



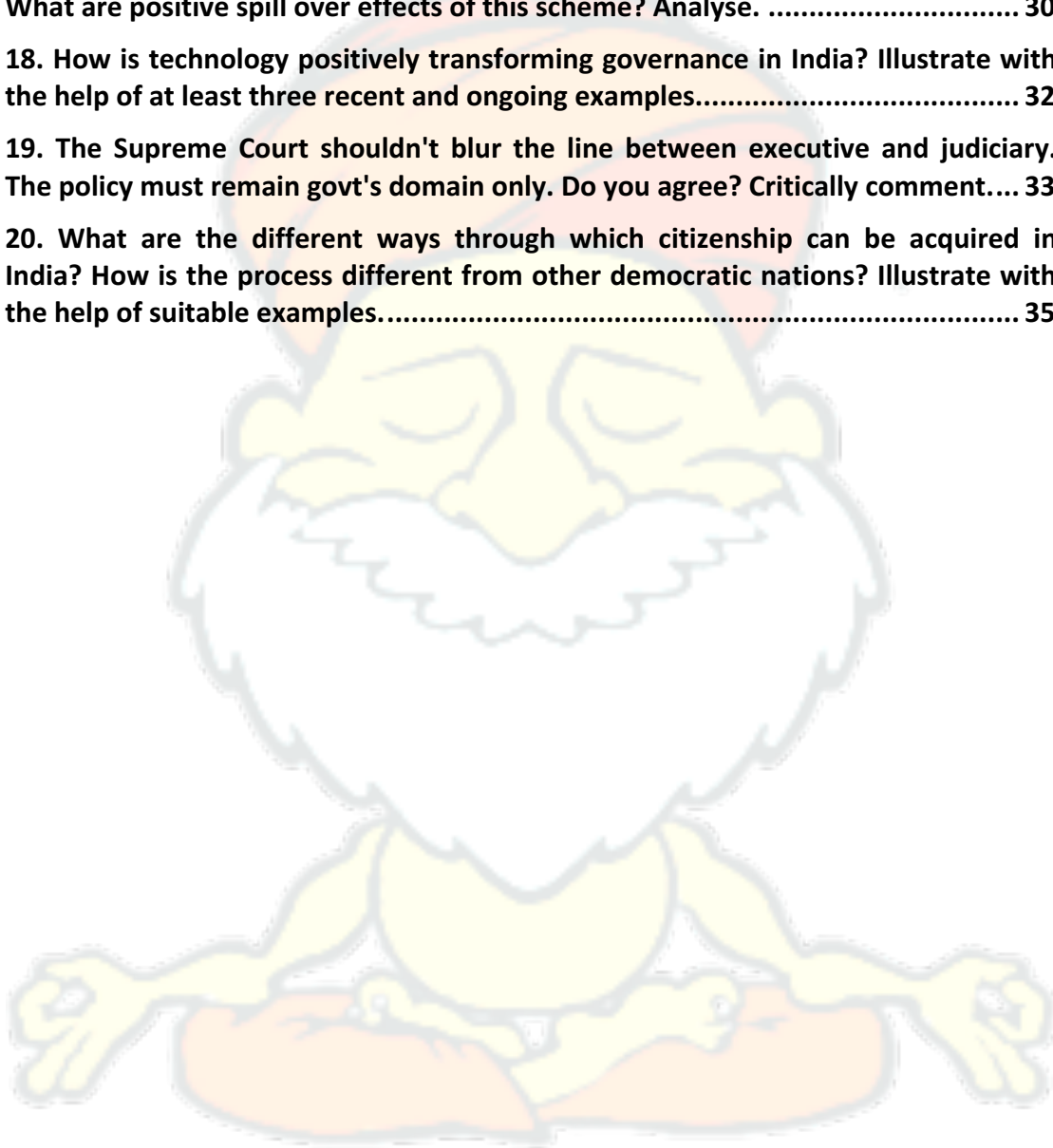
IASBABA'S TLP CONNECT/ TLP PLUS 2020

MAINS TEST - 27

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1. What challenges does India's federal polity pose to good governance and reforms in the fields of agriculture, policing and ease of doing business? Analyse with the help of suitable examples.

Demand of the question:

It expects students to write about challenges posed by federal polity in India to good governance and reforms in the field of the agriculture, policing and ease of doing business with the suitable examples.

Introduction:

Indian federalism is identified as cooperative federalism which is indestructible union of destructible states however Indian states don't draw power from union government but from constitution. Seventh schedule of the constitution provide list of subjects governed by states.

Body:

Federal polity in India is delicate balance between centre and states, most of the issues influencing day to day life are associated with states. Out of the 49 relatively large nations with gross domestic product (GDP) exceeding \$200 billion, India ranks at near bottom on most indicators of basic amenities, infrastructure, education and healthcare, in the company of Pakistan, Bangladesh and Nigeria.

Challenges posed by federal polity to good governance:

- A rigid, uniform political model imposed on all states and local governments sometimes disregard local needs.
- Bureaucracy is often seen as slow moving if not dysfunctional protected by Article 311, the generalist, all-purpose all-India services that lack in bringing specialized skills required to manage various services.
- Part IX of the Constitution that created over-structured, under-powered local governments that not empowered enough to take root as the third tier of federalism.
- Archaic anachronistic role of nominated governors are making states and local governments dysfunctional.
- The Centre collects a bulk of the taxes. However, states do most of the expenditure including on education, health, law and order, etc. Thus, there is an imbalance between revenue input and work output. This imbalance is sought to be addressed by transferring a part of the taxes collected by the Centre to the 28 states and 9 Union territories (UTs).

Challenges to reforms in Agriculture:

- Agriculture being a state subject, the central government formulates policy guidelines, advises, and allocates funds. However, the onus of proper implementation of farm and market reforms lies with state governments.

- Marketing system is inefficient and leads to the exploitation of farmers by intermediaries. Farmers in many states are also exploited through a non-transparent and multipoint levy of a market fee in the absence of a unified single trading licence valid across the state or Union territory.
- The centre, in an attempt to deregulate and privatize the agricultural marketing system, has ushered in a series of structural market reforms in the last few years. The launch of e-National Agriculture Market (e-NAM) is a step in the right direction for enhanced transparency in trading, better price discovery and to provide multiple choices to farmers in selling their commodities online and in markets of their choice.

Challenges to reforms in Policing:

- Politicisation of police force: No party wants to give up its hold on the police. The power to transfer is often misused in order to keep a tight control over the force results into lack of independence and professionalism.
- Supreme Court directed state governments to set up three new institutions: State Security Commission to insulate the police from extraneous pressures; Police Establishment Board to give autonomy to police in personnel matters; and Complaints Authorities to ensure a higher level of accountability by the police.
- There is no political will to give up transferring powers. Recent riots in Delhi again brought back issue of police reforms as police seen to be caught between various governments and lacked clear guidelines.

Ease of doing business:

- Imbalanced development: Development in India is lopsided, with some states better off like Maharashtra, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu than others like Bihar, Jharkhand and Uttar Pradesh.
- Regional and ideological concerns: The hostile business environment prevailing in the long rule of the Left Front in West Bengal left the State languishing.
- Retracting commitment of predecessors: YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) government have cancelled or put on hold a number of high-profile State contracts and projects, many involving foreign partners who now face huge losses. Analysts caution that it will be extremely hard for the State to attract foreign investors in future.

Conclusion:

Cooperation between the Centre and the states is a sine qua non for the expeditious implementation of reforms in the agriculture sector, policing and various indicators of ease of doing business. Hence, a structured mechanism based on the philosophy of cooperative federalism is the need of the hour.

2. India's diaspora has the power and numbers to alter the political discourse on foreign soils also. Do you agree? Substantiate your response with the help of recent examples.

Demand of the question

The question demands

- Understanding of the term diaspora
- Some statistics associated with diaspora (you can draw a map as well)
- Show with example how Indian diaspora is having/can have impact on political discourse.
- Mention diverse examples from many countries.

