

1. True emancipation of women can occur only if representation of women in the political process and institutions increase substantially. Do you agree? Critically comment.

Approach - It expects students to write about emancipation of women and to critically analyse how can woman emancipation be achieved through representation of women in political process and institutions.

Introduction

The term “emancipation” is often associated with the value of freedom. It implies freedom from legal, political or social restrictions. It is equally a process which enables the powerless social groups to gain access and control of resources in a given society. In tandem with this, woman emancipation is inextricably linked to efforts or social schemes aimed at setting the women free from all types of bondage and socio-political and economic exploitation.

Body

How the representation for women in the institutions truly emancipate woman:

- Women's political participation is a fundamental prerequisite for gender equality and genuine democracy. It facilitates women's direct engagement in public decision-making and is a means of ensuring better accountability to women.
- Their participation is crucial in the policy formulation and regulation as they represent nearly half of total population.
- More focused policies relating to women safety, education, child care, MMR, child marriage, Domestic violence etc if women are involved in decision making owing to their emotional quotient towards these issues.
- There are 13.72 lakh elected women representatives (EWRs) in PRIs (Panchayati Raj Institutions) which constitute 44.2 per cent of total elected representatives (ERs) as on December, 2017.
- Esther Duflo studies showed that in a randomised trial in West Bengal, women Pradhan’s (heads of village panchayats) focus on infrastructure that is relevant to the needs of rural women, suggesting that at least at the local level outcomes can be different.
- A study by India Spend reported women panchayat leaders in Tamil Nadu invested 48 percent more money than their male counterparts in building roads and improving access to woman health facilities.
- Another study by the United Nations found that women-led panchayats delivered 62 percent higher drinking water projects than those led by men.

Barriers to woman participation in various institutions:

- Patriarchal Society: Tendency of confining women to the four walls of domestic life, prohibiting them from decision making. Recent examples

Nagaland crisis over Urban Local Bodies reservation and lapsed women reservation bill, 2008.

- Education: One of the key challenges faced by women is lack of education which hinders their political involvement. Most of the 'winnable' women candidates come from political families.
- Representation: Lack of representation at Lok Sabha, Rajya Sabha and state legislative assemblies. As per UN India ranks 20th from the bottom when it comes to women's representation in the Parliament with merely 4% representation of women in Lok Sabha.
- Proxy politics: Women candidates who generally win elections are used as proxy by male members in their family. For example, in many villages of Uttar Pradesh, where women are village panchayat chiefs, their husbands introduce themselves as 'pradhan pati' (husband of the panchayat chief).
- Social Stigma: Women are seen as "home makers and care takers" and any deviance from this role is not acceptable by many.
- Institutional factors: Party politics oppose changes that are likely to make them cede power. Perhaps this might be because of the fact that they would be serving political parties that are patriarchal and practise dirty politics.
- Cultural and traditional norms: Women's ability to engage politically both within and beyond the voting booth particularly as community organisers and elected officials—is often shaped by norms that drive wider social structures.
- Economic factors: Socio-economic status of women to a greater extent play a significant role in enhancing their participation and representation in political decision-making bodies. The lack of an economic base for women has been a factor in their participation—or lack of—it in politics because the cost of campaigning is very high. For example, Irom Sharmila and Najima in Manipur, in the absence of funds, they are campaigning for elections.

Way forward -

- Women's leadership and communication skills need to be enhanced by increasing female literacy especially in rural areas.
- Awareness, education and role modelling that encourage women towards politics and wipe out Gender stereotypes which perceive women as weak representatives.
- Quotas for women in Parliament as envisaged in the Women's Reservation Bill.
- India should have an Election Commission-led effort to push for reservation for women in political parties.

Conclusion

Thus, the active participation of women, on equal terms with men, at all levels of political involvement is essential to the achievement of equality, sustainable development, peace and vibrant democracy and the inclusion of their perspectives and experiences into the decision-making processes.

2. What is the National Population Register (NPR)? What is the need of having the NPR? How is it different from census? Examine.

Approach - It expects students to write about NPR and the Need to have it as well as highlight upon how it's difference from census.

Introduction

The first phase of the Census and the exercise to update the National Population Register (NPR), scheduled for this year but deferred due to the coronavirus outbreak, may be delayed by a year as there is no sign of slowdown of the pandemic.

