1. Various Indian states have employed innovative technology to improve farm productivity and increase farmers' income. Can you discuss two such case studies?

Introduction

India's farmlands today are at a critical juncture. Our population continues to grow, rapidly industrialising and there is fall in agricultural income and the sector is in danger of being left behind. The need has arisen for another revolution: a new phase in Indian agriculture which is being defined by innovation and technology.

Body

Various states have adopted innovative techniques suitable for the topography and climatic factors.

A unique irrigation technology called System of Water for Agriculture Rejuvenation (SWAR) in Telangana:

- SWAR shifts irrigation from surface to measure moisture at plant root zone. Soil moisture content in the root-zone is an important variable in modelling hydrological and biophysical processes and agricultural applications and SWAR works on these parameters. The root zone also serves as an ecosystem to foster soil micro-organisms besides rationing plant water requirements.
- Technology used: The system involves storing of water in overhead tanks and sending it through a small diameter pipe to a customised locally-made clay pot that is buried near the root area. The clay pot contains micro-tubes that transmit water through a sand pouch, to prevent the roots from invading the pipes and the pot. The slow oozing of water provides moisture for a prolonged period, the level of which is calculated based on soil type, plant species and its age.

Benefits:

- SWAR uses a very less amount of water and there is zero wastage of water.
- The innovation has been highly recognised by the Andhra Pradesh and Telangana government. The government has placed orders for implementation of the system in an extent of 400 acres in Anantapur, Kurnool and Chittoor.
- The system is suitable for the massive tree plantation programme. In 2015, this technique was also used to grow vegetables and flowers.
- This helped show immediate results in terms of both soil and plant health and farmers' incomes.
- In vegetables and fruits, where close planting is done, it was discovered that one eighth of the water suffices, compared to drip irrigation.

- The innovative SWAR system attained a global recognitions and awards. It was due to these promising early results that SWAR received the Global Champion Innovation Prize for Water and Forestry at the 2015 Paris International Agricultural Show.
- SWAR desires to bring more low-rainfall areas under irrigation.

Protected Cultivation along with Plasticulture in Rajasthan:

- Involves cultivation in greenhouses and shade-net houses and use of Plasticulture applications in drip irrigation systems and sprinkler irrigation systems.
- Technology used: Slim polyethylene hoses with small nozzles run along the length of the plantations; the jets shoot water mixed with fertilizer directly at the roots; climate-controlled greenhouses create balmy conditions, just right for the plants inside
- From 2014-15 to till now, 32.74 lakh Sq.M. area of Green House, 3.05 lakh Sq.M. area of Shade net, 255.10 lakh Sq.M. area of Plastic tunnel have been established and 16149 Ha, area covered under plastic mulching.
- The focus districts initially are Jaipur, Alwar, Ajmer, Chiitorgarh, Udaipur, Kota, Sawai Madhopur, Sriganganagar and Bikaner.
- Cucumber, tomatoes, cherry tomatoes and strawberries are mainly cultivated and to increase farmers' incomes, facilitation has been provided to practice floriculture with flowers like Gerbera and Dutch Rose commonly grown.
- Rajasthan State government is also providing 20 % additional subsidy on Green House and Shade net so that Small /marginal/SC/ ST farmers could get subsidy up to 70%.

Benefits:

- Enhanced productivity and cost-saving: For ex: it is observed that Greenhouse cucumber production gives an average 50 tonne of average production. The average cost of cucumber is about Rs 20 per kg. So that's Rs 10 lakh in total revenue. If total costs are Rs 3-4 lakh, that means saving of around Rs 6 lakh.
- Yield improvement and water savings roughly about 50%- 60%.
- Fertilizer savings up to 30%-40%.
- Prevention of weed growth.
- Subsequent increase in farmers' income and additional income from floriculture.

Note: Many more examples of Zero-Budget-Natural Farming, Irrigation farming in Rajasthan etc. can be mentioned.

Conclusion

India's Department of Agriculture says the pace of farm mechanization has been poor, thus the need for greater mechanization and innovation for higher productivity is sorely felt in the sector.

Best Answer: Revamped

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2. Examine the factors that are causing stress in the civil aviation sector.

Introduction

The Civil Aviation Sector in India is a fast-growing industry and has recorded considerable growth in the last 30 years. India has the **third-largest aviation market** in terms of domestic passenger traffic. Further, It is projected that India would overtake the UK to become the third-largest air passenger (both Domestic and International) market by 2025.

Body

Current Situation

- The civil aviation sector contributed USD 8.9 billion to India's GDP in 2014 and supported 1.31 million direct, indirect and induced aviation jobs.
- In 2016, the demand for domestic air travel was twice that in China.
- The World Economic Forum's **Global Competitiveness Report, 2018** ranks India as **53rd** out of 140 countries worldwide in air transport infrastructure

Factors causing stress in the civil aviation sector

- **Rising fuel prices and the depreciating rupee**: Oil for the airline industry is an important variable cost. As the price for oil has shot up, it had led to difficulties for airlines as they have not been able to absorb in the short term due to their business model.
- **Taxes on aviation turbine fuel (ATF):** Due to high taxes and lack of competition among providers, ATF is relatively expensive in India. Since it remains outside the GST network, there are also regional disparities in its price. The price of aviation fuel in India may be up to 60 per cent higher than prices in ASEAN and the Middle East countries because of high central and state taxes
- **Airlines' inability to balance volume and value**: The suffering for the sector is not a new one altogether. Over time, checks and balances should have been built in the system to absorb price shocks. The sector is confused as a whole on whether they want more

volume or should they concentrate on a feasible plan that will help them keep their house in order.

- India's airlines have been trying so hard to capture market share that they've lost focus on making money. Indian aviation companies have been unable to value sustainability over volumes.
- **Inability to come up with a currency policy**: No airlines company has been able to devise a credible currency policy to protect them against sharp currency movements.
- **Capacity and infrastructure**: Inadequate hangar space and unavailability of land to expand airports at their current sites, particularly in major cities, are two of the major constraints that face the sector
- **Aviation safety**: Although the number of aviation safety violations in 2017 (337) has declined in comparison to 2016 (442), the absolute number remains high.
- **Skilled workers**: Shortage and gaps in the availability of industry-recognised skills – from airline pilots and crew to maintenance and ground handling personnel – could constrain the growth of different segments of the sector.

Way Forward

India needs to

- **Enhance aviation infrastructure**: Complete the planned airports under the UDAN initiative in a time-bound manner. A revival of 50 un-served and under-served airports/airstrips should be completed.
- **Address shortage of skilled manpower:** Promote collaboration between original equipment manufacturers (OEMs), industry and educational institutes to teach the latest concepts in the aviation industry including management principles, IT in aviation, etc
- Become a huge exporter of services as well, in terms of maintenance, repairs, and overhauls (MRO) services and other things
- **Ease the regulatory environment for airports**: Deregulate further and open up the aviation market to help increase passenger and freight traffic in India.
- Usher in amendments to Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Restructuring Act, 2013 and adopt "land-pooling" techniques to develop newer airports.
- Levy a lower Goods and Services Tax (GST) reasoning that "taxes add pressure on the airline's bottom line", thus aviation turbine fuel (ATF) needs to be brought under GST "at the earliest".
- Airlines must try to reduce dependence on ATF by adopting biofuels and explore issuing masala bonds to raise funds for themselves.
- **Prioritize aviation safety**: Shift focus to pre-empting and preventing accidents/incidents.
  • There should be zero tolerance for safety violations.
- **Aviation Financing**: In the wake of falling rupee, airlines may not be able to continue with Sale and Leaseback (SLB) model due to reduced margins (on account of the expensive

dollar). Thus, the model will fail to be sustainable in the long run. Therefore, establishing a domestic aircraft finance industry will require a long term vision and significant policy reforms, especially on the taxation front.

- The government may consider establishing a **Nabh Nirman Fund (NNF)** with a starting corpus of around $2 billion to support low traffic airports in their initial phases.

Conclusion

The industry stakeholders should engage and collaborate with policymakers to implement efficient and rational decisions that would boost India's civil aviation industry. With the right policies and relentless focus on quality, cost and passenger interest, India would be well placed to achieve its vision of becoming the third-largest aviation market by 2025.

Best Answer: Ayushi Singh

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3. What are the possible benefits for a common man from the Chandrayaan Mission? Discuss.

Introduction

Chandrayaan-2 is India's second lunar exploration mission after Chandrayaan-1, developed by the Indian Space Research Organisation. It involves the three modules: the Orbiter, Lander (Vikram) and Rover (Pragyan) to conduct various scientific experiments on the lunar surface.

Body

Benefits from chandrayaan-2 mission to a common man:

Chennai water crisis

- During its first mission to Moon in 2008, ISRO found the water on Moon. Experts stated that the present expedition could offer much-needed solutions to existing water shortages in Chennai.
- India is trying to identify the existence of Helium-3 on the surface of the Moon. The non-radioactive Helium-3 is touted to have the potential to power nuclear fusion reactors for centuries. Chennai, despite being a coastal city is suffering from drinking water scarcity.

- In the desalination process, the seawater is processed and made potable. However, the desalination process requires extreme energy guzzler technology. Here, Helium-3 based energy could come very handy.

Discoveries to benefit India, its citizens and humanity as a whole:

- A successful Chandrayaan 2 mission could prove to be a paradigm shift in the way expeditions to the Moon are conducted. It will also increase the understanding of space and promote global alliances, which finally culminates into "Peace".
- stimulation of technological development, and generation of scientific knowledge.

Making lives better:

- The requirements for high precision and for extreme reliability which must be imposed upon the components of a moon-travelling chandrayaan-2 are entirely unprecedented in the history of engineering, they improve manufacturing procedures, lengthen the lifetimes of instruments, and even discover new laws of nature.
- All this newly acquired technical knowledge is also available for application to earth-bound technologies. Every year, about a thousand technical innovations generated in the space program find their ways into our earthly technology where they lead to better kitchen appliances and farm equipment, better sewing machines and radios, better ships and aeroplanes, better weather forecasting and storm warning, better communications, better medical instruments, better utensils and tools for everyday life.

Earth's Environment:

- The Chandrayaan-2 programme is extremely exciting. Especially, the Vikram lander which will carry out several scientific experiments on the lunar surface. it will be interesting to further explore its environment, for example, it's surface constituents and its connection to the Earth's environment.

Better Standard of Living:

- In our modern world, we're often looking for instant gratification. But science isn't always like that. Nuclear power wasn't harnessed for decades after the idea was first proposed; the Higgs boson was only found after over 40 years had passed and billions of dollars were invested in its search. Yet each of these achievements, along with countless others, have helped bring about the modern world, with billions of people enjoying a higher quality of life than ever before.

Motivation:

- chandrayaan-2 will provide that inspiration to the youth and also the national public mainstream. It would inspire the young generation into notable achievements and enable them to play their legitimate role in challenging future activities

Conclusion

The Chandrayaan-2 mission is a precursor to the ambitious Gaganyaan project, which aims to place three Indians in space by 2022.), interplanetary probes and a solar spacecraft mission (Aditya). The missions of ISRO have helped in various applications like telecommunication, military, etc. and its future missions are expected to further explore new areas in space technology.

Best Answer: Jean Grey

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4. Highlight the achievements of ISRO in the area of indigenisation of technology.

Introduction

Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) was established in 1969. Since its beginning, ISRO has created a niche for itself in the space technology world through continuous low-cost innovations.

Body

Indigenization of Space systems:

India has made remarkable strides achieving 98 per cent indigenisation in launch vehicle technology and 60-70 per cent in satellite technology

ISRO is making desperate attempts to indigenizing current space technology. It is developing its own rockets, cryogenic engines, navigation, spy and communication satellites.

Some of **Achievements** are:

CHANDRAYAAN-2:

- Chandrayaan2 is a fully indigenous mission, which aims to place a robotic rover on the moon, is India's most complex and most ambitious. For the first time, it will shed light on a completely unexplored region of the Moon – its Southern Polar region.

GAGANYAAN :

ISRO has successfully demonstrated some of the technologies required for the mission such as:

- Space Capsule Recovery Experiment (SRE-2007),
- Crew module Atmospheric Re-entry Experiment (CARE-2014),
- GSLV Mk-III (2014),
- Reusable Launch Vehicle- Technology Demonstrator (RLV-TD),
- Crew Escape System
- Pad Abort Test (2018) and
- unveiled a space capsule (crew module) and Space suit prototype

IRNSS:

- India's own regional navigation satellite system named as "Navigation with Indian Constellation (NavIC)" is established by ISRO
- The potential of this indigenous system is being demonstrated in various application sectors viz. vehicle tracking system, mobiles, timing & power synchronization, fisheries, surveying etc. For example, all commercial vehicles registered from 1stApril 2019 onwards are mandated to have vehicle trackers, which are also NavIC-enabled.

GAGAN:

- The Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) and Airports Authority of India (AAI) have implemented the GPS Aided Geo Augmented Navigation-GAGAN project as a Satellite Based Augmentation System (SBAS) for the Indian Airspace. The objective of GAGAN to establish, deploy and certify satellite based augmentation system for safety-of-life civil aviation applications in India has been successfully completed.

MANGALYAAN:

- It is India's first interplanetary mission and made ISRO the fourth space agency to reach Mars, It made India the first Asian nation to reach Martian orbit and the first nation in the world to do so in its maiden attempt. most of the systems were indigenous.

HysIS:

- It is the country's first hyperspectral imaging satellite for advanced Earth observation. HysiS is a state-of-the-art satellite with many indigenous components developed by SAC.
- The primary goal of HysIS is to study the Earth's surface in visible, near-infrared and shortwave infrared regions of the electromagnetic spectrum.

LAUNCHERS:

- Launch Vehicles are used to carry spacecraft to space. India has two operational launchers: Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (**PSLV**) and Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle (**GSLV).**

ENGINES:

- ISRO is also planning to use **scramjet engine** for minimizing rocket size (40-50 per cent) and save fuel (up to 70 per cent). Furthermore, ISRO has developed RLV-TD a reusable launch vehicle to make space program cheaper and perform advanced space research.
- GSLV Mark III – developed by ISRO with its **own cryogenic engine**. The launch vehicle is capable of carrying 4 ton satellites into the geosynchronous transfer orbits.

DEFENCE:

- Communication is key to any sort of defence establishment. By developing India's capability in GSLV launching system, India is now inching closer to launching its own communication satellites which will serve a critical role and purpose in times of strategic need.

In all, India now has complete autonomous capability in space technology- propellant manufacture, satellite manufacture, launch capability up to 4ton satellite and so on. Also, the costing is very competitive compared to foreign launches which costed much more, thereby saving India's foreign reserve too

Conclusion

The success of ISRO is testament to India's capability in frugal engineering and finding solutions with severe resource constraints and international non-cooperation. Future missions like Aditya-L1, Gaganyaan etc. will help India enhance its global image even further.

