



# INSIGHTSIAS

SIMPLIFYING IAS EXAM PREPARATION

## SECURE SYNOPSIS

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IAS SELF STUDY GUIDE

**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.

# Table of Contents

## General Studies Paper - I \_\_\_\_\_ 4

### **Topic: Indian culture will cover the salient aspects of Art Forms, Literature and Architecture from ancient to modern times.** \_\_\_\_\_ 4

- Q1) It is argued that democracy is integral to the Indian nation and that there are many examples of its rich democratic traditions in the ancient Indian republican polities before Independence. Do you agree? Critically comment. (250 Words) 4
- Q2) Discuss the origin of Tantrism and nature of its influence of both Hinduism and Buddhism. (250 Words) 5
- Q3) Buddhism remains a key anchor for Asian identity and a phenomenon of unprecedented Pan-Asian importance, especially in terms of spiritual connectivity among nations with enduring impact. With special reference to India, discuss the statement. (250 Words) 6
- Q4) Why is Jainism known a transtheistic religion? Examine its transtheistic nature is reflected in its art and architecture. (250 Words) 7
- Q5) The inclusive, humane nature of Bhakti and Sufi traditions not only threaten communalism, they can also unite humanity in India and Pakistan. Discuss critically. (250 Words) 8
- Q6) How did the medieval Sufi and Bhakti movement get represented in the contemporary north and south Indian vernacular literature? Examine. (250 Words) 9

### **Topic: Modern Indian history from about the middle of the eighteenth century until the present- significant events, personalities, issues** \_\_\_\_\_ 11

- Q1) If Mahatma Gandhi had survived till 1950s, how different would have been the Constitution of India? Examine. (250 Words) 11
- Q2) Compare and contrast Rash Behari Bose's contribution to India's freedom struggle with that of Subhash Chandra Bose's. (250 Words) 12
- Q3) What might have happened to India if Subhash Chandra Bose had survived the plane crash and lived? Critically comment. (250 Words) 12

### **Topic: The Freedom Struggle – its various stages and important contributors /contributions from different parts of the country.** \_\_\_\_\_ 13

- Q1) The assessment that the RIN mutiny as a momentous event and as having hastened the end of British rule in India is an exaggeration. Comment. (250 Words) 13
- Q2) Chandrashekhar Azad's own martyrdom robbed him of the opportunity of working for the establishment of the socialistic society he had dreamed about with comrades. Comment on Azad's ideology and his contributions to India's struggle for Independence. (250 Words) 14

### **Topic: Post-independence consolidation and reorganization within the country.** \_\_\_\_\_ 15

- Q1) Post – independence, how different would have been India's course towards modernity and democracy without Jawahar Lal Nehru? Critically analyse. (250 Words) 15
- Q2) "Nehru and Patel were colleagues not rivals, co-workers not adversaries. Working individually, and together, they united India and gave it a democratic template." Analyse. (250 Words) 15

### **Topic: History of the world will include events from 18th century** \_\_\_\_\_ 16

- Q1) Along with the nazis, common citizens were equally complicit in allowing holocaust to happen. Analyse critically. (250 Words) 16

### **Topic: Salient features of Indian society, diversity of India** \_\_\_\_\_ 17

- Q1) India has slipped to 42<sup>nd</sup> place from 32<sup>nd</sup> on the Economist Intelligence Unit's annual Global Democracy Index and remains classified among "flawed democracies". Examine on what basis this index is created and why has India slipped in its ranking. (150 Words) 17
- Q2) The philosophical and religious currents of thought in Brahmanism and Buddhism gave rise in India to two forms of society strongly opposed. Analyse. (250 Words) 18

### **Topic: Role of women; Social Empowerment;** \_\_\_\_\_ 19

- Q1) Critically comment why and how female genital mutilation (FGM) practices such as *khatna* or *khafz* that are practised in India and elsewhere must be prevented. Also comment on implications of practises such as FGM on human rights and gender equality. (250 Words) 19

Q2) Do you agree that taking cue from Shaktism, the idea of <i>shakti</i> can be used to empower Indian women to resist patriarchy? Critically comment. (250 Words)	21
Q3) Do you consider training dalit and tribal youth to become priests a reformative and a revolutionary step? Justify your answer. Also examine how does different sections of society view this step that's being initiated at a conservative religious institution such as the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD). (250 Words)	22
<b>Topic: Population and associated issues,</b>	<b>22</b>
Q1) Should India open its doors to inflow of refugees from other countries? In the light of existing refugee policy, critically comment. (250 Words)	22
<b>Topic: Salient features of world's physical geography.</b>	<b>23</b>
Q1) Examine the impact of climate change on indigenous populations around the world. (250 Words)	23
<b>Topic: Changes in critical geographical features (including waterbodies and ice-caps) and in flora and fauna and the effects of such changes</b>	<b>24</b>
Q1) Geoengineering interventions to combat global warming are more dangerous than the climate change itself. Discuss. (250 Words)	24
Q2) Examine how the change in demography along the River Cauvery basin has affected cropping pattern, water use pattern and also land use pattern in the basin. (250 Words)	26
<b>Topic: Urbanization – problems and remedies</b>	<b>26</b>
Q1) Efficient management of urban solid waste has positive implications for global warming. Examine. (250 Words)	26
Q2) Urbanization advances economic development, but it also poses major challenges, from managing congestion and pollution to ensuring that growth is inclusive and equitable. Does India have tools to overcome to overcome these challenges? Discuss. (250 Words)	27
Q3) Sustainable urban development needs to be led by the central government working closely with state and local governments. In this regard, it is said that India needs to develop its own national urban policy (NUP) as an instrument for applying a coherent set of interventions in relation to the future growth of cities, in partnership with all stakeholders. Discuss what features should NUP include. (250 Words)	28
Q4) Rent control policies are counterproductive – they are politically unviable and potentially too disruptive economically. Examine. (250 Words)	29
Q5) Urban floods are not only an ecological disturbance produced due to anthropogenic factors, they are also an occurrence within a sociopolitical space. Analyse. (250 Words)	30
<b>Topic: Factors responsible for the location of primary, secondary, and tertiary sector industries in various parts of the world (including India)</b>	<b>31</b>
Q1) India's industrialization and urbanization did grow together in the early 1990s. However, in the past decade, share of manufacturing has declined in urban areas and has increased in rural areas. Analyse the causes and consequences of this trend. (250 Words)	31

## General Studies Paper - I

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

Q1) It is argued that democracy is integral to the Indian nation and that there are many examples of its rich democratic traditions in the ancient Indian republican polities before Independence. Do you agree? Critically comment. (250 Words)

The Indian Express

### Background:-

- Today India is the largest democratic nation in terms of population. But history and ancient literature suggest that democracy and republic ideas were implemented ever since the 'Age of Vedas'. The present Westminster style of democracy in India was inherited from the British but the principle of democracy in Vedas existed as a core value in Ancient India

### Democratic traditions in ancient Indian republican polities:-

- Ancient India was the progenitor of democracy, as one can trace its evolution from the Vedas and subsequently hear of its presence through numerous accounts. **This spirit of republicanism continued to thrive at the grassroots at village level**, which were left undisturbed to their own devices in the new political order.
- Likewise, **the economic guilds organised on a republican pattern** continued to function and to thrive even during the powerful Mauryan Empire.
- Even where there was monarchy, it was a limited or constitutional monarchy, **so that the pattern of monarchy remained fundamentally democratic**. It was based on **decentralisation and local autonomy**. The people formed the following appropriate associations and groups to exercise their rights in self-government in an ascending order: **kula (clan), jati (caste), sreni (guild), puga or pura (village community) and janapada (state)**.
- Each group had its own rules and regulations and was working for democracy at its respective stratum of self-government**. Some of the janapadas in ancient India were republican in form and some had monarchical organisation. But **each of them often had an assembly (samiti) the precursor of the modern parliament** which was attended by the high and the low together with a view to taking decisions about the affairs of the state.
- In the Mahabharata, there is a reference to **Ganas (republics) being governed by their councils of leaders called Gana-Mukhyas**. **All these Ganas (republics) had an extremely democratic constitution**. Each had its own assembly (parishad).
- It is said that in ancient India, **the people led a democratic way of living although political democracy did not exist in its full form**.

### Modern sense of democracy dint exist then:-

- The modern sense of democracy was not applicable then. The terms universal adult suffrage, equality before law, election etc were still not applicable largely..
- Tribal assembly (santhagara) was dominated by oligarchs and that non-Kshatriyas, slaves and wage earners had no place in it.
- Further, the strict control exercised by the "republican" states through executive edicts and legislation exposes their undemocratic character.
- According to a Buddhist Jataka story there was a ban among the Shakyas on the marriage of girls even with a king of supposedly low status.
- The gana of Vaishali formulated a rule which related to the marriage of girls in different wards of the city. Similarly, inter-dining among the people of unequal birth was also prohibited

### Conclusion:-

- That era is influenced by war and conquest so the democracy which people considered then and now are largely different. With education and rationale democracy in India has been the result and gift of the freedom fighters to the people of India where everyone is equal.

**Q2) Discuss the origin of Tantrism and nature of its influence of both Hinduism and Buddhism. (250 Words)**

Oxford

**Background:-**

- Tantrism is the search for spiritual power and ultimate release by means of the repetition of sacred syllables and phrases (mantras), symbolic drawings (*mandalas*), and other secret rites elaborated in the texts known as Tantras ("Looms").

**Origin of Tantrism:-**

- It is believed that tantrism originated in the early centuries CE and gradually developed into an actual pantheon by the end of the Gupta period.
- The spread of Buddhism to East Asia and Southeast Asia gave rise to the introduction and evolution of tantra in these regions of the world as well.

**The salient features of Tantrism are namely the**

- Spirit of Heterodoxy
- The Spirit of Revolt:-
  - It professed equality of all encouraged free social interaction among all castes and unrestricted access to ritual worship for all, in blatant opposition to the existing Brahmanic traditions.
- Ritualism
- Centrality of the Body:
  - The human body is credited to be the earliest medium through which truth can be realised. Body and bodily faculties are employed in the practice of sadhana.
- The Ultimate Reality as Bi-polar
- Realisation as the union of polarities:-
  - Liberation from the bondage is the chief goal of Tantrism.
- The Pursuit of Siddhis:-
- Predominance of Female Deities
- Deities of Terrifying Nature
- Emphasis on Guru and Diksha:
  - Tantrism proves to be a dangerous path for those who are initiated and unaccompanied by a competent Guru. No sadhaka should attempt it by him.

**Nature of influence on both Hinduism and Buddhism :-**

- Tantra has other connotations as well, both in the Hindu and Buddhist traditions. It may apply to any of the scriptures, which usually deal with the worship of Goddess Shakti, the Sacred Feminine in the Hindu pantheon.
- **Hinduism:-**
  - According to Hindu tantrism, the entire universe is considered to be the divine stage **where Shiva and Shakti carry on the drama of life**. Tantra deals with ritual and spiritual practices to attain the grace of that Shakti, with the aim at **achieving liberation from darkness of ignorance, thus also attaining immortality**.
  - Today, **Tantra basically exists in the Shakta, Shaiva, Vaishnava, Shaurya and Ganapatya traditions**. Though each one of these cults has their own texts and treatises, there is no clear line of demarcation between all of them and they all include the basic tenets of Tantrism.
  - Extolled as a short-cut to self-realization and spiritual enlightenment by some, left-hand tantric rites are often rejected as dangerous by most orthodox Hindus. **The popular perception of tantra among Hindus espoused in Indian journalism, equates it with black magic.**
  - Tantra exists for spiritual seekers in the age of Kaliyuga, when Vedic practices no longer apply to the current state of morality and Tantra is the most direct means to realization
  - **In traditional pockets of Tantric practice in India**, such as in Assam near the venerated Hindu temple of Kali, Kammakha, in parts of West Bengal, in Siddhanta temples of South India, and in Kashmiri Shiva temples up north, Tantra has retained its true form.
- **Buddhism:-**
  - **Tantric Buddhism, also known as Vajrayana Buddhism**, is an ancient and a highly complicated system of Buddhist philosophy.
  - What sets Buddhist Tantrism apart from all the other sects are the rituals, which use the Upaya (or skilful) **aspect to attain Godhead, rather than mere meditation**.

