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A compilation of foundational topics prerequisite for Civil Services

For the 5th Week

of

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(26th April to 1st May)

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1. Geography

1.1. Supply Chain Resilience Initiative (SCRI)

- In the context of international trade, supply chain resilience is an approach that helps a country to ensure that it has diversified its supply risk across a clutch of supplying nations instead of being dependent on just one or a few.
- India, Japan and Australia - launched the Supply Chain Resilience Initiative (SCRI).
- The initiative, first proposed by Japan with India and Australia as partners, potentially see other Asian and Pacific Rim nations.
- The SCRI aims to create a virtuous cycle of enhancing supply chain resilience with a view to eventually attaining strong, sustainable, balanced and inclusive growth in the region.
- Unanticipated events – whether natural, such as volcanic eruptions, tsunamis, earthquakes or even a pandemic; or manmade, such as an armed conflict in a region – that disrupt supplies from a particular country or even intentional halts to trade, could adversely impact economic activity in the destination country.
- Under the SCRI, the countries will share best practices on supply chain resilience and will hold investment promotion and buyer- seller matching events to provide opportunities for stakeholders to diversify their supply chains.
- Japan
- India
- Australia

2. History

2.1. Rabindranath Tagore

About

- He was an Indian polymath - poet, writer, playwright, composer, philosopher, social reformer and painter born on 7 August, 1941.
- For "Gitanjali" in 1913, He became the first non European to receive a Nobel Prize in Literature and second non European to receive Nobel Prize after Theodore Roosevelt.
- Also known by the name of "The Bard of Bengal".
- He denounced British Raj and advocated Independence and was an exponent of Bengal Renaissance for which he founded Vishwas-Bharti University.
- His compositions were chosen by 2 Nations as national anthems - India's "Jana Gana Mana" and Bangladesh's "Amar Shonar Bangla" and the Sri Lankan Nation Anthem was inspired by his works.

Early Life

- Brothers -
 - ✓ Dwijendranath Tagore - Philosopher and poet.
 - ✓ Satyendranath Tagore - First Indian to be appointed in Indian Civil Services.
 - ✓ Jyotindranth Tagore - Music, composer and playwright.
- Never went to school, was trained informally at home by his does not explain things, proper teaching stokes curiosity.
- He debuted in the short story genre in Bengali with "Bhikharini" (The Beggar Women) and seldom used the pen name "Bhanusimha" in his poems.

Education and After

- Father Debendranth wanted his son to become Barrister, therefore enrolled him at a public school in Brighton, England in 1878.
- He briefly read law at University School of London, but again left school, opting instead for Independent studies and in 1880 returned to Bengal degree-less.
- In 1890, Tagore began managing his vast ancestral estates in Shelaidaha.
- In 1901, Tagore moved to Shantiniketan to found an Ashram with a marble-floored prayer hall - The Mandir- an experimental school, grooves of trees, garden and a library.
- He gained Bengali and foreign readers alike - published Naivedya (1901) and Kheya (1906) and translated poems into free verse and in 1913 he was awarded Nobel Prize for Gitanjali.

Life

- He was awarded Knighthood by King George V in 1915 Birthday Honours which he renounced after the 1919 Jallianwala Bagh Massacre

- In 1921, Tagore and Agricultural Economist Leonard Elmhirst set up the “Institute for Rural Reconstruction” later renamed Shriniketan or “Abode of Welfare”.
- In early 1930’s he targeted ambient “abnormal caste consciousness” and untouchability. He lectured against these, and penned Dalit heroes for his poems and his dramas and campaigned successfully to open Guruvayoor Temple to Dalits.
- Tagore’s remit expanded to science in his last years, as hinted in Visva-Parichay, in 1937 a collection of essays.

Death

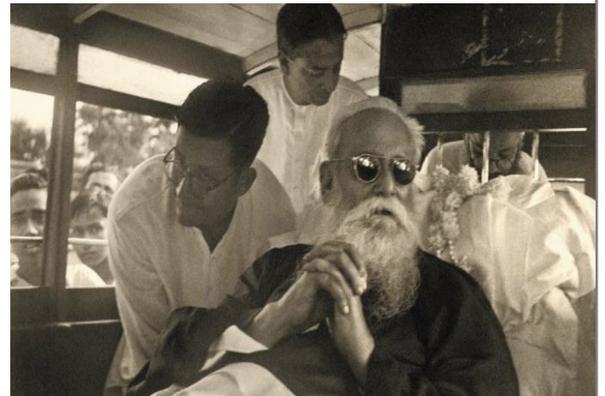
- His last 5 years were marked by chronic pain and two long period of illness and he began losing consciousness in late 1937 and ultimately closed his eyes on 7 august 1941 aged 80.

