



News Analysis (18 May, 2019)

 [drishtiias.com/current-affairs-news-analysis-editorials/news-analysis/18-05-2019/print](https://www.drishtiias.com/current-affairs-news-analysis-editorials/news-analysis/18-05-2019/print)

Interstate Migrants Avoiding Big Cities

'**Migration and its impacts on cities**', a report by the **World Economic Forum**, shows that smaller cities are rapidly growing, but at the same time struggling to cope with the infrastructure demands as civic revenue resources are on the decline.

- Attractive incomes, ample employment opportunities and comparatively low living costs are driving **interstate migrant populations** to smaller cities that are emerging as **counter-magnets** to megalopolis.
- **The UN Migration Agency (IOM)** defines a migrant as any person who is moving or has moved across an international border or within a State away from his/her habitual place of residence, regardless of
 - The person's legal status;
 - Whether the movement is voluntary or involuntary;
 - What the causes of the movement are;
 - What the length of the stay is.
- **The Economic Survey 2016-17** had noted that **counter-magnet region** dynamics are observed in **Jaipur** and **Chandigarh** (to Delhi), **Surat** has started acting as a counter-magnet region to Mumbai and attracts migrants from the neighbouring districts of Maharashtra, **Pune** also has become a counter-magnet to Mumbai.
 - That interstate migration is multiplying and migrants prefer smaller cities to settle down.
 - The high cost of living and overcrowding megapolis has drawn migrants to these small cities in search of better opportunities in all areas of life.
 - These small cities are now a preferred destination for many citizens across India for better job opportunities, education, healthcare services, real estate investment and better quality of life, among others.

Rising Urban Agglomeration

- According to the **2011 Census**, the population of Class I cities (having more than 1 lakh population) is on the rise.
- In 2001, the total number of Class I cities was 441, which constituted 62.29 per cent of the total urban population, while in 2011, the number of Class I cities increased to 468, constituting 70.24 per cent of the total urban population. Not surprisingly, the share of the workforce engaged in the agriculture sector (cultivators and labourers) came down from 58.2 per cent in 2001 to 54.6 per cent in 2011.
- Cities, including Surat, Faridabad and Ludhiana total over 55 per cent of in-migrants while Jaipur is growing as the urban agglomeration with migration spreading to the suburbs.

Challenges

Municipal bodies in smaller cities are facing a daunting challenge to accommodate the rising population because of inadequate revenue resources.

- The total revenues of the municipal sector account for only 0.75 per cent of the country's GDP as against 6 per cent in South Africa, 5 per cent in Brazil and 4.5 per cent in Poland.
- The inadequate understanding of city planning and inability to translate the plans into actions is hampering the growth of smaller cities. Smaller cities are unable to attract investment and entrepreneurs for infrastructure development.
- The existing institutional framework of municipalities is unable to deal with the standard problems of urban infrastructure utilities like street, electricity and water, along with sanitation, drainage, waste management and the provision of other basic services.
- Providing security, sufficient open spaces, public parks and playgrounds, health facilities, and air pollution are still a bigger challenge in smaller cities.

Government Initiatives

- The government is adopting various measures to provide better living conditions in small cities through various schemes:
 - Smart Cities Mission
 - Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) Project
 - Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban) or Housing for All by 2022 Mission
 - Heritage City Development and Augmentation Yojana (HRIDAY)
 - Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission
 - Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM)
 - Creating rural urban agglomerate to provide urban amenities in the rural areas is one such step to check rural-urban migration.
 - Government is implementing various schemes to provide basic needs and develop rural infrastructure for improving the living conditions of rural masses so that distress migration of people from rural areas to cities could be reduced.
 - In a market economy like India, the movement of people for better economic opportunities is inexorable, but schemes like Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee (MGNREG) have succeeded in reducing such migration.
-

Kerala: The First Indian State to Issue Masala Bond

Recently, the state-owned **Kerala Infrastructure Investment Fund Board (KIIFB)** debuted its 'masala bond' issue of ₹ 2,150 crore on the London Stock Exchange.