- Tibet too has a very strong Buddhist Tantric background which continues, albeit many have been transplanted to monasteries in India, **and claims to be a right-hand path**, in contrast to the more varied Hindu counterparts (that include both left and right-hand practices)

#### **Conclusion:-**

- Tantric Hindu and Buddhist traditions influenced a number of other religious traditions, both within South Asia as well as in other areas of the world. Because tantric traditions first emerged in South Asia, their impact there is naturally the most significant. The South Asian traditions that were influenced by the tantric traditions to some degree include Jainism, Islam, and Sikhism

Q3) Buddhism remains a key anchor for Asian identity and a phenomenon of unprecedented Pan-Asian importance, especially in terms of spiritual connectivity among nations with enduring impact. With special reference to India, discuss the statement. (250 Words)

#### IDSA

#### **Background:-**

- Buddhism is one of the most intriguing philosophical products that originated in India some 2600 years back and has remained a powerful integrated philosophical whole, encompassing all facets of both spiritual and material culture that have guided humanity for centuries.

#### **Buddhism remains a key anchor for Asian identity and of pan Asian importance:-**

- For all these centuries, Buddhism remained as the **solid foundation for societal and cultural transformation in Asia.**
- **Buddhism and trade had become synonymous as traders assisted monks** who played a vital role in connecting their journey to distant Asian regions with the spread of the philosophy they practiced.
- By providing the foundation for the adoption of culture, thoughts, idioms and common spiritual beliefs and practices among people in India, China, Japan, Korea and in other parts of Asia **Buddhism became the single most important factor for infusing "Asia" with a cultural coherence.**
- **Buddhism integrated myriad societies and regions, effectively interweaving them into a common culture of ethical values** especially among the social and political elites in Asia.
- **Buddhist culture is the root from which several Asian nations draw their national identities and political and social heritages.** In many countries, Buddhism is embedded into their "nationalistic" thinking and actions such as in Sri Lanka. Certainly, **Buddhism is an intensifying factor for Asian emotional bonding and connectivity**
- At the core of Buddhism lies the idea of exploring the potential of an individual for realizing perfection towards the goal of attaining enlightenment. **This philosophical virtue contributed to the foundation of democratic culture in many Asian societies.**
- The core ethics of Buddhism, **which stress on the nature of interdependence and interconnection**, drew **Asian societies towards adaptation and cooperation, and these still drive them towards accepting a cooperative culture.**
- The diversity of Asian value systems today reflects how the culture of **inclusiveness and tolerance has protected Asian cohesion** at various turns of history.
- **The Buddhist emphasis on the need for consensus, practiced in the monastic order of Sangha also impacted Asian societies.**
- Buddhism allowed people **to positively react to modernity and change.** A majority of Asian societies and nations, including Japan, India and China, experienced **modernity without completely emulating Western value systems**
- Asian history is **full of Buddhist-Muslim friendly interactions and cooperation.** These were not without advantage to Asian connectivity. **Many Asian societies have internalized Buddhist principles without having to adopt a Buddhist identity.**

#### **Indian context:-**

- Scholars from across Asia came to study in renowned Indian universities such as Nalanda and Takshashila and took home with them Buddhist teachings, texts and relics
- For India, Buddhism lies at the core of its identity as a cradle of wisdom and provided the country with a **unique image of being an embracer and enlightener rather than being a conqueror** and threatening power.
- In fact, the intrinsic nature of Buddhist principles **provides India a global persona of benign international influence.**
- The essence of Buddhist influence lies in **co-optive power, allowing nations to pursue interests without being explicitly adversarial.** India's domestic performance (democracy and pluralism) and external pursuit (independent and non-aligned foreign policy) have their underpinning in the Buddhist **doctrine of Madhyamika.**
- The recent strategic embrace of India by major world powers including in **nuclear cooperation** is driven because of India's irrefutable historical personality record and its unique appeal.



- Buddhism has already gained prominence in **India's diplomacy for fostering deeper engagement with ASEAN countries as part of the 'Look East' and now "Act East" policy.** In fact, Buddhism is also fast becoming a brand symbol of rising India.
- **Numerous Buddhist sites in India**, directly linked to the spiritual destinies of millions in Asia, could form a part of Buddha-Industry,

#### **Conclusion:-**

- The Nalanda project could certainly open the prospects of Asian convergence. Buddhism is once again making a comeback and its growing popularity is linked to the peaceful nature of its philosophy and to its geographic spread. Buddhism could become a catalyst for building greater interaction within the Asian community.

Q4) Why is Jainism known a transtheistic religion? Examine its transtheistic nature is reflected in its art and architecture. (250 Words)

[Reference](#)

[Reference](#)

[Reference](#)

#### **Background :-**

- Jainism is a transtheistic religion prescribing non-violence toward all living beings

#### **Transtheism:-**

- It refers to a system of thought or religious philosophy which is neither theistic, nor atheistic, but is beyond them.

#### **Reasons why Jainism is known as a transtheistic religion :-**

- Jains do not believe in a God or gods in the way that many other religions do, but they do believe in divine (or at least perfect) beings who are worthy of devotion. **So a new word was needed: *transtheistic*, meaning inaccessible by arguments as to whether or not a God exists**
- It is theistic in the limited sense that the gods exist, but become irrelevant as they are transcended by moksha (that is, a system which is not non-theistic, but in which the gods are not the highest spiritual instance).
- **Athiestic nature:-**
  - The **Jain view of God enables Jainism to explain the evil and suffering that exists in the world without the intellectual difficulties faced by religions** that have an omnipotent, creator God at their heart. Jains use the existence of evil as a reason for denying the existence of an omnipotent, wholly good, Creator.
  - **Jain prayers tend to recall the great qualities of the tirthankaras** and remind the individual of various teachings.
  - Jains believe that the goodness or quality of a being's life are determined by **karma** and it has nothing to do with spiritual being
  - **Jains do not believe in any god who will respond to prayer or intervene in the world.** The beings that Jains worship have no interest in human beings. The beings that Jains worship are beyond human contact and they cannot intervene in the world.
  - **Jains do not believe that any form of god is necessary to keep the universe in existence.**
- **Jainism and God – the theistic side**
  - Some writers regard the **jinas** as 'gods' because the jinas are venerated by Jains in the way that other faiths worship gods or God. Jains venerate them because they have achieved perfection, and have become liberated from the cycle of birth and death.
  - The jinas are the ideal state of an individual soul's existence, and are worshipped as a perfect example for Jains to aspire to. **So the only 'gods' that exist for Jains are pure souls that are omniscient, perfectly happy and eternal.**

#### **How this transtheistic nature is reflected in its art and architecture :-**

- Jain architecture was almost an offshoot of Hindu and Buddhist styles but with some specific Jainism needs. In later years Jains started building temple-cities on hills based on the concept of mountains of immortality.
- The transtheistic nature in the art and architecture is visible as Jain iconography mostly has a sage in sitting or standing meditative posture without any clothes. **Popular themes and icons in Jain art include the Tirthankaras, yakshas and yakshinis and holy symbols such as the lotus and the swastika, which symbolized peace and well-being.**



- Jains mainly depict tirthankaras or other important people in a seated or standing meditative posture, sometimes on a very large scale. Yakshas and yakshinis, attendant spirits who guard the tirthankaras, are usually shown with them. Figures on various seals from the Indus Valley Civilisation bear similarity to Jain images, nude and in a meditative posture.
- **Rock cut:-**
  - Excellent Jain architecture and sculpture can also be seen in the rock-cut caves found in Mathura, Bundelkhand, Madhya Pradesh and Orissa. A number of rock-cut caves have been discovered in twin hills in Puri District of Orissa and in Ellora in Maharashtra.
  - Udayagiri and Khandagiri Caves: The caves bear inscriptions and sculptural friezes depicting Tirthankaras, elephants, women etc
- **Temple architecture:-**
  - The Dilwara Temple complex in Rajasthan consists of five ornately carved marble temples, each dedicated to a different Tirthankara
  - The Jain pilgrimage in Shatrunjay hills near Patilana, Gujarat is called "The city of Temples".
- **Ayagapata is a type of votive slab associated with worship in Jainism. These stone tablets bear a resemblance to the earlier Shilapatas** – stone tablets that were placed under trees to worship Yakshas. However, this was done by indigenous folk communities before Jainism originated suggesting that both have commonalities in rituals.
- **Most of the Jain paintings and illustrations depict historical events**, known as *Panch Kalyanaka*, from the life of the Tirthankaras. Rishabha, the first Tirthankara, is usually depicted in either the lotus position or *kayotsarga*, the standing position.

#### Conclusion:-

- Bahubali statue in Shravanabelgola in Karnataka was the earliest proponent of disarmament. His message is more relevant today, when nations are faced with the threat of war. The teachings of the 24 Tirthankaras after the life of Bahubali till the last Tirthankara Mahaveera shows that Jainism has given the message of peace and ahimsa.

Q5) The inclusive, humane nature of Bhakti and Sufi traditions not only threaten communalism, they can also unite humanity in India and Pakistan. Discuss critically. (250 Words)

The Hindu

DAWN

#### Background:-

- **In contemporary times, religion and religious identity is being used as cover for political agenda. Be it terrorist violence or sectarian nationalism in various parts of the world, religion is used to mask underlying politics. However there are some traditions like Sufism and Bhakti movement within the major religions that are focused more on the unity of humanity as a whole, overcoming sectarian divides.**

#### Ideology of these traditions:-

- They have strong elements of mysticism, giving no importance to rituals, aimed at an understanding of the divine by transcending anthropomorphic understandings.
- People of all religions, in many countries, frequent their shrines, and this again is similar to the Bhakti saints, who have a vast following among people of different religions.
- Bhakti and Sufi traditions gave respectability to many low castes, posing a challenge to the upper caste hegemony; this tradition had an inclusive approach towards Muslims as well.
- The Bhakti and Sufi traditions opposed the rituals, hegemony of the elite of society. They adopted the languages more popular with the masses. Also, they talked of one God.

#### How they threaten communalism:-

- One region's Bhakti movement has often tried to include the Bhakti movements of others under its own encompassing wings. **When Tulsidas wrote the Ramcharitmanas, he chose the "Muslim" premakhyan form to do so.**
- They **treated Hindus and Muslims alike**. Amir Khusrau said "Though the Hindu is not like me in religion, he believes in the same things that I do".
- **Sufis bridged the communal divide as is evidenced by the reverence the Subcontinent's non-Muslim population exhibited for Sufi saints.** Sufism around the world and in the Subcontinent had the depth to connect beyond caste, creed and gender
- The slogan of Bhaktism that 'Allah and God are same' **brought Hindus and Muslims closer. Path of brotherhood became clear.**

- **Bhakti tradition** preached the **principle of coexistence**. As a result of their teachings much of the bitterness between the Hindus and Muslims was removed. The Hindus began to worship Muslim saints and the Muslims began to show respect for the Hindu Gods .

#### How they unite humanity:-

- Sant Kabir and Guru Nanak had preached a non-sectarian religion based on universal love. The Sufis believed in the concept of Wahdat-ul-Wajud (Unity of Being) which was promoted by Ibn-i-Arabi . He opined that all beings are essentially one. Different religions were identical.
- They awakened a new sense of confidence and attempted to redefine social and religious values. Saints like Kabir and Nanak stressed upon the **reordering of society along egalitarian lines. Their call to social equality attracted many a downtrodden.**
- The importance of the Bhakti and Sufi saints lies in the new atmosphere created by them, which **continued to affect the social, religious and political life of India even in later centuries. Akbar's liberal ideas were a product of this atmosphere** in which he was born and brought up.
- A notable contribution of the Sufis was **their service to the poorer and downtrodden sections of society**. Nizamuddin Auliya was famous for distributing gifts amongst the needy irrespective of religion or caste.
- Sufi's culture and ideology **represents Islamic syncretic tradition that alone would resist the forces of Islamic fundamentalism and terrorism.**
- They **rebelled against all forms of religious formalism, orthodoxy, falsehood and hypocrisy and endeavoured to create a new world order** in which spiritual bliss was the only and the ultimate goal.
- At a time when struggle for political power was the prevailing madness, **the Sufi saints reminded men of their moral obligations. To a world torn by strife and conflict they tried to bring peace and harmony.**
- In the rural agricultural background of human life, **Sufism became a vehicle of spiritual and cultural upliftment of people.**
- The roots of Indian Feminism can be traced to women in Bhakti, who challenged Brahminical patriarchy through their songs, poems and ways of life.
  - At a time where most spaces were restricted to women, they embraced Bhakti to define their own truths to reform society, polity, relationships and religions.
  - They broke all societal rules and stereotypes, and lived their lives as they pleased.

