

**1. In the age of widespread fake news and misinformation, it has become imperative to regulate the media. Do you agree? Is it possible to make the media organisations behave responsibly without stifling the right to freedom of expression? Share your views.**

**Approach** - In the introduction mention what do you mean by fake news and misinformation or give recent example of fake news. Then in the main part of answer mention about causes of spread of fake news, need of regulation of media (try to mention examples), give some measures or innovative solutions to regulate media.

### **Introduction**

Fake news refers to deliberate creation of misinformation or hoaxes spread via traditional print and broadcast news media or online social media shaping belief of people around the nation and world. Fake news, defined by the New York Times as “a made-up story with an intention to deceive”.

### **Body**

Causes of spread of fake news:

- Lack of verification/authenticity: Everyone is busy in sharing/forwarding news items without verifying news. People don't care about finding truth behind a news item and instead look for evidence to support their preferred narrative.
- Social media: It decentralised creation & propagation of fake news. The vastness of social media users and internet makes tracing the origin of fake news almost impossible
- Lack of legislation: There is no specific law or codes of practices to deal with fake news in India. Traditional news sources, journalist follow strict code of practices. However, internet enabled a whole new way to publish, share and consume information with very little or no regulation.
- Organised fake news: Misinformation is no longer considered rare & isolated phenomenon, but appears to be organised and disseminated to target certain section of society.

There is need to regulate media due to following threats posed by fake news:

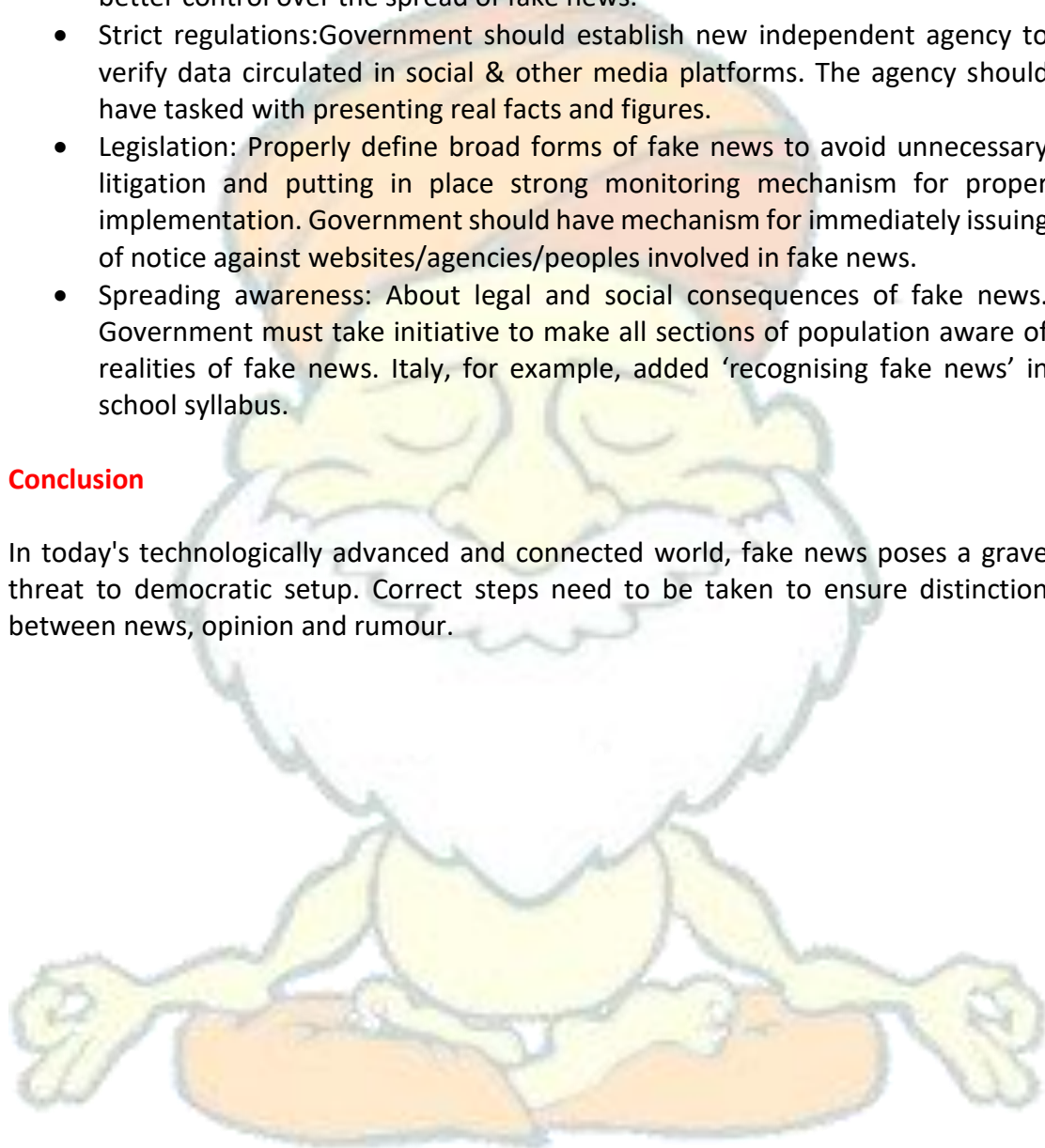
- Fake news and misinformation can disturb fraternity & brotherhood in society, which then lead to creating enmity & hatred among two or more communities. It can flare up communal violence, hurt sentiments of people. Example: Child kidnapping rumours leads to lynching by mob in Jharkhand.
- As communal tendencies emerged in politics due to spread of fake news economic development taken back seat. Social conditions in country impacts the investor's sentiments.
- Political parties and political leaders try to polarize voter's mind which then further leads to growing tension between different sections of society. Political campaigning during elections has progressed from mere mass appeal in name of identity to something akin to psychological warfare.

By following measures fake news and misinformation can be managed without stifling the right to freedom of expression:

- Internal regulations: Regulating social media to put proper checks through rigorous internal editorial standards and imposing fines upon its inability to stop proliferating fake news.
- Accountability of Social Media: Social media websites should be made accountable of such activities so that it becomes their responsibility to have better control over the spread of fake news.
- Strict regulations: Government should establish new independent agency to verify data circulated in social & other media platforms. The agency should have tasked with presenting real facts and figures.
- Legislation: Properly define broad forms of fake news to avoid unnecessary litigation and putting in place strong monitoring mechanism for proper implementation. Government should have mechanism for immediately issuing of notice against websites/agencies/peoples involved in fake news.
- Spreading awareness: About legal and social consequences of fake news. Government must take initiative to make all sections of population aware of realities of fake news. Italy, for example, added 'recognising fake news' in school syllabus.

### **Conclusion**

In today's technologically advanced and connected world, fake news poses a grave threat to democratic setup. Correct steps need to be taken to ensure distinction between news, opinion and rumour.



**2. Is it ethical for the judges to become legislators after retirement? Critically examine.**

**Approach** - It expects to ascertain as to what extent the appointment for the Judges to take up positions in the government post-retirement justified. While introducing the question candidate can start with the respective independence and autonomy of judiciary. Whereas in the main body part it is necessary for a candidate to throw light on the negatives and positives of judges becoming legislators after retirement. Then on can conclude with the respective opinions of whether it is ethical or not for judges to become legislators.

### Introduction

The judiciary has been assigned a very significant role in the Indian democratic political system. Therefore, its independence becomes very essential for the effective discharge of the duties assigned to it. To maintain its impartiality and integrity Article 124(7) of the Indian Constitution provides that a retired Supreme Court judge cannot "plead or act in any court or before any authority within the territory of India".

### Body

Former Chief Justice of India's (CJI) nomination to the Rajya Sabha, just four months after his retirement, raises the question on integrity and impartiality of judges. Hence, it becomes imperative to check the positive as well as negative arguments in this regard.

Arguments against judges becoming legislature after retirement:

- The very fact that a judge accepts such an appointment could cast doubt on his judgements. For instance, former CJI had presided over politically sensitive cases (Assam NRC, Sabarimala, Ayodhya, Rafale, and CBI) where all the decisions went in favour of the government.
- This gave rise to the impression that his nomination was a reward for these 'favours'. Hence, it also raises a question on the integrity of the such judge who became legislator.
- The desire of a post-retirement job can influence pre-retirement judgments. Hence, a situation of 'conflict of interest' can occur or 'favouritism' could take place.
- It might also signal that the judiciary is not independent, but is vulnerable to dictates of the executive. Hence, it might hamper the foundational principle of 'Separation of Powers'.
- It will undermine the very constitutional values of impartiality in the dispensation of justice.
- Deteriorates the Public Perception about the integrity of the Judiciary and thus the functioning of our Democracy.

Arguments in favour of judges becoming legislature after retirement:

- Article 124(7) of the Indian Constitution restricts post-retirement appointments in Judiciary itself, but not in posts of president, governor, Member of Parliament, etc.
- In this context, Former Chief Justice of India viewed that membership of the Rajya Sabha was not a job but a service and hence there accepting RS nomination is not ethically conflicting.
- With regard to judgements, former CJ has said that he did not deliver the judgements alone and that there were other judges also. Hence, there cannot be quid-pro-quo arrangements.

In its 14th report in 1958, the Law Commission noted that retired Supreme Court judges used to engage in two kinds of work after retirement:

- Firstly, "chamber practice" (a term which would, today, mean giving opinions to clients and serving as arbitrators in private disputes) and secondly, "employment in important positions under the government". The Law Commission frowned upon chamber practice, but did not recommend its abolition.
- However, it strongly recommended banning post-retirement government employment for Supreme Court judges because the government was a large litigant in the courts. The Commission's recommendations were never implemented.

In constitutional democracy, it is time to have a law in place either by way of a constitutional amendment or a parliamentary enactment barring/regulating post-retirement appointments of Judges.

### **Conclusion**

Several appointments to administrative bodies require a cooling-off period for individuals so as to eliminate the possibility or suspicion of a conflict of interest or quid pro quo. This cooling-off period must be extended to Indian Judiciary. So that people's trust in the judiciary is maintained and its impartiality will not be questioned citing attack on principle of separation of power.

**3. The Chinese adventurism in the Ladakh region is a manifestation of Chinese expansionism and its aggressive posturing as an imminent global superpower. Comment.**



**Approach** - A candidate is expected to put forth their opinion based on these kind of issues. However, it is necessary to adopt a neutral approach while answering this question. For introduction, a candidate can start with briefing of the issue. Whereas, in the main body part it is expected to write how China's policy of expansion and their aggressive posturing as an imminent global superpower has manifested as Chinese adventurism in the Ladakh region. To sound neutral, it is necessary to write down what counter and suomotu measures India has taken to contain Chinese aggression in Ladakh. While concluding one can end up by showing what extra steps India should take to counter Chinese expansionism and aggression.

### Introduction

Tensions along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) pose the biggest national security challenge to New Delhi in at least 20 years. The clashes in Galwan Valley in eastern Ladakh have claimed 20 Indian lives, the first incident of fatalities on the India-China border in 45 years. China has revived its claim on the entire Galwan Valley and has asked India to pull back from the areas.

### Body

In 2017, India and China agreed to amicably resolve the Doklam standoff that lasted for more than two months. No blood was spilt then, and no shots fired. However, the situation this time is different due to following reasons behind China's aggression:

- Salami slice strategy: There is a clear shift in Chinese foreign policy post the COVID-19 outbreak. This is seen in China's rising tensions with the U.S., its threats against Taiwan, repeated naval incidents in the South China Sea, and a new security law for Hong Kong.
- The tensions along the LAC are part of this shift. To understand this shift, one has to get a sense of the sources of China's conduct.
- Today's China is an ambitious rising power which wants to reorient the global order. When it was rising, China had adopted different tactical positions — "hide your capacity and bide your time", "peaceful rise" or "peaceful development".
- Under President Xi Jinping, the Chinese think they have arrived. With the global economy in the doldrums, globalisation in an irrecoverable crisis accentuated by the COVID-19 outbreak, and the U.S. under an isolationist President taking the most aggressive position towards China since Richard Nixon, Beijing believes the global order is at a breaking point.
- It is fighting back through what game theorists call "salami tactics" — where a dominant power attempts to establish its hegemony piece by piece. India is one slice in this salami slice strategy.
- Changed perception about International table: China doesn't see India as a 'swing state' any more. It sees India as an ally-in-progress of the U.S. If India is what many in the West call the "counterweight" to China's rise, Beijing's definite message is that it is not deterred by the counterweight. This is a

message not just to India, but to a host of China's rivals that are teaming up and eager to recruit India to the club.

- Within this broader framework there could be a host of factors — local, regional and global — that influenced China's moves. When most of the world's big powers are grappling with the pandemic, revisionist powers such as China have more room for geopolitical manoeuvring.
- Europe has been devastated by the virus. The U.S. is battling in an election year the COVID-19 outbreak as well as the deepest economic meltdown since the Great Depression.
- A confluence of all these factors, which point to a decline in the country's smart power, allowed China to make aggressive moves on the LAC.

Hence, it is clear that Chinese adventurism in the Ladakh region is a manifestation of Chinese expansionism and its aggressive posturing as an imminent global superpower. However, India is not a silent observer when China moves with aggression. Its following counter and suomotu measures have proved to be an 'eyeball to eyeball' answer.

- **Military:** India has moved in additional divisions, tanks and artillery across the LAC to match Chinese deployments. Further, India has approved the purchase of 33 Russian fighter jets and upgrades to 59 war planes at a cost of Rs. 18,148 crore.
- **Economic:** 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 224 Chinese apps. Further, India's trade deficit with China fell to \$48.66 billion in 2019-20 on account of the decline in imports. The trade deficit stood at \$53.56 billion in 2018-19 and \$63 billion in 2017-18.

On 1st April, 2020, India and China completed their 70 years of diplomatic relations. Both sides should acknowledge that the situation is precarious, and that the recent days in particular have undone decades of painstakingly negotiated confidence-building mechanisms.

### **Conclusion**

Good neighbourhood relations are crucial for national stability and well-being. If India is to disengage from economic involvement with China and build the capacities and capabilities it needs in manufacturing, and in supply chain networks closer home, it cannot be a prisoner of the short term. However, through Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan, India can try to replace Chinese products with domestic products in the sectors where it is possible. Further, it needs to boost up its economic relations with other countries so that there exists the real mettle to stand one on one in terms with China.

**4. What are your views on the recently enacted farm laws? In your opinion, what are the most important provisions therein? Substantiate your views.**

**Approach** - As the question is directed towards recently enacted farm laws, it becomes necessary for candidate to put forth their own views on the recently enacted farm

laws. It also asks to enlist the most important provisions therein with relative examples. Here, a candidate can start with introducing which new form laws are enacted by the government. In the main body part candidate can put forth their views on recently enacted farm laws with respect to backend and frontend operations. It is also necessary to enlist the most important provisions with relative substantiation. However, in the conclusion one can explain how it is going to be beneficial for the farmer and what are the necessary steps needed to be taken to ensure better implementation of provisions.

### Introduction

In order to revive the Indian economy, the Central government has announced the AtmaNirbhar Bharat Abhiyan. Agricultural reforms are part of the third tranche of the economic package announced under Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan to counter Covid-19 pandemic which may yield better income for farmer in coming days. In this direction, the newly introduced ordinances have been enacted by the government recently.

### Body

The central government introduced major agricultural market reforms through three reform laws as The Essential Commodities Amendment Bill 2020 (ECA), The Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Bill, 2020 and The Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement of Price Assurance and Farm Services Bill, 2020. These bills are aimed at transformation of agriculture in the country and raising farmers' income.

- The amendment to ECA would deregulate the commodities such as cereals, edible oils, oilseeds, pulses, onions and potatoes.
- Any limits under ECA over these commodities will be imposed only in exceptional circumstances such as war, famine, extraordinary price rise and natural calamity.
- The freedom to produce, hold, move, distribute and supply will lead to harnessing economies of scale and attract private sector/foreign direct investment into the agriculture sector.
- It will help drive up investment in cold storages and modernization of the food supply chain.
- An amendment to FPTC will create an ecosystem where the farmers and traders would enjoy freedom of choice of sale and purchase of agri-produce.
- It will also promote barrier-free inter-state and intra-state trade and commerce outside the physical premises of markets notified under State agricultural produce marketing legislations.
- It empowers farmers for engaging with processors, wholesalers, aggregators, large retailers, exporters etc. and thus eliminating intermediaries resulting in full realization of price.



- Farmers have been provided adequate protection. Sale, lease or mortgage of farmers' land is totally prohibited and farmers' land is also protected against any recovery.
- It also provides an effective dispute resolution mechanism with clear timelines for redress.
- These reforms are expected to build necessary agrarian infrastructure in the country which will lead to build "One India, One Agriculture Market".

With respect to the above mentioned views following are the most important provisions of the laws which are beneficial to the farm sector.

- The Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Bill, 2020 will create an ecosystem where the farmers and traders will enjoy freedom of choice of sale and purchase of agri-produce.
- It will also promote barrier-free inter-state and intra-state trade and commerce outside the physical premises of markets notified under State Agricultural Produce Marketing legislations.
- The farmers will not be charged any cess or levy for sale of their produce and will not have to bear transport costs. The Bill also proposes an electronic trading in transaction platform for ensuring a seamless trade electronically.
- The Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement of Price Assurance and Farm Services Bill, 2020 will empower farmers for engaging with processors, wholesalers, aggregators, wholesalers, large retailers, exporters etc., on a level playing field. It will transfer the risk of market unpredictability from the farmer to the sponsor. Due to prior price determination, farmers will be shielded from the rise and fall of market prices.
- It will also enable the farmer to access modern technology, better seed and other inputs. It will reduce cost of marketing and improve income of farmers.
- The Essential Commodities (Amendment) Bill, 2020 will remove commodities like cereals, pulses, oilseeds, edible oils, onion and potatoes from the list of essential commodities.
- This will remove fears of private investors of excessive regulatory interference in their business operations. The freedom to produce, hold, move, distribute and supply will lead to harnessing of economies of scale and attract private sector/foreign direct investment into agriculture sector.

### Conclusion

These newly introduced reforms are the most awaited reforms since the Independence of India in 1947. It has opened up a new window to improve the farmer's income by better price realisation. In the long run it will help India to achieve its target to double farmer's income by 2022.

**5. 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”.

**6. 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.
- JadavpurJyotideviShramajeevi 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 Adhaar-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.

**7. Examine the factors that make Indian farmers vulnerable. Discuss the measures taken in recent years to address those.**

**Approach** - It expects students to write - in first part write about factors which making Indian farmers vulnerable - in second part write various measures taken by government - in end write about what further steps government should take to reduce vulnerabilities of farmers.

### Introduction

Indian agricultural sector employs more than 50% of India's population and contributes to only 14% of the GDP. This indicates the drastic inequality in terms of earning when compared to urban population who are mostly employed in either manufacturing or service sectors.

### Body

Following factors make Indian farmers vulnerable:

- Poor policy and Planning: In the past, Government strategy primarily focused on raising agricultural output and improving food security rather than recognising the need to raise farmer's income,
- Absence of direct measure to promote farmer's welfare.
- Declining average size of farm holdings: Increasing demographic pressure, disguised employment in agriculture and conversion of agricultural land for alternative uses, have drastically reduced the average land holding.
- Dependence on rainfall and climate: Indian agriculture is heavily dependent on monsoon and ever-increasing global temperature has made agriculture more prone to extreme weather events.
- Collapsing farm prices: Low global prices have affected exports and the cheaper imports have hurt domestic prices in the country.
- Lack of easy credit to agriculture and dependence on money lenders.
- Fragmented supply chains:
  - Large gaps in storage, Cold chains
  - Limited connectivity
  - Absence of marketing infrastructure
- Lack of Mechanisation: Introduction of latest technology has been limited due to various reasons like accessibility for credit and low awareness.
- Crop production is always at risk because of pests and diseases.
- Shortage of inputs like seeds and irrigation facilities.
- Deficiencies in Agricultural Produce Market Committees (APMC) Act.
- Profiteering by middlemen.

It has following impact on Indian farmers:

- The above factors have resulted in low income for farmers which is evident from the incidence of poverty among farm households.
- The low and highly fluctuating farm income is causing a detrimental effect on the interest in farming and farm investments and is also forcing more and more cultivators, particularly younger age group, to leave farming.
- The country also witnessed a sharp increase in the number of farmer's suicides in the last decades.
- This can cause an adverse effect on the future of food security and the state of agriculture in the country.

Governments measures to reduce farmer's vulnerabilities:

- The goal set to double farmers' income by 2022-23 is central to promote farmer's welfare, reduce agrarian distress and bring parity between the income of farmers and those working in non-agricultural professions.

- In recent years, the Central government has taken various measures like the PM FasalBimaYojana (PMFBY), PM KrishiSinchaiYojana (PMKSY), electronic National Agricultural market (e-NAM), Soil health card, Neem-coated urea etc.
- Agriculture is a major component of Priority Sector Lending (PSL), and the target for bank lending to agriculture has been revised upwards every year.
- In addition to food subsidy under PDS, the government also provides fertilizer subsidy year after year.
- In the budget of 2018 for farmers, the Union budget has announced MSPs at 50% above the production cost.
- It also proposed to launch “Operation Greens” in the agriculture sector on the same lines of the milk sector’s “Operation Flood”.
- The 2019 budget announced a farm support scheme (PM-KISAN) for farmers owning up to 2 hectares of lands.
- Some States have introduced farm support schemes, examples being the RythuBandhu Scheme (Telangana) and the Krushak Assistance for Livelihood and Income Augmentation (KALIA) scheme (Odisha)

However, government needs to take further steps like:

- Improvements in allied sectors: Allied sectors like horticulture, food processing, poultry etc. needs to be pushed. For instance, government initiative like Project CHAMAN, AGRI-UDAAN programme, Scheme for Agro-Marine Processing and Development of Agro-Processing Clusters (SAMPADA) etc. are notable.
- Cooperative Farming: In this context, consolidation of land holdings also becomes important to raise farmer incomes. Farmers can voluntarily come together and pool land to gain the benefits of size. Through consolidation, farmers can reap the economies of scale both in input procurement and output marketing.
- There is a need to make a shift from rice and wheat-centric policies to millet, pulses, fruits, vegetables, livestock and fish.
- The creation of a competitive, stable and unified national market is needed for farmers to get better prices.

### Conclusion

The need is to educate the farmer regarding the use of proper quantity of manure, fertilizer and good quality seeds to get desired output of the produce. Optimal utilization of water along with above mentioned elements is essential. Government initiatives with the help of agriculture colleges and universities in association with gram panchayats are crucial for the implementation of the policies.

### 8. What are the current issues related to GM crops in India? What are your views on adoption of GM technologies? Substantiate.

**Approach** - Students are expected to write about the current issues of GM crops in India in first part, substantiate the views on adoption of GM technologies in second part.

### Introduction



GM crops are those crops whose DNA has been modified by introducing alien genes in the seeds to get desired effects such as resistance to pest attacks. Genes from any living organism, be it plants, or animals, is used to arrive at the desired traits. GM technology is often called “modern biotechnology” or “genetic engineering”. It allows selected individual genes to be transferred from one organism into another, also between nonrelated species.

### Body

Recently farmers in Maharashtra were protesting the central government’s move which bans the cultivation of GM crops and they would undertake mass sowing of GM seeds for maize, soyabean, mustard, brinjal and herbicide tolerant (Ht) cotton, although these are not approved.

Issues related to GM crops:

- Cost effective variety of Cotton: Bt cot is the only GM crop that is allowed in India. Currently farmers cite the high cost of weeding of it, which goes down considerably if they grow HtBt cotton and use glyphosate against weeds.
- New variety of Brinjal: Brinjal growers in Haryana have rooted for Btbrinjal as it reduces the cost of production by cutting down on the use of pesticides.
- To challenge Government for change its regulations: This action of defying government regulations by growing unapproved Bt varieties will draw attention of authorities to the need for introduction of the latest technology in the fields as the approval process of GM seeds is lengthy, opaque and often excludes farmers. This is opposed by farmers who want access to better technology.
- Huge benefits of GM crops: Because of the modification in genes, GM crops has huge benefits like Increased crop yields, Reduced costs for food or drug production, Reduced need for pesticides, Enhanced nutrient composition, Resistance to pests and disease, Increased shelf life etc. hence its attracts farmers to enhance their revenue.

In 2002 Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee (GEAC) allowed Bt cotton, since then 95 per cent of the country’s cotton area has under Bt cotton. Concerns over the use of genetically modified (GM) technology:

- Ecological Balance: The capability of the GMO to escape and potentially introduce the engineered genes into wild populations thus disturbing the fragile ecological balance.
- Danger of Permanence: The persistence of the gene after the GMO has been harvested. The susceptibility of non-target organisms (e.g. insects which are not pests) to the gene product will be in danger. Also, the stability of the gene is another cause of worry which will Increase use of chemicals in agriculture.
- Health: Genetic modification brings about changes that can be harmful to humans in the long run.

- Awareness and Labelling issues: Manufacturers do not mention on the label that foods are developed by genetic manipulation considering it may affect their business. However, this is harmful practice.
- Religious issues: Many religious and cultural communities are against such foods because they see it as an unnatural way of producing foods.

#### Views on adoption of GM technologies:

- Medicinal Benefits of GM technologies: GM technologies have emerged as one of the mainstays of biomedical research since the 1980. Pharmaceutical products such as hepatitis B vaccine, injectable insulin produced through GM technology.
- Genetic modification of insects: GM mosquitoes have been developed that express a small protein called SM1, which blocks entry of the malaria parasite, Plasmodium, into the mosquito's gut. Introduction of these GM mosquitoes into the wild could help reduce transmission of the malaria parasite. Also, male *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes engineered so it transmits a gene to their offspring that causes the offspring to die before becoming sexually mature.
- Genetic modification of humans is becoming a treatment option: Genetic modification via gene therapy is becoming a treatment option for diseases ranging from rare metabolic disorders to cancer. Coupling stem cell technology with recombinant DNA methods allows stem cells derived from a patient to be modified in the laboratory to introduce a desired gene. Introduction of these GM cells into the patient could cure the disease without the need for a matched donor.
- No Harm from GM Food recorded: There is a scientific consensus that currently available food derived from GM crops poses no greater risk to human health than conventional food, but that each GM food needs to be tested on a case-by-case basis before introduction.
- Considering all modern medicinal benefits of GM technology, introduction and responsible use of it is necessary for mankind.

#### Conclusion:

Though there is a ban on other GM crops, cases of cultivation of GM Crops not approved by the government indicate that there may be an illegal supply of GM seeds in the country. With growing agrarian distress there is a need for innovation in agriculture that balances interests of humans and that of environment. Given the increased growth of global population and increased urbanisation, GM crops offer one of the promising solutions to meet the world's food security needs which ultimately meet the SDG zero hunger target by 2030. Hence the government must take steps carefully keeping in the mind of interests of farmers, national biosafety and biosecurity.



**9. What do you understand by intelligent transportation system? What role can they play at a time of rising population and congestion? Illustrate.**

**Approach** - It expects students to write about intelligent transport system. And highlight on role of intelligent transportation system in the time of rising population and congestion with various examples and analysis.

### **Introduction**

With the conception of smart city transmuting cities into digital societies, making the life of its citizens easy in every facet, Intelligent Transport System becomes the



indispensable component among all. In any city mobility is a key concern be it going to school, college and office or for any other purpose citizens use transport system to travel within the city in the time of rising population and congestion.

### Body

**Intelligent transportation system** - An intelligent transportation system is an advanced application which aims to provide innovative services relating to different modes of transport and traffic management and enable users to be better informed and make safer, more coordinated, and 'smarter' use of transport networks.

How Intelligent Transport System works?

Traffic Management Centre (TMC) is the vital unit of ITS. It is mainly a technical system administered by the transportation authority. Here all data is collected and analysed for further operations and control management of the traffic in real time or information about local transportation vehicle. Well-organised and proficient operations of Traffic Management Centre depends on automatised data collection with precise location information than analysis of that data to generate accurate information and then transmitting it back to travellers.

Role of the intelligent transportation system at a time of rising population and congestion in transport -

- **Data collection:** Strategic planning needs precise, extensive and prompt data collection with real-time observation. So the data here is collected via varied hardware devices that lay the base of further ITS functions. These devices are Automatic Vehicle Identifiers, GPS based automatic vehicle locators, sensors, camera etc. The hardware mainly records the data like traffic count, surveillance, travel speed and travel time, location, vehicle weight, delays etc.
- **Data Transmission:** Rapid and real-time information communication is the Key to proficiency in ITS implementation so this aspect of ITS consists of the transmission of collected data from the field to TMC and then sending back that analysed information from TMC to travellers. Traffic-related announcements congestion, accidents and any work of construction are communicated to the traveler through internet, SMS or onboard units of Vehicle and infra-red links.
- **Data Analysis:** The data that has been collected and received at TMC is processed further in various steps. These steps are error rectification, data cleaning, data synthesis, and adaptive logical analysis. Inconsistencies in data are identified with specialised software and rectified. After that data is further altered and pooled for analysis. This mended collective data is analysed further to predict traffic scenario which is available to deliver appropriate information to users.
- **Traveler Information:** Travel Advisory Systems (TAS) is used to inform transportation updates to the traveling user. The system delivers real-time information like travel time, travel speed, delay, accidents on roads, change in route, diversions, work zone conditions etc. This information is delivered by a

wide range of electronic devices like variable message signs, highway advisory radio, internet, SMS, automated cell.

Why intelligent transport system is need in congestion areas and high populations areas:

- Improve attractiveness of public transport system.
- Tackling rising congestion which increases industry cost, travel time and life style problems.
- Low speed and increased accident can be tackled.
- Reduce environment impact of transport.
- For Capacity and security management.
- Incident management.

Advantage of the intelligent transport system:

- Make transportation more efficient, secure, safe, and affordable and reduce traffic related stress in life.
- Travel time improvement
- Speed control and improvement.
- Reduction in stops and delays at intersections.

### **Conclusion**

With urbanisation expanding with speedy stride, number of vehicles on road is also increasing. Combination of both in return puts enormous pressure on cities to maintain a better traffic system so that the city keeps on moving without any hassle. For the purpose application of Intelligent Transport System is the only solution. ITS a win-win situation for both citizens and city administrators where it provides safety and comfort to citizens and easy maintenance and surveillance to city administrators.

### **10. What are the various stages of vaccine development? Illustrate. How is efficacy of a vaccine calculated? Explain.**

**Approach** - In the introduction you can start with explanation of what is vaccine and how it works. It expects candidates to describe about various stages of vaccine development in the first half. In the next half it is expected to mention the method to calculate efficacy. To fetch more marks giving a current relevance is necessary.

### **Introduction**

Vaccine is a mild form of a disease that is put (injected) into a person or an animal's blood using a needle (an injection) in order to protect the body against that disease.

The outbreak of the novel coronavirus has triggered an international effort to develop a safe and effective vaccine against COVID-19, perhaps at breakneck speed.

### Body

Stages in the development of a vaccine: According to the Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), there are six stages of vaccine development: exploratory, pre-clinical, clinical development, regulatory review and approval, manufacturing and quality control.

- Exploratory: This is research-intensive phase of the vaccine development process which is designed to identify "natural or synthetic antigens that might help prevent or treat a disease".
- Pre-clinical: During this phase, researchers use tissue-culture or cell-culture systems and animal testing to determine whether the candidate vaccine will produce immunity or not.
- Clinical development: It is a three-phase process. During Phase I, small groups of people receive the trial vaccine. In Phase II, the clinical study is expanded and vaccine is given to people who have characteristics similar to those for whom the new vaccine is intended. In Phase III, the vaccine is given to thousands of people and tested for efficacy and safety.
- For instance, Oxford vaccine shows 90% efficacy in Phase-3 trial. Moderna has completed enrolment of its late-stage phase 3 COVID-19 vaccine study, with 30,000 participants now enrolled in the study in October 2020.
- Regulatory review and approval: If a vaccine passes through all three phases of clinical development, the vaccine developer submits a Biologics License Application (BLA) to the licensing authority.
- Manufacturing: Major drug manufacturers provide the infrastructure, personnel and equipment necessary to create mass quantities of vaccines.
- Quality control: Stakeholders must adhere to procedures that allow them to track whether a vaccine is performing as anticipated. Recently, Russia became the first country to officially register a Covid-19 vaccine and declare it ready for use.

Vaccine Efficacy calculation method:

- Vaccine efficacy is the percentage reduction of disease in a vaccinated group of people compared to an unvaccinated group, using the most favourable conditions.
- It is best measured using double-blind, randomized, clinical controlled trials, such that it is studied under 'best case scenario'.
- Vaccine efficacy studies are used to measure several possible outcomes such as disease attack rates, hospitalizations, medical visits, and costs.
- The outcome data (vaccine efficacy) generally are expressed as a proportionate reduction in disease attack rate (AR) between the unvaccinated (ARU) and vaccinated (ARV), or can be calculated from the relative risk (RR) of



disease among the vaccinated group. Following is the formula through which Vaccine efficacy is calculated.

$$VE = \frac{ARU - ARV}{ARU} \times 100\%,$$

- Here, VE = Vaccine efficacy, ARU = Attack rate of unvaccinated people, ARV = Attack rate of vaccinated people.
- The advantages of a vaccine efficacy have control for all biases that would be found with randomization, as well as prospective, active monitoring for disease attack rates, and careful tracking of vaccination status for a study population there is normally a subset as well, laboratory confirmation of the infectious outcome of interest and a sampling of vaccine immunogenicity.
- The major disadvantages of vaccine efficacy trials are the complexity and expense of performing them, especially for relatively uncommon infectious outcomes of diseases for which the sample size required is driven up to achieve clinically useful statistical power.

### Conclusion

Coronavirus pandemic has impacted almost every sector and left a disastrous impact on the affected sector or groups. Due to this sheer scale of impact it becomes imperative to expedite the vaccine development to unprecedented level so that its impact will be minimised and a pre-covid-19 normalcy can be brought in to lives of people.

### 11. What do you understand by the 'dark web'? Why is it a serious threat? Explain.

**Approach** - It expects students to write about – what do you know about Dark Web – in second part write about threats possess by Dark Web – in end write few advantages of it.

### Introduction

The dark web is the World Wide Web content that exists on darknets: overlay networks that use the Internet but require specific software, configurations, or authorization to access.



## Body

### Dark Web:

- The dark web refers to encrypted online content that is not indexed by conventional search engines. Sometimes, the dark web is also called the dark net.
- The dark web is a part of the deep web, which just refers to websites that do not appear on search engines.
- Most deep web content consists of private files hosted on Dropbox and its competitors or subscriber-only databases rather than anything illegal.
- Specific browsers, such as Tor Browser, are required to reach the dark web. Using the dark web often provides considerably more privacy than just using Tor to access the web.
- Many dark web sites simply provide standard web services with more secrecy, which benefits political dissidents and people trying to keep medical conditions private.
- Unfortunately, online marketplaces for drugs, exchanges for stolen data, and other illegal activities get most of the attention.

### Dark Web possess serious threats because:

- The dark web empowers ordinary people, but some people will inevitably abuse that power. The dark web can make it easier to commit some of the worst crimes.
- For example, the combination of the dark web and cryptocurrencies theoretically makes it much easier to hire someone to commit a murder.
- While the dark web promises privacy to its users, it can also be used to violate the privacy of others. Private photos, medical records, and financial information have all been stolen and shared on the dark web.
- Since there's more content to analyze, Deep Web search engines tend to be slower than standard search engines. Searching the Deep Web also requires a more precise search string.
- Deep Web searches should be reserved for serious, painstaking research, not for simple questions and basic Web surfing.
- Deep Web searches may also return sensitive personal information from normally restricted databases, creating ethical dilemmas and leaving individuals susceptible to fraud and identity theft.
- Everything on the deep web is completely untraceable and it's only a matter of time before criminals take advantage of it. To put it simply, the deep web has become a corrupted hub of criminal activity.
- The transfer of drugs, illegal weapons and the hiring of contract killers is an almost daily occurrence on this medium. Illegal bidding market places similar to E-bay have been set up on the deep web to sell these illegal goods and, no matter how hard they try; there is nothing the law can do to stop it.
- These illegal market places are extremely efficient and even boast a user-friendly interface and search bar to help criminals save time in locating their illegal goods.
- The currency used in these marketplaces is the cyber currency Bitcoin, which only adds to the impossibility of the transfers and guilty parties being traced.

However, Dark web had some advantages like:

- The dark web helps people to maintain privacy and freely express their views. Privacy is essential for many innocent people terrorized by stalkers and other criminals.
- The increasing tendency of potential employers to track posts on social media can also make it difficult to engage in honest discussions publicly.
- Finally, the popularity of the dark web with criminals makes it a perfect way for undercover police officers to communicate.
- One of the biggest advantages of the dark web is the difficulty of blocking it. Common forms of censorship, which block traffic to websites at specific choke points along the Internet hierarchy, do not work with encrypted overlay networks. For similar reasons, the dark web is more resistant to surveillance by governments and corporations.
- Whistle blowers, journalists, and other professionals at risk of targeted surveillance use the dark web to communicate sensitive information. And organizations including Human Rights Watch and the Electronic Frontier Foundation support the use of and access to the dark web.

### Conclusion

The internet, like most things in life, is both a boon and a curse. In the right hands and with the right guidance, it can be a pathway to unparalleled opportunities for learning and growth. Without proper regulation, however, it can be extremely destructive and may negatively impact someone's future.

### 12. Examine the current and potential applications of wearable devices.

**Approach** - It is straightforward question where, it expects students to write about – in first part current applications of wearable devices – while in second part you need to write about potential applications of wearable devices.

### Introduction

Wearable technologies are smart electronic devices (electronic device with micro-controllers) that are worn close to and/or on the surface of the skin, where they detect, analyse, and transmit information concerning e.g. body signals such as vital

signs, and/or ambient data and which allow in some cases immediate biofeedback to the wearer

## Body

Current applications:

- For Kids and Families: Wearable devices provide parental assistance. Whether kids are going to a school event or a friend's house, they will be accessible thanks to wearable tech all the time. You can get your kid a GPS tracker, a screen less smartphone or some other device among many more options.
- Health and Wellness: If you feel overstressed at work, then it's time to give yourself a break. Find the mind-body balance and meditate yourself after a long workday. Sometimes your mind can be tired along with your body, so it shouldn't be all about body health, but also mental health. From sleep tracking to heart rate monitoring, you can ask help from a smart assistant to check on what's going on in your body.
- Music: They offer the ability to take your podcasts and music to hangouts. Without the need of headphones, you and your friends can listen to music at the same time. Also, you can use these wearable speakers underwater, so the music will be with you even in the pool.
- Adventure: Dealing with bigger cameras is a difficult task when you're trying to record your adventures. It causes many accidents, especially for those who like outdoor and underwater sports like hiking, skiing, or diving. Thanks to these lightweight wearable cameras, no need to carry additional gears in your backpack.

