

1. What are your views on the recent military standoff between India and China? What is the geo-strategic background of the standoff? Examine.

Demand of the question:

It expects candidates to express their views on the recent military standoff between India and China. It also expects to probe deeper in to details of the geo-strategic background of the standoff.

Introduction:

India and China are demographically two very unique countries, only two with billion plus (population) categories. Global order is observing parallel but differential rise of two countries with unprecedented disagreements over border disputes due to the expansionist policy of China based on its ancestral claims.

Body:

Indian and Chinese troops have engaged in aggressive melee, face-offs and skirmishes at locations along the LAC in Galwan valley, in eastern Ladakh including near the disputed Pangong Lake in Ladakh and the Tibet Autonomous Region, and near the border between Sikkim and the Tibet Autonomous Region.

Views on Military standoff between India and China:

- It is part of China's 'nibble and negotiate policy'. Their aim is to ensure that India does not build infrastructure along the LAC. It is their way of attaining a political goal with military might, while gaining more territory in the process.
- China views India's assertions regarding Gilgit-Baltistan, as an implicit attack on the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), China's flagship programme. This view of China contradicts India's sovereignty claim and threatens security infrastructure.
- The resulted casualties across the LAC are not acceptable as Indian soldiers martyred along LAC due to China's wrongful approach to gain access of the Indian territory.
- The escalated tensions across LAC have affected India's trade relations with China as India's trade deficit with China stands at \$48.66 billion in 2019-20.
- In turn it also affected Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in India, as FDI from China in India has dipped to \$163.78 million in 2019-20 from \$229 million in 2018-19.
- Citing the "emergent nature of threats" from mobile applications, including popular ones of Chinese origin such as TikTok, ShareIt, UC Browser, and Weibo, the government has banned 59 apps. The app ban has resulted in loss of investment from Chinese investors in India.
- Hardly any country in Asia is willing to openly confront China, and side with India, due to China's strong economic ties with other nations.
- Recent events, suggest that escalations are highly possible. Both sides have substantial—and growing—military deployments along a mostly disputed border. This in turn has affected the peace across the border and affected lives of people who are living along the border areas.

- However, through recent skirmishes along the LAC India has shown to China that it will not take step back when it comes to securing its sovereignty.

Geo-strategic background of the standoff:

- The Indian and Chinese armies are engaged in the standoff in Pangong Tso, Galwan Valley, Demchok and Daulat Beg Oldie in eastern Ladakh. Following figure 1 represents the Disputed area.



figure 1

- A sizable number of Chinese Army personnel even transgressed into the Indian side of the de-facto border in several areas including Pangong Tso.
- The actions on the northern bank of Pangong Tso are not just for territorial gains on land, but enhanced domination of the resource-rich lake.
- The stand-off at Ladakh's Galwan Valley has escalated in due to the infrastructure projects that India has undertaken in the recent years. India is building a strategic road through the Galwan Valley - close to China - connecting the region to an airstrip.
- China is opposed to any Indian construction in the area. In 1962, a stand-off in the Galwan area was one of the biggest flashpoints of the 1962 war.
- The border, or Line of Actual Control, is not demarcated, and China and India have differing ideas of where it should be located, leading to regular border "transgressions." Often these don't escalate tensions; a serious border standoff like the current one is less frequent, though this is the fourth since 2013.
- Both countries' troops have patrolled this region for decades, as the contested 2,200-mile border is a long-standing subject of competing claims and tensions, including a brief war in 1962.

Steps to resolve the issue:

- Clarification on LAC: India should take the initiative to insist on a timely and early clarification of the LAC. Pockets of difference of alignment as perceived by each side have to be clearly identified and these areas demilitarised by both sides through joint agreement pending a settlement of the boundary.
- Scaling down of military contact: India must stand resolute and firm in the defence of territory in all four sectors of the border. Contacts between the

two militaries through joint exercises and exchanges of visits of senior Commanders should be scaled down for the foreseeable future.

- Strategic communication: The responsibility of effective strategic communication too rests with political leadership. It is important to perceive the signals of transgressions on a serious note and adopt adequate strategy with clear instructions for forces.

Conclusion:

As our Foreign minister has said that, "Reaching an understanding with China is a big challenge"; we need find out more ways to open talks with China regarding border issues and Devolving a comprehensive China strategy with strong political direction, mature deliberation and coherence are keys to handling the any escalating situation in future.

2. What diplomatic measures were taken in the recent past by India to isolate Pakistan at various global forums? Have these measures been effective? Critically examine.

Demand of the question:

It expects students to write about India's diplomatic measures to isolate Pakistan at various global forums. It also expects to probe both sides of effect of the measures.

Introduction:

Bilateral relations of India and Pakistan have been under the shadow of misunderstanding, tensions and wars since 1947. To counter Pakistan, India has embarked upon a bi-dimensional strategy towards Pakistan. First, it has intensified its campaign to diplomatically isolate at various global forums. Secondly, it has inclined to use hard force when faced with terrorism.

Body:

Diplomatic measures taken by India to isolate Pakistan at various global forums:

- After the Pulwama attack steps to isolate Pakistan at various global forums gained momentum.
- India's first official response to the Pulwama attack did include an appeal to all members of the international community to support the listing of Azhar under the UNSC committee and to ban terror groups operating from Pakistani territories.
- The attempt was to expose Pakistans terror supporting policy, isolate it from the world and force Pakistan to take "visible, credible and prompt" action against JeM and other terror groups operating from Pakistani soil.
- SAARC: Contentious relationship between the two important members of SAARC is the reason behind an unsuccessful journey of SAARC so far.
- Last year, India excluded Pakistan from the list of SAARC member countries which became part of its state-of-the art National Knowledge Network (NKN) for sharing scientific databases and remote access to advanced research facilities.

- For regional groupings in South Asian region, India has shifted its focus from SAARC to BIMSTEC to isolate Pakistan in the regional scenario.
- Also India successfully isolated Pakistan on the Kashmir issue at the United Nations (UN) . At UN Pakistan's persistent, intensive diplomacy to internationalise the Kashmir issue faced checkmate with 189 of the 193 members repudiating it.
- India also strived hard to pursue Financial Action Task force to include Pakistan in its black list, however due to some unavoidable circumstances this move of India to isolate Pakistan at this global forum has not yielded fruits as FATF continued to mention Pakistan in its grey list.

Effect of measure to isolate Pakistan:

- India has achieved success in getting Pakistan isolated even among Islamic countries, as the organisation of Islamic countries invited India for 50th anniversary meet despite the pressure from Pakistan's side.
- The isolation of Pakistan at global levels will help stop granting any aid to Pakistan, as it is reported for many of the times that Pakistan has used international aid to fund its terror activities across the border.
- It will also put a check on the terror activities, as most of the flow of fund by Pakistan to terror outfits will stop.
- It will also ensure to hamper Pakistan economically in international relations as Pakistan's trade with other countries may get affected tremendously.
- Its stature at the international forums, which in turn helps India to have greater and legitimate say when it comes to Kashmir issue on the International forum.
- It will also help to promote India's more trustworthy image on the international forum.

Though these measures are useful to some extent following factors played a pivotal role in nullifying India's efforts to isolate Pakistan:

- China factor: The China has supported Pakistan on Kashmir issue due to its vested interest in the China-Pakistan economic corridor.
- China also funded Pakistan when all other countries rejected an aid to China.
- The roots of Islamic fundamentalist terrorism are so deep in Pakistan that it became Pakistan's own headache. e.g. Attack on school in Peshawar.

For any meaningful conversation to take place between India and Pakistan terrorism has to come to an end. Also India needs to adopt more options to expose Pakistan at global forums rather than just opting to isolate Pakistan on global level.

