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**OCTOBER**

**03.10.2021**

# **CURRENT AFFAIRS**

A MAGAZINE FOR CIVIL SERVICES PREPARATION

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## GS 2 : Polity, Governance, International Relations

### 1. New pill to patients with COVID-19

#### Molnupiravir:

- Molnupiravir is an investigational **anti-viral drug for COVID-19** being developed by pharmaceutical major Merck and Ridgeback Biotherapeutics.
- The drug works by **inhibiting the process by which the virus replicates**. It alters critical enzymes that are necessary for the virus to begin replicating in the body's host cells.
- Phase 3 trials of the drug have shown promising results.

#### Significance:

- Molnupiravir is a pill and hence will **not be required to be administered**
- It would also be **cheaper than the monoclonal antibody therapy**.
- The drug has shown '**consistent efficacy**' across viral variants Gamma, Delta and Mu in those with mild or moderate disease

### 2. Digital health mission

#### In News:

- The launch of the Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM).

#### Details:

- The Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM) aims to give every citizen a unique digital health ID and provisions for users to access and link personal records with their unique ID to create a longitudinal health history.
  - The unique health ID will be a randomly generated 14-digit identification number. The ID will give the user unique identification, authentication and will be a repository of all health records of a person.
  - The user will also set up a Personal Health Records (PHR) address.

#### Significance:

- The Digital Ecosystem will enable facilities like digital consultation and hence will facilitate easy, affordable and accessible treatment.
- The new system will not only simplify processes of hospitals but also increase ease of living for the patients.
- The introduction of a unique health identification card at the national level would be a game changer in monitoring, providing and managing healthcare for all citizens. The digital ecosystem provides a more holistic and inclusive model for healthcare in India.
- The meta data could provide valuable insights not only for the government's evidence based policy making but also to insurance companies, international researchers, and pharma companies.

### Challenges:

- Data security and privacy of an individual remains a concern with the new system. Despite provisions such as making citizen's consent mandatory for sharing their information, such provisions can be easily manipulated by interested entities.
- The lack of access to technology, poverty and lack of understanding may hamper the mission.
- India's previous experience with respect to similar attempts like the One Nation One Ration card, PM-JAY card, Aadhaar card, etc., had brought to light many issues such as errors. The DHM is also likely to face similar issues.
- Also India faces structural issues like the acute shortage of healthcare professionals and healthcare facilities. The digital health mission will be rendered ineffective without such bare minimum resources.

### **3. Panel set up to implement Assam Accord**

#### Context:

- The Assam government has set up an eight-member sub-committee to examine and prepare a framework for the implementation of all clauses of the Assam Accord of 1985.

#### Assam Accord:

- It was a tripartite accord **signed between the Government of India, State Government of Assam and the leaders of the Assam Movement in 1985.**
- The signing of the Accord led to the conclusion of a six-year agitation that was launched by the All Assam Students' Union (AASU) in 1979, **demanding the identification and deportation of illegal immigrants from Assam.**
- Among the many clauses of the accord, clause 6 holds immense value. The **Clause 6 of the Accord** pertains to the constitutional, legislative and

administrative safeguards to “protect, preserve and promote the cultural, social, linguistic identity and heritage of the Assamese people”.

#### 4. '5 cr. houses given water connections'

##### Jal Jeevan Mission:

- Jal Jeevan Mission, is envisioned to **provide safe and adequate drinking water through individual household tap connections by 2024 to all households in rural India.**
- The programme will also implement **source sustainability measures** as mandatory elements, such as recharge and reuse through grey water management, water conservation, rain water harvesting.
- The Jal Jeevan Mission will be based on a **community approach to water** and will include extensive Information, Education and communication as a key component of the mission. JJM looks to create a **jan andolan** for water, thereby making it everyone's priority.

##### Progress made:

- **Five crore households had been provided with water connections since the launch of the Jal Jeevan Mission in 2019.**
- Also tap water has been reaching every household in about 1.25 lakh villages in about 80 districts of the country. The number of tap connections in the aspirational districts has also registered a notable increase since the launch of the scheme.

