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**NOTE:** Please remember that following '*answers*' are *NOT* '*model answers*'. They are *NOT* synopsis too if we go by definition of the term. What we are providing is content that both meets demand of the question and at the same time gives you extra points in the form of background information.



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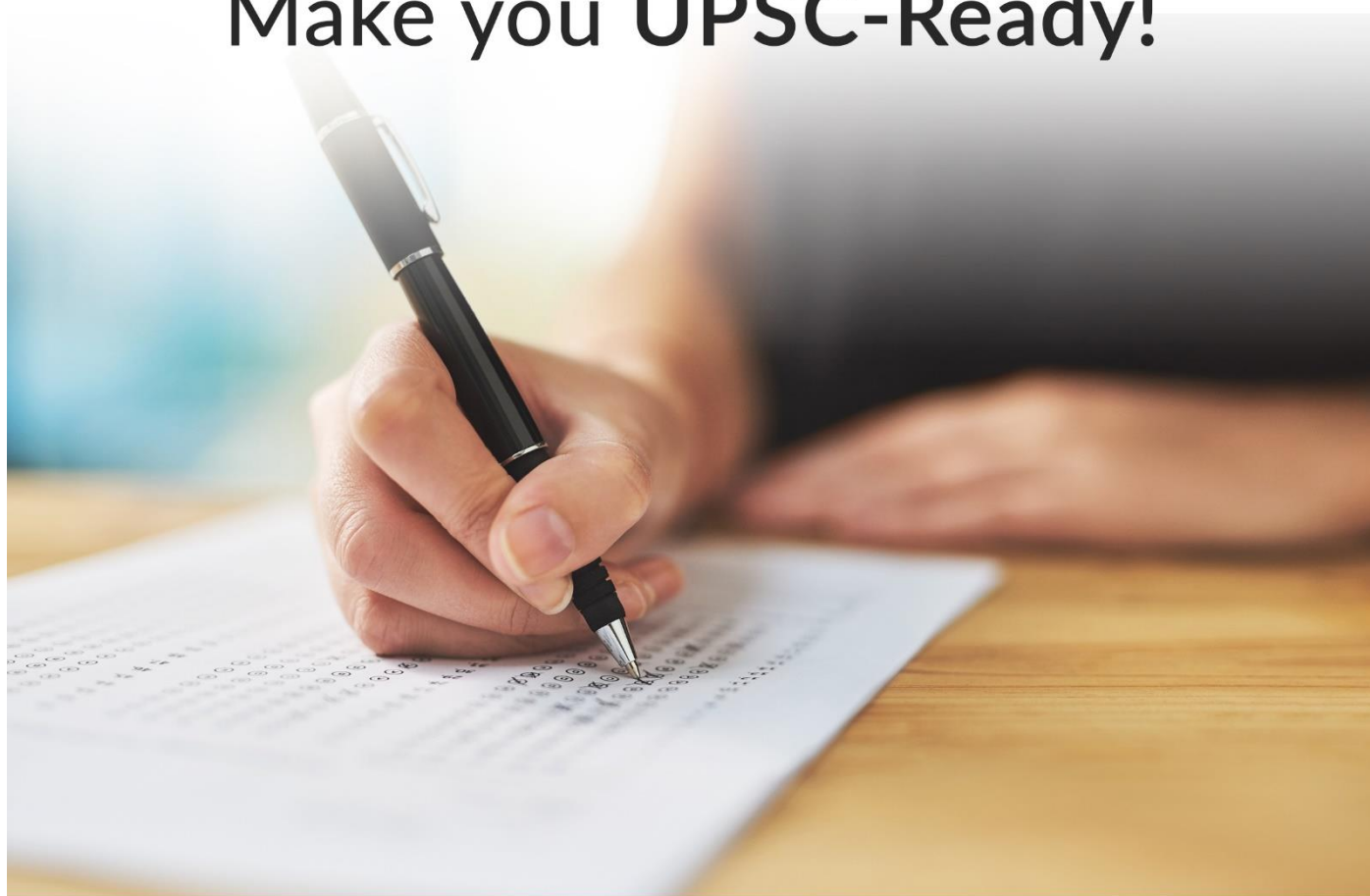
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## General Studies Paper - I

*Topic– Indian culture will cover the salient aspects of Art Forms, Literature and Architecture from ancient to modern times*

**Q) Discuss the contributions of master of all arts and crafts – Sri Vedanta Desikan to the Indian art and culture. (250 words)**

[pib](#)

### **why this question:**

A postage stamp to commemorate the 750th birth anniversary of Sri Vedanta Desikan was released yesterday, Sri Vedanta Desikan is one of the most prominent preceptors in the Srivaishnava tradition and one of the most effulgent luminaries.

### **Key demands of the question:**

The answer must capture the contributions of such a personality, essential features of Sri Vedant Desikan's philosophy, his contributions to Indian art and culture and its significance even today.

### **Directive word**

**Discuss** – This is an all-encompassing directive – you have to debate on paper by going through the details of the issues concerned by examining each one of them. You have to give reasons for both for and against arguments.

### **Structure of the answer:**

#### **Introduction**

In a few introductory explain who was Sri Vedanta Desikan?

#### **Body**

Discuss the following aspects in the answer:

- Discuss the background of who was he ? – Sri Vedanta Desikan (1268–1369), born in present day Tamil Nadu is also known as Swami Desika, Swami Vedanta Desika, Thoopul Nigamaantha Desikan. He was a multi-faceted personality – a spiritual teacher, a scientist, a logician, a mathematician, a literary genius, a linguist, a military strategist and much more. He was conferred the title of 'Sarva-tantra-svatantra' or master of all arts and crafts.
- essential features of Sri Vedant Desikan's philosophy – inclusion, irrespective of caste and creed could join the Sri Vaishnava fold etc.
- explain his literary contributions – prominent works are Hayagriva Stotram, Abheethistavam, Achyutha Satakam, Bhagavat Dhyana Sopanam and Kamasikasthaka etc.
- He received other titles such as 'Kavitarkika-kesari' and 'Kavitarkika-simham', the lion amongst poets.

#### **Conclusion**

Conclude with significance of such personalities and its uniqueness to India.

#### **Introduction:**

- Sri Vedanta Desikan (1268–1369) was a Sri Vaishnava guru/philosopher and one of the most brilliant stalwarts of Sri Vaishnavism in the post-Ramanuja period. He was a poet, devotee, philosopher and master-teacher (desikan).
- He was the disciple of **Kidambi Appullar**, also known as **Aathreya Ramanujachariar**, who himself was of a master-disciple lineage that began with Ramanuja. He is considered to be avatar (incarnation) of the divine bell of Venkateswara of Tirumalai by the Vadakalai sect of Sri Vaishnavite.

#### **Body:**

His Philosophy:

- The Sri Vaishnava philosophy that Saint Ramanuja initially propounded got a much wider audience with Vedanta Desikan's writings and preaching.
- One of the essential features of this philosophy was the aspect of inclusion. Anyone, irrespective of caste and creed could join the Sri Vaishnava fold. This is a truly democratizing movement that obliterated caste distinctions.
- he has been an extraordinary individual who has shown a new path towards human fulfilment and spiritual upliftment



### Contributions of Sri Vedanta Desikan:

- Vedanta Desikan was much more than a spiritual teacher. He was a multi-faceted personality— a scientist, a logician, a mathematician, a sculptor, a civil engineer, a poet, a literary genius, a linguist, a geologist, a dietician, a behavioural scientist, a military strategist and much more.
- He wrote poems, prose, drama, epics, commentaries, scientific texts and philosophical treatises in Sanskrit, Tamil, Prakrit and Manipravalam.
- His magnum opus, the **Rahasya Traya Sara**, is a masterly treatise on **Prapatti** or surrendering oneself to the divine.
- His masterpiece, **Paduka Sahasram**, reveals his poetic eloquence and his mathematical ingenuity. In two verses in this collection, Sri Vedanta Desikan gave a solution to a mathematical problem that was solved five centuries later by another mathematician, Leonard Euler.
- Desikan showed his knowledge of the arts and sciences through other works such as **Silparthasaram**, a treatise on sculpture, and **Bhugola-nirnayam** – a research text on geography.
- Taking cues from the Vedic scriptures, Vedanta Desikan authored **Aahaara Niyamam** that detailed how different food items help in maintaining a healthy mind and a disease-free life.
- His '**Subhashita Neevi**' contains a fund of moral and ethical advice which is relevant and practical.
- Desikan's Works in Tamil are numerous, out of which two need special mention: **Paramathabhangam**, where he describes and refutes 15 schools of philosophy.
- Desikan's talent as a military strategist came to the fore during the repeated invasions of the holy city of Srirangam by the forces of the Delhi Sultanate. Before the forces of marauding invaders like Mallik Kafur and Ulugh Khan arrived at Srirangam in 1327, Desikan hid the main Deity of the temple behind a newly built wall, and escaped with rare manuscripts that would otherwise have been destroyed by the invaders.

### Achievements:

- He was celebrated as '**sarva-tantra-svatantra**' or master of all arts and crafts;
- He was awarded the title '**kavi tarkika-kesari**', the lion amongst poets and logicians;
- He was glorified as '**ramanuja-daya-patram**', the recipient of Ramanuja's blessings.

### Conclusion:

- Leading a very active life and achieving success in diverse fields, he scaled the greatest spiritual heights as well as other fields of knowledge and human welfare.
- His versatile intellectual and creative output did not make him vain or pompous. He remained a humble devotee of the Lord he believed in. Humility was his hallmark, simplicity his strength.

## Q) The Bhakti movement empowered those on the lowest treads of Indian society and provided impetus for the growth of vernacular literature. Comment. (250 words)

### Reference

#### Why this question:

The question is straightforward and is about discussing the role played by Bhakti movement in the Indian society in terms of addressing the social evils and contributing towards vernacular literature.

#### Demand of the question:

The answer must explain the significance of Bhakti movement in detail with special focus on two fronts namely the – overcoming of social issues and its contributions to the vernacular literature.

#### Directive:

**Comment**— here we have to express our knowledge and understanding of the issue and form an overall opinion thereupon.

#### Structure of the answer:

The answer to the question is direct, one must discuss in detail how the Bhakti movement, which started around the 6th century (AD) and spanned all the way to the 18th century, in many ways broke barriers of gender, class and caste. At the same time, it shattered stereotypes associated with the perception of spiritualism; denounced orthodoxy and the rigid ritualistic practices of worship, and established a more personal and informal connection between the devotee and the divine.

From Basavanna and Akka Mahadevi in Karnataka, Janabai and Tukaram in Maharashtra to Kabir, Tulsidas and Mirabai in North India and Chaitanya Mahaprabhu and Sarada Devi in West Bengal — these mystics and poets challenged social hierarchy and questioned 'rules' of seeking salvation.

Comment on the contributions to the vernacular languages.



### Conclusion:

Conclude by reasserting the significance.

### Introduction:

- Bhakti was accepted as a means to attain moksha along with jnana and karma. The Bhakti Movement originated in the seventh-century in Tamil, South India (now parts of Tamil Nadu and Kerala), and spread northwards. It swept over east and north India from the 15th century onwards, reached its peak between the 15th and 17th century CE.
- The Bhakti Saints moved against the austerities propagated by the Buddhist and Jain schools and professed that ultimate devotion to god was the means to salvation.

### Body:

Empowerment of lower treads of Indian Society:

- The Bhakti movement in many ways broke barriers of gender, class and caste.
- At the same time, it shattered stereotypes associated with the perception of spiritualism; denounced orthodoxy and the rigid ritualistic practices of worship, and established a more personal and informal connection between the devotee and the divine.
- During the Bhakti movement, the lower classes rose to a position of great importance.
- The Bhakti movement gave equal importance to men and women which gave way to the importance of women in society.
- The Alvars and Nayanars initiated a movement of protest against the caste system and the dominance of Brahmanas or at least attempted to reform the system. This is supported by the fact that bhaktas or disciples hailed from diverse social backgrounds ranging from Brahmanas to artisans and cultivators and even from castes considered “untouchable”
- Ramananda opposed the caste system and chose his disciples from all sections of society irrespective of caste. His disciples included Kabir, a weaver; Raidasa, he was a cobbler; Sena, he was a barber; thus, emphasizing the equality among people of all occupations and caste.
- Saint Kabir aided the common people to shed age-old superstitions and attain salvation through Bhakti or pure devotion. He criticized all forms of worship of idols.
- Guru Nanak condemned caste difference and rituals like bathing in holy rivers. His idea of religion was highly practical and strictly moral.
- Nathpanthis, Siddhars and Yogis condemned the ritual and other aspects of orthodox religion and the social order, using simple, logical arguments. These groups became particularly popular among “low” castes.

### Impetus for growth of vernacular literature:

- The Bhakti reformers adopted the common language of the people and preached in it instead of preaching either in Sanskrit or in Persian. In this way a great impetus was given to the development of the vernaculars.
- **Tamil:** the poetry of the Bhakti movement some of the first being the *Nalayira Divya Prabandham* (4,000 songs) of the Alvars (Vaishnavite) and the *Twelve Thirumurai* (comprising 18,426 songs) of the Saivite saints have as their main theme religion and god.
- **Kannada:** Veerashaivism greatly contributed. Ex: Basavanna and Akka Mahadevi wrote several Vachanas in Kannada language. The Vira-Saivas contributed the most for the development of Kannada literature. Showing a predominant preference for the prose medium, this sect had over two hundred writers.
- **Telugu:** Vaishnavism and Shaivism were the major movements in Telugu literature from the 12th to 15th century. Mallikajurna Pandit's *Siva-Tattva-Saram* is an important exposition of this faith. Similarly, Pallukari Somantha wrote important Saiva texts such as the *Panditaradhyacharita* and *Dvipada Basava Purana*.
- **Marathi:** Gnaneshwar who wrote “*Gnaneshwari*”, a book on Marathi grammar. Jnanadeva's literary skills and philosophical depth are aptly reflected in his *Bhavartha-Dipika*, popularly known as *Jnaneshwari*, and the *Amritanubhava*. The poetic compositions of other saints Eknath and Tukarama reached to common people in their own language and left deep imprint onto their thoughts and minds.
- **Assamese and Bengali:** Amongst the eastern group of languages. Bengali was used by Chaitanya and by the poet Chandidas, who wrote extensively on the theme of the love of Radha and Krishna. Ballads on events of contemporary interest composed by wandering ministers were equally popular. The whole of Assam passed under the sway of the strong Vaishnava movement during the fifteenth and sixteenth century A.D. Sankaradeva and Madhavadeva were the key architects of the Assamese Vaishnava movement. They made rich contributions to the development of the Assamese literature. The *Kirtana-Ghosha* of Sankaradeva is known as the Bible of the Assamese Vaishnava literature.





- **Hindi:**
- The phase (1318-1643), namely the Bhaktikala, witnessed wholesome composition of Hindi verses on religious, moral and mystical themes on the lines of two dominant schools of Bhakti saints, viz., the Nirguna and Saguna schools.
- The Hindi literature during the Bhakti Kala had saint poets of both Nirguna and Saguna schools and Sufi mystics. They composed their verses on religious, mystical and social themes. Kabir composed a number of songs and Verses (Sakhis), which are noted for their literary excellence.
- Tulsidasa's Ramacharita Manasa is an epitome of the medieval Hindu culture. Of the Krishna worshipping Saguna group, Surdasa was the most prominent saint poet, whose Sura-Sagra is one of the masterpieces of medieval Hindi literature.
- Vidyapati, Nandadasa, Hita Harivansa, Mirabai and Rasakhana etc., were some of the other prominent saint poets of this school, whose poetic compositions also made rich contributions to the contemporary Hindi literature.

**Conclusion:**

- Bhakti cult was out-of-the-box thoughts on religion. It was mainly against the common religious views, and most importantly, it was strongly against the caste system.



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*Topic- Modern Indian history from about the middle of the eighteenth century until the present-significant events, personalities, issues; The Freedom Struggle – its various stages and important contributors /contributions from different parts of the country.*

**Q) Discuss the contribution of Gopal Krishna Gokhale in the freedom movement of India. (250 words)**

#### Reference

#### **Why this question:**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi paid tributes to Freedom Fighter and social reformer Gopal Krishna Gokhale on his birth anniversary yesterday, in this context it is important for us to analyse the contribution made by Gopal Krishna Gokhale.

#### **Key demands of the question:**

The answer must elaborate on the role played by Gopal Krishna Gokhale during freedom struggle.

#### **Directive word**

**Discuss** – This is an all-encompassing directive – you have to debate on paper by going through the details of the issues concerned by examining each one of them. You have to give reasons for both for and against arguments.

#### **Structure of the answer:**

##### **Introduction**

In a few introductory lines explain the significance of the role played by him in the freedom struggle.

##### **Body**

The body of the answer has to capture the contributions made by him –

- **With respect to Indian National congress** – He became a member of the Indian National Congress in 1889. He was the leader of the moderate faction of the Congress party.
- In 1905, he was elected president of the Indian National Congress (Banaras Session).
- He played a **leading role in bringing about Morley-Minto Reforms**, the beginning of constitutional reforms in India.
- **Member in British India Legislature:** In 1899, Gokhale was elected to the Bombay Legislative Council and in 1901 he was elected to the Imperial Council of the Governor-General of India.
- **Servants of India Society:** It was formed by him in Pune (Maharashtra) in 1905 to further the expansion of education in India. The Society organized mobile libraries, founded schools, and provided night classes for factory workers.
- **Ranade Institute of Economics:** In 1908, he founded the 'Ranade Institute of Economics'.
- **Mentor to Gandhi:** In 1912, Gokhale visited South Africa at Gandhi's invitation. He received personal guidance from Gokhale, including a knowledge and understanding of India and the issues confronting common Indians.
- **Hitavad:** He launched the English weekly newspaper named The Hitavad (The people's paper) in 1911.

##### **Conclusion**

Conclude with significance of the role played by him.

#### **Introduction:**

- Gopal Krishna Gokhale was an Indian political leader, a social reformer during the Indian Independence Movement and Mahatma Gandhi's political mentor. He was born on May 9th, 1866. Gokhale campaigned for Indian self-rule and also social reform. He was the leader of the moderate faction of the Congress party that advocated reforms by working with existing government institutions

#### **Body:**

##### **Contributions of GK Gokhale in freedom movement of India:**

- The year 1886 saw the entry of Gopal Krishna Gokhale into public life. At only 20 years of age, he delivered a public address concerning "**India under the British Rule**" and was applauded for his expression and command of the English language.
- Gokhale's grasp of economics was evident in his famous budget speeches as a member of the Imperial Legislative Council, when he took the colonial government to task because its policies were damaging India; no less a person than John Maynard Keynes praised his mastery of economic logic.
- While contributing articles to the English weekly Mahratta, he was seduced by the idea of using education as a means to awaken patriotism among the people of India.



