



Mains Marathon
Compilation

October, 2022

Mains Marathon Compilation for the Month of September, 2022

1. While India-Bangladesh ties have improved a lot, there are still many long-standing pending issues, which need to be resolved for a better relationship. Comment
2. What is Precision Farming? Discuss the benefits associated with precision farming.
3. By 2030, India could possibly become a worldwide manufacturing hub. What is the significance of making India a global manufacturing hub? Also, highlight the hurdles in achieving this goal.
4. Do you think that reluctance of carmakers to add safety features to Indian cars is increasing the incidents of road accidents in India? What policy measures are required to make Indian roads safer?
5. Uniformed personnel constantly function in an unpredictable, stressful and dynamic environment, affecting their mental well-being. Comment and suggest some measures to reduce mental stress at the constabulary level.
6. Bring out the rationale behind the One Nation, One Fertilizer plan. Also, highlight the challenges associated with it.
7. What is mob-lynching? What are the various reasons for the rise in mob-lynching incidents in India? Suggest some measures to prevent mob-lynching.
8. Argue whether electoral bonds are an effective mechanism to conduct fair and transparent elections? Suggest some measures to improve transparency in electoral funding to political parties.
9. Teachers with skills and passion for the profession are foundational to the positive educational change envisaged by the NEP. In light of the statement, suggest the steps required to improve the quality of teaching in India that can be helpful in the realization of goals envisaged in the National Education Policy.
10. What are registered unrecognized political parties (RUPPs)? Highlight the issues associated with RUPPs.
11. Highlight the steps taken by the government to make India TB-free by 2025. What more is required to be done?
12. Bengaluru flood is all man-made and a result of a complete lack of vision of how a city needs to grow in a sustainable manner. Discuss and suggest remedial measures.
13. Highlight the challenges associated with laws that govern adoption in India? What measures can be taken to resolve these challenges?
14. The homegrown apple is in danger of becoming a rarity in India, what are the issues facing apple growers in India?
15. Comment on the significance of the India assuming G-20 presidency next year.
16. India has decided to opt out of the trade pillar of the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF). What is the rationale behind this decision and also discuss its implications?
17. The patent system is a critical aspect of the national innovation ecosystem, thus, the right interventions should be made for the promotion of the patent infrastructure. Comment.

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18. Although the draft Indian Ports Bill of 2022 addresses many issues facing the Port sector, a few important challenges remain unaddressed. Discuss.
19. Near-universal social security pensions would be a good start to a radical expansion of public support for the elderly. In light of the statement, comment on the need for moving from targeted to near-universal pensions for elderly people. Also, enumerate the government initiatives in this regard.
20. Highlight the graveness of the doctor- drugmaker nexus in India. What measures are required to keep this nexus at bay?
21. Why are Department Related Parliamentary Standing Committees (DRSC) not being utilized as per their stated objectives? Suggest some measures to increase their efficacy and their relevance.
22. What is the Eastern Economic Forum? Highlight the Significance of the Eastern Economic Forum for India.
23. Although the benefits of declining fertility are many, there are consequences as well. Elaborate
24. What do you mean by integral humanism? Discuss the relevance of integral humanism in modern times?
25. What is the Market-Based Economic Dispatch (MBED) mechanism? Discuss the rationale and challenges associated with it.
26. Why is there a need for a framework for global digital governance? What steps should be taken to achieve this objective?
27. The Supreme Court's decision to frame uniform norms for trial courts in awarding the death sentence is a welcome intervention. Elaborate.
28. Both Gati Shakti and NLP should be reconstituted to embrace, in the first instance, regional economic integration in the Indian subcontinent and then extend this to the larger Asian and global economy. Comment.
29. Broadcasting court proceedings is a step in the direction of transparency and greater access to the justice system, but there are concerns around the impact of live streaming both on judges and the people watching the proceedings. Elaborate.
30. Ayurveda, India's traditional medicine, has been in practice for close to three millennia, but there are a few challenges that the Ayurveda establishment has for long failed to skillfully address. Comment.
31. A huge amount of food produced annually goes unconsumed and turns into waste. Suggest measures to prevent food wastage in India.
32. What do you understand by the term Moonlighting? What are the reasons behind its prevalence after the pandemic? Also, highlight its implications.
33. Millets are termed a 'super grain' for good reasons. Discuss the multidimensional benefits associated with enhancing millet cultivation.
34. To what extent do you think, PM SHRI schools scheme, will be helpful in achieving the objectives set by National Education Policy?
35. Even if multilateralism has failed in addressing the present global crises, that should not prevent it from being strengthened in dealing with issues and problems that have a somewhat longer time horizon. Comment.

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36. can a country's performance in sports increase its soft power? How can India increase its sporting performance and soft power?
37. Highlight the significance of NavIC (Navigation in Indian Constellation) for India and compare it with the GPS navigation system.
38. What do you understand by an ethical dilemma? How an administrator should deal with situations of ethical dilemma?
39. The Bay of Bengal (the Bay) is significant in terms of geo-economic, geopolitical, and geo-cultural activities. In the light of the statement, highlight the challenges faced by the region and how the Centre for Bay of Bengal Studies (CBS) can be helpful in tackling those challenges
40. In light of the cataclysmic floods in Pakistan and the visible effects of climate change, discuss the measures required to tackle the challenges. How UNWC or the UNECE Water Convention can be helpful in tackling those challenges?
41. Hydropower projects planned or under construction in the Himalayas are under threat due to hazards related to Climate Change. Comment.
42. Discuss the economic significance and concerns associated with international trade settlement in rupees.
43. Considering the harmful impacts of pesticide usage, minimizing its use should have become a national priority. In light of the statement, highlight the harmful impacts of excessive usage of pesticides and suggest some measures to control it.
44. Comment on the need for Public-private partnerships in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) concerning sanitation.

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Q.1) While India-Bangladesh ties have improved a lot, there are still many long-standing pending issues, which need to be resolved for a better relationship. Comment

Introduction: Contextual introduction.

Body: Explain India-Bangladesh relationship. Also write some long-standing pending issues between India-Bangladesh.

Conclusion: Write a way forward.

India played a great role in the emergence of an independent Bangladesh. Further, India was one of the first states to recognize Bangladesh as a separate nation. The relationship between India and Bangladesh is anchored in history, culture, language, and shared values of secularism, democracy, and countless other commonalities.

India-Bangladesh relationship:

- **Trade relations:** India exports about US\$ 10 billion worth of goods to Bangladesh, which is about 15% of the total imports of Bangladesh. India imports a little over US\$ 1 billion worth of goods from Bangladesh.
- **Cooperation in Roadways:** Both countries decided to commence bus service from/to Dhaka from/to Gangtok and Darjeeling via Siliguri.
- **Assistance for Infrastructure:** India is also providing grant assistance to Bangladesh for various infrastructure projects. e.g. construction of Akhaura-Agartala rail link, dredging of inland waterways in Bangladesh, and construction of **India-Bangladesh Friendship Pipeline**.
- Recently, the **Maitri Setu bridge** was constructed to connect Sabroom in India with Ramgarh in Bangladesh.
- Both countries have **signed several bilateral instruments** in various sectors including hydrocarbons, agriculture, trade and development projects.
- India has been helping Bangladesh in coping with the Covid-19 pandemic by donating surgical masks, RC-PTR test kits, surgical latex gloves, vaccines etc.

Long-standing pending issues:

- **Teesta Water sharing agreement:** India receiving 39% of the water and Bangladesh 36% of it. The remaining 25% remain unallocated. Further negotiations between India and Bangladesh on the sharing of the river waters have made limited progress.
- **Border management and illegal migration:** Despite high-level talks between the two countries, the issue remains unresolved.
- **Implementation of NRC:** Bangladesh has raised concerns over the National Register of Citizens (NRC).
- **Trade Deficit:** Despite the increase in Indian exports to Bangladesh, the desired target for products exported from Bangladesh has not yet been achieved.
- Some textile manufacturers in India are complaining about competition from the **duty-free import** of garments from Bangladesh.
- There is a need to limit **China's growing influence** through investments in various projects in Bangladesh. Bangladesh is the second biggest arms market for China after Pakistan.

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- Bangladesh is also opposing India's proposed Tapaimukh Dam on the Barak River in Manipur and the Interlinking of the rivers project by India.

India needs to strengthen regional groups like SAARC, BIMSTEC etc. This will give **full impetus to India's Neighbourhood First policy** and elevate India-Bangladesh relations to another level.

Q.2) What is Precision Farming? Discuss the benefits associated with precision farming.

Introduction: Contextual introduction.

Body: Explain the benefits associated with precision farming.

Conclusion: Write a way forward.

Precision Farming is aimed at optimizing use of inputs through use of technology, improving economic returns and reducing environmental impact. Precision farming is able **to increase input efficiency using** sensors for ground data acquisition, wireless networks for interconnecting them, geospatial data analytics and Smart Decision Support Systems (SDSSs) for optimised farming decision-making. It can give us **“more from less”**.

It is referred to as “precision” because it is possible to perform the right intervention, in the right place, at the right time, responding to the specific demands of individual crops and individual areas of land with superior levels of precision.

Benefits associated with precision farming:

- **Reduced costs:** Being able to accurately decrease fertilizer, herbicide etc. in areas where it will not be economical to utilize is one of the key benefits of precision agriculture.
- **Increased Profitability:** Increasing yields because of applying agronomic principles at a high resolution, while reducing costs increases overall profitability.
- **Enhanced Sustainability:** Ensuring that crop input products applied actually get into the plant and not elsewhere affecting the environment.
- **Better Harvestability:** with the ability to understand the farm nutrient levels and soil types across the farm. As fields and geographies are not created equal, and can impact the amount of nitrogen mineralizations, water holding capacity, and much more.
- **Increased Land Values:** precision farming makes land more productive and profitable clearly translates into higher rent value and market value for farmland.
- **Higher resolutions understanding of farm:** Precision agriculture gives the ability to understand why certain areas of the farm under produce, or are producing better, to make decisions that continually improve the farm.
- **Better in season yield understanding:** Using precision imagery, or precision weather services, we can provide accurate yield prediction in-season, empowering better decisions agronomically as well as for marketing or asset purchasing purposes.
- Furthermore, improvements in storage by technological means can greatly **reduced crop spoilage** in the storage stage as well.

Rapid socio-economic changes such as economic growth, urbanization, and energy consumption are creating new opportunities for the application of precision farming in India.

Q.3) By 2030, India could possibly become a worldwide manufacturing hub. What is the significance of making India a global manufacturing hub? Also, highlight the hurdles in achieving this goal.

Introduction: Contextual introduction.

Body: Explain the significance of making India a global manufacturing hub. Also write some hurdles in achieving this goal.

Conclusion: Write a way forward.

Favorable demographic dividend over next 2-3 decades, availability of low-cost labor, and a strong domestic market provide an opportunity for India to turn into a global manufacturing hub. By 2030, India can add more than \$500 billion a year to the global economy.

Significance of making India a global manufacturing hub:

- The weakening of manufacturing in many developed nations has caused social divisions and devastation of communities. So, this will ensure **higher economic growth** and better living standards for people.
- Manufacturing provides **more room than services** for less-skilled and less-educated individuals. For instance, the prospects are not bright for less skill-intensive services such as tourism, aviation, and tourism traffic, which are badly hit by COVID.
- It is essential for **mass employment** and income growth.
- A thriving manufacturing sector will also generate additional benefits and help India, to **distribute wealth more equitably** and to contain its burgeoning trade deficit.

Challenges to emerge as a manufacturing hub:

- **Complex labour laws:** Large-scale exclusions of workers from labour law, violence and arrests are the reasons for India's poor performance.
- **Complex taxation system:** as well as a huge amount of paperwork and corruption. India started out with an overly complex GST, which has dampened investor sentiment and created tremendous compliance burdens on small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs).
- **Land acquisition difficulty:** Stringent land acquisition laws and inflexible labour regulations make it difficult for India to attract investors in the manufacturing sector.
- **Power deficit:** Greater availability of power is needed to realise the dream of becoming a manufacturing hub. India is running short of power with a deficit of 5.1%.
- **Un-skilled human capital:** India lags far behind other nations in imparting skill training.
- **Credit crunch:** Access to finance continues to remain the biggest challenge for MSMEs as the loans sanctioned by the Government are not disbursed properly. Banks and Non-Banking Finance Companies (NBFCs) have been reluctant to lend collateral free loans to MSMEs with the fear of no repayment.

Given the potential of manufacturing sector and the need to shift workforce from primary sector, Government of India has come out with **'Make in India' initiative to make India global hub** of manufacturing, research and innovation.

Q.4) Do you think that reluctance of carmakers to add safety features to Indian cars is increasing the incidents of road accidents in India? What policy measures are required to make Indian roads safer?

Introduction: Contextual introduction.

