

NATIONAL ISSUES**Grand Chord Route**

Indian Railways has installed the most advanced Electronic Interlocking System on the Grand Chord route. The measure is towards reducing the travel time between Delhi and Howrah to about 12 hours from the existing 17 to 19 hours.

About:

- Grand Chord is part of the Howrah-Gaya-Delhi line and Howrah-Allahabad-Mumbai line.
- It acts as a link between Sitarampur in West Bengal and Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyay Junction, Uttar Pradesh, and covers a stretch of 450 kilometres falling in North Central Railway Zone.
- The new Electronic system has replaced outdated 65-year old mechanical signalling system at Tundla Junction in Uttar Pradesh on the route. This interlocking system at Tundla is the second largest in the country after Kharagpur Station in South Eastern Railway.

Prison Statistics India–2017

The National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) released the report 'Prison Statistics India 2017.'

Key highlights of the report:

- Prisons Types: There are 1,361 prisons in the country consisting of 666 Sub jails, 405 District jails, 142 Central jails, 64 Open jails, 41 Special jails, 22 Woman jails, 19 Borstal School and 2 other jails.
- Prisons Occupancy: Out of the total capacity 3,91,574 in 1,361 prisons in 2017, the Central jails of the country were having the highest capacity of inmates (1,74,412) followed by the District jails (capacity of 1,53,383 inmates) and the Sub jails (capacity of 44,577 inmates).
- The number of prisoners lodged in various jails has increased from 4,33,003 in 2016 to 4,50,696 in 2017.
- Prisoners Types: Out of 4,50,696 prisoners, the number of Convicts, undertrial inmates and detenues accounted for 30.9 per cent 68.5 per cent and 0.5 per cent respectively. Other prisoners accounted for 0.2 per cent of total prisoners.
- The number of deaths in prisons has increased marginally from 1,584 in 2015 to 1,671 in 2017, out of which 1,494 were natural and 133 unnatural.
- A total of 378 prisoners escaped from lawful custody during the 2017.
- Gujarat has the highest number of undertrial prisoners who are Pakistani nationals. The state has 59 Pakistani undertrial prisoners out of the total 101 overseas prisoners in the state. Jammu and Kashmir has the second-highest Pakistani national undertrials at 35.

INDIAN POLITY & GOVERNANCE**Mission Indradhanush**

The Government will launch the second phase of nationwide immunisation drive, i.e. Intensified Mission Indradhanush 2.0, to mark the 25 years of Pulse polio programme.

- Intensified Mission Indradhanush 2.0 aims to achieve at least 90% pan-India immunisation coverage by 2022.
- Mission Indradhanush, that was launched in December 2014, has increased India's immunisation coverage significantly to 87% from 67% in 2014.
- However, official data on India's immunisation coverage is still 62%, given as the National Family Health Survey-4 (2015-16).

Immunization Programme in India

- Immunization Programme in India was introduced in 1978 as 'Expanded Programme of Immunization (EPI) by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

- In 1985, the Programme was modified as ‘Universal Immunization Programme (UIP)’. The stated objectives of the Programme include:
 - Rapidly increasing immunization coverage,
 - Improving the quality of services,
 - Establishing a reliable cold chain system to the health facility level,
 - Introducing a district-wise system for monitoring of performance,
 - Achieving self-sufficiency in vaccine production.
- UIP prevents mortality and morbidity in children and pregnant women against 12 vaccine-preventable diseases. But in the past, it was seen that the increase in immunization coverage had slowed down and it increased at the rate of 1% per year between 2009 and 2013.
- To accelerate the coverage, Mission Indradhanush was envisaged and implemented since 2015 to rapidly increase the full immunization coverage to 90%.

