



**9 PM**

# **Compilation**

**12<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> September, 2022**

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# General Studies Paper - 1

### General Studies - 1

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#### 1. [India's growing water crisis, the seen and unseen](#)

**Source**– The post is based on the article “**India's growing water crisis, the seen and unseen**” published in **The Hindu** on **15th September 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS1- Economic geography.GS2- Government policies for development in various sectors.

**Relevance**– About water crisis

**News**-The articles explain the growing water crisis and its impact on rural-urban disputes.

#### **What are various reports that tell us about the growing water crisis?**

**UNESCO UN water development report** tells about the global concern over sharp rise in freshwater withdrawal, water stress and water scarcity in different parts of the world.

**New water report of FAO**– sounded caution about this impending crisis.

**Water Scarcity Clock**– Two billion people are living in countries having high water stress.

**Global Drought Risk and Water Stress Map**- Major parts of India, particularly central, western and peninsular India are highly water stressed.

**NITI Aayog “Composite Water Index”**– 600 million people in India are facing acute water shortages.

#### **What are the impacts of water scarcity?**

Response of areas with water scarcity includes transfer of water from hinterland.

When the city is small, it depends on groundwater. As it grows, dependence shifts to surface water. With further growth it shifts to the hinterland. It is enhanced at the expanse of irrigation water.

It triggers sectoral and regional competition. Rural-urban transfer has become a cause of concern.

According to a review paper in 210, urban water infrastructure imports an estimated 500 billion liters per day over a combined distance of 27,000 km. 12% of large cities depend on inter-basin transfer.

A **UN report on “Transboundary Waters Systems- Status and Trends”** linked this transfer with SDG goals.

#### **What is the status of urbanisation in India?**

India is urbanising at a very fast rate. According to the 2011 census, it was 34% of the total population. The **World Urbanization Prospect** report says that it will cross 50% by 2050.

#### **What is the case of Ahmedabad and other cities in India?**

80% of its water supply was from groundwater till mid-1980s.City now depends on Narmada canal for water supply. It includes inter-basin transfer.

Almost all cities, that depend upon surface water, import water from the hinterland.

City water supply has become subject of inter-basin transfer.

Available studies from Chennai and Nagpur show the imminent possibility of rural-urban conflict.

#### **What needs to be done?**

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There is a need for a **system-perspective and catchment scale approach** to link reallocation of water with a wider perspective on development.

Infrastructure investment for water resource management is needed.

Further there is a need for fostering rural-urban partnership and **integrated approach in water management**.

**Institutional strengthening** to build flexibility in water resource allocation at regional level.

### 2. [Administrator-Statesman](#)

**Source**– The post is based on the article “**Administrator-Statesman**” published in **The Indian Express** on **17th September 2022**.

**Syllabus**: GS1- Modern Indian History

**Relevance**– About Madhav Rao.

**News**-The article explains the contribution of Madhav Rao in administrative reforms.

#### **What changes were happening in princely states thinking about statecraft?**

The book by Rahul Sagar gives a base for thinking about what an alternative state and constitutional imagination based on the princely states would have looked like.

In the late 19th century, some princely states were experimenting with a new form of government that maintains the monarchy intact. It will partially modernize the state by devolving power into the hands of capable administrators.

They supported intellectuals. Examples are Baroda’s roles in the life of both Ambedkar and Aurobindo Ghosh. Vivekananda relied on the Maharaja of Khetri.

#### **What was the contribution of Madhav Rao to his State?**

He transformed Travancore and Baroda. He fixed the revenues of these states, encouraged industry, modernized their practices, created new administrative cultures. He promoted learning and interest in culture.

#### **What details have been provided in his book?**

He delivered a series of lectures, “Hints on the Art and Science of Government, a treatise in the education of the Ruler”. They are instructions to the prince.

The lecture has two objectives-

(1) It articulates the aims and ends of government.

It provides for **rule of law and due process**. It grants great **personal liberty and equality before law**. It has strong emphasis on public health and education, and a taxation policy that encourages manufacturing. It is open to men of talent without being a **meritocracy**.

(2) The second objective is the art and science of administration. There is emphasis on recognition of human character. King should know how to spot discontent and factionalism among ministers. He should know how to inspire confidence in ministers.

The book is also concerned about liberty.

We can even trace **secularism** in his book. He writes that religious instructions should not be given in matters of education.

#### **What are PM Modi viewpoints about Madhav Rao?**

He praises his emphasis on teamwork and fair play. He recommends that his teachings have the potential to solve any problem faced by Governments and the Corporate World.

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### 3. [Remember Periyar with a pledge to embrace dissent](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article “**Remember Periyar with a pledge to embrace dissent**” published in **The Hindu** on **17<sup>th</sup> September 2022**.

**Syllabus: GS 1 – important personalities**

**News:** Periyar E.V. Ramasamy’s birth anniversary is on 17<sup>th</sup> September. It is celebrated as Social Justice Day.

Periyar is often referred to as an iconoclast because of the rebellious nature of his ideas.

His thoughts had clarity and honesty which led people practicing different faiths to discuss and debate his ideas on rationality and religion.

He had vision for eradicating social evils, political reforms, oppressing the minorities, etc. some of his vision has been discussed in this article.

#### **What were the different visions of Periyar?**

##### **Society**

He did not only aim at the eradication of social evils but he also wanted to put an end to activities that do not raise the standards of society.

He was one of the pioneering voices against the Kula Kalvi Thittam introduced by the then Chief Minister C. Rajagopalachari.

Kula Kalvi Thittam proposed to impose a method of education on schoolchildren where students would learn their family’s profession as part of the school curriculum.

Periyar felt that it would encourage caste-based divisions that might cause irreparable damage to society.

##### **Reforms**

Periyar’s vision was about inclusive growth and freedom of individuals. He was an important personality of his time because of the clarity in his political stand.

Periyar was way ahead of his time. All the reforms he shared with people could not be implemented at the time because his thought led to extreme discussions.

**Castes:** He felt that there is a need to change the priesthood of all castes if we want to change caste dynamic.

**Oppression of minorities:** Periyar proclaimed that he would always stand with the oppressed in the fight against oppressors as oppression was his enemy.

##### **Oppositions**

People used to oppose his ideas and thoughts but he had a very clear vision on his points.

He said that opposition that is not based on rationalism or science or experience will lead to fraud, selfishness and conspiracies.

Periyar reminds us of welcoming the ideas of oppositions as he used to invite the opposition for the debate.

Therefore, we should create a society with social justice by creating open spaces for oppositions by discussing and debating.

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### 4. [The consequences of declining fertility are many](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article **“The consequences of declining fertility are many”** published in **The Hindu** on **17<sup>th</sup> September 2022**.

**Syllabus:** **GS 1 – Population and Associated issues**

**News:** According to the World Population Prospects 2022, the average number of children per woman in the reproductive age group has declined by 50%.

This has changed from an average of five children per woman in 1951 to 2.4 children in 2020.

#### **What has led to decline of in the global fertility rate?**

Poorer countries have speeded the reduction in fertility rate faster than the richer countries.

According to the World Population Prospectus, the global fertility rate fell from three in 1990 to 2.3 in 2021.

Most advanced economies have their fertility rate below the replacement rate of 2.1 with South Korea has the lowest at 1.05 children per woman.

#### **What is the situation of India in the fertility rate?**

India's fertility rate was 6 per woman at the time of independence.

It further declined to 4 in the 1990s. Kerala became the first State in India to have a fertility rate below replacement level.

According to the latest National Family Health Survey (NFHS) of 2021 –

1. Fertility rate has fallen below the replacement level for the first time to 2.0 in 2021.
2. Only five States have a fertility rate above the replacement rate. They are Bihar, Meghalaya, Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand, and Manipur.

The fall in the fertility rate has been caused due to increased use of contraception, more years of average schooling, better health care, and an increase in the mean marriage age of women.

However, there are many positive and negative aspects of the declining fertility rate on the nation's economy.

#### **What are the advantages and disadvantages of the declining fertility rate on the nation's economy?**

##### **Advantages**

**Income:** Lower fertility rate improves the employment rate of the workforce which increases their income. Lower fertility helps in the increase in the ratio of the working-age population.

This high ratio of workforce boosts income, investment and savings due to lower dependence.

**Education:** Lower fertility rate improves women's education and lowers the fertility rate of future generations.

**Resources:** Lower fertility rate will also lead to lower pressure on land, water and other resources and would also contribute to achieving environmental goals.

**Public finance:** A lower fertility rate will also have a positive impact on public finance. It will lead to a fall in government debt due to lower savings of households and corporates with the increase in the higher dependency.

This will lead the government to have surplus than going in to the deficit.

**Inflation:** A falling fertility rate will have a positive effect on inflation. There will be lower labour supply with increase in the salary. This will lead to the change in unemployment inflation trade-off.



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However, there are other problems associated with the declining fertility rate.

### **Disadvantages**

**Japan** became the first country to experience the consequences of declining fertility rate.

**For example**, there has been increase in the **dependency ratio** in the Japan. This has led to near zero GDP growth since the 1990s and Japan is facing fiscal challenges to meet rising social security costs.

It will have a negative effect on the proportion of the working population. This will affect output in the economy.

An ageing population will also affect global interest rates negatively as the share of people over 50 years will be almost 40% of the population by 2100.

It could also diminish the creative capacity of humankind.

### **What can be the further course of action?**

The labour laws should be reformed with flexibility for workers. This would encourage working women to have more children and non-working mothers to enter the labour market.

### **For example –**

3. Germany found success in boosting births through liberal labour laws, allowing more parental leave and benefits.
4. Denmark offers state-funded IVF for women below 40 years, and Hungary recently nationalised IVF clinics.

Further, with labour reforms focus should also be on nutrition and health of the workers. This would ensure sustained labour supply and output despite lower fertility.

# General Studies Paper – 2

General Studies - 2

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1. [India-Bangladesh ties, a model for bilateral cooperation](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article “**India-Bangladesh ties, a model for bilateral cooperation**” published in **The Hindu** on **12th September 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 2 – India and its neighbourhood- relations.

**Relevance:** About the India-Bangladesh ties.

**News:** The recent state visit of the Prime Minister of Bangladesh showcased the high stakes of India-Bangladesh bilateral ties. The latest visit resulted in seven agreements designed to increase cooperation in the diverse domains of water sharing, railways, science and technology, space, media and capacity building.

What are the recent agreements signed between India and Bangladesh?

**Read more:** [Mature leadership in India and Bangladesh has not let minor disagreements threaten shared interests](#)

**a)** There was the agreement “to continue close security cooperation” over counter-terrorism, border crimes, and border management, **b)** Both countries agreed “to build resilient supply chains” between the two countries and “across the region”.

**Read more:** [Kushiyara River: Delhi, Dhaka sign river pact, first in 25 years](#)

What are the areas of cooperation between India-Bangladesh ties?

**Read more:** [Recent Developments in India-Bangladesh Relations – Explained, pointwise](#)

What are the areas of concern between India-Bangladesh ties?

Apart from **Teesta river water issue** the other issues are, **a)** The continued presence of 1.1 million Rohingyas who fled from Myanmar in 2017 has created enormous pressure on the Bangladesh economy and social harmony. So, Bangladesh wants stronger support from India to facilitate their early return to Myanmar, **b)** India’s sensitivity to growing cooperation between Dhaka and Beijing, **c)** Despite India and Bangladesh government’s secular policy, “incidents” against the minority is a cause of worry.

**Note:** *In the recent meeting, India made an assurance of more material assistance to support Rohingyas’ “safe, sustainable and expeditious return”.*

**Read more:** [A lot is at stake for India-Bangladesh ties](#)

The cumulative and adverse impact of COVID-19 and the Ukraine war on Bangladesh’s economy is visible by escalating protests, the sharp rise in fuel prices, erosion of foreign currency reserves, and a deepening financial crisis. This might change the present regime during the parliamentary elections in 2023.

But the people should respect the present regime for being “a role model for bilateral and regional cooperation”.

### 2. [The tedious process of adoption](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article “**The tedious process of adoption**” published in **The Hindu** on **12<sup>th</sup> September 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 2 – mechanisms, laws, institutions, and Bodies constituted for the protection and betterment of vulnerable sections.

**Relevance:** About adoption procedure in India.

**News:** From September 1, District Magistrates (DM) have been empowered to give adoption orders instead of courts. All cases pending before courts have to be transferred.

About the recent changes in the adoption procedure

The Parliament passed the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Amendment Bill, 2021 to amend the Juvenile Justice Act (JJ Act), 2015. The key changes include authorising District Magistrates and Additional District Magistrates to issue adoption orders under Section 61 of the JJ Act by striking out the word “court”.

The amendments to the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Model Rules, 2016 mention, “all the cases pertaining to adoption matters pending before the Court shall stand transferred to the District Magistrate from the date of commencement of these rules.”

**Note:** *The District Magistrates have also been empowered under the Act to inspect child care institutions as well as evaluate the functioning of child welfare committees, juvenile justice boards, child care institutions etc.*

What are the concerns associated with the revised rules?

**a)** The **Central Adoption Resource Authority (CARA)** says there are nearly 1,000 adoption cases pending before various courts in the country. Adoption cases already before courts for the past several months will have to be transferred and the **process will have to start afresh, b)** Many believe neither judges, nor DMs are **aware about the change in the JJ Act** leading to confusion in the system and delays, **c)** District Magistrates **don't handle civil matters** that bestow inheritance and succession rights on a child. If these rights are contested when a child turns 18, a **judicial order is far more secure** to ensure the child is not deprived of his or her entitlements.

**Must read:** [Review of Guardianship and Adoption Laws report: Explained | On guardianship and adoption of minors](#)

What is the adoption procedure in India?

Adoptions in India are governed by two laws — the Hindu Adoption and Maintenance Act, 1956 (HAMA) and the Juvenile Justice Act, 2015. Both laws have separate eligibility criteria for adoptive parents.

**Adoption under JJ Act:** Persons have to register on CARA's portal after which a specialised adoption agency carries out a home study report. After it finds the candidate eligible for adoption, a child declared legally free for adoption is referred to the applicant.

**Adoption under HAMA:** A “dattaka hom” ceremony or an adoption deed or a court order is sufficient to obtain irrevocable adoption rights. But there are no rules for monitoring adoptions and verifying the sourcing of children and determining whether parents are fit to adopt.

**Note:** *HAMA is a parent-centric law that provides son to the son-less for reasons of succession, inheritance, the continuance of the family name and for funeral rights and later adoption of daughters was incorporated because kanyadaan is considered an important part of dharma in Hindu tradition.*

**Read more:** [Facilitating adoption in India: Finding a home](#)

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What are the challenges in adoption in India?

**1)** There are very few children in CARA's registry (only 2,188 children). This forces many to wait for upto three years to be able to give a family to a child. This allows traffickers to take advantage of loopholes in HAMA, **2)** There is also corruption and trafficking as childcare institutions and NGOs directly give children for adoption.

What should be done to facilitate adoption in India?

Empower CARA to maintain various specialised adoption agencies, a registry of children, and prospective adoptive parents as well as match them before adoption.

India should frame a "child-centric, optional, enabling and gender-just" special adoption law like in other countries.

**Read more:** [Panel moots district-level survey to bring more children into adoption](#)

### 3. [We need civil society engagement in Kashmir](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article "**We need civil society engagement in Kashmir**" published in **The Hindu** on **12<sup>th</sup> September 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 2 – Development process and development industry

**Relevance:** problems associated with killing of Kashmiri Pundits

**News:** There has been increase in targeted killing of Kashmiri Pundits in the past six months. This has raised concerns over their right of return of the Kashmiri Pundits as well as the safety of minorities living in the Kashmir.

There are two types of Kashmiri Pundits – a) Migrant and b) Non-Migrant. Migrants were offered government jobs and were given high securities under **return and rehabilitation of Kashmir migrants scheme**. Whereas non-migrants lived on without any state protection.

