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

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#1-1-379/212, Indira park Main Road.
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Indian Constitution- historical underpinnings, evolution, features, amendments, significant provisions and basic structure.

Indian federalism is a case sui generis". Examine with necessary justifications. (250 words)

Indian polity by Lakhsmitkant

Why this question:

The question is based on the statement given by Alexandrowicz in his work "Constitutional Development in India, 1957". It was quoted because of the nature of Indian polity which could be easily called as "quasi federal or federal with unitary bias".

Key demand of the question:

The question is straightforward and there isn't much to deliberate, explain the concept of Indian federalism in detail.

Directive:

Examine – When asked to 'Examine', we must look into the topic (content words) in detail, inspect it, investigate it and establish the key facts and issues related to the topic in question. While doing so we should explain why these facts and issues are important and their implications.

Structure of the answer:

Introduction:

In brief explain what Federalism is in general.

Body:

Explain the following factors:

Discuss the federal features in the Indian constitution like

Dual Polity

Written constitution

Division of Powers

Supremacy of the constitution

Independent judiciary

Bicameralism etc

Then move onto discuss the tilt of the constitution towards Unitary features. For Example mention situations where centre is strong like in the cases of residuary powers, money bill, schedule 7 etc. India is indestructible union of destructible states. (Art 2,3)

Single constitution

Constitutional amendment could be done unilaterally by parliament

Emergency provisions

All India services etc.

Conclusion:

Conclude that The Supreme Court in ' S R Bommai Case 1994' said that federalism is the basic structure of the constitution and greater power to centre in some instances is just an exception and are not rule. Thus, in the words of Granville Austin Indian polity is a just case of " cooperative federalism "

Introduction:

Federalism is a system of government in which power is divided between a central authority and constituent political units. The Constitution of India establishes a federal structure to the Indian government, declaring it to be a "Union of States". Indian model of federalism is called **quasi-federal system** as it contains major features of both a federation and union. It can be better phrased as '**federation sui generis**' or **federation of its own kind**.

Body:

**Uniqueness of principle of federalism in India:****Federal Features of the India Union:**

- Two governments i.e. Union Government and State governments
- Division of powers between the union and its constituents (Seventh Schedule of the Constitution contains three lists such as the Union List, State List, and Concurrent List)
- Supremacy of the Constitution (Basic structure of the Constitution is made indestructible by the Judiciary)
- Partial rigidity of the Constitution
- Independent Judiciary
- Bicameralism

Unitary Features of the Constitution:

- A strong centre – The Union Government becomes all powerful in certain times like emergencies. Article 200 of the Constitution of India demands that the States must comply with the central laws.
- Single Constitution
- Single citizenship
- Flexibility of Constitution
- Integrated judiciary
- Appointment of the Centre. E.g.: Governor
- All India Services
- Emergency provisions

The following four characteristics highlighting the fact that the **Indian Constitution is not a “traditional federal Constitution”**:

- Firstly, being that there is **no provision of separate Constitutions for each State** as required in a federal state. The Constitution of India is the supreme document, which governs all the states.
- Secondly, the **Constitution can be altered only by the Union Parliament**; whereas the States have no power to alter it.
- Thirdly, in contradiction to a federal Constitution, the **Indian Constitution renders supreme power upon the Courts to invalidate any action which violates the Constitution**.
- Fourthly, the **distribution of powers facilitates local governance by the states and national policies by the Centre**.

Challenges to Federalism in India:



- For a country like India which is divided on the linguistic and communal basis, a pure federal structure could lead to disruption and division of states.
- India's federal character has undergone, over the past sixty years, many trials and tribulations.
- **Formation of Telangana under Article 3** of the constitution raised a lot of questions against the federal nature of the polity.
- **100th amendment of the constitution** where land was transferred to Bangladesh posed as a threat to federalism in India.
- On the introduction of **GST**, critics argue on the autonomy of states.
- With too much power given to a state, it may want to shift away from the union. Jammu & Kashmir's special powers are in question in the public time and again.
- The continued existence of provisions such as Article 356 (President's rule) goes against the grain of federalism.
- States such as Karnataka, Tamil Nadu have asserted their linguistic and cultural rights in the wake of the Centre's interventions such as a promotion of Hindi.
- States perceive that their progress is being penalised: While the southern States contribute to the nation economically, they don't occupy a central space politically and are further marginalised culturally.
- Disputes between states over sharing of river water, for example between Karnataka and Tamil Nadu over Cauvery water.

Conclusion:

The Indian Constitution is a **constitution sui generis**. On one hand, the constitution contains features which are of high importance for a federal arrangement, at the same time it contains provisions which fight for a strong Centre, thus making it quasi-federal in nature. The fact to be appreciated here is that these dual federalism provisions were deliberately incorporated to best fit a polyglot country like India.

Does the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill go against Article 14 of the Constitution?

Critically analyse.(250 words)

[The hindu](#)

Why this question:

The Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016 was passed by the Lok Sabha in January this year but lapsed as it was not tabled in the Rajya Sabha. It had proposed to amend the original Citizenship Act of 1955. After returning to power with a majority for another term, the National Democratic Alliance government is trying to resurrect the Bill.

Key demand of the question:

The answer must discuss the mandate of the bill, associated fault lines, the apex court observations in this regard and in what way the bill goes against Article 14 of the Constitution.

Directive:

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



'critically' is suffixed or prefixed to a directive, one needs to look at the good and bad of the topic and give a fair judgment.

Structure of the answer:

Introduction:

In brief explain the mandate of the bill.

Body:

First explain the Concept of Citizenship followed by the country.

The answer must focus to bring out the conflict that the bill holds on with Article 14 of the constitution.

Discuss the drawbacks associated with the bill.

Explain that there should be no politics in the passing of legislations that bypass the democratic ideals of India.

Conclusion:

Conclude by suggesting propositions or solutions to the issue.

Introduction:

The Citizenship Amendment Bill 2016 seeks to allow illegal migrants from certain minority communities in Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan eligible for Indian citizenship. In other words, it amends the Citizenship Act of 1955. The Bill was recently passed in the Lok Sabha. Nagaland, along with other north-eastern States, has witnessed several protests following the passage of the Bill in the Lok Sabha.

Body:

The key features of the bill are:

- **Definition of Illegal migrants:**
 - The Citizenship Act, 1955 prohibits illegal migrants from acquiring Indian citizenship.
 - The Bill amends the act to provide that the following minority groups will not be treated as illegal migrants: **Hindus, Jains, Sikhs, Parsis, Christians and Buddhists** — from Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh who came to India before 2014
- **Citizenship by naturalisation:**
 - Under Citizenship Act, 1955, one of the requirements for citizenship by naturalisation is that the applicant must have resided in India for 12 of the 15 years preceding the date of application.
 - It appeals for the minimum years of residency in India to apply for citizenship to be lessened from at least 11 to six years for such migrants.
- **Cancellation of registration of OCI cardholder:**
- The Bill provides that the registration of Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) cardholders may be cancelled if they violate any law.

The issues surrounding the bill:

- **Violates Article 14:**



- Article 14 of the Constitution guarantees equality to all persons, citizens and foreigners, differentiating between people on the grounds of religion would be in violation of the constitution.
- Civil society groups are opposing the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016, terming it "communally motivated humanitarianism."
- **Endorsing a particular religion:**
 - The bill undermines the Assam Accord which was signed to deport all the illegal migrants, majority being from Bangladesh, who entered Assam after 1971.
 - The Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016 imagines India as a Hindu homeland, which is a refutation of the constitutional idea of the republic.
 - Experts see it as a move to endorse Hindus from Bangladesh who migrated to Assam after 1971.
 - The Bill makes illegal migrants eligible for citizenship on the basis of religion. This may violate Article 14 of the Constitution which guarantees right to equality.
- **OCI:**
 - The Bill allows cancellation of OCI registration for violation of any law. This is a wide ground that may cover a range of violations, including minor offences
- **Discrimination of Muslims:**
 - Alleged illegal migration from Bangladesh has been at the heart of Assam's discontent. Not just the Muslim Bengali, but the Hindu Bengali has also been a reason for political mobilisation in the state. But only Hindu Bengalis are being favoured by the bill.
 - While Hindus and Parsis, Sikhs, Buddhists and Christians might be naturalised, Muslims will not be offered the same advantage even if they are persecuted

Other legal fallacies of the proposed law:

- The Citizenship (Amendment) Bill also fails on the tenets of international refugee law.
- Although India is not a signatory to the 1951 UN Refugee Convention, granting refuge based on humanitarian considerations is arguably a norm of customary international law.
- Shelter to individuals of a select religion defeats not only the intention but also the rationality of refugee policy.
- Muslims are considerably discriminated against and exploited in the neighbouring countries of China, Sri Lanka and the 36,000 Rohingyas Muslims from Myanmar who fled to India in the wake of 2015 insurgency is just one such example.
- Rohingya Muslims fleeing persecution in Myanmar are not offered such hospitality. The only way for them to live in India is by obtaining a valid visa and refugee status.

Conclusion:

India's citizenship provisions are derived from the perception of the country as a secular republic. In fact, it is a refutation of the two-nation theory that proposed a Hindu India and a Muslim



Pakistan. Independent India adopted a Constitution that rejected discrimination on the basis of religion and the birth of Bangladesh undermined the idea that religion could be the basis of a national community. So citizenship bill amendments need to be on this line.

Collective responsibility is a myth in Indian Cabinet system. Critically analyse. (250 words)

Polity by Lakshmikant

Introduction:

Collective responsibility, also known as **collective ministerial responsibility**, is a constitutional convention in Parliamentary systems that members of the cabinet must publicly support all governmental decisions made in Cabinet, even if they do not privately agree with them. **Article 75(3)** of Indian Constitution states that the Council of Ministers shall be collectively responsible to the House of the People

Body:

Collective responsibility means members of a Cabinet follow an integrated policy, for which all of them accept responsibility and on which they stand or fall together. Even if there are differences among them on minor matters, they must always put up a united front in the legislature and before the country.

Collective responsibility and India's strengths:

- The 'collective responsibility' has two meanings: the first that all the members of a government are unanimous in support of its policies and exhibit that unanimity on public occasions although while formulating the policies, they might have differed in the cabinet meeting;
- The second that the Ministers, who had an opportunity to speak for or against the policies in the Cabinet, are thereby personally and morally responsible for their success and failure.
- A parliamentary system that uses cabinet collective responsibility is more likely to avoid contradictions and disagreements between cabinet members of the executive branch.
- Cabinet ministers are likely to feel there is a practical and collective benefit from being part of a team.
- Cabinet collective responsibility to the people also benefits party and personal loyalty to the prime minister.
- Solidarity within the cabinet can strengthen the prime minister's party and accelerate policy decisions and interests of that party.

Collective Responsibility is a myth in India:

- Since Independence, several Prime Ministers had difficulty in enforcing collective
- For instance, during the regime of Jawaharlal Nehru, the country faced a shortage of food grains, resulting in high prices.
- When the MPs criticized the Government for not tackling this problem properly, the then Minister for Food and Agriculture, said the members should direct their complaints



against other ministries, including the Ministry of Irrigation and Power for not providing adequate water for cultivation; the Ministry of Commerce and Industry for not supplying fertilizers; the Ministry of Health for not checking the growth of the population; the Ministry of Railways for not providing an adequate number of wagons for movement of food grains; and the State governments for not effectively implementing the various policies relating to agriculture.

- **Morarji Desai**, who was Prime Minister from 1977-79, had a tough time ensuring the efficient working of his **Charan Singh**, the then Home Minister, publicly criticized Desai, mentioning several specific instances where he had violated the principle of collective responsibility.
- There have been numerous other instances where Prime Ministers have been unwilling or unable to enforce collective responsibility, thereby affecting the country's progress.
- There have been a number of resignations in the past because of the differences with the Cabinet. **Mathai** resigned as a Finance Minister because he disagreed with the Cabinet on the question of scope and powers of the Planning Commission which was proposed to be set up then.
- **D. Deshmukh** resigned because he differed from the Cabinet on the issue of re-organization of States, especially on the question of Bombay.
- Collective responsibility becomes a bigger challenge when there is a coalition government, as the Cabinet comprises representatives of several parties, many of which have no clear-cut policies.

Conclusion:

The principle of Collective Responsibility may be regarded as fundamental to the working of the Parliamentary Government, as it is in the solidarity of the Cabinet that its main strength lies. The principle of Collective Responsibility means that the Council of Ministers is responsible as a body for the general conduct of the affairs of the government. All ministers stand or fall together in Parliament, and the government is carried on as a unity.

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.

It is an irony of Indian democracy that citizens have more faith often in unelected institutions than elected representatives. Comment. (250 words)

Hindustantimes

Why this question:

The article covers a detailed narration of the citizenry behaviour as to how they have more faith often in unelected institutions than elected representatives.

Key demand of the question:

One has to explain the irony in the question statement with suitable illustrations and explain what needs to be done to restore such faith in the elected representatives.

Directive:



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

Structure of the answer:

Introduction:

State that Surveys have shown that faith in the armed forces and institutions such as the Election Commission often surpasses the faith citizens have in the legislature or the executive.

Body:

Such a question can be best explained through suitable examples like – Judiciary; explain that our founders carefully constructed a system of checks and balances, and separation of powers. Aware of the dangers of populism, and of the temptation of the political leadership to bypass the law, India's constitution designed a judiciary meant to be truly independent. The institution, to its credit, has lived up to this faith. Even at the most difficult of times, such as the Emergency, during which the role of the Supreme Court (SC) has been legitimately questioned as having aided the subversion of fundamental rights, it is instructive to remember that at least some within the institution sought to uphold the law. Another example could be of CBI.

Conclusion:

Conclude by suggesting solutions as to what needs to be done.

Introduction:

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

Body:

Surveys have shown that faith in the armed forces and institutions such as the Election Commission often surpasses the faith citizens have in the legislature or the executive. But if there is one institution that has a special place, in both constitutional design as well as popular sentiment, it is the judiciary.

Reasons for such perspective:

- **Illiteracy, Poverty, Gender Discrimination, Casteism, Communalism, Religious Fundamentalism, Regionalism, Corruption, and Criminalization of Politics** are still plaguing Indian Democracy.
- According to the last two reports, there is a rise of “conservative religious ideologies” in the country.
- Vigilantism, violence, narrowing scope for dissent, threat to minorities and marginalised groups has affected India’s democratic values.
- Important issues like **horse-trading in politics, the anti-defection law, pros and cons of post-poll alliances and discretionary powers of the governor** has brought to light the various challenges facing Indian democracy.
- **Journalists are increasingly under attack**, with murders taking place in several areas.
- As a result of limited scope for fair reportage, the Indian media is classified as only “partially free”. This is a fact which is also supported by the “Freedom in the World Report, 2018”.



- Unlike pre-poll alliances, where the voters are aware of whom they are voting for, **post-poll alliances present a new set of challenges.**
- **Anti-Defection law** does not seem to be doing much to stop MLAs from defecting.
- **Dynastic politics, lack of strong opposition at the centre and Religion based politics.** Ex: Government's decision to classify Lingayats as a religious minority in Karnataka.
- The delay in disposal of cases by the courts is a concern to people.
- Misuse of data on social media sites, privacy of users and the power of social media to influence important political outcomes.

Way Forward:

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



- The state must respect the articulation of the politics of voice and not just the politics of the vote

Parliament and State Legislatures – structure, functioning, conduct of business, powers & privileges and issues arising out of these.

As per Article 81, the composition of the Lok Sabha should represent changes in population. But it has remained more or less the same since the delimitation carried out based on the 1971 Census. Why is it so? Discuss. (250 words)

[Indianexpress](#)

Why this question:

The question is based on the importance that article 81 hold in Indian constitutional setup and its relevance to Indian population in the current times.

Key demand of the question:

One has to throw light on the unchanged composition of Lok Sabha despite changes in population numbers and relevance of the same and suggest what needs to be done.

Directive:

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

Structure of the answer:

Introduction:

In brief describe article 81 of the Indian constitution – Article 81 of the Constitution defines the composition of the House of the People or Lok Sabha. It states that the House shall not consist of more than 550 elected members of whom not more than 20 will represent Union Territories.

Body:

Explain in detail the why the number of Lok Sabha seats need to be rationalized on the basis of population?

What are the provisions related to it in the constitution? – provide here for an in-depth analysis for article 81 and the significance of these provisions.

Conclusion:

Conclude with what needs to be done and way ahead.

Introduction:

Article 81 of the Constitution defines the composition of the House of the People or Lok Sabha. It states that the House shall not consist of more than 550 elected members of whom not more than 20 will represent Union Territories. Under Article 331, the President can nominate up to two Anglo-Indians if he/she feels the community is inadequately represented in the House. At present, the strength of the Lok Sabha is 543, of which 530 have been allocated to the states and the rest to the Union Territories.

Body:

Article 81 also mandates that the number of Lok Sabha seats allotted to a state would be such that the ratio between that number and the population of the state is, as far as possible, the same for all states. This is to ensure that every state is equally represented. However, this logic does not apply to small states whose population is not more than 60 lakh. So, at least one seat is allocated to every state even if it means that its population-to-seat-ratio is not enough to qualify it for that seat.



The number of seats has remained the same since 1971 census due to:

- The population-to-seat ratio, as mandated under Article 81, should be the same for all states.
- Although unintended, this implied that states that took little interest in population control could end up with a greater number of seats in Parliament.
- The southern states that promoted family planning faced the possibility of having their seats reduced.
- To allay these fears, the Constitution was amended during Indira Gandhi's Emergency rule in 1976 to suspend delimitation until 2001.
- Although the freeze on the number of seats in Lok Sabha and Assemblies should have been lifted after the Census of 2001, another amendment postponed this until 2026.
- This was justified on the ground that a uniform population growth rate would be achieved throughout the country by 2026.
- So, the last delimitation exercise – started in July 2002 and finished on May 31, 2008 – was conducted on the basis of the 2001 Census and only readjusted boundaries of existing Lok Sabha and Assembly seats and reworked the number of seats reserved for SCs and STs.
- With the total seats remaining the same since the 1970s, it is felt that states in north India, whose population has increased faster than the rest of the country, are now underrepresented in the Parliament.
- It is frequently argued that had the original provision of Article 81 been implemented today, then states like Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh would have gained seats and those in the south would have lost some

Conclusion:

While 2026 is still a few years away, if we do not start a debate now on how to deal with the problems that are likely to arise, we will be forced to postpone the lifting of the freeze to a future date as was done in 2001. This will only postpone the problem for which we must find a solution sooner or later. Even the various proposals for electoral reforms which have been recommended by various Commissions over the past decade do not address these issues. These are challenges which our political leaders have to address in the immediate future.

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

Discuss the merits of the idea of setting up of the regional Supreme Court benches and 'divisions' of the top court and also discuss the possible procedure that would be followed if the idea has to be taken further. (250 words)

Indianexpress

Why this question:



The article discusses in depth that travelling to New Delhi or engaging expensive Supreme Court counsel to pursue a case is beyond the means of most litigants. It also highlights the fact that Standing Committees of Parliament recommended in 2004, 2005, and 2006 that Benches of the court be set up elsewhere.

Key demand of the question:

One has to provide for arguments for the merits of establishing multiple benches of the apex court to address the growing pendency of cases with the judiciary and discuss how it can be achieved.

Directive:

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

Structure of the answer:

Introduction:

Discuss the need for multiple benches.

Body:

Explain the current situation of Judiciary. The issues plaguing it and why multiple benches can be a way forward.

Discuss in depth the recommendations given by various law commissions so far and justify with your opinion as to what would be ideal.

Explain both the pros and cons associated and conclude.

Conclusion:

Conclude that though It is obvious that travelling to New Delhi or engaging expensive Supreme Court counsel to pursue a case is beyond the means of most litigants, the Supreme Court however has not agreed with the proposal to set up regional benches, which in its opinion will dilute the prestige of the court.

Introduction:

The Vice President of India, Shri Venkaiah Naidu strongly endorsed the recommendation of the Law Commission towards splitting the Supreme Court into Constitutional Division and Courts of Appeal for steady disposal of cases. He also underlined the need to set up four Regional Benches of the apex court and went to the extent of saying that this arrangement does not require any amendment to the Constitution (as per Article 130).

Body:

Article 130 of the Constitution says: “The Supreme Court shall sit in Delhi or in such other place or places, as the Chief Justice of India may, with the approval of the President, from time to time appoint.” Supreme Court Rules give the **Chief Justice of India** the power to constitute Benches — he can, for instance, have a Constitution Bench of seven judges in New Delhi, and set up smaller Benches in, say, four or six places across the country.

Merits of setting up regional SC benches and divisions:

- In the early decades of the Republic, the Supreme Court of India functioned largely as a constitutional court, with some 70-80 judgments being delivered every year by Constitution Benches of five or more judges who ruled, as per Article 145(3) of the Constitution, on matters “involving a substantial question of law as to the interpretation of the Constitution”.
- This number has now come down to 10-12.
- Due to their heavy workload, judges mostly sit in two- or three-judge Benches to dispose of all kinds of cases; these include several non-Constitutional and relatively petty matters such



as bans (or lifting of bans) on films, or allegations that a Commissioner of Police is misusing his powers.

- On some occasions, even PILs on demands such as Sardar jokes should be banned, or that Muslims should be sent out of the country, come before the Supreme Court.
- More than 65,000 cases are pending in the Supreme Court, and disposal of appeals takes many years.
- Several cases involving the interpretation of the Constitution by five or seven judges have been pending for years.
- It is obvious that travelling to New Delhi or engaging expensive Supreme Court counsel to pursue a case is beyond the means of most litigants.

Demerits:

- The Supreme Court has not agreed with the proposal, which in its opinion will dilute the prestige of the court.
- Article 130 says that the Supreme Court shall sit in Delhi or in such other place or places, as the CJI may, with the approval of the President, from time to time, appoint.

Views of the law Commissions in the past:

- The Supreme Court of India should consist of two Divisions, namely (a) Constitutional Division, and (b) Legal Division.
- Only matters of Constitutional law may be assigned to the proposed Constitutional Division.
- A Constitution Bench be set up at Delhi to deal with constitutional and other allied issues".
- Four Cassation Benches be set up in the Northern region/zones at Delhi, the Southern region/zones at Chennai/Hyderabad, the Eastern region/zones at Kolkata and the Western region/zones at Mumbai to deal with all appellate work arising out of the orders/judgments of the High Courts of the particular region".

Way forward:

- Induction of capable judges and quality lawyers besides improving the quality of legal education to enable delivery of justice in time.
- To cut the present delays in delivering justice, Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) may be evolved by the judiciary by which the number of permissible adjournments can be specified.
- A time limit can be set for disposal of cases based on the nature of issues involved.
- The Government should be more proactive in addressing the large number of pending vacancies in the judicial system so that delays are avoided.
- The judiciary and the Government to act in tandem in this regard.
- Election cases and cases of criminal proceedings against politicians to be decided by special benches of higher courts for their disposal within six months
- Immediate attention needs to be paid to the quality of legal education in the country.



- Ethical standards of profession should be imbibed by the students of law and the practicing lawyers.

Conclusion:

The speed and quality of justice delivery in the country has a huge bearing on the economic development as it impacts the flow of investment. It would be better if judges at various levels are exposed to special orientation programmes organised by the judiciary itself on various technical and specialised branches of emerging laws and the attendant issues and processes.

Salient features of the Representation of People's Act.

The Representation of People's Act 1951 is a significant legislation for the electoral system of India. Comment. Also enumerate the salient features regarding the disqualification provisions in the act. (250 words)

Indian Polity by Lakshmi Kant

Why this question:

One has to bring out the significance of Representation of People's Act 1951.

Key demand of the question:

Explain in detail the Representation of People's Act 1951; its features and a detailed narration of disqualification provisions in the act.

Directive:

Structure of the answer:

Introduction:

Start with significance of RPA 1951.

Body:

Discuss the Salient features of the Representation of Peoples Act first.

Enumerate the disqualification provisions in detail.

Highlight the significance of the act.

Conclusion:

Conclude with importance of it to the democratic system.

Introduction:

India being the largest democracy of the world, elections in India have been the largest electoral exercise in the world since the 1st general elections of 1952. **Representation of Peoples Act 1951** is an act enacted by the Indian provincial parliament before first general elections. The People's Representation act provides for the actual conduct of elections in India. The act also deals with details like qualification and disqualification of members of both houses of Parliament (i.e. Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha) and the state legislatures (i.e. State Legislative Assembly and State Legislative Council). Rules for the mode of conduct of elections is highlighted in detail.

Body:

Representation of Peoples Act 1951 (RPA Act 1951) provides for:

- Actual conduct of elections.
- Administrative machinery for conducting elections.
- Poll.



- Election offences.
- Election disputes.
- By-elections.
- Registration of political parties.

The RP Act, 1951 is of special significance to the smooth functioning of Indian democracy, as it checks the entry of persons with criminal background into the representative bodies. RP act, 1951 was amended many times, the major amendment being made in 1966.

The original RPA 1951 contains 13 parts and 171 sections. Part 2 deals with qualifications and disqualifications of the members of the parliament and the state legislatures. Part 4A deals with the registration of political parties. Part 5A deals with the free supply of certain materials to candidates of recognised political parties. Part 13A mentions the Chief Electoral Officer.

This act is important because it is cited judges frequently in preventing criminals from entering the electoral system and representative bodies of the country.

Section 8 deals with **Disqualification of representatives on conviction for certain offences**. The various sub-clauses include

- **8 (1)**: A person convicted of an offence punishable under certain acts of Indian Penal Code, Protection of Civil Rights Act 1955, Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act 1967, Prevention of Corruption Act 1988, Prevention of Terrorism Act 2002 etc. shall be disqualified, where the convicted person is sentenced to — (i) only fine, for a period of six years from the date of such conviction; (ii) imprisonment, from the date of such conviction and shall continue to be disqualified for a further period of six years since his release.
- **8 (2)**: A person convicted for the contravention of—(a) any law providing for the prevention of hoarding or profiteering; or (b) any law relating to the adulteration of food or drugs; or (c) any provisions of the Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961.
- **8 (3)**: A person convicted of any offence and sentenced to imprisonment for not less than two years [other than any offence referred to in sub-section (1) or sub-section (2)] shall be disqualified from the date of such conviction and shall continue to be disqualified for a further period of six years since his release.
- A fourth subsection, i.e., **8 (4)** was struck down by the Supreme Court in 2013 (Lily Thomas case). This subsection had provisions for convicted lawmakers to retain their seats if they filed an appeal within 3 months of their conviction.
- In 2013, the Patna High Court also debarred persons in judicial or police custody from contesting elections.

The other disqualification criteria for an MP as laid down in **Article 102 of the Constitution, and for an MLA in Article 191** is holding an **office of profit** under government of India or state government.

Conclusion:

Elections are the life blood of any democracy. The robustness of electoral processes determines the fate of the nation. The timely reforms to the electoral process by ECI, according to



the changing needs of the society and the strong review of the judiciary have helped in conduction of free and fair elections till date.

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

Present your arguments whether security imperatives can supersede democratic and human rights in case of the on-going Kashmir issue. (250 words)

Indianexpress

Why this question:

The article presents that the curfews, detentions and lockdown in Kashmir have only made the border, and our forces, more vulnerable. Thus it is necessary to analyse whether security imperatives can supersede democratic and human rights.

Key demand of the question:

One must discuss in detail whether security imperatives can supersede democratic and human rights in the Kashmir issue.

Structure of the answer:

Introduction:

In brief explain the ongoing conditions in Kashmir.

Body:

Explain whether the arguments of security, economic and welfare to justify new Kashmir policy are fair.

Explain in detail the factor of whether, and at which point, security imperatives can supersede democratic and human rights.

Present both arguments in favour and against.

Present your opinion with fair and balanced judgment.

Conclusion:

Conclude with what should be the strategy to handle the situation.

Introduction:

The Union Government in August 2019 abrogated Article 370 and Article 35A of the Constitution which grants special status to J&K. The government also decided to bifurcate the state into two Union territories – Jammu and Kashmir, which will have a legislature, and Ladakh, which will be without a legislature.

Body:

Security imperatives:

- Government's rationale of extending all the laws of the union to J&K was one of the major reasons.
- This would help alleviate the poverty and improve the socio-economic conditions of the people which can curb the violence in the J&K.
- Poverty has helped the extra-state actors and other perpetrators to spread the terror activities further leading into a vicious cycle. E.g.: Pulwama attack, innumerable suicide and fidayeen attacks in mosques and religious places.



- With the law and order now completely under the central government, it helps in better safety and security measures of the people.
- It also helps in better resource mobilization to tackle the cease-fire violations of Pakistan in the LoC region.

Violation of human rights:

- The clamp down of J&K in the garb of security has led to attack on the normal lives of people of J&K.
- the decimation of law, the suspension of habeas corpus, and the near permanent state of emergency practised in Kashmir has imperilled the liberties of Kashmiris.
- The use of Public Security Act and high number of preventive detentions to maintain peace and harmony goes against the ethos of democracy.
- Internet services and mobile services have been suspended in several places and all public gatherings are banned in Srinagar district. This affects the right to freedom of speech and expression of an individual.
- The shut-down of schools and colleges has affected the children and youth which is a violation of fundamental right.
- The scenario of how Pakistan's persecution of its minorities has deeply distorted its nature and character can act as a example for India.

Security measures v/s Human rights violation:

The founding fathers of the Republic favoured a strong Centre, but they were also prudent in seeking the route of persuasion and accommodation towards linguistic and religious minorities in the interest of national integration. The special status of J&K was never meant to be permanent, but it should not have been scrapped without wider consultations.

Ending Jammu & Kashmir's special status in the Indian Union, the government has extended all provisions of the Constitution to the State in one go, downsized the State into two Union Territories and allowed all citizens to buy property and vote in the State.

True, the special status of J&K was meant to end, but **only with the concurrence of its people**. The Centre's abrupt move disenfranchised them on a matter that directly affected their life and sentiments. Moreover, that this was done after a massive military build-up and the house arrest of senior political leaders, and the communications shutdown reveals a cynical disregard of democratic norms.

The entire region has geostrategic importance considering its gives access to Afghanistan, China and Central Asia. Therefore, apart from our domestic interest it is extremely critical region. And it good to keep under the control of central government, which allow the government to secure the security in the region is paramount over the other peculiar interest.

Conclusion:

Government decision to revoke Article 370, scrap Article 35A and reorganise J&K (into two Union territories) will go down as one the most audacious decisions taken since Independence. The



challenge, now, will be to ensure that the ownership for such a move is taken by the real stakeholders, the state's people.

What are your thoughts on the British-era sedition law, should it stay or has it outlived its utility? Critically analyse. (250 words)

Hindustantimes

Why this question:

The article suggests that The colonial law of sedition, meant to suppress and dissent still persists. Used as a political tool, it has deprived people of liberty. Thus, it is time to scrap it.

Key demand of the question:

Explain what is the British-era sedition law that India still inherits and upholds, what are the consequences, why is the law outliving its utility.

Directive:

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

Structure of the answer:

Introduction:

In brief explain what Indian Sedition law is.

Body:

First explain the colonial origin of sedition law.

The British regimes enacted it in order to suppress political and cultural dissent and many of the most famous figures of the freedom struggle including Gandhi were sent to jail on charges of sedition.

Explain why in 1962, the SC upheld the constitutional validity of sedition law.

Discuss the necessity to scrap the law that is outdated and has been outliving its utility.

Conclusion:

Conclude with way forward.

Introduction:

'Sedition' is **an offence incorporated into the Indian Penal Code (IPC) in 1870**. Section 124A of the IPC defines sedition and says:

- whoever by words either spoken or written or by signs or by visible representation or otherwise brings or attempts to bring into hatred or contempt, the government established by law; or
- whoever by the above means excites or attempts to excite disaffection towards the government established by law, has committed the offence of sedition.

The offence is punishable with imprisonment for life.

Body:



WHAT IS IT?

• **Sedition law:**
Section 124A of the Indian Penal Code, 1860

• **Definition:** Whoever by words, either spoken or written, or by signs, or by visible representation, or otherwise brings or attempts to bring into hatred or contempt, or excites or attempts to excite disaffection towards, the government established by law in India, shall be punished

• **Punishment:**
Imprisonment for life, to which fine may be added, or imprisonment which may extend to three years, to which fine may be added, or just a fine

WHAT THE SUPREME COURT SAID:

LANDMARK JUDGEMENTS

1962

KEDAR NATH SINGH VS STATE OF BIHAR

The Supreme Court held that "a citizen has a right to say or write whatever he likes about the government, or its measures, by way of criticism or comment, so long as he does not incite people to violence"

1982

P.ALAVIVS STATE OF KERALA

Where the court held that sloganizing, criticizing of Parliament or the judicial set-up did not amount to sedition

1995

BALWANT SINGH AND ANR VS STATE OF PUNJAB

The SC says: "Raising some slogan ("Khalistan Zindabad") a couple of times...which neither evoked any response nor any reaction from the public cannot attract such punishment"

Recently Supreme Court (SC) judge Justice Deepak Gupta, remarked that the time had come to reconsider the law of sedition. Highlighting a number of recent examples, he observed that the law of sedition "is more often abused and misused", and that "freedom of expression being a constitutional right must get primacy over the laws of sedition".

Dark side of Sedition Law:

- Before Independence, this charge was used by the British to suppress the freedom movement.
- Ironically, the same draconian law has become a tool that the country is now using against its own people.
- During colonial period section 124-A was interpreted by the privy council in a way to suppress every act that expressed discontent against the government.
- Many freedom fighters were slapped with these charges for invoking feelings of nationalism and educating people of India against the policies adopted by the colonial power.

Why Sedition law must be stripped off?

- Draconian laws such as the Section 124-A only serve to give a legal veneer to the regime's persecution of voices and movements against oppression by casting them as anti-national.
- Figures of the National Crime Records Bureau reveal that in the two years preceding the JNU case, there were a total of 77 sedition cases.
- Dissent is the lifeblood of democracy. Democracy has no meaning without freedoms and sedition as interpreted and applied by the police and governments is a negation of it.
- Terms like "disaffection" and "contempt" can be stretched to mean just about anything, enabling
- Beyond the high-profile urban cases, the reach of Section 124-A has extended even to faraway places. An entire village in Kudankulam, Tamil Nadu had sedition cases slapped against it for resisting a nuclear power project. Adivasis of Jharkhand, resisting displacement, topped the list of those slapped with sedition in 2014.



- Instead of critically analysing why citizens, be they in Kashmir or Chhattisgarh or Bhima Koregaon, are driven to dissent, the government is using an **iron-fist policy with the sedition law playing a leading role to completely shut out contrarian views.**
- Hence, before the law loses its potency, the Supreme Court, being the protector of the fundamental rights of the citizens has to step in and evaluate the law and may declare Section 124A unconstitutional if necessary.
- As events have shown, however, the gap between the law and its judicial interpretation has become so wide that there can be no interpretive bridge that will adequately protect liberty.
- This being the case, the Supreme Court will, hopefully, reconsider its 1962 decision, and strike down the law of sedition as being unconstitutional.

Way Forward:

- All speech-related offences should be made bailable offences; this would lessen the harmful impact of using arrest and custody as a way of harassing anyone exercising their rights under Article 19(1) (a). The **chilling effect on freedom of speech and expression** must be erased.
- Forming a committee involving Government and renowned civil society members while deciding cases under section 124 A.
- To limit the discretionary power as much as possible through better and comprehensive drafting of guidelines.
- The offences should be made non-cognisable so that there is at least a judicial check on the police acting on the basis of politically motivated complaints.
- In the case of offences under Sections 153A (“promoting enmity between different groups on grounds of religion, race, place of birth, residence, language, etc, and doing acts prejudicial to maintenance of harmony”) and 295A of the Indian Penal Code, it is mandatory under Section 196(1) of the Code of Criminal Procedure **to obtain prior sanction of the government before taking cognisance of the offences.** This needs to be extended to the offence of sedition under Section 124A.
- In the case of hate speech, it is important to **raise the burden of proof on those who claim that their sentiments are hurt rather than accept them at face value.**
- And finally, it is crucial that courts begin to **take action against those who bring malicious complaints against speech acts.**

Conclusion:

The word ‘sedition’ is thus extremely nuanced, and needs to be applied with caution. It is like cannon that ought not be used to shoot a mouse; but the arsenal also demands possession of cannons, mostly as a deterrent, and on occasion for shooting.

“Mother tongue vital for survival of a civilization”, Do you agree? Analyse the statement with suitable justifications backing your opinion. (250 words)

Hindustantimes

Why this question:



A few days after a language row erupted over allegations of an alleged plan to impose Hindi on Southern states, vice-president Venkaiah Naidu recently said respecting and recognizing the mother tongue and promoting it is vital for the survival of any civilisation.

Key demand of the question:

Explain the vitality of Mother tongue in marking the survival of any civilisation.

Directive:

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

Structure of the answer:

Introduction:

In brief explain the importance of Mother tongue in general.

Body:

Explain the role that a mother tongue plays in the development of a civilisation.

Discuss the contributions of it in establishing a civilisation.

Discuss its applications – in development of child, in education, Better connection with your culture, Intellectual Development, Commercial benefits, the Pride and in establishing identity of a particular society.

Conclusion:

Conclude with way forward.

Introduction:

Mother tongue or mother language refers to the language which a person has grown up speaking from early childhood. India is a land of linguistic diversity and the languages differ in their dialects every 100 kms. There have been many arguments and dissatisfaction over having a single national language (Hindi) for entire country. The Vice president of India recently said that mother tongue vital for survival of civilisation and every country must encourage their children to study primarily in the mother tongue.

Body:

Mother Tongue is vital for survival of a civilization:

- Mother tongue is the very first language that one hears, understands and gets familiar with. Thus, it plays important role in shaping feelings, emotions and thought processes.
- Use of mother language helps one in getting comfortable with his/her cultural identity.
- Maintaining mother languages is **necessary for preserving cultural heritage and identity**.
- Dissemination of mother languages **encourages linguistic diversity**, thus **inspires solidarity based on understanding, tolerance, and dialogue**.
- When languages disappear, the world loses **a rich tapestry of cultural identity**.
- **Opportunities, traditions, memory, unique modes of thinking and expression, valuable resources** for ensuring a better future also get lost.

Every year, UNESCO celebrates 21st February as International Mother Language Day to promote mother tongue-based multilingual education. The day is also a reminder of how language connects us, empowers us and helps us to communicate our feelings to others. The world has over 7,000 languages whereas **India alone has about 22 officially recognized languages, 1635 mother tongues, and 234 identifiable mother tongues**.

**Challenges faced in preserving mother languages:**

- According to the UN, every two weeks, a language disappears and the world loses an entire cultural and intellectual heritage.
- At least 43% of the estimated 6000 languages spoken in the world are endangered.
- Only a few hundred languages have been genuinely given a place in education systems and public domain. Also, 40% of the global population does not have access to education in a language they speak or understand.
- Less than a hundred languages are used in the digital world.
- Apart from globalization, rush for learning foreign languages for better job opportunities is a major reason behind the disappearance of mother languages.

