

**9pm**

# **Compilation**

**28<sup>th</sup> Feb to 5<sup>th</sup> Mar 2022**

**General Studies - 1**

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1. Prisoner of Gender
2. Winds of Change in Urban India that demand close investigation

**General Studies - 2**

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ForumIAS

# General

# Studies

# Paper - 1

**General Studies - 1**

GS1 – SOCIETY – WOMEN RELATED ISSUES

**ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN**

**1. Prisoner of Gender**

**Source:** This post is based on the article “**Prisoner of Gender**” published in **Times of India** on **4th Mar 2022**.

**News:** According to a recent Pew Survey, 79% of men and 82% women in India agree that it is very important for women to have the same rights as men. However, the anomaly is that this rarely translated into specific behaviours, relationships, freedoms.

**How different surveys highlight the discriminatory attitudes towards women in India?**

India is ranked second among 61 countries when it comes to completely agreeing that when jobs are scarce, men should have more rights to a job than women.

Among 34 countries, Indians are the third most likely to say that marriage is more satisfying when the husband provides for the family while wife takes care of the house and children.

**How this affects the society and the economy negatively?**

In other countries rising education and income levels and falling fertility rates have led to rising shares of women in jobs, but female labour force participation in India has dropped even in the same opportune conditions.

Data from NFHS and other surveys points out that specific discriminatory attitudes are a major factor in fettering women’s access to paid work.

GS1 – SOCIETY – URBANISATION

**URBANISATION AND RELATED ISSUES**

**2. Winds of Change in Urban India that demand close investigation**

**Source–** This post is based on the article “**Winds of Change in Urban India that demand close investigation**” published in **Live Mint** on 26th Feb 2022.

**News:** A recent analysis has shown that wind speed in major Indian cities has been slowing down consistently and significantly over several decades. The average wind speed has fallen by 47% in Hyderabad, 47% in Bengaluru, 46% in Kolkata

**What are the causes of this decrease?**

While the exact explanation of this phenomenon is not clear, some scientists say it is happening (along with other atmospheric changes) as a result of an increase in surface roughness, attributed to land-use changes. This they claim can be due to urbanization, or even forest growth.

Most global studies indicate that urbanization is the major factor that can explain weakening winds in urban regions.

**Why is urbanization a major reason?**

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Urban areas are characterized by urban 'heat islands', altered rainfall patterns, increased fog, haze and reduced evaporative cooling. This explains why urbanization may well be the main driver of falling wind speeds.

This is also supported by the fact that **the rate of** wind speed fall in some of the less-rapidly urbanizing districts is relatively slow.

Although it may yet turn out not be the main factor behind reduced wind speeds, urbanization is certainly a compounding factor.

### **What are the implications of Slowing wind speed?**

Slow winds cannot carry moisture for long which will result in **altered rainfall patterns**.

**Agriculture** depends crucially on **transpiration** (a plant's exhalation of water vapour), which in turn needs evaporation which is dependent on wind speed.

**Wind-dispersed plant species** also depend on wind speeds for survival. They also affect **natural disasters and ocean dynamics**.

This also means **that air pollution in cities** will take longer to get dispersed, exacerbating public-health problems.

Falling wind speed also has huge implications for the **wind-energy sector and thus for the clean energy sector**. Typically, a 5% fall in wind speed can lead to an almost 17% fall in wind energy in an average turbine.

### **What has been the global trend?**

Scientists have found that wind speeds have been declining globally since the 1960s which they refer to as "**global terrestrial stilling**". Although this drop may not seem like much but over long periods of time, it can have significant consequences.

### **What is the way forward?**

Natural phenomena need to be scientifically investigated for their implications to broader **socio-economic and cultural outcomes**. There is a need for an **informed understanding** of these winds of change so that we can formulate adaptation strategies.

# General

# Studies

# Paper - 2

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**General Studies - 2**

GS2 – POLITY – CONSTITUTIONAL BODIES

**ROLE OF A GOVERNOR AND RELATED ISSUES**

**1. Lines and roles: On Governors**

**Source:** This post is created based on the article “**Lines and roles: On Governors**” published in **The Hindu** on **3rd March**.

**News:** Recently, Kerala witnessed tussle between Governor, Arif Mohammed Khan and Kerala CM Pinarayi Vijayan. These confrontations are very common in different states.

The major source of conflict among these 2 offices is the way they understand their own powers. The problems arise due to the ways they understand their own powers.

**How powers of Governors are balanced by Constitution?**

Powers of the governor are limited by the ‘aid and advice’ clause, given in the constitution.

A Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court laid down in 1974 that the President and Governor shall “exercise their formal constitutional powers only upon and in accordance with the advice of their Ministers save in a few well-known exceptional situations.

Exceptional situations are also illustratively listed

**What are the issues linked to powers of Governors?**

Some Governors are using the discretionary powers available to them to control the state governments.

There have been many instances of some Governors not acting upon requests to grant clemency or assent to Bills. For instance, in Tamil Nādu, governor showed the reluctance to reserve the bill for President’s consideration, even though the bill expressly required so.

**What are the sources of this conflict?**

**Firstly**, [Article 163](#) empowers Governors to choose what is in their discretion and what is not.

**Second**, the Constitution does not set any time frame for Governors to act on the requests of state government.

**Third**, Constitution bars Courts from enquiring into acts of Governors.

**Fourth**, the Sarkaria Commission on Centre-State relations also recommended not to change this scheme.

**What are the suggestions?**

Provisions relating to the Governor’s role should be amended to make the following changes:

- Identifying areas of discretion,
- fixing a time-frame for them to act, and
- Cabinet advice should be mandatory to act upon in dealing with Bills.

M.M. Punchhi Commission’s recommendation of ending the practice of burdening Governors with the office of Chancellor in universities should be implemented



## **INDIA'S FOREIGN POLICY**

### **2. Where Are Our Qiaos & Wangs?**

**Source:** This post is based on the article “Where Are Our Qiaos & Wangs?” published in the **Times of India** on **2nd March 2022**.

**News:** Former Indian foreign secretary and China expert Vijay Gokhale, in his recent book on Tiananmen, made the observation on **military power and intellectual power**. He mentioned it is the intellectual power that Beijing is most afraid of as a challenge.

In this regard, the author of the article advocates scaling up strategic thinking capabilities in India among the senior strategic and military leadership.

#### **Why does India need to develop strategic thinking capabilities?**

Afghanistan and Ukraine have presented significant challenges for India's strategic leaders.

Now, India's strategic planners need to analyze the impacts of Russia's steps in Ukraine on China's strategies

#### **How did China develop its strategic capabilities?**

Two PLA colonels, Qiao Liang and Wang Xiangsui, published a book Unrestricted Warfare: China's Master Plan to Destroy America in the open domain in 1999. It formed the basis of China's evolving Grey Zone and Hybrid Warfare tactics.

It led to the development of an intellectual community within the Autocratic CCP. They absorb ideas from around the world and adapt them to suit Chinese characteristics and requirements. Further, China's Academy of Military Sciences cooperates with civilian think tanks such as the Academy of Social Sciences to create the template of Comprehensive National Power.

#### **Examples of using strategic capabilities in India**

One such example from India was the work of General Sundarji and K Subrahmanyam, who wrote about the likely path of nuclear deterrence. It was adopted well before India's nuclear arsenal was operationalized. That was a fine demonstration of India's strategic community working in unison towards a 'big' strategic outcome.

#### **Which strategy should India adopt?**

India should give greater intellectual depth to our strategic and military thinking. It should devote more time thinking about the problems of the future, rather than expending energy running present agendas. India should embrace the knowledge and attempt to continuously reinvent itself with confidence, curiosity, and humility by challenging subordinates to come up with better ideas.

## **DATA GOVERNANCE**

### **3. A world Fragmented by divergences in data regulation**

**Source**– This post is based on the article “**A world Fragmented by divergences in data regulation**” published in **Live Mint** on **26th Feb 2022**.

**News:** In the current times, Data is the new oil, and across the globe, various countries have been using very different approaches to manage this resource. Justice Srikrishna Committee Report of 2018 also mentions this divergence between the US, European and Chinese approaches, which is only increasing with passing time.

#### **What are the different approaches used across the world for data management?**

##### **Status of Data-**

**US** has always had a **laissez-faire approach** to data regulation. It tends to look at **personal data as property** and believes that anyone who has a legitimate claim over data also has the right to alienate it.

In **China**, although the tech companies are regulated in the same laissez-faire manner but here **data is also perceived as an asset** that the **state can use** to secure the country's financial and economic stability.

**Europe** has taken a **rights-based approach**, conferring on all natural persons a set of statutory rights, which ensure that the consent they provide doesn't extinguish their rights over personal data. The EU's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) sets out these rights along with the legal mechanisms that can be deployed to enforce them.

##### **Cross Border flows of data-**

**US** supports the **unrestricted flow of data across borders**; the Trans-Pacific Partnership is an example of this which requires participating parties to commit to promote cross-border data transfers.

**China** has adopted perhaps the **hardest line of all**. Two decades ago, it built the '**Great Firewall of China**', a massive surveillance and censoring system that it uses to **control the movement of data** packets across its borders.

**Europe** prioritizes data flows to countries whose legal systems meet their high **standard of adequacy**—requiring all other countries to go through a set of additional hoops if data is to be transferred to them.

#### **What are the implications of this divergence?**

As our world becomes increasingly dependent on data, this divergence will have **costs and complications**.

As the US companies have global reach, they exert an influence well beyond the sovereign territory of the US.

China with its Great Firewall has aggressively enforced its sovereignty over data within its land borders. It is also increasingly through initiatives like the Digital Silk Road has begun to export this uniquely Chinese approach to any other country looking to replicate its state-centric approach.

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Europe has chosen to strictly enforce its fair business conduct regulations on all international tech companies that operate within its sovereign territory—requiring them to comply or pay hefty fines.

### What is the best alternative for India?

The **Srikrishna Committee** analysed the three dominant approaches to data governance with a view to **proposing a fourth path for Indian data governance**. It proposed a framework that rather than focusing solely on the protection of personal data also allows this **data to be used for empowerment**.

### What is the way forward?

There is an urgent need to **find common ground** between these different approaches so that we can come up with a common framework for governance that **everyone agrees upon**. This then can be integrated into our technical and regulatory systems.

India also needs to align its data governance framework with the common principles shared by other governance models around the world.

## RUSSIA – UKRAINE CONFLICT

### 4. Weaponised economies, beyond the theatre of war & more

**Source:** This **post** is created based on the article “Weaponised economies, beyond the theatre of war & more” published in Business Standard on 5<sup>th</sup> March 2022.

**News:** Time and again developed countries have weaponised the global economic system. Every time countries have taken a lesson and changes have taken place.

25 years ago, IMF forced many **east Asian countries** facing **foreign exchange shortage** into conditions that Indonesia faced a near collapse. So, the East Asian countries since then took a lessons and accumulated mountains of foreign currency reserves.

**Same situation was faced by India**, when **US weaponised wheat supplies** against famine-stricken India in 1960s, as a punishment for criticizing the Vietnam invasion. India took a lesson and pushed ahead with the Green Revolution to become self-reliant in wheat production.

**Thus, countries have a tendency to overlook the peace-time benefits of trade, when they are confronted with blackmail.** Russia has been put into same situation after Ukraine invasion, west has weaponised global trade against it. So, there will be repercussions.

### What can be repercussions of weaponizing trade against Russia?

Sanctions **may leave Russia weakened** and its defence industry possibly unable to maintain its cutting edge. Its sanctions-hit economy could also become an unreliable supplier to India.