Body: Explain **how** safety features of cars can reduce the road accidents and write other reasons of causing road accidents. Also write some measures to make Indian roads safer.

Conclusion: Write a way forward.

India has the highest road fatalities in the world, and the government believes that equipping vehicles with more airbags will help reduce the number of lives lost on the roads. India has **1% of the global vehicle population** but its share in **road deaths is 11%**.

According to WHO, safety features of cars can reduce the road accidents:

- Correct helmet use can lead to a 42% reduction in the risk of fatal injuries and a 69% reduction in the risk of head injuries.
- Wearing a seat-belt reduces the risk of death among drivers and front seat occupants by 45 - 50%, and the risk of death and serious injuries among rear seat occupants by 25%.
- The use of child restraints can lead to a 60% reduction in deaths.
- Without these basic standards the risk of traffic injuries – both to those in the vehicle and those out of it – is considerably increased.

Other major factors responsible for road accidents:

- **Over speeding** is one of the major causes of road accidents in India.
- Driving under the **influence of alcohol**, or drugs.
- **Reckless driving** such as street racing, running red lights, changing lanes too quickly etc.
- Being **unaware of rules and regulations** on the road or knowingly ignoring them.
- Most of the roads have **potholes**, without road signs or under construction for a long period.
- The number of accidents occurring due to **distracted driving** (Reading messages, replying to texts, taking calls, reading, grooming, etc.) has increased in the past decades.

Measures to make Indian roads safer:

- There is need to focus on **stricter norms of traffic rule** especially on drunk driving, over speeding, helmets, seatbelts and identifying black spots.
- **Enforce lane discipline** and **automated driving test centers** to reduce the margin of human intervention.
- Need to **make spaces for all user-** pedestrians, cyclists, buses and other vehicles with intuitive road designs and signages, which mark out different zones of road usage.
- The speeding cameras with the **automatic number plate recognition system** could be helpful.
- The government can implement the important recommendations of the **KS Radhakrishnan panel on Road Safety**. a) perform a compulsory **Audit on road safety** b) **Creating awareness among people** on road safety rules, insurance policies, etc.

It is important that road users and people, in general, are sensitized about the norms and spirit of road safety. In line with reducing road accidents, India has already signed the **Brasilia declaration**.

Q.5) Uniformed personnel constantly function in an unpredictable, stressful and dynamic environment, affecting their mental well-being. Comment and suggest some measures to reduce mental stress at the constabulary level.

Introduction: Contextual introduction.

Body: Explain how work of uniformed personnel affecting their mental well-being. Also write some measures to reduce mental stress at the constabulary level.

Conclusion: Write a way forward.

Mental stress is a less-understood medical condition in India. Those who express the problem are termed as weak and are seen as shying away from the rigors of life. Security personnel are often exposed to a high level of the stressful environment due to strict and disciplinary environments. It many times negatively affects their ability to perform their job. It tends to become inhuman, especially to those who cannot communicate their personal issues in an appropriate forum.

Affecting mental well-being:

- In a uniformed setup, subordinate staff **does not want to appear weak** as the “macho man” stereotype weighs them down.
- The constabulary accounts for around 85 percent of state police and CAPFs. These personnel perform mostly remain in the background of the organisation with **less recognition for their achievements and more frequent persecution for failure**.
- A salary alone may not provide them with enough job satisfaction vis-a-vis the hardships they endure.
- To cope with such difficulty, personnel often resort to **alcoholism and drug abuse**. In the latter cases, defaulters are punished and suitable departmental action is also taken.
- Affected by daily exposure to **human indecency**, the shift changes, the long periods of boredom, cause serious job stress.
- **Lack of rewards for good job performance, insufficient training, and excessive paperwork** can also contribute to stress.

Measures to reduce mental stress:

- **Good working conditions, leave, allowances and housing** should be provided as entitlements.
- **Role of the police leadership:** to create a working environment that provides personal fulfilment to personnel and reduces the chances of mental stress and illness.
- Increase communication with all the ranks. For this, **regular Sampark Sabhas** need to be conducted where personnel can air their grievances and proper follow-up action must be taken on all possible issues.
- **Reward and recognition** act as big motivators. So, the incentive system has to be formalised in every setup.
- **Sports and cultural programmes** increase bonhomie and create bonds between personnel, who support each other during crises.
- Additionally, during random inspections on the field, **friendly communication with personnel on duty** increases his trust in the leadership and dedication to duty.

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- One common resource for police officers are **employee assistance programmes (EAP)**. Such programs are important and should be promoted by police agencies.

Considering the importance of mental health, Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) has decided to start a '**Chaupal**' like get-together for its personnel to vent their mental agony.

Q.6) Bring out the rationale behind the One Nation, One Fertilizer plan. Also, highlight the challenges associated with it.

Introduction: Contextual introduction.

Body: Explain the rationale behind the One Nation, One Fertilizer plan. Also write some challenges associated with it.

Conclusion: Write a way forward.

The Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers has decided to implement **One Nation One Fertiliser** by introducing a "**Single Brand for Fertilizers and Logo**" under the fertilizer subsidy scheme named "**Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janurvarak Pariyojna**"(PMBJP). All fertiliser companies in the country have to sell their products **under the brand name of 'Bharat'** for instance, 'Bharat urea', Bharat DAP' etc. irrespective of whether it is manufactured by a public or a private player.

Rationale behind the One Nation, One Fertilizer plan:

- To **bring uniformity** in fertilizers by **banning industrial diversion** of fertilizer brands across the country. Since fertiliser companies get the freight subsidy, they do not hesitate moving bags a longer distance.
- The government believes that **theft and black marketing of fertilizers** can be stopped in the country by providing fertilizers in the same sacks and under one brand name.
- The government believes that when it spends so much money on fertilizer subsidies and also determines where and at what price companies can sell their products, they should also **get some credit**.
- Govt. believes this move will help them reduce their **massive fertilizer subsidy bill**.

Challenges:

- It will **disincentive fertilizer companies** from undertaking marketing and brand promotion activities. So, likely to lose their decades-long brand and trust of farmers in their products.
- Fertilizer companies do a lot of **extension activities**, such as field-level demonstrations, crop surveys etc., to introduce efficient methods of nutrient application and it also helps in reaching out to the farmers, but now all this will stop.
- Currently, in case of any bag or batch of fertilisers does not meet the required standards, the blame is put on the company. But now, that may be passed on fully to the government.
- There is also speculation that the fertilizer companies are expected to be **limited to only contract manufacturers and importers** for the government.

One Nation, One Fertilizer plan is a significant step. India should also pay attention to improving fertilizer efficiency through need-based use and increase investment in new fertilizer plants.

Q.7) What is mob-lynching? What are the various reasons for the rise in mob-lynching incidents in India? Suggest some measures to prevent mob-lynching.

Introduction: Contextual introduction.

Body: Explain various reasons for the rise in mob-lynching incidents in India. Also write some measures to prevent mob-lynching.

Conclusion: Write a way forward.

The word lynching originated in the United States in mid 18th century. Mob lynching is an act of premeditated extrajudicial killing by a group of people, often targeted against a particular individual or group. Mob lynching is based on some false information, unconfirmed rumours etc. The Supreme Court has aptly described it as a **horrendous act of mobocracy**.

Reasons for the rise in mob-lynching incidents in India:

- **Psychology of mob:** Since it is harder to identify the real culprits when people attack in groups, people have less fear of being punished. Also there is dispersion of guilt and responsibility\
- **Lack of belief in police and administration:** The mob feel that they have a huge responsibility to society and police or any administrative body cannot do justice to that responsibility.
- **Discrimination based on communal lines:** the increasing hatred on the communal and religious lines.
- **Political patronage:** The culture of political mobilization based on social fault lines for **polarization of people and to vote banks** has become popular in country.
- **Misinformation and propaganda news:** intentional setting up of the events and the spread of fake news to incite violence in the society resulting into impulsive actions by the public.

Measures to prevent mob-lynching:

- A **national law** is required in response to the spate of lynching incidents happening in the country.
- The state governments shall designate a **senior police officer** in each district for taking measures to prevent incidents of mob violence and lynching.
- The state governments shall immediately **identify districts, sub-divisions, and villages** where instances of lynching and mob violence have been reported in the recent past.
- Central and the state governments should **broadcast on radio and television** and other media platforms including that lynching and mob violence shall invite serious consequence.
- Curb and **stop the dissemination of irresponsible and explosive messages**, videos and other material on various social media platforms.
- Indian community should be sensitised towards the rights of other citizens and danger of mob crimes for social cohesion. **Awareness campaigns** are needed to sensitise people about the plight of others.

There is a need for separate legislation and strict implementation procedures to curb the attacks and punish the wrongdoers. Due to the increasing dissemination of fake news, there is a need for stronger regulation over the use of social media and apps.

Q.8) Argue whether electoral bonds are an effective mechanism to conduct fair and transparent elections? Suggest some measures to improve transparency in electoral funding to political parties.

Introduction: Contextual introduction.

Body: Explain how electoral bonds are an effective mechanism to conduct fair and transparent elections and also write some issues. Also write some measures to improve transparency in electoral funding to political parties.

Conclusion: Write a way forward.

Electoral bonds are **interest-free bearer instruments** (like Promissory Notes) that allow donations to political parties using banks as an intermediary. The general public can also issue these bonds to fund eligible political parties.

An effective mechanism:

- All electoral bonds issued are to be redeemed by a bank account that the Election Commission of India has disclosed; hence the **malpractice is strengthened**.
- The widespread use of electoral bonds can help to hold back political parties who operate with the goal of simply collecting funds from the public. It is because **only registered parties** attaining at least 1% of the votes in the general election can receive electoral funding.
- Electoral bonds work with the government goal to make election funding entirely safe and **digitized**. Therefore, any donation going above RS 2000 is not legally required to be in the form of electoral bonds and cheques.
- All transactions of electoral bonds are carried out **via cheques or digitally**.

Issues:

- **Crony capitalism:** The higher value of the bonds being purchased indicates that the electoral bonds are being purchased by corporates rather than individuals that reflects corporate influence.
- **Delayed audit reports:** The delay & non-compliance by political parties defeat the purpose of any such reporting.
- **Foreign funding:** The Election Commission has observed that with the removal of the cap on foreign funding, electoral bonds invite foreign corporate powers to impact Indian politics.
- **Tax evasion:** Electoral bonds provide secrecy and will encourage round tripping i.e. rerouting illegal money that originates in India, back into the country through a tax haven.

Measures to improve transparency in electoral funding:

- An alternative to electoral bonds is a **National Electoral Fund** to which all donors can contribute. There is need to **educate the Voters** through awareness campaigns especially about the ill-effects of money power during elections.
- Venkatachaliah Committee Report (2002) recommended **strict regulatory frameworks for auditing and disclosure of party income** and expenditure along with state funding. In the absence of such frameworks, state funding in India cannot be effective.
- **Strengthening the role of Election Commission** by enabling suitable laws and creating healthy political environment. The EC should increase its own capacity in terms of empowering staff and developing infrastructural and logistical strength.

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Bringing about effective electoral finance reform in India requires political will. Measures like electoral bonds will have limited effectiveness, unless they are not accompanied by other necessary reforms.

Q.9) Teachers with skills and passion for the profession are foundational to the positive educational change envisaged by the NEP. In light of the statement, suggest the steps required to improve the quality of teaching in India that can be helpful in the realization of goals envisaged in the National Education Policy.

Introduction: Contextual introduction.

Body: Write some measures required to improve the quality of teaching in India that can be helpful in the realization of goals envisaged in the National Education Policy.

Conclusion: Write a way forward.

The NEP 2020 insists, 'Teachers truly shape the future of our children and, therefore, the future of our nation'. It implies that teachers play the most important role in nation-building by creating high-quality human resources in their classrooms.

Measures to improve the quality of teaching in India:

- We need is a coherent strategy to **tie together the various tests and processes** such as TET, teacher recruitment tests, classroom demonstrations and teacher interviews. This will enable a holistic assessment of teacher competence.
- A **National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education, NCFTE** should be drafted to guide all teacher education, pre-service and in-service, of teachers working in academic, vocational & special education stream.
- **Teacher Eligibility Tests (TETs)** should be extended to cover teachers across all the new stages (Foundational, Preparatory, Middle and Secondary) of school education.
- Recruiting teachers to a school complex and **sharing them across the group of schools** to deal with shortage of teachers particularly for music, dance, art, craft, counsellors, coaches, vocational education trainers, classical language teachers.
- Encourages school complexes to **hire local eminent persons or experts as 'master instructors'** in various subjects, such as in traditional local arts, vocational crafts, entrepreneurship, agriculture etc.
- Creating **performance standards** for teachers clearly spelling out the role of the teacher at different levels of expertise/stage and competencies required for that stage. **Teacher Audit or Performance Appraisals** that will be carried at regular intervals.
- **Enculturation of Teacher Empowerment Teachers autonomy** in selecting appropriate pedagogy and encourages them to also ensure socio-emotional learning of their students, which is a critical aspect of holistic development.
- **Innovative teaching methods** adopted by teachers to improve the learning outcomes will be recognised, documented, and shared widely as recommended practices.

