

**INDIAN HERITAGE AND CULTURE, HISTORY****Urdu**

Recently Punjab University, Chandigarh, had proposed to merge Department of Urdu language with school of foreign languages. The move earned huge criticism with Punjab Chief Minister Captain Amarinder Singh also saying that Urdu is an Indian language like any other Indian language.

**Origin:**

- According to the Urdu Language experts, all the historical references indicate that origin of Urdu had taken place in Punjab state of India several centuries back.
- Historians said that it had developed and flourished in Delhi during the period of 'Delhi Sultanate' from 12th to 16th century and then during the period of 'Mughal Empire' in Delhi from 16th century to 19th century
- Before it is called Urdu, it was familiar with other names including Hindustani, Hindavi, Dehlavi and Rekhta.

**Similarity with Punjabi Shahmukhi language:**

- We write it from right to left but the same was the case of Punjabi Shahmukhi language which was also written right to left.
- Despite its Persian script, Urdu is an Indian language because several Indian languages like Punjabi Shahmukhi language is also written in Persian Script.

**Urdu's official status in India:**

- It is one of the official languages under the Constitution of India, it is among the 15 Indian Languages written on the Indian Currency notes.
- It is one of the official languages in states like Kashmir, Telangana, UP, Bihar, New Delhi and West Bengal.
- The National Council for Promotion of Urdu Language (NCPUL) is an autonomous body under the Ministry of Human Resource Development (HRD), Government of India. Set up to promote, develop and propagate Urdu language, Council started its operation in Delhi in 1996.

**GEOGRAPHY****Hindu-Kush-Himalayan (HKH) Region**

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) will collaborate with meteorological agencies in China and Pakistan to provide climate forecast services to countries in the Hindu-Kush-Himalayan (HKH) region.

**About:**

- The Hindu-Kush-Himalayan (HKH) region spans Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan.
- The HKH region is considered the Third Pole [after the North and South Poles] and has significant implications for climate.
- The Third Pole, which contains vast cryospheric zones, is also the world's largest store of snow and ice outside the polar region, and the source of 10 major rivers, and, therefore, particularly sensitive to climate change.

**Regional climate centre in HKH region:**

- Earlier this month, the IMD organised a workshop to discuss ways to establish a regional climate centre that will provide forecasting services and climate analyses.
- It will be under the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) and take a few years to take shape.
- Alongside forecasting weather over long periods, the regional centres would provide data services, training and capacity-building, research and development.

**Saturn: Planet with Most Moons**

Recently the discovery of 20 new moons of Saturn has made Saturn the planet with the highest number of moons (82) against 79 moons of Jupiter.

- The discovered moons of planet Saturn may have once comprised a larger moon that was broken apart in the distant past.
- The newly discovered moons are able to continue orbiting Saturn after their parent moons broke apart indicates that these collisions occurred after the planet-formation process was mostly complete.
- These moons are the remnants of the objects that helped for planet formations thus studying the remnants might reveal the origin of the planet.
- Also, studying the orbits of these moons can reveal their origins, as well as information about the conditions surrounding Saturn at the time of its formation.
- The research related new moons of the planet Saturn have been released by the International Astronomical Union's Minor Planet Centre.

**CONSTITUTION AND POLITY**

**Meghalayan Minor Tribes Exclusion**

Recently, the Government of Meghalaya has decided to exclude 'unrepresented tribes' from the provisions of the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution.

- The five minor tribes namely, Bodo-Kachari, Hajong, Koch, Mann, and Rabha are clubbed together as 'unrepresented tribes' for nomination in Meghalaya's autonomous tribal councils.
- These minor tribes are indigenous to Meghalaya and have been living in the state much before its creation in 1972.
- These tribal councils are in the names of Garo, Jaintia, and Khasi district councils, that form the State's three major autonomous councils (predominantly the matrilineal communities).
- On September 26, 2019, a sub-committee constituted by the State government had decided to recommend to the Standing Committee of Parliament for the removal of the word 'unrepresented tribes' from the Sixth Schedule.
- This move has excluded 5 minor tribes in the State.
- The Sixth Schedule makes special provisions for the welfare and advancement of the Scheduled Tribes and the tribal areas residing in the parts or the whole of the four northeastern states namely, Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram, and Tripura.
- The proposed amendment will deprive some of these Scheduled Tribes of their constitutional rights to be represented in the autonomous district councils as of now, it will not be possible for them to get elected on the basis of adult suffrage.

**Hajong Tribe**

- The Hajong are tribal people native to the Indian subcontinent mostly in the northeast Indian states and Bangladesh. The majority of them are settled in India.
- Hajongs are predominantly the rice farmers and perform endogamy.
- The Hajongs are Hindus and observe Hindu rites and customs.

