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1.	**How do you justify the view that the level of excellence of the Gupta numismatic art is not at all noticeable in later times?**
	Gupta coins are among the most remarkably detailed coins from ancient India featuring exquisite artistic details. They stand out from coins crafted during the reign of other dynasties on following counts:
	• Achievement of remarkable craftsmanship was evident by the finesse of the variety of images carved on both faces of the coin and its smooth and even wedges.
	• Detailed carvings ranged from Chandragupta riding a horse to Samudragupta playing a Veena and the Goddess Lakshmi to a sacrificial horse for Ashvamedha ceremony and so on.
	• Apart from these detailed images, there were inscriptions as well, often adding details of the image inscribed on the coin.
	• Also, most of the important kings of Gupta dynasty are now believed to have had multiple coin-types during the course of their reign, in which older designs were dropped and newer motifs were adopted.
	• Scholars have pointed out that such designs were made possible by use of clay-molds by skilled mint-masters.
	In the post-Gupta period, not only the quality of gold coins fell, but also the numbers of gold coins being issued dropped drastically. Due to systemic economic distresses, town-based artisans producing good quality coins were forced to migrate to the countryside causing a decline of craft production and a decay of townships. Without urban centres and foreign trade, and with increasing decentralisation of political power which had resulted from the urban to rural migration of artisans, the excellence of Gupta numismatic art could not be sustained or recreated in the times that followed.
2.	**Clarify how mid-eighteenth century India was beset with the spectre of a fragmented polity?**
	The first half of the eighteenth century witnessed decline and disintegration of the mighty Mughal Empire and rise of virtually independent regional powers.

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Lack of strong central authority and emergence of regional power weakened the political structure that led to rise of foreign power.

Factors that could be considered to play potent role in fragmented polity were–

- The Mughal court saw a host of weak emperors in succession, emperors who were incapable to command the glorious empire and would rather indulge in wasteful extravagance of pomp and show. Courtrooms became kingmaker's ground for treachery and war of succession became recurrent.
- A number of powerful kingdoms such as Bengal, Avadh, Hyderabad and Mysore arose and became virtually independent from the Mughal Empire.
- The weakened Mughal Empire was challenged by Marathas time and again. Marathas captured vast swathes of territory in northern and central India.
- The remaining illusion of continued domination of Mughal power was shattered by Nadir Shah's (Shah of Persia) invasion of India in 1739.
- Afghan ruler Ahmad Shah Abdali also made frequent inroads into Punjab and finally took over Delhi in 1756-57. Marathas, who were considered as only contender to fill the power vacuum in Delhi, were defeated by Abdali's forces in the Third Battle of Panipat (1761). The war didn't decide who will rule India but who would not.

After these series of events, the Mughal Empire ceased to exist as an all-India empire in practice. The British took advantage of the entire situation. They defeated the forces of Bengal in Battle of Plassey and finally combined forces of Bengal, Awadh and Mughal were crushed in Battle of Buxar.

| 3. | **Why did the 'Moderates' fail to carry conviction with the nation about their proclaimed ideology and political goals by the end of the nineteenth century?**

The moderates were not against the British rule per se and had strong belief in sense of justice and goodness of the British rule. They pursued the policy of gradualism and constitutionalism. Constitutional reforms, administrative re-organisation and protection of civil rights were high on agenda and methods of |

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prayers, petition and protest were followed. Moderates met limited success in later stages due to various reasons–

• The political jargons used by the moderates were alien to uneducated masses. There was also lack of political faith in the masses. Thus, people largely remained aloof.

• It was gradually realised that the British didn't concede to any of the major demands of the moderates.

• Indian Council Act 1892 was criticised. Moves such as further amplification of repressive laws under IPC and reduction in number of members in Calcutta Corporation didn't go down well with progressive elements in INC.

• Political ideologies of the moderates were blamed to be inefficient. Methods followed by moderates were described as political mendicancy. The result was emergence of a more militant school of thought.

However, the role of moderates can also not be negated. They were first to create national awakening among Indians and prepared a solid ground for mass oriented national movement at later stages that followed.

4.	**What problems were germane to the decolonization process in the Malay Peninsula?.**
	Malay Peninsula was under the British influence since they first came in the late 18th century looking towards Southeast Asia for new resources. Since then, the British East India Company traded and partly controlled the region. The growth of their China trade further increased the company's desire for bases in the region near it.
	The decolonization of Malaya Peninsula was an extension of the series of decolonization movements going across the Asia and Africa and was influenced from this process which speeded-up after the World War-II.
	Malay Peninsula was a multi-racial, multi-cultural society with Malay Chinese and Indians forming major ethnic and interest groups which was a suitable condition for colonial powers to consolidate their regime.

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Fall of Singapore and Japanese advances in Malay Peninsula during the World War–II forced the British to consider reassessment of its non-interventionist policies in favour of ethnic cooperation and multiracial government in this region. But with the presence of diverse interest of different groups reaching to a consensus was a tough task.

Cold War ideological rivalry was prevalent in Malayan Peninsula too where with the rise of comintern aligned communist parties like Malayan Communist Party and Chinese Communist Organization, the fear of Malayan Peninsula falling to the Communists emerged. It was a nightmare for the liberal democracies/ colonial powers (i.e. British) which ensured transfer of power to ideologically friendly regimes.

The decolonization of Malayan Peninsula was largely a result of long reconciliation process between the Malayan nationalist and the European colonial powers. Their mutual compromise gave the British the confidence to speed up the process of decolonization through a smooth decolonization process.

| 5. | **How does the Juno Mission of NASA help to understand the origin and evolution of the Earth?.** |

With the principal goal to understanding the origin and evolution of Jupiter, the Juno spacecraft (NASA) was launched in 2011. Juno will study Jupiter much more thoroughly, given the array of nine scientific instruments that it carries on board.

The huge gas planet was likely the first planet formed and had a major impact on the formation of other planets. Like our sun, Jupiter is composed primarily of hydrogen and helium but is also imbued with other heavy elements fundamental to the creation of terrestrial planets.

By studying the atmosphere on Jupiter, we can get an unprecedented insight into its origins and most importantly on the origins of other planets in our solar system including Earth. Once Jupiter's current construction is known, it will then be possible to work out how, when and potentially where in the Solar System the first planet formed. The spacecraft will hunt for oxygen (in the form

of water) in Jupiter's atmosphere, which may also help explain how Earth got its water.

To summarize, we can expect to learn a wealth of information about Jupiter's inner workings in the months and years to come. In discovering Jupiter, we'll be discovering a part of ourselves.