Potential applications:

- The Public and Personal Safety: In contrast with the position that wearable technology will give harm to security, the wearable devices will provide the safety of the society. For example, in the near future Bio-sensors will be integrated into the wearable devices, and these sensors will monitor the brain activities.
- Business: The wearable technologies are expected to innovate the companies' strategies and the way of doing business. In the near future, there will be no need to go to meetings physically. Instead of W/C meetings, the managers may meet in a virtual meeting room formed by augmented reality and all the decisions will be recorded.
- Research: Wearable technologies provides several opportunities for companies in the context of market research. Researchers use some eye-tracking techniques in the laboratory experiments. In the future, they can gather real-life data via eye-tracking software built in a smart glasses.
- Production: In production and in the logistics workers should work very efficiently and find and bring the necessary parts. However, sometimes they can be confused about the location of the necessary parts or products. With Smart glasses, when the factory needs some parts, the list may be automatically uploaded to the glasses. It can put them in the order and may



navigate the optimum route for the workers, and this lead to time and cost efficiency.

- Sales: Retailers can use a system that customers upload shopping list to the Smart Glasses, and the glasses will make the customers finish their shopping as fast as possible via indoor navigation. In addition, there may be no need to try on clothes in the near future. When we choose a dress the smart glasses may show the dress on the wearer virtually and it will be like looking at a mirror.
- Tourism: Augmented reality integrated wearable technologies enable people to visit cities, tourist attractions virtually without going there. They also use virtual city sightseeing tours. New virtual tourism companies may emerge in the near future.
- Entertainment: With the emergence of wearable technologies, there will also be a paradigm shift in the gaming industry. Oculus Rift, which is a virtual reality head-mounted display, can be considered as the preliminary version of this shift. When a user wears this head-mounted display he/she can view the virtual environment almost as real.

### Conclusion

Today, the diffusion of the wearable technologies is just at the early adopter stage both for the society and companies. In the near future the evolution of wearable technologies, especially smart glasses and smart watches, will almost be completed their evolutions and these technological devices will be adopted by the societies and companies. Wearable technologies will be a milestone both for daily life of people and the way of doing businesses of the companies in the future.

### 13. What is the National Infrastructure Pipeline (NIP)? What are its intended benefits? Examine.

**Approach** - It expects student to write about – in first part write about what is National Infrastructure Pipeline – in second part write different intended benefits of National Infrastructure Pipeline – in the end write few challenges before it.

### Introduction

Recently, the Government has released a report of the task force on National Infrastructure Pipeline for 2019-2025. To augment infrastructure and create jobs in the country, the government task force on National Infrastructure Pipeline (NIP),



which in its report projected total investment of Rs 111 lakh crore in infra projects over five years. It said that 18 per cent of the targeted investment is expected to be made in the road sector.

### Body

National Infrastructure Pipeline (NIP):

- NIP is a first-of-its-kind initiative to provide world-class infrastructure across the country and improve the quality of life for all citizens.
- It will improve project preparation, attract investments (both domestic & foreign) into infrastructure, and will be crucial for attaining the target of becoming a \$5 trillion economy by FY 2024.
- Covers both economic and social infrastructure projects.
- During the fiscals 2020 to 2025, sectors such as Energy (24%), Roads (19%), Urban (16%), and Railways (13%) amount to around 70% of the projected capital expenditure in infrastructure in India.
- It has outlined plans to invest more than ₹102 lakh crore on infrastructure projects by 2024-25, with the Centre, States and the private sector to share the capital expenditure in a 39:39:22 formulas.

There are following intended benefits of NIP:

- It is estimated that India would need to spend \$4.5 trillion on infrastructure by 2030 to sustain its growth rate. The endeavour of the National Infrastructure Pipeline (NIP), is to make this happen in an efficient manner.
- Well-planned NIP will enable more infrastructure projects, grow businesses, create jobs, improve ease of living, and provide equitable access to infrastructure for all, making growth more inclusive.
- Well-developed infrastructure enhances level of economic activity, creates additional fiscal space by improving revenue base of the government, and ensures quality of expenditure focused on productive areas.
- National Infrastructure Pipeline will ensure that infrastructure projects are adequately prepared and launched. It will provide better view of project supply, provides time to be better prepared for project bidding, reduces aggressive bids/failure in project delivery, and ensures enhanced access to sources of finance as a result of increased investor confidence.
- It will strengthen agricultural and rural infrastructure. Irrigation and rural infrastructure projects would account for 7.7 lakh crore each.
- It will further increase the connectivity in India, especially in rural areas. Road projects will account for Rs. 19.63 lakh crore while another Rs. 13.68 lakh crore would be for railway projects.
- There is a lack of private investment due to ongoing NPA crisis and lack of credit creation in the economy. So the government needs to invest from its own resources to give a push to the economy

However, following challenges needs to address:

- Credit availability is the biggest challenge in the backdrop of the NPA crisis. Envisaged Private sector participation in capital expenditure (22%) may largely suffer due to this.

- State governments' financial commitment may not be realised because of fiscal concerns. Presently, more than 20 states already have a debt-GSDP ratio of above 25 per cent.
- Land acquisition is a big challenge for the completion of infrastructure projects.

### Conclusion

Availability of quality infrastructure is a prerequisite to achieve broad-based and inclusive growth on a sustainable basis. If the concerns regarding fiscal availability are addressed properly, National Infrastructure Pipeline would be a massive exercise to realise the vision of becoming a 5 trillion \$ economy by 2024.



### 14. Examine the significance of rural infrastructure schemes for the economy.

**Approach** - It expects student to write about – in first part write about significance of rural infrastructure schemes for the economy – in second part write about different rural infrastructure schemes (you can also write first and second part as one) – in third part write challenges before it – in end write few way forwards.

### Introduction

Infrastructure plays a critical role in the economic development of any country. Presently 65% of India's population resides in its rural areas. If we talk about rural

infrastructure in the country, then it is crucial for agriculture, agro-industries and poverty alleviation in the rural areas.

### Body

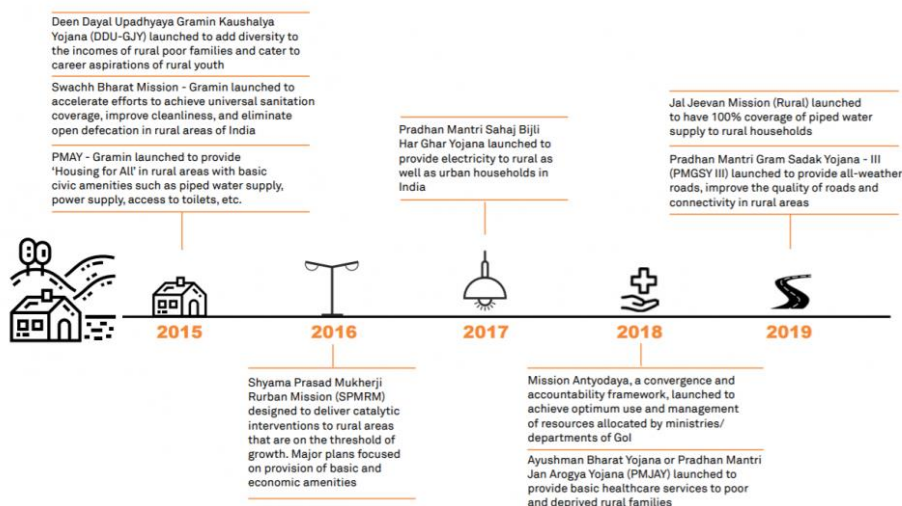
Significance of rural infrastructure schemes for the economy:

- Basically, rural infrastructure has the potential to provide basic amenities to people that can improve their quality of life. To give an example, development of rural infrastructure can lead to improved access to market centres for the rural producers, better availability of inputs and raw materials at reduced prices and improved mobility.
- Rural road infrastructure scheme: It provides mobility and connectivity to people living in rural areas. It also provides the much needed boost to agricultural activities by making available water, seeds and other raw materials to the farmers. By improving connectivity, rural roads also enhance employment opportunities for the rural people in non-agriculture sector, thereby, increasing livelihood opportunities. Rural roads also ensure that the rural areas are served with better public services and all the benefits offered by the state reach the far-flung areas easily. They can even provide access to education and health services.
- Rural electrification infrastructure scheme: It basically caters well to the requirements of agriculture and other activities including irrigation pumpsets, small and medium industries, khadi and village industries, cold storage chains, healthcare and education
- Rural water supply scheme: It can lead to sustainability of systems and sources and tackle the problem of water quality, thereby, increasing good health of people.
- Rural housing infrastructure scheme: It has the potential to improve living standard of the people.
- Overall and as per various studies, development of rural power, irrigation, water, sanitation and road infrastructure can increase productivity, savings, income and tourism and result in better jobs and health of rural people.

Keeping all the above factors in mind, the government of India (GoI) has initiated critical schemes for the upliftment of rural infrastructure. Such as:

- Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY - Gramin): Providing Housing for All by 2022. PMAY-G aims to provide pucca (permanent) houses and other basic civic amenities such as piped drinking water, power supply and Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) connection in convergence.
- Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY): Improving rural connectivity, by providing all-weather roads to connect eligible habitations in rural areas. As on December 31, 2019, road length worth Rs. 2.9 lakh crore had been sanctioned and expenditure of Rs. 2.17 lakh crore incurred.
- Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM): Providing Functional Household Tap Connection (FHTC) to every rural household i.e., Har Ghar Nal Se Jal by 2024.





There have been several factors that have posed a challenge to development:

- **Land availability:** There is a continuous tussle for land for agriculture, agro-based industries, and housing in the rural areas, which is a severe constraint to meet the housing demands of the rural population. This implies that the vision of 'Housing for All' will require acquisition/ supply of large land parcels on a regular basis.
- **Inadequate financing:** Inadequate access to formal sources of finance for the rural population has been an issue in the rural housing sector. Lack of proper documentation/ steady source of income for rural population has been a hindrance in securing formal finance.
- **Legal constraints:** There is a barrier for major players in real estate in tapping the vast land potential in rural areas reinforced by poor enforcement of laws against encroachment of public lands. There is an absence of clear titles to private lands causing an artificial scarcity of land in rural areas. Another major issue is the absence of large-scale digitisation of land records and easy access to such records for checking land-holding titles.
- **Poor condition of rural road network:** India has one of the largest and densest rural road networks around the world. However, 2.7 million kilometres of rural road network is in poor condition. At present, most of the rural roads are not all-weather roads and lack connectivity to remote areas.

Several reforms that are identified as imperative in the development of Rural infrastructure are as follows:

- **Boosting rural affordable housing to ensure 'Housing for All by 2022':** However, for the affordable housing initiative to succeed there needs to be efficient land usage and easy access to finance and innovative financing mechanism. For that the government is setting up an affordable housing fund in the National Housing Bank (NHB) that can be funded from the priority sector lending shortfall.
- **Improving condition of roads under PMGSY:** All roads to be covered by five-year maintenance contracts, to be entered into along with the construction contract with the same contractor in accordance with standard bidding document (SBD). Policy Framework for road maintenance by National Rural Infrastructure Development Agency in collaboration with the International Labour



Organization (ILO) to be implemented on a state level. Ensuring greater fund availability, acknowledging feedback from the Meri Sadak App and improving last-mile connectivity in rural areas.

- Improving coverage of basic civic amenities: By increasing accountability of GPs by decentralising service delivery model, improving the capacity of local government to undertake and implement quality infrastructure projects in the rural areas. And creating awareness among the rural population regarding user charges/ fees for quality services/ amenities.
- Improving supply of drinking water: By bringing structural changes in the regulatory environment, a shift is needed in the institutional framework of the Central Water Commission (CWC) and the Central Groundwater Board (CGWB) to make water management more holistic and multidisciplinary. Restructuring and unifying the CWC and CGWB to form a new National Water Commission (NWC). A model law on water resource regulatory mechanisms can also be drafted and implemented on state level.

### Conclusion

Rural infrastructure can give impetus to overall growth and special need of Atmanirbhar Bharat can be fulfilled by bringing 69% of Indian population together with good infrastructure connectivity of all sorts.

**15. What is the 'Blue Flag' certification of beaches? Explain. Why was it in news recently? Discuss.**

**Approach** - Students are expected to write about the 'blue flag' certification in first part and discuss its recent significance in Indian context.

### Introduction

Blue Flag is awarded by the Denmark-based non-profit Foundation, Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE). The award is given to the safest, cleanest, and environment-friendly beaches of the world. Recently India became the first country in

the world to receive the Blue Flag Certification for 8 beaches in a single attempt. This is a global recognition of India's conservation and sustainable development efforts

### Body

Blue Flag Certification:

- The 'Blue Flag' is a certification that can be obtained by a beach, marina, or sustainable boating tourism operator, and serves as an eco-label.
- It is awarded annually to beaches and marinas in FEE member countries. Blue Flag beaches are considered the cleanest beaches of the world.
- The Blue Flag programme was started in France in 1985. It promotes sustainable development in freshwater and marine areas through four main criteria those are Water quality, Environmental management, Environmental education, Safety.
- Forty-seven countries currently participate in the program, and more than 4000 beaches, marinas, and boats have this certification worldwide.

Recently, India is the first country in "Asia-Pacific" region which has achieved this feat in just about 2 years' time whereas Japan, South Korea and UAE are the only other Asian nations who have been conferred with a couple of Blue Flag beaches, however, in a time frame of about 5 to 6 years.

However according to the new notification, few activities and facilities would be permitted in the CRZ in order to meet the requirements of Blue Flag certification.

- Minimum distance: 50 meters from the High Tide Line (HTL) area was under imposition for development on the beach as per the earlier CRZ guidelines which is now changed to 10 meters from the High Tide Line.
- Infrastructure development permitted on Beaches: India has permitted certain types of development on beaches focusing on the criteria of blue flag certification such as Portable toilet blocks, change rooms and shower panels, Solid waste management plant, Solar power plant, Purified drinking water facility, Beach access pathways, Outdoor play / fitness equipment, CCTV surveillance and control room, First aid station, environment information boards and other signages, Other associated facilities or infrastructure, as per requirements of Blue Flag Certification.
- New initiatives by Government: To take this project forward India has launched its own eco-label BEAMS (Beach Environment & Aesthetics Management Services) under ICZM (Integrated Coastal Zone Management) project which is an attempt to achieve sustainability.

Although Blue Flag is the most popular eco-award, however there are certain issues which are harmful for the environment

- High levels of human influence: The beaches are not characterized for their naturalness; instead they show high levels of human influence and

artificialization. There are lot of services for the humans, but no real management for the conservation of the naturalness of the beach.

- Detrimental to beach ecosystem: The concession of Blue Flag award is strictly focused on services offered to the users of the beach, they do not take in account of environmental and ecological issues related to the behaviour of beaches as fragile systems. Ultimately it will cause damage the fragile species of beach ecosystem.

### Conclusion

India has now entered the bloc of 50 “BLUE FLAG” nations. The central government is planning to take this journey forward to 100 such beaches in the country in the next five years. As the ocean hosts the world’s largest connected ecosystem and provide an increasing amount of energy, food, materials to the society, development of beaches in line with the sustainable development goals will ensure healthy and productive marine environment.

**16. Comment on India’s recent achievements on the front of border infrastructure expansion. What benefits would accrue with such expansion? Examine.**

**Approach** - It expects students to write about recent border infrastructure expansion and how it will be beneficial in border security management in coming days.

### Introduction

India shares its border with seven different countries. Most of these borders are man-made and do not follow any natural barrier. India’s vast coastline and island territories also make it open to attacks and infiltration. In addition, political instability, cultural radicalism and patronage of mafia and terrorism in the few neighbouring countries make border management an important aspect to guard India’s sovereignty.

**Body**

India's recent achievements on the front of border infrastructure:

- **Bridge construction:** Defence Minister Rajnath Singh inaugurated 44 major bridges at strategic locations along the western, northern and north-eastern borders. This included eight major bridges in Ladakh and Arunachal Pradesh each, along with 28 other bridges located across different border sectors.
- **Tunnel construction:** Atal Tunnel in Rohtang, which is the highest altitude tunnel in the world and has strategic significance. The tunnel was constructed using drill and blast NATM (New Austria Tunnelling Method) techniques. 10 new such tunnel construction has been planned.
- **Infrastructure Development along the LAC:** India is close to completing a major upgrade of border roads, including a strategic military-use road that connects an airfield at Daulat Beg Oldie in the northern tip of the western sector with the villages of Shyok and Darbuk toward the south.
- **Frontier highways:** Roads spread across Jammu & Kashmir, Ladakh, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Arunachal Pradesh and Sikkim — BRO has reportedly completed 40 roads and 12 more roads will be completed by March 2021. For example Chardham project.
- **Comprehensive Integrated Border Management System:** The CIBMS is a robust and integrated system that is capable of addressing the gaps in the present system of border security by seamlessly integrating human resources, weapons, and high-tech surveillance equipment.
- **The Border Area Development Programme (BADP):** Under BADP, for projects in areas of States/UTs inhabited along the Indo-China border i.e. Arunachal Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Ladakh, Sikkim and Uttarakhand. The fund is distributed to the Border States and Union Territories (UTs) depending on various criteria such as the length of the international border and population.

Benefits of border infrastructure projects:

- Bridges will facilitate faster movement of heavy civil and military traffic in the border areas, provide connectivity to the border population and aid in the faster deployment of troops when needed in sectors of strategic importance. For example project Sampark of BRO.
- DS-DBO road greatly facilitates the lateral movement of Indian forces along the western sector, reducing travel time by 40%.
- The tunnels are being built in areas where road traffic is disrupted every year for up to six months due to heavy snowfall during the winter months. The opening of the tunnels will enable the rapid movement of troops throughout the year, even in winter months.
- CIBMS has three components which are using a number of different devices for surveillance, efficient and dedicated communication network and data storage for a composite picture. Sensors like Thermal Imager, Unattended Ground Sensor (UGS), Fibre Optical Sensors, Radar, Sonar, satellite imagery are used in CIBMS.



- Under BADP the projects for developing strategically important villages and towns in border areas will be given priority. Construction of roads, bridges, primary schools, health infrastructure, playfields, irrigation works, etc. will be undertaken within 10 km of the border.

Way forward:

- Improving the functionality and efficiency of BRO: with Manageable Workload, Greater Financial Autonomy, Delinking Pay and Allowances, Higher Incentives and changes in the organisation structure in order to meet the deadlines.
- Leveraging technology: Integrated command and communication centres, scaling up of CIBMS, use of AI and moving a step closer to smart border management as recommended by Madhukar Gupta committee.
- Cross-border cooperation (CBC): The core principle of cross-border cooperation (CBC) is the information sharing and collaborative approach between neighbouring countries for border security threats like human trafficking arms smuggling, terrorist threats, etc.

### Conclusion

Work on critical border infrastructure such as roads and bridges has gone up by nearly 75 per cent across seven states and union territories sharing borders with China and Pakistan in the last two years, defence ministry data has showed. The creation of infrastructure would help integrate these areas with the hinterland, create a positive perception of care by the country and encourage people to stay on in the border areas leading to safe and secure borders.

### 17. Critically evaluate the impact of liberalisation in addressing the twin problem of poverty and unemployment in India.

**Approach** - As the directive here is critically evaluate, it is necessary to arrive on the overall analysis of the pros and cons backed by evidence. In the first part of answer it is expected to show what were expected outcomes of liberalisation in addressing the twin problem of poverty and unemployment in India. In the next part you can show what positive impacts are and what the negative ones are. A constructive way forward will fetch you more marks.

### Introduction

In the economic history of India major economic reforms occurred in 1991 when a new economic policy was announced. This policy focussed on three aspects i.e. liberalisation, privatisation and globalisation. Though the macro objective of these reforms was to dismantle the excessive regulatory framework, micro objectives were

focussed at increasing growth rate of per capita income and achieving full employment there by reducing income inequality, reducing number of people living below poverty line.

### Body

Liberalization refers to the process of making policies less constraining of economic activity and also reduction of tariff or removal of non-tariff barriers. Poverty and unemployment are inseparable twins as unemployment leads to lack of a regular income, which in turn leads to the inability of a person to be able to maintain the basic needs, such as having sufficient healthy foods, availing health care and having adequate shelter and lack of education. However, even it is possible to live in poverty even while employed. For instance, A low paid worker may suffer much the same hardships.

Positive impacts of liberalisation on Poverty and Unemployment:

- There are two conclusions on trends in poverty. The first one, shown in a World Bank study by Gaurav Datt and others, is that poverty declined by 1.36 percentage points per annum after 1991, compared to that of 0.44 percentage points per annum prior to 1991.
- The second conclusion is that in the post-reform period, poverty declined faster in the 2000s than in the 1990s. Around 138 million people were lifted above the poverty line during this period.
- The poverty of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes also declined faster in the 2000s. The Rangarajan committee report also showed faster reduction in poverty during 2009-10 to 2011-12.
- Higher economic growth, agriculture growth, rural non-farm employment, increase in real wages for rural labourers, employment in construction and programmes like the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) contributed to higher poverty reduction in the 2000s compared to the 1990s.
- Unemployment rate is reduced: In 1991 unemployment rate was 4.3% but after adoption of new LPG policy more employment is generated because of globalization many new foreign companies came in India and due to liberalization many new entrepreneurs have started new companies because of an abolition of Industrial licensing / Permit Raj so, employment is generated, and due to which India's unemployment rate is reduced from 4.3% in 1991 to 3.6% in 2014.
- Strongest revolution of new century has been one of Information Technology, which started in last years of past century. This revolution was different because it made globalization even more obvious and stark. It made possible transfer of real time human labour across nations, without transfer humans themselves. There by it increased the employment rate in India.

Negative impacts of liberalisation on Poverty and Unemployment:

- Liberalisation benefits to those who have the skills and technology in the country. The higher growth rate achieved by an economy can be at the expense of declining incomes of people who may be rendered redundant. Hence, liberalisation has widened the gap between the rich and poor, rises inequalities and thereby increasing the number of poor in the country.
- In 1991, agriculture provided employment to 72 percent of the population and contributed 29.02 per cent of the gross domestic product. However, in 2018 the share of agriculture in the GDP went down drastically to 15% and employment to nearly 50%
- This has resulted in a lowering the per capita income of the farmers and increasing the rural indebtedness which in turn grappled more and more farmers in to poverty. Rising suicides of farmers in Maharashtra is one such example.
- As per the methodology of the Suresh Tendulkar Committee report, the population below the poverty line in India was 354 million (29.6% of the population) in 2009-2010 and was 269 million (21.9% of the population) in 2011–2012. Till 2014 unemployment rate came down to 3.6%. However, after 2014 due to jobless growth unemployment rate has increased to 6.1% in 2018.
- Former vice chairperson of NITI aayog, Arvind Panegariya also pointed out that Underemployment, and not unemployment is the key challenge facing India. He also argued that, it is not possible to grow at 7% and have no jobs growth. Most people are employed but earn low wages, especially in agriculture output per worker is one-fifth of that in industry.

Way forward to overcome the twin problem of poverty and unemployment:

- India needs to continue to follow the two-fold strategy of achieving high economic growth and direct measures through social protection programmes.
- The focus should also be on increase in urban growth and income as the share of urban poverty will rise with urbanization.
- It is necessary to focus here on the two important measures: creating productive employment and providing quality education for reduction in poverty and inequality.
- Employment focus is the major part of equity approach. Studies have shown that agricultural growth leads to reduction in poverty twice as that of non-agriculture. We need more diversified agriculture for raising the income of farmers.
- However, future employment has to be created in manufacturing and service. In this context, the Make in India initiative, focus on start-ups, Mudra, financial inclusion, etc., are steps in the right direction. Equally, service sector employment has to be promoted.
- Over time, the share of the organized sector has to be raised while simultaneously improving productivity in the unorganized sector.
- Efficient delivery systems of public services. Many reckon that poor governance is the biggest constraint in achieving the aspirations of a new generation and reduction in poverty, inequality and unemployment.



**Conclusion**

Sustainable Development Goal 1, one of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals established by the United Nations in 2015, calls for "no poverty". Though Liberalisation focused on creating employment and thereby reducing poverty, some of the issues still remain a challenge for the policymakers. There is a need of an effective anti-poverty programme at solving the unemployment problem through structural, institutional and technological reforms in the economic sectors for speeding up the pace of economic growth, and reduction in poverty. If the expected reforms are implemented in their letter and spirit we can realise true meaning of 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikaas'.

**18. Discuss the recent measures taken to upgrade the storage and transportation infrastructure for agricultural produce. Also, comment on its backward and forward linkage potential.**

**Approach** - It expects students to write about the storage and transportation infrastructure development measures taken by government recently in first part, and comment about its forward and backward linkage potential in second part.

**Introduction**

Agriculture is the primary source of livelihood for about 58% of India's population. India is a surplus producer in several agri commodities. However, the country's farmers do not get remunerative prices because of a lack of investment storage and transportation infrastructure. For a country where a large part of the population is dependent on agriculture for livelihood, it is essential to invest heavily in storage and warehouse facilities.

**Body**

Recently through various schemes and stimulus fund government have focused on agri infrastructure development.

Recent measures taken to upgrade the storage and transportation infrastructure:

- **Transport and Marketing Assistance (TMA):** The Government of India came out with Transport and Marketing Assistance (TMA) scheme to provide financial assistance for transport and marketing of agriculture products in order to boost agriculture exports.
- **More warehouses will be developed:** Under Union Budget 2020-21, the Ministry of Finance announced that more warehouses that comply with the requirements of the Warehousing Development and Regulation Authority (WDRA) will be developed on a public-private partnership (PPP) basis at the block/ taluka level.
- **Mapping of Cold storage facility:** National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) will be undertaking the exercise of geotagging all cold storage facilities, which will help NABARD direct resources so as to expand capacities where there is a need.
- **Direct Procurement from Farmer:** As part of stimulus package, the government has announced a Rs 1 trillion fund for entrepreneurs to set up facilities to procure, store and market agricultural produce. Aggregators, cooperative societies and farm entrepreneurs for strengthening farm gate infrastructure and establishing post-harvest management infrastructure will use this proposed fund.
- **Operation Greens:** The government has announced that Operation Greens, a price fixation scheme that aims to ensure that farmers are given the right price for their produce, will be extended from tomatoes, onions and potatoes (TOP) to all fruits and vegetables. The scheme will include a 50 per cent subsidy on transportation from surplus to deficit markets. It will also include a 50 per cent subsidy on storage, including cold storage. The project will be implemented on a pilot basis for six months and will later be extended further.
- **SAMPADA Scheme:** Government plans to triple the capacity of food processing sector in India from the current 10% of agriculture produce and has also committed Rs 6,000 crore (US\$ 936.38 billion) as investments for mega food parks in the country, as a part of the Scheme for Agro-Marine Processing and Development of Agro-Processing Clusters (SAMPADA).
- **Dairy Processing & Infrastructure Development Fund:** The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs has approved a “Dairy Processing & Infrastructure Development Fund” (DIDF) with an outlay of Rs 11,184 crore during the period from 2018-19 to 2030-31 through which 95 Lakh milk producers will be benefited by covering 50,000 villages.
- **Animal husbandry infrastructure development:** Government announced the launch of animal husbandry infrastructure development fund of Rs 15,000 crore with an interest subsidy scheme to promote investment by private players and MSMEs in dairy, meat processing and animal feed plants.
- **Venture Capital fund By NABARD:** In May 2019, NABARD announced an investment of Rs 700 crore venture capital fund for equity investment in agriculture and rural-focused start-ups.

- Digitalisation in Agriculture: The Government of India is going to provide Rs 2,000 crore for computerization of Primary Agricultural Credit Society (PACS) to ensure cooperatives are benefitted through digital technology.
- Pradhan MantriKrishiSinchaiYojana (PMKSY): The Government of India launched the Pradhan MantriKrishiSinchaiYojana (PMKSY) with an investment of Rs 50,000 crore aimed at development of irrigation sources for providing a permanent solution from drought.
- RashtriyaKrishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY): In 2019–20, Rs 202.5 crore was allocated to the Rainfed Area Development, a sub-scheme under RashtriyaKrishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY).

Backward and forward production linkages always requires modern agriculture production and distribution system. Forward linkage potential:

- Supermarkets can replace intermediaries: Provision of quality chilling infrastructure can attract the supermarkets to procure from farmers directly, which will result in Reduction of intermediaries.
- Adequate knowledge of Market through Digitalisation: Lack of adequate operational knowledge of smartphones resulted in loss for regular updates on fair prices of crops (MSP), future crops and weather updates etc. Digitalisation in this sector bridging this gap.
- Vital Role of Cold storage facility: The demand for frozen goods is increasing by the day, leading to an expansion of the cold storage market. The cold storage sector in agriculture is opening various business opportunities. Fully integrated cold chain will include, both forward and backward linkage such as Pre-cooling, packaging, small cold storage facilities and in forward linkage, Reefer vehicles, large cold-storage facilities, ripening chambers, waxing, and packaging from cold storage to consumer.

Backward linkage potential:

- Scientific approach farm processes: It has been reported that postharvest losses can be substantial, resulting in annual economic losses of at least Rs 1,00,000 crore. Investments in research labs for scientific gradation and quality assessment. Training centres for farmers to provide knowledge transfer on quality management, seed selection, crop forecasting etc. will avoid this loss.
- Development of infrastructure like road and transport: Good quality roads for farm produce to processing centres reduces time as well as preserve the quality of the product.
- Credit facility necessary for expansion: Easily available credit facility increases expansion ability of the farmers. Credit facilities also develop the farmers to enter into the farm allied businesses.

Going forward, the adoption of food safety and quality assurance mechanisms such as Total Quality Management (TQM), Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) and Good Hygienic Practices (GHP) by the food processing industry will offer several benefits.

### Conclusion



India is expected to achieve the ambitious goal of doubling farm income by 2022. The agriculture sector in India is expected to generate better momentum in the next few years due to increased investment in agricultural infrastructure. Furthermore, the growing use of genetically modified crops will likely improve the yield for Indian farmers.

**19. Why is regional imbalance a grave threat in the Indian context? Examine. Can the creation of infrastructure alone ensure inclusive growth and reduce the feeling of alienation? Critically comment.**

**Approach** – You need to examine the issue of regional imbalance in context of India and the threats arising out of it. Further in the 2<sup>nd</sup> part, you need to focus on critically commenting on creation of infrastructure as sole tool towards ensuring inclusive growth and reducing the feeling of alienation in people.

### **Introduction**

Regional disparities are an alarming issue in India, and it has been widening in spite of various policy initiatives by the government to develop backward areas. The fruit of high growth have not been distributed fairly across India's different regions and have given rise to the threat of regional inequality.

### **Body**

- Regional imbalance is the disparity in the economic and social development of two regions. Regional imbalances mean wide differences in per capita income, literacy rates, health and education services, levels of industrialization between different regions.
- Disparities in social and economic development, employment, and infrastructure amenities across the regions and within regions have been a major challenge to policy makers and economists. Consequently, regional

imbalance is considered a grave threat in Indian context due to the following factors:

1. **Inter - States and Intra State Agitations** - Uneven regional development or regional imbalances lead to several agitations with in a State or between the States. The erstwhile combined State of Andhra Pradesh can be cited as the best example of the consequences of intra - state regional imbalance in terms of development.
2. **Migration** - Migration takes from backward areas to the developed areas in search livelihood. For example, migration from rural to urban. Because, urban areas will provide better quality of life and more job opportunities when compared to rural. This leads to tremendous pressure on urban areas in terms of planning and resources.
3. **Social Unrest** - Differences in prosperity and development leads to friction between different sections of the society causing social unrest. For example Naxalism. Naxalites in India function in areas which have been neglected for long time for want of development and economic prosperity.
4. **Housing, Water Problem** - Establishment of several industries at one place leads to shortage of houses as a result rental charges will increase abnormally. For example, Mumbai, New Delhi, Chennai and Hyderabad and over population leads to water crisis.
5. **Aggregation of the imbalance** - Once an area is prosperous, more investments pour-in neglecting the less developed regions. For examples, the rate of growth of the metropolitan cities like Mumbai, Delhi, etc. is higher compared to other metro cities of India.
6. **Under – Developed Infrastructure** - Rural and backward areas do not have 24 hours power, proper houses, safe drinking water, sanitation, hospitals, doctors, telephone and internet facilities

Here, the creation of infrastructure alone can ensure inclusive growth and reduce the feeling of alienation due to the following factors:

- Availability of adequate infrastructure especially the physical infrastructure facilities is the pre-condition for sustainable economic and social development. Non-availability or inadequate availability of infrastructure poses a serious threat to growth.
- The social infrastructure broadly includes health, education and sanitation. It is well recognised that the literacy of any region or area has a positive relation to the overall development. Regional disparity can also be observed from the gap in literacy level in different states in India.
- The physical infrastructure includes transport, communication, electricity etc. India suffers from inadequate availability of physical infrastructure, as measured by any accepted indicator. Not only is infrastructure inadequate and weak, it varies from interstate to intra state.

At the same time, for overcoming any problem, a balanced approach is necessary where tackling regional imbalance would require a host of other measures along with infrastructure development like:

- The most important factors driving growth come from the health, education, transport, agriculture, and energy sectors, which are used to construct composite infrastructure index.
- Efficient investment in all these sectors would provide the much-needed boost required for economic and human development, which would ultimately result in sustainable and satisfactory economic growth which is broad based.
- Investment in agriculture needs to be stepped up especially in the lagging regions. Since agricultural growth is found to be different in different regions, steps to equalise it will certainly reduce the regional imbalances.

### Conclusion

Regional imbalance is a threat to the goal of inclusive growth and reduction of poverty. Ultimately, the key to balanced regional development lies not merely in increasing resource flows to backward regions but in creating an enabling environment to attract more resources, using them properly and assuring a fair deal to investors and also ensuring the ideal path of 'economic growth with integrity'.

### 20. Examine the factors that have led to India's lower tax to GDP ratio. What are its implications for the economy? Analyse.

**Approach** - Students are expected to examine those factors, which led to India's lower tax to GDP ratio in first part, and analyse its implications on economy in second part.

### Introduction

Tax revenue is income collected by governments through taxation. The tax-to-GDP ratio is used to measure how much a government controls its economic resources. The low ratio represents that the government won't be able to finance its expenditure and hence increases government's dependence on borrowings. Although India has improved its tax-to-GDP ratio in the last six years, it is still far lower than the average OECD ratio, which is 34 per cent.

### Body

India despite seeing higher growth rates, has struggled to widen the tax base.

Factors that have led to India's lower tax to GDP ratio:

- Low per capita income keeps tax collections low: Low average incomes and a high poverty rate result in a very small portion of the labour force being eligible to pay personal income taxes. As per OECD report, income taxes accounted for a lower proportion around 16% of the general government's revenue.
- A large proportion of economic activity generated by SME: Although SMEs have enjoyed strong profitability growth over the past decade, the



government has not captured their earnings in tax revenues due to a variety of exemptions and compliance issues.

- **Tax Exemptions to Start-ups:** Start-ups with turnover up to Rs. 25 crores are allowed deduction of 100% of its profits for three consecutive assessment years. Indeed, it boost the economic activity and entrepreneurship, a large proportion of income government missed to capture here.
- **Tax exemptions on agriculture related activity:** The incomes of the small and marginal farmers are far below the minimum threshold limit of personal income taxation. Wealthy farmers are reportedly misusing this benefit to evade taxes. The proportion of agricultural households holding 4-10 hectares of land is just 3.7% and 0.4% over 10 hectares. Just by taxing the incomes of the top 4.1% of agricultural households, at an average of 30%, as much as Rs 25,000 crore could be collected as agricultural tax.
- **Low service tax net:** Although it has been progressively expanded to include a greater number of services each year, and service tax revenue has grown the fastest of all revenue sources. Yet, service taxes constitute merely 5 per cent of total general government revenues, although they comprise about 60 per cent of GDP.
- **Tax exemptions to SEZ:** According to the sunset clause, there is 100 per cent income tax exemption on export income for SEZ units for the first five years, 50 per cent for next five years and 50 per cent of the ploughed back export profit for subsequent five years.
- **Drop in corporate tax revenue:** Surprise cut in corporate tax rate last year aimed at wooing manufacturers and boosting investment in Asia's third-biggest economy is another key reason behind the sluggish tax collections.

Lower tax-to-GDP ratio constrains the government to spend on infrastructure and puts pressure on the government to meet its fiscal deficit targets. Implications of lower tax to GDP ratio on economy:

- **It lowers the GDP:** One of the reasons for lower tax to GDP is due to pervasive structure of exemptions, which indirectly affects the GDP growth, as it is a vicious cycle that means low tax produces less revenue resources with the state. It results in less public investment and lower job opportunities, thus lower economic progress.
- **Lesser spending on health and education also disturbs Socio-Economical structure:** Lower revenue means lesser spending on important social sectors such as Health and Education, which are key sectors for developing country. As it diminishes the welfare measures provided by the state, ultimately it affects the social structure and develop further inequality.
- **Affects government policy:** It creates political incentives for successive governments to ignore some eligible sections of society for vote-bank politics, rather than building an effective tax system that will spur economic growth.
- **High Government Borrowing:** It also increases government borrowing. To stimulate the economic activity in the country government is forced to borrow from, within and outside the country and thus it becomes difficult to manage fiscal deficits.

- Low spending on national security: Even though the actual amount of defence expenditure is seen to be increased in each budget, the defence expenditure percentage to GDP is reduced almost every year since last decade.
- Burden on few sectors: Some economists argue that as high productive sectors are taxed it is incentivizing the low productivity sectors not to come into formal tax system.
- Parallel economy: Low taxation means most of the money in economy goes unaccounted and hence will encourage parallel economy.

Although there are numerous implications of Low ratio, India's number does not look that bad given the significant difference in per capita income of the developed country. Therefore, it does have some positive implications. Positive implications of low tax to GDP ratio:

- Tax cuts increases demand: Tax cut also stimulate the economic activity by increasing workers' take-home pay. Tax cuts can also boost business demand by increasing firms' after-tax cash flow, which can be used to pay dividends and expand activity, and by making hiring and investing more attractive.
- Low tax Attracts Investment: The government always hopes that, lower tax rates will attract more investments into the country and help revive the domestic manufacturing sector, which has seen lacklustre growth. So there is constant pressure on governments across the world to offer the lowest tax rates in order to attract investors.
- OECD, group of developed nations: Out of 36 member countries of OECD, most of them from the developed world. Such high average tax-GDP ratio in OECD could be attributed to some of the European countries like France, Denmark etc. hence its generalised numbers are not exactly relevant to Indian economy.