##### New additional measures taken:

- The newly launched **Jal Jeevan Mission app** aims to **improve awareness** among stakeholders and aims for **greater transparency and accountability of schemes** under the Jal Jeevan mission.
- The **Rashtriya Jal Jeevan Kosh** allows any individual, institution or philanthropist within India or abroad to contribute to help provide tap water connections.

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

#### 5. A tiny plant that can 'digest' low density plastic sheets

##### In News:

- Researchers from University of Madras and Presidency College, Chennai, have isolated an **alga that breaks down low density polyethylene**.

### Background:

#### Plastic pollution:

- **Around 5.6 million metric tonnes of plastic waste is generated each year in India.** Worryingly, **only 60% of the plastic used in India is collected and recycled.** Hence a large proportion of Plastic waste is continuing to accumulate and leading to adverse environmental impacts.
- The usual means of disposal of plastic waste involves **incineration, land-filling** and recycling. These methods have limitations and also sometimes produce **side-effects that are hazardous to the environment.**
- Hence there has been growing **emphasis on biodegradation methods** that are safe and environment friendly.

### Details:

- The alga identified is **microalga Uronema africanum Borge**. This is a species of microalgae that is commonly found in Africa, Asia and Europe.
- The alga used for the study has been harvested from a lake in Chennai.
- The microalga was found to **produce enzymes, hormones, toxins such as cyanotoxins and some polysaccharides** which were able to **slowly degrade polyethylene into monomers** which will not have harmful effect in the atmosphere.
  - Low-density polyethylene is highly resistant to degradation.
- The researchers are planning to collaborate with industry to take up this technology in to a pilot scale and finally large-scale study.

### Significance:

- The development gains significance given that the identified algae could be used as an agent of **biodegradation of plastic sheets and thus it offers a solution to Plastic pollution in India.**

## 6. Govt. notifies new rules to clear retro tax mess

### Context:

- The Union government has notified **new rules under the Income Tax Act** for specifying the process to be followed by affected taxpayers to **settle the retrospective tax disputes**.
- Union Finance Minister had recently introduced the **Taxation Laws (Amendment) Bill in the Lok Sabha to nullify the retrospective tax clauses** that were introduced in 2012 and had issued draft rules to resolve the pending tax disputes.
- Affected companies like Cairn Energy had envisaged interest to settle their dispute with the Indian government.

### Background:

#### **Retrospective tax clause:**

- The retrospective tax clauses were introduced in 2012 to **bring past indirect transfer of Indian assets under the ambit of taxation**.
- This provision was invoked against foreign investors such as **Vodafone and Cairn Energy**.
  - Vodafone had in 2007 purchased a 67% stake in Hutchison Whampoa.
  - Cairn Energy had undertaken a corporate reorganisation in 2006-07.
- **Large tax demands** were raised against these companies and upon their failure to pay, their assets were frozen by the Indian authorities.

#### *Concerns:*

- The retrospective tax and consequent tax demand had been **termed “tax terrorism”** by a few sections and it had become a point of **concern for potential investors**.
- This provision was thought to go **against the principle of tax certainty** and damage India’s reputation as an attractive foreign investment destination.

#### **Steps taken by the affected companies:**

- This move of the Indian government was challenged by the affected companies. Separate **international arbitration tribunal** verdicts in the Vodafone and Cairn cases have ruled against India’s retrospective tax demands.

- Cairn Energy, which was awarded \$1.2 billion by an international tribunal, filed cases in at least ten global jurisdictions, including the U.S., the U.K., Canada and Japan, to seize India's assets in lieu of the award as the government did not abide by the tribunal's decision.
- Cairn Energy has recently secured an order from a French court to freeze India's assets in Paris.