Best Answer: Aspirant123

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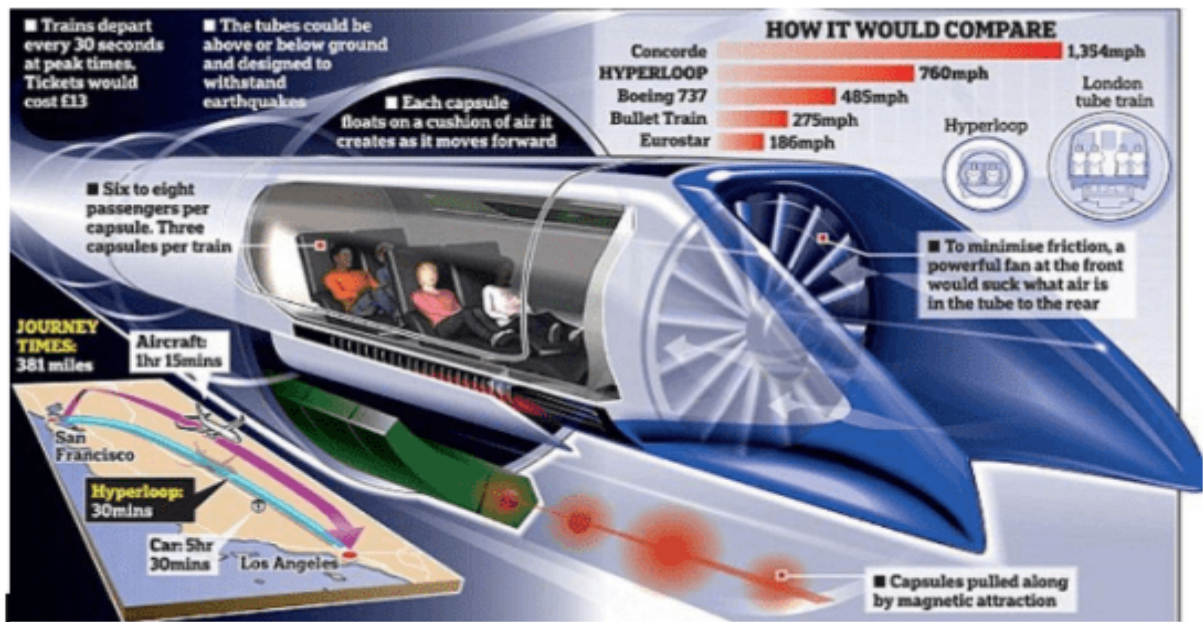https://uploads.disquscdn.com/images/bc1d30fad926952091b07b7ed1478878458dd9f64d20270c3d354c60caf6a022.jpg

5. How does hyper loop technology for transportation work? Discuss.

Introduction

Hyperloop is a new form of ground transport. It will have passengers travelling in floating pods within low-pressure tubes.

Body

Hyper look technology for transportation:

- The basic idea of Hyperloop is that the passenger pods or capsules travel through a tube, either above or below ground. To reduce friction, most but not all of the air is removed from the tubes by pumps.
- Overcoming air resistance is one of the biggest uses of energy in high speed travel. Airliners climb to high altitudes to travel through less dense air; in order to create a similar effect at ground level, Hyperloop encloses the capsules in a reduced-pressure tube, effectively allowing the trains to travel at airplane speeds but on the ground.
- In model, the pressure of air inside the Hyperloop tube is about one-sixth the pressure of the atmosphere on Mars. This means an operating pressure of 100 pascals, which reduces the drag force of the air by 1,000 times relative to sea level conditions, and would be equivalent to flying above 150,000 feet altitude.

- The pod would get its initial velocity from an external linear electric motor, which would accelerate it to 'high subsonic velocity' and then give it a boost every 70 miles or so; in between, the pod would coast along in near vacuum.

Benefits:

- Supporters argue that Hyperloop could be cheaper and faster than trains and car travel, and cheaper and less polluting than air travel.
- It's also potentially two or three times faster than even high-speed rail (and ten times the speed of regular rail services).
- They claim that it is quicker and cheaper to build than traditional high-speed rail; as such, Hyperloop could take the pressure off gridlocked roads, making travel between cities easier and potentially unlocking major economic benefits as a result.
- Being cheaper to build should mean these services can become profitable quickly.

Challenges:

- Plenty of engineering challenges need to be tackled which could push the costs up. Like building the tubes strong enough to deal with the stresses of carrying the high-speed pods, finding energy and cost efficient ways to keep them operating at low pressure.
- Lots of pods will be required to achieve the same passenger numbers as more traditional rail which uses much bigger carriages.
- How these services will be funded in the first place is not clear. These services can be financed through a combination of public and private investment.

Conclusion

The technology is nascent as no hyperloop has actually been developed on a long distance. India has time to develop expertise in the field. Partnerships with companies like HTT and Virgin Hyperloop will help India decide as to how the technology can be cost effective. Also, meanwhile improving basic necessities like food, access to energy and house should be focused.

No Best Answer

6. Identify the most polluted stretches of the Ganga river system. What are the most prominent contributing factors to this pollution? Can the Namami Gange plan address the problem of pollution in the Ganges? Comment.
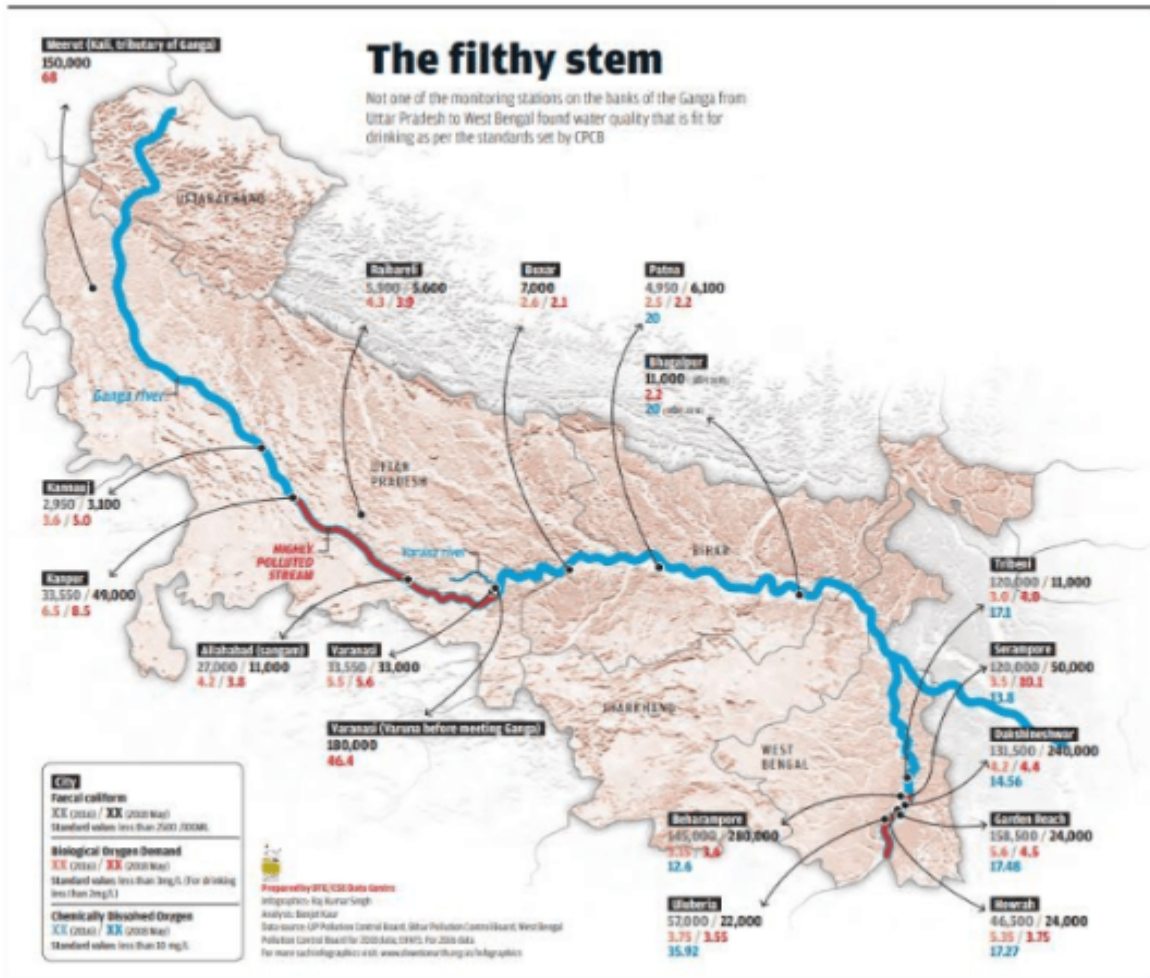
Introduction

Around 40 percent of Indian population is dependent on river Ganga for its water needs, the pollution levels are cause of concern. The government has taken several initiatives to abate

pollution levels, conservation and rejuvenation of river Ganga such as Namami Ganga Programme.

Body

Most polluted stretches of Ganga

Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) is continuously monitoring the pollution levels across the river stretches in India. CPCB considers a Biological Oxygen Demand (BOD) of less than 3 mg/l an indicator of a healthy river. BOD is the amount of oxygen required for the decomposition of organic compounds by microorganisms in a given amount of water.

Most prominent contributing factors

- **Industrial Waste:** Presence of large industries especially in the UP region, releasing polluted water without treating them into the Ganga. They are even responsible for toxic pollution (Leather Industries).

- **Agriculture Sources**: Agricultural runoff containing fertilizers, pesticides being non-degradable and having long life.

- **Municipal/Solid Waste**: The untreated sewage dumped into Ganga, gap between the functional Sewage Treatment Plant (STP) capacity and required STP capacity, has been a cause of concern.

- **Microbial Containment:** such as faecal, total coliform released, this can be observed during the Kumbh Mela. The river also finds the ultimate disposal place for unclaimed dead bodies and other half or fully burned dead bodies which decay and pollute river.
- **Dams:** are also one of the main cause of pollution in the Ganga. Dams obstruct the flow of river and make it slow, due to which Ganga lacks in self-purification capacity.
- **Tons of plastic, polythene and other trash**: are thrown into the Ganga River, choking out life from her waters and blocking existing sewerage systems.

Namami Ganga Programme

The Namami Ganga Programme is an initiative, to make villages on the bank of river Ganga ODF along with interventions dealing with solid and liquid waste management (SLWM). It incorporates activities like sewage infrastructure, ghats & crematoria development, river front development, river surface cleaning, institutional development, biodiversity conservation, afforestation, rural sanitation, and public participation.

Yes, it can address the Issue

- Infrastructure development- Activities like sewage infrastructure, river-front development, ghat and crematoria development, ghat cleaning, rural sanitation, etc. have been undertaken under this and all the villages near Ganga have been declared Open Defecation free.
- Decentralization- Panchayat Raj Institutions (PRIs) have been accorded a prominent role in the planning and execution of the projects under the Namami Ganga Programme as in case of Ganga Grams initiative.
- Mobilization of resources- financial and technological resource mobilization from the private sector is given priority. The Hybrid Annuity-PPP model has been adopted for the sewage sector.
- Zero black liquor discharge has been achieved in paper and pulp industries.
- National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG), nodal agency for implementing this programme has partnered with the National Institute of Urban Affairs to prepare Urban River Management Plan, which aims at preventing the deterioration and to ensure sustainable use of water resources.

- Knowledge dissemination and awareness building- Ganga Knowledge Centre (GKC) was established as a premiere and autonomous knowledge based institution to enhance the quality of the implementation of the Namami Ganga Programme.

Still there are concerns

- Unused funds- As per a report from the CAG, Government had only used $260 million of the $1.05 billion earmarked for the flagship programme between April 2015 and March 2017.
- Delays- There have been delays, lapses or complete non-implementation in areas like cleaning of the river, installation of sewage treatment plants, and construction of household toilets.
- Slow Implementation- Attributable to delays in tendering, non- availability of land, legal issues, pending approvals etc. National Green Tribunal recently slammed the government due to the stretches between Haridwar and Unnao being "unfit for drinking and bathing".
- Financial issues- Inadequate finances and resources with local bodies cripple their ability to treat sewage produced in cities. This finds its way into the river.
- Absence of a long-term plan- The government failed to come out with a detailed action plan for cleaning and rejuvenating Ganga.
- Technical and Engineering aspects- Some of the worst polluted stretches of the river are across UP, Kanpur being the worst in terms of Biological Oxygen Demand. Treating the highly toxic sludge requires advanced treatment technology.
- Poor inter-agency cooperation.
- Inability to keep pace with growing pollution loads.

Conclusion

The gap between the functional capacity of STP and required capacity of STP needs to be plugged, the awareness levels need to be promoted, initiatives like Ganga Praharis to educate, motivate citizens. The development of Ganga River must be a lesson for improving the stretches of other polluted rivers in India.

Best Answer: Ayush Dubey

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7. The term 'urban naxal' has gained currency in the last few years. What is the meaning of this term? What are your views on the belief that the so called urban naxals are a security threat to India? Comment.

Introduction

The term Urban Naxals is not clearly defined. The phrase "Urban Naxal" loosely means people of the Naxalite bent of mind who reside in urban areas and work as activists, supporters and protectors of the ideology, while the active Naxals battle it out in the jungles and vast swathes of Maoist-dominated areas.

Body

In India, while LWE has remained largely a rural phenomenon, the Naxal movement has been drawing great following and leadership from the urban areas, especially from highly educated achievers. The most predominant and visible modes of penetration appear to be infiltration into protests, agitations or demonstrations carried out against the government in urban areas.

They are not a threat to Internal Security:

- Political parties and right-wing organizations have wrongly termed some of the Left-leaning social activists as 'urban Naxal' for their political mileage.
- Anybody raising strong questions against the government is being perceived as an urban Naxal, which is very serious malice.
- These are Left-leaning activists who are fighting against social injustice and advocates for the rights of poor and tribal.
- Urban Naxals want to win the information/perception war through legal means, unlike real Naxals who want to overthrow the state through armed conflict.
- The government uses this term to curtail some dissenting voices.

They are Security Threat to India:

- Urban Naxals are the 'invisible enemies' of India. One common thread amongst all of them is that they are all urban intellectuals, influencers or activists of importance.
- These urban Naxal influence the middle-class employee, intellectuals and students with Maoist ideology and radicalize them against the government.
- They also hamper the international image of the country and portray bad social picture in international forums through conferences and newspaper articles.

