

1. What are the historical factors responsible for the prevalence of inequalities in the Indian society? Discuss.**Approach:**

Question is asking you to discuss so you have to discuss in detail and cover all dimensions comprehensively.

Introduction:

At the national level, inequality is broadly found to have risen in India between 1983–2012, particularly in the early 2000s. However, this has happened at differing degrees depending on the dimension being considered and the measurement method employed. The Cambridge dictionary describes inequality as “the unfair situation in society when some people have more opportunities, etc. than other people”. The United Nations describes it even more simply as “the state of not being equal, especially in status, rights and opportunities”. While the term itself is quite vast and has various interpretations, for the purpose of simplicity, the two large umbrellas under which we can classify inequality would be economic inequality and social inequality. Both these categories are deeply intertwined and inequality in one often affects the inequality in another.

Body:**THE HISTORICAL FACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE PREVALENCE OF INEQUALITIES IN THE INDIAN SOCIETY**

- There was a perceptible increase in inter- and intra-regional inequality in India during the reform period. This inequality was evident, not only in income terms, but also in terms of health and access to education. This section discusses some historical factors which might be responsible for the increase in inequality in India:
- Historically, the caste system classified people by their occupation and status. Every caste was associated with an occupation, which meant that persons born into a particular caste were also ‘born into’ the occupation associated with their caste – they had no choice.
- Inequality, discrimination and exclusion were brought home to even the most privileged Indians at the hands of the British colonial state. Such experiences were, of course, common to the various socially discriminated groups such as women, Dalits and other oppressed castes and tribes.
- An important element of the economic reform process adopted in India was the belief that a high fiscal deficit level was responsible for the 1991 crisis, and the deficit should therefore be brought down to a certain pre-determined target. However, over the 1990s, many policies which had contributed to this rural development were reversed. Central government expenditure on rural development schemes like agricultural programs, rural employment programs and anti-poverty schemes were cut. This had a

negative effect on rural poverty and employment generation during the 1990s. All these created a sharp rise in inequality.

- Prolonged experience of discriminatory or insulting behaviour often produces a reaction on the part of the excluded who then stop trying for inclusion. For example, 'upper' caste Hindu communities have often denied entry into temples for the 'lower' castes and specially the Dalits.
- One of the reasons behind the increased income inequality observed in India in the post-reform period has been the stagnation of employment generation in both rural and urban areas across the states. Open unemployment increased in most parts of the country, and the rate of growth of rural employment hit an all-time low.
- A number of policies adopted during the reform period essentially increased the level of inequality in India. Liberalization of trade helped some sectors where India was internationally competitive, but it also negatively affected the other sectors.
- Opening up the economy and financial sector liberalization also had major negative consequences for weaker sections of the population. The introduction of prudential norms for private and public sector banks and the Basle NPA benchmark made wary banks avoid lending to borrowers in agriculture and to small enterprises. As a result, credit flows to agriculture and to small and medium enterprises (SMEs) went down drastically in recent years. This reinforced the problems faced by these sectors due to trade liberalization and the complete removal of quantitative restrictions on imports.

Conclusion:

The Coronavirus pandemic has been the world's worst public health crisis in a hundred years. It triggered an economic crisis comparable in scale only with the Great Depression of the 1930s. India introduced one of the earliest and most stringent lockdowns in the face of the pandemic; the enforcement of the lockdown brought the economy to a standstill triggering unemployment, hunger, distress migration and untold hardship in its wake. The rich were able to escape the pandemic's worst impact; and while the white-collar workers isolated themselves and worked from home, a majority of the not-so-fortunate Indians lost their livelihood hence India needs to grow first before it can distribute. Otherwise, it can get stuck in a low-income equilibrium.

**2. How are social media platforms changing societal norms and values?
Explain with the help of suitable examples.**

Approach:

Question is very straight forward in its approach students are expected to write about role of social media platforms in changing societal norms and values and explanation with appropriate use of examples as demanded by the question explicitly.

Introduction:

Social norms are the rules governing acceptable behaviour within a group. Society is governed by social norms, however, the law has yet to catch up to the speed at which the Internet—and particularly social media—has developed. Prior research suggests that social media influences through two effects: the individual or direct effect (private) or the social or indirect effect (public). In the individual effect, media information about new norms may persuade individuals to accept them. In the social effect, the information creates common knowledge of a norm and enhances social coordination as individuals more readily accept the information if they believe others have also accepted it. Platforms like facebook, twitter,watsapp Instagram etc have played a big role in influencing individuals and groups in order to bring a change in the collective as well as individual behaviour.

Body:

HOW SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS CHANGE SOCIETAL NORMS AND VALUES-

- The traditional social norm of Privacy is completely changed, people aren't worrying to post confidential Information because of the LIKE-Hunger or Peer pressure or both. Also values of empathy and compassion have become redundant eg filming road accident victims rather than helping them has been one of the most ill effects of social media platforms. Recently a fight between two groups in Bagpat uttarpradesh was filmed by people watching them rather than helping them to end fight this incident was highlighted by every media group all around the world. This shows lack of good samaritanship and role of social media in it.
- Soocial norm of face to face meetings have been completely changed people prefer texting and virtual meetings rather than face to face meetings thus creating overall change in the values of weness, brotherhood etc found mostly among young people.

- Social media has created a new breed of ‘influencers’ – social media users with established credibility in a specific industry, These influencers typically have a larger audience and often persuade others through their content. It is through these influencer profiles, a recentralization of corporate influence was discovered. Companies are investing in influencers to generate content that can shift social norms.
- Social movements have been tied to the Internet as a space for launching or reinforcing their activities and interactions, and the Internet has been found in many cases to be useful to achieve their objectives, especially emphasizes the potential influence of people coming together in digital social networks and forming against government and corporations which formerly controlled channels of communication. These networked social movements born in the digital age have power because they are autonomous, free from institutional control, and operate in different venues, such as online as well as offline social networks and public space. Yellow vest movements in France, recent toolkit case in India.
- Social media has altered the way people generally vote or buy. The recent Cambridge Analytica scandal of 2016 US elections is the best example. Recent Hook-up apps are changing the whole fabric of relationship norms like the way they meet, the course of relation, etc.
- Parents generally spend some time on their children’s academics and growth. Now both of them are busy on social media, leading to neglect of child behaviour in crucial formative years.
- According to a survey an individual was willing to give a wrong answer just to conform to the majority view. This explains the impact of fake news online, which contributes to a polarised society. People are lacking Pure judgments, trying to imitate the group leading to a severe value crisis in the society. The trolling of women has brought to the fore the disturbing reality of online violence and abuse women face in India. Exposure of hatred to children at a young age because of cyber bully in New ethical issues are emerging because of privacy concerns, social injustice and ignorance, effects on family values etc.

Conclusion:

Social media is an open road, with bumps and turns all in our way. Its use is inevitable in this digital world, so protecting oneself from its Negativity and focussing more on real-life than our social life is the best way ahead.

3. What role have caste based political parties played in Indian politics? Have their activities and movements led to real upliftment and empowerment of the caste groups represented by them? Critically examine.

Approach

The candidate needs to discuss the role of caste based political parties in Indian politics in the first part of the answer while in the second part, the candidate should critically examine the real effect of these parties on the upliftment and empowerment of the caste groups they represent.

Introduction

The caste system is a predominant aspect of the social and political structure in India. Caste is a major factor in the structures and functions of the Indian political system. Indian politics is caste-ridden politics where caste determines the nature, organization, and working of political parties leading to prevention of the true working of Parliamentary democracy.

Body

- Many of the regional parties, which now represent half of the Indian voters, are associated with a single caste and/or religious community – and this is also true of some state units of national parties. In this regard, the role of such caste based political parties in Indian politics can be seen from the following points –
- Different caste groups have their loyalties behind different political parties and their ideologies. ‘Caste values’ and caste interests influence a person’s socialisation and consequently his political thinking, awareness and participation.
- One banks upon caste solidarity for occupying and performing a leadership role. Caste influences the process of leadership recruitment. This is particularly true of highly ‘caste conscious’ people of some states like Haryana, Bihar, UP, Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh.