- Just as this idea was enveloping Gokhale was promoted to **Secretary of the Deccan Education Society**.
- After being given charge of the **Bombay Provincial Conference in 1893**, he was elected to the Senate of the Bombay University.
- He visited Ireland and arranged for Irish nationalist Alfred Webb to serve as the President of the Indian National Congress in 1894
- In time, Gokhale came to devote all his spare time to the causes of the common man: famine, plague relief measures, local self- government, land reform, and communal harmony.
- As a **member of the Pune Municipality**, twice elected its president, Gokhale continued to strive to solve the problems of the poor, and those who came to him with grievances concerning water supply, drainage, etc. were pleased with the practical manner in which he dealt with the problem.
- Gokhale also published a daily newspaper entitled **Jnanaprakash**, which allowed him to voice his reformist views on politics and society.
- He was later **elected to the Council of India of the Governor-General of India in 1903**.
- He was appointed as the **Companion of the Order of the Indian Empire in 1904 New Year's Honours List**.
- In 1905, he founded the **Servants of India Society**, which trained people to be selfless workers so they could work for the common good of the people. He was also elected as the President of the Indian National Congress.
- So strong was the desire to make a difference, that these kindred spirits vowed a simple life of dedication to these causes.
- Among the many things the organization did, there were the commendable services of helping victims of floods and famines, and taking the time to educate women in society, so that they too may have a voice.
- Many people influenced Gokhale and gave him the strength and discipline to bring his ideas to the realm of reality, but none more than Mahadev Govind Ranade, to whom he was apprenticed in 1887.
- **Ranade trained him for 15 years in all spheres of public life**, and taught him sincerity, devotion to public service, and tolerance.
- Gokhale visited England and voiced his concerns relating to the unfair treatment of the Indian people by the British government. In one span of 49 days, he spoke in front of 47 different audiences, captivating every one of them.
- Before long, he was touted as the **most effective pleader for India's cause**. While Gokhale pleaded for gradual reform to ultimately attain Swaraj, or self-government, in India, some of his contemporaries, comprising a radical element, wished to use force as a means of persuasion. Gokhale maintained his moderate political views and worked out some reforms for the betterment of India.
- He was **instrumental in the formation of the Minto-Morley Reforms of 1909**, which eventually became law. Unfortunately, the Reforms Act became law in 1909 and it was disappointing to see that the people were not given a proper democratic system despite Gokhale's efforts.
- The **communal harmony he had longed for was shattered** when he realized that the Muslim community was steadfast in considering itself as a separate unit. On the bright side, however, Gokhale's efforts were clearly not in vain.
- Indians now had **access to seats of the highest authority within the government**, and their voices were more audible in matters of public interest.

#### Conclusion:

- **The liberal constitutionalism** that Gokhale stood for was swept aside by the rising tide of agitational politics after 1920. Gokhale was a mentor to both Mohammed Jinnah and Mahatma Gandhi.
- Mahatma Gandhi even wrote a book called, 'Gokhale, My Political Guru'. His **core beliefs about the importance of political liberty, social reform and economic progress** for all Indians are still relevant to our times.

**Q) Explain how Rabindranath Tagore catalyzed the progress of Indian national movement in innumerable ways. (250 words)**

[Indianexpress](https://www.indianexpress.com)

#### **Why this question:**

The article captures the contributions of Rabindranath Tagore to the Indian national movement.

#### **Key demand of the question:**

The answer must discuss in detail the contributions of Rabindranath Tagore to the Indian national movement.

**Directive:**

**Explain** – Clarify the topic by giving a detailed account as to how and why it occurred, or what is the particular context. You must be defining key terms where ever appropriate, and substantiate with relevant associated facts.

**Structure of the answer:****Introduction:**

Brief upon the recent incidences that highlight the inequality prevailing in terms of Women participation in the politics of the country.

**Body:**

Body of the answer should discuss the following aspects:

- What was the contribution of Rabindranath Tagore?
- Discuss how Tagore had no illusions about the character of British rule in India. However, he was no political leader himself but the period of the Partition of Bengal in 1905 by Lord Curzon is of importance, when he provided active leadership to the Swadeshi Movement advocating boycott of British goods and promotion of indigenous products.
- Discuss his multi-pronged approach: on the one hand, he was convinced that unless the sickness that Indian society was suffering from could be overcome mere achievement of freedom would be meaningless. Constructive social work was the crying need of the hour. Reforming education therefore became a cornerstone of his mission for society and nation building.
- His literary contributions to the national movement – his book Nationalism and others.
- Explain Tagore's opposition to the non-cooperation movement of Gandhi and his trenchant criticism of modern nationalism etc.

**Conclusion:**

Conclude by reasserting his dedicated contributions to the National movement.

**Introduction:**

- Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941) was a Romantic poet, novelist, and songwriter who contributed many political ideas to the Indian Independence Movement. Rabindranath Tagore denounced British imperialism, yet he did not fully support or agree with Gandhi and his Non-cooperation Movement. He viewed British rule as a symptom of the overall "sickness" of the social "disease" of the public.

**Body:**

Tagore's contribution to the progress of Indian national movement:

- Tagore generally denounced British imperialism and spoke out against it in some of his writings. In his writings, he also voiced his support of Indian nationalists.
- Tagore was outraged by the British proposal to partition Bengal and argued that instead of partitioning Bengal, what was needed was a self-help based reorganization of Bengal.
- Rabindranath Tagore wrote the song **Banglar Mati Banglar Jol** (Soil of Bengal, Water of Bengal) to unite the Bengali population after Bengal partition in 1905. He also wrote the famed '**Amar Sonar Bangla**' which helped ignite a feeling of nationalism amongst people.
- He started the **Rakhi Utsav** where people from Hindu and Muslim communities tied colourful threads on each other's wrists. In 1911, the two parts of Bengal were reunited.
- Although he supported nationalism, Tagore did not support the element in Gandhi's Noncooperation Movement called the **Swadeshi movement** which was an economic strategy that aimed to remove the British from power in India by using principles of Swadeshi such as boycotting British products, and improving production in India.
- He wrote many pieces and delivered lectures over his beliefs about nationalism and especially the examples of nationalism that he saw in his extensive travels and the growing nationalism he observed in Germany prior to World War II.
- His **critique of nationalism** was that of a wholesome and holistic thinker arguing against discourses couched in essentialism and one-sidedness that champion power and wealth but not soul and conscience, greed but not goodness, possessing but not giving, self-aggrandisement but not self-sacrifice, becoming but not being.
- Despite voicing his negative opinions about the nature of nationalism, Tagore wrote many songs praising the Indian independence movement.
- While Tagore had greater sympathy with the Extremists led by Balgangadhar Tilak, Aurobindo Ghosh and others, he was looking for an alternative leadership under the younger generation.





- He, however, **could not reconcile with terrorist extremism** as in spite of all his trenchant criticism of imperialist rule he never approved of two things—namely, romantic adventurism and violence born of intolerance.
- Tagore rejected violence from the British as well and **renounced the knighthood** that had been given to him in by Lord Hardinge in 1915 in protest of the violent Amritsar massacre in which the British killed at least 1526 unarmed Indian citizens.
- The cornerstone of Tagore's beliefs and work is the idea **that anti-colonialism cannot simply be achieved by rejecting all things British**, but should consist of incorporating all the best aspects of western culture into the best of Indian culture.
- One of the most important ideas that Tagore contributed is that **"freedom" does not simply mean political freedom from the British**; True freedom means the ability to be truthful and honest with oneself otherwise autonomy loses all of its worth.
- Tagore was essentially a universal humanist who believed in the essence of human unity. He saw no contradiction between this universalism and India's nation-hood and the fulfilment of its own destiny. Tagore's Shantiniketan was an effort in bringing about a confluence of his universal dream.

#### Conclusion:

- The basic thrust of Tagore's approach to India's nationhood and freedom from British rule was his **all-pervasive emphasis on root and branch social reform and removal of the gross inequities India's society suffered from**. Tagore's alternative vision of peace, harmony and the spiritual unity of humankind seems more relevant now than ever.

**Q) Discuss the contributions of Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar to the social reform movements with a special emphasis on the contributions made by him through literature. (250 words)**

Livemint

#### Why this question:

The question is in the light of recent incident in Bengal where in his statue was vandalized in Kolkata during a clash between Trinamool Congress and Bharatiya Janata Party cadres.

#### Key demands of the question:

The answer must briefly discuss the contributions of Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar in the social reform movements through his literary contributions.

#### Directive:

**Discuss** – This is an all-encompassing directive – you have to debate on paper by going through the details of the issues concerned by examining each one of them. You have to give reasons for both for and against arguments.

#### Structure of the answer:

##### Introduction

In a few introductory lines explain how he was a proponent of "do your work yourself", Vidyasagar is considered a legend ahead of his times—someone who could challenge the staunch Hindu patriarchy to bring in modern reforms.

##### Body

The body of the answer has to capture the following aspects:

- Brief about Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar – Born in 1820 in Midnapur as Iswar Chandra Bandopadhyay, he received the title Vidyasagar for his outstanding academic performance when he graduated from Sanskrit College.
- Literary contributions – Vidyasagar's Barna Parichay (an introduction to the Bengali alphabet) is still the first book a Bengali child is handed more than 160 years after it was written, His contribution to the alphabet, translation of several Sanskrit books, including Kalidas's Shakuntala, has helped Bengali literature, Vidyasagar wrote two volumes on the mistreatment of widows, which set the tone for major social reform in the state etc.
- Discuss then his contributions as a social reformer – took on conservative power centers of the Hindu society to force through reforms that would allow widow remarriage, women's education and the rights of lower caste Hindus to study Sanskrit, challenged the widespread practice of child marriage, He challenged the staunch Hindu patriarchy to bring in modern reforms etc.





### Conclusion

Conclude that he was an important He was an educationist, a reformer and a pundit of grammar in the history of India.

### Introduction:

- Ishwar Chandra Vidya Sagar became a legendary figure for his simple living, fearlessness, spirit of self-sacrifice, his devotion to education, to the cause of the downtrodden. The grammarist, polymath, scholar, educationist, reformer and doyen of the Bengal Renaissance has been a ready reference for millions of Bengalis to not only encourage their children to study but also to strive for excellence in the face of adversity..

### Body:

His contributions to the social reform movements:

#### Widow Remarriage:

- The focus of his social reform was women — and he spent his life's energies trying to ensure an end to the practice of child marriage and initiate widow remarriage.
- He followed in the great reformist tradition of Raja Ram Mohun Roy (1772-1833), and argued, on the basis of scriptures and old commentaries, in favour of the remarriage of widows in the same way as Roy did for the abolition of Sati.
- Vidyasagar wrote two volumes on the mistreatment of widows, which set the tone for major social reform in the state.
- His earliest effort at social reform, however, came in the second half of 1850 when, in a paper on the evils of child marriage.
- He launched a powerful attack on the practice of marrying off girls aged 10 or even younger, pointing to social, ethical, and hygiene issues, and rejecting the validity of the Dharma Shastras that advocated it.
- He showed that there was no prohibition on widows remarrying in the entire body of 'Smriti' literature (the Sutras and the Shastras).

#### Campaign against polygamy:

- Alongside the campaign for widow remarriage, he campaigned against polygamy.
- In 1857, a petition for the prohibition of polygamy among Kulin Brahmins was presented to the government with 25,000 signatures, led by the Maharaja of Burdwan.
- The mutiny of the sepoys resulted in the postponement of action on this petition, but in 1866, Vidyasagar inspired another petition, this time with 21,000 signatures.
- In the 1870s, the great rationalist, wrote two brilliant critiques of polygamy, arguing to the government that since polygamy was not sanctioned by the sacred texts, there could be no objection to suppressing it by legislation.

#### Women's education:

- He was a keen advocate of education for women. He rightly viewed education as the primary way for women to emancipate themselves from all the social oppression they had to face at the time.
- He went door to door, asking family heads to allow their daughters to be enrolled in schools. Across Bengal, he opened 35 women's schools and succeeded in enrolling 1300 students.
- To support women education, he organized a fund called Nari Shiksha Bhandar.
- He supported Drinkwater Bethune to establish the first permanent girls' school in India, the Bethune School.
- Vidyasagar spent the last 18 years of his life living among Santhal tribals in present day Jharkhand, where he started what is possibly India's first school for Santhal girls.
- He expressed his ideas through regular articles he wrote for periodicals and newspapers. He was associated with prestigious journalistic publications like 'Tattwabodhini Patrika', 'Somprakash', 'Sarbashubhankari Patrika' and 'Hindu Patriot'.

#### Other literary works:

- Vidyasagar's **Barna Parichay** (an introduction to the Bengali alphabet) is still the first book a Bengali child is handed more than 160 years after it was written.
- His contribution to the alphabet, translation of several Sanskrit books, including Kalidas's Shankuntala, has helped Bengali literature.
- He wrote two books which interpreted complex notions of Sanskrit Grammar in Bengali language viz. **Upakaramonika and Byakaran Kourmudi**.
- He established the Sanskrit Press with an aim to produce printed books at affordable prices so that common people could buy them.

**Conclusion:**

- He was a man of bold spirit, but was very simple and sincere. Therefore, even the great European officers deeply admired and respected him. He was very plain in dress and habit.
- The kindness of Vidyasagar's mother, Bhagabati Devi was boundless. Vidyasagar followed the principle of his mother all through his life. Therefore, people called him **DayaSagar Vidyasagar**, the Ocean of kindness and learning.

**Q) Discuss in detail the contributions made by Vinayak Damodar Savarkar Indian freedom struggle. (250 words)**

[Hindustantimes](https://www.hindustantimes.com)

**Why this question:**

Amidst the election season of 2019, National heroes have come to be vilified for petty political gain and Vinayak Damodar Savarkar was in the narrative too. Thus, its important for us to discuss his contributions.

**Key demands of the question:**

The answer must discuss in detail the contributions made by made by Vinayak Damodar Savarkar Indian freedom struggle.

**Directive:**

**Discuss** – This is an all-encompassing directive – you have to debate on paper by going through the details of the issues concerned by examining each one of them. You have to give reasons for both for and against arguments.

**Structure of the answer:****Introduction**

In a few introductory lines present the character of Vinayak Damodar Savarkar.

**Body**

The answer is straightforward and there is not much deliberation here. One must narrate the significant role played by Vinayak Damodar Savarkar in the anticolonial struggle and nationalism.

- He was a staunch patriot and was attracted to radical views and movements.
- He established the Free India Society to organise students to fight for India's independence through a revolution. He declared, "we want absolute independence."
- He authored a book "The History of the War of Indian Independence" in which he described the Indian Revolt of 1857 and referred to the British rule as unjust and oppressive. He became one of the first persons to allude to this revolt as India's 'first war of independence'. This book was banned in India but its secret publication and distribution was done.
- He is credited with coining the term 'Hindutva'. He turned towards creating a Hindu national identity. He stressed on the unity of all Hindus and also talked about Buddhism, Jainism and Sikhism as one with Hindu. He is regarded as a controversial figure today because of his ideology of a 'Hindu Rashtra'. Despite this, he was an atheist and a rationalist.
- He also initiated the reconversion of those Hindus who had converted to other religions.
- He became the president of the Hindu Mahasabha from 1937 to 1943.
- He was hostile to Gandhi, especially for his Khilafat Movement which he described as 'appeasement'.
- Etc.

**Conclusion**

Conclude by reasserting the significant role played by him in the freedom struggle.

**Introduction:**

- Vinayak Damodar Savarkar (Veer Savarkar) occupies a unique place in the history of Indian freedom struggle. His name evokes controversy. While some consider him as one of the greatest revolutionaries in the Indian freedom struggle, others consider him a communalist and right-wing leader.

**Body:**

Contributions made by Vinayak Damodar Savarkar:

- In Pune, Savarkar founded the "**Abhinav Bharat Society**". He was also involved in the Swadeshi movement and later joined Tilak's Swaraj Party. His instigating patriotic speeches and activities incensed the British Government. As a result the British Government withdrew his B.A. degree.



- In June 1906, Veer Savarkar, left for London to become Barrister. However, once in London, he united and inflamed the Indian students in England against British rule in India. He founded the Free India Society.
- The Society celebrated important dates on the Indian calendar including festivals, freedom movement landmarks, and was dedicated to furthering discussion about Indian freedom. He believed and advocated the use of arms to free India from the British and created a network of Indians in England, equipped with weapons.
- In 1908, brought out an authentic informative researched work on The Great Indian Revolt, which the British termed as “Sepoy Mutiny” of 1857. The book was called “The Indian War of Independence 1857”.
- The British government immediately enforced a ban on the publication in both Britain and India. Later, it was published by Madame Bhikaiji Cama in Holland, and was smuggled into India to reach revolutionaries working across the country against British rule.
- When the then British Collector of Nasik, A.M.T. Jackson was shot by a youth, Veer Savarkar finally fell under the net of the British authorities. He was implicated in the murder citing his connections with India House. Savarkar was arrested in London on March 13, 1910 and sent to India.
- In 1920, many prominent freedom fighters including Vithalbhai Patel, Mahatma Gandhi and Bal Gangadhar Tilak demanded the release of Savarkar. On May 2, 1921, Savarkar was moved to Ratnagiri jail, and from there to the Yeravada jail. In Ratnagiri jail Savarkar wrote the book ‘Hindutva: who is hindu?’.
- Savarkar began describing a “Hindu” as a patriotic inhabitant of Bharatavarsha, venturing beyond a religious identity. While emphasising the need for patriotic and social unity of all Hindu communities, he described Hinduism, Jainism, Sikhism and Buddhism as one and the same.
- He outlined his vision of a “Hindu Rashtra” (Hindu Nation) as “Akhand Bharat” (United India), purportedly stretching across the entire Indian subcontinent. He defined Hindus as being neither Aryan nor Dravidian but as “People who live as children of a common motherland, adoring a common holy land.”
- Although staunch anti-British in his early years, he supported British efforts in India seeking military efforts to Hindus during World War 2 and opposed the Quit India Movement.
- Hindu Mahasabha activists protested Gandhi’s initiative to hold talks with Jinnah in 1944, which Savarkar denounced as “appeasement.” He assailed the British proposals for transfer of power, attacking both the Congress and the British for making concessions to Muslim separatists.
- Vinayak Savarkar was a president of Hindu Mahasabha from 1937 to 1943. When congress ministries offered resignation on 22nd Oct 1939, Hindu mahasabha under his leadership cooperated with Muslim league to form government in provinces like Sindh, Bengal and NWFP.
- His strong views on Hindutva though secular in broader outlook, led to rise in radicalism among his followers. This also led to rise in tension between two communities.

#### Conclusion:

- Many of Savarkar’s ideas on social and religious reforms, embrace of science, and building a stronger state continue to be relevant for India.
- His controversial position on Hindutva also continues to inform current political debates. It is time that a wider set of scholars began to engage with Savarkar’s ideas—including controversial ones.

*Topic– Capitalism, socialism, communism etc.- their forms and effect on the society.*

**Q) Discuss the effects of the Haymarket Riot on the labour movement. How has the world evolved since then towards Uniting Workers for Social and Economic Advancement ? (250 words)**

#### Reference

##### *why this question:*

The Labour Day is celebrated to commemorate the happenings of May 4, 1886, the Haymarket affair (Haymarket Massacre) in the Chicago. To commemorate this event, the Second International, a pan-national organisation of socialist and communist political parties, marked 1 May as the Labour Day in 1891.

##### *Demand of the question:*

This question seeks to examine the effects of Haymarket affair on the labour movement across the world and how has the world evolved since then towards Uniting Workers for Social and Economic Advancement.



### **Directive word:**

**Discuss** – This is an all-encompassing directive – you have to debate on paper by going through the details of the issues concerned by examining each one of them. You have to give reasons for both for and against arguments.

### **Structure of the answer:**

#### **Introduction**

Start with brief introduction of Why 1 May is observed as Labour Day? – to commemorate the happenings of May 4, 1886, the Haymarket affair (Haymarket Massacre) in the Chicago.

#### **Body**

Discuss the following points in detail:

What was Haymarket affair?