#### Concerns:-

- **Nowhere in the subcontinent did Sufism play a dominant role in the formation of modern state structure.** The fact that hundreds and thousands of people visit shrines is not necessarily a reflection of Sufism's political power. Sufism currently **lacks the narrative which socio-economic modernity demands.**
- **Their capacity to generate tolerance has serious limits :-**
  - Increasing socio-political and socio-economic modernity has little space for Sufism
  - The lack of capacity of Sufi institutions to produce a counter narrative.
- It is non-conformist in its ability to experiment with method of praying but not in terms of reverence to God and his Prophet. **All Sufis were mindful of Sharia.**
- The **patronage of Sufi shrines by power centers** starting from the Mughals and leading up to the British **weakened the institution**
- There are **no centers of learning around shrines to ponder and educate**
- In the case of Bhakti tradition the disciples failed to rise above personal bias and created sects and sub-sects. **As a result the Indian society came to be divided into number of new cults based on orthodoxy.**
- Groups like ISIS, however, consider this a heretical practice and use it as a justification to target and kill practitioners of Sufi Islam.

#### Conclusion:-

- The essence of the Sufi and Bhakti tradition are reminders that the spiritual-moral part of religion has been undermined in current times. The inclusive, humane nature of these traditions needs to be upheld and the divisive-exclusionary versions of religions have to be ignored for humanity to progress.

Q6) How did the medieval Sufi and Bhakti movement get represented in the contemporary north and south Indian vernacular literature? Examine. (250 Words)

#### Reference

#### Background:-

- Early poetic compositions in almost all of the Indian vernaculars centered on religious and mystical themes. This was largely due to the casting influence of the medieval socio-religious reform movements.

- The Bhakti and Sufi movements had brought the whole of the Indian Subcontinent under their sway. **The Bhakti and Sufi saints lived and worked in the midst of the common people. They needed to reach out to them (common people) in order to spread their socio-religious and philosophical messages.** They, therefore, chose local vernaculars for their speech and writings for the maximum impact. Such spirited enterprises gave tremendous boost to the growth of vernacular literature of India.

#### **Rise of Vernacular Literature:-**

- The Bhakti reformers adopted the common language of the people and preached in it instead of preaching either in Sanskrit or in Persian. In this way a great impetus was given to the development of the vernaculars.
- **North Indian:-**
  - The Sufi and Bhakti saints played an important part in the **evolution of the Urdu language**. The Sufis realised that it was futile to preach Islam through Persian, which was not understood by the Indian masses. So, **these saints made use of large number of Hindavi words in their conversation with their disciples and common people.**
  - **Hindi**
    - The phase (1318-1643), namely the Bhaktikala, witnessed wholesome composition of Hindi verses on religious, moral and mystical themes on the lines of two dominant schools of Bhakti saints, viz., the Nirguna and Shaguna schools.
    - The Hindi literature during the Bhakti Kala had saint poets of both Nirguna and Shaguna schools and Sufi mystics. They composed their verses on religious, mystical and social themes. Kabir composed a number of songs and Verses (Sakhis), which are noted for their literary excellence.
    - Tulsidasa Ramacharita Manasa is an epitome of the medieval Hindu culture. Of the Krishna worshipping Shaguna group, Suradasa was the most prominent saint poet, whose Sura-Sagra is one of the masterpieces of medieval Hindi literature.
    - Vidyapati, Nandadasa, Hita Harivansa, Mirabai and Rasakhana etc., were some of the other prominent saint poets of this school, whose poetic compositions also made rich contributions to the contemporary Hindi literature.
    - The Sufi-mystics, on the other hand, under the influence of Persian style of poetry, wrote poetical romances based on common love tales of the Hindu and Muslim life.
      - Malik Muhammad Jayasi's Padmavat (1540), Nur Muhammad's Indravati etc., are invaluable compositions of this category of medieval Hindi literature
- **Assamese and Bengali:-**
  - Amongst the eastern group of languages. **Bengali was used by Chaitanya and by the poet Chandidas, who wrote extensively on the theme of the love of Radha and Krishna.** Ballads on events of contemporary interest composed by wandering ministers were equally popular.
  - The whole of Assam passed under the sway of the **strong Vaishnava movement during the fifteenth and sixteenth century A.D. Sankaradeva and Madhavadeva** were the key architects of the Assamese Vaishnava movement. They made rich contributions to the development of the Assamese literature. The Kirtana-Ghosha of Sankaradeva is known as the Bible of the Assamese Vaishnava literature.
- The development of Maithili, spoken in the region of modern Bihar, was also associated with Vaishnava and Bhakti literature.
- **Marathi**
  - Gnaneshwar who wrote "Gnaneshwari", a book on Marathi grammar
  - Jnanadeva's literary skills and philosophical depth are aptly reflected in his Bhavartha-Dipika, popularly known as Jnaneshvari, and the Amritanubhava.
  - The poetic compositions of other saints Eknath and Tukarama reached to common people in their own language and left deep imprint onto their thoughts and minds.
  - Tukaram is particularly known for his Abhanga or short lyrical poems, which made direct appeal to the people through the intensity of their lyrical quality.
  - Ramdas Samrath, the great saint preceptor of Shivaji, was another literary Stalwart of this age. His Dasabodha, reflected a combination of devotional and religious fervour and liberation and national reconstruction. The last great poet of this age was Vamana Pandita, who composed poetry in an ornate Sanskritized style
- **Gujarathi**
  - From the 16th century onwards, Gujarat began to be swept across by powerful currents of Vaishnava Bhakti movements.
- The major strain in the literature of this period is religious and mystical. Some of the major poets of this era were Narasimha Mehta and Bhalana. Narasimha Mehta, on account of the richness of his imagination and the variety of his creative activity, is considered as the father of Gujarati poetry. Bhalana and Akho also made rich contributions to this literature with their distinct styles of poetry

## ▪ South Indian literature:-

### ▪ Tamil

- In contrast, the poetry of the Bhakti movement some of the first being the Nalayira Divya Prabandham (4,000 songs) of the Azhwars (Vaishnavite) and the Twelve Thirumurais (comprising 18,426 songs) of the Saivite saints have as their main theme religion and god.
- Women such as Karaikkal Ammaiyar and Andal got public recognition, just as women poets were welcomed in the courts of kings in the Sangam Age.

### ▪ Kannada

- Veerashaivism greatly contributed. Ex: Basavanna and Akka Mahadevi wrote several Vachanas in Kannada language.
- The Vira-Saivas contributed the most for the development of Kannada literature. Showing a predominant preference for the prose medium, this sect had over two hundred writers.
- It included many women writers as well
- Chennabasava and Mahadevi yakka invented a new type of prose composition called Vacanas (Vachanas), noted for their simplicity and use of simple Kannada.
- The period witnessed some notable changes in Kannada literature. The champu form of compositions went out of use and Shatpadi and Tripadinew meters, representing verses with six and three lines, respectively came into vogue.
- The Vaishnava Movement cast another major influence on the development of the Kannada literature

### ▪ Telugu

- Vaishnavism and Shaivism were the major movements in Telugu literature from the 12th to 15th century
- Vira-Saivism began to exert influence on the religious life of Telugu from the twelfth century. The poets wrote either on the fundamental tenets of this sect or biographies of important Vira-Saiva leaders.
- Mallikajurna Pandit's Siva-Tattva-Saram is an important exposition of this faith. Similarly, Pallukari Somantha wrote important Saiva texts such as the Panditaradhyacharita and Dvipada Basava Purana.
- Veerashaiva religion, inspired by a similar movement from neighbouring Kannada language was popularised by the works of Palkuriki Somanatha
- Vaishnavism was at its zenith in two poets of the 15th century; Potana, the classical poet who translated Mahabagavata and Annamayya, the harbinger of musical literature, i.e. padakavita in Telugu.

*Topic: Modern Indian history from about the middle of the eighteenth century until the present-significant events, personalities, issues*

Q1) If Mahatma Gandhi had survived till 1950s, how different would have been the Constitution of India? Examine. (250 Words)

[Livemint](#)

### Background:-

- Gandhian Constitution for Aundh interested historians of what would have been the shape of the Indian constitution had Gandhi not been assassinated. In the formative years of 1950's for India whose development was still at a very nascent stage Gandhian constitution could have further propelled the socio economic concepts further in Indian constitution.

### Positives:-

- According to Gandhi, in a model state, power will not be concentrated in a few hands. **Centralized power has always created great problems for society.** So a more decentralized form of government would have been recommended in the original constitution itself rather than waiting till 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> constitutional amendment acts.
- Gandhi wanted a system of government that was built from the village panchayat upwards. In Gandhi's vision was that the prime minister of Aundh was a member of a village panchayat. **Power trickled up, and not down. So the menaces which India is facing today like corruption, criminalization of politics might not have happened**
- Gandhi's constitution for Aundh was his insistence that **only literate citizens vote**. This would have triggered compulsory education in India right from the start itself and there would have also been provisions for vocational education from then itself.
- **As** the Indian state might have become less a master and more a servant of the Indian people the true essence of democracy would have been upheld. Also the hierarchies in the society might have become less steep.
- As Gandhi would have focused **on austerity measures** for the leaders as well, the VIP culture and culture of power might have been so steep. Also the differences among different classes might have been less.

- As he was a champion of women rights, **strong provisions for women participation and women empowerment** would have been mentioned.
- Trustee ship model would have been a reality in India at the time of independence itself.
- **As a strong supporter of cooperatives, he would have ensured provisions in the constitution for a cooperatives in the original constitution itself.**
- **There would have been focus on secularism in the original constitution itself .**

One concern is why Gandhi did not support universal adult franchise. Despite contribution of other leaders for the constitution Gandhian role would have definitely made it even more inclusive and even more democratic.

Q2) Compare and contrast Rash Behari Bose's contribution to India's freedom struggle with that of Subhash Chandra Bose's. (250 Words)

[The Hindu](#)

#### **Background:-**

The contribution of both Rash Behari Bose and Subhash Chandra Bose to the Indian freedom struggle has been significant

#### **Similarities:-**

- Both believed the role of armed forces play in the political growth of a nation.
- Both advocated single minded focus on freedom struggle and denounced the dilution of the movement for national liberation through disgression towards social work.
- **Both leaders became active the most not from being in India but gaining support in East Asia especially Japan.**
- **Both believed in revolutionary way of attaining freedom. Rash Behari Bose** was even involved in an assassination attempt of the Viceroy of India, Lord Hardinge.

#### **Differences:-**

- The Indian, Rash Behari Bose, is even better known in Japan than his namesake and fellow nationalist, Subhash Chandra Bose.
- Bose was instrumental in persuading the Japanese authorities to stand by the Indian nationalists and ultimately to officially actively support the Indian independence struggle abroad. Bose convened a conference in Tokyo in 1942, which decided to establish the Indian Independence League.
- He selected the flag for the Azad Hind movement, **and handed over the flag to Subhash Chandra Bose.** But although he handed over the power, his organisational structure remained, and it was **on the organisational spadework of Rash Behari Bose that Subhash Chandra Bose later built the Indian National Army** (also called 'Azad Hind Fauj').
- His view of Gandhi was Gandhi is a person whom I respect but he is an Indian saint and 'a person of yesterday' whereas Subhash Chandra Bose is the 'person of today'. This was not the case for Subhash Chandra Bose as he believed in the Gandhian way initially .
- Rash Behari Bose did not belong to any political group.

Q3) What might have happened to India if Subhash Chandra Bose had survived the plane crash and lived? Critically comment. (250 Words)

[The Hindu](#)

#### **Background:-**

- Subhash Chandra Bose contribution to the Indian freedom struggle has been significant and believed in the **revolutionary way of attaining freedom. His sudden demise cost India a great visionary .**

#### **What might have happened ?**

- It is more than likely that Partition could have been avoided. The main reason is that Bose's popularity among the Muslim elites surpassed that of other leaders. The Indian National Army (INA), was composed of officers and men of the British Indian Army, which was 35-40% Muslim.
- Even assuming India was divided, **Bose as the nationalist par excellence but secular to the core** would have been able to outflank Hindu nationalists.
- Bose's secularism tinged with hypernationalism based on the INA's motto Ittehad, Itimad, Qurbani (Unity, Confidence, and Sacrifice) could have prevented Hindu chauvinism from gaining traction.