- It is believed that with ageing leadership the Maoists and Naxalites have been looking at cities and towns for leaders. It feels that this is keeping in line with the tradition that most of their top leaders are well-educated people from universities.
- Some communist parties and Naxal organisations give immense importance to its 'urban movement' not just for the leadership, but for providing personnel, supplies, technologies, expertise, information and logistic support by over ground activities.

- The main focus of the Maoists' urban work is to organise the masses, including the working class, students, middle-class employees, intellectuals, women, Dalits and religious minorities. Naxals create front organisations for extending the reach of the organisation.
- From their ideology, it appears that Naxalites are fighting for the rights of the poor and want to establish a people's government, but the facts are quite contrary. The social uplifting of the downtrodden is not their real aim rather it is political power by undemocratic means.

Way ahead:

- To paint overt and peaceful political rebellions as Naxalism is a bad tactic, a political and moral blunder, which the government and political parties should avoid.
- The government should focus on curtailing the propaganda of the real Maoists in rural pockets of central Indian.
- Take up genuine counter campaigns and outreach programs are the best way to ideologically defeat the leftist insurgency.

Conclusion

Many top intellectuals regularly support Naxalism, advocating an egalitarian society, human rights and tribal rights. But the use of violent means cannot be supported to achieve a noble cause in a democratic setup. Rather than blind support, the intellectuals should also encourage Naxals to eschew violence, fight elections, join the mainstream society and learn the art of give and take of democratic bargaining without aggression.

Best Answer: Write.s

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8. With the abrogation of Article 370, there is a fear of Jammu & Kashmir becoming a playground for external state and non-state actors trying to destabilise peace and order in the valley. Do you agree? How can this threat be averted? Suggest.

Introduction

Article 370 acknowledges the special status of the state of Jammu and Kashmir in terms of autonomy and its ability to formulate laws for the state's permanent residents.

Body

Jammu and Kashmir becoming a playground for external state:

- **Strategic location**: Jammu Kashmir location is at the confluence of India, Tibet, Afghanistan, Pakistan and the Central Asian Republics makes it one of the most geo strategically important regions of the world
- **China:** Chinese forces humiliated the Indian Army and captured Aksai Chin, which roughly forms 20 per cent of Jammu and Kashmir. This gave China a big foothold in Jammu and Kashmir.
- **Geographical route:** The state lies on the old silk route between ancient China and Central Asian Republics. Its vicinity to the China–Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), the flagship project for China's Belt Road Initiative (BRI), also enhances its geostrategic potential.
- **CPEC:** The CPEC passes through Gilgit-Baltistan, a part of Jammu and Kashmir. China has got its own and troops for security of the development projects in the corridor.
- **Ladakh**: Ladakh which is of strategic importance between Tibet and Pakistan has been a source of disputes between India and China.
- **Islam culture**: Due to its deep mystic moderate Islam culture, it has the potential of reversing the cultural Jehadi threat to the Uyghur region of China in the north.

Jammu and Kashmir becoming a playground for non-state actors:

- **Taliban:** The withdrawal of U.S. troops from Afghanistan describes the drawdown of United States Armed Forces and increased tension of Taliban in Middle East.
- **Various terrorist groups**: various terrorist groups are seen in Jammu and Kashmir and there is huge risk of intruders.

Steps for threat to be averted:

- **Intelligence unit:** Within the intelligence community, the different branches need to coordinate better when it comes to intelligence sharing between them, ensuring there is a single stream for the dissemination of counterterrorism intelligence.
- **Defence infrastructure:** Needed to allocate resources towards reaching the goal by overhauling its defence infrastructure and procurement policies.
- **Feasible option**: India has asked Pakistan to take credible and irreversible steps to end cross-border terrorism and dismantle terrorist infrastructure in territory under its control.
- **FATF:** India is also a member of FATF (Financial Action Task Force) whose aim is to establish international standards for combating money laundering and terrorist financing.
- **NIA:** Officers of the National Investigation Agency are going from door-to-door at crack down cross border terror funding.
- **Regional organizations:** Bilateral summit meetings with various countries, and at regional and multilateral forums, such as Shanghai Cooperation Organization, G20, BRICS, among

others. Manifestation: zero tolerance to terrorism; rejection of any justification for an act of terror; delinking terror from religion; need for all forces believing in humanity to unite in fight against terrorism has found greater acceptance.

- **Satellite:** ISRO launched an earth observation spy satellite RISAT-2B that can take high resolution images of the earth during day and night, and also under cloudy conditions to keep an eye also on terror camps across the border in Pakistan.

Conclusion

It is the consensus of government and public to maintain peace and harmony of the nation for the welfare of all.

Best Answer: Jean Grey

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9. What are your views on the idea of linking social media accounts to Aadhar? Will it be beneficial in any way from the perspective of India's internal security? Critically comment.

Introduction

Recently, Tamil Nadu government told the Supreme Court that social media profiles should be linked to users Aadhaar number to check terrorist messages, pornography, and fake news.

Body

Good Idea, can be looked after

- With the increase in number of fake news posts on social media, this can help with identifying the originator of fake news, with intentions are to create tensions in the society.
- Recent issue of online Blue Whale game, which led to suicides of many. It was difficult for the government to trace the originator.
- It is estimated that around 15% of twitter accounts are by bots, these bots are not human run, still they play a big role in spreading fake news.
- The increase in crimes such as Child pornography, Revenge porn, morphed photographs etc are on rise.

- Many anti-national posts and hate posts too are on rise, this creates social unrest.
- Social Media companies too have failed to keep a check on such posts despite receiving complaints.

Concerns

- There are many privacy concerns, this might be in conflict with the recent Aadhaar Judgement.
- Whatsapp has recently said that it cannot share the Aadhaar number with a third party as the content on its instant messaging Whatsapp was end-to-end encrypted and even they do not have access to it.
- Large number of fake news is generated from foreign nations too, this provision won't be able to address the issue.
- There is concern with regards to fair investigation, government might burst heavily on its critics too.
- Facebook reported the issue of Cambridge Analytica two years from the incident, with the absence of data localisation, how safe would Aadhaar details be stored with social media companies.

Yes, It can address India's internal security issues

- Social Media has the potential to mobilize large crowds, there exists threat to peace when crowd attempts to disturb the atmosphere. Hence, precautionary steps can be taken, if authorities are aware of such events.
- The offensive clips and hate messages have created social unrest like observed in Muzzaffarnagar riots 2013, Assam Ethnic clashes 2012 etc, spread of such videos and posts can be curtailed.
- Social media has become a potent tool for radicalisation by terror groups, arrest of Mehdi Masoor Biswas, in 2014, accused of being the man behind terror group Islamic State's (ISIS) most influential Twitter handle in India, brought to surface the extent of the threat posed by the misuse of social media.
- There is always a virtual community in social media that attempts to bring in political instability and revolution, sometimes using anti-national posts.
- The recent phenomena of Urban Naxals, who use the social media platform to reach out to naxalites.

However, there might exist few challenges. Most of the cyber terrorism originates from outside the national boundaries. Open-Source monitoring is possible, but monitoring of personal conversations will spark off debate.

Way Forward

- Social media companies need to be made compliant with Indian laws, when operating in India.
- Social media companies should be forced to ensure that they should store the metadata of all the content that is uploaded and by whom, they should store the details of the source.
- Laws can be made as per the recommendations of BN Srikrishna report on "Data Protection".
- Social Media lab (2013) Model of Maharashtra can be worked upon.

Conclusion

As stated by Supreme Court, there is a need to find a balance between the right to online privacy and the right of the state to trace the origins of hateful messages and fake news. Any state intervention for regulation of online content has to pass the test of proportionality laid down by the Supreme Court in Puttaswamy Privacy judgement.

No Best Answer

10. Social media platforms have become a major source of fake news and propaganda. Do you agree? How does it threaten peace and order in the country? How can it be addressed? Analyse.

Introduction

Fake news, or hoax news, refers to false information or propaganda published under the guise of being authentic news. Fake news websites and channels push their fake news content in an attempt to mislead consumers of the content and spread misinformation via social networks and word-of-mouth.

Body

Fake news is made-up stuff, masterfully manipulated to look like credible journalistic reports that are easily spread online to large audiences willing to believe the fictions and spread the word. This has, in turn, led to deliberate propaganda and clickbait articles causing disharmony in the country.

Fake News poses a security threat to peace and order in the country:

- **Social rifts**– Burial of real news, and spread of fake news create rifts among communities and castes and also polarize people along ideological lines. Ex. cow vigilantism
- **Mob violence**– Fake news of a certain person being a 'child-lifter' led to the death of an innocent civilian by the mob.

- **Hate speech**– Hate speeches are spread through communal media to incite violence.
- **Riots**– With fake information, it can lead to riots between two religious groups or community groups Ex. Muzaffarpur riots.
- **The radicalisation of youth:** The modus operandi of ISIS was the usage of social media to spread the fake and false messages and target vulnerable youth and radicalize them. Ex. The radicalisation of youth in the state of Kerala.
- **Impacted morale of soldiers**– Fake news like soldiers will have to spend their own money to buy uniforms and other clothes from civilian markets hurt the morale of the forces and the families of forces.
- **Damage to reputation**– Spreading fake news about a person, or using a picture of someone in fake news can damage the person's reputation and even lead to harassment and intimidation. Ex. JNU doctored video.

How to address fake news problem:

- **Accountability of social media**– Like WhatsApp limiting forwards, other social media platforms should also have accountability to deal with such news. Social Media platforms have to filter the spread of fake news.
- **Education campaign**– This education campaign needs to carried out by the apps and platforms, as well as the government about the education of the do's and don'ts, and the laws governing the conduct of participants.
- **Screening**– Special screening to check the use of automated software and chatbots responsible for the spread of fake news.
- **Independent agency**– Government appointed an agency to verify data being circulated on social platforms. Officers at the district level to be appointed to gather intelligence and closely monitor social media contents.
- **Private Initiatives**– like AltNews.in, Lallantop, media vigil and Debunked should be taken for a fact check of news and to pull down and debunk fake news.
- **Enforcement**– Platforms and Intermediaries need to comply with data access demands made under India laws by our security agencies.
- **Self-regulation and awareness**– Active civil society to curb the spread of fake news. People themselves must cross-check any news before reacting over it.
- **Punishment**– Severe punishment to be awarded for creating and spreading fake news.
- **Active participation of police**– Local police can be a part of the social media group to constantly check and monitor the spread of news.

Conclusion

Traditional media had the ways to screen material and verify sources before putting information in the public domain. But in the current world, with the prevalence of social media, we need the participation of all stakeholders to ensure only the information which is true and is beneficial for the society as a whole should see the light of the day.

Best Answer: Anshul

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11. What are your views on the provisions of compulsory retirements for civil servants under 56J? Don't you think such provisions affect the morale of bureaucracy? Critically comment.

Introduction:

According to Rule 56J of fundamental rules for civil services, the government shall have absolute right to retire any government servant (in public interest). Though this provision existed, but still the usage was minimal. However, the present government has evoked 56J to retire many civil servants has sparked off a debate.

Body

Views

- For better administration, it is necessary to remove government servant who promotes the culture of corruption and unethical practices.
- Such moves would ensure efficient and effective work by other civil servant who is more vulnerable to corruption.
- This provision is not treated as punishment under Article 31 of Indian constitution (Supreme Court in Umedbhai Patel Vs. State of Gujarat 2003 case upheld this).
- Still there are doubts raised with regards to forced retirement (Especially political motives).
- Such uncertainty of tenure leads to fear and instability by public servants.
- When Honest officers are wrongfully punished, this leads to inefficiency and demotivation for others in the department.

Morale refers to state of mind and emotions, effecting the attitude and willingness to work. 56J Affecting morale of bureaucracy:

- The young officers watching, his senior officials get terminated, might lack will to effectively implement schemes.
- Bureaucrat might not be able to take a strong stand for any issue.
- Would blindly support every decision of the government of the day, thereby compromising on foundational values of civil services.

- The one who is intended to replace the previous officer, knows what is expected out of him, thereby he just acts as a remote controller.

However, this can in turn restrict corrupt practices and cause fear for those who resort to unfair means. This will be promote the foundational values such as integrity, impartiality etc in the organization.

Conclusion

There exists a need for setting up standards of Service records, this will ensure only honest officers are promoted to senior levels. Civil servants are lifelines of a healthy democratic society and play a major role in good governance.

Best Answer: Redeemer911

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12. Why has the National Register of Citizens (NRC) been in controversy lately? Are the apprehensions concerning NRC justified? Critically comment.

Introduction

The National register of citizens is a register containing names of all genuine Indians residing in India. Assam faced influx from Bangladesh, to remove the illegal migration from neighbouring countries NRC as prepared in 1951.

Body

Controversies related to the National Register of Citizens (NRC):

- Laborious process: Adding a person to NRC is complex procedure because of presenting many documents and layers of verification.
- Document verification: "Family tree verification" has become difficult process for left out children.
- Rejection of certificate: More than 40 lakh people are rejected for panchayath residency certificates.
- Citizenship related: Failed to ensure legal clarity over the manner in which the claims of citizenship could be decided.
- Role of Supreme Court: lack of monitoring process, inability to comprehend political and policy actions in case of loss of citizenship.

- Huge population: Given the size of India's population, implementation of the NRC will be a mammoth task and demands a detailed analysis.

Benefits of NRC:

- Detection of illegal immigrants, inclusion will be a shield against harassment and a ticket to enjoying all the constitutional rights and safeguards and the benefits of government schemes.
- To safeguard the indigenous population and civilization.
- Illegal activities like terrorism, human trafficking, drug trafficking can be checked.
- To safeguard Voting rights and properties such as land and house.

Criticism of the NRC:

- The first report was announced on December 31-January 1, 2017, the removal of 40 lakh people leads to a major social and political crisis.
- The mass insecurity and social crisis stalking the 40 lakh people of Assam.
- Many people are in stake who lives in strategic and sensitive border state. Their documents are being ambiguous.
- Assam has a peculiar problem of villages getting ravaged, or disappearing, due to annual floods unleashed by the fiery Brahamaputra. Documents get destroyed, geographies shift, addresses change.
- Several cases of transparent injustice whereby families have been divided – some declared Doubtful Voters and foreigners, others as bonafide citizens.
- Widespread perception that specifically linguistic and religious minorities are being targeted – namely, Bengali speaking Muslims and Hindus.

Conclusion

It is important and essential for the union government to proactively come out with an equitable, predictable and transparent plan on the way forward, for those who will be identified as 'foreigners'. The left out from the NRC must be handled carefully on humanitarian basis.

Best Answer: Hula

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13. Recent developments in Karnataka and Goa legislative assemblies prove that the political problem of defection can't be addressed by the legal solution of the anti-defection law. Comment.

