

**NATIONAL SOCIAL ISSUES- WOMEN, POPULATION, URBANISATION, EMPOWERMENT ETC****Violence Against Women**

The Law Ministry has said that over 1000 Fast Track Special Courts will be set up across the country for speedy disposal of cases relating to rape and Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act.

**About:**

- Out of these, 389 courts have been proposed to be set up exclusively for POCSO Act related cases in districts where the pendency of such cases is more than 100.
- These courts will be set-up as a part of the National Mission for Safety of Women. The scheme was circulated to the concerned State Governments and Union Territory Administrations in September last year.
- The Ministry said, 24 States and Union Territories have joined this scheme for setting up 792 Fast Track Special Courts. These include 354 exclusive courts for trial of POCSO offences.

**Related Info:**

Incidents of rape and gang rape of minor girls below twelve years and similar heinous crimes against women require effective deterrence through time- bound trial. For this purpose, the Centre has enacted the Criminal Law (Amendment) Act, 2018.

**CONSTITUTION AND POLITY****Violent Protests**

As protests continue across the country over the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA), latest crime data on violent protests suggest that until at least 2018 compared with 2017, public concerns were more about economic issues than about politics.

**About:**

- According to the 2018 crime report of the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), while riot cases due to communal, political, agrarian and student issues declined over 2017, riots arising out of industrial and water disputes rose sharply.
- According to the NCRB report, industrial riots rose from 178 in 2017 to 440 in 2018. Water dispute riots rose from 432 in 2017 to 838 in 2018.
- On the other hand, political riots fell by almost 25% in 2018 over 2017. Communal riots fell by almost 30% in the same period. Caste conflicts too declined by almost 20%. Student conflicts marginally fell by about 10%, while agrarian riots recorded a decline of over 35%.
- Offences under the Prevention of Damage to Public Property Act have seen a decline of over 10%. A total of 7,910 cases were registered under this Act in 2017. This declined to 7,127 in 2018. In 2018, UP topped the charts for offences under the Act. As many as 2,388 offences were registered by UP under the Act, followed by Tamil Nadu (2230) and Haryana (415).
- In 2018, 76,851 cases were registered under the category "Offences against Public Tranquillity". This was a decline from 2017 which saw 78,051 such cases. Almost 90% of all such offences were associated with rioting while the rest were under "Unlawful

**INDIAN ECONOMY****Video Based Customer Identification Process (V-CIP)**

The RBI has amended the Know Your Customer (KYC) norms allowing banks and other lending institutions regulated by it to use Video based Customer Identification Process (V-CIP), a move which will help them onboard customers remotely.

**About:**

- RBI has decided to permit video based Customer Identification Process (V-CIP) as a consent based alternate method of establishing the customer's identity, for customer onboarding with a view to leveraging the digital channels for Customer Identification Process (CIP) by regulated entities (REs).

- The regulated entities will have to ensure that the video recording is stored in a safe and secure manner and bears the date and time stamp.

Related Info:

- Last year, the government had notified amendment to the Prevention of Money-laundering (Maintenance of Records) Rules, 2005. As per the circular, the reporting entity should capture a clear image of PAN card to be displayed by the customer during the process.
- It further said that the official of the reporting entity should ensure that the photograph and the identification details in Aadhaar/PAN should match with the details provided by the customer. It also said that Live location of the customer (Geotagging) shall be captured to ensure that customer is physically present in India.

**Residential Builder Finance With Buyer Guarantee (RBBG) Scheme**

Country's largest public sector bank, State Bank of India (SBI) has announced a 'residential builder finance with buyer guarantee' (RBBG) scheme to give a push to residential sales and improve homebuyers' confidence.

About:

- Under this scheme, the SBI will issue a guarantee for completion of select residential projects to customers who have availed home loans from it. The scheme will focus on affordable housing projects priced up to 2.50 crore rupees in 10 cities initially.
- Under RBBG, the guarantee would be given by the bank till the project gets the occupation certificate (OC).
- The guarantee will be available for RERA registered projects and a project will be considered stuck after it crosses the RERA deadline.

Related Info: The Real Estate (Regulation and Development) Act, 2016 establishes Real Estate Regulatory Authority (RERA) in each state for regulation of the real estate sector and also acts as an adjudicating body for speedy dispute resolution.