### Conclusion

Continues efforts government putting in the form of various schemes to generate more tax and to increase revenue collection. To avoid tax disputes government announced various schemes like "vivad se vishwas" scheme and "sabakavishwas" scheme. The Central Government also introduced the "Faceless Assessment Scheme" to provide greater transparency, efficiency and accountability in Income Tax assessments. Rationalisation of GST and moving towards a two-rate structure can also help in increasing compliance and putting an end to tax evasion. While measures to improve tax compliance and widen the tax base will yield higher tax revenue, the importance of higher economic growth cannot be ignored.

**21. How sustainable is the vision of export led economic growth in the current changing global order? Critically examine.**

**Approach** - It expects student to write about - in first part write about positive aspects of export led economic growth - in second part mention why it is not sustainable for economy - in third part write way forward/suggestions.

**Introduction**

Export led growth is where a significant part of the expansion of real GDP, jobs and per capita incomes flows from the successful exporting of goods and services from one country to another. As the global supply chains look to diversify their sources, amid Covid-19 pandemic, India hopes to become one of the replacements for China. Moreover, the idea of turning the Indian economy into an export-led economy is not new.

**Body**

Export-led growth sustainable due to:

- Exports of goods and services are an injection into the circular flow of income leading to a rise in aggregate demand and an expansion of output. This helps to raise per capita incomes and reduce extreme poverty especially in developing/emerging economies.
- Growing export sales provide revenues and profits for businesses which can then feed through to an increase in capital investment spending through the accelerator effect. Higher investment increases a country's productive capacity which then increases the potential for exports.
- Many industries help facilitate trade such as trade insurance, logistics and port facilities. Countries with fast-growing export sectors are likely to see increased investment and employment in these related industries. A good example is the importance of trade to countries such as the Netherlands (including the port of Rotterdam), and Singapore and Hong Kong both of which have developed in globally-scaled hubs for trade.
- India's big, unexploited opportunities are in unskilled labour exports. India is vastly under-exporting relative to its labour force. Because China's wages are rising as it has become richer, it has vacated about \$140 billion in exports in



unskilled-labour intensive sectors. Post-COVID, the move of investors away from China will probably accelerate to hedge against supply chain disruptions.

- As India contemplates atmanirbharta, two deeper advantages of export orientation are always worth remembering. 1) Foreign demand will always be bigger than domestic demand for any country. 2) If domestic producers are competitive internationally, they will be competitive domestically and domestic consumers and firms will also benefit.

However, there are potential risks and drawbacks from export-led growth:

- Focusing on exporting might lead to over-dependence on the economic cycles of trade partner countries and vulnerability to external economic and political shocks.
- Running persistent trade surpluses might incite a protectionist response from other nations who feel that the benefits of trade have been unequally skewed in favour of exporting countries. Huge trade imbalances remain a big concern in the global economic system.
- Production capacity allocated to supply goods and services for export cannot be put to use meeting domestic needs and wants. There might be a consequent dip in domestic living standards unless the country is also prepared to import goods and services using the revenue generated from exporting.
- Rapid export-led growth might lead to demand pull inflation and higher interest rates. High relative inflation might then have the effect of making export industries less competitive in overseas markets and domestic producers less price competitive against imports.
- Export-led growth might be unsustainable if it contributes extraction of natural resources beyond what is required for long term balanced growth to be maintained. Consider for example the impact of deforestation and over-fishing and degradation of land by industrial-scale farming.

Way Forward:

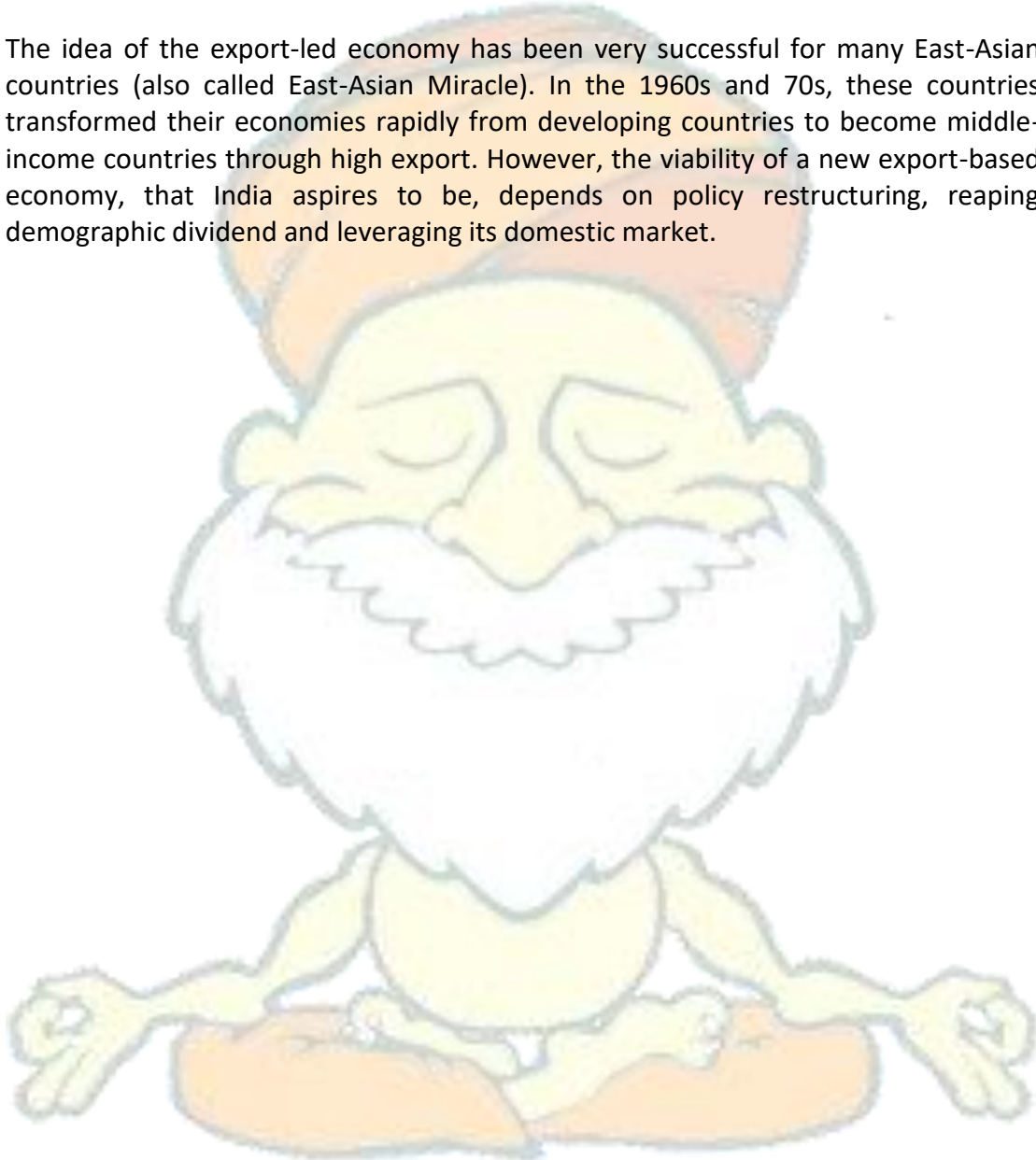
- **Building Domestic Demand:** No matter how bleak the global demand remains in the present times, a robust industrial architecture is crucial for a country to become self-sufficient. Thus, there is a need to build strong domestic demand, to sustain industrial activity in India.
- **Focus on Knowledge Power:** As the population in the majority of the developed world is ageing, India can leverage its demographic dividend and export its human resource to the world. For this, India needs to invest in its education, research & innovation capabilities and turn into a Knowledge superpower.
- **Addressing Structural Issues:** All countries that promoted export-led growth invested heavily in human capital and ensured very good infrastructure with ports, roads, airports and railways. Thus, India needs to: Invest in its labour force and provide them with regular, affordable food supply and housing. Build a well-functioning infrastructure and take various trade facilitation measures like easier customs clearances, less paperwork.
- **Economic Decentralisation:** There is also the need for economic planning to be devolved lower and lower down all levels of government so that people are

empowered to take up an economic activity that suits them and develop the resilience needed to respond to new opportunities and threats.

- Providing Easy Credit: Providing easy credit remains a critical aspect of mobilising investment. Hence, India also needs cleaning up of the Non-Performing Assets. In this context, the privatisation of banks will be a step in the right direction.

### Conclusion

The idea of the export-led economy has been very successful for many East-Asian countries (also called East-Asian Miracle). In the 1960s and 70s, these countries transformed their economies rapidly from developing countries to become middle-income countries through high export. However, the viability of a new export-based economy, that India aspires to be, depends on policy restructuring, reaping demographic dividend and leveraging its domestic market.



**22. Why is India grappling with the challenge of unemployment? Discuss. Examine the sectors that have high potential for creating jobs for the youth.**

**Approach** - As the question has two directives it is better to answer straightforwardly. The core of the question lies in unemployment and creating jobs for the youth. Hence, one can start by introducing some facts or stats regarding unemployment besides quoting any report regarding unemployment. In main body part, it is necessary to divide the question in two parts. For the first half of the answer, candidate needs to write the reasons due to which India is grappling with the challenge of unemployment. As a bridging gap between first half and second half, candidate may show which sectors have high potential for creating jobs for youth. In the second half, directive is examine, here a candidate is expected to investigate and establish the key facts and issues related to those specific sectors which have the high potential for creating jobs for the youth in India. For value addition, one can show a graph regarding unemployment, mentioning sector specific unemployment in table format, one can also mention current government schemes/programmes which works with objective of creating employment.

**Introduction**

Unemployment occurs when a person who is actively searching for employment is unable to find work. As per the report of Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMEI), unemployment rate in India fell to 7% in September 2020 from 3.37% of July 2017. As unemployment indicates the health of the economy and has subsequent critical domino effects on economy, it becomes essential to look at the reasons due to which India is grappling with the challenge of unemployment.

**Body**

Reasons for grappling challenge of unemployment in India:

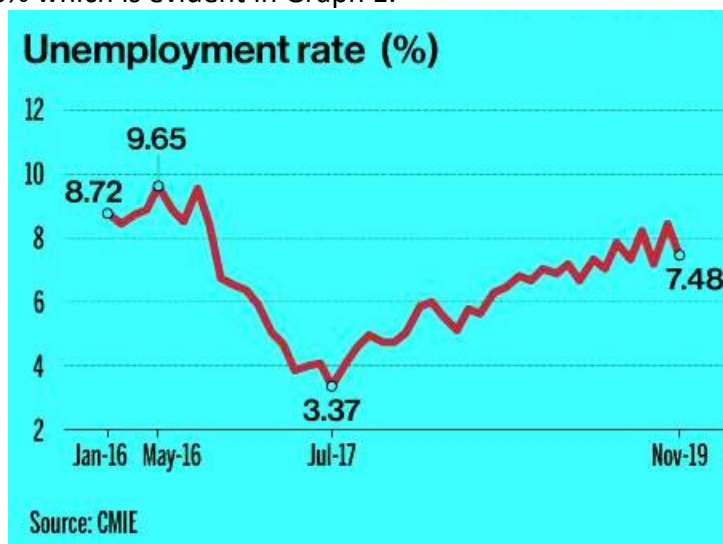
- Most of the decline in employment has happened due to the fall in the number of workers in agriculture and a sharp fall in the absolute number of female workers.
- Roughly 37 million workers left agriculture in the last six years. During the same time, 25 million women workers were out of the workforce. However, the low productivity in the agriculture sector plus the lack of alternative opportunities for agricultural workers makes transition among the three sectors difficult.
- Surprising trend is of declining women workers, which has absolutely no parallel in any developing or developed country of similar per capita income.



In most East Asian countries, the period of rapid growth was also accompanied by a rising number of women workers.

- Along with the fact that the number of people aged 25-64 years increased by around 47 million during the six-year period, it also means that the economy should have created at least 83 million jobs between 2012 and 2018 to accommodate those who have entered the labour force and those forced out of agriculture.
- The unemployment in India is not due to single reason, but it is due to multitude of reasons. For instance, disguised unemployment, structural unemployment, seasonal unemployment, vulnerable unemployment, technological unemployment, cyclical unemployment, and cyclical unemployment. Hence, it becomes a multi-fold crisis for India as economy is interdependent.
- Inadequate skills: Lack of vocational skills, skill gap of the working population posed one of the biggest sector specific challenge of unemployment. For instance, According to the Developer Skills report of an online learning platform, there is a strong mismatch between the frameworks/ skills required by the corporate world and the ones being learned by students. Close to 80% of the engineers blamed a lack of focus and hands-on coding experience for this situation.
- In the past few years, India's GDP grew at about 7-8%, but growth does not translated into creating more employment opportunities for the labour force of the country. For instance, the number of salaried jobs contracted by 1.8% in 2019-20. So, even before Covid kicked in, we were struggling to create salaried jobs.
- Legal complexities, inadequate state support, low infrastructural, financial and market linkages to small businesses making such enterprises unviable with cost and compliance overruns. For instance, despite the fact that attempt were made to lure foreign investors to set up their manufacturing plants in India under Make in India initiative. Very less investors are attracted to set up their manufacturing plants in India, just like Apple manufacturing plant set up issue.
- Also figures can be cited that in 2014, the share of manufacturing in India's GDP was 15%, however, in 2019 it contracted by 1% reaching to 14%.
- Inadequate growth of infrastructure and low investments in the manufacturing sector, hence restricting the employment potential of the secondary sector. For instance, despite being an emerging field in the economy, electric vehicles market is failing to create more job opportunities in 2nd and 3rd tier cities.
- The huge workforce of the country is associated with the informal sector because of a lack of required education or skills, and this data is not captured in employment statistics.
- The core cause of structural unemployment lies in the education we provide and how we provide it. For instance, the system of rote learning and targeting marks as an indicator of merit led to loss of true potential of child's intellect, like Indian middle class aspiration of making their son engineer and daughter.

- Gender based selection of jobs is also one of the factors which is affecting the job availability. For instance, a day time job is considered as safe and secure job for woman. Which contradicts job choices for woman.
- As per CMEI report, even before Covid-19, job opportunities were low for Indian youth. For instance, in November 2019, Unemployment rate in India fell to 7.48% which is evident in Graph 1.



Graph 1: Unemployment Rate in India (November 2019)

Unemployment affects the economy of the country as the workforce that could have been gainfully employed to generate resources actually gets dependent on the remaining working population, thus escalating socio-economic costs for the state. For instance, a 1 % increase in unemployment reduces the GDP by 2 %. Hence, creation of job opportunities becomes of critical importance. Meanwhile, manufacturing sector in the economy holds the key to create more jobs in India due to its forward and backward linkages.

- There are number of labour intensive manufacturing sectors in India such as food processing, leather and footwear, wood manufacturers and furniture, textiles and apparel and garments. Special packages, individually designed for each industry are needed to create jobs.
- The share of manufacturing in the Indian economy has varied between 14.7% of gross domestic product (GDP) and 16.7% of the GDP, between FY05 and FY20.
- Manufacturing activity leads to the creation of large employment in several service sector areas for instance, consider industry of readymade garments where backward linkages will provide job opportunities for youth in the rural areas for raw materials production, transport and for the youth in urban area with subsequent industrial and market development.
- Of course, just manufacturing cannot create enough jobs for the 10-12 million individuals who enter the workforce every year in India. In stark contrast, between 2004-05 and 2019-20, the share of services in the economy has gradually increased from 43.5% of the GDP to 50.4%.

- As per the study conducted by Climate Policy Initiative and Indian School of Business, India's renewable energy sector, including the solar and wind power generation segments, could create new job opportunities between 2 million and 4.5 million over the next 25 years.
- Besides tourism industry has more potential to generate more jobs. For instance, tourism Council calculated that tourism generated 8.31 lakh crore (US\$120 billion) or 6.3% of the nation's GDP in 2015 and supported 37.315 million jobs, 8.7% of its total employment. The sector is predicted to grow at an average annual rate of 7.5%.
- Credit facilities have not been penetrated in to rural areas. The current grants to Microcredit institutes and small scale banks holds the key potential to create more jobs. For instance, network of Grameen bank in Bangladesh.
- It not only holds the potential to generate jobs in banking sector, but also in other sectors too such as a loan granted to one organisation will create other jobs due to its forward and backward linkages.
- By improving the infrastructure and building post-harvest storage & processing units, and improving transportation facilities to distribute and sell the produce can create a large number of employment opportunities. Raising farmers' income is very important to boost the agricultural sector. For that, Minimum Support Price should be increased. Taking steps to boost Agri exports can also create number of jobs.
- Approximately 51% of MSMEs are in rural India. Strengthening them and providing the necessary tools & technologies to MSMEs can create multiple job opportunities.
- Also new fields like Artificial intelligence and Machine Learning hold the potential to create more jobs. According to accountancy firm PwC, over 7 million jobs will be displaced by AI between 2017 and 2037. However, it will also lead to the generation of 7.2 million jobs, which is a net gain of 200,000 jobs in India.
- For sector specific job creation opportunities, Government of India launched following schemes to ensure creation of job opportunities. For instance, Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act launched in 2005 providing the right to work to people. An employment scheme of MGNREGA aimed to provide social security by guaranteeing a minimum of 100 days paid work per year to all the families whose adult members opt for unskilled labour-intensive work. However, recently Azim Premji Foundation suggested increasing MGNREGA workdays from 100 to 200 to compensate for the lack of employment opportunities in rural areas.
- Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana was launched in 2015. The objective of PMKVY was to enable the youth of the country to take up industry-relevant skill training in order to acquire a secured better livelihood.
- The government launched the Start-Up India Scheme in 2016. The aim of Startup India programmes was to develop an ecosystem that nurtures and promotes entrepreneurship across the nation. Besides, Stand Up India Scheme also launched in 2016 aimed to facilitate bank loans to women and



SC/ST borrowers between Rs 10 lakh and Rs. 1 crore for setting up a greenfield enterprise.

- National Skill Development Mission was set up in November 2014 to drive the 'Skill India' agenda in a 'Mission Mode' in order to converge the existing skill training initiatives and combine scale and quality of skilling efforts, with speed.

### Conclusion

India has the opportunity to build a productive and inclusive workforce in the near future due to its advantage of demographic dividend. However, necessary cautions have to be addressed. It will not only help to create more jobs and reduction of unemployment in near future but it will help to ensure realising the dream of 'AatmNirbhar Bharat'.



**23. The continuance of retrospective amendments to taxation laws hurts investor sentiments and is detrimental to India's economic aspirations. Do you agree? Substantiate your views.**

**Approach** – You need to enumerate various recent retrospective amendments to taxation laws and show its effect on investor sentiments as well as India's economic aspirations in both positive and negative forms while also mentioning the side you agree with. Proper substantiation of points is necessary.

### **Introduction**

India, one of the fastest growing economies of the world with an exemplary rate of GDP, has tax as the main source of Government revenue, which contributes approximately 18% revenue to the GDP, and has always been a very sensitive issue taking into consideration the economic condition of population at large which have led to issues like retrospective amendments to taxations laws.

### **Body**

- Retrospective taxation allows a country to pass a rule on taxing certain products, items or services and deals and charge companies from a time behind the date on which the law is passed.

Consequently, the retrospective amendments to taxation laws can be seen to have the following benefits:

1. From the ancient time, retrospective law or ex post facto law has been a part of standard jurisprudence. It is neither an Indian creation, nor it is being used exclusively in India.
2. Some retrospective amendments are always required either to prevent the misuse of law or to harmonize various decisions of honourable courts with the statutes.
3. Further, many experts opine that such amendments are sometimes required to correct the "aberrations" that had come in by decisions of the quasi-judicial bodies, which went against the legislative intent.
4. Many consider this instrument as a platform of a great instrument to finance State welfare and achieve the much desired dream of egalitarianism.
5. Apart from India, many countries including the US, the UK, the Netherlands, Canada, Belgium, Australia and Italy have retrospectively taxed companies, which had taken the benefit of loopholes in the previous law.

At the same time, continuance of retrospective amendments to taxation laws can be seen as hurting investor sentiments and detrimental to India's economic aspirations due to the following points:

1. Introducing a retrospective taxation amendment into a present taxation system is hard on both ends i.e. for the government to implement and for the people to accept. The increased money flow towards the government results in lack of credit in the hands of the public and they are left helpless with a heavy tax burden on their heads.
2. A company's business decisions are based upon the tax situation that exists today. It is very difficult to organize its activities today based on a future law that will be made applicable from today. An ideal tax system should be predictable certain and stable. Hence retrospective implementation is considered a bad move.
3. Hurts Investor Confidence: The amendments are criticised by investors globally, who said the change in law was "perverse" in nature. This impacts the market sentiment and the flow of foreign funds to India.
4. Hurts Companies: While governments often use a retrospective amendment to taxation laws to "clarify" existing laws, it ends up hurting companies that had knowingly or unknowingly interpreted the tax rules differently.
5. As a retrospective amendment affects ongoing contracts too, it is very difficult for the contracting parties to accommodate a new levy against their private interest agreeable to both ends at once. In addition to domestic issues, international transactions also suffer a heavy blow and will certainly affect the foreign investment and faith, triggering financial crunches.
6. The legislature in recent times has perverted its power to enact retrospective changes in taxing statutes. One major instance would be of the Finance Act, 2009, which exemplifies several retrospective alterations in the Income Tax Act. For example – the Vodafone case.

#### Way Forward -

- Reducing scope of litigation by signing Advance-pricing Agreements (APA's) to avoid Transfer pricing disputes.
- Need to Bring More Clarity on Tax laws: India has already rolled out Anti-tax avoidance regulations i.e. the General Anti-Avoidance Rules (GAAR) from assessment year 2018-19.
- Indian Finance Code for simplification of taxation laws in India. In this context there is a need to implement recommendations of the Financial Sector Legislative Reforms Commission.
- Implementing Shome Committee recommendations: which recommended that any taxation involving indirect transfer of assets located in India should be prospective and not retrospective.

#### Conclusion

It can thus be concluded that retrospective application of tax law should occur in exceptional or rarest of rare cases, and with particular objectives. Moreover, retrospective application of a tax law should occur only after exhaustive and transparent consultations with stakeholders who would be affected which would be help in improving India's ease of doing business and overall business environment.



**24. Explain the phenomenon of jobless growth in the Indian context. Why does it occur? Is there a way to address it? Discuss.**

**Approach** - It is straightforward question, it expects student to give explanation about jobless growth in India context, reason behind it and in end mention measures to address it.

**Introduction**

The World Bank, in its publication, "South Asia Economic Focus, Spring: Jobless Growth?", says that over the long-term, India has been creating 7,50,000 new jobs for everyone per cent rise in gross domestic product (GDP), at an average of 7% growth, India should be creating at least 5.25 million jobs, if not more.

**Body**

Jobless growth in India:

- In a jobless growth economy, unemployment remains stubbornly high even as the economy grows. This tends to happen when a relatively large number of people have lost their jobs, and the ensuing recovery is insufficient to absorb the unemployed, under-employed, and those first entering the workforce.
- During the last decade (2001-11), the growth rate of the labour force (2.23 per cent) was significantly higher than the growth rate of employment (1.4 per cent), which itself was several-fold less than the growth rate of the economy. According to Census 2011, the average growth rate of the economy was 7.7 per cent per annum, when it was only 1.8 per cent for employment.
- 66th round of the National Sample Survey Office (NSSO) data on employment in 2011 revealed that between 2004-05 and 2009-10, only 1 million jobs were added per year; in a period when the economy averaged a record 8.43% growth annually.
- An Indian Labour Bureau survey of 2015 showed that 2,000 companies in eight sampled industries generated all of one lakh jobs, a fall from the four lakh generated in 2014, even though growth in 2014 was lower than in 2015.
- A HDFC Bank report on India's tapering jobs growth says that "employment elasticity" in the economy is now close to zero – for every one-point rise in GDP, jobs grow only 0.15. Fifteen years ago, it was 0.39

Reasons behind the Jobless growth

- In India, growth is attributed to service sector, whereby both employment and wages have seen a rise. But as figures say, the biggest employing sector in India is the Agriculture sector, employing 45% of the population but contributing 15% to the GDP, whereas Service sector is the biggest contributor to the GDP but employs less than 30%. IT and Financial services are drivers of service sector

growth in last 2 decades however both of these sector are not employment intensive. Thus contributing to jobless growth in India.

- Labour –intensive manufacturing sector did not become the engine of growth in India. In fact, it was the knowledge-intensive services sector which along with some segments of capital intensive manufacturing was the engines of growth in India. But these sectors by their nature were not employment-intensive.
- Stagnation in manufacturing output and employment and contraction of labour-intensive segment of the formal manufacturing sector.
- Therefore, the nature of the trade regime in India is still biased towards capital-intensive manufacturing.
- The nature of Indian manufacturing is not employment-friendly. Most of them are automated and any employment is highly skilled. Thus they Have contributed to growth, but not necessarily to employment.
- The labour intensity of MSME is four times higher than that of large firms. - but they are not treated well in India they have poor access to credit and they are plagued by many serious problems which has limited their growth potential.
- Impediments to entrepreneurial growth in small firms (such as high costs of formalisation) along with a long history of small scale reservation policy which has prohibited the entry of large scale units in labour intensive industries.
- The tax incentives, subsidies, depreciation allowance all are solely linked to the amount invested and not to the number of jobs created.
- Sluggish process in education and skill levels of workers.

However, following measures can be taken to address problem of Jobless growth:

- Improving the labour market information system where emerging demand for skills are spotted quickly and the necessary training and certifications for the same are created.
- Quick improvements in public-private partnership in capturing demand for skills and following through with quick investments in skill-building to match demand with supply.
- Jobs and skills planning should be decentralized and it has to be done at state and district levels, where there is granular information on education, skills and job options.
- Implementing a new model of manufacturing which is high-skilled, and where high-end cottage manufacturing can create employment at the small scale level.
- If urbanization is good and well planned, then job growth will be positive. Government should concentrate on the development of towns and narrow areas and service it with good infrastructure to generate employment alongside development.
- If government starts spending on public goods (schools, hospitals, dams, roads etc.) instead of spending on freebies (deep subsidies on food, farm loan waivers etc.) the capacity of government to create employment increases.

### Conclusion

India needs a new strategy to counter the phenomena of jobless growth. This requires manufacturing sector to play a dominant role. “MAKE IN INDIA” initiative a great step

forward which will boost the manufacturing. Complementary schemes like Skill India, Start-up India etc. can enhance the skillsets and employment generation.

**25. Do you think the inability of the Indian subcontinent to forge long lasting Economic alliances, unlike its western and eastern counterparts, has hurt it badly? Critically examine.**

**Approach** - It expects student to write about - in first part write about how inability of the Indian subcontinent to forge long lasting economic alliances hurt it badly - while in second part write about how it doesn't hurt - in third part write way forward.

### Introduction

Despite geographical proximity and the existence of bilateral and multilateral free trade agreements (FTAs), South Asia is one of the least economically integrated regions in the world. Owing to protectionist policies, high logistics cost, lack of political will and a broader trust deficit, intra-regional trade in South Asia remains well below its potential at 5% of the region's global trade.

### Body

Impact of least economic integration:

- On east side ASEAN and on west Gulf cooperation council and European Union helped member countries to achieve rapid economic growth.
- India achieve high growth rate but external trade potential not harnessed to its capacity majorly due to less economic integration in neighbourhood.
- Countries like Sri-lanka, Maldives, Nepal became too dependent on external debt for their development created debt-crisis and interference from big power like China.
- Failure of SAARC and spoiler role of Pakistan could not generate economic alliance which reduced growth pace in Nepal and Bangladesh.
- Till recently India's north-east remained underdeveloped due to lack of geographic connectivity which was possible through Bangladesh even before. Eg: Chittagong port, Kolkata-Pabna-Agartala train etc.
- India and other South Asian nations, collectively forecast to grow by 7.3% in 2017, can integrate their dynamic economies into the rest of Asia.
- Removing obstacles to trade and investment between South Asia, Southeast Asia and other parts of Asia is the key to erase extreme poverty in the region.
- If South Asia and Southeast Asia each cut non-tariff barriers by 50% and trade costs by 15%, will lead to gains of 8.9% of GDP in South Asia and 6.4% of GDP in Southeast Asia.
- Sub-regions of Asia have their respective weaknesses. So the Asia's growth spurt can be achieved from integrating these regions.

However, despite of lack of economic alliance:

- India and Bangladesh achieved high GDP growth rates.
- India-Srilanka free trade agreement increased trade volume between two countries.



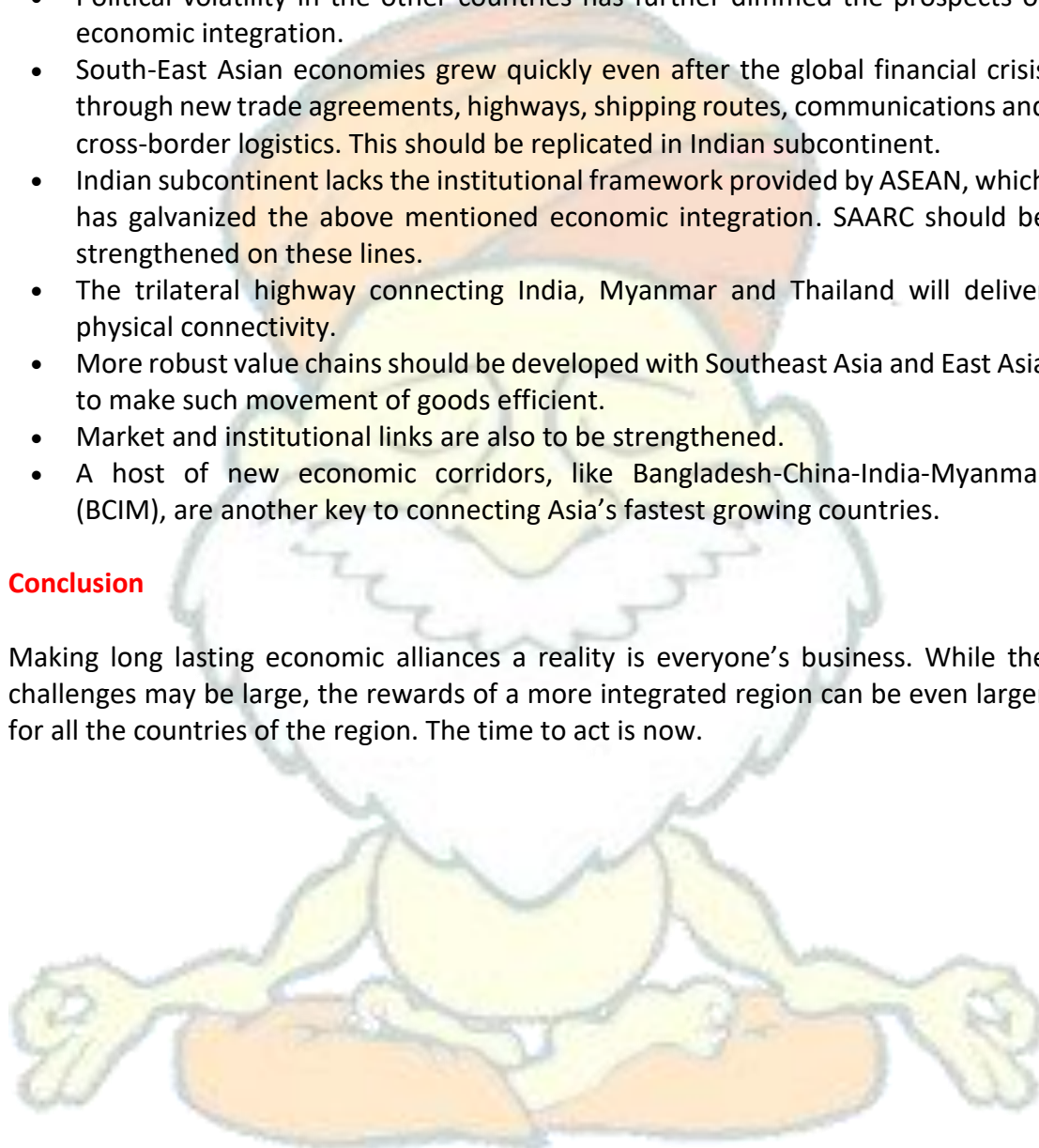
- India-Bhutan share special relationship and with Maldives also.
- India's initiatives of 'non-reciprocity' in neighbourhood, 'Neighbourhood first' policy increased economic alliance.

Way forward:

- As always, the problems are not economic but political and geopolitical.
- The drive for regional integration can only come from India.
- Political volatility in the other countries has further dimmed the prospects of economic integration.
- South-East Asian economies grew quickly even after the global financial crisis through new trade agreements, highways, shipping routes, communications and cross-border logistics. This should be replicated in Indian subcontinent.
- Indian subcontinent lacks the institutional framework provided by ASEAN, which has galvanized the above mentioned economic integration. SAARC should be strengthened on these lines.
- The trilateral highway connecting India, Myanmar and Thailand will deliver physical connectivity.
- More robust value chains should be developed with Southeast Asia and East Asia to make such movement of goods efficient.
- Market and institutional links are also to be strengthened.
- A host of new economic corridors, like Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar (BCIM), are another key to connecting Asia's fastest growing countries.

### Conclusion

Making long lasting economic alliances a reality is everyone's business. While the challenges may be large, the rewards of a more integrated region can be even larger for all the countries of the region. The time to act is now.



**26. Examine the recent improvements introduced to the Integrated Child Development Services and Mid-Day Meal schemes.**

**Approach** - Student are expected to write about the recent improvements introduced to the Integrated Child Development Services and Mid-Day Meal scheme in first part and examine its implications in the second part.

**Introduction**

Paediatric malnutrition has always been a matter of national concern. Under the Convention on the Rights of the Child, to which India is a party, India has committed to yielding "adequate nutritious food" for children. The formulation of Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) scheme is one of the most prestigious and premier national human resource development programs for children under 6 years of age and their mothers. To follow it for further age group GOI introduced Mid-day Meal Scheme (MDM), which supplies free lunch on working days for children in primary and upper primary classes.

**Body**

Recent improvements in Mid-day meal scheme:

- Inclusion of Pre- primary class (Bal Vatika) children under MDM: MDM has been proven to attract children from disadvantaged sections (especially girls, Dalits and Adivasis) to school. The revised National Education policy has proposed that prior to the age of 5 every child will move to a "preparatory class" or "balavatika". The mid-day meal programme shall be extended to the preparatory Classes in primary schools to avoiding classroom hunger and Reducing malnutrition.
- Inclusion of simple and energetic breakfast under MDM: Children are unable to learn optimally when they are undernourished or unwell. Hence, the nutrition and health of children will be addressed, through healthy meals. New National Education Policy (NEP) has noted that morning hours after a nutritious breakfast can be particularly productive for the study of cognitively more demanding subjects and hence recommended expansion of the mid-day meal scheme to include provisions for breakfast in schools. In locations where hot meals are not possible, a simple but nutritious meal-- groundnuts or chana mixed with jaggery and local fruits may be provided.

Recent improvements in Integrated Child Development Services:

- Digitisation of Anganwadi Centres: The Ministry of WCD has conceptualized a digital platform, " Poshan Tracker", which will be an overarching system, providing facilities, services and interlinkages, and thereby also promote real time data with analytics.
- Non-formal Pre-School Education in Anganwadi Centres: Children (3-6 years) are provided non-formal Pre-School Education service in all AWCs. The child beneficiaries under the Anganwadi Services Scheme are also provided

Supplementary Nutrition as per the guidelines of the Scheme. Monthly Village Health and Sanitation Day and Community Based Events are organised to improve status of nutrition of children.

- Poshan Abhiyaan (National Nutrition Mission): Poshan Abhiyaan targets to reduce the level of stunting, under-nutrition, anemia and low birth weight babies by reducing mal-nutrition/under nutrition, anemia among young children as also, focus on adolescent girls, pregnant women and lactating mothers.
- Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana: Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY) scheme provides cash incentive amounting to Rs.5,000/- in three instalments directly to the Bank/Post Office Account of Pregnant Women and Lactating Mother in DBT Mode during pregnancy and lactation in response to individual fulfilling specific conditions. The eligible beneficiary also receives the remaining cash incentive as per approved norms towards maternity benefit under Janani Suraksha Yojana (JSY) so that on an average, a woman gets Rs.6,000/-.
- Out of school Adolescent Girls: Scheme for Adolescent Girls aims at out of school girls in the age group 11-14, to empower and improve their social status through nutrition, life skills and home skills. The scheme has nutritional and non-nutritional components which include nutrition, iron and folic acid supplementation, health check-up and referral services. Mainstreaming out of school girls to join formal schooling bridge course/skill training, life skill education, home management etc.

Constraints in implementation of Integrated Child Development Services and MDM:

- Under performed ICDS: Despite increasing funding over the past three decades, the ICDS fell short of its stated objectives and still faces a number of challenges. Also, though it has widespread coverage, operational gaps mean that service delivery is not consistent in quality and quantity across the country.
- Child hunger in India: Despite the success of the program, child hunger as a problem persists in India, 42.5% of the children under 5 are underweight. Some simple health measures such as using iodised salt and getting vaccinations are uncommon in India. Many children don't get enough to eat, which has far-reaching implications for the performance of the country as a whole.
- Implementation issues: Several media reports have highlighted implementation issues, including irregularity, corruption, hygiene, caste discrimination, etc.
- Poor food quality: Poor food quality is a major concern, affecting the health of children. There are provisions for regular social audit, field visits and inspections but these are seldom carried out.

### Conclusion

The various vertical health programmes initiated by the Government of India (GOI) from time to time did not reach out to the target community adequately, even though



ICDS are there. In order to change this and strengthen the Mid-Day Meal Programme to bring uniformity across the nation, monitoring and evaluation need to be improved, and this requires to be a part of the budget allocation. An enhanced budget that supports the MDM Scheme and the various components associated with the holistic development of the school ecosystem will eventually result in making a positive impact on education.



**27. What are the key components of the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme for electronics manufacturers? Discuss. What sort of economic potential does this scheme hold?**

**Approach** - It expects students to write – in first part write about key components of the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme – in second part write about what economic potential holds by PLI scheme – in end write challenges which needs to be addressed.

### Introduction

Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) notified PLI scheme on April 2020. Global electronics companies like Samsung, Pegatron, Flex, and Foxconn are in final stages of negotiations to benefit from the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme for making mobile phones and certain other specified electronic components in India.

### Body

Key components of the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme:

- It offers a production linked incentive to boost domestic manufacturing and attract large investments in mobile phone manufacturing and specified electronic components, including Assembly, Testing, Marking and Packaging (ATMP) units.
- It will extend an incentive of 4% to 6% on incremental sales (over a base year) of goods manufactured in India and covered under target segments.
- It will be active for five years with the financial year (FY) 2019-20 considered as the base year for calculation of incentives.
- It will be implemented through a Nodal Agency which shall act as a Project Management Agency (PMA) and be responsible for providing secretarial, managerial and implementation support and carrying out other responsibilities as assigned by MeitY from time to time.
- Eligibility for the scheme- All electronic manufacturing companies which are either Indian or have a registered unit in India will be eligible to apply for the scheme. These companies can either create a new unit or seek incentives for their existing units from one or more locations in India.
  - Any additional expenditure incurred by companies on the plant, machinery, equipment, research and development and transfer of technology for the manufacture of mobile phones and related electronic items will be eligible for the incentive scheme.
  - The investments done by companies on land and buildings for the project will not be considered for any incentives.

