

IMPORTANT NEWS ARTICLES & EDITORIAL FOR UPSC FRIDAY, 10TH MAY 2024

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GS-II : Candid notes on the NHRC status deferral

- **Candid notes on the NHRC status deferral Commission** of India ONIC was formally announced late last week that the deferral of its status would continue for a year more. The deferral was put in place by the sub-committee on accreditation (SCA) of the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRD) for a year, in 2021. While the SCA did not agree with the pleas of some leading international non-governmental organisations, to put the NHRC in category F, it also rejected India's request to lift the deferral. The NHRC chairperson, a former Justice of the Supreme Court of India, Justice Arun Mishra, and the government may have been unhappy with the continuing deferral but are sure to be relieved that they have avoided the ignominy of a downgrade.
- **The NHRC, directly and, the government, from behind the scenes**, had lobbied hard for the deferral to be removed and the cloud over India's 'A' status goes away: Justice Mishra retires in early June and, if the new government to be formed in June after the general election 2024 does not reappoint him, he will be the first NHRC chairman to leave the organisation with the sword of Damocles hanging over its head. This would only strengthen the initial doubts raised about his appointment. The NHRC brochure "A peep into Justice Mishra's approach to human rights" is available from a brochure published by the NHRC, titled "Human Rights 25".
- **The document was put out as part of the celebrations** of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, in its introduction the document sought to establish that "India's earliest civilisations laid the fundamental edifice for some basic human rights principles. To substantiate this point it referred to ancient texts such as the Vedas and the Upanishads. It rightly asserted that they promoted the exploration of spiritual truths. Thereafter, the LETTERS TO THE EDITOR checking by candidate The act by the BJP candidate for Hyderabad, Madhavi Latha Kompella, of checking the voter identity cards of some burqa-clad Muslim women voters, by asking them to lift their face veils, is provocative (Inside pages, May 14).
- **If nominees notice any discrepancy in polling stations**, they should always check with the presiding officer or even approach the State Election Commission, I wonder if Ms. Kompella's actions, result the Prime Minister's the seems to precede an informal of his party to have set conducting to have Y. L. Kakde retired Indian Foreign Service officer. Much of the criticism of the West for weaponising human rights is valid, but the continuing deferral of the NHRC's status must lead to hard questions in India gone to the next level. What kind of signal is Ms. Kompella sending out? And from a party that claims that winning a third term in office is a given IN.
- **Nagarajan, Chermal The other war that rages Not a word is being** said about Russia's mounting aggression towards Ukraine. As a senior citizen, I am unable to understand why nations that matter in the world order are silent. Instead, the focus seems to be more on the Gaza-Israel war. Peace-loving citizens across the world are distressed. What are the present plans of the United States that are the publication went on so state, "The concept of justice and fairness is ancient and central to Indian literature. The Manusmriti, while reflecting the social norms of its time, also outlines principles of justice, including punishment proportionate to the crime". For crores of historically disadvantaged Indians, the Manusmriti is the fountainhead of the evil of discrimination and violence they have suffered. Its mention in a NHRC document, despite the routine caveat attached to the reference, will be outrageous to them and to those who have pledged to uphold the Indian Constitution.

- **Was the Manuamriefs mention an oversight or does it** reflect the considered views of Justice Mishra? Even at this stage a clarification would be useful. He would certainly know that the foundational values of the Indian Constitution are in direct conflict with the basic postulates of CERTInd CoradefoxcrButobsThi The peed in 2015 in.
- **In Jaishcharshonthe Manusmritifreed India Drifting away from the Paris Principles?** Certainly, the GANHRI's decision has not beenin theeacclaInfluenced by the reference to the Manusmriti but because of the belief that India has not been adhering to the Paris Principles. In early 2017, the SCA had put the NHRC in the deferral category but it was lifted after a review later that year Hence, India retained its 'A' status In a public note on that occasion, the NHRCcriticrightWiestbeenthe bilogiethathad stressed the importance of the 'A' status. Ir stated, "A status accreditation also grants participation in the work and participation of the GANHRI, as well as the work of the Human Rights Council and other UN mechanisms".
- **On the Paris Principles the NHRC noted, "The United Nations' Paris Principles** provide the international benchmarks against which the National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) can be accredited". The Paris Principles were adopted by the UN in 1993. The NHRC.



