



9 PM

Compilation

14th to 19th November, 2022

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General Studies Paper – 1

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General Studies - 1

1. [How we can make the digital space safer for all, particularly women](#)

Source– The post is based on the article “**How we can make the digital space safer for all, particularly women**” published in The Indian Express on **15th November 2022**.

Syllabus: GS1- Society

News– The article explains the need to focus on safety tools and features across digital platforms

What are the reasons for increasing vulnerability of women in digital space?

India has one of the **youngest youth demographics** in the world and among the most active online. **Increased online interactions** lead to more content which is shared among people. Sometimes, these interactions also make them vulnerable to harm. Women are often particularly vulnerable.

Private pictures of young women are leaked online. Sometimes it is from a hacked account, other times because of a soured relationship.

It should be no surprise that young men and women are exploring new ways to express their sexuality through sharing intimate images. These new social norms have created **new forms of abuse** where women are usually the victims.

What are the reactions to such abuses?

Crimes that disproportionately impact women devolve into **mass panic**. This reaction ends up denying women their freedom and agency by their **so-called “protectors”**. They advise women to go offline, to be ashamed of expressing themselves.

What are the efforts by various stakeholders for online safety of women?

Leading academics are spearheading research around the topic to discuss the evolution of technology-facilitated abuse.

New IT rules have shown concern regarding the safety and security of users, particularly women and children.

With the overhaul of the IT Act, there is an opportunity to discuss in detail the nature of **technology-facilitated abuse**. This could be the start of an era of **evidence-based discussion**.

What is the way forward?

Industry, also, has a role to play. If platform providers could be more responsive to the concerns and experiences of women then, it can help mitigate such issues.

Platforms need to **design choices** that help women stay in control of who they engage with. They should leverage **open source technology** that detects and blurs lewd images so that women don't need to see unsolicited pictures.

We need to focus on **safety tools and features** across the spectrum of websites and apps.

Societal cooperation is needed. **Public discourse** around technology-facilitated abuse has to be elevated

2. [8 billion & falling: India, soon to be the world's most populous country, has a narrow window to encash its demographic dividend](#)

Source: The post is based on an article “**8 billion & falling: India, soon to be the world's most populous country, has a narrow window to encash its demographic dividend**” published in **The Times of India** on **16th November 2022**.

Syllabus: GS 1- Population

Relevance: concerns associated with rising population

News: Global population has reached 8 billion. The world's population has more than doubled over the last six decades, even when developing countries tried to control their population expansion.

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What are the concerns with the rise in population for the world?

Globally, the population is rising but the fact is that there has been **demographic decline** with a **low fertility rate**. It is also expected that **population graying** will be dominant in this century.

What does rising population implies for India?

India is set to become the world's most populous country in the next year.

However, with the increase in population, the **fertility rate** in India has also declined and has dropped below the replacement level. Therefore, the challenge lies with India in using its demographic dividend.

What is the current situation of India and what is the way forward?

The share of the **working age population** peaked at 66% in 2012 globally whereas the working age population in India stood at 70% in 2020. This shows that India's performance compared to the world is not up to the mark.

Research also indicates that in India the economic benefit from the demographic transition has been lower than other Asian countries.

Further, the proportion of the overall working age population in India was at 46% in 2021 while the global average was 59%.

The situation is poorer when it comes to the **employment of women** in India. **World Bank's** data shows that women employment in India is at only 19% compared to a global average of 46%.

Therefore, India needs to employ more women, improve its overall human capital quality by skilling them and come up with the right policy. This will help India to utilize its demographic dividend efficiently.

3. [The inspiration for New India: The unsung martyrs of Mangarh](#)

Source: The post is based on the article "**The inspiration for New India: The unsung martyrs of Mangarh**" published in the **Indian Express** on **17th November**.

Syllabus: GS 1 – The Freedom Struggle — its various stages and important contributors/contributions from different parts of the country.

Relevance: About the Mangarh Massacre and relevance of tribal movements.

News: On November 17, 1913, Mangarh Massacre or Adivasi Jallianwala have occurred.

What is Mangarh Massacre, and who is Govind Guru?

Read here: [Mangarh Massacre: Rajasthan's Jallianwala Bagh: A lost story](#)

Govind Guru demanded that the colonial state should reduce the revenue rate during famines and stop encroaching on the religious freedom of tribal communities and harming their culture. How government is showcasing tribal movements?

-**Mangarh Dham** will be developed as a joint project of the governments of Rajasthan, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra. It will be a national memorial showcasing tribal legacy and their rich cultural heritage.

-The government is already setting up **tribal museums in 10 states** — Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Mizoram, MP, Chattisgarh, Jharkhand, Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh, Goa and Kerala — to raise awareness about the sacrifices made by tribals during the freedom struggle.

What is the relevance of tribal movements in the country?

After 75 years of Independence, Prime Minister gave a call for **Amrit Kaal's "Panch Pran"**. This involves removing traces of the colonial mindset, taking pride in our roots, inculcating unity and a sense of duty and improving the well-being of the nation. The role of tribal communities during the freedom struggle and nation-building inspires this endeavour.

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The environment-friendly lifestyle of tribal communities and their zeal to protect nature offer valuable lessons to people from the elite class and developed countries.

How did tribal movements help India to achieve social justice?

India's growth story was incomplete when the tribals were left behind. Droupadi Murmu taking over as the President of India is a landmark in the country's history. At present, the Union Council of Ministers has eight tribal ministers.

The pro-poor welfare policies, people-centric measures, Eklavya Model residential schools, scholarship schemes for students and health schemes of the government have imparted a new meaning to the idea of social justice.