But now, with the targeted killings of the Kashmiri Pundits, both feel endangered,

#### **What are the solutions to killing of Kashmiri pundits?**

There is no top-down solution to returning of Kashmiri pundits. The efforts of individuals and civil society will need to create positive conditions on the ground. Government can only enable the process.

They will have to encourage people to stop blaming each other.

Individuals or communities will have to look within themselves and build courage to acknowledge mistakes and restore trust.

#### **What was the effort taken by Centre for Dialogue and Reconciliation (CDR)?**

Centre for Dialogue and Reconciliation (CDR) started a Pundit-Muslim dialogue series in 2010.

The participants in this dialogue were public intellectuals and other influential persons.

These dialogues created a social environment that enabled Kashmiri Pundits to take up government postings in the Kashmir.

Participants were sharing individual experiences that were often misunderstood by other community.

Participants pointed out that interdependence was not strange to Kashmir and it was grounded in wider cultures.

The Pundit-Muslim dialogue also saw a series of conversation from both the sides and there were different points of views.

#### **What are the grievances of both sides?**

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In one such discussion, participants expressed their grievances. For example;

Muslim participants felt the Pundits did not see the struggle of the Muslims in the Valley who faces violence from the system. The Kashmiri Muslim was always portrayed as being misguided and helped by Pakistan.

While, Pundits expressed their anger that Muslims did not protest the Pundit killings not even when the killers claimed them.

The greater responsibility lay with the Muslims as they were the majority.

A respected Kashmiri Pundit public intellectual observed that the Pundit community too had suffered from a lack of leadership.

If any senior leader has taken the issue to Muslims, then the movements Pundits from the valley could have been stopped. They would have guided the Pundits not to sell their property in a hurry.

### **What can be further course of action in resolving Kashmiri Pundits dispute?**

There is a need of an urgent civil society engagement between communities in Kashmir.

This engagement can create confidence, restore trust and strengthen inter-community bonds.

It could also enable Pundits to fulfil their dream to return in peace and with dignity.

#### 4. [India-UK ties can ease an Elizabethan burden](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article “**India-UK ties can ease an Elizabethan burden**” published in **The Live Mint** on **12<sup>th</sup> September 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 2 – Bilateral, regional and global groupings and agreements involving India

**News:** The article discusses India and UK relations after the demise of Queen Elizabeth II.

India and Britain trade relations exist from the Mughal era.

Even now there is discussion on the trade from the Britain side asking India to cut the duty of 150% on Scotch whisky imports.

U.K. is currently facing serious economic problems and ties with India will be of help for both the countries.

### **What is the current economic condition of the U.K.?**

There is galloping inflation with rise in food prices.

There are problems with the energy supplies after Russia decided to reduce the gas supply.

There is an increase in cost of living with high debt burden.

However, the ties with India and can be useful in improving these situations.

### **What are the areas of cooperation between India and the U.K.?**

India wants easy entry to skilled Indians into the U.K. even though U.K. has dropped tariffs on labor intensive Indian exports.

U.K. wishes India to grant access to British legal services market and lower import barriers to its Scotch and cars.

The other areas of cooperation between the two nations are Indian production of British defence equipment and cooperation in technology (AI and Data exchange).

Both the nations have decided to sign an early-harvest interim agreement by the end of October.

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However, there has also been concern in the U.K. over buying Russia's oil by India in spite of Western sanctions on Russia.

### 5. [New paradigm: FTAs, multilateral exposure limited to supply chains, governance](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article “**New paradigm: FTAs, multilateral exposure limited to supply chains, governance**” published in **The Indian Express** on **12<sup>th</sup> September 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 2 – Bilateral, regional and global groupings and agreements

**News:** India has recently decided to stay away from trade part of the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF). This decision has come on the backdrop of declining trade in India.

#### **What is IPEF and why has India taken decision to stay away from IPEF?**

IPEF has four pillars trade, supply chains, tax and anti-corruption and clean energy.

It is not like a regular trade agreement as the 14 members are not obligated by all the four pillars even though they are signatories of it.

India has decided to stay away from trade part of the agreement and has joined other three pillars.

#### **What are the other problems with IPEF?**

IPEF is being seen as an alternative to Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP).

America recently decided to stay away from Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) and IPEF is led by America.

Therefore, IPEF is being seen as re-establishing America economic existence in the Indo-Pacific.

#### **What are the concerns behind the withdrawal of India from the IPEF?**

**One** of the reasons behind it, is the increase in imports from China.

**Second**, IPEF also does not incorporate issues such as tariff reduction or reciprocal commitments.

**Third**, India is looking to find a place in the Minerals Security Partnership (MSP).

**Minerals Security Partnership (MSP)** is an eleven-member partnership program led by the US that focuses to secure supply chains of critical minerals with an aim to reduce dependency on China.

**Fourth**, India is also more impacted than other countries when global trade slows down.

For example, the net exports to real GDP growth were at minus 6.2% in April-June 2022-23 even as the country's trade deficit went low to 28.7 billion dollars in August from a record high of 30 billion dollars in the month of July.

**Fifth**, the trade deficit also remained high in the month of August and there are other concerns coming up in the future.

#### **What are the future concerns for India in trade?**

**First**, the European Union is heading towards recession.

**Second**, there are shipments being postponed because of the confirmed orders.

**Third**, inflation in the US has led to lower demand.

**Fourth**, there are new items added to the negative list of exports such as wheat, steel, and iron pellets. These all worsen the balance of trade situation.

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**Fifth**, there is an estimate from the experts that Current Account Deficit could rise to 3.3 percent of GDP in FY23.

### **Why staying away from IPEF is not of much concern to India?**

Even though India has stayed away from IPEF agreement there are other agreements with which India is looking to move forward.

The agreements are – **a)** trade agreements with UAE and Australia, **b)** a free trade agreement (FTA) with the United Kingdom, and **c)** there are trade talks with Canada going on.

Although exports have been impacted globally there are demands for low-value products which will help India's MSMEs.

This is a positive sign for India in the medium and long term and countries are also moving away from China because it has become costlier and less reliable.

### 6. [Disengagement on Line of Actual Control is a welcome start, but normalization of India-China relations is a long way off](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article “Disengagement on Line of Actual Control is a welcome start, but normalization of India-China relations is a long way off” published in **The Indian Express** on **12<sup>th</sup> September 2022**.

**Syllabus: GS 2 – India and its neighborhood**

**News:** Recently China and Indian forces has decided to disengage from the Gogra-Hot Springs.

This engagement has come after a series of clashes and agreements between the two nations. However, still the bilateral relations between the two countries are declining.

### **What are reasons for declining bilateral relation between India and China?**

China surprise attack to India in April 2020 in LAC was in violation of a range of bilateral agreements negotiated by India and China.

This broke India's political trust in China that was already weakened by the earlier military crises in the high Himalayas during 2013, 2014, and 2017.

Galwan clashes between the two sides in mid-June 2020 also saw blood shedding for the first time on the Chinese border in five decades.

### **What steps have been taken by India to counter China?**

India has imposed a series of economic measures against China and increased its military engagements in the border.

India has also stated that the “state of the border” reflects the “state of the relationship”.

India has stepped up its security cooperation with America and restored the Quadrilateral forum with Australia, Japan, and the US.

### **What are the future courses of action that India can take?**

India and China will meet at SCO summit in Uzbekistan. There are various points on which India would like to talk to China. They are –

**First**, a disengagement of the military by pulling the troops on both sides to their peace time locations.

**Second**, India would also want the resolution of two other points (Depsang plains in the north and the Demchok valley in the south) of conflicts in Ladakh.

However, India faces a great threat from the growing military gap with China and it is hard to return to the border that was once peaceful.



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Therefore, India should be open for a political engagement with China in Uzbekistan and lay out clearly India's terms for the normalization of bilateral relations.

### 7. [Tokyo-Delhi compact](#)

**Source**– The post is based on the article “**Tokyo-Delhi compact**” published in **The Indian Express** on **12th September 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS2- International Relations.

**Relevance**– About India-Japan relations.

**News-** The article explains the outcomes of recently held **2+2 ministerial dialogue** between India and Japan and other important aspects of their relations.

Recently the second **India-Japan 2+2 ministerial dialogue** was held in Tokyo.

**What are other important developments taking place in the context of ministerial dialogue?**

There is heightened tension across Taiwan strait where China installed five missiles inside Japan's exclusive economic zone.

There is an increase in the defence budget of Japan to 2% and it is developing counter strike capabilities to tackle emerging threats from China and North Korea.

**What are the key outcomes from dialogue?**

The Joint Statement reiterates their commitment to a **free and open Indo-Pacific, a rules-based global order that respects sovereignty and territorial integrity** and the **peaceful resolution of disputes**.

A key outcome of this round of talks was the agreement to launch the **Joint Service**

**Staff talks** between the Japan Joint Staff and the Indian Integrated Defence Staff which enhance their cooperation further build on existing bilateral and multilateral exercises including “**Dharma Guardian**”, “**JIMEX**” and “**Malabar**” and, an earlier decision to conduct the inaugural India-Japan fighter exercise between the two air forces.

Discussion on the **Ukraine issue**.

They also welcomed Japan's participation for the first time in the **MILAN** multilateral naval exercise.

**What are the other aspects of their relationship?**

There were two bilateral summits this year-the visit of Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida to India in March and that of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Japan for the Quad

Leaders' Summit in May.

Both are celebrating the 70th anniversary of their relationship.

Modi and Abe laid a strong foundation of the relationship. PM of Japan, Kishida played an important role in developing bilateral ties in his capacity as Foreign Minister between 2012-17.

**What are the potential areas of cooperation?**

Cooperation in defence equipment and technology, covering areas such as Unmanned Ground Vehicles (UGV) and Robotics, where Japan has considerable strengths.

Another area of potential cooperation is in the manufacturing of drones. Japan's largest drone manufacturer, ACSL, has already established a joint venture in India with Delhi-based Arc Ventures.

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### **The Agreement Concerning Reciprocal Provision of Supplies and Services (ACSA)**

between the Self-Defence Forces of Japan and the armed forces of India signed in 2020 has already been operationalised earlier this year. This paves the way for deeper cooperation between the two militaries.

### 8. [The Indian education scramble](#)

**Source**– The post is based on the article “**The Indian education scramble**” published in **The Business Standard** on **12th September 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS2- Issue related to development and management of education, human resources.

**Relevance**– About our education system.

**News**- The article explains the issues concerning our education.

There is debate among educational policymakers about teaching methodology. For example, whether a 10 years old kid must learn Newton law of motion before learning to ride a bicycle.

#### **What are the issues related to our educational system?**

**First** is, It was largely designed by Britishers and had greater emphasis on knowledge as something superior to skills. Regular graduate courses are seen as superior to vocational education. It is in contrast with Germany, where 75 per cent of the people in the 19-24 age group have received formal vocational education whereas in India the corresponding number is merely 5 per percent.

**Second** is the central role of tuition. While the southern states are slightly lower in, the eastern ones have two-thirds or more school children taking tuition. There is an almost universal belief in India that private tuition is an absolute must to score well in exams. It promotes rote learning.

**Third** issue is related to exponential growth in edutech startups and large investment going into these ventures.

**Fourth** issue is the large number of coaching centers for IIT in Kota and UPSC coaching institute.

**Fifth** issue is related to Artificial intelligence where roughly 80% of research funding in the world is devoted to. There is a possibility that chatbots would replace 90% of jobs currently being done by professionals like doctors, lawyers and physicians, the lifeline of India’s middle class.

#### **What are new guidelines in China related to tuition classes?**

Recently, China banned private for-profit businesses from offering both online and offline tutoring classes for primary and secondary school students. These guidelines also ban such businesses from offering classes on weekends, holidays, and summer and winter breaks.

### 9. [Great G20 power, great responsibility](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article “**Great G20 power, great responsibility**” published in **The Hindu** on **13th September 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 2 – Important International institutions, agencies and fora- their structure, mandate.

**Relevance:** About India’s G20 presidency.

**News:** From December, India will assume the Group of 20 (G20) year-long presidency along with India will also hold the G20 Summit in India in 2023. India will have the opportunity to assume centre stage in proposing and setting the global agenda and discourse.

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What are the other International events India participated in or going to participate in?

India participated in **1)** The ‘Senior Officers Meeting’ of the Quad, **2)** India and Japanese counterparts held the second India-Japan ‘2+2’ Foreign and Defence Ministerial Meeting in Tokyo.

India is also scheduled to attend **1)** The meeting of the Council of Heads of State of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) in Samarkand in Uzbekistan. This will be the first in-person summit of the SCO since the COVID-19 pandemic, **2)** India and China will take up the remaining issues along the LAC when the disengagement at Patrolling Point 15 in Gogra-Hot Springs is completed, **3)** India will also preside as President of the United Nations Security Council for December 2022.

**Must read:** [G20 and its Significance – Explained, pointwise](#)

Why India’s G20 presidency is significant?

**Read more:** [Heading the G20 and New Delhi’s choices](#)

India can assert its political, economic and intellectual leadership while hosting the G20 presidency.

What India should do as a G20 president?

**India will have to perform a delicate balancing act:** India have to balance the West, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, and G7 partner nations setting the agenda along with the emerging nexus between China and Russia. India might have to address issues that help in bridging the emerging divide in the world order.

**India needs to promote specific priorities:** India can find a common ground for setting its G20 agenda by addressing issues of global concern. India needs to focus on specific priorities related to domestic and regional issues such as economic recovery, trade and investment, unemployment, patent waivers on diagnostics, therapeutics, and vaccines.

India should chart a road map for quick global economic recovery, focusing on the supply chain resilience mechanism and stressing on green and digital transformations in the economy and their impact on societal well-being.

**India should forge greater cooperation with many G20 members:** India should forge greater cooperation with the European Union, the U.K., and Canada especially on realising free trade agreements.

**Ensure better and more balanced representation at the G20:** India could invite and engage countries from Africa and South America to ensure better and more balanced representation at the G20.

Areas such as technology transfer, greater access to trade for developing countries, addressing debt distress of countries by offering sustainable aid and loan programmes, tackling food and energy prices/security for vulnerable economies etc. could be relevant.

**Read more:** [Preparing for the presidency – On Assuming G20 Presidency](#)

India will be central in outlining key priority areas and in ensuring that the forum does not remain just a ‘talk shop’ but translates into a ‘walk shop’ in terms of meaningful actions and outcomes. Only this will give credibility to India’s pivotal role in the international community.

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### 10. [Three to tangle: The Pakistan factor should not undermine India's close security ties with the U.S.](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article “**Three to tangle: The Pakistan factor should not undermine India's close security ties with the U.S.**” published in **The Hindu** on **13<sup>th</sup> September 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 2 – Bilateral, regional and global groupings and agreements involving India and/or affecting India's interests.

**Relevance:** About India-US security ties.

**News:** Recently, the U.S. decided to refurbish the F-16 fighter fleet of Pakistan. The U.S. Defense Security Cooperation Agency notified a possible Foreign Military Sales worth \$450 million for engine, electronic warfare upgrades and spares for Pakistan's F-16s. The proposed sale does not include any new capabilities, weapons, or munitions. However, this might upset India-US security ties.

Why India is concerned about the US decision to refurbish F-16s?

The F-16 fighter fleet has been the backbone of the Pakistan Air Force since the early 1980s. It was upgraded and replenished periodically. The U.S. administration has maintained that since Pakistan is a major non-NATO ally, the defence partnership with Pakistan is a critical component of its global war on terror.

India continuously raised its concerns about the US decision to upgrade and provide more F-16s to Pakistan with U.S. interlocutors. This is because terrorism against India has been Pakistan's state policy for decades. India's apprehensions came true in February 2019. A day after the Balakot air strike conducted by the Indian Air Force, Pakistan deployed its F-16s to target Indian military bases close to the Line of Control.