GS-II : Rise in public health spending due to states, not centre

- **more than 1% of its GDP on health care, is inching close** to 2% under the current regime. An increase in public spending is welcome. But is it correct to attribute it to the Union government? DATA POINT First, public spending on health in India continues to be abysmal compared to many countries. Second, while public spending on health has indeed increased, much of the rise is due to the States and not the Centre. In fact, the Union Health Ministry has been transferring a lower share of its resources to States in recent years. Moreover, the Centre has also cut the budget for the National Health Mission (NHM) in recent years, while increasing disproportionately the spending on government-funded health insurance schemes (GFHIs). Chart 1 shows the per capita public spending on health in India compared to other countries in 2021.
- **Bhutan's spending on health was 2.5 times more than India's** while Sri Lanka's was three times more. Many BRICS nations (old list) spent 14-15 times more than India. The increase in public spending on health in recent years, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic, can be attributed to the States and Union Territories (Chart 2). The States have sustained the increase post-COVID-19 as well. Given the resource constraints they face, this is commendable. In contrast, the Union government's spending on health as a percentage of GDP, which increased moderately during the pandemic, has decreased post-pandemic.
- **Furthermore, a significant part of the increase in healthment** as a percentage of GDP during the pandemic needs to be attributed to the negative and low growth of GDP, while absolute increase in expenditure remained modest, in real terms (Chart 3). More concerning is the decline in the share of resources transferred to the States by the Union Health Ministry. In FY14, three-fourth (75.9%) of the Union spending on health was transferred to the States (Figure 4).
- **Within the first three years of the National Democratic Alliance government**, the share came down to little more than half (53.4%) and declined consistently to reach a new low of 43% in FY24 (Budget Estimates). The trend reflects increased centralisation of financial resources on health, a subject which largely falls within the domain of States. Launched in 2005, the NHM was a crucial intervention by the Union government. But expenditure on the scheme has mostly remained stagnant or has come down in the last seven years (Chart 5). Between FY14 and FY19, the spending on NHM grew at 7.4% on average, largely due to a sudden jump in FY18. During the second tenure of the NDA government, spending on NHM declined in real terms at 5.5% on average.
- **The Modi government's emphasis on Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY)** is visible in its spending patterns. A look at the expenditure on various GFHIs such as PMJAY shows a steady increase in expenditure. Between FY15 and FY20, expenditure in real terms nearly doubled, growing at an average of 18% per annum. Even though the Centre draws a lot of mileage from these schemes, a bigger share of the spending is incurred by the States. The COVID-19 pandemic had shown the cracks in India's health system and highlighted the need for increased public investment in healthcare. While the States have risen up to the challenge, despite financial constraints, the Union government has done little.

