

**9 PM**

**Compilation**

**August, 2022**

## 9 PM Compilation for the Month of August, 2022

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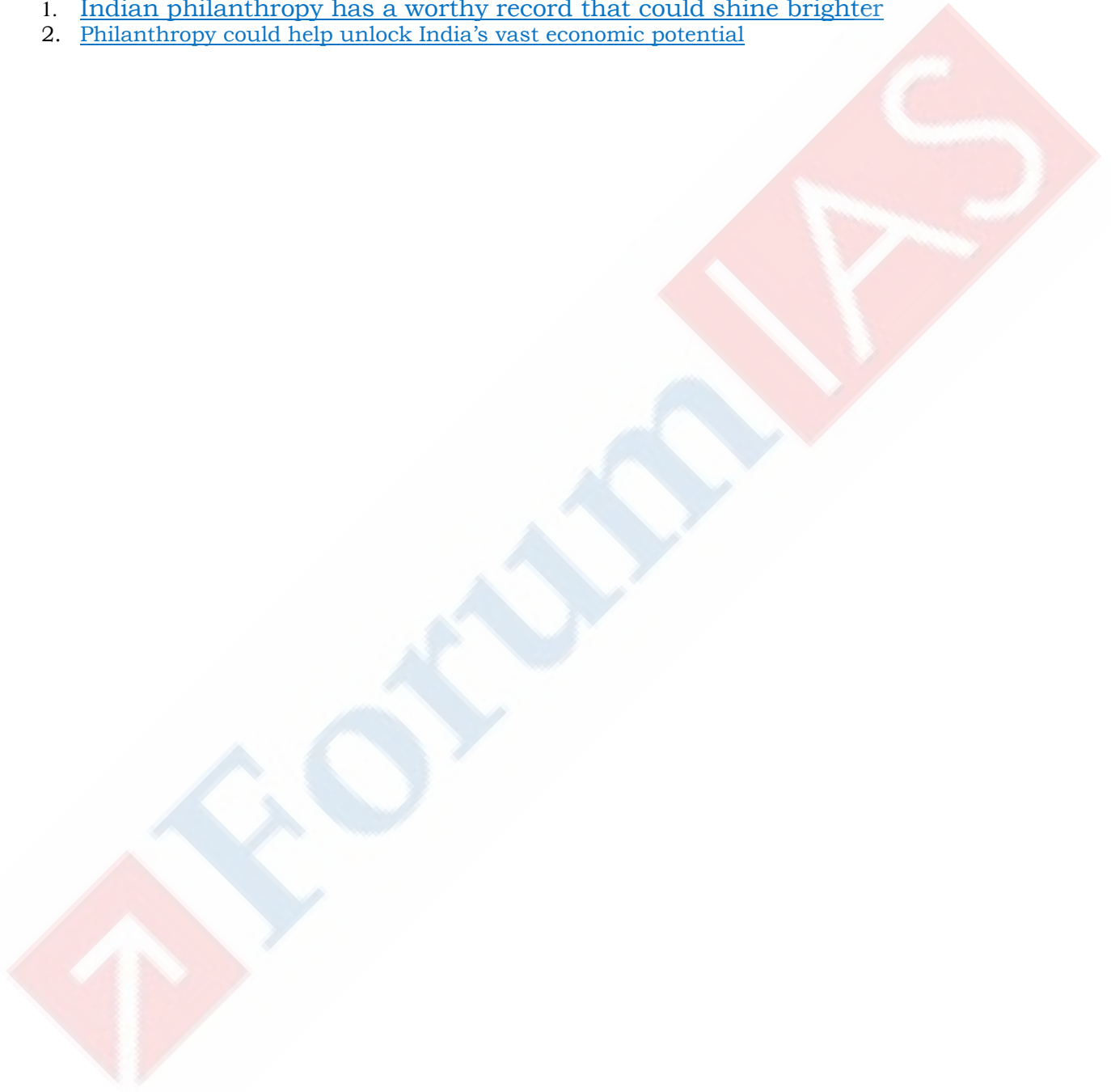
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# General

# Studies

# Paper – 1

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### General Studies - 1

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#### 1. [Hail the rise of digital humanities](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article “Hail the rise of digital humanities” published in the Business Standard on 1<sup>st</sup> August 2022.

**Syllabus:** GS 1 Indian Art and Culture

**News:** Recently, the Jadavpur University has launched **the Bichitra project**, a **digital humanities project**. In this project, digital versions of manuscripts and printed books and journals related to Rabindranath Tagore in Bengali with English transcription have been gathered for study.

#### **About the Digital Humanities**

In this, the “digital world” and “humanities” are combined together to produce anything meaningful.

Nowadays, the digital humanists have developed new methods, such as **computer-based statistical analysis, search and retrieval, topic modelling**, and **data visualisation** for use in their researches.

#### **Some Applications**

A key element in spurring growth in digital humanities is the collection and digitisation of large datasets that will enable researchers to experiment.

(1) At the University of California, Berkeley, researchers are using **mathematical techniques** and **machine learning-based tools** to unravel which author contributed what to the Hebrew Bible, a composite text compiled over hundreds of years.

(2) in the University College London, researchers are using similar **mathematical techniques, text- and sentiment-mining techniques** on digitized newspapers and available periodicals. It is to unravel the history of mentalities, long-term developments, and turning points in public debates.

(3) Further, mathematical methods are being used in news headlines, social media posts, and smart stock market traders on Wall Street and other financial markets to extract emotions.

#### **Importance of the digital humanities**

The Digital humanities techniques are applied to archives and collections that are so large that any human researcher or research group cannot comfortably handle them.

These methods enable ambitious projects with large interdisciplinary teams to work on difficult or complex projects.

Digital humanists are transforming the idea of what a **humanities research project** can be. These techniques are giving humanists, new ways of seeing past and present cultures.

#### **Some Developments in the field of digital humanities**

##### **In the Western Countries**

Major Western universities have started setting up digital humanities departments and research centers. For Example, **the Digital Humanities Centre** at Berkeley; Massachusetts Institute of



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Technology's Digital Humanities and Literature Research Initiative; the University of Cambridge's new M Phil in digital humanities, and Oxford University's M.Sc. in digital scholarship.

### In India

Ashoka University has initiated foundation courses in digital humanities and seminars for exploring critical thinking and opportunities for interdisciplinary majors.

IIT Jodhpur, Mumbai University, and Jadavpur University are offering post-graduate diplomas in digital humanities.

The Centre for Internet and Governance in India, Bangalore, is also playing a pioneering role in spreading the word.

### What are the challenges in the adoption of the digital humanities in India?

In India, even relatively minor updates of curricula are greeted with **temper tantrums** by the teachers concerned, even at the IIM level. In part, this arises because such changes require professors and lecturers in their late 50s and early 60s to unlearn and relearn new concepts. For example, it happened when the Internet and the World Wide Web started to make their presence in the 2000-2010 period.

The Indian tech companies may convert the still nascent concepts in digital humanities into **learn-by-rote formulae**. It will further block any Indian participation in this new intellectual revolution that is underway.

### 2. [A translation revolution for an inclusive, prosperous India](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article "**A translation revolution for an inclusive, prosperous India**" published in the **Indian Express** on **3<sup>rd</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 1 Indian Art and Culture

**Relevance:** The National Language Translation Missions

**News:** Recently, the **Artificial Intelligence for Bharat (AI4Bharat) Centre** at IIT Madras was established with support from Rohini and Nandan Nilekani, and Microsoft. It aims to **bring Indian languages, to parity with respect to English in AI technologies, with open-source contributions in datasets, models, and apps**.

The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology has launched the **National Language Translation Mission**. Under the mission, the government launched **Bhashini platform**, which is a language translation ecosystem based on the application of **Artificial Intelligence (AI)**.

The platform would align central ministries, state governments, big tech companies, start-ups, publishers, universities, NGOs, and citizens.

### Some developments related to the translation revolution in India

Around 100+ models of language translation have been uploaded into **Bhashini's Universal Language Contribution API (ULCA)**, and the **Bhasha Daan** (Creating datasets by crowdsourcing).

Some models created include **IndicBERT** (a language model in 12 languages), **IndicTrans** (translation model used by India's Supreme Court), **IndicXlit** (transliteration model in 20

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languages), **IndicWav2Vec** (speech-recognition model), and **IndicBART** (language generation model).

### **What is the significance of the translation revolution in India?**

**India is rich in linguistic diversity.** For Example, there are 22 official languages, newspapers in 35 languages, and 1,200 languages spoken in India. This diversity is a treasure chest of Indian knowledge which remains locked so far.

The Indian national movement's operating units were organized **around language** rather than British administration units like Madras Presidency, United Provinces, Bombay Presidency, etc. These units contributed to Indian Independence.

The translation revolution **will expand the global knowledge base**, unlock Indian treasures for every Indian, and raise the share of the internet in Indian languages.

### **It would provide a better and more effective communication medium for Indian society.**

**For example**, it would enable a webinar being held in the Hindi language that could be heard live by a participant in Tamil. Further, a book published in the English language could simultaneously be available in 22 Indian languages.

### **What are the challenges of the translation revolution?**

As per Vladimir Nabokov's 1941 essay, there are three sources of evil in translation — ignorance, laziness, and prejudice.

There are limitations of translation by software based on uniquely human skills and emotions.

### **What should be done?**

(1) It should be ensured that the translation technology should assist the translators, **not replace them.**

(2) It should be understood that languages are **not a collection of words** but living, breathing organisms holding the connections of a culture. For example, Himachal Pradesh's 16 languages have 200 words for snow.

(3) While focusing on language translation between **Indian languages**, the government should not forget **English** as a link language, scale tool, and software vehicle. The reasons for the inclusion of English are:

(a) In 1919, Gandhiji wrote an article in **Young India** suggesting that real education was impossible through a foreign medium.

(b) B R Ambedkar supported the adoption of English in the Constituent Assembly debates because it was equidistant from all communities and would blunt traditional advantages.

(c) English is a vocational skill that creates labor mobility, wage premiums and resumes signaling.

(d) The translation to **English** can raise the viability of regional publishers, regional language writers, and regional language translators. For example, **Geetanjali Shree** has won the Booker Prize for her English translation of the Hindi novel, *Ret Samadhi*

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### 3. [Reaping the demographic dividend](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article “**Reaping the demographic dividend**” published in **The Hindu** on **4<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 1 – Population and associated issues.

**Relevance:** About the recent UNPD report on population.

**News:** [World Population Prospects 2022](#) forecasts that the world’s population will touch eight billion this year and rise to 9.8 billion in 2050.

**Must read:** [The UN World Population Prospects Report and Population Issues in India – Explained, pointwise](#)

About China’s population policy

A long-time critic of China’s population policy believes that without the one-child policy, China’s population would have naturally risen and peaked at 1.6 billion in 2040. This would allow them to reap a much longer “demographic dividend.”

At the present policy by 2050, China will have only 1.3 billion people, of whom 500 million will be past the age of 60.

**Must read:** [Population control measures in India – Explained, pointwise](#)

About the demographic dividend in India

In contrast, India’s population would have peaked at 1.7 billion, of whom only 330 million will be 60 years or older. India is getting a demographic dividend that will last nearly 30 years.

Deloitte’s Deloitte Insights (in 2017) expects “India’s potential workforce to rise from 885 million to “1.08 billion people over the next two decades from today.” The insights contends that “the next 50 years will be an Indian summer that redraws the face of global economic power.”

McKinsey & Company’s report, ‘India at Turning Point’ (in 2020) suggested how India can “create \$2.5 trillion of economic value in 2030 and support 112 million jobs, or about 30% of the non-farm workforce in 2030.” These include digitisation and automation, shifting supply chains, urbanisation, rising incomes and demographic shifts, and a greater focus on sustainability, health, and safety are accelerating.

**Read more:** [India in 2023: The challenge and opportunity of being the most populous country](#)

How do India and China reap their demographic dividends?

India today is compared to China, the only country it can be reasonably compared to. The Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution in China fuelled China’s growth for decades.

The IT technologies in India have matured exponentially. Now the IR can revolutionise learning and transform Indian society at an astonishingly low cost.

India does not have a Hukou system which in China attaches rural folk to rural parts creating a deep divide between urban China. But the Hukou system disincentivises migration to urban areas. For instance, only about 36% of China’s overall population is urban.

**Read more:** [Elderly population in India – Explained, pointwise](#)

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What India should do to reap its demographic dividend?

The major challenges in reaping demographic dividend are **a)** India's bad infrastructure, **b)** poorly skilled workforce that will impede growth. Hence, India should focus on both.

India needs to invest massively in quality schools and higher education as well as healthcare.

India must seize the moment and not be incremental in its approach.

#### 4. [A century back is not as long ago as it may seem](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article "**A century back is not as long ago as it may seem**" published in the **Live Mint** on **5<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS-1, World and Modern India History

**Context:** The article compares the events of the same year of the previous century i.e. 1922 with the year of the present century i.e. 2022.

Over a period of hundred years, **various things have changed**. For instance, since 1922, industry, telephony, media, medicine, trade, communication, science, entertainment, travel, and even the climate have changed.

**However, over the same period of time, since 1922, various things have stayed the same. For example,**

(1) The public health crises continue to linger. For example, **the Spanish Flu Epidemic** hit the world **in 1918**, and **the Covid-19 Pandemic in 2021**. And now another health crisis, monkeypox, has come up to haunt the world.

(2) In 1922, the revolution's architect Vladimir Lenin fell ill and his **comrade Josef Stalin** rose to power. Stalin deviated from Lenin's grand plan of a **federal union of states**, which had envisaged devolution of power to satellite states, and created **a centralized Union of Soviet Socialist Republics**. However, such a central control has been re-established in Russia in the last few years. For example, the invasion of Crimea and Ukraine.

(3) The then Weimar Germany was facing **hyperinflation**, resulting in massive unemployment and general impoverishment. Adolf Hitler leveraged economic distress and became the undisputed leader of the Nazi party. Nowadays, the world is facing high inflation and commodity prices.

(4) Mahatma Gandhi pleaded guilty to a charge of sedition for his writings. He said **Section 124A** is "perhaps the prince among political sections of the Indian Penal Code designed to suppress the liberty of the citizen."



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### 5. [Why India needs to stop participating in commonwealth games](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article “**Why India needs to stop participating in Commonwealth Games**” published in the **Indian Express** on **6<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 1 History; History of Modern India; G2 International Relations; Bilateral Relations

**Relevance:** Colonial Power; Neo-colonialism

**News:** The 2022 edition of the Commonwealth Games is being held in Birmingham, UK and athletes from 72 nations and territories are participating in the sports event.

#### **History of Commonwealth Games (CWG)**

Queen Elizabeth is the head of the Commonwealth. The CWGs are part of the Commonwealth. The CWGs were once known as the British Empire Games (BEG). Later on, it came to be known as the **British Empire and Commonwealth Games**. Further, it was renamed **the British Commonwealth Games**.

#### **What is wrong with the very idea of the Commonwealth Games (CWG)?**

##### **Historical Reasons**

The 72 nations and territories that are participating in the **2022 edition of the Commonwealth Games, were** once colonized by the British. As a result of this colonization, Britain took our wealth and led to the impoverishment of colonies like India. Hence, our “commonwealth” is now British wealth.

The natives of these colonies were subjugated, civilized, and then disciplined with devices like the Indian Penal Code, 1860.

From **India’s perspective**, as per some experts, the **East India Company** and **the British Raj** siphoned out nearly \$44.6 trillion from India over a rough period of 200 years, i.e., 1765 to 1938, etc.

As per the experts, India’s **per capita consumption of food grains** went down from 200 kg in 1900 to 157 kg on the eve of the Second World War. The major reason for the impoverishment of India can be owed to the **British practices of greedy taxation**. For example, The British East India Company first got revenue collecting rights in Bengal in 1765, and it promptly tripled the tax revenue from Bengal. Thus, Bengal faced a massive famine in 1770.

During WWII, Former British PM Winston Churchill’s **wartime colonial policies** resulted in the Bengal famine of 1943. India was forced to pay for British defense expenditure, above what was already paid in peacetime. Further, the British kept presses in India working overtime to print Indian rupees during this time, pushing up inflation and making food more expensive in India.

##### **Contemporary reasons**

In 2019, when the then **British Prime Minister Theresa May**, was pressed in parliament to apologize to colonies, on the country’s behalf, she expressed her “regrets” but refused to apologize.

Further, Britain has established a **terrible immigration policy**, which intertwines with its colonial past.

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In the Commonwealth, the **closest relationships** with Britain are still enjoyed by the settler countries, where British citizens went to settle. For Example, Australia, Canada & New Zealand.

### What should be done?

The government should establish a museum to memorialize the grief and loss during British rule on lines of those already present. Like a private museum to Partition in Amritsar, and a memorial to the Jallianwala Bagh massacre.

The government should commission the writing of a good economics textbook that can teach our young about the **colonial-era impoverishment of India**.

The government and sports ministry should support participation in other games and contests.

### 6. [Water-wisdom for climate change](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article **“Water-wisdom for climate change”** published in the **Business Standard** on **8<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** **GS 1** – Salient features of World’s Physical Geography; Distribution of Key Natural Resources across the world (including South Asia and the Indian subcontinent)

**News:** During the monsoon season, it has been noticed that precious rainwater is going down the drain. It means we are wasting precious natural resources.

#### Some key facts about water

**One,** water is a key determinant of health security and economic growth in India.

**Two,** water wars are not inevitable but will happen if we do not manage our resources prudently.

#### Various Paradigms in the understanding of the water management practices in India.

Over the past decades, the country has learned critical lessons on water management and evolved a new paradigm.

**(A) Till the late 1980s:** Water management was largely confined to the issue of irrigation projects. Therefore, dams and canals were built to store and supply water over long distances.

However, big droughts occurred in the late 1980s, and big projects were found insufficient.

**(B) Post-1980s Period:** The **traditional technologies for rainwater harvesting** in ecological diverse regions of India were promoted. For example, the slogans like **“Rain is decentralized, so is the demand for water. So, capture the rain when and where it falls”**, were raised. Therefore, the state governments started launching massive programs to capture rainwater by building ponds, digging tanks, and setting up check-dams on streams.

**(C) By the mid-2000s:** It was understood that groundwater is not a “minor” resource, but **the “major source”** of water for both drinking and irrigation. Further, over 50% of agriculture was still rain-fed. Therefore, water conservation and rainwater harvesting were critical for productivity and well-being.

Therefore, Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) was linked with the rainwater harvesting efforts. Thereafter, rural water assets were constructed.



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**(D) In the 2010s;** During this period, India witnessed a number of **urban droughts**. During this time, it was learnt that augmenting the water supply is just one part of the challenge.

(1) Pumping and piping water from long distances led to losses in distribution and rising electricity costs.

(3) Overuse of groundwater led to a decline in the groundwater level in urban areas.

(4) There were cases of **encroachment** of water bodies.

(5) More water supply meant more wastewater, and untreated wastewater released into rivers caused river and water pollution. This in turn destroys available water and increases the cost of cleaning up drinking water.

(6) The urban residents were not even connected to underground sewerage. Therefore, they relied upon **on-site sewage “disposal” systems** like septic tanks or open drains

(7) The **sewage treatment infrastructure** was not sufficient to stop river pollution.

### What should be done?

To ensure **affordable sanitation** and **treatment of wastewater** in cities, there is a need for the reengineering of **on-site systems**. It means waste to be collected from each household, transported, and treated in that area.

The **urban-industrial wastewater** and **sewage** must be treated, recycled, and reused. If it is treated for reuse, then it will prevent water loss and pollution of our rivers.

In addition, water use must be minimized and become much more efficient with every drop. For example, investing in **water-efficient irrigation**, household appliances, and changes in our diets.

India must invest in various **local water systems** to capture every drop of rain at local levels like the construction of ponds, tanks, and rainwater-harvesting structures.

Our **forests** and **green spaces** need to be protected. They will recharge our groundwater.

In our cities, the lakes and ponds should be protected as they would act as sponges that will allow us to harvest the **rain flood** and make sure it does not turn into wasted water. Further, the treated sewage and wastewater must be diverted to these sponges to recharge the groundwater in the cities and make us water-secure.

### 7. [Moving policy away from population control](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article “**Moving policy away from population control**” published in “**The Hindu**” on **13<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 1 Population and Associated Issues, Poverty and Developmental issues, Urbanization, their problems and their remedies.

**Relevance:** Demographic Transition of India

**News:** Recently, the United Nations released its **World Population Prospects (WPP), 2022**.

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### WPP's Projections of Demographic Transition of India

India is at the **3rd stage of the demographic transition (DT)**. It is experiencing a slowing **population growth rate** due to constant **low mortality** and rapidly **declining fertility**. Its population growth is further expected to fall to 1% by 2025.

**Read more:** [The UN World Population Prospects Report and Population Issues in India - Explained, pointwise](#)

### What are the challenges in Demographic Transition?

Several States have not achieved a **low TFR**. This has been due to high illiteracy levels, rampant child marriage, high levels of under-five mortality rates, low workforce participation of women, and low contraceptive usage compared to other states.

**Male-dominant sex ratio:** In 1951, the country had a sex ratio of 946 females per 1,000 males. It has come down to 943 females per 1,000 males in 2011. The major causes behind this decline are the preference for **sons** and **sex selection** (both pre-and post-natal)

Some communities face challenges like **marriage squeeze** due to an imbalance between the number of men and women available to marry in a specific society and eventual **bride purchase**.

India stands 101 out of 116 nations in the **Global Hunger Index**. Anaemia and stuntedness remain high despite ongoing the **Public Distribution System** and the **Midday Meals Scheme**.

**Serious health risks:** In 75 years, India's health problems have shifted from **communicable diseases** to **non-communicable diseases (NCDs)**. For example, India is home to over eight crore people with diabetes. In contrast, **India's health-care infrastructure** is highly inadequate and inefficient, India's **public health financing** is low which is among the **lowest percentages** in the world.

The share of India's elderly population is now increasing and is expected to be 12% by 2050.

**Other issues in harnessing the demographic dividend:** **a)** India's labour force is constrained by the absence of women from the workforce; i.e., only a fourth of women are employed, **b)** Poor quality of educational attainments and lack of the basic skills required for the modernised job market, **c)** India's one of the world's lowest employment rates is another enormous hurdle in reaping the 'demographic dividend'.

### What should be done to harness demographic dividends?

There is a need to ameliorate the **status of women** in Indian society, and quality of life. Further, the government should also prioritize improvement in **sex ratio**.

The focus should not be on population control but on improving the quality of life of the Indians.

For the elderly population, **advanced investments** in the development of a robust social, financial and healthcare support system are the need of the hour.

There should be an **extensive investment in human capital like** education and health, care for older populations, suitable infrastructure creation, and conducive **social welfare schemes**.

**Read more:** [World Population Prospects\(WPP\) Report: UN population report explained: A look at the trends, projections and implication](#)

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### 8. [Nehruvian institutions: The temples that Jawaharlal Nehru built](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article “**The temples that Jawaharlal Nehru built**” published in **The Hindu** on **16<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 1 – Modern History: significant events and personalities.

**Relevance:** About the significance of Nehruvian institutions.

**News:** As India celebrates 75 years of Independence, it is important to remember the contributions of Jawaharlal Nehru-built institutions in India’s development.

What are Nehruvian institutions?

Nehru’s vision of India was anchored in a set of ideas such as democracy, secularism, inclusive economic growth, free press and non-alignment in international affairs and also in institutions that would lay the foundation for India’s future growth. These institutions touched every kind of economic activity, ranging from agriculture to aviation and space research.

He even described them as “**the temples of modern India**”. There were around **75 of these institutions** including the Bhakra-Nangal dam, Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited, All India Institute of Medical Sciences, the LIC, the Oil and Natural Gas Corporation, Indian Oil Corporation, the National Library of India and the National Institute of Design.

**Read more:** [Recalling India’s Antarctica activities](#)

How Nehruvian institutions cover the entire spectrum of India’s development?

Nehru’s inclusive vision ensured that these institutions spanned the entire social spectrum. For instance, **a)** When the **IITs** were planned, Nehru also established a network of **Kendriya Vidyalayas**, **b)** With large projects in steel and petroleum, Nehru saw the importance of promoting small and cottage industries and set up the **Khadi and Village Industries Commission**, **c)** When Bhilai, Durgapur and Rourkela were taking shape as functional townships, the Prime Minister also felt the need for a well-designed, modern city and thus was born **Chandigarh**. Chandigarh was perhaps India’s first ‘smart city’ when that term was not yet fashionable.

What are some examples of the success of Nehruvian Institutions?

**Indian Oil** became the first Indian company to be listed in the Fortune 100, in 2014. **Amul** emerged as the country’s best known consumer brand and India became the largest milk-producer in the world.

**The success of Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC):** It is a Nehruvian institution established in the early years of independent India. Recently, it launched India’s largest public issue and collected ₹21,000 crore from the market.

**The success of IITs and IIMs:** The celebrated names of global CEOs and corporate leaders were educated at the iconic Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) and Indian Institutes of Management (IIM).

Further, the **Green Revolution** transformed India from a basket case to a grain-exporting nation, the **telephone revolution** changed the telephone from being a symbol of elite lifestyle to mass ownership, and the **digital revolution** turned India into a global technology hub all played out one after another. Collectively, these shifts have lifted over 300 million Indians above the poverty line. The success of these missions owed a great deal to the Nehruvian model.

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**Read more:** [Jawaharlal Nehru Port becomes first 100% Landlord Major Port of India](#)

How do the Nehruvian institutions become so successful?

**The role of the Election Commission of India and the Planning Commission:** Both of these ensured the triumph of democracy along with development.

**Management of accomplished persons:** The notable persons include Homi Bhabha, Vikram Sarabhai, P.C. Mahalanobis, Verghese Kurien, S.S. Bhatnagar, S.Bhagavantam and C.D. Deshmukh.

Each of them steered the fortunes of the project under them with high professional standards, laying down benchmarks for the performance of the project and identifying second layers of leadership for the project's future growth.

Hence, even today, Nehru stands out as a unique personality who combined intellectual stature with mass popularity.

### 9. [Towards an India where women lead](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article **“Towards an India where women lead”** published in the **Indian Express** on 16<sup>th</sup> August 2022.

**Syllabus:** **GS 1** Salient features of Indian Society, Diversity of India.

**Relevance:** Gender Disparities; Prejudices and Discrimination

**News:** Recently, the **2022 World Economic Forum's Gender Gap Index** was released, which confirmed a number of gender-based inequalities in India.

#### **The Findings**

In 2021, India's overall score has improved from 0.625 to 0.629. This is the **seventh-highest score** in the last 16 years.

India will now take 132 years to reach gender parity.

#### **What are the causes of concern related to the inclusion of women in India, even after 75 years of Independence?**

The Indian women have not been able to secure for themselves **equality** and **equity** in various spheres of life.

(1) Women's leadership in higher education and education-related **decision-making bodies** at the government level is largely absent. For example, only seven of India's 54 central universities have women vice-chancellors. This is despite girls outnumbering boys in higher education admissions and women constituting more than 50% of the entry-level university teaching positions.

#### **There are several reasons for this:**

Indian women have to perform multiple tasks. For example, marriage and family are still considered responsibilities of women.

There are various **social ills** like **entrenched patriarchy** and **male hegemony** in various spheres of life. Most women have to fight these social evils. Therefore, they choose not to fight as it can



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get dirty and time-consuming. For example, a **woman's assertiveness** is seen as **aggressiveness**.

In history, the valor of men who conquered cities with violence has been sung and the women's side of the story has been forgotten.

**What are the measures needed to realize the ambition?**

(1) **Making higher education more Indo-centric:** India should make an **intellectual journey** towards the **creation of knowledge** that is original and goes back to its roots. India must **emancipate** and **empower** the Indian mind by breaking the **glass ceiling** of intellectual slavery, i.e., the belief that all Western ideas are good, and anything Indian is seen as being regressive and therefore bad.

(2) In history, the stories have been told from the **male perspective**. Therefore, they must be re-told from a feminine perspective.

### 10. The fragility of the Northeast's integration

**Source:** The post is based on an article "The fragility of the Northeast's integration" published in the "The Hindu" on 16<sup>th</sup> August 2022.

**Syllabus:** GS 1 Regionalism

**Relevance:** North-Eastern States

**News:** In recent years, the North-eastern states governments like **Assam, Tripura, Manipur** and **Arunachal Pradesh** are ruled by the same political party which is ruling the Union government. So, there is a debate on **mainstream** versus **sub-stream friction**.

**How the integration of Northeast India into mainstream Indian life has been on the national agenda from independence?**

The **Sixth Schedule** was introduced in the Constitution of India, for **undivided Assam's tribal belt**. It mandated the formation of Autonomous District Councils in which, among others, tribal customary laws were given legitimacy. In other words, the Northeast's tribals were encouraged to live by their own geniuses and local customs.

**State Reorganization:** Nagaland became a state in 1963. Tripura and Manipur, which were the Part-C States after the merger with India in 1949, were also upgraded to States in 1972. In 1972, Meghalaya became a State, while Arunachal Pradesh and Mizoram were made UTs. The latter two were upgraded to States in 1987. These were done to meet the aspirations of the local people and tribals in the North-eastern region.

**Inclusion by accommodation:** Later, India gained confidence and shed insecurities about further **balkanization** of Northeast regions after its traumatic Partition experience. Thereafter, the focus shifted to accommodate people, rather than requiring the latter to leave their streams to join the mainstream. For example,

(1) The **North Eastern Council (NEC)** which was an advisory body composed of the State's Governors as members, was amended. Later it became an infrastructure planning body, Sikkim was included and the composition expanded to include Chief Ministers.

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(2) The **Department of North-East Region (DoNER)** was created by the Union Government in 2001, and in 2004 it was upgraded to a full-fledged Ministry.

(3) India's Look East Policy was born with the stated objective of linking the Northeast with the vibrant economies of South East Asia.

(4) In 2010, a protected area regime that had restricted visits to Nagaland, Manipur and Mizoram by foreigners was relaxed.

(5) A judicial commission was constituted in 2004 to recommend a way to repeal or else "humanise" AFSPA.

### **Why Northeast's remained alien 75 years after Independence?**

**Historical reason:** The **British India Foreign Secretary Olaf Caroe** coined the term "Mongolian Fringe" in relation to the North-east region and proposed to leave this region from a Crown Colony. The **Governor of Assam, Robert Reid** said "Northeast people had no affinity with the rest of India racially, historically, culturally, or linguistically". Therefore, the British dropped the Crown Colony plan on grounds of administrative feasibility.

**North-east people do not believe it to be part of Mainland India:** The Naga Hills refused the Sixth Schedule. They wanted nothing less than sovereignty. This resulted in a powerful insurgency in the region.

**The Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act (AFSPA), 1958 Promulgation:** The Draconian act was promulgated and enforced in wake of the Naga insurgency. This gave sweeping powers to the armed forces. Also, a separate Nagaland State was created in 1963.

The North-eastern people are fearful of the threat of cultural and population deluge from mainstream India.

National identity questions for the Northeast people remained incompletely resolved. Therefore, insurgencies have continued to prevail in States such as Assam and Manipur.

### **New challenges**

New political dynamics in the north-eastern states do not reflect the grass-root sentiments. For example, Assam vehemently opposed the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA),

### 11. Arctic amplification: What is causing Arctic warming?

**Source:** The post is based on the article "**What is causing Arctic warming?**" published in **The Hindu** on **18<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 1 – geographical features and their location changes in critical geographical features (including water bodies and ice-caps).

**Relevance:** About the Polar and Arctic amplification.

**News:** A recent study points out that the Arctic is heating four times faster than the rest of the planet. The warming is more concentrated in the Eurasian part of the Arctic, where the **Barents Sea** north of Russia and Norway is warming at an alarming rate — seven times faster than the global average. This is affecting the monsoons and climate conditions around the world.



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What is Polar and Arctic amplification?

Global warming has hastened due to anthropogenic forces or human activities since pre-industrial times and has increased the planet's average temperature by 1.1 degrees Celsius.

**Polar amplification:** Any change in the surface air temperature and the net radiation balance tends to produce larger changes at the north and south poles. This phenomenon is known as polar amplification

**Arctic amplification:** The above changes are more pronounced in the northern latitudes than in the southern latitudes. This is known as Arctic amplification.

What are the causes of Polar and Arctic amplification?

**Primary causes:** Ice-albedo feedback, lapse rate feedback, water vapour feedback and ocean heat transport. Among these, the ice-albedo feedback and the lapse rate feedback are responsible for 40% and 15% of polar amplification respectively.

**Ice-albedo feedback:** Sea ice and snow have high albedo, implying that they are capable of reflecting most of the solar radiation compared to water and air. Global warming is resulting in diminishing sea ice. As the sea ice melts, the Arctic Ocean will be more capable of absorbing solar radiation.

**Lapse rate feedback:** The lapse rate or the rate at which the temperature drops with elevation decreases with warming.

What are the consequences of Arctic amplification?

The causes and consequences of Arctic amplification are cyclical, which means what might be a cause can be a consequence too.

**Melting of Greenland ice sheet:** Greenland's old and thicker ice sheets are getting replaced by young and thinner ice sheets.

In 2019, the melting of this icesheet was the single biggest cause for the rise in the sea level, about 1.5 metres. If the Greenland ice sheet melts completely, the sea level would rise by seven metres.

**Note:** *The Greenlandic ice sheet holds the second-largest amount of ice, after Antarctica, and therefore it is crucial for maintaining the sea level.*

**Impact on biodiversity:** The warming of the Arctic Ocean results in the acidification of water by changing the salinity levels. This impacts biodiversity, including the marine species and the dependent species.

Further, it also increases the amount of rainfall. This affects the availability and accessibility of lichens to the reindeer. This is causing widespread starvation and death among the Arctic fauna.

**Impact on permafrost:** The permafrost in the Arctic is thawing and in turn releasing carbon and methane which are among the major greenhouse gases responsible for global warming.

Experts fear that the thaw and the melt will also release the long-dormant bacteria and viruses that were trapped in the permafrost and can potentially give **rise to diseases**.

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What are the impacts of Arctic amplification on India?

**Arctic ice and Indian monsoon:** A study found that the reduced sea ice in the Barents-Kara sea region can lead to extreme rainfall events in the latter half of the monsoons in India. The changes in the atmospheric circulation due to diminishing sea ice combined with the warm temperatures in the Arabian Sea contribute to enhanced moisture and drive extreme rainfall events.

**Arctic ice and sea level rise:** According to the [World Meteorological Organization](#)'s report, the sea level along the Indian coast is rising faster than the global average rate. One of the primary reasons for this rise is the melting of sea ice in the polar regions, especially the Arctic.

### 12. [Urbanisation's different strokes](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article **"urbanization's different strokes"** published in the Business Standard on 18<sup>th</sup> August 2022.

**Syllabus:** GS 1 – Urbanization, their problems, and their remedies.

**Relevance:** Trends of Urbanization in the world

**News: Recently,** the United Nations released the World Urbanisation Prospects: 2018 Revision.

#### **Trends of Urbanization**

##### **Global Trend**

Since the 1960s, Urbanization has grown from around 33% in the 1960s to 55% in 2020.

Further, as per projections, urbanization is going to accelerate in the next few decades,

The correlation between the transformation from a rural to an urban economy and an increase in the urban proportion is expected to increase in the coming period.

#### **Regional trajectories of urbanization**

##### **Developed Countries**

In 1950, approx 64% of the population was living in urban areas in North America. In 2020, North America has become the most urbanised region, with 82% of its population living in urban areas.

##### **Other regions**

In the 1950s, around 17.5% and 14% of the population were living in Urban areas in Asia and Africa respectively.

In 2020, Asia had an urbanization rate of 50% and Africa had an urbanization rate of 43%. Further, Central Asia has higher urbanization than any other Asian region (48%). Further, East Asia has a greater urban proportion (64.8%). Moreover, in East Asia, more developed countries like China and Japan have higher urbanization rates.

In South Asia, 16% of the population was living in urban areas in 1950. This was increased to about 36.6% (2020). Further, the Indian urbanization rate was more than the South Asian average.

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### What are the reasons for variation in urbanization across the world?

The presence of **sub-regional** and **inter-regional disparities** exists due to different levels of **development** and **industrialization** in different countries.

There are other reasons for the variations, which range from different rates of **natural population growth** in rural and urban areas, uneven rural-to-urban migration, international migration, and the growth of urban settlements.

Administrative changes like **reclassification** or changing the definition of what constitutes an urban area also impact the level of urbanization in a country.

Moreover, **economic change** and **spatial planning**, which includes housing, infrastructure, and service delivery, are strongly related to the extent and pace of urbanization as well as the underlying demographic dynamics.

### Importance of Urbanization

According to the World Bank's feature on urban development, almost 80% of global gross domestic product (GDP) is being generated in cities

Urbanization led to higher development, shared prosperity, and welfare, as well as a rise in formal employment and labor productivity in a country.

### What should be done?

The urbanization trajectory of developing countries like China and Nigeria must be watched. These countries contribute at least 33% to the global urban population by 2050.

To trigger urbanization, policymakers should focus on equipping our cities with infrastructure facilities to cater to the needs of a rising population. For this, the impetus should be to attract investment and opportunities in infrastructural development and a greater focus on ease of living for its people.

There should be **equitable development** to avoid the concentration of population in only a few cities, and to narrow the rural-urban disparity and the disparity among cities and megacities.

### 1. [CAG report on abysmal state of heritage conservation](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article "**CAG report on abysmal state of heritage conservation**" published in the **Indian Express** on **1<sup>st</sup> September 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 1 – Salient aspects of Art Forms, literature and Architecture from ancient to modern times.

**Relevance:** About challenges in heritage conservation.

**News:** Recently, the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) declared Anang Tal as a **[monument of national importance](#)**.

About Anang Tal and Anangpal II

**Read here:** [Anang Tal lake declared monument of national importance](#)

The CAG's performance audit on Preservation and Conservation of Monuments and Antiquities revealed Anang Tal as being "in the last stage of disappearance".

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About the CAG reports on the state of India's heritage conservation

After 2007, there has been no internal audit of the ASI conducted by the ministry. So, the CAG reports are the most comprehensive public document on the institutional malaise that dogs the conservation of our monuments and antiquities.

These documents range from those relating to museums in 2011 to CAG findings on the ASI in 2013.

What are the key highlights of CAG reports on heritage conservation?

The report notes that **a)** There is no national policy on archaeological exploration, excavation and antiquities, **b)** Some 58 lakh plus antiquities all over India, but there is no database or inventory in its possession, **c)** The ASI budget for exploration and excavations is less than 1%. But the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) showed its intention to raise the allocation to 5% of the total budget, **d)** The budget of the ASI in 2021-2022 has been reduced by more than Rs 200 crore, **e)** The ASI, in many cases, has been working in violation of the provisions of the Monuments (AMASR) Act. At Humayun's tomb, a CAG inspection revealed commercial construction being undertaken in the prohibited area by an "agency other than the ASI", **f)** The poor state of conservation at ASI-protected sites and the lack of follow-up in many places also highlighted by the report. For instance, Buddhist stupa site of Kanaganahalli in Karnataka precious carved panels were still lying scattered in the open. The cement beds created at the open shed for placing artefacts had cracked.

**Read more:** [Monuments and antiquities are part of our heritage and culture, they should be protected adequately](#)

What are the other challenges persisting in heritage conservation?

**a)** There is no synergy between the different agencies involved in heritage conservation, **b)** The National Culture Fund, established in November 1996, to bring in individuals and corporate groups to fund conservation, has utilised only 14% of its funds because of the lack of coordination with the ASI.

**c)** [National Monuments Authority](#), a statutory body for implementing heritage by-laws and site plans for each monument, has only finalised and notified 31 monuments. This is only a fraction of the 3,693 monuments on the list of Centrally Protected Monuments.

This snail's pace is the consequence of the Centre's proactively plan to reduce the prohibited and regulatory area around monuments and its plan to amend the act.

**Read more:** [What are the steps taken at global level to conserve Geo heritage sites?](#)

Modern keepers of ancient material have to act quick to ensure proper heritage conservation of Indian history.

### 2. [Supertech demolition and the Noida problem](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article "[Supertech demolition and the Noida problem](#)" published in the **Indian Express** on **2<sup>nd</sup> September 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 1 – Urbanization – problems and their remedies.

**Relevance:** About the fall of Noida as a satellite town and the rise of the Noida problem.

**News:** The Supreme Court ordered the demolition of the twin towers in Noida in August 2021 after a long legal battle between the residents and the developer.

About the development of Noida as a satellite town

An acronym for New Okhla Industrial Development Authority, Noida was envisaged in the early 1970s. In 1972, the Uttar Pradesh government marked the rural area consisting of 50 villages as "Yamuna-Hindon-Delhi Border Regulated Area" to regulate land dealings in the area close to the national capital. In April 1976, 36 out of these 50 villages were notified as Noida.



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The main objective of Noida was **a)** To decentralise economic activity from Delhi to Noida, **b)** To reduce migration in the megacity, **c)** To provide affordable suburban housing for the people of Delhi.

Why did Noida as a satellite town fail, and what led to the Noida problem?

Within the NCR Plan, Noida's population was projected to be 5,50,000 by 2001 and 1.1 million by 2011. The population that the town achieved, however, was only 3,05,058 in 2001 and 6,42,381 in 2011. This is because,

**a)** Urban planners in India have worked on the strong assumption that the growth of cities can be perfectly predicted based on population projections, But planners failed to understand **growth is not so deterministic**, **b)** Planners **cannot decide a geographical distribution of densities** or economic classes of people in a city, **c)** Large parts of Noida were marked as housing lands with high FSI. But Noida **lacked the infrastructure** that could have supported commercial activities and **authoritarian land-use plans** prevented the organic development of any new nodes of the market, **d)** The opening of the Delhi Noida Direct (DND) Flyway in 2001 made the region fail to attract the service sector, **e)** The region lacks essential elements of urbanity like trade and commerce, institutions.

All this resulted in housing projects have not enough buyers, crashing rents and existing facilities rapidly deteriorating. This is often called the Noida problem.

How do ensure proper urban development?

The Noida problem highlights the unpredictable nature of urban development. So the urban plans can be made implementable only when they are flexible enough to let a city grow around emerging markets. The solution is not more government control, but less control.

### 3. [Our concept of a family should embrace liberty](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article **“Our concept of a family should embrace liberty”** published in **The Live Mint** on **2<sup>nd</sup> September 2022**.

**Syllabus:** **GS 1 – Society and its features**

**Relevance:** **issues associated with LGBTQI+**

**News:** **This article discusses about the problems related to LGBTQI+ and recent SC decision on it.**

**Recently, the Supreme Court gave a landmark ruling in a case involving dispute over maternity benefits. In this case, a nurse in a government hospital was denied maternity leave because she had taken leaves earlier to care for her husband's children from a previous marriage.**

**What was the Supreme Court's ruling?**

**The court rejected the argument that her “atypical” family doesn't qualify for the benefits what others are getting under the Maternity Benefit law. SC held that Familial relationships may take the form of domestic, unmarried partnerships or queer relationships. The court equated all such familial relationships to traditional family relations and ruled that “they are equally deserving not only of protection under the law but also of the benefits available under social welfare legislation”.**

**SC had already decriminalized same sex relationship in 2018.**

**What is the significance of the judgment?**

The conservatism in society, culture and law do not recognizes other forms or relationship and they tend to follow the same old pattern.

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The Centre has strongly opposed a petition seeking registration of same-sex unions under the Hindu Marriage Act of 1955, arguing that “our values” are opposed to it.

Recently passed laws continue to discriminate against queer couples (or even single men), by denying them the right to raise children through adoption or surrogacy.

All these restrictions take away the fundamental rights granted to all by the Constitution.

The lack of marriage recognition makes it hard for same sex partners to take care of loved ones.

They also face issues in buying family health insurance cover, opening a joint bank account among others.



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# General

# Studies

# Paper – 2

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## 9 PM Compilation for the Month of August, 2022

### General Studies - 2

#### 1. [International North South Transport Corridor \(INSTC\): Bringing Eurasia closer](#)

**Source:** This post is based on the article “**Bringing Eurasia closer**” published in **The Hindu** on **1st August 2022**.

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

**Relevance:** About the International North South Transport Corridor (INSTC).

**News:** Recently, two 40-ft containers of wood laminate sheets from Russia’s Astrakhan port crossed the Caspian Sea and eventually reach Nhava Shiva port in Mumbai. The journey signalled the launch of the International North South Transport Corridor (INSTC).

What is INSTC?

It is a 7,200-km multi-modal transport corridor that combines road, rail and maritime routes connecting Russia and India via Central Asia and Iran. The corridor is expected to consolidate the emerging Eurasian Free Trade Area.

The legal framework for the INSTC is provided by a trilateral agreement signed by India, Iran and Russia at the Euro-Asian Conference on Transport in 2000.

**Read here:** [“INSTC | International North-South Corridor”](#)

What is the significance of INSTC?

**1)** The INSTC is expected to **reduce freight costs** by 30% and the **journey time** by 40% in comparison with the conventional deep sea route via the Suez Canal, This is significant as a container ship was stuck in the Suez last year, halting maritime traffic between the Mediterranean Sea and the Red Sea, **2)** INSTC **can shape a north-south transport corridor** that can **complement the east-west axis** of the China-led Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).

**Read more:** [India and Central Asia](#)

What is the significance of INSTC to India?

**1)** India can now **bypass Pakistan to access Afghanistan, central Asia** and beyond, **2)** The infrastructure will **allow India’s access to Afghanistan and Central Asia**, **3)** A special economic zone around Chabahar will **offer Indian companies the opportunity to set up a range of industries**; for example, NALCO proposes to set up an aluminium smelter.

**Read more:** [India – Central Asia Relations – Explained, pointwise](#)

What does India’s engagement in INSTC and Quad signify?

India’s founding role in both the INSTC and the Quad exemplifies its **departure from non-alignment to multi-alignment**.

The INSTC offers a platform for India to closely collaborate with Russia, Iran and Central Asian republics. INSTC’s major players Russia and Iran are subject to sanctions by Western governments.

On the other hand, Quad members of the U.S., Japan and Australia aim to create and safeguard a free and open Indo-Pacific.

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Overall, the INSTC is a laudable initiative as a transcontinental multi-modal corridor that aims to bring Eurasia closer together. Further, India's membership in INSTC consolidates India's multi-alignment strategy.

**Read more:** [Quad Leaders' Summit – Explained, pointwise](#)

### 2. [Representation, all the way up](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article “**Representation, all the way up**” published in the “**The Hindu**” on **1st August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 2 Issues and Challenges Pertaining to the Federal Structure, Devolution of Powers and Finances up to Local Levels and Challenges Therein.

**Relevance:** Local Self Government; Panchayat Raj Institutions (PRIs)

**News:** Recently, Droupadi Murmu, an Adivasi woman from a humble background, was sworn in as **the 15th President of India**. It has become possible due to various constitutional reforms after independence. The article highlights some major reforms and analyses them.

The **73rd and 74th Amendments** towards **democratic decentralisation** has played a key role in diversifying representation in politics.

#### **Merits of the Constitutional Reform**

The reforms mandated the creation of rural and urban local governments with functions, funds, and functionaries. It enabled them to function as “**institutions of self-government**” at the local level across the country. These reforms were aimed to meet the **stated ends of economic development and social justice**.

These amendments signaled a realisation of a long-held vision of Mahatma Gandhi and his followers to make the village the core unit of governance.

These reforms have provided **Intersectional reservation**, which refers to reservation for SC Women, ST Women and OBC Women. It mandates the **reservation of seats** to members belonging to the **Scheduled Castes (SCs)** and **STs**, in the **elected councils** of Panchayats and Municipalities. Further, a minimum of one-third of seats have to be reserved for women.

Such reservation has succeeded in broadening the **representative character** of the Indian state by increasing the total number of elected representatives and diversifying its constituents.

In fact, some states have gone beyond the Constitutional mandate by increasing women's reservations from 33% to 50% and introducing reservations for OBCs.

#### **Issues in the local-self-governance**

Despite 30 years of these constitutional reforms, the local governments have still not become powerful “units of self-government”. The reasons include:

- (1) There are issues in the design and the implementation of the Constitutional Amendments.
- (2) The expansion of the reservation to other social bases has been relatively ignored in academic and policy debates.

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(3) The judiciary has been quite sceptical about **diversifying representation** in local governments, like OBC reservation in local government elections.

The Judiciary has upheld various amendments that prescribed **educational qualifications** for contesting local body elections on the ground that it is for the **“better administration of the panchayats”**.

(4) Some believe that reservations in local governments do not substantially benefit the marginalised groups. For example, women are sometimes proxies for their husbands in reserved constituencies.

### **What should be done?**

Empirical studies have shown that **women-led panchayats** invest more in public goods, prioritize infrastructure more relevant for women, and increase women’s involvement in village affairs.

The SC has given direction that diversifying reservations to OBC should be justified by “empirical findings” of backwardness.

### 3. [Central bank autonomy and its crypto plot twist](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article **“Central bank autonomy and its crypto lot twist”** published in the Live Mint on 31<sup>st</sup> July 2022.

**Syllabus:** GS 2 Issues and Challenges pertaining to the growth and development of the Indian Economy

**News:** At present, there are arguments that the Central banks should have functional autonomy to target their aim of country’s financial stability and development.

### **Situations at present – The loss of autonomy of the central banks in India**

Nowadays, the liberty of the central banks is bounded under the **legal mandate**. **For example**, in 2016, the Reserve Bank of India was given a mandate to keep inflation within in particular range. Therefore, there is a special panel to decide the monetary rate policy, in which the government’s appointees also play important role.

Further, the RBI-Centre relations went through a rocky patch around the time of demonetization.

Last year, RBI’s target band was renewed till the end of 2025-26. However, there are elections in 2024 which might impact it.

### **What are the arguments for more autonomy to central banks?**

**First**, we can look at the example of the US. US Federal Reserve has autonomy in decision making. It is not forced to make price stability, its top priority and can take the decisions on the basis of long-term benefit to the economy.

**Second**, separation of powers based on expertise is seen to maximize public welfare. It is being followed in many other countries as well.

**Third**, at present, most of the economies are the crypto disruption. Central banks must make serious policy efforts the strengthen their currencies.

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### What are the arguments against more autonomy to the Central bank?

**One**, all policies in a democracy must stay accountable to people via elected governments; and

**Second**, since **monetary** and **fiscal policies** do not work in isolation. They work in tandem, especially in times of crisis. Therefore, the bank's relations with the government or treasury mustn't go awry.

#### 4. [Working towards animal health](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article "**Working towards animal health**" published in **The Hindu** on **2<sup>nd</sup> August 2022**.

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

**Relevance:** To understand the concept of animal health.

**News:** COVID-19 have put the spotlight on the need to create greater collaborations and synergies between research on human health and animal health.

Why does India need to focus on animal health?

**Increased animal husbandry:** India has a livestock population of 1.6 billion and approximately 280 million farmers rely on livestock and related industries for livelihood. In the current atmosphere of climate change and unpredictable weather, animal husbandry assumes significance as a source of reliable income for farmers.

In India, the annual outbreak of zoonotic diseases translates into an estimated annual loss of \$12 billion to the economy.

**The volume of Trade:** The dairy industry in the country is valued at \$160 billion, while the meat industry is valued at \$50 billion.

**Protection of Wildlife:** Livestock and related activities have significant overlap with wildlife and humans.

**Increase in Zoonotic disease:** The world witnessed around 9,580 instances of disease outbreaks from 2000 to 2010, of which 60% of diseases were zoonotic in nature.

Hence, even though animal diseases do not affect human health directly, they are responsible for huge consequences to farmers, exports and gross domestic product (GDP) growth nationally.

**Read more:** [Union Minister inaugurates India's first ever Animal Health Summit](#)

What are the challenges in addressing animal health?

**a)** Health policies are **largely been human-centric**, leaving a large unaddressed gap for diseases of pandemic potential in animals, **b)** Synergies from advances in human vaccines have not been leveraged in animal vaccine development.

**Read more:** [Unite human, animal and environmental health to prevent the next pandemic – UN Report](#)



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How India is promoting animal health?

Firstly, **the department of Animal Husbandry** has been working towards increased investment in preparedness to protect health and building economic resilience so that India could become a world leader in animal pandemic preparedness.

Secondly, the **Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying (DAHD)** has set up a dedicated **'One Health Unit'** in collaboration with the Gates Foundation. One of the primary focus areas of the unit is to **create an "animal pandemic preparedness" model** by creating a mechanism for storage and seamless exchange of data and information on livestock health. This will be implemented through the **National Digital Livestock Mission (NDLM)**.

The benefits of a successful model are, **a)** Seamless coordination with critical ecosystem partners to ensure the timely and successful development of animal drugs and vaccines, **b)** Enable the linking and comparison of real-time information regarding diseases between wildlife and human systems, **c)** A reliable mechanism for forecasting disease outbreaks, and **d)** Present a good starting point to lead global pandemic preparedness effort because this is faced by other countries as well.

Thirdly, Companies can now avail of incentives for setting up or expansion of animal vaccines and related infrastructure under the **Animal Husbandry Infrastructure Fund**.

Fourthly, DAHD in collaboration with the Office of the Principal Scientific Adviser, Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO), and others has **set up an Empowered Committee for Animal Health** to streamline the animal health regulatory ecosystem in the country.

**Read more:** [Govt plans 'One Health' to check antibiotics use in animals, humans](#)

**Close collaboration** is needed between veterinary science and human health experts to forge effective tools for pandemic preparedness.

### 5. [The powerful and ubiquitous ED](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article **"The powerful and ubiquitous ED"** published in the **Indian Express** on **2<sup>nd</sup> August 2022**.

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

**Relevance:** To understand the increasing powers of central agencies.

**News:** Now a days central agencies have taken over the investigation of sensational cases which were once done by state police forces. Now, only the [Enforcement Directorate \(ED\)](#), National Investigation Agency (NIA), [Central Bureau of Investigation \(CBI\)](#), Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB), are in the limelight.

Among them ED became a prime agency following the enactment of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) in 2002. Recently, the Supreme Court also acknowledged the ED's sweeping powers under the PMLA.

What increased the powers of the central agencies?

Over the past few years, major amendments in key Acts have given teeth to central agencies. These agencies have the mandate for investigations across the country and are not bound by any jurisdictions.

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This made the central agencies as big brothers of investigations, while state and city police forces function in their shadows with limited powers and jurisdictions.

The NIA, CBI, NCB, and other central investigative agencies now investigating high-profile cases. For instance, the Aryan Khan drug case and the drug nexus investigation in the Sushant Singh Rajput case by the NCB. Investigations in the Antilia case by the NIA.

**Must read:** [The functioning of the Enforcement Directorate](#)

What is the status of ED?

The ED is the **only central investigative agency that does not require permission from the government** or any authority to summon or prosecute politicians or government officials for inquiry into economic offences and financial crimes like money laundering.

Raids conducted by the ED between 2014 and 2022 had jumped 27 times as compared to the raids conducted during 2004-2014. Between 2004 and 2014 the number of ED raids was 114, which, in the period between 2014 and 2022, in a span of just eight years, increased to 3,010.

**Read more:** [How Enforcement Directorate \(ED\) became so powerful?](#)

The increased role of central agencies made the City and state police forces suffer a major loss of reputation. Mumbai Police, once considered second only to Scotland Yard has not had the same fame anymore.

### 6. [Where's that law?](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article “Where's That Law?” Published in **The Times of India** on 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2022.

**Syllabus:** GS 2 Important Provisions of the Constitution of India; Government Policies and Interventions for Development in various sectors and issues arising out of their Design and Implementation.

**Relevance:** Fundamental Right to Privacy

**News:** In May, The Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) issued an advisory warning against sharing Aadhaar numbers with unauthorized entities.

#### **What are the issues related to privacy in India?**

Five years ago, the SC ruled the **right to privacy** as a **fundamental right**. However, there is a **statutory vacuum** in the laws related to privacy. India doesn't have a **data protection law**.

However, the **Sri Krishna committee** was constituted to make recommendations on the data protection law. Consequently, the GOI introduced **the Personal Data Protection Bill 2019**. But the government didn't conform to these recommendations and gave the government, sweeping exemptions from privacy norms. The government was endowed with powers to overrule the proposed **Data Protection Authority**, reducing it largely to an appendage rather than an independent regulator.

Civil society was worried about these exemptions, as these give space to the government to undermine privacy.

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The **joint committee of Parliament** examining the Bill noted that it is difficult to distinguish between **personal** and **non-personal data**.

There are incidents of theft of data from public and private agencies collecting biometric information like fingerprints. **For example**, people have lost money from bank accounts due to Aadhar.

There are also threats like the **Pegasus malware** that infects mobile phones.

There is opacity in the **data collection operations** of tech companies.

### What should be done?

With the era of 5G and ever-**greater sharing of data** between smart devices, and coming big jumps in computing power, there is a dire need for the **data protection law** in India.

Such a law is urgently needed to clarify the **ownership, storage, and processing of personal data** collected by public and private entities.

The law will codify the responsibilities and liabilities of these entities.

### 7. [Key lessons from public-private efforts will help us eliminate TB](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article "**Key lessons from public-private efforts will help us eliminate TB**" published in the **Business Standard** on 2nd August 2022.

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

**Relevance:** Reforms in delivery of public health services

**News:** In the recent period, the central and state governments have engaged with the private sector in different **disease areas**, particularly TB. Because the private sector has the potential of providing **disruptive innovation** for serving the public health goals of the Central and State governments in India.

### Some private sector engagement programs

**(1) The Private-Provider Interface Agency (PPIA):** It was implemented in Mumbai in Maharashtra, Patna in Bihar, and Mehsana in Gujarat. The agency worked with a network of private doctors, chemists, laboratories, and hospitals to ensure that **TB diagnosis** and treatment practices adhere to the prescribed '**Standards of TB Care**' in India.

As a result of the implementation of the PPIA program in Mumbai and Patna, there was a 351% and 532% increase in TB case notifications from the private sector, between 2014 and 2018. The actual reporting of cases resulted in a greater understanding of the TB burden on the ground.

**(2) The Patient-Provider Support Agency (PPSA) model:** The government has expanded the PPP model to the **PPSA model**. The government's annual TB report tells us that **PPSA programs** have now been scaled up and launched in more than 170 districts across India.

**(3) Others:** Under the **Chiranjeevi Yojana program**, the Gujarat government is engaging with **private providers** to increase institutional deliveries. Under the **Hausala Sajheedari initiative**, the UP government is engaging private health facilities for family planning. The scheme works on a reimbursement basis under a **public-private partnership (PPP) model**

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### Potential to engage private players for Tuberculosis (TB)

The National Prevalence Survey talks about the actual burden of TB in India and health-seeking behaviors in the public and private sectors.

According to the survey, almost half of all patients with **TB symptoms** seek care in the private sector.

### Some key challenges in the implementation of the PPSA Programme.

(1) First, there have been cases of **unstandardized care** in the private sector that led to treatment delays, thus contributing to the emergence of **drug-resistant TB** and increased **mortality**. For example, as per a 2019 study, it was estimated that a **symptomatic patient** approached **multiple private healthcare providers**. Therefore, up to 65 days were taken before an accurate diagnosis.

(2) The **state and district administration** will find it difficult to implement the PPSA because it is a new approach for the implementers.

(3) At present, very few non-government organizations (NGOs) apply for PPSA because information on such contracting isn't easily visible or is difficult to understand.

### What should be done?

(1) The state and district administration need to be **convinced** and **encouraged** to support and implement the PPSA model across their region. For this, effort should be taken for their **capacity building** and hand-holding support should be given to the state and district administrators. For this, state technical support units (STSUs) have already been established in some states.

(2) The **tendering process** should be expanded and advertised to allow diverse organizations in this segment to apply for consideration as PPSAs.

(3) The government can adopt the model of **output-based financing** for PPSAs. The PPSAs should be paid from ensuring notifications to conducting advanced diagnostic tests, HIV-diabetes testing, etc.

(4) The government can explore the applications of these models in various government initiatives such as the **Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PM-JAY)** in case of difficult-to-treat forms of TB, such as extra-pulmonary TB, etc.

(5) The **Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM)**, can help in achieving universal health coverage, quality healthcare for all, and also eliminating **Tuberculosis (TB)**. This program aims to digitize the country's healthcare ecosystem and to enable the creation of an enabling ecosystem for fostering public-private collaborations.



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### 8. [India and Switzerland's deepening partnership](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article "**India and Switzerland's deepening partnership**" published in the **Indian Express** on **2<sup>nd</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 2 International Relations; bilateral Relationship

**Relevance:** India-Switzerland Relations

**News: At present,** Switzerland's State Secretary in charge of Switzerland's Foreign Policy is on an official visit to India.

#### **India-Switzerland Relationship**

**Diplomatic relation:** India and Switzerland signed **the Treaty of Friendship** in 1948 in New Delhi. Therefore, both countries are going to commemorate the 75th anniversary of our friendship next year.

**Science and Technological relation:** Both are collaborating on digital transformation, sustainability, health, life sciences, MedTech, infrastructure, cleantech, fintech, blockchain, AI, and robotics.

**Trade and Commerce relation:** Innovation and investment continue to be the **primary drivers** of bilateral relations. Switzerland is the **12th largest investor** in India. There are about **100 Swiss companies** which are manufacturing locally and supporting the **Make in India initiative** of India.

#### **Potential areas of cooperation**

There is enormous **bilateral economic potential**. **For example**, trade talks between Switzerland (as part of the European Free Trade Association EFTA) and India are high on the priority list.

