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**April
2021**

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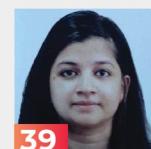
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Still No Recognition of the Third Tier

THE HINDU

1st April 2021

RELEVANCE FOR UPSC-CSE:

- **GS Paper 2:** Functions and Responsibilities of the Union and the States, Issues and Challenges Pertaining to the Federal Structure, Devolution of Powers and Finances up to Local Levels and Challenges Therein.

RELATED KEYWORDS: Functional decentralisation; Performance-based conditionalities; Decentralised governance; Equalisation principle;

ARTICLE SUMMARY

Context: A brief critique of recommendations of the Fifteenth Finance Commission with regard to local governments.

About Finance Commission

- **Primary task:** Constitutional body set up under **Article 280**, to rectify vertical and horizontal imbalances in resources and expenditure responsibilities between Union and States.
 - The tasks of the Union Finance Commission were broadened as part of the decentralisation reforms (280(3) (bb) and (c)) is a firm recognition of the organic link of public finance with the development process at all tiers of government.

Positive aspects of 15th FC recommendations

- **Higher vertical devolution to local governments:** From 0.78% share of the divisible pool by 11th FC to 4.23% by 15th FC.
- **Raised share of tie-up expenditure:** Raised tie-up expenditure share to 60% and linked them to drinking water, rainwater harvesting, sanitation and other national priorities in the spirit of cooperative federalism.
- **Entry-level criterion to avail the local grant:** Aim is to standardise the accounting system.
 - **For Panchayats:** Online submission of accounts.
 - **For Urban local bodies:** Fixation of the minimum floor for property tax rates and also a consistent improvement in their collections.
- **Grant to primary health centres:** Upholding constitutional mandate of functional decentralisation of basic services like drinking water, public health care, etc.
- **Continuity in the basis of distribution:** It employed population (2011 Census) with 90% and area 10% weightage the same criteria followed by the Fourteenth Finance Commission.

The performance-linked grants was introduced by the **13th Finance Commission** - earmarked 35% of local grants specifying six conditions for panchayats and nine for urban local governments and covered a wide range of reforms: from the establishment of an independent ombudsman to notifying standards for service sectors such as drinking water and solid waste management.

Criticisms of 15th FC recommendations

- **Reduced performance-based grant:** Focus on building new cities, leaving out Panchayati raj institutions.
- **Questions on data reliability and efficacy of entry-level criterion:** No objective analysis to examine how and where the financial reporting system has failed.
- **Overlooking India's regional heterogeneity:** Opportunity to ensure comparable minimum public services to every citizen irrespective of her choice of residential location not been taken forward.
- **Missing equalisation principle:** Although the commission outlines nine guiding principles as the basis of its recommendation to local governments, there is no integrated approach, and local governments are side-lined in the balancing act.
- **Side-lining equity and efficacy criteria for determining distribution:** Abandoning tax effort criterion incentivises dependency, inefficiency and non-accountability.

AlmaAta declaration of the World Health Organization (1978) which outlined an integrated, local government-centric approach with simultaneous focus on access to water, sanitation, shelter and the like.



Three Mantras for Informal Sector

BUSINESS STANDARD

1st April 2021

RELEVANCE FOR UPSC-CSE:

- **GS Paper 3:** Indian Economy and issues relating to Planning, Mobilization of Resources, Growth, Development and Employment.

RELATED KEYWORDS: Persistent and pervasive informality; Voluntary dwarfism; Backward and forward linkages; Silent structural transformation;

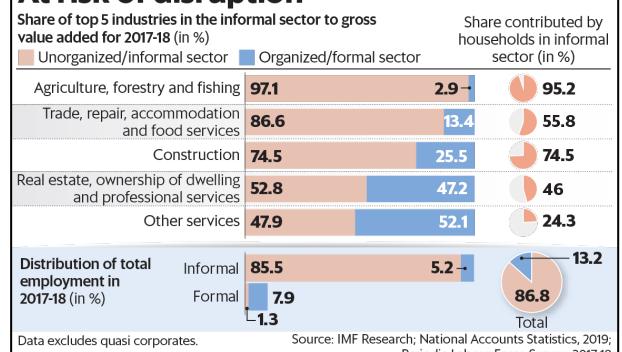
ARTICLE SUMMARY

Context: An overview of strategies needed to drive formalization of India's vast informal sector.

About informal sector

- **Size:** Consists of casual workers and self-employed persons, accounting for 80% of the workforce and 50% of the GVA in India.
- **Challenges:**
 - Informal enterprises are small in size and deploy very little fixed capital.
 - Majority of informal enterprises are semi-permanent in nature and with low margins of profit.
 - **Sub-optimal and low wages**, mainly driven by low levels of labour productivity.
 - **High levels of corruption:**
 - ✓ On one hand, corruption prepares the breeding ground for informal enterprises, and, on the other hand, it effectively curtails any scope of their transition into viable economic entities.
 - ✓ This **vicious life cycle of labour-dystopia** and severely stunted growth of informal sector enterprises is the crux of pervasive and persistent informality.
 - **Increasing concentration of workers in low productive jobs:** Micro enterprises constitute more than 90% of total enterprises in the total formal and informal sector.
 - **Supply shocks:** On backdrop of Covid-19 pandemic.

At risk of disruption



Way forward

- **Ensure incremental processes:** Facilitating the natural progression of enterprises from informal to formal.
- **Bring in policies to deter factors behind the creation of new informal enterprises:**
 - **Correct incentive regime:** That promotes voluntary dwarfism in the informal sector.
 - **Effective use of technology:** E.g.
 - ✓ **Shram Suvidha Portal** - Transparent and accountable one-stop-shop for compliance with labour laws.
 - ✓ **The Startup India Mission** nudges the enterprise eco-system towards formalization.
 - **Expand the concept of portability:** Portability of benefits (welfare measures for workers and incentives for enterprises) imparts agility and dynamism to informal enterprises.
 - **Migrate to optimum industrial locations:** Facilitating up-gradation of competitiveness through effective forward and backward linkages.
 - **Leveraging Skill India Mission:** According to the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship's Annual Report 2018- 19, India needs 614 million workers, about 15% of them in construction and real estate alone.
 - ✓ Under PMKVY 2.0, National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) has trained 7.3 million persons by December 2019.



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The Bare Necessities for India

BUSINESS STANDARD

2nd April 2021

RELEVANCE FOR UPSC-CSE:

- GS Paper 3:** Indian Economy and issues relating to Planning, Mobilization of Resources, Growth, Development and Employment.

RELATED KEYWORDS: Bottom-of-the-pyramid householder;

ARTICLE SUMMARY

Context: An overview of the Bare Necessities Index (BNI) presented in the Economic Survey 2020-21.

About Bare Necessities Index (BNI)

- Covers:** Five areas that impact the daily lives of a bottom-of-the-pyramid householder.
 - BNI has been created for all states for 2012 and 2018 using data from two NSO rounds viz., 69th and 76th on drinking water, sanitation, hygiene and housing condition in India.
- Scope:** Along with other accepted indices of measuring well-being such as per capita income, nutrition, health etc., BNI could be the benchmark to measure the quality of life in India.

Conclusions from BNI Index: Comparison between 2012-2018

- Better access to bare necessities**
 - Highest** in states such as Kerala, Punjab, Haryana, Gujarat, Uttarakhand, Delhi, Goa, Mizoram and Sikkim.
 - Lowest** in Odisha, Jharkhand, West Bengal and Tripura.
- Decline in inter-state disparities:** In access to bare necessities.
- Rural India scenario:** Highest access to bare necessities in 2018 is recorded in Punjab, Kerala, Sikkim, Goa and Delhi, while lowest in Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, West Bengal, Odisha, Assam, Manipur and Tripura.
- Access to bare necessities has improved disproportionately more for poorest households:** When compared to relatively richer households across India, rural as well as urban
- Spillover effect:** Has led to improvements in health and education indicators.

LIVING CONDITIONS

DIMENSION	AREA	PARAMETERS EXAMINED
1.	Water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Principal source of drinking water Distance to the principal source of drinking water Nature of access
2.	Sanitation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access of the household to latrine Type of latrine used by the household
3.	Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Condition of structure Type of the dwelling
4.	Micro-environment	Drainage system of the household
5.	Other facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kitchen type Ventilation of the dwelling unit Availability of electricity for domestic use Type of fuel used by household for cooking

Related Government schemes

- Swachh Bharat Mission-Rural and Urban:** To achieve 100% Open Defecation Free status and 100% scientific processing of the Municipal Solid Waste.
- Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana:** To provide housing for all in urban and rural areas.
- National Rural Drinking Water Programme (now Jal Jeevan Mission):** To provide safe and adequate water for drinking, cooking and other domestic needs to every rural person.
- Sahaj Bijli Har Ghar Yojana —Saubhagya:** Universal household electrification by providing electricity connections to all willing unelectrified households in rural and urban areas.
- Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana :** To provide clean cooking fuel to poor households with a target to provide 80 million deposit-free LPG connections.

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Net Zero and Climate Injustice

INDIAN EXPRESS
2nd April 2021

RELEVANCE FOR UPSC-CSE:

- **GS Paper 3:** Environment: Conservation, environmental pollution and degradation.
- **GS Paper 4:** Public/Civil service values and Ethics in Public Administration: Ethical issues in international relations and funding.

RELATED KEYWORDS: Nicomachean Ethics; Distributive justice; Commutative justice; Corrective justice; Climate-just world; Climate debt;

ARTICLE SUMMARY

Context: Climate change actions should ensure distributive, commutative and corrective justice rather than focusing on net zero emissions targets, which is unjust for developing countries.

Arguments against the idea of net-zero emissions targets:

- **Against commutative justice:** It strikes at the root of the basic tenets of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).
- **Against distributive and corrective justice:** It violates principles of equity and CBDR-RC based on historical responsibility.
 - Even though industrialisation in the developed countries is responsible for a emission that causes climate change, people of the developing countries are suffering disproportionately more.
- **Undermines the achievement of a climate-just world:** Due to mismatch between the commitments of developed and developing nations -
 - The **Climate Action Tracker** reports that the climate action of major developed countries is incompatible with the goals of the Paris Agreement (backtracked from Kyoto commitments).
 - While on the other hand, India introduced climate sensitivity in domestic policies through interventions like energy for all, housing for all, health insurance and crop insurance, “**Clean India**”, and “**Give it up**” campaigns, popularising yoga and sustainable lifestyle practices.

Way forward: To deal with climate change by referring to the three types of justices provided by Aristotle in **Nicomachean Ethics**.

- **Distributive justice:** It pertains to how resources should be distributed in terms of principles of equality, equity and merit.
 - **Ensure distributive climate justice in the implementation of the Paris Agreement:** By focusing on ensuring ambitious climate action by developed countries in the near term.
- **Commutative justice:** It refers to agreements or commitments and other kinds of social contracts. Ensure it by fulfilling the past commitments made by developed countries. E.g.
 - Take on the targets in the second commitment period (starting December 2020) of Kyoto Protocol.
 - Meet their climate finance goal: i.e. the goal of jointly mobilising at least \$100 billion per year by 2020 to support climate action in developing countries.
- **Corrective justice:** It pertains to the righting of wrongs.
 - Developed countries need to repay the climate debt by shouldering greater mitigation responsibilities and providing finance, technology and capacity-building support to safeguard the interest of the poor and vulnerable people in developing countries.

Conclusion: It is now time that developed countries rose to the occasion and ensured climate justice by leading climate action responsibly.





A University is not a Corporation

INDIAN EXPRESS

3rd April 2021

RELEVANCE FOR UPSC-CSE:

- **GS Paper 2:** Governance, Administration and Challenges: Issues relating to development and management of Social Sector/Services relating to Education and Human Resources.

RELATED KEYWORDS: Democratization of knowledge; Knowledge society;

ARTICLE SUMMARY

Context: Universities should be governed in a unique way rather than like corporations, due to their unique role and impact on society.

Governance challenges faced by the Universities:

- **Complex governance:** Due to the multifaceted nature of the organization.
 - There are social expectations from different stakeholders — faculty, staff, students, parents, accrediting bodies, government departments, regulatory agencies, international partners/donors.

Challenges of treating universities as corporations:

- **Focused on economics rather than social development:**
 - Corporations are founded on the principles of profitability and return on investment. Thus, their focus will be on things like generating maximum possible revenues with a productive workforce.
 - Universities, on the other hand, are founded on the twin principle of the creation of knowledge through research and its dissemination by teaching (focus on improving teacher-pupil ratio).
- **Different parameters for measuring their success:**
 - Success of corporations is measured on financial parameters such as turnover, EBITDA (earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation, and amortization), margin, sales, market share etc.
 - Success of universities is measured based on intangible outcomes of intellectual growth and holistic development, inspiring young people to become transformative leaders etc.