- Netaji would not have shared vision of a non-aligned foreign policy: **Netaji's India would have clearly been a member of the Soviet Bloc. He believed** in the modern world, independence and security of a nation cannot be assured unless it becomes militarily a strong nation. So border disputes might have found other solutions.
- He stood for communal harmony, which he demonstrated in the Indian National Army (INA), where there were Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Christians and others. Women had equal status in the INA and fought next to their fellow men.
- He made emphasis on **Panchayati Raj Institutions, radical land reforms, cheap credit to the peasant and likewise development of social forestry and cultivation**. This shows his determination of creating a modern and a socialist state based on economic regeneration to improve the lot of millions of down trodden masses.
- **Along with illiteracy, unemployment and poverty were to him the priority areas. So India might have**
- He stood for necessary attention on **pro people economy and planning**.
  - He wanted **large scale industrialization and scientific agriculture** aided by the state to serve the problem of poverty and unemployment.

#### **Conclusion:-**

- Despite Bose's absence India largely achieved his vision in terms of literacy, local governance, industrialisation and as a rising power in the world.

*Topic: The Freedom Struggle – its various stages and important contributors /contributions from different parts of the country.*

Q1) The assessment that the RIN mutiny as a momentous event and as having hastened the end of British rule in India is an exaggeration. Comment. (250 Words)

#### **The Indian Express**

#### **Background:-**

- The naval mutiny of 1946 was among the hardest blows the British received during their brutal 200 year occupation of India. The unexpected revolt by more than 25,000 ratings of the Royal Indian Navy (RIN) drove a stake of fear through British hearts and had a long lasting impact on future events in the freedom struggle.

#### **Importance of it :-**

- The naval mutiny began with a tiny spark. It was limited to a peaceful protest hunger strike against the atrocious living conditions and the rotten food being served daily to the Indian ratings. But when the British officers ignored the protests the fuse was lit.
- **The strike soon spread to other parts of India.** The ratings in Calcutta, Madras, Karachi and Vizag also went on strike shouting slogans against British.
- The Royal Indian Navy mutiny was arguably the **single most important event in convincing the British government that it could no longer hold on to India.**
- The most significant feature of this short uprising was the **massive outpouring of public support for the mutineers**
- The mutiny clearly portrayed an **example of unity among the Indians**, when it came to confronting the British, irrespective of whether one was a civilian or a defense personnel.

#### **Why it is overshadowed/criticised :-**

- It took place when already the process of transferring of power from British to India was underway so it is an exaggeration to say it hastened the transfer of power.
- Even though it started as a peaceful protest it took a violent path later.
- Upon its political isolation, the colonial state crushed the revolt by deploying British battalions, the Royal Navy and the Royal Air Force
- Mutineers floundered since the leadership of neither the Congress nor the Muslim League supported the strike.
  - When hundreds of ratings were imprisoned for months in abominable conditions at the Mulund camp, there would be no one to speak for them. But, their overall alignment with the national movement finally let the RIN mutiny down.
- The leaders realized that any mass uprising would inevitably carry the risk of not being amenable to centralized direction and control. Besides, **now that independence and power were in sight, they were eager not to encourage indiscipline in the armed forces**
- Hectic negotiations with Sardar Patel followed. He **assured them that the national leadership would look into their grievances and prevent any victimization. This led to fading of the mutiny slowly.**
- **RIN trials overshadowed mutiny**

### Conclusion:-

- For the first time the blood of men in the Services and in the streets flowed together in a common cause.

Q2) Chandrashekhra Azad's own martyrdom robbed him of the opportunity of working for the establishment of the socialistic society he had dreamed about with comrades. Comment on Azad's ideology and his contributions to India's struggle for Independence. (250 Words)

### The Wire

### Background:-

- Revolutionaries like Azad, Bhagat Singh etc began their struggle as a revolutionary nationalist fighting British imperialists. However their ideological evolution in the heat of struggle brought them to the conclusion that without a socialist revolution there can be no genuine independence for the masses.

### Azad's ideology:-

- Though Azad began his freedom movement along with Gandhiji, Gandhiji withdrawing Non-cooperative movement against British rule did not go well for him. **He believed in a strong constant aggressive attack on British administration.**
- Azad dreamt of an independent **India based on socialist principles** and was fearless in his approach.
- Chandra Shekhar Azad **refused to bow down to the British forces and remaining true to his promise that he will never surrender to the promise** he shot himself showing death was on his own terms.
- He believed in the total independence of India from British hands when still some of the leaders were demanding for dominion status
- He **believed in equality of people above caste and religious identity.**
- Azad's ideology was to fight for independence till the death. Even before his martyrdom, he was not scared by the mighty power of British army.
- However this attitude of Azad might have been the reason for him to be targeted by the British. He could not implement his ideology as he died.

### Contributions to India's struggle for independence:-

- He is considered as one of the greatest revolutionaries who dawned in Indian soil. He was one of the most important revolutionaries **who reorganised the Hindustan republic association under the new name of Hindustan socialist republican association.**
- At times when open civil disobedience programmes were not possible due to police repression of highest degree, these revolutionaries kept the hopes alive of eventual victory for millions of Indians.
- He played key role in kakori train robbery which was successful execution of train robbery to loot money from British treasury for funding their arm and ammunition mission and the shooting of Saunders in Lahore to avenge the killing of Lajpat Rai.
  - Aligned with their noble and selfless ideals of creating a just and equal India, these robberies were seen by the people in a similar light as Robin Hood not as acts of criminality, but of rebellion against injustice.
- He was an iconic figure that rose above his caste or religious identity. He was an Indian first and last.
- His idea was always twofold
  - To undermine the authority of the British police
  - To build an organization that could stand up to the colonial rule.
- His ability to evade capture and remain a "free" man till his death is very unique to him.
- **Relevance:-**
  - Socialism is still relevant today. his ideology of fighting for the country is especially necessary by the people when India is facing many issues everyday where it is still reeling under the caste and religious identities

### Conclusion:-

- Revolutionaries like Azad dreamt of liberating their country from the shackles of enslavement and did not shy away from making any sacrifice whatsoever on the altar of their motherland.



**Topic: Post-independence consolidation and reorganization within the country.**

Q1) Post – independence, how different would have been India's course towards modernity and democracy without Jawahar Lal Nehru? Critically analyse. (250 Words)

[The Wire](#)

**Background:-**

- The contribution by the Indian freedom fighters has been tremendous and It is very difficult to separate one or the other of the towering individuals who fought for India's freedom especially of Nehru's.

**India would have been different in the following way :-**

- The **Kashmir issue might not have been sent to the UN**
- India could have been militarily more stronger and border dispute with **China** would have been handled more assertively.
- Handling of the military itself:-
  - Nehru's pacifist leanings and idealism made him **not a very effective leader of the military**. He did pay the kind of attention that was needed for the military.

**However Nehru's role cannot be ignored due to many reasons :-**

- **Democracy:-**
  - He Prevented balkanisation of India thus helped in maintaining balanced federal structure
  - His political outlook and philosophy, primarily his supreme **faith in democracy, was reflected in the constitution itself** which did not have to mention the word "secularism" to make its point because **by making the individual citizen the focus of the constitution it bypassed the tangled issue of caste, community and religion.**
  - Militant communism was the major opposition in the country, at least till the mid-1950s. **By adopting a socialistic line (mixed economy), he helped encourage the split in the communist movement and outflanked their appeal.**
- **Modernity:-**
  - Nehru played a key role in passing four Hindu code bills which carried out the **most progressive and far-reaching reform of the community**
  - Nehru's personal imprint **is also visible in India's nuclear and space programmes.**
  - **He emphasized on planning leading to establishment of Planning commission**
  - **Emphasised on institutes for learning like IIT's**
  - **Non alignment movement was a ne ideology in international relations and put India at the centre.**

**Conclusion:-**

- Despite some concerns the role played by Nehru as the first prime minister is unprecedented. His vision for India are still relevant even in 21<sup>st</sup>

Q2) "Nehru and Patel were colleagues not rivals, co-workers not adversaries. Working individually, and together, they united India and gave it a democratic template." Analyse. (250 Words)

[The Indian Express](#)

**Background:-**

- Jawaharlal Nehru, India's first prime minister and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, its first deputy prime minister were two towering figures of India's anti-colonial freedom movement.

**Similarities and how they cooperated with each other:**

- In November 1946, Nehru joined the interim government and resigned from the party presidentship on the ground that the two roles of the leader of the government and the president of the party could not be combined. Even Patel supported this view.
- They said that the proceedings and the papers of the government were secret and could not be divulged to persons outside the government. In essence they argued for the autonomy of the parliamentary wing and even its supremacy over the party in so far as government affairs were concerned.
- They complemented each other in many ways as one was a great organizer and able administrator, the other commanded immense mass support and had a wide social and developmental perspective

- There was considerable mutual affection and respect for each other and each recognized the indispensability of the other.
- Gandhi's death also made a difference; the two realized that it had made their cooperation all the more necessary. Throughout Patel remained Nehru's loyal colleague, assuring him of complete support for his policies.
- **The integration of the princely states including Kashmir into the Indian union successfully shows the coordination between the two leaders.**
- **The democratic values enshrined in the constitution was supported both the leaders.**

#### However they had their differences:

- But their worldviews differed widely, **which reflected in their contrasting attempts to shape the trajectory of the freedom movement, the Indian constitution, issues related to integration of the reluctant princely states, and matters relating to combating communal violence.**
- After 1947, policy differences on several questions cropped up between them.
  - The two differed on the role and authority of the prime minister
  - The manner in which the riots of 1947 were to be handled and the relations with Pakistan.
  - Nehru opposed, though unsuccessfully, Patel's view that the right to property should be included among the Fundamental Rights in the constitution.
- **Differences in Economic Policy:**
  - Nehru envisioned a socialist India with the elimination of profit in society with social service and cooperation taking place of competition'
  - Nehru replicated the Soviet planning commission and its Five Year Plans while severely restricting the scope of private enterprise
  - Patel on the other hand believed that capitalism could be '*purged of its hideousness*'. For him, creation of wealth for ushering in societal prosperity was a desirable trait.
- **Differences in Foreign Policy**
  - Nehru and Patel's foreign policies too were fundamentally opposed.
  - **Patel questioned the legitimacy of India's policy in delaying recognition to the state of Israel** only to placate the sentiments of its Muslim citizens
  - He was also **perturbed by the approach of Nehru towards the Chinese** and was deeply anguished in India being unable to defend the right of the Tibetan people
  - As for an Indo-China military conflict, Nehru confidently predicted that such a situation was 'unlikely' in the '*foreseeable future*'
  - **Nehru rejected Patel's advice of modernizing the army and making adequate security provisions**
- **Differences on Communalism**
  - **Perhaps, the most irreconcilable differences between Nehru and Patel related to their approach towards countering communalism and the violence that came in its wake.**
- **Kashmir:-**
  - On Kashmir, Patel had **advised Nehru against going to the UN.**

#### Conclusion:-

- The admiration for each other can be summarised in one statement by Nehru where he stated "The **Sardar** has been a tower of strength; but for his affection and advice I would not have been able to run the State".

**Topic: History of the world will include events from 18th century**

Q1) Along with the nazis, common citizens were equally complicit in allowing holocaust to happen. Analyse critically. (250 Words)

[The Indian Express](#)

[BBC](#)

[The Guardian](#)

#### Background:-

- Around six million people were killed in the Holocaust, the Nazis systematic attempt to exterminate the Jewish people. Jews from across Germany and Nazi-occupied Europe were rounded up, and either transported to extermination camps where they were gassed, shot locally, or starved and abused in ghettos and labour camps until they died.

### **No, common public are not be blamed:-**

- The **Nazis did not come to power by direct election**. Instead Hitler enticed various conservative German parties to form a coalition with him, and slowly and gradually took over the government. So people did not elect him. So they are not to blame for his activities.
- **At no point did a majority of Germans support him or elect him**. The Reichstag, the Germans elected representatives **did** pass the Enabling Act, but every German cannot be blamed for how their representatives voted.
- The majority of Germans were not aware of the atrocities that Hitler caused.
- The social-psychological conditions, the objective and keenly felt pressures of the group, the fear of being held in contempt by one's comrades turned some common men into killing Jews.
- There were instances all over Europe where people risked their lives to protect Jews.