Ideas

- He denounced Nationalism and propounded Internationalism.
- He heralded the cultural rapprochement between communities, societies and nations much before it became the liberal norm of conduct.
- According to Amartya Sen - “Tagore rebelled against strongly nationalist forms of the independence movement, and he wanted to assert India's right to be independent without denying the importance of what India could learn from abroad”.

Works

- Europe Jatiri Patro (Letters from Europe)
- Mansusher Dorm (The Religion of Man)
- Brief chat with Einstein “Note on Nature of Reality”.
- His novel - “Ghare Baire” (The Home and the World) in which he excoriated rising Indian nationalism and religious zeal in the Swadeshi movement.
- Gora - Here he raises controversial questions regarding the Indian identity. Politically Charged compositions - “Chitto Jetha Bhayshunyo” - “Where the mind is without Fear” and “Ekla Chalo Re
- He wrote “Banglar Mati Banglar Jol” (Soil of Bengal, Water of Bengal) to unite the Bengali population after Bengal partition in 1905.



Tagore Vs Gandhi

- Tagore -Believed that **imperialism is an external manifestation of nationalism**, He considered that ‘internationalism’ would cut above the narrowness of nationalism.
- Mahatma Gandhi, on the other hand, strived to make internationalism more accepting and tolerant by broadening its horizons within the fold of nationalism.

Freedom of Tagore

“Freedom does not simply mean political freedom from the British; True freedom means the ability to be truthful and honest with oneself otherwise autonomy loses all of its worth”

3. Polity & Governance

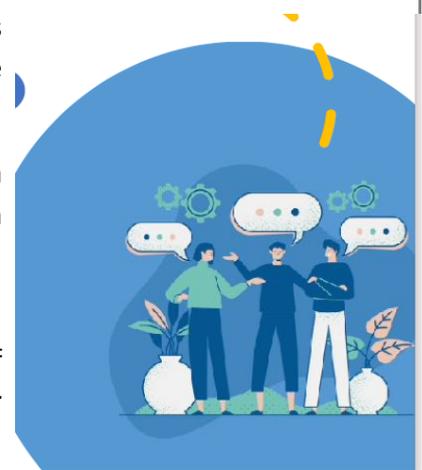
3.1. What is Model Code of Conduct?

- The MCC is a set of guidelines issued by the Election Commission to regulate political parties and candidates prior to elections, to ensure free and fair elections. This is in keeping with Article 324 of the Constitution, which gives the Election Commission the power to supervise elections to the Parliament and state legislatures.
- The MCC is operational from the date that the election schedule is announced till the date that results are announced. Its main purpose is to ensure free and fair elections in the country.
- A form of the MCC was first introduced in the state assembly elections in Kerala in 1960. It was a set of instructions to political parties regarding election meetings, speeches, slogans, etc.
- In the 1962 general elections to the Lok Sabha, the MCC was circulated to recognised parties, and state governments sought feedback from the parties.
- The MCC was largely followed by all parties in the 1962 elections and continued to be followed in subsequent general elections.
- In 1979, the Election Commission added a section to regulate the 'party in power' and prevent it from gaining an unfair advantage at the time of elections
- For example, Ministers must not combine official visits with election work or use official machinery for the same. The party must avoid advertising at the cost of the public exchequer or using official mass media for publicity on achievements to improve chances of victory in the elections.
- In 2013, the Supreme Court directed the Election Commission to include guidelines regarding election manifestos, which it had included in the MCC for the 2014 general elections. These prohibit parties from making promises that exert an undue influence on voters, and suggest that manifestos also indicate the means to achieve promises.



Is MCC statutory?

- MCC was the result of a consensus among major political parties. It has no statutory backing. This means anybody breaching the MCC can't be proceeded against under any clause of the Code.
- However, certain provisions of the MCC may be enforced through invoking corresponding provisions in other statutes such as the Indian Penal Code, 1860, Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973, and Representation of the People Act, 1951.
- The ECI can issue a notice to a politician or a party for alleged breach of the MCC either on its own, or on the basis of a complaint by an other party or individual.