**Rabha Tribe**

- They are indigenous Mongoloid community of Nepal, Bhutan, Thailand, Myanmar, and Bangladesh, and the Indian states of Assam, Meghalaya and West Bengal.
- The language/dialect spoken by the Rabha people is mostly Rabha as well as Assamese.
- In Meghalaya, Rabhas are mostly found in Garo Hills districts.

**Koch Tribe**

- They are a Tibeto-Burman ethnolinguistic group of Assam, Meghalaya, West Bengal, and Bangladesh.
- Their language belongs to the Tibeto-Burman linguistic group.
- According to the census of 1881, Koch belong to a group of Bodo-Kachari people.

**Bodo-Kachari**

- It is a generic term applied to a number of ethnic groups that are predominantly living in the Northeast Indian state of Assam.
- They generally speak Assamese and other Tibeto-Burman languages and have a shared ancestry.

**INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS- BILATERAL, GROUPINGS, ORGANISATIONS**

**Bunad**

When Norwegian Ambassador Hans Jacob Frydenlund went to Rashtrapati Bhavan to present his credentials to President Ram Nath Kovind recently, he was wearing a "bunad."

**About:**

- Bunad is Norway's traditional folk costume.
- Bunad is not a single kind of costume but an umbrella term with several regional variations. There are 400 different variations that come in different styles for men and women.
- A bunad often includes an apron, a headdress, and a scarf or shawl, and is embroidered and embellished with buckles, ornaments, jewellery and at times, blades.
- Bunads are expensive and typically worn on festive occasions.

**Informal Summits**

China is yet to confirm President Xi Jinping's proposed visit to India for the second Informal Summit scheduled to take place in Mamallapuram, Tamil Nadu on October 11-12. The two countries convened their first Informal Summit in central China's Wuhan in April 2018.

**Meaning:**

- An 'informal summit' is different from a regular formal summits which involve months of minute diplomatic planning.
- By definition, informal summits lack the pomp, protocol and ceremony of formal ones, including delegation-level talks and a pre-set agenda for discussions.

- No agreements are signed, and there is no joint statement or press conference. The two leaders involved hold one-to one discussions, sometimes with only translators present.
- China is not the only country with which India has had an Informal Summit. In May 2018, Modi met Russia's Vladimir Putin for their first Informal Summit in Sochi to discuss international matters in a "broad and long-term perspective".

**Benefits:**

- Informal summits allow for quietly discussing contentious issues away from media glare and publicity.
- Absence of any formal joint communique also enables each side to spell out its own impressions of any outcomes.
- It allows leaders to meet 'informally' in order to know and understand each other better.
- By not setting expectations or deliverables, there is that much less pressure on the leaders.
- PM Modi's informal summits appear to be in response to the Trump administration's more aggressive strategy for Asia. It reasserts the tradition of independent Indian diplomacy while avoiding a formal strategic tilt toward America's adversaries.

**UNHRC's UPR**

The government is forming a task force to prepare a National Action Plan on Human Rights (NAPHR) as mandated under the UN Human Rights Council's (UNHRC) Universal Periodic Review (UPR).

**About**

- The task force will involve the Union Home Ministry and the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) and have representatives from ministries such as social justice and health.
- UPR is a state-driven process under UNHRC's auspices and provides opportunities to member states to declare what actions they have taken to improve human rights and to fulfil their obligations.
- A review cycle lasts four-and-half years, during which records of member states are reviewed.
- Earlier in 2017, India accepted 152 out of 250 recommendations on human rights. These pertain to sustainable development goals related to eliminating poverty, access to safe drinking water, sanitation and improving protection for women and children.
- However, India "noted" and refused to accept some recommendations, including those related to the Armed Forces Special Powers Act and the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act.
- Also, earlier, the UN had already recommended that India should have NAPHR covering issues such as the rights to health, education, food security, and housing; aspects related to custodial justice; and measures against the trafficking of women and children.
- NAPHR, once implemented, will help mitigate the criticism India faces at international level when it comes to its human rights record as well as strengthen the social justice system.
- It will also lead to stronger administration of justice, strengthening of human rights institutions, and linking of rights with development.

**UN Human Rights Council**

- It is an inter-governmental body within the United Nations system responsible for strengthening the promotion and protection of human rights around the globe and for addressing situations of human rights violations and make recommendations on them.
- It was created by the United Nations General Assembly on 15th March 2006 and replaced the United Nations Commission on Human Rights.
- It meets at the UN Office at Geneva.

**ENVIRONMENT- CONSERVATION, BIO-DIVERSITY AND ISSUES**

**GRADED RESPONSE ACTION PLAN (GRAP)**

Starting October 15, some stricter measures to fight air pollution will come into force in Delhi's neighbourhood, as part of the Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP).