There is a possibility that Russia accepts a Chinese embrace or even form a military axis with Beijing and Islamabad.

### What are the options with India?

**Accepting western rules**, even if they are selective against non-Western societies. However, with India’s long memory of racism and colonialism and cultural autonomy, it will be difficult to accept rules framed elsewhere.

**Focusing on self-reliance.** However, there is a trend that inward-looking economies don’t do well. Also, it won’t be easy due to:

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1. Lack of alternative to the dollar-based supply chains.
2. India is import-dependent for energy.
3. West dominates all major international institutions.
4. Even India's indigenously developed weapons systems require significant import content. For example, Tejas's engine is made by General Electric, the navy's ships have engines from Ukraine

Although, India has developed some indigenous technological solutions like Unified Payments Interface, but it is not that significant.

Russia has tried to build a "fortress economy" in response to sanctions since 2014, but remained vulnerable. The alternative of selective integration may work better by creating mutual inter-dependence of countries.

### 5. US not ready for a solo space ride

**Source:** This post is created based on the article "US not ready for a solo space ride" published in **Business Standard on 5th March 2022.**

**Syllabus:** GS – 3- Science and Technology

**News:** Ukraine crisis is threatening the US-Russia space cooperation. It will have implications for the space programs of US.

The Russian-American space cooperation started with the first Apollo-Soyuz mission in 1975. This area of cooperation withstood the Cold War and several other geopolitical differences between the two nations. International Space Station (ISS) is a shining example of this achievement. However, the recent Ukraine crisis is threatening this cooperation. Following the American sanctions, Russia has decided to stop supplying rocket engines to the US. It might result in some big problems for US Space programs.

#### What are the dependencies of US on Russia in Space programs?

**Rocket Engines:** Russia has delivered 122 RD-180 engines to the US since the 1990s. US used 98 engines to power Atlas launch vehicles, which are crucial to the launch of Department of Defense payloads and NASA missions.

**ISS Program:** Roscosmos and NASA are key partners in the ISS programme, besides the Canadian Space Agency, the European Space Agency, and the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency.

**The ISS is divided into two orbital segments — American and Russian.** The US and Russia keep the science laboratory continuously staffed with astronauts and cosmonauts. The Russian segment is responsible for guidance, navigation, and control of the entire complex.

Also, Russia's cargo craft provide periodic orbit-raising boosts for the ISS. It ensures that it doesn't sink too low into Earth's atmosphere. The American space agency is far from self-reliant in this aspect.

It will be almost unviable for the US to maintain ISS alone. The space industry will be "confronting the very real possibility of a space station gap in this case. It means US will be ceding the control of Earth's lower orbit to the Chinese, who already have a space station in the development stage.

**Transporting astronauts:** From 2011 to 2020, the US relied solely on Russia to fly astronauts to the ISS. According to a 2019 Tass report, Nasa purchased \$3.9 billion worth of seats from Russia to transport its astronauts to and from the ISS since July 2011.



## 6. India's tea industry is on tenterhooks as Russia wages war on Ukraine

**Source:** This post is based on the article “India's tea industry is on tenterhooks as Russia wages war on Ukraine” published in **Business Standard** on 5th Mar 2022.

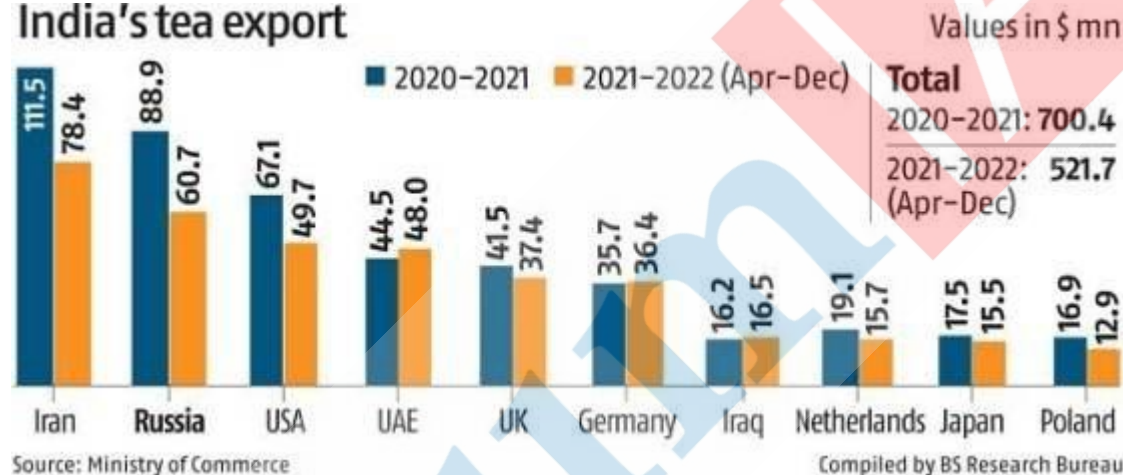
**Syllabus: Gs – 3** Transport and marketing of agricultural produce and issues and related constraints.

**Relevance:** To know about Russia Ukraine crisis on India's tea exports.

**News:** The Russia-Ukraine crisis has impacted the Indian tea exports to the region into disarray with port disruptions and payment delays hitting shipments.

### About India's Tea exports to Russia

#### India's tea export



Russia is among the top two buyers of Indian tea (the other being Iran) accounting for about 18% of the total tea exports.

However, Indian tea exports to Russia are impacted due to **a)** inability expressed by shipping lines to deliver the cargo to war-hit or countries facing sanctions and **b)** banks refusing to accept payments.

This disruption has mostly affected the South Indian Region, as substantial tea exports take place from this region during this time. (South India accounts for about 18% of total tea production in India).

Moreover, this conflict has broken out at a time when tea exports are yet to recover from the blow dealt by Covid-19.

#### How will this impact the domestic tea industry?

The Indian tea industry largely caters to the domestic market. Yet, exports are vital to keeping the domestic demand-supply in balance. For instance, if exports are impacted then more tea will be available in the domestic market and that will lead to an oversupply situation, causing prices to crash, a situation that will pile pressure on a troubled industry.

#### What is the Indian Government doing to overcome this impact?

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The Indian government is now reportedly exploring the option of allowing the rupee-ruble trade to bypass the impact of sanctions on Russia following the war on Ukraine. That has rekindled hopes for an increased offtake from Russia.

### 7. The Strain When You Abstain

**Source:** This post is created based on the article “The Strain When You Abstain” published in Times of India on 5<sup>th</sup> March 2022.

**News:** India has decided to abstain from voting against Russia in United Nations Organizations. India stand is based on its own security interests.

#### Russia-Ukraine Conflict in Brief

##### **What are the justifications for India’s stand on conflict?**

India’s dependence on Russian military supplies is widely acknowledged. Indigenization requires time and diversification is also not possible immediately because for diversification, it requires India to have choices in advanced military technologies. Only Russia has been willing to share technologies with India thus far.

##### **Why India should reconsider its stand on Ukraine crisis?**

**First,** previously neutral European countries, including Germany have joined international action against Russia.

**Second,** many Western observers have started raising question whether India will indeed be a like-minded partner in upholding the rules-based-order, after its stand on Russia.

**Third,** supporters of India in US for a waiver from sanctions under Countering America’s Adversaries Through Sanctions Act ([CAATSA](#)) will find it difficult to justify their stand now.

**Fourth,** Convergence between Russia and China is growing. Furthermore, Pakistan PM’s recent visit to Moscow has created uncertainty among Indian policy makers over their stand for Russia.

**Fifth,** the Chinese challenge for India in Indo-Pacific might increase after Ukraine crisis, as it might embolden China. In this case, India might need US and its allies for securing the Indo-Pacific security order. On the other hand, Russia dismisses Indo-Pacific as a US strategic construct.

**Sixth,** Ukraine’s crisis will result in a surge in crude prices and growing global inflation could reduce the flows of foreign portfolio investment in India. It will have severe implications for the already suffering Indian economy from covid.

**Seventh,** Furthermore, the European Union is India’s third-largest trade partner. India is also negotiating an FTA with it. India’s stand on crisis might become a hurdle in both trade growth and FTA.

**Lastly,** India’s stand is diluting its own stated values of respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty of nations.

## 8. Will Russia's war spur trade diversification?

**Source:** This post is based on the article “Will Russia's war spur trade diversification?” published in **Business Standard** on **3rd March 2022**.

**News:** Building a resilient economy, particularly after the COVID-19 pandemic became important. Russia's invasion of Ukraine gave a boost to this ideology.

### Why is it important to build a resilient economy?

After World War II, economic actors had put faith in broad-based international commitment to open a global economy. But tensions, fiction, and blockages in global supply chains during the pandemic began to erode this faith. Countries like China and United States have erected barriers to foreign tech firms and market access, citing national security concerns.

Economic and financial sanctions have become a foreign policy weapon for countries like the USA. This can be seen in the Ukrainian crisis, where the NATO response has been economic. EU countries are experimenting with excluding Russia from the SWIFT financial system.

### Why economic sanctions on Russia are difficult?

Russia supplies 40% of Europe's natural gas. Therefore, there was resistance by major EU countries to exclude Russia from SWIFT. Only selected banks were targeted.

Russia also depends on Europe to continue purchasing its gas. This translates into economic mutual assured destruction. Therefore, the Italian president had commented that Europe should look to diversify its supplies.

### What should be done to ensure greater diversification?

Though Japan is entirely dependent on the import of fossil fuels, it maintains a highly diversified supply. Japan acquires oil from several countries in the Middle East and natural gas from Australia, Malaysia, Qatar, Russia, and the USA. Europe can adopt similar supply sources.

Countries should also diversify their markets, as market access can also be cut by large economies like the USA. Given these factors, it is important to ensure diversification for a resilient supply chain and global economy.

## 9. Escaping the global sanctions net

**Source:** This post is developed based on the article “Escaping the global sanctions net” published in **Indian Express** on **2nd March 2022**.

**News:** Western countries have put several types of economic sanctions on Russia. However, the effectiveness of these sanctions is debatable.

The way of expressing global dominance and hegemony is changing. Now, it is expressed through financial sanctions, instead of troop presence. Most recently the method has been adopted against Russia.

**First**, financial manipulations from afar in the form of sanctions. In Afghanistan, financial sanctions gave the US government the ability to exercise control over a government or its activities or both. Furthermore, it also controls those countries or corporations trading with or investing in Afghanistan.

**Second** way of exerting control from afar is confiscation of foreign exchange reserves in American banks. For example, the US froze Afghanistan's foreign exchange reserves of \$7 billion deposited in the New York Federal Bank, after its withdrawal.

### **What were the implications of sanctions on Afghanistan?**

**Role of private sector:** These sanctions are designed by government and implemented by both profit-making and non-profit private enterprises, domestic and international NGOs (including the United Nations).

**China's chance to build dominance:** This move gave China with the chance to unite its investments in Afghanistan and Pakistan, isolating India. Furthermore, it gave economic lever of Afghanistan in the hand of China in the form of rich mineral resources.

### **What are the implications of sanctions on Russia?**

Unlike Afghanistan, Russian economy is more isolated, protected and less reliant on international funding. So far, the possible impact of sanctions on Russia is estimated at a 1 per cent loss in GDP.

Banning Russia from the SWIFT system of international payments is a problem for the global financial system. The impact of any disruption in Russian exports of oil, gas, palladium, wheat, and fertilizer will have repercussions for the global economy, recovering from covid shock.

Lastly, the Ukraine incident shows a cooperation between Russia and China in the form of division of labour. While China is focusing on the economy, the Russia is attending the political and the military aspects of keeping the US out of Eurasia.