Introduction

You can start with the definition of diaspora (a group of people who spread from one original country to other countries) or any fact associated with the Indian diaspora (India was the leading country of origin of international migrants in 2019 with a 17.5 million strong diaspora, according to new estimates released by the United Nations)

Body

Here you should highlight with examples on how the number and power of diaspora can change political discourse on foreign soil. You can explain region or country wise

- Middle East
 - Indian diaspora in Middle East is nearly 8.5 million. It has been critical in gulf nations decision making. Opening of first Hindu temple in UAE is example of it.
- Europe
 - UK – in UK, The Home Secretary (Priti Patel) and finance secretary(Rushi Sunak) are important in policy making there. Their influence can be used for good India – UK relations
 - Ireland – the Indian origin person is PM of Ireland (Leo Varadkar). Having Indian origin person at such important positions can help in smoothening India – EU relations
- USA
 - Many Indian origin people hold important positions in trump administration. It has shaped India US relationship (eg. Seema Varma)
 - Indian diaspora is also one of major reason for events like Maddison square gathering. It is also numerically important in elections in USA
- CANADA
 - Indian diaspora especially punjabi plays important role in indo Canada relationship
- Caribbean

- Many Indian origin people are at important positions in these countries. Such countries are helping India in fight against black money.
- Global corporate world
 - Indian origin people hold important positions like google CEO Sundar Pichai and Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella. These people can help in influencing world view about India and can also bring investment in India

Apart from these you can give other example that you might know.

Also mention the challenges in realising Indian diaspora's potential

- It's fragmented in nature
- In gulf it is mainly in lower class with limited influence
- India lacks a holistic and comprehensive approach to realise the potential etc

Then mention the steps taken by the steps taken by the government to engage diaspora like Pravasi Bhartiya Yojana, rising appreciation of the role of diaspora by Indian leadership eg. Indian PM engaging them during his foreign visit etc.

Conclusion

Mention how a goal of \$5 trillion needs help from Indian diaspora or any other importance for India's future.

3. What is G-20? What is the mandate and role of G-20 in global affairs? Has it been a success? Critically analyse.

Demand of the question

It demands following

- Basic understanding of G-20, it's role
- An analysis of whether it is successful or not?
- You should mention both the sides

Introduction

You could introduce with giving a background of emergence of G-20 or can explain in detail what it is.

Body

Background go emergence

- Founded in 1999 with the aim to discuss policy pertaining to the promotion of international financial stability, the G20 has expanded its agenda since 2008 and heads of government or heads of state, as well as finance ministers and foreign ministers

G-20 and its mandate

- The Group of Twenty, or the G20, is the premier forum for international economic cooperation. The G20 brings together the leaders of both developed and developing countries from every continent.
- Collectively, G20 members represent around 80% of the world's economic output, two-thirds of global population and three-quarters of international trade. Throughout the year, representatives from G20 countries gather to discuss financial and socioeconomic issues.
- The presidency of the G20 rotates between member countries every year. The presidency plays a leading role in setting the agenda and organizing the Leaders' Summit, which is attended by the G20 Heads of State or Government. At the Summit, the leaders issue a declaration, or communiqué, based on policy discussions at meetings held throughout the year.
- In the run-up to the Summit, the presidency hosts several meetings featuring Ministers, senior government officials as well as civil society representatives. At the government level, the G20 work is organized around the Finance and Sherpa Tracks, while civil society assembles through Engagement Groups.
- It has 20 members including European Union.

Its role in global affairs and success

It has important role to play in global affairs as it includes top 19 countries and EU and every year summit takes place on important issues

Issues they have discussed and acted upon

- The 2008 summit in Washington played important role in arriving at a common strategy to deal with global slowdown of 2008
- Other economic issues like cryptocurrency regulation in Argentina G20 summit, e-commerce in Japan G20 summit, US- China trade war issues.
- Global health related discussion and common strategy
 - This year's virtual summit hosted by Saudi Arabia has discussed common strategy to fight COVID-19. It was also an important platform to fight Ebola outbreak.
- Terrorism
 - Every year G20 discusses issues concerned with terrorism e.g. 2015 summit discussed terrorist issues after Paris attack.
- Environment and climate change
 - It has also turned into a body to discuss global environmental issues for example 2016 summit in China had a discussion of pollution in China and climate change agreement between US and China.
- Refugee crisis
 - G20 has also discussed refugee crisis which has emerged as a serious issue across the world in its various summits
- It has also provided scope for bilateral and multilateral talks for example, Indian PM has an opportunity to meet the global leaders like US president and Chinese president to discuss bilateral issues.

However there are issues with its successes

- It's decisions are not binding in nature.
- There is rising divergence between the members so consensus is becoming difficult eg. US – China trade war.
- There is no consistency in its working.

Conclusion

Yet it proves to be important platform of major countries which will be useful to meet global common challenges like climate change , sustainable development, epidemics like corona virus, terrorism etc.

4. For India's 21st century priorities, the civil servants can't afford to be oblivious to the power of technology in general and ICT in particular. Discuss. Do you observe any behavioral transformation on the technology front? Examine.

Approach

The question contains two parts, first is to deliberate on how the public servants of the current generation cannot sideline the power of technology, especially the ICT. The second part asks to bring out the changes in the behavior of both citizens and civil servants regarding their adaptation to technology.

Introduction

India's 96th place in the United Nation's e-government index and 91st place in the World Economic forum's network readiness index shows that both the Indian citizenry and the public servants have miles to go in-order espouse the technology in governance.

Body

In the 21st century, Indian public servants have no choice but to be tech-savvy, because;

- The current generation of India –with the highest number of smartphone and social media users in the world- is intertwined with the technology to such an extent that, any alternative to ICT in the administration is simply pooh-pooed as the generation gap.
- Given the speed of communication offered by the ICT, usage of any other older means of communication would not only sound obsolete but may also result in a slow or a sub-standard communication. Ex: Use of ICT to spread awareness regarding COVID-19.
- With the advent of ICT many governmental functions like the recruitment, contracting, data collection and storage, grievance redressal, etc, have been carried out with utmost cost efficiency as of now. However, any delay among

the public servants to adapt themselves to the state of the art technology will harm the efficiency, effectiveness, and economy of all these functions. Ex: Blockchain technology to maintain account books of Central Bank can be a game-changer.

- With the rising aspirations for Simple, Moral, Accountable and Transparent governance (SMART) among the Indian citizenry, ICT has become a sine-qua-non, to say the least. Ex: e-complaints, e-courts, e-offices, digital management of legislatures, etc.

In this context, it is heartening to note that both the public servants and citizens are showing keen interest to adopt the technological paraphernalia into the governance domain.

- Out of 1.75 crores, RTIs filed so far, nearly one third are filed in the online mode. And this percentage is rising consistently.
- Online filing of complaints, online hearing and redressal of consumer grievances, digital payment of utility bills, etc are on a rise since 2010. Thanks to Bharath Nirman and Digital India programs.
- Gauging the benefits of ICT, the government has converted some of its functions completely to the online mode. EX: Applications to various jobs, patent registrations, auctioning of government projects, filing IT returns, etc.
- Basic knowledge of ICT is prescribed as a criterion for the recruitment of various public servants. And the curriculum to train various probationers has been modified to include state of the art digital technology.
- Also, some of the schemes like PMGDisha which educate the citizens about ICT are taken up with great interest and seriousness. With 2.5 crore beneficiaries, the scheme has reached up to 40% of rural households so far.

Conclusion

Thus a behavioral transformation from all the stakeholders' Viz, public servants, government and from the citizens will go a long way in making India a role model in digital governance. This is evident as recently Google suggested the US to adopt the Indian model of UPI.

5. What is micro-finance? How does the SHG model aid in micro-financing? What are the challenges of this model? Examine

Demand of the question:

The question demands an understanding about the term “micro finance”. Thus, introduction should begin with explanation of the term microfinance as well as the term Self Help Groups. The question requires one to establish a proper link between how SHG model of development would bring in last mile connectivity to microfinance facility. The body should also analyse the challenges associated with

providing micro finance to SHGs. Conclusion should bring out the solution to these challenges.

Introduction:

Microfinance refers to finances provided to low-income individuals or institutions who otherwise would have no other access to financial services. The goal of microfinance is to ultimately give impoverished people an opportunity to become self-sufficient.

Self Help Groups are informal association of people with a common cause of economic development of the group. It provides collateral free loan with terms decided by the group at the market driven rates.

