



# INSIGHTSIAS

SIMPLIFYING IAS EXAM PREPARATION

- IAS SELF STUDY GUIDE -

## **SECURE SYNOPSIS**

### **MAINS 2019**

# **GS-II**

## **MAY 2019**



**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.

INSIGHTS IAS



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## General Studies Paper - II

*TOPIC: Indian Constitution- historical underpinnings, evolution, features, amendments, significant provisions and basic structure ;*

**Q) “While a stable government has its own benefits, less stable governments are neither a threat to democracy”. Elucidate upon the statement with respect to prevalence of coalition politics in the country. (250 words)**

Livemint

**Why this question:**

The article captures a detailed discussion of whether multiparty rule is good or bad for India depending on the prevalent political circumstances amidst the upcoming election results.

**Key demand of the question:**

The answer must evaluate the role of coalition politics in relevance to Indian democracy. One has to provide for arguments weighing the benefits of majority stable government vs coalition unstable government.

**Directive word:**

**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:**

Begin with what you understand by stable and unstable government in a democracy.

**Body:**

Discussion should include the following aspects –

- Narrate a background for the question discussing the current situations of elections in India.
- Explain what is coalition government India? – A coalition government is a cabinet of a parliamentary government in which multiple political parties cooperate, reducing the dominance of any one party within that coalition.
- Discuss its impact on Indian politics? – In a Parliamentary democracy, coalitions arise mainly as a result of political compulsion. conflicts. It may also be formed due to emergency. The policies that are adopted by the coalition government are made by the coalescing parties and merely finalized by the leader of the coalition.
- Then move on to discuss how many a times coalition politics helps overcome the tyranny of the majoritarian politics and acts as a perfect check and balance mechanism.
- Take cues from the article for more points.

**Conclusion:**

Conclude with way forward signifying importance of Democracy.

**Introduction:**

- The classical paradigm of parliamentary democracy consists of an elected representative parliament which is supreme, a cabinet collectively responsible to parliament, a prime minister who is supreme within the cabinet and an organized opposition within the Parliament.
- It was assumed that the majority would form a government and the minority the opposition. Problems arise when no single party could secure enough majorities to form a single party government, and in such situation the alternative was the multi-party system or coalition government.

**Body:**

- A coalition is an alliance of parties formed for the purpose of contesting elections jointly and/or forming a government and managing the governance by a process of sharing process.
- So coalition implies co-operation between political parties and this co-operation may take place may take place at Electoral, Parliamentary and Governmental levels.

Benefits of less stable or coalition governments:

- The coalition government addresses the regional disparity more than the single party rule.
- Coalition government is **more democratic**, and hence fairer, because it represents a much broader spectrum of public opinion than government by one party alone. In almost all coalitions, a majority of citizens voted for





the parties which form the government and so their views and interests are represented in political decision making.

- Coalition government creates a **more honest and dynamic political system**, allowing voters a clearer choice at election time. It is also easier for parties to split, or new ones to be formed, as new political issues divide opinion, because new parties still have a chance of a share in political power. The **Desai government (1977-1979)**, for example, undid regressive laws enacted by the Indira Gandhi government during the Emergency.
- Coalitions provide good government because their decisions are made in the interests of a majority of the people. A coalition government better reflects the popular opinion of the electorate within a country.
- Coalition government provides more continuity in administration. A more consensual style of politics also allows for a more gradual and constructive shift of policy between administrations.
- Such government functions on principle of politics of consensus. Besides, states are given more powers, and the base of concept of federalism is strengthened.
- Government will be more consensus based: resulting policies will be broadly approved of for the benefit of the nation. Eg: The coalition governments could take pluralistic opinions and could address issues such as lynching or sedition laws, these would be crucial interventions in India's governance, especially consequential for citizens ranged against the perpetuation of majoritarianism.
- Better representation of the electorate's wishes. Better quality of policy: enhanced scrutiny and increased attention paid to each policy
- Increased continuity: election does not lead to dramatic overhaul which can produce fragmented rule
- Yet instability apart, coalition governments have been effective in enhancing democratic legitimacy, representativeness, and national unity.
- Critics of one-party majority governments often cite the excessive abuse of President's Rule during Indira Gandhi's time as one of its shortcomings, a practice that the coalition era has effectively ended.

#### Conclusion:

- In short, India's experience does not support the thesis that coalition governments are innately bad. Since India is a diverse country with different ethnic, linguistic, and religious communities, it also has diverse ideologies.
- Due to this, the benefit that a coalition has is that it leads to more consensus based politics and reflects the popular opinion of the electorate. It is the competency of the government and not whether it is a coalition or an individual party, that plays an important role in impacting the welfare of the people.
- Whether the right decisions come from a coalition or an individual ruling party, they will always be appreciated and rewarded by the public.

**Q) What is a coalition government what is its impact on Indian politics? Do you agree Coalitions allow a diversity of voices to be heard, keep fundamentalism at bay? Critically analyse. (250 words)**

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

#### Why this question:

The article discusses how an absolute majority in favor of a political party has the tendency to threaten democratic values and in what way Coalitions allow a diversity of voices to be heard, keep fundamentalism at bay.

#### Key demands of the question:

The answer must briefly discuss the role of coalition politics in the present context. Discuss in detail the pros and cons of such a tool of democracy.

#### Directive:

**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 background/context of the question.



### Body

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

- What is coalition politics in India? – In a Parliamentary democracy, coalitions arise mainly as a result of political compulsion. conflicts. It may also be formed due to emergency. The policies that are adopted by the coalition government are made by the coalescing parties and merely finalized by the leader of the coalition.
- What are the features of coalition government?
- Examine is India Is Set to Return to Coalition Politics?
- Then move on to evaluate the merits and demerits of the Coalition govt.
- Take cues from the article to justify the significance of such a democratic tool.

### Conclusion

Conclude with way forward.

### Introduction:

- A coalition is an alliance of parties formed for the purpose of contesting elections jointly and/or forming a government and managing the governance by a process of sharing process.
- So coalition implies co-operation between political parties and this co-operation may take place may take place at Electoral, Parliamentary and Governmental levels.

### Body:

#### Impact of Coalition Government on Indian Politics and diversity of India:

- The process of fragmentation of the national party system and emergence of minority or coalition governments started in India from 1967.
- This period also marked the emergence of coalitions and also new parties and mergers along with breakup of some parties and absorption of the others.
- This began the era of Coalition Politics or Multi party rule in India. The adoption of multi party system and regionalism changed the centre-state relations to a certain extent.
- Coalition government is **more democratic**, and hence fairer, because it represents a much broader spectrum of public opinion than government by one party alone. In almost all coalitions, a majority of citizens voted for the parties which form the government and so their views and interests are represented in political decision making.
- Coalition government creates a **more honest and dynamic political system**, allowing voters a clearer choice at election time. It is also easier for parties to split, or new ones to be formed, as new political issues divide opinion, because new parties still have a chance of a share in political power. The **Desai government (1977-1979)**, for example, undid regressive laws enacted by the Indira Gandhi government during the Emergency.
- Coalitions provide good government because their decisions are made in the interests of a majority of the people. A coalition government better reflects the popular opinion of the electorate within a country.
- Coalition government provides more continuity in administration. A more consensual style of politics also allows for a more gradual and constructive shift of policy between administrations.
- Such government functions on principle of politics of consensus. Besides, states are given more powers, and the base of concept of federalism is strengthened.
- **Government will be more consensus based:** resulting policies will be broadly approved of for the benefit of the nation. Eg: The coalition governments could take pluralistic opinions and could address issues such as lynching or sedition laws, these would be crucial interventions in India's governance, especially consequential for citizens ranged against the perpetuation of majoritarianism.
- Better representation of the electorate's wishes. Better quality of policy: enhanced scrutiny and increased attention paid to each policy
- Increased continuity: election does not lead to dramatic overhaul which can produce fragmented rule
- Yet instability apart, coalition governments have been effective in enhancing democratic legitimacy, representativeness, and national unity.
- Critics of one-party majority governments often cite the excessive abuse of President's Rule during Indira Gandhi's time as one of its shortcomings, a practice that the coalition era has effectively ended.

However, it has its own set of limitations:

- Coalition government is actually less democratic as the balance of power is inevitably held by the small parties who can barter their support for concessions from the main groups within the coalition.
- Coalition government is less transparent, because a party has no real chance of forming a government alone, the manifestos they present to the public become irrelevant and often wildly unrealistic.



- Coalitions provide bad government because they are unable to take a long-term view.
- Coalition governments are very unstable, often collapsing and reforming at frequent intervals – Italy, for example, averages more than one government per year since 1945. This greatly restricts the ability of governments to deal with major reforms and means that politicians seldom stay in any particular ministerial post for long enough to get to grips with its demands.
- Coalition governments are definitely far less effective, not durable, and non-dependable as compared to the governments formed by any one party with a definite ideology and principles.
- In coalition governments, MLAs and MPs from all the parties are given portfolios/ministries and appointed as Ministers. These ministers are appointed on the recommendations of the parent party, without taking the qualification, character and criminal /clean record of the MLAs and MPs.

#### Conclusion:

- Since India is a diverse country with different ethnic, linguistic, and religious communities, it also has diverse ideologies. Due to this, the benefit that a coalition has is that it leads to more consensus based politics and reflects the popular opinion of the electorate.
- It is the competency of the government and not whether it is a coalition or an individual party that plays an important role in impacting the welfare of the people. Whether the right decisions come from a coalition or an individual ruling party, they will always be appreciated and rewarded by the public.

*Topic – Structure, organization and functioning of the Executive and the Judiciary; Ministries and Departments of the Government; pressure groups and formal/informal associations and their role in the Polity.*

**Q) While the Judicial system of the country preaches people transparency, it itself has remained as the country's most opaque institution. Critically analyse under the recent controversies surrounding it. Do you think it requires an institutional reset? (250 words)**

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

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

Off-late the SC has been making headlines more for controversies than for its position of giving diktats. The current Chief Justice of India, Ranjan Gogoi, just like his two immediate predecessors, Justices Dipak Misra and JS Kheharis dealing with a crippling controversy and many such errors have been pointed out around the judicial system that highlights the opaqueness of the system.

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

This question seeks to examine the issues surrounding the judicial system of the country, the causes and consequences associated with it. One should also suggest what needs to be done to overcome such a state of affairs in the country's Judicial system.

#### **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**

Start with brief introduction of the background of events surrounding the Judicial system.

##### **Body**

Discuss the following points in detail:

- What are the issues surrounding the system that makes it opaque?  
Corruption.
- Lack of transparency (particularly in the appointment of judges).
- abuse of the office of the Chief Justice of India.
- fragility of judicial independence
- Under trials of the accused.
- Lack of information and interaction among people and courts.
- What needs to be done ?
- Discuss the need for institutional reset; what should it be like?
- Conclude by re-asserting the necessity of judicial system remaining transparent.



### Conclusion

It is not enough to assert that judicial independence will be at risk whenever any matter related to the judiciary is sought to be debated. Instead, mechanisms must be evolved to ensure due process, where protecting judicial independence is one of the factors involved while ensuring transparency is another.

### Introduction:

- The Chief Justice of India (CJI) is the head of the judiciary of India and the Supreme Court of India. The recent allegation of sexual harassment against the Chief Justice of India (CJI), is now turning into a crisis of credibility, not just for the CJI but the judiciary and our constitutional scheme of government as a whole.
- The current Chief Justice of India, Ranjan Gogoi, just like his two immediate predecessors, Justices Dipak Misra and JS Khehar, has had to deal with a crippling controversy.

### Body:

#### The crises surrounding Judiciary off late:

- The Chief Justice's conduct in the sexual harassment allegations has sent a signal that he is above all principles of natural justice, above all due process, above all law and entitled to be a **judge in his own cause**.
- The controversies regarding the CJI being the master of the roster and how the cases were allotted to various benches in partisan manner.
- The issue of 4 senior most judges holding a public press conference wrt the above issue.
- Lack of transparency particularly in the appointment of judges has led to issues like that of errant judges like Justice CS Karnan.
- The sealed cover has now become a problem of opacity. In the Rafale case, the NDA government's evidence is in a sealed envelope, as indeed are all the reports of the officer in-charge of the National Register of Citizens process in Assam. In former Central Bureau of Investigation chief Alok Verma's case, the Central Vigilance Commission's report remains in a sealed cover, as do the NIA's reports in the Hadiya conversion case.
- Parliament had tried to create the National Judicial Accountability Commission (NJAC) exactly for such situations but the SC struck it down (4-1) as unconstitutional.
- The Supreme Court protects the Right to Information Act for us, but claims immunity for itself. Only seven of 27 SC judges have disclosed their assets. There is no transparency or disclosure of the collegium proceedings or even explanation when it changes its mind on an appointment.

#### Institutional reset:

- The judiciary of India has proved itself time and again by upholding the rule of law, fundamental rights of citizens and upholding the constitution of India.
- The rulings in Kesavananda Bharti, Maneka Gandhi, Shreya Singhal, Justice Puttuswamy are some of the shining examples of Judiciary's strength. The need of the hour is not an institutional reset but reforms to uphold the judicial independence and transparency.

#### Measures needed:

- An independent enquiry towards complaints of Sexual harassment is needed to uphold the credibility of the SC.
- The Gender Sensitization and ICC should inquire into the affidavit of the complainant to ensure justice is done.
- **Appointment:**
  - More transparency in the appointment of judges, the **Memorandum of Procedure** must be adopted at the earliest.
  - All India Judicial services (AIJS) for uniformity and efficiency in appointment process.
- Strengthening alternative dispute resolution mechanisms
- Adequate funding to expand physical infrastructure.
- Modernization of court process; use of technology to be expanded. Initiatives like CIS should be supplemented by file tracking and knowledge management system.
- Analyzing appropriate court-related data for better understanding of problems. This would also help in proper case listing
- Application of management principles; full utilization of court managers; include external support agencies to work with judicial officers to cater to the needs of institution better.
- Creation of a transparent mechanism to discipline judges
  - **Judicial Standards and accountability Bill, 2012:** The Bill seeks to put in a place a system to probe complaints against High Court and Supreme Court Judges.



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**Q) Discuss the nuances of the in-house power of inquiry of the supreme court of India. How is it an exercise of moral authority ? Comment. (250 words)**

The hindu

**Why this question:**

The question is in the backdrop of the investigation of sexual harassment allegations against Chief Justice of India by an in-house three-member committee headed by Justice Bobde. It is important that the procedure followed in this case is carefully deliberated upon to ensure that it is fair, just and reasonable

**Key demand of the question:**

The answer must discuss in detail the process of inquiry under the In-House Procedure.

**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.

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

**Structure of the answer:**

**Introduction:**

Brief upon the scenario.

**Body:**

- Elaborate of what is Inquiry under the In-House Procedure?
- The 'In-House Procedure' is specifically designed to deal with charges of misconduct against sitting judges of the court. It requires the Chief Justice of India to constitute a three-member panel of Supreme Court judges to enquire into a complaint of misconduct received by the CJI against a sitting judge. The CJI is further tasked with supervising and enforcing the outcome of this inquiry. The procedure, however, does not expressly provide for a mechanism to constitute a committee when the complaint is against the CJI himself.
- Provide for pros and cons associated with such a system of inquiry
- Discuss what are the issues and concerns involved?
- Suggest what should be done ?

**Conclusion:**

Conclude that With institutional integrity at stake, the court must ensure that this inquiry instils confidence in the ability of formal institutional mechanisms to sensitively and fairly address sexual harassment. The Supreme Court must lead by example and abide by the principles that are expected to be followed for every other body inquiring into sexual harassment at the workplace.

**Introduction:**

- The office of Chief Justice of India heaved a sigh of relief after **Justice S.A. Bobde in-house committee** had found "no substance" in the sexual harassment allegations levelled by a former Supreme Court staff member against Chief Justice of India Ranjan Gogoi. The Committee has given a clean chit to CJI Gogoi and concluded that there is no substance in the allegations of the complainant.

**Body:**

**Inquiry under the In-House Procedure:**

- The 'In-House Procedure' is specifically designed to deal with charges of misconduct against sitting judges of the court.
- Since there was no other procedure against a judge of a Supreme Court or High Court, an in-house procedure was laid down.
- This was done at Chief Justices' Conference held in December 1999. A Code of Conduct was laid down which contained 16 clauses in addition to the declaration of assets by the judges. The in-house procedure was suggested in the event of any complaint against any judge.
- The 2003 judgment states that the in-house procedure has been adopted for inquiry to be made by the peers of judges in case of a complaint against the Chief Justices or Judges of the High Court in order to find out truth of the imputation made in the complaint. That in-house inquiry is for the purpose of his (CJI's) own information and satisfaction.
- It requires the Chief Justice of India to constitute a three-member panel of Supreme Court judges to enquire into a complaint of misconduct received by the CJI against a sitting judge.





- The CJI is further tasked with supervising and enforcing the outcome of this inquiry.
- The procedure, however, does not expressly provide for a mechanism to constitute a committee when the complaint is against the CJI himself.

#### Pros of in-house procedure:

- When the allegations are examined by the judge's peers, outside agencies are kept out, and the **independence of the judiciary** is maintained.
- Awareness about the existence of a mechanism to examine such complaints will **preserve the faith of the people in the impartiality and independence of the judicial process**.
- The in-house procedure envisages that false and frivolous allegations can be rejected at an early stage and only those that are not baseless, and may require a deeper probe, are taken up for inquiry.
- It helps in judge's accountability and will serve as a safeguard for the members of the higher judiciary from being maligned or being subjected to vilification by false and frivolous.

#### Cons:

- The procedure, however, does not expressly provide for a mechanism to constitute a committee when the complaint is against the CJI himself.
- Lack of accountability breeds corruption. Judicial Corruption exists because public trials are almost never heard by the public.
- All that the CJI does in case of an in-house procedure is to get information from peer judges of those who are accused and the report made to the Chief Justice of India is wholly confidential. The said report is only for the purpose of satisfaction of the Chief Justice of India.
- It is purely preliminary in nature, ad hoc and not final.
- The Indian judiciary is as much a part of this democracy as other organs of the Government. With all State action being subject to public scrutiny under the Right to Information regime, it is unclear how the judiciary is claiming the moral high ground to be above this regime.
- The Committee does not provide any justification for not supplying a copy of the same to the Complainant, which is a basic tenet of natural justice.

#### Way forward:

- Given the public interest in the fair administration of justice vis-à-vis the highest judicial officer, the Committee cannot remain under the cover of confidentiality.
- The independence of the judiciary and constitutional protections given to judges do not transform into an immunity shield.
- The report must at the very least be provided to the complainant. The reliance on **Indira Jaising v. Supreme Court of India & Anr.** is **entirely misplaced** as that judgement was in context of the discretion of the CJI to release a 'preliminary inquiry' that was considered as 'ad hoc and not final' under the 'in-house procedure' against judges of a High Court.
- In view of the importance of the in-house procedure, it is essential to bring it into public domain.
- The Registry of the Supreme Court of India should be accordingly directed, to place the same on the official website of the Supreme Court of India.
- Raising questions is the very essence of democracy – whether it is against the Chief Justice of India, the prime minister, the commissioner of police, the president of the Bar Council of India or of each other as citizens of this country.
- The larger institutional questions raised must be addressed by appropriate modifications to the in-house procedure, including providing for the constitution of and a permanent non-partisan body for cases where the CJI and Judges of the Supreme Court are accused of sexual harassment.
- This must comprise a procedure that is sensitive to the power imbalance between judges and ordinary persons and other concerns of victims of sexual harassment.

**Q) “Apex court’s handling of charges against CJI has left a deep scar that will take decades to fade.” Critically analyse. (250 words)**

[The hindu](#)

**Why this question:**

The question is in the context of recent issue surrounding the office of Chief justice of India. The article highlights in what way the handling of charges of sexual allegation against the CJI were against the values of transparency and fairness.

**Demand of the question:**



This question seeks to examine the process adopted for handling the charges against the CJI and one needs to evaluate the process critically and the impact it has on other aspects of justice with fairness and transparency.

**Directive word:**

**Critically analyze** – When asked to analyse, 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**

Start with brief introduction of the entire scenario.

**Body**

Discuss the following points in detail:

- Start with a brief evaluation of the process that was adopted to handle the charges.
- What should have been the ideal procedural safeguards and legal principles to handle such a case.
- Why was there a deviation and whether it is justified?
- What are the flaws in the current method of handling the case? – The constitution of the “in-house” panel was not in compliance with the provisions of the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013, members other than judges should have constituted the committee instead of an “in-house” panel comprising three judges of the Supreme Court. The panel’s report is not available to the public on reasons of confidentiality.

**Conclusion**

Conclude that the Apex court is supposed to protect individual rights and adjudicate freely and fairly.

**Introduction:**

- The office of Chief Justice of India heaved a sigh of relief after Justice S.A. Bobde in-house committee had found “no substance” in the sexual harassment allegations levelled by a former Supreme Court staff member against Chief Justice of India Ranjan Gogoi. The Committee has given a clean chit to CJI Gogoi and concluded that there is no substance in the allegations of the complainant.

**Body:**

**The ideal procedural safeguards and legal principles to handle such a case:**

- If an average employee in a government department is accused of sexual harassment at the workplace. If at the outset reasonable material is found in favour of the complaint, the accused is suspended from employment pending an inquiry.
- Usually, an independent inquiry will follow which will give both parties an opportunity to present evidence and arguments and to examine and cross-examine witnesses.
- This is considered necessary in administrative law to ensure that the accused does not tamper with evidence or intimidate or influence witnesses.

**Flaws in the current method of handling the case:**

- The CJI himself constituted an extraordinary hearing in the Supreme Court, along with two other judges, on a non-working day in a case titled “Matter of great public importance touching upon the independence of the judiciary”.
- The constitution of the “in-house” panel was not in compliance with the provisions of the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013, a special legislation to curb harassment.
- It did not seem to be of concern that to ensure independence of the inquiry and check for bias, members other than judges should have constituted the committee.
- Nor was not in accordance with any requirements under the existing framework of law.
- Thereafter, the complainant was forced to abstain from the panel, citing various reasons such as the refusal of the panel to allow the presence of her lawyer, refusal to record the proceedings or to inform her of the procedure followed and prohibition on conveying the details of the proceedings to anybody else, including her lawyer.
- The panel continued the proceedings in her absence and then met the CJI.
- The finding of the panel that the allegations are baseless is the final blow in a process that has violated all principles of fairness, due process and impartiality.
- The panel’s report is not available to the public on reasons of confidentiality.



- The public have been kept in the dark, having no access to and no knowledge of what transpired in the proceedings. This has happened at a time when the Right to Information Act, 2005 has revolutionised access to information by the public.

#### Travesty of Justice:

- The institution of the judiciary has a strong counter-majoritarian character. It is considered neutral — free from self-interests.
- It is supposed to protect individual rights and adjudicate freely and fairly.
- But the current episode points to a larger problem in Indian democracy: the emergence of **judicial oligarchy**.
- Critics opine that in this particular case, the main question was **whether the Supreme Court would live up to the standards of fairness it expects of all authorities** while inquiring into a former woman employee's complaint of sexual harassment and victimisation against the Chief Justice of India, Ranjan Gogoi.
- An allegation against a sitting judge is inquired into by three other judges of the court, the accused is exonerated, the panel report is made available only to the CJI and the seniormost judge of the court, and this secrecy is justified by relying on a judgment of the Supreme Court itself.

#### Way forward:

- Given the public interest in the fair administration of justice vis-à-vis the highest judicial officer, the Committee cannot remain under the cover of confidentiality.
- The independence of the judiciary and constitutional protections given to judges do not transform into an immunity shield.
- The report must at the very least be provided to the complainant. The reliance on **Indira Jaising v. Supreme Court of India & Anr** is entirely misplaced as that judgement was in context of the discretion of the CJI to release a 'preliminary inquiry' that was considered as 'ad hoc and not final' under the 'in-house procedure' against judges of a High Court.
- In view of the importance of the in-house procedure, it is essential to bring it into public domain.
- The Registry of the Supreme Court of India should be accordingly directed, to place the same on the official website of the Supreme Court of India.
- Raising questions is the very essence of democracy – whether it is against the Chief Justice of India, the prime minister, the commissioner of police, the president of the Bar Council of India or of each other as citizens of this country.
- The larger institutional questions raised must be addressed by appropriate modifications to the in-house procedure, including providing for the constitution of and a permanent non-partisan body for cases where the CJI and Judges of the Supreme Court are accused of sexual harassment.
- This must comprise a procedure that is sensitive to the power imbalance between judges and ordinary persons and other concerns of victims of sexual harassment.

#### Conclusion:

- The decision by the 'in-house committee' is an egregious instance of a hallowed institution abusing its own greatness by letting its power speak, and not the compassion for which it is renowned.
- The judges must not reduce the institution of Supreme Court to a private club where certain interests are privileged at the cost of judicial integrity. The Chief Justice of India is not above the law.

**Q) "Establishing the position of the SCs and STs as worthy participants in the affairs of governance is intrinsic to an equal citizenship". Comment in the light of recent Supreme court judgment with respect to reservation in promotions. (250 words)**

#### Reference

##### *Why this question:*

The article highlights the apex court's significant landmark judgment that was made yesterday with respect to reservation in promotions.

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

The answer must evaluate the facility of promotions in jobs for SC's and ST's and in what way establishing their position is intrinsic to equal citizenship.

##### *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:*



Brief upon the background of the scenario.

#### Body:

- The Supreme Court on Friday upheld a Karnataka law which grants reservation in promotion and consequential seniority to the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes in government services in the State.
- The judge said “administrative efficiency is an outcome of the actions taken by officials after they are appointed or promoted. It is not tied to the selection method itself.” The argument that one selection method produced officials capable of taking better actions than a second method must be empirically proven.
- Discuss series of events – cases that have had inference on the judgement made yesterday.
- Explain the constitutional nuances –
- 77th Constitutional Amendment Act- Introduced Article 16(4A); It confers power on the state to reserve seats in favor of SC and ST in promotions in Public Services if the communities are not adequately represented in public employment. This law was given retrospective effect from 1992.
- while the test of proportionality to the population is mandated by the Constitution in Article 330 (Reservation of seats for SCs & STs in the House of People), it does not do so in the provision of reservations in promotions (Article 16(4A)).
- Suggest what should be the way forward

#### Conclusion:

Conclude with significance of such judgement to favor the equality of citizens.

#### Introduction:

- Supreme Court, in a landmark ruling, has upheld the constitutional validity of a 2018 Karnataka law granting consequential seniority to government servants promoted on the basis of reservation. **Article 16(4A)** of the Constitution permits reservation in promotion posts for the SCs and STs, but Supreme Court judgments over the years have imposed certain conditions for the state to exercise its power under this provision.

#### Body:

##### Background:

- In its landmark 1992 decision in **Indra Sawhney vs Union of India**, the Supreme Court had held that reservations under Article 16(4) could only be provided at the time of entry into government service but not in matters of promotion.
- It added that the principle would operate only prospectively and not affect promotions already made and that reservation already provided in promotions shall continue in operation for a period of five years from the date of the judgment. It also ruled that the creamy layer can be and must be excluded.
- **77th Constitutional Amendment Act** introduced **Article 16(4A)**; It confers power on the state to reserve seats in favour of SC and ST in promotions in Public Services if the communities are not adequately represented in public employment. This law was given retrospective effect from 1992.
- While the test of proportionality to the population is mandated by the Constitution in Article 330 (Reservation of seats for SCs & STs in the House of People), it does not do so in the provision of reservations in promotions (Article 16(4A)).
- Karnataka’s 2018 law protects consequential seniority from April 24, 1978. The Karnataka legislature enacted the 2018 law after the Supreme Court invalidated the **2002 Act in B K Pavitra vs Union of India**.
- Striking down the **2002 law** in 2017, the Supreme Court had said that **Sections 3 and 4 of the Act were ultra vires of Articles 14 and 16 of the Constitution on the ground that the exercise mandated in the Nagaraj judgment had not been carried out.**

#### Current verdict:

- While upholding the validity of the **Karnataka Extension of Consequential Seniority to Government Servants Promoted on the Basis of Reservation (to the Posts in the Civil Services of the State) Act, 2018**, said it “has cured the deficiency” on account of which a 2002 law on reservation in promotions had been quashed in 2017.
- The judgement of Supreme Court addresses two issues related to reservation in promotion for SCs and STs:
  - **No need for quantifiable data:** It relieved the states from collecting quantifiable data on backwardness for providing reservation in promotions for STs and SCs.
  - **Validity of creamy layer:** It upheld the validity of application of creamy layer in reservations in promotions for STs and SCs.



- The “deficiency” referred to was the lack of an exercise to determine and collect quantifiable data on inadequacy of representation, backwardness and the impact on overall efficiency before the law was enacted, as mandated by the Supreme Court’s 2006 judgment in **M Nagaraj vs Union of India**.
- This Supreme Court order is **significant** because it underlines “a ‘meritorious’ candidate is not merely one who is ‘talented’ or ‘successful’ but also one whose appointment fulfils the constitutional goals of uplifting members of the SCs and STs and ensuring a diverse and representative administration”.

#### Way Forward:

A comprehensive piece of legislature that would deal with ambiguity related to reservation in promotions is needed. The Act should try to rectify the current issues such as

- Undefined parameters of efficiency.
- Absence of transparency in evaluating backwardness and efficiency of STs/SCs
- Presence of ambiguity regarding whole process of promotions in government services.

### Q) Discuss in detail the appointment procedure of Judges as enshrined in the Indian constitution. (250 words)

The hindu.

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

Pushing for a ‘full court’, the Supreme Court Collegium, led by Chief Justice of India Ranjan Gogoi, recommended the names of two judges to the court and rejected the government’s disapproval of the elevation of two others yesterday. Thus, it is important for us to ponder upon the appointment procedure of the judges.

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

The question expects

#### **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:**

Briefly state the importance of the appointment of Judges.

##### **Body:**

- Discussion should include the complete procedure of appointment as per the constitution.
- Appointment Procedure? -Article 124(3) of the constitution mentions the following people as eligible to become a Supreme Court (SC) Judge:
  - A High Court (HC) judge who has held that post for 5 years or more.
  - An advocate who has practiced in the HC/SC for 10 years or more.
  - A distinguished Jurist.
- Article 124(2) says that the President of India Shall appoint the judges after consultation with such number of Judges of the SC/HC as he deems necessary. For appointment of any Judge of SC (other than CJI), the CJI must be consulted.
- The three Judges case of 1981, 1993 & 1998 has formalized the collegium system for the purpose of consultation.
- The collegium for appointing SC judge consists of the CJI and 4 senior-most judges of SC.
- Memorandum of Procedure (MoP) was set up after the Third Judge Case of 1998 to provide the process of how the Collegium would recommend names to the Executive.
- The President of India can either accept the recommendation or send it back for reconsideration. The reconsidered advice must be accepted by the President.

##### **Conclusion:**

Conclude with a reassertion that appointment of Judges is a significant procedure in the Judicial system of the country.

#### **Introduction:**

- The judges of the Supreme Court and High Court in India are appointed by President as per **article 124(2) and 217 of the constitution**.
- In such appointment, the President is required to hold consultation with such of the Judges of the Supreme Court and of the High Courts in the States as he may deem necessary for the purpose.



**Body:****Eligibility to become a Supreme Court judge:**

- To become a judge of the Supreme Court, an individual should be an Indian citizen.
- The norms relating to the eligibility has been envisaged in the Article 124 of the Indian Constitution. In terms of age, a person should not exceed 65 years of age.
- The person should serve as a judge of one high court or more (continuously), for at least five years or the person should be an advocate in the High court for at least 10 years or a distinguished jurist.

**The collegium system of appointment of judges:**

- The collegium system was commissioned by two judgments of the Supreme Court in 1990s. It has no mention in the original Constitution of India or its successive amendments.
- The three Judges case of 1981, 1993 & 1998 has formalized the collegium system for the purpose of consultation.
- The collegium for appointing SC judge consists of the CJI and 4 senior-most judges of SC.
- The collegium sends its final recommendation to the President of India for approval. The President can either accept it or reject it. In the case it is rejected, the recommendation comes back to the collegium. If the collegium reiterates its recommendation to the President, then he/she is bound by that recommendation.

**For appointment of High court judges:**

- President appoints judges in consultation with: Chief Justice of India, Governor of the State, Chief Justice of the High Court.

**Need for reforms:**

- Collegium system has its concerns as absolute power is not desirable in any branch of the State.
- Diversity in consideration such as geography, gender and ethnicity should all “legitimately weigh in the balance” when appointing judges from a pool of potentially meritorious candidates. The Collegium system is unable to cater to this need of diversity in the judicial system.
- It is seen as a closed-door affair without a formal and transparent system. Judges, hopeful of going higher, have to please the members of the collegium.
- This system overlooks several talented junior judges and advocates.
- Sometimes, collegium gets obstructed, when old rivalries between its members see each other’s favourites getting vetoed.
- Sometimes collegium meetings become examples of bargaining within the collective, and consensus emerging from a division of the spoils.

**Way forward:**

- The need of the hour is to revisit the existing system through a transparent and participatory procedure, preferably by an independent broad-based constitutional body guaranteeing judicial primacy but not judicial exclusivity.
- The new system should ensure independence, reflect diversity, and demonstrate professional competence and integrity.
- The system needs to establish a body which is independent and objective in the selection process.
- Setting up a constitutional body accommodating the federal concept of diversity and independence of judiciary for appointment of judges to the higher judiciary can also be thought of as an alternate measure.
- As of now, instead of selecting the number of judges required against a certain number of vacancies, the collegium must provide a panel of possible names to the President to appointment in order of preference and other valid criteria.
- Meanwhile the centre should hasten its process of finalising the MoP on judicial appointments.

**Q) What is the significance of Leader of opposition in Indian Polity ? Explain in what way an effective opposition is crucial to an effective democracy ? (250 words)**

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

**Why this question:**

The article discusses about the current situation of the Congress party which is unlikely to get the post of the Leader of the Opposition (LoP) in Lok Sabha for a second time in a row as it has yet again failed to get 10% seats in Parliament’s lower House.

**Key demand of the question:**

Answer must discuss the significance of the post of leader of opposition.



**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:**

In a few introductory lines state the current situation of LoP.

**Body:**

In brief discuss what you understand by Leader of opposition? significance of it in Indian polity, what are the nuances of the office of LoP. Why is it essential etc.

**Conclusion:**

Conclude by reasserting significance of the office in a democracy.

**Introduction:**

- The Leader of the Opposition is the politician who leads the official opposition in either House of the Parliament of India. To claim the status of “official opposition” in either house a party has to secure 55 seats (10%) of the seats in the Lok Sabha and likewise 25 (10%) of the seats in the Rajya Sabha. It is a statutory post defined in the Salaries and Allowances of Leaders of Opposition in Parliament Act, 1977.

**Body:****Significance of the office:**

- In view of the importance of the opposition in a parliamentary democracy, the office of the Leader of the Opposition is indeed one of responsibility.
- LoP is referred to as the ‘shadow Prime Minister’.
- She/he is expected to be ready to take over if the government falls.
- The LoP also plays an important role in bringing cohesiveness and effectiveness to the opposition’s functioning in policy and legislative work.
- LoP plays a crucial role in bringing bipartisanship and neutrality to the appointments in institutions of accountability and transparency – CVC, CBI, CIC, Lokpal etc.
- LoP among other things, watches for encroachments on the rights of minorities, demands debates when the Government is trying to slide away without parliamentary criticism.
- LoP must be in his place even more constantly than the Prime Minister.
- LoP must be familiar with all the tricks of skilled parliamentarian and all the opportunities of the rules of the House

**Reforms needed:**

- No matter whosoever gets the majority, the LoP is critical to effective functioning of the opposition in the Parliament.
- Now that there is a law recognising the LoP, passed by the Parliament, it has to be enforced and
- It can’t be overlooked or undermined, no matter what the flexibility or ambiguity that exist in the legal framework.
- There arises a problem when no party in opposition secures 55 or more seats.
- In such situations, the numerically largest party in the opposition should have the right to have a leader recognised as leader of the opposition by the speaker.

**Conclusion:**

- Under India’s almost unique system of government, the Leader of an Opposition has a very special responsibility towards the Parliament and to the nation. At moments of danger, moments specialty of foreign danger, and particularly also in matters affecting the security and safety of the realms.
- While he remains a critic he must in a sense be, a partner and even a buttress of the Government to which he is opposed. This dual responsibility he must discharge with fidelity



*Topic – Functions and responsibilities of the Union and the States, issues and challenges pertaining to the federal structure, devolution of powers and finances up to local levels and challenges therein.*

**Q) Elucidate on the issue of ‘parallel government’ that is recently being witnessed between the Lieutenant-Governor (L-G) and the elected government of a union territory (Puducherry and Delhi). (250 words)**

The Hindu

**Why this question:**

The Madras court recently passed a judgement stating that the Administrator of Puducherry (the term used in the Constitution to refer to the Lieutenant-Governor (L-G)) could not interfere with the day-to-day administration of the Union Territory when an elected government was in place as that amounts to running a “parallel government.”

**Key demand of the question:**

The answer must evaluate the nuances of Articles 239A vs 239AA of the Indian constitution and Section 44 of the Government of Union Territories Act, 1963 amidst the recent controversies surrounding Puducherry administration.

**Directive:**

**Elucidate** – 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 background of the controversies surrounding Puducherry.

**Body:**

- Provide for the key highlights of the recent Madras High Court judgement – The Administrator of Puducherry (the term used in the Constitution to refer to the Lieutenant-Governor (L-G)) could not interfere with the day-to-day administration of the Union Territory when an elected government was in place as that amounts to running a “parallel government.”
- Bring out a comparison between Articles 239A vs 239AA – how it is different in case of Delhi and in that of Puducherry.
- Section 44 of the Government of Union Territories Act, 1963: It states that there shall be a Council of Ministers in each UT to aid and advice the Administrator who shall act in his/her discretion only in so far as any ‘special responsibilities’ were concerned. However, since the Act does not specify the ‘special responsibilities’ the Administrator and the Council of Ministers should leave the political differences apart to facilitate the smooth functioning of the government.
- Discuss what needs to be done to overcome such a tussle.

**Conclusion:**

Conclude with a balanced opinion based on your analysis.

**Introduction:**

- Government of Puducherry is a democratically elected body that governs the Union Territory of Puducherry, India. It is headed by the Lieutenant Governor of Puducherry as its nominal head, with a democratically elected Chief Minister as real head of the executive.
- The **Madras High Court** has ruled that the Lieutenant-Governor (L-G) of Puducherry could not interfere with the day-to-day administration of the Union Territory when an elected government was in place. The court said incessant interference from the L-G would amount to running a “parallel government.”

**Body:**

**Key observations made by the Madras High Court:**

- The Central government as well as the Administrator [the term used in the Constitution to refer to the L-G] should be true to the concept of democratic principles. Otherwise, the constitutional scheme of the country of being democratic and republic would be defeated.
- Government secretaries were bound to take instructions from the Ministers and the Council of Ministers, headed by the Chief Minister. Government secretaries of the Puducherry administration were required to report to the Council of Ministers headed by the Chief Minister on all official matters.
- Article 239A symbolises the supremacy of the Legislature above the Administrator in case of the Union Territory of Puducherry.



- The secretaries are not empowered to issue orders on their own or upon the instructions of the Administrator.
- Government officials cannot be a part of social media groups through which the L-G was issuing instructions to them for redress of public grievances. As per rules, they were bound to use only authorised medium of communication when it came to issues related to administration.

#### **Powers and sources of LG of Puducherry:**

- **The Government of Union Territories Act, 1963** provides for a Legislative Assembly of Pondicherry (as Puducherry was then called), with a Council of Ministers to govern the “Union Territory of Pondicherry”. The same Act says that **the UT will be administered by the President of India through an Administrator (LG)**.
- **Section 44 of the Act**, which deals with the Council of Ministers and its working, says the Council of Ministers headed by a Chief Minister will “aid and advise the Administrator in the exercise of his functions in relation to matters with respect to which the Legislative Assembly of the Union Territory has power to make laws”.
- The same clause also allows the LG to “act in his discretion” in the matter of lawmaking, even though the Council of Ministers has the task of aiding and advising him. In case of a difference of opinion between the LG and his Ministers on any matter, the Administrator is bound to refer it to the President for a decision and act according to the decision given by the President.
- However, the Administrator can also claim that the matter is urgent, and take immediate action as he deems necessary.
- Under Rule 47, which deals with persons serving in the UT government, the Administrator exercises powers regulating the conditions of service of such persons in consultation with the Chief Minister. In case the LG has a difference of opinion with the Chief Minister, he can refer the matter to the central government for the decision of the President.

#### **Comparison with powers of LG of Delhi:**

- The powers of the LG of Puducherry are different from the ones of the LG of Delhi, the other UT that has an elected legislature and government.
- The **LG of Delhi has “Executive Functions”** that allow him to exercise his powers in matters connected to public order, police and land “in consultation with the Chief Minister, if it is so provided under any order issued by the President under Article 239 of the Constitution”. Simply put, the LG of Delhi enjoys greater powers than the LG of Puducherry.
- While the LG of Delhi is also guided by the Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi Act, 1991, and the Transaction of Business of the Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi Rules, 1993, the LG of Puducherry is guided mostly by the Government of Union Territories Act, 1963.
- Articles 239 and 239AA of the Constitution, as well as the Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi Act, 1991, clearly underline that Delhi is a UT, where the Centre, whose eyes and ears are the LG, has a much more prominent role than in Puducherry.
- Under the constitutional scheme, the Delhi Assembly has the power to legislate on all subjects except law and order and land. However, the Puducherry Assembly can legislate on any issue under the Concurrent and State Lists. However, if the law is in conflict with a law passed by Parliament, the law passed by Parliament prevails.

#### **Way forward:**

- Although the existence of a Governor was debated in the Constituent Assembly and critics exist for his role but, the Governor and Lt Governor play a pivotal role in running the constitutional machinery of states and Union Territories especially during a crisis situation.
- The Central government as well as the Administrator should be true to the concept of democratic principles. Otherwise, the constitutional scheme of the country of being democratic and republic would be defeated.
- Governor needs to play his/her role effectively to maintain Constitutional provisions and bring peace and stability in the region.

*Topic: Statutory, regulatory and various quasi-judicial bodies*

**Q) Discuss the roles and responsibilities of National Anti-Profiteering Authority as a quasi-judicial body in ensuring transparency in the trading industry post GST roll out. (250 words)**

#### Reference

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

The question is to analyse the roles and objectives of the quasi-judicial body of National Anti-Profiteering Authority.



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

This answer is straightforward and direct- one must list down the objectives of National Anti-Profiteering Authority in ensuring transparency and how the institutional mechanism under GST law acts to check the unfair profit-making activities by the trading community.