Way forward to preserve mother languages:

- With the help of technology, every mother language can be maintained. Google's Project Navlekha in India is an example. The project is aimed at increasing the online content in Indian local languages.
- People should be made aware of the professional viability of pursuing degrees in native languages. With a degree in a native language, one can take up professions like Language Expert, Translators, and Tourist-Guide etc.
- Also to maintain any native language, it is necessary that it is spoken. Use of native languages at homes, schools, and offices should be encouraged.
- The Upper House of India has an arrangement for interpretation of 22 languages i.e. members are encouraged to speak in their native languages.
- Countries like France, Germany, Italy, China have developed their mother languages as a powerful medium. Other countries need to learn from these to preserve their cultural and linguistic identity.

Conclusion:

It is our strength that we have many languages and dialects. All other languages are important. But one should respect, learn and understand their mother tongue. According a hegemonic role to the "most-spoken" language in the country may promote cultural homogenisation, but that is hardly desirable in a country with a diverse population, a plural ethos and is a cauldron of many languages and cultures. Further, national identity cannot be linked to any one language, as it is, by definition, something that transcends linguistic and regional differences. The need today is to respect, protect and nurture diversity of our nation so that unity is ensured.

Should groundwater use for cultivation of water intensive crops be discouraged? Critically analyse how groundwater can be used and managed effectively for Agricultural purposes. (250 words)

Financialexpress**Why this question:**

The article highlights the efforts being made by International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) in developing rice crops that are less water intensive.

**Key demand of the question:**

Provide for a detailed analysis of ground water usage associated in the agrarian systems of the country.

Directive:

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

Structure of the answer:**Introduction:**

In brief explain the importance of conserving ground water and that the major contributions in exploitation of ground water are being made by the agricultural systems; such as rice cultivation etc.

Body:

First discuss the arguments made in the article.

Explain the importance of saving ground water.

What are the factors responsible for unconditional exploitation of ground water?

Explain what needs to be done to overcome the situation, suggest alternatives.

Conclusion:

Conclude with way forward.

Introduction:

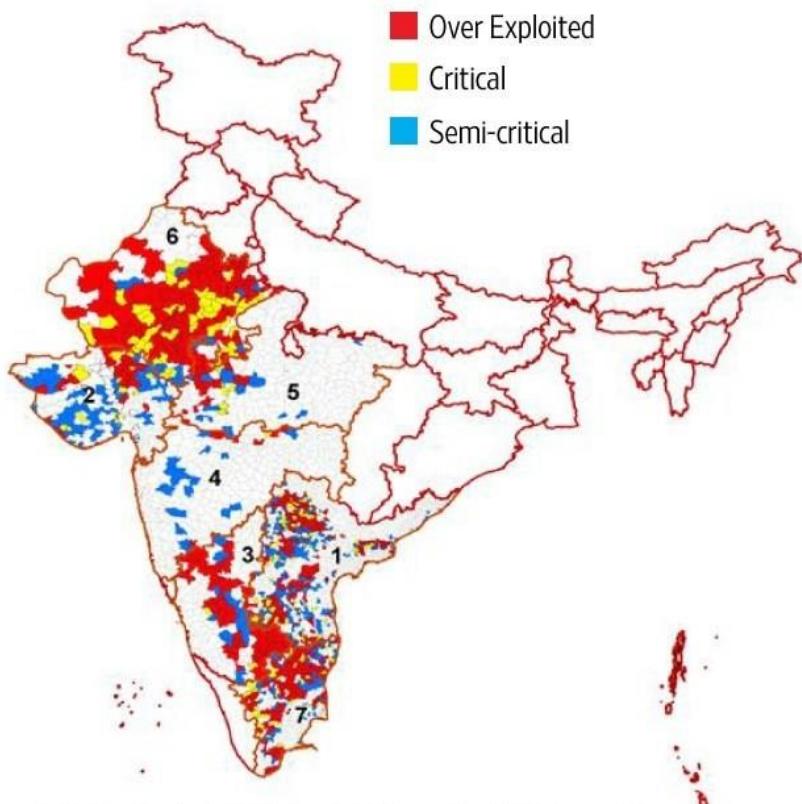
The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) World Water Development Report states that India is the largest extractor of groundwater in the world. Fifty-four percent of India's groundwater wells have declined over the past seven years, and 21 major cities are expected to run out of groundwater by 2020. Erratic monsoon rains and skewed farm incentives have led to the growing groundwater crisis, impacting farm incomes and availability of drinking water.

Body:

According to IRRI, if the aquifers are well-connected, and rechargeable, pumping of groundwater is one of the good approaches to capturing water from rain and rivers, which otherwise ends up in the sea. The amount of water that can be pumped out depends on the type of aquifer, and the recharge capacity, which, in turn, depends on the source of recharge, and the properties of the sink.



GROUND WATER STRESSED BLOCKS OF INDIA



1: Andra Pradesh, 2: Gujarat, 3: Karnataka, 4: Maharashtra,
5: Madhya Pradesh, 6: Rajasthan and 7: Tamil Nadu

Source: IWMI

Reasons for ground water exploitation in India:

- India is the largest user of the groundwater in the world with **almost 90% being used for drinking water and almost 60-70% for irrigation.**
- Subsidies:**
 - Subsidies on electricity** are thought to play a central role in the Indian groundwater crisis.
 - The vast majority of groundwater pumps are unmetered, and if charged, are billed at a flat, non-volumetric, and highly subsidized tariff.
- Water intensive crops:**
 - Government encourages farmers to produce water-intensive crops like rice and sugarcane through **increased minimum support prices (MSP).** This has also led to groundwater depletion, income inequality and unsustainable agriculture.



- Farmers are digging more and more borewells, but the sources of the problem are many, including transition to water-intensive crops and spate of construction activity along catchment areas.
- **Unpredictable monsoon:**
 - Successive droughts and erratic rainfall have led to excess extraction of groundwater. That explains 61 per cent decline in groundwater level in wells in India between 2007 and 2017.
- **Land use changes:**
 - India's huge groundwater-dependent population, uncertain climate-reliant recharge processes and indiscriminate land use changes with urbanization are among the many factors that have rendered the Indian groundwater scenario to become a global paradigm for water scarcity, for both quantity and quality.
 - Trans-boundary upstream water sources and archaic irrigation methods for the water shortage.
- **Government failure:**
 - The **government finance for well digging and pump installation with capital subsidies, massive rural electrification and pervasive energy subsidies** all have enabled this process to aggravate.
 - In the north western parts of India and southern peninsula, the early and **rapid rural electrification, free or subsidised power to the farm sector, large productive farmers and attractive procurement prices for major cereals** led to intensive use of groundwater.
 - **Zero marginal cost of pumping and lack of restriction on volume of water** resulted in inefficient and unsustainable use of the resource.
- **Lack of adequate planning, crumbling infrastructure, indiscriminate drilling of borewells, large-scale consumption of water, and a false sense of entitlement** in using water carelessly are causing water shortages.

Measures needed:

- **Reducing electricity subsidies:**
 - An analysis of panel data across 370 districts in India found that a reduction in electricity subsidy was correlated with a decrease in groundwater extraction .
 - Most empirical studies are in favour of pricing electricity on the basis of actual consumption. They show that the energy prices at which the farmers start responding to tariff changes in terms of reducing the demand for water and electricity would be socio-economically viable.
 - Incentivising farmers with carbon credits can encourage them to use groundwater efficiently, IRRI says.
- **Micro-irrigation:**



- Encouraging farmers to adopt micro-irrigation techniques such as drip irrigation and micro-sprinklers.
- According to the CWMI report, adopting micro-irrigation techniques can save roughly 20% of the groundwater used annually on irrigation in India.
- **Sustainable Agricultural Practices:**
 - When rice is grown under aerobic conditions, like **Direct Seeded Rice (DSR)**, a saving of about 12-35% of irrigation water is reported.
 - Efficient irrigation scheduling (like alternate wetting and drying) not only shrinks the use of water but also the carbon footprint by reducing emissions of methane, a greenhouse gas, from bunded fields or paddies.
- **Creating awareness:**
 - Creating sustainable change would require a bottom-up approach by empowering the local community to become active participants in managing groundwater.
- **Proper implementation of initiatives:**
 - **12th five-year plan** proposed a policy of **participatory groundwater management (PGM)**, which involves a collaborative approach among government departments, researchers, NGOs and community members.
 - The plan involves training community workers to carry out aquifer mapping and implement innovative ways to use groundwater conservatively with the local community.
 - Government has come up with a **6,000-crore World Bank-aided Atal Bhujal Yojana** with community participation to ensure sustained groundwater management in overexploited and ground water-stressed areas in seven States.
 - **World Bank's Water Scarce Cities Initiative** seeks to promote an integrated approach to managing water resources and service delivery in water-scarce cities as the basis for building resilience against climate change.
 - India needs better policies that directly help small-holders and labourers to adapt and adjust to risks associated with groundwater depletion and a more variable future climate.
 - Crisis can be tackled by restoring and enhancing groundwater recharge areas, stopping polluted water from recharging groundwater, rainwater and roof top harvesting and the restoration of ponds, lakes and other river systems.
 - Growing **less water-intensive crops in the dry season and transitioning away from irrigation-intensive systems** where there is little water.
 - **Behavioural economics and other novel approaches** can be brought to bear on maximizing agricultural production with minimal water use instead of focusing on marginal increases in yields with unbounded water use.



- **Water-deficient states should promptly move towards micro-irrigation systems.** These techniques have significantly higher efficiency vis-à-vis flood irrigation techniques.
- States should continue to focus on **command area development (CAD)**. This is now part of **Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY)** which focuses on “more crop per drop”.
- The cropping patterns in the states should be changed as per the agro-climatic zones. Improper cropping patterns affect both crop productivity and irrigation efficiency.
- **Farmer producer organizations (FPO)** provide a sense of ownership to farmers and encourage community-level involvement with lower transaction costs.
- India **needs to establish data networks** to track not only crop transpiration but also total inflows and recoverable outflows of irrigation water but also the losses to unrecoverable sinks such as evaporation.

Conclusion:

There is a need to **modernise the regulatory framework** for accessing groundwater soon after massive expansion in mechanical pumping led to the realisation that recharge could not keep pace with use.

Urgent and fresh debate on the need to repeal the sedition law, for it has no place in a vibrant democracy is the issue at the hour. Discuss.(250 words)

The hindu

Why this question:

The article discusses the concerns and issues surrounding the debate of sedition.

Key demand of the question:

One must discuss in detail the challenges that sedition law poses in the current polity set up and in what way it is high time to debate and conclude upon it.

Directive:

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

Structure of the answer:

Introduction:

In brief narrate what are the issues with continuing with the sedition law.

Body:

Explain the following factors:

What is the Sedition Law?

Write briefly upon the Use of Sedition law during India's Freedom Movement.

Discuss what the current issue is.

List the various supreme court judgments.

Explain the various concerns involved.

Conclusion:

Conclude with way forward.

Introduction:



'Sedition' is an offence incorporated into the Indian Penal Code (IPC) in 1870. Section 124A of the IPC defines sedition and says:

- whoever by words either spoken or written or by signs or by visible representation or otherwise brings or attempts to bring into hatred or contempt, the government established by law; or
- whoever by the above means excites or attempts to excite disaffection towards the government established by law, has committed the offence of sedition.

The offence is punishable with imprisonment for life.

Body:

Courts have interpreted 124A of Indian penal code in many cases relate to 124A section:

- **Kedar Nath Singh Vs State of Bihar 1962:** constitutional bench of Supreme Court made clear that allegedly seditious speech & expression may be punished **only if speech is an incitement to violence or public disorder.** Subsequent cases have further clarified the meaning of this phrase.
- **Indra Das vs. State of Assam & Arup Bhuyan vs State of Assam:** Supreme Court stated that **only speech that amounts to "incitement to imminent lawless action" can be criminalised.**
 - Therefore, advocating revolution or advocating even violent overthrow of State, does not amount to sedition, unless there is incitement to violence & more importantly, incitement is to imminent violence.
- **Maneka Gandhi case, 1978:** The Maneka Gandhi judgment was a balanced judgment and is one of the best judgments that Indian Supreme Court has ever given.
 - The judgment's importance can be seen today also because the way in which the bench construed Article 21 and expanded its horizons has given way for the resolving of problems left unsolved by the Parliament.
 - The SC stated that Criticizing and drawing general opinion against the Govt. policies and decisions within a reasonable limit that does not incite people to rebel is consistent with the freedom of speech.
 - The judgment **saved the citizens from unquestionable actions of Executive.**
- **Balwant Singh v. State of Punjab:** In one of most important judgements in this regard, Supreme Court **overturned the convictions for sedition(124A IPC)** and Promoting enmity between different groups on grounds of religion, race, place of birth, residence, language, etc (153 A IPC).
 - In this case, accused raised slogans such Khalistan Zindabad, Raj Karega Khalsa (Khalsa will rule) & Hinduan Nun Punjab Chon Kadhu Ke Chhadange, Hun Mauka Aya Hai Raj Kayam Karan Da (Hindus will leave Punjab, we will rule) i.e. a few hours after Indira Gandhi's assassination.



- Despite the slogans clearly undermining Indian sovereignty and government, SC acquitted or free from charge or verdict of not guilty the accused because the slogans did not imminently incite violence.
- Thus, even advocating secession of country or violent overthrow of government, does not attract sedition unless there is imminent incitement to violence.
- 'Incitement' rather than 'advocacy' is the important element of section 124A.

Dark side of Sedition Law:

- Before Independence, this charge was used by the British to suppress the freedom movement.
- Ironically, the same draconian law has become a tool that the country is now using against its own people.
- During colonial period section 124-A was interpreted by the privy council in a way to suppress every act that expressed discontent against the government.
- Many freedom fighters were slapped with these charges for invoking feelings of nationalism and educating people of India against the policies adopted by the colonial power.

Why Sedition law must be stripped off?

- The recent order of a Bihar court directing the filing of an FIR against 49 eminent persons who signed an open letter to the Prime Minister expressing concerns over mob lynching is shocking, disappointing, and completely disregards the true meaning of the law.
- Dissent is the lifeblood of democracy. Democracy has no meaning without freedoms and sedition as interpreted and applied by the police and governments is a negation of it.
- Terms like "disaffection" and "contempt" can be stretched to mean just about anything, enabling.
- There have been many incidents in recent times where "misguided" people have been termed "anti-national".
- Law enforcement agencies forget the fact that the sentiment could have been demonstrated through a slogan, a cheer, a statement, protest against a nuclear power project, or an innocuous post on social media. In all these cases, the state, across regimes, has filed charges of sedition.
- Authorities often forget the fact that sedition can't be applied to instances of criticism of the government or a political functionary. More importantly, words alone are not enough for such a charge to be slapped. Incitement to violence is the most crucial ingredient of the offence of sedition.
- Going through the numbers that the National Crime Records Bureau puts out every year, it is clear that despite the rise in sedition cases, convictions happen in barely a few. Even if these people are not convicted, the slapping of these charges is a way the governments over the years have been sending a strong message to its own people—obey or be ready to face consequences.



- Hence, before the law loses its potency, the Supreme Court, being the protector of the fundamental rights of the citizens has to step in and evaluate the law and may declare Section 124A unconstitutional if necessary.
- As events have shown, however, the gap between the law and its judicial interpretation has become so wide that there can be no interpretive bridge that will adequately protect liberty.
- This being the case, the Supreme Court will, hopefully, reconsider its 1962 decision, and strike down the law of sedition as being unconstitutional.

Way Forward:

- **All speech-related offences should be made bailable offences;** this would lessen the harmful impact of using arrest and custody as a way of harassing anyone exercising their rights under Article 19(1) (a). The **chilling effect on freedom of speech and expression** must be erased.
- Forming a committee involving Government and renowned civil society members while deciding cases under section 124 A.
- To limit the discretionary power as much as possible through better and comprehensive drafting of guidelines.
- **The offences should be made non-cognisable** so that there is at least a judicial check on the police acting on the basis of politically motivated complaints.
- In the case of offences under Sections 153A (“promoting enmity between different groups on grounds of religion, race, place of birth, residence, language, etc, and doing acts prejudicial to maintenance of harmony”) and 295A of the Indian Penal Code, it is mandatory under Section 196(1) of the Code of Criminal Procedure **to obtain prior sanction of the government before taking cognisance of the offences.** This needs to be extended to the offence of sedition under Section 124A.
- In the case of hate speech, it is important to **raise the burden of proof on those who claim that their sentiments are hurt rather than accept them at face value.**
- And finally, it is crucial that courts begin to **take action against those who bring malicious complaints against speech acts.**

Conclusion:

The word ‘sedition’ is thus extremely nuanced, and needs to be applied with caution. It is like cannon that ought not be used to shoot a mouse; but the arsenal also demands possession of cannons, mostly as a deterrent, and on occasion for shooting.

Religious trusts have been historically known to be repositories of wealth donated by disciples and followers. In such a context do you think allowing religious trusts to invest in start-ups could catalyse the ecosystem? Analyse.(250 words)

[Indianexpress](#)

Why this question:

Religious trusts have been historically known to be repositories of wealth donated by disciples and followers. However, this opaque world has opened up in recent times with the income and



profitability of some of the well-known trusts now available with credit rating agencies as well. Thus it becomes necessary for us to analyse their role in contributing to start up ecosystem.

Key demand of the question:

One has to explain the significant contribution that the religious endowments and trusts can make by contributing to start ups through investments.

Directive:

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

Structure of the answer:

Introduction:

In brief discuss the significance of religious trusts and there working in general.

Body:

Explain that religious trusts have been historically known to be repositories of wealth donated by disciples and followers. However, this opaque world has opened up in recent times with the income and profitability of some of the well-known trusts now available with credit rating agencies as well. Discuss the startup ecosystem currently present in India – In 2018, India turned out to be the world's third-largest startup ecosystem, with \$38 billion in foreign direct investment.

Conclusion:

Conclude that Indian economy can witness a multiplier effect on employment generation if thousands of genuine startups start seeing capital inflows through these religious institutions

Introduction:

Religious Trusts has not been defined under the income tax act. The creation of Religious Trust is governed by the personal laws of the religion. But in general connotation, it can be deemed as the Trusts which are involved in the activities of promoting religion or particular belief. But in reality, most of the Religious Trusts also promote the charitable causes as well e.g. education, medical facility, providing food the poor etc. and such types of Trust are called **Charitable & Religious Trust**.

Body:

Religious trusts have been historically known to be repositories of wealth donated by disciples and followers. However, this opaque world has opened up in recent times with the income and profitability of some of the well-known trusts now available with credit rating agencies as well.

Wealth status of some of religious trusts:

- The Vatican is reported to be worth \$10 billion or more, while the Mormon Church in the US is estimated to be worth four times more.
- In 2015, the Islamic Development Bank estimated that Muslims donated "Zakat" worth \$262-560 billion, of which a sizeable share would have been to religious organisations.
- Various media reports indicate that the richest temple trust in the world — the Padmanabhaswamy Temple in Thiruvananthapuram — is, even by conservative estimates, valued at approximately \$17 billion.
- Combine the value of antiques accumulated over centuries and this amount could be 10 times or \$170 billion. That's equivalent to the GDP of oil-rich Qatar.
- Many similar temple trusts like those of Tirupati Balaji, Shirdi Sai Baba, Vaishno Devi, Siddhi Vinayak and Golden Temple are known for holding onto their wealth or investing it in government securities alone.



- Almost all of them reportedly saw huge spikes in “donations” immediately after demonetisation in 2016.

Wealth can be used to boost start-up ecosystem:

- **National priorities and liquidity:** A government that has aggressively championed and executed projects to reform and bolster almost all the sectors of the economy, must focus on this locked-in wealth.
- With India being the world’s third largest startup ecosystem, there can be a **multiplier effect on employment generation** if thousands of genuine startups start seeing capital inflows through these religious institutions.
- Even if these trusts/funds invest 5-10 per cent towards entrepreneurship or venture capital, it will facilitate the creation of the largest pool of capital for venture capitalists in the next decade.
- **Cascading effect:** This can trigger a fresh new wave of entrepreneurship and job creation, one that will make the world sit up and take notice of India in a new light.
- The institutions equivalent to charitable trusts are endowment funds, which are allowed to invest in Indian small and medium enterprises and startups, and are being rewarded for their proactive investments.

Challenges faced by the charities:

- The prevailing rules prevent charitable institutions from deploying religious trust contributions in anything that is not specifically mentioned
- At present, the wealth in funds/trusts is mandated to be invested/deposited as per their respective guidelines and there is no provision for investments in alternate investment funds (AIFs).
- One of the biggest challenges to giving today is the **credibility of organizations**. A lot of organizations have poor reputations in terms of how they’re using their funds
- **Non-accountable, non-transparent undemocratic functioning:** CBI records filed in the Supreme Court show that only 10% of the total registered NGOs under the Societies Registration Act file annual financial statements.
- **Over dependence on funds from the government** dilutes the willingness of NGOs to speak out against the government.
- **Money Laundering:** Corrupt or unscrupulous NGOs that receive foreign funds may serve as conduits for money laundering.
- **Accreditation** remains a big challenge as it is very difficult to distinguish whether an organization wants to work for the cause or has been set up only for the purpose of receiving government grants.
- The number of foreign-funded organisations operating in India has reportedly shrunk by nearly half in the past two years amid a crackdown by the government.



- **Emotional ties** play a big part, if parents and grandparents have given to a particular religious trust or temple, somehow the present generation feels obliged to continue that, even when they would rather channel that money somewhere else.

Way Forward:

- A change in policy that could potentially go a long way in bringing in wider funding options to India's deserving entrepreneurs and startups who need continuity and stability, in planning as well as in execution at the policy level, along with the involvement of key stakeholders in the entire decision-making process
- The policies pertaining to investment/deposit of such trusts/funds are amended to include investment in AIFs Category-I, then, by further investment in startups, they can generate direct and indirect employment in huge numbers, giving a fillip to the economy.
- **Amending Section 11(5) of the Income Tax Act, 1961** which pertains to modes of investments/deposits made by charitable/religious trust. This section can include "Investment by acquiring of units of SEBI registered AIF (Category I & II)".
- **A National Accreditation Council** consisting of academicians, activist, retired bureaucrats should be made to ensure compliance by NGOs.
- There should be better coordination between Ministries of Home Affairs and Finance in terms of monitoring and regulating illicit and unaccounted funds.
- **A regulatory mechanism** to keep a watch on the financial activities of NGOs and voluntary organizations is needed.

Conclusion:

If India's aim is to be a more efficient economy, policy-makers must allow our charitable/religious trusts to invest/deposit part of their corpus into the startup eco-system.

What is graded response action plan (GRAP)? Discuss the effectiveness of such plans in solving the issue of air pollution in cities like Delhi. (250 words)

Indianexpress

Why this question:

The article discusses – stricter measures under Graded Response Action Plan in Delhi-NCR from October 15. It throws light on how the plan worked in Delhi so far, what is being extended to NCR towns, and where other do states figure in it.

Key demand of the question:

One should explain in detail the concept underlying the graded response action plan (GRAP) and its effectiveness of such plans in solving the issue of air pollution in cities like Delhi.

Directive:

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

Structure of the answer:

Introduction:

In brief explain the genesis of graded action plan.

Body:



Explain that Approved by the Supreme Court in 2016, the plan was formulated after several meetings that the Environment Pollution (Prevention and Control) Authority (EPCA) held with state government representatives and experts. The result was a plan that institutionalized measures to be taken when air quality deteriorates.

Explain the key features of the plan.

Discuss the challenges involved in implementing it.

Elucidate on the positives it brought in, in the cities like that of Delhi in treating the issue of air pollution.

Conclusion:

Conclude with way forward.

Introduction:

The Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP) was prepared by the **Supreme Court-mandated Environment Pollution Control Authority (EPCA)**. A graded response lays down stratified actions that are required to be taken as and when the concentration of pollutants i.e. particulate matter, reaches a certain level. It has already been in effect for two years in Delhi and the National Capital Region (NCR).

GRAP works only as an emergency measure. As such, the plan does not include action by various state governments to be taken throughout the year to tackle industrial, vehicular and combustion emissions. When the air quality shifts from poor to very poor, the measures listed under both sections have to be followed since the plan is incremental in nature.

Body:

The recent GRAP measures are aimed at stopping the use of diesel generator sets will, from next week, extend beyond Delhi to the NCR, where many areas see regular power cuts. The measures that are coming into force will be incremental. As pollution rises, and it is expected to as winter approaches, more measures will come into play depending on the air quality.

Effectiveness of GRAP:

- GRAP has been successful in doing two things that had not been done before — **creating a step-by-step plan for the entire Delhi-NCR region and getting on board several agencies**: all pollution control boards, industrial area authorities, municipal corporations, regional officials of the India Meteorological Department, and others.
- The plan requires action and coordination among 13 different agencies in Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana and Rajasthan (NCR areas).
- At the head of the table is the EPCA, mandated by the Supreme Court.
- The biggest success of GRAP has been in **fixing accountability and deadlines**. For each action to be taken under a particular air quality category, executing agencies are clearly marked.
- In a territory like Delhi, where a **multiplicity of authorities** has been a **long-standing impediment** to effective governance, this step made a crucial difference.
- The coordination among as many as 13 agencies from four states is simplified to a degree because of the **clear demarcation of responsibilities**.



- Three major policy decisions that can be credited to EPCA and GRAP are the **closure of the thermal power plant at Badarpur, bringing BS-VI fuel to Delhi** before the deadline set initially, and **the ban on Pet coke as a fuel in Delhi NCR**.

Shortcomings:

- One criticism of the EPCA as well as GRAP has been the focus on Delhi.
- While other states have managed to delay several measures, citing lack of resources, Delhi has always been the first one to have stringent measures enforced.

Way forward:

- It's important to, in the first place, have accurate air quality measurements all across our cities to give us a real-time indication of the extent of the problem.
- Only that, in combination with trying out a variety of measures suggested by experts, can tell us what works and what doesn't.
- Given the stakes involved and the fact that environmental fallouts cannot be confined within state borders, all stakeholders must work together to improve air quality in India.
- They should also search for long-term solutions which minimise economic costs.
- Enhanced investment in public transport, for instance, can mitigate the environmental fallout and also yield economic benefits.

Conclusion:

India has 12 out of 14 cities which are high levels of air pollution. Involvement of Supreme Court in this issue is a significant moment in India's battle for clean air, emphasising the need for a comprehensive plan presenting systemic solutions and reminding governments that a plan can be executed successfully only if all stakeholders work in tandem. This template should also be adapted for other Indian cities that suffer appalling air quality. Air pollution extracts an enormous price in terms of health, particularly of children. Combating it must become a governance priority

Indian cities are running out of water, coupled with alarming drinking water woes in cities, thus raising questions about the quality of the discourse and choice of water governance strategies in India. Discuss the factors responsible along with measures to improve water governance in the country. (250 words)

The hindu**Why this question:**

The article presents a detailed evaluation of NITI Aayog's strategy for water resources and highlights the water management issues in India.

Key demand of the question:

One has to bring out the issues and challenges associated with the water governance in the country and suggest way forward for the same.

Directive:

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

Structure of the answer:**Introduction:**



In brief explain the relevance of NITI Aayog's plans in the past for governance of water.

Body:

Explain the factors responsible for water crisis in the country.

Cover all the aspects ranging from fresh water, ground water etc. and their respective problems.

Discuss the lacunae in terms of governance of these issues like – failure of the authorities to address the situation, outdated ideas, procedures etc.

Suggest solutions as required.

Conclusion:

Conclude with way forward.

Introduction:

The **NITI Aayog report on Composite Water Management Index (CWMI)** said that India is facing its 'worst' water crisis in history. Taps in Shimla went dry in summer of 2018, posing an unprecedented water crisis in the hill town. According to a forecast by the Asian Development Bank, India will have a water deficit of 50% by 2030. Recent studies also ranked Chennai and Delhi at the top of the 27 most vulnerable Asian cities in terms of low per-day water availability Mumbai and Kolkata follow close.

Body:

India's water crisis is more serious than its energy crisis:

- The water crisis in India is more dire than imagined.
- The annual per capita availability of water continues to decline sharply from about 5,177 cubic metres in 1951 to about 1,720 cubic metres in 2019.
- The NITI Aayog in its report on Composite Water Management Index (2018) has underlined that currently 600 million people face high to extreme water stress.
- Twenty-one cities, including Delhi, Bengaluru, Chennai and Hyderabad will run out of groundwater by 2020, affecting 100 million people.
- Apart from mega cities, many fast-growing small and medium cities such as Jamshedpur, Kanpur, Dhanbad, Meerut, Faridabad, Visakhapatnam, Madurai and Hyderabad also figure in this list.
- The demand-supply gap in most of these cities ranges from 30 per cent to as much as 70 per cent.
- About two lakh die every year due to inadequate access to safe water, about three-fourths of the household do not get drinking water at their premise and about 70 per cent of water is contaminated.
- The rate of groundwater extraction is so severe that NASA's findings suggest that India's water table is declining alarmingly at a rate of about 0.3 metres per year.
- At this rate of depletion, India will have only 22 per cent of the present daily per capita water available in 2050, possibly forcing the country to import water.



- About 81 per cent of India's ultimate irrigation potential, estimated at 140 million hectares, has already been created and thus the scope for further expansion of irrigation infrastructure on a large scale is limited.
- Climate experts have predicted that there will be fewer rainy days in the future but in those days it would rain more.

Causative factors for water crisis:

- A combination of population explosion, unplanned growth of the city and its expansion to some traditional catchment areas (a region from which rainfall flows into a river, lake, or reservoir) have led to a reduction in the natural flow of water, and large-scale deforestation.
- Climate change, leading to much lower precipitation during the winter months. As a result, the natural flow and recharge of water in the region has fallen sharply
- Failure of State governments to check unplanned development and exploitation of water resources. There is no attempt at the central or state levels to manage water quantity and quality
- The vegetation pattern has changed, tree cover is shrinking and unscientific dumping of debris in water streams is rampant.
- The debris blocks the natural course of water bodies.
- Increasing number of tube wells resulting in depletion of groundwater.
- Changes in farming patterns lead to consumption of more water for irrigation and also change the soil profile because of the use of fertilizers
- The states ranked lowest like Uttar Pradesh, Haryana and Jharkhand – are home to almost half of India's population along with the majority of its agricultural produce.
- There is also a **lack of interest in maintaining India's traditional water harvesting structures.**

Measures needed:

- **Structural measures:**
 - Putting in place an efficient piped supply system (without leakage of pipes) has to be top on the agenda.
 - Ancient India had well-managed wells and canal systems. Indigenous water harvesting systems need to be revived and protected at the local level. Examples: Karez, Bawli, Vav etc
 - Digging of rainwater harvesting pits must be made mandatory for all types of buildings, both in urban and rural areas.
 - **Treating the Greywater and reusing it** needs to be adopted by countries like Israel (upto 85%). It could be used to recharge depleted aquifers and use on crops.



- Initiatives such as **community water storage and decentralized treatment facilities, including elevated water towers or reservoirs and water ATMs**, based on a realistic understanding of the costs involved, can help support the city's water distribution.
- Technologies capable of converting non-drinkable water into fresh, consumable water, offering a potential solution to the impending water crisis are needed.
Example: Desalination technologies in Coastal areas, Water-sterilization in polluted water areas.

Non-structural measures:

- The **World Bank's Water Scarce Cities Initiative** seeks to promote an integrated approach, aims at managing water resources and service delivery in water-scarce cities as the basis for building climate change resilience.
- Groundwater extraction patterns need to be better understood through robust data collection
- Decentralisation of irrigation commands, offering higher financial flows to well-performing States through a **National Irrigation Management Fund**.
- **Public awareness campaigns, tax incentives for water conservation and the use of technology interfaces** can also go a long way in addressing the water problem.
Example, measures such as water credits can be introduced with tax benefits as incentives for efficient use and recycling of water.
- A collaborative approach like the adoption of a public-private partnership model for water projects can help. **Example**, in Netherlands, water companies are incorporated as private companies, with the local and national governments being majority shareholders.
- Sustained measures should be taken to prevent pollution of water bodies and contamination of groundwater.
- Ensuring proper treatment of domestic and industrial waste water is also essential.

Way forward:

- India's water problems can be solved with existing knowledge, technology and available funds.
- NITI Aayog has prescribed only a continuation of past failed policies.
- India's water establishment needs to admit that the strategy pursued so far has not worked.
- Only then can a realistic vision emerge.

Conclusion:

Primarily water is not valued in India. "People think it is free". In order to meet the future urban water challenges, there needs to be a shift in the way we manage urban water systems.

An **Integrated Urban Water Management approach** must be adopted which involves managing freshwater, wastewater, and storm water, using an urban area as the unit of management.



Discuss the correlation between mothers' education and the nutrition levels of children and its overall impact on well-being of children. (250 words)

The hindu

Why this question:

A recent Pan-India study of 1.2 lakh children by Health and Family Welfare Ministry shows children received better diets with higher levels of schooling among mothers. Thus it is important to understand such a correlation and its impact.

Key demand of the question:

One must explain in detail the correlation between mothers' education and the nutrition levels of children and its overall impact on well-being of children.

Directive:

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

Structure of the answer:

Introduction:

In brief bring out the findings of the survey made by Health and Family Welfare Ministry.

Quote data from Comprehensive National Nutrition Survey (CNSS).

Body:

Explain first importance of nutrition in Children.

Discuss the determining factors of child nutrition in general and explain the role played by mothers in ensuring total nutrition to their children.

Discuss why is it important for mothers to be educated? How does it impact nutrition among children?

Quote data from the survey to justify your answers better.

Conclusion:

Conclude with what needs to be done to overcome the challenges of nutrition.

Introduction:

Malnutrition in India also persists because of the age-old patterns of social and economic exclusion. According to UNICEF, 38% of children younger than five years of age in India are stunted, a manifestation of chronic undernutrition. Stunting and other forms of under-nutrition are thought to be responsible for nearly half of all child deaths globally. Pan-India study of 1.2 lakh children by Health and Family Welfare Ministry shows **children received better diets with higher levels of schooling among mothers. Maternal education accounted for about 12% of the gender related factors attributing to malnutrition.**

Body:

Correlation between mothers' education and the nutrition levels of children:

- The data recorded show 31% of mothers of children aged up to four years, 42% of women having children aged five to nine and 53% of mothers of adolescents aged 10-19 never attended school.
- Only 20% of mothers of pre-schoolers, 12% of those of schoolchildren, and 7% of those of adolescents had completed 12 or more years of schooling.
- Data from the CNNS study show that with higher levels of schooling in a mother, children received better diets.
- Only 11.4% of children of mothers with no schooling received adequately diverse meals, while 31.8% whose mothers finished Class XII received diverse meals.

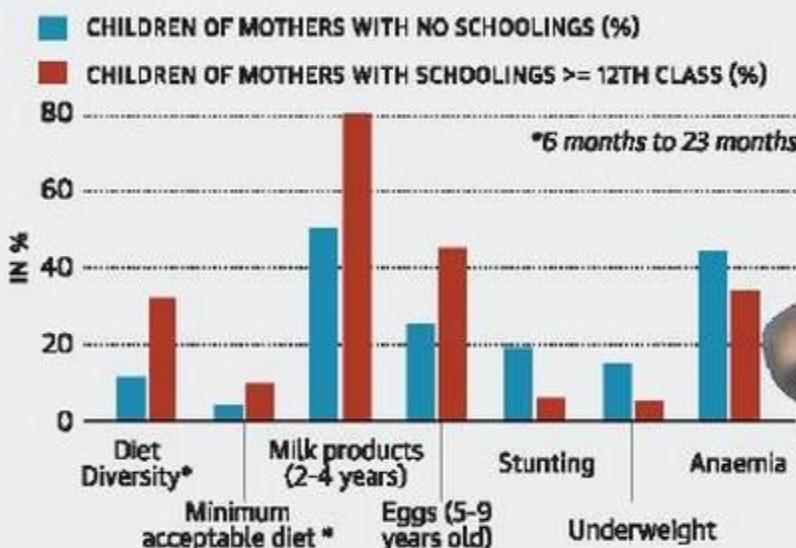


- The study found 3.9% of children whose mothers had zero schooling got minimum acceptable diets, whereas this was at 9.6% for children whose mothers finished schooling.
- Moreover, 7.2% of children in the former category consumed iron rich food, whereas this was at 10.3% for children in the latter category.
- The proportion of children aged two to four consuming dairy products, eggs and other fruits and vegetables the previous day increased with the mothers' education level and household wealth status.
- For example, only 49.8% of children in that age group whose mothers did not go to school consumed dairy products, while 80.5% of children of mothers who completed their schooling did so.
- These trends also show among older children and adolescents — only 25.4% of children in the 5-9 age group with uneducated mothers received eggs, but 45.3% of children whose mothers studied till Class XII had eggs.
- Stunting among children aged up to four was nearly three times for the former category (19.3% versus 5.9%), and the number of underweight children was nearly double among them (14.8% versus 5.1%) as compared to the latter category.
- Also, 5.7% of the children were wasted in the former category, while this was at 4.3% in the latter category.
- Anaemia saw a much higher prevalence of 44.1% among children up to four years old with mothers who never went to school, versus 34.6% among those who completed their schooling.
- The HUNGaMA (Hunger and Malnutrition) Survey across 112 rural districts in 2011 by non-profit Naandi Foundation shows the impact of the world's oldest anti-malnutrition programme. Eighty per cent of the mothers have not heard the word malnutrition in their local language.



Education route to good health

Children of women who are more educated are likely to receive more nutritious diets which consequently increases their resistance to future illnesses



However, the study also found that higher level of education among mothers also had its adverse impacts on education:

- On the flip side, a higher level of education among mothers meant that their children received meals less frequently, perhaps because their chances of being employed and travelling long distances to work went up.
- About 50.4% of children in the age group of 6-23 months born to illiterate mothers versus 36.2% among those who had finished schooling.
- Such children were also at higher risk of diabetes and high cholesterol as relative prosperity could lead to higher consumption of sugary drinks and foods high in cholesterol.
- Children in the age group of 10-19 showed a higher prevalence of pre-diabetes if their mother had finished schooling (15.1% versus 9.6%).
- The prevalence of high cholesterol levels was at 6.2% in these children as opposed to 4.8% among those whose mothers never attended school.

Measures needed:

- A decentralized approach should be promoted with greater flexibility and decision making at the state, district and local levels.
- The ownership of Panchayati Raj and urban local bodies is to be strengthened over nutrition initiatives.
- Mothers should be made aware of the right nutrition their child will need to stay strong and healthy.
- Anganwadi workers, ANMs and ASHAs should be educated and help educate the mothers about motherhood, sexual practices, hygiene and sanitation in the rural areas.



- Providing sexual health education to the adolescent females and mothers to be.

Conclusion:

Thus, maternal education has definite and significant effect on nutritional status of children. This is the key factor to be addressed for prevention or improvement of childhood malnutrition. For this it is imperative to launch sustainable programs at national and regional level to uplift women educational status to combat this ever increasing burden of malnutrition.

Review of its State Science and Technology Councils (SSTC) Programme by the government of India is a step forward in decentralization of the agenda of science and democratization of access to science and its methods, which was long overdue.

Comment.(250 words)

Indianexpress

Why this question:

The article discusses the importance of decentralization of Science and access to science in the development of the country.