Body:

The pillars of microfinance can help us understand how SHG model could help in micro-financing:

- Microfinance refers to putting **unbanked population** under formal banking system. This could be undertaken by SHG that takes up small entrepreneurial activity thereby bring more people under its ambit.
- It also requires **women, old age and other weaker section** to participate in economic process. Most of the SHG comprises of women and thus, their economic participation would ensure

Rural credit has been one of the most pertinent issues in India. Despite the existence of formal credit institutions like Banks, Microfinance Institutions, and Credit Cooperatives, sufficient credit is still not effectively penetrating rural areas, starving the ones who need it the most. In which SHG model could be of great help. Yet there are few challenges associated with this model such as:

- Poor accounting practices and incidents of misappropriation of funds that leads to defaulting of loans given to SHGs.
- Lack of resources and means to market their goods makes their goods uncompetitive in market. In such condition, SHG is unable to generate sufficient revenue to repay their debts.
- SHGs are heavily dependent on their promoter NGOs and government agencies. The withdrawal of support often leads to their collapse turning them into NPA.

Conclusion:

The SHG 'bank-linkage' programme is the flagship microfinance programme of the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) which has actively supported the development of this programme. It might help to resolve the problem of direct finance to them, yet tackling the core issues of SHG is important that would

ensure that health of SHGs remain stable and they genuinely become economic support system of rural India.

6. Examine the significance of a quick, robust and effective grievance redressal mechanism for good governance. In this light, critically evaluate the status of various grievance redressal forums in India.

Demand of the question:

The question demands an understanding of the concept of grievance redressal mechanism. Thus, introduction should briefly explain the meaning of the term. Body should explain its significance followed by some issues associated to it. Conclusion should mention few best practices model and end with a positive note as to what governance models should look up to.

Introduction:

Grievance redressal concerns with the receipt, processing, and effective resolution of complaints from citizens and consumers. It is a management and governance related process which results in removal of discontent by resolution of complaints and issues.

Body:

The significance of a quick, robust and effective grievance redressal mechanism can be understood as:

- An effective grievance redressal mechanism ensures **justice** to its people as they ensure not just presence of a feedback from public but also take the required action.
- In long term it also increases the **compliance rates** towards government norms and adhere to its rules.
- It **reduces the time as well as resources consumed** in completion of governance process. Timeliness factor plays a vital role
- A healthy grievance redressal mechanism generates a sense of **confidence** amongst public towards their government.

Yet, most of such mechanism have not been able to address the complaint in its entirety which is due to:

- Prevalence of **corruption** in government offices that makes the entire procedure not only costly but also inaccessible for common public.
- **Red tapism** at government offices is another common problem that has not been addressed by most of the offices.

- **Prevalence of delay** of work at government offices is another complaint that has shown no improvement even after the deployment of grievance redressal mechanism.

Most of which is due to non-compliance to Citizen's Charter. Yet, there are few exceptions and are regarded as best practices of governance model. E.g Pune Chinchwad Municipal Corporation governance model for Municipal Solid Waste handling have shown timeliness, robust as well as effective grievance redressal mechanism. Another example is that of Karnataka's economic governance that is considered as one of the best practices.

Conclusion:

Grievance Redress Mechanism is part and parcel of the machinery of any administration. No administration can claim to be accountable, responsive and user-friendly unless it has established an efficient and effective grievance redress mechanism. In fact, the grievance redress mechanism of an organization is the gauge to measure its efficiency and effectiveness as it provides important feedback on the working of the administration.

7. Now that India is out of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), what should be the key priority areas to focus on the trade and commerce front? Suggest.

Approach of the answer

- Briefly mention what is RCEP in the introduction
- Mention in brief the reasons as to why India did not join it
- Elaborate the priority areas that India needs to focus on trade front

Introduction

RCEP is a proposed agreement between the member states of the ASEAN and its six free trade agreement (FTA) partners. That includes India, China, Japan, South Korea, Australia and New Zealand

The countries involved account for almost **half of the world's population**, contribute over a **quarter of world exports**, and makeup around **30% of the global Gross Domestic Product**.

Body

India opted out of the mega trade deal due to following reasons:

- Fear of **dumping** of Chinese goods into Indian market

- The deal would have led to **Unfavourable Balance of Trade** for India - India has a bilateral trade deficit with most of the member countries of RCEP.
- **Domestic manufacturing sector** would face adverse competition especially from better economies of China and Japan, that might threaten their closure especially in the backdrop of slowing economy in India
- Threatens the informal **MSME sector** in India due to intense competition from well organised players in the trade group.
- **Farmers** would be more vulnerable to shocks caused by the expanded trade market – especially dairy farmers threatened by New Zealand
- **Loss of revenue** from removal of excise duties on the imported goods
- **India's concerns** were not addressed in the deal, some of which are
 - Auto-trigger mechanism
 - Agreement on Services and movement of personnel
 - Relaxation on IPR
 - Rules of Origin to prevent misuse of deal.

Some of the key priority areas that India needs to focus on the trade and commerce front are:

- **Strengthening our Domestic industry** through further enhancing the ease of doing business – easing land acquisition, labour reforms, easing export regulations etc
- **Increase the productivity** of youth through adequate vocational education and skilling programs so that training costs of firms is reduced
- **Boosting innovation** to make our products more competitive in the world market
- **Strengthening our Infrastructure** so as to reduce the logistics cost in India (one of the highest in world at ~ 16%)
- Mission mode implementation of Bharatmala, Sagarmala and Freight corridor projects
- **Banking reforms** to enhance liquidity & credit in the economy (in the backdrop of PMC Scandal & IL&FS Crisis)
- **Cooperative Federalism** to ensure that resources of the country are utilized in optimum manner
- **Bilateral Trade Agreements:** In order to make up for the lost huge market offered by RCEP, India has to negotiate with other countries (like UK, EU) to enhance India's export potential
- **Countering China:** The signing up of the deal by the remaining countries means strengthening of China's influence in the region. India should adopt aggressive public diplomacy to expose the dangers of Chinese economic trade policies
- **Strengthening India's Act East Policy** with the help of India's friends & allies ex: Japan, USA
- **Explore the possibility of SAARC Free Trade Area** this would help cement India's dominance in the subcontinent & Indian ocean region and help keep China at bay.

Conclusion

India's decision of not joining the mega trade deal was correct given the economic conditions prevailing at home. However, it has to strengthen its own economy and pursue its efforts to join the grouping at a later date without compromising on India's core interests.

8. Despite being natural partners, there are critical irritants in Indo-US relations that aren't letting the full potential of the cooperation being realised. Elucidate.

Approach of the answer

- In Introduction, you can mention recent developments in the bilateral relationship
- Briefly mention why US-India has been called the natural partners
- Then mention the irritants in the relationship

Introduction

The conferment of "Major Defence Partner" status on India by US legislature without signing of any specific treaty and India's reciprocal signing of foundational defence agreements with US, shows the increasing closeness of the relationship

Body

Post the end of Cold war, the relationship between US and India has often been termed as natural partners for the following reasons

- Both have Democratic Political System
- Both are Open Societies and advocate Pluralism
- Both have common challenger in China

However, there have been major irritants in the relationship which is yet to be resolved Some of which are:

- **Trade imbalance in favour of India:** President Trump's major agenda has been to reduce Trade deficits with developing countries and this includes India.
- **Trade barriers** continue to exist in both countries. In India it is in the form of high import duties especially in automobile & agricultural sector and in US it is in form of Sanitary & Phytosanitary measures (qualitative restriction)
- **Termination of Generalised System of Preferences regime by USA:** It was a preferential trade regime that allowed certain Indian goods duty free (or reduced duties) access to US markets. Removal of GSP status to India has negatively impacted exports of India

- **Competition in Services Sector:** Especially in the newly emerging areas of Big Data Analytics and AI
- **Visa Restrictions by US:** This directly affects the movement of Indian students and professionals (particularly the Indian IT Sector) to US
- **Disputes in WTO** related to solar subsidies and agricultural subsidies
- **Concerns of US about India's IPR regime** in particular the Section 3(D) of Indian Patents Act (prevents evergreening of patents) and the Compulsory Licensing regime.
- **Forced Localisation measures by India:** This includes forced data localisation rules by RBI, forced procurement of local components on FDI from USA and defence offset policies.
- **Strategic Divergence w.r.t**
 - **Russia:** Threat of imposition of **CAATSA** by US caused trouble w.r.t acquisition of S-400 Triumph system from Russia
 - **Iran:** Tensions between US-Iran has led to pressure on India (by US) to refrain from buying oil from Iran
 - **Afghanistan:** US wants Indian soldiers in Afghanistan to take up the responsibility of Security of the country in the wake of US withdrawal of its Troops
 - **Pakistan:** US dependence on Pakistan to handle Taliban in Afghanistan and the subsequent financial aid to Pakistan's military is not supported by India

Conclusion

Nevertheless, both US and India are committed to iron out the differences and strengthen their ties. The recent visit by President Trump to India shows that the trajectory of the relationship will be upwards in coming times.

