



INSIGHTSIAS

SIMPLIFYING IAS EXAM PREPARATION

- IAS SELF STUDY GUIDE -

SECURE SYNOPSIS

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

INSIGHTSIAS



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General Studies Paper - II

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

Q) It may well be the case that the basic structure doctrine is derived from the abstract. But that scarcely means it doesn't exist within the Constitution.

Comment. (250 words)

The hindu

Why this question

The doctrine of basic constitution is a novel and a landmark concept developed by the Indian judiciary. The doctrine has been invoked in many high profile cases in the SC. In this context it is important to discuss the relevance and place of the doctrine in the constitution.

Directive word

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

Key demand of the question.

The question wants us to express our knowledge and understanding about the doctrine of basic structure of the constitution and express our opinion as to whether the doctrine is implicit in the constitutional document or not.

Structure of the answer

Introduction– write a few introductory lines about the case which led to the birth of the basic structure doctrine. E.g mention the Kesavananda Bharati case which superseded the judgement in Gopalan Case and introduced the term.

Body-

Discuss what the term broadly means. E.g discuss how the term has been defined by various courts and what are the provisions related to the basic structure- democracy, socialist state, secularism, right to life etc.

Discuss whether the term is implicitly implied in the constitutional document. E.g

- *The phrase has no mention anywhere in the Constitution.*
- *Not only is the basic structure canon legally legitimate, in that it is deeply rooted in the Constitution's text and history, but it also possesses substantial moral value, in that it strengthens democracy by limiting the power of a majoritarian government to undermine the Constitution's central ideals.*
- *not only is the basic structure canon legally legitimate, in that it is deeply rooted in the Constitution's text and history, but it also possesses substantial moral value, in that it strengthens democracy by limiting the power of a majoritarian government to undermine the Constitution's central ideals.*
- *Any amending body organized within the statutory scheme, howsoever verbally unlimited its power, cannot by its very structure change the fundamental pillars supporting its Constitutional authority. Etc.*

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

Background:-

- The case of *Kesavananda Bharati v. State of Kerala* is perhaps the most well-known constitutional decision of the Supreme Court of India (**Supreme Court**). While ruling that there is no implied limitation on the powers of Parliament to amend the Constitution, it held that no amendment can do violence to its basic structure (the "Basic Structure Doctrine").



Doctrine of basic structure:-

- **Doctrine of basic structure says that**
 - The parliament's unlimited power to amend the constitution is subject to only one restriction i.e it should not dilute or violate the basic structure of the constitution.
 - Or the effects of the amendment should not be abrogating or disturbing in nature towards the basic structure.
- The doctrine of basic structure though is not exactly defined but through its contents which have been provided by the judiciary clarifies a scope defining the frame or the structure of the constitution. From time to time basic structure is enhanced with some new contents and hence the Supreme Court is yet to define the exact basic structure of the constitution.
 - Supremacy of the constitution
 - Rule of law
 - Sovereignty, liberty and republic nature of Indian polity.
 - Judicial review
 - Harmony and Balance between fundamental rights and directive principles.
 - Separation of power.
 - Federal character.
 - Parliamentary system.
 - Rule of equality.
 - Unity and integrity of the nation.
 - Free and fair elections.
 - Powers of SC under Article 32,136,142,147
 - Power of HC under Article 226 and 227.
 - Limited power of parliament to amend the constitution.
 - Welfare state.
 - Freedom and dignity of an individual.
- The Basic Structure concept got highlighted in various judgements of Supreme Court such as Indira Nehru Gandhi, Minerva Mills, Waman Rao and I.R.Coelho etc.

Basic structure is derived from the abstract:-

- The common criticism is that the doctrine has no basis in the Constitution's language. The doctrine does not have a textual basis. There is no provision stipulating that this Constitution has a basic structure and that this structure is beyond the competence of amending power.
- Its detractors also believe the doctrine accords the judiciary a power to impose its philosophy over a democratically formed government.

Basic structure exists within the constitution:-

- It is **deeply rooted in the Constitution's text and history**, but it also possesses substantial moral value, in that it strengthens democracy by limiting the power of a majoritarian government to undermine the Constitution's central ideals.
- Constitution authorises court to quash orders as well as legislations which violate fundamental rights of people except in case where the state is backed by law.
- **Fundamental Rights** are the main source of basic structure of constitution. There are fundamental rights to ensure freedom of speech and expression , to maintain a secular state and protect citizens from arbitrary action of state .
- **Preamble** specifically marks the thoughts of makers of constitution and the aspirations of people and defines the boundary upto which state can go . It tells that republic of India is constituted into a democratic, socialist , secular state .
- **Basic structure has implicit acceptance in constitutional debates** where some values like democracy, secularism , federalism were discussed vigorously and thus attracted more importance .



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) There is a need to stifle investigative adventurism on part of investigation agencies and hold accountable for their judgements in order to promote businesses in India. Comment. (250 words)

Indianexpress

Why this question

The high rate of litigation is a serious problem in India and government is the biggest litigant in the country in this context it is essential to examine the need for investigative agencies to shun investigative adventurism and improve their accountability

Directive word

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

Key demand of the question.

The question wants us to express our knowledge and understanding about the hefty litigation and adventuristic attitude of our investigation agencies and form an opinion as to why such attitude needs to be stifled and their accountability increased.

Structure of the answer

Introduction – write a few introductory lines about the high incidence of tax litigation in India and mention that government is the biggest litigant in the country.

Body –

Discuss the issue of investigative adventurism as shown by the investigating agencies in India. E.g

- *For long there has been a fear-induced inertia, especially in the higher echelons of the bureaucracy. Important decisions are invariably deferred, especially by officials due to fear of investigations, with the attendant risk of incarceration.*
- *The lack of judiciousness in investigations also invariably clogs judicial pipelines. The government is already the biggest litigant at all levels of the judicial system.*
- *It is averse to business interests and increases compliance costs*
- *In this, it is small and medium businesses with scarce capital and resources who are the worst sufferers. Not only are professionals to be hired and paid to defend unreasonable demands, but delays in adjudication and appeals, all due to crawling government machinery, leads to a burden of interest which could lead to bankruptcy etc.*
- *Bring out the need to increase their accountability and alter their attitude. E.g*
- *This attitude feeds on irresponsibility, for there is little in form of punishment to the offending officers for harassing businesses, sometimes in order to achieve imposed targets and sometimes for self-enrichment.*
- *Each adjudicating officer's record should be perused and ascertained how many such orders result in recoveries, penalties or prosecution and how many do not stand the test of law and rules.*
- *According to these metrics, promotions and other incentives should be denied.*

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

Background:-

- India has improved its ease of doing business rank but the litigation be it tax, investigative agencies targeting businesses recently can be ruinous for the ease of doing business.



Investigative adventurism is criticised:-

- **Flaws show up in many cases :-**
 - Notably, in the 2G telecom spectrum case where a special court judge was critical of CBI's efforts.
 - In another case, the Aarushi Talwar murder, Allahabad high court found fault with CBI and went on to acquit the accused.
 - In many cases, reputations are irreversibly damaged during the course of investigative agencies drawn out.
- Businesses cannot exist and flourish in a state of constant apprehension and dread of the capriciousness of the arms of law and regulatory agencies. **This discourages investment and entrepreneurship, which has the cascading effect of low growth and poor job creation.**
 - It is averse to business interests and increases compliance costs.
- Investigative 'adventurism' ravages reputations and incurs financial costs, profession .
- For long there has been a fear-induced inertia, especially in the higher echelons of the bureaucracy. Important decisions are invariably deferred.
- **The lack of judiciousness in investigations also invariably clogs judicial pipelines.** The government is already the biggest litigant at all levels of the judicial system.
- **It is small and medium businesses with scarce capital and resources who are the worst sufferers.** Not only are professionals to be hired and paid to defend unreasonable demands, but delays in adjudication and appeals, leads to a burden of interest which could lead to bankruptcy.
- There is a **serious need to curb the adventurism of the investigating and adjudicating officers for both the high economic and emotional costs they inflict.**
- This adventurism feeds on **irresponsibility**, for there is little in form of punishment to the offending officers for harassing businesses, sometimes in order to achieve imposed targets and sometimes for self-enrichment.

What needs to be done :-

- **There is a need for a review mechanism to be instituted and implemented, if not already in place.**
 - Each adjudicating officer's record should be perused and ascertained how many such orders result in recoveries, penalties or prosecution and how many do not stand the test of law and rules.
 - According to these metrics, promotions and other incentives should be denied.

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) Explain the main issues involved in Rafale deal controversy and discuss CAG's report in this regard ? (250 words)

Reference

Economictimes

Why this question

The controversy over Rafale deal has become a major talking point in newsroom debates and oped pages. It is important to understand the issues involved as well as the details of cag report on the deal.

Key demand of the question

The question expects us to highlight the main points of controversy in the Rafale deal. Thereafter, it expects is to discuss the content of CAG's report and debate it. Finally we need to provide a fair and balanced opinion and discuss the way forward.

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 – Explain about the deal and highlight the incessant noise surrounding the deal.



Body

Discuss the main reasons why the deal is controversial

- *cost breakdown of Rafale in the original bid under UPA and in the 36 aircraft in the government-to-government deal under NDA are not in the public domain.*
- *There was no agreement on the terms of Technology Transfer previously. What was on offer was just Licence Manufacturing technology. Under the current agreement, the 36 Rafale procurement offset proposal supports the 'Make In India' initiative of the Indian Government through Article 12 of the IGA. It states that the French Party will facilitate the implementation of 'Make In India' by the industrial supplier notably through offsets for 50% value of the supply protocol. Overlooking HAL for a private company appears controversial to some*

India has managed to negotiate the acquisition of the latest weapons package for the Rafale. These are the new weapons, beyond the standard package such as SCALP and METEOR

- *highlight the details of CAG report*
- *CAG found the 2016 deal to be 2.86 per cent cheaper than the deal negotiated by the UPA*
- *present government has left a five-squadron gap in India's defence preparedness, with no arrangement for five out of the seven squadrons, each of 18 Medium Multi Role Combat Aircraft, that the Air Force needs and began the process of procuring in 2001.*

Give your view on the cost calculation, examine whether such secrecy in public procurement is justified etc

Conclusion – *Give your view and discuss way forward.*

Introduction:

- The 36-Rafale deal is an offshoot of the tender issued by the Ministry of Defence in August 2007 to buy 126 fighter jets, 108 of which would be made in India by public sector HAL. After extensive trials of six foreign aircraft, **the IAF selected the Rafale and Eurofighter jets as having met its requirements.**
- India's intention to buy the 36 aircraft in "fly-away" condition was announced by Prime Minister during his visit to France in April 2015 and, a few days later, then Defence Minister had announced that the earlier 126-fighter deal — stalled over price since 2012 — was dead. The deal for the 36 aircraft — a new acquisition — was signed between India and France in 2016.
- The CAG report has examined the **€7.87-bn deal** for 36 Rafale aircraft to assess **"if the objectives of Indo-French joint statement and the objectives set out for Indian Negotiating Team by Defence Acquisition Council were achieved"**.

Body:

The controversy of the Rafale deal:

- **Lack of Transparency:**
 - The present deal as direct government-to-government agreement, as against the earlier open tender, is criticised.
 - Cost breakdown of Rafale in the original bid under UPA and in the 36 aircraft in the government-to-government deal under NDA are **not in the public domain.**
 - The Government's refusal to share the price details which was **'Classified information'**, citing the **Security Agreement provisions.**
 - This was as per the Inter-Governmental Agreement (IGA) between the Governments of India and France.
- **Accountability to Parliament:**
 - The government is duty-bound to share the full pricing details with the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) and the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) of Parliament.
- **Pricing Issues:**
 - The price for 126 aircraft that was quoted nearly a decade ago, was never finalised, and no contract was signed or executed.
 - The basic price of each Rafale aircraft was said to be around **Rs 670 crore.**



- At the time of its signing, the 36-aircraft deal was said to be worth around Rs 59,000 crore (€ 7.878 billion).
- Breakup given by Top defence officials: the basic cost of the 36 aircraft was € 3.402 billion (approximately Rs 670 crore per aircraft), the weaponry was for € 710 million, spare parts for € 1,800 million, weather and terrain compatibility fits for € 1,700 million, and performance based logistics support for € 353 million.
- **Transfer of Technology:**
 - The offset proposal supports the 'Make In India' initiative of the Indian Government through Article 12 of the IGA.
 - The current deal states that Dassault will facilitate the implementation of 'Make In India' by the industrial supplier notably through offsets for **50% value of the supply protocol**.
 - The **absence of transfer of technology (ToT)** component is raised as an issue.
 - Also, no role is guaranteed for any Indian public sector company, including HAL.
 - Some India-specific enhancements that were part of the earlier deal do not figure in the 2016 deal
- **Conflict of Interest:**
 - The **bypassing of procedures, the excessive interest of the Prime Minister's Office in the deal and the changes made by the government in the terms of the deal and even in the Defence Procurement Policy itself** cannot be explained without reference to the offset factor.
 - The offset deal granted to private MNC without any competition has raised eyebrows about lack of transparent bidding.
 - This has increased the suspicion of possible chances of Nepotism.

CAG's report on Rafale deal:

- The CAG report concludes that the 2016 agreement is **slightly better in terms of both pricing and delivery than the 2007 deal**.

Mixed bag

Key highlights of the CAG report on the Rafale Deal

Price comparison...

The price of the 36 Rafale aircraft in the 2016 deal was 2.86% lower than the comparable price based on the UPA-negotiated deal. The comparable price as of 2015 (aligned price) was arrived at by applying a price escalation formula to the June 2007 bid



Transfer of technology (ToT) costs... The CAG did not consider the costs needed to manufacture 108 aircraft in India that was part of the 18 flyaway + 108 ToT aircraft deal in the 2007 bid. Only the 18 flyaway aircraft were considered for comparison

Delivery schedule... The CAG noted that there was an improvement of one month in the delivery schedule in the 2016 contract (71 months instead of 72 months for the earlier bid)

Absence of bank guarantee... The auditor said that Dassault, not the government, saved a sum by the non-inclusion of a bank guarantee in the deal. This sum should have been passed on to the government, the audit observed

Government claims... One of the government's claims was that each aircraft (without enhancements) was 9% cheaper in the 2016 deal. But the audit concluded there was no difference between the 2007 (escalated to 2015) and the 2016 offer in this regard

126 to 36... The CAG said that it could not find any proposal with the Ministry for filling the wide gap in the operational preparedness of the IAF (by reducing aircraft to be bought from 126 to 36). It noted that the Ministry of Defence informed CAG that it had issued a fresh Request For Information (RFI) for new fighter aircraft to fill this gap

The concerns of the CAG's findings:

- The 2.86% gain in the aircraft price claimed by the CAG is at variance with the taller claims made by the government.
- The question of 50% offsets in the deal, which has been at the centre of a major controversy due to involvement of Indian MNC, has not been dealt by the CAG in this report.



- The CAG report is unhappy about the defence ministry's repeated demand not to discuss specific prices in the Rafale deal, as not disclosing price was presented as part of the agreement between India and France on the planes.
- The original issue of bringing down the total acquisition from 126 to 36 aircraft was not given much attention.
- There is also no answer to the question why the offer of a lower price made by the manufacturers of another shortlisted aircraft, the Eurofighter, was neither considered nor used to bargain for a better price.
- The CAG's assessment of savings in India Specific Enhancements (ISE) to be around 17% is also not properly documented and needs deeper examinations.
- The CAG report makes it clear that the Air Force's inability to specify its requirements clearly was to blame, in large part, for the delay.
- It stresses on the fact that the defence acquisition processes in India require reforms and streamlining.

Conclusion:

- The report comes amidst varied revelations about possible lapses and deviations in the Rafale deal.
- The CAG report is less likely to bring closure to the controversy over the deal as it does not clarify all the doubts about the deal.
- There is a need to deliberate the report in the Parliament in its forthcoming sessions and bring in the required transparency about the deal.

Q) Supreme Court's recent decision flags the need to address complexities in Centre-NCTD relations. Analyze. (250 words)

[The hindu](#)

[The hindu](#)

Why this question

The recent judgement of the SC on centre-Delhi relations has increased the ambiguity in the matter. The judgment follows a previous judgement by the SC last year. In this context it is important to discuss the issue in detail.

Directive word

Examine- here we have to probe deeper into the topic, get into details, and find out the causes or implications if any.

Key demand of the question.

The question wants us to dig deeper into the Centre- NCTD relations and bring out their complexity and the need to address the same.

Structure of the answer

Introduction– write a few introductory lines about the NCTD- Centre relations. E.g mention the legal/ legislative status of NCTD.

Body-

Discuss the complexity of the relationship. E.g discuss the recent judgement of the SC and the judgement given last year in the LG vs Delhi case. E.g

- *2018 judgement – It held that the Lt. Governor has to act either on the aid and advice of the Council of Ministers, or abide by the decision of the President on a reference made by him.*
- *The power to refer "any matter" to the President did not mean "every matter" should necessarily be referred to the President.*
- *Recent judgement (Union Territory of Delhi in Bir Singh versus Delhi Jal Board) – Both judges agree that there is no 'service' in the Delhi government, as all its employees come under the 'Central services'. Its civil servants are drawn from the DANICS cadre, a service common to various Union Territories.*
- *Justice Sikri believes that going by a Constitution Bench decision last year, the NCTD would indeed have the power to deploy officials within its own departments. However, the absence*



of a public service in Delhi means Entry 41 in the State List (services; service commissions) would imply that it is a matter inapplicable to 'Union Territories', and therefore, the LG need not act on the Delhi government's aid and advice.

- *Therefore, he favours a solution under which transfers and postings of officers in the rank of Joint Secretary and above could be directly submitted to the LG, and those of others be processed by the Council of Ministers and sent to the LG. In case of any dispute, the LG's view will prevail.*
- *Justice Bhushan, on the other hand, has ruled that once it is accepted that there is no 'service' under the NCTD, there is no scope for its government to exercise any executive power in this regard.*
- *A larger Bench will now decide on the question relating to control over the services.*

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

Introduction:

- The **69th constitutional amendment** designated **Delhi as National Capital Territory of Delhi (NCTD)** and provided Legislative Assembly.
- However it was **not conferred with full statehood** and is administered by union government through Lieutenant Governor. The Amendment provided **special status for Delhi by incorporating article 239 AA and 239 AB** by providing for legislative assembly and Council of Ministers.

Body:

The complexity of the relationship between the Delhi Government and the Lieutenant Governor is constantly on the burner due to various issues. Both the Delhi government and the LG had been on loggerhead over administrative issues.

According to **Supreme Court judgment** in Delhi Government vs. Lieutenant Governor case in 2018,

- Delhi government has power in all areas except land, police and public order.
- The Government of NCT Delhi (GNCTD) enjoys executive powers over all matters over which the Delhi Legislative Assembly can legislate
- The Lieutenant Governor (L-G) is bound by the aid and advice of GNCTD as per Article 239AA(4)
- The LG may only in exceptional cases refer a matter over which he/she and the GNCTD have a "difference of opinion", to the President, for a binding decision.
- Both LG and CM are constitutional functionaries and must work harmoniously with mutual respect.
- All decisions by Delhi's council of ministers, who are elected representatives, must be communicated to the L-G but that does not mean his concurrence is required.
- The power to refer "any matter" to the President did not mean "every matter" should necessarily be referred to the President.

The bench had on November 1 last year reserved its verdict on the petitions challenging the notifications issued by the Central government and the NCTD government.

The Delhi government does not have power of services, they cannot create new posts. Government can open new schools, but when it comes to hiring teachers, it will be done by the LG. Government can open new hospitals, but hiring of doctors will be executed by the lieutenant governor.

The Supreme Court has delivered a **split verdict** on a batch of petitions challenging various notifications, including on control of services and power of Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB), in the ongoing tussle between the Delhi government and the Centre.

The two-judge bench comprising Justices A.K. Sikri and Ashok Bhushan differed in **the aspect of power of "services" in the verdict.**

- **Justice Bhushan**, on the other hand, has ruled that once it is accepted that there is no 'service' under the NCTD, there is no scope for its government to exercise any executive power in this regard.
- His verdict is based on recent judgement (**Bir Singh versus Delhi Jal Board**), **there is no 'service' in the Delhi government, as all its employees come under the 'Central services'**. Its civil servants are drawn from the DANICS cadre, a service common to various Union Territories.
- He opined that the term "services" means the Union Public Services Commission and not State Services/Commission. The judge held that the executive power of the Delhi government in relation to 'services' extends only to matters with respect to which the Legislative Assembly has power to make laws.



- The absence of a public service in Delhi means Entry 41 in the State List (services; service commissions) would imply that it is a matter inapplicable to 'Union Territories', and therefore, the LG need not act on the Delhi government's aid and advice.
- **Justice Sikri** believes that going by a **Constitution Bench decision last year**, the NCTD would indeed have the power to deploy officials within its own departments.
- Therefore, he favours a solution under which transfers and postings of officers in the rank of Joint Secretary and above could be directly submitted to the LG, and those of others be processed by the Council of Ministers and sent to the LG. In case of any dispute, the LG's view will prevail.

The **Supreme Court's split decision** shows a difference of opinion that stems from a Constitution Bench verdict on the question of whether the government of the NCTD has executive control over those in its service. A **larger Bench** will now decide on the question relating to control over the services.

At the same time, the 2-judge bench was unanimous regarding other issues. The Supreme Court declared the competent authority in respect of the contentious issues as follows:

- Anti-Corruption Bureau under the Centre; the Delhi government has no police powers.
- Commission of Enquiry under the Centre
- Electricity Board under the Delhi government
- Power to appoint Public Prosecutor with the Delhi government

Conclusion:

The more significant challenge is to find a way out of the complexities and problems thrown up by the multiple forms of federalism and power-sharing arrangements through which relations between the Centre and its constituent units are regulated. The need of the hour is have a re-look at the 69th CAA and its articles to clearly define the scope of the various stakeholders. This must be done taking into the federal and democratic spirit of Indian Constitution.

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

Q) India's National Mission for a Green India assumes arbitrary targets that are rooted in habits of neo-colonial governance rather than "sound science". Comment. (250 words)

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

Why this question

The article examines the goals of the National Mission for a Green India and brings out its limitations.

Directive word

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

Key demand of the question.

The question wants us to express our knowledge and understanding of the National Mission for a Green India and express our opinion as to whether the mission has arbitrary targets which are rooted in neo-colonial governance.

Structure of the answer

Introduction– write a few introductory lines about the National Mission for a Green India. E.g The Green India Mission is one of eight missions under the National Action Plan on Climate Change and aims at "protecting, restoring and enhancing India's diminishing forest cover and responding to climate change by a combination of adaptation and mitigation measures".