Mission Indradhanush

- The aim is to fully immunize more than 89 lakh children who are either unvaccinated or partially vaccinated under UIP.
- It targets children under 2 years of age and pregnant women for immunization.
- It provides vaccination against 12 Vaccine-Preventable Diseases (VPD) i.e. diphtheria, Whooping cough, tetanus, polio, tuberculosis, hepatitis B, meningitis and pneumonia, Hemophilus influenza type B infections, Japanese encephalitis (JE), rotavirus vaccine, pneumococcal conjugate vaccine (PCV) and measles-rubella (MR).
 - However, Vaccination against Japanese Encephalitis and Haemophilus influenzae type B is being provided in selected districts of the country.
- It is a nationwide initiative with a special focus on 201 high focus districts. These districts accounted for nearly 50% of the total partially vaccinated or unvaccinated children in the country.
- The rate of increase in full immunization coverage increased to 6.7% per year through the first two phases of ‘Mission Indradhanush’.

Intensified Mission Indradhanush

- The Intensified Mission Indradhanush (IMI) was launched by the Government of India in 2017 to reach each and every child under two years of age and all those pregnant women who have been left uncovered under the routine immunisation programme.
 - Under IMI, greater focus has been given on urban areas which was one of the gaps of Mission Indradhanush.
- The target under IMI was to increase the full immunization coverage to 90% by December 2018. However, only 16 districts in the country have achieved 90% coverage so far.
- The Intensified Mission Indradhanush 2.0 will target the districts which have immunisation coverage of 70% or below.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS- BILATERAL, GROUPINGS, ORGANISATIONS

Credit Suisse's Global Wealth Report 2019

The Credit Suisse Group, a Switzerland-based multinational investment bank, has released the 10th edition of its annual Global Wealth Report.

About:

- The report tracks both the growth and distribution of wealth – in terms of the numbers of millionaires and billionaires and the proportion of wealth that they hold – as well as the status of inequality around the world.
- Wealth is defined in terms of “net worth” of an individual. This, in turn, is calculated by adding up the value of financial assets (such as money) and real assets (such as houses) and then subtracting any debts an individual may have.

Key findings of Credit Suisse's Global Wealth Report 2019:

- Just 47 million people – accounting for merely 0.9% of the world’s adult population – owned \$158.3 trillion, which is almost 44% of the world’s total wealth.
- At the other end of the spectrum are 2.88 billion people – accounting for almost 57% of the world’s adult population – who owned just \$6.3 trillion or 1.8% of the world’s wealth.
- China has overtaken the United States this year to become “the country with most people in the top 10% of global wealth distribution”.
- The report singles out India, along with China and Vietnam as the best examples of how wealth can be increased by pushing for higher economic growth.

Kolpak Rule

South Africa skipper Faf du Plessis said a no-deal Brexit would be beneficial for the Proteas because it would close the Kolpak route, stopping the talent drain in the process.

About:

- The Kolpak ruling is a European Court of Justice ruling handed down in 2003 in favour of Maroš Kolpak, a Slovak handball player.
- It declared that citizens of countries which have signed European Union Association Agreements have the same right to freedom of work and movement within the EU as EU citizens. Thus any restrictions placed on their right to work are deemed illegal under EU law.
- A Kolpak player, or Kolpak, is a term used in the United Kingdom for players in the domestic leagues in cricket and both rugby codes from overseas, subject to the Kolpak ruling.
- Implications for Cricket: the decision has allowed English county cricket clubs to employ the services of a multitude of overseas cricketers, especially from South Africa. Prior to the Kolpak ruling ECB rules had limited each county to one overseas (non-EU) professional.

ENVIRONMENT**White Bellbird**

According to a study, published in the journal ‘Current Biology’, the male white bellbird’s mating call is about three times louder than screaming phias — the previously loudest bird.

The discovery offers another example of the consequences of sexual selection.

- Sexual selection happens when males compete for mates, driving the evolution of truly bizarre and exaggerated traits such as the peacock’s tail, and the now found loud singing abilities of the male bellbirds.
- In general, sexual selection is a theory in postulating that the evolution of certain conspicuous physical traits—such as pronounced coloration, increased size, or striking adornments—in animals may grant the possessors of these traits greater success in obtaining mates.
- The white bellbird is one of the four bellbird species in South and Central America.
- It is listed on the ‘Least Concern’ category under the IUCN.

