



Mains Marathon
Compilation

3rd to 8th October, 2022

Mains Marathon Compilation for the Month of October, (First Week) 2022

- 1. Throw light on the performance of India and the world in achieving Sustainable Development Goals. What more needs to be done to achieve SDG goals on time?**
- 2. Discuss the significance of the recent Supreme Court's judgment that gives equal abortion access to all women.**
- 3. Do you think that India should make efforts in the repatriation of Artwork or artifacts. What are the hurdles India is facing in repatriation?**
- 4. Throw light on the lessons that India can learn from East Asian governments in developing the domestic Chip manufacturing industry.**
- 5. Discuss the rationale behind and implications of the Election Commission's proposal on freebies by political parties.**
- 6. How do a Governor's constitutional powers to assent to a state bill affect the constitutional order? What steps are required to rectify the issues in the process?**
- 7. The present CSR framework required to be strengthened to make it more suitable for the present Social, Environmental and other requirements of India. Discuss.**
- 8. Highlight the concerns associated with Rice exports. What are the factors that are aggravating the issues associated with Rice cultivation in India?**
- 9. There are no poor people, only people in poor places. Discuss. Also, highlight the policy challenges that are keeping certain areas poor in India.**
- 10. Given the current trends in alcohol consumption, the early temperance lessons along with our struggle against an imperial state remain relevant today. Comment. Also bring in the light, the factors behind increasing alcohol consumption in India.**

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Q.1) Throw light on the performance of India and the world in achieving Sustainable Development Goals. What more needs to be done to achieve SDG goals on time?

Live Mint

Introduction: Contextual introduction.

Body: Explain performance of India and the world in achieving Sustainable Development Goals. Also write some measures to achieve SDG goals on time.

Conclusion: Write a way forward.

Sustainable Development Goals is a group of **17 goals with 169 targets** and 304 indicators to be achieved by 2030. SDGs are the outcome of the Rio+20 conference (2012) and is a non-binding document. All the countries which are members of the UN agreed to work upon for the better future of the country.

According to **Sustainable Development Report, 2022** by Sustainable Development Solutions Network (**SDSN**), performance of India is as follows:

- India's Rank has **slipped** for the third consecutive year. It has been ranked 121 out of the 163 countries in 2022. India ranked 117 in 2020 and 120 in 2021.
- India is not placed well to achieve the SDG goals and its **preparedness has worsened** over the years in comparison with other countries.
- The country continues to face major challenges in achieving 11 of the 17 SDGs. For instance, SDG 2 on ending hunger, SDG 3 on good health and well-being and SDG 6 on clean water and sanitation.
- Further, ensuring decent work (SDG 8) has become even more challenging.
- However, India is **on track to achieving SDG 13** on climate action.

According to UN SDGs report 2022" performance of world: is:

- **Electricity:** Around 91% of the world population gained access to electricity, leaving 733 million people in the dark in 2020 compared to 1.2 billion in 2010.
- **Clean Water and Sanitation:** the proportion of the global population using safely managed drinking water services increased from 70% in 2015 to 74% in 2020.
- Moreover, over the same period, the population **practising open defecation decreased** by a third, from 739 million people to 494 million. Hence, the world is on track to eliminate open defecation by 2030.
- Rising global temperatures continue unabated leading to more extreme weather events around the world and that energy-related emissions have increased 6% in 2021 reaching the highest level ever.

What more needs to be done?

- **Use resources effectively:** Economic cost-benefit analysis can help identify policies where few resources can help a lot and highlight where even very larger sources achieve little.
- **Localising SDG:** Allows developing local solutions and enable each level to play its role.
- **Infrastructure:** There is need to invest in **new, resilient infrastructure** or retrofit existing to make it more sustainable.

Technological democratization, sustainable infrastructure development, and behavioural change will help us restore ecosystems and mitigate the risks posed by climate change in the coming decade. India's efforts to achieve SDGs will aid India in mitigating Climate change.

Q.2) Discuss the significance of the recent Supreme Court's judgment that gives equal abortion access to all women.

Indian Express

Introduction: Contextual introduction.

Body: Write some significance of the recent Supreme Court's judgment that gives equal abortion access to all women. Also write some issues with it.

Conclusion: Write a way forward.

In a significant ruling on reproductive rights, the Supreme Court recently ruled that **all women, regardless of their marital status** are entitled to safe and legal abortion till 24 weeks of pregnancy. It has ruled over a 51-year-old abortion law (**The Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act of 1971**) which bars unmarried women from terminating pregnancies which are up to 24-weeks old.