- During industrialization at the beginning of the 19th Century, the industrialists used to exploit the labour class and made them work up to 15 hours a day.
- The workers at Haymarket affair, in Chicago rose against this exploitation and demanded paid leaves, proper wages and breaks for the workforce.
- The day marks the victory of the workers' movement for eight hours of work.
- To commemorate this event, the Second International, a pan-national organization of socialist and communist political parties, marked 1 May as the Labour Day in 1891.
- Then discuss how have we evolved since then towards Uniting Workers for Social and Economic Advancement.
- Have a brief discussion on India scenario too.

#### **Conclusion**

Conclude with significance of workers sacrifices in achieving economic and social rights all over the world.

#### **Introduction:**

- International Labour Day, also known as International Worker's Day or May Day is celebrated to honour the contribution of working men and women. The theme of Labour Day this year is – **Uniting Workers for Social and Economic Advancement**.

#### **Body:**

##### **Haymarket Riot:**

- The Labour Day is celebrated to commemorate the happenings of May 4, 1886, the Haymarket affair (Haymarket Massacre) in the Chicago.
- To commemorate this event, the Second International, a pan-national organisation of socialist and communist political parties, marked 1 May as the Labour Day in 1891.
- It is a violent confrontation between police and labour protesters in Chicago on May 4, 1886, that became a symbol of the international struggle for workers' rights.
- US activists organized a national strike in Chicago's Haymarket Square (US) to get 8-hour work-shift, Paid leave and reasonable pay for the workers.
- On May 3 one person was killed and several injured as police intervened to protect strike-breakers and intimidate strikers during a union action at the McCormick Harvesting Machine Company that was part of a national campaign to secure an eight-hour workday.
- To protest police brutality, anarchist labour leaders called a mass meeting the next day in Haymarket Square.
- The Haymarket Riot created widespread hysteria directed against immigrants and labour leaders.
- Amid the panic, August Spies and seven other anarchists were convicted of murder on the grounds that they had conspired with or aided an unknown assailant.

##### **Evolution of labour field in world post the Haymarket Riots:**

- The Haymarket Riot had a lasting effect on the labour movement in the United States.
- The Knights of Labour (KOL), at the time the largest and most successful union organization in the country, was blamed for the incident.
- While the KOL also had sought an eight-hour day and had called several strikes to achieve that goal, its involvement in the riot could not be proved.
- Public distrust, however, caused many KOL locals to join the newly formed and less-radical American Federation of Labour.
- Popular pressure continued for the establishment of the 8-hour day.



- At the convention of the American Federation of Labour (AFL) in 1888, the union decided to campaign for the shorter workday again. May 1, 1890, was agreed upon as the date on which workers would strike for an eight-hour work day.
- In 1889, AFL president Samuel Gompers wrote to the first congress of the Second International, which was meeting in Paris. He informed the world's socialists of the AFL's plans and proposed an international fight for a universal eight-hour work day
- During industrialization at the beginning of the 19th Century, the industrialists used to exploit the labour class and made them work up to 15 hours a day. The workers rose against this exploitation and demanded paid leaves, proper wages and breaks for the workforce.
- Over time, the Labour Movement did indeed strengthen and grow throughout the nation. Organizations such as the American Federation of Labour (AFL) and the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) grew tremendously in members and political influence.
- Today, membership in unions has dropped substantially, especially in the private sector. Public sector union membership however remains strong and highly influential. Debate still rages about the need and cost impact of unions in the twenty first century.

#### Evolution in India:

- In India, the first Labour Day or May Day was celebrated in 1923 in Chennai. Led by Singaravelar, leader of the Labour Kisan Party of Hindustan, two meetings were held, one at Triplicane Beach and one near the Madras High Court.
- It was at these meetings that a resolution was passed urging the British government to declare May 1 as Labour Day and also a government holiday. It was the first occasion in India on which the red flag was used
- The Unions in India were not recognised by the capitalists at the beginning, and the government backed their attitude. But the strength of the movement has forced recognition upon both of them.
- But in India there is no strong Communist Party, and it will take some time to create an effective one.
- The Indian Trade unions have now got a legal status and now they are not as ad-hoc bodies or strike committees.
- They have now become a permanent feature of the industrial society. They have succeeded in organising Central Union Federations which help in the determination of principles, philosophy, ideology and purposes of the unions and give some sense of direction to the otherwise scattered and isolated unions.
- Through the status, the unions have now gained; they have influenced public policy, labour and industrial legislations. They have succeeded in evolving suitable machinery of joint consultation to negotiate various issues between labour and management.

#### Conclusion:

- In the modern industrial society, the importance of trade unions have been recognised which have diminished interest in political matters. Subtle changes are visible in the pattern of political unionism.

**Q) How does religion influence politics in India? Critically analyse in the light of recent 2019 report of United States Commission on International Religious Freedom. (250 words)**

The hindu

#### why this question:

Recently The United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, in its 2019 report has stated that there is an “overall deterioration of religious freedom conditions in 2018” in India. Thus the question becomes important to ponder from the point of view of GS paper I.

#### Key demands of the question:

The answer must evaluate the link between religion and politics in Indian case and how is different from other countries of the world, also discuss why is India often being criticized to fall in Tier II category, conclude with way forward.

#### Directive word

**Critically analyze** – When asked to analyze, you have to examine methodically the structure or nature of the topic by separating it into component parts and present them as a whole in a summary. When ‘critically’ is suffixed or prefixed to a directive, one needs to look at the good and bad of the topic and give a fair judgement.





### **Structure of the answer:**

#### **Introduction**

In a few introductory lines explain the background of the report findings.

#### **Body**

Discuss the following dimensions in the answer:

- Quote the findings of the report about India – According to the Commission, India continues to remain a Tier 2 country, a list it has been unable to get off of since 2009.
- In India, religious freedom is declining, apart from increased securitization and politicization of religion.
- Also discuss that Tenzin Dorjee, Commission Chairperson gave a dissenting view and argued that India is an open society with a robust democratic and judiciary system where religious harmony exists.
- Explain the correlation of religion and politics in India? How does religion influence politics in India? Discuss pros and cons – The religion based politics ideology and mass mobilization have always challenged secular forces in Indian society.
- Many people vote on the basis of religion and to the person belonging to their religion. In my view religion based politics is harmful, it divides the citizens.
- Discuss the constitutional provisions.
- Analyse the findings of the report – discuss shortcomings if any.
- Suggest what needs to be done?

#### **Conclusion**

Conclude with way forward.

#### **Introduction:**

- The United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, a bipartisan, independent federal government commission has said that there is an “overall deterioration of religious freedom conditions in 2018” in India, in its 2019 report released earlier this week. India continues to remain a Tier 2 country, according to the Commission, a list it has been unable to get off of since 2009.

#### **Body:**

- Tier 2 countries are those in which “violations engaged in or tolerated by the government during 2018 are serious and characterized by at least one of the elements of the ‘systematic, ongoing, and egregious’ CPC (Country of Particular Concern) standard.

#### **India- specific Key findings:**

- India saw an “overall deterioration of religious freedom conditions in 2018”.
- India continues to remain a Tier II country. It is in same list since 2009. Tier II countries are those in which violations engaged in or tolerated by government are serious and characterized by at least one of the elements of systematic, ongoing, and egregious (horrible)’.
- India is facing declining religious freedom, apart from increased securitisation and politicisation of religion.
- It is increasingly becoming difficult to separate religion and politics. It is a tactic which is sometimes intended by those who seek to discriminate against certain religious communities.
- Over the last decade Minorities conditions have deteriorated in country. The reason is attributed to extremist groups, anti-conversion laws, cow-protection groups, mob lynching, concerns that millions from Assam will be incorrectly left out of NRC (National Register of Citizen) and a denying international NGOs registration.

#### **Correlation of religion and politics in India:**

- Religion and Politics are intertwined and are integral parts of our society. It is a type of identity politics that is produced through the development of a community on the shared link of religion.
- Religion and caste have always played a very dominating role in Indian politics but since the past few years, religion has overtaken caste to become the No.1 issue for vote bank politics.
- Unlike western secularism where religion is totally separated from politics Indian secularism treats all religions equally.
- A majority of Indians prefer political leaders from their own caste, tribe or religion, according to a 2018 study.
- Politicians in order to win the confidence of the public, take the support of their religion, they build temples, give donations to various social organizations on the name of caste and religion, give religion influential speeches, etc.



- The rise of Hindu national decisiveness, politics of representational government, persistence of communal perceptions, and competition for the socio-economic resources are considered some of the reasons for the generation of communal beliefs and their change into major riots.
- Identity schemes based on religion have become a major source of skirmish not only in the international background but since the early 1990s it has also become a challenge for Indian democracy and secularism.
- The report says conditions for minorities in India have deteriorated over the last decade, adding that a “multifaceted campaign by Hindu nationalist groups like the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), Sangh Parivar, and Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP) to alienate non-Hindus or lower-caste Hindus is a significant contributor to the rise of religious violence and persecution.”
- It calls out the role of Hindutva/Hindu extremist groups, India’s anti-conversion laws, cow-protection lynch mobs, concerns that millions from Assam will be incorrectly left out of the National Register of Citizens and a lack of transparency on denying international NGOs registration and political targeting of NGOs.

However, the Chairperson of Commission, Tenzin Dorjee gave a dissenting view. He argued that India is an open society with a robust democratic and judiciary system where religious harmony exists. He cited “positive developments” like communal attacks dropped by 12 % in 2018 from 2017 levels, a 12% increase in budget of Ministry of Minority Affairs and Supreme Court’s push for a 11-point plan to counter mob violence

The Supreme Court had ruled that Section 123 (3) of the Representatives of People Act prohibits any candidate, his agent, or any person consented by such candidate or his agent, from soliciting votes, or discouraging voters against voting for a rival candidate, on grounds of religion, race, caste, community or language, by declaring such conduct as a ‘corrupt practice’.

#### Conclusion:

- The constitutional provision of Secularism must be upheld to maintain the plurality of India. The political parties must be sensitized to stay off communal activities barring which the Election Commission should take penal actions.

### Q) “The victims of capitalism have always been the disadvantaged sections of society” Critically analyse. (250 words)

[The hindu](#)

#### Why this question:

The question is in the context of 200th birth anniversary of Karl Marx, which was celebrated on May 5, 2018, yesterday. The article brings out the wisdom of Marxian philosophy and highlights its significance even as of today.

#### Key demands of the question:

The answer must discuss how Marxism as a science, as an ideology, and as a methodology keeps demonstrating its relevance every day. One has to analyse why the victims of capitalism have always been the disadvantaged sections of society.

#### Directive word

**Critically analyse** – When asked to analyze, you have to examine methodically the structure or nature of the topic by separating it into component parts and present them as a whole in a summary. When ‘critically’ is suffixed or prefixed to a directive, one needs to look at the good and bad of the topic and give a fair judgement.

#### Structure of the answer:

##### Introduction

In a few introductory lines define capitalism.

##### Body

Discuss the following aspects in the answer:

- What is capitalism ? what are its effects on the society ?
- Discuss the reasons for presence of class conflict in society.
- Capture the Indian context.
- Demerits of Capitalism – unprecedented concentration of wealth in the hands of a few and a marked shift in the actual centers of power. Crony capitalism among the policy makers.



- What are the dimensions/sectors hit by capitalism? – education, health, policy making, employment and jobs etc.
- Discuss what needs to be done ? re assert the significance of Marxian philosophy.

### Conclusion

Conclude with way forward.

### Introduction:

- Capitalism is an economic system believed to have been born in the aftermath of the industrial revolution in the eighteenth century Europe. It is based on private enterprise and private ownership of means of production like land, labour, capital etc. as compared to the economic system of Socialism, on the other end of the spectrum, which encourages public or state ownership of means of production.
- The production and distribution of commodities take place through the mechanism of free markets. Hence it is also called as market economy or free trade economy.

### Body:

Capitalism in India has had the following impacts on the society:

- **Increase in corporate power:** The benefits in terms of increased growth seem fairly difficult to establish when looking at a broad group of countries.
- Crony capitalism was soon making fast inroads into the policymaking coteries of India, and this new-found confidence of the private sector bore fruits.
- The costs in terms of increased inequality are prominent. Such costs epitomize the trade-off between the growth and equity effects of some aspects of the neoliberal Promotes exploitation and social injustice.
- **Increased inequality** in turn hurts the level and sustainability of growth. Even if growth is the sole or main purpose of the liberal agenda, advocates of that agenda still need to pay attention to the distributional effects. Capitalist policies result in an expanding carceral state and the criminalization of poverty.
- According to **Credit Suisse Research Institute's Global Wealth Report**, 1% of the Indian population owns 51.5% of the wealth in the country, and the top 10% own about three-fourths of the wealth. On the other hand, the bottom 60%, the majority of the population, own 4.7% of the total wealth.
- **Social sectors:** Public education and health are the worst hit by capitalism. Education spending by the Centre has been showing a downward trend — from 6.15% in the 2014-15 Budget to 3.71% in the 2017-18 Budget.
- **Labour-Market at mercy of Corporates:** Deregulation of the labour market produces flexibilization and casualization of labour, greater informal employment, and a considerable increase in industrial accidents and occupational diseases.
- **Anti-Democratic:** Globalization can subvert nations' ability for self-determination. Some scholars contend that Capitalism undermines the basic elements of democracy.
- The replacement of a government-owned monopoly with private companies, each supposedly trying to provide the consumer with better value service than all of its private competitors, removes the efficiency that can be gained from the economy of scale.
- **Environmental Impacts:** Trade-led, unregulated economic activity and lax state regulation of pollution lead to environmental impacts or degradation. "The era of neo-liberalization also happens to be the era of the fastest mass extinction of species in the Earth's recent history."
- **Consumers instead of Citizens:** Instead of communities, it produces shopping malls. The net result is an atomized society of disengaged individuals who feel demoralized and socially powerless. Capitalism holds that market forces should organize every facet of society, including economic and social life, and promotes asocial Darwinist ethic which elevates self-interest over social needs.

However, there are merits of a Capitalist Economy too,

- The producers are more incentivized to produce their best goods and services due to the feature of the profit motive and the ability to hold private property.
- The economic growth of an economy is also faster and higher in a capitalist economy. This is because the investors will also invest in projects that are profitable for them. There is no pressure to produce any goods or services if they do not wish to do so for the sake of the public.
- Since all resources and factors of production are under private ownership they are used in the most productive manner. This results in optimum utilization of resources,
- Consumers also benefit in a capitalist economy. Firstly they have the freedom to choose whichever products or services they wish to buy. Also, the competition is high and the producers are motivated to make their best products in large quantities at reasonable prices.
- Capitalism also promotes fundamental rights of freedom and choice for both the consumer and the producers



- In a capitalist economy, there is an incentive for technological and R&D development.
- We can expect a higher degree of efficiency and innovation in a capitalist economy than any other economy.

#### Way Forward:

- Positive intervention by Government for equitable and sustainable economic development and not complete separation of state and market.
- A system of taxation that promotes economic equality, encouraging entrepreneurship and setting up venture capital funds to support entrepreneurs from the lower socio-economic strata; running social welfare programs that ensure substantive equality of opportunity by providing affordable quality education and health services.
  - **Example:** Government of India recognizes this responsibility and hence to encourage entrepreneurship among marginalized sections of society and enhance socio-economic equality, it has started 'Start-Up India'.
- The market needs the state, more than the other way around. The market needs internal regulation, in order to function: the state, in the form of the legal system, ensures contracts are enforced.
  - **Example:** In the form of the police, it prevents theft and fraud. It establishes uniform systems of weights and measures, and a uniform currency.
- While the system of capitalism has its flaws, regulated by a government that works on social welfare model, capitalism can lead to improved efficiency in enterprise, enhance private investments and can boost economic production while at the same time raising the capital necessary for a government to run its social schemes for the betterment of the poor and the marginalized.
  - **Example:** the Scandinavian countries have followed the capitalist mode with a strong regulatory regime and social welfare which led to praiseworthy results. Inequality adjusted HDI regularly rank Scandinavian Countries like Norway, Denmark, Sweden and Finland among the top ten countries.
- Adopting a system that is flexible to change with the need of the time and enable the government to pitch in whenever necessary will help.

#### Topic- Salient features of Indian Society

**Q) What is community-based policing? What are its goals? Discuss in the light of issues that for long have plagued and continue to plague Indian policing system. Suggest what needs to be done to better the present picture of the system. (250 words)**

epw

#### Why this question:

Recently as part of its community-policing initiatives, the Maharashtra police has decided to institutionalize the "best policing practices" that were or are being followed in districts across the state. These include the "police Didi" programme in Mumbai, the "bharosa (trust) cell" by the Pune and Nagpur police and so on. Thus, it is important for us to evaluate the significance of community policing in Indian context.

#### Key demands of the question:

The answer must briefly discuss the concept of community based policing, its merits and demerits vis-à-vis the existing police system that is plagued with plethora of issues.

#### Directive word

**Discuss** – This is an all-encompassing directive – you have to debate on paper by going through the details of the issues concerned by examining each one of them. You have to give reasons for both for and against arguments.

#### Structure of the answer:

##### Introduction

In a few introductory lines explain what you understand by Community policing.

##### Body

The body of the answer has to capture the following aspects:

- Community policing – is a philosophy that promotes organizational strategies that support the systematic use of partnerships and problem-solving techniques to proactively address the immediate conditions that give rise to public safety issues such as crime, social disorder, and fear of crime.



- What are the elements of community policing? – positive interaction, partnerships, and problem solving.
- What are the key features of community policing? – It is a partnership with the objective to determine community needs and policing priorities and to promote police accountability and effectiveness. It should include the participation of all stakeholders. It is effective at problem solving.
- Discuss the benefits and disadvantages associated with it with respect to the issues plaguing Indian police system (highlight issues and show how community policing can provide for good fix).

### Conclusion

Conclude with significance of the role played by the system of such policing.

### Introduction:

- Community-based policing is a project initiated and implemented by the police in active partnership with the local community / neighbourhood / citizen groups / business community for identifying the needs and solving issues related to the common safety and security requirements of the local community.
- Various states have been experimenting with community policing including Kerala through Janamaithri Suraksha Project, Rajasthan through Joint Patrolling Committees, etc

### Body:

#### Goals of Community Policing:

- Improving the quality of life and ensuring safer living conditions by motivating and facilitating community members and other community interest groups to organize themselves into problem solving groups in partnership with the police
- Educating people on their rights, eligibilities and responsibilities in relation to criminal law
- Fostering a sense of respect for the legal process and eliminate fear of police in the minds of the people.

#### Benefits of Community Policing:

- Improved community initiative and response for crime prevention, problem solving and conflict resolution
- Enhanced community support for policing efforts
- Improved public safety and sense of security in the community
- Reduced fear of crime
- Improved law abiding nature in the community
- Improved sense of voluntarism in the community to solve common problems through collective approaches
- Enhanced trust, improved credibility and image of the police

#### Issues plaguing the police force:

- **Operational Freedom:** The Indian Police Act provides for the political superintendence of police force. This provision has been widely misused by political leaders both in the state as well as centre and has become a bottleneck in effective policing in the country. Political interference in police functioning and the political executive's hold over the force.
- **Crime Investigations:** Crime investigation requires skills, training, time, resources, and adequate forensic capabilities. However, the Law Commission and the Second Administrative Reforms Commission have noted that state police officers often neglect this responsibility because they are understaffed and overburdened with various kinds of tasks.
- **An overburdened force:** Currently, there are significant vacancies within the State police forces and some of the Central armed police forces. Most of the police personnel have to undergo a 12-hour duty on a daily basis without week off. Problems of overwork, lack of leave, poor dietary habits due to long hours of duty, lack of decent housing and so on are just some of the issues they face.
- **Vacancies:** India's ratio of police persons per 1,000 people is 1.2, which is grossly below the United Nation's recommendation. There are huge vacancies in almost every state, especially in the non-Indian Police Service posts
- **Constabulary related issues:** The constabulary constitutes 86% of the State police forces and has wide-ranging responsibilities. The Padmanabhaiah Committee and the Second Administrative Reforms Commission have noted that the entry-level qualifications and training of constables do not qualify them for their role.
- **Police infrastructure:** Modern policing requires a strong communication support, state-of-the-art or modern weapons, well-trained staff, Efficient Utilisation of funds and a high degree of mobility. The CAG and the BPRD have noted shortcomings on several of these fronts.