Way forward: Universities are not comparable to corporations. As William Bruce Cameron observed, “*Not everything that can be counted counts, and not everything that counts can be counted.*”

- **Promoting excellence in teaching and research:** By improving faculty-student ratio, establishing more research centres, generating socially relevant knowledge, and providing interdisciplinary learning.
- **Creating favourable regulatory structures:** By relieving them off binding organizational structures that breach the very academic freedom and autonomy.
- **Financially empowering universities:** The dependence on financial resources should not weaken the autonomy of the university- National Education Policy is the right policy in this direction.
 - Corporations should provide resources through **Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)** initiatives.
 - The Global Compact and the UN’s vision for implementing the **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** encourage businesses to examine their larger role in society.
- **Achieving accountability:** On the basis of a university’s own commitment and capacities to fulfil its stated mission, which in turn must be benchmarked against global standards of quality.
- **Promoting student-centric governance:** With a view to fulfilling students’ goals and aspirations.



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The Hollowness of a \$5-Trillion Economy

THE TRIBUNE
5th April 2021

RELEVANCE FOR UPSC-CSE:

- **GS Paper 3:** Indian Economy: Issues relating to planning, mobilization of resources, growth, development and employment; Inclusive growth and issues arising from it.

RELATED KEYWORDS: Tax marksmanship; Vanity projects; Trickle-down;

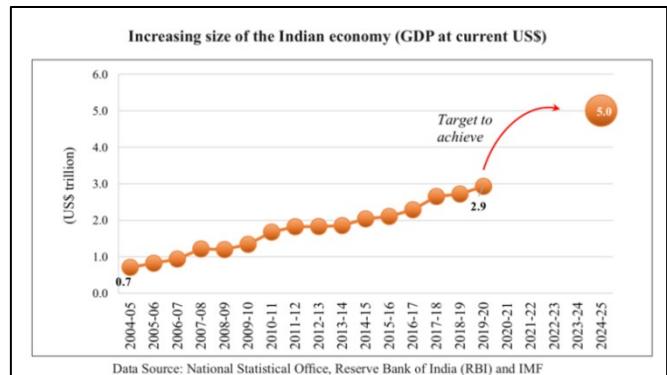
ARTICLE SUMMARY

Context: In trying to achieve the goal of a \$5-trillion economy, the government should ensure that the growth is inclusive.

Challenges in becoming a \$5-trillion economy

- **Target in itself is big:** Not easy to reach \$5 trillion by 2024-25 with present Real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is only close to \$2 trillion.
 - **Growth of the Gross National Product (GNP) is not development:** At best, the GNP per capita as a measure of the country's output and well-being is growing in an extremely narrow sense.
 - In the convoluted world, a word like 'Vikas', which is a loose translation in Hindi of 'development', has come to mean more flyovers and expressways, some freebies and vanity projects.
 - For e.g. if the GNP per capita is growing at 6%, but the inflation is 7%, there cannot be any improvement in the economic well-being of the country.
- **Threat of rising inequality:** At present, 75 % of the wealth belongs to the top 10 % of the people; this will further worsen if a large part of the benefits of the growth goes to the top 10%.
 - **The top 1% holds 45% of the country's wealth!**
 - **Hurdles in income re-distribution by the State:** Due to -
 - ✓ **Powerful interests:** Manipulating government policymaking.
 - ✓ **Poor tax marksmanship:** As India's low tax-to-GDP ratio consistently demonstrates.
- **Possibility of egregious consequences in trying to achieve the growth:** If growth comes without an actual decline in employment, equality and increase in the real income of the bottom 40 % of the population.
- **Employment issues:**
 - **Impact of the pandemic:** Nearly 31 million families have moved down from the middle class, and nearly 100 million people have lost jobs.
 - **Lack of job creation:** Industries that are most likely to create employment, i.e. the medium and small industries, are going down under and the large ones do not create enough employment.
 - ✓ The 6 % productivity-linked incentive from the tax paid by the average taxpayers goes to large industries, further increasing inequality.
- **Broken health and education system:**
 - India stands at the 102nd spot on the **Global Hunger Index**, 102nd on the **Human Development Index**, 4th from the bottom on the **World Happiness Index**, 141st on the **Gender Equality Index**, 142nd on the **Poverty Index**.
 - Thus, a growth without improving health and education system will not improve the quality of life of the majority of the population.

Conclusion: Government should strategize growth and development where all essential objectives of development are met rather than trying to do distribution or waiting for trickle-down.



- Economist **Jagdish Bhagwati** has found that it is not growth per se but the type of growth that matters.
 - Whether the growth dividends go to a minority or are more distributed, whether they create employment and basic quality of life for the majority or get spent on what the elite want.
 - **Ensure following components for equity and inclusiveness:** Distribution and access to food, shelter, health and protection; provision of more jobs; better education; and availability of economic and social choices.





The Pillars of an Equitable Post-COVID India

THE HINDU
6th April 2021

RELEVANCE FOR UPSC-CSE:

- **GS Paper 3:** Indian Economy and issues relating to Planning, Mobilization of Resources, Growth, Development and Employment.

RELATED KEYWORDS: K-shaped recovery; Islands of excellence;

ARTICLE SUMMARY

Context: In the post-pandemic world, addressing inequality is key to sustaining growth and well-being.

Analyzing the rising inequalities in India:

- **In the pre-COVID scenario:** Following factors led to the rising inequalities even before the pandemic.
 - **Slow economic growth:** Compounding the existing problems of unemployment and inequality.
 - **Presence of large informal sector** (which is vulnerable to economic shocks).
- **Impact of the pandemic:** India's middle class shrunk by a third due to the pandemic, while the number of poor people earning less than Rs.150 per day more than doubled. - **Pew Research Report**.
- **Prospects of K-shaped economic growth:** While the big companies gained huge profits during the pandemic, the informal sector lost employment and wages.
 - The levels of GDP show that it will grow only around 1.1% in FY22 as compared to FY20 levels.
 - According to **the Centre For Monitoring Indian Economy**, the employment rate is still 2.5 percentage points lower now as compared to the level before the lockdown last year.
- **Gendered impact:** Women lost more jobs, and many are out of the workforce.
- **Inequalities in health care:** Where the public expenditure is just 1.5% of the GDP → increased out-of-pocket expenditure.
- **Increasing inequalities in education:**
 - In education, there are **islands of excellence** that can compete internationally even as a vast majority of children have poor learning outcomes.
 - Experience of a **digital gap** in education during the pandemic.

Way forward

- **Focus on employment and wages:**
 - **Improve investment levels:** Which declined from 39% in 2011-12 to 31.7% in 2018-19;
 - **Focus in employment-intensive sectors:** E.g. Infrastructure; Budget 2021-22 focus on capital infra-investment a right step.
- **Create equality of opportunity by improving human development:**
 - **Health sector:** Public expenditure should be 2-3% of GDP and move towards universal healthcare.
 - **Education:** Revamp model that produces islands of excellence and fixing the digital gap.
- **Provide quasi-universal basic income and other safety nets:** Cash transfers to all women above the age of 20 years; Expanding the number of days provided under MGNREGA and a national employment guarantee scheme for urban areas.
- **Increasing farmer's income:** Strengthen farmer producer organizations and states have to play a pro-active role in agri-reforms.
- **Enhance tax and non-tax revenues:** E.g. tax/GDP ratio to be raised, with a wider tax base and richer sections to pay more taxes.
- **Federal governance reforms:** Reduce inequalities between Centre and States in finances, strengthen state budgets to improve capital expenditures on physical infrastructure, spending on health, education and social safety nets.
- **Address non-economic factors:** Through the deepening of democracy and decentralization (since unequal distribution of development is rooted in the inequalities of political, social and economic power).

Seven challenges in employment

- Creating productive jobs for seven to eight million per year.
- Correcting mismatch between demand and supply of labour (only 2.3% of India's workforce has formal skill training as compared to 96% in South Korea, 80% in Japan, and 52% in the United States)
- Structural change challenge (Manufacturing should be the engine of growth. Here, labour-intensive exports are important and manufacturing and services are complementary).
- Focusing on micro, small & medium enterprises and informal sectors including rights of migrants.
- Getting ready for **automation and technology revolution**.
- **Social security** and decent working conditions for all.
- **Raising real wages** of rural and urban workers and guaranteeing minimum wages.



Why India Needs a Plan for Climate Talks

LIVEMINT
6th April 2021

RELEVANCE FOR UPSC-CSE:

- **GS Paper 3:** Conservation, environmental pollution, and degradation.

RELATED KEYWORDS: Carbon infrastructure; Green infrastructure; Climate justice;

ARTICLE SUMMARY

Context: India must announce a national target date for reaching net-zero emissions (necessary not only to reduce carbon emissions but also to control air pollution) in the CoP 26, which is to be held in November 2021.

Positive developments since Paris Agreement:

- **Increased public awareness** about the dangers of climate change has increased all over the world.
- **The growth of solar energy** has been impressive.
- **Electric vehicles** have made more progress than once thought likely.

Issues with the global climate change governance:

- **Looming view of goals:** The goal of limiting global warming above pre-industrial levels to "well below 2°C, and ideally to 1.5°C" is nowhere in sight.
 - Instead, the **world looks set for a warming of at least 3.2°C**, which will be disastrous; India would be among the worst sufferers.
 - **The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)** has reported that global emissions must drop to zero by 2050 if global warming is to be limited to 1.5° C above the pre-industrial level.
- **Distorted climate justice:** The announcement of net-zero emission by the developed countries has put pressure on developing countries like India.
 - This is because developed countries are already nearing their peak emission, while the developing countries don't have access to the required technology and burdened with development objectives.
 - For e.g. while the standard for net-zero target has been set at 2050 by the developed countries, for India, the 2°C targets would allow India's emissions to rise and peak in 2026.
- **Inadequacy of carbon budget:** The IPCC states that the carbon that can be released from 2020 onwards cannot exceed 985 Gigatonnes (Gt) if global warming is to be limited to 2°C.
 - However, at the current rates of emission, this global budget would be exhausted by 2043.
 - Lack of international agreement presents a problem in deciding fair carbon budgets.
- **Financing issues:** While the Paris agreement envisaged climate-related finance for developing countries being ramped up to \$100 billion per year by 2020, the OECD estimates suggest that the actual flow was only \$79 billion in 2018.
 - The additional investments in the energy sector needed in developing countries are estimated to exceed \$400 billion per year between 2016 and 2050, even to meet the 2°C target.
 - In addition, these countries have to bear adaptation costs that the UN estimates at about \$70 billion per year, rising to \$390 billion by 2050.

Way Forward:

- **Reducing emissions:** Through –
 - **Rational energy pricing** to encourage energy-efficient choices.
 - **Carbon pricing** to incentivize a shift from fossil fuels to green energy.
 - **Upgrading the efficiency and cleanliness of coal-based thermal plants**, combined with a phasing down of these plants.
 - **Setting higher energy-efficiency standards** for buildings.
 - **Sensible urban planning** to reduce the dependence on personalized motor transport.
 - **Increasing forest cover**.
- **Role of COP-26:** While it can only encourage governments to act, there are two areas where it can give strong signals –

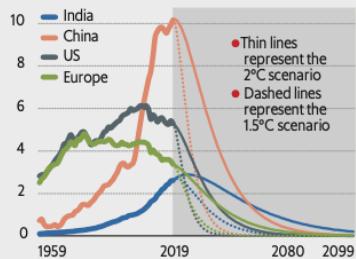
ZERO CARBON RACE

► **2050 HAS** been set as the target year for achieving net zero carbon emissions by many advanced countries. Pressure is likely to increase on India too.

► **1.5°C** would be the rise in global temperature if the target is attained globally by 2050, but developing countries could and should get more time.

► **80% OF** India's electricity generation is still via coal. A national plan, with clear targets, for phasing down coal-based power generation is urgently required.

Historical and projected CO₂ emissions of the four largest emitters (in gigatonne)



Note: The emission reduction trajectories have been arrived at using a compromise formula which takes into account both current emissions and share in global population.

- One, is to call for stronger national targets for reducing emissions while leaving it to the governments to do what needs to be done.
- The other, is to agree on mechanisms for financing the massive investments that are needed in developing countries in order to reduce emissions.
- **Ensure climate justice:** Climate justice requires that the advanced countries get there (net-zero) before 2050, allowing the developing countries to get there later (than 2050). Approach should include –
 - Process to determine the global carbon budget in terms of the additional carbon that can be added to the atmosphere given the global warming target.
 - Agree upon a fair way of allocating the global budget across countries.
 - Define an emissions trajectory for each country that is consistent with its share of the budget.
- **On Financing:** Global community could help in containing global warming by putting in place mechanisms for financial support to developing countries that want to build the needed infrastructure for a **low emissions pathway**.
 - Increased investments in infrastructure in developing countries would also impart a much-needed expansionary stimulus to the global economy.





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Tackle Maoists with a Top-Down Approach

THE TRIBUNE
6th April 2021

RELEVANCE FOR UPSC-CSE:

- **GS Paper 3:** Internal Security: Linkages between development and spread of extremism; Various Security forces and agencies and their mandate.

