



Civils Cafe
IAS Study Circle

Have fun. Achieve dreams.

Lead by IAS, IPS, IPOS officers

IMPORTANT CURRENT AFFAIRS FOR PRELIMS VOL 32

- NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCHEDULED CASTES
- UNLAWFUL ACTIVITIES PREVENTION ACT
- SPEAKER'S POWERS UNDER ANTI DEFECTION LAW
- ALL INDIA JUDICIAL SERVICES
- UNIVERSAL SERVICE OBLIGATION FUND
- BHARAT GAURAV SCHEME
- ALL INDIA SURVEY ON DOMESTIC WORKERS
- NATIONAL FAMILY HEALTH SURVEY 5 (NFHS-5)
- MATOSINHOS MANIFESTO
- MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT LOCAL AREA DEVELOPMENT SCHEME (MPLADS)



SCAN TO EXPLORE





IMPORTANT CURRENT AFFAIRS

FOR PRELIMS VOL - 32

Civils Cafe

IAS Study Circle

Have fun. Achieve dreams.

INDIAN POLITY

1) NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCHEDULED CASTES

IN NEWS: - The National Commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSC) will examine the complaint of the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) officer Sameer Wankhede that he was being implicated in a false case.

ABOUT NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCHEDULED CASTES

- NCSC is a constitutional body that works to safeguard the interests of the scheduled castes (SC) in India.
- Article 338 of the constitution of India deals with this commission
- It provides for a National Commission for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes with duties to investigate and monitor all matters relating to safeguards provided for them, to inquire into specific complaints and to participate and advise on the planning process of their socio-economic development etc.
- Initially, the constitution provided for the appointment of a Special Officer under Article 338.
- The special officer was designated as the Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.
- The 65th Amendment Act of 1990 replaced the one-member system with a multi-member National Commission for Scheduled Castes (SC) and Scheduled Tribes (ST).
- The Constitution (65th Amendment) Act 1990, amended Article 338 of the Constitution.
- By the 89th Amendment, 2003 the erstwhile National Commission for SC and ST was replaced by two separate Commissions from the year 2004

which were: National Commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSC) and National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST)- under Article 338-A.

- NCSC consists of Chairperson, Vice-chairperson and three other members.
- They are appointed by the President by warrant under his hand and seal.
- Functions:
 - Monitoring and investigating all issues concerning the safeguards provided for the SCs under the constitution.
 - Enquiring into complaints relating to the deprivation of the rights and safeguards of the SCs.
 - Taking part in and advising the central or state governments with respect to the planning of socio-economic development of the SCs.
 - Regular reporting to the President of the country on the implementation of these safeguards.
 - Recommending steps to be taken to further the socio-economic development and other welfare activities of the SCs.
 - Any other function with respect to the welfare, protection, development and advancement of the SC community.
 - The Commission is also required to discharge similar functions with regard to the Anglo-Indian Community as it does with respect to the SCs.
 - Till 2018, the commission was also required to discharge similar functions with regard to the other backward classes (OBCs). It was relieved from this responsibility by the 102nd Amendment Act of 2018.

PRACTICE QUESTIONS

Consider the following statements

1. National commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSC) consists of Chairperson, Vice-chairperson and ten other members.

2. Article 338A of the constitution of India deals with NCSC

Which among the above statements are correct?

- a. 1 only
- b. 2 only
- c. Both 1 and 2
- d. Neither 1 or 2

Answer: - d

2) UNLAWFUL ACTIVITIES PREVENTION ACT

IN NEWS:- The Union Home Ministry (MHA) informed Lok Sabha in a written reply that nearly 53% of persons arrested under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967 (UAPA) in 2018, 2019 and 2020 were below the age of 30.

ABOUT UNLAWFUL ACTIVITIES PREVENTION ACT

- Introduced in 1967, UAPA purpose was to target separatist organizations.
- It is an anti-terror law which aimed at preventing certain unlawful activities of individuals and associations.
- Investigation are done by the State police and the National Investigation Agency (NIA).
- The investigating agency has up to 180 days to file a charge sheet so getting bail is very tough.