### Details:

- The Income-Tax (31st Amendment) Rules, 2021, introduce a new portion pertaining to 'indirect transfer prior to May 28, 2012 of assets situated in India'.
- As per the conditions laid down under this new rules, firms disputing retrospective tax demands will have to **withdraw all legal proceedings** including arbitration, mediation efforts and **waive all rights to claim costs or attach Indian assets** and also **indemnify the government** on costs and liabilities from any action pursued by other interested parties (including shareholders) in future. They would also have to give an undertaking that such initiatives will not be reopened.

## 7. Toxic firecrackers

### In News:

- The Supreme Court has come down heavily on the firecracker industry after revelation from the CBI enquiry pointing to **rampant violation of the SC ban on the use of toxic ingredients in firecrackers.**

### Background:

#### **Pollution caused by fire crackers:**

- **Firecrackers use different metal salts to get different colours.** Barium compounds produce green light and Strontium and Lithium salts produce red light.
- The burning of firecrackers resulting in **emission of particles and gases** is a major source of **air pollution**. It gives rise to higher levels of Aluminium, Barium, Potassium, Sulphur, Iron and Strontium in the air.

- High levels of such elements in the air **affect the health of people and animals.**

### **Previous Supreme Court Ruling:**

- Given the air and sound pollution caused by fire crackers, there were petitions filed in the judiciary calling for a total ban on firecrackers.
- However taking a balanced view the Supreme Court had ruled out a full ban on firecrackers and issued orders stipulating that **only reduced emission and green crackers be allowed**, with tight restrictions on timings when they could be burst.

### **Green Crackers:**

- The Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, through its **National Environmental Engineering Research Institute (CSIR-NEERI), Nagpur**, had come out with firecrackers that have lower particulate matter emission.
- These crackers are named as **Safe Water Releaser** (SWAS- Low Potassium Nitrate and Sulphur use), **Safe Thermite Cracker** (STAR- low Sulphur and Potassium Nitrate) and **Safe Minimal Aluminium** (SAFAL- Aluminium use is low).
- These have the unique property of **releasing water vapour and/or air as dust suppressant and dilutant** for gaseous emissions.

### **Details:**

- The Supreme Court has found six major fireworks manufacturers violating orders requiring them not to use prohibited chemicals such as Barium salts and to label the firecrackers in compliance with the law.
  - The **green crackers are to be identified using unique QR codes.**
- Firecrackers were also not labelled with information on the person responsible for legal compliance, as ordered by the court.
  - The **Petroleum and Explosives Safety Organisation should certify the composition of fireworks as free from banned chemicals.**



## THE INDIAN EXPRESS

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

#### 1. The State Nutrition Profiles

**In News:** NITI Aayog, in a joint effort with International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), Indian Institute of Population Sciences (IIPS), UNICEF and Institute of Economic Growth (IEG) has launched ‘The State Nutrition Profiles’ for 19 States and Union Territories.

- Give insights on nutrition outcomes, immediate and underlying determinants and interventions based on NFHS-rounds 3, 4 and 5.
- The SNPs include a comprehensive compilation of crucial data that can positively affect policy decisions and facilitate research in the area. The trend analysis of key indicators such as wasting, stunting, anemia, underweight and overweight and NCDs (Diabetes and High blood pressure) showcase the variability of performance across districts.
- The reports highlight the best and worst performing districts, highest burden districts and top coverage districts of the country.
- The SNPs are based on the headcount-based analyses and use of data from NFHS-5 to provide evidence that helps identify priority districts and number of districts in the state with public health concern as per WHO guidelines. Each SNP has incorporated key takeaways for children, women and men and identifies areas where the state has the potential to improve further.

#### 2. Meningitis

**Context** The Global Roadmap to Defeat Meningitis by 2030 was recently released by the World Health Organization (WHO) and its partners.

- This is the first-ever global strategy to defeat meningitis.
- It aims to eliminate epidemics of bacterial meningitis and to reduce deaths by 70 per cent and halve the number of cases.
- **Significance:** The strategy could save more than 200,000 lives annually and significantly reduce disability caused by the disease.