Switzerland is one of the **most innovative countries** and also the home of **world-leading technology companies**. Therefore, Switzerland seeks to engage with India, the leader of the **industry 4.0 revolution**, in areas ranging from digital governance to digital self-determination.

Both Switzerland and India may work together to address **climate change** and its impact on **security**.

There are convergences in Swiss and Indian priorities at the UN **Security Council**. Switzerland has been elected as a **non-permanent member** of the UNSC and desires to make the UNSC, an effective institution through the process of **greater transparency** as well as **accountability**. On similar lines, India has also been advocating for similar reform in the United Nations Security Council.

Both countries are committed to a robust and **effective multilateral system**. With reliable voices, both countries can together contribute to the global good.

Both countries have a **convergence** of the shared **democratic values** and **foreign policy independence**.

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### 9. [India's response to Sri Lanka and Myanmar crises is a study in contrast. It shouldn't be](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article "India's response to Sri Lanka and Myanmar crises is a study in contrast. It shouldn't be" published in the Indian Express on 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2022.

**Syllabus:** GS 2 International Relations; Bilateral Relations, etc.

**Relevance:** India-Myanmar Relations

**News:** On 1 August 2022, Myanmar is going to mark 18 months of the military coup in the country.

#### **Status of Humanitarian Crisis in Myanmar**

According to **UN human rights monitors**, over 2,000 people have been killed, and around 14,000 are in prison, including 90 lawmakers. Furthermore, over 7,00,000 are refugees, and half a million are internally displaced.

The contrast between the Indian response to the crisis in Sri Lanka and the dawning civil war in Myanmar could not be starker.

#### **India's response to Myanmar Crisis**

Unlike India's response to Sri Lanka, wherein it has extended \$3.5 billion in credits and supplied essential fuel, India's response to the Myanmar crisis is starkly different in various ways:

- (1) The Union Ministry of Home Affairs has refused entry to Myanmar's refugees.
- (2) Further, the Union administration has also not supported the Mizoram government's aid effort to refugees.
- (3) It has been reported that India's **Bharat Electronics Limited** (BEL) is supplying remote air defense and coastal surveillance equipment to the Junta regime.

#### **Response of other countries**

**Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN);** It took mediation with the Junta. The Junta has agreed to a **five-point consensus** with the regional grouping. It includes an immediate end to violence and a resumption of negotiations between the ousted administration and the Tatmadaw.

The US, EU, Australia, and Canada have announced targeted sanctions on the junta, and the EU imposed an embargo on arms sales to the country.

The international community has not recognized the **National Unity Government** as the legitimate successor of Myanmar's pre-coup elected administration. Also, none of the Asian countries has stepped up to support the **National unity government** and the **People's Defence Force (PDF)**.

Even when the National unity government and PDS find funds to buy arms, their access is blocked. For example, **Bangladesh** and **Thailand** do not allow arms to cross to the resistance.

The UN Security Council has called for an arms embargo. However, it is mostly acting against the unity government and the PDF.

Both **Russia** and **China** continue to provide arms to the junta. Now, both countries are the top arms exporters to the Tatmadaw post-coup.

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### **What are the factors that demand India to work towards the restoration of democracy in Myanmar?**

Although India-Myanmar shares land and sea borders. India has faced a troubled history of **cross-border insurgencies**. And successive Indian administrations have maintained relations with the junta in the hope that they would cooperate against **cross-border Indian armed groups**. But these insurgencies have mostly petered out in the recent past. Therefore, India can work towards the restoration of our neighbour's democracy.

In Mizoram, the Mizo people are distressed with the **junta's attack** on **Myanmar's elected administration**. They wish that the Union government of India must show compassion towards Myanmar's people and also extend active support to the **National Unity Government** that formed post-coup.

### **What should be done?**

China and Russia should stop arming the Tatmadaw. It can help a return to some kind of limited power-sharing.

One way in which Myanmar can regain democracy is if the junta is defeated. The 2008 Constitution of Myanmar mandates that around **20% of legislative seats** should be reserved for the military.

All Myanmar's neighbours need to unite together to put sanctions on the Junta government, especially nations such as Japan, Australia, and India that are members of the Quad along with the US.

### 10. [Making sense of the 'freebies' issue](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article "**Making sense of the 'freebies' issue**" published in **The Hindu** on **3<sup>rd</sup> 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:** India's subsidy burden.

**News:** Recently, Prime Minister warned youth not to get carried away by the 'revari culture', where votes are sought by promising 'freebies'.

In another instance, while hearing a PIL, the Chief Justice of India remarked that 'freebies' were a serious issue and asked the Central government to take a stand on the need to control the announcement of 'freebies' by political parties during election campaigns.

The Court also suggested that the Finance Commission could be involved to look into the matter and propose solutions.

What are freebies?

In general, Freebies are a **waste of resources and place a burden on already stressed fiscal resources**. For instance, free distribution of goods such as televisions and gold chains. Ironically the definition also includes free or subsidised rations under the [Public Distribution System \(PDS\)](#), cooked meals under the mid-day meal scheme, Work payments under MGNREGA also come under freebies.

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

Foodgrain distribution

**Pre-Pandemic:** In the mid-2000s, state governments started expanding coverage and reducing the prices of PDS products. Lower prices in the PDS became electoral issues in the southern States. This ultimately led to the [National Food Security Act](#) being passed by Parliament unanimously in 2013. The NFSA expanded the coverage of the PDS to about two-thirds of the population.

Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, there have been studies which showed the poverty-reducing effect of the PDS. Subsidised foodgrains distributed under the PDS not only contribute to ensuring basic food security but also act as an implicit income transfer allowing the poor to afford commodities that they otherwise could not.

The products under PDS are procured at minimum support prices (MSPs) from farmers. It is one of the main instruments of support to farmers.

**During Pandemic:** The Prime Minister has repeatedly campaigned about the Government implementing the 'world's largest food security programme' by distributing free foodgrain, through the [Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana \(PMGKAY\)](#) to around 80 crore ration cardholders.

The scheme kept many away from the brink of starvation during the novel coronavirus pandemic.

**Read more: [From freebies to welfare](#)**

What is the performance of other schemes?

[MGNREGA](#) has been another scheme which has been a lifeline for many during the pandemic and earlier. At a time when there are few employment opportunities, working under MGNREGA can guarantee some assured wages.

Similarly, [mid-day meals](#) in schools have been proven to contribute to increased enrolment and retention in schools and addressing classroom hunger.

Schemes such as old age, single women and disabled pensions, community kitchens in urban areas, free uniforms and textbooks for children in government schools, and free health-care services play a critical role in providing social security and access to basic entitlements.

Why these should not be considered freebies?

Calling the above schemes 'freebies' will make a view that the poor are unproductive and dependent on charity. Hence, it is important to recognise that most welfare schemes contribute to improving human development outcomes, which also results in higher economic growth in future.

How rich is getting freebies?

Around ₹1 lakh crore is the revenue forgone annually as a result of 'major tax incentives for corporate tax payers'. Corporate tax rates have been reducing and Budget documents show that in 2019-20, the effective tax rate (tax-to-profit ratio) declined as profits increased.



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The freebies that the rich get all the time through low tax rates and exemptions are considered 'incentives' instead of freebies. Hence, the government need to view both rich and poor alike in democratic India.

### 11. [Efficacy of RTI Act is threatened by opacity, opposition from bureaucracy and lawmakers](#)

**Source:** This post is created based on the article “**Efficacy of RTI Act is threatened by opacity, opposition from bureaucracy and lawmakers**” published in **Indian Express** on **3<sup>rd</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS Paper 2 – Governance – Transparency – RTI

**News:** The [Right to Information Act \(RTI\)](#) is set to complete 17 years in the upcoming months. Sarthak Nagrik Sangathan (SNS) 2021 report's findings highlight the issues associated with the Act.

SNS 2021 report states that Information Commissions are acting as a major bottleneck in the effective implementation of the RTI Law.

#### **What are the associated issues with Information Commissions?**

1. Huge vacancies
2. Poor choice of commissioners,
- 3. Untrained staff** and a non-cooperative set of public information officers (PIOs)
4. Increasing opacity in the working of the commissions.
5. In many cases, **PIOs have been found non-compliant** with the orders of even commissioners. **For example**, in Madhya Pradesh, an arrest warrant was issued against one PIO after the violations of 38 summons for appearing in a hearing and non-compliance with the commissioner's orders.
6. Any serious RTI query or query, which involves more than one department, requires the intervention of high officials. However, it is found that even in such cases, **junior rank PIOs attend the hearing and face the consequences** of any issues in that case.
7. Many commissioners have been seen openly expressing their **political inclinations**. It creates a sense of bias among the petitioners.
8. RTI Act clearly states that the final appeal lies with the information commissions. However, appeal against the commission's orders are **masked as writ petitions**. Supreme Court, in the case, **DDA vs Skipper Construction (P) Ltd** highlighted this issue. SC stated

*“High Courts must resist the temptation to exercise their writ jurisdiction in order to correct errors made by the SICs/CICs. If the High Court quashes a CIC/SIC order, it must categorically find that the order was without jurisdiction or palpably erroneous.”*

#### **What are the issues arising due to the inefficiency of Information Commissions?**

**A huge backlog** of second appeals. As on June 30, 2021, 2.56 lakh appeals were pending with 26 information commissions in the country.

**Lengthy wait** time for hearings.

**Hesitancy in posting penalties** for non-compliance.

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**Inexperience and unprofessionalism of PIOs** is life-threatening to the whistle-blowers. In India, 99 RTI activists have lost their lives, 180 assaulted and 187 were threatened since 2006, as per the reports of Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative (CHRI).

### What should be done?

**First**, a code of conduct must be evolved for the central and state information commissioners to keep them away from any political influence.

**Second**, raising awareness for RTI among the people.

**Third**, a strong political system is a must for the RTI regime to flourish.

### 12. [Costs of delayed justice](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article “**Costs of delayed justice**” published in the **Business Standard** on **2<sup>nd</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 2, Functioning of the Indian Judiciary

**Relevance:** Issues and Challenges Pertaining to the Indian Judiciary

**News:** Recently, The Prime Minister of India spoke at the first all-India legal district services authorities meeting in Delhi.

### PM's Remarks about the issues in the Indian Judicial System

He referred to the poor state of affairs of the **under-trial prisoners** languishing in Indian jails.

He referred to the inhuman conditions of overcrowded Indian jails, an issue which was also raised by indebted businessman Vijay Mallya in a British court.

### Other issues

Although, the Supreme Court had mandated the release of under-trial prisoners who had been incarcerated for 10 years without being convicted. But, most of the states have not made any significant progress in this direction.

There is a **severe shortage of judges** in Indian courts. The vacancies range between 20 and 40% at the high court and subordinate court levels. This happens due to the slow pace of judicial appointments at all levels.

The shortage of judges has led to **delayed justice** for millions of Indians. For example, about 47mn cases are pending across different levels of the system.

As per the PRS Legislative, if no new cases were filed, at the current disposal rate **it would take high courts and subordinate courts three years each to dispose of the cases**.

In addition, the legal aid provided by the state is of **poor quality**. It has distorted Indians' access to justice. For example, most prefer to hire private lawyers to fight cases.

As per a 2016 study, the **litigants attending the lower courts** incur the loss of over Rs 1,300 per day in their wages and businesses.

India's low ranking on the World Bank's Global Ease of Doing Business survey, refers to the failure of the Indian judicial system to enforce contracts.

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### The Way Forward

The Prime Minister has said that **justice delivery** is as critical as **access to justice**.

The PM argued for “**ease of justice**” alongside **ease of doing business** and **ease of living**.

### 13. [About One Belt One Road: Bring back the dhow route](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article “**Bring back the dhow route**” published in **The Hindu** on **4<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

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

**Relevance:** About the One Belt One Road initiative.

**News:** China’s interests in the Indian Ocean grew in the context of the ‘**One Belt, One Road**’ **initiative**. The OBOR constitutes massive geopolitical projects that aims to promote economic cooperation and connectivity between Asia, West Asia, Africa, and Europe.

But recently, a Chinese military vessel been scheduled to the Sri Lankan Port of Hambantota. This is because the Sri Lankan government is heavily in debt and distress partly due to the mega infrastructure of the Hambantota port and many other such projects under OBOR.

About the past trade routes

Indian Ocean trade routes since the old times include countries in the Arabian Gulf, East Africa, the Indian Peninsula, Bay of Bengal, Sri Lanka, Maldives, and other small island states. From the ports and harbours on Bahr Faris (Arabian Gulf) and down to the Swahili Coast on the west to the ports and harbours on the far east to Malacca.

For centuries, Indian Ocean navigators, shipowners and merchants were the custodians of all trade routes that crisscrossed the Indian Ocean.

Ibn Battuta in his book The Rihla talks of his travels in the Maldives and all throughout the Indian Ocean trading ports.

In the last one thousand years, many emerging powers have frequently attempted to capture and centralise these trade routes.

The Portuguese rule immensely improved the boat-building capabilities of the Indian Ocean port cities, but they took away the trade from the local families.

The British colonial rule consolidated cargo in several bigger port cities. Britain’s advocacy of free trade also gave an opportunity for the local traders to freely trade within the Indian Ocean states.

**Read more:** [Explained | What is the status of China’s Belt and Road Initiative in South Asia?](#)

What is the status of OBOR in reviving trade routes?

The recent Chinese attempts to consolidate the Indian Ocean trade routes under OBOR are yet to materialise. But the host countries of the Belt and Road ports have gone or are going bankrupt, defaulting on their sovereign debt. For instance, Pakistan stands on the brink of sovereign default.

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Robust small units with more flexibility and agility can produce more inclusive and sustainable returns. Attempts to restructure the debt of the Indian Ocean countries and proceed with the same mega infrastructure programmes might not be the future vision of the Indian Ocean states.

So, in one form or another, the Indian Ocean states still maintain their maritime heritage. Revitalising regional trade networks will maintain peace and stability in the Indian Ocean.

**Read more:** [Explained | The G7 plan to counter the Belt and Road initiative](#)

### 14. [Why the President of India is also Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article **“Why the President of India is also Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces”** published in the **Indian Express** on **4<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 2 – Indian Constitution—historical underpinnings, evolution, features, amendments, significant provisions and basic structure.

**Relevance:** About the President as a supreme commander.

**News:** The recent debate in Parliament provoked the question “Why did the founding fathers vest this supreme command on the President despite India being a parliamentary democracy, not an executive presidency?”

What is the constitutional status of the President as a supreme commander?

**Article 53** of the Constitution states that the executive power of the Union shall be vested in the President of India.

**Article 53(2)** mentions “Without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing provision, the supreme command of the Defence Forces of the Union shall be vested in the President and the exercise thereof shall be regulated by law”.

**Article 74** states that the president shall exercise his functions only on the aid and advice of the council of ministers headed by the prime minister.

**Read more:** [The process of electing India’s President](#)

Debates on Constituent Assembly on President as a Supreme Commander

KM Munshi in the Constituent Assembly once argued that “The strongest government and the most elastic executive has been found to be in England and that is because the executive powers vest in the Cabinet supported by a majority of the lower house”.

He also said that the cabinet advises the head of the state namely the king or the President. “The King or the President is thus placed above the party. He is made really the symbol of the impartial dignity of the Constitution.”

However, in the Constituent Assembly, there is absolutely no discussion on vesting the supreme command of the defence forces in the president. It almost seems that the Constitution framers had taken it as a given that the supreme command of the armed forces would be vested in the presidency.

Similarly, the term “defence forces of the Union” is nowhere defined in the Constitution.

**Read more:** [The President is not a mere rubber stamp](#)



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Who is the Supreme Commander in other countries?

According to **British practice** where the supreme command of the armed forces is vested in the monarch.

In both the **American and French constitutional schemes**, the supreme command of the armed forces vests in the president. However, both these countries have an executive presidency.

**China** had an interesting institution dating back to 1925 called the Central Military Commission. But, the present form of China made the general secretary of the Chinese Communist Party as the president of the republic and chairperson of the Central Military Commission.

In **Pakistan**, Article 243-1A, as amended by the Constitution Eighteenth Amendment Act 2010, states: “the Supreme Command of the Armed Forces shall vest in the President.” However, that has not stopped Pakistan from being convulsed by a series of coups.

**Read more:** [Being Truly Presidential](#)

Hence, it is evident that rather than any deliberate plan or design the President of India ended up becoming the Supreme Commander of the Indian Armed Forces for the simple reason that the members of the Constituent Assembly decided to follow British precedent.

### 15. [Sober liquor policy: Delhi shows why all states need smart alcohol regulation and 100% private retail trade](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article “**Sober liquor policy: Delhi shows why all states need smart alcohol regulation and 100% private retail trade**” published in **The Times of India** on **4<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

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

**Relevance:** About alcohol regulation in India.

**News:** A new retail liquor trade policy introduced in Delhi in 2021 saw state’s withdrawal from the retail trade. This resulted in e-commerce-like discounts, litigations and allegations of corruption. So, less than a year after the new policy, the Delhi government will switch back to the old state-dominated retail trade.

**Must read:** [Prohibition of Liquor: Benefits and Challenges – Explained, pointwise](#)

About India’s unique alcohol market

India’s alcohol market is characterised by two features. First, demand for alcohol seems impermeable to economic downturns. Second, alcohol catalyses moralising in India. These two features lead to alcohol’s unique political economy. These include,

**1) It’s highly taxed and along with fuel** makes up about 24% of the state’s own tax base. State taxes on alcohol raise around Rs 2.25 lakh crore a year. India’s vast **welfare system is funded partly by taxes on alcohol**, **2) States make the retail trade vulnerable to nationalisation**. For instance, in Tamil Nadu, private retailers have been pushed out two decades ago, **3) There is corruption through licensing and regulatory distortions** to favour handpicked manufacturers, **4) Prohibition** is the most extreme form of distortion. Gujarat’s hooch tragedy showed that the ban merely drives demand underground.

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**Read more:** [Death by hooch – India needs a more honest discussion on the risks and benefits of prohibition](#)

What should be done to regulate alcohol?

Reforms in Alcohol regulation are pending long due. Manufacturers and retailers **need a stable and transparent policy** like any other industry. A stable policy will have a **positive spin-off on agriculture**, a key raw material supplier.

India also needs a **straight regulatory system and 100% private retail for alcohol**.

### 16. [Infrastructure Finance Secretariat \(IFS\): Getting set to make an impact](#)

**Source:** This post is created based on the article “IFS: Getting set to make an impact”, published in Business Standard on 4<sup>th</sup> August 2022.

**Syllabus Topic:** GS Paper 2, Government departments and organisations

**News:** Government is setting up Infrastructure Finance Secretariat (IFS).

The 2 divisions of the Department of Economic Affairs (DEA); 1) the Infrastructure Policy and Planning Division, and 2) the Infrastructure Support and Development Division, are now moved under a new set-up called Infrastructure Finance Secretariat (IFS).

IFS will have three sections: Infrastructure financing, sectoral studies, and capacity building.

#### **If the IFS function as an extended arm of DEA, what was the need to set it up?**

**First**, DEA has many times recommended having an institution like the 3P India, which was announced in Arun Jaitley’s budget speech in July 2014.

3P India was supposed to be an experts-led independent institution to revitalise the broken public-private partnership ecosystem.

The Kelkar Committee in 2015 in its report titled “Revisiting and Revitalising PPP Model of Infrastructure Development”, also strongly endorsed the setting up of 3P India.

**Second**, its mechanism will not be based on the bureaucratic model. It would have a mechanism for contractual hiring terms for experts. It would also attract professionals deputed from multilateral institutions like the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank.

**Third**, The IFS is expected to harmonising policies and formats related to infrastructure financing and development. At present, the matter of infrastructure has the involvement of 16 line ministries at the center, along with the NITI Aayog and the Ministry of Finance plus individual efforts of 30-plus states and Union Territories.

**Fourth**, financial and operating playing field has changed substantially in the first two decades of this century. Now, Investment policy supports Greenfield projects through state funding and monetization and brownfield assets through private capital. Technical platforms like Gati Shakti and new financial institutions — namely, the National Investment and Infrastructure Fund, have been set up. Now, IFS was needed to bring coherency in the functioning of every aspect.

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**Fifth**, urban local bodies and village panchayats require capacity building to fulfill the obligation of ownership and operations and maintenance of utilities like Nal-Se-Jal. Capacity building is one of the priority mandates of the IFS.

**Sixth**, IFS will be one-stop to engage with various stakeholders like regulators, project bidders, asset owners, asset operators and investors.

### What more can be done?

IFS could draw upon the learnings from similar organisations in other countries. For example, the National Infrastructure Commission of the United Kingdom was set up in October 2015.

In UK, the NIC functions as a think-tank focused on the long-term infrastructure priorities of the country. Thus, it provides advice and recommendations to the government on infrastructure challenges and strategy.

### 17. [What a new data law must have?](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article “What a new data law must have” published in the Times of India on 5<sup>th</sup> August 2022.

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

**Relevance:** Data Governance in India

**News:** Recently, the Government of India (GOI) has withdrawn the Personal Data Protection Bill 2019 from Parliament, and the Union Ministry of Information Technology (MeiTY) is reportedly finalizing a new draft.

### Some related concepts

**Personal data protection:** This is about allowing an individual to control how information about her is used,

**Non-personal data** regulation: It refers to the regulation of non-personal data for economic aims.

### Reasons for withdrawing the draft bill

The **objectives** to protect personal data were diluted. The **Justice BN Sri Krishna committee** recommended protecting personal data, given the fundamental right to privacy. However, the draft bill 2019 included both personal and non-personal data. Later, a parliamentary committee examining the law also suggested a **common regulator** and law for personal and non-personal data.

### What should an ideal data protection law look like?

**(1)** Our new law should focus on **personal data** and exclude **non-personal data**. Personal data is data about an individual or which relates to one, for example, our name, phone number, chat history, credit history, profile details, etc. In contrast, non-personal data may include, the number of cab users in a locality.

**(2)** There should be reform of **Indian surveillance laws** to put **checks on government use of data**. For this, certain privacy principles can be extended to data processing by law enforcement agencies, in line with the fundamental right to privacy.

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**For instance**, minimizing the amount of data collected by security agencies, limiting how long it can be stored, etc.

**(3) There should not be an over-reliance on consent for data processing:** In the withdrawn bill, there was an **over-reliance** on the consent of the individual. The law mandated consent for data processing every time, with limited exceptions. It neither empowered the individual nor took into consideration the business realities, like seeking consent for each act of processing was expensive and simply not feasible.

In contrast, the **EU's GDPR** recognizes that businesses may have legitimate interests in processing data and allows such processing, without businesses needing to resort to consent each time. Plus, the new law should provide ample consultation at each stage of regulation.

**(4) The data regulator must be strong and coordinate with other regulators:** The new law should establish a **robust regulator**. The regulator must also work closely with RBI, National Health Authority, TRAI, and other sectoral regulators. These regulators have already made inroads into data governance, like mandating local storage of payments data, barring merchants and payment aggregators from storing card data, restricting co-branding partners from accessing transaction data, etc.

**(5) Enable cross-border data flows:** The proposed law should enable and encourage cross-border data flows and limit data localization. Cross-border data flows are critical to economies. **For example, a McKinsey Global Institute Study in 2016** estimated that global data flows contributed **\$2. 8 trillion** to the global GDP. It can enable the development of, and the skilling of our workforce in, new technologies like AI. It will also prevent the fragmentation of the internet.

### 18. Sop or welfare debate

**Source:** The post is based on the article “**Sop or welfare debate**” published in **The Hindu** on **5<sup>th</sup> 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:** India's subsidy burden.

**News:** Recently, Prime Minister warned youth not to get carried away by the ‘revari culture’, where votes are sought by promising ‘freebies’. In another instance, while hearing a PIL, the Chief Justice of India remarked that ‘freebies’ were a serious issue.

What are Freebies?

What constitutes ‘freebies’ and what are legitimate welfare measures to protect the vulnerable sections are essentially political question that has no answer yet.

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

What are the recent Supreme Court remarks on Freebies?

The Supreme Court felt that Parliament could discuss this issue but no party would want a debate on this, as all of them support such sops. The Bench also disfavoured the ECI preparing a ‘model manifesto’ as it would be an empty formality.

**Read here:** [Supreme Court calls for a panel to look into freebies issue](#)



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What are the SC's previous remarks on Freebies?

In **S. Subramaniam Balaji vs Government of Tamil Nadu (2013) case**, the court upheld the distribution of television sets or consumer goods on the ground that schemes targeted at women, farmers and the poorer sections were in **furtherance of Directive Principles**.

The court also held that as long as public funds were spent based on appropriations cleared by the legislature, they could **neither be declared illegal nor the promise can be termed a 'corrupt practice'**.

However, the court directed the **ECI to frame guidelines to regulate the content of manifestos**. The ECI subsequently included in its Model Code of Conduct a stipulation that parties should avoid promises "that vitiate the purity of the election process or exert undue influence on the voters". The code also stipulates that **only promises which were possible to be fulfilled should be made** and that manifestos should contain the rationale for a promised welfare measure and indicate the means of funding it.

What are the challenges associated with Freebies?

Freebies pushing the economy to **unviable pre-election promises** that adversely affect the informed decision-making by voters. The Solicitor-General report mentioned that Freebies distorted the voter's informed decision-making, and that unregulated populism may lead to an economic disaster.

**Read more:** [From freebies to welfare](#)

Any further step, such as distinguishing welfare measures from freebies and pre-election inducements, or adding to the obligations of fiscal responsibility and fiscal prudence must come from the legislature.

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

**Source:** The post is based on the article "**Withdrawal of Personal Data Protection Bill: Who benefits from the delay?**" published in the **Indian Express** on **5<sup>th</sup> 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 Ministry of Electronics and IT (MEITY) withdrew the Personal Data Protection Bill, 2019.

What is the Personal Data Protection Bill, 2019?

A proposal for a data protection framework was first considered in 2011 when a draft was coordinated through the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions. An expert committee headed by Justice (retired) A P Shah in 2012 recommended, "a detailed framework that serves as the conceptual foundation for the Privacy Act". But the proposals were buried by 2014 due to objections from the intelligence establishment on surveillance reforms.

With petitions on the constitutionality of Aadhaar and the right to privacy were pending before the Supreme Court, the Union government constituted an expert group headed by Justice (retired)

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B N Srikrishna in July 2017. This led to the introduction of the Personal Data Protection Bill, 2019 in Parliament.

**Must read:** [Draft Personal Data Protection Bill – Explained, pointwise](#)

What is the reason for withdrawal?

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

What are the issues associated with the withdrawal?

**1)** The JPC (Joint Parliamentary Committee) has nowhere suggested a withdrawal in favour of a “comprehensive legal framework”, but on the contrary pitched for the Bill to “be passed” with amendments. **2)** The government fears that a compliance burden can impede innovation and growth in the digital economy. **3)** There exists a reasonable argument that if passed into law, the 2019 bill may institutionalise bad privacy practices. Seeking changes in the law at a later date may be difficult considering the relentless pace of digitisation.

**Read more:** [Issue of privacy and Personal Data Protection Bill 2019](#)

What could have been done instead of withdrawal of PDPB?

**a)** To build stakeholder confidence and clear doubts on specific provisions, a public consultation could have been organised. **b)** With the government setting the goal of a one trillion dollar digital economy a regulatory intervention is required to improve the business practices in digital products and services. India should explore the existing parliamentary amendments and judicial review to update the law and fill the legal vacuum. **c)** Growing international consensus suggests that next-generation innovation in technology needs data protection.

**Read more:** [Need for a robust Personal Data Protection Bill](#)

The government should realise that every delay and status quo will result in unregulated collection and exploitation of personal data of millions of Indians

### 20. [Maldives President Solih’s visit came in a fraught moment in ties between the two countries. Delhi must tread carefully](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article “**Maldives President Solih’s visit came in a fraught moment in ties between the two countries. Delhi must tread carefully**” published in the **Indian Express** on **5<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

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

**Relevance:** India-Maldives ties.

**News:** The visit of the Maldives’ President to Delhi gave both sides the opportunity to reiterate the importance of the bilateral relationship.

What are the key highlights from the Maldives President’s visit?

Maldives came face to face with Islamist fundamentalism when some 300 of its citizens joined ISIS back in 2014. The cyber security pact signed between the two countries during the visit also underlined concerns over the rise of Islamist fundamentalism.

**Read more:** [Flagging terror threat, India pledges support to Maldives](#)

What is the reason behind the recent engagement between India and Maldives?

**Firstly**, India was the Maldives first responder for decades. But India has been edged out by the proximity of the Maldives previous government to China due to its “**India Out**” campaign. But

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the present government wants to restore relations with strategically located India through their **India First policy**.

**Secondly**, after seeing Sri Lanka become convulsed by China's debt trap diplomacy, Maldives realised that China's trap should be avoided.

What are the recent engagements between India and Maldives?

**a)** Over the last four years, India has provided financial assistance for a slew of projects, both as grants and in credit lines. **b)** India also provided a further credit line of \$100m for the completion of unfinished infrastructure projects. **c)** Under its Neighbourhood First policy, as well as SAGAR (Security and Growth for All in the Region), defence and security cooperation between the two countries has grown. **d)** Both countries are members of the **Colombo Security Conclave**, a grouping of three nations that is now growing to encompass the other Indian Ocean and South Asian countries.

**Read more:** [Different narratives: On India – Maldives ties](#)

What are the challenges faced in bilateral ties?

**1)** The previous Maldives government's "India Out" campaign has targeted defence ties with India in particular. **2)** The disruption of the Yoga Day event in Male shows the lengths that some elements are willing to go to in order to undermine the government and its ties with India.

**Read more:** [Explained: What's behind the new anti-India campaign in the Maldives?](#)

India must tread with caution and ensure that there is no room for misinterpretation of its actions in the Maldives.

### 21. [Lessons for India from the Taiwan standoff](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article "**Lessons for India from the Taiwan standoff**" published in **The Hindu** on **6<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

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

**Relevance:** About Taiwan-China clash and lessons to improve India-China relations from it.

**News:** Recently, the United States House Speaker visited Taiwan against Chinese warnings. This has the potential to increase the already deteriorating relationship between the U.S. and China. Further, by conducting the recent meeting Taiwan signalled that it is unwilling to back down from its declared aims, no matter what the consequences were.

Why Taiwan is important for US and China?

Taiwan is a small island of 23 million people which has decided to stand up to one of the strongest military and economic powers on the planet (China).

China claims about a rising superpower, but this might not be true if it is unable to unify its claimed territories, in particular Taiwan.

For the U.S., it is about re-establishing steadily-diminishing American credibility in the eyes of its friends and foes.

**Read more:** [Taiwan-China conflict and India's stand on it](#)

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Why are the mistakes of India's China policy?

**First**, India's policy of meeting/hosting Chinese leaders while the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) continue(d) to violate established territorial norms on the LAC is a deeply flawed one.

**Second**, India is unilaterally avoiding Chinese sensitivities even during the standoffs between the two militaries. For instance, the parliamentary delegation visits and legislature-level dialogues between India and Taiwan have not taken place since 2017.

**Third**, soft-peddling of the Quad when China objected to it. It is only in the last two years or so that India has witnessed renewed enthusiasm around the Quad.

**Fourth**, non-acknowledgement of the PLA's intrusion into Indian territory in 2020 standoff. For example, ever since the standoff at the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in 2020, the government has not clarified what really went on at the border in 2020 and whether China continues to be in illegal occupation of Indian territory.

What are the impacts of India's China appeasement policy?

India's current policy of 'hide and seek' vis-à-vis China amounts to poor messaging, and confuse its own people as well as the larger international community.

This provides **a)** China with the cover of ambiguity to pursue its territorial claims vis-à-vis India, **b)** Confuses India's friends in the international community, **c)** Make India's China policy counterproductive.

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

What lessons India should learn from the Taiwan standoff?

The growing economic and trading relationship between India and China is enough to ensure that tensions between the two sides do not escalate and that the two sides must find ways of co-existing peacefully.

India should remember that the trade deficit is in China's favour. On the other hand, China is Taiwan's largest trading partner, and China has an annual trade deficit of around \$80 billion to \$130 billion with Taiwan. China is dependent on the semiconductors produced in Taiwan in a big way.

This shows that the close economic relationship with China has not stopped Taiwan from asserting its rights, nor has it backed down under Chinese threats.

India should **learn the importance of articulating red lines and sovereign positions** in an unambiguous manner like Taiwan. Any absence of such clarity will be cleverly utilised by China to push Indian limits. So, India for sure should do business with China, but not on China's own terms.

**Read more:** [India China Trade deficit triggers uneasiness](#)



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### 22. [Addressing the challenges in new-age digital commerce](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article “**Addressing the challenges in new-age digital commerce**” published in **The Hindu** on **6<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 2 – E-governance applications, models, successes, limitations, and potential.

**Relevance:** About the need for Online Dispute Resolution(ODR).

**News:** The novel coronavirus pandemic has further accelerated the process of digital inclusion. The rise in smartphone use fuelled by affordable data plans has catalysed an online revolution in the country.

For instance, the revolution has not only increased the routine to transact online but also learning online, having medical consultations online, and even resolving disputes online.

What are the challenges faced by small enterprises in digital inclusion?

Despite the rapid advancement small enterprises such as local Kirana stores have not gained from this. This is because, **a)** To sell on numerous platforms, sellers must maintain a separate infrastructure. This adds costs and limits participation, **b)** distinct terms and conditions of each platform limit the sellers’ flexibility, **c)** centralising digital commerce transactions on a single platform creates a single point of failure.

How Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC) will create a level playing field?

**Read here: [Open Network For Digital Commerce \(ONDC\) – Explained, pointwise](#)**

The ONDC began its pilot in five cities in April 2022, i.e., New Delhi, Bengaluru, Coimbatore, Bhopal and Shillong. Currently, the pilot has expanded to 18 cities, and there are immediate plans to add more cities.

India’s e-commerce industry is set to reach \$200 billion by 2027, this shift from a platform-centric paradigm to the democratisation of the nation’s online market will catalyse the inclusion of millions of small business owners and kirana businesses.

What should be done to improve the ONDC?

It is important to ensure a positive dispute resolution experience. Hence, it is imperative to support the ONDC initiative with a modern-day, cost-effective, timely and high-speed dispute resolution system. This can be done by Online Dispute Resolution or ODR.

The need for ODR include, **1)** The ODR is not restricted to the use of legal mechanisms such as mediation, conciliation and arbitration in an online environment but can be tailor-made for the specific use case keeping the participants in mind, **2)** The ODR can not only digitise the entire value chain but can also facilitate an enhanced user experience, **3)** The ODR will help mitigate litigation risk and provide valuable insights into problems faced by consumers, **4)** Consumers are provided with another choice for effective redress of their grievances, thereby building trust, confidence and brand loyalty.

How does the government is utilising ODR?

The governments, regulators and private enterprises have been adopting and encouraging its use. For instance, the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) has mandated platforms in the UPI ecosystem to adopt the ODR for complaints and grievances connected to failed transactions.

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The other applications include, SEBI SCORES (SEBI COmplaints REdress System), RBI CMS (Complaint Management System), MSME Samadhaan (the Micro Small and Medium Enterprises Delayed Payment Monitoring System), and RTIOnline are other examples of ODR systems that are widely used in the country.

**Read more:** [NITI Aayog Pushes for Online Dispute Resolution for Speedy Access to Justice](#)

A customised ODR process can help achieve a steep five-year target of adding \$48 billion in gross merchandise value to India's e-commerce market and aid a network of 90 crore buyers and 12 crore sellers with the least hiccups.

### 23. [India, democracy and the promised republic](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article “**India, democracy and the promised republic**” published in **The Hindu** on **8<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

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

**Relevance:** About the status of India on various parameters on its 75th anniversary.

**News:** Recently, a commentator has argued that India may not have succeeded in economic terms but has remained a democracy since its independence. But, democracy is not only about the protocols of governance but as much about the outcomes that it produces.

How India should be judged on its 75th anniversary?

On its 75th anniversary, India must be judged by the extent to which it has advanced human development.

This is because Jawaharlal Nehru in his message to the nation on August 15, 1947, mentions the aim of India “To bring freedom and opportunity to the common man, to the peasants and workers of India. To fight and end poverty and ignorance and disease. To build up a prosperous, democratic and progressive nation, and to create social, economic and political institutions that will ensure justice and fullness of life to every man and woman.”

What is the status of women on the 75th anniversary?

Gender-based inequality is rampant in India; within every social group, women are worse off than their men. Women are less nourished, less educated and have a representation in the institutions of governance far lower than their share of the population.

Women participate equally in the elections, but they are denied a place at the high table of governance. This reflects in the very low female labour force participation in India compared to the rest of the world.

It reinforces their secondary position in society by adding economic deprivation to the social restriction that discourages them from working outside the home.

**Read more:** [Preserving democracy in India](#)

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What is the status of Regional differentiation on the 75th anniversary?

China does far better than India on development indicators pertaining to health and education, not to mention poverty. There are States in India which compare quite well with China on human development indicators.

The south and the west of India show greater development because they have witnessed the greater social transformation. The superior human development indicators of Kerala and Tamil Nadu have followed this social transformation. For instance, data released by NITI Aayog in 2021 show multi-dimensional poverty in Bihar to be over 50% while it is only a little more than 1% in Kerala.

**Read more:** [No inner-party democracy](#)

What are the other challenges faced by India at present?

**a)** The freedom of expression of individuals is curtailed, **b)** India had not achieved sufficient progress in agriculture, **c)** India's middle classes have benefited greatly from the economic policies of the past 75 years, but have contributed relatively little to safeguard democracy.

Indians displayed an unusually strong commitment to civil liberties in 1977. It is necessary for India to create "social, economic and political" institutions that can facilitate social transformation. They can also arise from civil society.

### 24. Chinese military vessel at Hambantota is a spectre that threatens the new equilibrium in India-Sri Lanka relations

**Source:** The post is based on an article "**Chinese military vessel at Hambantota is a spectre that threatens the new equilibrium in India-Sri Lanka relations**" Published in the **Indian Express** on 8<sup>th</sup> August 2022.

**Syllabus:** GS 2 International Relations; Bilateral Relations

**Relevance:** India-Sri Lanka Relations

**News:** Recently, it came to the notice of the Indian government that a Chinese military vessel, the Yuan Wang 5, was scheduled to arrive at **Hambantota Port** on August 11. It had to stay over for a week. The Sri Lankan government attempted to show **it** off as a "**research vessel**" on an innocuous refuelling stop.

**About the Chinese Vessel – China's Yuan Wang:** This is a strategic platform that forms a part of the People's Liberation Army support force. It is used for surveillance.

**India's Response to the vessel:** Delhi has raised serious security concerns with respect to Sri Lanka's move, allowing Chinese vessels.

**Sri Lanka's Response:** After a tense week of negotiations between the two South Asian neighbours, Sri Lanka has "**deferred the arrival of Chinese vessels until further consultations are made on this matter**".

### **What are the possible threats to Indian interests?**

This is the second time in 19 months that Colombo has tried to make light of **India's security concerns** on account of the Chinese presence in Sri Lanka. **For example**, In January 2021, the Sri Lankan government awarded **a renewable energy project** on three islands close to the Tamil

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Nadu Coastline, to a Chinese firm. However, Sri Lanka deferred the project after much diplomatic energy on India's part, and a commitment to developing the same project through a grant.

Sri Lanka and other **India's entire neighborhood** countries like the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Afghanistan are facing a crisis. This may impact India adversely.

### **What can be its implications for India-Sri Lanka relations?**

Sri Lanka cannot play a China vs India game on its soil without getting hurt itself.

India has been giving **massive assistance** to Sri Lanka in its time of economic crisis. Colombo may lose Delhi's goodwill if it continues to ignore **India's real security concerns** in the neighborhood.

### 25. [The coming battle for Taiwan](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article "**The coming battle for Taiwan**" published in the **Live Mint** on **8<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 2 International Relations

**Relevance:** Geopolitics in the Indo-Pacific Region and India's neighborhood

**News:** The recent visit of US Leader Nancy Pelosi to Taiwan has triggered geopolitical events in the Indo-Pacific Region, in the form of the current Taiwan crisis.

China wants to reunify the country, both to recover from two centuries of humiliation by Western powers and to finish the civil war that started nearly a hundred years ago.

Further, China believes that if it recovers Taiwan, then it will retake its rightful place as a global power.

### **What are the stages that China has passed through to reach its present status?**

**First Act:** China has adopted Deng Xiaoping's '**hide and bide**' strategy and Hu Jintao's '**peaceful rise**'. Thus, it remained peaceful, until it was powerful enough to move to the next stage.

**Second Act:** By 2010 Beijing assessed that it was powerful enough to assert itself in the international arena. Therefore, it started forcefully taking control of disputed territories, both land, and sea, on its own terms. It has used coercion and force to change the status quo along the Ryukyus, Spratlys, Paracels, the nine dashed lines in the South China Sea, and, the Himalayan frontiers with Bhutan, Nepal, and India. However, India has been successful in forceful resistance.

**Third act:** By 2020, **Hong Kong** was reunited. China destroyed its limited autonomy under "one country, two systems". Thus, the only remaining Chinese target is **Taiwan**. **Macao** had already been taken.

**The Fourth act:** It will take place when China is reunified. It will then challenge and upstage the US as the world's dominant power.



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### What are the possible resistances to Chinese policy?

There are always **two threats** that can cause destruction to a particular country, including, present China; 1) Internal folly and 2) External resistance.

**Internal Folly:** Great nations suffer more from self-inflicted wounds than anything done by the enemy. China has been suffering from one century of civil war and revolutionary excesses. For example, recent attacks on the private sector, the tech economy, the current zero-covid policy, etc. have damaged the Chinese economy.

**External resistance:** India's resistance has added friction to the Chinese ambition in the Himalayas. **QUAD** and **AUKUS** have emerged. Nancy Pelosi's visit is a manifestation of a bipartisan consensus in Washington that Beijing must be challenged.

### What should be done?

#### For India

(1) Late K. Subrahmanyam pithily stated that India is better off on the side of the West in its contest with China because China's desire and thy manner of pursuing its desire is wrong

(2) Taiwan is not a major strategic concern for India. However, because it is the **single most important factor** that can consume Beijing's energies and delay its play for global power, it is in our interest that Taiwan keep China occupied. Therefore, to some extent, our interests converge with those of the US, Japan, Australia, and the Taiwanese people.

(3) Quad partners can extend material support, and India's moral support for Taiwan can be very important.

#### Global Geopolitics

As China may go to war. Therefore, international leaders should pursue good diplomacy, which involves buying time. A real invasion might begin with pre-emptive attacks against US military assets.

### 26. [CUET Defective](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article "**CUET Defective**" published in **The Times of India** on 8<sup>th</sup> **August** 2022.

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

#### Relevance:

**News: Recently,** the National Testing Agency (NTA) announced that the Common University Entrance Test (CUET) exam will go on till August 28.

### What are the reasons for such an extended exam period?

The announcement is attributed to "administrative/logistics/technical" reasons.

#### Proximate Causes

In CUET's second phase, a number of major technical glitches like server issues, snags in downloading papers and security protocol failures. Therefore, NTA cancelled exams at around 10% of the centres.

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### Ultimate Causes

The **under-preparation** of the NTA. Unlike JEE-Main, which has only two papers, CUET tests **54,000 unique subject combinations**. Therefore, CUET demands a more complex IT architecture and sturdier infra.

### Consequences

The glitches and delays will have spill-over effects on the entire higher education cycle.

**Psychological impact:** For Class XII students, this year is being felt like a never-ending nightmare of exam dates. They will have to face a fresh round of uncertainty. They will get their admit cards close to exam dates, often leaving them scrambling to make difficult travel arrangements.

### The Way Forward

NTA should invest in system upgrades. For example, the Kendriya Vidyalaya network can be used.

There are plans to hold **CUET twice** in the next academic year.

The Union Ministry of Education must ensure accountability at NTA.

### [27. Challenges faced by parliamentarians: A Disruption-mukt Parliament](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article **“A Disruption-mukt Parliament”** published in the **Indian Express** on **9<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

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

**Relevance:** About the challenges faced by parliamentarians in conducting business.

**News:** In a deliberative democracy, Parliament works as a special purpose vehicle for the legislative scrutiny of bills, grievance redressal and debate on policies and related governance issues. The inability of Parliament to transact any business and the lack of serious deliberation must be a matter of grave concern for all.

What are the challenges faced by parliamentarians?

**Firstly**, for any parliamentarian, it is extremely disappointing to be unable to speak in the House. When this happens too often, their enthusiasm to speak reduces significantly.

**Secondly**, When it comes to bills, opposition members argue vehemently that better scrutiny of the bill. But a close look at the percentage of members attending the meetings of standing committees makes one doubt the sincerity behind their demands.

**Thirdly**, systems work effectively when wrongdoers are punished and rule-abiding people are rewarded. What happens currently is exactly the opposite, especially in the context of coverage of parliamentary proceedings in mainstream media.

Those who make a reasonably good speech — well argued and supported by statistics, examples or case studies — rarely get adequate attention.

**Fourthly**, Only the politics of pandemonium(Chaos) grabs headlines in the news.

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**Read more:** [Rajya Sabha making the parliamentary process participatory and accountable](#)

What should be done?

Perhaps presiding officers can emulate the courts of law. Like in courts, the presiding officers can conduct what is called in-camera proceedings in their chambers, especially for Zero Hour and Question Hour.

In-camera conduct of Zero and Question Hours will be a smart way to prevent punishing those who observe discipline.

**Read more:** [Unsayable in the House – On issue of unparliamentary words](#)

As the Parliament of independent India enters the eighth decade of its history and prepares to enter a new, more well-equipped and modern Parliament House, it is the right time to think about systemic reforms.

### 28. [GDP And Our Judges](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article “GDP And Our Judges” published in **The Times of India** on **9<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 2 Functioning of the Indian Judiciary

**Relevance:** Judicial Review, Judicial Activism, and Judicial Overreach

**News:** Recently, A Supreme Court bench proposed to create **an expert committee** of Election Commission, Finance Commission, NITI Aayog, and RBI officials alongside political representatives. It will look into the economic impact of freebies doled out by governments.

**What are the issues in the judicial interventions in the areas of economic growth, as per the article?**

(1) **Climate of uncertainty:** The Judicial verdicts entail economic implications. An uncertain legal scenario is a great dampener for the private sector. The Covid pandemic has set back **economic growth**. Similarly, economic growth is being impacted by climate change. This has complicated **environmental decision-making** too.

(2) **Threat of criminality:** The bona fide decisions of the civil servants are being reopened in the courts. This will lead to delays in decision-making within the bureaucracy as civil servants are fearful of criminal charges. For example;

(a) In 2021, a two-judge SC bench directed CBI to inquire into the two-decade-old case of strategic disinvestment of Hindustan Zinc Limited (HZL), where a preliminary inquiry was closed by CBI itself.

(b) Former SBI chairman Pratip Chaudhuri was arrested on a magistrate court’s order, for an asset reconstruction case, long after retirement. Ironically, the right forum to hear that matter was NCLAT.

(3) Judiciary decisions that **override economic growth** or which reopen already settled matters are putting the **executive** and **judiciary** at cross-purposes. In fact, both organs have a larger public interest in mind.

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(5) The government has **economic imperatives**. Political executives are equally concerned about both the economy and the environment. For example, the GOI has taken the lead in renewable energy, and electric vehicles, addressing climate change and meeting SDGs.

(6) The governments are accountable to citizens for providing them a good standard of living. Further, The Judiciary doesn't have the expertise in many matters.

(8) There are cases of **judicial overreach**, i.e., courts are acting somewhat arbitrarily against government decisions and decision-makers. For example;

(a) In 2019, the SC suspended the MOPA Airport project's Environmental Clearance (EC) despite the **Environment Assessment Committee** and **NGT** following due process and ruled in favour of an EC being awarded.

(b) In the **Goa Foundation vs Sesa Sterlite case**, the SC halted the iron ore mining. Four years have passed and a vast number of jobs have been lost.

### How SC can get it right?

(1) The SC can take its own precedent and chart a **long-term road map and framework**. For example, in **the Shivashakti Sugars Limited vs Shree Renuka Sugar Limited verdict**, SC observed that the economic impact and effect of a decision ought to be kept in mind.

(2) The Judges start looking into **economic impacts** or **cost-benefit analysis** while arriving at responsible and sustainable judgments.

(3) By Institutionalization of dispute assessment. The SC can constitute an **independent committee of experts**, that can assist the court to help balance its final assessment by offering quantifiable analysis.

(4) **Judicial interventions** having economic implications require further deliberation, external expertise, a new assessment framework, and a macro-perspective.

(5) The courts must **stop criminalizing bona fide decisions** of the civil servants.

### 29. [What game theory tells us about China-Taiwan face-off](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article "**What game theory tells us about China-Taiwan face-off**" published in the **Live Mint** on 9<sup>th</sup> August 2022.

**Syllabus:** GS 2 International Relations

**Relevance:** India's Indo-Pacific Strategy; and Global Geopolitics and Geopolitics in the Indo-Pacific Region;

**News:** Recently, Chinese forces have encircled Taiwan by sea. They have blocked all global supplies to Taiwan by cutting off the entry of sea cargo.

### History of China-Taiwan Conflict

China-Taiwan tension has long been in existence, right from the mid-20th century. It is an indirect game being played between China and the US (as the chief backer of Taiwan's self-rule).

China wants to **integrate Taiwan's governance** with its own. It prefers a peaceful reunification, but without giving up the use of force as an option to achieve that goal.



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### The Game Theory in International Relations

Game Theory is an important model which helps analyze the strategic interactions in international relations.

#### The basic elements of this Game:

- (1) There are some decision-makers who interact, called '**players**'. For example, in the context of the **China-Taiwan crisis**, these are the heads of both adversaries.
- (2) Players have a range of **possible actions** that they could take to secure benefit, and such actions are called '**strategies**'. For example, Chinese and Taiwanese head have their own strategies.
- (3) Once both sides of the game **choose** theirs, an outcome is realized wherein both receive 'payoffs', which may be thought of as the utility of their specific actions.
- (4) The decisions depend on the visible actions of others. Further, the decision-makers also pay attention to **alternate scenarios** of potential action taken by others.
- (5) There may be a '**dominant strategy**' or '**Nash equilibrium**' in the game. It refers to an action that is better no matter what the other country does, and a pair of opposing strategies are said to be at a Nash equilibrium.

Thus, the scenario in question could be depicted as a '**two-player, or two-strategy**' game.

However, strategies and decisions taken in the game are not based on a **perfect information scenario**. There is a lack of information on what others may do results in asymmetry.

#### The ongoing China-Taiwan tension is one such scenario that could be analyzed from a Game Theory perspective.

The policymakers of China, as well as Taiwan, have **little information** in the form of knowledge about each other's strategic choices.

The Game Theory helps identify the **possible best situations** in the China-Taiwan confrontation. However, there are multiple 'best' situations and the theory doesn't tell us which one would occur.

#### First consider a scenario in which there is a '**two-player, or two strategy game (China and Taiwan)**'.

- (1) If **China and Taiwan go to war**, both combatants would lose weapons, soldiers, and peace. However, the net payoff or advantage, in this case, might be far better for China
- (2) Taiwan is a small country and has much tighter limitations on the weaponry and soldiers it can deploy. Therefore, **Taiwan might not respond to Chinese provocations and submit to Beijing**. Then it is advantageous for China. This explains why Beijing is showcasing its military strength by firing missiles and using other armed maneuvers to intimidate Taipei. China is expecting to obtain Taiwan's submission this way.
- (3) If both countries choose the option of not going to war. This is the best solution for both. Both will sign a sort of **bilateral agreement** wherein Taiwan would have to adhere to a set of conditions. Although not mutually acceptable to them, it would lead to a suboptimal solution.

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In the case of China and Taiwan, there would not be any '**dominant strategy**' or '**Nash equilibrium**'. Because both countries would try to adopt optimal strategies, keeping each other in consideration.

**Second**, alternative scenarios when **the US also enters** into the **game as the third player**. Here, the USA strategy cannot be predicted and so a clear payoff for it cannot easily be worked out.

In case the US also enters into the game, there may be a **dominant strategy** or **Nash equilibrium in the game**.

The China-Taiwan standoff has the possibility of solutions that could be worked out through peace deliberations, but for this to happen, the US should not enter into the game.

### 30. [C Raja Mohan writes | India, Bangladesh, Pakistan: What east can teach west](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article "**India, Bangladesh, and Pakistan: What East Can Teach West**" published in the **Indian Express** on 9<sup>th</sup> August 2022.

**Syllabus:** GS 2 International relations; Bilateral relations

**Relevance:** India's Neighbourhood Policy; India-Bangladesh relation; and India-Pakistan relations

**News:** India is going to celebrate the **75th anniversary of Independence** and mark the partition of the Subcontinent. However, the news from India's western frontier with Pakistan is rarely positive. There are in fact talks of a 100-year war between India and Pakistan on the Indian Subcontinent. In contrast, India and Bangladesh are celebrating "Swarna Adhyay" or "Golden moment"

#### **What are the issues in the India-Pakistan Relations?**

The persistence of cross-border terrorism, the conflict over Kashmir, the militarization of the frontier, little connectivity, poor trade relations, and no formal inter-governmental negotiations between the two countries.

#### **History of reinventing the Indo-Bangladesh bilateral relations**

Both India and Bangladesh have **reinvented** their **bilateral relationship** through their recent foreign policies.

(1) The resolution of the **land and maritime territorial disputes** transformed the bilateral relations between the two:

(a) In 2015, the Parliament of India approved the **settlement of the land boundary** between India and Bangladesh that had been pending for decades.

(b) Bangladesh had moved to the **Permanent Court of Arbitration** for the settlement of the maritime dispute between India and Bangladesh. The Indian government accepted the **award of the international arbitration** on settling the maritime boundary dispute between Delhi and Dhaka.

(2) **Cross-Border Terrorism:** Both are cooperating on **cross-border terrorism**, which helped build much-needed political trust between the two national security establishments.

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(3) Both have **reopened the border** that was largely shut down after the 1965 war between India and Pakistan. **For example**, India opened the **Indian market** for Bangladeshi goods, and Dhaka allowed Indian goods to transit to India's northeast. Further, transboundary bus services, reopening of railway lines, and the revitalization of waterways are restoring connectivity in the eastern subcontinent that was severed.

**(4) Bilateral trade volumes** have grown by leaps and bounds in recent years, touching nearly \$16 billion last year. For example, Bangladesh is one of India's top export markets.

India and Bangladesh have also developed inter-connected power grids facilitating Dhaka's purchase of power from India.

(5) **Geopolitical:** Bangladesh has discarded the temptation to balance India. Instead, It has embarked on a **cooperative** strategy with India, focusing on its economic growth and lifting itself in the regional and global hierarchy.

### **Lessons to be learnt from India's eastern frontier with Bangladesh**

(1) Pakistan and India should learn that it is indeed possible to transcend the bitter legacies of Partition and build a **mutually-beneficial relationship**. For example, Prime Ministers Sheikh Hasina and Narendra Modi have proclaimed a "**sonali adhyay**" or "**golden chapter**" in Indo-Bangladesh bilateral relations.

(2) There are a **number of benefits** that both countries are enjoying due to **smoothing of Indo-Bangladesh Relations:**

(a) The **north-eastern states** have realized the **immense benefits** of **deeper economic engagement** with Bangladesh. These states want to end the **geographic isolation** of the region, which can be done by deepening economic ties with Bangladesh.

(b) For India, the expansive partnership with Bangladesh has significantly eased its security challenges and laid the basis for **peace** and **prosperity** in the **eastern subcontinent**.

### **Challenges in learning from Indo-Bangladesh lessons in the India-Pakistan Relations**

There were efforts by India to replicate these kinds of moves with Pakistan. But Islamabad and Rawalpindi have not been ready to accept even the **simplest of initiatives** on trade, connectivity, or transborder energy cooperation.

### **The Way Forward**

Instead of focusing on the **western frontier**, India should focus on consolidating its "**golden moment**" in the **eastern frontier**. A lot of issues are still to be resolved in the east between Delhi and Dhaka. For example, protecting the rights of minorities, sharing the waters of more than 50 rivers, promoting cross-border investments facilitating trade and preventing illegal migration, etc. Otherwise, the issues can threaten to destabilise the growing strategic partnership.

The 75th anniversary of independence offers Delhi and Dhaka a special opportunity to elevate the ambition for their bilateral partnership.

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### 31. [India got Swaraj in 1947. It must now strive for Suraj or good governance](#)

**Source:** This post is created based on the article “**India got Swaraj in 1947. It must now strive for Suraj or good governance**” published in **Indian Express** on **9<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS paper 2- Governance + GS Paper 1 – Indian history

**News:** It is 75 years since India got independent. Now is the time to look back and assess, the ancient values of India that have been left behind.

#### **What are the ancient cultural ethos that present India needs to follow?**

(1) Gandhi ji weaponized ahimsa or non-violence to resist the colonial tyranny of the British by making it one of the cornerstones of the freedom struggle. Many sacrificed their lives for these values. The mantra of ahimsa is rooted in the cultural and civilizational ethos of our great nation.

(2) Long-drawn freedom struggle of India teaches us the lessons of resilience and hope in difficult times. Neither invaders nor the colonizers could sever the cultural and civilizational continuity that bind us together.

(3) Cultural ethos of ancient India dearly held up the idea of equality, unity, and inclusivity.

(4) India’s ancient scriptures are filled with examples of the worship of the divine in the elements — rivers, mountains, holy plants, and trees. It encourages us to conserve nature.

#### **What are the issues that need to be resolved?**

Present India is suffering from issues like poverty, illiteracy, gender discrimination, corruption, and inequalities.

#### **What should be done?**

**First**, universal and affordable access to quality education and healthcare.

**Second**, improving rural infrastructure across the country on a fast track basis.

**Third**, the promotion of the mother tongue will revolutionise the educational landscape by making it more inclusive and equitable.

**Fourth**, conservation of environment for the future generations.

### 32. [Launch a national tribal health mission](#)

**Source:** This post is created based on the article “**Launch a national tribal health mission**” published in **The Hindu** on 9<sup>th</sup> August 2022.

**Syllabus:** Issues related to health, Schemes, and programs for the vulnerable sections

**Context:** The health of the Tribal in India is in a dismal state. A health revolution for the tribal people of India is the need of the hour.

Nearly 11 crore tribal people (Scheduled Tribes (ST) as per Census of India (2011) live in India. It is the second-highest population in the world. However, their health state is in dismal condition.

As per the Lancet report, 2016, India has the second-highest infant mortality rate for the tribal people. Pakistan tops this list.



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Another report, i.e. the first national report on the state of India's tribal people's health, highlights the health state of the Tribal in India.

### What are the findings of the report?

- 1) When it comes to Tribal welfare, the government's major focus goes on the scheduled areas. However, it is found that half of the tribal population lives outside the scheduled areas, where they are found to be mostly powerless.
- 2) Despite the significant reduction in the Child Mortality rate among tribal from 135 in 1988 in the NFHS-1 to 57 in 2014 NFHS-4, the percentage of the excess of under-five mortality among STs compared to others has widened.
- 3) **Child malnutrition** is 50% higher in tribal children: 42% compared to 28% in others.
- 4) **Malaria and tuberculosis** are three to 11 times more common among the tribal people.
- 5) Even the incidence of non-communicable diseases is increasing. **For example;** the cases of hypertension and diabetes, and worse, mental health problems such as depression and addiction leading to cancer and suicide, are increasing.
- 6) Tribal people heavily depend on government-run public health care institutions. However, there is a 27% to 40% deficit in the number of such facilities in tribal areas. **There is a 33% to 84% deficit in medical doctors.**
- 7) There is **hardly any participation from tribal people** in designing health care facilities.
- 8) The official policy of additional allocation under Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP) has been flouted by the state governments. There is even no accounts of accountability on how much of the allocated amount has been spent.

### What should be done?

Following are some recommendations given by a government-formed committee for the health of tribal people:

**First,** launch a **National Tribal Health Action Plan** to bring the status of health and healthcare to par with the respective State averages in the next 10 years.

**Second,** the committee suggested nearly 80 measures to address the 10 priority health problems, the health care gap, the human resource gap, and the governance problems.

**Third,** the allocation of additional money so that the per capita government health expenditure on tribal people becomes equal to the stated goal of **the National Health Policy (2017)**, i.e. 2.5% of the per capita GDP.

Government must seriously consider the implementation of these recommendations.

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### 33. [About NIRF rankings 2022: Rankings that make no sense](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article “**Rankings that make no sense**” published in **The Hindu** on **10<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

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

**Relevance:** About the concerns associated with NIRF ranking.

**News:** Recently the [National Institutional Ranking Framework \(NIRF\)](#)’s ranking of higher education institutions (HEIs) has been released.

What are the key highlights of the rankings?

**Read here:** [Union Education Minister Releases India Rankings 2022 of higher educational institutes](#)

How one can understand NIRF ranking data is flawed?

**Firstly**, generally, students who cannot secure a seat in national law universities (NLUs) are admitted to private institutions. Similarly, private universities and institutions are the last choices for those looking for a career in academia. This is clearly visible from Common Law Admission Test admissions.

But according to NIRF, some private multi-discipline institutions are ranked higher than many prestigious NLUs and law departments.

**Secondly**, while the National Assessment and Accreditation Council gives due weightage to publications in UGC-Care listed journals, the NIRF uses publication data only from Scopus and Web of Science.

**Read more:** [Fund and Faculty count in higher education rankings](#)

Why there might be data fudging in NIRF’s ranking framework?