Significance of this judgment:

- It upheld the **right of reproductive autonomy, dignity and privacy under Article 21** of all women and girls to make reproductive choices for themselves.
- It addresses the hurdles faced by **minor girls** in accessing abortion, due to the provision of mandatory reporting.
- The Court also addressed sexual violence within marriage and **recognised marital rape** as a condition for abortion up to 24 weeks.
- Now abortion rights under MTP Act are also available to **cis-gender women**.
- Access to abortion is critically tied to preserving and upholding the human rights of pregnant women, girls, and others, and hence to attaining **social and gender justice**.
- Legalisation of abortions will also **discourage the illegal practice of abortions** done through untrained, unauthorised paramedics which are hazardous for the health and future fertility of the child bearer.
- If women with unwanted pregnancies are forced to carry their pregnancies because of legal constraints, it would affect the generations that are going to come.

Issues:

- This could be used by unscrupulous women to harass their husbands.
- The women outside marriages and in poor families are left with no choice but to use unsafe or illegal ways to abort unwanted pregnancies.
- There is concern many that it may be a precursor to the court finally criminalising marital rape.

At a time when sexual and reproductive health and rights are under threat globally, this progressive judgment stands out as a ray of hope. As unsafe abortions remain a major cause of maternal mortality, it is a significant verdict that advances the cause of safe abortion services.

Q.3) Do you think that India should make efforts in the repatriation of Artwork or artifacts. What are the hurdles India is facing in repatriation?

Times of India

Introduction: Contextual introduction.

Body: Explain why India should make efforts in the repatriation of Artwork. Also write some arguments against reparations and hurdles India is facing in repatriation.

Conclusion: Write a way forward.

India's historical artefacts are a treasure-trove of a rich cultural legacy and religious significance. In the past, many of valuable antiquities, artefacts and sculptures have been

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stolen from India and are sold in foreign countries. Repatriation is the return of stolen or looted cultural materials to their countries of origin.

Make efforts in the repatriation of artefacts:

- **International customary law:** The obligation to provide reparations arises when a violation of international law takes place.
- **To bridge the gap** between the developed and developing world therefore, reparations, whether symbolic, monetary, or otherwise, are much overdue.
- It is morally correct, and **reflects basic property laws**, that stolen or looted property should be returned to its rightful owner.
- Cultural objects belong together with the cultures that created them; these objects are a crucial **part of contemporary cultural and political identity**.

Arguments against reparations:

- Colonisation was a legal and common practices at the time, partly because of empire, all cultures are involved in one another; none is single and pure.
- Returning cultural objects which were obtained under colonial regimes to their countries of origin does **not make up for the destruction** of colonialism.
- Source countries do not have **adequate facilities or personnel** (because of poverty etc) to receive repatriated materials so objects are safer where they are now.
- Most objects at the time of their acquisition were **legally obtained** and therefore have no reason to be repatriated.

Hurdles India is facing in repatriation:

- There are **no established processes** to take back artefacts and some experts claim Indian authorities do not take care of such items properly.
- **Heritage theft** also remains a rampant problem. Poverty in the country fuels the theft of antiquities.
- Indian government's **standards for safekeeping heritage assets** are not up to the mark.
- **ASI has no policy for management of antiquities**. Storage conditions of these antiquities in monuments like Safdarjung's Tomb and Purana Qila are pathetic.

Initiatives like **India Pride Project** are a welcoming step in protecting Indian antiquities that has been instrumental in the repatriation of several works of incalculable archaeological and aesthetic value.

Q.4) Throw light on the lessons that India can learn from East Asian governments in developing the domestic Chip manufacturing industry.

Live Mint

Introduction: Contextual introduction.

Body: Write some lessons that India can learn from East Asian governments in developing the domestic Chip manufacturing industry.

Conclusion: Write a way forward.

Semiconductor foundries are the world's most expensive factories, accounting for 65% of industry capital expenditure but only 25% of the value addition. . The industry is dominated by the USA, Taiwan, South Korea, Japan, and the Netherlands. The USA leads in design of chips, but it is **Taiwan** that has over **70% market share in chip manufacturing**.

Following lessons India can learn from East Asian governments in developing the domestic Chip manufacturing industry:

- **Government intervention:** in the form of promoting research, facilitating cooperation and industry linkages. Like public sector research and development institutes such as

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Industrial Technology Research Institute (ITRI) in Taiwan, and the government coordination and encouragement of investment in the early stages as in South Korea.