- Once a notice is issued, the person or party must reply in writing, either accepting fault and tendering an unconditional apology, or rebutting the allegation. In the latter case, if the person or party is found guilty subsequently, he/it can attract a written censure from the ECI.
- In extreme cases, like a candidate using money/liquor to influence votes or trying to divide voters in the name of religion or caste, the ECI can also order registration of a criminal case against the candidate under relevant sections of the Indian Penal Code or Income-Tax Act.
- However, the MCC carries significant moral weight; indeed, former Chief Election Commissioner S Y Quraishi had described it as the Moral Code of Conduct. Even if it just a rap on the knuckles, most politicians do not relish the prospect of a censure or a reprimand by the ECI.
- The ECI also launched cVIGIL app to create a fast-track complaint reception and redressal system. cVIGIL is an innovative mobile application for citizens to report Model Code of Conduct and Expenditure violations during the elections.

4. Economy

4.1. Harmonized System of Nomenclature Code

What is the News about Harmonized System

- With effect from the 1st April, 2021, GST taxpayers will have to furnish HSN (Harmonised System of Nomenclature Code), or Service Accounting Code (SAC) in their invoices.

What is Harmonized System

- In trade parlance, every product is categorised under an HSN code (Harmonised System of Nomenclature). It helps in systematic classification of goods across the globe.
- HSN codes for goods at 6 digits are universally common.

What is Harmonized System in Indian Context

- Common HSN codes apply to Customs and GST.
- Accordingly, codes prescribed in the Customs tariff are used for the GST purposes too.
- Manufacturers and importers/exporters have been commonly using HSN Codes.
- Manufacturers were furnishing these codes even in the pre-GST regime.
- Importers and exporters have been furnishing these codes in import/export documents.

What is the use of Harmonized System in Indian Context

- This will help tax officers with deeper data analytics for every item supplied.
- It will help them in arresting tax evasion emanating from fake invoices and irregular tax credit claims
- The HS contributes to the harmonization of Customs and trade procedures, and the non-documentary trade data interchange in connection with such procedures, thus reducing the costs related to international trade.

Some Other Important Uses

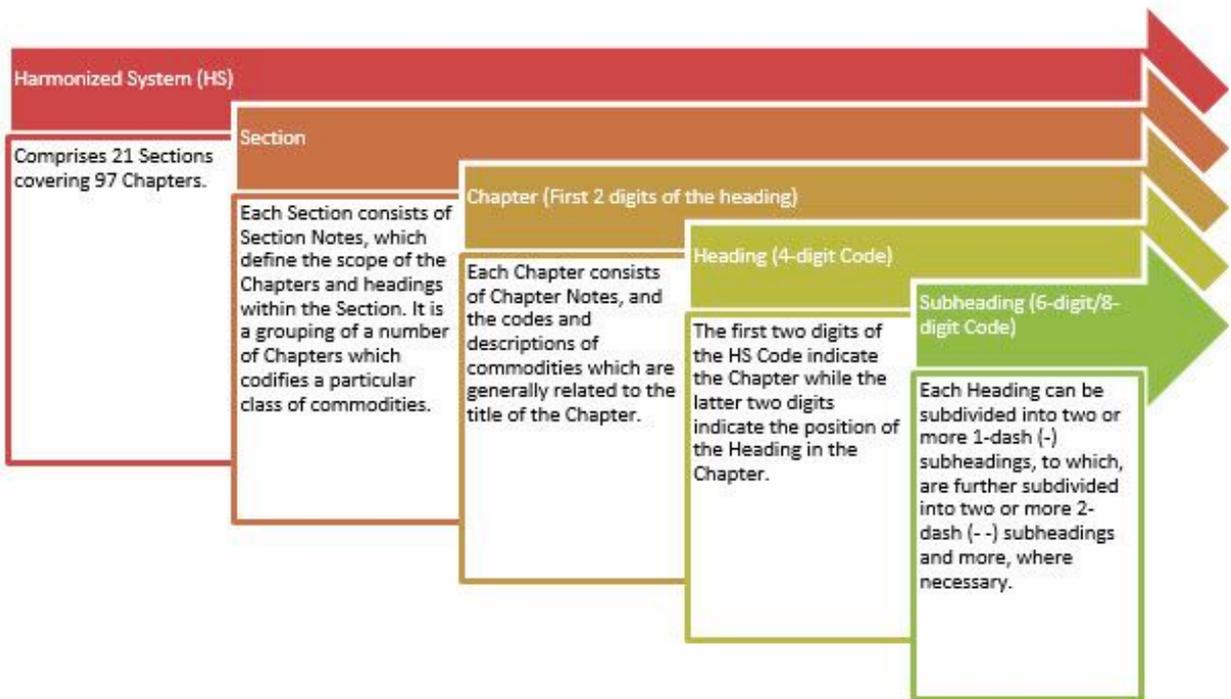
- It is also extensively used by governments, international organizations and the private sector for many other purposes such as internal taxes, trade policies, monitoring of controlled goods, rules of origin, freight tariffs, transport statistics, price monitoring, quota controls, compilation of national accounts, and economic research and analysis.
- The HS is thus a universal economic language and code for goods, and an indispensable tool for international trade.