6.	**"In spite of adverse environmental impact, coal mining is still inevitable for development".**

India's coal reserves, fourth largest in the world, provide it with a cheap source of energy. However, the mining of coal causes severe damage to the environment:

- Pollution due to exposure of mining waste to air and water.
- Coal mining results in methane emissions, a powerful greenhouse gas.
- Fires from underground mines can burn for years, releasing smoke containing CO_2, CO, NO_x, SO_2 etc.
- Deforestation when trees are cut down or burned for clearing the way for a coal mine.
- Despite the damage caused by coal mining, it is expected to contribute the dominant share to India's electricity production for decades to come. Even with annual growth rates above 10%, the share of renewable sources in India is unlikely to reach even 10% of the energy mix before 2040. (Solar energy still provides only about 1 per cent of the electricity generated in the country).

India's reliance on coal is expected to persist even in 2040s, with an envisaged share of 42%-50% in energy mix. A lower growth trajectory of renewable energy in view of the challenges and uncertainty of prices, storage costs, grid connectivity and parity make it over-ambitious to expect them to be central for India's development.

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7.	**Mention the advantages of the cultivation of pulses because of which the year 2016 was declared as the International Year of Pulses by United Nations.**
	Despite the strong evidences of health and nutritional benefits of pulses, its consumption remains low in many developing and developed countries. Therefore, the United Nations declared the year 2016 as the International Year of Pulses to heighten public awareness of the nutritional benefits of pulses as part of sustainable food production aimed towards food security and nutrition.
	Advantages of Cultivation of Pulses:
	• Pulses are able to increase biodiversity as they are able to fix their own nitrogen into the soil, which increases soil fertility.
	• Introducing pulses into crop production can be key to increasing resilience to climate change.
	• Pulses also offer a great potential to lift farmers out of rural poverty, as they can yield two to three times higher prices than cereals, and their processing provides additional economic opportunities, especially for women.
	• Pulses are a powerful ally in achieving food security. They are economically affordable, can be grown in dry environments, and have a low food wastage footprint, as they can be stored for long periods without spoiling.
	Therefore, pulses contribute significantly in addressing hunger, food security, malnutrition, environmental challenges and human health and also are a vital source of plant-based proteins and amino acids.
8.	**How does the cryosphere affect global climate?.**
	Cryosphere is the frozen water part of the Earth system - snow cover, permafrost, sea ice. It impacts global climate in a variety of ways:
	• Snow and ice have a high albedo, reflecting back a significant amount of solar radiation back into space. In this way, cryosphere acts as an important cooling factor in the global climate system.

- Snow and ice act as an insulating layer over land and ocean surfaces, holding in heat and moisture that would otherwise escape into the atmosphere. This insulation, then, also acts to cool the global climate.
- Since cold polar seawater is dense due its high salinity and sinks to the bottom of the ocean, spreading out across the globe and acting as a pump which drives oceanic circulation that transfers energy between the equator and the poles – acting as a conveyor belt.

The cryosphere is highly vulnerable to global warming. Therefore, any change in its composition is likely to have great side-effects on the global climate.

9.	**In the context of the diversity of India, can it be said that the regions form cultural units rather than the States? Give reasons with examples for your view point.**

India has been a country of multiple diversities like linguistic, religious, and cultural diversities since ancient times. After independence, various demands of reorganization of states on the basis of various aspirations comprising of cultural similarity, linguistic identity and others emerged from different parts of India. Though the government reorganized various states and also formed new states but cultural units have been intact in India till this day.

- Recently Chhath parv has been celebrated in Purvanchal region, which comprises the eastern end of Uttar Pradesh and western end of Bihar, where Hindi-Urdu and its dialects Awadhi and Bhojpuri are the predominant language.
- Population living in green revolution area that comprises Punjab, Haryana and west Uttar Pradesh practices nearly same traditions and represents a single cultural unit.
- Influence of Dravidian culture can be seen across all South Indian states, food habit of people living in these states is similar, wedding rituals are same.
- North eastern region comprising 8 states represents as a single cultural unit in terms of their traditions.
- Rice fish culture has also been practiced across all coastal regions in different states.

	It shows that cultural units in India are not necessarily concurrent with states and beyond the boundaries of formal division of states.
10.	**What are the two major legal initiatives by the State since Independence addressing discrimination against Scheduled Tribes (STs)?**
	Scheduled tribes of India, due to developmental displacement, and in absence of proper rehabilitation initiatives, have faced cultural discrimination and socio-political and economic exploitation. Due to lack of education and skills, for decades these tribes continued to be oppressed at the hands of the larger society.
	To undo these injustices and to safeguard tribal rights, the government undertook several constitutional and legal initiatives, significant among which have been Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities), 2015 and Panchayat (Extension to the Scheduled Areas), Act, 1996.
	The SC & ST PoA, 2015 prohibits the commission of offences against members of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (SCs and STs) and establishes special courts for the trial of such offences and the rehabilitation of victims, thereby preventing any potential social discrimination faced by the SCs and STs.
	PESA empowers the scheduled tribes to safeguard and preserve their traditions and customs, their cultural identity, community resources and also their customary modes of dispute resolution, thereby helping them from being vulnerable at the hands of larger society and also protecting their identity and culture from the onslaught of dominant culture.
	These two legal initiatives have perhaps played the greatest role in addressing the concerns and in protecting the rights and cultures of various tribal groups in India.

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11.	**The spirit of tolerance and love is not only an interesting feature of Indian society from very early times, but it is also playing an important part at the present. Elaborate.**
	Indian social, cultural and physical diversity is unique to itself and is known world-wide. It would be wrong to think that the concept of Love and Tolerance has just emerged in Indian society but is inculcated in society since 1000s of years shaping its culture.
	1. Early Indian Society:
	Religions like Buddhism and Jainism originated in India promoting the spirit of non-violence and people with different religious beliefs, cultural and social habits got a chance to settle down peacefully together in India.
	Recorders of history are compelled to look at different religious beliefs separately in their documents but there are also records that such transitions between different parts of society were always fluid. Bhaktism and Sufism are recorded as movements bringing different thoughts but they were sat and discussed together by everyone.
	Even after being a Muslim, emperor Akbar Emperor Akbar took initiatives for Ibadat Khana in Fateh Pur Sikri and Din-i-Illahi.
	During the national movement, Gandhiji tried to tie the knot between Hindu and Muslims by merging Khilafat and Non-cooperation movement.
	The communal violence during partition took many lives but there are stories at individual levels where hindus and muslims have helped each other to safety depicting that love and tolerance is basic to Indian Individuals.
	But it is not just the past, the spirit of love and tolerance remains more than relevant in present times as well.
	2. Modern Indian Society
	Cultural homogenization: Within the large Indian society, various groups get intermixed without losing their unique characteristics. This diversity is maintained even in the face of globalization because of the tolerance towards different cultures.
	Defeat extremist entities: Any extremist groups like ISIS, Naxals, etc. can only infect a small territory or indoctrinate only a few individuals because the

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society believes that the gains from these would be limited and short-lived. Love and tolerance towards diverse views will give larger gains.

Reflect rationally and peacefully: It is because of the spirit of love and tolerance that we are able to contain any communal disturbances within a short time frame, despite the rise of fake news and provocative messages over social media.