- **Foundry model:** In this, manufacturers do not design their own chips (or establish their own brands), but acted only as outsourced manufacturers for chips designed elsewhere. This may incentivize chip companies to outsource manufacturing to India.
- **Performance evaluation:** For this, set the goals for companies, ration the finance, discipline poor performers with financial stringency and reward good performers with financial largesse.
- **Purchase of process technology:** from advanced firms to bring expertise through the hiring of engineers, the licensing of product designs and offering in exchange either cash or fabrication capacity, or second sourcing and OEM contracts for the established players.
- **Financial support:** Investments in major semiconductor fabrication activities should be financed almost entirely by the companies themselves from external loans, government credit agencies or, from cross-investment by one part of the business group in another.

Areas like stable power, large quantities of pure water and land, are state subjects, and it will be up to state governments to create the right climate for easy implementation of semiconductor projects. Securing Chip industries is a necessity for India if it has ambitions of becoming a big global hub for manufacturing and technology innovation in the future.

Q.5) Discuss the rationale behind and implications of the Election Commission's proposal on freebies by political parties.

[Indian Express](#), [TOI](#)

Introduction: Contextual introduction.

Body: Explain the rationale behind the Election Commission's proposal on freebies by political parties. Also write its implications.

Conclusion: Write a way forward.

Recently, ECI said it plans to make it mandatory for parties to inform voters about the "financial ramifications" of poll promises against well-defined parameters by amending the model code of conduct. It will require political parties to declare the extent of coverage of promises in terms of individuals/households along with expected expenditure. Parties will be expected to provide details regarding all such promises separately. They would also need to show the income source required to fulfil all electoral promises.

Rationale:

- EC's aim to help voters make an **informed choice**.
- To assess the financial **feasibility of implementation of such promises** within the financial space available.
- To seek details on the **ways of revenue generation** for meeting promises and its impact on the Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management Act limits.

Implications:

- States and Union governments also would provide information on the receipts and expenditure, which would bring the government's **fiscal health into the political discourse**.
- It may eventually put the onus of assessment of proformas on the Election Commission, thereby increasing its power.
- There may arise issue of **what constitutes a freebie** and what not as a promise of one political party may be a freebie for another and vice versa.

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- While political parties making an assessment of what their poll promises cost should be a back-of-the-envelope calculation, such assessments would miss out on the costs that every new scheme or welfare measure imposes on the government machinery.

Way forward:

- India needs to have an **institutional mechanism** to control wasteful expenditure.
- Instead of having a blanket policy, the state needs to **identify the beneficiary** of a particular public policy.
- India needs to have a **good tax framework** for more social sector expenditure while also ensuring medium-term debt sustainability.

Q.6) How do a Governor's constitutional powers to assent to a state bill affect the constitutional order? What steps are required to rectify the issues in the process?

The Hindu

Introduction: Contextual introduction.

Body: Explain how a Governor's constitutional powers to assent to a state bill affect the constitutional order. Also write some steps to rectify the issues in the process.

Conclusion: Write a way forward.

The Governor being a part of the State legislature, the process of law making is complete only when he signs it, signifying his assent. There have been many instances of some Governors not acting upon requests to grant clemency or assent to Bills e.g., in Tamil Nādu, Kerala etc. A Governor's constitutional powers to assent to a state bill affect the constitutional order in following manner:

- **Article 200** of the Constitution provides for four alternative courses of action for a Governor when a Bill after being passed by the legislature is presented to him for his assent. Article 200 **does not lay down any time frame** to take action under this Article.
- Governor can **return the Bill to the legislature** with the request that it may reconsider the Bill.
- Governor can **reserve the bill** for consideration of President. Through this centre exercises this power by vetoing or delaying any legislation through President's refusal to assent to state's legislation.
- **Article 361** of the Constitution prohibits the court from initiating proceedings against a Governor or the President for any act done in exercise of their powers.

Some Governors use discretionary powers to control the state governments. So following steps are required to rectify the issues:

- The "**Punchhi commission- 2010**" recommended that there should be a provision for the impeachment of the governor by the state legislature.
- There is a need to **strengthen federal setup** (Inter-State council and the role of Rajya Sabha) in India.
- The appointment can be made from a panel prepared by the state legislature and actual appointing authority should be the Inter-state Council, not the central government.
- '**Code of Conduct**' should lay down certain '**norms and principles**' which should guide the exercise of the governor's 'discretion' and his powers.
- Provisions relating to the Governor's role should be amended to make the following changes:
 - Identifying areas of discretion,
 - fixing a time-frame for them to act,
 - Cabinet advice should be mandatory to act upon in dealing with Bills.

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The governor should work in an impartial manner and should not try to create a parallel government. It is important for maintenance of national interests, integrity and internal security.