There is a Lack of a rigorous system for verification of details submitted by HEIs by the NIRF. For instance, **a)** Evidences suggests that some private multi-discipline universities have claimed the same faculty in more than one discipline, **b)** there are irregularities in financial resources utilisation reports (spending on library, academic facilities, etc.) by multi-discipline institutions, **c)** Research grants and consultancy charges received in one discipline appear to have been claimed by other departments.

Apart from that, the NIRF applies almost the same parameters to all the institutions across varied disciplines in research and professional practice.

**Read more:** [Challenges in NIRF: Recast this apples-and-oranges ranking method](#)

How does the institutions violated transparency?

The NIRF requires the data submitted to it has to be published by all the participating HEIs on their website so that such data can be scrutinised. This didn’t occur because,

**1)** Some private multi-discipline universities have not granted free access to such data on their website. Such non-transparency is antithetical to the ranking exercise, **2)** The data uploaded on the websites omit details on the number, name, qualification and experience of the faculty.

Hence, severe methodological and structural issues in the NIRF undermine the ranking process. The methodology must be revised in consultation with all the stakeholders.

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34. [A Fuller Right: SC offers hope that right to abortion won't be restricted by a woman's marital status](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article “**A Fuller Right: SC offers hope that right to abortion won't be restricted by a woman's marital status**” published in the **Indian Express** on **10<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

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

**Relevance:** About the recent court judgement on abortion.

**News:** Recently the Supreme Court of India delivered a significant order, that the right to a medical abortion could not be denied to unmarried women.

What is the case?

**Read more:** [A law, without a flaw: on availing abortion services](#)

What are the reasons behind the court ruling permitting abortion for an unmarried woman?

**1) The 2021 Amendment to the MTP Act**, no longer restricts itself to an unwanted pregnancy between a “husband” and “wife”, but to a woman and her “partner”, by marriage or not, **2) S Khushboo case, 2010:** In this case, the court recognised the legality of live-in relationships and pre-marital sex, **3) Suchita Srivastava case, 2009:** In this the court recognised woman's right to make reproductive choices is part of the “personal liberty” guaranteed under Article 21, **4) K S Puttaswamy case, 2017:** In this, the court reaffirmed that women's right to bodily integrity is part of the fundamental right to privacy.

**Read more:** [Medical Termination of Pregnancy Bill, 2020 – Associated Issues](#)

The US court recognised that the constitutional rights are interconnected: Unravel one and the entire edifice of protections could fall apart. Now, the SC offers hope that the right to abortion won't be restricted by a woman's marital status.

35. [How to talk to India's unique digital polity of first-time, non-English internet-using voters](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article “**How to talk to India's unique digital polity of first-time, non-English internet-using voters**” published in the **Indian Express** on **10<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 2 – Important aspects of governance, transparency and accountability, e-governance applications.

**Relevance:** About the first-time voters and techno-nationalism.

**News:** The Internet and Mobile Association of India(IAMAI) has recently released its report titled “Internet in India”.

What are the key findings of the report?

The report highlighted India's and the world's most unique digital polity of first-time, non-English internet users who think, act and transact “mobile first”.

With anywhere between two to eight hours of daily usage, the Indian internet user is the ideal test case for any platform or app-based service looking to tap a global audience.

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Online gaming has nearly five times the number of users relative to those using the internet for online education.

**Read here: [Internet in India report: India to have around 900 million internet users by 2025: Report](#)**

What is the significance of first-time voters with digital knowledge?

The 2014 elections were the first time internet streaming played a significant role in disintermediating broadcast media. The 2019 elections were marked by the extensive role played by social media platforms such as Facebook and WhatsApp.

As per the UN's estimates for births in India, between 2002 and 2006 nearly 150 million people were born. They will be the first-time voters in the 2024 General Elections a sizable and distinct digital constituency.

This generation of first-time voters has experienced all the significant digital shifts in their formative years.

This is also the generation that had the highest exposure to online education due to Covid-19 vastly increasing their screen time and use of internet tools and services.

How India is building techno-nationalism ahead of the 2024 election?

The unique digital characteristics of India's first-time voters will require creative approaches for political engagement ahead of the 2024 elections and require techno-nationalism.

The Election Commission of India has opened up the voter registration process once every quarter. Further, the ECI also announced further liberalisation of the voter registration process with 17-year-olds being able to register a year ahead of being eligible to vote.

**Read more: [India needs to replace frequent elections with One nation One election](#)**

How other countries are promoting techno-nationalism?

From securing semiconductor supply chains to regulating data flows, techno-nationalism is on the political agenda of western democracies and eastern nations alike.

Indonesia is not just controlling online gaming apps and services but also actively promoting indigenously developed gaming apps.

From Kenya to Brazil the countries are witnessing preemptive actions to insulate the electoral processes of their respective democracies from the spread of viral fake news and disinformation on WhatsApp.

**Read more: [\[Yojana Summary\] One Nation One Election](#)**

What should be done?

Over the next two years as the government seeks to put in place a comprehensive digital regulatory framework governing data, privacy, apps and algorithms, engaging the first digital generation of new voters on techno-nationalism will be crucial at every step.



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### 36. [A good privacy law could fend off Chinese-style surveillance](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article “**A good privacy law could fend off Chinese-Style surveillance**” published in the **Live Mint** on **9<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

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

**Relevance:** Data Protection Law in India

**News:** Recently, the government has withdrawn the personal data protection bill and has announced to replace it with, a comprehensive legal framework.

#### **Background of data protection law and privacy law in India**

In 2017, the Central government set up a panel under retired Justice B.N. Srikrishna to frame data protection norms.

Later in 2017, the SC held that the **right to privacy** is a part of **the constitutional right to life and liberty**.

Thereafter, the Central government introduced the data protection bill in Parliament in 2019.

#### **Why does India need a robust data protection framework?**

(1) At present, due to the absence of a **robust data protection framework**, there is a potential risk of the development of a mix of the **surveillance state** as well as **surveillance capitalism** in India. **For example**, The Police compelled **Razorpay**, a payment gateway, to supply data on donors to **fact-checker AltNews**. Although the records were obtained legally, there was no safeguard against their misuse because of the absence of data protection law in India.

(2) Rapid digitization without a **strong data protection framework** may leave the public vulnerable to exploitation. For example, the Government of India manages the world's largest repository of biometric **data**. By 2026, India will have **1 billion smartphone** users. Further, the consumer digital economy is poised for a **10-fold surge** this decade to \$800 billion.

(3) **Other Countries;** Europe's general data protection law holds natural persons to be the owners of their personal data like names, email addresses, location, ethnicity, gender, religious beliefs, etc.

#### **What were the issues in the Data Protection Bill 2019?**

The bill gave the government unfettered access to **personal data** in the name of sovereignty and public order.

Srikrishna cautioned that the provisions in the bill could “**turn India into an Orwellian State**”.

The Central government sought to give the state an upper hand against both individuals and private-sector data collectors in the withdrawn data protection bill 2019.

Large global tech firms were concerned about the provisions of the withdrawn bill that insisted on storing “**critical**” personal data only in India for national security reasons. Localization gets in the way of efficient cross-border data storage and processing.

The bill also wanted to allow the platforms to do **voluntary verification** of social-media users, ostensibly to check fake news. However, **the Internet Freedom Foundation** pointed out that if social media platforms collect identity documents, it would leave users vulnerable to more

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sophisticated surveillance and commercial exploitation. Further, the platforms may start **denying some services** without identity checks. This may deprive the **right to anonymity** of whistle-blowers and political dissidents.

According to the government, a joint parliamentary panel that scrutinized the bill sought the 81 amendments.

### 37. [COVID-19, arguably, has become endemic in India](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article **“COVID-19, arguably, has become endemic in India”** published in **The Hindu** on **11<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

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

**Relevance:** About the endemic nature of Covid-19.

**News:** It has been 29 months since COVID-19 was declared a pandemic. However, new COVID-19 cases continue to be reported from different parts of the world, including India, regularly. This shows that Covid-19 has become an endemic state.

About the recent Covid-19 cases around the world

**India:** After the third wave in January 2022, India saw the lowest number of daily new COVID-19 cases in March and April. However, since then, daily cases have spiked to around 18,000 a day. India revives the discussion on whether COVID-19 continues to remain pandemic or has become endemic.

**Other countries:** The United States has returned to a ‘no mandatory COVID-19 test’ for inbound passengers. In Europe, many countries are back to full normalcy.

What are the terms epidemics, pandemics and endemics mean?

**Must read:** [Difference between epidemic, pandemic and endemic](#)

Pandemics are not merely health events but also encompass the social and economic implications of infections and diseases. For instance, HIV/AIDS was an epidemic in the mid-1990s. Now, HIV/AIDS cases are reported regularly but it is endemic because all societies/countries have agreed to it being an acceptable risk.

Why one should consider Covid-19 as endemic?

New diseases usually do not disappear completely. Chikungunya, dengue and many respiratory viruses usually stay within populations once they enter a population.

Twenty-nine months into the pandemic, there is consensus that SARS-CoV-2 will stay with humanity for long, possibly for years and even decades.

The risk of infection and disease under COVID-19, till early 2022, was unknown, and the outcome unpredictable. Two and half years into the pandemic, the risk of getting COVID-19 continues and will always be greater than zero.

But the risk of the social and economic impacts due to COVID-19 is minimal and close to zero. In such a backdrop, one can conclude that while the **health challenges of SARS-CoV-2 remain, the socio-economic impact is blunted**. Hence, one can conclude the COVID-19 pandemic in India has moved to its endemic stage.

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**Read more:** [One billion Covid Vaccines and beyond – Explained, pointwise](#)

Is the Covid-19 pandemic over throughout the world?

No, in epidemiology and public health, context (local setting, infection rate and vaccine coverage) determines the disease spread. Every country would reach an endemic stage at different points of time.

Countries that had higher vaccination coverage and higher natural infection (such as India) are likely to reach that stage early. Countries with low natural infection and vaccination coverage (as in Africa) would reach an endemic stage a little later.

**Read more:** [Is Covid-19 now endemic in India?](#)

What should be done?

In June-July 2022, around 30 deaths are being reported every day on average in people who tested COVID-19. In India, an estimated 26,000 to 27,000 people die every day due to a variety of reasons. The government should **take every effort to avoid any death that is preventable**.

COVID-19 is one of the many challenges and cannot continue to be the top and the only health priority. So, it is time to deal with the COVID-19 just like any other health condition and **integrate COVID-19 interventions into general health services**.

People should undertake voluntary precautionary measures. COVID-19 vaccination should become part of the routine immunisation programme.

**Read more:** [Explained: When does a disease become endemic?](#)

### 38. [A new global vision for G20](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article “A new global vision for G20” published in **The Hindu** on **11<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

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

**Relevance:** About the necessary reforms for G20.

**News:** The role of the G20 themes and focus areas lacks vision.

About the role of G20

The primary role of the G20 accounts for 95% of the world’s patents, 85% of global GDP, 75% of international trade and 65% of the world population.

The G20 plays an important role such as, **a)** Shaping and strengthening global architecture and governance on all major international economic issues, **b)** recognising that global prosperity is interdependent and economic opportunities and challenges are interlinked.

**Read more:** [Cabinet clears setting up of G20 Secretariat](#)

What does India want to change in G20?

According to the Ministry of External Affairs, India will strengthen international support for priorities of vital importance to developing countries in diverse social and economic sectors. This range from energy, agriculture, trade, digital economy, health and environment to employment,

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tourism, anti-corruption and women empowerment, including in focus areas that impact the most vulnerable and disadvantaged.

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

What are the challenges faced by multilateral organisations?

**1)** Multilateral commitments on aid and trade are faltering, **2)** The role of the United Nations and the World Trade Organization in securing cooperation between donor and recipient country groups is losing centrality. **3)** There are now three socio-economic systems the G7, China-Russia, and India and others, **4)** The Ukraine crisis is expanding the influence of the trade and value chains dominated by the U.S. and China.

What are the opportunities the G20 can utilise?

**1)** The G20 can harness the potential of the digital-information-technology revolution by redefining digital access as a “universal service.”

**2)** The world can build on the global consensus in the Vienna Declaration on Human Rights 1993. There is a growing recognition of economic and social rights. So, ensuring adequate food, housing, education, health, water and sanitation and work for all should guide international cooperation.

**3)** The global agenda has been tilted towards investment, whereas science and technology are the driving force for economic diversification. This can be corrected.

**4)** Space is the next frontier for finding solutions to problems of natural resource management. Open access to geospatial data, data products and services and lower costs of geospatial information technology facilities do not require huge financial resources.

### **Read more: [G20 summits have lost its significance](#)**

What reforms are needed to make G20 fully functional?

**Firstly**, G20 needs a new conceptual model seeking agreement on an agenda limited to principles rather than long negotiated moderating text. For instance, the Rio Declaration of 1992 is an appropriate model which incorporated three major priorities as part of a global agenda.

**Secondly**, India should seek collaboration on limited focus areas around science and technology, building on resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) and other multilateral bodies.

**Thirdly**, the presumed equality, recognised in the case of climate change, needs to be expanded to other areas with a global impact redefining ‘common concerns’.

**Fourthly**, emerging economies are no longer to be considered the source of problems needing external solutions but the source of solutions to shared problems.

**Lastly**, a Global Financial Transaction Tax, considered by the G20 in 2011, needs to be revived to be paid to a Green Technology Fund for Least Developed Countries.



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### 39. Fair share

**Source:** The post is based on an article “**Fair Share**” published in the **Business Standard** on 11<sup>th</sup> August 2022.

**Syllabus:** GS 2 Issues and Challenges Pertaining to the Federal Structure

**Relevance:** Fiscal Federalism

**News:** At a recent meeting of the governing council of the NITI Aayog, the state governments indicated that their resources to fund spending were dwindling.

#### **What are the causes of these tensions between the Union government and many state governments?**

Some of this has been caused by the transition to Goods and Services Tax (GST). It has reduced the space available to state governments to raise their own revenue.

The GST compensation payments to the states, which guaranteed increases in state revenues under the GST, have been ended.

The states argue that the Union government is taking too **large a share of the tax revenues**. As per some reports, the states’ share in taxes collected by the Union government has been between 29-32% since the pandemic hit in 2020-21. This is about 10 percentage points lower than the recommendations that were made by the **Fifteenth Finance Commission (FFC)**.

Further, the Union government is excessively resorting to various kinds of **cess** and **surcharge** in the tax mix. For example, the proportion of revenue raised from cess and surcharges has risen from about 6% in 2014 to almost 25% of the tax collection now. Unlike **regular taxes**, these are not part of the **divisible pool**. Therefore, the Union government does not have to share these with the states.

#### **What are the arguments in favor of providing more resources to the state governments?**

The fact is that the state’s administrative machinery is on the front line of delivering growth and development.

It is the main touchpoint between the citizen and the government.

Underfunded states lead to **poor public provision** of services, with deleterious effects on both citizen welfare and the growth potential of the economy.

The centralization of the fiscal and spending power through various measures such as cess or centrally sponsored schemes could affect the delivery of quality services to citizens.

#### **What are the arguments against providing more resources to the state governments?**

The Centre also has spending commitments and needs resources to finance national security needs and to run welfare programs.

The State governments are often alleged of inefficient and ineffective utilization of funds. Further, the quality of spending is also debated.

#### **What should be done?**

In terms of spending, **reforms** are needed at both levels of the government. For Example, the **division of resources** should be done more transparently.

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The Central government shouldn't excessively resort to **imposition of cess and surcharge**, as it distorts the tax system and creates inefficiencies. This could increase resentment among states and lead to greater friction between the Centre and the states.

The Union and state governments work together to take the development process forward.

### 40. [Why higher GST on chit funds is a bad idea](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article **"Why higher GST on chit funds is a bad idea"** published in the **Live Mint** on 11<sup>th</sup> August 2022.

**Syllabus:** **GS 2** Indian Economy and issues relating to Planning, Mobilization of Resources, Growth, Development, and Employment.

**News:** Recently, the Government of India has made an announcement of revised rates of GST on the chit funds. The tax has been raised from the earlier 12% to 18%.

#### **About Chit Fund**

It is an alternative source of credit, which is the earliest form of **peer-to-peer lending**.

In this, a piece of paper is used for **writing** a bid amount, known as a chit. Therefore, it is known as a **'chit fund'**.

It doesn't fall under the jurisdiction of the **Reserve Bank of India**. These are the legal entities, registered with and regulated by, the state governments under **the Chit Funds Act of 1982**.

#### **Functioning of the Chit Funds**

A chit fund is a **close-ended group lending scheme**. In this, funding is involved in a cycle. The cycles end after each fund participant has received the pool of money once.

**For Example**, every month, each participant makes an identical contribution to the lump sum. And a **lump-sum** amount collected from the contribution of all participants is transferred to one of them who wins that **month's bid** for the pool of money. The **cost of borrowing** and the **return** to savers depend on the **bidding process**.

The chit fund intermediary currently charges around 5% of the full lump-sum amount, divided by the number of participants.

#### **What are the benefits of the Chit Fund system?**

In the case of a chit fund, any investor can **bid** to borrow from others against the promise of future contributions, while the **credit risk** devolves to the chit fund's promoter.

A chit fund is a unique **hybrid instrument** that makes an individual a **saver/lender** instead of a **borrower**.

One can bid early in the cycle if one needs money for any planned purchase, working capital for business, or for a personal emergency. Alternatively, one can wait and take the lump sum in a later part of the cycle.

Professional chit funds have served a segment of the Indian population that do not have stable income streams, proof of regular income, or the collateral that banks need to sanction personal as well as small business loans.

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Borrowers in chit funds pay interest lower than most other sources of credit.

For savers, the interest earned is a **maximum of 4-6%** or often even **lower**.

### **How will the GST hike impact the chit fund industry?**

The chit fund intermediaries can raise their **monthly commission** from the current 5% to 7% (the most allowed by law). This will increase the **cost of borrowings** in the fund. Similarly, there would also be a decline in the **already-low returns** that chit-fund savers make.

The savers may switch to **alternative saving instruments** in an environment of **rising interest rates**. Therefore, it would make **borrowing difficult** as there would be inadequate savings.

If the chit fund industry shrinks, then borrowers would have to find a substitute source of **unsecured financing**.

### 41. State-level OBC groups must be included in central list

**Source:** The post is based on an article “**State-level OBC groups must be included in the central list**” published in the **Indian Express** on **11<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 2 Important Provisions of the Constitution of India

**News:** The Justice Rohini Commission has been given the 10th extension in five years.

The commission was constituted to ensure equitable distribution of reservation benefits among the OBC castes through sub-categorization

### **Background**

The **issue of sub-categorization** arises from the perception that a **few dominant castes** among the OBCs have cornered a **disproportionate amount** of the benefits from the reservation. It is leading to injustice.

### **About OBCs reservation**

Articles 15(4) and 16(4) make special provisions for socially and educationally backward classes of citizens (SEBCs, popularly known as OBCs), the Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs).

Currently, for each state, there are **two OBC lists**, i.e., one for the state and the Centre. So, a caste included in the OBC list of a state enjoys the reservation benefits in state government jobs and educational institutions, but not with respect to central government jobs or educational institutions.

### **Historical development of the OBCs reservation**

In 1955, the 1st **Backward Classes Commission** recommended the inclusion of 2,399 castes as OBCs. But, the then **central government** did not implement the recommendations and implementation of the welfare programs. Therefore, OBC castes have an abysmal representation in central government jobs. But the Centre suggested that state governments may draw up their own lists.

The **second Backward Classes Commission**, known as the **Mandal Commission**, gave its report in 1980. However, the central governments did not implement the recommendation for almost a decade.

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Finally, the **V P Singh government** decided to implement the recommendations of the Mandal Commission. Various OBC castes were included in the Central OBC lists. These were those castes and minorities which were common to both the State Lists and the Mandal Commission List.

The central government introduced a reservation of **27% for OBCs** in government jobs on August 13, 1990. The constitutional validity of the reservation was upheld in the **Indira Sawhney case**. Pursuant to judgment, **the National Commission for Backward Classes Act, 1993** was enacted.

In **Ram Singh and Ors vs Union of India Case (2015)**, the Central government argued that the inclusion of classes or groups in state OBC lists is a strong and compelling reason for the inclusion of such classes in the central lists. Because, in our constitutional scheme, the Union and state governments need to work in tandem and not at cross purposes. The Supreme Court judgment validated this argument.

### Issues related to OBCs reservation

OBCs are identified differently at the state and central levels. For example, the State OBC list and Central OBC list. But the SCs and STs are identified “**with respect to any State or Union Territory**” and have only one list and one status, both at the level of state and central government.

The “**two-status**” castes deny reservations in all these **important avenues** like IAS, IPS, IFS, IRS, and **coveted educational institutions** like the IITs, IIMs, AIIMS, and the Central universities.

Across all the states, there are hundreds of such OBC castes whose members are being denied reservation benefits in central government jobs.

### The Way Forward

In order to establish the truth that few dominant castes enjoy the benefits of reservation, a caste census is required. The government should conduct an extensive **caste census** to give proportional representation to the OBCs.

#### 42. [The slow execution of the police as an institution continues. Who will save it?](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article “**The slow execution of the police as an institution continues. Who will save it?**” published in the **Indian Express** on **12<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 2 – Various Security forces and agencies and their mandate.

**Relevance:** About police-politician nexus.

**News:** The political “masters” tries to create a nexus between them and the police through police stations.

Why police stations are crucial for politicians?

Police stations and outposts are the forums where maximum citizen-police interactions take place.



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If the officer in charge of the police station is impartial, efficient and compassionate, then no one will approach the local member of the legislature (MLA) or parliament (MP). So, the political leaders try to create a nexus.

**Read more:** [Police reforms are not enough](#)

How do the politicians create nexus with the police?

**At station level:** The strategy commonly used is to have a **police station “manned” by an officer of choice** who, in turn, pays daily obeisance to the politician along with that the officer does not bother to conceal.

The officer in charge would naturally allocate “beats” to constables who give more time to local “dadas” instead of investigating crime or maintaining order.

**District police level:** Politicians influence the district police chief to appoint cronies of his choice. This hand-picked team will collect from street hawkers, traders, merchants, restaurants and bar owners. The **collection is redistributed between everyone** in the station as the system is understood by all.

Money is needed by the officers to secure “good” postings, by politicians for their lifestyle desires and their parties for election purposes.

**Posting of zonal Inspectors General of police:** There are not many senior officers and many of them would look for “right” postings. The officer will also be provided with favourable media coverage and installed with great fanfare.

**Influence on Judiciary:** The judiciary is burdened with the weight of its mounting pendency. Further, for judges, post-retirement avenues are totally dependent on the executive.

**Read more:** [Police Reforms Needed to Ensure Political Neutrality](#)

The Indian Penal Code defines conspiracy as an illegal act and holds each conspirator to be equally responsible. But politicians de-construct and destroy institutions without any punishments.

**Read more:** [Need for Police Reforms in India](#)

### [43. What is the Criminal Procedure \(Identification\) Act, 2022?](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article **“What is the Criminal Procedure (Identification) Act, 2022?”** published in **The Hindu** on **12<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

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

**Relevance:** About the Criminal Procedure (Identification) Act, 2022.

**News:** The Ministry of Home Affairs recently notified that the Criminal Procedure (Identification) Act, 2022 will come into effect from August. It also repeals the existing Identification of Prisoners Act, 1920.

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What are the salient provisions of the Criminal Procedure (Identification) Act, 2022?

**Read here:** [Criminal Procedure \(Identification\) Bill, 2022: Protest in LS as Bill envisages lifting biometrics of detainees](#)

What is the use of identification details in criminal trials?

Measurements and photographs for identification have three main purposes. **1)** To establish the identity of the culprit against the person being arrested, **2)** To identify suspected repetition of similar offences by the same person and **3)** To establish a previous conviction.

**Read more:** [Unfounded apprehensions about this Act](#)

What was the need to replace the Identification of Prisoners Act, 1920?

In **State of UP vs Ram Babu Misra case**: The Supreme Court highlighted the need for amending the Identification of Prisoners Act.

**87th Report of the Law Commission of India in 1980**: The Commission undertook a review of the Identification of Prisoners Act based on the Supreme Court ruling and the numerous amendments made to the Act by several States.

The commission recommended several amendments.

These include **a)** Expanding the scope such as “palm impressions”, “specimen of signature or writing” and “specimen of voice”, **b)** Allowing measurements to be taken for proceedings other than those under the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC).

**Read here:** [This is a criminal attack on privacy](#)

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What is the difference between the Identification of Prisoners Act, 1920 and the Criminal Procedure (Identification) Act, 2022?

### A comparison between the two Identification Acts

The previous Identification of Prisoners Act, 1920 and the freshly notified Criminal Procedure (Identification) Act, 2022 have similarities as well as major differences. A quick look at how "measurements" of convicts and arrested persons will be collected from now on

Relevant provisions	Identification of Prisoners Act	Criminal Procedure Identification Act
Persons whose measurements can be taken	should be convicted of an offence punishable with rigorous imprisonment of one year or upwards	if convicted of an offence punishable under any law
	should be arrested for an offence punishable with rigorous imprisonment of one year or upwards	if arrested for an offence punishable under any law or if detained under preventive detention laws
	if directed by the Magistrate for measurements to be taken for the purposes of investigation of proceedings under the CrPC, provided the person has been arrested in connection with such investigation previously	if directed by the Magistrate for measurements to be taken for the purposes of investigation of proceedings under the CrPC or any other law in force; there is no requirement for the person to have been arrested in connection with such proceedings previously
	ordered to give security for his good behaviour under CrPC	ordered to give security for his good behaviour under CrPC
Measurements that can be taken	finger impressions, foot impressions, measurements and photographs	finger-impressions, palm-print impressions, foot-print impressions, photographs; iris and retina scan; physical, biological samples and their analysis; behavioural attributes including signatures, handwriting or any other examination referred to in section 53 or section 53A of the CrPC, 1973
Destruction of measurements	in case of acquittal, discharge or release, if not previously convicted of any offence punishable with rigorous imprisonment of one year or upwards	in case of acquittal, discharge or release, if not previously convicted of any offence punishable with rigorous imprisonment for any term. For convicts, records are to be destroyed from 75 years of collection

Source: The Hindu

What are the concerns associated with the Criminal Procedure (Identification) Act, 2022?

**Read here: [Criminal Procedure \(Identification\) Bill: Features, Benefits and Concerns – Explained, pointwise](#)**

The other concerns are,

- 1) The inclusion of derivative data such as “analysis” and “behavioural attributes” have raised concerns that data processing may go beyond recording of core “measurements”.
- 2) Unlike the Identification of Prisoners Act, 1920 the present Act allows for “measurements” to be taken if a person has been convicted/arrested for any offence, including petty offences. This has the following issues,
  - a) The necessity of taking measurements of such persons for investigation of offences is unclear,
  - b) Likely to result in abuse of the law at lower levels,
  - c) overburdening of the systems used for collection and storage of “measurements”.

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3) Large collection of data can also result in mass surveillance, with the database being combined with other databases such as those of the Crime and Criminal Tracking Network and Systems (CCTNS).

**Read more:** [Identity and privacy: On Prisoners' identification Bill/ Why the Criminal Identification Bill overreaches](#)

What should be done?

Though the Act will aid police in **predictive policing**. Purposes for collecting “analysis” and “behavioural attributes” need to be better defined.

The Central government said that the privacy and data protection-related concerns will be addressed in the Rules formulated under the legislation and through model Prison Manuals that States can refer to. This has to be done at the earliest.

**Read more:** [Criminal Procedure bill will not make Indians safer](#)

#### 44. [Survey data on poverty and broad policy pointers](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article “**Survey data on poverty and broad policy pointers**” published in **The Hindu** on **12<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 2 – Issues relating to poverty and hunger.

**Relevance:** About the concerns associated with the NFHS data.

**News:** Academics have questioned the quality of NFHS data on poverty statistics for various reasons.

About India's Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI)

NITI Aayog used the survey data of NFHS 4 to estimate the Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) and published the baseline report in 2021. The MPI is a product of the Head Count Ratio and Intensity of Poverty.

**Rationale for the MPI:** poverty is the outcome of simultaneous deprivations in multiple functions such as attainments in health, education, and standard of living.

**Calculating method:** NITI Aayog identified 12 indicators in these three sectors and calculated the weighted average of deprivations. The proportion of the population with a deprivation score greater than 0.33 to the total population is defined as the Poverty Ratio or Head Count Ratio.

**Estimation of the Intensity of Poverty:** is the weighted-average deprivation score of the multidimensionally poor. For instance, the Intensity of Poverty in Tamil Nadu declined from 39.97% to 38.78% during this period.

**Must read:** [Poverty ratio 32.75% in rural areas against 8.81% in urban: NITI report](#)

What are the concerns associated with the NITI Aayog's poverty index?

**Firstly**, the overall population was deprived in most of the indicators individually, and they were higher than the population identified as multidimensionally poor.

**Secondly**, the strength of the MPI as an instrument for a data-driven public policy depends on the quality of survey data, namely the NFHS data.



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What are the factors affecting the quality of NFHS data?

The National Sample Survey Organisation's (NSSO) sample surveys have been debated among economists and statisticians, both in terms of **sampling and non-sample errors**, right from its initial days in the 1950s.

The NFHS data were **collected in two time periods**. One before the pandemic and the other post-lockdown period. The difference in time period **interprets the statistics of the entire database**. For instance, the deprivation in terms of nutrition and maternal health declined, and schooling and school attendance increased in the post-lockdown period.

The other issues with NFHS data are **a) Arbitrariness** in reporting the age of the dead, **b) Differences** in data quality between educated and uneducated respondents, **c) Data quality** based on differences in time taken to complete a survey of different household types, **d) Market-based approach** to decide the data collection process, etc.

All these have serious implications for health data such as fertility and death rates.

**Read more:** [The worrying slowdown in India's fight against poverty](#)

What should be done with the NFHS Data and to reduce poverty?

**For improving the NFHS:** **a)** India should improve the sample design and response quality, **b)** Analysing the data and finding the inferences from different databases on an issue would help improve data gathering systems. **c)** The government must continue to use survey data both to derive policy conclusions and also to help improve data quality.

**For reducing poverty:** **a)** The survey data gives only broad policy pointers whereas programmatic interventions should be curated with ground-level realities, **b)** People may be deprived severely in a few functions, but may not be multidimensionally poor. Hence, attacking poverty should not only be multidimensional but also universal.

**Read more:** [Extreme poverty dipped in India: World Bank report](#)

### 45. [Punishing Process](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article "**Punishing Process**" published in **The Times of India** on 12<sup>th</sup> August 2022.

**Syllabus:** GS 2 Important Provisions of the Constitution of India

**Relevance:** Fundamental Rights

**News:** Recently, the Supreme Court (SC) granted permanent medical bail to **Varavara Rao** on technical grounds, i.e., medical condition, advanced age, adherence to bail conditions, and delay in framing charges.

#### **Observations Made by the SC in this case**

Stringent restrictions against bail in laws like Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA) don't hinder **constitutional courts** from protecting fundamental rights.

#### **What are the issues in the bail provisions of India**

At present, too many accused, who have not been proven guilty, are in jail.

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The laws like UAPA have defeated the **principle of bail as the norm & jail as an exception**. Because UAPA requires judges to deny bail if police cases seem to be prima facie true. For example, **the Bhima Koregaon case**.

Many accused die before bail. **For example**, Stan Swamy died in judicial custody, while waiting for the Bombay High Court to decide on his plea for bail on medical grounds.

In many cases, even the framing of charges isn't over.

Undertrials as a percentage of the prison population have been steadily increasing and are 76% at present.

The stringent bail provisions of custody and associated long process delays are nothing but a form of punishment.

### The Way Forward

For Justice UU Lalit, who heard Rao's plea, and will be the next CJI, the problem of undertrial prisoners must take top priority.

The SC bench had proposed **a comprehensive bail law**. It has reiterated that courts must decide on **bail applications** within two weeks. Further, investigators must set down reasons for arrest, which trial courts must carefully scrutinize.

### 46. [Regulating digital lending](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article "**Regulating digital lending**" published in the **Business Standard** on 12<sup>th</sup> August 2022.

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

**Relevance:** Digital Lending Framework in India

**News:** The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has published the first set of norms to regulate digital lending in India. Norms are based on the recommendations of **a working group** that was set up In January 2021.

### Needs for regulation on digital lending

At present, digital lending is a nascent segment in the Indian financial sector.

There are anecdotal allegations of many frauds in this segment in India. Therefore, actions must be taken to protect citizens from such frauds.

The digital lenders are finding it hard to sell such products to digitally unaware customers who don't understand the implications and fine print.

The central bank is concerned about the possibility of **widespread defaults** in this segment and cascading effects.

### New Set of Norms

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The RBI has created **three buckets for entities** in the digital loans market: **(1)** entities directly regulated by the RBI, **(2)** entities not regulated by the RBI but authorized to carry out lending in accordance with other provisions, and **(3)** entities involved in digital lending while being outside the purview of any regulations.

### Set of new norms for the digital loan market

This market works on the basis of **digital entities** known as **Lending Service Providers (LSP)**. These LSP act as intermediaries to arrange personal loans between lender and borrower. The loans are provided by **a regulated entity**, such as a bank.

In such cases, loan disbursements and repayments must be executed by direct transfers between the account of the borrower and the regulated entity providing the loan.

In this, any charges payable to the LSP in intermediation are paid by the regulated entity providing the loans, and not by the borrower.

Also, in any digital loan, a **standardized key fact statement (KFS)** must be provided to the borrower. Further, entities have to disclose the all-inclusive cost of digital loans in the form of an **annual percentage rate (APR)**, which will be part of the KFS.

Any data collected from borrowers must be need-based, collected with a clear audit trail, and with explicit prior consent.

The borrower must have the **“right to forget”** where personal data can be deleted.

All digital lending products must be reported to credit information companies.

All digital loans must come with a cooling-off/look-up period during which the borrower can exit the loan by repaying the principal and the proportionate APR without penalty.

The regulated entities and the LSPs working with them must also have a **nodal grievance redress officer** to deal with **FinTech** and complaints related to digital lending. If any complaint is not resolved within a stipulated period of **30 days**, a complaint can be lodged under **the RBI's integrated ombudsman scheme**.

### What should be done?

The RBI has said it would release **a second set of norms** after engagement with the government and other stakeholders.

The government needs to legislate for the norms and entities within the regulatory purview and should set up an **institutional mechanism**

The RBI could ensure **greater transparency** by mandating disclosure of all fees and charges.

The RBI could regularly release aggregated and anonymized data to give a sense of market size and growth rates.

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47. [The Portuguese Civil Code of 1867 is a colonial burden on Goa](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article “**The Portuguese Civil Code of 1867 is a colonial burden on Goa**” published in the **Indian Express** on **12<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 2 Important Provisions of the Constitution of India

**Relevance:** Uniform Civil Code

**News:** Recently, a **28-member parliamentary standing committee** visited Goa to study it in the context of the demand for a uniform civil code. The ministry of law has told the standing committee, that if **the Portuguese Civil Code of 1867** of Goa, requires review it must be looked into.

### **Case of Uniform Civil Code in Goa, Daman, and Diu**

The Portuguese had occupied and established the **Portuguese State of India in Goa, Daman, and Diu**. They did not interfere with the local customs relating to family relations. Therefore, framed **three separate codes** of religion-based customary laws prevalent in Goa, Daman, and Diu.

One of them was the **Portuguese Civil Code of 1867** which was extended to **Goa, Daman, and Diu** for the native subject.

Fourteen years after the advent of Independence, Goa and its affiliated territories were liberated and turned into a Union Territory (UT). Thereafter, **the Goa, Daman, and Diu Administration Act of 1962** was enacted by the government which declared that all laws in force in the Goa, Daman, and Diu **before their liberation** would **continue to be in force** until amended or repealed.

Since then, the government has not made any significant amendments or repealed the **pre-liberation family laws**. Further, the Central governments have also not extended any central law on family rights, including the **four Hindu law Acts of 1955-56**, to any of the three territories.

### **The Government's Stand**

The Union Law Ministry has told the concerned **standing committee of Parliament** that the **Portuguese civil code** and its later amendments as in force in Goa may be reviewed if required.

### **Constitutional Mandate of Civil Codes in India**

Article 44 of the Constitution of India requires the Central or State governments to endeavor toward enacting a uniform civil code (UCC) for the citizens throughout the territory of India.

### **What should be done?**

The **21st Law Commission** had given its opinion against the feasibility and need of such a code at this juncture.

The Law Ministry has told the **parliamentary committee** that enacting a uniform civil code would be possible only when a “**sizeable majority**” of the people seeks such a change in their personal laws.



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48. [India@75: As we celebrate the nation, we must also reflect on the mixed nature of our democracy](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article “**India@75: As we celebrate the nation, we must also reflect on the mixed nature of our democracy**” published in the **Indian Express** on **13<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus: GS 2** Indian Constitution—Historical Underpinnings, Evolution, Features, Amendments, Significant Provisions and Basic Structure.

**Relevance:** Functioning of Indian Democracy

**News:** India is going to celebrate its **75<sup>th</sup> year of Independence** on and around August 15, 2022. It refers to the celebration of India’s assertion of our nationhood (national self-respect and identity) as well as how India established a democratic system in order to conduct the affairs of the nation.

**What are the deep concerns of Indian democracy?**

**Firstly**, at present, there is a **nationalistic rhetoric**, in which there are attempts to **shrink the idea of India as a nation into one community**. The rhetoric is marked by exclusion and an overemphasis on community identity. Therefore, in the present narration, democracy is secondary to the nation.

**Secondly, a contradiction in the celebration of the Constitution of India:** Although the document is being celebrated, the adoption of its spirit in social and political practice is half-hearted. For example, the **two most revolutionary elements** of the Constitution, fundamental rights and directive principles, are conveniently set aside from time to time for vested interest.

Our legislative choices, executive practices and judicial interpretations have undermined the Constitution from time to time.

**Thirdly, Web of institutions:** The Constitution gave us many institutions. Subsequently, Parliament has added many other institutions. But most of the new institutions created serve the purpose of controlling citizens. There is a serious erosion of most institutions. This is partly due to political interference in functioning of these institutions in India.

**Fourthly**, Indian politics is marked by **deep inequalities**. Ordinary Citizens are not able to “do politics”. One can enter into Indian politics through the family route or by finding out family connections. This political inequality is exacerbated by and in turn, enhances various other inequalities.

**Fifthly**, there is no balance between the **people as a collective and the individual** in India’s democratic life. Here, the idea of the individual seldom carries weight. Within communities, individuals are **secondary**. Further, **fundamental rights and freedoms of individuals** such as freedom of expression, right to life and liberty are seen as unnecessary both by the public and rulers.

**What should be done?**

The best way to celebrate 75 years of our nationhood is to remind ourselves of the **contradictoriness of democracy** that we practice.

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### 49. [Why family needs to be at the heart of India's health system](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article “**Why family needs to be at the heart of India's health system**” published in the **Indian Express** on **13<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

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

**Relevance:** Health Reforms; Kerala Model.

**News:** Since Independence, India has been striving to establish a comprehensive primary healthcare care system. The Covid pandemic once again highlighted the need for an effective primary healthcare system.

#### **About the history of healthcare reforms in India**

The **Bhore Committee Report** of 1946, the **Kartar Singh Committee Report** of 1973, the **National Rural Health Mission (NRHM)** of 2005 and the **Ayushman Bharat Mission** of 2019 are significant landmarks in this endeavour.

**The NRHM:** (1) The Mission has set **the Indian Public Health Standards (IPHS)** for physical infrastructure, human resources and service delivery, and (2) a **three-fold** increase in budget.

**Health Care System in India:** The system comprises a **multi-tiered structure**. It means at the **block-level**, there is a 30-bed community health centre is operated by four specialists and at the **village-level**, a community worker operates and provides services covering 12 diseases/needs.

#### **Some good outcomes as a result of the NRHM Healthcare reforms**

- (1) Institutional deliveries went up from 41% in 2005 to 89% in 2021,
- (2) The maternal mortality ratio (MMR) went down from 407 per one lakh women in 2,000 to 113 per one lakh women in 2021,
- (3) The infant mortality ratio reduced from 58/1,000 live births in 2005 to about 28/1,000 live births in 2021,
- (4) There has been increased availability of drugs, diagnostics and doctors,
- (5) The healthcare system's footfall has registered an impressive improvement in states like Bihar and UP.

#### **What are the shortcomings of NRHM?**

Despite the launch of the mission, still less than 10% of the public health care facilities match up to the IPHS Standards.

The primary healthcare system continues to be plagued with gaps and deficiencies and the current facilities serve two to ten times the population they are designed to cater to.

One reason for the deficit is that public spending on healthcare is barely 1.1 per cent of the GDP and the other reason is the wavering political support for primary care.

#### **The Kerala Model -Healthcare system**

It has revamped its health care system based on the **UK's GP (general practitioners) system in the state**.

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Kerala appears to be the only state in India which has revamped **its primary healthcare system** (PHC) along the foundational principles of **comprehensive primary care**, i.e., a community-anchored delivery system, a continuum of care, and patient-centred, protocol-driven, evidence-based treatment.

This **comprehensive approach** has been enabled by a **tripartite partnership** between the **state's health department, women's collectives** and **community-level bodies**.

The Primary health centre (PHC) facilities have been renamed as **family health centres** (FHCs) which underlines the centrality of the family in the endeavour.

A series of **coordinated interventions** were made, like changing timings, redesigning the centres and equipping them with the patient and people-friendly facilities, providing intensive training to the staff to undertake new functions and responsibilities, etc.

The **Family Health Centre's (FHCs)** in Kerala provide a wide range of drugs and medical services, including nebuliser treatment for asthma patients, mobile teams provide palliative care at home.

### What should be done?

**For Kerala: The state government should focus on** deepening the reforms, and instituting the accountability framework related to the doctors, paramedics and frontline workers, needs to be strengthened.

**For Rest of India:** National policy should be **nimble** and allow for **differential strategies** because a single system may not be apt for the entire country.

The Centre should adopt **the principles of flexibility, decentralisation** and provides the **space for innovation** to states and districts to plan, design and implement primary care in accordance with local needs. The **Centre government's** role should be limited to **measuring outcomes**.

**Rest of the state government should** learn from a proactive primary healthcare system that is working in Kerala. They should reset their approach and change the design of their health care system.

### 50. [The 'freebies' debate](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article **"The 'freebies' debate"** published in the **Business Standard** on **13<sup>th</sup> 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:** India's freebies burden.

**News:** Recently, the Prime Minister said freebies were coming in the way of development. The debate over "freebies vs development expenditure" reflects a primary problem that economics is supposed to tackle.

**Must read:** [PM's 'revdi' remark: We need to disentangle good subsidies from bad](#)

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About the development expenditure and freebies

Economists call few freebies positive externalities; i.e. they have a public utility that goes beyond the benefit to the individual user.

For instance, **a)** spending on Education, welfare payments, and highways all are called as positive externalities, **b)** Mid-day meals in schools improved school attendance and enhanced child health and reduced the birth rate dramatically. **c)** Other schemes and programs such as the construction of free lavatories, providing subsidised cooking gas.

**Read more:** [Freebies against democracy but legislation against them not advisable: SC](#)

What are the issues associated with freebies?

**Constraints from other issues:** The major issue is not the freebies themselves, but the constraint imposed by limited means. For instance, Delhi can give free power up to a consumption limit and also invest in schools but not Punjab with its high indebtedness cannot do the same.

**The welfare state is unaffordable:** In advanced economies, “transfer payments” through social security, and unemployment benefits dominate budgets. Thus leaving less and less money for infrastructure, research, and other “investments” for growth. For instance, in Britain, the National Health Service is near breakdown.

**Read more:** [From freebies to welfare](#)

What needs to be done to provide a better welfare state?

**Follow the principle of Singapore’s founder, the late Lee Kuan Yew:** He mandated **high personal savings** with which Singaporeans could buy government-provided housing, and also mandated **personal health funds** to pay for medical emergencies. In return for people, he offered low taxes.

This has the following advantages, **a) government spending does not leave behind a burden** for future generations, **b)** The government would not spend the money it did not have. Thereby ratio of **public debt to GDP will not increase**.

**Provide fiscal space to states:** Creating a fiscal responsibility law will not achieve anything. Instead, the centre can increase the share of tax revenue to states, so that states can afford and plan their freebies.

**Read more:** [Making sense of the ‘freebies’ issue](#)

51. [A Journey Unfinished: India@75 has much to celebrate but the full range of freedoms available to elites eludes most](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article “**A Journey Unfinished: India@75 has much to celebrate but the full range of freedoms available to elites eludes most**” published in **The Times of India** on **13<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 2 – Indian Constitution—historical underpinnings, evolution, features, amendments, significant provisions and basic structure.

**Relevance:** About India’s democracy.



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**News:** India is celebrating its 75 years of Independence. But India needs to do more to be truly independent, to be truly free.

How has India been democratic ever since its independence?

The Partition riots were a monumental tragedy that indelibly marked India's birth as a nation. It was not clear then that India would survive as a country.

Despite that, people of various states are feeling a sense of national unity and purpose that overcame their religious, caste, language and socioeconomic identities.

All this is due to the remarkable achievement of our early leaders, who put in place democratic practices and made them into traditions.

How democracy is unifying India?

Liberal democracy has been a safety valve, diffusing the varied pressures emerging from the vast country. It has ensured that most battles are fought in newspapers, at the ballot box, in Parliament, and not in the street.

Liberal democracy has helped preserve the unity of our country.

**Read more:** [India, democracy and the promised republic](#)

What are the challenges India is still facing?

**Economic inequality** exists in India due to unequal access to public goods like education and healthcare.

**Draconian provisions:** Freedom fighters sought independence in part so that they could speak out, criticise and protest without the ever-present threat of being jailed by an omnipotent colonial government, using its arbitrary laws and police powers.

Yet many of those laws and police powers are still on the books, some even enhanced.

**Read more:** [No inner-party democracy](#)

What needs to be done?

**Need necessary improvements:** Malnutrition and stunting of children need immediate attention. Similarly, the extent to which poor children fall behind grade level requirements in reading and arithmetic should be rectified.

True economic freedom can come only when most people can easily find decent jobs. So, India should create more jobs.

**Need to aid religious minorities:** Sri Lanka is a classic example of what will happen if politicians demonise a minority. The role of minorities in India's achievement should not be ignored.

**Institutional reforms:** India should **improve the quality and efficiency of law enforcement agencies**. Along with that, institutions such as the press and the judiciary also are in dire need of reforms.

**Read more:** [Preserving democracy in India](#)

Gandhi feared that in post-Independence India, freedom for the few is never sustainable – unless the many see, experience and cherish that freedom. On our 75th Independence Day, the government should know that the struggle for independence is still unfinished.

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### 52. [A road map for India-EU ties](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article “**A road map for India-EU ties**” published in **The Hindu** on **16<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

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

**Relevance:** About India-EU ties.

**News:** Along with the 75 years of Independence, India also celebrates 60 years of diplomatic relations with the European Union (EU).

What are the recent developments in India-EU ties?

**a)** A cooperation agreement signed in 1994 took the bilateral relationship beyond trade and economic cooperation, **b)** The first India-EU Summit in 2000, marked a watershed in the evolution of the relationship. At the fifth India-EU Summit in 2004, the relationship was upgraded to a ‘Strategic Partnership’, **c)** The two sides adopted a Joint Action Plan in 2005 towards strengthening dialogue and consultation mechanisms in the political and economic spheres, enhancing trade and investment, and bringing peoples and cultures together,

**d)** The 15th India-EU Summit, 2020, provided a common road map to guide joint action and strengthen the partnership over the next five years.

The map highlights engagement across five domains: foreign policy and security cooperation; trade and economy; sustainable modernisation partnership; global governance; and people-to-people relations.

**Read more:** [India-EU: global dynamics](#)

What is the present state of India-EU ties?

**Economic partnership:** Bilateral trade between the two surpassed \$116 billion in 2021-22. The EU is India’s second largest trading partner after the U.S., and the second largest destination for Indian exports.

There are 6,000 European companies in the country that directly and indirectly create 6.7 million jobs.

**Avenues of collaboration:** **1)** The ‘**green strategic partnership**’ between India and Denmark aims to address climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution, **2)** The **India-Nordic Summit** focused on green technologies and industry transformation that are vital for sustainable and inclusive growth.

**Cooperation in the defence sector:** India and the EU regularly conduct joint military and naval exercises which reflects their commitment to a free, open, inclusive and rules-based order in the Indo-Pacific.

-The first maritime security dialogue in 2021 focused on cooperation in maritime domain awareness, capacity-building, and joint naval activities.

-France’s on-time delivery of 36 Rafale fighter jets and willingness to offer Barracuda nuclear attack submarines to the Indian Navy reflects the growing level of trust.

**Science and technology:**

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–**Science and Technology Joint Steering Committee:** It focus on areas such as healthcare, Artificial Intelligence, and earth sciences.

-In 2020, there was an agreement for research and development cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy between the European Atomic Energy Community and the Government of India.

**Read more:** [Why India-EU trade pact is still difficult to achieve?](#)

What are the challenges faced in India-EU ties?

India and the EU have differing opinions and divergent interests in some areas. For instance, **a)** India's reluctance to condemn Russia for the Ukraine crisis is not agreed upon by the EU, **b)** There is an ambiguity on the EU's strategy in tackling the rise of China. This is visible from Europe not criticising China's attack on Galwan Valley.

**Read more:** [Need for upgrading India-Europe relations](#)

What should be done to improve India-EU ties?

India's economic, political and demographic weight could be deftly leveraged by the EU to counterbalance China's influence across the region. For that, the resumption of the ambitious [India-EU free trade and investment agreement](#) in 2021 is a step in the right direction.

### 53. [Diplomacy for Viksit Bharat](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article "**Diplomacy for Viksit Bharat**" published in the **Indian Express** on **16<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 2 International relations; Bilateral relations Multilateral relations etc.

**Relevance:** Foreign Policy

**News:** The Prime Minister of India has outlined a new ambition to make India a developed country, "**Viksit Bharat**", by 2047.

**What are significant changes that will be needed in the Indian foreign policy tradition to become a developed country?**

(1) There is a need to **overcome the residual legacies of Partition** that continue to undermine Delhi's geopolitical position.

(a) India must prioritize deterring the dangers from across the **Western frontier** until Pakistan is ready for a productive relationship with India.

(b) Resolve the problems left over by Partition on India's North-western frontier, like the settlement of the boundary dispute with Bangladesh.

(c) Push for connectivity, trade ties, and security partnerships with its neighbors.

(d) Work towards strengthening **regional** and **trans-regional institutions** in South Asia and beyond.

(2) Address the **China challenge**, like the growing **power gap** with China. India-China border disputes started in 1962 and continue to happen even at present, like in 2013, 2014, 2017, and 2020. China has leveraged the divisions within the Subcontinent to constrain India, like CPEC

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in Pakistan. India's engagement in the extended neighborhood is being challenged by China due to its increasing presence. China has been asserting itself across Asia to make a **"unipolar Asia"**.

(a) The Indian government must secure frontiers, retain India's regional position, strengthen India's manufacturing sector, improve domestic technological capabilities, and produce more weapons at home.

(b) Build **stronger partnerships** with other major powers. India's **policy of strategic autonomy** is not a hindrance to it because all countries practice strategic autonomy to the extent they can. Partnerships should be based on negotiated **mutually beneficial terms**.

(3) If India becomes a **\$3-trillion economy**, its ability to engage with the other powers will improve along with the growth of its **comprehensive national power**.

(4) India must take **global leadership** in managing the **enormous consequences** of the unfolding technological revolution, stabilizing the economic order, and addressing the challenges of climate change and pandemics.

(5) On its way to 2047, India has to continue its **pursuit of multilateralism**, at the UN, G-20, and WTO. India should make coalitions of **like-minded nations**.

(6) India must look beyond **the immediate neighborhood** to more effectively engage with Africa, Latin America, and Oceania where Delhi's footprint remains light, despite some recent initiatives.

### **Domestic Ingredients for making India a developed nation**

Promoting social justice, internal unity, economic modernisation, resilient political institutions, and deep bases of science and technology.

#### 54. [Status of inequality: A probe into the Nehruvian pledge](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article **"A probe into the Nehruvian pledge"** published in **The Hindu** on **17<sup>th</sup> 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 status of inequality in gender, society and the practice of democracy.

**News:** On August 15, 1947, in his historic speech, Jawaharlal Nehru said, "The service of India means the service of the millions who suffer. It means the ending of poverty and ignorance and disease and inequality of opportunity." 75 years after the pledge, the inequality of opportunities which Nehru wanted to eradicate has only systematically widened.

This article reviews the pledge of ending inequality of opportunity made at the time of Independence under three broad heads: gender inequality, social inequality and the practice of democracy.

What is the status of inequality in gender?

**Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR):** According to the global Sustainable Development Goals target, all countries are expected to have an MMR below 70. But the MMR in 456 out of 640 districts of India is above 140 per lakh live births.



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The [Global Gender Gap Index](#), produced by the World Economic Forum, India's position fell from 98 in 2006 to 135 in 2022. On the sub-indices, **a)** On economic participation, India fell from 110 in 2006 to 151 in 2021, **b)** In health and survival, it slipped from 103 in 2006 to 155 in 2021.

**Crime against women:** The reported Indian Penal Code (IPC) crimes against women as a proportion of total IPC crimes increased steadily between 1990 and 2019.

**Read more:** [The inequality challenge for India@75](#)

Why does the status of inequality in society still persist in India?

In India, **social disparities in gender, caste and class coexist**. Constitutional guarantees of reservation in employment and education do not expand their opportunities. This is because **1)** Historically marginalised communities have to contend with powerful groups with great initial endowments, **2)** India has failed to seriously implement land reforms. So, the landless Dalits, Adivasis and the poor have not been able to go forward,

**3)** A 2019 paper shows that the egalitarian achievements up to the early 1980s have been lost following the liberalisation turnaround. The paper estimate that the top 1% of earners captured less than 21% of the total income in the late 1930s, 6% in the early 1980s and 22% in recent times. Further, the share of the bottom 50% income group grew over 90% in the 1980-2015 period, while that of the top 10% grew 435%, **4)** The sustained gains of economic growth have not been channelled to widen the access to education, health care, social security and so on.

**Read more:** [Selfish rich inequality hypothesis: The selfishness and graft of the rich drive inequality](#)

What about the practice of democracy?

Shankkar Aiyar termed India as a "**Gated Republic**". With growing social and economic inequality, Indian democracy is emerging to fulfil the term "Gated Republic". For instance, the privileged classes do not demand key public goods such as drinking water, electricity, and law and order because they have bottled water, storage tanks, water purifiers, inverters, and private security.

On the other hand, many of the avoidable deaths, and diseases, that happen in India are due to the public failure in providing water, public hygiene, education and the rule of law. Corruption is pervasive and undermines democratic practice.

**Read more:** [State of Inequality in India Report – Explained, pointwise](#)

So, the inequality of opportunities which Nehru wanted to eradicate has only systematically widened in India.

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### 55. [First principles should guide India's privacy law](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article “**First principles should guide India's privacy law**” published in the **Live Mint** on **17<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus: GS 2 Important Provisions of the Constitution;** Government Policies and Interventions for Development in various sectors and issues arising out of their Design and Implementation.

**Relevance:** Fundamental Right to Privacy and the Personal Data Protection Law

**News:** Recently, the Central government withdrew its Personal Data Protection Bill after four years of deliberation, while promising to put forward a revised version of the bill.

#### **Background**

The Supreme Court 2017 judgment upheld the right to privacy as a part of fundamental rights to life and liberty.

Consequently, Justice **B.N. Sri Krishna Committee** was constituted which drew up a draft bill in 2018.

A bill was introduced in Parliament. The bill had a considerable weakening of safeguards like the Centre and its agencies were given sweeping powers to call up data at will.

Thereafter, Justice Sri Krishna flagged “Orwellian” risks in the bill introduced in the parliament.

A **Joint parliamentary committee (JPC)** scrutinized the bill. The JPC's report suggested 81 changes and 151 corrections. Critics said the state agencies were given a free pass in the law and the stiff data localization and greater regulatory burden on digital players would dent the **business environment** that might choke innovation.

#### **Why do we need a data protection law in India?**

Indians live **digital lives** in large numbers for work, leisure, creativity, and commerce. This leaves a trail of data or information, known as the “**new oil**” of the **digital economy**.

Out of the three stakeholders—the individual, tech platform, and the government, involved in the internet's design, **individuals have the least control over their personal detail**.

**Cybersecurity concerns** have increased in the recent past. For example, issues like data leaks and thefts, and politically motivated spying have become common.

Further, several Western jurisdictions have already enacted a **data protection law**. India cannot remain behind.

#### **What should be the ingredient of the revised new bill?**

The bill should be based on the **1<sup>st</sup> principle**, i.e., individuals or citizens must be empowered with legal rights to their personal data. Further, **personal data** should be made **accessible** to others only for reasons that are **fair, transparent, and legitimate**.

The **1<sup>st</sup> Principle** should be adhered to because the SC directed the government to enact a **law to protect personal data** in the **2017 Judgment**, in order to safeguard the **fundamental right to privacy**.

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The government could take inspiration from the **EU's data law**. For example, provisions that offer a **strong shield** against **commercial** and **state surveillance**, provisions that commit companies to using only minimal data and for specific purposes, bar them from holding data longer than necessary, and make them accountable for lapses.

The Centre must commit itself to a clear timeline within which the new data protection law will be introduced.

### 56. [The Taliban factors](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article **"The Taliban Factor"** published in the **Business Standard** on 17<sup>th</sup> August 2022.

**Syllabus:** GS 2 International relations; Bilateral relations

**Relevance:** India-Afghanistan relations

**News:** Recently, the Taliban regime completed its one year of rule in Afghanistan. Now is the time to assess its relations with India.

India has long enjoyed a benign reputation in Afghanistan because of its traditional developmental role in that country.

#### **India's Foreign Policy Challenges**

Taliban 2.0 has imposed its vague notion of an **eighth-century Islamic state** and established its Sharia law that overrides human rights and oppresses women.

The Taliban lacks a **constructive governing system** and skill in the art of **state-building**. Therefore, the regime could not rebuild Afghanistan, which has been ruined by decades of war and lack basic institutions of governance.

India is finding it difficult to establish **diplomatic ties** with the Taliban regime. India closed its embassy and withdrew all personnel due to attacks on Indians.

Both **Taliban and Pakistan** have been **strong supporters** of each other. Further, India had supported the opposition alliance against Taliban 1.0. that ruled from 1996 to October 2001, which did not go in the interest of Taliban.

Afghanistan has become a safe haven for **terrorists and terror outfits** who want to recruit soldiers. For example, the Taliban has given shelter to **al-Zawahiri**, who was recently killed by the US. This is the reason there has been an upsurge in a terrorist activity like recruitment along the Indo-Pakistan border since the reading down of **Articles 370 and 35A of the Constitution of India**.

#### **New Developments**

Recently, India became the **15<sup>th</sup> nation** that **signaled rapprochement** by reopening its embassy in Kabul. The intended objective behind it is, to closely monitor and coordinate the **humanitarian assistance** that is being given by India.

At present, India can forge more **durable ties** with the Taliban on account of **manifest tensions** between Islamabad and Kabul. For example, the Taliban refused to accede to a **Pakistani**

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**government request** to surrender **Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan elements** sheltering across the border. As a result, Islamabad informed the whereabouts of al-Qaeda head Ayman al-Zawahiri to the US.

57. [Upma Gautam writes: Supreme Court's contradictory verdicts reinforce the need for a Bail Act](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article “**Supreme Court's contradictory verdicts reinforce the need for a bail act**” published in the **Indian Express** on **17<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 2 Important Provisions of the Constitution of India

**Relevance:** Fundamental Rights

**News:** Recently, in **Satender Kumar Antil v. CBI**, the Supreme Court has given directions on undertrials and pre-trial detentions. The SC has asserted mandatory compliance with Sections 41 and 41A of the Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC).

### **Criminal Justice Reforms**

In the first decade of the 21st century, **Section 41** was modified and **Section 41A** was incorporated into **the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC)**. The objective was to reduce the number of arrests by the police for offences punishable by up to **7 years** of imprisonment. Further, these initiatives had the potential to reduce custodial violence and lower the burden on courts.

### **The SC ruling**

The SC affirmed its 2014 verdict in **Arnesh Kumar vs State of Bihar Case**, in which it directed state governments to instruct their police officers to not arrest the accused automatically when the offence is punishable with imprisonment for a term which may be less than seven years.

The Court said that investigating agencies are accountable for compliance with Section 41 and 41A of CrPC.

It reiterated the importance of the “bail over jail” rule and issued a slew of **step-by-step procedures** to prevent unnecessary arrest and remand.

The government should enact the **Bail Act** to inject clarity into **bail-related matters**. While framing, the government should take a cue from the US, UK, Australia, New Zealand, and many other legal systems as well as the recommendations of the **268th Law Commission report**.

### **Ongoing issues in Indian Criminal Justice System (CJS)**

As per the **Prison Statistics of India 2020**, nearly 76% of prisoners are undertrials. The large percentage of **undertrials** in prison and **pre-trial detentions** are often a result of unnecessary arrests by investigating agencies and further the **unfair application of bail provisions** by the court. This led to a violation of the **cardinal rule** of the **presumption of innocence**.

Despite direction, the investigating agencies do not judiciously apply Sections 41 and 41A of the CrPC. They continue to take a **mechanical approach** that regards detentions as the only **effective option** to complete the **investigation**. Therefore, a lot of bail applications are pending before district courts, high courts, and the Supreme Court.

