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our environment. Analyse the impact of sand mining along the Indian coasts, citing specific examples.

60. Vulnerability is an essential element for defining disaster impacts and its threat to people. How and in what ways can vulnerability to disasters be characterized? Discuss different types of vulnerability with reference to disasters.

61. The banning of 'Jamaat-e-islaami' in Jammu and Kashmir brought into focus the role of over-ground workers (OGWs) in assisting terrorist organizations. Examine the role played by OGWs in assisting terrorist organizations in insurgency affected areas. Discuss measures to neutralize the influence of OGWs.

62. What is CyberDome Project? Explain how it can be useful in controlling internet crimes in India.

63. Cross-border movement of insurgents is only one of the several security challenges facing the policing of the border in North-East India. Examine the various challenges currently emanating across the India-Myanmar border. Also, discuss the steps to counter the challenges.

64. It is argued that the strategy of inclusive growth is intended to meet the objective of inclusiveness and sustainability together. Comment on this statement.

65. The public expenditure management is a challenge to the Government of India in the context of budgetmaking during the post-liberalization period. Clarify it.

66. What are the reformative steps taken by the Government to make the food grain distribution system more effective?

67. Elaborate the policy taken by the Government of India to meet the challenges of the food processing sector.

68. How is the Government of India protecting traditional knowledge of medicine from patenting by pharmaceutical companies?

69. How can biotechnology help to improve the living standards of farmers?.

70. Define the concept of carrying capacity of an ecosystem as relevant to an environment. Explain how understanding this concept is vital while planning for sustainable development of a region.

71. Indian government has recently strengthed the anti-terrorism laws by amending the unlawful activities (Prevention) Act, (UAPA), 1967 and the NIA Act. Analyze the changes in the context of prevailing security environment while discussing scope and reasons for opposing the UAPA by human rights organisations.

72. What are the basic principles of public life? Illustrate any three of these with suitable examples.

73. What do you understand by the term 'public servant'? Reflect on the expected role of the public servant.

74. Effective utilization of public funds is crucial to meet development goals. Critically examine the reasons for under-utilization and mis-utilization of public funds and their implications.

75. What is meant by the term 'constitutional morality' ? How does one uphold constitutional morality?

76. What is meant by 'crisis of conscience' ? How does it manifest itself in the public domain?

77. Explain the basic principles of citizens charter movement and bring out its importance.

78. There is a view that the Officials Secrets Act is an obstacle to the implementation of RTI Act. Do you agree with the view? Discuss.
79. What do you understand by probity in governance? Based on your understanding of the term, suggest measures for ensuring probity in government.
80. "Emotional Intelligence is the ability to make your emotions work for you instead of against you." Do you agree with this view? Discuss.
81. "An unexamined life is not worth living" — Socrates
82. "A man is but the product of his thoughts. What he thinks he becomes." — M.K. Gandhi
83. "Where there is righteousness in the heart, there is beauty in the character. When there is beauty in the character, there is harmony in the home. When there is harmony in the home, there is order in the nation. When there is order in the nation, there is peace in the world." — A. P. J. Abdul Kalam.
84. You are heading the rescue operations in an area affected by severe natural calamity. Thousands of people are rendered homeless and deprived of food,
85. Honesty and uprightness are the hallmarks of a civil servant. Civil servants possessing these qualities are considered as the backbone of any strong organization….
86. An apparel manufacturing company having large number of women employees was losing sales due to various factors. The company hired a reputed marketing executive, who increased the volume of sales within a short span of time.
87. In a modem democratic polity, there is the concept of political executive and permanent executive. Elected people's representatives from the political executive…
88. In one of the districts of a frontier state, narcotics menace has been rampant. This has resulted in money laundering, mushrooming of poppy farming, ….
89. In recent times, there has been an increasing concern in India to develop effective civil service ethics, code of conduct, transparency measures, ethics and integrity systems and anti- corruption agencies. In view of this, there is a need being felt to…
90. Safeguarding the Indian art heritage is the need of the moment. Discuss.
91. Assess the importance of the accounts of the Chinese and Arab travellers in the reconstruction of the history of India.
92. Throw light on the significance of thoughts of Mahatma Gandhi in the present times.
93. Why is Indian Regional Navigational Satellite System (IRNSS) needed? How does it help in navigation?
94. Why is India taking keen interest in resources of Arctic region?.
95. Define mantle plume and explain its role in plate tectonics.
96. What are the consequences of spreading of 'Dead Zones' on marine ecosystems?.
97. "Caste system is assuming new identities and associational forms. Hence, caste system cannot be eradicated in India". Comment.
98. 'Despite implementation of various programmes for eradication of poverty by the government in India, poverty is still existing'. Explain by giving reasons.
99. How the Indian concept of secularism is different from the western model of secularism? Discuss.
100. The Bhakti movement received a remarkable re-orientation with the advent

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"Education is not an injunction, it is an effective and pervasive tool for all round development of an individual and social transformation". Examine the New Education Policy, 2020 (NEP, 2020) in light of the above statement. (UPSC IAS Mains 2020 General Studies Paper – 4)

- The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 has been recently announced by the Government of India. NEP 2020 is novel in many ways that can help develop an individual and social transformation.
- It recognizes the importance of formative years; it envisages making education more inclusive and aimed at transforming the Indian education system to meet the needs of the 21st Century.

NEP's Vision of Individual & Social Transformation
- Recognizing the Importance of Formative years:In adopting a 5+3+3+4 model for school education starting at age 3, the policy acknowledges the formative years' primacy from ages 3 to 8 in shaping the child's future.
- Encouraging Vulnerable Sections of Society:Another laudable aspect of the scheme is vocational courses with an internship. This may encourage the vulnerable sections of society to send their children to school. Also, it would help in the realization of the goal of the Skill India Mission.
- Making Education More Inclusive:The NEP proposes extending the Right to Education (RTE) to all children up to the age of 18. Further, the policy seeks to leverage the huge potential of online pedagogy and learning methodologies to increase gross enrollment in higher education. Moreover, technological solutions should be utilized for creating greater access to the socially and economically disadvantaged groups.
- Ending Hindi vs. English Debate:Most crucially, NEP, once and for all, buries the strident Hindi versus English language debate. It emphasizes making the mother tongue, the local language, or the regional language the medium of instruction at least till Grade 5, which is considered the best medium of teaching. This will integrate culture, language, and traditions with the learning so that children can assimilate it in an integrative manner.
- Departure from Silos Mentality:Another key aspect of school education in the new policy is the breaking of the strict division of arts, commerce, and science streams in high school. This can lay the foundation for a multi-disciplinary approach in high education. This will help change the present scenario where students are under societal pressure to pursue certain streams that may not be as per their choice.
- Education & Social Justice:NEP recognizes education as the most effective way for social justice. Thus, the NEP calls for an investment of about six percent of GDP jointly by the Center and the States.

The new National Education Policy 2020 is novel. It aims to make the education system holistic, flexible, multidisciplinary, aligned to the needs of the 21st century and the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.

What are the main components of emotional intelligence (EI)? Can they be learned? Discuss. (UPSC IAS Mains 2020 General Studies Paper – 4)

Emotional Intelligence (EI) refers to the capability of a person to recognize, understand and manage own emotions, as well as to understand, manage and influence emotions of others. It is not always virtuous and can be used as a tool for positive and negative ends.

It is said to have five main elements which help in the following ways:
- Self-awareness: A self-aware person is in better position to understand the emotions of others.
- Self-regulation: It makes a person think before speaking/doing. It has many positive aspects including that of self assessment and holding himself accountable for his actions.
- Motivation: It helps in achieving goals. A motivated person leads by example and is in a better position to influence others.
- Empathy: It helps in understanding a situation by putting oneself in the position of others. Those who can empathize with others earn respect.
- Social skills: It helps in communicating your point of view and builds rapport with others. It makes the relationship more comfortable.

There is an "ability" model by Salovey and Mayer, Goleman's "performance-based" model, the BarOn model of emotional-social intelligence (ESI), which have different components of EI, however these components mainly involve how we perceive emotions, raise awareness of emotions, recognise, regulate and release emotions judiciously and empathetically, that is to say the four main components of EI are self-awareness, self-regulation, social awareness, and social skills. One can always learn how to better conscious knowledge of one's own character and feelings, regulate oneself without intervention from external entities, understand other people and take them along and develop skills required for successful social interaction. Emotions can be studied, experienced and taught, hence they are developable assets.

"The will to power exists, but it can be tamed and be guided by rationality and principles of moral duty.' Examine this statement in the context of international relations. (UPSC IAS Mains 2020 General Studies Paper – 4)

The 'will to power' represents a realist perspective, which assumes that nations are primarily driven by self-interest, power, and survival. Meanwhile, the idea that this 'will to power' can be 'tamed and guided by rationality and principles of moral duty' aligns more with liberal and constructivist perspectives, which emphasize

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cooperation, rule-based international order, and ethical obligations.

- Realism: Realist theories view international relations as a struggle for power among self-interested states. This 'will to power' can lead to conflict and competition, as states vie for dominance or survival. Example: the Russia-Ukraine war – will to power the eastern europe or the South China conflict is will to power marine resources and strategic sea lanes of communication.
- Liberalism: Liberal theories, on the other hand, emphasize the potential for international cooperation through institutions, economic interdependence, and democratic governance. They believe that the 'will to power' can be mitigated by the creation of international norms, laws, and institutions that guide state behavior. Example: UNCLOS regulating the affairs of the state on Oceans or the Outer Space treaty 1967 regulating the use of space for peaceful purposes.
- Constructivism: Constructivists argue that state behavior is shaped by identity, norms, and values. They believe that the 'will to power' can be guided by principles of moral duty, as states are influenced by international norms and their own identities. Ex: India has shared values of Non violence, Peace, Tolerance, multipolar world and respect for rule based order in international affairs. Hence India is increasingly being referred as Vishwa Guru in the International affairs context.

"The will to power exists, but it can be tamed and be guided by rationality and principles of moral duty" reflects an important and continuous process in international relations: balancing the inherent competition for power with the need for cooperation, rule of law, and ethical conduct.

A positive attitude is considered to be an essential characteristic of a civil servant who is often required to function under extreme stress. What contributes to a positive attitude in a person? (UPSC IAS Mains 2020 General Studies Paper – 4)

A positive attitude refers to a mental and emotional state characterized by optimism, constructive thinking, and a hopeful outlook. It involves maintaining a favorable and hopeful perspective towards oneself, others, and life circumstances, even in the face of challenges, setbacks, or adversity.

Here are some factors that contribute to a positive attitude:
- Self-awareness and mindfulness: Understanding one's own emotions, values, and goals can help a person develop a positive outlook and cope with stress. Mindfulness practices, such as meditation and yoga, can also be helpful in promoting a positive attitude.
- Resilience and adaptability: Having the ability to bounce back from setbacks and adapt to new situations can help a person maintain a positive attitude in the face of challenges.
- Social support and teamwork: Having a supportive network of colleagues, mentors, and friends can help a person stay positive and motivated.

Additionally, working collaboratively with others towards a common goal can be rewarding and contribute to a positive attitude.
- Sense of purpose and fulfillment: Having a clear sense of purpose and feeling fulfilled in one's work can contribute to a positive attitude and motivation to succeed.

Examples:
- Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, the former President of India, was known for his positive attitude and resilience in the face of adversity. He overcame humble beginnings to become a leading scientist and later, the President of India. His inspiring story and positive outlook continue to inspire people across the country.
- Kiran Bedi, the first woman IPS officer in India, is known for her positive attitude and innovative approaches to policing. She has implemented various reforms and initiatives to improve policing and community engagement, earning her widespread respect and admiration.
- Swami Vivekananda, a spiritual leader and philosopher, emphasized the importance of a positive attitude in achieving one's goals and living a fulfilling life. His teachings continue to inspire people across India and the world to cultivate a positive outlook and overcome obstacles with determination and perseverance.

Positive attitude is essential for civil servants to effectively serve the public and maintain a positive work environment. Through self-awareness, resilience, social support, and a sense of purpose, individuals can develop and maintain a positive attitude even in the face of stress and adversity.

"The current internet expansion has instilled a different set of cultural values which are often in conflict with traditional values.' Discuss. (UPSC IAS Mains 2020 General Studies Paper – 4)

The current internet expansion has brought about significant changes in our society, including the emergence of new cultural values that are often in conflict with traditional values. These changes have implications for various aspects of our lives, including our social, political, and economic systems. One area where this conflict is particularly evident is in the realm of values and ethics.

- Changing Social Interactions: The rise of social media platforms has transformed the way people interact and communicate. Online platforms have provided a space for individuals to express their opinions and engage in discussions, sometimes challenging traditional norms and values. For instance, the #MeToo movement gained momentum in India through social media, bringing attention to issues of sexual harassment and challenging traditional power dynamics.
- Access to Information and Alternative Perspectives: The internet has facilitated easy access to information and alternative perspectives, leading to the questioning of traditional beliefs and practices. Example:- Online

platforms and websites that discuss taboo subjects such as inter-caste marriages, LGBTQ+ rights, and gender equality have sparked conversations and challenged traditional norms in India.

● Influence on Youth Culture: The internet has had a significant impact on youth culture in India. Online platforms, streaming services, and social media have shaped their preferences, lifestyle choices, and aspirations, often in contrast to traditional values. Example:- Bollywood films have been influenced by global trends and Western values, reflecting changing societal attitudes towards relationships, individualism, and personal expression.

● Rise of Online Activism: Online platforms have given rise to a new form of activism, allowing individuals to mobilize and advocate for social causes that may be at odds with traditional values. For example, campaigns advocating for LGBTQ+ rights, environmental sustainability, and women's empowerment have gained traction through online platforms, challenging traditional societal norms in India.

● Digital Divide and Cultural Disparities: The internet expansion has also highlighted the digital divide and cultural disparities in India. While urban areas have better access to the internet and exposure to global cultural values, rural areas may still hold strong traditional values and face limited access to the online world.

By striking a balance between traditional and emerging cultural values, we can harness the full potential of the internet expansion to create a more prosperous, inclusive, and resilient society.

"A system of morality which is based on relative emotional values is a mere illusion, a thoroughly vulgar conception which has nothing sound in it and nothing true." – Socrates (UPSC IAS Mains 2020 General Studies Paper – 4)

The statement by Socrates highlights the importance of having a sound and objective moral system, rather than one based on subjective emotional values. A moral system based on relative emotions lacks objectivity and can be manipulated for personal interests, leading to moral confusion and chaos in society.
In India, there are several instances where a moral system based on emotional values has led to societal issues

● Dowry System: In India, the practice of giving and receiving dowry is based on emotional values and social pressure, rather than objective criteria. This has led to widespread exploitation of women and their families, and often results in harassment and violence against them.

● Communalism: In certain parts of India, communalism is prevalent where people are identified based on their religious affiliation rather than their common humanity. This emotional value system has led to conflicts, riots, and communal tensions between different religious communities.

● Child Marriage: In many parts of India, child marriage is still prevalent, where young girls are married off before reaching the age of 18. This is often based on emotional values such as family honor, protection, and social status, rather than objective criteria, and it results in a violation of the child's

rights and well-being.
- Discrimination based on gender and sexuality: In India, there is still widespread discrimination against individuals based on their gender and sexual orientation. This emotional value system is based on societal prejudices rather than objective criteria and results in the denial of equal opportunities, rights, and dignity to individuals.
- Corruption: Corruption in India is often based on emotional values such as greed, power, and entitlement, rather than objective morality and legality. This has resulted in a lack of transparency and accountability in the country's governance systems, leading to widespread social and economic inequality.

Socrates' statement emphasizes the importance of having an objective moral system in society, which can serve as a foundation for ethical behavior and decision-making. The above examples highlight the need for a sound and objective moral system in society to address issues stemming from subjective emotional values.

Rajesh Kumar is a senior public servant with a reputation of honesty and forthrightness, currently posted in the Finance Ministry as Head of the Budget Division. His department is presently busy organizing the budgetary support to the states, four of which are due to go to the polls within the financial year. This year's annual budget had allotted Rs. 8300 crores for the National Housing Scheme (NHS), a centrally sponsored social housing scheme for the weaker sections of society. `775 crores have been drawn for the NHS till June. The Ministry of Commerce had long been pursuing a case for setting up a Special Economic Zone (SEZ) in a southern state to boost exports. After two years of detailed discussions between the centre and state, the Union Cabinet approved the project in August. The process was initiated to acquire the necessary land. Eighteen months ago, a leading Public Sector Unit (PSU) had projected the need for setting up a large natural gas processing plant in a northern state for the regional gas grid. The required land is already in possession of the PSU. The gas grid is an essential component of the national energy security strategy. After three rounds of global bidding, the project was allotted to an MNC, M/s XYZ Hydrocarbons. The first tranche of payment to the MNC is scheduled to be made in December. Finance Ministry was asked for a timely allocation of an additional Rs. 6000 crores for these two developmental projects. It was decided to recommend re-appropriation of this entire amount from the NHS allocation. The file was forwarded to the Budget Department for their comments and further processing. On studying the case file, Rajesh Kumar realized that this re-appropriation may cause inordinate delay in the execution of NHS, a project much publicized in the rallies of senior politicians. Correspondingly, non-availability of finances would cause financial loss in the SEZ and national embarrassment due to delayed payment in an international project. Rajesh Kumar discussed the matter

with his seniors. He was conveyed that this politically sensitive situation needs to be processed immediately. Rajesh Kumar realized that diversion of funds from the NHS could raise difficult questions for the government in the Parliament. Discuss the following with reference to this case: (a) Ethical issues involved in re-appropriation of funds from a welfare project to the developmental projects. (b) Given the need for proper utilization of public funds, discuss the options available to Rajesh Kumar. Is resigning a worthy option? (UPSC IAS Mains 2020 General Studies Paper – 4)

Ethical issues involved in re-appropriation of funds

Economic Development vs Social Justice:
- By setting up a Special Economic Zone and natural gas processing plant, economic development would help in the region's economic growth and eventually lead to the overall development of society and people.
- However, finances' non-availability would cause a financial loss in the SEZ and national embarrassment due to delayed payment in an international project.
- Social justice, as re-appropriation may cause undue delay in the execution of the National Housing Scheme and may hamper the welfare of vulnerable sections of the society.

Empathy vs Professional Duty:
- As a senior public servant, Rajesh Kumar's responsibility is to exhibit empathy and compassion for society's downtrodden section's upliftment and welfare.
- Further, Rajesh Kumar is the head of the Budget Division in the Finance Ministry. Thus, his primary responsibility is to act with an objective analysis of demand without getting influenced by the political situation.

Possible Actions	Merits	Demerits
Diversion of Entire Amount	It will help in boosting exports and help increase clean energy accessibility. It will help in economic development and eventually lead to a trickle-down of benefits to society.	It may cause undue delay in the execution of the NHS and may leave the poor section of society vulnerable. It could set a wrong precedent of fund utilisation.
Reject the proposal	It will uphold the principle of social justice and help the poorer section of society. It will meet the populist demands that majorly influence political decisions.	Would cause financial losses in the SEZ and may bring national embarrassment due to delayed international project. Delay in gas project would have implications on energy availability and subsequent employment generation.
Partial re-appropriation of Funds	It will help in balancing the twin goals of economic development and social justice.	Partial re-appropriation of funds will require time for calculating the modalities. On the contrary, due to the politically sensitive situation, funds' re-appropriation needs to be processed immediately.

Conclusion: The Final Course of Action
- Thus, given the long-term implications of SEZ and the associated issue of national embarrassment (if delayed), Rajesh Kumar should recommend re-appropriating funds for SEZ projects only as an exceptional measure.
- He shall recommend that money for gas project can be mobilised through market bonds.
- Further, the firms engaged in SEZ and gas projects can be asked to fund housing projects under Corporate Social Responsibility.

Lastly, resigning cannot be considered a good idea. Resigning may reflect the escapist mindset and may set a bad example for other fellow civil servants. Being a public servant, it is the duty and moral responsibility to act in public service, following objective standards and without being influenced by vindictive politics.

The Chairman of Bharat Missiles Ltd (BML) was watching a program on TV wherein the Prime Minister was addressing the nation on the necessity of developing a self-reliant India. He subconsciously nodded in agreement and smiled to himself as he mentally reviewed BML's journey in the past two decades. BML had admirably progressed from producing first generation anti-tank guided missiles (ATGMs) to designing and producing state of the art ATGM weapon systems that would be the envy of any army. He sighed in reconciliation with his assumptions that the government would probably not alter the status quo of a ban on exports of military weaponry. To his surprise, the very next day he got a telephone call from the Director General, Ministry of Defence, asking him to discuss the modalities of increasing BML production of ATGMs as there is a possibility of exporting the same to a friendly foreign country. The Director General wanted the Chairman to discuss the details with his staff at Delhi next week. Two days later, at a press conference, the Defence Minister stated that he aims to double the current weapons export levels within five years. This would give an impetus of financing the development and manufacture of indigenous weapons in the country. He also stated that all indigenous arms manufacturing nations have a very good record in international arms trade. (a) As Chairman of BML, what are your views on the following points? (b) As an arms exporter of a responsible nation like India, what are the ethical issues involved in arms trade? List five ethical factors that would influence the decision to sell arms to foreign governments. (UPSC IAS Mains 2020 General Studies Paper – 4)

Ethical Issues involved in arms trade:
- The primary use of weapons is to kill other humans. The earnings made from the arms trade are like blood money. Killing is inherently wrong and it is against humanity which is one of the central ideas of the Indian way of life.
- India has been a land of Gautam Buddha and Mahatma Gandhi. They have advocated non-violence. But by indulging in arms trade, India will be endorsing violence, but in a different region of the world.

- Article 51 of the Directive Principle of State Policy says that the government should aim for promotion of international peace and security.
- By indulging in arms trade, India might be endorsing the actions and policies of foreign governments by which India may not stand. For example, selling weapons to autocratic countries and regimes known to suppress dissenting voices. In India, the government is accountable to parliament and weapons should be sold to democratic countries so that users can be held accountable.
- While engaging in arms trade, India should ensure that arms exported are not being used to suppress dissent or subvert democracy or invasion of peaceful neighbours. India should ensure use of exported weapons in self-defence and also not against India's own interest short term or long term.

Ethical factors that would influence the selling of arms to foreign governments are:
- Responsible Nations: The nations to which arms are being exported, should be a democratic and rational actor in international relations. There should be accountability for the actions of the government as governance is based on democratic ethics.
- Upholding Human Rights: Some nations simply deny their people certain basic rights, while many actively harm those under their control for political or religious reasons. If the foreign government has a proven past record of human rights violation, then it is advisable that weapons either must not be sold or sold only after a strict scrutiny.
- Use of Weapons: It should be preferred that weapons are being used in self-defence as defined under Article 51 of the United Nations Charter. Weapons must not be used for invasion of another nation or suppressing dissent or protests of people within the nation.
- Military Values: Indian Defense Forces have a long tradition of upholding human rights, respecting prisoners of wars, respect for international law in the battlefield. But if the military of a nation has a record of routinely taking civilians in the battlefield as prisoners, forcing young men to serve, even allowing children to be soldiers. Such factors must be considered.
- International Law: While exporting critical technologies, it must be noted that the recipient nation is following the norms made by the International Export Groups such as Australia Group, Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) and the Wassenaar Arrangement.

Rampura, a remote district inhabited by a tribal population, is marked by extreme backwardness and abject poverty. Agriculture is the mainstay of the local population, though it is primarily subsistence due to the very small landholdings. There is insignificant industrial or mining activity. Even the targeted welfare programs have inadequately benefited the tribal population. In this restrictive scenario, the youth has begun to migrate to other states to supplement the family income. Plight of minor girls is that their parents are persuaded by labour contractors to send them to work in the Bt Cotton farms of a nearby state. The soft fingers of the minor girls are well suited for plucking the cotton. The inadequate

living and working conditions in these farms have caused serious health issues for the minor girls. NGOs in the districts of domicile and the cotton farms appear to be compromised and have not effectively espoused the twin issues of child labour and development of the area. You are appointed as the District Collector of Rampura. Identify the ethical issues involved. Which specific steps will you initiate to ameliorate the conditions of minor girls of your district and to improve the overall economic scenario in the district? (UPSC IAS Mains 2020 General Studies Paper – 4)

The tribal area, which has minimal interaction with the outer world, is shrouded in abysmal condition which reflects the extent of poverty and deprivation. The ineffectiveness of the targeted welfare programs highlights the level of unawareness and helplessness.

The major stakeholders in this scenario are tribal people, the youth that has started migrating to other states and minor girls who are forced to work in the Cotton farms. The ethical issues involved are:
- Livelihood vs Well-being: The meagre livelihood opportunities have forced the local population to send their minor children to Bt-Cotton farms.
- Distress Migration: Migration of youth in search of better working opportunities leaving their families behind in abysmal conditions.
- Child Labour: Tribal people who are compelled to send their minor girls in the Bt-Cotton farms as their small landholdings are not earning well.
- Well-being of Minors: Forced labour which is leading to the deterioration of health of minor girls. This affects their education as well.
- Corruption: The NGOs are compromised and have proved ineffective in highlighting the plight of the tribals.

There are plethora of government schemes and programmes which when implemented effectively will ensure the upliftment of the tribal population. Following steps are needed to improve the well-being of minor girls and economic scenario:
- Article 24 of the Constitution prohibits the employment of children below 14. Actions shall be initiated against labour contractors under Child Labour Amendment (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 2016.
- Minors Girls shall be encouraged to attend school as it is their right under Article 21A. It shall be ensured that they receive the benefits of Integrated Child Development Services Scheme and Midday Meal. Eklavya residential school can be promoted to provide tribal children a better education.
- To enhance their earning, steps shall be taken to market their local products under the guidance of TRIFED. It will fetch them better livelihood opportunities. Their products can be listed on websites like TribesIndia or marketplace like Hunar-Haat for sale.
- As far as the return of migrants is concerned, it will require a calibrated approach. It will require better employment opportunity and adequate earnings.
- Avenues for the establishment of industries can be explored in consultation with all the stakeholders.
- Pradhan Mantri Van Dhan Yojana shall be harnessed which is a

market-linked tribal entrepreneurship development program for forming clusters of tribal SHGs and strengthening them into Tribal Producer Companies.
- Tribals shall also be encouraged to pool their land together and start contract farming.
- To bring transparency and efficiency among NGOs, a better surveillance mechanism shall be implemented under the EAT (Expenditure Advance Transfer) Module.
- The guidelines pertaining to the functioning of NGOs in the regions shall also be revamped.

While implementing all the mentioned steps tribals shall always be taken into confidence to assure that the reach of benefits is universal.

You are a municipal commissioner of a large city, having the reputation of a very honest and upright officer. A huge multipurpose mall is under construction in your city in which a large number of daily wage earners are employed. One night, during monsoons, a big chunk of the roof collapsed causing instant death of four labourers including two minors. Many more were seriously injured requiring immediate medical attention. The mishap resulted in a big hue and cry, forcing the government to institute an enquiry. Your preliminary enquiry has revealed a series of anomalies. The material used for the construction was of poor quality. Despite the approved building plans permitting only one basement, an additional basement has been constructed. This was overlooked during the periodic inspections by the building inspector of the municipal corporation. In your enquiry, you noticed that the construction of the mall was given the green signal despite encroaching on areas earmarked for a green belt and a slip road in the Zonal Master Plan of the city. The permission to construct the mall was accorded by the previous Municipal Commissioner who is not only your senior and well known to you professionally, but also a good friend. Prima facie, the case appears to be of a widespread nexus between officials of the Municipal Corporation and the builders. Your colleagues are putting pressure on you to go slow in the enquiry. The builder, who is rich and influential, happens to be a close relative of a powerful minister in the state cabinet. The builder is persuading you to hush up the matter, promising you a fortune to do so. He also hinted that if this matter is not resolved at the earliest in his favour; there is somebody in his office who is waiting to file a case against you under the POSH Act. Discuss the ethical issues involved in the case. What are the options available to you in this situation? Explain your selected course of action.(UPSC IAS Mains 2020 General Studies Paper – 4)

The decision making of the civil servant is predominantly guided by the ethical principles in public interest and not by any kind of luring or fear by seniors or political veterans. In the given case, as a municipal commissioner, my role is to

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ensure that larger interests of the society are not the vested interests of few individuals. Any unethical decision by me favoring the builder or pleasing my senior or political veterans would not only be violating the code of conduct but are also against the basic values of impartiality, objectivity, and fairness.

Ethical issues involved in the given case:
- Personal vs. Professional ethics: Personal ethics involve morals and values that have been induced in me since my childhood, by parents, family and relatives and friends & teachers. Professional ethics on the other hand involve a strict adherence to code of conduct laid down at the workplace. Any violation of these rules and regulations can be termed as unprofessional. In this case, my personal ethics forces me to take personal interest in the case, conduct the enquiry at a fast pace and send the culprits behind the bars irrespective of consequences. But professional ethics suggest me to follow law and rules and involve my other teammates and seniors in the investigation process, or even quit from the enquiry if asked to do so by the authority concerned.
- Personal Interest vs. Public Interest: The given situation may drive me as an officer to gain in terms of promotion or financial gains from higher authorities. This can be done if I keep my personal interest above public interest. Personal interest relates to ignoring the widespread nexus between officials of the Municipal Corporation and the builders and resolving the case at the earliest in the favour of the builder, while public interest lies in transparent and quick enquiry into the case and sending the culprits behind the bars thereby giving justice to victims and their families.
- Honesty & Courage vs. Flattering: Honesty is a facet of moral character that connotes truthfulness and straightforwardness of conduct. Similarly, courage means the ability to control fear by ignoring consequences while critical decision making. Flattery, on the other hand, is done to seek attention or try to win favor for unethical reasons.

Options available with me are:
- The first option is to lose all my moral values and read the situation as an opportunity to take executive favour in terms of posting and promotion by seniors and politicians. This can be done if I totally ignore the nexus between officials of the Municipal Corporation and the builders and end up an enquiry with results in their favour.
- The second option is to remain stuck to my moral principles of impartiality, integrity and probity thereby conducting a fair and transparent enquiry. If the builder and my senior officers are found guilty, a report regarding their conduct can be sent to the judicial and quasi-judicial authorities for further course of action.

My selected course of action:

My moral principles drive me to adopt the second option as my final course of action. Being honest and courageous since childhood, I hardly have any fear of consequences. Also, if I find that there is too much political and administrative

pressure on me to perform unethical action, then I may even breach the principle of hierarchy, and report the same to the higher central authorities and request them to tackle the situation. Also, I will bring the issue in public limelight through the media, which will continue the pressure of transparent enquiry on public officials on this matter.

Parmal is a small but underdeveloped district. It has rocky terrain that is not suitable for agriculture, though some subsistence agriculture is being done on small plots of land. The area receives adequate rainfall and has an irrigation canal flowing through it. Amria, its administrative centre, is a medium sized town. It houses a large district hospital, an Industrial Training Institute and some privately owned skill training centres. It has all the facilities of a district headquarters. A trunk railway line passes approximately 50 kilometres from Amria. Its poor connectivity is a major reason for the absence of any major industry therein. The state government offers a 10 years tax holiday as an incentive to new industry. In 2010 Anil, an industrialist, decided to take benefits to set up Amria Plastic Works (APW) in Noora village, about 20 km from Amria. While the factory was being built, Anil hired the required key labour and got them trained at the skill training centres at Amria. This act of his made the key personnel very loyal to APW. APW started production in 2011 with the labour drawn fully from Noora village. The villagers were very happy to get employment near their homes and were motivated by the key personnel to meet the production targets with high quality. APW started making large profits, a sizable portion of which was used to improve the quality of life in Noora. By 2016, Noora could boast of a greener village and a renovated village temple. Anil liaised with the local MLA to increase the frequency of the bus services to Amria. The government also opened a primary health care centre and primary school at Noora in buildings constructed by APW. APW used its CSR funds to set up women's self-help groups, subsidize primary education to the village children and procure an ambulance for use by its employees and the needy. In 2019, there was a minor fire in APW. It was quickly extinguished as fire safety protocols were in place in the factory. Investigations revealed that the factory had been using electricity in excess of its authorized capacity. This was soon rectified. The next year, due to a nationwide lockdown, the requirement of production fell for four months. Anil decided that all employees would be paid regularly. He employed them to plant trees and improve the village habitat. APW had developed a reputation of high-quality production and a motivated workforce. Critically analyse the story of APW and state the ethical issues involved. Do you consider APW as a role model for development of backward areas? Give reasons. (UPSC IAS Mains 2020 General Studies Paper – 4)

Critical analysis of the story of APW

Business activities, especially like setting up a small-scale manufacturing industry

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are done with the sole purpose of profit maximization and involve capital risk. Also, we know that proper and right choice of location is instrumental in future success of the industry. In our case, the condition of Parmal district, the Amria administrative centre within the district and the small Noora village is no more hidden after reading the given story. Despite such existing circumstances, the initiative to set up industry in such remote areas and ensure livelihood of villagers, that to with least government support, is a commendable and appreciable job. As far as excess use than granted capacity of electricity is concerned an enquiry can be initiated and prima facie a warning can be issued to administrative staff of the industry. Liaising with the local MLA to increase the frequency of the bus services to Amria can be considered a good initiative as it is the duty of the MLA to work in public interest and liaising is a part of long standing bureaucratic and corporate culture.

Ethical issues involved
- Selflessness vs. Business Ethics: Selflessness is being more concerned about the needs and wishes of others than with one's own. Business ethics talks about profit maximization and rapid growth instead. In the given case, Anil despite being a businessman, was less concerned about business ethics and instead showed selfless character in decision making.
- Accountability vs. Transparency: The case of accountability is worsened by the perceived lack of transparency in the system. Anil's industry should have maintained transparency in utilisation of allocated resources as running businesses brings accountability towards stakeholders.
- Spirit of Service and Sacrifice vs. Professionalism: Spirit of Service and Sacrifice is the major quality required in public officials, while professionalism is the major quality required in a businessman or industrialist for boosting business growth. In the given case, Anil despite being a businessman showcased the quality of spirit of service and sacrifice & remained less professional in approach.

My take on APW's initiative

Yes, I consider APW as a role model for development of backward areas. Firstly, we all know profit maximization is the sole purpose of any kind of business by private individuals. But the same cannot be found true in case of Amria Plastic Works (APW) and its owner Anil. Despite low expectation of return, he decided to set up industry in the backward Noora village, tried to ensure livelihood for village people and give hope to villagers for prosperity reaching their doorsteps in near future. His works can be more related to multi-dimensional philanthropic agenda rather than pure business motive. Secondly, even during lockdown, when his profit from industry went to zero, in fact might be facing losses because of huge investment done earlier, Anil decided to pay all employees regularly and ensured food, nutrition and livelihood security for them. Thirdly, he employed villagemen to plant trees and improve the village habitat. This work in itself is a highly philanthrophic and altruistic activity as it does common good to mankind without any discrimination and irrational thinking. Finally, as far as works like using electricity in excess by his industry and liaising with the local MLA to increase the frequency of the bus

services to Amria are concerned, they cannot be rated unethical, especially at the cost of what good he has done to the society. It is the duty of the government's executive authority to ensure smooth functioning of the system, if any small fault occurs, it can be dealt accordingly.

Migrant workers have always remained at the socio-economic margins of our society, silently serving as the instrumental labour force of urban economics. The pandemic has brought them into national focus. On announcement of a countrywide lockdown, a very large number of migrant workers decided to move back from their places of employment to their native villages. The non-availability of transport created its own problems. Added to this was the fear of starvation and inconvenience to their families. This caused the migrant workers to demand wages and transport facilities for returning to their villages. Their mental agony was accentuated by multiple factors such as a sudden loss of livelihood, possibility of lack of food and inability to assist in harvesting their rabi crop due to not being able to reach home in time. Reports of inadequate response of some districts in providing the essential boarding and lodging arrangements along the way multiplied their fears. You have learnt many lessons from this situation when you were tasked to oversee the functioning of the District Disaster Relief Force in your district. In your opinion what ethical issues arose in the current migrant crisis? What do you understand by an ethical care giving state? What assistance can the civil society render to mitigate the sufferings of migrants in similar situations? (UPSC IAS Mains 2020 General Studies Paper – 4)

Ethical issues that arose in the current migrant crisis:

While monitoring the District Disaster Relief Force, I witnessed certain ethical issues in fulfilling the responsibility of managing disasters.
- Conscience vs. administrative constraints: While monitoring disaster management authority, I had limited resources to be spent. This posed the challenges of caring well for elderly migrants especially those suffering from any disease. Assisting elder family members with physical care, emotional support, managing crises, maintaining connections with others, tested the conscience & decision–making of professionals.
- Selfish vs. selfless: Selfish means lacking consideration for other people and preoccupation with one's own pleasure, profit or welfare, while selfless means having little or no concern for oneself, and helping society as a whole. Migrants in their barefoot long journeys witnessed both kinds of people in the society. While some helped the migrants on their way to home in a selfless approach, many others hardly showed any interest and took care of their family only.

Meaning of an ethical care giving state:

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The ethics of care giving involves helping the needy without expecting for any reward in return. 'Ethical care giving state' is a government or nation which ensures implementation of such policies that provide social, economic, and medical facilities for free to the needy. To provide the same, besides constructing necessary infrastructure, also needs both professionals and volunteers providing caregiving.