- Both countries can continue to have dialogues through forums such as SCO as big Asian Nations are part of it.
Also, demanding a proof from Pakistan that it has left the policy of supporting terrorism, so that a mutually beneficial trade can be started.
- Initiatives such as Kartrarpur corridor can go a long way in improving relations if implemented successfully.

Conclusion:

As on the global forum Pakistan is known as a "Mad child with loaded gun", it becomes the responsibility of India to adopt a more modern and versatile approach to secure the sovereignty and integrity of India.

3. The internal affairs have had a substantial bearing on India's relations with the neighbours. Elucidate.

Demand of the question:

It expects candidates to give a clear account of how and why the internal affairs of India have a substantial bearing of India's relations with neighbours.

Introduction:

Since independence India's foreign policy has shifted manifold from the choice of Non-alignment during the Cold War period, and now transited to becoming an important Western strategic partner and providing a counterweight to China. The internal affairs in the regional international relations have played a prominent role in shaping India's relations with the neighbouring countries.

Body:

India's relations with its South Asian neighbours has always been influenced by the domestic internal factors such as ethnicity, religion, etc. Substantial bearing of internal affairs affected international relation with India's neighbours as follow:

- The relationship between India and Sri Lanka is more than 2,500 years old.
- Indian Tamils of Sri Lanka are Tamil people of Indian origin in Sri Lanka. They are also known as Hill Country Tamils, Up-Country Tamils or simply Indian Tamils. Though their numbers are much lesser as compared to Indian Origin Tamils (IOTs), they are economically prosperous and are well placed.
- Their Minority rights issue have affected India's relations with Sri Lanka. In recent times to assert their strong leadership over Sri Lanka, Sri Lankan political leaders are seen to be more pro-China, by sidelining India. Also there is issue of fishing territory for fishermen in the region.
- The issue of Bangladeshi immigrants in the states of Assam and West-bengal has affected the relations between India-and Bangladesh.
- As the Bangladesh Prime Minister raised concerns over roll out of the National Register of Citizens (NRC) in Assam, an exercise carried to identify genuine Indian citizens living in Assam and weed out illegal Bangladeshis.
- The Issue over the assertion of Pakistan's territorial claim of Kashmir and threat to India's sovereignty by this claim, has affected India's relation with Pakistan tremendously.
- Also the issue of drugs in the regions of Punjab and Rajasthan and human trafficking across the LOC is cause of concern for India's relations with that of Pakistan.
- The issues of AFSPA in the North eastern regions and in valley Kashmir has also impacted India's relations with neighbouring countries.

- Chinese aggression across LAC due to India's infrastructure projects has also affected India-China relations in recent Past. As infrastructure building across the Border is an internal matter of India.
- The issue of Madheshi origin people and their lineage with India has affected India's relations with Nepal. As Identity politics with India is also visible within the country.
- Nepali citizens from the Terai (Madhesis) feel discriminated as being "Indian".
- The issue of Rohingya migrants in Myanmar and India's stand on Rohingya's affected India's relations with Myanmar. Also some of the insurgent groups in the regions of North-east have also affected India's relations with Myanmar.
- Internal Security is a major concern for India; Indo-Myanmar border is porous and lightly policed which is exploited by terrorist outfits and insurgent groups from North Eastern part of India eg. supply of trained cadres, arms trafficking.

Though some of the positive developments have also been observed in the past

- As India-Myanmar joint operation destroyed several militant camps of Arakan Army on the Indo-Myanmar border.
- India and Bangladesh share 4096.7 km. of border, which is the longest land boundary that India shares with any of its neighbours. The India-Bangladesh Land Boundary Agreement (LBA) came into force following the exchange of instruments of ratification in June 2015.
- India is also investing into Sri Lanka's infrastructure development in the Northern and Eastern provinces. Which will in turn help the people of Indian origin Tamils in Sri Lanka.

In this way the internal affairs have a substantial bearing on the relations with neighbouring countries. Certainly some steps are needed to be taken to improve the relations with neighbouring countries:

- India needs to focus more on its traditional and cultural ties to improve relations with Sri Lanka. Mutual recognition of each other's concerns and interests can improve the relationship between both countries.
- As both countries have a democratic setup there is scope for broadening and deepening the ties.
- We need to formulate a constructive mechanism to solve the immigrant and refugee issues in India, so that relations with neighbours such as Myanmar and Bangladesh can be improved.
- Proper and suitable use of the regional groupings such as SAARC and BIMSTEC to improve relations between the Nations can prove to be more useful.
- Strengthening bilateral ties by conducting bilateral military exercises with neighbouring Nations can be useful to tackle threat of terrorism. e.g. SURYAKIRAN with Nepal and Hand in Hand with China.
- Staring a joint infrastructural developmental projects will also prove to be helpful so that internal affairs of country can be tackled neatly.
- Strict adherence to the PANCHSHEEL policy approach should be adopted.

Conclusion:

As India's foreign policy has entered in to era of "Act east" from "Look East", not addressing the concerns of our neighbours due to the internal affairs might seems to be wrong move. Hence, collaborating with the neighbours for a better and prosperous future should be the way forward.

4. How are strategic alliances taking shape in the Indo-Pacific region? What are the underlying factors of the evolving alliances? Examine.**Demand of the question:**

It expects candidates to write about the way in which strategic alliances are taking shape in Indo-Pacific region. It also expects to mention the reasons for evolution of such alliance in detail.

Introduction:

Strategic Alliances are formed between two or more countries to counter a common adversary. They have been an important research focus in the theory of international relations. It is basically a relationship in which both nations have common interests of security, defence and investment.

Body:

First time, the term 'Indo Pacific' was used by the Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe on Indian soil in 2007. Then, he said that there is a connection between the Indian Ocean and the Pacific Ocean. Indo-Pacific is strategic central location on one of the busiest maritime trade route of economic significance and wide variety of biodiversity existing in this region. Hence, many of the strategic alliances are taking shape in the Indo-Pacific region as follows:

- India and the US entered into a Strategic Partnership in 2004, strategic partnership became the building block of a deeper bilateral relationship that now included civil nuclear activities, civil space programmes, high technology trade and missile defence.
- India and Australia have stepped up bilateral relations to a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership and have concluded nine arrangements including Mutual Logistics Support for their militaries amid China's aggression in the Indo-Pacific region.
- India and Japan established a 'Strategic and Global Partnership' in 2006. Japan's appreciation of India as a strategic partner stems out of the geopolitical concerns it faces with regard to China's rise and the North Korean threat.
- India also has strategic partnership with Indonesia. "Shared Vision of Maritime Cooperation in the Indo Pacific region" with Indonesia has been signed. Also India-Malaysia relations have made impressive strides in recent years through strategic partnerships.
- The Indo-Pacific democracies of Japan, Indonesia, India and the Republic of Korea are of first order importance to Australia, both as major bilateral

partners in their own right and as countries that will influence the shape of the regional order.

- A 'Special Strategic Partner' of Australia, Japan is a democratic, trade-oriented nation with which Australia shared values and interests, including through Australia's alliances with the United States.
- The Quadrilateral Security Dialogue is an informal strategic forum between the United States, Japan, Australia and India that is maintained by semi-regular summits, information exchanges and military drills between member countries.
- Here QUAD is emerged as a formation of special strategic importance in the Indo-Pacific region.
- Also the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), is an international organisation consisting of 22 states bordering the Indian Ocean. Some of its member countries also border the pacific ocean.

