

1. 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.

Demand of the question:

It expects candidates to write the different ways through which citizenship can be acquired in India. It further expects from candidates to compare the citizenship acquiring process of India with that of other democratic nations while putting special emphasis on the difference of procedure of acquiring citizenship with relative examples.

Introduction:

Like any other modern state, India has two kinds of people—citizens and aliens. Citizens are full members of the Indian State and owe allegiance to it. They enjoy all civil and political rights. Aliens, on the other hand, are the citizens of some other state and hence, do not enjoy all the civil and political rights.

Body:

The Constitution deals with the citizenship from Articles 5 to 11 under Part II. However, it contains neither any permanent nor any elaborate provisions in this regard. It only identifies the persons who became citizens of India at its commencement (i.e., on January 26, 1950). It does not deal with the problem of acquisition or loss of citizenship subsequent to its commencement.

- It empowers the Parliament to enact a law to provide for such matters and any other matter relating to citizenship. Accordingly, the Parliament has enacted the Citizenship Act (1955), which has been amended from time to time.
- The Citizenship Act (1955) provides for acquisition and loss of citizenship after the commencement of the Constitution.

Acquisition and Determination of Indian Citizenship:

There are four ways in which Indian citizenship can be acquired: birth, descent, registration and naturalisation. The provisions are listed under the Citizenship Act, 1955.

By Birth:

- Every person born in India on or after 26.01.1950 but before 01.07.1987 is an Indian citizen irrespective of the nationality of his/her parents.
- Every person born in India between 01.07.1987 and 02.12.2004 is a citizen of India given either of his/her parents is a citizen of the country at the time of his/her birth.
- Every person born in India on or after 3.12.2004 is a citizen of the country given both his/her parents are Indians or at least one parent is a citizen and the other is not an illegal migrant at the time of birth.

By Registration:

- Citizenship can also be acquired by registration. Some of the mandatory rules are:
- A person of Indian origin who has been a resident of India for 7 years before applying for registration.
- A person of Indian origin who is a resident of any country outside undivided India.
- A person who is married to an Indian citizen and is ordinarily resident for 7 years before applying for registration.
- Minor children of persons who are citizens of India.

By Descent:

- A person born outside India on or after January 26, 1950 is a citizen of India by descent if his/her father was a citizen of India by birth.
- A person born outside India on or after December 10, 1992, but before December 3, 2004 if either of his/her parent was a citizen of India by birth.
- If a person born outside India on or after December 3, 2004 has to acquire citizenship, his/her parents have to declare that the minor does not hold a passport of another country and his/her birth is registered at an Indian consulate within one year of birth.

By Naturalisation:

- A person can acquire citizenship by naturalisation if he/she is ordinarily resident of India for 12 years (throughout 12 months preceding the date of application and 11 years in the aggregate) and fulfils all qualifications in the third schedule of the Citizenship Act.

By Incorporation of Territory

- If any foreign territory becomes a part of India, the Government of India specifies the persons who among the people of the territory shall be the citizens of India. Such persons become the citizens of India from the notified date.
- For example, when Pondicherry became a part of India, the Government of India issued the Citizenship (Pondicherry) Order (1962), under the Citizenship Act (1955).

The Act does not provide for dual citizenship or dual nationality. It only allows citizenship for a person listed under the provisions above i.e., by birth, descent, registration or naturalisation.

Difference of acquisition of citizenship in India and other democratic Nations:

- There are four fundamental ways to obtain U.S. citizenship: citizenship by birth in the U.S., citizenship through derivation, citizenship through acquisition, and citizenship through naturalisation. Most immigrants in the United States become citizens through the naturalisation process. An average of almost one million permanent residents apply for naturalisation each year.
- Citizenship through Naturalisation in USA: Naturalisation refers to the process in which a person not born in the United States voluntarily becomes a U.S. citizen. For foreign-born persons, naturalisation is the most common way to become a U.S. citizen. There are several requirements that must be fulfilled before an individual can apply for citizenship. Generally, applicants must be 18 years old and fall into one of the following three basic

eligibility categories: 5 years as a permanent resident, 3 years as a permanent resident who has lived in marital union with a U.S. citizen spouse for at least 3 years, Qualifying service in the U.S. Armed Forces.

- In UK a person can acquire UK citizenship through the following ways: by birth in the UK to a British citizen or someone with permanent residence by descent if you were born abroad to a British citizen who was born in the UK or became a UK citizen through naturalisation, registration or adoption naturalisation registration adoption.
- The condition for citizenship in UK through naturalisation differ with that of India in following ways: A person can apply for UK citizenship by naturalisation after 5 years of residence, or 3 years of residence if a person is married to or in a civil partnership with a UK citizen.
- Whereas in Australia In general, a person may acquire citizenship automatically ("by operation of law") through birth in Australia or through Australian descent, or by application after a period of residence in Australia. The process of acquiring citizenship by application is referred to as "naturalisation".

Conclusion:

The question of acquiring the citizenship took out its head due to the issues surrounded to the CAA and NRC. However, Acquiring Indian citizenship is a process is prescribed in the Citizenship Act in a profound manner. Still some of the issues needs to be addressed due to the contentious debate of illegal immigrants and refugees issues.

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

Demand of the question:

It expects candidates to write about the Separation of functions between executive and judiciary as prescribed in the Constitution of India. It also expects to write both side views of to keep policy making as being the government's domain only and not that of judiciary.

Introduction:

The doctrine of separation of powers implies that each pillar of democracy – the executive, legislature and the judiciary – perform separate functions and act as separate entities. The executive is vested with the power to make policy decisions and implement laws. The legislature is empowered to issue enactments. The judiciary is responsible for adjudicating disputes. The doctrine is a part of the basic structure of the Indian Constitution even though it is not specifically mentioned in its text.

Body:

Thus, no law may be passed and no amendment may be made to the Constitution deviating from the doctrine. Different agencies impose checks and balances upon each other but may not transgress upon each other's functions.

- Thus, the judiciary exercises judicial review over executive and legislative action, and the legislature reviews the functioning of the executive.
- There have been some cases where the courts have issued laws and policy related orders through their judgements.
- These include the Vishakha case where guidelines on sexual harassment were issued by the Supreme Court, the order of the Court directing the Centre to distribute food grains (2010) and the appointment of the Special Investigation Team to replace the High Level Committee established by the Centre for investigating black money deposits in Swiss Banks.
- With a view to see that judicial activism does not become judicial adventurism the courts must act with caution and proper restraint. It needs to be remembered that courts cannot run the government.
- The judiciary should act only as an alarm bell; it should ensure that the executive has become alive to perform its duties.
- While there has been some discussion on the issue of activism by the judiciary, it must be noted that there are also instances of the legislature using its law making powers to reverse the outcome of some judgements.
- Judicial overreach is when the judiciary starts interfering with the proper functioning of the legislative or executive organs of the government, i.e., the judiciary crosses its own function and enter the executive and legislative functions.
- Judicial overreach is considered undesirable in a democracy. It also goes against the principle of separation of powers.
- Although it is a matter of perception as to when there has been a judicial overreach, there are some examples that are cited generally to showcase

overreach by the judiciary. A common example is misusing the power to punish for contempt of court. Following are some of the recent examples of Judicial overreach.

- The Supreme Court struck down the National Judicial Appointments Commission (NJAC) which was established through the 99th Constitutional Amendment on grounds that it was unconstitutional. This was to replace the collegiate system.
- In 2015, the Allahabad High Court passed an order stating that children of public functionaries/ bureaucrats in Uttar Pradesh should be enrolled only in government schools.
- After the movie Jolly LLB 2 was certified by the Central Board for Film Certification (CBFC), a petition was filed that claimed that this film violated Section 5B of the Cinematograph Act, 1952. The court-appointed a commission that looked into it, and finally, the commission ordered four cuts in the film and also asked the CBFC to recertify the film. This was in violation of the Cinematograph Act, which does not give courts any power to certify or modify films.

However, In defence of judicial overreach, the judiciary has always maintained that it stepped in only when there were cases of executive and legislative under reach. But it becomes necessary to put a check on the unnecessary judicial overreach as people's representatives enjoy sovereign will and they should be the one who should make laws and not the judiciary.

- Dilutes 'separation of powers': It destroys the spirit of 'separation of powers' between Parliament, Executive and Judiciary, enshrined in the constitution.
- Limited experience: In many cases, courts are often ill-equipped and lack experience to weigh the economic, environmental and political costs involved like liquor ban case.
- Conflict of interest: Sometimes when judicial activism is exercised it is done for solely selfish, political or personal reasons.
- Undermines trust in Parliament: It reduces the trust people pose in the Parliament and elected representatives as frequent overreach signals executive inactivity and incompetency.
- Minority rule/ Undemocratic: Judicial overreach appears as an act of 'tyranny of unelected' in a democracy.
- Wastage of court's time: It is wastage of court's time, which can otherwise be used for adjudicating other important matters relating to public importance pending before the court.

Hence, it becomes imperative that policy making should remain the whole and sole domain of the executive and not the judiciary.

Conclusion:

The doctrine of separation of powers is not codified in the Indian constitution. Indeed, it may be difficult to draw a strict line demarcating the separation. However, it may be necessary for each pillar of the State to evolve a healthy convention that respects the domain of the others.

3. 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 candidates to write about the challenges India's federal polity poses to good governance and reforms in the field of agriculture and ease of doing business. It also expects to analyse these problems with the help of suitable examples.

Introduction:

Political scientists have classified governments into unitary and federal on the basis of the nature of relations between the national government and the regional governments. A federal government, on the other hand, is one in which powers are

divided between the national government and the regional governments by the Constitution itself and both operate in their respective jurisdictions independently.

