



9 PM

Compilation

26th Sep to 1st Oct, 2022

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General

Studies

Paper -1

General Studies - 1

1. [As India ages, keeping an eye on the elderly](#)

Source: The post is based on an article “As India ages, keeping an eye on the elderly” published in **The Hindu** on **1st October 2022**.

Syllabus: GS 1 – Population and associated Issues

News: 1st October is celebrated as International Day for Older Persons by the United Nations.

World Population Prospects 2022 report published by the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) has projected big shifts in global demographic patterns in the coming decades.

What are the findings of the report?

Globally: The report says that 16% of the world population by 2050 is expected to be made up of people over 65 years. It also says that the global population will be 9.7 billion people by 2050.

India: The report projects India’s population to be 1.7 billion by 2050. India will be home to the largest population in the world which would include a large elderly sub-population. This demographic change will have a great impact on its health systems.

Previous United Nations reports have projected that the proportion of India’s elderly population will double to nearly 20% of the total population by 2050.

This change in demographic structure will increase the pressure on public health systems. The prevalence of non-communicable diseases such as diabetes, hypertension and heart disease will be higher among the elderly.

Therefore, eye care service delivery is placed to be the first point-of-contact with the elderly and to also help with health surveillance and planning.

What are the findings of Hyderabad Ocular Morbidity in the Elderly Study (HOMES)?

HOMES is an eye institute that produces a series of systematic reports on various aspects of health, quality of life, mental health, etc.

The study has used eye care as a point of entry to measure a variety of health and social metrics in 1000 participants. The findings of the reports are –

Over 30% of the elderly had distance vision loss and over 50% had near vision impairment and they needed reading glasses.

Nearly half the participants had at least one disability and a third of them had multiple morbidities.

About 70% of them were using at least one assistive device and spectacles were the most common.

The study also explored many links between vision impairment and an elderly person’s mental health and confidence. People with impaired vision had a greater fear, and risk, of falling.

Therefore, addressing the vision impairment of elders is important to improve their lives.

What should be the course of action for improvement in the conditions of elderly?

To address vision loss, a package of interventions including assistive devices for sight, hearing, and mobility can be introduced.

Therefore, the Indian eye care model has always prioritized primary care vision centers that bring care closer to those in need.

The future of elderly care needs to be long term, comprehensive, and integrated, and oriented towards making primary care accessible.

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Proper accessibility will ensure that no elderly person is denied care irrespective of their financial status.

A comprehensive eye examination can be the first step towards enabling such a healthy and happy future for our elderly citizens.

2. [No discrimination – ON Supreme Court ruling on abortion rights](#)

Source– The post is based on the article “**No discrimination**” published in **The Hindu** on **1st October 2022**.

Syllabus: GS1- Social empowerment. GS2- Vulnerable sections

Relevance– Abortion rights of women

News– The article explains the recent Supreme Court ruling on abortion rights of unmarried women. It also explains the ruling by Delhi High Court on abortion by unmarried women.

What is Supreme Court ruling on abortion of unmarried women?

The Supreme Court ruled that single and unmarried women have the same right to a medically safe abortion as married women.

There is no rationale for excluding single or unmarried women from the categories of women who could seek abortion care after the completion of 20 weeks of pregnancy, but before 24 weeks.

Change in marital status is one of the reasons for which abortion during the extended upper limit of 24 weeks is permissible. Even abandonment by the partner could constitute a change in circumstances that could impact a woman’s decision about the pregnancy.

Unwanted pregnancy affects a woman’s physical and mental health. So, it is quite important that she alone should decide about abortion.

The legislature has allowed abortions up to the 24th week of pregnancy. It is allowed if two registered medical practitioners are of the opinion that continuing the pregnancy would involve a risk to the woman’s life and health.

Rape survivors who may legally seek an abortion in the extended period of 24 weeks will also include survivors of marital rape.

What was the earlier ruling by Delhi High Court?

The Delhi High Court had declined to allow the termination of the pregnancy of a 25-year-old woman who was in a consensual relationship. She wanted to terminate the pregnancy after her partner declined to marry her.

The High Court cited rule 3B. It contains the list of the women eligible for termination of pregnancy such as rape survivors, minors, those with physical disabilities and mental illness. Court observed that the list does not mention single women who had become pregnant in a consensual relationship.

General Studies Paper –2

General Studies - 2

1. [What ails Indian higher education: Government's licence-permit raj](#)

Source: The post is based on an article “**What ails Indian higher education: Government's licence-permit raj**” published in **The Indian Express** on **26th September 2022**.

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

News: The public institutions have managed to provide quality education to the growing nationals but there are many problems associated with them.

How did Higher Educational Institutions change?

Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs) have changed a lot from before. HEIs were mostly public institutions till 2003. Today, around 70 percent of the students studying higher education enroll themselves in private HEIs, due to the implementation of Mandal Commission report.

What are the problems associated with HEIs?

Vacant posts: Around 30 per cent posts were vacant in central universities and 40 per cent posts were vacant only for professors in December 2021.

There is a worse condition in the state universities. **For example**, 62 per cent posts were vacant in Odisha and two universities had no teachers at all. Around 25 per cent of college posts in Delhi were totally vacant in December 2021.

Appointment: The appointment of faculties goes through a long chain from financial, bureaucratic or judicial hurdles.

Further, temporary and ad hoc professors are burdened with a full-time routine on a fixed salary which is far below normal salary scales. Furthermore, there are regular breaks from their work.

Budget: The discontinuance of Five-Year Plans deprived public universities of their secured development grants.

The budget for central universities rose by 6.6 per cent in the year 2022, which is nominal if adjusted for inflation. While the condition of State HEIs funding is worse.

Originally, the state government used to pay for salaries and maintenance for the universities while central government used to pay for development through UGC.

Today, UGC is not doing the required task as funding schemes are mostly suspended.

RUSA funds: The Education Ministry administers the Rashtriya Uchchar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA). The RUSA funds were not sufficient. It left the universities with incomplete projects and unemployed staff.

Institute of Eminence (IoE): The Institute of Eminence (IoE) status was awarded to Jadavpur and Anna universities. The IoE tag entitles public HEIs to Rs 1,000 crore. But due to various bureaucratic hurdles the award has not yet been given.

Freedom of operation: There are also another channels for resource mobilisation that can be taken by public universities but this requires freedom of operation. But the Centre and state governments are not ready to give this freedom.

It is necessary to give universities freedom of operations as can be seen from the Jadavpur university. It helped the university to get IoE award as well as University with Potential for Excellence award.

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2. [How to fix India's broken police forces, CBI and IB](#)

Source: The post is based on an article “How to fix India's broken police forces, CBI and IB” published in **The Indian Express** on **26th September 2022**.

Syllabus: GS 2 – Police Reforms

News: Supreme Court gave Prakash Singh judgment on 22nd September, 2006. This judgment was a landmark judgment that brought police reforms in the country.

This judgment led 22nd September known as Police Reforms Day.

However, Justice Thomas Committee recorded that states have shown— “indifference to the issue of police reforms”. The statement depicts the dismal state of police reform implementation.

Why is there a need for the police reforms?

Colonial legacy: The Prime Minister of India has recently called for ending the colonial laws that are still present in India.

The Police Act of 1861 which mostly governs the functioning of police even today is a symbol of colonial rule.

The British followed the Irish model of governance of police. The model enables the executive to have complete authority over the police. It has not been changed even after seven decades of Independence.

Economy: India's economic development can be faster if the country did not have challenges to its internal security.

According to the **Institute for Economics and Peace**, violence cost the country 7 per cent of its GDP in 2020.

Therefore, economic development depends on proper law and order and we can have good law and order only if we have professional police.

Political leaders: There are political leaders in the Parliament that have criminal backgrounds.

According to the **Association of Democratic Reforms**, the percentage of such people was 24 per cent in 2004, 30 per cent in 2009, 34 per cent in 2014 and 43 per cent in the last election held in 2019.

Therefore, it becomes difficult for police to take action against them and people with such backgrounds harms our democratic values.

Internal security: The police force is unable to deal with the internal security challenges in India.

Internal security challenges in J & K, Maoists problem, insurgencies in North East are present from many years. We do not have a proper internal security doctrine to solve these issues.

Lack of trust: There is a lack of trust on the police especially from lower strata of the society.

This can only change if police are made free from political and financial influences.

Organized crimes: There has been an increase in organized crimes such as arms and drugs trafficking across the borders. Cybercrimes are also increasing.

These crimes require a high level of expertise from the police and it can only be possible if police are made free from political influences.

Lack of infrastructure: There is a lack of infrastructure in the police department which is also one of the reasons for their poor performance.

Infrastructures such as human resources, transport, communications and forensics need improvement.

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Poor job and housing conditions: The **National Police Commission** had recommended 100 per cent family accommodation for all non-gazetted police personnel. But the satisfaction level is hardly 31.24 per cent.

According to the **Status of Policing in India Report, 2019**, an average policeman works for 14 hours a day and does not get any weekly off. These all create mental and health problems to police.

Therefore, police should have 12-hour shifts and gradually aim to achieve eight-hour shifts.

Adopting technology: There is a scope for technological adoption in the functioning of the police. Therefore, adopting future technologies in police will help to fulfil grassroots policing requirements and will help in faster functioning of the police.

Statutory provisions: There are various central organizations that need to have statutory support.

For example,

1. CBI was created on the basis of a resolution passed on April 1, 1963. It derives power to investigate from the Delhi Special Police Establishment Act, 1946.
2. The Intelligence Bureau was set up through an administrative order in 1887. It also needs a statutory basis.

3. [Soft power, the new race every country wants to win](#)

Source: The post is based on an article “**Soft power, the new race every country wants to win**” published in **The Hindu** on **26th September 2022**.

Syllabus: GS 2 –

Relevance: India’s performance in sports and challenges associated with it.

News:

Soft power is defined as power of attraction between the countries through culture, political ideas, and policies rather than military powers.

India is heading towards soft power and it can be seen from the gold medal won by Neeraj Chopra in the Olympics. Further, Indian athletes have also won 61 medals including 22 golds at Common Wealth Games (CWG), 2022.

This can encourage India to become a great geopolitical actor also. However, there is still more to be done by India to improve its status in sports.

How sports have helped in improving soft power of China?

China uses its superiority in sports to build people-to-people relations with other countries. **For example**, athletes from African countries such as Madagascar are trained in swimming, badminton, table tennis, etc. in China.

This helps China to create a positive impact on a wider population which also result in better formal relations between the countries.

However, India has inadequately performed in sports when compared to China.

How has India performed in Olympics and what are the reasons associated with that performance?

Performance: India won seven medals in Tokyo Olympic games which was the highest number of medals won in the history of Olympic games in India.

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India has one of the world's poorest population-to-medal ratios in the Olympics. India has won only 35 medals at the Olympics till now.

Reasons: One of the reasons for the poor performance of India is that there is relatively low and little exposure of Indians to sports at the elementary school level.

Competent coach, adequate funding and sports academics are another major issue faced by sports in India.

A Parliamentary report provided that India spends only three paise per day per capita on sports while China spends ₹6.1 per day per capita.

What steps have been taken by the government?

The Ministry of Sports launched the **Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS)** to improve India's performance at the Olympics and Paralympics in 2014.

This scheme helps in extra monetary assistance and training from the best national and international coaches.

However, there are other highlights of the report which shows that India needs to improve its sports in becoming a soft power.

What does different report highlight?

NITI Aayog report came up with a **20-point plan** to improve India's Olympics performance in 2016.

- The report highlighted that India lacks a favorable atmosphere for sports to enhance the skills of early-stage athletes.
- It recommended that efforts should be made at the family, community to school, regional academies, State and national levels to improve things.

The **International Olympic Committee (IOC)** has claimed that the digital viewers of Tokyo Olympic Games increased by 74 per cent from the viewers of Rio 2016.

- This shows that there is a great opportunity for India to use such events as a platform to enhance its soft power.

What steps can be further taken by India to increase the country's sporting performance and soft power?

First, India should concentrate on forming MoUs with nations that excel in specific sports. The aim should be to train Indian players overseas.

- **For example**, Australia and the United Kingdom can assist us in swimming while African countries can assist in running.

Second, TOPS has showed that focusing on a few sports is beneficial for India to enhance its sporting abilities and standing.

- India should increase the number of athletes under TOPS and at least 500 athletes should be trained to promote a competitive climate.

Third, private investment needs to be used to develop infrastructure.

- The Government should also work on a public-private partnership (PPP) model to create basic sporting infrastructure at the district level which is recommended by NITI Aayog,

Fourth, the Government must also separate politics from sports. Former players rather than politicians should be chosen to lead sports organisations.

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4. [Over the top – on Telecommunication Bill 2022](#)

Source: The post is based on an article “**Over the top**” published in **The Hindu** on **26th September 2022**.

Syllabus: GS 2 – Fundamental Rights

Relevance: Telecommunication Bill 2022 and problems associated with it.

News: The draft telecommunication Bill provides for new definition for telecommunication.

The new definition includes everything from broadcasting services to electronic mail, from voice mail to voice, video and data communication services, and that the Government may notify separately.

However, bringing these services under regulation will be a threat to user’s privacy and data security.

What are the privacy related issues associated with the bill?

SC has said that right to privacy is a fundamental right. But the draft bill has failed to acknowledge it. This can be seen from the various provisions of the drafts.

For example,

3. The Government has the powers to prevent a message from being transmitted on the occurrence of any public emergency or in the interest of public safety.
4. Another clause in the draft Bill requires a license entity to provide information of the person to whom it provides services.

A similar clause under the IT rules was brought in last year.

It required messaging apps to enable the identification of the first originator of the information on its computer resource. However, it has been challenged in the Court.

It brings us to the question of whether this is technically possible without breaking encryption and making all communications vulnerable.

These provisions in the absence of data protection law may create problems for the people.

Therefore, the Government needs to upgrade its thinking on users and privacy and this draft needs to be dropped.

5. [Reformed multilateralism](#)

Source– The post is based on the article “**A ground plan for India’s reformed multilateralism**” published in **The Hindu** and “**A renewed multilateralism**” in the **Business Standard** on **26th September 2022**.

Syllabus: GS2- International Relations

Relevance– About multilateralism

News– The article explains the need for “**reformed multilateralism**”. It tells the importance of having multilateral institutions. It also explains India’s effort for reformed multilateralism.

United Nations General Assembly meetings are going to take place this month.

The other important events that are taking place next month are the annual meetings of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund in Washington and the Conference of the Parties on climate change in Egypt. In November, the G20 summit is being held in Indonesia.

These events are important from the perspective of India’s agenda of “**reformed multilateralism**”.

What is “reformed multilateralism”?

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It calls for reforms in the UNSC. It should be a more inclusive organization that shows contemporary global realities.

It calls for reforming institutions of global governance. They should incorporate institutional accountability and be more representative of developing countries.

What are the weaknesses shown by UN led multilateralism?

COVID19– It shows the weakness of UN led multilateralism. Countries closed their borders and supply chains were disrupted. Vaccines were available to a few countries.

Ukraine war– It has not been successful in preventing wars. Russia-Ukraine conflict is a recent example.

China rise– Its rise and aggression in South China shows the limitation of UN-multilateralism. China's growing dominance and increasing isolation of Russia and Iran could lead to Chinese led multilateral institutions that excludes west.