Assistance that the civil society can render to mitigate the sufferings of migrants in similar situations

Civil society can construct temporary health centers, rehabilitation centers, avail doctors & nurses, and other care giving professionals, to take care of migrants in their way. Also, civil society can provide direct financial assistance to migrants, providing them with essentials such food & water and necessary medicines, arranging transportation facilities to their destination. Civil societies and many individuals took responsibility and were highly successful in helping migrants during the COVID-19 pandemic in India.

Highlight the Central Asian and Greco-Bactrian elements in Gandhara art. (UPSC IAS Mains 2019 General Studies Paper – 1)

Gandhara school of art was one of the major schools of art in the history of ancient India. This style of art was closely associated with Mahayana Buddhism and hence the main theme of this art was Lord Buddha and Bodhisattvas. It mostly flourished in the areas of Afghanistan and present North-Western India. The period around which the Gandhara school of art flourished could be said to be from 1st century BCE to 4th century CE.

Central Asian Influence
- Shaka and Kushana rulers patronised the Gandhara art leading to its flourishment.
- They brought culture of their respective lands and local Hellenistic art tradition in Gandhara art.
- Hellenized Bactrians played a part in the creation of the anthropomorphic image of Buddha.
- certain iconographic elements associated with Buddhist ideology appear in Gandhara art in the forms derived from Iranian iconography, such as 'fire altars' and the flame halo.

Greco-Bacterian Influence
- Vajrapani found in the right hand of future buddha is told as transformed symbol of herculeus who is seen as protector of buddha.
- Some images of buddha in gandhar are presented in greek architectural environment bearing the affinity of Corinthian.
- The Apollo like face of buddha; natural realism; wavy hair as seen in images of buddha in gandhar resembles to Hellenistic tradition.
- Gandhara art also followed Hellenic fashions in numismatics, such as having themselves represented in profile on coins, with legends, which carry the year

of minting and other details.
- The drape of Buddha Garment garment recalls the togas of Hellenistic sculpture, the divine figure often acquires humanistic details such as jewellery and a moustache.
- Figures from the Greek pantheon appear alongside statues of the Buddha, often flanked by Corinthian columns and mounted on friezes.
- Older forms of Indian art had not bothered with chronology. There, forms and figures crowd the frame, almost like lush, natural growth. The sculptures of the Gandhara school, in contrast, inhabit sequential narratives.

The 1857 Uprising was the culmination of the recurrent big and small local rebellions that had occurred in the preceding hundred years of British Rule. Elucidate. (UPSC IAS Mains 2019 General Studies Paper – 1)

After the battle of Plassey in 1757, the political control of the East India Company increased and by the end of the eighteenth century, the British emerged as the main power in India. These changes led to dislocation in the socio-cultural, economic and political life of the people. The subsequent turmoil led to an outbreak of rebellion in different parts of the country. Rebellions were not confined to the later period of the British Empire but were a constant feature of it from its very beginning, culminating in the revolt of 1857. The revolt was not a sudden occurrence but it was the culmination of a century-long tradition of fierce popular resistance to British domination.

Political-religious Movements
- Sanyasi Uprising: The immediate cause of the rebellion was the restrictions imposed on the pilgrims visiting the holy places. The Sanyasis raided the English factories and collected contributions from the towns, leading to a series of conflicts.
- Pagal Panthis: Leaders such as Tipu motivated by both religious and political motives and took up the cause of the tenants against the oppression of the Zamindars.
- Wahabi Movement: Movement was a revivalist movement which tried to purify Islam by eliminating all the un-Islamic practices which had crept into Muslim society through the ages. It offered the most serious and well-planned challenge to British supremacy in India.
- Faraizi Revolt: This movement supported the cause of the tenants against the landlords and the British government.
- Kuka Revolt: They started out as a group for religious purification in Sikhism but under Ram Singh, the movement acquired a political overtone with the established aim of restoring Sikh rule in Punjab and ousting the foreign powers.

Tribal Movements/ Tribal Uprisings:
- Santhal Rebellion: With the introduction of permanent settlement in Bengal in 1793, heavy taxes, oppression by money lenders, landlords, revenue officials were the main reason for the rising of the rebellion. Under Sidhu and

kanhu rose against the oppressors and declared themselves independent in 1854.
- Khond Uprising: Their uprisings from 1837 to 1856 were directed against the British due to an attempt by the government to suppress human sacrifice (Mariah), the introduction of new taxes by the British and the influx of Zamindars and money-lenders into their areas which was causing the tribals untold misery.
- Early Munda Uprising: In the period of 1789-1832, the Munda rose up in rebellion seven times against the landlords, dikhus, money-lenders and the British, who instead of protesting them sided with the oppressors.

Main frontier uprisings before 1857 were:
- Khasi Uprising: Conscriptions of labourers for road construction linking the Brahmaputra valley with Sylhet passing through the entire length of the Khasi dominated the Khasis to revolt under the leadership of Tirut Singh. The long and harassing warfare with Khasis continued for four years and was finally suppressed in early 1833.
- Ahom Revolt: The British had pledged to withdraw after the first Burma war(1824-26) from Assam but in contrast, the British attempted to incorporate the Ahoms territories in the company's dominion after the war. This sparked off a rebellion in 1828 under the leadership of Gomdhar Konwar.
- Singhphos rebellion: While the British were engaged in harassing warfare with the Khasis, the Singhphos broke into open rebellion in early 1830, which was suppressed after 3 months. But the Singhphos remained in a mood of sullen discontent and again rose in rebellion in 1839, when they killed the British political agent.

Thus it is evident that the colonial rule even during the days of the East India Company witnessed numerous uprising and disturbances. These varied grievances reached their climax in the revolt of 1857, which in spite of targeting certain groups of Indians remains the prominent uprising against the British before the beginning of the Indian Freedom Movement.

Assess the impact of global warming on the coral life system with examples. (UPSC IAS Mains 2019 General Studies Paper – 1)

The greenhouse gases increase due to various human activities, which leads to an increase in global warming over the course of a couple of decades. This global warming has several effects on coral ecosystems.

Major impacts of Global Warming on Coral Life
- Bleaching is a phenomenon in which corals lose their distinctive color as a result of the loss of zooxanthellae algae. These algae reside in a symbiotic relationship with corals, and thus, their demise also results in the mortality of the corals. For example: Bleaching observed in the Great barrier reef of Australia.

- Increased temperature reduces the percentage of magnesium and calcium, making it difficult for corals to survive due to low levels of these mineral contents in the ocean.
- Phytoplankton serves as a primary source of nutrients for corals, enabling them to thrive in optimal subtropical temperatures. Without the presence of these organisms, corals would be unable to survive.
- Due to increase in global temperature corals are losing their mineral contents which are useful to sustain the life of corals.

Solutions
- Taking urgent measures to reverse global temperatures is the need of the hour. This entails implementing methods such as reducing carbon emissions and protecting the ozone layer. It is crucial to decrease the burning of fossil fuels and the release of harmful gases like CO2, NOx, and SOx into the atmosphere. Additionally, efforts should be made to reduce pollution near water bodies and to ban the use of non-biodegradable products in oceans and lakes. Artificial reefs can serve as a solution to prevent the erosion of islands.

Examine the linkages between the nineteenth century's Indian Renaissance and the emergence of national identity. (UPSC IAS Mains 2019 General Studies Paper – 1)

Indian Renaissance was product of inherent weaknesses prevailing in Indian society and direct influence of Western education. Indian renaissance resulted into national identity which inspired people to take pledge towards eradication of various social evils like Sati, Purdah system, child marriage, etc.

Linkage between Indian Renaissance and National Identity:
- The movement focused on individual rights with equality in every sphere of life irrespective of caste, gender, etc. Thus, paved way for universal brotherhood based on individual identity.
- The Brahmo Samaj, Prarthana Samaj, Arya Samaj, Ramakrishna Mission, the Theosophists, the Social Conference and individuals worked to spread education among the untouchables and remove restrictions imposed on them from entering temples or using ponds, tanks, etc.
- The intellectuals of the 19th century had a vision of the future India and in the words of M.G. Ranade, the vision that inspired them was, "a change from constraint to freedom, from credulity to faith, from status a to contract and from authority to reason".
- This imparted national identity as it was not just a socio-religious movement but also a movement against economic exploitation and social discrimination of backward communities and women's emancipation from bondage and slavery.
- This strengthened the national identity as the later Socio-Religious movements penetrated the lower strata of society to revolutionise and reconstruct social sphere. This was in the way of an effort to bridge the gap between different communities to fight for a common cause.

Thus, Indian renaissance based on Humanism, Universal Oneness, Rationality aroused the national identity and provided common thread incorporating people of different identity into single thread.

Discuss the causes of depletion of mangroves and explain their importance in maintaining coastal ecology. (UPSC IAS Mains 2019 General Studies Paper – 1)

Mangroves are salt-tolerant vegetation that grows in intertidal regions of rivers and estuaries. They are referred to as 'tidal forests' and belong to the category of 'tropical wetland rainforest ecosystem'. Mangrove forests occupy around 2,00,000 square kilometres across the globe in tropical regions of 30 countries. India has a total mangrove cover of 4,482 sq km. However, more than 35% of the world's mangroves are already depleted.

Causes of Depletion
- Clearing: Large tracts of mangrove forests have been cleared to make room for agricultural land, human settlements, industrial areas, shrimp aquaculture etc. As a result, mangroves get depleted to the tune of 2-8 percent annually.
- Overharvesting: They are also overexploited for firewood, construction wood and pulp production, charcoal production, and animal fodder.
- Damming of rivers: Dams built over the river courses reduce the amount of water and sediments reaching mangrove forests, altering their salinity level.
- Destruction of coral reefs: Coral reefs provide the first barrier against currents and strong waves. When they are destroyed, even stronger-than-normal waves reaching the coast can wash away the fine sediment in which the mangroves grow.
- Pollution: Mangroves also face severe threats due to fertilizers, pesticides, discharge of domestic sewage and industrial effluents carried down by the river systems.
- Climate change: Unusually low rainfall and very high sea surface and air temperatures caused severe threats to the survival of mangrove forests.

Importance of mangroves in maintaining coastal ecology
- Mangroves are among the most productive terrestrial ecosystems and are a natural, renewable resource. For instance, Sundarbans in the Gangetic delta supports around 30 plant species of mangroves.
- Mangroves provide ecological niches for a wide variety of organisms. They serve as breeding, feeding and nursery grounds for fisheries and provide timber and wood for fuel.
- Mangrove forests act as water filters and purifiers as well. When water from rivers and floodplains flow into the ocean, mangroves filter a lot of sediments, hence protecting the coastal ecology including coral reefs.
- Mangroves act as shock absorbers. They reduce high tides and waves and protect shorelines from erosion and also minimise disasters due to cyclones and tsunami.

Given their importance, strict enforcement of the coastal regulation measures, scientific management practices and participation of the local community in conservation and management are essential for the conservation and sustainable management of the precious mangrove forests.

Can the strategy of regional-resource based manufacturing help in promoting employment in India? (UPSC IAS Mains 2019 General Studies Paper – 1)

The National Manufacturing Policy aims to increase the share of manufacturing in the country's GDP to 25% by 2022. However, It has been observed that the rate of development in certain areas is very fast due to some locational advantages with a high degree of industrialization while other areas lag behind. In this regard, regional manufacturing becomes very important.

Employment generation due to Regional-Resource based manufacturing
- Suitably organized industries can utilize raw materials in the area and thereby give a fillip to greater production and processing. This would help in overall regional development.
- Manufacturing creates employment in the industry at various levels of skills. Normally a good proportion of the employment is in the unskilled and semi-skilled labor field who can expect higher wages than the informal sector earning.
- The industry also creates opportunities for entrepreneurship and employment in ancillary industries and services in the secondary and tertiary sectors.
- There would be greater and more varied demand for consumer goods. This creates its own cycle of possible growth in local production, distribution and support in the secondary and tertiary sectors.
- It would also reduce the income gap between rural and urban areas and thereby reducing the distress migration.

Challenges to regional-resource based manufacturing
- While many states like Jharkhand, Chattisgarh have abundant mineral resources, it is the lack of adequate infrastructure — mainly roads and power — that has been a major roadblock.
- Lack of skills amongst people in these manufacturing industries.
- MSME sector which will have lion's share in such a strategy are already facing challenges related to marketing, credit, growth, and non-availability of suitable technology for manufacturing, etc.
- Intellectual Property protection and enforcement are expensive and high risk in India.

In this regard, State and the Union government have come up with various strategies for harnessing the regional manufacturing potential-
- Orissa has also launched 'Odisha Industrial Development Plan: Vision 2025' the with focussed attention on five sectors that aim to attract investments of Rs. 2.5-lakh crore and generate direct and indirect employment opportunities

for 30 lakh people.
- UP government's One District, One Product scheme seeks to promote traditional industries synonymous with their respective districts to spur the local economy and create jobs.
- North East Industrial Development Scheme (NEIDS) encourages micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) to set up in the north-east region.
- Forest-based industries and Tribal Products are being encouraged in different states because of its ability to solve the problem of unemployment and poverty.
- Different states and regions harbor GI tagged products that could be manufactured locally and marketed globally.

The overall development of the country can happen only by securing a balanced and coordinated development of the decentralized manufacturing economy in each region.

Discuss the factors for localisation of agro-based food processing industries of North-West India. (UPSC IAS Mains 2019 General Studies Paper – 1)

Agro-based food processing industry, aptly recognised as 'sunrise industry', is described as one that adds value to agricultural raw materials. This value addition converts the raw agricultural products into marketable, easy-to-use or edible products like corn flakes, chips, ready to serve drinks, etc. The Indian food processing industry accounts for 32% of the country's total food market. It is one of the largest industries in India and is ranked fifth in terms of production, consumption, export and expected growth. However, the North-West India showcases a better-developed agro-based food processing industry. The factors for this localisation are as follows:
- Geography: The region is blessed with a diverse agro-climatic zones, fertile soil and undulating plains. These support a multitude of crops, vegetables and fruits round the year which provide ample raw material.
- Raw material: Availability of diverse raw materials viz. cereals, fruits, vegetables and livestock provide attractive base for food processing industry in this region. For instance, Punjab accounts for 17% of rice and 11% of wheat production of India. This region also has the distinction of having the largest population of livestock and largest producer of milk in India.
- Infrastructure: Well-connected transportation network, subsidised electricity, irrigation facilities (such as Indira Gandhi canal and Bhakhra Nangal) and ample warehousing and storage facilities contribute to flourishing agro-based industries in the region.
- Agricultural marketing: This region has well-developed agri-export zones, market yards, organised APMCs and mandis, etc. which have provided a conducive environment for the establishment of agro-based industries.
- Socio-economic status: The population of the region has good literacy rate, including financial literacy, and enjoys an efficient banking network. This helps channel easy availability of credit and capital investment.
- Policy support: The Punjab government operates an agricultural mega project

policy to facilitate investment in the food processing sector. Additionally, large landholdings, single window clearance, permission to set up private sub e-markets, amendment to APMC Act, etc. have enabled agro-based industries in this region to flourish.

- Capacity building and R&D: Capacity building of the manpower in food processing sector in India is spearheaded by the National Institute of Food Technology Entrepreneurship and Management which is located in Sonepat, Haryana. Likewise, a prominent institution for research and development to improve agricultural productivity and business opportunities is the Indian Institute of Maize Research located in Ludhiana, Punjab.

The initiatives taken at the Union level like permitting 100% FDI through the automatic route in food processing sector and Scheme for Mega Food Parks under the Ministry of Food Processing Industries are conducive steps. However, the challenges for the industry remain such as fluctuations in the availability of raw material due to climate change, inadequate implementation of the APMC Act, multiplicity of ministries and laws to regulate food value chain, etc.

What makes the Indian society unique in sustaining its culture? Discuss. (UPSC IAS Mains 2019 General Studies Paper – 1)

- The notion of accommodation and assimilation has been the key feature of Indian society. Since ancient times, India has accommodated different elements of society without letting them lose their separate identity as Jawahar Lal Nehru writes in The Discovery of India-Indian Society and Culture "is like some ancient palimpsest on which layer upon layer of thought and reverie had been inscribed, and yet no succeeding layer had completely hidden or erased what had been written previously".
- In course of time, India has evolved its own culture which is eclectic, externally receptive and heterogeneous.
- The essence of Indian society lies in harbouring diverse and distinct identities, ethnicities, languages, religions and culinary preferences. History stands witness to the fact that the societies that have struggled to hold differences were shattered in such an attempt.

However, Indian society succeeded and is unique because of its various peculiarities:
- A Cosmic Vision: The framework of Indian culture places human beings in the centre of the universe, as a divine creation-which celebrates Individuality and differences of opinion in the society.
- Sense of Harmony: Indian philosophy and culture tries to achieve an innate harmony and order in the society.
- Tolerance: In India, tolerance and liberalism is found for all religions, castes, communities, etc. Indian society accepted and respected Shaka, Huna, Scythians, Muslim, Christian, jews and Zoroastrians. Rulers like Ashoka, Akbar have patronized various religions and ensured that there is peaceful co-existence of religions.

- Continuity and Stability: The light of ancient Indian culture life is yet glowing. Many invasions occurred, many rulers changed, many laws were passed but even today, the traditional institutions, religion, epics, literature, philosophy, traditions, etc. are alive.
- Adaptability: Adaptability is the process of changing according to time, place and period. Indian society has shown fluidity and has adjusted itself with changing times.
- Caste System and Hierarchy: Indian Society has evolved systems of social stratification, which in the past helped in accommodating outsiders, but concomitantly it has also been the reason for discrimination and prejudice.
- Unity in diversity: Despite inherent difference Indian society celebrates unity in diversity which reflects in modern India's founding principles and constitutional ideals.

In recent times, Indian society has seen surge on multiple divisive issues like communalism, casteism, economic disparity and ethnic violence, which pose a serious challenge to the time- tested ethos of our society.

Despite this, India remains a diverse country, a bewildering mosaic of communities of all kinds; our peculiar societal genius is to fashion a form of coexistence where diversity can flourish and find its place. Principle of Sarva Dharma Sambhava (equal respect for all religions) is rooted in India's tradition and culture.

Many voices had strengthened and enriched the nationalist movement during the Gandhian Phase. Elaborate. (UPSC IAS Mains 2019 General Studies Paper – 1)

Gandhian Phase in Indian freedom struggle is undoubtedly remarkable because of the perspective Gandhiji provided to the masses and the way he guided the freedom fighters with the means of truth and non-violence. But there were numerous other simultaneous factors which further strengthened Gandhi's efforts and contributed to the nationalist movement.

Voices which strengthened and enriched the nationalist movement:
- Khilafat Movement (1919-22) was launched by the Indian Muslims to pressurise the British government to preserve the authority of Ottoman Sultan as Caliph of Islam. Gandhi and Congress leaders viewed it as an opportunity for cementing Hindu-Muslim unity and bringing the Muslims in the National Movement although this event is said to have brought the issue of religion in the freedom struggle.
- The ideological differences between the Swarajists and the No-Changers within the congress led to serious changes and contribution. No-changers continued their constructive programme of spinning, temperance, Hindu-Muslim unity, removal of untouchability etc whereas Swarajists won the election of Central Legislative Assembly in november 1923 filling the political void while the national movement was regaining its strength.
- Marxism and other socialist ideas spread rapidly in 1927 under J.L. Nehru and S.C. Bose's leadership. The left wing did not confine its concern to

freedom struggle only but raised the question of internal class oppression by the capitalists and landlords. It strengthened the voices of the marginalised and poor of the country and connected them to the movements.

- Revolutionaries like R.P. Bismil, C.S. Azad and Bhagat Singh among others took the responsibilities of informing people about a necessary revolution to uproot British Empire. The Terrorist Movement in Bengal led by Surya Sen is notable because of the role of revolutionary women who participated.
- Students and peasant parties got involved and propagated Marxist and communist ideas while remaining an integral part of the national movement and the Congress. In 1928, Bardoli Satyagraha occurred under the leadership of Sardar Vallabh Bhai Patel bringing forward farmers' concerns.
- There was rapid growth of trade unionism under the leadership of All India Trade Union Congress and many strikes took place during 1928 like Kharagpur, Jamshedpur and Bombay Textile Mill strike is the most important. The traders and workers contributed to the struggle for independence.
- Women from all over India were not left alone. They came forward and equally contributed to the national movement. Kasturba Gandhi, VIjay Laxmi Pandit, Aruna Asaf Ali, Bhikaji Cama are some of the most prominent who assumed leadership at different fronts.

Even the Business class participated by giving financial assistance and rejecting imported goods Every class, section, age group, political ideology emerged, came forward and contributed to the national movement. Even though it weakened the movement to some extent by the fragmentation and the internal ideological differences, it mainly made the movement strong by diversifying it and adding alternative perspectives to it. This multidimensional nature of the movement is one of the reasons for its success in 1947 when finally all the unheard voices till then were heard.

Assess the role of British imperial power in complicating the process of transfer of power during the 1940s. (UPSC IAS Mains 2019 General Studies Paper – 1)

Britain never wanted to leave India but the promise to the Indian National Congress of independence in return of Indian resources and army during World War Two; the post war financial and political exhaustion; change in political power at the centre (Labour Party) whose ideology favoured the Congress party; increasing global pressure and the inability to crush Indian leaders' will and efforts finally led to the Indian independence. However, Britain did succeed in making the process of transfer of power so complicated and hard that India still suffers from them.

Cabinet Mission
- Sir Stafford Cripps was responsible for drafting the Cabinet Mission Plan, which proposed a complicated system for India with three tiers- the provinces, provincial groupings and the centre. The centre's power was confined to foreign affairs, defence, currency and communication only.
- Three major groups of provinces: Group A, to include the Hindu-majority

provinces; Group B, containing the Muslim-majority provinces (western Pakistan); and Group C, to include the Muslim-majority Bengal (eastern Pakistan).
- Even though both Nehru and Jinnah eventually refused to accept it, Lord Wavell authorised a cabinet with Nehru as the Interim Prime Minister which enraged Jinnah who in turn resorted to direct action of sparking riots and massacres.

Partition
- In July, 1947 the British Parliament passed the Indian Independence Act which provided for the demarcation of India and Pakistan by midnight of August 14–15, 1947, in just one month. Two Nations Theory was an important factor here and fuelled communalism.
- The task of demarcating the boundaries was given to a British lawyer, Sir Cyril Radcliffe who had never visited the country before and was clueless about the social and political consequences of his decision. Two boundary commissions were set up for it.
- During partition, there was a large-scale communal violence and forced migration of people, probably the biggest in history.

Autonomy to Princely States
- The British paramountcy on the princely states and all the existing treaties of Britain with the princely states before the independence ended in 1947.
- As princely states were not a part of the British India, they became independent and had the option to either merge with India or with Pakistan or to stay independent.
- Even after the efforts of Lord Mountbatten, Nehru and Patel, few princely states like Kashmir, Junagadh and Hyderabad posed some serious challenges in the already troubled times.

It was hard to let go of the main resource supplier and the market consumer but when the odds were not in favour of Britain, it gave independence to India but made sure to create some contentious issues while leaving India. A lot of current day problems like issue of enclaves with Bangladesh (later resolved through The Constitution 100th Amendment Act, 2015), the migration issue, Kashmir issue between India-Pakistan etc. have their roots in the complications created by the British imperial power during the 1940s.

Explain how the foundations of the modern world were laid by the American and French revolutions. (UPSC IAS Mains 2019 General Studies Paper – 1)

The American Revolution and the French Revolution are considered as a cardinal epoch in world history. It gave a death blow to the old orthodox system of governance and installed modern ideals for governing nations.

American Revolution's contribution to Modern World
- Principles of liberty and democracy: The declaration of independence

proclaimed that "all men are equal". It provided an impetus to the people of the world to demand liberty and freedom.
- Constitutionalism: The revolution led to the first written constitution in the world which served as an inspiration for many nations who borrowed many ideas from the American constitution.
- The American war of independence gave birth to a novel system of government, viz, Federalism. In the course of time, the federal form of government got popularity. This provided a nice template for power sharing in diverse countries that needed complex polities.
- Promotion of Human Rights: The American war of independence laid stress on the rights of the human being. The "Declaration of Rights" of Thomas Jefferson awakened the people about their rights.

French Revolution's contribution to Modern World
- The democratisation of society: The French Revolution was a pan-European revolution. It hacked the roots of the ancient system in Europe and ended the centuries-old feudal system. Before the revolution, the society was based on inequality, disparity, privileges and concessions. The revolution attacked the roots of this disparity. It initiated a new social organization.
- Ideals of modernity: liberty, equality and fraternity brought political awakening in Europe.
- Secularism: The revolution ended the sovereignty, despotism and corruption of the Church. The importance of the worship of intellect and reason became more prominent.
- The people demanded not only political freedom but also right to property and freedom of expression. They also demanded voting rights. Women claimed equal rights with men.
- The Revolution aroused the spirit of nationalism. It paved the way for the unification of Italy and Germany. It also popularized the concept of democracy.
- Colonised peoples reworked the idea of freedom from bondage into their movements to create a sovereign nation-state.
- Tipu Sultan and Rammohan Roy are two examples of individuals who responded to the ideas coming from revolutionary France.

French and American revolution not only laid the edifice for a newly emerging egalitarian society and a new way of polity in their respective countries but they also acted as the philosophical basis and aspiration of the people of other nations. The revolutions highlighted the fundamentals of a civilised world which continues to shape the global aspirations of today's time.

What are the challenges to our cultural practices in the name of Secularism?. (UPSC IAS Mains 2019 General Studies Paper – 1)

India, since Independence, has been following a peculiar nation of secularism, where all religions are treated equally and supported by the State. However, this concept, at present, is undergoing a paradigm change wherein Constitutional

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morality is being considered a significant component of secularism by the judiciary. Another characteristic of this change is the growth of misguided perceptions about secularism. The ultimate outcome of these changes is the rise of various challenges to our diverse cultural practices. Thus, we have a logical classification of these challenges under two dimensions:

Challenges posed by misguided perceptions
- Religiousness is anti-secular and pro-fundamentalist: Thus perception discourages various religious practices like rituals, clothing, thoughts etc. People who wear the saffron dress, who keep beard and pat skull cap (Taqiyah) and all considered fundamentalists.
- Secularism is equated to atheism and apostasy: Those who do not believe in good or abandon their religious beliefs are marked as secular. This thought is leading to a slow degradation of cultural practices.
- Restrictions to food choices: Some states, through following the majoritarian religious sentiments, restrict the sale of beef.
- Judiciopapism: Sometimes, the judiciary also takes a narrow glimpse of secularism and interferes into religious celebrations and practices. Ex. Rajasthan High Court's ban on Santhara and Supreme Court's ban on the sale of crackers on Diwali.

Challenges due to rise of Constitutional morality
- Right to Equality: The practice of triple talaq and the ban on entry of women in Sabarimala temple were all declared unlawful by the Supreme Court. Those were done on account of gender inequality and gender exploitation inherent to these practices.
- Animal Rights: Supreme Court banned the traditional practice of Jallikattu because of the cruelty to animals involved in this.
- Objection to Harmful Cultural Practices: The illegality of female genital mutilation (FGM), practices in Dawoodi Bohra Community was brought into the limelight in 2018. The centre and the Supreme Court are having the opinion to ban this practice in India.

Thus, it is obvious that while some of the challenges are the outcome of the misleading notion of secularism, others are due to the exploitative and discriminatory nature of cultural practices only. The solution lies in getting all the stakeholders like religious leaders, judges, right's activists, civil society groups, NGOs and government representatives together over a common platform to discuss the challenges and to bring unanimity for preserving the cultural practices of our country.

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"Empowering women is the key to control the population growth." Discuss. (UPSC IAS Mains 2019 General Studies Paper – 1)

India is set to become the most populous nation in 2027, surpassing China, according to an estimation by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. India's population has ballooned from 555.2 million in 1970 to 1,366.4 million in 2017.

There are multiple causes of population growth in India such as child marriage and multi marriage system, religious superstitions, illiteracy and unawareness, poverty etc. However, they are in one way or the other linked to the poor condition of women in the nation. Thus, empowering women can play a crucial role in controlling the population growth.

- Women are at times financially weak to pay for needed family planning and health services. Access to and control over productive resources will result in increased voice, agency and meaningful participation in decision-making at all levels from family planning to the time of conceiving.
- The failure of family planning is directly related to large-scale illiteracy that also contributes to the early age of marriage, low status of women, high child-mortality rate etc. They are least aware of the various ways to control population, usage of contraceptives and birth control measures.
- Uneducated families cannot grasp the issues and problems caused by the increasing population rate. Education has a transformative impact on girls. Educated girls tend to work more, earn more, expand their horizons, marry and start having children later with fewer children.
- Fertility rates are high because of misinformation about side-effects of contraceptives, lack of knowledge about the benefits of small families, and religious or male opposition to contraception.
- Any woman with multiple children spends most of her life as a mother and wife. She cannot play any meaningful role in her community and society until she is able to limit her family to a proper size. Family planning will not only improve family welfare but also contribute to achieving social prosperity and personal happiness.
- It is also crucial to sensitize men and boys at a young age, so they become an integral part in bringing about a transformation of women empowerment in Indian society. When men start respecting women and accepting them as equals, a lot of gender-based inequalities will reduce considerably.

The unbridled growth of population is a problem that our country needs to overcome. The government, NGOs and the people of society have to work together to solve the problem of overpopulation in our country. India, however, needs to put more efforts on empowering its women who can help the country curb the growth of its population. As also mentioned by Nehru, to awaken the people, first women need to be awakened, because once a woman has been awakened then the whole nation and family get awakened with her.

What is water stress? How and why does it differ regionally in India?. (UPSC IAS Mains 2019 General Studies Paper – 1)

Water stress is a situation in which the water resources in a region or country are insufficient for its needs. Such a situation arises when the demand for water exceeds the available amount or when poor quality restricts its use.

Water stress in India
- India is home to nearly 17% of the world's population but has only 4% of the world's freshwater resources.
- According to NITI Aayog's Composite Water Management Index (CWMI) report 2018, 21 major cities including Delhi, Bengaluru, Chennai, and Hyderabad are racing to reach zero groundwater levels by 2020, affecting access for 100 million people. Besides, 12% of India's population is already living the 'Day Zero' scenario.
- According to the Aqueduct Water Risk Atlas of World Resources Institute, India is ranked 13th among the 17 most water-stressed countries of the world.

This indicates that India is going through water emergency. However, there is regional variation i.e. not all regions are equally water stressed.
- While the northwestern and central parts of the country are severely water stressed, the eastern parts receive abundant rainfall for groundwater recharge.
- The variation is also at the intra-regional level. For example, the areas in north Bihar struggle due to flooding while that of south Bihar finds it difficult to beat the heat. Flooding in Mumbai has become a regular phenomena while the nearby Vidarbha faces drought.

This uneven distribution of water crisis can be attributed to the following reasons:

Geographical factors
- India has diverse physiography, due to which different regions receive varying degrees of rainfall. For example, winter monsoon along the eastern coast and summer monsoon in northern India.
- Interior of southern India lies in the rain shadow zone and most of Rajasthan and northern Gujarat have arid climate.
- Also, the arid and semi-arid areas of northwestern India and central India are naturally occurring waterstressed areas.

Climatic factors
- Changing climate has led to an increase in the frequency and intensity of floods as well as droughts.
- Erratic monsoon is causing delayed and infrequent rainfall in different parts of India.

Agricultural practices
- In India, agriculture is not practised according to the agro-climatic zone. Groundwater is used to cultivate water intensive crops like paddy and

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sugarcane in rain deficit states like Punjab and Maharashtra respectively.
- State procurement policy and subsidised electricity in Punjab makes it profitable for farmers to produce rice. Similarly, farmers in Maharashtra cultivate sugarcane because they are assured of marketing.
- Moreover, flood irrigation is the most common form of irrigation in India which leads to a lot of water loss.
- All these have led to excessive groundwater extraction and have made India virtual exporter of water.

Human factors
- Rapid urbanization has led to the concentration of population in and around major cities which usually happen to be located in the rainfall deficient regions (like Delhi-NCR).
- The situation is aggravated by encroachment, contamination and consequent destruction of water bodies which otherwise help recharge the underground aquifers.
- Above all, there is a lack of awareness about water economy which demands judicious use of water.

Road ahead
- India's water challenge stems not only from the limited availability of water resources but also its mismanagement.
- There is a need to follow conservation agriculture i.e. farming practices adapted to the requirements of crops and local conditions. Cultivation of less water intensive crops like pulses, millets and oilseeds should be encouraged in water stressed regions.
- Rainwater harvesting needs to be incorporated with urban development projects. Mission Kakatiya (Telangana), which seeks to restore tanks through community-based irrigation management, is commendable.
- Freshwater sources need to be declared as water sanctuaries on the lines of national parks and tiger reserves. Water must be treated as a resource rather than a commodity.
- The efforts like the formation of Jal Shakti ministry (to tackle water issues holistically) and the goal to provide piped water to all rural households by 2024, under the Jal Jeevan mission, are steps in the right direction.

How can the mountain ecosystem be restored from the negative impact of development initiatives and tourism?. (UPSC IAS Mains 2019 General Studies Paper – 1)

The Himalayan States, including the Northeast, and the Western Ghats are the most prominent mountain ecosystems in India which are struggling to cope up with the negative impacts of development initiatives and tourism. The Report of Working Group II Sustainable Tourism in the Indian Himalayan Region by the NITI Aayog highlights similar concern.

The negative impacts emerge out of the replacement of traditional eco-friendly and

aesthetic architecture with inappropriate and dangerous construction, poorly designed roads and associated infrastructure, inadequate solid waste management, air pollution, degradation of water sources, and the loss of biodiversity and ecosystem services. Their repercussions were evident in the Kedarnath floods of 2013.

In this respect, the following steps can be considered:
- The reports by committees on Western Ghats ecology headed by Madhav Gadgil and K. Kasturirangan need urgent attention. The concept of ecological sensitive zones (ESZ) cannot be sacrificed for the sake of development. Likewise, NITI Aayog has suggested setting up of Himalayan Authority for coordinated and holistic development of entire Himalayan region.
- There has to be clear demarcation and planning with respect to the extent of infrastructure development. It should include a systematic process of urban planning, developing tourist hubs with strict controls, spring mapping and revival etc. For example, provision for no encroachment areas, well-preserved forested areas, etc.
- With respect to tourism, measures like application of carrying capacity concept to tourist destinations, implementation and monitoring of tourism sector standards, and performance-based incentives for States faring well on the standards can be considered. The unregulated tourism movement is a major reason for plastic pollution.
- States should also be encouraged to spend more on sustainable development of tourism. For instance, Uttarakhand stands second in tourist arrivals but invests only 0.15% of its total expenditure on this sector. Besides, States can also adopt and share the best practices. For example, Sikkim can be a lodestar for sustainable agriculture, waste management and ecotourism.
- With collaborative and participatory frameworks capacity building for conservation is required. Viable enterprises that can provide sustained economic incentives and support local communities need to be promoted. These can help achieve SDG Goal 8 (decent work and economic growth) and Goal 12 (responsible consumption and production).

To provide a better standard of living to the mountain communities and to meet the overall needs of the economy, a linkage between development and conservation needs to be formed. Besides, effective implementation of schemes and policies hold significance for any desirable results.

How is efficient and affordable urban mass transport key to the rapid economic development in India?. (UPSC IAS Mains 2019 General Studies Paper – 1)

Across nations, and through decades, economic development has been correlated to personal mobility. India has witnessed remarkable growth over the last few decades. However, the mobility infrastructure has not kept pace with the demand. As India aspires to be the second largest economy in the world by 2050, we must prepare for a rapid increase in demand for mobility.

Importance of efficient and affordable urban mass transport
- Supports clusters and agglomerations: In large metropolitan areas, growth can be slowed with the heavy usage of private vehicles. Effectively planned transportation can overcome this constraint and reinforce agglomerations by allowing more people to come closer together in higher density developments.
- Increases productivity: When transportation improvements increase the accessibility of people and businesses to reach jobs, services, and activities, productivity also increases.
- Enhances job & labor force accessibility: Another economic benefit of transportation improvements is the resulting larger pool of employees available for the job market.
- Opens new markets for businesses: Building a multi-modal facility opens new markets for companies searching for locations with the appropriate transportation infrastructure for their corporate needs.

Towards building an efficient and affordable urban mass transport
- Government has devised various policies for ensuring affordable, efficient and accessible mobility system like - National Transit Oriented Development Policy, 2017; Green Urban Transport Scheme, 2016; FAME (Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of (hybrid &) Electric vehicles etc.
- Despite these, Regulations must be introduced to encourage efficient use of existing roads and smarter traffic management. For example, not allowing trucks and large commercial carriers to ply city roads during the day.
- Governments must ensure that the adequate ecosystem is in place before adopting new technologies in mobility. For instance, to adopt electric vehicles, cities must have first installed sufficient number of charging stations.
- A good beginning is being made through the Smart Cities Programme, and all the selected 100 cities have put NMT (non-motorised transport) promotion as one of the goals in their respective Smart City Proposals.

In the coming years, Emerging market cities will play an increasingly large role in the global economy and for their unimpeded contribution. Therefore, India needs to develop Safe, Adequate and Holistic Infrastructure (SAHI) for the Indian population including women, elderly and the disabled.

