

7 PM COMPILATION

1st to 15th September, 2021

Features of 7 PM compilation

- ❖ Comprehensive coverage of a given current topic
- ❖ Provide you all the information you need to frame a good answer
- ❖ Critical analysis, comparative analysis, legal/constitutional provisions, current issues and challenges and best practices around the world
- ❖ Written in lucid language and point format
- ❖ Wide use of charts, diagrams and info graphics
- ❖ Best-in class coverage, critically acclaimed by aspirants
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- ❖ Best cost-benefit ratio according to successful aspirants

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Implications of the rise of Taliban for India – Explained, pointwise**Introduction**

For the first time, the Indian government has publicly acknowledged that the Indian Ambassador met with the head of the Taliban's political office. The meeting took place at the Embassy of India, Doha, at the request of the Taliban side.

The rapid collapse of the Afghan government and the triumphant return of the Taliban will have a considerable impact around the world.

The restoration of Taliban rule in Afghanistan with Pakistan's support undoubtedly presents some very serious potential challenges for India's security and India's Afghan policy.

About the recent developments in Afghanistan

Please read the following articles for the recent developments in Afghanistan

1. [The script of the new endgame in Afghanistan](#)
2. [Return of Taliban has implications for India](#)
3. [New Delhi's Af-Pak: Old friends versus old foes: Should India accept Taliban, betray Afghans or support resistance movements like Saleh's?](#)
4. [History over geography](#)
5. [Modi, Putin discuss Afghanistan; India flags terror concern at BRICS, UNHRC](#)
6. [Fourth evacuation from Kabul since 1992 & The legal challenges in recognising the Taliban](#)

What are the challenges imposed by the Taliban on India?



Source: Maps of India

If the Taliban did not accept India as a friendly nation, then there are various challenges like, **Challenges to internal security:** The U.S. has left Afghanistan without achieving any of its objectives. Further, the Taliban, with their prolonged war with the US, have gained access to many advanced military and sophisticated weapons.

The **collapse of the Afghan state will ignite many old threats in West Asia and act as a catalyst for terror outfits in Pakistan.**

The power transition that happened in Afghanistan is not a peaceful transition of power. Apart from that, the Taliban is also fighting with other militant groups such as the Islamic State – Khorasan.

All these pose a great internal security threat to India. As the Taliban along with Pakistani jihadists might plan covert attacks on India, especially on the North-Western frontier. They can also indulge in the smuggling of arms and ammunition.

Afghanistan is geographically the part of Golden Crescent (One of the two principal areas of illicit opium production). With the Taliban in power, India may also witness large scale illegal drug trafficking.

Increased tensions with India and Pakistan: After the withdrawal of US forces under the [Doha Agreement](#), **Pakistan's Afghan policy regained its prime.** The Pakistan army used

the jihadi armies to gain control of Afghanistan and launched a proxy war against India in the past, especially in the Punjab and Kashmir regions. This proxy war will increase in future with the Taliban in power.

Impacts India's policy on West Asia and Central Asian Republics: The return of the Taliban to Kabul has effectively brought **India's 'mission Central Asia' to rest**. This is because there is **little physical access** to India with the north-western landmass. Further, India's interest also shifted towards Indo-Pacific.

Increased threat from China: The absence of the US in Central Asia provides an opportunity for China in that region. Now China, along with Pakistan, might pursue infrastructure projects in the proximity of Kashmir.

What are the options that lie in front of India?

There are few options that lie before India.

Initiate dialogue with the Taliban and accept them: Even though India initiated dialogue, India still has not officially accepted the Taliban.

Wait and watch: This includes **"strategic patience" and not granting "legitimacy"**. But the Taliban spokespersons have welcomed India's continuing involvement in the economic reconstruction of Afghanistan.

So the **wait and watch might be seen as a denial from the Taliban** as they are engaging with India.

Engage with other democracies to take a unanimous call on Taliban: Canada has already announced that it will not recognise the Taliban, most others are undecided. India can make a similar announcement and unite global players. But, the move might make India's western frontiers vulnerable.

Imposing UN sanctions on Taliban and later sending a peacekeeping force: In the recent UNSC meeting, India introduced a resolution demanding that territory of Afghanistan not be used to threaten any country or shelter terrorists or to finance terrorist acts.

If the Taliban violates this, then India can initiate the process of imposing sanctions on the Taliban. But China and Russia might block the move.

Suggestions to improve India's Afghan policy

Immediate initiatives: India needs to implement the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019 to protect the minorities in Afghanistan. As and when the situation stabilises medical visas, visas for students who have already secured admission can be considered.

Domestic initiatives: India must **maintain vigil against a resurgence of cross-border terrorism** that could quickly destabilize Kashmir and **escalate the conflict between India and Pakistan**.

Diplomatic initiatives

India must make **all possible efforts to get the international community to hold the Taliban to its word** on letting all foreigners leave with peace, protecting the lives of all Afghan citizens, and respecting international humanitarian law.

Similarly, India should also **make the international community provide humanitarian assistance to the large number of Afghan people** displaced by fighting.

India needs to **directly engage with the Taliban** swiftly and **shift focus to our maritime and other challenges**. Further, a prolonged wait can make India's negotiation harder. India recently received an invitation to the **"Troika Plus" talks** in Doha. It should actively engage in that.

Read more: [Afghan Peace Process and India – Explained, Pointwise](#)

Terms to know:

- [Taliban](#)
- [Troika Plus talks](#)

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The Loan Melas Conundrum- Explained, pointwise

Introduction

Union Finance Minister recently asked public sector banks (PSBs) to give credit through outreach programs in every district of the country and referred to the 2019 “loan melas” undertaken by banks across 400 districts.

The finance minister first pushed lenders(PSBs) to reach out to customers and signal their willingness to lend during the festive season in September 2019. That year, the loan melas were conducted in October across 250 districts to make credit easily available during the festive season.

However, it is not the only way through which the government is pushing banks to provide cheap credit in bulk. Previously, similar attempts have been made through **Differential Rate of Interest (DRI)** and [MUDRA loans](#).

What is a loan mela?

Under a loan mela, cheap credit is provided to retail and small businesses during a festive season.

The idea of popularising **cheap credit** started in 1972 after Indira Gandhi’s Differential Rate of Interest (DRI) scheme, which made banks **allocate at least 1 percent** of loans to farmers and weaker sections of society at highly subsidized interest rates.

The move faced intense criticism for diluting loan procedures and denting credit culture.

What is the rationale behind loan melas?

Presently, the overall demand in the economy is still weak. A weak demand results in a weaker consumption scenario. Hence, a higher flow of credit to various segments of the economy will help **push consumption** and **investment**, thereby **accelerating economic recovery**.

The point of the loan *melas* is to link villagers directly with banks, to boost rural spending. Thereby, it will boost rural consumption-led economic growth.

Furthermore, Loan melas result in a positive influence in forcing banks to focus on **under-banked areas**. This gives a push for financial inclusion.

What are some issues/concerns associated with loan melas or cheap loans?

There are multiple issues/concerns associated with this concept.

Huge bad loans: Even in the 80s, when loan melas were conducted for the first time, it led to the creation of huge bad loans for the banks. Presently, when PSBs are already suffering from NPAs, giving away cheap credit can further worsen the problem.

Pressure on the banks: The state-run banks who would want to be in the good books of government will be under tremendous pressure to show these *melas* a success. The objective of managers in PSBs **shifts from quality to meeting lending targets**. This affects the overall asset quality and lending capacity of PSBs.

Lack of a robust recovery mechanism: Once the loan is given, there is virtually no effective mechanism that can be employed to get the repayment. Banks have recovery agents and business correspondents, but often they are local people and the borrowers don’t take them seriously.

Consumer demand: consumers are also not keen to borrow at the moment. The decline in income because of Covid-related disruption and the given medium-term economic uncertainty

is unlikely to encourage households to accumulate more debt. Thus, pushing more credit in encouraging production will not be feasible when consumer demand is dismal.

Lessons from MUDRA: Something very similar to loan melas was done through MUDRA scheme. Under this scheme, collateral-free or unsecured loans of up to ₹10 lakh were extended to micro and tiny businesses. As per a report, NPAs under the scheme that stood at Rs 384 crore at the end of December 2018, rose to Rs 516 crore by March 2019. Thereafter, it rose to Rs 530 crore by end of March 2020.

What are the measures that can be taken?

Let banks decide on credit deployment: Areas in which banks choose to deploy credit is a commercial decision determined by the demand for loans and best left to the banks.

Rural and small business finance network: There is a need for a 'rural and small business finance network' that could be a repository of information and data on the wide variety of rural financial markets. It could use emerging technologies in the realm of customer profiling, assessment and evaluation, and track progress and performance. This information should be accessible to institutions and governments for periodic review and program development.

Products catering to rural and semi-urban areas: There's a need to develop products and services that could harness the potential in rural and semi-urban areas. The need for products with features of safety and stability along with scope for generating strong and sustainable investments is what is essential.

Challenges associated with the functioning of Police – Explained, pointwise

Introduction

Police forces have the authority to exercise force to maintain law and order in a state. However, this power may be misused in several ways. Recently, the CJI observed that **Custodial violence and other police atrocities still prevail** in our society despite various constitution safeguards.

Further, the police investigation in the February 2020 riots case has come under the scanner of Delhi Trial Courts recently. The court observed serious lapses in police investigations. All these highlights need police reforms.

What is the status of Police in India?

Police come under the **state list of schedule 7 of the Indian constitution**.

The **center is also allowed to maintain its own police forces** to assist the states with law and order maintenance. Therefore, it maintains **seven central police forces** and some other police organizations for specialized tasks. These tasks include investigation, intelligence gathering, research and record-keeping, and training.

Expenditure on police accounts for about 3% of the central and state government budgets.

What are the issues associated with police investigations?

Poor Evidence: In multiple bail orders, judges have cited poor evidence as to their reason for granting bail. For example, in the context of the Delhi High court's bail for three anti-CAA activists in June, despite they have been charged with the **UAPA (Unlawful Activities Prevention Act)**, the police were not able to produce strong convicting evidence.

Challenges in Crime investigation: Crime investigation requires time and resources, skills, training, forensic capabilities, and infrastructure. Both, the **Second Administrative Reforms Commission** and the **Law Commission** have noted that state police officers often **neglect this responsibility because they are understaffed and overburdened** with various kinds of tasks.

Inconsistency: The courts noted many inconsistencies in witness statements, which should have been noted by police during their investigation.

Methods of framing charges: In some cases, investigation appeared "inefficient" and "unproductive". For example, in a riot victim's gunshot injury complaint, police had clubbed this case with incidents from other localities of some other day.

Increased custodial violence: Apart from the recent CJI remarks, the NCRB data have repeatedly shown police brutality, violation of human rights, and even extreme instances of custodial killings. Although several policemen do get convicted, there are that many who go scot-free — by manipulating records, intimidating complainants, or political patronage.