9. The decision to revoke Article 370 and the implementation of the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) have affected India's soft power image globally. Critically comment. What steps has the Government taken to address it? Examine

Approach

For the first part of the question, one has to show how both Article 370 and CAA have affected India's soft power. Here it is also necessary to argue that despite these two issues stirring the hornet's nest in the global polity the soft power of India remains intact.

However, in the second part it is necessary to mention the steps taken by government to patch up the damage caused to the Indian soft power in the wake of implementation of CAA and abrogation of Article 370.

Introduction

Indian foreign policy analyst C Raja Mohan observes that India holds “strong cards in the arena of soft power” to further its foreign policy goals. This very trump card of India seemed to be at stake in the aftermath of the repeal of Article 370 and the enactment of CAA.

Body

Despite the revoke of Article 370 and the implementation of the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) India's soft power seems to be intact to a large extent.

- Even amidst the din and fury of the revoke of Article 370 government of UAE honored our prime minister with 'Order of Zayed', the highest civilian award of the country.
- It was after abrogating Article 370 that China consented to blacklist Masood Azar under the UN 1267 list of global terrorists. It means the J&K issue is considered as an internal matter by China, than misconceiving it as a part of India's strategic foreign policy.
- Even after the enactment of CAA, the government of Afghanistan- despite being a nation having the Muslim population in the majority- backed out from contesting for UNSC non-permanent membership.
- Many nations like Israel, Iran and other Middle East nations played these issues down, referring it as the internal matter of India. Hence the movement of students, working professionals, and tourists between India and these nations were least affected.

However, there were some hiccups which cannot be ignored;

- The OIC (Organisation of Islamic Cooperation) took up the issue in a negative note. The statement issued by the organization on 25th September 2019 asks India to rescind the abrogation of Article 370.
- Stalwarts like Recep Tayyip Erdogan denounced the enactment of CAA as an attempt to massacre Muslim community. Such statements can cause huge damage to India's secular image across the world.
- Parliamentarians of the European Union made a private visit to Jammu and Kashmir which can be considered as the loss of trust in the Indian government.
- Islamic nations like Bangladesh, Indonesia, etc expressed concerns on the intent of the Indian government behind these initiatives.

Government has taken the following steps to reduce those negative consequences;

- The government invited the parliamentarians of the EU for an official visit. This resulted in clearing the air of suspicion behind these moves in the global arena. And, the EU team raised a green flag by denoting the act of abrogation as an internal matter of India.

- India not only defended its moves in international forums like UN, G20, Common Wealth, etc, but it also pulled all the strings of diplomacy to iron out the doubts and misconceptions regarding them.
- India has launched a social media campaign to demystify CAA, which opens up the channel of communication to reach out to the global citizenry. This is a step further in the current arena of diplomacy which is mainly restricted to the government to government contacts.
- Many developmental projects have been planned and implemented in Jammu and Kashmir on a war footing, not only to impress the native people but also to convince the world. EX: Vibrant Gujarat like summits planned in J&K.

Conclusion

India has one strong criterion to become a permanent member of the UNSC, according to Kofi Annan- former director of the UN. That is nothing but the soft power. And, India is ill afforded to lose it; hence both the government and the people of India should leave no stone unturned to nullify any kind of damage that occurs to its soft power.

10. Do you think electoral democracy at the grass-root addresses the challenges posed by regional consciousness and identity assertion? Critically examine.

Demand of the question:

It expects student to write about role of electoral democracy at grassroots level to address challenges posed by regional consciousness and identity assertion with critical approach.

Introduction:

It's been more than two decades since the 73rd and 74th constitutional amendments were passed by Parliament, which accorded constitutional status to local administration bodies across India and established elected democracy at grassroots yet India continues to face challenges of regionalism and identity assertion.

Body:

Challenges of regional consciousness and identity assertion:

- Indian diversity of languages, geography, castes and religions brings factors of regional consciousness and identity assertion to forefront. E.g. Demands of Bodo groups for separate state and autonomy.
- Development divide between east and west as well as north and south is visible enough to fuel regional consciousness.

- Long ignorance, distant geography, proximity to Southeast Asian culture made Indian north eastern states alienated. E.g. militancy in north eastern states like Manipur, Nagaland.
- Lack of representation in the central government and bureaucracy also fuels things like regional consciousness and identity assertion.

However, decentralisation has acted as cure to feeling of regionalism and alienation. It has helped people to see different electoral process with different lenses.

- Political literacy: It helped to garner political literacy at grassroots and provided means to lead at local level and engage their self in governance process.
- Devolution of power increases the sense of responsibility and authority which increases the faith in democratic parliamentary and constitutional framework which India adopted.
- Awareness among people to differentiate local issues, regional issues and national issue has time and again proved in various Elections. E.g., recent Delhi elections.
- Electoral democracy at grassroots empowers people to take decisions for their own good with the institution of Gram Sabha.

Still, electoral democracy at grassroots has limitations to address identity assertion issues and regional consciousness.

- Regional political parties continue to indulge in parochial agenda of regionalism for their survival in regional political competition with national players. E.g. Tamil pride continues to oppose Hindi names of government schemes.
- Electoral democracy is not empowered enough to be financially autonomous and remain dependent on state government for crucial funds.
- Electoral democracy has developed some kind of feudal aristocratic structure at grassroots which provided legitimacy to hegemony of dominant castes in village level. As electoral democracy is based on principle of majority. Minority voices at grassroots often get neglected.
- Regionalism and identity assertion is deep rooted in Indian psyche which cannot be dealt with devolution of power alone.

Identity assertion and regional consciousness is not dangerous every time, it is healthy until it does not go against national integrity and constitutional morality.

Conclusion:

Diversity is basis of dissent and dissent is feature of vibrant democracy. Regional consciousness and identity assertion sometimes helps government to divert its attention deficit regions with rights steps like DoNER, Ek Bharat Shrestha Bharat schemes. Nationalism and constitutionalism is not about uniformity but unity in diversity.

11. Do you think the Election Commission of India (ECI) as an independent and impartial body has been excessively and unnecessarily politicised by the political class? What can be its long term implications? Discuss.

Demand of the question:

It expects students to write about whether Election Commission of India has been excessively and unnecessarily politicised by political class and implications of such developments.

Introduction:

India is largest democracy in the world. General elections for Lok Sabha once in five years fascinates world observers as festival of democracy in which Election Commission of India plays critical role as independent, fair and unbiased constitutional institution.

Body:

Issues which questioned the integrity of Election Commission of India:

- Constitution does not mention the criteria for appointment as Election commissioner. Lack of bipartisan mechanism for appointment.
- The EC has also been asking for an independent secretariat so as to reduce the influence and interference of the Department of Personnel & Training (DoPT) under the Prime Minister's Office in matters of appointment and promotion.
- The EC has been demanding financial independence on the lines of the CAG and has been asking that its expenses be charged to the Consolidated Fund of India. That would have reduced the Commission's dependence on the Government for funds.
- Absence of curbs on expenses incurred by friends, supporters, relatives and political party of the candidates and included them as part of election expenditure. Government and the Parliament have made a mockery of the ceiling on election expenditure by confining it to expenses incurred by the candidate alone.
- Decisions of Election commission to increase the number of stages in West Bengal during 2019 general election. Delay in announcing the state assembly elections in MP, Rajasthan, Telangana, Mizoram and Chhattisgarh.
- EC has been demanding the authority to make rules related to elections. Lack of tooth to moral code of conduct. Selective actions on hate speeches, failure to curb social media misuse during elections, live broadcast of election rallies on polling days.
- Failure of ECI to come strong on the allegations of hacking of Electronic voting machines and government turned down the proposal to use Totalisers for simultaneously counting votes.

