

9 PM

Compilation

22nd to 27th August, 2022

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General Studies - 2

1. [What next on data protection?](#)

Source: The post is based on the article “**What next on data protection?**” published in **The Hindu** on **22nd August 2022**.

Syllabus: GS 2: Government policies and interventions for development in various sectors and issues arising out of their design and implementation.

Relevance: To understand the issues associated with the withdrawal of the Personal Data Protection Bill.

News: Recently, the government has withdrawn the [Personal Data Protection Bill](#). This increases uncertainty about the future of privacy regulation in India.

Why did the government introduce the data protection bill?

In Justice K.S. Puttaswamy v. Union of India case, the court held that the right to privacy had both positive and negative aspects. . The former implies the need for the state to actively take measures to protect an individual’s privacy.

Thus, the government was more or less forced to initiate the drafting of a data protection law.

What is the reason for withdrawal?

The growing importance of the digital economy and the broad scope of the proposed law raised contestations between stakeholders such as the state, industry, and advocacy groups. Each version of the law — the 2018 Bill of the Srikrishna Committee, the 2019 Bill introduced in Parliament, and the version of the Joint Parliamentary Committee(JPC) in 2021 — faced different types of critique from different stakeholders.

Read here: [Union government rolls back Data Protection Bill](#)

Data protection bill and stakeholders’ concern

a) Domestic industry felt that the law will create compliance hurdles for them, **b) For state** the law could limit intrusive data processing by state agencies, but it could also promote geopolitical, strategic or regulatory interests, **c) For users** poorly drafted law could legitimise certain intrusive practices, **d) For advocacy groups** the bill is a dilution of the focus on data privacy.

However, a law can also promote regulatory certainty, thereby opening up the possibility of increased data flows and the growth of the data processing business.

What are the recommendations of the Joint Parliamentary Committee(JPC)?

Read here: [First principles should guide India’s privacy law](#)

How to address the challenges in the new data protection law?

There are two challenges associated with the introduction of new data protection law. These are **a)** the form that a new law will take, and **b)** the nature of protections it will offer. These can be addressed by the following steps.

Form of the new law: The government has suggested that it will introduce multiple legislation comprising a new comprehensive legal framework. This is the right approach as it is healthy to maintain some multiplicity in the governance of a complex digital economy.

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The effectiveness can be further enhanced if **a)** Different laws and agencies should co-exist, **b)** Each bill should address a single coherent set of objectives and avoid overlapping, **c)** Separate laws should deal with issues concerning state surveillance, or issues in the data economy.

Nature of privacy protection: The law should **a)** Build on a risk-based approach to data protection, so that the regulatory focus is directed towards addressing sources of potential harm, **b)** Based on risk assessments, the law could enable co-regulation and self-regulation. **c)** Include more provisions to ensure accountability of the regulator, **d)** Invest in building some administrative capacity to implement it, as it did with SEBI and PFRDA, for faster implementation of law once passed, **e)** Framed based on transparent and meaningful consultations with all stakeholders.

Read more: [Withdrawal of Personal Data Protection Bill: Who benefits from the delay?](#)

2. [The problem with India's sporting bodies](#)

Source: The post is based on an article **“The problem with India's sporting bodies”** published in the **Indian Express** on 22nd August 2022.

Syllabus: **GS 2** Government Policies and Interventions for Development in various sectors and Issues arising out of their Design and Implementation.

News: In recent times, the national sports administration bodies for Olympic, football, hockey and few others are in court, due to governance related challenges.

History of sports' administration reforms in India

In 2016, the Supreme Court passed a landmark ruling that agreed to the wholesale changes to the BCCI constitution that were recommended by the **Justice R M Lodha committee** for BCCI reforms.

Like in cricket, the SC-handpicked Committee of Administrators (CoA) are in-charge of all major sports in the country.

The courts and the **CoA in-charge of football** are of the view that the 50% of the All-India Football Federation (AIFF) executive committee should comprise “eminent players” as co-opted members.

What are the issues in sports administration in India

Governance of India's national sports federations are not at par with the international standards. This misadministration is posing threats of international bans and administrative uncertainty.

Have the intentions of the court matched the implementation?

In the cricket administration, the **Supreme Court's verdict** related to BCCI reforms hasn't been fully implemented in letter or spirit. Cricket's constitutional ambiguity continues since the BCCI's plea, pointing to practical difficulties in implementing the **Lodha reforms**, is still pending.

The view of experts and reformers that appointment of players in large no. can bring changes to the sporting governance, has proved to wrong till now. **Following are some examples:**

1) The celebrated French footballer Michel Platini was jailed recently for a financial fraud he committed as FIFA vice president.

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2) Despite the appointment of **charismatic former Indian player** Saurav Ganguli as the president of BCCI, cricket governance has not changed much.

3) The players haven't been able to make improvements as they remain vulnerable to temptations and lack resolve to change the old system.

3. [Making bail impossible](#)

Source: The post is based on an article "**Making bail impossible**" published in "**The Hindu**" on 22nd August 2022.

Syllabus: GS 2 Important Provisions of the Constitution of India

Relevance: Fundamental Rights and the Bail

News: The ruling of **ADM Jabalpur v. Shivkant Shukla Case** (1976) was overruled by the Supreme Court(SC) while upholding the right to privacy. However, in the recent case of **Vijay Madanlal Choudhary v. Union of India**, SC upheld the constitutionality of Section 45 of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA). It has **reactivated the ADM Jabalpur case ruling**.

What are the Draconian preconditions for bail under Section 45 of the PMLA?

Section 45 mandates that in order to be eligible for bail, **the arrested person must persuade the court** that he is not guilty of the money laundering offences brought by the Enforcement Directorate (ED). The onus is on the accused to prove the allegations wrong. If he cannot do this, he will continue in jail.

What is the Supreme Court ruling?

The court overturned its decision in **Nikesh Tarachand Shah v. Union of India** (2017). **In the 2017 case**, SC directed **treating the offense of 'money laundering' as less heinous** and differently a crime from 'terrorism' under the Terrorist and Disruptive Activities (Prevention) Act (TADA).

In the present case, the court stated that the **offense of money laundering was as heinous as a terrorist act** and as great a danger to the sovereignty and integrity of our country.

The court also declared that the **ED does not need to share the Enforcement Case Information Report (ECIR)** with the accused.

According to the court, the fundamental rights of the accused are satisfied if he is informed of the grounds of arrest at the time of the arrest.

What are the issues in the ruling as per the author advocate, Prateek Chadha?

The court ignored the fact that under the PMLA, money laundering also covers minor offences relating to infringement of copyrights and trademarks, arts and antiquities, securities, information technology, companies, and air and water pollution.

Unlike the ECIR, the police and the Central Bureau of Investigation are allowed to share the content of the FIR with the accused.

With respect to informing the grounds for arrest at the time of arrest, there is no definition of what qualifies as grounds for arrest and how detailed such grounds need to be.

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What will be the consequences of the SC's ruling?

Rendering bail impossible: The ruling has judicially cremated the old principle of **bail being the norm** and **jail the exception**. It puts the onus on an arrested person to prove that he has not committed the offence that he stands accused of, in order to get bail. No accused will ever be able to prove this if he does not even know what the ECIR contains.

The SC's decision in **NIA v. Zahoor Watali** (2019), further compounds the problem, in which the court held that the court cannot enter into an appreciation of evidence at the stage of bail. The judge has to see whether **a prima facie case** against the accused is made out. This creates a problem because prima facie, the prosecution's version is sufficient.

4. [Anganwadi system: Not centres of learning yet](#)

Source: The post is based on the article **"Not centres of learning yet"** published in **The Hindu** on **23rd August 2022**.

Syllabus: GS 2: Issues relating to development and management of Social Sector/Services relating to Education.

Relevance: To understand the issues associated with the Anganwadi system.

News: The Anganwadi system, part of the **Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS)**, at present serves over 30 million children in the age group of 3-6 in 1.3 million centres across the country.

What are the challenges faced by the Anganwadi system?

The ICDS scheme is designed to support all children under six with their health, nutrition, and education needs. Over 70% of children are enrolled in Anganwadis at present. But the centres face **low attendance** because parents do **not** perceive Anganwadi centres as **centres of learning**. This is because,

Neglect the role of parents: In ICDS reports parents are addressed as "beneficiaries." The parents look for learning English (speaking and writing) and math skills when they enrol and send their children to a learning centre. But this is absent in anganwadis.

Read more: [Anganwadis model has enormous potential, however, it is struggling to deliver quality Early Childhood Education \(ECE\)](#)

Why does the child not learn Maths and English in the Anganwadi system?

According to experts, the ideal preschool has a skilled facilitator who ensures that children spend most of their time in free and guided play. It includes exploring and manipulating their physical environments to develop early language, early numeracy, socio-emotional, executive function, and motor skills.

The **early childhood care & education (ECCE)** curricula of various states also focus on local language-driven, and play-based pedagogy recommended by leading educators in India for this age group.

The Anganwadis in many States is staffed by Anganwadi workers with roots in play-based pedagogy. Thus attending the Anganwadi for the prescribed two hours a day helps children build critical skills by playing with inexpensive, locally made, indestructible toys in a group setting.

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Read more: [Early Childhood Care and Education \(ECCE\): Anganwadis should provide early childhood care and education](#)

What do the private preschools teach as ECCE?

As the parents look for learning English and math skills they send their children to private preschools. Here the children will sit in neat rows, practising joyless, rote-based learning and memorisation of letters and numbers to the exclusion of all else.

Over 7 million children in India attend these age-inappropriate private preschools that focus on rote learning from the earliest ages.

Read more: [Anganwadi centres are in urgent need of an overhaul](#)

What should be done to promote the Anganwadi system?

Imparting language and maths in a child-friendly way: The Anganwadi system must adopt a middle ground. Anganwadi centres can follow regular daily schedules that balance time spent on self-directed free play and teacher-led activities focused on developing cognitive, literacy and numeracy skills.

This can be done by **a)** Exposing children to the English language at an appropriate age, **b)** Giving children a pencil to scribble for a few minutes a day, of course without forcing them to write anything, **c)** Imparting the fun concepts of maths such as estimation, comparison, sorting, and seriation

Gaining trust from parents: **a)** Anganwadi centres can conduct regular Shiksha Choupals (parent-teacher meetings) and share regular messages to showcase the learning happening in the Anganwadi to the parent community.

b) Mass campaigns such as “School Chalen Hum” and the Swachh Bharat Abhiyaan change minds and behaviours with sustained action. A similar mass campaign for creating awareness of age-appropriate ECCE that brings parents in as stakeholders is crucial.

India needs to embrace the power of ‘abhibhavaak-bhagidari’ (participation of parents) to activate Anganwadi 2.0.

5. [A Centre-State skew further widened](#)

Source: The post is based on the article “A Centre-State skew further widened” published in **The Hindu** on **23rd August 2022**.

Syllabus: GS 2: Issues and challenges pertaining to the federal structure.

Relevance: To understand the issues of the financial health of States and Centre.

News: In a NITI Aayog meeting chaired by the Prime Minister, various Chief Ministers expressed their concern about dwindling State revenues. They sought a higher share in the divisible pool of taxes and an extension of GST compensation.

What is the reason for the poor financial health of States’?

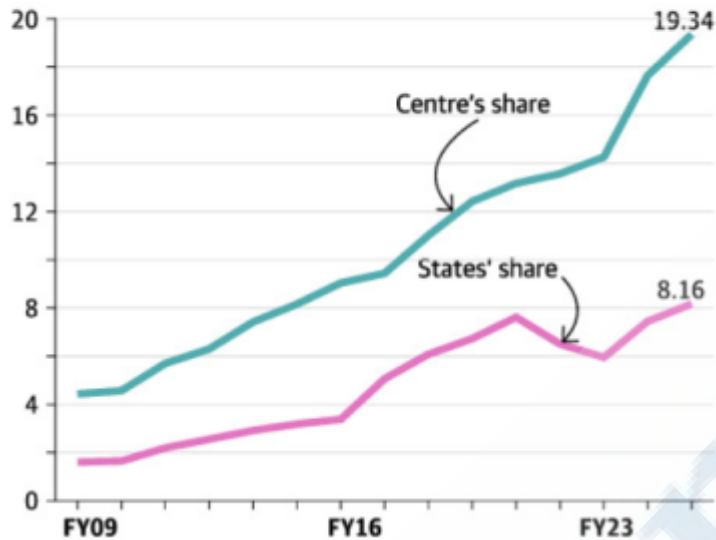
a) Slowdown in growth in 2019-20, **b)** Implementation of the [Ujwal DISCOM Assurance Yojana](#), **c)** Providing farm loan waivers, **d)** Heightened health and other expenses during the pandemic, and **e)** Revenue shortfall: Due to the reduction in gross tax revenues of states during the

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pandemic and the States' share of the Union government's taxes recorded a steep fall of 15% and 9% in FY20 and FY21, respectively.

About the financial health of the Centre

The chart shows the States' and Union government's share of gross tax revenue in ₹ lakh crore. States' share of Centre's taxes recorded a steep fall in FY20 and FY21. But, the Union government's share continued to rise



Source: The Hindu

The Union government's share continued to rise while the state government face financial issues. This is because, **a)** Even though the Finance Commission raised the States' share in Central taxes, it didn't translate into an increase in the actual share devolved as the divisible pool shrank, **b)** The Centre increased its revenue by levying cesses and surcharges which are not shareable with the States. For instance, their contribution raised from 10.4% in FY12 to 20% by FY21. This has also shrunk the divisible pool of resources.

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About the Centre's revenue sharing with states and the role of the Finance Commission

Chart 1 | The chart shows the Union government's (—) and States' share in total resources raised and total expenditure borne in FY19 (—)

Aggregate resources raised

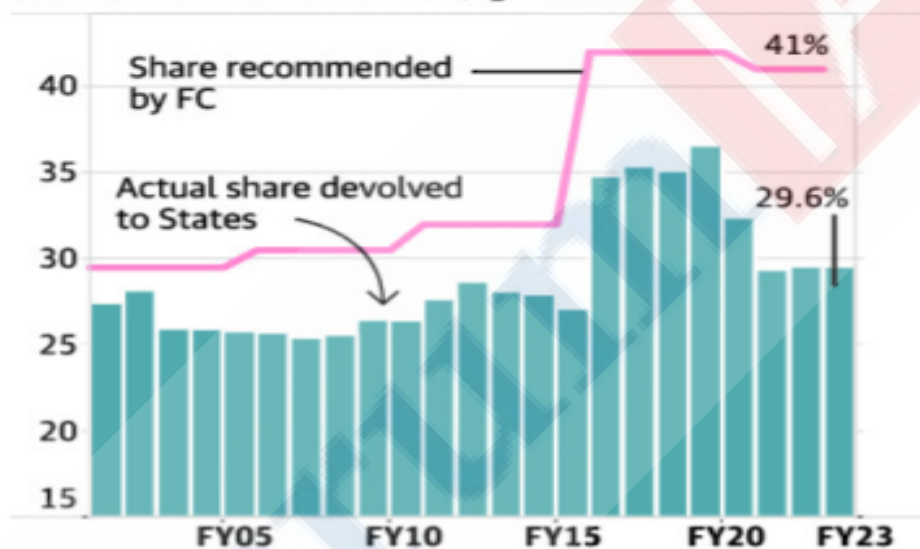


Aggregate expenditure incurred



Chart 2

The chart shows the States' share in the divisible pool of taxes mandated by the Finance Commission and the actual share devolved to the States (figures in %)



Source: The Hindu

The Constitution grants the Union government more revenue-raising powers while the States are tasked to undertake most of the development and welfare-related responsibilities.

According to the [15th Finance Commission](#)'s report, in FY19, the Union government raised 62.7% of the total resources raised by the Union government and States, while States had borne 62.4% of the aggregate expenditure.

The role of FC to correct the imbalance: The allocation of taxation powers and expenditure responsibilities to centre results in an imbalance. the Constitution provides for sharing of the Union government's revenue with the States. Successive Finance Commissions (FC) have attempted to reduce the imbalance by increasing the States' share in Central taxes.

What is the reason for the persistence of imbalance?

Though the 14th and 15th FC raised the share of States in gross taxes to over 40%, the actual share never reached the mandated level. At present, the actual devolution has widened to more than 11 percentage points, the highest in at least two decades.

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What is the status of Cess and Surcharge according to the CAG report?

Table 5

The table lists the issues flagged by the Comptroller and Auditor General with respect to cesses and levies

Year of audit	Issue
FY20	In FY20, cesses worth ₹78,376 crore – about 40% of the cesses – were not transferred to the reserve funds for which they were levied
FY20	During FY10 and FY20, nearly ₹1.28 lakh crore was collected through cess on crude oil but no funds were transferred to Oil Industry Development Board. The funds were retained in the Consolidated Fund of India and there is no assurance if they were used for the intended purpose
FY19	In FY19, cesses worth ₹1.1 lakh crore or 40% of the cesses were not transferred to the Reserve Funds and were retained by the CFI
FY19	₹8,871.19 crore were collected from Social Welfare Surcharge on customs. However, no dedicated fund was created to ensure that amount was spent for the intended purpose
FY19	₹414.51 crore were collected from abolished cesses (cesses subsumed under the Goods and Services Tax) and deposited in the Consolidated Fund of India

Source: The Hindu

Various cesses and charges are imposed by the government to raise resources. They are transferred to Reserve Funds to ensure that they are being used for the intended purpose. But according to the CAG report, this has not happened.

