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Cataract major cause of blindness above 50

Financial constraints are one of the barriers to accessing treatment, says survey

RINJU SHAjAN PErAPADAN
NEW DELHI

Cataract is the principal cause of blindness for people above 50 years in India, according to the National Blindness and Visual Impairment Survey of India (2015-19), adding that barriers to accessing treatment include the following — no one to accompany the patient, seasonal preferences, and financial constraints.

Among men, the most important barriers are financial constraints (31%) and local reasons (21.5%). Among women, local reasons (23.1%) and financial constraints (21.2%) were the most important barriers.

Cataract is the cause for 66.2% cases of blindness, 80.7% cases of severe visual impairment, and 70.2% cases of moderate visual impairment in the age group.

Also, blindness is more pronounced among illiterate (3.23%) than literates (0.43%) and more prevalent in the rural population (2.14%) than urban (1.80%).

Cases are avoidable: What makes this worse for India is the fact that approximately 93% of cases of blindness are avoidable.

Treatment available: Close to 93% of cases of blindness in this age group were avoidable.

NAGARAJA GOPAL

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.
- General Science.

Part B—Main Examination

PAPER-III

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

- Government policies and interventions for development in various sectors and issues arising out of their design and implementation.
- 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.
- Issues relating to development and management of Social Sector/Services relating to Health, Education, Human Resources.

* Age group → ≥ 50 years
* Conducted by Dr. Rajendra Prasad Centre for Ophthalmic Sciences, AIIMS

Blindness:

* Definition by NPCB (based on WHO Defn)
  - Inability of a person to count fingers from a distance of 3 meters (10 feet)
  - 3/60 vision with best spectacle correction

Visual Impairment (VI)

* Loss of Sight → cannot be 'fully' corrected using glass or contact lens
* 2 categories
  - partially sighted / sight impaired
  - moderate
  - severe sight impairment (blindness)

Cataract

* Opacity of lens of eye
* gradual loss of vision without any pain
* Symptom
  - painless progressive blurring of vision
* can be treated successfully with existing technology
* 85% → ‘Senile’ Category
* Congenital Cataract → affects infants & young children

Findings of the Survey:

1. Principal cause of blindness → Cataract
   - blindness - 66.2%
   - VI - 80.7%
   - Moderate VI - 70.2%

2. Cataract as a reason because of barriers for accessing treatment
   a) No one to accompany
   b) Seasonal preferences
   c) local reasons
   d) financial constraints
   e) lack of awareness

3. Blindness more pronounced among illiterate people

4. Blindness more prevalent in rural population

5. District with high prevalence of blindness & VI
   * Bijnor, U.P (B - 3.67%, VI - 21.82%)
National Programme for Control of Blindness (NPCB)

- Now NPCB & VI
- 100% Centrally Sponsored Scheme
  (Central Sector Scheme)

- Objectives:
  - Reduce the backlog of blindness
  - Strengthen the strategy of eye health & prevention of visual impairment
  - Community awareness
High quality fake notes back: NIA

Agency accuses Pakistan of being the 'main source' of pushing in illegal currency

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) has said "high quality" fake currency notes have "resurfaced", with Pakistan being the "main source". One of the reasons cited by the Government in 2016, when it scrapped the Rs500 and Rs1,000 currency notes, was to wipe out fake currency notes in circulation.

On Monday, at the nation-

If the media keeps quiet, terrorism will end: Doval

'The judiciary treats terror cases on a par with ordinary crimes'

National Security Adviser Ajit Doval said on Monday that the 'approach of the judiciary to treat terror crimes on a par with ordinary crimes' was one of the major challenges. Quoting the former British Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher, he said: "If a terrorist takes action and the media is quiet about it, terrorism will end."

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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.

- India and its neighborhood- relations.

PAPER-IV

General Studies-III: Technology, Economic Development, Biodiversity, Environment, Security and Disaster Management

- Role of external state and non-state actors in creating challenges to internal security.

- Challenges to internal security through communication networks, role of media and social networking sites in internal security challenges, basics of cyber security; money-laundering and its prevention.

- Security challenges and their management in border areas - linkages of organized crime with terrorism.
Major ‘emerging’ challenges as per NIA

- Circulation of FICNs (High & Low Quality)
- Increase in khulistani activities
- Collection of evidence from cyber space
- Capacity enhancement of cyber forensic laboratories

Sources of FICN

- High Quality FICNs - Pakistan, pushed along Western Border and Nepal
- Low Quality FICNs - Bangladesh

FICN could be used

- to exchange for genuine currency and to use exchanged money for terror funding
- Desired objectives of RBI & GoI couldnot be met in liquidity management
- affects creditworthiness of the country
2nd News Article:

* National Security Adviser
  
  Judiciary should not treat terrorism related cases on par with ordinary crimes - because eyewitnesses not coming forward as ‘witnesses’ to depose before court

* Need to change media policy in reporting terrorist attacks
  
  Media shall not act as agent of creating publicity for the terrorists - that creates fear among the public
Northeast monsoon may set in around October 17

Most parts of State likely to get rain today

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI

The northeast monsoon, which provides major share of rainfall to Tamil Nadu, is likely to set in around October 17.