### ***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 on National Anti-Profiteering Authority.

#### ***Body***

Discuss the following points in detail:

- Explain the composition of National Anti-Profiteering Authority.
- Evolution of NAA.
- Vision and Mission of NAA – is the institutional mechanism under GST law to check the unfair profit-making activities by the trading community. The Authority's core function is to ensure that the benefits of the reduction in GST rates on goods and services made by GST Council and proportional change in the Input tax credit passed on to the ultimate consumers and recipient respectively by way of reduction in the prices by the suppliers.
- Key functions of the authority – to ensure that traders are not realizing unfair profit by charging high price from consumers in the name of GST. to examine and check such profiteering activities and recommend punitive actions including cancellation of Registration.

#### ***Conclusion***

Conclude with significance of the body.

#### **Introduction:**

- The **National Anti-Profiteering Authority (NAA)** is a statutory body constituted under **Section 171 of the Central Goods and Services Tax Act, 2017**. It is to ensure the reduction in rate of tax or the benefit of input tax credit is passed on to the recipient by way of commensurate reduction in prices.

#### **Body:**

##### **Profiteering:**

- Profiteering means unfair profit realized by traders by manipulating prices, tax rate adjustment etc.
- In the context of the newly launched GST, profiteering means that traders are not reducing the prices of the commodities when the GST Council reduces the tax rates of commodities and services.
- Conventionally, several traders will have a strong tendency to quickly increase the price of a commodity whose tax rate has been increased.
- But on the opposite side, they may delay the price reduction of a commodity whose tax rate has been cut by the government.
- A delayed or postponed price reduction helps business firms to make higher profit. The losers here are the consumers.

##### **Roles and Responsibilities of NAA:**

- The Authority's core function is to ensure that traders are not realizing unfair profit by charging high price from the consumers in the name of GST.
- It ensures that the benefits of the reduction in GST rates on goods and services made by GST Council and proportional change in the Input tax credit passed on to the ultimate consumers and recipient respectively by way of reduction in the prices by the suppliers.
- Traders may charge high price from the consumers by naming the GST factor.
- Similarly, they may not make quick and corresponding price reduction when the GST Council makes tax cut. All these constitute profiteering.
- The responsibility of the NAA is to examine and check such profiteering activities and recommend punitive actions including cancellation of licenses.

##### **NAA has taken the following steps for customers get the full benefit of tax cuts:**

- Holding regular meetings with the Zonal Screening Committees and the Chief Commissioners of Central Tax to stress upon consumer awareness programs.
- Launching a helpline to resolve the queries of citizens regarding registration of complaints against profiteering.



- Receiving complaints through email and NAA portal.
- Working with consumer welfare organizations to facilitate outreach activities.
- A number of complaints regarding companies not passing on the full benefits of tax cuts to consumers have been received by the National Anti-Profiteering Authority (NAA).

#### Conclusion:

- The National Anti-profiteering Authority (NAA) is the institutional mechanism under GST law to check the unfair profit-making activities by the trading community. It helps in furthering the benefits of one-nation, one-tax to the consumer level.

### Q) Discuss the emergence of quasi-judicial bodies as an alternative justice system in India. (250 words)

Polity by Lakshmikanth, D D Basu

#### Why this question:

The question is about evaluating the role of quasi-judicial bodies in functioning as an alternate justice system.

#### Key demand of the question:

The answer must appreciate the role played by quasi-judicial bodies in India and how over time they have emerged as a mechanism of justice. One must explain using suitable examples.

#### 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:

Briefly suggest the evolution of quasi-judicial bodies in India.

##### Body:

Body of the answer should discuss the following:

- What do you understand by quasi-judicial bodies? – an organization or an individual on which powers resembling that of court of law or a judge have been conferred in order to adjudicate and decide upon a situation and impose penalty upon the guilty or regulate the conduct of the individual or entity.
- Discuss the emergence of quasi-judicial bodies in India.
- Suggest examples ranging from tribunals; types and various other bodies that support as an alternative mechanism of justice.
- Discuss the pros and cons, limitations or criticism if any.
- Quote examples ranging from – Lok Adalat, administrative tribunals, NGT etc.
- Suggest what should be done ?

#### Conclusion:

Conclude with significance of these quasi-judicial bodies in administering justice

#### Introduction:

- Quasi-judicial bodies are an entity such as **an arbitrator or a tribunal**, generally of a Public Administrative Agency, which has powers and procedures resembling that of a Court of Law or Judge, and which is obliged to objectively determine facts and draw conclusions from them so as to provide the basis of an official action. Such actions are able to remedy a situation or to impose legal penalties, and may affect the legal rights, duties or privileges of specific parties.

#### Body:

Some examples of Quasi Judicial Bodies in India are as follows

- Election Commission of India.
- National Green Tribunal.
- Central Information Commission (CIC)
- Income Tax Appellate Tribunal.
- Lok Adalat.

#### Reasons for Emergence of Quasi Judicial Bodies in India:

- As the State grew in size and functions, the burden on its functions, especially those of the judicial system increased manifold. Therefore, the need for an alternative judicial system arose.





- The cost factor also played an important role because ordinary judicial procedures can turn out to be a costly affair if stretched over a long period of time.
- The complexity of a plethora of laws called for more technical minds in specific fields.
- The conventional judiciary is suffering with procedural rigidity, which delays the justice.

**Pros:**

- **Low Cost:** Tribunals on the other hand, have an overall low cost which encourages people to seek redressal for their grievances.
- **Simplicity:** Tribunals and other such bodies do not follow any lengthy or complex procedure for submitting application or evidence etc.
- **Expert Knowledge:** A tribunal comprises of experts, who can easily understand the technicalities of a case, the necessary actions involved and their consequences.
- **Reduction of Workload:** Tribunals while taking up specific matters, majorly help by sharing the massive workload of the Judiciary. In a country which has 2.81 crore pending cases, it is important to take steps to decrease the burden of the Judiciary.
- **Flexibility:** since there is little use made of precedent.

**Cons:**

- There is an unfair imbalance between represented and unrepresented parties. It is unfair to people who are not represented and cannot get legal aid to come up against a rich. Since richer parties are allowed to employ skilled representation they are consequently more likely to win.
- The no-costs rule and lack of legal aid penalize poor litigants, although they do keep costs down.
- The lack of fees encourages poor applicants, although it may also result in ill-founded claims.
- Tribunals can become complex over time – as did the courts – rules of procedure grow up caused by the use of representatives who as a result make representation desirable in future.
- They may lack some of the perceived independence of the judiciary
- It can still be difficult for the people who go to tribunals to represent themselves because of the inherent difficulty in presenting a case in any environment.
- It undermines the celebrated principle of separation of powers.

**Way forward:**

- It should be manned by plural members rather than single individual
- They should be appointed by judicious process.
- Members should be from both the technical background and legal one.
- **SC recommendations:** The chairman should be appointed by President from sitting or retired judge of a High Court in consultation with CJI or committee headed by CJI.
- Vice-chairman should be a judge of district court or an advocate who is eligible to become a judge of HC.
- Removal should be more stringent.

**Conclusion:**

- Government needs to address this issue by enabling sufficient number of appointments at various Quasi Judicial Bodies. However, as a foolproof appointment mechanism plays a crucial role in ensuring quality, the Government is duty bound to provide for the same. Only then can India's Quasi Judicial Bodies expedite not only the resolution of disputes but also dispensation of justice.

## **Q) Discuss the significance and role played by Prime Minister's Science, Technology And Innovation Advisory Council in the development of science and technology domain of the country. (250 words)**

Reference**Why this question:**

The question is about the significance and role played by Prime Minister's Science, Technology And Innovation Advisory Council in India.

**Key demand of the question:**

The answer is direct and straightforward, one must discuss the roles and responsibilities handled by the Prime Minister's Science, Technology And Innovation Advisory Council.

**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:

Brief upon the need to have such regulatory to develop the domain of sci and tech in the country.

#### Body:

Following to be discussed in detail –

- About Prime Minister's Science Technology and Innovation Advisory Council (PM-STIAC) – is an overarching body for assessment, creation and implementation of major scientific, technology and innovation interventions for India.
- Explain the composition.
- The other important terms of reference of the Council is to formulate, converge, collaborate, co-ordinate and implement multi-stakeholder policy initiatives, mechanisms, reforms and programmes aimed at:
- Synergizing S&T covering fundamental to applied research in collaboration with multiple stakeholders both in central and state governments
- Enabling future preparedness in emerging domains of science and technology
- Formulating and coordinating major inter-ministerial S&T missions
- Providing an enabling ecosystem for technology led innovations and techno-entrepreneurship
- Driving innovation and technology delivery towards solving socio-economic challenges for sustainable growth
- Fostering effective public-private linkages for driving research and innovation
- Developing innovation clusters with multiple stakeholders including academia, industry and government
- Skilling in current and futuristic technologies.

#### Conclusion:

Conclude with significance of such regulatory bodies.

#### Introduction:

- The Prime Minister's Science, Technology And Innovation Advisory Council (PM-STIAC) is an overarching Council that facilitates the PSA's Office to assess the status in specific science and technology domains, comprehend challenges in hand, formulate specific interventions, develop a futuristic roadmap and advise the Prime Minister accordingly. PSA's Office also oversees the implementation of such interventions by concerned S&T Departments and Agencies and other government Ministries.

#### Body:

The other important terms of reference of the Council is to formulate, converge, collaborate, co-ordinate and implement multi-stakeholder policy initiatives, mechanisms, reforms and programmes aimed at:

- Synergizing S&T covering fundamental to applied research in collaboration with multiple stakeholders both in central and state governments
- Enabling future preparedness in emerging domains of science and technology
- Formulating and coordinating major inter-ministerial S&T missions
- Providing an enabling ecosystem for technology led innovations and techno-entrepreneurship
- Driving innovation and technology delivery towards solving socio-economic challenges for sustainable growth
- Fostering effective public-private linkages for driving research and innovation
- Developing innovation clusters with multiple stakeholders including academia, industry and government
- Skilling in current and futuristic technologies.

During the period between October 2018 to January 2019, the Office of Principal Scientific Adviser to Government of India held four meetings of the PM-STIAC, which resulted in the formulation of **nine different technology missions**.

- **Natural Language Translation** Through a combination of machine and human translation, the mission aims to enable access to teaching and research material bilingually i.e. in English and one's native Indian language.
- **Quantum Frontier** This mission aims to initiate works in control of the quantum mechanical systems, with a large number of degrees of freedom, as one of the great contemporary challenges in fundamental science and technology.
- **Artificial Intelligence** The mission focuses on efforts that will benefit India in addressing societal needs in areas such as healthcare, education, agriculture, smart cities and infrastructure, including smart mobility and transportation.



- **National Biodiversity Mission** This mission involves Comprehensive documentation of India's biodiversity with the potential for cataloguing and mapping all lifeforms in India including associated cultural and traditional practices. Assessment of the distribution and conservation status of India's biodiversity.
- **Electric Vehicles** The mission aims to reduce India's fossil fuel emissions and mitigate emissions by making Electric Vehicles economical and scalable through focused research, development and innovation and building of indigenous capacity.
- **BioScience for Human Health** The mission through the use of healthy and disease samples aims to understand the impact of nature and nurture on health. The mission aims to construct comprehensive reference maps of genomes and to understand the dynamics of how exposures to different environments have an impact on our bodies.
- **Waste To Wealth** The mission aims to identify, develop and deploy technologies to treat waste to generate energy, recycle materials and extract worth. The mission will work to identify and support the development of new technologies that hold promise in creating a clean and green environment.
- **Deep Ocean Exploration** The mission aims to scientifically explore the deep oceans towards improving our understanding of the blue frontier. The information from this mission will address issues arising from long term changes in the ocean due to climate change.
- **Agnii** This mission aims to support the national efforts to boost the innovation ecosystem in the country by connecting innovators across the industry, individuals and the grassroots to the market and helping commercialise innovative solutions.

#### Conclusion:

- It will be headed by **Principal Scientific Advisor to the government of India**. It has nine members, including Chairperson. It aims to bring together all science and technology partners from academia and institutes to industries near such centres or cities.

**Q) In the recent times misuse of drugs has been on rise in India and the need for stringent provisions to prevent their misuse has become the need of the hour. In this context discuss the major functions played by the Central Drugs Standard Control Organization (CDSCO) in regulating the manufacture, sale and distribution of Drugs. (250 words)**

#### Reference

##### *Why this question:*

In the recent past the Central Drugs Standard Control Organization (CDSCO) has asked commonly-used antibiotics manufacturers to ensure its details be made available to the general public. This decision was taken considering directives from the National Co-ordination Centre of the Pharmacovigilance Programme of India (PvPI). Thus it is important for us to know the functions of CDSCO.

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

The question must highlight About CDSCO, its role as a regulator, its functions and significance.

##### *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 brief on CDSCO, how they function.

##### *Body:*

Discussion should include the following aspects –

- About CDSCO: The Central Drugs Standard Control Organization (CDSCO) under Directorate General of Health Services, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India is the National Regulatory Authority (NRA) of India.
- What are its Functions ?
- Under the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, CDSCO is responsible for approval of New Drugs, Conduct of Clinical Trials,
- laying down the standards for Drugs,



- control over the quality of imported Drugs in the country and coordination of the activities of State Drug Control Organizations by providing expert advice with a view of bring about the uniformity in the enforcement of the Drugs and Cosmetics Act.
- CDSCO along with state regulators, is jointly responsible for grant of licenses of certain specialized categories of critical Drugs such as blood and blood products, I. V. Fluids, Vaccine and Sera.
- Discuss issues or concerns if any associated with it.
- Explain its significance.

#### **Conclusion:**

Conclude with way forward.

#### **Introduction:**

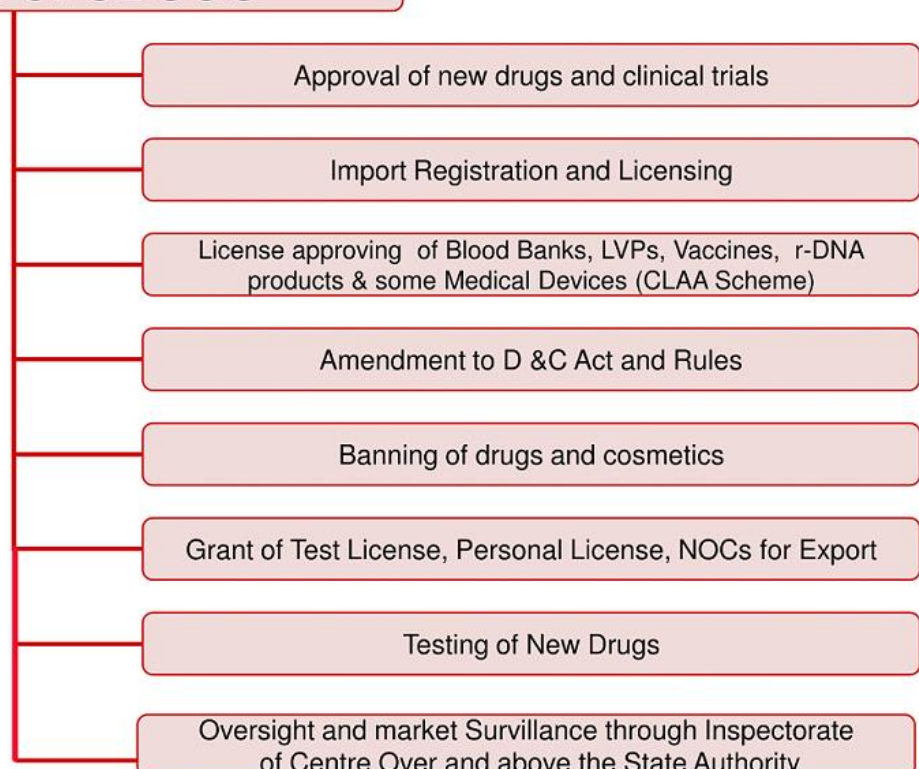
- The Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO) under Directorate General of Health Services, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India is the National Regulatory Authority (NRA) of India.
- CDSCO along with state regulators, is jointly responsible for grant of licenses of certain specialized categories of critical Drugs such as blood and blood products, I. V. Fluids, Vaccine and Sera.

#### **Body:**

##### **Medication misuse in India:**

- In India, it has been estimated that 50% of family spending on healthcare is on unnecessary medications or investigations.
- Failures in the pharmaceutical regulatory environment in India have contributed to oversupply and ease of access to various medications including many with little evidence to support their safe use.
- poor community literacy about medication safety and usage potentiates misuse and overuse of medications in India.
- This, in turn, can contribute to ill-health, public health predicaments such as antibiotic resistance.
- This has seemingly contributed to increasing rates of antibiotic resistance and further impoverishment.
- There are only 348 drugs on India's essential medicine list yet there are known to be 60,000–80,000 brands of drugs available on the market within India, even accounting for different preparations of drugs this is an extraordinary number.
- This results in an overwhelming workload for the already stretched regulators<sup>1</sup> and feeds into what has been reported as a growing culture of irrational and unnecessary prescribing and consuming practices.

## Functions of CDSCO





Under the **Drugs and Cosmetics Act**, CDSCO is responsible for approval of New Drugs, Conduct of Clinical Trials, laying down the standards for Drugs, control over the quality of imported Drugs in the country and coordination of the activities of State Drug Control Organizations by providing expert advice with a view of bring about the uniformity in the enforcement of the Drugs and Cosmetics Act.

#### Challenges faced by CDSCO:

- Institutional problems such as understaffing, lack of skills, and inadequate infrastructure.
- The most significant issue is the issuance of manufacturing licenses by the State Licensing Authority without the prior clearance of the Drug Controller General of India DCG (I), the head of CDSCO.
- According to a study, of the 110 anti-TB (tuberculosis) Fixed Dose Combinations (FDCs) available in India, only 32 (less than 30%) have been approved by the CDSCO.
- The market size of the banned drugs is estimated to be around Rs 20-22 billion. The ban, if comes into force, will thus impact the country's top drug-makers.

#### Way forward:

- Prevention is one of the ways in which drug abuse can be dealt with.
- Prevention programmes involving entities such as families, schools and the immediate communities are important in this regard.
- Media – especially the entertainment segment – also needs to understand its role in this context and play a positive role by resisting the urge to earn millions by romanticizing and glorifying drug abuse.
- These treatment programmes also impart the skills and capability required in order to say no to drugs in the future, which is highly critical for a complete cure to drug abuse.
- Government programs like **Red line campaign** should be advertised better and reached out to more people.
- Reducing the sale of Over-the-Counter drugs and mandating the prescription from registered medical practitioners. Sale on **online e-pharmas** should also be constructively regulated.

*Topic: Government policies and interventions for development in various sectors and issues arising out of their design and implementation.*

**Q) Indian policy story needs a serious national technology strategy as a part of its development policy. Comment. (250 words)**

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

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

The article discusses in detail the concept of techno-nationalism, it highlights the relationship between Technology and nationalism. How technology has often been an instrument of national power; and the quest for national power has, in turn, led to the investments in, and the creation of, different models of scientific organization.

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

The question expects one to assert the need for national technology strategy as a part of its development policy for furthering the benefits of technology in policies and programmes.

#### **Directive word:**

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

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

##### **Introduction:**

Begin with brief introductory lines stating what you understand by techno-nationalism.

##### **Body:**

- Discussion should include the following aspects –
- Explain how and why technology and nationalism are interrelated and interlinked?
- Discuss the role of technology in policy making, what differences does it bring in policy front?
- Explain who are the carriers of new front of techno-nationalism ? – nexus of big companies, state power and consumerist populism.
- One can take examples from the article and justify the need for technological strategy as part of national policy making.

##### **Conclusion:**

Conclude with a reassertion of significance of National technology strategy and its need.

**Introduction:**

- Technological nationalism is a way of understanding **how technology affects the society and culture of a nation**. One common example is the **use of technology as the key subject in a Nationalist project, with the goal of promoting connectedness and a stronger national identity**.
- This idea establishes the belief that the success of a nation can be determined by how well that nation innovates and diffuses technology across its people. Technological Nationalists believe that the presence of national R&D efforts, and the effectiveness of these efforts, are key drivers to the overall growth, sustainability, and prosperity of a nation.

**Body:****Technology and nationalism are interrelated and interlinked:**

- Technology and nationalism have always had a very intimate relationship.
- Technology and science as a source of nationalistic pride was suggested by Christopher Freeman in his 1980s seminal work on national systems of innovation
- Technology has often been an instrument of national power; and the quest for national power has, in turn, led to the investments in, and the creation of, different models of scientific organisation.
- The one common thread that we will see emerge in global discourse is the more open reassertion of techno-nationalism.
- A techno-nationalist imagination will be more ascendant in political discourse, and this will shape the course of economic reform as well. India's politics is too distracted to focus attention on this.

**Need for National technological strategy in India:**

- **Rise of Private behemoths:**
  - The current wave of techno-nationalism is the association of private companies with the techno-nationalist imaginary.
  - States have often aligned to promote the interests of national companies.
  - But in this techno-nationalist moment, many see the presence of big companies as a sign of being able to harness national technology prowess.
  - For eg: India doesn't have any big companies like Amazon or Google or Alibaba.
- **Stringent Regulatory measures:**
  - Indian companies could use a lot of help in many areas. But the underlying premise is less about regulation or development; it is more about creating large private sector icons as signs of national capabilities.
  - There is open talk in many circles that what India will need is a couple of behemoth private companies that can leverage scale to rival global giants.
- **Small players sidelined:**
  - The new techno-nationalist imagination, the issue is not protecting small producers or indigenous technology etc.
  - The focus is on creating what people believe to be the carriers of national power in the form of large companies.
  - India's regulatory flip flops on globalisation in recent months (most notably in e-commerce), are in part driven by this temptation that we need to create big Indian private companies that are also national icons.
- **Public Sectors discouraged:**
  - The nexus of big companies, state power and consumerist populism might be the new carriers of techno-nationalism, instead of the old public sector.
  - So one of the oddest manifestations of techno-nationalism will not just be conventional arguments for investing in more R&D.
  - They will be arguments for the subtle promotion of a few big companies, now positioned in their nationalist avatar.

**Way forward:**

- The government should be a facilitator rather than a promoter of the particular private enterprises.
- Emphasis should be given to more Research and Development which could open up more avenues and innovations.
- The PSUs which are doing well should be further prodded and their best practices must be emulated in the other PSUs which are sick.





- An equal pedestal should be provided to all private players – small and big; Government should encourage the players who are in line with the policies like Make in India.

**Q) Discuss the Key objectives Pre-conception and Pre-natal Diagnostic Techniques (Prohibition of Sex Selection) Act. Analyse how effective has the act proven to be till date? Discuss in the light of recent Supreme court judgement. (250 words)**

The hindu

**Why this question:**

In a significant judgement, the supreme court upheld the provision of PC-PNDT Act, 1994 which 'criminalizes' non-maintenance of medical records by obstetricians and gynecologists and suspend their medical license. indefinitely.

**Key demand of the question:**

The answer must appreciate the salient features of the PCPNDT Act 1994 and comment on the performance and effectiveness of the Act. One must also suggest what needs to be done to further the actual agenda of the Act.

**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:**

Brief upon the background of the context – highlight the recent SC verdict.

**Body:**

Body of the answer to discuss the following aspects :

- Salient features of Pre-conception and Pre-natal Diagnostic Techniques (Prohibition of Sex Selection) Act of 1994 –
- It provides for the prohibition of sex selection, before or after conception.
- It regulates the use of pre-natal diagnostic techniques only to detect genetic abnormalities, metabolic disorders, chromosomal abnormalities, certain congenital malformations, haemoglobinopathies and sex linked disorders.
- The Central Supervisory Board (CSB) was constituted by the government under Section 7 to review and monitor implementation of the Act and rules made there under
- It 'criminalises' non-maintenance of medical records by obstetricians and gynaecologists and suspend their medical licence indefinitely.
- It mandates compulsory registration of all diagnostic laboratories, all genetic counselling centres, genetic laboratories, genetic clinics and ultrasound clinics.
- Any person who puts an advertisement for pre-natal and pre-conception sex determination facilities through any media in electronic or print can be imprisoned and fined.
- Discuss its performance and related issues – corrupt medical practitioners, illegal medical practice, demand of male child etc.
- Suggest what should be done ? what steps should be taken to improvise the performance of the Act.

**Conclusion:**

Conclude with its significance.

**Introduction:**

- The Pre-conception & Pre-natal Diagnostics Techniques (PC & PNDT) Act, 1994 was enacted in response to the decline in Sex ratio in India, which deteriorated from 972 in 1901 to 927 in 1991.
- The PNDT Act provides for regulation of genetic counselling centres, genetic laboratories and genetic clinics and also regulates pre-natal diagnostic procedures.
- The medical professional running the genetic centre has to be registered under the PNDT Act.

**Body:**

**Key objectives:**

- The main purpose of enacting the act is to ban the use of sex selection techniques before or after conception and prevent the misuse of a prenatal diagnostic technique for sex-selective abortion.





It also aims to regulate pre-natal diagnostic technique for the useful purpose for which it has been intended, such as:

- where the age of the pregnant women is above 35 years (advance maternal age)
- where the pregnant woman has undergone two or more spontaneous abortions or foetal loss.
- where the pregnant woman had been exposed to potentially teratogenic agents such as drugs, radiation, infection or chemicals.
- where the pregnant woman has a family history of mental retardation or physical deformities such as spasticity or other genetic disease
- The Central Supervisory Board may specify any other conditions as required

In a significant judgment, **the Supreme Court** has upheld provisions in the **anti-pre-natal sex determination law which 'criminalises' non-maintenance of medical records by obstetricians and gynaecologists and suspend their medical licence indefinitely**. The court held that these provisions in the Pre-conception and Pre-natal Diagnostic Techniques (Prohibition of Sex Selection) Act of 1994 were necessary to prevent female foeticide in the country.

#### Effectiveness of the Act:

##### Positives:

- Registrations of pre-natal diagnostic clinics saw have considerably risen
- There has been a definite check on advertisements for sex selection from print media, television and from walls around the country.
- The SC ruling in 2015 extended this check even to online advertisements hosted by Google, Yahoo etc
- Efforts of public litigants have lead to effective implementation, e.g.: Maharashtra has seen a significant improvement in the sex-ratio over the years.
- The 2003 amendment brought ultrasound in its ambit. This had led to a drastic reduction in its indiscriminate and unethical use.

##### Challenges remain:

- The Act has the relevant provisions to end sex determination but the problem is that it is not implemented effectively.
- This is evident from the poor rate of conviction of the offenders.
- There are only 586 convictions out of 4202 cases registered even after 24 years of existence. It reflects the challenges being faced in implementing this social legislation, the Supreme Court observed.
- Had the law been enforced effectively the child sex ratio should have improved, but on contrary it has reached its lowest level as per the census 2011 data.
- This clearly shows the gap in the implementation of the PC&PNDT act.
- Registration has not been followed by actions, in most states, to prevent sex determination.
- Medical associations have been making continuous efforts to undermine the law, for continuation of their profiteering practices
- The non-maintenance of medical records by obstetricians and gynaecologists

##### Conclusion:

- Need of the hour is to promote medical prudence and accountability in private health sector, to cover for the hindrances to PCPNDT Act's implementation. Moreover, relevant landmark schemes like Beti Bachao Beti Padhao, SSY and their functioning can be interlinked with the Act's provisions for greater enforcement of both.

### **Q) Discuss the importance of an effective, efficient and expeditious contract enforcement regime to economic growth and development. (250 words)**

[Hindubusinessline](http://Hindubusinessline)

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

With India currently ranking at 77 in the World Bank's Ease of Doing Business Index, jumping from 65 place in the 2014-18 periods, Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) is working towards pushing India to the top 50 countries in the Ease of Doing Business Index. Enforcement of contracts being one of the key dimensions that require focused attention.

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

The answer must analyse India's Position on Enforcing contracts with respect to the importance it carries in the economic growth and development of the country.



### **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 background of the context of question.

#### **Body**

Discuss the following aspects in the answer:

- Explain that the importance of an effective, efficient and expeditious contract enforcement regime to economic growth and development cannot be overstated. A clear and certain legislative and executive regime backed by an efficient judiciary that fairly and punctually protects property rights, preserves sanctity of contracts, and enforces the rights and liabilities of parties is a prerequisite for business and commerce.
- Explain that India's Position on Enforcing contracts indicator over the years has shown improvement from 186 in 2014 to 163 in the 2018 report. However, in comparison with its BRICS counterparts and sizeable GDP based market economy, a greater room for improvement is discreetly felt.
- Discuss the Importance of just and efficient contract enforcement by highlighting the pros and cons facing the current system of business.
- Explain Why is India still lagging behind on Enforcing contracts?
- What needs to be done?

#### **Conclusion**

Conclude with way forward.

#### **Introduction:**

- In the **World Bank's ease of doing business ranking 2018**, India jumped 23 places from 100 to **77**. While improvement has been seen across various parameters, one aspect where India has remained stagnant is in enforcing contracts.
- **The Economic Survey 2017-18** made a compelling argument that addressing pendency, delays and backlogs in the appellate and judicial arenas is the next frontier for improving Ease Of Doing Business (EODB) in the country.

#### **Body:**

##### **Current scenario:**

- When it comes to the contract enforcement metric, India lags behind at 163 out of 190 nations.
- In India, there is significant disregard for upholding commercial contracts.
- Hardly any state has actually set up the commercial courts which could help in greater contract enforcement.
- Contract enforcement is not just a challenge with other private sector entities but also with the government.
- Government contracts get modified or nullified post contract signing, leading to significant damage to shareholder value. This has especially been observed in the infrastructure sector.
- The issue of overburdened and understaffed judiciary and slow judicial system. Giving some facts, the survey said there is a high level of pendency across six tribunals, estimated at about 1.8 lakh cases. The total backlog in High Courts by the end of 2017, according to the National Judicial Data Grid, was close to 3.5 million cases.
- While the volume of economic cases is smaller than other case categories, their average duration of pendency is arguably the worst of most cases, nearly 4.3 years for five major High Courts, it added.
- As of the quarter ending March 2017, a total of 1.45 lakh appeals were pending with the Commissioner (Appeals), CESTAT, HCs and the SC together, that were valued by the Department at 2.62 lakh crore.
- According to the Ease of Doing Business Index Report, enforcing a contract in India can take 1445 days and 30% of the claim value as cost

##### **Importance of an effective, efficient and expeditious contract enforcement regime:**

- Legitimate businesses will find it difficult to operate in environments where there is a lack of contract enforcement.
- Contract enforcement is very important for private enterprise.
- This is also one of the key reasons Indian capital has been regularly investing outside of India.
- It is essential for maintaining business confidence, reducing uncertainty and promoting fair play in the economy.



- Poor contract enforcement tends to increase the risk and reduce the returns (increased legal costs), thus affecting the overall risk to return ratio.
- Businesses don't engage in economically and socially beneficial activity such as innovation.
- Another effect of a poor contract enforcement mechanisms is the spurt of informal and often illegal channels of dispute resolution.
- Along with biased and poor quality decisions, this also brings undue power into the hands of middlemen and facilitators.
- This, in turn, creates problems such as increased corruption and the undermining of the rule of law.
- Contract enforcement is important for legitimate businesses to flourish in India and to generate jobs and bring in prosperity.
- An effective contract enforcement mechanism reduces the need to approach redressal mechanisms.
- It leads to healthy risk-taking behaviour in the economy, which is necessary to ensure growth.

#### Government Initiatives

- The **Commercial Courts, Commercial Division and Commercial Appellate Division of High Courts Act** was passed.
- This was primarily to address the dispute resolution concerns in India's business environment.
- It provides a forum with upgraded infrastructure to resolve "commercial disputes".

#### Way Forward

- As highlighted by the Economic Survey, addressing such deep-rooted problems will be possible through extensive cooperation between the organs of the government—"cooperative separation of powers".
- India needs to bring in improvements in ease of "starting a business" and in "contract enforcement" on a war footing.
- Devolution of powers to decentralise the system for faster decision-making.
- The tax department could exercise greater self-restraint by limiting appeals.
- Substantially increasing state expenditure on the judiciary, particularly on modernisation and digitisation
- An effective legal system provides the necessary level playing ground for smaller firms.
- Another major way to increase productivity of judges will be to introduce fully digital systems in the courts.
- It is also important that individuals and businesses also make an effort to learn more about contracts and contract enforceability.
- Poor and costly registration system in India can be dealt with digital signatures and other technology such as blockchain.

### Q) Discuss how Pradhan Mantri Adarsh Gram Yojana (PMAGY) is a vision for the empowerment of deprived sections? What are its objectives? Elucidate.(250 words)

[Vikaspedia](#)

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

The question is straightforward and is about analyzing the objectives and significance of Pradhan Mantri Adarsh Gram Yojana (PMAGY) in the empowerment of deprived sections of the Indian society.

#### **Directive:**

**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.

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

The answer must explain the objectives and significance of the Pradhan Mantri Adarsh Gram Yojana (PMAGY) .

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

- Pradhan Mantri Adarsh Gram Yojana (PMAGY), a Government of India initiative for the empowerment of deprived sections, aims to achieve integrated development of selected villages through convergent implementation of all relevant Central and State schemes.
- Discuss what are its objectives in detail.
- Who are the beneficiaries?
- What are the key domains of focus under it? etc.
- Explain the methods of implementation and provide for its achievements so far.

#### **Conclusion:**

Conclude with what should be the way ahead.

**Introduction:**

- Pradhan Mantri Adarsh Gram Yojana (PMAGY), a Government of India initiative for the empowerment of deprived sections, aims to achieve integrated development of selected villages through convergent implementation of all relevant Central and State schemes.
- The scheme was launched in March, 2010 on a pilot basis for the integrated development of 1000 villages each with more than 25% SC population. Presently the scheme is being implemented in five States of the country viz Assam, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and Tamil Nadu.

**Body:****Objectives:**

To ensure integrated development of the selected villages into “model villages” so that, inter alia,

- They have all requisite physical and social infrastructures for their socio-economic development, and satisfy the norms mentioned in the vision of an Adarsh gram to the maximum possible extent.
- Disparity between SC and non-SC population in terms of common socio-economic indicators (e.g. literacy rate, completion rate of elementary education, IMR/MMR, ownership of productive assets, etc.) is eliminated, the indicators are raised to at least the level of the national average, and
  - All BPL families, especially those belonging to SCs, have food and livelihood security, and are enabled to cross the poverty line and earn an adequate livelihood
  - All children complete at least eight years of education, and
  - Incidence of malnutrition, especially among children and women, is eliminated.
- Untouchability, discrimination, segregation, and atrocities against SCs are eliminated, as are other social evils like discrimination against girls/women, alcoholism and substance (drugs) abuse, etc., and all sections of society are able to live with dignity and equality, and in harmony with others

A Model village is one which has adequate physical and institutional infrastructure, in which minimum needs of all sections of the society are fully met; they live in harmony with each other, as also with the environment, and a village which is progressive and dynamic. These villages should be covered with all the facilities necessary for dignified living, creating thereby an environment in which all its residents are enabled to utilise their potential to the fullest.

These villages should, inter alia, satisfy the following norms:

**Physical Infrastructure:**

- Should be connected to the nearest major road by an all-weather road. Likewise, in case of a multi-hamlet village, all hamlets should be connected with each other by an all-weather road.
- Access for all to safe drinking water on a sustainable basis.
- All houses should have electricity

**Sanitation and Environment:**

- The village should have a high degree of sanitation- it should be free from dry latrines, and open defecation, and should have sanitary toilets, drains and an efficient waste disposal system. It should, as far as possible, fulfil “Nirmal Gram Puraskar” norms.
- The Village should take care of its environment through planting trees, water harvesting and maintenance of water bodies, use of renewable sources of energy, such as biogas, solar energy, wind energy, use of smokeless chulhas, etc.

**Social Infrastructure, Human Development and Social Harmony:**

- Should have an Anganwadi centre and schools of appropriate levels.
- The village should have adequate and attractive building for its anganwadi, school, health centre, panchayat, and community hall. The village should have adequate facility for sports and other physical activities.
- All children in the age-group of 3-6 should be enrolled in, and regularly attend the Anganwadi. Likewise, all children in the 6-14 age group should be enrolled in, and regularly attend school.
- All adults should be at least functionally literate, and should have access to facilities for continuing education.
- Access for all to primary health care and Reproductive Child Health (RCH) facilities, with proper pre-natal and ante-natal care for mothers.
- 100% institutional deliveries, full immunization of children, and observance of the small family norm.

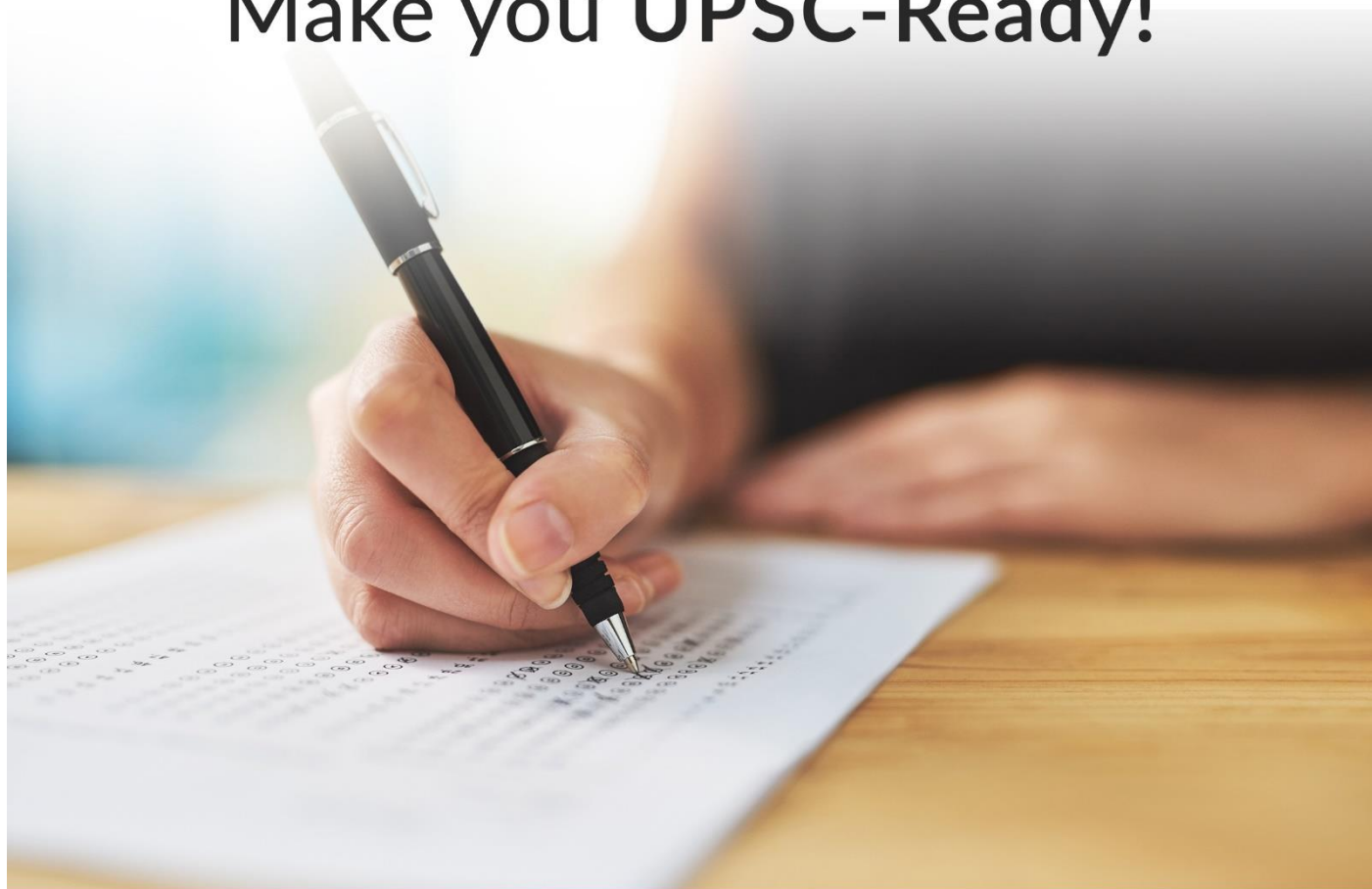
**Conclusion:**

- The scheme aims at overall development of villages. It is one of the best ways to carry on with the implementation of the existing schemes.



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*Topic: Salient features of the Representation of People's Act.*

**Q) Discuss the nature of the powers of Election commission of India. What is the procedure of disposal of matters that come before ECI ? Elaborate on the procedure when the Election commissioner dissents. (250 words)**

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

**Why this question:**

The article provides for clear insights on the working and functioning of ECI – how it has evolved over time and it pays a special focus on rules that it follows in case of a disagreement.

**Key demand of the question:**

The answer must discuss clearly nature of the powers of Election commission of India, procedure of disposal of matters that come before ECI and the power of dissent of the chief election commissioner.

**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:**

Brief upon the recent controversies surrounding the ECI.

**Body:**

Body of the answer should discuss the following aspects:

- When and under what circumstances did the Election Commission of India (ECI) become a three-member body? – discuss the coming of Article 324 and highlight its significance.
- From being one – member body to multi- member – trace the evolution and respective changes.
- What is the nature of the powers of the Election Commission of India?
- What is the procedure for disposal of matters that come before the Election Commission of India?
- What is the procedure for disposal of matters that come before the Election Commission of India? – discuss recent examples.
- Suggest what needs to be done ?

**Conclusion:**

Conclude with way ahead.

**Introduction:**

- The Election Commission of India is an autonomous constitutional authority responsible for administering election processes in India. The body administers elections to the Lok Sabha, Rajya Sabha, state legislatures, and the offices of the President and Vice President in the country.
- While the Election Commission is supposed to transact its business unanimously as far as possible, Commissioner Ashok Lavasa has dissented with the opinion of his colleagues in some recent matters.

**Body:**

**The nature of the powers of the Election Commission of India:**

- In **Mohinder Singh Gill & Anr vs The Chief Election Commissioner and Others** (1977), the Supreme Court ruled that “Article 324, on the face of it, vests vast functions in the Commission, which may be powers or duties, essentially administrative, and marginally, even judicative or legislative”.
- This means the ECI **mainly has administrative functions** in the preparation of electoral rolls and conduct of elections.
- The Commission has to exercise its powers and perform its functions under Article 324 in conformity with the provisions of Sections 9 to 11 of The Election Commission (Conditions of Service of Election Commissioners and Transaction of Business) Act, 1991.
- The three Sections apply to all the items of business transacted by the Commission — whether administrative, judicative or legislative.

**The procedure of disposal of matters that come before ECI:**

- Files are normally initiated at the level of the relevant sections/divisions in the Commission’s secretariat, and they move upwards, going up to the Deputy Election Commissioners (DECs) or Directors General (DGs) of the relevant divisions.
- The DECs/DGs then mark the files needing the Commission’s decisions or directions to the ECs in order of their seniority. With the observations of the ECs, the file ultimately goes to the CEC.





