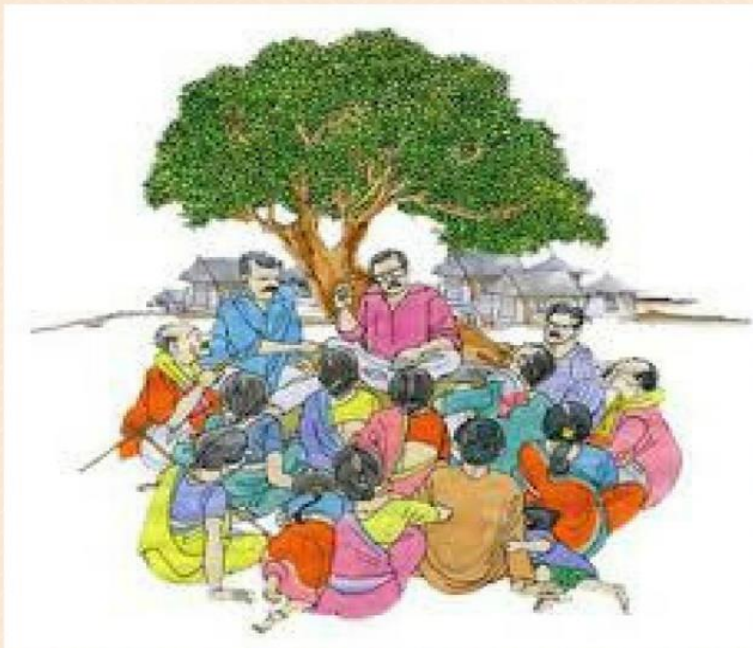




YK GIST



**JULY
2018**



**Housing for All
Panchayati
Raj System**

**Energy Needs
of India
UDAN Scheme**



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Preface

This is our 40th edition of Yojana Gist and 31st edition of Kurukshetra Gist, released for the month of July 2018. It is increasingly finding a place in the questions of both UPSC Prelims and Mains and therefore, we've come up with this initiative to equip you with knowledge that'll help you in your preparation for the CSE.

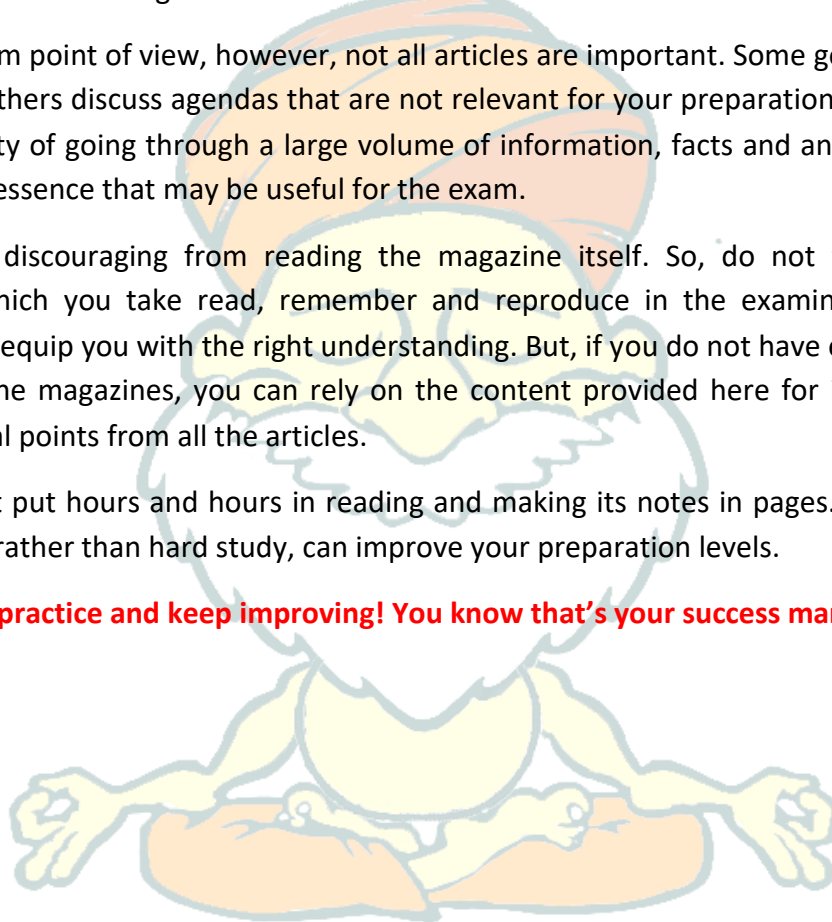
Every issue deals with a single topic comprehensively sharing views from a wide spectrum ranging from academicians to policy makers to scholars. The magazine is essential to build an in-depth understanding of various socio-economic issues.

From the exam point of view, however, not all articles are important. Some go into scholarly depths and others discuss agendas that are not relevant for your preparation. Added to this is the difficulty of going through a large volume of information, facts and analysis to finally extract their essence that may be useful for the exam.

We are not discouraging from reading the magazine itself. So, do not take this as a document which you take read, remember and reproduce in the examination. Its only purpose is to equip you with the right understanding. But, if you do not have enough time to go through the magazines, you can rely on the content provided here for it sums up the most essential points from all the articles.

