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## DAILY NEWS DIARY

Of

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## FOR PRELIMS AND MAINS

Warm Greetings.

- DnD aims to provide every day news analysis in sync with the UPSC pattern.
- It is targeted at UPSC – Prelims & Mains.
- Daily articles are provided in the form of Question and Answers
  - To have a bank of mains questions.
  - And interesting to read.
  - Providing precise information that can be carried straight to the exam, rather than over dumping.

Enjoy reading.

THE HINDU - TH  
INDIAN EXPRESS - IE  
BUSINESS LINE - BL  
ECONOMIC TIMES - ET  
TIMES OF INDIA - TOI

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## ESSAY PAPER

### EDITORIAL

**Is India about to face another ordeal after the Ram Janmabhoomi – Ayodhya dispute? Discuss?**

**INTRODUCTION** = The order of a civil court in Varanasi that the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) should conduct a survey to ascertain whether the Gyanvapi mosque was built over a demolished Hindu temple is an unconscionable intervention that will open the floodgates for another protracted religious dispute.

EX - The order, apparently in gross violation of the **explicit legislative prohibition on any litigation over the status of “places of worship”**, is likely to give a fillip to majoritarian and revanchist forces that earlier carried on the Ram Janmabhoomi movement over a site in Ayodhya.



### Steps to be corrected

- That dispute culminated in the country’s highest court handing over the site to the very forces that conspired to illegally demolish the Babri Masjid.
  - The plaintiffs, who have filed a suit as representatives of Hindu faith to reclaim the land on which the mosque stands, have now succeeded in getting the court to commission an ASI survey to look for the sort of evidence that they would never have been able to adduce on their own.
  - The order has been issued despite the fact that the Allahabad High Court reserved its order on the maintainability of the suit on March 15 and is yet to pronounce its ruling.
  - It is not clear why the civil judge did not wait for the ruling and went ahead with his directive to the ASI. By an order in 1997, the civil court had decided that the suit was not barred by the **Places of Worship (Special Provisions) Act, 1991**, which said all pending suits concerning the status of places of worship will abate and that none can be instituted.
1. The 1991 Act also froze the status of all places of worship, **barring the then disputed site in Ayodhya, as on August 15, 1947.**
  2. There was **another exception** — any place of worship that was an archaeological site or ancient monument covered by the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958. The latest application seeking a survey by the ASI as an expert body is aimed at providing “evidence”. Regardless of the merits of either side’s case, it ought to be clear to anyone concerned with peace and harmony in the country that the attempt to resurrect disputes buried by law is a serious setback to the cause of secularism and peaceful coexistence. That new challenges are emerging to the wisdom of Parliament in giving a statutory quietus to squabbles over religious sites is deeply disturbing.

**GS 2****❖ Social Justice****Q- What is M.S.Swaminathan's effective methodology in eradicating Tuberculosis?**

**BACKGROUND** = Tuberculosis is one of the most debilitating diseases and is also triggered by undernutrition. M.S.Swaminathan Research Foundation (MSSRF) has therefore started a programme designed to ensure the nutritional wellbeing of affected persons. Also, MSSRF's approach is to link agriculture, nutrition and health. The nutritional enrichment of the affected patient is best done through the cultivation and consumption of biofortified crops. Genetic gardens of biofortified crops should be established in all the TB treatment centers.

Since the organisation's inception in 1998, he has instilled the need for a more holistic approach to TB by engaging communities and the private sector. And recently REACH, a Chennai-based non-profit organisation working towards eradicating TB for over two decades, organised a virtual event at which Professor Swaminathan, who was its founding chair, was felicitated.



Professor Swaminathan pointed out the three steps to tackle an issue as crucial as TB —