Salient Features of the UAPA Act

- The Act gives special procedures to handle terrorist activities, among other things. It aims at the effective prevention of unlawful activities associations in India. Unlawful activity refers to any action taken by an individual or association intended to disrupt the territorial integrity and sovereignty of India.
- According to the Act, the union government may proclaim or designate an organisation as a terrorist organisation if it: (i) commits or participates in acts of terrorism, (ii) prepares for terrorism, (iii) promotes terrorism, or (iv) is

otherwise involved in terrorism. The Bill also empowers the government to designate individuals as terrorists on the same grounds.

- UAPA has the death penalty and life imprisonment as the highest punishments. The Act assigns absolute power to the central government, by way of which if the Centre deems an activity as unlawful then it may, by way of an Official Gazette, declare it so.
- Under UAPA, both Indian and foreign nationals can be charged. The offenders will be charged in the same manner whether the act is performed in a foreign land, outside India.
- Approval for property seizure by National Investigation Agency (NIA): As per the Act, an investigating officer is required to obtain the prior approval of the Director-General of Police to seize properties that may be connected with terrorism. The Bill adds that if the investigation is conducted by an officer of the National Investigation Agency (NIA), the approval of the Director-General of NIA would be required for seizure of such property.
- The investigation by the National Investigation Agency (NIA): Under the provisions of the Act, investigation of cases can be conducted by officers of the rank of Deputy Superintendent or Assistant Commissioner of Police or above. The Bill additionally empowers the officers of the NIA, of the rank of Inspector or above, to investigate cases.
- The Act defines terrorist acts to include acts committed within the scope of any of the treaties listed in a schedule to the Act. The Schedule lists nine treaties, comprising of the Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings (1997), and the Convention against Taking of Hostages (1979). The Bill adds another treaty to this list namely, the International Convention for Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism (2005).

3) SPEAKER'S POWERS UNDER ANTI DEFECTION LAW

IN NEWS: - The All-India Presiding Officers' Conference (AIPOC) ended recently with the delegates failing to reach a consensus on whether the Speaker's powers under the Anti-Defection Law should be limited.

ABOUT ANTI DEFECTION LAW

- In 1985 the Tenth Schedule, popularly known as the anti-defection law, was added to the Constitution by the 52nd Amendment Act.
- The purpose of the Amendment was to bring stability to governments by deterring MPs and MLAs from changing their political parties on whose ticket they were elected.
- The penalty for shifting political loyalties is the loss of parliamentary membership and a bar on becoming a minister.
- A member can be disqualified in the following cases
 - If a member of a house belonging to a political party:
 - Voluntarily gives up the membership of his political party, or
 - Votes, or does not vote in the legislature, contrary to the directions of his political party. However, if the member has taken prior permission, or is condoned by the party within 15 days from such voting or abstention, the member shall not be disqualified.
 - If an independent candidate joins a political party after the election.
 - If a nominated member joins a party six months after he becomes a member of the legislature.
- However, Legislators may change their party without the risk of disqualification in certain circumstances. Exceptions:
 - The law allows a party to merge with or into another party provided that at least two-thirds of its legislators are in favour of the merger.

- On being elected as the presiding officer of the House, if a member, voluntarily gives up the membership of his party or rejoins it after he ceases to hold that office, he won't be disqualified.
- Under the anti-defection law, the power to decide the disqualification of an MP or MLA rests with the presiding officer of the legislature.
- The law does not specify a time frame in which such a decision has to be made. As a result, Speakers of legislatures have sometimes acted very quickly or have delayed the decision for years — and have been accused of political bias in both situations.
- The law initially stated that the decision of the Presiding Officer is not subject to judicial review. This condition was struck down by the Supreme Court later, thereby allowing appeals against the Presiding Officer's decision in the High Court and Supreme Court.
- However, it held that there may not be any judicial intervention until the Presiding Officer gives his order.
- C.P. Joshi committee was formed in 2019 to examine the role of the Speaker in cases of disqualification on grounds of defection under the Tenth Schedule of the Constitution.
- The committee has advocated that the power to disqualify MPs and MLAs under the anti-defection law should also be given to political parties rather than limiting the power only for Lok Sabha and assembly speakers.

