

1. In the context of disaster preparedness, explain the concept of ‘black swan’ events. Why is it critical to be ready for such events? Discuss.

Approach

In this question the candidate needs to write first on concept of black swan event within the context of disaster preparedness, candidates can link it with various disaster such as COVID. And then discuss the importance of disaster preparedness and readiness in any such events.

Introduction

“Black swan events” are those that are possible, but are totally unexpected. The definition by author Nassim Nicholas Taleb includes First, it is an outlier, as it lies outside the realm of regular expectations, because nothing in the past can convincingly point to its possibility. Second, it carries an extreme impact. Third, in spite of its outlier status, human nature makes us concoct explanations for its occurrence after the fact, making it explainable and predictable.

Body

In the realm of disasters, in a little more than a year, we have experienced many disasters such as COVID-19, locust attack and frequent cyclones is being widely described as a “Black Swan event”, an event that has an outsized impact, that is hard to predict and even harder to compute probabilities.

A contrary view is that, in many ways, it is an entirely expected event given that all the drivers of risk have been there in plain sight it’s critical to be prepared for such events:

- Given recent events, however, it’s easy to predict more black swan events that will range from natural to technological disasters and terrorist events.
- As we plan for the future, we need to envision catastrophes so large that the response and recovery will go far beyond what we have experienced.
- Emergency managers and their partner organizations can expand their thinking, planning and response capabilities to encompass the “maximum of maximums.” As going beyond our own needs, after the Indian Ocean tsunami, we played a pivotal role in establishing an end-to-end Tsunami Early Warning System for the Indian Ocean.
- It’s critical that we communicate the risks as forcefully as possible to the people who are in positions to make wise decisions on the allocation of resources toward building resiliency in communities. For example, India’s success in reducing cyclone related mortality is lauded globally.
- If there’s one thing that we should learn from black swan events, it’s that they are hard to prevent. Their size and scope may overwhelm our feeble attempts to respond.
- In the long term, it will only be the resiliency of the people, organizations and systems that will change the course of history and the disaster’s impact. Most

of the time we can't change what happens to us, but we do control how we respond and recover.

- In our country, for the last two decades we have been talking about a paradigm shift from “relief and response” to “preparedness and mitigation” or “risk reduction”. With black swan event theory it is apparent that, we are poised for the next leap: from “risk reduction” to “resilience”.
- Being ready to face speaks of resilience of our infrastructure, which can also helped us deal with several other crises such as floods, cyclones, desert locusts and the crisis at our northern borders.
- The key lesson from the black swan theory is that the principles of resilience and anti-fragility have to be integral to India's growth story. This would mean that risk management has to become everybody's business beyond NDMA with Technical and academic institutions have important and crucial role.

Conclusion

In many ways, the disasters has come across as a backlash against the excesses of our consumption. We need to take a step back and assess how we can find a better balance with Nature. There is a strong sustainability angle that we need to pursue during disasters preparedness. Which clearly implies that we value our natural resources like rivers, wetlands, mountains, forests, coastlines, and bio-diversity.

2. Examine the significance of investment promotion as a tool for regional development. Can you discuss some related strategies adopted in India?**Approach**

Question demands to highlight the basics idea on investment promotion plans and regional development. Candidates need to examine the investment promotion significance in the regional development. And discuss some strategies adopted in India.

Introduction

Investment promotion can help to increase both domestic investment and to enhance their contribution to regional economic development. Success in promoting investment requires a careful calculation of how to employ resources most effectively and how to organise investment promotion activities within the government so that the overriding goal of economic development through improvements in the investment climate remains at the forefront of policymaking.

Body

Regional Development in India:

- It is reflected by the indicators like per capita income, the proportion of population living below the poverty, the percentage of urban population, percentage of population engaged in agriculture vis-à-vis engaged in industries, infrastructural development of different states.

Significance of investment promotion for regional development:

- Special economic zones (SEZs) in India are areas that offer incentives to resident businesses. SEZs typically offer competitive infrastructure, duty free exports, tax incentives, and other measures designed to make it easier to conduct business. Accordingly, SEZs in India are a popular investment destination for many multinationals, particularly exporters.
- The government sought to use SEZs to redress the infrastructural and bureaucratic challenges that were seen to have limited the success EPZs.
- SEZs can provide, in a concentrated area, the necessary conditions external investors may require. Moreover, these may include a skilled labor force, adequate infrastructure, and local input suppliers. Additionally, they can facilitate investment from foreign sources.
- Additionally, a well-executed SEZ helps generate spill-overs for the economy of the rest of the country. This is because domestic firms and industries outside an SEZ tend to upskill and expand, to be able to supply the SEZ firms.
- SEZs can play the role of 'testing grounds' for the Government for implementing liberal business policies in the future. Likewise, the Government can decide to implement 'successful' policies across the country and dump the 'unsuccessful' ones.