- **Police-Public relations:** The police – public relation in India lies under the shadow of distrust. People view police as corrupt, inefficient, politically partisan and unresponsive. This state of police – public relation needs an overhaul which is essential for an effective policing in the country.
- **Accountability** of the police to the larger community and their attitudes towards tribal, marginalised, Dalit and women complainants.
- The attitude of the citizen and male police officials is hardly praiseworthy when it comes to policewomen who are not from the IPS cadre. Their training, postings, etc, need to receive urgent attention.

#### Measures needed:

- Policing is, or rather should be, aimed at providing a safe environment to the community.
- As noted by experts, it is the only non-combatant organisation that can use force against citizens and curtail their liberty.
- Such power must be tempered by its own moral and social consciousness.
- The initiative announced by the Maharashtra police must take these factors into account when it institutionalises the best community practices.
- **An Independent Complaint authority:** To instil faith among citizen and to overcome police misconduct, an independent complaint authority is the demand of the time.
- **Modernization of policing Infrastructure:** Policing infrastructure in India is archaic in most of the towns in India. The system needs continuous budgetary support to overhaul the policing infrastructure in the country.
- A modern patrolling system, modern equipment, communication system, forensic labs are the need of the hour.

#### Conclusion:

- Safe and efficient internal security is need of the hour for sustainable economic growth for India particularly in the light of complex security threats. It is essential to now look at the police as a service organization meeting those needs of the society that are essential for safety, security, quality of life and peace.

### Q) Analyse in detail the role of the family in tackling crimes against women. (250 words)

#### The Big Picture – Tackling Crime Against Women

#### Reference

##### Why this question:

The International Family Day was celebrated on 15th May, it highlights the importance of families as a basic unit of society. It provides an opportunity to promote awareness of issues relating to families and to increase knowledge of the social, economic and demographic processes affecting them. It inspires a series of awareness-raising events, including national family days. In many countries, this day highlights different areas of interest and importance to families. Thus, on such an occasion its imperative to discuss role of the family in tackling crimes against women.

##### Key demands of the question:

The answer must briefly discuss the role of the family in tackling crimes against women.

##### Directive:

**Analyze** – When asked to analyze, you have to examine methodically the structure or nature of the topic by separating it into component parts and present them as a whole in a summary.

##### Structure of the answer:

##### Introduction

In a few introductory lines explain the context – International Family Day highlights the importance of families as a basic unit of society. May 15 was decided to be celebrated as International Family Day by the United Nations General Assembly in 1993.

##### Body

The body of the answer has to capture the following aspects:

- Explain that the crimes against women have been in focus over the past few weeks, with several heinous ones being reported across the country.
- Quote the recent examples – Kashmir incident, Rajasthan Dalit women rape case and others.
- The focus of the answer should be to justify the crucial role that a family has to play to address the crimes against women; explain how Family relationships can either encourage or constrain a girl's or a woman's ability to take advantage of opportunities that are provided through local, national or international initiatives.



- Infer how the family can act as a foundation for promoting gender equality and empowerment.

### Conclusion

Conclude that It is thus, critical that gender targets and benchmarks also acknowledge the fundamental family dimensions that either constrain or advance gender equality and empowerment.

### Introduction:

- Indian Society has always revered women. The home is often equated with a sanctuary, a place where individuals seek love, safety, security and shelter. For some women, the home is a place that imperils lives and breeds some of the most drastic forms of violence perpetrated against girls and women.
- Crimes against women have been in focus over the past few weeks, with several heinous ones being reported across the country.

### Body:

Role of family in tackling crimes against women:

- Families remain the intrinsic unit within which to effect change, and protect and empower girls and women.
- Families remain at the center of social life and continue to be the primary mechanism for coping with social, economic and political adversity and the socialization and education of children.
- Family relationships can either encourage or constrain a girl's or a woman's ability to take advantage of opportunities that are provided through local, national or international initiatives.
- In many societal contexts around the world, fathers, brothers and husbands determine the life choices that girls and women are allowed to make.
- In many societies and among various ethnic and cultural groups, families function as a crucial protective mechanism for girls and women.
- The family group shields girls and women from the discrimination, oppression, and violence they may face in the larger society
- International Family Day highlights the importance of families as a basic unit of society. May 15 was decided to be celebrated as International Family Day by the United Nations General Assembly in 1993.

### Causes for violence against women in families:

- The last decade has seen an **erosion of family values**, because these days, the world has shifted to a materialistic world. It is because of this materialism that the family value system is coming down.
- People don't have time to sit with their family members. This results in a lack of connection with their family members. Earlier we used to have the joint-family system where even if a child's parents were away, their grandparents were there to guide them. However, nowadays in the nuclear families, both parents are working, and the first schooling which a child gets is from the family; the child learns either consciously or unconsciously from the family. When children see how their father is behaving with their mother's, or with other family members, unconsciously the child learns from that behaviour.
- When parents do not have time for their children, they provide gadgets to them. These gadgets can either be computers, or smart phones, etc. However, they don't teach their children as to what to watch and what to avoid on these gadgets.
- There has been an increase in the number of crimes on the **minors by minors**. Juveniles are indulging in crimes against minors and somewhere, parental guidance is lacking. This is in spite of the fact that technology is spread all over but the children don't know as to how to use this technology.
- The lack of gender equality makes girls and women vulnerable to increased discrimination, violence, trafficking and other harmful practices.
- Girls and women's lack of power to make decisions about their own lives, coupled with limited economic resources, makes their position in the global economy perilous at best.
- In many parts of the world, particularly low-income girls and women are overburdened with domestic chores, not given equal access to education, nutrition, health care and technology, and lack the self-confidence to speak up around boys and men
- Regular consumption of alcohol by the husband has been strongly associated with poor mental health of women.
- Patriarchy has been cited as the main cause of violence against women. Women engaged in small business and farming were more likely to be abused than women who were housewives or who had occupational status equal to that of husbands.
- Exposure to harsh physical discipline during childhood and witnessing the father beating the mother during childhood is a predictor of victimization and perpetration of violence against his wife in adulthood.



- Traditional and cultural practices perpetuating violence against women like Female Genital Mutilation, Killing in the name of family honour, early marriages, Devadasi system etc.

#### Way forward:

- We need to provide children with greater parental guidance.
- In families, there should also be a relationship of authority and respect between parents and their children.
- Women should be respected at home. When women are respected at home, then children also learn about the importance of respecting women. Parents cannot treat their sons and daughters differently.
- It is important to note that when people become isolated from the society, their minds turn to criminal activities.
- The state has to work towards making people aware of laws like POCSO Act, Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act etc. The state should also make the penalties of not abiding by these laws clear to the public.
- **Gender-sensitization programmes** should also be started for males of family, police personnel, medical fraternity etc. Police apathy, especially when a woman approaches the police should be worked upon.
- Encourage and adopt family focused practices that promote equal access for both girls and boys to high quality education, and ensure opportunities to successfully complete schooling, and to making educational choices
- Students should be taught to engage in community activities so that they understand realities and also understand how to cope up with realities. Community get-togethers should also be encouraged so that people get to know each other. Neighbours should also get to know their neighbours. Community activities should be encouraged.
- The misuse of technology has resulted in many crimes. The right use of technology needs to be emphasized.

**Q) Increase in life expectancy, though desirable, has posed new challenges to the modern world, the problem of ageing populations has become a matter of great concern. Discuss the challenges faced by elderly population. (250 words)**

Livemint

#### Why this question:

The problem of ageing populations has become a matter of great concern for many countries today. Provisions for pensions and healthcare are straining budgets, leaving very little space for creating new employment opportunities for younger people. Home to over 100 million elderly people and with numbers further expected to increase threefold in the next three decades India has many challenges to be addressed.

#### Key demands of the question:

The answer must briefly discuss the challenges owing to increased life expectancy, what are the issues being faced by the elderly population and what needs to be done to overcome this challenge.

#### Directive:

**Discuss** – This is an all-encompassing directive – you have to debate on paper by going through the details of the issues concerned by examining each one of them. You have to give reasons for both for and against arguments.

#### Structure of the answer:

##### Introduction

In a few introductory lines explain the background of the question in brief.

##### Body

The body of the answer has to capture the following aspects:

- Quote facts showing the changing patterns of life expectancy.
- Discuss what are the issues associated with the elderly population in terms of dependence – economically, socially. abuse by the society, failing health conditions, emotional dependence etc.
- Suggest what needs to be done?

##### Conclusion

Conclude with way forward.

#### Introduction:

- India's progress in improving the lives of its citizens can be seen in a single statistic, namely, the increase in life expectancy at birth. In 1950-55, life expectancy at birth in India was 36.6 years, whereas the average in the world was 46.8 years. By 2010-15, life expectancy in India had almost caught up with the global average: 67.5 years in India, compared with 70.5 years globally.

**Body:**

Challenges to countries because of ageing:

**Economic challenges:**

- Increase in the dependency ratio: If the retirement age remains fixed, and the life expectancy increases, there will be relatively more people claiming pension benefits and less people working and paying income taxes. The fear is that it will require high tax rates on the current, shrinking workforce.
- Increased government spending on healthcare and pensions. Also, those in retirement tend to pay lower income taxes because they are not working. This combination of higher spending commitments and lower tax revenue is a source of concern for Western governments – especially those with existing debt issues and unfunded pension schemes.
- Shortage of workers: An ageing population could lead to a shortage of workers and hence push up wages causing wage inflation. Alternatively, firms may have to respond by encouraging more people to enter the workforce, through offering flexible working practices.
- Changing sectors within the economy: An increase in the numbers of retired people will create a bigger market for goods and services linked to older people (e.g. retirement homes)
- Higher savings for pensions may reduce capital investment. If society is putting a higher % of income into pension funds, it could reduce the amount of savings available for more productive investment, leading to lower rates of economic growth.
- Because of ageing and increasing life expectancy western countries share in the global GDP is reducing in relative terms.
- Especially during economic crisis they get affected even more as unemployment rises and they don't have the necessary skill and population to work.
- Without international migration, the working-age population (persons in age group 20-64 years, as per UN classification) in the developed countries would decline by 77 million or about 11 per cent – which could increase the dependence of the developed countries on international migrants or on outsourcing of work.
- In developing countries like India the needs of increasing numbers of elderly persons are to be provided for when the demands of India's youthful population are not yet creates an economic challenge.

**Health challenges:**

- A rise in age-related chronic illness: Dementia and Alzheimer's disease are expected to almost double every 20 years, as life expectancy increases.
- Special challenges for less developed nations: Poorer countries will carry the double burden of caring for older people with chronic diseases, as well as dealing with continued high rates of infectious diseases.
- Increasing need for specialized health care workers: With millions more older people needing health care, specialized doctors, like geriatricians, will be necessary to help seniors worldwide. By 2030, it is estimated that 36,000 geriatricians will be needed in the United States alone
- Increasing need for long-term care: The number of sick and frail elderly needing affordable nursing homes or assisted living centers will likely increase.
- Health care costs increase: As older people stop working and their health care needs increase, they might be pushed to poverty without government support. In the United States, another baby boomer turns 60 every eight seconds.
- As generally live longer than men most of them will end up being widows and might have acquired less education with fewer years at work and therefore more restricted access to social security.

**Advantages of using Aged people as a resource:**

- Increased longevity may also boost labour supply and saving rates. In addition, a decline in fertility increases female labour supply (Bailey, 2006) and the resources available to invest in children's health and education
- It is likely that older communities will become more law abiding, since older people are less inclined to commit crimes.

**Community benefits:**

- Older people tend to play a role in supporting and maintaining informal social networks, which in turn bind communities and families together and can make a substantial contribution to improving social conditions.
- In Vietnam, Old People's Associations (OPAs) .government uses them to reach the communities for popularising the government programmes. A great benefit of these 'inter-generational self-help groups' (as the OPAs are called) is the social capital they accumulate and the cohesion they enable within communities.
- Women in self-help groups are improving the quality of lives of people in many countries. especially SEWA (the self-employed women's association) in India

**Conclusion:**

- The elderly are the fastest growing, underutilized resource that humanity has to address many other problems. Re-integration of the elderly into communities may save humanity from mindlessly changing into a technology driven 'Industry 4.0' which futurists are projecting: an economy of robots producing things for each other.
- Healthy elderly citizens can share their wealth of knowledge with younger generations, help with child care, and volunteer or hold jobs in their communities.

**Q) Manual scavenging in India still remains a lethal Filth. Critically Analyse the statement with emphasis on initiatives taken by the government in this direction and reason for their failures. (250 words)**

The hindu

**Why this question:**

While expressing concern over the continuing practice of manual scavenging, National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) chairperson H.L. Dattu recently stated that just putting in place laws was not enough, they need to be implemented proactively.

**Key demands of the question:**

The answer must briefly discuss the menace of manual scavenging looming the country even today despite so many initiatives taken by the government. One has to critically analyse the causes of it and discuss the way forward.

**Directive:**

**Critically analyze** – When asked to analyze, you have to examine methodically the structure or nature of the topic by separating it into component parts and present them as a whole in a summary. When 'critically' is suffixed or prefixed to a directive, one needs to look at the good and bad of the topic and give a fair judgement.

**Structure of the answer:****Introduction**

In a few introductory lines explain the general conditions of scavenging in India.

**Body**

The answer must explain the following aspects:

- What are the conditions of manual scavengers in India today?
- What are the government initiatives present?
- Why are most initiatives failing to address the issue?
- Discuss the existing challenges.
- Why is the condition more appalling in urban regions?
- Discuss the causes of the above – societal, political and economic aspects.
- Explain what are the consequences of it on the society.

**Conclusion**

Conclude with what needs to be done to overcome such a social issue.

**Introduction:**

- Manual scavenging refers to the practice of manually cleaning, carrying, disposing or handling in any manner, human excreta from dry latrines and sewers. Despite banning it 26 years ago through a law, technological advancements increasing sensitivity to human rights, manual scavenging persists in India. The National Human Rights Commission recently rapped the Government about its seriousness to end manual scavenging

**Body:****State of Manual Scavenging in India:**

- Socio-Economic and Caste Census (SECC) released in 2015, states that there were around 18 million manual scavenging households in rural areas.
- A government survey identifies 12,226 manual scavengers in 12 states. Most septic tanks are emptied manually in Indian cities.
- The lack of proper safeguards puts manual scavengers at risk of infections, which are occasionally fatal.
- Statistics show that 80% of India's sewage cleaners die before they turn 60, after contracting various infectious diseases.
- The biggest challenge before the government is to check on private firms, which illegally engage people to clean sewers manually.
- Recently, Delhi Jal Board has prepared a Standard Operating Procedure for cleaning of sewers.



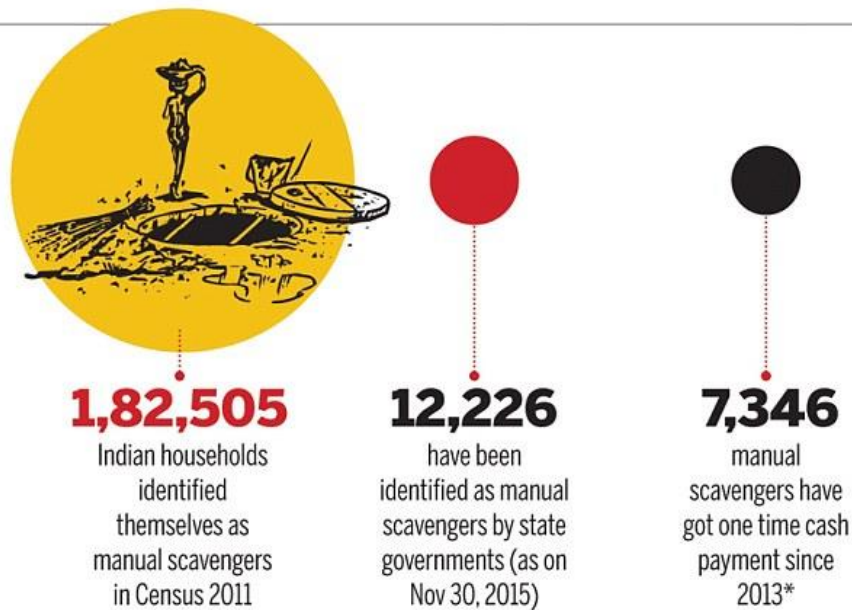


- The National Policy on Faecal Sludge and Septage Management, 2017, states that employment of manual scavengers is illegal, but it does not suggest mechanical alternatives to unclog septic tanks, drains and sewers

## VISUAL EDIT

# HOW TO END MANUAL SCAVENGING ON PAPER

In a bid to bury the shame of manual scavenging, are governments taking shortcuts or are people wrongly claiming to be manual scavengers?



\* Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013 (MS Act, 2013) came into force on Dec 6, 2013

Source: Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment

### Government Initiatives regarding Manual Scavenging:

- The Employment of Manual Scavengers and Construction of Dry Latrines (Prohibition) Act** was passed by the parliament in 1993, and set imprisonment of up to one year and a fine of Rs 2,000 for pushing a person to manual scavenging.
- Self Employment Scheme for Rehabilitation of Manual Scavengers (SRMS)**, a successor scheme to NSLRS (National Scheme for Liberation and Rehabilitation of Scavengers and their Dependents), was introduced in 2007 with the objective to rehabilitate remaining manual scavengers and their dependents in alternative occupations, in a time bound manner.
- Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013** came into effect from 6th December, 2013. This Act intends to achieve its objectives of eliminating insanitary latrines, prohibition of employment as manual scavengers etc.
- The act says **National Commission for Safai Karamcharis (NCSK)** would monitor implementation of the Act and enquire into complaints regarding contravention of the provisions of the Act.
- Under the provision, no person, local authority or agency should engage or employ people for hazardous cleaning of sewers and septic tanks
- Mechanised cleaning of septic tanks is the prescribed norm.
- A violation can be punished with two years of imprisonment or fine or both.
- Supreme Court issued a slew of directions in 2014** to prevent and control the practice and also to prosecute the offenders.
- It also directed the government to pay a compensation of 10 lakh rupees to the family members of those killed in acts of manual scavenging since 1993.
- Also, the **right to live with dignity** is implicit in the Fundamental Rights guaranteed in Part III of the Constitution. **Article 46** of the Constitution, on the other hand, provides that the State shall protect the weaker sections particularly, the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes from social injustice and all forms of exploitation.
- In spite of a well-funded programme such as the **Swachh Bharat Abhiyan** in operation, little attention is devoted to this aspect of sanitation.

### Challenges in banning manual scavenging:

- However, the dehumanising practice of manual scavenging, arising from the continued existence of insanitary latrines and a highly iniquitous caste system, still persists in various parts of the country.
- Design:** Septic tanks are designed badly. They have engineering defects which means that after a point, a machine cannot clean it.