Body-

Discuss how the missions targets are rooted in neo-colonial governance and are devoid of any scientific backing. E.g



- *“Ostensibly aimed at improving forest-based livelihoods, the initiative has all the qualities of past forestry efforts in India, which have historically performed a reverse role: disinheriting forest-rooted populations,”*
- *Given that forest cover of Europe in the colonial period was estimated at roughly one-third, and that this region serves as the source of knowledge, law and statecraft, afforestation rate of 30-33% became the widely accepted minimum for civilization.*
- *Exported to India, this targeted minimum, it can easily be concluded, became a conceptual ghost that haunted successive generations of forest policymakers, whose goals might have been diverse... but whose mechanism represent a disordered form of repetitive compulsion, imposed over and over on arid and semi-arid ecosystems and the local communities.*
- *Commitment to fixed rates of forest cover encourages tree plantations in “ecologically inappropriate sites and conditions”.*
- *Again, afforestation typically extends the “authority” of Indian state forest departments in a way that is mostly “at the expense of local livelihoods” rather than in “support of them.”*
- *One problem of plantation ecologies in India, according to the study, is “enthusiasm for fast growing species and exotic and invasive species, planted in the name of increasing land cover dedicated to ‘forest’.”*

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

National mission for green India :-

- Green India Mission is one of eight missions under the National Action Plan on Climate Change and **aims at “protecting, restoring and enhancing India’s diminishing forest cover and responding to climate change by a combination of adaptation and mitigation measures”.**
- The \$7billion environmental intervention, laid out in 2011, seeks to put a third of the country under forest cover by increasing forest and tree cover to the extent of 5 million hectares (mha), besides improving quality of forest/tree cover on another 5 mha of forest/non-forest lands.
- The mission acknowledges the influence forests have on environmental amelioration through climate change mitigation, water security, food security, biodiversity conservation and livelihood security of forest-dependent communities.
- **It hinges on decentralized participatory approach by involving grass root level communities and organizations in decision making, planning, implementation and monitoring.**

How is it rooted in habits of neo colonial governance :-

- **Tree planting is the focus :-**
 - Obsession with tree-planting has its roots in the colonial forestry bureaucracy.
- **Commitment to fixed rates of forest cover encourages tree plantations** in ecologically inappropriate sites and conditions.
- Given that forest cover of Europe in the colonial period was estimated at roughly one-third, and that this region serves as the source of knowledge, law and statecraft , **afforestation rate of 30-33% became the widely accepted minimum for civilization.**
- Afforestation typically extends the authority of Indian state forest departments in a way that is mostly at the **expense of local livelihoods rather than in support of them.**
- One problem of plantation ecologies in India is enthusiasm for fast growing species and exotic and invasive species, planted in the name of increasing land cover dedicated to ‘forest’.
- Aggressive afforestation projects in India also **tend to draw attention to, and direct resources toward, tree-planting, without a concomitant commitment to addressing the drivers of widespread and large-scale deforestation.**

The mission has also been criticised:-

- It has proved to be one of the most slow-moving missions in the NAPCC .
- At present, the **ministry is hugely understaffed and short of experts with respect to the GIM.**
- **Lack of capacity building :-**
 - Though the mission envisages an active gram sabha as the primary body at the decentralized level, no initiative has taken place with respect to capacity building at the ground level.



- **Decentralized and participatory governance** as envisaged in the mission document seems to be more in principle than reality.
- **Approaches on carbon sequestration and the issue of forest diversion are largely neglected in the mission.**
- **Funding issues :-**
 - The budgetary allocation for the mission has been shrinking over the years. The allocations for the years 2015-16, 2016-17 and 2017-18 were Rs 72 crore, Rs 42.01 crore and Rs 47.80 crore respectively.
- **Failed to reach targets :-**
 - In terms of targets, the data available for the year 2015-16 and 2016-17 shows that the mission has missed its targets by a long shot.
 - In 2015-16, the plantations undertaken were 34 per cent short of the targets. The following year the shortfall was more than 40 per cent.
 - The mission has also lagged in providing alternative fuel technology to households to reduce emissions from burning of fuelwood and other similar fuels. In 2015-16, only 25 per cent of the target was matched .
- **Data issues:-**
 - Lack of baseline data will pose a problem in preparing a robust business plan for enterprise development
- **No institutional mechanisms to handle watershed and biodiversity ecosystems.**
- There is **no clarity on the role of the Beat Office** (the lowest rung of the Forest Department) that has a direct interface with village dwellers.

What needs to be done :-

- The incredible and beautiful diversity of the Indian ecological mosaic deserves a **true ‘greening’ approach, that takes seriously the genius loci, the peculiarity of local systems, and restores these with local people.**
 - **More focus on the following aspect :-**
 - Gram sabhas and the committees mandated by the gram sabhas, including revamped joint forest management committees (JFMCs), will oversee the mission implementation at the village level.
 - **Apart from afforestation, protection and conservation are equally important.**
 - Convergence with NREGA and CAMPA funds would mean a steady and consistent line of finance an essential requirement for the long term sustainability of any project of this scale.

Q) Discuss how Swachh Bharat changed India and became a global inspiration ? (250 words)

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

Why this question

The news that On the lines of Swachh Bharat mission Nigeria President Muhammadu Buhari declared a state of emergency and launched a new National Action Plan for the sector. It is said that imitation is the highest form of flattery and the news calls for assessing the impact of SBM both domestically and globally.

Key demand of the question

The question expects us to discuss in brief about SBM, examine in detail the benefits accrued by the mission both domestically and internationally. Thereafter it expects us to highlight the reasons behind the Nigerian government's decision and give our view on the success of SBM.

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 – Explain about the Swachh Bharat Mission

Body



Discuss the domestic impact of SBM

- *The SBM has transformed into a massive 'Jan Andolan' created on the ground using information, education, and communication, aiming to bring behaviour change.*
- *Since the inception of the program, the rural sanitation coverage of India has increased significantly, from 39% in October 2014 to 95% today. Nearly 8.7 crore household toilets have been constructed under the Mission.*
- *As a result, almost 25 States/Union Territories, 529 districts, and 5,09,067 villages have declared themselves as free from open defecation.*
- *National Annual Rural Sanitation Survey (NARSS) conducted under the World Bank support project found that 93.4% of the households in rural India who have access to a toilet use it, confirming that behaviour change is happening on the ground etc*
- *Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 6.1 and 6.2 deals with water and sanitation respectively in which SBM is playing a massive role*
- *Highlight about Nigeria's decision to take learnings from the implementation of the programme in India*
- *Experts are worried that Nigeria may overtake India as number one in open defecation.*
- *Country made several efforts towards improving access to sanitation such adoption of the Community-Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) approach to scale up sanitation in rural areas. National and sub-national specific roadmaps were developed on lines of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)*
- *Many developing countries share similar challenges to India which makes Indian experience in this area invaluable – large population, decentralised government structure and WASH challenges. Etc*

Discuss about the limitations of the mission in India which these countries should be wary of

Conclusion – give your view and discuss way forward.

Introduction:

- **Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM)** is perhaps the largest behaviour change campaign ever, aims to make India a clean nation. The mission will cover all rural and urban areas. The **World Health Organization (WHO)** believes that SBM could prevent about 300,000 deaths due to water borne diseases assuming we achieve 100 per cent coverage by October 2019.

Body:

The domestic impact of SBM so far:

- **Five hundred and eighty four districts**, 5,840 blocks, 244,687 gram panchayats and 541,433 villages are open defecation free (ODF).
- As of September 2018, the sanitation coverage of India is **upwards of 93 per cent and over 465,000 villages** have been declared ODF.
- Towards the end of 2017, an independent verification agency (IVA) conducted the **National Annual Rural Sanitation Survey (NARSS)**, and found that **4 per cent** people who had toilets, **used them regularly**. NARSS also re- confirmed the ODF status of 95.6 per cent of the villages that had been verified ODF by the state governments.
- Since October 2014, 91.5 million toilets have been constructed and 154.3 million rural households have toilets now.
- **IHHL (individual household latrine application)** coverage in all states is in excess of 95 per cent, except Goa and Odisha.
- Over the last four years, a cadre of **500,000 swachhagrahis** has been created who have triggered lakhs of villages to become ODF.
- The foot-soldiers have helped in **geo-tagging toilets, verifying household behaviour, converting old toilets and retro-fitting them, engaging in other forms of cleanliness.**
- Bal Swachata mission that was launched to inculcate cleanliness values and personal hygiene amongst children. This would go a long way in.



- The SBM has transformed into a **massive ‘Jan Andolan’** created on the ground using information, education, and communication, aiming to bring behaviour change.
- **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 6.1 and 6.2** deals with water and sanitation respectively in which SBM is playing a massive role.

Nigeria’s decisions to take learnings from the implementation of the programme in India are

- Nigeria and India share similarities, which include a large population, decentralised government structure and WASH challenges. Both countries have been at the top of the global open defecation ladder.
- As India strides forward through SBM, it has greatly challenged Nigeria as it is set to become the next global leader in practising open defecation once India meets her target.
- During the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) era, Nigeria made several efforts towards improving access to sanitation. These include the adoption of the Community-Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) approach to scale up sanitation in rural areas.
- A new programme, Partnership for Expanded Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene (PEWASH) was developed in 2016 to improve the situation and bring sector actors together.

However India has seen many challenges and stigma remains:

- **Purity and pollution:**
 - The key reason for this is that basic latrines that need to be emptied out manually or pumped by simple machines are unacceptable to higher caste Hindus.
 - It is considered polluting to the individual and the home, and historically associated with untouchability. So people rather defecate in open than having a toilet at home.
 - It is not just a matter of access but a problem of perceptions of pollution, ritual purity, and caste.
 - Even if the government builds free toilets without any leakage or corruption, India will at best have 80 million new toilets that a large proportion of Indians do not want to use.
- **Contract labour:**
 - Municipalities began to employ more contractual labourers mostly scavengers forced into the profession by their caste to remove waste.
 - The Swachh Bharat campaign hardly addresses a reworking of the underground sewerage system due to which many such labourers have died recently while cleaning jammed manholes that open into the sewerage system etc.
- **The rate of open defecation is not decreasing much:**
 - India has far higher levels of open defecation than other countries of the same GDP per capita. For example, India has a higher GDP per capita than Bangladesh, but in Bangladesh only 8.4% households defecate in the open, compared to 55% in India.
- **Funds unspent:**
 - Centre has literally forgotten to spend the money earmarked to promote the use of toilets, a concern raised in the State of India’s Environment in Figure: 2018.
 - Centre has also failed to exhaust its budget for Swachh Bharat Mission-Gramin. This, despite the fact, that the budget for the scheme has seen a dip-over the past year.
- **Implementation issues:**
 - Sanitation coverage figures seemed to be more on paper but the actual progress at the ground level is very lethargic. Behavioural change is still a distant reality.
- **Quality:**
 - Standing committee has also raised questions over the construction quality of toilets and said that the government is counting non-functional toilets, leading to inflated data.
- **Unable to reach target:**
 - Access to free toilets has not helped resolve open defecation in India. The programme is unlikely to succeed in its primary task of eliminating open defecation by October 2019

Conclusion:

- Basic services such as good toilet and drainage systems, supply of safe drinking water all of which reduce exposure to and spread of diseases, require effective government intervention, which is part of basic human dignity of every individual. The success of the SBM is an inspiring model for Nigeria. The latter must also learn from India’s challenges to attain her **SDG goals 6.1 and 6.2**.



Q) Do you think India needs an anti-torture legislation. Critically analyze. (250 words)

The hindu

Why this question

Custodial torture is an inhuman and barbaric practice, which has been in vogue since ages, except in most of the modern liberal democracies, where it has been abolished. In this context it is important to discuss whether India also needs an anti-torture legislation or not.

Directive word

Critically analyze- here we 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. based on our discussion we have to form a concluding opinion on the issue.

Key demand of the question.

The question wants us to dig deeper into the issue of custodial torture in India and bring out the reasons as to why there is a need for an anti-torture legislation in India.

Structure of the answer

Introduction— mention about the huge pendency of cases in Indian courts of law and mention the prevalence of 3rd degree as an accepted form of custodial torture in India.

Body-

Discuss in points as to why custodial torture is an inhuman practice. E.g

- *The practice of custodial power is about men — and sometimes, women — who are in positions of power, even if for a brief while and over a limited terrain, having custody over a powerless person.*
- *It is about the use of custodial opportunity to torture the captive's body and mind.*
- *And there, in that arena of wantonness, it becomes something of a sport for the human "Gods" that rule mere humans.*
- *Custodial death, when not 'natural', is the extreme end-point of custodial torture.*
- *The death penalty, notwithstanding 'due process', is a close kin to this lawless and heartless game etc.*

Discuss why there is a need for an anti-torture legislation in India. E.g

- *India has practised and continues to practise the 'third degree' with impunity.*
- *India has signed but not ratified the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.*
- *Without such a law, there is no meaning to signing the Convention.*
- *Mention about the lapsed bill.*
- *Mention some Human Rights Commission reports which highlight custodial torture in India etc.*

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

Introduction:

- Custodial torture is global, old and stubborn. The butchering last October of Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi tells us custodial torture and killing are no country's, creed's or culture's monopoly.
- In India, the **National Human Rights Commission** figures of reported torture cases, the report said the figures showed **custodial violence and torture continue to be rampant in the country.**
- It also pointed out that the **number of reported cases being only a fraction of actuals, the situation was serious.**

**Body:****Custodial torture is an inhuman practice:**

- It represents the worst form of excesses by public servants entrusted with the duty of law enforcement.
- The practice of custodial power is about men — and sometimes, women — who are in positions of power, even if for a brief while and over a limited terrain, having custody over a powerless person.
- Custodial death, when not 'natural', is the extreme end-point of custodial torture. The death penalty, notwithstanding 'due process', is a close kin to this lawless and heartless game.

Need for an anti-torture legislation in India:

- India has practised and continues to practise the 'third degree' with impunity.
- India **signed the UN Convention against Torture** in 1997, but **neither has it ratified nor followed or preceded by domestic legislation to outlaw and prevent custodial torture.**
- India's non-ratification of the Convention is both surprising and dismaying.
- In 2010, the then government introduced **Prevention of Torture Bill** in the Lok Sabha in 2010 and had it passed in 10 days. The bill as passed by the Lok Sabha was referred to a select committee of the Rajya Sabha.
- The committee gave its report recommending the Bill's adoption later the same year. It lapsed with the dissolution of the 15th Lok Sabha. And was not revived by the 16th, the present Lok Sabha.
- The current government spoke of amending Sections 330 (voluntarily causing hurt to extort confession) and 331 of the Indian Penal Code, but in vain.
- there has been **no consistent documentation** of torture-related complaints. The National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) does not document cases of custodial torture. The NHRC does deal with cases of torture in custody, but the annual figures related to such cases do not get reported in its reports.
- In the ten-month period between September 2017 and June 2018, English language news reports on Internet noted 122 incidents of custodial torture resulting in 30 deaths. In several cases among these 122 incidents, there were multiple victims.
- The procedure to deal with children in conflict with law is different from the routine procedure of criminal justice system. But incidents show that children have been subjected to torture in police custody
- Torture is not just confined to police custody, but is also perpetrated in otherwise assumed to be "safer" custodial institutions like judicial custody (prisons), juvenile homes, de-addiction centers etc
- Nine years after the report of the Select Committee and 21 years after signing the Convention, India is yet to legislate a law that will outlaw torture

Way Forward:

- In a matter that concerns 'life and liberty', the Supreme Court is the guardian of the Constitution's guarantees.
- The Law Commission of India submitted its 273rd report recommending government to ratify the UNCAT and also proposed the Prevention of Torture Bill 2017.
- Definition of torture should be broadened to include discrimination of any kind as one of the purposes of torture. It is widely recognised that discrimination based on religion, caste and association with ideas does have an impact on the incidence and extent of torture.
- Given the fact that there is a possibility of a range of acts that can be committed under torture, cruelty and ill-treatment leading to differing severity of harm—the punishment prescribed should have further gradation. Also, death penalty should not be included as the punishment.
- The bill should enlist possible factors based on which the calculation of compensation should be devised.
- It is imperative that the democratic opposition makes the ratification of the Convention and a new anti-torture legislation part of its common programme. The 17th Lok Sabha must take a stand on this matter.
- It gives us a choice to join the civilised world in moving away from ancient barbarism

Conclusion:

- The prevention of torture has been one of **the key human rights developments** in the last decade. With India's strong stake for a seat at the security council, the issue has assumed importance.
- There is an urgent need to address the ways in which inequalities continue to exist and question the nature of our criminal justice system which turns a blind eye to torture.



Q) Discuss the key features of Banning of Unregulated Deposit Schemes Ordinance and examine its impact ? (250 words)

[The hindu](#)

Why this question

President Ram Nath Kovind on Thursday promulgated the Banning of Unregulated Deposit Schemes Ordinance and the article discusses the details of the ordinance and its impact.

Key demand of the question

The question expects us to discuss in detail the key features of the ordinance and examine its impact in terms of how it protects small investors from frauds. We need to discuss any issues if there are in the ordinance and the way forward.

Directive word

Examine – When you are asked to examine, you have to probe deeper into the topic, get into details, and find out the causes or implications if any.

Structure of the answer

Introduction – Highlight that President Kovind promulgated the Banning of Unregulated Deposit Schemes Ordinance and state the purpose of the ordinance.

Body

Discuss the key provisions of the ordinance

- In a bid to protect gullible investors from ponzi schemes, Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led government last week came out with an ordinance that banned unregulated deposit schemes, which will help to tackle the menace of illicit deposit-taking activities.
- Banning of Unregulated Deposit Schemes Ordinance, 2019 does not ban small and medium enterprises (SMEs) from receiving loans in the course of, or for the purpose of, business, the government has clarified.
- The new law permits deposits from 'relatives', banks, financial institutions, property buyers, customers (extending an advance payment), and for other designated purposes. Similarly, a proprietor can borrow from a non-relative as long as it is strictly for business purposes.

Discuss the impact of these measures

- Although the intent of the government behind bringing the ordinance is applaudable, experts believe this ordinance will have widespread ramification on some sectors and small traders.
- normal transactions like an individual reaching out to friends for a quick loan to tide over a crisis, a cash-strapped businessman borrowing from an acquaintance to meet a personal obligation; or, a charitable institution funding students and the ailing, cannot be done post this ordinance.

Conclusion – Give a fair and balanced view regarding the impact of the ordinance and discuss way forward.

Introduction:

- The savings of **low-income Indian households** have **traditionally remained unprotected** by the government when compared to those of the more affluent economic groups.
- The **President of India** recently promulgated the **Banning of Unregulated Deposit Schemes Ordinance**, which bars **all deposit schemes in the country that are not officially registered with the government from either seeking or accepting deposits from customers**.

Body:

Rationale behind the ordinance:

- To deal with the menace of illicit deposit taking schemes, as in the recent past, there have been rising instances of people in various parts of the country being defrauded by illicit deposit taking schemes.



- The worst victims of these schemes are the **poor and the financially illiterate**, and the operations of such schemes are often spread over many States.
- **Increasing scams:**
 - The CBI had lodged about 166 cases in the past four years related to chit funds and multi-crore scams, with the highest numbers in West Bengal and Odisha.
 - As per information provided by the Reserve Bank of India, between July 2014 and May 2018, 978 cases of unauthorised schemes were discussed in state-level coordination committee (SLCC) meetings in various states and union territories, and were forwarded to the respective regulators or law enforcement agencies in the states.

Key features of the ordinance:

- The Ordinance provides for a mechanism to ban unregulated deposit schemes and protect the interests of depositors.
- It also seeks to amend three laws, i.e., the Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934, the Securities and Exchange Board of India Act, 1992 and the Multi-State Co-operative Societies Act, 2002.
- The ordinance allows for **compensation to be offered to victims** through the liquidation of the assets of those offering illegal deposit schemes.
- **Deposit:** The Ordinance defines a deposit as an amount of money received through an advance, a loan, or in any other form, with a promise to be returned with or without interest. Such deposit may be returned either in cash or as a service, and the time of return may or may not be specified.
- **Unregulated deposit scheme:** A deposit-taking scheme is defined as unregulated if it is taken for a business purpose and is not registered with the regulators listed in the Ordinance.
- **Deposit taker:** The Ordinance defines deposit takers as an individual, a group of individuals, or a company who asks for (solicits), or receives deposits. Banks and entities incorporated under any other law are not included as deposit takers.
- **Competent Authority:** The Ordinance provides for the appointment of one or more government officers, not below the rank of Secretary to the state or central government, as the Competent Authority. Police officers receiving information about offences committed under the Ordinance will report it to the Competent Authority.
- **Designated Courts:** The Ordinance provides for the constitution of one or more Designated Courts in specified areas.
- **Central Database:** The ordinance will help in the **creation of a central repository of all deposit schemes** under operation, thus making it easier for the Centre to regulate their activities and prevent fraud from being committed against ordinary people.
- **Clear-cut time lines** have been provided for attachment of property and restitution to depositors
- **Attachment of properties / assets by the Competent Authority**, and subsequent realization of assets for repayment to depositors.
- **Severe punishment and heavy pecuniary fines** to act as deterrent.

Impact of the ordinance:

- Popular deposit schemes such as chit funds and gold schemes, which as part of **the huge shadow banking system** usually do not come under the purview of government regulators, have served as important instruments of **saving for people in the unorganised sector**.
- The proposed Ordinance will immediately tackle the menace of illicit deposit-taking activities in the country launched by rapacious operators, which at present are exploiting regulatory gaps and lack of strict administrative measures to dupe poor and gullible people of their hard-earned savings.
- It will altogether ban unregulated deposit taking schemes, and the law has adequate provisions for punishment and disgorgement or repayment of deposits in cases where such schemes nonetheless manage to raise deposits illegally
- The Saradha chit fund scam in West Bengal is just one example of such a heinous financial crime against depositors.
- The ordinance reflects a timely recognition of the need for greater legal protection to be offered for those depositors with inadequate financial literacy.

Limitations:

- Unregulated Deposit Ordinance bans **only Ponzi schemes** not regulated deposits.
- It does not stop any entity from seeking funds for its business or an individual raising a quick loan from relatives to tide over a crisis.



- Charitable institutions will find it difficult to fund students or those seeking medical assistance.

Way forward:

- Policymakers will have to make sure that the bureaucrats responsible for the on-ground implementation of the ordinance are keen on protecting the savings of low-income households.
- There must also be checks against persons in power misusing the new rules to derecognise genuine deposit schemes that offer useful financial services to customers in the unorganised sector.
- In the past there have been several cases of politicians acting in cahoots with the operators of fraudulent deposit schemes to fleece depositors of their hard-earned money.

Conclusion:

- While the intent of the ordinance, which is to protect small depositors, is indeed commendable, the benefits that depositors will eventually derive from the new legislation will depend largely on its proper implementation.

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) The announcement of Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi is an indicator that India is now seriously toying with the idea of targeted cash transfers. Critically analyze the effectiveness of targeted cash transfers ? (250 words)

The hindu

Why this question

This article discusses the form that direct income transfer scheme will take in a country like India and analyzes such a scheme for its effectiveness in tackling inefficiencies in welfare delivery channels.