Does Everyone has to go for Harmonized System

- As per the new invoice norms, businesses with more than ₹5 crore sales have to describe goods and services in internationally accepted six-digit codes of nomenclature.

Concept of Harmonized System

- It is a multipurpose international product nomenclature developed by the World Customs Organization (WCO).



Things Covered

- It comprises more than 5,000 commodity groups. Each identified by a six digit code,
- arranged in a legal and logical structure and is supported by well-defined rules to achieve uniform classification.

What is its Use

- The system is used by more than 200 countries and economies as a basis for their Customs tariffs and for the collection of international trade statistics.
- Over 98 % of the merchandise in international trade is classified in terms of the HS.

Example

- Of the six digits, the first two denote the HS Chapter, the next two give the HS heading, and the last two give the HS subheading.

HS Code Example

Apple  ➔ 08 08 10 00 00 00

International National

Section 02: *Vegetable Products*

Chapter 08: Edible Fruit and nuts, peel of citrus/melons

Heading 08: Apples, Pears and Quinces, Fresh

Subheading 10: Apples

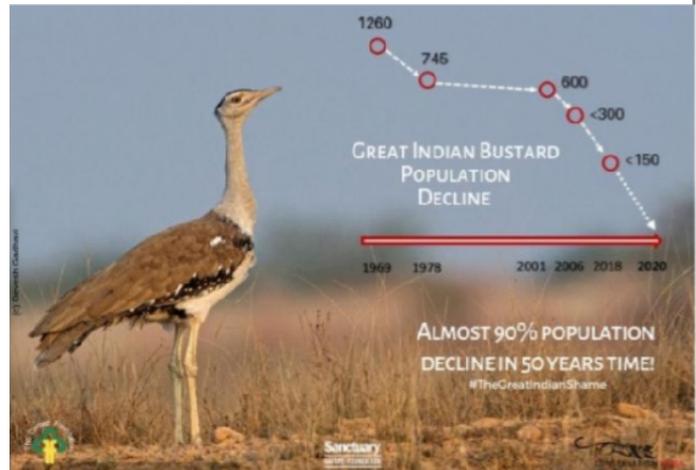
Country Specific Divisions

5. Environment & Ecology

5.1. Great Indian Bustard

Introduction

- It is one of the heaviest flying birds in the world.
- It is the State bird of Rajasthan.
- It is considered the flagship grassland species, representing the health of the grassland ecology.
- But with less than 200 GIBs remaining in the world, most of them found in Rajasthan's 'Desert National Park', we are on the brink of forever losing a majestic bird species, which was once a strong contender to be declared as India's National Bird.

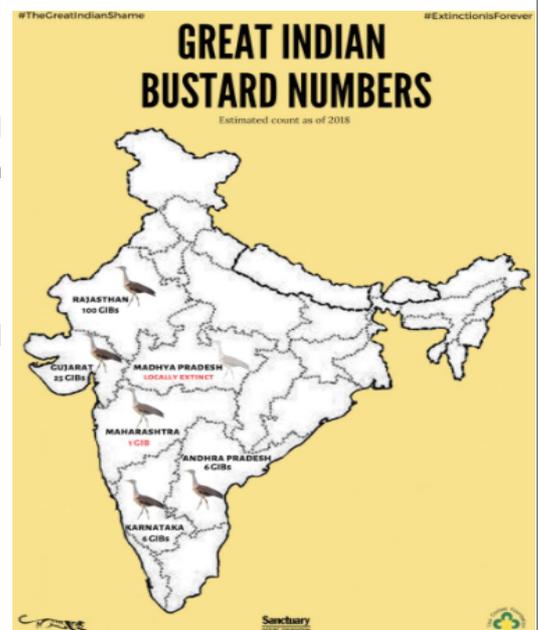


Habitat

- Bustards generally favour flat open landscapes with minimal visual obstruction and disturbance, therefore adapt well in grasslands.
- Its population is confined mostly to Rajasthan and Gujarat.
- Small populations occur in Maharashtra, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh.