**About:**

- Timeline: Approved by the Supreme Court in 2016, GRAP was notified in 2017 by the Centre and draws its authority from this notification.
- Bodies involved: The plan requires action and coordination among 13 different agencies in Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana and Rajasthan (NCR areas). At the head of the table is the EPCA, mandated by the Supreme Court.
- Working: GRAP works only as an emergency measure. As such, the plan does not include action by various state governments to be taken throughout the year to tackle industrial, vehicular and combustion emissions. When the air quality shifts from poor to very poor, the measures listed under it have to be followed since the plan is incremental in nature. If air quality reaches the severe+ stage, GRAP talks about shutting down schools and implementing the odd-even road-space rationing scheme.

**Environment Pollution (Prevention and Control) Authority (EPCA)**

- The EPCA, headed by retired IAS officer Bhure Lal and including members from the Centre for Science and Environment, was constituted in 1998 by the Supreme Court.
- The initial mandate of the body was to ensure the shift of Delhi's bus and auto fleet to CNG — a mammoth task that was among the most crucial ones in cleaning Delhi's air in the late 2000s.
- The body continues to monitor pollution and assists the Supreme Court in several pollution-related matters.

**DEFENCE & SECURITY****Rafale**

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh formally received the first Rafale fighter jet built for the Indian Air Force (IAF) at Production Unit of Dassault Aviation at Mérignac in France. He was handed over the first Indian aircraft, RB-001, by Dassault Aviation CEO Eric Trappier.

**About:**

- The Dassault Rafale is a French twin-engine, canard delta wing, multirole fighter aircraft designed and built by Dassault Aviation. Equipped with a wide range of weapons, the Rafale is intended to perform in-depth strike, anti-ship strike and nuclear deterrence missions.
- Introduced in 2001, the Rafale is being produced by the French Air Force and has been selected for purchase by the Indian Air Force, the Egyptian Air Force, and the Qatar Air Force.
- The Rafale has been used in combat over Afghanistan, Libya, Mali, Iraq and Syria.

**Indian scenario:**

- In September 2016, India and France signed a €7.87 billion Inter-Governmental Agreement (IGA) for 36 Rafale multi-role fighter jets in fly-away condition following the surprise announcement by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in April 2015.
- the first batch of the jets will arrive in India only in May 2020. By February 2021, India will receive 18 Rafale jets and by April 2022, India will get all the 36 Rafale.
- Till May 2020, three batches of IAF pilots, engineers and technicians will undergo advanced training on the Indian jets in France. So far, three IAF pilots and two technical officers have trained on French Air Force Rafale jets, as per the terms of the contract.

**PRELIMS SPECIFIC FACTS- INDICES, DAYS, AWARDS ETC.****Nobel Prize 2019 For Physics**

Three scientists, James Peebles, Michel Mayor and Didier Queloz have won the Nobel Prize 2019 for Physics for their contribution to the understanding of the evolution of the universe and earth's place in the cosmos.

**Cosmic Microwave Background (CMB):**

- Canadian-American cosmologist James Peebles, 84, won one-half of the Prize for his theoretical work helping us understand how the universe evolved after the Big Bang.
- His work is focused largely on Cosmic Microwave Background (CMB) radiation, which is electromagnetic radiation left over from the early universe once it had cooled sufficiently following the Big Bang.

**Exoplanet:**

- The other half went to Swiss astronomers Michel Mayor, 77, and Didier Queloz, 53, for their discovery of an exoplanet that challenged preconceived ideas about planets.
- Using a spectrograph, ELODIE, they predicted the planet by observing the "Doppler effect" — when the star wobbles as an effect of a planet's gravity on its observed light.
- Today, exoplanets are being discovered very frequently — over 4,000 are known — which is remarkable progress from three decades ago, when not even one exoplanet was known.

**QUOTE OF THE DAY**

**In the world of 'Apna Time Aayega', be the one who raps 'Apna Time Apun Khud Laayega'..**

### **DAILY ANSWER WRITING PRACTICE**

**Qns- As an international organisation committed to global peace, has the UN been able to ensure international ethics? Examine along with reasons given in support of your answer.**

**Answer**

International ethics concerns with ethical obligations between countries. Issues like wars, state backed ethnic conflicts, terrorist attacks, nuclear arms proliferation etc. involve questions of international ethics e.g. whether a particular war is 'just war'.

The United Nations was established in 1945 to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war and one of its main purposes is to maintain international peace. Yet on many occasions it has failed in its mission as well as in ensuring international ethics for establishing peace.