India's global image: India is home to a large number of refugees and its credentials are unblemished when it comes to taking care of people who seek shelter and help. This also exists in our diaspora as they are the first to help Indians abroad and this was recently seen in the Ukraine evacuation.

Barring occasional incidents of violence and hatred, Indian civilization has always celebrated plurality and promoted love & tolerance. This spirit has countered the destructive forces within India and helped Indian society to survive, sustain and flourish. Today, religion has a big role to play in Indian politics and thus religiosity is seen to be side-lined by communal ideas which give greater electoral benefits.

12. **Examine how the decline of traditional artisanal industry in colonial India crippled the rural economy.**

Pre-colonial India had favorable foreign trade due to excellence in indigenous production. Indian artisans were famous all over the world for their skills. There was large scale production on cotton and silk, jute, dyestuffs, mineral and metallic products like arms, metal wares and oil. India, towards the end of the 18th century was, undoubtedly one of the main centers of world trade and industry. This status of India was completely destroyed under colonial times due to various factors including the introduction of British economic policies, the influx of cheap imported goods, and the loss of patronage from local elites.

The decline of traditional artisanal industry affected the rural economy in the following ways:

Loss of livelihoods: As traditional artisanal industries declined, many artisans and craftsmen lost their primary source of income. This resulted in widespread unemployment, impoverishment, and forced migration to urban areas.

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Deindustrialization: The decline of traditional industries and the influx of cheap imported goods from Britain resulted in deindustrialization in rural India. Local industries could not compete with the superior technology and cheaper prices of British goods, leading to the closure of many small-scale industries.

Agricultural dependency: With the decline of artisanal industries, the rural population became increasingly dependent on agriculture for their livelihoods. This led to a surplus labor force in the agricultural sector and contributed to the fragmentation of landholdings and declining agricultural productivity. The increased dependency on agriculture made the rural economy more vulnerable to climatic fluctuations, famines, and other natural disasters.

Erosion of self-sufficiency: The decline of traditional artisanal industries forced rural communities to rely on imported goods, eroding their self-sufficiency and making them more dependent on external markets.

Loss of skills and knowledge: As traditional artisanal industries declined, the valuable skills and knowledge of artisans and craftsmen were lost.

Drain of wealth: As more money was spent on imported goods, less was available to invest in local industries and infrastructure, further impeding the growth of the rural economy.

Social consequences: Artisans, once highly respected members of society, faced a decline in their social status as their industries dwindled. This led to the disintegration of traditional social structures and increased social tensions within rural communities.

The decline of traditional artisanal industry in colonial India had a devastating impact on the rural economy. The colonial policies and economic practices of the British further exacerbated these issues, leaving the rural economy crippled and vulnerable.

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13. **Highlight the importance of new objective that got added to the vision of Indian independence since the twenties of the last century.**

The history of the Indian National Movement can be divided into three important phases:

1885-1905: The phase of moderate nationalism when the Congress continued to be loyal to the British crown.

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1906-1916: Rise of Swadeshi Movement, militant nationalism and the Home Rule Movement.

1917-1947: The Gandhian era.

The new objectives that got added to the vision of Indian independence in the twenties of the last century include:

Social and Economic Justice: Aiming to address issues like poverty, inequality, and discrimination, this objective sought to create a more equitable society by providing equal opportunities and rights for all citizens.

Communal Harmony: Recognizing the need for unity among diverse religious and ethnic communities, the importance of promoting communal harmony became central to the independence movement.

Women's Empowerment: The vision for Indian Independence expanded to include women's rights and gender equality, with women participating in various capacities and challenging traditional gender roles.

Secularism: Emphasizing secularism as a fundamental principle, the vision aimed to ensure that India would be an inclusive and pluralistic nation, accommodating its diverse religious and cultural traditions.

Democratic Governance: The vision evolved to include the establishment of a democratic system of governance, allowing citizens to participate in the decision-making process and fostering accountability and transparency.

Self-Reliance and Economic Independence: This objective aimed to break free from the colonial economic system and develop a self-sufficient economy, reducing dependence on foreign resources.

These new objectives had significance as evidenced by the following:

- All these inclusive movements inform constituent assembly debates and led to the formation of one of the most inclusive constitutions of that time.
- Women got the universal right to vote from start itself
- SC and ST got constitutional safeguards against untouchability and also got the promise of affirmative action in articles 15, 16 and 46
- Farmers got the promise of self-rule in form of panchayats (Article 40), cottage industries (article 43) and animal husbandry along modern and scientific lines (article 48)
- Articles 38, 39 and 43 ensure a socialistic pattern of society and secure a living wage, a decent standard of living and social and cultural opportunities for all workers

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	• Formation of linguistic states in 1956 Thus, new forces added colours to the polyphony of the Indian national movement and enriched times to come with their diverse and universal concerns.
14.	**Account for variations in oceanic salinity and discuss its multidimensional effects.** Oceanic salinity refers to the concentration of dissolved salts in seawater, typically expressed in parts per thousand (ppt). The normal range of salinity is 33-37 ppt. It is a critical parameter in oceanography, influencing various aspects of the Earth's climate system and marine ecosystems. *Factors Affecting Ocean Salinity:* **Evaporation and precipitation**: The salinity of water in the surface layer of oceans depends mainly on evaporation and precipitation. For instance, regions with high rates of evaporation, such as subtropical areas, experience higher salinity levels because water evaporates, leaving behind concentrated salt. Conversely, regions with high precipitation, like the equator or coastal zones, have lower salinity due to dilution by freshwater input. **Fresh water flow**: Surface salinity is greatly influenced in coastal regions by the freshwater flow from rivers, and in polar regions by the processes of freezing and thawing of ice. For instance, the areas of oceans/seas bordering the continental areas are less saline than interior areas due to influx of fresh water from rivers. **Sea Ice Formation and Melting**: During sea ice formation, the expelled salt increases the salinity of surrounding seawater, leading to dense, cold, and saline water sinking and contributing to global ocean circulation. Conversely, when sea ice melts, it releases freshwater, reducing the salinity of surrounding waters. **Ocean Circulation and Mixing**: Ocean currents and mixing processes play a significant role in redistributing seawater with different salinity levels.

For example, the Atlantic Ocean's Gulf Stream transports warm and saline water from the tropics to higher latitudes, impacting regional salinity patterns. Ocean depth: The salinity of the water body increases with increase in depth of oceans. Due to rainfall and influx of fresh waters from rivers, the salinity of surface water is less.

Multi-dimensional Effects of Ocean Salinity:

Ocean Density and Circulation: Salinity, together with temperature, determines seawater density. Variations in salinity influence ocean circulation patterns, as denser water sinks and initiates deep ocean currents. This circulation helps regulate Earth's climate by redistributing heat globally.

Marine Ecosystems: Salinity directly affects marine life, particularly organisms adapted to specific salinity ranges. Drastic changes in salinity can disrupt marine ecosystems, affecting the distribution and abundance of marine species.
For example, Coral reef are very sensitive to the changes in salinity of the ocean.