### **Yes, people need to be blamed to a certain extent:-**

- The evil of the Nazi ideology did not come out of nowhere. The Nazi ideology was willed by people and carried out by people.
- Hitler was not the only one advocating anti-Semitism to genocide extremes. He had immense support by the people as well.
- Thousands of people, who had lived side by side with their Jewish neighbours for generations, were quite willing to turn on them and become part of a programme of mass murder.
- Hitler's Anti-Semitism was not peculiarly German either. It had been part of countries towards committing Genocides all over the world like he was inspired first by the American genocide of the Amerindians.

### **Conclusion:-**

- **In many ways the Holocaust was the most modern genocide the world has ever seen carried out using all the bureaucratic institutional capacity of the modern state; aimed at eliminating Jews wherever they were caught, anywhere in the world.**
- Since World War Two, the international community has criminalized genocide and established the International Criminal Court.

### **Topic: Salient features of Indian society, diversity of India**

Q1) India has slipped to 42<sup>nd</sup> place from 32<sup>nd</sup> on the Economist Intelligence Unit's annual Global Democracy Index and remains classified among "flawed democracies". Examine on what basis this index is created and why has India slipped in its ranking. (150 Words)

#### **The Wire**

#### **Background:-**

- India world's largest democracy was ranked 42<sup>nd</sup> among 165 independent states on annual 2017 Global Democracy Index (GDI) released by UK-based company, Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU). India's rank has slipped from 32<sup>nd</sup> in 2016 GDI.

#### **On what basis this index is created ?**

- The Economist Intelligence Unit's Democracy Index is based on five categories:
  - Electoral process and pluralism
  - Civil liberties
  - The functioning of government
  - Political participation
  - Political culture.
- Based on their scores on 60 indicators within these categories, each country is then itself classified as one of four types of regime: full democracy; flawed democracy; hybrid regime; and authoritarian regime.

#### **Why India's rank slipped?**

- **Civil liberties:**
  - The strengthening of right-wing Hindu forces in an otherwise secular country led to a rise of vigilantism and violence against minority communities, particularly Muslims, as well as other dissenting voices.
  - In India, media is partially free .The death and murder of journalists
  - Rise of conservative religious ideologies.
  - Freedom of expression came under question due to intolerance grown against release of some movies, food habits etc
  - Targeting people as anti national when they don't accept the majoritarian perspective.

▪ **Functioning of government and Political culture:-**

- Violation of human rights for instance by AFSPA
- Some of the bills in the parliament were passed as the government is in majority
- Parliament sessions delayed
- High criminalisation of politics showing that muscle and money power still dominate the elections. Vote bank identity politics especially in rural areas.
- Dynastic succession in political parties
- Rise of communal incidents across the country

▪ **Media:-**

- Journalists are at risk from government, military and non-state actors and radical groups, and the threat of violence has a chilling effect on media coverage.
- India has also become a more dangerous place for journalists, especially the central state of Chhattisgarh and the northern state of Jammu and Kashmir.
- The authorities there have restricted freedom of the press, closed down several newspapers and heavily controlled mobile internet services.

▪ **Political participation:-**

- Political participation of women's still largely less.
- Even many people are not very enthusiastic in joining politics.

However reforms are being brought out for making the system transparent by moving to cash less economy, encouraging digitisation, electoral bonds to being transparency in political funding etc.

**Way forward :-**

- There is a need for the government to build trust among communities and punish the anti social elements very strictly.
- The state governments need to be accountable and not make statements which would further trigger violence like the support of some state governments for the ban of Padmaavat which triggered violence by Karni Sena.

Q2) The philosophical and religious currents of thought in Brahmanism and Buddhism gave rise in India to two forms of society strongly opposed. Analyse. (250 Words)

**Reference**

**Background:-**

- Buddhist society is a society with features essentially opposed to those of the brahmanic society, and because it proclaims the equality of all human beings and denies that birth and belonging to a social group grant rights and privileges.

**How the society is impacted:**

**Occupation:-**

- Brahmanism fixed for the members of each caste the occupations which they had to carry out and the qualities they had to possess and cultivate in themselves. It hindered also the social mobility and the evolution of ideas, especially those of scientific nature.
- In many texts Buddhism discards birth as the criterion for fixing the place of the individual in society, and asserts that the criterion must be knowledge and moral values.
- Because of Brahmanism people were restricted for the same job being passed down to their children based on caste like blacksmith son as a blacksmith. This was not the case in Buddhism.

**Birth :-**

- Only education can guarantee that the tyranny of birth be replaced by the just government as the Buddha aspired to of Knowledge and Moral values.
- In Brahmanism birth decided everything from caste, occupation and life of a person

**Rites and worship :-**

- Brahmanism was a ritualistic culture, where the regular performance of rites in all the stages and moments of life was an obligation imposed in all the members of society. And the brahmins were the persons in charge for the execution of the rites.
- Rites and worship do not play any significant role in ancient Indian Buddhism.

**Caste :-**

- Buddhism, owing to the importance it gave always and everywhere to ethical values, could not accept the caste institution, which divided men into closed groups, distributed rights and privileges, organized social hierarchy according only to birth.
- Buddha's conception of society and His rejection of the castes system is in absolute congruency with His attitude of universalistic inclusivism (not to leave anyone outside) and generosity.

- Brahmanism was a hierarchical society, a society of privileges and of discrimination, a society of group ethics where there was strong allegiance to caste.
  - **One own duty (svadharma)**
    - The distribution of the members of society into closed castes and the assignation to each of these castes of well fixed activities and virtues .Each caste has its own ethics.

#### **Violence:-**

- Buddhism propagated non violence
- But in Brahmanism to respect the purity of castes and to impose its norms sometimes people resorted to violence as well.

#### **Equality:-**

- The most important features of Buddhist society is the **absolute equality of all its members**. As for instance, the brahmans who converted to Buddhism, on entering the Buddhist Community, were not any more brahmans, and the privileges, which as such they possessed, disappeared.
- **For people of low castes to enter Buddhist Community was the recovery of their human dignity as they were treated equally which had been denied to them in Brahmanic society.**
- **In Brahmanism absolute equality is a myth as lower castes were discriminated based on ascriptive criteria .**
- Buddhism is one of the most magnificent and radical reactions in favour of the universal human rights of the individual against the oppressing tyranny of the pretended privileges of divine origin, of birth, and of class.
- Women equally treated with men is still constrained in a brahmanic society as the patriarchal mindset controls the women.

#### **Conclusion:-**

- Buddha's conception of society is also of an extraordinary actuality as so many of his teachings that with the lapse of centuries have not lost their wisdom and capacity to benefit people.
- Today in a great number of countries it is still birth that determines the destiny of persons. The social discrimination of dalits, fights over inter caste and inter religious marriages in India show that age old wisdom of Buddha is dominated by brahmanic ideals imposed in the society
- However with education there is a slow change taking place in the society .

#### **Topic: Role of women; Social Empowerment;**

Q1) Critically comment why and how female genital mutilation (FGM) practices such as *khatna* or *khafz* that are practised in India and elsewhere must be prevented. Also comment on implications of practises such as FGM on human rights and gender equality. (250 Words)

#### **The Hindu**

#### **Background :-**

- Two hundred million girls and women in the world are estimated to have undergone female genital mutilation (FGM), and another 15 million girls are at risk of experiencing it by 2020 in high prevalence countries.
- Despite decades of concerted efforts to eradicate or abandon the practice, and the increased need for clear guidance on the treatment and care of women who have undergone FGM, present efforts have not yet been able to effectively curb the number of women and girls subjected to this practice nor are they sufficient to respond to health needs of millions of women and girls living with FGM. So it is time world including India focuses on this issue.

#### **Why should India prevent FGM?**

- **Lack of awareness:-**
  - Women who are subjected to this consider it to be a harmless cultural and religious practice. These women insist that female circumcision and FGM are different things
- **Health issues:-**
  - New research in India suggests that much more damage is caused than a tiny excision. Besides excessive bleeding, infections and painful sex, psychological trauma, anxiety and fear are the less recognised side effects of FGM.
  - FGM may have various immediate and/or long-term health consequences, including severe pain, shock, infections and complications during childbirth (affecting both the mother and the child), long-term gynaecological problems such as fistula, psychological effects and death
  - FGM is widely performed with unsanitary and unsterile materials and used for multiple girls, which affects the health and wellbeing of the girl and women as well as there have possibility for the transmission of HIV/ ADIS.



- **International obligations:**
  - In 2015, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) recognized the close connection between FGM, gender inequality and development, urging global action to end FGM by 2030.
  - Even CEDAW and other international organisations are against FGM.
- While education is arguably the best solution for ensuring women and girls gain equal access to political and socio-economic power in society, **FGM makes this impossible because very often for the girls, post-mutilation, is end of schooling, early marriage, and denial of sexual and reproductive health and rights. This is a sure recipe for perpetuation of poverty, misery and inequality in society.**
- **Gender equality and human rights:-**
  - Female genital mutilation is akin to child sexual abuse. It occurs secretly, and is usually perpetrated by children's most trusted caregivers
  - It is mostly done to control women's sexuality and is in line with the patriarchal objective of subjugating women.
  - Harmful practices like FGM constitute a violation of women and girls human rights and are a form of discrimination based on sex, gender, age and other grounds.
  - FGM sustains gender norms and stereotypes that contravene human rights, and is harmful to the health and wellbeing of girls and women.
  - FGM is recognized as a violation of that best interest standard and a violation of children's rights.
  - FGM is expected to reduce the girl's sexual desire and prevent sexual experience before marriage, and to ensure faithfulness of the woman to her husband which is a manifestation of deep rooted gender inequality in the society.
  - Genital mutilation can be seen as reflective of women's inferiority in other spheres of life.
  - **The following rights are violated:-**
    - **Right to health**
    - **Rights of child**
    - **The right to sexual and physical integrity,**
    - **Right to be free from discrimination**
      - The practice of FGM is also a gender-based discrimination against women because it has been taken as a pre-requisite for marriage, to gain economic and social security
    - **Free from torture, cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment**
      - The UN Special Rapporteur on Violence against women has clearly stated that FGM amounts to torture.

#### **How FGM can be prevented?**

- Attempts to medicalise the procedure need to be shut down as female genital cutting **violates a fundamental code of medical ethics.**
- **International strategies:-**
  - **Data collection and alert:-**
    - The UK has just introduced a strategy to help identify girls at high risk of FGM: **a systematic, non-discriminatory collection of information about the women who have had FGM called the FGM Dataset.**
    - An alert is added to the medical files of the daughters of women who have had FGM, and their families are provided with education and support.
    - This system has led to the identification of the specialist health care needs of many women (and their daughters) who otherwise may not have spoken about their experiences with FGM. It has also meant that girls who may be in danger are better protected.
  - **India should make it mandatory by law for professionals and institutions working for and with children and women to report actual incidents or the risk of such incidents if they have reasonable grounds to believe that a harmful practice has occurred or may occur.**
  - **Education is always the key.** It is essential that women are informed about the link between their own health problems and FGM,
  - **Systematic identification of girls at risk, and implementation of child protection orders, could save girls from a lifetime of suffering.**
  - **Awareness generation:-**
    - People need to be made aware the harmful dangers of this practice.

#### **Conclusion:-**

- Therefore, efforts to address FGM are part of a long-term process aimed at ensuring greater government involvement in the protection of women's rights. The experience of nations around the world in addressing FGM reveals that no single approach can eliminate FGM Criminalizing the practice only will not change people's behaviour, unless governments undertake a multi-strategy approach to eliminating FGM.

Q2) Do you agree that taking cue from Shaktism, the idea of *shakti* can be used to empower Indian women to resist patriarchy? Critically comment. (250 Words)

#### Reference

#### Reference

- India has always honoured the spiritual role of women and the feminine principle. Goddess worship is one of the longest standing religious traditions in Hinduism. Yet in India there are instances of rape, murder of women taking place everyday and the patriarchal mindset has not subsided.