There may be an increase in rainfall in the State from October 15, according to the India Meteorological Department. The prolonged southwest monsoon will come to an end in two days over the southern parts of the country. Officials said usually, the north monsoon sets in around October 20. But, a deviation of seven days before or after this date is considered normal.

Changes in wind path
N. Puvinarasan, director, Area Cyclone Warning Centre, said wind direction had changed from westerly to easterlies at low level over the State. This would strengthen in the coming days. Easterly winds driven trough would usher in the monsoon this year.

Rainfall activity may begin on October 15 and become widespread across the State from October 16. Most parts of the State may get light to moderate rain and one or two places heavy rain, he said.

Officials recalled that the South Asian Climate Outlook Forum has predicted a normal monsoon over the southern peninsula this year. Chennai has a chance of getting light rain till Wednesday. The maximum temperature would be around 34 degree Celsius.

Part A—Preliminary Examination
Paper I - (200 marks)

- Current events of national and international importance.
- Indian and World Geography-Physical, Social, Economic Geography of India and the World.

Part B—Main Examination
PAPER- II

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

- Salient features of world’s physical geography.

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.
* Tamil Nadu to receive monsoon around October 17.

* Monsoon:
  - Seasonal reversal of winds
  - Sea to land - Southwest Monsoon (Summer)
  - Land to Sea - Northeast Monsoon (Winter)

* Seasons in India:
  - Winter (Jan - Feb)
  - Pre-Monsoon (March - May)
  - Southwest Monsoon (June - Sept)
  - Northeast Monsoon (Oct - Dec)

* Formation of Southwest Monsoon
  - Intense heating of Tibetan plateau
  - High pressure near Madagascar
  - Influencing Factors:
    - Somali Jet, Indian Ocean Dipole
**Formation of Northeast Monsoon:**
- High pressure - Tibetan, Siberian plateaus
- Weakening of high pressure system in Indian Ocean
- Migration of ITCZ (Inter-Tropical Convergence Zone) to South

**ITCZ:**
- Where trade winds from Northern and Southern Hemisphere merges
- Shifts seasonally

**Summer → Sun over Tropic of Cancer**
- Low pressure, high temperature
  - Central Asia
- High pressure over Indian Ocean

**Winter → Sun over Tropic of Capricorn**
- Reversal of wind - Northeast Monsoon
**Shifting of ITCZ:**
- To north in Summer → Southeast trade winds → SW Monsoon
- To south in Winter → Northeast trade winds → NE monsoon

**Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD):**
- Difference in Sea Surface temperature

  +ve IOD
  Wind
  Arabian Sea [WEST]

  Eastern Indian Ocean [EAST]

  -ve IOD
  Wind

**Somali Jet → Strengthens permanent high near Madagascar**

**Criteria for onset of NE Monsoon**
1. Withdrawal of SW Monsoon upto 15°N latitude
2. Persistent surface easterlies over Tamil Nadu coast
3. Only after October 10, etc.

**South Asian Climate Outlook Forum (SASCOF)**
- predicted Normal Monsoon in 2019
Framing laws for outer space

It is imperative that India's legal prowess be applied to the situational complexities of space exploration.

SHREYASHI & MIDHARSHI KAPOOR

Recently it was reported that the "world's first space crime" may have been committed by a NASA astronaut, Anne McClain. She is suspected of signing into the personal bank account of her estranged spouse from a computer aboard the International Space Station (ISS). The law which is applicable to the case is the International Space Station Inter-Governmental Agreement (IGA). The drafters of this agreement had made provisions to meet such a contingency. Article 22 of the Agreement concerns itself with criminal jurisdiction and states that countries which are mentioned in the agreement may exercise criminal jurisdiction over personnel in flights who are their respective nationals. Hence, the laws of the U.S. will be applicable in this situation concerning the first space crime.

arise on commercial space vessels, which will have personnel and space tourists from different jurisdictions. Space ambitions could lead to an increasing number of autonomous space stations established by countries such as India and China. Consider India’s space exploration ambition - ISRO is expected to become capable of sending Indians to the ISS owing to missions such as Mission Gaganyaan.