4. [‘The Chinese are planning a series of Himalayan dams of such worrying scale that they must be halted’](#)

Source: The post is based on the article **“The Chinese are planning a series of Himalayan dams of such worrying scale that they must be halted”** published in **The Times of India** on **17th November**.

Syllabus: GS 1 – Geographical features and their location changes in critical geographical features.

Relevance: About the features of the Himalayas.

News: John Keay has written about the mountain range since the 1960s. Recently, he has written a book titled 'Himalaya: Exploring the Roof of the World'.

What are the major highlights of his book on the Himalayas?

-In Tibetan mythology, the great peaks are persons, or rather they are deities. They constitute a society of gods who commune, fight and even mate among themselves.

Himalayan mountain pilgrimage: From Nanga Parbat in the West to Mount Kailas and Tsari in Tibet, Hindus, Buddhists and even Muslims go around the sacred peaks seeking intercession, merit and guidance.

Local communities know how to coexist: The technologies locals favour are best suited to their physical circumstances, like micro hydro projects and the frozen water towers being trialled in Ladakh.

They pioneered **glaciculture** in the Karakoram of Gilgit-Baltistan. Under it, farmers dependent on glacier melt have learnt how to seed new glaciers by artificial insemination.

Chinese dams need to be stopped: In Pemako in SE Tibet, the Chinese are planning a series of dams which will divert the waters of the Tsangpo-Brahmaputra from Assam to northern China. These can produce three times the electrical output of Yangtze's Three Gorges Dam.

Similar scale dams are being built on the Indus near Chilas where “an average of 300 earthquakes in a single month” is reported. However, vital to “development”, these projects have to be stopped to protect the environment.

General

Studies

Paper – 2

General Studies - 2

1. [Why China's dominance of electric vehicle supply chain must be countered](#)

Source– The post is based on the article “**Why China's Dominance of electric vehicle supply chain must be countered**” published in The Indian Express on **14th November 2022**.

Syllabus: GS2- International Relations

Relevance: Groundwater conservation related

News– The article explains that it is too risky and expensive for India to be dependent on imports across the energy transition board, particularly EVs.

What are the concerns in energy transition?

There are issues related to the **supply chain** for electric vehicles.

The **assertive behaviour** by China across the Taiwan Straits acts may create challenges. The risk may be even more acute because of a troubled relationship with China.

Supply chain is highly concentrated in China.

What are some facts related to China's dominance in various stages involved in the supply chain of Electric Vehicles.

According to a recent report by the International Energy Association, every part of the EV supply chain is **highly concentrated, mostly in China**.

As the **first stage** of the supply chain are the key minerals required for batteries, namely **lithium, nickel, cobalt and graphite**.

China has an 80 per cent share of global mining output in graphite. In cobalt, the politically highly unstable Democratic Republic of Congo mines two-thirds of the global supply and Chinese companies control a big share of that country's mining.

The **second stage of the supply chain** is the **processing of ore** into metal.

Globally, over 60% of lithium processing, over 70% of cobalt processing, 80% of graphite processing and about 40% of nickel processing takes place in China.

The **third stage** is **cell components** where China produces two-thirds of global anodes and three-fourths of cathodes. The only other producing countries of note are South Korea and Japan. After that come battery cells, where China has a 70% share.

Finally, in EVs themselves, China has a share of around 50 per cent in global production. Europe is a distant second with 25 per cent. India does not feature as a player of note.

What are facts related to investment in energy transition across the world?

China is now the biggest spender on climate and energy transition. According to a **report by Bloomberg's New Energy Fund (NEF), in 2021**, total global investment in climate transition is \$750 billion. China alone spent \$266 billion.

The US was a distant second with **\$114 billion**.

India was at **7th place with \$14 billion invested**.

Almost 40% of Chinese and US spending was on EVs. In the case of India, more than 95 per cent of India's spending is on renewable energy. In Europe, about 75-80 per cent of the spending is on EVs, which is why it leads the US in this sector.

In India, despite intent, EVs have not received sufficient investment.

What is the way forward?

A two-pronged strategy is needed.

First, on the minerals and materials. India has been slow at acquiring overseas mines of these critical minerals.

The government focus is upon PSUs. **An alternate option** is to liberalise exploration policies domestically, benchmark them with global best practices and invite global investors to find and mine in India.

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It is important to have **supply alliances** with countries ex-China, as has been done with Australia. There is a need for much investment in the higher end of the supply chain.

A public-private partnership is vital. The vibrant startup ecosystem must be leveraged because it is more likely to be innovative than legacy firms.

2. [Mutual benefit: On India-U.S. cooperation on trade](#)

Source– The post is based on the article “**Mutual benefit: On India-U.S. cooperation on trade**” published in **The Hindu** on **15th November 2022**.

Syllabus: GS2- International relations

Relevance: India-US relations

News- The article explains the Indo-US trade and economic ties.

Why does the US and India want strong trade and economic ties?

The US and India both have shared interest in strengthening the **global supply chain**. Trade has been used as a **geopolitical weapon** by some states.

There has been dominance of some states in the supply chain of certain products. For example, China is dominating solar panel.

What are challenges in Indo-US trade ties?

The Trump administration decided to withdraw **duty-free access** to Indian exporters under the **Generalised System of Preferences**. The U.S. is still to reinstate the GSP benefit and exporters on both sides still face challenges.

The International Trade Administration of the U.S. notes in its investment climate summary on India that new **protectionist measures** restricted the expansion in bilateral trade and investment. These measures include strict enforcement and potential expansion of **data localisation measures**, increased tariffs and **Indian-specific standards** not aligned with international standards.

The US decided to put India back on the US treasury “**monitoring list**” over its currency practices in 2020.