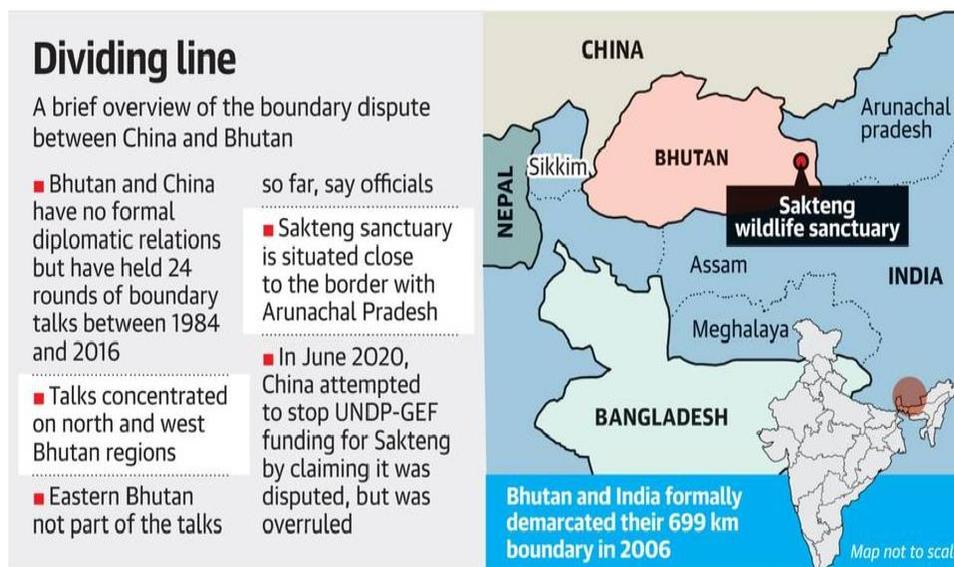
1. The first was to identify the problem,
2. Then to understand the nature of the issue
3. And third, to mobilise and organise people to work together towards the common goal of TB elimination.
  - The two most interesting aspects about Professor Swaminathan's approach to issues, be it hunger or a disease like TB, are that he thinks big — he wants to eliminate hunger, eliminate tuberculosis, and in order to implement the vision, he works out the steps, policies and programmes in an evidence-based framework.
  - TB eradication needed more than a biomedical approach; nutrition, gender and livelihood issues also need to be addressed.
  - There is a lot that remains to be done to achieve TB elimination, and we are further set back due to COVID-19. We have to learn from the COVID-19 response, particularly in terms of new technologies and adapting to the situation.

**❖ International Relations****Q- Give a brief account of the evolution of the Bhutan-China Boundary Agreements?**

**BACKGROUND** = Bhutan and China have agreed to set up the next round of much-delayed boundary talks between them "as soon as possible" and discussed a roadmap for expediting the boundary

resolution, a joint release of the 10th Expert Group Meeting (EGM) on the Bhutan-China Boundary held in Kunming. The upcoming talks, the 25th round of the boundary talks mechanism, will be the first since the Doklam standoff in 2017, and the first since China made new claims on Bhutan's eastern boundary bordering Arunachal Pradesh in June 2020.

"The two sides agreed to continue to maintain peace and tranquillity in the border areas pending a final settlement of the boundary issue, referring to the annual boundary talk mechanism that began in 1984, and was followed by two agreements on the maintenance of peace and tranquillity along the border areas in 1988 and 1998.



Since then, 24 rounds of talks have been held, but there have been no talks scheduled since 2016, ostensibly due to tensions over the Doklam standoff between India and China over PLA transgressions in Bhutanese territory, and more recently due to the Coronavirus pandemic. The previous 9th round of the ECG was also held prior to the Doklam standoff, in April 2017 in Beijing.

The talks have thus far focused on two **areas of dispute: Pasamlung and Jakarlung valleys to the North of Bhutan and Doklam to the West of Bhutan, along the tri-junction with India.** However, at a UN environmental meeting in June 2020, China raised an objection to a grant for Bhutan's Sakteng Sanctuary to the East frontier as well, saying that it was disputed as well.

### GS 3

#### ❖ Economic Development

**Q- What are Net Direct Tax Receipts and what does a raise in them mean for the economy?**

**BACKGROUND = Direct Taxes are the taxes paid out of pocket by a customer.** The provisional figures of Direct Tax collections for the Financial Year 2020-21 show that net collections are at Rs. 9.45 lakh crore. The net Direct Tax collections include Corporation Tax (CIT) at Rs. 4.57 lakh crore and Personal Income Tax (PIT) including Security Transaction Tax (STT) at Rs. 4.88 lakh crore. The net Direct Tax collections represent 104.46% of the Revised Estimates of Rs. 9.05 lakh crore of Direct Taxes for the F.Y. 2020-21.

- Despite an extremely challenging year, the Advance Tax collections for 2020-21 stand at ₹4.95 lakh crore which shows a growth of approximately 6.7% over the preceding financial year. (**Advance tax** means income **tax** should be paid in **advance** instead of lump sum payment at year end. It is also known as pay as you earn **tax**. These payments have to be made in instalments as per due dates provided by the income **tax** department.)