Body:

Following are the challenges India's federal polity pose to good governance and reforms in the fields of agriculture, policing and ease of doing business:

Challenges posed by federal polity to good governance:

- The general principle underlying the division of powers is that all matters of national importance, e.g. defence, foreign affairs, railways, currency are allotted to the Central government while matters that are primarily of local or regional importance e.g., education, public health, police, local administration are assigned to regional governments.
- Some matters which require the involvement of both the centre and states like criminal law, forest, economic and social planning are assigned in the Concurrent List. However, in the case of conflict over the legislation on any of the subjects mentioned in the Concurrent List, the Centre supersedes the States. Which comes in to conflict with the good governance in terms of federal polity.
- At present, about 40 percent of Central revenues (tax and non-tax) is transferred to the States, and this includes the grants they get from the Planning Commission and the Central Ministries.
- Asymmetrical sharing of revenue and resource crunch at the periphery results in uneven development across the country. The current Goods and Services Tax measure is feared by many states to be against fiscal federalism in India. It has amalgamated the various taxes into a single tax, procurement of which will then be divided among states in a prescribed ratio. Many states in India demand for more financial autonomy in India.

Challenges to reforms in Agriculture:

- As per the 7th schedule of Constitution of India, Agriculture is a state subject. However, the central government formulates policy guidelines,

advises, and allocates funds, and the responsibility of implementation of agricultural related reforms lies with the state government.

- The federal system hinders reforms in the agricultural sector in terms of MSP. Minimum Support Price (MSP) for different crops announced by the Union Government. But there is a wide gap between the cost of production and the MSPs announced for the year. Hence, it becomes difficult to trickle down for the benefits of it.
- Also different APMC rules differ as per different state regulations hinder the movement of goods thus harms the market of agriculture.

Challenges to reforms in Policing:

- Central Police Organisations include Intelligence Bureau (IB), Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), National Investigation Agency etc.
- Central Armed Police Forces include Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), National Security Guard (NSG), Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) etc.
- Sometimes, it happens that central agencies have to go beyond a boundary of a particular state for complete investigation of an issue. Hence, the jurisdiction of central agencies is not restricted by the needs and bounds of the geographical territories of a particular state.
- If there is a specific subject matter that falls exclusively within the jurisdiction of a central agency, then it is up to that agency to decide what is the best manner to preserve the integrity of that particular investigation and whether it needs to liaise with the state officials or not.
- Constitutional provisions are used by political parties to hide the real issues of corruption, fraud etc.
- Central government and State Governments' indifference and apathy towards constitutional scheme of federal structure.
- Tussles between the agencies of central government and those of state governments stress the cohesive functioning of centre and states.

Challenges posed to ease of doing business:

- Differences economic standards and relative economic and fiscal incompatibilities among the constituent states also pose a threat to a federation. The forces of imbalances in the field are demands for economic planning and development and for regional economic equality and financial autonomy of states. Demand for a financial equality of a region creates problems in a federation. Which in turn hinders the development in ease of doing business.
- Development in different Indian states is varied, where some states are better off like Maharashtra, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu than others like Bihar, and Uttar Pradesh.

Political deliberation seems to surpass the administrative and financial aspects of the Union-state relations in India. The states having the governments of those parties that form part of the central coalition give the impression that to have little conflict with the Centre. However following steps are needed to be taken to ensure

that federal structure doesn't hinder the reforms in good governance, agriculture, policing, and ease of doing business.

- Jurisdiction of central agencies is quite clear, therefore the state agencies need to cooperate with them during the investigations.
- Central Agencies need to be answerable only to the law and order of the country. Central ruling party should avoid pressurising agencies for its vested political interests.
- Also with respect to agriculture, recently the Union government issued The Farming Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Ordinance, 2020 (FPTC) which ensures easy movement of agricultural goods across the states.
- In the World Bank's recently released Ease of Doing Business Report, 2020 India was placed at 63rd position this time (2019) out of 190 countries marking an improvement of 14 places from its 77th position in 2018.
- However, India still lags in areas such as enforcing contracts (163rd) and registering property (154th).
- It takes 58 days and costs on average 7.8% of a property's value to register it, longer and at greater cost than among OECD high-income economies.
- The effective functioning of governance is the prime concern of every citizen of the country. The citizens are ready to pay the price for good services offered by the state, but what is required is a transparent, accountable and intelligible governance system absolutely free from bias and prejudices.
- There is a need to reformulate our national strategy to accord primacy to the Gandhian principle of 'Antyodaya' to restore good governance in the country.

Conclusion:

Indian federal system is termed as a quasi federal system. However, since the time of Independence, numerous achievements such as addressing the challenge of regionalism, communalism etc. have proved that despite being termed as quasi-federal, Indian federal system has proved its mettle in true letter and spirit. If it addressed the remaining challenges then it will prove to be one of the fine examples of success of federal polity as compared to other democratic nations.

4. 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 candidates to put forth both side views about the role played by electoral democracy at the grassroots level (especially Panchayati raj institutions) to address the challenges posed by regional consciousness and identity assertion.

Introduction:

Panchayati Raj Institution (PRI) is a system of rural local self-government in India. In its present form and structure PRI has completed 26 years of existence. However, some challenges still persists at the grassroots level due to regional consciousness and identity assertion. Electoral democracy has the onus to address these challenges to ensure deepening of democracy at the grass root level.

Body:

Challenges of regional consciousness and identity assertion:

- Regional consciousness is that part of people's social consciousness which refers to their perception of the distinctiveness of their own region or their own regional group.
- Identity assertion comes in to picture when a certain group of people in society put forth their views or demands based on the identity of caste, religion, race etc. For instance, Dalit assertion for rights in India is fine example of Identity assertion.
- Regional consciousness and Identity assertion comes to the forefront due to the varied diversity of India's culture and tradition in terms of region, geography, ethnicity, language, etc.
- For instance, agitation in Assam against some of provisions of the Citizenship amendment act.
- Regional consciousness also arises due to asymmetric nature of growth and development in different parts of country. For instance, Growth and development in the states of Bihar and Maharashtra lies totally on opposite poles of axis.
- Local or international political influencing factors also give impetus to the rise of regional consciousness and identity assertion. For instance, Kashmir issue.
- Different ethnicity and religion orientation also gives rise to regional consciousness and identity assertion. For instance, Militant movements in North eastern states of India.

Electoral democracy addressing the challenges posed by regional identity and identity consciousness:

- Awareness about electoral process at grass root level and participative democracy at the panchayat level ensured that people come forward and participate in ensuring the development of whole village/ panchayat/ urban area. It also led to vanishing the regional consciousness.

- Electoral democracy ensured participation from every strata of the society. Also the reservation rules also put marginalised and discriminated sections of society at par with the advanced sections of society. Which in turn ensures symmetry in decision making for the development of the region.
- The mechanism of Gram Sabha ensured that people come forward, speak up on the issues of the local problems faced by people, in turn it ensured empowerment of people.
- It also ensured devolution of power, which led to responsible decision making and increasing faith of people in the modern institutions of democracy.

Though the electoral democracy at the grass root level ensured that it diminishes regional consciousness and identity assertion, some problems still persists which are as follows:

- Electoral democracy at the grassroots level is not in position to manage its own funds, as it is dependent on the state government or central government for the sake of funds.
- The dependency on the availing funds increases the regional consciousness and identity assertion as it may lead to increased tussle between two political parties if two different political parties are ruling at the state and panchayati raj level respectively.
- Emergence of regional political and their increased importance in national level politics has great bearing on regional identity, as regional political parties put forth regional agendas and demands ahead of nation's agenda and necessities.
- Due to the historical and cultural reasons Regional consciousness and Identity Assertion is deeply rooted in the minds of Indian masses.

Identity assertion and regional consciousness though pose a significant challenge for the devolution of democracy at the grassroots level they have proved more beneficial as it proved to be doing more good than harm.

Conclusion:

The diverse nature of Indian society and regional identity has proved to be more susceptible for the regional consciousness and identity assertion. However, Unity of India lies in its diversity. Though some of the problems still persists, regional consciousness and identity assertion has pushed central government to look closely for development of backward regions of the country through different initiatives such as establishing Ministry of Development for North-east region.

5. 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 candidates to write about whether there is excessive and unnecessary politicization of ECI by the political class. It also expects to discuss about its long term implications.

Introduction:

The Election Commission is a permanent and an independent body established by the Constitution of India directly to ensure free and fair elections in the country.

Body:

Article 324 of the Constitution provides that the power of superintendence, direction and control of elections to parliament, state legislatures, the office of president of India and the office of vice-president of India shall be vested in the election commission. Thus, the Election Commission is an all-India body in the sense that it is common to both the Central government and the state governments.

Excessive and Unnecessary politicization by the political class of ECI:

- Appointment of Election commissioners: Constitution of India does not prescribes a set criteria for appointment of Election commissioners of India. Hence, the appointment of the election comes under the purview of political will.
- The EC's reputation suffers when it is unable to tame recalcitrant political parties, especially the ruling party. This is because despite being the registering authority under Section 29A of the Representation of the People Act, 1951, it has no power to de-register them even for the gravest of violations.
- The ECI is not financially independent such as other institutions. Hence, it comes under the purview of Ruling political party due to the financial dependence.
- Protection - Currently, only the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC), and not the other two commissioners, is protected from being removed except through impeachment. The other two commissioners having equal voting power in the functioning of the EC can outvote the CEC 10 times a day.
- Here, the uncertainty of elevation by seniority makes them vulnerable to government pressure. By this way, the government can control a defiant CEC through the majority voting power of the other two commissioners.
- Authority - The EC's reputation also suffers when it is unable to bring to control the unruly political parties, especially the ruling party.
- ECI has been demanding the authority to make rules related to elections. Lack of tooth to enforce moral code of conduct.
- 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. Which will ensure