Underlying factors for evolution of such Alliances:

- If any region is resource rich then disputes can occur between countries over access to such resources. For instance, Indo-pacific region is very rich region in terms of natural resources (fisheries, oil, gas) as well as mineral resources.
- Strategic central location for suitability of trade and affordable way to access to transport can play a role. For example, About 3.5 trillion dollars international trade flows through the South China Sea.
- Trade of some of the major economies like China, Japan, Korea or the west coast of the United States goes through the South China Sea.
- Any country can be heavily relied upon the major trade route. For instance, About 50% of India's trade is conducted through the South China Sea.
- Also many naval exercises of different Nations such as the United States, countries of ASEAN, Japan, Korea and Vietnam are conducted in this region.
- To contain the assertion of one county: Economically, China is leading the Indo-pacific region. Also, in general, China has a record of making countries fall into line with it either through warnings or by giving bribe in the form of investment.
- China is claiming larger part of South China sea as their own which comes under the maritime boundaries of other countries.
- Hence, due these kind of varied reasons such strategic alliances come in to picture.

Conclusion:

Indo-Pacific region due to its centrality holds immense trade and resource potential. Hence, it becomes imperative to form strategic alliances in those regions which are pivotal for growth and survival of Nation. The alliances should also be formed in such a way that they are mutually beneficial to each other.

5. What are India's interests in the Middle-East? How have India's relations taken shape with the Islamic World in the recent past? Discuss.

Demand of the question:

It expects candidates to write about the India's interest in the Middle-East countries. It also expects to write about how India's relations have taken shape with the Islamic world in the recent past.

Introduction:

India promotes its policy outreach towards the middle east with its 'Think west policy'. It suggests a new push towards more concrete strategic policies for West Asia. The interplay among these Middle East nations offers India with new avenues of cooperation other than traditional focus on energy and labour. 'Act East' needs to be matched with 'Think West'.

Body:

Close high level interaction has started now between India and Middle East countries. With the advent of the new millennium, there has been an extraordinary turnaround in the relationship between the Middle East countries and India:

- Collectively, the G.C.C. countries have become India's preeminent oil and gas supplier and leading trade partner.
- Diaspora: Large Indian diaspora in West Asia and particularly in the Persian Gulf is present, Indians are the largest expatriate group in each of the countries with population of 9,500,000 where 3,050,000 Indians live and work in Saudi Arabia constituting the largest number of Indian passport holders abroad, followed by 2,800,000 in the U.A.E.
- No major power has the kind of people-to-people socio-cultural compatibility and socio-economic interdependence with countries of the Middle East region, in particular with G.C.C. countries that India has.
- The deadly terrorist attacks in November 2008 in Mumbai was a watershed — the G.C.C. countries finally recognized the potential dangers to the region of Pakistani-sponsored terrorism against India.
- Indian investments in Chabahar port of Iran, and high dependence on Iran for oil imports.
- Being geo strategically important for India, and unstable Afghanistan can affect India's security as well as its economy.
- Also India has gained access to strategically important port of Duqm of Oman.
- Also, most of the natural gas is imported from the Persian Gulf. However, this can be imported from other places.
- Opportunist China inroads in Central Asia and Eurasia through its Belt and Road Initiative. This continental encirclement of India poses threat to it.
- Presently, India's foreign exchange reserves are relatively comfortable, at over \$450 billion, and can easily cover 9-10 months' imports at current prices. However, an increase in the price of oil would lead to an increase in the Current Account Deficit and erosion of this buffer
- Remittances: To India, largest global remittances of around \$85 billion come annually and almost more than 50% comes from this region (contributing to around 2.6% of the Gross Domestic Product). Any turbulence in middle east

will expatriate our nationals from this region leading to a big dent on our forex reserves.

- Strategic connectivity interests of India might get affected. This includes the port of Chabahar in Iran, linking India to Afghanistan and Central Asia.
- Last but not least, after Iran, India has perhaps the largest number of the world's Shia population.

India's relations with Middle east nations in recent past:

- There is a strong and growing multifaceted strategic partnership between India and Middle East countries, as sketched out in the many agreements they have forged in a wide variety of fields, ranging from energy, trade, and investment to counterterrorism and defence cooperation.
- India's relations with Iran are on the upswing as well. e.g. International North south Transport corridor and Chabahar port development.
- Iraq's economic relationship with India has been among Iraq's top three global economic partnerships in recent years and is growing rapidly. It is now the second largest oil supplier to India.
- In order to boost maritime cooperation with the Persian Gulf countries India sent ICGS Vijit, a Vishwas class offshore patrol vessel, to a 4 nations friendly visit including Bahrain.
- Israel is one of India's most important strategic partner and major source of its military hardware.
- The relations between India and Saudi Arabia improved over the years as the number of Indian pilgrims performing Hajj in Saudi Arabia has been increased to 200,000 every year. The Saudi prince expected that the Saudi investment in India may reach \$100 billion in the next two years.
- When it comes to UAE, In the financial year 2018-19, India-UAE bilateral trade grew by over 20% to reach US\$59.9 billion.
- The visit by Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif was also crucial for India, since the thaw between the West and Iran now gives New Delhi the opportunity to again pursue economic ties and explore certain projects that had been placed on the backburner. India is heavily dependent on Iran for energy, with the latter already India's second largest supplier of crude oil.
- Also India conducts variety of armed forces exercises with Middle east countries. For instance, Al Nagah III is the third in the series of the bilateral joint exercise between India and Oman.
- India's ties with Saudi Arabia are no longer limited by India's tensions with Pakistan. This enabled the two countries to sign a defence pact during the crown prince's visit.
- However, recent labour law amendment in Saudi Arabia have raised concerns over the loss of jobs for Indians, as it protects jobs for National workers.
- Also some of the middle east countries such as Turkey have raised concerns over rising communal tensions in India and also pointed out towards so called atrocities in the Kashmir valley over religious minorities.

In these unprecedented times following actions can be taken to improve relations between India and middle-east Asian countries so that mutually beneficial international relations can be culminated.

- **Mediating Role:** India has a very strong case to appeal for de-escalation between USA and Middle east nations as it had equity on both sides (with a trade of over \$200 billion) and large Diaspora in Middle east and USA. Hence, India should play a proactive role in mediation for long-term gains. However, India talked to both sides but is avoiding playing the role of a mediator.
- **Substitutes for Oil:** India should be relooking at options for oil supply in the worst-case scenario of disruption in oil supplies.
- **Investing in renewable energy sources** such as Solar energy will be good option. e.g. International Solar alliance.
- **Afghan Peace:** India needs to increase its engagement with Afghanistan in order to contain the increasing role of Pakistan in Afghanistan. Which will be beneficial for India in two ways as it would keep aside Pakistan and it will help India to improve relations with Afghanistan.

Conclusion:

There is a strong and growing multifaceted partnership between India and Middle East countries, as sketched out in the many agreements they have forged in a wide variety of fields, ranging from energy, trade, and investment to counterterrorism and defence cooperation. Hence, Middle East offers real opportunities for India to grow and develop in mutually beneficial way.

6. What is G-20? What is its mandate? How does it affect India's economic interests? Discuss.

Demand of the question:

It's a straightforward question as it demands candidates to write about the G-20 and its mandate. It also expects candidates to write about the impact of G-20 on India's economic interests.

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.