### **Arguments in favour of making immediate arrests and denial of bail to the undertrials**



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A section of commentators believes that the arrest of the wrongdoer is seen as an effective redressal mechanism by the victim.

Further, if a police officer does not go for immediate detention, it may be considered as a sign of complacency of the authorities.

Moreover, Section 41A has provisions that mandate the immediate arrest of the accused.

On the contrary, recently, In **Vijay Madanlal Chaudhary v. Union of India (PMLA case)**, the Supreme Court upheld the arbitrary conditions of bail under **Section 45 of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act**, thus discarding the “**presumption of innocence**” principle.

### What should be done?

The Court should not give a **contradictory verdict** because the operations of investigating agencies do not go in isolation from that of courts. The conflicting and ambiguous approach of courts towards **pre-trial incarceration** and **bail** provides investigating agencies avenues to justify flouting of the due processes.

The confusion created by the two decisions of the apex court reinforces the need for a Bail Act.

Investigating agencies and police offices need to sync their approach with the **principles of natural justice**.

### 58. [Bureaucrats Haven't Failed. But They Can Do Better](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article “**Bureaucrats Haven't failed, but they can do better**” published in **The Times of India** on 17<sup>th</sup> August 2022.

**Syllabus:** GS 2 Role of civil services in a democracy

**Relevance:** Civil Services Reforms

**News:** India is celebrating its 75<sup>th</sup> year of Independence in 2022. . This is a good time to reflect on the performance of the civil services, where it has failed, and where, if at all, it has made a difference.

**Functions of the IAS:** (1) Regulatory, (2) policy-making, (3) program implementation, (4) improving ease of living, (5) ease of doing business and governance, and (6) evidence-based assessments.

### Issues in the functioning of the IAS

At present, the public perception is negative about civil servants. The number of civil servants who are involved in misdeeds has been disturbingly increasing.

**Conformity:** Conformity is preferred over **competence**, **conviction**, and **willingness** to take an **evidence-based position** in the present bureaucratic system where there are compulsions of political compliance.

**Incentives:** The civil servants including competent become conformist due to incentives of postings like foreign posting incentives.

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### Some good contributions

(1) **1991 economic reforms**: The IAS has played a big role in the regulatory infrastructure, monetary and fiscal policy formulation, and in convincing the political masters to undertake liberal economic reforms, even at the cost of populism. Thus, they contributed to breaking the cycle of low growth rates and opening up the Indian economy, and allowing private sector participation with ease.

(2) Innovation in **implementation of programs**: (a) The use of technology for identification and portability in the Public Distribution System (PDS), and (b) Use of Aadhaar linked DBT and decline in leakages, the success of pro-poor public welfare was led by innovative civil servants.

(3) In **dismantling the archaic laws** in areas that were identified by the **World Bank** for reducing the **compliance burden**.

(4) The IAS officers have empowered 130 million women under the Livelihood Mission, facilitated 31 lakh elected Panchayat leaders, and contributed to poverty reduction and economic well-being like high rates of adolescent girls' participation in secondary/ higher education; etc.

(5) They have contributed to empowering the poor through means of Technology.

(6) There are many **young** and **idealist civil servants** who are struggling to improve the lives and livelihoods of people in remote regions of the country., who are making a difference. However, they often go unnoticed.

### What should be done?

The power of community organizations working with elected local governments.

There can be greater accountability through **deepening democracy** and the **voice of the poorest**.

There should be a ruthless crackdown on the **black sheep**, alongside a thrust for greater **professionalism among the IAS**.

The political democracy will have to be more tolerant to evidence-based dissent and the right person in the right place, with a lower premium on conformism.

The people should change their perception about civil servants like IAS.

59. [India-U.S. maritime relationship: This maritime partnership is still a work in progress](#)

**Source**: The post is based on the article **“This maritime partnership is still a work in progress”** published in **The Hindu** on **18<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

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

**Relevance**: About repairing the US Naval Ship in India and India-US maritime relationship.

**News**: Recently, the United States cargo ship has halted for repairs at an Indian facility in Chennai. This marks an important step in the India-U.S. maritime relationship.

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Why has a US Naval Ship come to India for repair?

**Read here:** [First ever repair of a US Navy Ship in India; 'Charles Drew' arrives at L&T Kattupalli shipyard](#)

During the bilateral 2+2 dialogue held in April this year, the two countries agreed to explore the possibilities of using Indian shipyards for the repair and maintenance of ships of the U.S. Military Sealift Command (MSC).

Later, the MSC carried out an exhaustive audit of Indian yards and cleared the facility at Kattupalli for the repair of U.S. military vessels.

What are the implications of repairing the US Ship in the India-U.S. maritime relationship?

Functional implications

**a)** It signals a more efficient leveraging of the [Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement \(LEMOA\)](#). With the arrival of a U.S. military vessel, the template of logistics cooperation seems to have broadened, **b)** Repairing the US Naval Ship in India is seen as a **global endorsement of Indian shipbuilding and ship-repair capabilities**, **c)** At a time when the Indian Navy has taken delivery of the INS Vikrant, the repairing the US Naval Ship will further **boost 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' and 'Make-in-India'**.

Geopolitical implications

**For India:** **a)** It signals a consolidation of the India-U.S. partnership and the [Quadrilateral Security Dialogue](#), **b)** India in the past has not offered access to foreign warships to Indian facilities to prevent an impression of an anti-China alliance. But the recent move suggests **greater Indian readiness to accommodate the maritime interests** of India's partners, **c)** India recently became an associated member of [Combined Maritime Forces \(CMF\)](#). Together, the move demonstrates India's commitment towards the collective responsibility of ensuring security in the shared commons.

**For US:** **a)** Strengthen US's military presence in the Eastern Indian Ocean, **b)** Underline the increased role of the [North Atlantic Treaty Organization \(NATO\)](#) in the Asian region.

What should be done to improve the India-U.S. maritime relationship further?

The India-U.S. maritime relationship remains a work in progress. U.S. **MSC has no warships**. The MSC is charged with delivering supplies to U.S. bases, and deals only with transport vessels of the U.S. Navy. India should promote strategic cooperation further with the U.S. Navy to facilities for repair and replenishment of U.S. destroyers and frigates

### 60. [The Centre vs State tussle over IAS postings](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article **"The Centre vs State tussle over IAS postings"** published in **The Hindu** on **18<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 2 – Role of civil services in a democracy.

**Relevance:** About deputation of AIS officers to the Centre.

**News:** All India Services (AIS) structure is unique to India and is too delicate to handle during a crisis. The majority of AIS officers working in the States were not coming forward to opt for tenure with the Centre. At present, many officers willing to go to Delhi on deputation are those assigned to the Northeastern States.

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About All India Services(AIS) and their rules for deputation

**Must read:** [Deputation of Cadre Officers and the Proposed Amendments – Explained, pointwise](#)

What are the advantages of working on deputation with the Centre?

**1)** Psychological satisfaction of **contributing to the formulation of national policy** on many critical issues, **2)** Many **opportunities for foreign travel** and a chance to be **deputed to work for international agencies**.

Why are officers reluctant to work on deputation with the Centre?

**1)** Long hours of work and the need for extreme clinical care in the preparation and submission of reports, **2)** Officers need to operate far away from their native State or the state in which they are more comfortable.

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

What are the impacts of non-deputation with the Centre?

**a)** There is an increase in manpower demands of GOI ministries, especially at the level of Deputy Secretaries and Directors who generally come from the IAS. This is not able to be filled even with the lateral entry scheme, **b)** There are far too many vacancies in the Central Police Establishment comprising the paramilitary forces such as the CRPF, BSF and CISF, and investigating agencies like the CBI and NIA.

About the tussle between Centre and State for deputation with the Centre

There are many instances of the tussle between the State and the Centre regarding deputing an officer. Recently, in West Bengal senior officers were greatly embarrassed due to the tussle between the state and the Centre.

**Read more:** [Why central deputation to 3 Bengal police officers not right?](#)

Situations like these arise due to ignorance of prudent and mature governance. This poses a threat to the foundation of All India Services.

What should be done to improve the deputation with the Centre?

There are simpler, more effective, and less contentious solutions to the shortage of officers for central deputation than [amending the IAS \(Cadre\) Rules](#). India needs a stable system of civil services to bolster democratic and responsive public administration in the country.

### 61. [Data opportunity at the G20](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article **“Data opportunity at the G20”** published in **The Hindu** on **18<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

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

**Relevance:** About regulating data within territories.

**News:** The global politics of data is rapidly evolving. Leading and emerging digital economies like the European Union (EU), the U.S., India, Indonesia, and South Africa all strive to protect, monetise, and leverage data collected within their territories for domestic purposes.



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**Note:** With the [proposed Data Act](#), the EU hopes to become an unparalleled data power by creating a single data market, setting robust standards and deploying the EU's collective data for their own use.

Why do the nations want to regulate data within territories?

According to the Information Technology and Innovation Foundation (ITIF), data localisation laws have more than doubled from 2017 to 2021. This is because,

**1)** Increasing privacy and security concerns coupled with economic interests, **2)** The sheer amount of data being generated and shared globally and its implications on global trade and commerce forced nations to govern and restrict cross-border data flows, **3)** States seek and want increasing levels of regulatory control over data.

**Read more:** [Data Protection Framework in India – Explained, pointwise](#)

Why is G-20 an ideal place to discuss and regulate data within territories?

The G-20 appears as a viable platform to discuss and regulate data because, **a)** Converging positions on data governance amongst major G-7 powers and emerging economies as the state finds a greater role in regulating data, **b)** G-20's track record as the apex forum to discuss global economic issues gives it legitimacy, **c)** The G-20 platform comprises of top (digital) economies, **d)** The G20 does not create binding rules but serves as a platform to catalyse and inject new thinking around critical current issues.

How does India aim to regulate data within its territory?

Since 2017, India has attempted to incubate governance of non-personal data, personal data, e-commerce regulation and artificial intelligence (AI) with a preference to harness "India's data for India's development."

Hence, one can assume that India was way ahead of the 'data sovereignty' curve.

**Read more:** [What a new data law must have?](#)

What should be done to regulate data within India's territory?

**1)** The Indian government should present a holistic agenda to G-20 which embeds data collection and sharing within a broader framework that prioritises digital security, innovation, and citizen rights, **2)** The Reserve Bank of India's data localisation directive has been in place for four years now. An empirical assessment of how this has impacted both start-ups, big technology companies, and users could serve as a useful example.

**3)** India's digital economy stewardship must transcend data localisation by highlighting best practices on data protection, competition law, etc both in India and other G20 countries, **4)** India should consider redrafting the [Personal Data Protection Bill](#) with a 'more comprehensive framework' as an urgent domestic priority.

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

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### 62. [Facilitating adoption in India: Finding a home](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article “**Finding a home**” published in **The Hindu** on **18<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

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

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

**News:** The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Personnel, Public Grievances and Law and Justice have tabled the report titled “Review of Guardianship and Adoption Laws” in Parliament. The report highlighted the huge mismatch between the number of people wanting to adopt children and the number of children legally available for adoption.

What are the major findings of the committee on the status of adoption in India?

There were 6,996 orphaned, abandoned and surrendered children residing in childcare institutions considered adoptable, but only 2,430 were declared legally free for adoption by Child Welfare Committees.

On the other hand, there are around 27,939 prospective parents registered with the [Child Adoption Resource Authority \(CARA\)](#) for adoption.

The total number of children adopted in 2021-22 was only 3,175.

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

What are the suggestions of the committee for facilitating adoption in India?

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

What is the other challenge associated with adoption?

The process of adoption in the country was tightened — procedurally and legally — in response to rampant malpractices and inter-country adoption rackets. The government installed CARA as the nodal body for in-country and inter-country adoptions

What should be done for facilitating adoption in India?

Policy intervention without knowledge of the ground realities often results in little or no benefit for the intended target group. Hence, a ground-level study has to be conducted as suggested by the Parliamentary Committee to bring out child-centric policies in adoption.

The government has to **ensure that orphan and abandoned children** found begging on the streets are made **available for adoption at the earliest**.

The government has to **address the imbalance** in the number of children available for adoption and the number of persons seeking to adopt the children.

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### 63. [India's strides in the Gulf](#)

**Source:** This post is created based on the article “**India’s strides in the Gulf**”, published in **Indian Express** on **19<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS Paper 2 – International Relations

**News:** In the centenary celebrations program of AMU, PM asked the AMU community to further strengthen India’s relations with the Islamic world.

Recently, Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) proposed conferring the crown prince of Saudi Arabia, Mohammad Bin Salman, with the honorary Doctor of Letters (D.Litt) degree. It is for his exemplary services to global affairs, and to augment India’s efforts to forge deeper links with the Gulf region.

#### **How PM of India has been working to improve relations with gulf countries?**

The Prime Minister of India has been investing a good amount of time to improve relations with gulf countries. His efforts stand out on many counts:

**First**, he has put personal imprints through more than a dozen visits so far, to the region.

**Second**, he has expanded India’s relations with the gulf from simple trade-economic-energy relations to strategic relations in the spheres of space technology, defense, counter-terrorism, and cyber-security.

**Third**, India has been able to maintain its relations with Israel, along with other countries in the region. He is the first Indian PM to visit Palestine and receive its highest civilian award in recognition of his contribution to promoting relations between India and Palestine.

**Fourth**, with the reducing role of the US in the region, India is being seen as a credible player with a role in the promotion of regional peace and security in the region.

**Fifth**, India has started looking at Gulf countries as its “maritime neighbors”.

#### **How AMU has contributed to the strengthening of India’s relations with gulf countries?**

There is an **extensive network of AMU alumni in every Gulf country**, especially in Saudi Arabia and the UAE. AMU’s “soft power dividend” has been successfully leveraged in bolstering people-to-people contact.

**The political leadership of the Arab and Islamic world has duly recognized the goodwill of AMU.** For example, in 1975, Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, the first President and founder of the UAE, on his presidential visit to India visited AMU and gave a generous grant for establishing the department of petroleum studies in the university.

**AMU can further a key goal of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020** i.e. Internationalization of education. It can collaborate with the institutions of the Gulf countries in the frontier areas of innovation, start-ups, and entrepreneurship.

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### 64. [Women's empowerment is about land ownership](#)

**Source:** This post is created based on the article “**Women’s empowerment is about land ownership**”, published in **Live Mint** on **19<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS Paper 2 – Social Issues – Women and related issues

**Context:** Despite legislative efforts to fix a sharp gender imbalance in inheritance, very few Indian women have any legal title to property.

Prime Minister, in his recent Independence Day speech, asked for an attitudinal shift across the country in **favor of ‘Nari Shakti’—or women’s power**. He further said, “Respect for women is an important pillar for India’s growth.”

However, the economist Hernando de Soto, in *The Mystery of Capital* said, legal ownership of land can make all the difference between poverty and the ability to escape it. Thus, women’s empowerment also requires control over assets, other than income and job opportunities. United Nations Sustainable Development Goals also require countries to track the status of women’s land rights.

#### **What do the survey findings say about women’s empowerment?**

In, India, especially in rural areas, women’s empowerment is constrained by weak command over the farmland they till. Following are the findings of the 5<sup>th</sup> round of the National Family Health Survey 2020-21:

1. A drop has been reported in the country’s women aged 15-49 saying they owned a house or land (either solely or jointly) to less than a quarter from over a third back in 2015-16.
2. About 98 million women were found to be engaged in agriculture and allied activities, with most working as labor rather than cultivators.
3. Less than 13% of Indian farmland is under female ownership.

#### **What are the laws regulating inheritance in India?**

**The Hindu Succession Act of 1956** laid down equal distribution of property among all inheritors, irrespective of gender, as the broad majority norm.

This law was amended in 2005 to specifically grant sons and daughters equal rights to joint-family property.

Among Muslims, an age-old provision often prevails by which sons get twice the share (on an avowal to provide for their sisters if need be).

In case of disputes over ancestral estates,

#### **What are the reasons behind women lacking land ownership?**

Almost a third of rural households are estimated to be headed by women. It is because of the patriarchal scenario, in which land-owning men migrate to cities, leaving their farms for womenfolk to work on.

Land possession remains largely dependent on inheritance and property rights for women.

In the cases involving disputes on ancestral estates, women were cheated of their due, by heavy family pressure.



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### 65. [A glimpse into India@100](#)

**Source:** This post is created based on the article “A glimpse into India@100”, published in **Business Standard** on **19<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS Paper 2 – Polity and Constitution

**Context:** Prime Minister in 2021 said that “the journey of the next 25 years is the *Amrit Kaal* of a new India” and “the fulfillment of our resolutions in this *Amrit Kaal* will take us till 100 years of independence.”

Foreign Minister S Jaishankar in his tweet revealed, what are the expectations to be fulfilled when the Amrit Kaam ends:

1. An India, that is developed.
2. An India, free of colonial mindset.
3. An India, proud of its heritage.
4. An India, united & integrated.
5. An India, whose citizens put duty above all.

#### Are the above aims achievable?

**1) Boosting per capita income to become a developed nation:** The question here is what is the level of income, required to be declared a developed nation?

**For example,** India’s per capita income is currently at \$2,200 and according to the World Bank, the world’s average per capita income is over \$12,000. It is about \$70,000 in the United States, \$50000 in the UK, \$70000 in Singapore, \$40,000 in Japan, and \$35,000 in Korea.

It took India 12 years to double its per capita income from \$1100 in 2009. At this rate, by 2047, India will be at \$8800, which is less than where China is today (\$12,500).

Thus, high-level efforts are required to multiply per capita income.

**2) India should be free of its colonial mindset:** For achieving this objective, first, it is to be decided, what the colonial mindset is. Is it abolishing English from education, renaming roads, getting rid of the railways, replacing Macaulay’s Penal Code, or changing provisions in the constitution adopted from British time laws?

There is no clear definition or roadmap for achieving this objective.

**3) We should be proud of our heritage:** Again, what is our heritage needs to be defined. Definition of heritage can be changed as per the ideologies of the ruling parties.

**4) A united and integrated India:** Many present incidents are disturbing the unity of the nation. It has to be properly given thought; what are developments and policies that are creating disharmony among different sections and should be dealt with as soon as possible?

**5) Citizens to put duty above all:** Article 51A in the Constitution defines the duties of citizens. Government must strive to ensure all of the citizens fulfill their duties, despite ideological differences.

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### 66. [Should there be limits on 'freebies'?](#)

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

**“Should there be limits on ‘freebies’?”** published in **The Hindu** on **19<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

**“Freebies In Our Bonnet”** published in **The Times of India** on **19<sup>th</sup> 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:** India’s freebies burden.

**News:** The Supreme Court, while hearing a petition to curb the practice of offering freebies, said that the term “freebie” should not be confused with genuine welfare measures.

What are the Supreme Court’s remarks on freebies?

**Read more:** [Voters prefer to earn a dignified earning over freebies: Supreme Court](#)

What about welfare and freebies?

Directive Principles can certainly guide state policy. But it is not easy to define welfare and freebie. This is because of the ripple effect they create on society.

But from an economic and public policy perspective, a freebie is any public policy intervention that will have a long-term impact on production as well as productivity. Hence, any public policy intervention that doesn’t support medium-term to long-term production and productivity may be termed a freebie.

**Read more:** [The ‘freebies’ debate](#)

About India’s spending on subsidies

No advanced economy spends more than 1% of GDP on subsidies across all sectors. For example, the total subsidy in Germany is 0.9% of its GDP, in France just 0.4%, but in India, agricultural subsidies alone eat up around 2.25% of our GDP.

What are the recent findings on the state’s welfare expenditure?

Welfare spending in India is woefully low. It is low in comparison to other developing countries. For instance, public spending on health and education was 4.7% in India, compared to 7% in sub-Saharan Africa. And it is also declining in many States.

According to the Reserve Bank of India’s Study on State Finances, from 2014 onwards, the social sector expenditure at the State level has been declining even after States were given more resources.

**Must read:** [State Finances: Trends and Concerns – Explained, pointwise](#)

What are the revenue expenditure side impacts of freebies?

**Revenue decline:** Though Goods and Services Tax is a game changer for indirect taxes, there is less than 6% of the people pay income tax in India. The tax exemption limit in India keeps getting raised year after year.

India is raising 0.2% of GDP through property tax, whereas the developing country average is 0.6% of GDP and in OECD countries it is 2% of GDP.

On non-tax revenues, there is a significant growth at the Central government level. But there is a substantial decline at the State government level.

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**Impact on Expenditure:** Universal health and education are not quick fix solutions and need a 10-15 year gestation period. So, the government find this wait difficult and choose an easy path to get a vote i.e., freebies and subsidies. Freebies will lead to a further decline in tax resources.

As States are not spending on productive activities, it ends up depleting the tax revenues. This again leads to a revenue decline.

**Read more:** [From freebies to welfare](#)

What should be done?

**1)** India needs to have an institutional mechanism to control wasteful expenditure, **2)** Instead of having a blanket policy — for instance, giving free electricity to all — the state needs to identify the beneficiary of a particular public policy, **3)** India needs to have a good tax framework, where the government have much better resources for more social sector expenditure while also ensuring medium-term debt sustainability, **4)** According to a private report, more than 8% of GDP actually gets spent on implicit subsidies. The government must assess and reduce them so that the state has more resources for welfare or social sector expenditure.

Most developed countries invested in universal health and education when they were poor. They cut down subsidies before they became freebies and used that resource for universal welfare. India too has to follow that approach.

### 67. [Chinese ship at Hambantota calls for New Delhi to look closely at its maritime strategy](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article “**Chinese ship at Hambantota calls for New Delhi to look closely at its maritime strategy**” published in the **Indian Express** on **19<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 2 – India and its Neighbourhood relations.

**Relevance:** Yuan Wang 5 and China’s evolving Indian Ocean strategy

**News:** Recently, Sri Lanka approved the arrival of a Chinese satellite-tracking vessel named “Yuan Wang 5” to Hambantota port. India had protested the Chinese vessel’s visit, deeming it detrimental to India’s security.

About Yuan Wang 5

**Must read:** [Yuan Wang 5: Why is the visit of a Chinese vessel to Sri Lanka’s Hambantota port controversial?](#)

How do Yuan Wang 5 impact India-Sri Lanka relations?

Permission by Sri Lanka might be **violative of the 1987 Indo-Sri Lankan Accord**. The accord calls upon the two countries to prevent foreign activity in their respective territories that could pose a threat to the other.

**Note:** The ship is not classified as a warship, and therefore Sri Lanka permitted it under research vessel.

**Read more:** [Chinese military vessel at Hambantota is a spectre that threatens the new equilibrium in India-Sri Lanka relations](#)

About China’s evolving Indian Ocean strategy

The Chinese policy in the Indian Ocean is gradual and relentless encroachment that expands China’s tactical space and asserts China’s rights and interests in spaces outside its sphere of natural influence.

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Under it, China does not want to physically dominate the region, but it is creating a permissive environment for its military activities. For instance, in the Bay of Bengal and the Andaman Sea, China has already sent survey and research vessels, as a way of marking their presence in the region.

They deployed YW-5 because

**1)** To threaten Indian interests in the region by conducting electronic snooping by foreign ships, aircraft and satellites, **2)** To showcase Chinese support from Indian Ocean littoral states, **3)** China uses maritime militias to threaten any activity deemed inimical to Chinese sovereign interests. So in future, they might deploy warships to foreign ports.

**Read more:** [Step back from water's edge](#)

What does India need to do?

India needs to assess the following conditions and has to define them clearly to improve India's maritime policy. These include **a)** Permitting foreign activity in littoral areas if it has a noble cause, **b)** International rules that privilege user-state rights can be permitted over the security concerns of littoral nations, and **c)** Whether India required law or should it demand special rights in its near-seas to protect India's national security.

### 68. [Experts Explain: An India Blockchain Platform](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article "**Experts Explain: An India Blockchain Platform**" published in the **Indian Express** on **19<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** **GS 2** – e-governance applications, models, successes, limitations, and potential

**Relevance:** **About** public digital infrastructure

**News:** In recent years, India has made a significant effort to become a digital society by building a large citizen-scale digital public infrastructure.

With the commencement of the Digital India mission in 2015, India's payments, provident fund, passports, driving licences, crossing tolls, and checking land records all have been transformed with modular applications built on Aadhaar, UPI, and the India Stack.

**Read more:** [Blockchain technology can help alleviate global warming and climate change](#)

What are the limitations of public digital infrastructure?

**a)** Existing different digital infrastructures are not interconnected as a design. For instance, the information has to travel across multiple systems to complete the interaction, **b) Rely on private databases:** This makes the validation of data more complex as the network grows, driving up costs and creating inefficiencies.

What is Web 3.0 and how it can address the challenges in public digital infrastructure?

**Read here:** [Web 3.0: The future of internet? – Explained, pointwise](#)

The Web 3.0 architecture establishes a new version of the Internet protocol incorporating token-based economics, transparency, and decentralisation.



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Blockchain and public digital infrastructure

According to Gartner, by 2023, 35% of enterprise blockchain applications will be integrated with decentralised applications and services. Many countries have already begun establishing their blockchain policies and infrastructure.

For instance, **a) Estonia**, the world's blockchain capital, is using blockchain infrastructure to verify and process all e-governance services offered to the general public, **b) China** launched a program in 2020 called BSN (Blockchain-based Service Network) to deploy blockchain applications in the cloud at a streamlined rate, **c) Brazil** recently launched the Brazilian Blockchain Network to bring participating institutions in governance and the technological system that facilitates blockchain adoption in solutions for the public good.

**DeFi:** There are well-established decentralised finance (DeFi) platforms that rely on blockchain infrastructure. DeFi allows users to borrow and lend cryptocurrencies on a short-term basis at algorithmically determined rates. DeFi users are rewarded with tokens that confer governance rights.

**Read more:** [Strategy to adopt blockchain into govt systems released](#)

What India should do to build a resilient public digital infrastructure?

The Indian digital community should focus on supporting research in standards, interoperability, and efficient **handling of current known issues** with the distributed technologies.

Smartphone manufacturers can be asked to deliver **blockchain-compliant devices** by adding extensions. This will enhance the last mile reach of the program.

India should build a **national platform operating at L1 that interconnects blockchains** application providers, token service providers, and infrastructure managers. This can provide a reliable and efficient network for the Indian digital economy.

India should also **work on an indigenous solution such as an India Blockchain Platform**. This will transform the digital ecosystem in India and will enable the future of digital services, platforms, applications, content, and solutions.

**Read more:** [Factors Affecting Growth of Block Chain technology in India](#)

### 69. [A Story of Private Success and Public Failure](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article "**A story of private success and public failure**" published in **The Times of India** on 20<sup>th</sup> August 2022.

**Syllabus:** GS 2 Important Provisions of the Constitution of India;

**News:** India is celebrating its 75<sup>th</sup> Year of Independence. Therefore, it becomes important to assess India's achievements.

**Background:** In April 2011, during the **Arab Spring movement**, India was asked to answer **three important questions**. Further, India was also asked to provide the **India Model for Egypt's future**

(1) How did you keep the generals out of power?

(2) How did you become one of the fastest growing economies in the world (and a global outsourcer of IT services)?

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(3) How did India create social harmony in the most diverse place on earth? In other words, how India had managed to have such a moderate Muslim population. The question reflected the Arab Spring's fear of radical Islam.

In other words, the three questions point to the **three key attributes of a successful nation**: (1) Democracy, (2) Prosperity, and (3) Social harmony.

### **Building blocks of India's success**

**(1) Democracy:** Andre Malraux said that "India was lucky to have been founded by saints, i.e., liberators with clean hands. For example, **Jawaharlal Nehru** deserves the most credit for embedding democracy and the rule of law, which was an exceptional achievement among post-colonial societies. This was in stark contrast to Pakistan, which got liberated and side by side turned into 'an army with a country'.

### **(2) Unfettering the economy:**

**(a) Pre-1991:** In the early years, India became a socialist country. It resulted in a command economy that was based on a License Raj. Due to this, India missed a lot of economic opportunities prior to 1991.

**(b) Post-1991:** India undertook economic reforms in 1991. Since then, India has adopted a lot of slow reforms like cutting red tapism, license raj, etc. This resulted into

### **India's IT revolution**

Due to this, India became the world's fastest-growing major economy. Further, India's poverty decreased and the middle class has grown.

**(3) The minority question:** Even after 75 years, India has remained **united** despite so many predictions of our breaking up. This has been because **average life expectancy** has risen from 32 years to 70 years. Literacy has gone up from 12% to 78%. The extremely poor (defined by \$1.90 income per day) declined from 70% to 21% in 2011. 90% of the people have access to electricity, versus 50% in 1995. There are other areas of development. Indeed, some mishappenings have taken place in India which makes Muslims in India no longer feel secure. But these have happened at the fringe level

**The unfinished agenda:** India could have done better. There are some areas, which could have been handled better:

(1) India has been unable to provide **quality education** and **healthcare** due to **poor governance** at the Central and state level. **For example**, one in four teachers is absent illegally in a government primary school and only one of the two present is teaching. Similar statistics describe the government's primary health centers.

(2) India's greatest challenge is **bad governance** and **weak institutions**. For example, it takes around 15 years to get justice in India, 3/4th of the persons in jail are under trial; and **1/3rd of India's** MPs and MLAs have a criminal record.

### **What should be the future course of action?**

India has risen from below, through the energy and ingenuity of its people, almost despite the state. It is quite unlike the **top-down success** of East Asian countries, which were steered skillfully by the state.

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India should fix its governance institutions as soon as possible. Otherwise, it will not become a developed country.

### 70. [A red card at last](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article “**A red card at last**” published in the **Business Standard** on 20<sup>th</sup> August 2022.

**Syllabus:** GS 2 Development Processes and the Development Industry — the Role of NGOs, SHGs, various groups and associations, donors, charities, institutional and other stakeholders.

**Relevance:** Issues and reforms in various sports Association functioning in India

**News:** Recently, the Federation Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) suspended the All-India Football Federation (AIFF) with retrospective effect, from August 14.

#### **Argument against the suspension**

The action is being perceived, by many, as an arbitrary and authoritarian action.

#### **What are the reasons for the suspension of the All India Football Federation (AIFF)?**

FIFA has cited “**third-party interference**” as the reason for the suspension of the AIFF. It means the failure to put in place a constitution and an elected administrative structure that is in consonance with **FIFA’s statutory regime**.

#### **Underlying Causes**

Over three decades, the AIFF has been administered by only two people at the top: i.e., the late Priya Ranjan Das Munshi (1988-2008) and Praful Patel (2009-2022).

Further, the AIFF is not administered by people who have a meaningful association with the game. For example, both people mentioned above were politicians.

No head has been appointed for the past three-odd months in the AIFF. This is because Mr. Patel was removed in May.

**Problems in other sports administration bodies:** Every sports body in India is facing administrative problems. This can be seen from the following examples:

(1) Hockey India is also being run by **a committee of administrators**. The Federation Internationale de Hockey (FIH) also wants India to adopt **a new constitution**, under which elections must be held to put in place a new administration.

(2) In 2017, the Supreme Court tried to reform the cricket administration. The court appointed **a committee of administrators**. Thereafter, a constitution was framed, and a new president was elected to head a fresh committee to run the Board for Control of Cricket in India (BCCI). The International Cricket Council (ICC) gave India the leeway and the time needed for such a transition.

(3) The Indian Olympic Association has been threatened with sanctions this year.

The problems are most often caused by the involvement of politicians who have no business being involved in the first place and who are in the game only to make a fast buck.

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### What should be the future course of action?

Lessons should be learned from the chess federation which has revived its functioning well in time which will allow Tamil Nadu to host this **year's edition of the Olympiad**.

### 71. [End this asymmetrical conflict over 'freebies'](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article "**End this asymmetrical conflict over 'freebies'**" published in **The Hindu** on **20<sup>th</sup> 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:** Distribution of freebies.

**News:** Recently, the Supreme Court recommended constituting an expert committee to study the issue of 'freebies'.

What are freebies?

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

What is the aim behind 'Trickle down economics' and Tax cuts?

Trickle-down theory along with Reagan tax cuts believes in providing maximum tax cuts to higher income earners and corporations. This is because of the expectation that any benefit provided at the top would trickle down to the poor in the form of job creation, higher output, and infrastructure development.

For example, in India, neo-liberal schemes of the post-1990s such as the [Special Economic Zones \(SEZs\)](#), [Software Technology Parks of India \(STPI\)](#), and [Bio Technology Parks \(BTP\)](#).

What are the impacts of Trickle down policy and tax cuts?

-In reality, 'trickle down' yielded some positive results, but it also widened inequality, diminished inclusive growth. This is highlighted in the recent [World Inequality Report 2022](#) also.

-Since the government is reducing taxes for well-offs, it is **forced to rely more on indirect taxes** than direct taxes. This includes taxes on fuel and food (rice, milk, cereal) on which the poor spend a major portion of their income. This further increases the financial burden on the poor.

How the distribution of freebies are reducing inequality?

States such as Tamil Nadu address this inequality through social welfare measures (derided as freebies). For instance,

The **free bus pass provided for women** has **a)** Saved family's fuel cost, **b)** Encouraged more women to join the workforce, and **c)** Aid in the creation of economically stable families and women's empowerment.

**Free mid-day meals** have **a)** Encouraged socially backward parents to send their wards to school at least for the meals, **b)** Kept child labour under control, and **c)** imparting education.

A paper published in Oxford University Press lauded the introduction of **free colour television in villages**. As it has **a)** Reduced domestic violence, **b)** Enabled women's empowerment as women have been able to connect with the outside world through visual media, **c)** Ensured self-respect as women and children do not visit the homes of rich who own TV sets.



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What are the Supreme Court's observations on the distribution of freebies?

In **R.K. Garg vs Union of India** (1981), and **BALCO employees Union vs Union of India** (2002), the Court held that the wisdom of economic policies is not subject to judicial review.

In **S. Subramaniam Balaji vs State of Tamilnadu** (2013), the court dismissed the petition which challenged the free gifts schemes (colour television, mixer grinder, laptops) of the T.N. government. The Court observed that the distribution of gifts relates to the implementation of directive principles of state policy.

**Read more:** [The 'freebies' debate](#)

How fiscal federal setup is aiding the distribution of freebies?

India adopts 'cooperative federalism' where the Union and State cooperate to legislate and frame policies in their respective domain. So, social welfare measures (freebies) may differ from State to State or region to region.

For example, in the desert regions of Rajasthan it could be free drinking water, in Kerala, it could be something else.

Thus, it is for the respective legislature/executive to formulate the social welfare measures for that region. So, forming a central committee by the court might not address the socio-economic diversity of the nation.

### 72. [Remission or premature release of convicts: The injustice of exceptionalism](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article "**The injustice of exceptionalism**" published in **The Hindu** on **20<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 2 – Criminal Justice System.

**Relevance:** Remission or premature release 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.

What did the government release them?

Most States, including Gujarat, adopted a revised remission policy for prisoners which makes the person convicted of rape ineligible for premature release. But the Supreme Court of India has ruled that the remission would be governed by the remission policy that was in force at the time of conviction.

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

How does behaviour aid in the remission or premature release of convicts?

Prison is a state subject. State governments have laid down behaviour/activities that can earn prisoners a certain amount of days as remission, which is then deducted from their sentence.

For example, if a prisoner earns two years in remission and a court has sentenced them to 10 years, they can leave prison effectively after eight years.

This system is **enshrined in the Prisons Act, 1894**, and also rules developed by different States.

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**Remission for life sentence:** The **Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC)** mentions that life convicts have to undergo a minimum of 14 years of actual imprisonment before they can be considered for remission/premature release.

**Premature release rules:** State governments have also developed premature release rules that include the power to give effect to the Governor's powers of remission under Article 161 of the Constitution.

Those powers are not governed by the CrPC and are often used to bypass the minimum 14 years of actual imprisonment requirement in the CrPC.

The Supreme Court has recognised remission as an inherent part of a prisoner's right to life. Hence, remission is a right and not a privilege extended to the convict by the state.

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

What are the concerns associated with the recent remission or premature release of convicts? Many persons convicted for the same offence after the revised remission policy are ineligible for remission, a different set of governance considerations has been applied to these 11 individuals.

The executive and the judiciary moving towards harsher sentences for those convicted of sexual offences. Rape survivors face many challenges while filing criminal complaints and navigating the justice system.

Further, a victim from caste and the religious minority has to face even more challenges when she is filing complaints against upper caste offenders.

Hence, the recent remission is exceptionalism and this exceptionalism is a grave injustice to the insurmountable difficulties endured by Bilkis Bano to pursue justice

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

**Source:** The post is based on the article **“What next on data protection?”** published in **The Hindu** on **22<sup>nd</sup> 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.

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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.

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?](#)

### 74. [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 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2022.

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

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**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.
- 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.

### 75. [Making bail impossible](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article "**Making bail impossible**" published in "**The Hindu**" on 22<sup>nd</sup> 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



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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.

### 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.

### 76. [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 **23<sup>rd</sup> 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.

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**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.

**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

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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.

### 77. 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 **23<sup>rd</sup> 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.

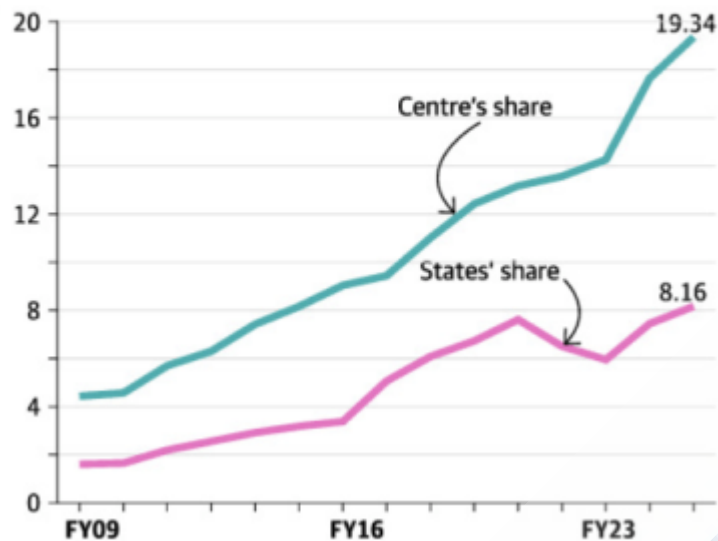
What is the reason for the poor financial health of States’?

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

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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

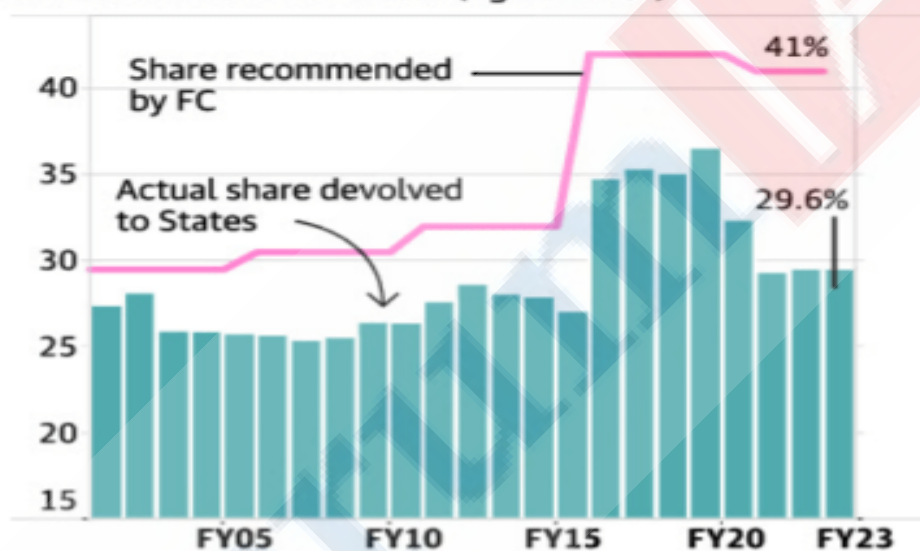


Aggregate expenditure incurred



**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).

78. [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 **23<sup>rd</sup> 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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79. [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 **23<sup>rd</sup> 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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### 80. [The New Drugs Bill](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article “**The New Drugs Bill**” published in **The Business Standard** on **22<sup>nd</sup> 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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81. [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 **24<sup>th</sup> 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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82. [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 **24<sup>th</sup> 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.

### 83. [Reinvigorating the Chabahar port](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article **“Reinvigorating the Chabahar port”** published in **The Hindu** on **24<sup>th</sup> 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.



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### 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.

### 84. [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 **24<sup>th</sup> 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 75<sup>th</sup> 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”**.

### 85. [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 24<sup>th</sup> August 2022.

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

**News:** This 75<sup>th</sup> 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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### 86. Dolo, Docs & Pharma

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

### 87. [Right About Rights](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article **“Right about rights”** published in **The Times of India** on 24<sup>th</sup> 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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### 88. [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 **25<sup>th</sup> 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.

### 89. [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.”**

### 90. [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 **25<sup>th</sup> 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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91. [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 **26<sup>th</sup> 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](#)

### 92. [Rainbow of Hope](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article “**Rainbow of Hope**” published in **The Hindu** on **26<sup>th</sup> 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.

### 93. [The simple truth](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article “**The simple truth**” published in **The Times of India** on **26<sup>th</sup> 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.

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

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.

### 94. [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 **26<sup>th</sup> 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.



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### 95. [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 **26<sup>th</sup> 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**.

### 96. [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 **26<sup>th</sup> 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.

### 97. [Murder in the Sewer](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article “**Murder in the Sewer**” published in **The Hindu** on **27<sup>th</sup> 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.

### 98. [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 **27<sup>th</sup> 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 9<sup>th</sup> 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.

### 99. 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 **27<sup>th</sup> 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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### 100. [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 **27<sup>th</sup> 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.

### 1. [PIN code @50 years](#)

**Source:** This post is based on the article “**PIN code @50 years**” published in **The Hindu** on **29<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

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**Syllabus:** GS 2 – e-governance applications, models, successes, limitations, and potential.

**Relevance:** About the achievements of the postal code.

**News:** India Post introduced a six-digit Postal Index Number (PIN) code on August 15, 1972. The idea was to give a unique identity to all physical addresses of the country in terms of the delivery jurisdiction of the post offices.

It is time to analyse the system's progress in achieving its purpose in the last 50 years.

Postal code in other countries

The postal code is known differently in different countries. For example, postcode, zip code, etc. It is an alpha-numeric or numeric number that is included in the postal address for easy identification of the sorting district and the addressee's delivery post office.

The codes were introduced nationwide in Germany in the year 1944, Singapore (1950), Argentina (1958), the U.S. (1963), Switzerland (1964), India (1972), and the U.K. (1974).

The [Universal Postal Union](#) says that 160 countries of the world have so far introduced postal codes.

Postal code in India

**Must read:** [Explained: History of the PIN code, which turns 50 this Independence Day](#)

The PIN code helps in taking a piece of mail to the addressee's post office. The delivery jurisdiction of the post office is normally divided into beats and there is a postman assigned to each beat.

What are the advantages of the postal code?

**a)** The postal code **revolutionised the system of manual postal sorting** as the sorters are not required to keep in memory the locations of thousands of post offices.

**b)** PIN-coded mails in India started improving after the introduction of **computerised billing by utility service** providers and the launching of KYC norms by banks, where providing complete and accurate addresses is mandatory.

**c)** Though the code was originally designed to help postal operations, today it is **used by couriers, e-commerce players and various other service providers** as a means of locational identification of a person.

What are the concerns surrounding the postal code?

The government made efforts to educate the citizens to write the PIN code of the addressee in the mail. Even after five decades, **a) a substantial volume of mail in India is not PIN-coded, b) beat sorting** at the post office is **done manually** in India.

The code may not be operationally relevant in the new role of a post office. This includes, **1) Personal mail has almost vanished** after the revolution of mobile telephony in the last two decades, **2) The postal system at present transport only documents and e-commerce parcels, but it is facing stiff competition from couriers.**

What should be done to improve the postal code system?

**Integrating the beat code with the six-digit PIN code:** This can facilitate the PIN code not only identifying the addressee's post office but also the concerned beat.

**Improve connectivity with postman:** The post office makes the mobile number of the delivery person of the beat available. This can facilitate citizens to leave instructions regarding their convenience in taking delivery.

**The utilisation of machines:** The letter sorting machines, flat sorting machines (handling packets) and parcel sorting machines have a tremendous capacity for sorting in a day. This has to be utilised effectively.

**Centralise the parcel delivery centres and mechanise the beats:** The logistic system associated with the e-commerce parcels is intrinsically different from that of handling personal



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mails. The postman does not need a vehicle for delivery of fewer e-commerce parcels. This should be done with centralised parcel delivery centres.

### 2. [The concerns around Aadhaar-Voter ID linkage](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article “**The concerns around Aadhaar-Voter ID linkage**” published in “**The Hindu**” on **29<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** **GS 2 Important Provisions of the Constitution of India**

**Relevance:** Right to Privacy; Aadhaar-Voter ID linkage

**News:** Recently, the Election Commission (EC) has been organizing a campaign to promote the linkage of Voter ID and Aadhaar. As a result, the block level officers (BLOs) have been asking individuals to link their Aadhaar with their Voter IDs, failing which their Voter IDs could be cancelled.

#### **Is the Aadhaar-Voter ID linkage mandatory?**

**Section 23(4) of the Representation of the People Act, 1950** which was inserted through the **Election Laws (Amendment) Act, 2021** requires the citizens already enrolled, to furnish their Aadhaar numbers.

**Rule 26B**, added to the **Registration of Electors Rules, 1960** requires “every person whose name is listed in the roll to voluntarily intimate his Aadhaar number to the registration officer”. However, **Form 6B** issued under the new Rule 26B does not give the impression of voluntariness in linkage. It mandates that the voter should either submit their Aadhaar number or any other listed document if the voter is “**not able to furnish their Aadhaar number because they do not have an Aadhaar number**”.

#### **Why do state and private sectors use Aadhaar for verification and authentication?**

First, at the end of 2021, 99.7% of the adult Indian population had an Aadhaar card. This coverage exceeds that of any other officially valid document such as a driver’s licence, ration cards, PAN cards etc.

Second, Aadhaar allows for **biometric authentication**. Therefore, Aadhaar-based authentication and verification is considered more reliable, quicker and cost-efficient when compared to other IDs.

#### **What are the benefits and concerns associated with the Aadhaar-Voter ID linkage?**

**Read here:** [‘Forcible’ Aadhaar-voter ID linking](#)

#### **Why mandatory Aadhaar-Voter ID linkage is an issue?**

As per the **Puttaswamy judgment**, the Court observed that the mandatory linking of Aadhaar with bank accounts fell afoul of **the test of proportionality**, as it deprived a person of their **right to property** for non-linkage.

In **Lal Babu Hussein** (1995), the SC had held that the Right to vote cannot be disallowed by insisting only on **four proofs of identity**, i.e., voters can rely on any other proof of identity and obtain the right to vote.

#### **What are the operational difficulties in Aadhaar-Voter ID linkage?**

First, the preference to Aadhaar for the purposes of determining voters is puzzling as Aadhaar is only a proof of residence and not a proof of citizenship.

Second, as per the Unique Identification Authority of India in 2018, Aadhaar based biometric authentication had a 12% error rate.

Third, linking of the two databases of electoral rolls and Aadhaar could lead to the linkage of Aadhaar’s “**demographic**” information with voter ID information. Therefore, it can lead to some

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sort of **state surveillance** and violation of the right to privacy. Therefore, any other officially valid document should be used to verify or authenticate the identity of the voter in India.

### What should be done?

There should be a **data protection law** that pacifies concerns about the unauthorised processing of personal data held by the government.

In the meantime, the government should clarify by making a correction in Form 6B that the linking is not mandatory.

**Read more:** [Keep it simple: On Aadhaar-voter ID linking](#)

### 3. [Clean and clear: Government, Twitter must reassure the public that user data has not been compromised](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article “**Clean and Clear: Government, Twitter must reassure the public that user data has not been compromised**” published in “**The Hindu**” on **29<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 2 Significant Provisions and Basic Structure.

**Relevance:** Fundamental Rights of the Citizens

**News:** Last Month, the whistle-blower Peiter ‘Mudge’ Zatko, a cybersecurity expert, disclosed to the U.S. government agencies and congressional committees that there were deficiencies in the working of Twitter.

#### What is the relevance of this Whistleblowing for India?

In this **whistle-blower’s disclosure**, it has come to the notice that the Indian government forced Twitter to hire a specific individual(s) who were government agents. Due to Twitter’s basic architectural flaws, they got access to the platform’s user data and vast amounts of Twitter’s sensitive data.

However, it is not clear whether the agent referred here is the **grievance officer** that **social media networks** operating in India are required to recruit, as per the **new laws** framed in 2021.

#### How this will impact free speech?

In recent years, the Government of India has been part of efforts to block its critics on social platforms. Therefore, unfettered access to sensitive user data on the social media platform can kill free speech.

#### What should be done?

The Government of India as well as Twitter must come up with an official response to the recent disclosure.

Further, the Government of India should also assure everyone that it is indeed batting for the individual’s rights of free speech and privacy.

### 4. [Privacy Protection has been far too long to wait](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article “**Privacy Protection has been far too long to wait**” published in **The Live Mint** on **29<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 2 – Fundamental Rights

**Relevance:** Privacy and issues associated with it

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**News:** This article discusses the issues associated with the facial recognition system and the efforts taken by the Supreme Court to address privacy issues.

The Internet Freedom Foundation filed a series of Right To Information (RTI) appeals to ask for details on facial recognition technology being used in our public spaces.

The reply to RTI shows that 124 such systems are currently in use across India. Many such closed-circuit cameras are deployed at airports, railway stations, and public thoroughfares.

### **What are the issues with Facial Recognition Technology and similar systems?**

This facial recognition is being done in the absence of data protection laws.

The consent of citizens is also not taken before using this system.

All around the world, there is discomfort over the use of facial recognition system because it is unreliable and there is a threat of misuse of this system.

Some cities in the US have banned its use, and there are similar demands in the EU.

It is against the SC ruling in the **Puttaswamy case**, which upheld the right to privacy as a fundamental right.

### **What are the other similar concerns?**

A recent circular issued by the Unique Identification Authority of India has created confusion among the public. The circular recommended citizens to not give out photocopies of Aadhar cards.

SC panel report on the use of Pegasus spyware by the Government was kept private and remained inconclusive. There was also a lack of clarity over allegations of military-grade spyware used against Indian journalists, politicians, judges, etc.

The lawmakers in India are letting people as well Constitution down by not putting invasive surveillance tech to the test of our right to privacy.

## 5. [A neglected contributor to the country's crisis of public health](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article **"A neglected contributor to the country's crisis of public health"** published in **The Live Mint** on **29<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 2 – Issues related to health

**News:** This article discusses the reasons and concerns associated with malnutrition in India and poor public health services.

### **What are the reasons behind the high rates of child malnutrition in India?**

The study of recent research has found that it is not poverty but the low social status of women that was responsible for India's poor record on nutrition.

Studies have highlighted that gender equality plays a significant role in tackling malnutrition.

### **Why has India failed to improve the basic social and well-being indicators of its population?**

#### **Caste system**

The **dual principles of purity and pollution of caste** have very serious implications on public sanitation. A certain caste excluded from society is considered ritually impure, and they are forced into sanitation work.

Therefore, even the most progressive and scientific-minded individuals who are socialized in caste do not define existing manual scavenging in our society as their enemy.

However, due to the lack of mutual trust and fellowship in society, the caste system affects the elite classes also. The elite classes cannot help themselves in bringing sanitation revolution and eliminating communicable diseases, getting open spaces, clean air, etc.

The covid pandemic also made a realization to the elite classes it is impossible to completely insulate themselves from the larger society.

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### Gender inequality

B.R. Ambedkar argued that control over women was central to maintaining caste purity. Even today, women have limited control over decisions regarding their choices in marriage or childbirth.

Violence against women has taken various forms. Honor killings are equally associated with caste/clan as they are associated with gender.

India has one of the lowest female labor force participation rates in the world. The New York City Board of Health declared racism a 'public health crisis, and India stands in a similar situation.

### 6. [Shambuka to Indra Meghwal, inequality hurts it all](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article "Shambuka to Indra Meghwal, inequality hurts it all" published in **The Indian Express** on **30<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 2

**Relevance:** Inequality and concerns associated with it

**News:** This article discusses about the issues associated with the caste system in India.

**What are the problems associated with Caste system?**

Even today, caste determines a person's occupation. It makes the Labour an obligation, instead of a choice.

The work is divided on the basis of caste. A caste is often associated with a particular kind of work. Low castes mostly do low profile work.

This segregation stands in the way of creating holistic knowledge. It prevents knowledge creation and kills imagination and innovation.

The monetary value of labour is determined by the caste of the labourer and not on the social need for labour.

Caste discrimination makes our democracy full of problems.

B.R. Ambedkar rightly stated "political democracy has been achieved by the freedom struggle and take over from the British, but social democracy is far away"

### 7. [Online gaming needs a synchronized policy framework](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article "Online gaming needs a synchronized policy framework" published in **The Live Mint** on **30<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

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

**Relevance:** benefits and challenges associated with online gaming

**News:** This article discusses the issues associated the online gaming and its economic benefit to India.

**What is the current situation of online gaming in India?**

- 1) This industry is valued at about \$2 billion currently and is expected to reach \$5 billion by 2025.
- 2) Foreign investors have invested more than \$1.6 billion in just the last 18 months.
- 3) Industry estimates suggest that the industry provides 50,000 jobs directly and many more jobs indirectly.
- 4) The Union ministry of electronics and information technology has been holding consultations to bring in positive and comprehensive regulations for online gaming.
- 5) Our Prime Minister called for making games in India and gave slogan of 'Create in India' and 'Brand India'.



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### **What are the problems associated with online gaming?**

Indian online gaming firms are facing difficult problems, like

First, the group of ministers (GoM) suggested a crippling goods and services (GST) regime on casinos, horse racing and online gaming.

The GST structure is such that players will pay GST not only for the service provided to them but also for their own money that goes into creating prize pools.

Reports suggest that this situation has arisen as the GoM may have equated games of skill with gambling for taxation purposes.

### **What is the difference between online gaming and gambling?**

Supreme Court and various high courts have held that games that have a **predominance of skill** involved in their outcomes are classified as games of skill, while games based on the **predominance of chance** are gambling.

Online games of skill are protected under the Constitution while gambling is outlawed in most states.

To avoid such confusion, the central government has thought to bring uniform regulations for online gaming.

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

This industry needs a rational and synchronized framework under which our tax policy is consistent with a positive vision for online gaming.

There must be a convergence of government policies across domains to support and incubate any new and innovative industry.

## 8. [The return of the Nuclear Weapons on the global platform](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article “The return of the Nuclear Weapons on the global platform” published in **The Indian Express** on **30<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 2 – India’s Nuclear policy

**Relevance:** Nuclear Energy and its implications on India.

**News:** The article discusses the changing scenario of the global nuclear order and its implications on India.

An international conference to review the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty concluded at the United Nations in New York last week. There was no consensus on the treaty.

### **History of the development of Nuclear Program in India**

One of the immediate consequences of the Cold War was that the US attempted to reduce the influence of India’s nuclear and missile programmes.

India conducted a **nuclear test in May 1998** and tried to manage the global consequences of the test.

The **India-US civil nuclear initiative of July 2005** finally produced a framework that brought to an end to India’s extended conflict with the NPT system.

The completion of India-US nuclear deal a few years later **gave India the freedom to develop its nuclear arsenal and resume civilian nuclear cooperation** with the rest of the world.

It was blocked since India’s first nuclear test in May 1974.

Today, India’s independent foreign policy appears to be growing as it has not bought a single reactor from the US nor has it become a much feared “junior partner” to the US.

**What are new challenges being faced by the global nuclear order after the failure of the Tenth Review Conference?**

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**First**, it is the deepening divide between America and Russia which are the main sponsors of NPT. Even at the height of the Cold War there was always one major area of cooperation between the US and the Soviet Union, strong support for the NPT.

The Ninth Review conference in 2015 was ended without an agreement. It was because of major differences over establishing a Middle East zone free of weapons of mass destruction.

**Second**, the non-nuclear state parties usually complained about the lack of progress in implementing the disarmament provisions of the NPT.

The major powers now put greater emphasis on the strategic utility of nuclear weapons rather than reducing their number.

**Third**, the invasion of a non-nuclear weapon state (Ukraine) by a nuclear weapon power (Russia) has generated a whole series of new questions.

- There are real fears that China might decide to show its nuclear power while seizing the territory of its neighbours.
- America's Asian allies worry about the US's ability to reinforce the "nuclear umbrella".

**Fourth**, China's political campaign against the AUKUS arrangement has found some importance in South East Asia. China argued that the AUKUS agreement violates the provisions of the NPT.

- China continued with the campaign against the AUKUS even though the NPT permits non-nuclear states to develop nuclear naval propulsion.
- Indonesia and Malaysia also raised concerns about the implications of the AUKUS deal for the NPT.

**Fifth**, nuclear power is coming back into the consideration around the world amidst the growing challenge of climate change.

- A draft noted that nuclear technologies can contribute to addressing climate change, mitigating and adapting to its consequences, and monitoring its impact.
- A group of 12 countries emphasised the importance of nuclear power in meeting the Sustainable Development Goals set by the UN.

### **What kind of implications does the unfolding global nuclear discourse present for India?**

India must find ways to end the current halt in its civilian nuclear power generation. India commissioned Asia's first nuclear power station more than 50 years ago is stuck today with a total generating capacity of barely 7,000 MW.

India's historic civil nuclear initiative was meant to open up international collaboration to boost the production of atomic electric power.

Civil Nuclear Liability Act, 2010 has made impossible for private players whether internal or external to contribute to the India's nuclear program.

The law needs to be revisited as it is of urgent need for India's strategy to rapidly raise the contribution of nuclear power to India's energy.

### 9. [Curing the patriarchal mindset of the legal system](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article "**Curing the patriarchal mindset of the legal system**" published in the "**The Hindu**" on **30<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

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

**News:** Recently, The Kerala High Court stayed the order of the sessions court in Kerala in a case of alleged sexual harassment.

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### Observations of the Session Court

The Session court granted **anticipatory bail** to an accused in a case of alleged sexual harassment. The court observed that **Section 354A of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) would not be used** for the offense, as the *de facto* complainant was **dressed in sexually provocative dresses**.

**Section 354A of the IPC covers the offenses;** “Assault or criminal force to woman with intent to outrage her modesty”

### What are the major issues in the observations made by the session court?

As per the **author Faisal C.K., Under Secretary (Law) Kerala government**, the following are the issues with the observations:

(1) The Sessions Court’s **ratio decidendi** (reason) is a **reflection of the patriarchal mindset**. Therefore, the observation violates a woman’s constitutional right to dignity, life and personal liberty, and privacy.

(2) The Sessions court judge’s comment is a **violation of the guideline given by the Supreme Court**. The Supreme Court in **Aparna Bhat vs The State Of Madhya Pradesh (2021)** held that “the use of reasoning/language which diminishes the offense and tends to trivialize the survivor [in gender violence cases] is especially to be avoided under all circumstances.”

(3) Further, these **reasons cannot be ground for granting bail** or other such relief to the accused person.

(4) The award-winning author, Githa Hariharan, points out that **It is not easy for women to approach the court**. The process is hard for women. It is even harder when women do not have financial or emotional support from their family, custom, or the present reading of the law.

(5) Further, the **representation of women in the Indian judiciary** too is poor. Since the inception of the Supreme Court in 1950, the apex court has seen only 11 women judges.

### What should be the course of action?

There should be the inclusion of **feminist jurisprudence** in the curriculum for law students. This would act as a remedial measure to cure the **patriarchal mindset** of the socio-legal system. This is because the feminist philosophy of law identifies the pervasive influence of patriarchal norms on legal structures and demonstrates their effects on the material conditions of women. Further, these are aimed to introduce reforms to correct gender injustice, exploitation, or restriction.

There should be **sensitization of legal practitioners and judicial officers** about feminist jurisprudence.

In a liberal democratic state, the choice of dress is a **‘self-regarding act’** over which the individual’s will is sovereign. It is an integral part of an **individual’s freedom of privacy and dignity**. Therefore, a person’s dress or the dressing style of a woman cannot be a license to outrage her modesty.

There should be the **inclusion of more and more women at all levels of the judiciary** to ensure that the decision-making process is more responsive, inclusive, and participatory at all levels.

### 10. [The Real Crime](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article **“The Real Crime”** published in **The Times of India** on 30<sup>th</sup> August 2022.

**Syllabus:** GS 2 Functioning of the Indian Judiciary; Social Justice etc.

**News:** Recently, the National Crime Record Bureau (NCRB) released its latest Crime in India report for 2021 which provides the dismal story of justice delivery in India.

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From 2020 to 2021, kidnapping and abduction cases increased by 20% and crimes against women, children, and senior citizens increased by 15%, 16%, and 5% respectively.

### **What are the issues in India's criminal justice system?**

A rise in serious crimes hasn't been accompanied by proportionate systemic upgrades.

Nearly **20% of sanctioned policing posts are vacant**, according to the Bureau of Police Research and Development.

The **conviction rates are very poor** in murder, sexual offenses, rioting, and kidnapping. For example, the conviction rate is just 28% in rape and 42% in murder cases.

There is **high pendency of cases** at the level of the judiciary. More no. cases come to the court than disposed-off by the courts during the year. For example, violation of Covid-related social distancing norms prompted a deluge of such cases. Courts disposed of 4 lakh cases in 2020 and 2021, but another 5lakh are pending trial.

### **What should be the course of action?**

As per statistical analysis, there is a need for more and better-trained police and judges.