PRACTICE QUESTIONS

Consider the following statements

1. The Tenth Schedule was added to the Constitution by the 52nd Amendment Act.
2. Under the anti-defection law, the power to decide the disqualification of an MP or MLA rests with the President

Which among the above statements are correct?

- a. 1 only
- b. 2 only
- c. Both 1 and 2
- d. Neither 1 or 2

Answer:- a

4) ALL INDIA JUDICIAL SERVICES

IN NEWS:- The government of India has recently proposed to pass a bill to establish an All-India Judicial Service (AIJS) to recruit officers for subordinate courts through an entrance test

ABOUT ALL INDIA JUDICIAL SERVICES

- The AIJS was first proposed by the 14th report of the Law Commission in 1958.
- The 42nd Constitutional amendment in 1976 amended Article 312 (1) empowering Parliament to make laws for the creation of one or more All-India Services, including an AIJS, common to the Union and the States.
- Under Article 312, Rajya Sabha is required to pass a resolution supported by not less than two-thirds of its members present and voting. Thereafter, Parliament has to enact a law creating the AIJS.
- This means no constitutional amendment will be required for establishment of AIJS.
- The Supreme Court of India also endorsed the same in the All India Judges Association vs. Union of India' case (1993) laying down that AIJS should be set up.
- **Dichotomy Between Articles 233 and 312:** As per Article 233, recruitment to subordinate judiciary is the prerogative of the State.
 - Due to this, many states and high courts have opposed the idea on the ground that it would go against federalism.

- If the fundamental power of the States to make such rules and govern the appointment of district judges is taken away, it may be against the principle of federalism and the basic structure doctrine.
- Article 233(1) of the Constitution lays down that “appointments of persons to be, and the posting and promotion of, district judges in any State shall be made by the Governor of the State in consultation with the High Court exercising jurisdiction in relation to such State”.
- **Constitutional Limitation:** Clause 3 of Article 312 places a restriction that AIJS shall not include a post inferior to that of a district judge. Thus, appointment of subordinate judiciary through AIJS, may face a constitutional barrier.

5) MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT LOCAL AREA DEVELOPMENT SCHEME (MPLADS)

IN NEWS: - Recently, the Union Cabinet restored the Members of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme (MPLADS) that was suspended in April 2020.

ABOUT MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT LOCAL AREA DEVELOPMENT SCHEME (MPLADS)

- The Members of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme (MPLADS) is a program first launched during the Narasimha Rao Government in 1993.
- It is a Central Sector Scheme fully funded by Government of India.
- It was aimed towards providing funds for developmental works recommended by individual MPs.
- The MPs then were entitled to recommend works to the tune of Rs 1 crore annually between 1994-95 and 1997-98, after which the annual entitlement was enhanced to Rs 2 crore.

- The UPA government since 2011-12 raised the annual entitlement to Rs 5 crore per MP.
- To implement their plans in an area, MPs have to recommend them to the District Authority of the respective Nodal District.
- The District Authorities then identify Implementing Agencies that execute the projects.
- The respective District Authority is supposed to oversee the implementation and has to submit monthly reports, audit reports, and work completion reports to the Nodal District Authority.
- The MPLADS funds can be merged with other schemes such as MGNREGA and Khelo India.
- The document 'Guidelines on MPLADS' was published by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation in June 2016 in this regard.
- It stated the objective of the scheme to enable MPs to recommend works of developmental nature with emphasis on the creation of durable community assets.
- Durable assets of national priorities viz. drinking water, primary education, public health, sanitation, and roads, etc. should be created.
- It recommended MPs to works costing at least 15 percent of their entitlement for the year for areas inhabited by Scheduled Caste population and 7.5 percent for areas inhabited by ST population.
- It lays down a number of development works including construction of railway halt stations, providing financial assistance to recognized bodies, cooperative societies, installing CCTV cameras etc.