**Market Study On E-Commerce In India: Key Findings And Observations**

The Competition Commission of India (CCI) released a Report titled 'Market Study on E-commerce in India: Key Findings and Observations.' The priorities for the CCI in the e-commerce sector in India are the following:

- Ensuring competition on the merits to harness efficiencies for consumers: Increasing transparency to create incentive for competition and to reduce information asymmetry
- Fostering sustainable business relationships between all stakeholders: The report enumerates certain areas for self-regulation by the e-commerce marketplace platforms to reduce information asymmetry and promote competition on the merits.
- Search ranking: Set out in the platforms' terms and conditions a general description of the main search ranking parameters, drafted in plain and intelligible language and keep that description up to date.
- Collection, use and sharing of data: Set out a clear and transparent policy on data that is collected on the platform, the use of such data by the platform and also the potential and actual sharing of such data with third parties or related entities.
- User review and rating mechanism: Adequate transparency over user review and rating mechanisms is necessary for ensuring information symmetry. Reviews for only verified purchases to be published and mechanisms to be devised to prevent fraudulent reviews/ratings.
- Revision in contract terms: Notify the business users concerned of any proposed changes in terms and conditions.
- Discount policy: Bring out clear and transparent policies on discounts, including inter alia the basis of discount rates funded by platforms for different products/suppliers and the implications of participation/non-participation in discount schemes.

**PRELIMS SPECIFIC FACTS- INDICES, DAYS, EVENTS, AWARDS ETC**

**Pravasi Bhartiya Diwas**

Indian embassies in different countries celebrated Pravasi Bhartiya Diwas.

**About:**

- Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) is celebrated on 9th January every year to mark the contribution of Overseas Indian community in the development of India.
- January 9 was chosen as the day to celebrate this occasion since it was on this day in 1915 that Mahatma Gandhi returned to India from South Africa, led India's freedom struggle and changed the lives of Indians forever.
- Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) Convention is celebrated once in every two years to strengthen the engagement of the overseas Indian community with the Government of India and reconnect them with their roots.
- During the Convention, selected overseas Indians are also honored with the prestigious Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award to recognize their contributions to various fields both in India and abroad.

**World Hindi Day**

World Hindi Day is being celebrated on January 10.

**About:**

- The day is commemorated every year with the objective to promote use of Hindi language abroad. Special functions are being organized to mark the occasion.
- On this day in 2006 the First World Hindi Conference was organized in Nagpur with the aim to promote the language worldwide and since then every year 10th January is being observed as the World Hindi Day.
- Ministry of External Affairs and Indian Missions abroad are observing the day annually.

**Costa Children's Book Award**

India-born author Jasbinder Bilan has won the Costa Children's Book Award, a coveted UK children's book award for her debut novel 'Asha and the Spirit Bird.' Bilan will receive 5,000 pounds as the winner of the award.

**About:**

- The Costa Book Awards are a set of annual literary awards recognising English-language books by writers based in Britain and Ireland.
- The awards are given both for high literary merit but also for works that are enjoyable reading and whose aim is to convey the enjoyment of reading to the widest possible audience.
- Authors need not be British or Irish but they must have been resident in the UK or Ireland for at least six months in each of the previous three years.
- There are five book award categories: (1) Novel, (2) First novel, (3) Children's book, (4) Poetry and (5) Biography.
- Each of the five winning writers receives £5,000.

**Muppavarapu National Awards**

Eminent Agricultural Scientist Dr M S Swaminathan and well-known social worker, Dr. Gutta Muniratnam were respectively chosen as the first recipients of 'Muppavarapu Venkaiah Naidu National Award for Excellence' and 'Muppavarapu National Award for Social Service'

**About:**

- The National Award for Excellence was instituted by the Muppavarapu Foundation, while the one for Social Service was launched by the Swarna Bharat Trust, in Hyderabad.
- M.S. Swaminathan, a plant geneticist by training, was awarded for his distinguished contributions to the field of agriculture. He is widely referred to as the scientific leader of the green revolution movement.
- Dr G Muniratnam, was awarded for his extraordinary contribution in improving quality of people's lives through social service. He is Founder Secretary of Tirupati -based Rashtriya Seva Samiti and an exemplary social worker.
- Each award carries a cash prize of Rupees Five Lakh and citation.

**DAILY ANSWER WRITING PRACTICE**

**Qns. Discuss how Artificial Intelligence can be used to meet India's socio-economic needs.**

Ans:

Artificial Intelligence (AI) refers to the ability of machines to perform cognitive tasks like thinking, perceiving, learning, problem-solving and decision making.

India, being the fastest growing economy with the second largest population in the world, has a significant stake in the AI revolution. Experts believe that Artificial intelligence could add at least a trillion dollars to our economy by 2035.