- Retirement postings for loyal bureaucrats in ECI have increased the politicisation.

Long term impacts of politicisation and biased Election Commission of India:

- Lack of action by Election commission on leaders of party in power will eventually create new normal of defying guidelines of Election commission.
- Politicisation affects unbiased, fair conduct and level playing fields for candidates which will eventually increase the litigations regarding elections in courts.
- People will lose faith in democratic processes and it will reduce people's participation in elections further weakening democratic culture in India.
- It will reduce the bar raised by constitutional independent institutions in India over the independent history of India.

However, Election Commission of India remains one of the strong and renowned institutions among democratic world. Strengthening of ECI with constitutional amendments will increase its independence and decrease the role of parties in power to influence the decision making of ECI.

Conclusion:

There is need to set appointment criteria for election commissioner and need to increase the autonomy of ECI by charged expenditure on consolidated fund of India. There is need to strengthen ECI to take actions on malpractices regarding electioneering in India.

12. There has been a remarkable improvement in terms of last mile delivery of critical public services in the last few years. Do you agree? With the help of suitable examples, bring out the most vital factors that can be attributed for this change.

Demand of the question:

It expects students to write about views regarding improved last mile delivery of public services along with factors which played critical role in such development.

Introduction:

Governance and the quality of public services can impact a country's economic growth. The objective of public services is to deliver social protection to the poor and vulnerable and to alleviate poverty. Public services reduce inequitable distribution of resources and correct historical inequities, such as caste based discrimination and gender inequities.

Body:

Improvement in the last mile delivery of Public services:

- Technological Revolution: It started the connectivity with thousands of people living in distant areas with the help of mobile technology. Biometric, retina scan technology provided basis for Adhar ID. Digital India mission helped to consolidate the list of beneficiaries as per various data like socio-economic census.
- Financial Innovation: Creation of Unified Payments Interface by National Payment Corporation along with JAM trinity provided platform to start Direct Benefit Transfer to the accounts of beneficiary.
- Welfare state oriented development politics of various state models: Various governments in the states realised the efficiency of public delivery as the major electoral agenda in election helped to garner votes. Delhi Government decision to provide doorstep delivery of PDS and other services under government of Delhi. Chhattisgarh model of PDS is another example.
- Rationalisation of public services and subsidies provided by government is another factor which played important role in the last mile delivery of public services in last few years. E.g. removal of gas subsidy beyond 10LPA income households, voluntary surrender of old ages concessions in railways and other transportation.

Along with above mentioned vital factors that played important role in improvement of delivery of public services, government policies also played important role in such direction:

- Decentralisation: Increased devolution of tax share to the states as per the 14th finance commission recommendations has increased capacity of states to improve public service delivery in the areas of health, education and PDS .
- Community mobilisation and activism has played role in putting pressure on public officials to deliver along with participation of women from poor, lower-caste, vulnerable households in Self-Help Groups (SHGs) to improve public service delivery. Awareness among people about their rights due to increased use of advertisement has helped to increase last mile delivery.
- Cohesion and consensus among states: All of these public services are essentially implemented at the state level. Hence, cohesion and consensus among states has been promoted and laggard states incentivised to undertake reforms.
- Interactive platforms such as Twitter Seva, mobile applications like UMANG also helped to put pressure on local government servant to deliver. Service guaranty acts by various state governments, Right to information act increased vigilance to improve last mile delivery of public services.

Conclusion:

Improvement in the last-mile access and the efforts of frontline providers of health and education services has risen bar of public service delivery in India. Social media and media has played important role in awareness of public service issues with informed debates. There is need of public private partnership to fill in the gaps in service delivery for optimal utilization of resources.

13. Do you think strategic disinvestment of Public Sector Undertakings is antithetical to the constitutional idea of a welfare state? Critically examine.

Demand of the question:

It expects students to write about the correlation between strategic disinvestment and idea of welfare state with critical analysis.

Introduction:

The Government of India has set an ambitious Rs. 2.1 trillion target of disinvestment for FY21 which includes Rs. 90,000 crore to be raised from an initial public offer in Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) and a stake sale in IDBI Bank. The aggressive stake sale plan comes against the backdrop of declining tax collections and a sharp deceleration in the economy that the government is attempting to revive.

Body:

Strategic disinvestment and Welfare state:

- When the government decides to transfer the ownership and control of a public sector entity to some other entity, either private or public, the process is called strategic disinvestment.
- Strategic disinvestment would imply the sale of substantial portion of the Government share holding of a central public sector enterprise (CPSE) of up to 50%, or such higher percentage as the competent authority may determine, along with transfer of management control. Government has decided to go strategic disinvestment of Air India, BPCL and Container Corp. of India.
- The welfare state is a form of government in which the state protects and promotes the economic and social well-being of the citizens, based upon the principles of equal opportunity, equitable distribution of wealth, and public responsibility for citizens unable to avail themselves of the minimal provisions for a good life.

Strategic disinvestment as antithetical to Welfare state:

- Public Sector Undertakings over period of independent economic history played role to provide goods and services to the masses in reasonable minimum rates.
- They worked with service motto rather than profit orientedness. Even though effective governance coupled with long time investments and monopoly for initial years made them profitable.
- Strategic disinvestment will remove government as service provider to most needy people of the society hampering the goal of Welfare State.
- Presence of PSUs made private players rational as PSUs provided stiff competition, which helped to maintain rationalisation of pricing of goods and services.

However, with changing times led to adoption of liberalised economic policies and PSUs became more and more stagnant with lack of innovation, asset use inefficiency, high tooth to nail ratio due to employment responsibilities eventually made them white elephants.

- The Indian economy is passing through a bad patch. This fiscal year's second quarter growth in gross domestic product (GDP) slipped to 4.5% and the portents of a slowdown have been quite apparent. Private sector investment is sagging. Gross capital formation has dipped. Aggregate demand has contracted. Public sector expenditure is the single engine that's driving economic growth.
- Direct tax collections registered a growth of only a little more than 6%. The Reserve Bank of India has taken a rate cut pause. Government seems determined to honor its commitment to low inflation and macroeconomic stability. India is thus faced with a Hobson's choice either to significantly revise its fiscal deficit target or monetize state assets.
- There is need of fresh asset creation by way of roads, ports and airports that would result in a cascade effect for the economy's growth hence there is dire need of strategic disinvestment.
- Wastage of public money to capitalise debt ridden PSUs is not serving the objective of Welfare state. Asset rationalisation will help in increased GDP will ultimately help in Welfare state objective.
- Revenue generation through divestment will allow focusing on more fundamental aspects of Health and Education rather running air line services or telephone services.
- With the global experience it is clear enough that running businesses is not the job of governments.

However, private sector is not panacea for every issue of PSUs but certainly strategic disinvestment cannot be called as antithetical to welfare state objectives.

Conclusion:

As per Indian experience with strategic disinvestment in India, efficiency of employed resources, competition enhanced performance, value grown manifold. There is need of government withdrawal from businesses and limit itself to facilitation and regulation at best.

14. Government is the biggest litigant in Courts. Why? Can you identify at least three prominent factors that lead to high number of litigations involving the Government in different courts of law? What measures can be taken to address that? Suggest.

Demand of the question:

It expects students to write about the reasons behind government being the biggest litigant in the courts along with prominent factors and measure to address underlying issue.

Introduction:

According to the Ministry of Law and Justice, government departments are a party to around 46 percent of court cases. While the expenditure incurred on litigation in the top court for the year 2014-15 was Rs 15.99 Crore, it rose to Rs 47.99 Crore in 2017-18. The spurt is almost three times.