G-20's effect on India's economic interest:

- India has been a founding member of G20 process and has played an active role in proposing new ideas and finding solutions.
- India will be hosting the summit in 2022 when India completes 75 years of independence. So it is going to be an important landmark event for the country.
- Though G-20 as a forum discusses varieties of issues, major issues which are discussed by G-20 which affect India's economic interest are terrorism, Economic offenders, taxation, and new digital technologies.
- Economic offenders: Dealing with the economic offenders has been emphasized by India as a serious policy challenge for India and other countries in G20.
- Economic offenders often commit the crime in one country and flee to another to escape the legal process at home. In this context, India proposed this idea and sought cooperation from other G20 countries.
- Taxation: Global taxation is another issue for G20 to deal with. G20 has already taken cognizance of this fact and has come up with the Base Erosion and Profit Sharing (BEPS) framework.
- The complications arise from the spread of global supply chains as activity happens at different levels and at different places.
- Very often, it is difficult to assess the origin of a particular activity for tax, like when and how to tax the entities engaged in tax evasion. Hence, these kind of framework help Indian economy to formulate policies in such a way that tax evasion can be curtailed.
- E-commerce mostly involves transactions without adequate information about the place of these transactions. G-20 like body if looks in to it then it becomes a major tool to avoid tax evasion on the world scale. For instance, Panama paper leak.
- The Fourth Industrial Revolution is going to be driven by those digital technologies like artificial intelligence, internet of things, block chain, etc.
- Although the benefits of digital technologies for economic growth and social development are well-known, there are certain issues such as privacy, data security and digital governance which are to be properly understood.
- For instance, artificial intelligence involves a lot of ethical issues which need to be tackled properly with international cooperation. Here G-20 impact India's economic interest by facilitating discussion on the world forum and it

also facilitates to formulate draft framework to govern emerging technologies on world economic scale.

- Terrorism: To contain terrorism requires global action, particularly regarding the money that flows into terrorist network from different parts of the world. G20 has provided platform to discuss this issue on international table.

Conclusion:

The world is so interconnected and integrated now that countries have to work together to resolve all global issues. Growing economic interdependence and spread of global supply chain are a reality rather than hype. Hence, G20 can provide the vision to bind all the countries especially the emerging markets like India, to support coordinated actions on major global economic issues and emerge strong on economic terms.

7. What has been the general trend of India's Africa policy? What are your views on the same? Discuss.

Demand of the question:

It expects candidates to observe and write the general trend of India's Africa policy. It also expects to express your views on it.

Introduction:

Africa is world's second largest continent both in terms of land and population with 55 countries which account for about 15 percent of world's population. India and Africa have a long and rich history of interaction marked by cultural, economic and political exchanges based on the principle of south cooperation.

Body:

In the recent years a number of steps have been taken to further strengthen these relations. Speaking at the Valedictory session of the national conference on India Africa Relations in changing global order India's Vice President has said that India and Africa have a lot of common interests and both have vital stakes in each other's progress, peace and prosperity.

- Political and Economic Engagement: In the last few years, Africa has been the focus of India's development assistance and also diplomatic outreach, as evident in plans to open 18 new embassies.
- Also, India-Africa trade reached \$62 billion in 2018 compared to \$39 billion during 2009-10. India's duty-free tariff preferential scheme for Least Developed Nation (LDCs) launched in 2008 has benefited 33 African states.
- Grants in Aid: After South Asia, Africa is the second-largest recipient of Indian overseas assistance with Lines of Credit (LOC) worth nearly \$10 billion (nearly 40% of the total LOC globally) spread over 100 projects in 41 countries.
- Capacity Building via E-governance Initiative: India is investing in the capacity building providing more than \$1 billion in technical assistance and training to personnel under the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) program.

- India has also invested \$100 million in the Pan-African E-Network to bridge the digital divide in Africa, leveraging its strengths in information technology.
- Security Cooperation: Approximately 6,000 Indian soldiers are deployed in UN peace-keeping missions in conflict zones in Africa.
- Cooperation on Multiple Fronts: Bilateral cooperation includes solar energy (Cooperation in International Solar Alliance) development, information technology, cybersecurity, maritime security, disaster relief, counter-terrorism and military training.
- Support in Fight Against Covid-19: Under the e-ITEC initiative, India has shared Covid-19 management strategies, training webinars exclusively aimed at training health-care professionals from Africa by Indian health experts.

Hence, on general trend if we see India's Africa policy restricted to traditional sectors of investments and is more of helping in nature. Though the investment is made in the African countries, this investment has resulted as beneficial for both countries.

Views on the India's Africa Policy:

- India's Africa policy over the past few decades has oscillated between passive and reluctantly reactive at best. Strategic apathy toward the continent was obvious on many fronts.
- Most of the countries in Africa did not feature in India's larger foreign policy matrix, but until recently there wasn't any significant attention paid to the continent.
- Indian leaders seldom travelled to African nations.
- The narrative of India's contemporary relationship with Africa is dominated by the historicity of their interactions. The century old trade partnerships, socio-cultural linkages built by a thriving diasporas, nationalist movements during the Nehruvian era that supported anti-imperial struggles, and shifting geopolitical tides with the Non-Alignment Movement (NAM).
- Beyond this rhetoric, what kept driving this relationship forward was the acquisition of critical assets by State Owned Enterprises (SOE) looking to diversify the energy basket away from West Asian nations and other commercial ventures by Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) and Multi-National Companies (MNC).

However, some changes also have been observed in the recent years as follows:

- Currently, India's forte in the continent has been developmental initiatives such as Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC), Team 9, and Pan Africa e-network among others are aimed at building institutional and human capacity as well as enabling skills and knowledge transfer.
- Conscious attempt at evoking morality to reflect an "alternate model of development" by using terms such as "win-win cooperation" to describe New Delhi's approach to Africa.
- A unique factor that sets Indian interactions apart is that there is palpable goodwill for people of Indian origin, a sense of familiarity and cultural connection, with Bollywood movies and songs often acting as a bridge.

- Whereas India's policy has focused on job creation in the countries it has invested in, China has tended to bring in its own labour causing resentment among the locals.
- The Chinese model has often been criticised for creating huge debts for the nation in which it sets up projects, the Nairobi-Mombasa rail link being one example of this.

Conclusion:

India will need to start delivering on the ground if the India-Africa partnership has to move beyond high level visits. Hence, Indian investments in Africa need to expand and diversify towards 'broad' range and not remain restricted to traditional sectors of investments. In order to keep the momentum of building political and economic ties with this increasingly important region, steps should be taken towards tailoring and funding joint projects for the sustainable development of the Africa.

8. What are India's economic and strategic interests in the ASEAN? Has India been able to tap the potential that Indo-ASEAN engagement offers? Critically comment.**Demand of the question:**

It expects candidates to write about India's economic and strategic interest in ASEAN. It also expects to write about whether India is successful in tapping the potential that Indo-ASEAN offers or not.

Introduction:

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations is a regional organization which was established to promote political and social stability amid rising tensions among the Asia-Pacific's post-colonial states. ASEAN works with motto of "One Vision, One Identity, One Community".

Body:

Economic and strategic interests of India in the ASEAN:

- 3 Cs—Culture, Connectivity and Commerce— will shape India's ties with the ASEAN bloc. India's trade with ASEAN stands at approx. 10.6% of India's overall trade.
- ASEAN is India's fourth largest trading partner. Bilateral trade between ASEAN and India has crossed US\$ 80 billion mark.
- Singapore has become India's investment and trading hub in the East.
- ASEAN occupies a central place in the security architecture of the Indo-Pacific region due to Maritime cooperation in terms of connectivity, safety and security.
- India's export to ASEAN stands at 11.28% of our total exports. The ASEAN-India Free Trade Area has been completed.
- India and ASEAN can collaborate to combat terror financing, cyber security threats, tax evasions and many more.