Following economic potential holds by PLI scheme for electronics manufacturers:

- The government estimates that with the PLI scheme, domestic value addition for mobile phones is expected to rise to 35-40% by 2025 from the current level of 20-25% and generate additional 8 lakh jobs, both direct and indirect.
- The scheme will generate approximately 3 lakh direct employment opportunities in next 5 years.
- Additional indirect employment will be nearly 3 times the direct employment.

- PLI scheme and other initiatives to promote electronics manufacturing will help in making India a competitive destination for electronics manufacturing and give boost to AtmaNirbhar Bharat.
- Creation of domestic champion companies in electronics manufacturing under the Scheme will give fillip to vocal for local while aiming for global scale.
- The scheme is expected to promote exports significantly.
- Out of the total production of INR 11,50,000 crore in the next 5 years, more than 60% will be contributed by exports of the order of INR 7,00,000 crore.
- The Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme is designed to incentivise incremental production for a limited number of eligible anchor entities in each of the selected sectors.
- These selected entities will invest in technology, plant & machinery, as well as in R&D.
- The scheme will also have beneficial spill over effects by the creation of a widespread supplier base for the anchor units established under the scheme.
- Along with the anchor unit, these supplier units will also help to generate massive primary and secondary employment opportunities.
- The sectors for PLI have been shortlisted on the basis of their potential for economic growth, extent of benefit to the rural economy, revenue and employment generation.
- A key benefit of the PLI Scheme is that it can be implemented in a very targeted manner to attract investments in areas of strength and to strategically enter certain segments of global value chains (GVCs).

However, there are few challenges which needs to address:

- It's difficult to build a manufacturing nucleus around R&D of semiconductors and compete with MNCs overnight, including high-value components like displays, camera modules and memory chips to be part of India's manufacturing nucleus; as opposed to assembly and packaging, which is quite doable.
- Many more companies would like to move their supply chains to India, at least partially if not fully. But, higher employment and economic activity will happen if we start moving the component manufacturing across the value chain, like plastic moulding, metal products etc.
- Companies may face issues like congested ports, slow turnaround times.
- India doesn't have international transshipment points, it's one of the reasons why exporting from India can be expensive.

### Conclusion

Given the scale of incentives, the electronics manufacturing sector of the country is set to transform in the next few years. Its contribution to the GDP will significantly improve, leading to unprecedented investment and job creation.

**28. Mission Karmayogi is a crucial step towards the modernisation of civil services in India. Comment.**



**Approach** - It expects students to write about – in first part write about need of the mission – in second part write about why it is crucial step towards the modernisation of civil services – in end write challenges before it.

### Introduction

The Union Cabinet has approved 'Mission Karmayogi' - the National Programme for Civil Services Capacity Building (NPCSCB). It is meant to be a comprehensive post-recruitment reform of the Centre's human resource development. Similar to pre-recruitment changes in the form of the National Recruitment Agency.

### Body

#### Need of the Mission

- There is a need to develop domain knowledge besides administrative capacity in the bureaucracy.
- There is a need to formalize the recruitment process and match the public service to a bureaucrat's competence, so as to find the right person for the right job.
- The plan is to begin right at the recruitment level and then invest in building more capacity through the rest of their career.
- As the Indian economy grows, it will get more complex to govern; the governance capacities will have to be enhanced proportionately which this reform undertakes.
- The reforms in the Indian bureaucracy is the need of the hour and It is a major reform undertaken in recent years to transform it.

It is crucial step towards the modernisation of civil services because:

- Tech-Aided: The capacity building will be delivered through iGOTKarmayogi digital platform, with content drawn from global best practices.
  - The platform will act as a Launchpad for the National Programme for Civil Services Capacity Building (NPCSCB).
- Shift from Rules to Roles: The programme will support a transition from "rules-based to roles-based" Human Resource Management (HRM) so that work allocations can be done by matching an official's competencies to the requirements of the post.
  - Apart from domain knowledge training, the scheme will focus on "functional and behavioural competencies" as well, and also includes a monitoring framework for performance evaluations.
- Rule Based to Role Based: The programme will support a transition from rules-based to roles-based HR management, so that work allocations can be done by matching an official's competencies to the requirements of the post.
- Domain Training: Apart from domain knowledge training, the scheme will focus on functional and behavioural competencies also.
  - It will provide an opportunity for civil servants to continuously build and strengthen their Behavioural, Functional and Domain Competencies in their self-driven and mandated learning paths.

- Uniform Training Standard: It will harmonise training standards across the country, so that there is a common understanding of India's aspirations and development goals.
- Vision for New India: Mission Karmayogi is aimed at building a future-ready civil service with the right attitude, skills and knowledge, aligned to the vision of New India.
- On Site Learning: It will emphasize on 'on-site learning' to complement the 'off-site' learning.
- Adoption of Best Practices: It will encourage and partner with the best-in-class learning content creators including public training institutions, universities, start-ups and individual experts.

However, there are few challenges before it:

- John Maynard Keynes, the economist, once said that "The difficulty lies, not in the new ideas, but in escaping from the old ones."
- There is a tendency in the Bureaucracy to resist the change which challenges their status quo.
- The bureaucracy too must understand the need of domain knowledge and the importance of moving away from generalist to specialist approach.
- In today's world the governance is getting technical with each passing day and hence it's important that the person in authority too should have the requisite skill and experience in that particular area.
- Thus, there should be a behavioural change in the bureaucracy too and they must embrace the change as a need of the hour and not an attack on their status quo.
- Moreover, these online courses must not become another opportunity for the officers to go for the sabbatical leaves.
- It must be ensured that they are actually attending the courses and participating in it so that the purpose doesn't get defeated.

### Conclusion

To conclude, the ultimate aim of Mission Karmayogi is to ensure "Ease of Living" for the common man, "Ease of Doing Business" and Citizen-Centricity that is reducing the gap between the government and the citizens. This can only be achieved by regular and constructive involvement by the government and civil servants.

**29. What is the Ayushman Sahakar Scheme? Can it transform the status of healthcare in the rural areas? Examine.**

**Approach** - As the directive here is examine, it is necessary to find out cause-effect relationship between two things. In the introduction you need to mention in brief about Ayushman Sahakar Scheme, you can state who launched the scheme or who is implementing the scheme or who targeted beneficiaries are. In the main body part, you need to explain about the features of scheme in first half, whereas in the second half you need cover various angles related to the question that whether it can transfer the status of healthcare in rural areas or not. Here you can cite cause effect relationship by stating how and why rural healthcare in the rural areas is lacking and how it will get benefited by the Ayushman Sahakar scheme. In the conclusion, you can show in brief how it will transform healthcare in rural areas in particular and at pan India level in general.

### Introduction

Ayushman Sahkar, a unique scheme to assist cooperatives to play an important role in creation of healthcare infrastructure in the country formulated by the apex autonomous development finance institution under the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, the National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC). The scheme is expected to revolutionize the way healthcare delivery takes place in rural areas.

### Body

As per NCDC, there are about 52 hospitals across the country run by cooperatives. They have cumulative bed strength of more than 5,000. Hence, utilisation of this kind of large health care facility seems a right move. Following are the features of the scheme:

- NCDC would extend term loans to prospective cooperatives to the tune of Rs.10,000 crore in the coming years. The NCDC fund would give a boost to provision of healthcare services by cooperatives.
- The scheme also provides working capital and margin money to meet operational requirements.
- Any Cooperative Society with suitable provision in its byelaws to undertake healthcare related activities would be able to access the NCDC fund.
- The scheme covers establishment, modernization, expansion, repairs, renovation of hospital and healthcare and education infrastructure.
- NCDC assistance will flow either through the State Governments/ UT Administrations or directly to the eligible cooperatives.

Status of healthcare in rural areas:

- Healthcare is the right of every individual but lack of quality infrastructure, dearth of qualified medical functionaries, and non- access to basic medicines and medical facilities thwarts its reach to 60% of population in India.
- Sixty per cent of primary health centres (PHCs) in India have only one doctor while about five per cent have none, according to the Economic Survey 2018-19.



- A majority of 700 million people live in rural areas where the condition of medical facilities is deplorable.
- In rural India, where the number of Primary health care centers (PHCs) is limited, 8% of the centers do not have doctors or medical staff, 39% do not have lab technicians and 18% PHCs do not even have a pharmacist.
- India also accounts for the largest number of maternity deaths. A majority of these are in rural areas where maternal health care is poor.
- If we look at the health landscape of India, 92 percent of health care visits are to private providers of which 70 percent is urban population. However, private health care is expensive, often unregulated and variable in quality. Besides being unreliable for the illiterate, it is also unaffordable by low income rural population.
- CAG's report on reproductive and child health highlights the dysfunctional aspects of the medical system in rural areas.

To control the spread of diseases and reduce the growing rates of mortality due to lack of adequate health facilities, special attention needs to be given to the health care in rural areas. The need to improve health care sector in Rural areas becomes more critical in the light of Covid-19 like pandemic. However, the Ayushman Sahkar scheme addresses some of these challenges in following ways:

- The scheme aligns itself with the focus of the National Health Policy, 2017, covering the health systems in all their dimensions- investments in health, organization of healthcare services, access to technologies, development of human resources, encouragement of medical pluralism, affordable health care to farmers etc.
- It has a comprehensive approach in which hospitals, healthcare, medical education, nursing education, paramedical education, health insurance and holistic health systems such as AYUSH will get covered
- . Ayushman Sahakar scheme fund would also assist cooperative hospitals take up medical / Ayush education there by it will address the issue of low doctor to patient ratio in rural areas.
- It is line with National Digital Health Mission. NCDC's Ayushman Sahakar would bring transformation in rural areas. By virtue of their strong presence in rural areas, cooperatives utilizing the scheme would bring revolution in comprehensive health care services.
- Any Cooperative Society with suitable provision in its byelaws to undertake healthcare related activities would be able to access the NCDC fund. NCDC assistance will flow either through the State Governments/ UT Administrations or directly to the eligible cooperatives. Subsidy/ grant from other sources can be dovetailed.
- Ayushman Sahakar specifically covers establishment, modernization, expansion, repairs, renovation of hospital and healthcare and education infrastructure encompassing various fields of health sector in rural areas.
- The scheme also provides working capital and margin money to meet operational requirements. The scheme provides interest subvention of one percent to women majority cooperatives.

Thereby it is clear that the scheme encompasses an all comprehensive approach to address the issues with respect to health care in rural areas. However, Issues with respect to corrupt practises, diversion of funds i.e. cut practices, awareness generation require a focused attention for the success of this scheme. Hence, its implementation at the ground level in an organised and more transparent manner is fundamental to success of this scheme.

### **Conclusion**

Cooperatives have a strong presence in rural areas, thus, the launch of Aayushman Sahakar scheme to improve healthcare in rural areas is a masterstroke by the government which has a strong potential to utilise the real potential of co-operatives which have a wide scale presence in rural areas. If implemented in its letter and spirit the scheme would revolutionize the way healthcare delivery takes place in rural areas in particular and at Pan-India level in general.



**30. What is the Viability Gap Funding (VGF) Scheme? Discuss. Why is it important?**

**Approach** - A direct question divided into two parts where the first part requires discussion on what is Viability Gap Funding (VGF) scheme and in the second part, you need to elaborate upon why it is important.

### Introduction

The main constraint in India's infrastructure sector is the lack of source for finance. Some projects may not be financially viable though they are economically justified and necessary. This is the nature of several infrastructural projects which are long term and development oriented. For the successful completion of such projects, the government has designed Viability Gap Funding (VGF).

### Body

- Viability Gap Finance means a grant to support projects that are economically justified but not financially viable. The scheme is designed as a Plan Scheme to be administered by the Ministry of Finance and amount in the budget are made on a year-to-year basis.
- Such a grant under VGF is provided as a capital subsidy to attract the private sector players to participate in PPP projects that are otherwise financially unviable. Projects may not be commercially viable because of long gestation period and small revenue flows in future.
- The VGF scheme was launched in 2004 to support projects that comes under Public Private Partnerships. VGF grants will be available only for infrastructure projects where private sector sponsors are selected through a process of competitive bidding. The VGF grant will be disbursed at the construction stage itself but only after the private sector developer makes the equity contribution required for the project.
- The usual grant amount is up to 20% of the total capital cost of the project. Funds for VGF will be provided from the government's budgetary allocation. If the sponsoring Ministry/State Government/ statutory entity aims to provide assistance over and above the stipulated amount under VGF, it will be restricted to a further 20% of the total project cost.
- The lead financial institution for the project is responsible for regular monitoring and periodic evaluation of project compliance with agreed milestones and performance levels, particularly for the purpose of grant disbursement.

Recently, the government has expanded the provision of financial support by means of viability gap funding for public-private partnerships (PPPs) in infrastructure projects to include critical social sector investments in sectors such as health, education, water and waste treatment. Also, the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs has approved continuation and revamping of the Scheme for Financial Support to Public Private Partnerships (PPPs) in Infrastructure Viability Gap Funding (VGF) Scheme Till 2024-25.

The importance of VGF scheme can be understood from the following points:



1. To promote PPPs in social and Economic Infrastructure leading to efficient creation of assets and ensuring their proper Operation and Maintenance and make the economically/socially essential projects commercially viable.
2. The scheme would be beneficial to public at large as it would help in creation of the Infrastructure for the country.
3. The new Scheme will come into force within one month of the approval of Cabinet. Proposed amendments under the revamped VGF scheme would be suitably incorporated in the Guidelines for the Scheme.
4. Revamping of the proposed VGF Scheme will attract more PPP projects and facilitate the private investment in the social sectors (Health, Education, Waste Water, Solid Waste Management, Water Supply etc.).
5. Creation of new hospitals, schools will create many opportunities to boost employment generation.
6. PPP projects - It will attract more PPP projects and facilitate private investment in the social sectors.
7. Employment and infrastructure - Creation of new hospitals, schools will create many opportunities to boost employment generation.

### Conclusion

The Indian Economy is currently going through a challenging phase as GDP growth has not grown to match India's potential. Infrastructure spend in India is likely to have a positive spiral and multiplier effect to our GDP growth and is likely to be one of the main devices to unleash India's economic growth potential where VGF will be an important component to ensure proper infrastructure funding.

**31. Discuss the mandate of the National Green Tribunal (NGT). What has been the impact of NGT in recent years? Examine.**

**Approach** - A straightforward question divided into two parts where in the first part, you need to discuss the mandate of National Green Tribunal (NGT) and in the second part, you need to examine the impact of NGT in recent years.

### Introduction

The National Green Tribunal has been established in 2010 under the National Green Tribunal Act 2010 for effective and expeditious disposal of cases relating to environmental protection and conservation of forests and other natural resources including enforcement of any legal right relating to environment and giving relief and compensation for damages to persons and property and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

### Body

- The National Green Tribunal, as per the National Green Tribunal Act is a specialised judicial body equipped with expertise solely for the purpose of adjudicating environmental cases in the country.
- Recognising that most environment cases involve multi-disciplinary issues which are better addressed in a specialised forum, the Tribunal was setup as per recommendations of the SC, LC, etc.
- The Tribunal is tasked with providing effective and expeditious remedy in cases relating to environmental protection, conservation of forests and other natural resources and enforcement of any legal right relating to environment. The Tribunal's orders are binding and it has power to grant relief in the form of compensation and damages to affected persons.
- The Tribunal shall not be bound by the procedure laid down under the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908, but shall be guided by principles of natural justice.
- The Tribunal's dedicated jurisdiction in environmental matters shall provide speedy environmental justice and help reduce the burden of litigation in the higher courts. The Tribunal is mandated to make and endeavour for disposal of applications or appeals finally within 6 months of filing of the same.
- Initially, the NGT is proposed to be set up at five places of sittings and will follow circuit procedure for making itself more accessible. New Delhi is the Principal Place of Sitting of the Tribunal and Bhopal, Pune, Kolkata and Chennai shall be the other four place of sitting of the Tribunal.
- It provides relief and compensation for environmental damage involving subjects in the legislations mentioned in Schedule I of the National Green Tribunal Act, 2010 may approach the Tribunal. Some of the statutes in Schedule I include The Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974, The Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Cess Act, 1977, The Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, The Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981, etc.
- The Chairperson of the NGT is a retired Judge of the Supreme Court, Head Quartered in Delhi. Other Judicial members are retired Judges of High Courts. Each bench of the NGT will comprise of at least one Judicial Member and one

Expert Member. Expert members should have a professional qualification and a minimum of 15 years' experience in the field of environment/forest conservation and related subjects

The National Green Tribunal has in the short term since its establishment strongly influenced environmental litigation in India. In this regard, the impact of NGT in recent years can be examined from the following points:

1. Since its inception, NGT has emerged as dedicated court for environmental issues where specialisation has allowed quick redressal of matters and also reduced burden on HC's and SC.
2. It's judgements have had far reaching consequences and have helped saved fragile environments like in the case of Save Mon Federation Vs Union of India case where the NGT suspended a ₹6,400-crore hydro project to save the habitat of a bird.
3. The Principal Bench of the NGT at New Delhi has given some powerful judgments in the recent years which have strengthened the process of obtaining environmental clearances. For instance, the case of M.P. Patil v. Union of India.
4. The quality of time spent on environmental issues has also be increased as, unlike the Supreme Court, the tribunal has benches in various States, thereby increasing access to all citizens. Also, time bound disposal of cases has helped in improved efficiency to a great extent.
5. But NGT has also been criticised for exceeding its jurisdiction where NGT has been accused of overstepping its jurisdiction and taking actions for which it has not been empowered under the NGT Act.
6. For example, Ban on sand mining activity in Goa by NGT has been termed as judicial overreach. It would impact the construction industry thereby hampering the developmental activity of the state.
7. Further, there is a limit to its Jurisdiction where two important acts – Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 and Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006 have been kept out of NGT's jurisdiction.
8. NGT hasn't had full strength. The lack of human and financial resources has led to high pendency of cases - which undermines NGT's very objective of disposal of appeals within 6 months.

### Conclusion

The NGT has been the most consistent and progressive environmental authority in India. Unlike the Supreme Court, it has lesser delays in resolving the cases before it. It had redefined the role of environmental experts and the criteria to select such experts. Thus, it can be said to have largely successful in implementing its orders and has had tremendous impact in India.

**32. The office of Governor has ceased to be apolitical in recent years. Do you agree? Substantiate your response.**



**Approach** - It expects students to write about office of Governor and how it ceased to become a apolitical in recent years with suitable examples.

### Introduction

Article 154 of the Constitution envisages Governor as the executive chief of the state. B R Ambedkar called the office of the Governor as the “office of dignity”. His office is the linchpin of Indian Cooperative Federalism. From a long time, the office of the Governor has been at the centre of controversies for several reasons, the most important one being the range of discretionary powers that the holder of the office enjoys.

### Body

Office of Governor in recent years ceased to be apolitical:

- **Intervention by governors:** Most notably, the governors of West Bengal, Puducherry and Maharashtra are in news for the wrong reasons. For example, Maharashtra governor issue over the opening of temple after lockdown in state and controversy over secularism.
- **Non-neutrality of the office of the Governor:** The governors are the agents of the Central Government and since most of them are retired politicians belonging to a particular political party, they remain loyal to the people, who appoint them. As a result of it, they try to topple the State Government if it happens to be a Government by the opposition party.
- **Appointment and dismissal of the Chief Minister:** Governor appoints Chief Minister, other ministers, Advocate General, Chairmen and members of the State Public Service Commission in the state. After elections in the state, there is a convention to invite the largest party to form government in the state. This convention has been flouted many times at the whim of the governor. Eg: The recent episode Maharashtra where Governor inducted a new government at 5:00 am without ascertaining the requisite numbers for the government.
- **Gubernatorial powers:** The task of inviting the largest party/alliance post-election is a discretion of the Governor which is wrought in controversy. Eg: Karnataka, in 2018 election presented a hung assembly. Ultimately the issue had to be resolved in Supreme Court leading to fall of the government that couldn't prove its majority.
- **Removal of the Governor:** Article 156 says that the governor will hold office during the pleasure of the President for five years. President works on aid and advice of the Council of Ministers under Article 74. In effect it is the central government that appoints and removes the Governors. The governor has no security of tenure and no fixed term of office. E.g: The mass changing of the governors of state whenever a new government comes to power at Centre.
- **Advising the President for proclamation of Emergency:** The Assemblies of Uttarakhand, Arunachal Pradesh had been placed under suspended animation on the recommendation of the Governor due to alleged failure of Constitutional Machinery (Article 356). However, the State Governments were

reinstated by reversal of President's rule by Supreme Court due to lack of sufficient evidence.

- Reservation of Bills for Consideration of President: On his/ her discretion, the Governor can reserve a bill passed by the state legislature for president's assent. However, situations are mentioned in Article 200, when he will reserve the bill, yet he can use, discretion regarding this matter. Governor has discretion to refuse to sign to an ordinary bill passed by the state legislature.
- Seeking information from the chief minister: With regard to the administrative and legislative matters of the state Many governors have been criticised for expanding their discretionary powers suo motu. Tamil Nadu (TN) governor Banwarilal Purohit has been criticised for running a parallel administration of universities within TN and appointing vice-chancellors without consulting the state government. He was already under fire for conducting "review meetings" of government schemes.

#### Recommendations of SC Judgements and Committees:

- SR Bommai vs. Union of India, 1994: The case was about the limits to the Governor's powers in dismissing a state government under Article 356 of the Constitution. The floor of the Assembly is the only forum that should test the majority of the government of the day, and not the subjective opinion of the Governor.
- Rameshwar Prasad Case, 2006: Supreme Court was called upon to pronounce its verdict on the validity of the proclamation of President's Rule and the dissolution of the Assembly in Bihar in 2005. The SC held that the Governor could not decide based on his subjective assessments.
- Sarkaria Commission Report (1988):
  1. Governor should be an eminent person and not belong to the state where he is to be posted.
  2. State chief minister should have a say in the appointment of governor
  3. Governor should be a detached figure without intense political links or should not have taken part in politics in recent past.
  4. Governor should not be a member of the ruling party.
- Punchhi Commission (2010): The phrase "during the pleasure of the President" should be deleted from the Constitution. Governor should be removed only by a resolution of the state legislature.

#### Conclusion

The role of governor is indispensable for the successful working of the constitutional democracy. He must refrain from aligning himself to any political ideology. For the smooth functioning of a democratic government, it is equally important to have 'Code of Conduct', 'norms and principles' the governor must act judiciously, impartially and efficiently while exercising his discretion and personal judgment.



**33. In parliamentary proceedings, examine the significance of the 'question hour'. What was the recent controversy related to it? Discuss.**

**Approach** - It is straightforward question it expects student to write about - in first part write significance of question hour - in second part discuss recent controversy related to it.

**Introduction**



Question Hour is the first hour of a sitting session devoted to questions that Members of Parliament raise about any aspect of administrative activity. The concerned Minister is obliged to answer to the Parliament, either orally or in writing, depending on the type of question raised.

### Body

Importance of Question Hour:

- The Government is put on its trial during the Question Hour and every Minister whose turn it is to answer questions has to stand up and answer for his or his administration's acts of omission and commission.
- Through the Question Hour the Government is able to quickly feel the pulse of the nation and adapt its policies and actions accordingly.
- It is through questions in the Parliament that the Government remains in touch with the people in as much as members are enabled thereby to ventilate the grievances of the public in matters concerning the administration.
- Questions enable Ministries to gauge the popular reaction to their policy and administration.
- Questions bring to the notice of the Ministers many loopholes which otherwise would have gone unnoticed.
- Sometimes questions may lead to the appointment of a Commission, a Court of Inquiry or even Legislation when matters raised by Members are grave enough to agitate the public mind and are of wide public importance.

Recent controversy regarding question hour:

- The monsoon session of the Parliament has begun from 14th of September. For this Parliamentary session a decision was taken to go without Question Hour. This decision has raised some serious concerns regarding the democratic functioning of the institution. Question hour is an opportunity for the members to raise questions.
- The decision to skip Question Hour during the Monsoon session of Parliament has earned criticism.
- With the ongoing issues in our country like the unprecedented decline in GDP and its impact on the economy, the New Education Policy, tensions at the border, rising unemployment, the miseries of migrant labour.
- Questions regarding all these issues were supposed to be asked in the question hour session with the government.
- Question hour is a parliamentary device primarily meant for exercising legislative control over executive actions.
- Over the decades, MP's have utilised this question hour to throw light on the government functioning. Suspension of the question hour is a straight indication that the opposition will lose the right to question the government. Plus, the Ministers are not liable to reply to the issues raised during the Zero Hour.
- This would mean that the MPs would not be able to hold the government accountable for its action. This will lead against the spirit of parliamentary democracy.

**Conclusion**

The government is accountable to the parliament. The parliamentary proceedings are meant to hold the government accountable and it should not be suspended or curtailed as it will go against the essence of the Constitution.



**34. What is the MPLAD scheme? Critically evaluate its performance in recent years. Do you support the recent decision of the government to suspend MPLADS for two years? Substantiate your views.**

**Approach** - As the question has two specific directives it will be better to answer the question in a straightforward way. In the introduction part one can explain what is MPLAD scheme and how it is implemented. Main body part will have two parts, in the first part one needs to arrive at a fair judgment based on overall performance of MPLAD scheme substantiated with examples and facts. In the second part of the answer it is necessary to put your opinion on the suspension of MPLAD scheme for two years. The opinion should be backed by supporting arguments with examples and

facts. In the conclusion one can conclude by explaining the impact of such scheme in brief and stating further course of action for continuation or discontinuation of scheme. The scheme is implemented by Ministry of Statistics and Programme implementation.

### Introduction

The Local Area Development Scheme known as MPLADS is a government scheme launched in 1993. This central sector scheme was developed as an initiative to enable the parliament members to recommend developmental work in their constituencies based on locally felt needs. The scheme emphasises on durable assets of national priorities and community needs viz. drinking water, primary education, public health, sanitation and roads, etc.

### Body

Features of MPLAD scheme:

- The MPLADS is a Plan Scheme fully funded by Government of India. The annual MPLADS fund entitlement per MP constituency is Rs. 5 crore.
- MPs are to recommend every year, works costing at least 15 per cent of the MPLADS entitlement for the year for areas inhabited by Scheduled Caste population and 7.5 per cent for areas inhabited by S.T. population.
- In order to encourage trusts and societies for the betterment of tribal people, a ceiling of Rs. 75 lakh is stipulated for building assets by trusts and societies subject to conditions prescribed in the scheme guidelines.
- Lok Sabha Members can recommend works within their Constituencies and Elected Members of Rajya Sabha can recommend works within the State of Election (with select exceptions). Nominated Members of both the Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha can recommend works anywhere in the country.
- All works to meet locally felt infrastructure and development needs, with an emphasis on creation of durable assets in the constituency are permissible under MPLADS as prescribed in the scheme guidelines. Expenditure on specified items of non durable nature are also permitted as listed in the guidelines.

However, the scheme received a fair criticism from various sections of society and demand for discontinuation due to its gaps in its performance since its inception which is as mentioned below:

- The scheme violates one of the cardinal principles, which though not specifically written down in the Constitution, actually permeates the entire Constitution: separation of powers.
- Simply put, this scheme, in effect, gives an executive function to legislators (read legislature). The argument that MPs only recommend projects, but the final choice and implementation rests with the district authorities is strange; there are hardly any authorities in the district who have the courage or the gumption to defy the wishes of an MP.



- The details below, which are some of the observations made by the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India, in a report made it clear that there are gaps in its implementation.
- Utilisation of funds between 49 to 90% of the booked amount; Though the scheme envisages that works under the scheme should be limited to asset creation, 549 of the 707 works test-checked (78%) of the works recommended were for improvement of existing assets.
- Delays in issuing work orders ranging from 5 to 387 days in 57% of the works against the requirement of issuing the work order within 45 days of the receipt of recommendation by the MP.
- There are wide variations in the utilisation of the MPLAD amount in various constituencies. A report published in IndiaSpend has some very interesting insights based on data made available to it by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation. Some of these are: "A year after they took office, 298 of 542 members of the 16th Lok Sabha — India's lower house of parliament — have not spent a rupee from the ₹5 crore that is set aside annually for them to develop their constituencies." Also, 508 MPs (93.55%) did not, or could not, utilise the entire MPLADS amount from May 4, 2014 till December 10, 2018, in 4 years and 7 months.
- Since the MPLADS began in 1993, ₹5,000 crore was lying unspent with various district authorities by May 15, 2015.
- Added to the data above is fairly widespread talk of money under MPLADS being used to appease or oblige two sets of people: opinion-makers or opinion-influencers, and favourite contractors. Sometimes these two categories overlap. An often-heard tale is that of the contractor being a relative, close friend, or a confidant of the MP, and the contractor and the MP being financially linked with each other.
- Reports of underutilisation and misutilisation of MPLADS funds continue to surface at regular intervals but there seems to have been no serious attempt to do anything about it till now. There are innumerable instances of misuse of these funds; one prominent example is the construction of a fountain in the open space of an unauthorised settlement, or a jhuggijhopdi colony, which did not have provision of drinking water. The general belief in the settlement was that the contractor who bagged the contract to build the fountain was related to the local Member of Parliament.
- Also, The National Commission to Review the Working of the Constitution (2000) and the Second Administrative Reforms Commission, headed by VeerappaMoily (2007), recommended discontinuation of the scheme.

Meanwhile the scheme has some of the positive impacts too, they are as mentioned below:

- Similar to MPLADS, several states have enacted schemes called Member of Legislative Assembly Local Area Development Scheme (MLALADS) where funds are given to MLAs.
- According to the 'Guidelines on Members of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme (MPLADS)' published by the Ministry of Statistics and

Programme Implementation in June 2016, the MPLAD funds can also be used for implementation of the schemes such as Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, Accessible India Campaign (Sugamya Bharat Abhiyan), conservation of water through rain water harvesting and SansadAadarsh Gram Yojana, etc. So, other schemes can be supported by funding through MPLADS.

- Based on Constitutionality of the Scheme, the MPLADS was challenged in the Supreme Court (SC) in 2010. A five-judge bench of the SC held that: Indian Constitution does not recognise strict separation of powers. Even though MPs have been given a seemingly executive function, their role is limited to 'recommending' works and actual implementation is done by the local authorities. Therefore, the scheme does not violate separation of powers.
- India has a quasi-federal nature of the Constitution. Article 282 held that both the Union and the State have the power to make grants for a purpose irrespective of whether the subject matter of the purpose falls in the Seventh Schedule provided that the purpose is "public purpose" within the meaning of the Constitution.
- Also, the Scheme falls within the meaning of "public purpose" aiming for the fulfillment of the development and welfare of the State as reflected in the Directive Principles of State Policy.
- Also there are robust accountability mechanisms for the scheme as it comes under the RTI Act.
- In 2018, when continuation of the scheme was approved, the government noted that "the entire population across the country stands to benefit through the creation of durable assets of locally felt needs, namely drinking water, education, public health, sanitation and roads etc, under MPLAD Scheme."
- Until 2017, nearly 19 lakh projects worth Rs 45,000 crore had been sanctioned under the MPLAD Scheme. Third-party evaluators appointed by the government reported that the creation of good quality assets had a "positive impact on the local economy, social fabric and feasible environment." Further, 82% of the projects have been in rural areas and the remaining in urban/semi-urban areas.
- There are numerous examples of good implementation of scheme. For instance, Cricket icon and Rajya Sabha member Sachin Tendulkar has sanctioned Rs 2 crore from his Members of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme (MPLADS) fund for revamp of rail foot overbridges in Mumbai here in the backdrop of the Elphinstone Road station stamped.

Government's recent move to discontinue MPLADS for 2 years:

- The central scheme has continued uninterrupted for 27 years. It is budgeted through the government's finances and continues as long as the government is agreeable. In 2018, the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs approved the scheme until the term of the 14th Finance Commission, that is March 31, 2020.
- However, the Government of India in the event of struggle against Covid-19 has suspended Member of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme or

MPLADS funds for two years (2020 and 2021) and directed these funds to be transferred to the Consolidated Fund of India.

- The Government is seeking to garner around Rs 7,900 crores by suspending the MPLADS for two years. For comparison, this is only 4.5% of the Rs 1.70 lakh crore relief package for the poor announced under the Pradhan MantriGaribKalyanYojana.
- The government is of view that the transfer of these sums to the Consolidated Fund of India would help judicious deployment of fund, but political opposition has criticized this move, as in their opinion the decision may undermine the decentralized manner of funding local area development.

When we see at the implementation gap as highlighted by the CAG report and current grim situation induced by pandemic, the move seems to be a right move in the right direction due to following reasons:

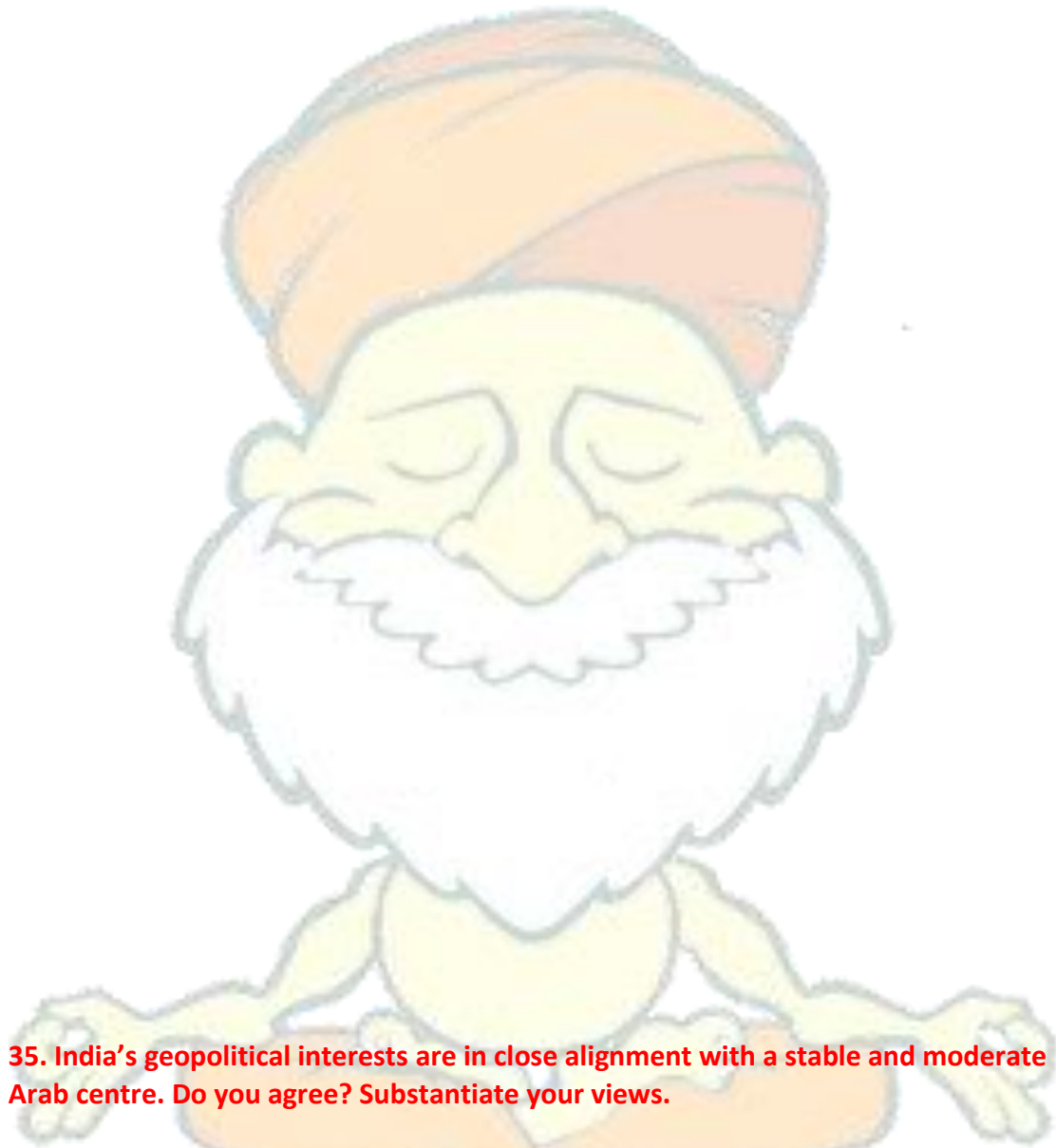
- In this pandemic like situation it is better to have more funds in hand for the building infrastructure and facilitating services in the Health sector. For instance, Resident doctors of Hindu Rao Hospital supported by AIIMS staff staged a protest alleging non-payment of salaries.
- According to the World Bank database, India was the 13th lowest (among 206 for which data was available) in terms of the percentage of total government expenditure that went to health in 2017. At present, Government spending on the healthcare industry stands at 1.15% of the Gross Domestic. Considering the balloon of pandemic this much expenditure on health care sector is meagre amount of money relatively to other sectors.
- Hence, it becomes evident that the current move by the government to suspend the scheme for two years is a well thought move.

However, we cannot neglect the objective of MPLADS. It aimed to create durable assets of national priorities and community needs, which also should not stop citing the basic needs of the citizens. Unless problems such as poor utilisation of funds, irregular sanction of works, delay in completion of works are tackled in an efficient manner, the efficacy of the scheme will remain in doubt.

### **Conclusion**

While resuming the operation of scheme after two years, corruption related factors needs to addressed so that MPLADS full potential can be utilised. Meanwhile, to compensate the loss incurred by suspension of scheme for two years, government needs to put on some constructive work in the durable assets creation by giving impetus to its other schemes such as, Accessible India campaign, Swachh Bharat Abhiyaan, conservation of water through rain water harvesting and SansadAadarsh Gram Yojana etc.





**35. India's geopolitical interests are in close alignment with a stable and moderate Arab centre. Do you agree? Substantiate your views.**

**Approach** - It expects students to write about - in first part write about why stable Arab centre important for India geopolitically - in second part mention challenges in west Asia -in third part write about what should be India's future policy towards West Asia.

### **Introduction**

India's relations with the West Asian countries are historical since the independence. India has interests in economic, political, security and strategic fields with the West

Asian nations. India has huge stakes involved in the region such as energy, trade and safety of Indian community in the region.