Introduction:

The anti-defection law under 10th schedule of the constitution was enacted through the 52nd amendment after a prominent culture of 'Aaya Ram Gaya Ram', in which legislators used to change parties frequently, was witnessed in the Indian polity.

Body

Anti-defection law:

- Grounds of disqualification-
  o Voluntarily giving up membership of the party
  o Voting against the direction of whip in the house
- Also, it provides in case of merger, if two-third of members of the party agree, there will be no disqualification, thus, validating mass defections.

A legislator is well within his rights to change party; in fact, he must if he loses trust in his parent party or finds another ideology more attractive. But any shift in political affiliation would mean the right to represent the mandate is lost, making the role of anti-defection law important.

Recent developments in Karnataka and Goa, though are defection, pass the anti-defection test and the members can continue to be a part of the government.

- **Karnataka**– Members resigned from the house instead of party, thus reducing the government to a minority and not inviting the wrath of anti-defection law onto themselves.
- **Goa**– Here mass defections were witnessed which are valid as per the law.

Both the above cases, as well as recent trends in Telangana and Rajya Sabha, show how legislators can bypass laws and thus there is a need to look at the problem from more than a legal perspective.

Way forward:

- Prevent unholy alliances- Parties form post-poll coalitions with the opposing parties only to form government, even when the ideologies do not match and against the wishes of elected legislators, as happened in case of Karnataka.

- Internal democracy- Parties should promote internal democracy for the member to express their opinion on important matters concerning parties, like with whom to form coalition, who should be chief minister etc.

Conclusion

Keeping defections in check ensures stability of governance and helps in keeping up with the mandate of people. Thus, to uphold this spirit, reforms within the parties are required apart from the legal solution.

Best Answer: Pushyamitra

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14. Has Brexit affected India in any away? Analyse.

Introduction:

Brexit is an abbreviation for "British exit," referring to the U.K.'s decision in a June 23, 2016 referendum to leave the European Union (EU). The vote's result defied expectations and roiled global markets, causing the British pound to fall to its lowest level against the dollar in 30 years.

Body

Facts:

- EU and India would emerge as strong trade partners through enforcement of BTIA.
- EU is India's largest trading partner accounting for approximately 13% of its total world trade, while India is EU's 10th largest trading partner. India is reliant on EU for machinery, nuclear reactors, optical and photo equipment, aircraft, etc.
- EU's top imports from India include mineral fuels, oil, distillation products, organic chemicals, textiles, etc. The key sectors of trade in services between the two are sea and air transport, computer and information, financial and banking services.

Positive effects of Brexit in India:

- **To reset legal terms:** Brexit is an opportunity for India to reset the legal terms of its trade with the UK and EU, at the multilateral level, and through free trade agreements.

- **Students friendly:** Before Brexit, British universities were forced to offer scholarships and subsidies to the citizens of the UK and EU. Brexit frees up funds for the other students and more Indian students might be able to get scholarships.
- **Increases tourism**: Reduction in pound value will reduce travelling cost to the UK and will make it a good travel destination.
- **Huge investment:** Brexit will help strengthen our ties with Britain because India's focus on innovation and entrepreneurship still makes it an attractive destination for outsourcing and investment.
- **Goods and services**: According to the UK's Department for International Trade (DIT) figures, total trade in goods and services between the UK and India was 18 billion pounds in 2017, a 15 per cent increase from 2016.
- **Current account deficit**: Lower commodity prices, crude oil prices may help narrowing current account deficit (CAD)
- **Trading partners:** The UK and the EU are losing trading partners in the process. So they will both be looking for replacements. Here, India can play a crucial role. We may see enhanced cooperation in segments like technology, cyber security, defence production and finance.

Negative effects of Brexit in India:

- **Short term effects:** Automobile, Pharmacy and IT might be the most affected. NASSCOM has predicted that the effect of Brexit will be felt on the $108 Billion Indian IT sector in the short term.
- **Automobile industry:** In the automobile industry, Brexit may lead to reduction in sales and companies that derive good revenues of profits from Britain could get hurt majorly.
- **Disruptions:** Indian companies would need to recalibrate European operations, like setting up an additional operating company within European Union. This means short term disruptions will have a financial impact, as also take up management time.
- **Immigration:** Because of the large number of immigrants from EU, UK has restricted immigrants from other parts of the world, which had an impact on Indians.
- **Restrictions:** Post Brexit, immigration into UK of Indians may not become easier as the UK wants to place quantitative restrictions on total number of immigrants, and only a few Indians with special skills may find it easier to work in the UK.

Conclusion

India should re-negotiate with the UK and EU the World Trade Organization Schedules of Concessions, for both goods and services, should resume its FTA discussions with the EU, and should prepare to launch FTA talks with the UK.

Best Answer: Anurag singh Thakur

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15. Do you think developments on the West Bank or Hong Kong can lead to internationalisation of the Kashmir issue as well? Critically comment.

Introduction:

Article 370 of the Indian constitution which gave special status to Jammu and Kashmir was revoked by the Government in August 2019 through a Presidential Order and the passage of a resolution in the Parliament. This action ensured the integration of the state with the entire nation and repeal of the Article 35A altogether.

Body:

Developments in various regions of the world and necessity of the International community:

West Bank:

- When the Jewish State (Israel) came into existence, there was no Palestine Arab State because Palestinian Arabs were not organized, unlike Zionists; they lacked the money and gun power of their own. They relied on the armies sent by Syria, Jordan, Iraq, and Egypt, to fight for their cause.
- West Bank is the region on the west side of Jordan River. From 1950 to 1967 it was ruled by Jordan. But Israel captured it in 1967's war. A Palestine Authority (PA) was created and Israel handed over the civilian administration of Gaza and West bank to this PA.
- The current Israel-Hamas conflict, sporadic ceasefires, economic blockades, violent uprisings and militant movements are frequent incidents plaguing the region even now.
- Various UN resolutions and global interventions have been accompanied with key outside parties—the UN, the United States, the EU and the neighbours intervening strategically.

Hong Kong:

- Hong Kong is situated on the southeast coast of China, Hong Kong's strategic location on the Pearl River Delta and the South China Sea has made it one of the world's most thriving and cosmopolitan cities. Hong Kong became a Special Administrative Region (SAR) of the People's Republic of China on 1 July 1997.

- The interference of the communist regime of China in the internal affairs of Hong Kong and its oppressive policies have led to various pro-democracy protests for autonomy in recent times.
- Massive protests in Hongkong have erupted against a government plan to allow extradition to mainland China. Civil unrests and severe economic clampdowns are being witnessed in the region.

Situation in Kashmir and why it should not be internationalized:

- Under the Shimla Agreement the two countries not only agreed to put an end to "conflict and confrontation" but also work for the promotion of a friendly and harmonious relationship and the establishment of durable peace in the sub-continent, so that both countries may henceforth devote their resources and energies to the pressing talk of advancing the welfare of their peoples.
- Article 370 of the Indian Constitution is a 'temporary provision' which grants special autonomous status to Jammu & Kashmir.
- The issue of cross-border terrorism affecting India, India's efforts to maintain peace and stability in J&K and issues relating to Article 370 are an internal matter of India which is aimed at improving growth and economic development, democracy and prosperity for the people of Jammu and Kashmir.
- It should also be noted that out of the 3 main administrative divisions – Jammu, Kashmir, and Ladakh – insurgency and demand for independence are high only in the Kashmir Valley. Most of the people in Jammu and Ladakh still wish to be part of India, even though they demand autonomy in a different way.
- Kashmir was and still is an integral part of India. It has a plural and secular culture – just like the rest of India. Urgent steps should be taken to bridge the gaps of trust deficit in the minds of Kashmiri youth. All Kashmiris should get the due share in the growth story of India which can be realised only if it is integrated with the rest of the nation.

Challenges:

- UN refuses to formally declare Pakistan a 'terrorist state'
- Pakistan's military, identified as anti-India elemental force in Pakistan, remains opposed to any understanding with India
- Rising influence of radical extremist ideas and ideologies inside Pakistan and subsequent influence on youth of Kashmir may lead to a call for International intervention.

Way forward:

India needs to establish a national security doctrine in order to deal with all security issues. A strong need for India to change its approach from Responsive to Proactive is more suitable at present. Immediate measures to improve and mainstream J&K population economically and

socially with the rest of India can help curb the feeling of neglect and backwardness of the region.

Conclusion:

For the past 70 years, India has consistently resisted any third-party mediation proposal and recently an overwhelming majority in the UN Security Council too has stressed Kashmir is a bilateral matter between New Delhi and Islamabad. Thus, both sides should exercise restraint and settle the matter via peaceful talks and negotiations, with the strict end to state sponsored terrorism by Pakistan.

Best Answer: Redeemer911

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16. Should India be worried about the deepening ties between Pakistan and the US? Critically comment.

Introduction:

USA has been a stronger ally to Pakistan in the past, but the relations seem deteriorating due to many factors such as China, Terrorism etc. Post 2000s there has been significant improvement in Indo-US relations and which look even better at present.

Body

Need to concern

- Recent visit by Pakistan's PM Imran Khan, where President Trump has lauded Pakistan's efforts to fight terrorism and end the war in Afghan (Afghan Peace Process).

- US has resumed Military Aid to Pakistan, to fight the terrorists and for Afghan Peace talks. But, Pakistan's duplicitous policy and double games have ensured diversion of funds towards encouraging terrorism. This can prove hazardous for India, particularly when Pakistan is attempting for infiltration of terrorists in Kashmir region (Especially post Article 370 Abrogation) to create unrest.

- US is the second largest military supplier to Pakistan. With continuous ceasefire violations and creating war like situation on border. Advancement in weapon technology of Pakistan can become an issue for India.

No need to worry

- Afghan Peace Process: US wants to get out of the mess it has created in Afghanistan and for talks with Taliban, it requires Pakistan help for momentary support. So, the relations are of temporary nature and strategic bargain.

- With Pakistan's proximity with China: US would like to have a partner like India in the neighbourhood that could potentially challenge Pak-China Hegemony.

- US has placed Pakistan in Religious freedom special watch list in the category of "Countries of Particular Concern".

- President Trump has time and again accused Pakistan for their "Lies and Deceit" and for providing safe heaven to terrorists.

- US policy of Kashmir: US want the issue of Kashmir to be solved bilaterally. This is in line with Indian stand.

- US voiced concern over Pakistan's failure to do enough to contain terror funding in its soil and not registering cases against terror masterminds Hafiz Saeed and Masood Azhar under anti-terror laws at the meetings of Financial Action Task Force(FATF), this has effectively placed Pakistan in Grey List of FATF.

Conclusion

Pakistan has been playing victim card and trying to gain sympathy from nations around. It has been spreading fake news of Human rights violation in Kashmir through sections of media. India must maintain status quo on Kashmir and not be moved by transient relations between US & Pakistan.

Best Answer: Ayush

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17.What are India's stakes in the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO)? What benefits would accrue from India's membership of the grouping? Discuss.

Introduction:

The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), an influential Eurasian regional grouping consisting of Russia, China and four Central Asian Republics (CARs)—Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan—in 2017 formally approved membership of India and Pakistan, who had been observers, to now become permanent members of the body.

Body:

India's stakes in the SCO:

- Earlier the SCO was seen as a Chinese dominated body being run with the support of Russia. With India's addition, it will be seen as an inclusive organisation with considerably greater respectability, leverage, power and stature.
- With two of the three largest economies (in PPP terms) viz. India and China being members of this organisation, its leverage and weight is bound to increase with passage of time.
- The significance of the SCO cannot be underestimated because of the presence of large territorial and economic powers like Russia and China, as well as the geopolitical space that the grouping occupies. The geographical and strategic space which the SCO entails is of great importance for India.

Benefits from India's membership of the grouping:

India's full membership will help in achieving regional and global stability and prosperity. It will also strengthen India's position in Central Asia.

- **Cultural and civilisation links:** India enjoys millennia old cultural, economic and civilisation links with countries of Central Asia. India and the region were inextricably bound with each other from 3rd century BC to 15th century AD through the Silk Road. India's disconnect with Central Asia came with Partition and the loss of direct geographical links. Thus, it will now be able to leverage its profound, deep-rooted ties with the region.
- **Diplomatic impetus**: Frequent and regular contacts at the highest level between India and these countries during annual SCO Summits will help deliberate with each other on a regular basis. This will help to promote understanding and open up fresh vistas and avenues of cooperation.
- **Energy co-operation:** India being energy deficient country with increasing demands for energy, it is an assured market for the resource rich Central Asian countries and Russia. SCO membership could help advance talks on the construction of stalled pipelines like TAPI (and possibly IPI later) which is of considerable importance to India's natural gas needs.

- **Knowledge sharing**: India will be able to share its expertise in information technology, software, pharmaceuticals, agriculture etc to the mutual benefit and advantage of India and Central Asia. Greater contacts and exposure to each other are also likely to provide a fillip to tourism and travel between India and Central Asia.
- **Security:** The chronic presence and increasing challenges of terrorism, radicalism, and instability still pose a grave threat to the sovereignty and integrity not only of India, but also of countries in its broader neighbourhood. India's participation in the SCO will be helpful for fighting against these problems.
- **Check the over powering presence of China:** India's presence in SCO would also ensure that China does not dictate terms in Eurasia. This is also the concern of Russia which is in a state of a 'soft competition' with China in Central Asia.
- **Organisational forums:** India would also benefit from the Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS) based in Tashkent, which would help gain vital intelligence inputs on the movement of terror outfits, drug-trafficking, cyber security and Public information of the region.

Challenges:

- **Balance of powers**: Since China and Russia are co-founders of SCO and its dominant powers, India's ability to assert itself would be limited and it may also have to either dilute its growing partnership with the West or engage in a delicate balancing act.
- **BRI initiative**: Except India, all the other members of SCO have endorsed China's BRI initiative. In this regard, if in future the economic policies of SCO come to be associated with the BRI network of roads and transportation, then India would face a dilemma and even a policy setback
- **RATS:** India might face difficulties as the Indian understanding of terrorism is different from the other members of SCO. For SCO, terrorism coincides with regime destabilisation; whereas for India it is related to state sponsored cross border terrorism. SCO's targets are groups like East-Turkestan Islamic Movement (ETIM) and Al-Qaeda, whereas groups like Lashkar-e-Taiba, Jaiesh-e-Mohammad, Harkat-ul-Mujahideen, Afghan Taliban and Haqqani Network do not come under the ambit of the SCO anti-terror structure.
- **Relations with Pakistan:** SCO charter prohibits the raising of bilateral issues, a conflict situation involving Kashmir might compel Russia and China to interfere to prevent any detrimental impact on the SCO.