GS-III : On the importance of regulatory sandbox in artificial intelligence

- **On the importance of regulatory sandboxes** in artificial intelligence Regulatory sandboxes have become a significant instrument in various countries used to evaluate innovations within a defined and monitored time frame while being subject to regulatory oversight and controlled constraints. Sanhina ChaucesT chillierges for soclerview ALPAPERgretarkenance, and more, concerna have energy regarding ethical ras acdeed wad their deployment.
- **In replamay bodies tuWhile the scrpoftheliomalmadamey** sandbos to often attributed in Che Platania Conduct Authority in the UK, men other puts have gently awaband or accord spanning sarikut data from the World Bank of November 2020, there were both announced and operidional, with the Bouncial sector a Jura in india, all franca regulars including the nerve Bank of India, Secured god of India, Insurance Repdamry and Development Authority of India, Tendon Furul Regalaury and Development Authority, and Internal Fant Services Centre Authority, luive launchint thest respective regalarly sand Equaniding beyond Ananor, Kartsurala ala ha macted the novation Authority Act, 2020, establishing an Stination Authority dedicated to praeting and relating innovathe inches though a mpilatory sunulan model Noah, the reutily paused Telecommunications.
- **Act 2023 proposed a repilamry sandbos where theapprices** acha pimary sandheres to strike shulance Derween stering Almotion and emringesemahle developmentTo regulate but not restrict bones have becomeand inonimnid time while being miliject to reptilatory owright and ontroecom This serves as a valuable tool for policymakers, furnishing them with empirical evlárnor gatling the enthal risks asociatrtsaidbios provides a corruledenstrument kor expertisestation,ation between ring collaborati Innovators and regulames дене сарыгену and aomuntably rerng partida disclose information about their AI modes, addressing comoerne ahour reams Adida putty and emailing tailored regular Furthermore, by mandating risk weesuments and safeguards, the sardbes gong potential societal impact of AI applications and marturing culture ofvvision through seven wurking groups.
- **The latest prepea peaal of the Digital India Act, 2023 also talks about** regulating AI bry exsting a separe set of laws andgrounded in a m cted appmach economic amh ans, job creation,Industrial turmation, and overall societal welfare. As a global schoolingy hath, the chair of the Clobal Partnership in Aruffictal imelligence and the Delft Declarations india sepe lchovation in alignment with its cultural and ethical values. A comprehensive regulatory sandbox can be enshioned to guide businesses, researchers, andpolicymakers, staring AI development ustainable growth A regulatory sandhek should not be viewed as an approach directly govern perceding firmal legation.
- **It serves as a perparatory measure tailored to India'settscal** devriopment within the ladunry Article 5 of the European Union's AI Act, but the provisions of a regulatory sandfos no test technokagy betare making Antistress. Addteomally, Senin became the first Europe ropean country have established the sturule of the Sinh Agency for the fupervision ofAnific icial Intelligence (ADSLAL, ahead of the Eiropean regulation in artificial alligence.
- **This regulation will mandare member sten in** denigune a national supervisory authority posible lor overseeing the impliconention of regulations retted to AL Glubully, there is a compete de towith emerging technologies Maurer, an evidence-based approach empowers policymakers to achopra well-med soner in crafting legal and pelic over that fomer beneficiulestabl as one or more impulatory cental

Cinement has the authority sundhouns, as prescribed, ea prune and regdate and util beclace innovation and technological flying the earner and durataan for theirling ncles the ue of of fect ds theThe EU las crane up with anAt Act, the US has released a white paper on the Alt of Rights, and the UK.

- **has a national AI Strategy China trying to regulate sariosa arpects** of Alle generative AI while Singapore following an aration friendly approachthese sandboves, insights get from Indicate that thin funding by ngang mgulatory costs. Sochs militarted utility postions regulatory sandhours a catalvet for Flexnovation,ImplementationThe benefits of regulatory sanilboves in the disasse sunding AI regulatkes, the coconcept of τροσhkyApperting exemomic growth, and rapidly evolving landscape of semingsandboves emerges as a compellingavenue for explocation. When sine considers the becedy of etringent Setalled regulation or fouring adaptable strategies the soft or self regulation, da Introduction of a replay sandbox remains a viable oppon poon. Firstly, wach alndia's approach 10 AI India, NITI Agogined a dicunpaper outlining a national strategy irAI whidiled to the establiment of the analAI Portal.
- **The Mistry of Electronics and tormation Technology (M)**, released a report on Innovacion 20223 highlighting tralia's At Awpspecific circumstances, paving the way for Amare regulatory action aligned with the examry's needs and developments in the AI undscape. ly guing a controlled evinment for sesting innovative AI appleadons, a regulatory sandbo enables stakeholders assess Haks. peline regulatory frameworka, and koster collaboranan berwees nepilanes Industry players, and other stakeholdemThis collaborative approach not unty psn repe AI deployment bur abo pouzione india at the forefront of shaping effective and adaptive regulatory framesocks for emerging textunokades.
- **Given the distinct Indan contest, it becomes pihrotal** to determine whicd appmach ta most viable and efficient in striking a fulance between hantering AI Innovatoe and ensuring ethical, transparent, and id acczsantable Alanhit Chaurika Technology Lawyer



➤ **The Union government signed a ceasefire pact in 1997** with the NSCN-IM leadership in India and a framework agreement to find a political solution was signed with the group in the presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi in 2015. The group envisages a 'Greater Nagaland' to include all the Nagadominated areas in Nagaland, Assam, Manipur and Arunachal Pradesh. M. Anand Singh, 44, the main accused, was arrested last July along with A.