RELATED KEYWORDS: Top-down approach; Knee-jerk approach; Hammer and tongs strategy;

ARTICLE SUMMARY

Context: The latest attacks by the Maoists in the Bastar region calls for a change in India's anti-insurgency operations.

Need for urgently dealing with the Maoist insurgents

- **Expanding footprint:** Which now runs from Pashupati (in Nepal) to Tirupati (in south India). At its peak, maoist insurgency was visible in over 200 districts across, most severely, in central India.
- **Considered as single biggest internal security challenge:** By the former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh.
- **Massacres on security personnel:** Hundreds of policemen from various cadres have been killed in attacks, mostly in the past two decades, by well-armed Maoist rebels in the Bastar region.

Challenges in countering Maoist insurgency

- **Federal nature of India:** It limits the ability of the Central government to tackle the challenges comprehensively.
- **Political challenges:** One state's insurgent cannot be a vote bank for another state! Politics often takes precedence over the safety of citizens.
- **Lack of expertise and bureaucratic reluctance:** It remains a challenge to get enough CRPF senior officers (IGs and DIGs) to move out of the comfortable cities.
 - IPS officers neither have the experience nor the inclination to battle insurrections.

Ways to deal with Maoist insurgency:

- **Continue with historically used three-part strategy:** Including following elements -
 - **Use of force:** The use of necessary military force to counter the aggressiveness of insurgents.
 - **Address the grievances of alienated people:** By infrastructure upgrades.
 - **Address the political demands:** With fixed timelines for political deliverables.
- **Adopt a top-down approach** (instead of a bottom-up approach): Based on an Army-led operation.
 - **It will open up avenues for army officers:** As the top-down approach will allow Army to depute senior officers (from colonels to generals) with experience in counter-insurgency operations.
- **Empower security personnel to use "quick-fix-solutions":** To tackle threats posed on their lives.
- **Assessing experimented strategies:**
 - **A low-key level strategy:** Adopted for decades in the North-East.
 - **Hammer and tongs strategy:** As the Sri Lankan forces eventually did against the LTTE.

Conclusion: Government should get the forces to participate in and collectively address a problem (Maoist insurgency) that cannot have a knee-jerk approach.



Had MK Sir not been there I would not have been able to give this attempt at the first place. Thank you Sir, for guiding me, for mentoring me, for supporting me and for being there through all ups and downs of the journey. I still remember his message pasted on my study wall saying, "Beta, we are going to nail it, and we'll do it." It's a huge success, but trust me when I say this, it is all yours Sir. Lot's of gratitude.

NUPUR GOEL | AIR - 11, CSE 2019



Deconstructing declarations of carbon-neutrality

THE HINDU
8th April 2021

RELEVANCE FOR UPSC-CSE:

- **GS Paper 3:** Conservation, Environmental Pollution and Degradation.

RELATED KEYWORDS: Common but differentiated responsibilities; Carbon neutrality; Negative emissions; Carbon debt; Twin burden of low-carbon development and adaptation to climate impacts;

ARTICLE SUMMARY

Context: India should refrain from joining the global game of declaring carbon neutrality, as it has to stay focused on development as its immediate need and aspirational goal.

Recent thrust towards Carbon Neutrality:

- According to the latest count of the **Energy and Climate Intelligence Unit (ECIU)**, around 8 countries have formally established the targets, and 32 have made informal commitments.
- **Impetus of such declarations:**
 - **Article 2 of the Paris Agreement:** Targets- Holding the increase in global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels and pursuing efforts to limit temperature increase to 1.5°C.
 - **Article 4.1 of the Paris Agreement:** Parties aim to reach global peaking of greenhouse gas emissions as soon as possible, recognizing that peaking will take longer for developing country Parties.

Issues with the thrust towards Carbon Neutrality: To achieve a three-way compatibility between temperature goals, carbon neutrality, and equity is not guaranteed.

- **Achievement of carbon neutrality is incompatible with a 1.5°C or 2°C targets:**
 - According to **The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change**, from 2018 onwards, for a 50% probability of restricting temperature rise to less than 1.5°C, the carbon budget available is 480 Giga-tonnes of CO₂ equivalent (GtCO₂eq).
 - At the current rate of emissions about 42 GtCO₂eq per year, this would be consumed in 12 years.
 - Alternatively, **global carbon neutrality must be reached by 2039**.
 - However, for a 50% probability of restricting temperature rise to below 2°C, the budget is considerably more generous, amounting to about 1,400 GtCO₂eq.
- **Undermines equity and principles of common but differentiated responsibility:** The balance of emissions and removal of GHGs is not sought on a country-wise basis but for the world as a whole.
 - **Developed countries have a huge carbon debt:** US's cumulative emissions between 2018 and 2050 would be 106 GtCO₂ (22% of the total remaining whole carbon budget).
 - If the US has to stay in its fair share of agreement, it should reach net-zero emission by 2025.

Way forward: India's approach to net-zero emissions is contingent on deep first world emissions reductions and an adequate and unambiguous global carbon budget. It should not join the carbon neutrality trend for a number of reasons -

- **Developmental aspirations:** Quest for sustainability shall not limit India's scope for development, including poverty eradication.
- **India does not owe a carbon debt to the world:**
 - India's emissions are no more than 3.5% of cumulative global emissions prior to 1990.
 - India's mitigation efforts are quite compatible with a 2°C target.
- **India's leadership role:** India can take the lead in sustainable development since its current low carbon footprint is because of its poverty and not by virtue of sustainability. Two aspects can be considered.
 - Taking the lead in some global ecological alternative **driven by frugality, minimal consumption and little technological advance** –may become politically infeasible.
 - Emerge as a **leader of green manufacturing and industry**, bellied on overall economic growth.





For Lok Adalats, Speed Overrides Quality

THE HINDU
8th April 2021

RELEVANCE FOR UPSC-CSE:

- **GS Paper 2:** Structure, Organization and Functioning of the Executive and the Judiciary.

RELATED KEYWORDS: Harmony ideology; Justice hurried is justice buried;

ARTICLE SUMMARY

Context: An analysis of the significance and key issues associated with Lok Adalats.

Significance of Lok Adalats

- **Act as an alternative dispute resolution tool:** To address the problems of crowded case dockets outside the formal adjudicatory system.
 - Lok Adalats are regularly organised to help parties reach a compromise.
 - Motor-accident claims, disputes related to public-utility services, cases related to the dishonour of cheques, and land, labour and matrimonial disputes are usually taken up.
- **Reduces judicial workload:** Data from **National Legal Services Authority (NALSA)** show that Lok Adalats organised across the country from 2016 to 2020 disposed of 52,46,415 cases.
 - While the formal judicial system is marred with delays and backlogs → refer Box 1.
 - The **State Legal Services Authorities (SLSAs)** have been organising Lok Adalats on a daily, fortnightly and monthly basis.
 - **National Lok Adalats (NLAs) organised under the aegis of NALSA:** From 2016 to 2020, NLAs have disposed of a total of 2,93,19,675 cases.
- **Party driven process:** Allowing them to reach an amicable settlement, with speedy settlements (efficient than litigation, arbitration or mediation).
- **Procedural flexibility:** No strict application of procedural laws such as the **Code of Civil Procedure, 1908**, and the **Indian Evidence Act, 1872**.
- **Economic affordability:** No court fees for placing matters before Lok Adalat and finality of awards, as no further appeal is allowed.
- **Legal status:** Award issued by a Lok Adalat, after filing of a joint compromise petition, has the status of a civil court decree.

Associated issues

- **Fall in the efficiency of National Lok Adalat:** Due to discontinuation of organising NLAs on specific to subject matter (since 2017).
 - In 2015 and 2016, ten NLAs were held each year that disposed of 1,83,09,401 and 1,04,98,453 cases respectively, whereas, in 2017 and 2018, number of NLAs dropped, with 54,05,867 and 58,79,691 cases settled respectively.
 - In 2019, four NLAs were organised, and they disposed of 52,93,273 cases.
- **Limitations of e-Lok Adalats:** First national e-Lok Adalat disposed 10,42,816 cases, much less than the average of settled cases in 2017, 2018, and 2019.
- **Questions over the quality of justice delivery:** In the **State of Punjab vs Jalour Singh (2008)**, court held that a Lok Adalat is purely conciliatory and it has no adjudicatory or judicial function.
 - The court found that it endeavours for speedy disposal of cases, undermining the idea of justice. – *Justice hurried is justice denied!*

Evolution of Lok Adalats:

- In 1949, **Harivallabh Parikh**, a disciple of Mahatma Gandhi, popularised them in Rangpur, Gujarat.
- The Constitution (42nd Amendment) Act, 1976, inserted **Article 39A** to ensure “equal justice and free legal aid”.
- **The Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987**, (came into force in 1995), was enacted “to provide free and competent legal services to weaker sections of the society” and to “organise Lok Adalats to secure that the operation of the legal system promotes justice on a basis of equal opportunity”.

Box 1: A picture of endemic delays and excessive backlog in Indian judiciary

- As per **National Judicial Data Grid**, 16.9% of all cases in district and taluka courts are three to five years old;
- For High Courts, 20.4% of all cases are five to 10 years old, and over 17% are 10-20 years old.
- Over **66,000 cases** are pending before **Supreme Court**, over **57 lakh cases** before various **HCs**, and over **3 crore cases** are pending before various **district and subordinate courts**.
- **Justice V.V.S. Rao**, former judge of the Andhra Pradesh High Court, calculated that it will take around 320 years to clear the existing backlog of cases.

- Money power domination:** In a majority of cases, litigants are pitted against entities with deep pockets, such as insurance companies, banks, electricity boards etc.
- Unjust compromise cost:** In most cases, litigants have to accept discounted future values of their claims instead of their just entitlements or small compensations, just to bring a long-pending legal process to an end. **For Eg.** the Bhopal gas tragedy was coercively settled for a paltry sum.
- Clout of patriarchy:** Poor women under the so-called 'harmony ideology' of state dictated by family courts will have to compromise matrimonial disputes under a romanticised view of marriage.

Conclusion: A just outcome of a legal process is far more important than expeditious disposal.



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Layers of Counter-Insurgency

INDIAN EXPRESS

9th April 2021

RELEVANCE FOR UPSC-CSE:

- **GS Paper 3:** Security: Linkages between development and spread of extremism; Various Security forces and agencies and their mandate.

RELATED KEYWORDS: Tactical withdrawal; People-centric approach; Winning hearts and minds; Enemy-centric approach; Surrender and rehabilitation policies.

ARTICLE SUMMARY

Context: While there is a decline in the Maoist insurgency, the recent attack on Tekulugudam Hill showcase that the decline could be a result of ‘tactical withdrawal’, which needs to be handled with an effective counter-insurgency strategy.

Key Strengths of Maoists:

- Robust and efficient intelligence network.
- Devolution of authority to local commanders.
- Ability to quickly readjust their strategy.
- Extensive support from local tribes and the ability to organise them into a tribal militia for short-term tactical purposes
- Domination of the local landscape - They have mastered the art of exploiting the grey zone areas.

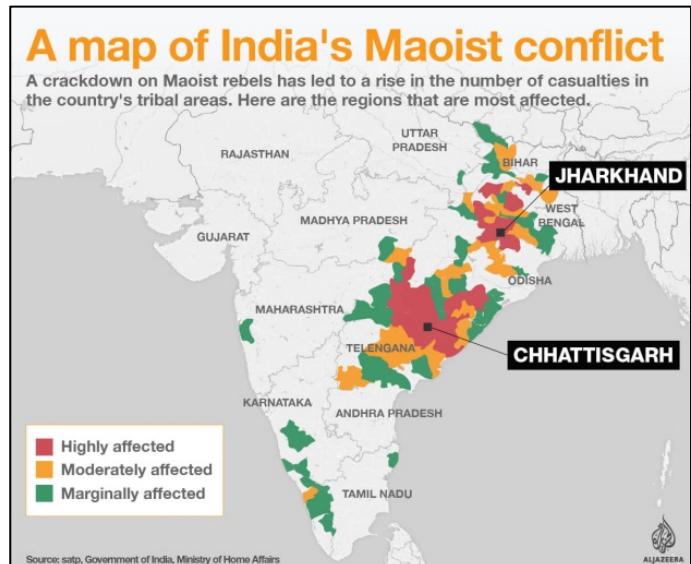
The jungles around the interstate borders have always been the preferred hiding spaces for the Maoists.

Different Counter-insurgency (COIN) strategies: Employed so far -

- **People-centric approach:** Through “winning hearts and minds”; is built on the notions of competitive state-building to address economic and governance deficiencies.
- **Enemy-centric approach:** The success of the state of Andhra Pradesh in curbing the Maoist problem is often attributed to this approach.
 - E.g. “Counter-guerrilla” tactics and jungle warfare was developed on the premise that Maoist guerrilla can only be countered by a state guerrilla.
- **A judicious mix of the enemy-centric and people-centric approaches:**
 - E.g. Greyhounds in Andhra Pradesh also worked on short-gestation-period developmental works.
 - Surrender and rehabilitation policies with sustained military pressure: As it was worked out in Andhra Pradesh and Odisha (after 2014 guidelines of the central government).
- **Negotiating with the insurgents:** This approach will be suitable for Maoists, as they may not fall under the “worst” category, as successive governments have labelled them as “misguided” youth.