Key demand of the question

The question expects us to explain the form that direct income transfer has taken in the country by explaining about Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi. Thereafter, we need to discuss the pros and cons of such a measure and give our view on its effectiveness.

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, all you need to do is look at the good and bad of something and give a fair judgement.

Structure of the answer

Introduction – Explain that India has discussed about universal basic income and direct income transfer is thought to bring about efficiencies in welfare delivery mechanism.

Body

Explain about the scheme

- *Vulnerable landholding farmer families, having cultivable land up to 2 hectares, will be provided direct income support of ₹6,000 a year*

Discuss the pros and cons of such direct income transfer mechanisms

- *inefficiencies of existing social security interventions is sought to be replaced with direct cash transfers*
- *Highlight that such income transfers are also riddled with inefficiencies*
- *Moreover, the state still has to invest in strengthening the basic infrastructure related to health etc*

Conclusion – Give your view on the effectiveness of such a measure and discuss way forward.

**Background:-**

- Recently the general budget announced a scheme, Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi, under which vulnerable landholding farmer families, having cultivable land up to 2 hectares, will be provided direct income support of ₹6,000 a year

Pradhan Mantri kisan Samman Nidhi:-

- Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi will provide assured income to small and marginal farmers.
- The amount will be transferred directly into their account in 3 equal installments.
- The complete expenditure of Rs 75000 crore for the scheme will borne by the Union Government in 2019-20.
- Over 12 crore farmer families will be benefitted under the scheme.

Benefits of targeted cash transfers:-

- **Past experiences:-**
 - Success of cash transfers for cooking gas, food and the rural jobs scheme also seem to have convinced the government on adopting the mechanism for agriculture.
- **Poverty reduction:-**
 - Cash transfer programmes have become an important tool of social protection and poverty reduction
 - It has immediate impact on reducing hunger and rural poverty.
 - They can help households to overcome credit constraints and manage risk.
- **Better use :-**
 - This can increase productive investment, increase access to markets and stimulate local economies.
 - Income support can be used to make a repayment or at least activate a bank account which can then receive a loan.
 - It can increase investment in agricultural inputs, including farm implements and livestock
- **Rural development:-**
 - It can serve as an important complement to a broader rural development agenda, including a pro-poor growth strategy focusing on agriculture.

Criticism:-

- Cash transfers are **not greatly superior in terms of leakages** compared to other schemes of in-kind transfer such as the public distribution system (PDS). Uncertainties in receiving uniform and periodic cash payment would reduce the validity of the scheme as income. Targeting errors are also likely.
- The real issue with the approach of a targeted cash transfer scheme is that it envisions the role of the state to only providing cash income to the poor. This kind of approach seeks to **absolve the state of its responsibility in providing basic services such as health, education, nutrition and livelihood.**
- **Does not eradicate poverty:-**
 - It may address certain aspects of inequality by ensuring a basic income, they will not eradicate poverty. Poverty is measured as deficits in income or consumption, but the underlying causes of these shortages are linked to human capabilities and access to resources.
- **Cash transfer scheme such as PMKSN cannot be substituted for subsidies and other institutional support systems such as the National Food Security Act-powered public distribution system.** In fact, such cash transfer schemes could be counterproductive and may lead to more distress.
- **Cash transfers do not solve the following problems which are the reason for the current agrarian crisis**
 - The Agrarian crisis is not just of low incomes in agriculture. The genesis of the current crisis lies in the faulty and ad hoc export-import policy, lack of infrastructure and cartelisation and collusion in agricultural markets, which have prevented farmers from realizing the market prices for agricultural produce.
 - Cash transfers do nothing to resolve any of these, nor are they any guarantee of protection against unforeseen events, whether natural or policy induced.
 - Cash transfer is neither a substitute for the structural reforms needed in agriculture, nor does it adequately compensate the farmer for the risks and uncertainty of crop cultivation.
- **Regressive:-**
 - Except for the Krushak Assistance for Livelihood and Income Augmentation scheme , which offers some relief to the sharecroppers and landless labourers **most other schemes are regressive with amount of transfer proportional to the land owned.**



- **Finding beneficiaries is tough :-**
 - In sugarcane and cotton, much of the ground-level work is organised and in the hands of cooperatives, where the person who has the operational holding of land is well identified. **But in crops where the ownership holding is different from the operational holding, it might be**
- **In the absence of proper tenancy records, it will also benefit the absentee landlords.**
- **It is no substitute for the lack of investment in agriculture, which has declined at 2.3% per annum in real terms**
- **By taking away precious fiscal resources, it makes the farmer more vulnerable to both market as well as non-market induced risks.**
- **Fiscal constraints to states:-**
 - The income transfer scheme will further erode the fiscal capacity of states.

Way forward :-

- For a long-term solution, the **government should first implement existing schemes, like it should give assured procurement** and marketing of all commodities having MSP.
- The **Swaminathan Committee in 2004** had recommended farmers be allowed to fix the price for their produce on their own (cost of production plus 50% as profit), keeping local factors in mind.
- Greater focus is required on **enhancing farmer loan repayment capacity via smooth supply and value chains, and better price realisations.**
- The government must focus on three things: **crop insurance, better irrigation and subsidised seed and fertilisers.**

Q) Implementation of PM-KISAN is riddled with challenges and learning from Rythu scheme and Kalia scheme will help going forward. Examine. (250 words)

[Economictimes](https://www.economictimes.com)

Why this question

PM KISAN announced in the budget is dominating the oped columns and the current article talks about the lessons that can be drawn from some of the similar schemes introduced by the state government and challenges ahead. This article will enable you to prepare the risks and challenges portion of the scheme.

Key demand of the question

The question expects us to bring out the details of the scheme along with the challenges that may come in the implementation of the scheme. Thereafter, we need to explain the learnings that can be drawn from other similar schemes from where PM KISAN draws inspiration and discuss way forward.

Directive word

Examine – When you are asked to examine, you have to probe deeper into the topic, get into details, and find out the causes or implications if any .

Structure of the answer

Introduction – Explain that the scheme has been introduced in the budget.

Body

Explain about the PM KISAN scheme. Highlight that the scheme draws inspiration from Rythu and KALIA scheme and explain those too.

Discuss the likely challenges that can be faced while implementing this scheme

- *One, in the absence of updated land records, where in some states they have not been updated since the 1930s, creating a database of unique beneficiaries and connecting it with bank details (and possibly Aadhaar) will be the toughest part of the exercise.*
- *Two, it is crucial that PM-KISAN payments are made directly into beneficiary bank accounts. Alternatively, Govt may want to consider issuing cheques.*
- *Three, as agriculture is a state subject, cooperation from states is pivotal in delivering such a scheme. But how the Centre manages that, particularly from non-BJP states, is to be seen.*



Highlight the learning from Rythu and KALIA scheme for better implementation of PM KISAN

Conclusion – Give your view and discuss way forward.

Background:-

- Recently the general budget announced a scheme, Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi, under which vulnerable landholding farmer families, having cultivable land up to 2 hectares, will be provided direct income support of ₹6,000 a year

Pradhan Mantri kisan Samman Nidhi:-

- Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi will provide assured income to small and marginal farmers.
- The amount will be transferred directly into their account in 3 equal installments.
- The complete expenditure of Rs 75000 crore for the scheme will borne by the Union Government in 2019-20.
- Over 12 crore farmer families will be benefitted under the scheme.

Cash transfers in agriculture :-

- Bhavantar Bhugtan Yojana in Madhya Pradesh was sought to provide relief to farmers by providing the differential between MSPs and market prices.
- The Rythu Bandhu scheme of the Telangana government provides ₹4,000 per acre for every season to all the farmers of the state. Similar initiatives have also be framed in Jharkhand and Odisha.
- In December 2018, Odisha launched the Krushak Assistance for Livelihood and Income augmentation (KALIA).
 - Unlike RBS, KALIA is more complicated in design and implementation. It commits to give Rs 5,000 per SMF, twice a year, that is Rs 10,000 a year. It has already made payments to 1.2 million SMFs in January 2019.
 - It is better than RBS in two ways.
 - One, it's more progressive, as every farmer receives the same amount of money irrespective of his landholding size.
 - Two, by covering landless sharecroppers and farm labourers, and targeting only SMFs, the scheme is efficient by design.

Benefits:-

- Past experiences:-**
 - Success of cash transfers for cooking gas, food and the rural jobs scheme also seem to have convinced the government on adopting the mechanism for agriculture.
- Poverty reduction:-**
 - Cash transfer programmes have become an important tool of social protection and poverty reduction
 - It has immediate impact on reducing hunger and rural poverty.
 - They can help households to overcome credit constraints and manage risk.
- Better use :-**
 - This can increase productive investment, increase access to markets and stimulate local economies.
 - Income support can be used to make a repayment or at least activate a bank account which can then receive a loan.
 - It can increase investment in agricultural inputs, including farm implements and livestock
- Rural development:-**
 - It can serve as an important complement to a broader rural development agenda, including a pro-poor growth strategy focusing on agriculture.

Criticism:-

- According to National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development's (Nabard) All India Rural Financial Inclusion Survey (Nafis) small and marginal farmers earned Rs 79,802-1,19,878 in 2015-16.**
 - This means that the Rs 6,000 annual direct income transfer under PM-KISAN would be only about 5-8% of their existing income levels.
 - This may not be much, particularly when compared with other direct income transfer (DIT) schemes rolled out in Telangana and Odisha.
- A Direct income transfer to landless labourers covered under KALIA's livelihood component is missing under PM-KISAN.
- Cash transfers are **not greatly superior in terms of leakages** compared to other schemes of in-kind transfer such as the public distribution system (PDS). Uncertainties in receiving uniform and periodic cash payment would reduce the validity of the scheme as income. Targeting errors are also likely.



- The real issue with the approach of a targeted cash transfer scheme is that it envisions the role of the state to only providing cash income to the poor. This kind of approach seeks to **absolve the state of its responsibility in providing basic services such as health, education, nutrition and livelihood.**
- **Does not eradicate poverty:-**
 - It may address certain aspects of inequality by ensuring a basic income, they will not eradicate poverty. Poverty is measured as deficits in income or consumption, but the underlying causes of these shortages are linked to human capabilities and access to resources.
- **Cash transfer scheme such as PMKSN cannot be substituted for subsidies and other institutional support systems such as the National Food Security Act-powered public distribution system.** In fact, such cash transfer schemes could be counterproductive and may lead to more distress.
- **Cash transfers do not solve the following problems which are the reasons for the current agrarian crisis**
 - The Agrarian crisis is not just of low incomes in agriculture. The genesis of the current crisis lies in the faulty and ad hoc export-import policy, lack of infrastructure and cartelisation and collusion in agricultural markets, which have prevented farmers from realizing the market prices for agricultural produce.
 - Cash transfers do nothing to resolve any of these, nor are they any guarantee of protection against unforeseen events, whether natural or policy induced.
 - Cash transfer is neither a substitute for the structural reforms needed in agriculture, nor does it adequately compensate the farmer for the risks and uncertainty of crop cultivation.
- **Regressive:-**
 - Except for the Krushak Assistance for Livelihood and Income Augmentation scheme, which offers some relief to the sharecroppers and landless labourers **most other schemes are regressive with amount of transfer proportional to the land owned.**
- **Finding beneficiaries is tough :-**
 - In sugarcane and cotton, much of the ground-level work is organised and in the hands of cooperatives, where the person who has the operational holding of land is well identified. **But in crops where the ownership holding is different from the operational holding, it might be**
- **In the absence of proper tenancy records, it will also benefit the absentee landlords.**
- **It is no substitute for the lack of investment in agriculture, which has declined at 2.3% per annum in real terms**
- **By taking away precious fiscal resources, it makes the farmer more vulnerable to both market as well as non-market induced risks.**
- **Fiscal constraints to states:-**
 - The income transfer scheme will further erode the fiscal capacity of states.

Way forward :-

- For a long-term solution, the **government should first implement existing schemes, like it should give assured procurement** and marketing of all commodities having MSP.
- The **Swaminathan Committee in 2004** had recommended farmers be allowed to fix the price for their produce on their own (cost of production plus 50% as profit), keeping local factors in mind.
- Greater focus is required on **enhancing farmer loan repayment capacity via smooth supply and value chains, and better price realisations.**
- The government must focus on three things: **crop insurance, better irrigation and subsidised seed and fertilisers.**

Q) Claims for tenure under the Forest Rights Act must satisfy the needs of the forest dwellers as well as the environment. Critically analyze. (250 words)

The hindu

Why this question

The recent SC judgement highlights the difficulties faced in the implementation of FRA. In this context it is essential to analyze the topic and the issues involved in detail.

Directive word



Critically analyze- here we 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. Based on our discussion we have to form a concluding opinion on the issue.

Key demand of the question.

The question wants us to dig deep into the issue and discuss why there is a need for a balanced and nuanced approach in handling claims for tenure under the FRA- why there is a need to satisfy the needs of forest dwellers as well as the environment.

Structure of the answer

Introduction- *write a few introductory lines about the recent controversy regarding the FRA. e.g The Supreme Court's order to evict, occupants of forest lands who failed to make a successful claim for tenure under the Forest Rights Act, 2006, has once again highlighted the dilemma of reconciling inalienable tribal rights with biodiversity conservation.*

Body-

Discuss the need to satisfy the needs of the forest dwellers. E.g

- *The Forest Rights Act protected possession and conferred heritability of land to over 23 lakh out of 44 lakh claimants who are either specified Scheduled Tribes, or people who have lived in forests traditionally, relying on forest produce for at least 75 years prior to the cut-off year of 2005.*
- *But over 20 lakh other applicants who could not establish their claim through gram sabhas and appellate authorities have now been ordered to be evicted.*

Discuss about the plight of traditional forest dwellers and problems faced by them.

Discuss the need to address the environmental concerns. E.g

- *Today, forests have shrunk to about 5% of the land in terms of protected areas, while human pressures are growing;*
- *landscapes are alienated for resource exploitation, road and dam building, and a lot of wildlife is lost to poaching.*
- *Man-animal conflict is growing etc.*

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

Introduction:

- The Supreme Court has asked the governments of 17 states to evict an estimated one million tribal and other households living in forests after their claims of the right to live in forests were rejected under the **Forest Rights Act**.
- As a consequence, more than one million tribals could be displaced, mainly in central India. The court has directed the **Dehradun-based Forest Survey of India** to submit a satellite-image based report on the encroachments removed.

Body:

- The petitioners, all conservationists, have qualified the objectives of their petition and highlighted the case for safeguarding the forests against "bogus claims to forest rights", calling for the state to take action against the loss of forest cover.
- The SC ruling has once again highlighted the dilemma of reconciling inalienable tribal rights with biodiversity conservation.

The rationale to satisfy the needs of the forest dwellers:

- FRA was passed with the **wholly welfarist goal** of making these communities partners in conservation. They would be stewards of forests that have shrunk and become fragmented over the decades.
- By recognizing and vesting forest rights to local people, the FRA empowers forest dwelling communities to manage natural resources and conserve
- Forest Rights Act protected possession and conferred heritability of land to over 23 lakh out of 44 lakh claimants who are either specified Scheduled Tribes, or people who have lived in forests traditionally, relying on forest produce for at least 75 years prior to the cut-off year of 2005.



- Claims are being rejected without assigning reasons, or based on wrong interpretation of the provisions, or simply for lack of evidence or 'absence of GPS survey'.
- The rejections are not being communicated to the claimants, and their right to appeal is not being explained to them or facilitated for.
- The mere rejection of claims by the state therefore does not mean that their possession of land is a crime of "encroachment".
- Additionally, by envisaging and providing for local stewardship of forests, it creates a possibility of collaboration between local people, state agencies and other actors, on equal terms.
- The FRA offers the chance to rethink wildlife conservation approaches in protected areas too, by making local communities rights-holders in the forest and improving the governance at the local level.
- The presence of large resorts and the heavy footfall of tourists on these sites be legitimised while the rights of their original inhabitants remain challenged
- The Forest Rights Act was passed to enable them to regain their lost habitats. But there has been a failure of political will to implement this piece of legislation
- Hounded for the mineral wealth that their lands contain, cheated out of land rights by money lenders, and, caught between left-wing mobilisation, a life of penury and rampant alcoholism, many Adivasi communities live a disturbed life.
- Nature conservation programmes such as "Project Tiger" that seek to restore forests as pristine nature spaces have transformed forest-dwellers and turned Adivasis into eco-refugees.
- The original inhabitants live in impoverished colonies outside the sanctuaries and parks while the forest department's writ runs large over these terrains.

The need to address the environmental concerns:

- Forests have shrunk to about 5% of the land in terms of protected areas, while human pressures are growing: landscapes are alienated for resource exploitation, road and dam building, and a lot of wildlife is lost to poaching.
- Man-animal conflict is growing.
- The illegal regimes of forest extraction continue, administrative laxity has permitted the growth of a nature tourism industry in the garb of 'Eco-tourism'.
- The government's own data shows that 14,00,000 ha of forests have been diverted since 1980 for non-forestry purposes, mainly for mining, defence projects, and hydroelectric projects. In response to a query in Parliament in 2016, it was officially accepted that up to 25,000 ha of forests are being diverted every year for non-forestry activities.
- Increasing incidents of forest fires like recently in Bandipur tiger reserve and Mudumalai reserve is a cause of concern.
- The despoliation of India's forests by the mining, timber and tourism industries not been addressed.

Way Forward:

- There is an urgent need to treat Adivasis as envisaged in **Nehru's Tribal Panchsheel policy** which was in support by Anthropologists like Verrier Elwin, Thakar Bapa etc.
- Studies indicate the strength of tribal knowledge of forests and ecological resources. Such knowledge enabled not only the conservation of flora and biodiversity but also that of fauna.
- **Resettlement:** In some well-documented cases, such as in the Western Ghats, alternative land and cash compensation convinced tribals to move out of core areas. One example is that of the Nagarhole National Park, where the outcome has been good for both people and wildlife, as evidenced by the recovery of tiger density over three decades.
- State governments need to pursue such programmes in a humane and vigorous fashion. They must also come forward to declare critical wildlife habitats under the Act. This will aid in formulating resettlement schemes for tribal residents.

Conclusion:

- Claims for tenure under the Forest Rights Act must therefore satisfy the primary test of whether they are legally unimpeachable, and even if they are, whether they would impose additional pressures on forests and wildlife.



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

Q) Is Ayushman Bharat going to enlarge the role of the private sector in healthcare? Analyze. (250 words)

The hindu

Why this question

Ayushman Bharat scheme is a landmark healthcare scheme which provides medical insurance to crores of poor families in India. However the scheme has been criticized for relying on private sector to deliver on its aims. In this context it is important to analyze whether the scheme will enlarge the role of private sector in healthcare.

Directive word

Analyze—here we 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.

Key demand of the question.

The question wants us to dig deep into the Ayushman Bharat scheme and bring out whether it will enlarge the role of private sector in India's healthcare sector.

Structure of the answer

Introduction— write a few introductory lines about the Ayushman Bharat scheme. E.g

Body-

Discuss in points how the scheme will enlarge the role of private sector in healthcare. E.g

- The question is tautological as India's health system is already one of the most privatised in the world, with three quarters of out-patient treatment and two thirds of in-patient treatment being provided by the private sector.
- In any case, it is unrealistic to expect it to be otherwise. The health sector always had — and will continue to have — private participation. Its nature is what should concern us — one that is changing, and has gained a huge momentum with the introduction of Ayushman Bharat.

Discuss the role of NHA.

- It is learnt that the pricing of services, a contentious issue between the hospitals and the NHA, has been or is proposed to be outsourced to a commercial firm.
- A similar concern arises on the proposal to outsource monitoring, empanelment, settling of claims, grievance redressal — all vital functions of a government body — to commercial companies.
- The detailed guidelines with the contract agreement to hand over large portions of district hospitals to private investors to establish the supply of specified services — cardiac, cancers, respiratory etc. — suggests a hybrid model that has no precedence, not even in the U.S.
- This is a brainwave of The United States Agency for International Development (USAID)-Niti Aayog initiative: it is apprehended and with justification, that it will destroy the public hospital system in India and deepen the control of the private sector and create monopolies rather than a competitive environment, adversely impacting the cost of care.

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

Background:-

- India's health system is already one of the most privatised in the world, with three quarters of out-patient treatment and two thirds of in-patient treatment being provided by the private sector.
- The Ayushman Bharat programme, perhaps one of the most ambitious government initiatives in the health space in recent years, has created several opportunities for private sector engagement and **participation**



Ayushman Bharat:-

- **Ayushman Bharat** is a progression towards promotive, preventive, curative, palliative and rehabilitative aspects of Universal Healthcare through **access of Health and Wellness Centers (HWCs) at the primary level** and **provision of financial protection for accessing curative care at the secondary and tertiary levels through engagement with both public and private sector (PMJAY).**

How the scheme enlarges the role of private sector in healthcare:-

- Ayushman Bharat programme has created unprecedented opportunities for the private sector to participate in **expanding access to quality secondary and tertiary health services for hitherto underserved parts of the Indian population.**
- According to the National Health Agency, the implementing authority for PMJAY, the average hospitalisation was around 4,000 per day after the scheme was rolled out on 23 September 2018. **This could increase to as high as 100,000 per day once the scheme is fully accessed by beneficiaries from underserved states like Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh.**
 - Thus, following the launch of PMJAY, one can expect the latent demand for hospitalisation to be triggered. The private sector can step up and help the government to meet this demand.
- **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 without private sector role
- **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 so private hospitals can play a significant role.
- **Poor healthcare ranking:**
 - India ranks as low as 145th among 195 countries in healthcare quality and accessibility, behind even Bangladesh and Sri Lanka.
- **Crumbling public health infrastructure:**
- Given the country's crumbling public healthcare infrastructure, most patients are forced to go to private clinics and hospitals. India falls woefully short of number of hospital beds compared to WHO standards. Secondary-level hospitals like district hospitals and medical colleges have poor infrastructure, especially the former.

However analysts criticise greater role given to private sector due to the following reasons :-

- **High Out of Pocket Expenditure:**
 - 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).
- **Commercial motive:**
 - Lack of transparency and unethical practices in the private sector.
- **Concentrated in Urban areas:**
 - 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.
- **Better infrastructure needed:**
 - Under the PMJAY, the private hospitals have to get registered and fulfil the minimum requirements. They are also expected to expand their facilities and add hospital beds.
- **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.

Way forward:-

- The budgetary support being granted to public hospitals can be given as incentives to private players in underserved areas.
- The **National Health Authority** set up as an independent authority should provide for less interference from the government, thereby **encouraging private players to participate.**



- A binding policy commitment is imperative so as to reduce policy uncertainty and enable investments in hospital infrastructure by private players.
- Focus on Public-Private Partnership to reap the maximum benefits to citizens.

Conclusion:-

- A well-coordinated and responsible partnership between the public and private sectors can ensure that the implementation of Ayushman Bharat and other flagship programmes is successful and India is firmly on the path towards improving outcomes in health radically.