#### About Meningitis

- Meningitis is an inflammation of the membranes that surround the brain and spinal cord.
- It is predominantly caused by bacterial and viral infection.
- Meningitis caused by bacterial infection causes around 250,000 deaths a year and can lead to fast-spreading epidemics.
- It kills a tenth of those infected – mostly children and young people – and leaves a fifth with long-lasting disability.

### 3. 21st SCO Council Meet

**In News:** Prime Minister participated virtually in the 21st Meeting of the Council of Heads of State of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), and through video-message in the Joint SCO-CSTO Outreach Session on Afghanistan, in Dushanbe in hybrid format.

- Celebrating its 20th anniversary this year. It will be the first SCO Summit being held in a hybrid format and the fourth Summit that India will participate as a full-fledged member of SCO.
- Coming against the backdrop of the turbulence caused by the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan, the current meeting will be one of the most significant gatherings in its two-decade history.
- **Iran has been accepted as the ninth full member of the organisation.**

#### India's Stand -

- Highlighted the problems caused by growing radicalisation and extremism in the broader SCO region, which runs counter to the history of the region as a bastion of moderate and progressive cultures and values. The recent developments in Afghanistan could further exacerbate this trend towards extremism.
- Offered to share the open-source solutions that have been developed for its development programmes with other SCO members
- Connectivity projects should be transparent, participatory and consultative, in order to promote mutual trust.
- Noting the humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan, India reiterated its solidarity with the Afghan people.
- *Suggestions to SCO:*
  - SCO could work on an agenda to promote moderation and scientific and rational thought, which would be especially relevant for the youth of the region.

- SCO could develop a code of conduct on 'zero tolerance' towards terrorism in the region, and highlighted the risks of drugs, arms and human trafficking from Afghanistan

### About Shanghai Cooperation Organization

- The Shanghai Cooperation Organization is a political, economic, and Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure of many important countries including India and its neighborhood.
- India is full member of the SCO.
- SCO Secretariat: Beijing
- Along with India and Pakistan (2017), this intergovernmental organisation has 8 members including Russia, China, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. It also has several observers like Iran and Afghanistan.
- The internal policy of the forum is inspired by the Shanghai Spirit: based on the principles of mutual trust, mutual benefit, equality, mutual consultations, and a desire for common development.
- **SCO's Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS):** RATS is a permanent organ of the SCO which serves to promote cooperation of member states against terrorism, separatism, and extremism and is headquartered in Tashkent.
- **History:**
  - 
  - **Built on Shanghai Five:** Russia, China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan (Kyrgyz Republic) and Tajikistan popularly known as Shanghai Five had come together in the post-Soviet era in 1996, in order to work on regional security, reduction of border troops, and terrorism.
  - **Initial Success in resolving Boundary Disputes:** The 1996 meeting of the Shanghai Five resulted in an 'Agreement on Confidence-Building in the Military Field Along the Border Areas' between China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, which led to an agreement on the mutual reduction of military forces on their common borders in 1997.
  - **Inclusion of Uzbekistan:** Subsequently, Shanghai Five helped resolve disputes between Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan on border issues and the Ferghana Valley enclaves.
  - **Institutionalisation:** Subsequently a permanent intergovernmental international organisation called SCO was founded in June 2001. It is Eurasian political, economic, and security alliance of China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan.

- **Expansion:** Its membership was expanded to include India and Pakistan in 2017.

- **SECURE:** PM Modi's mantra that is applicable to SCO

'S' for security of citizens,

'E' for economic development,

'C' for connectivity in the region,

'U' for unity,

'R' for respect of sovereignty and integrity, and

'E' for environmental protection

#### 4. Modi launches missions for better cities

##### In News:

The government has launched the **2<sup>nd</sup> phase of the Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban and Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT)** to make cities free of garbage, ensuring safe water, and not allow any untreated water discharge into any of the rivers in the country.