- In India, there are so many caste-based political parties which try to promote and protect the interest of a particular caste. The regional political parties, in particular, stand predominantly influenced by the caste factor.
- Strengthen democracy as these party's encourage people's political participation. Voice to marginalised sections as they cannot be ignored in the first-past-the-post electoral system.
- All political parties in India use caste as a means for securing votes in elections. BSP banks upon the support of Scheduled Castes while the BJP largely banks upon its popularity among caste Hindu and the trading community.
- Caste acts both as a divisive and cohesive force in Indian politics. It provides a basis for the emergence of several interest groups in the Indian system each of which competes with every other group in the struggle for power. At times it leads to unhealthy struggle for power and acts as a divisive force.
- At the same time, it is also a source of unity among the members of various groups and acts as a cohesive force like in the case of OBC's across the nation.
- Caste based Political parties and real upliftment of people –
- Caste based political parties being a form of identity politics, it important to know that identity politics is an inevitability in democracies. The existence of identity politics is an indicator of the health of a democracy because it means that marginalised sections are making an active bid for a share of power.
- Caste-based parties acquired their political and electoral strength by opposing the 'politics of equal recognition.' Politics of equal recognition promised equal rights and equality between citizens. It was rejected by Dalits and OBCs in favour of the 'politics of difference.'
- The politics of equal recognition was seen as being 'difference blind' and attesting one hegemonic culture whereas the politics of difference recognised the particularities of each social group and the non-assimilation of group identity.
- Over the years, legislative measures like the quota for SC/STs in jobs and Parliament have empowered Dalits or at least a section of them. The caste-based politics for Other Backward Classes (OBCs) may not have ended casteism, but it has led to efforts of empowerment like reservation policies.
- The caste factor is an important determinant of electoral politics in India. While nominating their candidates from different constituencies the political parties keep in mind the caste of candidate and caste of the voters in that particular constituency. As a result of this candidate is sure to get the votes of voters of his caste. This leads to disenchantment with constitutional principles and individual identity.
- The role of caste in the working of Panchayat Raj and other institutions of local self-government has been recognized reality. Caste based factionalism in rural areas of India has been the most major hindering factor in the organization and effective working of Panchayat Raj.
- Caste-based violence often finds its way into politics. The traditional differences between higher and lower castes become vigorous and have

turned into a violent and fierce struggle for power in society. The growing terrorization of the lower castes by the higher or even intermediary castes has been becoming a part of rural India's political reality.

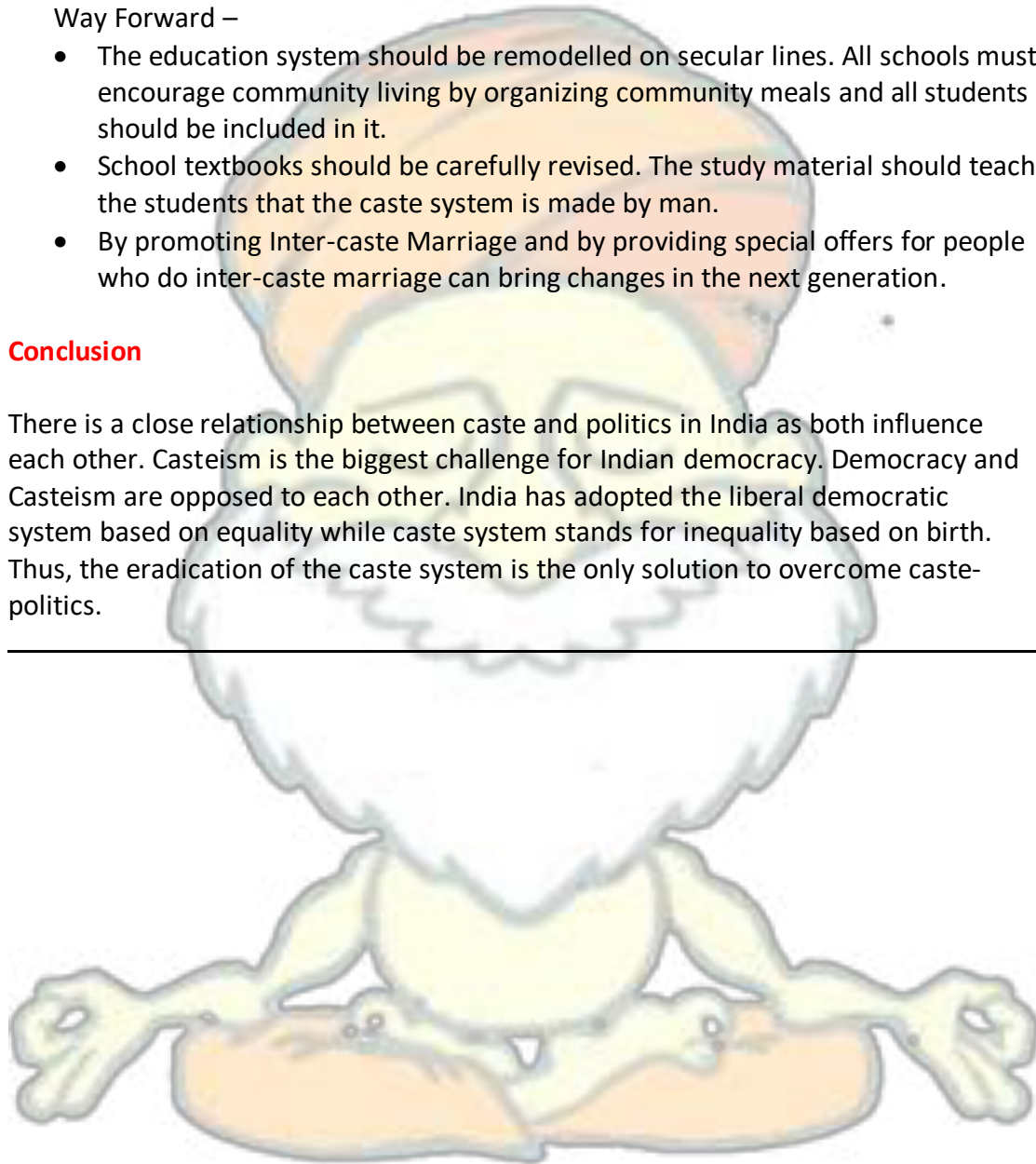
- Fragmentation of society and enhanced caste consciousness: Creation of favours in own interests and animosity between different sections of people. E.g. – Lingayat Sect in Karnataka wanting a separate religious denomination tag.

Way Forward –

- The education system should be remodelled on secular lines. All schools must encourage community living by organizing community meals and all students should be included in it.
- School textbooks should be carefully revised. The study material should teach the students that the caste system is made by man.
- By promoting Inter-caste Marriage and by providing special offers for people who do inter-caste marriage can bring changes in the next generation.

Conclusion

There is a close relationship between caste and politics in India as both influence each other. Casteism is the biggest challenge for Indian democracy. Democracy and Casteism are opposed to each other. India has adopted the liberal democratic system based on equality while caste system stands for inequality based on birth. Thus, the eradication of the caste system is the only solution to overcome caste-politics.



**4. Is embracing western culture detrimental to India's rich social diversity?
Critically comment.**

Approach

Candidates are expected first to write about western culture and then critically comment on how embracing western culture is detrimental to India's rich social diversity.

Introduction

Westernization is defined as incorporation of the norms, values and culture of the west into our culture. Western Culture derives most of its customs and traditions from the European culture. With the conquest of European powers and subsequent British rule in India has had a profound effect of western culture on Indian society. Western culture has made its presence in various forms.

Body

- Indian Culture, which is one of the oldest & richest cultures in the world with varied languages, customs, beliefs, ideas, taboos, codes, instructions, works of art, architecture, rituals, ceremonies etc.
- Let us understand how western culture greatly affected our diversity by homogenisation of traditions, customs, family, respect and love for others
- The interaction in present generation is highly diplomatic considering the financial status and wealth. Indian culture which teaches to be a part of each

other Joys and Sorrows to celebrate the moments together and share the grief together maintain and nurture the diversity. But slowly all our value for which India has the pride is vanishing & western culture is taking its place. With homogenisation effect.

- Marriage used to be considered as bonding of the souls which will be linked even after the death; but today marriage is like a professional bond or a so-called commitment to share life without compromising their self-interests. It has reduced to a just procedure whereas days back it was a show of a cultural diversity.
- In India different state have their own tradition in which food and clothes shows various variety and importance. But with the popularity of junk food which cause the health disorder in country hampers the food diversity of local cuisine.
- Globalisation had led to shrinking of Indian culture. People are influenced by western culture even in day to day activities like dressing style, food habits, music etc. The 'McDonaldization of Society' is a case in point.
- The institution of joint family has received very rude shock. The concept of joint families is decreasing the India's diverse festival and rituals.
- Subjugation of the local culture, loss of world diversity, conflict between core and peripheral values etc. For example, harassment against women is blamed on westernization, diseases due to adoption of lifestyles or eating habits that are not supported by the local climatic conditions.
- The fate of traditional material culture and styles of tribes were to be 'preserved' as museum specimens. Attempts were made to synthesise the customary and the modern laws. In all these efforts, the focus was on modernising the tribals.
- Rationalism and scientific education, that fuel modernisation, have their origin in western culture and westernisation is often perceived as a sub-process of modernisation which has benefited Indian and helped in maintaining Indian rich social diversity:
- Modern values like humanism, egalitarianism, secularism have entered Indian value systems. Our criminal law has been reformed. Evil customs like sati ended, Untouchability abolished.
- Concept of welfare state was introduced and thus Governmental activities on welfare measures have expanded.
- Far reaching reforms in Hindu society through social reform movements like the Brahmo samaj etc. under inspiration from the Western educated middle class in India.
- Spread of mass education. Emergence of a educated middle class as the vanguard of the freedom movement.
- The political system, which developed during the British rule, gave increasing opportunities for political articulation to the people of India, especially those who acquired western education.
- We find that the traditional social organisation exemplified by the caste system has undergone several changes yet continues to exist in Indian society performing some old and some new functions.