Q) India spends abysmally low on healthcare and there is a need to increase expenditure on the preventive healthcare front. Analyze. (250 words)

The hindu

Why this question

The article breaks down India's healthcare expenditure and compares it with some other countries. It also provides us useful insights into the preventive healthcare spending in India.

Directive word

Analyze-here we 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.

Key demand of the question.

The question wants us to dig deep into the issue of low healthcare spending by India and bring out the need to increase resource allocation towards health sector in general and preventive healthcare in particular.

Structure of the answer

Introduction— write a few introductory lines about India's Healthcare spending. E.g At present, India's health spending is only 1.15-1.5% of GDP.

Body-

discuss about the health expenditure of India in detail. E.g

- *Despite several innovations in the healthcare sector in recent times, in line with India's relentless pursuit of reforms, the government remains woefully short of its ambition to increase public health spending to 2.5% of GDP.*
- *According to the National Health Profile of 2018, public per capita expenditure on health increased from ₹621 in 2009-10 to ₹1,112 in 2015-16.*
- *Despite the doubling of per capita expenditure on health over six years, the figure is still abysmal.*
- *U.S.'s health expenditure is 18% of GDP, while India's is still under 1.5%. I*
- *The ₹6,400 crore allocation to Ayushman Bharat-PMJAY in the Interim Budget will help reduce out-of-pocket expenditure on health, which is at a massive 67%.*
- *bring out the need to increase our expenditure on health specially on preventive Healthcare. E.g*
- *A focused approach in adding tax on tobacco and alcohol, to fund non-communicable disease prevention strategies at health and wellness centres, should be considered.*
- *Cancer screening and prevention are not covered. There is no resource allocation for preventive oncology, diabetes and hypertension.*
- *Prevention of chronic kidney disease, which affects 15-17% of the population, is not appropriately addressed.*
- *Due to lack of focus in preventive oncology in India, over 70% of cancers are diagnosed in stages III or IV. The reverse is true in developed countries. Consequently, the cure rate is low,*



the death rate is high, and treatment of advanced cancer costs three-four times more than treatment of early cancer.

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

Background:-

- According to the National Health Profile of 2018, public per capita expenditure on health increased from ₹621 in 2009-10 to ₹1,112 in 2015-16. Despite the doubling of per capita expenditure on health over six years, India's health spending is only 1.15-1.5% of GDP even in the recent interim budget only 2.2% is allocated to healthcare.
- preventive healthcare segment today is on a rising curve wherein the Indian market size is estimated to be worth over \$55 billion, which is likely to become a \$106-billion opportunity by 2022.

India has neglected preventive healthcare:-

- As many as 68 per cent of urban Indians do not practice preventive healthcare** at an early stage, when they do not suffer from lifestyle disorders.
- There is no resource allocation for preventive oncology, diabetes and hypertension. Prevention of chronic kidney disease, which affects 15-17% of the population, is not appropriately addressed.
- The progressive nature of asymptomatic chronic kidney disease leads to enormous social and economic burden for the community at large, in terms of burgeoning dialysis and transplant costs which will only see an exponential rise in the next decade
- Due to lack of focus in preventive oncology in India, over 70% of cancers are diagnosed in stages III or IV. The reverse is true in developed countries.
 - Consequently, the cure rate is low, the death rate is high, and treatment of advanced cancer costs three-four times more than treatment of early cancer.
- The standard health insurance policies cover cancer but only part of the treatment cost. As a consequence, either out-of-pocket expenditure goes up or patients drop out of treatment.

Why there is a need for increasing expenditure on preventive healthcare:-

- India's disease profile has changed drastically from communicable to non-communicable diseases in the past few years**, which accounts for almost 60% of deaths in the country. These diseases are preventable, even after having a strong genetic connect, provided prevention is the focus.
- Through the preventive measures, **the resources our country can spare for health can be maximized**, thus covering a larger section of people
- NITI Aayog** has proposed higher taxes on tobacco, alcohol and unhealthy food in order to revamp the public and preventive health system. This has not found its way into the Interim Budget.
- Advanced diagnostics** offer in-depth insights into the human body and can detect signs of disease and aging much before they start manifesting in the body as markers of chronic disease.
- Preventive healthcare is indeed the purest form of **anti-aging because it can allow people to ensure that the processes of biological aging affect them slowly and minimally**.
- Given how skewed the **doctor-patient ratio is in India**, taking care of one's health becomes even more important. This is where preventive care becomes relevant.
- Preventive healthcare has helped consumers in making **consistent choices** and taking positive action on health, diet and lifestyle in order to stay fit.
- Adopting preventive care techniques like home monitoring allows patients to keep a close eye on their health and ensure that symptoms do not go out of control

Way forward:-

- A focused approach in adding tax on tobacco and alcohol, to fund non-communicable disease prevention strategies at health and wellness centres, should be considered.
- For various diseases, allocation should be realigned for disease management over a defined time period, not merely for episodes of care. Since a major innovation in universal healthcare, Ayushman Bharat, is being rolled out, it must be matched with a quantum leap in funding.

Q) The decision to provide financial rewards for publication in science journals and patents is fraught with problems. Discuss. (250 words)

The hindu

Why this question



The government has recently hiked the research fellowship for the phd students in India. The government has also decided to link the incentives paid to the research fellows with the number of publications in international or national journals. In this context it is important to discuss whether such incentives will help India's research sector.

Directive word

Discuss- this is an all-encompassing directive which mandates us to write in detail about the key demand of the question. we also have to discuss about the related and important aspects of the question in order to bring out a complete picture of the issue in hand.

Key demand of the question.

The question what is this to write in detail about the linking of incentives for research with the number of publications and bring out how this move is fraught with problems.

Structure of the answer

Introduction– write a few introductory lines about the recent decision of the government to hike research fellowships and putting forward the idea of linking incentives with publications and patents.

Body-

Discuss how the decision to provide financial rewards for publication in science journals and patents is fraught with problems. E.g

- It could lead to increase in unethical research practices and frauds by researchers, which already has an ignominious record in this area and has no nodal body to address scientific frauds and unethical practices.
- It is worth remembering that though the University Grants Commission's intent to introduce Academic Performance Indicators was good, APIs were largely responsible for the spike in predatory journals published from India.
- There is little guarantee that the reward system based on publication will not lead to further erosion in the quality of science research in India.
- In addition, giving greater rewards for publication in international journals makes no sense as international journals are not uniformly superior in quality to Indian ones. Similarly, some Indian journals are better than international ones despite having a low impact factor.
- By giving 60% lower stipend to students publishing in Indian journals, the government will unwittingly be widening the gap between Indian and international journals, which will be self-destructive in the long run.
- "majority of patents are 'biodata' patents" and are "filed for the sake of filing without any techno-commercial and legal evaluation". In such a scenario, a financial incentive for patent-filing will only exacerbate the problem.

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

Background:-

- Recently Ministry of Science and Technology increased the fellowship stipend for PhD students by nearly 25%.
- A one-time financial reward of Rs.50,000 and Rs.20,000 has been recommended for papers published in international and Indian journals respectively. And an incentive of Rs.1,00,000 on obtaining an India or international patent.

Providing financial rewards is a bad idea :-

- **International experience:-**
 - Based on experience in China, providing financial rewards led to an unprecedented increase in unethical research practices and frauds committed by Chinese researchers.
 - This could also happen in India as there is no nodal body to address scientific frauds and unethical practices.



- There is **little guarantee that the reward system** based on publication will not lead to further erosion in the quality of science research in India.
- Giving greater rewards for publication in international journals **makes no sense as international journals are not uniformly superior in quality to Indian ones**. While Nature, Science, Cell and The Lancet are prestigious, there are many journals which are of poor quality. Similarly, some Indian journals are better than international ones despite having a low impact factor.
- By giving 60% lower stipend to students publishing in Indian journals, the government will unwittingly be **widening the gap between Indian and international journals**, which will be self-destructive in the long run.
- With hundreds of papers being published each year, it is **debatable whether the government will be able to provide incentives given that research labs have reportedly been facing a fund crunch of late**.
- **Majority of patents are 'biodata' patents and had been filed for the sake of filing without any techno-commercial and legal evaluation**". In such a scenario, a financial incentive for patent-filing will only exacerbate the problem.
- It is worth remembering that though the University Grants Commission's intent to introduce Academic Performance Indicators was good, **APIs were largely responsible for the spike in predatory journals published from India**.
- Cost for filing patent is very high as compared to incentive given. Incentives can go waste if patent does not turn into product which is mostly Majority of patents in India are filed without any technical legal evaluation .

Way forward:-

- The Indian government must immediately make research and publishing optional for all teachers except for those at teaching-cum-research institutions and research centres. This will limit or may even nearly end publishing in predatory journals.
- Encouraging quality over quantity of patents is necessary.

Q) Effective drug pricing in the country is a problem still waiting for a solution. Examine in context of the parliamentary panel report ? (250 words)

Downtoearth

Why this question

The article analyzes the parliamentary committee report on how the centre has failed to not just reign in escalating drug prices but has also not been able to curb the business of substandard drugs. High OoPE is a huge issue when it comes to health management in the country and the issue is closely related to that.

Key demand of the question

The question expects us to discuss the details of the parliamentary committee report, discuss the reasons why the parliamentary committee report has come to the conclusions that it has and the impact of the report. Thereafter, we need to give suggestions regarding what can be done to improve the situation.

Directive word

Examine – When you are asked to examine, you have to probe deeper into the topic, get into details, and find out the causes or implications if any .

Structure of the answer

Introduction – Highlight that OoPE is a major health management related issue in the country in which high drug cost has a huge role. Also, highlight the problem of spurious drugs.

Body

Discuss details of the report

- *The Centre has failed to not just reign in escalating drug prices but has also not been able to curb the business of substandard drugs, according to a Parliamentary standing committee report*
- *drugs account for more than 70 per cent of one's medical expenses.*



- anyone hardly ever invests on drug innovation in India
- panel also highlighted that difference between prices of drugs sold at Jan Aushadhi Kendras (JAKs) and that of branded medicines is too high due to promotional cost. So it asked the government to ensure drug prices are not more than a certain ceiling fixed by National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority. But, it did not define the ceiling.
- there are too few JAKs in the country etc

Discuss the reasons for the issues as highlighted above and evaluate the findings of the committee

- The recommendation of the committee to bring more number of drug formulations under the NLEM will not sit well with the drug manufacturers who feel that such ceiling adversely impact innovations
- Moreover the focus should be on ensuring adherence etc

Discuss the impact of the recommendations of the committee

Conclusion – Give your view and suggest way forward.

Introduction:

An overwhelming 70% of healthcare expenses in India are met by out of pocket expenditure by the individual, due to which about 7% population is pushed below the poverty threshold every year. This is further bolstered by increasing fake drugs in the country. Lack of effective drug pricing is affecting numerous citizens in India which spends only about 1.5% of its GDP on healthcare.

Body:

A Parliamentary standing committee report mentions the following findings and impacts

- **Increasing Spurious drugs:**
 - The Centre has failed to not just reign in escalating drug prices but has also not been able to curb the business of substandard drugs.
 - **ASSOCHAM study** showed that **fake drugs constitute 25% of domestic medicines market in India.**
 - Estimates indicate that fake medicines constitute nearly one-third of all drugs sold in NCR.
 - the Centre has hardly made any substantial efforts to curb the sale of substandard drugs
 - A **2017 report of Comptroller and Auditor General of India** said in 14 states (Assam, Bihar, Haryana, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra, Manipur, Odisha, Punjab, Telangana, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal), medicines were issued to patients without ensuring the prescribed quality checks and without observing the expiry period of drugs.
- **High Out of Pocket Expenditure:**
 - OoPE is a major health management related issue in the country in which high drug cost has a huge role.
 - **About 55%** of the OOP expenditure is estimated to be on medicines. This result of government deciding to adopt **market-based pricing system** instead of calculating it through cost of production.
 - Difference between prices of drugs sold at **Jan Aushadhi Kendras (JAKs)** and that of branded medicines is too high due to promotional cost.
 - There are too few JAKs in the country. About 3,084 JAKs in 717 districts, many of which have none.
- **Low R&D:**
 - Companies are not focusing on innovation due to high costs and high failures.
 - Most of the research abroad is funded by public money and the private pharma firms take advantage of working on the molecule that has been discovered with public money.
 - They are focussing on generics leading to import of many drugs which end up in high costs.
 - Enforcement of patents poor, disincentive for innovation, so foreign companies sell at higher cost.
- **Implementation issues:**
 - DPCO rules are not stringent and ineffectively implemented.
 - Consequently, the unfair market practices by pharma companies may continue to hamper the availability of affordable medicines to the people.
 - Panel said the existing mechanism is favouring corporates rather than people.



Effective drug pricing is a problem because

- **High cost of innovation:** This is coupled with low success ratio. The clinical trials which includes human testing is difficult. India's 3 tier process of drug making makes it difficult to ascertain production costs.
- **Lower quality to reduce price:** Indian generics exported are biosimilars while for consumption in India chemical similars are adequate
- Trade-off between affordability and availability.
- Compulsory licenses and low prices will reduce incentives for innovation or entry of foreign pharma companies.

Way Forward:

- The committee asked the government to form an expert committee to study the impact of market-based and cost-based pricing and take appropriate steps.
- The committee asked the government to ensure drug prices are not more than a certain ceiling fixed by National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority
- The government should take all necessary steps to bring more number of formulations under these two categories
- If the manufacturer does not deposit the demanded amount within the prescribed time limit, a decision to cancel their licenses may be considered. Similar action may also be taken on retailers who indulge in overcharging.
- Medicines and devices listed in NLEM must be sold at the price fixed by NPPA, while those in the non-scheduled list are allowed a maximum annual price hike of 10%.
- Strong patent enforcement mechanism to encourage more R&D.
- Incentivization and encouragement for local manufacturing of drugs.
- Public funded research should increase

Conclusion:

- Medicines remain overpriced and unaffordable in India. In a country mired in poverty, medical debt remains the second biggest factor for keeping millions back into poverty. With little to no availability of basic health insurance, and a preference for private practitioners, drugs engender poverty.
- With innovative policymaking, the troika of quality, affordability and access can be achieved. Providing relief to people through Jan Aushadi Kendras and including drugs in health insurance schemes like Ayushman Bharat and National health policy are steps in the right direction.

Q) The advent of Industry 4.0 requires a human centric approach unlock growth.

Discuss. (250 words)

[Livemint](#)

Why this question

The article discusses the potential human capital related challenge that is likely given the way 4th industrial revolution is shaping up. The article also discusses how nations have started gearing up and India needs to follow suit. The article touches several topics in GS2 and GS3 syllabus and thus needs to be discussed in detail.

Key demand of the question

The question expects us to bring out the changes brought about by the advent of technology such as AI etc which is giving rise to 4th IR. Thereafter, it expects us to discuss how skill upgradation is necessary to deal with these changes and the efforts of India in comparison to other countries in bringing about such changes. Finally, we need to provide a fair and balanced opinion and discuss way forward.

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 – Explain about what do you mean by 4th IR.



Body

Discuss the changes brought about by 4th IR and how adapting to such changes require an emphasis on learning and unlearning.

- *The World Economic Forum estimates 75 million jobs may be displaced, but 133 million new roles may emerge globally in a few years. These new jobs will be different and will require higher application of cognitive skills alongside working with deep technologies.*
- *McKinsey says pretty much the same thing with more alarming statistics over a broader time horizon. Globally, 400 to 800 million jobs may be displaced by 2030, requiring as many as 375 million people to switch job categories entirely. Numerous studies have been carried out (including by Nasscom) and it's clear why re-skilling is an imperative.*

Highlight how other nations have started dealing with this challenge –

- *Countries have started to put in place national digital skills strategies, including in Asia etc*

Discuss what India needs to do.

Conclusion – *Give a fair and balanced opinion and discuss way forward.*

Introduction:

- The **fourth industrial revolution or Industry 4.0** is the current and developing environment in which disruptive technologies and trends such as the **Internet of Things (IoT), robotics, virtual reality (VR) and artificial intelligence (AI)** are changing the way we live and work. It is characterized by a fusion of technologies that is **blurring the lines** between the **physical, digital, and biological spheres**.
- According to **Professor Klaus Schwab**, Founder and Executive Chairman of the World Economic Forum and **author of The Fourth Industrial Revolution**, the new age is differentiated by the **speed of technological breakthroughs**, the **pervasiveness of scope** and the **tremendous impact of new systems**.

Body:

Industry 4.0 is a double-edged sword. The changes brought about by 4th IR:

- **Positives:**
 - There is an artificial intelligence (AI)-driven \$15.7 trillion game-changer that is unfolding. Of this, India can claim a \$957 billion boost to its gross domestic product in the next 12-15 years.
 - The global digital transformation market is expected to grow from \$ 445.4 billion in 2017 to \$ 2,279.4 billion by 2025.
 - The World Economic Forum estimates 133 million new roles may emerge globally in a few years.
 - These new jobs will be different and will require higher application of cognitive skills alongside working with deep technologies.
 - The race for talent acquisition is intense. Countries have started to put in place national digital skills strategies, including in Asia.
 - increasingly powerful computing devices and networks, digital services, and mobile devices, this can become a reality for people around the world, including those in underdeveloped countries.
 - advances in biomedical sciences can lead to healthier lives and longer life spans. They can lead to innovations in neuroscience, like connecting the human brain to computers to enhance intelligence or experience a simulated world.
 - Digital technology can liberate workers from automatable tasks, freeing them to concentrate on addressing more complex business issues and giving them more autonomy.
- **Negatives:**
 - The cutting-edge technologies such as AI will disrupt 70% of market leaders across industries in the next 10 years.
 - The **World Economic Forum** estimates 75 million jobs may be displaced globally in a few years.
 - McKinsey says globally, 400 to 800 million jobs may be displaced by 2030, requiring as many as 375 million people to switch job categories entirely.
 - The **skill gap is significant** and is being acutely felt across industries.
 - The economic benefits of the Fourth Industrial Revolution are becoming more concentrated among a small group. This **increasing inequality** can lead to political polarization, social fragmentation, and lack of trust in institutions.



- Technological advances are also broadening the **scope of surveillance**. In the UK today, an estimated 6 million CCTV cameras are recording activity all over the country.
- **Public trust in business, government, the media, and even technology is falling**. This is a crisis that is dividing societies and creating instability around the world.

Way forward for India:

- **Re-Skilling:**
 - Re-skilling and upskilling will have to be undertaken by every stakeholder.
 - Massive open online courses to re-skill the Workforce participants by companies using their own learning platforms and tapping into their partner networks.
 - Learning has happened in silos where learners have been pitted against one other. This has to morph into a collaborative mindset to create an environment of shared learning.
 - Industry needs to have deeper engagements with academia, Centres of Excellence and research labs to reach our optimum potential.
 - Universities will have to re-train to ensure students are employable in the digital era.
- **Investment:**
 - Indian IT is taking convincing strides to sustain its position as the preferred transformational partner for global clients. Towards this, investments of about ₹10,000 crore of have been earmarked for re-skilling.
 - The government doubled its Digital India budget to \$480 million in 2018-19, which will be used for research and training in deep tech.
- **Initiatives:**
 - The announcement of the National AI Centre, AI portal, and the identification of nine areas to be driven by technology are positive steps towards evangelisation.
 - the Karnataka government along with Nasscom has launched a CoE for data science and AI.
- **Global Approach:**
 - As many as 20 countries across the globe have adopted AI National Strategy. Governments worldwide recognise the inevitable shift and are adopting AI, analytics, and allied technologies to deliver citizen-centric services, including real-time response.

Conclusion:

- We have to consciously build positive values into the technologies we create, think about how they are to be used, and design them with ethical application in mind and in support of collaborative ways of preserving what's important to us.
- This effort requires all stakeholders—**governments, policymakers, international organizations, regulators, business organizations, academia, and civil society**—to work together to steer the powerful emerging technologies in ways that limit risk and create a world that aligns with common goals for the future.

Q) Teacher training requires an urgent overhaul in India. Examine. (250 words)

[Livemint](#)

Why this question

One of the major reason for our poor ranking in education indicators can be attributed to the quality of teaching staff in India. The article examines the issue and proposes solutions and thus is an important topic to be prepared for mains.

Key demand of the question

The question expects us to discuss the problem with respect to quality of teachers in India and how it is impacting the education indicators of the country. Thereafter it expects us to discuss the problems with the existing system and why and what kind of overhaul it requires.

Directive word

Examine – When you are asked to examine, you have to probe deeper into the topic, get into details, and find out the causes or implications if any .

Structure of the answer



Introduction – Highlight that teachers play an important role in improving education outcomes and the quality of teachers leave a lot to be desired in India.

Body

Explain the issue in detail

- India's persistently low-learning outcomes gain momentum once again in light of Pratham's Annual Status Of Education Report
- Pratham CEO Rukmini Banerji has highlighted the central role of teachers in improving learning outcomes
- Unfortunately, teachers in India, especially those in the government school system, are largely seen as a governance problem, with the focus on getting them into the classroom rather than developing their skills and motivation.

Explain the problems with the current system

- National Council of Educational Research and Training study finds there is no systematic incorporation of teacher feedback into designing trainings, and little variation or consideration of local issues
- The outcome of such training is limited and there is no measure of whether this is translated into classroom practice. Eventually, such factors have significant multiplier effects in how they de-professionalize the larger teaching profession and drive down a teacher's "internal responsibility"—the sense of duty to the job, shaped by the environment in which the teacher operates.

Discuss the nature of solutions required to the problem

- Incorporation of teacher feedback
- Strengthening the training system etc

Conclusion – Give a fair and balanced view and discuss way forward.

Introduction:

- Teachers play a vital role in educating and inspiring the young generation to become the demographic dividend of the future generation. NGO **Pratham's Annual Status Of Education Report** shows that **India's persistently low-learning outcomes gain momentum once again**.
- Quality of education is depends upon the quality of teacher. Teachers' training in India is unable to cover tough spots and follows a 'one-size-fits-all' approach.

Body:

Economist Eric Hanushek finds that a **child taught by a good teacher gains 1.5 grade-level equivalents, while a child taught by a bad teacher only gets half an academic year's worth**. Teacher Education is a crucial area which urgently needs focus in order to develop the standards of pedagogy in India. It is suffering from many deficiencies and structural issues

- Majority of aspiring teachers do not have basic concepts of mathematics, leave aside teaching to students.
- Results of TET shows dismal figures of **only 3-4 percent of them passing the eligibility test**.
- Although NCTE lays down the minimum qualification criterion for appointing teachers at various level, but some states have sought relaxation in minimum qualification in recruitment as teachers. This has created a large pool of '**untrained teachers**'. Around **20 percent of regular teachers and 40 percent of contract teachers** did not have professional qualifications for elementary education.
- Teachers in India, especially those in the government school system, are largely seen as a **governance problem**, with the focus on getting them into the classroom rather than developing their skills and motivation.
- Those teachers not meeting the qualification were mandated to get it within five years, but this remains unmet.
- **Widespread corruption** in appointment of teachers as seen in Haryana, Madhya Pradesh and with variation in other states also.