Teachers can turn the tide and lead the Indian education system out of its current morass of aimlessness and inflexibility to become a progressive, flexible, multidisciplinary, technology and skill focussed education system that will have the capability to produce competent, creative, skilled, employable and ethical learners.

Q.10) What are registered unrecognized political parties (RUPPs)? Highlight the issues associated with RUPPs.

Introduction: Explain registered unrecognized political parties (RUPPs).

Body: Explain various issues associated with RUPPs.

Conclusion: Write a way forward.

RUPPs are political parties whose vote share is below a threshold needed for recognition. These parties don't enjoy all the benefits extended to the recognised parties such as reserving a separate symbol for the party, subsidized land for party office etc. If a party satisfies any one of below-mentioned criteria, then they are called **Registered Unrecognised Political Parties**. The conditions are:

- If the political party is newly registered.
- If the political party not secured enough percentage of votes in Assembly or General Elections to become a state party.
- Political Parties that never contested in elections since they got registered with the Election Commission.

Issues associated with RUPPS:

- The majority of these parties did **not contest elections or file their contribution reports** and annual statements and therefore violated the law. This **defeated the purpose of a clean electoral system**.
- The Election Commission has reported that the majority of unrecognised parties **do not adhere to statutory compliances**, such as filing documents related to funding and taxation, among others.
- It is suspected that several unrecognised parties may be engaged in **money laundering**, corrupt electoral practices and abuse of money power, given the income tax exemptions they enjoy.
- The Association of Democratic reforms has reported that the number of registered unrecognised political parties has increased twofold in the last 10 years. It also points out that the number of unrecognised parties **increases disproportionately** during the year of Parliamentary elections.

Election Commission of India should impose strict norms for the registration of an association of persons as a political party apart from taking the stringent step of de-listing those parties which fail to adhere to the rules.

Q.11) Highlight the steps taken by the government to make India TB-free by 2025. What more is required to be done?

Introduction: Contextual introduction.

Body: Write some steps taken by the government to make India TB-free by 2025. Also write some additional measures to achieve this target.

Conclusion: Write a way forward.

Tuberculosis (TB) is an infectious **airborne bacterial disease**. According to **WHO's Global TB report 2021**, with 25.9 lakh TB cases, India is home to **25% of the global tuberculosis**

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cases. The National Tuberculosis Elimination Programme (NTEP) aims to strategically reduce TB burden in India by 2025.

Steps taken by the government:

- A range of forward-looking policies have been implemented including critical schemes such as **Ni-kshay Poshan Yojana (NPY)**, which helped **meet the nutritional requirements** of TB patients, especially the underserved.
- **Ayushman Bharat - Health and Wellness Centres** are established to decentralize comprehensive primary healthcare including TB care services at the grassroots level.
- Initiated strategies to **engage the community and create a Jan Andolan** to reach out to the underserved and marginalized and support patients in accessing care.
- Creation of **Patient Support Groups (PSGs)** to facilitate conversations between patients, doctors and their caregivers to address common issues in treatment.
- **Using Information Technology (IT) tools** for monitoring the programme and treatment adherence.
- **Incentives to private providers** for following the standard protocols for diagnosis and treatment as well as for notifying the government of cases.
- Patients referred to the government receive a **cash transfer** to compensate them for the direct and indirect costs of undergoing treatment and as an incentive to complete treatment.

What more can be done?

- **Poverty and malnutrition** are two main reasons for TB. Elected representatives need to ensure steps for the eradication of these.
- There is an urgent need for **cost-effective point-of-care devices** that can be deployed for TB diagnosis in different settings across India.
- **Service delivery** should be optimised so that the diagnostics and drugs reach to people who need them the most.
- There is a need to aggressively **scale up testing with innovative strategies** such as active surveillance, bidirectional screening for respiratory tract infections using the most sensitive molecular diagnostics, and contact tracing.
- The government must ensure that **social security programmes** are duly implemented. They work towards prevention of modifiable risk factors like malnutrition, poverty etc.
- There is also a need to consider **telemedicine and remote support** as important aspects of health services that could play a pivotal role in early detection and treatment.

Collective effort is desired at local, national and international level to attain **SDG 3.3** which aims to end the epidemics of AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria and neglected tropical diseases by 2030.

Q.12) Bangaluru flood is all man-made and a result of a complete lack of vision of how a city needs to grow in a sustainable manner. Discuss and suggest remedial measures.

Introduction: Contextual introduction.

Body: Explain how Bangaluru flood is all man-made. Also write some remedial measures.

Conclusion: Write a way forward.

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The city of Bengaluru witnessed several spells of heavy rainfall recently. Over the last few years, urban floods seem to have become an annual phenomenon in India. While heavy rainfalls are a significant factor in urban floods, a major cause is poor planning, inadequate infrastructure, unauthorized construction and encroachment of river and lake beds.

Bangaluru flood: Man-made and unsustainable growth of city:

- The city corporation has not connected the villages with the city's sewage infrastructure. Because of this, the stormwater drains malfunction, allowing rainwater and raw sewage to overflow.
- **Over concretization** resulting in reduced infiltration into the soil, **unplanned urbanization**, changes to the topography and **lack of buffers to hold surface water** all lead to flooding.
- The **highway** acts as a dam for the water. Bengaluru's drainage infrastructure is unprepared to handle periods of unexpectedly severe rainfall.
- **Garbage** frequently clogs drains, which limits the flow of sewage, and they are too small to support the weight of the expanding population.
- Both the **road network design and the leak system design** are incorrect. Also, there is no proper planning to use lakes to buffer extra water.
- The open areas including, the **greens and the lakes** have been recklessly destroyed which completely altered the balanced water management strategy of the city.

Remedial measures:

- Protected areas for river, lake, and other water channel catchments must be identified and freed from encroachments.
- **Permeable surfaces** rather than full concrete can be utilised in locations such as parking lots, footpaths, walking lanes, common areas in apartments and other large structures.
- Build **climate resilience** and a better environment such as curb car travel, improve cheap public transport with more buses instead of waiting for the expensive metro.
- **Preserve existing green cover and plant more trees**, both in the city and around it.
- Risk reduction should start with a **mapping of flood vulnerability**. Land use in urban areas should be strictly regulated.
- **De-concretise** pavements, prohibit littering and segregate garbage as unsegregated garbage clogs drains.
- The **urban infrastructure must be upgraded**, including construction of new storm water drains and expansion of existing sewerage infrastructure.
- Outdated institutions need to be replaced by a **constitutionally compliant structure**, with local governments at the top.

To develop a long-lasting solution, all parties must acknowledge the issues and adopt a thorough strategy. There is a need to integrate all the development activities and urban governance.

Q.13) Highlight the challenges associated with laws that govern adoption in India? What measures can be taken to resolve these challenges?

The Hindu

Introduction: Contextual introduction.

Body: Write some challenges associated with laws that govern adoption in India. Also write some measures to resolve these challenges.

Conclusion: Write a way forward.

Adoptions in India are governed by two laws — the Hindu Adoption and Maintenance Act (HAMA), 1956, and the Juvenile Justice Act (JJA), 2015. HAMA is the statute that governs the adoption of and by Hindus. The definition of ‘Hindus’ here includes Buddhists, Jains, and Sikhs. It gives an adoptive child all the rights of a natural-born child, including the right to inheritance.

Challenges associated with adoption laws:

- There are **no rules for monitoring adoptions** and **verifying sourcing** of children and determining whether parents are fit to adopt.
- There are very few children in the registry of CARA. This allows **traffickers** to take advantage.
- HAMA is a **parent-centric law**.
- JJ Act handles issues of children in conflict with law as well as those who are in need of care and protection and only has a **small chapter on adoptions**.
- **Child Adoption Resource Information and Guidance System (CARINGS)** acts as a centralised digital database of adoptable children and prospective parents. The human contact, bonding and psychological preparedness has been taken away. Therefore, there are an **increasing number of disruptions and dissolutions**, where children are returned after an adoption is formalised.
- The law obstructs **LGBTQI+ persons** from becoming parents because the minimum eligibility for a couple to adopt a child is the proof of their marriage. To negotiate these legalities, illegal adoptions are becoming increasingly common among queer communities.
- HAMA also does not provide for **inter-country adoptions**.

Measures:

- There should be a **“child-centric, optional, enabling and gender-just”** special adoption law like in other countries.
- There is a need for **uniform laws for adoption** so that there would be no discrimination in adoption on the basis of religion and there could be equal status and equal rights for all.
- There is a need to **adopt an inclusive approach** that focuses on the needs of a child to create an environment of acceptance, growth, and well being, thus recognising children as equal stakeholders in the adoption process.
- There should be **background checks** for people wanting to start **childcare institutions** and a mandatory security check of all those running them right now to ensure that none have a criminal history.
- There should be a **district-level survey** of orphaned and abandoned children.

Policy intervention without knowledge of the ground realities often results in little or no benefit. Hence, a ground-level study has to be conducted as suggested by the Parliamentary Committee to bring out child-centric policies in adoption.

Q.14) The homegrown apple is in danger of becoming a rarity in India, what are the issues facing apple growers in India?

The Hindu

Introduction: Contextual introduction.

Body: Write **some** issues facing apple growers in India.

Conclusion: Write a way forward.

In India, Apple is primarily cultivated in **Jammu & Kashmir; Himachal Pradesh; hills of Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand**. It is also cultivated to a small extent in Arunachal Pradesh; Nagaland; Punjab and Sikkim. Himachal Pradesh is known as the “**apple bowl of the country**”. Recently, Farmer's organizations and apple growers are holding protests in the State of Himachal Pradesh.

Issues facing apple growers in India:

- The input **cost of fertilizers, insecticides, and fungicides has risen** in the last decade. The cost of apple cartons and trays and packaging has also seen a dramatic rise. The cost borne to market the produce has also risen.
- The **increase in the Goods and Services Tax on cartons** from 12% to 18%. This was done to ensure that farmers are forced to sell their produce to big buyers instead of selling it in the open market. But this leaves the apple growers at the mercy of large giants in procurement, who even decide the procurement price.
- Due to **poor road infrastructure and non-availability of cold chains**, growers are forced to sell apples to commission agents at a lower price and the agents then sell the produce to big companies.
- Unlike in Jammu and Kashmir, there is **no minimum rate for procurement in Himachal**.
- Apple imports from Chile and Iran have aggravated problems of farmers. Moreover, apple production in Kashmir gets impacted by **climate change**.

Way forward:

- A legally guaranteed procurement at a **Minimum Support Price** should be ensured to improve the conditions of farmers.
- There is need of an **independent body** having representatives of apple growers, market players, commission agents and the government for conducting research in the apple economy.

Q.15) Comment on the significance of the India assuming G-20 presidency next year.

The Hindu

Introduction: Contextual introduction.

Body: Write significance of the India assuming G-20 presidency next year.

Conclusion: Write a way forward.

G20 members currently account for nearly 80% of world GDP, 75% of global trade, and 60% of the global population. The G20 does not have a charter or a secretariat. The Presidency, aided by the countries holding the Presidency before and after it (**Troika**), is responsible for setting the agenda of each year's Summit. At present, the Troika is made up of Italy (2021), Indonesia (2022) and **India (2023)**.

Significance of the India assuming G-20 presidency next year:

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

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- It can be **utilised to transform India's sub-optimal physical infrastructure** to create an attractive investment and tourism destination, especially as several important G20 meetings will be hosted outside Delhi.
- The four democracies- Indonesia, India, Brazil, and South Africa — hold the presidency from December 2021 to November 2025. This offers a rare opportunity for **synergy and solidarity to advance the interests of the developing world** and to assert their combined leadership of the Global South.
- All three members of IBSA Forum — India, Brazil, and South Africa — will hold the G20 presidency consecutively in 2023, 2024, and 2025. This forum is insulated from the geopolitical pressures and can **develop a cohesive plan to project the priority concerns of the Global South**.
- India can provide evidence of its domestic successes, tested at the continental scale, for global adoption.
- India can factor in the perspectives of countries not represented in the G20 and advocate an inclusive approach, with pragmatic and human-centric solutions to global issues. For instance, India can demand the G20 for elevating the African Union (AU) from a permanent observer to a full-fledged member of the G20, thus placing it on a par with the EU.
- India can find a common ground for setting its G20 agenda by addressing issues of global concern.

G20 has to include objectives, vision and mission statements, a permanent secretariat, and staff to oversee commitments and ensure continuity in the agenda. The G20, instead of international commitments, can focus on domestic commitments and start implementing them.