Conclusion:

India's membership of the SCO throws open many possibilities to achieve the huge potential of bilateral partnership. It creates a win-win situation for the organization, for Central Asia, for China, and for Russia, as well as for India. Members of SCO thus, have a huge potential to play a more substantive role in promoting peace, security, connectivity, economic development, trade, energy security, and investment within the region and beyond.

Best Answer: Aspirant123

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18.What is CPEC? Does it a pose a threat to India's interests? Examine.

Introduction:

Launched in 2015, China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is a series of roads, railways, pipelines, hydropower plants and other development projects, being built from between China and Pakistan. The $46 billion CPEC will connect China's largest province Xinjiang with Pakistan's Gwadar port in Balochistan. The so-called economic corridor between China-Pakistan is a flagship program of One Belt One Road.

Body:

CPEC possess multiple Sovereignty threats and security concerns to India, such as:

- China-Pakistan Economic Corridor violates the sovereignty and the territorial integrity of India. This corridor passes through Gilgit-Baltistan area of Kashmir which is an integral part of India but occupied by Pakistan. It has raised various security concerns for India.
- CPEC also somewhat legitimizes Pakistan's ownership over disputed PoK and it may lead to the internationalization of Kashmir Issue which India doesn't want.

-
  - o The high economic stakes in the project will push China to ally with Pakistan on the Kashmir dispute and will make China an indirect stakeholder in Kashmir conflict between India and Pakistan.
  - o China is State-of -Power country and they have the ability to influence Pakistan's policy and it might unofficially become 24th province of China which again will be an issue for India's security.
  - o Ever since the construction of the corridor is started, the Chinese military presence in the area is also embarked. This military personnel would be deployed around the projects built by Chinese companies. China can permanently position troops on Pakistan soil not too far from the Indian.
  - o Chinese naval ships would be deployed at Gwadar in cooperation with the navy of Pakistan for the safeguard of port and trade under this corridor. It would enable China to wield much more powerful influence in the Indian Ocean.

- China has plans to build a naval base in Gwadar port. The presence of Chinese warship in the area implies a security threat to India's western border of Gujarat and India's investment in Chabahar port.

- China's Maritime presence in Gwadar port which can be detrimental to India's energy and economic security, as more than two-thirds of India's petroleum imports pass through the area.

Conclusion:

Projects like CPEC must be based on the universally accepted and the other recognized international norms, transparency and equality, rule of law and must respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity. However, India needs to counter CPEC by various diplomatic, economic and strategic efforts.

Best Answer: suraj

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19.What role should Indian play in Afghanistan in the backdrop of the rapidly changing dynamics in this troubled region? Analyse.

Introduction:

Afghanistan has been mired in conflict for some 40 years. It has been almost 18 years since America and other NATO members invaded to kick out the Taliban in the wake of the September 11th attacks. The two sides have been negotiating directly for some time over the American troops withdrawal in exchange for a commitment from the Taliban not to harbour terrorists.

Body

Background:

- Taliban fighters, whom US-led forces spent billions of dollars trying to defeat, are now openly active in 70% of Afghanistan.
- Recent attacks claimed by Taliban and Islamic State group militants have killed scores in Kabul and elsewhere.
- IS is more active in Afghanistan than ever before, although it remains far less powerful than the Taliban.
- The prospect of a premature US withdrawal from Afghanistan is bad enough. Now Indian diplomacy must act fast to quell newly emergent threats to the country's fragile democracy.

Role of India:

- **Soft power:** Broadly speaking, New Delhi has pursued a "soft power" strategy toward Afghanistan, sticking to civilian rather than military matters.

Example: The Salma Dam power project in the Herat province, construction of the Afghan parliament building, helping in the expansion of the Afghan national television network, and several smaller projects in agriculture

- **Bilateral donor:** India has pledged some US$1.3 billion on various projects, emerging as the sixth largest bilateral donor to Afghanistan.
- **Policy:** India's Afghanistan policy has two major objectives: first, to curtail Islamabad's influence in Kabul and deny Pakistan's state and non-state agents leverage to plot against Indian interests, and second, to gain access to vast energy markets in Central Asia.
- **Vested interests:** India has been one of the staunchest supporters of a strong and "independent" government in Kabul since an Afghanistan that is indirectly controlled by Rawalpindi is detrimental to Indian strategic interests. New Delhi is working in close coordination with the government of Ashraf Ghani in almost all regional and international issues of concern.
- **Importance for afghan led government:** India has been opposed to any outside interference in talks with the Taliban, asserting that the peace process must be "Afghan-led, Afghan-owned and Afghan-controlled."

- **India–Pakistan:** This relationship continues to serve as a primary source of instability in the region, and, indirectly, also of instability in Afghanistan.
- **Neighbouring countries:** Pakistan–China and China–India relations are important considerations for Pakistan and India when they formulate their foreign policy strategies, including those related to their bilateral relations.
- **Constraints:** Due to geographical distance and absence of military footprint dictate that India cannot convincingly push for a complete exclusion of Pakistan from the Afghan peace process.
- **United Nations:** India's recent critical stance at the United Nations for its failure to sanction new Taliban leaders and their helpers in the neighbourhood may be ethically appropriate, but seems out of sync with emerging ground realities in Afghanistan.

Conclusion

The decision to abrogate the special status to Jammu and Kashmir came in the backdrop of a flurry of activities in Afghanistan. These developments have a direct bearing on India

Best Answer: SRK

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20.Keeping in mind, an aggressive and far more proactive China, there is an urgent need of enhanced and much deeper outreach towards Maldives, Sri Lanka and Bhutan. Elucidate.

Introduction:

India's relationship with China have gone through a tumultuous phase in the last few years. There have been disputes like China's opposition to India's entry in NSG, Support for discussion on Kashmir issue in UNSC recently among others.

Body:

Expansionist China is becoming more aggressive and proactive in its international affairs, to counter it, India needs to proactively engage in enhancing its relationship towards Maldives, Srilanka and Bhutan. The need to enhance with these three countries in particular is because:

With Srilanka:

- Chinese inroads in Sri lanka is seen to be threatening to India's security and safety.

- Sri lanka is considered to be important to Chinese "String of pearls" theory which is considered to be threatening India's security by presumably encircling India.
- Increasing Chinese role in Sri lanka and Indian ocean is seen to undermine India's role as the net security provider in the Indian ocean region.
- China has got lease of Hambantota port which could be used for military purpose in times to come.
- Increasing influence of China, will decrease Sri lanka's dependence on India, there by reducing India's bargaining power.

With Maldives:

- Strategic location of Maldives is very important for surveillance operations in the Indian Ocean region.
- Protect India's trade interests and security interest.
- To keep watch on global terror as country is closely linked to radical Islam. It has sent the highest number of foreign fighters to support terrorist groups in Syria and Iraq.
- It is also a member in China's Strong of pearl theory and ambitious Belt and Road Initiative, a development strategy which has met with a certain resistance by India.
- It has Free Trade Agreement with China. The archipelago nation is the only SAARC country, other than Pakistan, to have a free trade pact with China.
- China has also sent warships to visit the Maldives. If China, which has stepped up military pressure on India along their Himalayan frontier, turned one of the Maldivian islands into a naval base, it would effectively open a maritime front against India.

With Bhutan:

- Bhutan is a strategically important country for India due to its location, and both sides have been ramping up overall cooperation, including in areas of defence and security, and energy, over the past a few years.
- Bhutan's significance to India stems from its geographic location. Nestled in the Himalayas, it is sandwiched between India and China. Thus, it serves as a buffer between the two Asian giants. Bhutan's value as a buffer soared after China annexed Tibet in 1951.
- As the 2017 crisis in the Doklam region revealed, India will strongly oppose, even militarily, any Chinese attempt to assert control over mDoklam. Securing Bhutan's present borders especially its western border is clearly important for India.
- Doklam in the hands of a hostile power would heighten the vulnerability of India's Siliguri Corridor, a narrow strip of land that links India to its North-eastern states. So vital is Doklam to India's defence that India has a permanent and sizeable military contingent and an army hospital in Haa district, where Doklam is located.
- Bhutan is also very vital for India's energy security needs due to its hydroelectric potential.

Way forward:

- Neighbourhood first: India should in the first place resolve the differences with its small neighbors. Else it will only pave the way for China to exert growing influence in the region as it was seen in the case of Nepal during the economic blockade by India.
- Revival of SAARC should be stressed upon.
- Common platforms like SCO, of which both India and China are members, should be leveraged to iron out the differences and resolve issues.
- Infrastructure projects should be fast-tracked.
- India's overall approach towards its small neighbors should be that of big brother. It should not be assertive given the sensitivities involved.
- Internal balancing- Building up domestic military muscle by raising new forces, improving existing ones, or buying weapons.

- India is also cooperating with Australia, US and Japan to contain china's influence and also to sustain principle of free maritime trade.

Best Answer: None

21. In what ways will the abrogation of Article 370 affect India's relations with Pakistan? Examine.

Introduction:

Recently, the government of India has repealed Article 370 of the Constitution which used to grant special status to J&K and till now restricted Indian parliament to make any laws for the state and it can only preside over the subjects like Defence, External Affairs, and communication. Now J&K is divided into two Union Territories, one of Jammu and Kashmir with legislative assembly and another of Ladakh without legislative assembly.

Body:

Erstwhile State of Jammu and Kashmir is divided between Indian and Pakistani administered territories. The crucial border between them is known as the "Line of Control." So Pakistan has a keen interest in the affairs of state of Jammu and Kashmir. This is why the abrogation of Article 370 will affect India's relation with Pakistan.

The abrogations of Article 370 affect India's relations with Pakistan in the following ways:

- **Bilateral Relation:** Islamabad downgraded its diplomatic mission in Delhi and asked India to withdraw its envoy to Pakistan in retaliation. Although, ambassadors were not engaged in any serious political dialogue and just doing representational functional, so it will not affect much between two countries.
- **Trade:** Pakistan decided for suspension of bilateral trade to lodge its protest against New Delhi's move to revoke Jammu and Kashmir's special status. This won't affect India much as India and Pakistan have very minuscule bilateral trade. However, this will hurt Pakistan as their textiles industry imports 65% Cotton from India.
- **Cultural:** Pakistan has decided to ban all cultural exchanges with India, including all kinds of joint ventures between the entertainment industries of the two countries. As the Pakistan government has banned the screening of Indian films in the country's cinemas, this will affect the box office as Bollywood has a huge fan following in Pakistan.
- **Travel:** Countries have stopped functioning of Samjhauta express train. This will affect the divided Muslim and Sikh families in both countries. Islamabad also announced that its airspace would be partially closed to India, for a month. This will cost more to Indian airlines flying to the west. Pakistan has, however, kept the Kartarpur project alive.
- **Terrorism:** Pakistan threatened for more Pulwama like attacks. Pakistan will provoke Kashmiri people for anti- India sentiments and sponsor and radicalize them for stone pelting, militancy and terrorism. This will create a more volatile situation in the valley and is a threat to India's internal security.
- **Tension on Border and War:** Cross border shelling will increase on the border. Moreover, there is a threat of war between the two nuclear nations. Chances are less as Pakistan is going through an economic crisis right now.

Conclusion:

Pakistan is trying to internationalize the issue. Pakistan's narrative in this subject has very little substance. Both countries should go for a bilateral resolution of J&K issue of disputed territory peacefully under the Shimla Agreement of 1972. Domestically, India should also pump adequate funds in Jammu and Kashmir for developmental projects and win the confidence of the people to counter radicalization and militancy. India should also be very careful to avoid any Pulawama like attacks and be vigilant on borders.

Best Answer: None

22.What is Human Development Index (HDI). Evaluate India's overall performance with respect to the indicators constitutions the HDI.
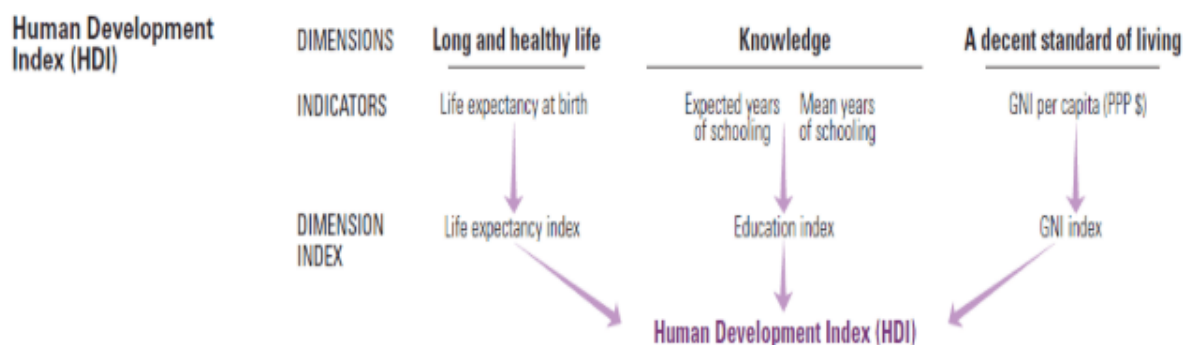
Introduction:

The Human Development Index emphasises that people and their capabilities should be the ultimate criteria for assessing the development of a country, not economic growth alone. It is published by UNDP and was created by Pakistani economist Mahbub ul Haq in 1990.

Body

The HDI is the composite measure of every country's attainment in three basic dimensions:

- Standard of living measured by the gross national income (GNI) per capita. **(SDG 8)**
- Health measured by the life expectancy at birth. (**SDG 3**)
- Education levels calculated by mean years of education among the adult population and the expected years of schooling for children. **(SDG 4)**

Performance of India

- As per the latest human development ranking released by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), India has climbed one spot to **130** out of 189 countries.
- The Inequality-Adjusted Human Development Index (IHDI) allows one to compare levels of inequality within countries, and the greater the inequality, the more a country's HDI falls.

- The value of India's Inequality-adjusted HDI (IHDI) falls to 0.468, a 26.8 per cent decrease, far worse than the global average decrease in the global HDI value due to inequality at 20 per cent.

India's statistics:-

- Life expectancy at birth – 68.8
- Mean year of schooling: 6.4 years
- GNI per capita: 6353 PPP $.

