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DAILY NEWS DIARY

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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.

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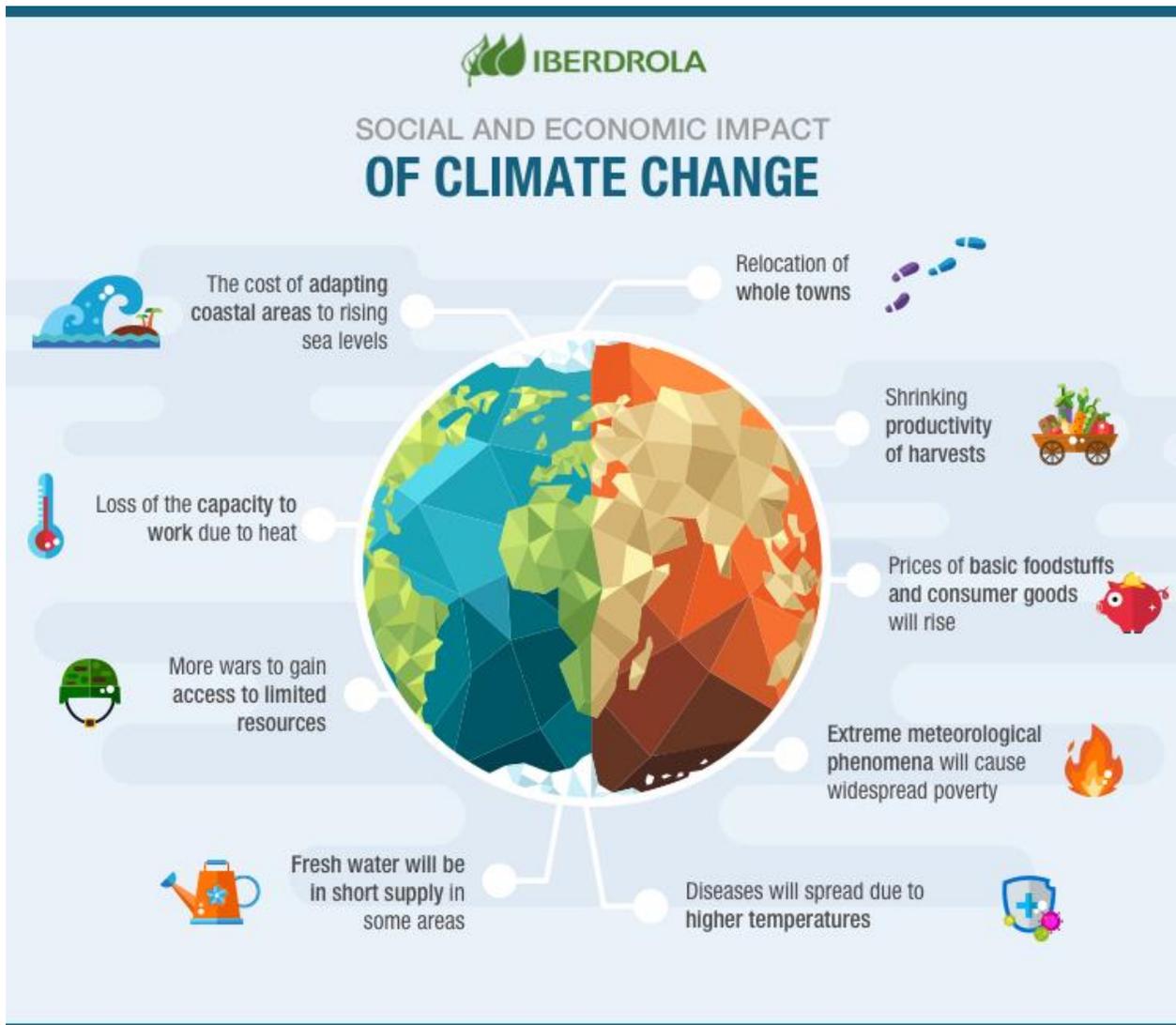


ESSAY PAPER

Editorial

Q- Government orders are not the same as good policy for clean energy or safety. Elaborate?

INTRODUCTION = A market economy does not remove the need for a government to use a framework of incentives to influence the direction it takes. In this context, climate change is perhaps the most serious global threat today that needs government intervention through incentives to steer economies away from the current energy use pattern.



Why are Government Orders Ineffective -

However, what an economy doesn't need are diktats, which are a dangerous substitute for well thought out incentives. Diktats merely represent virtue signalling. And that can have unintended

consequences which don't usually end well for people employed in the relevant areas. Unfortunately, that is what the Delhi government is trying.