- In some cases, where any of the ECs or CEC desire a matter to be discussed in person, that matter is deliberated upon in the meetings of the full Commission, which are normally attended by the concerned DEC and DGs as well.
- The decisions taken in those meetings are then formally recorded in the file concerned.

#### **Status of Equality between CEC and ECs:**

- In **S. Dhanoa vs Union of India (1991)**, the SC held: “The chief election commissioner does not appear to be *primus inter pares*, i.e. first among equals, but he is intended to be placed in a distinctly higher position”
- In **N. Seshan vs Union of India (1995)**, the SC held that the CEC and ECs are equal. CEC is given the power of recommending the removal of ECs with the intention of shielding them and not to use it against them. CEC cannot use its *suo moto* as he is an equal to them.

#### **The procedure when the Election commissioner dissents:**

- If some difference of opinion persists even after oral deliberations and discussions, such dissent is recorded in the file.
- The **Chief Election Commissioner and Other Election Commissioners (Conditions of Service) Act, 1991**, as amended, provides that in case of difference of opinion on any matter, such matter shall be decided by the **opinion of the majority**.
- All opinions carry equal weight, which means the CEC can be overruled by the two ECs.
- In normal practice, while communicating the decision of the Commission in executive matters, the majority view is conveyed to the parties concerned.
- The dissent remains recorded in the file.
- In case dissent is to be recorded in a case of judicative nature:
- for example, in references by the President under Article 103 of the Constitution or by the Governors under Article 192, or in matters relating to splits in recognised national or state political parties under the Symbols Order — the dissenting member may like to record a separate opinion/order.
- For example, separate opinions were recorded by the two ECs (S Y Quraishi and Navin Chawla) and the CEC (N Gopalaswami) in 2009 in the matter of alleged disqualification of Sonia Gandhi on the conferment of an honour by the government of Belgium.

#### **Conclusion:**

- However, despite the existence of the provision to take **decisions by majority since 1993**, very rarely has dissent been recorded. When a matter is deliberated upon by the three Commissioners in a Commission meeting, **they normally agree to a common course of action**.
- This does not, however, mean that there is no disagreement between the Commissioners — there are certain instances in the past where a consensus could not be arrived at even at the meeting.

### **Q) What is an exit poll ? And how is it different from an opinion poll ? Reason why in India Election Commission (EC) is opposed to media coverage of opinion polls and exit polls during a multi-phase election ? (250 words)**

#### Reference

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

Last evening soon after the last phase of elections were declared to be complete exit polls have been meted out by Media. Thus, it is an important theme from the exam point of view.

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

The answer must evaluate what is the concept of exit poll, how is it different from opinion poll and why ECI is opposed to the media coverage of the two concepts during the period of election process.

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

##### **Introduction:**

Begin with basic definitions of the two.

##### **Body:**

Discussion should include the following aspects –

- Explain What are exit & opinion polls? –
- An opinion poll is a pre-election survey to gather voters’ views on a range of election-related issues.
- An exit poll, on the other hand, is conducted immediately after people have voted, and assesses the support for political parties and their candidates.
- Explain why ECI is opposed to them during the period of ongoing elections?



- Both kinds of polls can be controversial if the agency conducting them is perceived to be biased.
- The projections of these surveys can be influenced by the choice, wording and timing of the questions, and by the nature of the sample drawn.
- Political parties often allege that many opinions and exit polls are motivated and sponsored by their rivals, and could have a distorting effect on the choices voters make in a protracted election, rather than simply reflecting public sentiment or views.

Discuss both pros and cons, explain the other practices across different countries and provide for a brief comparison.

#### **Conclusion:**

Conclude with way forward signifying importance of freedom of speech at the same time the reasoned account of such decisions made by ECI.

#### **Introduction:**

- Exit poll is a post-voting poll, which is conducted just after a voter walks out after casting his or her vote. Such polls aim at predicting the actual result on the basis of the information collected from voters. It assesses the support for political parties and their candidates. They are conducted by a number of organisations. The basic step to predict exit polls is sampling.

#### **Body:**

##### **Differences between Exit and Opinion polls:**

- One key difference between exit polls and opinion polls is the timing. Exit polls are conducted after an election or referendum and survey how people actually did vote. Opinion polls are conducted before elections and survey how people intend to vote.
- Moreover, opinion polls can ask a much broader range of questions to gauge the mood of the electorate. Examples of opinion poll questions include:
  - If the election were held today, who would you vote for?
  - Do you think the country is moving in the right or wrong direction?
  - Do you approve of the job the president is doing with regards to foreign policy?
- Another key difference is who does the polling and for what purpose the results are used. Exit polls are typically undertaken by news networks in order to analyse and predict the results of elections directly after voting closes. Opinion polls, on the other hand, are undertaken for analytical and predictive purposes by news networks. They are also regularly used by political parties as a strategic campaigning tool.

##### **The reason why Election Commission of India (ECI) is against these polls:**

- Both kinds of polls can be controversial if the agency conducting them is perceived to be biased.
- The projections of these surveys can be influenced by the choice, wording and timing of the questions, and by the nature of the sample drawn.
- Political parties often allege that many opinion and exit polls are motivated and sponsored by their rivals, and could have a distorting effect on the choices voters make in a protracted election, rather than simply reflecting public sentiment or views.
- Section 126A of the Representation of the People's Act, 1951, puts a ban on exit polls from the period between the commencements of the poll until half an hour after the closing of the final phase of the poll.
- Exit polls have often proved unreliable in India. In the past, there had been instances when exit polls had predicted the verdict of an election incorrectly. In 2004, the exit polls wrongly predicted the BJP-led NDA coalition winning again.

##### **Opposition to their regulation:**

- Regulating these polls is seen as a curb on the fundamental freedom of speech and expression.
- Another criticism is that the voters have the right to know what other people's views are on critical electoral issues so that they can form an informed opinion before casting their votes.

##### **International practices:**

- Sixteen European Union countries ban reporting of opinion polls, with ban timeframes ranging from a full month to just 24 hours before polling day.
- Italy, Slovakia and Luxembourg have a ban of more than 7 days.
- France – The French ban has been reduced to 24 hours ahead of voting day.
- UK – There are no restrictions on publishing results of opinion polls — however, results of exit polls can't be published until the voting is over.
- US – Media coverage of opinion polls is regarded as an integral part of free speech in elections, and publication is allowed at any time.



- The only restriction that exists — not reporting likely outcomes from exit polls before voting is over on election day — is one that news organisations commissioning the polls voluntarily impose upon themselves.

#### Conclusion:

- Since these polls are an important part of freedom of speech and expression and play an important role in informing voters. The need is to establish an independent regulator to regulate the conduct of these polls in terms of sample space, sampling technique, type and timing of questions etc. Media needs to have proper accountability while conducting exit polls.

### Q) An Election commissioner is a watch dog but not a blood hound. comment with decided cases. (250 words)

The hindu

#### Why this question:

The article captures the dissenting turf facing the election commission of India.

#### Key demands of the question:

The answer must briefly discuss how the election commission is a watch dog of democracy and not a blood hound.

#### 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 background/context of the question.

##### Body

The answer must explain first the issues facing the election commission of India. Highlight the details of the controversy.

Explain how election commissioner Ashok Lavasa wrote thrice to Chief Election Commissioner Sunil Arora on the issue.

The Election Commissioner was also reminded of the current legal position that, in non-quasi-judicial matters, dissenting notes were not included in the orders.

Discuss the effects of the above on the powers and functions of the ECI and how that makes ECI only a watchdog and not a blood hound.

##### Conclusion

Conclude with way forward.

#### Introduction:

- Recently, an Election Commissioner had dissented with the opinion of his colleagues in the Election Commission in five different matters pertaining to alleged violations of the Model Code of Conduct. The EC has been widely criticised for giving a series of 'clean chits' to the PM.
- This was despite some questionable remarks that appeared to solicit votes in the name of the armed forces. In this context, the Election Commission has decided by majority that dissenting opinions in Model Code of Conduct (MCC) disputes will not be made part of any final order.

#### Body:

##### Election Commission of India and its working:

- The Election Commission of India draws its authority from the Constitution itself. Under Article 324, the powers of "superintendence, direction and control of elections" are to be vested in an Election Commission.
- The CEC and ECs are appointed by the President to tenure of six years, or up to the age of 65 years, whichever is earlier.
- They enjoy the same status and receive salary and perks as judges of the Supreme Court of India.
- All three Election Commissioners have equal say in the decision making of the Commission
- The law requires the multi-member EC to transact business unanimously as far as possible.

##### Business of ECI:

- Section 10 (Disposal of business by Election Commission) of The Election Commission (Conditions of Service of Election Commissioners and Transaction of Business) Act, 1991, lays down that "all business of the EC shall, as far as possible, be transacted unanimously".



- Dissent is, however, provided for in the Act itself, which says: “If the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) and other Election Commissioners (ECs) differ in opinion on any matter, such matter shall be decided according to the opinion of the majority”.
- All opinions carry equal weight, which means the CEC can be overruled by the two ECs.
- If some difference of opinion persists even after oral deliberations and discussions, such dissent is recorded in the file.
- In normal practice, while communicating the decision of the Commission in executive matters, the majority view is conveyed to the parties concerned.
- The dissent remains recorded in the file.
- In case dissent is to be recorded in a case of judicative nature, the dissenting member may like to record a separate opinion/order.
- However, despite the existence of the provision to take decisions by majority since 1993, very rarely has dissent been recorded.
- When a matter is deliberated upon by the 3 Commissioners, they normally agree to a common course of action.
- This does not, however, mean that there is no disagreement between the Commissioners.

However, in the recent case Election Commissioner Ashok Lavasa had written thrice to the Chief Election Commissioner Sunil Arora in this regard. He had conveyed his decision to stay away from proceedings related to the MCC if the dissenting views were not incorporated in the orders. With ECI’s recent decision, the dissenting opinions will only be included in internal files, as per previous practice. **People are entitled to know whether or not the poll panel’s key decisions are unanimous.**

#### Conclusion:

- The MCC is a moral code and not backed by Statute. This also reduces the power of ECI to take strict actions against wrong doings. The onus on EC to maintain a level-playing field and enforce the election code is quite high, especially when its credibility is under question.
- There is a need to codify the true powers of CEC and ECs and the procedure to be followed in case of extraordinary situations to keep the integrity and sanctity of ECI intact.

**Q) who is an independent candidate in the elections of India? Discuss the issues associated with independent candidates and their contestations in the elections. Are they unimportant for political representation? Critically analyse. (250 words)**

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

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

The question is around the fact that Independent candidates are often deemed ‘frivolous’ or ‘spoilers’ by mainstream political figures and authorities, although there is little to no evidence on their effect on elections. It is often found that independent candidates decrease the chances that a Lok Sabha constituency elects a member of the party or coalition that forms the national government. It suggests that participation by independents has a high price – a lesser role for the constituency in policymaking.

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

The answer must discuss who is an independent candidate? Role in deciding election results, pros and cons what are the general recommendation by various committees about it like the law commission report etc.

#### **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:**

write a few introductory lines explain who is an independent candidate in an election.

##### **Body:**

Answer should have the following dimensions covered:

- Role of independent candidates in elections of India.



- How do they effect the results?
- Should independents be discouraged from participating as candidates in elections? – results for voter turnout and the distribution of vote shares are also consistent with the idea that independents give voters better opportunities to express their preferences.
- This can improve political representation, as independents are free from the dictates of a party line, and have the flexibility to represent local preferences in a way that party-affiliated candidates often do not. To answer the question of whether independents should be discouraged, we would need to know if these advantages are outweighed by the disadvantages of not electing candidates from the governing party, or coalition of parties, that forms the national government.
- What needs to be done?

#### Conclusion –

Conclude with significance and what should be the way forward.

#### Introduction:

- An independent candidate is one who contests polls without being affiliated to any political party. Independents often support policies that are different from major political parties. In its 255th report, the Law Commission of India sparked a debate when it recommended that independent candidates be barred from contesting elections as “they are either not serious or contest elections just to confuse the voters.”

#### Body:

##### Issues associated with independent candidates and their contestations in the elections:

- While there is a limit on expenditure that an individual candidate can incur on her/his election, there is none on the amount that a political party can. This obviously puts independent candidates, who had no party to bankroll their election, at a huge disadvantage.
- It is difficult for independent candidates to campaign and influence large numbers of voters in India with little money and influence.
- The second strand pertains to the collection of money and is two-pronged. First is tax exemption. The Income Tax Act 1961, and amended in 1978 with the addition of Section 13A, grants 100% exemption from income tax to political parties.
- It also clarifies that for the purposes of this section, ‘political party’ means a political party registered under the Representation of People Act. So, the tax exemption that a party’s candidate enjoys becomes indirectly unavailable to independent candidates.
- The independent candidates are not eligible to get money from electoral trusts. Even the electoral bonds bypasses the Independent candidates as only political parties are eligible.
- Many independent candidates are either not serious or contest elections just to confuse the voters.
- The number of independents winners has been decreasing. In 2014, 3,182 independent candidates contested the Lok Sabha elections and only 3 won seats
- Supreme Court, in **Dhartipakar Madan Lal Agarwal v. Rajiv Gandhi**, recommended that Parliament devise ways “to meet the onslaught” of such non-serious independent candidates.
- Proliferation of candidates puts “unnecessary and avoidable stress” in election management and increases security and election administration expenditure.
- Low vote shares and little direct policy influence drive the widely-held belief that independents are unimportant for political representation.

##### State of Independent candidates:

- With a constant decline in the number of successful independent candidates in all general elections, their average success rate is just 0.49 per cent.
- Till now, the highest number of winning independent candidates was seen in 1957 elections when they won 42 seats, followed by 37 in 1952.
- Since 1991 polls, number of winning independents is not just stood at single digit but also sharply declining too. The lowest count also observed in 1991 when only one independent had won out of total 5,514 independents contested.

##### Importance of Independent candidates:

- The presence of more independent candidates induced voters to step out and vote, and get existing voters to switch their votes.
- Independent candidates provide voters with better opportunities to express their preferences.
- Independents increase the chances of votes for regional parties at the expense of votes for coalition of parties, that forms the national government





- Independents can improve political representation, as independents are free from the dictates of a party line, and have the flexibility to represent local preferences in a way that party-affiliated candidates often do not.
- Independents thus generate a trade-off between giving voters better opportunities for preference expression and better representation in the government.

**Conclusion:**

- In Indian democracy any independent fulfilling current eligibility criteria can contest elections as many times. Independents play an important role in elections: they increase citizen knowledge about alternative policies and can facilitate the selection of representatives who are more responsive to their constituents.

*Topic – Welfare schemes for vulnerable sections of the population by the Centre and States and the performance of these schemes; mechanisms, laws, institutions and Bodies constituted for the protection and betterment of these vulnerable sections.*

**Q) Discuss the various constitutional safeguards for protection of the minority and schemes introduced by the government to empower them. (250 words)**

Indian polity by Lakshmikanth

**Why this question:**

The question is based on the static portions of the syllabus, it aims to analyse the various constitutional safeguards for protection of the minority and schemes introduced by the government to empower them.

**Demand of the question:**

This question seeks to examine constitutional safeguards for protection of the minority and schemes introduced by the government to empower them.

**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 highlighting the significance of the mechanisms to provide for the protection of the minority in the country. Provide for a brief on scenario of minorities in the country – one may quote some facts related to numbers.

**Body**

Discuss the following points in detail:

- Discuss first how Democracy and minorities are supplementary and complementary in nature and thus require safeguards.
- Discuss the constitutional safeguards: The Preamble of the 'Indian Constitution'; The preamble has authoritatively declared that India is a secular country, Part III of the Indian Constitution contains the cardinal part of Indian constitution; In this context following are the fundamental rights that ensure security and safeguard the rights and
- privileges of minorities of the country – Article 14, Article 15(4), Article 19, Article 28, Article 29, Article 30.
- DPSP – Article 38, Article 39. Article 46, Article 49, Article 51 etc.
- Explain how the various schemes and policies apart from the above constitutional safeguards have constantly aimed at providing safety and upliftment of the minorities in the country.

**Conclusion**

Conclude with significance of such efforts in a Democracy.

**Introduction:**

- Minorities are groups of people who do not enjoy a proportionate share of social, economic, or political power in a society.
- The Constitution of India does not define the word 'Minority' and only refers to 'Minorities' and speaks of those 'based on religion or language', the rights of the minorities have been spelt out in the Constitution in detail.

**Body:**

- According to the **Report of National Commission for Religious and Linguistic Minorities, 2007**, two types of minorities are recognised in India – **Religious Minorities and Linguistic Minorities**. Religious minorities include: Muslim, Christian, Sikh, Buddhist, Parsi (Zoroastrian) and Jain.
- As regards Linguistic Minorities, there is no majority at the national level and so the minority status is to be essentially decided at the State/Union Territory level.

**Constitutional rights and safeguards provided to the minorities in India**

The Constitution has adopted several safeguards to protect minorities in the country. Some of these rights are common to all the citizens, including minorities. These rights are enshrined in the following Articles of the Constitution:

- **Article 15** prohibits discrimination on the grounds of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth.
- **Article 16** ensures equality of opportunity in matters of public employment and makes provisions for certain “Classes” for employment, appointment and promotion in the services under the State.
- **Article 25** ensures freedom of conscience and free profession, practice and propagation of religion.
- **Article 26** ensures the right to manage religious institutions, religious affairs, subject to public order, morality and health.
- **Article 27** ensures freedom from payment of taxes for promotion of any particular religion
- **Article 28** ensures freedom to attend religious worship in religious institution or religious worship in certain educational institutions.
- **Article 29** gives minorities the right to conserve their language, script, and culture.
- **Article 30** gives the right to minorities to establish and administer educational institutions.
- **Article 347** allows use of minority languages for official purpose.
- **Article 350** directs the State to allow the use of minority language for redressal of grievances.
- **Article 350A** directs the State to provide facilities to linguistic minority groups for instruction in the mother tongue at the primary stage of education.
- **Article 350B** provides provision for a special officer for linguistic minorities to be appointed by the President.

Several affirmative actions have been taken for education of minorities. Articles 29 and 30 in the Constitution of India contain provisions for running of own institutions by minority groups. In addition, National Commission for Minorities Act, 1992 (NCM) and National Commission for Minorities Educational Institutions Act, 2004 (NCMEI) (modified in 2006 and 2010) have been enacted under Acts passed by the Parliament.

**Ministry of Human Resource Development** has taken several significant initiatives such as:

- Scheme for Providing Quality Education in Madrasas (SPQEM);
- Scheme for Infrastructure Development of (Private Aided/Unaided) Minority Institutions (IDMI);
- Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA);
- Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalyas (KGBVs);
- Extension of Mid-Day Meal (MDM) Scheme to Madrasas/Maqtabas;
- Saakshar Bharat;
- Jan Shikshan Sansthan (JSS);
- Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA);
- Strengthening of the National Council for Promotion of Urdu Language (NCPUL);
- Establishment of the National Commission for Minority Educational Institutions (NCMEI);
- Establishment of National Monitoring Committee for Minorities Education (NMCME);
- Identification of Minority Concentration Districts (MCDs);
- Girls Hostel Scheme; and
- Setting up Model Schools

**The Ministry of Minority Affairs** has taken several initiatives for the educational development of minorities such as:

- Pre-Matric Scholarship.
- Post-Metric Scholarship.
- Merit-cum-Means based Scholarship.
- Naya Savera (Free Coaching and Allied Schemes).
- Exclusive new component for meritorious students of Science stream (Coaching Schemes).



- Nai Udaan – Support for students clearing Prelims conducted by UPSC, SSC, State Public Service Commissions, etc., for preparation of Mains Examination.
- Padho Pardesh – Interest subsidy on educational loans for overseas studies.
- Maulana Azad National Fellowship (MANF).
- Maulana Azad Education Foundation (MAEF).
- Minority Cyber Gram (Digital Literacy).
- Seekho Aur Kamao (Learn & Earn) – Skill Development initiative for minorities.
- Upgrading Skill and Training in Traditional Arts/Crafts for Development (USTTAD).
- Nai Manzil – A scheme to provide education and skill training to the youth from minority communities.
- Concessional loans to minorities through National Minorities Development & Finance Corporation (NMDFC).
- Hamari Dharohar – To preserve rich heritage and culture of minorities.
- Nai Roshni – A scheme for leadership development of minority women.

#### Conclusion:

- India has always embraced diversity, becoming a vast ocean of cultures, religions, ethnicities, beliefs and practices. With such diversity, it becomes necessary to give each community their due, without inciting any conflicts.
- This plethora of diversity in our democratic nation makes the minority communities at times vulnerable, calling for sturdy laws to protect their rights. Moreover, it becomes the duty of the state to ensure that human rights are available to all citizens, irrespective of caste, colour, or creed.

**Q) Do you think Internet of Things offer a new form of persistent surveillance by Discuss the salient features of PM Shram Yogi Maan-Dhan (PM-SYM), how is it a new hope of light for the Pension Scheme for Unorganized sector workers in India? (250 words)**

#### Reference

##### *Why this question:*

The PM Shram Yogi Maan-Dhan (PM-SYM) that was announced in the Interim Budget-2019 was formally inaugurated by PM Modi recently. The scheme seeks to benefit around 42 crore workers from the unorganized sector of the country.

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

The question here is straightforward, one has to evaluate the salient features of PM Shram Yogi Maan-Dhan (PM-SYM).

##### *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 brief write up on unorganized sector workers and the facilities they have in terms of policies and programmes.

##### *Body:*

- Discussion should include the following aspects –
- PM-SYM is a Central Sector Scheme administered by the Ministry of Labour and Employment and implemented through Life Insurance Corporation of India and Community Service Centers (CSCs). LIC will be the Pension Fund Manager and responsible for Pension pay out.
- This scheme seeks to benefit around 42 crore workers from the unorganized sector of the country.
- Then move on to discuss the Salient Features of the scheme – Minimum Assured Pension, role of the central government etc.
- Once the beneficiary joins the scheme at the entry age of 18-40 years, the beneficiary has to contribute till 60 years of age.
- On attaining the age of 60 years, the subscriber will get the assured monthly pension of Rs.3000/- with benefit of family pension, as the case may be.

##### *Conclusion:*

Conclude with significance of such schemes in the upliftment of the unorganized working class.

**Introduction:**

- The central govt. of India introduced the new pension scheme i.e. Pradhan Mantra Shram Yogi Mandhan (PMSYM) for Labour/ Worker in Unorganised Sector. It was launched to provide assured monthly pension of 3000 rupees per month, with a contribution of 100 rupees per month, for workers in unorganized sector after 60 years of age.

**Body:**

Salient features of PM-SYM:

- The scheme is for informal sector or unorganised sector workers.
- Minimum Assured Pension: Each subscriber under the PM-SYM, shall receive minimum assured pension of Rs 3000/- per month after attaining the age of 60 years.
- The scheme is eligible for persons aged between 18 and 40 and are earning Rs. 15000 or less per month
- Family Pension: During the receipt of pension, if the subscriber dies, the spouse of the beneficiary shall be entitled to receive 50% of the pension received by the beneficiary as family pension. Family pension is applicable only to spouse.
- The subscribers have to pay a monthly amount of Rs. 100 if the subscriber joins at age 29 and Rs. 55 if the subscriber joins the scheme at 18.
- The same amount will be matched by the government.
- The scheme is estimated to benefit 10 Crore workers from informal sector.
- The government has allocated an initial fund of Rs. 500 crore for the scheme.
- PM-SYM is a Central Sector Scheme administered by the Ministry of Labour and Employment and implemented through Life Insurance Corporation of India and Community Service Centers (CSCs). LIC will be the Pension Fund Manager and responsible for Pension pay out.

Significance of the scheme:

- It is estimated that over 42 crore workers in India are working in the informal sector.
- 50 per cent of the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) comes from "sweat and toil of 42 crore workers in the unorganised sector."
- As per the India Labour Market Update of 2016, 82% of the Indian workforce is in unorganised sector.
- The workers of the sector include street vendors, rag pickers, porters, beedi workers, rickshaw pullers, agricultural labourers etc.
- The nature of their job and the income they receive are not stable. Often due to non availability of any laws to protect their interest, they are subjected to violation by the employers.
- This uncertain earnings puts pressure on them financially and need some kind of monetary protection to lead a life with means after their productive years.
- About 91 per cent of the informal sector, which was dependent on cash for survival, was harmed due to demonetisation.
- It is why social security schemes such as Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Mandhan (PMSYM) becomes necessary where the government is contributing in the premium amount.
- The new pension scheme will run alongside the existing Atal Pension Yojana, which guarantees returns post-retirement

**Way forward:**

- Along with the social security, Government should ramp up skilling of the workforce, take steps to generate more jobs in the formal sector, change labour laws to include informal workers.
- It will in effect provide wage protection, job security, social security to the workers and ultimately alleviate the hardships they face.
- Eventually it will boost the overall economic growth of the country.

**Q) Discuss the objectives, composition and significance of National Commission for Safai Karamcharis far do you think the commission has been successful in addressing the issues of the vulnerable section? Comment. (250 words)**

[pib](#)

**Why this question:**

The Union Cabinet had recently approved the proposal for Extension of tenure of the National Commission for Safai Karamcharis (NCSK) for another three years.

**Demand of the question:**



The question is about discussing the objectives and significance of National Commission for Safai Karamcharis. Also analyse its achievements.

**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 highlighting the significance of Scheme for Higher Education Youth in Apprenticeship and Skills (SHREYAS).

**Body**

Discuss the following points in detail:

- Explain – The NCSK was established in the year 1993 as per the provisions of the NCSK Act 1993 initially for the period up to 1997.

Later the validity of the Act was initially extended up to 2002 and thereafter up to 2004. The NCSK Act ceased to have effect from 2004. After that the tenure of the NCSK has been extended as a non-statutory body from time to time.

- Discuss the significant role played by the NCSK –
- Recommend to the Government regarding specific programmes for welfare of Safai Karamcharis, study and evaluate the existing welfare programmes for Safai Karamcharis, investigate cases of specific grievances etc.
- Also as per the provisions of the Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, the NCSK has been assigned the work to monitor the implementation of the Act, tender advice for its effective implementation to the Centre and State Governments and enquire into complaints regarding contravention/non-implementation of the provisions of the Act.
- Discuss their achievements.

**Conclusion**

Conclude with significance of such institutions in the upliftment of the vulnerable sections of the society.

**Introduction:**

- The National Commission for Safai Karamcharis (NCSK) is a statutory body that looks into matters concerning the Safai Karamcharis' welfare and makes recommendations to the government. It was established in the year 1993 as per the provisions of the NCSK Act 1993 initially for the period upto 1997. Later the validity of the Act was initially extended upto 2002 and thereafter upto 2004.
- The NCSK Act ceased to have effect from 2004. The Union Cabinet has approved the proposal for Extension of tenure of the National Commission for Safai Karmacharis(NCSK) beyond 31.3.2019 for three years.

**Body:**

**Objectives:**

- Recommend to the Central Government specific programmes of action towards elimination of inequalities in status, facilities and opportunities for Safai Karamcharis.
- Study and evaluate the implementation of the programmes and schemes relating to the social and economic rehabilitation of Safai Karamcharis; and scavengers, in particular.
- Investigate specific grievances and take suo-motu notice of matters relating to non-implementation of: –
  - programmes or schemes in respect of any group of Safai Karamcharis
  - decisions, guidelines or instructions, aimed at mitigating the hardships of Safai Karamcharis
  - measures for the social and economic upliftment of Safai Karamcharis
  - the provisions of any law in its application to Safai Karamcharis; and take up such matters with the concerned authorities or with the Central or State Governments
- To study and monitor the working conditions, including those relating to health, safety and wages of Safai Karamcharis working under various kinds of employers including Government, Municipalities and Panchayats, and to make recommendations in this regard.
- Make reports to the Central or State Governments on any matter concerning Safai Karamcharis, taking into account any difficulties or disabilities being encountered by Safai Karamcharis
- Any other matter which may be referred to it by the Central Government.





### Composition:

The National Commission for Safai Karamcharis comprises of

- One Chairman (in the rank and status of the Union Minister for States)
- 4 members, including a lady member (in the rank and status of the Secretary to the Government of India) and the Secretary (in the rank of Joint Secretary to the Govt. of India).

### Significance:

- The safai karamcharis face various problems like
  - They are boycotted socially and are referred to in derogatory words.
  - The poisonous gases emanating from waste cause many harmful diseases like Asthma and heart diseases
  - Low wage payment and low financial security
  - Protected gears are not provided which means they use their bare hands which leads to many diseases
- NCSK recommends to the Government regarding specific programmes for welfare of Safai Karamcharis, study and evaluate the existing welfare programmes for Safai Karamcharis, investigate cases of specific grievances etc.
- Also as per the provisions of the Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, the NCSK has been assigned the work to monitor the implementation of the Act.
- NCSK also tenders advice for its effective implementation to the Centre and State Governments and enquire into complaints regarding contravention/non-implementation of the provisions of the Act.

### Conclusion:

- The practice of manual scavenging is still prevalent in the country and its eradication continues to be an area of the highest priority for the government as well as the civil society.
- The NCSK works for their welfare and upliftment. In order for mission of Swachh Bharat to be successful, it is necessary that safai karamchari are provided with good conditions to work

**Q) Discuss some of the common prejudices against reservation policies. Should reservation be based only on caste and not economic status ? Critically analyse. (250 words)**

Epw

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

The article discusses in detail the general prejudices among people about reservation, that is how people often think Reservations in Education, Jobs based on caste is destroying talent base of India. One must present a critical analysis of whether reservation be based only on caste or also on economic status.

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

The question is about discussing the what are the general prejudices of the reservation system among public. The answer must present arguments for and against the system and argue to what extent it is a justified one.

#### **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.

**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**

Start with brief introduction of background of the reservation system.

##### **Body**

Discuss the following points in detail:

- Explain what are the prejudices about the affirmative action of State – Losing out opportunities to the some undeserving and cast privileged minorities is a form of oppression too, loss of talent, collapse of merit based selection system etc.



- Highlight that the Anti-discrimination laws and reservation policies were brought in to ensure that Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs) are protected from discrimination in the spheres of employment, education and political representation. The idea was to not just improve their economic status, but to address the denial of rights and oppression meted out to these groups over the years, and to work towards rectifying their utter lack of representation in public office.
- Discuss the merits and demerits of reservation based on economic status.
- Explain how discrimination usually occurs on the basis of a group's social and caste identity, irrespective of financial status.
- Conclude by arguing for both the points – caste vs economical status and give your opinion.

### Conclusion

Conclude with fair and balanced opinion.

### Introduction:

- The President of India has given his assent to the bill providing **10% reservation in jobs and educational institutions to the economically weaker sections in the general category**. The legislation will be known as the **Constitution (103 Amendment) Act, 2019** and it shall come into force on such date as the Centre notifies.

### Body:

- The topic of reservations in education and government jobs is, arguably, the most contentious of India's myriad threads of public discourse. It has led to many agitations, violence, court rulings and constitutional amendments.

There are a total of 9 crore SC workers\*

90000000

Out of this, the number of SC workers engaged in non-farm occupations is only 1.39 crores

13900700

Reservation is applicable to only permanent government employees who make for about 25 lakhs: a mere 3% of the total number of SC workers.

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### Common prejudices against reservation policies:

- According to a research by SARI, about half of the respondents said they do not support reservation. However, support for reservation was more common among people from reserved categories.
- The survey concluded that a majority of the most educated and historically well-to-do communities do not feel that people from marginalised groups should get government support for representation in social and public spheres.
- People from unreserved categories feel that people from reserved categories are often given a concession of a few points on exams and in interviews. This, according to them, distorts the playing field and is against Equality.
- Some people say that they oppose today's reservations because they believe reservation should be made on the basis of income rather than social background.
- In the upper caste imagination, reservation is indelibly branded as a welfare programme giving handouts to a set of caste-marked "beneficiaries".



- One of the primary criticisms that caste-based reservations faced, even from liberal quarters, was that it would lead to an inefficient bureaucracy.
- Another charge against caste-based reservation and its implementation was that it would be against national unity. Granting quotas by caste, it was argued, would escalate caste-based divisiveness and encourage sub-nationalisms by allowing them to be articulated in electoral politics.

Reservation is a fundamentally political promise made in acknowledgement of the fact that caste literally excludes sizeable communities from Indian society. The primary reason why reservation was written into India's Constitution was to ensure representation of all social groups in positions of power.

**Yes, reservation should be based only on caste and not economic status:**

- Reservation is intended not to be an anti-poverty programme. The government has many programmes which are, in principle, accessible to all poor people.
- Reservation exists because, in addition to being more likely to be poor than general castes, Dalits, backward Muslims, and Adivasis face social discrimination and exclusion that poor people from general caste backgrounds do not face.
- The fact that the right to education, the right to own land, the right to conduct business, or to pursue a well-remunerated occupation has been reserved for men from high caste backgrounds for generations means that government must take steps to correct the unequal distribution of rights.
- Historical injustice: Caste based reservation is a necessity in India because of historical negligence and injustice caused to those backward communities.
- Level Playing field: Reservation provides a level playing field as it is difficult for the backward sections who were historically deprived of education, skills and economic mobility to suddenly start competing with those who had access to those means for centuries.
- Meritocracy is important, however, it will have no meaning without equality. The caste based reservation also minimized the gap between upper and lower castes to a great extent.
- Administration quality: A study revealed that reservations have not affected the efficiency of administration, but enhanced quality. The best example is the Indian Railways in which the SC/ST employees comprise more in number, and the results have been better.
- As for economically weak SCs and STs, they need both financial support as well as reservation to ensure fair access to employment and education.
- Malaysia, South Africa and many countries in the European Union have supplemented anti-poverty policies with equal opportunity policies for excluded groups based on group identity.

**No, reservation shouldn't be based only on caste and but also economic status:**

- Majority of lower castes have stepped up the social ladder and are now on an equal status compared to the general population. Hence, there is no need for reservation anymore.
- Reservation only provides a limited and short-term solution to the historical injustice issues.
- Reservation is obviously a tool to address social and educational backwardness, however, it does not have solutions for all social and economic ailments. There are much better and innovative ways to solve those issues. However, reservation prevents the leadership to come up with viable solutions.
- As the reservation grows larger, it becomes a mechanism of exclusion rather than of inclusion. Because, nowadays, the previously advantaged communities has becoming disadvantaged to a large extent due to the reservation conundrum. Many upper castes are still plagued by poverty and illiteracy.
- Reservation brings down the economic growth rate of the country as it reduces the efficiency of its labour.
- New reservation on the basis of economic background is based on moral duties which are implicitly part of the constitution.
- Every person has right 'not face any inequality on the base of any ground' and, the directive principle of state policy (DPSP) is a moral obligation on the state to secure a social order for the promotion of the welfare of the people.
- High economic class and lower economic class and higher economic class in SCs and STs defend a reservation for maintaining the status quo.
- The same scenario is in socially and economically backward class also like Maratha, Jats, gurjars etc. is demanding reservation despite high living standard.
- Reservation on the basis of economic background may pave the way for a casteless society which was initially purpose of Dr Ambedkar's reservation system.

**Way forward:**

- Reservation is a policy tool that is used not only in India. In many countries, reservation or other types of affirmative action are used to try to overcome human prejudice based on race, gender, ethnicity, religion, caste or any other group identity, and to encourage representation of and participation by groups traditionally excluded and discriminated against.
- One way to make these measures more acceptable and help people better understand the historic, social and cultural background behind reservation would be to educate children in schools about caste, ethnic, gender and regional diversities and the need for public policy interventions to make society more equal and fair.

**Q) Evaluate the role played by Conditional Cash Transfer schemes in successfully curbing child marriages and addressing gender inequality. (250 words)**

The hindu

**Why this question:**

The article provides for a detailed analysis of interlinkages between conditional cash transfers and their role played in addressing gender inequality with special focus on how they curb child marriages.

**Key demands of the question:**

The answer must briefly discuss what are conditional cash transfers, their key role in alleviating poverty.

**Directive:**

**Evaluate** – When you are asked to evaluate, you have to pass a sound judgement about the truth of the given statement in the question or the topic based on evidences. You have to appraise the worth of the statement in question. There is scope for forming a personal opinion here.

**Structure of the answer:**

**Introduction**

In a few introductory lines explain what are conditional cash transfer schemes.

**Body**

The answer must explain the following aspects:

- In what way conditional cash transfers address poverty and other social issues?
- Problems and causes of child marriage – The reasons for child marriage, a social problem, range from usual factors of poverty, illiteracy and age-old cultural norms to apprehensions about early sexual activity (of adolescent girl in particular), elopement and marriage ‘outside the caste’. For some, early marriage is the resolution of the ‘problem of modernity and mobility’ of young women.
- Explain in what way conditional cash transfers can empower women?
- Discuss case studies of – Kalyan Lakshmi and Shaadi Mubarak schemes etc.
- Explain what are the consequences of it on the society.

**Conclusion**

Conclude with what more is needed to be done to overcome such a social issue.

**Introduction:**

- Conditional cash transfer (CCT) programs aim to reduce poverty by making welfare programs conditional upon the receivers’ actions. The government (or a charity) only transfers the money to persons who meet certain criteria. These criteria may include enrolling children into public schools, getting regular check-ups at the doctor’s office, receiving vaccinations, or the like. TISS, Hyderabad studied the impact of the schemes **Kalyana Lakshmi and Shadi Mubarak in Telangana and Chandranna Pelli Kanuka in Andhra Pradesh** recently.

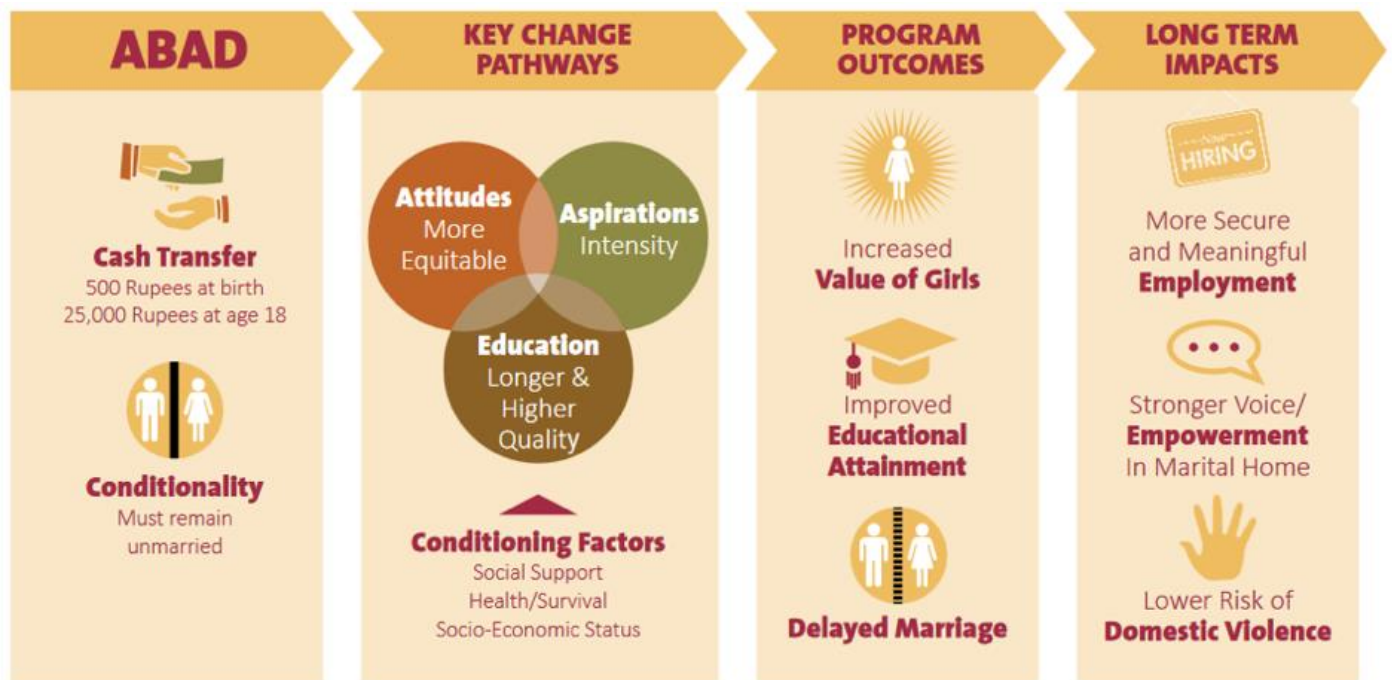
**Body:**

**Key Findings of the study:**

- The CCT schemes became popular as cash is transferred to the accounts of beneficiaries only when the girl is married after attaining the legally valid age of 18 years.
- The features of the schemes in the two States encompass added benefits of legal protection of the marriage as well as ensuring education of girls.
- However, the widely prevalent perception is that the scheme is for extending financial assistance to poor families to meet marriage expenditure rather than driving the message that child marriage should be viewed as a social problem.



### A sample of working of Conditional Cash Transfer:



### Significance of CCT:

- CCT schemes **addresses issues more towards the individual rather than the household**, which is the focus of the government.
- Certain national schemes, is, related to maternity benefits and the survival and education of the girl child which addresses the problem of child marriage directly or indirectly. E.g.: Dhanalakshmi, Rajiv Gandhi Scheme for Empowerment of Adolescent girls (SABLA) etc.
- CCTs have **benefits of legal protection of the marriage as well as ensuring education of girls**.
- The CCT schemes became popular as cash is transferred to the accounts of beneficiaries only when the girl is married after attaining the legally valid age of 18 years.
- CCT Schemes confer more than just monetary support; it should be a **means of financial inclusion and a tool of empowerment for adolescent girls**. The schemes benefits are therefore paid directly to bank accounts in the girls names, leaving the decision of utilization of the money in their hands.
- CCT scheme also works to **enhance the social power and self-esteem of girls** through a targeted behaviour change communication strategy.

### Challenges faced by CCT:

- However, **the financial incentive alone cannot help** in curbing the child marriage and bringing in gender equality.
- This is because the reasons for **child marriage, a social problem**, range from usual factors of poverty, illiteracy and age-old cultural norms to apprehensions about early sexual activity ( of adolescent girl in particular), elopement and marriage 'outside the caste'. For some, early marriage is the resolution of the 'problem of modernity and mobility' of young women.
- The widely prevalent perception is that the CCT scheme is for extending financial assistance to poor families to meet marriage expenditure rather than driving the message that child marriage should be viewed as a social problem
- The CCT also has negative fallout to it such as reinforcing dowry and marriage expenses being borne by the bride's family.
- If early marriage of girls is considered a gender disempowering phenomenon, then provision of financial assistance by the State seems to be primarily addressing poverty alleviation

### Other measures to curb child marriage:

- Increasing access to accessible, high quality and safe schooling is a critical strategy in ending child marriage and ensuring married girls have the opportunity to complete their education.
- Education builds knowledge, opens new opportunities and can help to shift norms around the value of girls in the community. The very act of girls attending school can reinforce to the community that girls of school-going age are still children.