3. [Question of intent: Why Supreme Court didn't find Rajiv Gandhi assassination case convicts guilty of terror](#)

Source: The post is based on an article “**Question of intent: Why Supreme Court didn't find Rajiv Gandhi assassination case convicts guilty of terror**” published in **The Indian Express** on **15th November 2022**.

Syllabus: GS 2- Governance

Relevance: SC judgment in the Rajiv Gandhi assassination case

News: The Supreme Court (SC) has recently released all the seven convicts in the Rajiv Gandhi assassination case.

This has created controversies. Therefore, there is a need to look at the **SC's 1999 judgment** in which it said that the killing by the LTTE was not a terrorist act.

What was the judgment of SC in 1999?

The matter came to the SC in 1998 after the **TADA court** sentenced all 26 accused to death. Judges looking at the case had different views and gave separate judgements.

However, all three judges were of the view that crime only attracted relevant sections of the **IPC-murder (302) and conspiracy (120-B)**. Provision of TADA could not be applied.

Section 3(1) of TADA says that anyone who commits act using explosives that could cause death or damage with intent to

- **overawe the government** or

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- to strike terror in any section of the people or
- to alienate any section of the people or
- to affect the harmony amongst different sections of the people,

commits a terrorist act.

The court said that the intent under this section was important and the current case does not signify that assassination was done with any of these four intents.

The court quoted the speech of the **LTTE leader** which said that they were not against India or the Indian people. They were only against the former leadership in India who was against the **Tamil liberation struggle** and the LTTE.

Therefore, the court ruled that the intent under Section 3(1) of TADA is not applicable in this case.

The court also ruled out **Section 4 of TADA** that says killing a person bound by oath under the Constitution to uphold the sovereignty and integrity of India or any public servant was deemed a disruptive activity.

The court ruled that this section was also not applicable as Parliament was dissolved months earlier to the assassination and Rajiv Gandhi was not a person bound by oath as an MP.

Therefore, the court ruled that the convicts did not have any intention to overawe the government or strike terror to the people of India. Thus, only IPC sections of murder and conspiracy can be applied to the seven convicts who were guilty.

4. [The foundation of tribal uplift policies is education: Union minister of tribal affairs writes on the occasion of Janjatiya Gaurav Divas](#)

Source: The post is based on an article **“The foundation of tribal uplift policies is education: Union minister of tribal affairs writes on the occasion of Janjatiya Gaurav Divas”** published in **The Times of India** on **15th November 2022**.

Syllabus: GS 2- Social Justice

Relevance: tribals conditions in India

News: The Government has declared to celebrate the birth anniversary of **Bhagwan Birsa Munda as Janjatiya Gaurav Divas** on 15th November every year.

This decision will help in strengthening the tribal legacy, heritage, culture and achievements of India.

What is the present situation of tribals in India?

India is home to about **25% of the world's ethnic population**, making it a country with a diversified cultural heritage and a large number of youthful tribal people.

These tribes are utilising the opportunity in the field of education, sports and they are also winning Padma Awards along with international recognition.

Further, the appointment of the **nation's first tribal President** (President Droupadi Murmu) shows that there is huge potential for the nation's Scheduled Tribes.

The government is also committed and adopted a **people-centric approach** towards the betterment of the tribal people in India.

The PM's call for **Reform, Perform, Transform** has served as the guiding principle to ensure the last-mile distribution of benefits and to improve the nation's overall development.

The most important tool for development is **holistic education** as advocated by our PM.

Why is education necessary and what are ways adopted by the government for the betterment of tribals?

Education is necessary to bring transformation in the tribals, in bringing reforms and in having a successful future.

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Education is necessary in tribals especially in young girls as **left-wing extremism** has made it challenging to establish educational infrastructure in the affected areas.

Further, the goal of the government is to address these problems at the block level, provide tribal students with quality education through **Eklavya Model Residential Schools** and to take advantage of the scholarship programmes.

The tribal development programmes focus on empowering tribal people digitally and upskilling them to produce and sell their manufactured goods. NGOs and other organisations are also taking efforts in the advancement of the tribal people.

The Ministry of Tribal Affairs under the **Vision for India@2047** has prioritised sustainable livelihoods, income generation, education, health and the promotion of varied ethnic cultures of tribal people. This has helped tribals to get integrated in the society. This ministry is also attempting to preserve several tribal languages.

5. [G20 Summit: What's at stake?](#)

Source: The post is based on the following articles

“Making G20 relevant: The body works best when it makes an enabling global economic environment its focus. India should take note” published in **The Times of India** on **15th November 2022**.

“G20 Summit: What's at stake?” published in the **Indian Express** on **15th November 2022**.

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

Relevance: About the performance of G20 in the past and present.

News: A two-day G 20 summit meeting will commence in Bali, Indonesia. This is the 17th annual summit. At the end of this meeting, India will assume charge of the G20 presidency.

Why India's G20 presidency is significant?

Read here: [Heading the G20 and New Delhi's choices](#)

How effective was the performance of G20 in the past?

It was formed in 1999 in the wake of the Asian financial crisis. Its major achievements include, **Role in Financial crisis:** The G20 was most effective in 2008 and 2009. As its coordinated policymaking mitigated the economic fallout of the financial crisis. Further, G20 also laid the platform for subsequent agreements on sharing tax data to curb tax evasion.

Expansion of G20's ambit: Since 2008, the core goal of improving the economic policy environment has expanded to tackling climate change and terrorism, among other things.

Dismantled protectionism: It was perhaps the single most important reason that more than 1 billion people globally escaped extreme poverty in the three decades before Covid.

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

Why did the performance of G20 reduce at present?

Global growth and the promise of globalisation of G20 have received a severe setback ever since the pandemic. This is because,

Output losses due to Covid: Most of the G20 constituent countries have suffered significant output losses since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic. For instance, India would have lost almost 14% of its total output — the highest loss among all G20 countries.