For instance, between FY10 and FY20, ₹1.28 lakh crore was collected as a cess on crude oil. However, not a single penny was transferred to the Oil Industry Development Board (OIDB).

6. [New Delhi's balancing act: We must find our own way to manage the current turbulence in the triangular relationship between Washington, Moscow, and Beijing](#)

Source: The post is based on the article “**New Delhi's balancing act: We must find our own way to manage the current turbulence in the triangular relationship between Washington, Moscow, and Beijing**” published in the **Indian Express** on **23rd August 2022**.

Syllabus: GS 2: Effect of policies and politics of developed and developing countries on India's interests.

Relevance: To understand the present development of great power rivalry.

News: A Chinese scholar has said that India will be a major beneficiary if the US can contain China in East Asia and the Western Pacific. Some other scholars said that the fight between Russia and Europe weakens both sides and would eventually benefit a rising India.

What will be the impact of the China-Taiwan conflict?

In a deeply integrated world, great power conflict has systemic effects and consequences for everyone. For instance, the Russian war in Ukraine and the Western sanctions in response have roiled global oil markets, disrupted the food supply chains and pushed the global economy into a fresh crisis.

If the current tensions around Taiwan turned into a war, the global economy will sink even further. Taiwan's geopolitical location, its special place in US-China relations, and its centrality to global manufacturing supply chains will make war in Asia far more consequential than the European one.

Must read: [The Great Power Rivalry \(China, Russia and the US\) and its Impact on India – Explained, pointwise](#)

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What are the policies of global governments at present times?

China: China is convinced now that it has the power to redeem its historic territorial claims vis a vis India and other Asian neighbours. Further, the changing Asian balance of power allows China to set the terms of engagement with the US in its own favour.

Russia: It proclaimed an alliance with China without limits.

In **Europe**, the Russian aggression has compelled **Finland and Sweden** to join the US-led NATO.

Japan: It has embarked on its own rearmament and is strengthening its alliance with the United States and is eager to build regional coalitions against China.

Read more: [Explained: 2 years after Galwan clash, where India-China relations stand today](#)

India's evolution of China policy

India pursued long a “**China-first strategy**” despite persistent evidence that Delhi's contradictions with Beijing are structural and not amenable to easy resolution. For instance, **a)** At a time when China was isolated in Asia and the world in the 1950s and 1960s, India campaigned with the rest of the world to engage with China, **b)** India insisted that China is the rightful owner of a permanent seat in the United Nations Security Council.

But China's Galwan clash tampered with the three decades of peace and tranquillity on the disputed frontier and brought a change in India's China policy.

Read more: [Global challenges can be tackled in spite of great power rivalry](#)

How can India benefit from the China-Taiwan conflict, and what are the concerns associated? China's fight with Taiwan will reduce China's “attention toward the Indian Ocean. So the experts are of the opinion that India would take this opportunity to strengthen its maritime power and consolidate its advantages in South Asia and the Indian Ocean region.

Concerns of the expert's view: **a)** China's conflict with the US over Taiwan during the late 1950s was also the period when Sino-Indian tensions over Tibet turned into the 1962 war, **b)** China now has the political will, economic power, and growing naval capability to pursue a two-ocean strategy.

Read more: [Why India Needs to Balance Relations with China, Russia and US?](#)

What should India do in the great power rivalry?

India must find its own way to manage the current turbulence in the triangular relationship between the US, Russia, and China. India should reduce the power gap with China, build the capacity to deter China's aggressive actions on its land and maritime frontiers, and rebalance the Indo-Pacific.

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7. More women are making a career in science. A lot more needs to be done to ease their journeys

Source: The post is based on the article “**More women are making a career in science. A lot more needs to be done to ease their journeys**” published in **The Indian Express** on **23rd August 2022**.

Syllabus: GS 2 – Social Justice – Women and related issues

Relevance: Women making careers in science.

News: The social sciences and humanities register a larger presence of women researchers. Now, the presence of women has increased appreciably in the sciences as well.

What does the data say?

The data released by the **Department of Science and Technology (DST)** has confirmed a rise in the participation of women in scientific and technological fields over the last two decades.

The percentage of women researchers has increased from 13.9 in 2015 to 18.7 in 2018.

Women today occupy key research and leadership positions in institutions such as ISRO, DRDO, etc.

What are the factors behind the higher enrollment of women in science?

First, the efforts of the individual enterprise

Second, the effort of the government through grants on gender diversity and aligning the infrastructure for greater inclusivity.

Third, Science, Technology, and Innovation Policy 2020 focus on meeting its target of 30 percent women at a post-doctoral level by 2030. In pursuance of the policy, DST is implementing **GATI, a grading system for institutes**. Grading of an institute will be on the basis of enrollment and impetus to the careers of women in its ranks.

What are the challenges to further increase in the participation of women?

First, according to the 2018 Global Gender Gap report, India is ranked 108 out of 149 countries.

Second, 2019 All India Survey on Higher Education shows a significant lag in female participation at doctoral levels.

Third, women scientists often have to shoulder a disproportionate burden of academic housekeeping in comparison to their male counterparts.

How the issues can be solved?

A proper system of mentoring and availability of funds can be set up, especially for those women who want to get back into the workforce after a break.

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8. The New Drugs Bill

Source: The post is based on the article “**The New Drugs Bill**” published in **The Business Standard** on **22nd August 2022**.

Syllabus: GS 2 – Governance.

News: The recently unveiled New Drugs, Cosmetics and Medical Devices Bill, 2022, has left many issues unaddressed.

History of laws associated with the AYUSH industry.

1940 – The parliament enacted the Drugs Act in 1940. But the definition of “drugs” in that law excluded Ayurvedic and Unani (Ayush) medicines. It was because **standardization of traditional medicine was not possible like modern medicine**. Ayush drugs are prepared from plants and herbs with little knowledge of the “active pharmaceutical ingredient”.

1964 – The government brought Ayush drugs within the purview of the Drugs & Cosmetics Act, 1940, but without standardization.

1982 – The law was amended to introduce the concept of “patent & proprietary” Ayush drugs, which allowed for the creation of new Ayush medicines using ingredients mentioned in the traditional texts.

Provisions under New Drugs, Cosmetics and Medical Devices Bill, 2022 and issues associated with it.

First, it requires Ayush drugs to meet the “standards of identity, purity, and strength specified in Ayurveda or Siddha, or Sowa- Rigpa or Unani Pharmacopoeia of India”.

Issues: **a)** Ayush pharmacopeias are exceptionally vague and very different from the rigorous standardization introduced by modern pharmacopeias. **b)** Most Ayush products in the market are “patent or proprietary” and are not included in the Pharmacopoeia. **c)** Also, this requirement has existed since 1995 in the Drugs and Cosmetic Rules, the drafting committee merely relocated it from the rules to the main law.

Second, it creates a new category called “**innovative drug of Ayurveda or Unani**”. It does not require Ayush medicines seeking “**patent & proprietary**”, to undergo the same testing and evaluation in clinical trials as for modern medicine. Instead, AYUSH medicines will be tested in accordance with the guidelines to be laid down by a new body called the “**Scientific Research Board**” (SRB) which will be staffed by Ayush experts.

Issues: It is not clear why these drugs cannot be approved by the same experts approving modern medicine.

Third, Section 108(a) of the new Bill treats the issue of safety such as the presence of heavy metals in Ayurvedic drugs in a light manner. It has reduced the punishment for this offense to a mere fine of Rs 50,000 despite the dire health consequences.

Issues: Causing harm to patients due to heavy metal contamination deserves to be punished with jail time and not a mere fine.

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9. [Reviewing remission – SC should lay down norms for release of convicts on remission](#)

Source: The post is based on the article “**Reviewing remission – SC should lay down norms for release of convicts on remission**” published in **The Hindu** on **24th August 2022**.

Syllabus: GS 2 – Criminal Justice System.

Relevance: About the remission of convicts.

News: Recently, the Gujarat government released 11 convicts in the Bilkis Bano murder and gang rape case of 2002 under its remission and premature release policy. This should be subject to judicial review.

About the recent case on remission of convicts

During the case, the Supreme Court transferred the case from Gujarat (where the crime occurred) to Maharashtra to ensure a fair and impartial trial. Later the convict petitioned to know whether Gujarat government or the Maharashtra government was the appropriate government for considering their plea for remission.

In that, the Supreme Court held that the Gujarat should consider the matter, and not Maharashtra. During the case, the court also said that the remission should be considered under a policy framed in 1992, as that was the prevailing policy on the date of their 2008 conviction.

Read more: [Remission or premature release of convicts: The injustice of exceptionalism](#)

What did the government permitted a remission of convicts?

Read here: [Explained: Why the 11 convicts in Bilkis Bano gangrape case walked out of jail](#)

What are the concerns associated with the recent remission of convicts?

- 1) State government made a decision on its own **without consulting with the Centre**. Under Section 435 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, such consultation with the Centre is mandatory in cases probed by the CBI.
- 2) Ideally, a remission panel should comprise senior government officials in charge of home or law, a district judge, the prison superintendent, and officers who deal with probation and rehabilitation of offenders. But in the recent remission, the panel consists of legislators. The presence of political members invalidate the decision.
- 3) The objection of the district judge concerned was disregarded while remission. Thus creates confusion on the legitimacy of the remission.

Read more: [The Issue of Marital Rape – Explained, pointwise](#)

What should be done in future while remitting convicts?

The Supreme Court should constitute a Bench **a)** To reconsider judgments that allow the remission policy obtaining on the date of conviction, instead of the policy currently in force, **b)** To address whether the ‘appropriate government’ should be the one in the State where the crime took place, or the State to which the trial was transferred on judicial orders should be responsible for remission, **c)** To formulate a **rational remission policy** that will be based on humanitarian considerations and have the scope for reform of the offenders and their sense of remorse.

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10. [Are freebies a way to mask state inaction?](#)

Source: The post is based on the article “**Are freebies a way to mask state inaction?**” published in **The Hindu** on **24th August 2022**.

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

Relevance: About the impact of freebies.

News: In promising freebies, the political parties and members play with the ground reality of the fiscal condition of the state.

What are freebies?

Read here: [PM’s ‘revdi’ remark: We need to disentangle good subsidies from bad](#)

The evolution of freebies in various states

In **Tamil Nadu**, DMK founder C.N. Annadurai provided just 1 kg of rice for ₹1 after he got elected. Later the freebies got expanded beyond rice, to gas stoves, colour TVs, laptops, payments for household work etc.

The **Delhi** government has notably offered water and electricity (up to a certain limit) free to the city’s voters.

The **Himachal Pradesh** government is offering locals free power upto 125 units, along with free water in villages and a 50% discount on bus fares for women.

In **Assam**, the State government has announced direct and indirect cash benefit schemes worth ₹6,000 crores impacting nine lakh beneficiaries.

Every year, governments at the **Centre and State expand the distribution** of private goods such as LPG cylinders to ordinary citizens.

Read more: [The ‘freebies’ debate](#)

What are the impacts of freebies?

Neglect the necessary infrastructure: Instead of building public assets, social capacity and society, the policymakers **shifted their attention towards direct transfers and welfarism** (via distribution of private goods for free). This causes a lack of government interest in delivering good public services.

Financial burden on state exchequer: Recently announced freebies in many States are difficult to fund. For instance, According to the RBI data, Andhra Pradesh announced freebies in FY23 that would consume almost 30.3% of its own tax revenue; for Madhya Pradesh, this figure was close to 28.8%; for Punjab, this was around 45.4%; and for West Bengal, it was about 23.8%. All of this will increase the government debt-to-GDP ratio.

Increase NPA: Over the past five years, banks have written off loans worth ₹10 lakh crore. The share of public sector banks in such NPA write-offs was typically between 60% and 80%.

Cost to the voter: When promised freebies are fulfilled, then ordinary voter has to pay the cost in the form of higher taxes or the opportunity cost of less development.

Must Read: [End this asymmetrical conflict over ‘freebies’](#)

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What should be done?

a) Governments announcing freebies should be required to **provide a funding plan** to bolster Parliament (and State Assembly) budgetary understanding and enhance their ability to act. The Election Commission should push political parties to provide a funding mechanism for such promises., **b)** A **Budgetary Office should be established** to aid in writing policies and conducting budgetary analysis, **c)** Transfers towards **capital expenditure schemes should be prioritised** over other schemes.

Read more: [Should there be limits on ‘freebies’?](#)

So, to end the freebie culture, governments must stick to fiscal probity and make credible policies. This will provide a network of competent public hospitals, high-quality schools and provides an enabling environment for the working population to build skills etc.

11. [Reinvigorating the Chabahar port](#)

Source: The post is based on the article **“Reinvigorating the Chabahar port”** published in **The Hindu** on **24th August 2022**.

Syllabus: GS 2 – International relations.

Relevance: Chabahar port and concerns associated with it

News: The Union government has increased its developing Iran’s Chabahar port to connect to Afghanistan and Central Asia for trade.

The Union Minister of Ports, Shipping & Waterways Mr. Sonowal visited Iran recently.

This visit highlights the importance of Chabahar as a gateway for Indian trade with Europe, Russia and CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States] countries.

What is India’s strategic vision for Chabahar?

[Read About Chabahar project](#)

The first agreement for Chabahar was signed by then Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee in 2003. The plan had a three-fold objective:

1. To build India’s first offshore port and to project Indian infrastructure skills in the Gulf;
2. To build a long term, sustainable sea trade route, as an alternative to Pakistan;
3. and to find an alternative land route to Afghanistan.

Prime Minister Manmohan Singh’s government constructed the Zaranj -Delaram Highway in Afghanistan’s South. The Highway would help connect the trade route from the border of Iran to the main trade routes to Herat and Kabul.

With China’s Belt and Road Initiative making inroads in the region, the government hopes to provide Central Asia with an alternate route to the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) through Iran for future trade.

What is the India’s future vision?

India’s vision to make the Shahid Beheshti port a “a transit hub” and link it to the International North South Trade Corridor (INSTC) that also connects to Russia and Europe.

What hurdles India is facing in completion of the Chabahar project?

The development of the Shahid Beheshti terminal in Chabahar as well as surrounding infrastructure has hit geopolitical road-block due to the following reasons:

4. The **US sanctions against the Iran** has been a setback for the Chabahar port. The US walked out of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) in 2018 and new sanctions were imposed on Iran. This caused India to stop its all oil imports from Iran which led in a strain in ties between the two nations.
5. It became **difficult to source equipment for the port construction** from infrastructure companies and to engage shipping and insurance companies for trade through Chabahar because they have fear of secondary sanctions.
6. The Indian government also **ended ties with Afghanistan after the Taliban takeover** in August 2021. It put an end to the humanitarian aid of wheat and pulses that was being sent to Kabul via Chabahar.
7. Recently when India restarted wheat aid to Afghanistan this year, it negotiated with Pakistan to use the land route.

12. [India at 75 looking at 100: Equitable access should be the goal](#)

Source: The post is based on the article **“India at 75 looking at 100: Equitable access should be the goal”** published in the **Indian Express** on **24th August 2022**.

Syllabus: GS-2, Issues Relating to Development and Management of Social Sector/Services relating to Health, Education, Human Resources.

News: At present, India is celebrating the 75th Year of Independence. Therefore, there are various voices for aspirations for India at 100 Years.

Why should India focus on investing in education and health in the next 25 years?

First, although India has a good quality of education and healthcare system, equity has no place in such outliers.

Second, Education and health are fundamental to every society. **For example**, Indian education produces global CEOs and Indian private healthcare systems have been providing services to medical tourists from many parts of the world.

Third, schooling plays a foundational role in not just societal development, but equity, gender parity, and a host of other consequential shifts.

Fourth, India has islands of excellence in primary care and outstanding clinical services but doesn't always provide sustained care as they are unaffordable to most of the section of Indian people.

How can India ensure high-quality education and healthcare at 100 years?

(1) To help children achieve their full cognitive potential, **foundational education** must begin at an **early stage** at home, and then in schools, before we get to institutions of higher learning. Parents must focus on the **verbal engagement** and **sensorimotor stimulation** of the children. Further, there must be **trained, competent** and **engaged teachers** in schools.

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(2) In families, socioeconomic status determines the amount and quality of the interaction between children and parents in their early life. Therefore, there should be **functional schools** to mitigate such deprived environments. Here, the functionality of schools comes from the quality and commitment of teachers.