- A **National Council of Educational Research and Training** study finds there is no systematic incorporation of teacher feedback into designing trainings, and little variation or consideration of local issues. There is no measure of whether this is translated into classroom practice.
- Nearly **half the teachers** believe that not all children could achieve excellent educational outcomes because of their socioeconomic backgrounds.
- Only **25% incorporate activity-based learning** and **33% use storytelling or role-play** in their paedagogic approach, either because these weren't priorities or because they did not have time.

Government Initiative so far:

- The ministry of human resource development and the National Council for Teacher Education in collaboration with non-government stakeholders launched the **National Teacher Platform or Diksha in 2017**.
- Diksha is envisioned as a one-stop solution to address teacher competency gaps through courses that address their skill gaps and by empowering them to "learn what they want, where they want".
- State initiatives like **RISE**(Rajasthan Interface for School Educators), Rajasthan's version of Diksha.
- **National Council for Teacher Education** plans and co-ordinates the development of teacher education system throughout the country.
- **Justice Verma Commission and Poonam Batra Committee** was appointed to look into teacher education. Their recommendations were based on creating new teacher education programmed in multi disciplinary environments.

Way forward:

- The **World Development Report On Education (2018)** states that "teacher skills and motivation both matter" and that individually-targeted, continued training is crucial to achieving learning improvements through teachers.
- **Better incentives for teachers:** Post training, there should be no differences in the salary of teachers, public or private. This will attract the best young minds towards this profession and will help it regain lost ground.
- Investments in teacher capacity through stronger training programmes. Teachers need to **unlearn and relearn the subjects** and the way it should be taught. There is **no point in teaching and employing rote learning**, for just passing the examination.
- Teacher training programmes should be **complemented by focus-group discussions with local NGOs and community-based organizations**.
- The teacher training models should have the **ability to provide continuous professional development through a blended model, complementing existing physical trainings**.
- A **technology-enabled platform** which allows training to become a **continuous activity** rather than an annual event is necessary.
- Apart from creating good content, it is also important to **consider teachers' technology consumption patterns**, the **potential of gamification to drive up engagement** and the **role of headmasters in promoting teachers' professional development**.

Conclusion:

- Teachers are important. This importance doesn't stem from their exalted mythical status, but from their role as professionals and critical levers in defining the quality of education children receive.
- Thus, Teacher education program forms the back bone of education system of a nation.

Q) Substance abuse is a problem that merits serious consideration in India. Examine. (250 words)

Reference

Why this question

The article discusses the high instance of alcohol and drug abuse among Indians which is often ignored. The article highlights the lacunae in our policy and healthcare system which fails to take care of such an issue.

Key demand of the question

The question expects us to explain the problem of substance abuse in the country, highlight why it should be focussed upon, discuss the lacunae in the current system and highlight the way forward.

Directive word



Examine – When you are asked to examine, you have to probe deeper into the topic, get into details, and find out the causes or implications if any .

Structure of the answer

Introduction – Highlight the problem of drug abuse in the country and the growing instance of mental health issues that India faces.

Body

Discuss the issue in detail – government-commissioned survey of substance abuse in the country shows worrying levels of addiction. Highlight the problem of drug and alcohol abuse in the country and the growing instance of it.

Discuss why this issue merits serious consideration

- huge gap between those who need medical treatment and its availability. Indians tend to look upon alcohol and drug addiction as moral issues. Consequently, addicts are unwilling to seek treatment.
- Social stigma attached to women doing such things makes them even less likely to seek treatment
- The existing centres hardly provide proper treatment etc

Discuss the steps needed to address this issue

Conclusion – Explain the significance of the problem and why it needs urgent redressal and the way forward.

Introduction:

- India is geographically situated in the close vicinity of the ‘**Golden Crescent**’ on its west and on east is the ‘**Golden Triangle**’.
- The usage of drugs in India is increasing, particularly in the border areas due to their porous nature, especially in Punjab and North East states.

Body:

- ‘**Prevalence and Extent of Substance Use in India**’- survey was conducted recently on consumption of substances in India by the **Social Justice and Empowerment Ministry** in collaboration with the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS).
- The survey covered general population (10-75 years), in all the 36 states and union territories covering over 2 lakh households and 4.73 lakh people in 186 districts of the country.

Key findings and highlights of the survey:

- India is home to **six crore alcohol addicts**, more than the population of 172 world nations including Italy.
- **Alcoholism** is a condition that requires medical attention, but unfortunately **only less than 3% of the people with drinking problem get any treatment**.
- There is a large number of people in the country addicted to various drugs. More than 3.1 crore Indians (2.8%) have reported using cannabis products, Bhang, Ganja, Charas, Heroin and Opium, in last one year. Unfortunately **only one in 20 drug addicts** get treatment at a hospital.
- Country liquor accounts for **30% of the total liquor consumption**, and Indian made foreign liquor also account for the same amount.
- In Punjab and Sikkim, the prevalence of cannabis use disorders is considerably higher (more than thrice) than the national average.
- At the national level, Heroin is most commonly used substance followed by pharmaceutical opioids, followed by opium (Afeem).
- Less than 1% or nearly 1.18 crore people use sedatives, non medical or non prescription use. However, what is more worrying that its prevalence is high among children and adolescents. This problem of addiction of children is more prevalent in Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Delhi and Haryana.
- Cocaine (0.10%) Amphetamine Type Stimulants (0.18%) and Hallucinogens (0.12%) are the categories with lowest prevalence of current use in the country.

The issue of substance abuse merits serious consideration as:

- Substance abuse assumed **serious proportions** in the country.
- There is also a **huge gap between those who need medical treatment and its availability**.



- Indians tend to look upon alcohol and drug addiction as **moral issues**. Consequently, **addicts are unwilling to seek treatment**.
- **Depression, anxiety, mood disorders and mental illnesses** underlie addiction and thus these are problems that need to be hospitalized and medically treated.
- While **alcohol consumption is 17 times more prevalent among men than among women**, the latter is harder to tackle.
- **Social stigma** attached to women drinking or doing drugs pushes the problem deeper underground among women than among men and is thus more difficult to detect and treat.
- **Peer pressure** plays a huge role in children taking to alcohol and narcotics. Many teenagers see alcohol and drugs as 'cool' stuff to engage in.
- Others see their use as **symbols of modernity and liberation**.
- Incidences of **HIV infection** and spread of **AIDS** are growing.
- Drugs have become an easy source of finance for illegal activities like **money-laundering, terror-financing, gun-running and prostitution**.
- **Parallel Economic system and Counterfeit currency** due to drug trafficking has increased threat to economy of nation.

Government's efforts towards Substance Abuse control:

- The Government has taken several policy and other initiatives to deal with drug trafficking problem.
- It constituted **Narco-Coordination Centre (NCORD)** in November, 2016 and revived the scheme of "Financial Assistance to States for Narcotics Control".
- In 2017, the government approved **new Reward Guidelines** with increased quantum of reward for interdiction or seizure of different illicit drugs.
- For effective coordination with foreign countries, India has signed **37 Bilateral Agreements/Memoranda of Understanding**.
- **Narcotics Control Bureau** has been provided funds for developing a new software i.e. **Seizure Information Management System (SIMS)** which will create a **complete online database of drug offences and offenders**.
- The government has constituted a fund called "**National Fund for Control of Drug Abuse**" to meet the expenditure incurred in connection with combating illicit traffic in Narcotic Drugs; rehabilitating addicts, and educating public against drug abuse, etc.
- The government is also conducting **National Drug Abuse Survey** to measure trends of drug abuse in India through Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment with the help of **National Drug Dependence Treatment Centre of AIIMS**.
- The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment has drafted **National Action Plan for Drug Demand Reduction (2018-2023)** for addressing the problem of drug and substance abuse in the country, dumping a long-pending draft policy on the matter.

Way forward:

- **Intelligence sharing:**
 - Usually the last point peddlers get into police net. The real movers or illegal traders get away.
 - So to identify those people and isolate them, the countries have to cooperate.
- **Law and Order:**
 - **Strengthening and effective implementation of NDPS Act.**
 - There is a need for **public-police co-ordination** to fight the issue.
 - If any drug carriers and masterminds have been caught, we should find out what are his/her travel links. This information can be shared.
- **Revenue intelligence:**
 - Hawala money channels should be curbed.
 - Money laundering from Tax havens need to be plugged by **bilateral agreements**.
 - Implementation of **FATF** norms and using global co-operation to fight menace of drug peddling.
- **Health issues:**
 - Substance abuse addicts suffer physically and mentally.
 - Treating women addicts who are neglected is imperative as they are usually sidelined in patriarchal society like India.
 - Treating those people and bringing them back to normal health is very important.
- **Awareness programme:**
 - Education about the ills of substance abuse in schools and colleges.



- To discourage people from substance abuse, **drug rehabilitation and Society awareness programmes** are very important.
- Use of **media, internet, celebrities** to educate the youth and reduce the peer pressure.
- **Social welfare and rehabilitation:**
 - It includes **rehabilitation of drug addicts** as most of them are very poor and bringing them back into society is a taboo.
 - There is a need for **more psychiatrists, trained counsellors and rehabilitation clinics**.
 - The rehabilitation centres should be **more humane and compassionate** towards addicts and **use scientific treatment methods**.
 - Encourage **civil society and NGOs to establish rehab centres**. NGOs like **Chetna, Save the Children** have showed the way in drug abuse control.
- **International Cooperation:**
 - India is signatory to the following treaties and conventions UN Convention on Narcotic Drugs (1961), U.N. Convention on Psychotropic Substances (1971), U.N. Convention Against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (1988), Transnational Crime Convention (2000).
 - We need to effectively use **SCO, BRICS and ASEAN platforms** for joint coordinated action against drugs trafficking.

Conclusion:

- A multipronged and a sustained effort is imperative to contain substance abuse issue in India.
- There is a need for co-operation between the various stakeholders involving education, de-addiction and rehabilitation of affected individuals and their families to address the issue.

Q) Despite their crucial role in welfare services, scheme workers continue to struggle for recognition of their rights. Examine. (250 words)

[epw](#)

Why this question

The article discusses the plights of the scheme workers in government schemes, the reasons behind their protests, and how government has responded to their protests. These workers play an important role in the implementation of government schemes and their demands and issues need greater examination and analysis.

Key demand of the question

The question expects us to discuss the issues faced by the various scheme workers, explain that they perform a crucial role in successful implementation of government schemes and discuss what needs to be done in this regard. We also need to highlight the impact of the prolonged issues and the way forward.

Directive word

Examine – When you are asked to examine, you have to probe deeper into the topic, get into details, and find out the causes or implications if any.

Structure of the answer

Introduction – Explain who the scheme workers are –

anganwadi workers and cooks are among the “scheme workers” across the country who bring the central and state governments’ social welfare schemes to the people. In effect, they are the ambassadors and implementers of these schemes, many of which are flagship schemes of the respective governments.

Body

Explain about their issues

- *All across India, these scheme workers provide core services in basic areas like health, education, and nutrition. Termed as “volunteers,” they are poorly paid, carry a heavy workload, and are not eligible for any benefits that government employees get*



- *Their unions point out that, despite their workload, they are also expected to carry out government surveys and data collection drives. However, not only are these workers not considered government employees, they are also paid “honorariums” that are disproportionate to the responsibilities they shoulder etc*

Discuss the important role they play and the impact of such issues

- *Considering their job descriptions and scope, it is obvious that this female-dominated workforce performs a crucial role involving the welfare of marginalised sections.*
- *They are the “face” and “hands” of social welfare schemes that cover pregnant women, children, the ill, and the malnourished. Etc*

Discuss what needs to be done to alleviate their plight.

Conclusion – *give a fair and balanced conclusion and discuss way forward.*

Introduction:

- Scheme workers providing **basic services through various government programmes form the backbone of the country’s social welfare system**. The various Scheme workers **ensure health, nutrition, well-being, education and all round development** of every child and her parent to **ensure better human development**.
- There is not enough attention paid to the **conditions under which they work** or the **value that is attributed to their work**.

Body:

- The scheme workers are the **true implementers** of the various welfare schemes and public service delivery. They work at the **grass-roots level**, thus **aware of needs of the citizens’ better**, thereby acting as a **primary feed-back collector**.
- There are around 27 lakh anganwadi workers and helpers, predominantly women, under the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS), a similar number under the MDMS, around 10 lakh accredited social health activists (ASHAs) and urban social health activists (USHAs), and around three lakh auxiliary nurse midwives (ANMs), all under the National Health Mission. There are many more lakhs under the National Child Labour Project, Small Savings Schemes, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, and National Rural Livelihoods Mission, among others.
- Considering their job descriptions and scope, it is obvious that this **female-dominated workforce performs a crucial role involving the welfare of marginalised sections**. They are the **“face” and “hands” of social welfare schemes that cover pregnant women, children, the ill, and the malnourished**.

The issues faced by such workers are:

- **Low salary:**
 - Anganwadi workers provide a long list of services, ranging from **teaching pre-schoolers to visiting homes of young children for nutrition and health counselling**. Despite that, these workers get about Rs 5,000 a month, which is less than the minimum wages.
 - Despite the importance of the work, their positions are considered **“honorary”** and their emoluments kept out of all norms of minimum wages and pay grades.
- **Delay in funds allocation:**
 - **Salaries delayed:** A study of six states by the **Centre for Equity Studies in 2016** revealed that 35 per cent of the workers had not received their previous month’s salary.
 - **Inadequate funds to run the program at ground-level:** 50 per cent of the workers felt that the funds they received for running the day-to-day activities of the centre were inadequate.
 - **Spending at Own Cost: 40 per cent reported spending their own money** to keep the centre’s activities going.
- **Overburdened:**
 - Low financial allocations to the education sector (about 3% of GDP) have meant that state governments cannot afford to hire teachers at the Pay Commission scales.
 - Over the years, they have hired fewer teachers, leading to huge vacancies and overburdening the hired teachers.
 - There are no fixed timings of work and this upsets their work-life balance.
 - The anganwadi, school teachers are saddled with a **host of administrative work** like election duties, census work etc.



- **Poor Infrastructure:**
 - Infrastructure is a major concern. The lack of buildings or dilapidated buildings poses grave threats to workers as well as the children patients etc.
 - To add to this, basic facilities like electricity, drinking water, sanitation, internet connectivity is mostly absent.
 - **Lack of adequate training facilities** lead to poor-quality work, increased risk to the service- receivers.
- **Job Insecurity:**
 - Most of them are **hired as contractual** employees or **volunteers**.
 - The **RTE banned contract teachers**; non-regular teachers were no longer referred to as contract or para teachers, but **in fact continue to function as such**.
 - Their contracts are “**permanent**”, but their terms are not that of a regular government employee.
 - **The lack of safe work environment** makes them **vulnerable to sexual harassments**.
 - The attempts to **privatise and cut budgetary allocations** to these schemes are also part of the state’s larger move to divest itself of its core responsibilities.

Impacts of such issues faced by the scheme workers result in

- Rampant absenteeism.
- Poor attention to core responsibilities.
- Lack of commitment to work.
- Corruption and bribery to satiate their needs.
- Strikes, protest and unrest.
- Poor Human Development Indicators like high IMR, MMR, wasting, stunting and underweight.
- High levels of preventable diseases incidences like polio, TB etc.
- Poor quality of education outcome as shown in ASER survey.

Way Forward:

- **Government spending on education and health** must be increased to **6% and 4% respectively** as recommended by many expert committees.
- **Timely allocation of funds** must be done to reduce spending from frontline worker’ pockets.
- **Salaries must be uniform and fixed across the country** based on pay commission recommendations. **The salaries must be disbursed on fixed date of month.**
- Use of **NSQF for Trainings and certifications** must be mandated as per existing laws. **Intermittent trainings must be provided** for the frontline workers to keep themselves updated with new trends.
- **Measures like RTI, Social Audit, Citizens Charters** can help keep a check on such delays as **accountability of government increases**.
- **Increase digital penetration** to reduce administrative overhead and **planning of activities** to coincide with cultural calendar of the region.
- Infrastructure can improved by **collaborating with the NGO’s , using CSR funds of companies and philanthropists**.
- **Grievance Redressal Mechanism** to address the woes of the frontline workers.

Conclusion:

- India’s ability to **achieve its SDGs** or to have a **healthy skilled workforce** that contributes towards economic progress or social and human development depends to a large extent on the performance of scheme workers. Thus, a closer look at their governance architectures is necessary.

Q) Entry of e-pharmacies will bring down the price of medicine for Indian patients. Discuss. (250 words)

The hindu

Why this question

The article digs deep into controversies and criticism faced by e-pharmacies and discusses at length as to how e-pharmacies will be beneficial for the Indian patients.

Directive word

Discuss- this is an all-encompassing directive which mandates us to write in detail about the key demand of the question. we also have to discuss about the related and important aspects of the question in order to bring out a complete picture of the issue in hand.



Key demand of the question.

The question wants us to write in detail about the e-pharmacies in India and bring out how they would help in increasing competition and lead to reduced prices of medicines for the customers.

Structure of the answer

Introduction– write a few introductory lines about the e-pharmacies in India. E.g Amid a slew of conflicting judicial decisions from different High Courts, the legality of e-pharmacies continues to be questioned and unclear.

Body-

Discuss in points as to how they would lead to lower prices of medicines for Indian patients. E.g

- The more prudent way of looking at the entry of e-pharmacies is competition and the resultant effect it will have on lowering the price of medicine for Indian patients.
- In a fully functional, competitive market, pharmacists would compete with each other for business. This competition could happen in the form of discounts or improving operational efficiency.
- Over the last decade, the Competition Commission of India (CCI) has had to deal with several complaints alleging that trade associations of pharmacists are providing platforms for cartelisation where pharmacists are basically rigging the market.
- The practice of requiring pharmaceutical companies to apply for a no-objection-certificate (NOC) from the regional trade association before they appoint new stockists in a region to sell a particular drug has the effect of artificially restricting competition in certain markets because more stockists mean more competition. By creating such artificial, extra-legal barriers to the free trade of medicines within India, these trade associations create huge distortions in the Indian market.
- It is suspected that these practices continue despite multiple restraining orders by the CCI.
- One major factor that contributes to high drug prices in India is the unreasonably high trade margins.”
- One of the culprits for this phenomenon identified by the CCI was “self-regulation by trade associations [which] also contributes towards high margins as these trade associations control the entire drug distribution system in a manner that mutes competition etc.

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

Introduction:

- An online pharmacy, Internet pharmacy, or e-pharmacy is a pharmacy that operates over the Internet and sends the orders to customers through the mail or shipping companies.
- Amid a slew of **conflicting judicial decisions from different High Courts**, the legality of e-pharmacies continues to be questioned by various trade associations such as the **All India Organisation of Chemists and Druggists (AIOCD)**.

Body:

E-pharmacies lead to lower prices of medicines for Indian patients:

- E-pharmacies, which operate through websites or smartphone apps on the Internet, offer medicines for sale at a discount of at least 20% when compared to traditional pharmacists, with the added convenience of home delivery of medicines to one’s doorstep.
- E-pharmacies offer the comfort of shopping from home, privacy, and price discounts. It also allows access to drugs, not available locally.
- The more prudent way of looking at the entry of e-pharmacies is competition and the resultant effect it will have on lowering the price of medicine for Indian patients.
- The history of India’s trade associations of pharmacists is one of rampant, **unabashed cartelisation** that has resulted in an artificial inflation of medicine prices.



- In simple terms, this means that pharmacists, who should otherwise be competing with each other to offer lower prices for their customers, prefer to enter into agreements with each other to fix the price at which they will sell medicines to patients.
- In a fully functional, competitive market, pharmacists would **compete with each other for business**. This competition could happen in the form of discounts or improving operational efficiency.
- The **Competition Commission of India (CCI)** has had to deal with several complaints alleging that trade associations of pharmacists are providing platforms for cartelisation where pharmacists are basically rigging the market.
- The practice of **requiring pharmaceutical companies** to apply for a no-objection-certificate (NOC) from the regional trade association before they appoint new stockists in a region to sell a particular drug. This has the **effect of artificially restricting competition** in certain markets because more stockists mean more competition.
- By creating such artificial, extra-legal barriers to the free trade of medicines within India, these trade associations create huge distortions in the Indian market. It is suspected that these practices continue despite multiple restraining orders by the CCI.

Risks Associated with E-Pharmacies:

- India's pharmacy laws are derived from the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940, Drugs and Cosmetics Rule, 1945, and the Pharmacy Act, 1948.
- These laws predate the advent of online commerce in India, leaving the business out of the purview.
- Unlike common items, drugs are highly potent and its misuse or abuse can have serious consequences on human health, not just for the one person consuming it but for humanity at large as some drugs can be addictive, habit-forming and harmful to the body.
- A large number of children/minor or people from uneducated rural background use the internet and can be victims of wrong medication while ordering medicines online.
- The risks exist in buying drugs online:
 - Supply of fake and illegal drugs;
 - Abuse on account of fake or forged or no prescriptions;
 - Lack of verification of the ultimate user;
 - Unhealthy competition;
 - Abuse of critical health data generated online; and
 - Mishandling during transport; are some of them.

Way Forward:

- Making draft guidelines is the need of the hour.
- E-pharmacies market is **\$18 billion** and will grow to **\$55 billion by 2020**.
- Industry experts estimate the market to be generating 3,000-4,000 orders on a daily basis.
- According to the **draft guidelines** that are yet to be formalised, e-pharmacies have to register for a licence with the **Drug Controller General of India (DCGI)**, which will be **valid for three years**.
- They do not allow e-pharmacies to sell narcotic drugs, tranquilisers, and Schedule X drugs, and neither are they allowed to advertise.
- These draft guidelines are along the **lines of laws in the US**, where the **regulators monitor e-drug sales**.
- The **National Association of Boards of Pharmacy (NABP)**, the apex pharmacy body in the **US**, gives **registration and certification for e-pharmacies** and they have to display the certification logo on their website.

Conclusion:

- Specific and clear-cut rules should be made for selling, prescribing, dispensing, and delivering prescription drugs through e-pharmacies. In its recent policy note on "**Making markets work for affordable healthcare**", the CCI noted, "One major factor that contributes to high drug prices in India is the unreasonably high trade margins." One of the solutions proposed by the CCI was encouraging more e-pharmacies.

Q) India is a paradox in itself as being the world's largest electoral wonder, but a flawed democracy. Comment in the light of the "State of Democracy in the World in 2018- report" (250 words)

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

Why this question



The article provides insights into the Indian socio-political landscape and analyzes India's poor performance as per the "State of Democracy in the World in 2018- report".

Directive word

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

Key demand of the question.

The question wants us to express our knowledge and understanding of the Indian socio-political landscape and express our opinion as to whether or not India is a paradox in itself as being the world's largest electoral wonder, but a flawed democracy.

Structure of the answer

Introduction– write a few introductory lines about Indian democracy. E.g mention about the India being the world's largest democracy and at the same time poor performer on the front of governance and human development.