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How do ocean currents and water masses differ in their impacts on marine life and coastal environment? Give suitable examples. (UPSC IAS Mains 2019 General Studies Paper – 1)

Ocean currents (surface or deep ocean currents) are streams of water flowing constantly in definite path and direction, for example, Gulf Stream (warm current) and Labrador current (cold current). Water masses are the extensive homogeneous body of immense volume of ocean water in terms of temperature and salinity. These are generally characterised by the downwelling of denser cold water and upwelling of less dense water, for example, the North Atlantic Deep-water mass in the Norwegian Sea.

Impacts of ocean currents

On marine life
- Ocean currents act as distributing agents of nutrients, oxygen and other elements necessary for the existence and survival of fishes and zooplanktons.
- They also transport planktons from one area to the other area. For example, Gulf Stream carries planktons from the Mexican Gulf to the coasts of Newfoundland and north-western Europe. Many significant fishing grounds of the world are developed in these areas.
- Mixing of warm and cold ocean currents bring rich nutrients which support marine organisms. For example, seas north of Japan is a rich fishing ground due to the mixing of warm Kuroshio and cold Kurile currents.
- Sometimes, a few ocean currents destroy planktons. For example, El Nino current destroys planktons off the Peruvian coasts resulting into mass deaths of fishes.

On coastal environment
- Ocean currents maintain the horizontal heat balance of the earth. The warm currents transport warm waters of the tropics to colder areas of temperate and polar zones. Cold currents on the other hand bring cold waters of the high latitudes to the areas of low latitudes.
- Surface ocean currents also modify the weather conditions of the coastal areas. The ideal and favourable European type of climate of the western coasts of Europe is due to the moderating effects of the North Atlantic warm currents.
- Cold currents also intensify the desert-like conditions in the coastal areas, exemplified by the presence of some deserts in the western edges of continents, e.g., Namib Desert in Africa.
- The convergence of warm and cold currents causes foggy conditions, e.g., near Newfoundland due to convergence of warm Gulf Stream and cold Labrador current.

Impacts of water masses

Downwelling of water masses
- It transports oxygen downward which is much needed by the marine organisms.

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- This process discourages enrichment of seawater by bringing nutrients, and hence the areas of downwelling of water masses are not conducive to marine life and hence they are the areas of low marine productivity.

Upwelling of water masses

- It is beneficial to the rich marine life because dissolved oxygen and nutrients are brought to the surface through upwelling. For example, the upwelling of nutrient rich cold water off the coast of Peru has made the region one of the richest fishing grounds.

Global warming is disrupting the sinking of cold, salty water as a result of increased melting of glaciers and sea ice. This could slow or even stop the circulation of ocean waters, which could result in potentially drastic impact on marine life and coastal environment. Thus, arresting global warming is the need of the hour.

Do we have cultural pockets of small India all over the nation? Elaborate with examples.. (UPSC IAS Mains 2019 General Studies Paper – 1)

India has a lot of diversity to offer to the people of this world and to her own people as well. The oldest civilisation has had ample time and experiences to accumulate the cultural practises of everyone who came here with their respective motives whether it was tourism, education, plunder, exploitation or to rule.

- Vast resources attracted people and foreign rulers in our past and they keep attracting people in the present as well. People from smaller cities migrate to urban centres and metropolitan areas in search of employment, education etc and they eventually settle down there. When such diversity of people pools in together at a relatively smaller place, it becomes a cultural pocket.
- The basic idea is that within a bigger, overarching culture, another smaller and different culture is developed and sustained. The metropolitan areas like National Capital Region of Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai, Bengaluru or coastal industrial hubs like Surat, Kochi, Visakhapatnam or religious centres like Ajmer, Amarnath, Chardhams etc can be taken as examples of hubs of such cultural pockets within India.
- Metropolitan areas represent a culture of their own which is entirely different from each other and can be seen in the banter between Delhi and Mumbai. But they are well diverse within themselves as well depending upon the time and place. The Ganpati Utsav and those who celebrate it, form a cultural pocket within Mumbai for ten days. It applies to other places as well. In Delhi, a cultural pocket is formed by the political, defence personnel and the patriotic citizens around the Independence Day celebrations.
- Multi Storey housing societies in urban areas are also an example of cultural pockets. Diverse people live in the same building exchanging food habits, traditions, indegenous culture and they celebrate all festivals together as if they are a big joint family. Same applies to multinational organisations and corporate offices as well where workers represent the diversity of India.
- Higher educational institutes like universities and colleges provide us with the same scenario. Students from every corner of the nation irrespective of their hometowns, race, caste, class or any other differences sit and study in

the same classroom and take part in extracurricular activities and college festivals together.
- It is very clear to us that India has uncountable cultural pockets all over the nation with different set of values and outlooks towards life enriching Indian cultural heritage and validating the fact that India is indeed one of the Cultural Superpowers of the world.

What are the continued challenges for Women in India against time and space?. (UPSC IAS Mains 2019 General Studies Paper – 1)

Nearly one-sixth of the world's women live in India and many of them had adorned high offices like that of President, Prime minister, Speaker of the Lok Sabha, Leader of the Opposition, yet there are innumerable women who rarely step outside their homes. Challenges faced by Indian women emanates from Hegemonic patriarchy, which is prevalent in Indian society. It means the idea that discrimination against women appears to be common sense to such an extent that not only men but even women also become the supporter and perpetrator of the very notion which discriminates against them.

This leads to various problems like:
- Oppression against women starts right from the womb: Female infanticide. This can be reflected in poor child sex ratio, i.e. 919/1000 according to census 2011.
- Girls are the worst sufferer of the vicious cycle of poverty and malnutrition. This is augmented by a lack of education and reproductive rights.
- The primary responsibility of taking care of family and bringing up the child is still on the women. This includes unpaid care work such as childcare, elderly care, and household work. Many women due to family pressures have to retreat from the workforce.
- Despite increasing levels of education and declining fertility rates, the current female LFPR is 23.7%.
- The women are either shown as docile homemakers or they are shown as sex symbols trying to convince the public at large to buy the product.
- The women are mostly deemed fit for "pink-collar jobs" only, such as teachers, nurses, receptionist, babysitter, lecturer etc. which have been stereotyped for women. This denies them opportunities in other fields
- Women in India face artificial barriers like stereotypes, media-related issues, informal boundaries, which prevent them from advancing upward in their organization into management-level positions. This can be reflected in an increasing wage gap between men and women.
- #Metoo movement shed light on numerous instances of sexual harassment at the workplace. However, due to the slow judicial system, justice hasn't been delivered to these women.
- Indian Parliament currently has 11.8% women representation, and state assemblies have only 9%. Even though the 73rd constitutional amendment act mandates 33% of panchayat seats to be reserved for women.

Road ahead
- Indian Society doesn't need better laws but better implementation.
- Reservation in parliament for women must be implemented as soon as possible.
- The government must empower women through Self-help groups so that they can become financially independent.
- Affirmative action should be pursued by the government to induct more and more women into positions of authority.
- Supreme court judgement of decriminalizing adultery and homosexuality, have reaffirmed women's right to sexual autonomy. However, Society has a larger responsibility to disassociate itself from the stigma attached to women's sexuality.
- Women's issues are not a political problem but a social issue, Hence it requires a cultural revolution. Movies like Padman and Toilet will help in challenging the hegemonic patriarchy.
- Apart from it, Beti Bachao Beti Padhao initiative is a step in the right direction.

In order to improve the condition of Indian women, society must remember words of J.L. Nehru: "India To awaken the people, it is the woman who must be awakened. Once she is on the move, the family moves, the village moves, the nation moves".

Are we losing our local identity for the global identity? Discuss. (UPSC IAS Mains 2019 General Studies Paper – 1)

Indian society is represented by a set of local cultural traits like local languages, different food choices, dressing styles, classical music, family structure, cultural values, etc. There has been a growing sense of insecurity among the Indian masses regarding the gradual degradation or loss of our local identity. This gradual loss of local identity is popularly attributed to globalization that creates a global culture in which the local identity is amalgamated to bring a homogenous culture throughout the world. This sense of insecurity is not baseless and is
supported through the following facts:
- Loss of local languages for English: Under the growing trends of convert culture in education and servicebased economy, English education has developed rapidly at the cost of several vernacular languages.
- Loss of classical music for Pop and Jazz culture: The changing taste of music among Indian youth has put a question mark over the survivability of traditional classical music in India.
- Loss of collective identity for individualism: With rise in metropolitan of Indian population, the individualism is growing and the social relations are now based on commercial benefits.
- Loss of joint family structure for nuclear family system: Economic migration and the choice for individual space have broken the joint structure of family in India. At this junction, the old-aged and children are depriving of the required care.
- Loss of moral education for advanced commercial education: The growing

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disorientation between morality and higher education is the greatest demolition of our identity.
- Degradation of the institution of marriage: The growing acceptance to the live-in-relationship has questioned the sanctity of the institution of marriage in our society. This represents the dominance of western culture and the Indian way of living.
- Changing style of clothing: With the rise in corporate culture, the Indian dressing style has remained merely an occasional stuff that too in cultural occasions only.
- Loss of traditional food choice: With the rise of chain restaurants and hotels, the food choice of Indian youth has inclined towards the Italian and Chinese fast foods. This has caused foods that are comparatively healthy and rich in nutrients.
- Deadline of cultural values: In the have of freedom of speech, the traditional values of moral decency, respect to elders, following the rituals etc. are all declining.
- Loss of indigenous system of medication like Ayurveda, Yoga etc.

Despite these facts, another dimension of thoughts about globalization points to the universalization of our local beliefs and cultural values rather than demolition. This dimension is also supported equally through various facts like:
- Indian festivals are now being celebrated all across the world: The most significant example is the Diya stamps issued by UNO to celebrate Diwali. Even a local religious festival of Chhath Puja is celebrated in Silicon Valley, USA.
- Observance of International Yoga Day on 21st June: This has popularized the Yoga throughout the globe.
- Observance of World Hindi Day on 10th January and organization of World Hindi Conference.
- ISKCON foundation has spread the practice of Bhakti Yoga in different Western countries. This promotes religious tourism in our country.
- Indian classical music is being liked all across the world and it is appreciated at Berklee school of music. SPIC MACAY, an NGO has promoted the Indian classical music and culture among youth across the world.
- Taj Mahal is among the seven wonders of the world.

Thus, culture is an ever-evolving entity which constantly changes through diffusion and amalgamation. Of course, we should embrace our cultural identity and values and it is our duty to preserve our cultural identity, however, globalization is not a matter to worry and infusion of global identity should be welcomed.

Do you think that Constitution of India does not accept principle of strict separation of powers rather it is based on the principle of 'checks and balance'? Explain. (UPSC IAS Mains 2019 General Studies Paper – 2)

Indian constitution have meticulously defined powers and functions of the different organs of the state. Legislature, executive and judiciary have to function within their

own spheres demarcated under the constitution. Unlike the US constitution, instead of having strict separation of power India follows the principle of 'checks and balance' which is evident from the various constitutional provisions dealing with executive, legislative and judicial organs.

- The executive power of the state is exercised by the President, who acts on the advice tendered by the council of ministers headed by the Prime Minister. However, according to article 75, the council of ministers with the responsibility of forming policies and implementing them are the members of the Parliament and responsible to the Lok Sabha.
- Under the constitutional provision, Parliament in India includes the Lok Sabha, the Rajya Sabha and the President. Parliament, the legislative body, has the head of executive as its integral part. Accordingly, the parliament uses different motions like censure motion, no confidence motion, etc., to check the functioning of the council and hold them responsible. Further, the Parliament under article 61, can impeach the President for violation of the Constitution.
- Within the constitutional provision India has an independent judiciary with the Supreme Court at its apex. Provision of judicial review and writ under Article 32 and 226 empowers the Supreme Court and the High Courts respectively to check the constitutional validity of the executive and legislative actions. Independence of the judiciary has been ensured in the constitution but the same has been interlinked with executive and legislative organ of the government. For instance appointment and transfer of judges of High Courts and the Supreme Court is done by the executive. Further, the removal of the judges of the High Courts and Supreme court is done by the Parliament.
- Idea behind the doctrine of separation of powers is to create separate power centers rather than having all power concentrated in a single institution. Though on the whole, the doctrine of separation of power in the strict sense is not possible in modern political system, its value lies in emphasis of checks and balance, which are necessary to prevent abuse of power and uphold the rule of law. All three of them are strong pillars of India which support and strengthen each other. Thus, keeps a check and ensures smooth functioning of the whole system and the nation.

The central administrative tribunal which was established for redressal of grievances and complaints by or against central government employees nowadays is exercising its power as an independent judicial authority. Explain. (UPSC IAS Mains 2019 General Studies Paper – 2)

A new Part XIV-A was added to the Constitution by the 42nd Amendment Act of 1976. This part is titled as 'Tribunals' and consists of Article 323A which empowers the Parliament to provide for the establishment of administrative tribunals for the adjudication of disputes relating to recruitment and conditions of service of public servants. Consequently, the Central Administrative Tribunal (CAT) was established by an Act of 1985. The Principal seat of CAT is at New Delhi with additional benches in different states. The CAT has been given original jurisdiction in relation to recruitment and all service matters of public servants covered by it.

The Central Administrative Tribunal (CAT) acts as an independent judicial authority i.e. it performs the duties free of influence or control by other actors.
- Article 323A enables the Parliament to take out the adjudication of disputes relating to service matters from the civil courts and the high courts and place it before the administrative tribunals.
- CAT is of statutory origin, as opposed to Supreme Court and high courts which have direct origin from the Constitution. Nevertheless, the 1985 Act, by establishing CAT, has opened a new chapter in the sphere of providing speedy and inexpensive justice to the aggrieved public servants.
- The members of CAT are drawn both from judicial as well as administrative streams so as to give the Tribunal the benefit of expertise both in legal and administrative spheres.
- CAT is free from technical rules of Indian Evidence Act, 1872 and procedural shackles of the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908 but it has been vested with the powers of Civil Court in respect of some matters including the review of their own decisions and are bound by the principles of natural justice.
- Recently, the Delhi High Court has held that the CAT can exercise the same jurisdiction and powers, as a High Court, in respect of its contempt proceedings. Thus, it gave more power to act as an independent judicial authority.
- In another case, the CAT has taken a swipe at Delhi High Court because during June vacations the High Court has heard briefly a case which was originally pending before the tribunal.

However, the Central Administrative Tribunal still cannot be called truly independent judicial body because
- the Tribunal members do not enjoy powers like other judges who hold constitutional posts, and
- it is dependent on the executive for appointing members of the tribunal and their funding.

Thus, it can be fairly argued that the tribunal which was formed for grievance and complaints redressal has although evolved into a judicial body but it cannot be called entirely independent.

What are the methods used by the farmers' organisation to influence the policy-makers in India and how effective are these methods? (UPSC IAS Mains 2019 General Studies Paper – 2)

Farmers' organizations are seen as a useful organizational mechanism for mobilizing farmers' collective self-help action aimed at improving their own economic and social situation and that of their communities. Such organizations are perceived to have the ability to generate resources, mobilise support and exert pressure with the help of their members. They operate at different levels from the local to the national.

Methods used by organizations
- Awareness generation: They try to gain public support and sympathy for their goals and their activities by carrying out information campaigns, organising meetings, filing petitions, etc. Most of these groups try to influence the media into giving more attention to these issues.
- Lobbying: Powerful farmers groups like sugarcane farmers of Maharashtra and UP try to influence policy making in their favour like getting favourable MSP and payment of arrears.
- Protest: They often organise protest activities like strikes or disrupting general administration. These protests of late have centred around issues like loan waiver, higher MSP, free electricity, etc. The recent farmers' march to Delhi under the Bharatiya Kisan Sangh banner was such an example.
- Activism: This method includes publicizing important issues, petitioning courts, preparing draft legislation and gaining public attention in matters related to farmers like issues pertaining to GM crops.
- Recent trends: Farmers organisations recently have also employed innovative ways like spilling milk and vegetables on highways or appearing to consume dead rats, soil and urine at Delhi's Jantar Mantar etc.

However, these moves have hardly bore the desired results:
- In a situation of impending unrest the government often takes to populist measures instead of employing a solution which is good for the nation and the farmers in the longer run.
- The government often takes short term respite such as farm loan waiver, higher MSP, cash transfers in farmers' accounts, etc.
- Even if the government resorts to such populist measures its effective implementation is often absent. For example, rise in MSP is of no use if there lack of infrastructure to procure grains from the hinterland or if the masses are unaware of such a scheme.
- Moreover, several policy recommendations have not been implemented as the government is not fully aligned with the suggestions. For example, the Swaminathan Committee recommendations is yet to be fully implemented.

Thus, although organising the protest and mobilising support help in gaining the attention of the public and the government, it can be argued that they have resulted in little on the ground.

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From the resolution of contentious issues regarding distribution of legislative powers by the courts, 'Principle of Federal Supremacy' and 'Harmonious Construction' have emerged. Explain. (UPSC IAS Mains 2019 General Studies Paper – 2)

Division of power is a basic feature of federalism. The Constitution provides for a three-fold distribution of legislative subjects between the Union list, the state ist, and the Concurrent List in the Seventh Schedule. However, contention develops in categorization of legislation into the entries of these three lists. To resolve these contentions, courts have evolved various principles.

Principle of harmonious construction
- When there is a conflict between the statue's provisions between the union and state list then the rule of harmonious construction needs to be adopted. The rule follows a very simple premise that every statute has a purpose and intent and should be read as a whole. The widest interpretation of the provisions of the statute should be allowed. Also, the Court should help in removal of the inconsistency of the statute's language in order to reconcile the contention. For instance, the conflict between centre and state arose in Shri Krishna Rangnath Mudholkar vs Gujarat University, 1963 on the validity of Gujrat University Act. The court used this principle to allow the State government to make law on excluded items(reserved for the centre) as an extension to its power to legislate on education, to the extent it does not contradict the union law.

Principle of Federal Supremacy
- When a statute's provisions fall in both state and union list, then the centre would have the dominant legislative power. The state and concurrent list are subordinate to the Union list. The Supreme court can apply this principle as a last resort if attempts to find a solution under the Principle of Federal Supremacy fails.
- In the era of cooperative and competitive federalism, conflicts should be minimized as far as possible. States should bring reform in important areas like Police, Agriculture marketing, etc. and coordinate with other states and centre in order to have a uniform legislative framework in key areas. With the recent steps like one nation, one ration card, more federal cooperation would be necessary.

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What can France learn from the Indian Constitution's approach to secularism.
(UPSC IAS Mains 2019 General Studies Paper – 2)

European countries like France have struggled to find a middle way between secularism and state religion that combines national and religious identity, and where ethnic and religious minority groups can co-exist within state's institutions. This can be seen in the banning of Islamic clothing, kosher or halal meals and burqas in France. But India's experiences can perhaps shine a light to the rigid form of secularism practiced in France:

- Although, the term 'Secular' was added to the preamble by the 42nd Constitution Amendment Act of 1976, the spirit of secularism, derived from Indian cultural ethos, was implicit in it.
- Indian philosophy of secularism is related to "Sarva Dharma Sambhava" which means equal respect to all religions. The State maintains a "principled distance" from all religion and intervenes wherever necessary, for example -Sabarimala Temple and Triple talaq issue.
- Like the French, Indians tend to consider secularism as part of their national identity. It is ingrained in both Constitutions but when it comes to treatment of minorities, French minorities feel targeted by "laicite"(secularism) while Indian minorities see secularism as their best protection, thus preventing them from differential treatments and phobias.
- In India, both state and religion can, and often do, interact and intervene in each other's affairs within the legally prescribed and judicially settled parameters.
- As per the French model, the state cannot give any financial support to educational institutions run by religious communities. In India, educational institutions may receive assistance from the state.
- In India, state has the policy of setting up Departments of Religious Endowments, Wakf Boards, etc. It is also involved in appointing Trustees to these boards.
- In France, the state tries to push religion into the private sphere, where religious symbols can not be publicly displayed. Indian secularism has no such objectives and special rights are given to different communities, like- Muslims have personal laws and Sikhs are allowed to carry Kripans (Knives).

We may observe this from the fact that very few people in India were radicalised and joined ISIS as compared to their western counterparts. The concept of secularism prevalent in France has its roots in religious wars and discontent but Indian secularism has evolved in relative harmony and in light of great civilizational and cultural antecedents. Thus, Indian secularism is not an end in itself but a means to address religious plurality and aims to achieve peaceful coexistence of different religions. In times of globalisation, when almost all the countries have now become multi-religious, it is the need of the hour to learn from Indian secularism.

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Despite the consistent experience of high growth, India still goes with the lowest indicators of human development. Examine the issues that make balanced and inclusive development elusive. (UPSC IAS Mains 2019 General Studies Paper – 2)

Human development is increasingly viewed as the ultimate goal of development. It has multiple dimensions such as life expectancy at birth, education, standard of living, healthcare, inequalities, etc. and these can be improved and achieved with the rapid economic growth. The Human development is best measured by the United Nations Human Development Index and the World's Banks Human Capital Index. While, the economic growth is measured by the Gross Domestic Product or gross national product. However, there exists a strong correlation between Economic Growth and Human Development as Economic Growth provides the necessary resources to permit sustained improvements in Human Development.

- India today is among the largest economies of the world. However, according to the United Nations Human Development Index report 2018, India ranks 130 out of 189 countries. The HDI 2018 highlighted some improvements such as increased life expectancy at birth, increased enrollment in schools, etc. However, India's gross national income per capita also increased by a staggering 266.6 per cent between 1990 and 2017.
- According to the World Bank's Global Human Capital Index 2019, India ranks 115th out of 157 nations. The report also held that a child born in India is likely to be only 44% productive when (s)he grows up, if (s)he receives education and adequate healthcare. So, This clearly states that the Indian economy has failed to provide a trickle-down effect.

Reasons for the lack of Human development
Unequal Distribution of Wealth and Non-inclusive growth: In the last five years, only 1% of the wealthiest in India increased their share in wealth of around 60% and the richest 10% in India own more than four times more wealth than the remaining 90%.

- This results in an uneven distribution of wealth across the various sections of the society and it marks the prevalence of high inequality in the Indian socio-economic paradigm which led Non-inclusive growth and low human development.

Jobless growth: With increasing economic growth, the rate of growth of employment has declined.

- According to NSSO, unemployment is India is highest in 45 years.
- With rising population and, consequently, the labour force, India will soon experience demographic disaster rather than a demographic dividend.
- Also, according to ASSOCHAM, there is no deficiency of the adequate number of jobs, but the majority of the labour force doesn't have adequate skills required by the market.

Dismal condition of Education and Health:

- On comparison with similarly placed emerging economies, India spends way too low in the education and health sector.
- India spends 3% of GDP on education and 1.5% of GDP on health.

Education status in India:
- Independent India retained the largely colonial superstructure of primary, secondary, and tertiary education, which emphasis on rote learning and obsession with marks in the exams.
- Consequently access, quality, and outcomes all are far lower than what anyone would have desired.
- Dropouts are only one outcome of bad quality. Poor learning outcomes, low employability of graduates, low productivity, and consequent low wages constitute another set of outcomes.
- All these outcomes are reflected in the Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) 2018, which concluded that the quality of education is far from satisfactory.

Health status in India
- Even after many government schemes, both the infant mortality rate and the maternal mortality rate remains high.
- There is a high prevalence of malnutrition in Indian children, reflected in a high percentage of Child stunting, wasting and underweight.
- The neglect of women's health, in particular, is striking.
- Apart from it, India features the highest deaths in the world due to air pollution.
- Also, there is a disconnect between the rate of technological growth and ability to distribute the gains from it by adequately focusing on skilling (via knowledge, education) and health, which is critical for greater resilience and sustained productivity.
- Though the government has initiated many schemes for enhancing human capital i.e. Skill India, Digital India, Startup India, Ayushman Bharat. However, the results are not yet promising.

Road ahead
- The government needs to increase public expenditure on health and education as envisaged by National health policy 2017 (2.5% of GDP) and Draft education policy 2019 (6% of GDP).
- Apart from holistic reforms in education, Right to Education must be accompanied by Right to Learning.
- Promotion of Primary health centre under Ayushman Bharat, which focuses on preventive healthcare is a step in the right direction.
- The government should also focus on promoting labour-intensive sectors such as gems and jewellery, textiles and garments and leather goods.
- Skill framework in India needs to integrate with industries, so as to increase the employability of the Indian labour force.
- The government should make efforts to curb digital divide, as it creates and reproduces socio-economic backwardness.

Human development and economic growth share a cause and effect to each other relationship. Therefore, without investing in Human capital and addressing current economic slowdown, the goal to becoming a $5 trillion economy, will remain a pipe dream for India.

There is a growing divergence in the relationship between poverty and hunger in India. The shrinking of social expenditure by the government is forcing the poor to spend more on non-food essential items squeezing their food budget. Elucidate. (UPSC IAS Mains 2019 General Studies Paper – 2)

Since the economic reforms, Urban Head Count Ratio (HCR) poverty fell from 32% in 1993-94 to 21% in 2009-10. The fall in poverty in rural India has been even more spectacular, where HCR declined from 50% to 34% in the same period. However, this looks decidedly uncomfortable when confronted with another set of facts on the prevalence of hunger(or under-nutrition) in India.

Despite increase in real income of the people over the last two decades, overall calorie consumption and nutritional intake has not commensurately increased. According to Global Hunger Index, India is second after South Sudan, when it comes to wasting (low weight for height) among children. Also, there are millions of children and adults suffering from "Hidden Hunger".

- The poor are increasingly spending more on education, healthcare, transportation, fuel and lighting. The share of monthly expenditure devoted to these items has increased at such a pace that it has absorbed all the increase in real income over the past decades. This has led to a 'Food Budget Squeeze'.
- Possibly, the most important reason for this is shrinking social expenditure by the government which is rendering the urban and the rural poor dependent on market prices of non-food essential items, like education, healthcare etc which are typically high.
- Social sector spending has always been low in India compared to other countries. According to the National Health Profile 2018, India spends 1.02% of the gross domestic product on public healthcare, while Maldives spends 9.4%, Sri Lanka 1.6%, Bhutan 2.5%, and Thailand about 2.9%.In education, India's public investment is around 2.7% of GDP, while it is 3.4% in Sri Lanka and 7.4% in Bhutan.
- Another reason is, rural working people are migrating in large numbers to urban centres or other rural areas in search of work. Most of such migration is temporary and seasonal in character, and involves travelling relatively large distances. This large circulation of labor does have substantial impact on the expenditure patterns of households. For instance, an increasingly footloose labour force means that a large section of the working poor have to bear higher costs of transportation, maintain communication with the sites of work (much of which is seasonal in character), and are deprived of traditional non-market sources of food when away from home.
- Hunger persists in India also because of a decline in access to non-market food sources, preference for 'better tasting more expensive calories and increased spending on luxury items like radio, TV, and mobile phones, as economist Abhijit Banerjee writes in his book – "Poor Economics".
- In recent times, talks of Universal Basic Income and replacing food subsidies with Direct Benefit Transfer are gaining ground. These measures may further aggravate the crisis of hunger by exposing the poor to market volatility.

Economists Amartya Sen and Jean Dreze distinguish two aspects of social security — "protection" and "promotion". While the former denotes protection against a fall in living standards through ill health, accidents; the latter focuses on enhanced living conditions- "capability building". Government needs to take care of these by increasing expenditure on education upto 6% of GDP as recommended by Kasturirangan committee, and meet the target of spending 2.5% of GDP on health helping the poor to focus on nutrition.

Implementation of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) based projects / programmes usually suffers in terms of certain vital factors. Identify these factors and suggest measures for their effective implementation. (UPSC IAS Mains 2019 General Studies Paper – 2)

Misgovernance has been a major issue that have marred the effective implementation of government schemes and policies. Therefore, the government has been spearheading radical digitisation to induce economic inclusiveness and social transformation, through initiatives like, 'Digital India', 'Make in India' and Skill India.

However, implementation of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) based programmes usually faces another set of complex challenges.

Challenges in implementation of ICT based programmes
- Low digital literacy: Illiteracy rate in India is more than 25-30% and digital literacy is almost non-existent among more than 90% of India's population.
- Poor internet connectivity: Rural India suffers from poor internet penetration due to lack of electricity and poor network quality. This has led to difficulties in Aadhaar Enabled Payment Services (AEPS) and last mile delivery of services.
- Problems in Common Service Centres: Lack of proper infrastructure facilities, unavailability of skilled workforce, huge population to serve, unavailability of last mile connectivity are some common issues faced by CSCs in India.
- Errors and Omissions in technology implemented: Issues related to identity mismatch and denial of services to beneficiaries. For ex: cases where senior citizens have been denied ration via PDS shops due to fingerprints mismatch.
- Non-inclusive nature of technology used: Problems faced by senior citizens, differently-abled, illiterate persons due to complex design of ICT based solutions.
- Privacy concerns: Programme implementation using digital technology requires authorization for collection and usage of public information at large scale. Since, privacy being a fundamental right, there are concerns related to mishandling and misuse of user information.
- Data theft and online security: Cyber security issues like cyber attacks, data theft can cripple sensitive government digital infrastructure like servers, power supply, communication links, etc.
- Geographical and weather related problems: Population residing in difficult

terrains like North Eastern hilly region, islands of Andaman and Nicobar and Lakshadweep are difficult to reach. Extreme weather events like cyclones, tsunamis, etc can hamper key communication and mobile internet services.

Measures for effective implementation
- Creating suitable infrastructure: Increasing the number of Common Services Centres and addressing the connectivity issues should be the first priority.
- Increasing investment in human capital formation: Improving digital literacy among the rural youth. Pradhan Mantri Gramin Digital Saksharta Abhiyan (PMGDISHA) that envisages making one individual digitally literate in every rural household is a step in the right direction.
- Changes in design and structure of technological solutions: Government websites should be made user friendly so that they can be used by differently abled and senior citizens.
- Mandating digital literacy in school curriculum and co-curricular activities on the lines of IT Club 'e-Kidz' formed by students of the Government Upper Primary School at Koothattukulam in Kerala.
- Involving Private sector organizations: Corporates can be asked to spend their CSR funds in digital training and providing technological solutions for societal needs.
- Role of NGOs and civil society groups: Akshaya Patra Foundation digitized their kitchen and enabling realtime data collection for serving food to more than 1.76 million children across 12 states in India.

Even though there are several challenges in the effective implementation of such programmes but the benefits of ICT based solutions cannot be neglected. It helped to save revenue for exchequer by plugging leakages, weeding out ghost beneficiaries, targeted delivery of services in real time etc. It has improved transparency, accountability and last mile delivery of basic services to the citizens.

Hence, if the challenges and lacunae of ICT based programmes are effectively tackled, e-governance can prove to be an effective tool in bringing social transformation thereby realising the dream of inclusive and prosperous India.

The time has come for India and Japan to build a strong contemporary relationship, one involving global and strategic partnership that will have a great significance for Asia and the world as a whole. Comment. (UPSC IAS Mains 2019 General Studies Paper – 2)

The India-Japan partnership, described as one of the most rapidly advancing relationships in Asia, has emerged as a significant factor contributing to the stability and security of the Indo-Pacific region. Deviating from the traditional policy of focusing on economic engagements, the partnership has significantly diversified to include a wide range of interests—including regional cooperation, maritime security, global climate, and UN reforms.

The strategic consequences of a rising China in the Indo-Pacific is providing greater

momentum to the India-Japan partnership. Both Japan and India through strategic convergence seeks to re-calibrate Asia's balance of power. It can be reflected in flowing initiatives:

Cooperation in Indo-Pacific region:
- It is a confluence between India's Act East policy and Japan's Free and Open Indo-Pacific strategy.
- It will strengthen the rule of law and freedom of navigation, which is threatened by China's muscle flexing in the South China sea.
- It will enhance cooperation with Japan and ASEAN countries.

Asia Africa Growth Corridor (AAGC):
- Japan looks to invest nearly $200 billion in Asia Africa region, that will turn the 21st century from an Asian century to Asian-African century.
- Japan will provide the state of the art technology and India will bring its expertise of working in Africa.
- AAGC seeks to counter China's influence, that it is establishing through Belt and Road Initiative.
- Japan, US, India(JAI) and Australia combinedly called Quad, is seen as an informal organisation that seeks to counter China.
- Japan is taking the North-East Road Network Connectivity improvement project, this will be a crucial link in India's Act East policy.
- India and Japan are negotiating cross-service agreements that will give access to each other's military facilities and could foster much closer military to military relations.

Apart from this, there are several engagements between India and Japan which are independent of China.
- Economic engagement: Japan has made investment in India's infrastructure. For example: Delhi-Mumbai economic corridor, Bullet train, Delhi metro etc.
- India along with Japan, Brazil and Germany forms the grouping called G4 countries, that seeks UNSC reforms.
- India is the first(non-signatory of the Non-Proliferation Treaty or NPT,) country with whom Japan has signed a civil nuclear deal.
- This will establish India's credibility as a responsible nuclear power.
- It will boost India' make in India initiative.
- It will augment India's INDC commitment at Paris climate deal.

Japan can prove to be a development multiplier in India. Therefore, India should develop an independent relation with Japan which is not to be seen in the context of China, US or any other country.

Too little cash, too much politics, leaves UNESCO fighting for life.' Discuss the statement in the light of US' withdrawal and its accusation of the cultural body as being 'anti-Israel bias'. (UPSC IAS Mains 2019 General Studies Paper – 2)

UNESCO was created in 1945 with the firm belief that, forged by two world wars in less than a generation, political and economic alliances were not enough to build world peace. In this sense, peace must be established on the basis of humanity and our moral and intellectual solidarity with one another.

The announcement of the US to withdraw from this cultural body has once again highlighted the politicization of its activities and limitation of funds-
- At the heart of its problems is a financing crisis since 2011, when UNESCO voted to admit Palestine as a full member state and Washington responded by halting payment of its annual $80 million in dues.
- Since then, Israel has regularly complained over resolutions on cultural sites in the West Bank and Jerusalem, arguing that they are worded to delegitimize the Jewish state. Israel's foes say it uses U.S. support to deflect bona fide criticism.
- Without U.S. money, UNESCO, which employs around 2,000 people worldwide, has been forced to cut programmes, freeze hiring and fill gaps with voluntary contributions. Its 2017 budget was about $326 million, almost half its 2012 budget.
- Other major contributors such as Japan, Britain, and Brazil delay funds, sometimes citing objections to the body's policies.
- Japan, for example, has threatened to withhold dues over the inclusion of the 1937 Nanjing Massacre in the body's "Memory of the World" programme.
- Russia and Ukraine have been at odds over Crimea, with Kiev accusing Moscow of trying to legitimise its annexation of the territory through UNESCO.

The fact is that UNESCO was all about solidarity and creating a climate for peace between countries, but nations now use their dues/funds to influence programmes. The preservation of shared human heritage needs a concerted effort involving all countries, for this, nations should sacrifice zero-sum game of politics.

On what grounds a people's representative can be disqualified under the Representation of Peoples Act, 1951? Also mention the remedies available to such person against his disqualification. (UPSC IAS Mains 2019 General Studies Paper – 2)

The Representation of the People Act, 1951 provides for the conduct of elections to the Houses of Parliament and to the Houses of the State Legislature, the provisions regarding qualification and disqualification for the membership, and remedies of disputes in connection with such elections.

The Act of 1951 has laid down certain criteria for disqualifications. According to it, the person is disqualified if he/she:
- is found guilty of certain election offences or corrupt practices in the elections;
- is convicted for any offence resulting in imprisonment for two or more years (except for the detention under a preventive detention law);
- has failed to lodge an account of his/her election expenses within the time;
- has any interest in government contracts, works or services;
- is a director or managing agent or holds an office of profit in a corporation in which the government has at least 25% share;
- has been dismissed from government service for corruption or disloyalty to the State;
- has been convicted for promoting enmity between different groups or for the offence of bribery;
- has been punished for preaching and practising social crimes such as untouchability, dowry and sati.

The Act of 1951 also provides for the following remedies against disqualification:
- An election can be called in question only by an election petition. Election petitions are to be heard in the High Court with its appeal lying at the Supreme Court. They act as a mechanism of grievance redressal for the affected parties.
- Furthermore, on the question of whether a legislator is subject to any of the disqualifications the final authority to decide rests with the President (in case of members of Parliament) and the Governor (in case of members of State legislature).
- However, the President or Governor shall act according to the advice of the Election Commission of India.
- In case of any enquiry, the Election Commission is conferred the powers of a civil court for summoning and enforcing the attendance of any person or any evidence.
- Besides, after a legislator is disqualified, the Election Commission may, on certain grounds, remove any disqualification or reduce the period of any disqualification.

Parliament's power to amend the constitution is limited power and it cannot be enlarged into absolute power". In light of this statement explain whether parliament under Article 368 of the constitution can destroy the Basic structure of the constitution by expanding its amending power?. (UPSC IAS Mains 2019 General Studies Paper – 2)

Article 368 of the Indian constitution gives the parliament the power to amend by way of addition, variation or repeal any provision of the constitution in accordance with the procedure laid down by the law. The power to amend the constitution is necessary to overcome the challenges and to meet the demands for the nation's growth and development. However, in the process of amending the constitution under Article 368, the Parliament at times have breached the constitutional limits by transgressing the areas related to federal relation between Union and States, issues of Individual liberty and to a certain extent misused Article 368 itself. This is evident from amendments like 25th and 42nd Constitutional amendment Acts which has threatened the principle of constitutionalism.

Therefore, the Supreme Court intervened to create a harmonious balance between fundamental rights and the Directive Principles which eventually led to the emergence of the doctrine of 'basic structure' of the constitution.