##### Achievement till now:

- **100% Open Defecation Free (ODF)**
- **70% of wastes in Indian Cities are being processed (from 20% back in 2014):** India is processing about **one lakh tonne of waste every day.**
- **Behavioral Changes: Cleanliness has become a great campaign.** PM cited that Children no longer throw Toffee wrappers around but keep them in the pocket to be disposed of in the dustbin later
- **National Respect and Pride:** The successes of the two missions have given citizens **respect, dignity, pride in collective ambition, and unmatched love** for the motherland.
- **Enhanced finances:** Allocation of the fund to the Urban Development Ministry increased from **25 lakh Crore (2007-2014) to 4 lakh Crore (2014-2021)**

##### Key Points of the Mission:

## Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban 2.0 (SBM-U)

- To make all cities **100% 'garbage free'** from **current 70%**
- **Ensure grey and black water management** in all cities other than those covered under AMRUT
- **Make all urban local bodies as ODF+** and those with a **population of less than 1 lakh as ODF++**
- **Focus on source segregation of solid waste** by utilizing the principles of **3Rs (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle)**
- **Scientific processing** of all types of **municipal solid waste** and **remediation of legacy dumpsites** for effective solid waste management

## AMRUT 2.0

- **100% coverage of water supply** to all households in around **4,700 urban local bodies** by providing about **68 crore tap** connections
- **100% coverage of sewerage and septage** in **500 AMRUT cities** by providing around **64 crore** sewers/ septage connections
- Adopt the principles of **Circular Economy** (Generating wealth from waste using 3Rs)
- **Promote conservation and rejuvenation** of **surface and groundwater bodies**
- **Data led governance in water management**
- **Technology Sub-Mission** to leverage latest global technologies and skills
- **'Pey Jal Survekshan'**: To promote competition among cities

## 5. Blood pressure, cholesterol control key for Type 1 diabetes

**Context:** A study conducted recently observed that it is crucial to have a good control over blood pressure and cholesterol and not just good control over blood sugar level to combat Type 1 **diabetes**

### Other observations made in this study

- Patients who have **T1D have reduced life-span even with insulin being administered to them**
- Subjects who were able to control all the three had better glycemic and blood pressure control, more favourable lipid profiles and lower prevalence of complications which helped them to increase their life-span compared to those who could not control all the three

- **T1D prevalence in India:** India is home to more than 95,000 children with T1D, reported to be the highest in the world, according to the 9th International Diabetes Federation Atlas
- **What is Type 1 diabetes?** In type 1 diabetes, the pancreas (a small gland behind the stomach) progressively reduces the amount of insulin (the hormone that regulates blood glucose levels) it produces until it stops producing any at all. If the amount of glucose in the blood is too high, it can, over time, seriously damage the body's organs.
- **Difference between Type 1 and type 2 diabetes**

**Figure:** Difference between Type 1 and Type 2 diabetes

- **National Programme for prevention and Control of Cancer, Diabetes, Cardiovascular Diseases and strokes (NPCDCS):**
- It was launched in **2010** in 100 districts across 21 States, in order to prevent and control the major NCDs.
- The main focus of the programme is on **health promotion, early diagnosis, management and referral of cases, besides strengthening the infrastructure and capacity building.**
- The funds are being provided to States under NCD Flexi-Pool through State PIPs of respective States/UTs, with the Centre to State share in ratio of 60:40 (except for North-Eastern and Hilly States, where the share is 90:10).
- **'Fit India'** movement was launched recently to highlight the need to stay healthy amid rising instances of lifestyle disorders and non-communicable diseases (NCDs).

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

### **6. Dismantling the Ordnance Factory Board**

**In News:** The Ordnance Factory Board (OFB), the first of whose industrial establishments was set up in 1801, will cease to exist from October 1, and the assets, staff, and operations of its 41 ordnance factories will be transferred to seven defence public sector units (DPSUs).

- OFB also includes nine training institutes, three regional marketing centres, and five regional controllers of safety.
- A large chunk of the weapons, ammunition, and supplies used by the armed forces, and paramilitary and police forces, come from OFB-run factories.