- Due to western culture influence, sanitation and public health has improved greatly in India. Many western doctors have immigrated into India and have made medicines which have helped reduce sicknesses, diseases in large parts because health care has become accessible.
- Western culture has brought media as well in India. For example, 'Bollywood' which came from Hollywood in America. Bollywood's films now traditionally feature India, its culture, tradition and religion. It helps to interact with each other know each other better and preserve our rich social diversity.

Conclusion

Western culture is not altogether bad, although it has made our life faster but enhanced the technology has also made our life easier and comfortable. We need to give importance to our Indian culture which taught us to live in peace and harmony with other by the way of increasing our tolerance and patience. Many people of other countries are realizing the importance of Indian heritage and are adapting the goodness of Indian culture such as practice of Yoga and meditation, wisdom and teachings passed by the ancient saint etc. The knowledge of Indian wisdom helps human being of any race to enrich their life.

5.Comment on the tribal diversity of India. Is it possible to modernise tribal societies without affecting their traditional values and customs? Discuss.

Approach-

Candidate can give some data about tribal population across regions, their significance and issues they are facing. In second part, way forward can be given by suggesting measures to enable tribal societies to be modern in true sense.

Introduction

Tribals constitute 8.6 percent of India's total population, about 104 million people according to the 2011 census (68 million people according to the 1991 census). This is the largest population of the tribal people in the world. The so called "tribal belt" embraces central and northeast India, which extends across the centre of India from Pakistan in the west to Bangladesh and Myanmar in the east. The belt is home to 81 million indigenous people, whose ancestors may have inhabited India before Aryan invaders, the ancestors of Hindus, arrived around 1500 B.C.

Body

Tribal diversity of India

- Home to the largest tribal population in the world, India has the privilege of hosting a variety of truly colourful, indigenous, equally vibrant and culturally rich tribal people whose lifestyles, culture, religious beliefs, traditions, rituals, dressing, food, language are so diverse that they represent an anthropological wealth of heritage.
- They comprise a substantial minority population of India, making up 104.2 million people, according to the 2011 census. Adivasi societies are particularly prominent in Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, West Bengal, and Northeast India, and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.
- The Scheduled Tribes are notified in 30 States/UTs under article 342 of constitution and the number of individual ethnic groups, etc. notified as Scheduled Tribes is 705.
- 89.97% of them live in rural areas and 10.03% in urban areas. The decadal population growth of the tribals from Census 2001 to 2011 has been 23.66%. The sex ratio for the general population is 940 females per 1000 males and that of Scheduled Tribes 990 females per thousand males.
- The Gond comprise the largest tribal group of India with a population exceeding 12 million. Linguistically, the Gond belong to the Gondi–Manda subgroup of the South Central branch of the Dravidian language family.

What are the main issues facing tribals?

- Education- Language The medium of instruction in schools is one of the most important obstacle.
- Economic condition prevents the parents from sending their children to school, parents prefer their children to help them in their work and supplement their income. Availability of teachers in remote tribal areas is a big recurring problem.
- Location of villages – The schools located in villages is a barrier for tribal students who live in far flung areas with absolutely no access to transportation.
- Many of the tribal areas are facing security concerns like LWE and Insurgency.
- The influx of outsiders has created tensions. The RIIN of Nagaland is a case in point.
- Due to exploitation of middlemen many tribes are abandoning their handicrafts e.g. weaver tribes of Andhra Pradesh.
- Companies Indian and foreign are often found in violation of the Benefit sharing clauses of Biodiversity Act.
- What can be done?
- Economy and Entrepreneurships:
- Their knowledge of ancient herbs, plants and other natural products is tantamount to that of an expert. These skills that were once a part of their tradition have now become a means for not only their livelihood but an active contribution to furthering India's economic growth.

- Mendha Lekha, a tribal village situated in Gadchiroli district, Maharashtra, has a successful bamboo economy. The entire village, comprising 450 people belonging mainly to the Gond tribe, works together in cultivating bamboo as raw material for the paper industry. The villagers make profits in crores, and are using the money for several development and social welfare
- In Kerala, tribes have been collecting and selling wild honey for years. According to a report by Agriculture Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) 38, 177.08 metric tonnes of honey, worth 705.87 crores was exported in 2015-2016. This can be increased to other areas also.
- Art and Culture:
- Tribal handicrafts are coveted around the world, for the precision, and effort with which each piece is created. Their age-old traditions have cultivated a generation of artisans who have honed their craft to contribute not only to the domestic market but India's exports as well.
- Dhokra Damar tribes of West Bengal and Odisha are the creators of Dhokra technique, which has been used to create metal artefacts. Each year, handicrafts are exported to at least 100 countries around the world.
- Knowledge of medicinal plants:
- Tribals from Maharashtra collect medicinal plants and process them to sell in domestic and international markets. Tribes india, website of tribal ministry, earns in crores by selling online products.

Conclusion

India is blessed with such a tribal diversity that it is an asset of our cultural heritage. Our so called concepts of modernity cannot be justified to make their lives better. For example tribal sex ratio is way better than general population, this shows they are way more progressive in their thought and actions. The efforts have to be in direction to create such an environment where no person from tribal background miss on any opportunity and make them capable enough so that they can reap optimum benefits from it.



6. What are the key challenges faced by women in workspace? Discuss. What measures should be taken to make workspace more equitable and safer for women?

Approach:

Question is asking you to discuss so you have to discuss in detail and cover all dimensions comprehensively.

Introduction:

It will take 257 years to reach gender equality in economic participation and opportunity, according to the WEF's 2020 global gender gap report. In fact, the

report shows that while other metrics of gender equality have improved (education attainment and health are close to parity, for example), the economic participation and opportunity metric has regressed to 57.8%.

Body:**THE KEY CHALLENGES FACED BY WOMEN IN WORKSPACE**

- **Disproportionate earnings:** As of today, women earn \$0.81 for every \$1 a man makes, resulting in far lower take-home income and associated financial security. In India too, the fight for equal wages continues. The Labour Bureau in India has found that in rural areas in the agricultural sector, the daily wage for men is ₹264.05 and ₹205.32 for women. In non-agricultural sectors, the average daily wage rate for men is ₹271.17, while for women it is ₹205.90.
- **Lack of community and support:** The old adage “It’s lonely at the top” can certainly be true for the women who do make it to senior roles within their organizations.
- **Shortage of professional opportunities:** 42% of women in the workplace say they’ve experienced gender-based discrimination, including being passed up for important assignments, experiencing repeated, small slights, and being treated as though they weren’t competent. This makes women almost twice as likely to experience these grievances compared to men (22%).
- **Representation of Women:** Women continue to remain underrepresented at every level, starting from entry level jobs to C-suite roles. What’s interesting to see is that the number of women and men leaving their companies is almost the same. Therefore, attrition can’t be blamed for this inequality and misogyny.
- **Unemployment Penalty:** During child rearing years, the unemployment penalty for women is longer. What this means is that when women take longer leaves, they have a much harder time to get rehired.
- **Increased risk of workplace harassment:** Women are far more likely to experience sexual harassment in the workplace, whether they are in a position of power or not.
- **MEASURES THAT SHOULD BE TAKEN TO MAKE WORKSPACE MORE EQUITABLE AND SAFER FOR WOMEN**
- There are plenty of steps that can and must be taken to improve gender equality in the workplace. These include:
 - **Put an end to salary secrecy:** Increased transparency around salaries and remuneration is one definitive step any organization can make.
 - **Dismantle the glass ceiling:** Lack of female representation in senior, high-paying positions only seeks to reinforce the gender pay gap. As such, this must be addressed head-on within each organization.
 - **Remove barriers for flexible working:** Lack of flexibility, or stigma, related to varied working hours can be a barrier to progression for many female workers, as women tend to take on more active parenting duties.

- Women make up about half the global population; representing a huge pool of talent, resources, and potential innovation. Hiring, training and investing in women makes good business sense, as well as being morally imperative.

Conclusion:

Gender inequality can be an entrenched issue in the office. It reveals itself in pay grade differences, lack of representation at senior level, and sometimes incredibly minimal intervention against gross misconduct. Reaching gender equality requires radical action in organizations. The world talks about progression and creating an environment where all people are treated equally. But, why does it stop when it comes to women? While there are men who have come forward to support women in all their endeavours, why is the word “feminism” branded with so much hatred and contempt? It’s time we shatter toxic masculinity and make people understand that feminism’s goal is to reduce gender gaps and achieve political, economic, personal, and social gender equality.