- India needs ASEAN support in achieving a rules-based regional security architecture. Partnership with ASEAN nations might help India counter the growing presence of China.
- ASEAN is seen as the most successful regional organisation next only to the EU. ASEAN India-Business Council (AIBC) was set up in 2003 to bring key private sector players from India and the ASEAN countries on a single platform.
- To develop connectivity through water, ASEAN and India are working on the Kaladan MultiModal Transit Transport Project. ASEAN-India cooperation in maritime domain is one of the key focus areas for growth and development of the Indo-Pacific region.
- Under New Delhi's 'Act East Policy', India has been increasing its engagements with the ASEAN.
- Delhi Declaration: To identify Cooperation in the Maritime Domain as the key area of cooperation under the ASEAN-India strategic partnership.

Potential of Indo-ASEAN relations and India's performance:

- ASEAN commands far greater influence on Asia-Pacific trade, political, and security issues than its members could achieve individually.
- It constitutes 3rd largest population in the world, of which more than half is below thirty years of age. It is also the Fourth most popular investment destination globally.
- ASEAN's share of global exports has also risen, from only 2 percent in 1967 to 7 percent by 2016, indicating the rising importance of trade to ASEAN's economic prospects.

Hence, ASEAN has tremendous potential in terms of economic and strategic partnerships. However, India's performance is of complex nature when it comes to tap potential of ASEAN:

- One major reason, among many, is a lack of agreement over product standardisation between India and most other countries in Asia.
- Exporters many times complain they are not able to sell, as their products do not meet the required quality standards required in a foreign land.
- At a time when the world economy is doing well, it is ironic that India's trade deficit has widened to \$14.88 billion in December 2017 from \$10.55 billion a year earlier.
- Between 2008 and 2016, India's trade with ASEAN region has increased faster than two of its two largest trading partners, namely, European Union and the United States
- Two way trade between India and ASEAN has moved from \$65.1 billion in 2015-2016 to \$71.6 billion 2016-2017. However, this figure is meagre in comparison to China's \$452.3 billion in 2016.
- Interestingly, in spite of all non-tariff measures and higher tariffs directed against Chinese exports, the country's trade with ASEAN has flourished. Over the last 15 years, China has emerged as first or second largest trading partner with almost all Southeast Asian countries.

Following steps are needed to be taken to improve relations with ASEAN countries:

- First, as cost of production is lower in Laos, Cambodia, and Myanmar, it means that Indian firms can gain significantly by investing in these countries.
- Investing in these regions meant a bigger market for Indian firms. ASEAN region has a combined GDP of \$2.7 trillion.
- Indian firms can evade protectionist measures targeted against their exports if they start exporting from ASEAN region.
- Investing in these regions will also ease out some of India's energy requirements, enabling the Indian to access cheaper foreign energy (oil and power) and minerals from Cambodia, Myanmar and Vietnam.
- Participating in the South-east Asian production network will allow India to increase its manufacturing base besides creating jobs for its young population.
- Also we need to open dialogue with ASEAN countries to modify the terms of Regional Comprehensive Economic Framework in such a way that it should not harm India's economy much, as India stood away from RCEP citing this reason.

Conclusion:

ASEAN region due to its demographic dividend advantage, technological advancement and wide market economy hold immense potential for growth and development of Indian sectors of economy such as horticulture, dairy etc. Hence, it's a great opportunity for India to mingle its objectives of Make in India with needs of economies in the ASEAN region, which will ensure a greater growth for Indian economy and creation of more jobs in India.

9. With many global powers getting disillusioned with the Chinese promise, India has a golden window of opportunity to become the global manufacturing hub. Comment.

Demand of the question:

It expects candidates to write about how global powers are getting disillusioned with Chinese promise and put forward both sides views that whether it's a golden window of opportunity for India to become the global manufacturing hub.

Introduction:

As tensions between India and China over the Indo-Chinese border grow, Indian government has come up with a strategy for self-reliance. Boycotting Chinese products, shifting towards local products is an essential component of that strategy. Replacing Chinese imports with the Indian home brands and gradually replace China as a global manufacturing hub in the post-COVID-19 world.

Body:

Disillusionment of global powers with China:

- The whole world is currently reeling from the effects of the recent novel coronavirus pandemic.
- It is now a well-known fact that the coronavirus pandemic has dealt a big blow to the credibility of China. Due to its hiding of data regarding Coronavirus pandemic.
- China has been one of the biggest retailers in the world but the situation has changed today due to the visible denial of the shipment entry to the ports of the US.
- China's sustained selling position in the global market is due to its lower prices and larger volumes; however, this position is expected to change depending upon the relations of China with the US and other advanced economies in the post-COVID 19 phase.
- According to the 'US- India Strategic and Partnership Forum', around 200 of American firms have thought of shifting their manufacturing from China to India. For instance, US firms like Mastercard may shift its base from China to Uttar Pradesh (India), as UP is claimed to be the hub of '90 lakh MSMEs and skilled labor'.

Hence, it opens up a golden window of opportunity for India to become a global manufacturing hub in following ways:

- Creating alternate source of manufacturing is a difficult challenge but small but systematic steps in that direction can help it to become self-reliant under the proposed 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' project. 'Make in India' schemes for promoting manufacturing of products in India shall in the short run result the replacement of production of low technology goods from China to India thereby encouraging production of local goods at a much lower price.
- This could be possible due to the announcement of the comprehensive Rs. 20 lakh crore relief and reboot economy package which would result in huge relief in taxation for small businesses.
- This will provide an incentive for the domestic manufacturing of products. This package will be particularly helpful for the MSMEs in carrying out their operations because of the collateral-free assistance worth Rs. 3 lakh crore that is being provided.
- There is a huge opportunity for India in the electronic segment including export base. The China smartphone market overtook the US market to become the second-largest smartphone market with the growth of 7 per cent.
- According to ICEA, the Indian position in terms of electronic exports has remained flat with staying at \$5 billion. A new scheme to promote electronic manufacturing, and have a worth of Rs 48,000 crore, will help India utilise the opportunity and make India a desirable alternative to China.
- Although many global manufacturers are moving out of China, their relocation to India is dependent upon the increased capacity of India in terms of manufacturing. Electric two-wheelers, e-rickshaws run from lithium-ion batteries that are imported from China.

- India succeeded in convincing Suzuki for establishing a factory of lithium-ion batteries in Gujarat. In a similar manner it needs to convince Hyundai, Panasonic, and LG for the investment plans in India in terms of the lithium-ion batteries.

However, there are some structural and infrastructural challenges which exist in the way to boost the manufacturing sector in India:

- While a massive working-age population gives India the chance to become the world's next growth titan, the country will have to work hard to translate its demographic windfall into much higher standards of living for average Indians. Economic productivity is the key.
- China has been built on infrastructure, investment and manufacturing; India has barely scratched the surface on all three.
- Today, India lags far behind China on all three fronts. India invests about 30 percent of its GDP, compared with about 50 percent in China. Manufacturing is about 20 percent of the Indian economy; it is about 30 percent of China's.
- China has arguably the best physical infrastructure outside the Western world. India's looks more like the poor country that it still is.
- Indian democracy is beyond vibrant, whereas China remains a one party state. For instance, When the Chinese government wants to build a high-speed rail line, they just acquire the land and move and compensate the adversely affected people.
- However, acquisition of land and building of project with this much of speed is less likely to happen in India.
- The manufacturing capabilities of South Asian countries also pose a challenge for India to expand its market. e.g. Vietnam:, The biggest factors contributing to the Vietnam's development is proximity to China, availability of cheap labour and its business friendly policies.

The government can replicate best practices from the South Asian countries to improve India's ranking on competitiveness. Incentives for export of electronic goods will also help. There is a need to push through long-pending legislation that aims to address the structural bottlenecks (in 4Ls: Land, Labour, Law, Liquidity) that continue to plague and hinder domestic competitiveness.