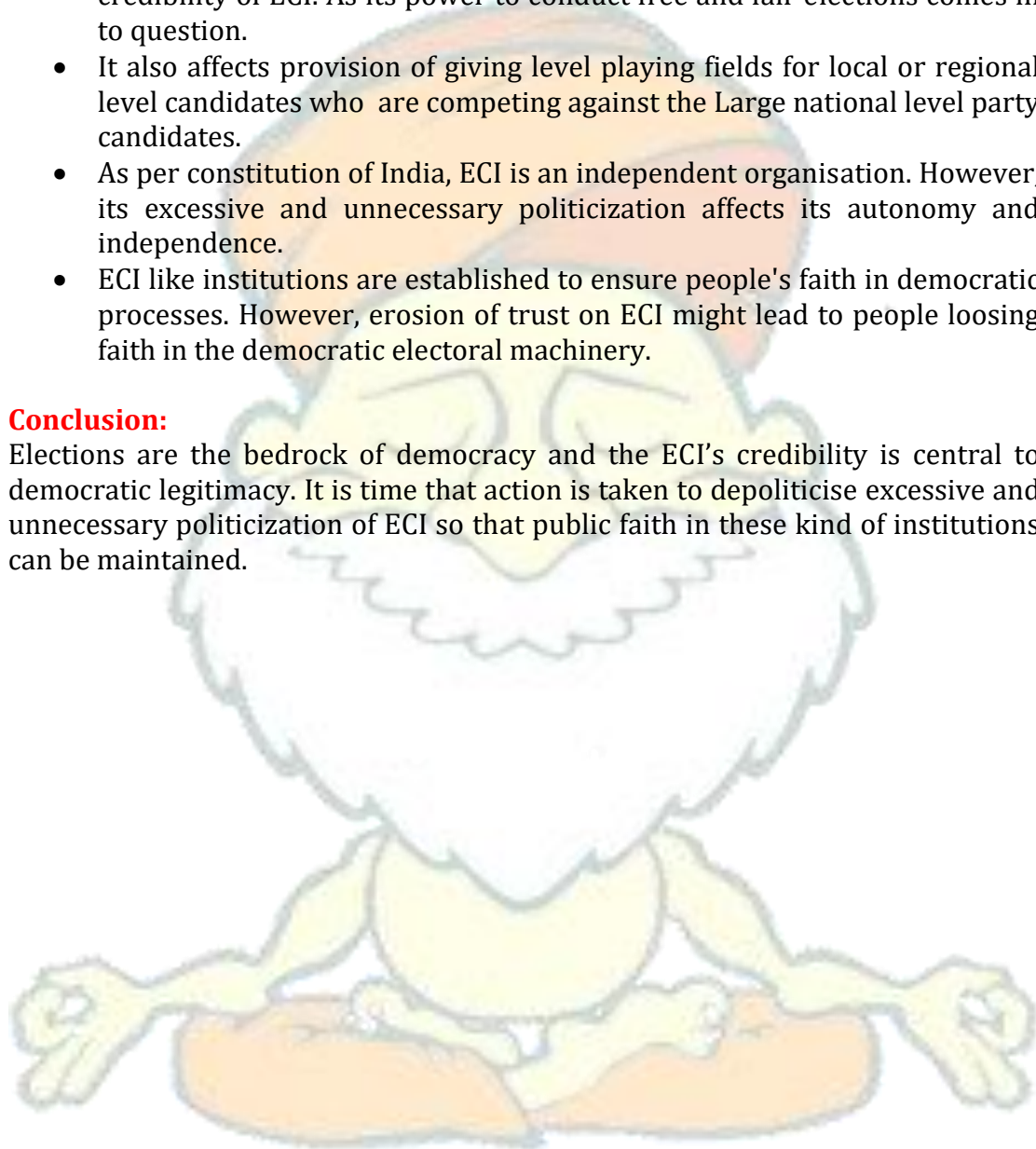
addressing problems of Selective actions on hate speeches, failure to curb social media misuse during elections, live broadcast of election rallies on polling days.

Long term implications of excessive and unnecessary politicization by political class:

- Excessive and unnecessary politicization by political class affects the credibility of ECI. As its power to conduct free and fair elections comes in to question.
- It also affects provision of giving level playing fields for local or regional level candidates who are competing against the Large national level party candidates.
- As per constitution of India, ECI is an independent organisation. However, its excessive and unnecessary politicization affects its autonomy and independence.
- ECI like institutions are established to ensure people's faith in democratic processes. However, erosion of trust on ECI might lead to people losing faith in the democratic electoral machinery.

Conclusion:

Elections are the bedrock of democracy and the ECI's credibility is central to democratic legitimacy. It is time that action is taken to depoliticise excessive and unnecessary politicization of ECI so that public faith in these kind of institutions can be maintained.



6. 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 candidates to write about whether there is remarkable improvement in terms of last mile delivery of critical public services in the last few years. It also expects to write with the help of suitable examples the most vital factors that can be attributed for this change.

Introduction:

Public services are the foundation of a fair and civilised society. It is essential to ensure fair implementation to protect public services so they can meet the needs of the future. Public services extend opportunities, protect the vulnerable, and improve everyone's quality of life. They are essential to our economic development and prosperity.

Body:

Remarkable improvement in terms of last mile delivery of critical public services:

- Improvement in Connectivity and reach: With the help of advanced technology and mobile revolution, people in the distant areas came under the reach of the delivery of public services which ensured improvement in delivery of public services.
- For instance, under digital India mission beneficiaries list is updated on the digital platforms which ensured availability of social sector schemes benefits all over India.
- Rationalisation of public service delivery and subsidies to the intended beneficiaries provided by government is another factor which played important role in the last mile accurate delivery of public services in last few years e.g. Removal of gas subsidy for high income households.
- JAM trinity and DBT: 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.
- Improvement in PDS: Due to the JAM trinity model, corruption in the PDS system is checked which ensured direct delivery of services to the beneficiary. For instance, remarkable success of PDS in Chhatisgarh.
- Interactive platforms such as Twitter Seva, mobile applications like UMANG also helped to put pressure on local government servant to deliver services to the intended beneficiary.
- Increased role of SHG's in rural areas played role to aware the masses about their rights and the kind of benefits they can avail from the states. For instance, many of the women from backward class got aware about the MUDRA scheme.
- Emergence of Cooperative federalism: Public service delivery is an essential component of governance. Emergence of Cooperative federalism ensured cooperation among states, which in turn ensured better service delivery.

Though the governance has observed better service delivery in terms of public services some of the problems still persists which needs to be addressed:

- Digital illiteracy is major hindrance for the better service delivery. Though India has more subscribers for mobile in the world, its proper use for availing benefits of public services is still unknown.
- Malpractices by appointed correspondents for the better service delivery still persists. For instance, in recent incidence a bank correspondent took benefit of Maternity care in the name of same women for 14 times.

Conclusion:

Improvement in the last-mile access and the efforts of frontline providers of health and education services has improved quality of public service delivery in India. Digital India like initiatives have contributed immensely for better delivery of services. However, some of the persisting challenges needs to be addressed so that not even the last person on the ladder be left out from availing the public services.



7. 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 candidates to write about the contradiction between idea of strategic disinvestment of Public sector undertakings and constitutional idea of welfare state.

Introduction:

In the biggest privatization drive, the Union Cabinet has approved sale of the government's stake to cut shareholding in select public sector firms below 51% to boost revenue collections that have been hit by slowing economy. These CPSE's include blue-chip oil firm Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL), Shipping Corporation of India (SCI) and on-land cargo mover Container Corporation of India (Concor).

Body:

Idea of strategic disinvestment and Constitutional idea of welfare state:

- Strategic disinvestment is the transfer of the ownership and control of a public sector entity to some other entity (mostly to a private sector entity).
- Unlike the simple disinvestment, strategic sale implies a kind of privatization.
- Strategic disinvestment in India has been guided by the basic economic principle that the government should not be in the business to engage itself in manufacturing/producing goods and services in sectors where competitive markets have come of age.
- 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 antithetical to idea of welfare state:

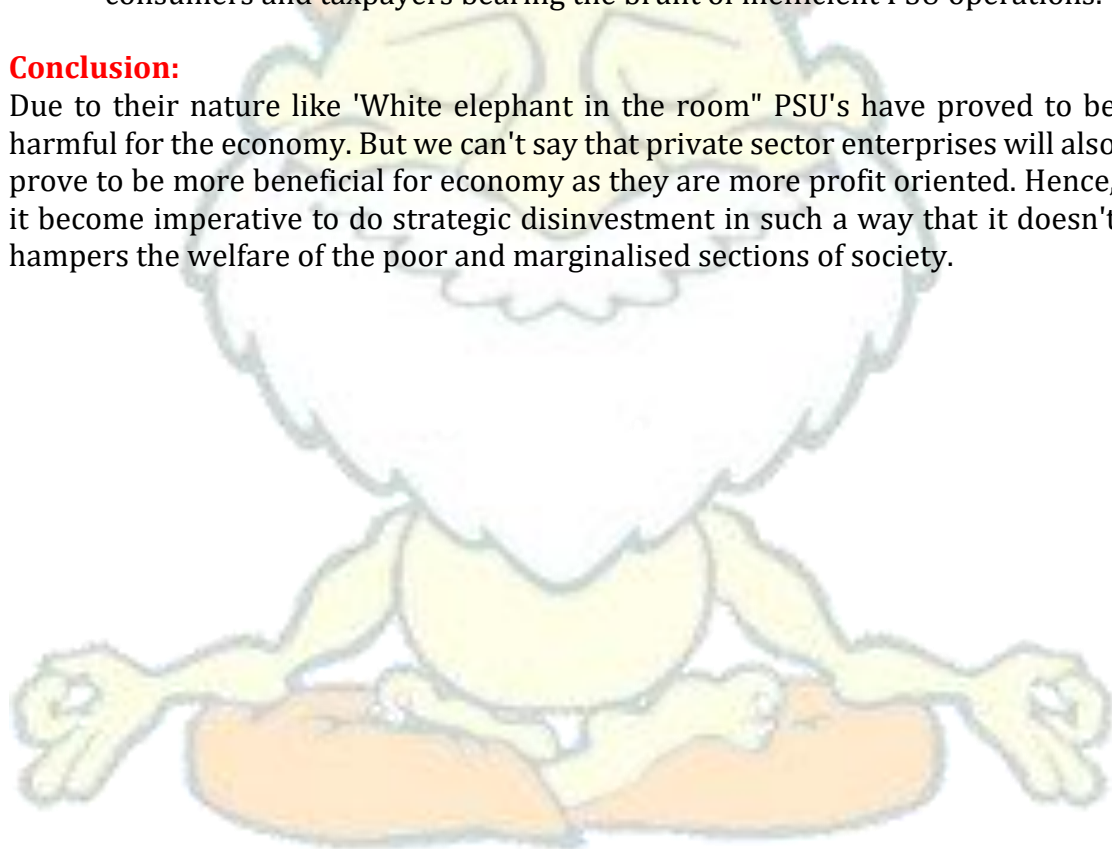
- Strategic disinvestment might eliminate government as service provider to the vulnerable and marginalised sections of society. It may hamper the goal of Welfare State.
- Presence of PSUs gives private players a stiff competition, which helped to maintain rationalisation of pricing of goods and services in the market. If a person can get a product at reasonable prices from PSU then why they will opt for private enterprise's product.
- Effective governance and effective implementation of work culture has made many PSU's profitable. Disinvesting them in the times of need is like betraying the PSU's for their honest service over the years.
- Public Sector Undertakings over period of independent economic history played role to provide goods and services to the masses in affordable prices.