Body:

Reasons behind government being the largest litigant:

- **Obsolete and redundant laws and poor governance:** Large number of cases coming against the government cannot be a good sign of good governance.
- **Huge tax litigation:** There are as many as 4, 83,000 direct tax cases pending in various appellate forums i.e. Commissioner (Appeals), ITAT, High Court and Supreme Court.
- **Writ Petitions:** violation of the fundamental rights by state machineries remains one of the major reasons. Study of Vidhi regarding Karnataka high Court showed writ petitions constitute nearly 60% of all fresh cases filed in 2016. Most of the cases are regarding the disputes of service, land revenue, land acquisition and education.
- **Issues like turf wars between various government agencies at different levels, poorly drafted laws especially regarding taxation, Environmental Issues and Increased use of judicial innovation of Public Interest Litigation are some of the reason behind increased government litigation.**

Prominent factors which worsened the situation:

- **Judicial Inefficiency:** Judiciary is facing huge shortage of capacity and management technique to deal with around 3 crore cases pending in India.
- **Lack of mechanism for out of the court settlement:** Despite of various attempts government yet to establish nucleus cell within law ministry to decide merit of the cases.
- **Opaque, unpredictable and sometimes retrospective decision making in governance affects multinational corporations and reduces authenticity of government, many times it fails to fulfil its own promises on contracts.**

However, any attempt at resolving the issue of government litigation must be based on the premise that the government in India functions in so many myriad forms that a one-size-fits-all approach to deal with the issue is impossible.

Measure to reduce litigations:

- Law Ministry moved proposal to the Cabinet seeking the creation of integrated legal divisions (ILDs) in all government ministries and departments to impart legal advice and pre-empt litigation at the point of origin.
- Government sharply increased the monetary threshold for filing appeals in tax disputes in various courts and decided to withdraw many pending appeals to cut down litigation and improve ease of doing business.
- Government has taken several measures to reduce tax litigations. In the last budget, Sabka Vishwas Scheme was brought in to reduce litigation in indirect taxes. It resulted in settling over 1, 89,000 cases. The Direct Tax Vivad se Vishwas Bill, 2020 proposed to deal with direct tax litigations.

Government can consider following measures like,

- To reduce the incidence of such writ petitions, the state must either ensure that quasi-judicial authorities are judicially trained or create a separate class of judicial officers to discharge quasi-judicial functions.
- Detailed drafting of rules with minimal complexity and increased clarity can reduce litigation.
- Rights based governance system to avoid the Public Interest Litigations, robust Out of the court settlement mechanism, use of technological solutions like big data to correct most contested issues in acts, rules and policies can be great leap forward.

National Litigation Policy (2010) only provides a distant goalpost of transforming government into a model litigant. However, what is needed is an implementable action plan to ensure that citizens are not forced to file cases against the government and its agencies in the first place. This will require a relook at the functioning of litigation-prone departments and formulating solutions unique to each department.

Conclusion:

Government wastes its scarce resources in the unproductive tasks of litigation due to faulty drafting of laws, misreading of constitutional framework or administrative incompetency to protect rights of people. More and more transparency, predictability, participative governance will help to reduce litigation burden of government.

15. There are allegations against some NGOs that they are driven by vicious agenda. What are your views on this? What measures have been taken by the Government to regulate the funding and activities of NGOs in India? discuss.

Demand of the question:

It expects students to write about the allegations on the NGOs as driven by vicious agenda and measure taken by government to regulate the funding and activities of NGOs in India.

Introduction:

NGO as an expression of voluntarism is a Janus-faced entity. At one level, it acts as an extension counter of the state, engaging in acts of humanitarian and social work. At another level, it is a political and cognitive entity challenging development paradigms and arguing issues of governance and democracy. This double-edged nature of the NGO puts it in a perpetual state of suspicion.

Body:

Former Prime minister of India in 2012 said, 'There are NGOs, often funded from the US and the Scandinavian countries, which are not fully appreciative of the development challenges that our country faces.'

NGOs with vicious agenda:

- The IB report emphasises that these NGOs are a threat to the national, economic security of India. NGOs are using various movements like anti-coal, anti-bauxite; anti-nuclear to discredit India on the international platforms.
- Delay in development projects becomes the sole objective of some NGOs as per the report of IB few years back which specifically named role of Green Peace in delaying the Kudankulam nuclear power plant. Copper sterlite Plant in Toothikudi also saw violent protests, company CEO saw it as vicious propaganda spread by various NGOs without facts and scientific proofs.
- There have been allegations on as NGOs are being work as frontier organisations for left wing extremism. Some Christian NGOs allegedly being involved in proselytizing activities.
- NGOs are often seen as encroaching on centuries-old tradition and culture of the people, and lead to mass protest at times. Ban of Jallikattu, after the PIL by PETA is one such example.

Steps taken by government to regulate the funding and activities of the NGOs in India:

- In 2010, amendments to the Foreign Contribution Regulatory Act (FCRA) 1976 by the government to prohibit the use of foreign funding in political activities in an effort to restrain foreign interference in domestic politics. But the 2010 amendments meant "any organisation of a political nature" was forbidden from taking foreign funding.
- Intelligence Bureau accused NGOs such as Greenpeace, Cordaid, Amnesty, and Action Aid for reducing India's GDP by 2-3% per year. It helped to legitimise the government's actions against NGOs.
- In late 2018, it was revealed the government had cancelled the licenses of nearly 20,000 NGOs receiving foreign funds under the FCRA. According to a report on India's philanthropic landscape by the consultancy firm Bain &

Company, there was around a 40% decline in foreign funding between 2015 and 2018.

- In 2015, Greenpeace staff member Priya Pillai was taken off a flight on her way to a meeting in the UK about issues relating to the allocation of coal exploration licences and its impact on tribal people.
- In 2018, a number of rights NGO activists were arrested and accused of being Maoists working against the state. This included Sudha Bhardwaj, general secretary of the Chhattisgarh People's Union for Civil Liberties, who had worked for decades to empower disadvantaged, voiceless groups in the tribal areas of Chhattisgarh.

However, NGOs occupy inevitable space in civil society to raise people centric issues. They cannot be clubbed into single category. NGOs have to take some steps to come clean and establish reputation:

- They have to create systems of audit which are both rule bound, time bound and transparent. NGOs have to spring clean their bureaucracies, show that foreign grants do not colour local issues.
- They have to account for grants and any sub-grants they might make. The trajectory must be transparent to prevent suspicions clouding a crucial debate.
- They have to demonstrate to the rest of the society that beyond protest, they are seeking to create new epistemologies of knowledge which adds to the quality of livelihood and thus reveal that obsolescence and displacement are not inevitable for the margins.

Conclusion:

India has nearly 3.4 million non-governmental organisations (NGOs), working in a variety of fields ranging from disaster relief to advocacy for marginalised and disadvantaged communities. They are a major part of civil society which brings rapid change and social transformation. There is need of fact based and people centric analysis issues raised by NGOs.

16. Do you think the model of governance adopted and implemented by the Delhi State Government, particularly in the fields of education and healthcare are worth emulating by other states? Share your views.

Demand of the question:

It expects students to write about the model of Delhi government on education and health along with need to emulate by other states students should also write about shortcomings involved and further reforms required if any.

Introduction:

Ban Ki-moon, former Secretary General of United Nations commended Delhi government's health initiatives and Maharashtra government has shown interest in emulating Delhi model of education. Resounding of AAP highlights mass popularity of Delhi model.