- Delhi has released a draft policy that will make electric vehicles (EVs) mandatory in phases for ride aggregators and delivery vehicles.
- GoI and many states have already provided fiscal concessions to nudge consumers towards EVs.
- Transitions, however, take time and their pace is influenced by the public investment to lower costs at the individual level.

Delhi government's action will only put upward pressure on the costs of a couple of sectors without meaningfully altering the city's air quality.

1. **Instead, the Delhi government should start by converting its own fleet into EVs. Investing in public transport, particularly buses, and charging stations will also help.**
2. When virtue signalling is used as a substitute for good policy, the price is borne by consumers. To illustrate, road transport minister Nitin Gadkari recently said that GoI has prepared a draft notification to make a minimum of six airbags mandatory for vehicles carrying up to eight passengers.
3. But about 81% of the 18.6 million vehicles sold annually are not four-wheelers – they are two-wheelers. Plus, national highways that make up only 1.94% of India's road network account for 35.7% of crash fatalities. The laudable intent of making most of our roads safer needs action elsewhere.

GS 1

❖ Indian Society

Q- Make a note of the troubles awaited to be resolved on the law on interfaith marriages?

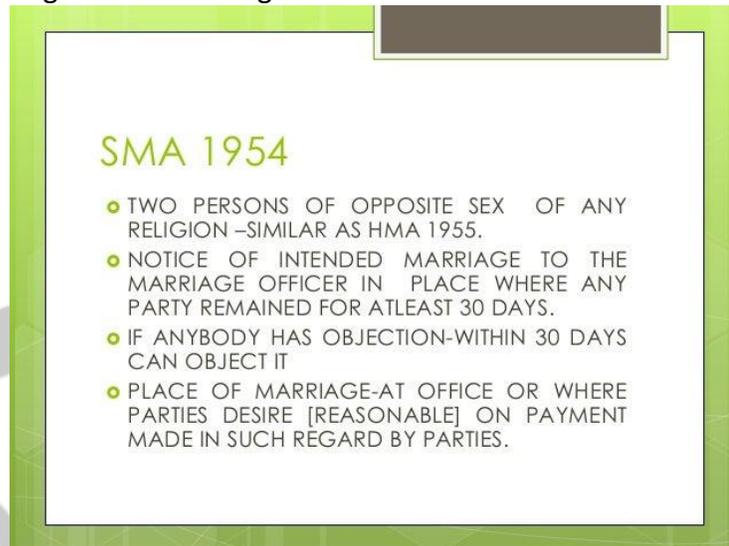
BACKGROUND = The law that governs inter-faith marriages in the country, the Special Marriage Act (SMA), 1954, is being challenged for endangering the lives of young couples who seek refuge under it. More than a year after a writ petition was moved before the Supreme Court, seeking striking down of several of its provisions, the Union government is yet to submit its response.

Case Study -

Twenty-seven-year old Aafreen Ansari* was under tremendous pressure from her family to get married. But she was already in love with a Hindu boy and the idea of an inter-faith marriage was vehemently opposed by her parents. So, without any further delay, she and Mohan Sharma*, decided to have a court marriage under the SMA around August 2020.

She and Mr. Sharma went online and submitted their application. When they reached the Sub-Divisional Magistrate's (SDM) office for the verification of their documents, the staff dissuaded them in multiple ways- They threatened to stop our marriage over a spelling error. And then they told us we were required to wait for 30 days and issue a notice inviting objections to our marriage from the public and that this notice would be stuck on the court premises," recounts Ms. Aafreen.

1. Section 5 of the SMA requires a person marrying under this law to give a notice of intended marriage,
2. And Section 6(2) says it should be affixed at a conspicuous place at the office of the marriage officer.
3. Section 7(1) allows any person to object to the marriage within 30 days of the publication of the notice, failing which a marriage can be solemnised under Section 7(2).



Such was the terror of being discovered, that the couple approached the Delhi High Court a few days later, challenging Sections 6 and 7 of the Act. The couple are now married, but the court is yet to give its decision.

Challenges -

1. The law doesn't require a notice to be sent to the families, but there are often instances where marriage officers and State governments go over and beyond the law to scuttle these marriages.
2. Some State governments can also be overzealous in implementing the law.