The emergence and the application of the doctrine of 'basic structure' can be seen in light of following Supreme Court judgments:
- Kesavananda Bharati Case (1973): The Supreme Court held that Parliament's power to amend the constitution is limited as it cannot alter the 'basic structure' of the constitution.
- A limited amending power is one of the basic features of the constitution and, therefore, the limitations on that power cannot be destroyed.
- Parliament cannot, under Article 368, expand its amending power so as to acquire for itself the right to repeal or abrogate the Constitutional provisions which threatens the basic features or the Constitution itself.
- Minerva Mills v/s Union of India Case (1980): The Supreme Court struck down clauses (4) and (5) of Article 368 inserted by 42nd Amendment, on the ground that these clauses destroyed the essential feature of the basic structure of the constitution.
- Chandra Kumar v/s Union of India (1997): The judgment held that every provision of the Constitution was open to amendment provided the basic foundation or structure of the Constitution was not damaged or destroyed.

Thus, Parliament is restricted in its power to amend the Constitution so that the soul of Constitution as envisaged by founding father of India remains intact. It is to be noted that, the doctrine of basic structure does not undermine the legislative competence of the parliament, rather it helps in maintaining the supremacy of the constitution and upholding the constitutional spirit.

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"The reservation of seats for women in the institutions of local self-government has had a limited impact on the patriarchal character of the Indian Political Process." Comment. (UPSC IAS Mains 2019 General Studies Paper – 2)

A million women have been elected at the village, block and district levels, following the 73rd Constitutional Amendment which reserved 33 percent of seats in Panchayati Raj Institutions for women. The process of decentralization has provided representation but representation has not always led to their participation in the Indian political process.

Patriarchal Character of Indian Political Process
● The practice of "Sarpanchpatis": The effective political power and decision making are wielded by husbands or other male relatives of elected women representatives. This makes the intended empowerment of women through reservation infructuous.
● Rubber stamps: Most of these women are just rubber stamps with the men in their house- can be the husband, father or the son - running the show. They also work as proxies for rural elites hence restricting their autonomy.
● Lack of exposure of women themselves to politics and the absence of any experience in exercising their political responsibilities hinder their participation. Since most women are illiterate and do not have any training of handling technical issues and financial deals, they have no option but to take assistance from male family members.
● Stereotypes and traditional norms: This relegates women to the domestic sphere and dissuades them to engage in public affairs. Caste and class factors also play a key role that restrict women to take leadership roles.
● The burden of household responsibilities, purdah (veil) system, etc adversely affect their performance.

However, there have also been many positive impacts of women representation:
● Women have done considerable development work on the ground, for example, women sarpanch of Dhani Miyan Khan Gram Panchayat in Haryana built a training centre for women and ensured that every village child went to school.
● Elected women representatives are also more accessible than their male counterparts who are often not around.
● It has been seen that though women lacked confidence initially but exposure to local politics gave them new confidence to take independent decisions and not become a proxy of male candidates.
● There has been a marked improvement in social development parameters such as education and health where panchayats are led by women.

Road ahead
● Capacity Building of Elected Women Representatives (EWR) and Functionaries of PRIs: This would prepare women to discharge multiple roles, enabling them to raise local priorities to the planning process.
● Strengthening women's groups and building networks: Formation of women's forums and networks to develop a sense of solidarity amongst the women.

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- Institutionalisation of mechanisms to strengthen the capacity building of EWRs to better understand and perform their functions.
- Mobilisation of community and strengthening the processes of constituency building to enable women to better articulate their voices and participate in the electoral process.

The reservation of women at the local level has had various social and developmental impacts like promotion of nutrition, sanitation drive, behavioral changes, etc. Also, women are more aware of their rights now which could be seen in women voters outnumbering men voters in states like Bihar. However, women's participation in politics in a true sense is still to be realized. Their participation in the political process is a matter of human right and a key in deepening our democracy. It would also help India in realizing the SDG-5 (Sustainable Development Goal) that aims to end gender inequality in all forms.

"The Attorney-General is the chief legal adviser and lawyer of the Government of India." Discuss. (UPSC IAS Mains 2019 General Studies Paper – 2)

The Constitution under Article 76 has provided for the office of the Attorney-General for India (AGI). He is appointed by the President and holds the office during the pleasure of the President. He must be a person who is qualified to be appointed as a judge of the Supreme Court.

As the chief legal adviser of the Government of India, the Attorney-General has the following duties:
- To give advice to the Government of India on legal matters, which are referred to him by the President.
- To perform other duties of a legal character that are assigned to him by the President.
- To discharge the functions conferred on him by the Constitution or any other law.

The AGI is the highest law officer in the country and acts as the lawyer of the Government of India. Through a notification of 1950, he has been assigned the following duties by the President:
- To appear on behalf of the Government of India in the Supreme Court and high courts.
- To represent the Government of India in any reference made by the President to the Supreme Court under Article 143 of the Constitution.

Along with these duties, the AGI also has the right of audience in all courts in the territory of India. He also enjoys all the privileges and immunities that are available to a member of Parliament.

However, the Attorney-General is not the full-time counsel of the Government. He does not fall in the category of government servants and he is not debarred from private legal practice. But, he should not advise or hold a brief against the

Government of India and he should not defend accused persons in criminal prosecutions without the permission of the Government of India.

Thus, the duties and privileges of the AGI, combined with the limitations imposed on him, make him the chief legal adviser and lawyer of the Government of India. Nevertheless, the separate law minister in the Central cabinet to look after legal matters at the government level, to some extent, gives the office of AGI a subordinate position.

Individual Parliamentarian's role as the national law maker is on a decline, which in turn, has adversely impacted the quality of debates and their outcome. Discuss. (UPSC IAS Mains 2019 General Studies Paper – 2)

Parliament is considered as a temple of Democracy where elected representatives arrive at decisions regarding governance after debates & deliberations. It is considered as the highest platform for holding the executive accountable for their actions. However, of late the great institution has been in the headlines for all the wrong reasons such as the devaluation of parliamentary authority, falling standards of debates, deterioration in the conduct and quality of Members, poor levels of participation and the like. This has led to a certain cynicism towards parliamentary institutions and an erosion in the credibility of parliamentarians and parliamentary processes.

The declining role of Individual parliamentarians and its effect on the quality of debates and their outcome
● Absenteeism: The problem of absenteeism in the houses has increased in proportion to an increase in the indifference of Politicians towards public issues.
● Party politics and the politics of survival are also responsible for declining standards.
● Regarding absenteeism, it is said members cannot always be present in the house because attending the session is not their only function and they are responsible to their conscience, country, and constituency and to their party in whatever they do.
● Frequent disruption and logjams: Moreover, disrupting parliamentary activity through walkouts, the staging of dharnas and gheraos of ministers without reasonable cease are also indicating towards parliamentary decline.
● Live broadcast: Live telecasting of Parliamentary proceedings incentivizing sensationalization of issues often neglecting meaningful discussions
● Criminalization of politics: ADR reports that 34% of the MPs in the 2014 Lok Sabha faced criminal charges, as compared with 30% in 2009 and 24% in 2004. This results in unparliamentary behavior.
● Anti Defection Law and Instruments of Whip: Today, the parliamentarians and state legislators lack vision, commitment, quality and competence for nation-building.
● They use parliament as a body of legitimization of personal and class dominance by the party.

- The enactment of the anti-defection law in 1985, which allows parties to herd their members, weakens the incentives of legislators to invest in developing their own viewpoints and express them freely as they cannot use their own stand on different issues to evolve or develop their own political careers.
- The rigidity of party discipline has tied down party members to follow the dictates of party bosses once elected to the Legislature.
- He or she votes according to the directions of the party whip even if larger social and national interests are being sacrificed to short-sighted policies for short-term political gains.
- Majority of ruling parties: Ruling parties' dominance was another factor, i.e., responsible for the parliamentary decline.
- The parties today enjoy a virtual monopoly in political power, and its decisions were pushed through the Parliament and state assemblies because of the sheer majority.
- Political instability and a divided Parliament—with the ruling coalition often a minority in the upper house—were the principal causes for the decline in the legislative output over the years.
- The politicization of the role of the speaker: The office of the speaker is getting politicized. As a result, there is a lack of confidence in the office of the speaker. Hence there are more disruptions leading to a declining role of parliament.
- Live Telecast of the proceedings: The live coverage of the parliament sessions and increasing tendency to play to the gallery and media has led to a deteriorating quality of parliament.

Road ahead
- A strict code of conduct should be implemented for regulating their good behavior and attendance in the House.
- The onus is on all political parties and parliamentary institutions to manage dissent in order to minimize disruptions.
- The parties and their leaders should not be allowed to reverse roles on the basis of winning or losing elections.
- Another possible solution, going by the global experiences, is reserving a day in the week for the Opposition to set the agenda for Parliament.
- The advantages of this mechanism are evident– the government can't shy away from discussing issues inconvenient to it; the Opposition won't be smarting as it would get ample opportunities to vent its anger and raise issues.
- Yet another solution could be to spread out the parliamentary proceedings to round-the-year, Monday to Friday, instead of the three sessions, as is the current practice.
- Episodic meetings are bound to create episodes, so to speak. Parliamentarians want an appropriate time to raise issues dear to them.
- Anti-defection law should be applied only to confidence and no-confidence motions (Dinesh Goswami Committee on electoral reforms, 1990) or only when the government is in danger (Law Commission 170th report, 1999).
- Instead of making the Speaker the authority for disqualification, the decision should be made by the president or governor on the advice of the Election

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Commission.
- This would make the process similar to the disqualification procedure as given in the Representation of Peoples Act (RPA).
- Individual MPs and MLAs need to be empowered to think independently.

Also, a parliamentary government is described as a government by discussion. Therefore, by allowing for wider and more impactful participation in parliament, it is possible that some of the causes of disruptions would get addressed.

'In the context of neo-liberal paradigm of development planning, multi-level planning is expected to make operations cost-effective and remove many implementation blockages." Discuss. (UPSC IAS Mains 2019 General Studies Paper – 2)

Neoliberalism is a policy model—bridging politics, social studies, and economics—that seeks to transfer control of economic factors to the private sector from the public sector. It tends towards free-market capitalism and away from government spending, regulation, and public ownership. In this change in the economic scenario where the government is supposed to be an enabler rather than a player or provider of first and last, multi-level planning holds significance.

Multi-Level Planning
- Multi-level Planning opposed to centralized planning is an exercise where local institutions are actively involved not only at the implementation level but MLP is a more integrative effort that seeks to involve all hierarchies of administrative, geographical, political and regional levels in the planning process.
- It seeks to involve the active participation of the lower hierarchical levels in information generation, data collection, policy suggestions, plan implementation & monitoring of all developmental activities.
- The various levels of multi-level planning in India are:
- Centre
- States
- Districts
- Blocks
- Villages.

How multi-level planning is expected to make operations cost-effective and remove many implementation blockages:
- Relevant policies: MLP involves involving decision-makers at all spatial levels in the planning process through negotiations, deliberations, and consultations by way of communication through information flows and mutual partaking of perspectives which makes policies relevant and need-based.
- People's participation: As a natural corollary to the decentralisation of planning, mechanisms for peoples' involvement need to be intensively explored for each level for more 'relevant' policy since interests cannot be

adequately articulated without the active participation of people who are the intended beneficiaries.

- Articulation at local levels could then be factored in policy proposals.
- Cost-effective operations: Multi-level planning is expected to make operations cost-effective by providing better linkages between relevant sectors and ready access to required information, which would remove many implementation blockages.
- Doing away of regional disparities and imbalances: By way of delayed decisions, Multi-level planning is expected to reduce regional disparities and bring more equity in development, since the chief factor behind persistent regional imbalances has been diagnosed as an unstudied application of the macro plan at micro levels without necessary modifications/detailing by the local development planners to address the particular requirements of an area/target group.
- Fight against corruption: Corruption has been another persistent problem. For example, the main problem with poverty alleviation programs has been the identification of beneficiaries and articulation of their needs, which has been far from orderly. Omissions/commissions alleged/inadvertent have largely thwarted efforts.
- Identification through local bodies can address the problem. Development planning is expected to simplify the implementation process by infusing role clarity, removing overlapping between sectors and establishing needed linkages for set output levels.
- Local development planners can decide on the territorial level, viz. gram sabha, Samiti or Zilla Parishad, where a function can be performed with maximum impact and economy.
- The revival of local self-governments: As per the MLP approach, the establishment of local "self-government" would renew local administration, which would have positive spin-off effects on business generally. The improved investment climate is expected.

Issues with MLP in the neo-liberal paradigm
- A major problem, widely recognized, is one that relates to the activities that should
- An important issue of discussion for long has been whether the division of powers Multi-level Planning and functions between State and sub-State levels should be nationally determined or left to individual states to decide.
- In a given geographical area, there are various levels of government, such as Centre, state and district and several agencies at each level functioning in the same area.
- The relationship in each category could vary in degree from superior-subordinate, equal, to semi-independent in nature.
- The way the agencies are structured at each area level in terms of representation to area-levels, and the superior-subordinate, semi-equal or equal nature of the relationship in access to resources and powers of decision making, constitutes the core of multilevel planning.
- When the framework at sub-State level is varying and unclear, the functioning, in reality, can be very much at variance with formal structures

(leading to an accusation of hypocrisy or real centralization in the guise of decentralization).

Road ahead
● In determining appropriate area levels, there is a need to take into account not only planning requirements in terms of techniques and processes but also social, political and administrative structures.
● There is a need to introduce Constitutional provisions to ensure continuity and authenticity to such arrangements, particularly in regard to elections for bodies at sub-state levels.
● Since multi-level planning involves the sharing of policy and planning functions with the sub-national levels following six operational sing principles have been suggested for devising necessary mechanisms and procedures for effective flows of information for planning and for frequent interaction with the participating levels.

In India, our planning process has mostly been centralized and a single- level sectored planning has been going on for a long time. In the context of the neo-liberal paradigm of development planning, for a country as wide and diverse as India, every state, district, block and village have to formulate its model of development, outlining its short-, medium- and long-term perspectives.

The need for cooperation among various services sectors has been an inherent component of development discourse. Partnership bridges the gap among the sectors. It also sets in motion a culture of 'collaboration' and 'team spirit'. In the light of statements above examine India's development process. (UPSC IAS Mains 2019 General Studies Paper – 2)

The service sector has been the growth engine of India's development story post LPG, contributing more than 50 percent of India's GDP.

Why cooperation among various service sectors?
● India has a huge demographic dividend and it has to be leveraged fruitfully over the next few decades.
● The potential of our youth has to be realized through education, skill development, elimination of gender bias, employment and good health.
● The resulting issue of job loss due to the technological interventions can be tackled better in Indian development and growth context.
● While India is among the top 10 World Trade Organization members in service exports and imports, the growth and export of services are less than that of the People's Republic of China, and exports are competitive in only a few services and are concentrated in a few markets. Hence, close cooperation and collaboration is the need of the hour.
● Most of the poor in India do not have access to basic services such as healthcare and education, and infrastructure is weak so the cost of service delivery is high. If India needs to breach the gap between GDP growth and

inclusive growth, then this cooperation is necessary.
- Research and development and ICT can play key roles in inclusive growth by ensuring access to cheaper technology and by disseminating knowledge

However, the lack of cooperation among service sectors has dented India's growth to some extent.
- Disintegrated transport sector- Road and Rail transport are seen in vacuum by policymakers. The result is road development fails to take into account railways(frequent tussle between highway developers and railways for the demand of highways of rail blocks by highway developers)
- Education and healthcare, especially for children, have suffered due to this lack of cooperation.
- SEBI IRDA conflict over ULIPs is a classic case of a dent in regulation due to a lack of cooperation among service regulators.
- Fragmentation: Multiple ministries and central government departments regulate services such as energy and transport while others like construction and retail do not have nodal ministries.
- Non-Homogenous: The services sector is a highly non-homogeneous sector comprising a wide range of activities. There are differences within the services sector with regard to the contribution of different sub-sectors to GDP and to employment. Services are inherently diverse; thus, it seems unreasonable to provide an integrated management framework that can apply to all industries.

However, of late many integrative measures have borne rich dividends.
- JAM trinity is a novel integration and cooperation between three services-Banking, Universal ID and mobile services. This lead to financial inclusion and inclusive development
- The concept of integrated multimodal transport is a very good way to extract the best of all modes and provide a reliable and cheap mode of the transportation system.
- The merger of water resources and drinking water ministry would synergize efforts of both the ministries, as well as bring out a kind of team spirit among them.
- Hence better cooperation must be sought after. Govt can devise a services council in line with the GST council so as to cooperate among federal service sectors as well.

Road ahead
- There is an urgent need to focus on the service sector and to identify the key barriers faced by different types of services and then to undertake specific reforms. For instance, in road transport, reforms should focus on establishing a seamless supply chain by removing barriers to the interstate movement of goods.
- In the case of industries like energy, various government departments should work together to design a policy that will facilitate equitable access at affordable prices.
- Regulations should be transparent and non-discriminatory, should take into

account the evolving nature of the service sector and its links with other service-related sectors, and should support its growth.

- The government can work with industry and with educational institutions in public-private partnerships to identify skill requirements and design appropriate courses and training programs to facilitate their better cooperation.
- Focusing on vocational training and developing appropriate curricula will increase the employability of students in the service sector. The quality of education can be improved through proper collaboration with other service sectors at international standards.

The service sector will be able to contribute to inclusive growth by enhancing investment, creating employment and human capital, developing infrastructure and lastly, by better cooperation & assimilation among themselves. It is important for a developing country like India with a large, young population to generate quality employment and to move up the value chain. If the reforms suggested here are implemented, they will enable better cooperation among sectors which in turn will enhance the productivity and efficiency of the sector and lead to inclusive growth.

Performance of welfare schemes that are implemented for vulnerable sections is not so effective due to absence of their awareness and active involvement at all stages of policy process. Discuss. (UPSC IAS Mains 2019 General Studies Paper – 2)

India which embodied the concept of Welfare State since its inception has initiated numerous schemes for the welfare of the vulnerable sections. The social audits often indicate that these schemes have been underperforming and one of the main reasons is surely the absence of awareness among vulnerable sections and their active involvement at all stages of the policy process and in implementation.

Lack of Awareness and Lack of Tangible Results
- The government often announces n number of schemes and doesn't take must efforts to build awareness of scheme among those for whom the scheme has been modelled. As a result, the beneficiaries are at the mercy of the bureaucracy and there is a lack of rights-based approach. This also translates into a lack of accountability on the part of the bureaucracy and the executive.
- Lack of awareness reduces the vulnerable sections to mere beneficiaries rather than partners in the development process. This bureaucracy led approach in the place of beneficiary led approach makes the vulnerable sections a hesitant participant which reduces the efficacy of the schemes.
- Social Audit is one of the effective ways to ascertain the performance of various schemes and adopt necessary corrective actions. But lack of awareness among the target groups results in a gap in ascertaining the effectiveness of the scheme. Hence no robust corrective actions could be taken.

Lack of Active Participation and Lack of Tangible Results

- Lack of active participation of vulnerable sections in the planning process results in gaps in the policy due to lack of first-hand experience. Often the policies which are the brainchild of armchair experts fail to capture the challenges and translate into tangible benefits.
- Lack of active participation also eliminates the chances of beneficiary led approach and rights-based approach. In the absence of both, there is a clear lack of accountability on the part of the executive.
- Lack of active participation also results in absurd policies which propagate one size fits all approach. This approach undermines the fact that India is a land of diversity clubbed with disparities and the uniform measures will not yield desired results.

Way Forward

Democracy is by the people, of the people and for the people. Hence for democracy to succeed in both letter and spirit, it is necessary for active participation of people in governance. Building awareness and encouraging active involvement will go a long way in enhancing outcomes of welfare schemes.

'The long-sustained image of India as a leader of the oppressed and marginalised nations has disappeared on account of its new found role in the emerging global order.' Elaborate. (UPSC IAS Mains 2019 General Studies Paper – 2)

India has been taking an increasingly pragmatic stance in the conduct of its foreign affairs in recent times. This shows a gradual shift from a conventional foreign policy that India had adopted.

India as the leader of the oppressed and marginalized Nations
- India took control of narratives regarding various developing and marginalized nations in the first 4 decades since independence.
- Important among them were NAM and G-77.
- G77 is a coalition of 134 developing nations (including China) at the United Nations.
- Traditionally G77 speaks with a single voice before the 193-member General Assembly and also at all UN committee meetings and at international conferences.
- The Non-Aligned Movement is a movement of countries representing the interests and priorities of developing and oppressed countries.
- India was a founding member of this grouping.
- India was at the forefront of these attempts to create a global space for developing nations and regions whose voices went unheard.
- This policy continued throughout the Cold War when India leaned toward the Soviet Union while deftly maintaining strategic autonomy and charting its own course in a bipolar international order.

India's newfound role in the emerging global order
- This worldview began to evolve following the collapse of the Soviet Union and

an economic crisis at home.
- A newfound pragmatism began to emerge and by the late 1990s India was willing to place its own national interest – both economic and security – ahead of broader ideas of global justice and equity.
- The high rates of economic growth ushered through domestic reforms attracted international investors and India quickly captured this opportunity.
- Economic attractiveness gave the country space to engage the rest of the world on its own terms.
- This meant that India would not give in easily on strategic issues, but it would at the same time be flexible and engage with the rest of the world to achieve win-win outcomes.
- This shift, which is ongoing today, seeks to position India among the great powers by showcasing a willingness to take on more international responsibilities.
- Today India is at the center of the international security architecture, and a key to the economic and technological debates of the age.
- By virtue of its economic growth, its world-class space program, and its contributions from medicine to IT, India has become indispensable to global needs and a shaper of the world economy, not just as a market, but also as an engine of growth and ideas.

India - realpolitik:
- India now prefers multi alignment rather than non-alignment. Ex, SCO, BRICS, QUAD, etc.
- There is a growing convergence of views between India and the U.S. on the security and diplomatic architecture of the Asia- Pacific.
- India deals with China with confidence and candor. This is the new normal in the relationship. India and China engage, cooperate and compete simultaneously
- India is taking a dehyphenation stance on Israel and Palestine. That means India's relationship with Israel would stand on its own merit and will be independent of her relationship with Palestine.
- India has pursued a strong Indian Ocean policy and unveiled a vision framework for the Indian Ocean. India has announced a new initiative, SAGAR- Security And Growth for All in the Region- not only to safeguard India and its island territories but to broaden economic and security cooperation in the region.
- India has coupled diplomacy and development in a turn towards quantifiable outcomes. Prime Minister's foreign visits have focussed on the search for technology, resources, and best practice.
- India is willing to shoulder the responsibility of securing the global commons.
- This was demonstrated by humanitarian relief operations in Yemen, Nepal, South Sudan, Fiji, Sri Lanka and the Maldives, and in India's continuing lead in UN peacekeeping operations.
- India stood in the frontlines in keeping the maritime commons safe and secure, and in global negotiations, such as on climate change.
- Active engagement in development work across the globe. Ex. African nations, Afghanistan, etc.

- Focus on better suited regional groupings like BIMSTEC or ASEAN over SAARC.
- Wooing foreign investments and at the same time investing big in other nations. Ex. Vankor Oil Field; Taas-Yuryakh; Lower Zakum Concession etc.
- At the same time, Indian companies have become one of the biggest sources of FDIs in countries like Britain, Nigeria, South Africa, etc.
- So we can see that now India cooperates with other countries but on its own terms and defects when it is not able to do so

At the global level, we see a shift towards playing a leading world role, rather than a mere balancing one, with ambition, energy, and confidence. There is a realization in the government that, to become a truly great power, India will need to set the agenda on the burning international issues of the day, rather than merely shaping outcomes. At the end of the Second World War, India was a passive witness to the creation of a new security architecture for the world, as decisions concerning India were made by the British. But India now is prepared to lead the negotiation of global covenants.

What introduces friction into the ties between India and the United States is that Washington is still unable to find for India a position in its global strategy, which would satisfy India's National self-esteem and ambitions" Explain with suitable examples. (UPSC IAS Mains 2019 General Studies Paper – 2)

The partnership with India is one of the few U.S. relationships that has deepened notwithstanding transitions from the Bush to Obama to the Trump administrations. But a number of differences are coming to a head that could stall or even derail progress. Key among them are trade and strategic issues.

Reasons for continued frictions between India and the US on the strategic and global platform:
- India cannot ensure its global rise without a stable global economic order, but America under the present administration is challenging the basic foundations of economic globalization.
- The U.S.-China trade and technology conflict is rising, with huge consequences for a global economy already under stress from several directions.
- With Washington flexing its economic muscles, India has begun to face heat.
- New Delhi has been forced to stop concessional oil imports from both Iran and Venezuela, and these heavy-handed American steps have led to a sharp rise in India's oil import bill.
- India's energy security requires the stable Middle East and New Delhi cannot be expected to downgrade its profile in the region.
- But more than that, the U.S. attempts to undercut India's strategic ties with Iran are going to pose serious challenges for Indian foreign policy.
- India's attempts to reach Central Asia are also likely to suffer if New Delhi's ties with Tehran show a downward trend.
- The United States has also been critical of India's bid to purchase the

Russian made S-400 air defense system.
- The biggest challenge New Delhi faces is that if it defies American diktat, there would be economic sanctions as well as restrictions on high-tech defense cooperation with Washington. But if India cancels the S-400 deal, its traditional ties with Russia are bound to suffer.
- Trade ties are also a source of tension. India has been a huge beneficiary of the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) program, but the Trump administration ended it.
- Hyper-nationalism and a combative approach have fundamentally defined the motivational structure of India's current foreign policy.

The US is unable to find for India a position in its global strategy:
- A major obstacle to deepening bilateral relations at the U.S. end is the recurring failure to remember why assisting India's success remains fundamentally in America's national interest.
- This shortcoming is only amplified by the fallacious presumption that India is somehow in the same league as the United States and, as such, should be expected to cooperate by bearing the requisite costs of upholding the global order
- What compounds these problems is the capacity of various interest groups in American society and narrow bureaucratic interests within the U.S. government to hijack national policy-making toward India, turning it away from what U.S. grand strategic interests demand in favor of more parochial preferences.
- The United States views international politics from the vantage point of a hegemonic power and remains determined—as it should—to preserve its primacy.
- In contrast, India views the international system very much as a subordinate state and desires a multipolar system that would more easily accommodate its preferences.
- In the US, bolstering ties with India is still not a pressing foreign policy priority given that the US has stronger and more committed allies willing to readily partner with it in managing the challenges posed by a rising China.
- In India, the U.S. relationships with both Pakistan and China fuel doubts about American credibility in different ways, and the country as a whole has yet to rid itself of old suspicions of the US nurtured during the Cold War.

Road ahead
- The US should return to the best of its past practices toward India: acting to deepen the relationship by strengthening India's capabilities without any expectations of clear quid pro quos.
- It is in U.S. interests to bolster Indian power even if no repayment is forthcoming because doing so will help limit the rise of a Chinese hegemony in Asia that could undermine the enduring strategic interests of the United States.
- The administration must resist the demands both of pressure groups in American society and of narrow bureaucratic interests in the U.S. government that push for transactional policies that subvert the nation's

larger goals.
- India should articulate a geopolitical vision that preserves a special priority for the US and look for creative ways to demonstrate strategic solidarity with Washington.
- If India is to enjoy the kind of preferential support that the United States usually extends only to its closest allies, its leaders must offer their American counterparts a vision of strategic partnership that they find both appealing and consistent with their own conceptions of the national interest.
- Such a vision should be reinforced by increasing cooperation with the United States across the widest possible range of issues.

A long-term American commitment to India in the Indo-Pacific region is the only way to operationalize the vast potential in Indo-U.S. strategic relationship into concrete policy outcomes while preparing India as a credible counterweight to the Chinese power in Asia.

Enumerate the indirect taxes which have been subsumed in the Goods and Services Tax (GST) in India. Also, comment on the revenue implications of the GST introduced in India since July 2017. UPSC IAS Mains 2019 General Studies Paper – 3)

Goods and Services Tax (GST) is an indirect, comprehensive, multi-stage, destination-based tax that is levied on every value addition.

The Goods and Service Tax Act was passed in the Parliament in March 2017. The Act came into effect on 1st July 2017.

At the Central level, the following taxes have been subsumed in the GST:
- Central Excise Duty
- Additional Excise Duty
- Service Tax
- Countervailing Duty
- Special Additional Duty of Customs

At the State level, the following taxes have been subsumed in the GST:
- State Value Added Tax/Sales Tax,
- Entertainment Tax (other than the tax levied by the local bodies), Central Sales Tax (levied by the Centre and collected by the States)
- Octroi and Entry tax
- Purchase Tax
- Luxury tax
- Taxes on lottery, betting and gambling

Revenue implications of GST since July 2017:
- GST was introduced in July 2017. After the initial transitional issues following the roll-out of GST, revenue collection picked up from an annual average of 89.8 thousand crores in 2017-18 to 98.1 thousand crores in

2018-19.
- However in 2018-19, indirect taxes have fallen short of budget estimates by about 16 per cent, following a shortfall in GST revenues (including CGST, IGST and compensation cess) as compared to the budget estimates. Indirect taxes have fallen by 0.4 percentage points of GDP primarily due to shortfall in GST collections.
- According to the Economic Survey, though there has been an improvement in tax to GDP ratio over the last six years, gross tax revenues as a proportion of GDP has declined by 0.3 percentage points in 2018-19 over 2017-18.

Do you agree with the view that steady GDP growth and low inflation have left the Indian economy in good shape? Give reasons in support of your arguments. (UPSC IAS Mains 2019 General Studies Paper – 3)

The Economic Survey 2018-19 states that the economy witnessed a gradual transition from a period of high and variable inflation to a more stable and low level of inflation in period 2014-18. However, in the current fiscal quarter, the headline inflation has fallen to the lowest value and also there is a reduction in Gross Value Added (GVA). This has raised various debates around the use of inflation targeted monetary policy and its impact on the overall economy.

Points to agree
- Provided policy stability: Steady growth rate and low inflation has provided better market conditions for investment and production planning.
- More equitable: Inflation impacts the poor more as it decreases their purchasing power. Low inflation increases disposable income and therefore increases investment in the economy.
- Maintaining the fiscal deficit to the appropriate level: Controlled price level has helped in reducing subsidies and unnecessary tax cuts.
- Helping urban economy: Low inflation rate has kept the living cost in urban areas to a manageable level. This has provided relief to the middle class.

Points to disagree
- Fall in consumption demand: Decreasing Consumer Price Index (CPI) clearly shows the receding disposable income in rural areas which can be clearly seen in the Q2 GDP growth rate falling to 5%.
- Reduction in investment: The contraction of the economy due to falling consumption has reduced the scope of further investment.
- Double Balance Sheet Problem: Due to the slowdown, various corporates are facing the revenue shortage to pay back the interest, leading to NPA problem faced by the banks.
- Revenue Shortfall of the Government: Due to less income generation in the economy, direct tax revenue has receded. This reduces government legroom for more public expenditure.

Road ahead
- Increasing liquidity: The recent step to slash the corporate tax and providing

loans to MSMEs is the desired initiative to infuse more liquidity in the economy and increase investment.
- Increasing public expenditure: Schemes like MGNREGS, rural housing etc. should be implemented more effectively so as to give a boost to rural income generation and thus demand creation.

Promoting labour-intensive industries such as Food Processing Industries, Leather Industries, etc. in order to create demand in the economy and provide employment to youths.
Current monetary policy easing should be continued to give a renewed push to the investment cycle of Indian economy. Inflation is a double edged sword therefore a sustainable range of the inflation rate of 4-6% should be maintained so that maximum income generation could happen in the economy.

How far is Integrated Farming System (IFS) helpful in sustaining agricultural production. (UPSC IAS Mains 2019 General Studies Paper – 3)

The Integrated Farming System (IFS) is a combined approach aimed at efficient sustainable resource management for increased productivity in the cropping system. The IFS approach has multiple objectives of sustainability, food security, farmer's security and poverty reduction by involving livestock, vermicomposting, organic farming etc.

Indian farm sector needs to address the twin challenges of productivity and sustainability along with augmentation of farmer's income. For this, IFS emerges as one of the most viable options, as it ensures:
- Productivity: IFS provides an opportunity to increase economic yield per unit area by virtue of intensification of crop and allied enterprises especially for small and marginal farmers.
- Profitability: It has the capability to make the sector profitable by reducing the use of chemical fertilizer and recycling nutrients.
- Sustainability: In IFS, subsystem of one byproduct works as an input for the other subsystem, making it environmentally sustainable. Moreover, IFS components are known to control the weed and regarded as an important element of integrated pest management and thus minimize the use of weed killers as well as pesticides and thereby protect the environment.
- Recycling: Effective recycling of products, by-products and waste material in IFS is the cornerstone behind the sustainability of farming system under resource poor condition in rural areas.
- Income round the year: Due to interaction of enterprises with crops, eggs, meat and milk, IFS provides flow of money round the year amongst the farming community.
- Best utilization of small landholdings: Indian farmers in many regions such as in north-eastern part, practice subsistence agriculture. They also have a rich traditional base in water harvesting, soil management etc. which could be efficiently utilized under IFS.
- Meeting fodder crisis: Byproduct and waste material of crop are effectively

utilized as fodder for livestock (Ruminants) and products like grain, maize are used as feed for monogastric animals (pigs and poultry).
● Employment generation: Combining crop with livestock enterprises would increase the labour requirement significantly and would help in reducing the problems of underemployment and unemployment to a great extent. IFS provides enough scope to employ family labour round the year.

IFS provides multiple benefits that are sustainable and can pave the way for climate-smart agriculture. India needs to adopt a "well designed" Integrated Farming System (IFS) to realise the vision of doubling farmers' income by 2022 and having sustainable agricultural practices.

How was India benefited from the contributions of Sir M.Visvesvaraya and Dr. M. S. Swaminathan in the fields of water engineering and agricultural science respectively? (UPSC IAS Mains 2019 General Studies Paper – 3)

The British rule in India neglected modernisation of Indian agriculture and little was done to improve irrigation system. After independence, India did not have enough to feed its burgeoning population and it was forced to subsist on "ship to mouth" existence.

At these junctures,two personalities-Sir M Visvesvaraya and MS Swaminathan-emerged who revolutionised their respective fields of knowledge, contributing enormously to India's development.

Sir M. Visvesvaraya's contribution in the field of water engineering
● He is remembered as India's most prolific civil engineer, dam builder, economist, statesman, and can be counted among the last century's foremost nation-builders.
● He played an instrumental role in the construction of the Krishna Raja Sagara Lake and dam in 1924. This dam not only became the main source of water for irrigation for the nearby areas, but is also the main source of drinking water for several cities.
● Visvesvaraya was, among other things, responsible for the building and consolidation of dams across the country. He invented the Block System -automated doors that close in the conditions of overflow, and also designed Hyderabad's flood management system.
● He is recognised for his brilliance and creativity in harnessing water resources, designing and constructing dams and bridges, and revolutionising the irrigation system in India.
● Due to his outstanding contribution to the society, Government of India conferred 'Bharat Ratna' on this legend in the year 1955.

Dr. M.S. Swaminathan's contribution to agriculture science
● A plant geneticist by training, Professor Swaminathan's contributions to the agricultural renaissance of India have led to his being widely referred to as the scientific leader of the green revolution movement.

- Recognized worldwide for his basic and applied research in genetics, cytogenetics, radiation and chemical mutagenesis, food and biodiversity conservation, he conceptualized ever-green revolution movement in agriculture.
- Swaminathan is the visionary who took India from the bondage of 'Ship to Mouth' existence to the freedom of 'Right to Food' through home grown food.
- Apart from serving as head of various national and international institutions, he headed the National Commission on Farmers (NCF) constituted in 2004 to address the nationwide calamity of farmer suicides in India.

India needs to adhere to the visions of these two men, especially when our agrarian challenges are mounting due to erratic rainfall, cycles of floods and droughts, unsustainable practices and other endemic issues.

Elaborate the impact of National Watershed Project in increasing agricultural production from waterstressed areas. (UPSC IAS Mains 2019 General Studies Paper – 3)

Watershed project involves conservation, regeneration and judicious use of all the resources like land, water, plants, animals and humans within the watershed area.

The National Watershed Project also known as Neeranchal National Watershed Project is a World Bank assisted watershed management project. The objective of this project is to support Integrated Watershed Management Program (IWMP) through technical assistance to improve incremental conservation outcomes for the natural resources including water, soil and forests while enhancing agricultural yields in a sustainable manner for farming communities.

Water-stressed regions of India such as Northwest India, Vidarbha region of Maharashtra etc. are prone to drought and water scarcity thus affecting the agricultural production in the regions. The National Watershed Project has the potential in increasing agricultural production in these regions:
- The project has led in reduction of surface runoff thus increasing groundwater recharge, soil moisture and better availability of water in water-stressed areas. It also helps farmers to better manage surface and groundwater resources.
- This has resulted in incremental agriculture productivity and increased cropping intensity through optimum utilization of natural resources like land, water, vegetation etc.
- For example, a watershed project in Bangaru, Telangana has increased crop yields and cropping intensity significantly. This is also accompanied by a shift towards higher-value crops especially horticultural crops.
- It will also help to mitigate the adverse effects of drought and prevent further ecological degradation and support farmers in water-stressed areas to adapt to climatic change and ensuring improved livelihoods for people.
- It helps in the restoration of ecological balance in the degraded and fragile water-stressed areas by increasing vegetative cover and decrease soil erosion

through afforestation and crop plantation.
- People's involvement including the farmers and tribal is the key to the success of any watershed management program, particularly the soil and water conservation. Successful watershed management has been done at Sukhomajri, Panchkula and Haryana through active participation of the local people.