Key demand of the question:

One has to discuss the significance that the State Science and Technology Councils (SSTC) Programme holds for Indian advancement in science, in decentralizing access to science and its benefits.

Directive:

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

Structure of the answer:**Introduction:**

In brief explain the significance of science in general to the country.

Body:

Explain in detail first the features of State Science and Technology Councils (SSTC) Programme. Discuss why is it important that the State Science and Technology Councils (SSTC) Programme be reviewed – The SSTCs were formed to spearhead the use of science and technology (S&T) for regional problems and to foster “scientific temper” within states, and the DST programme was mandated “to provide core support”.

Discuss how it helps address the developmental problems and other issues, also discuss the hurdles or challenges associated.

Conclusion:

Conclude with way forward.

Introduction:

The State Science and Technology Councils (SSTCs) constituted to spearhead the use of science and technologies (S&T) for regional problems and to foster scientific temper have been completely neglected and are now intellectually adrift. State Science & Technology Councils have been set-up in all the States and Union Territories. Several States have also formed a separate Department of Science & Technology. The State Councils are normally chaired by Chief Ministers of respective States or by an eminent scientist.

Body:**Growing challenges of a developing India:**



- Managing floods and droughts, designing better timetables for city buses or developing biodegradable paints for Ganapati idol makers, are all extremely challenging tasks.
- The systematic study of such problems and their solutions will lead not only to better development outcomes, but also new science, enterprises and jobs.
- The primary responsibility of solving them lies with our scientists and bureaucrats, not politicians.
- Unfortunately, this is not fully appreciated by our society or accepted by our elite institutions as their mandate.
- Many of the development problems, for instance, water or public health, are on the State List.
- Most state departments do not make any provision for research in their budget simply because it may be too disruptive, or that they do not find viable partner institutions.

Effects of these challenges:

- The result is that our industry imports much of its sophisticated machinery.
- Our state agencies call on expensive international consultants even in traditional areas such as irrigation.
- International companies fill our pot-holes with cement, and foreign universities prepare our smart city plans and assess our drinking water systems.
- These universities know that solving hard real-life problems is the road to “world-class” research and international rankings.

The SSTCs are well-placed to **enable problem discovery, identify higher education institutions to work on these problems and engage with state agencies.**

Challenges faced by SSTC:

- **Funding:** From the DST kitty of Rs 3,000-4,000 crore, barely Rs 100 crore makes it to the SSTCs put together. State funding is scarce. For example, the Maharashtra SSTC has an annual budget of about Rs 60 crore. Compare this with the Rs 200 crore research grants that IIT Bombay alone receives from central agencies, with little to show.
- Second, much of the SSTC budget is disbursed in the same patronising “project proposal and approval” method of the DST, rather than in sectoral engagement and people-driven problem identification.
- Chronic issues in rural electricity or public health or disasters such as the recent Sangli floods are never analysed since they are not seen as scientific problems but social, political or implementation problems to be undertaken by NGOs or the concerned state agency.
- **Lack of diversity in research and Development:**
 - the more informed paradigm is that science is about empowering people, and not merely about few fashionable research areas.



- It is about the practice of observation, analysis, reporting and argumentation, which may happen within a laboratory or outside it, and which speaks not only to scientists, but to administrators, people, their representatives and the civil society at large.

Measures needed:

- The DST should disburse about Rs 2,000-2,500 crore directly to SSTCs with precise guidelines on problem area selection, publicly available reports as research outcomes, identification of regional institutions, strengthening of universities, and working with regional agencies.
- The DST should be a clearing house for data from central agencies such as the National Remote Sensing Agency (NRSA).
- The SSTC should become the **nodal center for research in and for state agencies** and administrative units such as forests lands, watersheds, districts or cities.
- This will enable sectoral research, funds, logistical support and access to state-level data.
- There should be innovative funding mechanisms, for example, providing Rs 10 per capita or Rs 1 crore per district per year as research funding for work on regional problems.
- The SSTC should work with the state higher education department to evolve curricula and research frameworks for the state's development requirements and provide academic space for SSTC projects, and evolve a network of regional institutions to work with district-level agencies.
- There should be better alignment of research and development with existing programmes at the national and state level. For example, the SSTC may offer a programme for institutions or enterprises to prepare air quality action plans for cities as required by the National Clean Air Programme or district irrigation plans as a part of the national PMKSY programme.
- There should be a Model State Science and Technology Council Act to ensure the above agenda to prevent capture by venerable scientists or elite institutions, and to allow people and their representatives to initiate studies on problems which bother them.

Conclusion:

Decentralisation of the agenda of science and democratisation of access to science and its methods is the need of the hour. This will bring real science closer to schools and colleges and allow the community to participate in its own development. This approach is certainly in line with the spirit of science, and certainly what was intended by Bharat Ratna C Subramaniam, who initiated the SSTC programme and was a key figure in both the Green Revolution and the White revolution.

Active participation of the multiple stakeholders in defence manufacturing can help make the Indian defence industry more competitive. In the context of this statement explain the role of greater inclusion of indigenous technology in building robust defence system. (250 words)

Economic times

Why this question:

The question seeks to analyse the role of multi-stakeholder approach in indigenization of defence systems.

**Key demand of the question:**

Analyse the pros of an indigenous ecosystem for the defence sector of the country and discuss its overall impact on the development of the defence system.

Directive:

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

Structure of the answer:**Introduction:**

Start by quoting data like – India is one of the largest importers of weapons and ammunition and highlight the need for indigenization of technologies for the greater interest of the country.

Body:

Explain first the need for greater inclusion of indigenous technology in the armed forces.

Discuss why we need to focus on these aspects? – quote the security dimensions, changing warfare's. Explain the possible interventions and steps that the government should take in this direction.

Conclusion:

Conclude that All stakeholders must come together and hold interactions and come up with action plans as far as research is concerned, so as to increase our defence capabilities to take India to a new height.

Introduction:

India remains **the world's largest importer of major arms**, accounting for **13 per cent of the global total sales**, according to a new data released by **Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI)**, an independent institute that tracks arms proliferation among other issues in conflict studies. Currently, India allocates about **1.8 percent of its GDP to defence spending and imports about 70 percent of defence equipment**. Army Chief Gen Bipin Rawat on Tuesday pitched for greater inclusion of indigenous technology in the armed forces and asserted that India will fight and win the next war with home-grown solutions.

Body:**Need for greater inclusion of multiple stakeholders:**

- Defence production in India is **currently dominated by state-owned manufacturers and lacks autonomy and modernisation**. g.: DRDO, BHEL etc.
- The Union Budget 2017-18 has allocated Rs. 3,59,854 crore to the Ministry of Defence and most of this amount goes for defence acquisition. Still, India can't even compare to its neighbour China in modern warfare and has been unable to protect its borders from being intruded by the militants.
- The major problem behind this is lack of high levels of indigenisation in this The “strategic partnership model” is aimed at making efforts to stimulate defence manufacturing ecosystem in the country through involvement of Indian as well as foreign firms.

The role of greater inclusion of indigenous technology in building robust defence system could help realise the following potential and strengths:

Policy Initiatives:



- The government's agenda to **reduce import dependence in defence by 35-40 percent** it is actively promoting indigenous defence manufacturing with initiatives like **Make in India** and **policy reforms including allowing 100 percent Foreign Direct Investment (FDI)**.
- **Defence Procurement Policy (DPP)** is seen as a game changer to ensure faster pace in procurement, especially through newly introduced categories under **indigenously designed, developed and manufactured (IDDM) provisions**.
- Several states are also offering incentives and concessions in the form of **aerospace clusters or Special Economic Zones (SEZs)** for developing an ecosystem where all core and ancillary activities related to defence manufacturing can co-exist.

Redefined Roles:

- **Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEM)** as well as **Small & Medium Enterprises (SME)** in the defence manufacturing sector are focussing on moving from a buyer-seller to a co-developer and co-manufacturer relationship.
- They have come together and formed strategic partnerships to support the development of a sustainable supplier base for the defence sector. Also, moulded themselves quickly to foster a **culture of innovation and R&D**.

Partnering for success:

- India harbours an immense amount of potential that can be tapped into by way of key strategic partnerships that add value across the entire length and breadth of R&D, manufacturing and supply chain.
- Foreign OEM's are encouraging Indian industry to adopt best practices for global quality standards in their manufacturing processes to lead to the creation of a **gold standard supply chain and defence manufacturing ecosystem in India**.

Skilled talent pool:

- As per government estimates, a **reduction in 20-25 percent in defence related imports** could directly create an additional **100,000 to 120,000 highly skilled jobs** in India.
- The academia and industry needs to forge partnerships to encourage research and technological advancements and create a talent pool that is industry ready.
- **Innovation for Defence Excellence:** The scheme envisions setting up innovation hubs particularly for the defence sector across the country.

Robust supply chain:

- A strong supply chain is critical for a defence manufacturer looking to optimize costs. Gradually, a handful of Indian SMEs are playing a key role in the global supply chain of OEMs.
- With the **government's offset policies**, procurement policies and regulatory incentives spurring the growth of a domestic defence industry, the SMEs need to play a more active role in developing a robust supply chain.

Infrastructure development:



- Lack of adequate infrastructure drives India's logistics costs upwards thus reducing the country's cost competitiveness and efficiency.
- While the government is investing in this area the pace of development needs to pick up considerably and public-private participation can go a long way in hastening this process.
- Establishment of **two defence industrial corridors** in the country. **Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh** to develop defence manufacturing ecosystems in the region.

Challenges faced in indigenization:

- Lack of an institutional capacity and capability to take different policies aimed at indigenisation of defence to its logical conclusion.
- Dispute Settlement body: There is an urgent need for a permanent arbitration committee which can settle disputes expeditiously.
- In the USA, the procurement agency DARPA has a permanent arbitration committee which resolves such issues amicably and their decision is final.
- Infrastructural deficit increases India's logistics costs thus reducing the country's cost competitiveness and efficiency.
- Land acquisition issues restrict entry of new players in the defence manufacturing and production.
- Policy dilemma offset requirements under the DPP are not helping it achieve its goal. (Offsets are a portion of a contracted price with a foreign supplier that must be re-invested in the Indian defence sector, or against which the government can purchase technology.)

Way Forward:

- **Defence offset policies** need better monitoring, removing unnecessary restrictions and linking defence offsets with offset in civil sector. That should be encouraged.
- To boost indigenization, the **Defence Research & Development Organisation (DRDO)** needs to be given more autonomy like space and atomic energy departments.
- Even playing field should be created between the Defence Public Sector Undertakings (DPSUs) and the private sector companies.
- Indian defence PSUs and ordnance factories have a lot of potential, they need to be "**revived, revitalised and made a lot more dynamic**".
- Establishing courses on defence production across universities and creating job opportunities for the graduates.
- The government needs to expedite the setting up a **professional defence procurement agency**.
- Meeting the objectives of defence exports, encouraging innovation, streamlining procurements will require robust defence diplomacy. A **cadre of defence diplomats** should be created to address these issues.



- The country needs an elaborate ecosystem of innovation of which defence innovation can be a part.



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Higher minimum wage solutions for the poor can have encouraging multiplier effects to the economy. Elucidate. (250 words)

The hindu

Why this question:

The article discusses in detail the impact of minimum wage solutions for the poor and in what way it would impact the economy.

Key demand of the question:

Explain what is the impact of such a policy and its effect on the economy.

Directive:

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

Structure of the answer:

Introduction:

Introduce by mentioning about the government's recent decision to improve rural wages.

Body:

Recently The central government decided to adopt new indexation of NREGA wages based on CPI-Rural instead of CPI-AL, meant to increase rural incomes. The current daily NREGA wages are just a quarter of the minimum daily living wage of Rs 692 as outlined in the 7th Pay Commission.

Explain the benefits of higher disposable income for the poor on the entire economy.

Give suggestions to increase the income of poor in the conclusion.

Conclusion:

Conclude that increasing the disposable income of the poor is important not only for their livelihood but is also critical for reviving the slowdown in the economy. It is economically prudent to substantially increase the budget for public programmes such as NREGA.

Introduction:

According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), Minimum wages have been defined as “the minimum amount of remuneration that an employer is required to pay wage earners for the work performed during a given period, which cannot be reduced by collective agreement or an individual contract”.

As per Economic Survey 2018-19, a well-designed minimum wage system is required to reduce wage inequality in the country. According to the International Labour Organisation's India wage report one in every three wage workers in India is not protected by the minimum wage act.

Body:

Higher minimum wages can have encouraging multiplier effects:

- According to the Periodic Labour Force Survey 2017-18, 45% of regular workers are paid less than the minimum wage.
- The law would **benefit about 50 crore workers**.
- With an easily understandable national wage floor— which would apply across job types and geographies—the hope is that compliance will improve.



- At the moment, women earn roughly 45% less than men in the same occupation. It prohibits gender discrimination in matters related to wages and recruitment of employees for the same work or work of similar nature.
- A national wage floor would also hopefully reduce rural-urban gaps.
- Since casual workers can be fired easily, estimates show that the wage may even go down to a miserable ₹20 a day in times of poor demand. A mandated minimum wage will hopefully reduce these glaring inequities.
- It will substantially reduce the number of minimum wages in the country from the existing more than 2000 rates of minimum wages.
- This would ensure that every worker gets a minimum wage which will also be accompanied by an increase in the purchasing power of the worker thereby giving a fillip to growth in the economy.
- Minimum wages are neither a dole nor an act of charity. They are a legal mandate that are arrived at by calculating the minimal nutritional requirement and basic needs of an individual.

Inadequacies in Minimum Wage System:

- **Complex system:** Presently the minimum wage system, under the Minimum Wages Act, 1948, has different minimum wages defined for different job categories across States.
- 1,915 minimum wages are defined for various scheduled job categories across various states.
- Lack of a uniform criteria for fixing the minimum wage rate.
- Different minimum wages for the same occupation across different states, along with a wide range between the lowest and highest minimum wages, trigger migration of industries towards low wage regions.
- This can also cause distress migration of labour to better paying states.
- **Gender Bias:** Analysis of minimum wage data also shows a systemic gender bias. For example – male-dominated job of security guards pays better than being a domestic worker, most of whom are women.
- **National Floor Level Minimum Wage:** Some states have minimum wages even below the non-statutory National Floor Level Minimum Wage (NFLMW) of Rs 176 per day.

Measures needed:

- Increasing the ambit of the minimum wage system, it recommended deciding minimum wages on the basis of skills and split across geographical regions.
- With the government in the process of bringing the Code on Wages Bill in Parliament, the survey said the rationalisation of minimum wages proposed by the Bill should be supported.
- The survey suggested the government should notify a “**national floor minimum wage**” across five regions, after which States can fix their own minimum wages, but not lower than the floor wage.



- This would bring uniformity and make States “almost equally attractive from the point of view of labour cost for investment as well as reduce distress migration.”
- The proposed Code on Wages Bill should extend applicability of minimum wages to all employments/workers in all sectors and should cover both the organized as well as the unorganized sector.
- A mechanism for regular adjustment of minimum wages should be developed, with a national-level dashboard at the Centre that States can access and update.
- An easy to recall toll-free number to lodge complaints about non-payment of minimum wages should be publicised.

Conclusion:

A simple, coherent and enforceable Minimum Wage System should be designed with the aid of technology as minimum wages push wages up and reduce wage inequality without significantly affecting employment. An effective minimum wage policy is a potential tool not only for the protection of low paid workers but is also an inclusive mechanism for more resilient and sustainable economic development.

Discuss the salient features of Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation Act (LAAR) that is about to be heard by the apex court bench. Also explain the case and its impacts on landholders and developers. (250 words)

Indianexpress

Why this question:

A five-judge Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court is set to hear a case on the interpretation of the Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation Act (LAAR). Thus important from examination point of view to understand the features of the act.

Key demand of the question:

Discuss in detail the case and reasons for which it is being heard and the salient features of the Act.

Directive:

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

Structure of the answer:

Introduction:

In brief explain the background of the case

Body:

Start by stating the reasons as to why was a referral to a larger Bench made?

The Bench headed by Justice Arun Mishra will specifically interpret a provision of the law, Section 24(2), which states that when a developer fails to take possession of the land acquired under the 1894 Act for five years, or if compensation is not paid to the owner, the land acquisition process would fail and will have to initiated afresh under the LAAR.

Discuss the significance of the judgment and the impact it shall have.

Conclusion:

Conclude with way forward.

Introduction:

The Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act, 2013 (also Land Acquisition Act, 2013) is an Act of Indian Parliament that regulates



land acquisition and lays down the procedure and rules for granting compensation, rehabilitation and resettlement to the affected persons in India. The LARR act provided for greatly enhanced compensation, consent of those whose land was sought to be acquired, and detailed rehabilitation and resettlement provisions. In other words, it changed the relationship between the state and the individual by empowering the latter against the former.

Body:

The **Section 24(2) of the act**, which states that **when a developer fails to take possession of the land acquired under the 1894 Act for five years**, or if compensation is not paid to the owner, the land acquisition process would fail and will have to initiated afresh under the LAAR.

Section 24(2) says that in cases where acquisition proceedings were initiated under the 1894 law and compensation had been determined –

- the proceedings would lapse if the state did not take possession of the land for 5 years (and)
- had not paid compensation to the landowner.

Case:

- A five-judge Constitution bench headed by Justice Arun Mishra and comprising Justices Indira Banerjee, Vineet Saran, M R Shah and Ravindra Bhat will hear matters relating to correctness of the interpretation of Section 24 of Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act, 2013 (Land Acquisition Act, 2013).
- Two three-judge Bench rulings delivered by the apex court in 2014 and 2018 on the same issue differed in their interpretations.
- This has prompted the court to refer the matter to a larger Bench.
- The hearing will decide the legality of several cases of land acquisition that took place across the country before 2009.
- The matter also raises significant questions on judicial discipline.
- It relates to how judgments of the court are applied while deciding subsequent cases on similar issues.

Reasons for a higher judge bench:

- Days after the 2018 verdict was pronounced, another three-judge Bench Comprising Justices Lokur, Joseph, and Deepak Gupta stayed all cases relating to this provision of the land acquisition Act in all High Courts till the question of law was settled.
- The Bench also asked “other Benches of the Supreme Court” to not take up the issue until it was decided by a larger Bench.
- Two of the judges on this Bench, Justices Lokur and Joseph, were also part of the Bench that delivered the 2014 verdict that was invalidated.
- Justice Joseph in oral observations made in the court strongly criticised the 2018 ruling and said that the 2018 verdict had deviated from “virgin principles” of the institution in declaring a verdict of equal Bench strength ‘per incuriam’.



- Subsequently, separate Benches headed by Justices Goel and Mishra referred the matter to the CJI, requesting that a larger Bench be set up.

Significance of the judgement:

- It would be correct to say that thousands of families who had previously given up all hope had their acquisition proceedings set aside and their land returned under Section 24.
- This Section was upheld and imbued with substance by several judges of the Supreme Court and various High Courts.
- It has positively impacted the lives of several farmers'/ land owners

Impact of the judgement:

- Once the proceedings lapse under the old law, the acquisition process would be initiated again under the new law.
- This would allow the owner to get a higher compensation.
- The term “paid” in the provision needed interpretation.
- Since it placed the responsibility on the government, cases were filed before the courts soon after the law was implemented.

Conclusion:

LARR act is hailed as a landmark law in the interest of the all stakeholders so for implementation of this act government needs to consult all stakeholders.

India slipped to the 102nd spot in the Global Hunger Index which features 117 countries, in this context discuss the reasons for which India's improvements have been slow while suggesting way forward for further improvement. (250 words)

Indianexpress**Why this question:**

Recently India slipped to the 102nd spot in the Global Hunger Index which features 117 countries. Thus important to evaluate the findings from the exam perspective for GS paper II.

Key demand of the question:

One has to brief upon the findings of GHI and India's position in it and evaluate the factors responsible for such a situation and what needs to be done.

Directive:

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

Structure of the answer:**Introduction:**

In brief quote the findings of the report.

Body:

Explain first significance of GHI in short.

Then move on to list down the findings of the report and the reasons of India have deteriorated position in the ranking.

India is ranked 102 of 117 countries in the Global Hunger Index 2019, behind its neighbors Sri Lanka, Nepal, Pakistan and Bangladesh.

Explain What are the reasons for which India's improvements have been slow?



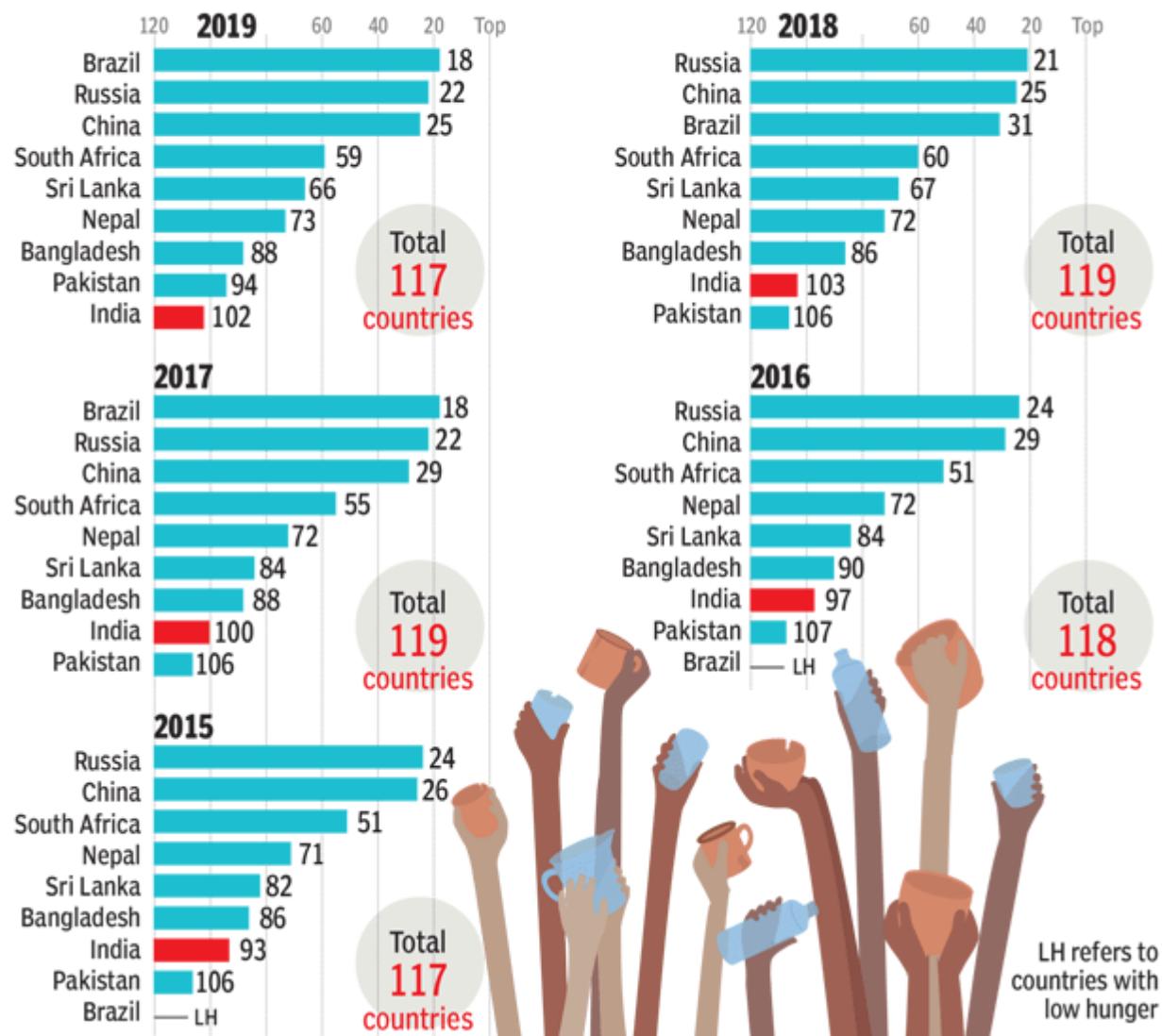
Conclusion:
Conclude with way forward.

Introduction:

In the recently released Global Hunger Index (GHI) Report-2019, India was ranked at 102nd position out of 117 countries. The report is an annual publication that is jointly prepared by the Concern Worldwide (an Irish agency) and the Welt Hunger Hilfe (a German organization). The report is based on four GHI indicators namely, **undernourishment, child stunting, child wasting, and child mortality**.

Body:

INDIA WAS AT 93 IN 2015



Key findings:



- India's rank has slipped from 95th position (in 2010) to 102nd (in 2019). Over a longer-term duration, the fall in India's rank is sharper, i.e., from 83rd out of 113 countries in 2000 to 102nd out of 117 in 2019.
- According to the report, India's child wasting rate was extremely high at 20.8% – the highest for any country.
- Child wasting refers to the share of children under the age of five who are wasted, i.e., they have low weight with respect to their height, reflecting acute undernutrition.
- The share of wasting among children in India marked a steep rise from 16.5% in the 2008–2012 to 20.8% in 2014–2018.
- According to United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), child wasting is a strong predictor of mortality among children (under 5 yrs. of age).
- India has demonstrated an improvement in other indicators that includes, under-5 mortality rate, prevalence of stunting among children, and prevalence of undernourishment owing to inadequate food.
- The report also took note of open defecation in India as an impacting factor for health. It pointed out that as of 2015–2016, 90% of Indian households used an improved drinking water source while 39% of households had no sanitation facilities.
- Open defecation jeopardizes the population's health and severely impacts children's growth and their ability to absorb nutrients.

Reasons for rising hunger:

- **Issues with agriculture:**
 - The change from multi to mono cropping systems limits the diversity of agricultural products.
 - Inclination towards cash crops and changing food habits result in malnutrition, undernutrition and even micro-nutrient deficiencies.
- **Food wastage:**
 - Food wastage is also an emerging challenge that undermines the efforts to end hunger and malnutrition.
 - According to the FAO, the global volume of food wastage is estimated at 1.6 billion tonnes of primary product equivalents.
- **Unstable markets:**
 - Rising food prices make it difficult for the poorest people to get nutritious food consistently which is exactly what they need to do.
- **Natural disasters:**
 - Natural disasters such as floods, tropical storms and long periods of drought are on the increase with calamitous consequences for the hungry poor in developing countries.
- **Societal Issues:**



- In many parts women's nutritional requirements are often unmet as they consume whatever is left after everyone else has eaten.
- Low agricultural investments and poor health, sanitation and childcare practices are other hindrances in achieving zero hunger.
- Conflict, economic slowdown and rapidly increasing overweight and obesity levels are reversing progress made in the fight against hunger and malnutrition.
- **Climate change impact:**
 - Erratic rainfall and increasing frequency of extreme events have impacted agricultural activities everywhere creating unfavourable conditions for food production.
 - Climate variability affecting rainfall patterns and agricultural seasons, and climate extremes such as droughts and floods, are among the key drivers behind the rise in hunger, together with conflict and economic slowdowns
 - Changes in climate are already undermining production of major crops such as wheat, rice and maize in tropical and temperate regions and, without building climate resilience, this is expected to worsen as temperatures increase and become more extreme.
 - Analysis in the UN report the prevalence and number of undernourished people tend to be higher in countries highly exposed to climate extremes.

Measures needed:

In India, to combat the malnutrition levels both immediate and long term interventions are needed.

- Around 85 to 90% of wasting can be managed at the community level.
- Now, the nutritional rehabilitation centres are coming up across the country. It can help in taking care of the institutional needs of the children who are already malnourished.
- But to prevent it from happening, mothers need to be educated about nutrition at anganwadis, access to clean drinking water and sanitation has to be ensured, and livelihood security is needed.
- However, for immediate intervention, nutritional formulation needs to be made available at community level.
- The government can utilise the existing network of public distribution system, have the self-help groups prepare packaged, portioned nutritional formulations to help the moderately malnourished before wasting happens.
- A section of policymakers have also advocated the use of Ready To Use Therapeutic Food (RTUF).
- long-term investments in health, sanitation and nutrition are far more effective in preventing deaths due to severe acute malnutrition.
- The NNM would do well to keep such studies in mind

Way forward:



- Achieving zero hunger requires agriculture and food systems to become more efficient, sustainable, climate-smart and nutrition-sensitive.
- There is a **need for synchronisation among malnutrition, dietary diversity and production diversity.**
- Policies must pay special attention to groups who are the most vulnerable to the harmful consequences of poor food access: infants, children aged under five, school-aged children, adolescent girls, and women.
- A sustainable shift must be made towards nutrition-sensitive agriculture and food systems that can provide safe and high-quality food for all.
- The UN report also calls for greater efforts to build climate resilience through policies that promote climate change adaptation and mitigation, and disaster risk reduction.

Considering the complexities and ground realities, development in Northeast will require special handling; in such a context discuss the importance of Act East Policy (AEP). (250 words)

Economic times

Why this question:

The article is one amongst the series of articles that have been tracing the developmental aspect of NER and significance of the same to the overall developmental aspect.

Key demand of the question:

One must discuss in detail the importance of development of Act East Policy.

Directive:

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

Structure of the answer:

Introduction:

In brief narrate the complexities and ground realities of North-East.

Body:

Northeast India, considered remote and landlocked, shares 80 percent of its border with other countries, including China, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh and Myanmar.

Discuss the key features of the regions and its importance.

Explain the policies and initiatives taken by the government to improvise the region and bring its potential to full use.

Conclusion:

Conclude with way forward, suggesting benefits of the policy.

Introduction:

North Eastern Region of India consists of eight states namely Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura. (Seven Sisters and Sikkim)

Body:

Importance of Act-East policy:

- Since its inception, the AEP has been pursued in a multi-faceted manner in wide-ranging areas in trade and connectivity.



- Northeast has the potential to become a major educational destination, particularly for CLMV (Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Vietnam) countries (from schools to specialisation institutes).
- India's relations with its eastern neighbourhood have improved far-flung. India's proactive role in building a common market with neighbouring Bangladesh, Bhutan and Nepal, on one side, and ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations), on the other, with an ambitious but realistic connectivity programme has been the key focus of the AEP.
- Japan-India Act East Forum is a right step forward, which has been aimed to assist the NER states to attract Japanese technology and investment, sharing of experiences through skill development, improvement of connectivity, among others.
- The North Eastern Region (NER) is surrounded by international borders, serving as India's gateway to the east. NER's geographical position, vast land border, rich nature and agro-climatic conditions, access to growing ASEAN market and presence of mineral and agro-horticulture resources largely explain why NER continues to play an important role in the AEP.

Key challenges related to the development of the North-East region are:

- **Geographical Challenges:**
 - Very high rainfall, shifting river courses, poor drainage system and narrow valleys are regularly causing severe floods, erosion, landslides and sand deposition in the North East causing loss of huge areas of valuable agricultural land.
 - Hilly, inaccessible and undulating terrain has led to underdeveloped transport links.
 - Large area of land is under 'Jhum cultivation' which leads to large scale deforestation resulting in soil erosion and loss of soil fertility.
- **Disaster Proneness of North East:**
 - High rainfall and large river basins of the Brahmaputra and the Barak along with their narrow valleys regularly cause severe floods, erosion, landslides and sand deposition leading to loss of huge areas of valuable agricultural land and thereby reduction of the average size of land holdings in the region.
 - The region is highly prone to Earthquakes and post the great earthquake of intensity of 8.5 in Richter scale of 1950 in Assam, flood and erosion have increased in the state and till date about 5000-6000sq.km of land has been lost due to erosion by rivers. This has made lakhs of people landless and homeless in the state.
- **Historical Challenges:**
 - Despite the above mentioned challenges, the North-eastern region was at par with rest of the country at independence but post-independence events have retarded the development of the region.
 - **Partition of the country:** When the major road, rail and river routes connecting North East to the rest of the country suddenly got snapped.



- **The Bangladesh Liberation was of 1971:** When crores of people from Bangladesh entered some states of North East as refugees which changed the demographic situation in some state of North-East bordering Bangladesh.
- **Insurgencies:** From the end of the seventies of the last century problems of insurgency started in states like Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Manipur, Insurgency affected the present day Nagaland and Mizoram in the fifties and sixties of the last century. Now, of course, due to various actions taken by the Central and State governments, insurgency in this region is no longer a matter of great concern.
- **Infrastructural Factors:**
 - NER has about 6 per cent of the national roads and about 13 percent of the national highways. However, their quality is not good due to poor maintenance.
 - The prominent indicators of shortfalls in infrastructure in this region are: increasingly congested roads, power failures, shortage of drinking water etc.
- **Political challenges:**
 - Chinese Aggression on Arunachal Pradesh (called NEFA at that time) in 1962, apparently refrain large scale investment from private player in North East.
 - Large scale Migration from Bangladesh led to various socio-economic- political problem
 - The culture of ‘bandhs’ is peculiar problem of NER, widely prevalent in Assam, Manipur and Nagaland.
 - Three fourth of NER have no proper land records and Individual ownership of land is not well established
- **Social Challenges:**
 - Remarkable growth of migration from the North East to different parts of the country mostly in search of education and job opportunities gives big blow to the local society.
 - Drug abuse is a serious problem among youth of North east with more than 30% of its youth being drug abusers.
 - The pandemic of HIV/AIDS, spreading fast in Manipur, Nagaland and Mizoram, is also a matter of grave concern.
 - Migration from surrounding areas of NERs (Bangladesh and states of Bihar and Bengal) reduced the average size of land holding to about one hectare.
- **Lack of Social Infrastructure:**
 - Inadequate number of polytechnics and higher institutions for engineering, medical and nursing studies etc.
 - Teachers’ Training is poor thereby leading to poor standards of education

Way Forward:

A **six-fold strategy** for the comprehensive development of the region has been proposed-

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- Empowering people by maximizing self-governance and participatory development through grass-root planning to promote inclusive development.
- Creation of development opportunities for the rural areas through enhancing productivity in agriculture and allied activities such as animal husbandry, horticulture, floriculture, fisheries and generation of livelihood options through rural non-farm employment.
- To develop sectors in the region having a comparative advantage such as agro-processing, Hydro-power generation.
- Enhancing the skills and competencies of the people and building the capacities for institutions with the Government and outside.
- Creating a hospitable investment climate to encourage investment by the private sector particularly for infrastructure.
- Harnessing the resources of the Government and the private sector to realize the objectives of the Vision.
- The way forward for the development of the NER is through getting India, CLMV countries and ASEAN act together and supporting and complimenting each other for connectivity and human resource development, sustainability and inclusiveness.

Conclusion:

Innovation, Initiatives, Ideas and Implementation—all the four needs to go together. Inclusive growth is possible through improved governance, doing away with the draconian laws and ensuring the local communities are empowered to implement basic services. For this, all the stakeholders need to formulate a comprehensive realistic plan for the overall development of North East.

Discuss the key features of Jammu and Kashmir Public Safety Act (PSA). Why is it often referred to as a “draconian” law? Analyse.(250 words)

Indianexpress

Why this question:

Recently, National Conference leader and former Jammu and Kashmir chief minister Farooq Abdullah has been detained under the Jammu and Kashmir Public Safety Act, sources have confirmed to The Indian Express.

Last month, former IAS officer Shah Faesal was stopped at New Delhi airport Wednesday and sent back to Kashmir, where he has been detained under the Public Safety Act (PSA).

Key demand of the question:

The question expects us to critically analyse the Jammu and Kashmir Public Safety Act (PSA).

Directive:

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

Structure of the answer:

Introduction:

Discuss the context of the question in brief.

Body:

Start by explaining the features of Jammu and Kashmir Public Safety Act (PSA). explain the history of J&K Public Safety Act.

Some key features include – The PSA allows for administrative detention for up to two years “in the case of persons acting in any manner prejudicial to the security of the State”, and for administrative



detention up to one year where “any person is acting in any manner prejudicial to the maintenance of public order”.

Detention orders under PSA can be issued by Divisional Commissioners or District Magistrates.

The detaining authority need not disclose any facts about the detention “which it considers being against the public interest to disclose”.

Under Section 23 of the Act, the government is empowered to “make such Rules consistent with the provisions of this Act, as may be necessary for carrying out the objects of this Act”.

Conclusion:

Conclude with solutions to address the issue.

Introduction:

The Public Safety Act (PSA), 1978, of Jammu & Kashmir is an **administrative detention law that allows detention of any individual for up to two years without a trial or charge**. The Public Safety Act allows for the arrest and detention of people without a warrant, specific charges, and often for an unspecified period of time.

Body:

Key features of J&K PSA are:

- The Jammu and Kashmir Public Safety Act (PSA) received the assent of the J&K Governor on April 8, 1978.
- The Act was introduced as a tough law to prevent the smuggling of timber and keep the smugglers “out of circulation”.
- The law allows the government to detain any person above the age of 16 without trial for a period of two years.
- The PSA allows for administrative detention for up to two years “in the case of persons acting in any manner prejudicial to the security of the State”, and for administrative detention up to one year where “any person is acting in any manner prejudicial to the maintenance of public order”.
- Detention orders under PSA can be issued by Divisional Commissioners or District Magistrates.
- Section 22 of the Act provides protection for any action taken “in good faith” under the Act: “No suit, prosecution or any other legal proceeding shall lie against any person for anything done or intended to be done in good faith in pursuance of the provisions of this Act.”
- Under Section 23 of the Act, the government is empowered to “make such Rules consistent with the provisions of this Act, as may be necessary for carrying out the objects of this Act”.
- The only way the administrative preventive detention order can be challenged is through a habeas corpus petition filed by relatives of the detained person.
- The High Court and the Supreme Court have jurisdiction to hear such petitions and pass a final order seeking quashing of the PSA.
- However, if the order is quashed, there is no bar on the government passing another detention order under the PSA and detaining the person again.



- There can be no prosecution or any legal proceeding against the official who has passed the order.

PSA is often referred to as a “draconian” law:

- Right from the beginning, the law was misused widely, and was repeatedly employed against political opponents by consecutive governments until 1990. After the emergence of militancy, the J&K government frequently invoked the PSA to crack down on separatists.
- In August 2018, the Act was amended to allow individuals to be detained under the PSA outside the state as well.
- The detaining authority need not disclose any facts about the detention “which it considers to be against the public interest to disclose”.
- The terms under which a person is detained under PSA are vague and include a broad range of activities like “acting in any manner prejudicial to the security of the State” or for “acting in any manner prejudicial to the maintenance of public order”.
- The vagueness provided in the act gives unbridled powers to the authorities. The detainees, therefore, are effectively debarred from contesting the legality of their detention.
- **PSA does not provide for a judicial review of detention.** To checkmate the J&K High Court orders for release of persons detained under the act the state authorities issue successive detention orders. This ensures prolonged detention of people.
- PSC has been used against human rights activists, journalists, separatists and others who are considered as a threat to the law & order. **Right to dissent** is stifled by these Acts.

Cases:

- Global human rights organisations such as Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative (CHRI) and Amnesty International have noted in their reports that responses by various government authorities to applications filed under the Right to Information (RTI) Act, 2005 suggest that no Rules have so far been framed to lay down procedures for the implementation of the provisions of the PSA.
- An Amnesty report published earlier this year, which analysed over 200 case studies of PSA detainees between 2012 and 2018, said former Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti had informed the J&K Assembly in January 2017 that between 2007 and 2016, over 2,400 PSA detention orders were passed, of which about 58% were quashed by the courts.
- Also, Mehbooba told the Assembly in January 2018 that 525 people had been detained under the PSA in 2016, and 201 in 2017.