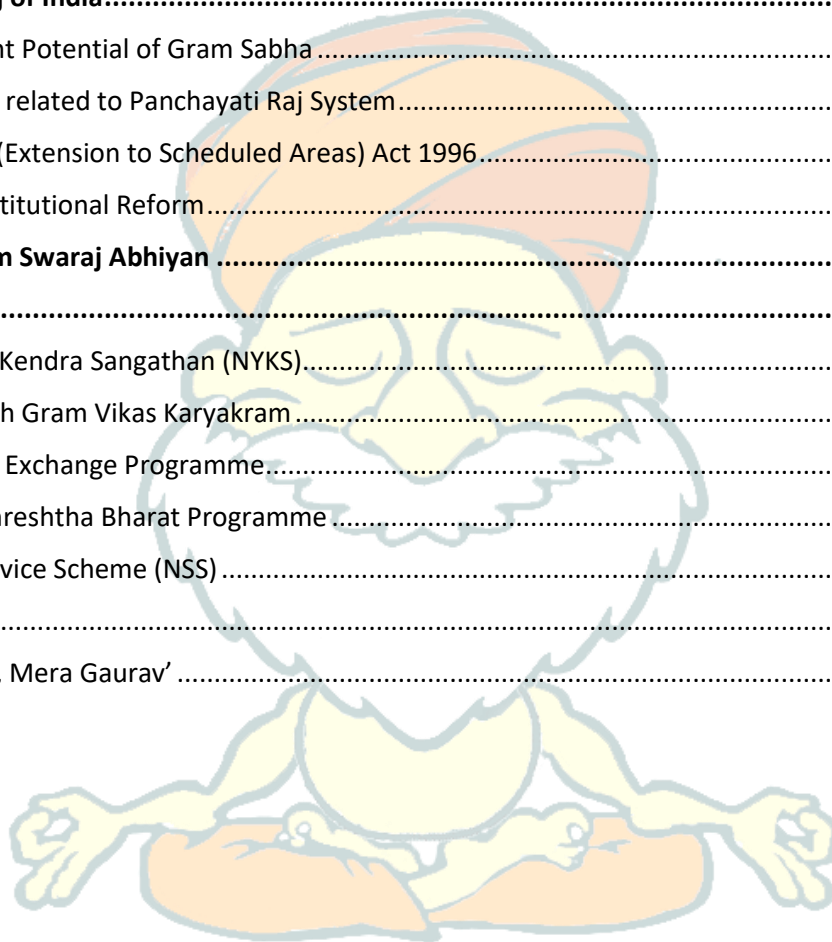
You need not put hours and hours in reading and making its notes in pages. We believe, a smart study, rather than hard study, can improve your preparation levels.

Think, learn, practice and keep improving! You know that's your success mantra 😊



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Affordable Housing: Future of Urban Development

Definition: Affordable housing refers to housing units that are affordable by that section of society whose income is below the median household income.

Reasons behind the current Housing Deficit:

- Increasing pressure on land, non-availability of it to poor at affordable prices
- Real estate speculations in urban areas
- Regulatory hurdles, red tapism, lack of speedy clearances, high fees and taxes, unfavourable development norms especially for low income groups
- High gestation period of housing projects, spiralling land and construction cost and non-availability of adequate credit
- Affordable housing needs to be coupled with proper transport, which lacks in most of the cases, forcing them to live in slums

Owning a house: Bedrock of possibilities

Providing stable, affordable housing is a major first step to establishing and sustaining a basic standard of living for every household.

- Many who live in slums have little to no control over or ownership of the property they live on. The formal financial sector is unable to serve them. Once titled, they could obtain access to several public benefits including loans.
- Housing is often the bedrock of other development interventions: owning land boosts health profiles, educational outcomes and gender equality. The converse is equally true.
- A decent habitat for the poorer sections of society will not only contribute towards their well-being and real asset creation, but also catalyze overall social and economic growth.
- The priority for housing ought to be higher than education and health. For many people in the developing world, the land on which they live is their only asset. If that property is not publicly recognised as belonging to them, they lose out on social benefits.
- Giving slum-residents basic property rights would encourage residents to invest in home improvement and encourage municipalities to provide infrastructure and better services. Upgradation rather relocation should be an option. Several attempts to relocate slum dwellers to the city's fringes have failed because the location restricts the access of residents to employment, schools and other amenities. Slum-dwellers favour upgradation of existing facilities and secure tenancy.

Urbanisation and India

- Rise in the service sector → Rise in Disposable Income → Rise in aspirations and standard of living → Urbanisation
- Rapid urbanisation is a reality for emerging markets and India is no exception. Currently, urban India houses 377 million people, making up 32 per cent of the country's population. This is expected to increase to 40 per cent with close to 600 mn urban dwellers by 2030.
- **SDG 11:** Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable; while the SDGs seek to achieve their objectives by 2030, PMAY (U) looks to ensure each Indian has a home by 2022.

Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY)

Aim: Affordable Housing for All mission

Timeline: To be achieved by the year 2022 – when India will be completing its 75 years of Independence. The housing shortage in the country is still pegged at close to 19 million.

By: Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation (MoHUPA); will follow the cooperative federalism model

Objective of Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojna (PMAY) – Housing for All

- Affordable homes with water connection, toilet facilities, 24x7 electricity supply and complete access
- 2 crore houses to be built across nation's length and breadth
- Targeting the Lower Income Groups (LIG) and Economically Weaker Section of our society (EWS), basically the urban poor by the year 2022
- 2 million non-slum urban poor households are proposed to be covered

How Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojna (PMAY) will work:

PMAY Housing Scheme will work by providing central assistance to Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) as well as other employed agencies through States/UTs for:

- Building onsite Rehabilitation of the existing slum-inhabitants by commencing private participation for using poor land area as a resource.
- By providing Credit Linked Subsidy
- Initiating Affordable Housing in Partnership

- Granting Subsidy to the beneficiary for individual house construction/enhancement

Government: A Catalyst

- **Budget**
 - **2017-18:** Affordable housing was given infrastructure status
 - **2018-19:** Institutionalized an *Affordable Housing Fund* under the National Housing Bank to boost financing in the sector
- **Section 80-IBA of Income Tax:** Provides for 100% deduction of profits for affordable housing projects to encourage private participation in the mission
- The 'City Liveability Index' has been recently launched by Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs.