➤ **Kajit Singh, Keisham Johnson, L. Michael Mangangcha and K. Romojit Meitel** by the Manipur Police while travelling in a vehicle dressed in camouflage at a



resembling uniforms worn personnel. by security Three weapons and ammunition looted from NSCN-IM promised a safe passage to Manipur-based terrorist outfits, the Central agency says since armouries were recovered from their possession. The NIA registered a fresh case on July 19 under the stringent Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) and other sections of law to probe the larger conspiracy. Local youth recruited The NIA said Anand Singh mobilised local youth for armed training to escalate the ethnic strife and in July 2023 participated in a weapons training camp organised in Selloi Langamal Ecological Park near Keikhu by PLA cadres where 80 young men received training in handling firearms "Singh assisted in Plea to bar PM from polls rejected

➤ **The Hindu Bureau NEW DELHI The Supreme Court on Tuesday** declined to entertain a plea to bar Prime Minister Narendra Modi from election for allegedly making hate speeches and violating the Model Code of Conduct campaigning during A Bench of Justices Vikram Nath and Justice Nath told advocate Anand S. Jondhale, appearing for petitioner Fatima. The petition had sought from Nath and S.C. Sharma asked the petitioner to approach the authorities concerned for the redressal of the grievance "For writ of mandamus you must approach the direction to the EC to disqualify Prime Minister Modi from election for six years under the Representation of the People Act. imparting training on battle drills and jungle warfare to the participating youth, the NIA stated.

➤ **The agency said the criminal intent of targeting** the rival community has been established and corroborated by the use of camouflage attire they were wearing "to evade detection by security personnel The NIA said the "China- Myanmar module of the hearing NSCN-IM based in Myanmar decided to extend support to banned terrorist organisations Kanglei Yaol Kanba Lup and People's Liberation Army of Manipur to infiltrate their extends of Kavitha May 20 The Hindu By NEW DELHI A Delhi court extended the today of Bharamithi (BRS) vitha, who was money laundering alleged Delic scam, till the court sentence of the elementary charge by the ED against vitha until the custody. On May 10 filed a near cadres into the Indian territory for carrying out terrorist attacks. "For this purpose, NSCN-IM promised a

GS-III : Solar flares behind aurora captured by Chandrayaan-2 orbiter, Aditya-L1: ISRO

➤ **Solar flares behind aurora were captured by Chandrayaan-2 orbiter, Aditya-L1: ISRO**

ANONNA DUTT
NEW DELHI MAY 14
WHILE MOST of India did not get to see the Aurora lights visible in many parts of the world recently, the solar flares that caused it were seen by Indian ground stations, the spacecraft Aditya-L1 studying the Sun from a point 1.5 million km away, and the Chandrayaan 2 orbiter circling the moon. The colourful lights in the night sky are a result of the charged particles ejected by the Sun hitting the gases in Earth's upper atmosphere. Usually, these



particles travel along the Earth's magnetic fields, reaching the poles where the vibrant colours are seen. But, during a geomagnetic storm, like the one witnessed recently, the magnetic fields may break and allow the particles to reach the upper atmosphere.

➤ **The geomagnetic storm witnessed recently** was the most intense seen since 2003, according to a statement by the Indian Space Research Organisation and led to disruptions in communications and GPS systems. On the geomagnetic storm touched a nine, the maximum available, the space "Indian sector got less affected as the storm happened in the early morning of 11th May, when the ionosphere had not developed, index, it agency said. main hit of the fully.