Strategic disinvestment assumes significance due to the prevalence of an increasingly competitive environment, which makes it difficult for many PSUs to operate profitably. Presently, the Government has about Rs. 2 lakh crore locked up in PSUs. Disinvestment of the Government stake is, thus, far too significant. The importance of disinvestment lies in the utilization of funds for:

- Financing the increasing fiscal deficit.
- Financing large-scale infrastructure development.
- For retiring Government debt- Almost 40-45% of the Centre's revenue receipts go towards repaying public debt/interest.
- It is expected that the strategic buyer/acquirer may bring in new management/technology/investment for the growth of these companies and may use innovative methods for their development.
- While government presence may be a necessary evil in strategic sectors such as defence or oil exploration, there's really no call for it to be running fuel retailing outlets, building ships or running container freight operations. Government presence in such non-strategic sectors not only distorts competitive dynamics for private players, it also results in consumers and taxpayers bearing the brunt of inefficient PSU operations.

Conclusion:

Due to their nature like 'White elephant in the room' PSU's have proved to be harmful for the economy. But we can't say that private sector enterprises will also prove to be more beneficial for economy as they are more profit oriented. Hence, it become imperative to do strategic disinvestment in such a way that it doesn't hampers the welfare of the poor and marginalised sections of society.



8. 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 candidates 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:

As per information available from 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:

Government is biggest litigant in Courts due to following reasons:

- Most cases are not where government is a compulsive litigant but where the government is a respondent. As per a Legal Policy report on the Supreme Court, only 7.4% of fresh cases filed before the court in 2014 were by the Central government.
- The writ jurisdiction vested in High Courts under Article 226 of the Constitution enables an ordinary citizen to access the highest court in her State to address grievances against any authority, including any government, for violation of any of her fundamental or other rights.
- Data for the year 2016 show that writ petitions constitute nearly 60% of all fresh cases filed before the Karnataka High Court, out of which nearly 80% of them are filed against the State Government or related agencies.
- 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.

Prominent factors that lead to high number of litigations involving the Government in different courts of law:

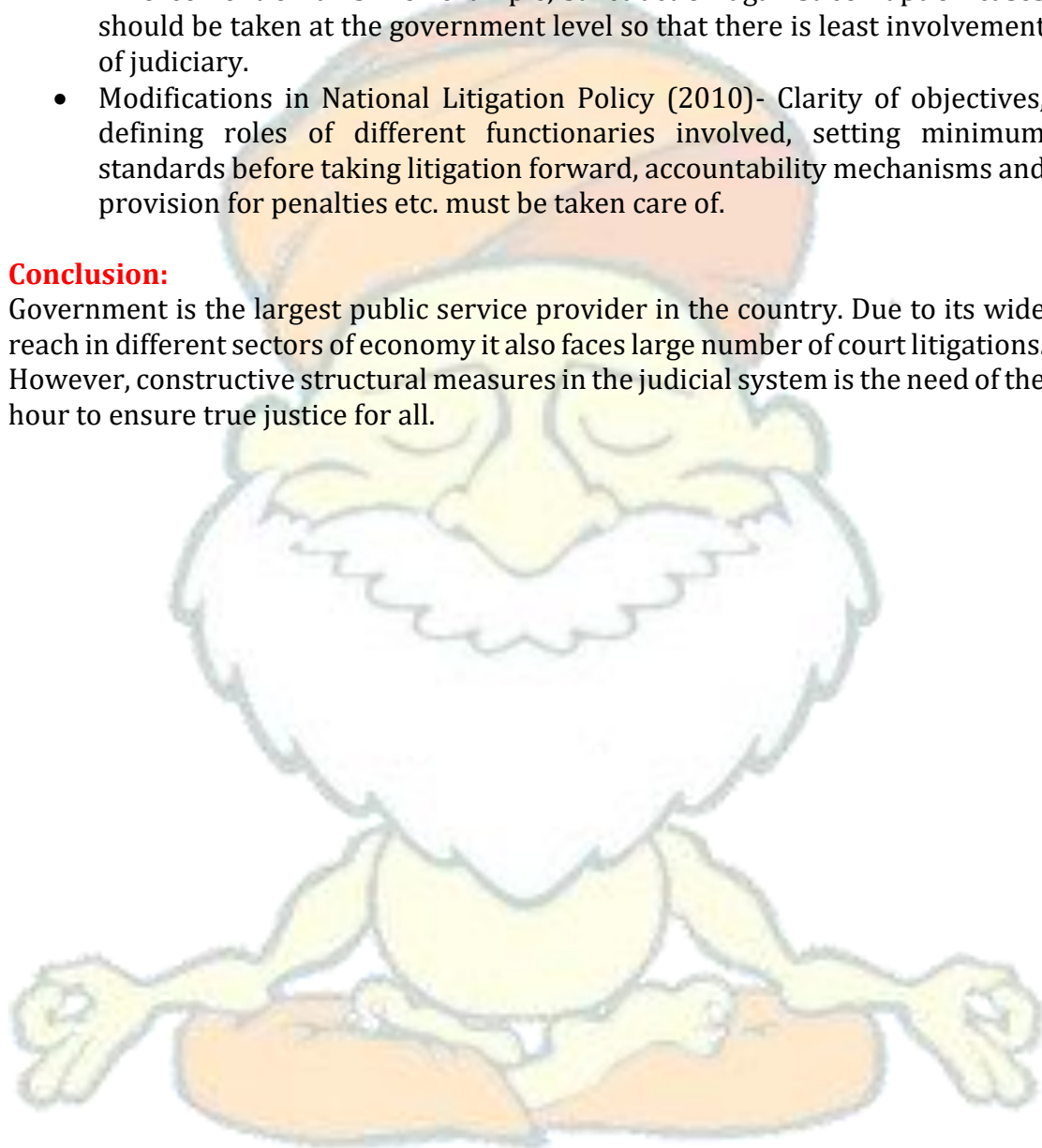
- Lack of efficiency: Judiciary is facing huge shortage of capacity and management technique to deal with around 3 crore cases pending in India.
- Lack of mechanism for out of the court settlement: Despite of various attempts government yet to establish nucleus cell within law ministry to decide merit 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.

Measures to address this issue:

- Alternate Dispute Redressal mechanism- For cases like traffic rules violation, theft and other petty crimes, to solve them without bringing them in the purview of judiciary.
- Reforming quasi-judicial authorities- Appeals against orders of quasi-judicial authorities can be reduced by appointing judicially trained person or creating a separate class of judicial officers to discharge quasi-judicial functions in those authorities.
- Enforcement of laws- For example, strict action against corruption cases should be taken at the government level so that there is least involvement of judiciary.
- Modifications in National Litigation Policy (2010)- Clarity of objectives, defining roles of different functionaries involved, setting minimum standards before taking litigation forward, accountability mechanisms and provision for penalties etc. must be taken care of.

Conclusion:

Government is the largest public service provider in the country. Due to its wide reach in different sectors of economy it also faces large number of court litigations. However, constructive structural measures in the judicial system is the need of the hour to ensure true justice for all.



9. 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 candidates 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:

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 bring rapid change and social transformation. However, due to some recent developments their credibility has been questioned on the issues of vicious agenda.

Body:

NGO's and their agenda's:

- NGOs have acted as a cover for organized crime in past and are often seen as fronts for fundamentalist causes. Foreign funded NGOs have been responsible for organising agitations and scuttling development projects in India.
- 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.
- The Intelligence Bureau 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.
- There have been allegations on some NGOs that they are working as frontier organisations for left wing extremism. Some Christian NGOs are also allegedly being involved in proselytising activities.
- AS per same Intelligence bureau report delay in development projects becomes the sole objective of some NGOs, the report specifically named role of Green Peace in delaying the Kudankulam nuclear power plant.
- Intelligence Bureau also accused NGOs such as Greenpeace, Cord-aid, Amnesty, and Action Aid for reducing India's GDP by 2-3% per year. It helped to legitimise the government's actions against NGOs.

Measures have been taken by the Government to regulate the funding and activities of NGOs in India:

- The most draconian attempt to crack down on NGOs came in 2010 with amendments to the Foreign Contribution Regulatory Act (FCRA). The law was first enacted in 1976 by the Congress 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. This vague definition allowed the government to question those NGOs demanding better government accountability about their funding sources.
- In 2015, Greenpeace staff member Priya Pillai was taken off from 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.
- In late 2018, it was revealed that 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.

However, adopting one size fits all approach to take actions against all NGO's is not the right way. As many of the NGO's have truly worked hard for the betterment of people and marginalised sections of society.

- A National Accreditation Council needs to be set up, consisting of academicians, activist, retired bureaucrats should be made to ensure compliance by NGOs.
- There should be better coordination between Ministries of Home Affairs and Finance in terms of monitoring and regulating illicit and unaccounted funds.
- A regulatory mechanism to keep a watch on the financial activities of NGOs and voluntary organizations is the need of the hour.