- Under the Swachh Bharat Mission, millions of septic tanks are being built in rural India
- By 2019, some 30 million septic tanks and pits would have been dug along the Ganga. If the Central, state and local sanitation programmes do not take up faecal sludge management as a priority, the onus will shift to the lowest rung of the society to clean millions of dry toilets.
- **Sewage issues:** Many cities do not have sewerage that covers the whole city. Sometimes, sewage lines are connected to storm water drains which get clogged and demand human intervention.
- **Open drains:** Open drains are also badly designed, allowing people to dump solid waste into them, which accentuates the problem. Improper disposal of sanitary napkins, diapers etc clog the drains, which machines cannot clear.
- Manual scavenging is not only a caste-based but also a gender-based occupation with 90 per cent of them being women.
- **Irony of Swachh Bharat Mission:** On the one hand it aims at protecting dignity of women by providing them with private sanitation spaces, and on the other, it is perpetuating humiliation of women manual scavengers as they are the ones who clean human excreta from dry-pit latrines.
- **Legislative failure:** In 2013, the 'Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act came into force. However this law leaves people helpless.
- In the earlier Act, the district magistrate had the power to solve all the cases, but that's not the case with the current one. If the assigned public official isn't doing his duty of identifying manual scavengers and processing their rehabilitation, there is no mechanism to pull them up
- The Act does not address critical aspects of provisions like the rehabilitation of those who were liberated from manual scavenging before passing the law in 2013.
- Liberated manual scavengers regularly face brutal atrocity and violence.
- **Safety issues:** Requirements of oxygen cylinder, torches, and constant monitoring of workers through computers etc. are not mentioned in the act and hence are not provided to the cleaners.
- **Lack of education:** Low level of education, awareness about their rights, laws and low self esteem force them to take such work.
- National Safai Karamcharis Commission which was mandated to implement the act has not been functioning properly. Its website has not been updated about recent developments and new initiatives.

#### Measures needed:

- It is a social and gender issue and can be eradicated by sensitising people about its ills.
- We need to strike at the root cause —**caste prejudice** as Raja Ram Mohan Roy said that change should come from society itself.
- Ensure discrimination-free, secure and alternate livelihoods by providing skill development and livelihoods training to women
- Create a favourable environment through community awareness and sensitization of local administration.
- Build the capacity of the community to promote rehabilitation efforts and self-reliance and also build leadership in the community with a particular focus on Dalit women
- Requires a comprehensive approach that moves beyond expanding income generation or providing loans, to secure the future of the next generation of liberated manual scavengers.
- Need to demolish and rebuild old facilities lacking sanitation
- Raising the confidence level among those engaged in manual cleaning is vital
- Need for political will to eradicate this inhuman practice.
- Improving educational status among the children of the scavenging community
- Swachh Bharat Mission may be used to actively target conversion of insanitary latrines on priority basis.
- Liberated manual scavengers must be linked to social security and other welfare schemes to ensure that they are not dependent on this inhuman work for their survival.
- Bio-toilets: Bio-digester toilets are designed to convert human waste into gases and manure.
- The zero-waste bio digester technology uses psychotropic bacteria to break down human excreta into usable water and gas. Once applied, the bacteria can work for a lifetime.



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### Topic: Role of Women

**Q) Ban on Caster Semenya reveals limits of trying to ensure equal opportunity while delineating between male, female athletes . Critically analyse. (250 words)**

[Indianexpress](https://www.indianexpress.com)

#### Why this question:

The Court of Arbitration for Sport recently rejected an appeal from 800m champion runner Caster Semenya to declare void a regulation that barred females with Differential Sex Disorders (DSD) from running in races between 400m and a mile without bringing down their testosterone levels to under 5 nmol/L. The decision sent shock-waves through track and field because it was discriminatory and exclusionary against women with naturally occurring high-testosterone.

#### Key demands of the question:

The answer must weigh the impact of such a decision that disfavors the women as a lesser gender. One must analyse the decision with a view of the affect it has on the society that we are in today which has moved far ahead from the parochial mindset of differentiating men and women on mere means of physical power.

#### Directive word

**Critically analyse** – When asked to analyze, you have to examine methodically the structure or nature of the topic by separating it into component parts and present them as a whole in a summary. When ‘critically’ is suffixed or prefixed to a directive, one needs to look at the good and bad of the topic and give a fair judgement.

#### Structure of the answer:

##### Introduction

In a few introductory lines explain the backdrop of the situation.

##### Body

Discuss the following aspects in the answer:

- How does the Ban on Caster Semenya reveals limits of trying to ensure equal opportunity while delineating between male, female athletes?
- Discuss the associated facts – Female bodies can produce testosterone as high as 7 to 29 nmol/L closer to the male range, far above the 1.79 nmol/L seen in 98.3 per cent of females.
- Relevance of Differential Sex Disorders (DSD).
- Why is the issue with Sports ?
- What needs to be done?

##### Conclusion

Conclude with way forward.

#### Introduction:

- The Court of Arbitration for Sport recently rejected an appeal from South African 800m champion runner Caster Semenya to declare void a regulation that barred females with Differential Sex Disorders (DSD) from running in races between 400m and a mile without bringing down their testosterone levels.
- The decision sent shock-waves through track and field because it was **discriminatory and exclusionary against women** with naturally occurring high-testosterone.

#### Body:

##### The Case:

- In 2018, the International Association of Athletics Federations dictated that female runners with naturally occurring **high testosterone levels (HyperAndrogenism) and specific “differences of sex development”** must lower their testosterone in order to compete in events ranging from 400 meters to one mile.
- Two-time Olympic champion Caster Semenya challenged the 2018 policy which will come into effect from May 8, 2019. It was discriminatory, she argued, lacked scientific grounding and did “irreparable harm to affected female athletes.”
- But on 1<sup>st</sup> May 2019, in a blow to Semenya and an untold number of other women, the Court of Arbitration for Sport upheld the regulations. The policy is now set to go into effect on May 8
- Semenya can now appeal the CAS award at the Swiss Federal Tribunal within 30 days.

##### Associated facts:

- The **normal female range of testosterone**, as indicated by the court, is 0.06 to 1.68 nanomolecures per litre (nm/L) of blood.
- The correspondent male range is 7.7 to 29.4.





- The hormone contributes significantly to the strengthening of muscles and the density of bones.
- Its abundance is a crucial factor that makes male athletes perform better than female athletes.
- Going by the guidelines, Semenya has high testosterone level (T-level) and will have to take medication to reduce it to within 5nm/L.
- She has to maintain this for six months ahead of competition, if she wants to run her pet 800m.

#### Gender hurdle:

- Although it rejected Semenya's claims, the Court of Arbitration for Sport's panel conceded that the regulations are "discriminatory" but "necessary" to preserve "the integrity of female athletics."
- The regulations are **additionally discriminatory**, panel members noted, because they "do not impose any equivalent restrictions on male athletes."
- No one is concerned about male athletes with unusually high, naturally occurring testosterone.
- Taking hormones out of the equation, there are a host of biological advantages that some athletes enjoy over others.
- Nordic skier Eero Mäntyranta, for example, had a genetic condition that caused the excessive production of red blood cells, giving him an advantage in endurance events.
- Michael Phelps' unique and optimally shaped swimming body allows him to cut through the water with remarkable speed and efficiency.
- Semenya and her supporters argue that since the women affected by the policy are, in fact, women, they should be allowed to compete without restriction.
- In the animal kingdom, there are many species that are hermaphrodite, and in humans we now know there is a spectrum of sex (that includes people who are intersex) and gender (that includes people who are transgender).
- The complexity of sex in particular as a melange of genes, hormones, anatomy, biology can no longer be classified simply with a binary definition of male or female. It is, therefore, unfair and unethical for the IAAF to make new regulations for women's sport – to the effect of excluding some women – based on outdated definitions and understandings.

#### Sporting rights versus human rights:

- The controversy has brought into the fore the battle between sporting rights and human rights.
- The IAAF regards women's sport as a "protected class" and insists that it must "place conditions" on the female category in order "to ensure fair and meaningful competition."
- Human rights activists disagree. If an athlete is legally a woman, that should be good enough.
- The United Nations Human Rights Council resolved that the new regulations "may not be compatible with international human rights norms and standards."
- Just because regulations exist does not mean that they are evidence based, ethical, or even effective. The crux here is that this kind of regulation has its legacy in the long and problematic history of "sex testing" women athletes.
- There is no conclusive, incontrovertible correlation between high natural testosterone and better performance. Without such evidence the IAAF's regulations shouldn't be enforced.

#### Conclusion:

- The IAAF case matters because it is fundamentally about all women's rights to participate in sport. The practice to regulate the participation of women with differences of sex development will in effect stigmatise women athletes by categorising, labelling, and excluding them without scientific evidence or ethical consideration. Women should be allowed to compete with women without emphasizing on genetic superiority.

### Q) Political equality is still far away on the Indian political horizon. To bring equality fight needs to be fought equally by men. Critically analyse.(250 words)

Hindustantimes

#### **Why this question:**

The question is based on the theme of political participation of women in the country and the challenges facing it. One needs to evaluate the issue closely and discuss the importance of significant role that needs to be played by Men to bring equality in participation.

#### **Key demand of the question:**

The answer must discuss the picture of political participation women in India, how far have women been able to enter the political arena of the country. Also explain the necessity of efforts by the Men in this direction.



**Directive:**

**Critically analyze** – When asked to analyze, you have to examine methodically the structure or nature of the topic by separating it into component parts and present them as a whole in a summary. When ‘critically’ is suffixed or prefixed to a directive, one needs to look at the good and bad of the topic and give a fair judgement

**Structure of the answer:****Introduction:**

Brief upon the recent incidences that highlight the inequality prevailing in terms of Women participation in the politics of the country.

**Body:**

Body of the answer should discuss the following aspects:

- Highlight the present ratio of women participation in Indian politics.
- Discuss the trends in women participation that was witnessed this election.
- What should be the role of Men in bringing equality of participation in the political arena and why is it important?
- Suggest what needs to be done?

**Conclusion:**

Conclude that Male politicians must take a lead role in challenging traditions which foster inequality and also unequivocally condemn the misogynistic language that their counterparts use when it comes to women.

**Introduction:**

- The Economic Survey 2018 called for more representation of women in decision making process in the country, saying their political participation has been low despite them accounting for **49 per cent of the population**.
- An **Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and UN Women report — Women in Politics 2017**, revealed that **16<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha had 65 (12 percent of 545 MPs)** and **Rajya Sabha 27 (11 per cent of 245 MPs)** women MPs. 22 years since the initial proposal, the Women’s Reservation Bill remains out of reach

**Body:****Present situation of women’s political representation in India:**

- India ranks **153 out of 190 nations** in the percentage of women in the lower house of world parliaments.
- The Economic Survey 2018 said there are **developing countries like Rwanda** which has more than 60 per cent women representatives in Parliament in 2017.
- In India, between 2010 and 2017 **women’s share rose 1 percentage point** in its **Lower House (Lok Sabha)**.
- As on October 2016, out of the **total 4,118 MLAs** across the country, **only 9 per cent** were women.
- The highest percentage of women legislators come from Bihar, Haryana and Rajasthan (14%), followed by Madhya Pradesh and West Bengal (13%) and Punjab (12%).
- The factors such as **domestic responsibilities, prevailing cultural attitudes regarding roles of women in society and lack of support from family** were among main reasons that prevented them from entering politics.
- **Lack of confidence and finance** were the other major deterring factors that prevented women from entering politics.
- Ahead of any election campaign in the country, **sexist and derogatory remarks** start doing the rounds against women contestants, in some cases forcing them to withdraw their nomination.
- The introduction of **the Women’s Reservation Bill in 1996** that would reserve 33 percent of seats in Lok Sabha and the state legislative assemblies for women on a rotational basis, lapsed in 2014 with the dissolution of the 15th Lok Sabha.
- The constitution allocates total seats to states by population, the resultant women’s representation at 12% is far below the actual population of women. So, on grounds of fairness, this is an anomaly.

**Enhancing women participation in parliament would ensure the upliftment of status of women:**

- In 1994, India ratified the 73rd and the 74th amendments to the Indian Constitution, granting women 1/3 reservation in rural and urban democratic bodies.
- There are 13.72 lakh elected women representatives (EWRs) in PRIs (Panchayati Raj Institutions) which constitute 44.2 per cent of total elected representatives (ERs) as on December, 2017.
- Women sarpanchs accounted for 43 per cent of total gram panchayats (GPs) across the country, exhibiting active leadership of women in local government.



- There is documented evidence both at the **international level and at the gram panchayat (village)** level to suggest that a greater representation of women in elected office balances the process and prioritizations that elected bodies focus on.
- In terms of **policy styles**, for instance, the inclusion of women adds behind the scenes discussion rather than direct confrontation on the floor of the House.
- In terms of **agenda** (as measured in Rwanda), a wider range of family issues get tackled.
- Esther Duflo and Raghavendra Chattopadhyay (**NBER Working Paper 8615**) showed that in a randomised trial in West Bengal, **women pradhans** (heads of village panchayats) focus on infrastructure that is **relevant to the needs of rural women**, suggesting that at least at the local level **outcomes** can be different.
- The role model effect also erases the gender disparity in educational attainment of young girls.
- A study by IndiaSpend reported **women panchayat leaders** in Tamil Nadu **invested 48 percent more** money than their male counterparts in building roads and improving access.
- Another study by **the United Nations** found that **women-led panchayats delivered 62 percent higher drinking water projects** than those led by men.

#### Way forward:

- India should have an **Election Commission-led effort** to push for reservation for women in political parties.
- **Reservation for women in political parties** – a more viable option.
- Quotas for women in Parliament as envisaged in the **Women's Reservation Bill**.
- **Awareness, education and role modelling** that encourage women towards politics and wipe out **Gender stereotypes** which perceive women as weak representatives.
- Inclusive economic institutions and growth—both necessary for and dependent on social empowerment—require inclusive political institutions.
- **Women's leadership and communication skills** need to be enhanced by increasing female literacy especially in rural areas. They should be empowered in order to break socio-cultural barriers and improve their status in the society.

#### Conclusion:

- B.R. Ambedkar once said that “**political power is the key to all social progress**”. Ensuring proportional representation to women in parliament is seen by policy makers as a **panacea to the issues surrounding women empowerment**.
- Recognising the significance of roles of women in decision making process in the society is **critical to strengthen women's agencies for building a progressive society with equality of opportunities among all citizens**. Male politicians must take a lead role in challenging traditions which foster inequality and also unequivocally condemn the misogynistic language that their counterparts use when it comes to women.

**Q) What do understand by the concept of “feminist finance”? Discuss the role of State as an enabler of gender equalisation in India. (250 words)**

Epw

#### **Why this question:**

The article highlights by articulating concept of “feminist finance” the emergent non-enabler role of the state.

#### **Key demand of the question:**

The question is to evaluate the concept of Feminist finance and the role of State in making efforts for gender equalization. The answer must provide for a detailed narration of what you understand by feminist finance and the role of a state in enabling gender equalization.

#### **Directive word:**

**Discuss** – This is an all-encompassing directive – you have to debate on paper by going through the details of the issues concerned by examining each one of them. You have to give reasons for both for and against arguments.

#### **Structure of the answer**

##### **Introduction:**

write a few introductory lines about the concept.

##### **Body:**

Answers must discuss the following aspects :

A feminist is someone who believes in equality. A ‘financial feminist’ is just about believing in financial equality of women. Discuss the role of women as both as economic agents and as citizens. Explain



what are the hurdles to women becoming agents of economy in our country, discuss the societal, political and economic factors associated.

Discuss the need for State to act as an enabler for feminist finance so as to attain gender equalization and parity.

### **Conclusion –**

Conclude with way forward.

### **Introduction:**

- Feminist finance or economics is the **critical study of economics and economies, with a focus on gender-aware and inclusive economic inquiry and policy analysis**. Much feminist economic research focuses on topics that have been neglected in the field, such as care work, intimate partner violence, or on economic theories which could be improved through better incorporation of gendered effects and interactions, such as between paid and unpaid sectors of economies.

### **Body:**

#### **Salient features of Feminist finance:**

- Feminist finance is oriented towards the goal of “enhancing the well-being of children, women, and men in local, national, and transnational communities.”
- Feminist economists call attention to the social constructions of traditional economics, questioning the extent to which it is positive and objective.
- It shows how its models and methods are biased by an exclusive attention to masculine-associated topics and a one-sided favouring of masculine-associated assumptions and methods.
- While economics traditionally focused on markets and masculine-associated ideas of autonomy, abstraction and logic, feminist economists call for a fuller exploration of economic life, including such “culturally feminine” topics such as family economics, and examining the importance of connections, concreteness, and emotion in explaining economic phenomena.
- Many scholars including **Ester Boserup, Marianne Ferber, Julie A. Nelson, Marilyn Waring, Nancy Folbre, Diane Elson and Ailsa McKay** have contributed to feminist economics.

#### **State of Gender equality in India:**

- India’s progress towards gender equality, measured by its position on rankings such as the Gender Development Index has been disappointing, despite fairly rapid rates of economic growth.
- In the past decade, while Indian GDP has grown by around 6%, there has been a large decline in female labour force participation from 34% to 27%.
- The male-female wage gap has been stagnant at 50% (a recent survey finds a 27% gender pay gap in white-collar jobs).
- The women labour force participation rate is **about 25%** and most of them are in the unorganized sector where the above legislations don’t apply.
- The lack of decision making and no ownership of economic resources hinder women from economic growth.

#### **The role of state as enabler of gender equalisation in India is:**

- Gender equality is when women and men enjoy the same rights and opportunities across all sectors of society, including **economic participation and decision-making**, and when the different behaviours, aspirations and needs of women and men are equally valued and favoured.
- The first task of governments is to act as a model of best practice for our communities. As major employers and service providers, governments can have a significant impact on women’s lives by using fair employment practices and ensuring non-discriminatory service provision to citizens.
- India was one of the economies which introduced a **legislation – Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act** to protect women.
- The recent **Maternity Benefit (Amendment) Act 2017** also has helped women to work better during maternity as well as take care of child.
- State is on the frontline of tackling violence and harmful practices against women in both the public and private spheres.
- Governments must take action to improve female representation in elected, administrative and appointed office at the highest levels in our own institutions.
- Governments have a duty to ensure women’s equal access to land and economic and natural resources.
- Local authorities can establish mechanisms to make it easier for women to obtain basic legal documents such as birth certificates, provide legal aid services that support women in exercising their rights, and guarantee women’s participation in land governance institutions and policy-making processes.



- Governments should fully mainstream a gender perspective into local legislation, urban planning and policy-making in order to tackle the multiple barriers to women's empowerment.

**Conclusion:**

- Economies grow faster when more women work. If governments want to capitalise on this kind of growth, they must not only remove these impediments but also incentivise women's entry into the workforce.
- The law influences what happens on the ground. With more women employees and entrepreneurs, societies get to equal, economies become more resilient. There is a need to recognise women's unique role as drivers of progress and powerful agents of change.

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*Topic– Urbanization, their problems and their remedies.*

**Q) “The conditions of urban poor women are more appalling than their rural counterparts.” Analyse with suitable justifications. (250 words)**

Reference

Vikaspedia

**Why this question:**

The question is about discussing and differentiating the conditions of Urban poor women with those of rural counterparts.

**Key demands of the question:**

The answer must briefly discuss how the conditions of women are different and rather more deplorable for Women of Urban areas in India in comparison with those of rural areas.

**Directive:**

**Comment–** here we have to express our knowledge and understanding of the issue and form an overall opinion thereupon.

**Structure of the answer:**

**Introduction**

In a few introductory lines explain the general conditions of women in India.