Ushering in the much-needed change is imperative in bridging the gap between housing deficit and the ongoing supply of housing units across the country.

Strong partnerships: The government partnering with private players is a key success driver in the development of affordable housing projects through a commercially viable project structure. A policy pool that caters to innovative implementation methods that foster healthy competition between strong developers in the market will ensure effective and sustained growth of the sector.

Innovative finance mechanisms: Innovative PPP models make room for finance mechanisms that provide relief to the private developers and provide a thrust in the right direction to the affordable housing sector to encourage the private developers to participate in the affordable housing.

Demand analysis: Optimised allocation of the planned housing stock to the right section of the population is a key growth retardant to the number of vacant and unsold inventory. And, developing affordable housing units with access to modes of transportation, better connectivity, quality healthcare and education, proximity to community services, etc. is the need of the day.

Single-window clearances: This measure will stimulate the supply of viable affordable housing by minimising construction cost overruns (owing to delay in approvals) to substantial levels.

Construction tech: Leveraging the benefits of new advancements in the construction sector will have long-term implications on cost, quality and safety of the housing units. Adopting low-cost construction technology such as pre-fabrication will help developers construct units at lower costs and at a quicker pace. The higher initial cost of technology is compensated by lower labour costs and higher efficiency in construction.

Standards, monitoring: Introducing monitoring mechanisms to ensure delivery of quality homes to the beneficiary population will not only imply enhanced living standards but also strengthen sector values. Guidelines prescribing standards for construction methods, technology, material as well as execution and implementation along with efficient monitoring mechanisms will help streamline the project right from activation to the sale / rent of property to the target population. Innovative maintenance mechanisms result in sustainable development and longer life of affordable housing units.

Refer:

- [Mindmap](#)
- [Formulating a National Urban Policy](#)
- [Transforming Cities](#)

Connecting the dots:

1. Homelessness is a serious challenge in India. Discuss the importance of owning a house and the ways government can ensure ownership rights for maximum population including those living in slums.
2. Brining in private players into fray of affordable housing scheme will no longer keep the housing affordable. Do you agree with the statement? Evaluate.
3. Government schemes do not only face implementation or structural challenges but are also subject to social challenges. Discuss. Suggest a strategy for overcoming social challenges in policy making and implementation.

Universal Village Electrification

Rural electrification has received attention in the development agenda mostly in the last one-and-a-half decades. Access to affordable electricity for each and every household is a necessary condition for social and economic development.

Effects of Energy Poverty:

Lack of access to energy at home and for income-generating activities is associated with-

- Higher levels of poverty
- Low productivity
- Heavy workload

- Women's safety issue: Energy poverty affects women and girls more as they have to bear the primary responsibility for collecting firewood, cooking and other domestic work. These tasks expose them to negative health impacts and increase their domestic and reproductive burdens.
- Missed educational opportunities
- High exposure to health risks

Government Schemes:

- In 2005, the Central government launched the Rajiv Gandhi Grameen Vidyutikaran Yojana (RGGVY) which subsumed all other ongoing schemes related to rural electrification. The scheme focused on electrification of villages through implementation of decentralized distributed generation (DDG).
- RGGVY was later included in the Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Gram Jyoti Yojana (DDUGJY) (recently renamed the Saubhagya scheme), which additionally focuses on feeder separation, improvement of sub-transmission and distribution network, and metering to reduce losses.

All these schemes have delivered results and now only a few villages are left that have yet to achieve the target of 100% electrification.

The Saubhagya Scheme

Aims to improve environment, public health, education and connectivity with the help of last-mile power connections across India along with providing electricity connections to over 40 million families in rural and urban areas by December. Households out of reach of the national electricity grid are proposed to be provided with solar power packs along with battery banks with the Rural Electrification Corporation as the nodal agency.

- The Saubhagya scheme will help India, the world's third-largest energy consumer after the US and China, meet its global climate change commitments as electricity will substitute kerosene for lighting.
- It will also help improve education, health, and connectivity apart from having a multiplier effect on increased economic activities and job creation.

Issues that have plagued the sector: Present & Future

- Efforts to provide electricity to every Indian have historically been hampered by poorly designed and implemented schemes that encouraged contractors to do the bare minimum to make sure a village qualified as electrified, resulting in inconsistencies in official data, and glaring disparities on the ground.
- The next challenge for the government will be to install electrical connections to about 30 million homes that are still off the grid.
- Electricity supply is controlled and maintained by India's state governments, and, these government-owned distribution companies "remain the weakest link" in the power sector value chain. They are badly run and unable to invest in upkeep of the local distribution infrastructure. Reliability of electricity supply is "likely to remain a dream" for most consumers in India for years to come.
- Grid reliability challenges are more severe in dispersed rural areas than in cities. Though India has put rural electrification in a sharper focus over the last few years, upgrading of local distribution infrastructure, including metering and billing, is crucial. That will determine whether the schemes launched for total village electrification bear the desired results and lead to true 100% household electrification.
- Most power distribution companies (discoms) continue to struggle with their financial turnaround plans despite implementation of the Centre's mega loan recast scheme called UDAY. Unable to charge cost reflective tariffs, discoms have been resorting to widespread load-shedding to check their operational losses.