Conclusion:

India's strategy should be to boost manufacturing competitiveness and increase its share in world trade. In this pursuit, there is a need to create an infrastructure that raises the competitiveness of India's exports. Hence, the coronavirus pandemic and trade war between USA and China has opened up a golden window of opportunity for India to be the manufacturing hub of the world.

10. How is the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic impacting India's diaspora? What measures have been taken by the Government to help the distressed diaspora? Examine.

Demand of the question:

It expects candidates to write about how the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted Indian diasporas worldwide. It also expects to write about the steps taken by the Indian government to help the distressed diasporas.

Introduction:

For a nation, which prides itself on having a diaspora empire on which the sun never sets, the present global pandemic is a reminder of the trials and tribulations of past empires, which crumbled under the weight of their own wealth, glory and responsibilities.

Body:

The Indian diaspora has been a source of remittances, technology and intellectual power. Ever since the Indian economy was liberalised and began to grow at a rapid pace, the prosperous diaspora in the developed countries and the massive number of migrant workers in the Gulf became the back bone of the Indian economy.

- Covid-19 has put to the test the seriousness of the pledge of assistance and protection made by the government to every Indian abroad.
- The government shut down Indian skies to all inbound traffic on March 22, which left a large number of Indians stranded in various countries. The stranded Indians included employees working in MNC's, students went to study in abroad, migrant workers in the regions of gulf, and tourists including medical tourists and occasional visitors.
- Indians stranded abroad stared at the bleak possibility of not returning home.
- They faced evictions from hostels and hotels in certain cases due to safety measures as well as financial constraints.
- The events that followed gave the impression that the administration has a discriminatory approach towards its citizens in need overseas.
- Air India signed a contract with the four countries - Germany, Canada, France and Ireland. The contract said that Air India would return safely the citizens of four countries. But it opted to fly back empty instead of ferrying back Indians, which left everyone with a sense of betrayal.
- Added to this is the real danger of loss of lives among the diaspora, resulting in cases of deprivation and misery. Unless the spread of Coronavirus is halted and the world economy recovers, India will have a gigantic burden on its hands.
- With the growth of nationalism in different parts of the world and diminishing international cooperation, India cannot count much on external help. The United Nations itself remains paralysed on account of the arrogant approach of China. Kerala will be particularly affected as many of the people who are likely to be affected will be from the state.
- As nearly 17.5 million people of Indians live abroad, the job loss led to weakening of their financial books, in turn unfolding survival problems in front of them.
- Hunger fight: As many of the people have lost jobs due to COVID-19 induced lockdown, it led to weak financial conditions of people. Which led to be

dependent on the relatives or at help of the NGO's and Civil Society organisations.

- Large amount of remittance flow stopped due to job loss.
- Many of the stranded Indian failed to get quick medical attention in the countries where they are stuck. Leading to risk of loss of lives.
- Students faced evacuation from the Universities under the reasons of noncompliance of Online education in their education curriculum. For instance, USA initiated such process.
- In the case of stranded Indians, even the Supreme Court of India said, "stay where you're" in an observation while dealing with the plea seeking directions to the government to initiate evacuation missions.

However, In 2017, then External Affairs Minister of India said, "Even if you are stuck on Mars, the Indian Embassy will be there to help you". It was based on the glorious track record of 30-plus successful overseas evacuations by the government since Independence. Following such events 'Samudra setu' and 'Vande Bharat' mission has been launched to bring back stranded Indians:

- Vande Bharat Mission is the biggest evacuation exercise to bring back Indian citizens stranded abroad amidst the coronavirus-induced travel restrictions.
- It is also considered as the largest exercise to bring back Indian citizens since the evacuation of 177,000 from the Gulf region in the early 1990s at the start of hostilities between Iraq and Kuwait during the first Gulf War.
- The mission has given priority to Indian citizens with "compelling reasons to return" – like those whose employment have been terminated, those whose visas have expired and not expected to be renewed under the present circumstances and those who have lost family members in recent times.
- The program named Samudra Setu by Indian navy entails to bring back around two thousand Indians in two ships during the first phase of evacuation.
- INS Jalashwa and INS Magar are being operated as part of efforts to repatriate Indian nationals from foreign shores.

Conclusion:

According to Global Migration Report 2020, India continues to be the largest country of origin of international migrants with a 17.5 million-strong diaspora across the world, and it received the highest remittance of \$78.6 billion (this amounts to a whopping 3.4% of India's GDP) from Indians living abroad. Hence, it becomes important protect and take care of the interest of the Indian diaspora living abroad.

11. What is the structure and the mandate of the International Labour Organisation (ILO)? Discuss.

Demand of the question:

It's a straightforward question as it expects from candidate to write in detail about the structure and mandate of International Labour Organisation.

Introduction:

The International Labour Organization (ILO) celebrated its 100th anniversary in 2019. It is the only tripartite U.N. agency as it brings together governments, employers and workers of 187 member States, to set labour standards, develop policies and devise programmes promoting decent work for all women and men.

Body:

The unique tripartite structure of the ILO gives an equal voice to workers, employers and governments to ensure that the views of the social partners are closely reflected in labour standards and in shaping policies and programmes.

- The ILO is established in 1919 by the Treaty of Versailles as an affiliated agency of the League of Nations. It became the first affiliated specialized agency of the United Nations in 1946. It has its headquarter in Geneva, Switzerland.

Structure of ILO: The ILO accomplishes its work through three main bodies which comprise governments', employers' and workers' representatives:

- **International Labour Conference:** It sets the International labour standards and the broad policies of the ILO. It meets annually in Geneva. It is often referred to as an International Parliament of Labour. It is also a forum for discussion of key social and labour questions.
- **Governing Body:** It is the executive council of the ILO. It meets three times a year in Geneva. It takes policy decisions of ILO and establishes the programme and the budget, which it then submits to the Conference for adoption. The work of the Governing Body and the Office is aided by tripartite committees covering major industries.
- It is also supported by committees of experts on such matters as vocational training, management development, occupational safety and health, industrial relations, workers' education, and special problems of women and young workers.
- **International Labour Office:** It is the permanent secretariat of the International Labour Organization. It is the focal point for ILO's overall activities, which it prepares under the scrutiny of the Governing Body and under the leadership of the Director-General.
- Regional meetings of the ILO member States are held periodically to examine matters of special interest to the regions concerned.

Mandate of ILO:

- ILO has mandate for creation of coordinated policies and programs, directed at solving social and labour issues.
- It also has mandate for adoption of international labour standards in the form of conventions and recommendations and control over their implementation.

- It provides Assistance to member-states in solving social and labour problems.
- It also works in Human rights protection field (the right to work, freedom of association, collective negotiations, protection against forced labour, protection against discrimination, etc.).
- It also facilitates Research and publication of works on social and labour issues.
- As part of its mission, the ILO aims to achieve decent work for all by promoting social dialogue, social protection and employment creation, as well as respect for international labour standards.

So far ILO has worked as per its mandate and strived to achieve following glorious achievements:

- ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work: It was adopted in 1998, the Declaration commits member states to respect and promote eight fundamental principles and rights in four categories, whether or not they have ratified the relevant conventions.
- Core Conventions of the ILO: The eight fundamental conventions form an integral part of the United Nations Human Rights Framework, and their ratification is an important sign of member States' commitment to human rights.

However ILO faced criticism on certain issues as it lacked to address them, they are as follows:

- A universal labour guarantee that protects the fundamental rights of workers', an adequate living wage, limits on hours of work and safe and healthy workplaces.
- Guaranteed social protection from birth to old age that supports people's needs over the life cycle.
- Managing technological change to boost decent work, including an international governance system for digital labour platforms.

