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# Editorial Discussion & Analysis (EDA)

27th & 28th August 2021

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### 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. Governance

## 1.1. Covering the Gaps in the Game of Data (The Hindu)

Author - Kripa Ananth Pur

- Context- For Effective Governance, Data is Imperative

### Data Based Policy Making

- Data-based policymaking or budgeting is meant to facilitate the use of evidence to inform programmatic funding decisions.
- The goal is to further invest in what works to improve outcomes for citizens.
- Data-based decisions can redress inter and intra-district inequalities through targeted resource allocations.
- However existence of reliable and validated data along with demonstrable impact is very important.
- For example, it is well known that the flow of funds below the block level is often opaque and the data that is submitted by local bodies is not accurate.
- Another Example is during Covid, some States were not testing enough which lead to insufficient data on the number of Covid Cases.

### Way Forward

- Accurate collection, measurement and interpretation of data are critical for data-based decision making to be successful
- States collect enormous amounts of administrative data, state needs to ensure that the data is authentic and up to date.
- Issue such as mental health, that comes with enormous social stigma in India needs careful measurement as higher incidences of mental health can indicate better access to institutional care.
- State with high literacy and human development index (HDI) can mean that people have enough confidence in the judiciary, police thereby indicating better quality of governance.
- Jean Drèze and others have been calling for decentralised systems of data collection processes, with States building their own databases .
- States Must invest heavily in both human and technical infrastructure.

## 2. Ecology

### 2.1. The Clean Up Crew We Need

Author - Adarsh Kulkarni

- Context- The Clean Up Act!

#### Concern

- Vultures are often misunderstood as a source of diseases. Some consider vultures ugly, unlovable and even a bad omen.
- Vultures are slow breeders and so the survival of every individual is very crucial. They are relatively social birds with an average lifespan of 10-30 years in the wild.
- **India lost more than 95% of its vulture population through the 1990s and by the mid-2000s**
- Main reason for the decline in the vulture population is the use of the drug, diclofenac. (Painkiller Drug for Cattle)
- **Diclofenac is toxic to vultures even in small doses and causes kidney failure and death**
- **Quarrying and blasting of stones where vultures nest have also caused their decline.**

#### Benefits of Vultures to Ecosystem

- Vultures are very important scavengers in our ecosystem. With a strong sense of smell, vultures can detect the presence of dead animals from great distances.
- **Generally, vultures rely on other carnivores to open carcasses.**
- Their powerful bills and long slender necks help them tear off chunks of meat of the dead animals. Vultures have a highly acidic stomach that helps them digest rotting carcass.
- Declining Vulture Populations can lead to inefficient clearing of carcasses and contaminates water systems.
- **Dead animals if left to rot for longer periods, then this may expose humans to severe health hazard**

#### Way Forward

- India banned diclofenac for veterinary use in 2006. Vulture 'restaurants', which exist in some countries, are also a way of preserving the population.
- Diclofenac-free carcasses of cattle are dumped in designated areas where vultures gather to feed.
- **A Vulture Care Centre (VCC) was set up at Pinjore, Haryana in 2001 to study the cause of deaths of vultures in India.**
- **Jatayu Conservation Breeding Centre in Pinjore is the world's largest facility within the state's Bir Shikargah Wildlife Sanctuary for the breeding and conservation of Indian Vulture species.**

## 3. Polity

### 3.1. Has the First Past the Post System Polarised Indian Politics?

#### What is FPTP?

- The first-past-the-post (FPTP) system is also known as the simple majority system.
- In this voting method, the candidate with the highest number of votes in a constituency is declared the winner.
- This system is used in India in direct elections to the Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies.
- While FPTP is relatively simple, it does not always allow for a truly representative mandate, as the candidate could win despite securing less than half the votes in a contest.

#### Maurice Duverger's Views (French Political Scientist)-

- FPTP system tends to bring about a two-party system at the constituency level.
- In India this translated into the establishment of a two-party system at the State level which happened between 1967 and 1989.
- Post 1990s' (a) Congress versus BJP in a number of State, (b) Congress versus the Left in 3 States and (c) Congress versus regional parties in other States.

#### Does FPTP system Leads to Polarisation?

- The FPTP system can't be blamed for polarisation. Polarisation is linked to the politicisation of certain social cleavages.
- These cleavages are sometimes dormant in society and can become active or can be activated through mobilisations.

#### PR System

- This refers to an electoral system in which the distribution of seats corresponds closely with the proportion of the total votes cast for each party
- This is a more complicated but representative system than the first-past-the-post (FPTP) system, which is used in India.
- If a party gets 40% of the total votes, for example, a perfectly proportional system would allow it to get 40% of the seats.

#### Layers of Protection to the Basic structure of the Constitution

- The government needs a two-thirds majority in both Houses subject to the presence of at least 50% of the House in attendance- Constitutional Amendments.
- Judicial Review
- For some articles on Centre-State relations, it has to pass them through half the State Assemblies

## 4. Indian Society

### 4.1. Bringing Her Back To School (Indian Express)

Author - Amitabh kant & Piyush Prakash

- Context- Make sure Girl don't Drop out from School
- **The global average for the private rate of return with just one extra year of schooling is about 9 per cent. Social returns of an extra year of school are even higher – above 10 per cent at the secondary and higher education levels as per a decennial World Bank review.**
- **For their own empowerment, as well as for society at large, we must bring more and more women within the ambit of higher education.**
- In India, before the pandemic, there was a welcome trend in the gradual increase in the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) for women in higher education – **from 19.8 per cent in 2012-13 to 27.3 per cent in 2019-20.**

#### Reasons for Girls Dropping out

- **They are engaged in domestic activities (31.9 %)**
- They are not interested in education (15%)
- They have financial constraints (18.4 %)
- They Get Married (12.4 %)

#### Government's Response

- National Scheme of Incentives to Girls for Secondary Education (NSIGSE)
- **PRAGATI Scholarship scheme for girls in technical education-** launched by the Ministry of Human Resource Development in 2014 to provide encouragement and support to Girl Child to pursue technical education.