Climate Regulation: Ocean salinity is intimately linked to the global water cycle and climate regulation. Changes in salinity impact the ocean's capacity to absorb and store heat, which, in turn, influences atmospheric circulation and weather patterns.

Sea Level Changes: Variations in oceanic salinity affect sea level through their impact on water density.
For instance, changes in sea level can have significant implications for coastal communities and ecosystems.

Ocean Acidification: Salinity plays a role in regulating the ocean's carbonate system. As CO2 levels rise due to human activities, ocean acidification occurs, affecting marine organisms with calcium carbonate shells and skeletons.
Water Resource Management: In coastal regions, variations in salinity affect the availability and quality of freshwater resources, impacting agriculture, human settlements, and ecosystems.

	Understanding and monitoring variations in oceanic salinity are essential for predicting and adapting to the impacts of climate change, improving marine resource management, and protecting vulnerable ecosystems. Remote sensing technologies and oceanographic studies provide valuable insights into these variations, aiding in the sustainable management of our oceans and their vital role in the Earth's climate system.
15.	**Petroleum refineries are not necessarily located nearer to crude oil producing areas, particularly in many of the developing countries. Explain its implications**

The location of petroleum refineries is influenced by several factors, including access to transportation infrastructure, market demand, and government policies. In many cases, petroleum refineries are not necessarily located near crude oil producing areas, especially in developing countries. This has several implications, including:

Increased transportation costs: When refineries are located far from crude oil producing areas, transportation costs for crude oil can be high. This can increase the cost of producing refined petroleum products, which may be passed on to consumers.

Vulnerability to supply chain disruptions: Refineries that are located far from crude oil producing areas are more vulnerable to supply chain disruptions. Any disruptions to transportation infrastructure or crude oil supply can lead to delays in production, which can impact the availability of refined products.

Dependence on imported crude oil: When refineries are not located near crude oil producing areas, countries may become dependent on imported crude oil to meet their energy needs. This can have economic and geopolitical implications, as countries may be forced to rely on foreign suppliers for their energy security.

Environmental concerns: The transportation of crude oil over long distances can pose environmental risks, such as oil spills or leaks. This can have negative impacts on local ecosystems and communities.

Lack of local economic benefits: When refineries are located far from crude oil producing areas, local communities may not benefit as much from the economic activity generated by the industry. For example, if a country exports |

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crude oil to be refined elsewhere, the local communities do not benefit from the added value created by refining the crude oil into finished products. This can lead to economic disparities between regions within a country.

Infrastructure challenges: In some cases, the lack of infrastructure connecting crude oil producing areas to refineries can be a challenge. For example, in countries with rugged terrain or poor road networks, transporting crude oil to refineries may be difficult or expensive. This can limit the ability of countries to develop their petroleum industry and access international markets.

The location of petroleum refineries hence has important implications for energy security, transportation costs, and environmental risks. While refineries may not necessarily be located near crude oil producing areas in some developing countries, efforts can be made to mitigate these risks through improved transportation infrastructure, diversification of energy sources, and environmental safeguards.

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16. **In what way can floods be converted into a sustainable source of irrigation and all-weather inland navigation in India?**

India, being a country with a diverse climate and geographical features, experiences a wide range of natural phenomena, including floods. While floods can cause significant damage and loss of life, if managed effectively, they can also be converted into sustainable sources of irrigation and all-weather inland navigation. This would not only mitigate the adverse effects of floods but also contribute to agricultural productivity and transportation infrastructure. Potential ways to achieve this transformation are as below:-

1. Construction of Flood Control Infrastructure
Dams and Reservoirs: Building dams and reservoirs in flood-prone areas can help regulate the flow of water during flood events. These structures can store excess water during heavy rainfall and release it gradually during dry periods, ensuring a continuous supply of water for irrigation throughout the year.
Embankments and Flood Channels: Constructing embankments and flood channels along rivers and streams can help redirect floodwaters to designated areas for irrigation purposes. By channeling the excess water, the impact of

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floods can be minimized, and the water can be utilized for agricultural activities.

2. Water Management Techniques

Rainwater Harvesting: Encouraging the adoption of rainwater harvesting techniques at the individual and community levels can help recharge groundwater and provide a sustainable source of irrigation during dry periods. This can be achieved through the construction of check dams, rooftop rainwater harvesting systems, and farm ponds.

Watershed Development: Implementing watershed management programs can help conserve rainwater and recharge aquifers. This involves activities like afforestation, contour bunding, and contour trenching, which reduce soil erosion and increase water infiltration, leading to enhanced groundwater availability for irrigation.

3. **Integration of Floodwater into Irrigation Systems**

Canals and Lift Irrigation: Developing an extensive network of canals and lift irrigation systems can help divert excess floodwater to areas requiring irrigation. By integrating floodwater into the existing irrigation infrastructure, farmers can benefit from increased water availability, leading to higher crop yields and improved agricultural productivity.

Floodwater Recharge Wells: Constructing floodwater recharge wells at suitable locations can help replenish groundwater reserves during floods. These wells can capture and store excess floodwater, which can then be accessed during periods of water scarcity for irrigation purposes.

4. **Inland Navigation and Transportation**

Waterways Development: Expanding and improving the existing network of rivers, canals, and waterways can facilitate all-weather inland navigation and transportation. This would not only provide an alternative mode of transportation but also boost trade and economic activities in flood-prone regions.

Floodplain Mapping: Conducting detailed surveys and mapping of floodplains can help identify suitable routes for inland navigation and transportation infrastructure. By utilizing floodplains for navigation purposes, the adverse impacts of floods can be minimized, and the potential benefits can be maximized.

By implementing these measures, floods can be transformed from being a destructive force to a sustainable source of irrigation and all-weather inland

	navigation in India. This requires a comprehensive approach involving the construction of flood control.
17.	**What characteristics can be assigned to monsoon climate that succeeds in feeding more than 50 percent of the world population residing in Monsoon Asia?** Seasonal variations in atmospheric circulation and precipitation patterns cause monsoon climates to have distinct wet and dry seasons. More than half of the world's population is said to be dependent on the monsoon climate, which is critical to agriculture and food production in Monsoon Asia, which includes nations like India, China, and Southeast Asia. _Some of the key characteristics of the monsoon climate that contribute to its ability to sustain food production in Monsoon Asia include:_ **Heavy rainfall**: Monsoon areas get a lot of rain throughout the wet season, which is essential for supporting plants and developing crops. **Seasonal Variability**: Farmers may plan their planting and harvesting schedules properly because the monsoon environment has different wet and dry seasons. **Temperature range**: Because monsoon regions offer such a wide range of temperatures, many different crops that are adapted to various temperature ranges can be grown there. **Fertility of the soil**: In monsoon regions, regular rainfall and seasonal flooding help to replenish soil nutrients, which raises the productivity of agricultural land. **Biodiversity**: The monsoon climate supports a wide variety of plant and animal species, which maintains the food chain and preserves the ecological equilibrium. **Water availability**: The high rainfall in the wet season and the seasonal flooding helps to maintain water availability throughout the year, which is crucial for irrigation and crop growth. **Adaptation strategies**: Farmers in monsoon regions have developed a range of adaptation strategies to cope with the variability of the monsoon climate, including crop diversification, water storage, and soil conservation techniques. **Cultural significance**: The monsoon climate has a deep cultural significance in many societies in Monsoon Asia, where it is often celebrated in festivals and

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ceremonies, and it is closely linked to traditional farming practices and knowledge systems.