7. Certain political parties have floated the idea of giving remuneration to women homemakers. What are your views on this? Discuss.

Approach:

Question is straight forward in its approach students are expected to express their views about the idea of remuneration to women by the political parties by giving a detailed explanation with examples as well.

Introduction:

The expanding role of freebies in Indian Politics in the last decade has become an intriguing question in the Indian political economy. Freebies have become a strategy to woo voters lately. The Election Commission, earlier in 2019, has revealed an analytical emphasis on the distribution of freebies and attractions to voters by almost all the political parties. Recent announcement by a political party of giving remuneration to homemakers is an election freebie promise but it has a larger perspective through ideological and economic aspects as well.

Body:

- Remuneration to homemakers has been advocated by feminist groups from a long time. It involves paying homemaker against the work done in home such as cooking, looking after the elderly, washing clothes etc. so as to bring them in parity with those working outside home and giving recognition to their efforts as well. In these times where societies are largely patriarchal efforts of homemakers usually go unnoticed and is not considered work at all.
- Idea of giving remuneration to homemakers is a drastic step towards change in following ways-
- One extremely significant dimension that has gone largely ignored in the purview of the measurement of economic activity – is household unpaid work by women. This is the flip side of women's low labour force participation, which is among the lowest in the world in India. Women who are not in the workforce are not sitting at home enjoying leisure time – they're engaged in child and parent care, cooking, cleaning and performing other household chores. The fact that women's household work is unpaid and therefore goes unrecorded as part of the GDP understates women's contribution to the economy. According to research by the International Monetary Fund, raising women's participation in the labour force to the same level as men can boost India's GDP by 27 percent. One way to do this is by giving homemakers, the majority of whom are women, a salary.
- As a matter of public policy, schemes targeted at economically vulnerable households can and should be fine-tuned by recording the value of women's work. Finally, as a matter of macroeconomics, capturing women's unpaid labour would give a truer picture of GDP and, therefore, a more realistic assessment of the size of the economy and of economic growth.
- This will help shatter the stereotypical image of Indian women who are portrayed as domestic and social parasites living on their husbands' earnings and contributing nothing.
- A large number of women live with domestic violence and cruelty because they are economically dependent on others, mainly their husbands. Time-use data from 2019 gathered by the National Sample Survey Organisation revealed that only about a quarter of men and boys above six years engaged in unpaid household chores, compared to over four-fifths of women paying

renumeration to homemakers will ensure their financial independence to a large extent and is thus an inclusionary measure as well.

- Supreme court also advocated that value of the work of homemaker must be at par with the office going individual and fixing remuneration and recognising the value of the labour of homemaker is the acceptance of the idea that these activities contribute to the economic condition of the family in a real way.
- Once recognised as work, this arena of unpaid domestic labour that is dominated almost entirely by women can become one where women can demand some degree of parity in terms of the time and energy expended on it.
- It moves us towards a more holistic understanding of labour: Labour isn't purely tied to the exchange value of a service on the market, and recognises an extremely intimate form of labour that has proved essential to keeping the unit of the family intact and functional
- However there are some challenges as well which are as follows-
- Paying home-makers would disincentivize even the educated women to stay indoors and receive some sort of salary. This would impact the overall LFPR of women which is already low.
- In rural areas, where patriarchal mindset exists women would serve as proxies to their husbands. The amount they would receive would directly be spent by their husbands leaving them disempowered (financially).
- Identifying the beneficiaries would be a herculean task for the government, as too much of arbitrariness exists.
- It would burden the already curtailed fiscal space of the state governments which are currently reeling under the high fiscal deficit in the post-Covid scenario and would therefore have far-reaching impact on the state-exchequer.

Conclusion:

Needless to say, women constitute almost half the population and their needs and issues have to be addressed. A homemaker doesn't need any favours. She is already contributing to the economy. A salary for her work at home would be a tool towards her empowerment, give her a life of dignity. Idea of remuneration isn't new it needs a serious thought on part of policy makers to bring equality in the society which has been marred by discrimination from quite a long time now.

8. Why is it important to have more women in politics? What will be achieved by greater participation of women in matters of politics and governance? Put forward your views with the help of suitable arguments.

Approach

The candidate needs to bring out the importance of having more women in politics in the first part of answer while in the second part, the candidate needs to put forward his/her views regarding the positive effects of greater participation of women in politics and governance.

Introduction

Despite women constituting half the world's population, they account for less than a quarter of the membership of national parliaments globally. Such descriptive or numerical under-representation can have consequences for substantive representation of women's interests as well as overall societal interests, which clearly highlights the importance of women's participation in politics.

Body

Importance of having more women in politics –

- In the Beijing Platform for Action, stemming from the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing 1995, the prioritization of women's leadership was considered vastly important. Two decades later, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development underscored the need and urgency to achieve gender parity in leadership through SDG Target 5.5.
- The full and active participation of women in legislatures, equal to men, is not just a goal in itself, but central to building and sustaining democracies. The equal presence of women, their leadership and their perspective in parliaments is essential to ensure greater responsiveness to citizens' needs.
- For political institutions to be democratically legitimate and responsive to all citizens, they must be inclusive of the plurality of groups that exist within the population. This requires greater representation of women in national parliaments and broader diversity.
- People's interests and priorities are often shaped by their respective social, economic and ethnic differences. Female legislators belonging to various backgrounds can therefore bring a wide array of issues to the table.
- Furthermore, any democratic system benefits from having people from diverse backgrounds and life experiences represented in its political institutions. It enables us to draw on the full array of capacity and skills in the population in shaping policies for the advancement of all.
- The meaningful participation of women in national, local, and community leadership roles has become an important focus on global development policy. In this regard, following can be some of the achievements through greater participation of women in matters of politics and governance –

- Women’s political participation results in tangible gains for democracy, including greater responsiveness to citizen needs, increased cooperation across party and ethnic lines, and a more sustainable future.
- Research has shown that women in government tend to work in more collaborative and bipartisan ways and employ a more democratic leadership style compared to men’s more autocratic style. Women are also more effective at building coalitions and reaching consensus.
- Women’s participation in politics helps advance gender equality and affects both the range of policy issues that get considered and the types of solutions that are proposed. There is also strong evidence that as more women are elected to office, there is a corollary increase in policy making that emphasizes quality of life and reflects the priorities of families, women, and ethnic and racial minorities.
- For example, in Norway, a direct causal relationship between the presence of women in municipal councils and childcare coverage was found.
- Women’s parliamentary presence could also have a role model effect. A 2012 study conducted in India explained that the increased proportion of women village leaders had closed the “aspiration gap” between girls and boys by nearly 25 percentage points and had eventually erased or reversed the gender gap in educational outcomes.
- Further, in many instances, greater political participation by women does result in policy choices more attuned to women’s needs and concerns. Moreover, having more women in elected office has been shown to lead to broader societal benefits such as better infant mortality rates, better education outcomes in urban areas and lower corruption.
- For example, research on panchayats (local councils) in India discovered that the number of drinking water projects in areas with women-led councils was 62 per cent higher than in those with men-led councils.
- Moreover, not every woman elected to parliament or another legislative body will place women’s issues or rights at the forefront of her own agenda. Clearly, women’s representation is not the only factor, but it is a critical factor for the development of inclusive, responsive, and transparent democracies.

Measures to Empower Women –

- Creating a gender-responsive policy environment.
- Support women’s leadership development programmes.
- Enact legislated candidate quotas and reserved seats.
- Create enabling environment for voluntary party quotas.

Conclusion

The positive impact of women in politics and governance is undeniable where the world can’t afford wasting a precious resource through the dramatic underrepresentation of women in leadership positions which clearly brings out the need for male and female legislators to work together in order to solve the myriad of

problems in the world to meet worldwide development goals and build strong, sustainable democracies.

9. Discuss the role of women self help groups in uplifting the rural economy.

Approach

Candidates are expected first to write about self help group. And then highlight the role of Self help group in uplifting the rural economy.

Introduction

The origin of SHGs in India can be traced back to the establishment of the Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA) in 1972. Self-Help Groups (SHGs) are informal associations of people who choose to come together to find ways to improve their living conditions. It can be defined as self governed, peer controlled information group of people with similar socio-economic background and having a desire to collectively perform common purpose.

Body

Role of self help group in uplifting the rural economy:

- Financial Inclusion: Priority Sector Lending norms and assurance of returns incentivize banks to lend to SHGs. The SHG-Bank linkage programme pioneered by NABARD has made access to credit easier and reduced the dependence on traditional money lenders and other non-institutional sources.
- Alternate source of employment: It eases dependency on agriculture by providing support in setting up micro-enterprises e.g. personalised business ventures like tailoring, grocery, and tool repair shops. For example Kudumbashree in Kerala has helped in providing skill training and poverty eradication of women.
- Banking literacy: It encourages and motivates its members to save and act as a conduit for formal banking services to reach them.
- Credit availability: Bank credits are not easily accessible to individual poor, but by forming a SHG, there are make better prospects for bank credits. (often without collateral). Under the SHG-Bank linkage programme, many SHGs have become institutions of micro-credit.
- The need to solve problems at the ground level: India is a country that has diverse culture, traditions, historical backgrounds, etc. Therefore, it is difficult for the government to solve the socio-economic problems by itself. Thus,

bringing together the people who face similar problems may be a game-changer for the Indian economy.