#### **Shaktism:-**

- It is a major tradition of Hinduism, wherein the metaphysical reality is considered feminine and the Devi(goddess) is supreme. It includes a variety of goddesses, all considered aspects of the same supreme goddess
- Shakti** refers not to the power of aggression that divides and causes conflict, but to the power of integration that unites and brings peace.
- Shakti** is the force of wisdom and enlightenment, not ignorance and inertia, a creative not a destructive energy.
- It gives refinement and sensitivity, not crudeness and intolerance.

#### **It Can be used to empower women:-**

- An awakening of Shakti can aid in developing a truly democratic society. Shakti works best with community as Sangha Shakti, encouraging like-minded individuals to work together for their mutual well-being.
- India needs to promote a new Shakti among its women, starting with young girls, empowering, enabling, educating and respecting them. This is a necessary initiative for members of all groups.
- Such education for girls should address the necessary fields of modern learning but must also honour feminine values, and the Shakti or spiritual power that women can manifest.
- In today's world with education economic empowerment is mostly happening giving the true essence of shakti.
- Shaktism is a type of women empowerment for women to adhere to the Sustainable development goals, gender equality etc. It sees both women and men as equal partners.
- In Shaktism women are the defenders of society and vanquishers of evil.
- Women can be encouraged to pursue challenging careers like police, army. With Shaktism women will be the leaders. And take decisions on their own so the women oppression will be rescued as women will be aware of their rights.
- It fights the patriarchal division of labour and ensures women as independent entity.

#### **But still concerns remain:-**

- Many people still consider due to shakti notion there is liberty given to women which has caused divorces, rise in nuclear families etc
- Despite push for equality of gender as the notion of *shaktism* even now the gender equality and female labour participation is less. The country ranked a lowly 108 out of 144 in the **Global Gender Gap** report released by the World Economic Forum (WEF)
- Social empowerment has still not occurred as India still faces instances of domestic violence incidents, maternal mortality rates, lack of reproductive rights and women are still considered to be only second to men is accepted by majority in the society.
- Society is ever changing and social values also change. So the Shakti notion that women are the defenders of the society thwarts social progress and encourages conservatism
- Hindu tradition also considers women the vessels of shakti. This identification with shakti acknowledges women as the vessels of both creative and destructive power.
  - Some feminists and scholars criticize this identification because they believe it has led society to label women either as saints or sinners, with little room in between.**
  - They argue that women, like benevolent goddesses, are expected to exhibit forgiveness, compassion, and tolerance of others' transgressions. If they conform to this role, patriarchal society accepts them; if they do not, and attempt to exhibit independence and assertiveness, they are considered destructive, disrupting community and family social structures

#### **Conclusion:-**

- Therefore, the social narrative of girls and women in a resurgent India has to change from that of Abala to Sabala and from Shanti to Shakti and from survivor to strong security-provider.
- So there is need for attitudinal change in the society as a whole which can only be done by the involvement of parents, teachers in imbining the notions that men and women are equal



Q3) Do you consider training dalit and tribal youth to become priests a reformative and a revolutionary step? Justify your answer. Also examine how does different sections of society view this step that's being initiated at a conservative religious institution such as the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD). (250 Words)

[The Hindu](#)

**Background:-**

- Dalits have been discriminated by the upper castes since many centuries. The recent move by Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD), which manages the country's richest religious centre, to **appoint Dalits, Adivasis and fishermen as priests in temples** it's building across Andhra Pradesh is a push for social inclusion.

**It is a revolutionary step due to the following reasons:-**

- Such a programme would **represent long-overdue inclusive, perhaps disruptive, social engineering that could bring marginalised communities, previously barred from entering temples for fear of "impurity", into the mainstream.**
- Elevating a few from among these oppressed communities to priesthood, even in small neighbourhood temples of the TTD in far-flung areas of Andhra Pradesh, **could serve as a reparation of sorts.**
- Any progressive movement in this sphere will leave **a deep and indelible mark on social life.**
- Leads to caste mobility impacting the confidence of the people who had been prone to low self esteem due to excessive submissiveness

**Some concerns are still unanswered:-**

- This would not change the basic structure of Hinduism and the so-called tradition of following agamasastras, or doctrine for temple rituals.
- This is unwittingly creating another social layer or a sanskritised class of purity where dalits are still wearing the cross thread and they are been made to follow Brahmin way of life. By retaining the presence of these threads only caste is
- The Devasthanams will not appoint the trained priests from the backward communities in the regular temples it operates. **Instead, the trainees will be accommodated as priests in temples it is constructing in various Dalit colonies, tribal areas and fishermen villages across the state.**
- The main objective of training SC, ST and BC priests and **appointing them in temples in their own villages is to prevent religious conversions and not to uplift them.**
- This reinforces the superiority of the Brahmin and further entrenches the lower castes in their religious, ritual, social lowness.

**How are others viewing it ?**

- The Supreme Court in 2015 **held that caste and birth should not determine induction of priests in temples.** Rather, domain knowledge, traditional codes of practice, and the Constitution's guarantee of equality before law should be applied.
- Brahmin priests intention to go on strike shows their reluctance to accept a person from the scheduled caste as a priest in a temple.

**Conclusion:-**

- It is time India creates temples of the 21st century and rediscover rituals with a social eye. These must be temples where rituals of all caste groups find place in everyday practice in such a way that there is no one ritualistic system that dominates

***Topic: Population and associated issues,***

Q1) Should India open its doors to inflow of refugees from other countries? In the light of existing refugee policy, critically comment. (250 Words)

[The Hindu](#)

**Background:-**

- India with its history, culture, traditions, is today an example of generosity in the way it has opened its borders to all people who have come looking for safety and sanctuary.
- There are Tibetans, Afghans, Myanmarese in India and it has maintained an open door policy for all. India has a generous approach in relationship to all people and a proof of that is the granting of long term visas and work permits to refugees.

- But with the Rohingya issue the refugee issue has come to the forefront again

#### **Yes, it should open its doors for refugees:-**

- India should adhere to the responsibility as a major power in the region and also as the largest democracy in the world on humanitarian grounds .India has been historically known to be benevolent to refugees.
- Even being open to refugees is important to the India's economic investment especially in the case of Rohingyas peace and stability in the Rakhine state is important because continued violence in Rakhine state is affecting India's Kaladan Multi-modal Transit Transport project.
- Despite India not signing the convention, the UNHCR has generally praised India as a host country.
- The culture of tolerance enshrined in Indian cultural texts is imbibed in the minds of Indians
- India is a secular country and the democratic foundations ensure the protection of refugees.
- India will be put on the world map and make it respected as a global and responsible power if it is benevolent to refugees.

#### **No:-**

- Indian experience with migrants earlier is making it cautious about open to refugees further.
  - Northeast is already reeling under a steady deluge of illegal infiltrators from Bangladesh, including Buddhist Chakmas turfed out from their homes in the Chittagong Hill Tracts.
- India is over populated already and further accommodating ill only trigger socio-economic tensions and also it is burden on exchequer.
- There are also issues of terrorism ,communalism ,ethnic violence .
  - Genuine fears that destitute Rohingya youth would be easy prey to Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence and international jihadist outfits such as al-Qaeda among others.
- India has not signed UNHCR convention so there is no obligation to accept refugees.
- Foreigners act 1946 does not recognise refugees as a special category needing humanitarian protection.

#### **Way forward:-**

- India needs to have a clear cut refugee policy .Also the source of the problem need to be further explored so that violence and ethnic cleansing are effectively dealt with.
- However, since the refugees have no home to return to, at least at the moment in the case of Rohingyas, India can reconsider the idea of deporting them.

### ***Topic: Salient features of world's physical geography.***

**Q1)** Examine the impact of climate change on indigenous populations around the world. (250 Words)

#### **Down to Earth**

#### **Background:-**

- Indigenous peoples are among the first to face the direct consequences of climate change, owing to their dependence upon, and close relationship with the environment and its resources.

#### **Impact:-**

- Climate change exacerbates the difficulties already faced by vulnerable indigenous communities, including political and economic marginalization, loss of land and resources, human rights violations, discrimination and unemployment.
- **Examples include:**
- **In the high altitude regions of the Himalayas**, glacial melts affecting hundreds of millions of rural dwellers who depend on the seasonal flow of water is resulting in more water in the short term, but less in the long run as glaciers and snow cover shrink.
- **In the Amazon, the effects of climate change include deforestation and forest fragmentation**, and consequently, more carbon released into the atmosphere exacerbating and creating further changes.
  - Droughts in 2005 resulted in fires in the western Amazon region. This is likely to occur again as rainforest is replaced by savannas, thus having a huge affect on the livelihoods of the indigenous peoples in the region.
- **Indigenous peoples in the Arctic region depend on hunting** for polar bears, walrus, seals, fishing and gathering, not only for food to support the local economy, but also as the basis for their cultural and social identity.
  - Some of the concerns facing indigenous peoples there include the **change in species and availability of traditional food sources, perceived reduction in weather predictions and the safety of travelling in changing ice and weather conditions, posing serious challenges to human health and food security.**

- In Finland, Norway and Sweden, **rain and mild weather during the winter season often prevents reindeer from accessing lichen, which is a vital food source.** This has caused massive loss of reindeer, which are vital to the culture.
- Rising temperatures, dune expansion, increased wind speeds, and loss of vegetation are negatively impacting traditional cattle and goat farming **practices of indigenous peoples in Africa's Kalahari Basin**, who must now live around government-drilled bores in order to access water and depend on government support for their survival and bringing different cultures together leading to ethnic clashes.
- Indigenous peoples may be more vulnerable to irregular migration such as trafficking and smuggling, owing to sudden displacement by a climactic event, limited legal migration options and limited opportunities to make informed choices.
- Deforestation, particularly in developing countries, is pushing indigenous families to migrate to cities for economic reasons, often ending up in urban slums.

**However over the period of time indigenous peoples interpret and react to the impacts of climate change in creative ways, drawing on traditional knowledge and other technologies to find solutions which may help society at large to cope with impending changes.**

- Examples include:
  - In Bangladesh, villagers are creating floating vegetable gardens to protect their livelihoods from flooding, while in Vietnam, communities are helping to plant dense mangroves along the coast to diffuse tropical-storm waves.

#### **Conclusion:-**

- It is important to note that enhancing and supporting the adaptive capacity of indigenous peoples will only be successful if this is integrated with other strategies such as disaster preparation, land-use planning, environmental conservation and national plans for sustainable development.

*Topic: Changes in critical geographical features (including waterbodies and ice-caps) and in flora and fauna and the effects of such changes*

Q1) Geoengineering interventions to combat global warming are more dangerous than the climate change itself. Discuss. (250 Words)

#### **The Wire**

#### **Geoengineering interventions:-**

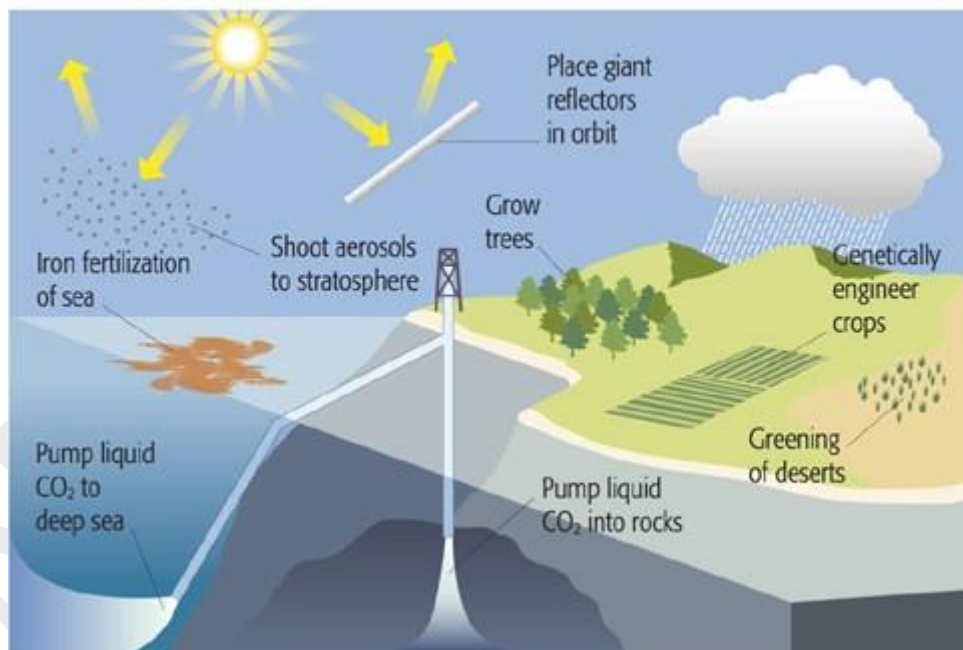
- Geoengineering interventions are large-scale attempts to purposefully alter the climate system in order to offset the effects of global warming. Most geoengineering proposals can be divided into two types: solar radiation management (SRM) and carbon dioxide removal (CDR).
- Climate engineering offers the hope of temporarily reversing some aspects of global warming and allowing the natural climate to be substantially preserved whilst greenhouse gas emissions are brought under control and removed from the atmosphere by natural or artificial processes
- One such technology is inspired by volcanoes that entails spewing sulphate aerosols into the upper atmosphere to deflect sunlight and artificially cool the planet.