Implementation Challenges:

- Inaccessibility and non-feasibility of conventional grid system
- Difficult hilly terrain
- Areas affected by Left Wing Extremism
- Forest clearance
- Railway clearance

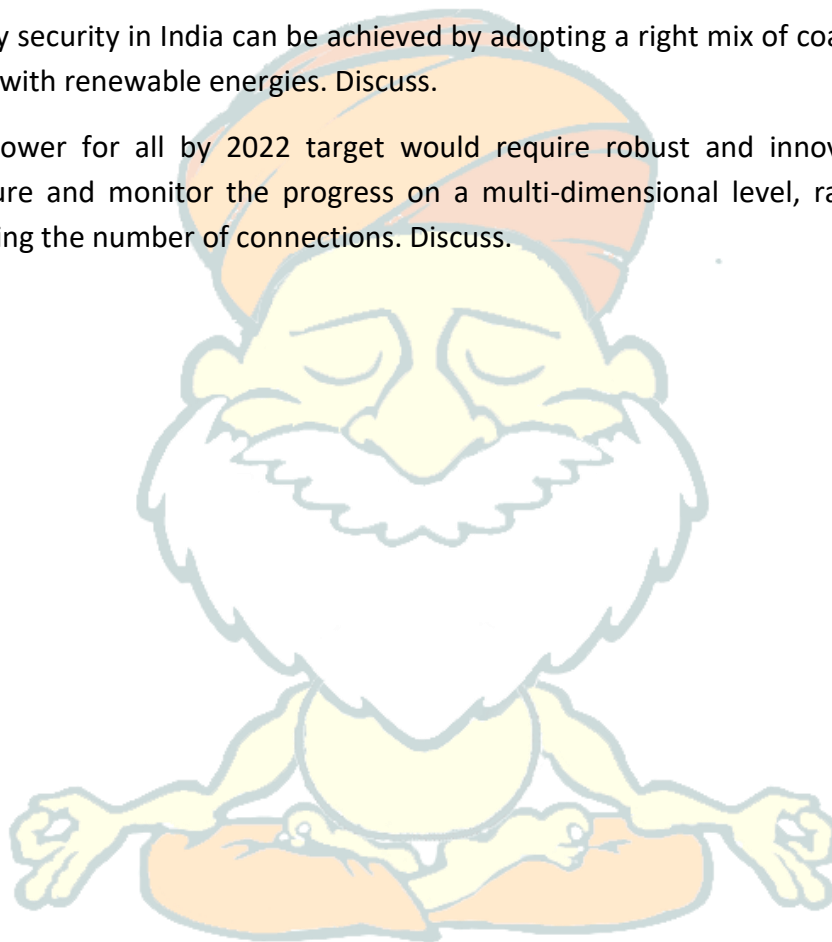
We need innovative solutions to address the electricity access challenges posed by rural India –

- Village-level entrepreneurs could be contracted to operate and maintain the local distribution while generating bills and collecting revenues from the customers.
- Banking on community relationships, these entrepreneurs could improve compliance on payments as well as curb stealing of power.

- Recruiting and training local youth could help address maintenance issues. This will also help in creating more skilled jobs and entrepreneurs in rural areas.
- Pre-paid and smart metering systems are other ways to encourage payments. Such solutions need to be piloted and tested.

Connecting the dots:

1. Electricity is the 'guiding light' towards attaining the goal of 'developed India'. Critically analyse with respect to new scheme launched recently.
2. Energy security in India can be achieved by adopting a right mix of coal-based power along with renewable energies. Discuss.
3. The Power for all by 2022 target would require robust and innovative tools to measure and monitor the progress on a multi-dimensional level, rather than just counting the number of connections. Discuss.



Targeting Economic Offenders – Fugitive Economic Offenders Bill, 2018

Indian businesses have grown, they have spread their wings all over the world and to fund their expansion many have gone to the banks for capital. Banks too have given loans to their clients in good faith in expectation of growth. Unfortunately they are now feeling the pinch in many ways. The government felt that despite the existence of the IPC, Prevention of Corruption Act and Prevention of Money Laundering Act, a specific act targeting economic offenders is the need of the hour.

Hence the government announced in the budget that a specific law targeting fugitive economic offenders was soon to be brought about which would give government powers to seize properties and appropriate the sale proceeds toward the loan creditors. After the Punjab National Bank was hit by the fraud the union cabinet immediately approved the bill to boost the confidence of the investors and bank customers in the banking system.

What is the Bill about?

The bill empowers authorities to attach and confiscate properties and assets of economic offenders like loan defaulters who flee the country.

- Aimed at preventing culprits of economic offences from evading the legal process and fleeing the country
- Re-establish the rule of law as the accused will be forced to return to India and face trial for his offences. This would also help the banks and other financial institutions to achieve higher recovery from financial defaults committed by such fugitive economic offenders, improving the financial health of such institutions.

When will this Bill come into effect?

Cases in which the total value involved in such offences is Rs. 100 crore or more – in order to ensure that courts are not over-burdened with such cases.

Who is a fugitive economic offender?

As per the original bill of 2017, the “fugitive economic offender” means any individual against whom a warrant for arrest in relation to a scheduled offence has been issued by any court in India, who:

- (i) Leaves or has left India so as to avoid criminal prosecution; or
- (ii) Refuses to return to India to face criminal prosecution.

What comes under Economic offences?

Offences under the following Acts:

- Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881;
- Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934;
- Central Excise Act, 1944;

- Customs Act, 1962;
- Prohibition of Benami Property Transactions Act, 1988;
- Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002; and
- Indian Penal Code

Provisions:

- Making an application before the special court for a declaration that an individual is a fugitive economic offender;
- Attachment of the property of a fugitive economic offender and proceeds of crime;
- Issue of a notice by the special court to the individual alleged to be a fugitive economic offender;
- Confiscation of the property of an individual declared as a fugitive economic offender or even the proceeds of crime;
- Disentitlement of the fugitive economic offender from defending any civil claim; and
- Appointment of an administrator to manage and dispose of the confiscated property under the act.

