A N A L Y S I S

European Parliament (MEPs) visit

Invite to MEP from United Kingdom rescinded after he asked to meet people without escort

Peezada Asgho

T.N. enacts law on contract farming

Chennai

Tamil Nadu has become the first State in the country to enact a law on contract farming. It will safeguard the interests of farmers during bumper crop or when market prices fluctuate, an official release said.

Tamil Nadu Page 5

Peelzada Asgho

Srinagar

As many as 23 Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) arrived in Kashmir on a two-day visit on Tuesday to assess the ground situation after scrapping of J&K’s special status and recorded the feedback from the Army, local officials and 15 delegations, as the Valley observed a complete shutdown and saw a spurt in street protests.

Peelzada Asgho

Srinagar

Questions grow over NGO’s invite to MEPs

Suhasini Haidar

New Delhi

The Members of European Parliament (MEPs) visiting India were promised a “prestigious VIP meeting” with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, and the NGO that

Alok Deshpande

Meet Mahale

UC MLA

A day before the meeting of newly elected MLAs of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis said the Shiv Sena was not promised the top post for two-and-a-half years when the alliance was formalised before the 2019 Lok Sabha polls.

We will form the government together. Reasonable demands on merit will be considered when we sit to talk government formation.

Devendra Fadnavis, MLA

Mumbai

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Mumbai

It will be a BJP-led govt. for 5 years

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It will be a BJP-led govt. for 5 years
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No</th>
<th>News Articles</th>
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<td>India, Saudi Arabia constitute Strategic Partnership Council</td>
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<td>Practice cum Revision - MCQs</td>
<td>@end of the video</td>
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</tbody>
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*C – Chennai; B – Bengaluru; D – Delhi; H – Hyderabad; T – Thiruvananthapuram
The new gold standard in development economics?

With ICT becoming a dominant factor, ‘randomistas’ could be changing the social sciences paradigm

Dr. Akosua Bordo

Development economics has changed a lot during the last few decades, not only due to the emergence of new ‘randomised control trials’ (RCTs). ‘Randomistas’ are proponents of using RCTs in development economics to measure the impact of interventions on productivity and living standards in poor countries. These randomistas, oftenloganomics, rather than relying on intuition or anecdotes, rely on randomized trials to measure the impact of development interventions. They argue that RCTs provide the most reliable evidence for policy makers.

An evolution

The concept of RCTs is quite simple. The idea of using trials to measure the impact of interventions in development economics is not new. However, the statistical foundation of RCTs was established in the 1960s by the work of Ronald Fisher, almost 100 years ago, mostly in the context of designing experiments.

In my experience, I have seen the proportion of studies using RCTs increase from 10% to 25% in different fields of study. It is due to randomization that RCTs have gained popularity in development economics. RCTs are used to evaluate the impact of different interventions on various aspects of development, such as education, health, and economic growth.

Marking a change

Social scientists have found RCTs to be informative, robust, and efficient. They provide a rigorous means of identifying what works in the context of different interventions. The use of RCTs has led to increased confidence in the findings of development economics and has helped to narrow the gap between evidence and policy-making.

The early applications of RCTs were mostly within the agricultural sector. For Ronald Fisher himself, this was only one of his contributions to the field of statistics. His work on RCTs has been described as a “great revolution” in the history of statistics.

Part A—Preliminary Examination

Paper I (200 marks)

- Current events of national and international importance.
- Economic and Social Development—Sustainable Development, Poverty, Inclusion, Demographics, Social Sector Initiatives, etc.

Part B—Main Examination

PAPER-III

General Studies II: Governance, Constitution, Polity, Social Justice and International relations.

- Issues relating to poverty and hunger.