Governments must withdraw all those cases which are not very serious and important at present, like covid-related cases, thousands of cases relating to possession of small amounts of marijuana, etc.

The process of **prosecution** and **investigation** of offenses should be reformed. Further, the government must undertake efforts like a serious review of criminal codes.

### 11. Towards the centenary of Independence

**Source:** The post is based on an article "**Towards the centenary of Independence**" published in the **Business Standard** on **30<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 2 Important Provisions of the Constitution of India

**News:** The prime minister in his Independence Day speech spoke about the priorities for the next 25 years leading up to the centenary of independence.

**Five things focussed:** an India (1) that becomes a developed country, (2) that is free of a colonial mindset, (3) that is proud of its heritage, (4) that is united and integrated, and (5) whose citizens place duty above rights.

### **What are the challenges to the achievement of the above-mentioned focus areas?**

(1) The PM's five-point priorities for the next 25 years, do not focus on **nurturing democracy**, or on **social harmony** and **respect for diversity of religion and language** prevalent in India.

(2) Some surveys showed India's democracy is considered to be in danger. This is being considered not just by outside observers, but also by India's population, as depicted by some surveys.

(3) According to the latest report of the **Varieties of Democracy Project**, which rates democracies in the 0 to 1 range, India's performance has dropped from 0.67 or higher from 1990 to 2013 to 0.41-0.44 in 2020 and 2021. The index registered a sharp dip to 0.40 between 1975 and 1976, because of the Emergency.

(4) As per some experts, India has moved from a vibrant democracy, which refers to a greater restraint in the use of police powers particularly against political opponents, to an **electoral autocracy**.

### **What should be other focus areas in the next 25 years?**

(1) India has huge social diversity. This social diversity underlies the **wide variety of cultures** that is hosted by India. Therefore, the Union government policies must respect this **social and cultural diversity**.



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(2) The Central and state governments work to strengthen our democracy like opposition parties must not be threatened with police power, etc. This vibrant democracy would support social harmony.

(3) Every Indian should not only respect but also take **pride** in the **diversity of Indian society** in terms of the variety of languages, religions, religious practices, and social norms.

(4) The government **should focus on the prevalent economic diversity** across India. For instance, Kerala has plantation agriculture, the northeast has different agriculture, and Punjab and Haryana have different. Therefore, all of these areas cannot have the same policies for agricultural marketing.

(5) The government must close the **growing gap in per capita income** between the states. For example, in 2019-20, the per capita income in the north-western, southern, and western states was 2.6 times larger than in the northern, central, and eastern states. This has happened because a large proportion of the fruits of liberalization have accrued to the western, southern, and north-western states.

(6) The **employment generation** should also be **another key priority** because close to 90% of the increase in the number of people of the working age in the next 25 years will take place in the populous northern states. There should be a focus on **human resource development**, particularly in the **slow growth states**. This can be done with a focus on the quality of education and health care.

(7) India should take advantage of the **changing trends of globalization, technology development, a promising environment for small start-ups**, and so on. These are far more important to attain than attaining the status of a developed country or gross domestic product growth targets.

### [12. The many ways of helping Sri Lanka](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article **“The many ways of helping Sri Lanka”** published in the **“The Hindu”** on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2022.

**Syllabus:** GS 2 International Relations, Bilateral Relations

**Relevance:** India-Sri Lanka Relations

**News:** Recently, Sri Lanka’s economy has been hit by one of the worst economic crises in its history. In this context, India has tried to help out Sri Lanka in a number of ways

**India’s Assistance so far and Sri Lanka’s Public Perception of India’s response to the country’s economic crisis**

Till now, the Indian government has provided assistance of nearly \$4 billion to its neighbor. The support is greatly valued by the various sections of Sri Lankan society like

(1) A Sinhalese farmer said that he has received a normal yield this time thanks to “the supply of chemical fertilizers from India.”

(2) A veteran Sri Lankan government official pointed out that even **“certain fringe groups,”** which are widely known for their **anti-India rhetoric**, have stayed silent when the rest of Sri Lankan society was “tremendously appreciative” of what India did.

**Scope of more engagement**

(1) In Sri Lanka, agriculture and allied activities are the priority areas where India can make a difference.

(a) In Sri Lanka, a considerable quantity of milk powder, dairy products, and other such products are imported. India’s **National Dairy Development Board of India** can help Sri Lanka in

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attaining **self-sufficiency** in dairy production. This would help it to save precious foreign exchange.

(b) Likewise, the poultry sector, which is also in a state of crisis, deserves special treatment. In this, India can help with veterinary medicines, and domestic production of maize used as feed. In this area, Indian agricultural universities can share their knowledge to increase both production and productivity.

(c) Further, agricultural machinery is another area where Sri Lanka needs a helping hand.

(2) Sri Lanka has faced problems on the energy front, which exploded into a major political crisis. Therefore, India's participation in energy projects will be desirable.

(3) Sri Lanka's Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) have not achieved their potential for various reasons, one of which is the low adoption of technology, among others. India can help through its programs like the '**Digital MSME**' and '**RAMP**' (Raising and Accelerating MSME Performance) which can provide leads to the MSME sector.

(4) India can establish **smart classrooms and modern computer labs** in Tamilian areas. Indian universities can set up satellite campuses in Sri Lanka and so on.

(5) **On the cultural front**, India can arrange for greater numbers of Buddhist monks to visit places of religious importance here.

(6) The Indian government could extend liberal loans, share **technical expertise** or **knowledge**, as well as help Sri Lankans upgrade their skills in different areas of economic activity.

### **What should be the future course of action?**

India must ensure that the proposed development program is equitably distributed in coverage. For example, **The Northern** and **Eastern Provinces**, where the Tamil and Muslim ethnic minorities live, and which were badly hit by the civil war, should be more focused on.

Sri Lanka's **political class** and **civil society** should facilitate the success of the program. They should prevent the anti-India rhetoric of a few groups, which may go against these programs.

### 13. [Drop the phone checking, draft surveillance curbing orders](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article "**Drop the phone checking, draft surveillance curbing orders**" published in the "**The Hindu**" on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2022.

**Syllabus:** GS 2 Important Provisions of the Constitution of India; GS 3 Indian Security

**Relevance:** Surveillance and Intelligence Reforms in India

**News:** Recently, the Supreme Court has looked into the findings of the apex court-appointed committee which probed into the allegations raised in the Pegasus Case.

There are allegations that the personal communication devices of a range of people in India, including journalists, civil society activists, and politicians, were targeted illegally using Israeli-made spyware.

#### **Surveillance-related issues in India**

There are allegations that the Centre and the States operate like a **police state** when it comes to surveillance. Further, there are allegations that the corporate houses are also involved in surveillance or snooping on activists and competitors at will and collect huge dossiers on "persons of interest".

There is a **lack of checks and balances** in the legal framework related to surveillance and intelligence gathering in India. For example, the law allows police officers to authorize interception (rather than the Court).

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Various technologies are being used in India for surveillance. For example, **facial recognition technology** (like “**PacketShaper software**”). Surveillance software called “**FinFisher**” has also been used by law enforcement and intelligence agencies.

The UN General Assembly “**Report of the Special Rapporteur**” 2013 mentioned that the Indian Government will install a **centralized monitoring system**. It will route all communications to the central security agencies. This was meant to bypass the service provider and also to take surveillance out of the realm of **judicial authorization**. It will also eliminate the accountability on the part of the Central government.

In 2013, *The Guardian* placed India at 5th rank among countries where the largest amount of intelligence was gathered. For instance, the Delhi police issued a tender inviting a technology company to supply Internet monitoring equipment in 2014.

In 2018, the **Justice B.N. Srikrishna Committee** submitted a report to the Government which said that much intelligence gathering in India does not happen under the remit of the law. Further, there is **little meaningful oversight** over surveillance in India.

### **What are the issues with state surveillance?**

As per the **European Court of Human Rights**, “a **secret surveillance system** can undermine or even destroy democracy under the cloak of defending it”.

### **International legal regime for surveillance -Check and Balances**

In 1978, the US Congress enacted the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA). Consequently, **the United States Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court** was established.

In 1986, the Wiretap Act was enacted in the US to prohibit private agencies from engaging in surveillance. Further, the government must apply to a Federal Court to seek permission to do surveillance.

The **Patriot Act 2001 (or Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism Act of 2001)** was enacted to counter international terrorism in the US. The act required **court approval**.

The **New South Wales Law Reform Commission, 2005** established the office of the privacy commissioner. The office had dedicated inspectors to investigate complaints.

The United Nations contributed to the development of a legal framework evolving the “**no secret**” rules. The governments cannot do surveillance only in the name of the “**national interest**”.

As per the **Venice Commission Report, 2015**, independent control and oversight are necessary over the executive, parliamentary oversight, judicial review, and oversight of expert bodies.

The **UN Good Practices on Oversight Institutions** requires the setting up of a civilian, independent institution that can carry out an investigation and have unhindered access to information. Further, individuals are empowered to complain to a court.

### 14. [Focus on nutrition: PM's appeal in 'Mann Ki Baat](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article “Focus on nutrition: PM's appeal in 'Mann Ki Baat'” published in **The Business Standard** on **31st August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 2

**Context:** This article discusses the issues associated with malnutrition and its mitigation strategies.

Prime Minister has recently pleaded to make malnutrition eradication a people's movement. He stressed on the use of technology for creating awareness

**What steps have been taken by the government to address malnutrition?**

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India has made noticeable progress in alleviating starvation but malnutrition is still prevalent. It is evident from the high occurrence of anemia and obesity.

The government has also made some sensible moves to utilize anganwadis for this purpose by equipping them with mobile devices and extending their services to adolescent girls.

### **What are the reasons for existing malnutrition?**

The country's **vast public-distribution network has failed** to deliver to its potential.

Its focus is on **supplying primarily the belly-filling cereals** rather than the whole range of food items to take care of the nutritional needs.

Another cause of malnutrition is **consumption of cheaper cereals** rather than the nutritious coarse grains like millets.

### **What are the findings of the UN report?**

The United Nations (UN) report titled "State of Food Security and Nutrition 2022" has indicated that:

Even though the number of undernourished people in India has declined, the number of anaemic children and women including overweight people is still high.

The Fifth National Family Health Survey had shown that over half the children and women were anaemic. The incidence of obesity was on the rise among both men and women.

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

The prime minister stressed on increasing the consumption of millets.

A recent study points out that regular consumption of millets can improve hemoglobin levels and reduce anemia-causing iron deficiency.

The ultimate objective should be to make millet products part of the modern food platters to combat malnutrition in a cost-effective manner.

### 15. Is Devas Ruling A Pyrrhic Win?

**Source:** The post is based on an article "Is Devas Ruling A Pyrrhic Win?" published in **The Times of India** on **31<sup>st</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 2 – International issues

**Context:** The articles discuss the issues related to arbitration awards and various steps taken by the government.

### **What is the history associated with Devas arbitration award?**

Antrix Corporation and Devas Multimedia entered into a transaction for leasing of S-Band spectrum in 2005, and which came to be cancelled by Antrix following the "2G scam".

Devas sued and secured an award in an India seated ICC arbitration (domestic award) of over Rs 10,000 crore.

CBI initiated an investigation into the transaction and filed an FIR alleging that the transaction has been made to defraud the state of its resources.

Antrix filed a petition before the National Company Law Tribunal for winding up of Devas on grounds of fraud.

This petition was filed with the authorisation of GoI. The petition was allowed and upheld by the apex court. SC said the entire transaction was in conflict with the public policy of any country.

### **What steps have been taken by Delhi High Court?**

Delhi HC has set aside the ICC award.

It will lead to an automatic stop on all seizure orders passed by foreign courts in pursuance of enforcement proceedings initiated by Devas.



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However, Devas shareholders initiated another BIT arbitration against GoI, which is yet to be concluded.

Thus, setting aside the ICC will not be sufficient. The BIT awards were passed in separate and independent proceedings, and are not automatically void by the setting aside of the ICC award.

### **What lies ahead?**

The seizure proceedings in enforcement of two Bilateral Investment Treaty (BIT) awards may not become void like ICC award.

A BIT is a reciprocal sovereign-to-sovereign guarantee that protects investors and investments of one country in the territory of the other.

Devas's shareholders may allege that setting aside of the ICC award will deprive them of their rights to the money.

GoI can argue that the outcome of a judicial proceeding is not same as to state action and therefore it is not acceptable to treaty arbitration.

It will also lead to India's image of going against treaty claims.

India's reluctance to return to negotiation in the matter also negates the positive steps the present dispensation had taken in settling the retrospective taxation disputes with Cairn and others.

### 16. [Kendriya Vidyalayas: It has long been clear that the state can run schools well](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article **"It has long been clear that the state can run schools well"** published in the **Livemint** on **1<sup>st</sup> September 2022**.

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

**Relevance:** About the success of Kendriya Vidyalayas (KVs)

**News:** There are 1,252 Central Schools or Kendriya Vidyalayas with over 1.4 million students. Despite the more expensive private schools, KVs are regarded as good schools.

About Kendriya Vidyalayas

Kendriya Vidyalayas (KVs) were set up in 1963. They ensured that the children of Union government employees, such as the armed forces, Indian Administrative Service and police officers, among others, had good schools available to them even if their parents were transferred across the country.

What is the performance of Kendriya Vidyalayas?

**a)** They have maintained high-quality standards and delivered on their mandate across hundreds of cities and towns, **b) Extra and co-curricular activities:** Theatre, debate, sports, picnics and a lot more usually happen outside the classrooms, **c) Diversity in classrooms:** The schools educate children of IAS and IPS officers and also Class IV employees, **d) Per student expenditure** in a KVs is two to three times that in an average state-run public school.

What are the lessons that should be learnt by Kendriya Vidyalayas?

The six decades of KVs set clear examples of how public schools can be run well. KVs are proven examples of higher capital expenditure results in better facilities. So, the government should increase public expenditure on education.

### 17. [Electricity Amendment Bill 2022: A mixed bag](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article **"Electricity Amendment Bill 2022: A mixed bag"** published in the **Indian Express** on **1<sup>st</sup> September 2022**.

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

**Relevance:** About Electricity Amendment Bill 2022

**News:** Recently, the government introduced the [Electricity Amendment Bill 2022](#) in the Lok Sabha.

What are the progressive steps mentioned in the Electricity Amendment Bill 2022?

**States revoking power purchase agreements (PPAs):** The Bill states that if PPAs are renegotiated, the affected party has to be compensated within 90 days from the date of submission of the petition.

**Applicability of new tariffs:** New tariffs often come into force in the middle of the financial year. The Bill states that new tariffs have to be made applicable from the beginning of the financial year.

**Reduction in processing time:** The Bill has proposed a reduction in the time for processing tariff petitions from 120 days to 90 days.

**Suo motu powers to regulators:** Regulatory commissions have been given suo motu jurisdiction if tariff petitions are not filed within 30 days of the stipulated time.

**A much-needed payment security mechanism:** the Bill talks about ensuring a payment security mechanism before dispatch. This will ensure that dues to generators do not swell up to unmanageable levels.

Does the Bill encroach on State's domain on power sector governance?

The Bill facilitates the Centre to give additional distribution licences in an area already serviced by a distribution company (discom). This is considered an encroachment on the state's power. But this is not because, **a)** The licence will be deemed to have been granted if the state electricity regulatory commission (SERC) does not take any action within the stipulated time. **b) Power is a Concurrent subject.**

**Read more:** [Explained: Electricity amendment bill 2021 —why are states such as WB opposing it?](#)

What are the various concerns raised by states on the Electricity Amendment Bill 2022?

**Firstly**, according to the Bill, for the applicants seeking a distribution licence in more than one state the Central Electricity Regulatory Commission (CERC), and not the SERC, will grant a licence for additional distribution.

SERC is likely to be more aware of the field-level conditions in a state than the centre.

**Secondly**, till now, the CERC received instructions from the Centre and the SERCs. But the Bill has a provision empowering the Centre to give directions directly to the SERCs. This will enable the Centre to bypass state governments.

**Thirdly**, the Bill has made a small change in the composition of the committee for the selection of Chairman/members of the SERCs. It facilitated a nominee of the central government at the level of additional secretary as the third member.

What should be done to improve the Electricity Amendment Bill 2022?

**1)** CERC and SERC agencies should consult each other while granting licences for discoms seeking licenses for more than one state. The agency that grants the licence should also administer it.

**2)** The government had declared the Railways to be a deemed distribution licensee in 2014 under the third proviso of Section 14 of the Electricity Act 2003. The exception made for the railways had led to demands for a similar licence from entities such as the metro rail and ports.

Since the railways were never transmitting, distributing or trading in electricity but were bulk consumers, they should not be qualified to be a deemed distribution licensee.

### 18. [Personal data protection: Firms need to do more](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article “**Personal data protection: Firms need to do more**” published in **The Business Standard** on **1<sup>st</sup> September 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS Paper 2 – Fundamental Rights

**Relevance:** data protection and concerns associated with it

**Context:** This article discusses the issues associated with data and the ways to tackle it.

**What is the current issue with personal data protection?**

**Lack of legislation protecting personal data** allows Indian organizations to collect data as they want, often needlessly.

The data is often sold, or monetized in other ways, and is frequently held in insecure servers.

It opens the door to **widespread misuse of data and to cybercrime, potentially targeting every Indian**.

It is also a **barrier to efforts to set up data centers** for overseas clients.

It is a serious problem and is only expected to increase in scale as more segments of the economy get digitized.

However, one of the reasons why Indian firms may not be investing enough in this area is because of a lack of regulatory compulsion.

**What provisions can be included in a data protection law?**

It should **lay down clear, broad definitions** of what constitutes private data. Those definitions should be open to review and updates as technology develops.

There must be norms that data will not be collected needlessly.

The data that is collected should be a small detail clearly stating purposes, keeping the data-owner informed and seeking his or her permission at every stage.

There should also be clear norms for the security of any data collected and stored with the collector and storage center should be held liable for breaches with huge penalties.

Victims should be in a position to easily bring class-action civil suits seeking damages in such cases.

Data-owners should also have the “right to forget”.

Once the purpose of the data has been served, the data-owner should have the option to ask for deletion.

There should be a transparent process for granting clearance to any agency to launch a data collection-cum-surveillance exercise against an individual or organisation.

### 19. [Level playing field: UGC must give Indian universities the same freedoms it's planning to give foreign universities](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article “**Level playing field: UGC must give Indian universities the same freedoms it's planning to give foreign universities**” published in **The Times of India** on **1<sup>st</sup> September 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 2 – Issues linked with education

**Relevance:** Higher education reforms

**Context:** This article discusses about the problems faced by Indian Universities compared to foreign universities.

UGC and the education ministry are reportedly finalising regulations for foreign universities' India campuses.

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The plan is to offer “near full freedom” on determining academic course structure and curriculum, faculty hiring and salaries, and even fees.

### **Why should Indian universities in India not enjoy these freedoms?**

Foreign universities are concerned with over-regulation.

However, Indian universities have to actually function under the restrictive regime.

If UGC wants to reform the system it must apply the changes to all players – domestic and foreign.

### **What are the problems associated with Indian Universities?**

Indian universities, both public and private, have to negotiate their way through a bulk of rules and regulations, framed by UGC, AICTE, NMC, BCI, state governments.

These rules apply for starting new courses, sanctioning student intake, and various academic and administrative operations.

No Western country or even China makes its education institutions subject to so many rules and regulations.

The parliamentary standing committee on education has found **UGC and other regulators to be overregulating** in their approach.

There’s a growing demand-supply gap in quality higher education.

## [20. Playing Chinese Checker: PLA’s big aim at LAC is to get India to accept China’s hegemony. We must see this & prepare](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article “**Playing Chinese Checker: PLA’s big aim at LAC is to get India to accept China’s hegemony. We must see this & prepare**” published in **The Times of India** on **1<sup>st</sup> September 2022**.

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

**Relevance:** India and China bilateral relation

**Context:** The article discusses the bilateral relation between China and India and the steps that India can take to counter China.

It has been just over two years since Galwan. Since then, India-China relations have deteriorated significantly.

### **What are the differences between Galwan and earlier clashes between China and India?**

The earlier clashes were accidental in nature but in Galwan the Chinese side has undertaken the operation in a planned, pre-determined, well thought out way.

The number of troops involved on both sides was much higher than in the earlier cases.

By bringing such large military strength to the India-China border areas, PLA has violated all preceding agreements by bringing such large military strength to the India-China border areas.

### **What were the reasons behind Galwan clash?**

There were two reasons: **tactical and strategic**.

**The tactical reason was** that China wanted to have actual control over the territory which they were claiming.

They have also been able to eliminate the situation where both armies would patrol areas of overlapping claims.

The strategic reason was that China wanted to show India, to other Asian countries and to nations across the globe that China is the most powerful nation in Asia.

### **What steps can be taken by India to counter China?**

India needs to urgently enhance defence spending especially over the next three to five years.



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India cannot accept the change in status quo in eastern Ladakh and if there is no peace on the border, the rest of the India-China relationship cannot continue.

Few steps taken by India against China are – Chinese firms were kept out of 5G trials, Chinese apps were banned and FDI rules were changed for neighbouring countries.

### **Can China disengage and de-escalate at the LAC in eastern Ladakh?**

There has been disengagement in certain sectors but not yet in all sectors of the border in Ladakh.

China has not indicated any desire to de-escalate.

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

India has to be strategically patient and build up strength.

A fast-paced GDP growth will reduce the asymmetry between India and China.

India must continue balancing Chinese power by further beefing up our strategic partnerships with Japan, France, the US, Australia and other similar countries.

### 21. About the Crime in India report: A revert to the mean

**Source:** The post is based on the article “**A revert to the mean – Increase in violent crimes, suicides in 2021 points to indirect consequences of pandemic**” published in **The Hindu** on **2<sup>nd</sup> September 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 2 – Criminal Justice System.

**Relevance:** About the recent findings of the Crime in India report.

**News:** According to the annual report, “Crime in India” released by the NCRB, the registration of violent crimes such as rape, kidnapping, atrocities against children, robberies and murders increased in 2021 to levels set before the pandemic.

**Note:** The drop in 2020 seemed to be an anomaly, either due to lowered registration or a partial decrease in occurrence as there were extensive lockdowns and office shutdowns.

What are the key findings of the recent Crime in India report?

The overall crime rate (per one lakh people) decreased from 487.8 in 2020 to 445.9 in 2021.

**Domestic violence:** “Cruelty by husband or his relatives” constituted 31.8% of crimes against women, up from 30.2% in 2020, indicating that domestic violence continued to be a major issue.

**Law enforcement was less responsive:** While violent crimes increased, the charge sheeting rate fell from 75.8% in 2020 to 72.3% in 2021, as did the conviction rate (57% from 59.2% in 2020).

**State-wise violent crime data:** Assam (76.6 violent crimes per one lakh people), Delhi (57) and West Bengal (48.7) had the highest numbers while Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu registered the lowest numbers.

**Suicide rate:** Suicide rate in the population in 2021 was 12 per one lakh people. This was the highest in the last five years. Domestic problems (33.2%) and illnesses (18.6%) were reported as the main reasons.

Most victims are daily wage earners (25.6%) and housewives (14.1%). This reveals the severity of the pandemic and its indirect consequences on people.

**Cybercrime:** These cases registered a 5.9% jump over 2020. This increase was more so in rural areas. Cyber crime in metropolitan cities (with a population of more than two million people) registered a decline of 8.3% compared to 2020. This indicates the increasing use of digital devices and the related challenges.

**Read more:** [Suicide of Businessmen: Limited liability could save some Indian lives](#)

The Government must educate people about risks in cyber activities and ensure better law enforcement to curb various crimes.

### 22. Academia, research and the glass ceiling in India

**Source:** The post is based on the article “Academia, research and the glass ceiling in India” published in **The Hindu** on **2<sup>nd</sup> September 2022**.

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

**Relevance:** About the glass ceiling of women

**News:** Gender inequality and discrimination in academia relating to higher education still persist in India.

Two well-known examples of the glass ceiling of women in pre-independence India

**Kamala Sohoni:** **Sir C.V. Raman** rejected her request for pursuing research in physics under his guidance only because she was a woman. After satyagraha, she was admitted for one year under certain conditions.

**Bibha Chowdhuri:** **Professor D.M. Bose** was reluctant to include her in his research group on the ground that he did not have suitable research projects to assign to women. After a prolonged struggle, she had been included. Her work on cosmic rays in determining the mass of mesons is legendary.

Some well-known examples of Women who broke the glass ceiling

**Donna Strickland** was awarded the Nobel Prize in Physics, for her work on lasers in 2018. She became the third woman to win a physics Nobel, after **Marie Curie** in 1903 and **Maria Goeppert Mayer** in 1963.

How glass ceiling of women impacts women’s growth in STEM?

Women are still an under-represented population globally in hardcore science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM).

#### **UNESCO findings**

According to available UNESCO data on some selected countries, India is at the lowest position, having only 14% female researchers working in STEM areas.

But India is not very far behind many advanced countries in this aspect. For example, Japan has only 16% female researchers, the United States 27% and the United Kingdom 39%.

The highest number of female researchers are in Tunisia, Africa (55%) followed by Argentina (53%) and New Zealand (52%).

#### **Education and faculty**

About 43% of women constitute the graduate population in STEM, which is one of the highest in the world. But **a)** Only 14% of women join academic institutions and universities, **b)** The total number of women fellows in the three science academies of India is 7% for the Indian Academy of Sciences (IAS); 5% for the Indian National Science Academy (INSA) and 8% for the National Academy of Sciences India (NASI) and **c)** The more prestigious the institute, the lower the number of women employees. For example, in IIT Madras only 31 out of 314 professors.

In the corporate world

Participation of women in leadership and decision-making positions in private enterprises (the corporate sector) is increasing. **a)** The number of women in senior management positions in the corporate sector in India is 39%, **b)** According to a forecast made by Deloitte, the number of female board members in the management of private enterprises have been growing from 15% (2016) to 19.7% in 2022. At this pace, near parity will be reached by 2045.

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What are the government incentives for breaking the glass ceiling of women?

Some of them are, a) [Gender Advancement for Transforming Institutions \(GATI\)](#), [Knowledge Involvement in Research Advancement through Nurturing\(KIRAN\)](#), [Vigyan Jyoti Programme](#), etc.

Some institutions are setting up crèches so that scientist mothers can carry on with their research work uninterrupted. Universities too are trying their best to be equal opportunity employers.

**Read more:** [India's innovation potential and initiatives](#)

What can the government learn from the corporate sector in breaking the glass ceiling of women?

**1) Mechanism of selection and promotion of personnel in the private sector based on competence or merit, 2) Private sector's adoption of various schemes:** Such as flexi-hour work time, rejoining the workforce after an interim break, sections operated only by women, etc. So, gender equality or parity will happen only when there is a change in mindset and institutions consider women as assets rather than simply a diversity of rectification issue.

### 23. [The NPT is beginning to look shaky](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article **"The NPT is beginning to look shaky"** published in **The Hindu** on **3<sup>rd</sup> September 2022**.

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

**Relevance:** About the present state of the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) Treaty.

**News:** Recently, the Tenth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) concluded. After four weeks of debate and discussion, the delegates failed to agree on a final document.

What is the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) Treaty?

**Read here:** [50 years of Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty\(NPT\)](#)

The NPT was negotiated during the 1960s to reconcile three competing objectives **1) Controlling** the further spread of nuclear weapons beyond the P-5 countries that had already tested; **2) Committing** to negotiating reductions of nuclear arsenals leading to their elimination; and **3) Sharing** benefits of peaceful applications of nuclear science and technology.

What are the successes of NPT?

The first objective was strongly supported by the nuclear-haves; the other two were demands made by the nuclear have-nots.

**Achievement of the non-proliferation objective:** This objective has been achieved in large measure. In the last 50 years, **only four more countries have gone on to test and develop nuclear arsenals**. These are **India, Israel, North Korea and Pakistan**.

**Note: South Africa** developed nuclear weapons, but the apartheid regime destroyed them and joined NPT in 1991.

**Non-proliferation post-1991:** After the end of the Cold War, non-proliferation remained a shared priority for the major powers and the [International Atomic Energy Agency](#), set up originally to promote international co-operation became better known as the non-proliferation watchdog.

**Read more:** [The role of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons \(NPT\) in preventing the spread of nuclear weapons](#)

What are the failures of NPT?

Progress on the other two objectives took a back seat.



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**No meaningful discussions or negotiations on nuclear disarmament** have ever taken place in the NPT framework. For instance, since 1970, when the NPT entered into force, only four of the 10 review conferences have concluded with a consensus document.

**Unity of P5 against universal condemnation:** When the nuclear have-nots suggested a universal condemnation of all threats of nuclear use, all five nuclear haves joined together to resist such moves.

**Halt in progress between US and Russia:** Arms control talks between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R./Russia did bring down their collective arsenals from a high of nearly 65,000 in the early 1980s to less than 12,000 warheads. But this process has been halted.

For example, the U.S. withdrew from the 1972 **Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty** in 2002 and from the 1987 [Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces \(INF\) Treaty in 2019](#).

The only surviving arms control treaty between Russia and the U.S. is the New START Treaty which imposes a ceiling on operational strategic nuclear weapons of 700 launchers and 1,550 warheads each. It expires in 2026 and there are no signs of any follow-on discussions.

**Rising China and associated nuclear threats:** While withdrawing from INF, the US stated that China's missile developments created new security threats that needed to be addressed. The US even invited China to join in the arms control process. But the requests were rejected. Analysts suggest that China may be on track to expand its arsenal from current levels of approximately 350 warheads to over 1,000 by 2030.

**Read more:** [Weapons of Mass Destruction \(WMDs\) and India's Stance – Explained, pointwise](#)

What is the status of other treaties on nuclear non-proliferation?

**Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW):** It is also called Ban Treaty. Frustrated by the absence of progress on nuclear disarmament, the nuclear have-nots successfully negotiated this Treaty in 2017.

All 86 signatories are nuclear have-nots and parties to the NPT. The TPNW creates a new legal instrument. But the nuclear-haves and their allies ignored the Vienna meeting.

**Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT):** It was concluded in 1996 but has yet to formally enter into force because two major powers, the U.S. and China, have yet to ratify it.

**1985 Reagan-Gorbachev declaration** states that 'a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought'. The statement remains valid. Nobody wants a breakdown of the NPT but sustaining it requires facing up to today's political realities. Without addressing the new challenges, the NPT will weaken.

### 24. [Stop the stalker: Plug legal loopholes, tell cops to adopt zero tolerance](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article "**Stop the stalker: Plug legal loopholes, tell cops to adopt zero tolerance**" published in **The Times of India** on **3<sup>rd</sup> September 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 2 – Criminal Justice System

**Relevance:** stalking and problems associated with it

**Context:** This article discusses about the problems related to stalking and police in India. Since 2013, Stalking has been a clearly defined criminal offence. However, stalking incidents are still taking place.

Recently two stalking incidents took place – one in Jharkhand where a schoolgirl was burnt to death by a young man. In another such incident, in Delhi, a schoolgirl was shot despite a complaint to the police.

**What are the issues associated with stalking?**



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The cases of stalking have increased from 1,091 in 2014 to 9,285 in 2021 and there are many cases with pending trial.

Section 345D of IPC criminalizes stalking but the problem with the law is that it is bailable.

Stalking should be made non-bailable like Sections 354 and 506 of IPC. The police should adopt zero tolerance against stalkers.

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

The police are exhausted due to the large amount of work. The ratio of police to population is also very less.

There are fewer women police compared to men police.

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# General

# Studies

# Paper – 3

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### General Studies - 3

#### 1. [India's 'wheat waiver' WTO demand is risk-fraught](#)

**Source:** This post is based on the article **“India’s ‘wheat waiver’ WTO demand is risk-fraught”** published in **The Hindu** on **1st August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 3 Effects of liberalization on the economy

**Relevance:** About the public stockholding (PSH) of food.

**News:** Recently, India demanded [World Trade Organization \(WTO\)](#) to find a permanent solution to the issue of public stockholding (PSH) of food to protect India’s food security (PSH policy).

About India’s PSH Policy and WTO rules

India’s PSH policy is based on procuring food from farmers at an administered price (minimum support price or MSP – generally higher than the market price).

The PSH policy serves the twin objectives **1) Offering remunerative prices to farmers** and **2) Providing subsidised food to the underprivileged**.

However, under WTO law, such price support-based procurement from farmers is considered as a trade-distorting subsidy. Currently, India has temporary relief due to a ‘peace clause’ that bars countries from raising legal challenges against these subsidies.

India’s concern is that WTO should have the policy space to hold public food stocks using the MSP. However, there is no mention of price support in the Geneva declaration.

**Read more:** [12th Ministerial Conference of the WTO – Explained, pointwise](#)

Can the country export public stock holding food grains?

WTO law also prohibits countries from exporting foodgrain procured at subsidised prices. This is because, **a)** Gives an unfair advantage in global agricultural trade, **b)** A country will sell foodgrain in the international market at a very low price. This will depress the global prices and have an adverse impact on the agricultural trade of other countries.

Accordingly, in paragraph 4 of the 2013 WTO decision on PSH for food security purposes, countries procuring food for food-security purposes shall ensure that such procured food does not “distort trade or adversely affect the food security of other Members”.

This is also reflected in paragraph 10 of the Geneva ministerial food security declaration. The declaration states that countries may release surplus food stocks into the international market in accordance with WTO law. The WTO may agree to a temporary waiver to allow the export of wheat from public stockholdings given the ongoing food crisis in some countries.

**Read more:** [The Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies \(Agreement\) at the WTO Ministerial meeting](#)

Status of PSH on recent WTO ministerial meeting

India’s demand for a permanent solution to the PSH policy has acquired a new dimension in the recent WTO meeting. . The Russia-Ukraine war has unleashed a food crisis in many countries.

India insists that it should also be allowed to export food, especially wheat, from the pool of foodgrain procured under the MSP.

**Read more:** [Indian interests at the WTO Ministerial Conference](#)

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What should India do to protect India's PSH policy?

**1)** India should **revisit its stand on asking for a waiver for wheat exports** from its public stockholding. To help the food crisis in other countries, India can strengthen its commitment to the United Nations World Food Programme.

**2)** India should **focus on its core agenda** of pushing for a permanent solution for its PSH programme to attain the goal of food security, **3)** India can **lift the ban imposed on private traders to export wheat**.

### 2. [Financial health of airline sector is the real cause for concern, not overblown safety issues](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article **"Financial health of airline sector is the real cause for concern, not overblown safety issues"** published in the **Indian Express** on **1<sup>st</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 3 – Infrastructure: Energy, Ports, Roads, Airports, Railways etc.

**Relevance:** To understand aviation safety in India.

**News:** The recent incidents of airlines developing technical glitches have received widespread public scrutiny, raising concerns about the safety of Indian carriers. But this is not the real problem in aviation safety.

What is the performance of Indian aircrafts on safety parameters?

As per International Air Traffic Association (IATA) records, there was only one accident in every 9.9 lakh flights in 2021 as opposed to one in every 6.3 lakh flight in 2020, globally.

India's air safety indicators are significantly ahead of the global average. In 2019, there were just 0.82 accidents per million flights as compared to the global average of 3.02.

The improvement in India's performance can be noted in the fact that accidents per million flights were 2.8 in 2014.

Why does the recent issues are not significant for aviation safety?

**Quality of human resources:** This includes the critical facets of training pilots, ground crew and engineers helped in improving India's progress.

**Minimum Equipment List (MEL):** The incidents of airlines' Minimum Equipment List (MEL) have been repeatedly highlighted for the faltering safety standards. However, simply having a MEL by an airline does not translate into a compromise of safety margins.

The categories of MELs are defined by the manufacturer and duly approved by the regulator — the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA).

**Note:** *Oversight over Indian carriers is not just maintained by the DGCA but also by the IATA and EASA.*

**The incidents of windshield fissures or crack:** An aircraft windshield comprises multiple layers and houses a heating system. The movement of aircraft can cause certain stresses which might lead to cracks in the windshield. This is a fairly common occurrence that can take place due to adverse weather conditions.

Similarly, bird hits can also occur at any time as this is not a controllable factor.



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**Read more:** [Air pocket: Show cause to SpiceJet overdue. DGCA has to be more proactive on safety](#)

What are the challenges faced while ensuring aviation safety?

**a) Robustness of aircraft maintenance:** To ensure proper maintenance an aircraft must have the requisite bandwidth and repository of spare parts. In the backdrop of the Ukraine-Russia war, titanium is in short supply.

**Note:** 60% of Titanium comes from Russia. It is a major component of aircraft spares and engines.

**b) Multiple low-cost airline operators:** These airlines attract a greater portion of the market share, and keep ticket prices low enough to attract customers while managing operations as well as staff salaries. This poses a grave challenge to the sustenance of airlines.

**c) Financial health of the sector:** Apart from spares shortage, the sector is facing shipping disruptions and high fuel prices. A huge monotony of systems in every airline makes flights expensive.

Multiple taxes further push up costs even while competition between airlines creates immense pressure on the balance sheets. All this creates a situation of high operating costs for the entire aviation industry.

**Read more:** [Safety in the sky – The DGCA should have no tolerance for laxity among airlines seeking to cut corners](#)

What should be done to improve India's aviation sector?

The regulator must seriously consider the issues regarding the shortage of spare parts owing to delayed payments to vendors. The DGCA should also take steps to improve the financial health of airlines.

### 3. [PMLA verdict, an erosion of constitutional buffers](#)

**Source:** This post is based on the article “PMLA verdict, an erosion of constitutional buffers” published in **The Hindu** on **1st August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 3 – Money-laundering and its prevention.

**Relevance:** About the issues surrounding PMLA.

**News:** The Supreme Court in **Vijay Madanlal Choudhary and Ors versus Union of India case** upheld the provisions of the [PMLA \(Prevention of Money Laundering Act\)](#).

What was the case about?

**Read here:** [Supreme Court upholds powers of arrest, raids, seizure under PMLA](#)

What are the significant provisions of PMLA?

**Read here:** [Prevention of Money Laundering Act\(PMLA\)](#)

Section 3 of the Act says, “Whosoever directly or indirectly attempts to indulge or knowingly assists or knowingly is a party or is actually involved in any process or activity connected with the proceeds of crime including its concealment, possession, acquisition or use and projecting or claiming it as untainted property shall be guilty of the offence of money-laundering.”

The term “proceeds of crime” is separately defined to mean property that is obtained out of the commission of a crime “relating to a scheduled offence”. The schedule offence contains an array

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of breaches under 30 different statutes including the Arms Act, 1959 and the Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956, etc.

**Nikesh Tarachand Shah vs Union of India case:** The court declared the classification of offences under the PMLA into two categories as unconstitutional. The Court found the classification between offences unreasonable and the conditions themselves too disproportionate.

The Parliament deleted the classification. Later the court upheld it.

What are the basic precepts of justice violated by PMLA?

Some basic precepts of justice and fairness are inherent to India's criminal justice system. These precepts are, **a)** A person is presumed innocent until proven guilty, **b)** A person detained on suspicion of having committed an offence would be entitled to bail pending trial, **c)** A criminal law ought not to be retroactive, **d)** A person accused of an offence must be informed of the charges made against him; and **e)** A suspect has a privilege against incriminating herself.

But the PMLA violated all these precepts.

**Read more:** [Narrow view – SC verdict on PMLA fails to protect personal liberty from draconian provisions](#)

What are the concerns associated with the PMLA?

**Read here:** [Supreme Court examines allegations of rampant misuse of PMLA](#)

The other concerns are,

**PMLA is not a penal statute:** The offence under the PMLA is separately prosecutable, unless the proceeds of crime related to a “scheduled offence” no case can be made out under the statute. In other words, if a person is ultimately acquitted or discharged in a case concerning the predicate offence, the charge under the PMLA can no longer be maintained.

**Violative of K.S. Puttaswamy vs Union of India case:** The recent verdict fails to protect personal liberty(Right to privacy) from draconian provisions.

**Read more:** [How Enforcement Directorate \(ED\) became so powerful?](#)

#### 4. [Sowing the 'AI' seed for intelligent farming](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article “**Sowing the 'AI' seed for intelligent farming**” published in **The Times of India** on **1<sup>st</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** **GS 3** – E-technology in the aid of farmers.

**Relevance:** Application of the Artificial Intelligence in the Agriculture Sector

**News:** The Telangana government has promoted the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in its agricultural innovation program

John McCarthy, American computer scientist, first introduced the world to the term “artificial intelligence” at the 1955 Dartmouth Conference.

#### **Why do we need AI in the agricultural sector?**

India is expected to surpass China by 2023 to become the **world's most populated country**. Therefore, there would be immense pressure to feed such a huge population base.

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According to the **Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR)**, by 2030, the demand for pulses, cereals, rice, eggs, fruits, vegetables, and milk will be more than twice, in India, of what it was in 2000. While the Demand for food grains is expected to jump by more than 85%.

According to NITI Aayog, AI has the potential to add **\$1 trillion** to India's economy by 2035. And, as per some experts and academicians, a significant amount of this would be in the agriculture sector.

### **Application of the AI in agriculture**

(1) It can help in efficient and cost-effective resource and yield management in the agricultural sector.

(2) AI, cloud computing, satellite imagery, and advanced analytics, in combination, can create an ecosystem for **smart agriculture**.

(3) It can be useful in **prediction analysis**. It will ensure the highest possible yields based on the **seasonal forecast models**. For example, it can enable farmers to extract and analyze information such as weather, temperature, water consumption, or soil conditions through data collected directly from their fields.

(4) It has the potential to address **supply-demand mismatch** in real-time. For example, a **supply-demand engine** or **predictor** that can map supply and demand can reduce this issue significantly.

(5) Artificial intelligence can help in precision farming by determining whether pesticides and weedicides should be used by detecting and targeting weeds in the identified buffer zone. This can lead to **higher yields and reduced use of** pesticides and weedicides.

(6) AI-based natural **language translation** facilitates the issuance and spread of Agri-advisories, weather forecasts, and early warnings for droughts in **multiple vernacular languages**.

(7) The use of image recognition using AI approaches for plant identification, pest infestation, and disease diagnosis is also becoming prevalent.

### **What are the challenges in the AI application to the agricultural sector?**

(1) The lack of proper infrastructure and know how, faith in conventional styles of functioning, lack of awareness and scarcity of farmer capital,

(2) The fragmentation of land could also prove to be a hurdle for **large-scale implementation** of new technologies.

### **Measures Taken for the application of AI in agriculture**

The ICAR is looking at **cyber agro-physical systems** to make Indian farming a **viable, self-sustaining, and internationally competitive enterprises**.

The NITI Aayog identifies agriculture as one of the focus areas as part of its national strategy for AI.

Several states are serious about AI in agriculture. For instance, (1) **Karnataka** has partnered with a leading MNC for agricultural produce, price-related information, and intelligence using predictive modeling, (2) Uttar Pradesh is collaborating with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF) and the Tata Trust to set up the **Indian agritech incubation network** at

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IIT-Kanpur (3) Maharashtra has launched the **Maha AgriTech project** that is aimed at utilizing and promoting the application of satellites and drones to solve various agrarian problems.

### What should be done?

It is high time that collaborative **Agri-data stacks** are created and MSME and large corporations invest in this space.

There is a need for the right mix of participation from **public** and **private institutions**. **For example**, Data coming in from the government side is not accurate, not updated frequently, and is noisy. Therefore, the private sector has incentives to make data accurate as they are making decisions based on it.

### 5. [How IAF's hero became a villain](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article “**How IAFs Hero became A Villain**” published in **The Times of India** on **1<sup>st</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 3 – Internal and External Security; Various Security Forces and their mandate

**News:** Recently, a fatal accident involving India's MiG-21 aircraft took place, which is part of the Indian Air Force (IAF) fleet.

### What are the reasons behind frequent MiG-21 aircraft crashes in India?

(1) Although India has also inducted **newer aircraft** to complement the MiG-21 fleet, it still forms the backbone of IAF. It has been part of the IAF since the 1960s. Over the next six decades, the fleet of MiG-21 has been subjected to adaptation and evolution to fill in capability gaps. **For example**, its role has shifted from a pure air defence fighter to a strike aircraft, multi-role fighter, and even as a lead-in trainer for young pilots transitioning from basic jet trainers to fighters.

(2) The use of MiG in training became a major cause of accidents. Therefore, it was tagged as the “**Flying Coffin**”. It was because MiG-21 was too big or complex for rookie pilots under training.

(3) Once the Hawk Jet Trainer was inducted in 2007, the accidents notably reduced,

### What are the reasons that MiG-21 continued to be functional in the Indian Air Force (IAF)?

(1) There have been **delays in the delivery of Light Combat Aircraft (LCA)**, and when delivered to IAF, it was with a lesser no. of specifications, than required. Thus, IAF upgraded the MiG-21s and kept the squadron numbers from plummeting.

(2) Any **modern-day air force** attempts to develop a **Hi-Lo mix** in its fighter inventory. The ‘Hi’ component refers to expensive and more capable aircraft, and the low component refers to the aircraft used to acquire the quality that lies embedded in quantity. For example, the US has the F-22/F-16, the Chinese have developed the J-20/ J-10 and Pakistan is working on the J-10/JF-17 mix.

(3) For modern-day combat, the IAF requires **Rafale** to serve **the hi-end of the spectrum**. However, even if the LCA is inducted in large numbers, IAF would still need heavier fighter aircraft to fulfill the capability.

(4) India is facing a **two-front war scenario**. Therefore, the situation necessitates larger numbers of aircraft in the IAF fleet.



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The problem of MiG crashes does not lie in MiG-21 or anything else, but it is the result of India's broken procurement process. Therefore, the policymakers must fix the procurement process.

### 6. [Using a rupee route to get around a dominating dollar](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article **“Using a rupee route to get around a dominating dollar”** published in **The Hindu** on **2<sup>nd</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 3: Indian Economy and issues relating to planning, mobilization, of resources, growth, development and employment.

**Relevance:** To understand the concept of promoting the Rupee in International Transactions.

**News:** A number of countries, including India, are now considering the use of other currencies to avoid the U.S. dollar and its hegemonic role in settling international transactions. This is due to recent geopolitical developments in the Russia-Ukraine war followed by the sanctions imposed on Russia by the West.

What are the impacts of sanctions on Russia?

The impact of sanctions on Russia includes **a)** L-shaped stagnation in GDP which has declined by 10% to 15%, **b)** de-industrialisation and unemployment leading to sharp declines in the production of steel, wood and automobiles.

**Read more:** [RBI and the rupee: To break a free fall or not to](#)

About India's past Rupee-Rubel transactions

A comprehensive bilateral trade and payments agreement was signed by India in 1953 with the Soviet bloc countries. The deal includes fixed exchange rates as agreed upon by trade partners and the offer of credit by countries that had a trade surplus to countries with a trade deficit.

The Soviet Union's credit to India enabled the setting up of the Bhilai steel plant, other industrial units, oil refineries and pharmaceuticals — all controlled by India's public sector. The agreement ended in 1991 following the dissolution of the Soviet Union.

**Read more:** [Explained: What Rs 80 to a dollar means](#)

How does India is promoting Rupees for international transactions at present?

The options for invoicing in rupees were already legal in terms of Regulation 7(1) of the Foreign Exchange Management (Deposit) Regulations, 2016.

In recent times, India has been taking an active interest in having the rupee used for trade and the settlement of payments with other countries. This includes Russia as well.

The Reserve Bank of India has recently taken a proactive stand to have a rupee settlement of the trade. The current circular aims to operationalise the special Vostro accounts with Russian banks in India to promote trade and gain a better status for the rupee as an international currency.

**Read more:** [Why there is no reason to panic over the rupee](#)

What are the challenges of using Rupees for international transactions?

These include **1)** Lack of willingness of private parties (companies, banks) to accept the rupee for trade and settlements, **2)** Challenge in agreeing to a common exchange rate between the rupee and the foreign country. For instance, the exchange rate between the rupee and the ruble (R-R),

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3) Promoting Russian Ruble and Indian Rupee trade deals, especially on oil, can be considered by the West as India's 'indirect back door support'.

What are the advantages of using Rupees for international transactions?

a) India can avoid transactions in the highly-priced dollar which has an exchange value of ₹80, b) Provide stability to the Indian economy and prevent inflation and capital flight and c) Prevent the drop in foreign exchange reserves.

**Read more:** [External vulnerabilities: Time for a rupee review](#)

The R-R exchange rate can benefit both trade partners and counter the ongoing currency hierarchy.

### 7. [Contractual jobs in government: Government's own 'gig workers'](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article "Government's own 'gig workers'" published in **The Hindu** on **2<sup>nd</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 3: Indian Economy and issues relating to planning, mobilization, of resources, growth, development and employment.

**Relevance:** To understand the Contractual jobs in government.

**News:** While the Agnipath scheme has ignited a debate on the nature of jobs in the government, 'temporary' (gig) jobs have comprised the vast majority of available government employment. The modalities of "contractual" jobs in the public sector require a much deeper examination.

What are the types of outsourcing in government works?

Outsourcing has become the dominant mode of working in the government, from highly specialised tasks to the most routine ones. They may be classified into three categories; permanent, contractual and daily wagers.

There are two main methods to induct an 'employee' on contract in a government entity; **1)** Directly on the payroll of the entity and, **2)** Through a labour contractor or as part of any other contract entered into pursuant to a tender process. In this, the burden of responsibility is shifted to the contractor. This is the predominant mode of engaging contractual workers by the government.

In both cases, the costs and liabilities of the government entity are significantly reduced compared to a "permanent" position.

**Read more:** [Gig Economy in India and the Issues faced by Gig Workers – Explained, pointwise](#)

What are the advantages of contractual jobs in government?

**1)** It can augment the capacity of the government, particularly those works of the state that cater various services to people, **2)** It creates a viable avenue of employment for India's burgeoning working-age population.

What are the issues faced by contractual jobs in government?

Some common problems of contractual jobs also persist in government contractual jobs. These includes,

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**a)** Non-payment of salaries for extended periods, **b)** Distorting of statutory deductions for the worker's welfare such as provident fund (PF), employees' state insurance (ESI), etc. by the labour contractor, and **c)** Uneven distribution of work vis-à-vis "permanent" employees.

The other challenges include **a)** Overwhelming reliance on contractors has undermined the functioning of government institutions, **b)** There is an endless chain of delegating tasks. At any time there are more people to get things done than those who could actually do things,

All this **affects the quality of public service** that is sought to be provided including sanitation, public transport, health, etc.

***Note:** The Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs' **The Urban Learning Internship Program (TULIP)** enables city authorities to directly engage a young workforce for a fixed term.*

**Read more:** [Niti Aayog's report on India's gig economy: what has the think-tank recommended?](#)

How to improve the condition of contractual jobs in government?

It is important to recognise contractual jobs in government. In line with the vision of social justice enshrined in the Constitution, affirmative actions should be taken to address the issues associated with contractual jobs. It is time for the government to take some concrete measures for its own "gig workers".

### 8. [Rethinking the coal issue](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article "**Rethinking the coal issue**" published in the Business Standard on 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2022.

**Syllabus:** GS 3 Infrastructure: Energy Sector

**Relevance:** Coal Sector Reforms

**News:** At present, the country has been frequently facing coal supply crises. India is compelled to import expensive coal to keep its thermal power plants running.

#### **Status of coal reserves in India**

According to the Geological Survey of India's **Inventory**, India has one of the highest coal reserves in the world. The total assessed geological coal resource in the country is 352 billion tonnes.

The bulk of India's reserves, i.e., over 282 billion tonnes, consist of the relatively low calorific value thermal or non-coking coal. This coal is used to power most of the thermal power plants.

The country has fewer reserves of the higher quality **coking coal**, which is used in the metallurgical industry. Therefore, India needs to import coking coal.

#### **History of coal sector regulation in India**

The bulk of India's privately run coal mines were nationalized between 1971 and 1973. It was because, private mines were mismanaged and there were many serious accidents and safety-related concerns for coal miners. Further, private players lacked the resources and the inclination to improve coal mining efficiency and production.

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### Issues with the coal sector at present

It is not expected that India imports non-coking coal to power the thermal power plants of India because India possesses a large reserve of non-coking coal.

### Causes for our failure to meet domestic demand for thermal coal

#### Proximate Causes

(1) Although **Coal India Ltd (CIL)** has increased its production, it has not been able to keep pace with rising demand.

(2) The perpetually **cash-starved state DISCOMS**, which delay payments to producers, who in turn delay payments to the CIL.

(3) **Bad logistic planning** in India, due to which the coal remains available at pithead instead of being available to power plants.

(4) The private sector coal mines are still marginal to India's demand-supply equation.

(5) Another issue is the environmental one. The Union government's enthusiasm for encouraging **renewable power production** has often made it turn a blind eye to the **thermal power sector** because **coal emissions** are seen as a chief villain on the climate change front by everyone.

**Ultimate Causes:** Policy failure to take the long view of the coal sector. The CIL has not been able to solve the problem of production lagging behind demand. Further, even during the period of the 1991 reforms, the coal issue was not on the priority list.

#### What should be done?

The government needs to realize that **coal demand** cannot be ignored for at least three decades, if not more. Therefore, India needs to plan for coal as it will remain the **mainstay of thermal power generation**. Simultaneously, India should look for solutions to **utilize domestic coal reserves** present across the country, while also minimizing emissions

The coal emissions can be reduced through technologies like **coal liquefaction** and **carbon capture, storage, and utilization (CCUS) technologies**.

India needs to encourage research and development of carbon capture, storage, and coal liquefaction technologies, like being done by China, Indonesia, and several other countries.

The coal liquefaction from domestic mines could serve as an alternative source of gas when crude and natural gas prices go too high.

### 9. [Recalling India's Antarctica activities](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article "**Recalling India's Antarctica activities**" published in **The Hindu on 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 3 – Achievements of Indians in science & technology; indigenization of technology and developing new technology.



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**Relevance:** India's Antarctic policy

**News:** Parliament has recently passed the Indian Antarctic Bill, 2022.

What are the salient provisions of the Antarctic Bill, 2022?

**Read here:** [The Indian Antarctic Bill and its various provisions](#)

How did India shape the Antarctic treaty?

In February 1956, Jawaharlal Nehru and V.K. Krishna Menon began India's Antarctic policy. India became the first country in the world to request for an item on the agenda of the eleventh United Nations General Assembly entitled "The Question of Antarctica." The agenda aims to ensure that the vast areas and its resources were used entirely for peaceful purposes and for the general welfare.

After the Nehru-Menon initiative, twelve countries who believed that they had a direct stake in Antarctica started discussions among themselves and on December 1, 1959, the Antarctica Treaty was signed in Washington DC. Many countries such as the USSR and India were neither involved nor invited.

Subsequently, Antarctica faded from the Indian geopolitical gaze.

**Read more:** [Antarctica is losing ice 6 times faster today than in 1980s](#)

How did India get membership in the Antarctic treaty?

Later, Indira Gandhi appointed noted marine biologist Syed Zahoor Qasim as secretary of the newly-created Department of Environment in April 1981. Later a separate Department of Ocean Development was also created.

**First Antarctic expedition:** On January 9, 1982, India claimed that India's first Antarctic expedition (Operation Gangotri) has reached its destination. No other Asian country, including China, had a presence there.

A well-known British science magazine New Scientist reported India's expedition under the headline '**Indians quietly invade Antarctica**'. India's expedition was due to **a)** Antarctica's mineral wealth, **b)** To gain greater knowledge of the Indian Ocean and the monsoons, **c)** To research about life in ice-bound regions and marine biodiversity.

**Second Antarctic expedition:** A second expedition led by one of India's top geologists V.K. Raina landed in Antarctica on December 10, 1982.

With two expeditions successfully completed within a span of 11 months, **India finally became a member of the Antarctic Treaty** in 1983 and China followed in 1985. Today the Treaty has 46 members and has a Convention on Marine Living Resources and a Protocol on Environmental Protection as well.

**Read more:** [Need and significance of The Indian Antarctic Bill, 2022](#)

About India's later Antarctic missions

**a)** In 1984, India's first Antarctic team started wintering there and a few months afterwards unmanned Antarctic research base Dakshin Gangotri was established.

**b)** Since then, India has set up two manned research stations in Antarctica — Maitri in 1988 and Bharati in 2012. Forty expeditions to the continent have taken place.

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c) The Antarctic Bill provides a detailed legal framework for India's Antarctic activities that are consistent with its international treaty obligations.

What should be done to increase India's Antarctic activities?

1) India has been chartering polar research ships from countries like Russia and Norway while China has two of its own. A decision was taken in 2014 for India to have its own research ship with ice-breaking and other advanced technological capabilities but it remains unimplemented. Hence, the **issue of a polar research vessel needs to be addressed** immediately.

2) India should **revamp the old Maitri research station**.

### 10. [Digital India is well positioned to make the most of globalization](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article **"Digital India is well positioned to make the most of globalization"** published in the **Live Mint** on 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2022.

**Syllabus:** **GS 3** – Indian Economy and issues relating to planning, Mobilization of Resources, Growth, Development, and Employment; Effects of Liberalization on the Economy, Changes in Industrial Policy and their Effects on Industrial Growth.

**News:** According to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) report, internet traffic/ information flows in 2022 will exceed all the internet traffic up to 2016, in this globalized world.

#### **About the Globalization**

Jeffrey D. Sachs, in his book *The Ages of Globalization*, presents **seven distinct ages of globalization** since pre-historical times. These were driven by the interplay of geography, technology, and institutions.

Economic progress and globalization have undergone **three industrial revolutions**, and **Industrialization 4.0** is currently underway.

**(1) First Industrial Revolution:** It started in the 19th century with the use of steam and coal which resulted in **mechanization**, which contributed to lowering the cost of transport across the world.

**(2) Second IR:** This time the use of electricity and railroads started. It complemented the mass production. Thus, trade and commerce expanded manifold.

**(3) Third phase:** It was marked by the advent of computers and the emergence of low-cost manufacturing and global supply chains.

**(4) Fourth revolution:** The present age of globalization, known as **Digital Globalization**, commenced in 2000. It is described as **the Digital Age**.

It rides on **digital technology**, which is set to disrupt almost every industry in every country. Digital economies, in turn, run on the new fuel known as data. Data is a new resource or new oil of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

#### **How digitization is changing the economics of globalization?**

The digital platforms are driving down the cost of **cross-border communications and transactions**.

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It enabled **small businesses and entrepreneurs** like MSMEs, around the world, to participate in global trade through Global Value Chains (GVCs).

### Issues and Challenges in the digital globalization

This age of digital globalization is characterized by **large imbalances, digital divides** between haves and have-nots, and other development challenges.

(1) There are **technical and infrastructural challenges** that prevent developing countries from using the digital economy as a potential growth engine.

(2) More than 20% of the population in the developing world does not have access to a mobile broadband network. Further, the **internet speeds** are about 8 times lower in these developing countries.

(3) According to the **United Nations Conference on Trade and Development's (UNCTAD) Digital Economy Report, 2021**, there is a huge **digital divide** in terms of digital readiness between various countries. For example, the US and China are front-runners in harnessing data. They have 50% of the world's hyper-scale data centers, the world's highest rates of **5G adoption**, 70% of the world's top artificial intelligence (AI) researchers, and 94% of all funding for AI start-ups.

(4) Both the US and China make up about **90% of the market capitalization** of the world's largest digital platforms. Further, these platforms increasingly control all stages of global data value chains.

(5) Most developing countries will find it difficult to transform their economies through digitization. These countries risk being left on the periphery of an evolving globalization paradigm.

(6) There is a challenge in regulating data/information flows and setting up rules so that all participants prosper.

### Measures Taken for Digital India to transform India into a digitally empowered economy:

(1) We have a stable and secure digital infrastructure provided by Aadhaar, CERT-In, etc;

(2) The government digitally delivers government services through the Agrimarket App, Bhim, Digital AIIMS, etc.; and

(3) The government has launched schemes for **universal digital literacy**, accessible digital resources, and collaborative digital platforms for participative governance to help narrow the digital divide in India.

### 11. Time for a global treaty on uber-deadly weapons

**Source:** The Post is based on an article **"Time for a global treaty on uber-deadly weapons"** published in the **Live Mint** on **2<sup>nd</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 3 Internal and External Security

**Relevance:** The Weapons of Mass Destruction and their Delivery Systems (Prohibition of Unlawful Activities) Amendment Bill, 2022.

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**News:** Recently, The Ministry of External Affairs introduced **the Weapons of Mass Destruction and their Delivery Systems (Prohibition of Unlawful Activities) Amendment Bill, 2022**. In a global context, this is a **pre-emptive move** in relation to Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD).

### Features in the bill

The bill bars the **financing** of WMDs and their delivery vehicles. Further, it empowers the government to **freeze** and **seize the financial assets** and resources of those engaged in this illicit activity.

The new provisions cover **all holdings** that are either owned or controlled, wholly or jointly, directly or indirectly by offenders, and also any other things which are held by others on their behalf.

The Centre can take action via **any authority** that it has assigned this task to execute the order.

### What was the need for such a law for WMD in India?

There are enough **nuclear bombs** on the planet earth which are sufficient to kill all life on earth many times over. There may be an **accidental launch** of a nuclear missile tipped with a fissile warhead.

The risk of terrorists armed with nuclear, chemical, or biological devices or even aircraft filled with jet fuel has increased. For example, 'the **9/11 Terror Attack**' was suffered by the US in 2001.

The US invaded Iraq based on its anxiety over the presence of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs). Thus, the presence of WMDs, can lead to state conflicts.