## **10. The Ukraine war, India and a stand of non-alignment**

**Source:** This post is based on the article **“The Ukraine war, India and a stand of non-alignment”** published in the **The Hindu** on **2nd Mar 2022**.

**News:** World is criticizing Russia over its actions on Ukraine.

### **What are the concerns of Russia?**

It is clear that NATO expansion to Russian borders is a legitimate security threat for Russia. President of Ukraine should have been more careful in devising a formula to lean towards the west and ease Russian concerns at the same time.

But none of these justifies Russian invasion of Ukraine. It has been condemned by west and United Nations.

### **How it is difficult for India to choose a particular side?**

**India US** relationships are continuously growing especially in the defense sector. Both are also the members of the Quad grouping which will help India to contain China in the future if needed

**Russia** is India's principal source of military hardware and is willing to share the technology also. Russia has also helped India in the United Nations on many occasions. For example, Russia stalled action in the UN for several days at the time of the 1971 Bangladesh war to enable India to 'finish the job'. India may also need Russian support in the future if Pakistan brings up the Kashmir issue in the world organization.

### **India's Policy in Russia-Ukraine Issue**

At present, the Indian government policy of maintaining a kind of neutral position is the continuation of **Nehruvian policy of non-alignment**.

Jawaharlal Nehru even called it a selfish policy because it is motivated by the principle of national interest.



## 11. Ukraine's situation, India's national interest

**Source:** This post is based on the following articles

“Ukraine's situation, India's national interest” published in **The Hindu** on **3rd March 2022**.

“Standing against Putin's imperialist project” published in **Indian Express** on **3rd March 2022**.

**News:** Russian president announced military action in Ukraine to protect Russians from genocide and for de-Nazification and demilitarization of Ukraine.

### Why Russian belief is not correct?

Allegations of Nazism can't be held against Ukraine as there is no evidence of genocide and the Ukrainian president himself is a Jew. Thus, this allegation stems from the ideology that Russia thinks Ukraine has no right to exist.

Also, Putin is trying to revive Czarist Russia and not the Soviet Union. This would involve making Belarus and Ukraine satellite states. But this narrative is now being challenged in Ukraine with the revival of Ukrainian nationalism.

### How did the world countries react to Russia's attack on Ukraine?

**Germany**, which earlier was friendly with Russia, has now come out with a strong response and five-pronged strategies. It involves military solidarity with Ukraine, punitive measures against Putin's Russia, commitment to European collective defense through NATO, German rearmament, and a reduction in Germany's energy and economic interdependence with Russia.

Many other European countries also closed their airspace to Russia. Countries are isolating Russia on multiple fronts, including football, which is a sacred ritual in Europe. Some European countries have started to help Ukraine by supplying arms and offering significant economic and humanitarian assistance. The EU also plans to buy \$550 million worth of arms for Ukraine.

### What does the BRICS Delhi Resolution say?

New Delhi BRICS Declaration commits to resolve all disputes by peaceful means and is opposed to unilateral use of force against any state. Members also oppose the use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state.

But with the Russian attack on Ukraine, BRICS is losing its credibility.

### What should India do in the present scenario?

India should suggest Russia to withdraw its armed forces from the entire Ukraine according to the Delhi Resolution of BRICS. If Russia is not paying attention to India's suggestion, then India should announce its consideration of the U.S. proposed Draft Resolution in the UN General Assembly. It should adopt any reasonable amendments proposed by the UNGA.

India should also urge the United States to re-structure the objectives of [Quad](#), outline a clear strategy to achieve the objectives, and mobilize the resources required.

## 12. Debunking Russia's international law justifications

**Source:** This **post** is based on the article “**Debunking Russia's international law justifications**” published in **The Hindu** on **1st Mar 2022**.

**News:** Russian invasion of Ukraine is not justified under any circumstance. Russia has disrespected the UN charter and many other international laws.

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### What is the belief of Russia?

Russia has relied on a **theory of remedial secession**. The theory provides for the unilateral secession of a territory from the parent state in the most extreme cases.

However, the theory was most relevant in the case of decolonisation. It could have been used by Russia in case of severe violations of human rights and systemic oppression. But none of the allegations could be proved.

It first declared provinces in Ukraine, independent and then sent its forces as peacekeepers. The peacekeepers were sent to protect ethnic Russians. Ukraine has moved to the International Court of Justice to counter allegations of the genocide of Russians.

Coming to the independence of breakaway provinces, Ukraine agreed to the [Minsk accord](#) to recognize the independence of Luhansk and Donetsk. But Russia unilaterally declaring them independent is a clear violation of Article 2(4) of the UN Charter.

### Why the Russian actions are not justified?

**Violation of UN Charter:** Russian missile strikes and Russian forces invading Ukraine are a violation of **Article 2(4) of the UN Charter**. **Article 51** recognizes the right of self-defense but Ukraine has not attacked Russia. Further, the right to collective self-defense under article 51 exists only for states, and Donetsk and Luhansk are not states under international law.

**Humanitarian intervention:** Russia has invoked a controversial doctrine of right to protect or **Responsibility to Protect (R2P)**. This principle has often been used to justify use of force by third states in territory of a state which has failed to protect its citizens. Such actions may or may not be authorized by even Security Council. For example the 2011 military intervention in Libya received UN authorization while 1995 NATO bombing of Bosnian Serbs did not. In the present case, there is no evidence that ethnic Russians in Ukraine are facing atrocities.

### Why International Criminal Court is unable to exercise its jurisdiction?

Russian actions can be defined as crime of aggression as stated under Article 8bis (2) of Rome Statute. However, [ICC](#) can not exercise jurisdiction until both the aggressor state and victim are party to the Rome statute.

### What should global community do?

Russia believes in sphere of influence and notion of some countries having limited or partial sovereignty. Russia views Ukraine as possessing limited sovereignty.

This also is a threat to the rule based order created after World War II. Russia has used cultural and civilizational exceptionalism to over ride rule of law. For example, Russian Constitutional Court can invalidate any judgement by Human rights mechanisms.

The global community should come together to check the rise of arbitrary state power and check the imperial rise of power.

### 13. Western Sanctions: Impact & Ways Around Them

**Source:** This post is developed based on the article **“Western Sanctions: Impact & Ways Around Them”** published in **“Times of India”** on **28<sup>th</sup> Feb. 2022**.

**News:** Western countries have put several type of sanctions on Russia against invasion of Ukraine.

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In one of the more severe sanctions, Russia's assets worth \$300 billion have been frozen. These assets are held abroad in the Federal Reserve (US central bank) and the European Central Bank (ECB).

Other sanctions might be excluding Russian banks from the SWIFT network.

### About SWIFT

SWIFT (Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication) is a global messaging system that enables safe transfer of funds and allows banks to communicate with each other in a secure manner.

It has 11,000 international banks as members and is based in Belgium.

### How exclusion from SWIFT will affect Russia?

It will disconnect Russian banks from the international financial system. It will hinder their ability to operate globally, which means **Russia will not be able to pay for its imports or get paid for its exports** through the normal payment routes.

It is very important considering the fact that **overall exports** of Russia amount to nearly 30% of its GDP.

Last time, **Iran was excluded from SWIFT** and it lost almost half of its oil export revenues and 30% of foreign trade.

### How all these developments will impact India?

Even though neither Russia nor Ukraine are major trading partners, there will be macroeconomic repercussions:

- First, due to hinderance in Russia's ability to oil exports, **global crude oil prices** will rise further. It will have consequences for India, considering the high dependency on imports for oil and high retail inflation, which is already at 6%.
- Second, it will negatively affect the \$11. 9 billion **India-Russia bilateral trade**.
- Lastly, **Russia is India's biggest arms supplier**, accounting for more than half of India's total arms imports. De-swifiting will potentially impact defense deals between India and Russia.

### What are the suggestions?

The following are a few ways that can be used to bypass the sanctions:

- Firstly, countries could use their **respective currencies for trading**. A part of India-Russia trade already takes place in Indian rupee and not in US dollars.
- Second, Russia has been developing its **own alternatives to SWIFT**, called SPFS (System for Transfer of Financial Messages). Indian banks could register on this network for carrying out financial transactions.
- Third, **new digital currencies** can be brought into use.

However, India must be cautious in bypassing the sanctions, as it could attract punitive measures from the US and Europe.

#### 14. A pragmatic tightrope walk

**Source:** This post is based on the following articles

“Abstain, But Get Stronger” published in the **Times of India** on **28th February 2022**.

“A pragmatic tightrope walk” published in **Business Standard** on **27th February 2022**.

**News:** India decided to abstain, along with China and the United Arab Emirates, from a UNSC resolution which is for condemning Russia’s invasion of Ukraine.

#### **What does the Indian move in UNSC signify?**

The move has enabled India to maintain its long-standing diplomatic stance on respecting territorial sovereignty without compromising its relations with Russia. India chose a path which is originally defined by Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and further refined in changing geopolitical contexts by his many successors.

Henry Kissinger expressed his disappointment when Nehru decided to remain neutral during the Berlin crisis of 1961. Later, Prime Minister PV Narasimha Rao followed India’s middle path after USSR collapsed. He clarified that the middle way does **not** need two powers. It means there is no place for **absolute assertion**. The Indian government’s latest vote at the UNSC on Ukraine also reflects this perspective.

#### **How does the West react to the Russian attack on Ukraine?**

Sanctions have been imposed on Russia’s largest bank and Russian elites and their families.

Restrictions have been imposed on purchasing US military items, including those produced by foreign nations using US software.

Germany has stopped the certification of the [Nord 2 pipeline between Russia and Germany](#).

#### **What are the things which shape the Indian foreign and strategic policy?**

**Geography:** There are no security concerns for India, keeping in view India’s geography vis-à-vis Eurasian landmass. It is up to Germany, France, and the European Union to define and defend their national security.

**Strategic:** There is a view that challenge from China requires India to keep good relations with NATO powers and sacrifice the relationship with Russia. This view is not correct, as Western support for India is a strategic option that benefits both the West and India. The US-India relationship, like the Russia-India relationship, is and will always be based on mutual benefit and national interest.

#### **What are the suggestions for India?**

India’s national integrity, unity, and sovereignty can only be protected, defended, and preserved by Indians. This is where ‘Atmanirbharata’ comes into action. India requires indigenous scientific, technological, cyber, space, and defense manufacturing capability and capacity. No major nation can defend its sovereignty by depending on another.

Rather than surrendering to external pressure and choosing one side or another in the new East-West conflict, India should focus on renewing its capabilities and building international relationships that strengthen our domestic capacity.



## 15. The anatomy of India's Ukraine dilemma

**Source:** This post is based on the article “**The anatomy of India's Ukraine dilemma**” published in **The Hindu** on **28th February 2022**.

**News:** India abstained from a [United Nations Security Council \(UNSC\)](#) resolution which is for condemning the Russian military action against Ukraine.

### What are the available options in front of India?

India has four options in front of it: 1) Condemn Russian aggression 2) Support Russian aggression 3) Stay silent on Russian aggression 4) Express displeasure and call for diplomacy.

Among these options, the first one will pit India against Russia, the second will pit it against the U.S. and its allies. The third option will mark it as pro-Russia, and the fourth option, which it has taken, is the least harmful.

India has taken a pro-Russian stand in the Russia-Ukraine conflict, despite passionate appeals by the Ukrainian ambassador to India. This tilt is also shared by the Indian strategic community. This is seen as a product of time tested friendship and also a geopolitical necessity

### What are the reasons behind India's pro-Russia position?

**First**, India's tilt towards Russia is based on a calculation that India needs both USA and Russia to counter China. With the weakening of the USA-led global order and the assertive rise of China, it is important for India to have Russia by its side.