### Body

Geopolitical interest of India in west Asia:

- Geopolitically West Asia occupies an important position in international relations due to its geographical location and proximity to continents and countries South Asia, China, Central Asia, Europe, and Africa.
- The region is strategically significant due to its enormous energy resources, trade route links to different parts of the world.
- It is the world's largest oil-producing region accounting for 34% of world production, 45% of crude oil exports and 48% of oil proven reserves.
- Gate way to central Asia: West Asia is gate way to land locked and energy rich central Asia.
- Geostrategic importance: To reduce the influence of china in west Asia and in Arabian Sea. China is continuously making in road to west Asia through OBOR initiative.

**Challenges in west Asia:**

- The security situation in West Asia has been continuously deteriorating ever since the onset of the Arab Spring in December 2010.
- The internal security situation in Syria, Iraq and Yemen has gone from bad to worse. The regional powers continue to fight proxy wars on sectarian lines, pumping huge amount of money and weapons to bolster their favoured groups.
- The involvement of extra-regional players such as the USA and Russia in the internal conflicts in West Asia has further aggravated the situation.
- The GCC-Iran rivalry, Shia-Sunni conflict, external intervention in the region, the fear of rise of religious radicalism etc. have further contributed to instability in West Asia.
- Terrorism: Terrorism has emerged as the biggest security threat to the region. The rise of the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) is the most disturbing trend.
- Saudi-Iran rivalry: destabilizing West Asia and influencing West Asian geopolitics.
- Pakistan factor: Pakistan is very close ally of many west Asian countries especially with GCC.
- India's close relation with Iran may antagonize Saudi Arabia. India has to balance its ties with all three regional power in west Asia-Iran, Israel and Saudi Arabia.

India's geopolitical interests are in close alignment with stability in West Asia. Therefore, standing up for the region and opposing the forces of regional destabilisation should be at the very heart of India's foreign policy in the region. In this context, India's West Asia policy should adhere to following four principles:

- Acting as a Peace Negotiator: India should act as a mediator to normalize the relationship between West Asian countries, especially between Saudi Arabia, Israel, Turkey and Iran.

- **Opposing Foreign Interventions in the Region:** In the past, those came from the West and Israel. Today, most Arabs see the greatest threat to their security from Turkish and Iranian interventions.
- **Aiding Arab Economic Integration:** India should extend support to Arab economic integration, intra-Arab political reconciliation and the strengthening of regional institutions.
- **Strengthening Ties with All Major Players in the Region:** India's geopolitical interests are in close alignment with those in the Arab Centre including Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Oman. Thus, India needs to make strong ties with the region.

### Conclusion

The geopolitical realignment in the Middle East, marked by agreement on the normalisation of relations between the United Arab Emirates and Israel, intersects with the equally significant reorientation of the Subcontinent's relationship with the region. As Pakistan rediscovers its tradition of aligning with non-Arab powers, India must renew its defence of Arab sovereignty.

### 36. Collaboration between India and Australia can limit the dangers of the growing Geopolitical imbalance in the Indo-Pacific. Comment.

**Approach** - It expects students to write - in first part write how India and Australia can limit the dangers of the growing geopolitical imbalance in the Indo-Pacific - In second part write about challenges before it - in third part write way forward

### Introduction

India and Australia has shared a cordial relation with each other since a very long time and has witnessed an increased commitment in recent past. Multiple engagement in fields such as bilateral trade, strategic relations, student exchange programs, similar commitments towards sustainable development has made this relationship all the



more dynamic. As the global momentum is markedly shifting towards the Indo-Pacific region it becomes imperative for both the nations to stand in unison and provide the stability the region desires owing to the over-indulging nature of China.

### Body

Geopolitical imbalance in the Indo-Pacific:

- China's ambitious Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) raises concerns among other nations like China Pakistan Economic Corridor Passing through Pakistan Occupied Kashmir. China's alleged 'String of Pearls Policy' aimed at encircling India using infrastructural projects in countries like Sri Lanka and Pakistan.
- China is also building artificial islands in SCS and establishing naval ports of Hambantota and Gwadar in Indian periphery. Japan is also wary of China's capability to influence the energy supply chains on which East Asia depends.
- It is estimated that IPR will witness more than 50% of world's submarines and advanced combat aircraft movement in next two decades. Debt Book Diplomacy followed by China of leading to China acquiring Hambantota Port of Sri Lanka for a lease period of 99 years.
- China's has declared its ambition to make its military world class', one that is capable of 'winning wars' is not the right signal for regional peace and prosperity. The recently released Doklam report by Indian Parliamentary Panel even also suggested not to take China's strategic intentions casually.
- In 2016, International Court's (ICJ) held that China's claim over whole of SCS is baseless compromising the sovereignty of many other nations. China's out rightly refused to accept this verdict on South China Sea.
- Lack of holistic Legal mechanism for multilateral cooperation on maritime security in the IPR makes resolution of issues difficult. For example, the recently concluded Caspian Sea deal is a legal mechanism evolved to recognize the sovereign rights of all the littoral nations.
- Presence of Organized Crime and Piracy in the IPR the Golden Crescent and Golden Triangle region. Also, there is still presence of Pirate groups in the Somalia and adjoining regions. Presence of major nuclear weapons states like India, China, USA and rouge nuclear states like Pakistan and North Korea, in this region.

India and Australia can limit the dangers of the growing geopolitical imbalance in the Indo-Pacific as follows:

- The two countries must order their security establishments to develop strategic coordination in the various sub-regions of the Indo-Pacific littoral.
- The eastern Indian Ocean that lies between the shores of peninsular India and the west coast of Australia ought to be the top priority.
- Eastern Indian Ocean, connecting the two oceans, is at the heart of the Indo-Pacific. This is where Delhi and Canberra can initiate a full range of joint activities, including on maritime domain awareness, development of strategically located islands and marine scientific research.
- The sea lines of communication between the Indian and Pacific oceans run through the Indonesian archipelago. Given the shared political commitment to

the Indo-Pacific idea between Delhi, Jakarta and Canberra and the growing pressures on them to secure their shared waters, India and Australia must seek trilateral maritime and naval cooperation with Indonesia.

- The current trilateral dialogue between Japan, Australia and India (JAI) can be expanded from the diplomatic level to practical maritime cooperation on the ground.
- Paris and Canberra are eager to develop a trilateral arrangement with Delhi that will supplement the bilateral cooperation among the three nations. Delhi must endorse the initiative.
- India and Australia must explore the possibilities for engagement between India and the Five Power Defence Arrangement (FPDA). FPDA was set up back in 1971, after Britain pulled back most of its forces from the East of Suez. The FPDA brings together the armed forces of the UK, Malaysia, Singapore, Australia and New Zealand.

#### Challenges:

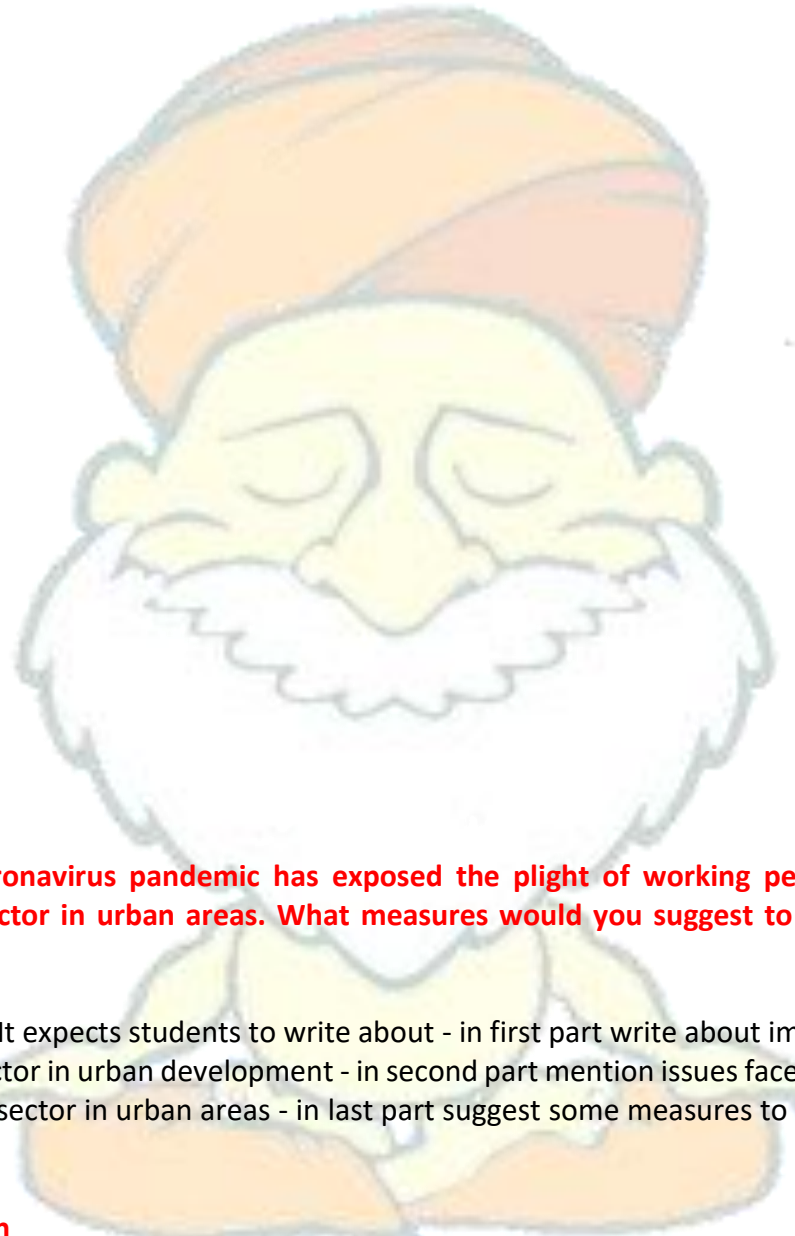
- There are also a growing number of non-traditional and trans-boundary security challenges, including terrorism, natural disasters and pandemics.
- Also, India faces unfavourable trade with Australia and despite opening talks for a comprehensive economic cooperation agreement in 2011, the agreement which would have significantly lowered the trade balance in favour of India, has remained elusive.
- The region faces a range of traditional security challenges that relate to issues of trust in the form of China which has emerged as a regional power and has little faith in rule based order.

#### Way Forward:

- Shared values, shared interests, shared geography and shared objectives are the bedrock of deepening India-Australia ties and the cooperation and coordination between the two countries have picked up momentum in recent years.
- India no longer sees Australia at the periphery of India's vision but at the centre of its thoughts.
- Both India and Australia share a vision of a free, open, inclusive and rules-based Indo-Pacific region and cooperative use of the seas by adherence to international law including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and peaceful resolution of disputes rather than through unilateral or coercive actions.
- The opportunity as well as challenge is that the two nations are at very different levels of development. There can be converging and diverging interests.
- It is only by building a series of overlapping bilateral and minilateral platforms for regional security cooperation that Delhi and Canberra can limit the dangers of the growing geopolitical imbalance in the Indo-Pacific.
- Therefore, the future must be woven around the three pillars, which are economic relationship, geostrategic congruence and people-to-people ties, and the glue that can bind this is a sustained momentum.

#### Conclusion

It is only by building a series of overlapping bilateral and minilateral platforms for regional security cooperation that Delhi and Canberra can limit the dangers of the growing geopolitical imbalance in the Indo-Pacific.



**37. The coronavirus pandemic has exposed the plight of working people in the informal sector in urban areas. What measures would you suggest to address it? Discuss.**

**Approach** - It expects students to write about - in first part write about importance of informal sector in urban development - in second part mention issues faced by worker of informal sector in urban areas - in last part suggest some measures to address this problem.

### **Introduction**

The unorganised sector refers to those enterprises whose activities or collection of data is not regulated under any legal provision or do not maintain any regular accounts. Informal/unorganized sector has a predominant place in the Indian economy in terms of its contribution to the GDP and employment. Out of the total workers, nearly 72 per cent in the urban areas are engaged in the informal sector.

### **Body**



Importance of informal sector in urban development:

- To put things in perspective, as per the Economic Survey of India, about 90% of India's total workforce of about 500 million workers is engaged in the informal sector.
- The migrant labourer is the builder of not just modern India, but modern Singapore, modern Dubai and every modern country that prides itself on the glamour list of modernity.
- A key feature of the urban economy in India, consistent with most developing economies, is the role played by informal workers and the unorganized sector.
- In many ways this is back-end India that offers the much-needed daily support to front-end India to keep the wheels of the modern economy moving.
- Factories, industrial units, hotels, restaurants and many other establishments, irrespective of their scale of operations, depend on such workers.
- They come in many avatars. There is a hierarchy even. There is the Uber and Ola driver who has migrated from Patna to Mumbai. There is the mason, the carpenter, the food delivery boy, the painter, the plumber and many, many others.
- Labour migration within India is crucial for economic growth and contributes to improving the socio-economic condition of people.
- Migration can help, for example, to improve income, skill development, and provide greater access to services like healthcare and education.

Issues faced by worker of informal sector in urban areas:

- Huge Gap in Data About informal sector worker: Though the Unorganised Workers Social Security Act 2008 has specified the role of urban local bodies in registering numbers of informal sector worker and disseminating information regarding welfare schemes to them, these provisions are not obligatory.
- Due to this, there is lack of any credible data on how many informal sector workers enter and leave our states and cities.
- Challenge of informalisation: According to the Economic Survey of India 2019, about 90% of India's total workforce of about 500 million workers is engaged in the informal sector. This made them more vulnerable to the economic crisis induced by Covid-19.
- Some of the major challenges due to the informalisation of the workforce include lack of job security, limited or no access to banking and insurance channels, a generally under-developed public health system.
- Lack of Basic Amenities: According to the recent "Drinking Water, Sanitation, Hygiene and Housing Condition" survey by the government, there continue to be glaring gaps in water access in urban and rural India.
- Also, informal sector workers are likely to have relied more on public amenities such as hand pumps and public taps or standpipes which are connected to a municipal connection.
- These sources are generally unreliable — hand pumps and municipal pipes, for example, do not always supply water of potable quality.

- Given the importance of washing hands in combating the infection, the lack of WASH (Water, Sanitation and Hygiene) makes migrant labourers subject to work in an unsafe work environment

Measures to make Urban spaces more inclusive for the informal sector worker:

- **Formalisation of Economy:** The central and state governments need to continue their efforts to address the informality of the Indian economy, the rural-urban divide, the uneven growth within states and between regions in the country, and the social and economic inequalities associated with the poorest and vulnerable. The informal sector worker need to be supported with relevant information and counselling for job search and employment opportunities based on their skills and previous experience through their local governance and panchayat structures. Recently proposed Unorganised Worker Index Number Card by the Labour Ministry would also help in formalisation of the workforce.
- **Focusing on Public Health Infrastructure:** Smart cities project does well by focusing on creation of hard infrastructure for urban renewal. There is a need to strengthen the public health emergency infrastructure also. This social and financial inclusion would make the Smart Cities Mission truly holistic.
- **Supporting Financially:** There is a need to expedite the proposed Social Security Fund under the Code on Social Security, 2019. This could go a long way to provide a sense of financial security and act as a tool to monitor this segment of the population better.
- **Creation of a Database of Migrant Workers:** Recognition and identification of migrants is the first step towards a more enhanced framework to provide basic amenities. To begin with, an effort to create a database of migrant workers is most necessary. Creating a digital Pan-India database to ensure coordination with their home districts and respective states. Eventually, convergence around this could create a framework of health, banking, microfinance and insurance networks centred around workers and migrants in urban areas.
- **Labour Migration Governance System:** A fair and effective labour migration governance system for workers within the country is an urgent need of the hour. This is necessary for the realisation of decent work opportunities for all migrant workers while respecting fundamental human rights. Also, there is a need to ensure the protection of the labour rights of workers while taking into account the views of the employers to foster innovation in business and enterprises.

### Conclusion

From workers walking for days to reach home to the long queues for a single meal, the Covid-19 crisis has reiterated the perilous situation of informal workers. Neither their rights as labour nor their rights to state welfare are adequately addressed by the existing approach. Only a radically-altered development model, which addresses the conditions that foment informalisation, can ameliorate these conditions. These would include significant investment in agriculture, ensuring stable livelihoods in the villages to prevent the hunt for precarious jobs by the rural masses; formulating new state policies that address the increased dependence on metropolises; increasing state capacity to implement existing laws covering the informal sector.



**38. While self-reliance is important, India does not have the luxury of abandoning export orientation. Elucidate.**

**Approach** - It expects students to write answer in two parts - In first part write your argument as why India focusing on self-reliance; while in second part write about why India does not have the luxury of abandoning export orientation.

**Introduction**

Only a self-reliant nation can serve the diverse needs of its population and provide them with choices. A content nation can also contribute to the welfare of other counties with a sense of self-pride. The COVID-related pressures and the unfortunate border tensions with its largest import partner, China, present a rare opportunity for India to reinvent itself, economically.

**Body**

India now focussing on Self-Reliance due to following reasons:



- COVID-19 took very little time to spread across the world economy. International trade has been constricted and global supply chains have, by and large, been disrupted.
- Each nation has been left to fend for itself. India's dependence on other countries has been exposed in several areas. The country should now refocus on manufacturing, and be self-reliant.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi gave a call to fellow Indians to be "Vocal for Local" in May. This essentially means, as PM Modi explained, not only to buy and use local products, but to also take pride in promoting them.
- The Centre announced a well-considered programme, the Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan (ANBA), as part of the post-pandemic economic revival package. Rs. 20 lakh crore (10% of India's GDP) was earmarked for the purpose.
- Nevertheless, experts and industrialists do assert that the ANBA is an excellent initiative and gives India the opportunity to embark on the self-reliance drive.

However, while focusing of self-reliance, India does not have the luxury of abandoning export orientation because:

- India has focused on domestic-demand led growth not just as a short-run response to Covid – 19, but as a medium-term growth strategy. All the evidence across the world and in India has shown that rapid and sustained economic growth requires export dynamism.
- Only growth can rehabilitate balance sheets; stressing balance sheets further cannot realistically revive growth. Consumption growth will be limited by the fact that household debt has grown rapidly in the last few years.
- Consumption now can grow only if incomes grow. Government spending could be a short run option, but COVID has limited that possibility. Post-COVID, India's debt is expected to rise from about 70 per cent of GDP to about 85-90 per cent and deficits are likely to be in the double-digit range. The fiscal space for spending will be severely limited both because of high levels of deficits and indebtedness and because debt dynamics will be adverse unless growth picks up substantially.
- India may well have scope for expansionary fiscal policy in the short run but not as a medium run growth strategy. India's financial system was badly impaired even heading into the COVID crisis and will come out more seriously damaged. Given the limited progress in fixing the financial system, prospects for investment remain weak. In short, in India's current circumstances, India does not have the luxury of abandoning export orientation because the alternatives are so limited.
- We estimate that India is producing and exporting about \$60-\$140 billion (2-5 per cent of GDP) less of low-skilled activity annually than it should be. There are, of course, two ways to look at this finding. On the one hand, it is an indictment of past performance. On the other, it is also an indicator of potential future opportunity if the underlying problems are addressed.
- In recent years, because China's wages are rising as it has become richer, it has vacated about \$140 billion in exports in unskilled-labour intensive sectors, including apparel, clothing, leather and footwear. Post-COVID, the move of investors away from China will probably accelerate as they seek to hedge against supply chain disruptions because of trade actions against China.

- India did not take advantage of the first China opportunity. Now, a second opportunity stemming from geo-politics has been created and that is India's big prize waiting to be seized. Importantly, exploiting this opportunity in unskilled exports requires more not less openness.

Export success will also require genuine easing of costs of trading and doing business in India. As India contemplates atmanirbharta, two deeper advantages of export orientation are always worth remembering. First, foreign demand will always be bigger than domestic demand for any country. Second, there is also a fundamental asymmetry: If domestic producers are competitive internationally, they will be competitive domestically and domestic consumers and firms will also benefit. The reverse is not true: Being competitive only domestically is no guarantee of efficiency and low cost. In sum, resisting the misleading allure of the domestic market, India should zealously boost export performance and deploy all means to achieve that.

### Conclusion

Pursuing rapid export growth in manufacturing and services should be an obsession with self-evident justification. Abandoning export orientation will amount to killing the goose that lays the golden eggs and indeed killing the only goose laying the eggs.

### 39. As global supply chains have disrupted during pandemic, India has a tremendous opportunity to reindustrialise. Comment.

**Approach** - It expects students to write - in first part, write about how pandemic disrupt global supply chain - in second part write about why India has a tremendous opportunity to reindustrialise - in third part in short you can mention few constraints for reindustrialisation - while in fourth part write about How India can seize the global supply chain opportunity in the post COVID-19 era

### Introduction

COVID-19 took very little time to spread across the world economy. International trade has been constricted and global supply chains have, by and large, been disrupted. With pandemic crisis, both regional and global supply chains stand fractured. There is a pressing need to re-evaluate the global supply chains wherein fundamental assumptions may need to be re-examined, manufacturing bases may need to be diversified, trade channels may need to be re-engineered, and investment destinations may see a shift.

### Body

Pandemic disrupt global supply chain as follows:

- Economic activities stagnated
- Transportation halted
- Labour movement restricted
- Some MSME's shutdown
- Unemployment
- Fall in demand
- Import substitution

India has a tremendous opportunity to reindustrialise because:

- India has strongest demography: According to National Policy for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship - 54% are below 25yrs and 62% are aged between 15-59yrs.
- India's continuous efforts to improve infrastructure by various projects like Bharatmala, Sagarmala, National Infrastructure Pipeline etc.
- Recently amended labour laws can attract foreign investment which can be utilised for industrialisation.
- With the disruptions in supply chains, every company that relied on inputs from abroad has been severely impacted. It is becoming evident that the supply chain strategies that were most celebrated in pre-COVID-19 world can no longer be relied upon.
- For instance, the lean or the 'just-in-time' inventory strategies that entail manufacturers to maintain minimum raw material, may need to be reevaluated. There is thus a pressing need to re-engineer the global supply chains wherein the fundamental assumptions may need to be re-examined, manufacturing bases may need to be diversified, trade channels may need to be altered, and investment destinations may see a shift.
- In line with the urge to create a resilient supply chain system, the consumption-driven developed economies such as the EU, Americas and Asia are not only rethinking their business strategies, but also are beginning to look at other nations to mitigate their supply chain risks.

However, following are some challenges for reindustrialisation:

- Regulatory uncertainty: Regulatory risks and policy uncertainty in the past have dented investor confidence.
- Investment: There has been a cyclical slowdown in fresh investment since 2011-12.
- Technology adoption: The adoption of new technologies like artificial intelligence, data analytics, machine-to-machine communications, robotics and related technologies, collectively called "Industry 4.0", are a bigger challenge for SMEs than for organized large-scale manufacturing. Data security, reliability of data and stability in communication/transmission also pose challenges to technology adoption.
- Exports and insufficient domestic demand: There has been no export driven industrial growth. Domestic demand alone may not be adequate for sustained, high value manufacturing.



- Challenges to doing business: Despite recent improvements in our global EODB rank, it continues to be a drag on the system. This is also true of investment conditions in the states. Getting construction permits, enforcing contracts, paying taxes, starting a business and trading across borders continue to constrain doing business.

India can seize the global supply chain opportunity in the post COVID-19 era by following interventions:



Under the above-mentioned groupings, some of the immediate measures the governments may undertake include:

- Immediate release of incentives under the industrial and sectoral policies.
- Enact ease of not just doing business but resuming, diversifying and expanding too.
- Allow extended operating hours.
- Provide plug-n-play infrastructure and common facility centers (CFCs) in each district, with focus on technological support and export promotion.
- Establish helpdesks and digital platform to bridge information gap between suppliers, buyers and logistics service providers.
- Revisit, renegotiate and enforce FTAs, especially with respect to value addition clauses and change in import-export basket of India.

### Conclusion

With the newly defined objectives of global companies and countries to reduce their supply chain risks in the long term and fix the broken value chains in the short term, India has an exclusive opportunity to emerge as the preferred destination during and after the COVID-19 pandemic.

**40. With its focus on equity and critical learning, NEP addresses present, future challenges. Elucidate.**

**Approach** - It expects students to write - in first part about present challenges faced by Indian education system - in second part write how different provisions of NEP addressed present and future challenges while focusing equity and critical learning. In end write 1-2 points about few lacunas.

**Introduction**

The Union Cabinet approved the National Education Policy (NEP) in July 2020. This policy will usher in sweeping changes to the education policy of the country, including a renaming of the Ministry of Human Resource Development as the Education Ministry. The NEP 2020 aims at making “India a global knowledge superpower”.

**Body**

Currently Indian Education system faces following challenges:

School Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inadequate public funding in the sector.</li> </ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disproportionate focus on school infrastructure as opposed to learning outcomes.</li> <li>• Challenges in governance and monitoring mechanisms for learning outcomes.</li> <li>• Accountability systems in government schools.</li> <li>• Inadequate teacher training, large number of teaching vacancies and rampant absenteeism.</li> <li>• Limited options for vocational education in the school system.</li> <li>• Inadequate support and counselling given to children in schools.</li> </ul>
Higher education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outdated and multiple regulatory mechanisms limit innovation and progressive change.</li> <li>• Outdated curriculum results in a mismatch between education and job market requirements, dampens students' creativity and hampers the development of their analytical abilities.</li> <li>• Quality assurance or accreditation mechanisms are inadequate.</li> <li>• There is no policy framework for participation of foreign universities in higher education.</li> <li>• There is no overarching funding body to promote and encourage research and innovation.</li> <li>• Public funding in the sector remains inadequate.</li> <li>• There are a large number of faculty posts lying vacant, for example in central universities, nearly 33 per cent of teacher posts were vacant in March 2018; faculty training is inadequate.</li> </ul>

NEP 2020 addressed present and future challenges by focusing on equity and critical learning as follows:

- NEP is important for several quantitative, and more importantly, qualitative changes. These range from pre-school to higher education with thrust on practicality and skill development; breaking the stereotypical divide of arts, commerce and science streams in high school; reorganising schooling years; making the education system more inclusive; permission to foreign universities to establish branches in India; and thrust on Indian and ancient languages.
- Other transformative changes relate to education in the local language or mother tongue at least up to the fifth grade and if possible, eighth and beyond; universal access and early childhood education; curriculum change leading to learning outcomes (LOs) and competencies; stress on equity, gender, special needs and promotion of multilingualism.



- It focuses on early child development, the endeavour to reduce the dropout rate, putting in place different forms of assessment, the emphasis on essential learning and critical thinking and the centrality of the teacher and teacher education.
- The NEP will bring two crore out-of-school children back into the mainstream. The policy aims at a 100 per cent Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in school education by 2030 and 50 GER in higher education by 2025 – it's currently about 25 per cent.
- Some elements of the overarching Universal Access to Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) framework relate to the NCERT's National Curricular and Pedagogical Framework for Early Childhood Education (NCPFCE). It also involves aligning NCPFCE with the latest research on ECCE and national and international best practices. The integration of vocational education with basic education in all institutions by identifying focus areas based on skills gap analysis and mapping of local opportunities will develop entrepreneurial competencies.
- Innovations in the higher education ecosystem include high-quality universities and colleges, multidisciplinary education, learning optimisation, extension of the graduate course from three to four years, multiple entry and exit points, college teachers' education, replacement of the UGC, AICTE and NAAC, dispensing with the MPhil programme and the proposed National Research Foundation. The key principles of the NEP relate to accessibility, equality, accountability, affordability, and quality of education.
- The "fragmented" ecosystem of higher education will be integrated once NEP's vision of combining different institutions into multidisciplinary universities and "higher education institution clusters" or "knowledge hubs" is realised. By upgrading the digital infrastructure, emphasising on learning at your own pace and underlining the importance of online courses, the NEP attempts to bridge the digital divide.
- The policy talks of solving mathematics problems through a variety of innovative methods, including the regular use of puzzles and games. There is a provision to teach coding at the middle-school level.
- The philosophy of access, equity, infrastructure, governance and learning has ultimately to be grounded in action to drive India's growth, modernisation and structural transformation. The policy justifiably aims to increase the spending on education from the current 3.2 per cent of GDP to 6 per cent of the GDP.

However, mobilising funds could be difficult because of the resource crunch, low tax-to-GDP ratio, kick-starting the economy, strife with neighbours and competing development requirements. The policy's success will also hinge on its integration with the government's other policies — the New Industrial Policy, Digital India, Skill India, Atmanirbhar Bharat and the "vocal for local" programme.

### Conclusion

NEP 2020 present wide-ranging reforms in the policy are aimed at making the Indian education system more contemporary and skill-oriented. Proper implementation of the reforms and ideas envisioned in the NEP 2020 will fundamentally transform India. With the emphasis on knowledge-economy driven growth in the 21st century, this is precisely what India needs to dominate in the future decades of growth and drive the education requirements of our young population.

**41. The Quad offers a great opportunity for reforming China-centred economic globalisation. Comment.**

**Approach** - As the directive is comment, it is important to pick out the main points and give one's opinion based on the information or the arguments originated from the reading. One should take a neutral ground and write facts and viewpoints. Introduction for this question may start with explanation of what is quad, what are subsequent developments and what is the main focus of this group.

**Introduction**

The Quad, or the quadrilateral security dialogue between India, US, Japan and Australia, is now emblematic of the geopolitical churn in the eastern hemisphere. Less noted but equally significant is its geo-economic agenda that has drawn South Korea, Vietnam and New Zealand into the post-pandemic consultations in the so-called "Quad Plus" format. In both the domains, China is the natural focus.

**Body**

The policy discourse is about blunting Beijing's ambition to exercise regional hegemony and preventing it from bending the global economic order in China's favour.

- Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad) is the informal strategic dialogue between India, USA, Japan and Australia with a shared objective to ensure and support a "free, open and prosperous" Indo-Pacific region.

- The idea of Quad was first mooted by Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe in 2007. However, the idea couldn't move ahead with Australia pulling out of it, apparently due to Chinese pressure.
- In December 2012, Shinzo Abe again floated the concept of Asia's "Democratic Security Diamond" involving Australia, India, Japan and the US to safeguard the maritime commons from the Indian Ocean to the western Pacific.
- In November 2017, India, the US, Australia and Japan gave shape to the long-pending "Quad" Coalition to develop a new strategy to keep the critical sea routes in the Indo-Pacific free of any influence (especially China).

China has been the chief beneficiary of the globalisation of the world economy which began accelerating since the end of the Cold War in the early 1990s.

- This phase of relatively free movement of capital and technology and goods and services enabled China to transform itself into a low-cost manufacturing hub for the world.
- It became an export powerhouse leveraging its access to the large consuming markets of the US, Europe and Japan.
- Thanks to its brand of state capitalism and managed markets, China emerged relatively unscathed from the global financial and economic crisis (GFC) of 2007-8 while the advanced capitalist economies of the West faced prolonged disruption and stagnation.
- The Western consensus behind globalisation has been eroded as competition from China has sharpened. As China, accelerated its ambition of becoming a world super power through its Belt and Road Initiative, Cheque book diplomacy etc. and by becoming a hub of global manufacturing industry.
- Due to this there is a rise in protectionist sentiments in the West, a greater scrutiny of inward investment particularly for acquisitions in the high-tech sector, and growing sensitivity over loss of intellectual property to Chinese firms.
- Also, Chinese aggression with its neighbours regarding Land boundary and maritime boundary issues forced the global leaders to think about opening a wide front against China on diplomatic table.

QUAD a great opportunity for reforming China-centred economic globalisation:

- As of now, it is an ad hoc grouping that has the potential to develop itself into a full-fledged economic and security-based international organisation.
- It is clear by now that India's foreign and domestic policies have started countering China's rise with the banning of several Chinese Apps and upholding the 'self-reliance' model of economic growth.
- The US has described China, along with Russia, as a strategic rival in its National Security Strategy, National Defence Strategy and the Pentagon's report on Indo-Pacific Strategy.
- Quad is an opportunity for like-minded countries to share notes and collaborate on projects of mutual interest.



- Members share a vision of an open and free Indo-Pacific. Each is involved in development and economic projects as well as in promoting maritime domain awareness and maritime security.
- It is one of the many avenues for interaction among India, Australia, Japan and the US and should not be seen in an exclusive context.
- Confronting an expansive Chinese aggression on its frontiers and Beijing's growing strategic influence in the subcontinent and the Indian Ocean, Its and opportunity for Delhi to explore security coalition-building with its Quad partners.
- India has also been a pioneer in economic decoupling from China. For instance, its withdrawal from the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership in 2019 and its opposition to China's Belt and Road Initiative first articulated in 2017.
- USA has laid out a comprehensive framework for addressing the ideological, political, economic, and technological and security challenges posed by China. But disentangling the web of economic interdependence woven over the last four decades is not easy.
- Free, open, prosperous and inclusive Indo-Pacific region serves the long-term interests of all countries in the region and of the world at large.

Hence, Quad shows a great potential to check China's ambitions be it in the Indo-Pacific region and beyond. However, global community is of the opinion that China's rise cannot be halted but can only be countered with an equally strong economic and security-oriented organisation and the Quad fits the setting. However, some of the following challenges persists in-front of QUAD grouping.

- **Undefined Vision:** Despite the potential for cooperation, the Quad remains a mechanism without a defined strategic mission.
- **Maritime Dominated:** The entire focus on the Indo-Pacific makes the Quad a maritime, rather than a land-based grouping or an economic counter grouping, raising questions whether the cooperation extends to the Asia-Pacific and Eurasian regions.
- **India's Aversion of Alliance System:** The fact that India is the only member that is averse to a treaty alliance system, has slowed down the progress of building a stronger Quadrilateral engagement.

### Conclusion

The challenge before the quad grouping lies in finding areas of mutual interest. However, Japanese PM Shinzo Abe's "Confluence of Two Seas" address to the Indian Parliament gave a fresh impetus to the Quad concept. Which recognises the economic rise of India at par with the developed nations in the west. Hence, QUAD holds the potential to reform China-centred economic globalisation besides ensuring a multi-polar world.

**42. How ethical do you find the behaviour of journalists nowadays? Hasn't journalism lost its high moral ground? Comment in the context of corporate control of media houses and the trend of intrusive media trials.**

**Approach** - It expects student to write about - In first part write few points about importance of media ethics - In second part write about how ethical journalism lost its ground nowadays due to corporate control and media trial - while in third part mention few points about how there are some journalist still work with high ethical standards.

### **Introduction**

The Journalism which provide accurate information from the source to the audience without any influence of political party, organisation is known as ethical Journalism. Ethical journalists must seek out and report on the truth, no matter how difficult or unpleasant it might be. They must ensure the information they provide is accurate, whether that means cross-checking eyewitness accounts, doing independent research, or verifying a source's credibility. At the same time, they must balance the objective reporting they strive for with the impact that reporting might have on the story's subjects or elsewhere.

### **Body**

Journalism in developing countries like India has immense importance as:

- It acts as a watchdog of public interest in a democracy. It plays an important role in a democracy and serves as an agency of the people to inform them of the events of national and international significance. It is the means by which people receive a free flow of information and ideas, which is essential to intelligent self-governance, that is, democracy.

- Freedom of the media is part of the freedom of speech guaranteed by the Constitution under Article 19 (1) (a).
- One of the basic tasks of the media is to provide truthful and objective information to the people for their social, political and international awareness to reach an informed opinion. This makes media an important stakeholder in a democracy to shoulder the responsibility of presenting unbiased honest news without any vested interest.
- Media is considered as “Fourth Pillar” in democratic countries along with Legislature, Executive, and Judiciary. Its importance in influencing readers can be gauged by the role it played during the freedom struggle, politically educating millions of Indians who joined the leaders in their fight against the British imperialism. The role of media in Indian democracy has undergone massive changes, from the days of press censorship during Emergency in 1975 to being influential in the 2014 Lok Sabha elections.

Due to corporate control of media and profit making attitude now days it observed that media acts less ethically & immorally on many instances:

- The issues of paid news, media trial, non-issues being presented as real news while the real issues are side lined, the news is being doctored and fact distortion for profits and political favour, fake news, yellow journalism are important concerns which are influencing public and impacting national security. For instance, fear mongering through media has led to mob lynchings, attacks on the migrant population.
- The absence of objective journalism leads to the false presentation of truth in a society which affects the perception and opinions of people. As observed in the case of Cambridge analytica case, the biased news coverage on social media platform affected the Presidential elections in the U.S.
- The chase for sensationalism and higher TRP rates as observed in the coverage of 26/11 terrorist attacks in India risked the internal security of the nation. The sensationalism-driven reporting compromised the identities of rape victims and survivors despite SC guidelines.
- Trial by media does not follow the due process of law and can reduce the public trust in institutions of governance like the judiciary.
- Paid news and fake news can manipulate public perception and can instigate hatred, violence, and disharmony among the various community within society.
- With the advent of social media, technological changes, the reach of media has grown profoundly. Its reach and role in impacting public opinion have made it even more important to ensure its objectivity, non-partisanship calls for the enforcement of journalistic ethics.

However, earlier major chunk of journalist works from urban area but with rise of social media and increased penetration of internet there are many independent journalists who are working from rural and semi-urban area. These journalist work without any corporate support and on non-profit basis independently, while sticking to ethical principles of journalism.



## Conclusion

In developing countries like India, the journalist has a great responsibility to fight backward ideas such as casteism and communalism and help the people in their struggle against poverty and other social evils. Hence, having journalistic ethics in place becomes very important. It is important that the media stick to the core principles like truth and accuracy, transparency, independence, fairness and impartiality, responsibility and fair play.

**43. In the age of social media influencers, ethics and morality have taken a backseat. Do you agree? Critically examine.**

**Approach** - As the directive here is critically examine, it is necessary to look deep at both aspects of the issue then arrive at fair judgment. In the intro part one can explain who social media influencers are and how they influence society, people etc. It is necessary to connect social media influencers with our syllabus point of social influence and persuasion. In the main body part both aspects of the issue needs to be deeply checked and before conclusion a fair judgment with examples has to be given. One can conclude by showing how social media influencers can play a prominent role in maintaining ethics and morality in the world.

## Introduction

Social media Influencers are people who have built a reputation for their knowledge and expertise on a specific topic. They make regular posts about that topic on their preferred social media channels and generate large followings of enthusiastic, engaged people who pay close attention to their views. For instance, Footballer Cristiano Ronaldo keeps his fans committed to his content with regular updates on his life and football practise sessions.

## Body

Social influence is the change in behaviour that one person causes in another, intentionally or unintentionally. Social influence and persuasion are the most efficient tools to bring about change in the participation levels of people in policy implementation. However in the age of social media we are witnessing a wide scale impact of social media influencers.

- A Social media influencer has the tools and authenticity to attract many viewers consistently and can motivate others to expand their social reach. An

influencer may be anyone from a blogger to a celebrity to an online entrepreneur.

- Their audience isn't limited to their actual followers; they can connect with the followers of their followers who share their content. As a result, they engage in many sponsored posts, allowing them to be paid for what they share on social media.
- Also, Social media influencers can have a significant impact on brand outreach considering influencers garner more social engagement than the advertising brand's account.