Body-

Discuss about the recent "State of Democracy in the World in 2018- report" and how India is a paradox in terms of being an electoral wonder but a flawed democracy. E.g

- *The Economist Intelligence Unit recently published its 11th report on the "State of Democracy in the World in 2018" titled "Me Too? Political participation, protest and democracy".*
- *The survey ranks 165 independent countries based on five parameters — namely, electoral process and pluralism, civil liberties, functioning of the government, political participation and political culture.*
- *India, which had reached its highest-ever position of 27 in 2014 (just two ranks away from becoming a full democracy), slipped to 42 last year, registering the second largest fall in ranking.*
- *This is the worst ranking ever on the index for India. It is a mid-range country among flawed democracies, with a high score of 9.17 in electoral process and pluralism but moderate record not crossing 7.5 on the rest of the parameters.*
- *What has adversely affected Indian rankings, according to the report last year, is the rise of "conservative religious ideologies". Vigilantism, violence, narrowing scope for dissent, threat to minorities and marginalised groups has affected our ranking etc.*

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

Introduction:

- Democracy is a form of government in which power ultimately comes from the people who are governed, either through direct voting or through elected representatives.
- India is today the largest functioning democracy in the world. The "**State of Democracy in the World in 2018**" index report titled "Me Too? Political participation, protest and democracy" was published recently by the **Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU)**. India was ranked **41**, a **mid-range country among flawed democracies**.

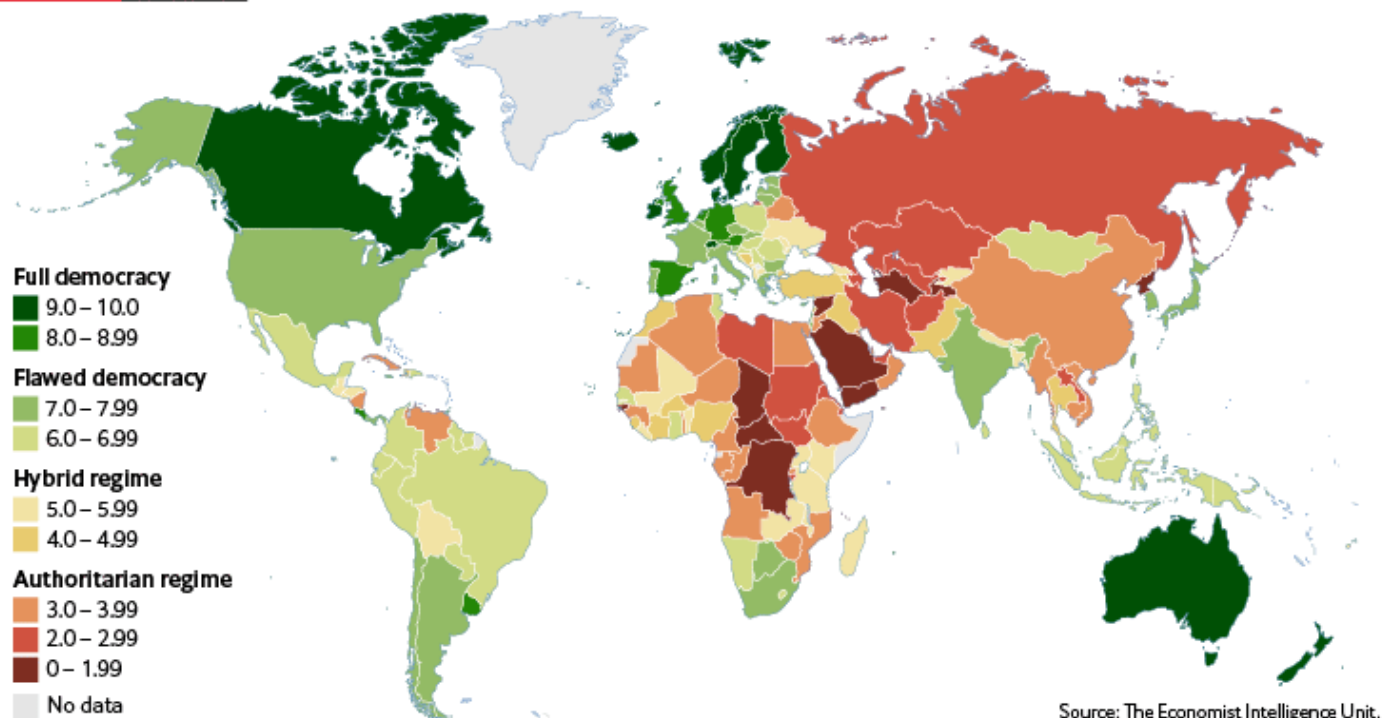
Body:

India is world's largest electoral wonder:

- **Electoral process and pluralism:**
 - A vibrant electoral democracy has been India's most enduring and endearing identity ever since India adopted a great constitution that made it a democratic republic with **universal adult suffrage**.
 - Over the past sixty four years, the Election Commission of India has delivered sixteen elections to the Lok Sabha (the House of the People) and over 360 elections to State Legislative Assemblies without missing a single deadline.



Democracy Index 2018



- **Civil liberties:**

- The practice of free and fair elections, where Indian citizen above the age of 18 years irrespective of caste, creed, religion, colour, race has the right to cast his vote.
- An individual also has the right to contest elections by registering himself as an independent candidate or a party of his own or as a member of any political party.

- **Functioning of the government:**

- Peaceful, orderly and democratic transfer of power has been the envy of the entire democratic world.
- The outgoing prime minister (or chief minister) offering the chair to the incoming one with humility and folded hands has been a sight which many democracies only long to see.

- **Political participation:**

- Elections can be truly free and fair only if these are inclusive, socially just and participative.
- During the sixty four years of our democratic history, the voter turn-out has remained around 55-60%, definitely far less than what ECI aspires to achieve.

- **Political culture:**

- Multiple parties at national, regional levels which represent the interests of the people of the nation.
- Strong challenging nature of the opposition parties ensure that the ruling party will abide to the rule of law and work on democratic principles.

However, it is a flawed democracy:

- **Illiteracy, Poverty, Gender Discrimination, Casteism, Communalism, Religious Fundamentalism, Regionalism, Corruption, and Criminalization of Politics** are still plaguing Indian Democracy.
- According to the last two reports, there is a rise of “conservative religious ideologies” in the country.
- Vigilantism, violence, narrowing scope for dissent, threat to minorities and marginalised groups has affected India’s ranking.
- Important issues like **horse-trading in politics, the anti-defection law, pros and cons of post-poll alliances and discretionary powers of the governor** has brought to light the various challenges facing Indian democracy.
- **Journalists are increasingly under attack**, with murders taking place in several areas.
- As a result of limited scope for fair reportage, the Indian media is classified as only “partially free”. This is a fact which is also supported by the “Freedom in the World Report, 2018”.
- Unlike pre-poll alliances, where the voters are aware of whom they are voting for, **post-poll alliances present a new set of challenges.**
- **Anti-Defection law** does not seem to be doing much to stop MLAs from defecting.



- **Dynastic politics, lack of strong opposition at the centre and Religion based politics.** Ex: Government's decision to classify Lingayats as a religious minority in Karnataka.
- The delay in disposal of cases by the courts is a concern to people.
- Misuse of data on social media sites, privacy of users and the power of social media to influence important political outcomes.

Way Forward

- **Universal literacy**, education for all, poverty alleviation, elimination of gender discrimination, removal of regional imbalances, administrative and judicial reforms and sustained economic, social and environmental development.
- A set of rules which would **curb the menace of defection** as well as the **misuse of powers of the governor's office** is required.
- A **defecting MLA must be disqualified** from contesting or becoming a minister for at least six years.
- A distinction needs to be drawn whether a member is leaving a party for ideological differences or for money and power.
- In case of hung assembly, whether the governor must call the single largest party first, or a post-poll alliance, the process must be uniform across the country.
- The governors' discretionary powers must be abolished and replaced with clear guidelines based on the **Sarkaria Commission**.
- Stricter data protection laws are required to ensure that political parties do not indulge in practices that involve undue influencing of voting behaviour.
- **Voter education, electoral reforms and periodical highlighting of the performance** (or non-performance) of elected representatives should be high priority.
- People must exercise their **right to vote**, participate in democracy and contribute towards the development of the country.
- The **youth must be aware** of the problems that the country is facing and choose the candidate who is most likely to bring about a change
- Democracy cannot survive without both **citizens' participation and politicians' accountability**.
- The promises of democracy can only be realised through collective action in civil society.
- The state must respect the articulation of the politics of voice and not just the politics of the vote

Topic- Mechanisms, laws, institutions and Bodies constituted for the protection and betterment of these vulnerable sections

Q) A mere repeal of the law will not address their need for establishing society-wide changes to gain access to political-social-economic welfare. Analyze the statement in the context of Denotified Tribes in India. (250 words)

Reference

Why this question

The interim budget presented recently, announced the creation of a welfare development board for denotified (DNT), nomadic (NT) and semi-nomadic (SNT) tribes. In this context it is important to discuss about the plight of those tribes and problems faced by them.

Directive word

Analyze-here we 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.

Key demand of the question.

The question wants us to dig deep into the socio economic conditions of the DNT- NT and SNT and bring out as to why only repealing of the law will not address their need for establishing society-wide changes to gain access to political-social-economic welfare.

Structure of the answer

Introduction– write a few introductory lines about the DNT. E.g The term, 'Denotified and Nomadic Tribes', can be traced to the Criminal Tribes Act (CTA) of 1871. The colonial government notified nearly 200 tribal communities to be hereditary criminals, cementing their societal identity as



outcasts and subjecting them to constant harassment by the administration. After India gained Independence, these tribes were 'de-notified' from the list of Criminal Tribes, and, hence, the term.

Body-

Discuss their history. E.g

- The CTA allowed for close supervision and control over the mobility of the tribes which were notified by the provincial governments.
- The Act was amended in 1897, 1908 and 1911 to give sweeping powers to the authorities, some as draconian as allowing the state to remove any child of the age of six and above from its 'criminal' parents.
- By 1924, certain provisions were amended, and the Act was finally applicable to the whole of British India.
- Along with the introduction of laws such as the Forest Acts and the Salt Tax Act, the British threw a noose around the the lives of DNTs using stringent regulations.

Discuss the problems faced by them and why repealing of the law has not been enough to address their socio-economic political concerns. E.g

- It is only in independent India that the need was felt to shift the collective burden of criminality to the individual, which led to the CTA being repealed and the Habitual Offenders Act (HOA) being enacted in various States.
- Not all States enacted it, Currently, a variant of the HOA Model Bill as proposed by the Union Government then stands enforced in 10 States across the country, having been enacted in many more.
- However, the HOA functioned as a mere extension of the CTA. Nomadic and semi-nomadic communities continued to face harassment at the hands of law enforcement agencies.
- The NCDNT report clearly recommends repealing the various HOAs. This has also been the constant refrain of community leaders, representatives and civil society organisations — as the Act still casts its shadow of the state on communities etc.

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

Background:-

- Recently Union Government has decided to form Welfare Development Board for Denotified, Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Tribes (DNT/ NT/ SNT) communities and committee under NITI Aayog to identify them. In this context it is essential to analyse the plight of these communities.

Denotified tribes:-

- Fifteen crore individuals, better known as the Denotified Tribes (DNT) of India, continue to be considered 'criminal by birth'.
- The term, 'De-notified and Nomadic Tribes', can be traced to the Criminal Tribes Act (CTA) of 1871. The colonial government notified nearly 200 tribal communities to be hereditary criminals, cementing their societal identity as outcasts and subjecting them to constant harassment by the administration.
- After India gained Independence, these tribes were 'de-notified' from the list of Criminal Tribes.

Mere repeal of the law will not address the needs of denotified tribes :-

- **More reforms needed:-**
 - The repeal of the Habitual offenders Act has to be accompanied by a slew of legal reforms to address the multitude of issues Denotified Tribes communities face.
- Their unique lifestyle **requires positive affirmation and development policies that cater to their long-standing and overlooked needs.**
 - It should be the duty of the government to be proactive and reach out to the DNTs since the latter would understandably refrain from seeking state help.
- **Discrimination faced by Denotified tribes is at societal level :-**
 - Nomadic and semi-nomadic communities continued to face harassment at the hands of law enforcement agencies.



- The mere repeal of the criminal tribes act **could not change the mindset of government officials or members of society.**
- **Lack of identity:-**
 - Given their centuries-old tradition of constant movement, they often do not possess any residential proof, which leaves them out of the majority of the government's developmental schemes.
 - Those deemed eligible for such schemes were randomly grouped under the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes or Other Backward Classes categories. As a result, most members of the DNTs continue to be out of the orbit of steps being taken to end discrimination.
- **Lack of data :-**
 - lack of enumeration of DNTs is the biggest hindrance to them being brought into the mainstream .
 - Lack of documentation further aggravates their problems as they cannot prove which community they belong to

Way forward:-

- There is a need for **establishing society-wide changes for DNTs to gain access to political-social-economic welfare.**
- Their unique lifestyle requires **positive affirmation and development policies** that cater to their specific needs.
- So the repeal of the **law has to be accompanied by a slew of legal reforms**, addressing the multitude of issues that DNTs face.
- Government can provide **employment opportunities for nomadic tribes by providing loans for small enterprises.** Some of those practicing traditional occupations, including street performers, are struggling due to changes in laws and need to be revived.
- Ration cards, Aadhar cards, other identity cards and documents should be prepared so that nomadic tribes have an identity and the ability to gain access to government programmes which provide food, health, education and other basic needs, as well as to other social protection mechanisms.
- It is important to understand their framework and not apply any external framework on them.

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) Institutional decay occasions worry because it affects ordinary citizens in disastrous ways. Comment in the context of India. (250 words)

The hindu

Why this question

Off late several institutions have come under the public glare and not always for good reasons. CBI has become so controversial that there is a severe trust deficit in its functioning which have had ramifications for centre state relations etc. The article highlights the importance of institutional strength in a democracy and the issues involved.

Key demand of the question

The question expects us to discuss the importance of strong institutions for a democracy like India and the likely impact that institutional decay can have. We need to provide a commentary on institutional autonomy and strength in the country and discuss way forward.

Directive word

Comment – When you are asked to comment, you have to pick main points and give your 'opinion' on them based on evidences or arguments stemming from your wide reading. Your opinion may be for or against, but you must back your argument with evidences.

Structure of the answer



Introduction – Mention that In a democracy, individuals are governed by institutions, and not by men. If we do not live in an institutional universe, we will be at the mercy of capricious individuals. And it is in this context that we need to examine the strength of institutions in the country

Body

Discuss the importance of having strong institutions in the country – discretionary power is not arbitrarily utilized, eliminate subjectivity, act as a framework etc

Discuss the impact of weakening of institutions on citizenry

Give a commentary on the state of institutions in the country and the problem emerging out of it – issues with the CBI and the impact it is having in centre state relations, issues with national statistical commission, RBI, planning commission etc

Conclusion – Give your view on the importance of institutions and discuss way forward.

Background:-

- Institutions are a structural necessity for ensuring better governance in a democracy.
- When institutions are threatened and they do not function independently or are not permitted to function independently, there is an implicit alarm bell ringing down the corridor of the body politic.

Institutional decay in India :-

- The Emergency imposed on the country from 1975 to 1977 initiated the process of institutional decay. Postings and appointments were manipulated to suit the ruling dispensation.
- There have been instances of governments sabotaging the autonomy of several political institutions as well.
- **Flaws show up in many cases :-**
 - Notably, in the 2G telecom spectrum case where a special court judge was critical of CBI's efforts.
 - In another case, the Aarushi Talwar murder, Allahabad high court found fault with CBI and went on to acquit the accused.
 - In many cases, reputations are irreversibly damaged during the course of investigative agencies drawn out.
- Four Supreme court judges coming out in front of media regarding the institution of chief justice of India.
- Tussle between RBI and government over allocation of funds and transfer of the same etc.
- NSSO, Enforcement directorate have also been undermined.

Institutions are important in a democracy due to the following reasons:-

- Institutions, as the embodiment of formal and informal rules, **assure citizens that the government exercises power according to some norms** that enable as well as regulate the expanding state activities.
- Institutions are meant to check expansion of government powers which can abridge an individual's freedom, equality and justice.
- Institutions lay down standards which are used by citizens to gauge constitutionality of Government's action

Institutional decay impacts democracy:-

- Tussle among the institutions will gift nothing but will only slow down the reputation of them.
- The appointment of members who were not nominated for selection to institutions arouses greater suspicion in the minds of common individuals.
- Citizens would lose confidence in such institutions.
- Can even affect cooperative federalism as states feel that their authority is being sidelined.

What needs to be done :-

- **There is a need for a review mechanism to be instituted and implemented, if not already in place.**
 - Each adjudicating officer's record should be perused and ascertained how many such orders result in recoveries, penalties or prosecution and how many do not stand the test of law and rules.
 - According to these metrics, promotions and other incentives should be denied.

Topic-Development processes and the development industry the role of NGOs, SHGs, various groups and associations, donors, charities, institutional and other stakeholders

Q) What do you understand by online curated content providers ? Do you think adoption of self regulation amounts to unnecessary censorship ? (250 words)

[Livemint](#)



Why this question

The article highlights the decision of OCCs to start self regulating themselves to curate their content instead of waiting for government to make regulations. We are expected to examine whether self regulation amounts to censorship and its impact on free speech.

Structure of the answer

Introduction – highlight that digital media is on the rise and is fast becoming the staple way through which we consume our entertainment leading to worries about lack of censorship on such platforms.

Body

Explain about what online curated content providers are – clutch of over-the-top (OTT) video streaming platforms adopted a self-regulatory content code to avoid probable government censorship. Among the signatories are streaming platforms of big broadcasting companies such as Hotstar, Voot, Zee5 and SonyLIV as well as independent firms such as Arre, ALT Balaji, Netflix and Eros Now. In the self-regulatory Code of Best Practices signed under the aegis of the Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI), the streaming platforms have been referred to as Online Curated Content Providers.

Highlight the issues that lack of censorship in digital media space were causing in terms of impact on impressionable minds. Also explain that the stakeholders thought it wise to adopt best practices before a government department stepped in and imposed unnecessary censorship. The pressure mounted as public interest litigations (PILs) and complaints against the OTT platforms started emerging.

Highlight about similar measures taken in related industries such as advertising which follows self-regulation through the Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI) and Broadcasting Content Complaints Council (BCCC) for non-news channels respectively etc. Discuss the impact such self regulations have had on freedom of speech and government censorship.

Conclusion – Give your view and discuss way forward.

Background :-

- According to recent BCG report, the online video content is expected to reach a market size of \$5 billion by 2023. In the light of such huge market there were calls for regulation on streaming platforms.

Content curation: (extra)

- Content curation is the process of finding and collecting online content and presenting the best pieces in a structured way. Unlike content marketing, curation does not involve creating your own content.

Online curated content providers :-

- In the self-regulatory Code of Best Practices signed under the aegis of the Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI), the streaming platforms have been referred to as Online Curated Content Providers.
- Major platforms, such as Netflix, Hotstar, Voot, Zee5, Arre, SonyLIV, ALTBalaji and Eros Now, have signed the code.
- The code has been in the works for over a year. **The primary objective is to ensure that the consumer interests are protected, and at the same time, the creativity of content providers stays intact.**
 - It also aims to empower consumers to make informed choices on age-appropriate content.
 - The code advocates a complaint and redressal mechanism as well, in relation to the content made available by respective OCCPs, according to the report released by the IMAI.

Why Self regulation is necessary :-

- Other experiences :-**
 - Mature industries like advertising and television follow self-regulation through the Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI) and Broadcasting Content Complaints Council (BCCC) for non-news channels respectively.
 - While newspapers (and journalists) are governed by self-regulatory codes devised by statutory bodies such as the Press Council of India, non-statutory bodies such as the Indian Broadcasting Foundation and News Broadcasters Association have adopted self-regulatory codes vis-à-vis non-news/non-current affairs and news broadcasts on television .
- Self-regulation encourages creativity and makes content creators more responsive to their viewers. It worked for broadcast media and there is no reason for it not to do so for curated video content.**



- **Lack of censorship in digital media space were causing in terms of impact on impressionable minds.**
 - The stakeholders thought it wise to adopt best practices before a government department stepped in and imposed unnecessary censorship.
 - The pressure mounted as public interest litigations (PILs) and complaints against the OTT platforms started emerging.

Self regulation leads to unnecessary censorship :-

- According to some experts these platforms are acting out of self-preservation: In the process, they are also restricting pushing at the boundaries of what is considered moral and immoral in India .
- The only way that these platforms can be expected to protect free speech is if there is transparency to consumers: a listing with details of the complaint filed, decisions made and action taken. **The self-regulatory code has no such provisions for transparency .**
- By creating a self-regulatory code, these providers have created a situation where the government and courts can treat this code as a standard industry practice and force others to conform to it, even if the content may not be illegal.

What more needs to be done :-

- While the prescription of the redressal mechanism is commendable yet the mechanism seems to lack 'teeth'. **An ideal self-regulatory mechanism should consist of self-regulation at two levels- entity level and the industry level.**
 - For instance, under the Press Council of India's Norms of Journalistic Conduct, a complainant may approach the Editor of the concerned newspaper and also the Secretary of the Press council of India.
 - For mechanism by the Code prescribed does not allow for a route an aggrieved user may follow if his/her complaint is not acknowledged or if he/she is unsatisfied with the response provided by the concerned department, as prescribed in self-regulatory codes pertaining to other media.

Q) Discuss the role played by NGOs and international institutions through their development initiatives in helping India address its hunger problem ? (250 words)

[Financialexpress](https://www.financialexpress.com)

Why this question

The article highlights the efforts made by Akshaya Patra foundation and how it has helped in tackling hunger on a large scale in this country. This brings into question the role played by NGOs in addressing developmental challenges and how in cooperation with government they can bring about huge social changes.

Key demand of the question

The question expects us to discuss the role played by NGOs and developmental institutions in tackling the hunger problem. First we need to highlight the hunger problem in India and thereafter explain how NGOs and international institutions can and are playing a huge role in tackling such challenges.

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 – Explain that in a democracy, civil society has an important role to play in fulfilling developmental agenda and organised efforts happen through NGOs.

Body

Discuss the state of problem of hunger in India – India currently has the largest number of undernourished people in the world and this is in spite of the fact that it has made substantial progress in health determinants over the past decades and ranks second worldwide in farm output.

Highlight how NGOs help in addressing the hunger problem and the role played by international institutions in resolving the hunger crisis



Discuss what more needs to be done. Discuss the issues faced by such NGOs and what needs to be done in this regard.

Conclusion – Give your view and discuss way forward.

Background :-

- India tops the list as the most undernourished country **with 194.6 million hungry citizens**. Despite a remarkable progress in the economy, the country has failed to eradicate hunger at the grassroots levels and is home to 15 percent of the world's hungry.