The Way Forward

- Special court will obviously require a lot of technical expertise. We need to talk about how can we strengthen these special courts, how can we man them with experts how can we get them outside help in terms of consultants or of people who can support them and understand the technicalities. It is important for the time-bound nature of the how these trials are supposed to proceed and how it may get impacted.
- The capacity of our legal system needs to get better. The issue of lack of time, and domain knowledge and expertise needs to be taken care of.
- Government needs to focus a lot on how the rules are made and framed in a manner that they reflect the true spirit of the law.
- Govt. needs to reach out to different countries with whom we don't have as yet the arrangement to have enforcement of the provisions under the law. We need to really expand that list to make sure that very few countries are left; as a matter of fact no country should be left out of the purview of the contracting laws.

Refer: [Mindmap](#)

Connecting the Dots:

- Critically analyse the Fugitive Economic Offenders Bill, 2018.

Panchayati Raj of India

April 24 – National Panchayati Raj Day

Panchayats: State subject; State Election Commissions to conduct all panchayat elections

72nd Amendment Bill:

- Came into effect as Constitution 73rd Amendment Act 1993
- A new Part IX was inserted in the Constitution of India enshrining the provisions for the Panchayats

Organizing village Panchayats:

- Gandhian principle
- Reflected in the Directive Principles of State Policy – **Article 40 of the Constitution:** Lays down that the State shall take steps to organise village panchayats and endow them with such powers and authority as may be necessary to enable them to function as units of self-government.

Acknowledging the importance of peoples' active participation in planning, decision making, implementation and delivery system to accelerate rural development process, Government legislated the 73rd Amendment Act, 1992, which became the Panchayati Raj law on April 24, 1993.

- The enactment of the 73rd Amendment to the Constitution was a watershed in the field of decentralization as it, inter-alia, provided certainty, continuity and strength to the Panchayati Raj System (PRS) in the country.
- Since then it became mandatory to involve local people and Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) to implement Government schemes and make them responsible to achieve the underlying objectives.
- The Panchayati Raj Act not only institutionalised PRIs as the mandatory third tier of governance, it transformed the dynamics of rural development by giving a say to a large section of the people — significantly, women — in the administration of their localities.
- The Law stipulated reservation for women and disadvantaged sections of the community, which created a space for them to be assertive and demand their rightful share in the decision-making at the local level.

Development Potential of Gram Sabha

“Gram Sabha” means a village assembly consisting of persons registered in the electoral rolls. All the people included in the electoral rolls of a village shall be the members of the Gram Sabha of that village.

According to Mahatma Gandhi's perception of “India lives in villages”

- Gram Sabha can be the bed rock of country's democracy
- It is a structure founded entirely on people's power (Lokshakti) expressing itself in the form of village power (Gramshakti)
- It provides a base for the three-tier structure of the PRIs in the district, viz. Gram Panchayat, Panchayat Samiti and Zilla Panchayat.

Urgent Need to Empower Gram Sabha

- State Acts should spell out the powers of Gram Sabhas and procedures for efficient functioning of these bodies
- Excessive control by bureaucracy has to be done away with
- State should clearly articulate the role of Gram Sabha in their Policy/Program/Scheme
- Roles and responsibilities of Sarpanch, Panch and Secretary should be clearly defined
- Sarpanch and Panch should represent the voice of people and not be rendered as mere functionaries of the administration
- Secretary, while being accountable to the Gram Sabha through Gram Panchayat, should be duly protected from local pressures
- PRIs should be provided with adequate manpower, mentoring and guidance. The States should, therefore, strengthen the administrative and enforcement capacity of Panchayats through proper staffing including; outsourcing, frequent training program comprising well-structured modules (possibly with the help of ICAI) simple guidelines, etc.
- State Government may itself devolve powers in various issues like ownership of Minor Forest Produce, control of money lending and prevention of alienation of tribal lands.
- It should be made absolutely clear that mandatory powers of the Gram Sabha are absolutely binding and that Government shall never overrule decisions of GS.

Committees related to Panchayati Raj System

B.R Mehta Committee:

- Recommended a three tier Panchayati Raj Institution (PRI) system at
 - Zila Parishad at the District Level
 - Panchayat Samiti at the Block/ Tehsil/ Taluka Level
 - Gram Panchayat at the Village Level
- Gram Panchayats should be constituted with directly elected representatives, whereas the Panchayat Samiti and Zila Parishad should be the constituted with indirectly elected members.

Entrust all local-level planning and developmental activities, alongside transfer of power and responsibility, to these democratically-elected bodies that were to serve as vehicles enabling people's participation. The underlying premise here was that no true community development was possible without the community itself identifying its problems and shouldering the responsibility for the same.

Note:

Balwant Rai Mehta is known as the Father of Panchayati Raj in India

First state in India to launch the Panchayati Raj: Rajasthan, in 1959

Santhanam Committee: On the financial matters of the PRIs

- The Panchayati Raj Finance Corporations should be established.
- All the grants at the state level should be sent in a consolidated form to various PRIs
- Panchayats should have power to levy special tax which should be based upon the land revenue and house tax etc.

Ashok Mehta Committee

- 3-tier should be replaced by the 2-tier system - District should be the first point for decentralization under popular supervision below the state level
- Compulsory items of taxation should be put under the jurisdictions of the Zila Parishads so that they are able to mobilize their own financial resources.
- There should be regular audit at the district level and a committee of legislatures should check whether the funds allotted for the vulnerable social and economic groups are actually spent on them.
- There should be Nyaya Panchayats as separate bodies from that of development Panchayats.
- There should be a minister for Panchayati Raj in the state council of ministers to look after the affairs of the Panchayati Raj institutions.