For instance, the Ministry of Home Affairs has reported that **348 custodial deaths and 1,189 cases of torture by the police** were reported in the last 3 years alone.

Corruption: In 2016, the vigilance department had conducted 55% more inquiries against its policemen. A Delhi Police survey also found that **34% of the cops to be corrupt in 2015**.

What are the challenges associated with the functioning of Police?

Increased political control: The political executive (i.e., ministers) has the power of superintendence and control over the police forces to ensure their accountability. The **Second Administrative Reforms Commission (2007)** has noted that the **excessive power in the hands of police has been abused in the past by the political executive**. They unduly influence the police personnel to serve personal or political interests.

Understaffed and overburdened: As per the United Nations recommended standard, India should have 222 police per lakh persons. But, the sanctioned police strength was 181 police per lakh persons in 2016, the actual strength was 137 police. So, the police force in India is heavily understaffed and overburdened.

Infrastructural Issues: The **CAG audits** have found shortages in weaponry with state police forces. For example, Rajasthan and West Bengal had shortages of 75% and 71% respectively in required weaponry with the state police.

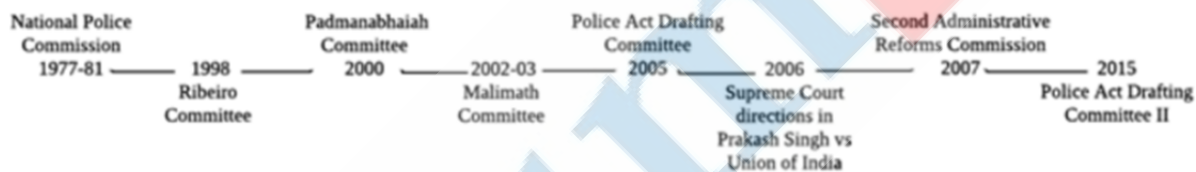
The **Bureau of Police Research and Development** has also noted a 30.5% deficiency in stock of required vehicles with the state forces.

On the other hand, **funds dedicated to the modernisation** of infrastructure are typically **not utilised fully**. For example, in 2015-16, only 14% of such funds were used by the states. This also made the police force **technologically not update**.

Low incentive to work: 86% of the state police comprise the constabulary. Constables are typically promoted once during their service. They normally retire as head constables. This weakens the incentive for them to perform well.

Increased psychological pressure: The superiors often verbally abuse the lower ranks of police personnel, or they work in inhuman conditions. This creates a non-harmonious work environment, which ultimately affects the relationship with the public.

What are the recommendations of various committees on police reforms?



Source: PRS

Read more: [Recommendations of committees on Police reforms](#)

How to improve the functioning of police?

The government has to implement the **Supreme Court's directions in the Prakash Singh case** and **other pending recommendations** like **separating the investigation and law and order functions** of the police, establishing **Police Establishment Board (PEB)** to decide transfers, etc.

Bringing the police under the "concurrent list" of the Constitution. This will also help in creating uniform standards in policing.

Proper Modernisation of Police Forces: Even though the **Modernisation of Police Forces (MPF) scheme** was initiated in 1969-70 and has undergone several revisions, there is a **need to fully utilise the finances sanctioned by the government**. The funds can be utilised to **update the IT infrastructure** and provide **technology training for police personnel**.

Increase Community policing: Community policing will help to improve a sense of security to the public. For example, the **Ummeed Initiative** of the Delhi government. This has to be implemented at the pan India level.

Gender-sensitive Policing: Police should be made more gender-sensitive. 33% reservation for women in the police should be implemented to achieve that.

Parliamentary discussions and debates: Law-making organ of the state needs to have a consistent and meaningful discussion on the issue of police atrocities within civil society.

Revamping Criminal Justice System: Along with police reforms, there is a need to reform the criminal justice system too. This can be done by implementing the recommendations of the [Malimath Committee](#).



The ILO report and Social protection in India – Explained, pointwise

Introduction

India is one of the largest welfare states in the world. But India, so far failed to provide social welfare to most of its vulnerable citizens. Recently, the [International Labour Organization \(ILO\)](#) has released a report titled 'World Social Protection Report 2020–22'.

The report provides a global overview of recent developments in social protection systems, including social protection floors, and covers the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Covid-19 pandemic also revealed the issues associated with existing social security provisions in India. This further highlights the need for universal social security in India.

What are the key findings of the ILO report?

Coverage of Social Protection: Currently, only 47% of the global population are effectively covered by at least one social protection benefit.

Government Spending on Social Protection: It varies significantly. On average, countries spend 12.8% of their gross domestic product (GDP) on social protection (excluding health). However, high-income countries spend 16.4% and low-income countries only 1.1% of their GDP on social protection.

Inequalities in Social Protection: There are significant regional inequalities in social protection. Europe and Central Asia have the highest rates of coverage, with 84% of people being covered by at least one benefit. On the other hand, Asia and the Pacific (44%), the Arab States (40%) and Africa (17.4%) have marked coverage gaps.

Category wise Social Protection mentioned in the ILO report

Children: Only one in four children (26.4%) receives a social protection benefit.

Cash Maternity Benefit: Only 45% of women with newborns worldwide receive a cash maternity benefit.

Disability: Only one in three persons with severe disabilities (33.5%) worldwide receive a disability benefit.

Unemployment: Coverage of unemployment benefits is even lower; only 18.6% of unemployed workers worldwide are effectively covered.

Old Age Pension: Around 77.5% of people above retirement age receive some form of old-age pension.

What is social protection?

Social protection includes access to health care and income security particularly in relation to old age, unemployment, sickness, disability, work injury, maternity, or loss of the main income earner, as well as for families with children.

Social security acts as an umbrella for people during adverse situations. The government's social welfare programmes act as a buffer against all odds in the time of need. Further, it helps to lift millions of people out of poverty and also helps to raise the standard of living.

Why does India need social protection programmes?

India needs social protection programmes for the reasons like increasing population levels, especially the elderly population, high prevalence of poverty and inequality and also for the prevalence of large scale unemployment and pandemic induced migration of workers in India.

Apart from that, India needs social welfare programmes for increasing privatization and globalisation, low insurance penetration, etc.

The impact of the pandemic on social security programmes

The pandemic has impacted the progress of India's social welfare programmes. For instance, [Oxfam International's "The Inequality Virus"](#) report mentions that the COVID pandemic has **increased the economic inequality in almost every country. This is the first time this has happened ever since records began.** The report also mentions that the **impact of the Pandemic on the Informal sector** due to stringent lockdown affected the sector more and resulted in large scale migration.

The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) released [the State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2021](#) report, highlighting the following issues in food security.

Dip in people's affordability of healthy food: There is a significant dip in people's affordability for healthy food due to a loss in income. The pandemic led to an additional 141 million people being unable to afford a healthy diet in the countries studied.

Loss of income & rise in food prices: The primary reason for a dip in affordability is the loss of income. But food price rise has made the situation more acute. By the end of 2020, global consumer food prices were the highest in six years.

Undernourishment: The increase in the number of undernourished during the pandemic was **more than five times** greater than the highest increase in undernourishment in the last two decades.

Read more: [Food security in India and its challenges](#)

What are the government programmes that aid social protection?

Social protection for organised sectors: [Employees Provident Fund Scheme](#), [Atal Bimit Vyakti Kalyan Yojna](#), etc. aim to provide social security to workers in the organised sectors.

Social protection for Migrant workers: [Migrant workers and their Social protection in India – Explained, pointwise.](#)

Social protection for Elderly population: [Government schemes and initiatives towards the betterment of the elderly population.](#)

Social protection for women: Schemes such as [Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana\(PMMVY\)](#), [Maternity Benefit Act](#), [Mission Shakti](#), [Mission Poshan 2.0](#), and [Mission Vatsalya](#), etc aim to provide social protection to women in the country.

Apart from that, schemes such as [Ayushman Bharat- National Health Protection Mission \(AB-NHPM\)](#), [National Nutrition Mission](#), [National Food Safety Act \(NFSA\)](#), etc also aim to provide social security.

Read more: Government Schemes in News – [Part 1](#) | [Part 2](#)

How to improve social protection in India further?

Implementing the recommendations of Parliamentary Committee recommendations: Recently, the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Labour chaired by Bhartruhari Mahtab suggested the government to improve social security measures. The important suggestions include,

The report suggested that the government should **strive to support a recovery that is robust, broad-based and women-centric and based on social dialogues** with all the stakeholders concerned.

The panel said **universal healthcare should be made a legal obligation** of the government.

The **budgetary allocation for MGNREGA should be increased.**

The panel also recommended **an urban job guarantee scheme** on the lines of the MGNREGA.

In the backdrop of pre-existing high and rising unemployment, a **comprehensive plan and roadmap are required** to address the deteriorating condition of employment, much aggravated by the pandemic.

Read more about the committee report: [‘Improve social security for workers’](#)

Conclusion

Although the government at various levels tries its best to ensure social security to its citizens, the government schemes and acts only reached a very small section of society. So, the government has to move away from the targeted schemes to the Universal social security programmes.

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Afghan immigrants and India's refugee policy – Explained, pointwise

Introduction

After the Taliban came to power in Afghanistan, many Afghans, including minorities, are looking for asylum in India. There are already 15,000-18,000 Afghan refugees in India, according to experts. Recently, Afghan immigrants started camping outside the UNHCR office in Delhi, demanding refugee status along with other demands.

Earlier, the ethnic cleansing of Rohingyas in Myanmar has also led to considerable Rohingya Muslims illegally seeking refuge in Bangladesh and also in India. Though the Afghan and Rohingya refugee crises appear disconnected, both are part of a major migration upheaval in the South Asian region. Both these refugee crises questioned India's refugee policy.

India's initiatives to evacuate Afghan nationals

India's humanitarian missions are guided by the principle of "**Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam**" (the world is one family). India followed the same principle during the Afghan crisis also.

Read more: [India's humanitarian missions are guided by Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam](#)

Firstly, Operation Devi Shakti: India launched this operation to evacuate Indian citizens and foreign nationals from war-torn Afghanistan. Also under this operation, the evacuation of three of the last six "Saroop" of the Sikh holy book has also been done.

Read more: [Operation Devi Shakti and other missions](#) and [The Saroop of Sikh Holy Book](#)

Secondly, Apart from that, India also introduced a **new category of fast-track e-visas** (e-Emergency X-Misc visa) **for all Afghan nationals** who seek asylum for entry into the country for a period of six months. But it's ambiguous what their fate will be after this period lapses.

Thirdly, Further, India is also raising its voice in support of Afghan nationals and their safety in global forums. For instance,

Under India's Presidency, the UNSC **adopted Resolution 2593**. The resolution expects the Taliban to adhere to its commitments regarding the safe and orderly departure of Afghans and all foreign nationals from the country.