(3) The schools and teachers should act as **agents of change** and help in the realization of the **transformational power of education**. However, this is difficult to achieve if the schools are working based on a one-size-fits-all approach of a standardized curriculum and limited assessment of knowledge and competencies.

(4) In addition to improving the schooling system, India must strengthen **vocational training centers** like Industrial Training Institutes, and simultaneously, reduce the number of degrees that do not serve as a gateway to professional development or knowledge acquisition in the education system.

(5) India needs to create and maintain opportunities at all levels of our educational system in order to ensure equity. To do so, India must ensure that finances are not a barrier to education for anyone.

Healthcare

(1) Education of women can play a major role in the reduction of fertility, safer births and better health of children, and increased social status.

(2) Healthcare must move beyond maternal and child health packages and programs to treat diseases. There should be a focus on enabling people to increase control over, and improve their health, preventing **life-threatening diseases**, and improving **palliative care for patients** of such diseases.

(3) Treating a bulk of illnesses does not require hospitals. It requires placing **healthcare providers** close to patients by creating proper and functional physical and digital infrastructure. In this regard, India should focus on making **primary healthcare** truly functional, to prevent illness and high **out-of-pocket expenses** on health.

(4) The right people with the right resources should be placed at the right places to create the right and rapid referral pathways so that delays in care do not result in unnecessary burdens on individuals and their families.

(5) The regulatory governance systems for the private sector must be improved to ensure that no part of the country is a **health “desert”**.

[13. The case of the missing scientific Indian](#)

Source: The post is based on the article **“The case of the missing scientific Indian”** published in **The Hindu** on 24th August 2022.

Syllabus: **GS 2** Issues Relating to Development and Management of Social Sector/Services relating to Health, Education, Human Resources.

News: This 75th year of Independence is a major milestone for India. This is a time to take stock of the developments in science education in India over the last seven decades.

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In the 1950s and 1960s, a solid foundation for modern science was built by Indian scientists. They were facilitated by the then Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru.

However, despite making significant scientific advancement in research fields, India has failed to propagate scientific literacy and scientific temper, not only among the public, but also among scientists themselves.

What are the causes for loss of scientific temper?

(1) Scientists themselves have been part of the problem. The eminent molecular biologist, **Pushpa Bhargava**, resigned from the Indian National Science Academy, the Indian Academy of Sciences, and the National Academy of Sciences in 1994, protesting the lack of commitment to “**science-related social problems**” by the scientist occupying high positions.

(2) **Lack of commitment to scientific temper:** Pushpa Bhargava once said, the bulk of scientists in the country, were themselves not committed to **scientific temper** which calls for rationality, reason and lack of belief in any dogma, superstition or manifest falsehood. Therefore, India has not produced any **Nobel Prize winner in science since 1930**

(3) India has provided a fertile ground for **pseudoscience** to prevail. For example, an astrology course was introduced in a national open university and there is official backing of the therapeutic properties of cow excreta despite no scientific validation of this.

(4) **Onslaught of disinformation:** Side by side the information revolution, there are currents of onslaught of fake news, conspiracy theories and manufactured ‘truths’ on the internet world. This disinformation weakens human rights and many elements of democracy.

(5) The politicians and administrators have not moved away from their blind beliefs towards scientific temper.

What have been the consequences of loss of scientific temper?

It has left much of our national psyche a prisoner of **obscurantism**. It has paved the way for **retrogressive religion-based politics** at the expense of constitutionally guaranteed secular values.

What should be the future course of action?

Fundamental Duties: Article 51A of the Constitution, inserted through the **42nd Constitutional Amendment Act**, says, “It shall be the duty of every citizen of India to develop the scientific temper, humanism and the spirit of inquiry and reform.”

The Western lesson to denounce pseudoscience: Several years ago, when some Christian revivalist groups in the U.S. wanted **Creationism** into the science curriculum as an alternate theory to the scientific theory of the origin of the human species, the proposals were summarily decried, and rejected by **the National Academy of Sciences**.

It should be kept in mind that “**Science is a way of thinking much more than it is a body of knowledge**”. There should be **evidence-based decisions** and the development of **critical thinking** using time-tested and successful methodologies followed in science.

The **science academies** have a role to inspire the country to attain greater science literacy among the public.

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14. [Dolo, Docs & Pharma](#)

Source: The post is based on an article “**Dolo, Docs & Pharma**” published in **The Times of India** on **24th August 2022**.

Syllabus: GS 2 Government Policies and Interventions for Development in various sectors and issues arising out of their Design and Implementation; Issues Relating to Development and Management of Social Sector/Services relating to Health, Education, Human Resources.

Relevance: Issues Medical Professionals and Pharma Industry Relationship; Out of Pocket Expenditure etc.

News: In recent times, Bengaluru-based Micro Labs was accused of offering freebies to doctors to promote its **paracetamol brand Dolo 650**. This led to sharp criticism of the relationship between the medical profession and the pharmaceutical industry due to scandals involving freebies to doctors.

What are the problems in the medical profession and pharmaceutical industry relationship?

Traditionally, pharma companies need to inform and update doctors about their products. But there is a thin dividing line between **legitimate promotional activities** (normal samples, pens, writing pads, small printed books, hand sanitizers, and masks) and **illegitimate incentivization** (like **pharma-sponsored trips** to foreign countries.). Therefore, most of the promotion seems to be going in the wrong direction.

One of the biggest sources of income for hospitals is the profit margin on drugs. Therefore, doctors tend to prescribe **high-cost drugs**, rather than cheaper generic medicines, to their patients.

Although there are codes of conduct that attempt to draw a thin line between legitimate promotional activities and illegitimate ones. For example, MNC pharma companies are bound to comply with their **internal codes of conduct**. But such **voluntary ethics codes** have failed so far.

Why have voluntary codes and guidelines in healthcare been ignored with impunity and regularity?

Both medical professionals and the pharma industry are enthusiastic about their mutual interests. These are:

- (1) For pharma it is a way to push new products, including irrational combinations.
- (2) For the medical profession it is a bonanza of individual gifts and trips, and for medical associations to earn money through conferences.

What should be the course of action?

Pandemic-inspired opportunity for reform: Covid-19 has made ordinary citizens acutely aware of the dangers of **unregulated healthcare** in India. For example, drug prescriptions and costs have aroused their suspicions. Thus, covid has created a sense of urgency for collective action on healthcare.

In India, the previous MCI code and the upcoming ethics code of the **National Medical Commission** label gifting and hospitality as unethical conduct.

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Federation of Medical and Sale Representatives Association of India (FMRAI) has asked the SC for early implementation of the **Uniform Code for Pharmaceutical Marketing Practices (UCPMP)**, which is currently a voluntary code on paper. The apex court has agreed to examine their plea seeking direction to the Centre to give teeth to UCPMP by making it law, thus ensuring an effective monitoring mechanism and transparency as well as punishments for violations.

15. [Right About Rights](#)

Source: The post is based on an article **“Right about rights”** published in **The Times of India** on 24th August 2022.

Syllabus: GS 2 Important Provisions of the Constitution of India

News: The Supreme Court on Tuesday struck down some controversial dimensions of the Benami Transactions (Prohibition) Amendment Act, 2016, and the parent legislation enacted in 1988.

About the SC verdict or judgment

The judgment has declared those 2016 amendments null and void or unconstitutional. The amendments sought to bypass **constitutional safeguards**, that are mentioned in Article 20 of the Constitution, against **retrospective application** of penal provisions.

The amendment has also reversed the **burden of proof** and attached **criminal provisions** to it. It includes up to 7 years of rigorous imprisonment. This leads to a violation of the **principle of natural justice** and can lead to potential abuse by the prosecution. (**Note:** Such a burden of proof inversion has also been highlighted by the SC in PMLA)

What will be the implications of the judgment

The welcome outcome of the verdict is that **prosecution proceedings** for transactions entered prior to the notification of the amendments in 2016 stand quashed.

What should be the course of action?

The Supreme Court is mandated to safeguard the **constitutional rights** and **principles of natural justice**.

While dealing with **economic offenses**, the laws should not circumvent established principles that safeguard against the miscarriage of justice and abuse of power, in an effort to produce results.

SC bench suggested that the government should prioritize getting back the money stolen by economic fugitives.

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16. [Keep it simple: On Aadhaar-voter ID linking](#)

Source: The post is based on an article “Keep it simple: On Aadhaar-voter ID linking” published in **The Hindu** on **25th August 2022**.

Syllabus: GS 2, Government policies for various sectors

News: Any mandatory linking of the Aadhaar to the voter ID is problematic.

The success of Indian democracy has been the regular conduct of elections and the relatively high participation of electors in the voting process compared to other countries.

How has India achieved this success?

The process of conducting elections is relatively simple with the use of the electronic voting machine.

High voter turnout has also been possible due to registration drives by the Election Commission of India (ECI).

The repeated cycles of elections have allowed for a united process, with voters allowed to register based on proof of their age and current place of residence.

There is an increase in the school-educated population and citizens living in houses whose addresses are mentioned in several identity documents. Thus, registering such citizens to vote is a relatively easy process.

What are the issues faced by the Election Commission of India (ECI)?

The ECI faces the issue of a cleaning up of electoral rolls due to an increase in migrant populations in urban areas, demographic changes due to the entry of more eligible voters, and deaths of older people.

What are the concerns with the linkage of Voter Ids with Aadhar cards?

The Aadhaar number is not proof of citizenship and is meant to be issued to residents, while only adult citizens who are residents in India are eligible to vote.

There is also evidence that Aadhaar-linkage with voter identity cards will lead to the arbitrary deletion of eligible voters on a large scale. It was seen in the Assembly elections in Telangana and Andhra Pradesh recently.

There is an absence of data protection law. It can possibly lead to misuse by agencies that can access the voter's database, as Aadhar cards are now used at various places for different services.

17. [To hoist the flag or not to — the choice is clear](#)

Source: The post is based on the article “**To hoist the flag or not to -the choice is clear**” published in the **Indian Express** on **25th August 2022**.
Syllabus: GS 2 Important Provisions of the Constitution of India

Relevance: Fundamental Rights v/s Fundamental Duties

News: Recently, the Prime Minister gave a slogan “har ghar tiranga”, and requested the people of India to fly flags at least on Independence Day.

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What were the responses to requests for “Har Ghar Tiranga” from some sections of society?

Some people said It is freedom of choice to fly a flag or not. It can't be forced. Further, there is no point in flying the national flag on a particular day like Independence Day, if one is **patriotic**.

Some argue that they are patriotic even if they don't show it by waving a flag or standing for our anthem.

Why is it wrong to argue for freedom of choice etc. in such cases?

Philosophically, more than **freedom of choice** and **not standing** (like for the National Anthem), all of us have a bigger responsibility i.e., to respect our flag and anthem.

For most, if it is requested by the **Prime Minister of India**, we should **respect** and **honour** such a request and celebrate the special occasions like the 75th year of Independence with flying of national flag

Freedom of choice comes with **greater responsibility**. This can be illustrated with the case of the **Elected Member of Parliaments (MPs)**.

Case of MPs: For example, no work is taking place in Parliament in the name of freedom of choice like the Opposition parties often resort to walk out and parliamentary disruption.

The people don't expect the elected MPs to take to the streets and hold placards in Parliament. They should use the Parliament to state their parties' views.

What should be done?

The Opposition must stay in Parliament and state their position clearly, even if they are overruled. The ruling party must also communicate in unambiguous terms the rationale behind their position.

Parliament is for healthy debate, not for unruly behaviour. Therefore, parliament should pass a law for **“no work, no pay.”**

18. [Heading the G20 and New Delhi's choices](#)

Source: The post is based on the article **“Heading the G20 and New Delhi's choices”** published in **The Hindu** on **25th August 2022**.

Syllabus: GS 2: Important International Institutions.

Relevance: About India as a G20 president and hosting G20 Summit. **News:** From December, India will assume for the first time the Group of 20 (G20) year-long presidency along with the G20 Summit in India in 2023.

What is G20?

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

The G20 has played a vital role in **addressing financial and economic challenges** such as the global financial crisis of 2008-09 and the Eurozone crisis of 2010.

The representation of the [United Nations](#), [World Bank](#), [International Monetary Fund](#), [World Trade Organization](#), [World Health Organization](#), and other multilateral institutions in it makes the G20 an incomparable body.

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What is the significance of India as a G20 president and hosting the G20 summit?

India has hosted large international conferences such as the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) summit in 1983 and the Third India-Africa Forum summit in 2015. But nothing compares with hosting the G20. This is because,

a) It is the world's informal steering directorate on global economic issues; **b)** It entails the responsibility of shaping decision-making on key challenges facing the world today; and **c)** Its summit is preceded by a large quantum of preparatory deliberations that feed into the final outcome.

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

What are the challenges faced by the G20 at present?

The existential crisis of countries: The major powers of the G20 nations are facing challenges, especially after the disastrous impact of the novel coronavirus pandemic. This makes the task of the presidency of the country much more complicated. This is seen in the present president of Indonesia.

Various international disputes: The war in Ukraine, India-China border tensions, EU/U.S.-Russia hostility, and deteriorating U.S.-China relations all impact the outcome of G20. So, the upcoming Bali summit will affect the Delhi summit.

What are the major opportunities for India as a G20 president?

First, the G20 presidency offers a **unique branding opportunity** for India's recent achievements. This includes the ability to combat COVID-19 both in India and abroad through India's vaccine diplomacy, India's digital revolution, reshaping global value chains, etc.

Secondly, it can be **utilised to transform India's sub-optimal physical infrastructure** to create an attractive investment and tourism destination, especially as several important G20 meetings will be hosted outside Delhi.

Thirdly, four democracies — **Indonesia, India, Brazil, and South Africa** — hold the presidency from December 2021 to November 2025. This offers a rare opportunity for **synergy and solidarity to advance the interests of the developing world** and to assert their combined leadership of the Global South.

Fourthly, all three members of **IBSA Forum** — India, Brazil, and South Africa — will hold the G20 presidency consecutively in 2023, 2024, and 2025. This forum is insulated from the geopolitical pressures and can **develop a cohesive plan to project the priority concerns of the Global South**.

Read more: [Data opportunity at the G20](#)

What India as a G20 president can do to save the G20 and India's stake?

a) India can provide evidence of its domestic successes, tested at the continental scale, for global adoption, **b)** IBSA needs an urgent rejuvenation by convening an informal meeting of its top leaders on the sidelines of the Bali summit,

c) India should factor in the perspectives of countries not represented in the G20 and advocate an inclusive approach, with pragmatic and human-centric solutions to global issues. For instance, India can demand the G20 for elevating the **African Union (AU)** from a permanent observer to a full-fledged member of the G20, thus placing it on a par with the EU.

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19. [Debate on revdi culture highlights bitterness between Centre and states](#)

Source: The post is based on the article “**Debate on revdi culture highlights bitterness between Centre and states**” published in the **Indian Express** on **26th August 2022**.

Syllabus: GS 2 – Issues and challenges pertaining to the federal structure.

Relevance: About the increasing centralisation in fiscal space.

News: Recently, the Prime Minister has called for an end to free “revdi” (freebies) culture. This shows curbing freebies may now be the Centre’s policy priority. The Centre’s stranglehold over states on almost all fronts, is leading to a breakdown of trust between the two “partners”.

What are the opinions of the Constituent Assembly on the Unitary and Federal nature of the Constitution?

The framers of the Constitution were aware of the uncertainties raised when India embraced a federal structure with strong unitary features. The present issue of increasing unilateralism as a good governance model is not even expected.

Jawaharlal Nehru defended the unitary features as a weak central authority “would be incapable of ensuring peace, of coordinating vital matters of common concern and of speaking effectively for the whole country in the international sphere.”

But **B R Ambedkar** assured that “**The Constitution is a federal Constitution**...Both the Union and the states are created by the Constitution, both derive their respective authority from the Constitution.”

Must Read: [End this asymmetrical conflict over ‘freebies’](#)

What is the present state of Fiscal federalism in India?

Read here: [A Centre-State skew further widened](#)

How did increasing centralisation in fiscal space happened?

For a long time, Planning Commission and Finance Commission were the cardinal pillars of Centre-state relations on the fiscal front.

Over the years, the very nature of fiscal transfer has become thoroughly centralised. For instance,

Non-adherence to Finance Commission recommendations: The last two successive Finance Commissions pegged the share of states in gross taxes to over 40%. But the actual transfer never reached this prescribed level. The peak was 36.6% in FY19 and it fell to a meagre 29% subsequently.

Implementing [Goods and Services Tax \(GST\)](#): The GST was once hailed as a milestone for cooperative federalism. But in reality, it increased the dependence of the states on the Centre for revenue.

Abolition of Planning commission: The Commission was disbanded to make way for the Niti Aayog. The powers of allocation of resources to states were passed on to the Ministry of Finance.

Under the Planning Commission, the Gadgil formula was used to allocate funds to states. However, after 2015, transfers to states are determined based not on any formula but purely on political exigencies.

The issue with Niti Aayog: In **National Development Council (NDC)** meetings, the prime minister used to regularly meet the chief ministers. But this has long been abolished.