Conclusion:

Citizens today are keen to play an active role in processes that shape their lives and it is important that their participation in democracy go beyond the ritual of voting and should include promotion of social justice, gender equity, inclusion etc. To ensure this NGO's can play a better role as they work for specific cause at the grassroots level. They are a major part of civil society which brings rapid change and social transformation. Hence, there is need of fact based and people centric analysis issues raised by NGOs.

10. 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 candidates 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:

Recently, Maharashtra government has shown interest in emulating Delhi model of education in all municipal corporation-run schools in Mumbai, Pune, Nagpur, Pimpri-Chinchawad and Navi Mumbai. Resounding of Delhi governments mass popularity of Delhi model of education and healthcare.

Body:

Delhi governments model of Education and Health:
Education Model:

- In 2016, the government allocated over Rs 25 crore for the construction of new classrooms and for the repair of existing school buildings.
- 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 year.
- In its Delhi manifesto, current ruling party in Delhi promised 500 new schools but only 30 have been developed owing to land shortages.
- To overcome the shortfall, the Delhi government built 8,000 new classrooms in the existing 30 schools.
- The Delhi government made education free up to Class 12. It also increased scholarships for students who scored above 80 per cent.
- It 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.
- 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. 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.
- 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.

Health Model:

- 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.
- These clinics were designed to provide quality primary healthcare services at an extremely low cost to people in the neighbourhoods.
- The mohalla clinics provides services such as basic medical care for common illnesses like fever, diarrhoea, respiratory problems, first aid for injuries and burns and referral services among others.
- 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. 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.
- Access: According to some reliable studies, mohalla clinics are making significant dent in people especially the urban poor having increased access to basic healthcare.
- Reach: Out 490 Mohalla clinics in Delhi and official report suggests more than 2 crore OPD patients have benefitted from these clinics. 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.
- 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.

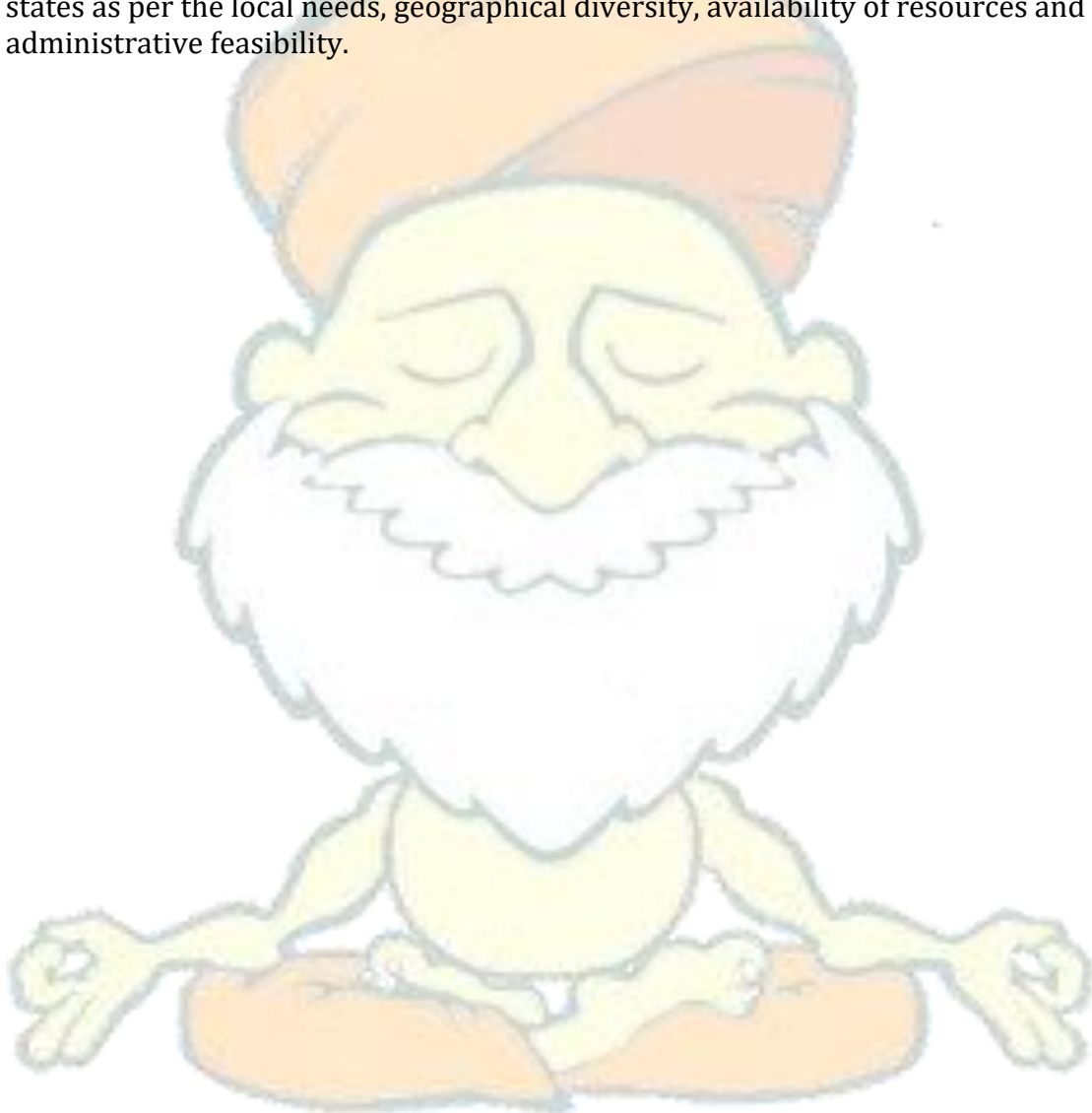
Need to be adopted by other states as:

- 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.

Conclusion:

Adoption of best practices of one government by other governments within India indicates the pattern of shifting from competitive to collaborative federalism. 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.



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

Demand of the question:

It expects candidates to write about the role played by Ujjwala Scheme in transforming the lives of rural women in India. It also expects to write about positive spill over effects of the scheme.

Introduction:

Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY) was launched on May 1, 2016, with a target to give 5 crore connections to women members of poor households by March 2019. The target was later raised to 8 crore connections by March 2020. It has recently achieved its target of 8 crore BPL household coverage under the scheme.

Body:

Role of UJJWALA scheme in transforming lives of rural women in India:

- 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.
- 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.
- 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.

Positive spill over effects of Ujjwala scheme:

- 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.
- Improvement in health of the rural woman also contributed for betterment of health of family, as reduced time in collecting wood can help to divert that time to ensure good food making.
- 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 the community activities.

- It also helped to Increase attention to the studies of children and old age care.

Conclusion:

Due to its wide scale positive spill over effects Ujjwala scheme has proved to be the most efficient scheme. Emulation of such target based approach to other social sector schemes will effectively address the challenges of gender gap, rural-urban divide, equal opportunity for inclusive and sustainable development.



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

Introduction:

Advancement of technology and its use in the governance is 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:

Role of Technology in transforming governance in India:

- 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.
- Improvement in 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.
- For instance, PARIVESH – an environmental single window hub for Environment, Forest, Wildlife and CRZ clearances.
- 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 improvement: Use of 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.
- Implementing Good Governance: Information Technology has ensured that a policy decision taken by the government can be quickly executed and implemented at multiple locations, across the length and breadth of the country. It also ensures transparency, accountability—while assuring quick and effective responsiveness of government to citizens' problems and suggestions.

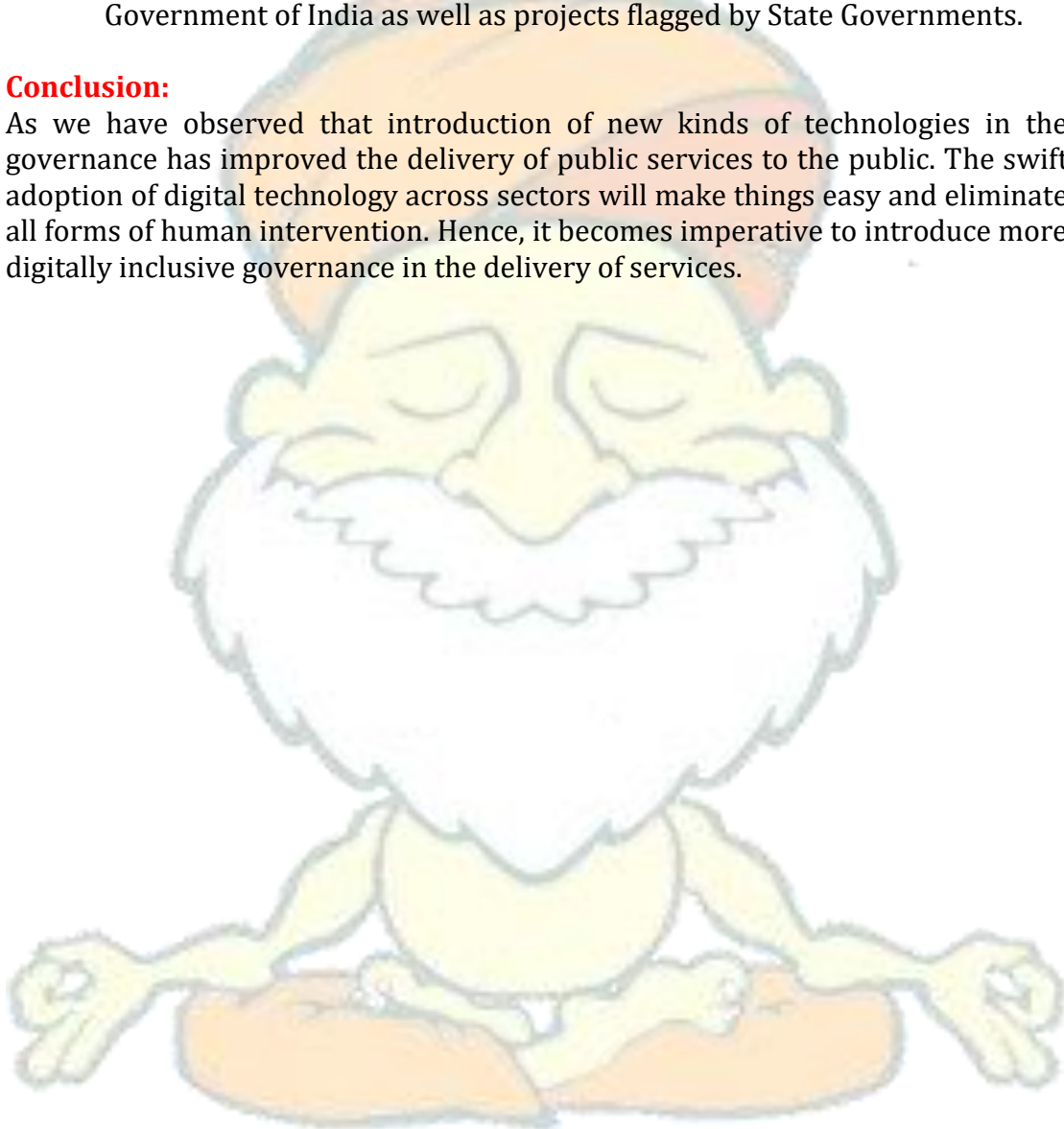
Recent report of McKinsey Global Institute said that India was the second fastest digitizing economy after Indonesia. However, if this digital inclusion is improved fast and implemented till the grass roots level then it will definitely prove to be more beneficial for the public service delivery in the system:

- 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.

- Crime and Criminal Tracking Network and Systems (CCTNS): CCTNS 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'.
- 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.

Conclusion:

As we have observed that introduction of new kinds of technologies in the governance has improved the delivery of public services to the public. The swift adoption of digital technology across sectors will make things easy and eliminate all forms of human intervention. Hence, it becomes imperative to introduce more digitally inclusive governance in the delivery of services.



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

Demand of the question:

It expects candidates to write what is micro finance and In short to write how it differs from the traditional mode of lending. Then in body part it needs an explanation of how Self help group model has served the purpose of micro financing in India. Further at the end it need what are the challenges in this model and possible solutions in brief to make a perfect end.

Introduction:

Microfinance, also called microcredit, is a type of banking service provided to unemployed or low-income individuals or groups who otherwise would have no other access to financial services. Microfinance allows people to take on reasonable small business loans safely, and in a manner that is consistent with ethical lending practices. The majority of micro financing operations occur in developing nations, such as India, Bangladesh, Uganda, and Indonesia.

Body:

Salient features of Microfinance:

- Borrowers are from the low income group
- Loans are of small amount – micro loans
- Short duration loans
- Loans are offered without collaterals
- High frequency of repayment
- Loans are generally taken for income generation purpose.

Self help group (SHG) and it's role in micro financing:

- A SHG (self help group) is a community based group with 10-20 members. They are usually women from similar social and economic backgrounds, all voluntarily coming together to save small sums of money, on a regular basis.
- They pool their resources to become financially stable, taking loans from their collective savings in times of emergency or financial scarcity, important life events or to purchase assets.
- The group members use collective wisdom and peer pressure to ensure proper end-use of credit and timely repayment. In India, RBI regulations mandates that banks offer financial services, including collateral free loans to these groups on very low interest rates. This allows poor women to circumvent the challenges of exclusion from institutional financial services. This system is closely related to that of solidarity lending, widely used by microfinance institutions.
- Beyond their function as a savings and credit group, SHG's offer poor women a platform for building solidarity. They allow women to come together and act on issues related to their own lives including health, nutrition, governance and gender justice.
- Many self-help groups, especially in India, under NABARD's 'SHG Bank Linkage' program, borrow from banks once they have accumulated a base

of their own capital. This model has attracted attention as a possible way of delivering micro-finance services to poor populations that have been difficult to reach directly through banks or other institutions.

Therefore the self help groups bring together vulnerable population to make them viable for loans from the government or private micro finance entities .It acts as a peer group to repay loans on time and therefore has great role in financial inclusion.

Advantages of financing through SHGs:

- An economically poor individual gains strength as part of a group.
- Besides, financing through SHGs transaction costs for both lenders and borrowers.
- While lenders have to handle only a triple SHG account instead of a large number of small-sized individual accounts, borrowers as part of an SHG minimise or travel (to and from the branch and other places) for completing paper work and on the loss of workdays in canvassing for loans.
- Where successful, SHGs have significantly empowered poor people, especially women, in rural areas.
- SHGs have helped immensely in reducing the influence of informal lenders in rural areas.
- Many big corporate houses are also promoting SHGs at many places in India.
- SHGs help borrowers overcome the problem of lack of collateral. Women can discuss their problem and find solutions for it.

Challenges being faced by Self help group in micro financing:

- Contrary to the vision for SHG development, members of a group do not come necessarily from the poorest families and this hinders the social development of vulnerable population.
- Lack of bank facilities to the last mile especially in the rural areas where the need is more .
- The SHG model has led to definite social empowerment of the poor but whether the economic gains are adequate to bring a qualitative change in their life is a matter of debate;
- Many of the activities undertaken by the SHGs are still based on primitive skills related mostly to primary sector enterprises. With poor value addition per worker and prevalence of subsistence level wages, such activities often do not lead to any substantial increase in the income of group members.
- There is lack of qualified resource personnel in the rural areas who could help in skill upgradation / acquisition of new skills by group members.

Reforms needed in micro financing of Self Help Group:

- Capacity building and imparting knowledge so that SHGs can become model of growth and become self sustainable.
- Targeting and incentivising micro finance for poor population through data available from socioeconomic caste census 2011.
- Making use of SHGs for developmental services such as education and health to increase their income and make them sustainable.

- Creating a separate regulator other than NABARD as both regulation and disbursement of fund leads to lack of specialisation and lack of focus.
- Need to learn from micro financing mechanism of southern states especially from Kerala model of kudumbashree to achieve pan India scaling of microfinance.

Conclusion:

Microfinance is the essential mode to support the marginalised and vulnerable population especially the women .Therefore the issues need to be tackled with focused and strategic way so that it can become a vehicle of poverty eradication and social development which would lead to India attaining sustainable development goal of 2030.



14. 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 where introduction should briefly explain the meaning of the term. Body should explain its significance in terms of a quick, robust and effective mechanism followed by some issues associated to it. It should also try to link the mechanism to good governance. Conclusion should 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. Public Grievance Redressal is said to be the cornerstone of any well governed democracy. 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.

Body:

- Public Grievances are a significant indicator of the state of governance in any system. In a democracy, the legitimacy of the government depends primarily on public trust and support, which is often contingent upon its capacity to deliver quality governance.
- Efficient and Effective public institutions provide the foundation on which the story of public trust can be developed, building on public satisfaction and with administration and service delivery. The public grievance redressal mechanism serves as an indicator to gauge the efficiency and effectiveness of administrative processes.
- Citizen-Centric online services are one of the most important aspects of an efficient and effective public administration system. It leads to transparency and accountability in governance and also fosters equitable growth. Technology is the empowering tool for citizens and a measure of accountability for the government.
- Public grievance redressal is very important component of a responsive administration and it is an instrument to measure efficiency and effectiveness as it provides important feedback on the working of an organisation. Public Grievance Redressal mechanism was also central to the Sevottam model.
- For effective public grievance redressal, an important tool is regular analysis of public grievance received in order to help the identification of the problem areas. A Grievance Analysis Study was conducted through Quality Council on India for identifying grievance prone areas, undertake root cause analysis and to recommend systematic analysis and to recommend systematic reform.

Thus, the significance of a quick, robust and effective grievance redressal mechanism can be understood in brief manner by the following points:

1. 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.
2. In long term it also increases the compliance rates towards government norms and adhere to its rules.
3. It reduces the time as well as resources consumed in completion of governance process. Timeliness factor plays a vital role.
4. 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.

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 which clearly highlights its significance and importance.

15. 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 behavioural transformation on the technology front? Examine.

Demand of the question: In the first part of the answer, you need to discuss the 1st statement given in the question where technological aspects need to be focused in governance matters. In the next part, progress in behavioural transformation on the technology front needs to be examined in a comprehensive manner.

Introduction:

For transforming the civil service, it is imperative to move to a strategic technological assimilation system, which would look at the individual as a vital resource to be valued, motivated, developed and enabled to achieve the government's mission and objectives. Within this transformational process, it is essential to match civil servants' aptitude with the job they have to do and bridge competency gaps for current and future roles.

Body:

Indian public servants have no option but to be tech savvy in this 21st century due to the following factors:

- The world is on the brink of a new, all-encompassing revolution moving at exponential speed. We are witnessing the emergence of innovative technological trends with applications as diverse as the technologies themselves. But the impact of the technological revolution on economies and society is not preordained and can be shaped by policies at the local, national and global levels.
- In this regard, technological assimilation aspect of civil servants becomes important due to their important role as executive in modern democracies and also due to the fact that technological evolution exists in a social context and not just as a business case
- 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-poohed 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 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 the evolving technological context, artificial intelligence (AI) can be used effectively to reduce poverty, improve the lives of farmers and make the

lives of the differently abled simpler. Civil servants aptitude towards AI assimilation in executive structures can help in greater efficiency of work.

- Similarly, blockchain has potential applications to a wide range of issues – from cross-border data flows to the future provision of government services and natural resource management. This can help civil servants reduce property and other disputes, increase transparency and fight corruption, among other things

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:

The Civil Service of the future will need people with a broader set of skills so that we can navigate this complex environment more effectively as we serve modern India. In line with the vision of 'New India'– we must seek to embrace technological change, grasping the opportunities it presents and fulfill the goals of civil services in India where technological assimilation would form an important component.

16. 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.

Demand of the question:

The question demands that the candidate to write how the revocation of article 370 has affected India's image globally and the soft power. Further it needs an measure of efforts taken by Government of India in mitigating the issues arising from it.

