

NATIONAL SOCIAL ISSUES- WOMEN, POPULATION, URBANISATION, EMPOWERMENT ETC**One Nation-one Ration Card scheme**

- Centre launched the One Nation-One Ration Card scheme on a pilot basis in Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra and Gujarat
- Families who have food security cards can buy subsidized rice and wheat from any ration shop in these states.
- Their ration cards should be linked with Aadhar Number to avail this service.
- The Centre is intended to extend the programme to all states by August next year so that the portability of the food security card is implemented.
- The national portability of ration cards will ensure all beneficiaries especially the migrants in getting access to PDS across the nation from any PDS shop of their own choice

INDIAN HERITAGE AND CULTURE, HISTORY**Statue of Unity shortlisted for UK-based structural award**

- The Statue of Unity has been shortlisted for 'The Structural Awards 2019'. The award is presented by the UK-based Institution of Structural Engineers (IStructE).

Statue of Unity

- The Statue of Unity is a memorial to Sardar Vallabhai Patel. It was inaugurated on 31st October 2018 in commemoration to Sardar Patel on his 143rd birth anniversary.
- It is situated in the Kevadia town, Narmada district Gujarat. It has been built on the Sadhu Bet Island, on the Narmada River.
- It is the tallest statue in the world with a height of 182 mts.
- Sardar Vallabhai Patel, popularly known as the Iron Man of India, served as the first home minister of independent India. He is credited with integrating the more than 500 disparate princely States into the Dominion of India

CONSTITUTION AND POLITY**Article 370 and 35(A) Revoked**

On 5th of August 2019, the President of India promulgated the Constitution (Application to Jammu and Kashmir) Order, 2019. The order effectively abrogates the special status accorded to Jammu and Kashmir under the provision of Article 370 - whereby provisions of the Constitution which were applicable to other states were not applicable to Jammu and Kashmir (J&K).

- According to the Order, provisions of the Indian Constitution are now applicable in the State. This Order comes into force "at once", and shall "supersede the Constitution (Application to Jammu and Kashmir) Order, 1954."
- A separate Bill - the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Bill 2019 - was introduced to bifurcate the State into two separate union territories of Jammu and Kashmir (with legislature), and Ladakh (without legislature).
- Jammu and Kashmir Reservation (Second Amendment) Bill, 2019 was also introduced to extend the reservation for Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) in educational institutions and government jobs in Jammu and Kashmir.

History

- J&K acceded to the Dominion of India after the Instrument of Accession was signed by Maharaja Hari Singh, the ruler of the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir, on 26 October 1947.
- Article 370 of the Indian Constitution provided that only Articles 1 and 370 itself would apply to J&K. The application of other Articles was to be determined by the President in consultation with the government of the state.
- The Constitution Order of 1950 specified the matters on which the Union Parliament would be competent to make laws for J&K, in concurrence with the Instrument of Accession - 38 Subjects from the Union List were added.
- The Constitution (Application to Jammu and Kashmir) Order, 1954 settled the constitutional relationship of J&K and the Union of India. It made the following provisions -
 - Indian citizenship and all related benefits (fundamental rights) were extended to the 'permanent residents' of Jammu and Kashmir.

- Article 35A was added to the Constitution (empowering the state legislature to legislate on the privileges of permanent residents with regard to immovable property, settlement in the state and employment) in 1954.
- The jurisdiction of the Supreme Court of India was extended to the State.
- Central Government was given the power to declare a national emergency in the event of external aggression. The power in case of internal disturbances could be exercised only with the concurrence of the State Government.
- Normalized the financial relations between the Centre and J&K

Article 370 - Features and Provisions

- Present in part XXI of the Indian Constitution which comprises of Temporary, Transitional and Special Provisions with respect to various states of India.
- Forms the basis of the “Special Status” of J&K.
- Provides for a separate Constitution of J&K.
- Limits the Union Parliament’s power to make laws for J&K to those subjects mentioned in the Instrument of Accession (defense, foreign affairs, and communications) and others as and when declared by the Presidential Orders with the concurrence of the Government of the State.
- Specified the mechanism by which the Article shall cease to be operative. That is, on the recommendation of the Constituent Assembly of the State before the President issues such a notification. However, this provision has been amended by the Constitution (Application to Jammu and Kashmir) Order, 2019.