- Supporting young people to be agents of change can be an effective and empowering process in and of itself. Many organisations work with young people so they can advocate for change as well as helping to inform the design of programmes that directly benefit their peers.
- Many families and communities see child marriage as a deeply rooted practice which has been part of their culture for generations. For change to happen, the values and norms which support the practice of child marriage need to shift.
- Working with families and the wider community to raise awareness of the harmful consequences of child marriage can change attitudes and reduce the acceptance among those who make the decision to marry girls as children.
- Community level change underpins all of efforts in preventing child marriage and mitigating the harmful effects for married girls. Without change at this level, the day-to-day reality for girls all over the world will remain the same.
- A strong legal and policy system can provide an important backdrop for improvements in services, changes in social norms and girls' empowerment.

#### Conclusion:

- ❖ The CCTs to curb child marriage need to emphasise legal registration of marriage and not simply rely on certificates by religious community leaders. Tighter administrative control to curb corruption and elimination of political approval at any stage is needed to discourage culture of political patronage.
- ❖ The schemes should be seen as part of initiatives to combat child marriage and thus linked to programmes meant for empowerment of girls through education and livelihood opportunities. This would motivate families to think of education and employment of their daughters, and not marriage, as priority.

*Topic: Issues relating to development and management of Social Sector/Services relating to Health, Education, Human Resources.*

**Q) The National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) ranking for 2019 highlights remarkable regional dominance and disparity. Analyse the role played by NIRF in enhancing the quality of higher education ? (250 words)**

Indianexpress

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

The article provides for deep insights on the highlights brought to us by the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) ranking for 2019. The NIRF ranking covers institutions from nine categories, such as overall, university, engineering, college, management, pharmacy, law, architecture, and medical.

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

The answer must appreciate the regional dominance and disparity as highlighted by the NIRF, and one has to evaluate the role played by the NIRF in enhancing the quality of higher education.

#### **Directive:**

**Analyze** – When asked to analyse, 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:**

Brief upon the scenario, bring out the highlights of NIRF 2019.

##### **Body:**

Body of the answer should discuss the following factors :

- Brief about NIRF – framework outlines a methodology to rank institutions across the country. The methodology draws from the overall recommendations broad understanding arrived at by a Core Committee set up by MHRD, to identify the broad parameters for ranking various universities and institutions. The parameters broadly cover “Teaching, Learning and Resources,” “Research and Professional Practices,” “Graduation Outcomes,” “Outreach and Inclusivity,” and “Perception”.
- Discuss why there is a regional dominance and vis-a-vis disparity in the ranking? – quote from the article ; Of the 860 institutions ranked, 182 institutions (accounting for 21 per cent) are from Tamil Nadu (TN). An analysis of its performance, welfare and politics brings out two important insights. First is the “populist” nature of its welfare policies. The regional parties which have been governing TN since 1960s progressively built a competitive populist platform. Central to this is a



progressive and expanding pool of welfare programmes, a fair measure of effectiveness in delivery, and a reasonable degree of commitment to their stability.

- Suggest what should be done ?

#### **Conclusion:**

Conclude with significance of such ranking framework in improvising the existing education scenario in India.

#### **Introduction:**

- The fourth edition of NIRF Rankings and first edition of ARIIA ranking was announced recently by the President of India. The results highlighting remarkable regional dominance and disparity are primarily the products of substantive aspects – policies and governance.

#### **Body:**

##### **Highlights of NIRF Rankings 2019:**

- Indian Institute of Madras (IIT Madras) has topped the list in 'overall category'.
- 7 IITs are among the first ten position holders whereas JNU, Delhi has secured the seventh rank.
- Seven Institutes from Karnataka have made it to the top 100.
- IISc Bengaluru has topped 'University category'.
- Banaras Hindu University (BHU) has retained its third position in the top 10 universities in the country for the third consecutive year.
- Miranda House, Delhi has secured the top position in Colleges category, IIT Madras in engineering category, National Law School of India University, Bangalore in Law category, IIT Kharagpur in Architecture category, AIIMS in medical category, IIM Bangalore in management category and Jamia Hamdard, New Delhi in 'Pharmacy Category'.

##### **Regional disparity in rankings:**

- Of the 860 institutions ranked, 182 institutions (accounting for 21 per cent) are from Tamil Nadu (TN).
- The combined contribution of six big states — Bihar, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh — is 127 institutions. In relational terms, they account for about two-thirds of the singular contribution of TN.
- The above regional disparity appears from the category of "overall", which is generic, denoting nothing novel or nuanced.
- "Colleges" would be a better category to scout, as they serve as the backbone of higher education in India.
- Again, of the 200 colleges ranked by the NIRF in 2019, 74 colleges are from TN. Kerala, with 42 colleges, comes next. Thus, these two states are home to more than half of the quality colleges in India. Delhi, with 37 colleges, comes third.
- Surprisingly, no college from Bihar, MP, UP and Odisha is of a standard to find a place in the 200 ranked colleges. Even the share of Gujarat and Rajasthan together is minuscule — five colleges.

##### **Reasons for above results:**

- A progressive and expanding pool of welfare programmes, a fair measure of effectiveness in delivery, and a reasonable degree of commitment to their stability.
- The welfare policies were fortified with and paved a way for a carefully crafted micropolitics of identity creation and assertion.
- Identity-based reservation in education and employment was an important component.
- The above aspects created a critical mass of quality education institutions, which in turn benefited and empowered the middle and bottom groups, which were marginalised or ignored by the earlier political regime and its ruling elites.

##### **The role played by NIRF in enhancing the quality of higher education:**

- **The National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) was launched by the Minister of Human Resource Development on 29th September 2015.**
- NIRF outlines a methodology to rank educational institutions across the country.
- The parameters used for ranking broadly cover **teaching, learning and resources, research and professional practices, graduation outcome, outreach and inclusivity, and perception.**
- From 2017, besides being ranked under specific disciplines, large institutions were also given a common overall rank.
- This year as well, educational institutions across the country were ranked in nine categories – overall, universities, engineering, colleges, management, pharmacy, medical, architecture and law.



- **Ranking promotes competition** among the Universities and drive them to strive for excellence. The rankings assume significance as performance of institutions has been linked with “Institutions of Eminence” scheme.
- It is possible to use the NIRF ranking to draw attention to issues of governance and quality that blight higher education in India.
- Focus on rankings can help to reform and modernise higher education, encouraging universities to professionalise services and management, and improve the quality of their programmes and facilities for students and faculty.
- Rankings will bring transparency to the education system as the institutes are funded by the public. It will also increase the level of competition among them.
- Idea behind these rankings is to promote quality education and encourage competition to make the institutes perform better and set new benchmarks of performance.

#### Way forward:

- A systematic, coherent, and transparent approach is needed to determine the suitability of universities to pursue objectives of excellence.
- The scrutiny of universities before starting programmes or schools should come down, as they are expected to assume greater responsibility in having self-regulating mechanisms and internal quality assurance systems.
- Taking inspiration from the Project 5-100 initiative, India could consider empowering 50 of its top universities in every possible manner to seek global excellence.
- RUSA can prove be a real game changer for higher education in the country
- Government can establish all India educational services which was recommended by the Subramanian committee.

#### Conclusion:

- ❖ Governments should aim to develop a diverse range of universities each with specialist world-class expertise, to attract high-achieving students and high-skilled labour.
- ❖ Building such a world-class higher education system would enable countries to mobilise and leverage the potential of the whole system for the benefit of society at large.

**Q) “Uncontrolled antimicrobial resistance may lead to global economic shocks”. Critically analyse and suggest steps India should take to sustain such shocks. (250 words)**

#### The hindu

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

According to a report released by the UN Interagency Coordinating Group on Antimicrobial Resistance, Drug-resistant diseases could cause 10 million deaths each year by 2050. The article highlights a report from the Interagency Coordination Group on Antimicrobial Resistance (IACG) that puts the financial fall-out in perspective.

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

The question expects one to analyse the economic shocks or consequences that uncontrolled antimicrobial resistance may lead for the world to face. One must suggest way forward for India to tackle such a situation that may soon arise in coming future.

##### **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:**

Begin with brief narration of current scenario of uncontrolled antimicrobial resistance.

##### **Body:**

Discussion should include the following aspects –

- Why is the problem of uncontrolled antimicrobial resistance?
- The difficulty has been in implementing it, given the twin challenges of antibiotic overuse and underuse.



- poorly regulated pharmaceutical industry means that antibiotics are freely available to those who can afford them.
- low immunization rates and drinking water contamination. Etc.
- What will be the consequences of failure to take measures against the above problems?
- What needs to be done?
- phasing out critical human-use antibiotics in the animal husbandry sector, such as quinolones.
- multi-stakeholder approach, involving private industry, philanthropic groups and citizen activists is needed.
- Private pharmaceutical industries must take it upon themselves to distribute drugs in a responsible manner.
- Philanthropic charities must fund the development of new antibiotics, while citizen activists must drive awareness.
- stakeholders must appreciate that the only way to postpone resistance is through improved hygiene and vaccinations etc.

#### Conclusion:

Conclude with immediate focused action needed to curb the menace of antimicrobial resistance.

## CAUSES OF ANTIBIOTIC RESISTANCE



Antibiotic resistance happens when bacteria change and become resistant to the antibiotics used to treat the infections they cause.



Over-prescribing of antibiotics



Patients not finishing their treatment



Over-use of antibiotics in livestock and fish farming



Poor infection control in hospitals and clinics



Lack of hygiene and poor sanitation



Lack of new antibiotics being developed

[www.who.int/drugresistance](http://www.who.int/drugresistance)

**#AntibioticResistance**



**World Health Organization**

#### Introduction:

- The **WHO** defines antibiotic resistance (AMR) as a condition wherein microbes survive when exposed to the drug which would have normally caused them to die. Antibiotics that once cured ailments across the spectrum are now turning into a potential source of prolonged illness, disability and death.
- A report from the **Interagency Coordination Group on Antimicrobial Resistance (IACG)** puts the financial fall-out in perspective. Titled “**No Time to Wait: Securing The Future From Drug Resistant Infections**”, it says in





about three decades from now uncontrolled antimicrobial resistance will cause global economic shocks on the scale of the 2008-09 financial crisis.

#### Body:

##### Financial impacts of Uncontrolled AMR:

- With nearly 10 million people estimated to die annually from resistant infections by 2050, health-care costs and the cost of food production will spike, while income inequality will widen.
- In the worst-case scenario, the world will lose 3.8% of its annual GDP by 2050, while 24 million people will be pushed into extreme poverty by 2030.
- Nations must acknowledge this eventuality, the IACG says, and act to fight it. For high- and mid-income nations, the price of prevention, at \$2 per head a year, is extremely affordable.
- For poorer countries, the price is higher but still modest compared to the costs of an antibiotic apocalypse.

##### Causes of AMR:

Other causes:

- WHO survey shows that three quarters (75%) of respondents think, incorrectly, that colds and flu can be treated with antibiotics.
- Discharge of antimicrobial waste into the environment from pharmaceutical industry.
- Growing antibiotic use in the animal sector and increased demand for meat and poultry.
- Nexus between doctors and pharmaceutical companies where doctors routinely receive compensation in exchange for antibiotic prescriptions.
- Lack of new antibiotics being developed.
- Poor infection control in hospitals and clinics.

##### Concerns due to increase AMR:

- Without concerted action, Drug-resistant diseases could cause 10 million deaths each year by 2050, and trigger an economic slowdown to rival the global financial crisis of 2008, warned the UN Ad Hoc Interagency Coordinating Group on Antimicrobial Resistance in a report.
- It added that by 2030, antimicrobial resistance could force up to 24 million people into extreme poverty. In the worst-case scenario, the world will lose 3.8% of its annual GDP by 2050.
- Currently, at least 7,00,000 people die each year due to drug-resistant diseases, including 2,30,000 people who die from multidrug-resistant tuberculosis.
- It also noted that more and more common diseases, including respiratory tract infections, sexually transmitted infections and urinary tract infections, are becoming untreatable.
- Lifesaving medical procedures are becoming riskier, and food systems are getting increasingly precarious. A very significant part of out-of-pocket expenditure on health care is on medicines. The ineffective drugs and/or second line expensive antibiotics is pushing the treatment costs higher.
- The report noted that the world is already feeling the economic and health consequences as crucial medicines become ineffective.
- Without investment from countries in all income brackets, future generations will face the disastrous impacts of uncontrolled antimicrobial resistance.

##### Steps taken to deal with the menace:

- Indian Association of Paediatrics, the Global Antibiotic Resistance Partnership, and the **Chennai Declaration** have helped build awareness about the problem.
- To prevent over-the-counter (OTC) sales of antibiotics, the Central Drugs Standard Control Organization (CDSCO) order prohibits medical stores from selling 24 key antibiotics without a doctor's prescription.
- ICMR has set up **National Anti-Microbial Surveillance Network** for understanding of mechanisms of resistance.
- **National Policy for Containment of Antimicrobial Resistance** (2011), to address the problem of multi-drug resistance.
- India developed **National Action Plan to combat Antimicrobial Resistance** as part of India's commitment to the **WHO's Global Action Plan**.

##### Steps needed to fight AMR:

- Rationalizing antibiotic use to limit antibiotic resistance in India.
- Improving regulation of drug production and sales
- Better managing physician compensation
- **Encouraging behavior change among doctors and patients** are of immediate priority.
- **Regulation of the e-Pharmacies** which gives an easy access to drugs.





- Improved management of the health care delivery systems, both public and private, will minimize conditions favourable for the development of drug resistance.
- Improved awareness of antimicrobial resistance through effective communication. WHO's World Antibiotic Awareness Week is one such event.
- Reducing the incidence of infection through effective infection prevention and control. As stated by WHO, making infection prevention and hand hygiene a national policy priority.
- **Discourage non-therapeutic use of antimicrobial agents in veterinary, agriculture and fishery practices** as growth-promoting agents.
- Promoting investments for antimicrobial resistance activities, research and innovations
- Strengthening India's commitment and collaborations on antimicrobial resistance at international, national and sub-national levels.
- **Regulate the release of antibiotic waste** from pharmaceutical production facilities and monitoring antibiotic residues in wastewater.

**Q) Do you think Disaster alleviation efforts in needs its own 'Ayushman Bharat' ? Critically analyse in the light of recent onset of cyclone Fani that hit eastern coast of India. (250 words)**

[Livemint](#)

**Why this question:**

The article discusses in detail the present conditions of preparedness India has with respect to onset of Disasters, the author presses on the need for a comprehensive method to deal, mitigate and stay prepared for disasters like Fani.

**Key demand of the question:**

The question expects us to elaborate on the need for a comprehensive approach to handle disasters , one has to focus on the aspects of preparedness in terms of provisions of Insurance to the disaster struck with respect to disaster management in the country.

**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:**

Begin with brief background of the situation facing eastern coastal India.

**Body:**

Discussion should include the following aspects –

- What aspects of Disaster management are missing in the Indian scenario?
- Explain why it is time to broaden the idea to cover asset losses of the disaster-struck?
- Role of National Disaster and Management Authority (NDMA) visavis lack of insurance aspects.
- Assert that it's time to move to the next level and work out ways to minimize the loss of property and assets due to disasters. While there are always calls for the government to make ex-gratia payments, the burden is best borne by insurance, a much- neglected tool that spreads the risk of exposure to calamities across large populations.
- Relate disaster management to the Ayushman Bharat of Health

**Conclusion:**

Conclude with way ahead.

**Introduction:**

- The eastern coast of India has had to bear the brunt of nature's fury yet again. Cyclone Fani hit Odisha recently, and though its menace as a storm was downgraded from "extremely severe" to "very severe" a few hours after it made landfall, it has left a trail of destruction that should make us revisit what we mean by "preparedness".

**Body:**

**Current institutional measures to tackle such incidences:**

- The **National Cyclone Risk Mitigation Project (NCRMP)**, to be implemented with financial assistance from the World Bank, is envisaged to have four major components:



- Component A: Improvement of early warning dissemination system by strengthening the Last Mile Connectivity (LMC) of cyclone warnings and advisories.
- Component B: Cyclone risk mitigation investments.
- Component C: Technical assistance for hazard risk management and capacity-building.
- Component D: Project management and institutional support.
- These components are highly interdependent and have to be implemented in a coherent manner.
- In 2016, **National Disaster Management Plan** was unveiled to tackle disaster. It provides a framework to deal with prevention, mitigation, response and recovery during a disaster.
- The **NDMA** had come up with its **National Guidelines of Management of Cyclones in 2008**. The basic premise of these guidelines is that the mitigation has to be multi-sectoral.
- Developing Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) frameworks for addressing the sustainability and optimal utilisation of coastal resources as also cyclone impact minimisation plans.
- Ensuring cyclone resistant design standards are incorporated in the rural/ urban housing schemes in coastal areas
- Implementing coastal flood zoning, flood plain development and flood inundation management and regulatory plans.
- Coastal bio-shields spread, preservation and restoration/ regeneration plans.
- There is a need for private sector participation in designing and implementing policies, plans, and standards.
- Need of Disaster Management program to be inclusive including women, civil society, and academia.

However, these measures are not sufficient as the trails of disaster left by these natural events are expensive. Countries the world over, even prosperous ones such as the US, are struggling to design effective insurance programmes for the disaster struck. Costs need to be kept low for the country's government as well as citizens, both of which must share the premium fees that would form a pool of funds needed to provide relief.

#### Measures needed:

- The government should try to devise its own **national disaster insurance policy**.
- Inputs could be taken from the NDMA, insurance companies and the sector's regulator.
- The **principle of progressive rates** would need to apply, since the capacity of a fisherman in Gopalpur to pay a premium may not be the same as that of a merchant in Bhuj.
- Insurance coverage will give insurers an incentive to push for better information systems, risk analysis and precautionary mechanisms.
- We need to employ technology, strict following of command structure and most importantly the participation and cooperation of local communities in the affected area.

#### Conclusion:

- Implementing such an insurance scheme for the most vulnerable, particularly the poor, will be of a great help as they will not be pulled into vicious cycle of poverty every now and then the disaster strikes. It provides a modern way to alleviate the misery of the poor and enable a quicker return to normalcy on all fronts.

**Q) Correcting regional imbalances in the availability of affordable/ reliable tertiary healthcare services is the need of the hour, and also to augment facilities for quality medical education in the country is essential to ensure a healthy India Discuss. (250 words)**

#### Reference

##### *Why this question:*

The question aims to evaluate the present conditions of healthcare system in India and how correcting regional imbalances in the availability of affordable/ reliable tertiary healthcare services is the need of the hour. The question also is about discussing the significance of augmenting medical education in the country.

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

The must evaluate in detail the existing healthcare system of the country and discuss the significance of bringing in regional balances in the availability and affordability of the healthcare system across the country along with significance of medical education.



### **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 brief write up on current healthcare scenario of the country.

#### **Body:**

Discussion should include the following aspects –

- Explain the challenges before the health system in India and why these challenges persist – Indian health system is besieged by inadequate infrastructure, paucity of skilled human resources, inadequate drug and medical supply, lack of preparedness, all of these further burdened by an increase in communicable, non-communicable, and vector borne diseases.
- Examine how health policy has fared in India recently?
- Explain the regional imbalances that exist in the health system and their causes as well as consequences.
- Discuss what needs to be done? – give a focused write up on aspect of medical education and the role it has to play in improving the healthcare system.

#### **Conclusion:**

Conclude with way forward.

#### **Introduction:**

- Tertiary Healthcare comprises of specialized consultative care, usually on referral from primary or secondary medical care personnel, by specialists working in a center that has personnel and facilities for special investigation and treatment.
- The Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojana (PMSSY) envisages creation of tertiary healthcare capacity in medical education, research and clinical care, in the underserved areas of the country.

#### **Body:**

The major challenges faced by healthcare system in India are:

- **Finance:** At **about 1.3% of the national income**, India's **public healthcare spending** between 2008 and 2015, has virtually remained stagnant. This is way less than the global **average of 6 per cent**. It is a herculean task to implement a scheme that could potentially cost Rs 5 lakh per person and benefit 53.7 crore out of India's 121 crore citizenry, or roughly about 44% of the country's population. **Over 70 per cent of the total healthcare expenditure** is accounted for by the private sector.
- **Crumbling public health infrastructure:** Given the country's crumbling public healthcare infrastructure, most patients are forced to go to private clinics and hospitals.
- **High Out of Pocket Expenditure:** Reports suggest that 70% of the medical spending is from the patient's pockets leading to huge burden and pushing many into poverty. Most consumers complain of rising costs. Hundred days into the PMJAY, it remains to be seen if private hospitals provide knee replacement at Rs 80,000 (current charges Rs 3.5 lakh) bypass surgery at Rs 1.7 lakh (against Rs 4 lakh).
- **Insurance:** India has one of the lowest per capita healthcare expenditures in the world. Government contribution to insurance stands at roughly 32 percent, as opposed to 83.5 percent in the UK. The high out-of-pocket expenses in India stem from the fact that 76 percent of Indians do not have health insurance.
- **Doctor-Density Ratio:** The **WHO** reports the doctor-density ratio in **India at 8 per 10,000 people** as against **one doctor for a population of 1,000**. To achieve such access, merely increasing the number of primary and secondary healthcare centres is not enough.
- **Shortage of Medical Personnel:** Data by **IndiaSpend** show that there is a staggering shortage of medical and paramedical staff at all levels of care: 10,907 auxiliary nurse midwives and 3,673 doctors are needed at sub-health and primary health centres, while for community health centres the figure is 18,422 specialists.
- **Social Inequality:** The growth of health facilities has been highly imbalanced in India. Rural, hilly and remote areas of the country are under served while in urban areas and cities, health facility is well developed. The SC/ST and the poor people are far away from modern health service.
- **Poor healthcare ranking:** India ranks as low as 145th among 195 countries in healthcare quality and accessibility, behind even Bangladesh and Sri Lanka.
- **Commercial motive:** lack of transparency and unethical practices in the private sector.



- **Lack of level playing field between the public and private hospitals:** This has been a major concern as public hospitals would continue receiving budgetary support. This would dissuade the private players from actively participating in the scheme.
- **Scheme flaws:** The overall situation with the National Health Mission, India's flagship programme in primary health care, continues to be dismal. The NHM's share in the health budget fell from 73% in 2006 to 50% in 2019 in the absence of uniform and substantial increases in health spending by States.

#### Steps taken up currently:

- The **National Health Policy (NHP) 2017** advocated allocating resources of up to two-thirds or more to primary care as it enunciated the goal of achieving "the highest possible level of good health and well-being, through a preventive and promotive healthcare orientation".
- A 167% increase in allocation this year for the **Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY)** — the **insurance programme** which aims to cover 10 crore poor families for hospitalisation expenses of up to ₹5 lakh per family per annum.
- The PMSSY establishes AIIMS in various regions of India apart from different government colleges. It is funded from different centrally sponsored schemes relating to creating infrastructure on health.
- The government's recent steps to **incentivise the private sector to open hospitals** in Tier II and Tier III cities.
- Individual states are adopting technology to support health-insurance schemes. For instance, Remedinet Technology (India's first completely electronic cashless health insurance claims processing network) has been signed on as the technology partner for the Karnataka Government's recently announced cashless health insurance schemes.

#### Measures needed to strengthen the existing state of Health infrastructure in the country are:

- There is an immediate need to **increase the public spending to 2.5% of GDP**, despite that being lower than global average of 5.4%.
- The achievement of a distress-free and comprehensive wellness system for all hinges on the performance of health and wellness centres as they will be instrumental in reducing the greater burden of out-of-pocket expenditure on health.
- There is a need to depart from the current trend of erratic and insufficient increases in health spending and make substantial and sustained investments in public health over the next decade.
- **Affordable medical education** would encourage more rural students to pursue medical career and thereby increase the medical fraternity in Tertiary healthcare.
- A **National Health Regulatory and Development Framework** needs to be made for improving the quality (for example registration of health practitioners), performance, equity, efficacy and accountability of healthcare delivery across the country.
- Increase the **Public-Private Partnerships** to increase the last-mile reach of healthcare.
- **Generic drugs and Jan Aushadi Kendras** should be increased to make medicines affordable and reduce the major component of Out of Pocket Expenditure.
- The government's **National Innovation Council**, which is mandated to provide a platform for collaboration amongst healthcare domain experts, stakeholders and key participants, should encourage a culture of innovation in India and help develop policy on innovations that will focus on an Indian model for inclusive growth.
- India should take cue from other developing countries like Thailand to work towards providing **Universal Health Coverage**. UHC includes three components: Population coverage, disease coverage and cost coverage.
- Leveraging the **benefits of Information Technology** like computer and mobile-phone based e-health and m-health initiatives to improve quality of healthcare service delivery. **Start-ups** are investing in healthcare sector from process automation to diagnostics to low-cost innovations. Policy and regulatory support should be provided to make healthcare accessible and affordable.

#### Conclusion:

- India needs a holistic approach to tackle problems in healthcare industry. This includes the active collaboration of all stakeholders public, private sectors, and individuals.
- A more dynamic and pro-active approach is needed to handle the dual disease burden. A universal access to health makes the nation fit and healthy, aiding better to achieve the demographic dividend.



**Q) Evaluate the objectives of Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana. How far has the scheme turned out to be a success ? Discuss. (250 words)**

**Why this question:**

The question is based on the static portions of the syllabus, it aims to analyse the achievements of Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana.

**Demand of the question:**

This question seeks to examine Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana and to what extent the scheme has succeeded in realizing the objectives of adding diversity to the incomes of rural poor families and cater to the career aspirations of rural youth.

**Directive word:**

**Evaluate** – When you are asked to evaluate, you have to pass a sound judgement about the truth of the given statement in the question or the topic based on evidences. You have to appraise the worth of the statement in question. There is scope for forming a personal opinion here.

**Structure of the answer:**

**Introduction**

Start with brief introduction about the scheme.

**Body**

Discuss the following points in detail:

- Discuss the key highlights of the scheme:
- DDU-GKY is a part of the National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM), tasked with the dual objectives of adding diversity to the incomes of rural poor families and cater to the career aspirations of rural youth.
- DDU-GKY is uniquely focused on rural youth between the ages of 15 and 35 years from poor families.
- Gram Panchayat will play a key role in generating awareness about the programme, facilitate mobilization of candidates, and assist in job melas and in tracking candidate placements.
- Mandatory coverage of socially disadvantaged groups (SC/ST 50%; Minority 15%; Women 33%).
- Guaranteed Placement for at least 75% trained candidates.
- Greater emphasis on projects for poor rural youth in Jammu and Kashmir (HIMAYAT), the North-East region and 27 Left-Wing Extremist (LWE) districts (ROSHINI).
- Explain how the scheme has been different from the past ones aiming at the same objectives?
- Discuss the merits and demerits associated.

**Conclusion**

Conclude with significance of such schemes in welfare of rural India.

**Introduction:**

- Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana or DDU-GKY is a Government of India youth employment scheme. The Vision of DDU-GKY is to “Transform rural poor youth into an economically independent and globally relevant workforce”.
- It aims to target youth, in the age group of 15–35 years. DDU-GKY is a part of the National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM), tasked with the dual objectives of adding diversity to the incomes of rural poor families and cater to the career aspirations of rural youth.

**Body:**

Objectives of Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana

- **Enable Poor and Marginalized to Access Benefits**
  - Demand led skill training at no cost to the rural poor
- **Inclusive Program Design**
  - Mandatory coverage of socially disadvantaged groups (SC/ST 50%; Minority 15%; Women 33%)
- **Shifting Emphasis from Training to Career Progression**
  - Pioneers in providing incentives for job retention, career progression and foreign placements
- **Greater Support for Placed Candidates**
  - Post-placement support, migration support and alumni network
- **Proactive Approach to Build Placement Partnerships**
  - Guaranteed Placement for at least 75% trained candidates
- **Enhancing the Capacity of Implementation Partners**
  - Nurturing new training service providers and developing their skills





- **Regional Focus**
  - Greater emphasis on projects for poor rural youth in Jammu and Kashmir (HIMAYAT),
  - The North-East region and 27 Left-Wing Extremist (LWE) districts (ROSHINI)
- **Standards-led Delivery**
  - All program activities are subject to Standard Operating Procedures that are not open to interpretation by local inspectors. All inspections are supported by geo-tagged, time stamped videos/photographs.

Appraisal of the scheme:

- **Fills Gap of Skill-deficit:** It is estimated that only 4.69% of the total workforce in India has undergone formal skill training as compared to 68% in UK, 75% in Germany, 52% in USA, 80% in Japan and 96% in South Korea. On the other side, there is a demand of 109.73 million skilled manpower by 2022 in twenty-four key sectors. Therefore DDU-GKY seeks to fill this gap by imparting specific set of Modular Employable Skills (MES) needed to access full time jobs in the formal sector.
- **Inclusive:** All candidates who hail from poor families, and are between the ages of 15 and 35 years, are eligible for the training programs. For women and other vulnerable groups like persons with disabilities, the upper age limit is relaxed to 45 years.
- **Diverse:** DDU-GKY is industry agnostic. That said, its current training partners offer training programs in over 82 sectors, covering over 450 job-roles or trades. Candidates can only choose from skills offered in their vicinity/ assigned projects in their district
- **Free-of-Cost:** DDU-GKY subsidizes 100% cost of skill training of candidates at its approved training centres implemented by its PIAs in sanctioned projects. There are no fees. There are no registration charges. There are no examination or certification charges. There are no placement charges. However, candidates are required to attend all classes and OJT, put in hard work and effort to learn a trade and achieve a minimum of 70% marks in the final exam to pass.
- **Certificates after Completion:** a government recognized certificate upon successful completion of the training will be provided. In the case of training programs implemented under NCVT curricula, NCVT through its accredited assessors will perform the external assessment on completion of the duration of the course and provide the necessary co-branded certification upon passing.
- **Placement Guarantee:** Under DDU-GKY, the training partners are mandated to place atleast 75% of the successful candidates in jobs, offering a minimum salary (CTC) of Rs. 6000 per month. This amount will include any incentive or facility the company will provide you with like transport or meals or accommodation etc. Else, the applicable charge may be deducted from your monthly salary.

**Conclusion:**

- DDU-GKY provides demand-driven placement-linked skill training so that candidates can learn a new skill, earn their way to new identity, gain respect and fulfil their income and career aspirations. It has the potential to transform rural poor youth into an economically independent and globally relevant workforce and help reap India its demographic dividend.

**Q) “Improving employability of students by introducing employment relevance into the learning process of the higher education system is the need of the hour”. Discuss the role played by Scheme for Higher Education Youth in Apprenticeship and Skills (SHREYAS) of Government of India in this direction. (250 words)**

pib

**Why this question:**

The question is about discussing the significance of employment relevant learning process that is needed in Indian system of higher education.

**Demand of the question:**

This question seeks to examine significance of employment relevant learning process that is needed in Indian system of higher education with a detailed analysis of recently launched Scheme for Higher Education Youth in Apprenticeship and Skills (SHREYAS).

**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 highlighting the significance of Scheme for Higher Education Youth in Apprenticeship and Skills (SHREYAS).

#### **Body**

Discuss the following points in detail:

- The Ministry of HRD has launched the Scheme for Higher Education Youth in Apprenticeship and Skills (SHREYAS) for providing industry apprenticeship opportunities.
- Discuss the salient features of SHREYAS Scheme-
- It is a programme conceived for students in degree courses, primarily non-technical, with a view to introduce employable skills into their learning, promote apprenticeship and also amalgamate employment facilitating.
- SHREYAS portal will enable educational institutions and industry to log in and provide their respective demand and supply of apprenticeship.
- The matching of students with apprenticeship avenues will take place as per pre-specified eligibility criteria.
- Explain the objectives of the scheme, its operation and implementation strategy.
- Discuss how schemes like SHREYAS will be a major effort in this direction to make our degree students more skilled, capable, employable and aligned to the needs of our economy so that they contribute to country's progress and also obtain gainful employment.

#### **Conclusion**

Conclude with significance of such schemes.

#### **Introduction:**

- The Ministry of Human Resources Development has launched the Scheme for Higher Education Youth in Apprenticeship and Skills (SHREYAS) for providing industry apprenticeship opportunities to the general graduates exiting in April 2019 through the National Apprenticeship Promotional Scheme (NAPS).
- It aims to enhance the employability of Indian youth by providing 'on the job work exposure' and earning of stipend. It targets in all the tracks together, it is proposed to cover 50 lakh students by 2022.

#### **Body:**

Objectives of SHREYAS:

- To improve employability of students by introducing employment relevance into the learning process of the higher education system.
- To forge a close functional link between education and industry/service sectors on a sustainable basis.
- To provide skills which are in demand, to the students in a dynamic manner.
- To establish an 'earn while you learn' system into higher education.
- To help business/industry in securing good quality manpower.
- To link student community with employment facilitating efforts of the Government.

#### **Role of SHREYAS:**

- SHREYAS is a programme basket comprising the initiatives of three Central Ministries, namely the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship and the Ministry of Labour & Employment viz the National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme (NAPS), the National Career Service (NCS) and introduction of BA/BSc/BCom (Professional) courses in the higher educational institutions.
- The scheme is for students in degree courses, primarily non-technical, to introduce employable skills into their learning, promote apprenticeship as integral to education.
- SHREYAS portal will enable educational institutions and industry to log in and provide their respective demand and supply of apprenticeship. The matching of students with apprenticeship avenues will take place as per pre-specified eligibility criteria.
- These courses will be available to them from Academic year April-May, 2019. More than 40 higher educational institutions have already been tied up for taking up embedded apprenticeship courses.
- The scheme would be operationalized by coordination of Ministry of Skills Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) and the Ministry of Labour.

#### **Conclusion:**

- Education with skills is the need of the hour and the SHREYAS will be a major effort in this direction to make degree students more skilled, capable, employable and aligned to the needs of our economy so that they contribute to country's progress and also obtain gainful employment.



**Q) Apprenticeships could be the real key to Skill India's success as they could help business firms raise productivity in several ways. Discuss. (250 words)**

[livemint](#)

**Why this question:**

The article discusses in detail the role played by Apprenticeships in the growth and development of the business firms in India.

**Demand of the question:**

The question is about discussing the significance of Apprenticeships in harnessing the success of Skill India mission and in what way it could help various business firms raise productivity.

**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 what you understand by apprenticeships.

**Body**

Discuss the following points in detail:

- Highlight the necessity of training youth – by 2022, or just seven years from now, it is estimated that there will be nearly 600 million people in India between the ages of 15 and 59.
- Comment on how India would soon have the world's largest workforce. And then discuss the odds – India's workforce is among the world's least skilled – only 3.5% of India's workforce has skills of any sort, while the comparable number for China is 47%, Germany 74%, Japan 80% and South Korea a stupendous 96%.
- Discuss what is apprenticeship? What is its significance.
- Role of Apprenticeship (Amendment) Bill, 2014 in India.
- Explain – Apprenticeships are an effective way for young adults to transit from school to work life while improving links between industry and training institutions. Apprenticeships are successful because they facilitate 'learning by earning' and 'learning by doing', combining formal education with hands-on experience.
- Conclude by listing governments efforts in this direction.

**Conclusion**

Conclude with way forward.

**Introduction:**

- An apprenticeship is a system of training a new generation of practitioners of a trade or profession with on-the-job training and often some accompanying study (classroom work and reading).
- Apprenticeships are an effective way for young adults to transit from school to work life while improving links between industry and training institutions. Apprenticeships are successful because they facilitate 'learning by earning' and 'learning by doing', combining formal education with hands-on experience.

**Body:**

Situation of Apprenticeship in India:

- India has a highly underutilized and mostly unknown formal apprenticeship system that began in 1961.
- Our roughly 700,000 formal apprentices are less than 0.01% of our labour force (Germany has 2.7%).
- We have only about 35,000 employers appointing apprentices (UK has 200,000).
- The low penetration reflects the "regulatory cholesterol" for employers that thought of apprenticeships as a job rather than a classroom.
- The Apprentices Act has been amended four times, but the 2015 amendment laid the foundation for reaching an ambitious goal of 10 million apprentices.
- Two important changes are pending: more employers and linking apprentices to higher education.
- A compliance mindset has sabotaged employer adoption, but apprentices deliver three outcomes; lower people supply chain costs, lower attrition and higher productivity.

Significance of apprenticeship:

- Apprenticeships and other hands-on post-secondary programs provide an optimum balance between theory and hands-on experience.



- However, many traditional programs often fail to teach the specific skills and techniques required on the job.
- Employers provide about 90% of apprenticeship training in the workplace. This is complemented with classroom instruction on theory. This combination of training creates a highly skilled workforce
- The natural learning-by-doing and learning-while-earning make apprenticeship more sustainable, scalable and self healing than other skill programmes.
- Apprentices can make the **system self-healing** – the global experience in this regard is positive. Germany has Europe's lowest unemployment rate because of apprenticeships and UK has found that employers gain 26 times their investments on apprenticeship stipends.
- With rising tuition in colleges and universities, the concept of hands-on learning and “earning while learning” is very attractive to many young people.
- apprentices can cut hiring costs by more than 50% because aggregation costs are shared by educational institutions, the government, parents, and non-profit foundations
- There are three upsides of well-structured apprenticeship programmes: soft skills are becoming more valuable than hard skills and are best learnt on the job; apprenticeship programmes are the shortest corridor to jobs; and increasing higher education connectivity means kids get the social signalling value of degrees almost free if they complete their apprenticeship period.
- Apprenticeship programmes can cut attrition by 25-50% because their structure of learning-while-earning and learning-by-doing allow employers to take employees for a test drive, and employees to understand the organization, job and colleagues while creating additional incentives for completion of the apprenticeship period.
- Employee productivity is a complex cocktail of hard and soft factors like motivation, tools, process, skills, culture, industry, location and much else.
- The productivity impact of industry and functional skills rises considerably when combined with the firm-specific skills that are often embedded in company work cultures.
- The practice of apprenticeships before employment nurtures social, intellectual and knowledge capital, and makes people productive 25-50% faster than direct hires.

#### Measures needed:

- Recent amendments to the Apprenticeship Act of 1961 create the space for innovation, scale and higher education linkages for state governments.
- Fixing schools is an important skill agenda.
- Second, exploding the number of employers offering apprenticeships -today, India has only 25,000 versus more than 200,000 for Germany – will ensure skills keep up with work.
- More focus on job creation and skill development because there is no such thing as India's labour market. Active state government apprenticeship programmes could take India's numbers to the same proportion of the labour force as Germany's (this would take India's current 300,000 apprentices to 15 million).
- Each state set up a State Apprenticeship Corporation (SAC) as a public-private partnership co-chaired by the chief secretary and the chairman of one of the state's largest private employer.
- SACs will anchor programmes on state strengths such as tourism in Rajasthan, information technology in Karnataka and manufacturing in Tamil Nadu; target employers with different strategies for companies headquartered and those operating in the state
- The best form of corporate social responsibility is a well-run apprenticeship programme that readies candidates for in-house absorption, in addition to supplying job-ready candidates to other industry players and the economy.

#### Government of India has taken up many schemes for apprenticeship development:

- **National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme** under Ministry of Skill Development where Union Government will provide financial incentives to the employers to engage apprentices and will directly share 25% of the total stipend payable to an apprentice with employer.
- **SHREYAS** under Ministry of Human Resources and Development to provide industry apprenticeship opportunities to the general graduates exiting in April 2019 through the National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme (NAPS). It aims to enhance the employability of Indian youth by providing 'on the job work exposure' and earning of stipend.
- **The National Apprenticeship Training Scheme** under MHRD is a one year programme equipping technically qualified youth with practical knowledge and skills required in their field of work. The Apprentices are imparted training by the organizations at their place of work.

**Conclusion:**

- Apprenticeship Training is considered to be one of the most efficient ways to develop skilled manpower for the country. It provides for an industry led, practice oriented, effective and efficient mode of formal training.

**Q) Do you agree there is a dire need for revolutionary changes in the India's education system ? Analyse the education agenda for a new and changing India. (250 words)**

Reference

The Big Picture – Education agenda for new India

**Why this question:**

The question is straightforward and is about discussing the education agenda of the country.

**Demand of the question:**

The answer must explain the issues currently facing the education system in India and why there is a need for overhaul in the system and what needs to be done to overcome it.

**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:**

The answer to the question is direct, one must explain the issues concerning the education system, explain why it requires a revolutionary change? What are the issues that need urgent attention? What should be the new education agenda? Discuss and analyse the failures of policies in the past, explain how these issues can be explained with a robust education agenda which is reformative and addresses the loopholes of the current education system.

**Conclusion:**

Conclude with what should be the way ahead.

**Introduction:**

- There is a dire need for revolutionary changes in India's education system, there is no doubt about that. The cut-offs at some of the top universities is over 99% if not 100%. Students are pushed to the brink to try and further their educational ambitions. Several aspects need to be addressed if we have to achieve the desired results and head in the right direction. India has one of the youngest populations in an aging world.
- By 2020, the median age in India will be just 28, compared to 37 in China and the US, 45 in Western Europe, and 49 in Japan. But for us to reap the benefit of this demographic dividend we need to ensure that we see an overhaul in our education system.

**Body:****Issues in Indian Education system:**

- The Indian education and social arrangements are very inflexible on kids and completely ignore their feelings, thoughts and ambitions. Kids are pressed to study from the age of 3. Non-performers are treated as dunces and detested by parents and society.
- As per UNESCO data, India has one of the lowest public expenditure rates on education per student, especially compared to other Asian countries like China.
- Education in most schools is one dimensional, with an obsessive focus on marks. Added to this is the lack of availability of trained teachers at all levels. Quality teachers are the missing link in the Indian education system. Although pockets of excellence exist, the quality of teaching, especially in government schools, does not meet the standards.
- With a literacy rate of 77 percent, India lags behind other BRICS nations, which have literacy rates above 90 percent. All these countries have better student-teacher ratios. So not only does India grapple with poor quality teachers, it also has fewer total teachers in comparison with other countries that do a better job at education.
- Data from the Ministry of Human Resource Development show that only half of all students who enter primary school make it to the upper primary level and less than half that get into the 9-12 class cycle.
- Only 58 percent of children enrolled in classes three to five could read a class one text.
- Less than half (47 percent) were able to do simple two-digit subtraction.
- Only half of the children in classes five to eight could use a calendar.
- They were not found proficient in even basic skills; about two-thirds of the students in class four could not master the measurement of the length of the pencil with a ruler.





- Study after study has shown that the true indicator of economic development in a country is the education and wellbeing of its people. Although, India has made rapid economic progress over the last three decades, one area that has not received enough attention is the quality of primary education.
- Lack of good secondary and higher secondary schools: The number of secondary schools is less than 150,000 for a country of 1.3 billion, and even this comes down to just 100,000 at the higher secondary level. While there are around five million primary school teachers, at the secondary level the number is just 1.5 million. India has persisted with a schooling system that has long failed its young.
- The inevitable shift to private school education along with the Right to Education Act represents a failure of the public-school system.

