More than 17000 birds lost in Sambhar Lake

A mass death of migratory birds at the Sambhar Lake in Rajasthan occurred due to avian botulism, a disease caused by a bacteria that affects nerves.
Dear aspirants
A note from Smart Abhyas

LIKE WHAT WE ARE DOING?

We at Smart Abhyas started this initiative with the intention of providing quality content to every single CSE aspirant out there. If you think we are on the right track please let us know by mailing us at smartabhyas@gmail.com, your feedback would mean a lot to us.

WE ARE ALWAYS LOOKING TO IMPROVE

Any suggestions that would help us enhance the quality of our content, the presentation of our content or anything important for that matter can be brought to us by mailing us at smartabhyas@gmail.com.

TELL A FRIEND

It would mean the world to us if you think that the content we are providing is worthwhile and spread the word to fellow aspirants out there.
### Polity and Social Issues

1. Adolescents, Diets and Nutrition: Growing Well in a Changing World
2. UNESCO Creative Cities Network(UCCN)
3. Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act (AFSPA)
4. Tamil Nadu becomes first State to enact law on contract farming
5. National Waterway -2
6. Special Protection Group (SPG)
7. India Justice Report 2019
8. Maternal death rate declining
9. President’s rule
10. India’s cancer care facilities highly inadequate
11. CJI Office comes under RTI ambit
12. Global supply chains major user of child labour: UN report
13. Supreme Court strikes down amended Finance Act rules for tribunals
14. India is home to 77 million diabetics, second highest in the world
15. 6th World Congress on Rural and Agricultural finance
16. Social Awareness and Action to Neutralise Pneumonia Successfully
17. Bureau of Indian Standards study
18. Annual report on road accidents
19. Cabinet approves extension of pharmaceuticals purchase policy
20. When Supreme Court reviews a decision
21. Survey on Household Social Consumption: Education
22. Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act
23. Quality Council of India
24. Bureau of Indian Standards
25. Food Corporation of India
26. Daman and Diu, Dadra and Nagar Haveli
27. QS Rankings

### Geography. Ecology and Biodiversity

1. Carbon emission from tropical forests jumps in new calculation
2. New frog species in West Bengal
3. ‘Wastelands Atlas’ – 2019
4. Danakil Depression
6. Australia’s iconic koala threatened
7. Feni river
8. Green Climate Fund
9. Iran discovers new oil field
10. Pliosaur
11. Khadi gets HS code
12. Fall Armyworm controlled in Odisha
13. Bad for herbivores, good for humans
14. Climate change is already damaging health of children
15. International Union for Conservation of Nature
16. Darjeeling tea
17. 3D profiles of migratory birds
18. Bird deaths in Sambhar Lake
19. 25,000 tonnes of plastic waste generated everyday in India
20. Methane in coalbeds, and how they can be extracted
22. Madden–Julian Oscillation
23. 1st International Conference on “Landslides Risk Reduction and Resilience”

**Economy**

1. Elephant bonds
2. Trade deficit and India
3. Economic slowdown may lighten India’s carbon burden
4. Core Investment Companies
5. Negative interest rates
6. NCDEX Agridex
7. Cabinet approves strategic disinvestment of BPCL and 4 other PSUs
8. Framework on currency swap arrangement for SAARC countries
9. FASTags explained

**Government Schemes and Initiatives**

1. Nirvik Scheme
2. Skills Build platform
3. Steel Scrap Recycling Policy
4. Atal Innovation Mission
5. Online Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation (OCSAE) Prevention/Investigation Unit
7. Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY)
8. Target Olympic Podium Scheme
10. Farmers Clubs Programme
11. Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana

**Science and Technology**

1. First ever Indian Brain atlas
2. Air Independent Propulsion (AIP) technology
3. WhatsApp attacked by Pegasus
4. NavIC set to be commercialised by Antrix
5. Dhanush artillery guns
6. Encouraging ethanol production
7. Potential drug to treat Alzheimer’s disease
8. Voyager 2
9. Anaemia in India
10. World Pneumonia Day
11. Geochemical Baseline Atlas of India
12. Agni-II
13. Winter-grade fuel suited for Ladakh launched
14. Understanding space Internet
15. Prithvi-2 missile
16. Cartosat-3

**International Relations, Summits and Meetings**

1. India says no to RCEP
2. Paris Peace Forum
3. 11th BRICS Summit
4. International Court of Justice
19. Vigyan Samagam
20. ‘No Money For Terror’ Ministerial Conference
21. Suranga Bawadi
22. National Agrochemicals Congress
23. Smog Tower

11. Indian diaspora largest in the world

12. Chagos Islands
Polity and Social Issues
1. Employee Provident Fund Organisation
2. EPFO Schemes
3. T N Seshan – The Great Ringmaster
4. Anti-defection Law
5. The Motor Vehicle Act
6. Directive Principles of State Policy
7. Merger of Daman & Diu, Dadra Nagar Haveli
8. National Investigation Agency
9. Document Identification Number