Way forward: An ideal COIN with the dual objective of defeating the insurgents militarily and fully quell the insurgent impulses.

- **Economic development:** To mend conflict over the distribution of resources.
- **Cooperation between the states:** States must do more to synergise their efforts by launching coordinated operations, thereby denying Maoists any space for manoeuvrability.
- **Improve the governance:** Create a system where the tribal population feels that the government is representative, not repressive.
 - Opening negotiation channels and policies like surrender and rehabilitation, creating a system where the traditional elite does not control the distribution of power.
 - It is also important to segregate the population from the insurgents both operationally and ideologically.
 - It needs to be understood that Maoists are not treated on par with terrorists- as successive governments have labelled them as “misguided” youth.



Why the Personal Data Protection Bill Matters

THE HINDU
12th April 2021

RELEVANCE FOR UPSC-CSE:

- **GS Paper 2:** Indian Constitution - Basic Provisions; Government Policies and Interventions for Development in various sectors and Issues arising out of their Design and Implementation.

RELATED KEYWORDS: Regulatory vacuum;

ARTICLE SUMMARY

Context: A critical analysis of the Personal Data Protection Bill, 2019.

Need for a Data Protection Bill 2019: Currently under the scrutiny of a Joint Parliamentary Committee.

- **Accommodating the changing trends:** Increased participation of people in the digital economy.
- **Increasing risks:** Increasing number of personal data breaches from major digital service providers. E.g. alleged data breach at MobiKwik co., risking data of 9.9 crore users.
- **Issues in existing data-protection framework under Information Technology Act, 2000:**
 - **Overriding user's consent provisions:** Compounded by broad conditions, users inability to understand implications, lack of emphasis on privacy etc.
 - **Exemptions to government agencies:** IT Act does not apply to government agencies resulting in a regulatory vacuum.
 - **Incapacity:** Of framework to address risks emerging from new developments in data processing technology.
- **Judicial intervention:** *Justice K.S. Puttaswamy (Retd) v. Union of India* judgment 2017 established the right to privacy as a fundamental right, called for a data protection law.
- **Administrative recommendation:** **Justice B.N. Srikrishna committee** suggested a draft data protection law.

Provisions of the Bill

- **Establishes a level playing field:** Applicable to both government and private entities across all sectors.
- **Emphasises data security and data privacy:** Entities will have to maintain security safeguards to protect personal data, fulfil a set of data protection obligations and transparency and accountability measures.
- **Give users a set of rights over their personal data and means to exercise those rights:** A user will be able to obtain information about different kinds of personal data that an entity has about them and how the entity is processing that data.
- **Creates an independent and powerful regulator:** Known as the **Data Protection Authority (DPA)**.

Associated concerns

- **Exempt provisions/powers:** Central government can exempt any government agency from complying with the Bill (Clause 35), and thus the government will be able to process any data.
- **Difficult to enforce safeguards:** Bill threatens legal consequences for users who withdraw their consent for a data processing activity and thus effectively discourage users from withdrawing consent.
- **Question over the effectiveness of DPA** as an independent regulator, upholding users' interests.

Decoding the data protection bill

WHAT IT MEANS FOR CONSUMERS

- **DATA** can be processed or shared by any entity only after consent.
- **SAFEGUARDS**, including penalties, introduced to prevent misuse of personal data.
- **ALL** data to be categorized under three heads— general, sensitive and critical.

THE GOVERNMENT & REGULATORY ROLE

- **GOVT** will have the power to obtain any user's non-personal data from companies.
- **THE bill** mandates that all financial and critical data has to be stored in India.
- **SENSITIVE** data has to be stored in India but can be processed outside with consent.

WHAT COMPANIES HAVE TO DO

- **SOCIAL** media firms to formulate a voluntary verification process for users.
- **SHARING** data without consent will entail a fine of ₹15 crore or 4% of global turnover.
- **DATA** breach or inaction will entail a fine of ₹5 crore or 2% of global turnover.

Source: Mint research



I have been MK Sir's student since 2018. I have been part of the INA Crash Course, QEP programme and the Interview programme, among others. I would like to thank MK Yadav Sir. He helped me at all the levels - whether the Prelims, Mains, or the Interview - it was an entire package for me. Special thank you from my side to Sir and the entire theIAShub team for helping me achieve this success.

HIMANSHU GUPTA | AIR - 27, CSE 2019



Scaling Up Vaccine Production

THE HINDU
13th April 2021

RELEVANCE FOR UPSC-CSE:

- **GS Paper 2:** Issues Relating to Development and Management of Social Sector/Services relating to Health, Education, Human Resources.

RELATED KEYWORDS: No Relevant Keywords.

ARTICLE SUMMARY

Context: An overview of legal options to scale up vaccine production.

Background status of vaccine production: According to Observer Research Foundation, till the end of March, India produced 316 million doses of Covishield and Covaxin, two COVID-19 vaccines in use in India.

- **Exports:** Of this, 64.5 million doses have been exported.
- **Challenges:** Centralised procurement, distribution, and coordination with different state governments and local authorities.

The demand-supply gap

Demand (Number of doses required per month to achieve target by July 31)

13.18

Supply (estimated production capacity as of March 2021)

8.2

- Serum Institute of India - 7
- Bharat Biotech - 1.2

(Doses in crore)

Demand-supply gap

4.98

To meet this gap, manufacturing capacities have to be ramped up and other foreign vaccines should be made available in the country

Legal options to scale up production

- **Non-IP-based solutions:**
 - **Section 2 of Epidemic Diseases Act of 1897:** Empowers government, during an outbreak of an epidemic, to take measures that it may deem necessary to prevent an outbreak or its spread.
 - **Section 26B of the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940:** Empowers the Central government to regulate the sale, manufacture, and distribution of a drug that is essential to meet the requirements of an emergency arising due to an epidemic.
 - **Loaning manufacturing capacity:** Government can direct pharmaceutical companies to loan their manufacturing capacity to existing COVID-19 manufacturers like Serum Institute of India and Bharat Biotech.
- **IP-based solutions**
 - **Section 100 of Patents Act, 1970:** Central government has the power to authorise anyone (such as specific pharmaceutical companies) to use any patents or patent applications for “purposes of government”.
 - **Section 92 of the Patents Act:** Allows the Central government to issue a compulsory licence.
 - **Relax IP rights:** For e.g. All COVID-19 vaccine projects that are funded by taxpayer’s money shall not claim IP rights.
 - **Role of the public sector:** Government needs to explore the production capabilities of pharmaceutical companies in the public sector to build India’s manufacturing competence.
 - ✓ For instance, Haffkine Biopharmaceutical Corporation, a State government public sector undertaking, can manufacture Covaxin immediately.





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End of the Digital Divide

TIMES OF INDIA
14th April 2021

RELEVANCE FOR UPSC-CSE:

- **GS Paper 2:** Issues relating to development and management of Social Sector/Services.
- **GS Paper 3:** Indian Economy and issues relating to planning, mobilization of resources, growth, development and employment.

RELATED KEYWORDS: Digital divide; “Digital GDP”;

ARTICLE SUMMARY

Context: Fast-spreading digital revolution offers a new growth path for India and other emerging nations.

Impact of the digital revolution on the economy:

- **Fuels domestic demand:** Emerging nations are adopting cutting-edge technology at a lower cost, which is allowing them to overcome traditional obstacles to growth.
- **Allows more access to services:** Over the last decade, the number of smartphone owners increased from 150 million to 4 billion worldwide, giving more accessibility to goods and services.
- **Huge growth for emerging economies:** Developing nations are adopting common digital technologies more quickly than the rich since they lack brick and mortar infrastructure, forcing the citizens to shift to the digital space. This has led to the following -
 - **Establishment of tech firms in emerging countries:** Since 2014, more than 10,000 tech firms have been launched in emerging markets – nearly half of them outside China.
 - **Growth of digital revenues:** Among the top 30 nations by revenue from digital services as a share of GDP, more than half are in the emerging world.
 - ✓ Since 2017, digital revenue has been growing in emerging countries at an annual pace of 26%, compared to 11% in the developed ones.
 - ✓ While India ranks 12th in the world with digital revenues as a share of the economy, revenues are growing at a rate of 33% (approaching 3% of the global) due to the growth of e-commerce.
 - **Led to the dominance of local firms:** With Amazon of China, there are now Amazons of Russia, Poland, Latin America, and Southeast Asia.
- **Narrowed gap of the digital divide:** Though only 5% of Kenyans carry credit cards, more than 70% have access to digital banking.
 - Last decade, the number of internet users doubled in the G20 nations, but the biggest gains came in emerging nations such as Brazil and India, “narrowing the gap” in access to digital services.
- **Impact on productivity:** Many governments are moving services online to make them more transparent and less vulnerable to corruption.
 - Since 2010, the cost of starting a business has held steady in developed countries while falling sharply in emerging countries, from 66% to just 27% of the average annual income.
 - Lagos and Nairobi are rising as local fintech hubs, where leading executives vow to raise Africa’s “digital GDP” by widening access to internet financing.

India's digital divide

Rural population **66%**

Internet density **25.3%**

Urban population **34%**

Internet density **97.9%**

Source: Telecom Regulatory Authority of India

The European Center for Digital Competitiveness:

Scores G20 nations by the pace of progress in digital ecosystems and “mindset”, and puts four emerging nations in the top 5: Saudi Arabia, Indonesia, China, and Argentina.

I want to express my heartful gratitude to entire team of **theIAShub**. I have been a part of the INA and the Interview program. These courses helped me a lot during Preparation. They enabled me to cover current affairs extensively in a short period. Also strengthened my GS 3 and Essay. MK Sir gave a lot of motivation and encouragement throughout the process. Thank you Sir and the Entire team.



PARI BISHNOI | AIR - 30, CSE 2019



Just Transition to Net Zero

INDIAN EXPRESS
16th April 2021

RELEVANCE FOR UPSC-CSE:

- **GS Paper 3:** Conservation, environmental pollution and degradation.

RELATED KEYWORDS: "Just transition"; Energy justice; Climate justice; Environmental justice.

ARTICLE SUMMARY

Context: If India intends to announce an ambition for net-zero, then as a country that uses coal for more than 70% of its energy, it must ensure support for people and communities who are dependent on the coal sector.

Need for 'Just Transition' towards net-zero: While there are multiple pathways to achieve net-zero emissions, almost all of them require moving away from coal. Increasingly, the plan also carries elements of a "just transition".

- It emerged from the labour movements of the 1970s; the term advocated support to workers who were forced to transition due to environmental and social concerns.
- Present-day phase-out plans incorporates elements of **energy justice, climate justice, and environmental justice**.
- Thus, most coal phase-out plans include a roadmap for workers and communities dependent on fossil fuels. For E.g.
 - **The German** coal phase-out plan seeks to end coal burning by 2038 and calls for an investment of more than 50 billion euros for mining and plant operators, impacted regions, and employees.
 - **In the US**, a new Interagency Working Group on Coal and Power Plant Communities and Economic Revitalisation is created, which is supposed to deliver resources that would revitalise the coal, oil, and gas communities.
 - **Canada** had placed a **Just Transition Taskforce** in 2018 when it decided to phase out coal by 2030.

The challenges faced by India: In transitioning from a coal economy to net-zero.

- **High dependence on coal for energy:** In FY20, India consumed approximately 942 million tonnes (MT) of coal, of which 730 MT was produced domestically.
- **Impact on formal direct and indirect employment in the coal value chain:** One study has pegged **direct coal jobs at 7,44,984**, while another pegs it at approximately 12,00,000 excluding contract employees.
 - According to Kuntala Lahiri-Dutt's concept, there are two more coal economies along with the formal coal value chain, i.e., **statecraft coal** (non-legal small-scale coal mines in the northeast) and **subsistence coal** (small-scale collieries run on village commons usually bordering formal mines) for which **there are no official employment figures**.
- **Difficult to make decisions on financing the transition:** As there is a lack of adequate information on data factors like education, skill levels, willingness to migrate, and caste of coal workers.
 - **Loss to exchequer:** In FY20, the Centre alone collected approximately Rs 29,200 crore in GST compensation cess from coal. These revenue receipts are **used for development** under different budget heads at the state level.

Way forward: Address the consequences of transitioning - If India wants to adopt a net-zero target, then it calls for the proper planning in place to counter the social and economic consequences caused by phasing out of coal.



This was my first attempt and I want to thank MK Yadav Sir for being there throughout the entire process. Since this was my first attempt, I needed some personalised guidance, which he provided beautifully. I joined INA and QEP for my Mains preparation. Even at the interview stage, he used to sit for long hours to sharpen my speaking skills and work on my feedback. Even more than the guidance, the motivation and the faith in my abilities helped me sail through the process. Thank you Sir, and everyone at **theIAShub**.