Health Outcomes

- IMR (Infant Mortality Rate) is 34.6 per thousand live births which are to be brought to 12 per 1000 by 2030.
- Mortality rate for Under 5 is 43 per 1000 with task of cutting it almost to its half by 2030 to 25.
- India remains to be the highest TB burden country according to WHO, with as many as 211 people per lakh suffering from either newly contacted or relapsed TB.
- India spends only 1.3% of its GDP on health expenditure

Education Achievement

- Total government expenditure on education is a paltry 4.6% of total GDP.
- Primary school dropout rate in India during 2007-2016 was 9.8%

National Income

- Total GDP of India in 2017 – 2.6 lakh crores $
- GDP per capita – 6,427 dollars

CHALLENGES IN INDIA

- Challenges such as violence against women, child marriage, and share of parliamentary seats for women are also evident in India, where despite considerable progress at the policy and legislative levels, women remain significantly less politically, economically and socially empowered than men.
- Fewer women's participation: For instance, women hold only **14.58 per cent of parliamentary seats**, and only 39 per cent of adult women have reached at least a secondary level of education as compared to 64 per cent males.
- Low Female labour participation – 27.2 per cent compared to 78.8 for men.
- Unequal distribution: According to the report, the unequal distribution of outcomes is visible not just between countries but also within each country. In India's case, the

inequality-adjusted HDI of 26.8 per cent is due to the stark inequality in access to education, health, and income.

Conclusion

India's Human Development Index (HDI) has increased tremendously from 0.427 in 1990 to 0.640 in 2018, but this is not the end. To develop further, India needs to focus on inequality and the pockets of deprivation that are dragging the HDI down and affects it adversely. Increasing the participation of women in labour force and climate resilience should be focused on is to ensure sustained HDI growth.

Best Answer: Neha

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23. The Delhi Government has started a happiness curriculum to supplement the regular curriculum. What are your views on this innovative step? Should it be replicated across the country? Comment.

Introduction:

To create a happy environment, in recent years, many countries like Bhutan, South Korea, UK etc have made happiness either a specific goal of their education and development policies or have included elements relating to happiness in their policy framework. In this backdrop, a new initiative by the Delhi Government that introduces the 'Happiness curriculum' in schools is an innovative and a welcome step.

Body:

Affirmative implications of the Happiness Curriculum:

- **Strengthen the inculcation of sound values**: This curriculum is based on human-centric education which includes meditation, value education and mental exercises and will be purely activity-based without formal exams, thus encouraging students towards value building.
- **Self-awareness and resilience**: The curriculum aims to stimulate self-awareness and a good mental health and character. This will go a long way in the child's performance in school and daily life. This will also contribute to a higher emotional quotient among the children.

- **Reduce anxiety, depression, and intolerance among students:** With an alarming increasing rate of suicides among school children – (Between 2014 and 2016, more than 26,000 students committed suicide, of which around 30 percent were due to exam failure) there is an urgent need to help students cope with the pressure of success and failure and take cognitive decisions. The happiness period is a big step in this direction.
- **Healthy childhood leads to healthy future**: A healthy and wholesome childhood, happy school life and a sound mindset goes a long way in creating a solid foundation for the youth of the country. This will invariably lead to a productive and strong growth of the young population ready to face the world and build a life.
- **Improved academic performance**: Research shows that a happy child performs better than his peers under pressure, and is able to accept both wins and losses with humility and sportively.
- **Increases interactive people skills**: Helps shy, introvert students shed their inhibitions and learn to be friendlier.

Need for the Happiness Curriculum across the country:

- As per the World Happiness Report, 2019, India ranked 140 out of 156 countries evaluated. The report calls for an environment in India which keeps people happy. It only reiterates the fact that India needs a well-being fused system of development for a better performance and education with a friendly touch is a much-needed reform in this regard.
- All over India, instances of suicide and succumbing to pressures of failures are on the rise. A uniform comprehensive happiness curriculum will ensure overall growth in the demographic dividend of the country.

- Feeling good about oneself and our place in the world–is the foundation on which great lives and great achievements are built. Adolescent mental health is a major factor that contributes to the youngsters' lifestyle and choices and a wellbeing induced education system is the most effective way to influence that.
- Failure to promote good mental health not only ruins lives, it costs the economy. Happiness curriculum will improve the deteriorating mental health and cut down the nation's mental health bill for years to come and also play a major role in the efficiency of the future economic contributors of India.

Concerns and a way forward:

- Efficient and conducive training to teachers must be given and the education models followed must be revised and evaluated regularly so that that innovative step does not die a mere experiment.
- Uniformity of the curriculum in all schools whether private or government-aided to ensure that all youngsters get the right idea of happiness and builds a strong cognitive ability.

- Make it a purely activity based, interesting session so as to encourage students to be active participants and not treat it as another school 'burden' that increases stress.

Conclusion:

School is the place where children inculcate an academic environment and also indulge in their all-round development, and this has a greater impact in learners' lives in the long run. Thus it is non-negotiable to create a happy environment from early childhood in all schools of India.

Best Answer:

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24.Discuss various schemes launched to promote tribal culture and entrepreneurship. How are they performing? Examine.

Introduction:

There are a total of 705 individual ethnic groups notifies as scheduled Tribes in the length and breadth of the country. As per 2011 census. The tribal population of the country is 10.43 crore, constituting 8.6% of the total population.

Body

Ministry of Tribal Affairs was set up in 1999 to uplift tribal communities of India which is extremely marginalised simply because of their cultural practises and habitation in faraway areas thereby getting geopolitically excluded.

Schemes to promote Tribal culture:

- **Aadi Mahotsav**
  - a celebration of the spirit of Tribal Culture, Craft, Cuisine and Commerce, was successfully conducted by the tribal ministry in Delhi. It has been organised in the memory of legendary tribal leader Birsa Munda.
  - The Festival showed exquisite craftsmanship of tribal artisans. This included beautiful sarees, dress materials, jewellery, bamboo & cane products, paintings and hundreds of other items.

- **Swadesh Darshan Scheme Tribal circuit**

- o Union Ministry of Tourism has inaugurated India's first tribal circuit project connecting 13 tourism sites in Chhattisgarh under Swadesh Darshan Scheme Tribal circuit project
- o Major components sanctioned under tribal circuit project in Chhattisgarh includes developing eco log huts, craft haats, souvenir shops, open amphitheatre, tribal interpretation centres, workshop centres, tourist amenities centres, viewpoints, nature trails, solar illuminations etc.
- o These components will improve the existing tourist facilities, enhance the overall tourist experience and help in getting more visitors which in return will increase promotion of tribal culture and job opportunities in the area.
- o Construction of **Museums** for Tribal Freedom Fighters.

- **Tribal Handicrafts**
  - o TRIFED has setup **TribesIndia** a chain of showrooms where several categories of handicrafts are being marketed like tribal textiles, tribal jewellery.
  - o TRIFED is also working on the capacity building of the tribes

Schemes for Promotion of tribal entrepreneurship

- **Van Dhan Scheme**
  - o The scheme aims at economic development of tribals involved in collection of Minor Food Produces (MFPs) by helping them in optimum utilization of natural resources and provides them with a sustainable livelihood.
  - o Under it, 10 Self Help Groups (SHGs) of 30 Tribal gatherers will be constituted.
  - o TRIFED– It is engaged in the marketing development of tribal products and provides marketing support to the products made by tribals through a network of retail outlets.
  - o Minor Forest Produce is the main source of livelihood of tribal in the country. Recently the government initiated the fixing of the MSP of the Minor Forest Produce and its range.

- Van Bandhu Kalyan Yojana -aimed at the social-economic empowerment of the tribal
  - o It aims at the overall development of tribal people with an outcome-base approach by bringing the tribal population of the country at par with other social groups and include them in overall progress of the nation.

- **Tribal Entrepreneurship Summit**
  - o India's first Tribal Entrepreneurship Summit was organised at Dantewada in Bastar region of Chhattisgarh. The summit is part of 8th Global Entrepreneurship Summit being held in India. The event was organized by National Institute of Transforming India (NITI) Aayog in partnership with Government of USA.
  - o It was organised to inspire, nurture and promote the spirit of entrepreneurship in tribal youth. It aims to ensure another step towards tribal-centric sustainable and inclusive development.

- **Stand-Up India**
  - Launched in 2015, Stand-Up India seeks to leverage institutional credit for the benefit of women entrepreneurs, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.
  - At least one women and one individual from the SC or ST communities are granted loans between Rs.1 million to Rs.10 million to set up greenfield enterprises in manufacturing, services or the trading sector.

Performance of schemes

- Under **Tribal Sub Plan**, 37 central government ministries and departments are required to earmark 2-20% of their total budget outlay for tribal welfare. The ministries identify targeted schemes and then earmark the funds scheme-wise to different states.
- However, 16 of the 37 ministries have spent less than half the amount to date.
- The Centre's bid to spend an unprecedented allocation of over Rs 39,000 crore for tribal welfare this fiscal hasn't been going well with almost half of the ministries unable to spend even 50% of the allocations

There are several **discrepancies** in the implementation of the TSP, including:

- Non-adoption of specific norms for release of funds,
- Weak programme management,
- A deficient monitoring system,
- Non-implementation of information programmes.

Minimum Support Price for Minor Forest Produce:

- The Ministry of Tribal Affairs (MoTA) has added nine minor forest produce (MFP) items to its minimum support price (MSP) for MFP scheme thereby taking the total number of MFPs covered under the list to 49
- Extension of the scheme from schedule V states to all over the country.

Skill Development:

An amount of Rs. 165.00 Crore has been released to various states under Special Central Assistance to Tribal Sub-Scheme and Grants for skill development of tribal youth.

Recommendations

- **Financial management –** strict adherence to earmarking of funds into a separate head at every level should be made mandatory for release of funds.
- Non-lapsable pool for TSP fund
- **Central nodal unit** for an overview which will facilitate better coordination and efficient implementation of TSP through an online monitoring system.

- **Involvement of the local community** in the planning process inputs/ suggestions of the local tribal community should be sought before finalising the plan for implementation of any programme under TSP.

Conclusion

As more number of tribes are being assimilated into the mainstream, there is an urgent need for effective implementation of these schemes to safeguard tribal culture and uplift their lives socially and economically.

Best Answer: None

25.How have minority centric welfare measures performed in India? Do a critical assessment.

Introduction:

The Indian Constitution is committed both to the idea of equality and to the preservation, protection and assurance of rights of minorities. Five religious communities such as Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists and Zoroastrians (Parsis) as minority communities under Section 2(c) of the National Commission for Minorities Act, 1992.

Body

Measures for development of minorities:

- **12th five year plan:** Aims at Faster, Sustainable and More Inclusive Growth, all efforts should be made to apply it to the Minority Sector too.
- **Steering committee:** Steering Committee was constituted under the Chairpersonship of Dr. Syeda Hameed, Member, and Planning Commission, which deliberated upon and reviewed the schemes of minorities.
- **"Empowerment of the Minorities":** The Planning Commission constituted a Working Group on "Empowerment of the Minorities".
- **Key parameters:** (I) Educational Empowerment, (II) Area Development (III) Economic Empowerment and institutional strengthening (IV) social empowerment
- **Decent finance allocation:** Minority Affairs Ministry has been allocated Rs 4,700 crore in the 2019-20 budget, the same as the previous fiscal.
- **Government initiatives:** The Ministry of Minority Affairs took a number of initiatives in the year 2018 for the welfare of the minorities in the country. These, among others, include Skill Development, Education, Haj, Waqf, Dargah Ajmer, Pradhanmantri Jan Vikas Karykram (earlier Multi Sectoral Development Programme), Secularism & Empowerment, Swachhta and Mushairas on the teachings of Mahatma Gandhi.

Minority centric welfare schemes:

- **More initiatives every year**: Increase the scale of key interventions by greater financial outlays across the board for brings a larger number of schemes within the scope.
- **Broader distribution:** Re-vamp the design, expand the scope and strengthen implementation structures of key initiatives led to efficient implementation.
- **Education reaching all villages**: "Free Coaching and Allied Scheme for the candidates and students belonging to minority communities" all over the country including North Eastern States.
- **Pilot project for minority**: Cyber Gram for digital literacy in a minority dominated village Chandauli in Alwar district of Rajasthan.
- **Nai Udaan** – Support for students clearing Preliminary Examination conducted by UPSC, SSC, State Public Service Commissions, etc.
- **Jiyo Parsi –** Scheme for containing population decline of Parsis.
- **Nai Roshni** – Scheme for leadership development of minority women.
- **Seekho Aur Kamao –** Skill development initiative for minorities.
- **Nai Manzil** – Scheme for formal school education & skilling of school dropouts.
- **USTTAD** – Upgrading the Skills and Training in Traditional Arts/Crafts for Development.
- **Hamari Dharohar** – Scheme to preserve rich heritage of minority Communities under the   overall concept of Indian Culture.

Lag in development of minorities:

- **Declining enrolments:** 58 per cent of the illiterates were concentrated in the states of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and West Bengal, which together accounted for 46 per cent of the Muslim population. Declining enrolments at successively higher levels of education remains an area of concern for all religious communities.
- **Ghost beneficiaries:** There are many people who are misusing with fake identities and beneficiaries are in dearth
- **Health care:** It is found that Muslims, among all other religious communities, suffer most in terms of healthcare, including access to medicine, maternal healthcare and sanitation.
- **Role of women:** role of women is still the same due to illiteracy, total fertilization rate, economic background, domestic violence etc

Conclusion

Inter-ethnic tensions, divisions and exclusion that remain unaddressed can easily become a source of instability and conflict. Dealing efficiently with minority-majority relations in the aftermath of ethnic conflict is central to achieving a durable peace

Best Answer: SRK

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26.Discuss various farmer centric welfare measures taken by the government. What are the core areas of focus in these schemes? Examine.

Introduction:

India is an agrarian county with more than 70% of its rural population dependent on agriculture. Agriculture contributes 17% to the GDP and employees around 50% populations.

Body:

Government has taken many steps for the welfare of farmers such as,

- **PM-KISAN:** To provide income support of Rs.6000/- per year to all landholding eligible farmers to supplement the financial needs of the farmers in procuring various inputs.
- **Soil health card:** Soil Health Cards carry crop-specific recommendations for nutrients and fertilizers to help farmers improve their productivity.
- **Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana**: Micro-irrigation is in place to ensure 'more crop per drop' and with the motto of 'Har Khet Ko Paani' for providing end-to-end solutions in irrigation supply chain for ensuring that every farm gets water.
- **Solar Subsidies:** To encourage farmers to install solar pumps for irrigation and reduce input cost.
- **Interest subvention scheme:** Short-term crop loans up to 3 lakh with low-interest rate made available to address the issue of farm credit and save farmers from being exploited in the hands of informal credit sources such as moneylenders.
- **Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana:** It is the biggest risk cover insurance and safety net provided by the government to farmers at minimal premiums rates.
- **Minimum Support Price:** MSP announcement to support the farmer to get the right price for their produce.
- **National Agriculture Market scheme**: Also known as e-NAM has integrated markets across states. It has cut down the middlemen in agriculture trading and facilitates online trade to give more choice of buyers to farmers and discover the better price of the produced.
- **Operation Greens:** To address the price volatility of perishable items like tomato, potato and onion, the government provided better logistics and cold storage supply chain.
- **Rashtriya Gokul Mission:** To conserve and develop indigenous bovine breed for higher productivity.