China's control of multilateral organizations is only increasing. The most recent example is the unofficial pressure China exerted on the former UN's human rights chief. It wanted to stop the release of a report by the UN Human Rights Council on the condition of Uyghurs in China.

What are the major global areas that requires multilateralism?

Digital transition– It will affect all sectors of the global economy, including manufacturing, and will largely determine the future global distribution of taxes, profits, and wages.

Some countries will seek to retain their technological edge. The recent example is the US trying to restrict the sharing of microchip technology with Chinese manufacturers.

Different jurisdictions will have different approaches to privacy and internet governance. It is important that the multilateralism of the 21st century focuses on preventing the control over data, technology.

India is proposing a third way between the **private sector-led US model** and the **state-dominated model of the People's Republic of China**. The Indian approach is to permit domestic digital innovation and profit-making within a structural framework developed by the state. It seeks to ensure equitable access and a level-playing field.

Climate crisis– The multilateral efforts in this field have largely focused on blaming the historical emitters of the west. This is not the right approach.

There is a need to understand which sectors and companies can handle the threats and opportunities represented associated with global green transitions.

The success for countries across the world on this front will depend on availability of financing for green transition.

Green projects in developing countries suffer from multiple financing constraints. Overall risk appetite for green projects in developing countries is low. Currency fluctuations have kept costs high.

Yet, multilateral development banks have been slow to adapt their lending to this new era. Rather than giving grants to individual governments, MDBs need to start focusing on supporting private investment through new mechanisms.

All the shareholders from the US to China to India agree on the need for such mechanisms. The only opposition is the bureaucrats and management of the MDBs. A recent report to the Indonesian G20 presidency underlined the need to change MDB operating structures in a timely manner.

There is a need for creation of a new green lending-focused multilateral institution.

What are efforts by India for reformed multilateralism?

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Mr. Jaishankar's hosting of a ministerial meeting of the G4 (Brazil, India, Germany and Japan) There is another high-level meeting of the Indian delegation with the L.69 Group for reforming UNSC.

Beyond the UN, India participation in plurilateral meetings of the Quad, IBSA, BRICS, CELAC and other trilateral formats, such as India-France-Australia, India-France-the United Arab Emirates and India-Indonesia-Australia underlines India's search for new frameworks of global governance.

6. [Making criminals of peaceful protesters diminishes Indian democracy](#)

Source– The post is based on the article “**Making criminals of peaceful protesters diminishes Indian democracy**” published in **The Indian Express** on **26th September 2022**.

Syllabus: GS2- Fundamental Rights

Relevance– About right to protest

News– The article explains the shortcomings in new rules framed under **new Criminal Procedure (Identification) Act 2022** . It also explains the reason for the decreasing level of peaceful protest in India.

What are the new rules?

Rules have just been framed for the **new Criminal Procedure (Identification) Act 2022** which allows policemen to record the biometrics of those arrested and even if merely detained. Those arrested for violating Section 144, are exempted, but only if they have no other offence registered against them.

Under the new law, the police can store your biometrics till you are acquitted. But for deleting the biometrics, we need an order from a magistrate.

Why is it a dangerous precedent?

The police have no respect for laws. Section 66A of the IT Act was struck down by the Supreme Court seven years ago. The police continue arresting people under this law.

The police's treatment of peaceful protesters depends on the orders they get and their own prejudices.

To protest peacefully is a fundamental right in a democracy. Our Constitution guarantees it. The Supreme Court has upheld it more than once. To treat peaceful protesters as criminals is not good for democracy.

What are the reasons for lack of peaceful protest in recent years?

In recent years there were few protest like protests against Dalit scholar Rohith Vemula's suicide in 2016, the kisan long march in Maharashtra in 2018, the anti CAA/NRC protests across cities in 2019-2020, and the farmers' protests in Delhi in 2020-21. However, these were restricted to specific sections.

There has been the criminalisation of peaceful protest. Earlier protesters were let off in a couple of hours, with no charges filed. But now criminal cases have been filed against peaceful protesters.

For those who want to organise silent demonstrations outside designated places, taking police permission is a very hectic task.

There are biases in the system. Only ruling party supporters are given special favour for holding protests.

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7. [Could constitutional monarchy crack a democratic conundrum?](#)

Source– The post is based on the article “**Could constitutional monarchy crack a democratic conundrum?**” published in the **mint** on **27th September 2022**.

Syllabus: GS2- Indian Polity

Relevance– Threats to democracy

News– The article explains the relevance of constitutional monarchy in context of emergence of demagogues across democracies in the world. It also explains the need to be cautious about blind faith on constitutional monarchs for checking demagogues.

What are arguments against constitutional monarchy?

It is an old institution. It has lost its relevance in current times.

Concept of monarchy is against the democratic **principles of equality** and elected head of states.

Monarchy is **ceremonial and symbolic**. It is not very different from **Republicanism**.

It does not enjoy any executive authority and puts a fiscal burden on society.

According to Merriam-Webster, a demagogue is a leader who makes use of popular prejudices and false claims and promises in order to gain power.

What are the arguments in support of constitutional monarchy?

Biggest threat to democracy today comes from **demagogues** and not constitutional monarchs.

Far rights leaders are emerging across the world. They are assuming absolute powers by leveraging the electoral system.

Plato also warned about this weakness of democracy.

The US constitution also recognizes this weakness. It has introduced a system of **checks and balances** and **separation of powers** to guard against demagogues.

Constitutional monarchs enjoys **legitimacy and popularity** among the masses. They can act as a stabilizing role in democracy. They can act as bulwark against demagogues.

What are the arguments against it?

If people don't find constitutional monarchs useful, they can lose popular support and legitimacy. It will result in abolition of the institution.

Constitutional monarchy may usurp power from Parliament. They can assume absolute powers.

Constitutional monarchy may not be a magical solution. They can act as **institutional bulwark** against threats to democracy.

8. [Samarkand: a miniature of an emerging world](#)

Source– The post is based on the article “**Samarkand: a miniature of an emerging world**” published in **The Hindu** on **27th September 2022**.

Syllabus: GS2- International Relations

Relevance– About Emerging world order

News– The article explains the current global situation. It also tells about the new developments at the SCO summit in Samarkand and its implications for future world order.

What is the current global situation?

Russia is on the back foot because of the Ukraine war.

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China cannot take position against Russia because of the Taiwan issue. It had to strike a deal with Russia on Taiwan in return for supporting Russia in the Ukraine war.

The USA wants closer relations with democracies. A counter coalition against QUAD (Red QUAD) may emerge in Indo-pacific.

What is the stand of India against its adversaries?

Given the present situation, it is a possibility that Russia would be a part of its opposing party.

Therefore, India told Russia to end the Ukraine war. PM Modi said that democracy and diplomacy should be the way forward. India spoke about the looming oil crisis and disrupted supply chain due to war. Putin said that he understood India's concern and promised to end the conflict. He blamed Ukraine for the continuation of war.

However, India has not been much vocal against China. India should have engaged with China which occupied territories across LAC. But India was silent.

India would have pulled Pakistan over cross border terrorism. India only demanded transit and trade access to Afghanistan and Central Asia. The Pakistan PM claimed that he discussed the Kashmir issue with China and received assurance of support. But China was silent.

China and Russia welcomed India's Chairmanship of the SCO and extended their support. It was nothing but a formality.

By questioning Russia on the continuation of the war, which positioned India on the right side of history in a world order divided between democracies and autocracies.

India made this clear at the SCO summit that it cannot be with China or Russia in the new dispensation.

What are the indications of developments at the Samarkand summit?

Samarkand summit shows the world order that may emerge in the future.

The Quad may be the forum that will enable India to protect its interests in the Indo-Pacific.

China-Russia-Iran-Pakistan axis will dominate SCO.

Ripple effects of the SCO summit were evident in the present UNGA session. Both Russia and USA supported the expansion of UNSC. Russia supported India membership of UNSC.

9. [Death penalty: Deciding the rarest of the rare](#)

Source– The post is based on the article **“Death penalty: Deciding the rarest of the rare”** published in **The Indian Express** on **27th September 2022**.

Syllabus: GS2- Fundamental rights provided by Indian constitution

News– The article explains the current framework for providing capital punishment. It also explains the weakness of this framework.

Recently Supreme Court acknowledged the need for re-examining the fundamental aspects of death penalty.

What is the Bachan Singh case?

Supreme Court proposed sentencing framework for death penalty. It asked courts to weigh aggravating and mitigating circumstances. It introduced **“rarest of rare”** category of case for capital punishment.

What are the concerns with this framework?

Different court approaches– The courts have taken differing approaches in which factors are relevant to sentencing and how best to bring in factors relevant to punishment.

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The courts have different opinions about the weightage sentencing factors must receive, and the contentious role of public opinion.

Accused in death penalty cases are mostly poor. They cannot afford quality legal representation. They don't have the resources to put before the Court meaningful mitigation information.

Santosh Kumar Bariyar v State of Maharashtra (2002)– SC judge expressed concern about the lack of uniformity in death penalty sentencing.

Channu Lal Verma v State of Chhattisgarh (2018)– SC judge Called for a relook at the constitutional possibility of the death penalty because of the arbitrariness in the process.

The **Lethal Lottery in 2008** and the **262nd Law Commission of India Report in 2015** also found shortcomings in the present framework.

What are examples that show contradictions in the Supreme Court's approach?

Manoj & Ors v. State of MP– SC set in place practical guidelines to ensure that courts have sufficient material on the accused before delivering a sentence of death at every stage of the judicial process.

Manoj Pratap Singh v. State of Rajasthan– SC does not find it useful for courts to have sufficient material on the accused.

What is the way forward?

The accused need to be given time and resources to gather and present such information in every single case and at every judicial stage.

We are required to remove the deep suspicion and biases faced by the accused person.

For further readings–

<https://blog.forumias.com/9-pm-daily-current-affairs-brief-september-22nd-2022/#gs15>

<https://blog.forumias.com/9-pm-daily-current-affairs-brief-september-21st-2022/#gs12>

10. On reservations for EWS: a test for law and justice

Source: The post is based on an article “**On reservations for EWS: a test for law and justice**” published in **The Hindu** on **28th September 2022**.

Syllabus: GS 2 –

News: The Supreme Court has reserved its verdict on a batch of pleas challenging the validity of the 103rd constitutional amendment.

What is 103rd constitutional amendment act?

However, this act has been challenged in the SC and various arguments have been put forward for the opposition.

Why this act has been challenged in the Supreme Court?

According to the petitioners, the amendment violates the Constitution's basic structure. They believe that the amendment destroys the Constitution's idea of equal opportunity.

Whereas, the government argues that the Constitution demands equality and there are multiple ways of providing equality. The govt. says that the power to amend include a power to decide how to guarantee equal status to all persons.

What was the rationale behind the reservation?

Reservations were **first introduced by some of the princely states** as an alleviative measure. At that time almost all government posts in the British India government were filled by the

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privileged castes. Thus, a system of reservations was introduced denominating communities as “Backward Classes”.

There were debates over reservations when the Constitution was being drafted. The Constitution makers saw reservation as a tool that will help assimilate the depressed class to rise and be equal with the privileged class into public life. Marc Galanter has called this a compensatory discrimination principle.

The rationale remained the same behind the introduction of the **1st Constitution’s amendment** in 1951 which allowed the state to make special provisions beyond reservations in public employment.

SC in the **State of Kerala v. N. M. Thomas (1975)** case held that reservations based on social and educational backwardness, ought to be seen as an intrinsic facet of the idea of equality.

Therefore, it seems that 103rd amendment act has not served the purpose of reservation.

How does 103rd amendment is against the idea of equality defined in the Constitution?

Reservations based on the economic criteria doesn’t place people into a definite group requiring special privileges.

This would eventually lead to dominant caste to retain their position in the administration.

Therefore, 103rd amendment act infringes the purpose of equality defined by the Constitution.

11. Permanent membership of the UNSC is another story

Source: The post is based on an article “**Permanent membership of the UNSC is another story**” published in **The Hindu** on **28th September 2022**.

Syllabus: GS 2

Relevance: issues and challenges associated with the permanent membership of UNSC.

Context: There are talks about the India becoming a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC).

UNSC remains the only exclusive club, where none of the new emerging countries has entered. Otherwise, even the exclusive **Nuclear Club** has been breached by India, Pakistan, North Korea, and Israel.

India’s External Affairs Minister, S. Jaishankar has also called for the reform of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC).

What are the concerns associated with veto power?

The right to vote with permanent UNSC members has been a cause of concern for other countries. This power has been used frequently to block any attempt that goes against any of the permanent UNSC members. For example;

Western members have used their privileged position to protect Israel when the Palestinian question was being discussed.

Veto power was also used to prevent sanctions being imposed on the apartheid regime of South Africa.

The Russia has cast more vetoes than the three western members of UN. However, many times it has gone in favor of India as well. For example, Russia has helped India on many occasions on the question of Kashmir. Russia also helped India by vetoing unfavorable resolutions during the war of Bangladesh liberation in 1971.

However, considering the present situation, India cannot be sure of help from Russia in future on Kashmir issue or any other unfavorable occasion.

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India cannot expect that Britain or America will cast a negative vote against Pakistan.

China is already hostile towards India. It can be seen in the Chinese blockade on the UNSC resolution against confirmed Pakistani terrorists in the sanctions list.

What are the challenges with permanent membership to India in UNSC?

None of the P-5 countries want any new member to be added to UNSC.

Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean are unrepresented in the permanent category at present. However, Africa is looking for two permanent seats and they are yet to decide which two African countries will be included.

There are four declared candidates for permanent membership: India, Japan, Brazil and Germany, called the G-4. There are concerns over the opposition of G-4 permanent membership. For example, China will not support India nor will it ever support Japan. Italy will oppose Germany.

Lastly, even if India is elected for permanent membership with full support, there will other countries along with India entering into the group.

What are the other challenges in the expansion of UNSC?

The UN charter will be amended if any new members are added in the UNSC. Amending the charter involves two-thirds of the total membership of the U N including the votes of P-5.

There is also an **enemy clause**, present in Article 107 of the charter and there will be difficulty in amending this clause. The P-5 members will always oppose the enemy nations.

What can be the course of action?

A group of experts has suggested that **a new category of semi-permanent members** should be created.

Countries would be **elected for a period of eight to 10 years** and would be eligible for re-election. India should also give serious consideration to this idea.

Some experts are of the opinion that **India should not accept permanent membership** without the right of veto.

While some say that even a permanent membership without veto will be tremendously helpful in protecting our interests.

12. Energising India-Nepal ties, the hydropower way

Source– The post is based on the article **“Energising India-Nepal ties, the hydropower way”** published in **The Hindu** on **28th September 2022**.

Syllabus: GS2- India and its neighborhood relations

Relevance– India Nepal hydro diplomacy

News– The article explains the potential of the West and East Seti River projects for India and Nepal. It also talks about the steps needed for the successful completion of the project.

Recently, Nepal signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with India to develop 1200 MW West Seti and EastSeti River (SR6) projects.

What is the historical background of the project?

The project was conceived in the early 80s.

The Australian company was engaged in developing the project during 1997-2011.

In 2011 project was handed over to a Chinese company. China withdrew from project in 2018

It was then remodeled by Nepal as the East and West-Seti-river joint project.

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What is the potential of the project?