SIMI KARAN (AIR - 31) | INTERVIEW MARKS - 201

“



River of Life

INDIAN EXPRESS

17th April 2021

RELEVANCE FOR UPSC-CSE:

- GS Paper 3: Conservation, environmental pollution and degradation.

RELATED KEYWORDS: ‘Sangam approach’; Transform “Jal Chetna” into “Jan Chetna” and turn it into a “Jal Aandolan”;

ARTICLE SUMMARY

Context: The holistic approach adopted under the ‘Namami Gange’ project brings together public policy, technology intervention, and community participation to restore the Ganga’s purity and biodiversity.

Causes for Ganga pollution: An increase in population, coupled with unregulated industrialization and unsustainable agricultural practices, has led to a significant rise in pollutants in the river.

- As a result, Ganga, which once sustained various life forms, now struggles to support its rich biodiversity. Depleting numbers of the Gangetic dolphins is a glaring example.

‘Sangam Approach’: The ‘Namami Gange’ project’s holistic approach brings together public policy, technology intervention, and community participation to rejuvenate River Ganga.

- Public policy:** In 2016, the government authorized the National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) to exercise powers under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986.
 - Issued notices to authorities wherever required, after regularly conducting the surprise checks on sewage treatment plants (STPs).
 - Issued directives on regulating the mining activities on river banks, prohibiting encroachment, and regulating activities like the immersion of idols.
- Technology intervention:**
 - NMCG adopted cutting-edge technologies like satellite imagery, remote sensing, and geospatial solutions, which facilitated real-time monitoring of pollutants in Ganga and its tributaries.
 - Scientific forecast models were deployed for designing new sewage treatment infrastructure.
- Easing private partnerships:** Adopted hybrid annuity model for project implementation, thereby entrusting long-term responsibility for operations and maintenance on the project executors.
- Community participation:** Through them, the government seeks to transform “jal chetna” into “jan chetna” and turn it into a “jal aandolan”.
 - Collaboration with premier institutes: NMCG is actively working together with premier institutes like the Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun, ICAR-Central Inland Fisheries Research Institute, Kolkata, and the Centre for Environment Education, Ahmedabad, to restore the river’s biodiversity.
 - Association with the Ministry of Agriculture: To promote organic farming in villages of Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, and Jharkhand.
 - A long-term Intensive and Scientific Afforestation Plan is under implementation in the river along with the Forest Research Institute, Dehradun.

Clean-up Act: Change in the Air

Some initiatives planned under Namami Gange (Amount Earmarked In ₹ Crore)

Sewerage Infrastructure	8000
River Front Management	250
Industrial Pollution	1000
Solid Waste Management	50
Aviral Ganga	100
R&D	500
Ganga Task Force	400
Awareness Creation	128
Bio Diversity Conservation	150



theIAShub was very instrumental in improving my GS answers - both in terms of content and style. The material provided was best in class and exhaustive and the style of delivery was very lucid and student friendly. Apart from INA for current affairs, short courses on Budget, Economic Survey, Environment, History, etc were useful in taking my Prelims score from 108 (2018) to 125+ (2019). I am very grateful to MK Yadav Sir for his comprehensive guidance and personalised advice.

VISHAL KHATRI | AIR - 5, IFOS 2019



Beyond the Jal Shakti Abhiyan

BUSINESS STANDARD
19th April 2021

RELEVANCE FOR UPSC-CSE:

- **GS Paper 3:** Environment: Conservation, environmental pollution and degradation;

RELATED KEYWORDS: In situ water capturing; Catch the rain where it falls and when it falls;

ARTICLE SUMMARY

Context: Given the state of the water crisis and skewed rainfall distribution in India, it is required to take steps beyond Jal Shakti Abhiyan (JSA) phase-II for water conservation.

Need for adopting urgent water conservation methods:

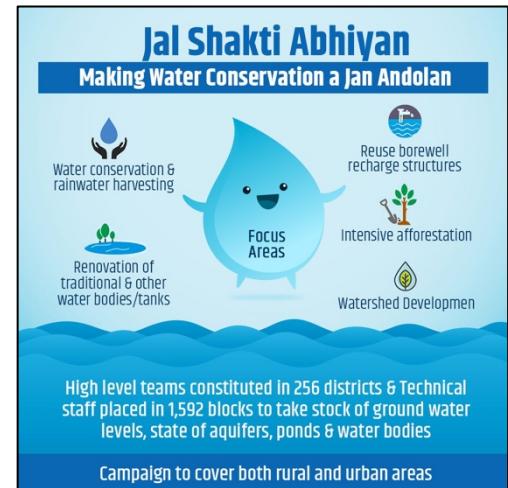
- **State of water crisis:** Projections by the National Institution for Transforming India (NITI) Aayog.
 - Nearly 600 million Indians are facing “high to extreme” water stress, likely to double by 2030.
 - About 22 % of groundwater has either dried up or is in the critical category.
 - India might lose nearly 6 % of its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) by 2050 due to water-related factors.
- **Skewed rainfall distribution:** Around 88 cm of 117-120 cm (annual area-weighted average rainfall in India) comes in the main monsoon season of just four months (June to September).

Positive aspects of JSA phase-II:

- **Longer duration of the programme:** Earlier, water conservation measures were taken up during the monsoon season, but JSA phase-II also covers pre-monsoon season, which is suitable for building or renovating rainwater collection infrastructure.
- **A people-driven programme:** This type of programme was successful in the past in semi-arid areas of Rajasthan and Gujarat, and their key components were water storage structures like Tankis (in homes), Tankas (in villages), Bowlies (step-wells).
- **In situ capturing and preserving rainwater approach:** as reflected in the campaign’s motto: “Catch the rain where it falls and when it falls.”
 - This is fine-tuned version of the earlier slogan: “Khet ka pani khet mein; gaon ka pani gaon mein”, meaning preserving rainwater falling in crop fields and villages in these respective places.
 - This helps to meet off-season contingencies in farms and villages, augments water availability in low-rainfall areas, and increase growth in crop productivity.
 - A major concern is that only a few states actually put this concept into practice.

Way forward: Many meteorologists and hydrologists believe that India is not an innately water-deficient nation. It is the indiscriminate splurging of water that has made it so. Following measures can be considered:

- **Prudent management of water resources:** Step up the level of trapping, suitably conserving and efficiently utilising the available rainwater.
- **Campaigns like JSA should sustain for years:** Rather than launching as occasional water conservation drives.



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The Ordinance Route is Bad, Repromulgation Worse

THE HINDU
20th April 2021

RELEVANCE FOR UPSC-CSE:

- **GS Paper 2:** Indian Constitution—Historical Underpinnings, Evolution, Features, Amendments, Significant Provisions and Basic Structure, Functions and Responsibilities of the Union and the States.

RELATED KEYWORDS: Concept of checks and balances; Separation of powers; Colourable exercise of power;

ARTICLE SUMMARY

Context: The central government re-promulgated the Commission for Air Quality Management in National Capital Region and Adjoining Areas Ordinance, 2020, raising questions about the practice of issuing ordinances.

About Ordinance Powers

- **Constitutional provision:** Constitution permits Central (**Article 123**) and State governments (**Article 213**) to make laws (as an emergency provision) when Parliament (or State Legislature) is not in session.
- **Safeguard:** Automatic expiry after six weeks from the time Parliament (or State Legislature) next meets.

An overview of misuse of Ordinances

- **Frequent use:** In the 1950s, central ordinances were issued at an average of 7.1 per year, peaked in the 1990s at 19.6 per year, and declined to 7.9 per year in the 2010s.
 - Still, 16 ordinances were issued in 2019, 15 in 2020, and four till now (April 2021) this year.
 - Bihar issued 256 ordinances between 1967 and 1981, of which 69 were re-promulgated several times, 11 kept alive for more than ten years.
- **Recent examples:**
 - In 2013 and 2014, the Securities Laws (Amendment) Ordinance was promulgated three times.
 - **Ordinance to amend the Land Acquisition Act 2014**, and re-promulgated twice in 2015.
 - **The Indian Medical Council Amendment Ordinance** in 2018, and reissued in 2019, as it was passed by only one House of Parliament in intervening session.
 - **Kerala ordinance** to set up a Kerala University of Digital Sciences, Innovation and Technology promulgated five times in 2020-21.

Judicial interventions and legal clarifications

- **D.C. Wadhwa v State of Bihar case, 1986:** The SC held it is a **colourable exercise of power** for the government to ignore Legislature, thus to continue to regulate the life and liberty of the citizens through Ordinance made by the Executive.
- **Krishna Kumar Singh v State of Bihar case, 2017:** Re-promulgation of ordinances is a fraud on Constitution and a subversion of democratic legislative processes.

Conclusion:

- Ordinances are to tackle exigencies when the Legislature is not in session and expire at the end of six weeks of the next meeting of the Legislature.
- Repromulgation is not permitted as that would be a usurpation of legislative power by the Executive.
- Need to uphold checks and balances upholding the separation of power as a responsibility of legislatures and the courts.



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Privatisation No More a Dirty Word

ECONOMIC TIMES

20th April 2021

RELEVANCE FOR UPSC-CSE:

- **GS Paper 3:** Indian Economy and issues relating to Planning, Mobilization of Resources, Growth, Development and Employment.

RELATED KEYWORDS: Catalyzing the animal spirits of the young workforce; All or none approach; Light touch in regulatory approach.

ARTICLE SUMMARY

Context: An analysis of the Government of India's (GoI) clear position in privatisation of public sector enterprises.

Evolution of Privatization in India:

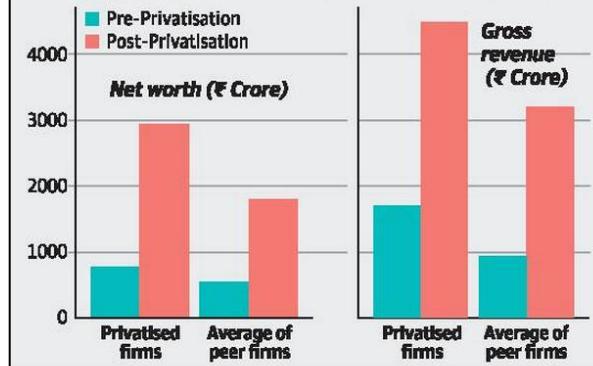
- **Disinvestment Commission, 1996:** Headed by G V Ramakrishna, it outlined the privatization agenda.
- **Section 5.4 of Budget 2000:** Having following elements -
 - **Restructure and revive** potentially viable PSUs.
 - **Close down** PSUs that cannot be revived.
 - **Bring down government equity** in all non-strategic PSUs to 26% or lower.
 - **Fully protect the interests of workers.**
- **Annexure 3 of Budget 2021:** Objectives of GoI's disinvestment policy included -
 - **Minimizing the presence of Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs)**, including financial institutions.
 - **Creating new investment space** for the private sector.
 - **Post disinvestment economic growth of CPSEs/financial institutions** through infusion of private capital, technology and best management practices.
 - Disinvestment proceeds to **finance the social sector and developmental programmes.**

Positive aspects of current policy

- **The clarity in strategy:** There is no attempt on the part of present government to restructure CPSEs. GoI intends to have a presence in **four strategic sectors**; GoI's presence will be meaningful and consolidated.
 - Atomic energy, space and defence.
 - Transport and telecommunications.
 - Power, petroleum, coal and other minerals.
 - Banking, insurance and financial services.
- **'All or none' approach towards sectoral presence:** There is no 'call option' awarded to itself through a 26% stake, giving the government a veto right on crucial business decisions.
- **Kept financial objectives apart from strategic ones:** The disinvestment policy is not based on the narrow financial consideration whether a CPSE is (or can be) profitable or not, but on whether GoI should be running a particular CPSE at all.
- **Addressing the downward spiral trend in CPSE:** Between 2009-10 and 2018-19, net revenue from operations to capital employed had reduced from 137.1% to 92.6%.
 - Net profit to capital employed reduced from 10.15% to 5.56%.
 - **Economic Survey 2019** highlights that privatized CPSEs have been able to generate more wealth from same resources.
 - India's transition from lining up in queue to get a landline telephone connection (1980s) to the world's highest per-capita data consumption and cheapest data rates (2010s) supports privatization.

Impact of privatisation

Graph shows net worth, gross revenue of privatised CPSEs and their peers before and after privatisation of the CPSEs



SOURCE: SURVEY CALCULATIONS BASED ON DATA FROM CMIE PROWEES

Conclusion: India needs an economic model which has a **light touch in its regulatory approach** and is significant in its impact. This model should blend the need for social welfare while catalyzing the animal spirits of a young workforce.





The Last Word on the State And Temples

THE HINDU

22nd April 2021

RELEVANCE FOR UPSC-CSE:

- **GS Paper 2:** Indian Constitution — Features, Amendments, Significant Provisions and Basic Structure, Functions and Responsibilities of the Union and the States.