Body

The National Population Register (NPR) can be understood from the following points:

- It is a Register of usual residents of the country. It is being prepared at the local (Village/sub-Town), sub-District, District, State and National level under provisions of the Citizenship Act 1955 and the Citizenship (Registration of Citizens and issue of National Identity Cards) Rules, 2003.
- It is mandatory for every usual resident of India to register in the NPR.
- A usual resident for the purposes of NPR is a person who has resided in a place for six months or more, and intends to reside there for another six months or more
- It is generated through house-to-house enumeration during the "house-listing" phase of the census, which is held once in 10 years.
- Once the basic details of the head of the family are taken by the enumerator, an acknowledgement slip will be issued. This slip may be required for enrolment in NPR, whenever that process begins.
- And, once the details are recorded in every local (village or ward), sub-district (tehsil or taluk), district and State level, there will be a population register at each of these levels. Together, they constitute the National Population Register.

Need of the NPR:

- Need of the NPR is to have a sound population data base, within the framework of the Indian Constitution, which can be used for various purposes including national security, identity, welfare schemes and in the interest of saving national resources.
- There was a need to update the NPR to "incorporate the changes due to birth, death and migration".
- Aadhaar is individual data, whereas NPR contains family-wise data. Various welfare schemes of the State and Central governments are generally family-based, for which NPR data may be used.

Difference between NPR and the Census:

- The NPR and the Census are carried out under the aegis of the Registrar General and Census Commissioner of India.
- The Census is carried out under the Census Act of 1948 and is based on the self-declaration by the individual. There is no verification involved.
- NPR, however, is carried out under the Citizenship Rules, 2003. These rules make it compulsory for the person to share the demographic data for making the NPR.
- There are bodies at the state, district, and taluka levels mandated under the rules which will be entrusted with the duty to populate such a register.

Way Forward

- Expedition and Deputation of illegal migrants: The Government could consider utilizing the recommendations of the 175th Law Commission Reports which suggest creating a separate force for detection of illegal migrants, and establishing more tribunals.
- Changing the Quasi-Judicial nature of the Foreigners Tribunal established under the Foreigners Tribunal Order of 1964.
- Public Awareness: The public should be made aware of the notifications made by the government through mediums such as PIB-FAQs.
- For example, no notification has been issued by the government yet, under Rule 4 of the Citizenship Rules, 2003 for the documents required for NRC India.
- The government should ensure that public outreach is also focussed upon along with the implementation of NPR so that the citizens could question the elected representatives at the State Level in case the issue is politicized.
- The government needs to build trust with the public.

Conclusion

The objective of the NPR is to create a comprehensive identity database of every “usual resident” in the country. While there are concerns about privacy, the government position is based on two grounds. One is that every country must have a comprehensive identity database of its residents with demographic details. In its statement issued after Cabinet approval to NPR, the Home Ministry said the objective of conducting NPR is to “prepare a credible register of every family and individual” living in the country apart from “strengthening security” and “improvement in targeting of beneficiaries under various Central government schemes”.

3. Why does India fare poorly on the Global Hunger Index despite having surplus food? Analyse. What measures would you suggest to address this paradox? Discuss.

Approach - It expects students to write about Global Hunger Index and despite having surplus why India face hunger problems. Also, to suggest various suggestion and way forward to address the paradox of high surplus food grains and hunger.

Introduction

Global Hunger Index is an annual peer-reviewed publication by Concern Worldwide and Welthungerhilfe. It tracks hunger at global, regional and national levels. It uses four parameters to calculate its scores like Undernourishment, Child wasting, Child stunting, and Child mortality. The GHI 2020 report has placed India 94th position among 107 countries, much behind Bangladesh, Pakistan and Nepal. The situation is grim and the country is battling widespread hunger.

Body

India fare poorly on the Global Hunger Index despite having surplus food because:

- The agriculture output from small and marginal holdings are either stagnant or declining due to reasons such as reduced soil fertility, fragmented lands or fluctuating market price of farm produce. Almost 50 million households in India are dependent on these small and marginal holdings.
- Though we have surplus food, most small and marginal farming households do not produce enough food grains for their year-round consumption.
- Relative income of one section of people has been on the decline. This has adverse effects on their capacity to buy adequate food, especially when food prices have been on the rise.
- The kind of work a section of people have been doing are less remunerative or there is less opportunity to get remunerative works. Fourth, the public distribution system (PDS) of the state is not functioning well or is not accessible to everyone.
- The emaciated rural livelihoods sector and lack of income opportunities other than farm sector has contributed heavily to the growing joblessness in rural areas. The Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) 2017-18 revealed that rural unemployment stood at a concerning 6.1 per cent, which was the highest since 1972-73.
- The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005 (MGNREGA) continue to be the lone rural job programme that, too, had been weakened over the years through great delays in payments and non-payments, ridiculously low wages and a reduced scope of employment due to high bureaucratic control.