Q.16) India has decided to opt out of the trade pillar of the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF). What is the rationale behind this decision and also discuss its implications?

Business Standard

Introduction: Contextual introduction.

Body: Explain the rationale behind opting out of the trade pillar of the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF). Also write discuss its implications.

Conclusion: Write a way forward.

The Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF) is an effort by United States to deepen ties with Asian nations through a range of issues including trade, climate change, supply chains and taxation. It's also among US levers to counter China's rising influence. India had **agreed to three out of four pillars of trade** relating to supply chains: tax, anti-corruption and clean energy.

Rationale behind this decision:

- **Data Localization:** As per U.S, India's proposed data localisation requirements will act as market access barrier, especially for smaller firms. However, India strongly supports data localization for protection of personal data and upholding national security.
- **Environment and Labour standards:** The IPEF imposes stricter environment and labour standards that are way above the prevailing norms in India. Such strict measures may hamper investment flows into India thereby limiting the benefits. Moreover, incorporation of such standards in Free Trade Agreements is against India's official stand.

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- IPEF talks about digital governance but the IPEF formulation contains issues that directly conflict with India's stated position.
- It is not clear what member countries will gain and whether some of the conditions would discriminate against developing countries. .

Implications:

- It will adversely affect longer-term economic prospects.
- Such preferential deals will give India an advantage over other countries, and help particularly to reduce trade diversion.
- Due to the global slowdown India seems to be impacted more in future than others as the trade pie shrinks. As of today, in the US market for textiles and garments, India's growth is the slowest among the top five exporters excluding China.

India is committed to a free, open, and inclusive Indo-Pacific region. It is important to establish connectivity in the Indo-Pacific region based on respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, consultation, good governance, transparency, viability and sustainability.

Q.17) The patent system is a critical aspect of the national innovation ecosystem, thus, the right interventions should be made for the promotion of the patent infrastructure.

Comment.

The Hindu

Introduction: Contextual introduction.

Body: Explain how patent system is a critical aspect of the national innovation ecosystem. Also write some measures for the promotion of the patent infrastructure.

Conclusion: Write a way forward.

A patent is an exclusive set of rights granted for an invention, which may be a product or process that provides a new way of doing something or offers a new technical solution to a problem. In India, patents are governed by the **Patents Act, 1970**. In most cases, a patent can protect an invention for up to 20 years.

Critical for innovation ecosystem:

- **Recognize and reward:** As such they serve as an **incentive** for inventors to invent. With a patent, an inventor or small business knows there is a good chance that they will get a return on the time, effort and money they invested in developing a technology.
- **Research and development (R&D):** The revenues generated from commercially successful patent-protected technologies make it possible to finance further technological research and development (R&D).
- **Commercialization of a technology:** Holding a patent also makes a small business more attractive to investors who play a key role in enabling the commercialization of a technology.
- **Spark new ideas:** The technical information and business intelligence generated by the patenting process can spark new ideas and promote new inventions from which we can all benefit and which may, in turn, qualify for patent protection.
- **No freebies:** A patent can help stop unscrupulous third parties from free riding on the efforts of the inventor.

What can be done?

- The government should **partner with industry and academics** to identify various issues and proactively address them. E.g. **KAPILA** (Kalam Program for IP Literacy and Awareness).
- **Clear incentives** should be provided to firms to invest in research and development through safeguarding their property and innovation.

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- **Public awareness** should be created about the economic, social and cultural benefits of patents among all sections of society.
- India should consider **adopting a petty patents regime** that provides limited protection to minor incremental innovations made, especially those by MSMEs, often called jugaad.
- There is a need for **fixing procedural shortcomings** to ensure ease of patent registration. E.g. the patent office is currently understaffed in terms of the number of examiners.
- A one-size-fits-all standard of inventiveness cannot be applied to patent applications. Patents are important not only for individuals or an organization but for the whole of humanity. Thus the need of the hour is to balance between profits of the organization and needs of the poor through a robust Patent Regime.

Q.18) Although the draft Indian Ports Bill of 2022 addresses many issues facing the Port sector, a few important challenges remain unaddressed. Discuss.

The Hindu

Introduction: Contextual introduction.

Body: Write how Indian Ports Bill of 2022 addresses many issues facing the Port sector. Also write some challenges that are unaddressed.

Conclusion: Write a way forward.

India has a **7,500 km long coastline**, 14,500 km of potentially navigable waterways and a strategic location on key international maritime trade routes. About 95% of India's trade by volume and 65% by value are done through maritime transport facilitated by ports. Indian Ports Bill of 2022 seeks to repeal and replace the existing Indian Ports Act 1908.

Addresses many issues:

- It empowers the Maritime State Development Council (MSDC) to formulate a national plan, for the development of major and **non-major ports** (Concurrent List) in India.
- It provides for adjudicatory mechanisms for **redressal of port-related disputes** and establishes a national council for fostering structured growth and development of the port sector.
- The **redundant provisions** of the Act have been **deleted** or replaced with contemporaneous provisions.
- It ensures compliance with the country's **obligation under the maritime treaties** and international instruments to which India is a party.
- Promote **integrated planning** between States inter-se and Centre-States through a purely consultative and recommendatory framework.
- Ensure **prevention of pollution measures** for all ports in India while incorporating India's obligations under international treaties.
- Outdated penalties in the Act have been updated with respect to amounts and offences relevant to present-day scenarios.

Challenges remain unaddressed:

- It has retained the MSDC as a statutory-cum-permanent body.
- It has also retained open-ended provisions like Section 10(c) that authorise the Central government to entrust any administrative and financial functions to the MSDC.
- In order to ensure that the composition of the MSDC is in favour of the Centre, the draft Bill makes five Secretaries and one Joint Secretary to the Government of India, besides the administrators of the coastal UTs, as members.

Way forward:

- The Centre should work towards greater **decentralisation**, deregulation, corporatisation and private sector participation.

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- Centre should give the concerned maritime States and city municipal corporations a **substantial equity stake in corporatized major ports**.
- Like the Goods and Services Tax Council, the MSDC should consist only of the concerned Ministers of the Union and maritime States/UTs.

Q.19) Near-universal social security pensions would be a good start to a radical expansion of public support for the elderly. In light of the statement, comment on the need for moving from targeted to near-universal pensions for elderly people. Also, enumerate the government initiatives in this regard.

The Hindu

Introduction: Contextual introduction.

Body: Explain why there is need of near-universal pensions for elderly people. Also write some government initiatives in this regard.

Conclusion: Write a way forward.

According to the World Health Organization, India's elderly population will rise from its current 60 million to over 227 million by 2050. Accordingly, the old-age dependency ratio will rise from 9.8 to 20.3. An increase in our elderly population and rising pressure on pension systems can offset many of the government efforts.

Need of near-universal pensions for elderly people:

- National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP) is **restricted to below poverty line** (BPL) families, based on outdated and unreliable BPL lists, huge exclusion errors in the BPL lists.
- **Central contribution to old-age pensions** has stagnated at a tiny 200 Rs per month since 2006, with a slightly higher but still paltry amount (Rs 300 per month) for widows.
- Targeting tends to be based on household rather than individual indicators.
- Eligible persons who had been left out of pension schemes were found to be much poorer than the pension recipients.
- Universalisation strengthens the moral-politico claim and the delivery of the public good or service.
- Present entitlements don't support lowest official poverty line consumption levels of Rs 27 in rural and Rs 33 in urban per day as per the Tendulkar committee.

Government initiatives:

- **National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP):** non-contributory pensions for the elderly, widowed women and disabled persons.
- **National Policy for Older Persons:** To encourage individuals to make provisions for their own and their spouse during old age.
- **Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme (IGNOAPS)** – The scheme provides an old-age pension for persons above the age of 60 years and belongs to the BPL category.
- **Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana (RVY)** – The scheme provides Physical Aids and Assisted-living Devices for Senior citizens belonging to the BPL category.
- **Pradhan Mantri Vaya Vandana Yojana** – The scheme aims to provide social security during old age. It also protects elderly persons aged 60 and above against a future fall in their interest income due to uncertain market conditions.
- **Senior care Ageing Growth Engine (SAGE)** Initiative and SAGE portal– It aims to help startups interested in providing services for elderly care.

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The need of the hour is to strengthen our pension systems through **better funding and coverage**. For that, the government has to allocate a **special budget** for the elderly population.

Q.20) Highlight the graveness of the doctor- drugmaker nexus in India. What measures are required to keep this nexus at bay?

The hindu

Introduction: Contextual introduction.

Body: Explain the graveness of the doctor- drugmaker nexus in India. Also write some measures to improve this.

Conclusion: Write a way forward.

Drug firms offer freebies in cash and kind to physicians to incentivise them to prescribe 'their drugs'. Further, Doctors are **utilized for reputation-building exercises**. Doctors have a commanding position and patients know little about the medicine. Patients will consume whichever medicine is prescribed. This unequal situation gets exploited.

Graveness of the doctor- drugmaker nexus:

- **Unethical drug promotion adversely influences doctors' prescription attitudes and harm human health** by over-use, prescription of higher doses etc. For instance, during COVID-19, many doctors prescribed dolo-650 instead of the usual 500 mg tablet.
- This causes a **severe financial stress for patients** as doctors would be inclined to prescribe a branded drug rather than the cheaper generic version.
- It is **against the spirit of competition** and can jeopardize the survival of small pharma companies which lack in financial resources in comparison to the big players.
- It induces the doctor to work in the interests of the company and not the patient which **erodes patient's trust on doctors** and the entire medical system.
- It has resulted in **unprecedented rise in the irrational prescriptions of drugs**, such as cough syrups, digestives and cognitive drugs that do not have any scientifically proven therapeutic merit.
- It **pushes costly medicines over the generic versions** that are priced around 40%-50% less than the branded medicines.

Measures:

- Making the Uniform Code for Pharmaceutical Marketing Practices (UCPMP) a **legally binding code of ethics** and should **face the same penal action as is mentioned in the Indian Penal Code** for bribery and other similar unethical practices
- **Mandatorily periodic disclosures of payments made by companies** towards doctors and professional bodies, directly or indirectly via other parties. It should be accessible to the public and include the amount, purpose of expenditure, and the party paid.
- A **mandatory ethical marketing code** will define boundaries for drugmakers and to prevent freebies from being masqueraded as product-related or educative material.
- To have **special laws** or provisions to prevent the corruption of pharma companies.
- The Government should consult all stakeholders, National Medical Commission, FMRAI, Doctors Associations and Pharma Companies etc. to establish a comprehensive framework to check such unethical practices.

It is high time we had strict regulations governing the relationship between doctors and drug manufacturers. To address this asymmetric relationship and promote ethical behaviour by Pharma companies, the **Uniform Code of Pharmaceutical Marketing Practices (UCPMP)** has been drafted the Government.

Q.21) Why are Department Related Parliamentary Standing Committees (DRSC) not being utilized as per their stated objectives? Suggest some measures to increase their efficacy and their relevance.

The Hindu

Introduction: Contextual introduction.

Body: Explain why Department Related Parliamentary Standing Committees (DRSC) are not being utilized as per their stated objectives. Also write some measures to increase their efficacy and their relevance.

Conclusion: Write a way forward.

The Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committees have been formed to cover all the Ministries/ Departments of the Government of India. Each of these Committees consists of **31 Members – 21 from Lok Sabha and 10 from Rajya Sabha** to be nominated by the Speaker, Lok Sabha and the Chairman, Rajya Sabha, respectively. They have tenure of one year, then they are reconstituted and their work continues throughout the term of a Lok Sabha.

Following reasons explain why Department Related Parliamentary Standing Committees (DRSC) are not being utilized as per their stated objectives:

- Meetings happen behind closed doors of which the minutes are never published creating the **issue of transparency** in the working of the committee.
- The committee's **recommendations are not binding** in nature. This leads to bypassing the result of detailed scrutiny of the bill.
- Lack of standing research support. There is an **absence of dedicated researchers** associated.
- All the bills are **not referred** to the departmental standing committees. E.g. three Farm Bills were passed without being referred to the DRSC.
- One year tenure leads **very little time for specialization**.
- **Attendance** of MPs at the committee meetings is weak. Also, one committee had to deal with too many ministries.

Measures to increase efficacy and relevance of DRSC:

- It may be useful to make the process of reference of Bills to these committees **compulsory/an automatic process**.
- During the discussions of the committee meetings, **no whip of the party** would apply to them and they have the liberty to vote in favour or against the Bill in Parliament.
- The committees can be given a **fixed timeline** to come up with the recommendation and present its report which can be decided by the Speaker/Chairman.
- To ensure quality work in the committees, **experts in the field may be invited** who could bring with them the necessary domain knowledge and also help introduce the latest developments and trends in that field from worldwide.
- Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs in collaboration with the committee chairmen should organise parliamentary works during the inter-sessional period, in advance.
- The committees should not limit themselves to discussing just the budget proposals. They should also come up with suggestions for the Ministry to take up new initiatives and people-friendly measures.