How NGO's initiatives helped address India's hunger problem :-

- Akshaya Patra** feeds 326.5 million meals (in FY18) through 37 kitchens and the plan is to raise this threefold by 2025. There are even mobile kitchens to feed 5,000-7,000 people every day during the Kumbh Mela, the NTR canteens in Andhra Pradesh feed 60,000 people at just Rs. 5 per meal and 2,000 homeless are even fed every day outside the London School of Economics in the UK
- Fight Hunger Foundation** :-
 - It advocates for community-based management of acute malnutrition, and conducts several pilot projects in partnership with the Department of Health and local organizations. Fight Hunger Foundation also undertakes studies to explore and test the efficiency of local ready-to-use therapeutic food products, and their effectiveness.
- The Robin Hood Army is a voluntary organization that aims to provide surplus food from restaurants to the less fortunate across the cities of India.
- Feeding India's volunteers or Hunger Heroes** have been working to provide food to the hungry. They collect leftover food from parties, weddings or other events and distribute it in shelter homes.
- No Hungry Child** is the name of the project started by former corporate sector employee V. Sridhar who wanted to provide nutritious meals to children in the country. they also provide funding to other registered NGOs to cook and serve free food to the poor.
- Embracing the World** is a global initiative that works towards alleviating poverty. According to them, they try to provide five basic needs – food, shelter, healthcare, education and livelihood, "whenever and wherever possible." The initiative helps feed 10 million people every year in India.
- Skip a meal** is a student driven initiative where volunteers forego one meal each week and give them to people in need.
- The **Right to Food Campaign** (launched in March 2014), which is an informal network of individuals and organisations, is the result of public interest litigation. Under the campaign, organised efforts are made to persuade State governments to attend to the most pressing demands of society, including proper nutrition

International institutions:-

- UN support:-**
 - To address the linked nutrition and livelihood challenges in India and to ensure that vulnerable groups are not left behind, the UN priority group partners with the government to scale-up nutrition services and improve feeding and caring practices in the home.
 - It assists government efforts to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the safety nets under the NFSA, and work towards increasing farm incomes for small and marginal farming households.
 - The group provides support the strengthening of agriculture and livelihood dimensions of anti-poverty programmes, particularly the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act and the National Rural Livelihoods Mission.
- The **Zero Hunger Challenge (ZHC)** recognises that eradicating hunger is multi-dimensional and that countries need to move beyond an approach that focuses on food production, to work towards achieving progress on five specific pillars. The ZHC is extremely relevant for India; home to 18% of the world's population, 25% of the country's people go hungry.
- Improving Child Nutrition through Rice Fortification:-**
 - The World Food Programme in India, in partnership with the Government of Odisha, is implementing a two-year project in Gajapati District to improve nutrition through rice fortification in nearly 1,500 schools through the mid-day meal scheme.
- Rayagada's Journey in Food Distribution Reform**
 - The World Food Project's pilot in Rayagada, Odisha reached a population of over a million people through nearly 400 Fair Price Shops and provided a learning opportunity for the formulation of an efficient Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS).



- **WFP Innovating with India**

- Over the last few years, WFP has transitioned from the direct delivery of food aid to providing advice and technical support to the Government of India to improve delivery of subsidised food through the Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS).

What can be done :-

- India must ensure that the food security act is implemented properly, that all Indians have access to basic cereals and pulses, there is enough knowledge around nutrition and healthcare, and that our women and children have access to good, reliable, primary healthcare.
- Some of the causes of hunger issue can be addressed by NGOs but much of it has to do with traditional norms and practices that we follow across communities that are harder to change. These need to be looked into.
- Attention needs to be paid on building neighbourhood health and nutrition profiles and carrying out interventions based on identified needs.

Topic –India and its neighborhood- relations, Bilateral, regional and global groupings and agreements involving India and/or affecting India's interests

Q) Development of India-Iran axis and Pakistan- Saudi axis in the region can undermine regional peace and security. Analyze. (250 words)

Indian express

Why this question

The article digs into the recent developments in the region defined by India, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan relationship. It is important to analyze the writeup in detail in order to broaden our understanding about the international affairs of our country.

Directive word

Analyze-here we 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.

Key demand of the question.

The question wants us to look deeper into the regional politics and the recent developments in the region and bring out how the apparent formation of groupings can impact peace and security.

Structure of the answer

Introduction– write a few introductory lines about the recent developments between the four countries. E.g mention the US sanctions on Iran and exemptions provided to India.

Body-

Discuss about the Iran-India relationship. E.g

- *India formally took over operations of the Chabahar port last month.*
- *For New Delhi, Chabahar is important to reach out to Afghanistan.*
- *Last month, senior bureaucrats of all the three countries, India, Iran and Afghanistan, held the first meeting for the implementation of the trilateral Chabahar agreement signed in 2016.*
- *They agreed on the routes for trade and transit corridors between the three countries and, according to the official communique, finalised the protocol to “harmonise transit, roads, customs and consular matters”.*

Discuss how it has impacted Pakistan- Saudi relationship. E.g

- *Pakistan has similarly been pushed towards Saudi Arabia by the compulsions of financial circumstances.*
- *For Riyadh, this move precludes any Iranian presence in Gwadar, contrary to some of the plans talked about in Tehran and Islamabad etc.*



Discuss how these developments can affect regional peace and security. E.g

- *While Pakistan will continue to try not to take sides, a significant upgrading of its relations with Iran may become more difficult — saying “no” to Saudi Arabia may also become more difficult.*
- *While the situation remains fluid, the present trends may eventually result in the crystallisation of two axes, bringing Pakistan closer to Saudi Arabia and Iran closer to India and this new regional game.*
- *This evolution will foster the Arabisation (or Wahabisation) of Islam in Pakistan. It may also relaunch sectarian tensions in the region under the aegis of foreign countries.*

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

Background:-

- With India's presence in Chabahar recently upgraded and the way Saudi Arabia is increasing its presence in Pakistan the relationship between Pakistan and Iran is moving in opposite directions.

India Iran axis :-

- **Chabahar port :-**
 - It will boost India's access to Iran, the **key gateway to the International North-South Transport Corridor that has sea, rail and road routes between India, Russia, Iran, Europe and Central Asia.**
 - **Chabahar port will be beneficial to India in countering Chinese presence in the Arabian Sea** which China is trying to ensure by helping Pakistan develop the Gwadar port.
 - **Recently** India formally took over operations of the Chabahar port.
 - **Last** month, senior bureaucrats of all the three countries, India, Iran and Afghanistan, held the first meeting for the implementation of the trilateral Chabahar agreement signed in 2016.
 - They agreed on the routes for trade and transit corridors between the three countries and, according to the official communique, finalised the protocol to harmonise transit, roads, customs.
 - Agreement with Iran and Afghanistan over access to overland routes from Chabahar to Afghanistan.
- Iran has benefitted from waiver of sanctions with respect to oil trade with Iran.

Saudi-Pakistan axis:-

- The India-Saudi Arabia relationship may have made rapid strides in recent years, but Riyadh's ties with Pakistan are much older, deeper, and consequential.
 - Firstly, relations between the two countries are firmly grounded on their shared religious values.
 - Secondly, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan have a decades-long and rich history of military and intelligence cooperation, with Riyadh having relied on the Pakistani military on various occasions
- In the recent years **Pakistan has been pushed towards Saudi Arabia by the compulsions of financial circumstances.**
- As Saudi Arabia tries to implement its Vision 2030, it may partner with India to achieve its economic objectives. But that cannot impact its unique alliance relationship with Pakistan.
- **Financial:-**
 - In the past few months, the dependence of Pakistan vis-à-vis Saudi and UAE has significantly increased because of the aid both countries agreed to give to Islamabad and because of industrial, strategic investments
 - Pakistan has benefited enormously from Saudi Arabia through generous financial aid, the supply of oil on a deferred payment basis and aid during crises.
 - Of late, Saudi Arabia has once again come to Pakistan's rescue by promising assistance worth \$2 billion to stabilise a falling economy.
 - Though the trade balance is heavily skewed in favour of Saudi Arabia, the two countries are negotiating a bilateral treaty to help correct the imbalance to some extent.
- **Strategic:-**
 - Besides, there are around two million Pakistani expatriates in Saudi Arabia, and they send back remittances worth over \$5 billion every year.
 - There is an implicit understanding that on everything, in particular, on security and military issues, Pakistan will be there for Saudi Arabia'.
 - In March 2018, Pakistan approved the dispatch of 1,000 troops to Saudi Arabia as part of their extensive defence cooperation.



- **Nuclear threat:-**

- Saudi-Pakistani defence relationship also has a more important nuclear dimension — any nuclear deal with Iran will necessarily leave it with some nuclear capability.
- That very prospect would be a catalyst for what is seen as a burgeoning Saudi-Pakistan nuclear relationship. Many believe this could involve Saudi Arabia importing technology and equipment from Pakistan.

How development of these axis undermine regional peace and security :-

- **Afghanistan and Taliban:-**

- There will be active involvement of Iran and Saudi Arabia in Afghanistan as both the countries support different sections of Taliban.

- **Radicalisation:-**

- Growth of sectarianism and radicalisation in Pakistan can increase cross border terrorism and instability in Kashmir State.
- Can lead to **intensification of Sunni Shia conflict** in the region.

- **Balance in relations is difficult to maintain:-**

- Saudi Arabia sees Iranian involvement and growing salience in regional politics as a threat to its security. Saudis argue that Iran is at the root of numerous security problems now plaguing the Middle East.

- This evolution will foster the **Arabisation (or Wahabisation) of Islam in Pakistan.**

- **India's interests:-**

- India's historical commitment to nonalignment has brought it close to competing states such as Iran, Israel, and Saudi Arabia. Given that the rivalry among those three states could eventually lead to war **endangering India's interests in the Middle East**, where it sources most of its energy and where millions of Indian emigrants
- Issue of Kashmir can come to the forefront.

Despite issues there can be act of balancing the relations among the countries:-

- India and Saudi Arabia have broadened the scope of their relationship with relations no longer encompassing only energy but infrastructure development and defense & security as well. However, Pakistan has no reason to worry—while Riyadh-New Delhi ties are more transactional, being primarily driven by economics, Saudi Arabia's relationship with Islamabad is more strategic, based on shared values and geopolitical interests.
- Saudi Arabia is the fulcrum of India's new "Look Middle East" policy – economic/strategic outreach to a region with which India as over \$180 billion of trade, source of 60 per cent of India's energy supplies and home to 7 million Indians with massive
- India is mostly looking towards balancing the relations between both Saudi and Iran.

Q) India needs to reassess it's policy choices in Afghanistan. Analyze. (250 words)

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

Why this question

The decision of United States to withdraw from Afghanistan and change the terms of negotiations, and India's absence from the high table of nations who are involved in discussions over the future of peace process in Afghanistan has huge strategic ramifications for India and the article looks at these points in detail.

Key demand of the question

The question expects us to bring out the status quo with respect to the developments in Afghanistan, examine impact of USA's withdrawal from Afghanistan, discuss India's strategy for Afghanistan and give a way forward.

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 – Explain about the recent US announcement to withdraw troops from Afghanistan and regarding negotiations with Taliban.

Body

Explain what the issue is about

Discuss the ramification of withdrawing from Afghanistan and negotiations with Taliban.

Examine the impact on India – developments in Afghanistan closely related to strategic security of India, India has had a stake in the peace process of Afghanistan etc

Highlight that the fact that India's presence on the negotiation table with Afghanistan is feeble has issues for India

Examine what should India's strategy be

Conclusion – Give your view and discuss way forward.

India's policy towards peaceful Afghanistan :-

- India's development assistance has been the source of its considerable influence and goodwill among Afghan citizens.
- Major projects, such as the Salma Dam and Parliament building in Kabul, that began in 2008-09, have now been completed.
- **Last year India and Afghanistan agreed to initiate an ambitious and forward-looking 'New Development Partnership'**, according to which India agreed to take up 116 high-impact community development projects to be implemented in 31 provinces of Afghanistan, including in the fields of education, health, agriculture, irrigation, drinking water, renewable energy, flood control, micro-hydropower, sports infrastructure and administrative infrastructure.
- India has been giving a lot of non-lethal military assistance. In 2016 four MI 25 attack helicopters were given to Afghanistan.
- India is the biggest regional donor to Afghanistan and fifth largest donor globally with over \$3 billion in assistance.
- India has built over 200 public and private schools, sponsors scholarships and hosts Afghan students.
- India has shied away from involving itself in full scale war in Afghanistan.

India needs to reassess the policy due to the complexity in the situation of Afghanistan due to the following reasons:-

- **Continuous attacks :-**
 - Recently there has been a spike in violence, with the Taliban carrying out a set of coordinated assaults around Afghanistan, rejecting an offer of a three-month ceasefire by President of Afghanistan and laying siege to Ghazni city.
 - The violence this year has also put 2018 on course to be the deadliest year for Afghan civilians, with an average of nine people killed every day, according to UN data.
- **Pakistan factor :-**
 - The major challenge is the cooperation of regional players. Peace in Afghanistan and the wider region can only be achieved through a multilateral mechanism involving the US as well as major regional players, including Pakistan, Russia, Iran, China, India and Saudi Arabia.
 - Despite six months of concerted American punitive actions on Islamabad, the Pakistan establishment is not shutting down support for Taliban fighters.
- The role of Pakistan is going to expand significantly, with the US depending upon it to implement the interim deal. This will be a diplomatic victory for Pakistan.
- **US role:-**
 - A period of adjustment has become essential following US President unilateral announcement that US is pulling its troops out of the conflict-ridden country.
 - Another development is the "framework" deal between the US and Afghan Taliban after six days of discussions at Doha.
 - The Afghan war has already become the longest war in US history. With the passage of time, the conflict has not only become more intense – it has also become more complicated



- **Iran factor :-**
 - US administration's collision course with Iran is another hurdle to realising its South Asia policy. Iran is a neighbour to both Afghanistan and Pakistan, and any action against Tehran will have consequences on the region.
 - US is also against Iran which is important to give access to the sea to landlocked Afghanistan through Chabahar port- which is in India's interests etc.
- **Islamic state:-**
 - After losing occupied territories in and around Mosul, IS is now slowly enlarging its presence in neighbouring countries, particularly Afghanistan. It is now targeting mainly the Shias and the Hazara minority, joining forces with the Taliban thereby changing the dynamics of the war in Afghanistan.
- **Russia:-**
 - Russia proposed an international conference on Afghanistan with the participation of all neighbours of Afghanistan including Iran, Pakistan, and India, but the US did not attend citing possible growing Russian military association with the Taliban.
- **Control of Afghan government:-**
 - The Afghan government controls barely half the country, with one-sixth under Taliban control and the rest contested.
 - Most significant is the ongoing depletion in the Afghan security forces because of casualties, desertions and a growing reluctance to join
 - Afghanistan launched the Kabul Process for Peace and Security Cooperation and also made an unconditional dialogue offer to the Taliban. The Taliban rejected his overture, declaring that they were ready to engage in direct talks only with the Americans.

Indian interests would be hurt :-

- More fighting and political instability in Afghanistan would be damaging, as much for Indian interests as for regional stability.
- Delhi is concerned about the vital role that all the powers are giving to Pakistan. Iran and Russia, two of India's closest allies during the Northern Alliance's battle against the Taliban regime in the 1990s, seem out of sync with Indian interests.
- An emboldened Taliban is sure to impinge on security scenario in India's troubled Kashmir Valley. The outfit seems positioned to emerge as the ideological bulwark of Kashmir's renewed insurgency.
- US criticism of India's Afghan policy and his plans to exit could cast serious doubt on the US's role as a strategic ally for India.

What should India do:-

- 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.

Q) India Saudi ties require the maintenance of a fine balancing act. Analyze. (250 words)

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

Why this question

The upcoming visit of Saudi crown prince to India has brought the focus on India's bilateral relations with Saudi Arabia and the tightrope of bilateral relations that has had to navigate in West Asia. The article examine India Saudi relationship and helps us in preparing for the same.

Key demand of the question



The question expects us to discuss the contours of the bilateral relationship between India and Saudi Arabia and expects us to bring out the fine balancing act that India has had to maintain in its relationship with west Asian countries. The question expects us to discuss the issues and provide a way forward.

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 – Highlight the upcoming visit of MBS to India and how this has brought focus on India Saudi relationship.

Body

Discuss the contours of the bilateral relationship

- *Modi's visit to Riyadh in 2016 gave a fillip to security and economic ties with Saudi Arabia. More recently, Modi met MBS on the sidelines of the G20 summit in Argentina, and the latter spoke of Saudi investment in India's national investment and infrastructure fund.*
- *India, for its part, has refrained from even a hint of disapproval of Saudi Arabia disastrous military intervention in Yemen or its misguided attempts to isolate Qatar*

Discuss the tight balancing act that India has had to navigate in West Asia in the context of its relationship with Saudi Arabia

- *India's own tightrope with Iran, and Pakistan's recent manoeuvrings with the Saudis create a tricky set of issues for New Delhi to navigate with the Saudis.*

Discuss the close ties of Saudi Arabia with Pakistan and how Saudi stand on terrorism in India has been an irritant

- *Highlight the complexities associated with India Iran Saudi triangle*

Discuss the humanitarian crises and how India has had to maintain a stoic silence

Conclusion – Give your view on India Saudi bilateral relations and discuss way forward.

Introduction:

Saudi crown prince, Mohammad bin Salman's India visit comes at an important juncture in the geopolitics of southwest Asia as well as in the bilateral relationship between the two countries. India's own tightrope with Iran, UAE and Israel and Pakistan's recent manoeuvrings with the Saudis create a tricky set of issues for New Delhi to navigate with the Saudis.

Body:

India and Saudi Arabia enjoy cordial and friendly relations reflecting the centuries old economic and socio-cultural ties.

The contours of India – Saudi Arab relations:

The relations between India and Saudi Arabia revolves around two important areas –

Trade and investment

- The **Delhi Declaration** signed during King Abdullah's visit in 2006 called for a closer economic engagement and energy partnership.
- The two sides re-affirmed their deep commitment to strengthen the 'strategic partnership' envisaged in the 'Riyadh Declaration' in 2010.
- Saudi Arabia is India's fourth largest trade partner after China, US and UAE. It is a major source of India's energy security requirement that counts for almost 1/5th of India's crude oil requirement.
- Saudi Arabia is India's top supplier of crude oil.
- India's major exports to Saudi Arabia include basmati rice, textiles and garments and machinery, while it imports organic and inorganic chemicals, metal scrap, leather, gold and oil from Saudi Arabia.
- The volume of bilateral trade between both countries during 2016-17 recorded at \$25.079 billion.



- Saudi Aramco is set to partner with the Abu Dhabi National Oil Company in developing an integrated refinery and petrochemicals complex at Ratnagiri in Maharashtra, a \$44 billion joint venture with Indian public sector involvement.
- Saudi Arabia has investment in India's national investment and infrastructure fund.

Defence and security cooperation

- Saudi Arabia is home to more than 3 million Indian people.
- India and Saudi Arabia share common grounds when it comes to maritime security and defence cooperation fight against extremism and terrorism.
- The Indian government approach to Saudi Arabia has broadly been continuous with the pattern of bilateral relations since 2006.
- The Indian high level visits to Riyadh in 2016 gave a fillip to security and economic ties with Saudi Arabia. These were followed up by talks on the sidelines of the G20 summit in Argentina.
- A comprehensive security dialogue between the national security advisers of the two nations has been announced, besides a joint working group on terrorism.
- India, for its part, has refrained from even a hint of disapproval of Saudi Arabia disastrous military intervention in Yemen or its misguided attempts to isolate Qatar.

The tight balancing act that India has had to navigate in West Asia in the context of its relationship with Saudi Arabia are

- **Saudi's' close ties with Pakistan:**
 - India maintains neutrality because Saudi Arabia has close military and strategic ties with Pakistan which is often a source of continuing strain for India.
 - Saudi perceives Pakistan as a major asset it can use to check the spread of Iranian influence.
 - Saudi needs Pakistan to contain Tehran's ability to influence events in Afghanistan after the American withdrawal through its Tajik and Hazara allies.
- **India-Iran-Saudi triangle:**
 - Iran is Saudi Arabia's chief adversary in West Asia. Salman has made containment of Iran his top foreign policy priority.
 - The Saudi-Iranian rivalry is being played out across the region, from Syria to Yemen.
 - India has deepened its engagement with Iran, be it on oil trade or the Chahbahar port.
 - Iran's Chahbahar port represents a strategic investment for India which hopes to use the facility to connect with the International North-South Transit Corridor (INSTC) that extends to Central Asia and to bypass Pakistan en route to Afghanistan.
 - With the Trump administration reimposing sanctions on Iran, the Saudis will want to prevail upon countries like India to minimise their dependence on oil imports from Iran, and so squeeze the latter.
 - Saudi Arabia is interested in curbing Iranian influence in Afghanistan.
- **Complex Relationships:**
 - India's tilt towards Israel, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE is not a risk-free move. Iran continues to exercise much influence in West Asia and can help shape events in Afghanistan by shoring up the Taliban against the U.S.
 - As tensions rise in West Asia, Israel, Saudi Arabia and the UAE have coalesced more closely against Iran under the U.S.-sponsored Middle East Security Alliance (MESA).
 - Concurrently, the recent escalation between Iran and Israel on the Syrian front suggests that tensions are unlikely to drop soon.
 - the sectarian-based conflicts and the proxy wars that constantly weaken the Middle East's security and stability make it extremely complex for India to stabilize its interests in the region
- **Humanitarian crises:**
 - India has been tight-lipped about the recent perpetrated murder of journalist Jamal Khashoggi by Saudi Crown prince.
 - India has also not taken sides on the Yemen war in which Saudi has been a major belligerent.

Way Forward:

- India should take advantage of any benefit that accrues from India's economic relations with Saudi Arabia but should not pin much hope on Riyadh in the political-strategic sphere.



- Vision 2030 of Saudi Arabia has created a roadmap for social and economic transformation and enabling the private sector is at the heart of it. India can reap this opportunity.
- Maintaining a close relationship with the Arab world without disrupting the relationship with Iran, and refraining from getting politically involved in any conflict in the region, could be seen as continuity in terms of India's engagement with the Middle East.

Q) India has a lot to gain from supporting the reform agenda of Mohammed Bin Salman. Critically analyze. (250 words)

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

Why this question

This article delves deep into the background of India's relationship with Saudi Arabia and the issues and enablers of the relationship. The article makes a case in favor of supporting MBS's reform agenda as he speaks about overturning the policies pursued since 1979. This question is important because of the importance of bilateral relationship, impending visit of MBS and the situation in Kashmir.

Key demand of the question

The question expects us to explain about the reform agenda of Mohammed Bin Salman, discuss the historical perspective and other issues and possibilities of the relationship and give our view on what would be a good strategy for India going forward.

Directive word

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

Structure of the answer

Introduction – Explain why the issue is in news – importance of bilateral relationship, impending visit of MBS and the situation in Kashmir.