Q.7) The present CSR framework required to be strengthened to make it more suitable for the present Social, Environmental and other requirements of India. Discuss.

The Hindu

Introduction: Contextual introduction.

Body: Explain some issues with present CSR framework. Also write some measure to strengthen the CSR framework.

Conclusion: Write a way forward.

Companies Act, 2013 mandates that corporates who are beyond a certain level of profits and turnover, should pay at least 2% of their net profits before tax to the development space. This law gives corporates the necessary drive to collaborate with non-state actors like Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs). This strengthening of citizenry-private partnerships is a major component of development activities.

Issues with present CSR framework:

- Since the requirement of 2% is only a **minimum requirement**, companies should be encouraged to spend more than this.
- Many private companies have **registered their own foundations/trusts** to which they transfer the statutory CSR budgets for utilisation.
- According to the Act, the company should give preference to local areas around it where it operates. So, there occurs **geographical bias** as 54% of CSR companies are concentrated in Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, and Gujarat while Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh receive little.
- Most CSR spending is on education (37%), health and sanitation (29%), and only 9% was spent on the environment.
- The **information** regarding CSR spending by companies is **insufficient** and difficult to access.
- The auditor is not mandated to qualify the accounts for non-compliance or inadequate CSR performance in the audit report.

Measure to strengthen the CSR framework:

- There is a need to curate a **national-level platform** centralised by the MCA where all States could list their potential CSR-admissible projects and preferential treatment to areas where companies operate.
- Companies need to **prioritise environment restoration** in the area where they operate.
- All CSR projects should be selected and implemented with the active **involvement of communities**, district administration and public representatives.
- Bringing CSR within the purview of **statutory financial audit** with details of CSR expenditure and mandatory independent third-party impact assessment audits.
- CSR non-spend, underspend, and overspend should be qualified by the auditor in the audit report as a qualification to accounts.
- The MCA and the line departments need to exercise greater direct **monitoring and supervision** over CSR spend by companies.

With nearly two-thirds of India still living in poverty by today's quality-of-life standards and the climate situation worsening day by day, the importance of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) can't be overestimated.

Q.8) Highlight the concerns associated with Rice exports. What are the factors that are aggravating the issues associated with Rice cultivation in India?

Indian Express

Introduction: Contextual introduction.

Body: Explain some concerns associated with Rice exports. Also write factors that are aggravating the issues associated with Rice cultivation in India.

Conclusion: Write a way forward.

It is **India's largest agricultural crop** (accounting for over 40% of the total foodgrain output). India exports rice to more than 130 countries, constituting around 40 percent of the global rice trade. But India's rice yield is lower than the world average.

Concerns associated with Rice exports:

- The **export uncertainties** affect the credibility of Indian exporters; create a disincentive for future exports, and enables buyers to shift towards other major rice-exporting countries.
- Though Indian farmers in general **lack market access**, and hence do not take advantage of high market prices.
- The fall in prices may adversely affect a section of farmers who hope to get a better price for their produce through exports.
- The exporters who face the burden of the unfeasibility of exports may pass it on to farmers in the form of **lower prices during procurement**.
- Rice exports are leading to **an indirect export of water** to other countries i.e. a virtual water trade (VWT) because the relative per capita water availability in India is lower than a majority of its major importing countries.

The following factors aggravate the issues associated with Rice cultivation in India:

- India's rice production declining significantly because of **deficient monsoon rainfall** in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand and Gangetic West Bengal.
- Yields in Punjab and Haryana turn out lower due to a new virus that has caused "**dwarfing**" of paddy plants in many fields there.
- **Insufficient MSP** realization is reflected in paddy households selling their produce to the APMC reducing from 17 per cent (2013) to 2.7 per cent (2019) because of poor participation of private traders, low infrastructure, unawareness, etc.

Way forward:

- Save water and the input requirements in the form of wider adoption of water-saving practices such as the system of rice intensification (SRI), etc.
- There is need for a **comprehensive rice strategy**, with focus on new systems, technologies and new rice seed varieties.
- Risk **mitigation measures, crop insurance**, price stabilization measures and optimum use of agro-climatic conditions can reduce the dependence on the monsoon.

Q.9) There are no poor people, only people in poor places. Discuss. Also, highlight the policy challenges that are keeping certain areas poor in India.

Indian Express

Introduction: Contextual introduction.

Body: Explain the reason behind people in poor places. Also write some policy challenges that are keeping certain areas poor in India.

Conclusion: Write a way forward.