But several experts were of the view that India could provide more towards the welfare of Afghan nationals. For instance, **Rahul Shivshankar** was of the view that **India needs to implement the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019 to protect the minorities in Afghanistan**.

Will CAA provide protection to Afghan immigrants?

Firstly, the Act is **yet to be implemented** by the government. This is because the rules are not yet notified by the government. Without rules, an Act cannot be implemented.

Secondly, the CAA **not only specifies about country and religion, but it also specifies the cut-off date —December 31, 2014**. So, It's **applicable to illegal immigrants or refugees who came to India on or before that cut-off date**.

Thirdly, the CAA **neither defines the word refugee nor applies universally to refugees** from all countries. It offers **no guidelines on how to deal with future refugee** or immigration issues.

Fourthly, the Act excludes the **Muslims of Afghanistan, Bangladesh, and Pakistan**. So, the evacuated Muslim immigrants of Afghanistan cannot get citizenship under the Act.

Fifthly, the CAA is **not a policy for granting asylum or refugee status**. Instead, it's **about fast-tracking and regularising the process** of granting citizenship to a group of people who have already been residing in India.

Read more: [Citizenship \(Amendment\) Act and migrants](#)

What is India's refugee policy?

India, like most of its South Asian counterparts, **does not have a national or an international refugee policy**. Further, India is also **not a signatory to the 1951 United Nations Refugee Convention and the 1967 UN refugee Protocol**. So, the **refugee matters** at present are dealt with, **on a case-by-case basis**. At present, India deals with refugees, based on the following legislation and guidelines.

Firstly, Since India does not have a refugee policy, **all refugees are categorised as foreigners** under the Foreigners Act of 1946 and the Citizenship Act of 1955.

1. As per the **Citizenship Act of 1955**, an illegal immigrant can be of two types:
2. Foreign national enters into India with valid travel documents but stays beyond their validity, or
3. Foreign nationals entered India without any valid travel documents.

Secondly, as per, the **Foreigners Act, 1946**, the central government has the right to deport any foreign national.

Thirdly, **law and order is a State subject and international relations and international borders are under the Union government**. This has resulted in, both the **Centre and the State government agencies, dealing with the refugee problem in India**.

Fourthly, in 2011, the Union government circulated a **Standard Operating Procedure to deal with foreign nationals who claim to be refugees**.

Fifthly, the **Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019** aims to provide citizenship to those who are sheltered in India for religious persecution or fear of persecution in their home countries. But the Act only covers the Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis and Christians from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, and Pakistan.

How has India dealt with illegal immigrants in the past?

Refugees from Bangladesh: In 2016, the government said in the Rajya Sabha that, India was home to **almost 20 million illegal migrants from Bangladesh itself**. The **Chakma and Hajong** refugees from Bangladesh, currently in Arunachal Pradesh, have also been **provided citizenship** by the government in September 2017.

Tibetan refugees: In the past, India has **provided a safe haven for Tibetan refugees on humanitarian grounds**. This has created an impact on India-China relations.

During Sri Lankan Civil War: According to a report of the **Ministry of Home Affairs**, **more than 3 lakh refugees entered India in different phases** between 1983 and 2012 due to the ethnic conflict. While 99,469 were repatriated to Sri Lanka till 1995, few left for other countries, **India provided refugee status** to the rest.

But recently, the government announced that nearly 1 Lakh Sri Lankan Tamil refugees living in the states of Tamil Nadu and Odisha **may acquire Indian citizenship by registration or naturalisation** after fulfilling the eligibility criteria laid down in the Citizenship Act, 1955.

During the Rohingya Muslims influx: India **refused to provide refugee status** to them. In March 2021, while opposing a plea seeking for the release of Rohingyas who were being held in Jammu for identification and deportation, the Indian government told the Supreme Court that **India cannot become the "international capital of illegal migrants"**.

Read more: [Refugee Problem in India – Explained, Pointwise](#)

Suggestions to solve the Refugee problem

Firstly, India needs to **formulate a comprehensive refugee policy** that would provide greater clarity in differentiating between a refugee/illegal migrant. A **National Immigration Commission can be appointed** to frame a National Migration Policy and a National Refugee Policy for India.

Secondly, the government has to **strengthen the Foreigners Act 1946** and also **sign bilateral agreements with neighbourhood countries** regarding deportation.

Thirdly, the states should follow the MHA guidelines of 2018 to identify illegal immigrants. The MHA recommendations include,

Restrictions of Illegal Migrants in specific locations as per provisions of law.

Capturing their biographic and biometric particulars and cancellation of fake Indian documents.

Initiating legal proceedings including deportation proceedings as per provisions of law.

Fourthly, India also **needs to strengthen the border areas** as the borders are porous and the neighbourhood countries are facing political vulnerabilities constantly. India can improve border surveillance, exploring the options of border fencing and smart walls, etc.

Conclusion

India is facing the issue of illegal immigrants right since independence. It is high time for India to **define a clear-cut refugee policy**. This will not only prevent the state governments from taking a different stand from that of the centre. But also deport the illegal immigrants who reside in India.

Terms to know:

- [Refugee, asylum-seeker and international migrant](#)
- [e-Emergency X-Misc visa](#)
- [Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam](#)

Green Hydrogen: Potential, Issues and Solutions – Explained, pointwise**Introduction**

The cost of green hydrogen made by electrolysis is estimated to be around ₹350 per kg and the Centre plans to bring it down to ₹160 per kg by 2029-30.

Addressing the International Climate Summit 2021 held recently, Mukesh Ambani, Chairman and Managing Director of Reliance Industries (RIL), said, “Efforts are on globally to make green hydrogen the most affordable fuel option by bringing down its cost to initially under \$2 per kg. India can set an even more aggressive target of achieving under **\$1 per kg** within a **decade**. This will make India the first country globally to achieve \$1 per 1 kg in 1 decade – the **1-1-1 target** for green hydrogen”

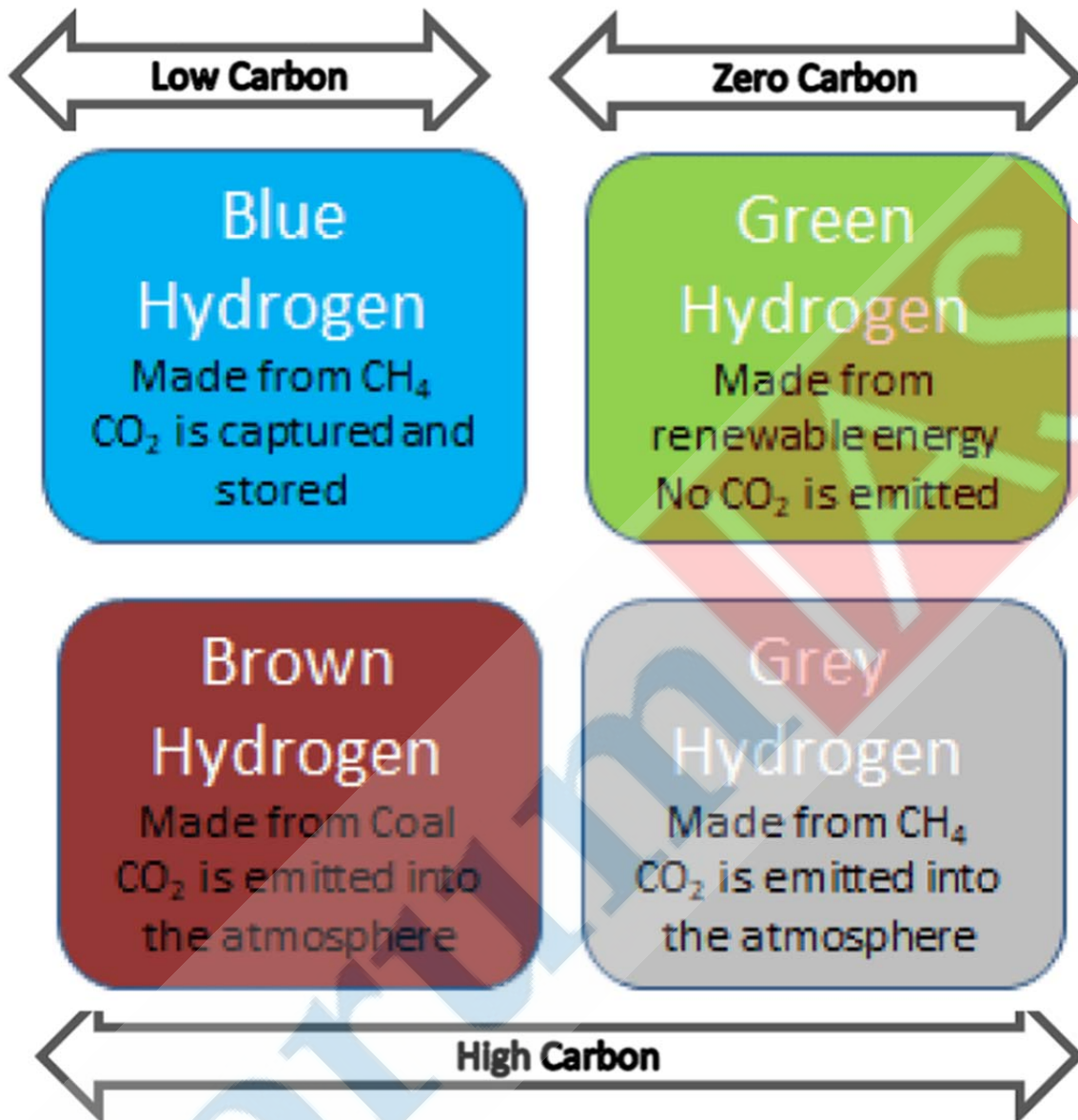
Achieving this target will substantially reduce the carbon footprint and have a favorable impact on the trade balance too. But the engineering problems associated with 1-1-1 are also equally formidable.

What is Green Hydrogen?

Green Hydrogen is the clean hydrogen generated by using renewable energy such as solar power and wind energy. The by-products are water and water vapor.

Green hydrogen is produced via **the electrolysis of water**. All you need to produce large amounts of hydrogen is water, a big electrolyzer, and large supplies of electricity. If the electricity comes from renewable sources such as wind, solar or hydro, then the hydrogen is effectively green; the **only carbon emissions** in its production will occur from the **generation infrastructure**.

There are many types of colors associated with multiple variants of hydrogen. The following pic describes these different variations:



Different types of Hydrogen

Why India needs green hydrogen?

Reduced energy bill: India imports over 85% of its crude oil and more than 50% of its gas. It spends around ₹12 trillion annually for its energy needs. Any savings because of reduced energy imports following the domestic increase of green hydrogen production will be a boon. The valuable foreign exchange savings can be deployed towards infrastructure creation, health, and education. It will also help India meet its [nationally determined contribution targets](#) under Paris Agreement.