Conclusion:

Public Safety Act is a breach of international human rights laws and that its misuse and the failure of the judiciary to prevent such abuse had contributed to the “already widespread fear and alienation felt by people” in the state.



India drew up its national plan of action for countering AMR in 2017, Trace the progress of the programme made so far. Also, do you think it has reached a state of 'limited successes? If so, why? Analyse.(250 words)

The hindu

Why this question:

The article talks about how exactly a year after the State launched the comprehensive Kerala Antimicrobial Resistance Strategic Action Plan (KARSAP), there are worries that the project could be losing its momentum.

Thus with the case of Kerala state it is important for us to evaluate the progress on this front and analyse the challenges involved.

Key demand of the question:

First one has to explain the coming of National action plan for countering AMR by GOI and the associated concerns in its progress. And analyse the success on this front while suggesting way forward.

Directive:

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

Structure of the answer:

Introduction:

Discuss in short the national plan of action for countering AMR in 2017.

Body:

Explain first the challenges involved in implementing the WHO global AMR Action Plan that was released in 2015.

Discuss what have been the challenges in implementing these rules across all the states and UTs in the country.

Explain what are the key concerns involved and what should be the way forward.

Conclusion:

Conclude with suggestions.

Introduction:

Anti-Microbial Resistance (AMR) is the ability of a microbe to resist the effects of medication that once could successfully treat the microbe. Today, the emergence and spread of antimicrobial resistance continues unabated around the world. **The Chennai Declaration**, possibly the first-ever attempt to draw up a roadmap to tackle antimicrobial resistance (AMR) in India was done in 2017, two years after the WHO global AMR action plan.

Body:

Progress of Chennai Declaration so far:

- Post the AMR action plan in 2017, all the states and UTs had to prepare the state action plan, start implementation and succeed to an extent, by now.
- However, only two states have the State Action Plans in place – Kerala and Madhya Pradesh.
- the national action plan – it is a cut and paste job of the WHO's global action plan, and the state action plan is quite similar to the national plan.

Reasons for limited success:

- The AMR action plans we have currently are bound to fail. And that is because the way we have gone about handling this challenge.



- AMR is a complex challenge – it is not just a technical or scientific challenge, but also a social, economic political challenge.
- The lack of dynamic solutions incorporating the political and social complexities involved to fight the AMR is another factor.
- The Technical Advisory Committee has not met for a year, so no significant recommendation has been passed on to the Intersectoral Committee.

Steps needed to fight AMR:

- There is a need to tweak the global plan for regional, national and sub national levels
- the Union Health Ministry must drive the push, so more states formulate their own action plans.
- Sanitation should be placed as the most important component of fighting AMR, armed with all the evidence.
- Awareness about personal hygiene, washing hands with soap and water the right way, for instance will go a long way in promoting sanitation.
- Rationalizing antibiotic use to limit antibiotic resistance in India.
- Improving regulation of drug production and sales
- Better managing physician compensation
- **Encouraging behavior change among doctors and patients** are of immediate priority.
- **Regulation of the e-Pharmacies** which gives an easy access to drugs.
- Improved management of the health care delivery systems, both public and private, will minimize conditions favourable for the development of drug resistance.
- Improved awareness of antimicrobial resistance through effective communication. WHO's World Antibiotic Awareness Week is one such event.
- Reducing the incidence of infection through effective infection prevention and control. As stated by WHO, making infection prevention and hand hygiene a national policy priority.
- **Discourage non-therapeutic use of antimicrobial agents in veterinary, agriculture and fishery** practices as growth-promoting agents.
- Promoting investments for antimicrobial resistance activities, research and innovations
- Strengthening India's commitment and collaborations on antimicrobial resistance at international, national and sub-national levels.
- **Regulate the release of antibiotic waste** from pharmaceutical production facilities and monitoring antibiotic residues in wastewater.

Conclusion:

India should tweak its own national plan to address the more urgent issues, and remember that with a challenge as dynamic as AMR, there needs to be fine tuning periodically. It is also important to



make sure states also engage similarly with their local issues and draw up a state action plan suitable for themselves. There needs to be some demonstrable political intent to thrash this issue out, reflected by equally robust field level implementation by multiple stake holders. Putting people at the centre of this fight is important, especially if we need to ameliorate the social and economic contributors to contagion.

With the Naga peace process approaching the final twitch, explain the prominence of an early settlement of the time's old issue. Deliberate the key demands of the Centre and the Nagas.(250 words)

The hindu

Why this question:

The last leg of negotiations between the government and the representatives of the six Naga National Political Groups (NNPGs) are being conducted in Delhi and the Naga peace process is expected to conclude by October 31.

Key demand of the question:

The question is based upon the ongoing happenings around Naga peace process. Students must trace the process so far and the implications along with the possibilities way ahead.

Structure of the answer:

Introduction:

In brief trace the negotiations so far.

Body:

Explain first the factors that have triggered the present situation so far.

Discuss the following aspects in the answer:

How did the Naga issue start?

Is the peace process with the NSCN the first?

How have the divisions impacted the peace process?

What are possible solutions ahead?

Conclusion:

Conclude with way forward.

Introduction:

Four years after the government inked the Naga peace accord in 2015, the Centre has now said that the process had almost concluded, despite the fact that the talks had hit a roadblock in its final stages. The Centre's push for a solution to the vexed issue by October this year and the **non-flexibility of the Isak-Muivah faction of the National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN-IM)** on the "Naga national flag" and "Naga Yezhabo (constitution)" are said to be the primary reasons. But the issue is more complex than the twin conditions, as it **affects Nagaland's neighbours in northeast India**.

Body:

Prominence of early settlement of the issue:

- The Peace accord augurs well with the internal security dimension of the North-East given its geo-political position as being surrounded by four countries China, Myanmar, Bangladesh and Bhutan.
- North-East is linked with the Indian heartland through the 21 km wide Siliguri Corridor, commonly known as the chicken neck.



- With the abatement in armed insurgency, development work can be carried with greater pace which will help in the integration of North-East with the Indian mainland.
- North-East has a tremendous economic potential which has remained unexplored till. It can emerge as the cradle of tourism and organic farming.
- With greater normalcy security forces involved in internal security can be moved to border areas for its optimum management.

NSCN (IM) demands:

- A "Greater Nagalim" comprising "all contiguous Naga-inhabited areas", along with Nagaland. That included several districts of Assam, Arunachal and Manipur, as also a large tract of Myanmar.
- The Nagaland Assembly has endorsed the 'Greater Nagalim' demand — "Integration of all Naga-inhabited contiguous areas under one administrative umbrella" — as many as five times: in December 1964, August 1970, September 1994, December 2003 and as recently as on July 27, 2015.
- The current demands of the NSCN (IM) have toned down from complete sovereignty to greater autonomous region within the Indian constitutional framework with due regard to the uniqueness of Naga history and traditions.
- NSCN (IM) seeks a "Greater Nagalim" comprising "all contiguous Naga-inhabited areas", along with Nagaland. That includes several districts of Assam, Arunachal and Manipur, and also a large tract of Myanmar.

Government of India's stand:

- A mutually agreed draft comprehensive settlement, including all the substantive issues and competencies, is ready for inking the final agreement. Respecting the Naga people's wishes, the Government of India is determined to conclude the peace process without delay.

Naga Peace-Accord provisions:

- NSCN – IM has been derecognized as a militant organization and talks have been initiated with the government.
- GOI is open to discuss the Naga territorial issue within the existing boundaries of the neighboring states of Manipur, Assam etc. which are being claimed as part of Greater Nagalim.
- Key issues that have been put under consideration includes AFSPA, demographic changes due to cross border migrations and other tribals like Meitei who are diluting the local populations in the Naga areas.

Loopholes in the Naga Peace Accord:

- The foremost challenge of the peace accord is the framework without clear mandate or objectives. The accord although remains out of public view but there has been talks about 'special arrangement' providing great scope of confusion to both government and the insurgents.



- The Naga issue not only pertains to the Nagas but also impacts the whole region, including Naga-inhabited areas of Myanmar.
- The issue of integration of contiguous Naga-inhabited areas of Manipur, Assam and Arunachal Pradesh in view of the demand for territorial unification of 'Greater Nagaland' will trigger violent clashes in the different affected states.
- There is a demand for a separate "frontier Nagaland or Eastern Nagaland" under the aegis of the Eastern Nagaland Public Organization (ENPO) which will undermine any attempt at making one greater nagaland.
- Another major hindrance to the peace process in Nagaland is the existence of more than one organisation, each claiming to be representative of the Nagas.

Way forward:

- The history of Indo-Naga conflict shows that various past agreements have broken down due to different interpretations of the provisions by the parties at their convenience.
- Failure of government to address the issue holistically will result in new revolutionary Naga movement which will be much dangerous due to globalisation, greater availability of resources for sustaining any rebellion, and greater scope for international intervention in case of a violent struggle.
- A greater understanding of the issue, especially the tribal factor and changing aspirations of the civil society, needs to be developed in order to bring an acceptable and comprehensive solution to the Naga problem.
- One way of dealing with the issue can be maximum decentralisation of powers to the tribal heads and minimum centralisation at the apex level, which should mainly work towards facilitating governance and undertaking large development projects.
- For any peace framework to be effective, it should not threaten the present territorial boundaries of the states of Assam, Manipur and Arunachal Pradesh. As it will not be acceptable to these states.
- Greater autonomy for the Naga inhabited areas in these states can be provided which would encompass separate budget allocations for the Naga inhabited areas with regard to their culture and development issues.
- A new body should be constituted that would look after the rights of the Nagas in the other north-eastern states besides Nagaland.
- Any final resolution package must also have the consent of the NSCN (K) as well. Only then will the Naga inhabited areas in Northeast India witness real peace after decades of violence.
- A non-territorial resolution for one of the oldest armed ethnic conflicts in the Northeast will offer a way forward to resolving many other ethnic conflicts such as those involving the Kukis, Meiteis, Bodos, Dimasas, Hmars, and Karbis.
- Any arrangement thus worked out should lead to social and political harmony, economic prosperity and protection of the life and property of all tribes and citizens of the states.



In the backdrop of the recent Global Hunger Index (GHI) report, what must India do better to keep pace with its South Asian neighbor's in tackling hunger? Analyse the causes and the challenges while suggesting way forward.(250 words)

Indianexpress

Why this question:

The article highlights the fact that the 2019 Global Hunger Index (GHI) report highlights that India's poorer neighbors: Bangladesh, Nepal, and even Pakistan have overtaken India in the battle against hunger. Thus necessitating us to evaluate the situation.

Key demand of the question:

Discuss what should be India's stand to tackle hunger, how should it overcome the lacunas at par with its neighbors.

Directive:

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

Structure of the answer:

Introduction:

In brief bring out the details of the report.

Body:

Explain in detail the following aspects: Highlight the facts brought out by the report; The GHI report ranks India at a lowly 102 out of 117 countries listed. Among all the countries included in the report, India has the highest rate of child wasting (which rose from the 2008-2012 level of 16.5 per cent to 20.8 per cent). Its child stunting rate (at 37.9 per cent) also remains shockingly high.

Discuss the causes that have led to the situation.

Explain that the relative success of our neighbors in combating hunger — Nepal emerging from 15 years of civil war and Pakistan still torn by internal conflict — is a sobering reminder of what India has not accomplished.

Conclusion:

Conclude with what needs to be done.

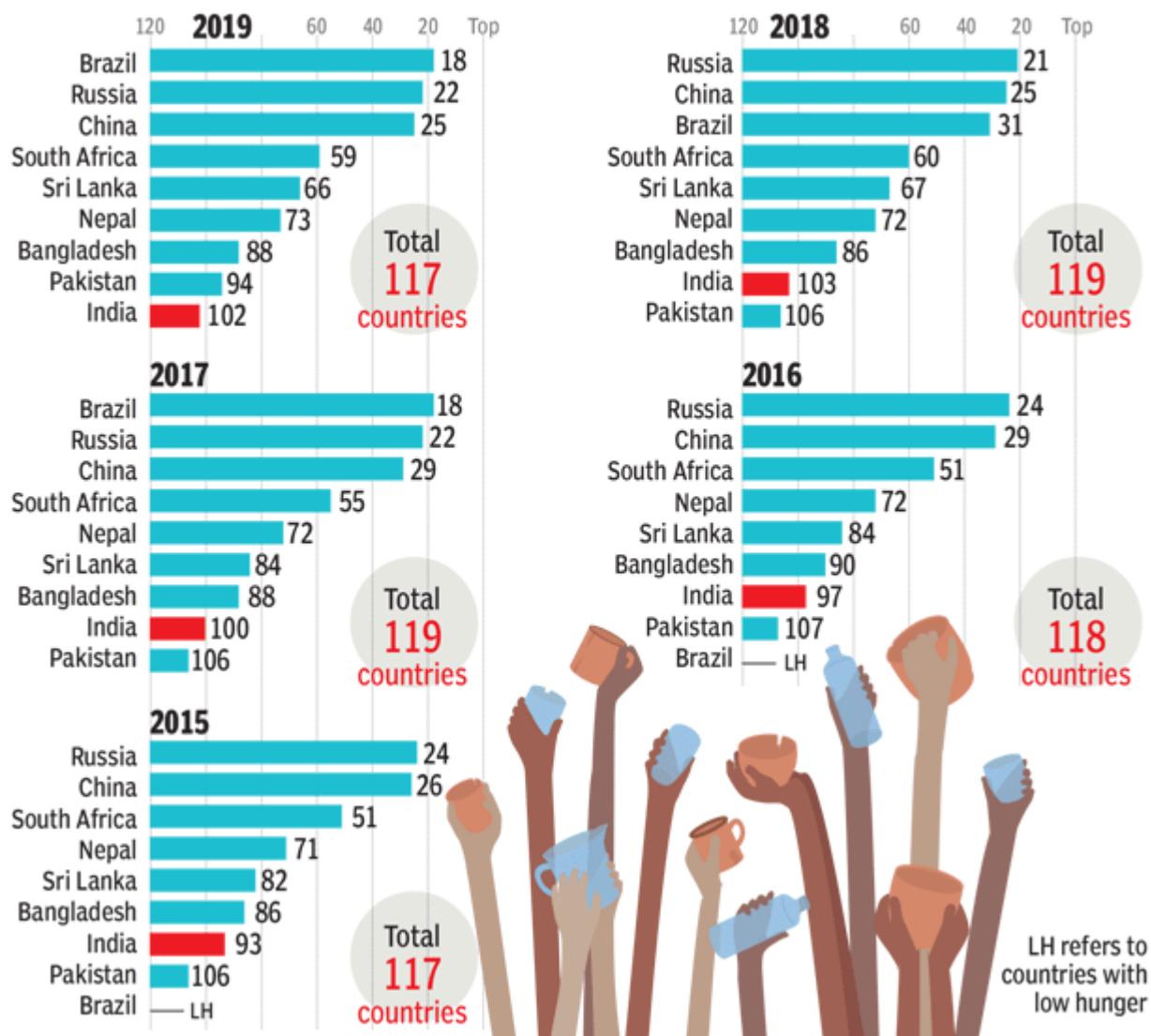
Introduction:

In the recently released Global Hunger Index (GHI) Report-2019, India was ranked at 102nd position out of 117 countries. The report is an annual publication that is jointly prepared by the Concern Worldwide (an Irish agency) and the Welt Hunger Hilfe (a German organization). The report is based on four GHI indicators namely, **undernourishment, child stunting, child wasting, and child mortality**.

Body:



INDIA WAS AT 93 IN 2015



Key findings:

- India's rank has slipped from 95th position (in 2010) to 102nd (in 2019). Over a longer-term duration, the fall in India's rank is sharper, i.e., from 83rd out of 113 countries in 2000 to 102nd out of 117 in 2019.
- According to the report, India's child wasting rate was extremely high at 20.8% – the highest for any country.
- Child wasting refers to the share of children under the age of five who are wasted, i.e., they have low weight with respect to their height, reflecting acute undernutrition.
- The share of wasting among children in India marked a steep rise from 16.5% in the 2008-2012 to 20.8% in 2014-2018.
- According to United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), child wasting is a strong predictor of mortality among children (under 5 yrs. of age).



- India has demonstrated an improvement in other indicators that includes, under-5 mortality rate, prevalence of stunting among children, and prevalence of undernourishment owing to inadequate food.
- The report also took note of open defecation in India as an impacting factor for health. It pointed out that as of 2015–2016, 90% of Indian households used an improved drinking water source while 39% of households had no sanitation facilities.
- Open defecation jeopardizes the population's health and severely impacts children's growth and their ability to absorb nutrients.

Reasons for rising hunger:

- **Issues with agriculture:**
 - The change from multi to mono cropping systems limits the diversity of agricultural products.
 - Inclination towards cash crops and changing food habits result in malnutrition, undernutrition and even micro-nutrient deficiencies.
- **Food wastage:**
 - Food wastage is also an emerging challenge that undermines the efforts to end hunger and malnutrition.
 - According to the FAO, the global volume of food wastage is estimated at 1.6 billion tonnes of primary product equivalents.
- **Unstable markets:**
 - Rising food prices make it difficult for the poorest people to get nutritious food consistently which is exactly what they need to do.
- **Natural disasters:**
 - Natural disasters such as floods, tropical storms and long periods of drought are on the increase with calamitous consequences for the hungry poor in developing countries.
- **Societal Issues:**
 - In many parts women's nutritional requirements are often unmet as they consume whatever is left after everyone else has eaten.
 - Low agricultural investments and poor health, sanitation and childcare practices are other hindrances in achieving zero hunger.
 - Conflict, economic slowdown and rapidly increasing overweight and obesity levels are reversing progress made in the fight against hunger and malnutrition.
- **Climate change impact:**
 - Erratic rainfall and increasing frequency of extreme events have impacted agricultural activities everywhere creating unfavourable conditions for food production.



- Climate variability affecting rainfall patterns and agricultural seasons, and climate extremes such as droughts and floods, are among the key drivers behind the rise in hunger, together with conflict and economic slowdowns
- Changes in climate are already undermining production of major crops such as wheat, rice and maize in tropical and temperate regions and, without building climate resilience, this is expected to worsen as temperatures increase and become more extreme.
- Analysis in the UN report the prevalence and number of undernourished people tend to be higher in countries highly exposed to climate extremes.

Measures needed:

In India, to combat the malnutrition levels both immediate and long term interventions are needed.

- Around 85 to 90% of wasting can be managed at the community level.
- Now, the **nutritional rehabilitation centres** are coming up across the country. It can help in taking care of the institutional needs of the children who are already malnourished.
- But to prevent it from happening, mothers need to be educated about nutrition at anganwadis, access to clean drinking water and sanitation has to be ensured, and livelihood security is needed.
- However, for immediate intervention, nutritional formulation needs to be made available at community level.
- **Public Distribution System** must be universalised (excluding income tax payees), and should distribute not just cereals but also pulses and edible oils. Further, we need to reimagine it as a decentralised system where a variety of crops are procured and distributed locally.
- Both **pre-school feeding and school meals** need adequate budgets, and the meals should be supplemented with nutrient-rich foods such as dairy products, eggs and fruits..
- **Social protection** also entails **universal pension** for persons not covered by formal schemes, universal maternity entitlements to enable all women in informal work to rest and breast-feed their children, a vastly expanded creche scheme, and residential schools for homeless children and child workers.
- Long-term investments in health, sanitation and nutrition are far more effective in preventing deaths due to severe acute malnutrition.
- The NNM would do well to keep such studies in mind

Way forward:

- Achieving zero hunger requires agriculture and food systems to become more efficient, sustainable, climate-smart and nutrition-sensitive.
- labour reforms which protect job security, fair work conditions and social security of all workers.



- The time has come for an urban employment guarantee programme, to help build basic public services and infrastructure for the urban poor — especially slum and pavement residents, and the homeless.
- This should also include employment in the care economy, with services for child-care, children and adults with disability and older persons.
- There is a **need for synchronisation among malnutrition, dietary diversity and production diversity.**
- Policies must pay special attention to groups who are the most vulnerable to the harmful consequences of poor food access: infants, children aged under five, school-aged children, adolescent girls, and women.
- There is an urgent requirement for a legally enforceable right to healthcare, with universal and free out-patient and hospital-based care, free diagnostics and free medicines.
- A sustainable shift must be made towards nutrition-sensitive agriculture and food systems that can provide safe and high-quality food for all.
- The UN report also calls for greater efforts to build climate resilience through policies that promote climate change adaptation and mitigation, and disaster risk reduction.

Trace the evolution of privacy in India from primitives to Puttaswamy. Discuss the challenges posed by spread of Internet with suitable examples and suggest a balanced approach to internet takedowns. (250 words)

Livemint

Why this question:

The article highlights the fact that Our courts should observe restraint while ordering the removal of offensive internet content.

Key demand of the question:

The answer should trace in detail the evolution of privacy laws and norms in India from primitives to Puttaswamy. Elucidate upon the challenges posed by the spread of internet.

Directive:

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

Structure of the answer:

Introduction:

In brief discuss importance of privacy.

Body:

Explain that as much as the internet is a blessing, the fact that it can be accessed from everywhere gives rise to conflicts between national laws that are hard to reconcile. The very concept of an international network, through which data flows unimpeded between countries, threatens traditional notions of sovereignty, challenging courts and governments to find new ways in which to enforce local laws while still availing themselves of the benefits of the network. As the stakes have grown higher, governments have allowed their frustration to show, imposing regulations such as data localization and requiring decryption of encrypted traffic to wrest back some control.

Conclusion:

Conclude with way forward.

Introduction:



Right to privacy refers to protection of one's personal information from being public or used by other without permission. Privacy is defined as "absence or avoidance of publicity or display; the state or condition from being withdrawn from the society of others, or from public interest. On August 24th, 2017, Supreme Court has given its verdict on Right to privacy in **Justice K S Puttaswamy V Union of India**, declaring it as a fundamental right of a citizen. This judgment has finally put an end to the long historical legal battle from the past 40-50 years.

Body:

Evolution:

The first case to lay down the basics of right to privacy in India, was the case of **Kharak Singh v. State of Uttar Pradesh**, where a seven judge bench of the Supreme Court was required to check the constitutionality of certain police regulations which allowed police to do domiciliary visit and surveillance of persons with criminal record.

In this particular case majority of the judges decline to interpret article 21 to include within its ambit the right the privacy, part of the majority expressed "The right of privacy is not a guaranteed right under our Constitution, and therefore the attempt to ascertain the movements of an individual is merely a manner in which privacy is invaded and is not an infringement of a fundamental right guaranteed in Part III.

The question of privacy as a fundamental right presented itself once again to the Supreme Court a few years later in the case of **Govind v. State of Madhya Pradesh**. The petitioner in this case had challenged, as unconstitutional, certain police regulations on the grounds that the regulations violated his fundamental right to privacy. Although the issues were similar to the Kharak Singh case, the 3 judges hearing this particular case were more inclined to grant the right to privacy the status of a fundamental right.

Subsequent to the Govind judgment, the Supreme Court was required to balance the right of privacy against the right to free speech in the case of **R. Rajagopal v. State of Tamil Nadu**. In this case, the petitioner was a Tamil newsmagazine which had sought directions from the Court to restrain the respondent State of Tamil Nadu and its officers to not interfere in the publication of the autobiography of a death row convict—'Auto Shankar' which contained details about the nexus between criminals and police officers.

The Supreme Court held: "(1) the right to privacy is implicit in the right to life and liberty guaranteed to the citizens of this country by Article 21. It is a "right to be let alone". A citizen has a right to safeguard the privacy of his own, his family, marriage, procreation, motherhood, child-bearing and education among other matters. None can publish anything concerning the above matters without his consent whether truthful or otherwise and whether laudatory or critical.

In the case of **Mr. 'X' v. Hospital 'Z'**, the Supreme Court was required to discuss the scope of a blood donor's right to privacy of his medical records. The respondent hospital in this case had disclosed, without the permission of the blood donor, the fact that the blood donor was diagnosed as being a HIV patient. Due to this disclosure by the hospital, the lady who was to have been married to the blood donor had broken off her engagement and the donor was subject to social ostracism. Discussing the issue of privacy of medical records, the Supreme Court ruled that while medical records are considered to be private, doctors and hospitals could make exceptions in certain cases where the non-disclosure of medical information could endanger the lives of other citizens, in this case the wife.



In the case of **PUCL v. Union of India**, the petitioner organization had challenged the actions of the state in intercepting telephone calls. Recognizing procedural lapses that had occurred, the court set out procedural safeguards which would have to be followed, even as it did not strike down the provision relating to interception in the Telegraph Act 1885. The Supreme Court placed restrictions on the class of bureaucrats who could authorize such surveillance and also ordered the creation of a ‘review committee’ which would review all surveillance measures authorized under the Act.

In 2005, the Supreme Court passed one of its most important privacy related judgments in the case of **District Registrar v. Canara Bank**. In this case the Supreme Court was required to determine the constitutionality of a provision of the A.P. Stamps Act which allowed the Collector or ‘any person’ authorized by the Collector to enter any premises to conduct an inspection of any records, registers, books, documents in the custody of any public officer, if such inspection would result in discovery of fraud or omission of any duty payable to the Government.

In the case of **Naz Foundation v. Union of India**, the Delhi High Court ‘read down’ Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code, 1860 to decriminalize a class of sexual relations between consenting adults. One of the critical arguments accepted by the Court in this case was that the right to privacy of a citizen’s sexual relations, protected as it was under Article 21, could be intruded into by the State only if the State was able to establish a compelling interest for such interference. Since the State was unable to prove a compelling state interest to interfere in the sexual relations of its citizens, the provision was read down to decriminalize all consensual sexual relations.

Following the trend of these judgements, the concept of right to privacy has evolved and emerged, as a fundamental right. Our judiciary has tried in these various judgements interpret the meaning and the scope of right to privacy. Right to privacy is an essential component of right to life and personal liberty under Article 21. Right of privacy may, apart from contract, also arise out of a particular specific relationship, which may be commercial, matrimonial or even political. No doubt puttaswamy judgment will have a deep impact upon our legal and constitutional landscape for years to come. It will impact the interplay between privacy and transparency and between privacy and free speech; it will impact State surveillance, data collection, and data protection for sure.

Challenges posed by spread of Internet:

- many challenges remain as the Internet entered the twenty-first century.
- Users faced abusive practices such as spam (unwanted commercial email), viruses, identity theft, and break-ins.
- Some governments severely limited and closely monitored the online activities of their citizens
- Other groups complained that the Internet was too open to objectionable or illegal content such as child pornography or pirated songs, movies, and software.
- Filters and copyright protection devices provided means to restrict the flow of such information, but these devices were themselves controversial.
- Internet governance was another thorny issue

Balanced approach against internet takedowns:



- Our courts have always operated with restraint, only taking proportionate action when necessary.
- They should demonstrate the same restraint while ordering the takedown of offensive content on the internet.
- Undeniably reprehensible material, such as child pornography and extreme acts of violence, should be taken down everywhere in the world.
- However, for everything else, we should offer other countries the courtesy of being able to deal with it within their territory, according to their own standards.
- If we fail to appreciate nuances such as these, we would end up curtailing our ability to benefit from all that the internet has to offer us.

Uniformity in civil law can only be achieved in a piecemeal manner. Comment.(250 words)

The hindu

Why this question:

In Jose Paulo Coutinho v. Maria Luiza Valentina Pereira (2019), the Supreme Court has yet again revived the debate on a uniform civil code (UCC).

Key demand of the question:

Explain the approach to achieve the significant UCC. What methods must be put in place to achieve the same?

Directive:

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

Structure of the answer:

Introduction:

In brief define UCC.

Body:

Explain the concept of UCC.

Uniform civil Code is a proposal to have a generic set of governing laws for every citizen without taking into consideration the religion.

Article 44 of the Constitution says that there should be a Uniform Civil Code. According to this article, “The State shall endeavor to secure for the citizens a uniform civil code throughout the territory of India”. Since the Directive Principles are only guidelines, it is not mandatory to use them.

Explain why India needs a UCC.

What should be the approach to achieve the same?

Conclusion:

Conclude with way forward.

Introduction:

Uniform Civil Code is one that would provide for one law for the entire country, applicable to all religious communities in their personal matters such as marriage, divorce, inheritance, adoption etc. **Article 44 of the Constitution** lays down that the state shall endeavour to secure a Uniform Civil Code for the citizens throughout the territory of India. Article 44 is one of the directive principles. These, as defined in Article 37, are not justiciable (not enforceable by any court) but the principles laid down therein are fundamental in governance.


Body:

In **Jose Paulo Coutinho v. Maria Luiza Valentina Pereira (2019)**, the Supreme Court has yet again revived the debate on a uniform civil code (UCC) and referred to Goa as “a shining example of an Indian State which has a uniform civil code applicable to all...”.

Status of Personal Law in India:

- Personal law subjects like marriage, divorce, inheritance come under Concurrent list.
- Hindu personal laws have been by and large secularized and modernized by statutory enactments.
- The Hindu personal laws (that apply also to the Sikhs, Jains and Buddhists) have been codified by the Parliament in 1956
- This Code Bill has been split into four parts:
 - The Hindu Marriage Act, 1955
 - The Hindu Succession Act, 1956
 - The Hindu Minority and Guardianship Act, 1956
 - The Hindu Adoption and Maintenance Act, 1956
- On the other hand, Muslim personal laws are still primarily unmodified and traditional in their content and approach.
 - The Shariat law of 1937 governs the personal matters of all Indian Muslims in India.
 - It clearly states that in matters of personal disputes, the State shall not interfere and a religious authority would pass a declaration based on his interpretations of the Quran and the Hadith.
- Apart from it, Christians and Jews are also governed by different personal laws.

India needs a Uniform Civil Code for the following reasons:

- A secular republic needs a common law for all citizens rather than differentiated rules based on religious practices.
- Different personal laws promote communalism and it leads to discrimination at two levels:
 - First, between people of different religions.
 - Second, between the two sexes
- Another reason why a uniform civil code is needed is **gender justice**. The rights of women are usually limited under religious law, be it Hindu or Muslim. The practice of triple talaq is a classic example.
- Many practices governed by religious tradition are at odds with the fundamental rights guaranteed in the Indian Constitution.
- Courts have also often said in their judgements that the government should move towards a uniform civil code including the judgement in the Shah Bano case.



- The Supreme Court in Shayara Bano case (2017) had declared the practise of Triple Talaq (talaq-e-bidat) as unconstitutional.

Challenges to UCC:

- Secularism cannot contradict the plurality prevalent in the country.
- Besides, cultural diversity cannot be compromised to the extent that our urge for uniformity itself becomes a reason for threat to the territorial integrity of the nation.
- The term ‘secularism’ has meaning only if it assures the expression of any form of difference.
- This diversity, both religious and regional, should not get subsumed under the louder voice of the majority.
- At the same time, discriminatory practices within a religion should not hide behind the cloak of that faith to gain legitimacy.
- Moreover, an individual’s freedom of religion under Article 25 is subject to “public order, health, morality”.
- In 2018, a report by the Law Commission of India stated that the Uniform Civil Code is “neither necessary nor desirable at this stage” in the country. The Commission said secularism cannot contradict the plurality prevalent in the country.

Way forward:

- The social transformation from diverse civil code to uniformity shall be gradual and cannot happen in a day. Therefore, the government must adopt a “Piecemeal” approach.
- Government could bring separate aspects such as marriage, adoption, succession and maintenance into a uniform civil code in stages.
- Government must emulate Goan practice of a common civil code, which has been the law since 1867, when the state was under the Portuguese colonial rule.
- Moreover, when constitution espouses the cause of Uniform civil code in its Article 44, it shouldn’t be misconstrued to be a “common law”.
- The word uniform here means that all communities must be governed by uniform principles of gender justice and human justice.
- It will mean modernization and humanization of each personal law.
- It would mean, not a common law, but different personal laws based on principles of equality, liberty and justice.
- Government has to take steps towards increasing the awareness among the public, especially minorities, about the importance of having a UCC.

Conclusion:

If the framers of the Constitution had intended to have a Uniform Civil Code, they would have given exclusive jurisdiction to Parliament in respect of personal laws, by including this subject in the Union List. Even the law commission has suggested in against of the idea. The government



needs to find a moral backing a unanimous support across the sections of the society to undertake such an move.

In order to ensure smooth functioning of the criminal justice system, one needs accurate, reliable and comprehensive data reports of crimes in the country. Discuss in the light of recently released National Crime Records Bureau report. (250 words)

The hindu

Why this question:

The article brings out the findings of the report published by National Crime Records Bureau.

Key demand of the question:

Explain the relevance of accurate, reliable and comprehensive data reports of crimes in the country for smooth functioning of the criminal justice system.

Directive:

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

Structure of the answer:

Introduction:

In brief highlight the findings of the report released recently.

Body:

Give a brief introduction about Criminal Justice system and its importance in a democracy.

Mention the importance of data reports for smooth functioning of criminal justice system.

Mention the lapses in the crimes data collection and its management by NCRB.

Conclusion:

Give the way forward for the lapses mentioned.

Introduction:

The latest annual crime data, “**Crime in India-2017**”, released by the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) revealed that there was an increase of 3.6 per cent in criminal cases in 2017 compared to 2016 when 50 lakh cases of cognisable offences were lodged across the country. However, data of death due to mob lynching, murder by influential people, killing ordered by khap panchayat and murder committed for religious reason have not been published. The new report has largely followed the pattern of the 2016 edition, barring additions in the category of cyber-crimes and offences against the state.

Body:

Issues in the report:

- While the 2017 reports released last week by the National Crime Records Bureau present numbers on different aspects of the criminal justice system, there are crucial gaps in the data collected.
- Further, the opacity surrounding the methodology for collection and compilation makes the data obscure and renders them ineffective for policymaking.
- While the report states that “socio-economic causative factors or reasons of crimes” have not been captured, the non-legislative parameters for classifying some offences have not been adequately explained. This raises questions about the basis for classification.



- In contrast to crime statistics, prison statistics do not provide any such offence-wise data on undertrials and convicts. This prevents cross-referencing and examination of the numbers in both reports.
- While prison statistics provide information on the different kinds of sentences being served by convicts, these numbers have not been categorised on the basis of offences.
- Thus it is impossible to gain insights into the sentencing trends for various offences and in various States or formulate policy on sentencing.
- There are concerns about the methods of computation and presentation of data.
- For instance, the crime statistics report, while recording rates of recidivism, collates State-wise information on the number of juveniles and adults who were arrested earlier but not convicted, and those who were previously convicted.

Measures needed:

- In order to effectuate cogent policies which do justice to the goals of reformation and rehabilitation, it is important to critically understand existing programmes.
- Robust policies cannot be formulated which would ensure successful reintegration of prisoners and provide those serving life-term imprisonment (52.6% of all convicts) an opportunity to reform.
- These policies are especially important since 94.4% of those entering the criminal justice system were arrested for the first time.

Conclusion:

In order to explore more precise and effective solutions to criminal justice issues, NCRB must first take steps towards ensuring the accuracy, reliability and comprehensiveness of these reports.

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

Ujjwala scheme has been heralding “The Blue Flame Revolution”, in this context discuss in what way it has impacted the lives of poor rural women. (250 words)

Hindustantimes

Why this question:

The article presents the success of the Ujjwala scheme that brought in the empowerment of rural poor women.

Key demand of the question:

One must elucidate on the salient features of the scheme and in what way it has successfully empowered the rural poor women in the country.

Directive:



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

Structure of the answer:

Introduction:

In brief narrate the importance of Ujjwala scheme in the Indian set up.

Body:

Ujjwala aims at bringing clean cooking fuel to poor households, identified according to the Socio-Economic Caste Census (SECC). More than 44 percent of Ujjwala beneficiaries are currently from SC/ST communities.

Discuss the factors that have led to the positive outcome of the scheme.

What are the associated challenges?

Explain how it has empowered rural poor women in terms of – access to education, access to basic needs etc.

Conclusion:

Conclude with way forward.

Introduction:

Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY) is a scheme of the Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas for providing LPG connections to women from **Below Poverty Line (BPL) households**. India is home to more than 24 Crore households out of which about 10 Crore households are still deprived of LPG as cooking fuel and have to rely on firewood, coal, dung – cakes etc. as primary source of cooking.

The PMUY has helped the spread of LPG cylinders predominantly in the urban and semi-urban areas with the coverage mostly in middle class and affluent households. It aims to safeguard the health of women & children by providing them with a clean cooking fuel – LPG, so that they don't have to compromise their health in smoky kitchens or wander in unsafe areas collecting firewood.

Body:

Impact of lack of LPG gas-stove and cylinder:

- Within poorer households, women often face a '**triple burden**' – market work, housework and family care.
- As families grow bigger, this burden increases as women are expected to participate both in low-paying jobs and also function as the main caregiver of the household.
- Estimates suggest that Indian rural women spend 374 hours a year collecting firewood.
- Over four million people die prematurely because of illnesses arising from open and polluting cooking fire sources.
- Women are the most significant sufferers of unclean fuel sources and are susceptible to heart diseases, lung cancer, are at the risk of contracting tuberculosis and cataract.

Pros due to usage of LPG gas stove and cylinder:

- Studies show that by shifting to LPG, women and girls may save up to 1.5 hours a day, allowing them time for education, self-employment and participation in the community activities.
- Studies from Africa also suggest that shifting to cleaner alternatives increase women's labour force participation by upto 9%.



- While efforts to increase usage beyond first time installation are underway, the international community has been lauding government efforts.
- Through this scheme, India has been making progress on Sustainable Development Goals.
- It is promoting gender equality, giving women opportunities for self-development by creating additional employment opportunities(Goal 5); promoting good health (Goal 3); providing access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy (Goal 7); and, combating air pollution (Goal 13 and Goal 15).

Achievements of PMUY:

- The oil ministry's Petroleum Planning and Analysis Cell (PPAC) estimates that LPG coverage in India (the proportion of households with an LPG connection) has increased from 56% in 2015 to 90% in 2019. There is a significant increase in eastern states, with 48% of the beneficiaries being SC/STs.
- The government reports show that around 80% of the beneficiaries have been refilling cylinders, with average per capita consumption being 3.28 cylinders.
- PMUY has resulted in an additional employment of around 1 Lakh and provide business opportunity of at least Rs. 10,000 Crore in last 3 Years to the Indian Industry.
- The scheme has also provided a boost to the 'Make in India' campaign as all the manufacturers of cylinders, gas stoves, regulators, and gas hose are domestic.
- PMUY reduces these ill-effects by providing clean fuel and cutting out on drudgery. Increased use of cooking gas will shrink the incidence of tuberculosis in India, based on the statistics from the latest National Family Health Survey (NFHS-4) on TB prevalence.
- PMUY has helped in reducing the drudgery for women. The time saved can be used in socio-economically productive activities like **Self-Help Group activities**.
- The **World Health Organisation** hailed PMUY as decisive intervention by the government to facilitate the switch to clean household energy use, thereby addressing the problems associated with Indoor Household Pollution.