Improvement in relations– It can provide India the much-needed leverage in future hydropower cooperation. India is already involved in the Mahakali Treaty (6,480 MW), the Upper Karnali Project (900 MW) and the Arun Three projects (900 MW) in western and eastern Nepal.

The project has the potential to enhance cross-border power exchanges between the two countries.

Countering China– It will also help India minimise the geopolitical influence of China and firm its presence in Nepal. West Seti Hydroelectric Project was a major Chinese venture under the Belt and Road Initiative.

Benefits to Nepal- Nepal's electricity exports to India are expected to increase foreign exchange and address the power shortage. It is estimated that if the hydropower potential is fully harnessed, Nepal can generate revenue of 1,069 billion rupees per year in 2045 by **exporting electricity to India**.

Benefits to India– The West Seti Hydroelectric Project can provide an alternative to address power deficits in India.

What steps need to be taken?

New options and alternatives need to be explored. Project costs have increased. There is a need for a careful study of investment scenarios, distribution, and transmission networks, and the cost of resettlement and rehabilitation, at the preliminary stage.

Nepal is concerned that the electricity rates and supply from India is inadequate to meet the rising demands. This needs to be taken care of.

The project can also be extended to other regional partners under the Bangladesh-Bhutan-India-Nepal (BBIN) framework for cross-border energy cooperation. A cross-border energy market that includes Nepal, Bhutan and north eastern states of India can be created.

13. [The Lalit Effect](#)

Source– The post is based on the article **“The Lalit Effect”** published in **The Times of India** on **28th September 2022**.

Syllabus: GS2- Indian Judiciary

Relevance– Challenges before judicial system

News– The article explains the issues of frequent adjournment pleas and frivolous PILs in higher courts of the country.

Chief Justice UU Lalit has increased the matters listed daily. It has led to an increase of adjournment pleas by lawyers.

What are the rules related to adjournment pleas by courts?

Civil cases– Civil Procedure Code stipulates a maximum of three adjournments while hearing a case.

Criminal cases– Criminal Procedure Code instructs judicial officers to hear trials and inquiries on a day-to-day basis. It stipulates that a lawyer engaged in another court cannot be a ground for adjournment.

What are the issues faced by the judicial system?

Adjournment pleas– Adjournments are taken for reasons like lawyers being busy in other courts. It leads to judicial delays.

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In 2017, a government panel on speeding up commercial disputes found the three-adjudgment rule violated in 50% of civil cases.

Fivolous PILs– These are diversionary for constitutional courts.

Recently, Bombay HC dismissed a PIL seeking a ban on advertisements of non-vegetarian foods. The court asked the petitioners why they wish to encroach on others rights.

14. [Matter of degrees: UGC should think more on allowing four-year undergraduates to enrol for PhDs](#)

Source: The post is based on the article “**Matter of degrees: UGC should think more on allowing four-year undergraduates to enrol for PhDs**” published in **The Times of India** on **29th September 2022**.

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

Relevance: About UGC’s decision to allow UG Degree holders to enrol PhD.

News: UGC is set to allow four-year undergraduate degree holders to enrol for PhD programmes.

What are the impacts of the UGC decision?

Advantages: **a) In sync with global standards:** A number of foreign universities allow undergraduates to skip the postgraduate stage and enrol directly for PhD, **b)** It will save time and money for students.

Disadvantages: **a)** Dilutes the requirement of mandatory publication of a research paper before the award of a PhD, **b)** Quantitatively it will produce more PhDs. For instance, in 2019, the US had 55,000 doctoral recipients. The same year, India had 2 lakh scholars enrolled for PhD and 39,000 doctoral recipients, **c)** PG course helps students do a deeper study of the discipline and also in research – because a dissertation has to be written. This will be diluted, **d)** Many PhDs will go on to teach undergraduate and PG students and inadequate knowledge of the core discipline will impair teaching standards.

Read more: [Phase 2 of Visvesvaraya PhD Scheme launched by IT Minister](#)

What UGC needs to do?

Firstly, UGC must ensure that PhD coursework also integrates parts of the PG curriculum.

Secondly, the same yardstick shouldn’t apply across disciplines: A doctoral student can focus on the thesis rather than a research paper but mandatory publication in a quality Scopus-indexed journal could prod the scholar to aim higher.

A UGC study in the top-ranked central university and an IIT found that 75% of the university submissions weren’t in Scopus journals, but the opposite was true for IITs. This is because there are around 30,000 Scopus-indexed journals in STEM and related fields against 14,000 for humanities and social sciences.

So, the UGC should understand that a PG degree may be important in some disciplines before a PhD and not so much in others.

Read more: [\[Kurukshetra September Summary\] Education for Tribals – Explained, pointwise](#)

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15. [False dichotomies of education that we must strive to overcome](#)

Source: The post is based on the article “**False dichotomies of education that we must strive to overcome**” published in the **Livemint** on **29th September 2022**.

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

Relevance: To balance various dichotomies of education.

News: Education should develop children’s capacity to question things in society or their capacity to contribute constructively. But in reality, education institutions focus far too much on the capacity to question instead of their contribution.

Good education must account for all these matters, and not make choices between them because these are false choices.

What are the false dichotomies the education should avoid and why?

Freedom versus discipline: In schools, discipline and freedom are seen as opposites. Educators often choose discipline, as it is easier to handle students. This is educationally ineffective, and potentially creates lifelong problems for students.

Memorization versus understanding: Memory plays an important role in developing conceptual understanding, as does practice in creativity. An educational approach that relies on one alone cannot achieve its goals.

Knowledge versus skills: Education today focuses on acquiring knowledge in children’s subjects. But they fail to develop their skills and capacities to process and use that knowledge. For instance, the development of an ability to communicate, or think critically, takes a back seat to soaking knowledge and content in courses.

Education for employability and employment versus a liberal education: Education that does not emphasize general capacities of critical thinking and education that ignores economic goals of productive livelihood undermines both citizenship and the individual.

Educators are facing challenges in providing liberal education which also equally develops capacities such that students can find gainful employment.

Read more: [\[Kurukshetra September Summary\] Education for Tribals – Explained, pointwise](#)

Collaboration versus competition: Institutions function as formal structures of the curriculum. But they do not focus on the practices and cultures which promote collaboration during competition. Thus making children failed to face the competition of various sorts they face in a reality.

Common-size-fits-all versus the contextual: In any education system, some matters have to be common across the system, while some must be entirely contextual. For any society to function as one unit there are common things that must be learnt. But there are contextual matters specific to areas, places, cultures and more. It is this balance between the common and the contextual that education policies must achieve.

But providing complete autonomy on everything is as dysfunctional for societies and communities as a deeply hierarchical, tightly prescriptive approach.

Love and affection for students versus a distanced professional approach: Education is at its core a matter of relationships, particularly between teachers and students. Both love and distanced approach should be practised on various situations.

Read more: [The controversy over NAAC’s system for assessing higher education](#)

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So overall a good education requires not dichotomies, but a consistent endeavour to balance and achieve complementary ends, both in theory and in practice.

16. [In nature's warning signs, a nudge to riparian states](#)

Source– The post is based on the article “**In nature's warning signs, a nudge to riparian states**” published in **The Hindu** on **29th September 2022**.

Syllabus: GS2- International Relations

Relevance– Hydro Diplomacy

News-The article explains the challenges faced by India due to frequent floods in trans-boundary rivers. It also explains the international mechanism to mitigate trans-boundary river floods.

Nearly a third part of Pakistan was impacted by floods. In June this year, Assam also faced floods.

There is a lack of transparency in sharing hydrological information between states which aggravates the flooding.

What is customary international law

In accordance with customary international law, no state can use its territory in a manner that causes harm to another state while using a shared natural resource. It means that there is a binding obligation on all states not to release water to cause floods in other countries.

What are challenges for India in case of Brahmaputra River?

Assam faces frequent floods in Brahmaputra River.

China dam construction activities on Brahmaputra is cause of concern for India.

There is no comprehensive **basin-level mechanism** to deal with water management of Brahmaputra.

Neither India or China are party to the **United Nations Convention on the Law of the Non-Navigational Uses of International Watercourses (UNWC) 1997** or the **United**

Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) water convention. Both have provisions for flood mitigation.

There was an MoU with China in 2013 with a view to sharing hydrological information during the flood season. But the MoU does not allow India access to urbanization and deforestation activities on the Chinese side of the river basin.

What is the case with flooding in Gandak and Kosi rivers?

Floods in Gandak and Kosi rivers that are shared by India and Nepal are frequent phenomena.

The intensity has increased because of glacial retreat and heavy seasonal precipitation.

Both rivers are covered under **India-Nepal Kosi agreement, 1954** to check floods in the river basin.

What is the way forward?

India can become a party either to UNWC or water convention. It could lay the groundwork for a bilateral treaty on Brahmaputra with China. India should not insist on insertion of dispute settlement mechanism provisions.

With Nepal, it is important that the two neighbors view the river basins as single entities. It will help in facilitating an integrated approach for improved basin and flood risk management.

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17. Globe-changing reverberations of the Ukraine war

Source– The post is based on the article “**Globe-changing reverberations of the Ukraine war**” published in **The Hindu** on **29th September 2022**.

Syllabus: GS2- International Relations

Relevance– Global impacts of Ukrainian crisis

News– The article explains the impacts of Russia-Ukraine powers. It also explains the response of major powers and its implications for future world order.

Big powers have always feared being surrounded. Russia has always felt vulnerable on its western front.

What are the impacts of the Ukraine war?

Russia had poor strategy and weak logistics. It has paid a heavy price militarily, economically and diplomatically.

There are more losses of human life than during the 10-year Afghanistan intervention.

There is huge devastation in Ukraine. Around 10 million people have crossed to neighbouring countries and 7 million people displaced internally.

What is Russia’s response?

Ukraine counter-offensive has retaken a 6500 square kilometres area and forced Russian forces to retreat to the Kharkiv border.

It has led Putin to announce referendums in occupied areas. Putin is planning to mobilise more focus. He is threatening to use nuclear weapons. Mr. Putin now interprets the current war as an existential struggle in which Russia would make use “of all weapon systems available to us”.

What will be the consequences for the future?

Ukraine will continue to remain hostile.

Putin’s objective of ensuring Russia’s security will remain elusive. He will suffer reputational damage both in Russia and at global level.

It will be beneficial to the west if war continues.

Rivalries between west and Russia would be sharper than during the cold war. The threat of nuclear weapons will increase as the treaty on non-proliferation will come under huge stress.

The strength of nationalism, based on ethnicity, culture, religion, history and language, will grow.

The Ukraine war will lead to major economic shifts. States suffering from western sanctions will try to set up alternative financial and monetary platforms beyond the control of Washington.

There will be increased protectionism and retreat from globalization. It will impact world growth.

Where does China and India stand?

China- It will continue to have a closer relationship with Russia.

India– It will be a setback for India’s vision of a multi-polar world order. It will have security implications for India as we have closer collaboration with Russia in areas of space, nuclear energy and defense.

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18. [Eye of the State – on draft Telecommunication Bill](#)

Source– The post is based on the article “**Eye of the State**” published in **The Indian Express** on **29th September 2022**.

Syllabus: GS2- Fundamental rights

Relevance– Surveillance powers of state

News– The article explains the vast surveillance power provided to the State by the draft Telecommunication Bill and its impact on fundamental rights enjoyed by citizens.

What are the provisions of the draft Telecommunication Bill that provides for state surveillance?

Clause 24(2)– It provides that application of surveillance will extend to OTT communication services like Telegram, Whatsapp. This will violate the privacy of users.

Clause 3 and 4– It requires licensing of telecommunication services.

Clause 23– It provides power to the government to prescribe standards. It will result in more regulations. It may lead to requirements for service providers like local registration and hosting of data. Smaller service providers may find it difficult due to compliance cost and privacy concerns.

Law enforcement agencies are provided more powers on vague grounds like-

Clause 25– It provides for extensive powers to the government like taking over the control, suspending the operation and even managing telecommunications services for reasons of “**national security**”. The term “national security” is not clearly defined and it is a vague term.

Clause 34– Providing false information by users may lead to their prosecution.

Clause 51– It requires service providers to supply user information to authorised officers for civil or criminal proceedings.

What are other challenges related to state surveillance?

There is a lack of data protection law.

State continues with **unauthorised surveillance**.

Bombay High Court noted in one of the cases that premier investigating agencies like the CBI have used interception orders that neither have sanction of law nor issued for legitimate aim.

19. [India’s national priorities are best served domestically](#)

Source: The post is based on an article “**India’s national priorities are best served domestically**” published in **The Business Standard** on **29th September 2022**.

Syllabus: GS 2

Relevance: domestic challenges in India

News: India has been involving greatly into international summits and meetings. But it does not serve much of India’s interest and there is need for India to change its priorities.

Why do international meetings do not serve the nation’s interest?

A lot of time spent on the international meetings and the cost of time spent is not at par with the returns.

For example, The Indian PM called for better supply chains and full transit rights at this SCO summit but Pakistan won’t allow surface transit rights to India via its territory.

China blocked a joint move by India and the US to blacklist the Lashkar-e-Taiba militant Sajid Mir under the 1267 Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee of the UN Security Council.

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Further India is also going to head the G20 presidency.

But due to the declining relations with China and Pakistan it is doubtful whether the heads of Pakistan and China will attend the meeting in India.

Therefore, India should focus more on resolving domestic challenges.

What are the domestic issues in India?

Unequal growth: The southern states are growing faster than those in the north. This may lead to serious disputes between India's southern and northern states over the sharing of centrally-raised revenues.

Delimitation of constituencies: The delimitation of Lok Sabha constituencies was last done on the basis of the 2001 census and is due for a review in 2026.

SC cases: Supreme Court is struggling with issues which may be resolved by ruling political parties at the Centre and the states.

For example, issues such as places of religious worship, quotas in government jobs for the economically weaker sections, etc.

Electricity: The state electricity corporations are also suffering with distribution losses by the high levels of subsidies provided in several states.

According to the Reserve Bank of India's July 2022 report, Punjab, Rajasthan, and Jharkhand are fiscally vulnerable. Another issue is the range of non-merit subsidies such as fertilizer subsidies.

What can be the course of action?

First, all such subsidies can be withdrawn and may be distributed as universal basic income.

Second, the repeated extensions and appointments of officials by the central government need a course of correction.

Third, the central government needs to discuss the disputable issues with the state governments like it did for GST.

Therefore, India should try to resolve domestic challenges first rather than indulging in international meetings.

[20. G-20 presidency is an opportunity to position India as the voice of the Global South](#)

Source: The post is based on an article "**G-20 presidency is an opportunity to position India as the voice of the Global South**" published in **The Indian Express** on **29th September 2022**.

Syllabus: GS 2 – Important International Institutions

Relevance: G20 and opportunities for India

News: India is about to take the presidency of G20. Its presidency will play a great role in putting forward Global South.

Recently external affairs minister S Jaishankar has called India the **Voice of Global South**.

However, there are many concerns as India's official outlook has also changed with time.

How has India's official outlook change?

India has been inactive in the Group of 77 (G-77). It is now a 134-member group of developing economies.

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India last hosted a G-77 meeting in New Delhi in the 1980s whereas Pakistan has been more active within this group and currently chairs it.

On the other hand, India was busy with forum like G-7 plus, BRICS, SCO and trilaterals and quadrilaterals like Quad, etc.