Geography, Ecology and Biodiversity
1. Air Pollution
2. WHO Report on Air Pollution 2018
3. Cyclones
4. Naming of cyclones, how and why it is done
5. Avalanche

Economy
1. Reserve Bank of India
2. FASTag

Science and Technology
1. C V Raman and Raman Effect in Every Day Life
2. Raman Effect in Every Day Life
3. RFID Technology

International Relations, Summits and Meetings
1. NATO
2. UN Security Council
3. BIMSTEC

All India Radio
1. A discussion on issues relating to Air Pollution
2. A discussion on birth anniversary of Guru Nanan Dev and Kartarpur Corridor
3. Agni-II
4. A discussion on National Press Day
Adolescents, Diets and Nutrition: Growing Well in a Changing World

What is the issue?

- Almost all adolescents in India take unhealthy or poor diets leading to one or the other form of malnutrition in them, revealed a UNICEF report revealed in association with NITI Aayog.


Key takeaways from the Report

- Over 50% of adolescents in the age group of 10 to 19 years in India are short, thin, overweight or obese.

- Over 80% of adolescents also suffer from ‘hidden hunger’, i.e. the deficiency of one or more micronutrients such as iron, folate, zinc, vitamin A, vitamin B12 and vitamin D.

- Fruits and eggs are consumed daily by less than 10% of boys and girls. Over 25% of adolescents reported no consumption of green leafy vegetables even once a week. Milk products are consumed by only 50% per cent of adolescents daily.

- Highlighting that 10 to 19-year-olds in every Indian state face an increased risk of diabetes and heart disease, the report said that growing incomes and increased spending on food has translated to greater consumption of fried foods, junk foods, sweets and aerated drinks.

- The report found that adolescent girls especially suffer multiple nutritional deprivations. While more girls suffer from shortness than boys, anaemia affects 40% of adolescent girls, compared to 18% of boys, and worsens as they get older.

- The report stated that focusing on adolescent girls before they become mothers, is critical to breaking India’s intergenerational cycle of malnutrition.

- In addition to the nutritional status of adolescents, the report also revealed that government nutritional schemes are not reaching adolescents.

- Nearly 25% of girls and boys do not receive any of the four school-based services (mid-day meal, biannual health check-ups, biannual deworming and weekly iron-folic acid supplementation). Addressing this gap will be critical to addressing early adolescent nutrition issues.

- According to the report, physical activity is also missing amongst adolescents. All girls and boys are unable to meet the 60 minutes per day recommended outdoor sports and exercise time. On average, girls in late adolescence spend only 10 minutes per day on such activities. Boys do relatively better, with exercise time of 40 to 50 minutes per day.

Steps that can be taken

- We must take action where adolescent children spend most of their time, on school premises. For example, this means moving from a cereal-based mid-day meal in schools to meals that are more nutrient-dense. In addition to iron and folic acid supplementation, we need to do more to provide diets balanced with proteins and adequate calories.

- As the consumption of fruits and vegetables among adolescents remains poor, providing nutrition counselling for young people to make the right food choices is one critical step we can take.

- We can also call for legislation to regulate the marketing of unhealthy foods in school premises, marketing that often leads young people into making poor food choices.

- We must work with academia to tap into the growing expertise in nutrition, diets and agriculture.

- We can call for more private sector investment and engagement in adolescent nutrition.
UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN)

What is the issue?
• UNESCO has announced that Mumbai and Hyderabad have been included in its network of UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN).
• Mumbai has been designated as Creative City of Films and Hyderabad a Creative City of Gastronomy.
• Earlier, Chennai and Varanasi were included as UNESCO cities of music while Jaipur was included as the City of Crafts and Folk Arts.

About UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN):
• The UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN) is a project of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).
• Launched in 2004 to promote cooperation among cities which recognized creativity as a major factor in their urban development.
• Currently, 180 cities are part of this network which aims towards a common objective of placing creativity and cultural industries at the heart of their development plans at the local level and cooperating actively at the international level.
• The network covers seven creative fields namely (a) crafts and folk arts, (b) media arts (c) film (d) design (e) gastronomy (f) literature and (g) music.
• By joining the Network, cities commit to sharing their best practices and developing partnerships involving the public and private sectors as well as civil society.

MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTION
Consider the following statements with reference to the Creative Cities Network

1. Mumbai, Hyderabad and Varanasi are the only Indian cities that have been identified as Creative Cities
2. It is a project of UNESCO
3. It was launched in 2004 to promote cooperation among cities which recognized creativity as a major factor in their urban development

Which of the above mentioned statements are true?

a) 1 and 2  b) 2 and 3

c) 1 and 3  d) All of the above

Solution: b

Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act (AFSPA)

What is the issue?
• The Cabinet Secretariat has notified rules reasserting the Union Home Ministry as the authority that would decide on the imposition of the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act (AFSPA) in the Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh.
• The notification also renamed the Department of Jammu and Kashmir in the Ministry as the Department of Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh Affairs.
• The Act, which empowers security forces to conduct operations anywhere and arrest anyone without a warrant, has been in force in Jammu & Kashmir since July 5, 1990.
• Earlier, before the State of J&K was bifurcated and downgraded, it was the Home Ministry or the Governor that was the designated authority for notifying the AFSPA.
What is AFSPA?