**For-against corporatisation**

- It has been argued that **OFB's monopoly** has led to innovation drying up, apart from low productivity, high costs of production, and lack of flexibility at the higher managerial levels.
- Corporatisation of OFB: The **restructuring of OFB into corporate entities** (owned by the government i.e Public Sector Company) was recommended in one or the other form by at least three expert committees on defence reforms set up in the last two decades –
  - TKS Nair Committee (2000)
  - Vijay Kelkar Committee (2005)
  - Vice Admiral Raman Puri Committee (2015).
  - A fourth committee, constituted by former Defence Minister Manohar Parrikar and chaired by Lt Gen D B Shekatkar, did not suggest corporatisation, but recommended regular audits of all ordnance units considering past performance.
- The central argument has been that corporatisation, which will bring these entities under the **purview of The Companies Act**, would lead to
  - Improvements in efficiency
  - Make products cost-competitive
  - Enhance their quality
- Employees argued that corporatisation was a “move towards privatisation”. They expressed **fears of job losses**, and said a corporate entity would not be able to survive the unique market environment of defence products with its unstable demand-supply dynamics.

### What has been the progress of Corporatisation of OFB?

- In May 2020, during fourth round of Atmanirbhar Bharat initiative, Finance Minister announced the decision to corporatise OFB for “improving autonomy, accountability and efficiency in ordnance suppliers”.
- An Empowered Group of Ministers (EGoM) for Corporatisation was formed with Defence Minister Rajnath Singh as chairman “to oversee and guide the entire process, including transition support and redeployment plan of employees while safeguarding their wages and retirement benefits”.
- In October 2020, the government declared a proposed strike by workers’ federations “invalid and illegal”.
- As no reconciliation could be reached between government and protesting workers, the government announced this June that the OFB would be split into seven DPSUs – Munitions India Ltd, Armoured Vehicles Nigam Ltd, Advanced Weapons and Equipment India Ltd, Troop Comforts Ltd, Yantra India Ltd, India Optel Ltd, and Gliders India Ltd.
- Each of these PSUs will run clusters of ordnance factories involved in manufacturing similar categories of products. Training and marketing

establishments that have been part of the OFB will also be divided among the seven PSUs

### Prelims Practice Questions

#### 1. Consider the following statements regarding Dhruv Mk III:

1. It is an indigenously developed Advanced Light Helicopter (ALH).
2. The aircraft is designed to mitigate low visibility during rescue operations at night.

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

- A 1 only
- B 2 only
- C Both 1 and 2
- D Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : D

Explanation

- **Dhruv Mk III is an indigenously designed and developed Advanced Light Helicopter (ALH-DHRUV). Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
  - It is a multi-role chopper with the Shakti engine manufactured by Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL).
    - HAL is an Indian state-owned aerospace and defence company, headquartered in Bangalore, India. It is governed under the management of the Ministry of Defence.
  - Recently, Indian Naval Air Squadron (INAS) 323, the first unit of the Dhruv Mk III aircraft, was commissioned into the Indian Navy.
- The aircraft, a step up from Mk 1, will be able to **mitigate low visibility during search and rescue operations** even at night. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
  - It has a 0.7 mm gun, which will give a huge capability from a LIMO (low intensity maritime operations) standpoint.
  - The automatic flight control system is hugely superior to the previous one.

#### 2. Consider the following statements about National Mineral Development Corporation (NMDC):



1. It is India's largest iron ore producer and exporter.
2. It is a Navratna Company under the administrative control of the Ministry of Steel.

**Which of the above statements is/are correct?**

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

**Answer: c**

**Explanation:**

- National Mineral Development Corporation is India's largest iron ore producer and exporter.
- It is a Navratna Company under the administrative control of the Ministry of Steel.
- In 1958, it was established as an owned and operated public company by the Indian government.
- It also maintains the nation's sole diamond mine at Patna in MP, with an annual output of one lakh carats.

**3. Consider the following statements regarding the National Climate Vulnerability Assessment Report:**

1. The report is a part of the National Action Plan on Climate Change Mission .
2. As per the report Assam, Bihar and Jharkhand are in the category of highly vulnerable states.