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Instead, CMs were made members of the governing council of the Niti Aayog. This was neither a substitute for the discussions between the planning bodies of state governments and the Planning Commission nor the discussions in the NDC.

States as agents of implementing Central schemes: The Constitution empowers the states to conceive schemes to provide sustenance and relief to people. Many study highlights that state government schemes are more innovative and appropriate to the targeted groups.

However, the Centre justifies the collection of Cess and surcharges as the Centre distributes these to states via central schemes.

Read more: [The poor state of India's fiscal federalism](#)

What should be done to correct the increasing centralisation in fiscal space?

The Centre's record is still worse on the fiscal deficit front and off-budget borrowing. This should be corrected first. Also at present, India need unity and not uniformity, assimilation not extinction.

Read more: [Fiscal policy should return to fundamentals](#)

20. [Rainbow of Hope](#)

Source: The post is based on the article “**Rainbow of Hope**” published in **The Hindu** on **26th August 2022**.

Syllabus: **GS 2, Laws and mechanisms for the vulnerable sections**

Context: The T.N. government, on the orders of the Madras High Court, has come out with a glossary of terms to address people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual or of any other orientation.

What are the terms?

The Department of Social Welfare and Women Empowerment notified the terms —

- 1) paal pudhumaiyar for queer;
- 2) maruviya paalinam for a transgender;
- 3) idaippaal for intersex;
- 4) paalina adaiyaalangaludan oththupogaathavar for a gender non-conforming person.

What are the different views with the terms?

Everyone one is not happy with these glossaries.

Some groups feel the word **thirunar** should be used for transgenders.

Others hope the nomenclature will not be helpful to those who fall outside the generalization of the benefits.

Rights activists hope the glossary is fluid because the conversation around gender and sexuality is evolving.

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Recent judgments made regarding LGBTQI+

Madras High Court came out with a number of guidelines for the police, and social welfare ministries, both State and Centre, to ensure the safety of the community.

In a June 2021 order, the Madras High Court had acknowledged that social sanction is of supreme importance to lead a life of choice.

In 2018, a Bench of the Supreme Court had overturned a 2013 ruling and decriminalised homosexuality.

What are the issues still prevailing?

An individual who wants to live with dignity with his/her own identification still has to face lots of problems before enjoying liberty, autonomy and privacy guaranteed by Article 21.

The state and society often calls for traditional values to fight all sorts of phobias.

What should be the course of action?

The T. N. government has worked on the principle of *suyamariyadhai* or self-respect by creating inclusiveness in language for a marginalized community which is the cornerstone of the Dravidian movement.

Movement for equal rights in T.N. will have to ensure that children are not forced to go in for conversion therapy or thrown out of their homes for being different.

21. [The simple truth](#)

Source: The post is based on the article “**The simple truth**” published in **The Times of India** on **26th August 2022**. **Syllabus: GS 2 – Functioning of judiciary and governance in India**

Context: The Supreme Court’s recently set aside the judgment of the Himachal Pradesh high court. The reason behind SC’s decision was that the judgment was incomprehensible.

Historical context behind keeping the language of governance difficult

The language of governance was deliberately made complex by governing classes in pre-modern societies. This complexity has survived till now.

It’s only over the last two decades that a movement to modernize and simplify the language of justice, law, and administration began in some Western democracies.

In the US, scholars of law-making regularly highlight opaque language and jargon in laws that also run into a number of pages.

What is the situation in India?

There have been very low-level efforts to change the language of governance. In the 75th year of its Independence, the language of the Indian state is still the same as the language of the colonial era.

It’s almost impossible to find clarity, brevity, and simplicity in the FIRs, charge sheets, drafting laws, and verdicts written by judges.

Today, English is a widely used language of governance in India but drafters of laws continue with old-styled expressions and complex sentence constructions.

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The way of writing laws in old-fashioned is a great example of the frightening tax code that results in a large amount of litigation.

What can be done to improve this?

The general aim of keeping the language of laws and regulations difficult seems to be confusing the general population.

The laws and judgments should be written in such a way that the language can be understood by ordinary people, and experts should not be needed to translate laws and court rulings.

22. [Pharma needs a dose of regulation](#)

Source: The post is based on an article **“Pharma needs a dose of regulation”** published in **The Business Standard** on **26th August 2022**. Syllabus: **GS 2 – Government policies for various sectors**

Relevance: Regulating Pharma Companies

News: Pharmaceutical marketing requires regulations.

Bengaluru-based Micro Labs has been accused of tax evasion and paying doctors Rs 1,000 crore as bribe to prescribe Dolo-650 for Covid-19 patients.

The Supreme Court is currently hearing a plea to make the **Uniform Code for Pharmaceutical Marketing Practices (UCPMP)** a statutory requirement.

What is the need for Uniform Code for Pharmaceutical Marketing Practices (UCPMP)?

The nexus between doctors and pharma companies is well-known. The most basic form of nexus consists of sending doctors and practitioners branded stationery, calendars, or desk knick-knacks. It keeps their products on top of the mind in a crowded market.

It is especially important in a market such as India, where many essential drugs are placed under price control.

However, the issue is a serious nexus. Where doctors are paid to fulfill the objectives of pharmaceuticals like fees to act as lead investigators on clinical trials or in endorsing key research papers.

Thus, a statutory code instead of voluntary code has been suggested, where, all pharma companies need to disclose payments made to doctors or their associations, directly or indirectly.

What are the concerns associated with Uniform Code for Pharmaceutical Marketing Practices (UCPMP)?

The unusual Indian administrative problem of overlapping jurisdictions is also likely to hamper the effectiveness of a UCPMP.

There are also regulatory issues between the Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilisers, and the Ministry of Health that UCPMP should be brought under which department and ministry.

23. [How we can democratise sports governance](#)

Source: The post is based on an article “**How we can democratise sports governance?**” published in the **Indian Express** on **26th August 2022**.

Syllabus: GS 2 Government Policies and Interventions for Development in various sectors and Issues arising out of their Design and Implementation.

Relevance: Sports Governance Reforms

News: There has been a judicial push for reforms in various sporting bodies, **football, hockey, table tennis** and the **Indian Olympic Association**. In recent, apart from this, India has also witnessed a suspension from FIFA in football.

Sports Governance reforms in India

Much of the recent reform action in **Indian sports administration bodies** have been in the courts.

For example, Judiciary has proposed the nomination of 36 “eminent” former players as members of the general body of AIFF alongside the 36 representatives of the state football associations

Legal regime for Sports Governance in India

There are various **national legal systems** bringing regulations to enforce their notion of good governance. The Indian version is the **National Sports Development Code, 2011**, fondly known as the **Sports Code**.

The Sports Code assembles dozens of government notifications issued over a few decades. Its **administrative directions** are binding on federations. Further, it provides the **minimum standards** that a sports body must comply with to retain the sports ministry’s annual recognition.

The **Olympic Charter** has a provision for the election of **athlete representatives** as members of the **National Olympic Committee** and their boards. This involves the creation of federation-recognised **athlete membership bodies** that include both active and recently-retired athletes with the **right to vote** their representatives into membership and federation posts.

The Olympic Charter sets a minimum of two athletes as members and one as an executive committee member of the National Olympic Committee (that is, the IOA) but has no upper limit for either.

What are the issues in sports governance in India?

At the heart of the controversy are differing conceptions of **a) what “democratic” decision-making** in federations looks like, **b) who** should be members of **sports federations**, and **c) who** have the right to vote in and stand for elections in these bodies.

At present, sports bodies are governed by a number of interest groups. The **decision-making** in these bodies is subjected to political and other considerations which go against sporting interests.

Although the Judiciary has proposed reforms, it is believed that the judiciary is not the ideal arbiter of sports governance standards.

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What are the challenges in Sports Governance?

The **sports persons or athletes** are not adequately represented in the **electoral colleges of the** sports bodies. These athletes have been alienated from the administration since the days of their youth. Therefore, they have little experience in sports governance.

Athletes might end up as **effective sports administrators**. There is an equal chance that they will not.

It is attractive to start with reforms at the top. However, the quality at the top of the sports pyramid, be it of athletes or administrators, depends entirely on what emerges from the bottom.

What are the suggestions to improve sports governance?

(1) There is a strong belief that **athletes** must be given a powerful voice in sports administration.

(2) The autonomy of sports federations is a **vital pillar** of the sports movement. This will enable sports bodies to act independently through their own democratic structures, free from governmental and external influence. This **autonomy** is not the antithesis of public accountability.

(3) Reforms must be taken from **the bottom of the pyramid, i.e.,** to reconstitute **district and state bodies** that feed into the **national sports governance pyramid**.

(4) The Indian Olympic Association (IOA) judgment held that **the Sports Code provisions** are also applicable right down the sports pyramid.

(5) The focus of reform efforts must be on training sports governors and administrators, both athletes and non-athletes.

(6) There must be **athlete commissions** and **athlete representation** in every district, state and national sports body. Further, these bodies must be embedded in **decision-making in reasonable numbers**.

24. [India as a foreign policy leader and balancer](#)

Source: The post is based on an article “**India as a foreign policy leader and balancer**”

published in the **Indian Express** on **26th August 2022**. Syllabus: GS 2 International Relations

Relevance: Evolution of India’s Foreign Policies

News: India is going to be the next President of the G20. India’s Presidency provides a perfect opportunity and beginning for the next anniversary era.

What are the principles guiding India’s Foreign Policy?

National interests are the principal driver of India’s foreign policy. For example, National security remains the key driver. Further, India’s Foreign Policies are anchored in a nuanced **balancing of interests** and **values**.

The Foreign Policies are guided by the belief that **external relationships** accelerate India’s economic progress.

Other motivations include the desire to enhance the **nation’s standing externally** and the impulse to do good for the world. For example, India assisted over 90 countries during Pandemic Covid-19.

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What is the evolution of India's Foreign Policy?

During Cold-war Period

India believed in the **ideals of equity** like India's independence would be incomplete without the liberation of Asia and Africa.

Traditionally, India has acted as a **balancer** and **leader**. During the Cold war, India was the leader of the **Non-Aligned Movement** and G77. India also remained in proximity with the West and demonstrated the capability to cooperate and communicate with the "other" side — Russia and China.

Since its Independence, India has accorded the highest priority to **India's immediate neighbours**. For example, India's contribution to the liberation of Bangladesh and the military interventions in Sri Lanka and the Maldives.

India's foreign policy mainly focused on China and Pakistan due to the history of conflicts between Pakistan and China.

Post-Cold War Period

In the post-Cold War period, India has moved more **time** and **resources** to careful nurturing relations with the major powers like the US, EU, especially France and Germany, the UK, Japan, Russia and China.

Post-2014 Period

From an economy that faced the challenge of feeding its population until the 1960s, India has emerged as the **fifth-largest economy**.

Now, India has ties with countries across regions, i.e., in the South Pacific, through Southeast and South Asia, in other parts of Asia, Europe, the Indian Ocean region, Africa, North America and Latin America. This shows India is one of the **aspiring**, as well as a **major player** on the world stage.

The neighbours have not been ignored. For example, equations with Bhutan, Bangladesh and Maldives are excellent.

Now, India is a **leading member** of the UN, an oft-invitee to the G7, a founding member of the BRICS, and a pivotal part of the **G20**. Further, India has become a major stakeholder in the comity of nations.

What are the challenges to India's external standing?

a) India's relations with its neighbours like Afghanistan, Nepal and Sri Lanka seem to have turned since the Covid-19 pandemic, **b)** both SAARC and **BIMSTEC** are not performing at the desired level, **c)** Despite India's enhanced GDP and its IT prowess, the doors of permanent membership in the UN Security Council remain shut.

The importance of Indo-Pacific region

The Indo-Pacific Region has emerged as a **principal theatre for Indian diplomacy** in terms of Foreign Policy. For example,

(a) India's continuous focus on the **ASEAN Grouping**, despite the setback of India's exit from RCEP, is a determined pushback to China.

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(b) Further, India is also partnering with the [Quad](#), [AUKUS](#), the [Indo-Pacific Economic Framework](#), [Partners in the Blue Pacific](#) etc., as the Indian Ocean region (IOR) is witnessing an active US-China contestation as well as a strong competition between China-India.

(c) Further, India focuses on **Africa's eastern and southern flanks** to enable India to craft a series of initiatives to strengthen cooperation in maritime activity, economic development, and the blue economy.

Further, the **I2U2 (India, Israel, U.S. UAE)** has been formed to cause progress in India-UAE, India-Israel and UAE-Israel relations.

What should be done?

The **Ministry of External Affairs** has been aided by academia, think tanks, civil society and media more than ever before, in terms of foreign policy making. This is a reflection of the **maturity** and **sophistication** of Indian democracy.

25. [Murder in the Sewer](#)

Source: The post is based on an article "**Murder in the Sewer**" published in **The Hindu** on **27th August 2022**.

Syllabus: GS 2 – Laws and mechanisms for the protection of the vulnerable sections

News: This article discusses the Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013, and the issues associated with manual scavenging.

Tamil Nadu recently notified the rules of the Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013.

What does Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013 say?

Manual scavenging is completely prohibited. However, the rules allow manual cleaning in conditions where mechanical equipment cannot be deployed, or when it is absolutely necessary to have human intervention.

It specifies a long list of protective devices and gear for the person engaged to clean a sewer or a septic tank such as airline breathing apparatus, and an airline respirator among others.

It also says that employers should provide devices such as chlorine masks, emergency medical oxygen resuscitator kits, first aid, etc.

It has mandated the regular maintenance of the equipment and devices.

What are the issues with manual scavenging?

Sewage cleaning involves working with human excreta, and it invokes the concept of dignity of labor.

The task of removing excreta and cleaning sewers by humans when machines are able to do the work is a gross violation of rights.

According to the Social Justice and Empowerment Ministry, 971 people lost their lives while cleaning sewers or septic tanks since 1993. It was the year when the law prohibiting the employment of manual scavengers was enacted.

Tamil Nadu is among the top States on the list.

The reason for such death is the lack of prevention measures from the poisonous gases.

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What should be the future course of action?

There should be proper implementation and monitoring of the rules.

Compensation should be given to the family members of those who have died and they should be provided with better profession opportunities.

26. Why Nepal has put on hold Gorkha recruitment under India's Agnipath scheme

Source: The post is based on an article “**Why Nepal has put on hold Gorkha recruitment under India's Agnipath scheme**” published in **The Indian Express** on **27th August 2022**.

Syllabus: GS 2 – Bilateral relations of India

Relevance: India and Nepal military relations

News: This article discusses the recruitment of Nepalese Gorkha soldiers and recent changes made by the Indian army in the recruitment of these soldiers.

Nepal has postponed scheduled rallies to recruit Gorkha soldiers for the Indian Army under the Agnipath scheme.

The Nepalese government is of the opinion that this new way to enter the Indian military is not covered under the Tripartite Agreement.

What is the Tripartite Agreement?

This agreement was signed between the government of India, Nepal and UK in 1947 regarding the future of Gorkha soldiers who were serving in the Indian army.

As per this agreement, four regiments of Gorkha soldiers — 2nd, 6th, 7th, and 10th were transferred to the British Army. Whereas the remaining — 1st, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 8th, and 9th regiments remained with the Indian Army.

The agreement also provides for the terms and conditions, post-retirement benefits, and pensions of Nepal domiciled Gorkha soldiers in the Indian Army.

How is the relationship between India and Nepalese Gorkhas?

The Gorkha soldiers from Nepal serve side by side with Gorkha soldiers who are born and brought up in India and are not considered mercenaries.

The Geneva Convention of 1949 defines mercenary. It says that soldiers serving in sovereign armies are not considered mercenaries.

There have been attempts to reduce the dependence on Nepal for Gorkha soldiers in the Indian Army in order to strike a balance between India and Nepal domiciled troops.

A pure Indian Gorkha battalion was raised in 2016 in Subathu, Himachal Pradesh.

The ratio of Nepalese domiciled soldiers and Indian domiciled soldiers in a Gorkha battalion ranges from 60:40 to 70:30, and it is expected to change in the future.

There was a change made in the recruitment rules of the Gorkha rifles after the Army decided that soldiers hailing from Kumaon and Garhwal regions of Uttarakhand will also be eligible to serve in Gorkha Rifles.

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How important is it for Nepal that Gorkhas serve in the Indian Army?

A research paper from 2020 titled 'The Gurkha Recruitment, Remittances and Development' by Ratna Mani Nepal states that:

- The remittances from Gorkhas serving in foreign armies have significantly contributed to social modernization in the isolated villages.
- The financial remittances have also encouraged entrepreneurship development which helps in regional development.

27. Pegasus case: Slowing justice, the committee way

Source: The post is based on the article “**Slowing justice, the committee way**” published in the **Indian Express** on **27th August 2022**.