Way Forward:

- **Increase Affordability:** A case in point is state-run fuel retailers introducing a 5kg refill option to make purchases affordable.
- **Increase Accessibility:** Gas Agencies should be set up within 10km radius, especially in the rural and remote areas to increase accessibility.
- **Increase Availability:** Alternatives like Gas-grid and piped connections in cities and areas near the bottling plants can free up the cylinders for other areas.
- **Promote 'Give it up':** The initiative of the government to persuade the well-off to give up the LPG subsidies has added to the corpus of PMUY. Similar initiatives can be promoted.
- **Encourage Private Players** to set up LPG franchises at rural areas.
- **Sensitization and Education** of safe use of LPG through **LPG Panchayats, NGO's etc.**



Conclusion:

PMUY is a novel scheme having twin benefits of women empowerment as well as environmental conservation. Ironing out the implementation issues can reap the envisioned benefits and lead to a sustainable future in energy consumption.

Recently, World Health Organization (WHO) has released the Global Tuberculosis (TB) Report 2019, In this context discuss the key challenges being faced by the government in its quest to restrict the spread of TB also evaluate the progress made in this direction till now.(250 words)

The hindu

Introduction:

Tuberculosis (TB) remains the biggest killer disease in India, outnumbering all other infectious diseases put together — this despite our battle against it from 1962, when the National TB Programme (NTP) was launched. The **Global Tuberculosis (TB) report by WHO** provides a comprehensive and up-to-date assessment of the TB epidemic and progress in the response at global, regional and country levels for India.

Body:

TB Situation in India:

- Tuberculosis incidence rate in India has decreased by almost 50,000 patients over the past one year (26.9 lakh TB patients in India in 2018).
- Incidence per 1,00,000 population has decreased from 204 in 2017 to 199 in 2018.
- Number of patients being tested for rifampicin resistance has increased from 32% in 2017 to 46% in 2018.
- Treatment success rate has increased to 81% for new and relapse cases (drug sensitive) in 2017, which was 69% in 2016.

India's efforts to eliminate TB:

- In 2018, Indian government launched **Joint Effort for Elimination of Tuberculosis (JEET)**, to increase the reporting of TB cases by the private sector.
- **National Strategic Plan (NSP) for TB Elimination (2017-2025)** was launched in 2017. The government also called for the elimination of TB by 2025, five years prior to the international target (2030).
 - The NSP plans to provide incentives to private providers for following the standard protocols for diagnosis and treatment as well as for notifying the government of cases.
 - Further, patients referred to the government will receive a cash transfer to compensate them for the direct and indirect costs of undergoing treatment and as an incentive to complete treatment.



- “**Nikshay**,” (2012) an online tuberculosis reporting system for medical practitioners and clinical establishments was set up. The aim is to increase the reporting of tuberculosis, especially from the private sector.
- In 1992, the WHO devised the **Directly Observed Treatment-Short Course (DOTS) strategy** and advised all countries to adopt the strategy to combat the menace of tuberculosis. The DOTS strategy is based on 5 pillars:
 - political commitment and continued funding for TB control programs
 - diagnosis by sputum smear examinations
 - uninterrupted supply of high-quality anti-TB drugs
 - drug intake under direct observation
 - accurate reporting and recording of all registered cases
- The Indian government has been implementing Programmatic Management of Drug Resistant TB (PMDT) services, for the management of multi-drug resistant tuberculosis (MDR-TB) and TB-HIV collaborative activities for TB-HIV

Challenges to achieve TB free India by 2025:

- **Poor socio-economic conditions:**
 - Poverty remains a stark reality in India with associated problems of hunger, undernourishment and poor and unhygienic living conditions.
 - According to GTB Report, 2018, a majority of TB patients (6lakhs) in India are attributable to undernourishment.
- **Underreporting and misdiagnosis:**
 - According to GTB Report 2018, India is one of the major contributors to under-reporting and under-diagnosis of TB cases in the world, accounting for 26% of the 3.6 million global gap in the reporting of tuberculosis cases.
 - Biomarkers and other diagnostics that identify individuals at highest risk of progression to disease are inadequate.
- **Treatment:**
 - Inequitable access to quality diagnosis and treatment remains a major issue in combating tuberculosis. Further, the private sector which contributes a major part of TB care is fragmented, made up of diverse types of healthcare providers, and largely unregulated.
 - Standard TB treatment is not followed uniformly across the private sector, resulting in the rise of drug resistance.
- **Follow-up treatment:**
 - Though the reporting of TB cases has increased lately, the reporting of treatment outcomes has not been robust.



- The absence of consistent follow-up of treatment regimens and outcomes may result in relapse of cases and MDR-TB and XDR-TB. India has already been facing the problem of increasing MDR-TB cases
- **Drugs:**
 - The drugs used to treat TB, especially multidrug-resistant-TB, are decades old. It is only recently that Bedaquiline and Delamanid (drugs to treat MDR-TB) has been made available. However, access to such drugs remains low.
- **Funds:**
 - The RNCTP remains inadequately funded. There has been a growing gap between the allocation of funds and the minimum investment required to reach the goals of the national strategic plan to address tuberculosis.
- **Issues with RNCTP:**
 - Weak implementation of RNCTP at state level is another major concern. The Joint Monitoring Mission report of 2015 pointed out that the RNCTP failed to achieve both the main goals of NSP 2012-2017- Providing universal access to early diagnosis and treatment and improving case detection.
 - Major issues with RNCTP include: human resource crunch, payment delays, procurement delays and drug stock-outs
- **R&D:**
 - R&D for new methods and technologies to detect the different modes of TB, new vaccines, and new drugs and shorter drug regimens have been slow, as compared to other such diseases like HIV/AIDS.
- **Social Stigma:**
 - According to a study which assessed social stigma associated with TB in Bangladesh, Colombia, India, India had the highest social stigma index.
 - Patients often hesitate to seek treatment or deny their condition altogether for fear of social discrimination and stigmatization.

Way forward:

- It is important to **address the social conditions and factors** which contribute to and increase vulnerability to tuberculosis. Concerted efforts should be made to address the issues of undernourishment, diabetes, alcohol and tobacco use.
- **Increased political will, financial resources and increasing research** to develop new ways to diagnose, treat and prevent TB will help achieve the goal.
- **Private sector engagement** in combating TB needs to be strengthened. The private sector should also be incentivised to report TB cases. Example: **The Kochi Model-** Increasing TB cases reporting from private sector



- There is an urgent need for **cost-effective point-of-care devices** that can be deployed for TB diagnosis in different settings across India.
- **Universal access to drug, susceptibility testing at diagnosis** to ensure that all patients are given appropriate treatment, including access to second-line treatment for drug-resistant TB.
- To ensure public participation — a missing element in the RNTCP —in public-private participation mode.
- **Mass awareness campaigns** like 'TB Harega Desh Jeetega' can play an important role in breaking social taboos regarding TB.

Conclusion:

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

Human rights rooted in an abstract concept of caste, religion will be bad for Indian society, explain the statement while justifying the fact that human rights are inseparable from a full understanding of democracy.(250 words)

The hindu

Why this question:

The article highlights the fact that our human rights should not be based on The basis of religious, national or cultural differences.

Key demand of the question:

One has to highlight the importance of human rights in a democratic political setup.

Directive:

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

Structure of the answer:

Introduction:

In brief explain the essence of human rights and their significance in a democracy and in what way Human rights rooted in an abstract concept of caste, religion will be bad for Indian society.

Body:

Explain the following aspects:

In India, instances of honor killing are on the rise. Perpetrators of this crime believe that their crime is justified since they are upholding the purity of their family.

Caste violence in India is on the rise in recent times. Dalit rights and other minority rights have suffered due to this caste violence which is powered by the existing narrow majoritarian ideology in the society now.

Example: Cow lynching.

Violation of Dalit rights is justified on caste grounds.

How should human rights be defined then?

Basic human rights have to be the same across all such differences.

basic human rights –food, inheritance and reproductive rights,

Education and freedom of work and movement— cannot be denied on the basis of gender differences, just as they cannot be denied on the basis of 'race'.

Conclusion:

Conclude with way forward.

**Introduction:**

Human rights are the basic rights and freedoms that belong to every person in the world, from birth until death. They apply regardless of where you are from, what you believe or how you choose to live your life. They can never be taken away, although they can sometimes be restricted – for example if a person breaks the law, or in the interests of national security. These basic rights are based on shared values like dignity, fairness, equality, respect and independence. These values are defined and protected by law.

Body:**Human rights are rooted in an abstract concept of caste, religion in South Asia:**

- There are families in South Asian nations who would kill their child — usually a daughter — for the sake of ‘family honour.’
- At larger levels, there are killings or hounding of people who believe differently in our religion for the sake of that religion.
- There is persecution and brutalising of citizens who have a different vision of our nation for the sake of that ‘nation’.
- caste violence: Instances of Dalit children being beaten to death for defecating in the open.
- Communal conflicts between religious groups have been prevalent in India since around the time of its independence from British Rule. E.g.: The 1984 Anti-Sikh Riots during which Sikhs were massacred.
- Until the Delhi High Court decriminalised consensual private sexual acts between consenting adults in 2009 homosexuality was considered criminal as per interpretations of the ambiguous Section 377 of the 150-year-old Indian Penal Code (IPC), a law passed by the colonial British authorities.

Human rights and democracy:

- Human rights have to be rooted in the actual biological existence of human beings in society.
- Basic human rights — that is, access to shelter, food, inheritance and reproductive rights, education, and freedom of work and movement — cannot be denied on the basis of gender differences, just as they cannot be denied on the basis of ‘race’.
- Various other rights may differ from society to society, but basic human rights have to be the same across all such differences.
- If differences of nationality, culture, gender, colour, sexuality, etc. mean that basic human rights have to change across these categories, then we are basically arguing that the ‘human’ does not exist, or it exists only as an abstract concept, un-rooted in biological and other realities.
- Respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms and the principle of holding periodic and genuine elections by universal suffrage are essential elements of democracy.

Conclusion:



Democracy does not mean merely the right to vote and send representatives to the Parliament or the Legislature. Democracy must provide an environment for the protection and effective realization of human rights.

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Arbika Shukla
AIR 4, CSE 2015



Kirti Chekuri
AIR 14, CSE 2015

2016



Nandini K R
AIR 1, CSE 2016



Dhyanchandra H M
AIR 47, CSE 2016

2017



Anudeep
AIR 1, CSE 2017



Anu Kumari
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3rd floor, Above Village Hyper Market,
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Above kumar Book Centre,
Old rajinder Nagar,
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📞 Ph No: 7303318519

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📍 INSIGHTSIAS (Initiative of INSIGHTSONINDIA)
#1-1-379/212, Indira park Main Road.
Beside Balaji Darshan, Opposite to victoria cafe,
near Ashoka Nagar Signal, Ashok Nagar,
Hyderabad, Telangana-500020
📞 8688512637



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

India is witnessing a gender revolution in education, but not in jobs. Critically analyse the statement listing out the causative factors responsible for such a trend. (250 words)

Hindustantimes

Why this question:

The article highlights the recent study by the Azim Premji University which found that 96% of parents said education was as important for girls as it is for boys, but only 52% saw it as a means to employment for daughters, whereas for sons, it was 71%.

Key demand of the question:

The answer must assess the trends of gender revolution in education and contrast it with that in terms of Jobs and analyse what are the shortfalls being witnessed.

Directive:

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

Structure of the answer:

Introduction:

In first, highlight the gender factor in education and jobs in India in brief.

Body:

Explain that educated women are a force for change. They are likely to marry later and have fewer kids. Yet, without social support structures for careers, education is in danger of becoming a goal in itself. Female labour force participation has plunged to 23.3% according to the 2018 Economic Survey. More girls are studying, but they are not necessarily landing more jobs.

Use data from the article, compare and contrast the underling factors leading to such a picture.

Conclusion:

Conclude with what needs to be done, what should be the way forward.

Introduction:

The recently released **periodic labour force survey (PLFS)** data published by the **NSSO** shows that **India's female Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR)**—the share of working-age women who report either being employed, or being available for work—has fallen to a historic low of 23.3% in 2017-18, meaning that over three out of four women over the age of 15 in India are neither working nor seeking work.

Body:

Status of women in education:

- Female enrolment in colleges is up from 47.6% in 2017-18 to 48.6% in 2018-19, the All India Survey on Higher Education found.
- In Uttar Pradesh, there are 90,000 more women than men in higher education.
- The surge of women and girls in education is an ongoing trend that every year makes tiny, but significant, gains.
- In 2015, Mint did a series of articles that documented how girls breached the gender gap in primary and secondary school, with a gap of just 0.8% remaining at the class 10-12 level.



- That generation of girls is now headed to college. This is reflected in the growth of universities from 903 in 2017-18 to 993 for 2018-19.
- Perhaps the biggest transformation has taken place in rural India where in 2016, 70% of 18-year-olds were already in college.

The success of this often unsung revolution is partly to do with targeted government interventions including scholarships, subsidies, and quotas for women. And partly, it is due to aspiration and easier access to technology and information in the post-liberalisation era.

Status of women in jobs:

- A January 2019 study by the Azim Premji University found that 96% of parents said education was as important for girls as it is for boys, but only 52% saw it as a means to employment for daughters, whereas for sons, it was 71%.
- Without social support structures for careers, education is in danger of becoming a goal in itself.
- Female labour force participation has plunged to 23.3% according to the 2018 Economic Survey.
- More girls are studying, but they are not necessarily landing more jobs.
- Muslim women have the lowest LFPR while among Hindu women, forward caste women have the lowest LFPR, implying that social norms and religious conservatism might play a role in women being “allowed” to work.
- Rural women work overwhelmingly in agriculture, which could offer a clue to understanding the falling rates of rural workforce participation. It is likely that non-farm jobs are rare, especially for women.
- 99% of (women workers described as directors and chief executives) were self-employed, of which around one-third worked as unpaid family workers

Factors responsible for such a fall in working rates of women:

- **Maternity:** Many women who join the workforce are unable to re-join after having a child.
- The landmark legislation Maternity Benefit Act, 2017, which entitles a woman to 26 weeks of paid maternity leave, is becoming a big hurdle as start-ups and SMEs have become reluctant to hire them.
- The increased cost for companies and this may discourage them from hiring women.
- The share of women workers in the agriculture sector dropped from 42% in 2004 -05 to 35.5% in 2011-12. This decrease in FLPR in agriculture can be attributed to **increased adoption of technology in agriculture.**
- The **gender pay gap was 34 per cent in India**, that is, women get 34 per cent less compared to men for performing the same job with same qualifications.
- In the organised sector, women professionals even in the highest ranks of labour (legislators, senior officials, and managers) are also paid less compared to their male counterparts.



However, these women constitute only one per cent of the total female work force and the gap is lowest as they are aware of their rights.

- **Concerns about safety and Harassment at work site**, both explicit and implicit.
- According to NSSO, urban males accounted for 16% of India's population, but held 77% of all jobs in computer-related activities in 2011-12. This shows how gender has become a discriminatory factor for certain white-collared jobs.
- **Higher Education levels of women** also allow them to pursue leisure and other non-work activities, all of which reduce female labour force participation.
- **Insufficient availability of the type of jobs** that women say they would like to do, such as regular part-time jobs that provide steady income and allow women to reconcile household duties with work.
- According to the reports, about 74 per cent in rural areas and about 70 per cent in urban areas preferred 'part time' work on a regular basis while 21 per cent in rural areas and 25 per cent in urban areas wanted regular 'full-time' work.
- **Marriage is a career stopper** for the majority of Indian women and this cultural abhorrence towards women working is a not-so-subtle way of ensuring that the escape routes out of a marriage are minimised, if not entirely closed
- Social norms about household work are against women's mobility and participation in paid work. **Childbirth and taking care of elderly parents or in-laws** account for the subsequent points where women drop off the employment pipeline.
- The **cultural baggage about women working outside the home** is so strong that in most traditional Indian families, quitting work is a necessary precondition to the wedding itself.
- When **increases in family incomes** are there, due to the cultural factors, women leave the work to take care of the family and avoid the stigma of working outside.

Way forward:

- **Non-farm job creation for women:** there is a need to generate **education-based jobs in rural areas** in the industrial and services sectors
- The state governments should make **policies for the participation of rural women in permanent salaried jobs.**
- The governments should also **generate awareness to espouse a positive attitude towards women** among the public since it is one of the most important impediments in women's participation in economic activities.
- Local bodies, with aid from state governments, should open more crèches in towns and cities so that women with children can step out and work. The crèches will open employment opportunities for women.
- **Supply side reforms** to improve infrastructure and address other constraints to job creation could enable more women to enter the labour force.



- **Higher social spending**, including in education, can lead to higher female labour force participation by boosting female stocks of human capital.
- **Skilling the women:**
 - Initiatives such as **Skill India, Make in India, and new gender-based quotas from corporate boards to the police force** can spur a positive change. But we need to **invest in skill training and job support**.
 - The private sector could also take active part in training women entrepreneurs. For example: Unilever's Shakti program, which has trained more than 70,000 rural women in India as micro-entrepreneurs to sell personal-care products as a way of making its brands available in rural India
- **Equal pay:** The principle of equal remuneration for work of equal value that is protected by Indian law must be put to actual practice. Improved wage-transparency and gender neutral job evaluation is required to achieve this end.
- **Assuring safe access to work:** It is important to improve existing transport and communication networks and provide safe accommodation for women who travel to or have migrated for work.
- A useful and easily implementable idea would be to give **income tax benefits to women**. It would be a bold and effective step to increasing India's female workforce participation.
- For political empowerment of women, their **representation in Parliament and in decision making roles in public sphere** is one of the key indicators of empowerment.
- **Gig Economy** provides women flexible work options to pursue their career while not missing important milestones in their family lives.
- Drawing more women into the labour force, supplemented by structural reforms that could help create more jobs would be a source of future growth for India. Only then would India be able to reap the benefits of "demographic dividend" from its large and youthful labour force.

Conclusion:

With more than 75% women not contributing to the economy, the nation is not only losing on the economic part but also the development of 50% of our population. The numeric consequences of reducing obstacles to women's full economic participation far exceed the demographic advantages of having a larger pool of young workers. It is thus high time to talk of the gender dividend along with the demographic dividend.

Under nutrition and over nutrition in Indian children sharply differ depending on where they come from, bring out the sharp rural-urban divide that is highlighted by the Comprehensive National Nutrition Survey and suggest way forward.(250 words)

The hindu

Why this question:

The first-ever Comprehensive National Nutrition Survey (CNNS) has been conducted by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and the United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF).

Key demand of the question:



One has to bring out the highlights of the survey and analyse the trends in rural-urban divide in terms of child nutrition aspects.

Structure of the answer:**Introduction:**

In brief list down the findings of the Comprehensive National Nutrition Survey (CNNS)

Body:

Explain the rural –urban divide with statistics – Malnutrition among children in urban India is characterized by relatively poor levels of breastfeeding, higher prevalence of iron and Vitamin D deficiency as well as obesity due to long commute by working mothers, prosperity and lifestyle patterns.

It is believed that wealthier households in urban areas and sedentary lifestyles of children may also be responsible for a higher deficiency of Vitamin D in urban areas (19%) as compared to rural areas (12%).

Rural parts of the country see a higher percentage of children suffering from stunting, underweight and wasting and lower consumption of milk products.

Rural children lag in intake of zinc which causes diarrhea, growth retardation, loss of appetite and impaired immune function. Among children aged 1–4 years, zinc deficiency is more common in rural areas (20%) compared to urban areas (16%).

Conclusion:

Conclude with what needs to be done to overcome the issue.

Introduction:

The key findings of the first-ever national nutrition survey conducted by the Centre, yet to be made public, providing for the first time hard evidence of the coexistence of obesity and under-nutrition, among school going children. The survey recorded malnutrition that included micronutrient deficiencies and details of non-communicable diseases such as diabetes, hypertension, cholesterol and kidney function in children and adolescents.

Body:**Rural-Urban divide in nutrition trends:**

- Rural areas also witness higher prevalence of stunting (37% in rural versus 27% in urban), underweight (36% in rural versus 26% in urban) and severe acute malnutrition (34.7% in rural areas for children in 5-9 years versus 23.7% in urban areas and 27.4% in urban areas for adolescents in 10-19 years versus 32.4% in rural areas).
- Malnutrition among children in urban India is characterised by relatively poor levels of breastfeeding, higher prevalence of iron and Vitamin D deficiency.
- In Urban India, there is prevalence of obesity due to long commute by working mothers, prosperity and lifestyle patterns.
- While in rural parts of the country, there is higher percentage of children suffering from stunting, underweight and wasting and lower consumption of milk products.
- 83% of children between 12 and 15 months continued to be breastfed, a higher proportion of children in this age group residing in rural areas are breastfed (85%) compared to children in urban areas (76%).



- Breastfeeding is inversely proportional to household wealth and other factors influencing this trend may include working mothers who have to travel long distances to reach their workplace.
- Rural children receive meals more frequently in a day at 44% as compared to 37% of urban children.
- However, a higher proportion of children residing in urban areas (26.9%) are fed an adequately diverse diet as compared to those in rural areas (19%).
- Children and adolescents residing in urban areas also have a higher (40.6%) prevalence of iron deficiency compared to their rural counterparts (29%), which experts say is due to a better performance of the government's health programmes in rural areas.
- While 14.5% of children in the age group of 5 to 9 years in cities had higher SSFT than 5.3% in rural areas, 10.4% of adolescents surveyed in urban areas in the age group of 10-19 had higher SSFT than 4.3% in rural areas.
- Wealthier households in urban areas and sedentary lifestyle of children may also be responsible for higher deficiency of Vitamin D in urban areas (19%) as compared to rural areas (12%).
- Rural children **lag in intake of zinc** which causes diarrhoea, growth retardation, loss of appetite and impaired immune function. Among children aged 1-4 years, zinc deficiency is more common in rural areas (20%) compared to urban areas (16%).

Steps Taken by Government of India to curb incidences of Malnutrition:

- **Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY)**: 6,000 is transferred directly to the bank accounts of pregnant women for availing better facilities for their delivery.
- **POSHAN Abhiyaan**: aims to reduce stunting, under-nutrition, anaemia and low birth weight babies through synergy and convergence among different programmes, better monitoring and improved community mobilisation.
- **National Food Security Act (NFSA), 2013**, aims to ensure food and nutrition security for the most vulnerable through its associated schemes and programmes, making access to food a legal right.
- **Mid-day Meal (MDM) scheme** aims to improve nutritional levels among school children which also has a direct and positive impact on enrolment, retention and attendance in schools.

Measures needed:

The following steps must be taken in policy action across 6 key areas viz.

- creating sustainable, resilient food systems for healthy diets;
- providing social protection and nutrition-related education for all;
- aligning health systems to nutrition needs, and providing universal coverage of essential nutrition interventions;
- ensuring that trade and investment policies improve nutrition;



- building safe and supportive environments for nutrition at all ages; and
- Strengthening and promoting nutrition governance and accountability, everywhere.

Conclusion:

As **Amartya Sen** noted, famines are caused not by shortages of food, but by inadequate access to food. For the poor and marginalised, access to food is impeded by social, administrative and economic barriers. If India wants to be malnutrition free, it will not be achieved only through government intervention, but through a **Cultural Revolution or Jan Andolan like Kuposhan Mukth Bharat (Malnutrition Free India)**.

Recently mental health conditions among youngsters have been on rise; in such a scenario discuss the need for multiple interventions to prevent mental health disorders among adolescents.(250 words)

The hindu

Why this question:

The question is in the background of world mental health day that was celebrated recently across the world. The question seeks to examine the significance of multiple interventions in mental health disorders and their need.

Key demand of the question:

One has to bring out the necessity of mental health interventions especially amongst the adolescents.

Directive:

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

Structure of the answer:

Introduction:

At first explain how by making mental health services and resources readily available, we are investing in the future well-being of our society.

Body:

Explain first what is meant by mental health, why it is often a taboo to get medical help in this scenario.

Explain the irreversible damages that the mental health diseases can lead to especially among adolescents.

Quote data suggesting that the issue of such disorders is alarming.

Take hints from the article and explain that Half of all mental health disorders in adulthood start by 14 years of age, with many cases being undetected. Those who suffer from depression and anxiety in adulthood may often begin experiencing this from childhood and it may peak during adolescence and their early 20s.

Discuss the efforts made by the Government of India.

Conclusion:

Conclude with vitality of such medical interventions for the betterment of our societies and their futures.

Introduction:

Mental health is defined as a state of well-being in which every individual realizes his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community. (WHO) With over 18% of India's population aged 10-17, the future of the country will be driven by this segment.

**Body:**

Recent data suggest that mental health disorders are on the rise among 13-17-year-olds, with one out of five children in schools suffering from depression.

- According to the National Mental Health Survey of 2016, the prevalence of mental disorders was 7.3% among 13-17-year-olds.
- With many resorting to self-harm, statistics suggest that suicide among adolescents is higher than any other age group.
- According to the Global Burden of Disease Study 1990-2016, in India, the suicide death rate among 15-29-year-olds was highest in Karnataka (30.7), Tripura (30.3), Tamil Nadu (29.8), and Andhra Pradesh (25.0).
- India's contribution to global suicide deaths increased from 25.3% in 1990 to 36.6% in 2016 among women.
- Though suicides among women have decreased overall, the highest age-specific suicide death rate among women in 2016 were for ages 15-29 years and 75 years or older.

Need for multiple mental health interventions:

- Half of all mental health disorders in adulthood starts by 14 years of age, with many cases being undetected.
- Those who suffer from depression and anxiety in adulthood may often begin experiencing this from childhood and it may peak during adolescence and their early 20s.
- By learning more about mental health, parents and school administrations should sensitise themselves about what constitutes 'warning signs' like erratic sleep patterns and mood swings.
- Peer support systems and trained counsellors can encourage dialogue around seeking support and better coping mechanisms.
- Parents and peers can play an important role by being understanding and communicative.
- There is evidence that technology can create loneliness, isolation and unrealistic expectations for adolescents.
- By moving away from strict rules and diktats, parents should gently discuss the role of technology to bring adolescents to the realisation that limiting screen time and engaging in social activities may improve how they feel.

Other measures needed:

- Executive wings of the government at both central and state levels have failed miserably to disseminate the new statute to stake holders. It has also failed to implement its provisions including the expeditious setting up of the State Mental Health Authority and Mental Health Review Board – the basic pillars central to the success of the Act. This need to be looked into.
- Mental health services must be scaled up as an essential component of universal health coverage.



- Barriers and threats to mental health, such as the **pervasive impact of stigma**, must be assertively addressed.
- Mental health must be protected by public policies and developmental efforts.
- New opportunities must be enthusiastically embraced, in particular those offered by the innovative use of community health workers and digital technologies to deliver a range of mental health intervention
- Substantial additional investments must be urgently made as the economic and health case for increased investments in mental health is strong.
- There is also an immediate opportunity for more efficient use of existing resources, for example, through the redistribution of budgets from large hospitals to district hospitals and community-based local services.
- Finally, investments in research and innovation must harness diverse disciplines to advance understanding of the causes of mental disorders and develop more effective interventions to prevent and treat them.

Conclusion:

Projects such as **SPIRIT** (Suicide Prevention and Implementation Research Initiative) in India, aim to reduce suicides among targeted adolescents and implement research-based suicide interventions. They also aim to empower regional policymakers to integrate evidence generated from implemented research on suicide prevention in policymaking. India requires multiple similar interventions for change.

What is Country Cooperation Strategy of the WHO that was recently in news? How far do you think India has achieved in improving the health of its population and bringing in transformative changes in the health sector?(250 words)

The hindu

Why this question:

'The WHO India Country Cooperation Strategy 2019–2023: A Time of Transition' has been launched recently.

Key demand of the question:

One has to explain in detail what is The WHO India Country Cooperation Strategy 2019–2023 and its significance.

Structure of the answer:

Introduction:

In brief provide for an overview of the cooperation.

Body:

First explain that the India CCS is one of the first that fully aligns itself with the newly adopted WHO 13th General Programme of Work and its 'triple billion' targets, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and WHO South-East Asia Region's eight Flagship Priorities.

CCS provides a strategic roadmap for WHO to work with the Government of India towards achieving its health sector goals, in improving the health of its population and bringing in transformative changes in the health sector.

Explain the significance of the same.

Conclusion:

Conclude with way forward.



Introduction:

The **Country Cooperation Strategy (CCS)** provides a strategic roadmap for WHO to work with the Government of India towards achieving its health sector goals, in improving the health of its population and bringing in transformative changes in the health sector. It builds upon the work that WHO has been carrying out in the last several years. In addition, it identifies current and emerging health needs and challenges such as non-communicable diseases, antimicrobial resistance and air pollution.

Body:

The Union Health Ministry has launched the ‘World Health Organisation (WHO) India Country Cooperation Strategy (CCS) 2019–2023: A Time of Transition’ with the collaboration providing a strategic roadmap for the WHO to work with the Indian government towards achieving its health sector goals; improving the health of its population; and bringing in transformative changes in the health sector.

India’s CCS and WHO goals:

- The India CCS fully aligns itself with **WHO ‘triple billion’ targets, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and WHO South-East Asia Region’s eight Flagship Priorities**.
- It urges to address emerging health scenario of the country like non-communicable diseases, antimicrobial resistance, and air pollution, etc.
- The India CCS also connects with India’s National Health Policy 2017, and other initiatives like **Ayushman Bharat, National Viral Hepatitis programme, Eat Right India movement, the Fit India movement and Poshan Abhiyaan** that have collectively engaged with the people and enhanced the awareness about crucial health areas

India’s efforts towards transformative healthcare:

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

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

- There is an immediate need to **increase the public spending to 2.5% of GDP**, despite that being lower than global average of 5.4%.



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

Way forward:

- Besides the health priorities detailed in the strategy, focus needs to be given on other equally pertinent health areas of environmental and occupational health, accidents and road injuries, and good nutrition and food safety.
- A mechanism needs to be institutionalized wherein every ministry has a health section/department, so that every policy factors in its health implications.

Conclusion:

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

The latest Nobel prize in the discipline of economics is recognition of the fact that there's still hope to fight poverty without succumbing to the polarizing debate between right and left wing populism. Critically analyse. (250 words)

Hindustantimes

**Why this question:**

A trio of economists were awarded the Nobel Prize on Monday for their work to alleviate global poverty. Abhijit Banerjee, Esther Duflo and Michael Kremer pioneered an approach to poverty reduction that was based on carefully designed experiments that sought answers to specific policy questions, according to the prize committee.

Key demand of the question:

Analyse the relevance of such a research that seeks to address one of the very major problems of the world – poverty. Also analyse the methods propounded by the trio and suggestions thereof.

Directive:

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

Structure of the answer:**Introduction:**

In brief narrate the background of the question.

Body:

Explain what is global poverty? Why is it prevalent?

Discuss the root causes of poverty across the world.

Present suitable arguments of the research that bagged the Noble prize.

Explain in what way reshaped development economics, had a clear impact on policy and improved our ability to fight global poverty.

Conclusion:

Conclude with way forward.

Introduction:

A trio of economists were awarded the Nobel Prize for Economics, 2019 for their work to **alleviate global poverty**. **Abhijit Banerjee, Esther Duflo and Michael Kremer** pioneered an approach to poverty reduction that was based on carefully designed experiments that sought answers to specific policy questions, according to the prize committee.

Body:

Global poverty continues to be a massive challenge. The award follows **Angus Deaton**, who received it in 2015 for his contributions to **development economics**—the field that studies the causes of global poverty and how best to combat it—particularly, his emphasis on people’s consumption choices and the measurement of well-being, especially the well-being of the poor.

Well developed theory can highlight what causes poverty and, based on this, suggest policies to combat it. But **it cannot tell us exactly how powerful specific policy measures will be in practice**. This is precisely where the contributions of Banerjee, Duflo and Kremer lie. The Nobel citation gives several examples of their impact, including how their research has helped education, health and access to credit for many in the developing world, most famously in India and Kenya.

According to poverty action lab at MIT set up by Banerjee, Duflo and Kremer:

- It might not be enough to announce a free vaccination programme to reduce child mortality.
- Giving a couple of kilogrammes of pulses or a steel bowl might be the critical factor in determining whether mothers walk the extra mile to bring their children to the vaccination centre.



- The Nobel Committee's decision to award this year's prize to above economists is an endorsement of the fact that those seeking to reduce poverty would do better to know how the poor behave.
- They and their comrades devote a lot of time conducting **randomised controlled field trials (RCTs)**, particularly in India, to find out what works and what doesn't to fight poverty.
- Poverty can't be eradicated without recognising that the poor have an agency and RCTs are needed to understand how exactly such agencies work.

However, the above approach has been criticized:

- Their peers have accused them of belittling theoretical and structural constraints in the fight against poverty. It is true that RCTs cannot replace macroeconomics.
- RCTs can't help us understand recessions which can throw millions into poverty at once.
- That is no reason to ignore their work and contribution in the fight against poverty, though.

Way forward to fight global poverty:

- Governments across the world spend big money on social schemes without the vaguest of ideas on whether their objectives have been met.
- The field-work based approach that these economists have perfected has revolutionised the field of development economics and made it more relevant in policy making.
- The government would do well to borrow from the research of these laureates to understand the impact of its several schemes and where necessary.
- It will tweak them to derive maximum benefit for the thousands of crores of rupees that it spends.

Extra information:

- **Rajasthan experiment**— Despite immunisation being free, women were not bringing in their children for the vaccination shot.
- The two MIT economists decided to give a bag of pulses free to women who brought their babies for vaccination.
- Word soon spread and the rate of immunisation shot up in the region.
- **Mumbai and Vadodara experiment**— With this, they wanted to understand the learning outcomes in the field of education.
- They wanted to know whether it is the lack of access to textbooks or hunger that caused poor learning outcomes.
- Through field studies, Mr. Banerjee and Ms. Duflo established that the problem is that teaching is not adapted to the needs of the students.
- Learning outcomes improved in schools that were provided with teaching assistants to support students with special needs.



- One of their studies resulted in benefiting 5 million children in India through programmes of remedial tutoring in schools.

Critically examine the performance of India's most ambitious health scheme; Ayushman Bharat-Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana. (250 words)

The hindu

Why this question:

Recently Gujarat, Tamil Nadu, Chhattisgarh, Kerala and Andhra Pradesh have emerged as the top-performing States under the Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PM-JAY), thus necessitating us to examine the performance of the scheme.

Key demand of the question:

One must examine the performance of the Ayushman Bharat-Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana.

Directive:

Critically examine – When asked to 'Examine', we have to look into the topic (content words) in detail, inspect it, investigate it and establish the key facts and issues related to the topic in question. While doing so we should explain why these facts and issues are important and their implications. When 'critically' is suffixed or prefixed to a directive, one needs to look at the good and bad of the topic and give a fair judgment.

Structure of the answer:

Introduction:

In brief quote data on the performance of Ayushman Bharat-Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana.

Body:

The question is direct and straightforward, there isn't much to deliberate apart from listing of the facts to substantiate the performance of the scheme.

Explain that It was launched as recommended by the National Health Policy 2017, to achieve the vision of Universal Health Coverage. Provide for details of the scheme.

Conclusion:

Conclude that the scheme will continue to focus on reducing catastrophic out-of-pocket health expenditure, improving access to quality health care and meeting the unmet need of the population for hospitalization care, so that India can move towards the vision of Universal Health Coverage.

Introduction:

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

Body:

Performance analysis of PMJAY:

- **Gujarat, Tamil Nadu, Chhattisgarh, Kerala and Andhra Pradesh** have emerged as the top performing States with free secondary and tertiary treatment worth nearly ₹7,901 crore availed under the Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PM-JAY), the flagship health assurance scheme of the Government in just over a year.
- Launched last year, the scheme crossed the 50-lakh treatment mark this week with secondary and tertiary level treatments worth ₹7,901 crore being carried out across 32 States and Union Territories.



- Half-a-crore hospital treatments have been provided and there are 9 hospital admissions every minute across India.
- More than 60% of the amount spent has been on tertiary care.
- Cardiology, Orthopaedics, Radiation Oncology, Cardio-thoracic and Vascular Surgery, and Urology have emerged as the top tertiary specialities.
- It has helped reduce catastrophic expenditure for hospitalizations, which pushes 6 crore people into poverty each year.
- Helps mitigate the financial risk arising out of catastrophic health episodes.

However, challenges remain:

- **High Out of Pocket Expenditure:** Most consumers complain of rising costs. Hundred days into the PMJAY, it remains to be seen if private hospitals provide knee replacement at Rs 80,000 (current charges Rs 3.5 lakh) bypass surgery at Rs 1.7 lakh (against Rs 4 lakh).
- **Commercial motive:** lack of transparency and unethical practices in the private sector.
- **Concentrated in Urban areas:** Private hospitals don't have adequate presence in Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities and there is a trend towards super specialisation in Tier-1 cities.
- **Better infrastructure needed:** Under the PMJAY, the private hospitals have to get registered and fulfil the minimum requirements. They are also expected to expand their facilities and add hospital beds.
- **Lack of level playing field between the public and private hospitals:** This has been a major concern as public hospitals would continue receiving budgetary support. This would dissuade the private players from actively participating in the scheme.
- **Additional incentives to the private players:** The setting up hospitals in the underserved areas by private players can happen when there are incentives from the State. Lack of this would maintain status quo of last mile medical care which is in shackles.
- **Populist measures of the government:** The idea of bringing the Above Poverty Line (APL) population in the unorganised sector under ambit of scheme has been a bone of contention. A sizeable part would remain uninsured—**mostly lower-middle class and middle-class households** whose income-earning members work in the unorganised sector. The high cost of insurance as compared to PMJAY would deter this section from being insured.
- **Federal issues:** Health is a state subject, and so far these states have declined joining the central government-led scheme.
 - Delhi government argues that its existing health scheme has wider coverage and is “10 times bigger than Ayushman Bharat”.
 - Odisha has pointed out certain flaws, saying that the existing Biju Swasthya Kalyan Yojana has special provisions like an extra Rs 2 lakh cover for women, which the Ayushman scheme lacks.
 - Telangana too has raised concerns about the rather “narrow ambit” of PM-JAY, saying that its Aarogyasri scheme benefits more people.



- West Bengal opted out, refusing to pay its share of the expenditure.

Measures needed:

- The current approach requires re-emphasising the missing priority on PHCs and CHCs for developing comprehensive primary care.
- Government hospitals should be removed from the ambit of the scheme as services there are already free of cost.
- The government should **fund public hospitals directly**. Under this scheme, it is being done through insurance companies by paying 15 per cent to them.
- India should not continue the insurance route for healthcare delivery as the administrative cost and the “unholy nexus” with insurance companies point towards profit maximization rather than quality health care delivery.
- The focus should be to **train a pool of social workers, psychiatrists, counsellors with public health orientation** who could then transform the primary healthcare delivery system in the country.
- India needs to design health services to **meet local needs** with opposite referral mechanism to secondary- and tertiary-care, and this can produce better health outcomes with a considerable cost-advantage.
- Reorienting resources towards population-based preventive programmes will help set the allocation of scarce resources for larger social benefits right.
- PPP in India needs a nuanced approach and systematic mechanisms, including legislation and regulatory aspects. The process requires wider stakeholder engagement and deliberations and oversight from top leadership.
- **Need of the hour:** “Tax funded” universal health coverage rather than the “for profit” insurance model.