Parliamentary Standing Committees ensure healthy democracy and governance through scrutiny and better policies. They enable the cabinet and Parliament to make difficult decisions.

Q.22) What is the Eastern Economic Forum? Highlight the Significance of the Eastern Economic Forum for India.

The Hindu

Introduction: Explain Eastern Economic Forum.

Body: Write some significances of the Eastern Economic Forum for India.

Conclusion: Write a way forward.

The Eastern Economic Forum (EEF) was established in 2015 to encourage foreign investments in the Russia's Far East (RFE). The EEF displays the economic potential, suitable business conditions and investment opportunities in the region. It serves as a platform for the **discussion of key issues** in the world economy, regional integration, and the development of new industrial and technological sectors, as well as of the **global challenges facing Russia and other nations**.

The RFE is geographically placed at a strategic location; **acting as a gateway into Asia**. EEF has emerged as an effective platform for discussing strategy for developing political, economic and cultural ties between Russia and **Asia-Pacific region**. China is the biggest investor in the region as it sees potential in promoting the Chinese Belt and Road Initiative and the Polar Sea Route in the RFE.

Significance of the Eastern Economic Forum for India:

- India and Russia are planning to expand the level of trade between the two countries. Hence, an area of special interest for India is the **exploration of hydrocarbon reserves** along the coast of Russia's Far East.
- *To deepen Russian-Indian cooperation in high latitudes in bilateral and multilateral formats, including the **Arctic Council**.*
- *Apart from traditional areas of cooperation such as weapons, nuclear energy (Kudankulam), space (Gaganyaan) and diamonds, new sectors of economic engagement are likely to emerge in **mining, agro-industrial and high technology**, including robotics, nanotech, and biotech.*
- This is a historic opportunity to **extend Act Far East Policy**. Engaging closely with East Asia was in line with India's policy goal of "Act East".
- The two countries' leaders set the goal to reach a volume of mutual trade equal to 30 billion dollars by 2025.
- *India and Russia determined to forge cooperation in geological exploration and **joint development of oil and gas fields** in Russia and India, including offshore fields.*
- There are plans to connect the port of Chennai with Vladivostok, the largest city in the Russian Far East.

India and Russia continue to share a common strategic rationale for their relationship. India needs to pursue and facilitate Russia's engagement in the Indo Pacific as it could contribute to make the Indo Pacific truly free and inclusive.

Q.23) Although the benefits of declining fertility are many, there are consequences as well. Elaborate

The Hindu

Introduction: Contextual introduction.

Body: Explain some benefits of declining fertility. Also write its consequences.

Conclusion: Write a way forward.

According to the **World Population Prospects 2022**, the average global fertility has been consistently declining over the past 70 years. Most advanced economies have their fertility

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rate below the replacement rate of 2.1, with South Korea reporting the lowest at 1.05 children per woman.

Benefits of declining fertility:

- **Higher wages:** With a shortage of workers, they will be in a position to bargain for higher wages and enjoy higher living standards. This could help reduce the relative decline many workers have faced in recent decades.
- **Less pressure on the environment:** Global warming, desertification, loss of farmland, pollution and use of non-renewable materials – all these environmental problems will be lessened by a fall in the global population.
- **Diminishes risk of famine and drought:** there will be less pressure on limited farmland and water supplies will face less competition.
- **Immigrants welcomed:** if populations fall so much there is a shortage of workers, attitudes to immigration may change and there even may be competition to attract migrants rather than resistance.
- **Greater choice and freedoms for women:** more freedom to pursue economic autonomy, gain education and pursue a career. It also increases the ability for children to gain a good education.

Consequences:

- **Increased share of retired people:** it will create a rising share of people over 65, and an **inverted population pyramid**. This has profound implications for health care, government spending and tax revenues.
- **Pressure on government spending:** With an ageing population, the government will need to spend **more on pensions and health care**. There will be fewer young people to pay income tax. It may require higher taxes on a shrinking workforce.
- **Less innovation:** Young people are more likely to be entrepreneurs, innovators and take risks to develop new technologies and business. With less young people, the potential 'brain pool' will be less.
- It leads to concerns about labour shortages and the **effects on a country's economic and social stability**. E.g. Japan is facing a shrinking labour force and challenges in caring for a growing cohort of elders.

Even though the effects of the demographic transition will not be felt tomorrow, India must get the ball rolling early, as the shifting in the socio-cultural landscape towards those of advanced age will take time.

Q.24) What do you mean by integral humanism? Discuss the relevance of integral humanism in modern times?

Introduction: Explain integral humanism.

Body: Explain the relevance of integral humanism in modern times.

Conclusion: Write a way forward.

Integral Humanism was a set of concepts drafted by Deendayal Upadhyaya as political program and adopted in 1965 as the official doctrine of the Jan Sangh. It was developed as an indigenous economic model with human being at center stage. This approach made this concept different from Socialism and Capitalism.

Tracing its origins to the non-dualistic philosophy of Advaita Vedanta, integral humanism propagated the oneness of various souls, be it of human, animal or plant origin. Rejecting the intrinsic diversity based on race, colour, caste or religion, it identified all human beings as part of this one organic whole, sharing a common consciousness of national thought. It

rejected social systems in which individualism 'reigned supreme'. It also rejected communism in which individualism was 'crushed' as part of a 'large heartless machine

Relevance:

- It places the **welfare of human** as the primary motto of any society.
- A large population of our world lives in poverty. After having tried various development models with mixed results, the world is in search of model of development which is integrated and sustainable.
- He believed that every individual, family and our society has a role to play in the development of our nation.
- The purpose of politics is to bring about **social and economic changes**.
- Policies and principles that can balance the use the labour, natural resources and capital so that we can provide a **life of dignity to every human being**.
- Full employment must be a primary consideration. Instead of the usual exhortation of "every worker must get food", we must think of "everyone who eats must get work", as the basis of our economy.

Conclusively, integral humanism builds on an organic thought. A nation, where all citizens identify themselves as a part of the same Indian ethos, where we modernise but do not westernise, where we have individual economic liberty but that which is coupled with social safety net.

Q.25) What is the Market-Based Economic Dispatch (MBED) mechanism? Discuss the rationale and challenges associated with it.

Indian Express

Introduction: Explain Market-Based Economic Dispatch (MBED) mechanism.

Body: Explain the rationale behind Market-Based Economic Dispatch (MBED) mechanism. Also write its challenges.

Conclusion: Write a way forward.

Under the MBED mechanism, the cheapest power from across the country will be dispatched to meet the system wide demand. This would also lead to a "**uniform clearing price**". It proposes a **centralised scheduling of power dispatches**, both inter-state and intra-state. This is in line with the Centre's '**One Nation, One Grid, One Frequency, One Price**' formula.

Rationale behind Market-Based Economic Dispatch (MBED) mechanism:

- A site of contestation between the Centre and the states due to the distribution segment — the weakest link in the power chain.
- The **financial position of discoms** continues to be unsteady. Their mounting losses have increased the fiscal risks at the general government level (Centre and states).
- It will ensure that the **cheapest electricity generating resources** across the country are supplied to meet the overall system demand and will therefore be a win-win for both the distribution companies and the generators and result in **savings for consumers**.
- With a centralised pool of generation and demand offers, power generators will be forced to become more cost-efficient or shut down, thus **lowering the overall variable cost of power** in India.
- With power being scheduled and dispatched over a larger balancing zone, **renewable energy is expected to be curtailed at a lower rate**.

Challenges:

- This will **impinge on the relative autonomy of states** in managing their electricity sector, including their own generating stations, and make the discoms entirely dependent on the centralised mechanism.

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- There are concerns this could strip states of their freedom to decide their own electricity requirement while managing **seasonal and local demand trends**.
- Power is in the **Concurrent List** of the Constitution, with the electricity grid being divided into state, regional and the national level Load Dispatch Centre (LDC).
- There are concerns that the new model could potentially **clash with emerging market trends** (renewable energy in the overall generation mix and electric vehicles), as these necessitate greater decentralisation of markets and voluntary pools for efficient grid management.
- Greater clarity is also needed on the **legality of the proposed Bilateral Contract Settlement (BCS)** mechanism under the scheme for refunding the difference between the Market Clearing Price and the contract price.

All stakeholders, from state governments to load dispatch centres to power exchanges and others need to be consulted at each step in this process. Their suggestions must not only be sought, but the desirability of the policy itself needs to be discussed threadbare.

Q.26) Why is there a need for a framework for global digital governance? What steps should be taken to achieve this objective?

Indian Express

Introduction: Contextual introduction.

Body: Explain why there is need for a framework for global digital governance. Also some steps to achieve this objective.

Conclusion: Write a way forward.

Global digital governance encompasses the norms, institutions, and standards that shape the regulation around the development and use of these technologies. Digital governance has long-term commercial and political implications. A common minimum digital governance framework can become a win-win for both governments as well as internet companies.

Need for a framework for global digital governance:

- There are **challenges facing the digital economy** including anti-trust, data governance, intermediary liabilities, consumer protection and the ethical use of technologies.
- Most countries are currently struggling to strike a balance between reining in Big Tech versus boosting their digital economy.
- Companies are burdened with the particular **regulatory requirements of the different countries** they operate in.
- It allows organizations to **minimize uncertainty** in development by clearly establishing accountability and decision-making authority for all digital matters.
- Having a well-designed digital governance framework minimizes effort and cost and **ensures digital business maturity**.
- Effective digital governance results in greater economic benefits, enhanced security and risk management.
- To **enhance security and resilience** by protecting against cyberattacks and to avoid dependence on third parties for critical resources.

The following steps should be taken to achieve the objective of global digital governance:

- Engage with **existing multilateral institutions** to incorporate and address the new issues raised by technology. E.g. a greater focus on digital trade liberalisation at the World Trade Organisation; extension of Interpol to tackling cybercrime etc.
- More rapid progress on issues such as trade, technology and data flows can be achieved by **working in parallel with smaller groups of 'like-minded' countries**, such as G7, US-EU, G7 + 4, OECD, Quad etc.

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- **Address issues of regulating Big Tech corporate** behaviour primarily through US-European cooperation, as both are major markets and US has headquarters of almost all the relevant companies.
- The uncertainty and risks from military applications of AI and other new technologies can be solved through **primarily bilateral and minilateral discussions**.
- **Build consensus** on how to regulate technology (e.g. digital taxation), share its benefits and address security risks (e.g. bans or agreements on specific uses of technology like chemical weapons ban).
- **Recruit, develop and train cohorts of policy professionals** at national and international level for policy formulation with an up-to-date understanding of key technologies and business models.

Wise investments in global digital governance allow countries to address concerns on security, societal values and anti-competitive behaviours while limiting the impact on economic productivity, innovation and entrepreneurialism.

Q.27) The Supreme Court's decision to frame uniform norms for trial courts in awarding the death sentence is a welcome intervention. Elaborate.

Indian Express

Introduction: Contextual introduction.

Body: Explain why the Supreme Court's decision to frame uniform norms for trial courts in awarding the death sentence is a welcome intervention.

Conclusion: Write a way forward.

India seldom executes death row prisoners, reserving it for truly "rarest of rare" crimes such as 26/11 terrorist attacks in Mumbai or the 2001 attempt to storm Parliament or the Nirbhaya gangrape-murder. Nevertheless, trial courts hand out dozens of death penalties every year. The Supreme Court in **Bachan Singh v State of Punjab upheld** the death penalty and introduced the "**rarest of the rare**" safeguard.

A welcome intervention:

- **Law Commission Report:** 2015 report recommended abolition of death sentence except in terror-related cases. Over 144 countries have either in law or practice abolished the death sentence.
- **Increased legislation:** Raising the procedural bar in imposing capital punishment creates a crucial balance between total abolition and active advocacy of the death sentence.
- **Focused on vulnerable:** According to Project 39A, 76 percent of such prisoners belonged to **SC, ST and OBC**, or **religious minorities** and over three-fourths were from economically vulnerable and over 62 per cent did not complete secondary school.
- **Liberal use:** Laws that prescribe the death penalty range from IPC 302 (murder) to the anti-terror UAPA to the amended POCSO Act. But trial judges interpret these statutes too liberally.
- **Legal assistance:** Poorer convicts often don't receive quality legal assistance and a capital punishment for an innocent is an irretrievable miscarriage of justice.
- This order is necessitated due to a difference of opinion and approach amongst various judgments, on the question of whether, after recording conviction for a capital offence, under law, the court is obligated to conduct a separate hearing on the issue of sentence.
- The trial court made no attempt to elicit relevant facts, nor did the trial court give any opportunity to the petitioner to file an affidavit placing on record mitigating factors.