**Note:** In 2016, the U.S. Congress stalled the Obama administration's move to give more F-16 fighters to Pakistan.

**Read more:** [India US 2+2 Dialogue and the Dynamics of India-US relations – Explained, pointwise](#)

About India-US security ties

India and the U.S. have committed to deepening defence and security cooperation.

India and the US have been skilfully managing their differences over Afghanistan, the crisis in Ukraine, and the threat of U.S. sanctions under its [Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act](#).

**Read more:** [India-US ties key to anchoring Indo-Pacific region](#)

What should be done to improve India-US security ties?

To stay in Afghanistan, the U.S. needed Pakistan; now to stay away from Afghanistan it needs Pakistan even more. But the US should recognise India's concerns are immediate and real.

The U.S. rewarding Pakistan will take out accountability of Pakistan and continue terrorism as a state policy. India and the U.S. need to work together to ensure the spectacular gains made in bilateral ties are preserved and nourished.

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### 11. [India has lost its way in the use of international law](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article “**India has lost its way in the use of international law**” published in **The Hindu** on **13<sup>th</sup> September 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 2 – Foreign policy of India.

**Relevance:** About International law and India’s participation.

**News:** India’s Constitution makers saw the value of international law. Article 51 of the Constitution states that the state shall foster respect for international law. But now the Indian policy-makers rarely employ the international law vocabulary.

About India’s participation in international law

Ever since India’s independence, India asserted its sovereignty and championed the principle of self-determination in international law. India played a key role in organising the first Asian-African Conference at Bandung in 1955, proclaiming that colonialism should “speedily be brought to an end”.

India has **a)** Remained committed to the UN Charter and has always advocated the peaceful settlement of international disputes, **b)** Engaged with international law norms in multiple fields such as human rights, trade, investment, environment, ocean, space, etc. has expanded vastly, **c)** Played an active role in shaping international law on terrorism by proposing a Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism (CCIT), and **d)** Initiated the International Solar Alliance (ISA) to influence international environmental law.

**Read more:** [How India has approached customary international law](#)

Why India’s low participation in International law is a cause of concern?

Western countries justify their conduct of international relations by embedding them in international law to gain legitimacy for their actions. However, India only makes **marginal articulation of India’s national interests internationally**.

For instance, **a)** India’s failure to use the international law vocabulary to call out Chinese transgressions of India’s sovereignty, **b)** India’s statement as part of the right of reply in September 2021 in the United Nations did not once mention ‘international law’, **c)** Barring a few instances such as suing Pakistan at the International Court of Justice in the Kulbhushan Jadhav case, India has not used international courts to hold Pakistan accountable for its breach of international law, and **d)** India’s failed to legally challenge Pakistan’s denial of most favoured nation status to India at the World Trade Organization.

All this resulted in India’s failure to develop and contribute new international law doctrines, interpretations, and principles that suit its national interests.

**Must read:** [India should develop its strategy of ethical lawfare by mainstreaming international law lexicon into its diplomatic toolkit](#)

What are the reasons behind India’s low participation in International law?

This is because **1)** India’s foreign service is heavily populated by generalist diplomats, **2)** The **legal and treaties (L&T) division** of the **Ministry of External Affairs (MEA)** is grossly understaffed. The L&T division has a strength of 13 offices as opposed to an approved strength of 23, **3)** Fragmentation of decision-making in international law with the involvement of several Ministries such as finance, commerce, law, environment, etc, and **4)** The Government has also failed to fund research in international law. This resulted in India’s abysmal capacity in international law, and **5)** The MEA funds research centres such as the **Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA)**. But the ICWA focuses largely on the study of international relations, not international law, **5) Low performance of Indian Society of International Law (ISIL):** It was supposed to become a centre of excellence for research in international law. Its flagship journal,

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the Indian Journal of International Law (IJIL), is nowhere close to the top international law journals in the world despite being over 60 years old.

What should be done to improve India's participation in International law?

**Fulfil the recommendation of the parliamentary committee:** In 2021, the committee recommended that the MEA should establish chairs for research in international law in universities.

India's ambition of punching above its weight in international affairs cannot be accomplished without its investing in international law. So India should invest in them.

### 12. Trade aversion

**Source:** The post is based on an article "Trade aversion" published in **The Business Standard** on 13<sup>th</sup> September 2022.

**Syllabus:** GS 2 – Important international groupings

**News:** India has recently decided to stay away from the trade aspect of Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF).

The government has argued that there are not clear guidelines and commitments in the areas of labour, environment, and public procurement are still emerging.

This decision of India might affect its long-term economic goals.

Although India has joined the three pillars of IPEF (supply chains, tax and anti-corruption, and clean energy) but the decision to stay from the trade pillar will weaken its position.

**Why are the issues involved with the decision of India to stay away from the trade part of IPEF?**

India's decision to stay away from the trade pillar of IPEF could have geopolitical and socioeconomic implications.

**First,** India is not a member of any mega trade agreement yet. IPEF provided an opportunity for India to build trade partnerships with countries in the region along with the US.

**Second,** it is possible that India will not be benefitted from supply chain pillar of the IPEF as well. Because trade and supply chains are interconnected and interdependent.

**Third,** it will also send a message that India has joined QUAD with a narrow focus on geopolitical security and it is not open for broader economic partnership in the region.

**Fourth,** India might also get isolated in trade and other economic aspect of the forum if India is not active in the IPEF forum. Therefore, it will be difficult for India to stand as an alternative to China in the Indo-Pacific region.

**Fifth,** the trade conditions of these agreements are making India, uncomfortable. However, these conditions might become a part of bilateral trade negotiations with advanced economies.

**What should be course of actions for India?**

If India has to become part of the global value chain it should be ready to negotiate and accept the terms of those trading groups.

India's decision to walk out of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) and now from the IPEF trade component affects its position in bilateral trade talks as well.

Therefore, India's trade policy needs to be fundamentally corrected and appropriate reforms should be carried out.

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### 13. [Gyanvapi order: The law cannot resolve vexed religious issues](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article “**Gyanvapi order: The law cannot resolve vexed religious issues**” published in **The Indian Express** on **13<sup>th</sup> September 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 2

**Relevance:** governance and issues arising out of it

**News:** The district judge of Varanasi in *Rakhi Sing & others* has ordered that the petition by the five Hindu women is maintainable under the Civil Procedure Code (CPC) of 1908.

District judge dismissed the mosque committee’s objections which were on the grounds that it is barred by the Places of Worship (Special Provisions) Act, 1991, the Waqf Act 1995 and the UP Shri Kashi Vishwanath Temple Act, 1983.

#### **What is the current ruling of the district court of Varanasi in Gyanvapi mosque?**

The judge has noted that the petitioners are seeking neither the conversion of the Gyanvapi mosque into a temple nor making any claim to ownership.

They are merely seeking a right to worship as a civil right.

The deities are being worshipped constantly till 1993 and after 1993 till now once in a year under the regulation of the State of Uttar Pradesh. Therefore, the bar set by the Places of Worship Act 1991 is not applicable.

The constitutionality of Places of Worship Act, 1991 is currently under review in the Supreme Court.

The court has held that the entry of the property as waqf in the revenue records as per law does not create ownership rights.

The Masjid Anjuman Committee’s objections on the maintainability under Order 7, Rule 11 of the CPC have been rejected.

#### **What is the Places of Worship Act, 1991 and judgments associated to it?**

It was passed when the Ram temple movement was at its peak.

The intention behind this law was to maintain the religious character of places of worship as it was on August 15, 1947. However, the law exempted the ongoing Babri Masjid dispute from its purview.

The five-judge bench of SC has said that this law promotes secularism which is the basic structure of the Constitution.

The bench also stated that non-retrogression is the fundamental principle of our constitutional law. Further, the court said that historical wrongs cannot be corrected by moving to courts.

Justice D Y Chandrachud has held that the Places of Worship Act, 1991 prohibits the conversion of the place but it does not prohibit ascertainment of the places of worship.

He further said that even the destruction of the deity’s property does not change the property’s character. The effect is that a temple remains a temple even after demolition.

#### **What can be possible solutions to the Gayanvapi mosque?**

A law cannot be a solution to social and religious problems. Laws are constantly changed or repealed. Thus, excessive reliance on Places of Worship Act is not correct.

**First**, in a court, there is only one winner but there is always room for both parties in arbitration, mediation, and out-of-court settlements. Therefore, a third mediator could be adopted so that both parties get benefits.

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**Second**, Multi-faith prayer rooms are quite common at Western airports therefore it is possible to create a separate room for these women prayers in the mosque.

### 14. A Setback for Moscow

**Source**– The post is based on the article “**A Setback for Moscow**” published in **The Indian Express** on **13th September 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS2- International Relations

**News-** The article talks about the important development taking place in the ongoing war between Russia and Ukraine and the dimensions of war that India needs to watch closely.

Recently, Russia suffered a serious setback in Ukraine and was pushed back at some fronts by Ukrainian army.

#### **What are the key events that are happening currently in the war?**

Ukraine’s army has captured some key towns in the northeast of the country that have been under Russian occupation. The latest reports suggest that Ukraine has regained an estimated area of nearly 3,000 sq km.

Russia has formally acknowledged that it has pulled out of a large part of the Kharkiv region and is regrouping for a better defence of its territorial gain in the Donbas region.

Until now, the consensus was in favor of prolonged stalemate between the two sides. Ukraine’s territorial gains in the last few days have made Ukraine’s victory a real possibility. Russia is surely losing ground.

#### **What are the dimensions that India needs to have a close watch?**

**First** is the nature of the debate in Moscow. Until now, domestic political environment has been favorable for Putin in Russia. But now, with the setbacks, this attitude of Russian population might change.

**Second**, Putin will have to recast its military strategy. He has to escalate the offensive to a higher level including the threat to use nuclear weapons. These options carry huge risks.

**Third**, Russian military setbacks could weaken the Russian **sphere of influence**. Major aim of Putin’s Ukraine war is to expand the **Russian zone of influence in Eurasia**.

**Fourth**, Ukraine gain and sustained US pressure could compel European nations to continue their opposition to war. Putin thought that European dependence on Russian natural gas will make it difficult for Europe to sustain its support for Ukraine.

**Fifth**, it can alter the nature of China’s relations with the US and Russia. It will send **strategic ripples** across Eurasia and the Indo-Pacific. Putin and Xi Jinping announced an **alliance “without limits” and “no forbidden areas”**. Beijing has lent political support to Moscow in the war.

#### **What should be India’s strategy?**

Until now, India’s focus has been on managing the economic consequences of the war in Ukraine and limiting its geopolitical impact on India’s security.

The intensive regional summit in Samarkand and the annual session of the UN General Assembly in New York – should give Delhi a close look at the changing dynamics in Ukraine and develop an effective response.



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### 15. [For India, the buzzword now is 'all-alignment'](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article “**For India, the buzzword now is ‘all-alignment’**” published in **The Hindu** on **14<sup>th</sup> September 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 2 – Bilateral, regional and global groupings and agreements involving India and/or affecting India’s interests.

**Relevance:** About India’s all alignment policy.

**News:** In his book the India Way, External Affairs Minister offers a critique of India’s traditional policy of “non-alignment”. He distinguishes between the “optimistic non-alignment” of the past and the more realistic “multiple engagements of the future”.

How India’s participation in the SCO summit is a clear signal of India’s all-alignment policy?

Next year, India will host the SCO summit, and is expected to invite all members — this includes the Chinese President and Pakistan’s Prime Minister. India’s engagement with the upcoming Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit in Samarkand, Uzbekistan highlights India balances various blocs. For instance,

**a)** India is a member of SCO and BRICS and also a member of Quad, groups such as the I2U2 (India-Israel-U.S.-UAE), and the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF).

**b)** India joining the Russian-led ‘Vostok’ Army Exercises along with China, and plans to host SCO-RATS counterterror exercises. On the other hand, the Indian Air Force took part in the Australian ‘Pitch Black’ exercises, and the Indian Army is planning exercises with the U.S. (Yudh Abhyas).

This shows India is the only country that would form the intersection, a part of all of those groupings.

How does India’s all alignment policy function within the SCO grouping and what India can do in the upcoming SCO Summit?

**India’s ties with Russia:** India has refused to heed pleas from the U.S. and Europe to endorse resolutions critical of Russia at the United Nations. India often abstained from voting on the Ukraine crisis. Further, India’s imports of Russian oil jumped from 0.66 million tonnes in the first quarter to 8.42 million tonnes in the second this year.

In the recent [Eastern Economic Forum](#) meeting, India outlines it wants to further strengthen energy ties, building on the \$16 billion investment Indian public sector units already have in Russian oil and gas fields.

**India’s ties with China:** The two leaders of India and China met 18 times between 2014-2019. But have not spoken directly once since the standoff that began in April 2020 between the Indian Army and the People’s Liberation Army (PLA). India-China bilateral ties have come to a virtual standstill on most fronts, with the exception of trade.

During the Doklam conflict, it was a “brush by” meeting between two leaders at the G-20 summit that led to the “breakthrough” in talks. So a similar can happen in the upcoming SCO summit or the G20 Summit.

**India’s engagement with Iran:** The SCO meeting is expected to pitch the Chabahar port terminal India is developing as an important route for trade to Central Asia and Russia.

Further, Iran has asked for India’s support with “above ground” equipment and parts for its plans to extend the rail line from the Afghan border outpost to Turkmenistan, the shortest possible route for India. This is in line with India’s plan to build a connectivity framework that counters the China-Pakistan-Economic Corridor from Gwadar.

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**India's engagement with Pakistan:** The decision by the Pakistan government in 2019 that no trade with India is possible without a reversal of India's Article 370 moves in Jammu and Kashmir has ended formal communication between both the countries.

With Pakistan reeling from massive floods, an economic crisis, and growing worries of an unstable Afghanistan Pakistan might look for a way to hold a conversation with India.

All this shows India fights for its unique brand of multi-alignment or "all-alignment" with partners worldwide, without having to choose between them.

### 16. [The solution to India's stunted improvement on the Human Development Index: Improving access to quality education](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article "The solution to India's stunted improvement on the Human Development Index: Improving access to quality education" published in **The Indian Express** on 14<sup>th</sup> September 2022.

**Syllabus:** GS 2 – Issues relating to development and management of Social Sector/Services relating to education

**News:** United Nation Development Program (UNDP) has released the Human Development Index (HDI) report for 2022.

HDI report involves four indicators with three dimensions — per capita income, health (life expectancy) and education (average and expected years of schooling).

**What are the findings of Human Development Index at the global level?**

The annual rate of progress in HDI which had gone up from 0.7 per cent in the Nineties to 0.8 in the next decade has now declined to half that level during 2010-21.

Higher achievements were recorded by medium and low HDI countries.

The worst affected are Latin America and Caribbean regions whose growth has slumped to 0.3 per cent during 2010-21.

**Why are the concerns for India associated with findings of the reports?**

The performance of India has declined in various categories in comparison to other developing countries for the last decade. The **global HDI rank of India** has slipped from 129 in 2019 to 131 in 2020 and to 132 in 2021-22.

**India's performance in all three dimension of HDI 2021-22 is lower than 2019.** Whereas, in other very-high, high, medium and low HDI countries the decrease is found only in health index.

**India's per capita income in terms of Purchasing Power Parity** has gone down by 5 per cent compared to a 2 per cent increase for the developing countries during 2019 and 2021-22.

The **decline in life expectancy** is sharper for India than for developing countries.

There is a **sharp fall in the expected years of schooling** and there is also high inequality in different dimensions of development.

**Inequality:** According to inequality-adjusted HDI figures, India's rank has gone down from the 132nd to 134th position. This inequality is higher than the average figures for other countries.

However, India has seen decline in health and education inequalities compared to other low and medium HDI countries.

**Health inequality:** India's rank in health inequality has improved during 2010-21 which is better than other low and medium HDI countries.

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Still, the inequalities in health and education are more than twice that of the very high and high HDI countries.