Hydroelectric power: The seasonal variation in rainfall also creates opportunities for hydroelectric power generation, which provides a reliable source of renewable energy for many countries in Monsoon Asia.

Tourism: The monsoon climate also attracts a significant number of tourists who are interested in experiencing the unique landscapes and cultural traditions associated with the monsoon season.

Overall, millions of people in Monsoon Asia depend on the monsoon climate for their food supply and way of life. Yet, it is crucial to remember that climate change and other variables have the potential to seriously impact the region's food security and sustainability by upsetting the delicate balance of the monsoon system.

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18. **The women's questions arose in modern India as a part of the 19th century social reform movement. What were the major issues and debates concerning women in that period?.**

Women's condition was deplorable during the colonial era. British realized that Indian women's condition was inferior to that of British society. The practices of Child marriage, Forced marriage, Sati, Devadasi, Purdah, Dowry, Female Foeticide, and Polygamy were prevalent in Indian society. The literacy rate was so low and they did not contribute towards the country's GDP. Bad social practices, dogmatic religious beliefs, inhuman superstitions, and sinister practices caused the most significant decline. However, after the social collapse, eternal depression, terrible suffering, and social collapse of the nineteenth century, the social reformers made zealous efforts to remove the social evil and awaken the people against the injustice done to Indian women. Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, and other social reformers emphasized women's education, prevention of early marriage, abolition of polygamy, and remarriage of widows.

The practice of Sati was widely prevalent in the 19th century. Traditionally, the widow sacrificed herself willingly, and the fire seemed cold to him. After the burning, a memorial stone was placed, and a sanctuary was often built for her and worshipped as a goddess. The actions of Sati were

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considered inhuman, and scholars discussed them from a different approach. A strong movement against this practice was led by Raja Ram Mohan Roy in the 19th century, which resulted in Lord William Bentinck passing a law against it in the year 1829.

The society during the British era was very patriarchal. Women were considered inferior to men and were deprived of many activities. It strengthened the foundation of the patriarchal society and deprived women of property rights, adoption, marriage, and divorce. Women were not allowed to inherit the property of their ancestors. They were considered as a wealth of some other family.

The Purdah system was highly prevalent in our society. The women's had to cover their faces before the opposite sex. Such a system was highly prevalent in some parts of the country and it extended the distancing between opposite sexes and promoted social isolation, and mental numbness. This was why women's participation in the mass movement was missing at that time. Previously, the restriction of women on the issue of marriage, movement, freedom, liberty, decisions were not that rampant, but in the 19th century, it became a part of the society.

The era of the 19th century witnessed a low stand in the case of woman's education. Women were not allowed to acquire higher education. In order to ameliorate the situation, different reformers have taken steps to open girls' schools at different places. Recognized as the primary means of uplifting the status of women, education began in the British period. After the Bhakti movement, Christian missionaries started interested in educating girls. For the first time, a girls' school was opened in Bombay in 1824. Before 1875, the universities of Calcutta, Bombay, and Madras did not allow the admission of girls for higher education. In 1881 the hunting committee also stressed the need to educate women.

Social customs such as polygamy, child marriage were widely prevalent at that time. Polygamy is the custom where a person marries two or more people. Sections 494 and 495 of the 1860 Indian Penal Code prohibit polygamy for Christians. In 1955, the Hindu Marriage Act was drafted, which prohibited the marriage of a Hindu whose spouse was still alive. Thus, polygamy became

illegal in India in 1956, for all citizens except Muslims, who have four wives, and for Hindus in Goa.

Child marriage was a major issue during the British era. At an early age, the girls were married and asked to give birth to a child. There were many reformers who fought for child marriage. In 1929, the Child Marriage Prohibition Act was passed. The law required girls below the age of fourteen and boys below the age of eighteen. However, the government failed to implement it properly.

The participation of women in the workforce has been found to be very low. The female members of the society were subjected to unequal pay as compared to the male counterpart. They were confined to the four walls of their houses and were not allowed to contribute to the country's GDP. Subsequently, after independence, a series of measures were taken to improve the rate of participation of women at work.

S**ociety women were not allowed to marry once their husbands die**d. In 1854, Vidyasagar started his campaign for the remarriage of widows. The 19th century was particularly scary for women, especially girls from low-income families forced into older men. After the death of her husband, she had to spend the rest of her life in a white sari, sacrificing all economic comforts, living a stigmatized and isolated life, and seeing this non-progressive exercise happening before his own eyes, Vidyasagar decided to end it. After the abolition of the practice of Sati, the British recognized the status of Hindu widows and passed the Remarriage Act for Hindu Widows in 1856. The Right to Property Act for Hindu Women was passed in 1937. It aimed to improve the property condition of widows.

Thus, during British rule, several social laws were used to balance the status of the ambiguous Indian woman. The national movement and the various movements of women have paved the way for their release of social sins and religious taboos. People have become aware of their social disabilities and have tried to remove all kinds of inequalities.

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19.	**Distinguish between religiousness/religiosity and communalism giving one example of how the former has got transformed into the latter in independent India.**
	Religiousness and communalism are two distinct concepts that have been observed in the Indian context. While religiousness refers to an individual's personal belief and adherence to a particular religion, communalism refers to the politicization and exploitation of religious identities for political gain. In independent India, there have been instances where religiousness has transformed into communalism, leading to social and political tensions.
	Religiousness -
	Religiousness is the expression of an individual's faith and adherence to a particular religion. It is a personal choice and encompasses beliefs, rituals, and practices that are followed by an individual in their daily life. Religiousness is driven by an individual's spiritual and moral convictions, and it does not necessarily involve the politicization of religious identities or conflict with other religious communities. It serves as a source of solace, guidance, and ethical principles for individuals.
	Communalism -
	Communalism, on the other hand, refers to the exploitation of religious identities for political or social gain. It involves the manipulation of religious sentiments and the creation of divisions among different religious communities. Communalism often leads to conflicts, violence, and the marginalization of certain religious groups. It can be fueled by political parties, leaders, or organizations that seek to mobilize support based on religious affiliations.
	Transformation of Religiousness into Communalism in Independent India
	In independent India, there have been instances where religiousness has transformed into communalism, primarily due to political motivations and socio-economic factors. One example of this transformation is the rise of the Babri Masjid-Ram Janmabhoomi dispute.
	The Babri Masjid-Ram Janmabhoomi dispute originated in the 16th century when the Babri Masjid was constructed in Ayodhya, Uttar Pradesh. The dispute gained significant attention in the 1980s and 1990s when it became a

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political issue. Various Hindu nationalist organizations and political parties started mobilizing support by advocating for the construction of a Ram temple at the site, claiming it to be the birthplace of Lord Ram.