Introduction:

The abrogation of Article 370 and the bifurcation of the state of Jammu and Kashmir in August 2019 provoked intense diplomatic response from the international community. For the most part, India received widespread support for its decision. At the same time, however, there have been criticisms of the restrictions imposed in the region on communication and civil liberties. China and Pakistan, in particular, reacted with hostility and attempted to open a new chapter on Kashmir at the United Nations Security Council.

Body:

Negative Impact of revocation of Article 370 on Indian diplomacy:

- First, India's "brand value" and its international standing has taken a hit. Across the globe, the international press has been extremely critical of the revocation of Article 370 and dismemberment of the state of J&K. The foreign press such as The New York times, The guardian has written about alleged human rights violations in the region, perpetrated by the Indian Army, and the detention of political leaders and activists. Other news organisations, such as Al Jazeera and certain media houses in Europe, have also chosen to take an openly anti-India stance.
- Second, India's narrative on Kashmir has been negatively affected. Until August 2019, India had control over the portrayal of the Kashmir conflict, which focused on the problems of Pakistan-sponsored cross-border terrorism. Globally, Pakistan was considered the primary aggressor in Kashmir and the root of most problems in the region. This was a diplomatic achievement for India. However, the manner in which the constitutional changes were implemented in Jammu and Kashmir has provoked criticisms against India's flawed management. While Indian allies such as the US continue to push Pakistan to tackle the terror groups operating on its soil, India has now also come under fire from its closest allies. Consequently, there has been a possible re-hyphenation of India and Pakistan in the eyes of the US and other European powers. Analysts say that this is something that Indian diplomacy will have to resist.
- Third, the newfound global attention has increased the possibility of the Kashmir issue being exploited by nations with deep interests in the region, particularly the US. President Trump's repeated mediation offers on Kashmir are a form of arm-twisting, mostly to appease Pakistan. In the

future, several nations may attempt to use the Kashmir dispute to leverage certain concessions. For example, the Swedish delegation to India, sent to pitch its fighter aircraft Gripen, expressed concerns over Kashmir in a transparent attempt to leverage India into a deal.

- Fourth, the GoI's August 2019 decision has led to politicking on the Kashmir issue in the US, the UK and other European countries. While the right-wing or conservative parties across the world have maintained a favourable view of the Modi government's constitutional changes in Kashmir, India has lost the bipartisan support and consensus it previously enjoyed in the UK and the US. Fortunately, the defeat of the Labour Party in the general elections in December 2019 has averted a potential clash with a Labour government, who had planned to intervene in Kashmir.
- Finally, India's longstanding position that Kashmir is an internal matter has come under question through the country's own diplomatic moves, e.g. the visit of European parliamentarians and ambassadors to Kashmir. If India truly considers Kashmir an internal matter, why does it require third-party approval? The answer to this perhaps lies in the subtext of the various statements issued since August 2019, most of which have sought a bilateral settlement of the Kashmir issue between India and Pakistan. The poor state of the bilateral relationship between the two countries; the bleak possibility of any dialogue; and the likelihood of increased militancy, agitations and protest, ensure that Kashmir will remain on the global radar for the foreseeable future.

Measures taken by India to avoid the the diplomatic fallback :

- Hours after the announcement was made in August 2019 from Parliament, the GoI mobilised its foreign missions to work with respective governments to ensure that the Kashmir narrative remained positive and to remind countries that the matter was "internal" to India.
- PM Modi and the External Affairs Minister (EAM) have focused on assuring the world that the changes in Jammu and Kashmir are well-intentioned and deserve a chance, despite short-term pains.
- The EAM travelled extensively through countries in Europe and Southeast Asia, addressing concerns about Kashmir.
- A special MEA team met with key stakeholders and the members of the UN HR Council members to explain India's position and clarify negative statements coming from Pakistan.
- Indian National Security Adviser Ajit Doval and Petroleum Minister Dharmendra Pradhan undertook a tour of West Asian countries: the UAE, Saudi Arabia and Qatar. Prime Minister Narendra Modi personally spoke to US President Donald Trump and other leaders.
- During a visit to Switzerland, President Ramnath Kovind found that the "situation in Kashmir" had been put on the agenda by his hosts.
- During a visit to Switzerland, President Ramnath Kovind found that the "situation in Kashmir" had been put on the agenda by his hosts.
- While this kind of global attention on the region is unprecedented, it does not necessarily mean that India's friends and allies have shifted their position. Despite the constitutional complexity of the decision,

most nations have accepted the new reality of Kashmir, albeit with a note of deep concern regarding human rights and India's management of the situation. Thus, India has managed to control the spiralling of the narrative, limiting it to reasonable criticism from various countries. Other than Pakistan, no country has sought a rollback of the abrogation of Article 370.

Conclusion:

Therefore India has largely been successful in tackling of the diplomatic issues and has avoided a blow to the soft power. But to further make its point globally acceptable India needs to bring normalcy in the Kashmir region with regular elections, reduction in armed forces and furthering democratic rights of the citizen.



17. 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.

Demand of the question:

It expects candidate to write what is 'Regional comprehensive economic partnership (RCEP). Further in brief to write about the reasons for which India didn't join this grouping and therefore write what reforms are needed in trade and commerce front so that in future India would not have to be out of such economic partnership and can become an equal player in global market.

Introduction:

The Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) is a proposed agreement between the member states of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) and its free trade agreement (FTA) partners. The pact aims to cover trade in goods and services, intellectual property, etc. India have decided not to join this agreement as according to the government of India the pact would have adversely affected the domestic industry in a negative way which would have been counterproductive. As said by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in his speech at the RCEP Summit said "the present form of the RCEP agreement does not fully reflect the basic spirit and the agreed guiding principles of RCEP. It also does not address satisfactorily India's outstanding issues and concerns in such a situation."

Body:

Reasons for which India has not joined the Regional Comprehensive Economic partnerships(RCEP) agreement:

- Unfavourable Balance of Trade : Though trade has increased post-FTA with South Korea, ASEAN countries and Japan, imports have risen faster than exports from India. According to a paper published by NITI Aayog, India has a bilateral trade deficit with most of the member countries of RCEP.
- Dumping of Chinese Goods :India has already signed FTAs with all the countries of RCEP except China. This is the major concern for India, as after signing RCEP cheaper products from China would have flooded the Indian market.
- Non-acceptance of Auto-trigger Mechanism :In order to deal with the imminent rise in imports, India had been seeking an auto-trigger mechanism. Auto-trigger Mechanism would have allowed India to raise tariffs on products in instances where imports cross a certain threshold. However, other countries in the RCEP were against this proposal.
- Protection of Domestic Industry :India had also reportedly expressed apprehensions on lowering and eliminating tariffs on several products like dairy, steel, etc. For instance, the dairy industry was expected to face stiff competition from Australia and New Zealand. Currently, India's average bound tariff for dairy products is on average 35%. The RCEP binds countries to reduce that current level of tariffs to zero within the next 15 years.

- Lack of Consensus on Rules of Origin :India was concerned about a “possible circumvention” of rules of origin.Rules of origin are the criteria used to determine the national source of a product.Current provisions in the deal reportedly do not prevent countries from routing, through other countries, products on which India would maintain higher tariffs.

Therefore India needs to work on reforms and frame policies to prepare the economy for facing global competition in future so that India will not face such a situation in negotiations of trade agreements.

Reforms needed to improve India’s trade and commerce capabilities:

- Strengthen Existing Agreements: The trade and investment agreements with ASEAN, Japan and Korea, as well as its bilateral arrangements with Malaysia and Singapore must be strengthened.
- Marketing Products: The marketing of Indian products to existing favourable markets, as well as other countries where India has a low export presence.
- The Indian industry, which has a business in these markets, can benefit from targeted promotional strategies given that Indian products are competitive and favoured there.
- Export Diversification: Increasing the exports in Africa, a rapidly growing continent which enjoys almost 9% of the export share, as well as Latin America, currently at a low 3%. West Asia has also been an expanding market where India enjoys synergies.
- The export strategy for India requires a two-pronged approach, focussing on both enhancing domestic competitiveness and undertaking targeted promotional activities.
- Deeper Economic Reforms: Must be initiated particularly in factor markets of land, labour and capital.It will provide the much-needed impetus to overall manufacturing investments.For domestic manufacturing, lowering costs of doing business, building the right infrastructure, ensuring faster and more efficient trade facilitation at the borders, etc.
- Targeted Export Promotion: Provide information on markets to their manufacturers and exporters, especially small enterprises, and assisting them with marketing efforts. Create dedicated agencies and establish offices overseas equipped with professional marketing expertise that will undertake export promotion and to link buyers with Indian exporters in major markets across the world.
- External Integration Strategy: The country needs to keep its interests on the table.
- The road to further expansion of its exports to RCEP member nations is very much still open, given that India already has trade and investment agreements with 12 of them.Utilising existing agreements better while proactively exploring new opportunities in other geographies will diversify both our markets as well as our export basket.

Conclusion:

A section of Indian industry felt that being part of RCEP would have allowed the country to tap into a huge market. Some like pharmaceuticals, cotton yarn and the services industry were confident of making substantial gains. Therefore it becomes imperative that India through institutional and functional reforms builds the capacity of Indian industry to take on world market as India cannot remain isolated from the world for long and in the end It would hurt Indian industry more if the same situation persists.



18. 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.

Demand of the question: You need to elaborate in brief about the way India and US are natural partners in the initial part of the answer and then focus on critical irritants in the relations and elucidate how these are not letting partnership to reach full potential.

Introduction:

Two decades of sustained focus and growing ambition have powered historic gains in US-India relations and given rise to a strategic partnership that is strong, forward-looking, and ripe with potential where shared democratic values anchor the US-India partnership and converging interests increasingly unite them in a “strategic handshake.”