INTERNAL SECURITY**Crime In India Report 2017**

The annual Crime in India Report 2017 was published by the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB).

Key highlights of the report:

- A total of 50,07,044 cognizable crimes — 30,62,579 Indian Penal Code (IPC) crimes and 19,44,465 Special & Local Laws (SLL) crimes — were registered in 2017, an increase of 3.6 per cent in registration of cases over 2016.

- The NCRB for the first time collected data on circulation of “false/fake news and rumours.” Under the category, maximum incidents were reported from Madhya Pradesh (138), Uttar Pradesh (32) and Kerala (18).
- A new category of offences committed by various categories of “Anti-National Elements” showed that the maximum offences were committed by Left Wing Extremist (LWE) operatives (652), followed by North East insurgents (421) and Terrorists (Jihadi and other elements) (371).
- 3,59,849 cases of crime against women were reported in the country. Uttar Pradesh topped the list with 56,011. Majority of cases under crimes against women were registered under ‘Cruelty by Husband or his Relatives’ (27.9%).
- In percentage terms, major crime heads under ‘Crime Against Children’ during 2017 were kidnapping and abduction (42.0 per cent) and cases under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012 (25.3 per cent) including child rape.
- 58,880 incidents of rioting were reported, of which the maximum incidents were reported from Bihar (11,698). Of the total riots reported, communal and sectarian riots accounted for 723 and 183 incidents respectively. There were 805 riots due to caste conflict and 1909 riots occurred due to political reasons.
- Incidents of atrocities against Scheduled Castes jump from 5,082 in 2016 to 5,775 in 2017.
- Incidents of crime related to Scheduled Tribes dipped from 844 in 2016 to 720 in 2017.
- Delhi recorded a 40.4% share of total Indian Penal Code (IPC) crimes registered across 19 metropolitan cities in the country in 2017 with Bengaluru taking the second position at 8.9% followed by Mumbai at 7.4%.
- There has been a 30 per cent rise in incidents of offences against the state in 2017 as compared to 2016. This category includes offences such as sedition, waging war against the country and damage to public property among others.
- The maximum number of sedition cases were reported from Assam (19) followed by Haryana (13). Jammu and Kashmir recorded just one case of sedition.
- Data collected under the new sub-heads of death due to mob lynching, murder by influential people, killing ordered by khap panchayat and murder committed for religious reason have not been published, resulting in partial delay of the agency’s report for 2017.
- A total 21,796 instances of cyber-crime were recorded in 2017, an increase of 77% over the previous year’s number of 12,317. nearly every fifth cyber-crime in 2017 was committed against a woman.

Techsagar

The National Cyber Security Coordinator's office in partnership with Data Security Council (DSCI) of India launched TechSagar.

About:

- TechSagar is national repository of India’s cyber tech capabilities.
- It is a platform to discover capabilities of the Indian Industry, academia and research across 25 technology areas like internet of things (IoT), Artificial Intelligence (AI), Machine Learning (ML), blockchain, cloud & virtualisation, robotics & automation, wireless & networking.
- The portal (techsagar.in) will list business and research entities from the IT industry, startups, academia, and individual researchers.
- It will allow targeted search, granular navigation and drilldown methods using more than 3,000 niche capabilities. The repository currently features over 4,000 entities.

Related Info: Data Security Council (DSCI) is a not-for-profit, industry body on data protection in India, setup by NASSCOM.

QUOTES OF THE DAY

A leader is who knows the way, walks the way and shows the way.

DAILY ANSWER WRITING PRACTICE

Qns: India's reluctance regarding negotiations for a separate treaty on Crime Against Humanity doesn't augur well with India's image as a champion of human rights. Analyse.