RELATED KEYWORDS: State – The tribune of social justice;

ARTICLE SUMMARY

Context: A critical analysis of the movement seeking to free Hindu temples from state control and demanding to replace State by the community of Hindus.

Arguments in support of the demand

- **Inspired by the West:** Where the idea of governments overseeing the management of religious institutions strikes as anathema to a secular, democratic republic.
- **Fundamental right of community:** Article 26 grants to every “religious denomination” right to establish institutions, to manage its affairs in matters of religion, to own and acquire property, and to administer that property in accordance with the law.
- **Biased state interference:** It is alleged that state interference is dominant in Hindu religious affairs only.

Arguments against the demand

- **Lack of clarity:** On who constitutes or who selects the community of Hindus (to oversee the management of temples).
- **Underlying private interests to reinstate hierarchical divisions:** By going back to status quo ante that existed before State intervened in the management of temples.
 - **Unjust consequence:** Reassertion of social powers by dominant groups.
- **Against the views of the Constituent assembly:** Left unattended, religion could lead to a perpetuation of historical evils; thus, religion cannot be treated as a subject beyond the sovereign powers of State.
- **Provision of Constitutional Checks and balances:** Protections of Article 25 and 26 are restricted to matters within the domain of religion, and Government has every authority to regulate and restrict a secular function performed by a public religious institution.
 - **For e.g.** Madras enacted a Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments Act in 1951, which was replaced in 1959 by the Tamil Nadu Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments (HR&CE) Act.
 - The right to freedom of religion under **Article 25 and 26** are subjected to **public order, morality and health.**
 - In the **Shirur Mutt case (1954)** – Court recognised that the basic framework of the 1951 law was in perfect consonance with authority vested in the State under Articles 25 and 26.
- **Essential role of State:** As a tribune of social justice.
 - **Historical expressions of state sovereignty extending to religion:** Hindu kings employing ministries to supervise temples and charitable bodies, Mughal rulers' appointments to manage Waqf etc.
 - **Noble objectives:** Statutes of 1951 and 1959 were framed with the objective to ensure that Hindu public endowments were being put to use for true purposes for which endowments were made.
 - **Equal treatment of all religion:** Besides Hindu laws, the government also regulate other religions like Muslims (Waqf Act, 1995).

Conclusion: Demand for transparency and to hold State responsible to administrative standards prescribed under the law shall be the way forward, instead of a riskier position demanding state withdrawal.





Let us Re-Envision Our Cities for Resilience in the Wake of Covid

LIVEMINT

23rd April 2021

RELEVANCE FOR UPSC-CSE:

- **GS Paper 1:** Urbanisation, their problems and their remedies.

RELATED KEYWORDS: Reverse migration; Knowledge spill-overs; Compartmentalised challenges; City as ‘a living whole’; Public data for social good; ‘Top-of-the-funnel’ innovations;

ARTICLE SUMMARY

Context: The pandemic holds lessons that should spur India to reshape its urban agglomerations into spaces where everyone can thrive.

Cities at the centre of India’s development agenda (\$5 trillion economy)

- **Cities are engines of growth and prosperity:** Labour markets that attract a diverse group of workers and industries, spurring ‘knowledge spillovers and innovation’.
- **Hubs of higher productivity and wages:** In turn attracting more talent.
- **Global experience:** Countries that prioritised and planned for urbanisation achieved higher growth and employment.
- **Positive spillovers:** Getting urbanisation right addresses climate and environmental risks.

Lessons from Covid-19 pandemic

- **Migrant crisis:** Cities failed to provide for their most vulnerable residents during pandemic, triggering an unprecedented reverse migration back to rural areas.
- **City is ‘a living whole’:** Compartmentalised approach to public health, housing, transportation, water and sanitation is inadequate.
- **Need for city resilience:** Environmental challenges (E.g. Kerala floods, Chennai floods etc.) and pandemic risk is increasing.

Way forward: A holistic approach to investing in cities: Four key areas that we must invest in to build truly integrated, inclusive and resilient cities -

- **Data:** High-quality open data and research helps policymakers make evidence-based decisions.
 - **India Urban Data Exchange**, developed in partnership with ministry of housing and urban affairs (MoHUA) and Indian Institute of Science – Platform for the use of public data for social good.
 - **Property Rights Research Consortium**, a group of leading think-tanks, provides data and policy support on land administration and urban housing issues.
- **Technology:** Can increase transparency and state capacity to deliver basic urban services.
 - **eGovernments Foundation**, working with MoHUA to deploy the **National Urban Innovation Stack**, an open-source platform for transparent municipal operations.
 - **Transerve**, leveraging geo-spatial technology for city planning and improving service delivery.
- **Engaging communities:** Grassroot organisations and community leaders play a critical role as first responders and in delivering essential supplies.
 - **Reap Benefit** launched ‘**Covid Hub**’, a crowd-sourced citizens’ network that supports last-mile delivery of healthcare, food and income relief.
- **Innovation:** Fosters ‘top-of-the-funnel’ innovations in urban governance.
 - **MoHUA and Nudge Foundation** launched an ‘**Equal Cities Challenge**’, a contest to encourage solutions that can improve living conditions for the urban poor.



Green Hydrogen can Spearhead India's Transition to Clean Energy

LIVEMINT
26th April 2021

RELEVANCE FOR UPSC-CSE:

- GS Paper 3: Conservation, Environmental Pollution and Degradation, Environmental Impact Assessment.

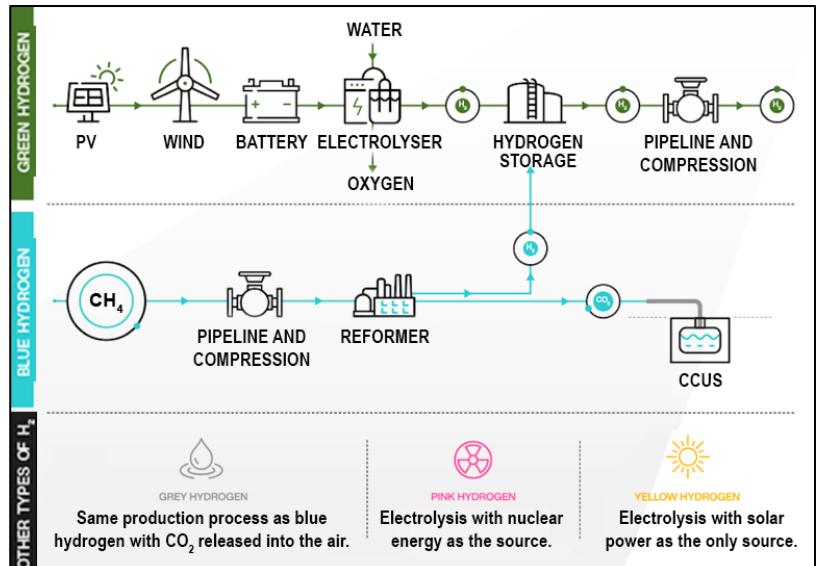
RELATED KEYWORDS: Carbon-free products; Development transition;

ARTICLE SUMMARY

Context: An analysis on green hydrogen – its significance in changing energy paradigm and necessary policy reforms to be put in place to leverage the potential.

An overview of the Indian energy paradigm

- High carbon dependence:** 82% energy from sources such as coal, oil and gas, and biomass.
 - India is the world's third-largest emitter:** With 3.6 gigatonnes of Co2 equivalent emissions.
- Heavy import-dependent:** 85% for crude oil, 53% for gas, and 24% for coal.
 - Impact on import bill:** Reaching \$160 billion and accounted by vulnerabilities in fuel prices.
- Growing impetus towards carbon-free products and markets:** As several countries announced net-zero targets, sustainability and rapid growth could go hand-in-hand by rapid innovation in clean energy sector.
- Significant growth potential:**
 - International Energy Agency (IEA):** India will overtake European Union as the world's third-largest energy consumer by 2030.
 - Growth share:** India will account for biggest share of energy demand growth over next two decades.
- Hydrogen, is also a **chemical feedstock** with an existing global market of 70 million tonnes.
 - Indian market:** India consumes 6 Mt of hydrogen (8.5% of global demand) annually, which is made by reforming 18 Mt of import-dependent natural gas.



Significance of green hydrogen

- About:** Green hydrogen (H_2) is made by splitting water (H_2O) via renewable power.
- Application as an energy carrier:** Can replace some energy imports, feasible, given India's record-low renewable power prices ($\text{₹}1.99/\$2.7$ cents per kWh).
- Industrial application:** Ideal power source for energy-intensive industries like refining, steel, cement, heavy mobility, and industrial heating.
- Critical to meet India's target of 450 gigawatts of renewable energy by 2030:**
 - Addressing 'duck curve' scenario (as experienced by California):** By providing an alternative market for cheap surplus generation by renewables in peak-generation hours.
 - Co-advantage:** As electricity accounts for 70% of the production cost of **green hydrogen**, cheap electricity from renewables adds to the competitiveness of green hydrogen.
- Economic potential – Sunrise industry:** Enable Indian entrepreneurs to capture new avenues of growth.
 - Attracting industries:** Locally available green hydrogen can attract high-value green industries, like green steel and green chemicals, to shift production to India.
 - New market and job creation:** Localization of production could create a new green technology market worth \$18-20 billion and generate domestic jobs.
 - Export potential:** Massive opportunity to create regional hubs to export high-value green products and engineering, procurement, and construction services.
 - Global Hydrogen Council:** Classified India as a net exporter of green hydrogen from 2030.

Way forward

- **Inspirations from the global trend:** West Asian countries, Chile and Australia are aiming to become leaders in green hydrogen.
- **Policy reforms necessary to support green hydrogen transition**
 - **Announce ambitious targets for green hydrogen and electrolyzer capacity by 2030:** On similar lines as renewables.
 - **Mandate blending a certain percentage of green hydrogen with grey hydrogen:** For existing applications and mandate new greenfield capacities of hydrogen applications like oil refining and fertilizers to use only green hydrogen from a future cut-off date.
 - **Aim to build a vibrant hydrogen products export industry:** Such as green steel, using a phased manufacturing programme.
 - **Form a regional alliance with South Korea, Japan, and Singapore:** To export green hydrogen from coastal India to help them reach their net-zero ambitions.
 - **Explore dollar-linked contracts for the procurement of hydrogen:** As capital cost contributes around 30% of green hydrogen cost.
 - **Roll out production-linked incentive scheme:** For electrolyzer manufacturing.

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Another Wave Spells More Nutrition Loss

THE HINDU
27th April 2021

RELEVANCE FOR UPSC-CSE:

- **GS Paper 2:** Issues Relating to Development and Management of Social Sector/Services relating to Health; Issues related to hunger and poverty.

RELATED KEYWORDS: Debilitating food and financial insecurities.

ARTICLE SUMMARY

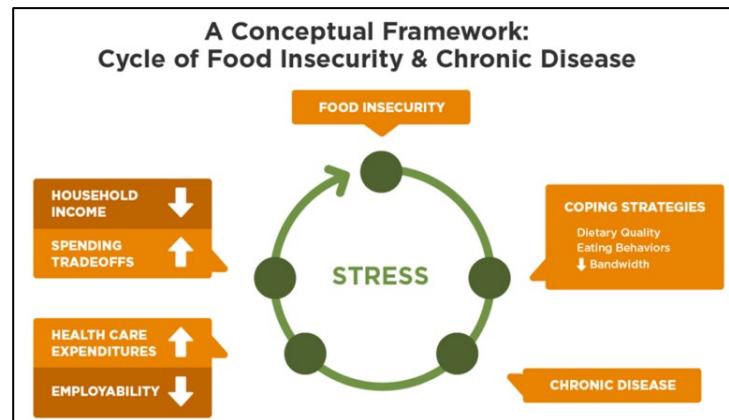
Context: An analysis on continuing pandemic impact and rising food insecurity in India.

Pandemic and food insecurity

- **Precarious pre-pandemic condition:** India ranked 102 among 117 countries in Global Hunger Index 2019
- **The Rapid Rural Community Response (RCRC) Survey:** Collected three rounds of data since lockdown (third round conducted between December 2020-January 2021)
 - **Persistence of cutting down on food even nine months after 1st lockdown:** 40% of households cut down on food during 1st lockdown, 25% continued to cut down during 3rd round of the survey.
 - **Higher cutting down on nutritious food:** 80% cut down on milk, vegetables, pulses, and oil (around 50% reported cutting down on pulses alone).
 - **Worst performing states:** Uttar Pradesh and Jharkhand.
 - **Underlying cause:** People losing their jobs and/or being pushed into lower income brackets over time due to the nature and handling of the pandemic.
 - **Downward shift in incomes:** Over 70% reported a reduction in incomes post the pandemic.
 - ✓ While 55% of households recalled earning less than Rs.5,000 per month prior to the pandemic, 74% reported doing so in December 2020-January 2021.
 - **Worst impact on migrants:** 74% of households had migrant members who had returned to the village during or after lockdown (in mid-2020).
 - ✓ 57% among them had gone back to destination city by December-January, with 59% of those remaining also wanting to go back.
 - ✓ **Limited state support:** Among the poorest, households with migrants were more likely to seek work than those without, but less likely to get work under Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) scheme.
- **Shrinking middle class:** Shrunk by over 32 million households in 2020-21 (Pew Research Center).