Dependence on coal: It also burns domestically-mined coal and lignite to run thermal plants to generate 65% of the power.

Future energy demand: Moreover, energy demand will grow alongside the country's gross domestic product.

Thus, green hydrogen will be a major component of renewable capacity, reducing dependence on fossil fuels and reducing India's import bill too.

How is India positioned favorably wrt Green Hydrogen production?

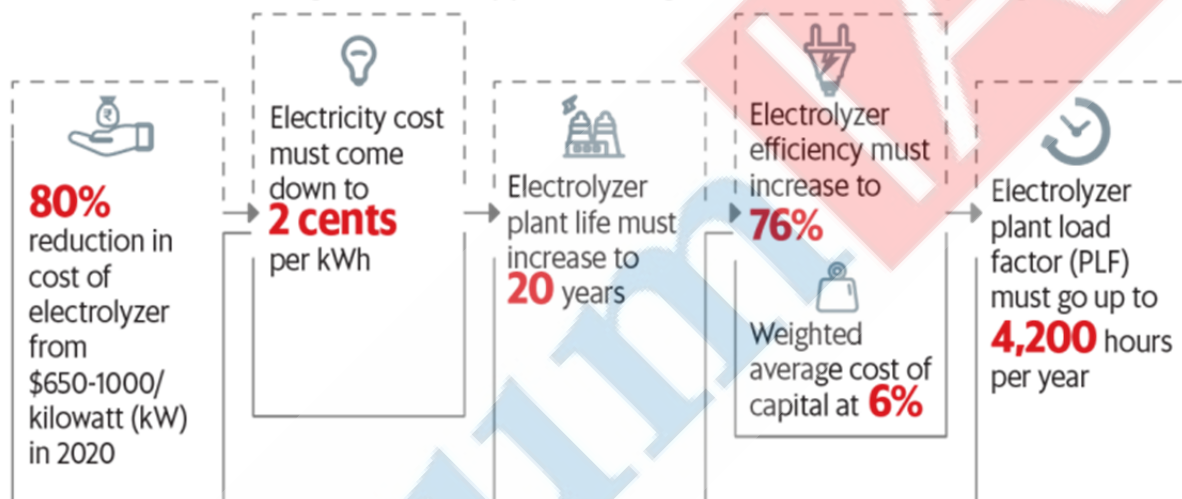
Most parts of India receive 4-7 per kilowatt-hour (kWh) of solar energy per square meter per day

Thus, India's **large landmass** and **low wind** and **solar tariff** can be leveraged to produce low-cost green hydrogen and ammonia for exports, thus bolstering India's geopolitical weight.

Must Read: [National Hydrogen Energy Mission](#)

Ideal solution

With most parts of India receiving 4-7 per kWh of solar energy per square metre per day, the green hydrogen play looks like an ideal solution to help India meet its energy needs. But the following needs to happen to bring down its cost to \$1 per kg.



Source: IRENA report

What are the advantages of Hydrogen?

As per CEEW analysis, the total **investment potential of green hydrogen in India is \$44 billion by 2030**. Further, green hydrogen holds the potential to become competitive for end-use sectors like steel and ammonia within the next decade.

Low-carbon footprint: Hydrogen is the most abundant element and is easily harvested by running a current through the water in a process called electrolysis. When hydrogen recombines with oxygen, it generates power with emissions of water. If electrolysis is done with renewable energy, the entire cycle is very low-carbon with less environmental impact than solar or wind.

Less capital imports: It may require less capital equipment imports, to create green hydrogen capacity.

Good storage material: Apart from use in transportation, hydrogen may be a good storage material for surplus electricity generated from renewables. Solar and wind are intermittent; sometimes they don't generate any power, and sometimes they generate a surplus. The surplus can be used to electrolyse hydrogen, which can be stored.

Higher energy value: Weight for weight, 1 kg of hydrogen has roughly thrice the energy value of 1 kg of diesel.

What are the potential challenges?

Highly reactive: Hydrogen is highly reactive at room temperature. So, storage and distribution require either high compression to **store in special tanks**, or chilling to below minus 250°C to liquefy. It takes up a lot of space too. 1 kg of Hydrogen, occupies a volume of about 11,000 litres, versus just over a litre per kg of diesel.

Dedicated infrastructure: It has a habit of making steel pipes and welds, brittle and prone to failure. Hence, the bulk transport of hydrogen will require dedicated pipelines, which would be costly to build, pressurizing the gas, or cooling it to a liquid.

Pressure on land: After converting electricity to hydrogen, shipping it, storing it, and then converting back to electricity, the delivered energy can be below 30 per cent of what was the initial electricity input. Hence, we need huge amounts of electricity from renewable sources which is going to put pressure on land.

Cost is an issue: Producing green hydrogen costs between \$3.5/kg and \$6.5/kg, depending on the cost of power. Cutting this, first to \$2 and then to \$1, will require new technologies and scale.

Storage and transport issues: While hydrogen has a very high energy content per unit of mass compared to natural gas, its energy density is low per unit of volume. Hence, we need huge containers to transport hydrogen. It's possible to convert hydrogen to liquid form to facilitate transportation. But it has to be cooled to minus 253 degrees Celsius and then reconverted which would require a lot of energy. It can also be converted to hydrogen-based fuels before transportation, but this will again require additional energy. Today, about 85 per cent of the "green" hydrogen that is produced is done so "on-site" so that transportation problems are taken care of.

One of the challenges is the **short supply of Electrolyzers**. Compared to more established production processes, electrolysis is very expensive, so the market for electrolyzers has been small.

Limitations on use in certain sectors: Hydrogen can be used in various sectors, but there are limitations in certain sectors. The best suited is the industrial sector (mainly steel, ammonia and refineries). Its **use in transport and power is restricted** since it has to compete with batteries. Hydrogen can be used in heavy duty, long-distance transportation because batteries have low energy-to-weight ratios, and they take a long time to charge compared to fuel cells. For smaller distances, battery-charged vehicles are the most viable option economically. The best use of hydrogen in the power sector is for storage. Hydrogen-based storage is ideal for inter-seasonal storage.

What are the planned policy interventions?

Firstly, the Union government plans to implement the **green hydrogen consumption obligation (GHCO)** in fertilizer production and petroleum refining, similar to what was done with renewable purchase obligations (RPO).

Secondly, India plans to shortly kick-start the **bids for 4 GW electrolyzer capacity** and **extending the PLI scheme for manufacturing electrolyzers**.

Thirdly, the **draft Electricity Rules, 2021**, floated by the power ministry have allowed green hydrogen purchases to help meet RPOs.

Fourthly, a range of Indian firms, including NTPC Renewable Energy, have ventured into green hydrogen. The NTPC unit is setting up **India's largest solar park** of 4.75 GW in Gujarat and plans to make green hydrogen there on a commercial scale. NTPC has also called bids for setting up a pilot project for **mixing green hydrogen with natural gas** for the city gas distribution network.

What steps can be taken?

Govt can provide policy support: Drastic cost reductions have been visible in solar and wind, and with coherent policy support, there is no reason why this is not possible in the case of hydrogen too.

Development of fuel cell technology: Also, side by side, one has to assume that fuel-cell technology and storage solutions will be developed to a point where hydrogen energy can be used commercially for a variety of purposes.

Competition must be encouraged. Entrepreneurs looking to launch start-ups on this new value chain must be enabled to raise the required funding.

Scale-up green hydrogen: For this, the govt should focus on R&D, ensure access to round-the-clock renewable power for decentralized hydrogen production, and explore blending green hydrogen in existing processes, especially the industrial sector.

We have to make **huge investments in research and development** to lower the cost of electrolyzers and make India a manufacturing hub.

A lot of work will also be required to **lay down standards for large-scale use of hydrogen** besides framing safety regulations. The recently announced Hydrogen Mission is a step in a right direction.

Conclusion

India has the potential of becoming a hydrogen exporter and should not lose this opportunity as it lost in the case of solar cells and batteries

Long term Impacts of School Closure – Explained, pointwise**Introduction**

Recently, a Survey named School Children's Online and Offline Learning (SCHOOL) was conducted to understand the impact of the prolonged closure of schools due to the pandemic. The survey mentioned that the **prolonged School closure at primary and upper primary levels** since the onset of the pandemic has **led to "catastrophic consequences"** for school students, particularly in rural India. This questions the effectiveness of online education.

The **Oxford Stringency Index's** school closure indicator shows that India closed the schools for 404 days between March 5, 2020, and July 20, 2021. The index **term India's this response as the most severe policy response** (requiring the closure of all types of educational institutions).

During this time, about **265 million schoolchildren** have been taught exclusively through so-called **"remote learning"**, the **largest number in any country for the longest period of time**. But the findings of the SCHOOL survey and other surveys highlight the impacts of School closure.

What are the key findings of the SCHOOL Survey on School Closure?

The report covered 1,362 sample households spread across 15 States.

Students Studying Online: Around **37% of the sample students** in rural areas were **not studying at all**. On the other hand, schoolchildren **studying online "regularly"** was **just 24% and 8% in urban and rural areas** respectively.

The study also mentioned that a **student** who was in Grade 3 before Covid-19 is now in Grade 5, and **will soon enter middle school**, but **with the reading abilities of a Grade 1 pupil**.

Reasons for Limited reach of online classes: Many sample households (about half in rural areas) have **no smartphone**. But even among households with a smartphone, the proportion of children who are studying online regularly is just 31% in urban areas and 15% in rural areas.

Impact of Limited Access to Online Classes: Due to limited access to online classes, 48% of the surveyed poor children in rural areas weren't able to read more than a few words while in urban areas, the figure was at 42%.

Shift from Private to Government Schools: Around 26% of the households had switched from private to government schools for lack of funds, while mid-day meals had been discontinued in all sample schools.

Marginalised communities were the worst affected. For instance, only 4% of rural scheduled caste and tribe children were studying online regularly compared with 15% among other rural children.

Main reasons why children did not study online regularly in households that had a smartphone	URBAN	RURAL
Child did not have their own smartphone	30	36
Poor connectivity	9	9
No money for "data"	9	6
Online study was beyond child's understanding	12	10
No online material was being sent by the school	14	43
Other	15	10

Source: The Hindu

Relation between the teachers and students: With 51% of the respondents in the urban areas and 58% in rural India saying that they had **not met teachers** during the month preceding the survey.

Impact on nutritional health: The closure of schools also affected the level of nutrition among the children where the **midday meals** have been stopped.

Parents on Online Education: Around 75% of parents feel their child's reading ability has massively declined and almost 97% of them want physical classrooms to open immediately.

Increase in Child labour: Child labour is **unusual among very young children**. But among girls aged 10 to 14, a **"large majority"** are **now doing some housework** and, in villages, **8% of them had done paid work** in the preceding three months

To repair the damage: The survey also mentions that **it will take years of patient work to repair this damage**. The survey also mentioned that **leaving these issues unaddressed will create everlasting damage to India's demographic dividend**.