Therefore, **access to quality education** is must for determining the focus of the country's development strategy as it moves towards a 10 trillion dollar economy.

### **What are the issues associated with findings of the HDI report?**

There is a doubt on the calculation methods and data used by UNDP for finding HDI.

We cannot come to the exact conclusion until the robustness of the data used is confirmed.

Therefore, there is an urgency of conducting the population Census and regular national surveys in India.

### 17. On India opting out of IPEF: India must actively pursue trade agreements, not only bilateral ones but also plurilateral pacts

**Source:** The post is based on an article "On India opting out of IPEF: India must actively pursue trade agreements, not only bilateral ones but also plurilateral pacts" published in **The Indian Express** on **14<sup>th</sup> September 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 2 – Bilateral, regional and global groupings and agreements involving India

**News:** India has recently decided to stay away from the trade pillar of Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF).

India also decided to opt out of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) in 2019.

The decision of India from staying away from such multi-trade agreements may be a concern to its trade development.

### **What is Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF)**

#### **Read More about [IPEF](#)**

IPEF offers member countries the option to not participate in all of the given pillars.

Therefore, India has joined the other three pillars (supply chains, tax and anti-corruption and clean energy) and stayed away from the trade pillar.

### **Why has India decided to stay away from the trade pillar of IPEF?**

The government has said that there are several areas of concern such as labor to environmental standards, digital trade, and public procurement.

Further, the terms of the agreements and the benefits that the member countries will get, are also not clear.

These are important concerns however these important concerns should not prevent India to stay away from the trade pillar of the IPEF.

These term and can also be sought in other bilateral agreements.

### **What are the challenges involved with India staying away from trade component?**

This decision of India to opt out of the trade pillar has come at a time when the global economic environment is uncertain and challenging.

The International Monetary Fund has **lowered its forecast for global growth and world trade in goods and services** this year. The issue is low demand and tightening policy of central banks to tackle increasing inflation. This slowdown in trade has already become visible in India's trade statistics.

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The export growth of India slowed down after the country witnessed unexpected exports growth in the first quarter of 2021-22.

### What can be the course of action?

India must take part in the trade agreement of both bilateral and multilateral. It will help in improving trade and exports of the nation.

### 18. [India at 100 should be a society where gender is not used as a tool to exclude](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article “**India at 100 should be a society where gender is not used as a tool to exclude**” published in **The Indian Express** on **14<sup>th</sup> September 2022**.

**Syllabus: GS 2- mechanisms, laws, institutions and Bodies constituted for the protection and betterment of vulnerable sections**

**News:** The article discusses the problems associated with Trans-genders and steps taken by the government to resolve them.

**What steps have been taken by government and court for the welfare of Trans-gender community?**

#### Court

The **NALSA vs Union of India** judgment of 2014 gave equal rights to the transgender community.

It talked about the self-determination of gender, prevention of discrimination in all spheres of life and spoke about positive action for the community.

The **Madras High Court** in a series of judgments has issued orders for reforming queerphobic curricula, banning conversion therapy, issuing a glossary for trans-sensitive media reporting, among others.

#### Government

The Transgender Persons Protection of Rights Act was enacted and its rules were notified in 2019. It led to the **formation of National Council for Transgender Persons** for the first time.

The **Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment is the nodal ministry** for the welfare of transgender persons. It launched social measures like a National Portal for application for Transgender ID cards, the SMILE scheme, etc.

The recent one is **Ayushman Bharat TG Plus card** that provides health insurance for transgender persons including gender-affirming care.

However, all these measures are not enough to improve the condition of trans-gender community and there is still a lot to be done.

### What problems are still faced by the trans-gender community?

The Transgender Persons Act and Rules don't provide for a reservation which was directed in the NALSA judgment.

Many states and UTs have not yet notified rules, or created separate washroom for trans-persons, among others.

Only 2 percent of transgender persons have been issued transgender ID cards which makes them eligible for various social schemes.

Transgender Welfare Boards have also not been constituted in many states and UTs.

The government has also opposed same-sex marriages and abstained from voting at the UN on sexual orientation and gender identity.

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Laws on reproductive health have excluded trans and queers from committing surrogacy, availing artificial reproductive techniques or seeking a legal abortion.

These all show that there is a lot more to be done and India should transform itself from gender biased state towards a gender inclusive state.

### **How should India move forward in recognizing other genders?**

India should not continue excluding a section of society for the way they are born even after 75 years of our Independence.

India should have a society where gender is not used as a tool to exclude, discriminate or harass.

It should be a nation where transgender people are sitting in Parliament or in the assemblies and shaping their destiny.

### 19. [India's great anaemia mystery](#)

**Source**– The post is based on the article “**India's great anaemia mystery**” published in **The Indian Express** on **14th September 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS2- Development and management of health

**News-** The article explains the increase in prevalence of anaemia among women and children despite improvement in other health indicators.

The prevalence of anaemia among women has increased from 53% in 2015 to 57% in 2019-20. Similarly, the percentage of anaemic children has increased from 58% in 2015 to 67% in 2019-20.

### **How WHO defines anaemia?**

Anemia is a condition where the number of red blood cells or the hemoglobin concentration within them is lower than normal.

### **What could be the probable reason behind it?**

**Cereal-centric diets**, with relatively less consumption of iron-rich food groups. However, there is increase in children and women consuming iron dense food from NFHS-4 to NFHS-5. The children consuming an adequate diet has increased from 9.6 percent to 11.3 percent from NFHS-4 to NFHS-5.

**Poor water quality and sanitation conditions.** Sanitation coverage of households has increased from 48.5 percent to 70.2 percent. Households with access to improved drinking water sources improved from 94.4 percent to 95.9 per cent.

**Delivery of health and nutritional interventions.** Women's consumption of folic acid during pregnancy and access to ante-natal check-ups has improved over the last five years

**Women's empowerment** is another factor. But women empowerment has increased during this period

### **Why does the data on anaemia seem anomalous?**

Several factors that are responsible for anaemia have improved since NFHS-4.

All other major undernutrition outcomes like stunting, wasting and underweight have improved over the past four to five years.

### **How to properly understand the reason behind the increase in anaemia?**

There is a need to go beyond haemoglobin and look for some other iron-specific biomarkers, like serum ferritin and marker of inflammation. It will identify the role of iron deficiency as a driver of anaemia.

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Measurement of anaemia should account for non-iron nutritional deficiencies like that of vitamin B12. There is a need for screening for genetic blood disorders, like thalassemia and sickle-cell anaemia.

The NFHS data must be expanded on food consumption to estimate the intake of various micronutrients. We need to compare it against recommended intake.

### 20. [Cloudy prospects for India's youth](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article “**Cloudy prospects for India's youth**” published in **The Business Standard** on **15<sup>th</sup> September 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 2 – Population and associated issues

**News:** India's population is still young with about 55 percent below 30 and over a quarter below 15. However, now it is becoming visible that this dividend is not available for long.

India's billion-strong working age populations have an enormous potential for jobs and economic growth.

However, successive governments have not been able to utilize this potential due to wrong or weak policies and programs. An extremely complex and anti-job-creating maze of labor laws and regulations is prevalent.

#### **What does the data say?**

According to **World Bank** data –

1. The **employment rate** is defined as number of employed divided by the population in the corresponding age category.
2. The employment rate for the 15-24 age groups was 23.2 per cent in India in 2020. It is very low compared to 50.6 per cent in North America, 38.9 per cent in Pakistan and 35.3 per cent in Bangladesh.
3. **The employment rate** for the 15-24 categories had fallen in India from 43.4 per cent in 1994 and 40.5 per cent in 2005 to 23.2 per cent in 2020.

According to the **National Statistical Office (NSO) and Periodic Labour Force Surveys** data, there is a sharp rise in the rate of open unemployment among youth from 5-6 per cent in 2004-05 and 2011-12 to 17-18 per cent in 2017-18 and 2018-19.

**The employment rate of women** is even poorer. **For example**, the employment rate for female youth had declined from 34.9 per cent in 2004-05 to 13.5 per cent in 2017-18.

Furthermore, the **rate of open unemployment among urban female youth** nearly doubled to 27.2 per cent by 2017-18 from 14.9 per cent in 2004-05.

The data on unemployment shows a declining scenario similarly the data on state education systems in the government schools are also not good.

**Annual Survey of Education Reports (ASER)** produced by the Pratham Education Foundation focuses on the education of the younger children only.

According to this report –

4. The result for government schools in 2008 was 53.1 per cent but it has fallen down to 44.2 per cent by 2018.
5. This shows that half of the children are not able to pass in the basic tests.
6. The success ratio for basic numeracy for class 5 students dropped from a 34.4 per cent in 2008 to a disastrous 22.7 per cent in 2018.
7. The success ratio for even standard 7 children was only 40 per cent dropped from 65 per cent in 2008.

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These data varies across different states.

It is the time for government to come up with policies and proper measures to ensure proper education and employment to its growing population.

### 21. [The party's over](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article “**The party's over**” published in **The Business Standard** on **15<sup>th</sup> September 2022**.

**Syllabus:** **GS 2 – Indian Polity – Electoral Reforms**

**News:** The Election Commission (EC) has recently moved to delist 86 unrecognized political parties and declare 253 inactive.

This step is appreciated as it will alert future parties before registering just for some gains.

#### **Why is the importance of this step taken by EC?**

**First**, many of these parties are suspected to have been set up to round-trip black money. Therefore, their removal cuts out one source of money laundering.

**Second, delisting or inactivating dormant parties** prevents the crowding out of the electoral space by non-serious parties.

**Third**, some parties register with EC for only some benefits.

**For example**, candidates belonging to political parties registered by the EC get preference in terms of allotment of free symbols that cannot be used by any other political party in elections across India.

#### **What are the benefits available for recognized national or state political party?**

**First**, recognized state and national parties get two sets of electoral rolls free of cost from the EC. Each candidate contesting general elections also gets a free copy of the electoral rolls.

**Second**, national parties receive land and buildings from the government to establish their party offices.

**Third**, national parties can have up to 40 star campaigners and state parties up to 20. The travel and other expenses of such campaigners are not included in the election expenditure of the party's individual candidates.

**Fifth**, candidates of national parties get free time slots on national and state television and radio.

**Sixth**, all registered parties whether recognized or not are fully exempted from income tax of received donations, income from property, and other capital gains.

#### **What can be further course of action?**

EC should continuously review the state of a large number of political parties that are not actively participating in the democratic process.

Strict scrutiny from EC will discourage people from forming political parties only to take tax concessions and financial gains.

### 22. [Examining the Dolo scandal](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article “**Examining the Dolo scandal**” published in **The Hindu** on **15<sup>th</sup> September 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 2 – Government policies for various sectors

**News:** Recently, a controversy came up regarding the marketing strategies of Micro Labs which is a Bengaluru-based pharmaceutical company.

Micro Labs is the maker of Dolo-650. It was charged of having bribed medical doctors with freebies worth ₹1,000 crore in one year to promote Dolo-650.

Dolo is a paracetamol tablet to help with fever and mild pain.

#### **What are the problems with paracetamol markets In India?**

The paracetamol API is mostly imported from China. There has been an upward pricing pressure because of the difficulty of ensuring regular supply from China.

Paracetamols markets in India are full of competitors.

Therefore, The Drugs (Prices Control) Order (DPCO) has established ceiling prices for over 850 medicines which include the brands of paracetamol.

It makes it difficult for pharma companies to offer freebies to doctors in paracetamol marketing.

Still, Micro Labs took this challenge of offering Rs 1000 crore for the promotion of Dolo.

#### **What could be the reason for offering freebies for the marketing of Dolo?**

There may be two reasons for offering freebies –

8. To increase higher sales at low margins in order to make the valuation look better.
9. For building their brands by higher over-the-counter sales.

However, there might be other reasons for giving freebies as well.

#### **What steps have been taken by the government to stop freebies for doctors?**

The **Uniform Code of Pharmaceuticals Marketing Practices of 2015** prohibits gifts, payments and hospitality benefits to doctors by the medical representatives. However, this code has been fully voluntary since 2015 and there is no enforcement mechanism.

The **Indian Pharmaceutical Alliance** is meant to enforce the code has also given a clean chit to Micro Labs.

Further, the **Income Tax Act, 1961** disallows deductions for payments to doctors and the tax deducted at source (TDS) is applicable for all payments made to doctors.

The **Indian Medical Council (Professional Conduct, Etiquette and Ethics) Regulations, 2002** also prohibits the disbursement of gifts. It may also lead to cancellation of license if found guilty.

#### **What can be the further course of action?**

**First**, prescriptions should be written without brand names. It should be made the normal practice.

Doctors will then have no incentive to promote particular brands. Pharmaceutical companies also will have no incentive to give freebies to doctors.

**Second**, there should be a flat dispensing fee in place of incentives for pharmacists. It will prevent pharmacists from recommending a brand name.



### 23. [The future of old times in India](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article “**The future of old times in India**” published in **The Hindu** on **15<sup>th</sup> September 2022**.

**Syllabus:** **GS 2 – Welfare schemes for vulnerable sections of the population by the Centre and States**

**News:** India has showed remarkable improvements in life expectancy and fertility rate. But it has brought another emerging challenge of ageing population in India.

India needs to take effort and rebuild its social security scheme to ensure a decent quality of life for the elderly in the near future.

#### **What are the problems with ageing population of India?**

According to **National Commission of Population**, share of the elderly (persons aged 60 years and above) in India’s population was close to 9% in 2011 and it is growing fast and may reach 18% by 2036.

According to a recent survey, 30% to 50% of elderly people had symptoms that make them depressed. A large majority of elderly persons living alone are women, especially widows.

Depression is strongly correlated with poverty, poor health, and loneliness.

Cash in the form pension can help to cope with many health issues and avoid loneliness as well.

That is why old-age pensions are a vital part of social security systems around the world.

#### **What steps have been taken by India for its ageing population?**

India has important schemes of non-contributory pensions under the **National Social Assistance Program (NSAP)** for the elderly, widowed women and disabled persons.

However, NSAP is only available to elderly people who belong to Below Poverty Line (BPL). The data of BPL lists are also unreliable as they are too old.

The central contribution to old-age pensions under NSAP is very low at Rs 200 per month for elders and Rs 300 per month for widows since 2006.

However, many states have increased the coverage of social-security pensions beyond NSAP norms using their own funds and schemes.

One of the reasons behind the low coverage of NSAP is that it is based on targets.

#### **What are the problems with targeting or setting limits on social benefits?**

Targeting social benefits is always difficult and is based on household rather than on the individuals. It needs to be corrected because there are many good households where elders and widows may face problems.

Therefore, a pension based on individuals can help them to avoid extreme dependence on relatives.

Targeting also involves complicated formalities such as the submission of BPL certificates and other documents.

These formalities often become problems for less-educated and low-income elders.

There are also other issues with NSAP such as lack of proper awareness, eligibility criteria, lack of implementing mechanism and bureaucratic wills.

#### **What can be done to correct this?**

A better approach should be to consider all widows and elderly or disabled persons as eligible.

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The eligibility can be made self-declared and time-bound verification responsibilities should be placed on the local administration or gram panchayat.

India's social assistance schemes have low budgets and these needs expanding.

For example, the NSAP budget this year was less than 0.05% of India's GDP which is very low compared to the elderly population.

Some states like Odisha and Rajasthan have achieved a near-universal social security pension which is 75%-80% coverage of elderly and widows.

Therefore, other states may also follow this if central government takes efforts to rebuild NSAP.

### **What can be the further course of action?**

India should move from targeted to near-universal pensions as some states have done it.

Social security pension will not be alone sufficient for the elderly as they also need other facilities like health care, disability aids, assistance with daily tasks, etc.

Therefore, the government should research and find possible solutions for its ageing population.

### 24. What unites India and the UK on trade isn't all positive

**Source**– The post is based on the article “**What unites India and the UK on trade isn't all positive**” published in **Live Mint** on **15th September 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS2- International Relations.