Strategies adopted in India:

- Many EPZs were converted to SEZs, with notable zones in Noida (Uttar Pradesh state), Falta (West Bengal state), Visakhapatnam (Andhra Pradesh state), Chennai (Tamil Nadu state), Cochin (Kerala state), Santa Cruz (Maharashtra state), Indore (Madhya Pradesh), as well as Kandla and Surat (Gujarat).
- The planned and systematic industrial development MIDC in the State of Maharashtra has continuously placed Maharashtra in first position in India for the highest productivity, economics performance, business efficiency, government efficiency, infrastructures and overall competitiveness.
- The GIFT City project was conceptualised in 2007. With sops being announced in almost all Union budgets since 2015, the Gujarat International Finance Tech (GIFT) City at Gandhinagar stands at an important cusp with the Rs 4000-crore second phase of the infrastructure project.

Conclusion

Raising the living standards in poorer and backward states would also require increasing productivity in the agricultural sector by supporting farm consolidation and improving infrastructure in rural areas, particularly roads that connect villages to market towns, crop storage infrastructure and access to social physical infrastructure will also have critical importance in regional development plans.

3. What is the philosophical basis of Atmanirbhar Bharat? Does it augur well with a globalised world? Critically examine.**Approach**

In this question the candidate needs to highlight the philosophy behind the Atmanirbhar Bharat. And then simply critically examine the role of this policy in globalised world order.

Introduction

It is not protectionism. It is not inward looking. It is not just import substitution and it is not economic nationalism. Main philosophy is to make India self-reliant by creating an eco-system that will allow Indian companies to be highly competitive on the global stage. The key element here is the “need to create an eco-system” that will allow Indian companies to be globally competitive and thus making India self-reliant.

Body

- In this context, the idea of self-reliance is about resilience, leveraging internal strengths, personal responsibility, and a sense of national mission or “Man Making” to use the late 19th century expression of Swami Vivekananda.
- It is important, at the very onset, to clarify that this idea of self-reliance is not about a return to Nehruvian import substitution or autarkic isolationism. The prime minister Modi emphasised that his vision includes active participation in post-COVID global supply chains as well as the need to attract foreign direct investment.
- This is about decentralised localism that takes pride in local brands, emphasises resilience and flexibility, and encourages local capacity-building and indigenisation.
- The same economic philosophy is reflected in several other supply-side measures announced recently. Self-reliance implies that product and factor markets are made flexible in order to allow the Indian economy to adapt to the problems and opportunities of an emerging post-COVID world.
- Thus, there is an unapologetic commitment to privatisation of non-strategic public sector entities, opening up of new sectors like space to private investment, decriminalisation of most aspects of corporate law, greater flexibility in labour laws, and so on.
- Self-reliance also means a commitment to resilience at multiple levels at a national level, an industry level, and at an individual level. For example, the government has indicated that it would provide various forms of incentives and protection to key industries for example, inputs for the pharmaceuticals industry.

Atmanirbhar Bharat policy raising questions in globalised order:

- Such a stance may have a recoil effect on India’s foreign trade too. The EIU said that a more protectionist trade stance and any increase in tariff rates for

imports may lead to punitive tariffs or the revocation of trade benefits from its partners.

- Manufacture of ideas has fallen far behind the invention of slogans. And the idea remains as wrong as it was half a century ago. India punishes import of consumer goods; they are mostly made in India. Services are also kept out.
- We need, instead, a combination of the best from wherever it is available when required, and making locally for our normal needs. Indians shouldn't be forced to settle for second or third rate products or services just because they have the made-in-India tag.
- That would be merely another, perhaps worse version, of the failed model of import substitution. Actually, what history proves over and over again is that there is no substitute for quality and competence. No amount of ideological or cultural massaging can make this go away.
- India is dependent on China for imports related to electronics, solar equipment, pharmaceutical (Active pharmaceutical ingredients) and Capital goods. Without developing domestic capacity for manufacturing in these areas, breaking away from dependence on China would not be easy.
- Similarly, in times of globalisation and being governed by the rules of the WTO, any efforts at creating systemic impediments to the smooth flow of trade across nations on trivial nationalism parameters are surely going to backfire, one way or the other.
- India opened itself to the global market in 1991 through its LPG (liberalisation, privatisation and globalisation) reforms, but remained hesitant in giving the market model full freedom. This may be reflected in market distorting subsidies and other restrictive policies, especially in Agriculture.

Way forward:

- India cannot become self-reliant until it has control over domestic and global supply chains. Thus, there is a need to ensure greater control over certain parts of the global value chain to protect strategic interests, especially in healthcare, agriculture and defence.
- Mostly all the multinational companies are more concerned about concentration risk of businesses in China than ever before. India can attract these investments and become the next global manufacturing hub.

Conclusion

The Self-Reliance neither signifies any exclusionary or isolationist strategies but involves creation of a helping hand to the whole world it's about being vocal for "local" which is a key complement of Atma-Nirbhar Bharat Abhiyan. In this context, people must internalise the concept of valuing local products and artefacts and promoting them. Only after this the dream of transforming "Local" India into a "Glocal" India will be possible.