As SC's guidelines are often ignored by trial courts such as the case of sedition law, Section 66A of the IT Act, so, the constitution bench must not only settle the matter quickly but also ensure lower courts follow its rules.

Q.28) Both Gati Shakti and NLP should be reconstituted to embrace, in the first instance, regional economic integration in the Indian subcontinent and then extend this to the larger Asian and global economy. Comment.

Business Standard

Introduction: Contextual introduction.

Body: Explain why there is need of reconstitution of Gati Shakti and NLP for regional and global economic integration. Also write some ways to achieve regional and global economic integration.

Conclusion: Write a way forward.

The Gati Shakti National Master Plan is an important step for India to upgrade national infrastructure and multimodal connectivity. The National Logistics Policy aimed at easing the movement of goods and boosting the trade sector in the Indian economy.

Need of reconstitution:

- **Rail sector** suffers from many **structural deficiencies** which have to be eliminated fast if the logistics cost has to be halved to global benchmarks. The railways need to have a time-table based goods operation. It has to become an aggregator at the source of freight, and disaggregator at the destination, to capture the high-value small-load business (as against rake-load goods).
- For decades the country has talked about **eco-friendly and cost-effective inland waterways** freight movement, but nothing has happened. There is valuable learning available from the river ports of China.
- **Road logistics** is a totally fragmented sector, where a large chunk of truck owners have a very small fleet.
- It is necessary to **improve air logistics** and drastically improve the transport of high-value and perishable items.

Ways to achieve economic integration:

- By **reducing the cost and time** of doing trade through infrastructure modernisation at home, India will continue to have a positive impact on the price of commodities and developmental targets in neighbouring countries.
- Government should work **collaboratively on various regional institutions and platforms** to develop a regional vision and standards for connectivity, reducing bilateral transaction costs etc. e.g. India's integrated check post lack complementary infrastructure on the other side of the border.
- Working through these **multilateral platforms** like SAARC, BIMSTEC etc. will help India develop a regional vision and standards for connectivity, reducing bilateral transaction costs.
- By **cooperating more closely with global players** like the Asian Development Bank and the World Bank, Japan, the US, Australia, EU and ASEAN. They come with expertise and expectations about connectivity standards, whether it is on e-commerce, environmental and social impact assessments of infrastructure or technology platforms.

For India and her neighbours, stronger political will is required to combat barriers to trade in the region, especially after the COVID-19 crisis which may result in unleashing a new wave of protectionist measures.

Q.29) Broadcasting court proceedings is a step in the direction of transparency and greater access to the justice system, but there are concerns around the impact of live streaming both on judges and the people watching the proceedings. Elaborate.

Indian Express

Introduction: Contextual introduction.

Body: Explain how broadcasting court proceedings are a right step for the justice system. Also write some concerns around the impact of live streaming both on judges and the people.

Conclusion: Write a way forward.

Live Streaming of Court proceedings has already been started in High Courts of Gujarat, Orissa, Karnataka, Jharkhand, Patna and Madhya Pradesh thus allowing media and other interested persons to join the proceedings. Recently the Supreme Court has decided to live-stream **all constitution bench hearings** to address pleas to make the highest judiciary's proceedings transparent and accessible to one and all.

Why it is a right step?

- **Accountability:** As stated by SC, Live streaming is an extension of the principle of open court and will bring accountability to the judicial process.
- **Right of access to Justice:** Live proceedings are in line with the right of access to justice under article 21. This would help people residing in distant places to witness court proceedings, which they otherwise could not have due to logistical issues and infrastructural restrictions.
- **International comparison:** Among big and established democracies, India is alone that is not providing video or audio transcripts of the court proceedings, despite having in place the required infrastructure for the same.
- **Article 129:** Publishing court proceedings is an aspect of Article 129, per which the Supreme Court is a court of record.
- **Boosting public confidence in judiciary:** Litigants depend on the information provided by the lawyers, regarding the court proceedings. If the description and information provided are inaccurate, not only it negatively impacts the confidence in the judiciary, it also violates the public's right to know.

What are the concerns?

- A huge concern will be the **cyber security threat**.
- Justices behave like politicians when given free television time; they act to **maximize their individual exposure**.
- Live streaming of Court proceedings is **open to misuse** as proved by so many complaints over the virtual court proceedings.
- Live-streaming would lead to people filing petitions just for the sake of **"being heard all across the country"**.
- There are lots of issues and arguments during the hearings which might not be suitable for live streaming.
- It will be **susceptible to abuses**. Thus, **issues of privacy** may arise.
- Due to the presence of the **digital divide** in the country, live streaming still might not result in access to justice for all sections of the country.

Owing to increased frequency of cybercrimes, there is a need for the deployment of a robust security system that provides secure access to case information for appropriate parties.

Q.30) Ayurveda, India's traditional medicine, has been in practice for close to three millennia, but there are a few challenges that the Ayurveda establishment has for long failed to skillfully address. Comment.

The Hindu

Introduction: Contextual introduction.

Body: Write some historical background of Ayurveda. Also write some challenges that the Ayurveda establishment has for long failed to skillfully address.

Conclusion: Write a way forward.

Ayurveda means the **science of life**. Ayurveda is also called traditional system of Indian medicine. Ayurvedic medicine is an example of a well-organized system of traditional health care, both preventive and curative.

A long historical background:

- Ayurvedic knowledge originated in India **more than 5,000 years ago** and is often called the "Mother of All Healing."
- The origin of Ayurveda dates back to the **Vedic era**. Most material relating to the health and diseases are available in **Atharva veda**. **RigVeda** which is the earliest Veda also mentions about diseases and medicinal plants.
- The earliest codified document on Ayurveda is **Charaka Samhita**, descended through Atreya.
- **Sushruta samhita** is another codified document, propagated by Dhanvantari.
- Sushruta School is dominated by **surgical procedures** and techniques while Charaka Samhita deals with **internal medicine**.

Challenges:

- Ayurveda's ancient treatises contain **useful portions alongside obsolete ones**. Hence, valuable health promotion and illness management observations need to be carefully filtered from outdated theories and socio-religious superstitions.
- Many experts admit that the **anatomy and physiology** contained in the Ayurvedic classics is mostly **outdated** and that the official approach to this subject is misguided.
- The belief in the **philosophical superiority** of Ayurveda has destroyed ancient medical writings from being revisable scientific treatises. The idea of Ayurveda being antithetical to the yukti-vyapashraya (reason-based) character of classical Ayurveda has made the reforms long overdue in Ayurveda. This is highlighted by Usman Committee (1923) and the Chopra Committee (1948).
- There is a **flawed approach** of making ancient concepts sound relevant by superimposing current scientific findings upon them. This will lead to dangerously wrong clinical choices.

Way forward:

- Necessary additions must be made either by translations or by collaboration with experts in portions still deficient.
- As a medical system, Ayurveda is valuable immensely for its observations. Ministry of AYUSH must take cognisance actions to revive Ayurveda.

Q.31) A huge amount of food produced annually goes unconsumed and turns into waste. Suggest measures to prevent food wastage in India.

Live Mint

Introduction: Contextual introduction.

Body: Write some measures to prevent food wastage in India.

Conclusion: Write a way forward.

The **Food Waste Index Report 2021**, by United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), revealed that **17% of all food** available at consumer level was wasted in 2019 and around **690 million people had to go hungry**. It is said that reducing just 50% of food loss or waste could end world hunger. Food waste is a significant **emitter of greenhouse gases**, generating 8-10% of global emissions.

Measures to prevent food wastage in India:

- **Ensuring comprehensible labelling:** only 35% of consumers fully understand the difference between terms such as “best before”, “consume by” and “expiry date” seen on date labels. Thus, the labelling which is understandable by common consumers will be helpful.
- **Use of Information Technology (IT):** Using Internet-of-Things (IoT) solutions in cold chains can help organizations harness data-driven insights, enhance traceability and monitor the quality of perishables.
- **Collaboration across the entire value chain:** The focus should be on implementing and scaling up tech solutions that generate maximum impact such as **demand forecasting, temperature monitoring, inventory management, geographic information system (GIS) mapping**, and remote sensing. **Boosting local supply chains** also leads to reduced spoilage and waste, quicker turnaround times.
- **Food waste-related benchmarks:** Organizations need to set food waste reduction goals, establish relevant metrics, track and report progress against them.
- **Awareness and Sensitisation drives:** to inculcate a behavioural change in food usage. For example, changes like, feed someone with extra food or make a **compost** out of it.
- Multilateral platforms like the **UN Food Systems Summit** can be used to improve cooperation and collaboration among countries.
- India can utilise the knowledge and practice of **UNEP’s Regional Food Waste Working Groups**. Especially to share and learn good practices with peer countries.
- India should include Food wastage as a core component of its **Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)** under the Paris Summit. This will place great accountability and motivate the country to take more concrete and innovative steps.

India needs a more proactive approach towards food wastage that should involve a blend of incentives, penalties and behaviour changing measures. This will ensure judicious food utilisation and would also **help in achieving SDG 12.3** that aims to halve global food waste by 2030.

Q.32) What do you understand by the term Moonlighting? What are the reasons behind its prevalence after the pandemic? Also, highlight its implications.

Live Mint

Introduction: Explain Moonlighting.

Body: Explain the reasons behind its prevalence after the pandemic. Also write its implications.

Conclusion: Write a way forward.

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Moonlighting is the act of **working at an extra job** beyond regular working hours, usually without the knowledge of the employer. Since the side job was **mostly at night-time or on weekends**, it was referred to as moonlighting. Moonlighting can be a **double-edged sword** for employees in India. It may bring in some extra income and valuable experience, but when caught it may be seen as violation of contract and even lead to termination.

Reasons behind its prevalence after the pandemic:

- **Work from home culture:** While the pandemic has resulted in work from home culture for the majority of the population, it has become easier for employees to work on a second job or business without their primary employer's knowledge.
- **Plan B:** People take up a second job **as a backup** because, at this moment, companies are understaffed and losing money. This also led to employees working for multiple jobs to **maintain job security** and a steady flow of income.
- **Paying off debt:** Due to pandemic, India as well as the rest of the world - suffered **heavy job losses**. With a second job, people manage to pay for home loan etc.
- **To Combat Boredom:** when they do not have enough work to keep them occupied at their primary jobs or to keep themselves busy throughout the day.
- **To Gain Additional Work Experience** or indulge in work profiles they are more passionate about.

Implications:

- It is a matter of concern for employers as it would put the **company's confidential information** at risk and employees might not give their 100%.
- The employee is able to perform better due to their improved knowledge and skills thereby **benefitting the employer**.
- If the employees are engaged in two jobs, they tend to **exhaust themselves**. Due to excessive work, they may face several **health related problems**.
- When an employee works for another employer or starts his/her own business which is similar to his first job, there is a **fear of competition** faced by the first employer. In such a situation, there is a conflict of interest.
- The employee may not be able to focus on the present job thereby **reducing the efficiency** of the organisation.

Way forward:

- A **non-compete clause** must be inserted in the employment contract. It greatly reduces the risk of losing business secrecy.
- Employers must ensure that employees receive the **minimum compensation** which is essential for their basic needs. Wages and salaries may be augmented by certain incentives.

Q.33) Millets are termed a 'super grain' for good reasons. Discuss the multidimensional benefits associated with enhancing millet cultivation.

Times of India

Introduction: Contextual introduction.

Body: Write some multidimensional benefits associated with enhancing millet cultivation.

Conclusion: Write a way forward.

Millets are cereal crops with high nutritive value and categorized as small-seeded grasses. The key varieties of millets include Sorghum, Pearl Millet, Ragi, Small Millet, Foxtail Millet, Barnyard Millet, Kodo Millet and others. Major producers include Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Gujarat and Haryana. 2023 was declared as the **"International year of millets"** by the UN.

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Multidimensional benefits associated with enhancing millet cultivation:

- **Social benefits:** Millets possess immense potential in the battle against poverty and provide food, nutrition, fodder and livelihood security. In rainfed farming areas, millet cultivation provides livelihood to 50% of tribal and rural population.
- **Agri-growth:** India is the largest global producer with a 41% market share. A compound annual growth rate of 4.5% is projected for the global millet market in the coming decade.
- **Restoration of ecosystems and sustainability:** Land degradation has been a major problem in India. Drought-tolerant crops (like millets) with low dependence on chemical inputs would put far less pressure on ecosystems.
- **Biofuel and climate resilience:** Millets also offer a significant cost advantage over maize as a feedstock for bio-ethanol production. They have higher photosynthetic efficiency. Their potential yield is unaffected by higher carbon dioxide levels.
- **Addressing SDGs:** Millet farming has led to women's empowerment. The Odisha Millet Mission saw 7.2 million women emerge as 'agripreneurs'.
- **Nutritional benefits:** They are a rich source of macronutrients and micronutrients like calcium, protein and iron. They have a **low glycemic index** that prevents type 2 diabetes. They can help to prevent cardiovascular diseases, lower blood pressure.
- **Water efficient:** They require less water. It is about one-third of rice, wheat and sugarcane.
- Boosting millet cultivation will **empower the average farmer** and achieve the objectives of enhancing incomes and improving crop diversification.