This issue, which initially had religious connotations, gradually transformed into communalism as political parties capitalized on it to gain support from their respective religious communities. Tensions between Hindus and Muslims escalated, leading to violent clashes and the demolition of the Babri Masjid in 1992. The incident resulted in widespread communal riots across the country, causing significant loss of life and property.

The transformation of religiousness into communalism in the Babri Masjid-Ram Janmabhoomi dispute highlights how political motivations and socio-economic factors can exploit religious sentiments and create divisions among different communities. It is essential to distinguish between religiousness and communalism to ensure peaceful coexistence and harmony among diverse religious groups in independent India.

| 20. | **"The growth of cities as I.T. hubs has opened up new avenues of employment, but has also created new problems". Substantiate this statement with examples.**

Cities like Bangalore, Hyderabad, Chennai, Pune, Mumbai, Delhi-NCR etc. grew significantly and fastidiously in the last two decades owing to growth in the IT-related services sector. The employment provided by the IT sector agrees with middle-class values and aspirations, further boosting the relevance and importance of these IT hubs, and further causing inward migration to these destinations.

Since, these IT hubs employ a considerable number of people, and since they attract a host of other related and unrelated services needed to cater to the daily needs of these employees, it causes the twin problems of over-population and over-crowding. The result is that municipal services get over-stretched, housing prices soar, traffic gets congested, prices of essential commodities inflate, and most importantly social tensions develop and increase. Sometimes, civil and police administrative machineries are also put to test in these cities. Especially in bigger cities like Delhi-NCR where IT hubs create sub-localities within the city, policing power is seen decreasing proportionately to the size |

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and scale of a locality's policing requirements. This is why problems like crimes against women, child abduction, racial-religious mob violence etc. happen with great frequency in such places.

Lastly, the growth of cities as IT hubs creates problems with pollution, waste disposal and energy management. Also, E-waste generation and its associated harms, and also the strain that IT infrastructure put on the electric grid, are much bigger challenges than one would like to admit and the only way forward is to follow sustainable development practices while developing IT hubs.

21.	**"The local self-government system in India has not proved to be effective instrument of governance". Critically examine the statement and give your views to improve the situation.** The local self-government system (LSGs), having an important role in local planning, development and administration, got a big fillip when it got constitutional status under 73rd and 74th Amendments. *Successes of LSGs in India* • Democratic Decentralisation through the election of 30 lakh representative in panchayats alone (as per Devolution Index Report 2013-14 of IIPA). • Voice to the marginalized and vulnerable sections of the society through reservations for women, SCs and STs. • Effective public service delivery as per the needs of the local population through LSG allows for bottom-up approach. Example- MGNREGA. *Shortcomings of LSGs in India* *The LSGs are dependent on the states for:* **Functions**: The progress of devolution of powers and responsibilities to local governments at various levels is poor and uneven. **Funds**: The local bodies cannot even meet routine functions because the proceeds of various taxes are not available to them as they form part of the Consolidated Fund of the State. **Functionaries**: There is a capacity deficit among the personnel and elected functionaries due to lack of capacity building.

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	Measures to Improve the Status of LSG (2nd ARC) • Clear definition of functions for each level of local government in case of each subject matter. • State Finance Commissions should evolve objective and transparent norms for devolution and distribution of funds. • Capacity building efforts must attend to both the organisation building requirements as also the professional and skills upgradation of individuals associated with these bodies. • Putting in place a well-delineated activity mapping for LSGs.
22.	**Critically examine the Supreme Court's judgement on 'National Judicial Appointments Commission Act, 2014' with reference to appointment of judges of higher judiciary in India.** Recently the Supreme Court struck down the 99th constitutional amendment and held the view that NJAC (National Judicial Appointment Commission) is not a credible alternative to the Supreme Court's collegium system of appointment of judges for the higher judiciary. The court held that the primacy of judiciary in the appointment of judges was part of the basic structure of the Constitution and that the parliament, through NJAC act, violated this basic structure by giving executive and civil society a say in these appointments. *However, this judgement faced criticism based on following arguments-* **The verdict upheld an extra-constitutional forum**, created by the Supreme Court's own members to serve its own ends, in the place of a system lawfully enacted by a popularly elected Parliament. According to critics, **the judgement failed to adequately answer the fundamental question at the root of the controversy**, i.e. how is judicial primacy in making appointments to the higher judiciary a part of our Constitution's basic structure. Whereas the Constitution accords to the President the power to appoint judges with compulsorily consulting with certain persons. **Critics say that the Supreme Court, in the second judges' case, 1993, wrongly interpreted the word 'consultation'** used in Articles 124 and 217,

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	to mean concurrence. The court then held that the executive was bound by the advice of the CJI in making appointments to the higher judiciary. Even the Supreme Court has admitted in the same NJAC judgement that all is not well within the opaque collegium system of " judges appointing judges" and called for further discussion on reform process of collegium system. The Constitution envisages and puts a system in place to ensure the balance of power involving the executive, the legislature and the judiciary but not at the cost of opaqueness in appointment process. With evident loopholes in the collegium system, time has come for a review of the verdict by a larger bench.
23.	**'Simultaneous election to the Lok Sabha and the State Assemblies will limit the amount of time and money spent in electioneering but it will reduce the government's accountability to the people' Discuss.** Recently the debate over simultaneous holding of the election to Parliament and State legislature has been revived. The Election Commission has also supported the idea of holding simultaneous elections. "Simultaneous Elections" broadly means structuring the Indian election cycle in a manner that elections to Lok Sabha and State Assemblies are synchronized together. *Benefits of simultaneous election* • The 79th Report of the Department related Parliamentary Committee has justified the simultaneous conduct of polls on several grounds, including a huge cut in expenditure incurred for conduct of separate elections every year. • Frequent elections lead to imposition of Model Code of Conduct (MCC) over prolonged periods of time and puts on hold the entire development programme and activities of the Union and State Governments in the poll bound State. Simultaneous election will help in limiting amount of time in electioneering. • Simultaneous elections would also reduce pressure on manpower and resource deployment necessary for conduct of elections.

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Concerns regarding reducing the government's accountability to the people

- Assembly elections are fought on local issues and parties and leaders are judged in the context of their work done in the state. Clubbing them with the general election could lead to a situation where the national narrative submerges the regional story and dilutes the accountability of state leadership.

- Therefore, while the idea of simultaneous elections does hold merit, due consideration should be given to both its benedicts and demerits before a decision is taken.