Body:

Since the end of Cold war, the relationship between US and India has blossomed into a natural partnership for the some of the following reasons –

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

The growing potential is also evident due to the following developments in recent times -

- The conclusion of landmark civil nuclear pact in 2008 was the high point of the bilateral ties and defence relationship and remains the defining element of this relationship even today.
- India's elevation to Strategic Trade Authorization-1 list in 2018 allows it to import high-end sensitive technologies like armed drones.
- Bestowing STA-1 status can be seen as a logical step after the United States recognized India as a “major defence partner” in 2016, enabling sale of high-end technology at par with the US allies.
- 2018 saw the inauguration of India-US 2+2 ministerial dialogue, signing of Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement to facilitate real-time information sharing between both countries, altering the nomenclature of US Pacific Command to the US Indo-Pacific Command and consensus on the first tri-service exercise.

These agreements demonstrate the intent of the United States and India to forge a security partnership in the Indo-Pacific to meet the challenges of these turbulent times. At the same time, there have critical irritants in the Indo-US relations, some of which can be seen below:

1. Trade imbalance in favour of India: President Trump's major agenda has been to reduce Trade deficits with developing countries and this includes India, which has more than \$21 billion in trade surplus with US in 2018.

2. 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.
3. Visa Restrictions by US: This directly affects the movement of Indian students and professionals (particularly the Indian IT Sector) to US.
4. Concerns of US about India's IPR regime in particular the Section 3(D) of Indian Patents Act (prevents ever greening of patents) and the Compulsory Licensing regime.
5. 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.
6. Disputes in WTO related to solar subsidies and agricultural subsidies.
7. The US has criticised India's data localisation and the draft e-commerce policy, calling it "most discriminatory and trade-distortive".
8. Strategic Divergence with regards to Russia:
 - a. Threat of imposition of CAATSA by US caused trouble w.r.t acquisition of S-400 Triumph system from Russia.
 - b. Iran: Tensions between US-Iran has led to pressure on India (by US) to refrain from buying oil from Iran.
 - c. 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.
 - d. Pakistan: US dependence on Pakistan to handle Taliban in Afghanistan and the subsequent financial aid to Pakistan's military is not supported by India.

Like security issues, trade and commerce issues too have substantial room for bargain and it is the willingness to discuss differences that makes the two democratic nations, India and the US, natural partners.

Conclusion:

As US-India ties enter seemingly turbulent waters, both nations need to recognize the relationship's value for the strategic underpinnings of their respective foreign policies. Each nation must keep the big picture in mind in dealing with the inevitable irritants in their ever-expanding engagement. After all, it is the willingness to discuss differences that makes two democracies like India and the US natural partners.

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

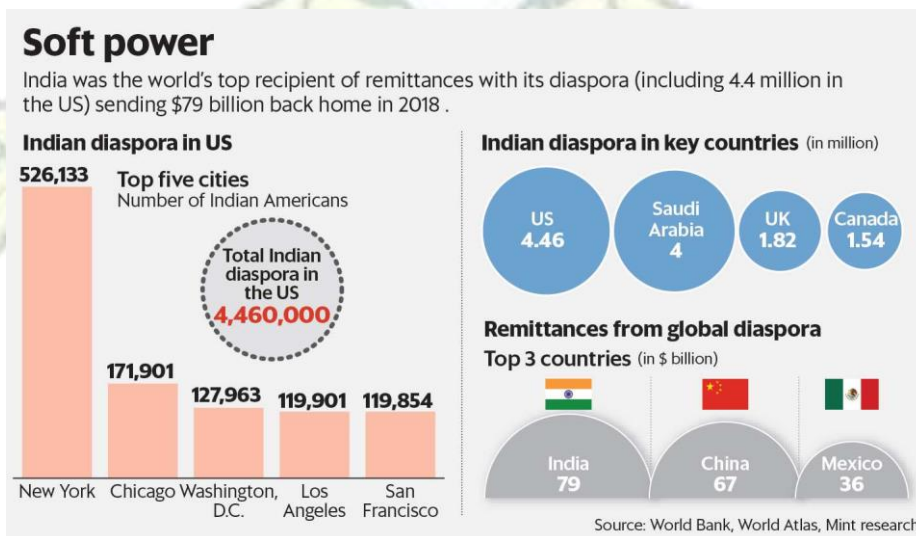
Demand of the question: Elaborate more upon the 1st statement in the question with the help of stats and statistics and give your view regarding it while also substantiating your view with examples. It is also important to provide a comprehensive overview to the statement along with understanding of basic concepts involved.

Introduction:

Indians living overseas constitute one of the world’s largest, most dynamic and oldest Diaspora communities. They constitute a series of migrations spanning several decades and centuries where according to new estimates released by the United Nations, India was the leading country of origin of international migrants in 2019 with a 17.5 million strong diaspora.

Body:

- The Indian diaspora at 17.5 million around the world, is the largest in the world. It is not just the largest but also among the most successful diaspora’s in the world.
- It is their ability to integrate and assimilate that makes them stand apart from other immigrants in the recent times —and this is the reason why they have been more easily accepted by the native population and politicians.
- Despite increasing recognition of the importance of Indian diaspora in international politics, there has not been any serious attempt to incorporate this phenomenon into India’s foreign policy formulation process until recently. The diagram below details some of the facts related to the issue -



- The modern Indian diaspora is old and spread across the world. From the bonded labours from the eastern Uttar Pradesh and Bihar to the erstwhile British colonies of Fiji, Mauritius, South Africa, East Africa, and the Caribbean, to the peasantry and Dalit diaspora of Punjab to the workers from the coastal states such as Kerala, Indians settled all around the world even during the colonial period and in the immediate aftermath of Independence.
- The Indian diaspora has been economically successful and often among the most-educated and prosperous communities in the host countries. Over time they have come to wield significant influence in the native societies due to their economic power if not demography.
- Three of the biggest US tech companies are headed by Indian Americans and there is a growing number of leaders in pharma/health/financial services in the US. It shows the talent that exists in the Indian American community, and how they are succeeding and giving back to the US, and India.
- Besides the hard economic and political power, the diaspora spreads the culture, awareness and soft-power of India by favourably influencing the local society and politics.
- The role of the Dalit diaspora in instituting chairs in the name of the Dr Ambedkar or installing his statues in universities across the world and celebration of the Ambedkar Jayanti by the United Nations is noticeable and serves as the vehicle of spread of Indian political ideas to other countries and has a long-lasting and deep influence.
- Indian Government has taken community engagements to a new level by involving the top leaders of the host country in these mega events. It has successfully leveraged the influence and numbers of the Indian diaspora to ensure the presence of the foreign leaders at these diaspora events. It makes sure that international political leaders take the welfare of Indian diaspora and Indian concerns more seriously.

At the same time, diaspora also has influence on Indian politics where in the week before the General Election in 2019, a survey released its findings on the concerns of young Indians living outside India. Key issues raised through the survey included the ability to obtain dual citizenship, hold representation in the Indian Parliament, and be given the right to vote in elections from outside India. It's evident that the diaspora have a strong sense to remain active in Indian politics and thus alter political discourse in India as well.

Conclusion:

It is needless to say that in a hyper-connected world, the diplomacy between countries has taken a new shape with the strengthening of public diplomacy. Under the present global conditions, government has been successful in mobilising the Indian diaspora towards the same.

20. 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:

The question demands candidates to write about the G-20 and its mandate. It also expects candidates to write about whether G-20 is a success or not.

Introduction:

The G20 is an informal group of 19 countries and the European Union, with representatives of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. The G20 membership comprises a mix of the world's largest advanced and emerging economies, representing about two-thirds of the world's population, 85% of global gross domestic product, 80% of global investment and over 75% of global trade.

Body:

Formed in 1999, the G-20 has a mandate to promote global economic growth, international trade, and regulation of financial markets. Because the G-20 is a forum, not a legislative body, its agreements and decisions have no legal impact, but they do influence countries' policies and global cooperation.

- After its inaugural leaders' summit in 2008, the leaders of the G-20 announced that the group would replace the G-8 as the main economic council of nations.
- The G-20 is a leading forum for global financial issues whose members include major developed and developing economies.
- Although not a legislative body, its discussions help shape financial policy within each of its member countries.
- Recent agenda items at G-20 meetings have included crypto currency, food security, and trade wars.

The G20 focuses on a broad agenda of issues of global importance, although, issues pertaining to the global economy dominate the agenda, additional items have become more important in recent years, like: Financial markets, tax and fiscal policy trade etc.

A look at the achievements of G-20:

- Flexible: With only 20 members, the G20 is agile enough to make prompt decisions and to adapt to new challenges.
- Inclusive: The inclusion every year of invited countries, international organizations and civil society organization through engagement groups allow for a broader and more comprehensive perspective when assessing global challenges and building consensus to address them.
- Coordinated action: The G-20 has also played a crucial role in strengthening the international financial regulatory system, including better coordination across countries.

- Facilitated an increase in lending from multilateral development banks of US\$235 billion at a time when private sector sources of finance were diminished.
- Major achievements of the G20 include quick deployment of emergency funding during the 2008 global financial crisis.
- It also works for reforms in international financial institutions by improving oversight of national financial institutions. Such as G20 driven reforms to the international tax system, through the G20/OECD Base Erosion and Profit Shifting (BEPS) project and implementation of tax transparency standards.
- G20 played a critical role in the ratification of the Trade Facilitation Agreement, with the WTO estimating it could contribute up to somewhere between 5.4 and 8.7% to global GDP by 2030 if the agreement were fully implemented.
- Better Communication: G20 bring World's top developed and developing countries together to bring consensus and reasoning into decision making through discussion.

Challenges before G-20:

- No Enforcement mechanism: The G20's toolkit ranges from simple exchanges of information and best practices to agreeing common, measurable targets, to coordinated action. None of this is achieved without consensus, nor is it enforceable, except for the incentive of peer review and public accountability.
- Not legally binding: the decisions are based on discussions and consensus which culminates in the form of declarations. These declarations are not legally binding. It's just an advisory or consultative group of 20 members.

Conclusion:

The G20 cannot be a panacea for the world's problems. But over the past 10 years, the G20 has been an important forum for international cooperation. Effective global governance, like the G20, is essential as rising powers seek opportunities to influence and contribute to the global order.