Conclusion:

PM-JAY seeks to accelerate India's progress towards achievement of Universal Health Coverage (UHC) and Sustainable Development Goal – 3 (SDG3). While the contribution of the private sector will be the key to its success, it's the will and zeal of the government to implement it that will make or break the scheme.

Information blackout leads to silence and exaggeration and on the other hand Journalism, when not fettered, facilitates informed dialogue. Comment.(250 words)

The hindu

Introduction:

The Reporters Without Borders (RSF) has released the World Press Freedom Index 2019, reflecting growing animosity towards journalists. It measures the level of freedom available to journalists and not the quality of journalism. Balanced, free and fair press can take the country forward. The recently released Press Freedom Index, in which India slipped two places to rank 138th among 180 countries.

**Body:****Observations on India:**

- India's rank dropped down to 140th from 138th in 2018, two points below the previous year.
- As per the Index, one of the most striking features of the current state of press freedom in India is violence against journalists including police violence, attacks by Maoist fighters, criminal groups and corrupt politicians.
- The media coverage in the sensitive regions like Kashmir continues to be very difficult. Even the entry of foreign reporters is prohibited in Kashmir and the Internet is often disconnected there.

Growing threat to freedom of press:

- India slipped two points on the World Press Freedom Index ranking and India's ranking reflects growing bitterness towards journalists.
- The antagonism towards the media which is openly encouraged by political leaders poses a great threat to democracy.
- Government's pressure on the name of Regulation, bombardment of fake news and over influence of Social media is dangerous for the occupation. Security of journalists is the biggest issue. Killings and Assaults on the Journalists covering sensitive issues are very common.
- **Section 124a of IPC** under which sedition is punishable by life imprisonment
- Although no journalist has been imprisoned under Section 124a of IPC for 'sedition', the law encourages self-censorship. Also, the coverage of regions regarded as sensitive by the authority like Kashmir is quite difficult in India.
- Foreign reporters are barred from the region and the Internet is often disconnected there.
- Kashmiri journalists working for local media outlets are often the targets of violence by soldiers acting with the central government's tacit consent
- The killing of journalists in connection with their work
- One of the reasons India's rating was downgraded were the incidents of murder of journalists.
- Hate speech targeting journalists shared and amplified on social networks
- It suggests scary picture especially in democratic countries where political leaders are openly threatening journalists, even incarcerating them if they refuse to offer their loyalty.
- India fared poorly on indicators such as hate speeches attacks on journalists on social media, trolling them and targeting their reputation. It also mentions that at least 4 journalists were gunned down in India in 2017.

Fourth pillar of democracy is not working well:

- Survey conducted by Edelman, Indian media has been losing its credibility and trust among the people.



- The study has noticed a sharp drop in trust over the past two years in television news in India.
- Study indicates a bright future of the Indian newspaper industry. According to the Trust Barometer Survey, people trusted newspapers more than any other medium.
- **Corruption-paid news, advertorials and fake news**
 - Competition for instant and quick news and reporting without first checking the facts. For example, reporting of GPS nano chips in new 500 and 2000 notes.
- **Corporate interest:**
 - Corporate and political power has overwhelmed large sections of the media, both print and visual
 - Corporates have financial stakes in either print or visual media leading to biased reporting.
 - Overemphasis on TRP's because they determine advertising revenue.
- **Role of social media:**
 - Social media enables antisocial people to become social. It helps lone wolves find the pack.
 - More than a means to perform socially deviant roles collectively, social media offers a platform to do it anonymously.
 - The Spreading of fake news further degraded the condition.
- **Credibility issue:**
 - Biasness of reporters, editors etc. have dented the image of news channels and newspapers.
- **Weak regulation:**
 - Only a self-regulating body like PCI (press council of India) has little power or legislative backup to regulate the press.
- **Media Sensationalism, Lack of Media Ethics, Profit/Self-Interests v/s Public Interest, Senior Journalists** are not stepping up/not taking initiatives to correct the wrongdoings in their respective media houses [silent/mute spectators] are other issues.

Reforms needed:

- Workplace Harassment, Insecurity of Jobs, Gaps in Pay are the other areas which needs improvement.
- Ownership restrictions on holdings have to be legislated.
- Senior print and television journalists must speak write and expose very clearly the issues plaguing the press in India.



- Implementing the recommendations of TRAI with regard to media ownership and investment disclosure norms would help in maintaining transparency required for the news media sector.
- Basic regulation for digital media outlets like compulsory and online registration of details need to be implemented strictly.
- Robust surveillance and compliance mechanism need to be implemented effectively so that source of news is verified before
- Journalists must resist the urge to sensationalise matters. They must keep a global perspective, and pay attention to the words they use, the examples they cite, and the images they display.
- They must avoid speculation and finger-pointing in the immediate confusion following an attack when nothing is known, yet the demand for information is perhaps the strongest of all.
- They must consider carefully the fact that there is something inherent in terrorism as a violent act that provokes a fear in many that is far disproportionate to the actual level of risk.
- And most of all, they must avoid fostering division and hatred and radicalisation at both margins of society.

Conclusion:

Journalism performs many tasks. British journalist George Brock has mandated four irreducible core tasks: verification, bearing witness, sense making, and investigation. In the interest of democracy, it is essential that the exchange of ideas take place in an uninhibited manner where all citizens can access information free of bias and prejudice.

Agreeing to the recently released National milk sample safety quality survey, contamination in milk is a more severe problem than adulteration. Discuss. (250 words)

The hindu

Why this question:

National milk sample safety quality survey has been released by the Food Safety and Standard Authority of India (FSSAI). The “most comprehensive and representative” milk safety and quality survey has demolished the perception of large-scale milk adulteration in India.

Key demand of the question:

One has to debate upon the fact that in India, contamination in milk is a more severe problem than adulteration. Suggest solutions to it by providing a brief analysis of the issue.

Directive:

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

Structure of the answer:

Introduction:

In brief highlight the findings of the survey.

Body:

First quote the Key findings of the report.



FSSAI has claimed that the quality of milk in the country is largely safe. However, it has added that contamination due to Aflatoxin M1 and Antibiotic residues is a more serious problem than adulteration.

Explain in detail the concerns associated.

Suggest what should be the way forward to handle the situation.

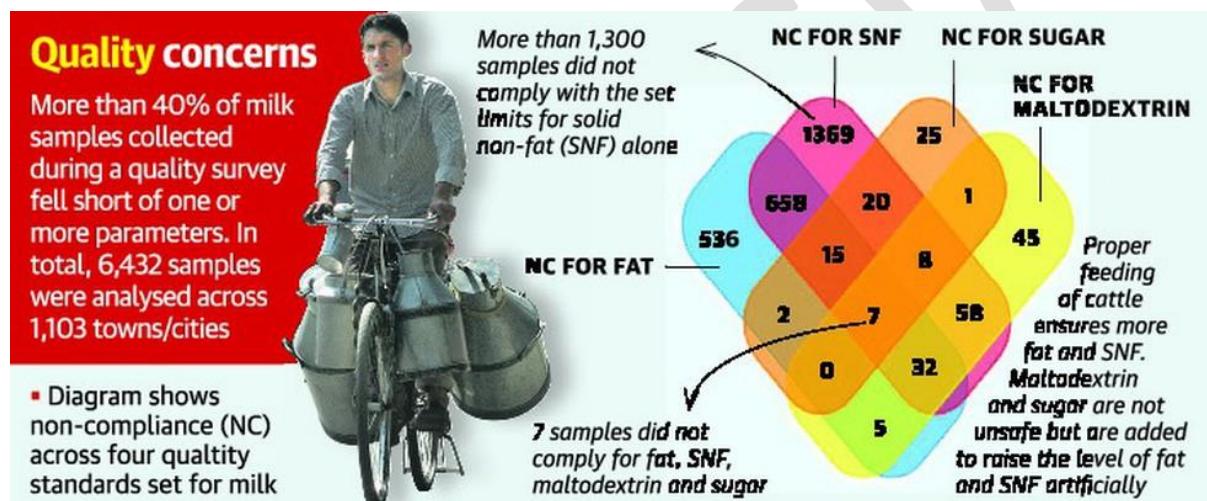
Conclusion:

Conclude by suggesting solutions.

Introduction:

The Food Safety and Standard Authority of India (FSSAI) recently released National milk sample safety quality survey. This is the first-of-its-kind comprehensive survey FSSAI has conducted through a third-party agency. It covered both organised (retailers and processors) as well as non-organised (local dairy farms, milk vendors and milk mandis) sectors.

Body:



Key findings:

- Around one-tenth of processed milk samples have safety issues, while over a third of the samples, even those of major brands, failed to meet one quality standard or another.
- In the survey of 2,607 processed milk samples, 10.4% had safety issues while another 37.7% missed at least one quality standard.
- Both raw and processed samples were found non-compliant on account of low fat or low SNF (solid not fat) or both. Proportion of fat and solid non-fat in milk varies widely by species and depends on breed as well as quality of feed and fodder.
- In the survey of 3,825 raw milk samples, about 47% missed one quality parameter or another, while another 4.8% had safety issues.
- On an average only, 7% of the milk had safety issues, and that most of the milk sold both in raw and processed form was fit for human consumption.
- Out of the total 6,432 samples of liquid milk which were tested, 456 samples (7.1 per cent) were found to be unsafe due to contaminants such as Aflatoxin-M1, antibiotics or pesticides.



Measures needed:

- To address these issues, FSSAI and the government are instituting a scheme for testing and sampling for organised dairy players. The scheme will be implemented from January 1, 2020.
- The scheme stipulates sampling points during various stages of milk processing, test methods and frequency of sampling.
- all attempts need to be taken both before and after food crop harvest to reduce the toxin amount.
- Improper storage of food harvest in warm and humid conditions leads to aflatoxin contamination that is much higher than what is seen in the field. Equally important is in having facilities to regularly test for aflatoxin M1.

Issues relating to poverty and hunger.

"India's TB report must be seen in light of the country's slide in Hunger Index", critically analyse the statement in the light of recently released Annual India Tuberculosis (TB) report.(250 words)

[Indianexpress](#)

Introduction:

Tuberculosis (TB) remains the biggest killer disease in India, outnumbering all other infectious diseases put together — this despite our battle against it from 1962, when the National TB Programme (NTP) was launched. The **Annual India Tuberculosis (TB) report** was released by the government on September 26. The **Global Hunger Index (GHI) 2019** put India at 102 in a list of 117 countries. Over the last century or so, it has been established beyond doubt that TB is more of a social disease owing its roots to poverty, malnutrition and poor sanitary conditions.

Body:

TB Situation in India:

- India is now home to about a quarter of the total global TB patients. The current government is committed to ending TB in India by 2025.
- Tuberculosis incidence rate in India has decreased by almost 50,000 patients over the past one year (26.9 lakh TB patients in India in 2018).
- Incidence per 1,00,000 population has decreased from 204 in 2017 to 199 in 2018.
- Number of patients being tested for rifampicin resistance has increased from 32% in 2017 to 46% in 2018.
- Treatment success rate has increased to 81% for new and relapse cases (drug sensitive) in 2017, which was 69% in 2016.

Hunger and TB:

- The GHI report is another stark reminder of what else is wrong in claiming that TB can be ended by 2025.



- A hungry India cannot be free of TB.
- Dietary deprivation is a direct indicator of inequality.
- Unequal societies cannot be made free of disease and infirmity.
- In an important study on nutrition and TB published this month in the BMC Pulmonary Medicine journal from Ethiopia, the researchers clearly show that the proportion of malnutrition in TB patients was nearly 60 per cent.
- The authors conclude that even a very distal reason for malnutrition in the community became a proximal cause for TB.

Challenges to achieve TB free India by 2025:

- **Poor socio-economic conditions:**
 - Poverty remains a stark reality in India with associated problems of hunger, undernourishment and poor and unhygienic living conditions.
 - According to GTB Report, 2018, a majority of TB patients (6lakhs) in India are attributable to undernourishment.
- **Underreporting and misdiagnosis:**
 - According to GTB Report 2018, India is one of the major contributors to under-reporting and under-diagnosis of TB cases in the world, accounting for 26% of the 3.6 million global gap in the reporting of tuberculosis cases.
 - Biomarkers and other diagnostics that identify individuals at highest risk of progression to disease are inadequate.
- **Treatment:**
 - Inequitable access to quality diagnosis and treatment remains a major issue in combating tuberculosis. Further, the private sector which contributes a major part of TB care is fragmented, made up of diverse types of healthcare providers, and largely unregulated.
 - Standard TB treatment is not followed uniformly across the private sector, resulting in the rise of drug resistance.
- **Follow-up treatment:**
 - Though the reporting of TB cases has increased lately, the reporting of treatment outcomes has not been robust.
 - The absence of consistent follow-up of treatment regimens and outcomes may result in relapse of cases and MDR-TB and XDR-TB. India has already been facing the problem of increasing MDR-TB cases
- **Drugs:**
 - The drugs used to treat TB, especially multidrug-resistant-TB, are decades old. It is only recently that Bedaquiline and Delamanid (drugs to treat MDR-TB) has been made available. However, access to such drugs remains low.



- **Funds:**
 - The RNCTP remains inadequately funded. There has been a growing gap between the allocation of funds and the minimum investment required to reach the goals of the national strategic plan to address tuberculosis.
- **Issues with RNCTP:**
 - Weak implementation of RNCTP at state level is another major concern. The Joint Monitoring Mission report of 2015 pointed out that the RNCTP failed to achieve both the main goals of NSP 2012-2017- Providing universal access to early diagnosis and treatment and improving case detection.
 - Major issues with RNCTP include: human resource crunch, payment delays, procurement delays and drug stock-outs
- **R&D:**
 - R&D for new methods and technologies to detect the different modes of TB, new vaccines, and new drugs and shorter drug regimens have been slow, as compared to other such diseases like HIV/AIDS.
- **Social Stigma:**
 - According to a study which assessed social stigma associated with TB in Bangladesh, Colombia, India, India had the highest social stigma index.
 - Patients often hesitate to seek treatment or deny their condition altogether for fear of social discrimination and stigmatization.

Way forward:

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


Conclusion:

India has the highest TB burden in the world. An end to TB is not possible till we end malnutrition, poverty and poor sanitation. We need a paradigm shift in the response to TB. This should include a more sensitive approach on gender and towards the underprivileged.

Important aspects of governance, transparency and accountability, e-governance- applications, models, successes, limitations, and potential; citizens charters, transparency & accountability and institutional and other measures.

Throw light on the nature of crimes based on the recent report published by the National crime records bureau (NCRB) and examine the possible causes behind the several crimes cited in the report.(250 words)

The hindu

Why this question:

The question is based on the report published by the National crime records bureau (NCRB).

Key demand of the question:

One has to explain in detail the issues facing the Indian society in the aspects of crime and the causative factors behind it.

Directive:

Examine – When asked to ‘Examine’, we must look into the topic (content words) in detail, inspect it, investigate it and establish the key facts and issues related to the topic in question. While doing so we should explain why these facts and issues are important and their implications.

Structure of the answer:

Introduction:

In brief quote facts from the report.

Body:

Focus on the crime statistics and analyze the nature of crime, as released by the report.

Enumerate the possible reasons for such crimes and examine each reason.

In brief, suggest measures to be taken to address such crimes.

Add a note on the initiatives taken by government to tackle such crimes.

Conclusion:

Conclude with solutions as to what needs to be done.

Introduction:

The latest annual crime data, “**Crime in India-2017**”, released by the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) revealed that there was an increase of 3.6 per cent in criminal cases in 2017 compared to 2016 when 50 lakh cases of cognisable offences were lodged across the country. However, data of death due to mob lynching, murder by influential people, killing ordered by khap panchayat and murder committed for religious reason have not been published. The new report has largely followed the pattern of the 2016 edition, barring additions in the category of cyber-crimes and offences against the state.

Body:

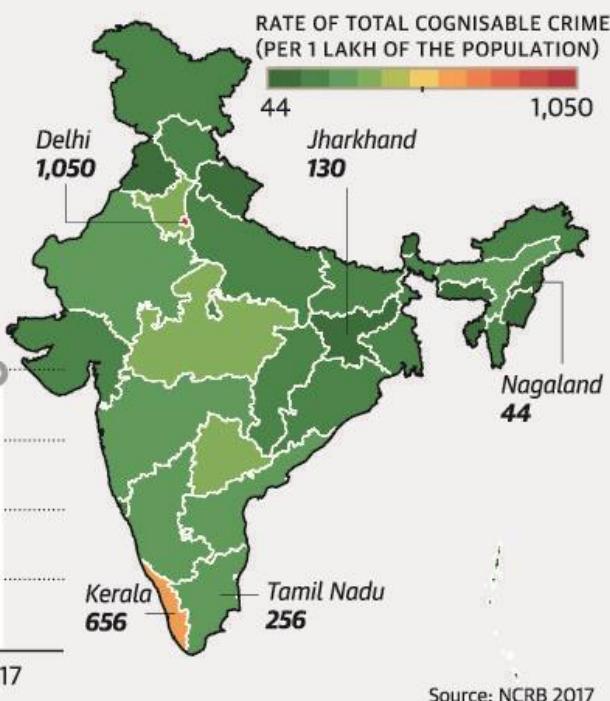


Infamous capital

Delhi had the highest crime rate in the country with 1,050 crimes committed per one lakh of the population as listed under the Indian Penal Code

Surge in crime

The number of crimes committed against women increased in 2017 by 6% compared with 2016 figures and by 9% compared with 2015 figures



Nature of Crimes:

- **Offences against the state:**
 - There has been a 30% rise in incidents of offences against the state as compared to 2016.
 - This category includes offences such as sedition, waging war against the country and damage to public property among others.
- **Crime Against Women:**
 - The number of crimes committed against women increased by 6% over the year 2016.
 - Majority cases were registered under 'Cruelty by Husband or His Relatives' followed by 'Assault on Women with Intent to Outrage her Modesty'.
- **Cyber Crimes:**
 - Bengaluru topped the list among metropolitan cities across the country in terms of number of cyber-crimes registered. Bengaluru was followed by Mumbai and Jaipur.
 - For the first time, "cyber stalking and bullying of women" has been included in the report. A total of 542 cases were reported under this category, with the maximum incidents recorded in Maharashtra (301).
 - Cyber frauds relating to credit cards stood at 395 cases, for ATMs at 1543 cases, online fraud stood at 804, and 170 cases of posting fake news on social media were also included in the report.
- **Riots:**



- Out of the total 58,880 incidents of rioting reported, communal and sectarian riots accounted for 723 and 183 incidents respectively.
- There were 805 riots due to caste conflict and 1909 riots due to political reasons.
- **Crime Against SC/STs:**
 - The incidents registered under the Scheduled Caste Prevention of Atrocities Act saw an increase from 5,082 incidents reported in 2016 to 5,775 in 2017.
 - Incidents of crime related to Scheduled Tribes dipped from 844 in 2016 to 720 in 2017.

Possible causes behind the crimes:

- As per the data, “**disputes**” (7,898 cases) were the motive in the maximum number of murder cases, followed by “**personal vendetta or enmity**” (4,660) and “**gain**” (2,103).
- **Fraudulent transactions and sexual exploitation** were the most reported cyber-crimes in India in 2017, according to the NCRB.
- **Sexual exploitation and personal revenge** have been noted as the two most focused motives behind cyber-attacks in Assam, throwing interesting insight into how the nature of cybercrime differs among states.
- Among the other most affected states, **frauds and extortion** were the biggest motives behind attacks in UP, while sexual exploits and frauds were the biggest causes of attacks in Maharashtra.
- Alongside the uniform aspect of frauds in each state, “**causing disrepute**” has been noted as the second most reported form of cyber-attacks in Karnataka in 2017.

Way forward:

- The state needs to avoid unprincipled criminalisation and rather focus on developing a guiding principle for re-classification of offences.
- This is because unprincipled criminalisation often leads to not only the creation of new offences on unscientific grounds, but also arbitrariness in the criminal justice system.
- There is also need for simultaneous reforms in police, prosecution, judiciary and in prisons.
- Thus, Criminal Justice Reform Committee must be constituted with a mandate to evolve criminal justice policy in India.
- The Committee needs to carry forward the work done earlier by Menon Committee on Criminal Justice System, the Malimath Committee, and the Law Commission.
- Implementation of Crime and Criminal Tracking Network and Systems (CCTNS), which aims at creating a comprehensive and integrated system for enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of policing at the Police Station level.
- Use of technological solutions like e-Courts, LIMBS to quicken the justice delivery and case-management.
- Police should be a SMART Police -a police which should be sensitive, mobile, alert, reliable and techno-savvy.



- Second ARC recommended that the government should declare certain crimes as “federal” and entrust their investigation to a Central agency
- The number of Forensic Science Institutions with modern technologies such as DNA fingerprinting technology should be enhanced.
- **Justice Malimath Committee in 2003** recommended incorporation of some aspects of an inquisitorial system to make the system more efficient.
- Inquisitorial system of investigation is practised in countries such as Germany and France, where a judicial magistrate supervises the investigation.

Does linking of Aadhaar with social media accounts enable commercial surveillance, restrict free speech, and curb privacy? Analyse.(250 words)

Hindustantimes

Introduction:

The Supreme Court will hear cases seeking the linking of Aadhaar with social media profiles of individuals from January 2020 onwards. It will be the first big legal battle on the right to privacy after the Supreme Court held in a landmark verdict in 2017 that privacy is a fundamental right.

Body:

Rationale behind Aadhar-Social Media link:

- The **dangers of the dark web** are a compelling reason behind Aadhar-Social Media link.
- There are rising instances of **cyberbullying, spreading of defamatory and humiliating messages and other intolerable activities on social media**. Aadhar-Social media link can help reduce it.
- Aadhaar-social media linking is needed to **keep a check on fake news and defamatory, anti-national and terror-sponsoring articles or content and pornographic material on social media**.
- The State also referred to the **Blue Whale game**, which had reportedly claimed the lives of several children in India.

Threats posed to Right to privacy by Aadhar-Social Media link:

- The linking of user profiles on social media with Aadhaar would make every message and post by the user traceable.
- Though the move will serve as a deterrent to social media instigators and perpetrators of defamatory and fake posts, it would also violate the privacy of the users, keeping a record of each message along with the registered mobile number or email account.
- This would mean the end of private communications.
- The privacy experts fear that the linking would allow India’s nationalist government to force social media platforms to become surveillance tools.

Right to choice also affected due to Aadhar-Social Media link:



- It is unclear as of now of what will happen to those who don't link their social media accounts to their 12-digit Aadhaar number. Will their accounts be deleted or blocked?
- It is also unclear what action will be taken against parody accounts of users.
- Users also have concerns that if a tweet they did years ago suddenly goes viral out of context then will all the people who shared it also get investigated or punished or will their accounts be deactivated?

Challenges apparent in the linking of Aadhaar number with social media profiles:

- The private use of Aadhaar itself has been controversial since the striking down of Section 57 of the Aadhaar Act.
- The limited eKYC provisions, which has been allowed only for banks and other regulated entities are indicative of this.
- The use of Aadhaar, further, has mainly been restricted to receiving government benefits such as the Section 7 benefits.
- It is thus difficult, legally, to find a way to permit Aadhaar-social media linking within the ambit of the Supreme Court's verdict on Aadhaar.

Other concerns:

- Cyberspace is like an ocean — endless and limitless — and we just cannot restrict it by or within any geography. There is no Indian internet as such.
- Since Aadhaar has almost all information related to our bank accounts it is better to avoid treading that path.
- Also, a social media account is a private account of a person — it necessarily does not have to be linked to a government database just for the sake of privacy.
- Linking with Aadhaar will be jeopardizing the independence and democratic rights of the person for one never knows know that data may be misused by the companies or the government of the day.

Measures needed:

- The K.S. Puttaswamy decision (2017) in the 'privacy' case is worth mentioning here.
- Accordingly, any state intervention for regulation of online content has to pass the **test of proportionality** laid down by the court.
- Supreme Court stressed the need to find a **balance between the right to online privacy and the right of the State** to detect people who use the web to spread panic and commit crimes.
- The Supreme Court also called for Parliament to draft and pass a **data protection law**
- Supreme Court also impressed upon the respondents to bring out a **robust data protection regime** in the form of an enactment on the basis of **Justice BN Srikrishna (Retd.) Committee Report with necessary modifications** thereto as may be deemed appropriate.



- The government needs to move away from relying on Aadhaar and linking as a one-stop solution for issues ranging from terrorism (SIM linking), money laundering (bank account linking), electoral fraud (voter ID linking) and now cybercrime (social media account linking).
- It is without question that a solution is required, but it is increasingly worrying as the solutions move toward deprivation of fundamental rights and the first steps towards a possible surveillance state.

Way forward:

- **Phone verification:** Most of the folks and younger generation use social media from their phones. There are already norms that every phone number needs to be verified — the need of the hour is to get them implemented more stringently on the ground.
- Another way is **KYC option** of linking social media accounts via the traditional physical verification option or through the references options.
- There is also a big need to **create awareness among the users** to stop propagating fake news and verify the news because in the long run an educated consumer of news is the best antidote to fake news.
- As a country, we must focus on **investing on research to develop the technology** to save our virtual space and not open our data for any misuse.

Discuss whether mandatory linking of Aadhaar to social media accounts violates an individual's right to privacy, and the balance between intermediary liability and free speech.(250 words)

Indianexpress

Why this question:

The article brings out a detailed discussion upon the balance between intermediary liability and free speech in the days of rising use of Internet.

Key demand of the question:

Explain the recent step taken by the government of India to frame rules to regulate social media citing unimaginable disruption to democracy and the growing menace of fake news.

Directive:

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

Structure of the answer:

Introduction:

In first explain the step being taken the GOI.

Body:

Currently, liabilities of the intermediaries on online content are governed by the Information Technology (Intermediaries Guidelines) Rules operational from April 2011.

The government now says that they recognise that rules need to be revisited and has initiated a consultation process on framing the revised guidelines.

The government aims to ramp up the regulatory regime considering the ever-growing threats to individual rights and the nation's integrity, sovereignty, and security.

Explain then the concerns raised by Social Media intermediaries.

Conclusion:

Conclude with way forward.

Introduction:



From January, the Supreme Court will hear cases seeking the linking of Aadhaar with social media profiles of individuals. It will be the first big legal battle on the right to privacy after the Supreme Court held in a landmark verdict in 2017 that privacy is a fundamental right.

Body:

Privacy Vs Security

SC says Aadhaar-social media linkage would impact privacy of citizens

Says it will have to balance the security needs of the state with the citizen's fundamental right to privacy

Court has allowed Madras HC to conclude its proceedings but restrained it from passing any final ruling

SC has issued notices to the central and the Tamil Nadu govts and a host of other bodies such as Trai



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Need for linking of Aadhar:

- To keep a check on the spread of fake news, pornographic and anti-national content, among other things.
- The government has referred to the Blue Whale game, the online suicide challenge that has reportedly claimed hundreds of deaths in countries like Russia and India.
- In the case of the Blue Whale challenge, the government found it hard to trace the originator of the online content.

Opposition to this move:

- Social media platforms like Facebook have been fighting this move to link user profiles with Aadhaar as they believe it would violate the users' privacy policy.
- Facebook has also defended itself, saying that it cannot share the 12-digit Aadhaar number on WhatsApp as it is end-to-end encrypted, even for Facebook.
- If the apex court rules in favour of Aadhaar linking with social media accounts, it would end private communications and experts believe this could also allow the government to use social media platforms as surveillance tools.

Concerns of linking social media with Aadhaar card:

- Cyberspace is like an ocean — endless and limitless — and we just cannot restrict it by or within any geography. There is no Indian internet as such.
- Since Aadhaar has almost all information related to our bank accounts it is better to avoid treading that path.



- Also, a social media account is a private account of a person — it necessarily does not have to be linked to a government database just for the sake of privacy.
- Linking with Aadhaar will be jeopardizing the independence and democratic rights of the person for one never knows know that data may be misused by the companies or the government of the day.

Measures needed:

- Phone verification: Most of the folks and younger generation use social media from their phones. There are already norms that every phone number needs to be verified — the need of the hour is to get them implemented more stringently on the ground.
- Another way is KYC option of linking social media accounts via the traditional physical verification option or through the references options.
- There is also a big need to create awareness among the users to stop propagating fake news and verify the news because in the long run an educated consumer of news is the best antidote to fake news.

Way ahead:

As a country, we must focus on investing on research to develop the technology to save our virtual space and not open our data for any misuse.

India is planning to frame rules to regulate social media citing unimaginable disruption to democracy and the growing menace of fake news. In this context discuss what are the concerns raised by Social Media intermediaries? And suggest way forward.(250 words)

The hindu

Why this question:

India plans to frame rules to regulate social media citing unimaginable disruption to democracy and the growing menace of fake news.

Key demand of the question:

Explain the concerns associated with social media intermediaries. What are the issues around it?

Directive:

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

Structure of the answer:

Introduction:

In brief narrate the context of the article.

Body:

Explain that Currently, a liability of the intermediaries on online content is governed by the Information Technology (Intermediaries Guidelines) Rules operational from April 2011.

The government now says that they recognise that rules need to be revisited and has initiated a consultation process on framing the revised guidelines.

The government aims to ramp up the regulatory regime considering the ever-growing threats to individual rights and the nation's integrity, sovereignty, and security.

Discuss the point that Social media intermediaries like Facebook and WhatsApp have argued that "seeking to trace the origin of messages" would lead to loss of individual privacy.

Conclusion:



Conclude that while the government must ensure that privacy is not compromised, Social Media companies must not take umbrage under the right to privacy.

Introduction:

The Central Government recently informed the Supreme Court that the entire process of finalising the laws on regulating social media will be completed by January 2020. The Supreme Court transferred to itself all cases pending before HCs relating to web content regulation. The petition urged the Court to transfer to itself certain petitions filed in various High Courts for linking social media accounts to Aadhaar numbers.

Body:

The Tamil Nadu government told the Supreme Court that social media profiles should be linked to users' Aadhaar number to check terrorist messages, pornography, and fake news.

Government's stance on need for rules:

- The government also informed the apex court that, in the last few years, there has been an enormous increase in the use of social media and with lower Internet tariffs, smart devices and last-mile connectivity, more and more people in India are becoming part of the Internet and social media platforms.
- While appreciative of technology for ushering in economic growth and societal development, the government also raised concerns over the exponential rise in hate speech, fake news, threat to public order, anti-national activities, defamatory postings, and other unlawful activities in these platforms.
- Internet has emerged as a potent tool to cause unimaginable disruption to the democratic polity, it was felt that the extant rules be revised for effective regulation of intermediaries keeping in view the ever growing threats to individual rights and nation's integrity, sovereignty, and security.

Concerns raised by Social media intermediaries:

- Social media intermediaries, Internet companies and privacy advocates say the new measures are a threat to free speech.
- All "intermediaries" are required to "proactively" purge their platforms of "unlawful" content or else potentially face criminal or civil liability.
- The rules also require services to make information about the senders of content and messages available to **government agencies for surveillance purposes**.
- Amending Section 79 of India's IT Act would require internet companies to take down content deemed inappropriate by authorities.
- Implementing such a measure would effectively **break the end-to-end encryption services** of platforms like Facebook-owned WhatsApp.
- Another recommendation would require internet companies to purge their platforms of "unlawful" content, although a clear definition of what that actually constitutes has yet to be decided, prompting concerns that its loose definition leaves it open to abuse.



- The regulatory provisions will turn internet companies into censors and undermine users' security.

Measures needed:

- We do need to find ways to hold social media platforms to higher standards of responsibility, and tackling harmful content on the internet is no doubt a challenging task.
- One-size-fits-all obligations for all types of online services and all types of unlawful content is arbitrary and disproportionately harms smaller players.
- Requiring services to decrypt encrypted data weakens overall security and contradicts the principles of data minimization, endorsed in MEITY's draft data protection bill.
- Disproportionate operational obligations, like mandatorily internet companies to incorporate in India, are likely to spur market exit and deter market entry for SMEs.

Conclusion:

Any conversation on additional regulation of social media brings up concerns about privacy and surveillance. Therefore, any bid at regulating expression online has to be proportional and concrete with adequate redressal mechanisms and without any blanket provisions.

India and its neighborhood- relations.

In the rising threats of water scarcity, critically analyse India's relations on river water sharing with neighboring countries.(250 words)

Economic times

Why this question:

The question seeks to examine the alarming water crisis situation in the country and significance of India's relations on river water sharing with neighboring countries amidst it.

Key demand of the question:

Discuss the importance of India's relations on river water sharing with neighboring countries amidst water crisis.

Directive:

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

Structure of the answer:

Introduction:

Start by highlighting the water crisis in the world particularly in India. Mention some facts for example India is water stress country.

Body:

Discuss the relations with all the neighboring countries individually. In this you have to focus on two things, first mention disputes and second challenges. For example with China , India being a low riparian state faces floods in NE often , Dams of china in the seismically active zones threatening stability in India etc.

Conclusion:

Conclude with way forward, suggest that Need of mutual trust and cooperation is the need of an hour, mapping of flood zone areas, sharing of data with each other etc.



Introduction:

According to a report by NITI Aayog, titled '**Water Quality Index**', India is currently ranked 120 among 122 countries. Water remains a politically contested issue in much of South Asia. The region is **facing water shortage and agrarian difficulties**, and it will continue to face **increasing demands on energy and water with rapid industrialisation**. **Over-extraction of groundwater** is of particular concern, with an estimated 23 million pumps in use across Bangladesh, India, Nepal and Pakistan. Moreover, **salinity and arsenic contamination** affects over 60% of groundwater in the Indo-Gangetic plain.

Body:

Water relations with neighbours:

- **India-China:**

- Both Brahmaputra and the glaciers that feed Ganga originate in China. As an upstream riparian region, China maintains an advantageous position and can build infrastructure to intentionally prevent water from flowing downstream.
- Owing to previous tendencies where the Chinese have been reluctant to provide details of its hydro-power projects, there is a trust deficit between the two neighbours.
- China's dam-building and water division plans along the Brahmaputra is a source of tension between the two neighbours, despite the two having signed several MoUs on strengthening communication and strategic trust.
- China has now plans to build four more dams on the Brahmaputra in Tibet. Both India and Bangladesh worry that these dams will give Beijing the ability to divert or store water in times of political crisis.

- **India-Bangladesh:**

- Sharing the waters of the Teesta river, which originates in the Himalayas and flows through Sikkim and West Bengal to merge with the Brahmaputra in Assam, is perhaps the most contentious issue between two friendly neighbours, India and Bangladesh.
- The river covers nearly the entire floodplains of Sikkim, while draining 2,800 sq km of Bangladesh, governing the lives of hundreds of thousands of people.
- For West Bengal, Teesta is equally important, considered the lifeline of half-a-dozen districts in North Bengal.
- Bangladesh has sought an "equitable" distribution of Teesta waters from India, on the lines of the Ganga Water Treaty of 1996 (an agreement to share surface waters at the Farakka Barrage near their mutual border), but to no avail.
- In 2015, Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Dhaka has generated some expectations to take forward the previous issues on fair and equitable water sharing agreement.
- But Teesta remains an unfinished project, as in India individual states have significant influence over transboundary agreements. This arrangement sometimes impedes the



policymaking process. For example, one of the key stakeholders of the Teesta agreement, West Bengal is yet to endorse the deal.

- **India–Nepal:**

- Water cooperation between Nepal and India have been agreements signed on major rivers like Kosi, Gandaki, Karnali or Mahakali, essentially for large hydroelectric and irrigation projects by building dams or barrages.
- No project except the Kosi barrage has been completed yet. Smaller rivers have also been ignored.
- There have been various disputes over this agreement fuelled by floods in the Kosi region.
- India and Nepal have also had disputes over the issue of compensation of the Kosi dam.
- Moreover, Nepal had considered India's construction as an encroachment on Nepal's territorial sovereignty.

- **India–Pakistan:**

- Both India and Pakistan since partition have experienced friction over various water conflicts.
- The countries early leaders anticipated this fierce rivalry over the waters that connect their volatile border.
- As a result, after numerous dialogues and through careful negotiations, both countries signed an accord called the Indus Waters Treaty in 1960, which clearly determined how the region's rivers are to be divided.
- In this treaty, control over three eastern rivers of the Beas, Ravi and Sutlej was given to India, while Pakistan got the control over western rivers of the Indus, Chenab and Jhelum.
- In 2005, Pakistan challenged India's 450 MW Baglihar dam project on the Chenab river before the World Bank, but lost the case in the end.
- In 2011, both countries went head to head again at the International Court of Arbitration (ICA) over India's 330 MW project in Kishanganga project in Jammu and Kashmir.
- The latest dispute is over hydroelectric projects that India is building along the Chenab River. According to Pakistan, these projects violate the treaty and will impact its water supply.

- **India–Bhutan:**

- India and Bhutan hydro-electric power cooperation started more than five decades ago.
- Initially, the cooperation was based on the development of small-scale hydro projects such as Tala, Chukha and Kurichu.



- Bhutan has the potential to generate 30,000 MW of hydro-power.
- In 2006, both countries inked a Power Purchase Agreement for thirty five years that would allow India to generate and import 5000 MW of hydro-power from Bhutan, the quantum of which increased to 10,000 MW in 2008.
- On the other hand, the people of Bhutan raised objections to such projects on their long run effects in the country.

Way forward:

Near-term hydro diplomacy in south Asia could start with less sensitive areas like

- managing flooding by sharing forecasting data
- collaborating on navigation, electricity generation, and water quality
- Through some critical debates on these agreements and by the active participation of regional organization and mutual understanding among shareholders.

Conclusion:

Water politics has far-reaching consequences for the prosperity and security of countries. While this transboundary issue is integral to the national development policies of these countries, it needs better analysis and understanding on the part of the countries involved. The water disputes in South Asian subcontinent deal with the complex orientation of the rivers of the region that cut across some countries in the region complemented by a tense and uncompromising geo-political situation amongst the fellow riparian countries brings out the strategic role played by water in the region.

Confusion with respect to manner of deportation of those left out of the NRC exercise could cast a shadow over the “best of the best” of ties between India and Bangladesh. In such a situation analyse areas of bilateral relations that need attention? (250 words)

The hindu

Why this question:

Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina was on a four-day India visit, the first full bilateral meeting since both countries went to polls, marking a new chapter between New Delhi and Dhaka.

Key demand of the question:

One has to throw light on the current Indo-Bangladesh relations – key areas of operation and areas that need attention.

Directive:

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

Structure of the answer:

Introduction:

In brief explain the recent relations shared between the country and the historical past that the two countries share.

Body:

First explain the recent meeting of the two prime ministers – Modi and Ms. Hasina inaugurated three projects. The projects include import LPG from Bangladesh, inauguration of the Vivekananda Bhavan at Ram Krishna Mission in Dhaka and inauguration of Bangladesh-India professional skill development Institute at the Institute of Engineers in Khulna.

Discuss the areas of cooperation between the two countries.