PAPER-IV


- Inclusive growth and issues arising from it.
- Nobel prize for Economic Sciences - 2019
  - Experimental approach to alleviate global poverty
  - New experiment based approach in development economics
  - Large questions → smaller questions

- Randomised Control Trials (RCTs)
  - Random allocation of subjects of study
  - Statistical foundation - Sir Ronald Fisher
  - RCT
    - Control: To get unbiased evaluation
      - Group under treatment vs control group
    - Randomisation: Allocation of subjects

- RCT in Social Sciences
  - Nobel laureates - 1000 RCTs in 83 countries

  - Focus
    - Microfinance
    - Access to credit
    - Behaviour
    - Healthcare, etc

  - Eg: Finland’s Basic Income Programme 2017-18
• Criticism - Use of RCTs in economic and social experiments
  1. Larger problems → small - conclusions are questionable
  2. Not able to maintain the ‘secrecy’ provided by randomization

• Increasing influence of development economics
  → Increase in the role of RCTs
India, Saudi Arabia constitute Strategic Partnership Council

PM Modi addresses Future Investment Initiative Summit

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday addressed the Future Investment Initiative Summit, where he announced the India-Saudi Strategic Partnership Council that will be led by the leaderships of both countries. The announcement was made in Saudi capital Riyadh where Prime Minister Modi paid a visit during October 2020.

The Indian leader thanked the Saudi for enlightened economic policies for Saudi Arabia and praised Crown Prince Muhammad bin Salman for his leadership role in setting up a new vision to one of the region’s largest energy suppliers in the world. “In talks with the Crown Prince today, we agreed on setting up the Strategic Partnership Council that will help India address its expectations and aspirations,” said Prime Minister Modi in Hindi, delivering the keynote address at the Future Investment Initiative Summit in Riyadh.

A State statement at the end of the visit stated that the founding document setting up the Strategic Partnership Council was signed by Prime Minister Modi and the Crown Prince Muhammad bin Salman.

Slowdown temporary, reforms will reverse trend: Mukesh

‘Steps taken since August will bear fruit in next few quarters’

Mukesh Ambani on Tuesday said the slowdown in the Indian economy was temporary and the recent measures taken by the government would help reverse the trend in the coming quarters.

Addressing the Future Investment Initiative Summit, also known as ‘Davos in the desert’, he said the reforms undertaken by the Indian government since August would bear fruit in the next few quarters.

“Yes, there has been a slight slowdown in the Indian economy, but my own view is that it is temporary,” he said at the Future Investment Initiative (FII) conference here.

“All the reforms that have been taken in the last few months will see the outcome and I am quite sure that in coming quarters this will reverse,” he said.

The Indian economy, which, till recently was hailed as the fastest-growing major economy, has seen its growth rate decline in each of the past five quarters, falling to 5% in April-June 2019

Part A—Preliminary Examination

Paper I - (200 marks)

- Current events of national and international importance.

Part B—Main Examination

PAPER-III

General Studies II: Governance, Constitution, Polity, Social Justice and International relations.

- Bilateral, regional and global groupings and agreements involving India and/or affecting India’s interests.

- Effect of policies and politics of developed and developing countries on India’s interests, Indian diaspora.
### Future Investment Initiative Summit (FIIIS)
- International platform for expert-led debates between global leaders, investors, and innovators
- Explore new trends, opportunities, challenges, and emerging industries that will shape the world economy and investment environment over the coming decades
- Launched by Public Investment Fund of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in 2017
- FII Summits are conducted every year to attract investments
  - 2019 - FII Summit → Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
  - Also called as ‘Davos in the Desert’
  - Important economic forum in the Middle East

### Strategic Partnership Council
- Between India and Saudi Arabia will be led by the leaders of both the countries.
- 2 parallel tracks
  - Political
  - Security
  - Culture
  - Society
  - Economy
  - Investment
  - [Diagram showing the relationship between political, security, culture, society, economy, and investment]
  - Foreign Ministers of India & S. Arabia
  - India → Min. of C & I
  - S. Arabia → Energy minister
- India - 4th country to form strategic partnership with Saudi Arabia
- Other countries: UK, France, China
Tamil Nadu becomes first State in country to get law on contract farming

President gives assent; the law will safeguard interests of farmers during times of bumper crop or when prices fluctuate; a 6-member body to ensure implementation

How it benefits farmers
- Protection of farmers from unfair deals
- Guarantees a fixed price for their crops
- Ensures timely payment
- Reduced risk of financial loss
- Improved crop production

PART A—Preliminary Examination

Paper I—(200 marks)
- Current events of national and international importance
- Indian Polity and Governance—Constitution, Political System, Panchayati Raj, Public Policy, Rights Issues, etc.
- Economic and Social Development—Sustainable Development, Poverty, Inclusion, Demographics, Social Sector Initiatives, etc.