Was it Temporary

- The Article was introduced to accommodate the apprehensions of Maharaja Hari Singh who would not have acceded to India without certain concessions.
- Territorial integrity was of paramount importance to India post-independence, thus, such a special provision was inducted in the constitution.
- The provision, however, is part of the “Temporary, Transitional and Special Provisions” of our constitution.
- Moreover, Article 370 could be interpreted as temporary in the sense that the J&K Constituent Assembly had a right to modify/delete/retain it; it decided to retain it.
- Another interpretation was that accession was temporary until a plebiscite.

Issues in Revoking

- Article 370 is the bedrock of the constitutional relationship between Jammu and Kashmir and the rest of India.
- It has been described as a tunnel through which the Constitution is applied to J&K.
- India has used Article 370 at least 45 times to extend provisions of the Indian Constitution to J&K. This is the only way through which, by mere Presidential Orders, India has almost nullified the effect of J&K’s special status.
- By the 1954 order, almost the entire Constitution was extended to J&K including most Constitutional amendments.
- However, abrogating the article altogether may threaten the peace in the state which is already a hotspot of conflicts and militancy.
- It will completely change the relationship between the state and the rest of India.
- It will also clear the path for abrogating Article 35A which would allow Indian citizens to purchase land and settle permanently in J&K.

Thus, the move is bound to have a significant impact on the demography, culture, and politics of J&K.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS- BILATERAL, GROUPINGS, ORGANISATIONS

Area 51

Hundreds of thousands of people have signed up to a Facebook event, promising to storm the alleged secret US military base, Area 51, located in the Nevada desert.

- On a Facebook event titled “Storm Area 51, They Can’t Stop All of us”, two million people on September 20, plan to storm a US Air Force facility called Area 51.

- Officially known as the Nevada Test and Training Range, Area 51 is part of the Nellis Air Force Base and is used as a training centre for the US Air Force. The name originates from its location of the Nevada map.
- With the facility shrouded in secrecy, several conspiracy theories have emerged over the years.
- Several Americans believed it was where the government hid the bodies of aliens and Unidentified Flying Objects (UFOs), some believed it was where the government held “meetings” with extraterrestrials, and others speculated it was where the government developed “time travel” technology.
- The Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), according to official documents, has been using the facility since 1955 to develop and test supersonic aircraft and stealth fighter jets.
- It was only in 2013 that the CIA published declassified documents admitting that the Area 51 is a secret military site.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY- EVERYDAY SCIENCE, SPACE, NUCLEAR, DEFENCE ETC

Genome India Initiative

India is planning to launch its first Human Genome Mapping project.

- Project involves scanning of 20,000 Indian genomes (in the next five years) in order to develop diagnostic tests and effective therapies for treating diseases such as cancer.
- It is to be implemented by The Department of Biotechnology (DBT), Ministry of Science and Technology.
- The project is to be carried out in two phases:
 - The first phase of the project involves sequencing the complete genomes of 10,000 healthy Indians.
 - Second phase, involves genome sequencing of 10,000 diseased individuals.
- Data on human sequencing would be accessible to researchers through a proposed National Biological Data Centre envisaged in Biological Data Storage, Access and Sharing Policy.
- National Centre for Cell Sciences will collect samples of the microbiome from the human gut.

Significance

- Healthcare: For new advancements in medical science (like predictive diagnosis and precision medicine, genomic information) and in disease management, genome sequencing can play a crucial role. Through genome sequencing methodology, researchers and clinicians can easily detect the disease related to genetic disorder.
- Genetic Screening: The genome project will lead to improved techniques of genetic screening for diseases prior to the birth.
- Evolution Puzzle: The genome project may answer questions regarding evolution by comparing human DNA with primate DNA.

Concerns

- Discrimination: Discrimination based on genotype is a possible consequence of genome sequencing. For example, employers may obtain genetic information on employees prior to hiring them. If a certain employee is shown to be genetically susceptible to undesirable workforce traits they may be discriminated against their genotype.
- Ownership and Control: Apart from the issue of privacy and confidentiality, questions of ownership and control of genetic information becomes critical.
- Fair Use of Genetic Data: For insurance, employment, criminal justice, education, adoption, and military is necessary.