Answer

Crimes against humanity are certain acts that are deliberately committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack directed against any civilian or an identifiable part of a civilian population. It is an offence in international criminal law, and is part of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC). World poverty, human-made environmental disasters, and terrorist attacks have thus been described as crimes against humanity.

- In State v. Sajjan Kumar (2018) Delhi High Court with reference to anti-Sikh riots of 1984 held that neither 'crimes against humanity' nor 'genocide' has been made part of India's criminal law, a lacuna that needs to be addressed urgently.
- The court categorically stated that these kind of mass crimes "engineered by political actors with the assistance of the law enforcement agencies" fit into the category of crimes against humanity (CAH).
- India is not a party to the Rome Statute, which means that it is under no obligation at present to enact separate legislation dealing with CAH. The reasons for India's reluctance regarding negotiations for a separate treaty on CAH are:
- Negotiations at the International Law Commission (ILC) seek to adopt the same definition of CAH as provided in the Rome Statute.
 - India is not in favour of using 'widespread or systematic' as one of the conditions, but prefers 'widespread and systematic', which would require a higher threshold of proof.
- Second, India wanted a distinction to be made between international and internal armed conflicts.
 - India's internal conflicts with Naxals and other non-state actors in places like Kashmir and the Northeast could fall under the scope of CAH.
- The third objection is related to the inclusion of the enforced disappearance of persons under CAH, which occurs when a person is secretly abducted or imprisoned by a state or a third party with State authorization.
 - India has signed but not yet ratified the UN International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearances, therefore, it is under no obligation to criminalise it through domestic legislation.
- Thus, India's domestic conditions compel India not to engage in negotiations at the International Law Commission (ILC).
- However, to abide by the constitutional principle of rule of law, India should adhere to its image as a champion of human rights. Thus, turning a blind eye to such crimes against humanity reflects poorly on India's status as a democracy.
- Hence, India should show political will and constructively engage with the ILC, which would also, in the process, address the shortcomings in the domestic criminal justice system.

Conclusion:

India's policymaking has been motivated by the motto: Think globally, act locally, but in the case of crime against humanity India must follow Act locally, Inspire globally. So India's eventual adherence to the International Criminal Court and the Rome Treaty will act as a pathway for the renaissance for the future of human rights-oriented modes of Indian governance. It will be conceived as an endeavour to make power more accountable, governance increasingly just, and the state incrementally ethical.

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS MCQS

1. What is 'TechSagar', recently seen in news?
(a) A national repository of India's cyber tech capabilities.
(b) A research vessel owned and operated by India's National Centre for Antarctic and Ocean Research (NCAOR).
(c) An Antarctic Snow Cruiser.
(d) None of the above
2. With reference to the 'Prison Statistics India 2017', consider the following statements:
 1. It was released by National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB).
 2. Rajasthan has the highest number of undertrial prisoners who are Pakistani nationals.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. With reference to the Grand Chord Route, consider the following statements:
 1. It is part of the Jammu – Kashmir line.
 2. The interlocking system at Tundla is the second largest in the country after Kharagpur Station in South Eastern Railway.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
4. With reference to the Credit Suisse's Global Wealth Report 2019, consider the following statements:
 1. China has overtaken the United States this year to become "the country with most people in the top 10% of global wealth distribution".
 2. The report singles out India, along with China and Vietnam as the best examples of how wealth can be increased by pushing for higher economic growth.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. Kolpak Rule and Cotonou Agreement', which was in the news recently is in the affairs of:
(a) European Union
(b) G20
(c) Shanghai Cooperation Organisation
(d) G7
6. 'Mission Indradhanush' covers which of the following diseases:
 1. Whooping Cough
 2. Japanese Encephalitis
 3. Hepatitis-B
 4. CancerSelect the correct answer using codes given below
(a) 1 and 3 only
(b) 2 and 4 only
(c) 1, 2 and 3 only
(d) 1, 2, 3 and 4