PART B—Main Examination

PAPER-III

General Studies II: Governance, Constitution, Polity, Social Justice and International relations.
- Statutory, regulatory and various quasi-judicial bodies
- Government policies and interventions for development in various sectors and issues arising out of their design and implementation
- Development processes and the development industry—the role of NGOs, SHGs, various groups and associations, donors, charities, institutional and other stakeholders
- Welfare schemes for vulnerable sections of the population by the Centre and States and the performance of these schemes; mechanisms, laws, institutions and Bodies constituted for the protection and betterment of these vulnerable sections

PAPER-IV

General Studies III: Technology, Economic Development, Biodiversity, Environment, Security and Disaster Management
- Indian Economy and issues relating to planning, mobilization of resources, growth, development and employment
- Major crops-cropping patterns in various parts of the country, different types of irrigation and irrigation systems storage, transport and marketing of agricultural produce and issues and related constraints; e-technology in the aid of farmers
**News**

- Tamil Nadu - enacted law on contract farming

  "The T.N. Agricultural Produce and Livestock Contract Farming and Services (Promotion and Facilitation) Act, 2019"

- First state to enact this law
- Provides for improved production and marketing of agri produce, livestock and its products
- Promotes services contract also
  - Post-harvest management and marketing services

- Based on Model Contract Farming Act of Central Govt.
  - "The ................. State/UT Agri Produce and Livestock Contract Farming and Services (Promotion and Facilitation) Act, 2018"

**Salient features of the Act**

- All kinds of farmers included
- Agri production, rearing of livestock
- who have leased land, tenant farmer, sharecropper
- Agri produce → all produce of agriculture, horticulture, apiculture, sericulture, animal husbandry or forest, etc
• Safeguards interest of farmers during bumper crop or market price fluctuation
  ➔ Pre-agreed price to be paid to farmers

• Agreement valid if registered with designated Registering and Agreement Recording Officer

• Support to farmers by way of inputs, feed and fodder, and Technology

• To establish “T.N. State Contract Farming and Services (Promotion and Facilitation) Authority

• Produce/Product covered under Crop/Livestock insurance in operation

• Prohibits purchaser from raising permanent structure on producers' land and premises
  ➔ Ownership cannot be transferred to purchaser

Contract farming

• Act: “Farming by a contract farming producer as specified under written agreement with contract farming purchaser..... farm produce including livestock or its products shall be purchased by purchaser”

• Commitment of producer to provide agri commodity of certain type, at a time and price and in required quantity
- Purchaser supports farmer’s production and buys product at price, as already established.

- Basic elements
  - pre-agreed price
  - pre-agreed quantity
  - pre-agreed quality
  - time

Need for contract farming

- Reduces burden on central/state level procurement system
- Increases private sector investment in agriculture
- Generates steady source of income at individual farmer level
- Promotes processing and value addition
- Generates gainful employment in rural communities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advantages</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To Farmers</td>
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<tr>
<td>- exposure to world class mechanised agro tech</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- assured upfront price and market outlet for</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>produce</td>
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<tr>
<td>- selling bulk supplies vs small supplies</td>
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<tr>
<td>- crop monitoring</td>
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<tr>
<td>- free technical advice</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To traders/purchasers</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Uninterrupted and regular flow of raw material</td>
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<tr>
<td>- protection from market price fluctuation</td>
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<tr>
<td>- long-term planning possible</td>
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<td>- dedicated supplier base</td>
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</table>
36 million Indians face flood risk: study