TechEx: Technology and Innovation Platform

The Union Ministry of Human Resource Development has inaugurated the TechEx - technology exhibition at IIT Delhi. TechEx was organized to demonstrate products and prototypes developed under the Ministry of Human Resource Development's IMPacting Research INnovation and Technology (IMPRINT) and Uchhatar Avishkar Yojana (UAY) schemes.

Uchhatar Avishkar Yojana

- UchhatarAvishkar Yojana (UAY) was announced with a view to promote innovation of a higher order that directly impacts the needs of the Industry and thereby improves the competitive edge of Indian manufacturing.
- The scheme focuses on a viable industry-academic collaboration where industry shares a part of the cost of research.

Other Initiatives/Schemes to Promote Research and Technology Ecosystem

- **Setting up of Research Parks:** The Government has approved setting up of Research Parks at IIT Kharagpur, IIT Bombay, IIT Delhi, IIT Guwahati, IIT Kanpur, IIT Hyderabad, IIT Gandhinagar and IISc Bengaluru.
- **Prime Minister's Research Fellowship:** The scheme offers direct admission to meritorious students in the Ph. D programmes in IITs, IISERs and IISc.
- **Smart India Hackathons:** It is a nationwide initiative to provide students a platform to solve some of the pressing problems of daily lives.
- **SETU (Self Employment and Talent Utilization):** It is a techno- financial, incubation and facilitation program to support all aspects of start-up particularly in technology driven areas.
- **Institution's Innovation Council (IIC)** is established in Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs) for promoting innovation ecosystem within their campus.
- **Trainee Teacher Scheme:** It had been initiated in National Institute of Technologies (NITs) with the objective to attract, motivate and sponsor best graduate engineers for part time M.Tech and Ph.D. programmes.
- **VAJRA (Visiting Advanced Joint Research Faculty):** This enables NRIs and overseas scientific community to participate and contribute to research and development in India through monetary support by the government.
- **Prime Minister's Science, Technology & Innovation Advisory Council (PM-STIAC):** It is an overarching body which assesses the status of specific S&T domains, comprehends challenges, formulates immediate, mid and long term interventions and presents a roadmap to the Prime Minister.

Urkund Software

According to a University Grants Commission (UGC) notice, all universities in India will get final subscription to access the Swedish anti-plagiarism software 'Urkund' from September 1, 2019. (Plagiarism is the practice of taking someone else's work or ideas and passing them off as one's own.)

- The Urkund software was chosen through a global tender process.
- While Turnitin (US anti-plagiarism software) is more commonly used by global academics, it was found to be 10 times more expensive without a proportionate increase in features or reliability.
- The central government is following a two-pronged approach to prevent plagiarism.
 - As a part of this process, in the coming years the software will be available free of cost to all 900 universities, including teachers, students and researchers.
 - The Centre also notified the University Grants Commission (Promotion of Academic Integrity and Prevention of Plagiarism in Higher Educational Institutions) Regulations, 2018 to prescribe the graded punishment for plagiarism.

UGC Panel on Improving Research Culture

- A UGC panel on improving research culture, headed by P. Balaram, noted that Indian academics have contributed 35% of all articles published in about 11,000 fake journals between 2010 and 2014.
- The panel found that most of these articles were in fake engineering journals, followed by articles in fake journals of biomedicine and social sciences.
- According to the panel report, primary responsibility to ensure high standards of academic research should lie with institutions themselves.
- Central rules and regulations can only complement the vigilant internal processes of institutions.
- The report submitted by the panel in July 2019 said that, "Institutions must take the responsibility for ensuring academic standards and for emphasising, to both students and

faculty, the importance of maintaining the highest standards of integrity in academic research.”

Biometric Token System in Railways

The Western and Central Railways have introduced a Biometric Token System (BTS) that seeks to streamline the process of boarding unreserved coaches (‘general’ compartment).

Biometric Token System

- Biometric Token System (BTS) is a system by which passengers travelling in the general coach, where seats are not reserved, are given a token roughly three hours before the train’s departure.
- These tokens are given on a first-come, first-served basis, and carry a serial number on them, which governs the order in which passengers will board the train.
- Tokens are issued after accepting biometric information of individual passengers.
- Passengers with valid tickets are required to place their fingers on a scanner, and are issued a token with a serial number against their biometric data.
- The biometric data captured in the machines will be stored locally with the authorities for a year.
- The data will be used to analyse the pattern of crowds and the number of people using a train.
- In case of a mishap, the railway authorities will have details of the passengers.
- The use of biometrics prevent black marketing of unreserved tickets.
- The token system helps in turning unmanageable crowds into well-managed, disciplined groups.