**Relevance**– About trade.

**News**- The article explains the economic challenges faced by Britain and similarity with India on the trade front.

### **What are the challenges faced by Britain?**

Britain is facing economic questions like peak inflation rate, high energy bills, higher interest rates.

On political fronts there are increasing calls for a referendum in Scotland. A bill is about to pass in Parliament that seeks to make unilateral arrangements on goods moving between Britain and Northern Ireland, instead of negotiating these disagreements with the EU.

The new PM Truss commitment to cancel a corporate tax hike that would take effect from April 2023. This will impact the fiscal revenue.

The UK had been steadily losing ground to its European partners in terms of both productivity increases and income growth.

According to The Resolution Foundation, the UK performed worse than most European countries from 2007 to 2018 on household spendings with only households in Greece and Cyprus seeing less growth. Incomes rose by 34 percent in France and 27 percent in Germany Compared to the UK.

### **What is the similarity between India and the UK?**

Britain has exited the biggest trade union. India also opted out from RCEP and is seeking clarification before it joins the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework.

The UK has fallen behind most of Europe. India is also lagging behind East Asia in per capita income and human development metrics.

Both the UK and India are led by bureaucrats and politicians with a weak understanding of regional supply chains and how essential they are to boosting exports.

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### 25. [Parliamentary business and an essential pit stop](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article “**Parliamentary business and an essential pit stop**” published in **The Hindu** on **16<sup>th</sup> September 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 2 – Parliament and State legislatures—structure, functioning, conduct of business, powers & privileges.

**Relevance:** About the Department-Related Parliamentary Standing Committees (DRSC).

**News:** The recently concluded monsoon session was adjourned sine die. Parliament had only limited legislative time this session and could pass only five pieces of legislation and referred two bills to the Standing Committee. The Lok Sabha’s productivity was 47% and the Rajya Sabha’s productivity was only 42%.

What are Department-Related Parliamentary Standing Committees (DRSC)?

**Read here:** [Departmentally Related Standing Committees \(DRSCs\)](#)

What is the status of DRSC?

The percentage of Bills having been referred to the DRSCs during the tenures of the 14<sup>th</sup> (2004-2009), 15<sup>th</sup> (2009-2014) and 16<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabhas (2014-2019) has been 60%, 71% and 27%, respectively.

Why does the government have to refer the Bill to DRSCs?

The examination of the Bills by the parliamentary committees is more to the benefit of the Government than the Opposition. This is because **a)** The deliberations in these committees mostly add value to the content of the legislation as the Members discuss the provisions of the bill irrespective of their party positions, **b)** Committee members from both the ruling side and the opposition side have some sort of ownership of the bill as they examine the bill, **c)** As in most of these committees, the government has a majority and the final decision is always by the process of majority voting.

The Bills which are not being referred to the parliamentary committees are considered **a)** Not examined properly, especially from the perspective of consumers and stakeholders. For instance, the three Farm Bills were passed without being referred to the DRSC and had to be withdrawn later, **b)** Remain just a bureaucratically conceived piece of legislation.

**Read more:** [The issues faced by MPs in India in initiating reforms on their own and measures for their empowerment](#)

What should be done?

The following changes could be suggested to be made into procedures meant for consideration of Bills.

**Compulsory reference of Bills:** The process of reference of Bills to these committees compulsory/an automatic process. The Speaker of the Lok Sabha and the Chairman of the Rajya Sabha have powers to refer Bills to a DRSC of Parliament. An exemption could be made with the specific approval of the Speaker/Chairman after detailed reasons for the same.

**Ensure frank and free discussions in DRSCs:** During the discussions of the committee meetings, no whip of the party would apply to them.

**Fixed timeline for DRSCs to come up with the recommendation and present its report:** In case the committee fails to give its recommendation within the approved/extended time, the Bill may be put up before the House concerned directly.

**Ensure quality work in the committee:** Experts in the field may be invited who could bring with them the necessary domain knowledge and also help introduce the latest developments and trends in that field from worldwide.

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**Organise committee meetings for discussions between two sessions:** It is important for the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs to conduct committee meetings between two sessions to critically analyse the bill within the desired timeframe.

**More power to discuss budget proposals:** The committees should not limit themselves to discussing just the budget proposals and endorsing them with a few qualifications or amendments. They should come up with suggestions for the Ministry to take up new initiatives and people-friendly measures.

**Read more:** [The working of DRSCs with suitable examples](#)

### 26. [The Eastern Economic Forum and India's balancing act](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article “**The Eastern Economic Forum and India's balancing act**” published in **The Hindu** on **16<sup>th</sup> September 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 2 – Bilateral, regional and global groupings and agreements involving India.

**Relevance:** About Eastern Economic Forum (EEF).

**News:** Recently, Russia hosted the seventh Eastern Economic Forum (EEF) Vladivostok. The [Prime Minister of India has virtually addressed](#) the Plenary Session.

What is the Eastern Economic Forum?

**Read here:** [Eastern Economic Forum\(EEF\)](#)

The primary objective of the EEF is to increase the Foreign Direct Investments in the RFE.

What is the significance of Russia's Far East (RFE)?

The primary objective of the EEF is to increase the Foreign Direct Investments in the RFE. This is because, **a)** The region encompasses one-third of Russia's territory and is **rich with natural resources** such as fish, oil, natural gas, wood, diamonds and other minerals, **b)** The region has a **sparse population** the EEF aims to encourage people to move and work in the Far East. Despite the abundance and availability of materials, procuring and supplying them is an issue due to the unavailability of personnel, **c)** RFE is **geographically placed at a strategic location**. The region is acting as a gateway into Asia. The Russian government has strategically developed the region with fast modernisation of cities that aims of connecting Russia to the Asian trading routes.

Who are the major actors in the Forum? What are their interests?

This year, the Forum aimed at connecting the Far East with the Asia Pacific region.

**China:** China is promoting the Chinese Belt and Road Initiative and the Polar Sea Route in Russia's Far East (RFE). China's investments in the region account for 90% of the total investments. China is also looking to develop its Heilongjiang province which connects with the RFE.

**Russia and China:** Russia has been welcoming Chinese investments since 2015. The Trans-Siberian Railway has further helped Russia and China in advancing trade ties.

Both Russia and China share a 4000-kilometre-long border, which enables them to tap into each other's resources with some infrastructural assistance.

**South Korea:** South Korea has invested in shipbuilding projects, manufacturing of electrical equipment, gas-liquefying plants, agricultural production and fisheries. In 2017, Korea along with the Far East Development Fund announced their intention to inject \$2 billion into the RFE in a span of three years.

**Japan:** Japan identified eight areas of economic cooperation and pushed private businesses to invest in the development of the RFE. Japan seeks to depend on Russian oil and gas resources.

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Japan also sees a market for its agro-technologies which have the potential to flourish in the RFE.

The trade ties between Japan and Russia are hindered by the Kuril Islands dispute as they are claimed by both countries.

**India:** India is keen to deepen its cooperation in energy, pharmaceuticals, maritime connectivity, healthcare, tourism, the diamond industry and the Arctic. In 2019, India also offered a \$1 billion line of credit to develop infrastructure in the RFE. Through the EEF, India aims to establish a strong inter-state interaction with Russia.

**Read more:** [Explained: Why the Eastern Economic Forum matters for India](#)

What is Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF)?

**Read here:** [IPEF: Indo-Pacific Economic Framework – Explained, pointwise](#)

The IPEF also presents an ideal opportunity for India to act in the region, without being part of the China-led Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership or other regional groupings like the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership.

Can India balance between the EEF and the IPEF?

India has vested interests in both forums and has worked towards balancing its involvement. India understands the benefits of being involved in the development of the RFE but India also perceives the IPEF as a vital platform to strengthen its presence in the Indo-Pacific region.

### 27. [After BCCI vs Supreme Court, it's back to status quo](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article “**After BCCI vs Supreme Court, it's back to status quo**” published in the **Indian Express** on **16<sup>th</sup> September 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 2 – Statutory, regulatory and various quasi-judicial bodies.

**Relevance:** About the recent amendment to BCCI Constitution.

**News:** Recently, the Supreme Court approved the amendments proposed to the BCCI constitution to give office bearers longer terms.

What are the recent modifications done by the court to BCCI Constitution?

**Read here:** [BCCI office-bearers can have two terms before cool-off period](#)

What are the concerns associated with the recent judgement?

1) The original 2016 SC order, based on the Justice RM Lodha committee recommendations, wanted the office-bearers to take a mandatory break after every three-year term. According to Justice RM Lodha, the “cooling off period clause” was “the most important pillar of our report as far as governance and structure of BCCI is concerned” to check monopolies and enforce antitrust regulations.

But, with the current judgement, the office-bearers can remain in a state body and the BCCI together for an unbroken stint of 12 years.

2) There have been three different cooling-off periods — three, six and 12 years — in three SC orders since 2016. FIFA's ultimatum to ban Indian football because of recent court interference might make the judges sceptical about wading into sporting arenas.

3) State units continued to be run as private fiefdoms, and cricketing controversies didn't quite end. For instance, Six years later, the original order of the Supreme Court hadn't gotten implemented by the BCCI.

**Must read:** [SC alters Lodha's BCCI proposals](#)

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28. [Abraham Accords have led to greater regional cooperation, expanding opportunities for India](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article “**Abraham Accords have led to greater regional cooperation, expanding opportunities for India**” published in **The Indian Express** on **16<sup>th</sup> September 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 2

**Relevance:** bilateral relations

**News:** It has been two years of Abraham Accords. It has helped not only the member nations but has also provided various benefits to India as well.

**The article discusses those benefits and highlights the importance of Abraham Accords.**

**What is Abraham Accord and what are its benefits?**

It is collaboration among Israel, the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain brokered by the US.

It aims towards normalisation of ties by bringing Israel closer to the Gulf nations and taking forward the peace initiative.

The benefits of this agreement continue to grow, which can be seen by the deepening people-to-people ties and business opportunities.

New joint ventures are also being undertaken in critical sectors such as clean energy, health, innovation, etc.

It has also worked towards academic collaborations between universities, promoting cultural exchange in the arts field and raising awareness about the shared histories and heritage.

**How Abraham Accords has helped India?**

**Regional connectivity:** Abraham Accords has improved the regional connectivity between the member countries. This regional connectivity has also helped Indians.

- For example, the Indian diaspora in the Gulf can now fly directly from the UAE to Israel or from Israel to Bahrain.

**Economic opportunities:** The Accords have provided for greater regional and multinational cooperation between companies from the UAE, Israel, Bahrain and the United States with the Indian private sector.

**Group formation:** The Accords has helped in the formation of the I2U2 Group. This group is established by Israel, India, the UAE, and the United States.

**What is I2U2 and its benefits?**

I2U2 focuses on joint investments in water, energy, transportation, space, health, and food security between the member countries.

The member countries will try to mobilize private sector capital and expertise to help modernise infrastructure, decarbonise industries, etc. in India.

I2U2 combines the strengths and resources of each member country to find innovative solutions to rising global challenges.

It will also serve as a model for multilateral cooperation with other like-minded countries.

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### 29. Climate action that runs on cooperative federalism

**Source:** The post is based on an article “Climate action that runs on cooperative federalism” published in **The Hindu** on **16<sup>th</sup> September 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 2

**News: India has decided to** buy 5,450 buses with an ambitious target to have 50,000 e-buses on the country’s roads by 2030. It shows India’s efforts towards climate goals.

Rapid electrification is a key pillar of India’s public transportation. This pillar has a potential to reduce India’s pollution and its import bill.

#### **What is the current situation of state buses and the problems associated with them?**

There are currently around 1,40,000 registered public buses on India’s roads.

Around 40,000 of these buses are at the end of their lifespan and their operation must be immediately stopped.

Most of the buses are owned by State transport undertakings and all these are in poor financial condition.

These buses run in losses due to the subsidised fares. State Transport undertakings pay high prices when they buy the buses in the market.

Furthermore, there are limitations to nation-wide laws on the issue of state governments control on transport, urban governance and pollution control.

However, cooperative federalism can play an important role in tackling these issues.

#### **How cooperative federalism has helped in the decision to buy buses?**

**Grand Challenge 1** is a great example of cooperative federalism. Under Grand Challenge 1, a unified tender for 5,450 buses (across five major Indian cities — Kolkata, Delhi, Bengaluru, Hyderabad and Surat) was issued.

This is for the 1<sup>st</sup> time that a unified tender to address the challenging issue of climate change, has been issued.

Convergence Energy Services Limited (CESL), a nodal agency of the Union government in collaboration with State-led demand and customisation acted as the programme manager in this effort of centralised procurement.

This coordination among central and state governments led to the finding of the low price required to operate the buses.

**For example**, on a cost-per-kilometre basis, the prices discovered were 40% lower than diesel and 34% less than CNG (without factoring in the subsidy through FAME-II).

#### **What is FAME?**

#### **What led to the success of this unified tender?**

This change in unified tender was enabled by three key factors a) collaboration, b) pace, and c) transparency.

**First**, the tender was a fully consultative process. The different contributions by participants helped in influencing the design of future tenders also.

**Second**, there was a sense of climate urgency that shaped this collaboration.

**Third**, transparency was the strongest aspect of this tender. There was clarity about the intention to build trust and build a publicly available process that invited bids from automakers and operators.

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Therefore, excessive centralization can have limitations and contradict the federal principles enshrined in the Constitution.

### **How decentralization decision can help in improving the climate conditions?**

Indian states and districts vary vastly in their vulnerability to climate impacts.

Decentralized decision-making and locally-led adaptation will help reduce possible damage to lives and livelihoods.

Urban local bodies and gram panchayats can be the heart of climate action and they can be consulted in the decision making process.

However, centralised procurement and programme management can deliver huge transformations in certain areas. Because, states lack size and financial power for electrification of mass mobility.

Although a good start has been made still much work remains to be done to enable the electrification of mass mobility in India.

### **What can be the further course of action?**

The country's shift to clean public transportation will require a range of efforts.

**First**, it will require increasing the manufacturing capacity of domestic battery production, building out charging infrastructure among others.

**Second**, effort on cooperative federalism can play an important role to fulfil the ambitious targets for green and inclusive economic development in India.

## 30. [A Tale Of American Gullibility And Pakistani Deceit](#)

**Source**– The post is based on the article “**A Tale Of American Gullibility And Pakistani Deceit**” published in **The Times of India** on **16th September 2022**.

**Syllabus**: GS2- International Relations

**News**– The article explains the sale of US military weapons to Pakistan and changing dynamics of US-Pakistan relationship.

Recently the US decided to provide a sustenance package for the Pakistan F-16 fleet. It announced foreign military sales to Pakistan worth \$450 million.

### **What are the reasons given by US for military sale?**

According to the USA, military sales support the foreign policy and national security objectives of the US. It provides interoperability in counterterrorism efforts. It will not alter the basic military balance in the region”.

After Pakistan was designated a **Major Non-Nato Ally** to secure its cooperation on global war on terror, USA sold 36 F-16 in 2006.

### **Why Trump presidency Changed the US policy?**

Trump's administration accused Pakistan of providing “**safe haven to terrorists**”.

It lashed out at Pakistan for its “**lies and deceit**”.

US suspended \$900 million in aid to Pakistan and froze \$225 million foreign military sale for 2017. It demanded decisive action against groups, including Afghan Taliban and the Haqqani Network.

In the backdrop of the Balakot incident, the US warned Pakistan about the use of F-16.



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Pakistan has a proven record of the misuse of US military equipment against India.

### **What are the changing dynamics of Pakistan relations with the USA and China?**

China has replaced the US as the primary strategic partner of choice for Pakistan.

China accounted for 53% of Pakistan's arms imports between 2002-21 as compared to 20% from the US.

Washington thinks that military sales to Pakistan do not alter the power balance in the region.

The US image in Pakistan is deteriorating. Imran Khan accused USA hand in his ouster.