Several factors seem to have contributed to a change in Indian official outlook.

What are the factors responsible for the change in Indian official outlook?

First, the unwillingness of the P-5 (the US, Russia, China, France and UK) to reform UN governance and let India into the UN Security Council.

Second, Western deglobalization and disinterest in the reform of multilateral financial and trade organizations (IMF, WB & WTO).

Third, failure on the part of the US, EU, China and Japan to address the problem of fixing external debt burden of developing countries.

Fourth, the deadlines on climate change.

Fifth, the East-West power struggle brought by Russia's invasion of Ukraine and imposing huge costs on developing economies.

What are the concerns with the present G20 meeting in Indonesia?

Indonesia is currently hosting G-20 summit.

It is unlikely that Russia and the US will come together in the G-20 meeting. If the Indonesia summit fails, G-20 might enter a non-functional phase.

Therefore, taking the presidency of G20 will be an opportunity for India to fix many issues.

How G20's presidency will be an opportunity for India?

In the past few meetings, the G20 has not played any significant role. For example, it failed to step in and help the Covid-afflicted world.

Therefore, India may be taking over the chairmanship of a paralyzed group and it will be an opportunity for India to breathe life in the group through North-South dialogue.

G20 will also be a great opportunity for India to showcase its tourist destinations to the world and promote tourism.

India's focus on reform of multilateralism, international finance and trade, climate change, developing country external debt, etc. were last seen in the pre-globalisation India era of the G-77.

India can raise these issues back on the global platform (G20). It will make a low-income developing country like India the Voice of the Global South.

However, India needs to regain the trust of other developing countries, especially in Africa and South and Southeast Asia to once again play this role effectively.

What can be the course of action?

Indian foreign policy has been on the lines with the Western policies. Therefore, there is a need to stay in the South and raise the developmental concerns of the Global South.

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21. Rediscovering the Bay of Bengal

Source: The post is based on an article “Rediscovering the Bay of Bengal” published in **The Hindu** on **29th September 2022**.

Syllabus: GS 2 – India and its Neighborhood

News: India has also opened the **Centre for Bay of Bengal Studies (CBS)** at Nalanda University. This shows India’s commitment towards constructive efforts by forming connections and setting up platforms for all in the Bay of Bengal.

The Bay of Bengal (the Bay) is experiencing an increase in geo-economic, geopolitical, and geo-cultural activity. It can play a key role in shaping the maritime order in Asia.

How CBS will be an advantage?

It will offer collaborations in areas such as geo-economics and geopolitics, ecology, trade and connectivity, maritime security, maritime law and blue economy. It will lead to generation of opportunities for the Bay region.

This will strengthen India’s overall framework for maritime engagement.

Further, it will also advance sustainable economic growth for all countries by promoting closer maritime ties.

What is the importance of the Bay of Bengal?

Commercial hub: The Bay has been a major commerce hub for the Indian Ocean. It created a channel between the East and the West in terms of trade and culture.

Security: It also acts as lifeline for global economic security and energy security.

Environment: The Bay also provides an opportunity for greater regional cooperation in the environmentally friendly exploration of marine and energy resources.

Biodiversity: The Bay has a biodiverse marine environment with many rare and endangered marine species and mangroves.

Geopolitical changes: The increasing interest towards Indo-Pacific and realignment of global economic and military power towards Asia has increased the significance of Bay region.

However, there have been many changes in the Bay in the recent times.

What changes or problems have come up in the Bay?

Population growth, altered land use, excessive resource exploitation, salinization, and sea level rise.

Non-traditional dangers including terrorism and climate change.

There has been species extinction due to the careless exploitation of the maritime environment which has led to problem of biodiversity.

These have led to the formation of a dead zone and the mangrove trees that protect the shore from the natural hazards are under more threat than ever.

Therefore, actions are required to preserve the Bay.

What can be the course of action?

First, a more focused and interdisciplinary study is required on these issues.

CBS has given the nation a unique interdisciplinary research center devoted to Bay-focused teaching, research, and capacity building.

Second, it is essential that maritime neighbors develop a partnership and cooperate because maritime domains are interrelated and interdependent.

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A few concerns that need immediate attention are – expanding cooperation in maritime safety and security, enhancing cooperation on maritime connectivity and the ease of maritime transit, among others.

Third, there is a need for regional marine entities to balance opportunities and goals on a national, regional, and international scale.

Fourth, countries in the region will need to mobilize incentives and investments, manage oceanic affairs more effectively, and support people as they switch to alternative lifestyles.

22. [Democracy in Kashmir: Indira's failure, Vajpayee's success](#)

Source: The post is based on an article “**Democracy in Kashmir: Indira's failure, Vajpayee's success**” published in **The Indian Express** on **29th September 2022**.

Syllabus: GS 2

Relevance: concerns associated with Jammu and Kashmir

News: Elections in Jammu and Kashmir is due for the past four years. It has been under direct administration of the Union government since Article 370 was revoked.

What were changes brought by revoking Article 370?

Jammu and Kashmir was transformed from a state to the union territory by the Union Parliament.

The new UT was given limited powers along the line of lines Delhi assembly.

The central government made further more changes in the UT.

For example, State subject certificates were replaced with domicile certificates which allowed voting and property rights to a temporary as well as long-time residents.

It altered land laws and affected forest rights, allocated mining rights to industry from outside the state, removed the right to free education up to the post-graduate level.

The latest changes were to revise the delimitation of electoral constituencies as ordered by the reorganisation act.

However, there are still many problems with Jammu and Kashmir.

What are the problems present in Jammu and Kashmir?

Voter's list: Jammu and Kashmir administration began to revise the voters' list after the delimitation commission submitted its report.

However, in the absence of recent census 2020 it is difficult to understand how the voters' list was prepared.

New laws: Jammu along with Kashmir has also suffered from the result of the new domicile certificates, land laws and industrial policies.

Delimitation commission: there are also allegations that the delimitation of electoral constituency by the delimitation commission has not been fair to the Kashmiri population.

Border dispute: J&K shares border with Pakistan and there have been wars which has disturbed the area.

Insurgency: There has been increase in the insurgency within the Kashmir valley and targeted attack on Pundits, panchayat officials and the police still continue.

Therefore, there is a need for a free and fair assembly election especially that which allows civil society observers.

How past government has helped in free and fair election in Kashmir?

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Atal Bihari Vajpayee government ensured free and fair elections in 2002 when the insurgency was at its height.

The elections were followed by new policies of non-interference in state governance along with peace negotiations with armed groups as well as Pakistan.

Vajpayee government followed by Manmohan Singh government led to a sharp fall in attacks and casualties and the restoration of a functioning government.

The peace-building years of 2002-2012 also laid the foundation for India to use the UN's Financial Action Task Force (FATF) to target Pakistan-based terrorists.

Therefore, there is a need to revise the current policy of the government.

What can be further course of action?

First, a free and fair election in 2023 can help to restore peace in J&K.

Second, the strongest confidence-building measure would be to restore statehood prior to elections and stop the implementation of the delimitation commission's recommendations.

23. After the floods, Bengaluru needs to clean up its act

Source: The post is based on an article **"After the floods, Bengaluru needs to clean up its act"** published in **The Hindu** on **30th September 2022**.

Syllabus: GS 2

Relevance: concerns associated with corruption and measures to tackle them

News: Bengaluru's floods have gone but they have left difficulties for the people. Difficulties such as flying of the dust in the air.

According to the various analyses rainfall has been expected to increase to an average of 1,000 mm per annum from the current 650 mm per annum.

The flood like situation in Bengaluru is generally blamed on builders, migrant, lack of spatial planning, etc.

However, these are not only the cause of flooding in Bengaluru.

There are other structural issues such as corruption also involved with the government that became the cause of flooding.

How does corruption affect the system?

Corruption reduces the economic growth. It transfers excessive wealth to the undeserving.

It also leads to people who are against the anti-corruption process reforms. The corrupt often use the honest to fulfil their agendas. For example, abound.

A government plays a major role in reducing and increasing corruption. For example, it can make bye-laws so complex that the strictest law-abiding citizen cannot comply with them.

These complex laws provide corrupt officials and politicians to freedom to bend them. These types of laws also provide opportunities for agents who bypass the rigidities of the system.

These agents work parallelly with the government officials and people generally do not complain about them.

The legal definition of corruption enables many in a corrupt system to escape punishment. Indian law recognises only corrupt acts by public servants to be 'acts of corruption' under the law.

It gives the way to private corruption. Many government actions are outsourced to private agents who collect handling fees on behalf of the government.

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For example, builder's agents openly asking for bribes. Therefore, corruption can also be blamed for the Bengaluru floods.

Moreover, e-governance mechanism has not helped to reduce corruption.

How has e-governance not been effective in controlling corruption?

E-Governance is often not the effective solution as claimed. E-enabled systems only relocate the place of corruption and they do not solve the problem.

When large databases, such as land records are moved to paperless systems, they become vulnerable to manipulation.

This leads to shifting of power from land administrators to the one who possesses the digital signature.

Therefore, data entry operator becomes an important and corruptible person in the system.

What can be the course of action?

First, there should be regular assessments and evaluations of ongoing anti-corruption measures. They help in alerting new corruption opportunities.

Second, there is a need for a genuine law of whistle-blower protection.

- It assures honest citizens, politicians, bureaucrats and judges of protection, as they otherwise fear the adverse consequences for disclosing illegal activities.
- Confidence-assuring whistle-blower protection measures can lead to exposure of more corruption, particularly at higher levels.

Third, there has to be a conscious move towards promoting ethical behaviour.

Fourth, there is a need for good leadership in order to make anti-corruption strategies successful.

24. [How dreams of freedom are shattered for working women in small-town India](#)

Source: The post is based on an article "How dreams of freedom are shattered for working women in small-town India" published in **The Indian Express** on **30th September 2022**.

Syllabus: GS 2

Relevance: problems associated with the employment of women

News: Urban cities are the hope of social and economic independence for young girls.

However, the murder of 19-year-old Ankita Bhandari in Uttarakhand has shattered the dreams of many young girls all over the country.

This has generated a fresh wave of anxiety and fear in the minds of girls who have such dreams.

Why do young girls migrate to urban cities and what are the problems associated with it?

They generally migrate in the search of employment. Some girls require to support their family with their incomes.

However, migration to big cities is a hard task for those coming from the economically weaker section of society. There are difficulties in finding jobs and places to stay.

Therefore, service sector jobs in small towns are the only option to for such women. However, there are other concerns associated with employment of women.

What are concerns associated with the employment of women?

Low participation: There has been low participation and a decline in women's employment.

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However, in urban areas there has been a long-term trend of more women in employment but there is discrimination.

Discrimination: Women's employment shows concentration in a few occupational segments and sectors.

This shows the broader discriminatory components of the urban labour market and the manner of women's exclusion/inclusion in urban employment.

Education: There is also more focus on the employment of younger aged girls who are educated. Therefore, those women who migrate and are not educated end up with domestic work and informal services which are highly unregulated.

Low wages: These women are further forced to face the gender discrimination and their jobs also do not pay them. Those jobs are temporary but serve a purpose for them to earn and support their families.

Accessibility: According to Centre for Women's Development Studies, many women reported their difficulty in accessing employment in urban areas.

Lack of awareness and laws: There is also lack of awareness of rights of women and laws on sexual harassment which leaves women on the hands of the employers.

There are other issues such as lack of adequate information of the job, conditions of work among others are the problems faced by the women.

There were also report on non-uniform wage rates, the absence of defined working hours, incidences of violence and harassment including sexual harassment.

Society: Girls often face many challenges like convincing their families and societies to migrate in the search of jobs.

All of these factors force young women to put up with hostile workspaces and insecure working conditions.

Further, such crimes will also discourage their hope to attain self-dependency and economic freedom.

[25. Keep up pressure: India-US teaming up on Pacific Islands will trouble China. That's welcome](#)

Source: The post is based on the article "**Keep up pressure: India-US teaming up on Pacific Islands will trouble China. That's welcome**" published in **The Times of India** on **30th September 2022**.

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

Relevance: About India-China relations.

News: The troop disengagement process in eastern Ladakh remains incomplete and China continues to block UN sanctions against Pakistan-based terrorists. Despite that, China's ambassador to India has recently said that the border situation is "switching to normalised management and control" and bilateral ties have shown positive momentum.

This shows China's subtle overtures to India due to the pressure on China by the US in East Asia.

What are the advantages China gained in delayed disengagement?

China has achieved their near-term objectives by delayed disengagement such as **a)** Along the LAC most of the disengagement buffer zones coming up on the Indian side, **b)** China has further bolstered its infrastructure on its side.

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

How China is approaching Pacific Islands?

China has been slowly peeling away the islands. For instance, **a)** Kiribati and the Solomon Islands switched recognition from Taiwan to Beijing, **b)** Kiribati pulled out of the Pacific Island Forum earlier this year on China's instructions.

What India should do if China is looking for peace?

China will talk about cooperation with India whenever it is in a tight spot strategically but will revert to an aggressive posture when the pressure eases. So, **a)** India should stick to its position that there can be no normalisation until China drops its aggressive behaviour, **b)** India should keep up the pressure by teaming up with the US to counter China's growing influence among the Pacific Island nations, and **c)** India should boost our defence infrastructure along the LAC.

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

26. [Vacation pe vacation: No major country has their top court going on long holidays. Neither should Supreme Court](#)

Source: The post is based on an article “**Vacation pe vacation: No major country has their top court going on long holidays. Neither should Supreme Court**” published in **The Times of India** on **1st October 2022**.

Syllabus: GS 2 – Functioning of Supreme Court

Relevance: concerns associated with vacation of courts

News: The article discusses the issue of too many vacations in the Indian Courts.

Excessive work is not only bad for family relationships but it also affects productivity. Therefore, many organizations mandatorily require employees to take annual leave.

However, there is a difference between individual leave and vacation.

Vacation means shutting down completely and organizations other than courts rarely go on vacation and there are individual leaves given in those organization.

Who decides vacations for Supreme Court (SC)?

The 1958 statute tells that vacation means such periods during a year fixed by SC rules with the prior approval of the President.

The current rule followed by SC for vacation is Supreme Court Rules, 2013 and Chief Justice of India (CJI) issues notifications for the vacation every year. For example, as per the recent notification, “The Chief Justice of India has directed that the Supreme Court will be closed for the annual Summer Vacation from Monday, the 23rd May, 2022 to Sunday, the 10th July, 2022 (both days inclusive).”

There are separate provisions for vacations in High Courts.

What are the findings of the Committee on Reforms of Criminal Justice System (2003)?

Committee on Reforms of Criminal Justice System (2003) was headed by Justice Malimath. It had a section on court vacations. The findings of the committee were:

There are no governmental organizations in the country except courts and schools that have vacation.

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Schools can be considered for the vacations as there are students studying but vacation in courts is not understood.

There are many countries in the world that do not have vacations in the courts.

For example, France and the US. Judges don't have vacation, but they can take holidays without affecting the function of the court.

Even in India the subordinate criminal courts do not have any vacation. But the subordinate civil courts, High Courts and the Supreme Court have vacations.

The concept of vacation is originated from colonial rules. Judges at that time came from England, a place colder compared to a India and the summer of India was unbearable to them.