**Second**, there is **emerging dualism** in India's security calculus. India needs Russia to manage continental space, which is under threat from China, Pakistan, and Taliban. Maritime space provides an opportunity to break this. And it is here in Indo-Pacific that the USA and its Allies present an opportunity to balance the Chinese threat through QUAD.

### How does the war in Ukraine have major implications for India's strategic interest?

**First**, Russian action in Ukraine neglecting the concerns of the rest of the international community including the U.S. will also encourage China and its territorial ambitions.

**Second**, the new sanctions regime may have implications for India's defence cooperation with Russia

**Third**, the longer the standoff lasts, China and Russia will come closer, which is not good for India.

**Finally**, the more severe the U.S.-Russia rivalry becomes, the less focus there would be on the Indo-Pacific and China, where India's interests lie.

### What does the Indian move in UNSC signify?

India's response to the Ukraine crisis exposes the vulnerability of India, given its hostile neighborhood.

This may diminish India's projection as **major power** or **swing state**.

It also shows that when it comes to geopolitics, India will choose its interests over principles.

The move shows India's adherence to strategic autonomy and safeguarding its own interests.

## 16. With Russia-Ukraine conflict, comes inflation challenge

**Source:** This post is based on the article “With Russia-Ukraine conflict, comes inflation challenge” published in the **Indian Express** on **28th February 2022**.

**News:** With the Russia-Ukraine conflict going into a war, global commodity prices, especially that of crude oil and gas, are likely to see a strong surge. This poses a challenge for India and the world to contain inflationary pressures.

### **How does the Russia Ukraine conflict affect the economy?**

At 6%, [India's consumer price index \(CPI\)](#) inflation crossed the upper limit of RBI's tolerance band in January 2022. The [wholesale price index \(WPI\)](#) is rushing at more than double that rate (12.96%). In the US, inflation is at 7.5 %, which is almost a 40-year-high. Economists also believe that the Federal Reserve will not be able to curb inflation soon.

High inflation imposes a large “**inflation tax**” on the public, with bank savings that earn an interest of less than 1%. India is also affected by this tendency. Most of the major banks, including the State Bank of India, offer interest rates between 3-4% to depositors. With CPI inflation at 6% and WPI inflation at 13%, Indian depositors are losing the real value of their money because of this **hidden “inflation tax”**.

Even, the upper limit of RBI's tolerance band is biased against depositors and is in favour of entrepreneurs. The inflation rate must be below 3 percent, which must ensure positive real rates of interest.

### **How can India ensure lower rates of inflation?**

There is a need to **control food inflation as food has a weight of more than 45%** in CPI in India. India imports roughly 60% of its consumption of edible oils. Global prices of edible oils have gone up by more than 50% over the last year. To control inflation, the **Centre has imposed stock limits** on traders and lowered import duties, and imported more pulses. It also imposed stocking limits on domestic oil/oilseed traders.

The Center can further control food inflation by unloading the excess grain in the open market. FCI could help in bringing down food inflation substantially as rice and wheat have a high weightage in CPI.

**Adopting the growth-oriented policy:** It has been seen that political party promises freebies before elections. They promise loan waivers and free power to farmers, unemployment allowances to the youth, and income support to women, laptops, smartphones, etc. This amounts to misusing taxpayers' money to get into power. There is a need to stop this competitive populism to make the Indian policy-making growth-oriented.

**Reform in grain-management-cum-food-subsidy system:** There is a need to bring reforms in this system. This should be combined with raising productivity and producing more nutritious food while protecting the environment.

## **DEMOCRACY IN 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY**

### **17. The dividends of democracy are worth the requisite investment**

**Source:** This post is based on the article “**The dividends of democracy are worth the requisite investment**” published in the **Livemint** on **3rd Mar 2022**.

**News:** The world is seeing a continued rise of authoritarianism in countries such as Brazil, Turkey, and Russia. There is a need for urgent global action to fight it and to put democracy in action.

#### **What does the research data suggest?**

There is a growing aspiration for democracy among ordinary people seeking greater freedom and dignity. **Pew Research survey of 17 advanced economies in 2021** shows disaffection of people with the lack of individual freedom in authoritarian states. According to the survey, a median of 74% of people in these countries had no confidence in Putin doing the “right thing in world affairs.”

#### **How is democracy important?**

Democracy is a key ingredient for economic advancement, as creating space for decent democracy nurtures innovation and consequently economic flourishing. Except for China, economic progress stalls in countries that are guided by religious fundamentalism or authoritarianism.

While many justify democracy as a means, **democracy is an end in itself**. Even if democracy slows economic growth, it brings equality which is vital for an equitable society.

India is the best example of how democracy can bring growth. Despite many economic mistakes, India’s investment in its education is bearing fruits today. Pickup of India’s democratic growth after the 90s is also an account of democratic dividend.

#### **What is the USA’s role in strengthening democracy?**

A recent study by the **Roosevelt Institute** points out how America’s neoliberal economic policies fuelled discrimination and inequity in many countries. Moreover, it intervened in countries like Chile, Cuba, and Central America to protect US corporate interests and not to support democracy.

Providing leadership to isolate authoritarian regimes requires the USA to take leadership.

### **18. Democracy ought to get the better of autocracy**

**Source:** This post is based on the article “**Democracy ought to get the better of autocracy**” published in the **Live mint** on **28th Feb 2022**.

**News:** Although the USA has imposed a lot of sanctions, it seems it does not affect the motives of Russia.

#### **Do countries fear sanctions?**

Sanctions have been unable to enforce a regime change as has been exemplified in the case of Iran. So while the USA has implemented half-hearted sanctions, it is unlikely to force Russia to change its plan. Russia’s access to SWIFT and hydrocarbons was left intact in fear of global disruption.

### Do autocracies work?

In a protracted battle, the Russian state is likely to sustain leadership because though there are elections, the opposition has been crushed by the Russian ruling regime. This is further exemplified by the rule in Iran and China. The example of China shows that autocracies may even be able to bend global rules. Chinese economic model uses economic feedback for a self-correction like democracies use elections.

However, the most pressing issue with an autocracy is its **structurally low sensitivity** to actual needs. It is governed by a **command economy**, not aware of the market and consumer needs. It also covers criticism and runs propaganda in the guise of information. This is why autocracies like the Soviet Union crumbled. Thus, democracy can be seen as the best bet.

GS2 – GOVERNANCE – ISSUES RELATED TO DEV & MGMT OF EDUCATION

### HIGHER EDUCATION AND RELATED ISSUES

#### 19. The systemic problems that have kept Indian schooling ineffective

**Source:** This post is based on the article “**The systemic problems that have kept Indian schooling ineffective**” published in the **Livemint** on **3rd Mar 2022**.

**News:** The article talks about the causes behind why children are not able to learn what they should at their school.

#### What are the causes?

**Design of schooling system:** The design like having a primary school within 1km has creates difficulties. Every primary school only has a small number of children between classes 1 to 5. Thus there is only one teacher or two. This has meant a greater teaching load for children.

**Inadequate investment in public education:** It results in inadequate or poor-quality resources. With roughly 3% of GDP as our public expenditure on education, India has been short of its commitment of 6%. This underlies many of the problems like **a)** an inadequate number of teachers, **b)** Inadequate staffing, **c)** lack of basic facilities in schools, **d)** deteriorating nutritional standards of the mid-day meal.

All of this affects the motivation and efficacy of teachers and the school atmosphere and children’s engagement.

**Dysfunctional teacher education system:** The National Education Policy 2020 talks about the issue of corrupt teacher education systems in India. 9 million teachers have undergone a B.Ed or D.Ed program of very poor quality. Many colleges sell degrees, without students even attending classes.

**Design and culture of the education system:** Indian education system is rigid and centralized. Many problems impact the education quality like **a)** uniform norms across the state, **b)** cookie-cutter training (*training which lacks any distinguishable characteristics*) for teachers irrespective of their actual needs, **c)** an ‘inspectorial’ regime rather than a problem-solving one.

All these make the teacher unsupported, demotivated, and disempowered.

**Administrative leadership and management:** Administration often assigned teachers to other duties like election duty, anti-malaria campaigns, etc. Their priorities are continually and rapidly changed, thus disorienting and distracting them from their main role. Further, policies related to education are typically not implemented effectively.



**Weak capacity of key institutions:** [Flaws in Indian higher education system](#)

## **MEDICAL EDUCATION IN INDIA**

### **20. Bitter pill, again**

**Source:** This post is based on the article “**Bitter pill, again**” published in **Times of India** on **5th Mar 2022**.

**News:** As the situation in Ukraine has worsened, some 20,000-odd students who had gone to Ukraine for medical education have returned back.

However, one big question is how they’ll continue their interrupted education, especially if the Ukraine crisis doesn’t ease in the near term.

#### **What leads to students opting for foreign education esp. medical education?**

The foreign degree options are extremely affordable.

There is a huge demand-supply problem in India that is some 16 lakh students take NEET for only 90,000-odd seats.

#### **What is the way forward?**

India needs to expand its medical education, which will immensely benefit its students and health care system.

Although the common licensing exam for all MBBS graduates that’s scheduled to start in 2023 is a positive step, but there is **need for newer medical colleges** with quality faculty, hospital linkages and other high-grade resources.

### **21. No quick fix: On the state of medical education in India**

**Source:** This post is based on the article “**No quick fix: On the state of medical education in India**” published in **The Hindu** on **28<sup>th</sup> Feb 2022**.

**News:** Many Indian students are pursuing medicine in Ukraine. The war in Ukraine highlighted the need to strengthen medical education in India.

#### **About PM’s remark on Indian medical education**

The Prime Minister, on Union Budget announcements on the health sector, stated that many young Indians were going to “small countries of the world for medical education.” He also urged the government **a)** To encourage the private sector, **b)** To set up more medical colleges and hospitals locally, along with cooperation from States, so that such aspirants remain in India.

#### **About medical education and Indian students abroad**

The most sought-after international destinations – for medical education are the U.S., the U.K. and a few West European countries. But these countries are too expensive for most Indians.

In the last few decades, Russia, China and Ukraine with their historical commitment to public health care have been able to offer more affordable, yet quality, medical education.

#### **What is the challenge faced in medical education in India?**

**1)** India’s huge population still continues to be predominantly rural, so make most of the trained medical doctors, paramedics and nurses gravitate towards cities, **2) Nature of medical**

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**education:** Medical education requires significant infrastructure — land, equipment, and trained faculty at the postgraduate level — all of which are in short supply and unevenly spread across India, **3) Low spending on health:** For several years, India's spending on health care has consistently lagged behind several countries comparable to its size. For this reason, there is barely one doctor for every 1,000 Indians and specialists often a tenth of what is required.

For these reasons, there is an increase in young Indians seeking affordable, quality, health-care education in other countries. Without correcting these deficiencies, India cannot expect to dramatically increase the availability of medical personnel.

### What should be done to revive medical education?

Encouraging private establishments to start medical schools might repeat the engineering fiasco. I.e., a plethora of colleges without adequately trained faculty or infrastructure that churn out students who need further skills upgrade to be employable.

The Government must **1)** Make health care the centrepiece of its economic rebuilding, **2)** Provide long-term commitment offering necessary training and post-graduate education, **3)** Ease procedures for establishing medical colleges, **4)** Spend more on infrastructure, and **5)** Provide incentives for a health-care ecosystem to develop in rural areas.

Over time, this will facilitate the growth of private and public medical colleges that could stem the outflow of students aspiring to be doctors.