- Rural poverty: SHGs have become a vehicle to lift people from below poverty line, generate awareness about welfare and developmental schemes of government, monitor its implementation etc. For example SHGs like SEWA, Lizzat papad promotes entrepreneurial culture among women.
- Positive correlation between SHGs and poverty can be inferred from the fact that southern states with high number of SHGs (71%) have average poverty rate at 9% as against nation's average of 21%.
- Need based service enhance economy: Commercial Banks and NABARD in collaboration with the State Government continuously innovated and designed new financial products for these groups. For example Community managed resource centre (CMRC) under MAVIM was launched to provide financial and livelihood services to SHGs. CMRC is self-sustaining and provides need-based services.
- Easier access to government schemes: The government schemes are mostly meant for the marginalised sections of the society. The inclusion and identification of these people are highly difficult. If they are grouped together, it is easier for the government to identify those who are in need of assistance quickly and efficiently. It also prevents the exploitation and corruption of the government at the ground level.
- Challenges faced by SHG:
 - There are about 1.2 lakh branches of banks in rural areas as opposed to 6 lakh villages in the country. There is a need to expand banking amenities further.
 - Patriarchal mindset, primitive thinking and social obligations discourages women from participating in SHGs thus limiting their economic avenues.
- Measures to Make SHGs Effective:
 - Extension of Self-Help Groups to Urban/Peri-Urban Areas efforts should be made to increase income generation abilities of the urban poor as there has been a rapid rise in urbanisation and many people remain financially excluded.
 - Need to establish a separate SHG monitoring cell in every state. The cell should have direct links with district and block level monitoring system. The cell should collect both quantitative and qualitative information.

Conclusion

SHG approach is an enabling, empowering, and bottom-up approach for rural development that has provided considerable economic and non-economic externalities to low-income households in developing countries. SHG approach is being hailed as a sustainable tool to combat poverty, combining a for-profit approach that is self-sustaining, and a poverty alleviation focus that empowers low-income households.

10. What is your notion of true women empowerment? Explain with the help of suitable examples.

Approach-

Candidate is required to define women empowerment by the empirical observation and elaborate further with suitable examples of empowered women around us in day to day life.

Introduction

Women's empowerment can be defined to promoting women's sense of self-worth, their ability to determine their own choices, and their right to influence social change for themselves and others.

Body

What is women empowerment?

- It is closely aligned with female empowerment – a fundamental human right that's also key to achieving a more peaceful, prosperous world.
- Gender equality is a basic human right, and it is also fundamental to having a peaceful, prosperous world.
- But girls and women continue to face significant challenges all around the world. Women are typically underrepresented in power and decision-making roles. They receive unequal pay for equal work, and they often face legal and other barriers that affect their opportunities at work.
- In the India, girls and women are often seen as less valuable than boys. Instead of being sent to school, they are often made to do domestic work at

home or are married off for a dowry before they are adults. As many as 12 million underage girls are married every year.

Why is it important to empower girl or women?

- Empowering women is essential to the health and social development of families, communities and countries.
- A key part of this empowerment is through education. Girls who are educated can pursue meaningful work and contribute to their country's economy later in life. They are also four times less likely to get married young when they have eight years of education, meaning that they and their families are healthier.
- The empowerment and autonomy of women and the improvement of their political, social, economic and health status is a highly important end in itself.
- The full participation and partnership of both women and men is required in productive and reproductive life, including shared responsibilities for the care and nurturing of children and maintenance of the household.
- In all parts of the world, women are facing threats to their lives, health and well-being as a result of being overburdened with work and of their lack of power and influence.
- In most regions of the world, women receive less formal education than men, and at the same time, women's own knowledge, abilities and coping mechanisms often go unrecognized. The power relations that impede women's attainment of healthy and fulfilling lives operate at many levels of society, from the most personal to the highly public.

What are some examples?

- Popularly known as the 'padwoman of India', Maya Vishwakarma calls herself the 'standing example' of the dire repercussions caused to the girls and women. Born to a family of agricultural labourers in a village in Narsinghpur district of Madhya Pradesh, Maya did not have access to sanitary napkins until she was 26. This caused her to face many health issues later in life, thus triggering her ambition to remedy the situation. At the age of 36, she quit her job and started the Sukarma Foundation in 2016, to create awareness around menstruation, promote the importance of using sanitary napkins and busting the stigma and myths around it. The foundation also manufactures affordable sanitary napkins which are given to the women in the remotest areas of the country.
- Almost 200 kilometres from Pune, the town of Mhaswad in Satara district of Maharashtra has a unique bank that provides loans as low as Rs 15 to rural women! The Mann Deshi Bank, established by Mumbai-based Chetna Sinha in 1997, provides financial aid to rural women, making them truly empowered. So far, the bank and its eight branches have empowered more than 3,00,000 women through 140 field facilitators.
- In 2017, a Mumbai-based non-profit organization, 'SheSays' led by Trisha Shetty, began a campaign, #LahuKaLagaan, which called to abolish tax on sanitary napkins. As the campaign went viral across the country, other organisations picked up the cause. Eventually, in 2018, the 12 per cent tax on sanitary napkins was scrapped by the government.

- Dr Rani Bang in naxalism hit district of gadchiroli in Maharashtra is working relentlessly for last thirty five years to provide basic healthcare to tribal women who face complications in pregnancy. A gold medalist from John Hopkins university, she chose to serve and empower fellow women and make them independent when it comes to health.

Conclusion

Women empowerment is multifaceted. Empowerment starts from home, by dividing responsibilities, by taking important decisions together, by making women financially more literate, by respecting their choices of employment and by listening to the unheard desires. Giving them a new voice, showing them a right path and providing her a right platform to express her fully so that she can realise her deep true self is the real empowerment. As a society we have to travel a long road to empowerment but we have to start from ourselves first.

11. Discuss the contribution of Sufi and Bhakti movements in the philosophical awakening of the masses.

Approach-

Question is straight forward. Student can give account of bhakti and sufi movements from medieval times and their impact on masses in the spiritual awakening.

Introduction

In medieval period, we see intense devotion or love of God of various kinds of bhakti and Sufi movements that have evolved since the eighth century. The idea of bhakti became so popular that even Buddhists and Jain adopted these beliefs.

Body

Bhakti movement

- Bhakti was accepted as a means to attain moksha along with jnana and karma. The development of this cult took place in South India when the Nayanars and Alvars moved against the austerities propagated by the Buddhist and Jain schools and professed that ultimate devotion to god was the means to salvation.

- People were no longer satisfied with a religion which emphasized only ceremonies. The cult is the combined result of the teachings of various saints, through the then times.
- Each of them had their own views, but the ultimate basis of the cult was a general awakening against useless religious practices and unnecessary strictness. The cult also emerged as a strong platform against casteism.
- Some of the important leaders of bhakti movement
- Namadeva and Ramananda (Maharashtra and Allahabad) – Both of them taught the concept of bhakti to all the four varnas and disregarded the ban on people of different castes cooking together and sharing meals.
- Sankara and Ramanuja – The propounders of Advaita (non-duality) and vishishta adwaita (qualified non-duality)
- Vallabhacharya – propounder of shuddha adwaita or pure non-duality.
- Chaitanya (Bengal) – relied on the use of music, dance and bhajans to get in touch with God.
- Kabir – was a disciple of Ramananda, and was raised by a Muslim weaver. He stood for doing away with all the unnecessary customs and rituals in both religions and bringing union between these religions.
- Nimbakacharya – founder of the Radha-Krishna cult. He expressed this relation to substantiate the importance of marriage.
- In South India 7th to 9th centuries saw the emergence of new religious movements, led by the Nayanars (saints devoted to Shiva) and Alvars (saints devoted to Vishnu) who came from all castes including those considered “untouchable” like the Pulaiyar and the Panars.