However, watershed project faces certain challenges such as very little community participation, lack of coordination between implementing departments and ministries, etc. Properly educating the people about the project and its benefits or sometimes paying certain incentives to them can help in effective people's participation. Watershed Development on a large scale is the best solution to overcome water-stressed problems.

What is India's plan to have its own space station and how will it benefit our space programme? (UPSC IAS Mains 2019 General Studies Paper – 3)

A space station is a large artificial satellite designed to be occupied for long periods and to serve as a base for scientific observation. Recently, India has announced its plan to build its own space station, as a carry forward of the Gaganyaan mission, which will be the first Indian manned mission to space.

India's Plan toward own Space Station
- The proposed space station is envisaged to weigh 20 tonnes and serve as a facility where astronauts can stay for 15-20 days.
- It would be placed in lower Earth's orbit at around 400 km above the earth.
- The time frame for launch is 5-7 years after the Gaganyaan mission which is expected to take place in 2022.
- The Gaganyaan mission would equip the ISRO with the necessary technology required for creating space platforms.

Space station's benefit toward the space programme
- It would help to sustain Human Space Mission in the future for a longer period of time.
- Space platforms can be used to perform Microgravity experiments. It would help in scientific and technological developments such as innovations related to water purification and biotechs.
- It will help in Deep space exploration like the study of other galaxies.
- The indigenous Space station would enhance India's image in the international sphere. It would increase
- India's position as a space power.
- India can earn revenue from the commercial engagements with other countries from its space prowess.

India should increase its engagement with the private sector and research institutions in order to create human resources and innovative products for its growing space economy.

Coastal sand mining, whether legal or illegal, poses one of the biggest threats to our environment. Analyse the impact of sand mining along the Indian coasts, citing specific examples. (UPSC IAS Mains 2019 General Studies Paper – 3)

Sand consumption globally has been increasing and according to a report by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), India is in the list of critical hotspots for coastal sand mining.

Coastal sand mining poses one of the biggest threats to our environment:
- It is very damaging to the beach fauna and flora and is ruinous to beach aesthetics.
- Resulting in coastal erosion, it frequently causes environmental damage to other coastal ecosystems associated with the beach such as wetlands.
- Another major impact of beach sand mining is the loss of protection from storm surges associated with tropical cyclones and tsunamis.

Indian coasts are greatly affected by coastal sand mining:
- For instance, in Periyasamypuram in Tuticorin district of Tamil Nadu, fish catch has come down, the palm trees have dried up, ground water has turned brackish and the sea has entered the village due to coastal sand mining.
- Seawater intrusion, inundation of coastal land and salinisation of groundwater have been observed along the coast of Kollam, Alappuzha, Pathanamthitta, Kottayam and Ernakulam due to sand mining.
- Coastal sand mining also has many negative impacts on the society. It affects the livelihood of the people, health, science beauty, climate and damage infrastructure.

Better spatial planning and reducing unnecessary construction, using green infrastructure, adopting recycled and alternative substitute materials such as oil palm shell, bottom ash, strictly adhering to Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ), etc. can help in reducing coastal sand mining. Also strengthening standards and best practices to curb irresponsible extraction; investing in sand production and consumption measurement should be adopted at policy level.

Vulnerability is an essential element for defining disaster impacts and its threat to people. How and in what ways can vulnerability to disasters be characterized? Discuss different types of vulnerability with reference to disasters. (UPSC GS-3 Mains 2019)

Vulnerability is the measure of the proneness of people to succumbing under the aftermath harmful effect of disasters. In the absence of robust disaster preparedness the vulnerability increases.

Characterizing the Vulnerability

Geographical Vulnerability

The geographical location may be in the coastal areas, along the river bank or in the earth quake zone makes them more prone to disasters.

Ex: Locations those on coastal areas are prone to floods and Tsunami whereas those at foothills of Himalayas are more prone to earthquake.

Economic Vulnerability

Disasters cause huge economic losses. The collapse of the infrastructure or means of livelihood imposes burden for years to come.

Ex: The floods in Kodagu of Karnataka in 2018 uprooted the coffee estates and farm houses along with infrastructure like roads. It will take years for people to rebuild their lives.

Crime Vulnerability

Often when the people are shattered some miscreants and vested interests become active. After Nepal Earthquake women became victims of sexual harassments and even human trafficking.

Social Vulnerability

The loss of dear ones and means of livelihood causes severe emotional and mental stress. This impacts their attitude and social behaviour.

Climate Change Vulnerability

The climate change is now seen as a causative factor for large number of floods and other disasters.

Ex: Sand Mining has left the coastal areas more vulnerable to flooding and erosion.

Vulnerability Mapping

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The Vulnerability mapping must become a key component of disaster preparedness. In the absence of which the administration will find it difficult to undertake the remedial measures in a sustainable and inclusive manner.

The banning of 'Jamaat-e-islaami' in Jammu and Kashmir brought into focus the role of over-ground workers (OGWs) in assisting terrorist organizations. Examine the role played by OGWs in assisting terrorist organizations in insurgency affected areas. Discuss measures to neutralize the influence of OGWs. (UPSC IAS Mains 2019 General Studies Paper – 3)

Terrorism instils an innate sense of fear in the citizen and dilutes the perceived control of the state over law and order. This state of lawlessness creates conditions which help the terrorist group achieve its political aims. Overground workers(OGWs) provide a support system to terrorist groups and networks in carrying out their activities in insurgency affected areas.

The role played by OGWs
- Food and Logistics support: OGWs assist terror networks to meet their basic needs.
- Propaganda and radical narrative: This provide the ideological background to the terror outfits.
- Finding new recruits: Pool of Disgruntled youth provide a fertile ground for OGWs to propagate radicalisation and hire new recruits.
- Coordination with other stakeholders: OGWs coordinate with secessionist leaders, and Organised crime Networks to meet their political objectives.
- Conduit for Illegal Money: This is done through illegal trade, counterfeit currency, Tax evasion and Hawala transactions. These funds are also used to instigate anti-state protest like stone-pelting.
- Assist in the planning and execution of terror plans: They provide operational planning, intelligence information, safety routes, maps and other inputs that are needed for terror operations.

Measures to neutralize the influence of OGWs
- Address the root cause of alienation among affected communities: This is done by addressing genuine concerns and through awareness campaigns that dispel false propaganda.
- Rehabilitating orphans and women: This would fulfil the state's duty to ensure Social welfare. Also, It would counter the influence of OGWs to find new recruits.
- Intelligence Infrastructure: To keep track of radicalisation attempts by OGWs and recruitment agents in order to stop this process at its inception.
- Human and Electronic Surveillance: This is used to tap into existing networks to pre-empt terror attempts.
- International cooperation: To facilitates follow up on suspects and terror networks.
- Fast track courts: Laws like Public Safety acts for the speedy conviction of

terrorists and OGWs through fast track special courts.

However, Misuse of the legal provision in the random booking of youth on mere suspicion should be avoided. The best defence against terrorism is to ensure that the people do not have the incentive to pick up arms against the country by providing them equitable political, social and economic opportunities.

What is CyberDome Project? Explain how it can be useful in controlling internet crimes in India. (UPSC IAS Mains 2019 General Studies Paper – 3)

- CyberDome project is a technological research and development centre of Kerala Police Department, conceived as a cyber centre of excellence in cyber security, as well as technology augmentation for effective policing.
- It envisages as a high tech public-private partnership centre of collaboration for different stakeholders in the domain of cyber security and handling of cyber crimes in a proactive manner.
- India has witnessed a 457% rise in cybercrime incidents under the Information Technology (IT) Act, 2000 from the year 2011 to 2016.

CyberDome project can be useful in controlling these internet crimes in India
- The project can help in preventing cyber crimes through development of a cyber threat resilient ecosystem in the country to defend against the growing threat of cyber attacks. To effectively tackle cybercrime, the Government has collaborated with private sector and academia to conform rapidly changing technology world.
- The Cyberdome will act as an online police patrol. Through its Anti-Cyber Terror Cell and a cybersecurity training unit, its officers will generate intelligence on various cyber threats in near real time and track fugitives online by monitoring their online activities, including social networking sites.
- It will create a digital repository of stolen and lost vehicles and travel documents, track online payments to prevent money laundering and channelling of funds to dubious organisations and issue cyber security advisories.
- Cyberdome would have centres for social media awareness, protection of children on the Internet, Internet monitoring and ICT (Information and Communication Technology) in service delivery.
- Cyberdome in collaboration with the RBI, Banks, payment gateways and other wallet groups can tackle financial fraud.
- Through its ransomware school, CyberDome can understand, analyse and mitigate ransomware infections, create standard operating procedures to deal with ransomware, creating awareness among the public as well as government departments about ransomware and its precautionary steps.
- The Cyberdome is expected to enable sleuths to obtain vital leads in cases of cyber-related offences using advancements in the field of information technology.
- Of late, Cyberdome has used social engineering as the lynchpin of its policing strategy to snoop on radical groups that use the net for extremist activities.

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- Cyberdome has made successful propaganda war against online games such as Blue Whale.
- Of late, Cyberdome has launched a covert cyber-surveillance and infiltration programme to crack down on child pornography. Thus, Cyberdome project has great potential to control internet crimes and must be replicated at the national level.

Cross-border movement of insurgents is only one of the several security challenges facing the policing of the border in North-East India. Examine the various challenges currently emanating across the India-Myanmar border. Also, discuss the steps to counter the challenges. (UPSC IAS Mains 2019 General Studies Paper – 3)

India and Myanmar share a long 1,643 km geographical land border and maritime boundary in the Bay of Bengal, which act as India's gateway to South-East Asia. India-Myanmar border is highly porous, poorly guarded and located along a remote, underdeveloped, insurgency-prone region and proximate to opium producing area.

Various challenges across the India-Myanmar border
- Cross-Border Terrorism: Indo-Myanmar border area have become a safe haven for dozens of insurgent groups. These insurgent groups performs offensive action in India and brings instability to the area by promoting separatist tendencies and take an easy hide in Myanmar. These groups also take advantage of loopholes in free movement regime across border to supply arms and drugs in India.
- Connectivity: Several connectivity projects like Kaladan Multi-Modal project and IMT Trilateral Highway project are underway, but the ground level progress is quite unfortunate.
- Free Movement Regime: It permits tribals to travel 16 km across the borders without any visa restrictions and allowed them to carry heavy loads. This loophole is well utilized by insurgents for trafficking of arms and drugs and to find safe havens in Myanmar.
- Boundary Agreement 1967: Though the agreement has delineated the borders between the two countries but not much has been crystallised on ground level.
- Tribal Linkages: The Indo-Myanmar border is densely populated with tribals, and these tribal communities have strong social-cultural linkages across borders and they refuse to accept the artificial border lines.
- Security Forces: Assam Rifles had a responsibility of guarding the Indo-Myanmar border, but most of it battalions are engaged in counter-insurgency operations. Therefore, it functions like counter-insurgency force rather than border-guarding force.
- Infrastructural Facility at Border Check-Points: The infrastructure facilities at border check-points is not sufficient to meet the required challenge. Moreh-Zokhawater point has been declared as Integrated Check-Point (ICP) but nothing much have materialised on the ground.
- Difficult Terrain Across Border: The geographical terrain around border areas is highly inaccessible, so it becomes quite difficult to develop communication

and connectivity.
- Trafficking: Proximity to 'golden triangle' has made Indo-Myanmar border highly vulnerable to drug trafficking and the border has become a gateway for trafficking of women and small children to South Asian Nations.
- Rohingya Issue: Influx of marginalised muslim minority rohingya community has raised a serious sociocultural confrontation in the areas due to increased burden on local resources.

Steps to Counter the Challenges

The vulnerability of the India-Myanmar border is posing a serious challenge to the internal security of the country. The Government of India should pay immediate attention to effectively manage this border.
- It should strengthen the security of the border by either giving the Assam Rifles the single mandate of guarding the border or deploying another border guarding force such as the Border Security Force (BSF).
- It should initiate a revision of the FMR and reduce the permitted distance of unrestricted travel.
- The construction of the ICP along with other infrastructure should be expedited.
- The Comprehensive Integrated Border Management System (CIBMS) which is touted as a robust and integrated system, is capable of addressing the gaps in the present system of border security by seamlessly integrating human resources, weapons, and high-tech surveillance equipment, should be proactively deployed.
- Sustained community interaction programmes so that the border tribal communities can be sensitised to participate in the nation building on both sides of the border.

India should endeavour to meaningfully engage with Myanmar and solicit its cooperation in resolving all outstanding issues and better manage their mutual border.

It is argued that the strategy of inclusive growth is intended to meet the objective of inclusiveness and sustainability together. Comment on this statement. (UPSC IAS Mains 2019 General Studies Paper – 3)

According to the World Bank, Inclusive Growth (IG) refers to "broad-based", "shared", and "pro-poor growth". It encompasses both the pace and pattern of growth, which is considered interlinked and therefore needs to be addressed together. Inclusiveness, on the other hand, is a concept that encompasses equity, equality of opportunity, and protection in market and employment transitions and is therefore an essential ingredient of any successful growth strategy.
- Rapid pace of growth is unquestionably necessary for substantial poverty reduction, but for this growth to be sustainable in the long run, it should be broad-based across sectors, and inclusive of the large part of the country's labour force. Thus, IG focuses on productive employment rather than income

redistribution as a means of increasing incomes for excluded groups. Also, the focus is not only on incremental productive employment growth but also on productivity growth.

- Growth can be 'inclusive' and "pro-poor", if and only if the incomes of poor people grow faster than those of the population as a whole, i.e., inequality declines. By focusing on inequality, the inclusive growth could lead to optimal outcomes for both poor and non-poor households.

- Sustained, high growth rates and poverty reduction, however, can be realized only when the sources of growth are expanding, and an increasing share of the labour force is included in the growth process in an efficient way i.e. growth associated with progressive distributional changes will have a greater impact in reducing poverty than growth which leaves distribution unchanged.

- The inclusive growth approach takes a longer-term perspective, where it is important to recognize the time lag between reforms and outcomes. Inclusive growth analytics is about policies that should be implemented in the short run, but for sustainable, inclusive growth in the future. For Example: The lag between the time when investments in education are made and the time when returns from improved labour skills are realised- this implies that the growth analysis must identify future constraints to growth that may not be binding today, but that may need to be addressed today in order to ensure sustainable and inclusive growth.

- Sustainable development should be followed wherein we should not only be inclusive with respect to people but also bring the environment in its inclusion thus causing minimum depletion of resources and going for a circular economy. In the past few years, the government is aggressively focusing on the strategy of inclusive growth in its various programs and policies. For Example, Jan Dhan Yojana has focused on incorporating the unbanked masses into the financial sector and has increased financial inclusion statistics to more than 80%.

In the last few decades, India's growth story has been phenomenal but the outcomes of this growth were not visible on the ground as India has performed badly in several social indicators as well as Human Development Index. Therefore inclusive growth is the idea to realize the dream of sustainable and qualitative development for present and future generations.

The public expenditure management is a challenge to the Government of India in the context of budgetmaking during the post-liberalization period. Clarify it. (UPSC IAS Mains 2019 General Studies Paper – 3)

The public expenditure management (PEM)is an instrument of state policy and mechanism for good governance. The broad objective of PEM is the achievement of overall fiscal discipline, strategic allocation of resources, operational efficiency and macro-economic stability.

Various challenges faced by the government with regard to PEM
- Global Shocks: Global slowdown, Federal rates (for eg. reversal of quantitative

easing), Trade wars, Oil prices etc. impact the budget estimates which in turn impacts the subsidies allocation and tax revenue collection.

- Narrow tax net: More reliance on indirect tax makes the taxation policy more regressive. It also constrains the government to increase its social spending, which is low in India as compared to other major global economies.
- Less capital expenditure: Budget's capital expenditure is essential to ensure inter-generational equity and competitiveness of the economy. It has remained around 10%-12% of government expenditure.
- Populist tendencies: This leads to unproductive spending of the scarce government resources. For eg. giving tax sops, farm loan waivers in the pre-election period.
- Fiscal deficit: Keeping the deficit within the desired limit is essential for maintaining the fiscal prudence.
- Managing public debt: It is essential to ensure that the burden of the current generation's needs doesn't fall on the next generation.
- Trade deficit: It should be reduced in order to have healthier global trade and improve market competitiveness.
- Containing inflation: It is one of the most important objectives of monetary policy which is also impacted by the revenue and expenditure policies of the government.
- Estimates of revenue and expenditure: In order to have effective PEM, comprehensive and realistic estimates of revenue and expenditure are essential. Currently, there is uncertainty in providing correct budget estimates.
- Ensuring equitable development across regions: One of the pressing challenges faced by the government with regard to public expenditure management is to ensure equitable development across the regions.
- Inadequate capacity and efficiency of public institutions: Substantive portion of budget allocation towards various schemes remains unutilized and underutilized due to poor implementation and structural bottlenecks. It leads to poor efficiency and cost overruns. For e.g. stalled road projects.

Government measures for effective PEM
- FRBM (Amendment) Act: Government has targeted to reduce the fiscal deficit gradually and stabilize it by 2023 to 2.5%.
- Removing Plan/Non-plan distinction: Removing plan/non-plan distinction and instead adopting the revenue-capital classification of public expenditure will help in allocation of more resources for creation of capital assets which in turn will help in improving the efficiency of economy.
- Monetary policy framework: Inflation targeting by the Monetary Policy Committee has helped in price stability, which is key to effective PEM.
- Deepening of Fiscal Federalism: More tax revenue has been devolved to states from the divisible tax pool. It would help in better allocation of scarce resources based on the needs of states.
- Monitoring system framework: It has been developed at the central level to enable the outcome budgeting. Also, it enables the timely assessment of resource utilization. E.g. Public Financial Management System (PFMS).

With the 1991 reforms, the Indian economy was linked with the global economy. The effective PEM becomes more essential in this globalised era to meet various objectives of state policy. Various fiscal targets should be followed prudently and monitoring of resource utilization should be made robust.

What are the reformative steps taken by the Government to make the food grain distribution system more effective? (UPSC IAS Mains 2019 General Studies Paper – 3)

The National Food Security Act (NFSA), 2013 provides for the Right to Food as a legal entitlement by providing subsidized food grains to nearly two-thirds of the population. However, the current food grain distribution system is fraught with various defects.

Issues with the Food Grain Distribution System
- Inaccurate identification of households: Presence of inclusion and exclusion errors in identification of beneficiaries.
- Leakages in the delivery system: This takes place during the transportation of food grains to ration shops and from there to the open market.
- Financially inefficient: The centre bears a large financial burden of the food subsidy as the cost of procuring and delivering food grains is about six times its sale price.
- Shortfall in the storage capacity: It leads to the rotting of food grains.

Reformative steps

Procurement
- Promotion of nationwide procurement: Food Corporation of India (FCI) has tried to revamp and restructure the procurement system to cover the entire country. In this regard, FCI has also made special efforts for procurement in the eastern states of India.

Stocking and Storage
- Use of modern technology in storage: To prevent rotting of food grains. Irradiation Technology has also been introduced.
- Online Monitoring System: To bring all operations of FCI Godowns online to check leakages.

Distribution
- Digitization of ration cards and use of AADHAR: It has helped to eliminate duplicate and ghost (fake) beneficiaries, and make identification of beneficiaries more accurate.
- Technology-based reforms implemented by states: End to end computerisation has curbed large-scale diversion of food grains by tracking its delivery from state depots to beneficiaries.
- GPS tracking of delivery: The tracking of the movement of trucks carrying food grains has helped in monitoring the supply chain. It has been implemented by Chhattisgarh and Tamil Nadu.
- SMS based monitoring by citizens: Allows monitoring by citizens as they can register their mobile numbers and send/receive SMS alerts during dispatch and arrival.

- Use of web-based citizen's portal: For public grievance redressal as they can register complaints or provide suggestions.
- Implementing Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) in Public Distribution System (PDS): Currently, pilot projects have been started in Delhi and Puducherry.

Road ahead
- Decentralized Procurement: Decentralized procurement operations by leading states that have gained sufficient experience in this regard. This would help Food Corporation of India (FCI) to focus on lagging states.
- Engagement of the private Sector: This can help to modernize stocking and warehousing facilities.
- Home delivery of food grains: This can help in increasing last-mile connectivity.
- Full implementation of Shanta Kumar committee recommendations.

Food security is crucial for reaping the benefits of demographic dividend and this can be achieved through a robust food distribution system. Competitive federalism should be promoted among states so as to learn from the best practices of other states in managing the food economy.

Elaborate the policy taken by the Government of India to meet the challenges of the food processing sector. (UPSC IAS Mains 2019 General Studies Paper – 3)

The food processing industry (FPI) is considered a sunrise sector that has gained prominence in recent years. The industry is of enormous significance because of the vital linkages and synergies that it promotes between the two pillars of our economy i.e. industry and agriculture.

The food processing industry is struggling with the following challenges:
- Poor supply chain linkages that results in high wastage and high costs.
- Infrastructure bottlenecks such as packaging facilities, cold storage, transportation, etc. cause a significant amount of food produced getting wasted.
- India lacks basic standardisation and certification infrastructure, as there is a huge gap in the availability of laboratories, trained manpower, and certification agencies.
- Lack of trained human resources at different levels in the food processing industry mostly due to lack of training infrastructure; lack of specialised training programmes etc.
- In addition, there are challenges like inadequate demand-based innovations, access to credit, proper branding, etc.

Given the above-mentioned challenges, the government has taken the following policy initiatives:

The Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MoFPI) is implementing PMKSY (Pradhan Mantri Kisan SAMPADA Yojana) as a comprehensive package for creation

of modern infrastructure with efficient supply chain management from farm gate to retail outlet. It is expected to provide a big boost to the growth of food processing sector, help in providing better returns to farmers, create huge employment opportunities especially in the rural areas, reduce wastage of agricultural produce, and enhance the export of the processed food. Under PMKSY the following schemes are to be implemented.
- Mega Food Parks
- Integrated cold chain, value addition and preservation infrastructure
- Creation/expansion of food processing/preservation capacities
- Infrastructure for agro-processing clusters
- Scheme for creation of backward and forward linkages
- Food safety & quality assurance infrastructure
- Human resources and institutions
- Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) policy: FDI up to 100%, under the automatic route is allowed in food processing industries.
- Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA): As an apex organisation under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, APEDA focusses on 'export' of scheduled products.
- The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) is working to strengthen the food testing infrastructure in India, by upgrading the existing food testing laboratories and setting up new mobile testing labs across the country.
- The Ministry of Food Processing Industries announced a scheme for Human Resource Development (HRD) in the food processing sector. The scheme has the following four components:
    1. Creation of infrastructure facilities for degree/diploma courses in the food processing sector
    2. Entrepreneurship Development Programme (EDP)
    3. Food Processing Training Centres (FPTC)
    4. Training at recognised institutions at State/national level

The food processing industry is critical to India's growth and the government should focus on providing adequate impetus to the sector. With the correct set of policy implementations and support, the industry can grow by leaps and bounds, taking India to a new position of strength and prosperity in the global economy.

How is the Government of India protecting traditional knowledge of medicine from patenting by pharmaceutical companies? (UPSC IAS Mains 2019 General Studies Paper – 3)

Traditional medicine comprises medical aspects of Traditional Knowledge (TKs) that developed over generations within various societies before the era of modern medicine. India has diverse set of traditional practices arising out of Ayurveda, Siddha, and diverse Tribal Practices that have developed over generations.

Issues involved in the protection of Traditional Knowledge
- Non-codification of TKs: Non-codified traditional knowledge are vulnerable to lose their relevance with the influences of modern medical practices.
- Patenting of TKs by Biotechnology companies: Various cases of Bio-piracy were raised in India where Biotech companies used the Traditional Knowledge to develop products and issued patents. E.g. Jeevani sports drug was derived from traditional knowledge of Kani tribe.
- Access and Benefit Sharing from TKs: Traditional knowledge is also often held collectively by communities, rather than by individual owners. This makes the benefit sharing difficult.
- Inadequate International Regimes for protection of TKs: Due to the community nature of traditional knowledge, it is not recognized in international laws explicitly.

Steps of Government To Protect TKs
Legal Steps:
- Biological Diversity Act: It contains the provision for fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources.
- Forest Rights Act 2006: It provides for community rights over forest resources. It can help in the protection of traditionally owned knowledge and practices. It also protects and promotes the livelihood of tribal community which is often based on their knowledge system and forest produce.
- The Geographical Indication of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999: It provides a collective right to the holders of the traditional knowledge associated with a particular geographical area.

Institutional Steps:
- AYUSH Ministry: To cultivate education and research in Ayurveda, Yoga, Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha, Homoeopathy, Sowa-Rigpa (Traditional Tibetan medicine), and other indigenous medicine systems.

Policy Measures, Initiatives and Projects
- Traditional Knowledge Digital Library (TKDL): It is a repository of traditional knowledge, especially of medicinal plants and formulations used in Indian system of medicine.
- National Ayush Mission: It promotes AYUSH medical practices, quality enhancement and mainstreaming these practices to our healthcare system. It also promotes the education and awareness of AYUSH medicine system.
- Research Centres and National Institutes have been created across India in the fields of Ayurveda, Unani, Homoeopathy, Siddha.

- India has also signed agreements with the United Kingdom Intellectual Property Office and other countries' patent office like USA etc to prevent the grant of invalid patents by giving patent examiners at International Patent Offices access to the TKDL database for patent search and examination.

The interest in traditional medicines is growing rapidly due to the increased side effects, adverse drug reactions, and cost factor of modern medicines. So, awareness and development of various traditional knowledge practices should be done along with a focus on their mainstreaming so as to reap its potential of great livelihood support particularly for the tribals. Also, a sui-generis system should be developed that can recognize the diverse nature of Traditional Knowledge and provide them with adequate legal and commercial protection.

How can biotechnology help to improve the living standards of farmers?. (UPSC IAS Mains 2019 General Studies Paper – 3)

In India, the majority of the population is involved in agriculture but it is not remunerative enough, especially in areas which did not go through the stages of the green revolution. In this scenario, biotechnology holds good potential to transform agriculture. It can affect all steps of the production chain, from agrochemical inputs to final food processing.

- Under biotechnology, plants, bacteria, fungi and animals whose genes have been altered by manipulation (Recombinant DNA Technology) are called Genetically Modified Organisms (GMO). GMO technology has brought significant changes in agriculture and areas related to it.
- Tissue Culture is the science of cultivating animal/ plant tissue in a prepared medium. Technologies based on this can be harnessed to achieve crop improvement objectives.
- Crops have been made more tolerant to abiotic stresses (cold, drought, salt, heat) so the farmers do not have to worry about the weather conditions and can help plants adapt to environmental stress and climate change.
- It has reduced reliance on chemical pesticides (pest-resistant crops) which is pocket-friendly for the farmers and eco-friendly for the consumer by eliminating harmful chemicals from the ecosystem.
- Post-harvest losses have been reduced by increasing crops' abilities to withstand the transportation period without being perished.
- Efficiency of mineral usage by plants has been increased by it (this prevents early exhaustion of fertility of soil), so a piece of land can be used for a long time for equally good yields.
- It has enhanced the nutritional value of food (like Vitamin A enriched rice) which increases the market value of the product, profiting the farmers and improving human health.
- Plants developed using biotechnology naturally resist specific insects, weed plants and diseases so there is no loss of crop due to these reasons. (Like Bt crops).
- In addition, it has been used to create tailor-made plants to supply alternative resources to industries, in the form of starches, fuels and

pharmaceuticals etc. which can boost the agricultural-industrial relations uplifting the farmers.

The benefits of biotechnology are especially meaningful at a time when our global population is growing and our demand for food is increasing, mainly in developing countries. Biotechnology allows farmers to grow more food on less land using environmentally sustainable farming practises which are necessary for them to have a good income and a better living standard. Biotechnology is a powerful tool to feed an increasing world population, but its "positive and negative potential" should be carefully evaluated.

Define the concept of carrying capacity of an ecosystem as relevant to an environment. Explain how understanding this concept is vital while planning for sustainable development of a region. (UPSC IAS Mains 2019 General Studies Paper – 3)

Carrying Capacity (CC) can be defined as the population that can be supported indefinitely by its supporting systems.
- In ecological terms, the carrying capacity of an ecosystem is the size of the population that can be supported indefinitely upon the available resources and services of that ecosystem.
- In the broader sense, carrying capacity also means that all plants and animals which an area of the Earth can support at once. Change in carrying capacity for one species affects other populations in the area.
- A simple example of carrying capacity is the number of people who could survive in a lifeboat after a shipwreck. Their survival depends on how much food and water they have, how much each person eats and drinks each day, and how many days they are afloat. If the lifeboat made it to an island, how long the people survived would depend upon the food and water supply on the island and how wisely they used it.
- Sustainable development, which entails the maximum use of resources without damaging the system's regenerative capacity, has a definite role to play in future policy planning. Sustainability requires managing all households -- individual, community, national, and global -- in ways that ensure that our economy and society can continue to exist without destroying the natural environment on which we all depend.
- Population Control: The notion that resource limitation must eventually constrain the growth of population is appealing, but appropriate estimation of regional carrying capacity would help to forge a definite course for planning.
- Women sensitization and education toward reproductive choices can play a dominant role in controlling pollution.
- Economic Planning: By carefully assessing the present and future availability of local resources, economic zones can be planned, which will help in mitigating the adverse effects of economic activities.
- For Example: The establishment of Coca-Cola bottling plant in Plachimada, Kerala in 2000, resulted in the depletion of groundwater in the area and was shut down in 2004 due to widespread protest. Careful assessment of regional

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carrying capacity can help us prevent such incidents
- Agriculture Management: The concept of carrying capacity of an ecosystem can be very useful in proper crop management across the length and breadth of the country. It has been found that farmers are overutilizing the capacity of land without giving any due importance to its regeneration, which has led to the problem of desertification in Punjab and Harayana.
- For Example: Farmers in water stress areas of Maharashtra are growing water intensive crops which have created drought like conditions in the region. Prior estimation of carrying capacity can help avert such chronic conditions.
- Under-used capacity of Food Production & Biodiversity: Using appropriate technological advancement, sustainability in food production methods and diversifying the use of biological resources can help attain harmony between natural resource and their utilization.
- Resource Management: Adaptive management is the most widely accepted solution for confronting the unpredictability of renewable resources. Natural resource management must consider the ever-changing interaction between physical and biological systems, and react according to acquired experience and historical knowledge in a continuous, iterative learning process.

The current ethos of 'sustainable development' is slanted towards preservation of the replacement capability of natural systems, rather than maximum use. However, the unceasing growth of world population may eventually bring inequilibrium between the two. To face this future with confidence, humanity must endeavour to maintain the Earth's carrying capacity at a productive yet sustainable level, through improved logistical foundations, a more cooperative political climate, and better scientific understanding.

Indian government has recently strengthed the anti-terrorism laws by amending the unlawful activities (Prevention) Act, (UAPA), 1967 and the NIA Act. Analyze the changes in the context of prevailing security environment while discussing scope and reasons for opposing the UAPA by human rights organisations. (UPSC IAS Mains 2019 General Studies Paper – 3)

The Union Government by amending NIA Act and UAPA Act seeks to provide more powers to India's anti-terror agency and expand the scope of India's anti-terror law, thereby providing a big push to India's internal security machinery.

Under the UAPA Act, the Central Government can designate an organisation as a terrorist organisation if it commits or participates in acts of terrorism; promotes terrorism; or is otherwise involved in terrorism. Currently, only an organisation can be declared a terrorist. The amendment allows government to designate individuals suspected to have terror links as "terrorists".

Likewise, the amendment to NIA Act widens the powers of the National Investigation Agency (NIA) to investigate crimes related to human trafficking, counterfeit

currency, dealing in prohibited arms, and cyber-terrorism. These were earlier under State police. NIA can also investigate a crime irrespective of its place of occurrence.

These amendments are in pursuance of the government's zero-tolerance policy against terrorism. These hold significance in the context of the prevailing security environment.

- Terrorism emanating from Pakistan has been a consistent challenge whereby terrorist organisations have been devising new methods to threaten the stability of the region.
- This often included formation of new terrorist outfit by the individuals if their previous organisation was banned. This issue emerged during India's efforts to designate Masood Azhar as terrorist when some foreign diplomats questioned India's domestic law which didn't provide for individual's designation. Now, declaring an individual as a terrorist will help the government to deal with such situations.
- Besides, there is growing menace of terror financing and organised crimes like human trafficking, cyber terrorism etc. An empowered NIA is a good step in this direction

However, human rights organisations allege that these amendments violate the basic human rights and seek to create a police state.

- The UAPA does not clearly define a 'terrorist act'.
- The presumption of innocence is considered a universal human rights principle but the UAPA creates a presumption of guilt for terrorist offences based on the seized evidence.
- Moreover, there is no set procedure for designation as a terrorist. By excluding judiciary and empowering the executive to designate, it dilutes the difference between a terrorist and a terror accused.
- Similarly, the term "affecting the interest of India" in NIA act is undefined and the civil society fears that it can be used to curb freedom of speech and expression.

Thus, though the changes are required to meet the prevailing security environment, the policy framework dealing with terrorism must incorporate the state duty to protect against human rights abuses and greater access of victims to remedies. Apart from dealing with terrorism, emphasis should be on to improve the functioing of the police force and to make India's judicial mechanism faster.

What are the basic principles of public life? Illustrate any three of these with suitable examples. (UPSC IAS Mains 2019 General Studies Paper – 4)

The fundamental principle in a democracy is that all persons holding authority derive it from the people; in other words, all public functionaries are trustees of the people. With the expansion of the role of government, public functionaries exercise considerable influence over the lives of people. The trusteeship relationship between the public and the officials requires that the authority entrusted to the officials be exercised in the best interest of the people or in 'public interest'.

One of the most comprehensive statements of what constitutes principles of public life came from the Nolan Committee, which outlined the following seven principles of public life Selflessness, Integrity, Objectivity, Accountability, Openness, Honesty, Leadership.

- Leadership: Holders of public office should promote and support the principles of public life by leadership and example. For eg. Lal Bahadur Shastri used to fast every Monday to save grains for poor people of the country and he gave a call for the nation to follow it. Thus exhibiting a true example of how leaders should lead from the front.
- Selflessness: Holders of public office should act solely in terms of public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other benefits for themselves, their family or their friends. For eg. Tukaram Omble of Maharashtra police tackled Kasab one of the terrorists of Mumbai attack so that he couldn't attack his fellow servicemen. Thus showing exemplary courage and the highest degree of selflessness by giving away his life for the cause of his nation. Gita also in one of its shloka- karmanye vadhikaraste ma phaleshu kadachana reiterates the principle of selflessness which means one should only focus on our actions and should not worry about the result.
- Accountability: Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office. For eg. Vikram Sarabhai accepted the failure of ISRO first mission without actually putting it on the mission head (APJ Abdul Kalam). Thus taking full accountability for the failure of his team.

Thus it can be established that principles of public life are important for every democracy. Guidelines of public behaviour arising from such principles can play a crucial role in creating trust between the public functionaries and common public. Therefore any person who is privileged to guide the destiny of the people must not only be ethical but must be seen to practice these principles of public life.

What do you understand by the term 'public servant'? Reflect on the expected role of the public servant. (UPSC IAS Mains 2019 General Studies Paper – 4)

A public servant is generally a person who is employed directly or indirectly by the government, either through appointment or election. A public servant values public good over his/her personal interests. Taxpayers and public funds partially or fully fund their wages, which is why they are known as servants of the public. The duties of public servants are as diverse as the duties and responsibilities of the government.

There are many elements which a public servant can imbibe to bring about a more humane and ethical governance structure. A few of these are:
- Public Servants have an obligation to protect and promote our constitutional ideals enshrined in the preamble, to uphold the rule of law, dispense administrative justice and ensure administrative facilitation.
- As an elite segment of society, public servants have an important role in informing and even formulating public opinion and perception on various issues.
- The public servant should be emphatic as also advised by Mahatma Gandhi's that if anyone was in doubt if an action was good or not was to put oneself in the situation of the poorest of the poor in the country and see how a particular policy and programme will impact him or her.
- S/He should also be 'efficient' as administrators occupying positions of power and authority, it is their responsibility to translate policies into programmes, to implement schemes on the ground.
- They need to be agile in their thoughts and actions. For eg. they should be able to access the latest information and knowledge and use them for improving service delivery.
- They should be impartial and incorruptible as also observed by Sardar Patel and should work for an inclusive national development as mandated by the Constitution.
- They should behave in a dignified manner and have the ability to patiently listen and take a balanced view. They must eschew arrogance and authoritarianism and be able to approach even the most intractable issues and irritants with a calm demeanour.

Kautilya in his Arthashastra emphasised on the importance of the common citizens: "It is the people who constitute a kingdom; like a barren cow, a kingdom without people yields nothing". Thus the success of the administration depends upon the involvement, commitment, dedication and sacrifice with which the public servants put their efforts for the welfare of the teeming millions in the country.