Ethics and Morality at the backseat in the age of Social media influencers:

- Spread of Hate: In this super competitive age of 21st century, survival of human beings is threatened by many factors. Hate speech and spreading fake news through social media handles became one of them. For instance, Social media influencer Jessy Taylor had to face wrath of people over her racist comments.
- Growth of insensitivity: Human is a social animal and lives in a society which is interdependent. However, due to social media influencers sensitivity of human beings is getting hampered. For instance, many of the time a buzz on twitter is seen when attack on minority community takes place. Many of the social media influencers on twitter insensitively took the sides of convicts or criminals who did some of the horrible crimes against minorities.
- Social media influencers even attain lowest level of not following ethics and morality in the social media sphere. For instance, a beauty YouTuber went to the worst rated salon in her area and claimed to get a skin infection, but was accused of lying by the owners.
- One such insane act is a famous YouTuber family sold replicas of their actual baby online, and people were weirded out. The Ingham Family, who have 1.2 million subscribers on YouTube, made a life-like replica doll of their four-month-old baby Jace in collaboration with dollmaker Mary Shortle. Some fans love the idea of getting their own Jace clone, complete with birth certificate and nappies. Others were horrified, calling it "unbelievably weird," "creepy," and "irresponsible."
- Throughout our life we heard this saying that 'lying is crime', however, in the age of social media influencers, 'lying is a trend'. For instance, Carissa Pinkston, a 20-year-old model for Rihanna's Savage X Fenty brand, made transphobic comments on Facebook, saying trans women aren't real women. She then backtracked and claimed to be transgender herself.
- People are getting mesmerised by the kind of glamour they can achieve through Social media influencing. For instance, An Instagram influencer who documented her motorcycle crash was accused of sponsoring the posts and glamorizing the accident.
- In this age it is also becoming difficult to understand who lies and who is telling the truth. For instance, in a recent controversy where the Baba ka dhaba owner got recognition due to a Youtuber was applauded by the public at large.

However, the same owner later on accused the Youtuber for cheating and stealing his money.

- Role of society on shaping children personality is of utmost importance. However, recent instances of exposing nudity and behaving in an unethical way through tik tok like social media platforms left a bad impact on children's mind. It seems like social media influencers have left the ethics and morality.
- Many of the social media influencers claim that they are more animal friendly or humane in nature but in reality they act in double standard way. However, a youtuber through her vlog demonstrated how to eat a live octopus. It's an inhumane act where people are getting less sensitive towards the animals.
- The basis of ethics and morality lies in respecting the individual. However, the incidence of a youtuber vs tik toker where they abused each other shows that both have left this basic principle and forgot to show respect to each other.
- The rise of influencer marketing even led this issue to the next level. For instance, people are just running behind money. To get money they can do whatever they want. Marketing through social media platforms is such a move. For instance, the term 'influencer marketing's increased by 325% in Google search in 2017.

Social influence is one of the biggest tools to change the whole picture of society. It works in three types, i.e. Compliance, Identification and Internationalisation. We can relate the Identification, and internationalisation types with respect to social media influencers. For instance, people worship celebrities and follow them, the kind of social media influence celebrities have is identified by the public and they follow them. Though we have seen many incidences where social media influencers left a negative impression wrt ethics and morality. There are many incidences where they uphold the ethics and morality.

Ethics and Morality upheld in the age of Social media influencers:

- Social influence in swachh bharat: Many of the social media influencers understood their responsibility towards the society and took part in promoting Swachh bharat abhiyan.
- It shows they adhered moral responsibility. In some of the tragic incidences social media used their spread and reach to aware people about the gravity of the tragic incidences and what we should do when these kind of situations occur. For instance, Hathras tragedy.
- Social media influencers even many of the times used their social media handles to spread the message against evils in society and spread awareness. For instance, campaign of selfie with daughter is one such example where people campaigned against female infanticide and promoted the campaign of 'Beti Bachao Beti Padhao'.
- It highlights that they adhered to their moral responsibility. Our prime minister also uses his influencing reach on social media to promote government campaigns and spread awareness. For instance, wide scale use of social media influence by PMO to spread awareness regarding COVID-19 pandemic.



- Following this move, social media influencers in India and across the globe too spread awareness regarding norms to follow during COVID-19. For instance, bollywood celebrities through their collective effort created a short film cum message to spread awareness regarding covid-19 pandemic. From the above mentioned arguments and examples it is evident that in the age of social media influencers ethics and morality have not taken a back seat, instead they promoted ethics and morality.

### Conclusion

'Technology is a two edged sword', hence it depends on the user who uses it and in which way the user use it. Though, ethics and morality have taken the back seat in the age of social media due to some irresponsible social media influencers, it is even upheld by some other social media influencers in the society. It's not a problem of the age of social media influencers but it's the problem of the way in which social media influencer uses their social influencing potential. Hence, it is of no doubt that the righteous and judicious use of social media influencing will bring sweet fruits of peace and harmony in the society there by ensuring ethics and morality take their front seat.

**44. What are the key features of the New Education Policy (NEP)? What are your thoughts on NEP? Discuss.**

### Approach:

It expects students to write about - in first part write about features of the New Education Policy - in second part write about significance of NEP - in third part write issues which needs to address related to NEP - in end you can write way forward.

### Introduction:

The National Educational Policy has come a long way from its first formulation in 1968 followed by its modified versions of 1986 and 1992, and now the National Educational Policy 2020(the NEP 2020). On 29th July,2020, Union Cabinet had given approval to new education policy for the 21st century. The cabinet had also approved a proposal to rename the Ministry of Human Resource Development as the Ministry of Education.

### Body:

Features of NEP:

- School Education:
  - Universalization of education from preschool to secondary level with 100% Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in school education by 2030.
  - To bring 2 crores out of school children back into the mainstream through an open schooling system.
  - The current 10+2 system to be replaced by a new 5+3+3+4 curricular structure corresponding to ages 3-8, 8-11, 11-14, and 14-18 years respectively.

- It will bring the uncovered age group of 3-6 years under school curriculum, which has been recognized globally as the crucial stage for development of mental faculties of a child.
- It will also have 12 years of schooling with three years of Anganwadi/ pre schooling.
- Class 10 and 12 board examinations to be made easier, to test core competencies rather than memorised facts, with all students allowed to take the exam twice.
- School governance is set to change, with a new accreditation framework and an independent authority to regulate both public and private schools.
- Emphasis on Foundational Literacy and Numeracy, no rigid separation between academic streams, extracurricular, vocational streams in schools.
- Vocational Education to start from Class 6 with Internships.
- Teaching up to at least Grade 5 to be in mother tongue/regional language. No language will be imposed on any student.
- Assessment reforms with 360-degree Holistic Progress Card, tracking Student Progress for achieving Learning Outcomes
- A new and comprehensive National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education (NCFTE) 2021, will be formulated by the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) in consultation with National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT).
- By 2030, the minimum degree qualification for teaching will be a 4-year integrated B.Ed. degree.
- Higher Education:
  - Gross Enrolment Ratio in higher education to be raised to 50% by 2035. Also, 3.5 crore seats to be added in higher education.
  - The current Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in higher education is 26.3%.
  - Holistic Undergraduate education with a flexible curriculum can be of 3 or 4 years with multiple exit options and appropriate certification within this period.
  - M.Phil. courses will be discontinued and all the courses at undergraduate, postgraduate and PhD level will now be interdisciplinary.
  - Academic Bank of Credits to be established to facilitate Transfer of Credits.
  - Multidisciplinary Education and Research Universities (MERUs), at par with IITs, IIMs, to be set up as models of best multidisciplinary education of global standards in the country.
  - The National Research Foundation will be created as an apex body for fostering a strong research culture and building research capacity across higher education.
  - Higher Education Commission of India (HECI) will be set up as a single umbrella body for the entire higher education, excluding medical and legal education. Public and private higher education institutions will be governed by the same set of norms for regulation, accreditation and academic standards. Also, HECI will be having four independent verticals namely,
    - National Higher Education Regulatory Council (NHERC) for regulation,
    - General Education Council (GEC) for standard setting,

- Higher Education Grants Council (HEGC) for funding,
- National Accreditation Council (NAC) for accreditation.
- Affiliation of colleges is to be phased out in 15 years and a stage-wise mechanism to be established for granting graded autonomy to colleges.
- Over a period of time, every college is expected to develop into either an autonomous degree-granting College, or a constituent college of a university.

#### Significance of National Education Policy 2020:

- **Recognising Importance of Formative years:** In adopting a 5+3+3+4 model for school education starting at age 3, the policy recognises the primacy of the formative years from ages 3 to 8 in shaping the child's future.
- **Departure from Silos Mentality:** Another key aspect of school education in the new policy is the breaking of the strict division of arts, commerce and science streams in high school. This can lay the foundation for a multi-disciplinary approach in high education.
- **The Confluence of Education and Skills:** Another laudable aspect of the scheme is the introduction of vocational courses with an internship. This may nudge the vulnerable sections of society to send their children to school. Also, it would help in realisation of the goal of Skill India Mission.
- **Making Education More Inclusive:** The NEP proposes the extension of the Right to Education (RTE) to all children up to the age of 18. Further, the policy seeks to leverage the huge potential of online pedagogy and learning methodologies for increasing gross enrolment in higher education.
- **Light but Tight Oversight:** According to the policy, in spite of periodic inspection, transparency, maintaining quality standards and a favourable public perception will become a 24X7 pursuit for the institutions, leading to all-round improvement in their standard. The policy also seeks to establish a super-regulator for education which will be responsible for standards-setting, funding, accreditation and regulation of higher education India.
- **Allowing Foreign Universities:** The document states universities from among the top 100 in the world will be able to set up campuses in India. This will lead to an infusion of international perspective and innovation, which will make the Indian education system more efficient and competitive.
- **Ending Hindi vs English Debate:** Most crucially, NEP, once and for all, buries the strident Hindi versus English language debate; instead, it emphasises on making mother tongue, local language or the regional language the medium of instruction at least till Grade 5, which is considered the best medium of teaching.

However, there are few issues which needs to address related to NEP 2020:

- **Knowledge-Jobs Mismatch:** There is a persistent mismatch between the knowledge & skills imparted and the jobs available. This has been one of the main challenges that have affected the Indian education system since Independence. NEP 2020 failed to check this, as it is silent on education related to emerging technological fields like artificial intelligence, cyberspace, nanotech, etc.
- **The Requirement of Enormous Resources.** An ambitious target of public spending at 6% of GDP has been set. Mobilising financial resources will be a big



challenge, given the low tax-to-GDP ratio and competing claims on the national exchequer of healthcare, national security and other key sectors.

Way forward:

- **Need for Cooperative Federalism:** Since education is a concurrent subject (both the Centre and the state governments can make laws on it), the reforms proposed can only be implemented collaboratively by the Centre and the states. Thus, the Centre has the giant task of building a consensus on the many ambitious plans.
- **Strive Towards Universalisation of Education:** There is a need for the creation of 'inclusion funds' to help socially and educationally disadvantaged children pursue education. Also, there is a need to set up a regulatory process that can check profiteering from education in the form of unaccounted donations.
- **Bridging Digital Divide:** If technology is a force-multiplier, with unequal access it can also expand the gap between the haves and have nots. Thus, the state needs to address the striking disparities in access to digital tools for universalization of education.
- **Inter-ministerial Coordination:** There is an emphasis on vocational training, but to make it effective, there has to be close coordination between the education, skills and labour ministry.

### **Conclusion:**

A New Education Policy aims to facilitate an inclusive, participatory and holistic approach, which takes into consideration field experiences, empirical research, stakeholder feedback, as well as lessons learned from best practices. It is a progressive shift towards a more scientific approach to education. The prescribed structure will help to cater the ability of the child – stages of cognitive development as well as social and physical awareness. If implemented in its true vision, the new structure can bring India at par with the leading countries of the world.

**45. India suffers from the twin challenges of unemployment and skill gap. Do you agree? Examine the recent initiatives taken by the government to address those.**

### **Approach:**

It expects students to write about Unemployment and skill gap and recent government initiatives to address it.

### **Introduction**

A skills gap is the difference between skills that employers want or need, and skills their workforce offer. Skill and employability go hand on hand. Skill gap is the real cause of high unemployable population. The skill gap is not only leading to unemployment but several other social economic challenges in the country. India still has age old tradition of learning on job through informal networks and training.

### **Body**

India suffering from twin challenges of unemployment and skill gap due to:

- **Employability:** As of now, only 5 per cent of the workforce have undergone any kind of vocational training, but even many of those are not employable, since the skills acquired have limited market application as per NASSCOM. According to NASSCOM, almost 40 per cent of the skilled workforce is not employable because the acquired education and training are of substandard quality.
- **Education system:** Furthermore, India's education system is primarily of a generalist nature and is not connected to the labour market. Academic and industrial requirements are not well synchronised.
- **Skills Mismatch:** India has a lopsided skills stock, it has caused problems due to the unregulated growth of technical institutions in the private sector and a lack of guidance for youth in choosing areas of training. As a result, an imbalance in the Indian labour market has created a surplus in some skills and shortages in others.
- **Women Security and Social Restrictions:** Women full engagement, however, remains restricted due to problems of personal security, biased attitudes of co-workers and social customs. Faced with ineffective protection, young female workers either select jobs for security considerations or prolong their education. Various studies have indicated marriage as a major cause of women workers withdrawing from the labour market and staying away from acquisition and upgrading skill.
- **Job market changing with technology:** Automation, machine learning and artificial intelligence, is drastically reducing the number of available jobs in the near future. New technology are rapidly evolving technology spaces where the comfort levels in using them needs to keep pace to stay professionally relevant which is lacking in Indian labour market.
- **Shortage of Jobs:** India's economic growth was more due to productivity than employment. In the wake of the limited creation of additional jobs, workers especially youth found themselves without jobs. The prevailing situation forced them either to opt for unskilled or casual work in the informal sector or to enrol for further studies.

Recently, there has been increased activity in the acquiring of skills. Young people are attending various technical institutes in large numbers due to various government initiatives such as:

- **Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY):** PMKVY is the flagship outcome-based skill training scheme of MSDE. Till 26 October 2018, 1.94 lakh candidates got a certificate and out of them, only 55% got employed across different sectors. This shows the low employability level under PMKVY. Participation from more and more industries should be sought for placement of the candidates trained under the scheme.
- **National Apprentice Promotion Scheme:** Scheme promote apprenticeship training and increase the engagement of apprentices from present 2.3 lakh to 50 lakh cumulatively by 2020. Training is considered to be most efficient ways to develop skilled manpower. It is providing the industry led practiced oriented

model of formal training. In future it's expected to become a effective skill delivery mechanism of India.

- USSTAD scheme: The Scheme aims at upgrading Skills and Training of minority communities by preservation of traditional ancestral Arts and Crafts. Many training center under scheme not started yet and knowledge partner does not belong to minority community.
- Skill Development Initiative Scheme: Scheme aims to providing skill training to early school leavers & existing workers. The certifications provided under this scheme are nationally and internationally recognised. The enrolment in skill institutes remains low as compared to their enrolment capacity. This is due to low awareness level among youths about the skill development programmes.
- National career services: It was launched for establishing quick and efficient career related services across the country by revamping the existing nation-wide set-up of Employment Exchanges into IT-enabled Career Centres. Posting of vacancies on the portal continues to stay sluggish, even though the number of job seekers is rising.
- Seekho aur Kamao: The scheme aims at upgrading the skills of minority youth in various modern/traditional skills depending upon their qualification, present economic trends and market potential, which can earn them suitable employment or make them suitably skilled to go for self-employment.
- Hunar se Rozgar: The Govt. of India, Ministry of Tourism has launched a Training Programme, christened Hunar Se Rozgar Tak, to create employable skills in the interested youth who are in the age group of 18-25 years and who are minimum 8th pass.
- Himayat Scheme: It is a training-cum-placement programme for unemployed youth in Jammu and Kashmir. Youth will be provided short-term training for at least 3 months, in a range of skills for which there is good demand.

Other different measures need to take by government to tackle twin challenges of skill gaps and unemployment:

- Raising national standards of education.
- Offering accreditation to more educational institutions for national and global recognition.
- Skill survey.
- Partnering with developed nation to raise countries skill standards.
- Allowing various skill upgrading apps and online sites for certification.
- Offering industry specific online courses for existing workforce.
- Promoting the adoption for different technologies such as blockchain technology, AI etc.

## Conclusion

The ever-increasing size of the youth workforce, both skilled and unskilled, in an environment of job scarcity means more young people are faced with limited employment opportunities, causing them to be either underemployed or unemployed. Taking cognisance of the importance of skill development for our



national development and global competitiveness government has taken appropriate national skilling agenda. However realisation of this agenda requires active involvement and vigorous partnership among all the stake holders viz., government, suppliers of educational services, industry and civil society.

**46. Examine the factors that ail the primary healthcare system in India. Why is there a wide variance in the performance of states? Analyse.**

**Approach:**

It expects students to write about factors ailing the primary health sector and highlight about wide variations in the performance of states.

**Introduction**

Primary health care is a whole-of-society approach to health and well-being centred on the needs and preferences of individuals, families and communities. It addresses the broader determinants of health and focuses on the comprehensive and interrelated aspects of physical, mental and social health and wellbeing. Primary health care is rooted in a commitment to social justice and equity and in the recognition of the fundamental right to the highest attainable standard of health.

**Body**

Factors behind ailing primary health care system in India:

- Limited services: Although Primary Health Care system exists in India but its scope is limited to pregnancy care, limited childcare and certain services related to national health programmes. Massive shortages in the supply of services (human resources, hospitals and diagnostic centres in the private/public sector) which are made worse by grossly inequitable availability between and within States. E.g. Even a well-placed State such as Tamil Nadu has an over 30% shortage of medical and non-medical professionals in government facilities.
- Funding: Funding for overall health care is very low, leaving insufficient amount that requires to be spend on Primary Health Care. The health budget has neither increased nor is there any policy to strengthen the public/private sector in deficit areas. While the Ayushman Bharat provides portability, one must not forget that it will take time for hospitals to be established in deficit areas.
- Staff shortage: PHCs are also suffering from inadequate skilled and trained manpower. There is a shortfall of about 9,000 doctors in about 25,000 PHCs in the country. There is a massive shortage of medical staff, infrastructure and last mile connectivity in rural areas. Eg: Doctor: Population 1:1800 and 78% doctors cater to urban India (population of 30%).
- Healthcare without holistic approach: There are a lot of determinants for better health like improved drinking water supply and sanitation; better

nutritional outcomes, health and education for women and girls; improved air quality and safer roads in rural areas which are outside the purview of the Health Ministry.

- **Crumbling primary health care infrastructure:** Given the country's crumbling public healthcare infrastructure, most patients are forced to go to private clinics and hospitals. There is a shortage of PHCs (22%) and sub-health centres (20%), while only 7% sub-health centres and 12% primary health centres meet Indian Public Health Standards (IPHS) norms.
- **Social Inequality:** The growth of health facilities has been highly imbalanced in India. Rural, hilly and remote areas of the country are under served while in urban areas and cities, health facility is well developed. The SC/ST and the poor people are far away from modern health service.
- **Training and manpower problems:** PHCs are suffering from poor management skills, lack of appropriate training and supportive supervision for health workers.
- **Poor facilities:** Primary level facilities need complete building reconstruction, as they operate out of rented apartments and thatched accommodations, and lack basic facilities such as toilets, drinking water and electricity.
- **Overburdened PHCs:** India has a large network of primary health centres (PHCs), each supposed to serve a population of 25,000. But in states such as Madhya Pradesh, Bihar and Jharkhand, however, a PHC covers as many as 45,000, 49,000 and 76,000 people.

Wide variations in performance of different states:

- **Decentralised health care and community level engagement:** The synergy generated by integrating state government plans and programmes with the local governments, the co-operatives, women neighbourhood groups and civil society organisations for example Kudambashree and Vigilance wing by Kerala.
- **Expenditure by states:** Prevalence of considerable inequity favouring high income group of States in terms of healthcare resources, for instance, it indicates that the high income States hold a superior position in terms of per capita government expenditure on medical and public health, total number of hospitals and dispensaries, per capita availability of beds in hospitals and dispensaries and health manpower in rural and urban areas.
- **Poor governance:** The most important factor that influences health care is the quality of governance. States that have moved forward have had the spell of good governance for most of the periods are good performing states.
- **Difference in female literacy:** Woman's low health literacy affects not only her own health knowledge, preventive behaviour, and ability to navigate the health care system but also her ability to care for her children.
- **Geographical factor:** Difficult terrain surrounded by hills, rivers, and dense forests leads to increase in the cost of health care, cost of health projects.

## Conclusion

Pandemics such as Covid-19 starkly remind us that public health systems are core social institutions in any society. The government has made several efforts to address

the shortfall in the public health system through the schemes. However, the need of the hour is an adequate investment, for creating a health system that can withstand any kind of public health emergencies, incentivise good performing states, deliver universal health coverage and meet the targets of the Sustainable Development Goals.

**47. Should the Chinese model of constructing massive dams like the Three Gorges Dam to tap hydroelectricity be followed in India? Critically comment.**

**Approach:**

It expects students to write about - in first part write about benefits of dam construction - while in second part write about issues pertaining to dam construction.

**Introduction:**

Amid simmering border tension with India along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in Eastern Ladakh, China is planning to build a major hydropower project on Brahmaputra River in Tibet and a proposal for this has been clearly put forward in the 14th Five-Year Plan to be implemented from next year.

**Body:**

India also planning a dam on Brahmaputra river against Chinese projects. There are both benefits and issues related to adopting Chinese model of constructing massive dams like Three Gorges Dam to tap hydroelectricity which are as follows.

Benefits of dam construction:

- Water for drinking and industrial use
  - Due to large variations in hydrological cycle, dams and reservoirs are required to be constructed to store water during periods of surplus water availability and conserve the same for utilization during lean periods when the water availability is scarce.
  - Properly designed and well-constructed dams play a great role in optimally meeting the drinking water requirements of the people.
  - Water stored in reservoirs is also used vastly for meeting industrial needs.
  - Regulated flow of water from reservoirs help in diluting harmful dissolved substances in river waters during lean periods by supplementing low inflows and thus in maintaining and preserving quality of water within safe limits.
- Irrigation
  - Dams and reservoirs are constructed to store surplus waters during wet periods, which can be used for irrigating arid lands. One of the major benefits of dams and reservoirs is that water flows can be regulated as per agricultural requirements of the various regions over the year.
  - Dams and reservoirs render unforgettable services to the mankind for meeting irrigation requirements on a gigantic scale.



- It is estimated that 80% of additional food production by the year 2025 would be available from the irrigation made possible by dams and reservoirs.
- Dams and reservoirs are most needed for meeting irrigation requirements of developing countries, large parts of which are arid zones.
- There is a need for construction of more reservoir based projects despite widespread measures developed to conserve water through other improvements in irrigation technology.
- Flood Control
  - Floods in the rivers have been many a time playing havoc with the life and property of the people. Dams and reservoirs can be effectively used to control floods by regulating river water flows downstream the dam.
  - The dams are designed, constructed and operated as per a specific plan for routing floods through the basin without any damage to life and property of the people.
  - The water conserved by means of dams and reservoirs at the time of floods can be utilized for meeting irrigation and drinking water requirements and hydro power generation.
- Hydro Power Generation
  - Energy plays a key role for socio-economic development of a country. Hydro Power provides a cheap, clean and renewable source of energy.
  - Hydro Power is the most advanced and economically viable resource of renewable energy.
  - Reservoir based hydroelectric projects provide much needed peaking power to the grid.
  - Unlike thermal power stations, Hydro Power stations have fewer technical constraints and the hydro machines are capable of quick start and taking instantaneous load variations.
  - While large hydro potentials can be exploited through mega hydroelectric projects for meeting power needs on regional or national basis, small hydro potentials can be exploited through mini/micro hydel projects for meeting local power needs of small areas. Besides hydro power generation, multipurpose hydroelectric projects have the benefit of meeting irrigation and drinking water requirements and controlling floods etc.
- Inland navigation
  - Enhanced inland navigation is a result of comprehensive basin planning and development, utilizing dams, locks and reservoirs that are regulated to play a vital role in realizing large economic benefits of national importance.
- Recreation:
  - The reservoir made possible by constructing a dam presents a beautiful view of a lake. In the areas where natural surface water is scarce or non-existent, the reservoirs are a great source of recreation.
  - Along with other objectives, recreational benefits such as boating, swimming, fishing etc. linked with lakes are also given due consideration at the planning stage to achieve all the benefits of an ideal multipurpose project.

While dams provide a yeoman service to the mankind, the following impacts of the construction of dams are required to be handled carefully: -

- Resettlement and Rehabilitation: displacement of local people due to dam project is major issues in India.
- Environment and Forests: dam construction required clearance of forest cover due to this Environment and Forests will be impacted.
- Geostrategic implications: it will impact India's big brother reputation and neighbourhood policy as building dams lead to low water flow to downstream countries.
- Sedimentary issues
- Socio economic issues
- Safety aspects

**Conclusion:**

The above problems related to the construction of dams may be resolved successfully in case the approach of government is objective, dynamic, progressive and responsive to the needs of the hour.

**48. The Arctic region must be approached carefully for exploration and drilling? Do you agree? Substantiate your views.**

**Approach:**

As the directive here is substantiating it is necessary to give examples while giving arguments. In the introduction candidate can start by giving importance of Arctic region. In the first half of main body part it is necessary to explain the reasons behind adopting a careful approach to explore and drill. A brief of way forward will enrich your answer. Conclusion in the context of sustainability will be good way to conclude.

**Introduction:**

Americans Robert Peary and Matthew Henson, along with several inuits, were the first people to finally reach the North Pole. They arrived on April 6, 1909, by traversing across the sea ice. It opened up a new land of opportunities for human kind. Subsequently, the global warming has intensified melting of glaciers thus started a new competition for the acquisition of resources.

**Body:**

Arctic a new land of opportunities:

- It is estimated that Arctic contains 90 billion barrels of oil, 1,670 trillion cubic feet of natural gas, and 44 billion barrels of natural gas, which is approximately 13% of the world's undiscovered oil resources, 30% of its undiscovered natural gas resources, and 20% of its undiscovered natural gas.
- The Arctic region also holds mineral resources, as mentioned earlier, including gold, nickel, copper, graphite and uranium. The potential of Arctic in terms of resources and to change geo-politics and in the Arctic are as represented in Figure 1.

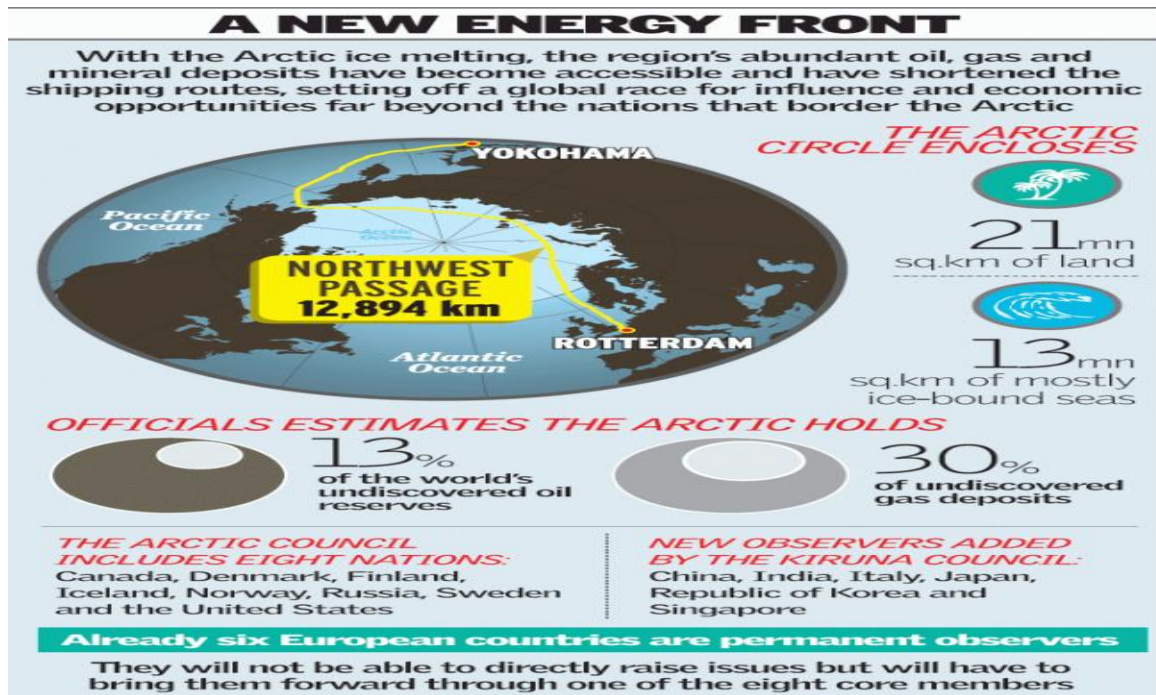


Figure 1

Hence, the opening of the Arctic Sea has given way for resource mapping in the Arctic region. Thereby initiating the processes of exploration and drilling. For instance, Russia has already started to venture as explorer. However, to save the mother earth and sustain humankind on the earth it is necessary to adopt a careful approach for exploration and drilling.

- The objective of an Arctic policy, should be centred on placing more weight on environmental and scientific aspects rather than the economic potential of the region.
- For instance, the kind of overexploitation of natural resources going on in Gulf region and South American continent actually shows the kind of environmental damage humankind is doing to Mother earth.
- Arctic as a land is not well known to humankind. If any aggressive action culminates into disaster like phenomena, then it will hamper survival of humankind.
- The race for resource utilisation at Arctic is swift. However, big countries like USA and Russia could dominate the landscape and may overexploit the resources. Which might also hamper other countries interests. Hence, there arises a need of well articulated policy for exploration and drill.
- Enhancement of economic activity in the Arctic Region will accelerate global warming and lead to large sea level rise. Melting ice may also supplement the problem of global warming with its reduced capacity to absorb carbon dioxide.
- Any drastic change in the Arctic is going to affect the monsoon system, which may fall worst on the agrarian economic countries like India.
- This may also results in thermal expansion, which increases the sea level, thereby allowing melted glacial water to flow into tributaries of Himalayan Rivers.



- The Arctic has enough hydrocarbons to cater to the needs of people. However, the technologically advanced solutions to explore and drill at the Arctic are not made or not tested. Hence, we need to adopt a very careful approach to utilise the resources of Arctic.
- Adding more water in the sea may result in submergence of coastal areas. Hence, while exploring at the Arctic it is necessary to consider this aspect also.
- The melting of arctic ice and the commercial exploitation of the resources would have detrimental effect on the local inhabitants like Inuits, Chukchis, Lapps etc.

It is in the everyone's best interest that , the Arctic Sea should be governed by an Antarctica type international treaty which makes the region a global common. India should remain engaged with the leading organisations like the Arctic Council where many important decisions on the future of the Arctic region will be taken. These can have direct or indirect impact on everyone. Universities and think tanks should pay greater attention to the study and analysis of the developments and needs to explore sustainable exploration and drilling opportunities in the Arctic Region.

#### **Conclusion:**

The opening of the sea routes and the exploration of hydrocarbons present economic opportunities which everyone can utilise. On the negative side, the enhancement of economic activity in the Arctic Region will accelerate global warming and lead to large sea level rise impacting the global climate to which India cannot remain indifferent.

#### **49. What has been India's recent performance on the ease of doing business index? What are the key areas that require improvement? Examine.**

**Approach** - It expects students to write about ease of doing business index, recent India's performance and also suggest key areas that require improvement.

#### **Introduction**

Ease of Doing Business is an annual survey published by World Bank. The report was introduced in 2003 to provide an assessment of objective measures of business regulations and their enforcement across 190 economies on ten parameters affecting a business through its life cycle. India bagged 63rd position this time 2019 marking an improvement of 14 places from its 77th in 2018. India for the third consecutive year was present in the list of 10 economies where business climates had improved the most.

#### **Body**

India's performance in recent years –

1. Resolving insolvency: The latest improvement has come on the back of the implementation of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC). India's rank has improved from 108 to 52 in the "resolving insolvency" category with the

overall recovery rate for lenders moving up from 26.5 cents to 71.6 cents to the dollar according to the World Bank.

2. Trading across border: The country's ranking in the "Trading across borders" category jumped 12 places from 80 to 68 signifying the abatement of paperwork in favour of electronic filing of documents and single-window customs procedures. Importing and exporting also became easier for companies with the creation of a single electronic platform for trade stakeholders, upgrades to port infrastructure and improvements to electronic submission of documents.
3. Dealing with construction permits: Interestingly, there has been improvement in a parameter that most industrialists would consider as a problem even now: "Dealing with construction permits". The country's ranking has improved by 25 places from 52 to 27. Obtaining all permits and authorizations to build a warehouse now costs 4% of the warehouse value, down from 5.7% the previous year.
4. Enforcing contracts: The introduction of the National Judicial Data Grid has made it possible to generate case management reports on local courts.
5. Paying taxes: The report notes that India made paying taxes easier by requiring that payments to the Employees Provident Fund are made electronically. Further, it introduced measures to ease compliance with corporate income tax.
6. Starting a business: Starting a business involves obtaining clearances, and conforming to various regulations under laws such as Companies Act, 2013. The report noted that India merged the application procedure for getting a Permanent Account Number (PAN) and the Tax Account Number (TAN) for new businesses. It also improved the online application system for getting a PAN and a TAN.

Expert Committee constituted by the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion and the Standing Committee of Commerce, have studied the the regulatory requirements for starting a business in India and the made recommendations on the ease of doing business to improve the business environment in India:

- Starting a business: Need to streamline regulations to give businesses in India a boost. The Committee had suggested that the procedures and time period for registration of companies should be reduced. In addition, a unique business ID should be created to integrate all information related to a debtor. This ID should be used as sole reference for the business.
- Acquiring land, registering property: It has been noted that land titles in India are unclear due to various reasons including legacy of the zamindari system, gaps in the legal framework and poor administration of land records.
  - It recommended process of updating and digital land records should be completed at the earliest.
  - The digitised records would assist in removing ambiguity in land titles and help in its smooth transfer.
  - It also suggested that land ownership may be ascertained by integrating space technology and identification documents such as

Aadhaar. Note that as of September 2017, land records had been linked with Aadhaar in 4% of the villages across the country.

- Steps include integration of land records and land registration and the passage of a law to certify land titles in urban areas.
- Enforcing contracts: Standing Committee noted that it took close to four years in India for enforcing contracts. On the other hand, it took less than six months for contract enforcement in Singapore. This may be due to various reasons including complex litigation procedures, confusion related to jurisdiction of courts and high existing pendency of cases.
  - It recommended that an alternative dispute resolution mechanism and fast track courts should be set up to expedite disposal of contract enforcement cases.
  - It suggested that efforts should be made to limit adjournments to exceptional circumstances only.
  - It also recommended that certified practitioners should be created, to assist dispute resolution.
- Construction permits: The Committee had observed that it took 33 procedures over 192 days to obtain a construction permit in India. Similar permit in Singapore involved 10 procedures and took 26 days. The Committee also recommended creating a single window for registration and issuance of permit, to reduce delays.
- Taxation: The Standing Committee had noted that the tax administration in India was complex, and arbitration proceedings were time-consuming.
  - The Committee observed that for 'Make in India' to succeed, there is a need for a fair, judicious and stable tax administration in the country.
  - Further, it suggested that to reduce harassment of tax payers, an electronic tax administration system should be created.
  - Such a system would reduce human interface during dispute resolution. The GST framework allows for electronic filling of tax returns, among other measures.

Other side of the coin that need to be addressed:

- However, the rankings do not capture the real cost of doing business in the countries with large unorganized sectors (such as India), and the cost of production are different from larger formal companies.
- Starting, running or shutting down a business may be easier in Delhi and Mumbai compared to Coimbatore or Hyderabad where it is probably more difficult.
- The index fails at measuring the difficulties businesses face in terms of raising liquidity, controls on internal trade, skilling/employability issues, etc.
- Admittedly, it is not easy to streamline processes across the country given India's federal set up where States have a big say in several parameters that go into the ranking such as securing building permits, land approvals, electricity connections, registering assets etc.

## Conclusion



Improvement have taken place due to the commitment of the Government to carry out comprehensive and complex reforms, supported by the bureaucracy which has changed its mindset from a regulator to a facilitator. To come under 25 or below 50, the government needs to announce and start implementing next set of ambitious reforms now, as these reforms takes a few years to be realised on the ground.

### 50. What are global supply chains? How do they evolve? Explain.

#### Approach:

It expects students to write about global supply chain and write about how they evolve.

#### Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused closures of business, the stoppage of factory outputs, and the disruption to global manufacturing industries and their supply networks. This is a result of China becoming the production hub of the entire world in the last two decades. Global supply chains are networks that can span across multiple continents and countries for the purpose of sourcing and supplying goods and services.

#### Body

Global supply chain:

- Global supply chains involve the flow of information, processes and resources across the globe. It is a chain of separate but inter-linked and coordinated activities in different geographical locations to bring out a product or a service to complete production and delivery to final consumers.
- Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) is strategy of China for global supply chain management under which it is promoting transport infrastructure and communication facilities, supply chain logistics network.
- India needs to develop a robust long-term vision to establish itself as a major player in the global supply chain arena. The Sagarmala Programme is an initiative by the government of India to enhance the performance of the country's logistics sector.

Evolution of global supply chains:

- Before 1900: The industrial revolutions started to change things. As railroads were laid, it became faster, easier and cheaper to transport goods over longer distances, although supply chains still tended to be limited to countries. International ocean trade was fairly inefficient as loose goods were stored in ship's hulls, and required a lot of effort to load and unload.
- Early 20th Century: Since the invention of the internal combustion engine and cars in the late 19th century, pioneers started developing trucks to allow for the faster transport of goods by road. A major development in supply chain

storage was in 1925 when pallets started to be used in warehouses. This allowed goods to be consolidated together onto pallets, which could then be stacked vertically, saving space and making goods handling more efficient.