Way forward:

- We have to enhance millet cultivation. There is a need to increase crop area under millet cultivation.
- Millets should be included in PDS (Public Distribution System).
- There is a need to promote **agribusiness startup incubation centres** and increase popular awareness of benefits of millets among consumers.

Q.34) To what extent do you think, PM SHRI schools scheme, will be helpful in achieving the objectives set by National Education Policy?

Indian Express

Introduction: Contextual introduction.

Body: Explain how PM SHRI schools scheme will be helpful in achieving the objectives set by National Education Policy. Also write some concerns.

Conclusion: Write a way forward.

PM SHRI (PM Schools for Rising India) schools will provide high-quality education in an equitable, inclusive and joyful school environment. The schools will be developed as **Green schools**. Under the PM SHRI scheme, **14,500 schools** across India's states and Union Territories will be upgraded with modern infrastructure, the latest learning tools and technology, smart classrooms, upgraded sports facilities, etc.

Helpful in achieving the objectives of National Education Policy:

- PM SHRI schools can become a medium to bring change brought by the new education policies (NEP and NCF).
- Every region will have PM SHRI schools that will **mentor other schools** in their areas. It will also have range of learning experiences, good infrastructure among others.
- These schools will include a variety of pedagogies and assessment systems along with **vocational education**.
- These schools will provide linkages with counsellors and local industry to provide **employment opportunities** to their students.

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- The schools will also be developed into “**green schools**” with solar panels, smarter waste disposal, and management systems, naturally farmed nutrition gardens, water conservation and harvesting system, and more.
- **Career guidance** and mentoring will be provided by the alumni and parents will also be trained to become home mentors.
- The school will become **community centres** after the regular hours and converge with existing schemes like PM Poshan, Samagrah Shiksha and Ayushman Bharat.
- The **curricular and extra-curricular activities** will also be redesigned to reflect the key features of the NEP 2020.

Concerns:

- The poor status, low salaries and inadequate working conditions discourage talented people from entering the teaching profession.
- There is also lack of investment in high-quality teachers, training and resource materials along with the lack in teacher training schools in India.

For the PM SHRI schools to succeed, a **teacher training programme** must be in place to train the educators in the pedagogical practices proposed by the NEP. As far as principals are concerned, there is a great crisis of leadership.

Q.35) Even if multilateralism has failed in addressing the present global crises, that should not prevent it from being strengthened in dealing with issues and problems that have a somewhat longer time horizon. Comment.

Business Standard

Introduction: Contextual introduction.

Body: Explain **how** multilateralism has failed in addressing the present global crises. Also write some needs to strengthen multilateralism.

Conclusion: Write a way forward.

Multilateralism is also called as a rule-based international order. Since 2008, and after decades of accelerated expansion, the global integration of trade, markets and finance has slowed down and we are in a period of “**slowbalization**” or even “**deglobalization.**”

How multilateralism has failed in addressing the present global crises?

- Advanced economies (AEs) are now disenchanted by globalization. For Example, Brexit and inward-looking policies of many developed countries like US.
- The **BRICS** failed to determine the dynamics of the future course in the Indo-Pacific.
- In the **G7 Summit 2022**, the members were preoccupied with its increasing involvement in the war through supply of money, sophisticated weapons, etc. It failed to produce any results on other major **issues like climate change etc.**
- As the Appellate Body of the **WTO** is unable to hear new appeals, causing widespread concern in the context of escalating global **trade protectionism.**
- Despite its massive size, the **United Nations** has become hostage to geopolitical competition and ideological struggles. E.g. mostly refrained from criticizing **Beijing’s actions against the Uighurs.**
- The performance of the **World Health Organization during the Covid-19 pandemic**, and the ambiguity and lack of transparency of its investigation on the origins of the virus.
- The **conflict in Ukraine** has exposed fault lines in European security that most multilateral actors had failed to acknowledge.

Need to strengthen:

- The new realities of the **digital economy and rapid technological development** necessitate coordinated action to address crucial challenges.

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- As, the effects of economic slow-down cut across the boundary lines of countries, there is a need to act on the UN general agenda to revive and strengthen our capacity to fight against issues like **poverty, equal participation, biodiversity loss**, justice etc.
- To improve the **fairness of corporate taxation**, especially of digital companies, and to shore up the **privacy treatment of consumer data** across borders.
- **Achieving the SDGs**, including ambitious targets on climate action, universal healthcare and financing for development, will require stakeholders to work together at all levels in innovative partnerships and initiatives.
- There is also a need to **enhance cooperation** among the UN, regional organization, international finance institution at both policy and operational levels.

Way forward:

- India needs to support reform not only to expand the permanent members' category of the Security Council but also to revitalize the role of the General Assembly.
- India, Germany, Japan and Brazil [G-4] have sought to refocus the UN on UNSC reform, they must remain focused and determines even if these changes do not happen easily.

Q.36) can a country's performance in sports increase its soft power? How can India increase its sporting performance and soft power?

The Hindu

Introduction: Contextual introduction.

Body: Explain how a country's performance in sports increases its soft power and also write some points against this view. Also write some measures to increase sporting performance and soft power of India.

Conclusion: Write a way forward.

Soft power is a "power of attraction through culture, political ideas, and policies rather than coercion" that military hard power exhibits. It aims to persuade and not coerce. At the most fundamental level soft Power is about **winning the hearts and minds of people** i.e. a people centric approach.

Increases soft power:

- China uses its superiority in elite sports **to build "people-to-people" relations** with other countries. E.g. athletes from African countries are trained in swimming, badminton, table tennis, etc.
- Mega sporting events generate viewership in their billions. So they provide a platform for countries to **showcase their culture, values and tradition**.
- A powerful means of **showcasing a nation's achievements and its ability to manage major projects**.
- It can create **positive pathways for young people**, giving skills, confidence, and self-respect and **generates role models**. It reduces violence and **promotes community cohesion**.
- Russia used the Games and World Cup to change the image of Russia from that of an authoritarian closed nation, to that of an open one which welcomed the World in 2014 and 2018.

Not necessarily increases the soft power:

- It is obvious that performance in sports increase soft power, but is not sufficient. This is because foreign policy outcomes are not unilateral decisions.
- It has been ruined by **drugs, cheating, and hooliganism**.

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- It can **also worsen the relationship between nations**, as the example of El Salvador and Honduras shows. The poor relationship between the two nations was further exacerbated by playing against each other in the World Cup in 1969.
- Sport teams and athletes can serve a **national propaganda** machine meant **to support a negative narrative**.

Ways to increase sporting performance:

- India should concentrate on forging **MoUs with nations that excel in specific sports**. For example, Australia and the United Kingdom can assist us in swimming, African countries such as Kenya in running.
- **Focusing on a few sports** is beneficial for a country such as India. India needs to **boost the number of athletes under TOPS**.
- **Private investment** needs to be harnessed to develop infrastructure. This also creates a huge market for private players to invest in.
- As recommended by NITI Aayog, the government should **work on a public-private partnership (PPP) model** to create basic sporting infrastructure at the district level so that talent can be captured at an early stage.

As **Nelson Mandela once stated**, “Sport has the power to change the world, to inspire and to unite people in a way that very little else can”, placing the spotlight on a nation through sports can be advantageous and provide worldwide attention to positive changes.

Q.37) Highlight the significance of NavIC (Navigation in Indian Constellation) for India and compare it with the GPS navigation system.

The Hindu \

Introduction: Contextual introduction.

Body: Write some significance of NavIC (Navigation in Indian Constellation) for India. Also write its comparison with GPS navigation system.

Conclusion: Write a way forward.

Navigation with Indian Constellation (NavIC) is an independent regional navigation satellite system designed to provide position information in the Indian region and 1500 km around the Indian mainland. It is a regional system and consists of seven satellites.

Significance of NavIC for India:

- It give real time information for **standard positioning service** open for civilian use and **restricted service** for authorised users like for military.
- It will help in **scientific & technological advancement** of India.
- It will make **Indian Armed Forces self-reliant**.
- Further with extensive coverage, one of the stated future uses of the project includes sharing the project with the SAARC nations. This will help in **integrating the regional navigation system** further and a diplomatic goodwill gesture from India towards countries of the region.
- It is important for the **country's sovereignty and strategic requirements**.
- Relying on systems like GPS and GLONASS may not always be reliable as those are operated by the defence agencies of respective nations and it is possible that civilian services can be degraded or denied.

Comparison with GPS navigation system:

- **Coverage:** GPS caters to users **across the globe** and its satellites circle the earth twice a day, while NavIC covers India and some neighboring countries.

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- **Satellites:** currently, NavIC has a total of 7 satellites in Earth's orbit whereas **GPS has a total of 31 operational satellites** rotating around the Earth. While GPS needs only 24 satellites to cover all the regions.
- **Frequency:** NavIC uses **L5 frequency** for Standard Positioning Service (SPS) and **S band frequency for military use**. GPS uses L1 and L5 frequencies for both general and military use.
- **Accuracy:** The reason for NavIC's pinpoint accuracy is **the direct line of sight between the satellite and India's region- all the time**. Since NavIC satellites are much above the Earth's surface (approx 35k km above), **signals can't be blocked by mountains**. GPS satellites are operating at medium orbit so there are chances of signal blocking by mountains. **NavIC has a position accuracy of 5-20 meters for general users** and 0.5 meters for military use. GPS has a similar position accuracy of less than 20 meters.

Having a global navigation system bolsters the ability of a nation to serve as a net security provider. It can also play a significant role in relief efforts post disasters such as the tsunami in the Indian Ocean region in 2004.

Q.38) What do you understand by an ethical dilemma? How an administrator should deal with situations of ethical dilemma?

Introduction: Explain ethical dilemma.

Body: Explain how an administrator should deal with situations of ethical dilemma.

Conclusion: Write a way forward.

An ethical dilemma is a situation of conflict among various principles, creating a difficulty in decision making. An ethical dilemma arises when one has to choose between ethical values and rules in order to determine the right-thing-to-do. Administrators too face ethical dilemmas many times. This led to difficulty in decision making and requires conscience to resolve such dilemmas.

There are several different types of ethical dilemmas that one may encounter in the course of performing their roles and responsibilities:

- **Epistemic dilemmas** take place in a decision-making context where moral standards conflict and the one cannot readily determine which ethical principle should take precedence over the other.
- **A self-imposed dilemma** is created by the one's own errors in judgment, such as making competing promises to multiple organizations that cannot be fulfilled simultaneously. In contrast, a **world-imposed dilemma** is caused by circumstances outside the one's control.
- An **obligation dilemma** is one where person has multiple options and more than one of them is obligatory, while a **prohibition dilemma** occurs when all available options are prohibited.

How an administrator should deal with situations of ethical dilemma?

- Personal self-interest should be secondary to the common good in all situations, especially when such circumstances give rise to conflict of interest.
- A dilemma should be dealt appropriately by considering and reformulating all the options in a systematic and coherent manner.
- To resolve such ethical dilemmas, an order or a sequence of logical reasoning is must to integrate and rearrange the process of dealing with ethical dilemmas.
- The decisions should be guided by following principles:
 1. The provisions of Indian Constitution.

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2. Democratic accountability of administration.
 3. The rule of law and the principle of legality.
 4. Professional integrity.
 5. Impartiality and neutrality.
 6. Larger public good.
 7. Responsiveness to civil society.
- The bureaucracy should be loyal to the country and its people while decision making considering consequences of such decisions.
 - It is fundamental ethical duty of civil servants to show a spirit of neutrality and discretion and keep their own personal preferences out in the performance of their duties and responsibilities.

Civil servants are responsible for providing justice to many lives. Their impartiality and neutrality is must to uphold his/her duty towards a society. Dilemmas arise many times in life of civil servants while performing their duties. What required is the objective decision making for larger public benefit.

Q.39) The Bay of Bengal (the Bay) is significant in terms of geo-economic, geopolitical, and geo-cultural activities. In the light of the statement, highlight the challenges faced by the region and how the Centre for Bay of Bengal Studies (CBS) can be helpful in tackling those challenges

The Hindu

Introduction: Contextual introduction.

Body: Explain some challenges faced by the Bay of Bengal region. Also explain how the Centre for Bay of Bengal Studies (CBS) can be helpful in tackling those challenges.

Conclusion: Write a way forward.

The Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) is a regional organization comprising **seven Member States** lying in the littoral and adjacent areas of the Bay of Bengal constituting a contiguous regional unity. This sub-regional organization came into being in 1997 through the **Bangkok Declaration**.

Challenges faced by the region:

- The region's maritime environment has changed as a result of **major powers expanding their economic and geopolitical influence**.
- The Bay's ecosystem is going through an unprecedented crisis brought on by widespread **environmental exploitation and geopolitical unrest**. **Species extinction** has severe consequences on biodiversity.
- Problems such as **population growth, altered land use**, excessive resource exploitation, **salinisation**, sea level rise, and climate change are exerting significant strain on the Bay's environment.
- **Operational discharge** from small and medium feeder ships, shipping collisions, unintentional oil spills, **industrial waste**, pollution, and the accumulation of non-biodegradable plastic litter are all contributing to the deterioration of the Bay.
- A **dead zone** has formed as a result, and the mangrove trees that protect the shore from the fury of nature are under more threat than ever.

Recently, India has implemented its promise to set up a **Centre for Bay of Bengal Studies (CBS) at Nalanda University, Bihar** for research on art, culture and other subjects related to the Bay of Bengal. This can be helpful in tackling these challenges by following ways:

- **Trade and connectivity:** The Bay region is a key transit route between the Indian and the Pacific Oceans. CBS can help in harnessing and sharing the Bay's natural wealth.

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- **Maritime security and maritime law:** collaboration on controlling drug trafficking, facilitating intelligence-sharing, counter-terrorism, coastal security, cybersecurity, etc.
- It can help member states to **tackle any future uncertainties**. Especially like challenges in climate change, COVID-19 pandemic and balancing US-China relations, etc.
- This will strengthen India's overall framework for **maritime engagement**, which aims to advance sustainable economic growth for all by fostering closer nautical ties.
- Strengthening Cultural heritage and Blue economy.

Way forward:

- Littoral governments need to support and **promote skill-building, research, and training**.
- Countries in the region will need to mobilise incentives and investments, manage oceanic affairs more effectively, and support people as they switch to alternative lifestyles.

Q.40) In light of the cataclysmic floods in Pakistan and the visible effects of climate change, discuss the measures required to tackle the challenges. How UNWC or the UNECE Water Convention can be helpful in tackling those challenges?

The Hindu

Introduction: Contextual introduction.

Body: Explain some measures to tackle the challenges of floods and climate change. Also explain how UNWC or the UNECE Water Convention can be helpful in tackling these challenges.

Conclusion: Write a way forward.

Recently Pakistan has been devastated by heavy floods which led to heavy loss of life, essentials shortages. Pakistan experienced a monsoon in 2022, which is unusually wet, called "**monsoon on steroids**" by UN. It is an imprint of a **global-warming-induced extreme weather event**.

Measures:

- **Flood Detection Systems:** gives vital information that can protect properties from excessive damage and save lives.
- **Prompt Storm Drain Cleaning:** Drains can eventually gather debris, making it challenging for the water to drain properly.
- **Plant More Trees:** since it will benefit the environment and also help to avert flooding. **Mangroves and eucalyptus** trees are particularly good at reducing flood risk.
- **Construction of Dams:** Pakistan consistently endures flooding due to a lack of dams in the nation. With the increase in rainfalls, dams must be constructed around the nation to store surplus water and avert further flooding catastrophes to stop this.
- More **robust flood management practices** including in urban areas, adoption of **climate resilient agriculture systems**. Government should continue to pursue its **mitigation measures promised under Paris Agreement**.
- Strategic **environment assessment of development activities** needs to be undertaken in flood prone areas.

The UNECE Water Convention was adopted in 17 March 1992 and entered into force on the 6 October 1996. The Convention requires states to, 'prevent, control and reduce transboundary impact, use transboundary waters in a reasonable and equitable way, and ensure their sustainable management'. UNWC or the UNECE Water Convention can be helpful in following ways:

- A **legal binding framework** by which a state can conduct its activities related to transboundary rivers, lakes and aquifers which provides for **predictability and transparency**.

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- Legal frameworks help create an enabling stable environment for **encouraging investments**.
- Being a Party sends a clear signal to non-Parties of the type of **legal commitments** that a country is willing enter into.
- **Recognition by countries** and the international community of a country's long-term commitment to transboundary water cooperation.
- **Stronger water management** at the national level linking to transboundary management.
- Accession process offers a means by which to **strengthen national awareness and capacity** on transboundary water issues amongst key stakeholders across sectors.

It is important that all riparian states must comply with all the procedural duties pursuant to the no harm rule. They must also think of becoming a party to either the UNWC or the UNECE Water Convention.

Q.41) Hydropower projects planned or under construction in the Himalayas are under threat due to hazards related to Climate Change. Comment.

Times of India

Introduction: Contextual introduction.

Body: Explain how hydropower projects in the Himalayas are under threat due to hazards related to Climate Change.

Conclusion: Write a way forward.

With its **steep topography and abundant water resources** the Himalayas offer sustainable, low-carbon hydropower for energy-hungry South Asia. But three out of seven projects, Tapovan-Vishnugad (520 megawatts), Phata Byung (76 megawatts) and Singoli Bhatwari (99 megawatts), have already been severely damaged by floods and landslides in 2013 and 2021. Several other hydropower projects in the Himalayas have also suffered similar damage.

Threat due to hazards related to Climate Change:

- Climate change has driven **erratic weather patterns** like increased snowfall and rainfall. The thermal profile of ice is increasing, making it more susceptible to melting.
- **Glacier retreat and permafrost thaw** are projected to decrease the stability of mountain slopes and increase the number and area of glacier lakes.
- Global warming is expected to lead to more glacier melt and **extreme precipitation events** in the region.
- Many of the projects are **significantly upslope** in locations closer to glaciers and glacial lakes in high altitude areas, making them more hazard-prone.
- The Himalayan region is in a **seismic zone**, so greater chances of earthquake, landslides, rock-ice avalanches, debris flow and lake outburst floods.
- **Lake outburst floods are often unpredictable** and cause severe downstream damages to the infrastructure system such as hydropower.
- The risks of **increased erosion and sediment flow** in the high mountains may reduce reservoir storage capacity, undercutting their supply of water for irrigation and power.
- **Temperature rise** from climate change could **increase rockfalls** in the Himalayas.

Way forward:

- An **independent scientific assessment** of the immediate or long-term implications of construction work for hydropower development should be commissioned.
- **Citizens' engagement and public consent mechanisms** need to be strengthened at the planning stage.
- **Microhydel project** may be promoted, as these have less of an adverse social and environmental impact on local communities and are a very suitable for this region.

Q.42) Discuss the economic significance and concerns associated with international trade settlement in rupees.

Live Mint, Business Standard, The HinduBusinessLine

Introduction: Contextual introduction.

Body: Write some economic significances of international trade settlement in rupees. Also explain some concerns associated with it.

Conclusion: Write a way forward.

The Reserve Bank of India recently allows for International Trade settlements in Indian Rupees (INR). This is where trade settlement in rupees comes in – instead of paying and receiving US dollars, the invoice will be made in Indian rupees if the counterparty has a Rupee Vostro account.

Economic significance:

- It will make much easier for Indian exporters and importers to **trade with countries** (like Russia and Iran) facing difficulties in invoicing trade in the US dollar.
- With global inflation unlike to abate, (Russia-Ukraine conflict and its impact on global food and energy prices), the US dollar will strengthen further, leading to the weakening of the INR.
- A weakening rupee worsens the threat of imported inflation in India. This policy would largely **lower demand for foreign exchange** for the settlement of current account-related trade flows.
- This would **help accept the INR as a currency of choice** for trade among India's major economic partners and its **recognition as a global currency**.
- Since India runs a **trade deficit**, settling trades in rupees **will also save dollar outflows**.
- The move could assist Indian exporters in collecting **advance payments** in Indian rupees from overseas clients.
- The move could have a favourable **long-term influence on regional nations** wanting to trade with India.

Concerns:

- **Accepting the rupee will be difficult** in the prevailing global trade protectionism and geopolitical rivalries as each country wants to promote exports and reduce imports.
- Invoicing in Indian Rupee and not depending on US Dollar **may upset India's relationship with the US**.
- It may also have an **indirect impact on services sector** for which we are dependent on developed markets like the US and Europe.
- India's share in global trade is not significant enough and dependence for import of fossil fuels, edible oils etc. are quite large. It is unlikely that exporting countries will consider Indian rupee as a currency of invoicing, unless it suits their interests.
- The international trade transactions to be settled in Indian rupee **needs to be analysed from bilateral trade equilibrium** to understand their potential scope and scale.

Way forward:

- To promote this, India should increase exports and imports so that rupee becomes a highly tradable currency.
- This should be supported by **critical reforms in financial markets** which include capital account convertibility, deepening financial markets etc.

Q.43) Considering the harmful impacts of pesticide usage, minimizing its use should have become a national priority. In light of the statement, highlight the harmful impacts of excessive usage of pesticides and suggest some measures to control it.

Indian Express

Introduction: Contextual introduction.

Body: Write some harmful impacts of excessive usage of pesticides. Also write some measures to control it.

Conclusion: Write a way forward.

Chemical compounds that are employed to eliminate pest organisms are called pesticides. The term pesticide covers a wide range of compounds including insecticides, fungicides, herbicides etc. The **Insecticides Act of 1968** covers the registration, manufacture and sale of pesticides in India.

Harmful impacts of excessive usage of pesticides:

- **Impact on humans:** Exposure to various pesticides can cause short-term health problems (**acute**) like nausea, diarrhoea, dizziness, breathing problems, etc. as well as long-term diseases (**chronic**) birth defects, cancers, neurological harm, reproductive harm, etc.
- **Impact on environment:** Excessive use can be toxic to a host of other organisms including birds, fish, beneficial insects, and non-target plants. This is one of the major causes of the world-wide decline in honeybee population- affecting the pollination process that is vital for the agricultural sector.
- **Water contamination:** Pesticides can reach surface water through runoff from treated plants and soil. Once groundwater is polluted with toxic chemicals, it may take many years for the contamination to dissipate or be cleaned up.
- **Effect on soil fertility:** They persist for a long time in the soil and atmosphere and influence various biotic and abiotic factors. eg: certain pesticides are known to impede the nitrogen fixing function of soil bacteria.

Measures to control it:

- **Using technology:**
 - Mobile technology can be roped in to develop a multi-purpose **Pesticide Prescription and Transaction System** (PPTS). It will also provide information about hazards and help to limit the selling of illegal and non-genuine pesticides.
 - **Geographical information systems** (GIS), **global positioning systems** (GPS), and various sensors, can be used to decrease risks for environmental pollution and to enhance economic benefits stemming from the reduction in the use of pesticides.
- **Alternate business model:** The business model of the farm chemical input industry must transform to become a service industry.
- **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.

Pesticides can help farmers to create economic gain, but interventions are needed to reduce the extent of pesticide overuse to protect farm workers, consumers and the environment as well as to reduce unnecessary farm expenses on inputs.

Q.44) Comment on the need for Public-private partnerships in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) concerning sanitation.

Indian Express

Introduction: Contextual introduction.

Body: Explain some benefits of Public-private partnerships in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) concerning sanitation.

Conclusion: Write a way forward.

Public-private partnerships involve collaboration between a government agency and a private-sector company that can be used to finance, build, and operate projects. **Sustainable Development Goal 6.2** targets to achieve access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all. The second phase of the **Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM)** targets will be achieved through the help of technology and private sector engagement.

Need for Public-private partnerships in achieving SDG6.2:

- **Infrastructure-intensive sector:** There is need of massive investment in chronically **under-funded and inefficient** sanitation sector. Public-private partnerships (PPPs) can be a mechanism to help governments fund much needed investment and bring **technology and efficiency** that can improve the performance and financial sustainability of the water sector.
- **Inclusive sanitation:** PPPs help 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. E.g. **Lighthouse Initiative (LHI)** by the Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation as part of the Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav.
- **Multi-stakeholder platform:** These stakeholders include the private sector, government, financial institutions, civil society groups, media, donors, etc. E.g. in **India Sanitation Coalition (ISC)**, corporates such as ITC, Jindal Steel and Power, etc. have come forward for collaboration.
- PPPs enable the public sector to **profit** by financial, business and other types of knowledge and skills and an **innovative entrepreneurial approach** in project implementation and management.
- **Small scale private operators** are becoming more and more commonplace in developing countries, with many donor-sponsored sanitation PPP projects **for rural and peri-urban areas** having been successfully implemented and scaled up, with new local operators emerging.

One of the main challenges in introducing PPPs in sanitation lies in the proper definition of structures and 'rules for the game' for all actors. So, roles and responsibilities must be assigned and regulatory mechanisms must be established from the outset. Moreover, for a successful PPP the **involvement of civil society** is imperative.