

1. SC says Centre, States have equal powers to make GST-related laws (Page no.- 1)

GS Paper- 2 (Indian Polity)

The Supreme Court on Thursday, in a judgment championing the importance of “cooperative federalism” for the well-being of democracy, held that Union and State legislatures have “equal, simultaneous and unique powers” to make laws on Goods and Services Tax (GST) and the recommendations of the GST Council are not binding on them.

2. Bridging the health policy to execution chasm (Page no.- 6)

GS Paper- 2 (Social Justice)

In April this year, the Union government released a guidance document on the setting up of a ‘public health and management cadre’ (PHMC) as well as revised editions of the Indian Public Health Standards (IPHS) — for ensuring quality health care in government facilities. For a country where politicians take pride in inaugurating super-specialty hospitals and where the health focus has traditionally been on medical care or attention on treating the sick, these two developments to strengthen public health services are welcome.

3. Pockets of hope, linking nature and humanity (Page no.- 6)

GS Paper- 3 (Environment)

Biodiversity is the living fabric of our planet. It underpins human well-being in the present and in the future, and its rapid decline threatens nature and people alike.

According to the Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services released in 2019 by the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) at the UNESCO headquarters in Paris, the main global drivers of biodiversity loss are climate change, invasive species, over-exploitation of natural resources, pollution and urbanisation.

4. By the book (Page no.- 6)

GS Paper- 2 (Social Justice)

The Supreme Court has allowed Madhya Pradesh to implement 14% reservation for Other Backward Classes (OBCs) and notify the elections for nearly 23,263 local bodies within two weeks. The Court had on May 10 ordered the State to proceed with the elections without OBC quotas.

5. Crushing lives (Page no.- 6)

GS Paper- 3 (Disaster Management)

Working in hazardous sites such as quarries, where explosives and heavy machinery are deployed, is fraught with risks. But human casualties in accidents caused at such sites due to greed-induced exploitation, violation of safety and operational norms, and collusion with regulators, involve an element of culpability.

6. Can India re-imagine South Asia? (Page no.- 7)

GS Paper- 2 (IR)

After weeks of protests, Sri Lankan Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa stepped down this month, but that is not the only big political non-electoral change in the neighbourhood in 2021-22. Just a month ago, it was Pakistan; a year ago, it was Nepal. Power changed hands through more coercive means in Myanmar and Afghanistan. Their polities have yet to settle down. How should India react to these changes? Is there a common strain running across the region in these developments?

7. Understanding India's ethanol blending policy (Page no.- 8)

GS Paper- 3 (Environment)

The Union Cabinet on Wednesday approved amendments to the National Policy on Biofuels, 2018, to advance the date by which fuel companies have to increase the percentage of ethanol in petrol to 20%, from 2030 to 2025.

A NITI Aayog Committee report of June 2021 lays out a comprehensive picture of ethanol blending, the challenges and a roadmap.

Car makers have said that with modifications in engines (hardware and tuning), the loss in efficiency due to blended fuel can be reduced. To compensate the consumers for a drop in efficiency from ethanol blended fuels, tax incentives on E20 fuel may be considered.

8. The child online safety toolkit (Page no.- 8)

GS Paper- 3 (Internal Security)

The child online safety toolkit, scripted and put together by the Britain-based NGO 5Rights, works to ensure that children's rights and needs are prioritised in the digital world.

Research conducted by 5Rights and its partner Revealing Reality indicated that "within 24 hours of a social media profile being created, children were being targeted with graphic content."

The toolkit contains — five things every policymaker needs to know to enshrine child online safety into law and practice, 10 Policy Action Areas with detailed roadmaps and key practical steps needed to make child online safety a reality.

9. Pangong bridge construction is in 'occupied territory': Centre (Page no.- 11)

GS Paper- 2 (IR)

India is closely monitoring the construction of a bridge by China on the Pangong Tso (lake) in eastern Ladakh, which is in "occupied territory", the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said on Thursday. Sources in the security establishment stated that a broad bridge was currently under construction, connecting both sides of the lake, which would significantly cut down time for the People's Liberation Army (PLA) to move troops and armoured vehicles, while a smaller bridge built early this year was intended to support construction of the main one.

10. Modi to fly to Japan for Quad Summit next week (Page no.- 11)

GS Paper- 2 (IR)

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will travel to Tokyo for his second in-person Quad Summit on Tuesday, and hold bilateral talks with U.S. President Joseph Biden, Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida and Australian PM Scott Morrison, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) announced.

During his visit to Japan, which begins on May 23, Mr. Modi will address a business summit and meet with members of the Indian community in Tokyo, while the Quad summit and bilateral meetings will be held on May 24

11. Child rights groups oppose raising marriage age of women (Page no.- 12)

GS Paper- 2 (Social Justice)

An umbrella body of child rights organisations, set up by Nobel Laureate Kailash Satyarthi, which appeared before the parliamentary panel studying the Bill on raising the age of

marriage for women to 21 from 18 years, has opposed the move and emphasised the need to improve access to education to delay marriages.

12. Nasheed to help 'coordinate' Sri Lanka's foreign aid efforts (Page no.- 13)

GS Paper- 2 (IR)

Sri Lankan Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe has appointed Maldivian Parliamentary Speaker and former President Mohamed Nasheed as the "coordinator" for securing foreign aid to Sri Lanka that is facing an unprecedented economic crisis.

13. Indian women win recurve bronze (Page no.- 13)

Prelims GS Paper- 1 (Current affairs - sport)

The Indian recurve women's team bagged a bronze and Mohan Bhardwaj reached the semifinals of the compound men's event at the Archery World Cup Stage 2 in Gwangju, South Korea, on Thursday.

14. Nikhat adds gold to a glittering career (Page no.- 13)

Prelims GS Paper- 1 (Current affairs - sport)

Nikhat Zareen gave a dazzling performance to beat Thai Olympian Jutamas Jitpong 5-0 and become the fifth Indian woman to win a World title at Istanbul on Thursday.

The June-born Nikhat, a former World junior champion and an Asian bronze medallist, celebrated her birthday early as she screamed out of joy when the announcer declared her the winner after the 52kg-final bout in the World women's championships.

Six-time champion M.C. Mary Kom, Sarita Devi, R.L. Jenny and K.C. Lekha are the other Indian women who have won the crown.

India last won a World title when Mary had become a six-time champion in Delhi in 2018.