#### Way Forward

- As an immediate step, in every locality, a mohalla school or a community learning programme should be started with appropriate Covid norms if the local disaster management authorities and the state governments permit.
- To predict likely drop-outs, a Gender atlas comprising indicators that are mapped to key reasons for school drop-outs should be developed.
- There is a need to revise the National Scheme of Incentive to Girls for Secondary Education in areas or states with high prevalence of drop-outs and early child marriages
- Every panchayat showing a consistent trend in girl child drop-outs should have composite schools till higher secondary (classes I-XII).
- Behavioural Insights Units (BIU) may be established across states to tackle social issues with the help of ultra-local NGOs/CSOs to reach the last mile.
- Behavioural nudges are going to be key in tackling social prejudices and orthodox cultural norms

## 5. Health

### 5.1. Cohabiting With Covid (Indian Express)

**Author - K Srikanth Reddy**

- Context- Finding ways to Live with Virus

#### Microbes

- If not for the Novel Coronavirus, we do know about the evolutionary biology of other microbes, to start eschewing the war-like slogan of eradication.
- **The 2 microbes that have been completely eradicated so far are smallpox in humans and rinderpest in cattle.**
- Polio has not been eradicated all over the world — it still lurks in Afghanistan and Pakistan.
- **Getting rid of the Coronavirus completely is an unrealistic ambition, especially since it is a respiratory virus that spreads far and fast.**
- **Only winning strategy we have is to protect people from severe disease through vaccination & Masking.**

#### How can Humans exert pressure on the Virus?

- **We Must discard the “waging war” metaphor and recognise the evolutionary imperatives that drive the microbe’s behaviour.**
- **Microbes evolve much faster than humans. We can exert evolutionary pressure on the virus by creating barriers for its easy transmission and prevent a prolonged stay in infected humans.**
- And how can we do this? Simple, by using masks, moving in well- ventilated areas and avoiding crowds.

#### Why will the virus become less virulent over time?

- **Because its survival advantage depends on having a human host, in whom it can replicate. It cannot afford to wipe out our species, for it will script its own extinction by doing so**
- **SARS-CoV-2 virus is killing those where the virus is maladapted to the host**

#### Way Forward

- **Eradication of the virus is also a difficult goal to reach when there are alternate hosts where the virus can find refuge and from whom it can re- emerge to infect humans. Eg, Cats, dogs, Cows**
- **We must free ourselves from the obsession with zero-Covid, while we vigorously nudge the virus to become a less threatening co-habitant of our shared planet.**
- **Change in Behaviour of behaviour of anti-maskers, vaccine opponents and vaccine hoarding nations is a must.**

## 6. Indian Economy

### 6.1.Asset Monetization- Execution Is the key (The Hindu)

Author - T. T ram Mohan

- Context- Asset Monetization is fine “if” executed properly

#### Asset Monetization

- Government hopes to earn ₹6 Lakh Crores in revenues over a four-year period.
- Government parts with its assets — such as roads, coal mines — for a specified period of time in exchange for a lump sum payment.
- At the end of the period, the assets return to the Government.
- Unlike in privatisation, no sale of government assets is involved.
- By monetising assets it has already built, the Government can earn revenues to build more infrastructure.
- Monetization mainly in 3 sectors: Roads, Railways & Power
- Airports, Ports, Telecom, Stadiums

#### Under Utilized Assets

- Monetisation will happen through public-private partnerships (PPP) and Investment Trusts.
- **By making the necessary investment in an Under Utilized asset (Airport, stadium), the private player can reap the benefits of a higher level of cash flows.**
- **Difference in cash flows under Government and those under private management is a measure of the improvement in efficiency of the assets.**
- This is a win-win situation for the Government and the private player.
- **Government gets a ‘fair’ value for its assets. The private player gets its return on investment.**
- **Monetizing Under Utilized Assets has much to commend as compared to a Well Utilized Asset.**

#### Well Utilized Assets

- The private player has little incentive to invest and improve efficiency.
- Assuming a Highway, which has a good traffic and well managed. If this is taken over by the Private player then, The private player may value the cash flows assuming a normal rate of growth of traffic.
- There will be **no improvement in efficiency of the Asset.**



- However, paradoxically despite this private players will prefer well- utilised assets to assets that are under-utilised, because in the former the cash flows and returns are more certain.
- At the end of the day, the cost of capital is also to be seen by a Private Enterprise. It is much expensive for an Entrepreneur to Raise Capital than Government.
- For government it is much easier to raise Debt as government is Sovereign, it can never default.

### Way Forward

- In general, the economy is best served when public authorities develop infrastructure and monetise these.
- We are better off monetising under-utilised assets than assets that are well utilised.
- To ensure proper execution, there is a case for independent monitoring of the process.
- Government may set up an Asset Monetisation Monitoring Authority staffed by competent professionals.