Number of those affected may be underestimated

The tidal threat

A new study suggests that in India, as a result, nearly 750 million people live on land below the high tide line and 31 cm on land below annual flood levels. The numbers are a sharp increase from previous estimates. Table lists the change from previous estimates of population under threat.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>New estimate</th>
<th>Old estimate</th>
<th>Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnam</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
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<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
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The study, which appears on Thursday in the peer-reviewed scientific journal Nature Communications, employs a new software called CoastalDEM. Estimates on the risks posed by flooding now rely on detailed maps of the globe taken by the Shuttle Radar Topography Mission of NASA, which was a radar mapping system that travelled around the sphere between 2000 and 2003. The maps so prepared form the basis for determining the elevation of the earth's topography. However, say the authors of the study, this approach overestimates the elevation of land surfaces and frequently misses CoastalDEM, they claim, is more accurate and "reduces linear vertical bias from 0.6 to less than 0.05 m." It does so because it uses more variables - vegetation cover, population density - to estimate the actual land surface. More sophisticated modelling techniques, claim the authors from Kajal and Benjamin Strauss, of Climate Centre, an independent organisation of scientists and journalists working on climate change.

Part A—Preliminary Examination

Paper I - (200 marks)

- Current events of national and international importance.

Part B—Main Examination

PAPER-II

General Studies-I: Indian Heritage and Culture, History and Geography of the World and Society.

- Important Geophysical phenomena such as earthquakes, Tsunami, Volcanic activity, cyclone etc., geographical features and their location-changes in critical geographical features (including water-bodies and ice-caps) and in flora and fauna and the effects of such changes.

PAPER-IV


- Disaster and disaster management.
New estimate on number of people who could be affected by climate change

- **High Tide Line (HTL)** - Line of intersection of land with water surface during a high tide.

- **Low Tide Line (LTL)** - Line of intersection of land with water surface during a falling tide.

- **Shore Line** - Land between High Tide Line and Low Tide Line

- **Shuttle Radar Topography Mission (SRTM)** - NASA
  - Objective: to get high resolution digital elevation data
  - Space Shuttle Endeavour - 2000

- New software Coastal DEM to measure topography of earth - more accurate

- **SRTM** - Overestimation of elevation
- Globally
  - 11 crore people live below current HTL
  - 25 crore people live below annual flood levels
    - SRTM Data - 2.8 Cr
    - 6.5 Cr

- India - underestimation of 88%
  - 2050 - 3.6 crore would face annual flooding
  - 2100 - 4.4 crore would face annual flooding

- People living below HTL
  - earlier estimate - 2.8 million
  - now 21 million

- In line with IPCC draft report on oceans and earth's frozen zones
  - displacement of 250 million people by 2100

- Rise in Global mean sea level
  - 20th century: 11-16 cm
  - 21st century: 2m!

- Solutions
  1. Adherence to Paris Climate Agreement
  2. Fossil Fuels → Renewable energy
  3. Shift to electric vehicles
  4. More carbon sinks
  5. Water use efficiency
  6. Adaptation and mitigation
  7. Sustainable agriculture.
PRACTICE QUESTIONS
DISCUSSION
Practice Question – Prelims

Q1. Consider the following statements with reference to ‘Randomised Control Trials (RCTs)’.
   1. It involves randomization of the trials under controlled parameters.
   2. RCTs have been used in the field of development economics.
   3. The Government of India now using RCTs in order to reduce the number of under trials in jails.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
(a) 1 and 2  
(b) 2 and 3  
(c) 1 and 3  
(d) 1, 2 and 3

Practice Question – Prelims

Q2. Consider the following statements about Future Investment Initiative Summit, recently seen in news.

   1. The main aim of the summit is to explore the new trends, opportunities, challenges and emerging industries that will shape the world economy and investment environment over the coming decades.
   2. It has been jointly launched by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India and Public Investment Fund of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in 2017.

Which of the above statement/s is/are correct?

a) 1 only  
b) 2 only  
c) Both 1 and 2  
d) Neither 1 nor 2
Q3. Consider the following statements with reference to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).

1. The objective of IPCC is to assess scientific information relevant to human-induced climate change and its impacts.

2. It is an intergovernmental body of the United Nations.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
(a) 1 only
(b) 2 only
(c) Both 1 and 2
(d) Neither 1 nor 2