Body:

Model of Delhi government regarding Health and Education:

Education	Health
<p>Education budget has also increased almost every year. It now constitutes at least 26 per cent of Delhi's overall budget, hitting the figure of Rs 13,997 crore in the 2018-19 fiscal.</p> <p>In 2016, the government allocated over Rs 25 crore for the construction of new classrooms and for the repair of existing school buildings.</p> <p>To overcome the shortfall, the government built 8,000 new classrooms in the existing 30 schools.</p>	<p>Health budget: Delhi government increased the funds for healthcare. From a measly sum of Rs. 3,300 crore in 2015-16 to Rs. 7,484 crore in 2019-20, the health sector budget has seen a quantum jump.</p> <p>10,959 beds were available in 2014-2015; it has gone up to 11,353. Further, according to government statement, three hospitals under construction would likely to add another 2800 beds in next six months.</p>
<p>At the heart of Delhi's education model is the school management committees (SMCs). The SMCs are mandated under the Right to Education Act 2009. This committee comprises parents and teachers affiliated to a particular school.</p> <p>The members of the SMCs live in the vicinity of the school so they would feel a 'sense of ownership' towards this process. SMCs are responsible for monitoring and assisting in matters of the school.</p>	<p>Mohalla clinic model: The government through its three-tiered network of Mohalla clinics, Polyclinics and Hospitals launched many schemes to provide free medicines, tests and surgeries for critical illnesses.</p> <p>These clinics were designed to provide quality primary healthcare services at an extremely low cost to people in the neighbourhoods.</p> <p>The mohalla clinics provides services such as basic medical care for common illnesses like fever, diarrhea, respiratory problems, first aid for injuries and burns and referral services among others.</p>
<p>The Delhi government made education free up to Class 12. It also increased scholarships for students who scored above 80 per cent.</p>	<p>Access: According to some reliable studies, mohalla clinics are making significant dent in people especially the urban poor having increased access to basic healthcare.</p>
<p>Some principals and teachers were also sent on a 12-day training session to</p>	<p>Reach: Out 490 Mohalla clinics in Delhi and official report suggests more than 2</p>

<p>Cambridge University. Moreover, subjects such as retail, travel and tourism, information and technology, beauty and wellness, financial market, management, and security were introduced as courses in the schools.</p>	<p>crore OPD patients have benefitted from these clinics.</p>
<p>Introduced a happiness curriculum and an entrepreneurship mindset curriculum. CCTV cameras were also installed in schools and parents were provided a live feed. The management quota was also scrapped during admissions.</p>	<p>Multi-specialty polyclinics (largely converted many existing dispensaries) to strengthen the second tier of the health system. Polyclinics intended to focus on secondary healthcare in the form of OPD consultation by specialist doctors, including diagnostics.</p>
<p>To check the dropout rate, the government introduced the 'Chunauti' scheme in 2016. Under the initiative, students are divided into groups on the basis of whether they can read or write Hindi and English, and solve mathematics. Depending on their learning abilities, they are offered 'special classes' in the government schools. This scheme has been reformed and has been inspired by Nobel Prize winner Abhijit Banerjee's model. As part of the scheme, students are divided into three groups in Class 6 — Pratibha (for the best students), Nishtha (for the average ones) and Neo Nishtha (for those who barely pass). Even though they sit in the same classroom, the teaching methods vary</p>	<p>At the third tier, considerably invested to strengthen the hospitals system. So far, the government has tied with 41 private hospitals in Delhi to facilitate 30 surgeries free of charge for patients referred by government hospitals in the capital.</p>

Need to be adopted by other states as:

- Ability to touch almost everybody' life: Health and education are important subjects under state list which has potential to transform lives of common people.
- Fundamental right: Article 21A provide right to education between ages of 6 to 14. However quality education has made difference in Delhi. It helps to create equal opportunity which is basis of right of equality and right to life with dignity only possible with proper health care.
- Total expenditure on education is 27.8% of total expenditure versus the all-states average of 15.9%, and on health 13.8% of total state expenditure versus all-states average of 5.2%.

- Delhi government's schools had outperformed private schools. The pass percentage in government schools was 90.68 per cent, whereas the pass percentage for private schools was 88.35 per cent in 2017-18 educational year.
- Consecutive ASER reports have projected poor learning outcomes of children in education and poor performance at international level.
- 70% out of pocket expenditure on health is the major reason behind poverty in India. Delhi model on Health can improve economic resilience of poor population.
- Potential as electoral discourse: Recent Delhi election proved efficacy of issues like health and education in electoral discourse.

However, there is need to bring changes while emulating the model in different states as per the local needs, geographical diversity, availability of resources and administrative feasibility.

- Even Delhi model is not without flaws, there is lack tertiary health progress small number of ICU beds, poorly functioning ventilator and lack of enough beds proportionate to the population of Delhi.
- Delhi is limited geographical variation, no terrain challenge or huge rural or migrating population. Within small union territory of Delhi model of education and health proved effective and different states may need different innovation based on their challenges.

Conclusion:

Adoption of best practices of one government by other governments within India indicates the pattern of shifting from competitive to collaborative federalism. From the issue of boundary settlement quarrels to emulation of best practices in governance Indian federalism has come very long path.

17. How is the Ujjwala Scheme transforming the lives of rural women in India? What are positive spill over effects of this scheme? Analyse.

Demand of the question:

It expects students to write about the role of Ujjwala Scheme in transforming the lives of rural women in India and students should also write about positive spill over effects of the scheme.

Introduction:

Ujjwala scheme has recently completed its target of 8 crore BPL household coverage under the scheme. It is identified as the most successful scheme of the central government in recent times with record time completion.

Body:

According to the World Bank, lack of access to energy is a fundamental barrier to progress in many parts of Africa and South Asia and has an impact on a wide range of development indicators such as health, education, food security, gender equality, livelihoods and poverty eradication.

Role in transforming lives of rural women in India:

- Clean cooking fuel: Traditional unprocessed biomass cooking fuels such as wood and cow dung, have serious health implications for women and children who are most affected by indoor air pollution. In the past, attempts were made to improve stoves that can use unprocessed biomass. However, this was not effective. LPG became the solution of clean cooking fuel which was not available in 45% of households before 2014.
- Reduced exposure to harmful indoor pollution: Women and children used to face huge issues of respiratory diseases due to inhalation of harmful gases like carbon monoxide, sulphur dioxide, black carbon etc.
- Time saved in search of fuel: It helped to save the time of women in searching fuel wood. The Economic Survey says “the amount of time spent on collecting firewood in India suggests that on an average, women spend around 374 hours every year for collection of firewood”. Increased security from the threat of wildlife attacks: It reduces the possibility of man animal conflict due to lesser dependence of humans on forest produce.
- Solution on woes of the rainy season: LPG proved bliss to women as it used to be difficult to maintain dry fuel wood for rainy season. Burning of wet wood used to be much more harmful. State of forest report, 2019 notices reduction in demand of fuel of wood.

Spill over effects:

- Fight against climate change and global warming: CO₂, CO, SO₂, black and brown carbon are one of the major drivers of global warming. Use of clean fuel aiding efforts to avert climate change.
- Reduced disease burden on below poverty population as reduction in child and women respiratory diseases: Reduced disease burden and reduced IMR, MMR has helped to improve sustainable development goal aims.
- More time for household women to engage in economic activities: Studies show that by shifting to LPG, women and girls may save up to 1.5 hours a day, allowing them time for education, self-employment and participation in the community activities.
- Increased attention to the studies of children and old age care.

The ‘blue flame revolution’ has played important role in access to energy however there is need to sustain gains by maintaining LPG prices affordable otherwise benefits can be short lived.

Conclusion:

Synergy of health, energy access and sustainable development achieved by Ujjwala Scheme will enhance with universal access to electricity. Emulation of such target based approach to social schemes will effectively address the challenges of gender gap, rural-urban divide, equal opportunity for inclusive and sustainable development.

18. How is technology positively transforming governance in India? Illustrate with the help of at least three recent and ongoing examples.

Demand of the question:

It expects students to write about the role of technology in transforming the governance in India along with at least three recent and ongoing examples.

Introduction:

Technology has been a game changer and was progressively helping in eliminating corruption, ensuring transparency and improving the delivery of services in several areas like healthcare, land registrations, transport, tax collection and urban planning.

Body:

Recent report of McKinsey Global Institute said that India was the second fastest digitizing economy after Indonesia. Digitization has the potential not only to boost core sectors like IT, digital communication, and online retail but also transform financial services, agriculture, logistics and education.

Role of Technology in transforming governance in India:

- Information database for inclusive development: Use of biometric technology for unique identification ID by UIDAI indicate role of technology in creating identity database to use targeted delivery of benefits for Welfare. It has helped to further direct benefit transfer in account of beneficiary with JAM trinity.
- Efficiency in governance: Technology has exponentially increased the speed of government processes, reduced paper work and brought single window system which in way increased efficiency of government by putting control, track and feedback system in function. E.g. PARIVESH – an environmental single window hub for Environment, Forest, Wildlife and CRZ clearances, SPICe+ for Ease of doing business, ENSURE Portal is to make subsidy transfer process quicker and faster. By the help of this Online Portal Government will directly Transfer the subsidy amount in the beneficiary's account.
- Ease of governance procedure: Simple technologies like CCTV eased huge pressure on security agencies to prevent crime or identify criminals. Mobile technology and location tracker technology like triangulation became great help in solving crime mysteries.