Syllabus: GS 2 Important Provisions of the Constitution of India; Functioning of Indian Judiciary

Relevance: Pegasus Case; Judicial Reforms

News: The Supreme Court listed the Pegasus case for hearing before the bench of the Chief Justice N V Ramana, one day before his retirement, for examining the reports submitted by a technical committee constituted last year.

Background

The Supreme Court had constituted **a committee of technical experts** monitored by retired Supreme Court Justice R V Raveendran.

The committee had created a website and published a **methodology** for investigations into the case. It invited submissions and devices for study through a public notice. It conducted the video recordings.

What are the major issues in the judicial process related to the hearing of the Pegasus case?

The committee submitted its final report in August in a sealed cover. The findings of the committee were announced in summary without disclosing material particulars. The report has been resealed and kept in the custody of the Secretary General of the Supreme Court of India.

Despite submission, there have been multiple delays in the listing of the case for hearing. Despite the fact that the Pegasus case concerns a lot for **India's democratic framework and fundamental rights**.

The Supreme Court of India took 4 hearings over two weeks to issue a pre-admission notice to the central government. These **four hearings** are **instructive regarding** the failed attempts by the Court to solicit the cooperation of the Union government.

The Court remarked that as per the report the government failed to cooperate with the committee.

What should be done?

Given the Pegasus case is pending it is hoped that the Judiciary must take remedial measures like the release of the contents of the report and giving directions to the government to enforce the **writ** of the **Supreme Court of India**.

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28. [Puttaswamy and the fading promise of a right](#)

Source: The post is based on the article “**Puttaswamy and the fading promise of a right**” published in “**The Hindu**” on **27th August 2022**.

Syllabus: GS 2 Important Provisions of the Constitution of India

Relevance: 5 years of Right to privacy judgment.

News: Five years ago, on 24 August 2022, a nine-judge Bench of the Supreme Court of India delivered a very crucial judgment in **Justice K.S. Puttaswamy (retd.) vs Union of India (2017)**.

About the Judgment

The SC judgment recognised the **right to privacy as being a fundamental right**. This right stems from **the right to life and personal liberty**, guaranteed under Article 21 of the Indian Constitution.

The right to privacy is intrinsic to an **individual’s ability** to exercise bodily autonomy.

However, the right to privacy is not an “absolute right”. It is subjected to certain limitations in a manner similar to those placed on the right to free speech and expression.

Read more: [Right to privacy is a fundamental right now](#)

What are the issues in enforcement even after 5 years of Right to privacy judgment?

So far, the **recognition** of the right has not been upheld in letter or in practice. This can be understood from the nature of the relationship shared among consumers and companies.

Data not protected: Data security breaches which result in the loss and theft of personal, sensitive data continues unabated. The **Personal Data Protection Bill, 2021** has been withdrawn after an unnecessarily long period of stagnation.

Data collection: In India, any person or business can **procure** the **personal information** for a vast majority of the people. These data are used and consumed most often by some legitimate advertising agencies, unscrupulous telemarketing firms, and cyber criminals.

This **status quo** leaves the people open to **a range of harms** like phishing attacks, financial scams, as well as other harmful activities based on information about an individual.

‘Spying’ from above: There are apprehensions about the unauthorized or illegal **state surveillance** in the name of the security and integrity of India. For example, this is validated with the allegation of the misuse of the **Pegasus spyware** by the Indian government.

Other ‘transgressions’: The Government has demanded the **VPN service providers**, most of which operate in jurisdictions outside of India, to ensure start collecting and maintaining KYC records on Indian nationals who seek to avail their services. The kind of information requested to be collected and stored includes full name, phone number, home address, etc., which generally is not sought by VPN service providers.

What should be done?

The government must adhere to the judgment and put into place all of the checks and balances which are necessary to prevent Government overreach and abuse of power.

General

Studies

Paper – 3

General Studies - 3

1. [Delhi Police's use of facial recognition technology](#)

Source: The post is based on the article “**Delhi Police’s use of facial recognition technology**” published in **The Hindu** on **22nd August 2022**.

Syllabus: GS 3: Science and Technology- developments and their applications and effects in everyday life.

Relevance: To understand facial recognition technology.

News: A recent RTI findings reveal that the Delhi Police treats matches of above 80% similarity generated by its facial recognition technology system as positive results. But it is unclear why 80% has been chosen as the threshold between positive and false positive.

What is facial recognition technology?

It is an algorithm-based technology which creates a digital map of the face by identifying and mapping an individual’s facial features, which it then matches against the database to which it has access.

What are the various purposes of facial recognition?

It can be used for two purposes:

1) One on one(1:1) verification of identity wherein the facial map is obtained for the purpose of matching it against the person’s photograph on a database to authenticate their identity.

Examples, using facial recognition to unlock phones or providing access to any benefits or government schemes.

2) One to many (1:n) identification of identity wherein the facial map is obtained from a photograph or video and then matched against the entire database to identify the person in the photograph or video.

For example, law enforcement agencies such as the Delhi Police usually procure FRT for 1:n identification.

Why match score is important for facial recognition?

For 1:n identification, FRT generates a probability or a match score between the suspect who is to be identified and the available database of identified criminals. A list of possible matches are generated on the basis of their likelihood to be the correct match with corresponding match scores.

About Delhi police and others using FRT

The Delhi Police first obtained FRT for the purpose of tracing and identifying missing children. The procurement was authorised as per a 2018 direction of the Delhi High Court in **Sadhan Haldar vs NCT of Delhi**. In 2020, the Delhi Police stated that they were using FRT for police investigations.

As per available RTI’s, the Delhi Police has consequently used FRT for investigation purposes and also specifically during the 2020 northeast Delhi riots, the 2021 Red Fort violence, and the 2022 Jahangirpuri riots.

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Multiple cities, including **Kolkata, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Ahmedabad, and Lucknow** are rolling out “**Safe City**” programmes which implement surveillance infrastructures to reduce gender-based violence.

What are the harmful effects of using FRT?

Issues related to misidentification due to inaccuracy: Extensive research into the technology has revealed that its accuracy rates fall starkly based on race and gender.

This can result in a **false positive**, where a person is misidentified as someone else, or a **false negative** where a person is not verified as themselves thereby lead to exclusion. For instance, the use of FRT by law enforcement authorities has already led to three people in the U.S. being wrongfully arrested.

Issues related to mass surveillance due to misuse of the technology: At present, India does not have a data protection law or a FRT specific regulation to protect against misuse.

Illegitimate collection of data: For instance, the Delhi Police is matching the photographs/videos against photographs collected under Section three and four of the Identification of Prisoners Act, 1920. This law has now been replaced by the [Criminal Procedure \(Identification\) Act, 2022](#).

The new Act allows for wider categories of data to be collected from a wider section of people, this might lead to broad collection of personal data in violation of internationally recognised best practices for the collection and processing of data.

2. [Pharma oversell clearly needs to be reined back](#)

Source: The post is based on the article “**Pharma oversell clearly needs to be reined back**” published in the **Livemint** on **22nd August 2022**.

Syllabus: GS 3 – Changes in industrial policy and their effects on industrial growth.

Relevance: About the pill peddling and its impacts.

News: The Federation of Medical & Sales Representatives Association of India (FMRAI) has moved to the court with public interest litigation (PIL), accusing the marketer of Dolo-650 of bribing doctors with “freebies” worth ₹1,000 crores to recommend the tablet.

A month ago, the Income tax department carried out raids at the drugmaker’s offices. It alleged that doctors were bribed with “travel expenses, perquisites and gifts”. The PIL is filed based on the IT Raids.

What are the implications of pharma companies pill peddling doctors?

Consumer access to many pharma products is regulated. But, pharma firms need to market their products to beat the competition, earn profits and continue to produce drugs for patients. So, they indulge in pill peddling activities

In 2019, the government acknowledged in Parliament that it had got complaints flagging “unethical” practices by pharmaceutical companies. Such pill peddling **a)** Can push doctors to over-medicate patients, **b)** Make patients buy pricier alternatives, **c)** Violate the fundamental maxim of healthcare: do no harm.

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Must read: [Drug Regulations in India – Explained, pointwise](#)

How government is regulating pill peddling?

The Centre in 2015 brought in the **Uniform Code of Pharmaceutical Marketing Practices**. It is a voluntary set of guidelines to prevent pharma companies or their agents from dangling the promise of gifts and cash to healthcare providers to promote pill peddling.

Doctors are bound by a code of conduct that bars them from accepting gifts from the pharma sector. Ideally, the ethics of doctors should defend patients from predatory business practices.

But, a company found guilty of doctor bribery would suffer a reprimand or at most expulsion by a pharma association, the pharma firm is part of.

Read more: [The Draft Drugs, Medical Devices and Cosmetics Bill, 2022: Provisions and Concerns – Explained, pointwise](#)

The need of the hour is corrective action and legal backing for restrictions on pill peddling.

3. [Patently Inadequate](#)

Source: The post is based on an article “**Patently inadequate**” in **The Times of India** on **22nd August 2022**.

Syllabus: GS 3 issues relating to Intellectual Property Rights.

News: Recently, the Prime Minister’s Economic Advisory Council published a working paper on patents in India, which points out issues in the system of granting patents in India.

What are the findings of the report?

The **World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO)** 2010-19 data showed that Indians filed nearly a similar number of applications within the country (1.2 lakh) as well as abroad (1.07 lakh). However, only 13,670 patents were granted in India against 44,000 granted abroad.

At present, India’s average time taken to dispose of applications is 58 months against 15 in Japan, 20 in China, and 21 in the US.

The PMEAC’s report notes that manpower at the patent’s office is woefully inadequate, leading to delayed issuing of patents. India’s patent office had just 858 examiners and controllers in 2020 against over 13,000 in China and 8,000 in the US.

What are the consequences of delayed patenting?

Due to the delayed issuing of patents, other countries that quickly process patent applications get an unnecessary advantage.

Slow disposal not only delays new technologies but also sends serious Indian innovators abroad or leads to a brain drain.

Patents help start-ups secure funding, which in turn creates jobs.

What should be the course of action?

At present, **India is betting big on start-ups to drive innovation and create jobs**. Therefore, it is imperative that the patenting process must be made faster.

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The **Government of India has announced its program to fill 10 lakh central government vacancies by 2024 to tide over the job crisis**. Therefore, hiring should be done in the right areas. As per the PMEAC paper, around 2,000 persons must be hired for the patent office in India.

There should be time-bound clearances, i.e., a few months or weeks for each stage of the patent-granting process.

4. [Spend It, Hide It And Forget About It](#)

Source: The post is based on the article “**Spend it, hide it and forget about it**” published in **The Times of India** on **22nd August 2022**.

Syllabus: GS 3 – The Union Budgeting

News: Recently, the debate has risen on freebies, from the highest political levels to RBI to the Supreme Court.

Importance of welfare measures (or freebies)

- (1) Freebies (or Welfare) have helped to ensure most citizens had access to clean, smoke-free cooking gas through public sector energy companies
- (2) Mid-Day Meal in a school is universally acknowledged to be the key driver for dramatically improving school enrollment ratios.
- (3) Welfare measures provided piped water to all households; a service so basic that most of the world got it nearly a century back.

Issues in the freebies

- (1) As per the RBI’s report on state government finances, states have stressed **overall deficits and debt**. The debt sustainability of Bihar, Kerala, Punjab, Rajasthan, and West Bengal could be an issue.
- (2) Pension is a big liability on state government budgets. Some states like Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh have moved back from NPS to the **old pension scheme /defined benefit plan**, having the potential to increase liabilities.
- (3) In the power sector, the **state government-owned power discoms** are facing high debt levels. As per RBI estimates, aggregate DISCOM debt is nearly Rs 4. 5 lakh Crore. If a bailout is provided to all discoms, then it would cost a sum of Rs 4. 3 lakh Crore, or 2. 3% of GDP to the exchequer.
- (4) Today, the true state of state government finances is hidden in myriad layers. Some debt is reflected in the budget, some in power companies, some in other state government-owned PSUs, etc. **For example**, to finance discoms, “**off balance sheet**” **borrowings** are resorted due to restrictions imposed on the total debt that can be raised by a state government via the FRBM Act.
- (5) Freebies are intensely political in nature in India. It is a part of the grand bargain between the voter and the politician/policymaker.

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What should be the course of action?

There should be **transparency** in the state government balance sheet. All state government borrowings and debt should be aggregated in the **state budget** and reported. For example, The Centre brought FCI's outlay, a large chunk of GoI's subsidy bill, above the line in the budget.

The FRBM caps should be revised upwards to reflect the new accounting reality. The new FRBM caps should apply to aggregate state debt. This will force the finance ministers to optimize between several competing demands and show **bond markets** the true color of the government's fiscal situation.

5. [Solar energy: For Amrit Kaal in agriculture](#)

Source: The post is based on an article "**Solar Energy: For Amri Kaal in Agriculture**" published in the **Indian Express** on **22nd August 2022**.

Syllabus: GS 3 Major Crops – Cropping Patterns in various parts of the country, – Different Types of Irrigation and Irrigation Systems; Storage, Transport and Marketing of Agricultural Produce and Issues and Related Constraints; E-technology in the aid of farmers.

Relevance: Innovations in Agricultural Sector

News: India is celebrating the 75th Year of Independence and has entered into the **Amrit Kaal** toward 2047. It's time to focus on the achievements of our farmers and agri-scientists in the last 75 years, and what more innovations (anusandhan) need to be made in the agri-food space by 2047.

India's achievements in the agricultural sector since its Independence

India's efforts led to boosting production and converting India's food situation from "ship to mouth" in the mid-1960s to emerging as the largest exporter of rice in the world (21mmt in FY22).

At present, poultry and fisheries have the fastest growth, while it has been the slowest in cereal production.

There are government interventions in cereals through the massive procurement of rice and wheat. Further, most of the sub-sectors rely on market forces. But these sectors still perform better.

What are the challenges in the agricultural sector in the coming years?

Since Independence, India's population has gone up by a little more than four times. It is likely to surpass China by 2023. As per the latest UN Population reports, India's population is likely to be 1.66 billion by 2050. The **biggest challenge will be feeding a country**.

With the **rise in low-income levels**, people are likely to demand not just more food, but safe and nutritious food.

India has neglected the **environmental consequences** that accompany agricultural development in India.

The **average holding size** has been declining from 2.3 hectares in 1970-71 to just 1.08 hectares in 2015-16.

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At present, cereals are the mainstay of Indian farmers. It cannot give high incomes to farmers even when their productivity is increased.

What should be the course of action?

In the next 25 years, we need to go beyond just increasing production. The focus must be on the food system as a composite entity. It requires addressing **five dimensions**: (1) **production**, (2) marketing, (3) consumption, (4) environmental sustainability, and (5) nutritional outcomes.

Ex-Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri raised the slogan “**Jai Jawan, Jai Kisan**”. Atal Bihari Vajpayee extended it to include “**Jai Vigyan**”. Now, Prime Minister Modi has extended it to, “**Jai Anusandhan**”. Here, anusandhan, or innovation in agriculture can lead to an India which have a well-fed population, zero hunger, almost no malnutrition, climate resilience, and high incomes for our farmers.

It is time to wake up now and promote **climate-resilient agriculture**. There is a need to arrest the **dramatic decline** in our groundwater table, particularly in the northwest, rejuvenate our soils, and improve the air quality by stopping/reducing stubble burning and methane emissions.

India needs to develop **carbon markets** so that farmers can be incentivized to change unsustainable farming practices. This requires innovations in policies, technologies related to **precision farming**, as well as institutional engineering.

India needs to become a nation of **innovators** in the agricultural sector like Israel, Holland, and the US.

Diversification toward **high-value** crops is a must as we move forward. This can be done by building **efficient value chains**. Here, in addition to the public sector, the role of the private players can play an important role.

In 2016, Prime Minister had given a clarion call to double farmers’ incomes by 2022-23. This can be done with **out-of-the-box innovations** like “solar as a third crop” on fields. Solar energy can be bought by power companies and incorporated into the grid for distribution.

PM can use his **social capital** and **powers of mobilization**, as witnessed recently in the “**Har Ghar Tiranga**” campaign, for a “**Har Khet Main Saur Urja**” (solar power in every farmer’s field) project. This can help in promoting clean energy in rural areas, and double and stabilize farmers’ incomes.

6. [Factoring in the risk-Development of mountain areas over the years has upset the ecological balance](#)

Source: The post is based on the article “**Factoring in the risk-Development of mountain areas over the years has upset the ecological balance**” published in **The Hindu** on **23rd August 2022**.

Syllabus: GS 3: Disasters and disaster management.

Relevance: To understand the impacts of development activities in hilly areas.

News: At least 25 people were killed over the weekend as torrential rains triggered flash floods and landslips in Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand. Several arterial roads were blocked by

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debris, as currents washed away bridges and vehicles. This highlights the challenges associated with the development activities in hilly areas.

About the present trend of the Indian monsoon and its impacts in hilly areas

The monsoon compresses around 75% of India's annual rainfall into four months and unevenly waters the country's highly diverse terrain. Monsoon rain patterns are being disrupted leading to a rise in cloudburst-like events as well as a rise in the frequency of high-energy cyclones and droughts.