#### **Education agenda for a New and Changing India:**

- Technology has to be a primary part of the process. Technology allows us to adapt to teaching and assessment of entirely new skills that are very significant for the present century and that you cannot progress in a kind of traditional setting.
- This necessitates refined public policy, a long-term commitment, and a systematic approach.
- Our education must be all round developer. It must be based on creative rather than memorizing. Practical or Visualize education must be promoted.
- It is time that India began viewing school education as a critical strategic investment and gave it the status of a vital infrastructure project. As all in-country efforts have failed, we should go in for a radical overhaul of our educational infrastructure with the help of countries that have an amazing record in providing quality school education — Finland, for instance. We can surely afford to pay for that.
- Providing universal quality education depends not on the performance of teachers alone but is the shared responsibility of several stakeholders: governments, schools, teachers, parents, the media and civil society, international organisations, and the private sector.
- A complete paradigm shift is needed as far as our education system is concerned. However, one has reason to believe that there are some positive signs too. For example, in schools itself, we are talking about Programme for International Students Assessment (PISA)- these are definitely encouraging signs.
- Skilling has to improve across higher education sectors and it has to be diverse. Let's not forget that only about 5% of the Indian workforce is trained in any sort of skills today; we are staring in the face of a demographic disaster if skill development is not undertaken.

#### **Conclusion:**

- India continues to have the largest number of young people anywhere. By ensuring they get a world-class education over the next few decades, India will be well on its way towards becoming a developed nation sooner than expected.

### **Q) Discuss the promises and challenges of a bold experiment – Pradhan Mantri Jan Aarogya Yojana. (250 words)**

[Vikaspedia](https://www.vikaspedia.com)

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

The question is straightforward and is about discussing the nuances of – Pradhan Mantri Jan Aarogya Yojana.

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

The answer must explain in detail the challenges and benefits that – Pradhan Mantri Jan Aarogya Yojana has as a bold experiment in the health sector.

#### **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:**

The answer to the question is direct, one must explain in detail the salient features of the scheme, merits, demerits and analyse how the scheme is different from the previous ones, what difference has it brought for the healthcare system of the country.

#### **Conclusion:**

Conclude with what should be the way ahead.



### Introduction:

- Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PM-JAY), introduced under the ambit of Ayushman Bharat, aims to reduce the financial burden on poor and vulnerable groups arising out of catastrophic hospital episodes and ensures their access to quality health services was conceived.
- India is concerned with many health issues be it malnutrition, infant mortality, rising non communicable diseases, growing number of deaths due to cancer etc. Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY) is the step in the right direction which can give impetus to healthcare in India.

### Body:

#### Promises:

- AB-PMJAY provides a defined benefit cover of Rs. 5 lakh per family per year. This cover will take care of almost all secondary care and most of tertiary care procedures.
- To ensure that nobody is left out (especially women, children and elderly) there will be no cap on family size and age in the scheme.
- The benefit cover will also include pre and post-hospitalisation expenses. All pre-existing conditions will be covered from day one of the policy. A defined transport allowance per hospitalization will also be paid to the beneficiary.
- Benefits of the scheme are portable across the country and a beneficiary covered under the scheme will be allowed to take cashless benefits from any public/private empanelled hospitals across the country.
- The beneficiaries can avail benefits in both public and empanelled private facilities. All public hospitals in the States implementing AB-PMJAY, will be deemed empanelled for the Scheme. Hospitals belonging to Employee State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) may also be empanelled based on the bed occupancy ratio parameter. As for private hospitals, they will be empanelled online based on defined criteria.
- To control costs, the payments for treatment will be done on package rate (to be defined by the Government in advance) basis. The package rates will include all the costs associated with treatment.
- For beneficiaries, it will be a cashless, paper less transaction. Keeping in view the State specific requirements, States/ UTs will have the flexibility to modify these rates within a limited bandwidth.

The program certainly has a good intent of giving the best of the medical services at lowest prices to the economically weaker, deprived sections of the society. The program is **fraught with many challenges that can hinder its outcome.**

- **Finance:** At about 1.3% of the national income, India's public healthcare spending between 2008 and 2015, has virtually remained stagnant. It is a herculean task to implement a scheme that could potentially cost Rs 5 lakh per person and benefit 53.7 crore out of India's 121 crore citizenry, or roughly about 44% of the country's population. Because inflation in healthcare expenses has been known to increase faster than general inflation, the problem is likely to get worse in the future.
- **Out of pocket expenditure high:** Even the poor are forced to opt for private healthcare and hence, pay from their own pockets. Resultantly, an estimated 63 million people fall into poverty due to health expenditure, annually.
- **Doctor-Density Ratio:** The WHO reports the doctor-density ratio in India at 8 per 10,000 people. To achieve such access, merely increasing the number of primary and secondary healthcare centres is not enough. Access should be equitable. Infrastructure creation and quantity of healthcare centres should go hand-in-hand.
- **Policy inaction:** The Government has launched many policies and health programmes but success has been partial at best. The National Health Policy (NHP) 2002 proposed to increase Government spending on health by two to three per cent of the gross domestic product (GDP) by 2010 which has not happened yet. Now, the NHP 2017 has proposed to take it to 2.5 per cent of the GDP by 2025.
- **Inequities in the health sector exist:** due to many factors like geography, socio-economic status and income groups among others. Compared with countries like Sri Lanka, Thailand and China, which started at almost similar levels, India lags behind peers on healthcare outcomes.
- **Absence of primary care:** In the northern States there are hardly any sub-centres and primary health centres are practically non-existent. The wellness clinic component is a step towards bridging that lacuna but funding constraints are here too.
- **Infrastructure constraints:** There are doubts on the capacity of this infrastructure to take on the additional load of such insured patients from other States, growing medical tourism (foreign tourists/patients) as a policy being promoted by the government, and also domestic patients, both insured and uninsured.
- **Massive shortages in the supply of services** (human resources, hospitals and diagnostic centres in the private/public sector) which are made worse by grossly inequitable availability between and within States. For



example, even a well-placed State such as Tamil Nadu has an over 30% shortage of medical and non-medical professionals in government facilities.

- **Healthcare does not have holistic approach:** There are a lot of determinants for better health like improved drinking water supply and sanitation; better nutritional outcomes, health and education for women and girls; improved air quality and safer roads which are outside the purview of the health Ministry. These issues are increasingly being recognised with emerging challenges such as Anti-microbial resistance, air pollution, and non-communicable diseases (NCDs).
- **Pricing of medical equipment:** Private hospitals are charging exorbitant prices for these and poor suffer the most and there is no price capping yet.
- **Lack of level playing field between the public and private hospitals:** This has been a major concern as public hospitals would continue receiving budgetary support. This would dissuade the private players from actively participating in the scheme.
- **Additional incentives to the private players:** The setting up hospitals in the underserved areas by private players can happen when there are incentives from the State. Lack of this would maintain status quo of last mile medical care which is in shackles.
- **Improper support infrastructure of IT:** The programme is being rolled out hurriedly, even before the necessary systems and processes have been developed fully and tested for their robustness. This has led to continued Out of Pocket Expenditure for the poor pushing many into poverty.
- **Other Concerns:**
  - The crucial determinant of PMJAY's success lies at the state government level as public health is a state subject.
  - The experience from previous centrally-sponsored schemes is that line ministries have often created too many requirements and required excessive standardisation, thereby stressing on top-down approach.

#### Way forward:

- There is a need for multi-sectoral planning and 'health in all policies' approach, where initiative of different departments and Ministries is developed and planned coordination, accountability assigned and progress monitored jointly. It has to be coordinated at the level of Prime Minister or the Chief Minister's office, as the case may be.
- PPP in India needs a nuanced approach and systematic mechanisms, including legislation and regulatory aspects. The process requires wider stakeholder engagement and deliberations and oversight from top leadership.
- There is a need to reform and re-design institutions to broader health system goals to contribute achieve sustainable development goals.
- Policy proposals, such as setting up of Indian Medical Service, establishing public health cadre as well as mid-level healthcare providers and exploring lateral entry of technical experts in academic and health policy institutions, including in the health Ministry (up to the levels Joint Secretary and Additional Secretary levels) should be deliberated and given due priority.
- A competitive price must be charged for services provided at public facilities as well. The government should invest in public facilities only in hard to reach regions where private providers may not emerge.
- The government must introduce up to one-year long training courses for practitioners engaged in treating routine illnesses. This would be in line with the National Health Policy 2002, which envisages a role for paramedics along the lines of nurse practitioners in the United States.
- There is urgent need for accelerating the growth of MBBS graduates to replace unqualified "doctors" who operate in both urban and rural areas.
- The government needs to provide adequate funding to improve the quality of services as well.
- In a federal polity with multiple political parties sharing governance, an all-India alignment around the NHPS requires a high level of cooperative federalism, both to make the scheme viable and to ensure portability of coverage as people cross State borders.
- State governments, which will administer it through their own agency, will have to purchase care from a variety of players, including in the private sector, at predetermined rates. Reaching a consensus on treatment costs through a transparent consultative process is vital for a smooth and steady rollout.
- A large-scale Information Technology network for cashless treatment should be set up and validated. State governments need to upgrade the health administrative systems. The NHPM has a problem with the distribution of hospitals, the capacity of human resources, and the finances available for cost-sharing.

**Conclusion:**

- Good health is part of 'social contract' between the Government and the people and essential for sustaining economic growth of the country. Seventy years of independence is an opportune time to revisit priorities and place health higher on policy and development agenda.
- PM-JAY seeks to accelerate India's progress towards achievement of Universal Health Coverage (UHC) and Sustainable Development Goal – 3 (SDG3).

**Q) Discuss the major issues and challenges of education sector in India. Also suggest solutions to bring an overhaul in the system. (250 words)**

**Reference****Why this question:**

The question is straightforward and is about discussing the major issues and challenges of education sector in India.

**Demand of the question:**

The answer must explain in detail the major issues and challenges of education sector in India and one must also provide for solutions to bring change in the system.

**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:**

The answer must have the following broad dimensions:

- What are the major issues facing the Indian education system? – Expenditure on, Gross enrolment pattern, Capacity utilization, Infrastructure facilities, PPP model, Student-teacher ratio, Accreditation and branding – quality standards, Students studying abroad etc.
- What are the factors responsible for the above challenges?
- Solutions to be in the following broad categories to resolve the issues – Innovations required, Quality of education, Making education affordable etc.

**Conclusion:**

Conclude with what should be the way ahead.

**Introduction:**

- India's demographic dividend depends on the learning level of students. The quality of education has a direct bearing on any economy. The ASER report by NGO Pratham shows the **prevalence of learning deficit and the poverty of basic reading and arithmetic skills among students in Indian schools.**

**Body:**

The issues and challenges faced by education system in India are:

- **Expenditure on Education:**
  - The expenses on education as a percentage to GDP, India lags behind some developed/ developing nations.
- **Infrastructure deficit:**
  - Dilapidated structures, single-room schools, lack of drinking water facilities, separate toilets and other educational infrastructure is a grave problem.
- **Student-teacher ratio:**
  - Another challenge for improving the Indian education system is to improve the student teacher ratio.
  - In India, this ratio is very high as compared to certain comparable countries in the world. For example, while in developed countries this ratio stands at 11.4, in case of India, it is as high as 22.0.
- **Corruption and leakages:**
  - The transfer of funds from the central to state to local governments to school leads to involvement of many intermediaries.
  - The fund transfer is drastically reduced by the time it reaches the true beneficiaries.
  - High rates of corruption and leakages plague the system, undermine its legitimacy and harm the many thousands of honest headmasters and teachers.
- **Quality of Teachers:**
  - Lack of well trained, skilled and knowledgeable teachers which provide the foundation for a high quality education system.
  - Teacher shortages and poorly qualified teachers are both a cause and effect of poorly paid and managed teaching cadres.



- **Non-Academic burden:**
  - The teachers are overburdened with senseless reports and administrative workload. This eats into the time which is necessary for teaching.
  - A study by the **National Institute of Education Planning and Administration (NIEPA)** revealed that **teachers spend only around 19 percent of their time teaching** while the rest is spent mostly on non-teaching administrative work.
- **Poor salary:**
  - Teachers are paid miserly salaries which affect their interest and dedication to work. They will look for other avenues like tuitions or coaching centers and coax the students to attend it.
  - This has dual effect, **firstly the quality of teaching in schools drop and secondly, the poor students are forced to spend money despite constitutional provision of free education.**
- **Teacher Absenteeism:**
  - Absence of teachers during school hours is rampant. The lack of accountability and poor governance structures add to the woes.
- **Lack of Accountability:**
  - **School Management Committees** are largely dysfunctional. Many exist solely on paper.
  - Parents are often not aware of their rights and if they are it is difficult for them to make their voice heard.
- **High drop-out rates:**
  - The drop-out rates in schools, especially girls, is very high.
  - Many factors like poverty, patriarchal mindset, lack of toilets in schools, distance to schools and cultural elements lead to children dropping out from education.
- **School closure:**
  - Many schools are closed to low student strength, lack of teachers and infrastructure. The competition posed by private schools is also a major challenge to government schools.

A **systemic approach to reforming education system** in the country needs the following:

- The current approach, mainly academic in nature, recognizes that **piecemeal initiatives** are unlikely to improve student learning.
- A **new systemic approach** to reforming education is now emerging in Andhra Pradesh, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha and Rajasthan.
- It is **accompanied with administrative reforms** that create an enabling environment for these new practices to take root.
- It involves **aligning all stakeholders and orienting their collective efforts** towards following a single and “comprehensive transformation road map” towards better learning outcomes.
- **Academic interventions** involve the adoption of grade competence framework instead of just syllabus completion.
- **Effective delivery of remedial education** for weaker students like after-school coaching, audio-video based education.
- Administrative reforms that **enable and incentivize teachers** to perform better through data-driven insights, training, and recognition. **Example:** Performance based increments in Salary.
- Together with human enablement, a **seamless ecosystem or a system enabler** (often a **technology platform**) is also set up.
- This **streamlines communication** and saves teachers’ valuable time that they might have otherwise spent on administrative tasks, such as leave applications, allowance claims, transfers and service book updates.
- It is also important to **track the performance of the schooling system** on a regular basis to course correct where needed.
- Therefore, a **robust accountability system** is required wherein there is a clear articulation of the roles and responsibilities of all relevant stakeholders, and the administration is empowered to act where necessary.
- This involves **frequent real-time, data-enabled review meetings at the block, district, and state levels.**
- These states have also developed user-friendly dashboards that assist education officials and the state leadership in decision-making.





### Way forward:

- **Digitization:**
  - **Create a single-window system for infrastructure and mainstream fund-flows:** In Bihar, only around 10 percent of the schools fulfil infrastructure norms. A study revealed that files for renovating schools often go on a two-year journey through various departments.
  - The same can be applied for teacher salaries and school funds. These can be transferred directly from the State to the teachers and schools. There is no need to involve the District or Block in this process.
  - Leveraging the **audio-visual edutainment** to make education more interesting and easier to understand for the children. This will **improve the quality as well as reduce the drop-out rates.**
  - Implementing **bio-metric attendance for teachers and students for every class** can help reduce absenteeism.
- **Empower School Management Committees by using mobile phones:**
  - To develop a system that **facilitates School Management Committee** members by fostering democratic accountability.
  - Social audits should also be carried out for effective functioning.
- **Better pre-service teacher training** coupled with transparent and merit-based recruitments is a lasting solution for teacher quality.
- Improve the **quality of teacher education** by making teacher training mandatory. Example: **National Council for Teacher Education Act amendment bill, Diksha portal** to train teachers.
- Increase the **public spending on education to 6% of GDP** as recommended by many committees like the recent **TSR Subramaniam committee.**
- Teachers are rarely reprimanded for non-performance, while there are recommendations for **removal of non-detention policy.** The blame is squarely on the children, such an attitude must be wiped out.
- **Education policy in India** is focused on inputs rather than learning outcomes; It has a strong elitist bias in favour of higher education as opposed to primary or secondary education. This needs a change by coming out with a new policy.

### Conclusion:

- State-wide campaigns, driven by the state's political and bureaucratic leadership, re-energize parents and the community at large, and channel the attention of all stakeholders towards better learning outcomes. Only when we align incentives of all stakeholders, and enable them while holding them accountable, can we shorten the distance between the nation's current state of education and its aspirations.

**Q) Malnourishment in India is the next public health emergency that needs to be addressed immediately. Critically analyse the statement and also discuss the significance of food fortification to tackle the issue of Malnourishment. (250 words)**

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

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

The article discusses in detail the current scenario of malnourishment prevalent in the country. It narrates the compelling reasons for us to think of simpler and effective strategies like fortification of food staples with essential micronutrients like iron and vitamin to deal with the issues of stunting, wasting, anemia etc.

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

The question is about discussing the issue of Malnourishment, its prevalence in India and in what way it has become a public health emergency. One must emphasise on how fortification of food is a way forward to tackle the menace.

#### **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.

**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 current scenario in the country.

### Body

Discuss the following points in detail:

- Highlight how Malnutrition affects Indian population? – quote facts like; iron deficiency contributes to 20% of maternal deaths and is associated with nearly half of all maternal deaths in India. Malnutrition extends to the children that women with anemia give birth to. They often have low birth weight, are pre-term, and suffer from poor development and lower mental abilities. Lack of essential nutrients in the diet makes growing children weak and make them under nourished etc.
- Why has it become a public health emergency?
- Discuss why other missions to tackle malnutrition haven't been able to succeed fully – National Food Security Act (NFSA), a free Mid-day Meal Scheme (MDM), National nutrition mission etc.
- Discuss what is Food fortification and its importance and relevance to Indian case.
- Conclude by listing governments efforts in this direction.

### Conclusion

Conclude with way forward.

### Introduction:

- According to WHO, Malnutrition refers to deficiencies, excesses or imbalances in a person's intake of energy and/or nutrients. The term malnutrition covers 2 broad groups of conditions.
- One is '**undernutrition**'—which includes **stunting** (low height for age), **wasting** (low weight for height), **underweight** (low weight for age) and **micronutrient deficiencies or insufficiencies** (a lack of important vitamins and minerals). The other is **overweight, obesity** and **diet-related non-communicable diseases** (such as heart disease, stroke, diabetes and cancer).

### Body:

- India is home to one of the largest populations of malnourished children in the world. One cannot build a strong building on a weak foundation.

### Current Scenario of Malnutrition in India:

- India is home to over 40 million stunted and 17 million wasted children (under-five years).
- Despite a fast-growing economy and the largest anti-malnutrition programme, India has the world's worst level of child malnutrition
- Though anaemia among children has declined, it affects every second child in the country. There has been no perceptible decline in anaemia among 15 to 49-year old women; it affects around 60 per cent of them.
- The daily consumption of iron rich dark green leafy vegetables has reduced from 64 per cent to 48 per cent of the population in the last decade.
- Many, in fact, argue that the NFSA's focus on wheat and rice has forced millets — traditional source for iron and minerals — out of the market.
- The government's iron supplementation programme to overcome IDA has led to only 30 per cent of pregnant women consuming iron and folic acid tablets.
- Lack of sanitation and clean drinking water are the reasons high levels of malnutrition persists in India despite improvement in food availability

### A public emergency:

- The scale of malnutrition in India constitutes a public health crisis, which not only violates a fundamental right of humanity, but also undermines significant advances made in economic, social, and cultural indicators.

### Failure of Government Schemes:

- India already has two robust national programmes addressing malnutrition the Integrated Child Development Service (ICDS) and the National Health Mission but these do not yet reach enough people.
- The delivery system is also inadequate and plagued by inefficiency and corruption. Some analysts estimate that 40 per cent of the subsidised food never reaches the intended recipients
- More specifically, the current institutional structure has so far failed to correctly map the time frame for focused intervention, and state spending directed at nutrition and micronutrient supplementation continues to be low.
- These challenges are compounded by the continued lack of clarity in identifying the nodal ministry from which to coordinate the Government's various nutrition programmes, including the Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS) and the National Rural Health Mission (NRHM).



- With current interventions retaining a focus on addressing malnutrition post-birth, the importance of intervening during the first 1,000 days of a child's life cannot be over emphasised.

**Fortified foods** are those that have nutrients added to them that don't naturally occur in the food. These foods are meant to improve nutrition and add health benefits. For example, milk is often fortified with vitamin D, and calcium may be added to fruit juices.

#### Significance:

- Food fortification has been identified by the World Health Organization, the Copenhagen Consensus and the Food and Agriculture Organization as one of the top four strategies for decreasing micronutrient malnutrition at the global level.
- It helps to address micronutrient deficiencies across populations, countries and regions. For instance, iodine deficiency can have a bearing on children's cognitive functions, whereas deficiencies in vitamin A and zinc can affect their immunity.
- Fortification of centrally-processed staple foods is a simple, affordable and viable approach to reach large sections of a country's population with iron, folic acid, and other essential micronutrients.
- Adding micronutrients to common staple foods can significantly improve the nutritional quality of the food supply and improve public health with minimal risk.
- Food fortification is considered an efficient public health strategy because it can reach wider susceptible populations through existing food delivery systems without requiring major changes in existing consumption patterns.
- It acts as an effective short-term approach to address the nutrition gaps within a population.
- Compared to other nutrition interventions, food fortification is also more cost-effective, if advantage can be taken of existing technology and large-scale distribution systems such as the MDM Scheme, ICDS, PDS, etc.
- An effective way to secure micronutrients for beneficiaries is to include fortified foods as an additional supplement to the nutritious meals that are served to them as part of such programmes.
- According to NFHS 2015-16, every second tribal child suffers from growth restricting malnutrition due to chronic hunger.
- Such acute food insecurity in tribal households is due to a loss of their traditional dependence on forest livelihood and the State's deepening agrarian crisis.
- Adding fortified foods are also useful in lowering the risk of the multiple deficiencies that can result from deficits in food supply or a poor quality diet.

#### Conclusion:

- Boosting nutrition levels across the country is one of the biggest low hanging fruit in the Indian public policy sphere. If we can conquer space, we can conquer malnutrition.

**Q) Elaborate on the nature of corruption in healthcare systems in India. How do you think India can cure corruption in healthcare systems ? Critically analyse. (250 words)**

[epw](#)

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

The article discusses in detail how the prevailing corruption conditions in the healthcare industry of India.

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

The answer must discuss in detail the issue of corruption in health industry, causes and consequences of it and measures to tackle the same.

#### **Directive word:**

**Elaborate** – 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.

**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 with facts prevailing conditions of corruption in the health industry.

### **Body:**

- Highlight that corruption in the healthcare sector is old news. Almost everybody in the country has been a victim of some form of graft or malpractice—be it inflated bills, wrong diagnosis, or substandard treatment.
- Discuss the incidences of corruption that are regularly witnessed – Lack of ethics amongst health professional, cost cutting, lack of value to patients, lack of accountability etc.
- What needs to be done?
- Suggest measures to overcome – digitization, public private partnership in the healthcare industry, regulatory mechanisms etc.

### **Conclusion:**

Conclude with what should be the way forward.

### **Introduction:**

- Corruption is the very antithesis of patient centred care. Driven by greed, those in power divert crucial resources away from patients in need, which results in poor quality of care and worsening health outcomes. It is an international problem and no health system is free from it.

### **Body:**

#### **Nature of Corruption in healthcare systems in India:**

- **Bribes and kickbacks:**
  - The country's doctors and medical institutions live in an 'unvirtuous circle' of referral and kickback that poisons their integrity and destroys any chance of a trusting relationship with their patients.
  - Given these practices, it is no surprise that investigations and procedures are abused as a means of milking patients.
- **Theft and embezzlement:**
  - This may occur as theft of public assets and goods, such as instruments and medicines, by individuals for sale, personal use or use in for-profit private
  - The theft of government revenues, such as patient registration fees, and the payment of salary to deceased or "ghost" workers are other forms of corruption.
- **Intentional damage to public goods for private gain:**
  - Public assets and instruments in government hospitals may also be intentionally damaged so as to make them unavailable to patients, with the ultimate aim of ordering the services from private clinics in return for financial incentives or "commission."
- **Absenteeism:**
  - Perceived somewhat less often as a form of corruption, absenteeism (not attending work but claiming salary) in the health sector has been a major concern in some developing countries.
- **Informal payments:**
  - In some countries, patients commonly make informal payments to healthcare professionals for better services. The imposition of such a "tax" on "free" healthcare services has a negative impact on access to health services
- **Use of human subjects for financial gain:**
  - Clinical researchers get paid by the biomedical industry for the recruitment of poor and illiterate, e. Vulnerable, human subjects for clinical trials.
  - Another way in which hospitals and physicians use patients is by charging uninsured patients and patients with other health plans far more than the actual costs involved and what the health insurers pay.
- **Institutionalised potential corruption:**
  - In some for-profit hospitals, physicians have contractual obligations to admit a fixed number of patients to allotted beds and prescribe a number of laboratory investigations (even if unnecessary) to generate revenues.

**Impact of Corruption in Healthcare Sector in India:**

No doubt, corruption has a severe impact on the society. It has not only affected the health industry and the economy as a whole, but also the people of the country, especially the poor and the common people. The results are evident:

- Low-quality healthcare facilities that do not fulfil our needs.
- Government hospitals and health centres in rural areas are in shabby conditions.
- Lack of access to medicines and other basic healthcare facilities for poor patients.
- Huge medical bills
- Incomplete treatment of patients
- Circulation of fake or inappropriate drugs, goods and equipment in the market
- Spread of diseases and no control of infectious diseases like dengue
- Death of patients for wrong treatment or inadequate services
- Unnecessary medical tests
- Unqualified and inefficient doctors
- Healthcare professionals in the vicious cycle of unethical practices
- Loss of faith in the system

**Measures needed:**

- **Zero tolerance for unethical and corrupt practices in health:**
  - Physicians, professional medical associations of diverse disciplines and the bioethics community should discuss possible anti-corruption measures and implement a publicly declared policy of zero tolerance for unethical and corrupt practices in the care of patients, clinical research and medical education.
- **Whole-hearted support for anti-corruption measures:**
  - Physicians and bioethicists should support, whole-heartedly and without reservation, the anti-corruption initiatives undertaken by the other sections of society and state, such as civil society, patient rights groups, voluntary health associations, nongovernmental organisations (NGOs), the judiciary, and the media.
  - This would help build good governance and a just society.
- **Protection of whistle-blowers:**
  - Physicians and bioethicists should provide moral support and legal help to members of their profession or discipline who have dared to expose serious wrong doing in any aspect of healthcare and medicine.
  - This is necessary because whistleblowers run the risk of facing harassment, if not harm, by vested interests.
- **Legislation:**
  - Physicians and bioethicists should play a more proactive role in pressing for the enactment and implementation of legislation and regulations for good governance, transparency and accountability in healthcare and medicine.
  - Anti-corruption laws are frequently breached because of inadequate regulation and monitoring, or the absence of effective penalties.
  - One solution could be to set up an office of ombudsman to deal with corruption (eg Lokpal) in every district, province and state capital.
  - The ombudsman should be equipped with adequate resources, infrastructure and real powers.
- **Education:**
  - The importance of (continuing) education can hardly be overemphasised. It is hard to believe that all young men and women join medicine only to make money out of people's illness.
  - Education in ethics through the use of positive role models may reinforce moral values.
  - It would help present and future healthcare professionals not only to steer clear of fraud and abuse, but also to create a favourable ethical climate within the profession.

**Conclusion:**

- It is time to acknowledge that corruption in healthcare entails crimes against humanity.
- There is no room for complacency- history will not forgive physicians and bioethicists if they fail in their moral duty to safeguard the cause of ethics in medicine when it is necessary.





**Q) Evaluate the coming of Faster diagnostic tests for tuberculosis in India. How far has India gone from conventional methods to more efficient and effective methods? Analyse. (250 words)**

[Thehindubusinessline](https://www.insightsias.com/thehindubusinessline)

**Why this question:**

Scientists have developed highly sensitive and rapid tests for detection of tuberculosis infection in lungs and surrounding membranes. Unlike current tests that use antibodies for detection of bacterial proteins in sputum samples, new tests use Aptamer Linked Immobilized Sorbent Assay (ALISA) and Electrochemical Sensor (ECS) for detection of a bacterial protein in the sputum.

**Key demand of the question:**

Answer is straightforward and is about discussing the evolution of science in the field of Tuberculosis Diagnosis.

**Directive word:**

**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 highlight the context of the question.

**Body:**

In brief discuss the following points:

- Explain the significance of coming of Faster diagnostic tests for tuberculosis in India.
- How has the evolution in diagnostics changed the landscape of Health issues specifically the TB burden?
- Tuberculosis (TB) is a global health concern for both developing and developed countries and has recently become more complex due to persistence in aging populations and the rise of drug-resistant strains, recent advances allow better and earlier diagnosis of active pulmonary TB – Conventional diagnostic tests use antibodies for detection of bacterial proteins in sputum samples. However, such tests suffer with limitations including batch-to-batch variability, limited shelf-life, and cost.
- To address these problems, the researchers have now developed two DNA aptamer-based tests – Aptamer Linked Immobilized Sorbent Assay (ALISA) and Electrochemical Sensor (ECS) for detection of a bacterial protein in the sputum.

**Conclusion:**

Conclude with way forward.

**Introduction:**

- Tuberculosis (TB) remains the biggest killer disease in India, outnumbering all other infectious diseases put together — this despite our battle against it from 1962, when the National TB Programme (NTP) was launched.
- According to the **World Health Organization's "Global Tuberculosis Report 2018"**, India accounted for **27% of the 10 million people**, who had developed TB in 2017, besides making up **32% of global TB deaths among HIV-negative people, and 27% of combined TB deaths**. The Lancet report says that India's goal to end the epidemic by 2025 was too "ambitious", "unrealistic", and, therefore, unattainable.

**Body:**

**According to WHO 2018 Global TB Report,**

- India accounted for 27% of the total new TB infections in 2017- the highest in the world
- There has been a 1.7% reduction in tuberculosis cases and 3% reduction in deaths from 2016
- India has 24% of the world's drug-resistant TB burden- the highest in the world
- There was also 8% reduction in rifampicin–first-line TB drug–resistant tuberculosis (RR TB) and MDR-TB

**Diagnosis techniques:**

- Conventional diagnostic tests use antibodies for detection of bacterial proteins in sputum samples. However, such tests suffer with limitations including batch-to-batch variability, limited shelf-life, and cost.
- To address these problems, the researchers have now developed two DNA aptamer-based tests – Aptamer Linked Immobilized Sorbent Assay (ALISA) and Electrochemical Sensor (ECS) for detection of a bacterial protein in the sputum.



- Aptamers are DNA, RNA or peptide molecules that bind to specific molecular targets. They are known to bind the right target (which defines sensitivity) and at the same time rule out any non-specific binding to other targets (specificity).
- The performance of the newly developed tests was compared with antibody-based tests in 314 sputum samples. ALISA showed 92% sensitivity while the antibody-based method was 68% sensitive.
- The ECS test can be used for screening of samples in the field as it takes as less as 30 minutes to deliver results.
- It is highly sensitive and could detect HspX protein in 91% of the samples tested in this study.
- In addition, there is no need for sputum sample preparation which is a complex and time-consuming process.

#### Significance of new Diagnostic techniques:

- The aptamer-based screening tests for pulmonary TB, pleural TB, and TB meningitis hold immense promise for a country like India, where the disease burden in high and primary health care is only a dream for many.
- The ECS platform could be used in a mobile screening van at the point-of-care, which could help in remote rural and tribal areas.
- The group used aptamer-based test also for detection of pleural TB, the second most prevalent form of extrapulmonary TB.
- Early diagnosis of pleural TB is limited by availability of a sensitive and rapid test. The performance of existing DNA-based tests varies widely due to low bacterial load in pleural fluid sample.
- Aptamer-based test for pleural TB has showed 93% sensitivity and is cost-effective.

#### Way forward:

- It is important to **address the social conditions and factors** which contribute to and increase vulnerability to tuberculosis. Concerted efforts should be made to address the issues of undernourishment, diabetes, alcohol and tobacco use.
- **Increased political will, financial resources and increasing research** to develop new ways to diagnose, treat and prevent TB will help achieve the goal.
- **Private sector engagement** in combating TB needs to be strengthened. The private sector should also be incentivised to report TB cases. Example: **The Kochi Model**– Increasing TB cases reporting from private sector
- There is an urgent need for **cost-effective point-of-care devices** that can be deployed for TB diagnosis in different settings across India.
- **Universal access to drug, susceptibility testing at diagnosis** to ensure that all patients are given appropriate treatment, including access to second-line treatment for drug-resistant TB.
- To ensure public participation — a missing element in the RNTCP — in public-private participation mode.
- **Mass awareness campaigns** like 'TB Harega Desh Jeetega' can play an important role in breaking social taboos regarding TB.

#### Conclusion:

- India has the highest TB burden in the world. Given our inter-connected world and the airborne spread of TB, we need collective global action. Ending TB in India will have massive global impact in addition to saving the lives of tens of millions of India's people over the next 25 years. Even if ending TB by 2025 is not complete, pulling the TB curve down by 2025 and sustaining the decline ever after is a possibility.

**Q) What are the bottlenecks in the delivery of nutrition interventions to pregnant women in India ? Discuss more so specifically with respect to Maternal nutrition and suggest solutions to tackle the same. (250 words)**

[epw](#)

#### *Why this question:*

The article discusses in detail the issues surrounding maternal nutrition interventions in India. The article emphasizes on how Maternal nutrition is important due to its critical and complex association with women's well-being and implications for child development.

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

The answer must evaluate the bottlenecks in the delivery of nutrition to the women facing maternal malnourishment. One has to suggest solutions to address such maternal and child undernutrition prevalent and analyse the failures of the past and present mechanisms trying to address the situation.

#### *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 maternal nutrition.

#### Body:

Body of the answer to capture the following dimensions:

- Importance of Maternal nutrition to women's well-being and implications for child development.
- Quote facts to highlight the issue. ( from NFHS-4 etc.)
- Discuss what are the issues currently associated with nutrition intervention schemes and policies? Why are they failing? – Access to prenatal and postnatal care is limited, lack of budgets for nutrition interventions, delay in fund releases and shortage of staff and infrastructure against sanctions/norms, and qualitative evidence etc.
- Then move on to suggest an analysis as to what needs to be done? How can one overcome these challenges?
- What kind of overhaul is required etc.

#### Conclusion:

Conclude with what should be the way forward.

#### Introduction:

- The term “maternal nutrition” focuses attention on women as mothers, on their nutritional status as it relates to the bearing and nurturing of children. At the same time, women also play vital, if often unacknowledged, roles in their families, communities, and societies.
- However, the poor nutritional status of many women in India today compromises their capacity to meet the vigorous demands of their multiple roles as mothers and productive workers

#### Body:

Bottlenecks in the delivery of nutrition interventions to pregnant women in India:

- **Poverty and food insecurity:** According to Multi Dimension Poverty Index (MPI) 2018 of UNDP, 364 million Indians continue to experience acute deprivations in various social indicators. Over one in four multi-dimensionally poor in India are under ten years of age.
- **Poor access to health services:** According to a The Lancet study (2016) India ranks 145th among 195 countries in terms of quality and accessibility of healthcare, behind its neighbours like China, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Bhutan.
- **Lack of education and information:** As per Annual State of Education Report 2017, India's 125 million children between 14 and 18 years of age are ill-equipped to read, write or even do basic arithmetic. It stated that the gender divide in cognition levels worsens with rise in age, as girls are often compelled to drop school for a variety of reasons.
- **Poor sanitation and lack of availability of fresh drinking water:** According to Niti Aayog's Composite Water Management Index 2018, 600 million people face high-to-extreme water stress; 75 per cent of the households do not have drinking water; and 84 per cent do not have piped water access; and 70 per cent of our water is contaminated. When water is available, it is likely to be contaminated, resulting in nearly 2, 00, 000 deaths each year.
- **Climate change and environmental degradation:** According to Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Assessment Report-5 2014, in India, the estimated countrywide agricultural loss in 2030 is over \$7 billion due to climate change. It will severely affect the income of 10 per cent of the population. Agriculture, the mainstay of the Indian economy, will see dramatic changes in yields, affecting people's right to food security.
- **Social ills like early child marriage and forced labour:** According to the latest figures of UNICEF India, 27% per cent marriages in India in 2016 were child marriages. Child marriage affects society as a whole since child marriage reinforces a cycle of poverty and perpetuates gender discrimination, illiteracy and malnutrition as well as high infant and maternal mortality rates.
- **Poor breastfeeding:** According to a report (2017) by UNICEF and WHO in collaboration with the Global Breastfeeding Collective, India is among the world's five largest emerging economies where investment in breastfeeding is significantly low resulting in an annual loss of \$14 billion due to child deaths and cognitive losses from poor breastfeeding practices.
- **Economic and financial disability of women:** Despite economic and educational growth, female participation in the labour force of India has fallen to 24% in 2011, from 31% in 2004. India is 11th from the bottom in the world in women's labour-force participation rates



- **Increase in inequality:** India ranked 147 out of 157 countries in terms of its commitment to reducing inequality according to Commitment to Reducing Inequality Index developed by Oxfam and Development Finance International.

#### Government initiatives:

- Accessibility and Affordability of Food: National Food Security Act 2013, Mid-Day Meals and supplementary nutrition under Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS).
- Water and Sanitation: National Rural Drinking Water Programme and Swachh Bharat Mission.
- Maternity Benefits: Compensate wage loss during pregnancy-Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana.
- Full immunization: Mission Indradhanush and roll out of Rotavirus and Pneumococcal vaccines.
- Initiation of Early Breastfeeding- MAA National Breastfeeding Programme.
- Delaying the age of marriage and ensuring gap between pregnancies-Beti Bachao Beti Padhao and National Health Mission IEC.
- Weekly Iron Folic Acid (IFA) Supplementation

#### Measures needed:

- **ICDS System Strengthening:** There should be a mechanism for growth monitoring which would include, early registration and weight monitoring, monthly weight monitoring, quarterly height/length monitoring.
- Improved Service Delivery: Will include convergence of services such as Immunisation, institutional delivery, drinking water and sanitation and efficient service deliver.
- Use of information technology (ITC): use of ICT interventions for addressing under nutrition includes
  - Real time monitoring-Population, target groups etc.
  - Nutrition Mapping
  - Data Analysis-Connecting Gaps.
- Infant and young child feeding promotions (IYCF): This will include
  - Behaviour change
  - Multi-media creatives: Exclusive breastfeeding, Early initiation of breastfeeding and complementary feeding
- Proper implementation of National Nutrition Mission (POSHAN Abhiyan).
- **Diversified food:** Diversifying the diet which should include required amount of nutrients is a better way to contain under-nutrition at the base.
- **An inclusive and holistic approach:** including controlling/regulating food price, strengthening the public distribution system (PDS) and income support policies for making food cheaper are important steps.
- In order to improve their income and food situation, it is therefore crucial that women obtain access to resources, that is, to credit, land, and agricultural means of production.
- **Gender equality** is one of the means to improve the income thereby diverse food basket of the people. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations estimates that if women farmers had the same resources as men, it would have led to 150 million fewer hungry people.

#### Conclusion:

- The health service delivery system is at the core of maternal nutrition interventions; strengthening them will go a long way in improving the health of women in India.

**Q) Educational institutions have been the preserves of the upper caste and the rich. With affirmative action in the form of caste-based reservations, however this hegemony has been challenged to a significant extent often through harassment, disgrace and coercion. Critically analyse the statement in the light of recent incident of Mumbai doctor's suicide owing to caste-based discrimination. (250 words)**

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

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

Recently a Mumbai Doctor committed suicide over alleged harassment by the seniors based on caste discrimination. In such a disturbing event it is important for us to examine the social issues deeply still present in our society.

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

The answer must discuss the societal issues that still perpetuate in our society even today and the adverse implications it has on the country as a whole.



### **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:**

Begin with brief write up on the background of the case.

#### **Body:**

Discussion should include the following aspects –

Explain how educational institutions in India have long been a monopoly of the upper caste and the high standard society, explain that though through affirmative actions the downtrodden were and are given a chance such incidences only indicate the absence of acceptance of such steps even today.

Discuss what needs to be done to overcome the challenges involved?

Who are the stakeholders involved etc.s

#### **Conclusion:**

Conclude with significance of such schemes in the upliftment of the unorganized working class.

#### **Introduction:**

- **Sociologist Emile Durkheim** had famously hypothesised that ‘suicides are a result of not just psychological or emotional factors but social factors as well’. The death of Payal Tadv, a 26-year-old resident doctor at Mumbai’s BYL Nair Hospital, has exposed yet again the insidious nature of discrimination and casteism against Scheduled Caste (SC)/Scheduled Tribe (ST) students in educational institutions.
- Tadv belonged to the Bhil Muslim community, recognised as an ST group. The death of Rohith Vemula, the Dalit student pursuing his PhD at the University of Hyderabad, whose suicide was described as “institutional murder” in 2016 is also a case in point.

#### **Body:**

- Despite constitutional provisions and safeguards, dalit representation in higher educational institutes and in the work force remains largely minimal.

#### **Discrimination at Educational institutions and Jobs:**

- Discrimination happens in different ways. At the institute level, it could be a teacher failing a student because of personal bias against their rural background.
- Or it could be teachers and students making casteist comments against students.
- Dalit children have been made to sit separately while eating in government schools.
- Sometimes the government itself puts students at disadvantage by not implementing its policies. When a student avails the post-metric scholarship, for example, they sometimes don’t get it for the next one or two years.
- The person either drops out or goes to a private loan shark, ending up in a vicious cycle of debt and, eventually, poverty.
- People belonging to lower castes have little chances to be called for an interview
- Another pertinent issue is the experience of caste discrimination in educational institutions and the level of politicisation of such issues on the college/university campuses.
- Sometimes disagreements between student groups on the university campuses take on ugly forms.
- According to a 2010 report by the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) on the Prevention of Atrocities against Scheduled Castes, a crime is committed against a Dalit every 18 minutes.

#### **Thorat Committee findings on discrimination:**

- The Thorat Committee report eventually served as a milestone in efforts to identify caste-based discrimination in higher educational institutes.
- It revealed that about 69 per cent of the SC/ST students reported that they did not receive adequate support from teachers and about half of them cited inaccessibility and indifference as reasons for less contact with teachers.
- About one-third gave caste background as reason for avoidance by the teachers, and 72 per cent of SC/ST students mentioned some kind of discrimination during teaching sessions.
- About 76 per cent of students mentioned that their papers were not examined properly and 88 per cent mentioned that they got fewer marks than they expected.