➤ **Also, being at lower latitudes, widespread outages haven't been reported in India.** Ionosphere was very turbulent over the Pacific and American sectors." said ISRO One of the payloads onboard Aditya-L1 called ASPEX captured high speed solar wind, high temperature solar wind plasma (the charged particles expelled by the Sun), and an energetic ion flux. Two other instruments on the space-based observatory had over the previous few days seen multiple M and X-class flares from the same region where the recent one originated. Solar flares are classified based on their strength, with B-class being the smallest, followed by C, M, and then X-class that are thousand times stronger than B-class.

➤ **Solar flares are more commonly seen during the solar maximum.** In the current cycles the solar maximum is likely to happen in mid 2025. Chandrayaan-2 orbiter also captured the eruptive even from its orbit around the moon Isro said. The payload XSM on board detected the solar flares with it being equipped to autonomously identify large flare and activate a mechanism to bring a filter in front of the detector. It also collected information on the local charge particle concentrations, which went up to Ma 9 onwards.

GS-III : CHAT GPT

- **POWERFUL AI MODEL YET BIJIN JOSE BENGALURU, MAY 14 OPENAI** on Monday introduced its latest large language model (LLM) called GPT-4o, billed as its fastest and most powerful AI model so far. The company claims that the model will improve its AI chatbot ChatGPT and make it easier to use. Until now, OpenAI's most advanced LLM was GPT-4, which is only available to paid users. However, the GPT-4o will be freely available. What is GPT-4o? GPT-4o ('o' stands for 'Omni') has been developed to enhance human-computer interactions. It lets users input any combination of text, audio, and image, and receive responses in the same formats.
- **This makes GPT-4o a multimodal AI model - a significant leap** from previous models. It could assist users with a variety of tasks, from real-time translations to having real-time spoken conversations. OpenAI said that the new updated version of ChatGPT will also have updated memory capabilities, and it will learn from its previous conversations with users. GPT-4o will be made available to the public in stages. What is the technology behind it? LLMs are the backbone of AI chatbots. Large amounts of data are fed into these models to make them capable of learning things themselves. Unlike its predecessors that required multiple models to handle different tasks, GPT-4o uses a single model trained end-to-end across various modalities-text, vision, and audio. OpenAI CTO Mira Murati said the voice mode on previous models was a combination of three different models, transcription, intelligence, and text-to-speech, while GPT-4o is a single model and understanding of inputs. For example, that allows for a more holistic processing, GPT-4o can understand tone, background noises, and emotional context in audio inputs at once.
- **This was a big challenge for earlier models. efficiency. GPT-4o** responds to queries as fast as a human does in conversation, in around 232 to 320 milliseconds. Why does all this matter? The AI race is intensifying, with tech giants Meta and Google working towards building more powerful LLMs and bringing them to their products. GPT-4o could prove beneficial for Microsoft, which has invested billions into OpenAI, as it can now embed the model in existing services like its search engine. The new model also came a day ahead of the Google I/O developer conference, where Google is expected to announce new updates to its Gemini AI model. What are GPT-4o's limitations?
- **On its official blog, OpenAI said that GPT-4o is still in the early** stages of exploring the potential of unified multi-modal interaction, meaning certain features like audio outputs are initially accessible in a limited form only. The company said further development is necessary to fully realise its potential in handling complex multimodal tasks seamlessly. OpenAI said GPT-4o has safety measures including "filtered training data, and refined model behaviour post training".
- **The new model has undergone safety evaluations** and reviews focussed on risks like cybersecurity, misinformation, and bias. VAJIRAM & RAVI more Yeratea wainfecAAMTHEsoutto clinthe ababoutIn changesuch abbe recorThebutionthat triextremmate cThiwaveshave bsamerexcessApril onclimateAttof studytant in changeenon, antious abevent. omand medecadea particlikely bHeat