Russia's invasion of Ukraine and sanctions against Russia by West has not only created massive geopolitical uncertainty but also spiked global inflation due to supply chain bottlenecks and curbs

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Impact of Central Bank's decision: To control high inflation, central banks across countries have raised interest rates. This in turn has dampened economic activity. For example, the US and the UK are set to face a recession.

A slowdown in China: China, one of the major engines for global growth, is witnessing a sharp slowdown as it struggles with a real estate crisis.

Geopolitical rifts: Such as **a)** Tensions between the US and China, the two biggest economies in the world, **b)** The decline in trade between the UK and the euro area in the wake of the Brexit decision.

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

What should be done to improve the performance of G20?

Requires joint action: G20 countries can grow faster if they grow together. For growing together, they require peace. So, in the present summit, the leaders have to **a)** Find common ground such as multilateral action on climate, debt, taxation, and pandemic preparedness, etc., **b)** Secure peace in Ukraine and prevent further fragmentation, and **c)** Rule out the differences in the policy landscape.

Contain raging inflation: According to the IMF, “the overarching priority for policymakers in most economies is to ensure price stability while bringing down debt levels and protecting the most vulnerable”.

So, the G20 countries have to **a)** Contain inflation, **b)** Find ways to help the vulnerable without increasing the debt levels, **c)** Ensure proper monitoring of external risks.

6. [Forced transmission-New guidelines for satellite channels leave wide scope for interpretation](#)

Source: The post is based on the article “**Forced transmission-New guidelines for satellite channels leave wide scope for interpretation**” published in the **Business Standard** on **15th November 2022**.

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

Relevance: About the concerns associated with mandatorily broadcasting content.

News: Recently, the Union Cabinet has approved the “Guidelines for Uplinking and Downlinking of Television Channels in India, 2022”. Under this, the channels would have to mandatorily broadcast content on themes of national importance and socially relevant issues for at least 30 minutes every day.

What are the key provisions of the guidelines?

Read here: [Centre devises new guidelines for TV channels; broadcast of socially relevant topics compulsory](#)

What are the concerns associated with mandatorily broadcasting content?

The issue with the notion of “public property”: The government considers that airwave resources are theoretically owned by the people of India. But, access to them does not come for free.

Broadcasters pay a licence fee (plus a processing fee for live events). Hence, this transfers ownership for the duration of the contract and confers some degree of independence on the broadcaster.

Government has a better alternative: Private broadcasters might not be willing to sacrifice half an hour's revenue every day to cover “themes of national importance” when the government has a large broadcaster (Doordarshan) at its disposal to do just this.

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Doordarshan has both terrestrial and satellite feeds, plus regional channels that cover pretty much the whole population of India. So, Doordarshan has a far better reach than any private satellite channel.

Challenge in monitoring: The government has said it will monitor channels to ensure they are broadcasting content on themes of national importance. At present, India has around 800-odd channels. So, government monitoring might result in a certain degree of cherry-picking.

Guidelines open for interpretation: These guidelines are opaque and open for interpretation since “national importance and social relevance” and “national interest” can easily lie in the eyes of the beholder.

Further, the guidelines add that “channels shall comply” with these recommendations. Such assertions are unlikely to ease operational conditions.

Read more: [Content slot: On guidelines for television channels](#)

7. [Undermining federalism, eroding States' autonomy](#)

Source- The post is based on the article “**Undermining federalism, eroding States' autonomy**” published in **The Hindu** on **16th November 2022**.

Syllabus: GS2- Issues and challenges pertaining to federal structure

Relevance: Cooperative federalism

News- The article explains the challenges to **cooperative federalism** in the present government. When the NDA government came into power in 2014, there was hope that India would move towards cooperative federalism. NITI Aayog replaced the Planning Commission of India with the main objective of promoting cooperative federalism.

But no steps have been taken to promote **cooperative federalism** by NITI Aayog.

Which instances show that the Union government has not followed the spirit of cooperative federalism?

Finance Commission recommendations- The Fifteenth Finance Commission, in its first report, had recommended a special grant to three States amounting to ₹6,764 crore. It was to ensure that the **tax devolution** in 2020-21 in absolute terms should not be less than the amount of devolution received by these States in 2019-20. This recommendation was not accepted by the Union Government.

A similar approach has been followed by the Union Government with regard to grants to States recommended by the Finance Commission for the period 2021-26.

This clearly demonstrates that the Union Government has undermined the stature of the institution of the Finance Commission and **cooperative federalism**.

Off-budget borrowings- The decision to treat **off-Budget borrowings** from 2021-22 onwards serviced from the State budgets as States' borrowings and adjusting them against borrowing limits under **FRBM** in 2022-23 and following years. It is against all norms.

The Government of India has indicated that such a decision is in accordance with the recommendation of the Finance Commission. In fact, there is no recommendation to this effect by the Fifteenth Finance Commission.

The borrowings by corporations against State guarantees are mostly used for **capital investment**. The Centre has also been raising off-Budget borrowings but mainly for meeting **revenue expenditure**. The **CAG Report** on the Compliance of FRBM Act for 2017-18 and 2018-19 pointed out as many as eight instances of meeting revenue expenditure through Extra Budgetary Resources.

Cesses and surcharges- The NDA government has been resorting to the levy of cesses and surcharges. These are not shareable with the States under the Constitution.

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The share of cesses and surcharges in the gross tax revenue of the Centre increased from 13.5% in 2014-15 to 20% in the Budget estimates for 2022-23.

Centrally sponsored schemes– Many committees of government have recommended the need to curtail the number of centrally sponsored schemes.