Read more: [Why do we need to reopen schools?](#)

Findings of various studies about the impact School Closure

Firstly, A study in the Netherlands has found that most **learning losses occurred "among students from disadvantaged homes"**. Researchers have also termed this as **nutrition loss and learning loss**.

Secondly, a large multi-State study in the United States records that the pandemic **"has also prompted some students to leave the public school system altogether"**.

Thirdly, according to a study by the [Azim Premji Foundation](#) in India, **92% of children on average have lost at least one specific language ability** from the previous year across all classes; the figure is **82% when it comes to mathematical ability**.

Fourthly, the **UNESCO data** has mentioned that school closure has resulted in the following impacts.

Increased exposure to violence and exploitation: When schools shut down, early marriages increase, more children are recruited into militias, sexual exploitation of girls and young women rises, teenage pregnancies become more common, and child labour grows.

Social isolation: Schools are hubs of social activity and human interaction. When schools close, many children and youth miss out on social contact that is essential to learning and development.

Fifthly, the World Bank blog mentions that **there are no estimates of the benefits of school closures**. In contrast, the **cost of keeping schools closed** in terms of children's learning, mental health, and socio-emotional development **is exorbitant**.

The World Bank's simulations at the end of 2020 showed that the **Learning Poverty indicator** (the percentage of ten-year-olds who cannot read and understand a simple text) would **likely increase from 53 percent before the pandemic to 63 percent**.

Read more: [E-classes leading to learning gaps in higher education: Survey](#)

Suggestions to reopen the schools

The World Bank blog mentions that school closures did not help enough in reducing the spread of the Pandemic. This is because the epidemiological surveys and household-level analysis indicates that children transmit the virus less efficiently than adults.

This is reflected in the [Indian Council of Medical Research's \(ICMR\) Fourth National Seroprevalence Survey](#) also. As the survey mentioned that, more than half of the children (6 -17 years) were seropositive. So, reopening the school is essential, but the government has to follow few important steps. For instance,

Follow the ICMR recommendations: The ICMR also recommended the following.

- It will be **wise to open primary schools** first and then secondary schools.
- **Vaccinate all support staff and teachers** before opening the schools.

So, to reopen schools, there is an urgent need to **recognize teachers and other school staff as front-line workers and prioritize them in the vaccination campaign**.

Create the concept of school bubble: The Covid-19 technical advisory committee (TAC) constituted by the **Karnataka government** has proposed the '**school bubble**' concept to **mitigate the spread of the disease among children** (aged below 18) attending offline classes at schools and pre-university colleges across the state. The government has to implement this concept throughout India while reopening schools.

Decentralisation of decisions: Decisions to open schools should be taken for **geographic units** that encompass relatively proximate communities, and certainly **not for an entire state or district simultaneously**. As a default option, the panchayats in rural areas and wards in urban areas can decide about the reopening of schools.

Read more: [Our children need education. How much longer can schools remain shut?](#)

Suggestions to bridge the learning gaps

Repeat the academic year: 'One way of addressing the learning crisis might be **to repeat the entire academic year**. For instance, The **government in Kenya** has recently decided to do just this. Some countries, such as the **Philippines**, allow **extended time for classes on resumption**, both in the duration of school hours and more calendar days of interaction.

Teaching arts: Teaching arts such as Music, painting, theatre and dance in schools will make the resumption of routine life at school more nourishing.

Bringing back the dropouts: Whenever schools reopen, the government has to bring back the dropouts. For instance, the Uttar Pradesh government proposes to track all students disappearing between Classes VIII and IX. Similar tracking is necessary at the All India level.

Addressing the learning deficit: Once the schools reopen, offering a few standardised “bridge” courses and “remedial classes” may seem like a facile antidote to the months of lost formal learning. For that, An ‘Education Emergency Room’ should be set up in every district to coordinate, implement and monitor local plans.

Reorganisation of this year’s curriculum: Schools will start teaching offline right from where they left online. This ‘where we left it’ approach will not provide any benefit for school education. So, A team of subject-specialists and teachers must sit together to look at the syllabus designed for every grade level and deliberate on ways to reorganise it for this unusual academic session.

Special focus on marginalised sections: Introducing the concept of One-to-one tutoring for the most disadvantaged learners. For example, the National Tutoring Programme of the UK and a similar programme in Ghana were done this. In Italy, university students are volunteering to conduct one-on-one classes for middle school children from poor immigrant backgrounds.

Read more: [Blended model of learning – Explained in detail](#)

Conclusion

By March 2021 itself, 51 countries had resumed in-person education. In another 90 countries, including many in Africa, resorted to “hybrid” schooling models (i.e., a combination of in-person and remote teaching). India can adopt similar strategies initially and open schools when all school staff is fully vaccinated.

Overall, India must open schools at the earliest, but it must do so with rigorous procedures along with genuine expert advice to bridge the learning gaps.

Banning Virtual Private Networks (VPNs) – Explained, pointwise

Introduction

A parliamentary standing committee on Home Affairs has urged the central government to block Virtual Private Networks (VPNs) in India.

The recommendations come months after the central government liberalized the Other Service Providers (OSPs) sector by recommending the official use of VPNs, to facilitate the remote working ability for India's massive outsourced IT industry.

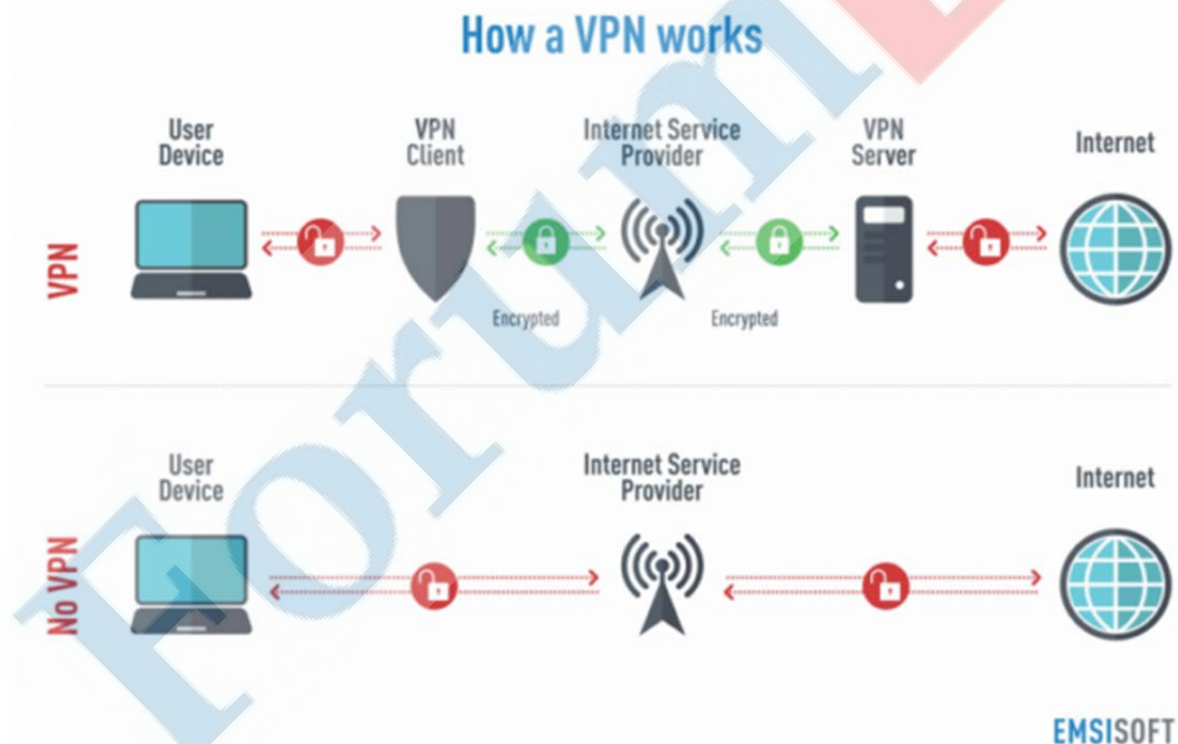
Is an outright ban on VPNs justified? The question merits a detailed discussion of various underlying issues.

So, let's begin.

What is a VPN?

Devices connecting to the Internet are all assigned an Internet Protocol (IP) address. This allows law enforcement agencies, service providers, etc., to identify the device and its location, thereby identifying the user.

A virtual private network (VPN) is **an internet tool** that masks a person's actual Internet Protocol (IP) address, so the online actions are virtually untraceable. It provides **online privacy** and **anonymity** by creating a private network from a public internet connection.



VPN services **establish secure and encrypted connections** to provide greater privacy than even a secured Wi-Fi hotspot.

They can be used to hide a user's browser history, Internet Protocol (IP) address, and geographical location, as well as web activity and devices being used. So you could be sitting next to a person in New Delhi, but your location could appear to be, say, Dublin or New York to any app application that you're using.

Examples of VPNs: ExpressVPN, NordVPN, Surfshark, etc.

What is the scale of VPN usage in India?

Virtual Private Network (VPN) adoption jumped manifold in India in the first half of 2021 as companies moved to secure communication networks as more employees are working from home.

Of India's 1.38 billion population, VPN installation penetration went up from only **3.28%** of the population in 2020 to **25.27%** in the first six months of 2021.

Why the committee has recommended a ban?

The parliamentary standing committee on home affairs recommended the ban, citing the **"technological challenge"** posed by VPNs. It said the Dark Web and VPNs can **bypass cybersecurity walls** and **allow criminals to remain anonymous online**. It also noted that VPNs can be easily downloaded and many websites providing such facilities are advertising them.

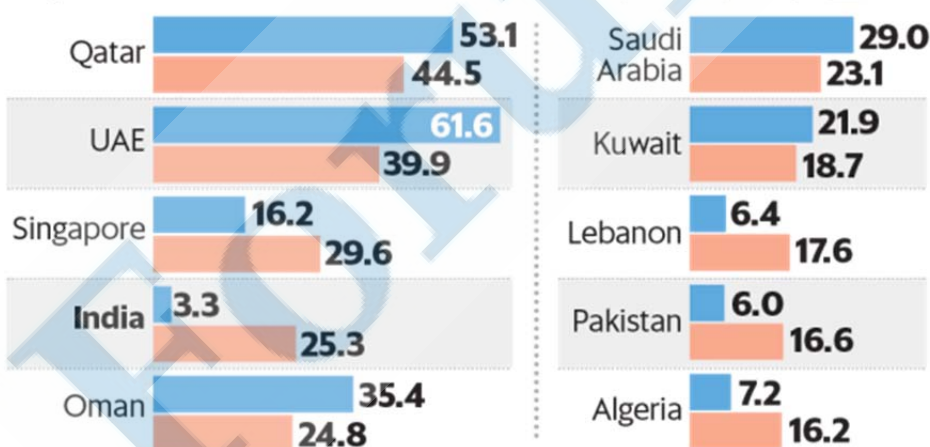
Further, it is well known that **cybercrime** has been, and continues to be on the rise, with VPNs becoming an increasingly **valuable tool to blackhat hackers and cybercriminals**.