During the Soviet-US Cold War, the **mutually assured destruction** (MAD) doctrine was an assurance of peace in the world. However, the role of the **non-state actors** who are mostly **state-sponsored** has increased

### Other Measures Taken to tackle such threat

Global efforts to minimize terror threats include **stopping money** from being sneaked into the development of weapons that can kill at scale.

Recently, India has aligned its policy with the advice of the Financial Action Task Force. India has amended its 2005 ban on making WMDs to outlaw the funding of such activity as well.

### What should be done?

To help secure the world, India should propose a global treaty that commits every state to '**no first use**' of WMDs, in line with **New Delhi's no first use nuclear doctrine**.

Further, All the countries holding WMD ensure that **non-state actors** mustn't get access to nukes and other mass killers.

Our WMD law may seem unlikely to be invoked, given the scant evidence available of such further, India's WMD law, should not be misapplied to the subjects. Here, judiciary can play a vital role



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### 12. 5G power for India and Bharat

**Source:** The post is based on an article “5G power for India and Bharat” published in the **Business Standard** on 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2022.

**Syllabus:** GS 3 Infrastructure; Energy, Ports, Roads, Airports, Railways, etc.

**Relevance:** Communication Networks; 5G etc.

**News:** Recently, the government carried out the 5G spectrum auction. Also, the Union Cabinet approved a **mega revival package** for state-owned telco Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd (BSNL)

#### **What are the arguments against the revival of the BSNL?**

The PSU has been losing market share to the private sector and piling up losses over the years. Therefore, the **5G auction** and **BSNL revival package** create a confusing picture in the telecom industry at present.

#### **What are the arguments in favor of the revival of the BSNL?**

The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) data explains that India needs both BSNL and next-generation services, like 5G.

5G will enable the telecom industry to put India on the global map in multiple spheres, ranging from healthcare to education and consumer business. Whereas, **BSNL** will serve **rural India** despite the private sector making definite inroads into the hinterland.

Some reasons of evidence that support the demand for the revival of the BSNL in India are:

#### **In wireline or fixed phone service**

(1) At the all-India level, BSNL is the leading operator in wireline with 7.59 million subscribers, followed by Bharti Airtel.

(2) At the rural-India level, BSNL's share in the **total rural market share** in wireline is 23.72%, followed by Reliance Jio's rural market share in wireline at 1.24%.

#### **In wireless or mobile services**

(1) In India's wireless market, BSNL still possesses 7.06% of India's rural wireless market share.

#### **Tele-density**

It is the number of **telephone connections for every 100 individuals** living within the area. According to **TRAI's quarterly data**, as of March 31, 2022, India's rural teledensity is at 58.07%. There are some 15 circles, where rural teledensity is more than 50%. For example, Kerala leads with a rural teledensity of 211.4%, followed by Himachal Pradesh at 104.48%, Andhra Pradesh at 78.56%, and so on.

#### **What should be done?**

These figures suggest that rural India holds the power in telecom. Therefore, it needs both BSNL and 5G. 5G is a tool whose time has come to empower citizens with ultra-high-speed data in both India and Bharat.

The 5G Technology may provide better communication facilities, downloading speed of light, etc.

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13. [That pulses are not prioritised speaks of perverse policies that encourage crops requiring more water and chemical fertilisers](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article “**That pulses are not prioritised speaks of perverse policies that encourage crops requiring more water and chemical fertilisers**” published in the **Indian Express** on **4<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

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

**Relevance:** About the reducing pulse cultivation in India.

**News:** Pulses are referred to as “orphan crops”. India is facing reducing pulse cultivation.

What is the reason for reducing pulse cultivation?

Pulses cultivation has reduced because

**1)** They are mostly **grown in marginal lands** prone to moisture stress,

**2)** Farmers **switch to more high-yielding crops when they have access to irrigation**. For instance, the surplus rainfall in much of the South Peninsula, Central and Northwest India led to falling in kharif pulses crops arhar (pigeon- by 13.5%). But rising for moong (green gram) and urad (black gram). This is because these are of shorter duration (60-90 days), unlike arhar which takes 160-180 days.

**3)** Farmers, especially in the two major pulses-growing states of Maharashtra and Karnataka, have basically **diverted arhar area to soyabean and cotton**.

Soyabean is trading roughly 50% above its minimum support price (MSP). Also, its yields are more or less the same as arhar with hardly 90-100 days’ maturity time. Bountiful rains have given an added boost to cotton.

**4)** The **lack of price certainty** and a better than normal monsoon have resulted in pulses acreage going up mainly in Rajasthan and MP. Even there, farmers have opted for moong, urad and other short-duration pulses. As this can be harvested early to enable planting of their main rabi winter-spring crop of wheat or mustard.

**Read more:** [India’s pulses problem: We need real reform](#)

What are the benefits of Pulses?

**a)** Pulses are a valuable protein source for many Indians whose diets are vegetarian and cereal-based, **b)** Pulses harbour bacteria that naturally “fix” atmospheric nitrogen and their extensive root systems keep the soil porous and well-aerated.

**Read more:** [A new public stocking policy centred on pulses, edible oils and vegetables is needed to manage unseasonal price hikes](#)

What should be done to improve pulses cultivation?

Pulses **should become a commercial crop** rather than a crop of last resort. This requires **1)** Assured MSP, **2)** A stable import policy, **3)** Breeding of varieties that are of shorter duration and amenable to mechanical harvesting, **4)** Policies that encourage farmers to grow crops requiring less water and chemical fertilisers.

**Read more:** [Diversification of Food Basket Through Pulses](#)

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### 14. [Letting jobless growth worsen is way too risky](#)

**Source:** This post is created based on the article “**Letting jobless growth worsen is way too risky**”, published in **Live Mint** on 4<sup>th</sup> August, 2022.

**Syllabus:** GS Paper 3, Indian Economy, Employment and development

**Context:** In an emerging country, like India, the path to productivity and growth must lead workers away from farms towards jobs in factories and offices. However, India had limited success in this transition.

Some estimates say India need to create 90 million jobs by 2030 to absorb new entrants to the workforce.

As per Periodic Labour Force Survey, the proportion of Indians employed in agriculture was falling for decades, but this process flattened some years ago and reversed by the Covid crisis. That farms support around 43% of our workforce.

#### **What are the factors hindering worker’s movement from farm to factories in India?**

**First**, in the absence of a robust manufacturing sector, those who move out of farming mostly find themselves in low-paying construction work and informal services.

**Second**, in contrast to Bangladesh, we have not had an export boom of low-skill, labour-intensive products. India’s economic growth has been largely services led in contrast. A leap from the primary to the tertiary sector can’t absorb workers in the volumes we need.

**Third**, India’s growth elasticity of employment is on decline. It is a measure of how output expansion generates jobs. A 10% growth in gross domestic product is associated with only a 1% rise in employment.

**Fourth**, government has made efforts; like production-linked incentive schemes and efforts to grab the business flite from China. However, the efforts are hindered by legacy issues of poor infrastructure, complex and variable rules, skill deficiencies, hidden costs and more.

**Lastly, K-shaped recovery** from the covid pandemic has only worsened inequality.

### 15. [Is the declining rupee a crisis or an opportunity?](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article “**Is the declining rupee a crisis or an opportunity?**” published in **The Hindu** on **5<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 3: Indian Economy and issues relating to planning, mobilization, of resources, growth, development and employment.

**Relevance:** To understand the challenges with Rupee depreciation.

**News:** The declining rupee has several consequences. The rupee’s steep slide to the 79-to-a-dollar range is bound to impact importers, widen the current account deficit (CAD) and increase India’s external debt burden.

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**Must Read:** [Explained: What Rs 80 to a dollar means](#)

Why India will not reap the benefits of the declining rupee?

**1)** Despite depreciation in the nominal exchange rate, the real exchange rate has not really depreciated in recent times. This means domestic prices are rising faster than international prices. But, this matters for questions of trade balance and exports, **2)** In the last two-three decades, the sensitivity of exports has been weak as far as changes in the real exchange rate are concerned, **3)** The depreciation is concerning because it adds to the inflationary pressure and squeezes the purchasing power of those whose incomes are not linked to the crisis.

**Read more:** [Using a rupee route to get around a dominating dollar](#)

What are the long-term impacts of rupee depreciation?

**1)** Forex reserves has now fallen sharply as the import bill remains high and forex resources have depleted. The expectation of depletion of the reserves combined with currency depreciation can lead to instability, **2)** Companies that have ECBs (external commercial borrowing) will face some squeeze in the balance sheets, **3)** The relationship between output and inflation rate termed the Phillips Curve, has been flat and the inflation rate changes for reasons other than demand factors, **4)** So far, the policy measure has been exclusively dependent on monetary policy. Higher interest rates or higher repo rates have an adverse impact on output, which affects GDP growth, **5)** Fiscal policy targets a specific level of debt to GDP ratio, i.e., it targets debt stability, and the job of the monetary policy is to target the output gap and thereby control inflation. Fiscal policy needs to play a role in helping boost demand, but that is not exactly consistent with the present policy framework.

**Read more:** [External vulnerabilities: Time for a rupee review](#)

What India should do to limit the impacts of rupee depreciation?

**a)** India needs to find out whether India has adequate flows on the capital side to bridge the CAD, **b)** The RBI has to sell dollars in the spot market to contain the depreciation, **c)** To avoid the East Asian experience in the mid-1990s, the RBI must watch the import cover of forex reserves; The consequent impact on the rupee liquidity is another factor the RBI needs to watch, **d)** The government need to increase corporate tax in some form, to finance additional government expenditures, particularly in compensating labour's income, **e)** India should also rethink fiscal policy rules and must review to what extent rules are relevant and useful in the current context, **f)** The government's outstanding debt is large and increases in interest rates will raise the interest bill. Correcting the government's fiscal imbalances will improve the overall macro atmosphere and offer a positive signal to the external world and provide comfort to investors.

**Read more:** [Why there is no reason to panic over the rupee](#)

### 16. [The aircraft and the carrier](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article **"The aircraft and the carrier"** published in the Business Standard on 5<sup>th</sup> August 2022.

**Syllabus:** GS 3 Various Security Forces and their mandate

**Relevance:** Indian Navy; INS Vikrant



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**News:** The **Cochin Shipyard Ltd.** handed over India's first indigenous aircraft carrier or IAC-1, known as **Indian Naval Ship (INS) Vikrant** to the Indian Navy(IN), which will be commissioned shortly in the IN.

### History of Aircraft Carriers in India

Since independence, India has cumulatively operated three aircraft carriers, the **original INS Vikrant, the INS Viraat, and INS Vikramaditya**. The first two have been decommissioned from the IN.

The **second INS Vikrant**, which will be commissioned soon, will be the fourth aircraft carrier of India.

**INS Vikramaditya** is still serving the IN. And after commissioning, INS Vikrant (45,000-tonne carrier) will also be the second serviceable carrier.

### Issues

**First**, an aircraft carrier must be able to take enough air wings into battle. However, the only aircraft carrier, **INS Vikramaditya** cannot embark on more than about 25 fighters. Therefore, it can be clearly stated that the Indian Naval Ship is left short of air power in crucial battle spaces and missions.

**Second**, the types of aircraft in a carrier's air wing and the efficiency with which they can be sustained in battle is the ultimate determinant of a carrier's worth. However, the Indian Navy has ordered the MiG-29K for INS Vikramaditya and IAC-1. The MiG-29K is a poor choice because it will be unable to absorb the **pounding** that carrier-based fighters receive while landing when the **pilot slams** down his fighter at a **precise spot** on the deck so that it can engage a row of arrestor wires that drag the aircraft to a halt.

### What should be done?

Therefore, the Indian Navy is pushing hard for the **Indian Aircraft Carrier (IAC) -2 of 65,000-tonne capacity**. Further, the Indian Navy is also pushing for a **flat deck carrier** that is designed and built in India, with **technical and tactical consultation** from the US Navy. The IAC-02 would be able to embark some **55 fixed-wing fighters, ASW and utility helicopters**, and aircraft like the fixed-wing, radome-equipped E2C Hawkeye for extended maritime domain awareness (MDA) missions.

India and the US have constituted a **Joint Working Group** on aircraft carrier technology cooperation under **the Defence Technology and Trade Initiative**.

Recently, the Indian Navy has sent out a Request for Information for **26 Multi-role carrier-borne fighters (MRCBF)**. The marine version of **Dassault's Rafale fighter**; and **Boeing's F/A-18E/F Super Hornet** are the two aircraft that meet the requirements. *The Super Hornet is the better choice, as is evident from the plethora of disadvantages in buying its rival, the Rafale-Marine.*

**First**, the Indian Navy specified that it requires eight twin-seat and 18 single-seat fighters. The Rafale-Marine does not come in a twin-seat version. Both configurations are available in the Super Hornet

**Second**, the Super Hornet would ensure high interoperability between the fighters, the aircraft carrier, and a number of other platforms that the Indian military has already bought, or could do so.

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**Third**, If the Indian Navy does not buy the Super Hornet, it may also be denying itself access to MQ-25 tankers from US carriers in the future. Other interoperable platforms also include **MH-60R Seahawk helicopters**, the **P-8I multi-mission maritime aircraft**, and the MQ-25 Stingray autonomous, carrier-borne tankers.

**Fourth**, If the Indian Navy buys the Super Hornet, the US Navy might also link the availability of EMALS/ AAG from General Atomics for the **next indigenous aircraft carrier (IAC-2)** to the strategic closeness.

**Fifth**, a Super Hornet sale to India would create a higher degree of **interoperability** with US naval forces in the Indo-Pacific, as well as with the **Quad militaries** as both Australia and the US operate Hornets.

**Sixth**, the acquisition of Super Hornets would allow the Indian Navy continued access to the most capable **combat aviation assets** in the Indo-Pacific. For example, the US has 11 carriers against only one French and one British carrier.

### [17. What the RBI's Financial Stability Report reveals about the banking sector](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article “**What the RBI's Financial Stability Report reveals about the banking sector**” published in the **Indian Express** on 5<sup>th</sup> August 2022.

**Syllabus:** GS 3 Issues and Challenges Pertaining to the growth and development of the Indian Economy; Investment

**Relevance:** Bank reforms, regulatory reforms, Infrastructure Investment related reforms

**News: Recently**, the RBI released its latest **Financial Stability Report (FSR)** which talks about the health of the Indian Banking System.

#### **What were the findings of the report?**

The RBI has stated that the banking system is healthy, considering the stress of the previous decade. The two key indicators clearly demonstrate the progress in the banking system:

(1) The Bank's financial situation has been improved by **successive waves of recapitalization**. Therefore, banks have **written off** most of their bad loans. Therefore, they brought down their **gross non-performing loans (NPAs)** from 11% of total advances in 2017-18 to 5.9% in 2021-22.

(2) Due to the above said **financial turnaround**, the banks have the space to resume their business of **extending credit**.

#### **Why the improvement in banks' financials is a glass half-full picture?**

(1) It is still unclear whether the banking system is healthy enough to finance the **strong economic recovery** or **GDP growth**. There are various factors behind it:

(a) Over the last decade, banks have increasingly shifted away from providing credit to **industry** or **financing investment**. Now, banks are lending more to **consumers**. For example, the share of industry in total banking credit has declined from 43% in 2010 to 30% in 2020, and consumer loans have increased from 19% to 29%.

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(b) Most of the industry credit/loan has been extended to the **smaller firms or MSMEs**. For example, due to **the credit guarantee scheme** in the wake of the pandemic, the loan growth for MSMEs has gone up from 3 percent in 2020 to 31 percent in 2022.

(3) There has been little lending for **private sector investment** for infrastructure creation. Most of this went for **public sector capital expenditure**. Much of the lending to the private industry has been in the form of working capital loans, necessitated by the increase in commodity prices.

### **Why is there so little lending for investment by large firms?**

There has been a situation of risk aversion on the part of firms and banks in terms of private sector investment:

On the **demand side**, private sector investment has been sluggish for nearly a decade after the **boom-and-bust of the mid-2000s**. The firms have little reason to expand their production facilities.

On the **supply side**, most of the bank loans given during the period 2004-09 for large infrastructure projects turned bad, leading to **high levels of NPAs**. Therefore, banks were unable to extend credit for a decade.

Thus, even when their health improved, they remained wary of lending to large-scale industrial projects, preferring instead to shift to smaller-scale and less risky consumer lending.

### **Why has the perception of risk aversion not changed even during the post-pandemic recovery?**

There is still no framework that will reduce the risk of private sector investment in infrastructure.

The banks do not have a reassurance that in case the NPA problems do develop, the problem will be resolved expeditiously. The Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code has been plagued by delays and other problems.

Now, there are other issues like heightened **global macroeconomic uncertainty**, growing **geopolitical tensions**, and uncertain recovery prospects of India's domestic economy.

A healthy balance sheet of the banking sector is necessary, but not sufficient for economic growth.

### **What should be done?**

Both banks and firms have to be willing to take on the risk of investment in industry and infrastructure.

**Deep structural reforms** should be introduced to the infrastructure framework, the resolution process, and management processes at the banks themselves.

### 18. [Breathing LiFE into the climate narrative](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article "**Breathing LiFE into the climate narrative**" published in the **Indian Express** on **5<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 3 Ecology and Environment

**Relevance:** The Concept of Lifestyles for the Environment (LiFE)

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**News:** Recently, the Prime Minister of India launched the concept of “**Lifestyle for the Environment**” (**LiFE**) on June 5, 2022, World Environment Day.

In November 2021, at the CoP 26 in Glasgow, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in addition to announcing the **panchamrit**, or **five climate-related commitments** of the country, also articulated the **concept of LiFE**.

### **About the concept of LiFE**

It is planned as a **first-of-its-kind global movement** that advocates for “**mindful and deliberate utilization**” by people worldwide, instead of “**mindful and wasteful consumption**”.

It will provide the world with a unique **people-powered platform** to relentlessly focus on bringing individual and collective actions to the core of the climate action narrative.

### **Objectives**

(1) It aims to harness the **power of individual** and **collective** action across the world to address the climate crisis. It aims to nudge individuals and communities to adopt simple and specific climate-friendly behaviors in their daily lifestyles. **For instance**, an individual can carry a reusable cloth bag instead of a plastic bag; walk short distances instead of driving; or turn off electrical appliances when not in use; prioritize public transport wherever possible and take other similar actions.

(2) LiFE aims to activate a global community of “**Pro Planet People**” and steer the world towards a **sustainable model of development**.

### **Key Component**

**(1) Consume responsibly:** LiFE plans to break down the mental model like Sustainable living and comfortable living are competitors. It will nudge the world to consume responsibly, rather than consuming less.

LiFE will deploy a range of **tested behavioral techniques**, including nudges, social and behavior change communication, and norm influencing to make mindful consumption a mass movement, on which India relied in the recent **jan andolans** such as the Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM).

(2) **Produce responsibly:** The LiFE movement’s nudging of the consumption patterns of the society may also go to the extent of leading to responsible production and a sustainable market.

(3) **Live responsibly:** Humans remain at the mercy of the natural world, no matter how much technological progress we make as a global society. This was recently proved during the Covid pandemic.

### **Why can climate change no longer be an after-thought to the global development agenda?**

It has been estimated that the global economy could lose up to 18% of GDP, and India could lose \$6 trillion by 2050 if no climate action is taken.

In India alone, more than 50% of our largely rural workforce will be negatively affected by climate change.

Further, the ongoing climate crisis is already threatening food and water security across the world.



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### Importance of community and individual actions

According to the **United Nation Environment Programme (UNEP)**, if one billion people out of the total global population of close to eight billion people adopt **eco-friendly behaviours** in their day-to-day lives, then **global carbon emissions** could drop by approx 20%. For Example

(1) Eco-friendly behaviours include turning off ACs, heaters, and lights when not in use can conserve up to 282 kilowatts of electricity per day.

(2) Avoiding food wastage can reduce an individual's carbon footprint by 370 kg per year.

(3) Reducing one flight trip per year can reduce per capita carbon emissions by 700 to 2,800 kg.

### Other pro-planet initiatives around the world

(1) Denmark promotes the use of bicycles by limiting parking within the city centre and providing exclusive bike lanes.

(2) Japan has its unique "walk-to-school" mandate, which has been in practice since the early 1950s.

### The Way Forward

India can lead the **global climate debate** by nudging the world towards a new model of sustainable and inclusive development through the **LiFE movement**.

The LiFE movement can play a pivotal role in not merely reversing the effects of climate change, but also mainstreaming a **harmonious** and **mindful way of living**.

The Indian leadership can promote LiFE movement while **presiding as the G20**, a group that covers 60% of the global population, 80% of the global GDP, and 75% of global exports.

### [19. About spectrum auction: Dialling right – Government should ensure that exchequer and the public benefit from spectrum sale](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article "**Dialling right – Government should ensure that exchequer and the public benefit from spectrum sale**" published in **The Hindu** on **5<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 3 – Indian Economy and issues relating to planning, mobilization, of resources, growth, development and employment.

**Relevance:** About India's spectrum auction.

**News:** India's latest auction of telecommunications spectrum drew bids exceeding a record ₹1.5 lakh crore in a clear sign that the industry is on the path to recovery.

About the present Spectrum auction

The government has netted just over a third of the ₹4.3 lakh crore reserve price it had set for the spectrum on offer. 71% of the airwaves on the block won bids is a testament to the improvement in the industry's health.

Reliance Jio emerged as the top bidder cornering 48% of the airwaves. Bharti Airtel bid just under half that amount for 39%. The debt-laden Vodafone Idea cornered about a 12% spectrum.

**Read more:** [Analysing spectrum auction](#)

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What were the recent steps that help to improve the telecom sector?

**Government steps:** The Centre last year eased the regulatory norms around the payment of dues. This includes a four-year moratorium on outstanding payments and the redefinition of adjusted gross revenues to prospectively exclude non-telecom earnings.

The Government's policy decision to return bank guarantees to telcos helped them to improve their eligibility for debt and increased capital expenditure.

**Steps taken by industry:** Industry increased tariffs which helped them to lift the average revenue per user at the telecom service providers. Thereby boosting margins.

All this allowed service providers to attract investor interest and spread liabilities over a staggered period.

**Read more:** [Opportunities and challenges associated with the launch of 5G Spectrum in India](#)

What are the lessons that should be learned from spectrum auction?

The **high reserve price** has dampened enthusiasm for certain spectrum bands. For instance, 3.3 GHz and 26 GHz were bid at the reserve price in several service areas, the 600 MHz was left untouched, and 60% of the 700 MHz spectrum remained unsold.

**Note:** *The 700MHz spectrum is ideal for rural connectivity as well as signal penetration inside buildings in urban areas.*

**Read more:** [Auctioning 5G spectrum bands](#)

Hence, the government should price the spectrum in an optimal manner to ensure that both the exchequer and the public at large, including in remote rural corners, benefit from it.

[Sticking to commitments-India must set an example by balancing energy use and climate goals](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article "**Sticking to commitments-India must set an example by balancing energy use and climate goals**" published in **The Hindu** on **6<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 3 – Conservation, environmental pollution and degradation.

**Relevance:** About India's updated NDCs.

**News:** Ahead of the 27th Conference of the Parties of the UNFCCC (COP 27), in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt the Cabinet has approved India's Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC).

What are India's updated NDCs?

**Read more:** [Cabinet nod for climate pledges](#)

What is the present state of the Paris Agreement targets?

The 2015 **Paris Agreement** requires countries to spell out a pathway to ensure the globe does not heat beyond 2°C, and endeavour to keep it below 1.5°C by 2100. Under the agreement the countries must submit NDCs every five years, mapping what will be done post-2020 to stem fossil-fuel emissions.

But the subsequent COPs are making compromises on the cuts they can undertake over multi-decadal timelines with the least impact on their developmental priorities.

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About India's first INDC and India's participation in COPs

India consistently held that the existing climate crisis is largely due to industrialisation by the U.S. and developed European countries since 1850. However, international pressure and clearer evidence of the multi-dimensional impact of climate change have seen India agree to move away from fossil fuels over time.

India's first NDC, in 2015, specified eight targets.

**Read here:** [India's INDCs- Progress and Challenges Ahead](#)

At COP 26 in Glasgow in 2021, Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid out five commitments, or 'Panchamrit'. But the recent updated NDC is silent on whether India would cut emissions by a billion tons and create carbon sinks.

**Must read:** [India announces new climate targets at COP26 – Explained, pointwise](#)

What should be done?

India has expressed its intent, via several legislations, to use energy efficiently and many of its biggest corporations have committed to shifting away from polluting energy sources.

India should not promise more than what it can deliver. As it undermines the moral authority that India brings to future negotiations. India should be an exemplar for balancing energy use, development and meeting climate goals.

### 20. [Who needs media in New India?](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article **"Who needs media in New India?"** published in the Indian Express on 6<sup>th</sup> August 2022.

**Syllabus:** GS 3 Role of Media and Social Networking Sites in Internal Security Challenges etc.

**Relevance:** Role of Media; Media Freedom

**News:** The government has ordered the Indian Women's Press Corps (IWPC) to vacate its premises, a 27-year-old institution.

The IWPC was allowed to retain the building based on the Parliament resolution which was passed to express solidarity with the institution. IWPC was allowed to retain the premises, two decades ago, as it had an important role in our democracy.

#### **Role of Media**

The media is the fourth pillar and a co-stakeholder in our democracy. Media play's role in guarding against elected representatives and bureaucrats exercising unfettered power and misusing the system.

#### **How government's engagement with media has been changing lately?**

The long-established tradition of **sharing information** with journalists is slowly fading in many spheres. Rather, the idea is to maintain a distance and the government will provide its data and findings.

The **Central Hall in Parliament** is now out of bounds for senior journalists. Journalist has been banned since Coronavirus. Further, in the **new Parliament building plan** of the government, there is no provision for a Central Hall, where correspondents could exchange notes with MPs.

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The **media's presence in Parliament House** has also been **drastically reduced**. For example, media organisations are now permitted to send only one accredited parliamentary correspondent to cover the Lok Sabha. Further, the number of days for coverage per week is also restricted for journalists.

Further, correspondents with the **Press Information Bureau (PIB) cards** are no longer permitted automatic access to the **North** and **South Block secretariats**. The meeting can be made with a prior appointment.

Similarly, photographers are not allowed to cover functions in the Durbar and Ashoka Halls and investiture ceremonies in **Rashtrapati Bhavan**.

The government also ended the practice of **taking newsmen** on the Prime Minister's flight. Similarly, the only official media is allowed to be on board the president's and vice president's flights.

There have been few incidents in which the **Enforcement Directorates** has raided media owners.

### Issues in the functioning of media

Nowadays, the media does not take **objective editorial stands** on the ongoing issues in Indian politics. They allow spokespersons of different parties to freely express themselves on topical issues.

On television channel debates, people representing **diametrically opposite** views simply shout each other down without any attempt at a dialogue or rational argument.

### What are the reasons for such a move?

Earlier governments followed the **liberal approach** that news persons act as a watchdog on politicians, bureaucracy and constitutional bodies.

However, in recent times, the government has adopted **an authoritarian model**. It has taken a dim view of the role of the media in a democracy.

### What should be done?

India has a country that is **large, diverse, and stratified, socially and economically**. Therefore, such diversity should be represented in the form of a plurality of opinions in our mainstream television channels and newspapers.

To function freely, the media necessarily needs to remain in contact with those in authority, so that it is in a position to deduce the truth and obtain accurate information on issues of public importance.

### 21. [Fiscal policy should return to fundamentals](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article "**Fiscal policy should return to fundamentals**" published in the **Business Standard** on **5<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 3 Issues and Challenges Pertaining to the Indian Economy

**Relevance:** Macroeconomic Conditions; High Inflation



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**News:** Recently, the US Federal Reserve and the European Central Bank have hiked large interest rates to forcefully bring down inflation.

Some experts are of the opinion that deficit spending needs to play a much more active role in managing business cycles.

### **Evolution in the use of fiscal and monetary policy in the business cycles?**

**(1) Before the 2008 global financial crisis, Monetary Policy was the main device to address ordinary business cycles.** On the contrary, it was suggested that fiscal policy should play a supporting role, except in the event of wars and natural catastrophes such as pandemics.

**(2) Post-financial crisis 2008:** Over the past decade, it has been firmly established that even in normal times, the fiscal policy should also play a more **dominant macroeconomic stabilization**. **Monetary policy** could respond immediately, but it was suggested that **fiscal policy** through taxation and government expenditure should quickly follow and take the lead over time.

It is true that “**helicopter money**” and other **transfer programs** proved extremely effective during the initial stages of the Covid-19 pandemic. These programs helped to cushion individuals while reducing long-term economic scarring.

However, both **monetary** and **fiscal policy** are vital to handle a routine downturn in the economy.

### **What are the challenges in the conduct of fiscal policy?**

The large and politically divided countries, such as the United States or the United Kingdom, have not figured out how to conduct technocratic fiscal policy on a consistent basis. Because politics is hardwired into fiscal policy.

There are **horse-trading** and issues in the implementation of the **fiscal measures** or **transfer programs**. The implementation remains inefficient, and these tend to be bigger as the spending bill increases.

The fiscal measures resulted in increased **inflationary pressures** and reduced capacity to respond to the supply shocks triggered by the war.

### **What should be done now with high inflation and slowing growth?**

(1) Interest rates need to be raised, but not at the pace at which it is happening. This entails a risk of yet another deep recession at the end of 2023

(2) Some mainstream economists believe that public debt could be much bigger without any negative consequences.

### **What should be done?**

The governments should **redistribute** income on a sustainable basis. It should raise taxes on higher-income individuals and increase transfers to lower-income, especially very low-income, segments of the population. Higher taxes on high-income and upper-middle-income individuals will also lead to the achievement of **social cohesion**.

Fiscal policy needs to go back to **fundamentals** and be **recalibrated**. There is a need for the readjustment of macroeconomic policy gradually, as it is important to avoid a deep recession.

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### 22. [Towards a super vaccine](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article “**Towards a super vaccine**” published in **The Times of India** on **6<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 3 science and technology – new developments in the field of biology

**Relevance:** Biological Disaster; Monkeypox and Covid-Pandemic

**News:** On July 23, WHO declared monkeypox a **Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC)**, the highest level of alert. Since Covid in February 2020, this is the second such alert in two years.

### [About Monkeypox disease](#)

#### **Nature of Monkeypox**

This international monkeypox outbreak is largely restricted to those below 40 years of age, who were born after the smallpox vaccination ended in 1980.

#### **History of Smallpox Vaccine Development**

(1) **Ancient Variolation:** It was an ancient method practiced in India, China, and the Orient. This involved introducing a tiny amount of pus from the **smallpox pustule** into the recipient's arm. It produced immunity. Later on, Lady Mary Wortley Montagu introduced it to 18th-century Britain.

(2) In 1763, **John Fewster**, a local surgeon in Gloucestershire, discovered **cross-protection** between cowpox and smallpox. In 1801, **Edward Jenner** understood the implications of this **revolutionary medical advance** of cross-protection, and he predicted that this vaccination would rid the world of smallpox.

(3) In the 1930s, the ‘**vaccinia viruses**’ were used for the development of a smallpox vaccine to eradicate smallpox.

(6) The first-generation smallpox vaccine was made by growing the vaccinia virus in the skin of animals – mostly cows, but also sheep.

(7) The second-generation vaccine used live vaccinia virus grown in eggs or in cell culture, being introduced in the late 1950s and early 1970s, respectively.

(8) A freeze-drying method developed in the early 1950s allowed the vaccine to be stored and transported at room temperature.

(9) Between 1958 and 1977 it was mainly the second-generation vaccine that was used in smallpox eradication programmes.

(10) Third-generation vaccines introduced in the late 1970s are based on a Turkish strain – Modified Vaccinia Ankara (MVA) – which had lost the ability to multiply in humans; it could still be grown well in chicken embryos.

**The smallpox-monkeypox vector:** Two smallpox vaccines are approved for use against monkeypox.

1) ACAM2000 is a **second-generation vaccine** that includes live vaccinia virus, which replicates in the recipient and has unpleasant side effects.

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2) MVA-BN is a **third-generation vaccine**, which uses MVA technology developed in the 1990s and has a better **safety profile**. It is licensed under **three brand names** – Jynneos (US), Imvanex (EU) and Imvamune (Canada).

In 2019 a clinical study showed equivalence between the MVA and ACAM2000 vaccines, with the former showing better post-vaccination safety.

Several studies have established MVA-based candidates to have good efficacy against monkeypox.

Thereafter, MVA/S was developed. As per a study, MVA/S vaccination produced strong neutralising antibodies and cellular immunity against the **Covid virus**.

### The Way Forward

**The monkeypox-Covid vector:** There are chances that MVA/S may provide protection against both **Covid** and **monkeypox**. Therefore, it can be used to develop a single vaccine that can protect against two diseases that are circulating now and both have been declared as a PHEIC rating.

23. [Explained: as India strengthens its climate targets, a look at the progress so far, what's new](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article "**As India strengthens its climate targets, a look at the progress so far, what's new**" published in the **Indian Express** on **6<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 3 Ecology and Environment

**Relevance:** India's Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs)

**News:** Recently, India has updated its Nationally determined commitments (NDC) with incorporation of the two of the **five promises**, that were made by the Prime Minister at the Glasgow Summit, into official targets, as part of India's international climate commitments for 2030.

The **2015 Paris Agreement** requires every country to set self-determined climate targets, which have to be progressively updated with more ambitious goals every few years.

(1) India's first **Intended Nationally Determined Commitments (INDC)** were submitted in 2015. It contained three main targets for 2030:

(a) A 33 to 35 percent reduction in emissions intensity (or emissions per unit of GDP) from 2005 levels

(b) At least 40 percent of total electricity generation to come from non-fossil renewable sources

(c) An increase in forest cover to create an additional carbon sink of 2.5 to 3 billion tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent

(2) In 2021, the Prime Minister promised to strengthen **India's climate commitments** at the Glasgow meeting. He made 5 promises, and called it the '**Panchamrit**'.

(3) In addition, PM had said that at **least 500 GW** of India's installed electricity generation capacity in 2030 would be based on non-fossil fuel sources, and India would also ensure avoided emissions of at least **one billion tonnes** of carbon dioxide equivalent between now and 2030.

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(4) PM Modi had also announced a net zero target for India for the year 2070. It means India would offset its greenhouse gas emissions entirely, either by absorption of carbon dioxide through natural processes like photosynthesis in plants or through physical removal of greenhouse gases using futuristic technologies. But **net-zero** is a **long-term target** and does not qualify to be included in the NDC which seeks **five-to-10-year climate targets** from countries.

### What are the newly updated official targets?

\* India will now reduce its emission intensity by at least 45 percent, instead of just 33 to 35 percent, from 2005 levels by 2030.

\* Also, it would now ensure that at least 50 percent of its total electricity generation, not just 40 percent, would come from renewable sources by 2030.

### What are the reasons for incorporating the two promises incorporated into the new official targets?

India is on its way to achieving its existing **INDC targets** well ahead of the 2030 timeline stipulated in the climate pact.

(1) India's **emissions intensity** was 24% lower than the 2005 levels in the year 2016 itself. It is very likely that the 33 to 35% reduction target has already been achieved, or is very close to being achieved.

(2) The other target of having at least **40% of electricity** coming from **non-fossil fuels** has officially been reached, i.e., **41.5% of India's current installed electricity capacity** of 403 GW is now powered by **non-fossil fuels**. For example, wind, solar, and others renewables energy alone account for more than 28% of this capacity while hydropower contributes over 11 percent.

### Which Glasgow commitments have not been converted into official targets by the government?

(1) India's non-fossil fuel electricity generation capacity would touch 500 GW in 2030.

(2) India would cut at least one billion tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent from its net projected emissions between now and 2030.

### What are the reasons for the non-incorporation of the two targets?

(1) It is difficult to achieve the **500 GW non-fossil fuel electricity capacity target** for 2030. Of the current installed capacity of 403 GW, over 236 GW, or 58.5% comes from fossil fuel sources, while non-fossil fuels make up only 167 GW.

To add capacity from non-fossil sources, this would have to triple in the next 10 years to reach the 500 GW target. But, the total installed electricity capacity has more than doubled in the last 10 years

(2) The promise to reduce at least **one billion tonnes** of carbon dioxide equivalent from the cumulative projected emissions till 2030 is problematic. As per, **India's annual projections**, India could be emitting anywhere between 35 and 40 billion tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent in total by the year 2030.



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### 24. [Tapping technology to check minor mineral plunder](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article “**Tapping technology to check minor mineral plunder**” published in **The Hindu** on **8<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 3 – Conservation, environmental pollution and degradation.

**Relevance:** About illegal mining of minor minerals

**News:** The United Nations Environment Programme, in 2019, ranked India and China as the top two countries where illegal sand mining has led to sweeping environmental degradation.

Minor minerals such as sand and gravel have crossed 60 million metric tons in India. This makes it the second-largest extractive industry on the planet, after water.

Laws and monitoring have been made stringent for the mining of major minerals. But rampant and illegal mining of minor minerals continues unabated.

What are the impacts of illegal sand mining?

Severely affects soil formation and the soil holding ability of the land, leading to a loss in marine life, an increase in flood frequency, droughts, and also degradation of water quality.

These effects can be seen in the beds of the Godavari, the Narmada, Yamuna and the Mahanadi basins.

In Narmada basin, sand mining has reduced the population of Mahseer fish from 76% between 1963 and 2015.

Apart from these, illegal mining can also create losses to the state exchequer. For instance, U.P. is losing revenue from 70% of mining activities as only 30% area is legally mined.

**Read more:** [SC appointed Central Empowered Committee\(CEC\) report on Sand mining in Rajasthan](#)

How minor minerals are regulated?

Firstly, the Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) Notifications of 1994 and 2006 made **environmental clearance compulsory for mining in areas more than or equal to five hectares**.

Secondly, a report by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change on **Environmental Aspects of Quarrying of Minor Minerals (2010)** directed all State governments to make the requisite changes in the regulatory framework of minor minerals.

Thirdly, the Supreme Court of India after taking cognisance of a report directed state governments to make environmental clearance for mining in areas less than five hectares mandatory. Consequently, the EIA was amended in 2016.

The amendment also provided for the setting up of a **District Environment Impact Assessment Authority (EIAA) and a District Expert Appraisal Committee (EAC)**.

Fourthly, the NGT directed some States to use satellite imagery to monitor the volume of sand extraction and transportation from the riverbeds.

What are the challenges in regulating minor minerals?

**Not efficient regulation:** State-wise review of EACs and EIAAs in key industrial States such as Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu, shows that these authorities have a rejection

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rate of a mere 1%. So, introducing clearances alone can not help eliminate irregularities in the illegal mining of minor minerals.

A State-wide review of the reasons behind non-compliance suggests a malfunction of governance due to **a)** weak institutions, **b)** scarcity of state resources to ensure enforcement, **c)** poorly drafted regulatory provisions, **d)** inadequate monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, and **e)** excessive litigation dampens state administrative capacity.

**Under-estimated quantity:** The problem of illegal mining of minor minerals is often under-estimated. There have been numerous cases of the illegal mining of dolomite, marble and sand across the States.

**No comprehensive assessment:** This hampers the evaluation of the scale of sand mining in India.

**Difficult to detect:** Being removed from agricultural lands or fallow lands of the government near major highways or construction projects.

**Power of state governments:** The regulatory and administrative powers to frame rules, prescribe rates of royalty, mineral concessions, enforcement, etc. are entrusted exclusively to the State governments.

**Read more:** [Coastal sand mining, whether legal or illegal, poses one of the biggest threats to our environment.](#)

What should be done to protect minor minerals?

**1)** Satellite imagery can be used to monitor the volume of extraction and also check the mining process, **2)** The NGT and administrative authorities can obtain satellite pictures for the past 10 to 15 years and show how small hillocks of earth, gravel or small stone dunes have disappeared in an area, **3)** Drones, the internet of things (IoT) and blockchain technology can be leveraged to monitor mechanisms by using Global Positioning System, radar and Radio Frequency (RF) Locator.

### 25. [About Gregor Mendel and criticisms against his work: Judging the fudging of data](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article “**Judging the fudging of data**” published in **The Hindu** on **8<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 3 – Awareness in the field of biotechnology.

**Relevance:** About the contribution of Gregor Mendel and the issues surrounding fudging of data.

**News:** Recently the 200th birth anniversary of Gregor Mendel, the ‘father of modern genetics’ was celebrated worldwide. This raised the issue of judging the fudging(cheating) of data.

About Gregor Mendel

-Mendel discovered the basic principles of heredity and laid the mathematical foundation of the science of genetics.

-He performed controlled crossing experiments on around 29,000 plants with the garden pea between 1856 and 1863. He deduced that genes come in pairs and are inherited as distinct units, one from each parent.

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-He registered many observable characteristics, such as the shape and colour of the seeds, and the colour of the flower, and formulated two principles of heredity.

His seminal paper, 'Experiments on Plant Hybridization', was published in the Proceedings of the Brunn Society for Natural Science in 1866.

In 1900, the British biologist William Bateson unearthed Mendel's paper and gave posthumous recognition to Mendel's works.

What are the criticisms against Mendel's work?

In 1936, eminent British statistician and geneticist, Sir Ronald Fisher, published a paper. By reconstructing Mendel's experiments, Fisher found the ratio of dominant to recessive phenotypes to be implausibly close to the expected ratio of 3:1. He claimed that Mendel's data agree better with his theory than expected under natural fluctuations.

But he also concluded, "The data of most, if not all, of the experiments have been falsified to agree closely with Mendel's expectations." Numerous articles have been published on the Mendel-Fisher controversy subsequently.

**Read more:** [Scientists solve the curious case of Himalayan glaciers resisting global warming](#)

How has the Mendel theory and fudging of data evolved recently?

In a 1984 book, an author argued that Ptolemy, Hipparchus, Galileo, Newton, Bernoulli, Dalton, Darwin, and Mendel are all alleged to have violated standards of good research practice.

The 2008 book by Allan Franklin and others ended the Mendel-Fisher Controversy. The book recognised that "the issue of the 'too good to be true' aspect of Mendel's data found by Fisher still stands.

How one can judge the cheating of data?

Benford's law says that in many real-life numerical data sets, the proportion of times of different leading digits is fixed.

It is difficult to conclude fudging in most cases. The available technologies for identifying data fudging are still inadequate to address all possible situations.

Judging the fudging is a continual process, empowered with new technologies, scientific interpretations, and ethical standards.

### 26. [India's tax-GDP ratio may be too high](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article "India's tax-GDP ratio may be too high" published in the **Indian Express** on **8<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 3 The Union Budgeting in India

**Relevance:** Tax/GDP Debate

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**News:** In a recent web publication, the IMF published its **World Revenue Longitudinal Data set** for all countries, from 1990-2019.

### **Common Observations of India's Tax/GDP Ratio**

(1) India's Tax/GDP ratio is low, at around 10-11% of GDP. It has stayed close to that level for the last 20 years. In 2019, it hit a decade low of 10% of GDP, the same as in 2014.

(2) In comparison with our peers, India's tax/GDP ratio is much lower. Therefore, it is argued that it should be increased.

### **Debates on Tax/GDP Ratio in the Indian Economy**

India's tax/GDP ratio is one of the three important fiscal variables in the economy, i.e., **taxes**, **fiscal deficit**, and **debt**. And it is lower than what it "should" be.

These fiscal variables are interrelated. Therefore, a lower tax/GDP ratio impacts the other **two fiscal variables**. I.e., lower tax revenue means higher fiscal deficit, for the same level of expenditures, and higher deficit means higher debt. All three, directly or indirectly, are assumed to affect growth and/or inflation.

It has been argued that the low tax ratio in India has led to a lower rate of investment, a higher fiscal deficit, and lower GDP growth.

### **What are the issues in the arguments for low-tax/GDP ratio in India?**

However, there is **no empirical evidence** to indicate a **causal relationship** between **tax ratios or fiscal deficits** and **growth**. But no doubt there is a **well-established relationship** between investment and growth.

India should compare its tax-GDP ratio with the tax/GDP ratio of the **G20 countries**. There is a **misinterpretation** because the tax collected is a function of the average level of per capita income. And Per capita income in the G20 varies from around \$2,100 (India) to around \$65,000 (US).

In the pre-pandemic year 2019, India's tax-GDP ratio was 16.7%. It was higher than that of China (15.9%), Mexico (14.1%), Indonesia (11.0%), Saudi Arabia (5.9%), and Turkey (15.9%) among G20 economies.

If the comparison is done with the tax-GDP ratio adjusted for PPP per capita income, the IMF's data reports that the **world average tax gap** is -1.3 percent and India is at +1.2 percent for the nine years 2011-2019. So, India's tax GDP ratio averages 2.5 percentage points more than an average economy.

Among 70 Emerging economies, excluding Advanced Economies and countries belonging to the former Soviet Union, India's rank is 20, i.e., India's Tax ratio is higher than 50 peers on a systematic basis.

### **Debates over the structural measures to increase the tax/GDP ratio of India**

**Hike Corporate Tax Rate View:** Some experts argued to increase revenue from **corporate tax** (one of three major components of tax revenue, the other being income and indirect taxes). Because inequality was increasing, the rich should pay more taxes to lower the fiscal deficit.



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**Lower Corporate Tax Rate View:** A small minority of economic experts argued that the higher corporate tax rates will stifle investment, increase **tax un-compliance**, and **lower growth**. Therefore, there should be a lowering of the corporate tax rate in India to meet the intended goals

### **Various Structural Change Measures Taken for Increasing the Tax Collection in India Post-2019**

**Corporate tax cut 2019:** In September 2019, the **Finance Minister** lowered the corporate tax rate by around 10 percentage points. This was **one of the largest corporate tax cuts** in world history. Unfortunately, the pandemic struck the world a few months later and disrupted world economies.

#### **Efficacy of the tax cut in India**

The corporate tax revenue has increased by 66%, and GDP by 33% based on the use of **fiscal 2019-20** as a base. It means, there has been an average tax buoyancy of 2.0 over three years since 2019.

Tentatively, the tax-GDP ratio in the fiscal year 2022-23 will average over 18 percent in India, a level close to Japan and the US.

#### [27. Experts Explain: What it will take to fulfill India's solar power dream](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article **“Experts Explain: What it will take to fulfill India's solar power dream”** published in the **Indian Express** on **9<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 3 – Infrastructure: Energy, Ports, Roads, Airports, Railways etc..

**Relevance:** About the challenges faced by solar PV manufacturing in India.

**News:** From less than 10 MW in 2010, India has added significant solar PV capacity over the past decade, achieving over 50 GW by 2022.

By 2030, India is targeting about 500 GW of renewable energy deployment, out of which ~280 GW is expected from solar PV. This necessitates the deployment of nearly 30 GW of solar capacity every year until 2030.

#### About Solar PV panels

A typical solar PV value chain consists of first fabricating polysilicon ingots which need to be transformed into thin Si wafers that are needed to manufacture the PV mini-modules. The mini-modules are then assembled into market-ready and field-deployable modules.

The bigger size of solar wafer there is an advantage in terms of silicon cost per wafer, as this effectively means lower loss of silicon during ingot to wafer processing.

What are the challenges that need to be overcome in solar PV manufacturing?

**Higher Imports:** India currently does not have enough module and cell manufacturing capacity. Hence, Indian solar deployment or installation companies depend heavily on imports.

India's current solar module manufacturing capacity is limited to ~15 GW per year. India only produces ~3.5 GW of cells currently. India has no manufacturing capacity for solar wafers and polysilicon ingots, and currently imports 100% of silicon wafers and around 80% of cells even at the current deployment levels.

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**Size and technology:** In terms of cell technology, most of the manufacturing still uses Al-BSF technology, which can typically give efficiencies of ~18-19% at the cell level and ~16-17% at the module level. By contrast, cell manufacturing worldwide has moved to other newer technologies, yielding module efficiency of >21%.

**Raw materials supply:** Silicon wafer, the most expensive raw material, is not manufactured in India. More than 90% of the world's solar wafer manufacturing currently happens in China.

Other key raw materials such as metallic pastes of silver and aluminium to form the electrical contacts too, are almost 100% imported. India is more of an assembly hub than a manufacturing one.

**Read more:** [Semiconductors: Heroes Of The New Digital World](#)

**Academics plus industry:** India has hardly invested in creating high-quality high-TRL technology centres that can help the industry to try and test the technologies in a cost-effective manner. Examples of the such centres include IMEC Belgium or the Holst Centre in the Netherlands.

What are the government initiatives to promote solar PV panels?

**Firstly**, there is a 40% duty on the import of modules and 25% duty on the import of cells, and a PLI scheme to support manufacturing capex.

**Secondly**, it is mandatory to procure modules only from an approved list of manufacturers (ALMM) for projects that are connected to state/ central government grids; so far, only India-based manufacturers have been approved.

**Read more:** [The Global Semiconductor Shortage – Explained, pointwise](#)

What can be done?

Although India is making great progress in the deployment of solar PV modules for power generation, its path to becoming a manufacturing hub for the same requires more than just putting tax barriers and commercial incentives in the form of PLI schemes, etc.

**a)** India will have to work on technology tie-ups to make the right grade of silicon for solar cell manufacturing, **b)** In long term, it would be beneficial to move up the value chain by making components that could drive the price and quality of both cells and modules, **c)** India needs to create industry-like centres to work on specific technology domains with clear roadmaps and deliverables for the short and long term, **d)** Strong industry-academia collaboration in an innovative manner to start developing home-grown technologies.

### 28. [PMLA verdict — due process will be bulldozed](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article “**PMLA verdict — due process will be bulldozed**” published in **The Hindu** on **9<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 3 – Money-laundering and its prevention.

**Relevance:** About the issues surrounding PMLA.

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**News:** The Supreme Court of India in Vijay Madanlal Choudhary vs Union Of India found all the provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002 (“PMLA”) as constitutional.

The Court compared the intensity of money laundering with terrorism while disagreeing with its earlier judgment, where the Court had made a distinction between the two.

**Must read:** [The Supreme Court’s Judgment on PMLA – Explained, pointwise](#)

What are the significant provisions of PMLA?

The PMLA is meant to deal with prosecution and punishment for the offence of “money laundering.” An accused commits laundering when s/he has relation with any process or activity with the “proceeds of crime.”

So, for the PMLA to come into action, there must have been another crime — independent of the PMLA — from which monies were derived.

**Read here:** [Prevention of Money Laundering Act\(PMLA\)](#)

What are predicate offences?

The other crime, which is a necessary precondition for an offence under the PMLA is described as the predicate offence.

These predicate offences can be various offences under regular penal law such as the Indian Penal Code 1860, the Prevention of Corruption Act, etc. These are governed by the regular criminal process.

**Read more:** [PMLA verdict, an erosion of constitutional buffers](#)

What are the challenges associated with PMLA?

**a)** Non-supply of the Enforcement Case Information Report (ECIR) to the accused/arrested person, **b)** Power to make any person (including existing or future accused) state the truth on oath even though it may amount to self-incrimination, **c)** Once a person is accused of committing the offence of money laundering, the burden of proving that proceeds of the crime are untainted property shall be on the accused, **d)** Blanket common and non-graded punishment for anyone associated with money laundering.

**Read here:** [Supreme Court examines allegations of rampant misuse of PMLA](#)

What are the concerns raised against the judgment?

**1)** Legislative intent can be a beginning point of constitutional analysis. i.e., whether the state has a legitimate purpose in making a law. But the Court treated legislative intent as the end point of its analysis.

**2)** The overemphasis on the seriousness of money laundering. There are so many offences under regular penal law that are punishable with life imprisonment or even death, where none of these draconian provisions applies.

**3)** Legislative intent is reflected by Parliament as part of its normal law-making power, whereas the constitutional due process is incorporated in the Constitution itself and is meant to define the limits of parliamentary law, irrespective of its intent.

Hence, elevating legislative intent can bulldoze any constitutional argument/reasoning that due process has been completely compromised in PMLA cases.

**Read more:** [How Enforcement Directorate \(ED\) became so powerful?](#)

### 29. The employment-income crisis

**Source:** The post is based on an article “**The employment-income crisis**” published in the **Business Standard** on 8<sup>th</sup> August 2022.

**Syllabus:** **GS 3** Indian Economy and issues relating to Planning, Mobilization of Resources, Growth, Development, and Employment.

**Relevance:** Jobless growth in India and associated reforms

**News:** India is the fastest growing large economy in the world. However, the Indian Economy is facing a number of challenges.

#### **What are the challenges to addressing the employment-income crisis?**

India is facing the **biggest crisis** of the **unemployed** and **unemployable** graduates, or secondary school drop-outs. This has caused disaffection among youth.

#### **Some Measures Taken to solve the crisis**

**Education:** Today, 50.2% of men and 41.0% of women have 10 or more years of schooling in the 15-49 age group.

**Skilling:** (1) **Sector Skills Councils** were set up from 2009-10 onwards. (2) **The Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship** was set up in 2014 with a strong focus on standardisation, and (3) **Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs), polytechnics, and other skill-oriented institutions** were brought on a common platform.

The states and districts are playing a vital role in the implementation of skill programs.

The government launched **Skill Hubs** linking schools to ITIs/polytechnics, apprenticeship/internship embedded courses, credit equivalence frameworks, and so on.

#### **What are the issues in the measures taken so far?**

The **Comptroller and Auditor General of India**, has pointed out that there has been misreporting of employment due to incentivized thrust on employment.

Colleges and high schools had some apprenticeship and vocational opportunities, but not on a transformational scale.

#### **Some solutions to fight the challenges outlined above through a reform of the education-skill continuum**

(1) There should be **meaningful skilling** for enterprises and jobs in the **rural areas**. **For example**, the promotion of high-value activities in the agriculture and allied sector. **Basic IT and communication skills** should be part of every skilling program.

**For example**, Madhya Pradesh has launched a pilot in some villages for full employment through the Livelihood Mission.

(2) There should be **an education-skills continuum**. Skilling should be linked with formal education. For example, there can be certificates, diploma courses, and bachelor's degrees in vocational education like counseling, tourist guides, accountancy, IT skills, etc. Thus, BA/B.Sc./B.Com graduates can be made employable on a large scale with modest investments.



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For Example, **Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra** have higher **women's work participation** due to numerous technical and service-oriented institutions and courses.

(3) There should be a re-orientation of the ITIs and polytechnics. The focus should be on reskilling and upskilling through changes in curriculum development and course design.

(4) local governments and community organisations like women's self-help groups (SHGs) and youth organisations should be involved in the skilling plan for a local area.

In addition, there should be a database of all men and women seeking employment or enterprise support for each and every local body, rural or urban.

(5) Skills and credit have to go hand in hand. The newly-trained individuals or groups who want to develop their enterprises must be provided with credit. There can be **innovative technology-enabled financing** through **community collectives** like community cadre of Bank Sakhis and Bank Mitras.

(6) Apprenticeship or skill programs managed by potential employers must be encouraged to enable a more **need-based development of skills**.

(7) The **Rural Self Employment Training Institutes (RSETIs)** should be leveraged in districts. They can run courses in partnership with the Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVKs) like mechanisation and modernisation of agriculture and allied activities. Further, SHGs, farmers producer organisations (FPOs), primary agricultural cooperative societies, etc., can work with RSETIs for skill and credit linkage.

(8) The certification and assessment should be developed in accordance with the systems for higher education.

### 30. [New terms of trade](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article "**New Terms of Trade**" published in the **Business Standard** on **8<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** **GS 3** Effects of Liberalization on the Economy, Changes in Industrial Policy and their Effects on Industrial Growth.

**Relevance:** External Sector; Foreign Trade Policy, Free Trade Agreements

**News:** In the last fiscal year, India's merchandise export rose by over 40% in the last fiscal year. However, India's merchandise export growth has seen a moderation in recent.

#### **Causes of the recent moderation**

(1) The surge in India's merchandise export was driven by global commodity prices. Therefore, it was not going to sustain for a longer period of time.

(2) Moderation is partly because of the imposition of export restrictions to contain domestic inflation.

(3) In recent years, India's participation in the global value chain has declined. Consequentially, it has affected exports.

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(4) The World Bank data shows that India's exports of goods and services as a percentage of gross domestic product steadily declined from a high of 25.4% in 2013 to 18.7% in 2020.

### **Importance of attaining and maintaining higher levels of India's merchandise exports**

High Merchandise export is an important driver for attaining higher sustainable economic growth.

### **Some measures were taken by the government – the government restructured the department of commerce.**

(1) Now, the **Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT)** will look at regulations and the promotion of foreign trade. It will not be involved in the making of the foreign trade policy.

(2) Further, the **trade policy division** has been bifurcated to handle bilateral trade negotiations and multilateral trade negotiations. This will help in providing focused attention to negotiations on **free-trade agreements** that India is currently engaged in with a number of countries.

However, the reorganization of the commerce department cannot solve the problem. Instead, it should be seen as a starting point.

### **Other Potential areas for interventions**

In addition, the government must bring **domain experts** into the system of the department of commerce.

India needs to build **institutional capacity** in the **trade policy establishment**. This will help India to take a practical position in trade negotiations. **For example**, India's decision to not join the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) has been severely criticized in various quarters. India lost an opportunity to become part of the most dynamic trading bloc in the world.

India needs to integrate with global value chains (GVC) to boost its merchandise trade sustainably. **For example**, If India remains out of an RCEP-like trade agreement and increases tariffs to protect domestic businesses, then it would be difficult for India to become an integral part of any value chain.

### **The Way Forward**

India should build on the momentum that it has gained after the pandemic and sustains a reasonable rate of export growth over the medium term.

The government should use the restructuring of the commerce department to build institutional strength.

### 31. [Fair trial goes beyond courts, to the police and media](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article "**Fair trial goes beyond courts, to the police and media**" published in **The Hindu** on **10<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 3 – Role of media and social networking sites in internal security challenges.

**Relevance:** About the information leak from police and its impact by poor media ethics.

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**News:** Recently, the Chief Justice of India objected to the lack of media accountability in the media's coverage of legal issues.

How does media hamper a fair trial?

In **criminal cases**, media attention is often drawn toward investigation and early trial stages, with a notable disconnect from the eventual outcomes of a trial.

This makes the police a crucial source for the media and communication between the two institutions is often a starting point of trouble. For instance, in Bhima Koregaon violence (2018) the police exposed letters purportedly written by activists that were still undergoing forensic analysis.

Why do media reports hamper a fair trial?

**1)** Unregulated divulgence of case details by police and disproportionate reliance on this information by the media hampers a fair trial, **2)** Government regulation is not uniform for print and television media and enforcement of these regulations is slow, **3)** Media fails to check the accuracy of police narratives before making them public. Further, reporters bear the burden of translating the significance of police versions in a criminal trial.

**Read more:** [Secure Indian interests: Ensure fair play in media](#)

Why police is revealing information to the media?

Police reveal crucial information to the media because **a)** They are more **concerned with demonstrating dynamism and efficiency**, rather than the protection of civil liberties, **b)** Most police departments do not have dedicated media cells, making officials of all levels authoritative sources of information and blurring the boundaries between an official and informal police account of events, **c)**

What are the potential impact of police revealing information to media?

Revealing information from police violates **a)** Presumption of innocence and **b)** The right to dignity and the privacy of suspects, the accused, victims, witnesses and persons closely related to them, **c)** Face social ostracisation and difficulties in retaining employment, making them vulnerable to crime and exploitation, **d)** Hampers the evidence-based narrative of criminal cases presented by the police to a court.

What are the various steps taken to restrict police from revealing information?

**Firstly**, the Supreme Court in **Romila Thapar vs Union of India, (2018) case** directed law enforcement authorities not to reveal details of their investigations, especially the personal details of the accused, before the trial is complete. This interpretation is held in various instances.

**Secondly**, the Ministry of Home Affairs issued a sparse office memorandum outlining a media policy over a decade ago.

**Thirdly**, Kerala is one of the few States that have disallowed photographs and parades of persons in custody within its Police Act.

**Read more:** [Police – Training, Modernisation and Reforms Report: Make police complaints authority free from cops: House panel](#)

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How do ensure the government can ensure a fair trial?

**For media:** In the immediate interest of the media and the general interest of the free press, the media institutions such as National Broadcasting Standards Authority and Indian Broadcasting Foundation must find answer this ethical crisis.

**For police:** In an ongoing case, the Peoples' Union for Civil Liberties asked the Supreme Court to issue guidelines to regulate media briefings by the police to ensure a fair trial.

So a structured and well-designed media policy with training and enforcement mechanisms is the need of the hour for the police.

### 32. Powering reforms

**Source:** The post is based on the article: "**Powering reforms**", published in the **Business Standard** on 10<sup>th</sup> August 2022.

"**Power plays**", published in **The Times of India** on 10<sup>th</sup> August 2022.

**Syllabus:** GS 3 Infrastructure; Energy

**News: Recently,** The Electricity (Amendment) Bill, 2022 was tabled in the Lok Sabha, and it was immediately sent to the Standing Committee on Energy for closer scrutiny and debate.

The subject matter of electricity comes in the Constitution's concurrent list. Therefore, the Government of India has introduced a bill for reform.

#### **Background- The Electricity Act 2003**

The act tried to provide a new architecture to promote competition in a system that was hitherto defined by a **maze of cross-subsidies**.

The Act tried to **foster competition** with the **open access mechanism**, which means a customer is not limited to a single supplier.

#### **Features of the Proposed Bill**

It proposes the principle of **open access**, i.e., the right of consumers to choose their electricity provider, regardless of who controls the physical infrastructure in their locality or state.

The state's distribution infrastructure can be opened up to all licensees in the area.

It will segregate carriage and content to circumvent the conflict of interest that is faced by the State-DISCOMS due to simultaneous owning of the distribution infrastructure and retail.

There's also a provision that can lead to trimming the cross-subsidies.