The Government of India has grouped them under certain broad umbrella heads. In 2015, the Centre increased the States' share in a number of CSS. It has burdened the States. They have lost their autonomy in this process.

Encroaching state powers– The Centre has enacted three farm laws though agriculture is a subject listed in the **State List under the Constitution**. Though these Acts have been repealed, their enactment is against the **spirit of the Constitution**. States were not even consulted while introducing these Bills.

8. [On religious conversion, Supreme Court must set the bar high, remain mindful of danger of spectre-mongering on a fraught issue](#)

Source: The post is based on an article **“On religious conversion, Supreme Court must set the bar high, remain mindful of danger of spectre-mongering on a fraught issue”** published in **The Indian Express** on 16th November 2022.

Syllabus: GS 2- Governance

Relevance: concerns associated with forceful religious conversions

News: The Supreme Court has said that forced religious conversions are very dangerous and may affect the security of the nation as well as the freedom of religion and conscience of the citizens.

It has directed the centre to step in and inform measures that can be taken by the Union government to stop such conversions.

How are religious conversions being carried out?

Missionary activities in tribal areas and **inter-religious marriages** are the two major factors of the conversions.

In the case of inter-religious marriages, the law now requires that the bride and groom should seek permission before marriage from the district magistrate.

If the case is of forceful conversion, the burden lies on the groom and his family and they have to disprove the charges to the authorities.

What are the present laws regarding religious conversions?

Article 25 of the Constitution says “all persons are equally entitled to freedom of conscience and the right freely to profess, practise and propagate religion”.

Even though, almost 10 states have brought **anti-conversion laws**. They claim that legal safeguards including IPC provisions have failed to stop religious conversions through coercion, intimidation, etc.

However, using these means is not a solution and action against forceful conversion should be taken in such a way that it does not interfere with fundamental freedoms.

What are the concerns associated with religious conversions?

Religious conversions, especially forceful, have political implications and they are used as weapons by political parties in India which ultimately harms the society. Therefore, a judicial and wise intervention is required to address the issue.

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9. [Ukraine imbroglio can give the Global South a chance to claim a place at the high table of global diplomacy](#)

Source– The post is based on the article “**Ukraine imbroglio can give the Global South a chance to claim a place at the high table of global diplomacy**” published in **The Indian Express** on **16th November 2022**.

Syllabus: GS2- International relations

Relevance: Russia and Ukraine war

News- The article explains the events and reasons for prolonged conflict between Russia and Ukraine. It also explains the position of India and scope for the global south to have negotiated a solution of the conflict.

What are some facts related to war?

War between Russia and Ukraine is still going on. There are no prospects for **global diplomacy** to end the war.

There seems less chance of victory of one side over another or **negotiated solution**.

On eastern front, Ukraine has succeeded in pushing Russia back. But, **new fronts** are opening at sea, in air, cyber space and in random bombardment of targets far away from the actual fighting.

The Security Council stays paralysed. Its Resolutions on the Ukraine war are vetoed by major powers.

What are the objectives of both parties in the war?

Objectives of the belligerents keep evolving as the war unfolds. The initial objective of Russia was to neutralise Ukraine and make it a buffer between NATO and its own territory, and protect the interests of the Russian minorities of Ukraine. It has now evolved into **territorial annexation**. Ukrainian objectives are total defeat of Russia, war reparations to be paid by it and regime change in Moscow.

The two objectives are totally **incompatible**.

Why has war in Ukraine become protracted?

The reasons for prolonged war are **strategic depth** of the belligerents, **diffuse targets**, **incompatible war objectives**, and the induction of third parties with a stake in keeping hostilities alive.

The additional factor that is responsible for prolonging conflict is the **nuclear option**, available to both sides. This has created a **balance of terror**.

What are the impacts of war?

Vast sums of tax-payers money are being diverted into the **military-industrial complex** and proxy war of NATO.

There is a steep rise in prices of essential commodities. Inflation has hit all across the globe but its impact is asymmetric. The poor suffer relatively more.

It has created **refugee problem**. There are 6 million Ukrainian refugees spread over Europe.

What is the Indian position on war?

The Indian position has been consistent. It is asking for an immediate **cessation of hostilities** and the start of negotiations. India has reiterated the country’s commitment to **global governance**. It has struck a **delicate balance** between the belligerents.

Modi message to Russian President Vladimir Putin that “**now is not the era for war**” and his call for immediate cessation of hostilities at the G20 reiterate the Indian position.

India’s neutrality in western capitals is perceived as a pursuit of its narrow **self-interest rather than a serious global policy option**.

What is the scope for the global south to end the conflict?

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The protracted war in Ukraine has provided the Global South an opportunity to claim a place at the high table of **global diplomacy**.

An initiative by the South, possibly led by Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, working jointly with Turkey, and with the implicit support of India and China, can offer to broker a deal. It can be operated through the United Nations General Assembly.

10. [What the burden of the heavy school bag reveals](#)

Source– The post is based on the article “**What the burden of the heavy school bag reveals**” published in **The Indian Express** on **17th November 2022**.

Syllabus: GS2- Issues related to development and management of education

Relevance: Reforms educational system

News- The article explains the issue related to the educational system.

What is the situation of schools after the pandemic?

Things have changed a lot in schools after the pandemic. Sanitisers and masks have become a part of a child’s life.

They also carry heavy bags which causes **mental and physical burden**.

It puts unnecessary **pressure on a child’s health**.

What are the concerns associated with this issue?

The thinking of all the schools and teachers continues to remain that maximum education can be obtained only by carrying more books.

Instead of finding new ways of teaching and learning, schools and teachers are paying more attention to **technical and materialistic things** like apps, books and bags.