### **What is the strategy of Pakistan?**

Pakistan army is concerned about deepening strategic partnership between USA and India. It is trying to improve its relationship with USA.

### 31. [Strategic autonomy: India's membership of SCO serves its interests and is not at odds with its other alliances](#)

**Source**– The post is based on the article “**Strategic autonomy: India's membership of SCO serves its interests and is not at odds with its other alliances**” published in **The Times of India** on **16th September 2022**.

**Syllabus**: GS2- Regional and global grouping

**Relevance**– About SCO

**News**-The article explains the relevance of SCO for India.

PM Modi is attending the 22nd summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation.

### **What are some facts about SCO?**

SCO accounts for 40% of the global population and 30% of GDP.

Majority of SCO members have a pronounced anti-western position.

### **What is its significance for India and what are the limitations?**

SCO is important from the perspective of India's **strategic autonomy**. For example, during the Ukraine crisis, we imported crude oil from both US and Russia.

SCO is a reminder of **pragmatism in foreign policy** that we can have an economic relationship with adversaries. For example, both Japan and Australia, despite being members of Quad, have close economic integration with China.

### **What are the limitations?**

Gains from SCO will be limited on account of China. Given the structural nature of disputes between them, bilateral meetings on the sidelines of the summit will not be successful.

### 32. [A Civilisational Diplomacy](#)

**Source**– The post is based on the article “**A Civilisational Diplomacy**” published in **The Indian Express** on **16th September 2022**.

**Syllabus**: GS2- International Relations.

**Relevance**– About Foreign policy of India.

**News**– The article explains the foreign policy choices of India and changing Chinese opinion about our foreign policy.

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PM Modi and President Xi Jinping are meeting for the first time in the post-Covid world, at the 22nd Council of Heads of State of the SCO

### **What is the changing Chinese opinion about foreign policy of India?**

The visible change in Chinese public opinion about India is due to **India's principled stand** on the Ukraine crisis and assertion of an **independent foreign policy**.

The Chinese strategic community views Modi as being politically astute in pursuing India's national interests by **balancing relations with major powers**.

Chinese social media voices draw attention to India using media platforms alongside **official diplomacy** to convey Indian viewpoints, and expose the fallacy in the Western arguments.

Many in China also believe that Beijing should have pursued a similar **balanced approach** to the Ukraine conflict.

India's stance on Ukraine has generated a positive mood in China that may help resolve the on-going disputes between India and China.

### **What are the foreign policy choices of present government?**

As per present government policies, both Russia and China are **civilisational states**. Complete weakening of either of them may have implications for India's external security. This view stems from the weakening **Asian civilisation** against western dominance.

### **What are the implications of these foreign policy choices?**

Due to foreign policy choices, India can have good relations with both Russia and China despite both having different world outlook.

This outlook has enabled India to have a **prudent diplomatic approach**. It denies the charges of India going very close to western powers.

### 33. [How Supreme Court can redeem itself in India's 65-year battle against electoral corruption](#)

**Source**– The post is based on the article **“How Supreme Court can redeem itself in India's 65-year battle against electoral corruption”** published in **The Print** on **17th September 2022**.

**Syllabus**: GS2- Salient features of representation of people act.

**Relevance**– About electoral bonds

**News**– The article explains electoral bonds.

The roots of all political corruption lie in electoral funding. In 2017, electoral Bonds were legalised with the Union Budget taking effect.

The Supreme Court is going to hear this matter very soon.

### **What is the Supreme Court stand?**

In 2019, SC passed an interim order. The interim order was indecisive. Since then, there has been a delay of three and half years in hearing the case.

In his interim order, SC observed that there should be some transparency. They asked political parties to submit the details of donation through these electoral bonds to the Election Commission in a sealed envelope.

### **How does it work?**

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A donor goes to the State Bank of India. He buys the electoral equivalent of a bearer cheque or bond. These are given away to the party of their choice. The party would deposit it into a designated bank account

### What arguments were given in favour of electoral bonds?

The Union Finance Minister during its introduction conceded that it was a partial reform. It was the first step to resolve the issue of black money in electoral funding.

The parties have incentives in buying electoral bonds through electoral bonds as they were tax-exempt.

### What are the issues with electoral bonds?

It brings **anonymity** to electoral funding. It takes away the voters' right to know the source of electoral funding.

Parties make policies in favour of persons purchasing electoral bonds rather than voters who put their faith in these parties.

### 34. [Eat and learn](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article “Eat and learn” published in **The Hindu** on **17<sup>th</sup> September 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 2 – Welfare schemes for vulnerable sections of the population

**News:** Recently, the Tamil Nadu government has come with **free breakfast scheme** for schoolchildren.

This scheme will take care of hunger, the calorific requirements, and energy and micronutrient requirements of the children.

This breakfast scheme is important for the children as there are many benefits of the breakfast.

### What are the benefits of the breakfast for children?

Studies show that there are many benefits of eating breakfast regularly. They are –

5. It improves the student's affecting ability to focus, learn and retain information positively. This leads to the improvement of the performance in the schools.
6. A regular breakfast also takes care of the diet quality like micronutrient sufficiency, anaemia and height and weight issues in children among others.

### What can be the further course of action?

Pilferage, poor quality of food, delays in sanctioning funds, and caste-related disruptions should be avoided.

Other states can also learn from Tamil Nadu to enact the free breakfast scheme to ensure the growth and development of the children.

# General Studies Paper – 3

General Studies - 3

1. [Profitability of apple farming: The crisis of apple farmers](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article “**The crisis of apple farmers**” published in **The Hindu** on **12<sup>th</sup> September 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 3 – Major crops-cropping patterns in various parts of the country.

**Relevance:** About the non-profitability of apple farming.

**News:** Apple growers in Himachal Pradesh are protesting due to the non-profitability of apple farming.

What are the reasons behind the non-profitability of apple farming?

In the 1970s and 1980s, the Himachal Pradesh provided a lot of support to apple production. Such as setting up nurseries and giving plants to farmers on a large scale, offering a transport subsidy on cartons, providing heavy concession on tools, etc. Land reforms restricted the transfer of land to non-agriculturist of Himachal Pradesh.

But in the 1990s, with rising fragmentation of land, low productivity and withdrawal of state support, apple agriculture became unsustainable.

This resulted in **a)** Increasing cost of apple production, **b)** Input cost of fertilizers, insecticides, and fungicides have risen by 300% in the last decade, **c)** Increase in the cost of apple cartons and trays and packaging. For example, increase in the Goods and Services Tax on cartons from 12% to 18%.

All this made farmers sell their produce to big buyers instead of selling it in the open market. The big growers have also started to shift from the conventional varieties to more genetically modified varieties called the spur, most of which are imported from European nations.

**Read more:** [Artificial Intelligence powered solutions can enable farmers to do more with less and improve farm productivity](#)

How does apple procurement by large players make apple farming non-profitable?

In the open market, the price of apple is decided on the basis of an apple carton. Large players do not buy apples in cartons; they procure them in plastic trays and decide the rate on the basis of a kilogramme.

Unlike in the open market, where apples of all varieties/grades are procured, the large players only procure apples of high quality. Such apples don't constitute even 20%-30% of the total production in a harvest. Further, large players also bring in a substantial fall in procurement prices across the market.

**Note:** *Jammu and Kashmir ensure legally guaranteed procurement at a Minimum Support Price. But in States such as Himachal Pradesh, the MSP is absent for apple farmers.*

**Read more:** [Pineapple Agroforestry Systems can Address Twin Challenges of Climate Change and Biodiversity Loss](#)

What should be done to ensure the profitability of apple farming?

**Formation of an independent body:** A statutory body must be formed. Such a body should **a)** Have representatives of apple growers, market players, commission agents and the government, **b)** Conduct research in the apple economy, **c)** duly support and trusted by the farmers.

## 2. Lending Transparency

**Source**– The post is based on the article “**Lending Transparency**” published in The **Business Standard** on **12th September 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS3- Indian Economy

**News-** The article explains the concerns related to loan apps and issues related to recent RBI exercise of vetting loan apps.

The Finance Ministry has asked the RBI to check digital loan apps and compile a “whitelist”. The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MEITY) has been asked to coordinate with the RBI and service providers such as Google Play and Apple App Store to ensure that only loan apps on the RBI whitelist are available for download.

### **What are the concerns related to loan apps?**

These applications provide loans to vulnerable, tech-illiterate people, and low-income groups at **exorbitant interest rates with hidden processing fees and charges**.

Lenders also use **predatory loan recovery practices** involving blackmailing and criminal intimidation.

There is also the possibility of **money laundering** and tax evasions.

There are also concerns related to **indebtedness of households**. The RBI data shows the financial indebtedness of households was 40% of GDP in May 2021.

### **What can be done by the RBI?**

It can create a checklist of information pertaining to interest rates, fees and other charges, all of which should be clearly published by any loan app.

It could set ceilings on interest rates and impose penalties for violations.

**For data protection**, the RBI could check the apps that collect more data than strictly necessary to generate credit scores and process loans, and that all such data are collected with permissions, and not shared with other entities. It could publish such data-collection standards in the interests of public safety.

It should work with the Income Tax Department and other departments to detect the cases of money-laundering.

However, the RBI must ensure that it does not exclude legitimate players by setting complicated, opaque standards for whitelisting. It must also ensure that its process of approval or rejection is prompt and offer reasons to the applicant in cases of refusal.

### **What can be done by other organs of government?**

To prevent use of strong arm tactics to extract money from borrowers, executive and the judiciary need to ensure that citizens are not harassed, while accelerating processes of loan recovery.

MEITY could coordinate with Apple and Google to ensure non-compliant apps are kept off these stores.

To prevent “side-load” apps that can be installed by sending a link bypassing Apple and Google app stores, we should educate potential borrowers to avoid these practices.

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### 3. [Making In India. But How?](#)

**Source**– The post is based on the article “**Making In India. But How?**” published in **The Times of India** on **12th September 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS3- Indian Economy

**Relevance**– About our Production Linked Incentive Scheme.

**News-** The article explains the Production Linked Incentive Scheme and its future scope.

Production Linked Incentive scheme (PLI), intended to create a sustainable manufacturing base in India.

#### **What is the need for the PLI scheme?**

It starts from the premise that India manufactures too little because it suffers from a competitive disadvantage of around 8. 5-11% on account of factors such as lack of adequate infrastructure, high cost of finance; inadequate availability of quality power; neglect of R&D; and the inadequate skills of Indian workers.

Since addressing these weaknesses will take time, the government wants a faster alternative.

GoI through PLIs offer manufacturers a government payment of some percentage, provided they meet incremental investment and sales targets.

#### **Who pays?**

The Indian customer pays a higher price because of tariffs if parts are imported

The Indian taxpayer pays for subsidies, not just to Indian firms that are selected for PLI but also to international manufacturers.

#### **How many jobs are being created?**

There is no data available on that. We can have a look at imports and export data in the telecommunication sector.

In the last third of 2019 before PLI was introduced , exports were \$1. 6 billion and imports \$4. 4 billion. In the last third of 2021 after PLI was introduced, exports were \$2. 7 billion and imports \$5.

So exports have gone up substantially, but they were already trending up before PLI.

On the other hand, imports were trending down, and now are trending up, which is consistent with PLI encouraging manufacturers to import parts so long as the final assembly is done in India.

#### **What are the main concerns related to the scheme?**

1. The producers can shift their production to countries having better investment climates like Vietnam, when PLI ends and achieve scale economies without incurring disadvantages given the small investment required to meet PLI eligibility. There will be little incentive for them to continuously operate in India.
2. Manufacturers could continue to produce, but will require continued tariff and subsidy protection.
3. If PLI-induced domestic production does not become globally cost-competitive, it will reduce exports in other sectors. For example, high cost domestically produced semiconductor through PLI incentives will reduce the competitiveness of two wheeler exports that rely on chips.

There is a need to enhance human capital investment, a feasible land acquisition process, strengthening infrastructure and a predictable tax regime.

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### 4. [China's property bust holds lessons for India](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article “China’s property bust holds lessons for India” published in **The Business Standard** on 13<sup>th</sup> September 2022.

**Syllabus:** GS 3 – Industries and industrial policy

**News: Decline of** China’s property market has become a serious concern for it. It also holds important lessons for India.

One of the reasons for the decline of property market in China is limiting the leverage to it. The step has been taken by Chinese government to protect the financial system.

#### **What are the current situations of the private property markets in China?**

The real estate sector has been one of the major growth drivers for the Chinese economy over the last decade. But the property sector has seen the steepest decline in over 30 years.

Sales in China’s property market is stuck at 80 per cent of the pre-pandemic levels and show no signs of picking up.

Covid pandemic and government strict credit measures also declined private property markets. Property sales in China this year are the lowest level since 2015.

The majority of apartments in China are built on a pre-sell model by developers. But this model has failed due to lack of confidence among buyers. Buyers have lost faith in the developers that they will complete projects or deliver apartments.

These financial problems have forced developers to suspend construction activity and stop new projects.

Still, Chinese economy has grown due to exports and infrastructure spending despite the decline in the real estate sector.

However, the present economic situation of China will not help it to achieve the 5.5 per cent target set for 2022.

#### **What will be the consequences of slowing property markets in China?**

The commodity prices will be impacted in China if construction continues declining.

There will be the divergence of monetary policy between China and most of the developed world.

**For example,** now the US and EU are tightening policy and financial conditions to fight inflation while China is cutting rates to increase property markets and stabilize its economy.

The US Treasury bond yields are now higher than Chinese government bonds and this yield gap will only grow in the future which will weaken the Chinese currency.

A weakening Chinese currency will put pressure on other emerging market (EM) currencies and no country would like to lose competitiveness to China.

#### **What is the current real estate market situation in India and what lesson India can learn from China?**

It suggests how much the real estate sector can be a stimulating factor for the economy and how much it can slow down the economy if it is not working well.

**For example, after IL&FS crisis** Real estate sector in the India was deprived of funding increasing defaulting builders and real estate NPAs.

However, the real estate in India is booming now due to various reforms brought by the government.

Therefore, India should also focus on the real estate sectors with proper reforms and credit access in the future.



### 5. [Battling Global Crises Locally](#)

**Source**– The post is based on the article “**Battling Global Crises Locally**” published in **The Times of India** on **13th September 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS3- Environmental Pollution and Degradation. GS2- Development and management of health

**News**– The article explains the difficulty in collective response at international level, as seen in the case of Covid and climate change. Thus, national level policy responses are required to compensate for it.

**What are the challenges associated with collective response at international level and how can it be resolved?**

Benefits of global public goods like climate change are enjoyed by other countries also due to its spillover effects in terms of reduced global warming.

But the burden falls exclusively on countries reducing emission levels, they are not even incentivized to reduce emissions. Thus, countries pass on this responsibility to each other.

The only way to solve the problem is through international cooperation. **UNFCCC** is an example of joint understanding at international level. The result has been significant yet insufficient progress toward reducing the danger of global warming.

**What are the current challenges faced by the existing global framework to fight climate change collectively?**

According to its latest **IPCC assessment**, beyond 2020, the world can add only another 500 billion metric tons of carbon to the existing stock. It will cap the increase in temperature at 1.5°C above its pre-industrial level.

But China, US, EU, UK, India, Russia and Japan alone would end up adding 594 billion metric tons of carbon to the atmosphere before bringing their net emission to zero under their nationally determined commitments.

The US and EU-28 account for more than 45% of the existing carbon stock in the atmosphere. They have less than 15% share in the world population and have the highest living standards in the world.

Therefore, the remaining carbon space of 500 billion metric tons can be allocated to poorer nations.

**How was the collective global response against Covid pandemic?**

Given its global public goods nature, no single country could eradicate the infection fully on its own because there was threat of its reappearance as long as the virus remained active in other countries. Therefore, it was beneficial for countries that discovered vaccines against coronavirus to share it with other countries. Yet, there was limited response to it.