L.M. Singhvi Committee: The Panchayati Raj Institutions declined in the country because of:

- Absence of a clear concept
- Absence of political will
- Lack of Research, evaluation and monitoring

Suggested that Gram Sabha be the base of a decentralized democracy

- Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) to be viewed as institutions of self-governance which would actually facilitate participation of people in the process of planning and development
- Recommended **constitutional recognition of local self-government** and inclusion of a new chapter in the Constitution for this purpose. The 73rd Amendment included the Gram Sabha as the basis of the three-tier Panchayati Raj.
- Recommended establishment of the Judicial Tribunals in the states which would tackle the controversies regarding the elections to the Panchayati Raj institutions.

Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act 1996

PESA marks a departure from colonial laws of governance that pervades the administration of the people and the natural resources promoting people-centric governance. PESA is a unique legislation, often described as a **Constitution within the Constitution**, which attempts to bring together in a single frame two totally different worlds - the simple system of tribal communities governed by their respective customs and traditions, and the formal system of the State governed exclusively by laws.

The Scheduled Areas were exempted from the application of the 73rd Amendment for which the Parliament enacted a separate law, Panchayat (Extension to the Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996 (PESA). The Provision of Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act 1996 (PESA) extends Part IX of the Constitution with certain modifications and exceptions, to the Fifth Schedule areas (to promote tribal self-government) of 9 States viz Andhra Pradesh (AP), Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh (HP), Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh (MP), Maharashtra, Odisha and Rajasthan.

- Mandates the state to devolve certain political, administrative and fiscal powers to local governments elected by the communities.
- Guarantees tribes half of the seats in the elected local governments and the seat of the chairperson at all hierarchical levels of the Panchayat system.

LOCAL GOVERNANCE TO TRIBAL REGIONS

<p>Provisions of Act</p> <p>A VILLAGE SHALL ORDINARILY CONSIST of a habitation/ hamlet or a group of habitations/ hamlets comprising a community managing its affairs in accordance with their traditions and customs</p>		<p>Grama Sabha</p> <p>APPROVES OF THE PLANS, programmes, and projects for social and economic development before such plans, programmes, and projects are taken up for implementation by the panchayat at the village level</p>
<p>EVERY VILLAGE SHALL HAVE A GRAMA SABHA consisting of people whose names are included in the electoral rolls for the panchayat concerned at the village level</p>		<p>RESPONSIBLE FOR THE IDENTIFICATION or selection of persons as beneficiaries under the poverty alleviation and other programmes</p>
<p>THE GRAMA SABHA SHALL BE COMPETENT TO SAFEGUARD and preserve the traditions and customs of the people, their cultural identity, community resources, and the customary mode of dispute resolution</p>		<p>WILL EXERCISE COMMAND OVER NATURAL RESOURCES, resolve disputes, and manage institutions such as schools and cooperatives under it</p>

The Gram Sabhas under PESA are deemed to be 'competent' to safeguard and preserve the traditions of their people, community resources and customary mode of dispute resolution. The Gram Sabhas further have:

- Mandatory executive functions to approve plans of the Village Panchayats, identify beneficiaries for schemes, issue certificates of utilization of funds.
- Right to mandatory consultation in matter of land acquisition, resettlement and rehabilitation and prospecting licenses/ mining leases for minor minerals.
- Power to prevent alienation of land and restore alienated land.
- Power to regulate and restrict sale/ consumption of liquor.
- Power to manage village markets, control money lending to STs.
- Ownership of minor forest produce
- Power to control institutions and functionaries in all social sectors.
- Power to control local plans and resources for such plans including TSP, etc.

PESA continues to be hailed as a fundamental departure to local self-governance that would usher in participatory democracy and genuine empowerment of the people. PESA was considered the most logical step in the Fifth Schedule areas to ensure tribal welfare and accountability. But, alas, it has not been properly implemented. Tribal communities have progressively been denied self-government and rights to their communities' natural resources that should have been provided under the legislation.

The reasons why PESA failed to deliver has been a result of

- Lack of clarity,
- Legal infirmity
- Bureaucratic apathy
- Lack of political will
- Resistance to change in power hierarchy
- Non-realisation of its real long term worth

Need for Institutional Reform

For reform measures to be successful, along with the 'political will' rhetoric what we need is 'administrative will'. Democracy, which is a government of people, by the people, for the people, must ultimately win; this cannot happen without developing democratic local governance with a sense of urgency.

Effective devolution: It is imperative that activity maps be incorporated in the guidelines of all centrally sponsored schemes and that the massive amounts of money earmarked for poverty alleviation in all its dimensions be sent directly to gram panchayat accounts, reinforced by detailed activity maps to ensure genuine "local self-government".

Financial incentivisation of the states: To encourage effective devolution to the panchayats of the three Fs — functions, finances, functionaries. Foster genuine fiscal federalism where PRIs raise a large portion of their own revenue and face hard budget constraints, i.e. fiscal autonomy accompanied by fiscal responsibility.

Devolve the three Fs: The states on their part should understand the constitutional spirit and devolve the three Fs to the local bodies without exception. Also, the elected bodies should have supervisory powers to monitor and execute schemes. The funds allocated to local bodies should go into the accounts of panchayats, municipalities and corporations, and should be spent in accordance with the resolutions of the respective bodies, and not by other agencies like the jal board or development authorities.