The **National Council for Teacher Training (NCTE)**, under the central government, has the task of setting the minimum qualifications for teachers, preparing curriculum and facilitating the opening of new colleges for teacher training. But, the work of selecting and recruiting the teachers lies with the state government.

The reason why our education system is not improving even after many efforts is because education falls on the **concurrent list**.

What is the way forward?

People need to understand that the **teaching method is more important** than books or other tools.

If the classroom environment is to be made interesting, then children should be taught in small groups.

The Right to Education Bill had called for **reducing the classroom size**. But it implies that the number of classes will have to be increased which will require more teachers.

We also require **more qualified teachers** who can not only understand the child’s state of mind but who can also implement the curriculum accordingly.

“**Learning without burden**” under the chairmanship of Yashpal in 1993 suggested changes in the syllabus to reduce the weight of bags. It also suggested how to make **learning joyful** and give less emphasis on books and bags for children.

The new **National Curriculum Framework (foundational stage)** talks beyond the classrooms. It focuses more on pedagogy than content and encourages activities. It acknowledges the importance of the teacher, students and other stakeholders.

11. [This unseating of vice chancellors is faulty](#)

Source– The post is based on the article “**This unseating of vice chancellors is faulty**” published in **The Hindu** on **17th November 2022**.

Syllabus: GS2 – Polity

Relevance: Centre-state relations

News- The article explains the issue related to appointment of vice chancellors of University.

What is this issue all about?

In **Gambhirdan K. Gadhvi vs The State Of Gujarat**, from Sardar Patel University, Gujarat, the Supreme Court quashed the appointment of the incumbent Vice Chancellor on the ground that the search committee did not form a panel for the appointment of VC. Therefore, it was not in accordance with the UGC Regulations of 2018.

In **Professor (Dr) Sreejith P.S vs Dr. Rajasree M.S.**, the appointment of the Vice Chancellor of the A.P.J. Abdul Kalam Technological University, Thiruvananthapuram, was challenged on the ground that the search committee recommended only one name. This is also against the UGC Regulations.

What is the core issue with SC judgement?

In both these cases, the issue framed by the Supreme Court is about whether the appointment of VCs should be made as per the **UGC Regulations** or the **provisions of the State University Act**.

Under the Indian Constitution both the Union and the State can legislate on a matter under the Concurrent list. **A VC is appointed by the Chancellor under the relevant University Act.**

But the Supreme Court has brought in **Article 254** of the Constitution to rule that if provisions of the State law are repugnant to the provisions of the Union law, the State law will become void.

Why is this conclusion faulty?

First, repugnancy under Article 254 relates to a State law and a substantive law made by Parliament. It thus excludes rules, regulations which are made by subordinate authorities, in this case the UGC. However, the substantive law is made by the superior authority, namely Parliament.

Second, the rules and regulations made by the subordinate authority, though laid in Parliament, do not go through the same process as a law. The Constitution cannot be assumed to equate the Act with the rules.

Third, The inclusive definition of law given in **Article 13(2)** is applicable only to that Article. It means the term law does not include the rules, regulations, etc. for the purpose of Article 254.

Fourth, the regulations made by a subordinate authority of the Union overriding a law made by a State legislature will amount to a violation of federal principles.

Finally, the UGC Regulations on the appointment of VCs are outside the scope of the main provisions of the UGC Act as none of its provisions refers to the appointment of VCs.

What is the way forward?

Article 254 needs to be **analysed in depth** before reaching such conclusions. Such an analysis would make it clear that a State law can be repugnant only to the central Act, and not the regulations and rules made there under.

Since this issue is bound with the **right of States** to manage university education, more serious thought needs to be given to it.

The Supreme Court held in **S. Satyapal Reddy vs Govt. Of A.P. (1994)** that the court has to make every attempt to reconcile the provisions of the apparently conflicting laws and the court would endeavour to give harmonious construction.

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When this is done in most of the cases, there would be no need to strike down a State law on the ground of repugnancy.

12. [Why the Old Pension Scheme is both bad economics and bad politics](#)

Source: The post is based on the article “**Why the Old Pension Scheme is both bad economics and bad politics**” published in **The Indian Express** on **17th November 2022**.

Syllabus: GS 2- Governance

News: The government in Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh has reverted to the Old Pension Scheme. Punjab is also expected to follow the same but there are concerns associated with it.

What was the Old Pension Scheme (OPS)?

OPS **fixed pensions** of the central and state government employees at 50 percent to the last drawn basic pay. The amount of the pensions also increased with the hike in dearness allowances announced by the government for serving employees.

However, a **New Pension System** came into effect for those joining government service from January 1, 2004 which promised an assured or ‘defined’ benefit to the retiree. It was described as a ‘Defined Benefit Scheme’.

What were the concerns with the OPS?

Lack of proper funds: The pension liability remained unfunded and there were no mechanisms through which money could be raised and given to the pensioner.

Unsustainable: OPS was unsustainable because the liability of pension kept on increasing every year due to the increase in dearness allowances (DA) and increase in life expectancy rates.

Burden on states: OPS took away a quarter of the tax revenues of the state. Further, if salaries of state government employees are added to the bill, states hardly get anything from their own tax receipts.

Burden on the taxpayers: Taxpayers face the burden of ever-increasing pensions. The current generation faces a burden of older employees as well as they are also paying for newer employees under NPS.

What was planned to address this situation?

Old Age Social and Income Security (OASIS) commission: It was set up in 1998 with the objective of targeting unorganized sector workers who had no old age income security. The committee found that less than 11% of the estimated total working population had some post-retirement income security.

It recommended investment in three types of funds — **safe** (allowing up to 10 per cent investment in equity), **balanced** (up to 30 per cent in equity), and **growth** (up to 50 per cent in equity). This investment could be further invested in **corporate bonds or government securities**.