- **Fertilizer:** The government has implemented 100% Neem coating of Urea; it has resulted in improving the soil quality and also prevented the diversion of fertilizers to other purposes. The government also provides fertilizer subsidy to farmers to reduce input cost.
- **Kisan service centre:** To provide information related to better farming practices.
- **Loan waivers:** In the case of crop failure, the government provides loan waivers to farmers.

Challenges:

- Only big farmers reap the benefit of schemes and small farmers are excluded.
- Corruption and leakages don't let the benefit reach the farmers.
- Delay in payments of MSP is an issue.
- Lack of irrigational facilities as many farmers in the country still do not have access to water.

Way Forward:

The government should provide a boost to the ailing agriculture sector and look beyond short-term measures such as loan waivers and cash transfers.

- The Government should promote exports, as a lot of wastage is reported in the sector due to lack of domestic demand.
- The government should promote agricultural start-ups in rural areas.
- Invest more in Agri-research to come up with better technology for farmers.
- Enhance the scope of private investment in food processing and agri-based start-ups.

Conclusion:

Enabling the farmer to capture maximum value on every grain, every drop and every ounce of his produce is a must for Doubling Farmers income by 2022 as recommended by Ashok Dalwai committee.

Best Answer: Ritik

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27.What measures have been taken by the governments to protect and promote the rights and interests of the girl child? How are they performed? Discuss.

Introduction:

A low child sex ratio (919), incidences of child marriage and child pregnancy, malnutrition and denial of education beyond primary show the dismal state of girl child in India.

Body

Measures for welfare of girl child:

- **Improving sex ratio**– Beti Padhao, Beti Bachao Scheme, Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (PCPNDT) Act are meant to prevent sex selective abortions and improve sex ratio in the country.
- **Female education**– Sukanya Samridhi Yojana creates a fund for the future education of the girl child and Udan for higher education of girl child.
- **Child Marriage**– Prohibition of Child marriage Act 2006 has been enacted to prevent marriage of girls below 18 years of age.
- **Health and nutrition**– Supplying iron and folic acid tablets, Kishori Shakti Yojana, POSHAN abhiyan, Mid day meal scheme have been undertaken to provide sufficient nutrition to girl child.
- **Hygiene**– Ujjwala sanitary napkin at minimal cost under Suvidha scheme will support menstrual hygienic among girls.
- **Child labour**– The Child Labour(Prohibition and Regulation) Amendment Act, 2016 has been enacted to make sure girls are not indulged in chil labour and instead get education.
- **Sexual abuse**– Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012 provides strict punitive action in case of sexual abuse against the child.
- **Human trafficking**– Ujjawala scheme to prevent, rescue and rehabilitate trafficked girl.

Performance of the above mentioned measures:

Positive

- Increase in child sex ratio in Haryana (913 in 2018 from 834 in Census 2011) which used to have the lowest sex ratio in the country.
- Increasing usage of sanitary pads among girls
- Improvement in health and nutrition, and reduction in anemia.
- Increased attendance and decreased drop out rates.
- Reduction in child marriages

Negative

- Sex ratio is still very low compared to developed countries and there exists a huge disparity among northern and southern states.

- Girls are still denied higher education due to burden to support family or patriarchal mindset (57% girls drop out by Class XI).
- Child labour is still prevalent especially as domestic labours, which do not come under formal employment and hence difficult to monitor.

Conclusion

The schemes have had mixed results and to achieve the real objective and SDG 5 robust structural and institutional mechanisms must be created to ensure proper implementation of these schemes in letter and spirit.

Best Answer: Jean grey

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28. Last mile delivery of government services to the intended beneficiary has been a key design priority of various government schemes. Discuss various measures that have been taken in this direction.

Introduction:

Government schemes aim at welfare of people via distribution of benefits. However, most times the benefits do not reach the intended beneficiaries rendering the schemes ineffective.

Body

Reasons for lack of last-mile delivery:

- **Exclusion error**– Eligible beneficiaries are excluded from benefits due to infrastructural issues, lack of awareness on part of people, lack of verifiable documents etc.
- **Access issue**– Remote areas, lack of access points, unawareness of people etc. act as impediments in effective last mile delivery.
- **Leakages**– Often the benefits are diverted towards other sectors or profits by middleman, for example case of urea fertilizer which was diverted to industries and across border due to its cheap price owing to huge subsidy.
- **Migration**– As the schemes are implemented at state level, migration of poor denies them benefits of scheme in another state.

Last mile delivery has been the key design priority because lack of it causes:

- Further impoverishment of poor
- Diversion of taxpayers money
- Drain on public exchequer
- Reduction in social economic indicators

Measures taken to ensure last mile delivery:

- **PM Jan Dhan Yojana**– Providing zero balance bank accounts to unbanked population has ensured their connectivity with the formal system.
- **JAM trinity**– Jan Dhan, Aadhar and Mobile makes verification of beneficiary and giving information about benefits easier.
- **Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT)**– Direct transfer of subsidy to the bank accounts prevents its leakage through middlemen, eg. LPG Pahal scheme.
- **Point of Sale terminal (PoS)**– To prevent leakages of ration and ensure its distribution to the intended beneficiaries only and to give push to 'One nation-One ration card' scheme.
- **Mid Day Meal scheme**– That ensures distribution of food and nutrition to children as well access to education.
- **Asha workers**– A large network of asha workers that is helping strengthen the healthcare for rural poor women through institutional deliveries and nutritional intake.
- **Promoting Self Help Groups (SHG)**– There has been increased last mile delivery of credit services through SHGs by deploying its members as Banking Correspondents, as in case of Deendayal Antodaya Yojana.
- **Door step delivery**– Delhi Government has launched a scheme for doorstep delivery of essential government services by mobile sahayaks at a minimal fee.

Conclusion

In current times, the last mile delivery of services is being taken up in a vigorous manner through tools like Sevottam Model, Social Audit etc. Need is to further strengthen the existing measures to ensure a smooth delivery of benefits and improve governance in the country.

Best Answer: Iron man

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29.What are the behavioural constraints that limit the performance of various government schemes? Analyse.

Introduction:

Behavioural economics points out a new set of constraints on behaviour that can help to sharpen public policy making tools – interventions based on this concept might be able to help to balance out potential forms of behavioural market and political failure. It is responsibility of policy makers to incorporate behavioural constraints into their frameworks for policy evaluation.

Body

Behavioural constraints that limit the performance of government schemes:

- **Lack of awareness**: Government is not fully aware of ground reality and they don't have proper mechanism to reach the beneficiaries. And public are also not aware of the details of the schemes.
- **Lack of communication:** There are number of schemes introducing every month. Lack of advertisements, miscommunication among the public, misleading middleman will lead to ineffective implementation.
- **Lax attitude of public**: though government makes various schemes and initiatives with great vision. It is public interests to make use of those initiatives. Lax attitude, prejudice, high expectation leads to poor execution.
- **Corruption:** To enrol in certain schemes documents are mandatory. Various departments delay the documents and demand bribe. This results in waste of money and time.
- **Caste and gender discrimination:** In rural women are given less importance due to lack of knowledge. And caste discrimination still prevails helping only certain sectors.
- **Target audience**: New schemes to fund care for old age and childcare need to accommodate family attitudes that today constrain the reform of child benefit and caring schemes.
- **Impractical target**: Huge money, huge resources, and impractical targets shows failure of policy making and results in trust deficit in future government initiatives
- **Digital divide**: 70 per cent of over one billion Indians lives in rural areas, and only about 400 million have Internet access.
- **Idle government RFPs**: Many Request For Proposals (RFPs) issued by the government are not being picked up by competent private sector organisations since they are not commercially viable. Example: Biggest challenge faced by Digital India programme is the slow/delayed infrastructure development. Spectrum availability in Indian metros is about a tenth of the same in cities in developed countries.

Measures:

- **Coordination**: Better coordination among private entities, community, civil society, NGOs and government in designing a public policy in order to improve the transparency, quality and effectiveness of a policy or scheme.

- **Evaluation and feedback mechanism:** Can get feedback from time to time from public and errors can be minimized.
- **Make use of technology:** Grievance redressal mechanism can be made using apps in mobiles for quicker solutions
- **Nudge theory concept:** The concept is a relatively subtle policy shift that encourages people to make decisions that are in their broad self-interest. It's not about penalising people financially if they don't act in certain way. It's about making it easier for them to make a certain decision

Conclusion

The Economic Survey has advocated use of the behavioural economics concept of 'nudge' to encourage desirable social and economic change in the country. The Survey recommends that the proposal to set up a behavioural economics unit in the NITIAayog must be immediately activated.

Best Answer: Ravi

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30.The Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana has proved to be a boon for the poor women in India. Discuss. What are the indirect yet far reaching benefits of this scheme? Examine.

Introduction:

The Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY) was launched in May 2016 with the objective of providing free LPG connections to 50 million (subsequently 8 Crores) women belonging to below poverty line (BPL) households over a period of three years. LPG distributors, local NGOs, and self-help groups were involved to make it an inclusive social movement.

Body:

It has impacted the lives of poor women in India for the better through numerous ways:

- **Health**: Research showed that people using solid biomass frequently suffer from headaches, nausea, chronic bronchitis and many skin diseases. Indoor air pollution and the acute respiratory illnesses caused by it were observed in most rural women. Ujjwala has empowered women and protected them and their families through the use of clean burning fuel by helping prevent a significant number of acute respiratory illnesses and

other ailments. PMUY implementation has been appreciated by the World Health Organization (WHO) as a decisive intervention to check the indoor health pollution being faced by the women of the country.

- **Safety**: Women going to the forests for collecting firewood are also often exposed to health and safety issues, even sexual harassment at times. This is considerably decreased as a result of the LPG connections.
- **Economic empowerment**: Release of LPG connection under this Scheme shall be in the name of the women belonging to the BPL family enabling the subsidy provision in the women's account. Also, using LPG saves time for women as they do not have to collect solid fuel and then use it for cooking, with this cooking time can be effectively used in other economic activities. Women in many villages formed self-help groups to indulge in community economic activities in their free time.

Indirect benefits of the PMUY:

- **Environment:** There is a definite positive impact on forest cover and the environment from stopping the use of firewood.
- **Youth employment**: It will also provide employment for rural youth in the supply chain of cooking gas. Employment in the logistics and maintenance services are an additional benefit.
- **Climate and air pollution measures**: Significantly helps in control of particulate matter and indoor air pollution, giving way to a clean energy cooking process.
- **Female financial empowerment**: To get an LPG gas connection under Ujjwala scheme, it is compulsory to have a bank account in the name of a female member of a family. Many Jan Dhan accounts were opened for women. Government statistics from January 2018 show that of 30.97 crores accounts opened under Jan Dhan scheme, 16.37 crores (roughly 50 percent) were opened in the name of women resulting in financial inclusion and betterment of women's economic status.
- **Development of children**: Women can now engage in socialisation of children and take care of their nutrition and education, thus building a robust future.

- **Recognition from International Agencies**: Developed countries and International agencies like WHO and IEA have hailed the scheme as clean, convenient and energy-efficient source provision and also serving as an inspiration for developing countries.

However, there have been some issues concerning the scheme:

- **Issue of refill and affordability**: refilling of LPG gas connections saw a fall in refill from 35000 in 2016-17 to 13000 in 2018. Also, several complaints of affordability was raised as a reluctance of adoption was shown.

- **Behavioural Limitations**: It requires behavioural changes as it is difficult to give up on age old practices of using traditional chulhas with a lack of awareness among people regarding benefits of use of LPG gases.
- **Inactive and corrupt uses**: Many inactive accounts were identified, with some accounts bearing false beneficiaries using LPG for commercial and profitable purposes.
- **Economic impact**: To meet the requirements, LPG imports may cost the exchequer significantly.

Way forward:

- **Encourage behavioural campaigns**: 'Give it up' campaign, LPG Panchayat etc have been remarkable in bringing in behavioural changes. Every LPG panchayat is expected to share the experience of early local adopters of clean fuel, an exercise on comparing the costs of alternative biomass fuels, safety demonstration and feedback on services.
- **Regulate DBT and beneficiary identification:** Target beneficiary expansion and identification must be carried out carefully to eliminate fake accounts and corrupt use of the scheme.

Conclusion:

According to the official PMUY website, by January 2019, 64 million LPG connections have been provided under the Ujjwala scheme, resulting in it being considered one of the most successful and effective social sector programmes in India. Thus effective benefits should be realised by addressing all the loopholes and shortcomings of the implementation.

Best Answer: None

31.What is your assessment of the Pradhan Mantri jan Arogya Yojana? Has it been able to bring in positive transposition in people's lives? Comment.

Introduction:

Launched in 2018, Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY), under Ayushman Bharat umbrella is world largest healthcare program. The scheme extends access to hospital care for 10.74 Crore beneficiary families and about 50 crore Indian citizens. It is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW).

Body:

Highlights of the Scheme

- The scheme guarantees eligible families are covered for inpatient expenses of up to Rs 5 lakh per year in any government or empanelled private hospitals all over India.

- It addresses concerns of expenditure by vulnerable families for secondary and tertiary care. The extension of comprehensive primary health care is given under Health and wellness centres.
- An autonomous and empowered National Health Agency (NHA) has been established with corresponding state-level health agencies (SHAs).
- The benefit cover under it also includes pre and post-hospitalization expenses.
- Unlike private insurance schemes, PMJAY does not exclude a person on account of pre-existing illnesses.
- One unique feature of the PMJAY is its national portability once fully operational.

Assessment of the Scheme:

- PM-JAY has dramatically changed the picture of the health sector and directly benefit poor people.

- Increased benefit cover to nearly 40% of the population, especially the poorest & the vulnerable.

- The poor and vulnerable can now avail benefits in both public and empanelled private facilities. It ensures all people can access quality health services when and where they need them, without suffering financial hardship.

- It provides cashless and paperless access to services for the beneficiary at the point of service.

- It guarantees quality, affordability and accountability in the health system.
- It has rationalized the cost of care in the private sector.

But still there exist some Concerns and Challenges with PMJAY:

- PM-JAY focuses on secondary and tertiary care, taking away the attention from primary care and public health-related investments.
- Massive shortages in the supply of services (human resources, hospitals and diagnostic centres in the private/public sector). So PMJAY will raise the demand without raising supply.
- The current package prices are too low to encourage private-sector hospitals to fully participate in the scheme.
- Unfair practices by doctors and officials at every level.

- Hospital insurance addresses only a small amount of out-of-pocket expenditures
- Still, millions of people across India are pushed into poverty because of out-of-pocket spending on health care.

- PMJAY excludes the 500 million people or so of the middle-class segment.