**What are the suggestions for countries?**

When it comes to global public goods, countries must take supplementary actions at the national level to compensate for suboptimal actions at the international level.

According to a recent book by public servants.

India must expand its production of solar and wind energy. It will not just meet its NDC obligations but also to satisfy the extra demand for Air conditioning that would arise from emission-induced increases in temperatures. States will have to play a critical role in promoting **climate resilient livestock production, climate-smart agriculture and water conservation.**

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Response to pandemic will have to become an integral part of future **disaster risk management strategy** of India. It will have to include developing systems to minimize the spillover effects of epidemics from outside of national borders.

### 6. [India Industrial Production Index is not beyond repair](#)

**Source**– The post is based on the article “**India Industrial Production Index is not beyond repair**” published in **Live Mint** on **13th September 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS3- Indian Economy

**News-** The article explains the discrepancies in IIP data and suggestions to improve it.

Various analyses have shown that IIP has understated growth in industrial output over the last decade and its unreliability.

#### **Which are the studies conducted on IIP related issues?**

Rangarajan Commission in 2001 was the first official panel to flag serious discrepancies in IIP data.

Committee on financial sector assessment by the RBI and Union government in the mid 2000s reiterated the concerns.

National Statistical Commission appointed N.S. sastry for conducting audit of IIP data. It found problems with collection and validation of data.

The Parliamentary standing committee asked for another review in 2012.

The Suamitra Chaudhari panel was set up in 2014.

The National Statistical Commission on real sector statistics in 2018 by Sudipto Mandle raised concerns about IIP reliability and understating growth in industrial output.

A 2020 working panel by some economists raised the issue of bizarre growth in some components of IIP.

#### **What are the issues with the current system?**

Post-liberalisation, there is broader erosion in state capacity to track private sector growth.

There is a lack of a comprehensive and dynamic firm level database. The existing

One from the economic census to the MCA-21 are not representative of the entire industrial sector.

There is a lack of effective statistical leadership. The Statistical Ministry is not able to coordinate raw IIP data spread across various Ministries.

Lack of capability with statisticians to validate raw data before accepting it as meaning statistics.

#### **How to make improvements in the IIP index?**

Monthly release of index should include number of sampling and no-corresponding units for each item.

GST database can be used. An accurate and dynamic business register is needed.

New databases need to be tested and release in a validated database for public feedback before being plugged into the statistical system.

Statistical governance and disclosure norms need to be improved.

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### 7. [RBI paper on Climate action has suggestions worthy of adoption.](#)

**Source**– The post is based on the article “**RBI paper on Climate action has suggestions worthy of adoption**” published in The **mint** on **13th September 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS3- Environmental Pollution and Degradation.

**Relevance**– About global public goods that benefit the whole world population.

**News**– The article is about the climate risk discussion paper that encourages the financial sector to prioritise green-transition financing and ensure long term system stability by addressing the threats of climate change.

#### **What the consultation paper talk about?**

The paper explains **physical climate impact risk** and **transition loss risk** in the financial sector.

It provides broad guidance, good practice for regulated entities in the financial sector about **governance, strategy, processes** and **risk management structure** to address climate risk.

It emphasises on financing opportunities available for climate transition. To have foreign financing in environmentally sustainable business will require incentivisation of green transition from linear economy model to circular economy model.

#### **What are the suggestions put up in the paper?**

Extreme weather events and India rank among 10th worst affected countries in climate risk index calls for quick action.

**Quantitative and qualitative issues**-Both need to be incorporated in **climate risk mitigation strategies**. We need to take a **balanced approach** as regulated entities are saddled with capital commitments, liquidity buffers, cash reserve requirements and CSR requirements.

#### **Qualitative issues-**

- Asking for information on climate-impact parameters from corporates during the credit appraisal stage should be mandated.
- strength the **capital buffers** and incentivise the sectors that contribute less towards climate change through **lower risk capital weightage**.
- Due to the absence of data on climate change default probabilities, **stress testing, forecasts or scenario analysis** could be used as short term methodology for loss estimates of lending.

#### **Quantitative issues-**

- Sector and region-wise concentration needs progressive rationalisation.
- For reduction in scope 1 emissions i.e., direct emissions by entity and scope 2 emissions i.e., indirect emission like from electricity it buys, investment should be incentivized. It will reduce their carbon footprints by renewable energy and lower carbon footprints across data centres.
- There is a need for an increase in regulated entities financing for newer decarbonisation technology, green hydrogen and renewable energy and reducing the financial entities exposure to polluting industries and promoting lending to cooling technology providers.
- For banks, there is a need to incentivise sustainable financing via risk weight concessions and realignment of PSL guidelines. Climate financing should make up part of 40% PSL targets.
- For regulated entities that meet short of target, there is a need for a mechanism for issuing climate transition certificates on lines of carbon credits.

Ultimately, corporations and regulated entities need to **embed sustainability at the core of their business**.

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### 8. [Connecting the dots to boost the patent ecosystem](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article “**Connecting the dots to boost the patent ecosystem**” published in **The Hindu** on **14<sup>th</sup> September 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 3 – issues relating to intellectual property rights.

**Relevance:** About India’s patent ecosystem.

**News:** The recent report of the Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister (EAC-PM), ‘Why India Needs to Urgently Invest in its Patent Ecosystem?’, highlights the significance of a robust patent system for a knowledge economy and for the promotion of technological innovations.

What are the key findings of the report on India’s patent ecosystem?

The rising share of residents in the total number of patent applications filed in India has more than doubled during the last decade.

For the first time, the number of patent applications by residents has surpassed that of foreign applications during the last quarter of the financial year 2021-22.

What are the suggestions of the report to improve India’s patent ecosystem?

The report expressed the long pendency of processing patent applications in India as a major concern. So the report suggested **a)** Increasing the efficiency of processing patent applications, **b)** Investigate the patent ecosystem more closely to connect the dots so that appropriate measures are adopted to improve the patent ecosystem.

What are the other concerns in India’s patent ecosystem?

**Increasing abandoned applications:** The total number of patent applications to the Indian patent office has increased by 48% between 2010-11 and 2020-21. Similarly, the number of abandoned patent applications also increased by almost 350% during this period.

These applications do not meet the requirements under Sections 9(1) and 21(1) of the Patents Act.

The applicants did not refile or submit specifications due to **a)** applicants are not confident, **b)** the long pendency discouraging applicants from following up on their applications.

**Incentives to file patents and associated issues:** Since the National Intellectual Property Rights Policy 2016, a lot of emphasis has been attached to the filing of patent applications. This resulted in encouraging the filing of patent applications even when the innovator knows that their claims will not pass scrutiny.

**India’s poor performance in industry-academia collaboration:** India’s score for the industry-academia collaboration indicator has declined over the last few years, from 47.8 in 2015 to 42.7 in 2021. Consequently, India’s ranking in this indicator in the GII declined from 48 to 65 during this period.

**Note:** India’s improvements in some other indicators have resulted in India’s overall ranking in the GII improving from 81 in 2015 to 46 in 2021.

The draft of the National Auto Policy 2018 points out that collaboration between the industry and academia in India has been limited to niche research areas that have low commercial significance.

What should be done to improve India’s patent ecosystem?

To improve India’s patent ecosystem, India needs to **a)** Eliminate perverse incentives in the system that promote patent filing, **b)** Fasten the entire patent filing system, **c)** Promote the quality of patent applications and **d)** Increase the collaboration between academia and industry.

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### 9. [About the draft Indian Ports Bill of 2022: An improved Bill, but still contentious](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article “**An improved Bill, but still contentious**” published in **The Hindu** on **14<sup>th</sup> September 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 3 – Infrastructure – Ports.

**Relevance:** About the draft Indian Ports Bill of 2022.

**News:** The draft Indian Ports Bill of 2022 will replace the Indian Ports Act of 1908.

What is the performance of Indian major and non-major ports?

India has 12 major ports and 212 non-major ports. Most of the non-major ports are small fishing harbours and only a few of them cater to international shipping.

Major ports figure in the Union List and come under the jurisdiction of the Central government. Non-major ports are in the Concurrent List and come under the respective State governments.

Data show that non-major ports have fared much better than major ports. Between 1993-94 and 2021-22, the share of the total cargo of non-major ports went up from 8% to 45%, and the CAGR of cargo traffic of non-major ports was 14% compared to the 4.8% of major ports.

Major ports performed various port functions with their own staff and equipment. States developed non-major ports almost entirely on a public-private partnership (PPP) basis. For instance, Gujarat developed India’s first private port, largest captive port, largest commercial multipurpose port, etc.

**Maritime State Development Council (MSDC):** It serves as an apex advisory body for the coordinated development of major ports and non-major ports. It has met only 18 times in the last 25 years.

What are the issues associated with the draft Indian Ports Bill of 2021?

A few major provisions of the [draft Indian Ports Bill of 2021](#) are, the bill **a)** Give statutory status along with wide-ranging powers and functions to the MSDC, **b)** Make MSDC a permanent body with its own office, staff, accounts and audit, **c)** Empower the MSDC to formulate a national plan, to be notified in the official gazette, for the development of major and non-major ports, **d)** Order an appropriate inquiry if any port contravenes the national plan, and **e)** Empowered the Centre to make a port non-operational if it was not in consonance with the national plan.

The maritime States oppose the 2021 bill as they thought **1)** A statutory-cum-permanent MSDC will curtail their powers to develop and manage non-major ports, **2)** The bill reflects Socialist-era issues of Central planning and Inspector Raj.

What are the changes in the draft Indian Ports Bill of 2022?

The Bill dropped or toned down many of the 2021 bill provisions. However, the Bill **a)** Retained the MSDC as a statutory-cum-permanent body, **b)** Authorise the Central government to entrust any administrative and financial functions to the MSDC.

What are the challenges with the draft Indian Ports Bill of 2022?

**Does not resolve the main issue of disagreement between the Centre and the maritime States:** A statutory-cum-permanent MSDC will make the better performing non-major port struggle with the issues of major ports. It will choke future development of non-major ports and stifle novel initiatives by the maritime States.

**Ensure that the composition of the MSDC is in favour of the Centre:** The Bill makes five Secretaries and one Joint Secretary to the Government of India, besides the administrators of the coastal UTs, as members. Further, the vote of an officer is also counted the same as the vote of a Minister.

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What should be done to make the draft Indian Ports Bill of 2022 holistic?

**1)** Like the Goods and Services Tax Council, the MSDC should consist only of the concerned Ministers of the Union and maritime States/UTs; officers should only be special invitees.

**2)** Ports in Germany, the US and China are managed at the municipal and regional levels. A 2011 World Bank Report, 'Regulation of the Indian Port Sector', observed that non-major ports are perceived as "more business-oriented, customer friendly, cheaper and in general more efficient."

So the Centre should understand that the ports are best managed by local and regional governments.

**3)** The draft Bill relating to the MSDC must be scrapped and the MSDC should remain an apex advisory body.

Overall the centre should work towards greater decentralisation, deregulation, corporatisation and private sector participation.

### 10. [An opportunity for India Inc](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article "**Connecting the dots to boost the patent ecosystem**" published in **The Hindu** on **14<sup>th</sup> September 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 3 – changes in industrial policy and their effects on industrial growth.

**Relevance:** About Indian business activities.

**News:** At present, businessmen are seen not as wealth creators but as nation builders. Corporate India receives trust, goodwill and confidence from the nation, and it must provide returns to the nation in equal measure.

What is the present state of Indian business activities?

**Challenges with corporate:** Corporate India focuses on brand power, digital technology, talent pools, scales of operations, and global connectivity. So, Corporate India's response to the country's job crisis has been more symbolic than substantial.

**Challenges with the Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs):** **a)** Much of India's blue-collar employment is generated in SMEs and in its sprawling gig economy. The jobs thus created are sub-optimal with low wages and unstable working conditions, **b)** Some 45% of India's manufacturing takes place in garments units, hazardous chemical factories and in unsafe engineering workshops.

What should be done to improve Indian business activities?

**1) Learn from Taiwan:** Technology and innovation in Taiwan has transformed its low-level economy into a part of a global value chain. Taiwanese SMEs which manufactured cotton shirts, plastic flowers and wooden toys are now producing memory chips and laptops and assembling smartphones.

The Government's ONDC (Open Network for Digital Commerce) and collaboration from other corporate can also transform Indian SMEs.

**2)** India's SME sector needs to modernise itself with the help of digital technology, professional management and better scale of operations.

**3)** India's corporate sector can extend a helping hand across the aisle to help the SMEs achieve a transformation. This helping hand should be market-driven and backed by a strong value proposition.

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4) Indian food is popular worldwide. However, India has not been able to create a McDonald's or KFC to bring Indian food to the world stage as a global business in scale and sophistication. So, the corporates has to utilise this space.

5) Across the world, the informal sector is steadily evolving into the formal sector in partnership with the organised industry which is creating innovative business models. For instance, Uber, Ola, etc. This model could now be replicated in other situations. This can create a win-win situation for both corporates and informal sector.

Mahatma Gandhi's insight that "what we need is not mass production, but production by the masses" must be an enlightened vision of Indian business.

### 11. [Don't curb rice exports in anxiety over evidence](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article "**Don't curb rice exports in anxiety over evidence**" published in **The Live Mint** on **14<sup>th</sup> September 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 3 – Major crops-cropping patterns in various parts of the country

**News:** Recently the Centre has imposed a 20% export duty on some varieties of rice and a complete ban on broken-rice shipments.

This has delivered an instant shock to traders and exporters.

India's reputation as a reliable trade partner was already hurt by the Centre's decision in May to stop wheat exports. The ban came after it declared to "feed the world" in response to the global food shortages caused by the Ukraine war.

The latest decision to ban rice exports is a bigger concern to India's reputation worldwide.

#### **What are the issues associated with the ban on exports of rice?**

##### **Exporters**

The ban and high import duty has affected the exporters.

The price of the rice has gone up and the buyers are not ready to buy at that price. Therefore, around 1 million tons of outbound rice is estimated to be stuck.

##### **Farmers**

The ban on export can also affect farmer's income as the rice ban will increase stocks and the new harvested crops will not be bought from farmers.

##### **Food security**

India is the world's top exporter of rice. It has shipped 21.2 million tons of rice in 2021-22.

The export ban will lead to food security concerns all over the world.

However, it is necessary for India to ensure that its citizens get enough food and domestic priority should be given more importance.

With the help of different scheme like NFSA, 2013 India has ensured that there is enough food to meet the nation demands at the time of high food inflation.

#### **Why India should not put ban on export of rice?**

The ban has been put due to the fear for food shortages in India.

There has been a deficient rain in some paddy growing states this year causing low output. Still, there are other states where paddy has grown in abundance.

Central buffer stocks are down from 31.7 million tonnes at the start of July to 24.5 million tonnes in September. However, it is still almost twice the country's required minimum level.

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Therefore, it seems that there will be price stability and enough grain supplies for the nation.

### **What are other concerns for India and what can be future course of action?**

India has also put a ban on the exports of steel.

These measures from the government raise overall cost of doing business and goes against the perception of an open economy.

Therefore, the government should stay away from these decisions and it is best to rely on RBI for controlling the inflation.

### 12. Moonlighting & market: Should employees have side gigs? Bosses & HR gurus are divided. But answer is in supply & demand

**Source**– The post is based on the article “**Moonlighting & market: Should employees have side gigs? Bosses & HR gurus are divided. But answer is in supply & demand**” published in **The Times of India** on **14th September 2022**.

**Syllabus**: GS3- Indian economy (Employment)

**Relevance**– About Moonlighting

**News**- The article explains the concept of moonlighting and concerns of employers about this new concept.

Moonlighting has expanded exponentially during pandemic. It is prevalent in sectors where demand outstrips supply, like IT sector.

A PwC survey found that 54% of respondents strongly or moderately agreed that India faces a shortage of their skill sets.