GS2 – POLITY – ELECTORAL ISSUES

### OPINION POLLS AND RELATED ISSUES

#### 22. What to make of Indian opinion polls and our pollsters

**Source–** This post is based on the article “What to make of Indian opinion polls and our pollsters” published in **The Hindu** on **26<sup>th</sup> Feb 2022**.

**News:** State assembly elections for several states have been completed recently. Now, attention **has been shifted to the exit polls** conducted by different pollsters. However, exit polls over the years have also attracted some negative reactions for their wrong predictions.

#### Why are opinion polls and their prediction viewed with apprehension?

This is due to the **opacity around the methodology they use**. No pollster other than Lokniti-CSDS provides details of its methodology. For example -How they conduct their surveys, what the margin of errors for vote-shares are, and the assumptions made while converting vote-share estimates into seat predictions all remain hidden.

The **lack of disclosure around their funding** only serves to heighten those suspicions.

#### What is the situation globally?

Opinion polls can go wrong even in countries with a long tradition of polling like UK and USA but their wrong forecasts are seen as errors. While in India, a wrong forecast by a pollster is seen as evidence of fraud or a scam.

**This is** because these countries have greater transparency and self-regulatory institutions that lend greater credibility to their pollsters.

#### Despite these shortcomings why are they still useful?

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Exit polls are a **statistical estimate** so are subject to uncertainty.

Their **findings carry more weight than** newsroom or drawing-room **speculation**.

Also, since the 1980s, **exit polls have had a better record than pre-poll surveys** in India, and they have been largely correct in predicting election winners.

GS2 – POLITY – JUDICIARY

### **DEATH PENALTY AND RELATED ISSUES**

#### **23. A negation of the individual and a collective moral decay**

**Source:** This **post** is based on the article “**A negation of the individual and a collective moral decay**” published in **The Hindu** on **3rd Mar 2022**.

**News:** Recently, a designated fast track in Gujarat decided the fate of 78 accused in the 2008 blasts in Ahmedabad. 49 people were convicted. The Court Sentenced 38 of 49 people to death.

According to a report by Project 39A at the national law university (Delhi), a total of 488 prisoners in India were on death row. This is an increase of 21% from 2020. This judgment has added 10% more to this number.

It is a reflection of the increasing trend of **retributive justice**.

#### **How does it reflect retributive justice?**

Debates on the death sentence focus on its **efficacy or constitutionality**. But the issue that it provides the state with the monopoly of violence or retribution is ignored.

This monopoly is justified by arguments that this prevents crime or is a measure of long-due justice. But this punishment under the rarest of rare doctrine is a reflection of retributive justice.

Rarest of rare doctrine allows the use of public sentiment as a judicially reliable standard in giving death sentences.

As Justice Bhagwati had pointed out in **Bachchan Singh versus State of Punjab(1980)** that discretion under doctrine is a poor substitute for principles. When an institution can kill someone using any standard, it defeats the moral imperative to do no harm.

#### **How lack of standards was displayed in the current verdict?**

Following are the criticisms put forward by the authors in the article:

First, the court orally convicted several accused ‘en masse’, instead of declaring charges separately. Out of 78 accused, 49 were convicted, consequently, the role of each accused was not indicated.

Second, the defense was directed to commence sentencing argument without access to written judgments. Even it was unknown, which accused are awarded the death sentence. It crippled any possibility of making a proper mitigation argument.

Mitigation requires going into the humanity of the accused, which itself is subjective. It is therefore important that that penalty should be also seen from the angle of retributive Justice.

### **ANTIMICROBIAL RESISTANCE AND RELATED ISSUES**

#### **24. The growing scourge of anti-microbial resistance needs urgent attention**

**Source:** This post is created based on the article “The growing scourge of anti-microbial resistance needs urgent attention” published in Indian Express on 3<sup>rd</sup> March.

In the past few years, alarmingly high resistance rates in pathogens of public health importance have been reported from Indian hospitals. Thus, it becomes important that the issue of AMR be given due importance.

#### **Findings of GRAM(Global burden of bacterial antimicrobial resistance in 204 countries and territories in 2019) report**

1. 95 million people died from drug-resistant bacterial infections in 2019. AMR directly caused at least 1.27 million deaths.
2. Majority of the deaths from AMR are associated with bacteria E coli, followed by K pneumoniae, S aureus, A baumannii, S pneumoniae, and M tuberculosis.
3. Lower respiratory infections associated with resistance accounted for more than 1.5 million deaths.
4. Data specifically for India was not sufficiently available, but as per few available reports AMR burden in India may not look very different from the global estimate.

#### **What are the reasons behind increasing AMR?**

**Firstly**, unnecessary prescription of antimicrobials is increasing the already high levels of drug resistance.

**Secondly**, the major impediment to AMR containment is that the most affected countries have the least data on the burden posed by AMR. In India too, hospital information systems in most public sector funded healthcare facilities are inadequate.

**Third**, National Action Plan for AMR was approved in 2017. However, its results proved to be dismal. It faced many issues such as missing governance mechanisms and absence of funding

#### **What are the suggestions to tackle the AMR problem?**

A multipronged and multisectoral approach is required to tackle AMR.

**Firstly**, promoting the judicious use of existing antimicrobials.

**Secondly**, Developing new antimicrobial drugs.

**Third**, creating effective AMR containment plans by fixing responsibility and monitoring progress at the highest levels.

**Fourth**, some of the measures that have been proved effective must be used as much as possible, for example;

- Utilization of quality diagnostics and laboratories.
- Educating people about antimicrobials.
- Infection control in communities and hospitals.

## **RESERVATION IN INDIA**

### **25. Counting those who qualify as EWS**

**Source:** This post is based on the article “**Counting those who qualify as EWS**” published in **Indian express** on 4th Mar 2022.

**News:** Supreme Court has sought clarification from the Government regarding the basis for the income cut-off for Economically Weaker Sections (EWS).

Government in 2019 issued a circular, which guaranteed 10 per cent reservations in civil posts and services of the GoI to the Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) of the society. These sections were not covered under the reservation scheme for Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs), and Other Backward Classes (OBC).

#### **What are the criteria used by the Government to identify EWS candidates?**

GoI used two criteria for the definition of the EWS:

- **One**, the gross family income from all sources — agriculture, business, professional, etc. — for the financial year preceding the application should be less than Rs 8 lakh;
- **Two**, if the family owned or possessed assets of a certain limit.

The family includes those who seek the benefit, their spouse, parents, siblings, and children below 18 years.

#### **What does the PLFS data suggest about the household earnings in the country?**

PLFS provides a good estimate on the issue as its geographical coverage is the entire country, except for villages in Andaman and Nicobar Islands, and it covers all sectors of the economy.

Based on data on non-SC/ST/OBC, it was found that 99% of rural households and 95% of urban households had **monthly earnings less than Rs 66,667**, which would translate to approximately Rs 8 lakh annually.

But PLFS data is based on the current weekly status; there is a possibility that the household had positive income at other times of the year but not the week preceding the survey. Therefore, the earnings data is an underestimate.

More than 90% of rural and urban non-SC/ST/OBC households had **monthly earnings less than the cutoff** set by the GoI for EWS income criteria.

So in this scenario, analysis reveals that more than 90% of rural and urban non-SC/ST/OBC households will meet the EWS criteria.



## **RULES-BASED ORDER**

### **26. The 'global rules-based order' is an idealistic myth**

**Source:** This post is based on the article “**The 'global rules-based order' is an idealistic myth**” published in the **Indian Express** on **3rd March 2022**.

**News:** Unexpected Russian military intervention in Ukraine is the latest example of an underlying cause of decay in the **international 'rules-based' order**.

#### **Where did the idea of an 'international rules-based order' originate?**

Diet of Westphalia (then Holy Roman Empire) in 1648 established the principle of 'sovereignty'. For a long time, it has been the founding principle behind the UN Charter. It established wars of aggression illegal under international law and liable to be punished by the international community via the UN Security Council.

#### **To what extent does a rules-based order really exist?**

There is a lot of debate on this amongst IR scholars. **Whether or not we actually live in an international society of states**, where a community that feels like one accepts a set of common guiding principles and is willing to operate according to rules/norms of behavior.

Another is **whether international society is still merely a system of states**, In which individual actors, adhere to global 'rules' to the extent convenient to them or bend and break those rules when core national interests are involved.

In the second interpretation, states are engaged in rational-utilitarian cooperation, competition, and even conflict, depending on the particularity of each situation.

#### **Why a rule-based order is merely a convenient illusion?**

In the absence of effective enforcement of rules, the notion of rules is an empty idea. Because it hardly has any compelling power to affect the actual foreign policy choices made by states. As we can see in the case of five permanent members. They make use of veto whenever there is the possibility of global action against themselves.

UN Security Council intervention in an international crisis has only been possible in the rarest of rare exceptions when all five permanent members happened to agree. As we can see, Russia and China veto American, French, and British resolutions and vice-versa.

#### **Does rule-based order really exist?**

Russian intervention in Ukraine is an example of the erosion of the belief that [HYPERLINK "https://blog.forumias.com/rules-based-order-rbo/"](https://blog.forumias.com/rules-based-order-rbo/) [rule-based order](#) exists. All the great powers, including during and after the Cold War, consists of largely self-interested countries, driven by a desire for national security and glorification.

#### **What is the source of stability in the international system?**

It is the **nuclear weapons** that are capable of destroying human civilization. The notion of 'mutually assured destruction' created a tension that prevent warfare even between two nuclear-armed rivals.

## **DRAFT INDIA DATA ACCESSIBILITY & USE POLICY**

### **27. Why draft data accessibility policy is dangerous**

**Source:** This post is created based on the article “US not ready for a solo space ride” published in Indian Express on 5th March 2022.

**News:** Government has released Draft India Data Accessibility & Use Policy 2022.

The policy would **govern, “all data and information created/generated/collected/archived by the Government of India”**. State Governments will also be free to adopt the provisions of the policy.

### **What are the concerns associated with the policy?**

- 1. Privacy related aspects:** With the digitization of every aspect of life, the intensity of data collection has increased manifolds. For example:
  - a. Linking of Aadhaar with bank accounts and mobile connections.
  - b. [Agristack](#) in agriculture
  - c. [e-SHRAM portal](#) for unorganized laborers
  - d. [Aarogya Setu](#) and ABHA (Ayushman Bharat Digital Health Mission) for health sector
  - e. NDEAR (National Digital Education Architecture) for school children and teachers

This Public data is now viewed as a prized asset of the Union government that it can freely share with the private sector for profit. All this may lead to mandatory collection of even most personal data and that too for a longer period of time.

Even past experiences in data sharing are not encouraging. For example, the transport ministry had to scrap the bulk data sharing policy, 2019 citing potential misuse of personal information and privacy issues.

- 2. Making data open by default:** Draft policy has used phrase “open data”, without mentioning its objectives. As per World Bank benefits of open data is that it supports “public oversight of governments and helps reduce corruption by enabling greater transparency”. These principles were recognized in the National Data Sharing and Accessibility Policy, 2012.

Out of the 13 listed objectives, only one is relevant to transparency and the majority are linked to commercialization.

- 3. Detached from the constitutional framework:** Draft policy does not contain any proposals for the creation of a legal framework that governs data sharing. It makes it a part of a larger trend of **policy-based administration detached from our constitutional framework**.

As per the Supreme Court’s Puttaswamy judgment on the fundamental right to privacy, the first ingredient to satisfy constitutionality is the existence of a legal, more often a legislative, basis. Without a law, there is absence of defined limits to data sharing that are enforceable and contain remedies.