A multi-pronged approach is needed to deal with the crisis.

- First, more crops have to be grown, especially by small and marginal farmers with support from the Union government. A renewed focus on small and marginal holdings is imperative.
- Second, the government may create provisions to supply cooked nutritious food to the vulnerable section of the society. A model of cheap canteen, which provides cooked food to vulnerable sections of the society for just Rs 15-20, is being successfully run by Left parties during the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic in many parts of West Bengal.
- Jadavpur Jyotidevi Shramajeevi Canteen, for example, has been running for more than 200 days. This model can be replicated by governments or other agencies. This has to be done in addition to the existing provisions of healthy diets from Anganwadi and schools through mid-day meals for children, mothers and students.
- Third, rural employment schemes such as MGNREGA should be given a boost to increase employment and wages. Several organisations and individuals working under the scheme have suggested that the guaranteed work-days be increased to 200 and that commensurate wages be given in accordance with the minimum agricultural wages of the states.
- Fourth, access to food grains under the PDS needs to be streamlined by simplifying technical processes and reducing Aadhaar-related glitches. This is the right time to universalise PDS: COVID-19 has exposed the weaknesses of the targeted nature of the scheme.

Conclusion

GHI's answer is the government and international groups must intervene more actively to support vulnerable communities and victims of natural disasters and climate change; and health and nutrition support systems have to be reviewed and strengthened. There is a macro-level answer too. The current political climate and social divisions discourage domestic migration, and international migration is mostly illegal as we painfully learn each day. If these barriers are opened, perhaps shifting population and demographic change will offer an answer to the problem.

4. What reforms would suggest for improving the institutions of urban governance in India? Substantiate with help of suitable examples.

Approach - As the directive here is substantiation, it indicates arguing with suitable examples. In the introduction candidate can write about the status of institutions of urban governance in India. In the first half of main body part one can show issues in the institutions of urban governance in India. In the next half of answer it is expected to write down the suggestion for reforms. To fetch more marks it is necessary to give examples or best practises.

Introduction

In an effort to support a transition to sustainability, institutions of urban governance play a prominent role in making the cities more smart. Urban areas in India are expanding rapidly. With growing urban population, city infrastructure such as water supply, sewerage, solid waste management are under pressure and require appropriate government efforts. There is a need to strengthen institutions of urban governance to deal with rising pressure on urban governance.

Body

Issues faced by Institutions of Urban Governance in India:

- **Urban planning:** Urban planning is done at the state government level and municipalities have implementation role in it. There is no direct responsibility for the consequences of planning as long as the municipality completes the plan. Poor planning, Lack of accountability, and weak governance created problems in the institutions of urban governance.
- **Poor coordination:** Poor coordination among Union government, state government, and various departments at local level lead to flawed planning and poor implementation of urban policies. Inability to coordinate leads to administrative inefficiency and thus poor urban governance.
- **Coercive State Control:** Coercive control exercised by the state government over urban bodies is a hurdle in the development of institutions of urban governance. It proves to be more of a curse than a boon, because, instead of providing guidance and support through the control mechanism, the control turns out to be negative, restricting the functioning of these bodies. For instance, in urban area the municipal commissioners are appointed by state government who instead of acting as 'agents of facilitation' act as 'agents of state government'.
- **Personnel recruitment:** Corruption, favouritism and nepotism is rampant in institutions of urban governance. In the case of most of the bodies, the state government is empowered to take disciplinary action and the urban body has very little control over its personnel recruitment and management. For instance, a racket regarding urban local bodies personnel recruitment is recently busted in Maharashtra's Ahmednagar district.

- Weak Financial Condition: Institutions of Urban governance face acute scarcity of finances. The Economic Survey of 2018 pointed out municipalities do not realise the full potential of property tax.
- Thirteenth Finance commission data reflected municipal tax to GDP ratio is a meagre 0.5% as compared to central tax to GDP ratio at 12%.

Reforms to improve the institutions of urban governance:

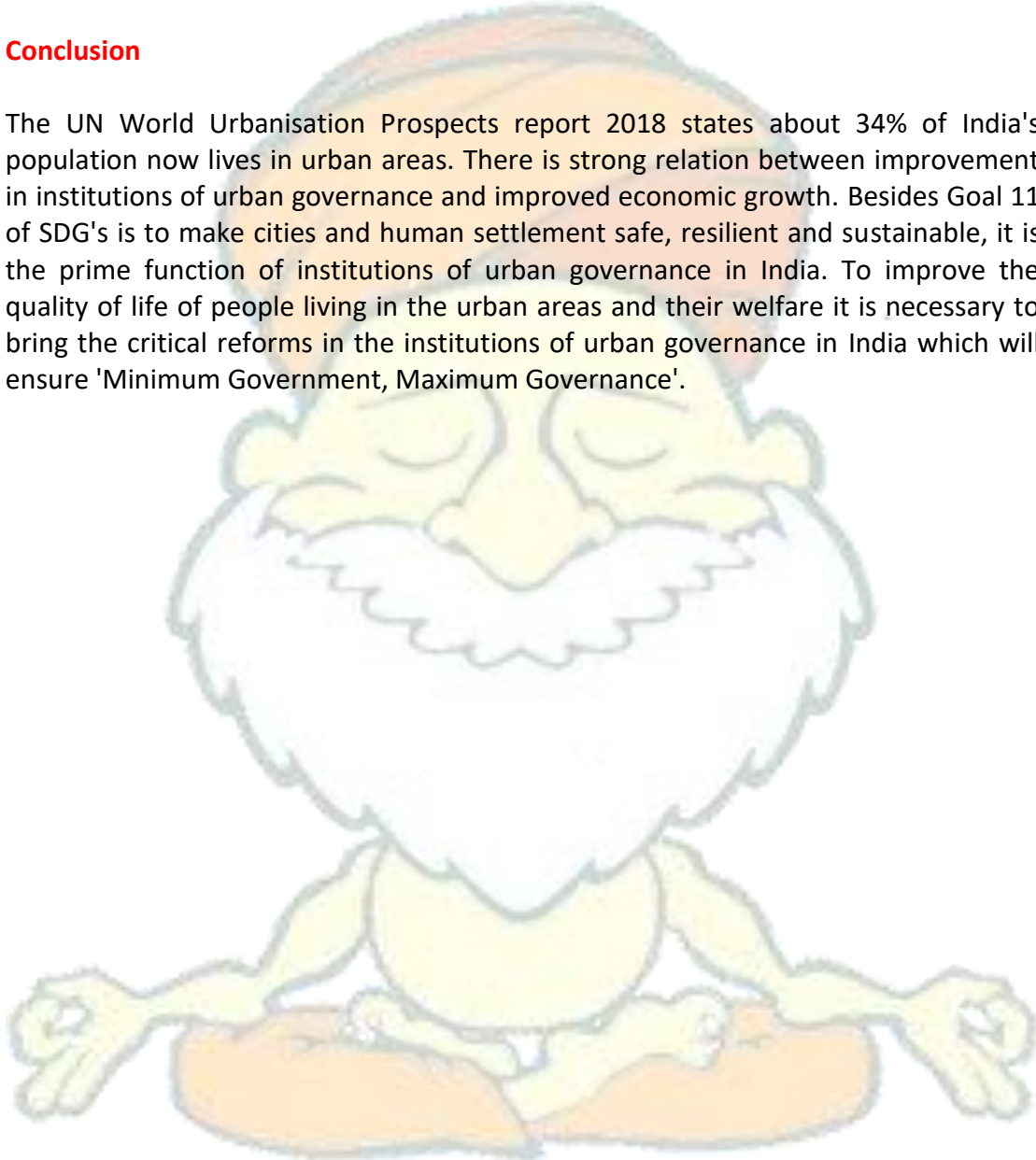
- Empowerment of institutions of urban governance: To achieve empowerment, a clear command and control structure at the field level needs to be figured out. There is need to eliminate the multiplicity of authorities and institutions in the urban areas with one function being managed by one institution only — and which is publicly accountable. A beginning in this direction could be made by designating the district magistrate as the ex-officio municipal commissioner, and also ensuring that the line department functionaries report to the DM in the field.
- Governance Reforms: Governance reform are a catalyst for change. The Government may consider the adoption of a common categorisation of urban bodies across the country so as to assist a systematic planning process and devolution of funds. All areas having population more than 10 lakh should be defined metropolitan areas.
- Reformed urban governance machinery is the need of the hour. It will help to invest in building a credible database of the urban poor and migrants, along with mapping their skills that is maintained centrally at the office of the re-empowered district magistrate.
- The urban poor may be granted new types of identification documents which can be held by the people in addition to those pertaining directly to their native place. For instance, the national migrant database, announced by the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) is a step in this direction.
- Government needs to coordinate at various levels with regard to implementation of various programmes. The urban local bodies should prioritise the development programmes. Any mega project envisaged needs to be developed taking into account the views of all the stakeholders.
- Use of technology: To perform the regulatory functions like town planning, enforcing building by-laws and renewal of trade licenses, a reformed urban district administration shall have to increasingly use technologies such as mobile-governance, geo-spatial platforms for zonal regulations and property tax, tele-education, and block chain-based networks for record keeping and verification. For instance, smart electricity metering and smart water metering in the Delhi region is one such examples.
- Participation of Public in the administrative decision making process will be a crucial step in the right direction. Public meetings must be held at places and at times that cause minimum disruption to the citizens' daily schedules. Interactions with the public over social media and radio shows will be more participatory in nature.
- As per 2nd ARC 6th report there is need to establish Audit committees at the state level to oversight the integrity of financial information, adequacy of

internal controls, compliance with applicable laws and ethical conduct of all persons involved in urban governance bodies.