60% of the poor still reside in the states of Bihar, Jharkhand, Odisha, Madhya Pradesh, Chattisgarh, Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand. The reason for these states to be in the category of the poorest state is because 85% of tribal people live there.

There are no poor people, only people in poor places as the country's massive productivity differences are due to **wage differentials**. These differences are due to-

- **States:** In the next 20 years, six states in South and West India will account for almost 35 per cent of GDP growth but only 5 per cent of population growth because economic complexity breeds higher wages.
- **Cities:** Hyderabad has a higher GDP than Odisha and four times that of J&K. The three pillars of governance- PM, CM, and DM is not effective. District magistrates are unelected, inexperienced, and unempowered to breed well-paying jobs.
- **Sectors:** Software industry employs only 0.8 percent of our labour force but generates 8 percent of GDP, while agriculture has 42 percent of our labour force but only generates 16 percent of GDP. States that increase manufacturing and service jobs will have more high-paying jobs.
- **Firms:** Higher productivity firms provide higher wages with more capital, technology, and meritocracy.
- **Skills:** States with high populations of residents with skills in demand attracts more high-paying jobs. India's problem is not jobs but wages.

Challenges:

- **Agriculture:** a low productivity sector due to lack of improved seeds, fertilizers, and machines like tractors, investors, etc.
- **Human Capital:** The expenditure on education, skill-training, research, and improvement in health is minimal.
- **Technology:** The deficiency of human capital and the absence of skilled labour are major hurdles in spreading technology in the economy. Most enterprises in India are micro or small which cannot afford modern and more productive technologies.
- **Lack of infrastructure:** These include transportation, communication, electricity generation, and distribution, banking and credit facilities, health and educational institutions, etc.
- **Lack of Capital and Entrepreneurship:** The shortage of capital and entrepreneurship results in low level of investment and job creation in the economy.
- **Regional Poverty:** Government should provide special facilities and concessions to attract private capital investment to backward regions. Public sector enterprises should also be set up in backward areas.

State governments must sustainably **create high-paying jobs** by raising the productivity. Public sector should make liberal expenditure to provide at least minimum requirements.

Q.10) Given the current trends in alcohol consumption, the early temperance lessons along with our struggle against an imperial state remain relevant today. Comment. Also bring in the light, the factors behind increasing alcohol consumption in India.

Indian Express , Indian Express 2

Introduction: Contextual introduction.

Body: Write some contemporary relevance of early temperance lessons. Also write some factors behind increasing alcohol consumption in India.

Conclusion: Write a way forward.

According to National Family Health Survey, alcohol consumption among both men and women is **higher in rural India** than in urban India, the. Overall, 1% of women aged 15 and over drink alcohol, compared to 19% of men in the same age group. Alcohol consumption is **more common among Scheduled Tribes** than from any other caste/tribe groups. It is linked with multimorbidity, lower life expectancy, mental impairment, and loss of productivity.

Contemporary relevance of early temperance lessons:

- **Role of state:** Gandhi's objection to the state having a role in the **production and distribution of alcohol**.
- Moreover, Gandhi understood that without wide-spread **self-regulation by individuals**, prohibition would devolve into corrupting attempts at enforcement. **E.g. Bihar** situation after liquor ban.
- C Rajagopalachari also said that the presence **cultural tendency for abstinence** in India would make prohibition less corruptible, relative to other countries.
- The temperance movement, by leveraging these cultural norms, would prepare the ground for more effective state interventions.

Factors behind increasing alcohol consumption in India:

- Older **cultural-religious norms** that encouraged abstinence have **weakened**.
- More people are earning sufficient **income** to purchase it. This has outpaced the efforts to reduce consumption.
- Increased **urbanisation** and an **expanding middle class** are also contributors.
- **Social pressures** are a major contributor to the high prevalence of alcohol consumption in India. Many **social activities** are centred on alcohol and the drink being perceived as a '**social lubricant**'.
- Political dependence on the **revenue** generated by the industry- especially among the states. This was evidenced by how states decided to reopen liquor shops despite a fast-growing pandemic to improve their revenues.
- **Aggressive marketing** by the alcohol industry.
- **Low awareness** about the negative impacts of alcohol on health.
- Sustained messaging about the 'attractions of alcohol consumption' via **movies** and **other TV programs**.

Way forward:

- Reducing alcoholism cannot be achieved using a sudden blanket ban across the country. It needs to be brought in **by phases**.
- **Political will** is a key component in reducing the harmful use of alcohol.
- The policies designed for the purpose must be tailor made for **local circumstances**. It should be **comprehensive** and **inclusive** with clarity in division of responsibilities.