Effective utilization of public funds is crucial to meet development goals. Critically examine the reasons for under-utilization and mis-utilization of public funds and their implications. (UPSC IAS Mains 2019 General Studies Paper – 4)

Effective utilization of funds for welfare services is one of the key tenets to ensure social and economic justice and meet developmental goals. However, as former Prime Minister Rajeev Gandhi had remarked, "only 15 paise for every 1 rupee spent on public welfare actually reaches to the masses", thereby highlighting the gravity of ineffective utilization of funds in our country. Public servants are the trustees of the hard earned public funds, therefore it becomes their moral and legal responsibility for their effective utilization. The various reasons due to which these funds are under-utilized and mis-utilized are given below:

Under-Utilization
- High administrative cost and procedural delays in government offices which keeps the funds tied in administrative tangles and bureaucratic loopholes.
- Inappropriate budgetary allocation, for example: use of guillotine voting
- Lack of sufficient staff in government offices
- Improper technological penetration at grassroot level
- Ineffective decentralization of financial power

Mis-Utilization
- Corruption leading to diversion of funds to unauthorised sources.
- Poor accountability mechanism preventing their effective monitoring and utilization.
- Lack of coherence in planning.
- Ineffective decentralization of power
- Populist politics in the country.
- Corporate impact on policy makers i.e crony capitalism
- Favouritism and misuse of office i.e favouring someone over others while allocation of government projects.
- Expenditure rush during the month of March, popularly known as 'March Rush', which leads to unplanned and improper fund expenditure, to prevent lapsing of funds that have remained unutilized.
- Diversion of funds to other purposes.

Implications
- Social: Violation of the rights and entitlements of the masses. It leads to social problems like inequality, illiteracy, poor health and sanitation, increased animosity among different communities etc.
- Political: Misallocation and underutilization has led to unequal development in the country, increased corruption and inequality within different states. This has created the problems of regionalism, naxalism, and separatism.
- Economic: India's continuous struggle with poverty and inability to build on its demographic dividend has been the major impact. Inspite of having a potential of double digit growth, our growth story still revolves around 7%, along with inadequate improvement in infrastructure, human indices, employment etc.

- Ethical: Breach of 'Doctrine of Public Trust' which lays responsibility on public servant for judicious use for the benefits of the masses.

No matter how good the policy we frame, its impact drastically depends on the allocation and effective utilization of funds. Therefore, to realize the ethical and moral duty incorporated in Directive Principles of States Policy to maximize welfare measures and prevent concentration of wealth in few hands, it is important to take appropriate policy measures to realize the goals of national development.

What is meant by the term 'constitutional morality' ? How does one uphold constitutional morality? (UPSC IAS Mains 2019 General Studies Paper – 4)

Constitutional morality means adherence to the core principles of the constitutional democracy. In classicist George Grote's perspective, it means "paramount reverence for the forms of the constitution, enforcing obedience to authority and acting under and within these forms, yet combined with the habit of open speech, of action subject only to definite legal control, and unrestrained censure of those very authorities."

Constitutional Morality
- In India, the term was first used by Dr. B.R. Ambedkar during his parliamentary debates. In his perspective, it would mean an effective coordination between conflicting interests of different people and the administrative cooperation to resolve it amicably without any confrontation amongst the various groups working for the realisation of their ends at any cost.
- In contemporary usage, it refers to the substantive content of a constitution. To be governed by a constitutional morality is to be governed by the substantive moral entailment any constitution carries. In this sense, constitutional morality is the morality of a constitution itself.
- Its scope is not limited only to following the constitutional provisions literally but vast enough to ensure the ultimate aim of the Constitution, a socio-juridical scenario providing an opportunity to unfold the full personhood of every citizen, for whom and by whom the Constitution exists.
- The sources of constitutional morality are the text of the Constitution, the Constituent Assembly debates and the events which took place at that period.
- Constitutional morality is important for constitutional laws to be effective. Without it, the operation of a constitution tends to become arbitrary, erratic, and capricious.
- An important case which employed this concept in an innovative manner was the Naz Foundation Case which used the concept of constitutional morality to strike down Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code and decriminalise homosexuality.

Uphold constitutional morality
- By letting constitutional morality guide the Court's decision instead of

popular morality, while interpreting the constitution.
- By locating the content and contours of constitutional morality so that it is not being ignorantly and dangerously used in courts.
- By making a commitment to the values like constitutional supremacy, rule of law, liberty, equality, parliamentary form of government, self restraint and intolerance for corruption etc.
- By using it as an aid in making choices because it can give another set of clues while searching for constitutional meaning in cases wherein the words of the constitutional clause can be read in different ways.
- By having paramount reverence for the forms of the constitution, enforcing obedience to authority and acting under and within these forms.

Even the constitution itself mentions this concept only four times (twice in Article 19 and twice in Right to religious Freedom under Article 25 and 26), and it has been understudied and ignored for a long while by people in general as well. It needs to be changed in order to understand the constitution with a new perspective exploring further possibilities of this concept. Public conscience, moral order and constitutional morality- ethics of politicians, that constitute the core of policy making, must be very sound and strong if democracy is to survive for the long period of progress and prosperity of the people.

> What is meant by 'crisis of conscience' ? How does it manifest itself in the public domain? (UPSC IAS Mains 2019 General Studies Paper – 4)

There is a higher court than courts of justice and that is the court of conscience. It supersedes all other courts. — Mahatma Gandhi

Crisis of Conscience
- It is the dilemma of being ethically unfair or wrong in the decision making process.
- Sometimes in complex and emotional situations, it is very hard to decide what is the right thing to do. The situation might need a different solution practically which might be immoral but our conscience strongly suggests us a completely different approach.
- It is ethically proper to violate an ethical principle only when it is clearly necessary to advance another true ethical principle which will create the greatest amount of good and the least amount of harm to the greatest number of people, which is the utilitarian approach.

How does it manifest in public domain?
- It manifests in the decision making process by civil servants where the decision can impact a huge number of people. The problem arises when they are pressurised under some ministerial influence to take immoral decisions or implement unethical policies.
- It manifests in the tussle between ethics and the law. For example, restricting public movement in Kashmir for upholding law and order raised the situation of crisis of conscience. Similarly, despite having a legal status as a third

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gender, transgenders continue to face oppression, marginalisation, lack of employment opportunities which forces them to resort to beggary, and this failure to ascertain to them life of dignity is a manifestation of the crisis of conscience in public domain.

It is common to come across such crises of conscience in public domain where lives and decisions overlap and come face to face almost every time. The key to overcome such crisis of conscience for public servant is through keeping all dimensions in mind, freeing himself from desires or pressures and staying calm & true to public service ethical code and legal framework.

Explain the basic principles of citizens charter movement and bring out its importance. (UPSC IAS Mains 2019 General Studies Paper – 4)

Citizen's Charter is a document of voluntary commitments made by a government organization to the citizens/client groups in respect of the services/schemes being provided to them or to be provided to them. The main objective of Citizen's Charter is to improve the quality of public services. The aim of the exercise is to build bridges between citizens and administration and to streamline administration in tune with the needs of citizens. This is done by letting people know the mandate of the concerned Ministry/ Department/Organisation, how one can get in touch with its officials, what to expect by way of services and how to seek a remedy if something goes wrong.

Principles of Citizen Charter
- Quality: improving the quality of services
- Choice: for the users wherever possible
- Standards: specifying what to expect within a time frame
- Value: for taxpayers money
- Accountability: of the service provider (individual as well as organisation)
- Transparency: in rules, procedures, schemes and grievance redressal
- Participative: consult and involve

Importance
- It is helpful in making administration more transparent and accountable.
- It is citizen-centric in nature and makes the administration more citizen friendly.
- It promotes good governance
- It improves service delivery to the citizens.
- It provides a pathway for grievance redressal.

A Citizen Charter cannot be an end in itself, it is rather a means to an end- a tool to ensure that citizens always remain at the heart of any service delivery model.

> There is a view that the Officials Secrets Act is an obstacle to the implementation of RTI Act. Do you agree with the view? Discuss. (UPSC IAS Mains 2019 General Studies Paper – 4)

The Official Secrets Act was enacted in 1923 and was retained after Independence. The law makes spying, sharing secret information, withholding sensitive information, a punishable offence. The law meant for ensuring secrecy and confidentiality in governance, mostly on national security and espionage issues, has often been cited by authorities for refusing to divulge information. Governments have faced criticism for misusing the law against journalists and whistleblowers.

How Official Secrets Act is an obstacle to Right to Information Act?
1. Culture of secrecy: The frequent use and misuse made confidentiality a norm, hindering the very essence of providing information under RTI. OSA along with other rules and instructions impinge on the freedom of information as they historically developed a culture of secrecy and non-disclosure, which is against the spirit of the Right to Information Act.
2. Ambiguity: The wording of the law is ambiguous and has made it a legal provision converting various issues of governance into a confidential matter. Any kind of information is covered by Section 5 of OSA and is classified as 'secret'. The word 'secret' has not been defined in the Act. Therefore, public servants enjoy the discretion to classify anything as 'secret' allowing them to deny information under RTI.
3. No change in ambiguous clauses: The Official Secrets Act was enacted during the colonial era to govern all matters of secrecy and confidentiality in governance. With time law has not changed or amended to improve its provisions. Even under RTI, OSA is a cause of exemption and no improvement is done even to define what defines the 'secret' under the act.
4. A tool of corruption: It is said that OSA has become a tool of corruption. Either its recent case of irregularities in the Rafale aircraft deal or irregularities in Bofors defence deal, OSA lead to opaqueness that undermine the very essence of RTI.
5. Misuse: The OSA makes it a punishable offence to share information that may help an enemy state. The law is misused for booking journalists when they publicise information that causes embarrassment to the government. Journalist Tarakant Dwivedi was booked for criminal trespass under the Official Secrets Act in 2011. An RTI query later revealed that the armoury he visited was not a prohibited area.

Road ahead
1. Defining security: Section 5 of OSA should be amended to make the penal provisions of OSA applicable only to violations affecting national security. The 'security' clause under the section should be defined clearly with details.
2. National security act: Second ARC Report had suggested that the Act should be substituted by a chapter in the National Security Act. The NSA should incorporate the necessary provisions of defined secrecy, as it had become a contentious issue after the implementation of the Right to Information Act. The Law Commission also suggested consolidation of all legislation dealing

with national security into a single law and pass the National Security Act.
3. Freedom of speech and expression: According to the Supreme Court, the right to freedom of speech & expression and information should be prioritised over the archaic Official Secrets Act. The Court ruled for the protections to the whistleblowers to make sure that those who expose corruption should not feel insecure.

After the enactment of the RTI, OSA needs to be reconsidered as it hinders the very essence of RTI. It is necessary to go back into the history of the law to understand why it was enacted and whether it is still relevant today. Both the acts have different objectives to achieve, and should complement each other and not be a hindrance in good governance.

What do you understand by probity in governance? Based on your understanding of the term, suggest measures for ensuring probity in government. (UPSC IAS Mains 2019 General Studies Paper – 4)

Probity literally means a complete and confirmed integrity; having strong moral principles. Probity in Governance is defined as adherence to ethical and moral values like honesty, Integrity, rectitude, uprightness etc. It is the presence of procedural integrity with high standards of ethical behaviour. It is vital for executing the governance system and socio-economic development.

Probity in Governance seeks to fulfil the following purposes:
● It preserves public confidence in Government processes
● It maintains integrity in public services
● It ensures accountability in governance
● It ensures compliance with processes
● It seeks to avoid the potential for misconduct, fraud and corruption

Measures for ensuring probity in government:
1. Moral education: Moral education is a must to ensure probity in governance. To make an individual high on integrity, it is necessary to provide him with ethical training that will inspire him to improve governance. The moral education will surely ensure that this takes place. For example, training on the importance of avoiding bribes.
2. Accountability: Accountability reduces chances of malpractices in governance. When an individual is expected to give answers to higher authorities, he/she avoids performing acts that will reduce his/her position. This will translate into good governance. For example, Social audits ensures accountability and thus lead to probity.
3. Information Sharing and Transparency in Governance: Sharing information and transparency are indispensable pillars of good governance that compel the state and civil society to focus on results, seek clear objectives, develop effective strategies, and monitor and report on performance.
4. Access to information:Many laws were enumerated to bring probity in governance for sharing information to the public by putting information in

the public domain and which includes the following:
- Right to information Act.
- Ombudsman Office in the local/state level.
- Accountability bill for disclosure of Income and Assets.
- Records Management laws.

5. Grievance redressal: Easy access of government officials to the public is important for grievance redressal. It can be ensured through:
- Availability of Contact numbers of senior servants to Public
- Details in Departmental websites
- Facilitation counters for citizens
- Assessment and Monitoring

6. Code of conduct: Probity is maintained by formulating and employing model code of conduct for ministers, bureaucracy, judiciary, and civil society groups.

7. Institutional reforms: Introducing public delivery of service agreements by executive agencies for ensuring accountability, objectivity and transparency. Allowing stakeholders like citizen committees to participate in various decision making processes and encouraging and facilitating public participation through the following:
- Public Hearings.
- Citizen Advisory Boards.
- Government Contract Committees.
- Public Watchdog Groups.
- Independent Anti-Corruption Agencies.
- Capacity building of citizens and civil society groups.

Probity is a crucial feature of governance which endows government to act ethically and perform its duty as per the norms only. It is significant for the government to follow the rules and regulations as well as adopt policies of impartiality, to gain confidence from the public. When government becomes its system streamline as well as transparent, then the public and government employees concerned to it follow the same criterion. Hence, no corruption, fraud, and irresponsibility will happen.

"Emotional Intelligence is the ability to make your emotions work for you instead of against you." Do you agree with this view? Discuss. (UPSC IAS Mains 2019 General Studies Paper – 4)

Emotional intelligence refers to the ability to recognize and manage one's emotions and the emotions of others effectively. It involves the ability to use emotions to guide thoughts and behavior and to handle interpersonal relationships skillfully.

Examples that illustrate the importance of emotional intelligence:
- Leadership: During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Chief Minister of Kerala, Pinarayi Vijayan, demonstrated emotional intelligence by leading from the front and inspiring confidence in the public. He provided daily updates on the

state's efforts to contain the pandemic, showed empathy towards those affected by the virus, and took decisive action to mitigate the impact of the pandemic.

- Customer service: In 2020, a young woman in Karnataka, Sindhuja Rajaraman, went viral for her empathetic and polite customer service skills while working as a customer care executive for a food delivery app. Her emotional intelligence helped her connect with customers, listen to their concerns, and provide effective solutions that left them feeling satisfied.
- Stress management: In 2021, Indian athlete Mirabai Chanu won a silver medal in weightlifting at the Tokyo Olympics. After a disappointing performance at the Rio Olympics in 2016, Chanu worked on her mental toughness and emotional resilience, which helped her cope with the pressure of competing at the highest level. Her emotional intelligence enabled her to stay focused on her goals, manage her stress levels, and ultimately succeed in her endeavor.
- Teamwork: In 2020, a group of Indian engineering students developed a low-cost ventilator to help address the shortage of ventilators during the COVID-19 pandemic. The team consisted of students from various backgrounds, including mechanical engineering, electrical engineering, and medicine. Their emotional intelligence enabled them to collaborate effectively, communicate clearly, and work towards a common goal that had a significant impact on public health.

Emotional intelligence is a vital skill that can help individuals and organizations thrive in various domains. From resolving conflicts to providing effective customer service, emotional intelligence can make a significant difference in how we approach challenges and interact with others. By fostering emotional intelligence, we can create a more empathetic, inclusive, and productive society.

"An unexamined life is not worth living" — Socrates (UPSC IAS Mains 2019 General Studies Paper – 4)

- An unexamined human life, is deprived of the meaning and purpose of existence. The ability to introspect removes the individualistic absurdity by invoking a commitment to moral integrity and social solidarity.
- Just like a seed needs soil, sunlight and water for its germination, human life needs introspection and examination for its growth. An understanding of the experiences gained in the life at any particular time, enriches one's engagement with self and the universe.
- Mahatma Gandhi's examination of self through his autobiography 'My experiments with truth' highlights the significance of reflection on life. Mahatma Gandhi was not only able to map his weaknesses and vulnerabilities through the examination, but was also able to question his prejudices and understand his strength as a human being.
- This very ability to reflect on life adds more depth to the character of 'Arjun' in Mahabharat than most of the other characters like Bheeshm, Yudhishthir or the Kauravs. Instead of following the norms and fighting with his clan,

Arjun questions the meaninglessness of the war and the purpose of his life.
- The fast-changing societies and consumerist culture in the contemporary world leave less time for human beings to examine and think about the changes. Adaptation to changes have become automatic and unquestionable.
- The quotation has strong relevance in the present times where human beings are burdened with the histories of war, colonisation, nationalisation, erosion of morality in the scientific and technological advancements and the sense of spiritual uprootedness.
- It is in these times that one needs to delve deeper into the conscience to find the purpose of existence and engage in a more meaningful manner with the society.

"A man is but the product of his thoughts. What he thinks he becomes." — M.K. Gandhi (UPSC IAS Mains 2019 General Studies Paper – 4)

Mahatma Gandhi in his book "My Experiments with Truth" has shown how his thought process was influenced by his upbringing, experiences and his strong beliefs. Similarly, through this statement Mahatma Gandhi means that the actions of a person are largely determined by her thought process.

How thought influences the attitude and behavior of a person
- One's thoughts are the first engagement points with society.
- Thoughts impact behavior as well as the attitude, while molding the actions. It, therefore, becomes very important for the thoughts to be fixated to a compass of morality and conscience.
- Ethical behavior and regulation of actions emerge from the ethical thought process.
- Thoughts or reflections on experiences open up possibilities for the choices of action to be taken.
- An understanding and awareness of one's thoughts and feelings or emotional intelligence can help in regulating her actions accordingly. For example, while thoughts of kindness and compassion can create more empathetic individuals, thoughts of violence and anger can contribute to the making of criminals in society.
- Individuals' thinking has become more self-centered under the impact of increasing individualism and consumerism, this has further led to the individuals' detachment from the community and society.

It is in these times that people's ability to think freely in a society should be nurtured. Societies need to emphasize more on education as the inculcation of critical ethical thinking can produce individuals who act ethically, thereby impacting society, nation and the world at large.

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"Where there is righteousness in the heart, there is beauty in the character. When there is beauty in the character, there is harmony in the home. When there is harmony in the home, there is order in the nation. When there is order in the nation, there is peace in the world." — A. P. J. Abdul Kalam. (UPSC IAS Mains 2019 General Studies Paper – 4)

A.P.J Abdul Kalam had highlighted the importance of quality of righteousness through this quote and had given a beautiful connectivity between heart, character, nation and the world.

- Righteousness is the quality of being morally right and justifiable which forms the basis for any peaceful and prosperous society. Every religion focuses on the quality of righteousness as a means to an end. For example: In Hindu mythologies and texts, the path of righteousness i.e dharma is regarded as the ideal path or ultimate duty of every human being.
- By the above quote, he lays down the path for enabling peace in a society. By focusing on individual rejuvenation as the locus of all activity, he aims to reform and integrate the whole society. For example: In the 3rd century BC, Ashoka promoted the code of Dhamma in his empire, which was the set ideal social behaviour for promoting peace and enabling prosperity in the kingdom.
- The contemporary society has been seen digressing from the path of righteous behaviour and has shown more inclination toward the materialistic way of life, which has led to the eruption of several social and societal problems.
- If individuals follow the righteous path, they are more likely to spread happiness to others and succeed in their personal endeavours and will contribute to the upliftment of their household status, which indirectly will contribute to the happiness and upliftment of whole society, and then many social problems like crime, corruption, mob lynching etc can be eliminated from the society.
- Similarly, the more prosperous society will contribute to a more prosperous nation. For example: Terrorism has beacame a severe menace in many West Asian countries and threatening the safety and security of whole world. Focus on enabling the order of righteous path in these nations will contribute to maintaining peace in the whole world.

Righteousness in multiple dimensions in the society with the indomitable spirit is essential for realizing the vision of "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam".

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You are heading the rescue operations in an area affected by severe natural calamity. Thousands of people are rendered homeless and deprived of food, drinking water and other basic amenities. Rescue work has been disrupted by heavy rainfall and damage to supply routes. The local people are seething with anger against the delayed limited rescue operations. When your team reaches the affected area, the people there heckle and even assault some of the team members. One of pa-Ur team members is even severely injured. Faced with this crisis, some team members plead with you to call off the operations fearing threats to their life. In such trying circumstances, what will be your response? Examine the qualities of a public servant which will be required to manage the situation. (UPSC IAS Mains 2019 General Studies Paper – 4)

In this situation, there are several key stakeholders that need to be considered. These include
- the affected people in the area,
- local government and police authorities,
- the rescue team,
- the medical staff providing aid,
- NGOs and aid organizations providing assistance.

Given the complexity of the situation, it is important to take a multi-pronged approach to ensure that rescue efforts can be completed in a safe and effective manner.
- The first step would be to ensure the safety of all team members. I would ensure that the injured team member is provided with medical attention and ensure that the other team members are protectedfrom the angry mob.
- Establish communication with local government officials and police authorities: It is important to establish open communication with the local government and police authorities to ensure that they are aware of the situation and can provide additional support if needed.
- Engage with local stakeholders:The rescue team should engage with local stakeholders, such as community leaders, to ensure that their concerns are heard and addressed. This can help to build trust between the team and the affected people and provide a basis for a more successful rescue operation.
- Explore alternative routes:The rescue team should explore alternative routes for delivering aid and services to the affected people, such as airdrops or boats if the roads and supply routes are damaged.
- Foster understanding:Lastly, the team should make an effort to foster understanding between the affected people and the rescue team. This can be done by providing information about the rescue efforts and providing assistance to the affected people in a respectful manner. By taking these steps, the rescue team can ensure that rescue operations can be conducted in a safe and effective manner.
- Finally, I would need to ensure that justice is servedand that the people are provided with the necessary help and resources.

Qualities of Public Servant
- In such a situation, qualities such asempathy, respect, determination, strong communication skills, and a sense of justice will be of utmost importance. I would need to be able to empathize with the local people, understand their needs and respect their opinions.
- I would need to be determined to carry out the rescue operations, despite the odds, and ensure that the team members are provided with the necessary support and protection.
- My communication skills would need to be strong and effective so that I can explain the situation to the people in a way that they can understand and be assured of our efforts to aid them.

Leadership is the most important quality of a public servant. Leadership is not about a title or a designation. It's about impact, influence, and inspiration.

Honesty and uprightness are the hallmarks of a civil servant. Civil servants possessing these qualities are considered as the backbone of any strong organization. In line of duty, they take various decisions, at times some become bonafide mistakes. As long as such decisions are not taken intentionally and do not benefit personally, the officer cannot be said to be guilty. Though such decisions may, at times, lead to unforeseen adverse consequences in the long-term. In the recent past, a few instances have surfaced wherein civil servants have been implicated for bonafide mistakes. They have often been prosecuted and even imprisoned. These instances have greatly rattled the moral fibre of the civil servants. How does this trend affect the functioning of the civil services? What measures can be taken to ensure that honest civil servants are not implicated for bonafide mistakes on their part? Justify your answer. (UPSC IAS Mains 2019 General Studies Paper – 4)

In Indian bureaucracy, major administrative decisions are taken by civil servants, who like normal humans are susceptible to make mistakes. But there is a thin line between intentional and bonafide mistakes, which needs identification for making administration easy as well as transparent.

However, instances of wrongful prosecution of honest officers deeply impact the morale of honest officers. It has multiple effects on the functioning of civil services in India:
- Losing confidence in the organisation: Moral boosting plays an important role in shaping up the work profile of a civil servant. For that to happen, he/she must believe that the organization will stand with him/her during bad times. Possible punishment from the same organization will demotivate him/her from dedicating his/her efforts to the upliftment of the organization.
- Ex: A police officer part of an encounter is charged for murder by the same seniors who backed the operation. In such cases, the officer will lose his belief in the system after getting free from the charges.

- Impact on the decision-making of officers: Officers will be averse to expressing their views. This may further aggravate red-tapism due to fear of departmental action for their incorrect decisions.
- A tool to harass honest officers: Corrupt political leaders and bureaucrats may harass honest officers through baseless complaints and investigations.
- Impact on the reputation of honest officers: Prosecution of honest officers leads to mental agony and heavy financial loss besides being defamed in the society.
- Policy paralysis: Policy paralysis is one of the most dangerous events that can seriously impact government working. The officers working in the government hesitate to take decisions fearing prosecution. If decisions are not taken fast the country's growth will become stagnant.
- Ex: After a series of scams during UPA II, there was a belief that a policy paralysis was happening for the fear of prosecution.

Measures to ensure that honest civil servants are not implicated for bonafide mistakes
- Legal immunity: The civil servants are given legal immunity, meaning that they cannot be held accountable for their official acts if they are undertaken after following due procedure. This will be a great confidence booster for honest civil servants.
- Ensuring maximum transparency in administration: The key policy-making decisions should be made ensuring maximum clarity and openness about how decisions are taken. This will prevent blaming select individuals for incorrect decisions.
- Reducing politicization of bureaucracy: The fear of transfers, denial of promotions, or being punished post-retirement may impact the decision making of officers. Ensuring fixed tenure to civil servants is a much-needed step for systemic reforms in civil services.
- IAS Association of India and other civil society groups should support and stand by honest officers undergoing wrongful prosecution.
- Creating internal oversight mechanisms: Internal inquiries in each department should consider integrity and past career record of officers before recommending for a criminal investigation of bonafide decisions.

Thus, if we can observe that the civil services indeed are prone to mistakes which may not be always intentional. There is a need to segregate mistakes from conspiracy in order to protect the honest and punish the guilty.

An apparel manufacturing company having large number of women employees was losing sales due to various factors. The company hired a reputed marketing executive, who increased the volume of sales within a short span of time. However, some unconfirmed reports came up regarding his indulgence in sexual harassment at the work place. After sometime, a woman employee lodged a formal complaint to the management against the marketing executive about sexually harassing her. Faced with the company's indifference in not taking cognizance of her grievance, she lodged an FIR with the Police. Realizing the sensitivity and gravity of the situation, the company called the women employee to negotiate. In that she was offered a hefty sum of money to withdraw the complaint and the FIR and also give in writing that the marketing executive is not involved in this case. Identify the ethical issues involved in this case what options are available to the women employee? (UPSC IAS Mains 2019 General Studies Paper – 4)

Women often face sexual harassment at the workplace which results in many women even withdrawing from the labor force leading to loss of precious human capital. Post-MeToo movement these allegations have found a renewed voice and any organization must deal with such cases with sensitivity and fairness.

Facts of the case are
● Alleged sexual harassment at the workplace by the marketing executive.
● The marketing executive is an important resource for the company as he increased sales in a short period of time.
● Company management's indifference is not taking cognizance of the woman's complaint.
● Company pressurizing the woman employee to withdraw the case.

Ethical issues involved in the case are:
● For Woman employee:
● Handling mental agony and societal pressure in pursuing the case.
● Loss of self-respect in negotiating with the company for monetary benefits.
● Marketing executive:
● Saving professional life by negotiating with the woman employee and proving innocence if not guilty.
● Company management:
● Insensitivity towards the dignity of a woman.
● Priority to profit over organizational values by indulging in illegitimate negotiation with the woman employee.
● Other employees
● To continue working with the marketing executive against the moral conscience of other women employees.

Following options are available to the woman employee:
● Continue with her case by taking a firm stand against the company management.
● This would give her a fair chance to prove her viewpoint in a court of law and

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will give her mental peace that she stood for herself.
- However, she will have to face mental agony and societal pressure in pursuing the case and may even prove detrimental for her career prospects.
- Accept the negotiation offer by the company and withdraw the case.
- This may be beneficial for her career and will save her from the rigorous investigation process.
- However, this would create dissonance and affect mental peace as her conscience would not allow her to accept monetary gains over self-respect. Also, she would never be able to stand for herself in the future.
- Resign from the company and focus on other career opportunities.
- This will let her avoid the situation and will be beneficial for her career prospects.
- However, the scars of sexual harassment will remain with her throughout her life and she will regret that she herself is responsible for the denial of justice to her.

The correct course of action
- Option(1) seems to be the correct way of handling the situation. The women employee can play a leadership role. Her actions will give voice to other genuine concerns of women employees. It is her moral responsibility to come forward and show exemplary behavior. This will not only bring self-satisfaction to her but also increase her confidence and inner strength.
- Also, there is a major fault of company management in giving priority to profit motives by saving the marketing executive and not forming the internal complaints committee as mandated by the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013.

Gandhiji considered 'commerce without morality' as one of the seven social sins. Thus, it is not only an individual's fault, but an organization's which lack values such as respect for the dignity of woman, work-culture ethics, and gender equality.

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In a modern democratic polity, there is the concept of political executive and permanent executive. Elected people's representatives from the political executive and bureaucracy forms the permanent executive. Ministers frame policy decisions and bureaucrats execute these. In the initial decades after independence, relationship between the permanent executive and the political executive were characterized by mutual understanding, respect and co-operation, without encroaching upon each other's domain. However, in the subsequent decades, the situation has changed. There are instances of the political executive insisting upon the permanent executive to follow its agenda. Respect for and appreciation of upright bureaucrats has declined. There is an increasing tendency among the political executive to get involved in routine administrative matters such as transfers, postings etc. Under this scenario, there is a definitive trend towards 'politicization of bureaucracy'. The rising materialism and acquisitiveness in social life has also adversely impacted upon the ethical values of both the permanent executive and the political executive. What are the consequences of this 'politicization of bureaucracy'? Discuss. (UPSC IAS Mains 2019 General Studies Paper – 4)

Cooperation between elected representatives and bureaucrats is essential for democratic governance of the country. However, due to the 'politicization of bureaucracy', there is a deterioration in the functioning of the civil services.

Values involved in the case
- Political neutrality and impartiality
- Integrity and probity
- Courage of conviction
- Following the code of conduct
- Legal responsibility

Consequences of politicization of bureaucracy
- Policy paralysis: Fear of political vendetta against non-cooperative officers in the form of frequent transfers, delay in promotions, etc results in red-tapism and culture of secrecy in their decision making.
- The dilemma in personal v/s professional life: A bureaucrat indulged in material benefits have to compromise with his conscience or inner voice just to be in tune with outside reality, thereby disturbing his mental peace and work ethics. The person loses self-respect and trust of his family and children who inculcate such inadequate values from him.
- Detrimental to the moral fiber of bureaucrats: Even honest civil servants with political leanings have the compulsion to take biased decisions in favor of one political group.
- Impact on governance system: Lack of impartiality in the functioning of civil servants has a direct impact on their decisions in day to day administration either in public service delivery or implementing social welfare schemes.
- Problems in chaotic situations: Difficult circumstances like communal riots demands officers with strict political neutrality. Biased decisions can lead to

loss of lives and property. Hence, a civil servant must be accountable for his decisions in such situations.
- Negative impact on civil society: Civil servants occupying top positions in the government are role models for young aspiring Indians. Their impartial attitude is detrimental to societal ethics at large.

Reducing politicization of bureaucracy
- Moral education: To make an individual high on integrity, it is necessary to provide him with ethical training that will inspire him to improve governance. The moral education will surely ensure that this takes place. Ex: Training on the importance of avoiding bribes.
- A dedicated unit to oversee violations of the Code of Ethics & Code of conduct by government officials be set up both at the state and center level.
- Transparency: Information must be made accessible to the common public through websites.
- Mandatory declaration of assets and liabilities of government employees, accompanied by proper auditing.
- Establishment of Independent Anti-Corruption Agency.
- Citizens Advisory Boards to incorporate ideas of the common public in improving governance.
- Mandatory Social Audit of all government programs, for example, Meghalaya has passed a law for social audit of government programs.

In a democracy, it is essential that the politicians play the role of masters assisted by the civil servants. However, the extent of interference of the bureaucracy in the affairs of the state is crossing every limit. This is mostly because of the bow-down policy and inefficiency of our political leadership. We must ensure that both political and permanent executives perform their roles within their domain without one domination the other.

In one of the districts of a frontier state, narcotics menace has been rampant. This has resulted in money laundering, mushrooming of poppy farming, arms smuggling and near stalling of education. The system is on the verge of collapse. The situation has been further worsened by unconfirmed reports that local politicians, as well as some senior police officers, are providing surreptitious patronage to the drug mafia. At that point of time a woman police officer, known for her skills in handling such situations is appointed as Superintendent of Police to bring the situation to normalcy. If you are the same police officer, identify the various dimensions of the crisis. Based on your understanding, suggest measures to deal with the crisis. (UPSC IAS Mains 2019 General Studies Paper – 4)

As the appointed superintendent of police in the district facing a narcotics menace, it is essential to identify the various dimensions of the crisis and propose measures to address the situation. The crisis can be viewed from multiple angles:
- Law and Order: The rampant narcotics trade has led to an increase in criminal activities such as money laundering, poppy farming, and arms

smuggling. This poses a significant challenge to maintaining law and order in the district.

- Public Health and Safety: The drug menace not only affects the social fabric of the community but also poses severe health risks to individuals involved in drug abuse. It is crucial to address the public health consequences and ensure the safety of the local population.
- Corruption and Collusion: The unconfirmed reports of local politicians and senior police officers providing patronage to the drug mafia indicate a deep-rooted problem of corruption and collusion within the system. This undermines the effectiveness of law enforcement efforts and exacerbates the crisis.

Measures to deal with the crisis
- Strengthen Intelligence and Investigation: Enhance intelligence gathering capabilities to identify key players involved in the narcotics trade. Conduct thorough investigations to gather evidence and build strong cases against individuals involved in drug-related activities.
- Community Engagement and Awareness: Collaborate with local communities, NGOs, and educational institutions to raise awareness about the dangers of drug abuse. Implement preventive programs and campaigns to educate the public, especially youth, on the consequences of drug addiction.
- Crackdown on Drug Suppliers and Networks: Coordinate with other law enforcement agencies to disrupt the drug supply chain. Target high-level drug suppliers, dismantle their networks, and seize their assets to cripple their operations.
- Transparency and Accountability: Ensure transparency and accountability within the police force. Conduct internal investigations to identify and take appropriate action against police officers found to be involved in corruption or colluding with the drug mafia.
- Rehabilitation and Support Services: Establish rehabilitation centers and support services for drug addicts to facilitate their recovery and reintegration into society. Provide counseling, vocational training, and job placement assistance to help them lead productive lives.
- Collaboration with Judiciary and Legal Reforms: Work closely with the judiciary to expedite drug-related cases and ensure that offenders are held accountable. Advocate for stricter laws and penalties to deter drug-related activities and support legal reforms that address the complexities of the narcotics menace.
- Strengthen Border Security: Collaborate with border security agencies to enhance surveillance and prevent the influx of drugs and arms across borders. Implement stricter checks and monitor known smuggling routes to curb the inflow of illicit substances.
- Whistleblower Protection: Establish mechanisms to protect whistleblowers who come forward with information on drug-related activities. Encourage individuals to report anonymously and ensure their safety and confidentiality.

Dealing with such a crisis requires a multi-dimensional approach, involving a

combination of law enforcement efforts, community engagement, rehabilitation, and systemic reforms. It is essential to address the root causes of the narcotics menace and restore peace, security, and prosperity to the affected district.

In recent times, there has been an increasing concern in India to develop effective civil service ethics, code of conduct, transparency measures, ethics and integrity systems and anti- corruption agencies. In view of this, there is a need being felt to focus on three specific areas, which are directly relevant to the problems of internalizing integrity and ethics in the civil services. These are as follows: • Anticipating specific threats to ethical standards and integrity in the civil services, • Strengthening the ethical competence of civil servants and • Developing administrative processes and practices which promote ethical values and integrity in civil services. Suggest institutional measures to address the above three issues. (UPSC IAS Mains 2019 General Studies Paper – 4)

In recent times, there is an increasing expectation from ordinary citizens, business leaders and Civil Society for higher standards of ethical behaviour and integrity in the Civil Services. To promote this, various methods like Code of Conduct, Citizen Charters, etc have been developed. However, the focus should also be on internalizing professional ethics and integrity in civil services to make it more citizen-friendly.

Values involved in the case
- Ethical integrity of civil servants.
- Probity in governance.
- Moral aptitude of civil servants.
- Accountability and responsibility.
- Transparency and citizen participation.

Specific focus issues and measures to address them
- Anticipating specific threats to ethical standards and integrity in the civil services.
- Red-tapism: Unnecessary administrative complexities to effective service delivery should be identified and removed.
- Culture of Secrecy: Decisions made by civil servants and public officials should be made as transparent and open as possible. Reasons must be given for official decisions.
- Inadequate grievance redressal System: Effective mechanisms should be put in place to ensure timely resolution of public complaints and appropriate feedback provided to the public organisations. Grievance redressal processes should be monitored so as to ensure that systems are reviewed and performance is improved.
- Biasedness and Partisan Attitude: Implementation of conduct rules and code of ethics in order to create a professional and non-partisan civil service hierarchy.
- Elitism of civil servants: Public orientation in Civil servants is crucial to

increase public participation and improve public service delivery. Civil servants should be given proper training to ensure citizen-friendly behaviour.

Strengthening the ethical competence of civil servant.
- Training and performance appraisal: This would incentivise the honest civil servants and make them role models for others to emulate.
- Reward and honours: It will infuse competition in the civil services to perform better and develop innovative solutions for public service.
- Promotion of inclusive work culture: Diluting strict hierarchy to increase the cooperation among public officials to increase the effectiveness of services.
- Social and cultural competence: This would help the civil servant to understand the diverse Indian society and perform as per the high aspirations of the public.