For instance, monsoon rainfall over India is 8% more than what is usual for this time of the year. This creates a better situation for agriculture in some regions. But it also means floods and concentrated downpours with devastating consequences. Mountain areas are far more vulnerable and bear a disproportionate impact of climate change.

Read more: [Explained: What are cloudburst incidents and are they rising across India?](#)

Why do the governments ignore the impact of development activities in hilly areas?

A recent report released by the Himachal Pradesh government highlighted that mountain areas are highly vulnerable to natural disasters. The development in those areas over the years has compounded the problem by upsetting the ecological balance of various physical processes.

The inherent risks of infrastructure development in hills and unstable terrain are often neglected by authorities in the name of balancing the demands of the people for better infrastructure and services.

What are the challenges in providing early warning forecasts in hilly areas?

The government has improved the early warning forecasts. The [India Meteorological Department](#) now provides fortnightly, weekly and even three-hourly weather forecasts to districts. Within these are integrated warnings about flash floods and lightning.

Challenges in early warning forecasts: These are **a)** Not always accurate, **b)** Not provided early enough for authorities to prepare themselves and **c)** The success of predicting cyclones has not been observed for floods.

What should be done to regulate development activities in hilly areas?

a) The increased risk and cost to such projects and infrastructure should be factored in when they are tendered out by the government, and **b)** The government must adhere to the strict scientific advice regarding development.

7. [Pill pushers: Dolo PIL another reminder of dubious doctor-pharma relationships. Generics can minimise the problem](#)

Source: The post is based on the article **"Pill pushers: Dolo PIL another reminder of dubious doctor-pharma relationships. Generics can minimise the problem"** published in **The Times of India** on **23rd August 2022**.

Syllabus: GS 3 – Changes in industrial policy and their effects on industrial growth.

Relevance: About the pill-pushing activity of pharma firms.

News: The Federation of Medical & Sales Representatives Association of India (FMRAI) has moved to the court with public interest litigation (PIL), accusing the marketer of Dolo-650 of bribing

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doctors with “freebies” worth ₹1,000 crores to recommend the tablet. This has again put the doctor-pharmaceutical firm relationship under scrutiny.

Must read: [Pharma oversell clearly needs to be reined back](#)

Why pill-pushing is often ignored by patients?

a) Demand for medicine is often urgent considering the medical conditions of the patient. For example, the opioid crisis in the US was a particularly shocking demonstration of this, **b)** There's a huge information asymmetry between doctor and patient.

This is clearly evident by India's out-of-pocket medical expenditure. India's OOP medical expenditure is 55% of citizens' total spend, as compared to the global average of 18%.

***Note:** In the opioid crisis, pain-management pills were prescribed by doctors across the US, their addictive and harmful after-effects hidden or ignored. It took years for the crisis to be officially acknowledged. Litigation and finally bankruptcy filings by drug manufacturers followed.*

How government is regulating pill-pushing?

1) Since 2015, for pharma firms, there's a **voluntary code of marketing practices** in place, **2)** The **Indian Medical Council** regulates the conduct of doctors through powers flowing from statutory legislation.

In both these regulations, the misconduct is expected to be addressed within the fraternity.

Read more: [The Draft Drugs, Medical Devices and Cosmetics Bill, 2022: Provisions and Concerns – Explained, pointwise](#)

How does the government regulate pill-pushing?

The government should aim to **neutralise doctor-pharma “deals”** by **1)** Effectively using the government's existing programme of bulk purchases and sales of generic drugs. Bulk buying provides a price discount of 50-90% over branded medicines, **2)** Expanding government distribution program and utilising the existing network of private chemists to improve its effectiveness, **3)** Creating awareness about palliatives and the availability of generics can substantially reduce the scope of pill-pushing.

Must read: [Drug Regulations in India – Explained, pointwise](#)

8. [Death by pothole: There's a way to change that](#)

Source: The post is based on the article **“Death by pothole: There's a way to change that”** published in **The Times of India** on **23rd August 2022**.

Syllabus: GS 3 – Infrastructure

Relevance: Death caused by potholes.

News: As per reports, India ranks the worst in road deaths worldwide. Among these deaths, death by potholes is most shocking in India.

Last week, Kerala high court directed district collectors to proactively avert these “pothole deaths”, as the head of the local disaster management authority.

What is the present situation?

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India ranks the worst in road deaths worldwide. Government data put the 2016-20 annual average of pothole deaths at 2,300.

The government data is an underestimation, as the reason behind many such deaths are labeled as 'death due to negligence'. In these cases, the responsibility for deaths is put on the victims/drivers, instead of engineers or contractors.

The phrase pothole death is unique to India.

What causes these deaths?

Other than Kerala High Court, as mentioned above, Bombay HC as well constituted a special bench on the issue.

Similarly, Karnataka HC warned Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike of the contempt case against it.

All these cases prove the negligence of the authorities and give the culprits orders again and again.

What steps can be taken further to stop pothole accidents?

Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Act 2019 has the provision of a fine up to Rs 1 Lakh to the designated authority, contractor, consultant, or concessionaire for low-grade work that leads to road accidents.

The monetary penalty under the Act 2019 for pothole deaths should be increased.

The use of advanced polymer techniques and rapid-setting concrete in the roads will assure pothole-free roads.

9. [How should public sector banks be privatised?](#)

Source: The post is based on the article **“How should public sector banks be privatized?”** published in **The Indian Express** on **22nd August 2022**.

Syllabus: GS 3 – Indian Economy

News: In the Union Budget 2021-22, the government announced its decision to privatize two public sector banks.

What were the reasons behind Privatization?

India's public sector banks have struggled with high levels of non-performing assets (NPAs). High levels of NPAs erode a bank's profitability.

This has led RBI to put banks under Prompt Corrective Action (or PCA) and forced them to improve their financial performance metrics before being allowed to resume normal banking activities.

Due to the rise in NPAs, PSBs struggled to finance India's growth needs.

The government even had to recapitalize many PSBs to ensure that they stayed in business. This has drawn criticism of wasting taxpayers' money.

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What are the arguments in favour of the privatization of PSBs?

A recent paper by Poonam Gupta of NCAER and Arvind Panagariya of Columbia University, titled “**Privatization of Public Sector Banks in India Why, How and Ho Far?**”, argues that “the government should move as rapidly as politically feasible”.

According to the paper published, all PSBs should be privatized.

The paper has taken different metrics to compare Pvt. banks and PSBs. They are:

Gross non-performing assets: The study shows that there has been an increase in the gross non-performing assets of PSBs from 2014-15.

Extending loans: Pvt. banks had a greater contribution towards extending loans.

Deposits growth: Pvt. banks had a higher percentage of contribution to getting deposits from savers.

Number of branches and Employment generation: The report argues that the private banks added more branches and created new jobs while the public sector banks saw declines on both counts.

Fraud Amount: The data reveals that PSBs have higher fraud than Pvt. Banks.

Market capitalization: The Market capitalization of Pvt. Banks is higher than PSBs.

Arguments against privatization

In a paper titled “**Privatisation of Public Sector Banks: An Alternate Perspective**”, members of RBI’s Banking Research Division warn against the perspective of viewing privatization as a solution to all problems.

Following are the **arguments given against the privatization of the banks** in the report:

While the private banks **dominate the metropolitan area** it is the public sector banks that operate branches in rural India.

PSBs provide **more ATMs in rural areas** than PVBs.

PSBs are more efficient in bringing **financial inclusions**, and it can be seen through beneficiaries of the Jan Dhan Yojana.

PSBs are more efficient than PVBs in **providing agricultural advances and PSL advances**.

PSBs have a greater share in the **lending for infrastructure finances**, and this lending plays an important role in the country’s development and growth.

RBI researchers found that PSBs are also **more effective in monetary policy transmission**, aiding the countercyclical monetary policy actions to gain success.

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10. [India's clean energy transition plays to the country's strengths](#)

Syllabus: GS Paper 3, energy and climate change

News: While India's current commitments are a promising start, they won't be enough to avert the worst effects of climate change.

India has committed to 500 gigawatts of renewable energy by 2030.

What more is required over and above India's present climate commitments?

More financing from developed countries.

There is a need for better batteries to electrify the economy.

Direct air capture technologies are prohibitively expensive. They must be made a lot cheaper to deploy at scale.

What are the benefits of emissions cut to India?

30% emissions cut by 2030 can create 39 million new jobs, as per report from Energy Innovation.

It can move the country from bearing the high price volatility of oil and natural gas to the zero price volatility of renewable sources.

India will benefit from the downward cost curve of advancing technologies in the field of clean energy.

Al Gore's Climate Trace, uses satellite technology to report on emissions around the globe. World including India will need all these technologies to tackle climate change.

11. [Our open network for digital commerce must win trust](#)

Source: The post is based on the article "**Our open network for digital commerce must win trust**" published in **Livemint** on **24th August 2022**.

Syllabus: GS 3: Changes in industrial policy and their effects on industrial growth.

Relevance: To understand the challenges associated with the ONDC.

News: The Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC) aims to make India towards democratizing e-commerce. But there are certain challenges associated with the ONDC.

What is ONDC?

Must read: [Open Network For Digital Commerce \(ONDC\) – Explained, pointwise](#)

What is the need for ONDC?

E-commerce platforms act as trusted intermediaries between buyers and sellers, offering a safe and secure online marketplace. They played an important role in ensuring that consumers receive the timely delivery of quality goods, and merchants are able to supply goods with the help of necessary logistical support and receive payments in time.

But over-reliance on platforms raises concerns of concentration risk and exclusion. The ONDC aims to address such concerns by promoting unbundling and interoperability in the e-commerce ecosystem through an open e-marketplace.

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Read more: [ONDC is the disruption Indian commerce needs](#)

What are the challenges associated with the ONDC?

The challenges include

- a) Potential risks and unintended consequences, feasibility and the challenges of scalability.
- b) ONDC makes network participants responsible for managing the order's life cycle such as catalogue management, order management, invoicing, logistics, customer support, returns and others. Eventually, they might look for network participants to ensure end-to-end transaction surety, especially small scale businesses.
- c) The ONDC envisages that a buyer and seller need not be on the same application to discover each other, but will have the ability to connect through different apps. So, a network participant can simultaneously play both buyer and seller. This might create ambiguities. The applicable laws may also differ from the roles that players play in the ONDC ecosystem.
- d) Since the platform is open and decentralized, suspicious elements might join the network as service providers, sellers or consumers. This creates challenges in accountability and redressal of grievances.
- e) ONDC is incorporated as a not-for-profit company, it is majority owned by private sector institutions. Most of them are likely to act as or have an interest in, network participants, directly or indirectly. This may lead to conflicts of interest in the decisions of ONDC.
- f) Consumers and merchants are the targeted beneficiaries of ONDC. But their role in ONDC governance or rule-making processes is limited.

Read more: [Addressing the challenges in new-age digital commerce](#)

Entities in the e-commerce ecosystem should proactively engage with the ONDC to obtain more transparency and approach integration accordingly.

12. [Investing abroad rules revamped to increase ease](#)

Source: The post is based on the article “**Investing abroad rules revamped to increase ease**” published in **The Business Standard** on **24th August 2022**.

Syllabus: GS 3 – Economy.

News: The Union government recently, strengthened overseas investment rules for Indian entities to impart greater clarity and improve the ease of doing business.

Why overseas investment rule is needed?

India doesn't have full convertibility on the capital account.

It is important for the government and the RBI to monitor overseas transactions by Indian entities because of their wider implications for currency management and financial stability.

The policy establishment has made it easier for Indian entities to acquire businesses and other assets abroad.

The rule is aimed at bringing clarity to enable Indian businesses to integrate with the global value chain.

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What are the new rules?

The new rules clearly differentiate between direct and portfolio investment and put in place clear guidelines.

Indian Entity: An Indian entity can make overseas direct investment (ODI) by taking an equity stake in a genuine business through various possible means like bidding, tendering etc. The arrangement should be in accordance with the law applicable in India or the host country.

Indian Entity engaged in financial services: The entities engaged in financial services in India can make ODI directly or indirectly, in a foreign entity, engaged in financial services.

Indian Entity not engaged in financial services: An Indian entity not engaged in financial services can also make an ODI in a foreign entity engaged in financial services, except in banking and insurance.

Prescribed Limit: The commitment by an Indian entity in all foreign entities put together should not exceed 400 per cent of its net worth. In the case of overseas portfolio investment (OPI), it should not exceed 50 per cent of net worth.

Individuals: Individuals can make an ODI or OPI but the limit would be subject to the liberalized remittance scheme of the RBI.

An individual can acquire foreign securities without any limits by way of inheritance from a person resident in India.

However, the rules prohibit Indians from investing in foreign entities engaged in real estate activity, gambling, or dealing with products linked to the Indian rupee without the RBI's permission.

13. [Let UPI stay successful as a special public good](#)

Source: The post is based on the article "Let UPI stay successful as a special public good" published in **Live Mint** on **24th August 2022**.

Syllabus: GS 3 – Economy

Relevance: Issues associated with UPI.

News: No service is costless but some deserve a public subsidy. While UPI is our prime mover in the online payments space, we could also count on an RBI-issued e-rupee to help us go cashless.

What is the current situation of India in online payment?

India's present digital payment system is featured by following 2 points:

First, we have confusing payment mechanisms: from RTGS and NEFT to IMPS and UPI.

Second, 'India Stack' has been remarkably successful. It is the building block for digital enablers with Aadhaar identification at its base.

What is the issue with the UPI payments?

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Merchants are paid very less from National Payments Corp of India's (NPCI) Unified Payments Interface (UPI), which shifts cash from one bank account to another by using verified phone numbers.

Centre ended a 0.3% fee on deal value (or ₹100 if lower) that recipients had to pay to boost cashless transactions.

As estimated by the RBI, UPI transactions cost 0.25% of transactions and central funds to compensate financial intermediaries for it have fallen short.

For any system to sustain itself it must not burden private players.

UPI as a Digital Public Good and concerns associated with it

The finance ministry described UPI as a "digital public good" due its convenience for users and potential gains for our economy.

A public good is one that satisfies a need and is free for anyone to use. According to economists, any scarcity of such goods would lead to over-exploitation which will result in a net drop in welfare.

Concerns: The payment volumes will likely go beyond an annual ₹120 trillion, so its subsidy bill could increase over ₹30,000 crore in 2023-24. In order to cut the cost of the subsidy, it will be better for the Centre to come up with the operational expense of the UPI payments.

What should be the course of action for government?

The state should not subsidize other modes of online payment, especially those which are costlier to operate and used for larger sum.

Rupay card which is operated by NPCI was launched as a rival to Visa and Mastercard networks. It should charge merchants a fee and act only as a cost competitor.

'Smart money' usage can be made chargeable even as basic transfers are kept free.

14. The implications of the 5G roll-out for law enforcement

Source: The post is based on an article "The implications of the 5G roll-out for law enforcement" published in **The Hindu** on **24th August 2022**.

Syllabus: GS-3, Achievements of Indians in Science & Technology

News: In the recent past, the Prime Minister of India announced that 5G deployment in India will commence sooner than expected. As per some reports, there are expectations that the government may launch 5G at the inauguration of the **India Mobile Congress** on September 29.

Importance of 5G Network from the angle of law enforcement in India

(A) Ensuring security

(1) The police can have faster access to critical information in real-time, and it would be able to nab criminals. This is because the 5G has **high bandwidth** and will allow **ultra-fast Internet speeds** with **low latency**. The police devices such as body cams, facial recognition technology, automatic number-plate recognition, drones, and CCTVs, working on the 5G network would perform better.

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(2) The increased storage capacity promised by 5G will allow the police to streamline their investigation methods.

(3) 5G will also allow **rapid** and **secure communication** within the organization as well as between civilians and emergency responders.

What are the challenges in the adoption of the 5G network?

(A) Most police systems in India are outdated and do not have infrastructure that is compatible with 5G.

(B) Cybersecurity concerns

(1) India has a poor cybersecurity foundation. For example, India's **previous networks** were hardware-based, but 5G is a **software-defined digital routing**. Therefore, India's networks are susceptible to cyber threats such as botnet attacks, man-in-the-middle attacks, and distributed denial-of-service (DDoS) overloads.

(2) 5G lacks **end-to-end encryption**. Therefore, hackers can hack into systems to perpetrate cybercrimes

(3) The 5G led bandwidth expansion will enable criminals to embezzle databases easily. Further, the frequency of attacks would increase with time as more devices will be connected to the 5G network,

(4) Due to a faster network, there could be a lower probability of criminals getting caught after commissioning identity theft or credit card fraud or stealing information from computers, smartphones, and tablets.

(5) 5G may also make it easier for criminals to perpetrate cyberbullying.

(6) It could be easy to carry out DDoS onslaughts because of the real-time communication capabilities between multiple criminal groups.