Conclusion:

The eight-core conventions of the ILO provide relevance and bring justice to the workers all around the world. The conventions are formulated keeping in mind the economic challenges faced by the workers of all classes. They help the workers get fair pay for their work and get the opportunity to be treated equally. It also regulates the employment of children for minimum wages. However, ILO needs to formulate policies to address the emerging challenges due to global integration so that interest of every worker is addressed.

12. There are many international organisations and programmes that work for the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger. Can you discuss at least three of them? Also, discuss their mandate and objectives.

Demand of the question:

It expects candidates to write about at least 3 International organisations and programmes which work to eliminate extreme poverty and hunger. It also expects to discuss about their mandates and objectives.

Introduction:

Poverty and hunger are closely linked, those who live in poverty are likely to suffer from hunger or malnutrition. Poverty and hunger are often caused by lack of education, employment and healthcare.

Body:

As poverty and hunger are closely linked, many of the organisations are working in the direction to achieve the target of eradication of extreme poverty and hunger. The organisations and programmes include, Oxfam International, The Organization for Poverty Alleviation and Development, Food and Agricultural organisation, United Nations World Food Programme etc. Their detailed work and along with mandate and objectives are mentioned below:

Oxfam International:

- Oxfam International is a global development organization mobilizing the power of people against poverty.
- It serves as an international confederation consisted of 19 organizations that work together with local communities in around 90 countries.
- When crisis occurs, Oxfam International helps rebuild livelihoods and works to find innovative and practical solutions for people to end their poverty.
- Oxfam International fights for a world in which an opportunity is not a privilege, but a right for everyone and in which human rights can be claimed.
- At the core of the organization's work is working with partner organizations, as well as with vulnerable women and men to end the injustices that cause poverty.
- It also conducts campaigns to raise the voices of poor on local and global agendas to influence decisions that affect them.
- During the last two years, Oxfam International worked directly with 22.3 million people across the world and provided immediate relief in times of crisis.

The Organization for Poverty Alleviation and Development:

- The Organization for Poverty Alleviation and Development (OPAD) is an international NGO that actively works on poverty alleviation by promoting human rights, sustainable development and climate change.
- The vision of the organization is to "improve the standard of living of all people by recognizing them as resources and not as victims.
- OPAD acts internationally by offering a variety of services directed towards eradicating poverty.
- The organization implements many projects of poverty eradication in developing countries by using tools such as education, economic development, health promotion and income redistribution.

- It also advocates for equal rights to economic resources amongst men and women and works with small-scale food producers, such as women, indigenous groups, family farmers and pastoralists, to improve their income and sources of livelihood.
- It supports local initiatives by promoting self-reliance amongst women, men and youth in poor countries.

Food and Agricultural Organisation:

- The Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) is a specialized agency of the United Nations that leads international efforts to defeat hunger.
- Established in 1945, the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) has its headquarters in Rome, Italy.
- It was founded with a goal to provide food security for everyone and assure that people will have access to high-quality food in sufficient quantities to achieve a healthy lifestyle.
- Every year, the FAO publishes a number of major 'State of the World' reports related to food, agriculture, forestry, fisheries and natural resources.
- Helping Governments and Development Agencies coordinate their activities which are targeted to develop and improve agriculture, fisheries, forestry and other water and land resources.
- Conducting research and providing technical assistance to various projects related to improving agricultural output and development.
- The FAO also brings out a number of publications/reports, some of which are, the State of the World, the Global Report on Food Crises, the State of Food and Agriculture, the State of the World's Forests, etc.

United Nations World Food Programme:

- Assisting almost 100 million people in around 83 countries each year, the World Food Programme (WFP) is the leading humanitarian organization saving lives and changing lives, delivering food assistance in emergencies and working with communities to improve nutrition and build resilience.
- As the international community has committed to end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition by 2030, one in nine people worldwide still do not have enough to eat. Food and food-related assistance lie at the heart of the struggle to break the cycle of hunger and poverty.
- WFP's efforts focus on emergency assistance, relief and rehabilitation, development aid and special operations. Two-thirds of our work is in conflict-affected countries where people are three times more likely to be undernourished than those living in countries without conflict.

One of the cause of hunger is poverty. It is a global social issue. As per the Asian Development Bank's figures In India, 21.9% of the population lives below the national poverty line in 2011. The SDGs aim to end all forms of hunger and malnutrition by 2030, making sure all people—especially children—have sufficient and nutritious food all year.

Conclusion:

According to the most recent estimates, in 2015, 10 percent of the world's population or 734 million people live in poverty. The reasons for poverty are manifold. However, a harmonious collaboration of government initiatives and the organisations and programmes which work for eradication of extreme poverty and hunger will yield better results in future if both strive in one direction to achieve the targets of SDG 1 and 2.

13. Do tough laws always ensure justice? Critically examine.**Demand of the question:**

It expects candidates to examine both sides of whether tough laws always ensure justice and come to a balanced conclusion.

Introduction:

Rule of Law collates the rules which are based on the principles of freedom, equality, non-discrimination, fraternity, accountability and non-arbitrariness and is certain, regular and predictable. As law and justice are interrelated terms in this modern world, it becomes important to verify whether tough laws always ensure justice or not.

Body:

Tough laws ensure justice:

- The Constitution has been made the supreme law of the country and other laws are required to be in conformity with the Constitution.
- Hence, Article 39A of the Constitution of India provides that State shall secure that the operation of the legal system promotes justice on a basis of equal opportunity, and shall, in particular, provide free legal aid, by suitable legislation or schemes or in any other way, to ensure that opportunities for securing justice are not denied to any citizen by reason of economic or other disability.
- Accordingly under NALSA act, Free legal services are provided in matters before Civil, Criminal and Revenue Courts, Tribunals or any other authority exercising judicial or quasi judicial functions.
- Articles 14 and Article 22(1) also make it obligatory for the State to ensure equality before the law and a legal system that promotes justice on a basis of equal opportunity to all.
- Whenever we see the courts can even call the high profile citizens to court and treats them at equal with the poor person as all are equal before the law. It ensures justice for the poor or underprivileged one.
- The dignity of a person is of pivotal importance when it comes to justice. Hence, when a law ensure dignity of a person/entity is restores then it's a sure justice. e.g. A prominent Bollywood actor went to jail for brutally killing the people who were sleeping on the pavements.
- It also ensures justice by giving proper compensation to the victim of any tragedy. e.g. If a gas cylinder blasts during cooking then the respective gas agency is liable to pay 50 Lakh Rs. to the victims once victim files an FIR.

Hence, the system of tough law ensures justice by providing access to justice, equality in terms of delivering justice, compensation to victims, reinstating the dignity of the victim. However, sometimes tough laws lack to ensure justice:

- Just having a tough law in place is not enough, as its effective implementation on ground matters the most. e.g. As per the prohibition of Child Marriage act, it is mandated to have age of boy be 21 and that of girl is 18 for marriage. However, According to UNICEF approximately one in four young women in India were married or in union before their 18th birthday.
- There is need of adequate machinery effective implementation of law. For instance, On average, in India the police have a vacancy of 23% (2017), and the judiciary between 20%-40% across the high court's and lower judiciary.
- Sometimes local customs of people especially tribal's comes in to conflict with the law. Then using law to ensure justice as per their customs becomes an ethical question.
- It comes in to dilemma that whether to apply law or break the customs of tribal.
- Even though if law is in force it doesn't fulfil the required goals. For instance, Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989 is in force for more than 3 decades now, but number of atrocities on the people belonging to SC and ST community doesn't come down.
- Too much law for anything has resulted in judicial pendency of cases over the world. For instance, in India itself, Nationally, at the subordinate court level, on average a case remains pending for five years or more.
- Many of the times it is felt that formal procedure set by the law is not enough to ensure justice, as it requires heroic action to ensure justice. For instance, encounter in Disha murder case was highly applauded by the general public.