Simultaneous elections are desirable provided they are juxtaposed with certain reforms that would require a prior political consensus to bring a constitutional amendment to curtail or raise term of some states to enable EC to synchronize poll schedule, raise necessary resources of EC such as EVMs, personnel, etc.

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24. **How do pressure groups influence Indian political process? Do you agree with this view that informal pressure groups have emerged as powerful as formal pressure groups in recent years?.**

Pressure groups are vital to the Indian political process, influencing decisions, shaping public opinion, and advocating for specific causes. Formal pressure groups are structured entities, such as trade unions and NGOs, while informal pressure groups are more loosely organized, including social movements and online communities. Both types of pressure groups contribute to a vibrant democracy by ensuring diverse voices are heard in policy-making.

There has been a growing perception that informal pressure groups have emerged as powerful as formal pressure groups in recent years.

This view can be attributed to the following factors:
Increased access to information: With the rise of the internet and social media, informal pressure groups can easily disseminate information and mobilize public support for their cause.

	Media attention: Informal pressure groups often receive significant media attention, which can pressure politicians and policymakers to address their concerns. **Spontaneity and flexibility**: Informal pressure groups can respond quickly to emerging issues and adapt their strategies as needed. *Examples of informal pressure groups gaining prominence in recent years include:* **Anti-corruption movement (India Against Corruption**): Led by social activist Anna Hazare in 2011, this informal pressure group demanded the enactment of the Jan Lokpal Bill to address corruption. The movement garnered widespread public support and played a crucial role in the formation of the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP). **Farmers' protests**: The ongoing farmers' protests in India, which began in 2020, are an example of an informal pressure group coming together to challenge the central government's farm laws. The protests have gained national and international attention, pressuring the government to engage in dialogue with the farmers. Despite the growing influence of informal pressure groups, it is essential not to undermine the importance of formal pressure groups, which continue to play a crucial role in the Indian political process. Both types of pressure groups contribute to a vibrant democracy by ensuring that diverse voices are heard and considered in the policy-making process.
25.	**Discuss the role of Public Accounts Committee in establishing accountability of the government to the people.** Public Accounts Committee is considered the most important financial Committee of Parliament in the financial accountability process. It comprises of 22 members of parliament (15 members from Lok Sabha and 7 from Rajya Sabha). *It establishes the accountability of the government by:* • Examining the budgetary appropriations and accounts of the government and Reports of Comptroller and Auditor General (under article 151) on the execution of the projects and programmes by the various ministries.

- Examining the demand for excess grants before they are presented to the Parliament for regularisation.
- In scrutinising the appropriation accounts and the audit report of CAG on it, the Committee has to satisfy itself that:
- the money that has been disbursed was legally available for the applied service or purpose;
- the expenditure conforms to the authority that governs it; and
- every reappropriation has been made in accordance with the related rules.
- The committee examines public expenditure not only from legal and formal point of view to discover technical irregularities but also from the point of view of economy, prudence, wisdom and propriety to bring out the cases of waste, loss, corruption, extravagance, inefficiency and nugatory expenses.

Demerits:

PAC in India is not able to enforce the accountability of the government to the people in true sense because-

- Even if it brings out the irregularities in the public expenditure there are no mechanisms to enforce the corrective measures.
- It examines the expenditure which has already been done by the government.
- Its recommendations are only advisory in nature and are not binding on the ministry of the day.
- PAC has got no mandate to examine the policy in broader sense.

However, PAC at times, through its criticism of the inefficient public expenditure of the government, creates a strong public opinion against the government. The incumbent government to remain in power tries to rectify the inefficiency in its public expenditure and policy making. Thus, the committee helps in enforcing accountability of the executive to the people.

26. | **'To ensure effective implementation of policies addressing water, sanitation and hygiene needs, the identification of beneficiary segments is to be synchronized with the anticipated outcomes'. Examine the statement in the context of the WASH scheme.**

India is one of the developing countries that has come out with WASH schemes to address the challenges of health and sanitation in urban and rural areas. Swachh Bharat Abhiyan for urban and rural areas is one of the manifestation of the importance of WASH schemes.

There has been huge disparities in access to WASH services across different segments of the population. In India, around 128 million lack safe water services and about 840 million people don't have sanitation services. Thus, there is an urgent need to identify the different kinds of beneficiaries and communities whose access to WASH services need to be enhanced. The outcomes need to be enhanced in terms of adequacy, accessibility, affordability, quality and safety of the WASH services.

WASH sectors come under concurrent subjects and both central and state governments can legislate on it. The collection of data related to WASH schemes are generally done at state level but it suffers from many discrepancies. The needs and barriers for segments of the population differ and consequently the strategies also need to be customised for the different segments. Therefore, policymakers are gradually moving away from a "one size fits all" approach to a more beneficiary-centric approach.

A traditional approach has been to segment the beneficiaries on the basis of geographical and social context (GSS). Population was therefore segmented as rural, urban, low income and so on. Recently there is a trend to segment the beneficiaries on the basis of the human life cycle (LCS). Beneficiaries are thus segmented as children, adolescents, adults, senior citizens, and so on.
To be able to achieve our WASH targets, it is important that our policies adopt both the LCS and GSS approaches.

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27. **Does the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 ensure effective mechanism for empowerment and inclusion of the intended beneficiaries in the society? Discuss.**

The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 replaced the Persons with Disabilities Act, 1995 to comply with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. It has come as a breather for estimated 70-100 million disabled citizens of India. Main provisions of the act that ensure inclusion and empowerment are enumerated below–

- The act aims towards more inclusive coverage of the disabled population by increasing the types of disability from existing 7 to 21. Speech and Language Disability and Specific Learning Disability have been added for the first time. Acid Attack Victims have been included.

- Every child with benchmark disability (at least 40% of the specified disability) between the age group of 6 and 18 years has been given the right to free education. It also recognises the right of a disabled child to study in a main stream school.

- Additional benefits such as reservation in higher education (not less than 5%), government jobs (not less than 4 %), reservation in allocation of land, poverty alleviation schemes (5% allotment) etc. have been provided for persons with benchmark disabilities and those with high support needs.
- Stress has also been given to ensure accessibility in public buildings in a prescribed time-frame.

- This act stresses the principles of non-discrimination, full and effective participation and inclusion in society, equality of opportunity, accessibility and respect for the evolving capacities of children with disabilities. Emphasis has been given to right based approach with focus on right to equality and opportunity, right to inherit and own property, right to home and family and reproductive rights among others.

- The act has also been criticised as it misses on special provision to assist persons with mental illness. Many states also could not frame rules under

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the act within the stipulated time limit. In absence of rules, several key provisions of the act could not be enforced.