Way forward

- **Reform state intervention:** The government promised to restart Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY) with 5 kg of rice/wheat per person per month for next two months. **Needed reforms -**
 - Need for similar support for stable longer periods.
 - Expand current offering to include nutritious foods like pulses.
- **Address issues faced in existing schemes:** Such as MGNREGA (delay in wages and rationing).
 - **Ramp up food security schemes:** Such as ration provided to children through anganwadis, Public Distribution System and mid-day meal scheme.
- **New schemes:** Such as a potential urban employment scheme should be explored.
- **Expand community kitchens (Such as Amma canteens):** For migrants stuck in cities without work.





No Country for Women

INDIAN EXPRESS

28th April 2021

RELEVANCE FOR UPSC-CSE:

- **GS Paper 2:** Salient features of Indian Society: Role of women and women's organization; Social empowerment;

RELATED KEYWORDS: Gender-based discrimination; #MeToo movement;

ARTICLE SUMMARY

Context: Though women in India have made some progress recently, India's performance in Global Gender Gap Index released by the World Economic Forum proves the progress is insufficient due to the prevalence of gender-based discrimination.

Progress of women empowerment in India:

- **On the economic front:** Four out of every five women have bank accounts.
- **On social front:** Increase in literacy (3/4 are literate) and usage of menstrual hygiene products, modern contraceptives, mobile phones and internet.

Problems faced by women due to Gender-based discrimination in India:

- **At home:**
 - **Sex-selective abortion:** Done by misusing ultrasound technology.
 - **Work in unpaid domestic chores:** As per the 2019 National Sample Survey Office (NSSO) time-use survey, it is almost ten times more than men.
 - **Spousal violence:** Due to their economic dependence.
- **In society:**
 - **Increase in child marriages:** According to National Family Health Survey (2019-20).
 - **Low educational opportunities:** Only 37% complete Class 10.
 - **Subjected to rapes:** National Crime Records Bureau enumerated nearly **88 rapes daily in 2019**.
- **In politics:**
 - **Low political participation:** The share of women ministers has declined sharply from 23% to 9%.
- **In employment:**
 - **Low women's labour force participation:** At 21%.
 - ✓ Indian boardrooms had only 15 % of women.
 - ✓ There are fewer Indian women in the workforce than even in Saudi Arabia.
 - **Sexual harassment at the workplace:** Exposed by #MeToo movement.
 - **Lack of facilities at the workplace:** E.g. Workplace crèches (legally mandated) are rare.

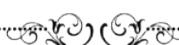
RIFT WIDENS

Highlights of report

- ▶ According to WEF's Global Gender Gap Report 2021, India has closed 62.5% of its gender gap till date
- ▶ India's gender gap on economic participation and opportunity sub-index widened by 3% this year
- ▶ Highest decline on political empowerment sub-index, where India regressed 13.5 percentage points
- ▶ Women's labour force participation rate fell from 24.8% to 22.3%
- ▶ Estimated earned income of women is only one-fifth of men's, which puts India among the bottom 10
- ▶ India ranks among bottom five in discrimination against women in health and survival sub-index
- ▶ As Covid-19 impact continues to be felt, global gender gap has increased by a generation from 99.5 to 135.6 years
- ▶ Iceland is the most gender-equal nation for the 12th time in 15 years
- ▶ Top 10 gender-equal countries include Finland, Norway, New Zealand, Rwanda, Sweden, Ireland and Switzerland

Conclusion: India should rewrite its gender norms by drawing inspiration from countries like Nepal, Bangladesh and Rwanda, where women are empowered politically and economically.

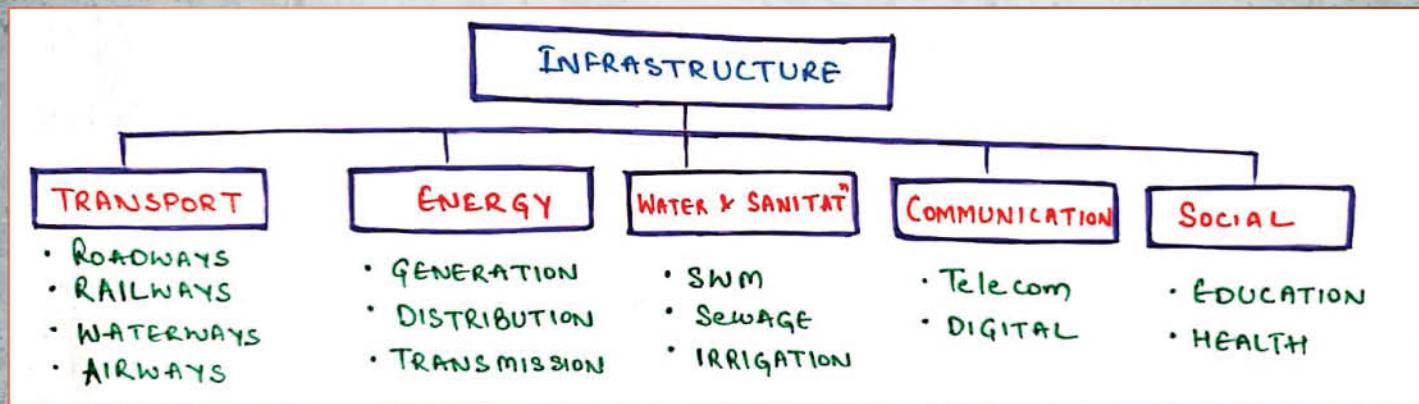
- Within South Asia, 83% of post-conflict Nepali women now work outside homes.
- Bangladesh is the only country where women have reigned as heads-of-state for longer than men.
- In Rwanda, women now dominate two-thirds of parliamentary seats.





Factopedia

INFRASTRUCTURE



INFRASTRUCTURE

Investment

- **Current:** India's infrastructure investment for fiscal year 2018 and 2019 is about **Rs 10 lakh crore** each.
 - **Public (primarily)** – 65%
 - **Private** - 35%

TRANSPORT SECTOR

Contribution to GDP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall: 4.6% (of this Road: 67%, Railways: 15.7%, Air: 11, Water: 7%)
Freight Transport Share	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Road: >60% (US- 37%, China- 22%) • Railways: 35% (China 47%) • Waterways: 9% • Inland Waterways: 0.15% (China 9%, Bangladesh 32%) • Coastal Shipping: 7%
Passenger Transport Share	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Road and others: 85% • Railways: 15%

ROAD SECTOR

Road Network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> India has the 2nd largest road network in the world (55Lakh KM) 		
Cost Efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost of transporting 1 Tonne per km: Roadways: Rs 2.5; Waterways: Rs 1.06; Railways: Rs 1.36 		
Distribution of Roadways	Name	Responsibility	Connects
	National Highways	Union Government	State capitals
	Expressways	Union & State Government	Economic centres
	State highways	State Government	State Capital to District HQ
	District roads	Zila Parishad	District HQ to tehsil and Blocks
	Rural roads	Gram Panchayat	Villages to neighbouring towns
			95% of total road network

Social Damage

- Road Accidents:** 11% of Global deaths (with only 1% of World's vehicles)
- Cost of damage:** 3.14% of GDP

RAILWAYS

Network

- 4th largest network in the world (67,580 route km)

Employment

- It is the single largest employer in India and the eighth largest in the world (employing close to 1.4 mn people)

Capacity
[Eco Survey 2020-21]

- During 2018-19, Indian Railways carried
 - 840 crore passengers (World's largest passenger carrier)
 - 120 crore tonnes of freight (World's fourth-largest freight carrier)

Operating Ratio

- Freight:** 0.59 & **Passenger:** 1.92

Rail Accidents

- 55 in FY20 (104 in FY17)
- Causes:** **Human Error:** 80% & **Unmanned level crossings:** 18%

SHIPPING, PORT, AND INLAND WATERWAYS

Strategic advantage

- Coastline:** 7500 km
- Major ports:** 12 (Proposed 13th : Vadhavan port)
- Non-major ports:** 205

Trade through marine transport

- By Volume:** 95%
- By Value:** 68%

Inland Waterways

- Navigable:** 14,500 kms
- Freight capacity:** <1% of India's total freight (Europe: 7%, USA: 14%, China: 9%)
- Operational Waterways:** Out of 111 NWs, **13 NWs** are operational

Coastal Shipping

- Freight:** <6% of total freight traffic

CIVIL AVIATION

Airports
[Eco Survey 2019-20]

- Total Airports and Airstrips:** 646
- Commercially managed airports by Airport Authority of India:** 136
 - Manage 78% of domestic & 22% of international passenger traffic.

Total throughput of Indian Airport

- 34 crore passengers

Aviation Market

- Current:** 9th largest in the world (USD 16 billion)
- Projected:** 3rd largest by 2024 & largest by 2030.

Domestic Aviation

- Market:** 3rd Largest
- Traffic:** 137 million in FY20 (61 million in FY14)

LOGISTICS SECTOR

Logistics Costs

- Overall:** 14% of GDP (Germany: 8%, USA: 9%, Europe: 10%, Japan: 11%)
- Warehousing costs:** 10% of the total logistics costs

Impact on exports

- 10% decrease in indirect logistics cost can increase 5-8% of exports.

Logistics Performance

- India ranked 44th on the **Logistics Performance Index (LPI)** in 2018 (Latest Available Data)

REAL ESTATE SECTOR

Contribution to GDP

- Construction:** 9% (real estate: 5-6%)
- Expected to contribute 13% by 2025

Market Size

- Rs. 12,000 crores in 2019 (will grow to Rs. 65,000 crores by 2040)
- 3 houses are built per 1,000 people per year
- Expectation:** five houses per 1,000 population

FDI inflow

- Between 2000-2020 Construction is the third-largest sector for FDI inflows

TOURISM SECTOR

Industry highlights

- Share in World Tourist Arrivals:** 1.2%
- Foreign Exchange Earnings (FEEs):** \$29.9 Bn

Contribution to GDP

- 6.8% in 2019

Employment

- In FY20 supported 40 Million jobs (8 % of total employment)

India's Rank

- Travel and Tourism Competitive Index** - 34th position in 2019 (WEF)

- Health Factsheet is covered in detail in November Magazine
- Energy & Education Factsheet is covered in detail in December Magazine
- Digital Infrastructure Factsheet is covered separately in January Magazine

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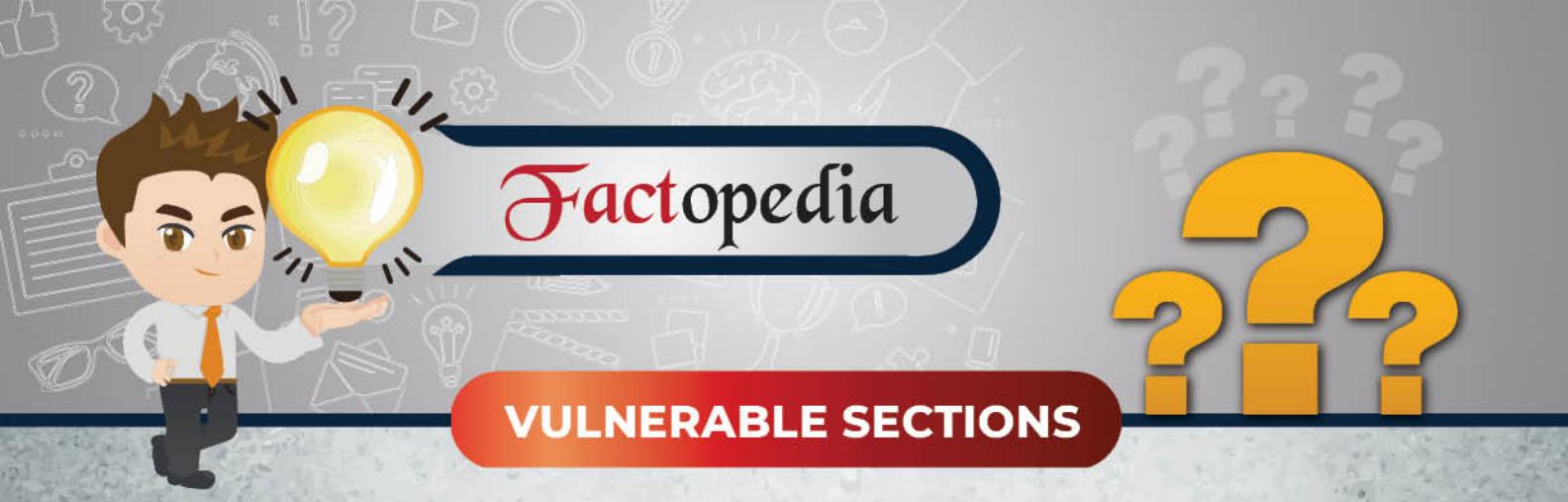
Special Value Addition Themes

**Preceeding Edition -
March 2021**

- ↳ Manufacturing Sector in India
- ↳ Disaster Management

**Upcoming Edition -
May 2021**

- ↳ Governance
- ↳ Banking and Financial System



Factopedia

VULNERABLE SECTIONS

SENIOR CITIZENS

Population	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Elderly persons (aged 60 years or above): 8.6% of population (104 Million)In Rural areas: 71%In Urban Area: 29%
State - wise data on elderly population	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Maximum Population: Kerala (12.6%) followed by Goa (11.2%)Least: Dadra & Nagar Haveli (4%) followed by Arunachal Pradesh (4.6%)
Working Status	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Rural areas: 66% of elderly men and 28% of elderly women were working.Urban areas: 46% of elderly men and 11% of elderly women were working.
Literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Literates among elderly persons: increased from 27% in 1991 to 44% in 2011.
Disease Burden	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Multi-morbidities: 23% of the elderly population.Cardiovascular diseases (CVD): 37% of the population above 75.Diabetes: 14% above 60.