Example -

- a. Haryana, for instance, created a checklist for marriages under the SMA, with 16 criteria that require a couple to publish a notice inviting objections in a newspaper and that such notices be sent to their parents. But even without such over-reach, several provisions in the law put the lives of these couples in danger.
- b. Some States require couples to also seek a no-objection certificate from their parents.
- c. The Maharashtra (Department of Registration and Stamps) publicly shares the details of these couples on its website, from where communal elements can access them.

Way Forward -

All eyes are now on the Supreme Court, where a petition in the Nandini Praveen vs. Union of India in September 2021 has sought that these and a few other provisions be struck down as they violate the right to privacy, and the right to marry.

Until the top court decides, couples will be forced to knock on the door of courts to seek protection from a law that was framed with the intent to safeguard their interests.

GS 2

❖ Governance

Q- Why, What and How of Karnataka's growth story?

BACKGROUND = Karnataka has attracted foreign direct investments (FDIs) worth ₹1.6 lakh crore so far in the current fiscal, which was more than 50% of such investments received in the entire country.

- The State had captured FDI to the tune of ₹1.6 lakh crore in fiscal 2022 in diverse businesses and technology areas, including aerospace and defence, agrotech, fintech, healthtech, biotechnology, nanotechnology, electronics, drone technology, hospitality, food processing, manufacturing, hardware and ESDM.
- The State was home to over 13,000 of the 57,000 startups in the country.
- To promote technological innovation in the State, 200 startups would be given seed funding of up to ₹50 lakh each in the current financial year.
- To maintain Karnataka's lead position in technology, we will continue to focus on digital education and skill development through effective implementation of NEP. The move to set up an ART Park (Artificial Intelligence & Robotics Translational Park) at the IISc was testimony to the government's commitment towards the growth of emerging industries.
- The focus was to grow and develop the hardware sector on the lines of the software industry.
- Under the ESDM (Electronics System Design & Manufacturing) policy, ₹5,000 crore would be given as subsidy, and out of this ₹2,000 crore has already been given out in the first year.
- The Centre observed a 'Startup India Innovation Week' from January 10 to 16 and has announced national rewards for startups for their innovative product development. Of the 56 startups awarded, 14 are from Karnataka.

GS 3

❖ Economic Development

Q- Inequality Kills and more so in India. Elaborate?

BACKGROUND = The income of 84 per cent of households in the country declined in 2021, but at the same time the number of Indian billionaires grew from 102 to 142, according to an OXFAM Report, pointing to a stark income divide worsened by the Covid pandemic.

1. The country's healthcare budget saw a 10% decline from RE (revised estimates) of 2020-21.
2. There was a 6% cut in allocation for education, the Oxfam report says, while the budgetary allocation for social security schemes declined from 1.5% of the total Union budget to 0.6%.
3. The India supplement of the global report also says that in 2021, the collective wealth of India's 100 richest people hit a record high of Rs 57.3 lakh crore (USD 775 billion). In the same year, the share of the bottom 50 per cent of the population in national wealth was a mere 6 per cent.
4. During the pandemic (since March 2020, through to November 30, 2021, the wealth of Indian billionaires increased from Rs 23.14 lakh crore (USD 313 billion) to Rs 53.16 lakh crore (USD 719 billion). More than 4.6 crore Indians, meanwhile, are estimated to have fallen into extreme poverty in 2020, nearly half of the global new poor according to the United Nations.
5. India has the third highest number of billionaires in the world, just behind China and the United States, with more billionaires than France, Sweden and Switzerland combined — a 39 per cent increase in the number of billionaires in India in 2021.

Oxfam Inequality Report 2021

- 65.7% households belonging to the general category have access to improved, non-shared sanitation facilities while only 25.9% Scheduled Tribes (ST) households have improved, non-shared sanitation facilities.
- 12.6% more children are stunted in Scheduled Castes (SC) households than those in households belonging to the general category.
- Chances of a child dying before his fifth birthday is three times higher for the bottom 20% of the population as compared to the top 20%.
- The National Health Profile (NHP) in 2017 data shows that there is only one government allopathic doctor for every 10,189 people and one state run hospital for every 90,343 people.
- The number of hospital beds per 10,000 population between 2010 and 2020 reduced from 9 to 5.
- Rural India is home to 70% of the population but it has 40% of the beds in the country.



Digital Divide

Entering the pandemic in 2020, only 15% rural households had an internet connection while more than 60% women across 12 states had never used the internet.

Smartphone users in rural India were almost half of urban India and SCs and STs with smartphones stood at 25 and 23%.