Key Points

- After this, KIIFB became the **first sub-sovereign entity in India** to tap the offshore rupee international bond market.
- The secured fixed-rate bond has a five-year tenure with a 9.723 per cent coupon.
- The bond issue builds on the Kerala government's focus to get multinational corporations to invest in the state, which has traditionally been known for its unfriendly business policies, bureaucratic delays and recurrent industrial strikes.
- As per Kerala state government, the proceeds from the bond issue are slated to be used to part-finance the rebuilding of infrastructure in Kerala that was devastated by 2018 floods.

Masala Bond

- Masala Bonds are **rupee-denominated bonds**, i.e, the funds would be raised from overseas market in Indian rupees.
- According to RBI
 - Any corporate and Indian bank is eligible to issue rupee denominated bonds overseas.
 - The money raised through such **bonds cannot be used for real estate activities** other than for development of integrated township or affordable housing projects.
 - It also **cannot be used for investing in capital markets, purchase of land and on-lending to other entities** for such activities as stated above.
 - The rupee denominated bonds can only be issued in a country and subscribed by a resident of such country that is a member of the financial action task force (FATF) and whose securities market regulator is a member of the International Organisation of Securities Commission.
 - While residents of such countries can subscribe to the bonds, it can also be subscribed by multilateral and regional financial institutions where India is a member country.
 - The minimum maturity period for masala bonds raised up to rupee equivalent of USD 50 million in a financial year should be 3 years and for bonds raised above USD 50 million equivalent in INR per financial year should be 5 years.

Kerala Infrastructure Investment Fund Board (KIIFB)

- KIIFB came into existence in 1999 under the Finance Department, Government of Kerala, to manage the Kerala Infrastructure Investment Fund, as per the **Kerala Infrastructure Investment Fund Act**.
- The main intention of the Fund was to provide investment for critical and large infrastructure projects in the State of Kerala.
- But it was in 2016, that the present government changed the role of KIIFB from handler of investment bonds to an entity to **mobilize the resources for developmental projects over and beyond the budget**.

ISRO's Seven Mega Missions

ISRO has planned seven mega missions, including Chandrayaan-2, to be conducted over a period of 10 years.

- Of these, only two missions have been defined — **XPoSat** and **Aditya-L1**.
- The four other undefined missions, which are in the planning stage, are **Mangalyaan-2, Venus mission, Lunar Polar Exploration** and **Exoworlds**.
- Xposat will be launched to study cosmic radiation in 2020, Aditya-L1 to the Sun in 2021, Mars Orbiter Mission-2 in 2022, Venus Mission in 2023, Lunar Polar Exploration or Chandrayaan-3 in 2024 and Exoworlds, an exploration outside the solar system in 2028.
- Aditya-L1 will play a key role in understanding and predicting climate change on Earth. The payloads will study the solar corona. Corona has an influence on the upper atmosphere and that impacts climate change on earth.
- Aditya-L1 will be placed in a '**libration orbit**', which is about 1.5 million km from Earth. It is about 1% of the distance between the Sun and the Earth, where the **gravity of the two celestial objects equalises**. Placing it in such an orbit **allows the spacecraft to circle along with the earth, thereby constantly facing the Sun**.
- Xposat will be a five-year mission, carrying a polarimeter instrument made by Raman Research Institute to measure cosmic radiation. The spacecraft will be placed in a circular 500-700km orbit.

Import of Refurbished Mobile Phones

India has allowed the import of refurbished mobile phones, subject to the condition that they are certified by the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS).

- A refurbished mobile phone refers to a handset that was returned to the manufacturer, tested for problems and restored to full-functioning in factory-standard condition.
- The move meets the demands of mobile operators like Apple which want to tap blooming smartphone business in India.
- As per a notification by the commerce ministry, **the import of electronic goods** (new as well as second hand, whether or not refurbished, repaired or reconditioned) **which require compulsory registration, is prohibited unless they are registered with the BIS** and comply to the labelling requirements. The import can be allowed if the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) gives a specific exemption for a particular consignment.

Concerns

- The chief concern is that **how will the BIS be able to certify refurbished phones** as they lack in uniformity. For instance, new phones have a uniform standard and can be examined for certification purposes by picking up a sample. However, such uniform sampling is not possible in the case of refurbished mobile phones.
- There is a fear that companies may use India as a place to **dump hazardous electronic waste**.
- Import of refurbished mobile phones would **negate the effect of 'Make in India' initiative**.
- It will act as a **counter to the National Policy on Electronics, 2019**.

Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS)

- BIS is the **National Standard Body of India established under the BIS Act 2016** for the harmonious development of the activities of standardization, marking and quality certification of goods and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.
- It has its **headquarters in New Delhi**.

Important Facts For Prelims (18th May 2019)

Taiwan Legalises Gay Marriages

- Recently, Taiwan became the first Asian country to legalise same-sex marriages.
- The Bill passed by the Taiwanese Parliament recognises same-sex marriages and gives couples many of the tax, insurance and child custody benefits available to male-female married couples.
- In India, Homosexuality was decriminalised by the Supreme Court in 2018 when the apex court struck down some of the provisions of Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code.

North America	Marriage	Civil union		Marriage	Civil union		Marriage	Civil union
Canada	YES		Cyprus		YES	Portugal	YES	
USA	YES		Czech Republic		YES	San Marino		YES
Latin America + the Caribbean			Denmark	YES		Slovenia		YES
Argentina	YES		Estonia		YES	Spain	YES	
Brazil	YES	YES	Finland	YES		Sweden	YES	
Chile		YES	France	YES	YES	Switzerland		YES
Colombia	YES	YES	Germany	YES	YES	UK†	YES	YES
Ecuador		YES	Greece		YES	Africa		
French Guiana	YES	YES	Hungary		YES	South Africa	YES	YES
Jamaica	YES		Iceland	YES		Middle East		
Mexico*	YES	YES	Ireland	YES		Israel		YES
Uruguay	YES	YES	Italy		YES	Asia		
Europe			Liechtenstein		YES	Taiwan	YES	
Andorra		YES	Luxembourg	YES		Oceania		
Austria	YES	YES	Malta	YES	YES	Australia	YES	YES
Belgium	YES		Netherlands	YES	YES	New Zealand	YES	YES
Croatia		YES	Northern Ireland		YES			
			Norway	YES				

* Recognition is on a state-by-state basis

† Excluding Northern Ireland. British overseas territories including Anguilla, the British Virgin Islands, Montserrat, and Turks and Caicos Islands do not permit same-sex marriage or civil partnerships

Countries, where Same Sex and Civil Unions Are Recognised

UK's Law on Carrying Kirpans

- Recently, the United Kingdom government has passed the '**Offensive Weapons Bill**' with an amendment by which **Sikhs in the country will be allowed to own a longer 'Kirpan (dagger)' and use it during religious and cultural functions**. The Bill received the royal assent and is now an Act.
- The purpose of the law is to reduce violent crimes in the UK following a spike in fatal knife attacks and acid attacks by strengthening the law surrounding the possession, supply and sale of dangerous knives, corrosive substances and firearms.
- However, the initial draft of the Bill had included clauses directly impacting Sikhs, including extending existing offences of possessing a bladed article or offensive weapon on school premises and banning the sale and possession of curved swords over 50 cm, both in public and private.
- However, with the new amendment added as "**religious reasons**", Sikhs can keep longer (3 feet) kirpans and use it during religious and cultural functions.

NOTE:

- Small *Kirpans* (around 3 inches or 7.6 cm) were not affected by the new legislation and are already protected under UK law.
- The *Kirpan* is a ceremonial knife/dagger which symbolises the spiritual struggle over evil. It is one of the five articles of faith (5 *Ks*) of Sikhs, which the baptised Sikhs are expected to wear at all times.
- The others *Ks* are - *Kesh* (unshorn hair), *Kara* (steel bracelet), *Kanga* (wooden comb) and *Kachha* (undershorts/underwear).

Military Nursing Service to Get Ex-Servicemen Status

The Defence Ministry and the Indian Army have agreed in principle to grant ex-servicemen (ESM) status to the Military Nursing Service (MNS) cadre.

- The ESM status will allow retired MNS officers to get identity cards, seek re-employment in government organizations/PSUs and apply for different resettlement schemes of the armed forces.
- The serving officers of MNS will be allowed to use star plates on their official vehicles. An officer from MNS will be entitled to have a single star on the car in case of a brigadier, and two stars if she is a major general.
- The Armed Forces Tribunal (AFT) in 2010 had directed the government to treat military nurses at par with regular commissioned officers in terms of ranks and entitlements.
- The MNS was set up as an auxiliary force in 1943 and has only women officers with permanent commission, who serve as nursing staff in all three forces.
- It is the only all-women officers' corps in the armed forces.