ODISHA DEVELOPMENT

A 3600 Years Old Site

As per the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), a rural settlement had thrived at Bharati Huda in Jalalpur village in Odisha’s Cuttack district, about 3600 years ago. This is based on the ancient artefacts and grain discovered by the ASI from the mentioned site in the year 2018. The age of the settlement was arrived at after radiocarbon dating of charcoal samples found at the site by the Inter University Accelerator Centre (IUAC) in New Delhi using Accelerator Mass Spectrometry (AMS).

Other Findings

- Chalcolithic Culture: The excavated remains indicate existence of Chalcolithic culture in the valley as attested by the presence of mud structural remains, large quantity of potsherds, ground and polished stone tools, bone tools, beads of semi-precious stones, terracotta objects, huge quantity of faunal remains and carbonized grains. The site has cultural similarity with Golabai Sasan, Suabarei and other excavated and explored sites in the Mahanadi delta and partial similarity with the chalcolithic sites of middle Mahanadi valley and sites of central and eastern India.
- Economy: The inhabitants practised agriculture and animal husbandry as attested by the findings of domesticated varieties of rice and jute and evidence of domesticated cattle among the faunal remains as well as terracotta bull figurine.
- Worship: A new religious belief emerged in the form of nature worship as evident from a single specimen of the Sun motif found arrayed in chocolate-slipped pottery. Sun worship dated back to 1099 BCE in the Prachi valley. Devotees from different parts of Odisha as well as the neighbouring States congregated at Chandrabhaga on the shore of the Bay of Bengal on the occasion of Magha Saptami to pay homage to Sun God. The world famous Sun temple of Konark, located some 30 kilometres from the excavation, was built in the 13th century CE. The tradition of Sun worship seems to have evolved with human settlements in the region.
- Co-existence: The excavation confirmed that a separate ethnic group that was using non-black-and-red ware might have existed during the early chalcolithic cultural horizon and a new class of ethnic group might have come into contact with the rural settlers at Bharati Huda during the mature phase of chalcolithic culture.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

Don’t let anyone ever make you feel like you don’t deserve what you want.

DAILY ANSWER WRITING PRACTICE

Qns: Examine the negative aspects of Article 35A. Why scrapping Article 35A maybe be a bad idea?

Ans: Article 35A is a unique provision included in the Indian constitution that bestowed Jammu and Kashmir Legislature a complete freedom to decide about the permanent residents of the State. It gives the permanent residents special rights and privileges regarding the acquisition of property in the state, in public sector jobs, scholarships and other public aid and welfare. The provision was arguably added in the constitution in pursuance of Article 370 that gives special status to the state of J&K within the Indian Union. The wording of Article 35A tries to insulate it from being challenged in courts by mandating that no act of the legislature coming under it can be challenged for violating the Constitution or any other law of the land .

- It forbids Indian citizens from settling in the state, acquiring immovable properties, seeking employment in the state.
- The critique of this article from the angle of women s rights is equally strong. If a native woman marries a man not holding a permanent resident certificate of Jammu & Kashmir, then she would lose her property right and their children also become ineligible to claim the property of their mother.
- It undermines the rights of West Pakistan refugees. Persons who migrated from Pakistan to India in 1947 have been denied the permanent resident status of J&K. This is an issue worth looking from a humane perspective but despite assurances from the government at periodic intervals. However, The Resettlement Act of 1982, passed by the Jammu and Kashmir legislature, tried to partially rectify the situation. This act bestowed upon such persons and their children the rights of permanent residents in J&K. However, the issue is politically very sensitive in J&K because of the clash of ideological positions, claims and counter-claims of different stakeholders. Hence, the permanent resident certificate has not been granted to these people. The issue must be resolved amicably by giving due rights to these people as they were uprooted from their ancestral roots in 1947 and then looked upon India as a beacon of hope.
- It conflicts with (rather violates) fundamental rights under Articles 14, 19 and 21 of the Constitution
- Critics also allege that Article 35A has catalysed in radicalization and ghettoization and aids separatist ideology.
- Not granting permanent resident status to the West Pakistan refugees is very inhuman and grossly undermines their well-being. It also undermines their faith in the goodness of India as well as its impartial judicial system.
- Article 35A also adversely affects the economic development of the state.