Way Forward:

- Raise the percentage of GDP allocated to health from 1.2% today to 2.5% by 2022.
- Government hospitals need infrastructure and machinery up-gradation, which can be done by the earnings of public hospitals under PMJAY.
- Ensuring adaptive price setting, third-party monitoring, strict regulation, and quality improvements in public sector hospitals.
- PMJAY will need a gamut of skilled manpower as facilitators and administrative staffs at various levels.
- Universal health coverage (UHC) will require an insurance program for the middle class also.
- Need to strengthen the country's primary care services.
- A larger share of India's public health expenditure to be allocated to preventive care.

Best Answer: Redeemer911

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32. Discuss the features, significance and performance of Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi.

Introduction:

Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi a scheme announced in the interim budget, under which vulnerable landholding farmer families, having cultivable land up to 2 hectares, will be provided with direct income support of Rs. 6000 per year.

Body

Recently the scope of the scheme has been expanded to cover all farmers in the country irrespective of the size of their landholdings. The revised scheme is expected to cover around 2 crores more farmers and increase total coverage of PM-KISAN to around 14.5 crore beneficiaries. It also costs Central Government around Rs. 87,000 crores for the year 2019-2020.

Features of PM KISAN Scheme:

- PM KISAN is a Central Sector scheme with 100% funding from Government of India

- Under the scheme income support of Rs.6000/- per year in three equal instalments will be provided to small and marginal farmer families having combined land holding/ownership of up to 2 hectares
- Definition of the family for the scheme is husband, wife and minor children.
- State Government and UT Administration will identify the farmer families which are eligible for support as per scheme guidelines.
- The fund will be directly transferred to the bank accounts of the beneficiaries.

Significance of PM KISAN Scheme

- It provides support to small and marginal farmers who are largely involved in subsistence farming and struggles to invest in agriculture inputs or technology,
- It will boost the rural consumption and positive for agriculture and allied sectors.
- **Poverty reduction**: Cash transfer programmes are an important tool of social protection and poverty reduction. They have an immediate impact on reducing hunger and rural poverty.
- **Better use**: This can increase productive investment, increase access to markets and stimulate local economies. Income support can be used to make a repayment or at least activate a bank account which can then receive a loan.
-
- **Rural development:** It can serve as an important complement to a broader rural development agenda, including a pro-poor growth strategy focusing on agriculture.

Similar programmes by states:

- **Bhavantar Bhugtan Yojana** in Madhya Pradesh was sought to provide relief to farmers by providing the differential between MSPs and market prices.
- The **Rythu Bandhu scheme** of the Telangana government provides ₹5,000 per acre for every season to all the farmers of the state.
- **Krushak Assistance for Livelihood and Income Augmentation (KALIA)** of Odisha is more complicated in design and implementation. It commits to give Rs 5,000 per SMF, twice a year, that is Rs 10,000 a year.

Performance of PM KISAN Scheme

- About 60 per cent eligible farmers are deprived of the PM Kisan Samman Nidhi benefits as the States have not added them to the list of beneficiaries.
- Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh and Gujarat are the top States which have registered the maximum number of beneficiaries while West Bengal has not joined the scheme yet.
- About 79 per cent of the current beneficiaries have received the first instalment, while 59 per cent have received the second instalment.

- Payment has been stopped in a few circumstances as there were discrepancies in their bank account details.

The Need of the hour is to improve infrastructure in agriculture which would help farmers in getting a competitive price for their produce and access to markets. Government must focus on three things: crop insurance, better irrigation and subsidised seed and fertilisers.

Conclusion

PM-KISAN is an ambitious scheme that has the potential to deliver significant welfare outcomes. However, the current top-down, rushed approach of the government ignores governance constraints and therefore an alternative bottom-up strategy and well-planned implementation mechanism would allow weaknesses to be identified and rectified at the local level.

Best Answer: Ravi

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33. Should Delhi be granted full statehood? Share your views.

Introduction:

Article 239AA and article 239AB provided special status to the National Capital Territory(NCT) with a legislative assembly and its own democratically elected government via the 69th Amendment Act of the constitution. In the recent years there have been considerations raised politically over Delhi's statehood.

Current status of Delhi: According to the act, Delhi can make laws on all matters of state and concurrent subjects except public order, police and land.

Body:

Benefits of according statehood:

- Smooth functioning: Better coordination and quicker decision making and interconnectedness on the political and bureaucratic fronts.

- Better administration of increasing population of Delhi.
- Accountability: Promote good governance and reduce shortcomings on delivery of services by government.
- Strengthens the democracy and prevents confusion and multiplicity of authorities on specific domains and prevents repetitive decision making.
- Important domains like law and order, police, etc. are outside the purview of state government making it difficult to deal with matters like riots, etc.

Arguments against statehood:

- Capital of a country: Renders it as a capital for everyone and not as a territory as a single state.
- Genuineness of demand: Seems more like a political interest than an administrative concern.
- Security Issues: As it's an important centre hosting the Parliament, various central agencies, Supreme Court, Diplomatic enclave, etc. the risk of security breach is high when not under the responsibility of the Centre.
- Financial and administrative viability: Coordination between policies and implementation will be disrupted.

Conclusion:

Partial Statehood by the 69th Amendment Act hasn't totally failed in respect of governance and welfare of Delhi and its citizens. However, there can be well defined division of powers between Centre and the Delhi government and an effective participation of local government as well in the administration, keeping in mind the strategic and national importance of India.

Best Answer: Upsc aspirant

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34. Has the judiciary been adventuring into the executive domain of late? What can be its implications? Analyse with the help f suitable examples.

Introduction:

The constitution of India has provided for separation of powers between institutions of the state- executive, legislature and judiciary to ensure checks and balances which are essential

in a democracy. But off late the judiciary has been criticized by executive, legislature and civil societies alike about interference in executive domains.

Implications:

Judiciary has been adventuring into executive domains off late and following are its implications:

Positive implications:

1. Safeguards the rights and liberty of citizens and ensures welfare of the same.
   o River Ganga pollution curtailment and mitigation: The SC took a tough stand on the delay in taking steps to prevent pollution from industries and failure in an effective vision implementation of cleaning of River Ganga. This resulted in creating a time line and a target based action with 118 selected towns on bank or River Ganga to achieve total sanitation including waste water treatment and solid waste management. Effective limits were implemented on industrial clusters to ensure abatement of pollution.
2. Protection of Fundamental Human rights guaranteed under article 21 of the constitution:
   o Plight of under trial prisoners and Prison reforms: Concerned that almost 67% prisoners in overcrowded jails across India are under trials, the SC sought early conclusion and reformative steps stating that prisoners also have human rights. NALSA was asked to coordinate with state authorities and Home Ministry to establish under-trial Review Committee comprising of District Judge, District Magistrate and Superintendent of Police in all districts.
   o Delhi pollution prevention and abatement: Judiciary was instrumental in pushing the government to develop and adopt various policies and programmes for combating air pollution. It also banned sale of older Diesel cars and also cars above 2000cc for certain period.
3. For protection of Law and order and safety of women:
   o Ban on cooling stickers on cars: The Supreme Court has ordered a complete ban on use of tinted plastic films irrespective of the degree of visibility on windscreens and other glass panels of vehicles throughout the country. Vehicles with tinted glasses helped criminals escape after committing heinous crimes such as sexual assault against women, robberies, kidnapping etc.
4. Uniformity in policy creation on certain spheres. Also provides impetus for accountable and responsible administration.
   o Likewise, the SC has intervened in many issues to serve the larger interest of society across the country. like cases of fighting diseases like Dengue, issues of policies of Health, drinking water, etc. stopping of polluting industries of Agra, beautification of Taj Mahal, etc.

Negative implementation:

1. Ignorance of technical and actual compatibility of implementation and decision taken.
   o Judiciary mandate on speedy implementation of interlinking of river projects: There are certain procedures for taking up projects like feasibility reports, EIA, etc. which are violated due to the expedition. Technical feasibility and expertise were overlooked as a result of this intervention.
2. Irreversible judgments by Judiciary unless reviewed often leads to an ineffective progress in undesired projects.
   o The SC, ruling on a PIL about road safety, banned the sale of liquor within 500m of any NH and SH: Data compiled by NCRB showed that in road accidents in 2014, over speeding and reckless driving accounted of nearly 90% of it, while drunk driving accounted to 2.5%, hence rendering it as an unfeasible decision.
3. Arbitrary decisions made by judiciary affects growth and development of economy:
   o Ban on Liquor on NH resulted in collateral damage for government, tourism and livelihood as there was massive loss of revenue because almost one half to two third of retail outlets, bars, etc. are located within 500 meters of NH and SH. Employment and livelihoods are bound to be a casualty as a multiplier effect.
4. Leads to indolence, apathy and inertia on part of executive which is not a healthy trend in democracy.

Conclusion:

There have been numerous instances where the SC has justified its inteference and enhanced the growth of judicial review. However, in the interest of democratic governance, all the 3 organs of the state should discharge their obligations freely and independently, entrusted with intervention only where required in the larger interest of the citizens of India.

Best Answer: harsh

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35.Has the recently concluded general elections strengthened the conviction that presidential form of government would be a better option for India? Critically comment.

Introduction

India opted for parliamentary form of government based on Westminster model where executive is directly responsible to legislature whereas in presidential system election is more about national leader elected on the basis of his/her charisma with limited accountability.

Body

Elections in India are being fought in a style of presidential form due to hero worship, where Charisma matters more than manifestos or ideologies of parties. It can be seen in case of recent elections and in many previous elections too, where leaders like Indira Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru won elections around their charisma.

Suitability of Presidential form for India:

- Stable government- The president will be elected by the people and will be voted out by them. He will not have to appease unreasonable allies and indulge in compromises all the time.
- Increased efficiency of legislature- The legislature will be free to do its work, that is to pass laws, instead of devising methods to criticize the government. It will truly engage the electorate with the democratic process.
- Promotion of merit- The president will be fully in charge of the executive. He will be able to attract the best and brightest to his cabinet, irrespective of their political affiliations.
- Internal democracy- It will force political parties to be more democratic and robust. All political parties will have to choose their best candidates, as there will be a direct head-to-head contest.
- Clear choice- The parliamentary system has distorted the voting preferences of an electorate that knows which individuals it wants but not necessarily which parties or policies.
- Tough and unpopular decisions- A system of directly elected chief executives at all levels, panchayat chiefs, town mayors, Chief Ministers (or Governors) and a national President, elected for a fixed term of office with clearly defined authority would permit India to deal more efficiently with its critical economic and social challenges.
- Consensus building- The President will have to win the support of people of varied groups, interests, and minorities and would have to work with Parliament to get his budget through or to pass specific Bills.

Issues with adopting the Presidential system in India:

- Authoritarianism- The president can assume dictatorial powers
- No accountability- The executive is not responsible to the directly elected legislature
- Conflicts- If the president belongs to one party and the legislature is controlled by another party, it can lead to conflict and paralysis.

- Ignorance of interests of minorities- In a diverse country like India, it can lead to a situation where the views of an individual can override the interests of different segments.
- Lack of autonomy- Bringing 'outside' talent in a presidential system without people being democratically elected would deter people from giving independent advice to the chief executive because they owe their appointment to him/her.

Conclusion

In India context given the vast number of parties and maturing stage of democracy it is preferable to continue with Parliamentary form due to its stability and other advantages. Also, as per the recommendations of **Swaran Singh committee**, India need not replace the current system. However, India can explore option of having direct election of Chief ministers at state level to experiment with Presidential form of government.

Best Answer:Aspirant123

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36.The existing number of ministries in the central and state governments doesn't augur well with the philosophy of 'minimum government, maximum governance'. Comment.

Introduction:

The Government consists of a number of Ministries/Departments, number and character varying from time to time on factors such as the volume of work, the importance attached to certain items, changes of orientation, political expediency, etc.

Body:

For decades, we have had extraordinarily large governments while ironically the quality of governance has been quite poor. There has been more attention paid to the size of the government and not so much to its quality

As per the Constitution, the total number of Union ministers, including the Prime Minister shall not exceed 15 per cent of the number of members in the LS. (Similar for State Governments)

Reasons for More number of ministries:

- Dedicated attention required to a particular sector. Ex Ministry of Skill.

- For better work distribution and increased efficiency of the government.
- Better accountability of concern ministers with the related subject or sector.
- Decentralization of work to look into sector specific development.
- Some vulnerable sections of society need extra and dedicated attention of government. Ex. Women, Child, Minority, Tribes etc.
- With new advancements new sectors are emerging. Ex.

Other political reasons for doing so:

- Before and after election coalition promises: Ministries became vehicles of political patronage in coalition politics.
- Need to accommodate MPs from different regions and states to give sense of inclusivity.
- Caste and religion representation also play an important role in India, where people don't cast their vote but vote their caste.

Negatives of more number of ministries:

- Unnecessary creation of new ministries to accommodate MPs who are incompetent to hold the post, but government needs to do that under obligation of coalition.
- Reduced efficiency of administration as decision making process gets delay.
- Increased red-tape: Multiple approvals required for any project falling under more than one ministry.
- It also creates more avenues for corruption for ministers.
- The increased cost of maintenance of ministries and associated office and employees.
- Hindrance for ease of doing business as clearances from different ministries is required for any new project.

Way forward for Minimum government and maximum Governance:

1. The merger of ministries: In order to ensure better implementation of policies and coordination, we should merge similar and complementary ministries into one. This will allow policymakers to frame holistic and comprehensive policies on the one hand and ensure smooth implementation on the other. For Example:
   o Currently, three ministries in the energy sector—power, petroleum and natural gas, and renewable energy can be fused into a single ministry. The recent problem of power plants being built without proper coal supplies could have been avoided if the policy had been handled by one minister.
   o Similarly integrate the aviation, railways, roads, and shipping ministries so that the country gets an integrated transport strategy rather than the current mess.
   o Can bring pharmaceutical department and Ayush Ministry under the health ministry.
2. Several ministries, which are irrelevant now, can safely be shut down while some of their tasks can be handed over to independent regulators. For Example:

o Ministry of information and broadcasting.
o Ministry of culture.
o Ministry of heavy industries.
o Ministry for at micro, small and medium enterprises.
3. Set up technocratic missions that have very specific Projects which can be best dealt through commissions. Ex. The mission for cleaning the Ganga, building new cities, setting up high-speed rail links.
4. Less number of ministries will help state governments save a lot of money which can be utilized for developmental projects and better governance measures.

Conclusion:

Creation of umbrella ministries like Jal Shakti and housing and urban affairs ministry by the government is a good step in the right direction. Similarly, coordination among different ministries and reduced red-tapism is the need of the hour for achieving "minimum government and Maximum governance".

Best Answer:

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