PRACTICE QUESTIONS

Consider the following statements

1. MPLADS is a Central Sector Scheme

2. The MPLADS funds can be merged with other schemes such as MGNREGA and Khelo India.

Which among the above statements are correct?

- a. 1 only
- b. 2 only
- c. Both 1 and 2
- d. Neither 1 or 2

Answer: - c

6) DIGITAL INDIA LAND RECORDS MODERNISATION PROGRAMME

IN NEWS: - Union Minister for Rural Development and Panchayati Raj has recently held a workshop on Digital India Land Record Modernization Programme (DILRMP)

ABOUT DIGITAL INDIA LAND RECORDS MODERNISATION PROGRAMME

- The DILRMP was previously known as the National Land Record Modernization Programme (NLRMP).
- It was launched in 2008 with the purpose to digitize and modernizing land records and developing a centralized land record management system.
- The DILRMP is the amalgamation of two projects:
 - Computerization of Land Records (CLR)
 - Strengthening of Revenue Administration and Updating of Land Records (SRA & ULR)
- The district will be taken as the unit of implementation, where all activities under the programme will converge.
- The DILRMP has 3 major components
 - Computerization of land record
 - Survey/re-survey
 - Computerization of Registration

- Salient features
 - Unique Land Parcel Identification Numbers. It is just like the Aadhar Number of land parcels.
 - A unique ID based on Geo-coordinates of the parcels is generated and assigned to the plots.
 - This has been introduced to share the computerized digital land record data among different States/Sectors and a uniform system of assigning a unique ID to the land parcel across the country.

7) UNIVERSAL SERVICE OBLIGATION FUND

IN NEWS:- The Union Cabinet has given its approval for provisioning of mobile services in uncovered villages of Aspirational Districts across five States. The project will be funded by Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) and is targeted to be completed within 18 months after the signing of the agreement.

ABOUT UNIVERSAL SERVICE OBLIGATION FUND

- Universal Service Obligation Fund was established in 2002, with the main aim to provide universal telecom services and ensure that even the unconnected areas in the country reap the benefits of inclusive development.
- The Indian Telegraph (Amendment) Act, 2003 gave statutory status to the Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF).
- The USOF is headed by the USOF Administrator who reports to the Secretary, Department of Telecommunications (DoT).
- The funds for the USOF comes from Universal Service Levy (USL). The USL is charged from all the telecom operators on their Adjusted Gross Revenue (AGR). These are then deposited into the Consolidated Fund of India, and prior parliamentary approval is required for dispatching.

8) BHARAT GAURAV SCHEME

IN NEWS: - To promote and attract tourism business, the Indian Railways recently launched Bharat Gaurav trains that will be operated by private players and run on theme-based circuits.

ABOUT BHARAT GAURAV SCHEME

- Through this policy, which offers operators the “Right of Use” of its rakes and infrastructure, the Railways has liberalised and simplified a part of operations that was otherwise carried out mostly by IRCTC.
- While any entity can run these trains, including state governments, it is implied that the policy is targeted at tour operators.
- According to the Bharat Gaurav policy, any operator or service provider, or virtually anyone, can lease trains from Indian Railways to run on a theme-based circuit as a special tourism package.
- The tenure of the arrangement is a minimum of two years and maximum of the codal life of the coach.
- The operator has the freedom to decide the route, the halts, the services provided, and, most importantly, the tariff.
- The IRCTC runs such theme-based tourist trains, for instance, the Ramayana Express, which goes on a tour of several places connected to Lord Ram.
- Anyone can approach Railways to lease the 3033 conventional Integral Coach Factory-design coaches earmarked for this segment. In fact, if the operator finds it feasible, then it can even purchase rakes from Indian Railway production units and run them.
- The operator has to, however, take care of end-to-end, comprehensive service like hotel stay, local arrangements, etc. These trains cannot be used as ordinary transport trains between an origin and destination.