Causes and Effects -

1. This surge comes at a time when **India's unemployment rate was as high as 15 per cent** in urban areas and the healthcare system was on the brink of collapse.
2. Oxfam has pointed out that about **one-fifth of the increase in the wealth of the richest 100 families** was accounted for by the surge in the fortunes of a single individual and business house – the Adanis.

Gautam Adani, ranked 24th globally and second in India, witnessed his net worth multiply by eight times in a span of one year; from USD 8.9 billion in 2020 to USD 50.5 billion in 2021. According to the real time data by Forbes, as of 24 November 2021, Adani's net worth stands at USD 82.2 billion. This tremendous growth in a span of eight months, during India's deadly second wave, also includes returns from Adani's newly bought Carmichael mines in Australia, and a 74 per cent acquired stake in the Mumbai airport. At the same time, Mukesh Ambani's net worth doubled in 2021 to USD 85.5 billion from USD 36.8 billion in 2020,.

3. The "stark reality **of inequality contributing to the death of at least 21,000 people** each day, or one person every four seconds".
4. The pandemic has set **gender parity** back from 99 years to now 135 years. Women collectively lost Rs 59.11 lakh crore (USD 800 billion) in earnings in 2020, with 1.3 crore fewer women in work now than in 2019. It has never been so important to start righting the wrongs of this obscene inequality by targeting extreme wealth through taxation and getting that money back into the real economy to save lives".
5. There is **increase in indirect taxes** as a share of the Union government revenue last four years, while the proportion of corporate tax in the same was declining.
 - a. The additional tax imposed on fuel has risen 33 per cent in the first six months of 2020-21 as compared to the last year, 79 per cent more than pre-Covid levels.
 - b. At the same time, the wealth tax "for the super-rich" was abolished in 2016, it says.
 - c. Lowering of corporate taxes from 30 per cent to 22 per cent to attract investment last year resulted in a loss of Rs 1.5 lakh crore, which contributed to the increase in India's fiscal deficit.
 - d. "These trends show that the poor, marginalised and the middle class paid high taxes despite going through the raging pandemic while the rich made more money without paying their fair share."
6. Data from the National Sample Survey (NSS) (2017-18) shows that **Out-of-Pocket Expenditure (OOPE) in private hospitals is almost six times of that in public hospitals** for inpatient care, and two or three times higher for outpatient care. The average OOPE in India is at 62.67 per cent, while the global average is at 18.12 per cent.
7. Despite the country's federal structure, the structure of revenue kept the reins of resources in the Centre's hands and yet the management of the pandemic was left to the states – who were not equipped to handle it with its financial or human resources.



Q- Which of the following are correct regarding Industrial Relations Code, 2019?

1. The Code basically replaces the existing legislation on labour laws.
2. It provides for recognition of trade unions and resolution of industrial disputes.

Select the correct answer using the code below?

- a) 1 only b) 2 only
c) Both 1 and 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2



Q) Consider the following statements with regard to Indian Army Day:

- A. January 15, every year is celebrated as Indian Army Day, because on this day Lieutenant General KM Cariappa was appointed to the post in 1949.
- B. The day is celebrated at all army command offices across India as well as the headquarters in Mumbai.
- C. Indian Army Day marks the celebration of not only the brave soldiers, but also marks the transfer of power from British rule to India.
- D. The Prime Minister of India is the Supreme Commander of the Army.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- a) A and C
b) B and D
c) A, C and D
d) All of the above

Answer: a

Explanation:

- Indian Army Day is marked on January 15, every year because on this day Lieutenant General KM Cariappa was appointed to the post in 1949. He became the first Indian to head the forces. Since then, this day has become a significant day for Indian history. It was the first time an Indian soldier took reigns of the armed forces.
- Indian Army Day marks the celebration of not only the brave soldiers, but also marks the transfer of power from British rule to India.
- On this day, a grand parade is organised at Cariappa parade ground in Delhi cantonment.
- The salute of this parade is usually taken by Indian Army Chief. Thus, in 2022, General Manoj Mukund Naravane will make the salute on the occasion.

- Apart from this, the Day also involves a showcase of all the weapons in Indian Army arsenal. The latest kind of weapons, helicopters, drones, etc are displayed with great pride.
- In 2022, latest weapons that were acquired, indigenously developed and imported, will be showcased.
- Land based Indian Army is the largest component of the Indian Armed Forces. The President of India is the Supreme Commander of the Army. Indian Army is professionally headed by Chief of Army Staff (COAS), who is a four-star general. Indian Army in its current form was founded on February 26, 1950.

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