



TATHASTU
Institute of Civil Services

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS



1st March, 2024

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S.NO.	TOPIC
1.	Leaked papers and cheating scandals: How to fix India's exams

Leaked papers and cheating scandals: How to fix India's exams

SOURCE: [THE INDIAN EXPRESS](#)

TAG: GS Paper II- Important Aspects of Governance, Transparency and Accountability.

Practice Question:

Mains

Q. "Evaluate the effectiveness and challenges of the Public Examinations Prevention of Unfair Means Bill 2024 in addressing malpractices. (150 words)"

WHY IN NEWS?

- ❖ While the **Public Examinations Prevention of Unfair Means Bill of 2024** was under discussion in Parliament, preparations were underway for yet another **question paper leakage**, this time in the **constable recruitment process in Uttar Pradesh**.

Public Examinations Prevention of Unfair Means Bill of 2024

- ❖ The Bill seeks to stop dishonest practices like cheating in exams, ensuring fairness and credibility of the exam public examinations. It responds to frequent cancellations of recruitment tests due to leaked question papers.
- ❖ **IMPORTANT PROVISIONS OF THE BILL:**
- ❖ **DEFINITION OF PUBLIC EXAMINATION:**
 - A **Public Examination**, according to **Section 2(k) of the bill**, refers to any **test overseen by a designated "public examination authority"** outlined in the Bill's Schedule or any other authority notified by the **Central Government**.
 - The **Schedule** includes **five such authorities**:
Union Public Service Commission (UPSC), Staff Selection Commission (SSC), Railway Recruitment Boards (RRBs), Institute of Banking Personnel Selection (IBPS), and National Testing Agency (NTA).
- ❖ **DEFINITION OF UNFAIR MEANS:**
 - According to **Section 3 of the Bill**, Unfair Means in public examinations refers to **engaging in at least 15 prohibited actions** aimed at **gaining monetary or wrongful benefits**.
 - **Some of these actions include:**
 - **Leaking the question paper**, answer key, or part of it.
 - **Illegally obtaining the question paper or an Optical Mark Recognition (OMR) response sheet.**
 - **Unauthorized individuals offering solutions to exam questions** during the public examination.
- ❖ **PUNISHMENTS:**
 - All offences will be **cognizable, non-bailable, and non-compoundable**, according to **Section 9 of the Bill**.
 - Individuals **engaging in unfair practices** and offenses may face a **penalty of imprisonment** ranging from **three to five years** and a **monetary fine of up to Rs 10 lakh**.



❖ **MODEL DRAFT FOR STATES:**

- The law provides a **model draft for states to adopt at their discretion**, aiding in **preventing criminal interference** in state-level examinations.

❖ **HIGH LEVEL NATIONAL TECHNICAL COMMITTEE:**

- A **High-Level National Technical Committee on Public Examinations**, is to be **constituted to ensure secure online platforms**, robust IT security, and **national standards for reliable exams**.

WHY IS SUCH A BILL NECESSARY?

☛ **MALPRACTICES IN THE CONDUCT OF EXAMS:**

- **Rajasthan, Haryana, Gujarat, and Bihar** experienced **paper leaks**, affecting over **1.5 crore** students between **2016 and 2023**, with **70 reported cases during this time**.
- **Malpractices** in exams result in **delays and cancellations**.

☛ **ETHICAL CONCERNS:**

- ☛ **Cheating in exams** raises **ethical concerns by violating academic integrity**, providing an **unfair advantage**, promoting deception, diminishing personal accountability, **hindering genuine learning**, **damaging reputations**.

☛ **NO PROVISIONS AT CENTRAL LEVEL TO CHECK UNFAIR PRACTICES:**

- Currently, there is **no specific law** addressing **unfair means or committed offenses**.
- The Bill aims to **enhance transparency, fairness, and credibility** in public exams, reassuring the youth about fair rewards for sincere efforts.
- Several states, such as **Gujarat, Rajasthan, UP, Uttarakhand, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, AP, and Odisha**, already have **laws criminalizing cheating**.
- However, **despite the existence** of these laws, **no convictions have occurred**, indicating ongoing offenses and a lack of legal consequences for wrongdoers.

CONCERNS WITH THE BILL

- ❖ **State Government Discretion:** The **reliance on state governments** to create their own acts may foster partisan interests, mirroring issues observed in previous model bills.
- ❖ **Exploitable Loopholes:** The bill's stipulations, including **the penalties for wrongdoers** could be manipulated to avoid facing criminal consequences
- ❖ **Lack of Clarity about Committee Composition:** The bill lacks transparency regarding the composition and qualifications of the National Technical Committee on Public Exams, raising worries about potential bias.

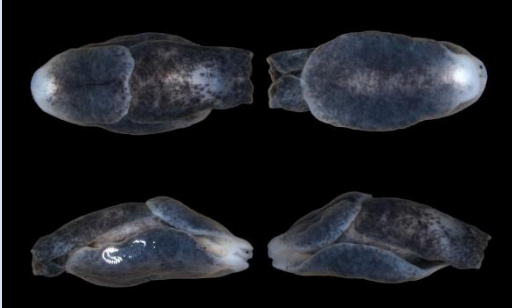
WAY TO FORWARD

- ❖ **Attributes of a Good Exam:** Characteristics include **reliability, validity, objectivity, clarity, and comprehensiveness**. The examination processes, from **setting question papers to evaluation**, need **meticulous planning and execution**.
- ❖ **Call for Professional Exam-Conducting Bodies:** Advocacy for **creating professional bodies** to conduct exams **scientifically**. The **establishment** of NTA is a positive move.
- ❖ **Laws alone cannot guarantee** exams free of malpractices. Employ **remote proctoring tools** during online exams.
- ❖ Educate students about the **importance of honesty** and the **consequences of cheating**. Foster an **environment where academic integrity is valued**.