- 4. Unsatisfactory anonymization tool:** Policy is trying to ensure privacy preservation through anonymisation tools. However, as per Luc Rocher and co-authors at the Oxford Internet Institute even heavily sampled anonymised datasets are unlikely to satisfy the modern standards for anonymisation set forth by GDPR.

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### Few suggestions that can be implemented

Independent regulatory body, to monitor and impose penalties, should be constituted.

The draft should go through thorough Parliamentary scrutiny, because public money would be spent to enrich datasets of public data. It will help bring accountability.

GS2 – SOCIAL ISSUES – ISSUES RELATED TO CHILDREN

GS3 – INDIAN ECONOMY – COVID AND ITS IMPACT

### IMPACT ON HEALTH

#### **28. Care informed by data: On children orphaned by the pandemic**

**Source:** This post is created based on the article published in The Hindu on 4<sup>th</sup> March 2022.

**News:** Some reports have suggested a high increase in COVID-19-associated orphanhood.

Lancet estimates of COVID-19-associated orphanhood put the number at over 19 lakh children orphaned. Globally it estimated 52 lakh children had been rendered orphans by the pandemic. However, Lancet report has been refuted by Indian government.

National Commission for Protection of Child Rights data put the number of children orphaned during COVID-19 in India far lower, at 1.53 lakh.

Orphanhood has been defined in the report as the death of one or both parents; or the death of one or both custodial grandparents. It is time for the government to take some effective measures to deal with the menace of orphanhood.

#### **What are the measures that the government should take?**

Orphaned children are vulnerable to poverty, violence, destitution, and lack of access to education and health care. Thus, **Government should include childcare into any COVID-19 management program.**

Many programs have been launched by the government for children forced into orphanhood by COVID-19. Programs include provisions for adoption, foster care, education, and health care. **It is time to update the status of such programs**, and information on the number of cases where intervention has occurred, and where it is pending, must be put out in the public realm.



# General

# Studies

# Paper - 3

General Studies - 3

GS3 – ENVIRONMENT – ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION

**WASTE MANAGEMENT**

**1. Waste Pickers need policy report**

**Source:** This post is based on the article “**Waste Pickers need policy report**” published in **Indian express** on **5th March 2022**.

**News:** India is home to more than 4 million waste pickers, who are the backbone of traditional waste management in most Indian cities.

Yet, they are one of the most marginalised groups of Indian society and are at the very bottom of the socio-economic chain. The fact that they have feeble access to the government social safety net makes them highly vulnerable to emergencies and disasters.

**What are the challenges that waste pickers face?**

Their multiple vulnerabilities include **low and uncertain incomes, limited access to government schemes, high health risks, and severe social exclusion**. These get compounded in the presence of emergencies like the **COVID-19 Pandemic**.

Apart from this, nearly 70% come from **socially backward groups** and over 60% have **no formal education**.

Majority of them have **no health insurance**, indicating very high degrees of health-shock vulnerabilities.

**Why are they mostly left out of government’s social safety net?**

They usually lack any income, caste, or occupation certificate. This thwarts any attempts at formalising their work and limits their access to government social security schemes.

**What is the way forward?**

**Short term measures**

- Urban local bodies should **register these workers** and provide them with ID cards that recognise them as municipal workers with a clear role. They should be paid a **minimum wage** and should be given an authorised access to waste.
- If **Waste pickers’ cooperatives are given more strength**, they can collectively bargain for higher prices for what they collect.

**Long term measures:** There is a need for a **comprehensive welfare framework** to design social protection schemes explicitly for Waste pickers.

- There is a need to **proactively reach out to the workers** for enrolment in government schemes and for a **greater awareness** among them about their entitlements.
- There is a need to **create better, safer, decent jobs in the economy** that informal workers like can eventually move to, supported by efforts to enhance their skills.
- Finally, alternatives like **technology-led circular economy** models that eliminate the need for any person to do this hazardous work manually need to be explored.

## **PLASTIC POLLUTION AND RELATED ISSUES**

### **2. Tackling the plastic problem**

**Source:** This post is developed based on the article “**Tackling the plastic problem**” published in “**The Hindu**” on **28<sup>th</sup> Feb 2022**.

**News:** A United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) report stated last year that emissions of plastic waste into the aquatic ecosystems may triple by 2040 in the absence of actions.

#### **What are the causes behind increasing plastic waste?**

**Increasing global consumption** and low participation in recycling programmes.

**Consumption externality:** It is more challenging to address challenging to address compared to production externality. Because imposing cost of the harm by plastics on all consumers may not yield efficient solutions due to their large number.

**Banning plastic bags** can result in a sustainable environment, intergenerational equity, saving marine and wildlife ecosystems, and restoring soil quality. However, it also causes inconvenience for consumers, increases substitution costs, and creates unemployment shocks as it affects the production of plastics.

**Taxation:** It is difficult to bring global consensus on a uniform tax to be imposed. Because, it may depend on country-specific circumstances.

#### **What policy measures can be adopted against plastics?**

Removal of existing taxes and subsidies that have a negative environmental impact.

Taking into account the different types or grades of plastics for taxation.

Restructuring existing taxes in an environmentally friendly manner. It can be done in the following ways:

- various stages of production, consumption or disposal of plastics should be taxed. Because pollution starts happening from the production stage.
- Meters can be installed for recording the emission or the effluent discharged for taxation purposes.
- Eco-tax should be equal to Marginal social cost arising from the negative externality at various stages.

Promoting multiple use of plastics through better waste management

Educating the public on the harmful use of plastics

Providing subsidies for research and development activity for substitute development,

Appropriate disposal mechanisms and waste management and use of waste for constructive usage like roads

GS3 – INDIAN ECONOMY – INDUSTRIAL POLICY AND GROWTH

GS3 – AGRICULTURE – MAJOR CROPS: CROPPING PATTERNS

### **FERTILIZER SECTOR IN INDIA**

#### **3. Liberalise, do not bureaucratise**

**Source:** This post is developed based on the article “**Liberalise, do not bureaucratise**” published in “**Business Standard**” on **28<sup>th</sup> Feb 2022**.

**News:** The draft Integrated Plant Nutrition Management Bill, 2022 has been put for the public comments.

[About the Draft Integrated Plant Nutrition Management Bill, 2022](#)

The bill has been criticised from various angles by various stakeholders in the fertilizer sector.

#### **What are the criticisms against the bill?**

**Use of fertilisers:** The bill aims to balance the use of different types of fertilizers in the light of over-use of urea. This imbalance can be corrected by rationalizing subsidies and not by enacting a new law.

**Governance structure:** At present, fertiliser sector is governed by two mechanism: **1)** Fertiliser Movement Order (FMO), promulgated and enforced by the fertiliser ministry. It controls the production of fertilisers. **2)** Fertiliser Control Order (FCO), issued and administered by the agriculture ministry. It controls the allocation of fertilisers to different states.

The inclusion of these provisions in the planned single statute may confuse the different stakeholders.

**Inspector Raj:** Bill may bring back the Inspector Raj of prior to economic liberalisation in 1991. It provides for fertiliser inspector with sweeping powers like entering, searching and confiscation of stocks in any premise in fertiliser sector for violation of bill’s provisions.

**Complicated pricing system:** Bill empowers central government to fix the maximum price at which fertilisers would be sold to the farmers. However, prices would differ for different consumers or classes of consumers in accordance with the local situation and period of storage of fertilisers. It will complicate the process of fertiliser pricing.

**Over-regulation:** It will also bring desi soil fertility-enhancers and crop yield-boosters, such as “Pachgavya Krishi” and “Amritpani” under price control and controls of other kinds. It means these products will be subject to bureaucratic controls and inspectorial scrutiny.

GS3 – SCIENCE AND TECH – INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

### **DEFENCE TECH IN INDIA AND RELATED ISSUES**

#### **4. An atmanirbhar flight plan for fighter jets**

**Source:** This post is based on the article “**An atmanirbhar flight plan for fighter jets**” published in the **Business Standard** on **4<sup>th</sup> March 2022**.

**News:** India designed, developed, and manufactured many combat aircraft like 147 HF-24 Marut fighters in the 1960s and 40 Tejas light combat aircraft (LCA). Many of our institutes like DRDO, Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd, and IT engineering companies, have built expertise in aeronautical design, flight dynamics, and other skills needed for building modern combat aircraft.

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Yet, it struggles to design engines for one of these otherwise indigenous aircraft. Almost every aeronautical engine flying in India has been purchased from abroad.

### What are the reasons behind that?

**Reverse engineering:** All world's engine vendors America's Pratt, Europe's Rolls-Royce, and Russia's Klimov sell aero engines to India, without any hesitation. That is because Reverse-engineering an aero engine is exceedingly difficult. The critical technologies in this field relate to materials (high-temperature composites and alloys) and precision engineering, which are nearly impossible to copy. Even China has not succeeded in reverse engineering a high-performance aero engine.

### Why India is not successful in making its own engine?

**Limited Resources:** DRDO's aero engine laboratory Gas Turbine Research Establishment (GTRE) has made little progress in developing the Kaveri engine for the Tejas LCA. The Tejas needs an engine with 82-90 kiloNewtons (kN) of peak thrust, but the Kaveri has managed 72 kN during flight testing in Russia. The reason for such a thrust deficit is **limited resources along with technological incompetence**. Kaveri engine programme had been allocated just Rs 2,839 crore for R&D, including setting up engineering and test facilities, which is not sufficient.

**Not enough attention:** Ministry of defence is estimated to buy foreign military aero engines worth Rs 3.5 trillion over the next two decades. Yet, **governments have not paid attention to developing aero engines, which account for one-third the cost of a new military aircraft**. With government focus on "atmanirbhar Bharat" and 68% of the defence capital budget being earmarked for domestic purchases, meeting that indigenisation target would require many more engines to be domestically designed, developed, and manufactured.

### What should India do?

First, India requires **sophisticated testing facilities**. During the testing of Kaveri, India took the help of Russia and undergone through various performance checks. Creating such flight-testing facilities in India would save hundreds of crores and valuable time.

Second, MoD should shift without delay to **indigenous aero-engine programmes** for combat aircraft. For this DRDO can partner with French engine-maker Safran in developing an engine for the Advanced Medium Combat Aircraft (AMCA). Although Safran is currently reluctant to transfer engine technology to India, but if it did, this would be a huge gesture of Indo-French solidarity.

Third, the government should also **urge the USA to ease restrictions** on the release of advanced engine technologies so that India faces fewer restrictions in getting the General Electric (GE) F-414 engine to power the Tejas Mark 2. India is already importing the less powerful GE F-404 engine for the Tejas Mark 1, but the Mark 2 is a heavier and bulkier aircraft and would require the F-414 to power it.

## 5. Is DRDO To Blame for India's Acute Import Dependence?

**Source:** This post is created based on the article "Is DRDO To Blame for India's Acute Import Dependence?" published in **Times of India** on **3rd March**.

**Syllabus:** GS Paper 3- Science and tech – Defence technologies

**News:** After the Ukraine conflict, DRDO has been blamed for India's heavy dependence on other countries like Russia for their defence needs. However, there are many issues that are constraining the capabilities of DRDO.

### What are the issues facing Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)?



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**First, DRDO is a demand-driven organization.** It means the efficiency and success of DRDO's projects depend upon the user's requirements. For example, Arjun Main Battle Tank (MBT) was built as per the requirements of the Indian Army based on a Western tank. It achieved performance in terms of protection, mobility, and firepower comparable with any leading MBT in the world in its class. However, later it was found that tank has become heavier for transportation over the bridges near the border.