- About 84 per cent of these students mentioned that evaluation in practical and viva was unfair and 85 per cent of them mentioned that the SC students didn't receive enough time with the examiners, as compared to higher caste students.
- Besides, a large chunk of SC/ST students experienced social isolation and discrimination during their stay in the hostels at AIIMS.
- The report also delineated the discrimination felt by SC/ST faculty members employed at AIIMS, Delhi.

#### Impacts of such discriminations:

- Lower castes don't enjoy a good quality life and it pulls down the overall HDI
- Potential of lower castes remain untapped and human capital is lost
- Psychological impact whereby they adopt their conditions as if they are entitled to it and shun in raising their voice against discrimination
- In extreme cases, discrimination may lead to incidents like suicide.

#### Reasons behind persistence of such discrimination:

- Traditional mindset with deep rooted caste system in pockets of India
- Low level of awareness among lower caste about the government policies and legislation intended for their favour
- Poor implementation of existing laws like Prevention of Atrocities Act
- The primary reason for educational institutions emerging as pulpits of protest lies in the fractured social structure in universities, where the elite of the Dalits are competing with general students.

#### Measures needed for Inclusive Educational System:

- Banish Untouchability in Educational institutions: The government must proactively ensure a discrimination free education atmosphere.
- Constitutional safeguards and protective legal clauses can play a great enabling role.
- Reservations combined with economic opportunities and social empowerment of Dalits could stem atrocities against them
- Country needs a better basis of reservation which includes the poor and the backward groups and excludes the rich and the dominating sections among all castes.
- The present reservation system requires serious amendments.
- Before extending reservation to more groups, the entire policy needs to be properly examined, and its benefits over a span of nearly 60 years have to be gauged.
- A change of attitude is needed among the ruling classes to stem the tide.
- The private sector will have to accept the social responsibility setting aside its sole profit motive.

#### Conclusion:

- Quality education is the bedrock of sustainable development, the foundation for improving people's lives. Sure, we have made improvements in this area, but we need to take stronger measures if we want this development to reach the most marginalised in time for achieving our Sustainable Development Goals.

**Q) "India has 20.6 health workers per 10,000 people, while it is less than the World health Organization's minimum threshold of 22.8" does it reflect a healthcare crisis in India? Critically analyse. (250 words)**

The hindu

#### *Why this question:*

The article provides for a detailed analysis of the mismatch between the numbers of health workers per chunk of population size. It brings out the health crisis India is acing due to such low numbers.

#### *Demand of the question:*

Answer must discuss in detail the effects of such mismatch on the health system of the country.

#### *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*

Start with stating facts of the scenario.



### Body

Discuss the following points in detail:

- Bring out the current issue, discuss the following aspects:
- India has 20.6 health workers per 10,000 people.
- While it is less than the World health Organization's minimum threshold of 22.8, the numbers have increased from 19 health workers per 10000 people in 2012.
- The distribution of health workers is uneven between urban and rural areas. Rural areas with nearly 71% of India's population have only 36% of health workers.
- Delhi has the highest concentration of health workers followed by Kerala, Punjab, and Haryana.
- The uneven distribution of health workers is seen in private and public health sector too — more than 80% of doctors and 70% of nurses and midwives are employed in the private sector.
- Discuss its impact, challenges and way forward.

### Conclusion

Conclude with significance and way forward.

### Introduction:

- Post Independence there has been a significant improvement, in the health status of people. Public health and health services have been synonymous in India. This integration has dwarfed the growth of a comprehensive public health system, which is critical to overcome some of the systemic challenges in healthcare. Poor strata of population have denied proper health care due to lack of universal healthcare. The above figures from a NSSO survey show the improving trend.

### Body:

The major challenges faced by healthcare system in India are:

- **Finance:** At about **1.3% of the national income**, India's **public healthcare spending** between 2008 and 2015, has virtually remained stagnant. This is way less than the global **average of 6 per cent**. It is a herculean task to implement a scheme that could potentially cost Rs 5 lakh per person and benefit 53.7 crore out of India's 121 crore citizenry, or roughly about 44% of the country's population. **Over 70 per cent of the total healthcare expenditure** is accounted for by the private sector.
- **Crumbling public health infrastructure:** Given the country's crumbling public healthcare infrastructure, most patients are forced to go to private clinics and hospitals. There is a shortage of **PHCs (22%)** and **sub-health centres (20%)**, while **only 7% sub-health centres and 12% primary health centres meet Indian Public Health Standards (IPHS) norms**.
- **High Out of Pocket Expenditure:** Reports suggest that 70% of the medical spending is from the patient's pockets leading to huge burden and pushing many into poverty. Most consumers complain of rising costs. Hundred days into the PMJAY, it remains to be seen if private hospitals provide knee replacement at Rs 80,000 (current charges Rs 3.5 lakh) bypass surgery at Rs 1.7 lakh (against Rs 4 lakh).
- **Insurance:** India has one of the lowest per capita healthcare expenditures in the world. Government contribution to insurance stands at roughly 32 percent, as opposed to 83.5 percent in the UK. The high out-of-pocket expenses in India stem from the fact that 76 percent of Indians do not have health insurance.
- **Shortage of Medical Personnel:** Data by **IndiaSpend** show that there is a staggering shortage of medical and paramedical staff at all levels of care: 10,907 auxiliary nurse midwives and 3,673 doctors are needed at sub-health and primary health centres, while for community health centres the figure is 18,422 specialists.
- **Rural-urban disparity:** The rural healthcare infrastructure is three-tiered and includes a sub-center, primary health centre (PHC) and CHC. PHCs are short of more than 3,000 doctors, with the shortage up by 200 per cent over the last 10 years to 27,421. Private hospitals don't have adequate presence in Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities and there is a trend towards super specialisation in Tier-1 cities.
- **Social Inequality:** The growth of health facilities has been highly imbalanced in India. Rural, hilly and remote areas of the country are under served while in urban areas and cities, health facility is well developed. The SC/ST and the poor people are far away from modern health service.
- **Poor healthcare ranking:** India ranks as low as 145th among 195 countries in healthcare quality and accessibility, behind even Bangladesh and Sri Lanka.
- **Commercial motive:** lack of transparency and unethical practices in the private sector.
- **Lack of level playing field between the public and private hospitals:** This has been a major concern as public hospitals would continue receiving budgetary support. This would dissuade the private players from actively participating in the scheme.



- **Scheme flaws:** The overall situation with the National Health Mission, India's flagship programme in primary health care, continues to be dismal. The NHM's share in the health budget fell from 73% in 2006 to 50% in 2019 in the absence of uniform and substantial increases in health spending by States.

#### Steps taken up currently:

- The **National Health Policy (NHP) 2017** advocated allocating resources of up to two-thirds or more to primary care as it enunciated the goal of achieving "the highest possible level of good health and well-being, through a preventive and promotive healthcare orientation".
- A 167% increase in allocation this year for the **Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY)** — the **insurance programme** which aims to cover 10 crore poor families for hospitalisation expenses of up to ₹5 lakh per family per annum.
- The government's recent steps to **incentivise the private sector to open hospitals** in Tier II and Tier III cities.
- Individual states are adopting technology to support health-insurance schemes. For instance, Remedinet Technology (India's first completely electronic cashless health insurance claims processing network) has been signed on as the technology partner for the Karnataka Government's recently announced cashless health insurance schemes.

#### Measures needed to strengthen the existing state of Health infrastructure in the country are:

- There is an immediate need to **increase the public spending to 2.5% of GDP**, despite that being lower than global average of 5.4%.
- The achievement of a distress-free and comprehensive wellness system for all hinges on the performance of health and wellness centres as they will be instrumental in reducing the greater burden of out-of-pocket expenditure on health.
- there is a need to depart from the current trend of erratic and insufficient increases in health spending and make substantial and sustained investments in public health over the next decade.
- A **National Health Regulatory and Development Framework** needs to be made for improving the quality (for example registration of health practitioners), performance, equity, efficacy and accountability of healthcare delivery across the country.
- Increase the **Public-Private Partnerships** to increase the last-mile reach of healthcare.
- **Generic drugs and Jan Aushadi Kendras** should be increased to make medicines affordable and reduce the major component of Out of Pocket Expenditure.
- The government's **National Innovation Council**, which is mandated to provide a platform for collaboration amongst healthcare domain experts, stakeholders and key participants, should encourage a culture of innovation in India and help develop policy on innovations that will focus on an Indian model for inclusive growth.
- India should take cue from other developing countries like Thailand to work towards providing **Universal Health Coverage**. UHC includes three components: Population coverage, disease coverage and cost coverage.
- Leveraging the **benefits of Information Technology** like computer and mobile-phone based e-health and m-health initiatives to improve quality of healthcare service delivery. **Start-ups** are investing in healthcare sector from process automation to diagnostics to low-cost innovations. Policy and regulatory support should be provided to make healthcare accessible and affordable.

#### Conclusion:

- India needs a holistic approach to tackle problems in healthcare industry. This includes the active collaboration of all stakeholders public, private sectors, and individuals.
- A more dynamic and pro-active approach is needed to handle the dual disease burden. A universal access to health makes the nation fit and healthy, aiding better to achieve the demographic dividend.



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*TOPIC: Important aspects of governance, transparency and accountability, e-governance- application, models, successes, limitations, and potential; citizens charters, transparency & accountability and institutional and other measures. Role of civil services in a democracy.*

**Q) Discuss the utility of socio-economic caste census in targeting the beneficiaries across welfare schemes of the country. What are the challenges in choosing the beneficiaries? Elaborate. (250 words)**

Livemint

**Why this question:**

The article provides for deep analysis of use of socio-economic caste census as a tool to target right beneficiaries in various welfare schemes of the country. One has to analyse the benefits and challenges brought by it.

**Key demand of the question:**

The answer must appreciate the utility of socio-economic caste census in targeting the beneficiaries across welfare schemes of the country, discuss the associated issues in choosing the right beneficiary in welfare schemes.

**Directive:**

**Elaborate** – 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:**

Define what you understand by Socio – economic caste census.

**Body:**

Body of the answer should discuss the following aspects:

- Discuss if SECC is a better tool to estimate poverty than the BPL method?
- What is the advantage of using SECC in targeting beneficiaries of welfare schemes?
- What are the Drawbacks of SECC? – SECC collates data regarding the caste of the people. This caste related information faces the danger of being misused by political parties for their ulterior motives. SECC data must be regularly updated in order to remove beneficiaries who have overcome their deprivations. This will put a huge burden on the part of the government etc.
- Suggest what should be done?

**Conclusion:**

A multidimensional approach that incorporates a range of indicators to capture the complexity of poverty is the need of the hour and the SECC seems to be a good tool in the hands of the government in this regard. However, the government should take necessary steps to avoid the misusing of SECC and also to strengthen the SECC.

**Introduction:**

- Socio Economic and Caste Census (SECC) is a comprehensive exercise carried out for both rural and urban India. SECC supplies data to differentiate the socio-economic status of households based on housing, educational status, landholding, differently abled, occupation, possession of assets, SC/ST households, incomes etc. It was conducted by MoRD, Ministry of Urban Development, Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation, The Office of the Registrar General and Census Commissioner and the State Governments.

**Body:**

**Utility of SECC:**

- The household data can be utilised by planners of programmes at State, district, Block, Gram Panchayat and village levels.
- BPL data tells us how many are poor and SECC tells us who those poor are. It is more concerned with ensuring the right person gets the benefit.
- The results of the SECC would be used for various other developmental uses in the country.
- It is expected that the database provided by SECC would be used for decentralized governance, planning and development.
- Checks and balances at several levels starting from the enumeration stage, to public scrutiny at the Gram Sabha level.
- It would help in understanding the changes in society and exclude or include well of or deprived caste.





- Without accurate data of thousands of jatis (castes) and upjatis (subcastes), it is difficult to infer the accuracy of the caste based political decisions.
- Some jatis may have managed to pull themselves out poverty and marginalisation, while others may have sunk into it.
- Data on caste can be used to rationalise reservation policies.
- This data will strengthen the democratic system and will help to uplift a particular caste and in future there will hopefully be a casteless society.

#### Challenges in choosing the beneficiaries:

- Delay in the release of SECC data turned the major issue, due to which states have to rely on BPL data which was highly inadequate for identifying the beneficiaries of NFSA (National Food Security Act), 2013.
- The errors of omission (excluding those who are poor) and commission (including those who are not poor) are still reported to be there in SECC data.
- There are inconsistencies between the data obtained from SECC 2011 and already existing data from sources like NSSO etc.
- Critics of national food security Act say that providing food security benefit to 75% of the rural household is faulty as according to the SECC 2011 data only 50% of the rural household are deprived.
- Though, experts have appreciated the approach of defining poverty through deprivation, instead of consumption, but there are some data which contradicts the ground. For example, the number of manual scavengers are grossly underestimated.
- A district-wise comparison with data from the last census conducted in 2011 and numbers from the more recent National Family Health Survey (NFHS 2015-16) suggests that while there are some common patterns in all three databases, there are considerable differences when it comes to identification of the most backward districts.

#### Way forward:

- A multidimensional approach that incorporates a range of indicators to capture the complexity of poverty is the need of the hour and the SECC seems to be a good tool in the hands of the government in this regard.
- However, the government should take necessary steps to avoid the misusing of SECC and also to strengthen the SECC.

### Q) Discuss what role Civil society has a to play in restoring institutions that form the bulwark of democracy. (250 words)

#### The hindu

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

The article brings to light various instances where serious loss of credibility of democratic institutions has been witnessed across the world and amidst such conditions it highlights the role played by Civil society in preserving and restoring the tenets of Democracy.

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

The answer must briefly discuss the role of Civil society in maintaining a true democracy by protecting the institutions that are bulwarks of democracy.

##### **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 what you understand by civil societies.

##### **Body**

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

- Explain few incidences across the world highlighting the erosion of democratic values and its degradation.
- Discuss how democracy has been protected by civil society- how it has critiqued the faults of various regimes, role played by them in assistance of the government in restoring institutions that form the bulwark of democracy, keep vigil on complicit office-holders etc.
- Discuss Why is civil society important for democracy?



- Conclude with how Civil society organizations engage in advocating the public's rights and wishes of the people, including but not limited to health, environment and economic rights. They fulfill important duties of checks and balances in democracies, they are able to influence the government and hold it accountable.

### Conclusion

Conclude by reasserting their importance.

### Introduction:

- **Civil Society Organizations** can be defined to include all non-market and non-state organizations outside of the family in which people organize themselves to pursue shared interests in the public domain".

### Body:

- Examples include community-based organizations and village associations, environmental groups, women's rights groups, farmers' associations, faith-based organizations, labour unions, co-operatives, professional associations, chambers of commerce, independent research institutes and the not-for-profit media.

### Need for an active civil society:

- Citizens have the right to scrutinise the work of their representatives.
- To publicise acts such as infringement of civil liberties and failure of governments to provide a reasonable standard of life for the citizens.
- Article 19 of the constitution provides for the democratic right to protest as part of the freedom of expression.
- The right to participate in an activity should not be restricted to politics and elections alone.
- Without this right, democracy becomes an illusion.
- So civil society cannot be conceptualised independent of the state.

### Civil society's functional contribution to good governance

- **Watchdog:** against violation of human rights and governing deficiencies.
- **Advocate:** of the weaker sections' point of view.
- **Agitator:** on behalf of aggrieved citizens.
- **Educator:** of citizens on their rights, entitlements and responsibilities and the government about the pulse of the people.
- **Service provider:** to areas and people not reached by official efforts or as government's agent.
- **Mobilizer:** of public opinion for or against a programme or policy.
- The ways include: Right to Information Act, Consumer Protection Act, Citizens Charters, Whistleblower protection, e-governance, Democratic Decentralisation, Public Interest Litigation, etc

### Role of Civil Society:

- In a large developing country like India, there are numerous gaps left by the government in the development process. These are the gaps that civil societies try to fill in modern India.
- Supplementing the government effort to provide health care to citizens, and by raising awareness in society about issues like child and maternal malnutrition
- A number of NGO's like Childline India Foundation, World Vision, Arambh India have played important role in raising awareness on child sexual abuse.
- In the last 20 years, a very large number of NGOs in India have been active in the area of environmental protection.
- The NGOs have often been helped by the judiciary whenever the government of the day has proved unresponsive.
- The engagement of civil society and the media in educating citizens about the evils of corruption, raising their awareness levels and securing their participation by giving them a 'voice'.
- Civil society can influence policy and project formulation through membership of committees and submission of memoranda.

### Conclusion:

- Pressure groups, NGOs and CSOs form the backbone of democracy. The state must respect the articulation of the politics of voice and not just the politics of the vote.
- The promises of democracy can only be realised through collective action in civil society. A democratic state needs a democratic civil society and a democratic civil society also needs a democratic state. They mutually reinforce each other.



## Q) What do you understand by the Citizen's Charter ? Highlight its importance in the Governance of developing nation like India ? (250 words)

The hindu

**Why this question:**

Question is about discussing the meaning and scope of citizen's charter and then also discuss about its essential components while highlighting its significance in governance systems.

**Key demand of the question:**

Analyse in detail the project and Significance of the project and how it can prove to be a significant turning points in the conservation efforts of such endangered animals.

**Structure of the answer:**

**Introduction:**

write a few introductory lines about the citizen's charter. E.g Citizen's Charter is a document which represents a systematic effort to focus on the commitment of the Organization towards its Citizens in respects of Standard of Services, Information, Choice and Consultation, Non-discrimination and Accessibility, Grievance Redress, Courtesy and Value for Money.

**Body:**

In brief discuss –

- Start by discussing what is citizen's charter?
- Discuss its various components.
- Explain how it can help in better governance of countries like India, explain using suitable examples.

**Conclusion:**

based on your discussion, form a fair and a balanced conclusion on the given issue.

**Introduction:**

- A Citizens' Charter represents the commitment of the Organisation towards standard, quality and time frame of service delivery, grievance redress mechanism, transparency and accountability. The concept of Citizens Charter enshrines the trust between the service provider and its users.
- **Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances in Government of India (DARPG)** initiated the task of coordinating, formulating and operationalising Citizen's Charters.

**Body:**

The basic objective of the Citizens Charter is to empower the citizen in relation to public service delivery.



**The salient features of a Citizen's Charter are:**

- Agreed and published standards for service delivery;
- Openness and information about service delivery;
- 'Choice' and Consultation with users;
- Courtesy and helpfulness in service delivery; and
- Provision of redressal of grievances.

**Importance of Citizen's charter in the Governance of developing nation like India:**

- To make administration accountable and citizen friendly.
- To ensure transparency.



- To take measures to improve customer service.
- To adopt a stakeholder approach.
- To save time of both Administration and the citizen

#### Conclusion:

- Citizen's Charter is playing a prominent part in ensuring "minimum govt & maximum governance", changing the nature of charters from non-justiciable to justiciable & adopting penalty measures that will make it more efficient & citizen friendly.

### Topic –India and its neighborhood- relations.

#### Q) The listing of Masood Azhar as a global terrorist has opened new phase in India-China relations. Analyse. (250 words)

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

##### Why this question:

The United Nations Security Council recently has designated JeM Chief, Masood Azhar as a global terrorist after China lifted its technical hold on his listing under the UNSC 1267 sanctions committee. The JeM itself was sanctioned by the 1267 Committee in 2001. The proposal to designate Azhar under the 1267 Al Qaeda Sanctions Committee of the UN Security Council was moved by France, UK and the US on February 27.

##### Key demand of the question:

The question expects us to analyse the implications and significance of the move upon India- China relations in coming future.

##### Directive word:

**Analyse** – When asked to analyse, 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:

Begin with brief on the recent happenings around declaring JeM Chief, Masood Azhar as a global terrorist.

##### Body:

Discussion should include the following aspects –

- Past attempts by India to designate Masood Azhar a global terrorist: India had initiated the move in UN to list him as global terrorist in 2009. However, on all occasions China, a veto-wielding permanent member of the Security Council, blocked the proposals from being adopted by the Sanctions Committee.
- Recent developments: Now, the 1267 Sanctions Committee of UN has designated Masood Azhar, as a UN proscribed terrorist. The recent proposal was the fourth attempt by India.
- Reason for china not using Veto: It appears that China has responded to the growing global concern in relation to Jihadi terror, most recently seen in Sri Lanka.
- Discuss the significance of the move to India – China relations ; take cues from the article.
- Discuss what is the way ahead for India?

##### Conclusion:

Conclude with significance of such move.

##### Introduction:

- The **United Nations Security Council** has designated JeM Chief, Masood Azhar as a global terrorist after China lifted its technical hold on his listing under the UNSC 1267 sanctions committee. The JeM itself was sanctioned by the 1267 Committee in 2001. The proposal to designate Azhar under the 1267 Al Qaeda Sanctions Committee of the UN Security Council was moved by France, UK and the US on February 27.

##### Body:

##### India's previous attempts:

- In the last 10 years, China has repeatedly blocked India's listing proposals at the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Resolution 1267 sanctions committee to designate Azhar as a global terrorist.
- Beijing blocked it for the first time in 2009, after India had moved the proposal in the aftermath of the 26/11 Mumbai attack.
- In February 2016, after the Pathankot attack, India put forward a fresh proposal. China intervened at Pakistan's behest and placed a technical hold on India's move, and did so again in October 2016.



- It subsequently used its veto power to block the proposal in December 2016, a day before the end of the technical hold.
- After the February 14 Pulwama attack, claimed by the JeM, the government had made the listing of Azhar a focus in its diplomatic efforts.
- It reached out to several governments, and shared a dossier on Azhar with each member of the Security Council, who are all members of the 1267 ISIL and al-Qaeda sanctions committee.
- Despite weeks of a diplomatic campaign after the Pulwama terror attack, China's decision to place a "hold" on the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) listing of Jaish-e-Mohammad chief Masood Azhar as a global terrorist had come as a setback to India.

**Reasons for not blocking this time:**

- A major reason was the sustained international pressure by India, the US, Britain and France. It had become untenable for China to continuously withstand growing international pressure not to blindly support Azhar.
- There was even a threat to put the question of blacklisting Azhar to a public vote – a move that would have been very embarrassing for China.
- China's decision to drop its objection to the UN listing Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) chief Masood Azhar as a terrorist reflects its growing frustration with Pakistan's use of terror masterminds as strategic assets.
- Experts say it was a move to shield from growing criticism that China supports terror infrastructure.

**Impact of India-China relations:**

- The move helps remove a key irritant in China-India ties and it may help the process of stabilising relations between the two.
- The move is also significant as it removes the suspicion between the two.
- Sino-Indian relations have improved since the Doklam confrontation in 2017. The Wuhan "spirit," the supposed positive outcome of the informal summit at Wuhan between Modi and Chinese leader Xi Jinping, is credited with improving relations between the two countries.
- India can now bring up any problems it has with Pakistan in the conversations it has with China.
- The collaborative efforts to fight terrorism as seen in various multilateral groupings like BRICS, SCO where both India and China are members can now be accelerated.
- The bilateral trade between the countries will continue to grow smoothly.
- However, there are irritants which need to be worked upon viz. Belt and Road Initiative to which India refuses to be a partner, the border issue, the issue of giving refuge to the Tibetians.

**Way forward:**

- India-China relations must be managed through a mix of competitive and cooperative policies and regular leadership-level interaction.
- The only effective instrument for managing India-China relations will be a significant, sustained and rapid development of India's economic and security capabilities, thus narrowing the power gap between the two Asian giants.
- The two sides need to build mutual strategic trust based on the fact that their common understanding and shared interests are greater than their divergences.
- The two countries should realize that they offer each other opportunities without posing any threat, and that peaceful co-existence and win-win cooperation are the right choice for them.
- The two countries should prudently and discreetly deal with sensitive issues, including the border dispute, and should not allow such issues to restrain the further development of bilateral ties.
- There are several areas, apart from trade and investment, in which the two sides can strengthen cooperation, such as infrastructure construction, urbanization, food security and climate change.
- The two countries militaries should maintain regular high-level and non-confrontational dialogues, in order to reduce strategic miscalculations and enhance strategic trust.
- The two sides should also build a communication and coordination mechanism to manage their overseas interests, and organize dialogues at academic, media and cultural levels, as well as exchanges between NGOs as a way to improve bilateral ties.

**Conclusion:**

- The relationship between India and China is a complicated, multifaceted one that involves a mix of issues. There are issues where they work together and issues on which they disagree.
- As long as the two sides deepen their exchanges and reduce suspicion the strategic value of cooperation would be evident and people would be confident of China-India relations.





**Q) Indian Ocean is an “ocean of economic opportunities” for India. Comment. (250 words)**

The hindu

**Why this question:**

The Indian Ocean is a valuable source of fishing and mineral resources. The Indian Ocean basin is of particular importance for India, as the region’s most populous country and geopolitical keystone. Thus it is important for us to examine its significance for India.

**Key demand of the question:**

The answer must evaluate the importance Indian ocean holds for our country – economically and geopolitically.

**Directive word:**

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

**Structure of the answer:**

**Introduction:**

Begin with brief background, narrating the significance of Indian ocean.

**Body:**

Discussion should include the following aspects –

- Quote some facts related to the Indian ocean, asserting its proximity to India vis-à-vis its high importance for the country. The Indian Ocean covers at least one fifth of the world’s total ocean area.
- It is bounded by Africa and the Arabian Peninsula (known as the western Indian Ocean), India’s coastal waters (the central Indian Ocean), and the Bay of Bengal near Myanmar and Indonesia (the eastern Indian Ocean).
- The Indian Ocean matters today, arguably more than ever. It is a major conduit for international trade, especially energy.
- Its littoral is vast, densely populated, and comprised of some of the world’s fastest growing regions.
- The Ocean is also a valuable source of fishing and mineral resources. The Indian Ocean basin is of particular importance for India, as the region’s most populous country and geopolitical keystone.
- Narrate the significance of the region.

**Conclusion:**

Conclude with way forward signifying importance of IOR.

**Introduction:**

- The Indian Ocean matters today, arguably more than ever. It is a major conduit for international trade, especially energy. Its littoral is vast, densely populated, and comprised of some of the world’s fastest growing regions.
- The Ocean is also a valuable source of fishing and mineral resources. The Indian Ocean basin is of particular importance for India, as the region’s most populous country and geopolitical keystone.

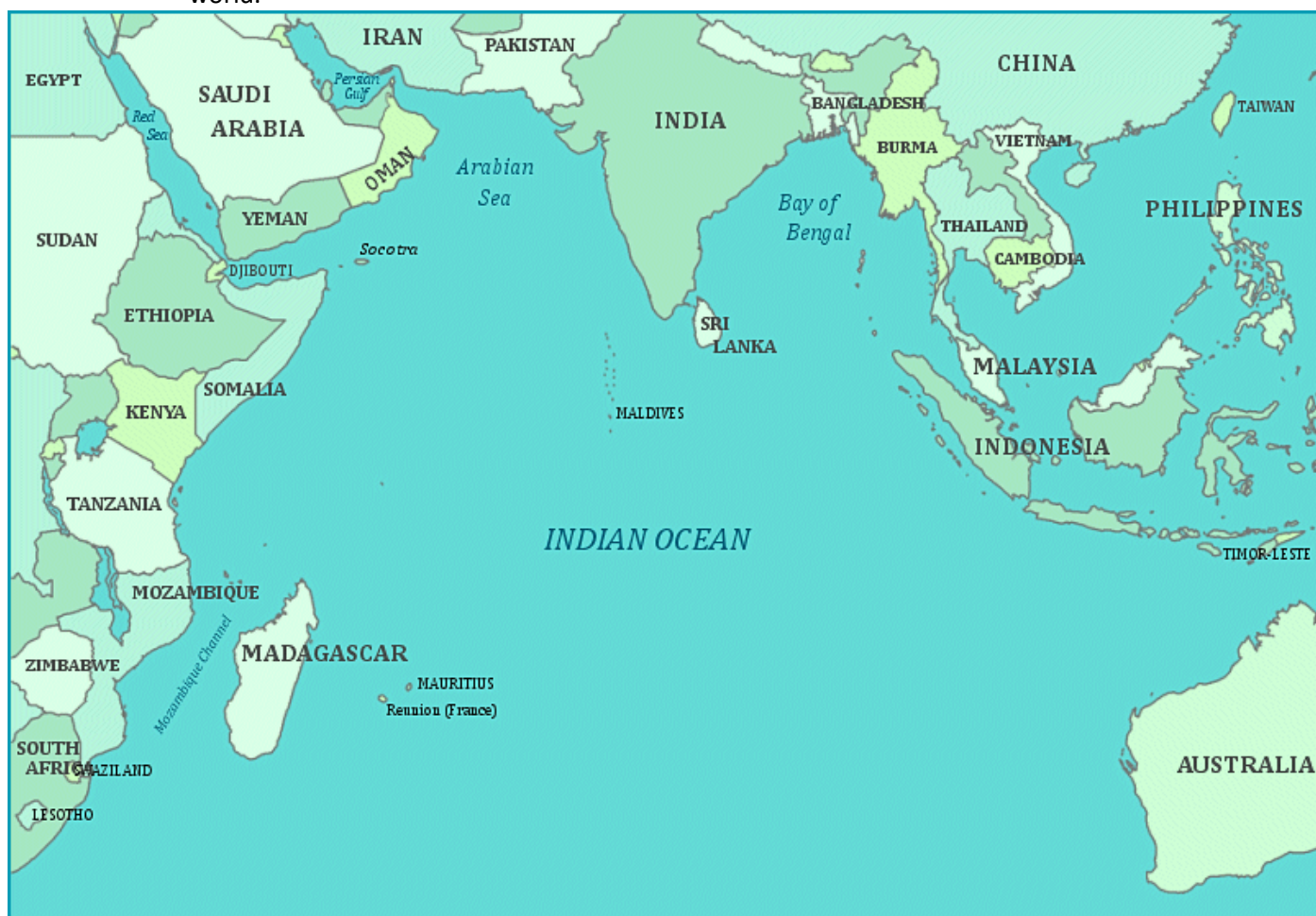
**Body:**

The Economic importance of IOR for India includes:

- **Trade and Commerce:**
  - It enjoys a privileged location at the crossroads of global trade, connecting the major engines of the international economy in the Northern Atlantic and Asia-Pacific. This is particularly important in an era in which global shipping has burgeoned.
  - Today, **almost 90,000 vessels in the world’s commercial fleet transport 9.84 billion tonnes per year.** This represents an almost four-fold increase in the volume of commercial shipping since 1970.
  - The Indian Ocean has vital sea lanes of communication crisscrossing it and which feeds Asia’s largest economies. Around **80 per cent of the world’s seaborne oil trade** passes through the choke points of this ocean and therefore it literally connects the east to the west with 40 percent passing through the Strait of Hormuz, 35 percent through the Strait of Malacca and 8 percent through the Bab el-Mandab Strait.



- The Ocean's vast drainage basin is important in its own right, home to some two billion people. This creates opportunities, especially given the high rates of economic growth around the Indian Ocean rim, including in India, Bangladesh, Southeast Asia, and Eastern and Southern Africa.
- **95 per cent of India's trade by volume and 68 per cent of trade by value** come via the Indian Ocean.
- Presence of 13 major ports and over 200 minor ports provide avenues for exports of Indian goods to world.



- **Blue Economy:** The Indian Ocean is rich in natural resources.
  - **Oil and Natural Gas:**
    - Forty per cent of the world's offshore oil production takes place in the Indian Ocean basin.
    - Energy security and resources are absolutely critical. The Indian Ocean Region is immensely rich in that.
    - 28 million barrels per day—or nearly **80 per cent of India's crude oil requirement**—is imported by sea via the Indian Ocean. Taking into account India's offshore oil production and petroleum exports, India's sea dependence for oil is about 93 per cent, according to the Indian Navy.
    - India is also the **fourth-largest importer of liquefied natural gas (LNG)**, with about 45 per cent coming by sea.
    - India has her own oil rigs in the Indian ocean region. Example: **Bombay high**
  - **Minerals:**
    - Mineral resources with nodules containing nickel, cobalt, and iron, and massive sulphide deposits of manganese, copper, iron, zinc, silver, and gold present in sizeable quantities on the sea bed.
    - Indian Ocean coastal sediments are also important sources of titanium, zirconium, tin, zinc, and copper.
    - Additionally, various rare earth elements are present, even if their extraction is not always commercially feasible.
    - In **2014, the International Seabed Authority** issued licenses for the Indian Ocean ridge, opening up new opportunities for **deep seabed mining**. This region is estimated to have massive reserves of manganese, as well as cobalt, nickel, and copper, all of which are scarce on Indian soil.



- **Placer Deposits** – Vitally important, thorium resources in placer sands of Malabar coast are a promise to Nuclear Energy security. Similarly Placers of Thailand, Indo-China and Australia are source of precious heavy metals critically important for Electronics and semi conductors industry.
- **Fishing and Aquaculture:**
- Fishing in the Indian Ocean now accounts for almost 15 per cent of the world's total.
- Aquaculture in the region has also grown 12-fold since 1980. Although global fishing is reaching its natural limitations, the Indian Ocean may be able to sustain increases in production.
- The largely unregulated overexploitation of its fishery resources. The consequences of over fishing, which is actually largely a result of activity by countries outside the region, could eventually have serious consequences for littoral states that depend heavily on maritime resources to feed their populations and also provide valuable export revenues.
- India captured 4.1 million tonnes of fish in 2008, placing it sixth in the world and its fishing and aquaculture industries employ some 14 million people.
- Fisheries and aquaculture industries are also a **major source of exports**. India's maritime exports grew **55 times** in volume between 1962 and 2012 and fisheries exports now account for Rs. 16,600 crore or about \$2.5 billion.
- **Tourism:**
- Coral atolls in Lakshadweep, Andaman & Nicobar Islands attract many tourists from India as well as abroad. This helps the livelihood of many islanders.

#### Conclusion:

Indian Ocean is an “**ocean of economic opportunities**” for India. The security threats posed by State and non-state actors are impeding the progress. The Government initiatives like SAGAR, IORA, Sagarmala etc. should ensure that the fruits of Blue Economy is well reaped.

#### Q) Discuss in detail the issue of displacement of Rohingya community. What are controversies associated and highlight role of India in addressing the issue. (250 words)

The hindu

##### Why this question:

The article discusses the case of Rohingya repatriation in detail. It narrates briefly the issue on a broader picture, causes and its consequences with special emphasis on India's role in the scenario.

##### Key demands of the question:

The answer must briefly discuss issues associated with displacement of Rohingya community, the challenges it is posing in the region and the key role India has to the issue.

##### 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/context of the question.

##### Body

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

- Discuss who are Rohingyas and what is the issue? – They are an Ethnic group, mostly Muslims. They were not granted full citizenship by Myanmar. They were classified as “resident foreigners or associate citizens”.
- What are the Concerns with regard to these Illegal Migrants? – The Myanmar Government says that Rohingya people are not Burmese citizens – but the Rohingya have been living in Myanmar for generations. Today, they are a people with no home or citizenship.
- Rohingya people are being widely abused and exploited. They are one of the most persecuted minorities in the world.
- Discuss the Rohingya crisis and Implications for the Region.
- India's role and stand on the issue.

##### Conclusion

Conclude with way forward.





### Introduction:

- The Rohingya are **Myanmar's Muslim minority** who reside in the northern parts of the **Rakhine region**, a geographically isolated area in western Myanmar, bordering Bangladesh. Nearly two years after they fled Myanmar following a brutal crackdown, more than 270,000 Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh have been provided with identity cards, the United Nations said recently, to safeguard their right to voluntarily return home to Myanmar. This is a welcome development for the Rohingyas.



### Body:

#### Issue of Rohingyas:

- Rohingyas are considered “stateless entities” by the Myanmar government and have been refusing to recognise them as one of the ethnic groups of the country.
- This has led to large scale exodus of the Rohingya population to neighbouring countries like India, Bangladesh, Malaysia, Thailand and Indonesia.
- The 1982 Citizenship Law denies the Rohingya Muslims citizenship despite the people living there for generations.
- The Rohingyas are fleeing Myanmar because of the restrictions and policies placed by the government.
- The Rohingyas are ethnically, linguistically, and religiously different from Myanmar's dominant Buddhist community.
- Tensions between the Rohingyas and the other religious groups have exploded into conflict.
- The violence and turmoil began in 2012 when a group of Rohingya men were accused of raping and killing a Buddhist woman. The Buddhist nationalists retaliated by killing and burning the Rohingya homes.
- About 1.1 million Rohingyas are said to live in Myanmar's Rakhine region, which is Myanmar's least developed region, with more than 78 per cent of households living below the poverty line.



### Role of India:

- It is estimated that there are around 40,000 Rohingyas in India, of which around 5,700 are in Jammu and are more vulnerable for getting recruited by terrorist organisations.
- Indian Government has described illegal Rohingya immigrants as posing a national security threat, and ordered state governments in 2017 to identify and deport them.
- India is not a signatory to the 1951 United Nations Convention and 1967 Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees, and it does not currently have a national law on refugees. Thus, the principle of non-Refoulement doesn't bind India.
- However, the prohibition of non-refoulement of refugees constitutes a norm of customary international law, which binds even non-parties to the Convention.
- Any deportation would violate their fundamental rights to equality and to life, under Article 14 and 21 of the Constitution
- It is difficult to envisage, given the present circumstances, use of force to send the unfortunate and suffering people back as neither Myanmar nor Bangladesh.
- At the same time, we obviously cannot send a message that India is willing to receive a huge number of displaced people from Myanmar.
- India's actions make it clear that it would not compromise with the security concerns of the country while dealing with Rohingya issue.

### Concerns/Challenges for India:

- The violence in Rakhine state is affecting India's Kaladan Multi-modal Transit Transport project
- Rohingya Muslims, considered by the UN to be the most persecuted minority in the world.
- Rohingya crisis pose a security challenge to the South and Southeast Asia.
- Rohingyas have acquired documents like Aadhaar, PAN and Voter-ID. This raises the concern of naturalisation of illegal migrants by fraudulent means.
- In the absence of a law to deal with refugees in India, their identification and surveillance will become difficult.

### Way forward for India:

- It is high time to formulate a strong refugee policy. It will help to mitigate the present Rohingya refugee problem and provide a structure to be used whenever similar problem arises.
- Provide funding to socio economic developmental projects in partnership with Myanmar government in the Rakhine region.
- India should improve border security and regulate inflow of illegal migration
- India should show leadership by protecting the Rohingyas and calling on the Myanmar government to end the repression and atrocities causing these people to leave.
- ASEAN, India and Bangladesh need to discuss the Rohingya crisis together to work for an optimum solution to the problem.
- The first step would be to convince the present government in Myanmar about the benefits of well-coordinated cooperation between ASEAN members, India and Bangladesh to tackle the issue.
- Our Act East policy demands India to play a role in finding a permanent solution to Rohingya crisis.
- We should take an apolitical, pragmatic position that is free from ideological inclinations.

*Topic: Bilateral, regional and global groupings and agreements involving India and/or affecting India's interests*

**Q) What is Intra – Afghan Dialogue ? With India being a key player in the Afghanistan's peace process, Discuss the effects of such a dialogue on India. (250 words)**

Hindustantimes

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

The question is in the context of Intra – Afghan Dialogue and its impact on India.

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

This question seeks to examine Intra – Afghan Dialogue, role of India and the effects it will have on the geopolitics of the region.

#### **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 narration of the background of the issue.

**Body**

Discuss the following points in detail:

- India-Afghanistan Relations – Strategic, Economic, and Security Interests. Highlight as to why India's stakes are high in such a dialogue.
- Debate on India's role in Afghan – There is a debate among major players in Afghan on the optimal role for India in Afghanistan's reconstruction in light of the enduring security competition between India and Pakistan.
- Discuss the involvement of different powers – US, China, Iran etc and roles played by them.
- Then move on to discuss Why India needs to keep a close eye on the progress in the US-Taliban talks?
- Conclude with way ahead

**Conclusion**

Conclude with significance of the such dialogues and the impact it will have possibly on India's relationship with Afghanistan.

**Introduction:**

- The direct negotiations between the Afghan government and the Taliban are known as Intra- Afghan Dialogues. The intra- Afghan dialogue is proving to be the most intractable. Taliban have, so far, refused to sit across the table with the Afghan government, describing it as illegitimate.
- Consequently, US special representative for Afghanistan reconciliation, Zalmay Khalilzad is in negotiations with the Taliban. Five rounds of talks have been held and a sixth is likely soon.

**Body:**

Khalilzad's negotiations with the Taliban are focusing on four aspects:

- the pace of withdrawal of foreign troops;
- Taliban's commitment to not again allow Afghanistan to be a base for attacks against other countries;
- intra-Afghan dialogue;
- Reduction of violence leading to a comprehensive ceasefire.

But for an eventual settlement of the Afghan crisis, the Afghan government and the Taliban need to talk. Thus, the emphasis on Intra-Afghan dialogue.

**Intra-Afghan dialogue:**

- An intra-Afghan dialogue involves political and civil society leaders of Afghanistan.
- The negotiators list from the Afghan Government numbering around 250 includes representatives of political parties, government officials, opposition figures, former fighters, women's rights activists, war victims' families, Muslim leaders, youth and media groups.
- It includes tribal elders and members of Afghanistan's High Peace Council (AHPC), a body that oversees peace efforts but does not represent the government.

**Reasons for India's discomfort in US talks with Taliban:**

- These talks continue without acknowledging a role for India, despite this being an expressly stated goal of USA's South Asia policy.
- Khalilzad's conference at the U.S. State Department to discuss "international support for the Afghan peace process, the role each party can play in bringing an end to the war, and progress to date in peace talks" included only special envoys from Russia, China and the European Union.
- When talks with the Taliban began, the objective was to try to mainstream the insurgents into the political process, and at least have a working ceasefire by the time presidential elections, scheduled for April 2019, were held.
- However, the Taliban continues to carry out terror attacks in Afghanistan even as its leadership talks with the U.S. Despite the Ministry of External Affairs issuing a statement on the importance of holding the presidential elections, the Afghan vote has been further postponed to September 28.



- The Taliban launched its annual spring offensive, naming it Operation Fateh, targeting international and local forces. Several attacks have taken place with Afghan and international security forces casualties.
- This makes Mr. Ghani's continuance more tenuous under the constitution, which could mean an interim government will be installed, something India has been opposed to as well.
- New Delhi is worried about the prospect of chaos and civil war, akin to the scene after the previous U.S. pullout in the early 1990s that cut India out and brought the Taliban to power in Kabul with Pakistan's support.

#### Way forward for India:

- Despite the restricted room for manoeuvre, however, there are several steps New Delhi can and must take in the present scenario to ensure both its own relevance in Afghanistan and stability in the region.
- To begin with, there is the question of talks with the Taliban, which India has thus far refused.
- India needs to monitor the Taliban's approach to groups fostered by the Pakistani state to target India.
- India must focus on assisting Afghanistan in every manner possible to ensure that the country's elections are as peaceful and participative as possible.
- On the military front as well, India must move quickly to provide helicopters as well as engineering/tech support for Afghan hardware.
- Indian government must realise that its consistent undermining of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) because of problems with Pakistan is also weakening Afghanistan's engagement with the subcontinent, which India had worked hard to foster
- For regional security there must be closer involvement of regional powers in international efforts to ensure non-interference and a stable Afghanistan; this also requires involvement of the Central Asian Republics, which border Afghanistan.
- It is important for India to coordinate its efforts with those of Russia and Iran to ensure success.