GS-I : Heatwaves & climate change

- **Heatwaves & climate change** A new study has attributed heatwaves witnessed in India in April to climate change. This is not a surprise -with soaring global temperatures, heatwaves have become more frequent and intense in the country. In 2020-2021, AMITABH SINHA THE EXTREME heat in parts of eastern and southern India this April has been attributed to climate change. A new study has said that the heatwaves were made an anomaly by climate change. In other words, if there was no climate change, it would be extremely unlikely that such a change would occur. NUMBER OF HEATWAVE DAYS STATES: Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Delhi, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Punjab, Rajasthan, West Bengal. This is the first time in a straight year that heatwaves have affected so many states. Some researchers had earlier shown that the heatwaves have been attributed to climate change. The heatwaves in March and April of 2022 and April of 2021 were caused by climate change. WHAT MAKES FOR A HEATWAVE?
- **Nam with normal Heatwave if temperature higher** by multi-degree Celsius or more. A maximum temperature of 45 degrees Celsius or more for two consecutive days is considered a heatwave. A temperature rise of 3-4 degrees Celsius above the normal maximum temperature for a particular place is considered a heatwave. The change in a global phenomenon and scientists have been cautious about blaming any individual weather event on climate change. However, new tools and methodologies developed in the last two decades have made it possible to attribute heatwaves to climate change. A severe heatwave if temperature higher by more than 4.5 degrees Celsius for two consecutive days. More than 5 degrees Celsius remains above normal.
- **But there is plenty of evidence now to suggest that** heatwaves are becoming more frequent, longer, and prolonged because of climate change. Last year, several parts of the country experienced heatwaves in February, which is technically a winter month for India. Much higher than normal daily maximum temperatures were recorded. The IMD in April because heatwaves began to be declared in the April-July period. The maximum temperature for the month of April is higher than normal and hot in February in India.
- **The IMD more grim. Heatwaves at the beginning of the year likely** to be more prolonged, the IMD said. In some places, it is predicted, an 18-day heatwave was recorded in Odisha in April, the second longest spell for the state. According to an analysis by the IMD Central, a 175-hour Bengal recorded the highest number of heatwave days in the last 15 years, India from Thursday. Heatwaves are not defined by high temperatures.
- **They are defined by abnormalities in temperature** in a place that normally sees a temperature of 40 degrees Celsius during summer is not considered a heatwave even if the temperature rises to 42 or 43 degrees. On the other hand, it would be considered a heatwave even at 15 degrees Celsius if it is normal for that time. The IMD said India recorded its warmest April ever. Not surprisingly, eastern India recorded a fresh spell of heatwaves, which is likely to start over overnight due to dehydration and cardiovascular and respiratory diseases. Evenings are sudden drops. Data on illnesses and deaths caused by heatwaves is not maintained well in India. It is to collect and collate

these data began only about a month ago. But reliable figures are still not available and there are wide differences among numbers reported by various agencies such as the IMD, National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), the Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme or the National Centre for Health Monitoring. For instance, the Health Ministry, in reply to a Parliament question last year said that only 33 heat-related deaths in 2022.

- **But the NCRB, which has seen a heat-related mentality** among accidental heat-related deaths caused by 730 deaths for 2022 in 2023 deaths in the first six months by (NDMA) Data collected and NDMA showed a sharp decline in the sharp decline number of heat related deaths ever since state governments and district administrations began implementing various It was evidence of the success of early warnings and heat action plans, but this dataset has been showing a reversal of trends in the last couple of years. This could be because of better reporting or an increase in the severity of heatwaves. Mitigation of heatwaves All the 21 states to be notified for heatwaves now have heat action plans to manage the adverse impacts.
- **Simple measures like the provision of cool drinking water** at public places, free distribution of oral rehydration salts at schools and in villages during peak hours and providing more shaded places have brought relief to large numbers of people and prevented deaths in several cases. However, more needs to be done especially because heatwaves not only affect the urban areas but also affect the rural areas. The government should ensure that non-essential activities especially those carried out in the open are stopped during the worst time. Like schools, offices, etc. can be temporarily closed. All organised outdoor activities including sports, would need to be strictly monitored. Some experts lament the lack of adequate funding for the heat action plan. Year 2023 also ended up as the second worst ever for heatwaves. The heatwave index for this year was Impact of heatwaves Prolonged exposure to heat can result in.





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