**Reasons for failure of UN to build International ethics**

- Competing blocks: UNSC at present is too undemocratic and concentrates power in 5 permanent members who use their veto power to satisfy their own and allies 'national interest' without any ethical considerations e.g. in Syria competing blocks are fighting for territorial control.
- Lack of reform in UNSC: The Security Council's membership and working methods reflect a bygone era. Though geopolitics has changed drastically, emerging nations are demanding more representative quota in UNSC which is important for enhancing its legitimacy. Greater sharing of power would help in reaching consensus on common issues quickly and democratically. It will also ensure condemnation of unethical actions without any favours or bias, thus creating a moral pressure on the perpetrating state.
- Failure to invoke R2P: In 2005, the UN and its member states collectively sanctioned 'Responsibility to Protect (R2P)', R2P's core tenant decrees on every sovereign state an obligation to safeguard its inhabitants from mass atrocities, and the duty may fall to the wider international community. In Rohingya's crisis UN failed to invoke R2P as China opposed action.
- Failure to convince P-5 countries: UN ability to tackle peacekeeping challenges and thus protecting human right depends on its capacity to persuade big powers to take the UN seriously. However, UN has failed in this pursuit to build a case for International morality vis-à-vis hard national interest.

**Way Forward**

There is a dire need for reforms in United Nations based on equality and democratic spirit. An organization built on the moral principles of equality and representation will promote International ethics and world peace.

**Qns. India needs to stop looking at only South Asia as its "neighbourhood" and instead, evolve a more rational and realistic understanding of its "strategic frontiers". Discuss.**

India desires a peaceful and stable environment for its development, and the government has clearly indicated its priority for building stronger ties with its South Asian neighbours.

“Neighbourhood First” policy is an example of India’s focus on the development and progress of South Asia.

Issues in the region:

- The region is home to the world’s 400 million poor people, which means nearly 30 per cent of the region’s population lives below the poverty line. All the SAARC countries have a rather low ranking on the human development index (HDI).
- The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) came into being to promote intraregional connectivity through trade but intra-SAARC trade stands at a meagre 5%.
- The tensions between the two leading powers of South Asia have caused great damage to region, often stunting its growth and development.
- Thus, we need to think more rational and beyond our south Asia frontiers.

Strategic Frontier and the need

- A Strategic Frontier is that unexplored area of potential growth that lies beyond today’s business and encompasses tomorrow’s opportunities, if discovered.
- Our Free Trade Agreements with Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreements with Japan and South Korea now place us in parallel with the dynamic, fast-growing countries to our east.
- It has also been augmented by strategic partnerships with countries across East and South-East Asia. India’s Act East policy have been a harbinger in this front.
- As we grow in international stature, our defense strategies should naturally reflect our political, economic and security concerns, extending well beyond the geographical confines of South Asia. For instance, India has been expanding its reach and relationship depth with U.S., Middle East, Africa, Australia, Seychelles and other island nations.
- Our security environment ranges from the Persian Gulf to the Straits of Malacca across the Indian Ocean, includes Central Asia and Afghanistan in the North West, China in the North East and South East Asia. Our strategic thinking should also extend to these horizons.

Challenges:- India’s strategic frontiers clash and will be in conflict with those of China. It also runs aground where Pakistan is concerned, such as in SAARC initiative, which needs to be smoothed out with strategic thinking.

Conclusion

India has been traditionally more closely associated with South East region due to converging interests in trade, tourism, issues with China etc. through SAARC, ASEAN. but given continuously changing global paradigms and having a troublesome neighbourhood India needs to be more pragmatic and explore and invest in its strategic frontiers.



### **DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS MCQS**

1. Hajong, Koch, and Rabha tribes are predominantly found in which region of India?
  - (a) Southern Region
  - (b) Central Region
  - (c) Western Region
  - (d) North-Eastern Region**
2. Consider the following statements:
  1. Hindu Kush Himalayan region is considered as the third pole of the Earth.
  2. This region has the world's largest store of snow and ice apart from the polar region.
 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
3. Who among the following have been awarded the 2019 Nobel Prize for Physics?
  - (a) James Peebles, Michel Mayor and Didier Queloz**
  - (b) Gérard Mourou, Arthur Ashkin, Donna Strickland
  - (c) James P. Allison and Tasuku Honjo
  - (d) Kip Thorne, Rainer Weiss, Barry Barish
4. With reference to the Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP) to fight air pollution, consider the following statements:
  1. The plan requires action and coordination among all central and state agencies in India.
  2. It works only as an emergency measure.
 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
5. With reference to the Urdu, consider the following statements:
  1. It is official language only in the state of Kashmir.
  2. The National Council for Promotion of Urdu Language (NCPUL) is an autonomous body under the Ministry of Human Resource Development (HRD), Government of India.
 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
6. With reference to the Dassault Rafale, consider the following statements:
  1. It is an American twin-engine, canard delta wing, multirole fighter aircraft designed and built by Dassault Aviation.
  2. India recently received the first Rafale fighter jet built for the Indian Air Force (IAF).
 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