Sufi movement

- In the early centuries of Islam a group of religious minded people called sufis turned to asceticism and mysticism in protest against the growing materialism of the Caliphate as a religious and political institution. They were critical of the dogmatic definitions and scholastic methods of interpreting the Qur’an and sunna (traditions of the Prophet) adopted by theologians.
- Instead, they laid emphasis on seeking salvation through intense devotion and love for God by following His commands.
- By the eleventh century Sufism evolved into a well developed movement with a body of literature on Quranic studies and sufi practices.
- Of the groups of sufis who migrated to India in the late twelfth century, the Chishtis were the most influential. This was because they adapted successfully to the local environment and adopted several features of Indian devotional traditions.
- Shaikh Muinuddin Sijzi, Khwaja Qutbuddin Bakhtiyar Kaki, Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya are some of the prominent sufi saints.
- Pilgrimage, called ziyarat, to tombs of sufi saints is prevalent all over the Muslim world. This practice is an occasion for seeking the sufi’s spiritual grace (barakat).
- Spiritual awakening

- Shankaraharya, from Kerala in the 8th century, salvation .was an advocate of Advaita or the doctrine of the oneness of the individual soul and the Supreme God which is the Ultimate Reality.
- Basavanna’s virshaivism movement began in Karnataka in the 12th century which argued for the equality of all human beings and against Brahmanical ideas about caste and the treatment of women.
- From Maharashtra Janeshwar, Namdev, Eknath and Tukaram as well as women like Sakkubai and the family of Chokhamela, who belonged to the “untouchable” Mahar caste. This regional tradition of bhakti focused on the Vitthala (a form of Vishnu) temple in Pandharpur, as well as on the notion of a personal god residing in the hearts of all people.
- For baba guru nanak the message is spelt out in his hymns and teachings. These suggest that he advocated a form of nirguna bhakti. He firmly repudiated the external practices of the religions he saw around him. He rejected sacrifices, ritual baths, image worship, austerities and the scriptures of both Hindus and Muslims.
- From the tradition and hierarchy ridden society this message of unity in diversity gave new impetus to the lower castes and a new form of awakening took place against the redundant traditions.

Conclusion

Bhakti and sufi movements gave rise to new Indian consciousness. Indian society became spiritually awakened with the new philosophical ideas instilling new sense of identity among lower castes seeking spiritual salvation and philosophical awakening.

12. Why is Rumi, the 13th century poet so famous? Can you discuss some of ideas and philosophies about life and love?

Approach:

Question is asking you to discuss, it requires you to write a debate where one has to use your skill at reasoning, backed up by deliberately selected evidence to make a case for and against an argument.

Introduction:

Rumi was 37, a traditional Muslim preacher and scholar, as his father and grandfather had been, He was this compelling figure in all cultures whose tomb

draws reverent followers and heads of state each year for a whirling dervish ceremony on 17 December, the anniversary of his death.

Body:

RUMI'S IDEAS AND PHILOSOPHIES ABOUT LIFE AND LOVE

- Rumi believed passionately in the use of music, poetry and dance as a path to reach God. It was from these ideas that the practice of whirling dervishes developed into a ritual form.
- Rumi believed that all lives were sacred: Taa'shif nifaak b'astz sang (Even a seemingly lifeless stone has a degree of consciousness; respect it).
- He believed that all religions are only one religion. because all praises are directed towards God's Light.
- He believed in THE SILENCE OF LOVE and that Love is the astrolabe of God's mysteries. A lover may hanker after this love or that love, but at the last he is drawn to the KING of Love. However, much we describe and explain Love, when we fall in love, we are ashamed of our words. Explanation by the tongue makes most things clear, But Love unexplained is better.
- Rumi was a jurist and religion teacher until the age of 37, when he met a wandering dervish named Shams Tabrizi. He soon became Rumi's spiritual mentor and intimate friend and eventually changed the course of his life.
- Rumi's poetry is a series of mystical experiences – a reflection on nature's beauty, a song, a dance, an idea, a feeling... anything that makes us human, everything we're able to see with our eyes open or shut. Below you will find a lot of Rumi love quotes that prove how spiritual and intense his poems are.
- Rumi's work continues to resonate and today, his tomb draws dervish followers and heads of state each year for a ceremony that marks the anniversary of his death.
- He is among the poets that show us the importance of every experience, be it good or bad.

Conclusion:

Rumi is a very mysterious and provocative poet and figure for our time, as we grapple with understanding the Sufi tradition and understanding the nature of ecstasy and devotion and the power of poetry. As new translations come into print, and his work continues to resonate, Rumi's influence will continue. His inspiring words remind us how poetry can be a sustaining part of everyday life.



13. "Education is the ability to listen to almost anything without losing your temper or your self-confidence." Comment on this quote of Robert Frost.

Approach:

Question is straight forward in its approach, students are expected to explain the meaning of the quote in introduction then explain the quote using relevant examples.

Introduction:

The given statement emphasizes on the essence of education that it cultivates spirit of tolerance and boost self confidence. Education provides ability to take criticisms in a constructive manner. A well educated person develops a temperament of critical thinking and knows how to deal with success and failure properly. As such, an educated person, when confronted with conflicting views, will not lose temper. He/she will rather try to analyse others' views, try to learn from others; and thereafter come up with an appropriate response/strategy. Also, an educated person doesn't lose self-confidence easily, for he/she is aware of own limits and is confident of own abilities. 'Voltaire' says that i don't agree with you but I respect your right to disagree with me . To make this statement his education could be inclusive, diverse, tolerant.

Body:

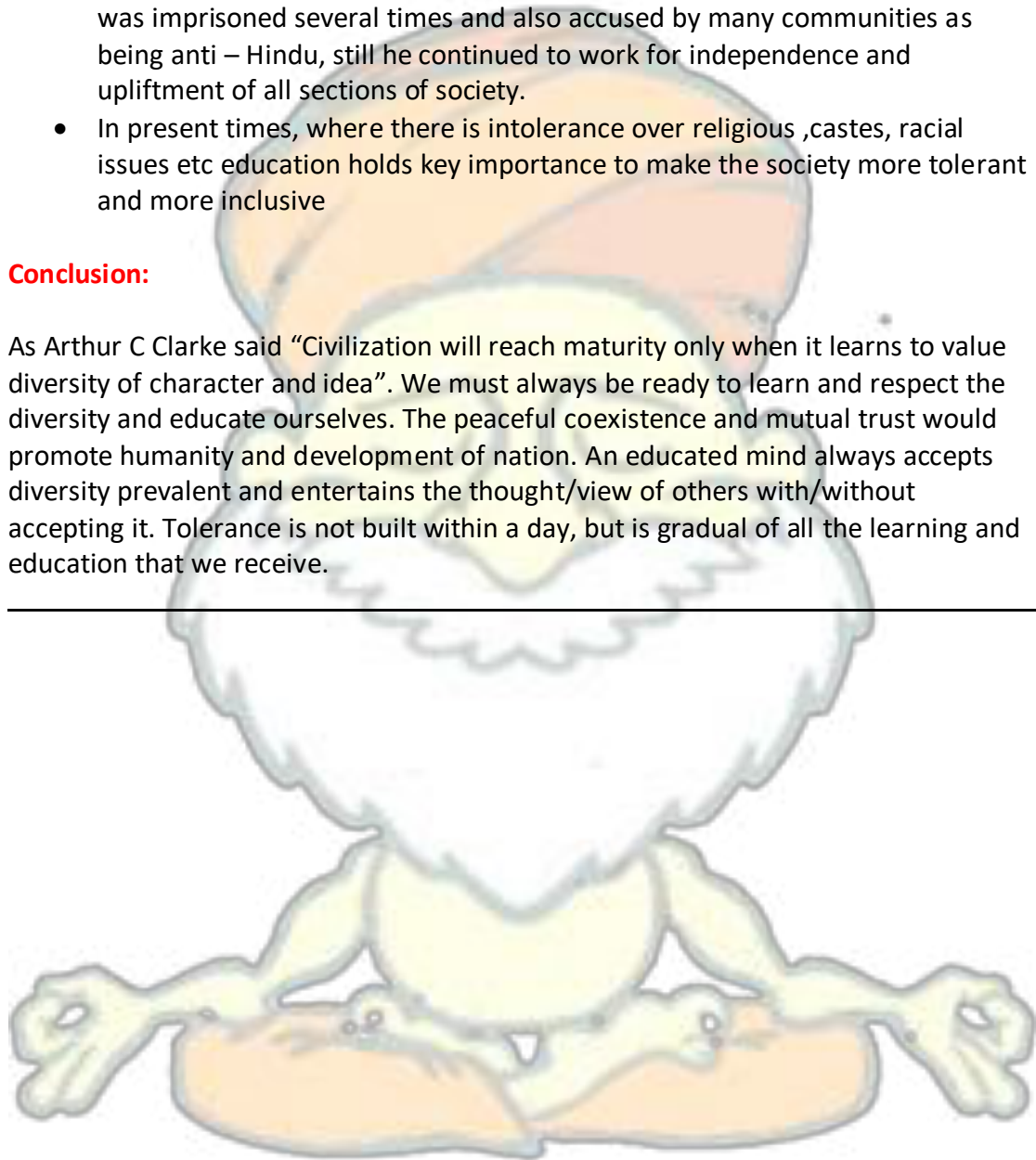
- Education is manifestation of perfection already in men so a Person it helps person to make his mind strong, educated mind listen to all without any reaction. In the diverse country like India, Civil servants must possess ability to deal with diverse interests, political pressures and criticisms. Such ability can be cultivated through proper education. Issue of corruption among government officials is also a manifestation of lack of self confidence and character building ability of present status of education system.
- For example, Pame Armstrong, IAS wanted to build a road in Tamenglong, Manipur out of empathy for the local people. He tried to get it done through State projects but he faced hindrances. Later, he took to crowd-financing and built it, by mobilizing the public for the cause, without Government financing. His confidence, empathy and patience emanate from his education.
- Peace and Harmony can be brought only if we have tolerance in the society. Different culture and different ideas lead towards higher development goals. For example- American society is an amalgamation of different views, religions, culture and rights of individual freedom and thereby it has achieved a position of being a global destination. Whereas an intolerance to others may lead to downfall as happened with Myanmar at international forum.
- Mahatma Gandhi showed tolerance towards the agitated public when he withdrew non cooperation movement because he had true education of Freedom and how to achieve it. He had differences of opinion with Ambedkar, Subhas chandra Bose but have never show or spoken anything intolerant.
- Education in form of awareness , information related to health and hygiene helped in behavioural change among the society towards building toilets in houses who were earlier resisting to such changes siting religious reasons.
- As it is said "mind once enlightened can not go dark again". Such enlightenment can only be achieved through proper value education and concept based learning. Dr APJ Abdul Kalam also emphasized the importance of value education in his quote "Real education enhances the dignity of a