#### Conclusion:

- India is committed to **"Afghan-led, Afghan-owned and Afghan controlled" peace process**. India's engagement with Afghanistan is multi-dimensional.

**Q) "India's Act East policy remains the bedrock of the national Indo-Pacific vision and the centrality of ASEAN is embedded in the Indian narrative." Analyse. (250 words)**

[The hindu](#)

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

The article captures a detailed discussion of significance of India's Act East Policy and Engagement with ASEAN as a critical component to the national Indo-Pacific vision.

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

The answer must evaluate the of significance of India's Act East Policy and Engagement with ASEAN and in what way these two factors have become the driving factors for the India's Indo pacific strategy.

#### **Directive word:**

**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:**

Begin with brief background of the India's Indo-pacific vision.

##### **Body:**

The answer must discuss the significance of India's Act East Policy and Engagement with ASEAN, suggest how India's 'Look East Policy' has become 'Act East Policy'. Discuss the Indo -Pacific vision statement, its significance in detail. Take cues from the article.

##### **Conclusion:**

Conclude with way forward.

#### **Introduction:**

- The term Indo-Pacific has been gaining traction in Indian policy circles for some time now. It achieved operational clarity after the Indian vision was presented by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in his keynote address at the Shangri-La Dialogue in June 2018.
- His speech underscored that for India the geography of the Indo-Pacific stretches from the eastern coast of Africa to Oceania (from the shores of Africa to that of the Americas) which also includes in its fold the Pacific Island countries.

**Body:****India's Indo-Pacific Vision:**

- India views the Indo-Pacific as a geographic and strategic expanse, with the 10 ASEAN countries connecting the two great oceans. Inclusiveness, openness, and ASEAN centrality and unity, therefore, lie at the heart of the Indian notion of Indo-Pacific.
- Security in the region must be maintained through dialogue, a common rules-based order, freedom of navigation, unimpeded commerce and settlement of disputes in accordance with international law.
- More connectivity initiatives impinging on respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity, consultation, good governance, transparency, viability and sustainability should be promoted.

**India's actions under Act East policy:**

- The Objective of "Act East Policy" is to promote economic cooperation, cultural ties and develop strategic relationship with countries in the Asia-Pacific region
- Relations with ASEAN have become multi-faceted to encompass security, strategic, political, counterterrorism, and defence collaboration in addition to economic ties.
- India has been an active participant in mechanisms like the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), in ASEAN-led frameworks like the East Asia Summit, the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Plus, the ASEAN Regional Forum as well as the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation and the Mekong-Ganga Economic Corridor.
- India has also been convening the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium, in which the navies of the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) participate. India has boosted its engagements with Australia and New Zealand and has deepened its cooperation with the Republic of Korea.
- Through the Forum for India-Pacific Islands Cooperation, India is stepping up its interactions with the Pacific Island countries. India's growing partnership with Africa can be seen through the convening of mechanisms like the India-Africa Forum Summits.
- India's multi-layered engagement with China as well as strategic partnership with Russia underlines its commitment to ensuring a stable, open, secure, inclusive and prosperous Indo-Pacific.
- In addition to reviving the economic partnership, India has focused on promoting connectivity with other ASEAN states through Myanmar and Thailand.
- AEP has imparted greater vigour to India's ties with ASEAN.
- AEP has sought to significantly expand its geographical coverage beyond ASEAN alone, to include other countries like Japan, Australia, Pacific Island nations, South Korea, and Mongolia.
- India's partnership with Japan has witnessed the most dynamic growth.
- India's AEP has also impacted relations with the United States.
- By aligning India's Act East Policy with the U.S. pivot to Asia, India seeks to expand its geo-strategic space to contend with China's growing assertiveness and foster balanced relations.

**Challenges towards Indo-Pacific vision:**

- Integration of the Quadrilateral initiative which got revived in 2017 with its larger Indo-Pacific approach.
- Ways to move beyond security and political issues and articulate a more comprehensive policy towards the region.
- Commerce and connectivity in particular will have to be prioritised if India is to take advantage of a new opening for its regional engagement.
- While India has been consistently emphasising "inclusiveness" in the Indo-Pacific framework, it will be challenging to maintain a balance between the interests of all stakeholders.
- There are differences between India's vision and the U.S.'s strategy for the Indo-Pacific even as countries like China and Russia view the Indo-Pacific with suspicion.

**Way forward:**

- India must continue to focus on further strengthening collaboration with ASEAN nations and others.
- India's bureaucratic shift is an important move to articulate its regional policy more cogently, coherently and with a renewed sense of purpose.
- Partners must work to promote economic revival, seek strategic cooperation to fight terrorism, and enhance maritime security and defense cooperation.
- Soft power such as Buddhism, tourism, people-to-people contacts, and cultural ties with the region must continue to be harnessed.
- Beyond, but linked to ASEAN, India must further strengthen strategic and economic ties with the U.S., Japan, Korea, Australia, and also with China.



- Important sectors like technology transfer, civilian nuclear cooperation, defence, and innovation should be given priority
- Continuous engagement with China too is necessary to expand cooperation, particularly on the economic front.

**Q) Discuss how far the IBSA endeavor has succeeded in proving to be unique a voice for the Global South. (250 words)**

The hindu

**Why this question:**

The article discusses in detail Why the unique grouping of India, Brazil and South Africa must be revitalised. It explains the achievements and way ahead for the platform IBSA.

**Demand of the question:**

The question is about discussing the attempts of IBSA to become the voice of global south.

**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 IBSA.

**Body**

Discuss the following points in detail:

- IBSA – International tripartite grouping for promoting international cooperation among three countries, represents three important poles for galvanizing South-South cooperation.
- Discuss its evolution from the Brasilia declaration.
- Discuss its significance.

**Conclusion**

Conclude with way forward.

**Introduction:**

- IBSA is a unique forum which brings together India, Brazil and South Africa, three large democracies and major economies from three different continents, facing similar challenges. All three countries are developing, pluralistic, multi-cultural, multi-ethnic, multi-lingual and multi-religious nations.

**Body:**

**Cooperation in IBSA is on three fronts:**

- first, as a forum for consultation and coordination on global and regional political issues, such as, the reform of the global institutions of political and economic governance, WTO/Doha Development Agenda, climate change, terrorism etc.;
- second, trilateral collaboration on concrete areas/projects, through fourteen working groups and six People-to-People Forums, for the common benefit of three countries; and
- Third, assisting other developing countries by taking up projects in the latter through IBSA Fund.

**Significance of IBSA:**

- The success of IBSA reflects an important demonstration effect.
- It is the champion of South-South Co-operation and the advocate of a coordinated response by developing economies to secure the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- The glue that binds IBSA countries together is their faith in democracy, diversity, plurality, inclusivity, human rights and rule of law.
- IBSA success in contributing to discourse on global issues also shows the importance of engaging with the countries of the South.

**Successes so far:**

- The three Foreign Ministers have been meeting regularly to provide a coordinated leadership to the grouping.
- While the India, Brazil and South Africa Facility for Poverty and Hunger Alleviation (IBSA Fund) is small in monetary terms, it has succeeded in implementing 31 development projects in diverse countries: Burundi, Guinea-Bissau, State of Palestine, Cambodia and Vietnam, among others.
- India has been running an innovative IBSA Visiting Fellows Programme through the Delhi-based think tank, RIS or Research and Information System for Developing Countries.



- A strong case exists for expanding its reach. Both South Africa and Brazil should initiate their own editions of this programme, as an investment in building intellectual capital.

#### Challenges aplenty:

- Post 2011, BRICS, the larger group comprising IBSA countries, China and Russia, started to overshadow IBSA. IBSA has been unable, until now, to hold its sixth summit.
- The fact is that the political leadership of both Russia and China have shown greater commitment to the idea of BRICS, and pushing their anti-West agenda through it, than have the political leadership of Brazil, India and South Africa to IBSA, and to its pro-democracy agenda.
- BRICS accounts for 26 per cent of the world's area, 40 per cent of its population, and 22 per cent of global GDP. Therefore, when BRICS speaks, its views are bound to receive much greater notice than those of IBSA.
- It also helps that those drafting BRICS declarations are far more concise and self-disciplined than their colleagues in IBSA who still seem to be driven by the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM)-style urge to be long-winded.

#### Way forward:

- The idea of IBSA remains valid. The grouping has its tasks cut out. The special responsibilities it bears cannot be discharged by BRICS.
- In fact, strengthening IBSA could increase the effectiveness of BRICS and encourage it to follow a more balanced approach on key issues of interest to India, Brazil and South Africa.
- Hence, the current endeavours to infuse greater dynamism in IBSA are well-timed.
- They would need buy-in by the government that comes to power in India.
- Support by Brazil and South Africa's heads, who have just won re-election as President, would be crucial.

### Q) What do you understand by 'Shanghai spirit' ? Discuss what is the strategic importance of SCO for India ? (250 words)

#### Reference

##### *Why this question:*

The Indian delegation is participating in the second Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Mass Media Forum at Bishkek in Kyrgyzstan. Thus it is important for us to analyse the its importance for India.

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

The answer must evaluate what is Shanghai's spirit and its significance to India.

##### *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 Shanghai spirit.

##### *Body:*

Body of the answer to capture the following dimensions:

- The Shanghai Spirit — the core value of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) — has played a significant role in safeguarding regional security and promoting regional development.
- The "Shanghai spirit" is about mutual trust, mutual benefit, equality, consultation, respect for cultural diversity and pursuit of common development among the SCO members.
- Then move on to discuss Why SCO is important for India?

##### *Conclusion:*

Conclude with what should be the way forward.

#### Introduction:

- **The Shanghai Spirit** — the core value of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) — has played a significant role in safeguarding regional security and promoting regional development.
- The SCO's undergirding values, which feature **mutual trust, mutual respect, equality, respect for diverse civilizations and pursuit of shared development**, was born together with the Shanghai Five mechanism, the precursor of the SCO. SCO's main objective is working cooperatively against terrorism, separatism, and extremism.



**Body:**

The “Shanghai Spirit” is the SCO’s driving philosophy. It emphasises

- harmony
- working by consensus
- respect for other cultures
- non-interference in the internal affairs of others
- non-alignment

**Strategic importance of SCO for India:**

- India has challenges to address and opportunities to harvest in the SCO summit.
- **Security:**
  - India through **RATS** can improve its counterterrorism abilities by working toward intelligence sharing, law enforcement and developing best practices and technologies.
  - Through the SCO, India can also work on anti-drug trafficking and small arms proliferation.
  - Cooperation on common challenges of terrorism and radicalisation.
- **Energy:**
  - India being an energy deficient country with increasing demands for energy, SCO provides it with an opportunity to meet its energy requirements through regional diplomacy.
  - Talks on the construction of stalled pipelines like the **TAPI** (Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India) pipeline; **IPI** (Iran-Pakistan-India) pipeline can get a much needed push through the SCO.
- **Trade:**
  - SCO provides direct access to Central Asia – overcoming the main hindrance in flourishing of trade between India and Central Asia.
  - SCO acts as an alternative route to Central Asia.
  - Economic Ties – Central Asian countries provide India with a market for its IT, tele-communications, banking, finance and pharmaceutical industries.
- **Geopolitical:**
  - Central Asia is a part of India’s Extended Neighbourhood – SCO provides India an opportunity to pursue the “**Connect Central Asian Policy**”.
  - Helps India fulfil its aspiration of playing an active role in its extended neighbourhood as well as checking the ever growing influence of China in Eurasia.
  - Platform for India to simultaneously engage with its traditional friend Russia as well as its rivals, China and Pakistan.
  - The SCO provides the only multilateral platform for India to deal in close proximity with Pakistan and Afghanistan
- **Hydrology:**
  - A MoU signed during the 2018 summit concerned the sharing of hydrological information on Brahmaputra
  - The agreement enables China to provide hydrological data in flood season from May 15 to October 15 every year.
  - It also enables the Chinese side to provide hydrological data if water level exceeds mutually agreed level during non-flood season.
- **Pakistan :**
  - The summit provides an opportunity for the Indian and Pakistani leaders.
  - They could meet informally on the sidelines of a multilateral event.
  - The two sides are obliged to cooperate on issues of mutual interest without bringing in their bilateral disputes.
  - Signing off on joint counter-terrorism exercises will be a new form of engagement between the two militaries.
- **China:**
  - After the Wuhan meet, the SCO summit will provide another opportunity for cooperation.
- **Russia:**
  - Russia has been India’s staunchest supporter in the SCO.
  - It has lobbied hard with Beijing for years to ensure India’s entry into the grouping.
  - India is clear that its relationship with Moscow would not be impacted by the West’s approach towards it.



- **Iran:**
  - Iran is an observer state that has applied for full SCO membership.
  - India has a powerful strategic interest in Iran's Chahbahar port.
  - The US administration is hostile to Iran.
  - But India has been seeking to signal to US, the alignment of interests in Chahbahar.

#### Way forward:

- Joint commitment, respect for human rights and the rule of law, will build and strengthen the cooperation needed to respond to global challenges.
- To ensure fair globalisation, nations must have the necessary domestic resources and capacities to steer their economies and development agendas.
- Openness and partnership between countries can make a critical contribution to strengthening security and bringing about prosperity.
- Connectivity in the SCO region must be given priority.
- Increasing awareness of our shared cultures can help boost tourism

#### Conclusion:

- Thanks to the Shanghai Spirit, the SCO has become a paradigm of global and regional cooperation, and serves as a model of efficient cooperation by paying equal attention simultaneously to economic development and security cooperation.
- SCO is a potential platform to advance India's Connect Central Asia policy. Thus, India must make use of the platform to secure its interests vis-à-vis the challenging neighbours China and Pakistan.

**Q) Comment on the aspects that are turning SAARC futile and dysfunctional. What steps should be taken to make it more relevant and workable in the present conditions ? (250 words)**

#### Reference

##### *Why this question:*

The question is about discussing the problems facing SAARC and the futility and ineffectiveness that is being witnessed by the partnership.

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

The answer is straightforward and must discuss the reasons of SAARC's ineffectiveness and dysfunctionality.

##### *Directive:*

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

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

- Although conceptualized to collaborate on common problems of member nations like low intra-regional trade, infrastructure, sustainable development and poverty alleviation, SAARC has failed to be effective and turned dysfunctional due to the following reasons:
- The success of European Union was facilitated by France and Germany, the two bitter rivals, coming together. In contrast, India and Pakistan, the two big rivals could not come to common terms.
- SAARC charter doesn't allow discussion of bilateral issues as a result of which the contentious issues continue to simmer and countries are not able to come forward.
- Trade barriers: Tariff and non-tariff barriers have also played their role in keeping the level of integration low while Pakistan hasn't extended MFN status to India with so many items been put under the 'negative list'
- Failure to ensure single window clearance and removal of clumsy procedures resulted in high cost trade inhibiting the growth potential of the region.
- Non-availability of adequate infrastructure in the form of roads and cargo/ship handling equipment has also hindered the progress.
- Due to same agriculture produce like Basmati rice in India, Pakistan and Bangladesh scope of trade is also inherently less.
- Regional problems: Srilankan Tamil issue, Bangladesh's political conflict, Nepal's unstable terrain, and political instability in Pakistan further aggravated by militancy creating real bottlenecks in developing the region.



### Conclusion:

Conclude with what should be the way ahead.

### Introduction:

- SAARC was set up in **1985** and today it has **8 members**: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Srilanka. Afghanistan joined SAARC only in 2007.
- SAARC member nations cooperate on a range of issues from **agriculture, economy, poverty alleviation, S&T and culture to encourage people to people contact**.

### Body:

- SAARC aims at integration of south Asian nations for undertaking **collective efforts to achieve common objective of regional stability and prosperity**. Despite geographical contiguity and historical and cultural links, the SAARC region remains the most disconnected regions in the world.

SAARC has failed in achieving its objectives because:

- India-Pakistan rivalry**: This has become a bottleneck in achieving effective coordination. India has conveyed that terrorism and talks cannot go on simultaneously.
- Bilateral issues**: Long pending issues between members like fishermen issue between India and Srilanka, Teesta water sharing between India and Bangladesh, lack of direct access to Afghanistan to other members except Pakistan have restricted in arriving at common ground for regional integration.
- SAARC charter doesn't allow discussion of bilateral issues as a result of which the contentious issues continue to simmer and countries are not able to come forward.
- Perceived Big-Brother attitude of India**: Asymmetry in the region due to sheer size of Indian economy and stature in international arena requires India to play an over active role. However, this is perceived as big brother attitude by other members creating mistrust.
- Internal Crises**: Almost every member is facing numerous internal crises like Tamils issue in Srilanka, Constitutional crisis in Nepal, religious fundamentalism in Pakistan and Bangladesh, Terrorism and instability in Afghanistan. Consequently, there is no much enthusiasm to achieve collaboration in the sub continent.
- China's inroad into SAARC countries**: Increasing presence of china in the region and reservations of India with China is creating roadblocks. India cannot match the levels of financing by China. China with its grand plan of BRI has lured the small nations.
- Poverty- Ridden**: Even though the region accounts for **21% of world population, its share in global GDP is just around 3%**. Being one of the poverty ridden areas of the world, there is limited avenues to achieve synergy.
- The lack of finance, research and technology has also hampered trade facilitation, monitoring etc
- The **non-availability of adequate infrastructure** in the form of roads and cargo/ship handling equipment has also hindered the progress.
- Due to **same agriculture produce** like Basmati rice in India, Pakistan and Bangladesh, the scope of trade is also inherently less.
- Tariff and non-tariff barriers** have also played their role in keeping the level of integration low, especially since Pakistan hasn't extended MFN status to India and therefore, with so many items been put under the 'negative list'.

Effective grouping like SAARC will be **beneficial for India**

- The importance of regional cooperation particularly in the spirit of South-South cooperation between geographically contiguous countries cannot be belittled.
- Seamless physical connectivity**: Connectivity between regions increases the economic interaction and collective growth of region. This increases the economic and political bonhomie between nations and its people.
- Trade and Commerce**: Trade liberalisations under SAFTA, operationalisation of SAARC Agreement on Trade in Services (SATIS) have the potential to tackle the developmental deficit together.
- Common threats of **Terrorism, Climate Change impacts, Poverty and Socio-Economic backwardness** can be fought together as the problems plague all countries equally.
- Unexplored and high-potential areas like **Power generation, Science & Technology, Sports, Culture** can be strengthened through agreements and MoUs.

### Measures needed to revive SAARC:

- SAARC should also seek **free and preferential trading arrangements** with other regional bodies, notably the EU and the ASEAN. It should also remain fully focused on the **SAARC social charter to spread out its reach to the common man**.



- There is a need to focus on small politics instead of big politics to resolve conflict in conflicting regions. This would mean that they focus on **economic cooperation and other small ways that can create cooperation and more peace**
- SAARC cannot be effective unless it places itself on a managerial position to achieve regional order, forcing all the members to act mutually in making the region a '**zone of peace**' and the center for world business.
- All countries should come together to sort out their differences, either multilaterally or bilaterally. It's not necessary to sort out the differences but despite that, it is necessary to work with the differences like that of India-China, Japan and China, Russia and Japan.
- The **bilateral issues** between member nations should be resolved. Bilateral Issues between India- Pakistan, India- Sri Lanka, Pakistan- Afghanistan etc. must be improved with serious engagement and collaboration – working together to bring peace and stability as a common good in the region.
- Information on terrorism, trafficking, smuggling etc. must be shared and joint exercises must be conducted to build mutual trust and capability.
- SAARC needs to work on **Improving infrastructure and regional connectivity** – Collaboration in scientific research, universities exchange programs, tourism etc. will have a positive effect on relations among countries.

#### Conclusion:

- SAARC has the potential to transform the South Asian Region. Mutual mistrust and non-cooperation should not be allowed to undermine this potential.
- SAARC should function as an autonomous institution by which driving principles, strategic actions, and rules of law can be implemented in a way that is relevant to both, its own members and other rising powers.

### Q) Discuss the possible Foreign policy challenges awaiting India, as great power rivalry aggravates in international politics bringing disruptions for India at bilateral and regional level. (250 words)

Economictimes

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

The article discusses in detail the effect of current trends of rivalry between different countries across the world that India will face.

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

The answer must discuss in detail the context, current rivalry that is aggravating the tensions between countries say like that of China and America. One has to discuss in detail impact of such turfs on India.

#### **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 statement in the question.

##### **Body:**

Body of the answer must discuss in detail the current trends of Indian foreign policy, what are the repercussions of international politics that may bring disruptions and challenges to Indian bilateral relations with other countries. Discuss specific key areas of concerns like – Sino- American trade wars, India's another challenge would be to balance between its Indo-Pacific and Eurasian strategies. Issues of south Asia etc.

##### **Conclusion:**

Conclude with what should be the way forward.

#### **Introduction:**

- A successful Indian foreign policy, by definition, is one that creates the external circumstances conducive to realizing India's fundamental aims, namely, protecting its physical security and its decisional autonomy, enlarging its economic prosperity and its technological capabilities, and realizing its status claims on the global stage.
- Beyond the domestic issues, India faces the same challenges as before in its relations with the rest of the world, which need attention.

**Body:**

The foreign policy challenges awaiting India are:

**India and South Asia:**

- The SAARC spirit soon evaporated after 2014, and after the Uri attack in 2016, India's stance affected the convening of the SAARC summit in Islamabad.
- India is driven by the vision of itself as the self-declared "regional superpower".
- But this is being undermined by the smaller countries in South Asia.
- They are deciding to leverage China's ambitions in the region, particularly the Indian Ocean, to their own advantage.
- It is difficult to ignore Pakistan. A terrorist attacks cannot be ruled out and it would attract kinetic retaliation. Despite good planning there is always the risk of unintended escalation as Balakot (this year) and the downing of an Indian Air Force (IAF) MiG-21 showed
- India has tried to fight China's expansion by backing those political parties and leaders in these countries whom it sees as being more "pro-New Delhi". E.g. as in Sri Lanka and the Maldives
- However, as New Delhi has realised, even pro-India leaders in these countries do not like to take India's domination.
- In Nepal, India's promises to speed up long-pending projects have not yet succeeded in reversing the damage done by the 2015-16 economic blockade in support of the Madhesis.

**India and China:**

- The Asian superpower – China's – economic and geostrategic ambitions will continue to shape India's responses.
- It may influence everything from India's relations with the neighbourhood to the US and Russia in the West and ASEAN and Japan in the East.
- Despite the Wuhan meeting and the cooling of Doklam standoff's tensions, many differences remain, but new opportunities too.
- China is now keen to build bridges in the region and elsewhere, given its pressure of economic slowdown along with the US trade war against it.
- There is now a need for a new arrangement to replace the strategic framework formulated in 1988 during Rajiv Gandhi's visit.
- It served both countries well for three decades but is now under strain.

**India, Afghanistan and the Taliban:**

- The reconciliation talks between the U.S. and the Taliban as the U.S. negotiates its exit from Afghanistan raise New Delhi's apprehensions about the Taliban's return, constituting another potential irritant.
- It furthered the impression that the Trump administration was desperate to make concessions to the Taliban.
- Iran and Russia too, which consider themselves stakeholders, are likely to be concerned about this.
- Russia has tried to keep India in the frame through New Delhi's "non-official" participation in the Moscow process, but the future of that process is uncertain. [Click here to know more.](#)
- The challenge would be for India to stay relevant in Afghanistan, with the recent developments in Taliban issue.

**India and USA:**

- US protectionism on the trade front – The Generalised System of Preferences scheme has been withdrawn, adversely impacting about 12% of India's exports to the U.S., as a sign of growing impatience with India's inability to address the U.S.'s concerns regarding market access, tariff lines and recent changes in the e-commerce policy.
- US visa rules hurting Indian professionals
- US's collision course with Iran impacting India's oil purchases
- Iran's issue could also adversely affect the operability of Chabahar port which India has built as an alternative route to trade with Afghanistan.
- The threat of sanctions under the Countering American Adversaries Through Sanctions Act (CAATSA), were India to proceed with the purchase of the S-400 air and missile defence system from Russia.
- Other potential tricky issues could relate to whether Huawei, which is currently the prime target in the U.S.-China technology war, is allowed to participate in the 5G trials (telecom) in India.



**Measures needed:**

- This necessitates using multi-pronged diplomatic efforts and being generous as the larger economy.
- It also needs a more confident and coordinated approach in handling neighbourhood organisations — SAARC, BIMSTEC, the Bangladesh, the Bhutan, India, Nepal Initiative, the Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar Forum for Regional Cooperation, the Indian Ocean Rim Association.
- This should be preferably in tandem with bilateralism because our bilateral relations provide us with significant advantages.
- With all our neighbours, ties of kinship, culture and language among the people straddle boundaries, making the role of governments in States bordering neighbours vital in fostering closer linkages.
- This means investing attention in State governments, both at the political and bureaucratic levels.
- Domestic decisions in terms of expanding the foreign policy establishment though having a seasoned professional at the top does help.
- We need to ensure far more coordination among the different ministries and agencies than has been the case so far.
- Our record in implementation projects is patchy at best and needs urgent attention.
- The focus on the neighbourhood is certainly desirable, for only if we can shape events here can we look beyond.

**Conclusion:**

- The limitations of India's foreign policy are linked intimately to its weaknesses at home. If India is to realize its great power ambitions in the decades to come, the Government will have to accelerate economic reforms domestically, strengthen India's institutions, preserve its constitutional ethos, and protect the nation's internal cohesion, all of which have floundered dangerously in recent years.

**Q) With the help of Forums like SAARC/ other alternative measures, how can India help build a cohesive south Asia? Comment. (250 words)**

**Why this question:**

The question straightforward and is about discussing efforts that can be made to build a cohesive South Asia.

**Demand of the question:**

The answer must discuss in detail the possible methods and efforts that can be made to build a stronger and cohesive South Asia.

**Directive:**

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

**Introduction:**

Start by highlighting the importance of the region.

**Structure of the answer:****Body:**

The answer should focus on the aspects of regional integration of south Asia, In terms of economy, societies, culture etc. discuss the role of measures like SAARC and other regional groupings in addressing the same.

Move on to explain the possible challenges, hurdles and how one can address them.

**Conclusion:**

Conclude with what should be the way ahead.

**Introduction:**

- South Asia is one of the least integrated regions in the world, **despite geographical contiguity and historical and cultural links**. To fulfil ambitions in Indo-Pacific and beyond, India must work for a cohesive South Asia.

**Body:**

India's foreign policy with respect to South Asian region is guided by the **following principles**:

- **Panchsheel**: These fundamental principles include for instance the five principles of peaceful co-existence: Mutual respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty, Mutual non-aggression, Mutual non-interference, Equality and mutual benefit, and Peaceful co-existence.
- **Neighbourhood First**: Cordial relations and productive cooperation with India's neighbours, particularly with the founder Members of SAARC in South Asia, has always with a priority.



- **Strategic Autonomy:** Independence of decision making and strategic autonomy are significant features of India's foreign policy. India thus **believes in Partnerships and shuns Alliances**, particularly military alliances.
- **Constructive Engagement over Aggression:** India advocates the policy of constructive engagement over aggression. It believes that violent retaliation and confrontation can only complicate the matters.
- **No endorsement of Unilateral Sanctions:** India also does not endorse the idea of imposing sanctions against any individual country by another country or group of countries unless these sanctions have been imposed by the United Nations as a result of international consensus.

**India's efforts towards a cohesive South Asia can be as follows:**

**Economic growth is primary:**

- Our ability to manage our region and stature in the world depend to a considerable degree upon economic success.
- The continent-sized Indian economy, growing at around 6 per cent, holds a tremendous attraction for our neighbours.

**Positive asymmetry towards neighbours:**

- Realising its special responsibility in driving the locomotive of South Asian growth, India would "continue to institutionalise positive asymmetry in favour of our neighbours and allow all to benefit from our economy and market", should be the leitmotif of our South Asia policies.

**Jingoism not sustainable in diplomacy:**

- All our neighbours have certain vested interests opposed to India and it becomes necessary once in a while to send a coercive message to them.
- This should, however, not alienate the constituencies that are well-disposed towards us.
- A jingoistic response, as opposed to discreet punitive action, to the provocations of the Pakistan security establishment and its proxies ends up consolidating opinion there in favour of the provocateurs.
- The wisdom of restricting transit for Nepal to punish the short-sighted actions of its governments is also questionable. The resulting hardship can turn the entire population against us.

**Separate domestic politics from relations with neighbour:**

- Relations with our South Asian neighbours are intertwined with the interests of our states and certain political constituencies.
- For example, the politics in Tamil Nadu over the Sri Lankan Tamils issue and our relationship with Pakistan has become a subject of electoral politics in recent years.
- In a democracy, such politics is unavoidable to an extent but carried out cynically, it could have unintended

**Efficient project implementation in neighbouring countries:**

- The cost and time overruns that mar most of our projects at home due to cumbersome administrative and financial procedures also afflicts our projects in neighbouring countries. Instead of complaining against interlopers from outside the region, we need to focus on improving our project delivery.

**Capitalise our cultural heritage:**

- Lastly, the pull of our soft power is the strongest in South Asia because India remains the repository of nearly all linguistic, religious and cultural traditions of this region.
- India is the epitome of the South Asian diversity, which we have managed well in our vibrant democracy.
- Any faltering on this count would impair not only our South Asia project, but also our global ambitions

**Way forward for India to better realise its interests in South Asia are:**

- BIMSTEC is seen as complimentary for various initiatives of India like forming a bridge between **ASEAN and India, new found concept of Indo-Pacific, neighbourhood first policy.**
- As the largest bay in the world, Bay of Bengal is a pivot for BIMSTEC countries. Their combined GDP — at 2.85 trillion US Dollars — and one of the largest combined population in the world, gives BIMSTEC an inherent advantage.
- India's Trilateral highway project all the way to Cambodia will further strengthen the connectivity with South East Asian nations.
- The **BBIN Motor Vehicle Agreement** will help in **connectivity, economic development and regional integration.** This will also help in the **development of North-East India**, which has hitherto been neglected.
- Focus on **SASEC** which is SAARC minus Pakistan;
- The **RCEP initiative** will form a bigger regional and economic entity, thus **strengthening our Act East policy.**
- The **informal QUAD grouping** with USA, Japan and Australia and increased focus on Indo-Pacific region must be leveraged to **counter to Chinese hegemony** in South Asian region.

**Conclusion:**

Geographies are not static; they evolve, sometimes slowly and quickly at others. How we imagine and construct regions changes according to circumstances. India must look at her **national interests and strategic autonomy**. In the process, she can take along the likeminded neighbours together.

**Q) Discuss the significance of BIMSTEC in bridging South Asia and Southeast Asia. What is India's stake in the region? Elaborate. (250 words)**

[Indianexpress](#)

**Why this question:**

By inviting leaders from the BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation) countries, Kyrgyz Republic and Mauritius at his swearing-in ceremony on May 30, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has made a carefully calibrated diplomatic move that signals a major outreach to India's neighborhood from the Bay of Bengal to Central Asia, as well as the Indian diaspora across the world.

**Key demand of the question:**

The answer must discuss the significance of BIMSTEC in bridging south Asia and Southeast Asia. And India's stake in the region 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:**

Briefly explain the mandate of BIMSTEC in general.

**Body:**

Body of the answer should discuss the following aspects:

- Explain what is BIMSTEC?
- Discuss why the region matters?
- The Bay of Bengal is the largest bay in the world. Over one-fifth (22%) of the world's population live in the seven countries around it, and they have a combined GDP close to \$2.7 trillion.
- Despite economic challenges, all the countries in the region have been able to sustain average annual rates of economic growth between 3.4% and 7.5% from 2012 to 2016.
- The Bay also has vast untapped natural resources. One-fourth of the world's traded goods cross the Bay every year.
- India's stake in the region in detail.
- Conclude as to what can be the way ahead.

**Conclusion:**

Conclude with way forward.

**Introduction:**

- The Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) is a regional grouping of seven countries i.e. Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Thailand that lie in the littoral and adjacent regions of the Bay of Bengal. This sub-regional organisation came into being on June 6, 1997, through the Bangkok Declaration.
- The first summit was held in 2004 and the secretariat established in Dhaka in 2014. Technological and economic cooperation among South Asian and Southeast Asian countries along the coast of the Bay of Bengal is the main objective of BIMSTEC

**Body:**

- BIMSTEC is a **bridge between South Asia and South East Asia**. BIMSTEC has gained more favour as the preferred platform for regional cooperation in South Asia.

**Significance of BIMSTEC in bridging South Asia and Southeast Asia:**

- **Connectivity:**
  - BIMSTEC serves two purposes for India – it makes it easier for India **to share a common regional platform with its neighbours in South Asia** (sans Pakistan) and secondly, **BIMSTEC also establishes a linkage between South and Southeast Asia.**



- Urgency of **promoting regional and sub-regional cooperation** via BIMSTEC and BBIN has to be seen in the context of China's BRI and the compelling strategic challenge posed by China's muscular geo-economic and geo-political interventions in Asia, particularly in India's neighbourhood.
- The **development of the North-eastern region**, by opening up to Bangladesh and Myanmar, is another incentive for India.
- **Regional Co-operation:** Regional cooperation under the ambit of SAARC has become difficult made BIMSTEC more viable:
  - Despite India's keen interest in cooperating and strengthening intra-regional connectivity by backing the SAARC–Motor vehicle agreement, the agreement was stalled following Pakistan's reluctance.
  - Similarly, the **SAARC satellite project** that India proposed was abandoned following objection from Pakistan in 2016
  - **SAARC has also faced obstacles in the area of security cooperation.** A major hindrance in this regard has been the lack of consensus on threat perceptions, since member countries disagree on the idea of threats. **Example:** cross-border terrorism emanating from Pakistan.
- **Cordial Relationship:**
  - The member countries have **generally cordial relationships**, something patently missing among the SAARC countries.
  - BIMSTEC's major strength comes from the fact that it **includes two influential regional powers: Thailand and India.** This adds to the **comfort of smaller neighbours by reducing the fear of dominance by one big power.**
- **Economic vistas:** As a trade bloc, BIMSTEC provides many opportunities.
  - The region has countries with the **fastest-growing economies in the world.** The combined GDP in the region is around **US\$2 trillion** and will likely grow further.
  - Trade among the BIMSTEC member countries reached **six percent in just a decade**, while in SAARC, it has **remained around five percent since its inception.**
  - Compared to SAARC, BIMSTEC has greater trade potential as well. Among the member countries, **India's intra-BIMSTEC trade is around 3 percent of its total trade.**
  - BIMSTEC regional grouping happens to have five nations that are also part of SAARC. The fact that this region is growing at 6.5% per annum, collectively comprises of 1.5 billion people, is the drive behind India's focus being part of BIMSTEC.

#### Stakes for India in BIMSTEC:

- BIMSTEC is the natural platform for India to implement its regional connectivity, Neighbourhood First and Act East policies.
- BIMSTEC is important for free trade agreement, poverty alleviation, tourism, energy and climate change, and even counter-terrorism and disaster management.
- BIMSTEC could allow India to push a constructive agenda to counter Chinese investments, and follow best practices for connectivity projects based on recognised international norms.
- Myanmar and Thailand, have a crucial place for India's ambitious connectivity plans for north-eastern region.
- Myanmar is only Southeast Asian country India has a land boundary with.
- India-Myanmar-Thailand highway is one of the key projects that figures in a big way in the government's Act East policy

#### Way Forward:

- The members need to work collectively towards making BIMSTEC a stronger, more effective and result-oriented organisation for achieving a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable Bay of Bengal Region.
- BIMSTEC secretariat must be significantly empowered with more human and financial resources.
- BIMSTEC will have to prioritize economic connectivity, which is the prerequisite for regional integration.
- Need for upgrading cooperation in disaster management, terrorism, maritime security and transnational crime.
- BIMSTEC weather and climate centre at Noida should be converted into a development centre on disaster manage
- India can provide training to member states at its disaster management training centre in Nagpur.
- India will need to take on an informal BIMSTEC leadership role and let its commitments lead by example.
- Now is the time not just to deliberate, but also to deliver. Now is the time to translate promises into performance.





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*Topic– Effect of policies and politics of developed and developing countries on India's interests, Indian diaspora*

**Q) A US-China Trade War is in no one's interest, full-blown trade war would only weaken the global economy. Discuss. (250 words)**

Livemint

**Why this question:**

The question is in the context of recent announcement made by President Donald Trump that the United States would raise tariffs on 200 billion dollars of Chinese goods from 10 to 25 %, because trade talks are moving "too slowly."

**Demand of the question:**

This question seeks to examine the negative impact of the US – China trade war on the global economy.

**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 on the background of the context.

**Body**

Discuss the following points in detail:

- Background – The two sides have imposed tariffs on 360 billion dollars in two-way trade since last year but Trump and Chinese leader Xi Jinping agreed to a truce in December to refrain from further escalation.
- Provide for an overview of the trade wars going on in between the two countries –
- Beginning: US President Donald Trump has complained about China's trading practices since before he took office in 2016. The US launched an investigation into Chinese trade policies in 2017. It imposed tariffs on billions of dollars' worth of Chinese products last year, and Beijing retaliated in kind.
- Breakthrough: After months of hostilities, a breakthrough of sorts came in December. Both countries agreed to halt new trade tariffs to allow for talks.
- Now President Trump has decided to hike existing tariffs.
- Why tariffs? Tariffs, in theory, make US-made products cheaper than imported ones, and encourage consumers to buy American.
- What is the impact so far? Both US and international firms have said they are being harmed. Fears about a further escalation has rattled investors and hit stock markets. The IMF warned a full-blown trade war would weaken the global economy.

**Conclusion**

Conclude with way forward .

**Introduction:**

- Trade war is a situation where countries restrict each other's trade by imposing tariff or quota on imports. Trade tensions are a manifestation of the strategic competition between the two countries China and USA.
- US had imposed tariffs on as much as 25 percent on \$34 billion in Chinese imports. China responded with retaliatory tariffs of 25% on US goods worth an equivalent \$34 billion, including soybean, automobiles, and marine products such as lobsters.
- The U.S.-China trade war has flared up again after a deceptive lull over the last few months, when both sides were trying to negotiate a deal.

**Body:**

**Current Situation:**

- President Trump tweeted that he would raise the 10% tariff imposed on \$200-billion worth of Chinese goods to 25%, starting Friday.
- That the Trump administration pressed ahead with the increase even as China's Vice Premier Liu He was still in Washington for a second day of talks with U.S. trade officials only underscores the businessman-turned-President's 'take no prisoners' approach to negotiations.
- China promptly promised retaliatory action, but was yet to spell out the measures.



- With Mr. Trump tweeting that “the process has begun to place additional tariffs at 25% on the remaining” Chinese goods worth \$325 billion, the U.S. administration unambiguously signalled it was not going to be the first to blink.

#### Implications for the global economy

- The increase in tariffs imposed on goods crossing international borders essentially represents a new tax on a global economy already facing a slowdown.
- Last month, the International Monetary Fund trimmed its projection for global growth in 2019 to 3.3%, from a 3.5% forecast made in January, citing slowing momentum in “70% of the world economy”.
- IMF Chief Economist Gita Gopinath had at the time projected a pick-up in global growth momentum in the second half, predicated substantially on the “improved” outlook for U.S.-China trade tensions.
- IMF chief Christine Lagarde and Ms. Gopinath, however, presciently warned that the world economy was poised at “a delicate moment”.
- Were tensions in trade policy to flare up again, it could result in large disruptions to global supply chains and pose downside risks to global growth, the IMF warned.
- Barely a month later, the world economy faces the very real risk of an escalation in this trade war where other countries, including India, can largely only wait and watch as the U.S. and China raise the pitch.

#### US China trade war impact on India:

##### Benefits:

- Diminished US-China trade engagement could have positive results for countries such as Brazil and India from a trade perspective, at least in the short run.
- For instance in the case of soybean there could be a cascading impact in terms of openings for India to enter other markets
- US-China trade war could accelerate the transition. US companies that rely heavily on imports from China would be forced to redesign their supply chains around tariffs.
- Multinationals and their suppliers would look for alternative facilities outside China. This is bad news for China but might benefit India.
- Even if tariff walls went up, India’s large market and relatively swift growth would force multinationals who wanted a piece of that growth to manufacture locally.
- India would receive a large boost from China on the hunt for new supply chains.

##### Threats:

- In the long term, a full-fledged trade war is not good for India. It invariably leads to a higher inflationary and low growth scenario.
- Increase in interest rates in the US has implications for emerging economies such as India, both for the equity and debt markets.
- Higher interest rates do make the option of investors borrowing cheap money in the US and investing in Indian equities significantly less attractive.
- The three external risk factors higher tariffs, rising interest rates, and elevated bond sales will come at a time when the domestic banking system is grappling with a renewed stress of bad loans.
- India cannot grow on a sustained basis until it exports and free trade is in existence. With the trade war free trade might affect global economy and in turn India’s as well.
- Trade war among major economies would affect multilateral trading system globalisation and disrupt global supply chains.
- Reducing investment flows into India.
- RBI has flagged oil price volatility as a factor that would have a bearing on India’s inflation outlook.

##### Way forward:

- US and China need to negotiate the issue amicably and not put the free trade under threat.
- India needs to be cautious. Its strategic relationship with both the countries needs to be nurtured.

#### **Q) Discuss the Objectives of recently unveiled Global Health Security Strategy by the US. Also discuss its significance. (250 words)**

##### Reference

##### *Why this question:*

The United States government recently unveiled the Global Health Security Strategy, a first of its kind strategy to prevent, detect and respond to threats from infectious diseases occurring naturally or accidentally.



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

The answer must provide for a detailed narration of Global Health Security Strategy as unveiled by the US. Discuss its significance in detail.

### **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 discuss the importance of Global Health Security Strategy.

#### **Body:**

Answers must discuss the following aspects:

- What are the objectives of Global Health Security Strategy? – It is a first of its kind strategy to prevent, detect and respond to biological threats from infectious diseases occurring naturally or accidentally, in an effort to help improve the world's ability to stop deadly outbreaks before they spread between countries.
- Goals of the strategy?
  - strengthen partner country global health security capacities,
  - increase international support for global health security and
  - a homeland prepared and resilient against global health threats.
- Significance of such a step.
- What should be India's role?

#### **Conclusion –**

Conclude with way forward.

#### **Introduction:**

- **The Global Health Security Strategy** defines the actions the US administration will take by adopting a whole-of-government approach to health security and leveraging the strengths of different federal departments, agencies and funding streams

#### **Body:**

##### **Objectives:**

- The United States government has come up with a first of its kind strategy to prevent, detect and respond to threats from infectious diseases occurring naturally or accidentally.
- An effort to help improve the world's ability to stop and contain deadly outbreaks before they spread between countries.
- It defines the actions that US administration will undertake by adopting a whole-of-government approach to health security.