Therefore, a vacation system was introduced so that those judges can go back to England in summer for several weeks. It is not required now.

However, there are different suggestion and steps taken by the Chief Justices.

What were the steps taken by Chief Justices?

CJI Justice Lodha in 2014 sought to eliminate vacations. CJI Justice Thakur, in 2016, appealed to HCs to not go on vacations. CJ of Allahabad High Court, Justice Chandrachud voluntarily gave up summer vacation.

What can be the course of action?

Arrears Committee and 230th Report of Law Commission recommended for a shorter duration in the vacation.

However, the recommendation does not hold any importance as complete vacations for courts are not needed.

There is a need to fix days of annual leave for the judges so that they also get time from the work.

27. Letting go of a chance to democratise telecom services

Source– The post is based on the article “**Letting go of a chance to democratise telecom services**” published in **The Hindu** on **1st October 2022**.

Syllabus: GS2- Indian Polity

Relevance– Regulation of telecommunication services in India

News-There is a need to resolve the issues with the new Telecommunication Bill, 2022.

What are the issues with the new bill?

Repackaging–

It is repackaging of **Telegraph Act, 1885** in the guise of legislative advancements.

It will lead to centralisation of power through a **new licensing regime**.

Inclusion of OTT platforms–

It includes online communication service providers within the ambit of telecommunication service. This move is to provide a level playing field to OTT platforms with telcos.

The argument about **the same services, and same rules** for both OTT platforms and telcos is a flawed one. Telecom operators act as gatekeepers to the underlying broadband infrastructure. OTT.

services can only be accessed through telco-controlled infrastructure.

Services provided by OTT platforms are diverse like social networking and video calling. They act as aggregators of these services.

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Privacy related issues–

The central government by exercising its powers to issue a license may put a requirement on such online service providers to store data locally in India

The requirement of interception under the act is not conducive for end-to-end encryption provided by OTT platforms. This will harm the privacy enjoyed by users of these platforms.

These rules are in stark contrast with the recommendations by the Supreme Court in its right to privacy decision in 2017 and the **Justice B.N. Srikrishna Committee Report on data protection**.

Suspension of internet services–

Clause 24(2)(b) of the Telecom Bill provides specific power for suspension of Internet services. The clause does not solve any of the issues that exist with the current framework for Internet shutdowns in India, specifically the **Temporary Suspension of Telecom Services (Public Emergency or Public Safety) Rules, 2017**.

Frequent internet shutdown has a chilling effect on fundamental rights enjoyed by citizens. There are high economic costs associated with it.

Missed opportunity–

The bill is missing an opportunity to set global standards by not introducing principles of net neutrality in the Telecom Bill.

28. [Punish vandals: Needed: smart law on property damaged in protests](#)

Source: The post is based on the article “**Punish vandals: Needed: smart law on property damaged in protests**” published in **The Times of India** on **1st October 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 damages to public and private property and limiting them.

News: Recently, the Kerala high court directing Popular Front of India (PFI) to deposit Rs 5.2 crore for damages incurred during the banned outfit’s flash hartal is a rare case of speedy remedial action.

How damages to public and private property is handled in India?

Those damaging public and private property must be effectively deterred.

Government actions

Central government: The government enacted the Prevention of Damage to Public Property Act, 1984. The government introduced an amendment bill in 2015. The bill suggested placing the burden of proof on the accused, fixing responsibility on organisations and office-bearers, and pegging the fine as the market value of public property damaged.

State government: Some states have enacted their own laws. But they vary from state to state. For instance, Kerala enacted a law in 2019 to recover damages for private property destruction but left out public property. In contrast, UP’s 2020 law enables recovery of damages for both public and private property.

Judicial actions

The Supreme Court’s 2009 guidelines prescribed a fair procedure. High Courts were empowered to initiate suo motu proceedings and appoint a judicial officer as Claims Commissioner.

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What are the concerns associated with various laws regarding damages to public and private property?

a) The Centre's law, Prevention of Damage to Public Property Act, 1984, is outdated and narrowly focused on criminal prosecution, **b)** The state governments did not implement the law effectively. For example, the SC found great divergence from due process in the recovery of damages from anti-CAA protesters and directed UP to follow this law properly.

What needs to be done to limit the damages to public and private property?

a) Uniform central legislation that ensures time-bound inquiry into damages, recovery of assets and criminal prosecution of rioters is needed, **b)** The government also need to fix the fault of police officers and government negligence in preventing violence.

General

Studies

Paper – 3

General Studies - 1

1. [Greying threat: India must have its version of China's fusion of civil and military in naval deployment](#)

Source: The post is based on the article “**Greying threat: India must have its version of China's fusion of civil and military in naval deployment**” published in **The Times of India** on **26th September 2022**.

Syllabus: GS 3 – Role of external state and non-state actors in creating challenges to internal security.

Relevance: To build India's grey-zone capabilities.

News: Indian Army chief has recently emphasised the need to develop India's grey-zone capabilities.

What are grey-zone capabilities?

The grey zone describes a set of activities that occur between peace and war situations. Generally, grey-zone activities are considered gradualist campaigns by state and non-state actors that combine non-military and quasi-military tools.

These are actions that fall below the threshold of armed conflict which aims to thwart, destabilize, weaken, or attack an adversary. They are often tailored toward the vulnerabilities of the target state. For instance, nefarious economic activities, influence operations, cyberattacks, mercenary operations, assassinations, and disinformation campaigns, etc.

China and grey-zone capabilities

China over the last decade has emerged as a fine practitioner of grey-zone warfare. They have an excellent fusion between their civilian and military naval assets.

For instance, **a)** The so-called Chinese scientific vessel, Yuan Wang 5 was docked at Sri Lanka's Hambantota port. In reality, it was a spy ship capable of tracking intercontinental missiles, **b)** Chinese deploying civilian trawlers and a maritime militia to assert their maritime claims in the South China Sea, **c)** China's so-called Nine Dash Line cartographical innovation that laid claim to almost all of the South China Sea region, **d)** They even encroach upon traditional fishing grounds and exclusive economic zones (EEZs) of neighbouring states. For instance, 220 Chinese fishing vessels had intruded into the Whitsun Reef area, which is part of the Philippines' EEZ.

Read more: [Yuan Wang 5: Why is the visit of a Chinese vessel to Sri Lanka's Hambantota port controversial?](#)

Chinese civilian-military maritime forces mean formidable strategic and tactical worries for India.

What India needs to do to improve its grey-zone capabilities?

India needs to **a)** Seriously upgrade its coastal defence and sharpen its naval fleet, **b)** Along with INS Vikrant, India needs many more high-tech naval vessels and listening posts to counter the China threat.

Read more: [Chinese ship at Hambantota calls for New Delhi to look closely at its maritime strategy](#)

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2. [Open networks are good but only if they are regulated](#)

Source: The post is based on the article “**Open networks are good but only if they are regulated**” published in **Livemint** on **26th September 2022**.

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

Relevance: To understand the need for ONDC.

News: The Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC) is being hailed as India’s next digital leap forward. It is expected to revolutionize e-commerce, much like what the Unified Payments Interface (UPI) did for Indian payments.

What is ONDC?

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

What is the need for ONDC?

During the pandemic, the government found that **a)** A large percentage of the domestic retail trade was found to be digitally excluded, **b)** India has a large supply chain break-down, **c)** Digital commerce in India is dominated by two foreign companies. Further, ongoing investigations against these two companies in the Competition Commission of India stressed the need for a custom-built approach to take on these companies and **d)** To resolve the challenges faced by small traders and shopkeepers due to demonetization, the introduction of GST and digital trade during lockdowns.

Further, the Success of the UPI during the pandemic forced the government to find a similar “public good” for digital commerce.

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

What should be done to make ONDC a neutral platform?

Make the platform-neutral: ONDC should function as a neutral platform, helping neither the buyer nor the seller. ONDC’s task should be generating trust that every player will have to be treated equally.

The government should not allow political agenda to take place within ONDC. For instance, a political party has decided to launch its own e-commerce app (called Bharat e-Market) on ONDC. These things should be avoided.

Proper regulation: In the UPI space, without proper regulation, two largest players in the UPI space—PhonePe and G-Pay—have ended up controlling over 80% of the market. So, the regulation of ONDC cannot be left to the company.

A nominally independent or autonomous body will have to lay down the ground rules, monitor conduct on the platform and weed out any indications of dominance.

Need clarification: The government need to clarify the incentives that exist for private players to shift their network of suppliers and buyers to ONDC.

Read more: [Our open network for digital commerce must win trust](#)

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3. [RBI, inflation targeting, and the limits of monetary policy](#)

Source– The post is based on the article “**RBI, inflation targeting, and the limits of monetary policy**” published in **The Indian Express** on **26th September 2022**.

Syllabus: GS3- Indian Economy

Relevance– About inflation

News– The article explains the new statutory framework for inflation targeting. It also explains the reason behind high levels of inflation in recent times and implications of this.

What is the statutory framework for monetary policy?

The Centre, under RBI Act, 1934 has fixed the CPI inflation target at 4% with an upper tolerance limit of 6%.

Read more about [Inflation Targeting](#).

With the enactment of inflation targeting framework, RBI was entrusted with the responsibility of meeting this target (“accountability”). It was given “independence” for the conduct of monetary policy.

Has RBI been able to achieve its target?

Inflation in 2022 has been above 6% every single month from January to August.

During the present government’s first term, inflation was above 6% only for one month after a new inflation targeting framework came into existence.

During the second term, it has exceeded its target in 21 months out of 41 months.

Why RBI needs help of government in controlling inflation?

Food and beverage items have a combined 45.86% weight in the overall CPI (Consumer Price Index).

There has been consistent increase in the general CPI as well as the consumer food price index (CFPI).

During the present government’s first term, average food inflation was low, thus RBI was able to control the inflation. Whereas, during the 2nd term, food inflation has been high, therefore the inflation has been high.

Average weight of food items in CPI is 45% in India. While, it is 10-25% in developed countries.

The food inflation cannot be controlled through **demand side measures** like increase in repo rate. There is need for supply side measures.

Therefore, RBI has to be dependent on the government for **supply side measures**. For example, the government banned wheat exports in May this year. It impacts the independence of RBI in conducting monetary policy.

Inflation control cannot be left to the RBI alone. It needs cooperation between the government and the RBI.

4. [Pitching India as a signature destination](#)

Source: The post is based on an article “**Pitching India as a signature destination**” published in **The Hindu** on **27th September 2022**.

Syllabus: GS 3 – Industries and industrial policies

Relevance: tourism sector in India and problems associated with it.

News: World Tourism Day is celebrated on 27th September 2022 but tourism sector has been severely impacted by the pandemic in India and around the world.

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However, the government is making efforts to bring the industry back on track.

One of such efforts is the **'The Dharamshala Declaration'** which has been developed with help of various Ministers.

What is Dharamshala Declaration?

The Dharamshala Declaration **aims to recognize India's role in contributing towards global tourism** as well as focusing on recovery of domestic tourism.

The Ministry of Tourism has come up with strategy to encourage more Indians to travel domestically and explore India. It will help to reach the goal of **Ek Bharat Shrestha Bharat**.

The Tourism Ministry has also been working with the Ministry of External Affairs **to identify 20 Indian missions abroad**. This will help in bringing higher number of tourists in India.

Moreover, there are goals set for the Indian tourism sector for the coming years that will boost the sector's growth.

What are the goal set for India in tourism sector?

India would be achieving \$150 billion as GDP contribution from tourism and \$30 billion in foreign exchange earnings with 15 million foreign tourist arrivals by 2024.

India is estimated to grow at 7%-9% compounded annual growth rate by 2030.

The Tourism Ministry is committed to work on these goals to ensure the **positioning of India as one of the world's best tourism destinations by 2047**.

What is the current situation of tourism in India and what steps have taken by government?

Tourism has been one of the sectors severely affected by COVID-19.

The Government of India's **Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme** was recently enhanced from ₹4.5 lakh crore to ₹5 lakh crore to benefit enterprises in hospitality and related sectors.

Further, the Ministry of Tourism has also prepared a draft **National Tourism Policy 2022**.

What are the provisions of the draft National Tourism Policy 2022?

First, it aims at improving the framework conditions for tourism development in the country.

This will be done by supporting tourism industries, strengthening tourism support functions and developing tourism sub-sectors.

Second, it also promotes sustainable, responsible and inclusive tourism in line with our cultural values.

Third, it aims to give support to digitalization, innovation and technology through the **National Digital Tourism Mission** and skilling through the **Tourism and Hospitality Sector Skill Mission**.

Fourth, the policy also gives a special focus to private sector participation through **public-private-partnerships (PPP)**.

This policy has been first attempt towards tourism and hospitality sectors after 2002.

Moreover, the presidency of G20 will be an advantage for India to bring its tourism Infront of the world.

How can the presidency of G20 will be helpful for tourism sector in India?

India has an opportunity to position itself as a major tourism destination during India's presidency of the G20.

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India will welcome delegates from the 20 countries/European Union and it will be hosting around 200 meetings with foreign delegates.

This will be an opportunity for India to showcase its country's cultural richness to the world.

Moreover, the Ministry of Tourism should also work with other Ministries to bring required transformation in visa, ease of travel, traveler-friendly and improved immigration facilities at airports.

5. [Why PLI Is Worth Doing](#)

Source: The post is based on an article “Why PLI Is Worth Doing” published in **The Times of India** on **27th September 2022**.

Syllabus: GS 3 – Industries and industrial policies

Relevance: advantages and problems associated with Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme.

News: Vedanta Foxconn semiconductor factory in Gujarat has received an investment of \$20 billion through the government's flagship Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme. This has led to the analysis of the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme.

How does PLI affect a specific product category?

PLI on a specific product category is accompanied by higher tariffs on the product.

This increases the import tariffs and usually results in higher price for the Indian consumer and lower prices of domestic products.

For example, iPhone 13 costs Rs 1.29 lakhs in India versus Rs 92,500 in Chicago.

How PLI recognize the problem of manufacturing sectors and what are the steps taken for the improvement?

Problem: Manufacturing as a proportion of GDP has not picked up meaningfully despite reforms in 30 years. PLI reforms recognizes that India's manufacturing productivity is almost 20-30% lower than the rest of Asia. It also recognizes that perfect conditions required for its growth will take time to come up.

Solution: The government will monetize that productivity deficit through PLI.

This will help them to invest in large global-scale capacities. Therefore, PLIs are the industrial variant of Direct Cash Transfer that help to boost the industries.

However, there is a concern for its affordability through budget and post PLI measures.

What are the concerns associated with PLIs?

Affordability: The total combined estimation for the 14 PLI programs is Rs 3.46 lakh crores and it is being argued whether the government will be able to spend this amount.

The amount is expected to be spent over five years and it would be 1.5% of Union Budget expenditure (0.2% of GDP). Therefore, it seems reasonable and can be supported by the government through budget.

Further, the total expenditure is dependent on milestone production achievements of the companies. If the maximum projected milestones are achieved by the companies, they would generate enough additional taxes to pay for the programme by itself.

Post PLI: Investment through PLIs is for a five-year period and this raises concerns for the companies for post five-year plans. It has been said that PLIs would help companies with incentives to build ecosystem and sustain itself without any further requirement of the incentives.

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6. [NASA's risk focus adds up and so does the US Fed's](#)

Source: The post is based on an article “**Nasa’s risk focus adds up and so does the US Fed’s**” published in **The Live Mint** on **27th September 2022**.