Explain the areas of concern such as – Growing concerns in Bangladesh over the National Register of Citizens (NRC) in Assam are another source of tensions.

Conclusion:

Conclude that India-Bangladesh border is one of India's most secured. Relations between the two countries have reached a stage of maturity. Bilateral ties can be expected to grow stronger in the future. It is for India to take the lead to remove these irritants.

Introduction:

India's links with Bangladesh are civilisational, cultural, social and economic. India and Bangladesh today enjoy one of the best periods of their relationship, with positive development in the areas of diplomatic, political, economic and security relations. The National Register of Citizens, a Supreme-Court driven exercise, threatens to disturb the equilibrium in India-Bangladesh ties.

Body:

Frequent meetings between neighbours are hallmarks of a strong friendship, and Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's four-day India visit, the first full bilateral meeting since both countries went to polls, marks a new chapter between New Delhi and Dhaka. The ties exhibit an improvement in the strategic sphere, and alignment on regional and global issues, connectivity and trade.

Major Developments in recent years:

- The **India-Bangladesh Land Boundary Agreement (LBA)** came into force following the exchange of instruments of ratification in June 2015.
- A number of security related agreements (Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters; Transfer of Sentenced Prisoners, Combating International Terrorism, organized Crime and Illicit drug trafficking, MoUs on Prevention of Circulation of Fake Currency Notes and Prevention of Human Trafficking and Extradition Treaty) have been signed between both the countries and working groups have been constituted to curb illegal activities in the border areas.
- Though **bilateral trade was just over \$9 bn** in FY 2017-18, but the pertinent point is, Bangladeshi exports to India increased by 43%, reaching \$1.25 bn in FY 2018-19 and this was made possible because of removal of non-tariff barriers.
- Bangladeshi tourists accounted for 6% of the total percentage of tourists visiting India in 2018. Today, Bangladesh accounts for 50% of India's health tourism revenue
- In 2018, in addition to the 660 MW of power already imported by Bangladesh, Indian export of electricity increased by another 500 MW.
- A 1,600 MW power station with a dedicated transmission system is being developed to boost power trade.
- Train services in Dhaka-Kolkata and Kolkata-Khulna are doing well, the third one, Agartala-Akhaura route, is under construction. Five additional bus services were introduced in 2018. Recently, the first ever Dhaka-Kolkata cruise ship was launched.
- Bangladesh has facilitated connectivity with the Northeast by allowing the use of Chittagong and Mongla ports.

**The concerns of NRC and implication on Indo-Bangla ties:**

- The NRC compilation exercise has sparked a debate around its political, economic and humanitarian consequences.
- The government maintains that the NRC is an administrative task overseen by the Supreme Court, and not a political one.
- However, some members of the ruling party have been making hateful anti-migration and anti-Bangladeshi comments.
- This reflects poorly on the prevalent positive relationship between Bangladesh and India.
- **National Register of Citizens** has left out 1.9 million people in Assam and they are being labelled as illegal immigrants from Bangladesh.
- **India's** strong stance that she will deport all non-citizens has time and again cast strain on the bilateral ties.
- But Bangladesh is firm in its stance that no migrants travelled to Assam illegally during the 1971 war of independence and NRC may risk the relations.
- The divergence in the two sets of statements proffered by New Delhi will ensure the issue gets raised again and again by Dhaka, and could cast a shadow over what one Bangladesh official otherwise described as the “best of the best” of ties between two neighbours.

Along with the NRC, the following issues remain unresolved, being irritants in the relationship –

- the Teesta water-sharing issue
- non-tariff barriers on Bangladeshi exports
- border killings

Measures needed:

- Expelling illegal immigrants to Bangladesh is not an option since Dhaka has never accepted that they are its citizens or that there is a problem of illegal immigration. In the absence of a formal agreement, India cannot forcibly push the illegal migrants back into Bangladesh.
- Such an attempt would not only damage bilateral relations but also sully the country's image internationally.
- Apart from deportation, the other option is large scale detention camps – which is an unlikely option for a civilised democracy like India.
- Another option is instituting work permits, which would give them limited legal rights to work but ensure they have no political voice. However, it is not clear what will be the fate of children of such individuals.
- With no end to uncertainty, NRC seems to be a process without an end.

Way forward:

- India-Bangladesh border is one of India's most secured.



- Bangladesh-India relations have reached a stage of maturity. Bilateral ties can be expected to grow stronger in the future. It is for India to take the lead to remove these irritants.
- Both countries must reach consensus on the issues like NRC, Rohingya and Teesta rivers.
- The need of the hour is that Union Government should clearly chart out the course of action regarding the fate of excluded people from final NRC data and political parties should refrain from colouring the entire NRC process through electoral prospects that may snowball into communal violence.
- There is a need for a robust mechanism of legal support for the four million who have to prove their citizenship to India with their limited means.
- Greater involvement of people and wider public debate on foreign policy issues will discourage conspiracy theories and distrust.
- A greater level of people-to-people contact should be encouraged.
- Fencing needs to be completed speedily and monitored effectively. This would create misgivings but also ensure that Bangladesh knows that India means business. The state governments and the Indian border forces seem receptive to such an idea

Experts and analysts agree that it is a good idea to make Informal Summits such as Wuhan as a regular feature of diplomatic exchanges between India and other countries. Discuss the impact of such meets highlighting importance.(250 words)

Indianexpress

Introduction:

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping met for an ‘informal summit’ at Wuhan in 2018, the two sides agreed on steps to reset bilateral relations derailed by the Doklam crisis. The process of rapprochement apparently set in motion at this summit, which came to be described as the ‘**Wuhan spirit**’, was expected to guide their relations. At the Wuhan Summit, a decision was made to hold more such summits, aimed at ensuring “higher levels of strategic communications.” The second informal summit between the leaders of India and China is scheduled to take place in the second week of October in Mamallapuram in India.

Body:

Importance of informal summits:

- Informal Summits act as supplementary exchanges to annual Summits and other formal exchanges such as the G20 Summit, EU-India Summit and the BRICS Summit among others, and allow for “direct, free and candid exchange of views” between countries.
- They help in something that may not be possible to do through formal bilateral and multilateral meetings that are agenda driven, where specific issues are discussed, and outcomes are more concretely defined.
- Informal Summits may not take place on a fixed annual or biennial schedule; they are impromptu in the sense that they take place when a need for them is perceived by the concerned nations.



- For instance, the intergovernmental organisation ASEAN held four Informal Summits in the years 1996, 1997, 1999, and 2000. And in November 2018, Prime Minister Narendra Modi attended the ASEAN-India Informal Breakfast Summit in Singapore.
- Informal Summits allow discussion on wide-ranging issues, they are not particularly purpose-specific, and are sometimes considered to play bigger roles in diplomatic dialogue than formal exchanges.
- They tend to be more in-depth, and relatively flexible in intent and the scope of discussion.
- For instance, in Wuhan, Prime Minister Modi and President Xi discussed a range of subjects, including the India-China boundary question, bilateral trade and investment, terrorism, economic development and global peace, and reached a “broad consensus”.

Impacts of informal summits:

- It emphasises the need to carry out “in-depth practical cooperation”.
- It helps promote people and cultural exchanges “in a more mature manner”.
- **Readjustment:** The Wuhan Summit achieved a “re-set” of the Sino-Indian relationship after the two-month long border standoff at the India-China-Bhutan trijunction in Doklam.
- **Confidence building measures:** Significantly, at Wuhan, the two leaders decided to give “strategic guidance” to their military, so that issues did not escalate as in the case of the Doklam standoff.
- **Reset of old blocking points:** Informal summits provide an opportunity to “push forward the realisation of better and faster development of bilateral relations at a new starting point”.
- The “institutionalisation” of such Summits would help in strengthening the “strategic communication” between the countries, irrespective of the political party in power.
- The Bishkek meeting was preceded by one in Qingdao (2018), where India and China signed two bilateral agreements, enabling China to release hydrological data to India, which are crucial to preventing flooding in the Northeast.

Conclusion:

Japan and Russia are the only two countries with which India has annual Summits at present. The informal summits strengthen the “Closer Developmental Partnership” and is an indication of greater understanding between the two nations.

Discuss how the border dispute with China is posing a major test to the India-China bilateral relations. List down the efforts taken by both countries in this regard and their consequences.(250 words)

The hindu

Why this question:

Recurrent conflicts between India and China at the border have brought to light the existing Border dispute between India and China. The failure of the two nations to resolve the issue has had a profound impact on the bilateral relations and the article discusses the need for a more balanced approach.

Key demand of the question:



Answer must explain the context, issues involved, the background and the causes for fallout while suggesting way ahead to tackle the scenario.

Directive:

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

Structure of the answer:**Introduction:**

In brief state the scenario between the two countries.

Body:

Explain first the background on India-China border issues.

Explain the associated fallouts between the two in the past.

Discuss in detail the Agreements and initiatives to resolve border disputes.

Suggest what should be the position of both the countries on border disputes.

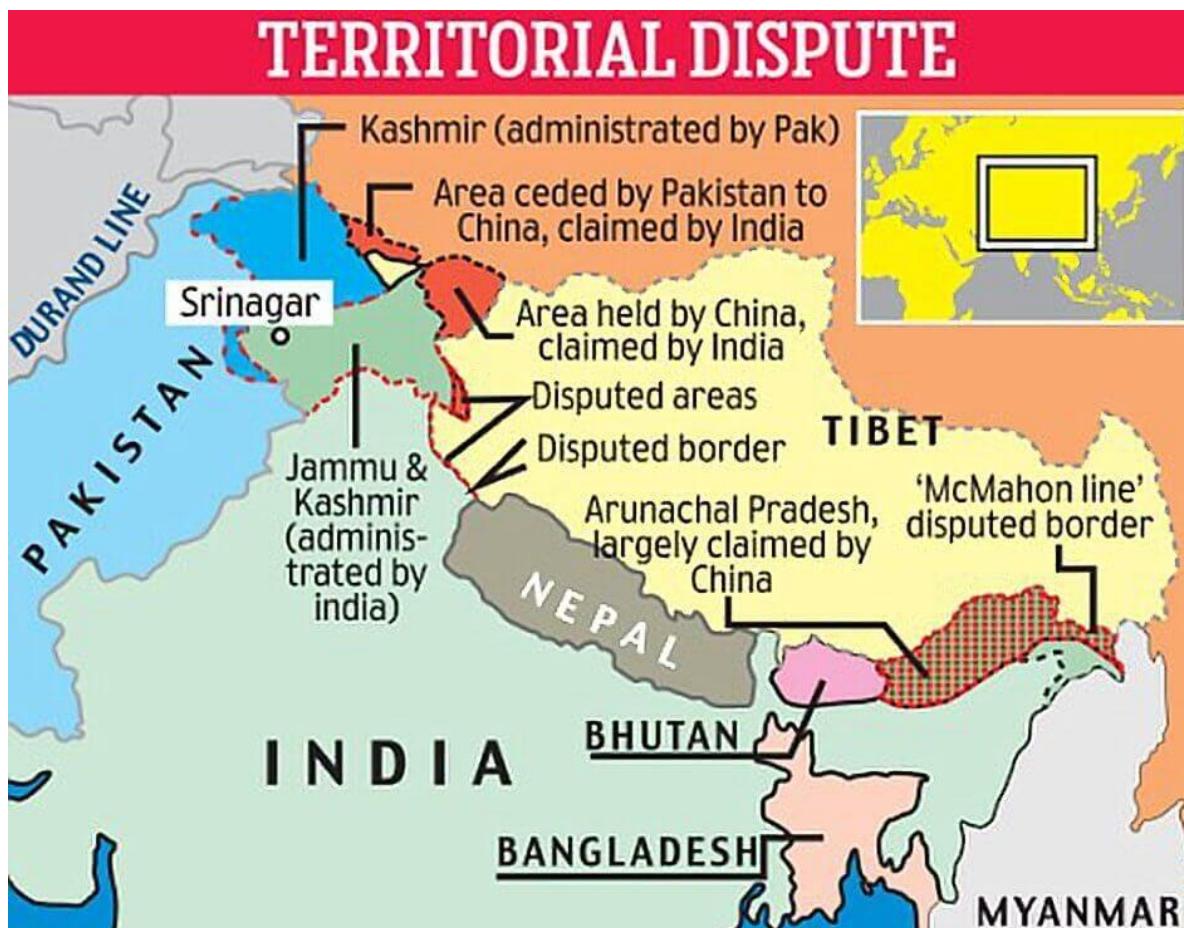
Conclusion:

Conclude with way forward.

Introduction:

The border between India and China is not clearly demarcated throughout. Along certain stretches of its 3,488-km length, there is **no mutually agreed Line of Actual Control (LAC)**. India, following Independence, believed it had inherited firm boundaries from the British, but this was contrary to China's view. China felt the British had left behind a disputed legacy on the boundary between the two newly formed republics.

Body:



The commonly referred “border dispute” between India and China manifests itself in two distinct and separate areas of contention.

The India-China border is divided into three sectors, viz. **Western, Middle and Eastern**.

- **Western Sector:** The boundary dispute here pertains to the Johnson Line proposed by the British in the 1860s that extended up to the Kunlun Mountains and put Aksai Chin in the then princely state of Jammu and Kashmir. Independent India used the Johnson Line and claimed Aksai Chin as its own. China initially did not demur when India said so in the early 1950s; however, in the years that followed it reversed its position and stated that it had never acceded to the Johnson Line and therefore did not see why it should cede Aksai Chin to India.
- **Middle Sector:** Here the dispute is a minor one. It is the only one where India and China have exchanged maps on which they broadly agree.
- **Eastern Sector:** The disputed boundary here in the of the India-China border is over the MacMahon Line. Representatives of China, India and Tibet in 1913-14 met in Shimla, where an agreement was proposed to settle the boundary between Tibet and India, and Tibet and China. Though the Chinese representatives at the meeting initialled the agreement, they subsequently refused to accept it. The Tawang tract claimed by China was taken over by India in 1951. Till the 1960s, China controlled Aksai Chin in the West while India controlled the boundary up to the McMahon Line in the East.



- **India-China-Bhutan tri junction (Doklam):** Though the border dispute aggravated many times between China & India, it is different now because, the disputed area i.e Doklam belongs to Bhutan and Indian troops are defending it because of our relations with Bhutan. The region is very close to Siliguri pass or Chicken neck which connects North East – India with mainland India. This region also hosts thousands of Tibetan refugees.

Nearly six decades have passed since then, but the border issue remains unresolved. It has turned into one of the most protracted border disputes in the world. Since 1981, when the first round of border talks was held, officials from India and China have met a number of times to find a solution to the issue.

Measures undertaken:

- **Shimla agreement of 1914:** To demarcate the boundary between Tibet and North East India, a convention was held at Shimla in 1914, representatives of all three i.e. Tibet, China and British India. After the discussion, the agreement was signed by British India and Tibet but not by the Chinese officials. Presently India recognises the Mc-mahon line, as agreed by the Shimla convention, as the legal boundary between India and China. However, China rejects the Shimla agreement and the Mc-mahon line, contending that Tibet was not a sovereign state and therefore did not have the power to conclude treaties.
- **Panchsheel Agreement of 1954:** The Panchsheel doctrine clearly indicated the willingness to ‘Respect each other’s sovereignty and territorial integrity’. Although we have come a long way since, from 1962 war to the cold peace era of 1962-1989, to the revived tensions of the present, the intent of the doctrine was well directed. It must have acted as a safeguard against any such disputes arising at the first place.
- The two countries are also engaged in **Confidence Building Measures (CBMs)** on the border with bilateral agreements signed in 1993, 1996, 2005, 2012 and 2013.
- By the beginning of the 21st century, the two sides had agreed not to let the border dispute affect bilateral engagements.
- This was inked into the Agreement on Political Parameters and Guiding Principles for the Settlement of the India-China Boundary Question signed in 2005.
- During Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee’s visit to China in 2003, the two sides agreed on the appointment of special representatives for consultations aimed at arriving at a framework for a boundary settlement that would provide the basis for the delineation and demarcation of the border.

Way forward:

- Need for a renewed effort to resolve the boundary dispute to maintain peace and tranquillity in border areas.
- India and China should “reinforce communication and coordination in international affairs and make the international order more just and equitable”.
- Maintain regular contact and advance the development of bilateral relations in all areas.
- Seeking mutually acceptable resolutions on the differences with due respect for each other’s sensitivities, concerns and aspirations



- Need to respect each other's Sovereignty and sincere adherence to Panchsheel (Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence).

Conclusion:

A strong India-China relationship is important not only for the mutual benefit of the people of India and China, but also for the region and the world.

Critically present a detailed analysis of India's One-China policy.(250 words)

Hindustantimes

Why this question:

The article discusses in detail the India's policy of one-China policy and in what way It can't validate its claim over Arunachal Pradesh without recognising the historical independence of Tibet.

Key demand of the question:

One has to provide for an in-depth discussion of India's one- China policy.

Directive:

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

Structure of the answer:

Introduction:

In brief define one-child policy.

Body:

Explain first how Indian nationalism is often stumped when China claims Arunachal Pradesh as part of "South Tibet".

Explain the historical context of these aspects. Take hints from the article and present in detail the analysis of the India's one-China policy.

Conclusion:

Conclude with way forward.

Introduction:

The **One-China policy** refers to the policy or view that there is only one state called "China", despite the existence of two governments that claim to be "China". As a policy, this means that countries seeking diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China (PRC, Mainland China) must break official relations with the Republic of China (ROC, Taiwan) and vice versa. The One China policy is different from the "**One China principle**", which is the principle that insists both Taiwan and mainland China are inalienable parts of a single "China".

Body:



Significance of Taiwan for India:

- India-Taiwan relations are significant to India's security interests.
- Taiwan is known for hardware manufacturing while India has an established software industry; some even refer 'India and Taiwan' as IT to indicate the fact that both countries complement each other.
- Taiwan has for long been a world leader in high-tech hardware manufacturing, and is able to contribute much to the "Make in India", "Digital India" and "Smart Cities" campaigns. Apparently, India is yet to explore Taiwan's vast technological potential.
- Taiwan's agro-technology and food processing technology will also be very beneficial for India's agriculture sector.

Challenges:

- Constrained by its commitment to Beijing's "One China" policy, New Delhi finds it difficult to realise the potential of its bilateral relationship with Taiwan.
- Despite the fact that the economic interests of the two nations dovetail well, the economic exchange is still relatively insignificant. Taiwan's share of trade with India is around one per cent of its global trade.
- Taiwanese direct investment into India totalled \$66.46 million between 2004 and 2014, far less than its investment in most of the Southeast countries. Over the past decade, Taiwanese firms have invested more in China, Vietnam, Thailand, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Cambodia than India.
- India is a democracy and only has to deal with the Kashmir issue. But China is facing resistance movements in Tibet, East Turkestan (Xinjiang) and Southern Mongolia.



- The five-month revolt in Hong Kong is also hugely significant for it shows the limits of Chinese power, and may be inspiring citizens inside China. Taiwan too remains a concern for Beijing.
- This makes Delhi's One-China policy absolutely lopsided in terms of diplomacy.
- India has to remain silent on 60% of contested area under China's territorial control, and also its rule over Hong Kong and claims over Taiwan, while China has to stand with India only on Kashmir.

Measures needed:

- On the strategic security front, both India and Taiwan have serious and deep concerns about China's growing assertiveness in the region. The China factor can become a medium to bring the strategic communities in New Delhi and Taipei closer.
- It is not to say that India and Taiwan should forge a military alliance against China, which is too proactive and unrealistic. Taiwan does not expect India to be some kind of a military ally but believes that India's presence in the region will provide some sort of balance. Regular information exchange between the militaries and the intelligence agencies of Taiwan and India would benefit both.
- India should deploy its military attaché to its office in Taipei as part of plans to strengthen defence cooperation.
- More interactions and collaboration between strategic studies communities are needed.
- For many years Taiwan has been focusing on China's market and has now attempted to diversify its investments away from China.
- Equipped with Taiwan's technology and experiences, India can modernise its capacity as nearly 40 per cent of its fruits and vegetables go waste after harvesting. Such collaboration could seriously change the landscape of India's rural areas and agriculture.
- India has abundant natural bamboo resources while Taiwan owns the world-class bamboo charcoal technology. With this sort of technology, India can make use of its bamboo resources to produce high value-added goods.
- Both sides need to work out plans to pep up trade volume and increase economic cooperation between the two nations so as to take advantage of the joint strength.
- India's cultural diplomacy can bring rationality to India-Taiwan relations. There is religious intimacy between the two societies as most Taiwanese are Buddhists.
- Both countries are free democracies with a strong civil society. Though few Taiwanese know India very well, there are an increasing number of India-related elements in Taiwan, ranging from Tagore's poetry and Darjeeling tea to herbal soaps.
- In the absence of formal diplomatic relations, there is also a need to conduct friendly sister-city activities to promote engagement and mutual understanding.
- Another obvious area of cooperation with Taiwan is educational exchange. Taiwan is host to 160 accredited universities that accept hundreds of thousands of international students every year. Degrees earned in Taiwan are recognised worldwide.



Way forward:

- It is understandable that Taiwan is not the priority of India's foreign policy as the present government is interested in big power diplomacy. But India should not neglect Taiwan at the cost of its national interests.
- Even as India launches its "Act East" policy and ambitious initiatives such as "Make in India", it is time to highlight the importance of Taiwan for an emerging India and bring the India-Taiwan relationship into focus.
- As India becomes more and more important in Taiwan's policy, it is time for Indian policy makers to review India's Taiwan policy and fashion a new approach.
- Greater cooperation between India and Taiwan could prove critical in helping New Delhi and Taipei achieve their economic goals at home and their strategic aims in the region.
- It is time to acknowledge the importance of India-Taiwan relations. India should consider its own interests not the third party's ones, when it thinks of developing relations with Taiwan or other countries.

Bilateral, regional and global groupings and agreements involving India and/or affecting India's interests.

Technological and climatic trends could see the Arctic region emerge as a hotspot of great power competition in the times ahead. Elaborate. (250 words)

Financial express

Why this question:

US President Donald Trump's recent offer to buy Greenland appeared to come out of the blue. It is, however, indicative of the emerging geopolitics of the Arctic region, where climate change and China are fast destabilizing the status quo, throwing up political, security, legal, and environmental challenges.

Key demand of the question:

The question expects us to bring out the significance of Arctic region as hotspot of global power centre in terms of resources that it has to offer owing to the technological and climatic trends it is witnessing currently.

Directive:

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

Structure of the answer:

Introduction:

In brief start by explaining – India's footprint in the Arctic oil and gas sector is increasing with Indian state-run companies investing \$5 billion in various oil projects in the Russian far-east.

Body:

Explain the significance of Arctic region.

Oil and natural gas are particularly important for the energy hungry Asia-Pacific region. With the Arctic opening up for exploration, drilling in inaccessible and remote areas seem promising.

Discuss the issues underlining arctic politics.

Throw light upon India's position amidst these issues.

Conclusion:

Conclude with way forward.

Introduction:



It has been long believed that the Arctic sea comprises one of the largest oil reserves. However, the extreme cold and unfavourable conditions had prevented any concrete exploration plans. A USGS (United States Geological Survey) brought out an estimate that the Arctic might contain 30% of the world's undiscovered Natural gas reserves and 13% oil reserves.

Body:**Impact of technological and climate trends on Arctic oil exploration:**

- Rising global temperature is melting Arctic sea ice, making a piece of the planet accessible for the first time in living memory.
- Due to increased ice melt (due to global warming) this region has become accessible arousing economic interest rather than alarm over the ice melt.
- the vanishing ice also opens up two new faster shipping routes that sharply reduce the distance between Western countries and Asia by connecting the Pacific and Atlantic oceans.
- Shipping companies have already built 500 ice-class ships, suitable for the Arctic region. More are under construction.
- Cargo liners herald the intense competition to grab the abundance of natural resources that lie under the melting sea ice.
- There is a substantial increase in drilling activities in the current decade with the melting of the summer ice in the region.
- Countries with direct access to the Arctic Ocean—USA, Canada, Greenland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia and those further away, such as China and India, are likely to exert a significant influence in the drilling for Arctic oil and gas.
- Norway have deep water rig sites set up in the Arctic to extract gas.
- Russia owns nearly 80% of the oil and gas under the Arctic shelf. Russia's two biggest hydrocarbon companies—Rosneft and Gazprom. The former holds monopoly over Russia's oil and has the expertise to drill for off-shore oil, while Gazprom, Russia's gas monopoly largely handles land-based projects.

India and the Arctic:

- India's footprint in the Arctic oil and gas sector is increasing with Indian state-run companies investing \$5 billion in various oil projects in the Russian far-east.
- On September 17, 2019 in a new development, a consortium of oil companies in India— IndianOil, ONGC Videsh, Bharat Petro Resources entered into a preliminary agreement for a stake, with Rosneft, in the Vostok and Eastern Cluster oil projects in the Arctic region.
- India plans to import oil through a new sea route that would connect Vladivostok with Chennai.
- For India, which is still substantially coal-driven, dependency on oil and gas shall remain for the next few years, making the Arctic a necessity to make India energy secure.

Challenges:



- Arctic oil and gas exploration is ridden with challenges ranging from technological hurdles in the freezing environment, to shifts in policy regimes and environmental concerns that overrule industry needs in many nations.
- The Arctic's vast reservoirs of fossil fuel, fish and minerals, including rare earth materials, are now accessible for a longer period.
- But unlike Antarctica, which is protected from exploitation by the Antarctic Treaty framed during the Cold War and is not subject to territorial claims by any country,
- There is no legal regime protecting the Arctic from industrialisation, especially at a time when the world craves for more and more resources

Conclusion:

Several estimates point towards a plateau in global demand by 2023, keeping in mind huge investments in renewable energy. Nations while indulging in the Arctic rush shall do well to remember the basic law of ecology that one cannot change one thing in nature and that everything is connected with everything else.

Establishment of strong rapport with West Asian Kingdoms could safeguard India's oil and gas assets against threats from Pakistan. Elucidate.(250 words)

Indianexpress

Why this question:

The article describes that Pakistan is heavily in debt to Saudi Arabia and it depends hugely on the kingdom's largesse to avoid economic collapse. Saudi Arabia has consequently considerable leverage over Pakistan and the latter in turn cannot afford to ignore Saudi economic interests when war gaming an offensive strategy against India.

Key demand of the question:

One has to emphasize on the fact that its time for India to deepen its economic linkages with Saudi Arabia through interlocking cross country investments.

Directive:

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

Structure of the answer:

Introduction:

In brief narrate the context of the question.

Body:

Discussion should talk about the dependency of Pakistan on Saudi Arabia for oil and natural gas. Explain why India should encourage cross country investments with Saudi Arabia. What should be India's role in establishing relations with the oil countries in such a context?

Conclusion:

Conclude with way forward.

Introduction:

India and Saudi Arabia enjoy cordial and friendly relations reflecting the centuries old economic and socio-cultural ties. Close geographical proximity, civilizational links, cultural affinity, natural synergies, vibrant people to people contacts. Common challenges and opportunities have added momentum to this robust engagement.

Body:

**Importance of Saudi Arabia for India:**

- The **Delhi Declaration** signed during King Abdullah's visit in 2006 called for a closer economic engagement and energy partnership.
- The two sides re-affirmed their deep commitment to strengthen the 'strategic partnership' envisaged in the 'Riyadh Declaration' in 2010.
- Saudi Arabia is India's fourth largest trade partner after China, US and UAE. It is a major source of India's energy security requirement that counts for almost 1/5th of India's crude oil requirement.
- Saudi Arabia is one of **India's top supplier of crude oil**.
- India imports 80 per cent of the oil it consumes, which means there are multiple ways in which the country will be impacted by this disruption.
- India is already trying to make up for the loss of supply from Iran after US-imposed sanctions. After Iraq, Saudi Arabia is India's second-largest supplier of crude oil — it accounts for almost 17 per cent of the country's imports.
- Although Saudi Arabia has assured that there will be no loss of supply, if the process of restoration takes more time than anticipated, India would have to look for alternatives.
- Saudi Aramco is set to partner with the Abu Dhabi National Oil Company in developing an integrated refinery and petrochemicals complex at Ratnagiri in Maharashtra, a \$44 billion joint venture with Indian public sector involvement. This project is currently stalled because of land acquisition and environmental clearance.
- The investment by Saudi Aramco in Reliance Industries. The commercial logic for Aramco is compelling. It would secure a captive outlet for 5,00,000 barrels of crude oil a day and a foothold in India's downstream market.
- Saudi Arabia has investment in India's national investment and infrastructure fund.

However, **Saudi's' close ties with Pakistan** due to common religious beliefs makes India walk a tightrope.

- India maintains neutrality because Saudi Arabia has close military and strategic ties with Pakistan which is often a source of continuing strain for India.
- Pakistan is far too important to Saudi Arabia for internal security reasons for Riyadh to sacrifice its stake in Islamabad in order to appease New Delhi.
- The Pakistan Army has more than once acted as the Saudi ruler's praetorian (security body guards) guard and given the uncertain hold of MBS on his country, and also MBS may need the services of Pakistani mercenaries in the near future.
- Pakistan on its part perceives MBS as a valuable interlocutor on its behalf with the U.S. because of his excellent rapport with U.S. President Donald Trump.
- Islamabad deems this essential in light of the recent strains in U.S.-Pakistani relations over Pakistan's support to terrorist groups.



- Saudi economic largesse matters greatly to Pakistan, which is in dire economic straits and has been forced to turn to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for loans that are bound to come with strict conditionalities.
- Over and above the \$6 billion already promised by Saudi Arabia, MBS has promised a further \$20 billion in Saudi investment in Pakistan.
- A large part is earmarked for investment in the construction of an oil refinery in Gwadar on the Makran coast, which is being developed as a strategic port by China and features prominently in the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) plan.

Strategic potential of closer India-West Asian kingdoms:

- Pakistan is heavily in debt to Saudi Arabia and it depends hugely on the kingdom's largesse to avoid economic collapse.
- Saudi Arabia has consequently considerable leverage over Pakistan and the latter in turn cannot afford to ignore Saudi economic interests when war gaming an offensive strategy against India.
- If the Saudis invested in India oil and gas assets, it might deter Pakistan from bringing these assets into their strategic calculus.
- Saudi Arabia said, it would share intelligence with India and other countries, that were willing to fight terrorism.
- Joint Statement urged for the early adoption of UN Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism
- Both the sides resolved to create comprehensive security dialogue consisting of National Security Advisors. There would a Joint Working Group on counter terrorism.

Way Forward:

- India should take advantage of any benefit that accrues from India's economic relations with Saudi Arabia but should not pin much hope on Riyadh in the political-strategic sphere.
- Saudi Arabia is transforming and that the opportunities for partnership and growth are unlimited. Saudi Arabia is a G-20 economy that is opening up to foreign investors at an unprecedented rate.
- Vision 2030 of Saudi Arabia has created a roadmap for social and economic transformation and enabling the private sector is at the heart of it. India can reap this opportunity.
- Maintaining a close relationship with the Arab world without disrupting the relationship with Iran, and refraining from getting politically involved in any conflict in the region, could be seen as continuity in terms of India's engagement with the Middle East

What is Wuhan Spirit? Provide for detailed analysis of the effects of first Wuhan Summit on Indo-China relations.(250 words)

Indiatoday

Why this question:

The question is in the backdrop of the informal summit that is to be held between India and China.

Key demand of the question:



The answer must discuss the Wuhan Spirit and analyse the effects of it on Indo- China relations.

Directive:

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

Structure of the answer:

Introduction:

In brief discuss What happened in the Wuhan Informal Summit?

Body:

In brief, discuss the context by emphasizing on informal Wuhan Summit and Mamallapuram summit.

Explain what is Wuhan Summit – Focuses on the opportunities, the countries have, to ensure a ‘higher level strategic communications’ between the two nations.

Discuss the challenges both countries facing to have a better outcome at the Mamallapuram summit.

Suggest measures to strengthen trust between the two countries.

Conclusion:

Conclude with implications of such meetings.

Introduction:

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping met for an ‘informal summit’ at Wuhan in 2018, the two sides agreed on steps to reset bilateral relations derailed by the Doklam crisis. The process of rapprochement apparently set in motion at this summit, which came to be described as the ‘**Wuhan spirit**’, was expected to guide their relations. At the Wuhan Summit, a decision was made to hold more such summits, aimed at ensuring “higher levels of strategic communications.” The second informal summit between the leaders of India and China is scheduled to take place in the second week of October in Mamallapuram in India.

Body:

Wuhan Spirit is in line with the five principles of peaceful coexistence (Panchsheel) jointly advocated by China and India in the 1950s. Under Wuhan Spirit, the following are present:

- Both countries agreed that they form the “backbone” of economic globalisation, and they should jointly make positive contributions to global peace and development.
- The two nations have agreed to cooperate, for the first time ever, on a joint project in Afghanistan.
- China has indicated that India’s refusal to join the Belt and Road Initiative will not come in the way of economic cooperation.

Effects of Wuhan Summit on Indo-China relations:

Positives:

- The trade wars between US and China has helped India leverage stronger ties with USA and China bilaterally.
- China’s Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) which India has constantly said no to, has also come under increasing attack, due to debt trap diplomacy.
- While in 2018, the China-Russia axis appeared to be a new strategic alignment, which has been reset to some extent by India.
- India’s relations with Russia have acquired a fresh dimension, incorporating economics alongside a longstanding military relationship.



- India's line of credit to develop Russia's Far East has fundamentally changed the nature of India-Russia relations.
- A new triangular relationship of Russia, India and Japan, appears to be altering equations in the East Asian region.

Shortcomings:

- Despite Wuhan summit starting off with much flair, however, little has changed as far as India-China relations are concerned.
- Doklam and the disputed border between the two countries remains an issue of concern.
- In spite of cooperation in Afghanistan, the China-Pakistan axis has sought to sideline India from Afghanistan peace process.
- China is also wary of India's efforts in Ladakh and Arunachal Pradesh.
- China's willingness to block any concrete action against Pakistan, its "all-weather friend", for supporting terrorism has constituted one of the most pressing obstacles in having smooth relations between New Delhi and Beijing.
- Pakistan's historically close relationship with China has deepened in recent years, particularly after the inauguration of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), which is an important component of China's geo-economic and geopolitical Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).

India's military exercises and impact on Wuhan Spirit:

- India plans of "all arms integrated" exercise 'codenamed Changthang Prahar (assault)' in a "super high altitude" in Ladakh should be pursued
- The reopening of the Advanced Landing Ground at Vijoynagar in Arunachal Pradesh for the use of military aircraft.
- The proposed major combat exercise in Arunachal Pradesh, in which the new Integrated Battle Groups will be seen in operation.

Conclusion:

It has been said that this century is **Asia's century**, so in the light of this perception, both countries need to focus their energies more on domestic socio-economic development rather than frittering it away militarily. Hopes raised at the Wuhan Summit that the two countries would jointly work together on an economic project in Afghanistan have proved to be evanescent. With preparations and proper handling, the forthcoming meet could, on the other hand, provide India's leaders with a realistic estimate as to where India-China relations are headed.

"Vanilla Islands can act as a gateway to strategic space for Delhi in south western Indian Ocean". Elucidate. (250 words)

[Indianexpress](#)

Why this question:

The article discusses in what way Vice-President Naidu's visit to the Indian Ocean islands could be a moment for Delhi to launch economic, defence cooperation with the littoral.

**Key demand of the question:**

One has to explain that for India to be effective in the south western Indian Ocean, Delhi must begin to treat the Vanilla Islands as a single strategic space.

Directive:

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

Structure of the answer:**Introduction:**

In brief discuss what constitutes Vanilla Islands.

Body:

Explain the following dimensions in your answer:

Discuss first the significance of New frontiers – Vanilla Islands:

India is devoting greater attention to the Indian Ocean. Many places that have long fallen off Delhi's political radar are coming into view.

A group of Exotic Island states in the South Western Indian Ocean — The Comoros, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mayotte, Reunion, Seychelles — joined hands to promote tourism.

Many of them grow vanilla and so they call themselves after it.

Vice president is the first senior figure from the Indian leadership to visit the Comoros.

Then discuss the significance of these islands to India and trace the historical ties and pasts. Discuss the current importance.

Conclusion:

Conclude with way forward for India in the current scenario.

Introduction:

A group of exotic island states in the South Western Indian Ocean — **The Comoros, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mayotte, Reunion, Seychelles** — joined hands a few years ago to promote tourism to their corner in the Indian Ocean. That many of them grow vanilla was a good enough reason for calling themselves '**Vanilla islands**'. The Vice president of India is the first senior figure from the Indian leadership to visit the Comoros.

Body:



Strategic potential of Vanilla Islands:

- **Sea lines of communication:**
 - With all the sea lines of communication between Europe and the Indian Ocean came round Africa and went through the Mozambique channel, the Vanilla islands become attractive way stations.
- **Net Security Provider:**
 - As elsewhere in the region, India can contribute significantly to the security and prosperity of the Comoros.
- **Members of forums led by India:**
 - Comoros is a **founding member** of the **International Solar Alliance**. It is a **member of the IORA** that India is reviving. It is also a **member of the Arab League and the OIC**.
- **Mineral Resources:**
 - African resources become important for Asian powers like China, Japan and India, the SLOCs from Africa's east coast and the Vanilla islands that straddle them have once again become important.
 - As they appreciate their renewed salience, the islands are looking to develop partnerships with the major powers.
 - Many of the island states are also beginning to see themselves as large "Ocean States". Due to the provisions of the Law of the Sea, the ocean states are entitled to large exclusive economic zones (EEZ).
 - Seychelles for example, has a land area of approximately 455 sq km spread over 115 islands and a population of barely 100,000. But its EEZ is close to 1.3 million sq km.
- **Voting strength in UN:**



- As part of the growing interaction with the island states, PM met leaders of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) on the margins of the UNGA last month.
- Together they account for more than 40 members.
- Their large numbers and impact on the voting patterns in the UN and other multilateral forums had always made island states of interest to major powers.
- **Climate change activism:**
 - Immediate vulnerability to rising sea levels has made island states the most active champions of urgent global action to mitigate climate change.
 - Island states have also taken the lead in developing the concept of “blue economy” focused on sustainable use and development of ocean resources.
 - Indian PM’s activism on countering climate change and promoting blue economy have made the island states special partners for India.
- **Scramble for Africa:**
 - Africa is witnessing a phenomenon called the “New Scramble for Africa”.
 - If Europe and North America dominated Africa’s economic relationship in the past, China, India, Japan, South Korea and the ASEAN share the geopolitical space today with the US and EU. China, Japan, Korea and India are also major investors in Africa as well as providers of development assistance
 - China’s Belt and Road Initiative is about connecting China’s eastern seaboard with the Indian Ocean littoral.
- **Large Diaspora:**
 - Although India has had strong ties with one of the Vanilla Islands, Mauritius, Delhi has long seen it through the prism of the Indian diaspora.
 - During PM Modi’s first term, the Foreign Office set up a separate Indian Ocean Division with a focus on the island states

Way forward:

- To be effective in the south western Indian Ocean, however, Delhi must begin to treat the Vanilla Islands as a single strategic space.
- It can build on its traditional presence in Mauritius to launch substantive economic and defence cooperation with the littoral.