Reason for Decline

- Habitat loss & fragmentation
- Change of land use pattern
- Desertification
- Ill-thought plantation of exotic & invasive species in grassland ecosystems
- Neglect of state institutions due to classification of 'grasslands' as 'wastelands'
- Conversion of grasslands to agriculture lands due to increasing irrigation potential
- Decline of nature/GIB-friendly agrarian practices
- Collision/electrocution with power transmission lines
- Wind turbines and Solar farms (photovoltaic power stations)
- Hunting
- Noise pollution disrupting natural breeding cycle.



Protection

- IUCN - Critically Endangered CITES - Appendix 1
- The Great Indian Bustard, Asian Elephant and Bengal Florican have been included in Appendix I of the UN Convention on Migratory Species at the 13th Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) in Gandhinagar (Gujarat).
- Conference of the Parties (COP) to the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 - Schedule 1



'Gibi' the enchanting Great Indian Bustard, representing all the endangered species that need our love, care, and protection.

Conservation In India

- It is kept under the species recovery programme under the Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats of the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEFCC).
- The MoEFCC has also launched a program called 'Habitat Improvement and Conservation Breeding of Great Indian Bustard-An Integrated Approach'.
- The objective of the programme is to build up a captive population of Great Indian Bustards and to release the chicks in the wild for increasing the population.
- Rajasthan government has launched 'Project Great Indian Bustard' with an aim of constructing breeding enclosures for the species and developing infrastructure to reduce human pressure on its habitats.



Important

- The Ministry of Environment Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) along with the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) India has come up with a unique initiative a "firefly bird diverter" for overhead power lines in areas where Great Indian Bustard (GIB) populations are found in the wild.
- The Supreme Court of India, in a recent hearing, directed that power lines in GIB landscapes should be placed underground.
- They have been satellite-tagged in the Desert National Park (DNP).
- The technique of satellite telemetry has been used for a long time in the last century to track the movements of birds.
- It usually involves a bird being fitted with a satellite transmitter weighing 170 grammes.
- Today, GPS technology is being used, giving scientists even more precise data.

6. Science & Technology

6.1. Baikal Covid

- Baikal-GVD (Gigaton Volume Detector) is one of the three largest neutrino detectors in the world along with the IceCube at the South Pole and ANTARES in the Mediterranean Sea

- Mission: Study in detail neutrinos and determine their sources

- Fundamental Particles

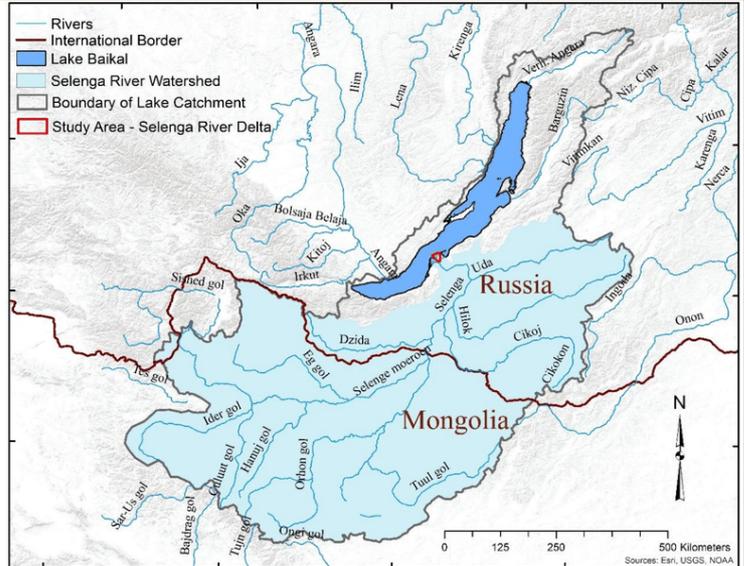
- ✓ Broadly, particles of matter that scientists know about as of now can be classified into quarks (including protons and neutrons) and leptons (electrons) – 5% of the universe

- ✓ Not much is known about the remaining 95 per cent of the universe, which is classified by the authors into dark matter (27 percent) and the remaining 68 per cent of the universe of which scientists have “no idea” about yet

- Neutrinos are fundamental particles, abundant in nature (second most abundant after photons) with about a thousand trillion of them passing through a human body every second. They carry no charge and do not interact with matter

- One way of detecting neutrinos is in water or ice, where neutrinos leave a flash of light or a line of bubbles when they interact. To capture these signs, scientists have to build large detectors

- ✓ An underwater telescope such as the GVD is designed to detect high- energy neutrinos that may have come from the Earth’s core, or could have been produced during nuclear reactions in the Sun



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