(7) 5G would enable hackers to enter into **Internet-of-Things (IoT) devices** and commit crimes. For example, an IoT vehicle can be hacked to cause an accident or make a ransom to collect insurance money, etc.

(8) Further, Terrorists would be able to execute attacks more rapidly and precisely with a 5G network.

What are solutions for fighting new-age crimes?

First, the Indian police will need to be trained so that they are able to recognize **new 5G-enabled crimes**.

Second, there should be the development of training programs that focus on such 5G-enabled crimes.

Third, the government and telecom companies could think of setting up a **5G crime monitoring task force** to monitor and identify new crimes and develop countermeasures.

Fourth, it is imperative to create regulations that make it a crime for people to use 5G technology to commit crimes.

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Fifth, regulations may also require telecom companies to allow police officers access to their equipment to track the location of victims and perpetrators of 5G-facilitated crimes for countermeasures.

Sixth, law enforcement agencies will have to **evolve strategies** to identify victims of 5G-facilitated crimes in India, locate them, and take action against the perpetrators of such crimes.

Seventh, law enforcement agencies should have the necessary infrastructure to take full advantage of all that 5G can offer. The government must provide funds to invest in modern tools, software and infrastructure.

15. [Let's end the Wild West ways of fintech lending](#)

Source: The post is based on an article **“Let's end the Wild West ways of fintech lending”** published in **Live Mint** on **25th August 2022**.

Syllabus: GS 3 – Financial Institutions

Context: The internet has revolutionized digital businesses. Many such businesses are practicing unfair business practices and nil accountability. Fintech is fast becoming one such business.

Fintech promised efficient and cheaper credit operations so that borrowers do not have to spend days filling out meaningless forms.

A working group set up by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) says fintech lenders in India are not following existing rules and regulations and indulging in unethical practices.

Defining fintech

In a recent podcast, Aditya Narain, deputy director of the International Monetary Fund, defined fintech as “technology-driven innovation in financial services”.

He also said that fintech covers all manner of firms, from small startups to large universal banks.

It meant that any business with financial products at its core has to be regulated for the sake of proper growth, financial system stability, and protection of depositor and customer interests.

What is the view of fintech on regulations?

Many fintech lenders consider that they should be free of regulation because they operate in a free market.

Why fintech regulation is necessary?

The regulatory framework and legal structure in India mandate that fintech must be regulated by RBI to conduct any lending business. This is necessary for two reasons:

First, regulatory compliance imposes a cost on regulated entities.

- The increase in the number of regulators and touchpoints will compel fintechns to employ additional manpower for compliance.
- This will increase operational costs, and startup fintech firms enjoy an unfair cost advantage by avoiding regulatory compliance.

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Second, not adhering to regulation can lead to adverse market outcomes or the unintended consequences of widespread instability.

- This will impose not only additional costs on all players but could also erode public confidence in the online lending ecosystem.
- This will have an impact on all financial systems, especially when innovation in the financial system, products, and credit delivery platforms and mechanisms are deemed critical for achieving meaningful financial inclusion.

16. [Drone strikes: Targeted killings raise troubling questions](#)

Source: The post is based on an article “**Drone strikes: Targeted killings raise troubling questions**” published in **The Business Standard** on **25th August 2022**. Syllabus: GS 3 – **Science and technology and their effects on everyday life**

News: Increasing range and unrestricted use of Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems (LAWS), is a matter of global concern.

What are Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems (LAWS)?

Lethal autonomous weapons systems (LAWS) are fully machine-systems controlled and depend on facial recognition and artificial intelligence.

Such drones operate only on the basis of ex-ante data inputs about the target and are independent of human discretion in carrying out a strike.

Examples of the use of cross-border drones: **1)** The US government announced on August 1 that the Egyptian surgeon Ayman al-Zawahiri was killed by them in a drone strike in Kabul. **2)** More than two years ago, on January 3, 2020, Qasem Soleimani an Iranian major general was killed at Baghdad airport by a Reaper drone strike launched by the US.

Which countries have developed such drones?

Along with the US, a Turkish government-promoted company called Savunma Teknolojileri Muhendislik (STM) produces a drone named Kargu-2, which can be operated manually and autonomously.

India is behind Turkey and even lagging Iran in the context of drones and these types of drones pose a threat to the national security of India.

What are the concerns with Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems (LAWS)?

First, there is no international convention limiting or providing a context for the use of such weapons.

Second, there is no publicly available information about the reliability of LAWS.

Third, the concerns with the development of drones are the increasing range, automation, and possibly deniability of origin.

Fourth, The United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres called for rules to regulate and limit the use of LAWS.

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17. Chips for growth

Source: The post is based on an article “Chips for growth” published in **The Business Standard** on **25th August 2022**. **Syllabus: GS 3 – Industries and industrial policies**

News: India’s attempt to enter the global semiconductor market with a government commitment of \$10 billion is well-timed. But the policy decision must be followed up with a lot of work on the ground.

What were the reasons behind the disruption of the value chain for chips?

First due to the pandemic, and then by the Ukraine War, the supply of neon, a gas that’s key for the semiconductor manufacturing process, was affected.

What are the advantages for India to enter into the semiconductor market?

First, India has a strong background and plenty of skills and experience in chip design.

Second, it has a large domestic market, which is expected to grow faster after the launch of 5G telecom services, which will create new demand for chips.

Third, India has a large automobile industry, that has suffered from chip shortages.

Fourth, domestic semiconductor production could also provide a boost to the growing aerospace and defense sectors and enable local mobile handset manufacturing to move up the value chain.

What are the concerns associated with India, entering the semiconductor market?

Policy drafts, made for the industry, are ambiguous and unclear.

Delays in land acquisition, environmental and other statutory clearances are also major issues.

Lack of infrastructure.

Chip manufacturers **require massive amounts of absolutely pure water**, whereas India is water-deficient and the water quality is poor in most places.

The **policy commitment of \$10 billion and assurances of support by India may not be enough**, as setting up these plants is fairly expensive.

18. Water Of India

Source: The post is based on the article “**Water of India**” published in **The Times of India** on **25th August 2022**. **Syllabus: GS 3 – Major Crops – Cropping Patterns in various parts of the country, – Different Types of Irrigation and Irrigation Systems; ; Ecology and Environment**

Relevance: Water efficiency, climate change, water resources in India.

News: Recently, China’s southwestern regions were battling fires following a severe heat wave.

What are the other extreme weather events around the world?

Global level

(1) Europe last month experienced heatwaves and wildfires

(2) The US government has for the first time ever declared a water shortage on the critical Colorado River.

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Indian level

In March, parts of India experienced a severe heatwave which shrunk the wheat output.

At a regional level, there are **deficiencies** in monsoon rainfall across a vast area from UP to Bengal. It would negatively impact the paddy output because it is a water-intensive crop.

What are the other major issues with water resources in India?

(1) **Resource Scarcity:** India has 17% of the world's population and 4% of its water resources. Most of India's groundwater draft goes to irrigation (90%). Further, Indian farmers use 2-4 times more water to produce a unit of grain as compared to China and Brazil.

(2) Paddy and sugarcane consume more than 60% of the irrigation water available, as per NABARD and ICRIER.

(3) Further, India's cultivation patterns are out of sync with its **resource endowments**. The water-intensive crops are cultivated in the most **water-scarce regions of India**. For example, paddy cultivation in Punjab.

What are the solutions to improve water resources in India?

The states should **bring policies to change cropping patterns**. For example, Punjab is unsuitable for paddy cultivation. Therefore, policies should be introduced to incentivise farmers in Punjab to move to **less water-intensive crops**.

Further, the state governments in Eastern India, need to focus on higher crop yields.

India can no longer afford in-kind subsidies that distort prices and impact the environment. For example, free electricity incentivises more borewells. Therefore, **market-responsive prices** are required as these prices reflect the scarcity of resources.

19. [How a 16-foot yacht points to nation's vulnerability to a terror attack](#)

Source: The post is based on the article "**How a 16-foot yacht points to nation's vulnerability to a terror attack**" published in the **Indian Express** on **25th August 2022**.

Syllabus: GS 3 Security Challenges and their Management in Border Areas

Relevance: Maritime Security

News: Last week, an **unmanned yacht (Lady Han)**, carrying a cache of arms and AK-47 rifles, live ammunition etc. reached the shores of Maharashtra. A day later, the Mumbai Traffic Police's WhatsApp helpline number also received messages with a warning that a '26/11-like terror attack' will soon be executed in Mumbai.

Why is this incident a matter of concern?

The boat dodged the Indian Navy's surveillance, the Indian Coast Guard's monitoring and also slipped through Maharashtra's Coastal Police dragnet and finally reached the Maharashtra shore.

The happening of this incident has all the markings of the November 26, 2008 Mumbai terror attacks, which resulted in the killing of more than 150 innocents and injuring hundreds in Mumbai.

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What are the issues in India's maritime security?

The **Ram Pradhan Committee** formed after the **26/11 Attack**, found that there was a clear **lack of coordination** between the state and central intelligence and investigation agencies, including the defence forces, which resulted in the 26/11 attack.

Based on the **recommendations** of the Committee, it was decided that **heads of all state and central agencies**, including the defence agencies, will meet at least once in six months. This is to ensure there is a proper and **seamless flow of information and intelligence** between all the agencies. But, in the past 13 years, this meeting has happened only once, in 2009.

After the 26/11 attacks, the **Maharashtra coastal police** were set up to man the Maharashtra coastline. In Mumbai, coastal police stations have been established. **Amphibian vehicles were provided** to man the coastline, but these vehicles are no longer functional due to a lack of proper maintenance.

Unfortunately, the incident is important to understand that no lessons have been learnt from the astounding failures of 26/11.

20. [ONORC Scheme: Grains Of Transformation](#)

Source: The post is based on the article "**Grains of Transformation**" published in **The Times of India** on **25th August 2022**.

Syllabus: GS 3 Issues of Buffer Stocks and Food Security;

Relevance: One Nation One Ration Card (ONORC) Scheme

News: In the recent past, the Central government had launched the **One Nation One Ration Card (ONORC) scheme** which is a high-impact welfare scheme in the public policy realm.

Need for ONORC Scheme

In India, about 6Cr people migrate inter-state and 8Cr migrate intra-state seasonally.

Earlier, when such workers went to cities to work, they lost their entitlement for subsidised grain as they were tied to the fair price shop (FPS) back home.

Further, if these migrants were registered at an FPS in a city, then their family members were forced to buy food grain at a much higher market rates at their native place.

About the ONORC

It allows the PDS beneficiaries freedom to buy heavily subsidised grains from any FPS in the country. For example, it enables the Indian migrants living in different parts of India, to buy PDS ration from FPS located anywhere in India.

Read more: [One Nation One Ration Card: Good intention but implementation may be difficult](#)

What are the implications of the One-Nation-One-Ration-Card (ONORC) scheme?

(1) Indian workers will become **self-reliant**. This plan is part of India's Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan.

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(2) This has ended the **monopoly** of the neighbourhood FPS. Earlier, beneficiaries had no choice but to go to a particular FPS. Thus, shop owners commanded a captive market and had no incentive to maintain quality. This has led to following

a) ONORC gives **every beneficiary**, not just migrants, the **choice to buy** from another FPS if it is selling better quality grains and providing better service.

b) ONORC has induced a **fierce competition** between the Fair Price Shops (FPSs). The seller has competition from over 5 lakh shops across every state in the country. This will contribute to overall improvement in quality of goods and services delivery.

(3) Now, **Crores of workers, daily wagers**, including urban poor such as rag pickers, street dwellers, temporary workers in the organised and unorganised sectors, and domestic workers are taking advantage of this pathbreaking scheme.

What were the reasons behind the success of the ONORC scheme?

(1) The Prime Minister has pushed for **digital India**. It has been a big enabler for the country. Therefore, 100% of ration cards are digitised and electronic point of sale devices has been installed in more than 5.3 lakh (99%) of FPSs across India.

(2) Various ministries and departments coordinated their efforts for strategic outreach and communication to make people aware about the ONORC scheme in India. For example,

(a) The government undertook a **radio-based campaign** in Hindi and 10 other regional languages using FM and community radio stations.

(b) **Announcements** and **displays** were arranged in railway stations and public buses, in order to give the PM's message to migrant workers who travel in trains.

What should be done to improve the ONORC Scheme further?

The Department of Food and Public Distribution launched a **'Common Registration Facility'** on pilot basis for 11 states/UTs to include more beneficiaries under NFSA.

Further, all the Public policy should be formulated in a manner that benefits the poorest of the poor and the most marginalised sections of Indian society.

21. [Making out a case for the other UBI in India](#)

Source: The post is based on the article **"Making out a case for the other UBI in India"** published in **"The Hindu"** on **25th August 2022**.

Syllabus: GS 3 Inclusive growth

Relevance: Universal Basic Insurance (UBI)

News: Universal basic income (UBI) and **Universal basic insurance** became a hot debate in policy circles across the globe, especially after the Covid Pandemic.

About Poverty Lines and Poverty Trap

Income shocks result in a free fall of those living on the line of basic living wages down towards the **critical survival line**. A fall below the critical survival line needs to be prevented as it can be catastrophic like a household can end up facing a poverty trap.

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What are the three types of security nets?

1) A **passive safety net** focuses on those falling from basic living wages and prevents them from falling below the critical survival line. For example, it is basically a **social assistance programme** meant for the **most income-deprived sections** of society.

2) An **active safety net** which works like a **trampoline** so that those who fall on it are able to bounce back to basic living wages. This type of safety net is a scheme with a higher outlay.

3) A **proactive safety net** which acts like a launchpad so that those who fall on it will not only bounce back but will also move up beyond basic living wages. The third type of social security net is the most desirable option but requires immense resources and institutional capacity.

What are the various types of Social Security nets in India?

India operates the widest spectrum of social security schemes at a different level, which cater to the largest number of people than any other country.

(a) Food security: The [National Food Security Act \(NFSA\)](#) is the world's largest food security programme.

Issues: There are issues of financial sustainability and leakages in the food security programme.

(b) Health Security: For the **unorganised sector**, there is the [Ayushman Bharat Scheme](#). For the organised sector, the Employees State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) and Central Government Health Scheme (CGHS) are being run. Further, about 110 million people in India have private health insurance.

Issues: Despite these large-scale provisions, about 400 million Indians are not covered under any kind of health insurance.

(c) Income security: For the organised sector, the General Provident Fund (GPF), the Employees' Provident Fund (EPF), the Public Provident Fund (PPF) and the New Pension Scheme (NPS) are being run. In the unorganised sector, the [Pradhan Mantri Kisan Maan-Dhan Yojana \(PM-KMY\)](#), the [PM-KISAN scheme](#), the [Atal Pension Yojana \(APY\)](#), and the [Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act](#), are being run.

Issues: The Indian economy is informal in nature. Therefore, rolling out schemes such as unemployment insurance is difficult due to the challenges of identification of the beneficiaries. Further, there are huge fiscal implications (around 4.5% of GDP).

Why should India adopt Universal Basic Insurance (UBI)?

Insurance penetration (premium as a % of GDP) in India has been hovering around 4% for many years. However, it is around 17%, 9% and 6% in Taiwan, Japan and China, respectively.

Though the economy largely remains informal, **data of the informal sector are now available** both for businesses (through GSTIN, or Goods and Services Tax Identification Number) and for unorganised workers (through e-Shram portal, centralised database of all unorganised workers).

What should be done?

The Karnataka Model: It has developed a prototype of a social security portal based on such data, known as 'Kutumba'. It is the **social registry portal** available as a blueprint. The government should implement it at national level.

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22. [How to decarbonize the steel industry](#)

Source: The post is based on the article “**How to decarbonize the steel industry**” published in **The Live Mint** on **26th August 2022**.

Syllabus: GS 3 – Climate change and pollution

News: India is a big producer of steel. Reducing emissions from this industry will have a hugely positive effect on the environment.

What is the significance of reducing emissions from the steel industry?

The decarbonization of steel production will also lead to the decarbonization of related industries such as automobiles, infrastructure, and buildings.

India is the world’s second-largest steel producer.

The National Steel Policy states that by 2030, a capacity of 300 million tons per year will be needed to meet the needs of our rapidly growing economy, which implies a doubling of production and a parallel increase in energy consumption.

Steel accounts for almost a third of direct industrial CO₂ emissions, or 10% of India’s total energy infrastructure CO₂ emissions.

What are the challenges associated with decarbonizing the steel industry in India?

Decarbonizing will not be fast and without big investments. Basic decarbonization technologies are not yet feasible and are not commercially workable.

Steel has a primary and secondary impact on Scope 3 emissions in the Indian economy.

That is why India must face the challenge of decarbonization decisively.

What can be done further?

Steel production technology is diverse in both the primary and secondary sectors.

However, clean technologies can lead to a general adoption that will transform steel production and reduce environmental damage.

Research and development by the steel industries will help in reducing the environmental damage by developing new processes and products, improving processes to maximize quality, optimizing costs and energy consumption, recycling waste and conserving natural resources.