**Second,** Some experts also try to **compare DRDO with US Defence Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA).** However, DARPA is a user independent organisation, means it is independent of US armed force's requirements. It is like venture capital with an element of risk of failures.

Whereas, DRDO's projects are user defined and it is only one link in the entire chain of defence development and production.

**Third, some technologies are difficult to develop and reverse engineered.** They require continuous investment over years without expectation of immediate return. This is not the case with DRDO. For example, Kaveri aero engine project was abandoned, even though it achieved some successes.

**Fourth, DRDO has decentralised and it is embracing the private sector** as a partner. Thus, it should not be held responsible for technical failures. It is working on the same lines as DARPA, like funding the private sector projects, under Technology Development Fund Scheme. Another, VDEX program is a defense ministry program, with a corpus of Rs 500 crore administered for developing techs for armed forces.

### **CYBERSECURITY AND RELATED ISSUES**

#### **6. Reporting Cyberattacks**

**Source-** This post is based on the article "**Reporting Cyberattacks**" published in **The Hindu** on **26<sup>th</sup> Feb 2022.**

**News: Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology** is likely to come up with new cyber security regulations. These regulations are likely to put the onus organisations to report any cybercrime that may have happened against them, including data leaks.

Such provision is part of the Data Protection Bill 2021 and European Union General Data Protection Regulation (EU GDPR) also.

#### **What are the advantages of Incidence reporting?**

If incidences are reported, organisations can be alerted about the associated security vulnerabilities.

Firms not yet affected can also take **precautionary measures** such as deploying **security patches** and improving their **cyber security infrastructure.**

However, it has been seen that firms are reluctant to notify the breach incidents to the regulators.

#### **Why are firms reluctant to report such incidents?**

**Reputation of firms-**This is because any security or privacy breach has a negative impact on the reputation of the associated firms.

**Market performance-**In the long term, it is seen that breached companies underperformed in the market. After one year, share price of breached firms fell 8.6% on average, resulting in a poor performance in the stock market.

### How can the government overcome this issue of non-compliance?

**Ensuring the implementation of the regulation**– It can be done through periodic cyber security audits which can identify incidents that might not have been reported by the firm.

However, the regulators in most countries including India do not have such capacity to conduct security audits frequently and completely. So, to overcome this issue government can empanel **third party cyber security auditors** for the conduct of periodical cyber security impact assessments for government departments. Private firms can also be mandated to publish periodic security audit reports.

Government has set up **Common Criteria Testing Laboratories and certification bodies** to certify IT security products and protection profiles. The same scheme can be **extended towards cyber security audits and assessments**.

IBM has set up a large cyber security command centre in Bengaluru, other large firms can also be encouraged to set up such centres for protection of their firms' assets.

### What is the cyber security situation world-wide?

Worldwide private firms, government services, especially critical utilities, are prone to cyber-attacks and breach incidents. The **ransomware attack** against the **nationwide gas pipeline in 2021 in the U.S.** virtually brought down the transportation of about 45% of all petrol and diesel consumed on the east coast.

GS3 – SCIENCE AND TECH – DEVELOPMENTS AND THEIR APPLICATIONS AND EFFECT

## NUCLEAR WEAPONS AND NUCLEAR POLICY OF INDIA

### 7. GoI Will Have To Keep Buddha Smiling

**Source:** This post is created based on the article “GoI Will Have To Keep Buddha Smiling” published in Times of India on 5<sup>th</sup> March 2022.

**Syllabus:** GS- 2 – International Relations – India's Nuclear policy

**News:** Russian invasion of Ukraine has reignited the debate of the significance of robust nuclear deterrence.

Since the Russian invasion the question is being raised – would Russia have invaded Ukraine, if the latter had not given up its nuclear stockpile. It is notable, that Ukraine had given up its nuclear stockpile along with Belarus and Kazakhstan, after the Budapest Memorandum on Security Assurances in 1994.

### Why India requires nuclear deterrence capabilities?

**First, India is facing a 2-front challenge** from China and Pakistan. Both these countries have more nuclear warheads than India. China has more than double the number India has.

**Second,** As per a Pentagon report, **China's nuclear warheads can go up to 700** in the next six years and top 1,000 by 2030.

**Third,** US focus on Europe may embolden **China to step up the pressure on India's northern borders**. India might not receive help from other countries.

**Fourth, Pakistan does not have a “no first-use’ (NFU) policy**. It often indulges in the display of nuclear threats.

### How India should strengthen credibility of the nuclear deterrence?

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India has taken many steps in strengthening its nuclear deterrence capabilities, like creation of the tri-service Strategic Forces Command (SFC) and the PM-led Nuclear Command Authority in 2003. However, much more is required to be done:

**Nuclear-powered submarines** that are armed with nuclear-tipped ballistic missiles are called SSBN. At present, **India has just one SSBN, INS Arihant, which can be armed only with the 750-km range K-15 nuclear missiles.**

Whereas, US, Russia and China have much larger SSBNs, which are armed with 5,000-kmplus range missiles.

### **What are the steps taken by India?**

Work is continuously ongoing to strengthen nuclear triad (Water, Air, Land) in India:

#### **Water based capabilities**

- INS Arighat is expected to be commissioned this year.
- Construction of two 7,000-tonne SSBNs is also ongoing.

#### **Air based capabilities**

- Some Sukhoi-30MKI, Mirage-2000 and Jaguar fighter jets have been modified to enable them to deliver nuclear gravity bombs.
- Induction of the nuclear-capable Rafale fighters.

#### **Land based capabilities**

- country's first intercontinental ballistic missile Agni-V, with a strike range of over 5,000-km, has been inducted.
- Prithvi-II (350-km), Agni-I (700-km), Agni-II (2,000-km) and Agni-III (3,000-km) missiles, have already been introduced.

## **XENOTRANSPLANTATION**

### **8. Find space for new science, its ethical dilemmas**

**Source:** This post is created based on the article **"Find space for new science, its ethical dilemmas"** published in **The Hindu** on **4<sup>th</sup> March 2022**.

**News:** Several advances have been made in the field of 'Xenotransplantation'.

Xenotransplantation involves the transplantation of nonhuman tissues or organs into human recipients.

#### **What are the developments made in the field of Xenotransplantation?**

In September 2021, at the NYU Langone hospital in New York, the medical team attached a kidney from a gene-edited animal to a person declared brain dead. It was to check if the animal kidney was able to do the job of processing waste and producing urine. The experiment was successful.

On January 14, 2022, in University of Maryland, doctors used a genetically modified heart, as a replacement heart for a patient who had run out of available options.

In a latest example, a doctor in Germany has been working in the area of xenotransplants. He is planning to develop a farm to cultivate genetically-modified organs for such transplants.

All the above developments have one source i.e., tissue or organs or Pigs. It is regarded by medical science as an animal whose organs are currently best suited for humans.



### **Need of Xenotransplantation**

**In the United States** there are around 90,000 persons waiting for a kidney transplant. Success in Xenotransplantation will fulfill this requirement.

**In Germany** alone there are 8,500 patients waiting for organ transplants.

Wide adoption of xenotransplant procedures will diminish the **illegal and immoral trade** in human organs.

### **What are the ethical issues associated with Xenotransplantation?**

The animal rights movement is against xenotransplantation, because it ignores the **rights of animals**. According to them, animals also have rights and it is our moral responsibility to support these rights. Thus, they are against animal farms with genetically modified animals.

Second, the **philosophy of anthropocentrism** places human beings at the center of nature. It regards all other living creatures as having value only if they can be of use to humans. Mahatama Gandhi was also opposed to such thinking.

Third, Xenotransplantation places us in a **classic utilitarian dilemma**. The dilemma is whether it is better to kill an animal and save a human being or to save an animal and let the human die.

Lastly, pig is considered a **dirty animal in many societies**, including many Indian societies. Even the people who deal with pigs are given low social status. Thus, it would be difficult to make such a development, adopted globally.

GS3 – AGRICULTURE – STORAGE, TRANSPORT AND MARKETING OF AGRI PRODUCE

### **APMCs in India and related issues**

#### **9. Gaining heft – On e-NAM's trade effectiveness**

**Source:** This post is based on the article “**Gaining heft**” published in the **Business Standard** on **2<sup>nd</sup> March 2022**.

**News:** There is an increase in the e-NAM's trade volumes after the repealing of the three agricultural laws.

#### **What is electronic National Agricultural Market (e-NAM)?**

It is a pan-Indian digital market, launched in 2016. About 1,000 markets in over 20 states and Union Territories have been linked to the e-NAM portal and the network is further expanding.

#### **What is the present status of e- NAM?**

Although trade in e-NAM is increasing, online trading is taking place only in 570-odd markets of the 1,000 linked to the e-NAM. Many big agricultural markets, like Delhi's Azadpur mandi, one of the largest in Asia, are yet to be connected to it. Besides, just three states Rajasthan, Haryana, and Andhra Pradesh account for over 70% of the transactions.

Also, the bulk of the trading consists of the deals within the same mandis (intra-mandi trade) or between the mandis of the same district. Inter-mandi and, inter-state trade are minimal, though that is what the e-NAM is chiefly meant for.

#### **How the e-NAM can be further promoted?**

There is a need for a **single trading license** that will be valid throughout the state and across the states as well. Also, **state APMC Acts should be amended** to make specific provisions for

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inter-state trading in farm commodities. Issues concerning the quality, grading, packaging, storage, and transportation of the commodities should be resolved.

To overcome the legal hurdles in inter-state marketing of farm produce, the **Ashok Dalwai committee** proposed to **shift agricultural marketing from the State List to the Concurrent List**. Along with the expansion, there is a need to **consolidate the existing network** of the e-NAM.

### GS3 – INDIAN ECONOMY – CRYPTOCURRENCY AND RELATED ISSUES

#### 10. RBI ought to take a balanced view on cryptocurrency

**Source:** This post is based on the article “**RBI ought to take a balanced view on cryptocurrency**” published in the **Live mint** on **2nd March 2022**.

**News:** While it is right to be concerned about cryptocurrency, RBI’s move to ban crypto and refer it to the Ponzi scheme lacks balance.

##### How crypto is beneficial?

Crypto could save in remittances transfer as India received 87 bn dollars and remittance charge alone cost 30,000 crores. Crypto with near-zero fees could be useful here. Cryptocurrencies are also powering new innovations like Maharashtra State Board of Skill Certification verification based on Ethereum and NFT (Non-Fungible Token) by media houses.

##### How the RBI’s move on banning cryptocurrency is not justified?

RBI does not clarify how cryptocurrency is going to actually “wreck” the economy. There was also no reasoning on how a crypto ban in India would solve any of the problems cited that regulation cannot solve.

Also, Citizens should have the right to participate in a new technology wave and be part of the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

### GS3 – ENVIRONMENT – ENVIRONMENTAL REPORTS, SURVEYS

#### 6<sup>th</sup> IPCC report

#### 11. Our Politicians in denial of climate change

**Source:** This post is based on the article “**Our Politicians in denial of climate change**” published in Indian **express** on 5th March 2022.

**Syllabus:** GS3- Conservation, environmental pollution and degradation.

**Relevance:** Climate Change, IPCC sixth assessment report.

**News:** IPCC (Intergovernmental panel on climate change) has released its 6<sup>th</sup> assessment report, titled ‘Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability’.

In its report, IPCC discusses the increasing extreme heat, rising oceans, melting glaciers, falling agricultural productivity, resultant food shortages and increase in diseases like dengue and Zika.

##### What the IPCC’s 6<sup>th</sup> assessment report says about climate change?

IPCC warns that if the planet gets warmer than 1.5 degrees Celsius from pre-industrial times (*we are at 1.1 degrees at present*), then there will be irreversible impact on “ecosystems with low resilience” such as polar, mountain and coastal ecosystems.