#### **What are the possible challenges in front of the proposed bill and reforms?**

Since 2003, a number of attempts have been made to introduce the principle of open access in India. But these efforts died down due to **strong opposition** and **poor drafting**.

There are fears that this Bill will die in committee because a number of members of parliament have argued that the bill infringes upon the **states' rights to regulate electricity supply and pricing**. It would be an example of the encroachment by the Union government into the state's regulatory and legal domains.



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Further, the Central government has also not consulted **the state governments** during the drafting of the bill or before its introduction into the lower house. Therefore, the bill may face **political backlash** during passage in the house.

In the past, **open-access provisions** were undermined due to exceptions and legal wrangling. For example, earlier only large consumers were able to choose their provider, which reduced the competitive pressures in the power sector.

In 2015, a parliamentary panel said that open access was fairly good in the case of **interstate access** but unsatisfactory for intra-state.

### What should be done?

The Union government is competent to introduce the bill because electricity is on the **Concurrent List** of the Constitution.

The principle of open access would lead to competition, and the poorly-performing state electricity utilities may turn into better-performing providers in the coming years.

The power subsidies should be transparently provided and not through **cross-subsidization** within the **public-sector power company (state-owned DISCOMS)**. The cross-subsidies cause inefficiency and reduce competitiveness

### 33. A carbon market's form must follow its function

**Source:** The post is based on the article “A carbon market's form must follow its function” published in the **Live Mint** on **9<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 3 Ecology and Environment; Infrastructure and Energy

**Relevance:** Market Intervention for Combating Climate Change

**News:** This week, the Lok Sabha passed **the Energy Conservation (Amendment) Act of 2022** before sending an update of India's plans to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

Prime Minister of India revised India's **climate commitment** at last year's **CoP-26 summit in Glasgow**

- (1) By 2030, India aims at around 50% energy drawn from sources other than fossil fuels.
- (2) India would release 45% less dirty emissions for every rupee of economic output than we did in 2005.
- (3) India would also achieve carbon neutrality by 2070.

### Proposed bill

The bill amends the Energy Conservation Act 2001. The move will let the government specify **standards of energy** use by various groups of users, with mandates for **clean sources** in their usage mix.

The bill proposes to set up a **market platform** locally for the **trading of carbon credits**.

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### About the carbon market

The idea works by placing a price tag on a fungible **tonne of carbon exhaust**. **Further**, the prices of carbon units are based on the forces of demand and supply in a system of **dynamic burden sharing**. In this, the emitters pay the cost to buy credit for their own financial well-being, and the ones outperforming the green energy target will sell those credits.

The carbon market functions with a '**cap and trade**' mechanism. In this, a legal limit is set on emissions.

It allows the entities which are spouting more gases than their annual allowance to buy add-on rights, while **efficient carbon compressors** could sell their surplus to the defaulters.

### Why did India need a carbon market?

It is a form of market intervention, which is a key element of economic success. For example, it works upon private incentives.

The deployment of private incentives and market signals helps to stall climate change.

### What should be done?

The **cap-and-trade limit** should be tightened over the years in accordance with our climate goals.

For this, **emission caps** should be placed and should be calibrated with full transparency. **For instance**, the scientific data used for their basis, devices used for exhaust evaluation, and other elements of our policy frame must always be kept amenable to scrutiny.

It's crucial that **cap-and-trade** does not end up as an **inspect-and-extort regime** in India. For this, a tech-enabled model of open verification can be adopted by the government.

The past certificates issued by the Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) could be enlisted under a cap-and-trade plan.

### [34. Step back from water's edge](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article "**Step back from water's edge**" published in the Indian Express on 10<sup>th</sup> August 2022.

**Syllabus:** GS 3 Internal and External Security

**Relevance:** Maritime Security

**News: In recent days, there were reports** that a Chinese "spy ship" known as Yuan Wang-5, was going to visit the Sri Lankan port of Hambantota. This happened amidst India's emergency economic assistance to Sri Lanka.

### History of the PLA's vessel visit to Indian waters

In 2014, a PLA Navy's (PLAN) Type-039, a diesel submarine was docked in Colombo, Sri Lanka.

It was followed by a port call by a Type-091 nuclear-powered attack submarine on the Sri Lanka Port.

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### Why did Sri Lanka give permission to the Chinese vessel to enter its domestic port?

Sri Lanka has cordial diplomatic relations and economic dependence on China. Therefore, there could be no plausible reason for Sri Lanka to deny entry to Yuan Wang 5, especially into **Hambantota** on which China has a **99-year lease**.

Apart from India and the IMF, Sri Lanka also needs Chinese help for its economic recovery in this crisis time.

Although the actual mission of **Yuan Wang 5** is not known, it is also assumed that it was on a **legitimate space-related assignment**. For example, Further, China is active in space programs. It has planned 50 space launches for 2022, like a return of three Chinese astronauts to earth from **an 11-year-old space station**, the **Tiangong-3 space station** is under-construction, etc. For these, space activities, China needs survey/research ships in dispersed oceanic locations ranging from the mid-Pacific and south Indian Ocean to the coast of Africa, for control and tracking as well as rescue tasks

### International laws for the passage of vessels in the sea waters

The 1982 UN Convention for Law of the Seas permits unfettered freedom of navigation on the high seas. Therefore, a **foreign warship** has a right to be in the **Indian Ocean**, likewise, a similar Indian vessel would be allowed in the South China Sea.

In the 200-mile exclusive economic zone (EEZ), there exists the conditional right of “innocent passage” for all vessels, including warships.

During peacetime, UNCLOS mandates foreign vessels, especially warships, to have prior consent before entering **foreign ports**.

During wartime, the **1907 Hague Convention** permits entry for warships of belligerents into neutral ports for limited durations.

### Indian Issues with the Yuan Wang 5 in the Indian waters

(1) First, China has overtaken the US Navy and has become a **“maritime Great Power”**. It is mandated to safeguard the **Maritime Silk Road** that spans the **Indo-Pacific** and includes the China-Pakistan economic corridor.

(2) In recent years, China has created a string of ports, in India’s neighborhood, meant to contain India.

(3) The Yuan Wang 5 research/spy vessel comprises **multi-spectral surveillance** and **eavesdropping devices**. The ship has **“lethal capabilities”** and **“aerial reach of more than 750 km”**. Therefore, it could do reconnaissance of India’s atomic research centers within Indian borders.

(4) The visit of the PLA’s ship to Hambantota could lead to the infringement of the **1987 Indo-Sri Lankan Accord**. The accord calls upon the two countries not to allow their respective territories to be used for **“activities prejudicial to each other’s unity, integrity, and security”**.

### What should be done?

(1) However, Colombo has often **acknowledged** that the security and economic interests of both India and Sri Lanka are inextricably interlinked and any deliberate actions that harm Indian interests will eventually rebound on it.

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(2) Indian **armed forces** and **other agencies** are aware of such reconnaissance. They have already taken precautionary policies and procedures relating to **electronic emissions** and **missile-firing trials**. Further, the **Indian Navy's maritime domain awareness matrix** would follow the position and movements of Yuan Wang 5, if it was in our waters,

(3) India needs to bolster its **economic** and **maritime power**. Further, India can enforce its version of a "**Monroe Doctrine**," because there would be the frequent presence of PLAN in the Indian Ocean.

### 35. [The uproar over the Electricity \(Amendment\) Bill, 2022](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article "**The uproar over the Electricity (Amendment) Bill, 2022**" published in **The Hindu** on **11<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 3 – Infrastructure: Energy, Ports, Roads, Airports, Railways etc.

**Relevance:** About the concerns associated with the Electricity (Amendment) Bill.

**News:** The Union Power Ministry introduced the Electricity (Amendment) Bill, 2022 in Lok Sabha.

What are the key provisions of the Electricity (Amendment) Bill?

**Read here:** [Explained: Electricity Bill – promise, problems](#)

What is the history of the Electricity Act?

The Electricity Bill was brought for the first time and passed in Parliament in 2003.

#### **Aim:**

-To consolidate the laws relating to generation, transmission, distribution, trading and use of electricity.

-To protect consumers' interest and supply of electricity to all areas, rationalisation of electricity tariff, transparent policies regarding subsidies etc.

**Outcome:** The Act resulted in the privatisation of distributing companies.

**Amendment:** The 2007 amendment included provisions for "cross subsidy." Thus ensured subsidy to poor households was added to the Bill.

Later many amendment Bills remained in their draft form but it wasn't cleared.

**Read more:** [Explained: Electricity amendment bill 2021 —why are states such as WB opposing it?](#)

What are the concerns associated with the present Electricity bill?

**a)** Privatisation of distribution companies and generating units might result in job losses, **b)** The Bill might result in the privatisation of profits and the nationalisation of losses, **c)** The Bill is silent on subsidised power provided to poor farmers in States like Tamil Nadu.

The other concerns are,

**Make Centre powerful:** The Bill proposes Centre's intervention in the area of power distribution. Further, the amendment empowers the Central Government to prescribe the criteria.



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**The issue with multiple distribution licensees:** Such a provision might create a situation similar to the telecom sector where monopoly companies will destroy the public sector and smaller networks.

**Read more:** [Government policies are successful in ensuring reliable electricity supply](#)

### 36. [Custom That Costs Us Dear](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article “Custom That Costs Us Dear” published in the Times of India on 11<sup>th</sup> August 2022.

**Syllabus:** **GS 3** Indian Economy and issues relating to Planning, Mobilization of Resources, Growth, Development and Employment.; Governing Budgeting

**Relevance:** External Sector; Ease of Doing Business

**News:** Since 2018-19, the government has switched from liberalism to protectionism on account of its import substitution.

#### **History of tariff setting in India**

(1) Since 1882, Britain had followed a policy of complete **free trade** in India. In 1894, it imposed 5% duty on imports meet revenue needs. However, it was simultaneously offset by an equivalent excise tax on domestically produced products in India. The custom duty was used with revenue roles instead of protective.

(2) The **Indian Fiscal Commission of 1921-22** recommended that custom duty has a protective role to play, as initial protection is important to withstand **foreign competition**. A **tariff board** can be established to which industries could petition for **grant of protective duties**.

(3) **First Tariff Board** was appointed in 1923. Based on the board’s recommendation, the government granted protection to the iron and steel industry. Later on, **more tariff boards** were appointed between 1923 and 1939.

(4) With the advent of **World War II**, this practice of the grant of protection ended. Due to war, the government imposed strict and direct import controls through licensing.

(5) After the war, the government started liberalising controls. It ushered in an era of **liberal trade policy ensuing**. As a result, the Tariff Commission was created in 1951 in the prevailing liberal policy environment.

(6) In 1957-58, the balance of payments crisis ended this liberal era. In 1960s, strict import licensing regime was instituted. Later on, the Tariff Commission was disbanded in 1976.

(7) In the 1970s, the **licence-permit raj era** was ushered in. The Revenue Department had the authority to set **customs duties** in India.

(8) In 1991 reform, the government eliminated **import licensing**. Tariffs were used for protection once again. India also introduced anti-dumping and safeguard mechanisms. The GOI revived the **Tariff Commission** in 1997. However, but it failed to effectively challenge the authority of the revenue department to set **customs duties**.

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### Trends of customs-duty since 2014-15

In 2014-15, the duty rates were increased and applied to less than 1% of all tariff lines and later on. However, later on, it was increased to **3-4%** of all tariff lines.

In 2018-19, the then finance minister in his budget speech said, “I am making a calibrated departure from the underlying policy in the last two decades, wherein the trend largely was to reduce the customs duty. There is substantial potential for domestic value addition in certain sectors . . . To further incentivise domestic value addition ... I propose to increase customs duty on certain items”.

In 2018-19, increased custom duty rates were applied to 42. 3% of all tariff lines. Further, the **average of all customs duties** was also increased from 13. 7% to 17. 7%, and other measures were also taken in this regard.

### What are the issues the trade policies have taken so far?

The Custom duties have been hiked without doing adequate analysis, discussion or debate while making decisions.

The government has used custom duties as a **revenue-raising instrument**. But, a **central principle of public finance** does not allow the customs duties to be used like a revenue instrument.

**Institutional flaw:** The revenue department shouldn't be the authority to impose customs duties. The Tariff Commission lacks necessary expertise and authority to influence the decisions of the revenue department.

### The Way Forward

Increases in customs duties should be strictly reserved for protection to new industries.

The government should constitute an **expert body** which should be mandated to review high customs duties prevailing in many existing industries.

### [37. The inequality challenge for India@75](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article “**The inequality challenge for India@75**” published in the Live Mint on 11<sup>th</sup> August 2022.

**Syllabus:** GS 3 Inclusive Growth; Indian Economy and issues relating to Planning, Mobilization of Resources, Growth, Development, and Employment; etc.

**Relevance:** Inequalities in India

**News:** The article compares the present development with the national income at the time of independence. It highlights the lacunas in the growth patterns of India.

During the period 1900-01 to 1946-47, national income growth was 1% per annum and per capita income growth was 0.2% per annum.

(1) During the period 1950-51 to 2019-20, India has **restored economic autonomy** and enabled India to pursue its **national development objectives**. For Example, the GDP has multiplied by just over 29, which means it has doubled every 14 years and the GDP per capita has multiplied by almost 8, which means it has doubled every 24 years.

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(2) India's rapid economic growth since 1980 has led to a **substantial reduction** in **absolute poverty**.

**What are the areas where India needs reflection as well as introspection in the coming period?**

(1) During the same period, the **East or Southeast Asia economies** have performed better than the Indian Economy. For example, the per capita income as a proportion of that of the world economy rose from 12% to 18% for India, 13% to 87% for China, and 10% to 35% for Indonesia.

(2) Economic growth in India has been associated with **unequal outcomes** that have created divides between regions, sectors, and people.

(3) Western and Southern India have developed more than the east and north of India.

(4) There has been a widening gap between richer and poorer states.

(5) Over the period 1950-51 to 2019-20, the agricultural sector's share in GDP fell from 58% to 15%.

(6) There is a massive rural-urban divide prevalent in India.

(7) The **economic inequalities** have risen in India since India took the path of rapid growth from 1980s. For example, For India, **the World Inequality Report 2021**, estimated that the top 1% held as much as 33% of total wealth in India and the top 10% held 65% of total wealth.

(8) However, the scale of absolute poverty in India is striking. Poverty reduction could have been much greater.

(9) Malnutrition, particularly among children and women—persists, hunger and destitution are common,

(10) The child labour is prevalent, access to educational opportunities is sparse, and healthcare is neither available nor affordable.

(11) There has been jobless growth in India. Economic growth has not led to commensurate **employment creation** in India.

**What should be done?**

Economic growth can be transformed into meaningful **development** only if it brings about an **improvement** in the living conditions of people.

It is essential to recognize that employment is not only a **source of growth** but also a means of **mobilizing** people, which is the most **abundant resource** for development in India.

Employment is the only sustainable means of eradicating poverty and mitigating inequality.

The government should resolve to ensure that **poverty** and **illiteracy** do not exist 25 years from now when we celebrate the first centenaries (100 years) of our independence.

### 38. [State Holds Back Nation](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article "**State Holds Back Nation**" published in the Times of India on 12<sup>th</sup> August 2022.

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**Syllabus: GS 3** Indian Economy and issues relating to Planning, Mobilization of Resources, Growth, Development and Employment.

**Relevance:** Inclusive Growth and Prosperity of India

**News:** India's economic fundamentals and demographic composition can help it in making widespread prosperity a reality in the next two decades or so.

### Strong Fundamentals of India

#### Economic Fundamentals

(1) The policy initiatives on **infrastructure development, digitization of the economy**, and a push towards **rural development** have created a **conducive environment** for **inclusive growth**.

(a) India's **transportation infrastructure** has been improving steadily. Cities and towns in remote parts of the country are now much better connected. Therefore, there is **increased mobility of labor, capital, and raw materials which** could spur economic growth even in most interior parts of the country.

(2) **Digitization of Indian Economy:** In terms of digitization of the economy, India is by far the world leader in digital payments and transactions. For Example, in 2021, the number of **real-time digital payment transactions** in India was almost threefold that of China. The digital revolution has the **potential** to unlock the country's **entrepreneurial spirit**.

(3) India has made commendable progress in improving the **quality of life** of its rural population. **For example**, rural India's access to clean fuel for cooking increased from 18% of the population in 2012 to 54% in 2020.

#### Demographic Fundamental

India's workforce can contribute to economic development through increased labor supply and higher productivity.

#### What is the metric to measure the increase in prosperity of India?

A key metric of the mass prosperity of any country is its per capita income. For India to come close to upper-middle-income countries on this metric, it needs a fourfold increase in its per capita income.

#### The Possible Measures to Achieve a Four-Fold Increase in Per-Capita Income

(1) **Growth and distribution:** (a) India's GDP growth needs an **average annual growth rate** of 7% in the next 25 years, and (b) States like Bihar and Uttar Pradesh must grow at a much higher rate to **catch up with more prosperous** states like Gujarat and Haryana.

(2) **Drivers of growth:** India's long-run economic growth will depend on an economic system that provides strong incentives for **productivity gains through technological innovation and capital formation**. For this India needs a **market-based system, where the private** sector is much involved

#### Can India achieve productivity gains and capital formation that can set it on a 7 % GDP growth rate path?

Although it is not easy, undoubtedly it is achievable due to the following reasons:

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- (1) India has irreversibly moved towards a **market-based system** since the **1991 liberalization**.
- (2) Furthermore, the speed of reform, like the **pace of privatization** has picked up in recent years.

### What more measures do we need to move towards a 7% growth rate?

- (1) **India needs to speed up the privatization of the loss-making public sector banks:** A market-based banking sector will be in a solid position to allocate **capital efficiently** and **productively** across different sectors of the economy. It will lead to the **creative destruction of underperforming companies**, and will eventually pave the way for sustained economic growth.
- (2) In addition, India will also need a lot of **new private enterprises like start-ups** spread across the country to meet its growth target of 7%.

### 39. [In the field](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article **“In the field”** published in the **Business Standard** on **12<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** **GS3 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; Issues related to Direct and Indirect Farm Subsidies and Minimum Support Prices;

**Relevance:** 11<sup>th</sup> Agricultural Census

**News:** At present, the 11th agricultural census is being undertaken. This census is going to be vastly different and much more consequential than its past versions.

### How is the 11<sup>th</sup> agricultural census going to be very different?

For the first time, this huge exercise is being carried out fully digitally, on smartphones and tablets. It will make use of **satellite mapping, drones, and digitized land records** to ensure **accuracy** and **early availability of data**.

### Issues in the implementation of agriculture and farmers-related ongoing schemes

Most of the **subsidies, cheaper institutional credit, and other benefits**, goes to **absentee landlords** instead of tillers of the land, tenants, share-croppers, and genuine farmers.

At present, policy planners have **no precise idea** of how many farmers and farm holdings are present in the country. **For example**, during the launch of the **Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi Yojana**, farmers-related data collected during the 10th agricultural census 2015-16 was found to be inadequate.

The **number of operational farm holdings** found in the last census is believed to have changed substantially due to **inheritance-driven** division or fragmentation of **land**, sale, purchase, leasing, and diversion of farmland to other purposes. For example, many smallholders have become **marginal farmers** and a sizable section of the marginal farmers have turned into landless laborers since the 10<sup>th</sup> census.

### Parameters of the 11<sup>th</sup> Agricultural Census

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It would work to collect data on the **number** and **size** of the operational farm holdings, their class-wise distribution, land use, tenancy systems, and cropping patterns.

### Importance of the 11<sup>th</sup> Census

It would gather information based on **operational holdings** rather than their **ownership**. The former is more critical for precise targeting of resources, especially the financial and other sops being given to farmers by the Centre and state governments through income support and input subsidies as direct benefit transfers.

The government will use the **updated statistics** to reorient its farm policies to help **small and marginal farmers** to shift to relatively **remunerative crops** and **agriculture's allied activities**.

It will help the government to improve the **quality of the farm** produce to **global standards**. This will contribute to enhancing its **export potential**.

### 40. [India's big problem of low-quality employment](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article "**India's big problem of low-quality employment**" published in the **Indian Express** on **13<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** **GS 3** Indian Economy and issues relating to Planning, Mobilization of Resources, Growth, Development and Employment.

**Relevance:** Job Creation in India; Inclusive growth.

**News:** Recently, a V.V. Giri National Labour Institute's report titled "Impact Assessment Study of the Labour Reforms" was published. It was based on the labour reforms conducted in Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Jharkhand, and Uttar Pradesh during the period 2004-05 to 2018-19.

### What is the status of Employment Creation in India?

**Between 1980 and 1990 Period:** Every 1% of GDP growth generated roughly **two lakh new jobs**

**Between 1990 to 2000 Period:** Every 1% of GDP growth generated roughly one lakh jobs.

### About the Labour Reforms in recent decade

**Before 2014 Reforms:** The government focused on improving labour administration by simplifying procedures and digitisation.

**Post-2014 Reforms:** The government shifted primacy focus on reforming the content of the laws. In this context, the union government designed a framework for labour law reforms.

Thereafter, it encouraged the state governments to implement changes, since labour is a state subject. Rajasthan took the initiative and other states followed the economic reforms.

**Read more:** [Labour reforms are much needed for Indian progress towards a \\$5 trillion economy](#)

### What are the key findings of the Impact Assessment Study of the Labour Reforms?

The labour reforms undertaken so far had **little effect** on increasing **employment in large enterprises** in India.

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Rajasthan, the first state to implement the reforms, seems to have benefitted the least from them. This is because the **effects of labour reforms** cannot be revealed immediately as it will take time.

In contrast to creation of jobs, the report says, employment in formal enterprises is becoming more informal.

**Must read:** [Labour reforms in India](#)

### What causes problems in labour reforms?

Labour Reforms couldn't induce the creation of large enterprises, the primary objective of the reforms because the increase in the threshold of application (i.e., now 300 labour) of the Industrial Disputes Act is conceptually flawed.

Large investors are employing increasing numbers of people on short-term contracts, while perversely demanding more flexibility in laws.

The labour laws are the only **one factor affecting business investment decisions**. In addition to labour reforms, an enterprise must have a **growing market** for its products, and **capital, machinery, materials, land**, etc. to produce for the market.

The reforms failed to serve the primary purpose of labour laws like to protect workers, not promote the interests of investors.

**Read more:** [Are labour law reforms the panacea to the investment problem?](#)

### What should be done?

Fundamental reforms are required in the **theory of economic growth**, i.e., more GDP does not automatically produce more incomes at the bottom.

In addition, India needs to focus on the creation of jobs, labour policies must focus on the generation of better-quality livelihoods for Indian citizen or all citizens' ease of earning better livelihoods and with more dignity

### 41. [No holds barred – India must continue to try to designate terrorists and not lose faith in the process](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article "**No holds barred-India must continue to try to designate terrorists and not lose faith in the process**" published in "**The Hindu**" on 13<sup>th</sup> August 2022.

**Syllabus:** **GS 3** – Role of external state and non-state actors in creating challenges to internal security.

**Relevance:** India-China relations and Terror threats.

**News:** Recently, China has placed a "technical hold" on the joint India-U.S. proposal to designate Jaish-e-Mohammad deputy chief a global terrorist on the United Nations Security Council 1267 Committee listing.

### What are the challenges happenings in India-China relations?

Despite 16 rounds of military commander talks at the Line of Actual Control, India and China have failed to resolve the standoff along the LAC that began in April 2020.

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Chinese satellite tracking ship was supposed to dock at Sri Lanka's Hambantota port after the Sri Lankan government gave a clearance to the visit.

Chinese technology majors in India are being raided by the Enforcement Directorate and Income Tax authorities under suspicion of a range of financial crimes.

### Consequences of Chinese technical hold move

At a time when **bilateral trust** is already in deficit, China's decision to stop an important terror listing would give a big blow to the bilateral relations between two countries.

The terror outfits, the LeT and JeM, may continue to perpetrate major attacks on Indians.

### What India should do?

India continue its attempts to designate these terrorists, with perseverance, without losing faith in the process. It can take the following options to resolve the problem:

- (1) India should go for keeping the **international pressure** up, and garner more **co-sponsors** for the listing.
- (2) India should work on changing **1267 Committee procedures**, so that they don't allow one country to hold back such important terror listings without due cause.
- (3) India can **open dialogues** with both China and Pakistan bilaterally on the issue. Here, Pakistan's need to be removed from the FATF grey list and China's interest in Pakistan's economic recovery may be leveraged to ensure the listings are accomplished.

#### 42. [India's 75 years of scientific advancements: On path of science](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article "**On path of science**" published in the **Business Standard** on **13<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 3 – Achievements of Indians in science & technology; indigenization of technology and developing new technology.

**Relevance:** About India's 75 years of scientific advancements.

**News:** As the country celebrates 75 years of Independence, it's time to introspect India's scientific advancements and their benefit to the common people.

About India's 75 years of scientific advancements

Since 1947, the country has **emerged as a global power in space technology, nuclear power, and many other fields.**

India's **probes to the moon and Mars, nuclear weapons, and strategic missile systems** are praiseworthy achievements.

Along with that India also achieved **self-sufficiency in foodgrain, medicines, and vaccines, and exemplary developments in communications and information technology.**

**Innovation:** In the latest Global Innovation Index 2021, India ranked 46 among 132 countries, two notches above its 2020 position. India overperformed on innovation relative to its level of development for the 11th year in a row.



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**Agriculture:** In 2021-22, India's farm exports touched a record \$50.21 billion. The country is among the 15 leading exporters of agricultural products.

**“pharmacy of the world”:** Local firms supply affordable drugs and vaccines to not only developing but also developed countries.

India's successful vaccination drives – from against smallpox, to polio, and now Covid, besides the ongoing Mission Indradhanush – are prime examples of Indians' trust in modern sciences.

**IT industry and telecom revolution:** Services firms in India, according to reports, are targeting record \$350-billion exports in the current financial year, up 37%, year-on-year, despite global headwinds.

**Read more:** [SERB-SURE scheme launched to augment research capabilities in state universities and colleges](#)

How did India achieve these 75 years of scientific advancements?

**Planning Commission:** The Planning Commission was set up in 1950 and the first plan draft, presented in July 1951, included a chapter on “Scientific and Industrial Research”;

The chapter recognised 11 research institutes at the national level in a bid to lay the foundation of scientific research in the country.

**Scientific Policy Resolution, 1958:** It is India's first major science policy. The plan realised “it is only through the scientific approach and method and the use of scientific knowledge that reasonable material and cultural amenities and services can be provided for every member of the community”.

**Green Revolution:** It was based on 1958 policy. After two successive years of drought, India was dependent on wheat imports and stared at yet another famine. The scenario drastically improved after **M S Swaminathan** – the father of the Indian Green Revolution – started to teach farmers to effectively increase yield with the help of high-yielding wheat and rice varieties, fertilisers, and advanced farming techniques.

**IT and Telecom policy:** India allowed domestic software firms to become globally competitive in the 1990s. This is the foundation of Digital India and associated socio-economic development.

**Read more:** [DRDO successfully test fires indigenously developed laser-guided ATGMs](#)

What should be done to improve 75 years of scientific advancements further?

**Invest in R&D:** According to a study by the NITI Aayog and the Institute for Competitiveness, India has among the lowest research and development (R&D) expenditures. Its R&D spending has decreased from 0.8% of GDP in 2008-09 to 0.7% in 2017-18.

Hence, India needs further investment and technological development to fulfil its missions like [National Hydrogen Mission](#).

43. [State control in the financial sector: Azadi of the financial sector](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article “**Azadi of the financial sector**” published in the **Business Standard** on **16<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 3 – Effects of liberalization on the economy, changes in industrial policy and their effects on industrial growth.

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**Relevance:** About the state control in the financial sector.

**News:** While celebrating the 75th anniversary of India's Independence, one needs to remember that in the field of financial economic policy, 44 of these 75 years were a period with a highly repressed financial system.

How did India achieve excessive state control in the financial sector?

Excessive state control is justified by the government through the philosophy of self-reliance,

All across the financial system, state domination was achieved through **a) A combination of bans and public sector ownership. b) most routine activities of financial markets were prohibited by law, and c) cross-border engagement was mostly banned.** For instance,

**-Banking, insurance and mutual funds** were the preserve of **public sector banks, Life Insurance Corporation of India/General Insurance Corporation of India and Unit Trust of India**, respectively.

**-Capital Issues (Control) Act of 1947:** This law is applicable to securities markets. Under this law, the government decided which company could raise capital in the public market using which instrument and at which time.

What is the outcome of excessive state control in the financial sector?

The domestic investment was clogged within the domestic savings on questions of both raw magnitudes and risk tolerance. It was a picture of low freedom in financial sector.

In 1991, the government tried to push in favour of greater economic freedom, reduced central planning, and increased regulatory capacity. These reforms have played an important role in the real sector growth of the last three decades.

**Read more:** [Strengthening financial sector](#)

What is the outcome of low state control in the financial sector?

**a)** New industries like the software industry are financed by a new set of financial players, **b)** Activities like a loan against a car or a loan against a house, which were once relatively unusual, have become commonplace, **c)** The government can balance the balance sheets by tapping into the near-infinite pool of foreign investment

**Achievements in the equity market:** **a)** The emergence of the full ecosystem of finance in the equity market. These include the initial public offering (IPO) market, the equity spot market, derivatives trading, algorithmic trading, etc. **b) Equity as a source of financing:** Between 1991-92 to 2019-20, equity as a source of capital for large private non-financial firms went up from 24% to 37%, **c) market capitalisation** of listed Indian firms rose from about 5% of gross domestic product (GDP) in 1980 to about 100% of GDP at present.

What are the challenges faced at present due to state control in the financial sector?

**1)** The present access of households and micro, small and medium enterprises to formal finance, insurance penetration and density, pension assets as a percentage of GDP is low. This shows that India continues to be **underbanked, underinsured and inadequately covered by old age income** security measures.

**2) Forward-looking speculative decision-making** is absent in large parts of the financial system, **3) The long arm of central planning** has only grown, where minute details of products and processes are controlled by the state. In many cases, there are controls on the persons

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appointed into leadership roles in these financial firms. All this creates subservient employees in private firms who work within the written and unwritten wishes of the regulators.

**Must read:** [Financial sector regulator in India](#)

What should be done to reduce state control in the financial sector?

Important elements of Financial Sector Legislative Reforms Commission (FSLRC) recommendations were implemented in 2015 and 2016, such as inflation targeting at the Reserve Bank of India and the merger of Forward Markets Commission with the [Securities and Exchange Board of India](#).

But still India needs to go further to implement the balance and unleash financial sector.

#### 44. [PLFS findings on FLFPR: More women in the labour force must not lead us to complacency](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article “**More women in the labour force must not lead us to complacency**” published in the **Live mint** on **16<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 3 – Economic development: Indian Economy and issues relating to growth, development and employment.

**Relevance:** About the PLFS findings on FLFPR.

**News:** As per the [Periodic Labour Force Survey\(PLFS\)](#) released by the [National Statistical Office \(NSO\)](#) covering June 2020 to July 2021, the female labour force participation rate (FLFPR) in India has witnessed an increase.

About the PLFS findings on FLFPR

**Data on FLFPR:** The figure in the period stands at 25.1%, far better than the 17% in 2017-18.

The increase in FLFPR was mostly driven by a rise in rural FLFPR that went up from 18% in 2017-18 to about 28% in 2020-21. The increases were mostly in agriculture, where the share of rural women workers increased to 75% in this period.

**Data on the share of unpaid family workers:** The share of women working as unpaid family workers increased from 39% in 2017-18 to 43% in 2020-21; 87% of unpaid women family workers in rural India are in agriculture.

**Data on the share of own-account workers:** own account workers, i.e., individuals running enterprises without any hired help, increased by 3% over the period, almost 40% of whom were producing largely for their own consumption rather than for the market.

**Data on urban women workers:** Urban areas also witnessed a marginal increase in the FLFPR, from 16% in 2017-18 to almost 19% in 2020-21. Around 38% of these women were working as own-account workers and unpaid family workers.

Almost 40% of self-employed workers in the age cohort of 26-35 years end up producing for self-consumption rather than for the market. There is also a falling share of working women in the same age cohort, from 31% in 2017-18 to 26% currently. The fall is evident across all categories of workers: self-employed, regular/salaried and casual workers.

The marginal increase in the urban FLFPR is mainly driven by a 4% rise in the share of older women workers in the age cohort 36-59 years.

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**Data on women neither working nor looking for work:** Almost 82% in the 26-35 years age cohort, cited childcare and household chores as their primary reasons for not being part of the labour force.

Women aged 35-plus cited health and age-related issues, social norms and non-availability of jobs, in addition to household commitments and childcare as reasons for not seeking work.

**Read more:** [Periodic Labour Force Survey\(PLFS\) – Annual Report](#)

What are the impacts of PLFS findings on FLFPR?

**1)** The share of women workers engaged in agricultural activities had been in decline since the 1990s. The **reversal in trend indicates over-crowding and under-employment** in the sector. **2)** The FLFPR numbers continue to remain dismal and **way below the global FLFPR** of approximately 48%, **3)** The increase in rural women's LFPR **does not reflect increased demand and/or better job opportunities** beyond agriculture, **4)** The employment of older women workers in urban areas highlights the **Informal job networks**, which usually lead to employment in jobs with low remuneration and below par working condition.

**Read more:** [Periodic Labour Force Survey and Unemployment in India- Explained, pointwise](#)

What should be done to improve India's FLFPR?

There is a need to **decrease the disproportionate burden** that women bear for domestic care and household work that keeps them away from the country's labour market. Hence, the government has to not only generate jobs and opportunities for women but also has to create an ecosystem of enablers that substantially reduces the care and household commitments of women.

### 45. [To Be Developed](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article **"To be developed"** published in **The Times of India** on **16<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** **GS 3** Indian Economy and issues relating to planning, Mobilization of Resources, Growth, Development, and Employment.

**Relevance:** Economic Growth

**News:** The Prime Minister of India's 75<sup>th</sup> Year Independence Day speech has set an ambitious target that India must become a developed country by 2047.

**Criteria for a country to become developed:** (1) **income, and per capita income**, and (2) **non-farm employment** must be far more than farm employment.

**Linkages between two criteria;** If the share of people in farming goes down and manufacturing and services jobs multiply, it leads to a rise in incomes. For example, the British saw an increase in income during the **Industrial Revolution** when the share of employment in agriculture began to come down in around 1760. In fact, in every country that has become rich, farm employment has radically shrunk.



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### Where does India stand today?

In 2018-19, around 41% of the labor force was engaged in agriculture, and 12.1% were employed in manufacturing. Most of those who came out of farms are absorbed in low-paid and insecure jobs in services and real estate.

### Challenges in giving a boost to the manufacturing sector

The tariff rate has increased by 4.5 percentage points over the last five years to 18.3%.

The government has embarked upon **protectionism**. The PLI schemes have an overemphasis on protection. This protectionism will undermine opportunities offered by the world, to India, in the Global Value Chains.

**Lack of speedy dispute redressal process:** Indian courts' performance in contract enforcement is among the worst in the world. NCLT. There are **vacancies** and **huge backlogs** in the entire judicial system that dilute the efficacy of most reforms

### What should be done?

In order to become a developed country, the Indian economy requires people to move out of farms much faster. For this, the **Indian farming sector needs to be reformed and manufacturing should flourish**.

To boost the **manufacturing sector**: (1) the Centre-state should make a joint effort to clear projects fast, and (2) the Centre should stop hiking import duties and reduce the which can be low-hanging fruit for the government.

### 46. [The shackles of 1861 need to go](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article **"The shackles of 1861 need to go"** published in **The Hindu** on 16<sup>th</sup> August 2022.

**Syllabus:** GS 3 Various Security Forces and Agencies and their Mandate.

**Relevance:** Police Reforms

**News:** Recently, a book titled **"The Struggle for Police Reforms in India: Ruler's Police to People's Police"** authored by a former IPS officer, **Prakash Singh** was released.

**History of the reforms in the criminal justice system (CJS) during 75 years of Independence**

#### (A) Parliament's Contributions

The **Probation of Offenders Act, 1958** was passed to reform, rather than punish, offenders.

The **Dowry Prohibition Act** was passed in 1961 for realizing the urgent need to check the social evil of dowry.

The **Indian Penal Code (IPC)** was amended in 1983 and 1986 to introduce sections 498A for cruelty by husband and his relatives, and Section 304B for the dowry related death.

The **Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act**, was enacted in 1989.

The definition of rape has been widened and offenses related to sexual assault made tougher.

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The **Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012**, and the **Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015**, have been enacted.

The **Information Technology Act** of 2000 has been amended to give legal sanctity to electronic documents and signatures to facilitate online transactions and check cybercrime.

The **National Investigation Agency (NIA)** was constituted in 2008 after the deadly 26/11 terror attacks in Mumbai, to investigate and prosecute offences affecting national security.

### (B) The constitutional court's contributions

The Supreme Court granted relief to the LGBTQ+ community by reading down Section 377 of the IPC.

Custodial torture and sexual harassment of women have been held to be violations of fundamental rights.

The SC has ruled that the right to privacy is one of the fundamental rights under the Constitution of India.

The Supreme Court has acknowledged the misuse of Section 124A and has, in fact, may decide on the constitutionality of the sedition.

Attempts have been made to blend some elements of the inquisitorial system into the (prevalent) adversarial system. For example, making **judicial inquiry** has been made mandatory into custodial death and **custodial rape mandatory** to punish the guilty.

### (C) Other Reforms

Police power to arrest has been curtailed, the use of handcuffs restrained, the presence of a lawyer permitted during interrogation, CCTV cameras installed in the police stations, and human rights bodies allowed to keep a constant eye.

#### Problems in the functioning of the Indian Police forces

(1) There are allegations of using brute force and a large trust deficit between the public and police.

(2) No state governments has given due attention to police reforms suggested under SC's directives in **Prakash Singh v. Union of India (2006)**. For example, even the directive of separating investigation from law and order was not implemented by States and Union Territories in the true spirit.

(3) In fact, no State or UT has adopted **the Model Police Act** drafted by Soli J. Sorabjee.

(4) The State's police acts continue to live with British time provisions which have outlived their purpose long ago, like the connection between the **magistrates** and the police in the system. **For example**, the District Superintendent of Police is unable to transfer his Station House Officers (SHOs) without the approval of the District Magistrate in U.P.; the performance appraisal report of a Superintendent of Police is still written by the District Magistrate in some States

(5) Introduction of the **police Commissionerate system** in metropolitan areas (as per the provisions of the **Criminal Procedure Code**) is always resisted.

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**(6) The Criminal system is** governed by the 1861 Act, which laid the foundation for an organized police force. It's Drafting of IPC was impacted by the revolt of 1857. The main objective was to use the police as a weapon of repression and strengthen the hold the British had over India. The **prevention (and detection) of crime** was never their priority.

### **What should be done?**

There should be additional funding for police reforms. Further, there is a need for improvement in soft skills and ensuring investigation in an impartial manner in order to bridge the trust deficit.

More offences can be **made bailable** and more brought under the ambit of **compounding** to lighten the burden on jails.

The Police department can establish **specialised wings** to deal with newer types of crime.

Further, police must be encouraged to use **technology** and **forensic** techniques to enhance the quality of evidence.

### [47. Sustainable environmental practices: Stepping back from an ecological abyss](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article **“Stepping back from an ecological abyss”** published in **The Hindu** on **17<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 3 – Environment and Bio-diversity: Conservation.

**Relevance:** About the sustainable environmental practices.

**News:** Chipko, Silent Valley, Narmada, Koel-Karo movements inspired many sustainable environmental practices. The government too responded with a series of forest, wildlife, environment-related laws and policies. It is now a time to analyse the phase of these sustainable environmental practices.

What is the status of environmental health in India?

**Water:** According to NITI Aayog, “600 million people in India face high to extreme water stress... with nearly 70% of water being contaminated; India is placed at 120th amongst 122 countries in the water quality index”.

**Air:** Four hundred and eighty million Indians face the world’s most extreme air pollution levels.

**Land degradation and desertification:** According to the Indian Space Research Organisation, over 30% of India’s land is facing issues such as degradation and desertification.

Overall, the World Bank reported in 2013 that India was **losing 5.7% of its GDP due to environmental damage**.

**Read more:** [Just Fine – On amending environmental laws](#)

What is the reason for damage to sustainable environmental practices?

**Obsession with economic growth:** Despite growing evidence of GDP being a very poor indicator of human well-being exploitation of natural elements continue to be ignored or mauled.

According to the former Planning Commission, over 60 million people have been physically displaced by ‘development’ projects in the last few decades with very poor rehabilitation. Amongst them, a disproportionately high percentage of these are Adivasis and Dalits.

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**Favour corporate access:** The government favour corporate access to land and natural resources. For instance, the latest proposals to amend forest and environment laws, and the Environment Impact Assessment notification.

**Building massive physical infrastructure:** For instance, the 2022-23 Budget has an allocation for highways alone that is 40 times greater than the Budget of the Ministry for Environment, Forests and Climate Change.

**The economic 'reforms' in 1991:** With greater integration into the global economy, the entry of multinational corporations into every sector, and increasing exports of natural materials, the issue of environmental sustainability was relegated to the background.

**Less fund for climate action:** India still provide abysmally low budgets for adaptation measures. The Climate Action Plan got a meagre ₹30 crore in the 2022-23 Budget.

**Read more:** [Can synthetic biology offer solutions to environmental challenges?](#)

What are a few innovative and successive sustainable environmental practices?

-Community-led ecotourism, such as homestays in Uttarakhand and Ladakh and Sikkim, has combined increased earnings with ecologically sensitive visitation.

-Women farmers of the Deccan Development Society have demonstrated how organic, rainfed farming with traditional seed diversity can provide full food security and sovereignty.

-Handloom weavers in Kachchh (Gujarat) have shown how dignified, creative livelihoods can be revived based on organic Kala cotton and a mix of traditional and new skills.

What can be done to improve sustainable environmental practices?

**Give priority to India's crafts:** India's crafts have sustained several hundred million people in the past. They can do so again if the traditional and new skills in textiles, footwear, cleaning agents, furniture, architecture and construction, water-related technologies, and a range of household items are given priority.

**Link programmes and environmental outcome:** As advocated by the UNEP, public transportation, organic farming, land and water regeneration, ecotourism, etc can significantly enhance job creation. Linking programmes such as the MGNREGA with such activities will boost sustainable environmental practices.

**Fundamental restructuring of economy and governance:** This means a shift away from large infrastructure and industrialisation, replacing mega-corporations with producer cooperatives, ensuring community rights over the 'commons' (land, water, forest, coasts, knowledge), etc.

This will entail respect for both human rights and the rights of nature.

**Collective mobilisation:** Instead of relying on government action alone, collective mobilisation of industrial workers, farmers, fishers, craftspersons, pastoralists, etc is required to fulfil India's environmental objectives.

### 48. [Achievements of CSIR: High points in science, technology and innovation](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article "**High points in science, technology and innovation**" published in **The Hindu** on **17<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.



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**Syllabus:** GS 3 – Achievements of Indians in science & technology; indigenization of technology and developing new technology.

**Relevance:** About the achievements of CSIR.

**News:** The Council of Scientific and Industrial Research has undertaken its mission effectively since Independence.

What is the responsibility of CSIR in 1947?

CSIR had been founded in 1942. In 1947, India has a GDP of a mere ₹2.7 lakh crore and food grain production of a meagre of 50 million tonnes.

The challenges of educating the people, feeding the population, implementing democracy, promoting industry and trade, and ensuring the country's security. In this situation, the CSIR took the responsibility of

**a)** Developing the science, technology and innovation ecosystem, **b)** Establishing a number of national laboratories under its umbrella, and **c)** Promoting similar organisations independently.

What are a few major achievements of CSIR?

**1)** The CSIR started five of its own laboratories with support from the government and industry and raised resources through crowdsourcing, **2)** In collaboration with the Sir Dorabji Tata Trust, the Government (through the CSIR) started the **Tata Institute of Fundamental Research**, **3)**

**The development of national calendar:** CSIR setup a committee under the Chairmanship of Meghnad Saha. Based on the committee's science and technology-based solutions a national calendar has been adopted, **4)** The CSIR's National Physical Laboratory developed the **indelible ink made up of silver nitrate** to address various challenges in voting.

**Read more:** [Year-End Review-2021- Council of Scientific and Industrial Research](#)

Achievements of CSIR in leather industry

**a)** CSIR-Central Leather Research Institute (CLRI) was established in 1948, it developed technologies for finished leather products, such as the first-ever indigenous manufacture of leather chemicals, making the transition from semifinished to finished leather possible, **b)** CSIR-CLRI routinely trained the next generation manpower for the leather industry. As a result, more than 40% of personnel employed in the leather industry have been trained directly or indirectly in the CSIR-CLRI.

The leather industry employed less than 25,000 people at the time of Independence. Due to successful intervention by CSIR, the leather industry now has a workforce of more than 4.5 million, a large percentage of them being women. Further, Indian exports in this sector are close to \$6 billion.

What are the achievements of CSIR in other technologies?

**During the Green Revolution:** The CSIR helped in the development of agrochemicals and the mechanisation of agriculture. Two public sector companies were founded, post-Independence, based on technologies developed in the CSIR's laboratories.

Indigenous development of the Swaraj tractor at the CSIR-Central Mechanical Engineering Research Institute (CMERI), led to the formation of Punjab Tractors Ltd. in 1970.

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**Development of generic pharmaceutical industry:** The production of anti-HIV drugs by processes developed in CSIR laboratories provided the necessary impetus to the growth of generic pharmaceutical companies.

**Dairy sector:** In the 1950s, when solving the infant food problem, the CSIR successfully developed technologies to convert buffalo milk into powder and commercialised it with the help of Amul Industries.

**Other missions:** The Aroma Mission of the CSIR in recent times has been transforming the lives of thousands of farmers across the country.

In upcoming years, CSIR will help in reducing dependence on natural resources, making all industrial processes circular, making technologies environmentally friendly and providing sufficient opportunities to all for living.

### 49. [Required fundamental policy changes in science and technology: The coming 75 years](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article **“The coming 75 years”** published in **The Hindu** on **17<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 3 – Achievements of Indians in science & technology; indigenization of technology and developing new technology.

**Relevance:** About the fundamental policy changes in science and technology.

**News:** At present India spends just 0.7% of its GDP on research and development (R&D). In the next 75 years, India should shift its focus to science and technology.

**Read more:** [India's Research and Development \(R&D\) activities has achieved far less than it's potential](#)

What basic fundamental policy changes in science and technology does India need?

Increase the R&D budget to 4% of the nation's GDP

Israel and South Korea are prime examples that drive their respective economies by spending nearly 5% of their GDP on R&D.

However, an increase in R&D must proceed with

**a)** Appropriate macro-level policy changes on fund allocation, including building physical and intellectual infrastructure, especially in universities, **b)** Well-trained, globally competitive institutional administrators and processes.

Ensure individual institutions implement processes to accommodate the large budget

This requires **a)** Standardising procedures across institutions and borrowing the best practices from some global counterparts, **b)** Each grant-receiving institution must have internal procedures to handle their scientists' requests to facilitate effective academia-industry collaboration.

**Must Read:** [Research and Development in India: Status, Challenges and Recommendations – Explained, pointwise](#)

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Encourage individual entrepreneurs and Link science with society

Encouraging individual entrepreneurs can bring the benefits of science and technology closer to the masses.

India should **a) resolve** inadequate staffing at funding agencies, lack of transparency in fund disbursement, lack of a rigorous international standard review and feedback process, excessive delay in fund disbursement, and an outdated appraisal system. To avoid these, India can take help from the IT majors, **b) Link the labs with the entrepreneurs** to execute innovative ideas, products, and solutions to our society.

**Read more:** [Ministry of Science and Technology inaugurates India's 'First Lavender Festival' in Bhaderwah](#)

All these fundamental policy changes in science and technology will be feasible only if India cuts the defence budget. India must realise that the next generation of war is economic, not military, and only a science and technology-driven economy can prepare India for that.

### 50. [Power, a reality check](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article **“Power, a reality check”** published in the **Indian Express** on 17<sup>th</sup> August 2022.

**Syllabus:** GS 3 Infrastructure; Energy

**Relevance:** Power Distribution Sector Reforms

**News:** Recently, the Central government has come up with a **Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme (RDSS)** in a series of attempts to tackle the challenges of the power sector.

The Central government and state governments have made impressive strides in increasing access to the **quantity** and **quality of electricity**, as well as expansion of renewable capacity in India.

#### **What are the major issues in the Power Sector?**

The financial health of the **power sector** is rapidly deteriorating. At present, the state-owned DISCOMs are debt-ridden. In fact, the problem has also worsened the fiscal situation of the state governments.

As per **the RBI** and **PRS Legislative Research**, the **“true” deficit of the state governments** significantly increases in FY21, if DISCOM's losses are incorporated. **For example**, state government deficits increased as a whole from 4.7% to 5.5% of state GSDP, putting state governments above fiscal responsibility limits. Further, the “true” aggregate debt increases from 31.0% to 34.5%. This has happened in the case of Punjab and Rajasthan, whose **deficits** and **debt** have exceeded the indicative targets set by the Fifteenth Finance Commission (FFC) due to the non-inclusion of the DISCOM losses.

The discoms are incurring huge losses, in increasing order, from **“Headline losses”**, **“losses without subsidies and grants”**, and **“losses without subsidies and grants and including the arrears of the discoms”**. **For example**, For the fiscal year 2020-21, the combined losses of the discoms are Rs 2.1 lakh crore without subsidies and grants, Rs 3.0 lakh crore when arrears to power generating companies (GENCOs) are included, and much more when the headline loss of 78,000 crores is included.

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### What are the causes of poor affairs of state-owned discoms?

The discoms have not been able to achieve **full cost recovery** through revenues and continue to bear losses.

The financial situations of the state governments have worsened because the state governments have failed to fully integrate **DISCOM operations** in the analysis of **state government finances**.

Thus, the DISCOM losses must be added to **state government deficits**, and the DISCOM's debt must be included in state government debt. It will show a clear picture of the fiscals of state governments.

#### 51. [The woes of power: A moderate approach to the discom sector might be the answer](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article "**The woes of power: A moderate approach to the discom sector might be the answer**" published in the **Indian Express** on **17<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 3 Infrastructure; Energy

**Relevance:** Power Sector Reforms

**News:** The Government has launched the latest **Revamped Distribution Sector scheme (RDSS)**,

#### About the scheme

The government has allowed the states to access some central government resources based on certain conditions like adhering to regular revision in tariffs, smart metering, and committing to a reduction in the AT&C losses.

#### Some findings about the state of affairs of the power sector.

(1) The problem of discoms is considerably worse than recognized because true losses of Rs 3 lakh crore exceed substantially the headline number of Rs 78,000 crore.

(2) The state government finances (due to power woes) have deteriorated, i.e., **true state government deficits** are about 5.5% of GSDP, not 4.7%, and the true debt is 34.5% of GSDP, not 31.0%.

(3) unsustainable discom operations are increasingly financed not by public sector banks, but by the **Power Finance Corporation/Rural Electrification Corporation (PFC/REC)**.

#### What are the political economy implications or issues in the power sector reforms?

(1) On the one hand, the **Ministry of Finance** is concerned about the financial situation of the discoms. Therefore, it is trying to induce state governments to make reforms through incentives. On the other hand, the Ministry of Power (MOP) has the mandate to pursue **objectives** that are **politically popular** (access and quality) and increase renewable capacity, important for international acknowledgment. **For example**, the MOP has given higher priority to **infrastructure building** over **financial sustainability**, which has become a major concern for the MOF.

(2) Discoms owe increasing amounts of money to **PFC/REC**. Further, any default by discoms will jeopardize the functioning of the PFC/REC.



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(3) There are issues in the **regulation** of the **Power Finance Corporation (PFC)/ Rural Electrification Corporation (REC)**. On the one hand, these are regulated by the RBI as non-bank financial companies (NBFC). But such regulatory oversight is lighter compared to that involving the PSBs. On the other hand, these have been used to pursue the government's quantity targets on access, quality, and renewable capacity. Therefore, the MOP will be reluctant to impose **hard budget constraints** on the discoms, which creates moral hazard and disincentives for discoms reforms.

(4) The state governments are involved in **greater freebie-ism like** offering free electricity, in the power sector. Therefore, lending to discoms has become a **Ponzi dynamic** which leads to under-recovery by the discoms.

### What should be done to resolve the above issues?

(1) There should be a comprehensive attempt at **institutional changes** and financial performance. The latest RDSS scheme along with proposed changes to the electricity law steps in this direction.

Unlike the UDAY scheme, the RDSS desires frontload of the actions that discoms and state governments need to take. Further, the proposed legal provisions under the Electricity Bill may help make the RDSS provisions more effective.

(2) There should be **greater transparency**. For this, the **next finance commission** should recommend that the state government should ensure that discoms losses and debts are reflected in their **state government balance sheet**.

(3) There should be **simplicity in power tariffs** in India. **For example**, most states have more than a hundred tariff rates, which leads to large costs and zero benefits. The central government and the central regulator should nudge/persuade their respective state government counterparts to have tariff schedules with no more than say 5-6 rates. For example, one for agriculture, one for industry and commerce, and say 3-4 for households.

(4) There should be a target for smart metering of the entire system, including agriculture. This has the potential to improve **financial performance** and reduce inefficiency and corruption.

(5) **The principle of no cross-subsidization** must be accepted. The state government must eliminate rampant **cross-subsidization**. For example, Industrial and commercial consumers should pay tariffs close to the costs of procuring power by the discoms and not the costs that make up for losses elsewhere in the system, like **below-cost pricing** for agricultural consumers and households consumer in a state.

### 52. [Solutions to India's jobs problem lie in creating better regulatory conditions for private sector while protecting rights of workers](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article **"Solutions to India's jobs problem lie in creating better regulatory conditions for the private sector while protecting rights of workers"** published in the **Indian Express** on 18<sup>th</sup> August 2022.

**Syllabus:** GS 3 Indian Economy and issues relating to Planning, Mobilization of Resources, Growth, Development, and Employment.

**Relevance:** Jobless Growth in India; Job Creation Prospects

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**News:** In the recent past, the prime minister's office (PMO) had instructed that the recruitment of 10 lakh people be done by the government in a mission mode in the next year and a half. Further, the new Bihar government has also promised its people to create 10 lakh jobs within the government fold.

### Some findings related to job creation in the Financial Year 2021-22

#### Private Sector

Most of the job creation that happened in India in the FY was in the private sector. For example, eight out of the top ten private sector firms by **market capitalisation** added to their workforce in this financial year. In terms of number, together these firms added 3 lakh new jobs in the last financial year.

#### Public sector undertakings (PSUs)

The **government-owned enterprises** or **public sector understanding** saw a decline in the total number of people they employed during this FY. The top 15 listed PSUs by **market capitalisation** like State Bank of India, Coal India, ONGC, NTPC, BPCL, and HAL, saw a reduction in the number of people employed.

#### Challenges in Job Creation

The PSUs are not able to solve India's joblessness. These firms failed to create jobs, even when India's GDP was growing at almost 9% (last year).

#### The Way Forward

As per analysis, the private sector has a greater role to play in the creation of jobs in the Indian Economy.

### 53. [Soldiers, The Silent Partners of Indian Democracy](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article "**Soldiers, the silent Partners of Indian Democracy**" published in **The Times of India** on 18<sup>th</sup> August 2022.

**Syllabus:** GS 3 The Security forces and their mandate

**Relevance:** Role of Indian Armed Forces in Indian Democracy and reforms

**Context:** Over the last 75 years, India has acquired the tag of being a responsible military power.

#### What are the issues facing the Indian Military?

India has been a diffident power when it comes to the application of **military force** as an instrument of statecraft. This has held back the Indian state from deploying the military on a number of occasions.

#### History of Indian armed forces contributions

##### (A) Phase of vital contribution to nation building

(a) Soon after Independence, it helped in the restoration of peace and communal harmony in several places in northern and eastern India.

(b) It fought a land-air battle for over a year across two fronts in the **Srinagar Valley-cum Ladakh sector**, and **the Jammu and Poonch sectors**.

(c) Helped to quell a potential secessionist rebellion by the Nizam of Hyderabad.

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### (B) Phase of declined contribution

The political class had misplaced fear of **militarisation of Indian society**. Therefore, they gradually stopped listening to the Indian military. For example, the ruling class ignored Generals **Thimayya** and **Thorat's warnings** and assessments of Chinese intentions and were side-lined for their views which were termed, alarmist. As a result, India experienced its only major military defeat in 1962.

The military took an eternal 14 years for evicting the Portuguese from Goa.

### (C) Post 1962 resurgence phase

PMs and Defence Ministers started understanding the Indian military and allowed service chiefs to speak truth to power in the nation's interest.

The political executives started focusing on an **indigenous defense manufacturing** and licensed manufacturing ecosystem.

As a result, India's military revived and won the Indo-Pak War in 1965 and 1971 conflicts. Another manifestation was India's **'fighting fire with fire'** response at Nathu La in 1967.

### (D) The post-1972 period

This time Indian forces learnt new lessons as they faced challenges of **'Full Spectrum Conflict'**.

The Indian forces carried out **Operation Pawan** in Sri Lanka, **Operation Cactus** in the Maldives, and **Operation Bluestar** at Golden Temple, Amritsar.

In the realm of 'No War and No Peace,' and strategic coercion, change was made in the strategies and structures for national security. These were aimed to allow India to **flex its military muscle**, which could act as a **credible instrument of deterrence**. India won the **Indo-Pak Kargil war of 1998**. However, it was a costly victory.

### (E) New Paradigm- Limited military action used as a means of political signaling

In recent years, Indian forces carried out military action along and across the Myanmar-India border against insurgents; and also had a face-off at **Doklam**.

The Special forces and IAF carried **counter-terrorist strikes** after the Uri and Pulwama attacks.

### What is the issue in India's ongoing paradigm?

There is a reactive approach to external security challenges at present.

### What should be done?

India must migrate from a **reactive approach** to a more **proactive and preventive strategy**. This can only be achieved through the following steps:

- (1) The military should be nimble in its thought and action across the spectrum
- (2) It must have cutting-edge technology and synergised joint strategies across the land, maritime, aerospace, and cyber domains.
- (3) The military is an instrument of the state and a strong pillar of democracy. It cannot rest in a complex and unpredictable global security environment with powerful adversaries

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(4) The Indian state has applied military power, ensuring it remains non-expansive and non-intrusive. This is part of a **robust** and **resilient democracy**.

### 54. [Hard truths about India's labour reforms](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article “**Hard truths about India's labour reforms**” published in **The Hindu** on **19<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** **GS 3** – Indian Economy and issues relating to Planning, Mobilization of Resources, Growth, Development and Employment.

**Relevance:** About the impact of labour reforms.

**News:** While the numbers of Indian billionaires increased during the COVID-19 pandemic, hundreds of millions of Indians lost their incomes when the country was locked down during the pandemic.

The problem is not just employment but also poor quality of employment.

About employment and social and economic freedom

The dominant ‘theory-in-use’ to **increase employment is to improve the ease of doing business**. The **investments in businesses will improve citizens’ ease of earning good livelihoods**.

According to this theory, large and formal enterprises create good jobs. But for that to happen the labour laws must be ‘flexible’ to attract investments.

About India's labour reforms

The primary purpose of labour laws is to protect the rights of workers, not promote the interests of investors.

**Prior to 1991**, Indian labour laws protect labour more. But **after 1991**, labour laws’ principal thrust is to improve administration by simplifying procedures and digitisation. However, the government did not make the labour laws more employer-friendly.

**Reforms post-2014:** The Government designed a framework for reforms. Since labour is a concurrent subject, it encouraged States to implement changes. The first state to do so is Rajasthan.

Labour laws cover many subjects — payment of wages, safety conditions, social security, terms of employment, and dispute resolution. The proposed national reforms aim to convert all these laws into four codes.

**Must read:** [Labour reforms in India](#)

What are the key findings on the impacts of labour reforms?

The V.V. Giri National Labour Institute released an interim report titled “Impact Assessment Study of the Labour Reforms undertaken by the States.” The report has focused on the reform of the Industrial Disputes Act.

The report spans the period 2004-05 to 2018-19. The report defines “formal” employment as the grant of paid leave, a written contract, and some “social security”.



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**Read more:** [About the Impact Assessment Study of the Labour Reforms](#)

**Key findings:** When the emphasis was on administrative reforms, the share of employment in plants employing more than 300 people increased from 51.1% to 55.3% between 2010-11 to 2014-15. But when the emphasis was on labour reforms, the ratio increased less from 55.3% to 56.3%, in 2017-18.

The report stated the following reasons for such factors. These are,

**a)** Labour laws are only one-factor affecting business investment decisions, **b)** An enterprise must have a growing market for its products, **c)** Many things must be put together to produce for the market (such as capital, machinery, materials, land, etc.) not just labour, **d)** Investors do not hire people just because it is easy to fire them.

What one can conclude from the impact of labour reforms?

**1)** Reforms of labour laws have had little effect on increasing employment in large enterprises, **2)** Labour reforms cannot induce the creation of large enterprises. This is because the laws such as Industrial Disputes Act still apply to them.

**Must read:** [GDP growth and formal employment: Whose GDP is it anyway?](#)

What should be focused on instead of labour reforms?

The government need to understand that more GDP does not automatically produce more income at the bottom. The government has to enable **a)** The generation of better-quality livelihoods for Indian citizens, now and in the future, **b)** Fundamental reform is required in the ways policies are made, **c)** Fundamental reforms are required in the theory of economic growth.