- From the 1930s to the 1940s Greater Mechanisation: Logistics became very important during World War II, as military organisations needed efficient supply chains at home and in Europe. The 1940s saw a consolidation of industrial engineering and operations research into supply chain engineering.
- The Global Supply Chain in the 1950s: The revolution in global supply chains was the invention of the shipping container. Whether a container is being pulled by road on a truck, carried on the railway or shipped overseas on a container ship, standardisation makes transporting and handling these containers fast and easy. The invention of containerisation was one of the main drivers in making global trade cheaper and more efficient.
- From the 1960s to the 1980s: IBM developed the first computerised inventory management and forecasting system in 1967. Before the 1960s, logistics records and data were captured, sent and reported through paper. Data computerisation started to streamline logistics, and created opportunities in many areas including more accurate forecasting, better warehouse storage, truck routing and better inventory management. In global supply chain due to barcodes made it much easier to scan products.
- Further Efficiencies and the Shift to a Global Model: The 1980s new software like flexible spreadsheets, mapping and route planning made it easier to track costs and maximise profits. This was coupled with other advancements including air freight optimisation, supply chain distribution networks and the introduction of Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) systems. MIT also developed RFID tags to make it easier to electronically track goods and shipments, a predecessor of the Internet of Things devices we use today.
- Now with True sense of Globalisation: All of this history brings us to the present, and continued transformation in global supply chains. One of the biggest influences has been the explosion of manufacturing in Asia, with China, Japan and Korea becoming major suppliers and exporters of goods. At the same time Block chain technology, AI, and machine learning combines with predictive and prescriptive analytics to provide better forecasting, enhanced order management and more. What's more, the supply chain is evolving toward a more data-driven, network-driven and collaborative supply chain ecosystem that drives real value and growth for all participants.

Importance of Global supply chain GSC:

- Tool to Economic Growth: GSC are a powerful driver of productivity growth, job creation, and increased living standards. Countries that embrace GSC grow faster, import skills and technology, and boost employment.
- Diversifying Country's Export Sector: It provides opportunities for developing countries to diversify their exports and intensify their integration into the global economy.
- Boon to Developing Countries: By embedding more technology and know how in all their agriculture, manufacturing, and services they make it easier for

those countries to diversify away from primary products to manufactures and services and develop high value added task.

### Conclusion

For many countries like India, the ability to effectively insert themselves into Global supply chain is a vital condition for their development. This supposes an ability to access Global supply chain, to compete successfully and to capture the gains in terms of national economic development, capability building and generating more and better jobs to reduce unemployment and poverty.

### 51. What are your views on the efficacy of India's security intelligence establishment? Substantiate your views.

#### Approach:

It expects aspirants to write about - in first part write about major intelligence agencies currently operating in the country and their mandate - in second part write about concerns about the existing intelligence network - in third part write way forward.

#### Introduction:

An intelligence agency is an agency of government that is responsible for the collection, analysis, and exploitation of information which is in support of law enforcement, national security, military, and foreign policy objectives. They gather information directly or indirectly and that includes espionage, communication interception, cryptanalysis, cooperation with other institutions, and evaluation of sources (public).

#### Body:

The major intelligence agencies currently operating in the country and their mandate include-

- Intelligence Bureau (IB) – The Intelligence Bureau specialised agency used to garner intelligence from within India and also execute counter-intelligence and counter-terrorism tasks.
- Counter-intelligence refers to information gathered and activities conducted to protect against espionage, other intelligence activities, sabotage, or assassinations conducted for or on behalf of foreign powers, organizations or persons or international terrorist activities, but not including personnel, physical, document or communications security programs.
- Counter-terrorism tasks include political or military activities designed to prevent or thwart terrorism thereby giving a wide remit to the agency.



- Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) – A specialised, independent agency dedicated to foreign intelligence gathering.
- Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-IN)- Deals with the Collection, analysis and dissemination of information on cybersecurity incidents.
- Directorate of Enforcement (DE)- An economic intelligence agency responsible for enforcing economic laws and fighting economic crime in India.
- Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI)- A major intelligence agency which enforces the prohibition of the smuggling of items including drugs, gold, diamonds, electronics, foreign currency, and counterfeit Indian currency.
- Intelligence units of different states with different mandates. For example, Maharashtra intelligence unit is concerned with organised crime and smuggling activities while north-eastern states also have to deal with secessionist movements.

Concerns about the existing intelligence network:

- The changing nature of threats emanating from the Cyberspace and social media like ISIS using secure communications networks to further its propaganda and recruit people online which cannot be tackled through the traditional setup.
- A chronic shortage of specialised personnel coupled with the inefficient use of human resources. Take for instance the IB, a major portion of its human resources gets diverted doing daily police work like verifications, something that the agency claims it does not do any better than the police forces.
- Intelligence Agencies with different mandates, often overlapping each other's, sometimes leading to duplication of efforts and non-cooperation between agencies. For Ex: The mandates of RAW and IB with respect to organised crimes like smuggling.
- Intelligence collection is ad-hoc in the absence of clear-cut requirements from the consumers of intelligence.
- Poor cadre management and inability to recruit qualified language specialists and technical skills.
- Lack of intellectual capacity and investment in the education system exacerbate recruitment shortfalls in intelligence agencies. Engaging private players for specialist tasks is therefore necessary.
- Agencies suffer from a chronic shortage of military expertise.
- Lack of a comprehensive national-level database of suspected individuals. Initiatives like NATGRID are yet to take off due to differences over data sharing between the centre and states.
- Failure to act swiftly over the gathered intelligence by the enforcement agencies due to doubts over the credibility of the data, a fact which came to light post the Pathankot airbase attacks.
- The country's inability in ending various armed conflicts, be it Naga insurgency or other northern movements or Kashmir militancy exposing the fault lines in our intelligence establishment. Neighbouring countries such as Pakistan and China also have a role in fomenting these movements.
- The inability of the police forces to prevent communal violence and growing fundamentalism in many instances like the Muzaffarnagar violence, which is mainly due to the failure of the traditional intelligence networks.

- Lack of parliamentary statute failing to enforce accountability in intelligence agencies.
- The National Cyber Security Policy which aimed at creating a skilled workforce of 5,00,000 professionals to tackle the growing cyber-attacks fails to suggest ways to create such a talent pool.
- Lack of political attention and effective guidance has prevented reform and optimal functioning of the intelligence system.
- The absence of the Chief Of Defence staff has hampered the coordination between the military and other intelligence agencies.

Way forward:

- Intelligence agencies need to anticipate threats in advance to prevent and mitigate possible security breaches.
- The states must rise above politics in matters of national security to implement crucial initiatives like NATGRID and NCTC.
- A comprehensive law bringing intelligence agencies under parliamentary scrutiny will help in delineating functions of different agencies and enforce accountability to the legislature rather than the present ad-hocism.
- The Central Government should take active steps to ensure interagency, interstate and centre-state cooperation to plug the information gaps.
- While the revenue outlays have been increasing, the capital outlays have seen troughs and crests in the last four years. Hence, expenditure on expanding manpower has to be balanced by commensurate expenditure on infrastructure like training schools, forensic laboratories, procuring additional vehicles etc.
- The National Cyber Security Policy has to be strengthened to address the skill gap and develop cutting edge/bleeding edge technologies in the upcoming fields of big data and data analytics to detect early patterns of crime and effectively prevent it.

**Conclusion:**

No security network would be strong enough to tackle security threats unless the centre and states focus on intelligence gathering and sharing. A coordinated plan of intelligence gathering involving all stakeholders and dissemination should come into place immediately without any delay so that we can tackle the present challenges effectively.

**52. Discuss the mandate of Border Security Force (BSF)? How is it different from the roles and responsibilities of the Indian Army? Examine.**

**Approach:**

In the introduction explain what is BSF and brief about its origin. In the first half of main body part explain about the mandate of BSF. In the next half compare and differentiate the BSF's mandate from roles and responsibilities of Indian Army.

**Introduction:**

The Border Security Force (BSF) is India's Primary border guarding organisation on its border with Pakistan and Bangladesh. It is one of the three Border Guarding Forces (BGF) of India, and was raised in the wake of the 1965 War on 1 December 1965, "for ensuring the security of the borders of India and for matters connected there with".

**Body:**

Mandate of Border Security Force (BSF):

- It is a border guarding force charged with guarding India's land border with Pakistan and Bangladesh during peacetime and preventing transnational crime at the same, it has various active roles during an outbreak of war. It comes under Ministry of Home Affairs.
- The BSF are the border guards of the country and are called the 'First Wall of Defense of Indian Territories'.
- It ensures the security of the borders of India and headed by an officer from the Indian Police Service. It also undertakes defensive actions during wartime to free up Indian Army troops for offensive operations.
- The BSF has also been tasked with assisting the CRPF and army in counter-insurgency operations.

Mandate of Border Security forces differs from roles and responsibilities of the Indian Army in following ways:

INDIAN ARMY	BORDER SECURITY FORCES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Indian Army or Bhartiya Thal Sena is the land-based component of the armed forces.</li> <li>• It is evolved from the armed forces of the East India Company, ultimately turned into the British Indian Army and the Indian Army after independence.</li> <li>• It is commanded by the Chief of Army Staff (COAS). Indian Army comes under defence ministry of India.</li> <li>• It aims to preserve national interests and safeguard sovereignty, territorial integrity and unity of India</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The government created the Border Security Force as a unified central agency with the specific mandate of guarding India's land border with Pakistan and Bangladesh during peacetime and preventing transnational crime at the same, it has various active roles during an outbreak of war.</li> <li>• The BSF takes its officers from IPS on deputation at command and leadership levels, from the rank of Deputy Director General (DIG) and above.</li> <li>• It aims to guard border and prevent trans-border crimes, unauthorized</li> </ul>



<p>against any external threats by deterrence or by waging war.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It assist Government agencies to cope with 'proxy war' and other internal threats and provide aid to civil authority when requisitioned for the purpose.</li> <li>• The mission of the Indian Army is to guarantee the national security and defend the sovereignty, territorial integrity and harmony of India from external aggression and intimidation.</li> <li>• It also includes providing humanitarian support and aid to the common people during natural disasters and unexpected time.</li> <li>• The Para Commandos are the most well known of the Indian Army's special forces.</li> <li>• It undertakes operations behind enemy lines, anti-terrorist and counterinsurgency missions as well as rescue operations during natural disasters.</li> </ul>	<p>entry into or exit from the territory of India.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It also aims to prevent smuggling and any other illegal activities on the border.</li> <li>• It is also charged with Anti-infiltration duties, collection trans-border intelligence and to promote a sense of security among the people living in the border areas.</li> <li>• During war time it holds ground in assigned sectors.</li> <li>• Besides looks for maintenance of Law and Order in enemy territory administered under the Army's control.</li> <li>• It acts as guide to the Army in border areas and aids in control of refugees.</li> <li>• It also Performs special tasks connected with intelligence including cross-border raids.</li> </ul>
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**Conclusion:**

Border Security Force and the Indian Army, work and strive hard to secure India from Internal and external threats respectively. Although their mandate, roles-responsibilities are different, they have worked well as a fine 'wall of defence' against security threats to India. Their personal hard work and sacrifice to check security threat is non-comparable with any other field of career which needs to be praised as we can avail good sleep at night only because of their sacrifice.

**53. Should betting be legalised in India? Discuss its pros and cons.**

**Approach:**

It expects aspirant to write about - in introduction define betting or write recent examples of betting - in main body part give view on betting legalisation, write advantages and disadvantage of betting legalisations.

**Introduction:**

Betting is the wagering of money or something of value on an event with an uncertain outcome, with the primary intent of winning money or material goods.

**Body:**

The Law Commission has recommended that gambling and betting on sports, including cricket, be allowed as regulated activities taxable under the direct and indirect tax regimes and used as a source for attracting foreign direct investment (FDI). The commission's report, "Legal Framework: Gambling and Sports Betting including Cricket in India", recommends a number of changes in the law for regulating betting and generating tax revenues from it

**Advantages of legalising betting:**

- **Curb black money and terror financing:** The reasons to look at legalising and regulating gambling are several. First, gambling is already operating in a spread out and operating in a huge way. Despite devoting several legal measure and covert actions, legal enforcement authorities are not able to curb it. Gambling and betting is mostly done very secretly and which is handled in a delicate manner. It is mostly headed underworld and strong syndicates who use the unaccounted money earned from gambling activities for nefarious activities. These activities could include terror financing. So legalising the activity will not only help curtail an important source of black money and stop funds flowing to terror agencies.
- **Huge Revenues:** Estimates about the size of the gambling market in India vary according to various private and government agencies. According to KPMG report, the size could be around \$ 50- \$60 billion, while other, more recent, studies from financial institution peg the value even to higher numbers. Even a normal estimate suggests with just 15 per cent GST, the government could earn tens of thousands of crores by legalising sports betting. If online gambling and casinos are also permitted in a strong restrictive way, the estimated tax revenue very huge to both state and central government. These can be used to fund health and other constructive projects of the government.
- **Employment opportunities:** Apart from revenue generation, legalizing the gambling will surely create huge employment. Globally, wherever gambling is regulated, it has created a massive opportunity for employment generation. In India it could create direct and indirect jobs for around 25-40 lakh. How ? U.S. employs over 2.5 lakh people in the gambling industry, while over 1 lakh individuals are employed in the U.K.

**Disadvantages of legalising betting:**

- **Spoils the integrity:** Integrity is a core component in any activity, but in sports and games is crucial to its success. It serves the basis for the enjoyment of participants and spectators. But if the gambling and betting are legalized, integrity and honesty will be under great threat. Match fixing and spot fixing would drastically increase. Athletes and players will be tempted. Psychologically, players attracted to gambling naturally because of their competitive nature, media success, money and self-assured sense of entitlement.
- **Affects common man:** If betting were to be legalised, this lower class of the country will affect. Betting attracts the common man to try their luck and tempts

them to play with money. It is very tough to imagine the consequences of a poor person losing his hard-earned money or his life saving on betting. Law commission report on legalizing gambling

**Conclusion:**

Legalizing gambling would also lead to demands for legal frame work other nefarious activities like prostitution, drugs etc. So the government has to weigh the pros and cons before indulging the act of legalizing gambling, which can lead to a complex impact on the society.

**54. What are the current legal and institutional frameworks for the prevention of money laundering in India? Discuss.**

**Approach:**

As the directive here is discuss it is necessary to cover various angles of the topic. In the introduction explain the meaning of money laundering. In the main body part explain the legal and institutional frameworks for the prevention of money laundering in India.

**Introduction:**

Money laundering is concealing or disguising the identity of illegally obtained funds so that they appear to have originated from legitimate sources. According to the IMF, global Money Laundering is estimated between 2 to 5% of World GDP.

**Body:**

Money laundering involves three steps i.e. placement, layering and integration. Placement puts the "dirty money" into the legitimate financial system. Layering conceals the source of the money through a series of transactions and bookkeeping tricks. In the case of integration, the now-laundered money is withdrawn from the legitimate account to be used for criminal activities.

Current legal and institutional frameworks for the prevention of money laundering in India:

Legal Framework:

In India, the specific legislation dealing with money laundering is the Prevention of Money-Laundering Act(PMLA), 2002. The law was enacted to combat money laundering in India and has three main objectives which are as below:

- To prevent and control money laundering.



- To provide for confiscation and seizure of property obtained from laundered money.
- To deal with any other issue connected with money-laundering in India.
- Under the PMLA Act, the Enforcement Directorate is empowered to conduct a Money Laundering investigation.
- Apart from the provisions of PMLA, there are other specialised provisions such as RBI/SEBI/IRDA anti-money laundering regulations.

Foreign Exchange Management Act,1999 (FEMA) also deals with the issue of money laundering in an alternative way.

- It is a set of regulations that empowers the Reserve Bank of India to pass regulations and enables the Government of India to pass rules relating to foreign exchange in tune with the foreign trade policy of India.
- It gives powers to the Central Government to regulate the flow of payments to and from a person situated outside the country.
- All financial transactions concerning foreign securities or exchange cannot be carried out without the approval of FEMA. All transactions must be carried out through "Authorised Persons".

The Benami Transactions (Prohibition) Act, 1988:

- Benami transactions refer to those transactions in which the real beneficiary of the transaction and the person in whose name the transaction is made are different, specifically transactions relating to properties. The property is held by one person while the payment for purchasing the property is made by another.
- By doing so, public revenue is defrauded and the real owner is hidden. Benami property could include assets of any kind including legal documents, rights, assets, intangible assets, tangible assets, movable property or immovable property.

Black Money (Undisclosed Foreign Income and Assets) and Imposition of Tax Act, 2015:

- Black Money Act, 2015 is an Act of the Parliament of India. It aims to curb black money, or undisclosed foreign assets and income and imposes tax and penalty on such income.
- The Act has been passed by both the Houses of the Parliament. The Act has received the assent of the President of India on 26 May 2015.
- The goal of this law is to bring back the income and assets held abroad back to the country. As a result, only an Indian resident gets the opportunity to declare undisclosed assets.
- The government gives a time frame when someone can disclose assets. If the resident holding undisclosed assets declare the assets in the given time frame they are not subject to prosecution.

Institutional Framework:

1. Enforcement Directorate: Directorate of Enforcement is a specialized financial investigation agency under the Department of Revenue, Ministry of Finance, Government of India.

- In 1956, an 'Enforcement Unit' was formed, in Department of Economic Affairs, for handling Exchange Control Laws violations under Foreign Exchange Regulation Act, 1947.
- In the year 1957, this Unit was renamed as 'Enforcement Directorate'.
- ED enforces Foreign Exchange Management Act, 1999 (FEMA) and Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002 (PMLA).

2. Financial Intelligence Unit India (FIU-IND) :It was set up by the Government of India in 2004 as the central national agency responsible for receiving, processing, analyzing and disseminating information relating to suspect financial transactions.

- FIU-IND is also responsible for coordinating and strengthening efforts of national and international intelligence, investigation and enforcement agencies in pursuing the global efforts against money laundering and related crimes.
- FIU-IND is an independent body reporting directly to the Economic Intelligence Council (EIC) headed by the Finance Minister.

3. Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and Securities and Exchange board of India (SEBI):

- Reserve Bank of India (RBI) is India's central bank. It controls the monetary policy concerning the national currency, the Indian rupee. The basic functions of the RBI are the issuance of currency, to sustain monetary stability in India, to operate the currency, and maintain the country's credit system.
- It aims to regulate the issue of Bank Notes and keeping of reserves to secure monetary stability in India and generally to operate the currency and credit system of the country to its advantage.
- In an attempt to curb money laundering it can take corrective actions too. For instance, in 2013, the then RBI governor D Subbarao took corrective steps to check money laundering in India and strengthen in India.
- SEBI also issued guidelines in the past to curb money laundering through capital market in India.

**Conclusion:**

Black money in India, accounts for around 40% of India's GDP. Hence, it poses a serious threat not only to the India's financial system and governance but also to the global financial system and governance. Governments in various countries today have come up with different legislations to deal with this menace. However, more needs to be done in this regard so that India can truly realise its dream to be a \$5 trillion economy by 2025.

**55. What are the applications of big data in governance? In this regard, discuss the recommendations of Kris Gopalan panel.**

**Approach:**

Students are expected to write about the applications of big data in governance in first part, and discuss the recommendations of Kris Gopalan panel in the second part.

**Introduction:**

Big data is a term that describes the large volume of data – both structured and unstructured – that inundates a business on a day-to-day basis. Big data can be analysed for insights that lead to better decisions and strategic moves. The use and adoption of big data within governmental processes allows efficiencies in terms of cost, productivity, and innovation. Data analysis often requires multiple parts of government (central and local) to work in collaboration and create new and innovative processes to deliver the desired outcome.

**Body:**

By implementing a big data platform, governments can access vast amounts of relevant important information of daily functions.

Applications of big data in governance:

- Income tax dept has initiated Project insight. Under this project an integrated data warehousing business intelligence platform being rolled out in phased manner. Under this project a dedicated compliance portal would be used to capture response on compliance issue in structured manner for effective compliance monitoring and evaluation. It shows the transparency attribute of good governance.
- National Intelligence Grid (NATGRID) an Information Technology (IT)-enabled platform, is being created to help the security and law enforcement agencies across the country by sharing information relating to crime in real time and keep track of such incidents in the best interest of national security. It will use modern technologies like big data and to analyse vast amounts of data to track suspected terrorist and crime related activities to help prevent them. It shows the responsive nature of good governance.
- GeoMGNREGA', as geo-tagging of assets created under MGNREGA is known, involves generation of an asset ID after completion of work and marking it as a primary asset. Geo-tagging of completed assets is done through the Bhuvan mobile platform, which involves capturing of the GPS location of the asset along with two photographs. It shows the transparency and accountability attributes of good governance.
- Smart city's network would be based on Big Data. Big data systems are stored, processed, and mined in smart cities efficiently to produce information to enhance different smart city services. In addition, big data can help decision



makers plan for any expansion in smart city services, resources, or areas. It shows the Effective and efficient attributes of good governance.

- The government has rolled out the direct benefits transfer scheme (DBT) in various states where benefits and subsidies are transferred to the bank accounts seeded with the Aadhaar numbers of the individuals directly in order to do away with the intermediaries involved in the flow of funds, thereby reducing leakages. It shows the transference attribute of good governance.
- CCTNS (Crime and Criminal Network Tracking System) is an e-governance project under the Digital India mission which seeks to use IT for better provision of citizen-centric services, connect about 14000 police stations across the country and facilitate investigation, detection and prevention of crime. It shows the accountable attribute of good governance.

#### Recommendations of Kris Gopalan panel

- The Committee has defined three categories of Non-Personal Data – 1) Public Non-Personal Data 2) Community Non-Personal Data & 3) Private Non-Personal Data. The Committee has also defined a new concept of 'sensitivity of Non-Personal Data', as even Non-Personal Data could be sensitive from the following perspectives – 1) It relates to national security or strategic interests. The Committee recommends that the data principal should also provide consent for anonymisation and usage of this anonymized data while providing consent for collection and usage of his/her personal data.
- Define Non-Personal Data Roles Articulating a legal basis for establishing rights over Non-Personal Data and Create a new category / taxonomy of business called 'Data Business' that collects, process, store, or otherwise manages data, and meets certain threshold criteria.
- Data Business is a horizontal classification and not an independent industry sector. Many existing businesses in various sectors, collecting data beyond a threshold level, will get categorized as a Data Business. Data Businesses will provide, within India, open access to meta-data and regulated access to the underlying data. The compliance process will be light-weight and fully digital.
- Data Sharing Purpose or Sovereign purpose in this, Data may be requested for purposes of national security, legal purposes, etc. Core Public Interest purpose – Data may be requested for community benefits or public goods, research and innovation, policy making, for better delivery of public-services etc.
- Data may be requested in order to encourage competition and provide a level playing field or encourage innovation through start-ups activities (economic welfare purpose), or for a fair monetary consideration as part of a well-regulated data market.

#### Conclusion:

'Governance' is the process of decision-making and the process by which decisions are implemented or not implemented. Big data technology is vitally important for governments. It can't solve every problem, but it's a step in the right direction. It's

giving leaders the tools necessary to enact important changes that will be of benefit for citizens now and in the future.

### 56. What is the Global Partnership on Artificial Intelligence (GPAI)? What are its objectives?

#### Approach:

It is straightforward question where it expects students to write about - in first part write about Global Partnership on Artificial Intelligence (GPAI) - while in second part mention it's objectives.

#### Introduction:

India joins Global Partnership on Artificial Intelligence (GPAI) as a founding member to support the responsible and human-centric development and use of AI.

#### Body:

Global Partnership on Artificial Intelligence (GPAI):

- GPAI is an international and multi-stakeholder initiative to guide the responsible development and use of AI, grounded in human rights, inclusion, diversity, innovation, and economic growth.
- It is the league of leading economies including India, USA, UK, EU, Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Mexico, New Zealand, Republic of Korea, and Singapore.
- GPAI will be supported by a Secretariat, to be hosted by Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in Paris, as well as by two Centres of Expertise- one each in Montreal and Paris.
- This is also the first initiative of its type for evolving better understanding of the challenges and opportunities around AI using the experience and diversity of participating countries.

Objectives of GPAI:

- Initiative will look to bridge the gap between theory and practice on AI by supporting cutting-edge research and applied activities on AI-related priorities.
- In collaboration with partners and international organizations, it will bring together leading experts from industry, civil society, governments, and academia to collaborate to promote responsible evolution of AI.
- It will help to evolve methodologies to show how AI can be leveraged to better respond to the present global crisis around COVID-19.

#### Conclusion:

By joining GPAI as a founding member, India will actively participate in the global development of Artificial Intelligence, leveraging upon its experience around use of digital technologies for inclusive growth.

**57. Failure to scale up successful governance models is a critical challenge in India. Do you agree? How can it be addressed? Suggest.**

**Approach** - As no specific directive like comment or critically is given here, it is necessary to answer directly according to the miscellaneous directives i.e. Do you agree, suggest. In the introduction candidate can define the successful governance model. You can cite any report to add a legitimacy to the definition. In the first part of main body part explain in detail the reasons behind it in detail. You need to cite respective data, facts for substantiation of your arguments. In the next part explain a way forward in detail. You can conclude by showcasing the benefits of successful governance model in brief.

### **Introduction**

UNDP describes governance as "a system of values, policies and institutions by which a society manages its economic, political and social affairs through interactions within and among the state, civil society and the private sector". Where, successful governance constitutes complete devolution of powers to local level and their respective successful implementation at the grass-root level.

### **Body**

The World Bank defines governance as 'how power is exercised in the management of a country's economic and social resources for development.' India is ranked 111 in World Bank's Global Governance Indicators (GGI) in 2016.

Critical challenges to scale up successful governance model in India –

- **Lack of Accountability:** A common reason usually cited for inefficiency in governance is the inability within the system to hold the Civil Services accountable for their actions. Seldom are disciplinary proceedings initiated against delinquent government servants and imposition of penalties is even rarer.
- **Low Levels of Awareness of the Rights and Duties of Citizens:** Inadequate awareness about their rights prevents citizens from holding erring government servants to account. Similarly, low levels of compliance of Rules by the citizens also acts as an impediment to successful governance; when citizens do not adhere to their duties they infringe on the freedom and rights of other citizens.
- **Ineffective Implementation of Laws and Rules:** There is a large body of laws in the country, each legislated with different objectives-maintaining public order and safety, maintaining sanitation and hygiene, protecting rights of citizens, giving special protection to the vulnerable sections etc.
- **Red Tapism:** Bureaucracies the world over are expected to adhere to rules and procedures which are, of course, important for successful governance. However, at times, these rules and procedures are ill-conceived and cumbersome and, therefore, do not serve their purpose.



- Hunger and Poverty are the biggest challenges for successful governance in India. Which actually eats up more of resources required to be implemented in to successful governance. For instance, The latest Global Hunger Index (GHI) 2019 has ranked India a lowly 102 among the 117 countries slipped from 95th position in 2010.
- Digital illiteracy in India is also a major impediment for successful governance in India. For instance, As per a report from the Digital Empowerment Foundation in 2018, around 90% of India's population is digitally illiterate. Besides, Limited digitalisation of government offices and inadequate infrastructure has further been a stumbling block in ensuring effective transparency and accountability measures.

In ideal scenario if we observe successful governance is based on four E's of good governance, i.e. Ethos, Equity, Ethics and Efficiency. Hence, to scale up the successful governance model it is necessary to take the following steps.

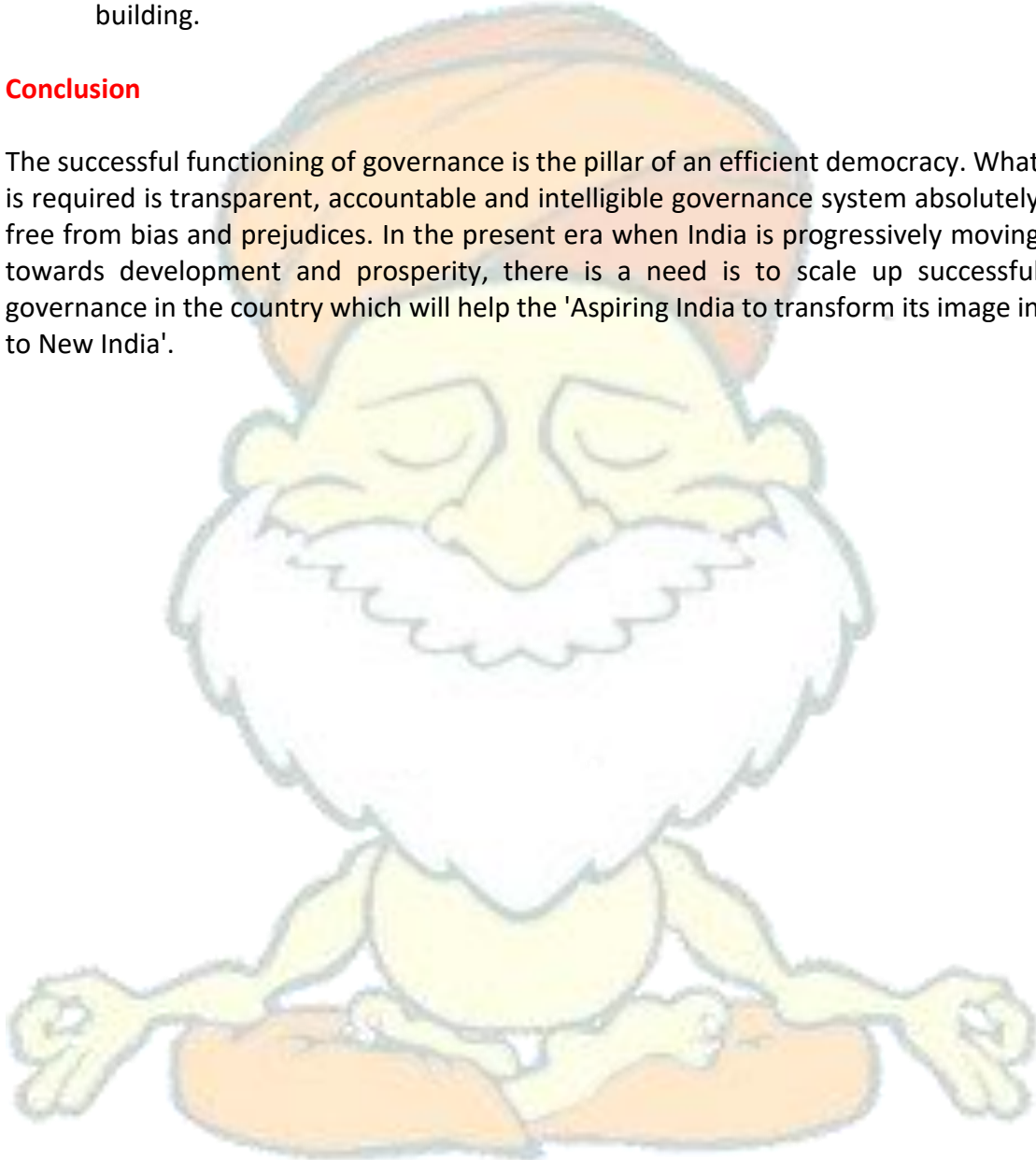
- Transparency is broadly accepted as a major principle of successful governance. Transparency allows stakeholders to collect information that may be critical to uncovering abuses and defending their interests. Likewise, transparency increases accountability of the Government officials. Hence, increasing transparency through governance will scale up successful governance in India.
- 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.
- Accountability become another crucial concept in maintaining successful governance. Accountability means being answerable for the performance of tasks assigned to a person. 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 Redressal Mechanism. Such a bill was previously recommended by the Second Administrative Reforms Commission.
- E-Governance initiatives for providing an accountable administration and swift delivery of services include a framework for efficient handling of public grievances through the Centralised Public Grievance Redress and Monitoring System (CPGRAMS) which is already in place. Which will scale up the successful governance in India.
- Rule of law: Without rule of law successful governance can't be ensured. It is also important that laws must benefit every individual of the society. Thus states must ensure rule of law in the territory.
- Democratic decentralisation: Participation of the people either direct or indirect in the development and decision making process is one of the cornerstones of good governance. Democratic decentralisation should be

emphasised which entails power to the Gram Panchayats and people at the lowest level of political hierarchy.

- There is imperative need to strengthen and widen the national public information infrastructure through developing information networks for wider access of digital information through wider use of information technologies.
- Changing the mindset of the government employees is important. This will be addressed to organizing programmes for orientation, training and capacity building.

### Conclusion

The successful functioning of governance is the pillar of an efficient democracy. What is required is transparent, accountable and intelligible governance system absolutely free from bias and prejudices. In the present era when India is progressively moving towards development and prosperity, there is a need is to scale up successful governance in the country which will help the 'Aspiring India to transform its image in to New India'.



**58. Effective two-way communication is the cornerstone of democratic governance. Do you agree? Substantiate.**

**Approach** - It expects students to write about democratic governance and importance of effective two way communication in democratic governance.

**Introduction**

Democratic governance giving citizens a say in how decisions are made—is fundamental to ensuring that democracy delivers for all of society. Strong democratic governance is characterised by transparency and accountability in both the public and private sectors. An open, participatory governance process responds to citizen and business needs, resulting in better and fairer government policies.

**Body**

Communication process and structure in democratic governance –

- Communication processes can be one-way for example providing information and conveying messages or two-way for example dialogue, deliberation. Communication has evolved away from its traditional focus on one-way communication for the purpose of propaganda, social marketing, awareness-raising, and influencing attitudes, opinions and behaviour, towards a much greater emphasis two way communication more participatory and deliberative processes of dialogue.
- Communication structures include free, plural, and independent media systems, robust civil society, and the legal and regulatory framework that enables or precludes the free flow of information from government to citizens and vice versa. These form the framework through which citizens and government can communicate and engage in dialogue. They are essential components of the so-called democratic governance and play an important role in forming public opinion.

Role of communication in supporting democratic governance and stimulating economic growth is increasingly recognised in policy statements of the so-called 'good governance' agenda. Importance of effective two way communication for democratic governance -

1. **Capability:** Consultation and dialogue between state and citizens can in principle improve public understanding of and support for government policies and encourage citizen ownership of reform. Without the support of the public, governments often lack the capability to get things done.
2. **Accountability:** Access to information with two way communication and government transparency are in theory vital for enabling citizens to monitor and hold government to account for its actions. There is significant evidence that transparency can reduce opportunities for corruption.
3. **Responsiveness:** An informed and politically active electorate in theory strengthens the demand for governments to be accountable. There are several



examples where communication processes for example debate through the media, public information campaigns, social accountability mechanisms have encouraged government responsiveness to citizens' demands and resulted in better public services.

4. Agenda-setter: The communication can raise awareness of social problems, informing elected officials about public concerns and needs. A number of studies have demonstrated that the issues the communication through media present as important are the same as those the public subsequently think are important.
5. Gatekeeper: The communication with dialogue and deliberation can be a forum for the public debate and discussion of social issues and it can represent a plurality of perspectives, including those of poor and marginalised groups.
6. Watchdog: The effective discussion can provide a check on powerful sectors of society, including leaders within the private and public domains. Debate, in particular, can uncover corruption and monitor public interests.

### Conclusion

Communication structures include free, plural, and independent media systems, robust civil society, and the legal and regulatory framework that enables or precludes the free flow of information from government to citizens and vice versa. These form the framework through which citizens and government can communicate and engage in dialogue. They are essential components of the so-called 'democratic public sphere' and play an important role in forming public opinion.

### 59. What are your views on the idea of introducing domain specialisation in the Civil Services? Comment.

**Approach** - As the directive here is comment it is necessary to give your opinion on the issue. In the introduction you can explain in brief the context of issue of domain specialisation. In the first half of main body part you can argue in support of introducing domain specialisation in the civil service. In the next half you can argue in support of having a generalist in civil services. A brief about government initiative to address the issue of domain specialisation as a way forward will be an enrichment of the answer. Candidate can conclude by showing the importance of achieving a golden mean to address this issue.

### Introduction

Centre decided to introduce lateral entry in the highest echelons of the Indian Administrative Service, bringing skilled individuals from the private sector and academia. The decision itself is a historical one. However, the atmosphere of bureaucracy stirred after this due to the growing debate about the work bureaucrats do and how it is perceived, which culminated in to the debate of generalist v. specialist.

## Body

Introducing domain specialisation in the civil services:

1. Many within the IAS community have balked at the idea, but some believe that change is long overdue in one of India's oldest institutions. The lack of specialisation across the top tier of Indian bureaucracy is a concern that has remained unaddressed until now.
2. To counter the tag of "generalists" (lack of domain expertise) attributed to IAS officers, the IAS Association is thinking to lobby the government into posting and transferring officials "according to their technical expertise."
3. IAS officers are 'generalists' who hop from one ministry to another through their careers and do not necessarily have expertise in any area. Sometimes it leads to lacunas in policy formulation area.
4. For instance, renowned poet and writer Ashok Vajpayi was made the secretary of the culture department in Madhya Pradesh a long time ago. The initiative to open the Bharat Bhavan, which is the hub of creativity in the state, was taken by him. It might not had happened if he was posted in coal ministry.
5. Arbitrary postings can be debilitating and can affect the career trajectory of civil servants and the general administration. For instance, what is the point of deputing an officer to a ministry where he will learn and understand problems of that ministry in a year's time? And then when he will be transferred to some other ministry, he will take another year to understand problems of that ministry.
6. A parliamentary panel has also recommended that the government bring 'specialised generalists' who have domain-specific knowledge into the civil services to increase the efficiency of the bureaucracy. For instance, introducing lateral entry in to civil services is a step in the right direction.
7. Besides, the first ARC also indicated, in broad terms, the knowledge and specialization required for staffing posts in each of these areas. The selection of personnel to the eight areas of specialization was to be made through a mid-career competitive examination.
8. In its 'Strategy for New India @75' document, the NITI Aayog has recommended bringing in "domain experts" into India's otherwise generalist bureaucracy by suggesting that recruits into the civil services be placed in a 'central talent pool', after which candidates can be allocated positions in the government based on their qualification and expertise.

Though having a specialist civil servant is the need of the hour, there are some pros of having a generalist in the civil services.

- The first is the argument that the best leadership is provided by generalists who have a breadth of understanding and experience. Specialists, no matter how competent, tend to have a tunnel vision and are not equipped to take a broader view.
- Sure, domain knowledge has to feed into policy-making, but that can be accomplished by domain experts advising the generalist leader in decision-

making. In this worldview, a good IAS officer can head the Department of Agriculture as competently as she would the Department of Shipping.

- Young recruits join the IAS as generalists, acquire breadth and then go on to acquiring depth. Which makes them a more specialised person in the field of their respective work domain. Hence, recruiting a specialist who has narrowed vision to work on multidimensional problems will hamper the system.
- Also being a generalist doesn't mean that civil servants don't do a specialist kind work in their respective work domain. For instance, Nikhil Nirmal, the District Magistrate of Alipurduar a lawyer by profession, ably managed dengue outbreaks and enforced food security in the district.
- Managing specialisation can be a complex challenge. How much specialisation should there be? How should officers be allocated among the specialisations? What should be the weightages for expressed preferences and revealed competencies? Once allocated a specialisation, how should an officer's career be managed? It will make the task of recruitment more cumbersome.
- An IAS Officer never remains a 'generalist' as projected. They become specialists in public administration and governance; having unparalleled experience of managing every development scheme at the district and sub-district levels, interacting with people across different demographics, and ensuring coordination between different departments.