Hence, the committee recommended that the home ministry coordinate with the ministry of electronics and information technology (MeitY) to "identify and permanently" block such VPNs with the help of Internet Service Providers (ISPs).

Secure network

A VPN is a way to obscure your identity on the Internet. VPN services establish secure connections between a user and a server or service by routing the data through a remote server, or servers, and hence disguise the user's identity.

Top 10 countries in terms of VPN adoption (in %) ■ 2020 ■ Jan-Jun 2021



Source: Google Play Store, Apple App Store, Atlas VPN adoption index

Countries where VPNs are banned

 Russia

 UAE

 Oman

 China

 Iraq

 Belarus

Must Read: [Origin of VPNs and how do they work?](#)

What are the potential implications of a ban?

Impact on industry: Almost any business that requires employees to access sensitive information, or even software that needs to stay within the company's network, uses VPN. Corporates use VPNs to create an internal network that can be accessed by their employees even when they aren't within the office premises, which is a very important use case under the

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current work-from-home conditions. Without VPNs, competitors can use third-party trackers and target important employees online to extract confidential business data.

Negative effect on telecom efficiency: Other countries with state capabilities that have tried banning VPNs have seen a big negative effect on overall telecom efficiency. For example, Iran's internet is slow due to its attempts to inspect internet traffic for anything that might be going through a VPN.

Impact on privacy: Data and online activity can be easily tracked by Internet Service Providers (ISPs) in India. The ISP owns the internet connect, and can even reset the internet configuration remotely. The ISP has the capability to reduce speeds to some websites or can slow some down as well. It can deny access to certain websites and can track browsing history to show relevant ads to users. VPN is the only tool that's easily available that can help one prevent this breach of privacy.

Impact on whistleblowers & journalists: VPNs are also immensely useful to people like whistleblowers, journalists. In order to ensure the privacy and security of not just themselves, but also that of their sources, journalists rely on encryption and VPNs to enable secure communication. In addition to anonymity, this technology permits them to access content in foreign jurisdictions, which is subjected to geo-restrictions.

Impact on Freedom of choice: VPNs give internet users access to content that the government doesn't want them to see. VPNs give users a choice. A ban would compromise this freedom.

Future censorship: A ban would open the door to increased censorship in the future, including blocks to popular apps such as WhatsApp, Facebook, and Twitter that a VPN would be able to circumvent.

What are the issues/concerns associated with the ban?

Compromise security: The misuse of VPNs is a valid concern, but industry and the government use the technology extensively for **secure communications**. Moreover, according to the National Cyber Security Coordinator, India faces around 375 cyberattacks on a daily basis. In such circumstances, banning VPNs will bring a major segment of the Indian Information Technology Enabled Services (IT-ITes) sector to a standstill and lead to massive employment challenges.

Against governance: If India banned VPNs, it would join the ranks of countries such as Russia, China, Belarus, Venezuela, Turkey, and the Gulf states. All these countries are not role models in terms of governance or freedom.

Attempts to block VPNs often fail: Attempts to block VPNs are not trivial efforts. **Even the People's Republic of China**, with a vast and well-trained bureaucracy dedicated to maintaining the Great Firewall, can only **block VPNs with low reliability**. China is still among the top 10 markets for technology.

Against fundamental rights: In *Anuradha Bhasin vs Union of India (2020)*, the Supreme Court ruled that when access to the internet is crucial to continue a trade or profession, then the same is protected under Article 19(1)g of the Indian Constitution.

A ban is not necessary: VPN does not grant complete anonymity. So, a ban would do little to help fight crime. It's already possible for law enforcement backed with a court order to piece together criminal activity online from multiple sources, such as from the server logs of VPN providers, ISPs, and website and app operators.

What should govt do, instead of a ban?

Banning technology is not the solution. Banning the wrong use of technology is the correct way to look at it.

Government should consider any such proposal only after **seeking legal opinion** and further opening up a **public consultation process**. The process should be inclusive of criminologists, technologists, industry, and civil society organisations, especially those with a focus on digital rights.

ForumIAS

The Issue of Marital Rapes in India – Explained, pointwise

Introduction

According to the **UN Women’s 2011 report**, out of 179 countries for which data was available, 52 had amended their legislation to explicitly make marital rape a criminal offense. However, **India is one of the countries where marital rape is yet to be even recognized.**

Recently, the **Kerala High Court** held that **acts of sexual perversions of a husband against his wife amounted to (mental) cruelty** and was, therefore, a good ground to claim divorce **(since marital rape is not a punishable offence)**. The Court also said that **in modern social jurisprudence, spouses are treated as equal partners and a husband cannot claim any superior right over his wife** either with respect to her body or with reference to her individual status.

In another case, the **High Court of Chhattisgarh** heard a criminal revision petition on the charges framed against the husband based on the allegations of his wife. The High Court upheld charges under Sections 498A (cruelty towards wife by husband or relatives) and Section 377(unnatural sex) but **discharged the husband under Exception 2 to Section 375.**

These cases again put a spotlight on debates around marital rape in India.

Section 375 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) and Marital rape

Section 375: This section provides the definition of rape. Under this, a man is said to commit “rape” who had sexual intercourse with a woman under certain circumstances. This section also specifies the circumstances like against her will, without her consent, etc.

Exception 2 to Section 375: This section provides that sexual intercourse by a man with his own wife (provided that wife is over the age of 18) would not amount to the offence of rape. This is based on the premise that all sex within marriage is consensual.

Status of Marital rape in India

In a survey conducted by **International Centre for Research on Women (2011)** nearly 20% of Indian men have, reportedly, at least once carried out sexual violence against a female partner. Another study conducted by the **Joint Women Programme**, an NGO, found that **one out of seven married women** had been raped by their husbands at least once. They frequently **do not report** these rapes **because the law does not support** them.

In another study by **National Health and Family Survey (NFHS-4)** for the year 2015-16, 5.6% of women have been reported as victims under the category of “physically forced her to have sexual intercourse with husbands even when she did not want to”.

What are the court Judgements on Marital rape?

Nimeshbhai Bharatbhai Desai vs State of Gujarat (2017) case: In this case, the Gujarat High Court elaborately dealt with the issue of marital rape. The court stated that **“making wife rape illegal or an offense will remove the destructive attitudes that promote the marital rape”**; However, **due to the non-recognition** of marital rape as a crime, the court held that the **husband is liable only for outraging her modesty** and unnatural sex.

Independent Thought v. Union of India (2017) case: In this case, the SC has **criminalised sexual intercourse with a minor wife** aged between 15 and 18 years. But, the **SC refused to delve into the question of marital rape** of adult women **while examining an exception to Section 375** (rape) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) which allows a man to force sex on his wife.

Note: The Court restricted marital rape cases to minors to bring parity between IPC and POCSO 2012.

High Courts(HC) have given various views. One HC backed marital rape as a valid ground for divorce, while others granted anticipatory bail to a man who was accused of marital rape.

But the High Courts have highlighted the lacunae in IPC which provide that any sex between a man and his wife, forcible or not, does not constitute rape.

What are the challenges in criminalising marital rape?

Eyewitness: There are issues as these crimes are committed in a space where there are no eyewitnesses. But this is the same for other crimes of Rape and POCSO.

Threat to life: It will further increase the threat to a woman's life by her husband and her in-laws. Any attempt to go against them may lead to further atrocities and an attempt on her life.

Institution of the family: Mostly husbands get protection in the name of marriage as it is considered as a sacrosanct institution.

Note: In 2018, the central government had filed an affidavit in Delhi High Court, arguing that marital rape should not be criminalized, on the ground that it may "destabilize the institution of marriage".

Society and mindset: Right from police to judges, society is structured in a manner to be insensitive against marital rape crimes.

False cases: Dissatisfied, angry, vengeful wives might charge their innocent husbands with the offense of marital rape. Further, it will be difficult for husbands to prove their innocence.

Increase burden on judiciary: Due to the near impossibility of proving marital rape, and false cases, its criminalisation would only serve as an increased burden to the already overburdened legal system.

How the issue of Marital rape can be addressed?

Implementing the recommendations of the Justice Verma Committee: The committee was constituted in 2012 with an objective to strengthen the anti-rape laws in the country. The committee observed that Marital rape is a criminal offence in South Africa, Australia, and Canada, among other countries. The committee strongly recommended that the exception for marital rape be removed.

The Committee also highlighted the recommendations made by the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) Committee in respect of India in 2007. The CEDAW asked for "widening the definition of rape to reflect the realities of sexual abuse experienced by women, and to remove the exception to marital rape from the definition of rape".

So, it is high time that the Parliament has to legislate a law to bring the necessary changes.

Judicial interventions: The Courts around the world have played a great role in shaping Jurisprudence. Like the argument for LGBT which emerged in the EU and US was taken up by the Indian courts too.

In matters of rape, the courts around the world, like the European Commission of Human Rights (ECHR) has held that "a rapist remains a rapist, regardless of his relationship with the victim".

Further, while decriminalising adultery, the Supreme Court in Joseph Shine vs. Union of India (2018) said that legislation that perpetuates stereotypes in relationships and institutionalises discrimination is a clear violation of the fundamental rights guaranteed by the Constitution.

Apart from that, **Article 142** grants exceptional powers to SC. Under this, SC has the equivalent power of a lawmaker. So, in failure of Parliamentary legislation, the Courts **can strike down the exception** to Section 375.

Societal change: The laws alone cannot be used to fight marital rape issues, societal change is pivotal. Societal change is important, as we need to challenge not just the issue of patriarchy, but the very notion of marriage as a sacrosanct institution.

Conclusion

The Indian constitution in **Article 14** grants **no special recognition to any institution** like marriage. So the **rights that are extended to minor women can be extended to adult women too.**

It is undisputed that **marriage in modern times is regarded as a partnership of equals.** It is an association of two individuals, each of whom has separate integrity and dignity. The violation of the bodily integrity of a woman is a clear violation of her autonomy under **Article 21.** It is high time for India to accept the observations of ECHR and criminalise marital rape in India.

Sri Lanka's economic crisis: Challenges for India – Explained, pointwise

Introduction

Sri Lanka's government recently declared an economic emergency. The country is witnessing rising food prices, a depreciating currency, and rapidly depleting forex reserves. The army has been called in to manage the crisis by rationing the supply of various essential goods.

Sri Lanka, located at the crossroads of global shipping lanes, enjoys an unrivaled strategic significance in the Indian Ocean region.