It also recommended that individuals could have **unique retirement accounts** and they would be required to invest at least Rs 500 a year into that account.

Out of those money at least Rs 2 lakh would be used to **purchase an annuity** after the retirement. The income from the annuity will then be used to provide **a fixed monthly income** to the retired employee.

HLEG: It was a **high-level expert group** set up to look into the situation for government employees. It suggested a defined contribution scheme for government employees.

In the **first tier**, it recommended a **10 percent contribution** by the employer and the employee. The accumulated funds would be used to pay pension in annuity form.

In the **second tier**, the employer’s contribution would be matching with the contribution of the employees but limited to 5 per cent. However, no limit was specified for the employee. This contribution could be later withdrawn or converted into annuity.

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What was the origin of the New Pension Scheme (NPS)?

The **OASIS report** became the basis for the NPS. It was made applicable for all new recruits joining government service from January 1, 2004.

The defined contribution under NPS was 10 percent of the basic salary and DA by the employee and a matching contribution by the government. However, the government increased its contribution to 14 percent of the basic salary and DA in 2019.

NPS gave the opportunity to the employees to choose from a range of schemes from **low risk to high risk**. The return from the investment in these schemes depends on the **number of years and choice of the scheme**.

NPS has become effective and its assets under management have also increased. Therefore, moving to OPS from NPS will again acts as a burden on the exchequer and its impact should be taken into account while reverting back.

13. [Making cities smart and sustainable](#)

Source: The post is based on an article **“Making cities smart and sustainable”** published in **Business Standard** on **17th November 2022**.

Syllabus: GS 2- Governance

News: Urban cities are now converting into smart cities but there is a need to look at sustainable development.

What are the requirements for a sustainable smart city?

Urban design: A proper urban designing or urban planning is needed to make cities smart and sustainable.

It should provide **socio-economic opportunities** for its expanding labor force along with **quality of life**, and a **safer and more secure environment**.

It should also provide an **environmentally friendly infrastructure** and unique identity for each city along with greater adaptability to changing climatic, economic, and social factors.

Use of ICT: A smart city combines information and communication technology (ICT) with numerous physical devices linked to an Internet of Things (IoT) network that provide **effectiveness in local operations and services**.

It also helps municipalities to engage with people, keep an eye on the happenings of the city, improve the quality of services and improve **citizen-government interaction**.

Gathering data: It is beneficial for a smart city to gather data and information that could be further used to improve the **processes, operations and governance systems** of the city like monitoring and managing power plants, water supply, etc.

The concept of smart cities in India, under the **Smart Cities Mission**, is based on six fundamental principles –

1. putting the community at the core of planning and implementation,
2. optimal use of resources that generates more outcomes using fewer resources,
3. cooperative and competitive federalism,
4. adopting innovative methods for sustainable solutions,
5. using technology as a means to achieving goals and financial convergence.

However, there are also challenges with the smart city.

What are the challenges?

Rapid Urbanization: Currently, 54 percent of the world's population lives in cities, and it is predicted to rise to 66 percent by 2050.

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According to the **World Bank**, smart cities make the process of urbanization more inclusive through the integration of migrants, bringing together the formal and informal sectors, and providing services for both the rich and the poor.

Therefore, smart cities will attract people for settlements which would cause urbanization and put pressure on resources.

What is the way forward?

First, smart cities need to be sustainable smart cities with environmental, social, economic, and cultural dimensions.

Second, it must also integrate the newest technology with governance and enhance innovative socio-technical, socio-economic, and sociocultural aspects of growth.

14. [New UGC rules will ensure more of our brightest students can get into PhD programmes at an early age](#)

Source– The post is based on the article “**New UGC rules will ensure more of our brightest students can get into PhD programmes at an early age**” published in **The Indian Express** on **18th November 2022**.

Syllabus: GS2- Issue related to development and management of education

Relevance: Higher education

News- The article explains the new UGC rules for PhD programmes.

What are the new regulations of UGC related to PhD?

As per **NEP 2020**, the **four-year undergraduate programme** offers an **honours degree**, with the last year dedicated to research or an **honours degree** with a primary focus on coursework. The **new regulations** will permit students from both categories to join PhD degree programmes offered by higher educational institutions

Anyone who has completed a four-year bachelor’s degree programme in any discipline with a minimum of 75 per cent marks in aggregate or its equivalent grade is eligible for a PhD programme. UGC prescribes only the **minimum qualifications** for admission to a PhD programme. Universities can raise the bar to ensure that only the deserving are admitted to PhD programmes.

What is the rationale behind this move of UGC?

It is not true that PhDs who have bypassed the PG degree will have inadequate knowledge of the core discipline, which will lead to degrading teaching or research standards. There are many such examples from top institutes such as IITs, Purdue, and MIT.

Our admission processes are by **elimination rather than selection** due to intense competition. It generates a huge pool of highly talented students who could not get into top HEIs as part of the university system. Once we provide the opportunity for these students to move into a PhD programme after their UG degree, they will have the chance to be outstanding teachers or researchers.

There is an erroneous belief that UGC has done this to produce more PhDs. The goal of UGC in permitting students after a UG degree into PhD programmes is **not numbers but quality**.

The **four-year bachelor’s degree programme** introduced in our university system is designed to equip the students with **complex problem-solving, critical thinking, creative thinking and communication skills**. This training will lead to **rigorous specialisation** in a chosen disciplinary or interdisciplinary major and minor subject area.

A research study on the Nobel Prizes in chemistry, physiology, or medicine between 1901 and 2003 indicates that the majority of the winners who discovered their prize-winning results were aged between 31 and 40. Our **creativity** declines with ageing in most of us.