#### **Impact on climate change:-**

- **Negative:-**
  - A recent study shows that rapid application, followed by abrupt termination of this temporary tech-fix can in fact **accelerate climate change.**
  - The increase in temperature from the abrupt termination is so quick that **most species, terrestrial or marine, may not be able to keep up with it and eventually perish.**
  - The increase in temperature is two to four times more rapid than climate change without geoengineering. **This increase would be dangerous for biodiversity and ecosystems.**
  - Reptiles, mammals, fish and birds that have been moving at 1.7 km/year on average will now have to move faster than 10 km/year to remain in their preferred climatic zones. **This raises serious concerns, especially for less-mobile animals like amphibians and corals.**
  - Not just species but **entire ecosystems could collapse by suddenly hitting the stop button on geoengineering.**
    - For example, temperate grassland and savannahs, which are maintained by specific combinations of temperature and rainfall, may experience increasing rates of temperatures, but an opposing trend in rainfall, after 2070.

- **Ineffectiveness**
  - The effectiveness of the techniques proposed may fall short of predictions.
  - In ocean iron fertilization, for example, the amount of carbon dioxide removed from the atmosphere may be much lower than predicted, as carbon taken up by plankton may be released back into the atmosphere from dead plankton, rather than being carried to the bottom of the sea and sequestered.
  - Model results from a 2016 study, suggest that blooming algae could even accelerate Arctic warming.
- **Moral hazard or risk compensation**
  - The existence of such techniques may reduce the political and social impetus to reduce carbon emissions
- **Albedo modification strategies could rapidly cool the planet's surface but pose environmental and other risks** that are not well understood and therefore should not be deployed at climate-altering scales.
- In the case of environmental risks, the offsetting of greenhouse gases by increasing the reflection of sunlight is not going to be perfect. Some people, potentially a small minority, will get less rainfall. There is **concern about what particles might do to the ozone layer**.
- The drop off of tropical storms in one area would actually lead to a spike in drought in parts of Africa, according to the data.
- **Positive:-**
  - As expected, the climate would begin to cool once geoengineering commences. This initial cooling phase, **would provide relief, particularly for species that were unable to keep up with past warming**.
  - Also birds and fish which may have moved in response to elevated temperatures in the past will possibly turn back.
  - If solar geoengineering were ramped up slowly to half the rate of warming over the coming decades, then **it seems likely it would reduce many climate risks**. Solar geoengineering deployment can be ended without the impacts of a termination shock if it is gradually ramped down over decades.
  - The climate models reveal that the large-scale action would indeed calm things down a bit and **potentially reduce the number of North Atlantic cyclones**.

#### GEOENGINEERING SOLUTIONS TO CLIMATE CHANGE



#### Conclusion:-

- In any case in the meantime, two aspects are certain: **under no scenario could climate engineering serve as a substitute to reduced greenhouse gas emissions, and it would be better to implement such technologies with more nuanced research.**

Q2) Examine how the change in demography along the River Cauvery basin has affected cropping pattern, water use pattern and also land use pattern in the basin. (250 Words)

[Down to Earth](#)

**Background :-**

- There have been glaring changes in the demography of Cauvery for example the increase in the population that lives in the basin. There has been a two fold increase from till 2011 since 1921 based on census data. This has altered the usage of water of this river.

**Affected cropping pattern:-**

- There has been increase in cropping area and irrigation command area between 1980 and 2000.
- Cropping pattern in Tamil Nadu has changed from two to three crops of paddy per year between the 1970s and 1990s.
- In Karnataka farmers have opted to grow paddy over much more water-efficient crops such as millets and ragi.
- Farmers in both the states have also started cultivating water-intensive sugarcane along the Cauvery basin.

**Water use pattern:-**

- Contributed to the scarcity of water in the river.
- Sewage and industrial effluents from hundreds of villages, towns and cities are dumped untreated into the river, reducing its quality and flow. This has degraded the quality of water.
- The water use for cultivation of rice in Cauvery basin increased. This was mainly due to the popularity of growing a third paddy crop especially in Tamil Nadu, for which water use more than tripled.
- Bengaluru's current demand for water from the Cauvery comes to over 10 per cent of the total water allocated to Karnataka. 45% of the water is lost in leakages.

**Land use pattern:-**

- There has been a **reduction in the forest area**, especially close to the source of the river could potentially reduce the yield of the river in the years to come. According to the "State of Forest" reports dense forests in both these districts have declined by about 10 per cent between 2001 and 2013.
- Reports show that drop in forest cover has led to changes in the coffee-growing system that has shifted from **streamfed shady plantations to irrigated plantations**

**Way forward:-**

- Water conservation methods like rain water harvesting need to be encouraged at the ground level.
- It would be much more efficient to restore the lakes in the city and recycle water for usage .This is especially true with Bengaluru.

**Topic: Urbanization – problems and remedies**

Q1) Efficient management of urban solid waste has positive implications for global warming. Examine. (250 Words)

[The Indian Express](#)

**Background :-**

- Activities involved in the management of solid waste generate (GHGs) carbon dioxide, methane, and small amounts of nitrous oxide. GHG emissions from solid waste disposal by India increased at the rate of 3.1per cent per annum between 2000 and 2010.

**How effective management of urban solid waste has positive implications for global warming:-**

- Benefits of composting:-**
  - If biodegradable waste is processed locally through aerobic decomposition with the help of microbes or earthworms (vermin composting) to produce compost or organic fertiliser then the volume of waste sent to the landfill sites can be reduced .
  - Compost helps store carbon back in the soil. Its usage reduces the need for chemical fertilisers which emit large quantities of nitrous oxide and thereby **helps mitigate emissions. Compost also improves moisture retention in the soil.**
- Biomethanation** generates biogas which is a substitute for fossil fuel and produces slurry which is an excellent organic fertiliser, **both helping to mitigate global warming.** Local processing also means that biomethanation saves on transportation.



- **Recycling of waste also helps reduce GHG emissions** because the energy required to manufacture a product using fresh materials is higher than when using recycled materials. While
- The **non-biodegradable and non-recyclable waste** other than hazardous waste (batteries, CFLs, etc), **can be converted into Refuse Derived Fuel for use in high-temperature furnaces, for example, in cement kilns and power plants.**
- Technologies are also available for controlled incineration and/or gasification for **energy recovery from this waste.** These are commonly referred to as “waste-to-energy” plants

#### **Solid waste issue at present and challenges that remain :-**

- Biodegradable waste is mixed with other waste at the point where waste is generated. This increases the volume that has to be transported as the waste is hauled all the way to the landfill sites. **The increased fuel usage in transportation results in more emissions.**
- **Issues with composting:-**
  - Mitigation through composting is failing **because at most only two per cent of the municipal solid waste in India is composted.**
  - The Supreme Court order of 2006 directed fertiliser companies to co-market city compost with chemical fertilisers.
  - However, the government incentive of market development assistance for city compost is very uncompetitive vis-a-vis chemical fertilisers.
- Very few Indian cities are trying biomethanation **because segregation at source and feeding biodegradable waste to the plants in time remain a major challenge.**
- Lack of segregation comes in the way of realising the full potential of recycling. Only 27 per cent of paper in India is recycled.
- **Incineration of mixed waste in the absence of auxiliary fuel can release dioxins and furans which are severe air pollutants.** This has to be countered by installing appropriate filters in these plants.

#### **Way ahead:-**

- The Solid Waste Management Rules (2016) have laid down clear guidelines on permissible emission norms. **There is a need for real-time monitoring and open access to emissions data to ensure enforcement of the norms.**
- **There are lessons to be learnt from other countries:-**
  - GHG emissions from solid waste have been declining in Germany and Japan.
  - **A ban on land filling of non-pre-treated waste in Germany has led to 47 per cent of the waste being recycled**
  - The regulations in both countries ensure that **incinerators have state-of-the-art emission control technologies, and the directly landfilled municipal solid waste is as low as one per cent.**

#### **Conclusion:-**

- India needs to get its act together to improve its municipal solid waste management with the triple objective of resource recovery, improving public health conditions and mitigating the risks associated with human-induced global warming

Q2) Urbanization advances economic development, but it also poses major challenges, from managing congestion and pollution to ensuring that growth is inclusive and equitable. Does India have tools to overcome to overcome these challenges? Discuss. (250 Words)

#### Project Syndicate

#### **Background:-**

- By 2030, India’s urban population will reach 600 million people. For India, rapid urbanization is particularly vital to enable the country to take full advantage of the demographic dividend afforded by its young population. As the urbanization process continues, connectivity, proximity, and diversity will accelerate knowledge diffusion, spark further innovation, and enhance productivity and employment growth.

#### **Challenges:-**

- Rapid urbanization also poses enormous challenges, from managing congestion and pollution to ensuring that growth is inclusive and equitable.
- The challenges of urbanisation include
  - **Lack of prior and proper planning**
  - **The ineffective functioning of civic bodies and the paucity of resources for urban local bodies.**
  - In a bid to address these shortcomings, the 73rd and 74th constitutional amendments were passed to devolve more powers and the three “Fs” funds, functions and functionaries. **However, this is not happening effectively.**

### Yes, India has the tools to overcome the challenges:-

- **India will benefit from technological innovations** including digital technologies, cleaner energy, innovative construction materials, and new modes of transport. As technology continues to advance, **more diversified cities and districts tend to experience greater job growth.**
  - **The strongest job gains due to diversification are occurring in rural areas and among small enterprises, suggesting that India's urbanization can bring inclusive growth and prosperity.**
  - **Evidence also shows that high growth rates, which support poverty reduction, are concentrated in the rural areas of particular districts.**
- The UN **"New Urban Agenda"** emphasises the need to focus on these challenges.
- **Its flagship schemes like the Smart Cities, AMRUT, Housing for All, HRIDAY and Swachh Bharat** are aimed at not only addressing various deficits to provide better urban governance, but also seek to make Indian cities and towns hubs of growth and sustainable development.
- A series of reforms through incentives and disincentives have been put in place to achieve these goals. **Incentives for universal housing, giving infrastructure status to affordable housing, allowing FDI and providing income tax exemption are among the important measures taken.**
- Also, **the government is promoting innovative measures like waste-to-energy, waste-to-compost** and the reuse of construction and demolition waste as part of sustainable urbanisation.

### Way forward:-

- 'Housing for All' policy should be pursued with a vigorous annual review that ranks States on the basis of performance. The Centre should also take its own **National Urban Transport Policy** on developing cities around mobility networks seriously.
- **Urban governance policies**, although mainly in the domain of the States, **must be aligned with national commitments** on reduction of carbon emissions under the Paris Agreement, and to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 11.
- **There is a need for a plan of action to achieve sustainable human settlements.** It should ensure adequate shelter, water, energy, sanitation and solid waste management, along with other elements.
- There is a need for proper planning and various deficits relating to infrastructure, housing, slum upgradation, reduce pollution, employment, education and health in urban areas need to be through public and private participation.

Q3) Sustainable urban development needs to be led by the central government working closely with state and local governments. In this regard, it is said that India needs to develop its own national urban policy (NUP) as an instrument for applying a coherent set of interventions in relation to the future growth of cities, in partnership with all stakeholders. Discuss what features should NUP include. (250 Words)

[Livemint](#)

### Background:-

- India is in the midst of a major urbanization boom. As per Census 2011, 377 million Indians comprising 31.1% of the total population lived in urban areas. Going ahead, by 2030, India's urban population is projected to increase to 600 million. **However, this positive trend is also accompanied by its own unique set of issues.**
- Indian cities face challenges in terms of deficits in infrastructure, governance and sustainability. With rapid urbanization, these problems are going to aggravate, and can cumulatively pose a challenge to India's growth trajectory.

