



19th Statistics Day and Contribution of PC Mahalanobis

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Why in News?

The **19th Statistics Day** was celebrated on **29th June**, marking the **132nd birth anniversary** of **Prasanta Chandra Mahalanobis**, with the theme '**75 Years of National Sample Survey**', highlighting **NSS's key role** in strengthening **India's statistical system**.

- To commemorate 75 years of NSS, the government launched the **GolStat app**, conferred the **2025 Prof. C.R. Rao Award** to **Dr Prajamitra Bhuyan** for excellence in statistics, and released the **SDG National Indicator Framework Progress Report, 2025**.

What is National Statistics Day and Contribution of PC Mahalanobis?

- **About National Statistics Day:** Initiated by the Government of India in 2007, **National Statistics Day** is observed on **June 29** to honour **Prasanta Chandra Mahalanobis** and raise awareness about the role of **statistics in policy-making, development, and governance**.
- **About PC Mahalanobis:** **PC Mahalanobis (1893-1972)** was an **eminent Indian scientist and statistician**, born in **Calcutta (present-day Kolkata)**. His key contributions are:
 - **Mahalanobis Distance:** It is a way to measure **how far a point is from the average** in **multi-dimensional data**.
 - E.g., in **face recognition**, it helps check if a **new face matches a known person** by seeing **how far** it is from the **average face**.
 - **Indian Statistical Institute:** Established in **1931** in **Kolkata**, it became a global hub for **statistics, economics, and data science**.
 - He also founded **Sankhya**, the first Indian statistical journal, in **1933**.
 - **Second Five-Year Plan (1956-61):** In 1955, **PC Mahalanobis** was appointed to the **Planning Commission** by **Prime Minister Nehru** and advised on **industrialization**, emphasizing **heavy industries** through the **Mahalanobis Model**.
 - **National Sample Survey:** It was launched in **1950** based on the recommendation of **Professor P. C. Mahalanobis**, then **Statistical Adviser to the Cabinet**.
 - **Feldman-Mahalanobis Model:** An **economic growth strategy** adopted by **developing nations**. It **prioritises** investment in **heavy industries** (like **steel, machinery, and capital goods**) to create a **strong industrial base** for long-term **self-reliance**.
- **About National Sample Survey:** Since **1950**, the former **National Sample Survey Organisation (now National Statistical Office)** has conducted large-scale **sample surveys** across India, typically in **year-long rounds**.
 - It collects data through **nationwide household surveys**, the **Annual Survey of Industries (ASI)**, **rural and urban prices**, and supports **crop statistics** by supervising **area and crop estimation surveys**.
 - It also maintains a **sampling frame** for **urban surveys**.
- **About MoSPI:** The **Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI)** was established as an **independent ministry** on **15th October 1999**, following the **merger** of the **Department of Statistics** and the **Department of Programme Implementation**. The

Ministry has two wings, namely, **Statistics and Programme Implementation**.

- The **Statistics Wing**, known as the **National Statistical Office (NSO)**, includes the **Central Statistics Office (CSO)** and **National Sample Survey Office (NSSO)**.
- The **Programme Implementation (PI) Wing** consists of three divisions i.e., **Central Twenty Point Programme (TPP)**, **Infrastructure and Project Monitoring (IPM)**, and **Members of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme (MPLADS)**.
- Additionally, the ministry oversees the **National Statistical Commission (NSC)**, established by a Government Resolution, and an autonomous institute—**Indian Statistical Institute (ISI)**—declared an **Institute of National Importance** by an Act of Parliament.

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Questions (PYQs)

Q. With reference to India's Five-Year Plans, which of the following statements is/are correct? (2019)

1. From the Second Five-Year Plan, there was a determined thrust towards substitution of basic and capital good industries.
2. The Fourth Five-Year Plan adopted the objective of correcting the earlier trend of increased concentration of wealth and economic power.
3. In the Fifth Five-Year Plan, for the first time, the financial sector was included as an integral part of the Plan.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

Ans: (a)

Q. In the context of India's Five-Year Plans, a shift in the pattern of industrialization, with lower emphasis on heavy industries and more on infrastructure begins in (2010)

- (a) Fourth Plan
- (b) Sixth Plan
- (c) Eighth Plan
- (d) Tenth Plan

Ans: (b)