Developing administrative processes and practices which promote ethical values and integrity in civil services.
- Promoting accountability: Effective laws which require civil servants to give reasons for their official decisions. For eg. RTI act.
- Reducing Corruption: Punitive provision like Prevention of Corruption Act and Whistleblower Protection act, technological Interventions in the form of e-governance to remove discretion, promotion of Social Auditing etc to ensure accountability of the administrative work.
- Human Resource management strategies: Performance-based pay, Lateral Entry, Multi-Phase training will increase the efficiency and quality of public service delivery.
- Internal and External Committees: To ensure redressal of complaints and grievances of civil servants and public. This improves the work culture and aligns the behaviour of public servants to the desired civil services values.
- Code of Conduct Rules: It ensures appropriate behaviour from public servants that should be unbiased and non-partisan.

Promotion of ethical behaviour and integrity in civil servants, and revamping the public administration is critical to ensure that the policies of social welfare are implemented in true spirit. It would improve the responsiveness of public servants towards the common citizenry. Also, public trust would increase in the government setup. Greater social capital can in turn help in the promotion of ethical governance.

Safeguarding the Indian art heritage is the need of the moment. Discuss. (UPSC IAS Mains 2018 General Studies Paper – 1)

India having vast diversity and a long-lasting cultural heritage has multiple monuments depicting our history being living remnants of our past. However, the recent submission of the Ministry of Culture to the parliamentary committee highlighted that 50 centrally protected monuments are missing thus calling for the safeguarding of our architectural heritage.

Reasons for safeguarding:
- Architecture helps demonstrate and understand history. For example ruins of Hazara Rama and Vithal Swami temple depict the Vijayanagara empire's magnificence.
- Architectural heritage is the pride of our country, boosting our soft power. For example, the Taj Mahal is one of the seven wonders of the world.
- It ensures attachment and a feeling of oneness of people with our culture. Also helps recognise unity in diversity due to the multiplicity of such structures.
- It provides the potential for the tourism industry to provide employment to people and boost revenues for the state as well.
- Flourishing tourism around monuments helps develop infrastructure in such areas as road, rail and air connectivity to reach such monuments.

Multiple threats to our monuments:
- Threats to monuments by rising pollution such as the yellowing of the Taj Mahal by air pollution due to nearby refineries were highlighted by the courts resulting in the formation of the Taj Trapezium Zone.
- Rapid urbanisation and thus illegal construction.
- Submergence by reservoirs and dams.
- Difficulties in tracing in remote locations.
- Dense forests and the non-availability of their proper locations etc,
- Unregulated tourist activities damage these constructions creating waste management issues etc.
- Security issues such as in museums due to shortage of manpower for guarding them, lack of proper surveillance technologies etc.
- Poor maintenance for example paintings in Ajanta which are getting worse due to humidity, ASI's capacity and expertise are also questioned in this regard. Their restoration capacity is also criticised in this regard.

To preserve our architecture, the government is taking multiple steps -
- Amendment of Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains (AMASR) Act-1958 in 2010 to add provisions of a prohibition area 100 metres around such monuments with no construction being allowed in such areas.
- Recent attempts to bring flexibility and rationalise prohibition and regulated areas. The ASI as an institution will also be provided further teeth to remove encroachments of regulated zones (300 metres around the monument).
- Private sector cooperation in restoration through schemes like Adopt a heritage scheme for better expertise in protecting monuments.

Further efforts are required such as involving the larger public in restoring historical sites in form of festivals, utilising technology while increasing the capacity of ASI to do so, spreading cultural awareness around the preservation of heritage by curriculum modification in schools and institutes etc. Preserving our monuments is a fundamental duty of every citizen as per Article 51(f) of the Constitution.
We should also link such preservation efforts with sustainable development to ensure future generations can enjoy culture along with access to planetary resources.

Assess the importance of the accounts of the Chinese and Arab travellers in the reconstruction of the history of India. (UPSC IAS Mains 2018 General Studies Paper – 1)

The Indian subcontinent was never a separate geographical region. Since ancient times, merchants, travellers, pilgrims, settlers, soldiers, goods and ideas were carried across its borders, covering vast distances on land and water.

It is therefore not surprising that there are many references to India in foreign texts. Such texts reveal how people from other countries saw India and its people, what they saw and found worthy of description.

The accounts of Chinese and Arab travelers visiting India at different stages of India's past are examples. While Arab travelers were eager for India's wealth and its distinctive cultural traditions, Chinese travelers frequented India in search of Buddhist scriptures and monasteries.

Chinese Accounts:

Many Chinese monks made long and arduous journeys to India to collect authentic manuscripts of Buddhist texts, to meet Indian monks, and to visit Buddhist teaching and pilgrimage sites. The most famous of those who wrote accounts of their Indian travels are Faxian (Fa Hien) and Xuanzang (Hiuen Tsang).

They throw light on the socio-political conditions of India at that time: For example:
- Fa-Hien presents a pleasant and idealized picture of Indian society in the 5th century. He describes a happy and contended people, enjoying a life of peace and prosperity. According to him people in India were not required to register their homes, or appear before a magistrate. The farmers working on the royal land had to pay a certain part of their produce to the king.
- Xuanzang gives a vivid description of the beauty, grandeur and prosperity of Kannauj, the capital of Harsha's empire in 7th century. His work 'Si-Yu-Ki' throws light on almost all aspects of India during the 7th century. Apart from the doctrines and practices of Buddhist monks, stupas, monasteries and places of pilgrimage, his accounts detail India's landscape, climate, crops, cities, caste system and various customs of the people.

Historians and archaeologists have used the works and itineraries of Chinese travelers to India to locate the location of various Buddhist monasteries in the subcontinent. For example, the British historian Gordon Mackenzie extensively used the accounts of Hiuen Tsang to locate Buddhist monasteries in South India.

The history of Buddhism in India is extensively documented by these accounts, and historians have immensely relied on these accounts to trace development of Buddhism in late ancient and early medieval period of India as well as eventual demise of Buddhism from the land of its origin.

Therefore, accounts of Chinese travelers are very important for the formation of the history of Buddhism in the subcontinent and the socio-economic conditions of ancient and early medieval India. Very importantly, they have been instrumental in locating diplomatic and trade relations between India and China as well as trade along the Silk Route.

Arab Accounts:
- Al-Biruni traveled to India to satisfy his curiosity about 'India and its people' and to study their ancient texts in the original language. His 'Taqeeq-e-Hind' covers a large number of subjects, including Indian scripts, science, geography, astronomy, astrology, philosophy, literature, beliefs, customs, religions, festivals, rituals, social organization and laws. In addition to the historical value of his description of 11th-century India, al-Biruni helped modern historians identify the early years of the Gupta era.
- The travelogue of Ibn-Batuta, written in Arabic called 'Rihla', provides extremely rich and interesting details about social and cultural life in the subcontinent in the fourteenth century. His account provides a vivid account of Indian cities during the medieval period. According to him Indian cities are full of exciting opportunities for those who had the necessary drive, resources and skills. They were densely populated and prosperous.

Thus, travel details can help historians reconstruct the past by linking them with other contemporary sources of history, such as the Court Chronicles.
Travelers wrote about what really attracted them or what was unique to them from the point of view of their own land. Building history from foreign accounts requires significant examination and verification of the veracity of the related accounts, the author's background, and the fact with other existing sources, then only the historical importance of these sources can be established.

Throw light on the significance of thoughts of Mahatma Gandhi in the present times. (UPSC IAS Mains 2018 General Studies Paper – 1)

Mahatma Gandhi entry into to the Indian national movement was a decisive turn towards a broad-based popular struggle. Gandhi's philosophy was well accepted by both the masses and the nationalist leaders and his political programme was well received and saw wide-spread participation across India.

Ahimsa:
Mahatma Gandhi's principle of non-violence is very relevant as the world faces terrorism and other forms of violence. Mahatma Gandhi's policy of non-violence was based on the concept of non-violence and compassion. Against colonial violence, he proposed a nonviolent response. In his view, a calm, nonviolent response reduces the attacker's wrath and frustration and is a more potent weapon than violence. The Salt March of 1930 was one of the most famous acts of Gandhi's peaceful resistance. In present times, the ideal of non-violence needs to guide the approach of individuals and nations, and world organizations, like violence, initiate a vicious circle of repression and injustice.

India at present faces a threat from Chinese expansionist policies, but it is Gandhi's philosophy that is helping India not wage any China war. In the west, India constantly is facing the belligerent attitude of Pakistan, but the ahimsa policy of the country holds its respect in International forums. Still, after 74 years of Independence, Gandhi's ahimsa policy holds ground.

Satyagraha:
Gandhiji called the general method of nonviolent action 'Satyagraha'. It is the expression of the purest spiritual power against all injustice, oppression, and exploitation. Satyagraha was thought of as the moral alternative to war.

Gandhi has shown us how to solve problems and conflicts from the micro to the macro level and has proved to be an effective remedy. Many contemporary challenges related to human rights, sustainable development, climate change, socio-political unrest, war and peace, terrorism, and politico-administrative corruption can be corrected using Gandhian Ideology. The critical aspect of satyagraha is standing for truth using non-violent means, and this ideology needs to be implemented in all spheres of society.

The farmers protesting against the Farm Law have also resorted to non-violence at present to reveal their interest in the Law passed by the Government.

Swaraj:
According to Mahatma Gandhi "Real Swaraj will come, not by the acquisition of authority by a few, but by the acquisition of the capacity by all to resist authority when it is abused". Swaraj holds a significant position in today's society. In the age of markets laden with products based on generating and gratifying instant of social approval, and when public imagination is becoming increasingly vulnerable to demagogues, the economic, social, spiritual, and political connotations of swaraj

still continue to be significant.

Swadeshi:
Indigenous peoples focus on political and economic action inside and outside their communities. It is the interdependence of community and self-reliance. Gandhi's thought of swadeshi is still prevalent in our society, by taking steps towards making India self-reliant.

During the Covid times, when India was witnessing a severe economic crisis, Prime Minister Narendra Modi called 'Atma Nirbhar Bharat', the second version of Swadeshi. This swadeshi form aims to make the country self-reliant. In order to free the country from the shackles of hunger, unemployment, poverty, swadeshi is the best path to unshackle these.

Secularism:
Gandhism was tolerant of all religions. Today, the world needs more and more religious and intelligently tolerant people in societies where violence is perpetrated in the name of religion. In society, tolerance helps to neutralize religion, caste, ethnicity, region, etc. in the world, based on day-to-day ethnic-Centered prejudices.

There are still different events held to inculcate the principles of secularism and equality in society. Though we witness different religion-based differences, i.e. Hindu and Muslim, it is the secularism ideology that is protecting the country from another partition.

Communal Harmony:
Gandhi always made an effort for Hindu-Muslim unity. At the present time, this ideology is equally significant. If Hindus and Muslims are united, the country can reach the heights of becoming a world power. A person should always respect others' faith. Cases of mob lynching are also violating the Gandhian ideology of communal harmony, so steps should be taken in this direction.

Decentralization:
The Gandhian idea of decentralization was implemented in democracies through the 73rd and 74th amendments, which empowered local self-governments at the grassroots level. Indian Government, for instance, has implemented local self-government by adopting the Panchayati Raj and Municipality system in rural and urban areas, respectively, and providing them with some subjects under the state list. This ideology of Gandhi is still relevant and plays a vital role in India's grass root development.

Cleanliness:
Gandhi paid great attention to purity, or cleanliness and was a staunch advocate of 'Swachhata'. He used to say, "Cleanliness hi Seva." India's most significant cleanliness initiative, the recently implemented Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, fulfills Bapu's dream of making India clean.

However, this quest for purity goes beyond physical purity and requires more

attention to inner purity. Therefore, for a clean India, with clean roads and toilets, we need a corruption-free society with a high degree of transparency and accountability, which is the need of the hour.

Sustainable Environment:
Gandhi always spoke of minimization of wants and advocated a nature-friendly idea. Gandhi believed that "there is enough on earth for human needs but not enough for human greed." These lines from Mahatma Gandhi show how human behavior destroys nature, and there is a need for a sustainable lifestyle in our times.

The world revolves around global warming, climate change, and resource depletion, and all environmental covenants and sustainable development efforts must implement Gandhi's philosophy. The recent coal crisis also compels us to follow the Gandhian philosophy of sustainable growth. Due to the increased consumption of resources like land, water, air, the carbon footprints are accelerating.

Women's Emancipation:
Gandhi played a vital role in bringing women out of their domestic work and involved them in public life. He was against the patriarchal form of society. With glass ceilings still far from being shattered in the public sphere, the Gandhian thought of women's emancipation remains relevant.

Gandhi's thought was an inspiration for society. Ultimately, all ideas and thoughts of the Mahatma were reached by him via lifelong experimentation with truths, which makes Gandhian thoughts more significant in the present era. In order to become a superpower, India should pay homage to Gandhian ideology and walk in the assigned path.

Why is Indian Regional Navigational Satellite System (IRNSS) needed? How does it help in navigation? (UPSC IAS Mains 2018 General Studies Paper – 1)

Strategic Independence	India's NavIC system operates independently without relying on GPS or other global systems.
National Security	NavIC enables precise tracking and navigation for defence operations and military applications.
Disaster Management	NavIC helps in tracking and responding to natural disasters, such as cyclones and floods.
Transportation and Navigation	NavIC enables precise tracking of commercial vehicles, enhancing road safety and efficiency.
Precision Agriculture and Farming	NavIC aids farmers in optimizing crop management, irrigation, and soil nutrient application.
Personal and Public Safety	NavIC enables real-time tracking of fishermen and sends alerts in case of potential dangers at sea.
Scientific and Technological Advancements	NavIC aids in scientific experiments, geological surveys, and geodetic network development.

IRNSS: NavIC (Navigation with Indian Constellation) is an independent and indigenous regional navigation satellite system developed by India. It is a set of 8 satellites which will be located in suitable orbital slots - geostationary or geosynchronous.

It makes India only the sixth country in the world to have its own navigation system.

This frees India from dependence on other countries for its navigation (GPS, GLONASS, Galileo etc.).

Currently, NavIC's reach extends only 1,500 km beyond Indian territory. However, for applications involving ships and aeroplanes travelling beyond this range, satellites in Medium Earth Orbit (MEO) would be required. By adding MEO satellites in the future, NavIC can extend its global reach and aim to provide navigation services on a global scale, similar to the capabilities of the GPS system.

Why is India taking keen interest in resources of Arctic region?. (UPSC IAS Mains 2018 General Studies Paper – 1)

India has taken a keen interest in the resources of the Arctic region due to a few key factors. Firstly, the Arctic region is believed to contain large reserves of oil, natural gas, and minerals, which are important resources for India's energy security and economic growth. Additionally, the Arctic region is also believed to contain large amounts of fish and other marine resources, which are important for India's fishing industry. Secondly, the melting of Arctic ice has opened up new shipping routes, which can potentially reduce shipping costs and transit times for India's trade with Europe and North America. This could have a positive impact on India's economy. Finally, India is also interested in the Arctic region for scientific research, as the region is home to unique and fragile ecosystems, and is important for understanding global climate change.

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- India is also interested in the Arctic region for scientific research, as the region is home to unique and fragile ecosystems, and is important for understanding global climate change.
- India is also interested in the Arctic region to protect its own interests as it is affected by the changes in the Arctic region and also to secure its strategic interests.

Constituting a dedicated expert committee to plan, monitor, steer, implement and review India's Arctic policy may help streamline the country's approach in a better manner.

Define mantle plume and explain its role in plate tectonics. (UPSC IAS Mains 2018 General Studies Paper – 1)

Mantle plume is an upwelling of abnormally hot rock within the earth's mantle which carries heat upward in narrow, rising columns, driven by heat exchange across the core-mantle boundary. Eventually, the rising column of hot rock reaches the base of the lithosphere, where it spreads out, forming a mushroom-shaped cap to the plume. Heat transferred from the plume raises the temperature in the lower lithosphere to above melting point, and forms magma chambers that feed volcanoes at the surface. It is a secondary way through which earth loses heat.

Role of mantle plume in plate tectonics:
- Mantle plumes transport primordial mantle material from below the zone of active convection that produce time-progressive volcanic chains, break up continents and act as a driving force for plate tectonics.
- The narrow conduits of deep-mantle material rise through the solid mantle before spreading out laterally in the upper asthenosphere. From there, they cause the lithosphere to swell and shear as the heat from the plume increases the temperature of lower lithosphere.
- Mantle plumes are also thought to be the cause of volcanic centres known as hotspots and probably have also caused flood basalts. When a plume head encounters the base of the lithosphere, it is expected to flatten out against this barrier and to undergo widespread decompression melting to form large volumes of basalt magma. It may then erupt onto the surface.
- As the plume remains anchored at the core-mantle boundary and it does not shift position over time, a string of volcanoes is created when the lithospheric plate moves above it.
- The material and energy from Earth's interior are exchanged with the surface crust in two distinct modes:
- the predominant, steady state plate tectonic regime driven by upper mantle convection, and
- a punctuated, intermittently dominant, mantle overturn regime driven by plume convection. This second regime, while often discontinuous, is periodically significant in mountain building and continental breakup.
- The formation of the Hawaiian Island and Emperor Seamount chain in the middle of the Pacific Plate are caused by mantle plume.
- Numerical modelling predicts that melting and eruption will take place over several million years. These eruptions have been linked to flood basalts, although many of those erupt over much shorter time scales (less than 1 million years). Examples include the Deccan traps in India, the Siberian traps of Asia, etc.
- The eruption of continental flood basalts is often associated with continental rifting and breakup. This has led to the hypothesis that mantle plumes contribute to continental rifting and the formation of ocean basins. In the context of the alternative "Plate model", continental breakup is a process integral to plate tectonics, and massive volcanism occurs as a natural consequence when it onsets.

Thus, mantle plumes are thought to be strong enough to induce rifting and the formation of plates. The relationship between plate- and plume-tectonics is considered in view of the growth and breakdown of supercontinents, active rifting, the formation of passive volcanic-type continental margins, and the origin of time-progressive volcanic chains on oceanic and continental plates.

What are the consequences of spreading of 'Dead Zones' on marine ecosystems?. (UPSC IAS Mains 2018 General Studies Paper – 1)

Dead zones are low-oxygen, or hypoxic, areas in the world's oceans and lakes. Because most organisms need oxygen to live, few organisms can survive in hypoxic conditions. That is why these areas are called dead zones. Dead zones in the coastal oceans have spread exponentially since the 1960s and have serious consequences for ecosystem functioning.

Consequences of Spreading Dead Zones on Marine Ecosystem
- The reduced dissolved oxygen in ocean water results in loss of marine life thus the habitats which were teeming with life become biological desert.
- Toxic algal blooms release toxins that can poison fish, molluscs and marine mammals like dolphins. Thus, affecting marine ecosystem by altering its food chain.
- The reproductive problems emanate when the oxygen level depletes i.e.. there is lower egg count and less spawning.
- Slow moving bottom-dwelling creatures like clams, lobsters and oysters are unable to escape the dead zone and face extinction.
- When fast moving marine species flee from the dead zones and occupy a new habitat, they cause overcrowding of their new habitats and affect the ecosystem services over there.

It is clear that the spread of dead zones can affect most marine ecosystems and have socio-economic ramifications due to human dependency on marine goods and services.
- Marine Life Impacts: The most immediate and severe consequence is the death of marine life within these zones. Oxygen-depleted waters cannot support the survival of most fish, shellfish, and other marine organisms. This leads to mass die-offs and a decline in biodiversity within the affected areas.
- Disruption of Food Chains: Dead zones disrupt the natural food chain dynamics. The loss of oxygen-sensitive species affects the predators that rely on them, causing imbalances in the ecosystem. This disruption can lead to cascading effects throughout the food web, impacting the abundance and distribution of species and potentially causing population declines or local extinctions.
- Economic Losses: Dead zones can have significant economic consequences, especially for fisheries and coastal communities dependent on fishing. The loss of commercially valuable fish and shellfish species can result in reduced catches and financial losses for fishermen and related industries. It can also impact tourism, as dead zones can create unappealing conditions for

recreational activities such as swimming and diving.
- Harmful Algal Blooms: Dead zones often coincide with the proliferation of harmful algal blooms (HABs). These blooms are fueled by excess nutrients, such as nitrogen and phosphorus, and can produce toxins that are harmful to marine life, including shellfish, fish, and mammals. The toxins can bioaccumulate in the food chain, posing risks to human health if contaminated seafood is consumed.
- Habitat Degradation: Dead zones can cause long-term damage to habitats, including seafloor ecosystems. When marine organisms die and decompose, the decomposition process consumes the remaining oxygen in the water, exacerbating the dead zone. This lack of oxygen affects bottom-dwelling organisms and can lead to the degradation of habitats like coral reefs, seagrass beds, and other sensitive ecosystems.
- Climate Change Feedback: Dead zones contribute to climate change feedback loops. As organic matter decomposes in oxygen-deprived conditions, it produces greenhouse gases like nitrous oxide and methane, which are potent contributors to global warming. These emissions further exacerbate climate change, creating a negative feedback loop that can intensify the ecological and environmental impacts.

Addressing dead zones requires reducing nutrient pollution from agricultural runoff, wastewater treatment, and industrial sources, as well as implementing sustainable land and water management practices. By mitigating dead zones, we can help preserve marine ecosystems, safeguard fisheries, protect coastal communities, and maintain the overall health of the oceans.

"Caste system is assuming new identities and associational forms. Hence, caste system cannot be eradicated in India". Comment. (UPSC IAS Mains 2018 General Studies Paper – 1)

Caste refers to a broad hierarchical institutional arrangement with which basic social factors such as birth, marriage, food-sharing, etc. are organized into hierarchies of rank and status. These subdivisions have traditionally been associated with occupations, and in relation to other higher and lower castes, decide social relations. The traditional hierarchical system of castes was based on the difference between 'purity' and 'corruption'. While the expression of hierarchy has changed to a large extent in recent times, the system itself has not changed much. For example- even though untouchability and caste-based discrimination are prohibited under the Constitution of India, occupations such as manual scavenging consist mostly of workers belonging to the lower castes. It is undeniably true that the caste system has been changing. However, the rate of change in different aspects of the system has not been uniform.

New identities and associational forms:
- Political: Unlike the old structure, various caste communities have strengthened themselves by forming political parties based on caste identity. For example- Bahujan Samaj Party due to which caste based political

mobilization has been increasing. Lingayats demand that they be considered as minority communities.

- Social:Due to the effects of globalization and technological development, with more inter-ethnic marriages, strict rules of marriage and succession have slowed. Though the expression of social exclusion and maintaining caste-based division by communities has not disappeared, it has become more subtle. For example- matrimonial advertisements which are often in newspapers demand brides and grooms especially from particular communities. Even religions that do not follow the caste system like Muslims and Christianity have seen discrimination like caste. For Dalits converting to Christianity, states like Kerala have separate cemeteries.

- Economic:Development policies targeting backward castes and scheduled people have only benefited a particular section of the population. These classes have emerged as oligarchs and have created divisions within the backward castes. These policies have strengthened caste-based mobilization. For example: Major castes like Maratha, Khap and Patidar have been demanding reservation. Socially empowered and land-owning communities like the Jats have also united themselves and demanded reservation.

Thus, there is a need to encourage inter-caste marriages under the Dr. Ambedkar scheme for social integration through inter-caste marriages. In addition, caste-based reservation needs to be abolished. This will help promote national unity and integrity.

'Despite implementation of various programmes for eradication of poverty by the government in India, poverty is still existing'. Explain by giving reasons. (UPSC IAS Mains 2018 General Studies Paper – 1)

Reducing poverty has become an international concern as SDG 1 targets to end poverty in all its forms everywhere. The Global Multidimensional Poverty Index-2018 released by the UN noted that 271 million people moved out of poverty between 2005 and 2015 in India. Still a big part of the population in india is living Below the Poverty Line. As per Tendulkar Committee this estimation is around 21.9% of the total population of the country.

Various government efforts against poverty:
- Removal of poverty has been a prime focus of Indian policy makers. Integrated Rural Development Program (IRDP) initiated in the early 1980s was one of the early poverty alleviation programmes.
- Various Programs have been launched continuously, like Employment Generation Program, Income Support, Employment Guarantee (like MGNREGA) to eradicate poverty.
- Schemes for providing utilities like housing, electricity etc. to people to ease the financial expenditure of the poor households.
- Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana and Housing for All by 2022 Scheme to provide housing to rural and urban poor is an example.
- Indian Government's latest schemes like Start-Up India and Stand Up India

are about empowering people i.e. making people, self–sufficient, to earn their livelihood.
- No proper validation of the method has been made using closely prepared prospective studies.

Reasons for failure of poverty alleviation efforts and existence of poverty:
- It is multi-dimensional menace which needs convergence, synergy from all level of institutions which we lack today.
- Poverty has certain behavioural attributes like strong feeling of marginality, of helplessness, of dependency, absence of childhood as a specially prolonged and protected stage in the life-cycle, a strong predisposition toward authoritarianism, child marriage. These have not been suitably into policy convergence.
- Climate change, Jobless growth, high inflation etc has reduced effect of government policies and efforts.
- Modern digital divides also add up to the issues. World Development Report 2017 highlights India's lagging in encashing Digital dividend resulting Digital Divide. Thus poor are not able to reap the benefits of Digital Technologies.
- Numerous already functional poverty alleviation programmes work in silos. There is no systematic attempt to identify people who are below poverty line and to determine and address their needs enabling them to move above the poverty line.
- There are cases of corruption in identification of beneficiaries, and there is also a lack of authentic data at every level.
- A typically low administrative capacity, coupled with problems of implementation at State level has often resulted in the under utilisation of funds.
- Leakage at different levels has led to diversion of resources meant for deprived ones.
- These programmes have focused on top to bottom approach, but such approach lacks coordination in decision making and causes clogging of funds and asymmetry in distribution.

Road ahead
- Realistic Assessment of the present situation of poverty in the country in need of the hour.
- Direct income transfer to needy is an immediate solution.
- Taxing wealth of rich people to fund amelioration of poor in the country.
- By improving social infrastructure and job opportunities in rural areas, migration to urban areas can be decreased, and thus urban poverty can also be decreased.
- Investment in Agriculture by the government is necessary to decrease rural poverty. Subsidies address only short-term issues. Also, there is a need to develop technologies, with the help of which farmers can practice all weather agriculture.

Continuous Economic Growth is a prerequisite for the removal of poverty. Ultimately, political will is necessary to eradicate poverty from the country through

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the implementation of various schemes. Investment in infrastructure, overall, is needed to reduce the cost of utilities. China did so and witnessed the huge fall in the number of people in the poor category. More initiatives like Ayushman Bharat, that empower people, are required.

How the Indian concept of secularism is different from the western model of secularism? Discuss. (UPSC IAS Mains 2018 General Studies Paper – 1)

Secularism refers to the separation of religion from state. It is a doctrine that opposes inter-religious (one religion vs another religion) and intra-religious (from within, i.e., the tyranny of the majority) domination. The term 'secular' is enshrined in the Preamble to the Constitution of India via 42nd Constitution Amendment Act 1976.

Western Secularism	Indian Secularism
Secularism in Western society refers to the complete separation of state and religion, as well as universal religious freedom.	Secularism in Indian society refers to the treatment of all religions equally and without prejudice between its adherents.
While western civilization's historical inheritance has led to the development of a brand of secularism that emphasizes the separation of church and state, India's past has produced a different result.	In India, there is no clear line between state and religion, and government involvement in religious activities is not prohibited. Both the state and religion in India can, and frequently do, engage and intervene in each other's affairs within legally mandated and judicially established bounds.
Religion has been consigned to the private domain and has no place in public life.	All forms of religious expression are equally supported by the state.
In addition, legislation in Western civilization is made apart from religious considerations.	However, in India, the law strives to accommodate the various religious precepts to which adherents of various religions subscribe.
According to the Western paradigm, the state cannot provide financial support to religiously run educational institutions.	In India, all religious minorities have the right to build and run their own educational institutions, which may receive government funding.
The concept of Western secularism opposes the open expression of religion outside of places of worship.	In India, the state supports every kind of religious expression equally.
In the Western paradigm, the state does not intervene in religious matters until religion is operating within the legal framework.	On the other side, in Indian secularism, the state must intervene in religion to eliminate evils.
There is clear distinction between state and religion.	There is no clever distinction between state and religion in India.
Due to the State's religious homogeneity, the focus is more on intra religion dominance than interreligious dominance.	Because Indian civilization is multi-religious, with multiple religious denominations and castes beneath each, it is important to focus on both interreligio

The uniqueness of Indian secularism is that it admits the freedom of religion, unlike its western counterpart that avoids religion. This religious freedom granted in the secular concept, makes the consolidation of religious people under one umbrella a reality in India.

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The Bhakti movement received a remarkable re-orientation with the advent of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. Discuss. (UPSC IAS Mains 2018 General Studies Paper – 1)

- Indian social set-up during the medieval period was based on Brahmanism characterized by rigid caste division, rituals and methods of prayer. Bhakti Movement was a reformative movement characterized by intense devotion or love for God. The movement focused to reform Indian society which was shadowed by Brahmanical dominance.
- Bhakti Movement started from South India in the form of Vaishnavite and Shaivaite sect, commonly known as Alvars and Nayanars respectively. Early 16th century was marked by rise of Bhakti Saint Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu in Eastern India. He was a Vaishanavit Saint and an ardent follower of Lord Krishna. According to his followers, he was an incarnation of Lord Krishna.
- Chaitnaya Mahaprabhu preached love, compassion, and non-violence. Though he was a Brahmin, he condemned caste system and emphasized on equality for all. According to him true worship lay in love and devotion. Bhakti Movement is known to transcend the practice of strict rituals and religious practices. Chaitanya Mahaprabhu is known to have revolutionized and re-oriented Bhakti Movement, giving it impetus through simplicity in teachings, propagating Bhakti ideas through his disciples, instructing them to write books, and overall making it a mass movement.
- The very first mandate by Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu to his disciples was to go to each house and ask people to chant 'Hari Bol'. By this, he propagated amongst people the practice of 'Nama Simaran' as a mode of devotion and love for God. Further, he propagated his message of 'Hari Bol' through 'Sankirtan Mandali'. In these Mandalies, devotees used to chant, sing and dance. Through Sankirtan, chanting of Hari Bol and combined dance and chant, Mahaprabhu brought people from different caste, creed, religion and sex together.
- The message of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu or Gaudiya School of thought is now propagated through ISKCON Movement across the world. It has participation of devotees from around the world. In other words it can be said that Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu not only revolutionized Bhakti movement but also universalized it.

Why indentured labour was taken by British from India to other colonies? Have they been able to preserve their cultural identity over there?. (UPSC IAS Mains 2018 General Studies Paper – 1)

Indentured labour was a bonded labour under contract to work for an employer for a specific amount of time, to pay off his passage to a new country. It was instituted following the abolition of slavery throughout British Empire in 1833 as newly free men and women refused to work for low wages on sugar, tea plantations and rail construction projects in British colonies of West Indies, Fiji, Mauritius and Ceylon. Indians were recruited and transported to many labour-importing colonies of Africa and Asia.

Reasons for indentured labour being taken by the British to their colonies:
- Industrial Demand: The industrialisation of Britain followed by the other European countries accelerated the flow of trade, labour and capital across the world. The growing urbanism in Europe especially in Britain increased the demand for food and agricultural goods since most of the labour force was consumed by the factories and firms. Colonies in Africa and Asia became the lucrative destinations for investing in agricultural and raw commodities.
- End of slavery: This provided for the immediate background for the Indentured labour system all over the world. British needed the labour to work in the plantation fields of African colonies. Hundreds of thousands of Indian and Chinese labourers went to work on plantations, in mines, and in road and railway construction projects around the world.
- African worker reluctance: The natives of African countries were self sufficient and completely relying on cattle farming. They were reluctant to work in the British factories and farms, so Indians became the obvious choice. The main destinations of Indian indentured migrants were the Caribbean islands (mainly Trinidad, Guyana and Surinam), Mauritius and Fiji. Closer to home, Tamil migrants went to Ceylon and Malaya. Indentured workers were also recruited for tea plantations in Assam.
- Availability of labour: Most Indian indentured workers came from the present-day regions of eastern Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, central India and the dry districts of Tamil Nadu. In the mid-nineteenth century these regions experienced many changes – cottage industries declined, land rents rose, lands were cleared for mines and plantations. All this affected the lives of the poor. They failed to pay their rents, became deeply indebted and were forced to migrate in search of work.
- Escape from poverty: Many migrants agreed to take up work hoping to escape poverty or oppression in their home villages. Agents also tempted the prospective migrants by providing false information about final destinations, modes of travel, the nature of the work, and living and working conditions. Often migrants were not even told that they were to embark on a long sea voyage. Sometimes agents even forcibly abducted less willing migrants. Nineteenth-century indenture has been described as a 'new system of slavery'.
- Indian labour suitability: Indian workers were perceived as being quiet, docile and industrious by colonists and suitable for working in many plantation and construction works in different colonies of Britain. The recruitment and arrival were done by private parties initially later British government regulated the recruitment of indentured labour.

Have they been able to preserve their cultural identities?
- Many of the indentured labourers did not return to their native countries and settled back in the colonies. They came to these colonies with hope and expectations. On arrival at the plantations, labourers found conditions to be different from what they had imagined. Living and working conditions were harsh, and there were few legal rights. But workers discovered their own ways of surviving.

- Many of them escaped into the wilds, though if caught they faced severe punishment. Others developed new forms of individual and collective self expression, blending different cultural forms, old and new.
- In Trinidad the annual Muharram procession was transformed into a riotous carnival called 'Hosay' (for Imam Hussain) in which workers of all races and religions joined.
- The protest religion of Rastafarianism (made famous by the Jamaican reggae star Bob Marley) is also said to reflect social and cultural links with Indian migrants to the Caribbean.
- 'Chutney music', popular in Trinidad and Guyana, is another creative contemporary expression of the post-indenture experience.

These forms of cultural fusion are part of the making of the global world, where things from different places get mixed, lose their original characteristics and become something entirely new. Most indentured workers stayed on after their contracts ended, or returned to their new homes after a short spell in India. Consequently, there are large communities of people of Indian descent in these countries. For example V.S Naipaul, Noble Prize winner writer had Indian roots. At the same time many of those who stayed back in the colonies elevated to highest positions after the process of decolonisation.

Discuss whether formation of new states in recent times is beneficial or not for the economy of India?. (UPSC IAS Mains 2018 General Studies Paper – 1)

Reorganisation of states has been one of the most contentious issues since the Independence of India. Besides political bargains, creation of new states has attracted the attention of policy makers and intellectuals who hold divergent views regarding the formation of smaller states. The best way to analyse whether the new states have ushered in economic growth and development of the country would be through underscoring the performance of recently created states of Jharkhand, Uttarakhand and Chhattisgarh carved out of Bihar, UP and Madhya Pradesh respectively on the basis of economic development and good governance.

Newer states a boon
- The Economic Survey 2016-17 stated that smaller states in India trade more than the rest. New states offered better and efficient administration which leads to creation of infrastructure strengthening the connectivity in the area, expand its access to market and boost trade for the overall economy of the country.
- People of the region gain control over its resources and an organic model of growth can emerge to address their economic aspirations.
- Political stability that arises from better representation of people creates conducive environment for investment in the region. Thereby encouraging regional economic development.
- After the creation of new states- there is marked increase in economic activity immediately across the border in the new states as per their findings. School enrolment also increased suggesting greater investment in human capital.

- Durable goods remained comparable across the two sides of the state border, suggesting that free movement of labour and capital can mitigate differences in economic opportunities across proximate geographies. The results provide new evidence that institutions matter for development, and local control of institutions can have large economic impacts.
- The findings underlined that the new states are growing faster than the old states; by 2008 the difference between economic activity in old and new states is no longer statistically significant, and the gap continues to close until the end of the data in 2013. The findings suggest that new state borders have 25% more economic activity than the parent state.
- Given the greater social heterogeneity of India, there should be higher number of states. When there are too many diverse groups in a large state, conflict emerge. And instead of public-good provisioning, redistribution of resources among regions becomes the central political issue. In other words when the diversity effects becomes greater than the scale effect, there is an economic case for a new state.
- In the case of the three new states mentioned above culture or ethnic factors were added as instrumental factors for mobilisation but arguably, decades of underdevelopment was the driving force behind the movement.

Concerns
- While analysing the socio-economic development of the new states of Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh and Uttarakhand, there is a contrary opinion as well. Uttarakhand continues to be at the end in the Human Development Index. The recent floods showed the inability of the state to deal with rehabilitation of the displaced residents.
- Chhattisgarh has witnessed largest tribal displacement in the recent times. The inclusive economic development is far from the reach of the state giving the increased miserable conditions of the tribal and their forceful displacement.
- Jharkhand has failed from the governance and administrative perspective and became state of coal scams and corrupt practices.
- Telangana recently carved out from the state of Andhra Pradesh is heavily relying on the central grants to pay for its newly created administrative and institutional machineries.
- To catch up with the growth trajectory of the other states, the above mentioned states started unmindful exploitation of resources such as mining of the minerals, converting agricultural land into real-estate which is not sustainable as far the economy of the country is concerned in the long run.
- Small states do not generate enough revenue for the state, thus are heavily dependent on the central assistance. Creation of new states means establishing new administrative machineries and new institutions which leads to increased revenue expenditure in turn puts pressure on fiscal pressures for the government.