- There will be a special unit created in each zonal railway to process such applications and also handhold applicants, and see end-to-end procedural requirements for the operators.
- These special units will help operators in creation of itineraries, public outreach, carrying out necessary approvals and the likes. The idea is to provide the operators a place to go to, like a single-window for all their needs when they interact with railways, and not run from pillar to post.
- The spirit of the policy is to give operators complete freedom to run the business and develop a business model in which Indian Railways will only physically run the trains, maintain them and charge a fee.
- The operator can carry out its own furnishings of the interiors of the trains if it wants within safety norms. It can decide what kind of interiors or berth composition it wants. However, it cannot tinker with or dismantle critical parts of the coach that has a bearing on safety and operation.
- It can name the circuit, the train and sell advertisement space. It can carry out branding on the exterior and interior of the train.
- It can tie up with agencies and entities for business development and logistics, etc. It can decide the food and entertainment to add to the experience of the passengers.
- However, it has to be ensured that things that are not allowed by railway laws are also not carried out onboard these trains. For instance, the operator cannot serve alcohol, states the policy.
- Indian Railways will provide staff to drive the trains, guards and also maintenance staff on board for the coaches. Other staff, like housekeeping and catering, etc, will be deployed by the operator.
- Indian Railways will also ensure that its entire infrastructure is in place to safely and efficiently host the train in its network. It will also give these

priority in its paths, like the Rajdhani and premium trains, so that these trains are not held up or sidelined to make way for regular trains.

- The money works out to be substantial as it is a sum of registration fee, security deposit for the rake, “Right of Use” charges, haulage charges and stabling charges payable by the operator to the Railways.
- To begin with, the Railways will take a one-time online registration fee of Rs 1 lakh from the applicant. The zonal railway concerned will revert after processing the application within 10 days.
- Thereafter, after allotment of the rake, there is a security deposit of Rs 1 crore per rake (the physical assets comprise a collection of coaches pulled by an engine), irrespective of the size of the rake, for the duration of the Right of Use period.
- The annual ‘Right of Use’ charges calculated on the basis of the type of coach taken and the duration.
- Delay in payment would result in a penalty equivalent to the bank’s prevailing interest rate plus 3% as administrative fee. If it is not paid within 30 days, the Right of Use may be terminated.

9) ALL INDIA SURVEY ON DOMESTIC WORKERS

IN NEWS: - Recently, the first-ever All-India Survey on Domestic Workers was flagged off by the Ministry of Labour & Employment. This was a first-ever such survey in independent India and will be completed in a year.

ABOUT ALL INDIA SURVEY ON DOMESTIC WORKERS

- The main objectives of the survey are:
 - Estimate the number/proportion of DWs at National and State level.
 - Household Estimates of Live-in/Live-out DWs.
 - Average number of DWs engaged by different types of households.

- Parameters the survey aims to capture the number and proportion of household workers by major states, with separate rural and urban break-ups, their percentage distribution, households that employ them and socio-demographic characteristics.
- The survey would cover 37 States and Union Territories, covering 1.5 lakh households in 742 districts.
- The survey for domestic workers is among five national jobs surveys that will be conducted periodically and provide crucial data for an upcoming national employment policy.
- The other four surveys are the All-India Survey of Migrant Workers, All-India Survey of Employment Generated by Professionals and All-India Survey of Employment Generated in the Transport Sector, All-India Quarterly Establishment-based Employment Survey (AQEES).
- Domestic worker is defined as any person engaged by a household if the frequency of visits by the worker to the household is at least four days during the last 30 days and the goods and/or services produced by the worker are consumed by the members of the household against payment either through cash or kind.