Hence, its economic stability assumes importance for India.

What is the current economic situation in Sri Lanka?

Poor state of tourism industry: The tourism industry, which represents over 10% of the country's Gross Domestic Product and brings in foreign exchange, has been hit hard by the Easter Sunday terror attacks of 2019 and coronavirus pandemic.

Shortage of forex reserves: As a result, forex reserves have dropped from over \$7.5 billion in 2019 to around \$2.8 billion in July this year.

Depreciation of currency: The printing of Rs. 800 billion by the Central Bank of Sri Lanka over the last 18 months to ease the economic crisis has increased liquidity in the economy. But this infusion of money, and the consequent increase in demand without a corresponding increase in supply, has led to a sharp spike in inflation. This in turn has devalued the currency, made imports costlier, added to the debt, and put the forex reserves under more pressure. So, the value of the Sri Lankan rupee has depreciated by around 8% so far this year.

Rise in price of food items: It has to be noted that the country depends heavily on imports to meet even its basic food supplies. So the price of food items has risen in tandem with the depreciating rupee. The government's ban on the use of chemical fertilizers in farming has further aggravated the crisis by dampening agricultural production.

High debt: Its public debt-to-GDP ratio was at 109.7% in 2020, and its gross financing needs to remain high at 18% of GDP, higher than most of its emerging economy peers. More than \$2.7 billion of foreign currency debt will be due in the next two years.

Must Read: [India's assistance to Sri Lanka](#)

Issues in India-Sri Lanka relations

India and Sri Lanka have enjoyed a cordial and relatively stable relationship since their independence, but over the years the ties seem to have declined, due to multiple **outstanding and recent issues:**

Fishermen issue: [Fishermen-related conflict](#) has been a constant area of concern between the two South Asian neighbors for a long time. Sri Lanka has long expressed concerns about illegal fishing by Indian fishermen within its territorial waters across the Palk Strait. India also detains Sri Lankan fishermen for illegal fishing. Between January 2015 to January 2018 alone, 185 Indian boats got seized, 188 Indian fishermen have been killed, and 82 Indian fishermen are missing.

Katchatheevu Island: It is an uninhabited island that India ceded to Sri Lanka in 1974 based on a conditional agreement called "Katchatheevu island pact". The central government recognizes Sri Lanka's sovereignty over the island as per the 1974 accord. But Tamil Nadu claimed that Katchatheevu falls under the Indian territory and Tamil fishermen have traditionally believed that it belongs to them and therefore want to preserve the right to fish there.

Must Read: [The issue of UNHRC Resolution against Sri Lanka and India's Stand – Explained, pointwise](#)

Many **recent issues** have cropped up too, like

Colombo port issue: In February 2021, Sri Lanka backed out from a tripartite partnership with India and Japan for its East Container Terminal Project at the Colombo Port, citing domestic issues. The Colombo port is crucial for India as it handles 60% of India's trans-shipment cargo.

Non extension of Currency swap agreement: The RBI had signed a currency swap agreement with the Central Bank of Sri Lanka (CBSL) under the **SAARC Currency Swap Framework** 2019-22, for withdrawals of up to \$400 million. Even though the agreement was valid till 13 November 2022, India declined any further renewal of it in the absence of an International Monetary Fund program to address Sri Lanka's current macroeconomic imbalances.

Sri Lanka's drift towards China: Over the years, Sri Lanka has drifted towards China for economic support and views her as a more reliable partner in enabling domestic economic development. Moreover, the present govt led by the Rajapaksa family is historically known to be closer to China. India is, hence, concerned about China's growing influence in the Indo-Pacific waters. China, for instance, is set to commence the construction of a US \$13 billion city on Sri Lanka's seafront close to Colombo.

Must Read: [Growing Chinese influence in Sri Lanka](#)**Implications for India**

Impact on India's strategic interests: Colombo assumes importance for India since almost 70% of all container cargo for and from India is trans-shipped there, mostly at Chinese-operated terminals. Thus, a long-term economic crisis in Sri Lanka will threaten India's strategic interests.

Opportunity for China: The growing economic crisis in Sri Lanka offers more opportunities for China to increase its dominance in the Indian Ocean region. Allowing this to continue will adversely affect India's strategic interests. The economic crisis may further push Sri Lanka to align its policies with Beijing's interests. This comes at a time when India is already in a difficult situation diplomatically with Afghanistan and Myanmar.

Problem for exporters: Decreasing forex reserves of Sri Lanka has Indian exporters worried about the possible payment of dues by Sri Lankan importers.

Thus, considering the strategic and economic implications for India, it should invariably help Sri Lanka to tide over the present economic crisis by whatever means necessary.

Suggestions/Measures

Nurturing the Neighborhood First policy with Sri Lanka is important for India, albeit with due caution, to preserve its strategic interests in the Indian Ocean region. India also must look for ways to boost people-to-people contacts. In the technology sector, India could create job opportunities by expanding the presence of its information technology companies in Sri Lanka.

Regional platforms like the **[Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation \(BIMSTEC\)](#)** and the Indian Ocean Rim Association could be leveraged to foster cooperation in common areas of interest.

Way forward

History, cultural closeness, and the constraints of geography poise India and Sri Lanka as natural and permanent partners. They need to explore cooperation in new avenues to further their respective economic and developmental aspirations jointly.

The present situation actually affords an opportunity to India. It can step up its aid to help rescue Sri Lanka from this economic crisis. Assistance given at this particular juncture will carry major diplomatic weight than the assistance given during normal times. This crisis can jumpstart a new chapter in India-Sri Lanka relations.

ForumIAS

Declining farm income: Reasons and solutions – Explained, pointwise

Introduction

The agriculture industry employs around 58% of the Indian population, contributing significantly to the Indian economy at around 18% of the country's GDP. But, despite playing a major role, recent reports have revealed serious issues that need to be addressed by policymakers.

Firstly, average farming household incomes have increased relatively slowly when compared to India's real GDP over the past six years, as per a survey report by the Ministry of Statistics and Program Implementation,

Secondly, millions of women for whom agriculture is the only source of income in rural India are now struggling with diminished savings and lost livelihood opportunities.

Let's have a detailed look.

What are the issues and concerns linked to farm income?

i). Slow increase in farming household income: The earning of an average farming household in India has increased by 60% over six years (from 2012-13 to 2018-19). However, after adjusting for inflation using the rural consumer price index, farmers' incomes have grown only 21% in real terms in the period. India's real gross domestic product (real size of the economy) grew 52% in the same period.

ii). Farming or crop production as an occupation is on the decline. Not only do agricultural households not earn even a majority of their incomes from cultivation, but it also is not even their largest source of income. The average Indian farmer is more of a laborer now, as he earns more from wages than from cultivation, and this has happened for the first time ever. Income from wages, on the other hand, doubled from Rs 2,071 to Rs 4,063 in six years.

iii). Rise in debt level: An average farm household in India owed Rs 74,121 worth of debt in 2018-2019, compared to Rs. 47,000 in 2012-2013. Thus, as income grew, average debt, too, rose with a similar degree, by 57%.

iv). Landlessness has increased: Average land held by a land-owning farmer household has shrunk from 0.806 hectares in 2003 to 0.558 hectares in 2019.

v). Employment crisis for rural women farmworkers: There is a drop in the demand for women farmworkers in migration source states.

So, on the one hand, we have problems of a slow rise in farm income coupled with the simultaneous rise of debt levels, on the other hand, we have issues of increasing unemployment of women farmers.

What are the primary reasons for the increase in agricultural unemployment?

The following major internal & external factors are responsible:

Internal factors: Insufficient public investment for agrarian development, Inadequate access to institutional credit, Inadequate irrigation facilities, Government's poor agriculture-related marketing policies, Low return from agriculture

External factors: Besides, external factors such as excessive economic liberalization in the Indian economy and low import tariffs in agricultural products have also played a critical role in the declining share of employment in the rural agriculture sector.

Other factors: Apart from the external and internal factors, exogenous shocks such as frequent droughts, floods, and cyclones are also responsible for the falling employment share in the agricultural sector. These natural calamities cause extensive damage to crops, which in turn disincentivizes the rural workforce to take up farming.

Covid Induced Lockdown: The nationwide lockdown announced in March 2020 led to an exodus of millions of migrant workers from cities to villages, adding to India's overpopulated and agriculture-reliant rural economy. This employment crisis has disproportionately affected women farmworkers in rural India. Reverse migration and increased availability of employable men in villages have led to a drop in the demand for women farmworkers in migration source states.

What steps can the government take?

Education to farmers- Many farmers are not aware of crop rotation. Though education in urban areas has improved a lot, the government has ignored the same in rural areas in general & in the agriculture sector. So government agencies need to start an efficient mechanism in this regard.

Irrigation infrastructure- Small land farmers are unable to arrange irrigation systems. They need proper irrigation. So government should have to take initiative for providing irrigation to the small landowners.

Processing industries and cold storage facilities- Today 90% of farmers want processing units and cold storage facilities in the villages, especially for vegetables and fruits. So that farmers will get proper marketing & rates. This will reduce middlemen's exploitation. Government should incentivize the industry to open food processing units and cold storage facilities near villages.

Developing an alternate sources of income for farmers:- The Government should take up the responsibility for providing training to the farmers to acquire new skills to reduce the dependence on agriculture. New areas like horticulture, aquaculture, fishery should also be promoted.

Sustainable farming methods- Organic farming is the way out for sustainable farming. The organic certification process should be faster. Precision farming can help farmers to get out of drought adversities by targeted input delivery. It requires minimum input and also reduces the cost of production. Already, Micro-irrigation is helping rainfed farmers in drought conditions. These methods should be promoted.

Support to women- Women farmers don't enjoy entitlement to their land. Govt is in process of digitization of land records.

Climate Resilience farming (CRF)- It depends mostly on technological tools like smart weather forecasts using Big data analytics. Plant biotechnology by developing short-duration varieties, submerged crop varieties for coastal regions, drought-resistant varieties for arid areas can further promote CRF.

Digitalisation in agri sector: Digitalising facilitates networking and a well-connected and coordinated agri-value chain by removing multiple middlemen and the lack of transparency. This also solves the 'access' and 'visibility' issues with respect to the market and demand faced by farmer producer organizations. By investing in the digital agriculture ecosystem, India can support marginal farmers by providing them with a platform to voice their concerns and have these addressed in real-time.

Agri-tech startups: Agritech startups must be incentivized to come up with innovations. These firms can tap into the evolving infrastructure in regional markets, by sharing useful tips and information with farmers via SMS or helplines in their local languages.

Way forward

Farming has been a traditional occupation for most of rural India. But, this is changing now. Farmers are quitting agriculture and joining non-farm jobs. It is an economic decision, since the income of a farmer is around one-fifth of a non-farmer.