- Quality enhancement and Accountability: Simple biometric attendance model increased the presence of government officials in their offices. Rating system for services offered by government and feedback option increased accountability in whole governance.

However, it is needed to make this digital delivery and online public interface more universal and more effective. Ongoing examples of technology in governance bring more clarity.

- PRAGATI platform: It is a multi-purpose and multi-modal platform that is aimed at addressing common man's grievances, and simultaneously monitoring and reviewing important programmes and projects of the Government of India as well as projects flagged by State Governments. It uniquely bundles three latest technologies: Digital data management, video-conferencing and geo-spatial technology. It also offers a unique combination in the direction of cooperative federalism since it brings on one stage the Secretaries of Government of India and the Chief Secretaries of the States. With this, the Prime Minister is able to discuss the issues with the concerned Central and State officials with full information and latest visuals of the ground level situation.
- National Agriculture Market (NAM) is a pan-India electronic trading portal which networks the existing APMC (Agriculture Produce Marketing Committee) mandis to create a unified national market for agricultural commodities. The NAM Portal provides a single window service for all APMC related information and services. This includes commodity arrivals and prices, buy and sell trade offers and provision to respond to trade offers, among other services. While material flow (agriculture produce) continues to happen through mandis, an online market reduces transaction costs and information asymmetry.
- Crime and Criminal Tracking Network and Systems (CCTNS): It aims at creating a comprehensive and integrated system for enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of policing through adopting of principle of e-Governance and creation of a nationwide networking infrastructure for evolution of IT-enabled-state-of-the-art tracking system around 'Investigation of crime and detection of criminals'.

Conclusion:

For years, India has been a complex nation, making it difficult for the common man to access government services. The rapid adoption of digital technology across sectors is making things easy and eliminating all forms of human intervention. This has a major impact on the efficiency and effectiveness of governance.

19. The Supreme Court shouldn't blur the line between executive and judiciary. The policy must remain govt's domain only. Do you agree? Critically comment.

Approach

Here the question asks to what extent there should be a line of separation between executive and judiciary. As the question instructs to examine critically, we have to provide both sides of the argument. I.e. why the doctrine of separation of powers is good and why some times the encroachment into each other's domain is inevitable.

Introduction

As stated by Roy Moore 'the doctrine of separation of powers is essential as man is perceived to yearn for more power'. In this light, a clear line of separation of powers augurs well for democracy, as it keeps various organs of the government restricted to their domain and avoids one organ encroaching into, or dominating over the other.

Body

Some of the verdicts of the Supreme Court prima facie indicate that the apex court is arrogating the policymaking power within itself, rather than leaving it to the legislature.

- Formulation of Visaka Guidelines for dealing with the sexual harassment of women at the workplace.
- Prakash Singh case verdict and the police reforms which came along with the verdict.
- The latest case of banning all the liquor shops within the vicinity of 500 meters to national and state highways.
- Also, the verdict mandated for the national anthem to be played at the beginning of every film in the film theatres.

All these show the violation of the doctrine of separation of powers between the government and the judiciary. Such a tendency can give rise to various problems and controversies like,

- The spirit of democracy is upheld when the laws are formulated by the representatives of the people and are implemented by the executive which has a clear public mandate. And the judge made policies simply stand against the spirit of democracy.
- Such acts of judicial activism and overreach can backfire as the judiciary takes legitimacy and not practicality and ground reality into consideration.
- Further judges are not trained for policy formulation and implementation. And are ignorant of attendant social, political and financial risks. Ex: The cost incurred by the Kerala government to navigate the Shabarimala verdict.
- Frequent interference in policymaking can create logjams for the smooth functioning of government. EX: After the Supreme Court judgment on SC/ST

atrocities act, the government had to put all its functions to the back burner and take up the issue immediately.

- Lastly, if the executive fails to implement the judicial laws, it not only reduces the stature of the judiciary but also leads to diminished trust within the public over the effectiveness of the judicial verdicts.

However, this being said, it is also essential to ensure that the government does not become callous within its domain. If such a situation arises wherein the government is lax in its functioning, it is good for the Supreme Court to intervene and make the laws. This is because:

- As said by Justice | | Bhagawathi "nature should abhor vacuum", i.e. if not the government, the judiciary should be ready to make policies.
- It is not blasphemous on the part of the Supreme Court to frame a blueprint of policy and leave it to the government for minute details. Ex: the mid-day meal scheme.
- Also whenever there is an urgency for the law and when the time is too short for the legislature and the executive to discuss deliberate and enact such a policy, the judiciary can rise to the occasion and make the laws. Ex: Rameshwar Prasad Judgement (guidelines for governor in case of hung assembly).

Hence a watertight separation with a clear cut demarcation also does not abode well for the functioning of the government.

Conclusion

In the conclusion, we can say that, when the line of separation between the judiciary and executive is important, the cooperation, coordination and collaboration components cannot be sidelined; because no system is mechanical which runs in silos and all the systems are organic which run through mutual tradeoffs. That is why a balance between the doctrine of separation of powers and the doctrine of checks and balances has to be maintained.

20. What are the different ways through which citizenship can be acquired in India? How is the process different from other democratic nations? Illustrate with the help of suitable examples.

Approach

The question contains two parts; the first part is a factual one, which asks to list out the ways of acquiring citizenship in India; whereas the second part is analytical which demands to compare Indian ways of acquiring citizenship, with that of some of the democratic nations.

Introduction

Indian democracy was at its pinnacle point when a person who was born in a nation which is considered by New Delhi as an enemy sovereign went on to hold the chair of prime minister in the year 2004.

Body

Hence, it is understood that an individual can become the citizen of India and can even hold the highest position in the government, not only by birth but also through other means as well.

Various ways through which an individual can acquire the citizenship are;

(Do not write the whole story, write this way)

- **By Birth:**
1950-1987, anybody who is born in India becomes a citizen.
1987-2004 anyone parent should be the citizen.
2004- To date, both parents should be citizens.
- **By Descent:**
1950-1992 born outside India but father was a citizen during birth.
1992-2004 born outside India but either of the parents were citizens during the person's birth.
2004- To date, no citizenship unless he/she gets registered after birth.
- **By Registration:**
Any person of Indian origin and not an illegal immigrant can register himself to become a citizen of India after fulfilling the prescribed criteria. It is mainly related to cases like cross border marriage, minor children and the children of former Indian citizens.
- **By Naturalisation:**
Any person residing in India for a minimum of 12 years can become a citizen of India via naturalization.
- **By Acquisition of territory :**
This comes into the picture whenever India acquires a foreign territory by war or even by signing the treaties.

Indian citizenship differs with some of the democracies of the globe like;

- **India-US:**
It is similar to that of India but, the US has one more way of acquiring citizenship i.e. through derivation. In this, the minor child of a naturalized citizen gets citizenship through derivation. And he/she need not undergo the naturalization process to obtain citizenship.
- **India-UK:**
The right of Abode is one kind of citizenship allowed in the UK which is different from those of the Indian counterparts. It is a way to acquire

citizenship for those who are a citizen of a British Overseas Territory or a citizen of a Commonwealth country born before 1983 with a parent born in the UK.

Along with this UK also provides permanent residence and indefinite visas for students and working professionals residing in her territory.

- **India-France:**

Citizenship by naturalization is easier w.r.t France than India, as it requires just 5 years of stay as a criterion. And in case of marital relations, the duration of stay further reduces to 3 years.

However, one needs to be proficient in the French language to become a citizen of France.

- **India-Japan:**

Two stark differences between India and Japanese ways of acquiring citizenship are; one, multiple citizenship i.e. Citizenship of two or more countries is allowed in Japan in some specific cases. Two, citizenship by naturalization in Japan specifies financial stability and moral character as the criteria.

Conclusion

However, apart from these minute differences, the broader procedure to acquire citizenship in almost all democracies is the same to a large extent. That is why the concept of “Vishwa Manav” is revered throughout the world and this is where the doctrine of Vasudaiva Kutumbakam takes its origin from.