Syllabus: **GS 3 – Science and technology development**

Relevance: **problems associated with space weaponization.**

News: **NASA** is estimated to have invested above \$320 million in Dart (Double Asteroid Redirection Test). It is the US space agency’s project to protect the planet from hitting any asteroid headed for earth.

NASA launched its **Dart (Double Asteroid Redirection Test) spacecraft** in November 2021 with Didymos in its target sights.

Didymos is a large asteroid which is 11 million km away. NASA is planning to hit the asteroid with Dart.

What is the use of Dart project?

America’s Dart project assures everyone on the earth to save the world from any such situation arising out the asteroid hitting the earth.

It would coordinate with other space agencies of the countries to execute the mission in saving the earth.

What are the problems associated with such space missions?

Cost: The cost of the mission is huge when compared to the probability of an asteroid hitting the Earth.

Alteration in data: Further, drones at over 25,000 kmph may alter the orbiter’s speed and make it difficult for NASA to detect and study.

Probability: The probability for an asteroid to hit the earth is very low. Till now, Nasa knows of no asteroid or comet that is on the course to hit the earth.

For example, last year Asteroid Bennu’s was estimated to crash into Earth till 2300 CE. Its probability was 1 in 1,750 and it’s still highly unlikely to happen.

However, Dart can be useful in the bad times when such situation arises.

7. [A push for semiconductor industry](#)

Source– The post is based on the article “**A push for semiconductor industry**” published in **The Hindu** on **27th September 2022**.

Syllabus: GS3- Indian economy

Relevance– semiconductor manufacturing

News– The article explains the size of the semiconductor industry. It also talks about the Indian government scheme to promote semiconductor manufacturing in India and the challenges associated with the scheme.

What about the semiconductor industry?

Semiconductors are the building blocks of almost every modern electronic device from smartphones to connected devices in the Internet of Things.

The chip-making process is complex and highly exact. It has multiple other steps in the supply chain that include-

- Designing software for chips and patenting them through core Intellectual Property rights.

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(b) Making chip-fabrication machines and setting up factories

(c) **ATMP** (assembly, testing, making and packaging).

The chip-making industry is highly-concentrated. It is controlled by the big players like Taiwan, South Korea U.S. According to a New York Times estimate, 90% of 5nm chips are mass-produced in Taiwan.

What are the changes introduced in the scheme?

According to the Electronics and IT Ministry, semiconductor demand in India would increase to \$70-\$80 billion by 2026.

In December 2021, India announced its \$10 billion dollar production linked incentive (PLI) scheme to encourage semiconductor and display manufacturing in the country.

It also announced fiscal support for a design-linked initiative (DLI) scheme for designing software, IP rights etc.

The new changes in the scheme seek to harmonize government incentives for all technology nodes of semiconductors. The modified scheme provides uniform 50% fiscal support for all nodes. Besides, it will provide 50% of capital expenditure for other steps of the process as well (chip design and ATMP).

What are the challenges?

Resources-Chip production is a resource-intensive and expensive process. The outlay of the scheme remains \$10 billion. Just the setting up of one semiconductor factory requires an investment of anywhere between \$3 and \$7 billion. Little would be left to support other elements like packaging and testing facilities, and chip design centers.

Initial funding should focus on areas like design and R&D.

Water-Chip-making requires ultra-pure water. Government needs to provide it to chip making factories. It could create challenges for the government.

8. [What is the solution to India's garbage disposal problem?](#)

Source: The post is based on an article "**What is the solution to India's garbage disposal problem?**" published in **The Indian Express** on **28th September 2022**.

Syllabus: **GS 3 – Environmental Pollution**

Relevance: problems associated with garbage

Context: There is a garbage problem everywhere around the country. Companies make the product but they are unable to take this garbage back to the recycling plants due to the low cost of the packaged material.

What does the data say?

According to a recent annual report of a large consumer goods (FMCG) company, out of every Rs 100 of the company's product that we buy, Rs 5 go up in vehicular smoke and Rs 8 for the package that we hold in our hand.

This packaging is required because the products have a long shelf life, and withstand heat, sunlight and rough handling during freight.

After using the product consumers throw it in the garbage which can be seen littering around the road causing problems like choking gutters.

However, there are different laws present to address the problem.

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What steps have been taken by the government to address the issue?

Government has various laws but they lack implementation.

According to the law, the **Ultimate Manufacturers (UMs)** of plastic are responsible for the collection of the waste and its processing.

They must set up collection networks and work with state pollution control boards and the city and town administrations. It will ensure that the waste reaches recyclers and manufacturers.

However, this system has not worked because of the economy associated with it.

For example, Rs 8 out of 100 was spent on packaging the product, the cost of the packaging materials is barely Rs 1.

Even with the most advanced recycling technology, the value of that piece of garbage in our hand to the ultimate manufacturer is less than 50 paise.

Therefore, it is simply not economical to transfer the waste back to the manufacturer.

This is why the garbage dumps, ragpickers, and the neighborhood kabaddi shops are necessarily the only last mile option of our recycling system.

What can be the course of action?

A suitable amount of money can be implemented as a sustainability tax on the packaging and carriage cost components of a given product. This tax can be easily administered and transferred to the districts and towns.

This would provide the company with a good amount to address its garbage disposal problem.

Therefore, a consumption tax based on sustainability would create the right incentives for a scientific analysis of garbage and the logistics of its disposal.

Further, it will also create a group of professional companies who specialize in this sector and provide their services to hundreds of cities and towns.

9. Bringing BPCL sale back on the table

Source: The post is based on an article **“Bringing BPCL sale back on the table”** published in **The Business Standard** on **28th September 2022**.

Syllabus: GS 3 – Industries and industrial policies

Relevance: problems associated the regulation of petroleum companies

News: Recently the government has put aside the idea to privatize Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL).

The reason behind it is the inability of the bidders to participate due to prevailing conditions in the global energy market.

However, it is not the only reason that prevents the bidders from participating.

What are the concerns with the privatization of BPCL?

The reasons for postponing the sale of the government’s 53 per cent stake in BPCL are not just the market conditions but it is also the policy environment that prevails in the country’s oil sector.

Therefore, even when the markets improve, the chances of a long queue of bidders for BPCL will remain low.

So, there is a need to reform the pricing policies that govern companies refining and marketing petroleum products.

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What steps have been taken by the government for the reforms in the petroleum industry and the problems associated with those reforms?

Many governments in the past have tried to deregulate petroleum product prices but they have failed to do so.

Oil prices are as regulated as any product in the pre-reform days of the 1970s and the 1980s.

Reform: The effort to dismantle the price mechanism for the oil sector was officially started in 2002. The administered price mechanism for the oil sector was officially dismantled.

This provided freedom to the oil companies to sell their products at a price determined by their own calculations on cost and return.

Problems: This led oil companies to declare their prices almost every fortnight but approval from the oil ministry was still required.

Even that little freedom for the oil companies was gone, when international crude oil prices began rising from 2004.

The then government decided to regain full control over prices of petrol and diesel and the oil companies were not allowed to fix the prices till 2009.

Reform: The petrol prices were made free from regulations from 2010. Further, under the Modi government diesel prices were also made free from the govt. regulations.

Problems: The government continued to have an indirect control on retail prices of petroleum products.

The government tried to fix the prices of petrol and diesel and they also raised taxes when international crude oil prices fell.

Therefore, oil refiners and marketing companies never enjoyed the true freedom in pricing their products.

Reform: The government set up the Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board in 2006.

It was set up to protect the interests of consumers and entities engaged in activities relating to petroleum, petroleum products and natural gas, and to promote competitive markets.

Problem: But the regulatory board has been insufficient to fulfil its aims.

These all issues have led to the inability of oil companies to develop a transparent system of fixing prices.

How have private companies perform in the petroleum sector?

They entered into the retail markets but later withdrew due to government-controlled pricing. Therefore, the regulatory and policy gaps in the pricing and distribution of petroleum products should be removed.

However, fixing the regulatory and policy gaps in the pricing of petroleum products would be a big challenge.

What can be the course of action?

First, the way out is to grant full freedom to oil marketing companies to fix the retail prices in a competitive environment.

Second, the government could declare a subsidized band of prices for petrol and diesel as it does for cooking gas.

Third, the transaction of the consumer should be linked with Aadhaar based system so that the consumers could claim the difference between the subsidized and market prices.

- This difference could be transferred to their bank accounts.

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- This will make the oil companies' costs and returns would become more transparent

Fourth, it is also important to safeguard the oil marketing companies from political intervention to freeze or bring down retail prices of petrol and diesel.

- This would ensure stability will also encourage the private sector to expand their retail operations in this sector.

10. The future of farmer producer companies could be brightened

Source– The post is based on the article “**The future of farmer producer companies could be brightened**” published in the **mint** on **28th September 2022**.

Syllabus: GS3- Agriculture

News– The article explains about **Farmer Producer Companies (FPC)** in India. It analyses the challenges faced by these FPCs and possible solutions to address these issues.

What are the issues faced by the farming sector?

70% of farmers are **small and marginal**. They have disadvantages in terms of scale, potential risk and bargaining power.

The average monthly income is almost 10000 per month at current prices.

Almost half of farmers are facing **debt issues**.

Most farmers are **rain-fed** and exposed to **climate risk**.

What are Farmer Producer Companies?

They were introduced in the 2000s as potential solutions to challenges faced by the farming sector. They operate on the basis of the **welfare model of collectivization**.

They function under the Companies Act, 2013 where shareholding farmers pool their resources for better market linkages.

By 2019, 7374 FPCs have been formed.

A central sector scheme was launched in 2021 to promote 10000 FPCs.

Additional funding is provided through the Small Farmers Agribusiness Consortium, NABARD and schemes like the Agriculture Investment Fund.

What are the challenges before FPCs?

First issue is related to raising capital from its members. High income states like Haryana and Punjab have better scope for raising capital. In states with lower per capita income like Odisha, it is difficult to raise capital. 65% of FPCs were operating on meagre share capital before the pandemic.

Second issue is that they cannot absorb public funding equally. There is a role of business development service providers, knowledge partners, and technical institutes to nurture FPCs. Small FPCs find it difficult to engage with these entities.

Smaller FPCs face issues in hiring full staff for operations that impact their branding and customer outreach.

Third issue is related to dominance of male. Women farmers face issues in providing share capital. They are represented by their male proxies.

What are the possible solutions?

Better coordination- There is a need for policy platforms like POSHAN Abhiyan for **inter-agency convergence**.

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Capacity building– The capacity of FPCs for absorbing public funds should be strengthened. Government officials and cluster-level federations set up under the One District One Product scheme can mentor FPOs.

Better incentives- FPCs must enable farmers access to entitlements like PM Fasal Bima Yojana, PM krishi Sinchai Yojana, KCC.

Women participation– They need to be given equal priority in these FPCs.

11. [Symptoms of climate change are real](#)

Source: The post is based on the article “**Symptoms of climate change are real**” published in the **Business Standard** on **28th September 2022**.

Syllabus: GS 3 – Climate Change.

Relevance: About climate change.

News: The resurgence of the monsoon at a time when it should normally have retreated from the northwest highlighted the impacts of climate change.

The excessive rain also exposed the inherent flaws in the drainage systems and poor town planning in most cities, including Delhi.

What are the clear symptoms of climate change in India?

a) Development of new rain-bearing systems in the oceans, **b)** The frequency of long dry spells and short bouts of intensive rain, along with the schedule of the monsoon’s onset and withdrawal has also undergone a noticeable change, **c)** There is a significant rise in the incidence of heavy downpours and pre-monsoon heat waves in the Himalayan region. This has led to more landslides and a greater melting of snow, and **d)** The overall monsoon rainfall this year, though about 7% above normal, has been quite patchy over time and space. This impedes crop sowing in some areas and adversely affects standing crops in others and **e)** The persistence of La Nina (caused by cooler than normal waters in the tropical Pacific) for an unusually long term of three years.

Must read: [Impact of Climate Change on Monsoon – Explained, pointwise](#)

What are the clear symptoms of climate change around the world?

Globally, the impact of climate change is showing up in a higher frequency and more intensity of heat and cold waves, wet and dry periods, and melting of glaciers.

The UN Food and Agriculture Organization is of the view that aberrant weather might lead to significant crop losses and exacerbate food security concerns in several countries in Asia, Africa and the Pacific region.

The impact of La-lina for consecutive three years is clearly visible in the dry climate in parts of the US and South America and unprecedented floods in Pakistan.

The potential loss to the global economy on account of weather-related factors is reckoned by some economists at over \$1 trillion by the end of 2023. This shows that global efforts to mitigate global warming are not producing the desired results.

Read more: [Managing Climate Change: A Strategy for India – Explained, pointwise](#)

What needs to be done to mitigate climate change?

a) Adapt to climate changes and enhance preparedness to cope with them, **b)** Concerted efforts to evolve crop varieties and agronomic practices capable of boosting the farm sector’s resilience against weather uncertainties.

Read more: [Climate change as business: Crisis, opportunity and everything in between](#)

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12. [Foreign trade: Going beyond a phrase](#)

Source: The post is based on the article “**Foreign trade: Going beyond a phrase**” published in the **Business Standard** on **29th September 2022**.

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

Relevance: About India’s foreign trade policy.

News: Recently, India’s foreign trade policy, 2015 was extended by six months at a time since 2020.

What are the reasons behind extending the foreign trade policy?

Read here: [Foreign Trade Policy extended for six months](#)

What is the need for a new Foreign Trade Policy?

Must read: [The Need for a New Foreign Trade Policy – Explained, pointwise](#)

What is the evolution of trade in India since FTP 2015-2030?

In 2015, the government was doubtful about the benefits of freer trade. So, new agreements were put on hold, older agreements were scrutinised, and bilateral investment treaties were scrapped.

After the Covid-19 pandemic hit India, the prime minister introduced the concept of *aatmanirbharta*, or self-reliance. It is not clear what self-reliance specifically means in the context of foreign trade policy. It is assumed that increasing the capacity and competitiveness of domestic industry.

Meanwhile, the government has also acted on multiple new free trade agreements,. For instance, **a)** Signing a comprehensive partnership with the United Arab Emirates, **b)** A more limited agreement with Australia, and **c)** Moving discussions forward with the United Kingdom and the European Union among others.

Read more: [Policy balance: Higher trade and fiscal deficits can create risks](#)

What clarifications are required in a new foreign trade policy?

The new foreign trade policy should ideally fill **a)** “Self-reliance” is one short phrase and does not constitute a policy statement on its own, **b)** Clarify whether Production-linked incentive (PLI) schemes are a temporary bridging mechanism or an export promotion system or an investment promotion scheme or a geo-strategic play to reduce dependence on China. This can be done by clearly defining aim and purpose of the scheme, **c)** There has to be clear proof of how temporary subsidies lead to a permanent increase in competitiveness.

In the absence of this understanding, the errors of the past will be repeated. These issues need to be clearly examined and understood before releasing a new policy.

13. [Talent, recognition – on awards to scientists](#)

Source– The post is based on the article “**Talent, recognition**” published in **The Hindu** on **29th September 2022**.

Syllabus: GS3- Science and Technology

Relevance– Importance of awards

News– The article explains the rationale behind central government’s proposed move to have a re look at awards, prizes and fellowships. It also explains the issues faced by scientific researchers if it is implemented.