- The improved direct tax collections, along with the recent uptick in inflows of indirect taxes, including the GST, suggest that India's fiscal position may be better than the 9.5% of fiscal deficit projected in the revised estimates
- The fiscal deficit in 2020-21 may be lower than the revised estimate, provided there is no slippage on the expenditure side.
- The strong campaign for the Vivad Se Vishwas Scheme, the use of technology and digitisation, and the widening of tax base coupled with tax collected at source has contributed to higher tax collections

### Snippets

#### GS 2

#### ❖ Polity

#### **Q- Mention the grounds on which the Supreme Court refused to entertain petition on religious conversions?**

- The Supreme Court said people are free to choose their religion, even as it lashed out at a "very, very harmful kind" of "public interest" petition claiming there is mass religious conversion happening "by hook or by crook" across the country.



- The fundamental right under Article 25 of the Constitution to freely profess, practise and propagate religion, subject to public order, morality and health. "Why do you think there is the word 'propagate'?"

#### **The petition says –**

1. Religious conversion is being done through a "carrot-and-stick" approach.
2. The petition alleged that the court should direct the Centre and the States to control black magic, superstition and religious conversion being done through threats, intimidation or bribes.

#### **Judgement Highlights –**

1. Religious faith is a part of the fundamental right to privacy. Reminding Mr. Upadhyay who claimed the petition that the Constitution Bench judgment upheld inviolability of the right to privacy, equating it with the rights to life, of dignity and liberty.
2. Every person is the final judge of his/her choice of religion or who their life partner should be. Courts cannot sit in judgment of a person's choice of religion or life partner.

Mr. Upadhyay's petition was dismissed as withdrawn. His pleas to approach the Law Commission or the High Court with the petition was not expressly allowed by the Bench.

## GS 3

## ❖ Security

Q- Write a brief note on the Freedom of Navigation Operation (FONOP) and India's protest against this U.S Naval Exercise?

- **Freedom of Navigation Operations (FONOPs)** — The US Department of Defense defines **FONOPs** as “**operational** challenges against excessive maritime claims” through which “the United States demonstrates its resistance to excessive maritime claims.”
- FONOPs are closely linked to the concept of freedom of navigation, and in particular to the enforcement of relevant international law and customs regarding freedom of navigation.
- FONOPs are a method of enforcing UNCLOS (United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea) and avoiding these negative outcomes by reinforcing freedom of navigation through practice.
- **Recently India** has protested the U.S. decision to conduct a patrol in the Indian Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) in the western Indian Ocean, rejecting the U.S.'s claim that its domestic maritime law was in violation of international law.



- **US** asserted navigational rights and freedoms approximately 130 nautical miles west of the Lakshadweep Islands, inside India's exclusive economic zone, without requesting India's prior consent, consistent with international law. And further stated India requires prior consent for military exercises or manoeuvres in its exclusive economic zone or continental shelf, a claim inconsistent with international law.
- Also added – US conduct's routine and regular FONOPs, as we have done in the past and will continue to in the future. FONOPs are not about one country, nor are they about making political statements. The Ministry of External Affairs confirmed - the USS John Paul Jones was “continuously monitored” transiting from the Persian Gulf towards the Malacca Straits. While India ratified UNCLOS in 1995, the U.S. has failed to do so far. For the 7th Fleet to carry out FONOPs missions in Indian EEZ in violation of our domestic law is bad enough. But publicising it? USN please switch on IFF (Identification, friend or foe)!”



Given the Inflation trends in India, this is the first time consumption for one of the following has contracted since 1998-99 due to the coronavirus induced lockdown?

- a. Fuel
- b. Electricity
- c. Mobile Data
- d. Essential Commodity Goods



Which of the following constitute the criteria for devolution regarding the 15th Finance Commission?

1. Income tax collections
2. Forest and Ecology
3. Status of Law and Order
4. Income Distance
5. Population(2001)

**Choose the correct option:**

- a. 1 and 3 only
- b. 2 and 4 only
- c. 1,3 and 5 only
- d. 4 and 5 only

**Answer: B**

Criteria for devolution: –Income distance 45%; Population (2011)-15%; Area-15%; • Forest and Ecology-10%; Demographic performance-12.5%; Tax Effort-2.5%. (Income distance is the distance of the • state's income from the state with the highest income. The income of a state has been computed as average per capita GSDP during the three-year period between 2015-16 and 2017-18. States with lower per capita income would be given a higher share to maintain equity among states

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