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Editorial Discussion & Analysis (EDA)

25th & 26th August 2021

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Table of Contents

1. Polity	1
1.1.Caste Counts (The Hindu).....	1
1.2.The Ugly Face of Crime Fighting Move (The Hindu).....	1
2. Ecology & International Relations	3
2.1.Climate Change, A catalyst for Arctic Cooperation (The Hindu)	3
2.2.Negotiating the new Global Climate Policy (The Hindu).....	4
3. Agriculture	6
3.1.Slipping on Palm Oil (Indian Express).....	6
4. Health	7
4.1.A Flawed Recipe (Indian Express).....	7

Note -

- **The Newspaper clippings pasted in PDF are important from Mains point of view as it contains the fodder material for Mains Answer Writing.**
- **Also watch DND video lectures everyday @ 4 PM on Sleepy's YouTube channel in order to understand how to get the most out of everyday's Newspaper .**

Click [here](#) to watch the following topics on YouTube

1. Polity

1.1. Caste Counts (The Hindu)

- Context- Caste Census Imperative

Concern

- No political party in the country has publicly opposed the demand as yet, and most have supported the call.
- **The last time India's population was enumerated on the basis of caste was in 1931, when it was under colonial rule.**
- Effective governance requires robust data on the governed. The creation of categories is itself a political act.
- **Caste as the fundamental marker of identity for an Indian has only grown since Independence.**
- **With Deepening of Democracy, questions on affirmative action towards Dalits, tribal communities and a large section of the population are being raised.**

Way Forward

- Particular groups within each category have benefited disproportionately from political and job reservations, and raising the demands for sub-quotas.
- With the role of the Government as a big employer diminishing, there is a demand for **affirmative action in the private sector.**
- **However inadequate and reliable data, leads to conflicting and often misleading claims.**
- **Partisan political gains should not be the motivation for a fresh census.**

1.2. The Ugly Face of Crime Fighting Move (The Hindu)

Author - Faizan Mustafa & Utkarsh Leo

- Context- National Automated Facial Recognition System vs Right to Privacy.

NAFRS

- To empower the Indian police with information technology, India approved implementation of the NAFRS.
- Objective is to "facilitate investigation of crime and detection of criminals" in a quick and timely manner.
- Regardless of face mask, makeup, plastic surgery, beard or hair extension it will be used for identifying person of interest.

- Computer algorithms will be used to map unique facial-landmarks (biometric data) such as shape of the cheekbones, contours of the lips to obtain a Faceprint.
- For purposes of 'verification' or 'identification', the system compares the faceprint generated with a large existing database of faceprints.

Why is NAFRS Intrusive for Liberty?

- There is a possibility of producing 'false positives' – a situation where the algorithm finds an incorrect match, even when there is none.
- It is crucial to examine whether its implementation is arbitrary and thus unconstitutional, and satisfies the Privacy test as per KS Puttuswamy judgment (2017).
- Fear of abuse and misuse with the pending-status of the Personal Data Protection Bill (PDPB), and the absence of clear guidelines.
- Law and order being State subjects, some Indian States have started the use of new technologies without fully appreciating the dangers involved.
- Proportionality Test Established By SC in 2017 is (a) any encroachment on the right to privacy requires the existence of 'law' (b) must exist a 'need' in terms of National interest and (c) Measure adopted must be 'proportionate' and it should be 'least intrusive.'

