of Evia recently seen in news is part of which country?**

- a. Italy
- b. Greece
- c. Turkey
- d. France

**Answer: b**

**Explanation:**

- Evia is an island in Greece.

**4. Consider the following statements regarding the Quit India Movement:**

1. It was also known as August Kranti.
2. Mahatma Gandhi launched this movement at the All-India Congress Session of Nagpur.
3. The slogans of 'Quit India' and 'Simon Go Back' were given by Aruna Asaf Ali.

Which of the statements given above is/are not correct?

- A 1 and 2 only
- B 2 and 3 only
- C 3 only
- D 1 and 3 only

Answer : B

Explanation

- On 8<sup>th</sup> August 1942, Mahatma Gandhi gave a clarion call to end the British rule and **launched the Quit India Movement** at the session of the **All-India Congress Committee in Mumbai. Hence, statement 2 is not correct.**
  - On 8<sup>th</sup> Aug 2021, India completed 79 years of Quit India Movement also known as **August Kranti. Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
- Gandhiji gave the call “Do or Die” in his speech delivered at the Gowalia Tank Maidan, now popularly known as August Kranti Maidan.
- Aruna Asaf Ali popularly known as the 'Grand Old Lady' of the Independence Movement is known for hoisting the Indian flag at the Gowalia Tank Maidan in Mumbai during the Quit India Movement.
- The slogan ‘**Quit India**’ was **coined by Yusuf Meherally**, a socialist and trade unionist who also served as Mayor of Mumbai.
  - Meherally had also coined the slogan “**Simon Go Back**”. **Hence, statement 3 is not correct.**

5. Consider the following statements:

1. He formed the Praja Socialist Party.
2. He is associated with the Bhoodan Yajna Movement.
3. He gave the call for Total Revolution.

The above statements most appropriately describe which of the following Indian political leaders.

- A Vinoba Bhave
- B Jayaprakash Narayan
- C Lokamanya Tilak
- D M N Roy

Answer : B

Explanation

**Jayaprakash Narayan: Post-Independence Role**

- In 1952, he formed the **Praja Socialist Party (PSP)**.

- In 1954, he devoted his life exclusively to the **Bhoodan Yajna Movement of Vinoba Bhave**, which demanded land redistribution to the landless.
- In 1959 he argued for a “**reconstruction of Indian polity**” by means of a four-tier hierarchy of village, district, state, and union councils (**Chaukhamba Raj**).
- Total Revolution: Against **Indira Gandhi Regime** as she was found guilty of violating electoral laws by the Allahabad High Court. He advocated a program of social transformation which he termed ‘Sampoorna Kranti’ (total revolution) in 1974 against corruption in public.
  - Total Revolution has **seven component revolutions**, namely- political, social, economic, cultural, ideological or intellectual, educational and spiritual.
- Hence, option B is correct.

**6. Which of the following factors are responsible for increase in price of edible oils in India?**

1. Increased transportation costs
2. Mismatch in demand & supply
3. Reduction of International prices of edible oils
4. Boost in domestic production owing to favourable weather conditions

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

Answer : a

- The prices of edible oils increase rapidly in the last 5 years during 2016-2021.
- RBD palmolein is one of the edible oils that saw a steep increase in the prices in the last five years.
- Groundnut oil saw minimum increase in the prices compared to other edible oils in the market.

**Factors responsible for increase in prices of edible oils**

- Seasonality
- Supply chain constraints
- Increased transportation costs
- Mismatch in demand and supply
- Increase in the international prices of edible oils

- Shortfall in domestic production owing to adverse weather conditions

## Mains Practice Questions

**1Q. There were some common characteristics of the tribal uprisings even though they were separated from one another in time and space. Discuss. (250 Words)**

### Approach

- Start with writing the expanse of tribal uprisings and causes of such uprisings under British rule.
- Discuss common characteristics of the tribal uprisings.
- Conclude by writing the significance of these uprisings in the Indian freedom struggle.

**2Q. A welfare policy is as good as its inclusive and sensitive implementation. Explain. (250 words)**

### Approach

- Briefly highlight what welfare policies and state mean.
- Highlight how inclusiveness and sensitivity in implementation can enhance welfare policies and status of a nation.
- Suggest measures to overcome some of the challenges faced in ensuring sensitive and inclusive policy implementation.