Thus, the Government's objective of doubling farmer's income is well-intentioned, but it must be equally backed by robust policies and incentives.



Why Global Automakers are exiting India? – Explained, pointwise

Introduction

To add to the problems of the Indian automotive industry, another big automaker has announced its exit from India. Ford has decided to stop manufacturing cars in India after failing to find a sustainable path forward.

The exit is the latest in the series, after **Harley-Davidson** announced its withdrawal in Sep 2020 and **General Motors** in 2017.

Other reputed international automakers who have exited the Indian market include names like, **UM Motorcycles, Fiat, and Eicher Polaris.**

Let's have a detailed look at the underlying issue.

Why big global automakers exit India?

Demand slowdown: Auto sales have registered a combined annual growth rate of just 1.5% in India over the past five years, upsetting the plans of MNCs who have heavily invested in the Indian markets.

Shift from ICEs to EVs: Global companies bid to move from Internal Combustion Engines to electric vehicles could also be one of the probable reasons. The existing trend underscores the pressure on global automakers to invest more in electric, automated, and connected vehicle technology. Hence, global automakers are walking away from money-losing ventures and redirecting capital to electrification & investment in technology.

Rise in demand for shared mobility: There are several factors for an increase in demand for shared mobility, like increase in traffic, increase in fuel prices, lack of parking spaces, less costly than owning a car, less pollution, etc. Governments worldwide are promoting shared mobility as part of smart mobility, and shared cars likely mean lower growth for vehicle sales.

High ownership costs: India, the 5th largest market for passenger vehicles and largest for two-wheelers, has seen growth in both segments tapering in past decades due to increasing ownership costs. CAGR for passenger vehicles dropped to 3.6% b/w FY 10 – 20 against 10.3% in a decade before this.

Shortage of semiconductor chips: Automakers from across the world are lowering production due to the global shortage of semiconductor chips. As a result, consumers will have to bear the burden of paying more to acquire these products.

India's tax structure: India has a differentiated tax structure that is tilted heavily in favor of small cars. Cars less than four metres in length and engines of up to 1.2 liters attract a duty of 29% (28 percent GST and 1% cess). Imposts on larger vehicles (longer than four metres and with engine capacity higher than 1.2 litres) can go up to 50%.

Dominance of Japanese and Korean carmakers: The Indian market is especially tough for these MNCs due to the dominance of the Japanese and Korean carmakers. Maruti Suzuki has a roughly 48% share in the Indian market, while Hyundai India has around 17%.

Impact of the pandemic: The pandemic has only made matters worse for auto companies, as they were forced to keep their retail outlets shut during the lockdown period.

Present scenario

The Indian automobile sector is currently valued at \$118 billion and is likely to become the world's third-largest automobile market by 2026.

The Electric Vehicle market is expected to grow at a CAGR of 44% between 2020-2027 and is expected to hit 6.34 million-unit annual sales by 2027. The EV industry will create five crore direct and indirect jobs by 2030.

Implications

Job loss: The most sensitive issue involved in global automakers exiting India is the potential job loss. The recent Ford exit will affect 4000 employees and the car dealerships who had invested for the long term.

Make in India program: Under the Make in India program, the government is making consistent efforts to urge foreign businesses to manufacture locally. Exits by global automaker brands not only hamper this process but also lands a blow to Brand India's image worldwide.

Suggestions

Giving industry status for the auto retail sector: Industry status will help the sector to get priority lending from banks, external commercial borrowing, financing from top lenders, private equity investments, easier access to domestic and global funds, and more tax benefits. Better financing options are required since the sector is capital-intensive in nature. This will boost confidence in the sector immensely and will result in the scaling up of infrastructure, bringing in new investments.

Upskilling: The world is changing. We are amidst a global shift towards a more ecologically sustainable society. Hence, people should be able to work in the new world of the automobile industry, soon to be dominated by electric vehicles. In fact, the shortage of mechanics and technicians is already apparent. It is precisely here that policymakers can design policies to upskill a large section of our population, who are already engaged in the automotive sector, in areas like Electric vehicles, automation, and connected systems.

Make in India not enough: China, which began attracting manufacturing investments decades ahead of India, initially relied on cheap labour and low taxes as incentives but now banks on a strong domestic market to sustain its attractiveness. India, too, would do well to suitably modify its 'Make in India' package to ensure that global manufacturers find it equally attractive to both make in India and sell in India.

Way forward

It's said that never let a good crisis go to waste. The crisis that the Indian automotive industry has been facing due to the sudden exits of global automakers is indeed an opportunity, to effect progressive changes in line with the demands of the future.

[Yojana August Summary] Reforms in the Civil Services – Explained, pointwise

Introduction

The Civil services are the backbone of the administrative machinery of the country. The ministers decide the policy, and it is for the civil servants, who serve at the pleasure of the President, to implement it.

Evolution of Civil services in India

During Ancient India: According to the Kautilya's Arthashastra, the higher bureaucracy consisted of the Mantrins and the Amatyas. While the Mantrins are the highest advisors to the King, the amatyas were the civil servants.

During Medieval India: During the Mughal era, the bureaucracy was based on the Mansabdari System. The Mansabdari system was essentially a pool of civil servants available for civil or military deployment.

During British India: The big changes in the civil services in British India came with the implementation of Macaulay's report. The Macaulay report recommended that only the best and brightest would do for the Indian Civil Service to serve the interest of the British Empire.

Post Independence: The modern Indian Administrative system was created under Article 312(2) in part XIV of the Constitution and All India Services Act, 1951.

However, India retained some elements of the British Structure like a unified administrative system, an open-entry system based on academic achievements, permanency of nature, etc.

Classification of Civil Services

Part XIV of the Constitution provides for different types or classes of services for India. The name of the chapter is **Services under Union and the States**. The Constitution has **not elaborated on the types and categories** of services.

In accordance with the Constitution, we can divide these services as **All India Services (AIS), Central Services, State Services, the Local and Municipal Services**.

There are four groups of Central Services, namely Group A, B, C and D..

The **highest personnel cadre** among the entire civil services in India is with the **Central Secretariat Service** and the **Indian Revenue Service**.

Civil servants are the employees of the government of India or of the States. But not all government employees are civil servants. As of 2010, there were **6.4 million government employees** in India, **but less than 50,000 civil servants** to administer them.

Read more: [\[Yojana August Summary\] Indian Bureaucracy – Explained, pointwise](#)

Why do we need the Civil service reforms?

In recent times, **technological advances, decentralisation and social activism** force the government to increase the **expectations on government service delivery**, transparency, accountability and rule of law. The **civil service**, as the primary arm of government, **must keep pace** with the changing times in order to meet the aspirations of people.

The **purpose of reform is to reorient the civil services** into a dynamic, efficient and accountable apparatus of public service delivery.

The reform is to **raise the quality of public services delivered** to the citizens and **enhance the capacity to carry out core government functions**.

Read more: [\[Yojana August Summary\] Probity in Governance – Explained, pointwise](#)

What are the problems associated with civil services in India?

There are few problems associated with the functioning of civil services. These include,

Red Tapism (Delay) and indecisiveness: This exists in many forms with the civil services. For example,

Queries by the superiors are made in parts and frequently, not once by taking all aspects. **Poor capacity building** of civil servants.

Sometimes it is **necessary to take the opinion of the Ministry of Law or Ministry of Finance** for taking an appropriate decision.

All this delays the decision-making process unnecessarily.

'Too busy' syndrome: Civil servants do not attend phone calls or give personal hearing to the aggrieved persons' citing they are busy. This leads to **further delay and also increases the corrupt practices by the subordinates** or middlemen. Further, it leads to **inefficiency** in decision-making due to not attending to the feedback and also creates a **bad image about the office/officer** concerned.

Prevalence of the 'transfer industry': In most of the states, the principle of three years' tenure is hardly followed, and many officers are transferred within a year or even earlier without sufficient, genuine reasons.

Political interference and administrative acquiescence: On the other hand, there are instances wherein **some officers continue on the same post for nine or ten years** because of political connection, backing, and favour to officers of a particular caste or religious community.

This **deprives other competent officers** to have an experience on that post as **every post has its peculiarities** in terms of problems, challenges, and opportunities, and the **beneficiary officer develops arrogance, egoism, and connivance** on the other hand.

Inefficient incentive system: In general, upright and outstanding civil servants have to be promoted. But, in practice, the corrupt and the incompetent are getting promoted.

Uneven utilisation of talent: There is a **dominance of few elite services in promotions,** work allocations and assignments. Most of the coveted positions in the government are taken over by the elite services, which result in uneven utilisation of talent and adversely affect the morale of other services.

For instance, specialist services like Indian Revenue Services, Indian Economic Services, etc do not get adequate opportunities and representation in the work.

Read more: [Corporate Management isn't What Civil Service Needs](#)

What are the recent Civil service reforms carried out by the government?

Mission KarmaYogi: It is a **National Programme for Civil Services Capacity Building (NPCSCB)**. The initiative will target 4.6 million Central Government employees, and it is based on 3 pillars (**governance, performance and accountability**). The mission **shifts capacity building from rule-based training to role-based training**. Thus, it laid **the ground for behavioural change**.

The fundamental focus of the reform is the **creation of citizen-centric civil services** capable of delivering services conducive to economic growth and public welfare.

Read more: [Mission Karmayogi](#)

Introduction of new services: The government approved the formation of the Indian Skill Development Service in 2015 and the Indian Enterprise Development Service in 2016.

Structural reforms: Further, the Cabinet approved the merger of all civil services under Indian Railways into a single Indian Railways Management Service as a part of structural reforms in that sector in 2019.

The Union Cabinet has also approved this year the [corporatization of the Ordnance Factory Board](#). It is the coordinating body of 41 ordnance factories production arm of the **Department of Defence Production, Ministry of Defence**.

Read more: [Major Administrative Reforms by the govt](#)

What are the required reforms in Civil Services?

The future of the country cannot be progressive without a reformed bureaucracy. The need of the hour is **rationalization and harmonization of services**.

Creation of Central Talent Pool: The government can create a Central Talent Pool. The Recruited candidates can be placed in the Talent pool first. The government can then **allocate candidates by matching their competencies and job description**.

Make postings Cadre Neutral: The **over-emphasis on one-time examination, cadre allocation and lifelong privileges have to be done away** with. The existing civil servants can be allotted duties in tandem with their academic expertise and practical experience gained at the workplace.

Further, the government can **make the posts cadre-neutral**. Or we can at least make multiple services with relevant experience eligible for the posts. This will lead to widening the talent pool available for the cadre post.

Read more: [Practice of reserving cadre posts for certain services is exclusionary, must be reconsidered](#)

Conclusion

In conclusion, the Civil Service reforms should **realign the outdated structure and culture** of servants **and forgo colonial ambitions**. The reforms **should raise the quality and sensitivity of services to the citizens** that are essential for the sustainable economic and social development of India.