### 55. [How free basics can help India grow rich?](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article “**How free basics can help India grow rich**” published in **The Times of India** on **20<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 3 Inclusive Growth

**Relevance:** The Universal Basic Income (UBI)

**News:** Recently, countries like South Korea, Finland, and Canada have made some Universal Basic Income (UBI) experiments, while India is witnessing the debates on the merits of free basic facilities.

#### **Why should India provide free basic facilities?**

(1) There is a **growing global consensus** about the **redistribution of wealth**. As per various leftists, the UBI can be a means to correct growing **income equality** in modern society.

(2) As per some **pro-market people**, the UBI is helpful to sustain **the level of consumption** in the economy. For example, Elon Musk, Mark Zuckerberg, and French economist Thomas Piketty have proposed it.

(3) There are some **historical experiences** related to the benefits of free basic facilities in western countries.

(a) Germany has provided and benefitted from free education and healthcare for years. It implemented the **Bismarckian pension model** in 1889 which arose to help the landless workers migrate to cities amid rapid industrialization.

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(b) After the Great Depression, America's social security system was implemented. This resulted in the transfer of cash which provided relief to the people and also kick-started demand in a struggling economy.

(4) Over the years, productivity has risen faster than wages in almost all economies (say the US). In India, the share of wages in total output fell from 30.3% in 1981-82 to 18.9% in 2019-2020.

### What are other reasons to implement UBI in India?

(1) **Limitation of Contribution Based Models:** Unlike, the rich countries, most workers in India are working in the unorganized sector. Thus, a contribution-based model will help only salaried people, whose number was only 24% in 2019.

(2) **Evident in the existing schemes:** the contribution-based model has been implemented in old age and disability schemes. These schemes exclude a large number of people.

(3) **Make population employable:** Free education and health care reduces out-of-pocket expenditure and make the population more employable.

### 56. [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 **22<sup>nd</sup> 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.

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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.

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.

### 57. 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 **22<sup>nd</sup> August 2022**.

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

**Relevance:** About the pill peddling and its impacts.

## 9 PM Compilation for the Month of August, 2022

**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.

**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 house is corrective action and legal backing for restrictions on pill peddling.

### 58. [Patently Inadequate](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article “**Patently inadequate**” in **The Times of India** on **22<sup>nd</sup> 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.



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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.

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.

### 59. [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 **22<sup>nd</sup> 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.

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(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.

### **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.

### 60. [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 **22<sup>nd</sup> 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 75<sup>th</sup> 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.

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### 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 (21 mmt 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.

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.

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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.

### 61. [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 **23<sup>rd</sup> 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 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.



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**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.

62. [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 **23<sup>rd</sup> 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 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

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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](#)

63. [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 **23<sup>rd</sup> 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?**

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.

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### 64. [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 **22<sup>nd</sup> 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.

#### **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:

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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.

### [65. 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.

### [66. 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 **24<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

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

**Relevance:** To understand the challenges associated with the ONDC.



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**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.

**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.

### 67. [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 **24<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

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**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.

### **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.

### [68. 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 **24<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 3 – Economy

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**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?**

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.

### 69. 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 **24<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

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## 9 PM Compilation for the Month of 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.

(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.



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### 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.

**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.

### 70. [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 **25<sup>th</sup> 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.

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### 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 fintechs to employ additional manpower for compliance.
- This will increase operational costs, and startup fintech firms enjoy an unfair cost advantage by avoiding regulatory compliance.

**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.

### 71. [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 **25<sup>th</sup> 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.

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### **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.

### 72. [Chips for growth](#)

Source: The post is based on an article “Chips for growth” published in **The Business Standard** on 25<sup>th</sup> 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.

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### 73. [Water Of India](#)

Source: The post is based on the article “**Water of India**” published in **The Times of India** on **25<sup>th</sup> 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.

##### **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.

### 74. [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 **25<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

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

**Relevance:** Maritime Security



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**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.

### **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.

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

**Source:** The post is based on the article "**Grains of Transformation**" published in **The Times of India** on **25<sup>th</sup> 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.

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### 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.

(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.

### 76. [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 **25<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

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**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.

### **What are the three types of security nets?**

1) A **passive safety net** focuses on those falling from basic living wages and prevents them a fall 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.

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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.

### 77. 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 **26<sup>th</sup> 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 CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, or 10% of India's total energy infrastructure CO<sub>2</sub> 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.



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### 78. [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 **26<sup>th</sup> 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** 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.

### 79. [‘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 **26<sup>th</sup> 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**.

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### 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) .

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**.

### 80. [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.

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### **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.

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.

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### 81. [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 **27<sup>th</sup> 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.

#### **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.

### 82. [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 **27<sup>th</sup> 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.



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### **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.

### **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.

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(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.

### 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).

### 83. [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 **27<sup>th</sup> 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.

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(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.

(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.

### 1. [James Webb telescope: Light on dark matter](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article **“James Webb telescope: Light on dark matter”** published in the **Indian Express** on **29<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 3: Awareness in the fields of Space.

**Relevance:** Space Exploration of James Webb Space Telescope(JWST)

**News:** In 2021, the James Webb Space Telescope was commissioned into space to probe the universe. It has replaced the Hubble Space Telescope.

### About the James Webb Space Telescope

**Read here:** [James Webb Space Telescope \(JWST\)](#)

### What are the previous findings on space science?

In 1543, the Polish astronomer Nicolaus Copernicus professed that the Earth is not at the centre of the universe. Earth is just another planet revolving around the Sun. Although, at present, the broad contours of the universe are fairly well established, but details are still missing:

(a) At the “beginning” of time, all the energy was concentrated in a **primeval fireball** of extremely high temperature and density.

(b) Thereafter, the universe started expanding, due to a massive explosion, which is termed **the Big Bang** about 14 billion years ago.

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(3) In the last few decades, it has been established that most of the universe is a combination of a mysterious **kind of matter** called **dark matter** and an even more **mysterious unknown substance** called **dark energy**.

### **What is the importance of the James Webb Space Telescope (JWST)?**

It provides a unique opportunity to fill the gaps in knowledge with the help of understanding the **electromagnetic radiation waves**, emitted from cosmic objects.

Due to the expansion of the universe, electromagnetic radiation waves are stretched. In other words, visible light could be stretched into the longer **infrared part** of the spectrum. The JWST will study this Infrared radiation. Further, these radiations have the advantage of passing through dust clouds more easily than visible light.

The JWST will give an insight into how the first stars and galaxies formed from the primaeval soup of matter and radiation.

It will also allow us to compare the earliest galaxies (those that are furthest) to those that we observe today in our own cosmic neighbourhood.

Since it operates in the infrared, it can see through the dust clouds that obscure regions where star and planet formation is taking place.

The Webb produces a huge amount of **spectroscopic data** which can help reveal the chemical composition of the region producing the radiation. Studying the chemical composition of exoplanets would also determine whether life as we know it is possible in these extra-terrestrial worlds.

### **What are some important JWST observations made so far?**

In July, the JWST released its first images of galaxies that might date back to almost 13 billion years ago. For Example, the cosmic cliffs of the Carina nebula, the Cartwheel galaxy, and Stephan's quintet.

It has also provided an analysis of the atmosphere and indicated the presence of water in a giant gas planet orbiting a star about a thousand light years away.

**Read more:** [What is the relevance of the recently released images from the James Webb Space Telescope?](#)

Over its lifetime, the JWST would provide us with a powerful window to help us understand the cosmos better and comprehensively.

## 2. [How to make in India—and protect economy from supply shocks](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article "**How to make in India and protect economy from supply shocks**" published in the **Live Mint** on **29<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 3 Issues and Challenges pertaining to growth and development of the Indian Economy.

**Relevance:** Global Supply Chain Disruption; Extern Sector; Atma Nirbhar Bharat

**News:** In the last few weeks, there has been a global decline in commodity prices. Such a trend of decline in India's domestic inflation rates was also seen. In India, the Wholesale Price Index has fallen from a peak of 16.6% in May to 13.9% in July 2022.

### **Background**

Globally, inflation had reached levels not seen in decades. Initially, it was due to a boom in demand during the Covid-19 pandemic as well as global supply chain disruption due to lockdowns. Later, it was due to the Ukraine war, and the consequent rise in prices of oil and food grains.



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### What are the challenges?

The global supply chain disruption remains an important challenge in the future ahead. For example, according to IHS Markit, the **global semiconductor industry** is facing acute supply shortages. The shortage in semiconductors is at six times high. This shortage can have multiplier effects on other sectors like automobile companies.

### What are the causes of supply chain disruption during the Covid and the Ukraine War?

**Backward, forward linkages:** Now, the global production of goods works in 'fragment due to falling transport costs, information technology improvements and falling barriers to global trade. This fragmentation is part of the global value chains (GVCs). For example, the developed west has done 'off-shoring' of production to countries such as China, Vietnam and India, having lower labour costs.

This changed the dynamics of how the trade worked. Therefore, a shutdown in one country will disrupt production in another country and supply in another country.

### Case of India's participation in the global value chain and vulnerability

**Export Pattern:** Since the 1990s, India's trading pattern shows a pattern common to emerging markets. In its export basket, the **share of finished consumer goods** has risen by about five percentage points, while the **share of intermediate goods** and **raw materials has fallen**.

**Import Pattern:** India is importing more intermediate goods than before. This shows that the bulk of its processing happens somewhere along the middle of the value chain, rather than at the beginning, or towards the tail end where assembly happens.

This means India is affected by shocks to the global value chain for a product, and this can affect production in countries further up the value chain. Therefore, India is prone to global supply chain shocks.

### What should be done?

**Make India less vulnerable to 'global supply shocks:** India should carry out reforms to immune itself from the problems present in the **underlying structure of the global economy**.

The government must focus on the idea of 'reshoring' key inputs like the **Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme** aimed at developing a domestic manufacturing base in a range of key sectors.

**Prioritize sectors:** These should be those sectors that are the most affected by the non-availability of critical imports and would impact the rest of the economy significantly. For example, basic metals, fabricated metals, chemicals and non-metallic minerals

Therefore, the **focus must be on the inputs or critical inputs** used in these sectors. Further, diversify existing imports of inputs among a number of countries to reduce vulnerability to external shocks.

### 3. [New regulations for the Credit Rating Agencies \(CRAs\): Reforming ratings](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article "**Reforming ratings**" published in the **Business Standard** on **31<sup>st</sup> August 2022**.

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

**Relevance:** Credit Rating Agencies (CRAs) Regulations

**News: Last week,** the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) released a circular modifying the **credit-rating system** in ways that would aid in transparency.

The changes would be applicable to already listed debt securities, and also to those proposed to be listed.

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### What are these new regulations for the Credit Rating Agencies (CRAs)?

(1) **Criteria for “sharp rating actions”**: It would refer to a drop of three notches or more in two consecutive rating releases. The CRAs must standardise the methodology for “**sharp rating action**”. Further, these changes will be applicable from the first half of the Financial Year 2022-23

(2) CRAs will highlight **non-cooperating issuers**, which refers to non-submission of quarterly financial results within prescribed timelines, non-disclosure of current and past operational details about CAPEX plans, debt obligations and repayment details, among others, and any other issue felt appropriate by a CRA.

(3) CRAs should frame detailed policy regarding methodology to assess the non-availability of information from **non-cooperative issuers**. CRAs should also consider the steps to be taken under various scenarios of non-cooperation. CRAs should follow a uniform practice of tagging such ratings within 7 days of **3 consecutive months of non-submission of the no-default statement (NDS)**. The changes related to not cooperating will come into force by March 31, 2023

(4) CRAs have been empowered to put in place a framework for **rating withdrawal of perpetual debt securities**. If a CRAs withdraws any credit rating, a CRA should mention the reasons for withdrawal and will also have to assign a **final credit rating** to such security, in its press release, except where there are no outstanding obligations, or the company is being merged or wound up.

**Read more:** [Sebi tightens disclosure rules for rating agencies](#)

All the new measures or regulations of Credit Rating Agencies (CRAs) would aid in transparency and improve borrower compliance with CRAs.

#### 4. [Falty towers: Lesson from the Supertech demolition: reduce the risk borne by homebuyers, improve Rera](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article “**Falty towers: Lesson from the Supertech demolition: reduce the risk borne by homebuyers, improve Rera**” published in **The Times of India** on 29th August 2022.

**Syllabus:** GS 3 – Government policies for various industries

**News:** This article discusses the issues associated with real estate in India and about Real Estate (Regulation and Development) Act, 2016.

The demolition of Supertech Twin Towers in Noida cheered many, and it was the news that was seen throughout the media.

#### **What are the issues with real estate?**

Indian households hold about 77% of total assets in real estate. It's the largest single investment most families make.

This makes homebuyers, disproportionately, vulnerable to real estate sector risk.

The tripartite agreement between builder, bank, and buyer requires the buyer to pay a part of the project cost in advance. The bank covers the residual cost and the builder underwrites EMIs, till possession is handed over.

There are a number of cases in this tripartite agreement where builders default and banks chase the hapless buyer despite the agreement detailing the obligations of all sides.

In one such case, the Delhi high court this year ordered interim protection to buyers against threat of action by banks. But there are many such cases.

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Despite e-governance initiatives, there is hardly any change on the ground. So, any meaningful reform has to address the spread of risks among stakeholders.

### **What is the Real Estate (Regulation and Development) Act, 2016?**

It was enacted in 2016.

The advantages of RERA are:

- It brings about the standardization of contracts.
- It reduces the information asymmetry between buyers and other stakeholders by making relevant information public.
- It also minimizes misuse of advance payments made by buyers.

### **What are the issues associated with RERA?**

It can't address older problems like that of the Supertech towers.

It cannot resolve the issue of corruption at the level of urban bodies.

It also suffers from the general weakness in state capacity as each state needs to establish a regulatory body.

However, RERA is the best available solution today. It will require state governments to invest in enhancing its capacity because a better system will benefit the buyers.

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### 5. [A major test looms for our real estate reforms](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article “A major test looms for our real estate reforms” published in **The Live Mint** on **30<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 3 – Industries and industrial policies

**News:** This article discusses about the provisions under Real Estate (Regulation and Development) Act, 2016 and various steps taken by the government in the real estate.

According to an estimate by a realty consultancy firm, the construction of about 240,000 homes remains stalled in the National Capital Region (NCR).

**What are the steps taken by the Government in real estate sector?**

The Centre set up a special fund to complete stalled affordable housing projects across the country.

The National Buildings Construction Corp Ltd and developers with proven track records also took over unfinished projects.

Real Estate (Regulation and Development) Act, 2016 had a blueprint for the sector’s regulatory architecture.

**What are different provisions under Real Estate (Regulation and Development) Act, 2016?**

**First,** All builders had to register their projects with a state’s Real Estate Regulatory Authority (RERA).

**Second,** they have to be clear on other undertakings and keep the funds pooled from homebuyers of one project in an escrow account so that none of it could be diverted.

**Third,** they had to abide by clear delivery timelines failing which they had to refund buyers or pay interest on their money for delays.

**Fourth,** Customers could also approach consumer courts under RERA which was given the power to crack down on builders with fines or prison terms.

The judiciary classified advance paying homebuyers as creditors, letting them to form a group and to drag corrupted builders to bankruptcy courts.

### 6. [Challenges of sub-national fiscal correction](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article “Challenges of sub-national fiscal correction” published in the “**The Hindu**” on **30<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 3 – Budgeting

**News:** Recently, the RBI released data on the **States’ outstanding debt**, which has registered an upward movement.

There has been an increase in the **Debt-GSDP ratio** (gross state domestic product) between 2013 and 2022.

They could be partly due to increased public expenditure due to the implementation of the Ujjwal DISCOM Assurance Yojana (UDAY), farm loan waivers, other freebies, etc. Further, the revenue mobilization efforts have failed.

**What are the arguments for the grant of the freebies?**

States push back on this issue on the grounds of welfare provisioning and protection of the vulnerable sections of the population.

**What are the different federal issues between the state and central governments?**

(1) **First,** There have been a set of issues related to Goods and Services Tax (GST) such as the rate structure, inclusion and exclusion of commodities, revenue sharing from GST, and associated compensation.



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(2) **Second, State-level expenditure patterns**, especially related to the welfare schemes of States. This is a key issue related to the quantity and quality of public expenditure by the State governments.

(3) **Third**, the conception and the implementation of central schemes.

However, the most pressing issue at hand is the **State-level expenditure patterns**. **There are two kinds of public expenditures: 1) Mandatory spending**: governed by formulas or criteria set forth, and 2) **Discretionary spending**: governed by annual or other periodic appropriations. Centre is pushing for more fiscal discipline by reducing the scope for discretionary spending and limiting States to focus on mandatory expenditures. Whereas, states are looking for more fiscal space for increasing discretionary spending.

### **What are the issues associated with discretionary spending?**

(1) Once started, some of the discretionary expenditure, used to increase demand in the economy, continues for longer periods leading to **fiscal stress**. This is because it is hard to **decrease government spending**, especially due to the resistance from the public.

(2) In a federal system, States' fiscal stress gets spilled over to the Centre, leading to a situation of overall **magnified fiscal slippages**.

(3) As the economy is recovering from the crisis, there exists a need to adhere to the path of fiscal correction both by the Centre and by the States.

(4) Many States indulge in higher levels of expenditures towards maintaining what they call their '**models of welfare provisioning**'.

(6) Sustained increase in welfare expenditure by the States leads to **fiscal expansion**, which necessitates **additional resource mobilization**. However, limited success in additional resource mobilization forced the state governments to **resort to borrowing**. Fiscal expansion financed through debt and the resultant debt accumulation have important impacts on the economy.

### **What should be the course of action?**

The **funds raised** through borrowings must be used for **capital formation**. This would contribute to the real income of future generations and add to the repayment capacity of the government as well.

There is a need for **fiscal correction** or fiscal consolidation at the State level. This can be done by **raising additional resources** at the sub-national levels, and simultaneously, ensuring **expenditure prioritization**.

The Central government must demonstrate its commitment to fiscal discipline in order to ensure a **cooperative federal structure**.

## 7. [The new facets of terrorism](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article "**The new facets of terrorism**" published in the "**The Hindu**" on **30<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS-3, Security Challenges and their Management in Border Areas – Linkages of Organized Crime with Terrorism.

**News:** Recently, two acts of terror were carried out in the U.S. and Russia. In the US, an attempt was made to murder Salman Rushdie, the famous author of the controversial 'The Satanic Verses'. In Russia, Darya Dugina, a nationalist leader and one of the supporters of Vladimir Putin's invasion of Ukraine, died in a car bomb explosion.

### **What are the causes of worry?**

**The fanaticism of religious fundamentalists has no expiry date:** Salman Rushdie was attacked for the words that he had written 34 years ago. Thereafter, Iran's Ayatollah Ruhollah

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Khomeini issued a fatwa against him in 1989. Terrorists driven by **religious fanaticism** are daring, suicidal, and vengeful individuals.

It is very difficult to protect a target because terrorists **integrate** into the **maze of ethnicities** of the United States and emerge only to kill. Here, the attack was made by a **24-year-old “sleeper”**, an offender who was not on the **FBI records** as a **terror suspect**.

**Democracies** and **autocracies** are known to use the **same tools of** intelligence gathering etc. But the recent attacks have made a mockery of **all security drills and knowledge** that has been accumulated by security agencies over the years. In the last decade, **technology, software, and tools** are used to tackle **infiltration**.

U.S. agencies gather and go through volumes of personal data of citizens and people around the world and deploy tools such as Artificial Intelligence (AI) to identify terrorists or their sympathizers. However, these new-age tools offer no guarantee of pre-emption and early detection.

Similarly, the Moscow incident puts a question mark on the **efficacy of Russian intelligence and law enforcement agencies**.

Russia also apprehended a suspect recently, who had allegiance to an Islamic terror group. He is alleged to have been preparing to enter India and harm an **unnamed dignitary** or high-value person. Therefore, threats are real to India as well.

### 8. [Floods and foes](#)

**Source:** The post is based on articles “**Floods and foes**” published in the “**The Hindu**” “**Floods in Pakistan bear similarities to those in India. It’s time for a collaborative mechanism to deal with extreme weather events**” published in the **Indian Express** on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2022.

**Syllabus:** GS 3 Disaster Management; GS 2 International Relations

**Relevance:** Flood Management and India-Pakistan Relations

**News:** In recent days, Pakistan has been hit by the worst natural disaster(flood). The Prime Minister of India has expressed condolences to the victims of the flooding in India’s neighborhood.

#### **Implications of flooding in Pakistan**

As per the official statements, due to flooding, one-third of Pakistan is underwater, more than 1,100 people have died, and over 33 million people have been affected. Homes, roads, and infrastructure have been damaged, amounting to a loss of about \$10 billion.

Further, standing crops have been affected. There are fears of disease as well as food shortages.

#### **What are the causes behind Pakistan’s Flood 2022?**

Pakistan experienced a monsoon in 2022, which is unusually wet, called “**monsoon on steroids**” by UN Secretary-General.

It is an imprint of a **global-warming-induced extreme weather event**.

In several parts of Pakistan, river embankments have not been repaired for years. Therefore, rivers caused havoc in surrounding places.

Pakistan’s city drainage systems have not received adequate attention from the country’s planners.

#### **Global Response to Pakistan’s Flood, 2022**

Various countries such as the U.K., the U.S., China, the UAE, Qatar, and Turkey have already dispatched aid to Pakistan, and many others have promised help.

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The IMF announced a **\$1.1 billion bailout tranche**, as part of ongoing negotiations with Pakistan.

### **Significance for India-Pakistan Relations**

There are indications that India will join the growing number of countries and international bodies that have responded to Pakistan's appeal for help to deal with the ravages of the worst floods.

The Pakistan Finance Minister has proposed to **lift the trade ban** imposed on India after the Jammu-Kashmir reorganization in 2019. This would enable the import of Indian vegetables and essential commodities.

**In the past**, both sides have provided assistance to each other in times of **humanitarian crisis**. For example, Pakistan extended help after the Gujarat earthquake of 2001, India did likewise when large swathes of Pakistan were flooded in 2010, and both cooperated during the Kashmir earthquake of 2005.

### **Similarities between India's floods and Pakistan's flood experiences**

The same southwest monsoon that brings the bulk of India's annual rainfall causes rain in Pakistan as well. Both countries are the victims of weather vagaries.

The two countries have shared **colonial legacies** in both **urban planning** and **flood management**.

Further, both countries receive water from the melting glaciers in the Himalayas, which do not respect borders.

### **What should be the course of action?**

**South Asia's ecological continuities** make the case for **regional cooperation on climate-related matters**. Therefore, India and Pakistan must come together during negotiations at the UNFCCC. The Subcontinent could learn from ASEAN's initiative to draft a **State of Climate Report** on the eve of COP-26 last year, which promotes cooperation and collaboration in the region.

There should be **data sharing mechanisms** on rainfall, river flows, as well as flood alert systems. There can be a **common renewable energy-dominated electricity grid**, which could substantially reduce the climate vulnerability of people in South Asia.

Both India and Pakistan must seize the moment (flood 2022) to help those stranded in the flooding in Pakistan. India considers itself the **"first responder"** in the neighborhood. India has helped Nepal, Sri Lanka, the Maldives, and Afghanistan during a such humanitarian crises.

## 9. [An intellectual property regime must boost innovation](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article **"An intellectual property regime must boost innovation"** published in the **Live Mint** on **31<sup>st</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 3 – Intellectual Property Rights

**News:** Two weeks ago, the Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister of India released a report on the current status of India's Intellectual Property (IP) regime.

Patents were designed to offer **inventors a monopoly** over their inventions for a limited duration so that they had time to recover their investments in research and development (R&D) and make some profit to boot.

### **The Findings of the report**

The number of patents filed in the country has increased from only 39,400 patents filed in 2010-11 to as many as 66,440 in 2021-22, over the past decade.

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There has also been a steady increase in patents filed by Indian residents, accounting for nearly 44% of all patents filed last year.

All this has resulted in India rising from 81st in the **Global Innovation Index** in 2016 to 46th last year.

### **What are the causes behind the innovation boost in India?**

The government has undertaken a series of reforms that have been implemented over the past few years.

There has been a progressive simplification of procedures, the electronic delivery of certificates, and expedited examination for certain categories of applicants.

### **What are the issues that are still causing problems in innovation boost in India?**

(1) Despite these reforms, India **lags far behind countries** that set **global benchmarks** in innovation. **For example**, the total number of patents filed in India last year was less than 5% of those filed in China and 10% of those filed in the US.

(2) India lags in patents granted, with just under 27,000 in 2020 compared to 530,000 obtained in China and 350,000 in the US.

(3) The **time taken to process a patent application** is problematic, i.e., on average 58 months are taken to process the patent application in India as compared to 20 months in China and 23 in the US.

### **(4) Problems in Digital Innovation**

India's patent system was designed before the age of **digital innovation**, and the **duration of this monopoly was set at a generous 20 years**.

Such a long period makes sense for more traditional inventions, but it is disproportionately long in the digital context. It does not encourage **digital inventors** to innovate and invent new ways to remain competitive. Instead, they rely on patent protection over a period of 20 years to stay ahead in the market.

### **What are the underlying causes behind various issues that plague the innovation ecosystem in India?**

India's patent office is poorly staffed. Around 860 people are working in the Indian patent office, 13,704 examiners and controllers are working in the Chinese office, and, 8132 employees are working in the US Patent offices.

### **What are the recommendations in the report?**

(1) The report has recommended the addition of 2,000 more staff at India's patent office over the next two years to address this.

(2) Various **procedural reforms**, like the **introduction of fixed timelines at various stages** in the patent process, must be introduced to improve the efficiency of the patent application process.

(3) The **onerous compliance obligations**, such as the requirement to submit information on the prosecution of foreign patent applications even though this information can be easily accessed from the PCT portal, must be eliminated.

(4) The **utility model patents** for minor innovations must be introduced. This would allow for a less stringent process. The innovations emerge from projects under the country's **Atal Innovation Mission**.

### **Other reforms required -Not mentioned in the report**

(1) **Reforms in Judiciary and Enforcement Machinery**: This would ensure that patent holders can easily enforce their patents once granted.

(2) **Different periods of protection**: This should be awarded based on **the nature of the innovation** which is sought to be protected. For example, Drugs and pharmaceuticals could



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continue to enjoy 20 years of protection, while patents for digital innovation could be limited to 5 years or less.

### 10. [Killer on the road: Road fatalities are going up because users don't take basic precautions and road design is poor](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article “**Killer on the road: Road fatalities are going up because users don't take basic precautions and road design is poor**” published in **The Times of India** on **31<sup>st</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 3 – Infrastructure

**Context:** This article discusses about the issues associated with road accidents and ways to reduce it.

**What is the current situation of road accidents?**

2021 marked the highest ever road accidents and numbers are expected to increase in the coming years.

Two-wheelers accounted for 44.5% of deaths, up from 35% in 2018, and pedestrian deaths have doubled to 12% of deaths since 2018.

**What does the data say?**

NCRB report blames over-speeding for 60% deaths and dangerous/careless driving for 26% deaths.

Union Ministry of road transport and highways (MoRTH) data shows that 70% of two-wheeler travellers killed in 2020 weren't wearing helmets. 84% of car travellers who died weren't wearing seatbelts.

**What has led to such accidents?**

The **predictable and uniform design of medians, intersections, lanes, shoulders, and pedestrian paths are absent** in most urban centers.

Most **highways still lack enough safe crossing facilities** for motorists and pedestrians while illegal openings in medians are big concerns.

Techniques like **rumble strips** aren't employed adequately.

**How road accidents can be minimized?**

The Motor Vehicles Act amended in 2019 has made **seat belts and helmets** compulsory but **there is lack of enforcement**.

A study from IIT Delhi has suggested that more **focus should be made on street and highway design** and enforcement rather than the current overwhelming focus on motor vehicle safety.

### 11. [Supertech buildings' demolition is a cinematic distraction from nexus between state and builders](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article “**Supertech buildings' demolition is a cinematic distraction from nexus between state and builders**” published in **The Indian Express** on **31<sup>st</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 3 – Industries and industrial policies

**Context:** This article discusses about the nexus between state and private players in real estate and issues associated with urban areas.

The recently-demolished Supertech buildings in Noida shows the new relations between land, private real estate players and the state.

**How the relationship between private companies and state has changed?**

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The market for land during the 20<sup>th</sup> century in NCR rose due to the actions of the government. The Delhi Improvements Trust and the Delhi Development Authority had a land monopoly in the post-independence decades. Their actions led to huge inflation in land prices which prevented people from buying land in Delhi.

The government's actions as a land monopolist in the Delhi region led private players to look beyond its boundaries.

Areas in Haryana and UP that bordered Delhi emerged as important nodes of urbanization.

The private house market started growing from the mid-1980s, with the availability of new sources of home loans and the expansion of the middle class.

**Since the 1980s, a new urbanisation in India came up. It helped in forming new relationships between government mechanisms and private players.** It helped in alteration of the approved lands.

As land values increased, it became profitable to convince government regulatory authorities **to allow changes in the plans that were actually approved.**

**What are the issues arising out of the nexus between private players and state?**

The approved **plans can easily be altered** and those plans are approved that benefit all parties. This requires collaboration between different levels of government, politicians, real estate companies, land surveyors and brokers of different kinds.

The complex system of land measurement and planning procedures made it almost impossible to institute mechanisms of transparency.

There is an increase in the state-real estate complex where it is has become difficult to calculate where the state ends and private interests begin. This is the Indian version of the military-industrial complex.

**What are the issues associated with the urban areas?**

Demolishing can lead to depriving rights of urban dwellers and cruelty towards them.

The problems of urban areas require a different approach rather than simply demolishing.

There are many illegal lands or structures but with the time they become legalized.

The encroachment of forest lands by powerful people degrades the urban environment.

This all happens due to the peculiar relations between governments and land markets and sometimes our own participation in it.

### [12. A bad idea: Separating 'E' from ESG](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article "A bad idea: Separating 'E' from ESG" published in **The Business Standard** on **31<sup>st</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 3 – Industries and industrial policies

**Context:** The article discusses the importance of social and governance for any entity and what stand can India take in the future.

**What are the importance of social(S) and governance (G) in ESG?**

The S and G pillars are as important as E(Environment) in assessing corporate performance from stakeholders' perspective.

Corporations that violate human rights, infringe labor rights or have gender-insensitive policies should be disapproved and they can't be idolized.

Impact investments can't ignore a corporate's performance under these two pillars.

Even the Conference of Parties' (COPs) negotiations under the UNFCCC framework give due consideration to Social and Economic factors, besides Environmental.

**What are the issues associated with COPs meetings?**

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The **developing countries have struggled to put up a united front** to keep the social and economic dimensions relevant in these discussions.

They have **failed to meet their commitments on providing finances and technology transfer to developing countries.**

There are clear signs of developed countries sliding back on their own emission commitments made in climate change negotiations.

The ongoing Russia- Ukraine war and its impact on the global availability of fossil fuels and their prices have forced many countries to rework their energy policies.

**What are the different stands taken by developed countries?**

The developed countries mostly try to push their agenda due to their larger presence in the international forums.

ESG is an important subject of discussion in international forums like Financial Stability Board (FSB). These forums are dominated by the developed countries and their decisions prevail.

**What is required from India in the G20 meetings?**

Indian officials attending meetings of these forums need to be careful. They should not end up supporting ideas that go beyond what has been agreed during the climate change negotiations.

India will assume the presidency of G20 by the end of this year.

There is likely to be a lot of pressure from the developed member countries on India to commit more on such issues that are of interest for the developed countries.

We must safeguard our domestic policy space in these negotiations.

### 13. [Suicide of Businessmen: Limited liability could save some Indian lives](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article “**Limited liability could save some Indian lives**” published in the **Livemint** on **1<sup>st</sup> September 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 3 – Indian Economy and issues relating to planning, mobilization, of resources, growth, development and employment.

**Relevance:** About the suicide of Businessmen and the role of Limited Liability Partnerships(LLPs).

**News:** According to the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), during the two pandemic years of 2020 and 2021 more businessmen took their own lives than cultivators. This defies pre-covid trends.

What are the key findings of NCRB data on the suicide of Businessmen?

**Daily wage-earners committed more suicides:** The category of daily wage-earners logged the biggest toll with over 42,000 such deaths in 2021. This is a little above a quarter of the year’s total. The report highlighted business distress caused by the covid crisis as a plausible factor.

**Business folks vs farmers:** By last year’s count, more than 12,000 people in business died by suicide. On the other hand above 10,000 individuals engaged in agriculture lost their lives during the same period.

**Subcategory of Businessmen:** According to the NCRB database, suicide cases among people who were in business included 4,500+ vendors, 3,600+ tradesfolk and 3,800+ persons doing something else.

**States of Businessmen committed suicides:** Karnataka, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Telangana accounted for half of them.

What are Limited Liability Partnerships(LLPs)?

**Read here:** [Limited Liability Partnership \(LLP\)](#)

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India passed its [Limited Liability Partnership Act](#). This created an LLP format, letting people join hands to set up a business entity governed by far fewer compliance rules than a regular company, but with the personal assets of partners shielded by the law from creditors.

How Limited Liability Partnership can reduce the suicide of Businessmen?

**a)** It limits the dues of a business to the money wilfully invested in it, **b)** In LLPs the owners would get a share of profits but have nothing at stake beyond the value of their shares.

What should be done to improve the effectiveness of LLPs?

In the informal sector, defaulting debtors can face severe consequences. But the LLP Act has witnessed only scant adoption. A special campaign to promote LLP enterprise and/or formalization of the informal economy has to take place.

### 14. [A quarter century of public-private partnership](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article “**A quarter century of public-private partnership**” published in **The Business Standard** on **1<sup>st</sup> September 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 3 – Privatization and liberalization

**Context:** This article discusses the PPP model and concerns associated with it.

#### **History of PPP**

The early 1990s witnessed the growth of public-private partnership or PPP before it mainstreamed into economic policy.

Spectrum’s Kakinada and GVK’s Jegurupadu power plants were two of the eight fast-track projects approved by the government in 1992.

**However, the fiscal 1996-97** can be regarded to be the **official starting year of PPP**.

An **expert group on Commercialization of Infrastructure Projects** submitted a path-breaking report advocating a significant role for private capital. The private sector allowed into ports through an amendment to the Major Port Trusts Act and National Highways Authority of India’s capital base was widened to Rs. 500 crores.

This report helped the formation of various organizations such as **The Infrastructure Development Finance Corporation**.

The **Planning Commission recognized a significant intra deficit**. It planned to raise the Gross Capital Formation (GCF) in infrastructure to 9 per cent of GDP by the terminal year of the 11th Plan (2007-12).

**The India Infrastructure Finance Company Ltd (IIFC)** was set up in 2006 to provide long-term financial assistance to PPP projects.

The share of private capital moved up from 22 per cent in the 10<sup>th</sup> Plan period to 37 per cent in the 11<sup>th</sup> Plan.

**PPP started lowering from 2012** onwards due to inappropriate risk-allocation, aggressive bidding, twin balance-sheet problems, mounting non-performing assets, and lack of dispute resolution.

Almost all Indian corporations and commercial lending institutions are careful of investing in greenfield PPP projects and foreign investors prefer operating brownfield assets.

#### **What were the steps taken by government to revive PPP?**

The Budget of 2014 proposed to set up an institution called **3P India** with allocation of Rs 500 crore.

In May 2015, the government constituted a nine-member committee which submitted its report “Revisiting and Revitalizing PPP Model of Infrastructure Development”.

The committee endorsed setting up “3P India”.



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3P India would deal with complex PPP issues like renegotiation, independent regulation, equitable risk-allocation, and amendments to Prevention of Corruption Act 1988, expeditious redress of disputes, and capacity building.

The annuity and hybrid annuity models that sought to substantially reduce the risk of private investment were adopted.

New sectors like ropeways and effluent treatment plants were brought into the PPP ambit.

PPP is back with 100 percent of the National Monetization Pipeline target of Rs 6 trillion and 40 percent of the National Infrastructure Pipeline target of Rs 111 trillion expected to be funded under PPP formats.

The finance ministry in July announced the setting up of a new body called the Infrastructure Finance Secretariat (IFS) which is expected to play an integrative role in the revival of the PPP ecosystem.

### 15. [Effecting the ban on single-use plastics](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the article “[Effecting the ban on single-use plastics](#)” published in **The Hindu** on **2<sup>nd</sup> September 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 3 – Environment – Pollution.

**Relevance:** About the ban on SUPs(single-use plastics).

**News:** The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change has notified the Plastic Waste Management Amendment Rules, 2021. Since July 1, 2022, India has banned the manufacture, import, stocking, distribution, sale, and use of single-use plastic (SUP) items with low utility and high littering potential.

About Plastic Waste Management Amendment Rules

**Read here:** [Plastic Waste Management \(Amendment\) Rules, 2022 – Explained, pointwise](#)

**Other countries that banned SUPs:** Bangladesh became the first country to ban thin plastic bags in 2002; New Zealand banned plastic bags in July 2019. China had issued a ban on plastic bags in 2020 with a phased implementation.

What is the international commitment that led to banning SUPs?

India is a party to the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA). India has also signed a resolution to draw up an agreement in the future that will make it legally binding for signatories to address the full life cycle of plastics, from production to disposal.

India also piloted a resolution on single-use plastics pollution at the 4th United Nations Environment Assembly in 2019, recognising the urgent need for the global community to address this issue. This resolution was adopted at the UN Environment Assembly as an important step forward.

**Read more:** [Candy sticks to earbuds: Govt bans single-use plastic from 2022](#)

Why are single-use plastics harmful?

**Read here:**

- [Explained: Why is single-use plastic being banned in India from July 1](#)
- [Why is single-use plastic being banned in India?](#)

What are the measures taken to enforce the ban on SUPs?

In an effort to empower citizens to help curb the plastic menace, the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) has launched a grievance redressal application.

The Government has been taking measures for awareness generation towards the elimination of single-use plastics. The awareness campaign has brought together entrepreneurs and start-ups,

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industry, Central, State and local Governments, regulatory bodies, experts, citizen organisations, etc.

What are the challenges in enforcing the ban on SUPs?

**Read here:**

- [India's ban on select single-use plastic items: A start but still a long way from blanket ban](#)
- [Single-use plastic ban: Reading the fine print reveals ominous loopholes](#)

What can be done to properly enforce the ban on SUPs?

**1)** The solution to the plastic pollution problem is not the responsibility of the government alone, but of industries, brands, manufacturers and most importantly consumers, **2)** Greener alternatives to plastic may be considered a sustainable option. For example, compostable and bio-degradable plastic, etc.,

### 16. Making at home: Vikrant's commissioning & plans to build fifth generation fighters must speed up defence self-reliance

**Source:** The post is based on an article **"Making at home: Vikrant's commissioning & plans to build fifth generation fighters must speed up defence self-reliance"** published in **The Times of India** on **2<sup>nd</sup> September 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 3 – Defence technologies – Indigenization of technology

**News:** This article discusses the advantages of indigenization.

**The Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) recently cleared the project to develop Tejas Mark-2. It is an upgraded version of the indigenous light combat aircraft Tejas Mark-1. Another project of Rs 15,000-plus crore to build a fifth-generation advanced medium combat aircraft will be cleared in the next few months.**

**Tejas Mark-1 will replace the ageing MiG-21s while Tejas Mark-2 will gradually substitute Mirage-2000s, Jaguars and the MiG-29s.**

**Another good news is commissioning of INS Vikrant. More than 75% of the ship's components have been procured domestically.**

**Why indigenization in defense is necessary?**

**Geopolitical environment** – It has become more complex and India can no longer rely on Russia which is now China's "limitless" ally.

**Cost** – Most hi-tech foreign purchases will be costlier than their domestically manufactured counterparts.

**Advantage for Indian industry** – Made in India arms and defence systems will be a big boost for Indian industry.

**Why are imports still a necessity?**

The import content for the indigenous Tejas fighter continues to be around 50%.

The key reason for reliance on foreign aero engines is that domestic Kaveri engine project failed. Big private sector companies should be invited for joint research and development to make import dependency minimum.

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17. [Three key changes: To counteract global slowdown GoI should privatise, reform agri market & reduce customs duties](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article “**Three key changes: To counteract global slowdown GoI should privatise, reform agri market & reduce customs duties**” published in **The Times of India** on **2<sup>nd</sup> September 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 3

**News:** This article discusses about the steps that India should take to tackle global economic slowdown.

**April-June quarter’s GDP data shows recovery in the Indian Economy. However, global economy has slowed down.**

**Also, RBI’s monetary tightening to contain inflation will hinder economic progress.**

**All these issues can be tackled if the state and central govt. can resume the shelved reforms.**

**What steps can be taken by government of India to counter global economic slowdown?**

**Privatization**

GoI needs to overcome bureaucratic hurdles to privatization.

The government announced strategic disinvestment of 35 PSUs in 2016. Out of which 24 are still in the process of sale.

There is slow progress in the proposed privatization of two public sector banks of the 12 functioning ones.

These transactions will provide capital for GoI and boost its infrastructure development plans.

**Agriculture**

The potential of the common platform for a national agricultural market (e-NAM) hasn’t been fully tapped.

It has a great potential but there is a need to work on logistics and dispute settlement.

**Trade**

The protectionist approach needs to be discarded to get the most out of the PLI scheme.

FTAs, rather than bilateral trade deals, should be prioritized.

18. [The world of clean hydrogen buzzing with activity](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article “**The world of clean hydrogen buzzing with activity**” published in **The Business Standard** on **2<sup>nd</sup> September 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 3 – Energy and associated issues

**Context:** The article discusses the steps that have been taken by India and other countries for promoting green hydrogen.

**What is green hydrogen?**

[Read Here](#)

**What is needed to increasing the production of Green Hydrogen?**

Green hydrogen has a critical role to play in decarbonization and the achievement of net-zero emissions.

There are four things needed to scale it up:

- Competitively priced renewable energy
- Electrolysers
- Supporting physical infrastructure
- Policy push

One of India’s advantages is cost-competitive renewable energy.

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### What steps have been taken in India?

**Reliance** is one of the largest producers of grey hydrogen globally.

It has announced to **deliver green hydrogen at the lowest cost** and to progressively commence transition from grey hydrogen to green hydrogen by 2025.

This will be supported by a giga-scale electrolyser manufacturing facility.

The **Adani Group** announced a partnership with Total Energies for its green hydrogen push.

The company targets production of 1 million tonnes of green hydrogen per year by 2030.

### What steps have been taken worldwide?

**US** have recently passed Inflation Reduction Act. It is the world's first tax credits for hydrogen.

**Amazon** announced to buy almost 11,000 tonnes of liquid green hydrogen from Plug Power annually.

**Walmart** had signed a similar deal with Plug Power to get up to 20 tonnes per day of carbon free hydrogen to power material-handling lift trucks in the US.

**Canada** is aiming to become a major producer and exporter of hydrogen as well as related clean technologies.

**Germany** is aiming to import significant amounts of renewable hydrogen to decarbonise its hard-to-abate sectors in line with its 2045 climate neutrality target.

### 19. [Overseeing an ocean: INS Vikrant joins the navy's fleet](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article "**Overseeing an ocean: INS Vikrant joins the navy's fleet**" published in **The Business Standard** on **2<sup>nd</sup> September 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 3 – Defense Technology – Indigenization of technologies

**Relevance:** security and bilateral relation

**News:** Indian Naval Ship (INS) Vikrant is commissioned into the navy's fleet. The articles discuss the further challenges before India in securing the vast ocean.

It will be the second aircraft carrier with India, first one being the INS Vikramaditya, that was bought from Russia. It will enter India into the exclusive club of only 5 countries, with 2 aircraft carriers.

However, it will still not be sufficient to tackle the challenges in front of India.

#### What are the issues India might still face?

Indian navy required two deployed carriers, minimum: One for the east coast (the Bay of Bengal and Malacca Strait) and a second for the west coast (the Arabian Sea, the Pakistan coast and West Asia).

Lately, the navy has begun suggesting for a third deployed carrier to carry out power projection at longer ranges across the Indian Ocean Region.

Now, **India's 2 aircraft carriers don't mean that both will be deployed**. The naval fleet must have three aircraft carriers to have two carriers operationally available. Because most of the time one of those three would be in the dockyard for maintenance.

**For example**, out of US's 11 carriers, only three US Navy carrier strike groups (CSG) were operationally deployed.

The Indian Navy's two aircraft carriers would mostly amount to just a single operationally deployed carrier.

Similarly, operationally deploying three carriers would require a four-carrier fleet.

#### What is the significance of warships?

Naval forces have an unparalleled capability for dispensing humanitarian aid and disaster relief as the Indian Navy did after the Asian tsunami of 2004.



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US has come up with National Defence Authorisation Act that specifies the annual defence budget and expenditures under various heads. It has for the first time; the US has given the navy legal and budgetary powers to discharge a clear peacetime as well as its combat role.

India plays a role of security provider in the Indian Ocean Region. It has a role and interest in protecting sea lines of communication (SLOCs) that carry 70 per cent of global trade.

China expanding navy poses a threat to India. China's warship is building yards in Dalian and constructing four-five large and sophisticated destroyers simultaneously.

### **what are the challenges in front of India?**

India is facing a dilemma whether it should focus on sea or land borders to counter China.

India is the only member country of the Quadrilateral that shares a land border with China. PLA's multiple encroachments, across the LAC, have heightened the tensions on India's land borders.

However, the US and Australia are pushing India to focus on the Indian Ocean Region.

India must resolve its stand since India's own economic prosperity depends upon keeping open its SLOCs in the Indian Ocean.

### 20. India's cyber infrastructure needs more than patches

**Source:** This post is created based on the **article "India's cyber infrastructure needs more than patches"**, published in **The Hindu** on **3<sup>rd</sup> September 2022**.

**Syllabus Topic:** GS Paper 3 – Cybersecurity

**Context:** Cybercrime is increasing with the increased use of information and communication technology (ICT). However, the capacity of enforcement agencies to investigate cybercrime remains limited.

According to the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), from 12,317 cases of cybercrime in 2016, there were 50,035 cases registered in 2020.

In Arjun Pandit Rao Khotkar vs Kailash Kushanrao Gorantyal case, SC settled the rules on the admissibility of electronic evidence.

The Court held that a certificate under Section 65B(4) of the Indian Evidence (IE) Act was a mandatory prerequisite for the admissibility of (secondary) electronic records if the original record could not be produced.

States are responsible for creating the infrastructure for cybersecurity, whereas the center is responsible for providing uniformity in the legislation.

### **What are the challenges in dealing with cyber or computer-related offences?**

**No separate procedural code:** There is **no separate procedural code** for the investigation of cyber or computer-related offences. The nature of electronic evidence is entirely different compared to the traditional crime.

A five-judge committee suggested **Draft Rules for the Reception, Retrieval, Authentication, and Preservation of Electronic Records**. However, it is yet to be given statutory force.

**Recruitment of technical staff** for the investigation of cybercrime is not happening at the required pace. Any person with an academic background in the arts, commerce, literature, or management cannot identify digital evidence.

**Authority to investigate:** As per the Information technology Act, offenses registered under the act, cannot be investigated, by an officer, below the rank of an inspector. However, there are not enough inspectors in a district for that purpose.

**Examiner of Electronic Evidence:** While most State cyber labs are sufficiently equipped to analyze hard disks and mobile phones, many are yet to be notified as 'Examiner of Electronic

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Evidence' (by the central government) to enable them to provide expert opinions on electronic records.

**Trans-national cybercrime:** It is very difficult to investigate Transnational cybercrimes. In these cases, blocking an objectionable website or suspect's account is the only option available to the authorities.

### **What should be the future course of action?**

**First,** the broad 'guidelines for the identification, collection, acquisition, and preservation of digital evidence' are given in the Indian Standard IS/ISO/IEC 27037: 2012. Which are issued by the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS). The guidelines are sufficient to ensure that electronic evidence is neither tampered with nor subject to spoliation during the investigation.

**Second,** a sufficient capacity build-up is required to handle cybercrimes. It could be done either by setting up a separate cyber police station in each district or range or by having technically qualified staff in every police station.

**Third,** Information Technology (IT) Act, 2000 should be amended and make the officers of the rank of sub-inspector, eligible to investigate the cybercrimes.

**Fourth,** the central government has proposed launching a digital rupee using blockchain technology soon. State enforcement agencies need to be ready for these technologies. Cyber forensic laboratories of States should be upgraded by providing modernization funds by the center.

**Fifth,** Data localization must be implemented to deal with the transnational crimes happening in India.

**Sixth,** the Indian police receives a CyberTipline report on online Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM) from the U.S.'s non-profit agency, the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC). India should develop its in-house capacity and/or makes intermediaries accountable to identify and remove online CSAM for immediate action by the police.

### 21. [INS Vikrant sets sail: Why it is key to India's maritime strategy](#)

**Source:** The post is based on the following article "Wind in the sail" published in **The Hindu** on **3<sup>rd</sup> September 2022**. "INS Vikrant sets sail: Why it is key to India's maritime strategy" published in the **Indian Express** on **3<sup>rd</sup> September 2022**.

"India needs to get cracking on the next aircraft carrier" published in **The Times of India** on **3<sup>rd</sup> September 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 3 – Indigenization of technology and developing new technology.

**Relevance:** About the present state of the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) Treaty.

**News:** India commissioned its first indigenously designed and built aircraft carrier, INS Vikrant. About IAC Vikrant

**Read here:** [IAC Vikrant](#)

The Navy has taken an active interest in procuring either the [French Rafale M](#) or the [American F/A-18 Super Hornet](#). This would need structural modifications in the ship which would allow the operation of these more capable aircraft from its deck.

What are the strategic advantages of aircraft carriers like IAC Vikrant?

**Access to littoral spaces:** In peace and in war, no platform provides access to littoral spaces as thoroughly and emphatically as the aircraft carrier.

**India's proactive maritime strategy:** Vikrant will boost India's maritime capability in the Indo-Pacific and the Indian Ocean Region. It will also aid India's 'SAGAR' or Security and Growth for All in the Region initiative.

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**Trade benefits:** A strong Navy is critical to India's ambition to grow its share in global trade. This is because India's merchandise exports are largely maritime.

**Economic empowerment:** One shipyard job leads to the creation of 5-6 jobs in ancillary industries. Over 500 Indian firms and 100 MSMEs contributed to building INS Vikrant. For example, Vikrant generated employment opportunities for almost 15,000 personnel across various segments including 2,000 personnel at the Cochin Shipyard.

**The versatility of aircraft carriers:** With Vikrant, India's aircraft carriers can be used as versatile assets, switching between power projection, soft and hard power diplomacies. This is because the navy earlier has only one aircraft carrier.

**Counter China:** INS Vikrant significantly expands the Indian Navy's footprint in the backdrop of increasing Chinese activity in the region. For instance, Under the People's Liberation Army Navy's (PLAN) "far-seas" strategy, China deploys 7-8 vessels in the IOR at any given time. There will be a Chinese Carrier battle group (CBG) moving into the IOR on a near-permanent basis in the future.

*What is a Carrier battle group (CBG)?*

*A Carrier battle group (CBG) is a floating airfield capable of moving 400-500 nautical miles a day. CBG also provide operational flexibility on a 'here and now' basis to launch air defence operations, anti-submarine and anti-ship warfare, and also strikes on land-based targets. CBGs have the inherent capability to prevent emerging threats at standoff ranges.*

*What are the challenges raised while building aircraft carriers?*

**Critics were concerned about the relevance of aircraft carriers in the contemporary world.**

They say there is little point in spending billions for a carrier strike force to protect the Bay of Bengal or the Arabian Sea. This is because **a)** The near-seas defence can be easily ensured from airbases on India's island territories, **b)** Aircraft carriers are logistically unviable and highly vulnerable to new hypersonic weapons and disruptive technologies, **c) Susceptibility to enemy attack:** The flattop of aircraft carriers is defenceless (a virtual sitting duck) against modern-day underwater attacks, long-range strategic airpower and ballistic missiles; **d) Prized target for enemies:** In a conflict scenario, the destruction of the opponent's aircraft carrier is a priority mission.

*How can India move ahead after IAC Vikrant?*

**Increase indigenous content:** The IAC Vikrant has 76% of indigenous content overall, but its critical technology has been imported. This points out the need for persistence and increases further indigenisation.

**Build second indigenous aircraft carrier:** The Indian Navy's ambition is to have three aircraft carriers. (INS Vikramaditya procured from Russia is undergoing a major repair-and-maintenance cycle). The expertise gained from building Vikrant could now be used to build a second, more capable, indigenous carrier.

**Solve the fighter jet conundrum:** India's plans to develop its own twin-engine deck-based fighter remain a distant dream. So, India should resolve the fighter jet conundrum while also taking a call on the second indigenous aircraft carrier.

**Must read:** [Need for a New Aircraft Carrier for the Indian Navy – Explained, pointwise](#)

The deployment of maritime power needs to be anchored in the logic of geopolitics and long-term state interests, and not on contingent assessments of imminent needs.



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### 22. [Fungi form a kingdom of life — they show us how we all need others to live](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article “Fungi form a kingdom of life — they show us how we all need others to live” published in **The Times of India** on **3<sup>rd</sup> September 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 3 – Biodiversity

**Relevance:** fungi and its uses

**News:** This article discusses the fungi and problem associated with it.

**What are fungi?**

1) They are neither plants nor animals. They are a body of species. They vary in size. 2) Yeast, moulds, lichens, mushrooms, and conks or wood are types of fungi. 3) Fungi decompose matter. They also perform a symbiotic role. Plants can only synthesize nutrients from the soil with the help of fungi. 4) Fungi are impacted by climate change, use of chemicals, habitat loss, and fragmentation. 5) Some fungi are critically endangered.

**What are the uses of fungi?**

Some fungi cause diseases and some provide essential goods. For example, **Yeasts** give us food preservation and liquid sterilization technique. Antibiotics come from **moulds** and penicillin and statins from **fungus**. Medicines needed for organ transplants come from **fungi**.

**What can be done to save fungi?**

The IUCN Red List should be applied to fungi as well.

They need to be added to flora and fauna in environment legislation.

Fungi are dependent on plants and animals to grow in order to preserve fungi we should preserve those trees and animals.

Fungal conservation is integrally habitat conservation.

### 23. [Microbes enable all life — and they adapt constantly](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article “Microbes enable all life — and they adapt constantly” published in **The Times of India** on **3<sup>rd</sup> September 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 3 – Biodiversity

**Context:** This article discusses microbes and issues related to them.

**Microbes**

1) They have the ability to respond to the environment by constantly adapting to the environment. 2) Microbes have groups of molecules or proteins that behave like sensors when they see sugar and light. 3) They pass this information to cells and they move in that direction. 4) This process of movement is called **taxis**. 5) They have **photoreceptor** that senses different molecules and light wavelengths including infrared.

**What are the problems with microbes?**

Fertilizers entering into lakes allow microbes to grow into **algal blooms**.

Algal blooms expand very fast and suck up nutrients and release virus and toxins which can poison animals.

**Cyanobacteria**

It is a type of microbe.

They are **blue-green** in colour because they have pigments which let them absorb lights for photosynthesis.

They have existed for about two billion years and over the time they became mineralized.



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24. [India needs to get cracking on the next aircraft carrier: INS Vikrant is a necessary but not sufficient condition to offset China's string-of-pearls threat](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article “India needs to get cracking on the next aircraft carrier: INS Vikrant is a necessary but not sufficient condition to offset China’s string-of-pearls threat” published in **The Times of India** on **3<sup>rd</sup> September 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 3 – Security and associated issues

**Context:** The article discusses about challenges faced by Indian in Indian Ocean Region and benefit of indigenous warships to Indian economy.

The indigenous aircraft carrier INS Vikrant constructed will boost India’s maritime power and sea control capabilities.

**What are the problems being faced by Indian navy?**

The country has been without an operational aircraft carrier for the last two years. Its only carrier INS Vikramaditya inducted from Russia in 2013 has been undergoing a major repair-and-maintenance cycle.

India needs at least **three carriers** while one undergoes the periodic maintenance, the other two can be operationally available for the eastern and western seaboard.

Another problem is associated with the serviceability-maintenance of the jets acquired for the carriers.

India had acquired 45 MiG-29Ks from Russia to operate from the deck of INS Vikramaditya.

The navy is now looking to import 26 new jets to meet the shortfall till the indigenous twin engine deck based fighter is ready in around 10 years.

**What are the maritime threats to India?**

**1)** There has been increasing threat from China in the Indian Ocean Region. China has world’s largest navy of 355 warships and submarines. It can deploy 7-8 vessels in the IOR at any given time. **2)** It is building two more carriers at an astonishing speed. There will be a Chinese CBG moving in the IOR on a near permanent basis in the future. This will erode India’s traditional maritime combat edge in its own strategic backyard.

**Which is more useful a shore based field or aircraft carriers?**

IOR is getting increasingly militarized along with the expanding military bases therefore it is necessary for India to deploy aircraft carrier.

Fighters jets taking off from shore-based airfields will have relatively limited combat ranges.

Carrier battle group (CBG) is a floating airfield capable of moving 400-500 nautical miles a day. CBG also provide operational flexibility on a ‘here and now’ basis to launch air defence operations, anti-submarine and anti-ship warfare, and also strikes on land-based targets.

Land based airbases can also be more vulnerable to pre-emptive strikes compared to the mobile airfields on CBGs.

CBGs have the inherent capability to prevent emerging threats at standoff ranges.

**How indigenous warships help the economy?**

One shipyard job leads to creation of 5-6 jobs in ancillary industries.

Over 500 Indian firms and 100 MSMEs contributed towards building INS Vikrant which has a 76% indigenous content.

It generated employment opportunities for almost 15,000 personnel across various segments which included direct employment of 2,000 personnel at the Cochin Shipyard.

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# General

# Studies

# Paper – 4

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### General Studies - 4

#### 1. [Indian philanthropy has a worthy record that could shine brighter](#)

**Source:** The post is based on an article “**Indian philanthropy has a worthy record that could shine brighter**” published in the **Live Mint** on **18<sup>th</sup> August 2022**.

**Syllabus:** GS 4 Corporate Governance.

**Relevance:** Ethics in Corporate Governance; Philanthropist

**News: Recently,** the India Philanthropy Report 2022 was published by Bain and Company and Dasra.

#### The Findings

According to the report, **Indian family philanthropy** is expected to grow at a robust 26% compound annual growth rate from 2021-22 to 2025-26.

There is still substantial scope to unlock an additional corpus of ₹60,000 crores to ₹1 trillion.

Family philanthropists are willing to contribute and increase their giving over time to social causes.

#### A Brief History of Family Philanthropy in India

India has had a rich culture of giving, primarily through social networks and religious institutions.

#### Pre-1920 Phase

(1) The process of industrialization that began in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, led a number of families like the Tatas, Birlas, Hamieds, and Bajajs, to create a significant amount of wealth. These families have played an important role in India’s advancement and philanthropic projects.

(2) Sir Jamsetji Tata established the **J.N. Tata Endowment Scheme** in 1892, much before similar foundations were founded in the West. Tata pledged half his wealth to establish **the Indian Institute of Science (IISC)**, which was founded five years after his passing

#### Post-1920 During Mahatma Gandhi’s leadership – The next major shift

(1) Mahatma Gandhi inspired prominent industrialists that believed that ownership of wealth must be held primarily in trusteeship for the benefit of the poor. Therefore, industrialists like Jamnalal Bajaj, G.D. Birla, Ardeshir Godrej, and Dr. K.A. Hamied. Ardeshir Godrej contributed a sum of ₹3 lakh to the Tilak Swaraj Fund established by Mahatma Gandhi in 1920.

(2) In 1935, Dr. K.A. Hamied established Cipla to make India self-reliant in quality healthcare.

(3) Family philanthropists also supported Mahatma Gandhi’s other objectives, like non-violence and the promotion of khadi.

(4) Philanthropic families helped found educational institutes, such as the **Birla Institute of Technology in Pilani** (G.D. Birla), the Indian Institute of Management (Kasturbhai Lalbhai), and the Tata Institute of Social Sciences (Sir Dorabji Tata).

#### Post-Independence India

(1) Many families have established foundations and trusts that work directly with non-profit organizations and local communities to address critical issues like healthcare, quality education, skill building, etc.

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(2) Business families upheld social responsibility as a core value long before corporate social responsibility (CSR) was a legal mandate. For example, **Godrej's 'good and green' approach** to building a more inclusive and greener India is one such.

### Post-1991 Era

(1) **New age role models** such as Azim Premji, Shiv Nadar Rohini Nilekani, and various others who are setting an example for **strategic family giving** and inspiring others to follow suit.

(2) At present, the family philanthropists are pooling resources for collaborative efforts. For example, **Social Compact**, a multi-stakeholder platform was founded with the support of philanthropists such as Rati and Farhad Forbes, Anu Aga, and Meher Pudumjee.

### Why does India need philanthropic contributions?

The covid pandemic has shown various **unmet needs** and **systemic inequalities** in our society. For example, there was a migrant crisis; in which millions of daily-wage workers were forced to travel long distances with little to no sustenance and support. There is enormous potential for the family philanthropist to help address these issues.

### What should be done?

**The future of giving:** They should come together as a community and collaborate for the purpose of **strategic giving** to the nation.

Philanthropic families have an **opportunity** to shape the **next 75 years of India**. They should draw inspiration from **their rich tradition** of giving during India's formative years and help build an **inclusive India** where a billion thrive with dignity and equity.

## 2. [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 **22<sup>nd</sup> 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 Jammalal Bajaj and G.D. Birla supported Mahatma Gandhi's initiatives during the freedom movement while pursuing their own philanthropic interests.



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**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 Philanthropical 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 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](#)