- In order to implement the above mentioned reforms, various schemes are launched by the Government. For instance, Smart Cities mission, AMRUT etc. However, their poor implementation is a cause for concern. Hence, accelerating these schemes in their letter and spirit so that they will overcome the problem of poor implementation is the need of the hour.

Conclusion

The UN World Urbanisation Prospects report 2018 states about 34% of India's population now lives in urban areas. There is strong relation between improvement in institutions of urban governance and improved economic growth. Besides Goal 11 of SDG's is to make cities and human settlement safe, resilient and sustainable, it is the prime function of institutions of urban governance in India. To improve the quality of life of people living in the urban areas and their welfare it is necessary to bring the critical reforms in the institutions of urban governance in India which will ensure 'Minimum Government, Maximum Governance'.



5. What are the social problems associated with the objectification of women in popular and social media? Examine.

Approach - It expects students to write about objectification of women and social problems related to objectification of women on various popular and social media platforms.

Introduction

Process of "objectification" term refers to the tendency to treat an individual not as a person with emotions and thoughts, but as a physical being or "object." Today a trend which is developing in entertainment media is the objectification of women. Specifically, in Indian movies, social media, music videos and television women represent as sexual objects. This is a total loss to society because the entertainment media is creating a stereotype.

Body

Objectification of women in popular and social media:

- Films objectifying women: There are many film songs that commoditise the female body. Most songs follow a particular format. We might have got used to it or we ignore it, but a whole generation in our country grew up believing that life is like what is shown in film.
- Fairs and arts: Copying films, village fairs organise "item dances", local theatre, painting, dance and folk arts objectify women and Irrespective of age, all men attend them.
- Advertisements and commercials: We can see numbers of advertisements in newspapers, magazines, radio, television, internet, hoardings, pamphlets etc. Often portray women primarily to target girls and women to become their customer easily. It is the fact of our Indian society that they generally consider women as weak person.
- With Proliferation of online content: Objectification of girls on social media found that girls are depicted in a sexual manner more often than boys. Social media has "amplified age-old pressures for teenage girls to conform to certain sexualized narratives.

Problems associated with objectification of women:

- Attribution of mind and moral status: Viewing another person as an object, or less than fully human, is fundamentally an act of denying that a person has mental abilities and moral status. Perceiving a person as lacking in mental capacity and moral status can alter the attitudes and behaviours of the perceiver and cause negative consequences for the targeted individual.
- Women as product: Promoting women as sex object for example, there is an advertisement of a use of deodorant woman get attracted towards a strange man who has used that brand of deodorant. This show that women are treated as object which itself do not have any self-identity. The depiction of

women in this and other advertisements is actually insulted to the women in general which are destroying the real status and dignity of women.

- Rape and sexual violence: Cases of violence against women and girls in India has continued to rise. Objectification of women supports the barbaric mentality of revenge against women and girls. It reinforces pervasive patriarchal gender stereotypes.
- A cycle of objectification: This process of “self-objectification” leads women to experience unpleasant feelings such as shame and anxiety. If repeated, it can eventually lead to long-term psychological harm. Such extreme behaviour is related to the low self-esteem of person which is arrived from objectification or commodification.
- Negative eating attitudes: Multiple studies have found a relationship between sexual objectification and disordered eating. In turn hinder women’s overall productivity.

It is important to enact and enforce legislation and develop and implement policies that promote gender equality by ending discrimination against women policies such as -

- Development of media sensitivity
- Parents and family involvement in watching television
- Sensitization of religion
- Portray of girl in media in a positive way
- Promote egalitarian gender norms as part of life skills and comprehensive sexuality education curricula taught to young people.

Conclusion

The mass media in India has not done efforts about discussing the issues related to women and prepare the women to work for their rights and work for equal role in society. Women are stuck with shaping their body perfectly as presented by the media and all this is done on keeping their physical health and mental state aside. It is clear that commodification/objectification of women in media have negative effect on our society. For preventing objectification in girls and women it needs to increase societal rewards and social powers.