- AI can help achieve the trillion dollars target by augmenting labour productivity and innovation, driving growth through intelligent automation, human-machine collaboration and innovation diffusion.
- Some of these are already in play in the form of smart factories where humans and machines work side by side to improve outcomes.
  - In the insurance sector, machines are doing repetitive tasks, allowing humans to focus on more complex, judgement-based processing and customer service.
  - New opportunities are also created through innovation spillovers. For instance, Google Maps is helping drive the growth of Uber and Ola, revolutionising personal transport and creating employment for a large number of people.
- AI, used in combination with robotics, Big Data analytics, Internet of Things (IoT) and genomics, could also improve the lives of our farmers.
  - Solutions for traditional challenges such as the unpredictability of weather or soil conditions, or the increasing costs of farm labour are being used extensively in several parts of the world, and precision farming, enabled by these technologies, is globally proven to increase crop yields, reduce farmers' costs and boost profits.
- NITI Aayog has decided to focus on five sectors that are envisioned to benefit the most from AI in solving societal needs:
- Healthcare: increased access and affordability of quality healthcare,
  - Agriculture: enhanced farmers' income, increased farm productivity and reduction of wastage,
  - Education: improved access and quality of education,
  - Smart Cities and Infrastructure: efficient and connectivity for the burgeoning urban population, and
  - Smart Mobility and Transportation: smarter and safer modes of transportation and better traffic and congestion problems.
- To truly reap the benefits of deploying AI at scale, the following barriers need to be addressed in order to achieve the goals of AIforAll:
  - Lack of broad-based expertise in research and application of AI,
  - Absence of enabling data ecosystems – access to intelligent data,
  - High resource cost and low awareness for adoption of AI,
  - Privacy and security, including a lack of formal regulations around anonymisation of data, and
  - Absence of a collaborative approach to the adoption and application of AI.

Conclusion:

- It is essential that we equip our people with the education, training and support they need to take on the many jobs that will be created.
- We also need to make AI responsible. Government and businesses must work together to develop a code of ethics - tangible standards and best practices to develop and use intelligent machines.

**DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS MCQs**

1. With reference to the 'Market Study on E-commerce in India: Key Findings and Observations', consider the following statements:

1. The report enumerates certain areas for self-regulation by the e-commerce marketplace platforms to reduce information asymmetry and promote competition on the merits.
2. Adequate transparency over user review and rating mechanisms is necessary for ensuring information symmetry.

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

2. With reference to the 'Muppavarapu National Awards', consider the following statements:

1. Prof. M.S. Swaminathan, a plant geneticist by training, was awarded for his distinguished contributions to the field of agriculture.
2. Dr G Muniratnam, was awarded for his extraordinary contribution in improving quality of people's lives through social service.

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 Fast Track Special Courts for speedy disposal of cases relating to rape and Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, consider the following statements:

1. Out of 1000 Fast Track Special Courts, 389 courts have been proposed to be set up exclusively for POCSO Act related cases in districts where the pendency of such cases is more than 100.
2. These courts will be set-up as a part of the National Mission for Safety of Women.

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 Costa Children's Book Award, consider the following statements:

1. They are a set of annual literary awards recognising English-language books by writers based in Britain and Ireland.
2. Authors must be British citizen.

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 'residential builder finance with buyer guarantee' (RBBG) scheme, consider the following statements:

1. Under this scheme, any bank can issue a guarantee for completion of select residential projects to customers who have availed home loans from it.
2. Under RBBG, the guarantee would be given by the bank till the project gets the occupation certificate (OC).

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 Video based Customer Identification Process (V-CIP), consider the following statements:

1. According to RBI amended Know Your Customer (KYC) norms only banks can use Video based Customer Identification Process (V-CIP).

2. The regulated entities will have to ensure that the video recording is stored in a safe and secure manner and bears the date and time stamp.

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

7. With reference to the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD), consider the following statements:
1. It is celebrated on 9th January every year to mark the contribution of Overseas Indian community in the development of India.
  2. Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) Convention is celebrated every year to strengthen the engagement of the overseas Indian community with the Government of India and reconnect them with their roots.

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

8. With reference to the latest crime data of the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) on violent protests, consider the following statements:
1. According to the 2018 crime report riot cases due to communal, political, agrarian and student issues increased over 2017.
  2. Water dispute riots declined in 2018 as compared to 2017.

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**

9. With reference to the World Hindi Day, consider the following statements:
1. It is being celebrated on January 10.
  2. The day is commemorated every year with the objective to promote use of Hindi language abroad.

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