human being and increases his or her self-respect. If only the real sense of education could be realized by each individual and carried forward in every field of human activity, the world will be so much a better place to live in.”meaning importance of education in overall development of human beings which includes respect, tolerance and dignity of individual.

- A well educated person develops a temperament of critical thinking and knows how to deal with success and failure properly. eg. Mahatma Gandhi was imprisoned several times and also accused by many communities as being anti – Hindu, still he continued to work for independence and upliftment of all sections of society.
- In present times, where there is intolerance over religious ,castes, racial issues etc education holds key importance to make the society more tolerant and more inclusive

Conclusion:

As Arthur C Clarke said “Civilization will reach maturity only when it learns to value diversity of character and idea”. We must always be ready to learn and respect the diversity and educate ourselves. The peaceful coexistence and mutual trust would promote humanity and development of nation. An educated mind always accepts diversity prevalent and entertains the thought/view of others with/without accepting it. Tolerance is not built within a day, but is gradual of all the learning and education that we receive.



**14. Truth can be stated in a thousand different ways, yet each one can be true.
Elucidate.**

Approach

The candidate needs to dwell upon the given statement and bring out its meaning through the help of different examples, which makes the understanding of 'Truth' more substantial.

Introduction

The above quote by Swami Vivekananda clearly demonstrates the nature of 'Truth' and the ideal way of understanding it in human society where in the present polarised times, truth can be seen from different perspectives which would help in healing the society.

Body

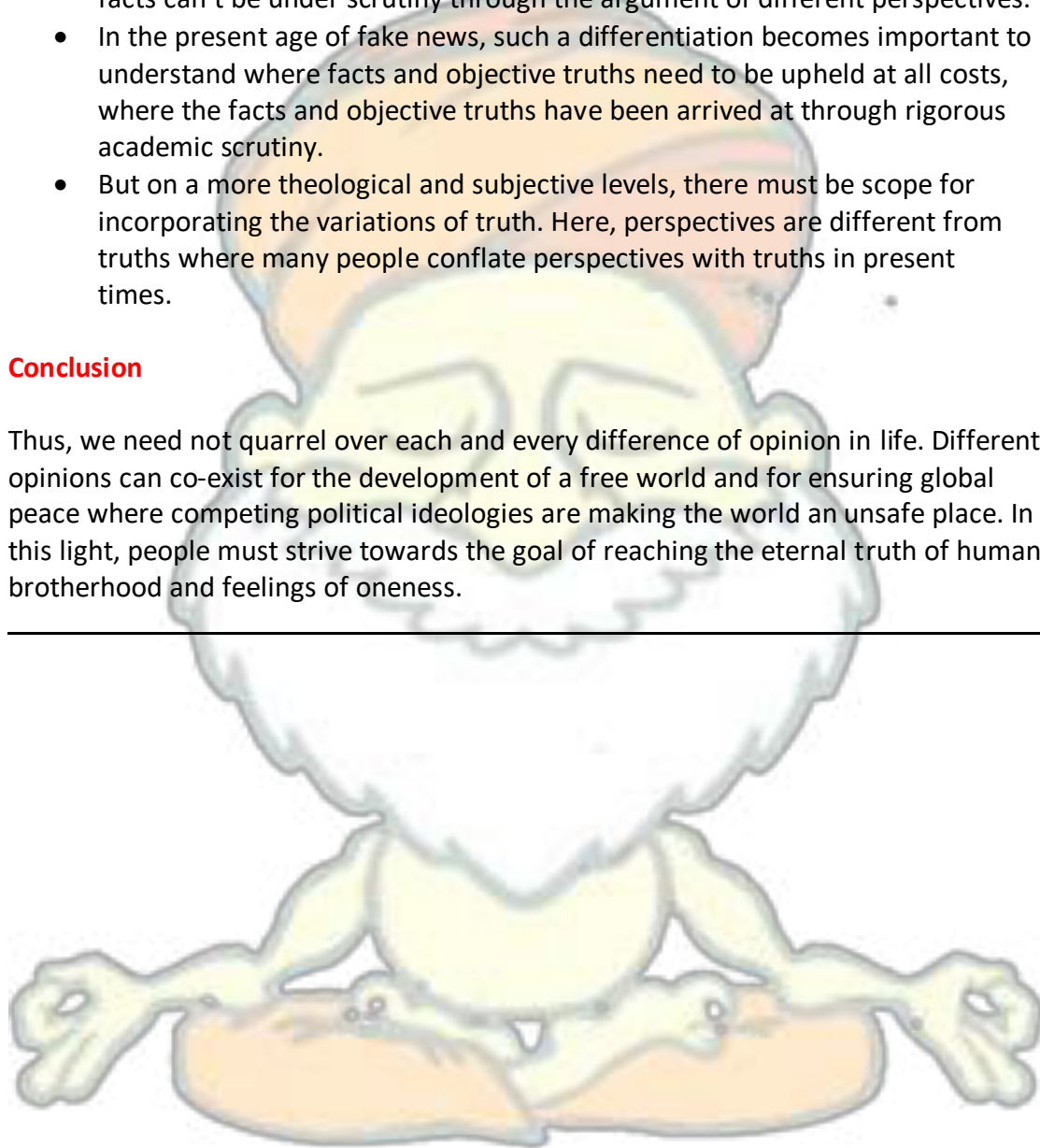
- Truth is multi-faceted. Truth remains true from the point of view of an observer but may be seemingly false from other's point of view. There has been a perpetual fight of perspectives and will always be as long as truth is concerned. There is no black or white but shades of grey.
- Proclaiming something as one absolute truth would be a recipe for disaster in matters where the outcomes can be subjective or unknown to humans. Here, Swami Vivekananda emphasized that truth can have different perspectives.
- In this light, the Rig Veda states, 'E-kam sad viprah bahudha vadanti' i.e. the truth is one but is called by many names. Thus, it brings home the point that we need not quarrel over each and every difference of opinion in life. Different opinions must co-exist for the sake of a free world.
- Further, this is the basis for development of Indian way of thinking where all religions are considered as true and rightful approach to reach the almighty. Thus, theological discussions can go a long way in present times, if everyone considers the above approach.
- Also, each religion teaches its followers to be truthful and non-violent. However, the ways of saying the same is different for different religions.
- Leaders can't lead without followers and unfortunately, some of the most passionate ideas die an early death because the leader is ineffective. To be able to take people along, inspire them with your vision, you need to know that there are a thousand sides to the same story.
- This is even true for leaders in corporate sector, where if you can't respect the diversity in your teams, you cannot establish a culture of tolerance and respect which could hamper improved performance by the team.
- What other person is saying may seem us to be false but when seen from his/her perspective can be true. Understanding this would help us solve

issues in amicable ways. It helps us not be prejudiced against others' opinions.

- Understanding the other side of the story and other faces of a situation/practice/thought is required before reaching to any conclusion.
- At the same time, it is important to understand that objective truths have no place for variations under the present discussions where the scientific truths are an example. The Earth is round and not flat is an objective truth, such facts can't be under scrutiny through the argument of different perspectives.
- In the present age of fake news, such a differentiation becomes important to understand where facts and objective truths need to be upheld at all costs, where the facts and objective truths have been arrived at through rigorous academic scrutiny.
- But on a more theological and subjective levels, there must be scope for incorporating the variations of truth. Here, perspectives are different from truths where many people conflate perspectives with truths in present times.

Conclusion

Thus, we need not quarrel over each and every difference of opinion in life. Different opinions can co-exist for the development of a free world and for ensuring global peace where competing political ideologies are making the world an unsafe place. In this light, people must strive towards the goal of reaching the eternal truth of human brotherhood and feelings of oneness.