Conclusion:

Indian foreign policy has always envisaged a rules-based order anchored upon international law, openness, transparency, inclusivity and commitment to advancing economic engagement in the region. In this regard India can focus on four areas of cooperation with Vanilla Islands i.e. **maritime cooperation; connectivity; UN Sustainable Development Goals 2030; and economic development.**



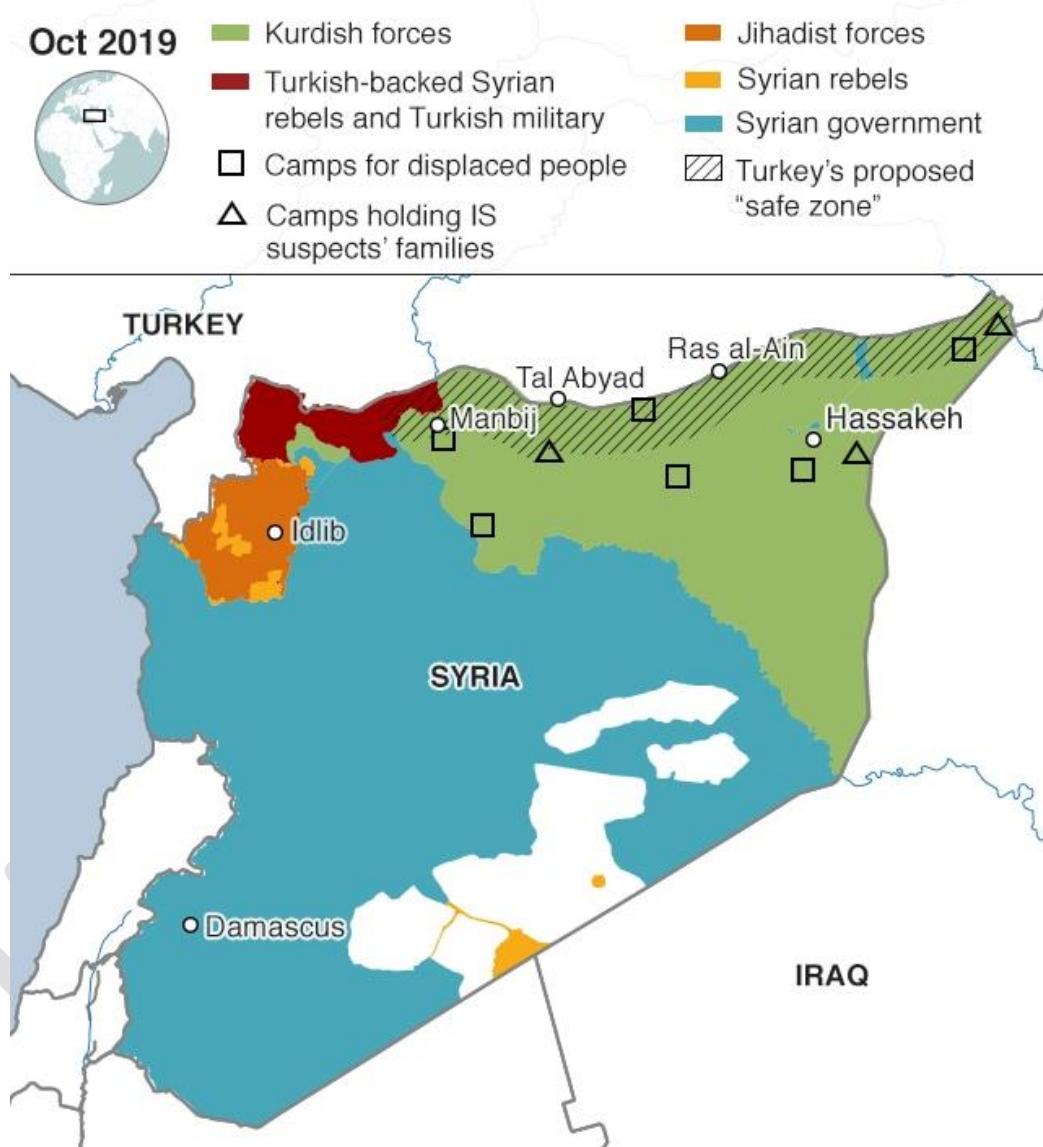
The impact of Turkey trying to redraw the map of Syria will be manifold with a ripple effect across the world. Elucidate.(250 words)

Indianexpress

Introduction:

Turkey has launched a military operation called **Operation Peace Spring** against the Syrian Kurdish militia (YPG) in Northeast Syria just days after U.S. troops pulled back from the area. The operation could **reshape the map of the Syrian conflict** once again, dealing a blow to Kurdish-led forces that have battled Islamic State while widening Turkey's territorial control at the border.

Body:



Impact on Syrian map:

- Turkey has two main goals in northeast Syria: to drive the Kurdish YPG militia which it deems a security threat away from its border, and to create a space inside Syria where 2 million Syria refugees currently hosted in Turkey can be settled.



- It had been pushing the United States to jointly establish a “safe zone” extending 20 miles (32 km) into Syrian territory, but repeatedly warned it could take unilateral military action after accusing Washington of dragging its feet.
- The north-eastern border region, currently controlled by Kurdish-led forces, stretches 480 km (300 miles) from the Euphrates River in the west to the Iraq border to the east.
- The immediate focus of Turkey’s military plans appears to be around a section of the border between the towns of Ras al-Ain and Tel Abyad, which are about 100 km apart.
- If the US pulls out all its troops from northeast Syria, the Damascus government – backed by Russia – may try to retake control of much of the region not seized by Turkey.

Global effects of Turkish attacks on Syria:

- The SDF-affiliated Syrian Democratic Council said an attack would trigger a **new wave of mass displacement**.
- A **full U.S. withdrawal** would expose the area to the **risk of more Turkish advances, an Islamic State revival, or attempts by Iranian- and Russian-backed government forces** to gain ground.
- **Russia and Iran**, the other two major foreign powers in Syria, strongly support President Bashar al-Assad – unlike Turkey and the United States which both called for him to stand down and supported rebels fighting to overthrow him. This could lead to revival of the cold-war.
- There has been no public support from Turkey’s Western allies for its plan to settle 2 million Syrians – more than half of the refugees it currently hosts – in northeast Syria.
- Erdogan threatened to send refugees to Europe if the European Union did not back his assault, prompting a furious response from the EU.
- The main Western concerns are that an **influx of Sunni Arab Syrians into the largely Kurdish northeast** would change the demographics of the region.
- Chaos could present **Islamic State with an opportunity to stage a revival** and the SDF has been conducting operations against IS sleeper cells since capturing its final territorial foothold earlier this year.
- Syrian Kurdish leaders have long warned that the SDF may not be able to continue holding IS prisoners if the situation was destabilised by a Turkish invasion.
- The SDF is still holding 5,000 IS fighters of Syrian and Iraqi nationality and a further 1,000 foreigners from more than 55 other states, according to the foreign relations department of the Kurdish-led administration in northern Syria.

India's stand on the Turkish offensive:

- India issued a strong statement expressing “deep regret” over Turkey’s military action in Syria and called it unilateral and offensive.
- India has called upon Turkey to exercise restraint and to respect the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Syria.



- The diplomatic exchanges between Turkey and India have intensified in recent weeks following India's decision to end the special status of Kashmir.
- Turkey supported Pakistan's stance for reversal of the scrapping of Article 370.

Way forward:

- The European Union should have a dialogue with Turkey despite Ankara's offensive against the Kurds, in order to avoid a fresh wave of migrants coming to Europe.
- Russia, the main international backer of Syria's President Bashar al-Assad, said it planned to push for dialogue between the Syrian and Turkish governments following the incursion.

Conclusion:

World powers fear the action could open a new chapter in Syria's war and worsen the regional turmoil. International criticism has not had the impact to curb down the offensive of Turkey.

What is RCEP? What are the potential benefits and disadvantages for India? Discuss India's key issues with RCEP while suggesting way forward. (250 words)

The hindu

Why this question:

Negotiations on the final agreement under the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) are becoming increasingly urgent as the deadline approaches. The article brings out a detailed narration on the importance of RCEP its advantages and disadvantages to India and way ahead.

Key demand of the question:

One has to bring out the significance of RCEP, advantages and disadvantages for India.

Directive:

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

Structure of the answer:

Introduction:

RCEP is a proposed Free Trade Agreement (FTA) between ten ASEAN member states and their six FTA partners namely India, Australia, China, Japan, New Zealand and South Korea.

Body:

In brief explain what RCEP is.

Discuss the advantages – boost India's inward and outward foreign direct investment, facilitate India's MSMEs, reduce trade costs etc.

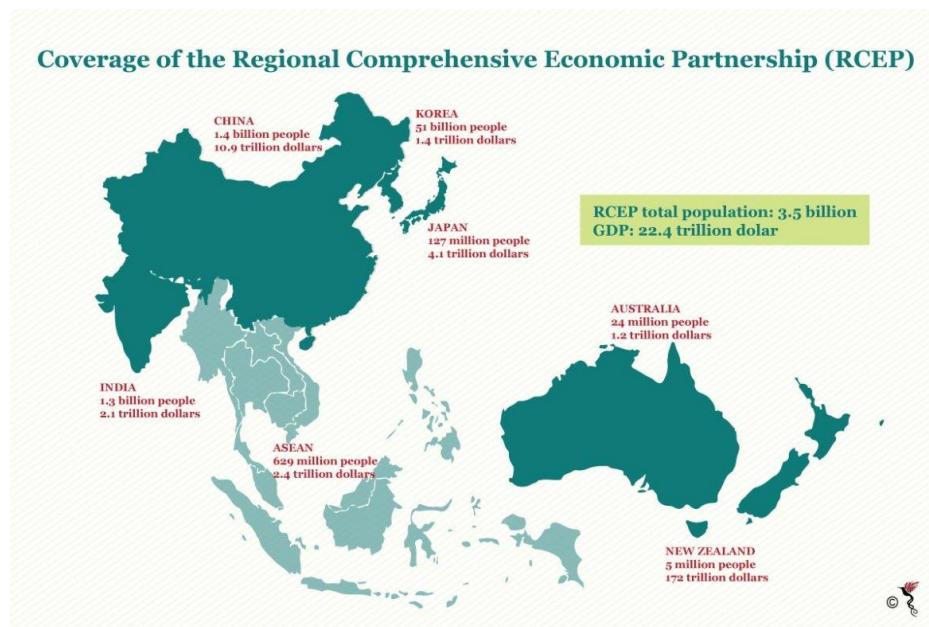
And disadvantages of RCEP to India – Widening Trade Deficit; Tariff elimination due to RCEP could worsen the trade deficit, other factors etc.

Conclusion:

Conclude with way forward.

Introduction:

The Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) is a trade deal that is currently under negotiation among 16 countries — the 10 member countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), and the six countries with which the ASEAN bloc has free trade agreements (FTA). It accounts for 25% of global GDP, 30% of global trade, 26% of FDI flows, and 45% of the world's population.

**Body:****Advantages for India:**

- **Act East Policy:**
 - For India, the RCEP provides a decisive platform to influence its strategic and economic status in the Asia-Pacific region and realise the goals of its “Act East Policy”.
- **Complement existing FTAs:**
 - The RCEP agreement would complement India’s current FTAs with the ASEAN+6 countries = address challenges of implementation issues, overlapping agreements etc.
 - Thus RCEP will make rules and regulations for doing trade more efficient = reduce trade costs.
- **Unlock the true potential of the Indian economy:**
 - RCEP is expected to harmonize trade-related rules, investment and competition regimes of India with those other countries in the group = Indian companies could enter the regional and global value chains and unlock the true potential of Indian economy.
 - It will give a boost to Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in India.
 - RCEP will especially boost textile and pharma industries as it will facilitate the removal of trade barriers such as sanitary and phyto-sanitary measures of these products.
- **Services sector growth:**
 - India has been seeking a more balanced outcome of the RCEP deal with a strong agreement on services trade, including a deal on easier movement of skilled manpower.



- Besides facilitating Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), the RCEP will create opportunities for Indian Service Sector companies to access new markets.
- It is because the manufacturing structure in many of these countries is becoming more and more service oriented. This phenomenon is known as **Servicification of manufacturing**.
- **Make in India:**
 - Make in India will become a global success if India becomes a part of the Asian Value and Supply Chain.
- **MSMEs:**
 - RCEP will also facilitate MSMEs to effectively integrate into the regional value and supply chains, thus promoting their growth.

India's concerns with RCEP:

- **Trade deficit:**
 - India's trade deficit (Imports > Exports) with various countries have always widened after signing FTAs with them. Example – ASEAN, Japan, Korea, and Singapore, most of which are RCEP nations.
- **Vulnerable sectors:**
 - India's vulnerable agriculture and dairy sectors will be exposed to vagaries of global trade as India is not in a position to compete with Australia and New Zealand, the top performers in these sectors.
- **The China factor:**
 - India fears that the RCEP pact will enable China to dump its products at lower prices and finally capture the market.
 - India's trade deficit with China is already at \$63 billion which will further rise if India joins RCEP.
 - Security concerns have also arisen over Chinese companies influencing market trends in sectors like telecommunication.
- **Make in India:**
 - Indian manufacturing is not competitive enough to face the consequences of a free trade regime.
 - Rationalisation of multiple GST rates is still a work-in-progress.
 - The compliance with the complex GST norms adds to the transaction costs.
 - Labour productivity in manufacturing in India is still one of the lowest in the world with regionally fragmented labour laws increase the cost of doing business.
 - Make in India seeks to create enabling conditions not only for domestic industries but also for foreign industries = more competition.



- Considering the above issues, the Indian industry is hardly in a position to compete in a free trade region.
- **Skewed sectorial growth:**
 - The issue of trade liberalisation in services is still a bone of contention among RCEP Nations.
 - India wants to capitalise on its pool of skilled labour from improved access to these economies.
 - Thus it sought binding commitments to simplify services trade.
 - India is even willing to trade up its remaining tariff policy powers in the manufacturing sector to get these concessions for services sector in RCEP.
 - However, given the situation of the manufacturing and agriculture sectors in India, it is definitely not a good idea to sacrifice them for the services sector. It will promote the skewed nature of sectorial growth.
- **Raising trade barriers with non-members:**
 - A preferential trade agreement such as RCEP provides preferential access to certain products by reducing trade barriers such as tariffs for member countries and not for others.
 - Hence, a preferential reduction of trade barriers = rise in relative trade barrier against non-members countries of RCEP.
- **Affect economic sovereignty:**
 - Harmonisation of foreign investment rules and IPR laws = take away India's ability to calibrate trade policies according to its needs.
- **Rigid tariff regime:**
 - India needs a tariff regime that must be flexible enough to allow tariffs to be calibrated.
 - Such flexibilities are provided by WTO's tariff regime, but not in other FTAs like RCEP.
- **IPR provisions:**
 - Japan and South Korea are proposing intellectual property provisions referred to as TRIPS-plus, which go far beyond the obligations under the WTO's agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS).
 - The proposed provisions seek to extend pharma firms' patent terms beyond the usual 20 years (patent term extensions) and also require data exclusivity that limits competition by encouraging monopoly. These will hit our access to affordable medicines.
 - Issues related to Intellectual Property Chapter, particularly pacts that constrain our farmers' ability to produce, preserve, exchange and sell seeds need to be rejected.



- If India makes any agreement like the International Union of New Plant Varieties (UPOV) 1991 (that favours multinationals and is against farmers' interests), it will kill the livelihood of our farmers.

Way Forward:

- All trade is based on comparative advantage and we have it in services sector which we need to look properly.
- Indian policymakers need to be mindful of domestic industry's concerns before getting into a deal with respect to the RCEP.
- We need to focus on improving the competitiveness of the Indian economy.
- India must play its due role to get its due place in the regional economic configurations.

Conclusion:

Bilateral talks between India and China are crucial for an early conclusion of RCEP negotiations as agreed by other members. Indian policymakers need to be mindful of domestic sectors' concerns before agreeing on terms of deal. Simultaneously, there is a necessity to improve our competitiveness in the economy. India must play its **due role to get its due place** in the **regional economic configurations**.

The recent determination to accelerate the development of an ambitious trans-Himalayan corridor between China's Tibet and Nepal by China can be seen as important tools of statecraft to security diplomacy and law enforcement cooperation. Critically analyse. (250 words)

Indianexpress

Why this question:

The article highlights that President Xi Jinping's brief but significant visit to Kathmandu was defined by the determination to accelerate the development of an ambitious trans-Himalayan corridor between China's Tibet and Nepal. While Delhi will debate the issues generated by China Nepal Economic Corridor for some time to come, it also needs to pay attention to an equally important dimension of China-Nepal relationship — the deepening of bilateral security cooperation.

Key demand of the question:

One must discuss in what way China sees security diplomacy and law enforcement cooperation as important tools of statecraft.

Directive:

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

Structure of the answer:

Introduction:

In brief narrate the context of the question.

Body:

Explain that China's interest in "security diplomacy" as separate from "defence diplomacy" is not limited to Nepal.

Security diplomacy has emerged as a major element of China's international relations in all geographies.

Explain the role of Nepal in Chinese security concerns.



Discuss the role of foreign states in Chinese security diplomacy.

Conclusion:

Conclude that Massive modernisation of its internal administrative structures, significant investments in new technologies, and an effective integration of law enforcement into China's foreign policy have transformed China's pursuit of security diplomacy.

Introduction:

Chinese President Xi Jinping's brief but significant visit to Kathmandu was defined by the determination to accelerate the development of an ambitious trans-Himalayan corridor between China's Tibet and Nepal. The expanding engagement between the police forces, intelligence agencies, border management organisations and law-enforcement authorities of the two nations has boosted China's interest in "security diplomacy" as separate from "defence diplomacy".

Body:



The **trans-Himalayan connectivity network**, a gigantic infrastructure program undertaken by the two countries, could help upgrade the roads, railway system and aviation in Nepal, and better logistics would then benefit the agriculture and industry sectors, improve economic structure and boost export.

The importance China attaches to security diplomacy is reflected in the fact that four of the 20 documents signed in Kathmandu relate to law enforcement. These agreements touched on border management, supply of border security equipment, mutual legal assistance, and collaboration between Nepal's Attorney General and China's prosecutor general.

Growing Nepal-China intimacies:

- Xi's generous assistance to Nepal of USD 495 million was of a piece with the style with which China makes friends with India's neighbours.
- There is to be a feasibility study on a trans-Himalayan train link between the two countries, and a road link from Kathmandu to Kerung, on Nepal's border with Tibet, as part of the Belt and Road Initiative.



- Both connections will increase Nepal's access to the Chinese economy. To the extent that this pushes up the possibility of Chinese goods flooding India through Nepal, Delhi should be concerned.
- But it must also come to terms with the reality that there can be no zero-sum games in foreign policy.
- Viewing relations with neighbouring countries only through the prism of India's security has its limits.
- As the region's largest economy, India needs to find better ways to make friends with its neighbours, and retain these friendships.

India's concern about the growing bonhomie:

- India's concern is that, given the difference in the strategic weight of China and Nepal, security diplomacy can be used as a tool by China to interfere in the internal affairs of Nepal.
- Since Nepal acts as a buffer state for India, seeing it slip into China's sphere of influence, will not be in India's strategic interest. Also, China's interest in "security diplomacy" is not limited to Nepal.
- China Nepal Economic Corridor can lead to China dumping consumer goods through Nepal which will worsen India' trade balance with China further.
- Developing the China-Nepal economic corridor is considered immensely vital for transforming Nepal into an economically developed nation and dependable neighbour.
- China is also participating in the development of new international rules on law enforcement, shaping the discourse on issues at hand, and seeking leadership positions in multilateral organisations dealing with law enforcement.

Way forward for India:

- China's deep pockets make it difficult for India to control the expansion of China's influence in India's neighbourhood.
- India will have to debate the issues generated by China Nepal Economic Corridor for some time to come, it also needs to pay attention to an equally important dimension of China-Nepal relationship that the deepening of bilateral security cooperation.
- India should act as a bridge rather than a blockade in realizing Nepal's dream of becoming a land-linked country from a land-locked one.
- Though India has all the right of such blockade, however, India must refrain from such blockades as it affects India's credibility in eyes of Nepali citizens.



Effect of policies and politics of developed and developing countries on India's interests, Indian Diaspora.

The fate of the Kurds is a parable for the future of West Asian geopolitics. Analyse.(250 words)

Indianexpress

Why this question:

The article explains in detail who are the Kurds, and why is Turkey attacking them in northern Syria. What role did Kurdish fighters play in the complex war in Syria, and what are the ramifications of US troops' withdrawal from the conflict?

Key demand of the question:

The question aims to discuss in detail the fate of the Kurds in the future of West Asian geopolitics.

Directive:

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

Structure of the answer:

Introduction:

In brief first explain who Kurds are.

Body:

Explain that the Kurds used the collapse of central authority in Syria and Iraq to carve out semi-autonomous regions for themselves. Baghdad has since reasserted its authority. In Syria, the Kurds leveraged the United States to maintain their independence from Damascus and shield themselves from a hostile Turkey.

Discuss the current scenario in Syria.

Explain the geopolitical trends from past to present.

Conclusion:

Conclude with a balanced opinion and way forward highlighting future possibilities of West Asian politics.

Introduction:

Kurds are the world's largest stateless ethnic group. They are an estimated 25 million to 35 million population. The majority among the Kurdish people today are Sunni Muslim, but there are adherents of other faiths too, including Sufism and other mystical practices. They live in the highlands of southern and eastern Turkey, northern Iraq, the northeastern Syria, northwestern Iran, and parts of south Armenia, and are a minority in each of these countries. Small communities live in Georgia, Kazakhstan, Lebanon, and eastern Iran as well. Kurds have long had a reputation for being fearless fighters, and they have served as mercenaries in many armies over the centuries.

Body:

Recently, the Trump administration ordered US troops to step aside from the border in northern Syria, effectively paving the way for Turkey to launch an offensive against US-backed Kurdish forces who they regard as enemies. Soon after Turkey launched an offensive with two main goals in northeast Syria: to drive the Kurdish YPG militia which it deems a security threat away from its border, and to create a space inside Syria where 2 million Syrian refugees currently hosted in Turkey can be settled.

Demands of the Kurds:

- The Kurds have never achieved nation-state status, except in Iraq, where they have a regional government called Iraqi Kurdistan.



- Kurdistan is made up of five different regions: south-eastern Turkey, north-eastern Syria, northern Iraq, northwestern Iran and south-western Armenia.
- In the early 20th century, the Kurds began working toward the creation of homeland known as Kurdistan. In 1920, the Treaty of Sevres — one of a series of treaties that the Central Powers signed after their defeat in World War I — outlined the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire and called for an autonomous Kurdistan.
- Three years later, after the end of the war, Western allies dropped demands for an independent Kurdish state and the Kurdish region was divided among several countries.

The fate of the Kurds is a parable for the future of West Asian geopolitics:

- The Kurds used the collapse of central authority in Syria and Iraq to carve out semi-autonomous regions for themselves. Baghdad has since reasserted its authority.
- In Syria, the Kurds leveraged the United States to maintain their independence from Damascus and shield themselves from a hostile Turkey.
- With US President Donald Trump suddenly deciding the Kurds were expendable, first Turkey and now Syria have begun eating away at the enclave.
- The crudity of the Turkish attack has earned Ankara international opprobrium while the Syrians have arrived as saviours. Both governments, however, seek the Kurdish enclave's disappearance.
- Ethnic armies like the Kurds, terror networks like the Islamic State, and various militia used the chaos in the Levant and Mesopotamia to carve out fiefdoms.
- Some, like the Kurds, played a traditional game of seeking an external patron to balance against powerful regional players.
- Some regional players, for example, Turkey and Iran, saw an opportunity to establish themselves as local hegemons.

The three possible geopolitical trends:

- One, the chaos that gave birth to the Kurds enclave is retreating. This return to normal borders is likely to be bloody and messy.
- Two, external players will play a shrinking role in determining West Asia's future.
- Three, West Asian politics will be about the interplay of its regional powers.

Way forward:

- The European Union should have a dialogue with Turkey despite Ankara's offensive against the Kurds, in order to avoid a fresh wave of migrants coming to Europe.
- Russia, the main international backer of Syria's President Bashar al-Assad, said it planned to push for dialogue between the Syrian and Turkish governments following the incursion.

Conclusion:



World powers fear the action could open a new chapter in Syria's war and worsen the regional turmoil. International criticism has not had the impact to curb down the offensive of Turkey.

With the Global Politics changing at a fast pace, India stands at the crossroads in terms of its foreign policy approach, do you agree? Give your opinion with suitable justifications.(250 words)

The hindu

Why this question:

The article explains that in a setting where there was a chariot of peace, joint co-operation, multilateralism and liberalism whose strings were controlled by institutions such as the United Nations, the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the International Court of Justice has now become one of warhorses pulling in different directions to embrace unilateralism, protectionism and isolationism.

Key demand of the question:

The answer should detail upon the changing geopolitics of the world and India's foreign policy approach with recent examples.

Structure of the answer:

Introduction:

Start by stating that the global order is now dipping into a vortex of disruptions largely caused by the United States, China and Brexit.

Body:

Discuss first the current issues of geopolitics.

Explain the aspects of – table policy of non-alignment and strategic autonomy; the idea to join the bandwagon of unilateralism and be a permanent treaty ally of one of the superpowers, and, finally, embark upon a calculated trip with the objective of expansion in terms of forging new relations and exploring fresh territories by adopting a strategy of “multi-alignment and transactional autonomy”. Discuss what opportunities India has ahead.

Conclusion:

Conclude that despite these contradictions and challenges, a number of opportunities in the new world order await India.

Introduction:

National interest has been the governing principle of India's foreign policy even at the time, of Nehru who was inspired by the ideal of world peace, toleration and mutual respect among nations. Foreign policy is not a fixed concept as it keeps on changing according to changing domestic and international conditions. In operational terms, the idea of national interest takes the form of concrete objectives of foreign policy. The secondary national interest may change with time but the primary national interest endures.

Body:



Foreign Policy of Independent India

PANCHSHEEL

mutual respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty, non-aggression, non-interference in each other's internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit, and peaceful coexistence.

NON ALIGNMENT

Non-alignment has been an important feature of India's foreign policy. The aim of Non-alignment was to maintain national independence in foreign affairs. Non-alignment was neither neutrality nor non-involvement nor isolationism. It was a dynamic concept. Furthermore, Non-Alignment gained popularity in the developing countries.

indiashashtra

ANT-COLONIALISM

India has always opposed colonialism and racism. Whenever any injustice happened, India raised her voice, for instance in favour of Indonesia's nationality fighting the Dutch colonialism in 1947, against South Africa's illegal occupation of Namibia and the infamous apartheid policy in South Africa India fully supported the inclusion of communist China in the United Nations.

ARTICLE 51

Article 51 of the Indian Constitution Lays down some Directive Principles of State Policy on Promotion of International Peace and Security. The state shall endeavour to:

1. Promote international peace and security.
2. Maintain just and honourable relations between nations.
3. Foster respect for international law and Treaty obligations in the dealings of organised people with one another,
4. Encourage settlement of international disputes by arbitration

India's core foreign policy objectives are:

The geopolitical scenario of the world is changing, and this has brought up new global issues for India to deal with. Therefore, various aspects of India's foreign policy also are required to be changed to fit the changing geopolitics of the world.

Changing geopolitics of the world:

South Asian concerns and realities to India:

- In this backdrop, India needs to rework many of its policies in the coming five years.
- South Asia, in particular, and the region of our highest priority, needs close attention.
- The region is one of the most disturbed in the world and India has little or no say in any of the outcomes taking place.
- India-Pakistan relations are perhaps at their lowest point. Tarring Pakistan with the terror brush is hardly policy, and stable relations continue to be elusive.
- India has no role in Afghan affairs and is also excluded from current talks involving the Taliban, the Afghan government, Pakistan, the U.S. and even Russia and China.
- India might have recouped its position more recently in the Maldives, but its position in Nepal and Sri Lanka remains tenuous. In West Asia again, India is no longer a player to reckon with.

China, US, Eurasia Challenges:



- China is the major challenge that India has to contend with. Smaller countries in the region are being inveigled to participate in China's programmes such as the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).
- India and Bhutan are the only two countries in this region that have opted out of the BRI, and they seem like the odd men out.
- Deepening India-U.S. relations today again carry the danger of India becoming involved in a new kind of Cold War.
- India must ensure that it does not become a party to the conflicts and rivalries between the U.S. and a rising China, the heightened tensions between the U.S. and Russia, and also avoid becoming a pawn in the U.S.-Iran conflict.
- Closer relations with the U.S. also carries the risk of aggravating tensions between India and China, even as China and the U.S.
- The U.S.-China-Russia conflict has another dimension which could affect India
- The strategic axis forged between the Mr. Putin's Russia and Mr. Xi's China will impact not only the U.S. but also India's position in both Asia and Eurasia, with India being seen as increasingly aligned to the U.S.
- Hence, India needs to devise a policy that does not leave it isolated in the region.
- The challenge in the coming years for India is to check the slide, especially in Asia, and try and restore India to the position it held previously. India cannot afford to wait too long to rectify the situation.

Need to focus on newer threats as well:

- As India intensifies its search for state-of-the-art military equipment from different sources, it may be worthwhile for India to step back and reconsider some of its options.
- Military power is but one aspect of the conflicts that rage today. Experts point out that outright war, insurgencies and terror attacks are fast becoming passé.
- Nations confront many other and newer threats at present. Today, disruptive technologies have tremendous danger potential and nations that possess these technologies have the ability to become the dominant powers in the 21st and 22nd Centuries.
- A major challenge for India will hence be how to overcome our current inadequacies in the realm of disruptive technologies rather than remaining confined to the purely military domain.
- The U.S., China, Russia, Israel and few other countries dominate these spheres as also cyberspace and cyber methodologies.

Way forward:

- Despite a plethora of official statements, the state of the economy remains a matter of increasing concern. India needs to pay greater heed to its economy.
- Notwithstanding India's ambition to become a \$5-trillion economy by 2024-25, the reality today is that the economy appears to be in a state of decline.



- New policy parameters will need to be drawn up by India, and our capabilities enhanced in areas such as artificial intelligence, biotechnology and cyber methodology, all of which constitute critical elements of the disruptive technology matrix.
- Neither the Economic Survey nor the Budget contain useful pointers to a more robust economy, one that is capable of providing a higher rate of growth, more opportunities for skilled labour, and greater potential for investments.
- The looming challenge for India in the coming five years, therefore, would be how to build a strong economic foundation, one that is capable of providing the kind of power structure needed for an emerging power, and also one possessing the best liberal credentials.

Conclusion:

In international community every country has to interact with other countries. This interaction is not haphazard but takes place with definite orientations and objectives. These orientations and objectives form the core of foreign policy. National security is an example of primary interest. No country can compromise with her national security for the sake of most beloved principles of foreign policy. Thus, the foreign policy is the instrument to realize the national interest of a country. A foreign policy bereft of national interest is a purposeless exercise.

“India needs to leverage technology to make roads safer”. Elucidate. (250 words)

Financialexpress

Introduction:

Indian roads are among the world's deadliest and apart from a strong regulatory framework, efficient systemic changes are vital to save lives. The Supreme Court of India has also time and again expressed concern over road deaths due to potholes, saying that such fatalities were more than the number of people killed in terror attacks in the country. The situation assumes significance as India is a signatory to the United Nations convention (**Brasilia Declaration on Road Safety**) on reducing road fatality by 50 per cent.

Body:

Road traffic fatalities constitute 16.6% of all deaths, making this the sixth leading cause of death in India. Burden of out-of-pocket expenditure is the highest for such injuries and is particularly high for poorer households in rural areas, and those seeking treatment at private health facilities with no health insurance.

Technological interventions for road safety:

- India needs to adopt **Integrated Traffic Management Systems (ITMSs)** or adopt initiatives like **computerised testing and remote supervision of driving tests**.
- The 2019 Motor Vehicle Amendments act introduced a **nation-wide integrated, digitised licensing system** that will involve **linking of the driving permits with unique identifications (UIDs)**, meaning one license per person.
- The section 25A focuses on establishment of the **National Register for Driving Licenses** which will include entries from all the state-owned registers to create a **consolidated database of new authorisations or renewals of driving licenses**.



- As per the MVA Act 2019, all state governments will now need to comply with the electronic monitoring and enforcement rules defined by the Centre. This will bring consistency in enforcement and make these initiatives more efficient and accurately measurable in term of success.
- Implementing ITMSs, for instance, will help minimise congestion using intelligent cameras to track traffic movement at the busiest junctions in real-time.
- Use of **sensor technology, automation and advanced video analytics** will allow instant identification of irresponsible drivers for generating computerised penalty tickets.
- These systems will not only capture a much larger number of violations than humans, but also help in maintaining electronic proofs of the fines collected.
- And negligible to no human involvement would mean greater accuracy, reliability and elimination of associated bribery.
- high-tech devices like **body-worn cameras, LIDAR (Light Detection and Ranging) guns, alcometers (breath analysers)** can keep contributing towards effective and ethical enforcement.
- The state-of-the-art body-worn cameras are capable of live streaming visuals even at night, using infra-red technology and can exchange voice or text messages internally. E.g.: Kerala
- Handheld and portable laser guns will capture license plate numbers of speeding vehicles, both in daylight and night to automatically send videos and pictures to the control room over 4G wireless networks. The breathalysers will be GPS-enabled and have inbuilt cameras for sending photographic evidence of the offence along with the fine. E.g.: Tamil Nadu

Way forward:

Planning to increase road safety via technology, new-age ideas for high-end safety equipment in vehicles, automated centres for checking fitness of vehicles, speed governors to track speed limits, digital message signboards to update users about road conditions in real-time and much more should be explored.

Conclusion:

Technology holds the key to finding solutions that are actionable, measurable, scalable and reliable, translating into better, faster and more productive enforcement. Amidst increasing motorisation, tech-oriented policies and solutions will expand the capabilities of enforcement, bringing a positive change in the national road safety status and strengthening India's agenda of reducing crash deaths by half, quicker than human effort alone ever will.

Case study: *technology is helping officials solve issues of irrational road behaviour in Vadodara. Four high-resolution red-light violation detection (RLVD) cameras have been installed at major traffic junctions, which work 24x7 to monitor and report instances of speeding, racing, dangerous driving or other safety risks by capturing images of vehicle registration plates. The images are then shared with the automation enforcement centre, which directly sends electronic challans to the traffic offenders within 7 days.*

Using this contactless enforcement system, Vadodara Traffic Police issued 14,663 e-challans worth ₹27.55 lakh between May 5-11. In the FY 18-19, the traffic police collected about Rs 1.88 crore as



fines and launching special payment desks to recover the remaining amount from offenders. Moreover, the traffic officials plan to either suspend licences or seize vehicles of violators with 15 or more e-challans, who haven't cleared the dues.

Control over data is a tool needed now to govern the world. In this respect, discuss the significance of data and elaborate on the methods taken by the Indian government to control data and localize it.(250 words)

The hindu

Introduction:

Data localization is the act of storing data on any device that is physically present within the borders of a specific country where the data was generated. India's recent drafts and statements have strong signals for data localisation, which means that data of Indians, even if collected by an American company, must be stored and processed in India. Worldwide, the data flow debate is playing out at the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and G20.

Body:

Importance of Data localization for India:

- For securing citizen's data, data privacy, data sovereignty, national security, and economic development of the country.
- Much of the data from online sales, on ecommerce platforms is likely to be hosted and stored in US data firms.
- The extensive data collection by technology companies, has allowed them to process and monetise Indian users' data outside the country.
- To curtail the perils of unregulated and arbitrary use of personal data
- With the advent of cloud computing, Indian users' data is outside the country's boundaries, leading to a conflict of jurisdiction in case of any dispute.
- Data is a digital transactions footprint. During war or hostilities, data centres could be switched off. Such scenarios are pushing countries towards local infrastructure.
- Data localisation will help Indian law enforcement agencies access data.
- Localisation will help law enforcement access the data. Currently, India has to use "mutual legal assistance treaties" (MLAT) with the US to get the data of Indians that are controlled by American companies.
- By requiring a copy of the data to be stored in India (data mirroring), the government hopes to have more direct control over these companies, including the option to levy more taxes on them
- Recently lynchings across the country were linked to WhatsApp rumours and in this context, localisation of data assumes significance.
- Data is the new oil, data is strategic and foreign entities could cripple India in event of war or sanctions.
- India's data localisation push can give rise to **new business opportunity**.



- India is an ideal location for lower cost of operations and availability of quality talent.
- National wealth creation relies on in-house data storage.
- It helps to champion domestic innovation.
- Massive amounts of data generated by cities can be used to improve infrastructure and transport systems as Singapore has done.

India's efforts towards Data Localization:

- **Justice SriKrishna recommendation on data protection**
 - The committee has proposed strict standards for cross-border transfer of data and storage.
 - Critical personal data, to be notified by the government, must be stored and processed at a data centre located in India.
 - Personal data can be transferred outside India but will need to comply with conditions of security, purpose limitation, storage limitation, data principals' rights as laid down under the Indian law.
 - Every data fiduciary will need to store at least one serving copy of personal data on a server or data centre located in India.
- **Draft Personal Data Protection Bill, 2018** which has specific requirements on cross-border data transfers.
- **The draft e-commerce policy** also has clauses on cross-border data transfer.
- **Reserve Bank of India in 2018** came out with directives for financial entities to restrict the data related to the payment system within India.
- **NITI Aayog's AI strategy** has sought mandated sharing of data for social purposes.

Way forward:

- **Data localisation is a critical necessity** for law enforcement.
- There is an urgent need to have an integrated, long-term strategy for policy creation for data localisation.
- Devising an optimal regulatory and legislative framework for data processors and data centres operating in the country.
- Adequate infrastructure in terms of energy, real estate, and internet connectivity also needs to be made available for India to become a global hub for data centres.
- Adequate attention needs to be given to the interests of India's Information Technology Enabled Services (ITeS) and Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) industries, which are thriving on cross border data flow
- Data needs to be shared with start-ups so that they can have a level playing field in offering innovative services with large and often global data companies.



- India urgently needs a **legally-backed framework** for a collaborative trigger mechanism that would bind all parties and enable law enforcers to act quickly and safeguard Indian citizens and businesses from a fast-growing menace.
- The customer also has a responsibility to **maintain basic cyber hygiene**, which includes following practices and taking precautions to keep one's sensitive information organized, safe and secure.
- **Real-time intelligence** is required for preventing and containing cyber-attacks.
- **Periodical 'Backup of Data'** is a solution to ransomware.
- Using **Artificial Intelligence (AI)** for predicting and accurately identifying attacks.
- Using the knowledge gained from actual attacks that have already taken place in building effective and pragmatic defence.
- Increased awareness about cyber threats for which **digital literacy** is required first.



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BANGALORE

📍 INSIGHTSIAS, NANDA ASHIRWAD COMPLEX,
3rd floor, Above Village Hyper Market,
Chandralayout Main Road, Attiguppe,
Bangalore - 560072
📞 Ph. No: 7483163074

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