23. [Tackle The Four Trojan Horses Of Inequality](#)

Source: The post is based on an article “**Tackle the four trojan horses of inequality**” published in **The Times of India** on **26th August 2022**.

Syllabus: GS 3 Inclusive Growth

Relevance: Growing Inequalities in India

News: Persisting and increasing inequalities have been a defining feature of present times. Policymakers should focus on at least four factors that are increasing inequalities.

What are the factors that are increasing inequalities?

(1) Economic system itself: French economist Thomas Piketty in his seminal work “**Capital in the Twenty-First Century**” postulated that inequalities are here to stay as they are **hardwired**

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into the present system. The rich have the capital, returns of which are much greater than those that are possible from labour.

(2) The rich are becoming richer due to the macroeconomic situation worldwide: In early 2020, major central banks adopted **expansionary monetary policies** due to slowing economies. This led to a large inflow of capital which resulted in **asset price inflation**, enriching those who had assets. At the same time, the pandemic-induced disruption, and supply chain disruption led to **decade-high levels of inflation** which disproportionately squeezed consumption by the poor.

(3) The growing education chasm: In addition, the edtech revolution in the education sector has profound implications for inequalities in access to and quality of education. While edtech has huge potential to improve access to quality education, it has not helped the poor and people in rural areas.

(4) The vanishing jobs pie: The employment elasticity of growth has come down and the number of **gig-economy workers** with no social protection has been going up. The Pandemic induced lockdown impacted lower-skilled workers, predominantly in the informal sector, as well as increased **gender-based inequities in income and employment**.

(5) Digital boost but only for the well-off: India's innovations in information and communication technology (ICT) have been remarkable. But there is a large digital divide and some are getting left behind like people relying on manual labour such as guards, messengers and construction workers. This gap has been further widened by the pandemic.

24. [‘Freebies’, a judicial lead and a multi-layered issue](#)

Source: The post is based on the article **“Freebies, a judicial lead and multi-layered issue”** published in **“The Hindu”** on **26th August 2022**.

Syllabus: GS 3 The Union Budgeting

Relevance: Freebies; Subsidies etc.

News: In the recent, the Prime Minister commented upon the **“freebies”** handed out by the state governments. The Supreme Court of India also commented that there has to be a distinction between expenditure made on **social welfare schemes** and **“irrational freebies”** offered to voters during elections. This has reignited the debate on the **economic rationale for granting subsidies**.

What is the definition of “subsidies”?

According to the **Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures (ASCM)** of the World Trade Organization (WTO), a subsidy shall be deemed to exist if there is a **financial contribution** in form of the **direct transfer of funds** (e.g., grants, loans and equity infusion), and/or **government revenue** that is otherwise due is foregone or not collected, and/or **a government provides goods or services**, by a government or any public body where government is engaged

In other words, ‘Subsidy’ can be any form of income or price support granted by the government. In fact, there is a **distinction** between various forms of **subsidies**: (1) transfer payments that are made for running social welfare schemes, and (2) other subsidies (like freebies) .

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Tax policy includes tax preferences like special tax rates, exemptions, deductions, rebates, deferrals, and credits. These are aimed for realising **specific benefits** serving the greater public good. For instance, to promote savings by individuals, and **customs duty concessions** are intended to promote exports.

What are the issues in providing tax-preferences?

There are situations when the objectives of **tax-preferences** are not realised, for instance, the 2019-20 corporate tax cuts did not result in higher **private investment** as the Government had expected.

First, as compared to individuals, corporates have been enjoying a larger share of tax preferences, for all years except in 2019-20 when the share of individuals inexplicably increased. Further, the corporate sector is also enjoying **lower tax rates** than the income tax rates on individuals.

Further, the government has reduced subsidies in agricultural sector, public health and education sector.

(a) Public health expenditure has struggled to cross 1.5% of GDP, which is significantly lower than those in other major economies.

(b) In education, the **Kothari Commission's recommendation** (1966), that public investment should be increased to "**6 percent of the national income as early as possible**" remains a distant dream.

(c) Agriculture has remained a neglected sector. Its share has almost halved in recent years.

(d) The market fundamentalists oppose these subsidies/support to the health, education and agricultural sector. The spaces are being created for **private players**. For example, the Government had brought **the controversial farm laws** for dealing with the issue of **increasing farm subsidies**.

25. [India's chip-making gambit: Ambitious plans or breakthrough strategy?](#)

Source: The post is based on an article "**India's chip-making gambit: Ambitious plans or breakthrough strategy?**" published in **The Business Standard** on **27th August 2022**.

Syllabus: GS 3 – Government policies for various industries

Relevance: advantages and concerns associated with the chip-making industry

News: This article discusses the benefits and concerns associated with the decision of India, to enter the chip-making industry.

What are chips and their uses?

Chips, or integrated circuits imprinted on silicon wafers, are at the heart of every kind of manufacturing industry from automobiles to telecom gear, and from defense equipment to solar panels.

They will become even more important in a world of artificial intelligence and electric cars, which need many more chips than petrol-driven cars.

Where does the world stand in chip-making?

The US has offered incentives of \$52 billion, and it leads in logic chip design.

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The European Union is topping up an earlier offer of \$30 billion.

China reportedly subsidizes its chip manufacturing to the extent of \$15 billion annually.

Samsung plans to invest \$200 billion in new chip factories.

What is the situation of India in chip making?

It has offered an unprecedented \$10 billion as capital subsidy to the chip manufacturing industry.

India's chip-making decision is a part of providing an incentive-based push into electronic manufacturing.

It has already been successful in manufacturing the mobile handset.

Chip manufacturers proposing to locate in India might look at mid-range chips (28 nm) used by the automobile industry and some smartphones.

India has strengths in chip designing and also has the advantage of being the labor-intensive country in making the chips.

It could do well in downstream product assembly, as it has done with mobile handsets.

India is looking for a full spectrum approach rather than a specialized approach. The full spectrum approach will replace imports of both chips and downstream products.

What are the concerns associated with the chip industry?

First, it requires a huge amount of cash for advanced research and super-expensive production facilities.

Second, even though India goes for a full spectrum approach, it will be dependent on upstream imports for materials and production equipment.

Third, Taiwan supplies chips more than half of the world's supply, and it would be a matter of concern if Taiwan is attacked by China.

Fourth, Russia and Ukraine are the leading suppliers of neon gas and palladium which is required in the chip-making industry and the conflict between these two will be a matter of concern.

26. [Improving women's work participation rate: Men@\(House\)Work](#)

Source: The post is based on the article "**Men @ (house) Work**" published in **The Times of India** on **27th August 2022**.

Syllabus: GS 3 Inclusive Growth

Relevance: Women's Work Participation; Work From home

News: Recently, the PM of India while speaking of "**Nari shakti in the workforce and Vision 2047**", advocated for flexible, work-from-home options to boost women's labour force participation.

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What are the various aspects of women's participation in economic activities?

Importance: As per Oxfam estimates, India's GDP would be higher by 43% if Indian women had the same work participation rates as men.

The present status of women's work participation: India has a dismal record in terms of women's work participation.

What are the causes behind dismal women's work participation?

The reasons range from higher education, rising aspirations to simply fewer jobs in the Indian job market.

Women are forced to work a double shift of housework and care responsibilities.

Most women are forced to drop out or choose a softer, less rewarding track if they are pursuing a physical workplace.

What are the challenges associated with providing flexible work to women?

The pandemic has shown how easy it is to allow many kinds of workers to work more productively at their own convenience. However, there are two major issues associated with it.

- 1) Studies show that remote work tends to stall promotion and career advancement for women.
- 2) Work from home or flexible work may not apply to all kinds of work.

What should be done to improve women's work participation?

An environment must be created that the home is not exclusively **a woman's domain**, it is also the responsibility of men. Therefore, men must contribute equally to care and household work.

There should be greater state or workplace investment in childcare, to make sure that women workers do not have to take a hit to their careers and have the same chances as men.

27. Inclusion of climate change in policy is crucial for a strong economy

Source: The post is based on the article "**Inclusion of climate change in policy is crucial for a strong economy**" published in the **Indian Express** on **27th August 2022**.

Syllabus: GS 3 Indian Economy; Ecology and Environment

Relevance: Monetary Policies dealing with the climate change issues

News: In July 2022, the Reserve bank of India (RBI) released a discussion paper that covers the issue of climate risks and sustainable finance.

About the RBI recent discussion paper

The RBI's earlier research papers or report could not address the **comprehensive risk assessment**.

Therefore, this paper seeks to understand **preferred approaches** to identification and disclosure of exposures to climate-related risks, transition risks, frameworks for management of risks and capacity building within the banking sector etc.

The RBI wants to assess the preparedness of the system rather than indicate its own approach to what a central bank can do.

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What is the importance of the RBI's recent consultation paper?

It shows the Reserve Bank's **inclination** to address **emerging risks** from **climate change** and a **full assessment of macro-risks** that may arise from disinvestment from fossil fuel-based assets.

Further, the discussion paper also indicates the RBI's understanding of the requirements of the **regulatory changes**.

The paper allows the RBI to respond based on existing practices and a better understanding of the risk profiles of banks.

What are the issues in the discussion paper?

The scope of discussion in the paper remains limited and without a general narrative on the central bank's role.

It does not detail the various instruments such as **capital requirements** for **fossil fuel-based lending** by banks or **credit guidance** that can be worked by a central bank to ensure the greening of the financial system.

Why should the central banks acknowledge the climate change risks?

(1) Exposure of assets to **extreme weather events** and **loss of asset value** due to a green transition are imminent risks to the financial system.

(2) Inclusion of climate change in a central bank's policy response remains unaddressed. Climate change is a significant threat to financial stability and the central banks are "failing to do its job" to address climate risk.

(3) Central banks can guide the flow of finance by restricting the flow of credit to fossil fuel-dependent sectors.

What are various measures related to the acknowledgement of climate change risks?

Globally

(1) Some Central Banks have adopted a range of **best practices** and **approaches**. For example, (a) **the Bank of Lebanon** sets different reserve requirements for loans linked to energy savings, and (b) the People's Bank of China offers positive incentives to commercial banks for extending green credit,

India

(1) The Reserve Bank of India has included renewable energy (RE) within priority sector lending.

(2) In 2021, the RBI joined the [Network for Greening Financial System](#) which promotes the exchange of **best practices** on **green finance** across the world.

(3) In 2021, RBI issued research papers indicating a **growing acknowledgement** of risks to the financial system. The RBI has acknowledged that extreme weather events can elevate inflation.

(4) In 2022, RBI estimated the direct and indirect exposure of Indian banks to **green transition** in India.

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What should be done?

While the RBI, disclosures and risk assessment frameworks are a starting point. It remains to be seen what **macro** and **micro-prudential regulations** will be introduced by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).

28. [AFSPA: A draconian law that needs to disappear](#)

Source: The Post is based on the article “**A draconian law that needs to disappear**” published in “**The Hindu**” on **27th August 2022**.

Syllabus: GS 3 Security Forces and Their Mandate

Relevance: The Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act 1958, or AFSPA.

News: In December 2021, the **Commandos of the Army’s 21 Para (Special Forces)** killed six locals initially in a case of mistaken identity in Nagaland, where the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act 1958, or AFSPA, has been imposed.

Background of the law

In the 1950s, Naga insurgents resorted to **large-scale violence** and meticulously planned and launched ambushes, which resulted into either killing or injury of hundreds of Indian Army soldiers, Central and State paramilitary personnel in the region.

As a result, the Union government introduced the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act 1958, or AFSPA.

About the AFSPA

Read here: [Armed Forces Special Powers Act \(AFSPA\) – Explained, pointwise](#)

What are the issues in the AFSPA?

(1) **Colonial legacy:** The law can be traced to the **Armed Forces (Special Powers) Ordinance 1942**, enacted by the British to subjugate the rebels in the country during the Quit India movement, particularly in Assam and Bengal in October 1942.

(2) In the North-East India, Nagaland has largely borne the brunt of this law since the AFSPA was imposed in the late 1950s.

(3) On account of sweeping powers, there are allegations of **aberrations committed** by security forces, for decades, against the residents of the states, where the AFSPA has been imposed. For example, in 2012, **the Extrajudicial Execution Victim Families’ Association Manipur (EEVFAM)** approached the SC with around 1,528 cases of alleged fake encounter. A number of those cases have been found to be indeed fake encounters.

(4) There are **delays** in any further action against the security forces due to delay in the consent from the Central government. For example, there is delay in any further action against the commandos in the recent case also.

(5) The AFSPA has become a case of violation of the very **basic tenets of democracy** like the principles “**Democracy is of the people, by the people and for the people**”, the liberty and the rights of the people which are enshrined in the Constitution of India.

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(6) Despite a **16-year** long hunger-strike by **Irom Chanu Sharmila**, the iron lady of Manipur, nothing has improved so far.

What are the measures taken so far?

Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said that all **three wings of the defence forces** were in favour of the removal of AFSPA from the Northeast and Jammu and Kashmir.

In April this year, the **Prime Minister of India**, Narendra Modi made a statement to the people of the North-east that the Government intends to withdraw the much-dreaded Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act 1958, or AFSPA, completely from the region.

Following the PM's statement, in March this year, the government has partially withdrawn the AFSPA from parts of **Assam, Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh** and **Manipur**.

What should be the way forward?

There needs to be a **comprehensive** and serious periodical review undertaken by the Centre till the entire **North-east** is freed from the tentacles of AFSPA.

Investigations into the 1,528 encounters also need to be fast tracked and taken to their logical conclusion.

The **Justice B.P. Jeevan Reddy Commission** recommended that AFSPA be withdrawn.

General

Studies

Paper – 4

General Studies - 4

1. [Philanthropy could help unlock India's vast economic potential](#)

Source: The post is based on the article “**Philanthropy could help unlock India's vast economic potential**” published in the **Livemint** on **22nd August 2022**.

Syllabus: GS 4 – Corporate Governance.

Relevance: Philanthropy and its relevance.

News: India will reach a per-capita income of some \$15,000 by India@100 in 2047. In that, philanthropy can play a crucial role in accelerating economic growth that is both inclusive and sustainable.

About philanthropy in India

Philanthropy has long been embedded in Indian society and contributed heavily to the creation of modern-day India.

Pre-industrial India: India saw business families giving away a proportion of their income to local charities. Industrialization and the freedom struggle in the 19th and 20th centuries.

After Industrialization: Industrialization enabled rapid wealth creation; business leaders like Sir Jamsetji Tata voiced their opinions on using wealth for social good, donating vast amounts to create exemplary institutions.

During the independence movement, Mahatma Gandhi encouraged businessmen to contribute their wealth for the betterment of society. Industrialists like Jamnalal Bajaj and G.D. Birla supported Mahatma Gandhi's initiatives during the freedom movement while pursuing their own philanthropic interests.

Philanthropy at present: India has witnessed an increase in domestic philanthropy. Few famous philanthropists are the Tata family which continued Jamsetji Tata's tradition of philanthropy, Azim and Yasmin Premji, and Nandan and Rohini Nilekani, etc.

Read more: [Indian philanthropy has a worthy record that could shine brighter](#)

About the Philanthropic role models in the USA

While India was undergoing independence movements, America was witnessing the Carnegie-Rockefeller era of philanthropy.

Andrew Carnegie built impressive institutions like Carnegie Library and Carnegie Mellon University and also inspired the rich to contribute to philanthropy. The last line of his book reads: “The man who dies rich, dies disgraced.”

John D. Rockefeller donated large amounts of money to systemic reforms, especially to improve the education system. The Rockefeller Foundation also developed the vaccine to eradicate yellow fever.

Both Carnegie and Rockefeller became role models, inspiring generations.

Read more: [Philanthropy and community support for higher education in India](#)

What are the challenges that hampered philanthropy in India?

There are three major challenges that have hampered Indian philanthropy. These are, **a) A trust deficit:** Philanthropists haven't fully appreciated for the good work being done in the impact

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sector; **b) The parochial nature of giving**, which risks some of the poorest parts of the country being ignored; **c) Programmatic giving** doesn't yield desired results. For example, a number of foundations and NGOs work on school education, yet learning outcomes have not improved.

How philanthropy and philanthropists can create a meaningful impact on Indian society?

There are four strategic ways that emerging philanthropists can create outsized impacts. These are,

Build institutions: India needs collective philanthropy to build new universities. Donors can fund think-tanks and build area-specific (say, on energy transition) or geography-specific (such as eastern Uttar Pradesh) institutions.

Fund risky R&D for the government: Philanthropists can fund innovative models and test new ideas through non-profits by building evidence, advocating for policy change and supporting government implementation.

Support governments to improve delivery: Philanthropists need to change their orientation from funding programme delivery through NGOs to initiatives which improve the government's system of delivery. For example, the Piramal Foundation is supporting the Aspirational Districts.

Enable economic growth: Philanthropists can use their wealth and experience to advocate policies, support the improvement of enabling conditions for investment, exports and job creation, and help transform India's economy.

Read more: [There is need to create a new discourse of philanthropy](#)