Graphite Reserves in India

- The **Arunachal Pradesh State government** has asked the **Geological Survey of India (GSI)** to explore the possibility of surveying and drilling for minerals along the India-China border, considering that China is reportedly undertaking huge mining activities in Tibet.
- **According to the GSI, about 35% of India's total Graphite reserves are found in Arunachal Pradesh.** This is the highest found in the country.
- The GSI's 2013 report, showed Arunachal Pradesh sits on 43% of the country's graphite resources followed by Jammu & Kashmir (37%), Jharkhand (6%), Tamil Nadu (5%), and Odisha (3%).
- But in terms of resources, Tamil Nadu led with 37% followed by Jharkhand with 30% and Odisha with 29%.

Graphite

- Graphite is a naturally-occurring form of **crystalline carbon**.
- It is a native element mineral found in **metamorphic** and **igneous rocks**.
- It has a **layered structure that consists of rings of six carbon atoms** arranged in widely spaced horizontal sheets.
- It is dark gray to black in colour, opaque, and very soft.
- It is the **only non-metal element that is a good conductor of electricity**.
- It is known as a **dry lubricant** for its greasy nature.
- It has many industrial uses, particularly for products that need very high heat.

Geological Survey of India (GSI)

- The Geological Survey of India (GSI) was **set up in 1851** primarily to find coal deposits for the Railways.
- Over the years, it has not only grown into a repository of geo-science information required in various fields in the country, but has also attained the status of a geo-scientific organisation of international repute.
- The main functions of the GSI relate to creation and updation of national geo-scientific information and mineral resource assessment.
- It is **headquartered in Kolkata**, and has six regional offices located at Lucknow, Jaipur, Nagpur, Hyderabad, Shillong and Kolkata and State Unit offices in almost all States of the country.
- Presently, GSI is an **attached office to the Ministry of Mines**.

Rashtriya Kishor Swasthya Karyakram (RKSK)

The Rajasthan government has decided to revamp the **Ujala Clinics (Adolescent Friendly Health Clinics)**, a part of Rashtriya Kishor Swasthya Karyakram, in its districts.

Rashtriya Kishor Swasthya Karyakram (National Adolescent Health Programme)

- In order to ensure holistic development of adolescent population, the **Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) launched Rashtriya Kishor Swasthya Karyakram (RKSK) in 2014.**
- The RKSK programme **defines an adolescent as a person within 10-19 years of age**, in urban and rural areas, includes both girls and boys, married and unmarried, poor and affluent, whether they are in school or out of school.
- To guide the implementation of this programme, MoHFW in collaboration with United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) has developed a **National Adolescent Health Strategy.**
- The **six thematic areas** of RKSK as well as that of the strategy are **nutrition, sexual reproductive health, substance misuse, non - communicable diseases, mental health, injuries and violence.**
- Its strength is its health promotion approach. The program envisages a paradigm **shift from the clinic-based services to the promotion and prevention and reaching adolescents in their own environment**, such as in schools, families and communities.
- **Key drivers** of the program are community based interventions like, **outreach by counsellors**, facility based counselling, **social and behavior change communication and strengthening of Adolescent Friendly Health Clinics (AFHC) across levels of care.**

Mt. Makalu

- It is the **fifth highest** mountain in the world, located in the Himalayas on the Nepalese-Tibetan (Chinese) border.
- It is **four-sided, pyramid-shaped** mountain, lies around 20 Km southeast of **Mount Everest**, the highest mountain in the world, in the Mahalangur Himalaya.
- The name Makalu is derived from the **Sanskrit word 'Maha Kala'**, a name for the Hindu god Shiva that translates "Big Black." The Chinese name for the peak is Makaru.

Makalu-Barun National Park

Makalu lies within Nepal's **Makalu-Barun National Park** and Conservation Area, a 580-square-mile parkland that protects pristine ecosystems from tropical rainforests to alpine tundra above 13,000 feet.

- The remote **Barun Valley** below Makalu is particularly important and managed as a Strict Nature Reserve to preserve its unique qualities and ecosystems.
 - Botanists have identified 3,128 species of flowering plants, including **25 species of rhododendron.**
 - Many animals also live here, with over 440 bird species and 88 mammal species, which includes a **red panda, snow leopard, and the rare Asian golden cat.**
-