### Reasons why India needs a national urban policy are :-

- India needs to develop its own national urban policy (NUP) as an **instrument for applying a coherent set of interventions in relation to the future growth of cities, in partnership with all stakeholders.** Globally, around one-third of countries have a national urban policy in place.
- **Such a policy will outline and highlight the importance and objectives of cities.**
  - India needs to fine-tune the vision about cities and urbanization in light of the aspirations of citizens, state capabilities, historical legacy, cultural context and present economic situation.
- **Urbanization in India is a complex issue, with the majority of city-related issues being state subjects.**
  - However, there is a need to build adequate capacities at the state/urban local bodies level to prepare cities for future challenges. **The National policy would set the common minimum agenda, involving participation of all stakeholders.**
  - In India, such agenda setting would encourage programmes and policies to be integrated and aim at operationalizing the spirit of the 74th Amendment.



- **The present urban scenario has new stakeholders who are more connected than ever. A NUP framework would recognize all these stakeholders and prevent cities from seeing through these participants.**
  - Various aggregators like Uber and Amazon, distance learning universities, the active participation of non-resident Indians, service aggregators such as UrbanClap present a complex web of **interdependent and interconnected stakeholders**.
  - Once their presence is acknowledged, states and cities would be better placed to develop the right processes and systems to utilize the potential of these stakeholders.
- **A NUP will provide a framework for states, which would be encouraged and nudged to adopt a state version of this policy.** This is a prerequisite for leveraging urbanization to the fullest extent and with the greatest efficiency. Addressing India's current urban woes without such a policy will be considerably more difficult.

**However government efforts are being made:-**

- To cater to urbanization challenges, **the government launched the Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (Amrut) as a step towards harnessing the agglomeration economies of the urban centres and making cities engines of growth.**
  - The mission lays emphasis on creating infrastructure, improving service delivery, making cities smarter for improved livelihood and providing for faster and integrated mobility.
- **It envisages convergence across various initiatives such as Amrut, Smart Cities, Hriday (National Heritage City Development and Augmentation Yojana), Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana and Swachh Bharat.**
- For 2018-19, the government increased the budget for the housing and urban affairs ministry by 8%, to **Rs41,765 crore.**
- The centre has also formulated separate policies for urban sanitation, transport, transit-oriented development and also a national mission on sustainable habitat, each with a specific mandate and vision

Q4) Rent control policies are counterproductive – they are politically unviable and potentially too disruptive economically. Examine. (250 Words)

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**Rent Control:-**

- A price control that limits the amount a property owner can charge for renting out a home, apartment or other real estate. Rent control acts as a price ceiling by preventing rents either from being charged above a certain level or from increasing at a rate higher than a predetermined percentage.

**Issues with rent control:-**

- Some economists consider rent controls, like other price ceilings, to be market distortions that **discourage the construction of more homes by limiting the profits owners can earn from them.**
- By discouraging the construction of new housing stock, **regulators may create the same housing shortage they sought to prevent by enacting the legislation in the first place.**
- Rent control's inability to restrain housing prices is not surprising given that **it doesn't address the ultimate problem, which is a lack of housing.** Instead, it further reduces the quantity of available housing by diminishing the profit incentive to build more.
- The main problem with the prolonged continuation of first generation rent control is that it leads to a consistent degradation of housing stock. When rents are so much lower than prevailing market rates, **builders and developers have no incentives to generate more rental housing for urban populations across income levels.**
- Property tax revenue falls, administrative costs and burdens rise and with these the potential for corruption also increases.
- Rent controlled buildings are often unkempt and dilapidated because **the nominal rents don't motivate landlords to spend on maintenance.**
- Instead, rent controls have given rise to the informal **pagdi system in Mumbai**, where tenancy is transferred from one tenant to another at property rates a little below prevailing market rates and the landlord pockets around a third of the sum to facilitate the transfer on paper.

**Rent control is necessary because:-**

- Others believe rent control is a viable method of ensuring affordable housing for renters that prevents landlords from capriciously raising prices.
- The intention of keeping rents at a low level was to prevent speculation and exploitation of tenants.
- In its initial years, **the system served the purpose of creating affordable housing at stable rents for thousands of urban citizens.**
- Such controls are a must to **stabilise land values and ensure mixed-income neighbourhoods.**

- Rent control can do much more than provide low-cost housing. It can play an important role in stabilising prices and preventing speculation, thus ensuring affordable housing that benefits even middle and upper-middle income residents.

#### Way forward:-

- Most cities around the world moved beyond first generation rent control by the 1970s and 80s, either **adopting to “second generation” rent control systems, rent stabilisation mechanisms, or removing all forms of rent control completely.**
- The apt solution to Mumbai’s rental housing problem, according to some planners, is not to abandon rent control **but improve the system by moving to some form of second generation control, so that lower-income families can also live within the heart of the city.**
- Rent controls must permit landlords to levy enough rents to cover operating and maintenance costs, repairs and a nominal return, but also protect tenants from owners profiteering over the value of property.

Q5) Urban floods are not only an ecological disturbance produced due to anthropogenic factors, they are also an occurrence within a sociopolitical space. Analyse. (250 Words)

#### EPW

#### Background:-

- India has emerged as one of the biggest victims of climate change.
- While natural causes like intense rainfall due to cyclones, rivers swelling in the city, weather factors etc take their course but it is largely due to the anthropogenic factors that the frequency of Urban flooding has increased in the recent years.

#### Factors affecting floods including anthropogenic, Socio-political factors:-

- **Trespassing on water storm drains**
  - The areas which were essentially created by the storm water drains to let their flood waters pass freely being tress-passed for developmental purposes result in obstruction of water flow and thus contributed immensely to the fury of floods.
  - Bengaluru and Mumbai floods have been a result of this failure.
- **Urbanisation :-**
  - It leads to paving of surfaces which decreases ground absorption and increases the speed and amount of surface flow. The water rushes down suddenly into the streams from their catchment areas leading to a sudden rise in water level and flash floods.
  - **Unplanned urbanisation is the key cause of urban flooding.** Various kinds of depression and low lying areas near or around the cities which act as flood absorbers are gradually filled up by construction and development projects for the poor and built upon due to urbanisation pressure. **This results in inadequate channel capacity causing urban flooding.**
  - **Encroachment of the natural streams and watercourses due to rapid urbanisation as a major factor contributing to urban flooding.** Encroachment, is a planning lexicon which is often equated with illegality and directed towards slum dwellers occupying waterways in cities
  - This provides an opportunity to the real estate developers in the city to reclaim the riverbanks. This further results in the shrinking of the riverbed, and the destruction of the riparian zones which are important for flood absorption.
- **Mumbai’s case:-**
  - **Reclamation of land** was initially carried out to link the seven islands which form Mumbai. This was followed by **continuous building activity which eventually spilled over to choke waterways** which allowed water to drain during monsoon.
  - Mithi river has over the years been not only been encroached upon, but whatever is left is clogged with **solid wastes and plastic**. With perhaps the most important channel of the city’s drainage system under siege, flooding is inevitable even if the rainfall does not breach the existing record.
  - Mangroves which dotted the city’s coast line have largely disappeared
- **Unauthorised colonies have been developed by the local colonisers on the agriculture land, earlier being used for crop has been purchased at lucrative prices from farmers,** without consideration to the city plans, drainage, sewerage etc. and thus subjected to flooding during heavy rain falls.
- **Poor Water and Sewerage Management**
  - Old drainage and sewerage system has not been overhauled nor is it adequate now. All the drainage and sewer system in many parts of Delhi has collapsed resulting in flooding. This can be seen during rainy seasons every year.

▪ **Lack of attention to the nature of hydrological system :-**

- In Uttarakhand floods haphazard, unregulated construction of roads and bridges was allowed on crumbling, landslide-prone ridges and steep slopes, **ignoring the region's fragile geology and high earthquake vulnerability.**
- Hundreds of buildings were constructed in the flood plains of rivers, their "natural" terrain, which should be no-go areas. **Riverbeds were recklessly mined for sand. As construction debris accumulated, land contours and flows of streams and rivers changed.**

▪ **Lack of flood control measures:-**

- **The growth in concretization of land has increased surface run off due to near lack of percolation of water into underground aquifers.** This coupled with no strict laws with respect to rainwater recharge facilities an ideal flooding situation.

▪ **Multiple authorities in a city but owning responsibility by none.**

- The real estate mafia and corruption in local revenue offices are a deadly combination for converting wetlands into concrete structures. This reduces the area of lakes and may even vanish lakes out of official records.
- Lack of sufficient financial resources with the urban local bodies.

▪ **Deforestation:-**

- Large areas of forests near the rivers/catchment of cities are used to make rooms for settlements, roads and farmlands and is being cleared due to which soil is quickly lost to drains. This raises the drain bed causing overflow and in turn urban flooding.

▪ **Religious practices :-**

- The religious significance of the ghats near rivers has stemmed development of hotels and dharamshalas to serve the needs of the pilgrims. This has increased the density and imperviousness of the settlement around the ghats.

**Conclusion:-**

- Cities are facing the cumulative impact of wrongs done over so many years. It will have to be reversed by land reclamation of wet lands which are the buffer zones of excess water.
- Sustainable city planning becomes crucial. Clearing the storm water drains and providing separate sewage lines, along with Municipal solid waste management will go a long way.

*Topic: Factors responsible for the location of primary, secondary, and tertiary sector industries in various parts of the world (including India)*

Q1) India's industrialization and urbanization did grow together in the early 1990s. However, in the past decade, share of manufacturing has declined in urban areas and has increased in rural areas. Analyse the causes and consequences of this trend. (250 Words)

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**Background:-**

- According to Conventional economics industrialization and urbanization go hand in hand as policymakers often adopt an active industrial policy to accelerate growth. Along with it they also embrace an active urban policy since industrialization without urbanization gets stalled.
- However this changed in India as the manufacturing growth in urban areas which was initially concentrated around the mega cities has reduced and share of manufacturing has increased in rural areas.

**Causes :-**

- Large-scale manufacturing enterprises, that account for 80% of output, are moving into rural areas in **search of lower land costs to remain competitive.**
- **Cheap labour :-**
  - Huge unskilled labour in rural areas which is suitable for manufacturing enterprises of leather, textile etc
  - Labour laws might not be very strictly implemented
- **Raw materials and inputs are readily available especially for food processing and agro based processing industries.**
- **Environmental regulation** may not be that strict in rural areas unlike urban areas where stricter pollution norms.
- Government giving impetus by skill development mission, Mudra loans, Startup and standup India

**Consequences :-**

- **Positives:**
  - Employment in the rural areas will increase reducing the burden on agriculture sector leading to increased standard of living as well.
  - The gap between urban and rural areas will reduce leading to easing of migration from rural to urban areas.

- Infrastructure in rural areas will improve leading to better education and health facilities.
- India's future economic growth may not be in its mega cities, which are already dense, but in its secondary cities, where there is substantial untapped potential.
- Next phase of urbanization could result in a four-fold increase in per capita income.
- Provides immense potential for regional and spatial development
- **Negatives:-**
- Will lead to De-congestion of urban areas
- Questions whether manufacturing sector moving away from cities will compromise economic growth and job creation, low levels of infrastructure investments in rural areas will slow down the pace of spatial transformation are raised
- The purity of villages would fade away with pollution rising, groundwater contamination increasing
- Threatens food security as due to rise of land prices agricultural land can be sold to industries .

**Way forward :-**

- Building a smart tier II and tier III city calls for **scaling up investments in physical and human infrastructure to make them more competitive, attract new enterprises, and create more jobs.**
- India can also draw upon other policy levers to **make tier II cities more competitive.**
- **New technology** can play a more dynamic role in urbanization. It can deliver better outcomes to entrepreneurs and citizens. It can reduce congestion costs, make cities green and sustainable, and increase the efficiency of local government programmes.
- Agricultural processing industries can be given impetus in rural areas.
- Connectivity between rural and urban areas can be increased by industrial corridors, Bharatamala scheme etc .