15. What is your view on the following quote by Venkataraman Ramakrishnan: We are all human beings, and our nationality is simply an accident of birth.

Approach:

Candidates are expected to provide the context of the quote and explain the quote by Venkataraman Ramakrishna. And then express the personal view on the quote.

Introduction

Just when Nobel laureate Venkataraman Ramakrishnan flooded with goodwill emails from India on winning Nobel prize and many were taking pride of him being an Indian origin. He said “We are all human beings, and our nationality is simply an accident of birth,” it doesn’t matter much as per Venkataraman on belonging to particular country.

Body

Nationality is not simply with accident of birth:

- Birth is not just a random momentary thing. It involves your parents. And they already had a nationality too.
- Nationality is a shared group identity in the significance of a geographical and sometimes demographic region seeking independence for its culture and/or ethnicity that holds that group together. This can be expressed as a belief or political ideology that involves an individual identifying with or becoming attached to one’s nation.
- With identity of nationality the feelings of the high and low and casteism are banished from the minds of the people, and social unity is achieved. The nationalist leaders make the people understand with full force that our nation can progress and can have a prestigious place in the world only, when all disparities are removed.
- Nationality transforms into the nationalism. Nationalism as an ideology built on feeling of togetherness and belongingness of community but try to exclude those who are different from them. It has characteristics of heterogeneity whereas humanity is based on homogenous characteristics and try to be more inclusive rather than exclusive.
- Nationality brings people together with the same mindset. Whereas humanism bring everyone to live together with or without the same mindset:

- Economically, nationality may give everyone equal rights to trade, practice profession or work, etc. Humanism is about fulfilling basic needs of an individual.
- India, as the birthplace of the Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam ideal and long-honored for its multiplicity of wisdom traditions and paths, is primed to become a model to lead a way out of this crisis. It is thus imperative that moral, spiritual and civil leaders work together to articulate universal ethical principles and values that can form the basis for social cohesion, shared agreements and lasting peace.
- Environmentally, nationalism and nationality cares about the environment related issues in their nation. They don't care about the environmental issues of other countries. Humanism cares about the environment at global level. They know that humans can exist only at those places where environment is proper to live and carry out other activities. For example Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro was criticised by all conservationist cross the world.
- Adherence to human values and humanity such as love and compassion is required in today's world which is affected by many nationality based conflicts such as civil wars, refugee crises and terrorism.
- It is with humanity and human values that one becomes truly able to put into practice his/her ethical values, such as justice, integrity, refusal of violence and ban to kill even in a crisis situation.
- Humanity convey a positive and affective surge, which reinforces the rationale of moral values. Humanity is value that permit us to live together in harmony and personally contribute to peace. Human values are a tool to manage human relations and a tool for peace when the tension is high.
- National citizenship is an accident of birth; global citizenship is different. It is a voluntary association with a concept that signifies "ways of thinking and living within multiple cross-cutting communities cities, regions, states, nations, and international collectives.
- It generates Cultural of empathy helps people see questions from multiple perspectives and move deftly among cultures sometimes navigating their own multiple cultural identities, sometimes moving out to experience unfamiliar cultures.
- When forces of Nationality and Patriotism try to take the front seat, there is a kind of hostility, protectionist feelings generated among the people of different countries. Therefore, Humanity should be always at a higher pedestal than other such values.

Conclusion

Since ancient times, the spirit of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, the world is one family, has stood as an ideal of Indian civilization. This inclusive and compassionate spirituality recognizes that "the truth is one, sages call it variously"; this has allowed for groundbreaking advances in philosophical inquiry and civilizational advances throughout world history.

16. Discuss the geopolitics of the Suez Canal during the aftermath of WWII.

Approach:

Question is straight forward in its approach students are expected to write about Suez canal and geopolitics arising out of it during the aftermath of WWII. Also it is important to give a brief about geography of Suez canal in the introduction of the answer.

Introduction:

The Suez Canal is an artificial sea-level waterway running north to south across the Isthmus of Suez in Egypt to connect the Mediterranean Sea and the Red Sea. The canal separates the African continent from Asia, and it provides the shortest maritime route between Europe and the lands lying around the Indian and western Pacific oceans. It is one of the world's most heavily used shipping lanes. The canal is extensively used by modern ships, as it is the fastest crossing from the Atlantic Ocean to the Indian Ocean. Tolls paid by the vessels represent an important source of income for the Egyptian government. The Canal runs between Port Said harbor and the Gulf of Suez, through soils which vary according to the region. At Port Said and the surrounding area, the soil is composed over thousands of years of silt and clay sedimentations deposited by the Nile waters drifted by Damietta branch.

Body:

Geopolitics of Suez canal during the aftermath of WWII-

- Colonel Gamal Abdel Nasser, one of the participants at the conference of non-aligned African and Asian countries held in Bandung in 1955, was seeking to unify the Arab world around Egypt, of which he became President in June 1956. In order to stimulate the economic and agricultural transformation of the country, he planned the construction of a huge dam at Aswan, but the United States, despite seeing Nasser as a preferable alternative to communism, refused to contribute to the enormous building costs. So on 26

July 1956, Nasser announced his intention to nationalise the Suez Canal Company. The majority of shareholders in this internationally vital waterway were French and British, and their concession was not due to expire until 1968. For Nasser, the revenue from operating the canal was necessary to allow Egypt to finance the building of the Aswan Dam.

- France, angered by the aid given by Egypt to the Algerian rebels, and Britain, which wanted to maintain its control over the strategically important Suez passage, decided to launch a joint military attack with a view to regaining control over the administration of the canal. They were supported militarily by Israel — a state that since its creation in 1948 had felt directly threatened by any hint of Arab expansionism or reinforcement. Moreover, Nasser had never stopped proclaiming his desire to destroy Israel. On 29 October 1956, Israeli forces took the Sinai Peninsula, a vital area for the protection of the Jewish state. One week later, Anglo-French troops disembarked in Port Said. The operation was entirely successful — the Egyptian army was defeated in a few days, even though Nasser had ordered the sinking of some forty ships in order to block the Suez Canal completely.
- However, the world powers did not appreciate the actions of France and Britain in the slightest. The Soviet Union, which was in the process of forcibly putting down the insurrection in Hungary, threatened Paris and London with nuclear reprisals. For their part, the United States, despite being traditional allies of the European powers, complained that they had not been consulted beforehand. They did not appreciate this kind of neo-colonial gunboat diplomacy at all, and exerted enormous financial pressure on the United Kingdom through the United Nations — so much so that the Anglo-French force had to withdraw despite its military success. Israel also evacuated Sinai. The UN took on the task of repairing the Suez Canal, which was reopened to shipping in April 1957. In the meantime, Nasser had ordered the destruction of several oil pipelines, meaning that Western European countries faced their first cuts in fuel supplies.
- The upshot of all this was that Nasser, boosted by his political and diplomatic victory, enjoyed immense prestige in the Arab world. He exploited to the full his image as the victim of an imperialist plot. The European powers were forced to recognise once and for all that they were not world powers and that their role on the international stage could not be more than that of supporting the United States. Indeed, it became difficult for them to pursue an independent policy on the world stage. Their influence in the Middle East became almost non-existent. The Suez Crisis therefore ended in a moral defeat and a diplomatic fiasco for the former colonial powers, while Colonel Nasser consolidated his position as defender of the Arab cause and champion of decolonisation.
- Today, nearly a decade on from the beginning of the Arab Spring, things have changed. It has become necessary for states across the region to reassert themselves and seek to restore stability and economic development. Key to this process will be economic cooperation within the bounds of power

politics in two leading geographical areas of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region: the Red Sea and the Eastern Mediterranean.

- Both “Saudi Vision 2030” and “Egyptian Vision 2030” place great emphasis on the optimum economic utilization of the Red Sea area, inclusive of the Red Sea’s waters, coastlines, and islands, with all the touristic and mineral resources the sea offers and its potential to serve as a multidimensional bridge between the Arabian Peninsula and Egypt. In fact, Saudi Vision 2030 views the bridge as a means to bolster the Saudi geo-strategic position by extending it to the Eastern Mediterranean via the Suez Canal. It was no coincidence that the agreements signed during the visit by the Saudi monarch to Cairo in April 2016 included a \$1.5 billion Sinai development project and a plan to build a King Salman Mosque in Ras Sudr on the eastern shore of the Gulf of Suez.

Conclusion:

About 12% of world trade passes through the canal each year, everything from crude oil to grains to instant coffee. Without Suez, a supertanker carrying Mideast crude oil to Europe would have to travel an extra 6,000 miles around Africa’s Cape of Good Hope, adding some \$300,000 in fuel costs (although there would be savings from avoiding the Suez passage tolls, which can run hundreds of thousands of dollars.) Because it has no locks, it can even handle aircraft carriers. With this the geostrategic importance of Suez canal has become even more significant which the world powers has realised since the Suez crisis of 1956.