**Body**

The answer must explain the following aspects:

- What are the conditions of women (poor) in urban India vs rural India?
- Why is the condition more appalling in urban regions?
- Discuss the causes of the above – societal, political and economic aspects.
- Explain what are the consequences of such a disparity.

**Conclusion**

Conclude with what needs to be done to overcome such a issue.

**Introduction:**

- Half of India’s population consists of women, but as per UNDP’s Gender Inequality Index (GII), Indian women lag behind in the socio-economic indicators.
- The Maternal mortality rate, Girls not receiving secondary education are high where as Female Labour Participation Rate, Women’s seat share in parliament are low. This is further substantiated by India’s ranking in Global Gender Gap Index by World Economic Forum.

**Body:**

- The dismal figures point towards the poor living conditions of the Indian women. And among them, the condition of urban poor women is even more deplorable than rural counterparts because

**Food & Health of Urban Poor Women:**

- Inflation of milk, vegetables, and pulses directly affects nutrition security of urban poor woman and her children.
- Since rural women engage in agriculture, fisheries and dairying; Government schemes for purchase of cattle, goat, hens- they’re slightly better off.

**Residence & family life of Urban Poor Women:**

- Nuclear families in slums, usually without caste-community affiliations. Husband has less fear of relatives or elders of the community. Could be more abusive / domestic violence than rural.
- Crime, Drugs, Liquor, Gambling, and Juvenile Delinquency is more prominent in urban slums than rural. When male members of a poor family engage in these evils, it has repercussion on the females of the house as well.
- Urban areas have higher cost of living. So, Urban poor woman have to engage herself in petty-labour while looking after the household chores and childcare. Rural women might have the help of grandparents / family elders / in-laws to take care of raising the children and dividing the domestic chores. So, she may have slightly better peace of mind.
- Urban slums have unhygienic conditions, and they are more prone to damage in urban floods which leads to diseases, financial distress. In Rural floods, Government relief and compensation packages are bigger and arrive more quickly due to the electoral politics.
- Urban slums more prone to eviction during anti-encroachment drives compared to rural slums.

**Occupation & Financial Well-being of Urban Poor Women:**

- Urban poor women face inequality in wages and job-opportunities. Salaried urban jobs require skill and documents- be it driver, electrician, plumber, nurse, receptionist, computer operator or teacher.





- So, urban poor women due to lack of higher-education end up in rag-picking, construction and hazardous industries without social security are more prone to industrial / occupational disease, disability. Rural women don't have social security either, but they're less prone to occupational disease because pesticide spraying is usually done by males.
- Urban poor women can hold only one type of job at a time (maids, ragpickers), whereas a rural poor woman can collect of minor forest produce in the morning, MGNREGA/farm-labourer in the afternoon and rearing hen/goat in the evening or going to a self-help-group for soap / handicrafts. So, employment security for rural poor women is slightly better than urban counterpart.

#### Political Voice of Urban Poor Women:

- Nature of municipal level delimitation and electoral politics is such that despite women-reservation in Urban Local Bodies (ULBs), limited opportunity for the poor women to express their voices, compared to Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs).

#### Conclusion:

- The conditions of urban poor women are deplorable than rural poor women. The need of the hour is to provide them with opportunities for health, education, work through initiatives like SHGs, NGO programs and Government initiatives like DAY-NULM, PM Awas Yojana, ICDS etc. This would help us in achieving the SDG-5 which empowers all women & achieve gender equality.

### Topic– Salient features of world's physical geography.

**Q) What do you understand by new Meghalayan age and how does it fit with the Anthropocene? Discuss. (250 words)**

#### Reference

##### Why this question:

Recently In Meghalaya, the Geological Survey of India (GSI) North Eastern Region (NER) installed two geological display boards at Mawmluh cave and Therriaghat to create awareness among visiting tourists and general public. Thus it is important for us to ponder upon the significance of Meghalayan age.

##### Key demands of the question:

The answer must elaborate upon the new Meghalayan age; how it came into existence, its significance, with respect to India and its relation with Anthropocene.

##### Directive word

**Discuss** – This is an all-encompassing directive – you have to debate on paper by going through the details of the issues concerned by examining each one of them. You have to give reasons for both for and against arguments.

##### Structure of the answer:

##### Introduction

In a few introductory lines explain Scientists still continue to refine the geologic timescale and recently have brought the official naming of a new age: the Meghalayan.

##### Body

Discuss the following aspects in the answer:

- As of July 2018, the Holocene — the most recent epoch of time spanning from 11,700 years ago to the present — is divided into three ages: the Greenlandian, the Northgrippian, and the Meghalayan.
- The global-scale climate change defines that the beginning of the Meghalayan coincides with a period of ongoing migration and collapse of many early human civilizations around the globe. Thus bringing us to the idea of Anthropocene – a proposed division of geologic time defined by signs of human activities in the geologic record.
- Discuss relevance with India, why the name ?
- Then move on to discuss – arguments both for and against an Anthropocene.
- Explain how Human beings have clearly altered landscapes through deforestation, agriculture, and industrialization, which among other things have accelerated erosion and sediment accumulation. Plastics are accumulating in our oceans and biosphere, leaving a global-scale marker of these synthetic materials in soils and sediments. People are causing high extinction rates and rapid changes in where species are found around the world. And, of course, burning fossil fuels and human-induced climate change leave signatures in sediment records worldwide.



- What are the challenges in agreeing to when the Anthropocene should begin?

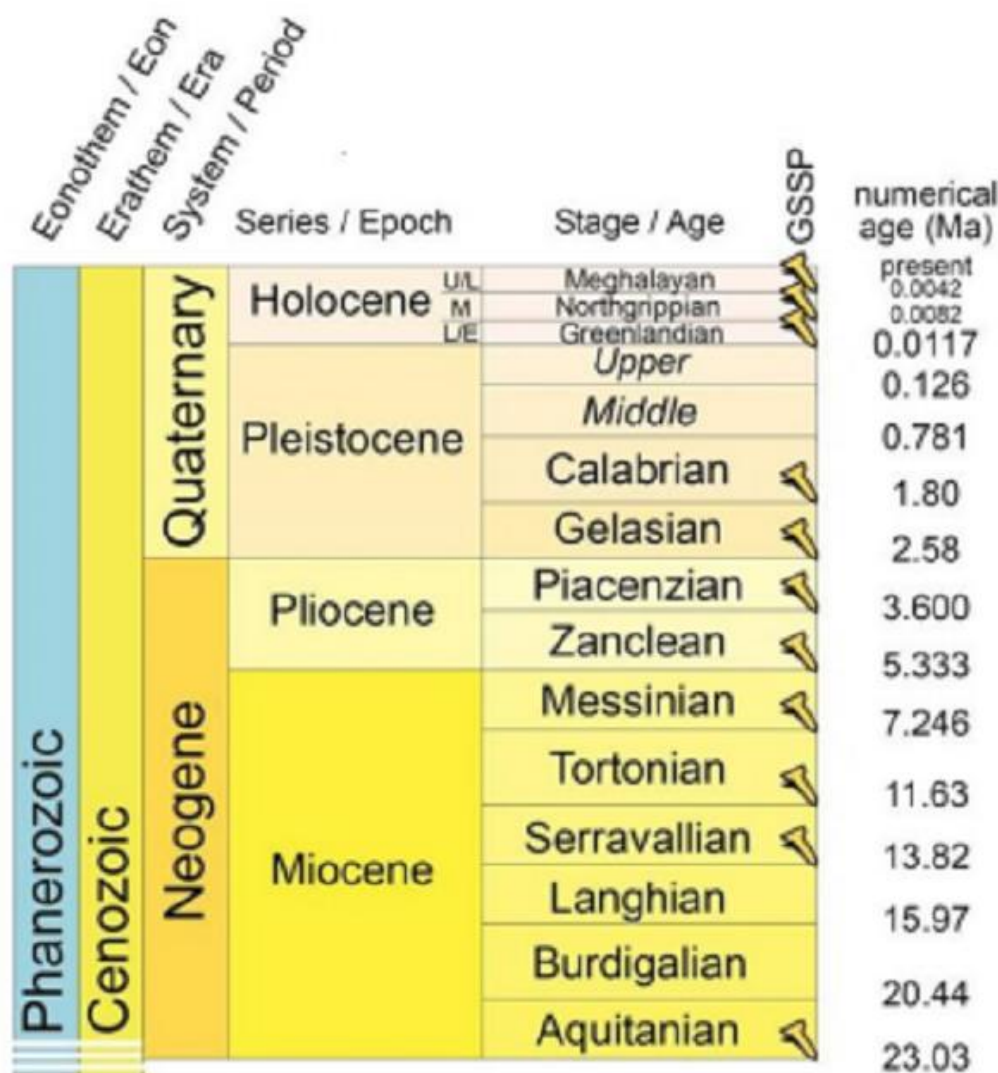
### Conclusion

Conclude with significance of the Meghalayan age.

### Introduction:

- Geologists have decided to classify the past 4,200 years as the Meghalayan Age. It is the most recent unit of the Geologic Time Scale in the 4.6 billion-year history of the Earth. Following this, the International Chronostratigraphic Chart, which depicts the timeline for Earth's history was updated.
- Mawmluh cave** made headlines earlier as high resolution stable isotopic studies of the stalagmites from the cave have shown that there was a major climatic event about 4200 years ago.

### Body:



### Meghalayan age:

- The Meghalayan, the youngest stage, runs from 4,200 years ago to 1950. It began with a destructive drought, whose effects lasted two centuries, and severely disrupted civilisations.
- The “Meghalayan Age” began 4,200 years ago and experienced an abrupt mega- drought and cooling around the globe.
- The drought and the cooling lasted two centuries and severely impacted agricultural-based societies that developed in several regions after the end of the last Ice Age.
- It resulted in the collapse of civilisations in Egypt, Greece, Syria, Palestine, Mesopotamia, the Indus Valley, and the Yangtze River Valley.
- Evidence of the 4,200-year climatic event has been found on all seven continents.
- This age is considered unique as this was the only age which began with a global cultural event produced by a global climatic event.
- Geologists have also introduced two other age classifications:



- **Greenlandian Age** (11,700 – 8,326 years ago) – began when the last ice age ended and the world began to warm up.
- **Northgrippian Age** (8,326 – 4,200 years ago) – began after an abrupt global cooling started following the Greenlandian Age.
- Together, these three stages stretch across the Holocene Epoch, which is the current geological time unit – having started 11,700 years ago.
- The Holocene epoch falls under Cenozoic Era and is the time after Ice Age.
- An International team of researchers collected some stalagmite which was deposited on the floor by plunging into the roof of the cave in Meghalaya. This helped the researchers to define the climate of that time in the history of the Earth. For this reason, the 'Meghalayan Age' has been named after Meghalaya.

#### Anthropocene:

- The Anthropocene is a **proposed epoch** dating from the commencement of significant human impact on the Earth's geology and ecosystems, including, but not limited to, anthropogenic climate change.
- Various start dates for the Anthropocene have been proposed, ranging from the beginning of the Agricultural Revolution 12,000–15,000 years ago, to as recent as the Trinity test in 1945.
- With climate change ruling the environment discourse, the sudden warming of the Earth in contemporary times prompted an official expert group to present a recommendation to the International Geological Congress to declare the geological period beginning since 1950 as the Anthropocene epoch.
- Since 2009, the Working Group on the Anthropocene (WHA) has been working to set up a working model for the Anthropocene Epoch.
- The epoch would be said to mark the impact of modern civilization on the climate and environment of the Earth involving humankind's impact on global climate.
- Modern levels of atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> are accelerating at a pace unprecedented in the history of previous geological periods. The annual rate of increase for atmospheric carbon dioxide levels in the late 1950's was 0.7 ppm/ year, while between the years 2005 to 2014 this had increased to 2.1 ppm/ year.
- Although the effects are slow to be realized, with the IPCC predicting the possibility of a rise in global temperatures by 3 degrees Celsius by 2080, the longer term effects with an increasing rate of acceleration in global atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> levels could have devastating effects on the Earth's climatic patterns.
- The human impact on Earth's chemistry and climate have cut short the 11,700-year-old geological epoch known as the Holocene and ushered in a new one, scientists argue. The Anthropocene, or "new age of man," would start from the mid-20th century (1950) if their recommendation is accepted.
- Human impacts on modern-era Earth and its ecosystems may be considered of global significance for future evolution of living species, including approximately synchronous lithospheric evidence, or more recently atmospheric evidence of human impacts.
- Given these, a new term, Anthropocene, is specifically proposed and used informally only for the very latest part of modern history involving significant human impact.

#### Conclusion:

- The new divisions of the Holocene also cut into the available time for an Anthropocene. The Meghalayan begins 4,200 years ago and continues to the present. Simply put, there is no time left over in the Holocene where we could put an Anthropocene.
- For the Anthropocene to be included in the formal geologic time scale, stratigraphers will need to argue that its onset was global in scale, simultaneous around the world and significant in its imprint on the geologic record.

**Q) What do you understand by Anthropocene epoch? Discuss its significance while elucidating some of the geological markers used in declaring Anthropocene epoch. (250 words)**

The hindu

#### Why this question:

A 34-member panel of the Anthropocene Working Group (AWG) has voted 29-4 in favor of designating a new geological epoch — the Anthropocene.

#### Key demands of the question:

The answer must analyse what is Anthropocene age, what is its significance and what are geological markers and evidences of the same in discussing Anthropocene epoch.



**Directive:**

**Discuss** – This is an all-encompassing directive – you have to debate on paper by going through the details of the issues concerned by examining each one of them. You have to give reasons for both for and against arguments.

**Elucidate** – Give a detailed account as to how and why it occurred, or what is the particular context. You must be defining key terms where ever appropriate, and substantiate with relevant associated facts.

**Structure of the answer:**

**Introduction**

In a few introductory lines define Anthropocene age.

**Body**

The body of the answer has to capture the following aspects:

- Anthropocene Working Group (AWG) voted in favor of designating a new geological epoch i.e, the Anthropocene.
- The term ‘Anthropocene’ was coined in 2000 by Nobel Laureate Paul Crutzen and Eugene Stoermer to denote the present geological time interval in which human activity has profoundly altered many conditions and processes on Earth.
- The word combines the root “anthro”, meaning “human” with the root “cene”, the standard suffix for “epoch” in geologic time.
- The Anthropocene is distinguished as a new period either after or within the Holocene, the current epoch, which began approximately 10,000 years ago (about 8000 BC) with the end of the last glacial period.
- Then discuss what are geological markers – Some of the geological markers used in declaring Anthropocene epoch.

**Conclusion**

Conclude with significance of the same.

**Introduction:**

- The term ‘Anthropocene’ was coined in 2000 by Nobel Laureate Paul Crutzen and Eugene Stoermer. Anthropocene denotes the present geological time interval in which human activity has profoundly altered many conditions and processes on Earth.
- The word combines the root “anthro”, meaning “human” with the root “cene”, the standard suffix for “epoch” in geologic time. A 34-member panel of the Anthropocene Working Group (AWG) has voted 29-4 in favour of designating a new geological epoch — the Anthropocene.

**Body:**

- The Anthropocene is distinguished as a new period either after or within the Holocene, the current epoch, which began approximately 10,000 years ago (about 8000 BC) with the end of the last glacial period.
- Anthropocene Epoch, unofficial interval of geologic time, making up the third worldwide division of the Quaternary Period (2.6 million years ago to the present), characterized as the time in which the collective activities of human beings (Homo sapiens) began to substantially alter Earth’s surface, atmosphere, oceans, and systems of nutrient cycling.

According to the AWG, the phenomena associated with the Anthropocene include:

- increase in erosion and sediment transport associated with urbanisation and agriculture,
- rapid environmental changes
- global dispersion of many new ‘minerals’ and ‘rocks’ including concrete, fly ash and plastics, and the myriad ‘technofossils’ produced from these and other materials.

**Significance of the Anthropocene Epoch:**

Some of the geological markers used in declaring Anthropocene epoch are:

- **Artificial radionuclides:** spread across the world by atomic bomb tests from the early 1950s would serve as the golden spike. The radionuclides are present almost everywhere from marine sediments to ice layers and even stalagmites and stalactites.
- **The rate of soil erosion:** increased from intensive agriculture and the land-use conversion will leave a mark in rock strata.
- **Global warming:** The rising air temperatures have caused glaciers and polar ice to melt and seawater to expand, both of which have contributed to a measurable rise in global sea level. Rising waters will change the



stratigraphy in some places by submerging low-lying areas and allowing the ocean to deliver sediments farther inland than they do at present.

- **The decline in seawater PH:** the depth at which carbonate minerals (e.g., limestone and chalk) form in the ocean will be shallower than it was during preindustrial times. Many pre-existing carbonate formations will dissolve in response to increases in ocean acidity, leaving a signature of striking dark layers of carbonate-depleted rock.
- **The rapid extinction rate:** It is the most significant evidence of the Anthropocene in rock strata. Several ecologists have noted that the rate of species extinction occurring since the middle of the 20th century has been more than 1,000 times that of the preindustrial period, comparable to the pace of other mass extinctions occurring over the course of Earth's history.
- **Deterioration of Forests:** The ongoing conversion of forests and other natural areas to agriculture and urban land and accelerated climate change resulting from alterations to the carbon cycle.

#### Conclusion:

- Anthropocene highlights the scale of our impact on Earth. It shows that the impact of our activities is global and irreversible which has generated a new geological epoch. It is necessary to think about the global issues which affect our planet like climate change, loss of biodiversity, environmental degradation, deforestation etc. which are being affected by human influence. The Anthropocene allows us to re-examine the relationship between humans and the rest of the natural world.

**TOPIC: Important Geophysical phenomena such as earthquakes, Tsunami, Volcanic activity, cyclone etc**

**Q) Discuss the role played by the geographical factors such as physiography and climatic phenomena in determining the air quality of the region. Explain with examples. (250 words)**

#### Reference

##### why this question:

The article brings out the case of air pollution witnessed by the Capital Delhi and the factors controlling the levels of air pollution. Thus, it is important for us to analyse the associated factors and their impact.

##### Key demands of the question:

The answer must explain the factors (geographical) responsible in controlling the levels of air pollution of a region with examples.

##### Directive word

**Discuss** – This is an all-encompassing directive – you have to debate on paper by going through the details of the issues concerned by examining each one of them. You have to give reasons for both for and against arguments.

##### Structure of the answer:

##### Introduction

In a few introductory lines explain what is air pollution, factors responsible for it.

##### Body

Discuss the following aspects in the answer:

- What factors – geographical, effect the air pollution aspect of a region? – physiography: presence of barriers, proximity to land and water, elevation, altitude etc. climatic conditions – hot, wet, dry etc.
- Take hint from the article and explain in detail the case study of Delhi.
- Discuss what are other factors that are working in tandem.

##### Conclusion

Conclude with way forward.

#### Introduction:

- Air pollution consists of chemicals or particles in the air that can harm the health of humans, animals, and plants. It also damages buildings. Its effects can range from higher disease risks to rising temperatures. Soot, smoke, mold, pollen, methane, and carbon dioxide are a just few examples of common pollutants

#### Body:

##### Geographical factors and air quality:

- **Location:** Latitude and altitude determines the rain and air pattern which effects air pollution level.