While the 2016 Act provides many reassurances, brings domestic law in consonance with international standards, and is a huge step forward, its implementation should be monitored carefully to ensure that the needs of persons suffering from disability issues are being comprehensively met.

| 28. | **Hunger and Poverty are the biggest challenges for good governance in India still today. Evaluate how far successive governments have progressed in dealing with these humongous problems. Suggest measures for improvement.**

From a famine affected third world country that depended on import of food grains to feed its population to a food secured nation, India has come a long way. Various steps taken by successive government to deal with hunger and poverty are discussed below–

- Green revolution in the late 1960s assured that India became self-sufficient in food grain production. There is clear evidence that level of hunger declined in most of the states.
- "GaribiHatao" (Removal of Poverty) gained prominence during 1970s with emphasis on welfare of the masses.
- Food for Work Programmes implemented from time to time aimed towards providing food in lieu of work also met with some success. It was felt that it would address the dual need of the employment and food.
- The accessibility issue of food was assured by Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) introduced in 1997. Better targeting ensured reduction in levels of poverty and hunger.
- More recently, employment generation programmes like MGNREGA and Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana have met with unprecedented success in improving livelihood of the people.
- But the challenges still remain. According to the latest Global Hunger Index (2017), India got a lowly 100th position out of 119 countries. On poverty front also, around 21.9% of India's population still lives below the national poverty line. Measures that could be taken are– |

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	• All the above programmes and schemes are mired with leakages and problems of last mile delivery. This issue need to be addressed by better targeting using JAM trinity (Jan Dhan, Aadhar, Mobile). • Low performance on hunger index can be improved by moving towards nutritional security by way of promotion of Nutri-cereals and other supplements. Better facilities of healthcare and education will indirectly help in reducing out-of-pocket expenditure and thus will help reduce incidence of poverty. Steps towards realisation of goals of Universal Basic Income and Basic Minimum Services will go a long way in addressing vicious cycle of chronic poverty.
29.	**'China is using its economic relations and positive trade surplus as tools to develop potential military power status in Asia'. In the light of this statement, discuss its impact on India as her neighbour** China has emerged both as an economic and a military powerhouse. It has a trade surplus with most of the countries in Asia including India. China's economic initiatives like One Belt One Road (OBOR) and Maritime Silk Road (MSR), though promoted primarily as economic initiatives have strategic undertone. *Possible impact of China's rise on India are–* • China could emerge as a direct military threat to India as has been seen in the recent Doklam standoff and other border disputes. • In face of rising assertion in the international affairs, China could hamper India's interest in multilateral forums like UNSC and those initiated by Beijing like Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank. • Growing economic cooperation between China and Pakistan could be seen as a policy to contain India. This is evident from China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) which has potential to emerge as a threat to India. • China's deepening relation with South Asian countries, where China is involved in infrastructure building, poses significant challenge to India's position in the region. At present China has more say in this region where India had strong hold in the past.

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China's rising economic influence in Asia will allow Beijing to spread its influence in the entire region, which could be used to India's detriment. In face of these challenges, India's policy response must focus on building indigenous military power and forging regional cooperation at the same time.

30. **What are the main functions of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)? Explain different functional commissions attached to it.**

The Economic and Social Council is at the heart of the United Nations system to advance the three dimensions of sustainable development – economic, social and environmental. It is the central platform for fostering debate and innovative thinking, forging consensus on ways forward, and coordinating efforts to achieve internationally agreed goals. It is also responsible for the follow-up to major UN conferences and summits. The UN Charter established ECOSOC in 1945 as one of the six main organs of the United Nations.

The main functions of ECOSOC are
• Advancement of the economic, social, and environmental aspects of sustainable development.
• It acts as the main forum for promoting and forming debates, creative thinking, and making attempts to put international agreements into action.
• A four-week session of UN conferences and summits, as well as meetings with the World Bank and IMF, are also its responsibility.
• Functional commissions: It is connected to a number of functional commissions. Some have been replaced and others have been disbanded.

Active commissions
Commission for Social Development- It was established in 1946 to advise and assist in the implementation of its work. It is associated with the implementation of the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action.
Commission on Narcotic Drugs- It acts as the central drug policy- making body within the UN system and performs duties supervised by the international drug control conventions.

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Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice- It provides guidance in the matter of crime prevention and criminal justice to the United Nations.

Statistical Commission- It is associated with providing assistance to the council in the matter of development of national statistics, coordination of the statistical work of specialized agencies, development of the central statistical services, advising collection, analysis and dissemination of statistical information.

Forum on Forests- Responsible for implementation of agreements related to forest, fostering international cooperation, policy development, monitoring, assessing and creating reports on progress, provide strong commitment for sustainable development.

Commission on Science and Technology for Development- It looks after the specific issues related to science and technology for development.

Commission on the Status of Women- It is associated with promotion of gender equality and women empowerment.

Commission on Population and Development- Responsible for monitoring, reviewing and assessing the implementation of the Programme of Action adopted in the International Conference on Population and Development.

Disbanded and replaced commissions: Commission on Human Rights was replaced by the United Nations Human Rights Council.

31.	**Explain the salient features of the constitution (One Hundred and First Amendment) Act, 2016. Do you think it is efficacious enough 'to remove cascading effect of taxes and provide for common national market for goods and services'?** The Constitution (One Hundred and First Amendment) Act, 2016, introduced the Goods and Services Tax (GST) in India, a comprehensive indirect tax system aimed at streamlining the taxation process and creating a common national market for goods and services. *The amendment's salient features include:* **Dual GST structure**: This includes Central GST (CGST) and State GST (SGST) or Union Territory GST (UTGST) depending on the transaction type. **Integrated GST (IGST):** For inter-state transactions and imports, the Integrated GST is levied and administered by the Central Government.

Destination-based taxation: The GST is a destination-based tax system, meaning that the tax revenue is collected by the state where the goods or services are consumed, rather than the state where they are produced.

GST Council: The amendment establishes the GST Council, a constitutional body comprising representatives from the Central Government and all States/Union Territories.

Compensation to states: To address potential revenue losses for states, the amendment provides for compensation payments for a period of five years from the implementation of GST.

The efficacy of the GST in removing the cascading effect of taxes and providing a common national market for goods and services can be assessed as follows:

Removal of cascading effect: By subsuming multiple indirect taxes, such as excise duty, service tax, and value-added tax, into a single tax, the GST has significantly reduced the cascading effect of taxes, leading to a more transparent and simplified tax structure.

Enhanced compliance and reduced tax evasion: The GST's comprehensive input tax credit system incentivizes businesses to ensure compliance and reduces opportunities for tax evasion.

Facilitating a common market: By harmonizing tax rates and eliminating state-level barriers, the GST has facilitated the creation of a common national market, making it easier for businesses to trade across state borders and improving economic efficiency.

However, there are some concerns and challenges:

Multiple tax rates: The GST system still has several tax rates, which can create confusion and complexity for businesses.

Compliance burden: Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) may face challenges in complying with the GST's digital filing requirements and navigating the tax system.

Revenue concerns for states: Some states may experience revenue losses despite the compensation mechanism, as they lose the autonomy to levy their taxes.

Addressing the challenges faced by businesses and states, and further simplifying the tax structure, can enhance the overall efficacy of the GST system.

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