Way Forward

- Imperative to tackle modern-day criminality in India, **but without accountability and oversight, facial recognition technology has strong potential for misuse and abuse.**
- **Moratorium on the use of facial recognition technology till we enact a strong and meaningful Data protection law.**
- International experience shows that Due to its adverse impact on civil liberties, Countries such as USA & UK have been cautious in using facial recognition.
- Would be Unwise to consider that the benefits for the deployment of this technology will be sufficiently great, and must outweigh the harm. **This way every citizen would be under the cloud of suspicion.**

2. Ecology & International Relations

2.1. Climate Change, A catalyst for Arctic Cooperation (The Hindu)

Author -Tatiana Belousova

- Context- The war is with Climate change, not each other
- 8 Countries have direct access to the Arctic resources, i.e., Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, the Russian Federation, Sweden and the United States.
- **In 2013, six Observers joined the Council, including China, Japan, India, Italy, South Korea, and Singapore, bringing their total number to 13.**
- **Presently, Russia's intention to re-establish the military might of its Northern Fleet also creates the security concerns in the Arctic Region.**
- The Regional tension within the Arctic region increased after the Russia- Ukraine Conflict in 2014.
- Russian Navy should ensure the readiness of its anti-submarine forces in the Arctic Ocean citing Barrents sea to be used as a naval front by the western powers.

Climate change- a wake up call in the Arctic too-

- **The summer of 2021 would be recorded in history as one of the most devastating seasons of our times.**
- Ferocious floods and wildfires were destroying communities in many parts of the world.
- Wildfires in Russian Siberia (Yakutia), where the winter temperature can be below - 40 Degrees C.
- Arctic region provides a platform for scientific research that can help to get to the bottom of natural calamities around the world.
- According to climate change. According to The World Climate and Security Report 2020- **Arctic is likely to begin experiencing ice-free summers within the next decade, completely free of sea ice.**
- **Environmental threats demand that environmental challenges should be an absolute priority for all players in the Arctic region.**

Way Forward

- All the Arctic actors should have a long-term vision and strategic goals as compared to immediate short-term gains.
- **Russia and China should refrain from opening up a War theatre against the West in the Arctic akin to the cold war era.**



- Climate change and its dramatic consequences must be a catalyst for Arctic cooperation.
- **Member nations must be concerned about the future developments in the region and their larger implications for humanity.**
- Arctic Council
- The Arctic Council is a high-level intergovernmental body set up in 1996 by the Ottawa declaration to promote cooperation, coordination and interaction among the Arctic States.
- Observers have no voting rights in the Council. As of May 2019, thirteen non-Arctic states have observer status
- Germany, Netherlands, Poland, United Kingdom, France, Spain, China, India, Italy, Japan, South Korea, Singapore, Switzerland have observer status as on 2019.



2.2.Negotiating the new Global Climate Policy (The Hindu)

Author - Mukul Sanwal

- Context- Climate Justice is “Common good”

Will Net Zero be Sufficient towards limiting the temperature rise?

- **Reaching net zero alone is not enough as it is the cumulative emissions up to net zero which determine the temperature that is reached.**
- Current emissions will not limit global warming and its adverse effect.
- India proposed that major economies bring down their own per capita emissions **to the global average by 2030. (At G20 Climate summit).**
- Achieving net zero of current emissions by 2050 restricts well-being of developing nations

Per Capita Emissions

- The world’s per capita greenhouse gas emissions are 6.55 tonnes of carbon dioxide.
- **India’s per capita emission at 1.96 tonnes is less than one-third**
- **Accepting ‘net zero’ emissions by 2050 effectively prevents India’s urbanisation and shift of the rural population into the middle class.**

Climate Justice and it's implications

- IPCC report has reiterated that impacts such as a rise in sea level, variability of rainfall **and temperature increases will not be reversible for some time** even after emissions fall.
- Adverse effects of climate change, or adaptation, are no longer a local but a global concern.
- Multilateral Cooperation on environmental law **to common goals of human well-being** as a universal human right based on a policy consensus.