- **Continentality:** The distance from the coastal areas is a major determinant of Air quality: E.g.: Delhi is cursed with poor geography as far as air pollution is concerned. The capital city lies to the north-east of the Thar Desert, to the north-west of the central plains and to the south-west of the Himalayas.
- **Relief:** The various geological features like mountains, plateau, plains etc. determine the air quality. E.g.: As winds arrive from the coasts, bringing with them pollutants picked up along the way, they get 'trapped' right before the Himalayas. The air pressure pushes from one direction, and with the inability to escape quickly in the other, the particulate matter accumulates over the northern plains. This accumulation and entrapment affect not only Delhi, but the entire expanse between Punjab in the west to West Bengal in the east.
- **Speed and direction of wind:** It is one of the most fundamental parameter that impacts air quality. E.g.: Winds from the Bay of Bengal act like a continuous "reset" button to the Chennai's air quality.
- **Temperature:** Temperature and sunlight (solar radiation) play an important role in the chemical reactions that occur in the atmosphere to form photochemical smog from other pollutants. E.g.: Favourable conditions can lead to increased concentrations of smog.
- **Humidity:** Like temperature and solar radiation, water vapour plays an important role in many thermal and photochemical reactions in the atmosphere. As water molecules are small and highly polar, they can bind strongly to many substances. If attached to particles suspended in the air they can significantly increase the amount of light scattered by the particles (measuring visibility). If the water molecules attach to corrosive gases, such as sulfur dioxide, the gas will dissolve in the water and form an acid solution that can damage health and property.
- **Rainfall:** Rain has a 'scavenging' effect when it washes particulate matter out of the atmosphere and dissolves gaseous pollutants. Removing particles improves visibility. Where there is frequent high rainfall, air quality is generally better. If the rain dissolves gaseous pollutants, such as sulfur dioxide, it can form acid rain resulting in potential damage to materials or vegetation.

After all, even after poor geography, meteorology, and natural sources of dust are accounted for, there are still significant pollutants that arise from **anthropogenic sources**. These anthropogenic factors include manufacturing activity, power generation, construction, and transport.

#### Conclusion:

- To curb air pollution, a variety of measures need to be taken, such as adding more renewable energy and replacing gasoline-fuelled cars with zero-emissions vehicles such as electric ones. On a larger scale, governments at all levels should make commitments to limit emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases.

**Q) What do you understand by Pacific decadal oscillation? Discuss in detail the causative factors and effects. (250 words)**

The hindu

#### **Why this question:**

The article captures the context of Northeast India, one of the wettest places on the Earth that has been experiencing rapid drying, especially in the last 30 years. It highlights that the decreasing monsoon rainfall is associated with natural changes in the Pacific decadal oscillation (PDO).

#### **Key demand of the question:**

The answer must discuss the concept of PDO in detail.

#### **Directive:**

**Discuss** – This is an all-encompassing directive – you have to debate on paper by going through the details of the issues concerned by examining each one of them. You have to give reasons for both for and against arguments.

#### **Structure of the answer:**

##### **Introduction:**

Explain what is PDO?

##### **Body:**

Body of the answer should discuss the following:

- What is PDO? – It is a long-lived El Niño-like pattern of Pacific climate variability. The PDO is detected as warm or cool surface waters in the Pacific Ocean, north of 20°N.



- Major changes in northeast Pacific marine ecosystems have been correlated with phase changes in the PDO; warm eras have seen enhanced coastal ocean biological productivity in Alaska and inhibited productivity off the west coast of the contiguous United States, while cold PDO eras have seen the opposite north-south pattern of marine ecosystem productivity.
- How is it different from ENSO?
- Causative factors? Consequences of such a geophysical phenomenon?

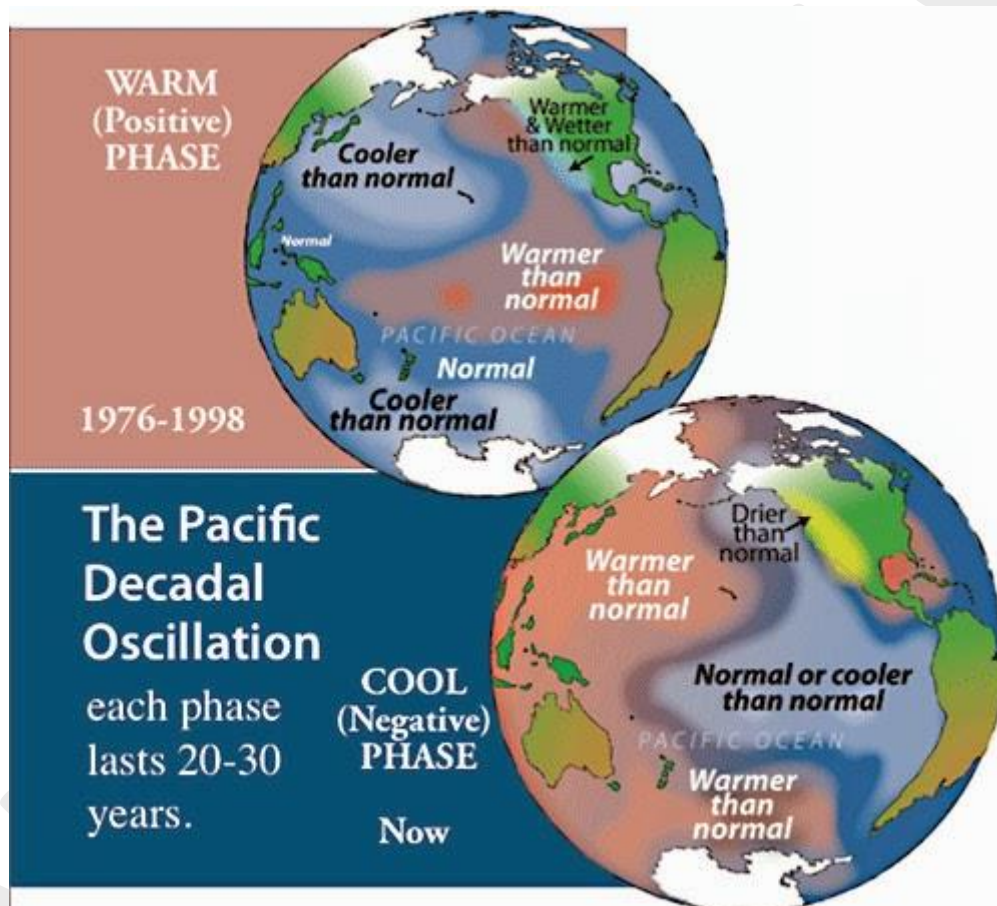
#### Conclusion:

Conclude with influence of such a phenomenon.

#### Introduction:

- Pacific decadal oscillation (PDO)** is a long-term ocean fluctuation of the Pacific Ocean, which waxes and wanes approximately every 20 to 30 years. Just like El Nino/La Nina in the tropical Pacific, PDO has a signature for a longer time (on the decadal scale) in the sea surface temperatures and its interaction with the atmosphere, which in turn affects the northeast Indian summer monsoon.

#### Body:



- The PDO has positive and negative phases. The climate impacts experienced during a PDO event can go hand-in-hand with impacts from El Nino or La Nina. If both phenomena are in the same phase, their associated impacts can be amplified. In the opposite phase, the associated impacts on global climate may be reduced.
- Positive phases:** Positive phases of the PDO tend to be associated with periods of more rapid global warming whilst cold PDO events have been linked to severe droughts spanning many years in south western USA, as well as increased rainfall over eastern Australia.
- Negative phases:** It is thought that negative phases could be linked to times of slower warming. This is because cold phases of the PDO tend to increase mixing of colder, deep ocean waters with warmer surface waters. This temporarily reduces the rate of global warming caused by increasing greenhouse gas emissions. Positive phases have the opposite effect.

#### Causes for PDO:

- The cause of changes in the PDO has yet to be identified and it may even be due to a combination of factors including long-lasting fingerprints of El Nino and La Nina events in the tropical Pacific Ocean; changes in atmospheric pressure the northern Pacific; the impact of industrial pollution; and natural variability.

**Effects of PDO:**

- PDO phase can have significant implications for the global climate, affecting Pacific and Atlantic hurricane activity, droughts and flooding around the Pacific basin, the productivity of marine ecosystems, and global land temperature patterns.
- PDO can intensify or diminish the impacts of ENSO according to its phase. If both ENSO and the PDO are in the same phase, it is believed that El Niño/La Niña impacts may be magnified. Conversely, if ENSO and the PDO are out of phase, it has been proposed that they may offset one another, preventing “true” ENSO impacts from occurring.

**Impacts on India:**

- Researchers from the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology, Pune and Assam University set out to understand the drying phase in the northeast.
- Northeast India, one of the wettest places on the Earth has been experiencing rapid drying, especially in the last 30 years. Some places which used to get as high as 3,000 mm of rain during the monsoon season have seen a drop of about 25-30%.
- It is found that rainfall in the region is largely dependent on monsoon rainfall and the impact of Pacific decadal oscillation (PDO) clearly visible in the region in the form of deficit rainfall over the years.
- Decreasing monsoon rainfall is associated with natural changes in the subtropical Pacific Ocean
- Change in land cover and deforestation could potentially result in more natural disasters, for example, flash flood, landslides from torrential rains, and damage to crops and biodiversity

**Way forward:**

- Policymakers should take these long-term predictions into account while planning construction of dams, power plants, etc. to prevent loss of property.
- Although the natural causative factors are out of human power, care must be taken to reduce the human causative factors of climate change.
- Afforestation should be increased to widen the watershed capacity.
- Other adaptation measures like Rainwater harvesting, tradition water saving methods could reduce the impacts of such natural phenomena.

*TOPIC: Changes in critical geographical features (including water bodies and ice-caps) and in flora and fauna and the effects of such changes.*

**Q) Explain the factors responsible for the origin of Cyclones in Bay of Bengal region. How do they influence regional climates, fishing and navigation ? (250 words)**

Reference**Why this question:**

The question is in the context of Cyclone Fani that is set to hit Odisha on May 3, causing extensive damage. Fani, had already intensified into an “extremely severe cyclone”.

**Key demands of the question:**

The answer must evaluate the factors responsible for the origin of cyclones more so specifically in the Bay of Bengal region and one has to evaluate effects of such cyclonic effect on the regional climate as well as the navigation and fishing aspects related to the coastal communities of the region.

**Directive word**

**Explain** – Clarify the topic by giving a detailed account as to how and why it occurred, or what is the particular context. You must be defining key terms where ever appropriate, and substantiate with relevant associated facts.

**Structure of the answer:****Introduction**

In a few introductory lines explain the background of the question.

**Body**

Discuss the following aspects in the answer:

- What are the factors responsible for a cyclonic activity?
- Why is the Bay of Bengal prone to cyclones? –
- BoB water is warmer than Arabian sea water ;landlocked- less heat circulation and less powerful winds- again lesser heat circulation



- fresh water from rivers fall into BoB, making the water as a light thin layer, more prone to evaporation
- easterly jet – causing the windfall in eastern coastal States of India. And in Arabian sea these winds will steer the windfall towards eastern Africa , not towards western coast of India .
- Discuss the influence of such weather phenomena on the regional climate.
- Explain its impact on local community, aspects of navigation, fishing etc.
- Highlight the need for managing disasters and need for readiness and preparedness.

### Conclusion

Conclude with significance of such geographical phenomena.

### Introduction:

- Cyclone Fani is only the second severe cyclone in the last 118 years to form in the Bay of Bengal (BOB) in the month of April and cross over to the Indian mainland, according to data from the India Meteorological Department (IMD).
- April cyclones are rare and the track and severity of Fani makes it even rarer. In recent times, cyclones have either had unusual timing, like Cyclone Pabuk in January, or they have intensified rapidly before making landfall, like Cyclone Ockhi in 2017 and Cyclone Titli last year.

### Body:

- Tropical cyclones—also called typhoons or hurricanes—are intense water-rotating systems formed by strong winds (of speeds at least 62 kilometres/hour) around low-pressure areas. They have a spiral, anticlockwise movement.

The factors responsible for the origin of Cyclones in Bay of Bengal region are:

- Large sea surface with temperature higher than 27° C.
- Presence of the Coriolis force enough to create a cyclonic vortex.
- Small variations in the vertical wind speed.
- A pre-existing weak low-pressure area or low-level-cyclonic circulation.
- Upper divergence above the sea level system.

### Reason for concentration of Cyclones in Bay of Bengal:

- Since sea surface temperatures and humidity both directly correlate with chances of cyclone formation, the Bay of Bengal is a more likely target because it gets higher rainfall, and because the sluggish winds around it keep temperatures relatively high: about 28 degrees around the year.
- Warm air currents enhance this surface temperature and aid the formation of cyclones.
- In addition, the Bay receives higher rainfall and constant inflow of fresh water from the Ganga and Brahmaputra rivers. This means that the Bay's surface water keeps getting refreshed, making it impossible for the warm water to mix with the cooler water below, making it ideal for a depression.
- But not all cyclones are formed in the Bay of Bengal. The basin is also host to cyclones that are formed elsewhere but move towards the water body, especially those formed in the Pacific Ocean. Cyclones usually weaken if they encounter a large landmass.
- However, due to the lack of any such presence between the Pacific and the Bay, cyclonic winds easily move into the Bay of Bengal.

### Impact on regional climate:

- **Negative:**
  - Tropical cyclones can quickly change the environment of the affected areas. They can bring warmer air into hot places.
  - This makes the atmosphere feel very sticky and muggy and rises the temperature dramatically.
  - This can cause heat strokes and other heat related illness to children and the elderly after the storm which is not good.
- **Positive:**
  - Rain can also help clear some pollutants from air.
  - Tropical cyclones help maintain the global heat balance by moving warm tropical air away from the equator, towards the poles.
  - Also, tropical cyclones prevents heat energy to building up in the tropics and stops from more storms from forming for a short period of time. **Relieve drought conditions.**
  - Tropical cyclones can bring warmer area into cool places. They can help warm up the environment surrounding the affected area. In effect, they bring more appropriate temperatures for.

**Impact on fishing:**

- **Negative:**
  - Loss of habitat
  - Loss of juveniles and brood fishes
  - Loss of livelihoods of farmers and fishermen: Statistics show that the global average annual losses from cyclones and storm surges are estimated at US\$ 80 billion.
- **Positive:**
  - Sea life benefit greatly by cyclones, mainly through the flushing out of estuaries and river channels. It provides food and breeding grounds through this process.
  - Cyclones have the power to pick up substantial amounts of sand, nutrients and sediment on the ocean's bottom and bring it toward those barrier islands.
  - Storm surge, wind and waves will often move these islands closer to the mainland as sand is pushed or pulled in that direction.

**Impact on Navigation:**

- Mariners have a way to safely navigate around tropical cyclones.
- They split tropical cyclones in two, based on their direction of motion, and manoeuvre to avoid the right segment of the cyclone in the Northern Hemisphere (the left segment in the Southern Hemisphere).
- The rules of thumb for ship travel when a tropical cyclone is in their vicinity are to avoid them if at all possible and do not cross their forecast path (crossing the T).
- Ships moving through the navigable semicircle are advised to keep the true wind on the starboard quarter while making as much headway as possible.
- However, small fishermen with no state-of-the-art technology are usually advised to stay off the seas before and during the cyclones.

**Conclusion:**

- Natural disaster comes without warning and they are exacerbated by climate change. India should prepare to mitigate and deflect the destruction caused by Cyclones.
- India needs to employ more technology, strict following of command structure and most importantly the participation and cooperation of local communities in the affected area.

**Q) Provide for a critical review of the physical effects of sand mining on hydraulic structures in the country. What can be done to better govern the resources of sand in the country ? Discuss. (250 words)**

The hindu

**Why this question:**

Recently UNEP released a report, "Sand and Sustainability: Finding new solutions for environmental governance of global sand resources" highlighting the issue of Sand mining and offering solutions to the issue through governance.

**Key demands of the question:**

The answer must discuss the ill effects of sand mining on the hydraulic systems such as rivers, shores, sea beds etc. and what are the efforts that must be taken in the governance of these sand resources so as to overcome the issue.

**Directive word**

**Critical review** – When asked to review, you have to examine methodically the structure or nature of the topic by separating it into component parts and present them as a whole in a summary. When 'critically' is suffixed or prefixed to a directive, one needs to look at the good and bad of the topic and give a fair judgement.

**Structure of the answer:****Introduction**

In a few introductory lines explain that the mechanical removal of sand directly from the active channel of rivers, streams and seashores has become sizeable source of course and fine aggregates in India. In the last few decades, the construction Industry in India has seen a rapid augmentation resulting in rise in the demand of construction raw materials, including aggregates.





### Body

Discuss the following aspects in the answer:

- What are the resources of sand available in the country? How is illegal sand mining physically affecting these resources and the physical environment around it?
- Discuss the causes of concern.
- Provide for a detailed discussion on how it affects the hydraulic system?
- What steps should be taken to handle this critical situation?
- Take hints from the report and suggest solutions.

### Conclusion

Conclude with way forward.

### Introduction:

- The **United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)** recently released a report, **Sand and Sustainability: Finding new solutions for environmental governance of global sand resources**, that highlights a problem that has largely stayed under the radar: sand consumption globally has been increasing and we are extracting it at rates exceeding natural replenishment rates.

### Body:

- Sand and gravel are the second largest natural resources extracted and traded by volume after water, but among the least regulated. Sand is created by slow geological processes, and its distribution is not even.
- Desert sand, available in plenty, is not suited for construction use because it is wind-smoothed, and therefore non-adherent.
- While 85% to 90% of global sand demand is met from quarries, and sand and gravel pits, the 10% to 15% extracted from rivers and sea shores is a severe concern due to the environmental and social impacts.

### Need for sand mining:

- Infrastructure projects and construction activities.
- To meet the rising need of housing construction.
- Livelihood of sand miners.

### Effects on the hydraulic structure due to rampant sand mining:

- Their extraction often results in river and coastal erosion and threats to freshwater and marine fisheries and aquatic ecosystems, instability of river banks leading to increased flooding, and lowering of ground water levels.
- The report notes that China and India head the list of critical hotspots for sand extraction impacts in rivers, lakes and on coastlines.
- Most large rivers of the world have lost between half and 95% of their natural sand and gravel delivery to ocean the report says.
- The damming of rivers for hydro-electricity production or irrigation is reducing the amount of sediment flowing downstream.
- This broken replenishment system exacerbates pressures on beaches already threatened by sea level rise and intensity of storm-waves induced by climate change, as well as coastal developments.
- There are also indirect consequences, like loss of local livelihoods — an ironic example is that construction in tourist destinations can lead to depletion of natural sand in the area, thereby making those very places unattractive — and safety risks for workers where the industry is not regulated
- Mining which leads to the removal of channel substrate, resuspension of streambed sediment, clearance of vegetation, and stockpiling on the streambed, will have ecological impacts. These impacts may have an effect on the direct loss of stream reserve habitat, disturbances of species attached to streambed deposits, reduced light penetration, reduced primary production, and reduced feeding opportunities.