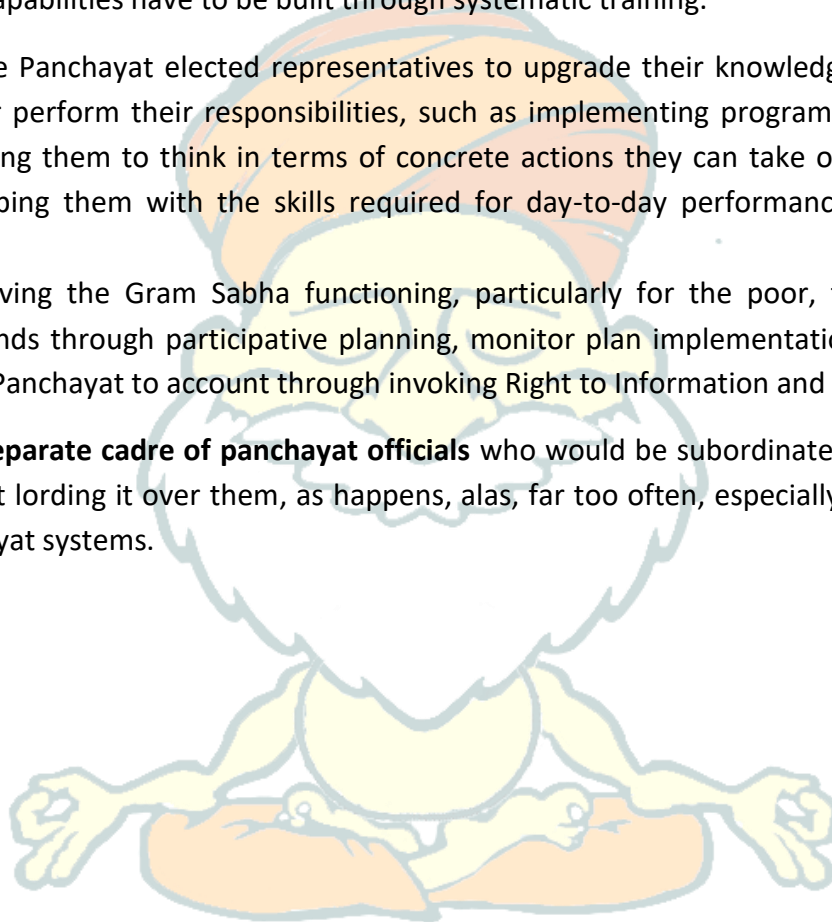
District planning based on grassroots inputs received from the village, intermediate and district levels through people's participation in the gram and ward sabhas.

Empowerment of Women: According to the report of the committee on empowerment of women (2010) submitted to the 15th Lok Sabha, with every successive panchayat election, women have been able to enlarge their representation beyond the minimum 33% prescribed by the Constitution. With the participation of women rising under the panchayati raj system and decision-making process at the grass-roots administration, its significance is increasing.

Capacity Building: The need for capacity building and systematic training of the elected representatives of the PRIs has added importance after the 73rd Constitutional Amendment on account of reservation of one-third seats for women and seats in proportion to their population for the scheduled castes and the scheduled tribes. The first time elected representatives, especially from reserved categories have no experience of performing the functions of the PRIs. Moreover, they also feel handicapped in exercising their powers and performing their duties due to lack of education and poor social & economic status on the one hand and the presence of the hostile cultural context and continuing caste and gender discrimination on the other hand. In order to empower the Panchayati Raj Institutions and enable them to function as local self-governments, in the letter and spirit of the Article 243G, their capabilities have to be built through systematic training.

- Enable Panchayat elected representatives to upgrade their knowledge and skills to better perform their responsibilities, such as implementing programmes equitably, enabling them to think in terms of concrete actions they can take or facilitate and equipping them with the skills required for day-to-day performance of executive duties
- Improving the Gram Sabha functioning, particularly for the poor, to assert their demands through participative planning, monitor plan implementation and to hold their Panchayat to account through invoking Right to Information and social audit.

Establish a separate cadre of panchayat officials who would be subordinate to the elected authority, not lording it over them, as happens, alas, far too often, especially in states with weak panchayat systems.



Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan

What: Revamped version of Rajiv Gandhi Panchayat Sashaktikaran Abhiyan (RGPSA)

Objective:

To make rural local bodies

- Self-sustainable
- Financially stable
- More efficient

Address critical gaps that hinder the success of panchayats by

- Enhancing their capacities and effectiveness
- Promoting devolution of powers and responsibilities

The components for which support is extended under the programme include the following:

- Capacity building for strengthening Panchayati Raj
- Development of institutional capability for training
- Implementation of PESA
- E- governance support structures