Conclusion:

Just having a tough law is not enough its effective implementation and applicability on ground also matters. Judiciary, the government, civil society groups and NGO's needs to put collaborative effort to plug the gaps in the availability, accessibility and affordability to justice for a common person, as it is rightly said by Martin Luther king that "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere".

14. Accountability and transparency are the most important prerequisites for an ethical governance machinery? Do you agree? Substantiate your views with the help of suitable examples.

Demand of the question:

It expects candidates to express their views about whether Accountability and transparency are prerequisite in the ethical governance machinery or not. It also expects to substantiate the views with suitable examples.

Introduction:

Accountability and Transparency are broadly accepted as a major principle of good governance. Accountability means being answerable for the performance of tasks

assigned to a person. Whereas Transparency allows stakeholders to collect information that may be critical to uncovering abuses and defending their interests. Likewise, transparency increases accountability of the Government officials.

Body:

Accountability and Transparency as prerequisite in governance:

- Accountability crucial concept in maintaining ethical governance machinery. Accountability means being answerable for the performance of tasks assigned to a person.
- Accountability necessitates the clear specification of tasks to be performed, the time frame and budget available for performing those tasks. Additionally, it is also important to be clear about the responsibility for performance of those tasks; person responsible and whether it is clear to them.
- For instance, Citizens Charter Bill 2011 aims at providing rights to citizens for time bound delivery of goods and services and provide a Grievance Redress Mechanism. Such a bill was previously recommended by the Second Administrative Reforms Commission.
- Lokpal and Lokayuktas aims at reducing corruption by setting up of a separate institution of Lokpal at the Central level and Lokayuktas at the State level. These organizations investigate cases of corruption against public servants in the respective Government organizations.
- E-Governance initiatives for providing an accountable administration include a framework for efficient handling of public grievances through the Centralised Public Grievance Redress and Monitoring System (CPGRAMS) which is already in place.
- Transparency is required to make the system of public service delivery effective.
- Transparency means that the criteria, process and systems of decision-making are openly known to all in a public manner. Citizens charter becomes an important measure for transparency in institutional setup.
- It allows ready information to the citizens in a manner that they may be able to claim their entitlements.
- For instance, The declaration of Right To Information Act (2015) set the stage for transparency in the functioning of the government and its various agencies. Under this Act, access to information from a public agency has become a statutory right of every citizen.
- Transparency is considered as a plane mirror which reflects govt. Workings, objectives, executive and legislative actions and government.
- Being a plane mirror, it depicts the core images of underlying fundamentals of accountability and the nature of governance which is prevailing.
- Major Initiatives to Enhance Transparency in India include – Right to Information Act, Public Services Bill, Citizens Charters, e-Governance, e-Bhoomi, e-Choupal, e-procurement.

However, sheer knowledge of what entitlements are, and who is responsible for fulfilling them, is not sufficient to ensure that public services are passably and effectively delivered to the 'intended' recipients.

- The governance involving transparency and accountability suffers from the weakness that disclosed Information's Genuineness can also be dubious and Wrong Interpretation of available information can give detrimental results to an organization.
- Further, the abundance and availability of information means that the user needs skill to determine what it is that they want. The user of information has major role to play in affecting information sharing.

Conclusion:

For the chariot of ethical governance machinery accountability and transparency prove to be the two wheels on which the chariot runs. If one goes down other will not function properly. Hence, Accountability and transparency form to be the prerequisite for an ethical governance of machinery.

15. During the COVID-19 pandemic many private organisations have been facing ethical dilemma with respect to employee layoffs. What are your views in this? Why shouldn't a profit oriented business enterprise get rid of the employees to maintain its profit balance? Discuss.

Demand of the question:

It expects candidates to write their views about the kind of ethical dilemma faced by employers with respect to employee lay off. It also expects candidates to put forth their views on that why a profit oriented business enterprise get rid of the employees to maintain its profit balance.

Introduction:

The devastating pandemic that has stricken the worldwide population induced an unprecedented impact on the formal as well as informal sectors of economy. World over the production facilities shut down due to lockdown and containment measures, at the same time it also posed some ethical questions in front of humanity. One such question was faced by private organisations whether to lay off the employees or not.

Body:

Ethical dilemmas of private organisations to lay off employees:

- Though a private organisation is started by an individual or a business entity, it works in synchronous because of employees. Employees are the real people who toiled hard day to day for the success of private organisation. Hence, laying off employees in time of crisis would be a betrayal to them.
- The strong foundations and expanse of an private organisation is due to the honesty, accountability and hard work of the employer. In the crisis like situation if employee removes them from the work then it will be a disrespect for their work.
- Due to inequalities existence is still prevalent in our society, employee works only with two objectives i.e. Firstly, to achieve the targets set by the private organisation and secondly, for the livelihood of her/his family.

- Hence, only for the profit motives if employer removes the employee the employee will fall in to financial trap which will lead her/him into poverty. She/he will also have to face the problem of managing food for the family.
- If an employee who has worked for many years, is part of every success and failure of the private organisation, then laying off that employee amidst crisis will be disloyalty for the loyalty of that employee.
- Being an employee, she/he will have to think about larger picture. For instance, if laying off 20 workers if benefits 20,000 people then it can be good decision, but if laying of 20 people as it affects only 1 person then it will be a bad decision.
- Employee also being a human needs to care about her/his family and hence, she/he comes into dilemma whether to lay off the worker for her/his families survival or continue the usual policy. For instance, a MSME entrepreneur is employing 5 workers then the person comes in to this dilemma.
- Not just in an unorganised sector but in the organised sector like Journalism people faced lay off. They showed their anger through social media posts. For instance, one of the prominent Newspaper in India faced backlash of its 100's of employees who were fired under the reason of lack of financials.
- As the economy is stuck, with no income in hand how could a private organisation will pay for the employee even if it wants to pay them.

To take decision when in dilemma is always a tricky task. In the time of crisis like COVID-19 it becomes more tricky. However, many of the fine examples of the employees have been observed over the world, as they came together to fight this crisis and cared for the interest of the employees over the interest of their own profits. This act of generosity forms the true answer for the question that why shouldn't a profit oriented business enterprise get rid of the employees to maintain its profit balance:

- It's not just an employee but the family of the employees is also dependent on the private organisation. If employee is laid off then survival of its whole family comes in to crisis.
- A private organisation cannot show dishonesty and disloyalty for the honesty and loyalty of an employee in the times of crisis, because it's the employee who has saved the organisation from failing in past.
- If an employer is rich enough then she/he has to bear the burden for the welfare of the employed and her/his family. For instance, Reliance group doubled salary for the employers in the times of crisis.
- If any Private organisations is built only on the motive of profits then it doesn't have the right to approach as it is bound by only profit motives. Organisations also need to look for element of human in employees. For instance, an organisation working as a family is bound to survive for a longer period.
- Employing a person when she/he in need and laying her/him off in times of crisis seems like the private organisation used the employee for its own benefits and got rid of it in times of crisis.

Conclusion:

The catastrophic effect induced by the COVID-19 is humongous. The humanity has the answer for its survival during the times of crisis as it has done in past. Hence, getting rid of employees in the time of COVID-19 seems a bad move as it sidelines the element of human in it. Hence, it becomes imperative to find out solution for this question by coming together and forming a chain of helping hands.