DIFFERENTLY ABLED PEOPLE (DIVYANGJAN)

Population	<ul style="list-style-type: none">2.21% of the total population (increased from 2.13% in 2001)<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Male: 56% and Female: 44%- Rural: 69% and Urban: 31%
Types of disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Disability in movement: 20%Disability in seeing: 19% (largest population of Blind people in the world)Disability in hearing: 19%
Literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Literates: 55%
Employment status	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Working Disabled population: 36%

CHILDREN

Children population	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Age group 0-6 years: 13.59% of the total population
Sex Ratio	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Age groups 0-6 years: 918<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Meghalaya and Mizoram: 970- Haryana: 834
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Out of school: 1 in 4 Children of school-going age.
Child Abuse and Exploitation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Child labourers between age 5-14 years: 10.13 millionKidnapping and abduction is the largest crime against children in our country: Every day, around 150 children go missing.
Child marriage	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Women married as children: 42% (1 in every 3 child brides in the world is a girl in India)

SCHEDULED CASTES (SC), SCHEDULED TRIBES (ST), AND OTHER BACKWARD CLASSES (OBCS)

Population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schedule castes: 16.6% Tribal population in India: 8.6%
Literacy Rate [PLFS 2017-18]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ST: 69.7% SC: 71.8% OBCs: 77.1%
Exclusion [NHRC, 2010]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SCs below the poverty line: 37% Undernourished SCs: 57% SC/ST Atrocities Act <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conviction rate in offences: 32% nationally Pendency rate of cases: 94%
Unemployment rate [NSSO, PLFS 2018-19]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SC: 6.4% ST: 4.5% OBC: 5.9%

RELIGIOUS MINORITIES

Population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Constitutes 20% of the total population of India. Community wise details are as under: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Muslim: 14.23% Sikh: 1.72% Jain : 0.37% Christian: 2.30% Buddhist: 0.70% Parsi : 57,264 (0.06%)
Unemployment rate [PLFS 2018-19]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Muslims: 7.3% Sikhs: 7.2% Hindus: 5.6% Christians: 7.2%

SEXUAL MINORITIES

Population [Census 2011]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total population of transgender persons: 4.9 Lakhs Transgender population in states: Uttar Pradesh (28.18%), Andhra Pradesh (8.97%), Bihar (8.37%).
Literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Literacy rate of Transgender: 57%
Transgender Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Self-employed: 45% Casual labour: 32% Contract workers: 5%

MIGRANT LABOURS

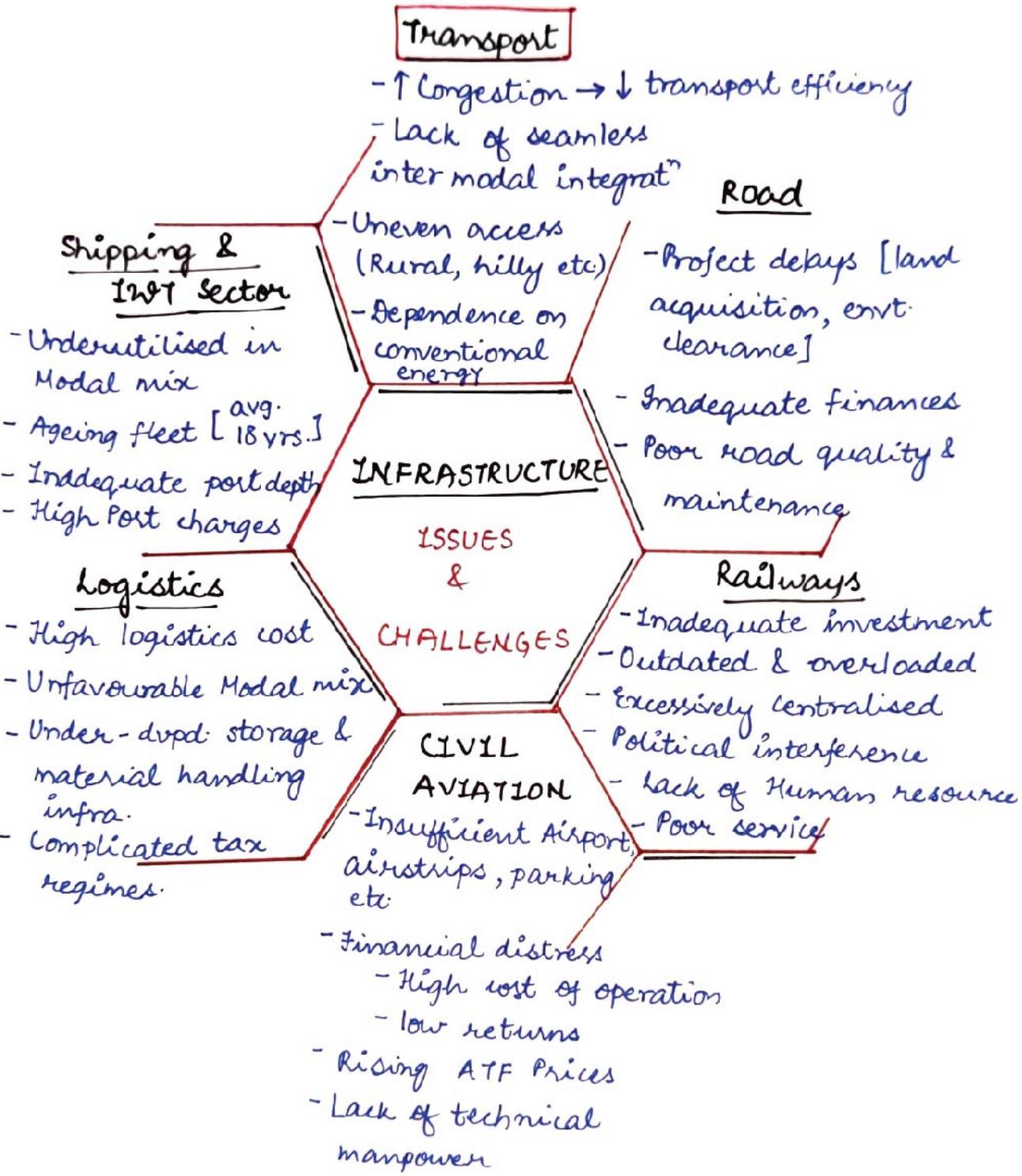
Population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> India had 45.6 crore migrants in 2011 (38% of the population) Internal Migrants: 99% Immigrants (international migrants): 1% Proportion of migrants in urban population: 47%
Migration pattern	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rural-rural migrants: 54% Rural-urban: 20% Urban-urban: 20% Urban-rural: 6%
Source & Receiver	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Largest source of inter-state migrants: Uttar Pradesh and Bihar Largest receiver: Maharashtra and Delhi

URBAN POOR

Slum Population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total: 6.55 crore living in 1.4 households (17.4% of urban Indian households) Highest population: Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh accounts for one-third of India's slum population.
Urban Poverty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Population living below the poverty line: 13.7%

Enrichment via Mindmaps

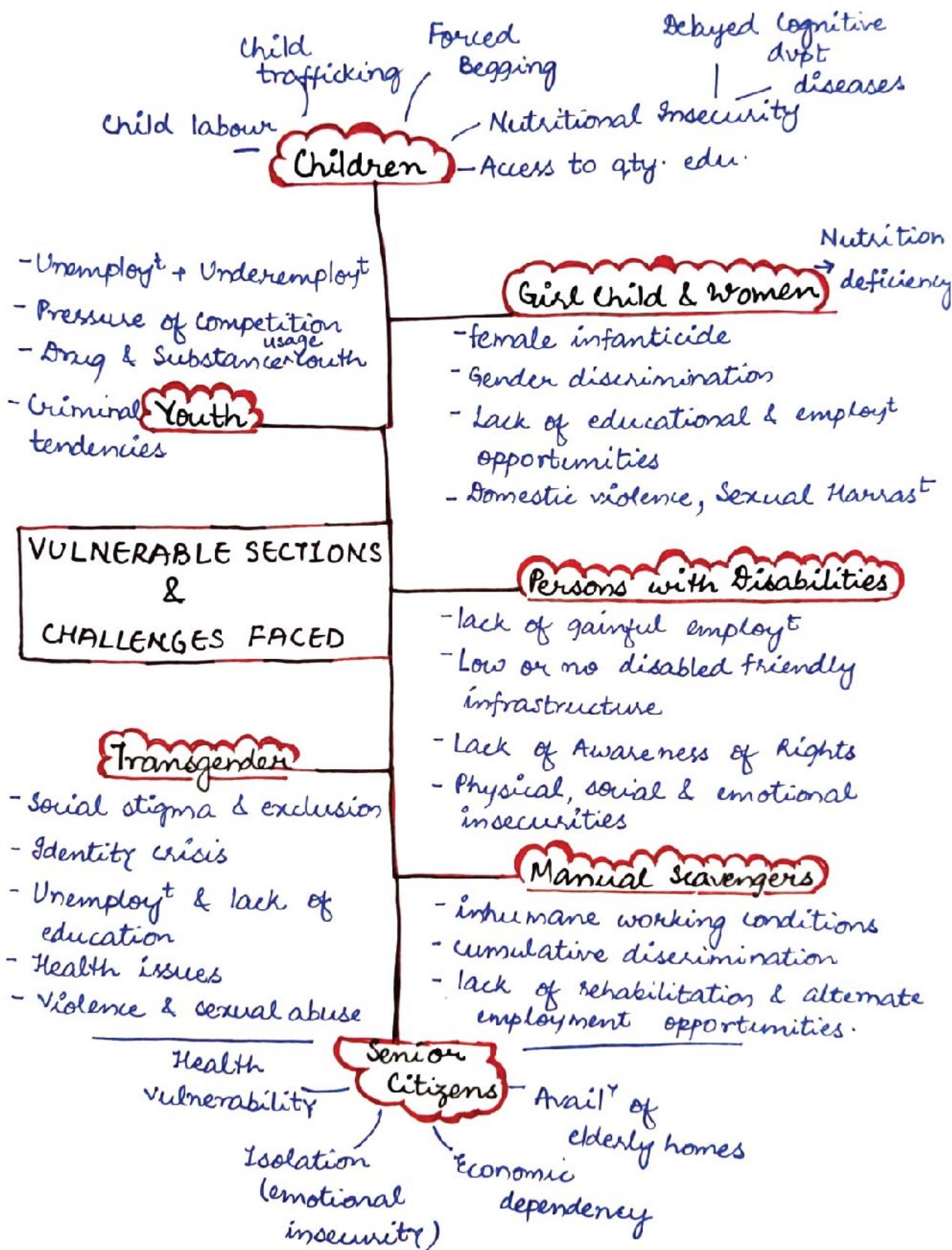
Infrastructure: Issues & Challenges



Infrastructure: Way Forward



Vulnerable Section & Challenges Faced



QUALITY ENRICHMENT PROGRAMME (QEP)

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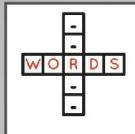
ORIENTATION SESSION
22nd MAY, 5 PM

BATCH STARTS
23rd MAY '21



MK YADAV

QEP Enrichment Deliverables



3 Tiered Case Studies (Local, National & International)

Important Keywords, Quotes, Definitions & Acronyms

Previous Year Questions Analysis & Key Facts

Economic Survey & Yojana Discussions



Weekly Editorials (7 Newspapers) & Mindmaps (AIR & Yojana)

Govt Schemes & Speeches (PM, Prez, VP)

Major Constitutional Articles, SC Judgements & Legislations

Committees & Commissions (Key Recommendations)

QEP Coverage - 20 Themes

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|------------------------------------|--|--|
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| 2. COOPERATIVE FEDERALISM | 9. INTERNAL SECURITY | 16. GENERAL STATE OF INDIAN ECONOMY |
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