Nature of the Scheme

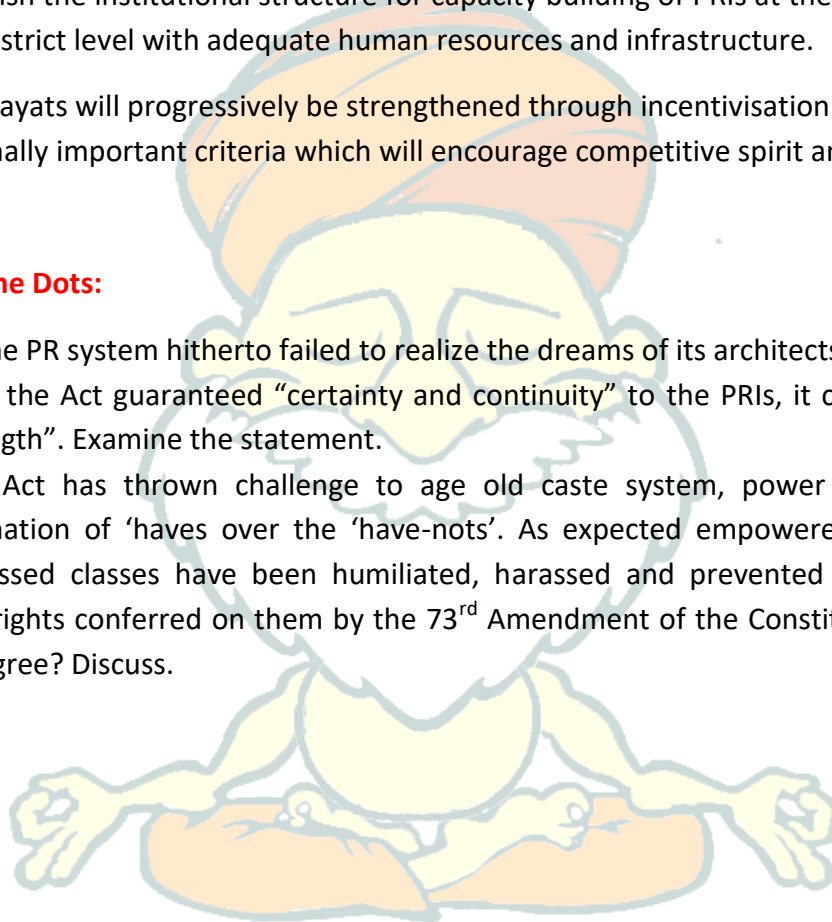
- The key principles of SDGs, i.e. **leaving no one behind**, reaching the farthest first and **universal coverage**, along with **gender equality** will be embedded in the design of all capacity building interventions including trainings, training modules and materials.
- Priority will be given to subjects of national importance that affects the excluded groups the most, e.g. poverty, primary health services, nutrition, immunization, sanitation, education, water conservation, digital transactions etc.
- The scheme is designed keeping in view programmatic convergence with **Mission Antyodaya GPs** and **115 Aspirational districts** as identified by NITI Aayog. As Panchayats have representation of Schedule Castes, Schedule Tribes and women, and are institutions closest to the grassroots, strengthening Panchayats will promote **equity and inclusiveness**, along with **Social Justice** and **economic development** of the community.

Impact:

- Help more than 2.55 lakh Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) to develop governance capabilities to deliver on SDGs through **inclusive local governance** with focus on optimum utilisation of available resources.
- Increased use of e-governance by PRIs will help **achieve improved service delivery and transparency**.
- Strengthen Gram Sabhas to function as effective institutions with social inclusion of citizens particularly the vulnerable groups
- Establish the institutional structure for capacity building of PRIs at the national, state and district level with adequate human resources and infrastructure.
- Panchayats will progressively be strengthened through incentivisation on the basis of nationally important criteria which will encourage competitive spirit among them.

Connecting the Dots:

1. Has the PR system hitherto failed to realize the dreams of its architects? Examine.
2. While the Act guaranteed "certainty and continuity" to the PRIs, it couldn't ensure "strength". Examine the statement.
3. "This Act has thrown challenge to age old caste system, power structure and domination of 'haves over the 'have-nots'. As expected empowered women and oppressed classes have been humiliated, harassed and prevented from enjoying their rights conferred on them by the 73rd Amendment of the Constitution Act." Do you agree? Discuss.



Do You Know

Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan (NYKS)

- **Launched in:** 1972, it is one of the largest youth organisations in the world
- **Objective:** To develop the personality and leadership qualities of the youth and to engage them in nation building activities.
- **Training on youth leadership and community development:** The programme aims at enhancing the capacity of young people to take up leadership roles to help others to live a meaningful life and contribute towards nation building.
- **Youth Convention and Yuva Kriti:** The programme is organised annually by all district NYKS to provide opportunity and platform to rural youth leaders to display products and express themselves, share experiences and suggest best practices for youth empowerment.

Yuva Aadarsh Gram Vikas Karyakram

- The programme aims at developing one village in selected districts as a model village by the youth for the youth.
- The activities include making the villages open defecation free, 100% immunisation, 100% enrolment of children in primary school, cleanliness, preventive healthcare etc.

Tribal Youth Exchange Programme

- The programme is organised every year with funding from the Ministry of Home Affairs.
- The youth drawn from areas affected by left-wing extremism are taken to other parts of the country to sensitise them to the rich cultural heritage of the country, to expose them to development activities and to enable them to develop emotional linkage with the people in other parts of the country.

Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat Programme

- The programme aims to promote the spirit of national integration through a deep and structured engagement between all Indian states and union territories through a yearlong planned engagement between states, to showcase the rich heritage and culture of either state for enabling people to understand and appreciate the diversity of India.

National Service Scheme (NSS)

- NSS was launched in 1969 with the primary objective of developing the personality and character of the student youth through voluntary community service. 'Education through Service' is the purpose of the NSS.
- The ideological orientation of the NSS is inspired by the ideals of Mahatma Gandhi. The motto of NSS is 'Not Me, But You'.
- Some areas in which NSS volunteers work are education, health, family welfare and sanitation, environment conservation, social service programmes, programmes for improving the status of women, relief and rehabilitation during disasters etc.

Bamboo

- Often referred to as "Green Gold", is re-classified as 'Grass' when grown outside forest areas making it free for cultivation, harvest, transport and its use as raw material for handicrafts.
- A re-structured National Bamboo Mission was launched to promote the bamboo sector in a holistic manner.

'Mera Gaon, Mera Gaurav'

- Agricultural scientists in groups of four each are selected and adopting five villages for demonstration of new technologies in agriculture and allied activities.
- Farmers are being empowered with knowledge, skill and information to enhance their income.

P.S- Download the Mind Maps from July 2018 YK Gist Post.

Thank you 😊