The Union Home Ministry has been given this task to have a re look.

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What is the rationale behind reducing the number of awards to scientists?

It is in accordance with PM's vision regarding "Transformation of the Awards Ecosystem".

Central government had modified the system of the Padma awards.

It ensures that ordinary people doing selfless work get the opportunity to get awards rather than well-known personalities who are repeatedly given these awards.

The government wants a transparent selection process.

What are the issues with the proposed move?

It is easy to set benchmarks in the field of sports and gallantry awards. But it is not the case with scientific research. It involves subjectivity.

It is possible to train talented youth to be Olympians or international cricketers but impossible to create an Einstein or a Chandrasekhar.

It is not easy to recognise early carrier potential. There is a lot of subjectivity involved. Fewer awards could increase discontent. Many talented youths can miss the opportunity to get awards.

14. How much should India prop up the rupee?

Source: The post is based on an article "How much should India prop up the rupee?" published in **The Hindu** on **30th September 2022**.

Syllabus: GS 3 – Indian Economy – Growth and development

Relevance: concerns associated with declining rupee and widening CAD.

News: The rupee weakened against the dollar recording a low at Rs 81 per dollar in the last week. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has been intervening in the forex market to smoothen the decline.

Indian foreign exchange reserves have fallen to about \$545 billion till mid-September 2022 in order to control the volatility.

How much of forex reserves should be used by the RBI to control the rupee volatility?

The use of forex reserves is appropriate at this point. Forex reserves are being spent to curb currency volatility.

It is not easy to fix the rupee at a particular level but it is possible to make it less volatile.

However, there is also a limit to rely on the reserves in order to control the rupee volatility.

How excessive intervention by the RBI can affect and forex reserves and what steps are needed?

Forex reserves can finish if RBI is aggressive in the intervention. Therefore, a holistic approach is needed. Thus, a multi-dimensional policy will be required, which includes easing provisions for remittances, allowing short-term foreign portfolio investments in government securities, etc.

Further a scheme to attract NRI investment can also be considered.

Depreciating the rupee sustainably will help the export sector and will address the challenge of high current account deficit (CAD) to some extent

Interest rate policy can be used to address domestic concerns and to help sustain the impact of the U.S. Federal Reserve's rate hikes.

However, there is a limit to the RBI continuously managing volatility because its priority is price stability through inflation containment and not the exchange rate management.

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What has been the reason for rupee volatility and what measures are required to address it?

The US Federal Reserve's decision to increase rates is making foreign portfolio investors move out of emerging markets.

Geopolitical uncertainties like the war in Ukraine, energy price volatility has also contributed to this situation.

What is the level of forex reserves in India in terms of number of months of import cover and is this measure adequate?

The import cover is one way to measure reserves adequacy but it's a very narrow one. There are other measures such as the Guidotti-Greenspan rule that looks at external debt that is less than one year.

Forex reserves should be sufficient to serve short term debt. From that point of view, we still have adequate reserves.

How can the real effective exchange rate (REER) be helpful for RBI in forex management?

It may not be a good approach and it is better to move with interest rate defense.

Therefore, addressing the macroeconomic fundamentals is necessary as it helped during the taper tantrum in 2013.

High inflation is also increasing the import costs which is widening the CAD.

However, we have already lived with CAD of 4% of GDP and it more important to come up with measures to finance the deficit.

Financing the CAD with capital inflows and preventing hot money outflow with the help of interest rates could be an effective long-term solution.

What are the consequences for the economy if CAD hits 4%?

Even during the tenure of Raghuram Rajan the CAD went up to 4% but as soon as hot money became volatile panic set in.

However, if RBI can operate the interest rate effectively that can check the outflow. But in using this tool RBI has to focus on the real interest rate and economic growth, i.e., R and G, for public debt management.

If the R is going to be greater than G then there is an unsustainable situation.

The only way to address these concerns such as fiscal consolidation, twin deficit crisis, a negative real rate of interest is to raise rates.

What are the concerns associated with the falling rupee?

As per an RBI report, 44% of the outstanding debt has not been protected and is vulnerable to forex volatility.

The rupee hasn't seen the kind of weakness that it saw during the taper tantrum and now it is extremely orderly. The pace of rupee depreciation has not been very severe this time to cause concern. However, uncertainties remain.

Moreover, rupee depreciation and appreciation are market-based and it is based on demand and supply mechanism.

Therefore, RBI needs to intervene only if the rupee is on a sustained free fall.

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15. Rupee trade settlement offers India structural benefits

Source: The post is based on an article “Rupee trade settlement offers India structural benefits” published in **Live Mint** on **30th September 2022**.

Syllabus: GS 3

Relevance: measures taken by the RBI to tackle falling rupee

News: RBI has taken a decision recently to let domestic exim traders facilitate and settle invoicing and payments for international trade in rupees.

This is a welcome step as it will reduce India’s trade deficit and India can more easily raise its proportion of Russian oil purchases at discount prices.

How is this measure helpful?

It is a departure from the long-standing Foreign Exchange Management Act provision mandating final settlement in free foreign exchange.

It would need foreign banks opening Vostro accounts in India with settlements taking place instantly. It would further allow Indian exim dealers to settle rupee-denominated trade invoices using these Vostro accounts.

It also provides the parties with some leeway by allowing advance flow management.

It is done by using excess rupee balances for permissible capital and current account transactions in accordance with mutual agreements.

The provision for opening bank accounts in the case of Russia is limited to Russian banks that are not on the US-Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) sanctions list.

Therefore, this step has come as the rupee falls to historic lows versus the dollar.

Why are the consequences of falling rupee?

Imports: The sharp rise in global commodities, particularly oil imports have caused India’s trade and current account deficits (CAD) to worrying levels.

The current account deficit is expected to touch 3% of GDP in 2022-23 despite a record increase in exports.

Inflation: A weakening rupee worsens the threat of imported inflation in India, since India is dependent on imports for about four-fifths of its annual motor-fuel demand.

Therefore, this policy would lower demand for foreign exchange for the settlement of current account-related trade flows.

Further this step taken by the RBI also has economic and geopolitical implications.

How this measure has economic and geopolitical implications?

First, it has liberalized capital account convertibility to decrease pressure on India’s dollar reserves. Capital account flexibility diminishes the function in trade of currency reserves.

Second, the move could assist Indian exporters in collecting advance payments in Indian rupees from overseas clients.

Third, even if a Vostro account is not pre-funded, foreign importers will have to buy rupees. The rupee payment method can be used to set off export and import transactions.

Fourth, the move could have a favourable long-term influence on regional nations wanting to trade with India.

Moreover, the measure will also affect international politics.

How will this measure affect international politics?

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First, it signals the beginning of more concerted attempts to settle payments in non-dollar currencies among BRICS nation and with other South Asian countries.

Second, it would support the Indian rupee's position on the internationally with China and Russia looking for alternative payment systems.

Moreover, the US dollar holds importance around the globe including in India.

How does US dollar hold importance around the globe and in India?

Internationally: The US dollar is defined as Dominant Currency Paradigm' (DCP) which means the US dollar holds importance as the source, destination and vehicle currency.

The DCP has affected national exchange-rate policies by emphasizing the stability of the US retail price index and input costs.

According to estimates, the dollar's proportion of global invoices is currently 4.7 times more than its share of global imports.

India: 60% of all export-import payments in India are made in US dollars (and 86% in the case of imports).

The settlement at the sovereign level is carried out in dollars even if an Indian exporter is paid in rupees.

Moreover, the rupee's current depreciation can be given to dollar strength globally.

16. [Chief of Defence Staff](#)

Source– The post is based on the articles “**Evolving Chair**” published in **The Hindu** and the “**The Chief task**” published in **The Indian Express** on **30th September 2022**.

Syllabus: GS3- Security challenges

Relevance– Reformation of armed forces

News– The article explains the new vision of the Indian government for transformation of armed focus and bringing synergy. It also explains the challenges before the institution of Chief of Defence Staff.

What is the status of armed forces in a democracy?

They are constitutionally empowered instruments of the state under the umbrella of **civilian supremacy**.

They operate with a **great deal of autonomy** and are largely trusted by the politicians to offer sound policy advice.

Indian armed forces have followed this model. In the case of India, bureaucracy has acted as a **policy interface** between executive and armed forces.

What is the proposed vision for transformation of armed forces and CDS role in this transformation?

One of the main components of this new vision is reorganisation of the armed forces into **integrated theatre commands**.

It focuses on bringing **synergy** between all wings of armed forces.

CDS mandate is to ensure “**jointness**” of the three services in operations, logistics, transport, training, support services, communications, repairs and maintenance.

CDS is also the **Principal Military Adviser** to the Defence Minister and Permanent Chairman of Chiefs of Staff Committee.

What are challenges before the institution of Chief of Defence Staff?

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To build a bridge between a government that wants quicker changes and an organisation that is resistant to change.

Build **operational capability** at a pace that will ensure that the military power asymmetry with China remains manageable.

Address the challenges related to **integrated military planning and training**. India specific requirements have to be addressed for fresh structures that focus on jointness.

To properly articulate **policies, doctrines and strategy**. A **National Security Strategy** needs to be devised. It will act as a guiding framework for policies and doctrines.

Balancing the need to retain the operational capability and the government's push towards self-reliance in defence manufacturing. The current **silos** of innovators and designers, manufacturers and armed forces needs to be broken down. We have to ensure lateral entry into innovation and manufacturing spaces to develop intellectual capital.

Shedding **colonial legacies** and traditions that are irrelevant. The focus should be upon fostering a sense of pride in India's martial traditions that go back to epics such as the Mahabharata and to Cholas and Marathas.

To bring in **fiscal prudence** and optimisation in utilisation of the defence budget especially given the tough economic outlook

More clarity is needed regarding the functions of the CDS, particularly their relationship with the Service Chiefs in terms of operational roles and administrative duties.

17. [Convergent growth](#)

Source– The post is based on the article “**Convergent growth**” published in the **Business Standard** on **30th September 2022**.

Syllabus: GS3- Indian Economy

Relevance– Challenges to growth of Indian economy

News– The article explains the historical reason for disparity in growth and development performance between Indian states. It also tells about the steps needed to be taken to remove this disparity.

The prime minister's August 15 speech spoke of a united and integrated India as one of the five focuses for policy in the years ahead to the centenary of independence.

What are some facts related to disparity in growth and development performance of states?

Low growth states are in northern, eastern and central parts of the country.

High growth states are in the south, west and south-west parts of the country.

There is a widening gap between low growth and high growth states of the country

The ratio of per capita state product increased from 1.6 in 1990-91 to 2.6 in 2019-20.

What are the historical reasons for this disparity?

Colonial period- Madras and Bombay presidencies saw higher growth. It was shaped by domestic entrepreneurship driven by nationalist considerations.

Large princely states also experienced higher growth. There was significant government support for industry, education.

The low growth areas coincides with the old Bengal presidency. Although in some parts, there was significant development in industry and agriculture. But it was dominated by British companies.

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After independence– There was substantial public investment in manufacturing and mining directed mainly at the eastern and central regions. But this heavy investment could not generate opportunities for private enterprises. In west Bengal. Growth was further impacted by extreme leftism.

States in the south and west were benefited by private investment in chemical, engineering and consumer industries. There was also public investment in the petroleum and chemical sectors.

After liberalisation– There has been a substantial shift from public to private investment. There has been rapid growth of export-oriented hightech services like the IT sector.

Higher growth states are the main beneficiary due to their strong private sector, coastal location and global interactions.

What is the way forward?

The focus of convergent-growth policies must therefore be on the five northern and central states- Rajasthan, UP, Bihar, MP and Jharkhand. There is a need to focus upon West Bengal which has the presence of most growth factors.

There is a need to properly utilise the **demographic dividend** of these five northern and central states. These states will account for 91.6 per cent of the national increase in the working-age population between 2030 and 2050.

The northern states cannot be integrated easily with the global economy. There is a need to connect them with the higher-growth states through encouraging a **national value chain** in manufacturing.

Making the northern states part of a national **manufacturing value chain** will require serious investment in logistics and infrastructure for manufacturing, skill development, and organised support for local MSMEs. It can not be done without central government support.

18. [The right corporate culture would end moonlighting](#)

Source: The post is based on the article “**The right corporate culture would end moonlighting**” published in the **Livemint** on **30th September 2022**.

Syllabus: GS 3: Indian economy and employment.

Relevance: About Moonlighting.

News: Wipro has sacked 300 employees it found guilty of working for its competitors. This triggered the ‘moonlighting’ debate.

What is moonlighting?

Read here: [What is moonlighting and if it's legal in India](#)

Why moonlighting is not acceptable?

Not for all: When it comes to professionals who have access to sensitive data such as customer information and trade secrets of their employers or are in possession of the company’s intellectual property, moonlighting poses a direct risk to the organization. So, in sectors such as fintech and banking, moonlighting shouldn’t be acceptable due to the sheer magnitude of risk it poses.

The employee-Employer agreement: Under it, the employee has explicitly agreed to a non-compete and single employment clause while joining a company. So, moonlighting raises questions about a person’s integrity and violates the implicit bond of trust shared between an employee and the employer. Further, it might even cause legal ramifications.

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Where moonlighting is acceptable?

In countries like the US, moonlighting is close to the norm. Many people work multiple gigs to make ends meet.

An employee and a freelancer are not the same. So, it is acceptable for the segment of professionals who prefer to work on short-term projects while being connected to multiple organizations. Consultants, gig workers, freelancers, etc, have limited exposure to an organization's trade secrets.

Combined with a non-disclosure agreement for them, there is a fair amount of confidentiality and protection built in.

Read more: [Should employees have side gigs? Bosses & HR gurus are divided. But answer is in supply & demand](#)

What are the conditions that lead to moonlighting?

Employees actually accept two different professional responsibilities due to reasons such as **a)** First organization's pay and benefits are lacking, **b)** Lack of opportunities to grow and learn within the organization, **c)** Lack of job satisfaction, and **d)** Organization lag on employee engagement, **e)** An employee may need an additional source of income due to an emergency, **f)** Employee may desire a move into a more challenging role or want to learn something new.

What are the concerns associated with moonlighting and work culture?

There has been a consistent and strong focus on the work culture and work-life balance since the pandemic. If employees are seeking additional work while organizations facilitate initiatives to promote a better work-life balance, there must be a crack in the foundation of work culture.

Read more: [Moonlighting is neither ethical nor a work trend](#)

What should be done?

Improve the organization's culture: **a)** Every manager and every leader must be equipped to understand the struggles of their teammates, **b)** Sustain the focus on the well-being of employees, **c)** Provide employees financial options to take care of themselves and their families during medical crises, **d)** Offering work flexibility to those who are also primary caregivers to children or the elderly, and **e)** Establishing a support system of mental health professionals along with empathetic managers.

The right culture is the only solution to this perennial problem of moonlighting. Further, a good work culture will also create a mutual sense of belonging, loyalty and trust.

19. [A costly decision – Extension of PMGKAY should have been avoided](#)

Source: The post is based on the article "**A costly decision – Extension of PMGKAY should have been avoided**" published in the **Business Standard** on **30th September 2022**.

Syllabus: GS 3: Indian economy.

Relevance: About extending PMGKAY.