### Measures needed:

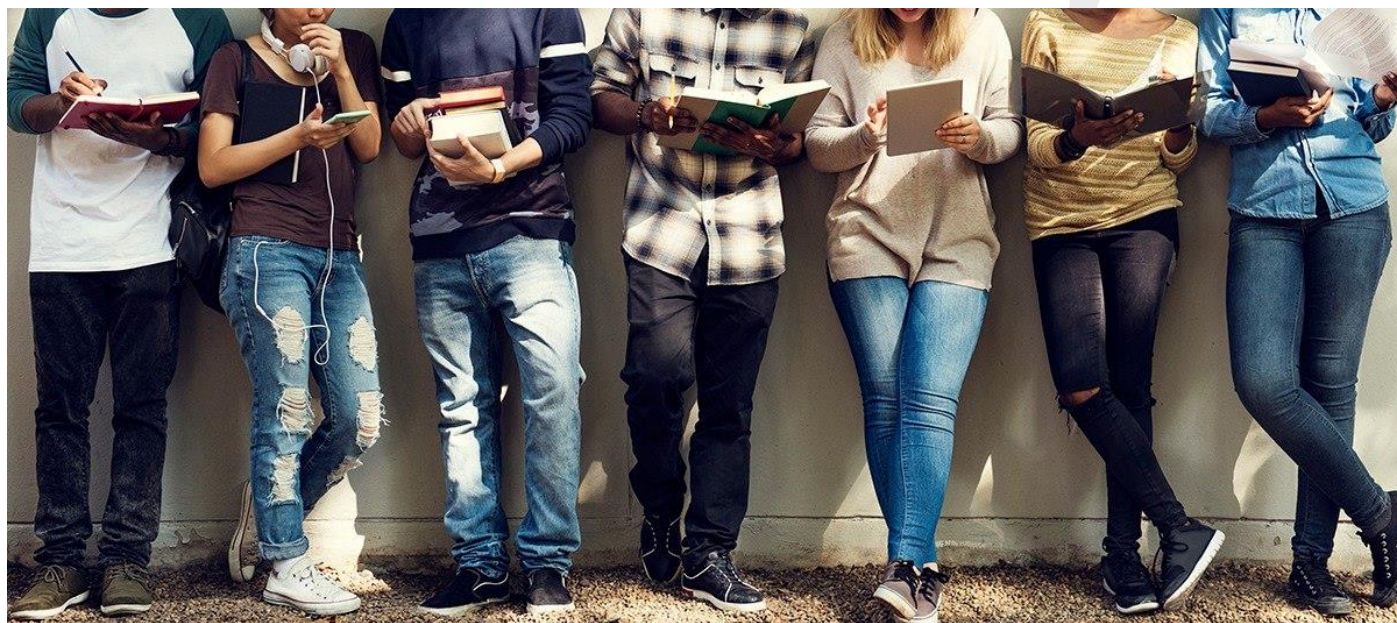
- The report suggests better spatial planning and reducing unnecessary construction — including speculative projects or those being done mainly for prestige — thereby making more efficient use of aggregates.
- It calls for investing in infrastructure maintenance and retrofitting rather than the demolish and rebuild cycle, embracing alternative design and construction methods, even avoiding use of cement and concrete where possible, and using green infrastructure.
- The report concludes with a call for large-scale multipronged actions from global to local levels, involving public, private and civil society organisations.
- This will mean building consensus, defining what success would look like, and reconciling policies and standards with sand availability, development imperatives and standards and enforcement realities.



- The alternative substitute materials the report points to, are several from India, including oil palm shell, waste foundry sand, crushed tiles, granite powder, mine waste, bottom ash, and discarded rubber.

**Conclusion:**

- To help states deal with the sand mining issues, including demand supply deficit and illegal extraction, the Union Government has launched a framework prepared after intensive consultations with all stakeholders.
- There is a need to reduce demand to responsible levels and stop environmentally damaging practices to protect sensitive ecosystems and meet biodiversity conservation goals.



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**Q) Do you think there exists a correlation of an agroclimatic conditions of a region with the strategy for water management practices? Give your opinion with suitable justifications. (250 words)**

#### Reference

##### **Why this question:**

The article discusses in detail how the water management practices often are and must be guided by the agroclimatic conditions of a region. It tries to establish the correlation that exists between the two aspects.

##### **Key demands of the question:**

The answer must briefly discuss the existence of the correlation between the agro climatic conditions and methods of managing water of a region and to what extent the correlation is significant in managing water as a critical resource, one has to justify with examples.

##### **Structure of the answer:**

##### **Introduction**

In a few introductory lines explain what you understand by question statement.

##### **Body**

The body of the answer has to capture the following aspects:

- highlight the need for conservation of water and effective management of the same and how it is the need of the hour.
- Discuss how Around the world, cities are facing huge water-related risks that are aggravated by climate change, rapid urbanization and outdated infrastructure resulting in flooding, water scarcity and rehabilitation costs on a scale that overwhelm the capacities of cities.
- Explain the challenges that are faced in conservation and management of water resource.
- Quote examples to justify the correlation – use hints from the article.

##### **Conclusion**

Conclude that the need of the hour is to go back to the use of traditional approach and adopt sustainable, cost effective, low maintenance practices. Depending on the agroclimatic region the strategy may be different but the idea is the same — catch water where it falls.

##### **Introduction:**

- Around the world, cities are facing huge water-related risks that are aggravated by climate change, rapid urbanisation and outdated infrastructure resulting in flooding, water scarcity and rehabilitation costs on a scale that overwhelm the capacities of cities.
- The city of Cape Town in South Africa, Shimla in India are a few examples where the taps went dry due to mismanagement and paucity of water.

##### **Body:**

There definitely exists a co-relation between the agro-climatic conditions of a region and the strategy of water management practices.

- Many Indian cities, including Delhi and Bangalore, face a water crisis, especially that of freshwater.
- A World Bank study puts the plight of the country in perspective: 163 million Indians lack access to safe drinking water; 210 million Indians lack access to improved sanitation; 21% of communicable diseases are linked to unsafe water.
- Cities or regions are geographically well placed in terms of their resources, but due to **existing water management practices**, our cities suffer. E.g.: **enormous concretisation in the name of urbanisation**

##### **Challenges that are faced in conservation and management of water resource:**

- **Legal and institutional framework**
  - The government finance for well digging and pump installation with capital subsidies, massive rural electrification and pervasive energy subsidies all have enabled this process to aggravate.
  - Zero marginal cost of pumping and lack of restriction on volume of water resulted in inefficient and unsustainable use of the resource.
  - Lack of adequate planning, crumbling infrastructure, indiscriminate drilling of borewells, large-scale consumption of water, and a false sense of entitlement in using water carelessly are causing water shortages.
  - No status report or data available to showcase the enforcement of law to implement RWH
  - Lack of coordination between state and nonstate stakeholders
  - Majorly RWH systems are implemented by individual users/owners





- Technical knowhow of RWH structures and technologies is minimal
- **Policy lacunae:**
  - Existing rules on groundwater access that give landowners the right to pump on their land
  - Subsidies on electricity are thought to play a central role in the Indian groundwater crisis. The vast majority of groundwater pumps are unmetered, and if charged, are billed at a flat, non-volumetric, and highly subsidized tariff.
  - In the north western parts of India and southern peninsula, the early and rapid rural electrification, free or subsidised power to the farm sector, large productive farmers and attractive procurement prices for major cereals led to intensive use of groundwater.
- **Urbanization:**
  - India's huge groundwater-dependent population, uncertain climate-reliant recharge processes and indiscriminate land use changes with urbanization are among the many factors that have rendered the Indian groundwater scenario to become a global paradigm for water scarcity, for both quantity and quality.
  - Cities like Bengaluru are losing its capacity to recharge groundwater as the number of water bodies like lakes has reduced by 79%
  - Commercial establishments like shopping malls, hotels, hospitals and high-rise apartments are using borewells in large number to meet the demand for the occupants.
- **Social aspect**
  - Documentation of best management practices of RWH systems is absent
  - Lack of research on importance and use of RWH for non-potable purposes.
  - Negligible community involvement/engagement for implementing RWH systems
  - Resistance among people to use harvested rainwater as an alternate source of water
- **Infrastructural aspect**
  - Availability of funds is a concern in practising RWH
  - No alternative provision for water supply augmentation
  - Lack of adequate storm water management infrastructures

#### Way forward:

- Strong leadership and coordination among state and non-state stakeholders would be necessary for a successful wide-ranging RWH implementation project.
- In addition, a coordinated educational programme will have to be conducted to dispel myths about stored water and to create the required skills base.
- The statutes and bylaws regarding water would also have to be reviewed to avoid legal impediments.
- The multi-layer institutional model requires substantial initial investment and effective communication between organisations, water users and governments should be looked into.
- An approach like RWH isn't just a viable alternative to current practices, it also aligns with the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, which include clean water, sanitation and sustainable cities, with community involvement.
- Ecologically safe engineering marvels of water conservation have existed in India for nearly 1,500 years, including traditional systems of water harvesting, such as the bawari, jhalara, nadi, tanka, and khadin. This can be rejuvenated and replicated.
- They continue to remain viable and cost-effective alternatives for replenishing depleted groundwater aquifers. With government support, they could be revived, upgraded and productively combined with modern rainwater-saving techniques such as anicuts, percolation tanks, injection wells and subsurface barriers.

#### Conclusion:

- The need of the hour is to go back to the use of traditional approach and adopt sustainable, cost effective, low maintenance practices. Depending on the agro-climatic region the strategy may be different but the idea is the same — catch water where it falls.

**Case study: Rwanda**, a sovereign (and landlocked) country in central Africa with a varied geography covering roughly 25,000 square kilometre of land and 1,400 sq km of water. Rwanda receives average annual precipitation of 1,200 millimetre (mm), and the rainfall ranges from as low as 800 mm in Eastern Province to about 2,000 mm in high altitude of north and west. Thus, there is ample scope to practice rainwater harvesting (RWH).



Looking at the urban trend, the country has one of the highest population densities in Africa (483 people/sq km). As per the 2012 census, Rwanda had approximately 12 million citizens and an annual population growth of 2.6 per cent. Around 19.4 per cent of the total inhabitants live in urban areas.

Its capital, Kigali, is a major urban centre with 76 per cent of the population categorised as “urban”. At the same time, Rwanda is also among the countries having the lowest per capita water availability (670 cubic metres per capita per year) and storage capacity in Africa. Besides inadequate per-capita availability, floods accompanied with soil erosion are a common issue in the country.

**Bawaris** are unique stepwells that were once a part of the ancient networks of water storage in the cities of **Rajasthan**. The little rain that the region received would be diverted to man-made tanks through canals built on the hilly outskirts of cities. The water would then percolate into the ground, raising the water table and recharging a deep and intricate network of aquifers.

In Himachal Pradesh, **kuhls** (surface water channels) have been used since ancient times to carry glacial waters from rivers and streams into valley fields. These kuhls need to be desilted and fortified to prevent them from breaking during torrential rainfall.

Another effective traditional water management system is **bamboo drip irrigation, practiced in the tribal pockets of the Khasi and Jaintia hills of Meghalaya**. In this, a network of bamboo pipes of varying diameters, lengths and positioning is used to harvest water from hill springs or streams. This can be adopted on a larger scale wherever possible.

**Nagaland's Zabo** is also a great way of collecting run-off in community tanks/ponds. Rainwater that falls on forested hilltops is led by channels that deposit it in pond-like structures created on the terraced hillsides. The channels also pass through cattle yards, collecting the dung and urine of animals, before ultimately meandering into fields at the foot of the hill.

### TOPIC: Economic, Human geography

**Q) Is regional inequality in India actually a problem of economic geography? Discuss. Suggest how economic growth can help do away with regional inequalities. (250 words)**

[Livemint](#)

#### **why this question:**

The article captures in detail how Economic geography is central to India's regional inequality distresses. It emphasises the need for issue to be looked through the prism of economic geography—density, distance, division by the policy makers.

#### **Demand of the question:**

This question seeks to examine the interlinkages between economic geography and the regional inequalities and disparities.

#### **Directive word:**

**Discuss** – This is an all-encompassing directive – you have to debate on paper by going through the details of the issues concerned by examining each one of them. You have to give reasons for both for and against arguments.

#### **Structure of the answer:**

##### **Introduction**

Start with brief introduction of the prevalent inequalities and disparities in the country.

##### **Body**

Discuss the following points in detail:

- What is regional inequality?
- What is regional disparity in India?
- The causes of regional disparities in India? What are the major causes of inequality in India?





- Take cues from the article and explain how the World Bank repeatedly identified the key dimensions of economic development—density, distance and division to deal with inequalities that are regional in nature.
- Provide for a comparison of regional inequalities – say north and south and then justify how economic geography aspects in the policy making can help resolve the issue.

### Conclusion

Conclude with significance of the economic geography in policy making.

### Introduction:

- India, as the world's fastest-growing major economy, may well be catching up with the richer economies in terms of absolute size. But economic convergence within the country remains a distant dream as poorer States continue to lag behind the richer ones in economic growth.
- A report from the rating agency **CRISIL** found that the inter-State disparities have widened in recent years even as the larger economy grows in size and influence on the global stage.

### Body:

- Many low-income States have experienced isolated years of strong economic growth above the national average. But they have still failed to bridge their widening gap with the richer States since they have simply not been able to maintain a healthy growth rate over a sustained period of time.

The Economic geographical factors are leading to regional inequality as discussed below

- **Geographical Factors:**
  - River plains, fertile areas, cool climate, arable lands, mines etc. are economically beneficial areas and are developed quickly. **Example:** Northern plains,
  - The difficult terrain surrounded by hills, rivers and dense forests leads to increase in the cost of administration, cost of developmental projects, besides making mobilisation of resources particularly difficult. **Example:** Himachal Pradesh, Northern Kashmir.
  - Adverse climatic conditions like regions prone to flood, drought are also responsible factors for poor rate of economic development of different regions of the country as reflected by low agricultural productivity and lack of industrialisation.
- **Location Advantages:**
  - The World Bank had said in 2009 that the hierarchy when it came to regional inequality is that distance is the most important factor, followed by density and finally division.
  - While determining the location of iron and steel projects or refineries or any heavy industrial project, some technical factors included in the location advantage are getting special considerations.
  - Due to some location advantages, some regions are getting special favour in respect of site selections of various developmental projects. **Example:** Ports in the coastal areas.
- **Human Capital:**
  - The population in the Gangetic plain is too large—nearly a fourth of the entire Indian population—for mass migration to be a viable option.
- **Economic Overheads:**
  - Economic overheads like **transport and communication facilities, power, technology, banking and insurance** are considered very important for the development of a particular region. **Example:** Gujarat, Maharashtra
  - New investment in the private sector has a general tendency to concentrate much on those regions having basic infrastructural facilities.
- **Policy & Governance Issues:**
  - The poor policies also lead to imbalanced growth in regions.
  - The benefit of **green revolution** was very much restricted to the states like Punjab, Haryana and plain districts of Uttar Pradesh leaving the other states totally in the dark about the adoption of new agricultural strategy.
  - States like Maharashtra, Gujarat, Tamil Nadu have excelled due to industrial development policies, attraction of FDI from foreign investors, tax holidays, tax sops to industries attract them.

### Way Forward:

- **Goods and Service Tax** is a game changer and provides a level-playing field for all states. This makes all states equally attractive to set up industries.
- Flagship projects like **Bharatmala, Sagarmala** concentrate on the hinterland development too thereby providing infrastructure to underdeveloped areas.



- Schemes like **Aspirational Districts Program** are curated to target the under-developed areas and bring on par with good socio-economic development.
- Bolstering the **State-level institutions, as gauged by their ability to uphold the rule of law and create a free, competitive marketplace for businesses to thrive, and the quality of public spending** could be crucial determinants of the long-run growth prospects of States.
- **Bottom-up development, competitive and co-operative federalism** should be implemented in true letter and spirit to reduce the regional disparities.

#### Conclusion:

Reducing the regional disparity is imperative as the demographic potential of states are different. The states with poor developmental indices are the youngest ones and must be developed to reap the demographic dividend and a sustained development of India.

**Q) While Life expectancy at birth refers to the average number of years an individual is expected to live, given mortality rates, India is experiencing a paradox of life expectancy increasing with increasing age. Discuss the causes of such a paradox and give your opinion. (250 words)**

#### Livemint

##### **Why this question:**

The article captures a detailed analysis of the paradox India is facing with respect to life expectancy.

##### **Key demand of the question:**

The answer must evaluate and analyse why there is a paradox in the life expectancy trends, one has to analyse the causative factors for the same.

##### **Directive word:**

**Discuss** – This is an all-encompassing directive – you have to debate on paper by going through the details of the issues concerned by examining each one of them. You have to give reasons for both for and against arguments.

##### **Structure of the answer:**

##### **Introduction:**

Begin with what you understand by life expectancy.

##### **Body:**

Discussion should include the following aspects –

- Explain the nuances of life expectancy in general – how it is a measure of different aspects in population studies.
- Discuss the Indian case – why is there a paradox?
- What are the factors that have lead to inverse picture of the life expectancy in India? – take cues from the article.
- Conclude with significance of various govt. initiatives in this direction.

##### **Conclusion:**

Conclude with way forward.

#### **Introduction:**

- According to WHO, **Life expectancy at birth** reflects the overall mortality level of a population. It summarizes the mortality pattern that prevails across all age groups – children and adolescents, adults and the elderly. It refers to the average number of years that a newborn is expected to live if current mortality rates continue to apply. According to the 2011 census, Indian life expectancy has merely increased from 60 years in 1992 to 67.9 years in 2012.

#### **Body:**

**Life expectancy at birth** as a concept differs on the basis of various factors:

- First, it varies across time horizons based on varying conditions such as war, spread of epidemics and environmental conditions.
- Second, it varies across age cohorts, again given mortality rates.
- Third, it also differs across space for the same time, depending on variations in geographical, economic, social and gender factors.

Despite consistent improvements in life expectancy at birth, India's life expectancy at birth is still lower than the global average.



The paradox in India:

- Life expectancy declines as age increases.
- For instance, life expectancy at age 1 for females and males is 71.9 and 68.3 respectively.
- Thereafter, as one attains age 5, life expectancy declines to 68.8 for females and 64.9 for males and, subsequently, at age 20, it further declines to 54.6 and 50.6 respectively.
- This is consistent with the fact that as one ages, the number of years one is expected to survive thereafter declines.
- However, if one observes India's life tables for age cohort 0-1, life expectancy does not adhere to the above logic, which is otherwise applicable throughout the ages of 1 to 70. **The age cohort 0-1, therefore, presents a paradox.**
- The life expectancy for females and males at birth is 69.6 and 66.4 respectively, which increases to 71.9 and 68.3 years once they attain the age of 1. Clearly, instead of declining, life expectancy is increasing with age.
- A newborn in India has a lower probability of surviving in the first year as compared to the probability of survival after the age of one year.

Reasons for the above paradox:

- **High infant mortality rates (IMR):** Statistics of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) show a strong correlation between IMR and life expectancy at birth.
- **Neonatal mortality rate (NNMR):** The rate of deaths occurring in the first 28 days, is the primary factor impacting IMR. Studies show that risk of such a death is almost 30 times higher than in the post-neonatal period.
- **High infant malnutrition in India:** National Family Health Survey 4 (2015-16) data show high incidence of stunting, atrophy and underweight under-five children (38.4%, 21% and 35.8% respectively).
- Other causal factors broadly include **immunizable diseases, poor sanitation and breastfeeding practices.**
- **Lack of Maternal Education and State intervention** at the right intervals. The former relates to awareness and latter to state-administered health supplements, immunization and sanitation access.

Government's efforts to reduce the above paradox:

- The government has accelerated progress through programmes such as **Mission Indradhanush, Swachh Bharat Mission, National Rural Health Mission and Poshan Abhiyan**. Despite these measures, however, the progress has been rather slow.

**Conclusion:**

- Undoubtedly, the impact that interventions focused on the first year of birth can have on the survival of individuals is profound. That being recognized, any strategy to raise life expectancy at birth should be aimed at tackling causal factors of IMR and NNMR by designing an appropriate microstructure of interventions.