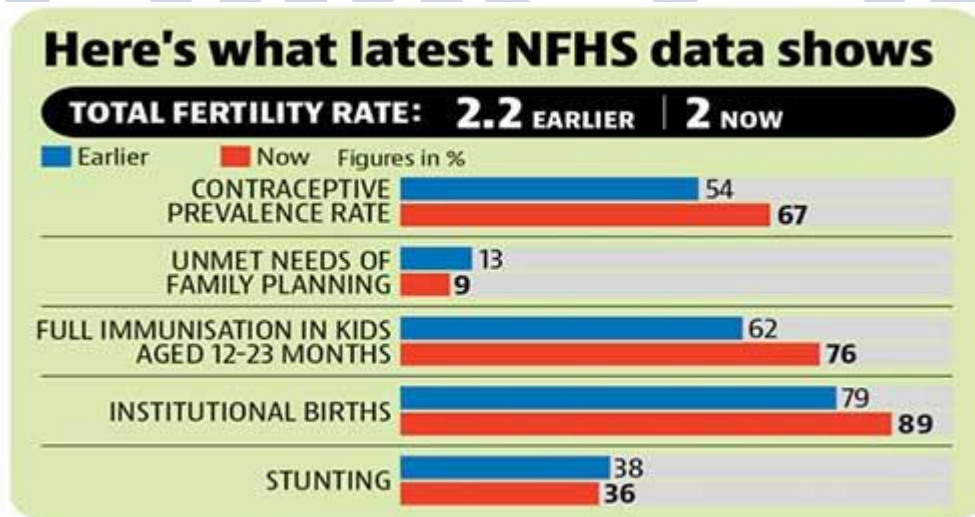
10) NATIONAL FAMILY HEALTH SURVEY 5 (NFHS-5)

IN NEWS: - Union Health Ministry releases NFHS-5 Phase II Findings

ABOUT NATIONAL FAMILY HEALTH SURVEY

- The National Family Health Survey (NFHS) is a large-scale, multi-round survey conducted in a representative sample of households throughout India.
- The NFHS is a collaborative project of the International Institute for Population Sciences(IIPS), Mumbai, India; ICF, Calverton, Maryland, USA and the East-West Center, Honolulu, Hawaii, USA.

- The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MOHFW), Government of India, designated IIPS as the nodal agency, responsible for providing coordination and technical guidance for the NFHS.
- NFHS was funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) with supplementary support from United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). IIPS collaborated with a number of Field Organizations (FO) for survey implementation. Each FO was responsible for conducting survey activities in one or more states covered by the NFHS. Technical assistance for the NFHS was provided by ICF and the East-West Center.



SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

11) MATOSINHOS MANIFESTO

IN NEWS: - The European Space Agency (ESA) council has approved a manifesto to accelerate the use of space in Europe.

ABOUT MATOSINHOS MANIFESTO

- The manifesto was adopted at the Intermediate Ministerial Meeting that was held in Matosinhos, Portugal.

- The Council of Ministers unanimously adopted this resolution that lays down a vision for the continent in terms of maintaining and expanding its activities in space.
- The large-scale nature and fast pace of the climate crisis and other challenges means that no European nation will be able to effectively address them alone.
- The manifesto defines three “accelerators” to further advance Europe’s space ambitions:
 - The first of these accelerators is for the ESA to start working towards the “Space for a Green Future”
 - The second accelerator is called “Rapid and Resilient Crisis Response” to support governments to act decisively on crises facing Europe, from flooding and storms to wildfires
 - The third accelerator mentioned in the resolution is “Protection of Space Assets”, whose objective is to safeguard ESA astronauts and assets from interference by space debris and space weather

EUROPEAN SPACE AGENCY

- The ESA is an intergovernmental organization that was formed in 1975 with the aim of developing Europe’s space capabilities.
- The organization has 22 member states — Austria, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the UK.
- Slovenia, Latvia and Lithuania are Associate Members.



Civils Cafe
IAS Study Circle
Have Faith, Achieve Dreams.
Lead by IAS, IPS, IPOS officers

**"STAY POSITIVE.
BETTER DAYS ARE
ON THEIR WAY."**

+91 7306994905 | atcivilscafe@gmail.com
www.thecivilscafeias.com

in @ t f

Copyright © by Civils Cafe IAS Study Circle. All rights are reserved. No part of this document may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without prior permission of Civils Cafe IAS Study Circle.

© Civils Café IAS Study Circle.