**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 : C

Explanation

- The Department of Science and Technology has released a report titled ‘The Report Climate Vulnerability Assessment for Adaptation Planning in India Using a Common Framework’.
  - It identifies the most vulnerable states and districts in India with respect to current climate risk and key drivers of vulnerability.
  - It is part of the capacity building programme under the two missions of the National Action Plan on Climate Change (total 8 missions).
    - National Mission on Sustaining the Himalayan Ecosystem (NMSHE)
    - National Mission on Strategic Knowledge for Climate Change (NMSKCC).
    - **Hence, statement 1 is correct**
- Key Findings of the Report:
  - **Highly Vulnerable States:** It identified **Jharkhand**, Mizoram, Orissa, Chhattisgarh, **Assam**, **Bihar**, Arunachal Pradesh, and West Bengal as states highly vulnerable to climate change.
  - Low Vulnerable States: Uttarakhand, Haryana, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Nagaland, Goa and Maharashtra.
  - Highly Vulnerable Districts: Among all states, Assam, Bihar, and Jharkhand have over 60% districts in the category of highly vulnerable districts. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**

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

1. In India and the USA, both a citizen by birth as well as a naturalised citizen are eligible for the office of President.
2. Citizenship is a matter dealt with by the Ministry of External Affairs in the Government of India.

**Options:**

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

**Answer: d**

**Explanation:**

- In India, both a citizen by birth as well as a naturalised citizen are eligible for the office of President.
- In the USA, a naturalised citizen is not eligible for the office of President.
- Naturalization is the legal act or process by which a non-citizen of a country may acquire citizenship or nationality of that country.
- Citizenship is a matter dealt with by the Ministry of Home Affairs in the Government of India.

**5. Bio Carbon Fund Initiative for Sustainable Forest Landscapes is managed by the**

- a. Asian Development Bank
- b. International Monetary Fund
- c. United Nations Environment Programme
- d. World Bank

**Answer: d**

**Explanation:**

- The BioCarbon Fund Initiative for Sustainable Forest Landscapes (ISFL) is a multilateral fund, supported by donor governments and managed by the World Bank.
- It collaborates with countries around the world to reduce emissions from the land sector through smarter land-use planning, policies, and practices.

**6. Consider the following statements regarding Cuba:**

1. It is surrounded by Pacific Ocean to the north and the Atlantic Ocean to the south.
2. It is a member nation of the International Solar Alliance.

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 : B

Explanation

- Cuba is a country of the West Indies and one of the more-influential states of the Caribbean region.
  - It is situated to the south of the Tropic of Cancer at the intersection of the **Atlantic Ocean (north and east, but not south)**, the **Gulf of Mexico (west)**, and the **Caribbean Sea (south) (not surrounded by Pacific Ocean)**. **Hence, statement 1 is not correct.**
- India was amongst the first countries to extend recognition to Cuba after the 1959 Revolution and both have maintained close contacts with each other in various international fora, such as the United Nations (UN), Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), World Trade Organization (WTO), etc.
  - **Cuba has also joined the International Solar Alliance**, an India-France initiative. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**

## **Mains Practice Questions**

**1Q. Even though child mortality in India has reduced significantly, the numbers are still the highest in the world. Discuss the reason behind the persistence in high rate of child mortality in the country and highlight the steps taken by the government in this regard. (250 words)**

### **Approach:**

- Explain child mortality with latest child mortality figures and improvement in them.
- Give reasons for persistence of high rate of child mortality.
- Mandate- constitutional obligation, SDGs
- Discuss steps taken by government
- Conclude with how better monitoring and implementation will help improve the situation

**2Q. Discuss how the process of fragmentation of the national party system and emergence of minority or coalition governments in 1960s impacted Indian politics and democracy. (150 words)**

### **Approach**

- Briefly introduce the political situation at centre in 1960's.
- Elaborate on the impacts of political development in 1960's.

Conclude with a brief comparison of 1960's with present times in context of multiple parties at national and state level