PRELIMS POINTERS:

1st March, 2024

TOPIC	DESCRIPTION																													
<p>ZSI NAMES A NEWLY DISCOVERED SEA SLUG AFTER PRESIDENT MURMU</p>	<p>WHY IN NEWS? The discovery of <i>Melanochlamys droupadi</i>, a new marine species, off West Bengal and Odisha coast, named after President Droupadi Murmu, garners attention for its uniqueness.</p> <p>ABOUT MELANOCHLAMYS DROUPADI</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Discovery: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☛ Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) names a new marine species of head-shield sea slug discovered off West Bengal and Odisha coast. ❖ Named after: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☛ Named after President of India, Droupadi Murmu, the species is called Melanochlamys droupadi. ❖ Unique Features: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☛ Characterized by a short, blunt, cylindrical body with a smooth dorsal surface and two dorsal shields. ❖ Habitat: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☛ Found exclusively in Digha (West Bengal) and Udaipur (Odisha) coasts, this species is not found anywhere else in the world. ❖ Physical Characteristics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☛ Small invertebrate, about 7 mm in length, brownish-black with a ruby red spot at the hind end, hermaphrodite, and normally found crawling on intertidal sandy beaches. ❖ Reproduction and Behaviour: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☛ Reproduction occurs between November and January. ☛ The species secretes transparent mucus to prevent sand grains from entering the parapodial space while crawling. 																													
<p>LANCET STUDY SHOWS OBESITY RATES GOING UP ACROSS WORLD</p>	<p>WHY IN NEWS? ❖ <i>The global surge in obesity rates, quadrupling among children and doubling among adults from 1990 to 2022, raises concerns with over one billion affected.</i></p> <p>KEY FINDINGS OF THE REPORT:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Obesity Surge: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☛ Rates quadrupled among children and adolescents, while more than doubled among adults from 1990 to 2022. ❖ One Billion Affected: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☛ Over one billion individuals globally, including 159 million children and adolescents, and 879 million adults, are living with obesity in 2022. ❖ Most Common Malnutrition Form: <div data-bbox="882 1653 1497 1966" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p style="text-align: center;">THE OBESITY MAP</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th rowspan="2"></th> <th colspan="2">India</th> <th colspan="2">World</th> </tr> <tr> <th>1990</th> <th>2022</th> <th>1990</th> <th>2022</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Men</td> <td>1.1</td> <td>26</td> <td>67</td> <td>374</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Women</td> <td>2.4</td> <td>44</td> <td>128</td> <td>504</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Boys and girls (total)</td> <td>0.2</td> <td>7.3</td> <td>31</td> <td>160</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Girls</td> <td>0.2</td> <td>5.2</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p style="font-size: small;">Source: Lancet All figures in million</p> </div>		India		World		1990	2022	1990	2022	Men	1.1	26	67	374	Women	2.4	44	128	504	Boys and girls (total)	0.2	7.3	31	160	Girls	0.2	5.2		
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- ☛ Obesity now **surpasses underweight** as the predominant form of malnutrition worldwide.
- ❖ **Study and Collaboration:**
 - ☛ **Conducted by NCD-RisC and WHO**, involving 1,500+ researchers from **190 countries** analysing **data of 220+ million** individuals **aged five or older**.

INDIA'S SITUATION:

- ☛ Both obesity and underweight coexist in India.
- ☛ Obesity rates **increased** significantly from 1990 to 2022, **ranking 174th highest globally**.
- ☛ In 2022, **obesity rates for girls increased from 0.1% to 3.1%**, and for **boys from 0.1% to 3.9%**.
- ☛ Among adults, obesity rates surged from **1.2% to 9.8% in women** and from **0.5% to 5.4% in men**.

'PM-SURYA GHAR: MUFT BIJLI YOJANA'

WHY IN NEWS?

- ❖ *Union Cabinet's ₹75,021 crore 'PM-Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana' promotes rooftop solar with subsidies, but concerns linger over delivering "free electricity" to one crore households.*

ABOUT THE SCHEME

- ❖ **Objective:**
 - ☛ Install rooftop solar in **One Crore households**, providing **300 units of free electricity monthly**.
- ❖ **Central Financial Assistance (CFA):**
 - ☛ **60% CFA for 2 kW systems, 40% for 2-3 kW systems**, capped at 3 kW.
 - ☛ **Subsidies:** ₹30,000 for 1 kW, ₹60,000 for 2 kW, ₹78,000 for 3 kW or higher.
- ❖ **Loan Facilities:**
 - ☛ **Collateral-free loans** at around **7% interest for RTS systems** up to 3 kW.

OTHER FEATURES:

- ❖ **Model Solar Village: One in each district** to promote rural RTS adoption.
- ❖ **Incentives for Local Bodies:** Urban Local Bodies, Panchayati Raj Institutions to benefit.
- ❖ **Payment Security and Innovation Fund: RESCO-based models** and innovative RTS projects supported.

OUTCOME AND IMPACT:

- ❖ **Savings and Earnings:**
 - ☛ Reduced bills, **surplus power sale to DISCOMs**, generating **over 300 units/month** for a household **with a 3 kW system**.
- ❖ **Solar Capacity Addition:**
 - ☛ **Targeting 30 GW** through residential rooftop solar, reducing **720 million tonnes CO₂ emissions by 25 years**.





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