News: Recently, the government has extended the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY-Phase VII) for a further period of 3 months i.e. October to December 2022.

What is Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY)?

Read here: [Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Package\(PMGKP\)](#)

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What are the concerns associated with extending PMGKAY?

Not an emergency situation: The scheme has been extended due to successive waves of the pandemic, which affected economic activity. But now the economy has now opened up completely.

Against finance ministry advice: Against the advice of finance ministry officials, the government extended the scheme due to political considerations.

Additional expenditure: In terms of fiscal impact, the extension will lead to an additional expenditure of Rs 44,762 crore. This is expected to take the food subsidy bill to about Rs 3.38 trillion, as against the Budget estimate of Rs 2.07 trillion.

Difficult to withdraw: The extension of the scheme gives an impression that it would continue even in normal times and was not necessarily an emergency intervention.

Impact money market: Because of measures taken by the Reserve Bank of India to contain inflation, the liquidity conditions have changed significantly. Higher government borrowing at this stage can push up the cost of money.

What should be done instead of extending PMGKAY?

Higher revenues at this stage should have been used to either push up capital expenditure, which would have boosted growth or reduced the fiscal deficit.

A swift fiscal consolidation in the case of better revenue realisation is needed in the medium term.

The global economic outlook has worsened significantly and will affect growth in the Indian economy as well. So India should use every opportunity to move forward in fiscal consolidation. This would help create some policy space to deal with another potential adverse shock.

20. [Saving the world – DART can reduce risks from meteors](#)

Source: The post is based on the article “**Saving the world – DART can reduce risks from meteors**” published in the **Business Standard** on 30th September 2022.

Syllabus: GS 3: Awareness in the fields of Space.

Relevance: About DART Mission.

News: NASA’s DART (Double Asteroid Redirection Test) spacecraft has collided with the asteroid Dimorphous.

What is the DART Mission?

Read here: [Explained: How NASA’s DART mission will hit and deflect an asteroid](#)

What are asteroids and their potential impact on Earth?

Read here: [Explained | The NASA spacecraft-asteroid collision](#)

A large meteorite burning up in the lower atmosphere could damage the ozone layer, or release enough energy to cause damage similar to a nuclear explosion.

What are the previous instances of asteroid strikes on Earth?

On average about 17 meteorites of substantial size hit the Earth every day (smaller ones burn up due to friction in the atmosphere).

Approximately 66 million years ago, a very large meteorite crashed into the Yucatan region of Mexico and caused the extinction of a large number of animal and plant species. It caused tsunamis and led to a nuclear winter that lasted a long time. It is estimated that the object was around 10 km in diameter and it caused a crater that’s 180 km wide and 2 km deep.

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In 1908, when a large meteorite smashed into an uninhabited part of Siberia with a force equivalent to a large nuclear bomb.

What are the advantages of the DART Mission?

a) Directly addresses a long-standing nightmare of mass extinction, **b)** It tests proof of concept for a planetary defence system, which could prevent a large asteroid from smashing into the Earth, or making a close fly-by with disastrous consequences, **c)** Since DART appears to have worked, scientists can now conceive a similar mission possibly involving a large nuclear warhead if there's a future emergency.

What are the challenges with missions like DART?

-DART was planned for several years, and the vehicle was launched in November 2021 in order to intersect Dimorphos ten months later.

- Given mankind's propensity for weaponising everything, such missions could also be used for military purposes.

What is ahead after the DART Mission?

The **Observational capabilities** will need to be good enough to observe the potential impact with enough time if there is indeed a hazardous object heading on a collision course.

21. [Swachh Bharat 2.0: Moving forward together](#)

Source: The post is based on an article "**Swachh Bharat 2.0: Moving forward together**" published in **The Indian Express** on **1st October 2022**.

Syllabus: GS 3

Relevance: measures taken to improve sanitation

News: The article highlights the importance of private sector in resolving the issue of Sanitation.

The concept of sanitation in India has been around since the Indus Valley civilization.

Sanitation coverage in India was as low as 39 per cent till 2014. Around 55 crore people in rural areas were without a toilet facility before 2014.

This severely affected the health and dignity of our people, especially women and children.

What are the impacts of poor sanitation?

Health: Poor sanitation has a great impact on health. For example, contaminated drinking water and food become a major cause of diarrhea and other diseases. It further leads to stunting in our children.

Environment: Poor hygiene and waste management practices also impact the environment. The untreated sewage flows directly into water bodies and affects marine ecosystems, contaminates soil and air.

Economy: A study by the World Bank states that the absence of toilets and conventional sanitation costs India 6.4 per cent of its GDP in 2006. The economic impact of poor sanitation for India is at least \$38.5 billion every year under health, education, access time and tourism.

Therefore, the goals of Swachh Bharat Mission have been effective in improving sanitation in India.

How has Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM) helped in improving sanitation in India?

More than 10 crore toilets were constructed from 2014 to 2020 and the country declared itself ODF on October 2, 2019. This achievement was the result of SBM, that was launched in 2014.

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One of its goals was to achieve universal sanitation coverage and to make the country Open Defecation Free (ODF).

This was done by **offering financial incentives for building household toilets** as well as community toilets for slums and migrant populations.

The government also ran several programmes with **the participation of the private sector** and NGOs to educate the population on the benefits of ODF.

The **second phase of the project was started in 2020** and is expected to run till 2025.

It has set even more ambitious targets such as a) sustaining the achievements of phase 1 and b) ensuring the treatment of both liquid and solid waste.

The targets will be achieved through the **help of technology and private sector engagement**.

What is Lighthouse Initiative (LHI)?

It has been started by the Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation as part of the Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav.

It will be implemented through PPP across villages in 75 gram-panchayats in 15 states in Phase 1. It is based on the principle of inclusive sanitation.

It aims to build solid and liquid waste management structures.

This will be done by employing a participatory and consultative approach through mobilisation of the village communities, corporates, district and block administration and gram panchayat officers.

What is India Sanitation Coalition (ISC)?

It is a multi-stakeholder platform that creates meaningful collaborations. These stakeholders include the private sector, government, financial institutions, civil society groups, media, donors, etc.

ISC is recognised as the official meeting point between the government and the private sector for engagement in building sustainable solid and liquid waste management infrastructure.

Corporates such as ITC, Jindal Steel and Power, JSW, Nayara, etc. have come forward for collaboration.

This has also led the Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation to recognise the benefits of working with the private sector.

Therefore, the Department has sought the construction of soak pits, waste stabilisation ponds, drainage channels, etc. in collaboration with private sector.

The fund has been provided by the Department and it will be further supplement by private sector through CSR funding.

What are other means to create hygienic surroundings in collaboration with villagers?

Managing plastic waste as well as wastewater at a village level by providing solutions to households to convert waste to earn a remunerative return.

It will create hygienic surroundings for the communities and make households economically self-sufficient.

Moreover, recovery of grey water can help to tackle scarce water resources, encouraging reuse and conserving water bodies.

Further, collaboration of corporates with the village communities will help to convert their waste to wealth by utilising simple and cost-effective technologies.

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22. [5G services to be rolled out today; how will your experience change?](#)

Source: The post is based on an article “**5G services to be rolled out today; how will your experience change?**” published in **The Indian Express** on **1st October 2022**.

Syllabus: GS 3

Relevance: benefits of 5G

News: The Prime Minister of India will launch 5G on 1st October and the sixth edition of India Mobile Congress in New Delhi.

What will be the benefits of 5G?

Socio-economic: The Ministry of Communications said that 5G can bring new economic opportunities and societal benefits and bring transformation for Indian society.

Consumers: 5G could have benefits of the superior Internet speed and low latency over 4G for consumers. 5G could touch 10 Gbps compared to the 100 Mbps peak of 4G. Latency under 4G is between 10-100 ms (millisecond) whereas on 5G it is expected to be under 1 ms.

Latency is the time it takes for a device to send packets of data and get a response. Shorter the latency, quicker the response.

Which technology is being used by the operators to launch 5G?

5G networks are deployed mainly in two modes: standalone and non-standalone. Both architectures have their advantages and disadvantages.

The biggest difference between the two architectures is the **compatibility** with existing device ecosystems.

Most smartphones today have the capability to connect to non-standalone 5G networks which are 5G airwaves transmitted through 4G networks.

Standalone mode: Reliance Jio has chosen the standalone mode. In this mode 5G network operates with dedicated equipment and runs parallel to the existing 4G network.

Whereas, in the non-standalone mode, the 5G network is supported by the 4G core infrastructure.

Non-standalone mode: Bharti Airtel has opted for non-standalone mode. The non-standalone networks are built on existing infrastructure.

Therefore, the initial cost and the time taken to roll out services through this mode is less than standalone networks.

23. [India-US ties: Depth & nuance](#)

Source- The post is based on the article “**India-US ties: Depth & nuance**” published in the **The Indian Express** on **1st October 2022**.

Syllabus: GS3- International Relations

Relevance- India and US relationship

News- The article explains the relationship between India and the USA.

How India-US relations have evolved historically?

Following the nuclear tests of May 1998, western world was angry with India. Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee wrote to President Bill Clinton. He told the nuclear weapon threat from China compelled India to have its nuclear bomb.

Talks between then External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh and US Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott led to President Clinton’s historic visit of March 2000.

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The **Indo-US nuclear deal** during the George W Bush years further improved the strategic relationship.

Obama became the only President to make two visits to India. He hosted both Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and Narendra Modi in the White House.

During the Trump presidency, there was continuous improvement in relations. **Quad framework** was revived. Defence partnership became strong. There was signing of the foundational agreements like **LEMOA, COMCASA**.

The momentum of the relationship has continued under President Joe Biden especially on **Indo-pacific strategy**.

What are the current states of relationship?

Experts say that India's relationship with the US has been the most comprehensive association since independence. India and US are seen as **"natural allies"** by leaders from India.

Russia's invasion of Ukraine has been a test case for the relationship. India did not criticize Russia. It has annoyed the west.

The US decision to provide F-16 to Pakistan has created friction between two sides.

Some analysts in New Delhi view the renewal of the US-Pakistan military engagement as a message to New Delhi for its strategy of **"issue-based alignment"**.

There is absence of a full-time ambassador 20 months after the Biden Administration took charge.

Both see rising China as a common threat. USA was late in recognising the threat. Although the containment started with Obama pivot to Asia strategy, the Trump administration clearly spelled out China as a strategic rival.

US exit from Afghanistan has increased China leverage in Pakistan and Afghanistan. In this context, India has sought an exemption on S-400 from US sanctions.

The closeness between China and Russia is increasing. There is a need for improving the relationship by accommodating each other.

24. [Let The Land Heal](#)

Source– The post is based on the article **"Let the Land Heal"** published in **The Indian Express** on **1st October 2022**.

Syllabus: GS3- Agriculture and Environment

Relevance– Unsustainable agriculture practices

News– The article explains the issues related to excessive use of pesticides. It also suggests measures to reduce their use.

What is the issue?

There is indiscriminate use of pesticides by farmers.

Lack of quality farm advisory services is responsible for it.

Pest are developing resistance to existing pesticides.

It is impacting the human body and biodiversity.

What is the way forward?

Alternate business model– The business model of the farm chemical input industry must transform to become a service industry.

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In India, shopkeepers only sell farm chemical inputs. Individual farmers cannot afford good quality precision spraying equipment. It leads to wastage.

To reduce the wastages, input sale of the sellers could be in the form of services like spray on farms.

Transparent data collection– Shopkeepers should report each sale of farm chemicals to the government in real time.

There is a need for a mandatory QR code on each farm chemical package. These measures will allow for better-targeted farm advisory and grievance redressal.

Independent regulator– Same officials and departments who advocate pesticide use also regulate the trade. The regulation of farm chemicals needs to be transferred to the health ministry.

25. [‘Lichens are a pioneer species which enable all life — conserving them is vital’](#)

Source: The post is based on the article “‘**Lichens are a pioneer species which enable all life — conserving them is vital**’” published in **The Times of India** on **1st October 2022**.

Syllabus: GS 3: **Conservation**, environmental pollution and degradation.

Relevance: About Lichens.

News: At present most conservation work is focused on charismatic species, like tigers and elephants. But Plants and lower plants, like lichen, ferns and mosses, were neglected.

What are Lichens?

Lichens are a complex life form that is a symbiotic partnership of two separate organisms, a fungus and an alga. The outer skin and internal structure of a lichen is made of strands of fungal hyphae. Interspersed among the strands inside the lichen are individual cells of algae.

Lichens do not have roots or structures like other plants, they depend on the atmosphere for air and water. So, the quality of ambience reflects in the diversity of lichens.

There are three broad categories of lichen. **1) Foliose** – These are flat and leaf-like lichens, **2) Crustose** – These are formed as a layer, **3) Fruticose** – These lichens resemble minishrubs.

Spread: Between six to eight percent of Earth’s surface is covered by lichen, with over 15,000 known species.

Why Lichen is a pioneer species?

Lichen is a ‘**pioneer species**’ because **a)** They are among the most ancient organisms on Earth. For instance, they are found in the Jurassic era, **b)** They are the first to appear on barren rocks, in deserts and icy terrain and after disturbances like landslides, **c)** They play a foundational role in enabling all life. For example, they aid in weathering rocks, creating soil – the basis of all life, **d)** In deserts, lichen form a crust over the surface, retaining moisture — only in such spots do desert trees grow, **e)** These are also bioindicators of pollution. As they depend on the atmosphere for air and water.

Read more: [Fungi form a kingdom of life — they show us how we all need others to live](#)

What are the other benefits of Lichens?

Animals and birds depend on Lichens: Some Lichens are consumed by musk deer in winter, when little else grows (this is similar to the Arctic reindeer which eat moss, after whom ‘reindeer moss’ is named), while others are used by birds and woolly flying squirrels to pad their nests.

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Formed via a symbiotic relationship between fungus and algae, they resemble a micro-ecosystem and with lower plants like mosses. They attract insects, birds, snails, frogs and little animals needing food, habitat and shelter.

Spices and perfumes: Parmotrema tinctorum and Ramalina sinensis respectively are used as spices and in perfumes, particularly utilised in the famous perfumeries of Kannauj.

Medicinal value: Some lichens are used in medicines for asthma and fractures. Some lichens have biochemicals which can treat cancers.

Source of income: Villages usually collect lichen and sell it to traders for its many uses.

Read more: [Arctic amplification: What is causing Arctic warming?](#)

What are the threats faced by Lichens at present?

a) Lichen found in alpine regions could be affected by **growing climate change**, **b) Species migration** is at work now, with global warming forcing animals and treelines to move to higher, cooler altitudes — lichen at 4,000 metres and in Arctic regions could be affected, **c) Deforestation:** If host trees are destroyed, so are the lichen on them, **d) Pollution in urban areas:** Traffic in urban areas produces nitrogen which damages the algae that make food for lichen.

What are the conservation efforts for Lichens?

In 2018, Uttarakhand decided to develop a park devoted entirely to lichens. Munsiyari in Kumaon was chosen as they have more than 130 lichen species.

Read more: [India's first cryptogamic garden opens in Dehradun](#)

What should be done to protect lichens?

Policymakers must have in-depth ecological knowledge while framing policies, for instance, they should **1)** Understand the link between species, **2)** Access scientific research on the impacts of losing biodiversity, **3)** Learn about habitats which shouldn't be disturbed, etc.