It is difficult to arrive at a conclusion, whether to introduce domain specialisation in the civil service or not. However, a golden mean has to be obtained. For instance, having a 'generalised specialised' should be a way forward. In this light Government of India recently launched 'Mission Karmyogi'.

- The mission is established under the National Programme for Civil Services Capacity Building (NPCSCB). It is aimed at building a future-ready civil service with the right attitude, skills and knowledge, aligned to the vision of New India.
- The capacity of Civil Services plays a vital role in rendering a wide variety of services, implementing welfare programs and performing core governance functions.

### Conclusion

India's bureaucracy has long been criticised for being obstructionist, and that it has often been an impediment to implementing even well-intended policy initiatives. Bringing 'generalised specialist' in to civil services will strike a right balance while addressing the domain expertise question. Hence, it becomes imperative for India to achieve a golden mean while recruiting the civil servants who will supplement the transition of India in to 'New India'.



**60. Should civil servants be active on social media platforms? Share and substantiate your views.**

**Approach** - It expects students to write about use of social media platforms by civil servants. And highlight on whether civil servants should use social media.

**Introduction**

Social Media in recent times has become synonymous with Social Networking sites such as FaceBook or MicroBlogging sites such as Twitter. However, very broadly social media can be defined as any web or mobile based platform that enables an individual or agency to communicate interactively and enables exchange of user generated content.

**Body**

As Indian citizens, civil servants are free to express their views in public, subject to their specific service conditions. In this regard, the benefits of Social media use by civil servant can be seen from following points:

1. Show the human side: Social media offers a great opportunity to humanise your department or organisation. Tell stories and let your audience in behind-the-scenes to give your social media page a friendly, personal feel and improve engagement rates.
2. Use images and videos: Videos and images make your message more interesting and engaging, meaning your audience is more likely to listen to what you have to say. Visual content, therefore, tends to receive more engagement and so is prioritised by social media algorithms, making it more likely that your followers will see your post.
3. Create awareness: Social media can be used by them to create awareness about social welfare programmes as the audience are huge. Social media can help police and administrators to check on and control the mob in panic situation as well as early information about possible communal and ethnic clashes. For example -Bhimakoregoan riots incident check by Pune police commissioner by early information through social media.
4. Create accessibility: Social media also acts as platform to reach the sections which are untouched due to geographical locations, environmental conditions, educate and alarm of any Climatic or environmental hazards.
5. It breaks down boundaries and hierarchies: Social media cuts across traditional silos, making projects or themes more open and accessible. In government, for example, in moments we can access similar activities other civil service departments are doing and the people behind them. Social media is non-hierarchical it doesn't worry about geographical location, job title or government department.
6. Creates buzz around events: Twitter can hugely enhance how people experience an event. Attendees can ask questions, quote and connect with speakers, provide instant feedback and maintain connections afterwards.

7. Motivate, sharing new ideas: From motivational blogs and leadership tips to thingsthere are heaps of articles out there that can provide new information or a different perspective and social media is the place to find them. Finding and sharing this kind of content benefits people, team and networks. For example IFS officers with popular Twitter accounts are beginning to highlight the nature of their jobs inside dense, remote forests, and the problems and roadblocks they face.

However civil servants are needed to be politically neutral and impartiality is the corner stone of the service. So some concerns arise when sensitive issues like communalism, casteist incidents are highlighted in social media because –

- It shows their bias and people would perceive it as the civil servant is favouring one community over the other leading to loss of trust in the administration.
- Even the proposed changes to the rulebook to explicitly treat criticism of government policies on social media as a violation of conduct rules.
- Public servants are sharing their days through daily and weekly notes; engaging in open dialogue with colleagues, stakeholders, and citizens; and sharing progress and updates in real-time. Endangers anonymity of service and civil servant.
- It is not the official way to resolve grievances and should be treated as the last resort. It undermines the bureaucratic due process and may open another channel of public service.
- Their comments might lead to further decisions in the society and violence can crop up. For example Bareilly DM in 2018 Facebook post, questioned the “trend” of raising anti-Pakistan slogans in Muslim localities to foment communal trouble later witnessed violence when 250 kaanwariyas allegedly clashed with Muslims residents.
- The personal behaviour of public servants can undermine public trust if it causes a reasonable person to conclude that they are unable to serve the government of the day impartially and professionally. For example Shah feasantweet about rape culture in South Asia.

Public servants in their capacity as ‘officers of the state’ are bound by service civil service conduct rules. These rules are different today from what they were in colonial times but they fall far short of today’s digital expectations for sure.

### Conclusion

The invisible civil servant is now becoming more and more visible in this ever evolving complex ecosystem. A number of civil servants are wanting to become visible. The public conduct of any civil servant must uphold the values of the Indian republic and promote the spirit and letter of the Constitution. The higher the civil servant’s authority, the more stringent is the need to be consistent with constitutional morality.

**61. Has India committed a blunder by not entering the RCEP? Critically examine.**

**Approach** - As the directive here is critically examine it is necessary to cover various angles of the issue and provide both sides views. In the introduction you can start by introducing what is RCEP and stating why India pulled itself out of RCEP. In the first half of main body part explain points in support of India's move. In the next half argue against India's decision to pull itself out of RCEP. A way forward while explaining when and how India should join the RCEP is necessary.

**Introduction**

Described as the "largest" regional trading agreement to this day, RCEP was originally being negotiated between 16 countries-ASEAN members and countries with which they have free trade agreements (FTAs), namely Australia, China, South Korea, Japan, New Zealand and India. India had been a part of negotiations for almost nine years till it pulled out in November 2019, stating that inadequate safeguards and lowering of customs duties will adversely impact its manufacturing, agriculture and dairy sectors.

**Body**

The purpose of RCEP was to make it easier for products and services of each of these countries to be available across this region. However, India has some major concerns due to which India opted to stay out of RCEP.

India's decision to stay out of RCEP is a good decision:

- Unfavourable Balance of Trade: India has trade deficits with 11 of the 15 RCEP countries, and some experts feel that India has been unable to leverage its existing bilateral free trade agreements with several RCEP members to increase exports.
- For instance, as per paper published by NITI Aayog, India has a bilateral trade deficit with most of the member countries of RCEP. Following Table 1 shows India's trade balance with RCEP members.

Table 1: India's trade balance with RCEP members.

RCEP Member	2018-19	2019-20
ASEAN	-21.85	-23.82
China	-53.58	-48.65
South Korea	-12.05	-10.81
Japan	-7.91	-7.91
New Zealand	-0.25	-0.14
Australia	-9.61	-6.93

*All figures in \$ billion*  
*Source: Ministry of Commerce and Industry*

- Dumping of Chinese Goods: India has already signed FTAs with all the countries of RCEP except China. China is a major concern for India, as after signing RCEP, cheaper products from China might flood the Indian market.
- Auto-trigger Mechanism: In order to deal with the imminent rise in imports, India had been seeking an auto-trigger mechanism that would have allowed



India to raise tariffs on products in instances where imports cross a certain threshold. However, other countries in RCEP were against this proposal.

- Rules of Origin issue: Rules of origin are the criteria used to determine the national source of a product. India was concerned about a "possible circumvention" of rules of origin. The deal did not have sufficient safeguards to prevent routing of the products.
- Protection for domestic industries: Throughout the negotiations, the dairy industry demanded protection as the industry was expected to face stiff competition from Australia and New Zealand when the deal was signed. Similarly, steel and textiles sectors have also demanded protection.
- Most favoured Nation Status: India wanted RCEP to exclude most-favoured nation (MFN) obligations from the investment chapter, as it did not want to hand out, especially to countries with which it has border disputes, the benefits it was giving to its strategic allies
- No deal better than bad agreement: India's stance was based on a "clear-eyed calculation" of the gains and costs of entering a new arrangement, and that no pact was better than a "bad agreement".

However, the COVID-19 pandemic has changed the economic game of global powers. India is also not an exception.

Arguments for India to review its RCEP stand:

- Need For Economic Realism: India should deter seeing RCEP only from the Chinese perspective. India should acknowledge that the trade bloc represents 30% of the global economy and world population, touching over 2.2 billion people, and staying out of RCEP may result in suboptimal economic growth without leveraging Asia-Pacific demand.
- In this regard, India can draw inspiration from Japan & Australia, as they chose to bury their geopolitical differences with China to prioritise what they collectively see as a mutually beneficial trading compact.
- Strategic Need: It is not just because gains from trade are significant, but the RCEP's membership is a prerequisite to having a say in shaping RCEP's rules.
- This is necessary to safeguard India's interests and the interests of several countries that are too small to stand up to the largest member, China.
- Global Economic Stagnation due to Covid-19: With global trade and the economy facing a steep decline due to Covid-19 pandemic, RCEP can serve as a bulwark in containing the free fall of the global economy and re-energising economic activity.
- Impact on India's Act East Policy: There are concerns that India's decision would impact its bilateral trade ties with RCEP member nations, as they may be more inclined to focus on bolstering economic ties within the bloc.

**Way forward –**

- India, as an original negotiating participant of RCEP, has the option of joining the agreement without having to wait 18 months as stipulated for new members in the terms of the pact.
- A possible alternative for India is to review its existing bilateral FTAs with some of these RCEP members as well as newer agreements with potential for Indian exports.
- The problem is a broader one, of India's competitiveness, which has to be improved so that opening up leads to more benefits than costs, to industrialisation and not its opposite.
- Conclusion of 17th ASEAN-India Virtual Summit and adoption of ASEAN-India Plan of Action for 2021-2025 proves that despite conclusion of RCEP, ASEAN countries are welcoming towards India. India must try to find out possibilities of increasing trade with ASEAN countries.

### Conclusion

Given India's own ambitions to generate growth and jobs within, economic isolation could never be an option for India and becoming a key player and rule-maker on the world stage, India's decision to withdraw from the RCEP is debatable. Instead of sitting out and building tariff walls across sectors, it must prod and incentivise the industry to be competitive, and get inside the RCEP tent at the earliest opportune moment but it should not be done at the cost of sacrifice of domestic industry in India.

**62. How do results of recent US elections affect India's interests? Critically analyze.**

**Approach** – A straightforward question where in you need to critically analyze the effect of results of recent US elections on India's interests.

**Introduction**

With Democratic candidate Joe Biden winning the US Presidential Election over the Republican candidate and incumbent President Donald Trump as their new President by a significant margin, the world is now bracing itself for the significant changes anticipated by this turn of events. This also holds true for India as not only is the USA India's second-largest supplier of defence equipment, it is also one of India's most important trading partner (the Indo-US trade figures exceed \$100 billion). India's bid for a permanent seat on the UN Security Council also makes its relationship with USA vital in strategic terms.

**Body**

Owing to India's strategic position in the world economy, growth prospects, and availability of cheap skilled labour, and also greater domestic demand momentum, traditionally, Indo-US ties have received a bipartisan support, and this is expected to continue even through Biden's tenure. In this regard, the effect on India's interests can be seen from the following points:

1. Under Biden administration, India's trade with the US could recover from the dip since 2017-18 where over the past 20 years, India has always had a trade surplus (exports exceeding imports) with the US. Trade surplus had peaked at USD 21.2 billion in 2017-18 and has moderated to some extent.
2. Beyond trade, over the past two decades, the US is the fifth-biggest source for Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) into India. Apart from FDI (or investment in the physical assets inside India), the US also accounts for one-third of all Foreign Portfolio Investments (that is, investment in financial assets) into India. Here, Biden is likely to be less obtrusive than the current Trump administration.
3. H1-B Visa Issue - Under President Trump, who severely curtailed the visa regime, owing to his policy of "America First", India had suffered the most. H-1B visa is a non-immigrant visa that allows American companies to employ foreign workers in speciality occupations that require theoretical or technical expertise. President Biden may again relax the norms for India's benefit.
4. A Biden presidency may also see a renewed push towards a rules-based trading system across the world — instead of outright ad-hocism as was the case under Trump — as well as a move away from the protectionist approach that has been getting strong across the world.
5. Here, India's exclusion from the US' Generalized System of Preference (GSP) could come up for reconsideration under Biden where India was the largest beneficiary of the programme in 2017 with USD 5.7 billion in imports to the US given duty-free status but was terminated by President Trump.
6. Further, under the Trump administration, the US sanctions on Iran severely limited India's sourcing of cheap crude oil. For an economy such as India, which



needs a regular supply of cheap oil to grow fast, a normalisation of US-Iran relationship (and lifting of sanctions), which President elect Joe Biden has promised, would be more than useful.

7. On China, too, while the US apprehensions are unlikely to be fewer even under a Biden administration, it is more likely that a Biden administration will help India against China, instead of clubbing the two together.
8. Also, Biden has promised to re-join the Paris Climate Accord, and this may help countries such as India in dealing with the massive challenges — both technical and financial — on this front.
9. Other Issues - Other points of contention between India and US - such as the tricky issue of data localisation or capping prices of medicines and medical devices - have a chance of getting towards a resolution under a Biden Presidency.
10. Civil Liberties and Democratic Rights in India - Although some US Congressmen and women had raised red flags on the human rights situation following the revoking of J&K's special status under Article 370 and passage of the Citizenship (Amendment) Act alongside the proposed nationwide National Register of Citizens (NRC), the Trump administration had not taken any actions beyond making some perfunctory statements. But this may change under the Biden Presidency, which can become an issue in terms of public outreach.
11. Further, there are many concerns related to the strategic aspects where India has some reservations in terms of Biden administration's approach to dealing with China as well as the overall emphasis on QUAD and Indo-Pacific approach. Relations with Pakistan vis-à-vis its support to terrorism as well as tackling the Afghan issue can also become a sore point in the normally flourishing strategic relationship.

### Conclusion

Combined with the control of Covid infections and the economic recovery, the US could yet again provide a growth impulse to the global economy that countries such as India need to boost their exports and grow where it has become clear that the outcome of the United States presidential election doesn't affect India's relationship with Washington as much as in earlier times where India's ties with America find bipartisan support.

**63. What are India's most critical challenges in WTO? Discuss. What has been India's response to those? Examine.**

**Approach** - In the introduction candidate can start by explaining historical association of India with WTO. In the first half of main body part clearly explain the kind of concerns India has with that of WTO. In the next part give how India has responded to these concerns, what measures India has adopted and what strategy it has adopted so that our concerns get addressed by WTO. Candidate can conclude by giving a brief way forward.

**Introduction**

India has been a member of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) since January 1995 and also had been a member of the WTO's forerunner General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) since July 1948. As a developing country, India has played a significant role in the proceedings of the WTO, especially in voicing its own concerns and also of the entire developing world.

**Body**

In the Doha WTO conference that took place in 2001, India emerged as the most outspoken of advocates for the developing bloc. However, there are many challenges for the Indian economy as a result of the many agreements signed as part of the WTO.

- Trade-Related Investment Measures (TRIMS): This agreement forbids the host country to discriminate against investments from abroad vis-a-vis domestic investment i.e. agreement requires investment to be freely allowed by nations.
- Peace Clause: High subsidies are seen to be distorting global trade. The peace clause protects a developing country's food procurement programmes against action from WTO members in case subsidy ceilings are breached.
- India's turn towards protectionist trade policy over the past years has not gone unnoticed at the WTO and a pattern is beginning to be visible when it comes to India at the WTO. For instance, USA consistently voicing the subsidy issues at WTO.
- Minimum Support Price and WTO: WTO's hard stand on agricultural procurement at minimum support price is a big concern, where India is defending its complex web of minimum support prices at the WTO amid international isolation and even opprobrium.
- Trade-Related Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS): Intellectual property rights seek to protect and provide legal recognition to the creator of the intangible illegal use of his/her creation. Since the law governing these aspects vary vastly across countries, the agreement stipulates a basic homogeneity of the law so that no infringement of rights occurred.
- Due to TRIPS the pharmaceutical and biotechnology industries are expected to be hit the hardest. Another impact on India is expected to be in the transfer of technology from abroad.

- **Ban on Chinese Mobile Apps:** After India banned 59 mobile apps of China, they have claimed that India has violated World Trade Organization (WTO) rules. Which poses a challenge for India that it has to comply with the international trading norms.
- **Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Tariff Case:** The World Trade Organisation (WTO) has decided to set up a dispute panel against India. The panel is being set up on the request of Japan and Taiwan. The dispute panels of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) would determine whether India's customs duties on imports of certain information and communications technology (ICT) products infringe WTO norms or not.
- **Developed countries** have been putting pressure on inclusion of non-trade issues such as labour standards, environmental protection, human rights, rules on investment, competition policy in the WTO agreements.
- **Fisheries Subsidies:** WTO members are negotiating to finalise disciplines to eliminate subsidies for illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing, and to prohibit certain forms of fisheries subsidies that contribute to overcapacity and overfishing. Which is a clear threat to India's domestic fishing industry.

#### India's Response to WTO's challenges:

- India's participation in an increasingly rule based system in the governance of international trade is to ensure more stability and predictability, which ultimately would lead to more trade and prosperity.
- India has an obvious interest in the liberalisation of services trade and wants commercially meaningful access to be provided by the developed countries. Since the Uruguay Round, India has autonomously liberalised its Services trade regime across the board.
- To comply with WTO TRIPS terms, it required some changes in the domestic laws of countries including India. As a result, India amended the Copyright Act, the Patents Act, and the Trade and Merchandise Act.
- Ensuring food and livelihood security is critical, particularly for a large agrarian economy like India. India is persistently demanding for a permanent solution on public stockholding subsidies at WTO.
- India strongly favours extension of higher levels of protection to geographical indications for products like Basmati rice, Darjeeling tea, and Alphonso mangoes at par with that provided to wines and spirits under the Trade-related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) agreement.
- India has responded against any inclusion of non-trade issues that are directed in the long run at enforcing protectionist measures (based on non-trade issues, the developed countries like USA and European Union are trying to ban the imports of some goods like textile, processed food etc.), particularly against developing countries.
- Besides, India has sought a clear dispute settlement mechanism in the global agreement to end harmful fisheries subsidies.

#### Conclusion



The role of WTO in future is very crucial as world is going through extraordinary situations such as the protectionism, trade war (like USA & China), Covid-19 Pandemic and Brexit. Since the WTO is consensus-based, reaching an agreement on reforms among all 164 members is extremely difficult. One possibility moving forward could be a plurilateral agreement with a group of like-minded countries on a new set of rules that serve as an addendum (supplement) to the broader WTO.



**64. What are your views on the consistent decline of multilateralism in recent years? How is it impacting global affairs? Discuss.**

**Approach:**

It expects students to write about multilateralism and present a viewpoint on decline declining multilateralism and its impact and its impact on global affairs.

**Introduction**

Multilateralism has a long history, but it is principally associated with the era after World War II, during which there was a burgeoning of multilateral agreements led primarily by the United States. The organizations most strongly embodying the principle of multilateralism are to be found in trade (the World Trade Organization [WTO]), security (the North Atlantic Treaty Organization [NATO]) and environment (numerous multilateral environmental institutions also exist).

**Body**

Multilateralism:

- Multilateralism is the process of organizing relations between groups of three or more states. Beyond that basic quantitative aspect, multilateralism is generally considered to comprise certain qualitative elements or principles that shape the character of the arrangement or institution.
- Those principles are An indivisibility of interests among participants and A system of dispute settlement intended to enforce a particular mode of behavior.

Consistent decline in multilateralism:

- Pursuing an aggressive “America first” policy, the Trump administration has relinquished the traditional role of the US as herald of the international liberal order and withdrawn from the Paris climate convention, the Iran nuclear deal, and the Trans-Pacific Partnership.
- China, aiming to bend the multilateral system in its favour, is setting up parallel governance structures such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation or the China Development Bank.
- The EU, a traditional champion of multilateralism, is internally divided and losing influence on the international scene. The G8 has shrunk to the G7, and a trade war is looming between the US and China.
- UN and its manifold agencies have been losing their lustre, criticised for their lack of efficiency, institutional sclerosis and ideological infighting.
- The WTO has failed to conclude the negotiations of the Doha Agenda started in 2001, as bilateralism and protectionism are resurging worldwide, and its dispute settlement system has stalled.
- The complex architecture of arms control set up at the end of the Cold War is threatened by the dismantling of the Iran nuclear deal.

- The governance of the internet is forfeiting its initial aspiration of a borderless knowledge society as a few private companies are hoarding data exponentially and authoritarian states are misusing it as a tool of surveillance and repression.
- As the current COVID crisis is illustrating, while existing multilateral mechanisms such as the WHO have excruciatingly shown their limits and shortcomings, alternative routes of unilateralism and uncoordinated action at the state levels have proven dead ends in containing the spread of the virus and are unlikely to address the global repercussions of the pandemic.

Impact of declining multilateralism on global affairs:

- **Deadlock at WTO:** The recurrence of deadlocks in the Doha Round for over the last 15 years is a clear sign of discontent from multiple stakeholders. Trump administration for the wreckage over WTO's Appellate Body, the practice of actually blocking appointments and re-appointments of judges.
- **UN is undermined:** United Nations Security Council failed to restrict terrorism by their use of the veto. In the most recent example of this power being exercised, Russia and China voted against a draft resolution that would have condemned a crackdown on anti-government protests in Syria and called on Bashar al-Assad, the Syrian president, to step aside. China's rejection of the Permanent Court of Arbitration's decision in the South China Sea case, despite signing up to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.
- **Rise of Nationalism:** Over the past decade and more, the world has been moving in direction opposite to that of multilateralism. There has been an upsurge in narrow nationalism, an assertion of parochial interests over pursuit of shared interests. There has been increased competition among states rather than embracing collaboration. US-China Trade war, BREXIT, US coming out of Paris Climate deal, Rise of right wing parties in Europe and decline in WTO are reflection of this trend.
- **Increasing Incidences of Lawfare:** It means the misuse of existing International and national laws by several countries (via forced technology requirements, intellectual property rights violations, and subsidies), to gain an unfair advantage over other countries. For example: The imposition of extraterritorial sanction (under CAATSA) by the US has affected development in developing economies like India and China. The trade war between the US and China has challenged the existing global trade.
- **Dual Use of Global Supply Chain:** Some of the developed countries have jurisdiction and control over global supply chains. Due to growing convergence between commercial interests with strategic goals, these supply chains enables them to have vast extraterritorial influence and has created new power asymmetries. For example: China through BRI is enhancing its role in global economic governance. The internet has become a distributed system of surveillance. There are fears pertaining to dual-use (commercial viability and military application) of Industrial Revolution 4.0.

Finding solutions to fix the malaise of multilateralism Four sets of additional measures will be crucial:



- Reconsidering past trade-offs: This means reconsidering past trade-offs and developing a new bargain on globalisation with better distributive mechanisms, both domestically and internationally.
- Multilateralism will need a brand new narrative: Appealing to global public goods and the welfare of future generations are likely to prove insufficient as rationales, especially to those who feel shortchanged and are enduring economic hardships. This new narrative will need to have individual and group appeal. It will also need to work across different levels of politics local, regional, national, and global.
- Fundamental renegotiation of multilateral institutions is essential: To do this effectively, it would be wise to tap into ongoing efforts of the global South (e.g., UN Security Council reform). Additionally, however, given the risks that weaponised interdependence and economic statecraft pose today, multilateral rules will have to be updated to prevent their misuse and abuse.
- Agreeing values: Amidst the great power competition currently underway, fractures are emerging over first-order values, such as democracy, pluralism, embedded liberalism, and rule of law.

### Conclusion

The current context, characterized by a weakening of multilateralism, the return of protectionism and the rise of extremist political movements, undermines the advancement of that global consensus, poses a grave challenge to the world economy and threatens the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals. Since US and West have adopted nationalistic leaning, India should step into the leadership role by advocating the multilateral approach of tackling the pandemic, climate change and terrorism.

**65. What are the most potent ecological hazards in the coastal regions? Examine.**

### Approach:

It is straightforward question, here it expects aspirants to - start answer by defining term like ecological hazard - in main body part you need to write about various ecological hazards in coastal region and how they are impacting surrounding region.

### Introduction:

An ecological hazard is a substance, state or event which has the potential to threaten the surrounding natural environment or adversely affect people's health, including pollution and natural disasters such as storms and earthquakes.

**Body:**

Some of the hazards include movement of barrier islands, sea level rise, hurricanes, nor'easters, earthquakes, flooding, erosion, pollution and human development along the coast.

- **Movement of barrier islands:** They create a barrier between the mainland and the ocean. They shelter and protect the mainland from the powerful forces of wind, waves, tides, currents and the ravages of storms and hurricanes. They shelter the estuaries that form behind the barriers. Between 75% and 95% of all marine species are dependent upon these estuaries at some point in their lives. They allow marshes to build up in the quiet waters of the sound. The marshes filter the pollutants that come in from mainland rivers and when the marsh grasses die they create detritus, a valuable food source for small marine organisms. Barrier islands provide valuable habitats for mammals, shellfish and fish including many endangered species, and offer a greater variety of bird species than any other ecosystem in the continental United States. They also serve aesthetic purposes and for years, have inspired artists, poets, writers, bird watchers, boaters, picnickers, sunbathers and swimmers.
- **Sea level rise:** Landward recession or erosion of sandy shorelines. Depending on the rate and scale of sea level rise, the environmental, social and economic consequences or shoreline recession within low lying inter-tidal areas, in particular, may be significant in the medium to long term. Salt water intrusion and landward advance of tidal limits within estuaries. This may have significant implications in the medium to long term for freshwater and salt water ecosystems and development margins, particularly building structures and foundation systems within close proximity to the shoreline. Existing coastal gravity drainage, storm water infrastructure and sewerage systems may become compromised over time as mean sea level rises. Sea level rise will influence the entrance opening regimes for intermittently closed and open lakes and lagoons and alter catchment flood behaviour over time.
- **Pollution:** Coastal and estuarine ecosystems have been, and still are, heavily influenced by humans through pollution and habitat loss worldwide. Over 80% of all marine pollution originates from land-based sources which are primarily industrial, agricultural and urban. Pollution accompanies most kinds of human activities, including offshore oil and gas production and marine oil transportation. Besides altering the marine environment, pollution also causes economic losses
- **Human development along the coast:** Living organisms play an essential role in biogeochemical cycles through coastal systems. They are themselves vulnerable to rapid changes which take place in the coastal zone due to anthropogenic activities, but changes in the structure of populations of organisms will in turn affect the geochemistry of the habitat, to a point where such cycles might become dysfunctional. The consequences of such changes taking place in coastal

ecosystems may have consequences at global level leading to an unbalance in fluxes of energy and minerals at the interface between land and sea.

**Conclusion:**

Solution of these issues lies in more informed preparedness for coastal flooding, tsunami inundation or maritime conditions through timely and accurate forecasts, improved approaches for managing shoreline erosion, accurate estimates of extreme event magnitudes for coastal engineering design, through to long-term planning for the impacts of coastal hazards and sea-level rise on low-lying coastal margins



**66. What are the post disaster management strategies for combating the impact of earthquakes? Discuss.**

**Approach:**

As the directive here is discuss it is necessary to cover various angles of the topic. In the first part of main body part explain earthquake and its impact. In the next half of main body part tell the post disaster management strategies to combat the impact of earthquakes. You can conclude by explaining the significance of these strategies to combat earthquake and other natural hazards.

**Introduction:**



An earthquake is shaking of the earth caused due to the release of energy from the earth's interior, which generates waves that travel in all directions. Minor tremors caused by small vibrations occur every few minutes but great earthquakes happen because of faulting (Normal, reverse and strike-slip) cause a great number of disruptions.

**Body:**

Earthquake is characterized by suddenness, scale, and magnitude. These three characters make it extremely dangerous when it comes to life and property without any discrimination. Following are the impacts of the earthquakes:

- **Damage to property:** The upheaval caused by an earthquake does huge damage to the property. Especially in a developed area of high population density, the damage to the property is huge.
- **Human loss:** Within the period between 1990 and 2006, around 23,000 lives were lost because of major earthquakes in India.
- One of the important impacts of the earthquake is the change in the river course due to blockage.
- Earthquakes in the ocean basin creates huge waves that strike on the coast and create huge damages. The 2004 Tsunami in Sumatra brought Tsunami to the east coast of India.
- **Mud fountains:** Due to the huge impact of the earthquake, mud and hot water may emerge on the surface. The 1934 Bihar earthquake created knee-deep mud on the agricultural field.
- If the earthquake happens in areas of dams, reservoirs, the damage is multiplied. Earthquake in hilly and mountain areas may cause landslides and avalanches.
- Earthquakes cause damage to electric property and gas pipes. Due to the havoc caused by the earthquake, it is even difficult to contain the fire.

Post disaster management strategies to combat the impact of earthquakes: Disaster management, goes through different stages.

- Post disaster management strategy deals with 5R's i.e. Relief, Response, Rehabilitation, Reconstruction and Recovery.
- Post-disaster initiatives taken in response to a disaster with a purpose to achieve early recovery and rehabilitation of affected victims and communities.
- The relief phase includes providing the immediate relief in terms food, medical attention, temporary shelter. It is the prime most post disaster strategy to mitigate the negative impact of earthquake.
- The response phase includes the search and rescue; fulfilling basic humanitarian needs of victims; assistance by regional, national and international bodies etc.
- Considering no possibility to reconstruct the area if damage is so grave, the rehabilitation phase comes in to picture. It includes rehabilitating the affected people at an alternate site. Besides it also includes making provisions for the livelihood of people.

- During reconstruction, the location or construction material of the property is considered.
- Recovery phase starts after the immediate threat to human life has subsided. The immediate goal of the recovery phase is to bring the affected area back to some degree of normalcy.
- Considering these strategies in mind Disaster management act, 2005 envisaged the creation of 'National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA)', headed by the Prime Minister to implement activities of Disaster Management in India. Besides State Disaster Management Authorities (SDMAs) headed by respective Chief Ministers to do the same at the state level.
- Besides, the government launched two Mobile apps, the first one is 'India Quake'– Developed by the National centre for seismology, the mobile app disseminates real-time earthquake information and the second one is 'Sagar Vani'-Intended to serve coastal communities, the mobile app disseminates ocean related information and alerts to the user community in a timely manner for their safety.
- The National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) strives to be the first responder at heritage sites, which are vulnerable to disasters such as earthquakes, floods, cyclones, and tsunami across India.
- In Earthquake management scenario in India, The NDMA guidelines of 2007 on earthquake preparedness are very important.
- Apart from it, India is a signatory to the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction which works in disaster management in a very holistic way. India also works closely with the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR).
- At the international forum India has also took one step ahead to deal with such issues through the initiative of Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI).

**Conclusion:**

The UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) recently published its report titled "The Human Cost of Disasters". It enlists Earthquake as one of the highly dangerous disaster for human lives and its subsequent impact on economy. Hence, it becomes of critical importance that apart from focussing on post mitigation measures if we focus on pre-disaster strategies then it will have less impact on the lives of people and its subsequent economic impact.

**67. How does external funding of illegal organisations create internal security threats in India? Examine.**

**Approach:**

It expects students to write about - in first part write about different internal security threats created by external funding of illegal organisations - in second part write about steps taken by government.

### Introduction:

India is one of the worst affected countries by terrorism. Terrorist attacks on country both at border or interior of country has been funded by sympathizers and external state actors. Recent revelations by David Hadley made it clear that master minds of 26/11 is LeT gets funding. Terrorist funding does not only has impact on Indian law and order issue but also it has profound impact on economic and social front.

### Body:

External funding is the main source of resources for all the major internal security issues of India:

- Economic terrorism: The country has to contend with Economic terrorism. Pakistan has been flooding the country with counterfeit currency with a view to subverting its economy and funding terrorist activities in different parts of the country. It is estimated that Pakistan pumped in 16 billion worth of FICN into India in 2010, a figure that rose to 20 billion in 2011 and 25 billion in 2012.
- Organised crime: Organised crimes in India especially in metro cities such as Mumbai and Delhi are rising due to flourishing external funding to illegal organisations. Such organised criminals also fund for radicalisation of youth and terrorist attacks.
- Religious or ideological extremism: External funding is greatest source of financial help to extremists. Financial incentives lure unemployed youth towards antinational activities in the name of particular religion or ideology.
- Cybercrime: Crypto-currency and unrecorded cash transaction in e-commerce are also emerging means to supply resources to hostile elements in the country.
- Armed violence: Armed violence which was hitherto legacy of Maoists or insurgencies is now taking a new form throughout India especially in the form of right wing extremism. Recently there has been reports of seizure of illegal weapons and public firing by individuals. External funding is easy source of illegal arms trade in India.
- External funding can be used as a tool of resource mobilisation by insurgent groups, militants and Naxals who are threatening peace and security of India.
- External funding is used to fund separatist activities in Kashmir and insurgent groups in north east.
- External funding is used to fund NGOs and other civil society groups to propagate an agenda which are detrimental to the interests of the society.

Government has taken various steps to combat external funding of illegal organisations in the country, which inter alia, include: -

- Strengthening the provisions in the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967 to combat terror financing by criminalizing the production or smuggling or circulation of high quality counterfeit Indian currency as a terrorist act and



enlarge the scope of proceeds of terrorism to include any property intended to be used for terrorism.

- An advisory on terror financing has been issued in April 2018 to States/ Union Territories. Guidelines have also been issued in March, 2019 to States/ Union Territories for investigation of cases of high quality counterfeit Indian currency notes.
- Training programmes are regularly conducted for the State Police personnel on issues relating to combating terrorist financing.
- Intelligence and security agencies of Centre and States work in tandem to keep a close watch on the elements involved in terror funding activities and take action as per law.

### **Conclusion:**

Better coordination between countries for data sharing and for information exchange can help to minimize the effect and a well-planned strategy can curb such menace.

### **68. What is the current status of threats of secessionism in the Northeast? Discuss.**

#### **Approach:**

As the directive here is discuss, it is necessary to cover various angles of the issue and arrive at a conclusion accordingly. In the introduction you can start by explaining the relationship of secessionist movement and turmoil in the North-east region. In the first half of main body part explain kinds of secessionist movements in the Northeast region. In the next half explain current status of secessionism in the North-east. A constructive way forward to address the issue will fetch more marks.

#### **Introduction:**

Northeast India is the eastern-most region of India. It is connected to East India via a narrow corridor (Siliguri corridor) squeezed between independent nations of Bhutan and Bangladesh. Secessionist movements in North east India have gained significance over the time. However, with moderate local support and high voter participation in the democratic elections, secessionist movements future is debatable on the table of containing the insurgency in North-east India.

#### **Body:**

Conflicts in the region can be broadly grouped under the following categories:

- National conflicts: Involving concept of a distinct 'homeland' as a separate nation and pursuit of the realization of that goal by use of various methods both violent as well as non violent. For instance, ULFA demand for sovereign Asom, NSCN for Greater Nagaland.
- Ethnic conflicts: Involving assertion of numerically smaller and less dominant tribal groups against the political and cultural hold of the dominant tribal

group. In Assam this also takes the form of tension between local and migrant communities.

- Sub-regional conflicts: Involving movements which ask for recognition of sub-regional aspirations and often come in direct conflict with the State Governments or even the autonomous Councils. For instance, United People's Democratic Solidarity (UPDS) in Assam.

Current status of threats of secessionism in the Northeast:

- A cursory look at the demographic mosaic of northeastern India would show that this region is home to a curious amalgam of cross-cutting societies. What compounds the problem of this plurality is the fact that the tendency for ethno-political assertion is high among almost all the groups.
- This is primarily because the political boundaries in most cases do not coincide with the existing social boundaries. The northeastern units of the Indian federation, in spite of several political permutations and combinations have not been able to cater to the demands of all the ethnic categories clamouring for recognition of their distinctive identity.
- The militant organization United Liberation Front of Assam demands a separate country for the indigenous people of Assam. The Government of India had banned the ULFA in 1990 and has officially labelled it as a terrorist group.
- The United People's Democratic Solidarity (UPDS) demands a sovereign nation for the Karbi people. It was formed in March 1999 with the merger of two militant outfits in Assam's Karbi Anglong district, the Karbi National Volunteers (KNV) and Karbi People's Front (KPF).
- The United People's Democratic Solidarity signed a cease-fire agreement for one year with the Union Government on 23 May 2002. However, this led to a split in the UPDS with one faction deciding to continue with its subversive activities while the other commenced negotiations with the Government.
- The Nagalim is a proposed independent country for the Naga people. In the 1950s, the Naga National Council led a violent unsuccessful insurgency against the Government of India, demanding a separate country for the Nagas.
- The secessionist violence decreased considerably after the formation of the Naga-majority Nagaland state, and more militants surrendered after the Shillong Accord of 1975. 2014 General Elections of India recorded a voter turnout of more than 87% in Nagaland, which was the highest in India.
- The National Liberation Front of Tripura (or NLFT) is a Tripuri nationalist organisation which seeks for Tripura to secede from India and establish an independent Tripuri state.
- It has actively participated in the Tripura Rebellion. The NLFT manifesto says that they want to expand what they describe as the Kingdom of God and Christ in Tripura.
- The Tripura National Volunteers (also known as the Tribal National Volunteers or Tripura National Volunteer Force) was founded in 1978 with assistance from the Mizo National Front. The group has significantly reduced terror activities and recently 88 cadres of NLFT surrendered to the Indian Government.

- Nagaland, Manipur, Assam and Tripura had been witnessing conflict since 1950-60 period, but since 1990, the intensity of conflicts started to decrease. Now the only state where prominent insurgency exist is Manipur. But in this region several armed factions operate. Some groups call for a separate state, others for regional autonomy while some extreme groups demand complete independence.

The ceasefire agreements and peace negotiations have resulted in reducing the violence levels and given the civil societies of the region space to talk. Besides following approach needs to be adopted to reduce the secessionist tendencies in North-east India.

- It is important to understand the culture and psyche of the people of North East while framing policy alternatives.
- Security situation in the region has improved considerably in Assam and Meghalaya in particular facilitating conducive atmosphere for investment and development. The Northeast Industrial Policy initiated by the Government of India further contributed in encouraging investment and industries in the region.
- The North East Council (NEC) and the Ministry for the Development of the North East Region (DoNER) have become fund disbursing agencies instead of strategic planning agencies. At present approximately Rs. 11,000 crore is lying idle with the Ministry of DoNER.
- When development comes to a region then it becomes a panacea for the secessionist movement. For instance, the Khalistan movement in Punjab was active in the 1980s and the 1990s, but is now largely subdued within India.
- Integrated and bottoms up approaches are required for integration of the North east in the Look East Policy which will immensely yield benefits in terms of development. The North East should formulate plans as to how it can engage with the ASEAN. Better coordination of efforts by all the Northeastern states should be ensured.

**Conclusion:**

Although varying in their demands and methods, there is a common thread running through the secessionist movement in north-east, that is of identity and development. Implementing sixth schedule provisions in these areas will help them to preserve their identity and culture while giving them greater autonomy. Economic development of the area in a calibrated manner would ensure sustainable development which will help to penetrate the modern values of democracy at the grass-root level.