Environmental Damage vs Well Being of Individual

- **Rising prosperity of the poor and its need for infrastructure should not not endanger planetary life.**
- **Consumption of the middle class in developing countries is less wasteful than in the first phase of urbanisation (Of USA, UK, China)**

Way Forward

- **Sharing prosperity should be the objective of new intergovernmental mechanisms, with the involvement of the private sector.**
- Ex- Supporting solar energy, joint research in new crop varieties and exchanging experiences on infrastructure viability.
- **Climate change requires a civilisational transformation in what we value, the way we live, and how we interact with one another**

Conclusion

- **By contributing over 60% of global cumulative emissions, with just one-fourth of the global population, North America and Europe are responsible for nearly 970 billion tonnes of carbon emissions.**
- **Countries like India needs the carbon space to grow to comparable levels of well-being.**

3. Agriculture

3.1. Slipping on Palm Oil (Indian Express)

Author - Sudhir Kumar Suthar

- Context- Palm oil can put North East Biodiversity at Risk

NMEO- OP

- The National Mission on Oilseeds and Oil Palm are part of the government's efforts to reduce the dependence on vegetable oil production.
- There has been a continuous increase in the production of diverse oilseeds but that has not matched the increasing demand.
- **Incentives to promote palm cultivation comes from the "success stories" of Indonesia and Malaysia.**
- **India imported 18.41 million tonnes of vegetable oil in 2018.**
- **The two countries produce 80 per cent of global oil palm.**

Concerns

- **Studies show Indonesia has seen a loss of 1,15,495 hectares of forest cover in 2020, mainly to oil palm plantation.**
- Along with adversely impacting the country's biodiversity, it has led to increasing **water pollution.**
- Decreasing forest cover has significant implications with respect to increasing **carbon emission levels.**
- Legislation allowing the clearing of tree cover and cutting forests for growing palm trees has led to increasing land-related tussles.
- **Studies have revealed that in case of variations in global palm oil prices, households dependent on palm oil cultivation become vulnerable.**
- **The Northeastern states are politically sensitive areas, and the oil palm initiative could breed tension there.**

Way Forward

- The palm oil policy could destroy this richness of the North East region.
- North east is home to 850 bird species, citrus fruits, medicinal plants and harbours rare plants and herbs.
- Palm Oil Policy contradicts government's commitments under the National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture.
- Such trends could have negative implications on farmer incomes, health, and food security in other parts of the country in the long run.

4. Health

4.1.A Flawed Recipe (Indian Express)

Author - Anura Kurpad and Harshal Singh Sachdev

- Context- Diet Diversification can address problem of Anaemia • Rice Fortification
- **Presently, compulsory rice fortification in safety-net feeding programmes like the ICDS, PDS and school mid-day meals is being carried out**
- Mandatory rice fortification programme is being piloted in some districts already.
- However, it is not established whether this will address the problem of Anaemia.
- **Extraordinarily high anaemia figure might, firstly, be inflated because WHO haemoglobin cut-offs are used to diagnose anaemia in India**

Concerns

- **The idea for iron fortification comes from the premise that a normal Indian diet cannot possibly meet an individual's daily iron requirement.**
- This mandatory fortification will cost the public exchequer Rs 2,600 crore annually with poor likelihood of benefit, and posing an unnecessary risk.
- **When rice fortification is made mandatory, it might even reduce the demand for the naturally-occurring diverse varieties in India.**
- It is often said that fortification is safe, that it delivers tiny amounts of iron, unlikely to cause harmful effects.
- **When the iron intake exceeds 40 mg/day, the risk of toxicity goes up.**
- **Iron causes oxidative stress, and more seriously, is implicated in diabetes and cancer risk.**
- **Iron present in the Indian Foods needs to be well absorbed else, fortification would be of no use.**

Conclusion

- The iron density of the Indian vegetarian diet, about 9 mg/1000 kCal, can thus meet most requirements
- Many other nutrients are involved in preventing anaemia, as well as a medley of non-diet factors, including the environment.
- Many other nutrients and adequate protein intake are also important, for which a good diverse diet is required

Question of the Day

- **"India's developmental needs are an obstacle" for Net zero. Do you agree? Substantiate your views with India's stand on Paris Accords. (250 words)**