- The Act came into force in the context of increasing violence in the Northeastern States decades ago, which the State governments found difficult to control.

- The Armed Forces (Special Powers) Bill was passed by both the Houses of Parliament and it was approved by the President on September 11, 1958. It became known as the Armed Forces Special Powers Act, 1958.

- It gives powers to the army and state and central police forces to shoot to kill, search houses and destroy any property that is “likely” to be used by insurgents in areas declared as “disturbed” by the home ministry.

- Security forces can “arrest without a warrant” a person, who has committed or even “about to commit a cognizable offence” even on “reasonable suspicion”.

- It also protects them from legal processes for actions taken under the act.

How is a region declared 'disturbed'?

- A disturbed area is one which is declared by notification under Section 3 of the AFSPA.

- An area can be disturbed due to differences or disputes between members of different religious, racial, language or regional groups or castes or communities.

- The Central Government or the Governor of the State or administrator of the Union Territory can declare the whole or part of the State or Union Territory as a disturbed area.

- A suitable notification would have to be made in the Official Gazette. As per Section 3, it can be invoked in places where “the use of armed forces in aid of the civil power is necessary”.

- The Ministry of Home Affairs would usually enforce this Act where necessary, but there have been exceptions where the Centre decided to forego its power and leave the decision to the State governments.

What is the state government’s role?

- The state governments can suggest whether the Act is required to be enforced or not.

- But under Section (3) of the act, their opinion can be overruled by the governor or the Centre.

Department of Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh Affairs

- The notification also renamed the Department of Jammu and Kashmir in the Ministry as the Department of Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh Affairs.

- The government said the department would be responsible for all matters relating to the two Union Territories, including counter-terrorism within Jammu and Kashmir, and coordination with the Defence Ministry for manning and managing the Line of Control between India and Pakistan, but excluding those matters with which the External Affairs Ministry is concerned.

- All matters falling within the purview of the Union Government in terms of the provisions of the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019, relating to both the Union Territories, except all such matters as have been specifically assigned under these rules to any other Ministry or Department of the Government of India.

- In Ladakh, the Department of Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh Affairs would be responsible for all matters enumerated in the State List and Concurrent List in any such matter, except all such matters as have, under these rules, been specifically assigned to any other Ministry or department of the Government of India.
**Tamil Nadu becomes first State to enact law on contract farming**

**What is the issue?**

- Tamil Nadu has become the first state in the country to enact a law on contract farming with President giving assent to the *Agricultural Produce and Livestock Contract Farming and Services (Promotion and Facilitation) Act*.

**Agricultural Produce and Livestock Contract Farming and Services (Promotion and Facilitation) Act**

- Provides for a six-member body called the *Tamil Nadu State Contract Farming and Services Authority*.

- The Authority would ensure proper implementation of the Act and make suggestions to the State government for promotion and better performance of contract farming.

- Safeguards the interests of farmers during times of bumper crop or when market prices fluctuate. The farmers would also be paid a predetermined price which had been arrived at the time of signing agreements with buyers.

- The farmers could get support from purchasers for improving productivity by way of inputs, feed and fodder and technology.

- However, any produce banned by the Centre or State government or the Indian Council of Agricultural Research would not be covered under contract farming.

**Contract Farming:**

- Contract farming refers to varied formal and informal agreements between producers and processors or buyers. It may include loose buying arrangements, simple purchase agreements and supervised production with input provision with tied loans and risk coverage.

- Contract farming usually involves the following basic elements – pre-agreed price, quality, quantity or acreage (minimum/maximum) and time.

---

**National Waterway -2**

**What is the issue?**

- The first-ever container cargo consignment will sail on National Waterway-2 from Haldia Dock Complex (HDC) to the Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) terminal at Pandu in Guwahati in November 2019.

**More on the issue**

- As per the *National Waterways Act, 2016*, 111 have been declared as *National Waterways (NW)*. These waterways pass through 24 states and two union territories, with an approximate total length of 20274 km.

- The Ganga – Bhagirathi – Hooghly river system between Haldia (Sagar) and Allahabad (1620 km) was declared as National Waterway-1 (NW-1) in 1986.

- **National Waterway-2:** 891km long stretch in Brahmaputra River extending from Sadiya to the Dhubri near Bangladesh border in Assam.

**Inland Waterways Authority of India**

- Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) is responsible for development and regulation of inland waterways for shipping and navigation.

- The Authority primarily undertakes projects for development and maintenance of IWT infrastructure on national waterways through grant received from the Ministry of Shipping.

- It was established in 1986 and is headquartered at Noida.