Framing visionary laws

Are humans from different cultural, political and economic settings likely to stop committing crimes in space? In such a scenario, far-sighted laws are essential to cater to every situation of potential criminality that might occur.

Consequently, it is not inconceivable that India then might have to become party to the IGA or contemplate a perceptive treaty with ISS nations to meet legal con-
August 2019 - World’s first space crime reported - One of NASA’s astronauts accused of signing into personal bank account of her estranged spouse.

- Law: ISS Inter-Governmental Agreement
- Few concerns in present space administration
  - Existing legal documents
    - Outer Space Treaty
    - Moon Agreement
    - Registration Convention
    - Rescue Agreement
    - Liability Convention

- Do not have detailed framework to address Criminal disputes w.r.t Commercial Space Vehicles

Issues that are beyond the foresight and jurisdiction of existing agreements

- International Space Station
  - Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA)

- ISS - Co-operative programme between USA, Russia, Canada, Japan and Eleven member states of ESA

- ISS IGA - International treaty - Signed in 1998

- Agreement provides framework for design, development, operation, utilisation of a permanently inhabited civil space station, for peaceful purposes
For India?

- has to become a party to IGA or appropriate MoUs to be Signed

- ‘Offences in Space’ to be included in Indian Penal Code (IPC)

- Indian Space achievements to be blended with visionary laws
  - Should cater to the needs of rapidly evolving space science.
Economics Nobel for Abhijit, two others

They were awarded for "their experimental approach to alleviating global poverty."

The Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences has decided to award the 2019 Sveriges Riksbank Prize in Economic Sciences in Memory of Alfred Nobel to three economists who have worked, and are still working, to understand and alleviate poverty – Abhijit Banerjee and Esther Duflo of Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and Michael Kremer of Harvard University.

The three will equally share the prize money of 9 million Swedish kronor (about $1,035,296.31, or €909,996.31). The research conducted by this year’s laureates has considerably improved our ability to fight global poverty; the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences said in a re....

Economics of poverty

Development economics just got a boost with the award of the Sveriges Riksbank Prize in Economic Sciences in Memory of Alfred Nobel to three economists who have worked, and are still working, to understand and alleviate poverty – Abhijit Banerjee and Esther Duflo of Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and Michael Kremer of Harvard University.

This is only the second time a woman has bagged the prestigious award, popularly called the Economics Nobel, and it is a first for a husband-wife duo to win in this discipline – Mr. Banerjee is married to Ms. Duflo. In the words of the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences, the experiment-based approach of the three laureates has transformed development economics and turned it in...
Sveriges Riksbank Prize in Economic Services in memory of Alfred Nobel - Nobel Prize in Economic Sciences
Awarded by Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences

A “new experiment based approach” in the field of development economics
large questions → Small & more manageable questions
Field experiments
Ability to fight global poverty

Outcomes of the Study:
1) Remedial tutoring - benefitted 5 million Indian children
2) Study in healthcare → heavy subsidy in preventive healthcare

Fieldwork based approach
 Governments to reframe policies and schemes
Maximum benefits for people
PRACTICE QUESTIONS
DISCUSSION
Practice Question – Prelims

Q1. Consider the following statements with reference to “National Blindness and Visual Impairment Survey of India (2015-19)”.

   1. The survey is conducted by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

   2. Visual Impairment is defined as when a person has loss of sight that cannot be fully corrected using glasses or contact lenses.

   3. According to the survey, cataract is the principal cause of blindness for people above the age 50 years.

Which among the above statements is/are correct?

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

Practice Question – Prelims

Q2. Consider the following statements.

   1. Indian monsoons are seasonal winds which reverse their direction with the change of season.

   2. Somali Jet strengthens the pace of Southwest monsoon towards India.

   3. Positive Indian Ocean Dipole shall have positive impact on Indian Monsoon.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

(a) 1 and 2
(b) 2 and 3
(c) 1 only
(d) 1, 2 and 3
Practice Question – Prelims

Q3. Which among the following space treaties, has not been ratified by India?
(a) The Outer Space Treaty
(b) The Registration Convention
(c) The Rescue Agreement
(d) The Moon Agreement

Practice Question – Prelims

Q4. Consider the following statements regarding the Nobel Prize in Economic Sciences-2019.
1. It was awarded for introducing new experiment based approach in the field of development economics.
2. The Prize was awarded by The Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences.
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
Practice Question – Mains
GS - III
Q. Critically analyse the need for including ‘Offences in Space’ in Indian Penal Code.

Practice Questions –
Prelims Answers
15-10-2019
1. Option ‘d’ – 2 and 3
2. Option ‘d’ – 1, 2 and 3
3. Option ‘d’ – The Moon Agreement
4. Option ‘c’ – Both 1 and 2