### **What are some facts about moonlighting?**

It is related to employees doing jobs on the side of their contracted full-time work.

It expanded exponentially during the pandemic period.

It is resisted by major employers who want to restore their white-collar works to the definition of pre-pandemic level.

### **What are employers' viewpoints about moonlighting?**

(a) Some employers are worrying about productivity. They are concerned about IP (Intellectual Property) leaks and conflicts of interest. For example, Infosys has called it “two-timing” and the Wipro chairman called it “cheating, plain and simple”.

(b) Others are open to the idea of companies working productively with employees without having exclusive ‘ownership’ of them. For example, Swiggy and Cred have greenlighted moonlighting.

According to them, moonlighting can help one do one’s day job better.

An American study published in the Academy of Management Journal last year found that it made employees feel empowered. It resulted in uplifting their mood and increasing performance.



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### 13. [The governance model to take on climate change](#)

**Source**– The post is based on the article “**The governance model to take on climate change**” published in **Live mint** on **14th September 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS3- Climate change. GS2- Important aspects of governance.

**Relevance**– About governance model

**News-** The article looks into the collaborative governance model needed to manage the ongoing transition in the world economy.

#### **Why is there scepticism about the government’s ability to lead the transition?**

**Polarisation** and **authoritarian populism** have undermined the capacity of societies to mount collective action at local and international levels.

Government has neither sufficient information nor the capabilities necessary to achieve positive structural change in the economy. If given too much power, they will direct resources toward the wrong places. They will promote special interests.

#### **What are the policy challenges on climate?**

Governance is difficult here. The regulations must not only be effective at the national level, they also must be negotiated globally among states with different interests and circumstances.

#### **Why is the Montreal protocol successful in comparison with UNFCCC?**

Both have similar challenges because both involve significant scientific and technological uncertainty. There are also major differences among the positions of advanced and developing economies. This is the reason why UNFCCC took Montreal protocol as its model.

**Case of Montreal protocol**– Montreal Protocol created sectoral committees in which ODS emitting firms joined national regulators and scientists in seeking technological alternatives.

These groups multiplied as knowledge was accumulated, capabilities were acquired and trust was built among parties.

This approach worked because the problem solving was devolved to local actors called firms with the requisite technological know-how.

**Case of UNFCCC**– Under the climate regime, firms have been kept at arm’s length from regulators. This has created conflicts of interest and hampered innovation.

#### **What are other successful examples?**

There are examples like the US Advanced Research Projects Agency–Energy (ARPA-E) Ireland’s agricultural-pollution regime.

In each case, ground level experimentation is coupled with higher level goal setting.

At the local level, the most successful initiatives took the form of private-public collaborations. They bring together training programs, businesses, non-profit groups and public officials.

#### **What should be the proper strategy?**

We should start out with **ambitious, somewhat ill-defined goals**. Program leaders must acknowledge deep uncertainty and hence the likelihood of mistakes.

We must use a **carrot and stick approach**. There must be incentives for the parties with the most detailed and accurate information. There must also be a threat of regulation.

There is a **need for frequent reassessments and revisions, setting milestones and monitoring progress**. When solutions do emerge, they can be generalized in the form of standards or regulations.

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This kind of policy making differs from current approaches. **The 'state versus market' dichotomy is simply irrelevant.** States and markets are complementary. The standard top-down, principal-agent model of regulation is not useful.

### 14. Labouring under an illusion

**Source**– The post is based on the article “**Labouring under an illusion**” published in **The Indian Express** on **15th September 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS3- Employment

**News-** The article explains the complex labour laws in our country and reforms needed in the system.

Employment elasticity of growth has declined. It is half of what it used to be two decades ago.

#### **What are the reasons behind low employment elasticity?**

Labour laws are very rigid. There are about 50-55 Union laws. Their definition differs, which increases the scope of litigation and complicates case law.

There is a lack of harmonisation in these laws as they were enacted at different times.

Sections of the Industrial Disputes Act related to lay-offs and closures are offending.

It increases the non-wage transactions cost of hiring labour.

Complex labour law affects the working of an enterprise in all three stages of life cycle- entry, functioning and exit.

#### **Which states have introduced flexible labour laws?**

Economic survey classifies states into those having flexible labour laws and those without them. Almost half of the states have introduced flexible labour laws.

#### **What is the meaning of flexibility?**

It does not always mean statutory changes. It can be done by flexible orders and regulations.

#### **Why is it difficult to assess the impacts of flexibility?**

**First**, there is not a long enough time-series.

**Second** is the lack of data sources. The only data source is the Annual Survey of Industries.

**Third**, Services are covered by state level Shops and Establishment Act.

**Fourth**, Covid has disrupted the labour market.

**Fifth**, technology has turned the manufacturing sector into capital-intensive and there is an increasing trend of contract labour.

**Sixth**, labour intensity is a function of labour prices and capital. It is influenced by subsidies and tax exemptions.

#### **What steps have been taken by the Union government and state governments?**

On the recommendations of the Second National Labour Commission (2002), and several other reports, the Union government unified 29 statutes and passed (2019, 2020) four Codes on wages, safety (and health), industrial relations and social security. These are statutory changes, to be followed by new rules under the new Codes.

Except for two or three large states, most states have announced these rules

#### **What needs to be done?**

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Labour market rigidities and complex procedures also exist in state-level Shops Establishments Acts. These need to be made flexible in the spirit of Model Shops and the Establishment Act.

### 15. [Is The Long Wait For Private Investment Over?](#)

**Source**– The post is based on the article “**Is the Long Wait For Private Investment Over?**” published in **Times of India** on **15th September 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS3- Indian Economy.

**Relevance**– About investment

**News-** The article explains the current scenario of investment in India.

There are favourable macroeconomic indicators that can lead to higher investment in the fiscal year 2023.

**What are the macroeconomic indicators which are not favourable?**

**Gross Fixed Capital Formation** that is private investment, was at its peak at 34.3% in 2012-13. It has been in the range of 30-32% since that time.

Share of the manufacturing sector in GDP remains below the stated government policy of 25%. It was 17.4% in 2020.

**Labour force participation rate** was below 40% in 2022.

**What drives private investment in India?**

Government capital expenditure is insignificant to drive private investment.

External causes had a negative impact on the investment cycle in recent years. It explains the need for durable growth and demand outlook to spur private investment.

**What are the factors conducive to private investment?**

Balance sheets of both corporates and banks have improved. Both **corporate debt to GDP ratio** and **NPAs** have declined.

Central government policy of high capital expenditure can create a strong multiplier effect for the economy.

Corporate profitability is at a high despite higher input cost pressures.

**Capacity utilisation** is improving. It was at 74.5% in March 2022 and surpassed the pre-pandemic level.

At 15.1% in July 2022, credit growth is highest in nearly 2.5 years.

According to **RBI's Industrial Outlook Survey**, business confidence among corporates has recovered well above pre-pandemic levels.

**Atmanirbhar Bharat policy** can offset global slowdown.

### 16. [Synchronize policies to counter weak growth and high inflation](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article “**Synchronize policies to counter weak growth and high inflation**” published in **The Live Mint** on **16th September 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 3 – Indian Economy – Growth and Development

**News:** This article discusses the problem associated with the rising inflation and measures that can be taken to tackle this.

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**The Indian economy has suffered a huge set-back with the pandemic. However, with the efforts of RBI and government, it is reviving still there are other problems emerging that need attention.**

### **What is the current situation of Indian economy?**

The headline inflation rate in India has remained above RBI's upper tolerance limit of 6% since January and now has again exceeded 7%.

The reason behind high headline inflation is high food and energy price inflation across the world. It has brought the challenge of low growth and high inflation, which requires the close fiscal-monetary policy coordination for resolution.

### **How coordination of fiscal-monetary policy can help?**

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman recently reportedly remarked that RBI cannot contain inflation on its own. Some of the facts make this statement true.

There is a significant supply disruption both at home and abroad due to various factors like Ukraine crisis. RBI's policy instruments are not particularly effective in addressing supply constraints.

Given supply constraints, RBI can impose exceptionally harsh contractionary policies to curtail demand, even for necessities like food. These policies may lower the inflation rate but poor households will be the most affected.

Therefore, it is required that central and state government should intervene in using its fiscal measures to ease the restrictions from the supply side.

### **What can be the further course of action to tackle the increasing inflation?**

**First**, there should be close coordination between RBI and the government to tackle this issue.

**Second**, government can intervene by taking different measures like easing domestic infrastructure, imposing temporary restrictions on exports of essential commodities, etc.

Apart from the intervention the central government's fiscal policy should continue to focus on stimulating aggregate demand and reviving growth.

**Third**, the Tinbergen rule should be followed. This rule says that the monetary and fiscal policy instruments should be separately assigned to address the two different policy goals of reducing inflation and reviving growth.

### 17. [A shimmer of hope for the golden fibre as demand for shopping bags rises](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article "**A shimmer of hope for the golden fibre as demand for shopping bags rises**" published in **The Business Standard** on **16<sup>th</sup> September 2022**.

**Syllabus:** **GS 3 – Transport and marketing of agricultural produce and issues**

**Relevance:** **issues with the jute industry and measures to improve them**

**News:** The government has recently banned single use plastic bags and this has led to an increase in the demand for jute bags. However, the jute industry faces many challenges and has to stay in line with this demand.

Jute is 100 per cent biodegradable and environment-friendly.

### **What is the current situation of jute industry in India?**

Jute mills mainly focus on exporting jute bags due to the high global demand.

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According to data from the Indian Jute Mills Association (IJMA), export of jute handbags was about 47 million in 2015-16 and increased to 104 million in 2021-22.

Shopping bags account for about 50 per cent of the export basket for most mills.

However, there are many problems this industry is facing.

### **What are the problems with the jute industry in India?**

**Market diversification:** The jute industry in India is small and only few mills have taken the advantage to export.

This sector is highly dependent on government orders and small to medium sized mills are producing almost 100 per cent government orders.

The size of the jute industry is about Rs 10,000 crore out of which the government is procuring around Rs 7,500 crore of jute bags. The rest is exported to various firms.

Only few large companies with modernised facilities are generating 30-40 per cent of their revenue from exports.

**Financial Issues:** The other problem is the financial condition of the jute industry is challenging.

**Regulations:** The jute sector is a highly regulated sector. The government determines the minimum support price (MSP) of jute crops for each crop year and jute bag prices are fixed on a price formula of the Tariff Commission.

The Jute Packaging Materials Act (JPMA), 1987 has mandated that 100 per cent of food grain and 20 per cent of sugar production is packed in jute bags.

But the margins on government orders are low. It lies between 5 and 7 per cent for jute bags other than shopping bags which has over 10 percent margin.

### **What are the challenges with the low margin in the jute?**

The low margin has various challenges.

**For example,** the jute production was very low in the year 2021 which led to the minimum carryover for FY 2022. This caused the rise in jute prices upto Rs 7000 – 7200 per quintal.

The government announced maximum procurement price of raw jute in September 2021 which was around Rs 6,800 while the MSP was Rs 4500 per quintal.

In many cases, the government-mandated maximum price of raw jute doesn't work. However, this price cap didn't work and jute mills had to buy raw jute at higher prices. This led to the closure of operations in about 15 jute mills.

### **What can be further course of action?**

**First,** the jute industry's dependence on the mandatory sector is another challenge. There is a need to develop new markets for jute products in order to make this industry survive. The other probable markets may be soil savers and jute geotextiles. But we need research and development to figure out where jute fiber is required.

**Second,** there is currently demand for shopping bags only in export markets. However, with the ban on single-use plastic items, it is expected there will be a rise in the demand in the domestic markets as well.

**Third, Bring Your Own Bag campaign (BYOB) campaign** has been represented before the Ministry of Textiles. This campaign focuses on using reusable bags.

However, in India, campaigns can lift the demand but industries also need to push towards modernization to grab the market and bring back the lost shine in the jute (golden fiber).

## 18. [Reintroduction of Cheetah](#)

**Source**– The post is based on the articles “**Why the return of cheetah is a powerful symbol**” published in the **mint** and “**Cheetahs will do well as India has history of their Presence**” in **The Times of India** on **17th September 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS3- Environment

**Relevance**– About species reintroduction

**News**– The article explains the government action plan for African Cheetah reintroduction to Kuno National Park.

Eight African Cheetahs will be reintroduced to Kuno national park.

The last Cheetah was recorded in 1947. After independence, it became extinct.

### **What is the plan for the Cheetah reintroduction to Kuno?**

The cheetahs will be first released in large fenced areas for adapting to the new environment. They will be fitted with satellite collars to track their movements.

After a short stay, they will be released into a large enclosure to make them familiar with the new environment. Here they will remain for around a month before being released into the wild.

Their movements will be monitored by researchers.

### **What are the issues related to reintroduction?**

The animals being brought are southeast African Cheetah. It is a different subspecies from Asiatic Cheetah.

Instead of being allowed to run wild, they will be held up in tightly controlled Kuno national park.

Earlier plans to relocate Asiatic lions from Gujarat to Kuno national park were not successful.

Other cats will have to be removed first. Recently, leopards entered into enclosures meant for Cheetah into Kuno national park.

**It will have to survive alongside tigers and leopards.** The habitat of cheetahs is totally different from that of tigers and leopards. Cheetahs thrive in grasslands while tigers and leopards survive in dry deciduous forests.

### **What are the factors favouring its reintroduction?**

It can survive in Indian habitats. Kuno is the same place where cheetahs once existed. The area has grasslands and forest habitats appropriate for this species.

African and Indian cheetahs have little genetic difference.

### **How will reintroduction of the species help?**

Bringing back cheetahs will **restore the historic evolutionary balance**. Dryland ecosystems of India will have a chance to return to their natural state as it is the flagship species of grasslands.

It will also uplift the **livelihood of the indigenous forest communities**. It will increase tourism as India is the only country where all the six big cat species are found.

In saving the cheetah, grassland-dependent species like caracal, which are on the brink, will also be saved.

Project Cheetah will boost the ecosystem and biodiversity where it will live.

### **What needs to be done?**

Other cats that are extinct like caracals also need attention.

We need to focus upon other Indian animals like great Indian bustard and vultures.

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Cheetah conservation can be used for consolidation of grassland and shrubland that are languishing.

### 19. Climate change as business: Crisis, opportunity and everything in between

**Source:** The post is based on an article “Climate change as business: Crisis, opportunity and everything in between” published in **The Business Standard** on **17<sup>th</sup> September 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 3 – Climate Change

**News:** There is a need to take steps towards climate change and adopt net zero emission targets as soon as possible.

This net zero target will not only have a positive impact on the climate but it will also change the economic activities of the nation.

#### **How will the net zero goal change the economy?**

It will help in transformational economic change through massive investment.

This change will be seen in almost every major industry and it will also give boost to businesses like solar panels and batteries amongst others.

**For example**, new hydrogen pipeline grids may supplement existing ones for gas and oil, and charging stations could be found everywhere.

Therefore, net zero target has led to the opportunity for new businesses.

#### **How climate change has led to different business opportunities?**

Reliance has asked the Gujarat government for 1,800 sq km of land in Kutch for its green energy project.

Public sector companies like Indian Oil and NTPC, Larsen & Toubro and ReNew Power, among others, are also in the race to catch the new opportunities.

Ola has already taken opportunity in e-scooters.

Investment by big companies now focuses on electric cars and scooters, electric traction for the railways, and scaling up of solar and wind energy farms.

Even though climate change brings new opportunities for businesses but there are many businesses that will suffer.

Businesses like travel and hospitality, office-wear market, cinema halls and commercial real estate are some of the businesses that will suffer because of the change in human activities.

#### **How climate change will impact human activities?**

Digitization, virtual communication and data revolution will help in decarbonizing human activities.

This will lead to a change in the traditional methods of communicating or living.

For example, daily travel will be changed with virtual meetings and offline education with online education, etc. These will have impacts on long-term lifestyle changes.