Evidence shows that both large and small states have fared well and that poor performance is not necessarily linked to size. In fact, today, technology can help make governing larger territories easier and bring even far- flung areas

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closer.Recently formed state Telangana has continuously been among the top ranks in the list of ease of doing business in the country, since its formation. Creation of new states offer possibilities of having better governance structure, greater participation for people, administrative convenience for the State and equitable distribution of resources. Regional development strengthens the equitable and symmetric growth of India.

The ideal solution of depleting ground water resources in India is water harvesting system". How can it be made effective in urban areas?. (UPSC IAS Mains 2018 General Studies Paper – 1)

India is currently on the brink of a major water crisis. After two successive years of weak monsoons, a significant 330 million people, constituting a quarter of India's populace, find themselves grappling with an acute drought. Almost half the nation faces drought-like conditions, severely impacting western and southern states that have witnessed sub-par rainfall. In such dire circumstances, the importance of sustainable solutions like water harvesting becomes paramount, especially in urban areas.

The Current Scenario and Urgency of the Situation:
- Already, about 12% of India's population is experiencing a 'Day Zero' scenario, wherein taps run dry, predominantly due to excessive groundwater extraction, inefficient water management, and consecutive years of low rainfall.
- This burgeoning crisis not only threatens access to a basic human right but could also induce a 6% contraction in the country's GDP by 2030 as demand outstrips supply.

The Salvation Offered by Water Harvesting:
- Water harvesting, particularly in urban areas, can act as a potent solution. By collecting and storing rain and runoff water, cities can reduce their over-dependence on dwindling groundwater sources.
- For example, Chennai's implementation of rainwater harvesting in 2002 provided a lifeline during subsequent water shortages, leading to a significant rise in groundwater levels in several parts of the city.

Strategies to Amplify Water Harvesting in Urban Centers:
- Policy Measures: Mandating rainwater harvesting in new constructions and incentivizing its adoption can provide the necessary impetus.
- For example, Delhi's provision of property tax rebates for households practicing rainwater harvesting.
- Technological Innovations: Integrating advanced technologies like IoT for monitoring, optimizing, and ensuring efficient use of harvested water can amplify the benefits.
- Urban Infrastructure Modifications: Introducing water-sensitive urban designs, such as permeable pavements and green rooftops, can augment rainwater absorption and storage.

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- For instance, Hyderabad's 'Lakes Revival' project which focuses on restoring its ancient lakes, helping in groundwater recharge.
- Collaborative Actions: Aligning municipal bodies, NGOs, and citizen groups can ensure not just the creation but the maintenance and optimization of water harvesting systems.
- For example, the collaboration between the municipality of Jaipur and NGO Tarun Bharat Sangh resulted in the establishment of numerous water harvesting structures across the city.
- Awareness and Education: Enlightening the urban populace about water scarcity and introducing them to simple water harvesting techniques can foster community-driven solutions
- For instance, bengaluru's 'Catch Every Drop' campaign, emphasizing the importance of rooftop rainwater harvesting.

The juxtaposition of vast urban landscapes with depleting water resources poses a grave challenge for India. But as history has shown, adversity often breeds innovation. Water harvesting in urban centers can be more than just a solution; it can be a revolution, turning the tide in India's impending water crisis. By valuing every drop and employing cohesive strategies, India can safeguard its future, ensuring that water remains a right and not a privilege.

Defining blue revolution, explain the problems and strategies for pisciculture development in India. (UPSC IAS Mains 2018 General Studies Paper – 1)

The term "blue revolution" refers to the remarkable emergence of aquaculture as an important and highly productive agricultural activity. Blue Revolution, is important to achieve economic prosperity of the country and the fishers and fish farmers as well as contribute towards food and nutritional security, keeping in view the bio-security and environmental concerns.

Problems of pisciculture development in India:
- High input cost: The cost of inputs per unit of fish weight is higher than in extensive farming, especially because of the high cost of fish feed. Netting involves regular and labour intensive cleaning.
- Social problems: Norms and religious values excluded women or other groups from participation in certain activities. Lack of family encouragement considering lower prestigious occupation.
- Lack of data: There are lack of reliable database relating to aquatic and fisheries resources in India as well as lack of suitable policies of government and inefficiency of an enforcement agency to monitor the supply of good quality seeds and feeds.
- Lack of finance: Lack of adequate financial support and proper transport and marketing facilities for the products.
- Inadequate family labour: Multiple use of pond water especially domestic purposes restrict the commercial fish farming. Multiple ownership of land is the cause of dispute and opinion diversification. Disputed ownership of water areas.

- Technological problems: Lack of value addition for enhancing profit margin. The market for processed fish is limited in the domestic market and is restricted to fish pickles, cutlets etc. Fish production technology is a complex technology. Lack of timely availability of inputs nearby, lack of quality feed in local market, lack of location specific improved technology, inadequate knowledge and skill about scientific fish farm management.

Strategies of pisciculture development in India:
- Growth of aquaculture sector, particularly brackish aquaculture, is mainly export driven. Thus to sustain the momentum of growth, issues concerning ecological and economic sustainability of brackish aquaculture and its comparative advantage need to be studied on a multidisciplinary and regional framework.
- Focus on the improvements in breeding technology, disease control, feeds and nutrition, and low-impact production systems to complement traditional knowledge to improve efficiency is required.
- Formulation of public and private policies to provide financial support, enhance skill and make farmers aware and capable to practice sustainable pisciculture.
- Emphasis on leveraging the latest information technology for better planning and monitoring is needed.
- Brackish aquaculture should be encouraged only in the areas suitable for the purpose. These should be identified and delineated with the help of remote sensing and GIS techniques to minimise problems of ecological pollution and social conflicts.
- Develop adequate legal and institutional measures to regulate the aquaculture activity in the ecologically fragile zones. These should be implemented and enforced by the local authorities.
- Enforce quarantine measures on fish seed and feed to ensure that the imported material is neither infected nor unwanted.
- Financial institutions should be strengthen the flow of credit to aquaculture sector but with due consideration to ecology and regulatory framework governing this sector.
- For proper planning of freshwater as well as brackish water aquaculture, there is a need to strengthen the current database, which is neither adequate nor easily amendable to proper empirical policy analysis.

India is home to more than 10 percent of the global fish diversity and it ranks second in the world in total fish production. In the present era of food insecurity, pisciculture shows enormous potential to feed the ever increasing human population. Eco-friendly aquaculture in harmony with environmental and socioeconomic needs of the society has to be evolved.

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What is the significance of Industrial Corridors in India? Identifying industrial corridors, explain their main characteristics. (UPSC IAS Mains 2018 General Studies Paper – 1)

Industrial Corridors are stretches across the country allocated to a specific geographical area with the intent to stimulate industrial development. It aims to create an area with a cluster of manufacturing or other industries and gives an impetus to smart and sustainable cities by leveraging on the high speed, high connectivity transportation system.

Significance of Industrial Corridors in India
● Industrial Corridors recognise the inter-dependence of various sectors of the economy and offer effective integration between industry and infrastructure leading to overall economic and social development. Industrial corridors constitute world class infrastructure such as high-speed transportation.
● The establishment of NMIZ in a scattered manner along the industrial corridor across the length of the state would prevent distress migration and provide people with job opportunities close to their dwelling place.
● It will prevent concentration of industries in one particular location which exploited the environment beyond its carrying capacity and caused environmental degradation.
● The production of export surplus would generate employment opportunities and raise per capita incomes.
● Moreover, people would find job opportunities close to their homes and would not have to migrate to far-off places thereby preserving family as an institution. This will also increase social integration in the country.
● The spread effects of industrial corridors in socio-economic terms are many such as setting up of industrial townships, educational institutions, roads, railways, airports, hospitals that will generate employment and raise standard of living.
● Production costs would come down due to improved transportation system and agglomeration effect, making Indian goods competitive in domestic as well as foreign markets.
● Provide necessary logistics infrastructure needed to reap economies of scale, thus enabling firms to focus on their areas of core competence.
● People would find job opportunities close to their homes which would curb migration towards cities, thus preventing stress on already burdened urban landscape.
● Prevention of concentration of industries in one particular location would prevent exploitation of environment as well as ensure balanced development in the country.

Major industrial corridor in India
● Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor (DMIC): The Delhi–Mumbai Industrial Corridor Project (DMICDC) is a planned industrial development project between India's capital, Delhi and its financial hub, Mumbai. It is one of the world's largest infrastructures spread across six states.
● Chennai-Bengaluru Industrial corridor: It is expected to boost commerce

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between south India and East Asia by enabling quicker movement of goods from these places to the Chennai and Ennore ports. The project with assistance from the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) will be developed in collaboration with the governments of three southern states. Both Road and Rail connectivity for Freight movement will be upgraded in this corridor.

- The East Coast Economic Corridor (ECEC): The ECEC running along the entire east coast of India from Kolkata to Kanyakumari is a multimodal, regional maritime corridor that can play a vital role in unifying the large domestic market, as well as integrating the Indian economy with the dynamic global value chains of Southeast and East. It would play a crucial role in the Government of India's (GoI) Make in India campaign and also supports the port-led industrialisation strategy under the Sagar Mala initiative and the Act East Policy by linking domestic companies with the vibrant global production networks of East and Southeast Asia.
- Amritsar kolkata industrial Corridor (AKIC): In order to give a boost to industrial development in the densely populated States of Northern and Eastern India. The AKIC will also leverage the Inland Water System being developed along National Waterway-1 which extends from Allahabad to Haldia.
- North East Myanmar Industrial Corridor: It has been initiated from the Tokyo Declaration for India-Japan Special Strategic and Global Partnership for enhanced connectivity and development in Northeast which would catalyse economic development and increase prosperity in the region.

An industrial corridor is a package of infrastructure spending allocated to a specific geographical area, with the intent to stimulate industrial development. The challenges while creating ICs would include correctly assessing the demand and viability, transport options for goods and workers, land values, and economic incentives for companies. The economic and financial feasibility of ICs should be ensured by attracting potential investors to set up manufacturing units at National Investment and Manufacturing Zones (NMIZs). India will also have to rely on foreign players for innovative technologies. The fundamental focus of ICs should be on improving both Industrial and Urban Infrastructure.

Mention core strategies for the transformation of aspirational districts in India & explain the nature of convergence, collaboration & Competition for its success. (UPSC IAS Mains 2018 General Studies Paper – 1)

The 'Transformation of Aspirational Districts' Programme aims to expeditiously improve the socio-economic status of 117 districts from across 28 states.The programme focusses on 5 main themes - Health & Nutrition, Education, Agriculture & Water Resources, Financial Inclusion & Skill Development, and Basic Infrastructure, which have direct bearing on the quality of life and economic productivity of citizens.

Core Strategies of the programme are:

States as main drivers
- Work on the strength of each district.
- Make development as a mass movement in these districts.
- Identify low hanging fruits and the strength of each district, to act as a catalyst for development.
- Measure progress and rank districts to spur a sense of competition.
- Districts shall aspire to become State's best to Nation's best.

The three core principles of the programme i.e. Convergence (of Central & State Schemes), Collaboration (among citizens and functionaries of Central & State Governments including district teams), and Competition among districts have been envisaged for the success of the programme.

Nature of Convergence, Collaboration and Competition
- The Aspirational Districts Programme is a product of collective and collaborative effort in which States are the main drivers which are being anchored by NITI Aayog.
- In addition, individual Ministries as well as administration of respective district have assumed responsibility to drive progress of districts. For each district, a central Prabhari offcer of the rank of Additional Secretary/Joint Secretary has been nominated.
- States have been requested to form a committee under Chief Secretary to implement the programme. States have also nominated nodal offcers and also State level Prabhari offcers.
- An Empowered Committee under the convenership of CEO, NITI Aayog has been notified to ensure convergence in schemes and address speciffic issues brought out by Prabhari offcers.
- NITI Aayog in partnering releases delta ranking for the districts. The purpose of this ranking is to spur a sense of competition among dynamic teams in districts.

As per UNDP's 2018 Human Development Index wherein India is ranked 130 out of 189 countries, there are significant inter-state and inter-district disparity. By uplifting the districts which have shown relatively lesser progress in achieving key social outcome, India can move ahead in the Human Development Index which will promote inclusive development through transformative governance.

'Women's movement in India has not addressed the issues of women of lower social strata.' Substantiate your view. (UPSC IAS Mains 2018 General Studies Paper – 1)

Though efforts were made to uplift the status of women prior to independence, the women's movement in India gained prominence in 1970s and 80s. These movements have tried to bring the women specific issues in the public domain.

However, it is found that these have not been able to address the issues of the women of lower social strata, belonging to SC, ST, minorities, and BPL families.

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- It is being seen that activists within the movements are urban, western, and middle class. Therefore, the movement is being considered a Western product. It has little to do with the lives of thousands of poor, rural, underprivileged women all over India.
- Women continue to have unequal access to land and other resources. Compensation policies in case of displacement are inevitably discriminatory towards women of lower strata due to multiple reasons such as lack of awareness, education etc. Women from these sections also find it more difficult to get loans.
- Recently, several movements have raised the gender issues through temple entry movement, triple talaq, etc. But temple entry movements are restricted to the specified places only, and triple talaq especially in hinterland or rural areas, go unnoticed.
- Sexual and domestic violence is mainly perpetrated against the women from lower caste and poor women but this issue has not acquired centre-stage in the discourse of women movements.

Issues of women agricultural labourers (e.g. fair wages etc.), women domestic workers and women manual scavengers has not been raised by the women movement prominently.

However, there is also a counter view that the urban, middle-class women are one of the participants in the movement. It is rather the poor women which are the backbone of the movements, exemplified the presence of poor women in the anti-alcohol agitation in Andhra Pradesh, and other parts of India. Similarly, the movement to protect the environment was started by poor women in Reni village of Uttarakhand and thereafter, it spread to other parts of the country.

But there are substantial evidences to prove that women movements have neglected the lower strata women. The National Federation of Dalit Women (NFDW), formed in 1995, has forced women's movements in India to address the caste question seriously. Thus there is an urgent need of women movements to be more inclusive and just, embracing the cause of poor and vulnerable women.

'Globalization is generally said to promote cultural homogenization but due to this cultural specificities appear to be strengthened in the Indian Society.' Elucidate. (UPSC IAS Mains 2018 General Studies Paper – 1)

Globalization is a process in which the world becomes a global village as national and regional economies, societies, and cultures get integrated through the network of trade, communication, migration and transportation. The pace of globalization has accelerated in India after the adoption of the policies of liberalization, privatization & globalization in the 1990s.

Globalization is leaving its footprints on almost every aspect of Indian society such as language (English), cuisine, clothing, etc., and thus leading to homogenization in many respects. There is an increasing tendency towards 'glocalisation' of culture

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which refers to the mixing of the global with the local culture.

Liberal ideas of individualism are permeating the Indian society; joint families are giving way to nuclear families; live-in relationships are proliferating; celebration of Valentine's Day, Mother's Day; consumption of pizza, burger, chowmein etc.; wearing jeans and tops; cropping up of MNCs; popularity of Hollywood movies, Bhangra pop, Indi pop, etc. are some of the homogenizing influences of globalization on Indian society.

However, globalization is not simply about homogenization, but it is also strengthening cultural specifities in India.
- A large segment of populace feels insecure by the inroads of globalization and are trying to preserve their cultural traditions and practices.
- Indian classical dance and music has got fillip in the recent years with the efforts of organization like SPIC MACAY and others.
- Local customs, and festivals are being observed by some tribal groups, especially in North-east India more zealously than before.
- The Indian culture has also spread its impact globally. Yoga traditions and practices are not only being practiced by Indians, but people across the globe are embracing them.
- Indian system of Ayurveda is being promoted by a large section of society in the backdrop of the ills of western system of medicine and cure. For example profuse use of 'Patanjali' products by the middle and lower middle classes of India.

However, there are also negative reactions to the process of globalization. Revival of caste, race and cultural identity at times leads to chauvinistic tendencies and may hurt the peace and harmony of the society. Excessive emphasis on cultural specifities, as a reaction to globalization may lead to protectionism, proliferation of orthodox ideas, and fundamentalism.

'Communalism arises either due to power struggle or relative deprivation'. Argue by giving suitable illustrations. (UPSC IAS Mains 2018 General Studies Paper – 1)

- According to historian Bipan Chandra "communalism is the belief that because a group of people follow a particular religion, they have as a result, common social political and economic interests." The majority community alleges that minorities have an anti-national approach while the minority points to the insecurity they are facing which often collides and trigger tensions.
- Communalism is a modern phenomenon which took its origin in the British colonial period and gained momentum at the time of freedom struggle and reached its heights at the time of partition. Its fundamental causes are secular like competition for share in political power or government jobs and a feeling of relative deprivation. Religion is not its fundamental cause but becomes an instrumental cause because it has great mobilizing power.

Example – The Bhiwandi communal riot (1970)
- The struggle for political power and a sense of relative deprivation creates communal problems. Bhiwandi in Maharashtra was a centre of powerloom industry with minority community's domination in ownership and labourers. Some members of minority community having amassed much wealth wanted to get a hold in the political set up of Bhiwandi, challenging the traditional leadership in Municipal administration. This led to a major riot in 1970.

The practice of mixing up religion with politics or using religion for the sake of political and economic gains is a reason for conflict between communities.

The progress of one community is viewed with unpleasantness and the economic collapse of the opposite side is gladly welcomed in a communally charged atmosphere. The vested interest groups having economic and other anti-social motives trigger communal conflicts in order to gain through a riot.

Religion, when deliberately used as a tool for attaining power, both political and over resources, leads to the growth of communalism. The rising trend of communalism and the violent aftermath that follows it is a major threat to the integrity of India. So, efficient and effective measures must be adopted against the evil of communalism and checking its spread on the social fabric of India.

In the light of recent controversy regarding the use of Electronic Voting Machine (EVM), what are the challenges before the Election Commission of India to ensure the trustworthiness of elections in India?. (UPSC IAS Mains 2018 General Studies Paper – 2)

In a democracy, there is nothing more important than the credibility of the electoral process. Recently, many political parties in India have been seeking for a return to the ballot paper. The issue pertains to the efficacy and credibility of EVMs in conducting free and fair elections. EVMs have brought a structure to the electoral process that did not exist during the ballot paper days when the number of invalid votes would often be high and incidents of booth capturing were a common phenomenon. However, recently the transparency and efficacy of EVMs have been questioned. The Election Commission of India faces the following challenges in this regard:
- To prove to the electorate and the parties that the EVMs are not manipulated and tempered.
- The EVMs are selected by computers on the principle of randomization which does not allow a prior knowledge or planned setting for a particular EVM in a particular constituency or at a particular polling booth. But the challenge before the commission is to account for the authenticity of these processes.
- It is also being opined that the present EVMs are not technologically advanced and secure.
- Ensuring an independent and robust verification system in the whole exercise of manufacturing and placement of EVMs, and registeration and counting of votes.

- Though EC has decided to use Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) machines in all future elections, it is yet to take a decision on tallying all votes cast through EVMs. So far, it has only ordered recounting of VVPAT slips on pilot basis.
- In recently concluded by-elections (e.g. in Kairana Lok Sabha by-elections) there were reports of last minute glitches with EVM and VVPAT which raises doubt about their functioning.
- Another challenge is to procure required VVPAT without delay for the Lok Sabha elections 2019.
- Considering the complexity VVPAT is introducing in to electoral process there is need for competent polling officers.
- VVPATs are very complicated and slight mishandling can result in failure. E.g. In Meghalaya Assembly by polls more than 33 per cent VVPATs failed as the paper used was not suitable for the humid weather there.

Whether National Commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSC) can enforce the implementation of constitutional reservation for the Scheduled Castes in the religious minority institutions?. (UPSC IAS Mains 2018 General Studies Paper – 2)

The National Commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSC) is a constitutional body in India. It was set up by Article 338 of the Constitution to protect Scheduled Castes from being exploited and to promote and protect their social, educational, economic, and cultural interests. It is a group that gives advice and makes suggestions to help the scheduled castes improve their lives as a whole.

Article 30 of the National Commission for Minority Educational Institution Act of 2004 says that a "minority" is a group of people based on their religion. A "minority institution" is an educational institution that is run and set up by the minority.
- Minorities have the right to set up and run their own schools: All minorities should have the right to set up and run their own schools the way they want.
- If the government wants to buy the property of a minority educational institution, it should keep in mind that the fixed price should not hurt the rights of minorities.
- The state shall not treat any educational institution differently because it is run by a minority, whether that minority is based on religion or language.

Minority Institutions Can Get Benefits:
- Other educational institutions are required to keep a reservation for SCs, STs, and OBCs in jobs and admissions, but minority educational institutions are not.
- When it comes to controlling who gets elected, minority educational institutions have a lot more power than other For example, a minority educational institution can choose teachers and principals with the help of an advisory group that doesn''t include university representatives. So, while the headmaster of a traditional school is usually chosen based on seniority, minority administrations can choose a headmaster however they want.
- Minority-run schools can set aside up to 50% of their spots for students from

their own group if they want to admit a student.

The Supreme Court said in the case of Inamdar vs. State of Maharashtra:
- A minority institution can''t use the policy of putting students on a waiting list. The policy of setting aside jobs for people from certain groups doesn''t apply to a minority institution.
- In light of recent calls for Dalit quotas in minority-run schools like AMU and Jamia Millia Islamia in Delhi, the issue of reservations in schools run by religious minorities has come up again.

The idea of making it a fundamental right in the constitution to protect the educational rights of minorities is not unfair to the wealthy classes, but it does give minorities a sense of security against what they see as a threat from the majority. This "right" works well for the Jains, who are a minority group with the highest literacy rate and where most of the people are educated. So, the next step would be to make a clear list of religious minority institutions that want help or recognition from the state. This would prevent overlapping regulatory powers for that particular institution, which would be good for the health and growth of both minorities and other communities. This is especially important in a majority-ruled country like India, which is a place where people from many different backgrounds live together.

Under what circumstances can the Financial Emergency be proclaimed by the President of India? What consequences follow when such a declaration remain in force? (UPSC IAS Mains 2018 General Studies Paper – 2)

The rationality behind the incorporation of Emergency provisions in the Constitution is to safeguard the sovereignty, unity, integrity and security of the country, the democratic political system, and the Constitution. During an Emergency, the central government becomes all powerful and the states go into the total control of the Centre. It converts the federal structure into a unitary one without a formal amendment of the Constitution. This kind of transformation of the political system from federal during normal times to unitary during Emergency is a unique feature of the Indian Constitution.

Grounds of Declaration of financial emergency:
- The President of India proclaims the Financial Emergency under Article 360 of the Constitution, when he is satisfied that the financial stability or credit of India or of any part of the territory thereof is threatened.
- The 38th Amendment Act of 1975 made the satisfaction of the president in declaring a Financial Emergency final and conclusive and not questionable in any court on any ground. But, this provision was subsequently deleted by the 44th Amendment Act of 1978 implying that the satisfaction of the president is not beyond judicial review.

Consequences of Financial Emergency:
The executive authority of the Centre extends:

- to direct any state to observe such canons of financial propriety as are specified by it and
- to direct the state as the President may deem necessary and adequate for the purpose.

Any such direction may include a provision requiring:
- the reduction of salaries and allowances of all or any class of persons serving in the state and
- the reservation of all money bills or other financial bills for the consideration of the President after they are passed by the legislature of the state.
- The President may issue directions for the reduction of salaries and allowances of
- all or any class of persons serving the Union and
- the judges of the Supreme Court and the high court.
- Thus, during the operation of a financial emergency, the Centre acquires full control over the states in financial matters.
- Once approved it continues indefinitely without repeated legislative approvals. President can revoke this proclamation anytime. This doesn't require parliamentary approval.

Article 360 empowers Union govt to take control over state govt on every financial matter deals by a state. The Financial Emergency has never been imposed in any part of country, neither has Article 360 been used till now.

> Why do you think the committees are considered to be useful for parliamentary work? Discuss, in this context, the role of the Estimates Committee. (UPSC IAS Mains 2018 General Studies Paper – 2)

The functions of Parliament are varied, complex and voluminous. It has neither time nor expertise to control to make a detailed scrutiny of all legislative measures and other matters. Therefore, it is assisted by a number of committees in discharge of its duties. These committees fulfil several objectives:
- These help Parliament in managing its business in a better way. It is easier to examine a topic in depth by a committee of 30 than by an assembly of 700.
- These enable inputs from experts and also directly from people. For example, the Departmental Standing Committees often invite comments from the public and call people to testify.
- A related advantage in the Indian context is that the anti-defection law does not apply to committees — therefore, decisions are not usually made on party lines.
- These committees allow members to focus on some specific areas and build their expertise, which helps them scrutinise issues more thoroughly.
- These keep an unremitting vigil over Government expenditure and performance. For e.g. Public Accounts Committee.

Role of the Estimates Committee

Estimates Committee compromises of 30 members solely from Lok Sabha. Its main

agenda is to examine the estimates included in the budget and suggest economies in public expenditure. It suggests alternative policies in order to bring about the efficiency and economy in administration. It brings to the notice of the Parliament, the ineffectiveness of the policy and need for changes in policy.

However, the effectiveness of the role of the committee is limited by the followings-

- It cannot question the policy laid down by the Parliament.
- It examines the budget estimates only alter they have been voted by the Parliament, and not before that.
- Its recommendations are advisory and not binding on the ministries.

The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) has a very vital role to play." Explain how this is reflected in the method and terms of his appointment as well as the range of powers he can exercise. (UPSC IAS Mains 2018 General Studies Paper – 2)

Article 148 – Provides for an independent office of CAG
CAG is head of the Indian Audit and Accounts Department
CAG is "guardian of Public Purse"
Duty of the CAG is to uphold the constitution of India and laws of Parliament in the field of Finance Administration.
CAG acts as a guide, friend and philosopher of the Public Accounts Committee of the Parliament.
B.R. Ambedkar said that the CAG shall be the most important Officer under the Constitution of India.
CAG is one of the bulwarks of the democratic system of government in India – the others being the Supreme Court, the Election Commission and the Union Public Service Commission – Dr. B. R. Ambedkar

APPOINTMENT AND TERMS
- CAG appointed by the PRESIDENT OF INDIA under his warrant and seal.
- Holds office for a period of 6 years or 65 years, whichever is earlier.
- Resigns by giving the resignation letter to the President.
- Removal on similar grounds as the Judge of Supreme Court — he can be removed by the President on the basis of a resolution passed to that effect by both the Houses of Parliament with special majority, either on the ground of proved misbehaviour or incapacity.
- Subscribes before the president an oath or affirmation –
- to bear true faith and allegiance to the Constitution of India;
- to uphold the sovereignty and integrity of India;
- to duly and faithfully and to the best of his ability, knowledge and judgement perform the duties of his office without fear or favour, affection or ill-will; and
- to uphold the Constitution and the laws.

INDEPENDENCE
- Security of tenure – Do not hold office till the pleasure of the President though appointed by him.

- Not eligible for further office
- Salary and other conditions determined by the Parliament. Salary equal to judge of SC
- Salary or rights cannot be altered to his disadvantage
- Conditions of service of persons in Indian Audit and Account service prescribed by the President after consultation with CAG
- Administrative expenses charged upon the Consolidated Fund of India.

DUTIES AND POWER
- Article 149 discusses the duties and powers of CAG.
- The duties are prescribed by the law made by Parliament.
- CAG Act 1971 was amended in 1976 to separate accounts from audit in the Central Government.
- Audits accounts of –
- Consolidated fund of India
- Consolidated fund of each state
- Consolidated fund of each Union Territory
- Audits expenditure of –
- Contingency fund of each state
- Public Account of each state
- Audits all the subsidiary accounts of state and central governments
- Audits receipts and expenditure of state and central government
- Audits receipts and expenditure of –
- Bodies financed by Central and State revenues
- Government companies
- Other corporation and bodies required by laws
- Advises the president to prescription of the form in which accounts of the center and state shall be kept
- Submits audits and reports to the President who shall place them before both houses of parliament.
- Submits audits and reports to state governor
- Ascertains and certifies the net proceeds of any tax or duty.
- He compiles and maintains the accounts of state government
- Submits audit reports –
- Audit report on appropriation
- Audit report on finance
- Audit report on public undertakings

ROLE OF CAG
- Accountability of the executive in the sphere of financial administration.
- CAG is an agent of Parliament, conducts audits on behalf of Parliament and is responsible only to the Parliament.
- The CAG has more freedom with regard to audit of expenditure than with regard to audit of receipts, stores and stock.
- The CAG has to ascertain the legality of disbursed money.
- Does Proprietary audit (Proprietary audit is discretionary) – wisdom, faithfulness and economy of government expenditure
- The secret service expenditure is a limitation on the auditing role of the CAG.

- CAG has no control over the issue of money from consolidated funds of India.

Policy Contradictions among various competing sectors and stakeholders have resulted in inadequate 'protection and prevention of degradation' to environment." Comment with relevant illustrations. (UPSC IAS Mains 2018 General Studies Paper – 2)

In India, the policy is made by the ministries and departments in charge, who keep in mind the specific goals and results. But some government agencies that make policy are hampered by bureaucracy and lack of specialisation. This often leads to policy paralysis and policy contradictions because there are more stakeholders and parties involved. This makes it hard to protect the environment and stop it from getting worse.

Policy conflicts between different sectors and stakeholders have made it hard to protect the environment and stop it from getting worse:
- For the Ken Betwa River Linking Project, the Ministry of Water, the Ministry of Environment, Forests, and Climate Change, and the States of UP and MP all had to give their approval. Panna Tiger Reserve and Ken River are in danger because of disagreements between different groups.
- The lack of policy integration makes it hard to grow rice because there is more silting and the risk ofvflooding.
- Policy paralysis is a problem for infrastructure projects in the North Eastern These projects involve the Ministry of Road & Transport, the Ministry of Water, and the Ministry of Environment, Forests, and Climate Change.
- Pink Bollworm has caused crop loss in some states where Bt Cotton is grown because it attracts Pink Bollworm. The use of Bt Cotton that hasn"t been approved shows that the Ministry of Agriculture, the Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee, seed companies, and enforcement agencies don"t work together well.
- The Department of Atomic Energy and the Ministry of Environment, Forests, and Climate Change worked together on the Theni Neutrino The ecology of the Western Ghats, which is in danger, is at risk because of policy contradictions.

To solve the problem of policies that contradict each other, the following steps should be taken:
- Both the central government and the states need to improve their ability to enforce environmental laws.
- Effective communication between the different Ministries about how to include environmental concerns in the planning and start-up stages of the project.
- So that projects don"t get behind, there needs to be well-trained staff and an accurate database.
- Making the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) procedure a better tool for protecting the environment and promoting sustainable growth.

Appropriate local community-level healthcare intervention is a prerequisite to achieve 'Health for All' in India. Explain. (UPSC IAS Mains 2018 General Studies Paper – 2)

"Health for all" means that everyone has access to the health services they need (such as prevention, promotion, treatment, rehabilitation, and end-of- life care) without having to worry about how they will pay for them. To do this, we need a health system that works well and gives everyone access to good services, health workers, medicines, and technologies.

Importance of health care interventions at the community level to achieve "Health for all"
- Local community-level interventions are the first way that people can get complete and easy-to-reach health care that meets their immediate needs.
- Risk screening helps find diseases early and reduces the overall number of diseases in the country. TB is found at an early stage.
- Providing preventive services like vaccinations, family planning, nutrition, and care for mothers at the local level can cut down on the need for secondary and tertiary health care.
- People"s out-of-pocket costs can be cut down if chronic health conditions and end-of-life care are handled at the local level.
- Keeping the ratio of doctors to patients at the local level can make sure that everyone has access to doctors, reduce the need for quacks, and get rid of causes that could have been avoided, like wrong treatment.
- Improvements to infrastructure, new technologies, and building up the skills of health workers should be added to the local community- level health care efforts.
- When local health workers are part of decentralisation, they can help meet the local health needs. Example: Groakhpur acute Ancephelitus syndrome
- Monitoring communicable diseases, like COVID, by screening patients and suggesting the best way to treat them. This is called Triage.
- These can help people learn about diseases that can be spread and diseases that can"t be Seeking medical advice as a behaviour.
- These are centres that are easy to get to and can be set up in the area with less This helps to even out both economic and geographical differences.

Community-based health care is therefore a very good idea for society as a whole. With the help of both public and private institutions, Ayushman Bharat can easily give it to everyone. In this direction, the government has also made a National Health Policy and a National Health blueprint to look at digitising health records and providing health care to everyone.

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E-governance is not only about utilization of the power of new technology, but also much about critical importance of the 'use value' of information. Explain. (UPSC IAS Mains 2018 General Studies Paper – 2)

E-governance is application of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) at all the level of the Government in order to provide services to the citizens, interaction with business enterprises and communication and exchange of information between different agencies of the Government in a speedy, convenient efficient and transparent manner.

Although e-governance is about utilization of the power of new technology like satellite technology, GPS, computer, internet, mobile, biometrics etc. in an efficient manner, it is also very much about how the information collected is utilised to better cater to the needs of the citizens. The information collected should help in 'clarity' in the objective setting, not only in ICT terms (computers, networks etc.) but also the process outcomes and the measurements post implementation. Information should be used for data mining and for supporting the management decisions and not merely for word processing. By knowing the value of information and its foundation, information can be improved and can provide better support in decision making and better assessment can be made.

Therefore, the focus of e- governance should not only be limited to efficiently utilising new technologies but it should also be oriented toward ensuring good governance using the information gathered.

India's relations with Israel have, of late, acquired a depth and diversity, which cannot be rolled back." Discuss. (UPSC IAS Mains 2018 General Studies Paper – 2)

The diplomatic relations between India and Israel were established in 1992. Since then especially during Kargil war when Israel's MOSSAD helped India's RAW by providing critical intelligence inputs, relations between both countries have gained strength both in depth and diversity.
- During the Indian Prime Minister 25 visit to Israel last year, both countries signed many important agreements such as setting up of India-Israel Technological Innovation Fund, cooperation in space technology, Water Conservation in India, Three Year Work Program in Agriculture 2018-2020 etc.
- The rise of Islamic extremist terrorism brought together both the countries against the global threat of terrorism.
- Barak 8 is jointly developed by Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI) and India''s Defence Research & Development Organisation (DRDO) which is capable of protecting sea vessels and ground facilities from aircraft and cruise missiles.
- India is the Israel''s seventh largest trading partner and number three arms supplier.
- Reasons for Israel's affinity towards India are -Ideological Compatibility, Economic Partnership, National security and counter-terrorism, Cultural and

People to People Ties.

India's evolving ties with Israel are based on pragmatism and emerging global scenario and the mutual dependency and trust have move to that extent from where it cannot be roll back. However, based on the value of democracy, secularism and human rights, India has generally conducted its Israel policy with careful attention to the sensitivities of Palestinians and advocated for peaceful and democratic resolution of Palestine issue.

A number of outside powers have entrenched themselves in Central Asia, which is a zone of interest to India. Discuss the implications, in this context, of India's joining the Ashgabat Agreement, 2018. (UPSC IAS Mains 2018 General Studies Paper – 2

Central Asia is in the "extended neighbourhood" of India. India has a lot of economic and geostrategic interests in the area. It has four main goals in Central Asia: security, energy, trade, and working together with other countries in different ways. Central Asia has become part of the "New Great Game" between regional and world powers. This game is about who will be the most powerful in the world.

Significance of the Central Asian region
● It is rich in energy and mineral resources which haven't been exploited yet
● Being placed in the middle of the Eurasian continent, it is also one of the most important routes of transit connecting Asia and Europe.
● Their consumer market still remains to be exploited.
● Control over Central Asian hinterland provides strategic supremacy over peripheral regions such as Persian Gulf.

As a result, major powers are making a wild dash to stamp their influence in the region:
● Russia is the traditional player in the region and wishes to exert political influence after a short gap of retreat from the region.
● China has fully used its geographical proximity to the region and is pursuing an ingenious soft-power policy. These countries have pledged support to the 'Silk Route Belt' idea for deepening their ancient ties with China.
● The US and its allies remain deeply engaged in the region and use it as a valuable supply hub for the Afghanistan war effort. They also aim to counter the Russian and Chinese influence.
● Despite efforts being made by India, questions such as what India can offer to Central Asia and what India symbolises for Central Asia remain a challenge for India-Central Asia relations.

Recently, India joined the Ashgabat Agreement which envisages enhancing connectivity within the Eurasian region and synchronising it with other regional transport corridors. Implications of India joining the Ashgabat Agreement:
● It will enable India to utilise the existing transport and transit corridor to facilitate trade and commercial interactions with the Eurasian region through better integration with Eurasian Economic Union and Shanghai Cooperation

Organization.

- India being a regional powerhouse in South Asia and southern central Asia, will be able to influence economic and political consequences through the agreement. This will also ensure that its competitor, China will not interfere in this region.
- Pakistan trying to interfere in Afghanistan is a big headache to India. By firmly establishing itself in central Asia, India plans to neutralize Pakistan.
- Ashgabat agreement also features fuel transportation from Caspian sea to the gulf of Persia. By being beneficiary of the project, India will try to isolate itself from uncertainty in middle east that has threatened to cut fuel supply.
- It will sychronize the existing trade corridors with International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC) - complimenting India's efforts for enhanced regional connectivity and accessibility.
- It will increase India's trade with Central Asia which is currently over $ 1 billion - only 0.11% of Central Asia's trade.
- It will increase scope of Chabahar to become a vital gateway and the shortest land route to Central Asia.
- It will provide access to high-value minerals of Central Asia