Why scrapping Article 35A would be a bad idea?

- Some experts say that the removal of Article 35A would change the demography of Kashmir. The separatist might fan anti-India feelings in the valley by politically misusing the issue. The hardening of the posture by the separatists will consequently disturb normalcy in the state.
- Asymmetrical federalism has been quite successful in India in preserving its unity and integrity. The Indian constitution purposefully mandates differential treatments for different units of the Indian Union. The Indian Constitution grants special status to J&K via Article 370 which together with the Instrument of Accession has been the cornerstone of J&K s successful incorporation into the Indian Union. In this context, scrapping Article 35A would be violative of Article 370 as well as the instrument of accession.
- The removal of Article 35A would also indirectly impact the special provision bestowed upon Mizoram, Nagaland etc. under Article 371.
- Critics also allege that it will lead to erosion of Jammu and Kashmir s autonomy.
- The rights of the legislature of J&K are not unlimited. The legislature can grant preferential treatment only in selective cases regarding property rights, employment, settlement and scholarship.

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS BASED MCQS

- In which of the following state/s, the One Nation-One Card scheme has been implemented recently on pilot basis?
 - Telengana
 - Maharashtra
 - Gujarat
 - Andhra Pradesh
 Select the correct answer from the codes given below:
 - 1, 2 and 3
 - 1, 3 and 4
 - 2, 3 and 4
 - 1, 2, 3 and 4**
 - Which of the following site/s of India has/have been shortlisted for the 'Structural Awards 2019'?
 - Taj Mahal
 - Statue of Unity
 - Konark Sun Temple
 Select the correct answer from the codes given below:
 - 1 only
 - 1 and 2
 - 2 and 3
 - 2 only**
 - Consider the following statements w.r.t Article 370.
 - It can be abrogated only through a constitutional amendment and not Presidential order.
 - Clause-1 of the Article 370 is the basis of Article 35A.
 Which of the statements is/are correct?
 - 1 only
 - 2 only
 - Both 1 and 2
 - Neither 1 nor 2
 - Consider the following statements w.r.t scrapping of Article-370.
 - J&K will no longer have its own flag
 - Article 370 removed completely from the constitution
 - Non-Kashmiris can get Govt job in J&K
 - Ranbir Penal Code will be scrapped completely
 Which of the statements are correct?
 - 1, 2 and 3
 - 2, 3 and 4
 - 1, 3 and 4**
 - 1, 2 and 4
 - Consider the following statements w.r.t to Human Genome Mapping.
 - India's first Human Genome Mapping project will be implemented by the Department of Science and Technology.
 - The Project involves scanning of 20,000 Indian genomes in order to develop diagnostic tests and effective therapies for treating diseases such as cancer.
 - According to Epidemiological Transition Level concept (ETL), cancer patients started to decrease in India with increase in life expectancy.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- 1 only
 - 2 only**
 - 1 and 2
 - 1 and 3
- Consider the following statements w.r.t Area 51
 - 'Storm Area 51' is Facebook event, promising to storm the alleged secret US military base in the Nevada desert.
 - Officially known as the Nevada Test and Training Range, Area 51 is part of the Nellis Air Force Base.
 - The Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) has been using the facility since 1955 to develop and test supersonic aircraft and stealth fighter jets

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

 - 1 only
 - 1 and 2
 - 2 and 3
 - 1, 2 and 3**
- The 'Urkund', sometimes mentioned in the news is a -
 - Anti-plagiarism software**
 - Women safety App
 - Russia's Mars Mission
 - Unmanned aerial vehicle
- Which of the following initiatives have been taken by the Govt to Promote Research and Technology Ecosystem?
 - SETU
 - VAJRA
 - Smart India Hackathon
 Select the correct answer using the codes given below
 - 1 and 2
 - 1 and 3
 - 2 and 3
 - 1, 2 and 3**
- Which of the following two Railway Divisions have recently adopted Biometric Token System?
 - Southern and Central
 - Eastern and Central
 - Northern and Central
 - Western and Central**