##### **The strategy will pursue three interrelated goals:**

- Strengthened capacity in developing nations to implement obligations under the International Health Regulations (2005)
- Increased international support for The Global Health Security Agenda (GHSA)
- A Homeland prepared and resilient against global health threats.

##### **Need:**

- The increase in the number of infectious-diseases outbreaks (e.g., Ebola, Zika, and yellow fever) around the world and the risk posed by an accidental or deliberate release of dangerous pathogens highlight the need for a sustained, multi-sectoral, and coordinated
- Outbreaks can spread rapidly to jeopardize the health, security, and prosperity of all countries, including the United States.
- With this new Strategy, the United States reaffirms its steadfast support for building global and country-level health-security capacities so we are all better protected against existing and emerging infectious disease threats.
- The GHSS highlights the need for establishing preparedness and response capabilities that extend beyond a single country's borders as well as the importance of incorporating a **One Health approach** when addressing existing and emerging biosecurity threats.

**Conclusion:**

- The US Global Health Security Strategy outlines the continued evolution of the US governments' involvement in the broader effort to establish and maintain global health security capacity to protect populations from an array of infectious disease and other health threats.
- While this document does not explicitly outline programs or allocate funding to global health or health security priorities, it will undoubtedly have an impact on global and domestic preparedness, detection, and response capabilities.

**Q) The Strait of Hormuz, a vital shipping route linking Middle East oil producers to markets in other parts of the world, has been at the heart of regional tensions for decades. Critically Analyse. (250 words)**

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

**Why this question:**

Saudi Arabia said on Monday that two Saudi oil tankers were among vessels targeted in a “sabotage attack” off the coast of the United Arab Emirates, condemning it as an attempt to undermine the security of global crude supplies. The UAE said on Sunday that four commercial vessels were sabotaged near its Fujairah emirate, one of the world’s largest bunkering hubs lying just outside the Strait of Hormuz.

**Key demand of the question:**

The incidence above necessitates us to analyse the significance of Strait of Hormuz – a vital shipping route linking Middle East oil producers to markets in Asia, Europe, North America and beyond, has been at the heart of regional tensions for decades.

**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:**

Begin with brief write up on geographical location of Strait of Hormuz – s a strategically important strait or narrow strip of water that links the Persian Gulf with the Arabian Sea and the Gulf of Oman.

**Body:**

Discussion should include the following aspects –

- The answer must mainly focus at analyzing the importance of the Strait of Hormuz.
- Who controls the Strait of Hormuz? – Iran and Oman are the countries nearest to the Strait of Hormuz and share territorial rights over the waters.
- Narrate a brief upon the Geographic Importance and History of the Strait of Hormuz.
- What are the issues/tussle between different countries of the region?
- How it is a Chokepoint Between Persian Gulf and The Arabian Sea?
- What are the present situations?
- What needs to be done?

**Conclusion:**

Conclude with way forward.

**Introduction:**

- Strait of Hormuz is the waterway separates Iran and Oman, linking the Gulf to the Gulf of Oman and the Arabian Sea. The Strait is 21 miles (33 km) wide at its narrowest point, but the shipping lane is just two miles (three km) wide in either direction.
- A third of the world’s liquefied natural gas and almost 20% of total global oil production passes through the strait, making it a highly important strategic location for international trade.

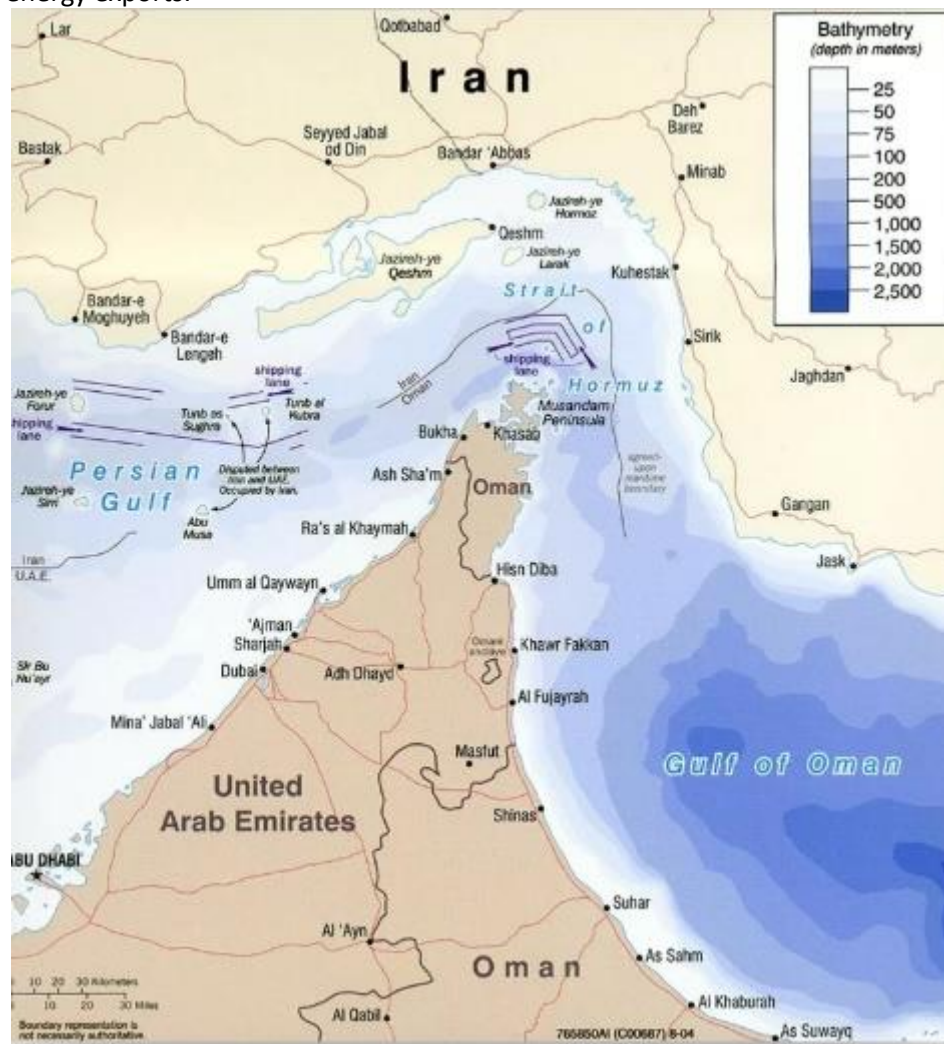
**Body:**

**Background:**

- In a recent incident, four commercial vessels were sabotaged near Fujairah (an emirate of the UAE), one of the world’s largest bunkering hubs lying just outside the Strait of Hormuz.
- The incident has come at a time of heightened tensions in the Gulf.



- The US has deployed an aircraft carrier, bomber planes and defence missiles to the region amid rising tensions with Iran, which has threatened to block oil shipments through the Strait of Hormuz if the US succeeds in halting its energy exports.



#### Significance of Strait of Hormuz:

- 5 million barrels per day (bpd) of seaborne oil passed through the waterway in 2016. That was about 30 per cent of crude and other oil liquids traded by sea in 2016. About 17.2 million bpd of crude and condensates were estimated to have been shipped through the Strait in 2017 and about 17.4 million bpd in the first half of 2018.
- With global oil consumption standing at about 100 million bpd, that means almost a fifth passes through the Strait.
- Most crude exported from Saudi Arabia, Iran, the UAE, Kuwait and Iraq — all members of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries — is shipped through the waterway.
- It is also the route used for nearly all the liquefied natural gas (LNG) produced by the world's biggest LNG exporter, Qatar.

#### Current issues regarding the strait:

- During the 1980-1988 Iran-Iraq war, the two sides sought to disrupt each other's oil exports in what was known as the Tanker War.
- The US Fifth Fleet, based in Bahrain, is tasked with protecting the commercial ships in the area.
- The fleet ensures that the critical waterway remains open, provocative Iranian military manoeuvres are likely in the immediate offing as is a nuclear restart.
- Iran agreed to rein in its nuclear programme in return for an easing of sanctions under a 2015 deal with the United States and five other global powers.
- Washington pulled out of the pact in 2018. Western powers fear Iran wants to make nuclear weapons. Tehran denies this.
- The UAE and Saudi Arabia have sought to find other routes to bypass the Strait, including building more oil pipelines.





Possible measures:

- Infrastructure includes the construction of bypass pipelines avoiding key choke-points and strategic storage.
- Existing bypass pipelines include SUMED (which avoids the Suez Canal); the Habshan-Fujairah pipeline in the UAE (bypassing Hormuz); and the Saudi Petroline, which runs to the Red Sea, hence offering an alternative to the Gulf and Hormuz.
- Strategic storage can be held by oil exporters, by importers, or a combination.
- Institutional approaches include mechanisms to deal with disruptions, such as cooperative sharing arrangements.
- Organizations such as the International Energy Agency (IEA), the International Energy Forum (IEF), Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), Gulf Cooperation Council, and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) could all have roles in alleviating the concerns.
- Governments do have a role in protecting the most vulnerable consumers and ensuring sufficient energy for critical services

**Conclusion:**

- The high seas are constituent element of the global commons which belongs to the entire world. Blocking the **freedom of navigation** goes against the rules based order of the UNCLOS and other inter-governmental agreements.
- The bilateral tensions should not affect the global trade and in turn the other countries. Issues must be sorted out by discussions between the concerned parties and peaceful solutions are the need of the hour.

**Q) “With the US trying to derail China’s development and contain its rise, and China aggressively projecting its power in Asia and around the world—a full-scale cold war is not far from reality”. Critically Analyse the statement in the light of recent trade turfs between Sino-American relationship. (250 words)**

Livemint

**Why this question:**

The article captures a detailed discussion on the global consequences of a possible Sino-American cold war.

**Key demand of the question:**

The answer must evaluate the current turf between China and America and the possible near future consequences on the world.

**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:**

Begin with elaboration on the concept of ‘Thucydides Trap’.

**Body:**

Discussion should include the following aspects –

- Narrate how the current Sino – American relations reflect in a possible Thucydides Trap.
- Discuss the causes and consequences of the current conditions of trade wars.
- Explain what could be the possible outcomes of such war?
- What needs to be done?

**Conclusion:**

Conclude with way forward signifying importance to curb such a turf in the larger good of the world.

**Introduction:**

- The phrase “Thucydides’ trap,” in the foreign policy context is used to explain the likelihood of conflict between a rising power and a currently dominant one.
- Despite the mutual awareness of the Thucydides Trap, China and the US seem to be falling into it anyway.
- Though a hot war between the world’s two major powers still seems far-fetched, a cold war is becoming more likely.

**Body:****US-China Trade war:**

- Trade tensions are a manifestation of the strategic competition between the two countries China and USA.
- According to the US, China has gained an unfair advantage through intellectual-property theft, forced technology transfers, subsidies for domestic firms, and other instruments of state capitalism. At the same time, its government is becoming increasingly authoritarian, transforming China into an Orwellian surveillance state.
- The Chinese suspect that the US's real goal is to prevent them from rising any further or projecting legitimate power and influence abroad.
- US had imposed tariffs on as much as 25 percent on \$34 billion in Chinese imports.
- China responded with retaliatory tariffs of 25% on US goods worth an equivalent \$34 billion, including soybean, automobiles, and marine products such as lobsters.
- The U.S.-China trade war has flared up again after a deceptive lull over the last few months, when both sides were trying to negotiate a deal.
- The US has imposed sanctions on ZTE and Huawei, China will be scrambling to ensure that its tech giants can source essential inputs domestically, or at least from friendly trade partners that are not dependent on the US.
- Regardless of which side has the stronger argument, the escalation of economic, trade, technological, and geopolitical tensions may have been inevitable.

**Current Impacts:**

- The US is sharply restricting Chinese foreign direct investment in sensitive sectors, and pursuing other actions to ensure Western dominance in strategic industries such as artificial intelligence and 5G.
- It is pressuring partners and allies not to participate in the Belt and Road Initiative, China's massive programme of infrastructure projects across the Eurasian landmass.
- And it is increasing US Navy patrols in the East and South China Seas, where China has grown more aggressive in asserting its dubious territorial claims.

**The possible outcomes of cold war:**

- The global consequences of a Sino-American cold war would be even more severe than those of the Cold War between the US and the Soviet Union.
- Whereas the Soviet Union was a declining power with a failing economic model, China will soon become the world's largest economy, and will continue to grow from there.
- China is fully integrated in the global trading and investment system, and deeply intertwined with the US, in particular.
- A full-scale cold war thus could trigger a new stage of de-globalization, or at least a division of the global economy into two incompatible economic blocs.
- In either scenario, trade in goods, services, capital, labour, technology and data would be severely restricted, and the digital realm would become a "splinternet," wherein Western and Chinese nodes would not connect to one another.
- In this balkanized world, China and the US will both expect all other countries to pick a side, while most governments will try to thread the needle of maintaining good economic ties with both.
- After all, many US allies now do more business (in terms of trade and investment) with China than they do with the US.
- Yet in a future economy where China and the US separately control access to crucial technologies such as AI and 5G, the middle ground will most likely become uninhabitable.
- Everyone will have to choose, and the world may well enter a long process of de-globalization.
- In effect, China and the US would create a new international order, based on the recognition that the (inevitably) rising new power should be granted a role in shaping global rules and institutions.

**Way forward:**

- US and China need to negotiate the issue amicably and not put the free trade under threat.
- India needs to be cautious. Its strategic relationship with both the countries needs to be nurtured.

**Conclusion:**

- In today's globalized world, any threats to global trade will impact all the countries to various extents. In such tensed atmosphere, a small irritant could turn the cold war into a hot one. Countries must introspect and learn from the lessons of the past cold war to avert a new one.



**Q) Discuss in detail the doctrine of hot pursuit which emerged as an exception to the fundamental principle of freedom of the high seas. (250 words)**

The hindu

**Why this question:**

Recently Heroin worth ₹600 crore were seized after an Indian Coast Guard ship intercepted the Pakistan fishing vessel Al-Madina off Gujarat. The article discusses in detail the significance of the concept of Hot pursuit amidst such a scenario.

**Key demand of the question:**

Answer must discuss the concept in detail, its significance to the fundamental principle of freedom of the high seas — the rights of vessels of all nations to navigate freely on the high seas.

**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 highlight the context of the question.

**Body:**

- In brief discuss what Doctrine of hot pursuit? The doctrine of hot pursuit emerged as an exception to the fundamental principle of freedom of the high seas — the rights of vessels of all nations to navigate freely on the high seas.
- Zone of hot pursuit: Contiguous to this zone is the zone of hot pursuit, and it extends up to 24 nautical miles. Any infringement of customs, sanitary, immigration and fiscal regulations in the contiguous zone can also attract punishment from coastal states.
- At a time when smuggling and piracy were rampant, this customary doctrine emerged to empower a coastal state to pursue on to the high seas a vessel that had violated its laws within its waters.
- Decades later, this customary doctrine was codified in the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of High Seas.
- Apart from imposing procedural restrictions, the Convention clearly spelt out that the right of hot pursuit ceases as soon as the ship pursued enters the territorial sea of its own country or a third state.
- Over the years, some countries have sought to introduce an expanded doctrine of hot pursuit on land, to justify the breaches of territorial sovereignty of foreign states as part of the ongoing pursuit of offenders.

**Conclusion:**

Conclude with way forward.

**Introduction:**

- The Indian Coast Guard (ICG) recently apprehended a Pakistani fishing vessel off Gujarat and seized huge cache of narcotic drugs worth ₹600 crore in the international market.
- During the hot pursuit, the crew threw bags containing suspicious material into the sea. According to the officials, the preliminary testing of one of the seized packets using a drug-testing kit revealed that the substance was heroin.

**Body:**

**Doctrine of hot pursuit:**

- The doctrine of hot pursuit in international law recognizes the right of a State to pursue a vessel belonging to a foreign State which has violated any law within its territorial boundaries and jurisdiction.
- The doctrine vests a right to pursue the delinquent vessel outside the territorial limits into the open sea and then can be taken into custody.
- The fundamental rule of the maritime law states that all vessels have the right to navigate freely on the high seas.
- Yet, the traditional notion has recognized the doctrine of hot pursuit as an exception to the principles of freedom on the high seas.
- At a time when smuggling and piracy were rampant, this customary doctrine emerged to empower a coastal state to pursue on to the high seas a vessel that had violated its laws within its waters.



- This denied the intruding vessel the opportunity to escape punishment by claiming protection under the right of free navigation on the high seas, which had been designed to protect innocent vessels.
- Importantly, this customary doctrine did not extend to the territorial waters of a foreign state.
- Decades later, this customary doctrine was codified in the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of High Seas.

#### Hot Pursuit as per UNCLOS

- The doctrine of maritime hot pursuit is codified in Article 111 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, 1982.
- Apart from imposing procedural restrictions, the Convention clearly spelt out that the right of hot pursuit ceases as soon as the ship pursued enters the territorial sea of its own country or a third state.
- It recognizes that a vessel, if has committed a violation of the laws of a foreign state while in that state's sovereign or territorial waters, may be pursued onto the high seas and seized.

#### Conclusion:

- India is also surrounded by the Golden Triangle in the North-East and Golden Crescent in the north-west, which are fertile regions for drug trade over the land boundaries.
- Over the years, some countries have sought to introduce an expanded doctrine of hot pursuit on land, to justify the breaches of territorial sovereignty of foreign states as part of the ongoing pursuit of offenders. This would help India curb the drug menace through land route trade.

*Topic: Important International institutions, agencies and fora, their structure, mandate.*

**Q) Discuss the role of World customs organization in global market and analyse what are the emerging challenges that it must deal with. (250 words)**

[pib](#)

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

Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC), under Ministry of Finance recently organised a meeting of Regional Heads of Customs Administration of Asia Pacific Region of World Customs Organisation (WCO) in Kochi (in Kerala). India currently holds seat of Vice Chairperson of Asia Pacific region.

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

This question seeks to examine role of World customs organization in global market along with the challenges being faced by the world countries with respect to customs and how should WCO resolve it.

#### **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 on WCO.

##### **Body**

The answer is straightforward and there is nothing much to deliberate upon. One must define the coming of World customs organization into existence, its roles, functions and responsibilities.

- As a forum for dialogue and exchange of experiences between national Customs delegates, the WCO offers its Members a range of Conventions and other international instruments, as well as technical assistance and training services.
- Besides the vital role played by the WCO in stimulating the growth of legitimate international trade, its efforts to combat fraudulent activities are also recognized internationally.
- WCO has also been responsible for administering the World Trade Organization's Agreements on Customs Valuation, which provide a system for placing values on imported goods, and the Rules of Origin, which are used to determine the origin of a given commodity.
- Discuss the challenges that it needs to tackle with.

##### **Conclusion**

Conclude with way forward.



### Introduction:

- The World Customs Organization (WCO), established in 1952 as the **Customs Co-operation Council (CCC)** is an independent intergovernmental body whose mission is to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of Customs administrations. It represents 182 Customs administrations across the globe that collectively process approximately 98% of world trade. It is the only international organization with competence in Customs matters and is considered as voice of international Customs community.
- Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC), under Ministry of Finance organized a meeting of Regional Heads of Customs Administration of Asia Pacific Region of World Customs Organisation (WCO) in Kochi. India currently holds seat of Vice Chairperson of Asia Pacific region.

### Body:

#### Roles and functions:

- As the global centre of Customs expertise, the WCO is the only international organization with competence in Customs matters and can rightly call itself the voice of the international Customs community.
- The WCO has divided its Membership into six Regions. Each of the six Regions is represented by a regionally elected Vice-Chairperson to the WCO Council.
- As a forum for dialogue and exchange of experiences between national Customs delegates, the WCO offers its Members a range of Conventions and other international instruments, as well as technical assistance and training services.
- Besides the vital role played by the WCO in stimulating the growth of legitimate international trade, its efforts to combat fraudulent activities are also recognized internationally.
- WCO has also been responsible for administering the World Trade Organization's Agreements on Customs Valuation, which provide a system for placing values on imported goods, and the Rules of Origin, which are used to determine the origin of a given commodity.
- It also promotes emergence of honest, transparent and predictable Customs environment, thus directly contributing to economic and social well-being of its members.
- It also actively supports its members in their endeavours to modernize and build capacity within their national Customs administrations

### Challenges faced:

#### Trade facilitation and security

- Ensuring speed and efficiency in the clearance process for an increasing volume of transactions
- Managing change from a few large/bulk shipments into a large number of low-value and small shipments
- Managing risks posed by limited knowledge on importers and the e-commerce supply chain (new class of sellers and buyers/occasional shippers and buyers)
- Ensuring data quality (accuracy and adequacy of the data received)
- Defining the role and responsibility (liability) of e-commerce operators to assist governments (e-vendors/intermediaries)

#### Fair and efficient collection of duties and taxes

- Identifying abuse or misuse of 'de minimus' for illicit trade purposes (splitting of consignments/undervaluation)
- Ensuring compliance with classification and origin rules
- Integration of e-commerce vs traditional trade

#### Protection of society – criminal exploitation of e-commerce

- Setting up a specialized unit to trawl the Web for information which might be of use in preventing, detecting, investigating and prosecuting a Customs-related offence (drug trafficking/counterfeited and pirated goods/illicit financial flows/money laundering)
- Enhancing international cooperation and ensuring that agreements on mutual legal assistance are in place to allow for investigations or prosecutions when websites are hosted outside a national territory
- Making the most of existing technologies, especially those related to data analysis

Other challenges include **globalization of business and trade complex new governance rules, international terrorism, environmental protection and poverty reduction.**



**Conclusion:**

- In an international environment characterized by instability and the ever-present threat of terrorist activity, the WCO's mission to enhance the protection of society and the national territory, and to secure and facilitate international trade, takes on its full meaning.

**Q) Explain the significance of International Monitoring System (IMS) of Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO). How can it be relevant to India ? Analyse. (250 words)**

The hindu

**Why this question:**

The executive secretary of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO), has invited India to be an observer in the CTBT. Being an observer would give India access to data from the International Monitoring System (IMS). Thus, it is necessary for us to evaluate the same with examination point of view.

**Key demands of the question:**

The answer must briefly discuss the objective of International Monitoring System (IMS) of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO) and the effect it has on India; one has to analyse India being an observer member what can be the possible repercussions.

**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 what is International Monitoring System (IMS) of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO)

**Body**

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

- **Highlight the background** – explain the invite India received to become an observatory member.
- **Discuss the objective** – The International Monitoring System (IMS) is a worldwide network of monitoring stations that will help to verify compliance with the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) by detecting events that might indicate violations of the Treaty.
- The **Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT)** is a multilateral treaty that bans all nuclear explosions, for both civilian and military purposes, in all environments. It was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1996, but has not entered into force.
- India, North Korea and Pakistan have not signed it, but Pakistan is an observer.
- **Explain the relevance of it to India** – Being an observer would give India access to data from the International Monitoring System. Also explain India's stand on the same.

**Conclusion**

Conclude with way forward.

**Introduction:**

- The International Monitoring System (IMS) is a worldwide network of monitoring stations that will help to verify compliance with the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) by detecting events that might indicate violations of the Treaty.
- The executive secretary of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO), has invited India to be an observer in the CTBT. Being an observer would give India access to data from the International Monitoring System (IMS).

**Body:**

The IMS uses four technologies to support the CTBT –

- **Seismological:** There will be 50 primary and 120 auxiliary seismic stations to monitor shockwaves in the earth that could be caused by a nuclear test.
- **Radionuclide:** Eighty stations worldwide will measure the atmosphere for radioactive particles. Radionuclide evidence can confirm that a nuclear explosion has occurred, if there is a leak.
- **Hydroacoustic:** There will be 11 hydroacoustic stations listening for sound waves traveling through the oceans that could be caused by a nuclear test explosion.



- **Infrasound:** When complete, 60 stations on the earth's surface will be able to detect ultra-low frequency sound waves caused by large explosions; these sound waves are inaudible to the human ear.

#### **Significance for India of International Monitoring System (IMS) of Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty Organization:**

- India is a non-signatory state to the Treaty; the observer status will let India know what is going on, from the ringside.
- With the status, it can also participate in science and technology meetings.
- Being an observer would give India access to data from the International Monitoring System — a network which when complete will consist of 337 facilities (321 monitoring stations and 16 radionuclide labs) located in 89 countries.
- This system can detect even small nuclear explosions using seismology, hydroacoustics, infrasound and radionuclide technology.
- It only gives the advantage of following what's happening, learning what China is doing in the organization, and where the US comes in.
- The strong relationship between the scientific and technological community and the CTBTO helps ensure that the IMS remains at the forefront of technological innovation and that no nuclear explosion goes undetected.

#### **India's stand on CTBT:**

- India perceives its nuclear weapons and missile programs as crucial components of its strategic doctrine.
- It rejects the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) on the grounds that it perpetuates an unjust distinction between the five states that are permitted by the treaty to possess nuclear weapons while requiring all other states parties to the treaty to remain non-nuclear weapon states.
- While endorsing the spirit of test-ban and the self-imposed moratorium on tests, India has said it would join the treaty only if there was no discrimination in favour of the five 'nuclear weapon states' in fulfilling the obligations for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons.

#### **Conclusion:**

- India's past with the treaty to ban all nuclear tests in all places for all time is well known. Since the treaty was opened for signature in 1996, a lot has changed for India and the same is true for the treaty itself.
- India did not support the treaty in 1996 and still does not, but it had been very supportive during negotiations. India's future with the treaty is still unwritten but now there are opportunities for it to be reengaged and renewed.

### **Q) What is UN-Habitat programme ? What are its objectives ? Discuss with special emphasis on role played by India with respect to it. (250 words)**

#### Reference

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

Question is straightforward and is about discussing the UN Habitat programme in detail. India has been elected to the Executive Board of the first UN-Habitat Assembly at the Plenary Session of the Assembly started on May 27, 2019 in Nairobi, Kenya. The special theme for the UN-Habitat Assembly is "Innovation for Better Quality of Life in Cities and Communities".

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

The answer must discuss in detail the mandate, significance and objectives of the program and the role India has in it.

##### **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 on what is the programme about.

##### **Body:**

Answers must discuss the following aspects :

- What is it? It is the United Nations agency for human settlements and sustainable urban development.
- Objectives: To promote socially and environmentally sustainable towns & cities with the goal of providing adequate shelter for all.



- Parent agency: It report to the UN General Assembly. It is also a member of the United Nations Development Group.
- What are its mandate?
- Role played by India – past to present?

#### **Conclusion –**

Conclude with way forward.

#### **Introduction:**

- UN-Habitat is the United Nations programme working towards a better urban future. Its mission is to promote socially and environmentally sustainable human settlements development and the achievement of adequate shelter for all.
- Mandated by the UN General Assembly in 1978 to address the issues of urban growth, it is a knowledgeable institution on urban development processes and understands the aspirations of cities and their residents. India has been elected to the Executive Board of the first UN-Habitat Assembly.

#### **Body:**

##### **Objectives:**

- UN-Habitat envisions well-planned, well-governed, and efficient cities and other human settlements, with adequate housing, infrastructure, and universal access to employment and basic services such as water, energy, and sanitation.
- It is mandated by the United Nations General Assembly to promote socially and environmentally sustainable towns and cities with the goal of providing adequate shelter for all.
- The mandate of UN-Habitat derives from the Habitat Agenda, adopted by the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) in Istanbul, Turkey, in 1996.
- The twin goals of the Habitat Agenda are adequate shelter for all and the development of sustainable human settlements in an urbanizing world.
- UN-Habitat reports to the United Nations General Assembly.

##### **Role played by India with respect to UN Habitat:**

- India was unanimously elected as the President of the UN-Habitat in 2017, an organ of the United Nations' Organisation (UNO) that promotes socially and environmentally sustainable human settlements across the world, after 10 years.
- Currently, India has been elected to the Executive Board of the first UN-Habitat Assembly.
- The nation's global clout continues to grow significantly.
- The various missions like **AMRUT**, **SMART City mission**, **PMAY** are addressing deficits in different kinds of infrastructure including affordable housing in a convergence mode. This is in line with the New Urban Agenda of UN-HABITAT
- Climate change
- Indian cities are prone to disasters and Responses to disasters in urban areas can promote greater resilience to future crises and support long-term development goals.
- The need for resilient cities is recognised in the Sustainable Development Goals, the Paris Agreement for Climate Change, the Sendai Framework and in the New Urban Agenda (Habitat-III).

#### **Conclusion:**

- As an inter-governmental policy-making and decision making body, the Governing Council of UN-Habitat seeks to promote integral and comprehensive approach to human settlements, assist the countries and regions in addressing human settlement problems and strengthen cooperation among all countries on human settlement issue.

### **Q) Describe India's core foreign policy goals and origin of QUAD. How is QUAD a reflection of multi-polar foreign policy. (250 words)**

#### Reference

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

Question is straightforward and is about discussing role played by India in QUAD.

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

The answer must discuss QUAD as reflection of India's multi-polar foreign policy.

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

##### **Introduction:**

write a few introductory lines on what is the QUAD.

**Body:**

Answers must discuss the following aspects:

- Significance of QUAD vis-à-vis India's multi-polar foreign policy.
- Explain how QUAD membership reinforces India's policy –
- China's assertion in South China Sea (SCS) compromises freedom of navigation. Through QUAD India seeks to reassert rule-based world order to counter China's growing power and assertion.
- Democratic, Cooperative and Peacekeeping endeavor: The QUAD initiative is group of four largest and powerful democracies in the world which values democratic, peaceful, rule based international order.
- India held that the Quad was more about sharing democratic experiences than a security arrangement directed at China.
- Emergence of Indo-Pacific: USA under its pivot to China policy held Indo-Pacific region is now world's most strategic location.
- Different nations are seeking to project their strategic power in the region.
- India's membership to QUAD should be seen in this light as a counterbalancing initiative to secure its own neighborhood.

**Conclusion –**

Conclude with way forward.

**Introduction:**

- National interest has been the governing principle of India's foreign policy even at the time, of Nehru who was inspired by the ideal of world peace, toleration and mutual respect among nations. In operational terms, the idea of national interest takes the form of concrete objectives of foreign policy.

**Body:**

India's core foreign policy objectives are:

- **The preservation of India's territorial integrity and independence of foreign policy:** The territorial integrity and protection of national boundaries from foreign aggression is the core interest of a nation.
- **Promoting international peace and security:** India as a 'newly independent and developing country rightly realized that international peace and development are correlated. Her emphasis on disarmament and the policy of keeping away from the military alliances is intended to promote global peace.
- **Economic development of India:** Fast development of the country was the fundamental requirement of India at the time of independence. It was also required to strengthen the democracy and freedom in the country.

**QUAD:**

- Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QSD) is the strategic dialogue between four countries viz. India, United States, Japan and Australia.
- It was originally initiated in 2007 but later disbanded with withdrawal of Australia.
- It has been recently revived and is being viewed as response to increased Chinese economic and military power.

**QUAD a reflection of multi-polar foreign policy:**

Though India is part of Quad, it is not a formal alliance or any security architecture against China. Moreover, alliances are not even feasible in this globalized world based on complex interdependence. But QUAD membership reinforces India's multi-polar foreign policy as:

- India is associated with several forums such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), BRICS etc.
- The other members of these grouping face some sought of strategic competition from USA, but India has managed well to maintain strategic autonomy which is a pillar of multi polar world order.
- China's assertion in South China Sea (SCS) compromises freedom of navigation. Through QUAD India seeks to reassert rule based world order to counter China's growing power and assertion.
- Democratic, Cooperative and Peacekeeping endeavour: The QUAD initiative is group of four largest and powerful democracies in the world which values democratic, peaceful, rule based international order.
- India held that the Quad was more about sharing democratic experiences than a security arrangement directed at China.
- Emergence of Indo-Pacific: USA under its pivot to China policy held Indo-Pacific region is now world's most strategic location.
- Different nations are seeking to project their strategic power in the region.
- India's membership to QUAD should be seen in this light as a counterbalancing initiative to secure its own neighbourhood.

**Conclusion:**

- The Quad remains a work in progress and its members are still in the process of defining its priorities. India seeks to promote goals of its foreign policy through strategic partnership with multiple international organizations and QUAD is one such group to deal with emerging challenges in Indo-Pacific region.

**Q) Discuss the Role and significance of UNSC, is there a need to reform UNSC ? Why India should be given permanent membership ? Comment. (250 words)**

Reference**Why this question:**

Recently Vice President calls for renewed efforts for India to gain permanent membership of the UN Security Council.

**Key demand of the question:**

The answer must discuss the role and significance of UNSC, need for UNSC reforms, why India should be given permanent membership.

**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:**

Briefly explain the mandate of UN security council in general.

**Body:**

Body of the answer should discuss the following aspects:

- What is UN security council?
- Discuss its composition, mandate and objectives.
- What are the current proposed reforms?
- What are India's demands?
- Why India should be given a permanent seat in the council? Discuss pros and cons.

**Conclusion:**

Conclude with way forward.

**Introduction:**

- The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) is one of the six principal organs of the United Nations. Like the UN as a whole, the Security Council was created following World War II to address the failings of a previous international organization, the League of Nations, in maintaining world peace.

**Body:****Role and Significance of UNSC:**

- The Security Council is the United Nations' most powerful body, with "primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.
- Its powers include the establishment of peacekeeping operations, the establishment of international sanctions, and the authorization of military action through Security Council resolutions.
- It is the only UN body with the authority to issue binding resolutions to member states.
- Under the UN Charter, all Member States are obligated to comply with Council's decisions.

**Need for reforms in UNSC:**

- **Regional representation**
  - Supporters of UNSC reform claim that there is a huge European bias in P-5 due to the presence of the United Kingdom and France including Russia.
  - While regions like Latin America, Caribbean group, Arabs and Africa do not have a single permanent member. Similarly, there is a western bias in UNSC. As China is the only Asian country among the five permanent members of UNSC.
  - Thus a large chunk of the population and many different regions of the world remain unrepresented in the permanent membership of UNSC.
  - It seems highly unfair that the whole continent of Africa does not have a single member in P-5 despite the fact that most of the affairs of the body concern this part of the globe only.
  - So regions like Africa and Latin America and others will have to be accommodated in the reformed UNSC.





- **Changing geopolitics:**
  - The victors of World War II shaped the United Nations Charter in their national interests, dividing the permanent seats, and associated veto power, among themselves.
  - It has been 72 years since the foundation of UNSC.
  - During this period, the geopolitical realities have changed drastically, but the Council has changed very little.
- **Question of Veto:**
  - All five permanent members of UNSC enjoy a veto power .
  - Veto is a kind of negative vote by a permanent member that prevents the adoption of a proposal, even if it has received the required overall votes by the members.
  - Sadly, veto power is grossly misused by the permanent members in their own national interest.
  - g. out of 24 vetoes over the last 20 years, 15 have been used by the United States to protect Israel.
  - This also badly affects the conduct of the business of UNSC as many important proposals involving substantive issues get blocked due to use of veto by any of the five permanent members.
- **G-4 and India's quest for a permanent seat:**
  - In recent decades, India has been very vocal in demanding for a permanent seat in UNSC. It is also part of G-4, a group of 4 nations (India, Brazil, Germany and Japan) to lobby for permanent positions on the UNSC or at least to make the council more representative.
  - Many member-states have been pledging support for our aspiration for permanent membership. Several P-5 countries have also announced their support. At present, China is the only P-5 member opposing India's bid.
  - G-4 wants to expand the permanent seats in the UNSC to 10 to include 6 new members G-4 nations apart from one seat to Africa and one seat to Arabs
- **Transparency and Working Methods:**
  - While the expansion of the Security Council has been hotly debated across the world, debate on the working methods of the Council, an equally important aspect of reform to many member states, has attracted less attention.
  - It is true that UNSC has been functioning in the most non-transparent and non-consultative way.
  - The undemocratic nature of UNSC within the supposedly democratic UN has compromised the overall credibility of the United Nations.

#### **India should be given a permanent seat in the council due to:**

- India is the 2nd most populous nation, the 3rd largest economy in PPP terms, a responsible nuclear power and the largest democracy in the world.
- India is a founding member of the UN, and it has been the temporary member of the UNSC for 7 terms.
- India has provided the 2nd largest number of troops in peacekeeping missions. In Africa alone 6000 of our troops have been stationed under UN peacekeeping missions. India has argued in UN that troops contributing nations should have greater say in UNSC.
- India enjoys the backing of major powers including four permanent members other than China and those of African Union, Latin America, Middle Eastern countries and other LDCs from different parts of the globe.
- India has been a responsible power and it has contributed significantly in global peace efforts.
- India rescued not only Indians but also many persons from other countries including Pakistan and USA from war ravaged Yemen and South Sudan under its operation Rahat and Sankat Mochan respectively.

#### **Conclusion:**

- In recent times the credibility of UNSC has suffered a severe blow as it has been ineffective and inefficient in tackling the conflicts in different parts of the world such as Syria, Ukraine etc. in most of these situations UNSC has remained mere a mute spectator.
- Therefore the demand for reforms in the council has become a necessity to restore its credibility and effectiveness in maintaining international peace and security.

### **Q) Discuss the Role and significance of Asian Development Bank. (250 words)**

#### Reference

**Why this question:**

**Key demand of the question:**

The answer must discuss the role and significance of Asian development bank.

**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:**

Briefly explain the mandate of the Asian Development bank.

**Body:**

Body of the answer should discuss the following aspects:

- Established in 1966, and is closely modeled on the World Bank; has a similar weighted voting system where votes are distributed based on member's capital subscriptions.
- ADB borrows from international capital markets with its capital as Guarantee.
- Since the ADB's early days, critics have charged that the two major donors, Japan and the United States, have had extensive influence over lending, policy and staffing decisions.
- There has been criticism that ADB's large scale projects cause social and environmental damage due to lack of oversight.
- India has about 6% voting rights (4th highest; second highest is USA, even here)

**Conclusion:**

Conclude with way forward.

**Introduction:**

- The Asian Development Bank (ADB) is a regional development bank established in 1966, which is headquartered in the Manila, Philippines. The bank also maintains 31 field offices around the world to promote social and economic development in Asia.
- The ADB was modelled closely on the World Bank, and has a similar weighted voting system where votes are distributed in proportion with members' capital subscriptions.
- As of 31 December 2016, Japan and United States hold the largest proportion of shares at 15.607%. China holds 6.444%, India holds 6.331%, and Australia holds 5.786%.

**Body:****Role of Asian Development Bank:**

- It was formed to foster economic growth and co-operation in the region of Asia and the Pacific and to contribute to the acceleration of economic development of the developing countries of the region.
- The basic objective of the Bank is to encourage economic and financial co-operation among the regional members.
- Members enjoy the right to construct projects supported by Bank loans.
- In 28 years of operation, the Bank has become a major catalyst in promoting the development of the most populous and fastest-growing region in the world today.

**The Bank's principal functions are:**

- To make loans and equity investments for the economic and social advancement of developing member countries;
- To provide technical assistance for the preparation and execution of development projects and programmes and advisory services
- To promote investment of public and private capital for development purposes; and
- To respond to requests for assistance in coordinating development policies and plans of member countries.

**Significance of ADB:**

- **Economic and Social Advancement:** This bank has a membership program under which there are various benefits available for the members' countries. It helps them in poverty reduction and country development.
- **Technical Assistance:** Most of the countries require a lot of services like advisory services. Moreover, they while operating at the international level, most of the countries require technical support too.
- **Investment Promotion:** the Asian Development Bank provides a lot of services to the member countries in the form of investments. At the same time, they also provide some specific sort of investment facilities for development purposes.
- **Support in Policies and Plans:** Plans and policies play an important role in any country. There are various domestic agencies providing help to the authorities while framing various policies.
- **Inclusive Development:** ADB works towards empowering women and improving their status in society.
- **Sustainable Development:** ADB believes in preserving and protecting the environment.



**Conclusion:**

- The Bank's operations cover the entire spectrum of economic development with particular emphasis on agriculture, energy, capital market development transport and communication and social infrastructure. The ADB aims for an Asia and Pacific free from poverty.
- Its mission is to help developing member countries reduce poverty and improve the quality of life of their people. ADB releases an annual report that summarizes its operations, budget and other materials for review by the public. Asian Development Bank plays an important role at a wide level.

**Q) Discuss the mandate of Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). (250 words)**

Reference

**Why this question:**

Question is straightforward and is about discussing role played by Food and agriculture organization.

**Key demand of the question:**

The answer must discuss the detailed objectives of FAO and its mandate.

**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:**

write a few introductory lines on what is FAO.

**Body:**

Answers must discuss in detail the objectives of the FAO.

The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) is specialized agency of the United Nations that leads international efforts to defeat hunger. Their goal is to achieve food security for all and make sure that people have regular access to enough high-quality food to lead active, healthy lives.

**Conclusion –**

Conclude with way forward.

**Introduction:**

- The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) is a specialized agency of the United Nations that leads international efforts to defeat hunger. With over 194 member states, FAO works in over 130 countries worldwide. Serving both developed and developing countries, FAO acts as a neutral forum where all nations meet as equals to negotiate arguments and debate policy.

**Body:**

**Mandate of Food and Agriculture Organization:**

FAO's mandate is to build a world without hunger through technical cooperation and assistance and its Members have agreed on five strategic objectives:

- **Help eliminate hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition:**
  - Our mandate is to support members in their efforts to ensure that people have regular access to enough high-quality food.
  - We can help by supporting policies and political commitments that promote food security and good nutrition and by making sure that up-to-date information about hunger and malnutrition challenges and solutions is available and accessible.
- **Make agriculture, forestry and fisheries more productive and sustainable:**
  - Growth in the agriculture sector is one of the most effective means of reducing poverty and achieving food security.
  - We must ensure that increased productivity does not only benefit the few, and that the natural resource base can provide services (pollination, nutrient cycling in soils, quality water, etc.) that enhance sustainability.
- **Reduce rural poverty:**
  - FAO strives to help smallholders improve farm productivity whilst aiming to also increase off-farm employment opportunities and, through social protection, find better ways for rural populations to manage and cope with risks in their environments.



- **Enable inclusive and efficient agricultural and food systems:**
  - Increasing smallholder farmers' participation in food and agricultural systems is critical to achieving FAO's goal of a world without hunger.
- **Increase the resilience of livelihoods to threats and crises:**
  - FAO's mission is to help countries govern, prevent and mitigate risks and crises and support them in preparing and responding to disasters.

**Conclusion:**

- FAO provides an umbrella under which countries can identify strategic priorities and coordinate their efforts to find solutions and plans of actions to pressing problems affecting food and agricultural production.
- FAO organizes high-level summits to mobilize political action and establish specific targets to be met in the fight to eliminate hunger.



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