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This will cause devastation to “infrastructure in low-lying coastal settlements, associated livelihoods and even erosion of cultural and spiritual values.”

The increased heat will lead to an increase in diseases like diabetes, circulatory and respiratory conditions, as well as mental health challenges.

### What are its India specific findings?

#### Impact on India

– IPCC also highlights that climate “maladaptation” will especially affect “marginalised and vulnerable groups adversely, indigenous people, ethnic minorities, low-income households and informal settlements. As a majority of Indian population falls into this group, it will be **hugely impacted**.

– IPCC highlights India as a **vulnerable hotspot**, with several regions and cities facing climate change phenomena like flooding, sea-level rise and heatwaves. **For instance**, Mumbai is at high risk of sea-level rise and flooding, and Ahmedabad faces the danger of heat waves.

– With increasing climate change, grains will have **diminished nutritional quality**. Already the by 4-10% globally due to climate change. India being a predominantly agrarian economy is likely to be especially hurt.

– Population in urban India is going to double 2050 from current figure of 480 million in 2020. **High concentration of population** in these cities will make them **extremely vulnerable** to climate change.

### 12. IPCC report makes a case for building people’s resilience to climate crisis. It will require multi-pronged efforts at all levels

This post is developed based on the article “**IPCC report makes a case for building people’s resilience to climate crisis**” Published in **The Hindu** on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2022.

**News:** IPCC’s began taking stock of the climate crisis about 30 years ago. However, its latest report is the gravest of all the warnings issued by the global body of experts.

The report predicts that the world will face multiple hazards even if the global temperature rise is contained to 1.5 degrees Celsius. The IPCC does not prescribe policy decisions. Thus, the experts underline building people’s resilience, especially that of the most vulnerable.

#### How would Climate Change impact India?

Global warming will affect India’s coasts, plains, forests, rivers, groundwater and mountain systems.

More than 40 per cent of the India’s population will face water scarcity by 2050. Whereas the country’s coastal areas, including cities such as Mumbai, will be affected by sea-level rises.

#### What should India do?

Climate-sensitive policymaking at the national and local levels is required. India should rectify past mistakes such as ignoring hydrology while planning towns and cities, neglecting flood alert systems, and encouraging water-guzzling crops.

Policymakers will have to find ways to save the country’s food security from adverse effects.

### 13. Planning for resilience in a warming world

**Source:** This post is developed based on the article “**Planning for resilience in a warming world**” Published in **Indian Express** on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2022.

This post is developed based on the article “**A cautionary tale**” Published in **The Hindu** on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2022.

This post is developed based on the article “**A vivid climate warning shot across India’s bow**” Published in **Live Mint** on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2022.

**News:** 2<sup>nd</sup> part of 6<sup>th</sup> IPCC report highlights the vulnerability of Indian cities to Climate Change.

With Global temp. already 1.1-1.3° Celsius above pre-industrial levels, some impacts of climate Change are bound to happen.

India has almost all type of climate change hotspots. The three major climate change hotspots are the semi-arid and arid regions, the Himalayan ecosystem and coastal zones.

- About half of India’s landmass is arid and semi-arid.
- India has 7,500 km of coastline, with population of 33 crore people living within 150 km from the coast
- The Himalayan region is home to five crore people covering 13 states and union territories.

The report further highlights that most of the national targets determined at the Conference of the Parties (COP26) in Glasgow are not sufficient to have an impact in the short term. For example – India will achieve net zero emissions latest by 2070 and would also ensure 50% of its energy will be from renewable energy sources by 2030. None of these targets can stop the breach of the 1.5°C level.

#### **What are the implications of Urbanization as per IPCC report?**

In the next 15 years, almost 40% of Indians will be living in urban areas. Urbanization processes have generated vulnerability and exposure combined with climate change hazards.

1. Extreme heat and humidity in urban areas will create life-threatening climatic conditions.
2. The primary drivers of increasing heat exposure in already-warm cities in India will be global warming and population growth.
3. The urban heat island effect will be amplified by heatwaves. Older adults, people with comorbidities, will be most vulnerable.
4. Increasing temperature will result in **heat-induced labour productivity loss**, leading to economic losses.
5. Climate Change will result in **Sea level rise** and increase in tropical cyclone storm surge and rainfall variability like increasing high-intensity short duration (sub-daily) rainfall. It will lead to larger probabilities of cities getting flooded.
6. **In the Himalayan region**, due to unplanned urbanisation, changes in land use, and land cover, small towns with populations under a lakh are turning into major urban centres.
7. One of the contributing factors of glacial decline is the **deposition of black carbon**. Black carbon can be sourced back to stubble burning, brick kilns, polluting industries.
8. **Water scarcity** in the hilly region has become a new phenomenon of change in hydrological regimes of the region.
9. The ‘**wet bulb**’ **temperature** trend is an index of the impact of heat and humidity combined — and its effect on health. Several cities of India in the Himalayan belt are predicted to reach wet-bulb temperatures of 35°C. It will have consequences such as a rise in heat-wave linked deaths or reduced productivity.

#### **How Local bodies in India are increasing adaptability?**



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**Firstly**, In Bengaluru, Indian communities have traditionally managed a **network of water tanks** of immense ecological importance. It made the urban areas water-secure. However, the practice is not continued due to increasing urban areas. However, the restoration of the blue network offers a more sustainable and socially just alternative for managing water resources.

**Secondly, Passive cooling technology**, is a part of ancient Indian building designs. It is a widely-used strategy to create naturally ventilated buildings. This tech can be used as a counter to urban heat island for residential and commercial buildings.

**Third**, Local governments in **Surat, Indore, and Bhubaneswar** linked transformation to local development needs. The report proves that the economic benefits of adaptation are a strategy for local institutions to support adaptation action

**Fourth**, to manage flooding in Indian cities adaptation measures should include **overhauling stormwater management, green infrastructure, and sustainable urban drainage systems.**

However, global response needs quantum leaps. Radical ideas like 'solar geo-engineering' might gain appeal soon.

GS3 – ENVIRONMENT – ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION AND ASPECTS

### **CLEAN COOKING FUEL FOR HOUSEHOLDS**

#### **14. Looking for an effective alternative to LPG**

**Source:** This post is based on the article “**Looking for an effective alternative to LPG**” published in the **Indian Express** on **4th March 2022.**

**News:** The government spent more than Rs 12,000 crore on near-universal access to LPG connections, Still, about six lakh people die every year due to air pollution in Indian kitchens.

#### **What are the problems faced by the people?**

Over half of **rural India** continues to primarily **rely on burning solid fuels for cooking.** It increases the likelihood of illnesses, including ischemic heart disease, cataracts, and lung cancer. Recent evidence also shows that it increases the risk of Covid-19 infection.

Rising domestic LPG prices, removal of subsidies, growing retail inflation, and unending distress owing to the pandemic have squeezed the pockets of low and middle-income households. Thus, it is difficult to shift to LPG.

#### **What are the other alternatives?**

**Electricity:** It may not be an immediately viable alternative because of two major concerns.

**First**, households that got electricity connections under rural electrification schemes have a maximum connected load of 500W. However, induction stoves are rated more than 1500W. If homes move to electric cooking, there will be issues of supply due to distribution transformer failures. As households would cook at roughly the same time, it could lead to further stress on the electricity distribution system.

**Second**, the Requirements of a rural household are usually met within 100 units/month, which gets covered by concessional tariffs. However, beyond 100 units, consumers have to pay about Rs 7-8 per unit used. Induction-based cooking alone would drive up the monthly electric bill by at least Rs 500-600, which would be unaffordable for many poor households.

**Piped Natural Gas:** It could be an alternative to LPG in densely populated urban areas in the coming years. But it is not designed to supplement the cooking needs of rural India because of



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network expansion costs. Even if this is addressed, India has limited reserves of natural gas. Therefore, large-scale usage of PNG would require imports, which would make PNG unaffordable.

### **What is the government doing?**

Since the launch of [Ujjwala Yojana](#) in 2016, there have been significant efforts in increasing the domestic LPG distribution network. The government has added 12 new bottling plants (with an added capacity of 6,200 thousand metric tons per annum) and about 9,000 new distributors.

However, budgetary allocations to LPG have been rapidly shrinking in the recent past. It has come down from about Rs 31,400 crore in 2018-19 to only Rs 4,000 crore in the budget for 2022-23.

### **What should be the way forward?**

A targeted approach backed by financial and institutional support is required in order to address the shortage of LPG problems. Government should also resume LPG subsidies and rationalize them. For example, subsidies could be provided only to consumers with low consumption.

Also, revising LPG prices could be limited to twice a year to provide price certainty in the context of volatile oil markets

GS3 – ENVIRONMENT – CLIMATE CHANGE

## **INDIA AND ISSUE OF CLIMATE CHANGE**

### **15. Rich nations must step in**

**Source:** This post is based on the article “**Rich nations must step in**” published in the **Business Standard** on **3rd March 2022**.

**News:** The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has released the second part of the [Sixth Assessment Report](#).

### **What is government doing to cope up with climate change impact?**

Government has introduced the National Action Plan on Climate Change in 2008. It also launched a [National Initiative for Climate Resilient Agriculture \(NICRA\)](#) in 2011. Government is also working on developing crop varieties and agronomic practices which can handle climate-related stresses.

India should stay at its stand of the last climate summit at Glasgow, especially its call for equity, climate justice, and curbing unsustainable consumption. The developed nations must lead in mitigation and extend financial assistance to the developing countries for adaptation.

GS3 – INDIAN ECONOMY – MOBILIZATION OF RESOURCES

GS3 - INDIAN ECONOMY – COVID PANDEMIC AND ITS IMPACT

## **POST-PANDEMIC ECONOMIC RECOVERY**

### **IMPACT ON ECONOMY**

#### **16. Here's Why its V not K**

**Source:** This post is based on the article “**Here's Why its V not K**” published in **Times of India** on **4th March 2022**.

**News:** There has been a lot of debate on the issue that whether post pandemic recovery is V-shaped or K-shaped.

Proponents of K- shaped recovery point claim that while corporations have returned to normal levels of activity, unemployment, poverty and distress among MSMEs continues to rise.

#### **Why the post pandemic recovery is more likely to be V-shaped recovery and not K-Shaped?**

The **first** argument is that as the workers and MSMEs are the backbone of the Indian economy, GDP could not have returned to its pre-Covid level without workers returning to work and MSMEs recovering too.

**Secondly**, acc to the PLFS Survey quarterly GDP at constant prices had dipped by 24% in April-June 2020 quarter but it returned to its pre-Covid level by January-March 2021 quarter. This sharp fall and full recovery within three quarters is what constitutes the V-shaped recovery of GDP.

**Urban unemployment rate spiked** from 9.1% in January-March 2020 quarter, to 20. 8% in April-June 2020 quarter but fell back to 9. 3% by January-March 2021 quarter showing a V-shaped recovery.

One counterargument for this can be that the **fall in the unemployment rate merely reflects a withdrawal of workers** from the workforce. However, According to PLFS labour force participation rate (*which is percent of above-15 population looking for work*) has also followed a V-shaped recovery path.

**Net additions to Employee Provident Fund (EPF)** subscribers list which closely track movements in GDP and the urban employment rate also shows a **V-shaped recovery**.

In the rural economy also, GDP data shows that **agricultural activity has remained robust** in both 2020-21 and 2021-22 and MGNREGA funds have also been generously expanded.

These are strong arguments against the narrative of massive unemployment and poverty in rural areas.