Body

Explain about the reform agenda of MBS –

- According to him policies that Saudi Arabia pursued after 1979 are now a drag on a productive Saudi future. Prince Salman vowed to overcome the deviations of 1979 and return Saudi Arabia to "moderate Islam".
- House of Saud began to promote a more conservative Islam at home and support Sunni extremism abroad. This included support to the jihad in Afghanistan and the American and Pakistani war against the Soviet-backed regime in Kabul. Gen Zia-ul-Haq took advantage of the new regional dynamic push Pakistan towards Islamic conservatism.
- Highlight the other items of the agenda in brief such as ending corruption and the way in which the agenda is being put in place by MBS including the Khashoggi incident

Discuss the historical perspective of India Saudi relationship, the issues involved such as

- Stand of Saudi Arabia on Kashmir issue
- Oil diplomacy
- India as an attractive investment destination for Saudi Arabia
- The religion issue and the Pakistan Angle etc
- The agreements in pipeline
- Human rights issues



Conclusion – Based on your arguments made above, give a fair and balanced opinion and way ahead for India.

Introduction:

- Saudi crown prince, Mohammad bin Salman's India visit comes at an important juncture in the geopolitics of southwest Asia as well as in the bilateral relationship between the two countries. India and Saudi Arabia enjoy cordial and friendly relations reflecting the centuries old economic and socio-cultural ties.

Body:

The reform agenda of MBS

- Prince Salman's agenda for "**reversing 1979**", when tumultuous regional developments and the Saudi response to them began to alter the equation between religion and politics in the region, destabilise India's neighbourhood and change South Asia's inter-state relations for the worse. He has often proclaimed his commitment to reverse the hugely negative consequences of 1979.
- House of Saud began to promote a more conservative Islam at home and support Sunni extremism abroad. This included support to the jihad in Afghanistan and the American and Pakistani war against the Soviet-backed regime in Kabul. Gen Zia-ul- Haq took advantage of the new regional dynamic push Pakistan towards Islamic conservatism.
- According to him policies that Saudi Arabia pursued after 1979 are now a drag on a productive Saudi future. Prince Salman vowed to overcome the deviations of 1979 and return Saudi Arabia to "moderate Islam". Recently, he had even taken on the Salafi religious establishment and has projected himself as an ideological moderniser.
- In terms of **economics**, Saudi Arabia has started to feel that its days of high oil prices are fading and its water becomes increasingly expensive. He piloted several economic reforms to drive the kingdom towards a sustainable post oil era.
- In terms of **social values**, many sociologists feel that traditional laws have pushed the Saudi Arabia's younger generation isolated from the world. Notably, only this year, women were given the right to drive in Saudi.
- **Technologically**, Saudi Arabia is far behind the western countries and developing nations in Africa and Asia. Even the countries like Indonesia and Pakistan which have a huge Muslim population have leaped forward when it comes to technology. In order to close the gap, Saudi Arabia is modernising as most of the Government works and services are already online.

The historical perspective of India Saudi relationship:

The Subcontinent's historic relationship with the Gulf is deep and civilisational. In the colonial era, the British Raj in undivided India became both the provider of security and the facilitator of the region's economic globalisation.

- **The religion issue and the Pakistan Angle**
 - After Partition and Independence, Pakistan sought to mobilise political support from the Middle East in the name of shared religious identity.
 - Riyadh became the moving force behind the **Organisation of Islamic Cooperation** that was set up in 1969 to unite the region's conservative regimes as a counter to Soviet-leaning Arab nationalists.
- **Foreign Policy level**
 - At the political level, India's emphasis was on solidarity with Arab nationalism and against neo-colonialism and Western imperialism.
 - Given its preference for "secular republics" in the Middle East, an element of defensiveness inevitably crept up in India's relations with the religiously conservative monarchies, especially Saudi Arabia.
- **Kashmir issue:**
 - The OIC's hostile rhetoric on the Kashmir question (at the instigation of Pakistan) congealed the perception in Delhi that Saudi Arabia and the conservative monarchies were "pro-Pakistan"
- **Other:**
 - There were real problems that limited India's possibilities in Saudi Arabia. These included growing divergence over regional issues such as Afghanistan, India's embrace of the Soviet Union, the deep dependence of the Gulf kingdoms on the West, and Saudi support for radical Islam beyond its borders since the late 1970s.
- **Post Cold-war:**
 - India's ever growing oil imports and manpower exports — generated greater interest in the Gulf monarchies, including Saudi Arabia, for limiting the political differences with India and expanding bilateral economic partnerships.



- As the gap in national economic capabilities between India and Pakistan began to widen since the 1990s in favour of Delhi, Saudi Arabia was happy to de-hyphenate its engagement in South Asia.

The current relations between India and Saudi Arabia revolves around two important areas –

Trade and investment

- The **Delhi Declaration** signed during King Abdullah's visit in 2006 called for a closer economic engagement and energy partnership and re-affirmed their deep commitment to strengthen the 'strategic partnership' envisaged in the '**Riyadh Declaration**' in 2010.
- Saudi Arabia is India's fourth largest trade partner after China, US and UAE. It is a major source of India's energy security requirement that counts for almost 1/5th of India's crude oil requirement.
- The volume of bilateral trade between both countries during 2016-17 recorded at \$25.079 billion.
- Saudi Arabia has investment in India's national investment and infrastructure fund.

Defence and security cooperation

- Saudi Arabia is home to more than 3 million Indian people.
- India and Saudi Arabia share common grounds when it comes to maritime security and defence cooperation fight against extremism and terrorism.
- The Indian high level visits to Riyadh in 2016 gave a fillip to security and economic ties with Saudi Arabia. These were followed up by talks on the sidelines of the G20 summit in Argentina.
- A comprehensive security dialogue between the national security advisers of the two nations has been announced, besides a joint working group on terrorism.

Benefits for India:

- India should take advantage of any benefit that accrues from India's economic relations with Saudi Arabia but should not pin much hope on Riyadh in the political-strategic sphere.
- Vision 2030 of Saudi Arabia has created a roadmap for social and economic transformation and enabling the private sector is at the heart of it. India can reap this opportunity.
- Maintaining a close relationship with the Arab world without disrupting the relationship with Iran, and refraining from getting politically involved in any conflict in the region, could be seen as continuity in terms of India's engagement with the Middle East.
- MBS's view of a moderate Islam open to the world and all religions will help revert the 1979 consequences which India is still facing.

However, there are **concerns about MBS's grand views**:

- Many observers, especially in the West, are sceptical of the potential for real change in Saudi Arabia.
- The humanitarian concerns where India has been tight-lipped about the recent perpetrated murder of journalist Jamal Khashoggi by Saudi Crown prince.
- India has also not taken sides on the Yemen war in which Saudi has been a major belligerent.
- As tensions rise in West Asia, Israel, Saudi Arabia and the UAE have coalesced more closely against Iran under the U.S.-sponsored Middle East Security Alliance (MESA).
- The sectarian-based conflicts and the proxy wars that constantly weaken the Middle East's security and stability make it extremely complex for India to stabilize its interests in the region.
- Saudi perceives Pakistan as a major asset it can use to check the spread of Iranian influence.

Conclusion:

- Delhi's visible and unstinted solidarity with Prince Salman's reform agenda at home and his effort to promote religious and political moderation in the region is a welcome step which India must support to promote her national interests.

Q) What choices does India have in dealing with Pakistan to curb the constant export of terror ? Discuss. (250 words)

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

[Financialexpress](https://www.financialexpress.com)

Why this question

The recent Pulwama attack and the role of Pakistan based terror groups in the attack has once again brought the focus on India Pakistan relations and the options before India with respect to Pakistan. The article discusses these issues and examines the potential policy solutions for India.



Key demand of the question

The question expects us to discuss the status of India Pakistan relationship and highlight the potential steps that India could take in the aftermath of Pulwama attack. It expects us to analyze the pros and cons of the decision and discuss way forward.

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 – Explain about the recent Pulwama attack and Pakistan's role in it.

Body

Discuss in brief the history of India Pakistan relations and the threats to Indian security emanating from Pakistan and its long standing role in Kashmir and exporting terror to India.

Discuss the options available before India

- Highlight one of the steps that India has already taken by removing the MFN status for Pakistan and enhancing customs duty on goods from Pakistan to 200%, effectively ending bilateral trade. Highlight the impact of the step.
- Highlight Pakistan's predicament with balance of payment crisis and how India can strike it hard if India succeeds in convincing major shareholders of the IMF — the US, European countries, Japan and China — and international organisations like the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) of the Pakistan state's involvement in these attacks, an IMF bailout of Pakistan, which looked like a distinct possibility will be in jeopardy
- Debate whether it would make sense for India to wage a war with limited military objective etc

Analyze the pros and cons of these steps

Conclusion – give your fair and balanced view on how India should respond and discuss the way forward.

Introduction:

- The Pakistan-based terrorist group Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) claimed responsibility for the Pulwama terror attack which killed more than 40 CRPF jawans in India. Pakistan has been a breeding ground for terrorists who have carried out many terror attacks in India like parliament attack, Mumbai attacks, Pathankot, Uri, Gurdaspur etc. Repeated requests and warnings from Global fraternity to Pakistan about taking measures to curb terror-breeding has fallen on deaf ears.

Body:

The history of India Pakistan relations

- India has, since the 1947 partition, Pakistan as an enemy. It has fought four wars with Pakistan. It began within months of independence in Kashmir. In 1965, Shastri surprised everyone by asking the Army to cross the border at Punjab and reverse the balance of the conflict which Pakistan thought would be in Kashmir.
- India was able to assist the Mukti Bahini to dismember Pakistan and help create Bangladesh. In Kargil, despite the surprise, India won. There is little doubt India could win again in a limited war, but the risk now is that both countries have nuclear weapons.

The options available before India to deal with Pakistan

- **War:** The war has to be of limited duration and one in which India sets itself a precise goal and can unilaterally end the war.
- The most direct and legitimate action would be to cross the Line of Control and occupy Azad Kashmir. This makes it clear that it is being used to transport terrorists and India wants to shut this gap.

Pros:

- It would make more sense to inflict damage by a **strictly limited action** which would be like a hit and run.



- As in 1965, it could be away from Kashmir.
- This would involve action across the Punjab or Rajasthan border. Like the surgical strike, India could hit the enemy camps and then withdraw.
- Conducting surgical strikes similar to the Uri and North East retaliation.

Cons:

- At some loss of life, the Indian Army could occupy Azad Kashmir. However, India has no experience of a prolonged war.
- Retaining it would be difficult. It could be made into an international dispute, going possibly to the UN.
- If so, India could hold it forever given how long it takes UN to solve any such dispute. This would be ending the 1948 war.
- Pakistan, along with China, is bound to open another front in the northern border regions of India with China.
- The Pakistan nuclear command has higher hold of Army which can be disastrous.

Naval War:

- India and Pakistan have only fought land wars.
- Given the recent upgrading of the Indian Navy, it would be possible to deploy the Navy to attack Karachi, a sort of reversal of 26/11.

Pros:

- This could be a limited engagement, striking a symbolic blow and demonstrating India's naval superiority.

Cons:

- Indian critical infrastructure like Ports, Nuclear plants can be at risk.
- Affects livelihood of many people dependent on IOR.
- It also affects the peace prevalent in the Indian ocean region.
- Huge costs involved.

• **Economic option:**

- Severing trade ties by cancelling MFN status, increasing import barriers and raising tariffs on goods from Pakistan.

Pros:

- This would weaken the Pakistani Economy which is already in tatters.

Cons:

- Affects people-to-people contacts, especially those in the border areas.

• **Diplomatic option:**

- Isolation of Pakistan at all global and regional forums by support of global fraternity.
- India can strike it hard if she succeeds in convincing major shareholders of the IMF — the US, European countries, Japan and China
- Urging the UNSC, FATF to take action against terror financing of Pakistan.

Pros:

- International pressure can force Pakistani Government to take action against the home-grown terror groups.
- an IMF bailout of Pakistan, which looked like a distinct possibility will be in jeopardy

Cons:

- China, all-weather friend of Pakistan, has veto power as a UNSC permanent member which it is using against India.

Conclusion:

The best way out for India would be provide the evidences for Pakistan State support to non-state actors. This should be backed by lobbying the International fraternity to urge Pakistan to take actions. Track-2 and Track-3 diplomacy can further help in better people to people contact and increase bonhomie and reduced terrorism.

Q) Withdrawing MFN status of Pakistan by India will have little intended impact. Analyze. (250 words)

[The hindu](https://www.insightsias.com/the-hindu)

Why this question



The recent attack on security forces in Kashmir highlights the instability in the region and the role of external threats. In retaliation India has decided to withdraw the MFN status of Pakistan. It is therefore important to discuss the effectiveness of such a measure in terms of the desired effect.

Directive word

Analyze-here we 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.

Key demand of the question.

The question wants us to dig deep into the issue of India's withdrawal of MFN status of Pakistan and bring out as to why it will only have a little desired impact on the trade relations between the two countries.

Structure of the answer

Introduction– write a few introductory lines about the decision of India to withdraw MFN status of Pakistan and mention about the Pulwama attack.

Body-

Discuss why withdrawal of MFN status will have limited impact. E.g

- *It does not strictly fall under the 'beggar-thy-policy', often used in international trade through which one country tries to resolve its economic problems by means that worsen the economic problems of its neighbours or trade partners.*
- *Trade now takes place using three channels: the official route; the illegal (informal) route, through smuggling along porous India-Pakistan land borders and also Afghanistan, which may not be accounted for in the national income; and lastly, through mainly Dubai and Singapore, which have free ports and accommodate legal agents of traders from India and Pakistan.*
- *Traders carry out informal trade between Pakistan and India through the exchange of goods at the border as well as through the personal baggage scheme' through "green channel" facilities at international airports or railway stations.*
- *'Informal trade has also taken place through Afghanistan where goods are exported officially from India and later smuggled into Pakistan.*
- *Also, under the South Asia Free Trade Area Agreement (SAFTA) 2004, Pakistan's share in external trade is less than 10%, while India's share is more than 70%.*
- *Such steps may propel Pakistan to look for new markets beyond SAFTA, corroborated by the recent meeting held with Saudi Arabia and growing prospects of trade through a third country, mainly via Dubai etc.*

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

Introduction:

- The Pulwama terrorist attack is one of the worst in recent years. The death toll in recent reports indicated over 40 CRPF jawans had been killed. India withdrew **the Most Favoured Nation (MFN) status to Pakistan and increased the import duty to 200%** as a punitive measure. This was further followed by a decision to make use of the waters of **Eastern rivers (Ravi, Beas and Sutlej) completely** in compliance with Indus Water treaty.

Body:

MFN Status:

- **Article 1 of General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT)**, 1994, requires every WTO member country to accord MFN status (or preferential trade terms with respect to tariffs and trade barriers) to all other member countries.
- Accordingly, India accorded MFN status to all WTO member countries, including Pakistan, from the date of entry into force of the so called Marrakesh Agreement, establishing the WTO.
- Even though it suggests special treatment, in the WTO it actually means **non-discrimination — that is treating virtually everyone equally.**



- In effect, then, every WTO member is supposed to be “most favoured” for all other WTO members.
- A country which provides MFN status to another country has to provide concessions, privileges, and immunity in trade agreements.
- India accorded Pakistan MFN status in 1996 while the latter has not responded.

Impact of withdrawal of MFN status:

- It is intended to isolate Pakistan diplomatically and squeeze the country’s industry.
- In terms of trade, such a step can lead to the stoppage of input materials such as chemicals and cotton from India, which will push up costs of production for the relevant Pakistani industries.

However, critics argue that **withdrawal of MFN status will have limited impact.**

- While the withdrawal of the MFN status by India is negative in sentiment terms for the bilateral relations, the impact on trade is unlikely to be substantial given that volumes of merchandise trade are low.
- India’s trade numbers with Pakistan are minuscule. Trade between the neighbours jumped nearly three-and-a-half times between 2000-01 and 2005-06 (from \$251 million to \$869 million per annum), but progress was slower in the decade that followed, with volumes rising a little over three times.
- Pakistan’s exports to India have consistently been about a fourth of what it imports from India, the MFN concessions notwithstanding.
- Pakistan is yet to transition fully to MFN status for India and it maintains a Negative List of 1,209 products that are not allowed to be imported from India.
- In addition, Pakistan permits only 138 products to be imported from India through Wagah/Attari border land route.
- Despite these restrictions, India continues to maintain a substantial trade surplus.
- Pakistan is an important export destination for India but not vice-a-versa. This is despite the fact that Pakistan imposes a large number of Non-Tariff Measures (143) on Indian exports, the major ones being export related measures (25.2%); technical barriers to trade (24.5%); and sanitary and phytosanitary measures (22.4%).
- It would also give a **push to the illegal trade between the two countries**, which takes place through border gaps and via third countries.
- Traders carry out informal trade between Pakistan and India through the exchange of goods at the border as well as through the **personal baggage scheme’ through “green channel” facilities at international airports or railway stations.**
- It could also give a handle to extremist elements in Pakistan to scale up the rhetoric against India.
- It does not strictly fall under the **‘beggar-thy-policy’**, often used in international trade through which one country tries to resolve its economic problems by means that worsen the economic problems of its neighbours or trade partners.
- Under the South Asia Free Trade Area Agreement (SAFTA) 2004, Pakistan’s share in external trade is less than 10%, while India’s share is more than 70%. Such steps may propel Pakistan to look for new markets beyond SAFTA like Dubai and Saudi Arab.

Conclusion:

- The moot point therefore is the sensitivity of the impact of the MFN status on Pakistan in terms of its trade with India. It can only be a pressure tactic and do little unless **stringent actions are taken to stop informal trade** that has been going on between the two countries for long.

Topic– Effect of policies and politics of developed and developing countries on India’s interests, Indian diaspora

Q) USA’s withdrawal from the intermediate range nuclear forces treaty brings back the worrisome echo of the cold war. Examine (250 words)

The hindu

Why this question

The article discusses the recent decision of USA to withdraw from the INF treaty and examines it’s implications. It is important to understand the contents of the treaty and what it means for arms control and strategic relations around the world.



Key demand of the question

The question expects us to explain the treaty and discuss the decision of USA to withdraw from the treaty. We need to examine the implications of such a decision and discuss what it portends for the future of arms control.

Directive word

Examine – When you are asked to examine, you have to probe deeper into the topic, get into details, and find out the causes or implications if any .

Structure of the answer

Introduction – discuss why this issue is in news.

Body

Explain about the INF Treaty – Signed in 1987 by Ronald Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachev, it barred both countries from deploying land-launched cruise missiles in the 500- to 5,500-km range.

Discuss the rationale behind USA's decision to withdraw from the treaty

Discuss the strategic impact it is likely to have – bring out the point of view of European nations, what it means for the strategic security in Indo Pacific.

Conclusion – Give your view and discuss what should India's view be on this development.

Background:-

- Recently US administration declared a suspension of U.S. obligations under the INF Treaty and formally announced its intention to withdraw from the treaty in six months. Shortly thereafter, Russia also announced that Russia will be officially suspending its treaty obligations as well.

Intermediate range nuclear forces treaty :-

- After several years of negotiations, the United States and the Soviet Union agreed to sign the Intermediate Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty in 1987.
- Under the Treaty, the two parties agreed that a whole important class of nuclear weapons would be removed from Europe, and only tactical nuclear weapons (TNW) or short-range missiles – mostly deployed on the territory of Germany – would remain.
- The INF Treaty for years served to mitigate fears of both parties in relation to possibility of military escalation, operational miscalculation, and helping to shift the logic of MAD [mutually assured destruction] to the higher “more sensitive” political level.
- It barred both countries from deploying land-launched cruise missiles in the 500- to 5,500-km range.

Rationale behind USA's decision to withdraw from the treaty:-

- Russia:-**
 - What concerns Washington most is a Russian cruise missile designated SSC-8 associated with the Russian designation 9M729.
 - The SSC-8 has a range of 2,000 km, and is likely capable of being armed with conventional or nuclear warheads. Russia has also developed a shorter range version – the 9M728 (SSC-7) cruise missile that is a part of the Russian Iskander-M tactical missile system.
 - In July 2014, the U.S. State Department found Russia to be in violation of the agreement by producing and testing an illegal ground-launched cruise missile.
- China:-**
 - China is not bound by the INF Treaty and has deployed intermediate-range missiles in significant numbers .
 - For many years China not limited by the INF Treaty has made striking military progress and developed and deployed a numerous arsenal of high-end cruise missiles, both land attack and anti-ship (ASBM), capable to carry conventional or nuclear warheads.
 - As analysts have noted intermediate-range systems make up approximately 95 percent of the People's Liberation Army missile force.
- Observers have argued that the INF Treaty is anachronistically Eurocentric, failing to take into account the U.S.-Chinese military balance, which is becoming increasingly central to Washington's strategic calculations.

**Implications:-**

- **US:-**
 - Intermediate-range missile systems and cruise missiles would considerably enrich U.S. capabilities .
 - Returning to intermediate-range systems would equip American forces with the capability to strike targets that are highly difficult to penetrate for conventional weapons at present.
- **China:-**
 - Nevertheless, any additional U.S. conventional military superiority gives China considerable incentive to increase reliance on an escalatory and possibly deterrence strategy.
 - There will be vectoral enhancement of political relations with states all over the world, particularly those that are economically and politically affiliated to China, with possible shows of economic might and deeper engagement on the field of security.
- **Europe:-**
 - Washington and Moscow walking away from the INF Treaty will legitimate deployment of intermediate missiles in Europe – at the Russian and the European side.
 - Within the range of 500 – 2,000 km, Poland could stand for a missile launchpad and the first rank target, at the same time.
- **Russia:-**
 - Washington's decision will ignite wide policy polemics in the Alliance, protracted debate on relations with Russia, the prospect of stronger nuclear deterrence, and if miscalculated, even war.
 - In harmony with the Limited Test Ban Treaty of the 1960s, SALT [Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty] and START [Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty], the INF has had a codifying effect on the two superpowers' strategic relations. The INF Treaty bound Russia, but also offered a hedge against worst-case scenarios, like a redeployment of U.S. missiles in Europe.
 - The number of operational 9M729 missiles has been quite limited, but released from its official obligations under the treaty, Moscow could deploy more units rapidly.
 - US's move is also likely to undermine the 2010 New START treaty governing U.S. and Russian long-range nuclear systems. The INF Treaty's demise will undercut New START by reopening questions on the relationship between intermediate and strategic systems that have been resolved for 30 years by the elimination of ground-based, intermediate-range missiles
- Washington's leaving the ABM [Anti-Ballistic Missile] and INF Treaty creates a formal agreement to **vertical proliferation of WMD and gives higher status to the concept of power in international politics.**
- Withdrawal is likely to be **controversial with U.S. allies in NATO**, further splitting the alliance at a difficult time for transatlantic relations. Many Western European NATO states favour retaining the INF, in conjunction with previous U.S. policy designed to push Moscow back into compliance. This raises concerns that divisions within NATO may worsen when the United States officially withdraws from the INF.