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15. [The uplink-downlink puzzle](#)

Source: The post is based on an article “**The uplink-downlink puzzle**” published in **Business Standard** on **18th November 2022**.

Syllabus: **GS 2- Governance**

Relevance: **concerns associated with New Guidelines for TV channels**

News: The government has recently come with the guidelines for uplinking and downlinking of satellite television channels in India.

What do the guidelines say?

It states that a broadcaster who uplinks a channel from India and then downlinks it for broadcast here will have to broadcast for 30 minutes in a day on **themes of national interest and social relevance**.

The guidelines include news and non-news channels for broadcasting themes of national interest.

It has also done away with approval for every live event and also allows limited liability partnerships (LLPs) companies for uplinking foreign channels from Indian teleport.

What has been the stand of government regarding these guidelines?

The government used the SC judgment of 1995 which said that “**airwaves are public property**” to justify its stand.

However, the judgment only specifies the “**public trust doctrine**” which makes the state as a trustee of public resources and directs the State functionary to be transparent in dealing with public resources.

Therefore, using this doctrine for private TV channels is a **misinterpretation** of the judgment. Moreover, there are concerns associated with the current guidelines.

What are the concerns?

India wants to become a **hub like Singapore** but its process is not as easy as Singapore offers. **For example**, applications for registration have been made online but the process is not online end-to-end.

The process has been made for easing of permissions but Indian board control and trademark registration is required. It also does not provide ease of operation for foreign companies like Singapore does.

Due to these regulatory compliances **only 22 channels use India** as an uplink hub against a few thousand from Singapore.

According to MIB data, over 772 channels are uplinked out of India but these are downlinked and broadcasted within India.

What was the need of these guidelines?

Cable/DTH is facing **tough competition** as viewers are moving away from it to OTT platforms, free-to-air television and free OTT.

Further, online streaming platforms such YouTube, Instagram and others have seen a rise in viewers. Google and Meta take away roughly **70 percent of all digital advertising** due to their large number of viewers.

The pandemic also put pressure on ad revenues of the TV channels and the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India’s (Trai’s) pricing mechanism for channels has put pressure on pay revenues.

These issues have led to the merger of TV channels such as Disney-Star, Zee-Sony.

Therefore, this policy addresses these concerns by providing **ease of compliances, ease of doing business and making India a teleport hub**.

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16. [Opaque political financing could cost democracy dear](#)

Source– The post is based on the article “**Opaque political financing could cost democracy dear**” published in **The Hindu** on **18th November 2022**.

Syllabus: GS2-Polity

Relevance: Electoral Bonds

News- The article explains the issue related to political financing.

What is the issue all about?

The discourse around political finance in India usually revolves around the issue of corruption. Introduction of electoral bonds is either presented as a pious instrument for ‘**cleansing**’ politics or as a mechanism for **legitimizing** ‘**institutionalised corruption**’.

It precludes any focus on the structural relationship between the nature of political funding and the shape of our political system. Corruption is merely one symptom of this structural relationship, rather than being a driving factor.

What is the role of political financing in political competition?

One, the **degree of transparency** of political funding informs the efficacy of institutional safeguards. For example, the inherent opacity of electoral bonds renders the power of the Election Commission of India (ECI) irrelevant in terms of ensuring a level-playing field between the ruling and the Opposition parties.

Second, the extent to which **political funding is centralised** within a party determines whether power in the party is drawn from organisational structures or exercised in a personalistic manner. For example, membership-funded parties such as the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam and the Bahujan Samaj Party of an earlier era were highly organised parties where leaders wielded power in a responsive, programmatic manner.

Third, the political financing regime also shapes the **role of ideas in grounding political competition**. But, when political finance is anchored to a narrow concentration of economic capital, the ideological basis of political competition tends to become severely corroded.

What are the impacts of electoral bonds on political competition?

One, the design of electoral bonds, perhaps more than any other instrument of political finance, leans to the advantage of the ruling party.

The ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in 2019-20 got over 75% of the total electoral bonds sold, as opposed to the meagre 9% share of the Congress, according to ECI data.

Second, electoral bonds centralise political funding towards the national units of political parties, further entrenching the leverage of national leadership over the State and local units.

As a reply to a Right To Information (RTI) query revealed, out of the ₹5,851 crore of electoral bonds sold in 2018-19, 80% of the bonds were redeemed in Delhi.

What is the way forward?

The new political financing regime should **build on the political pathologies** already prevalent in our system that is crumbling organisations, political centralisation, a business-politics compact fuelled by rent seeking and cronyism rather than creating them from scratch.

It is important that independent institutions such as the ECI and the Supreme Court of India step in to layer the seeming black hole of electoral bonds with a minimum level of **institutional safeguards**.

Otherwise this “reform” of political finance goes down in history as a significant marker in our story of democratic decline.

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17. Weighing in on PMGKAY, the free grains scheme

Source– The post is based on the article “**Weighing in on PMGKAY, the free grains scheme**” published in **The Hindu** on **18th November 2022**.

Syllabus: GS2- Welfare Schemes

Relevance: Implementation of schemes

News- The article explains the issue related to welfare schemes.

What are the provisions of PMGKAY?

It is aimed at providing an **additional allocation of foodgrains** (rice or wheat) from the central pool at **five kilograms** per person per month free of cost.

The PMGKAY benefits cardholders of the **Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY)** and **Priority Households (PHH)** categories, both falling under the **National Food Security Act (NFSA)**. This is over and above the regular monthly quota under the NFSA, i.e., 35 kg per month per family for AAY and 5 kg per month per person for PHH.

The PMGKAY covers even **Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT)** beneficiaries.

What are the reasons for extending this scheme?

The extension of the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY), a scheme to distribute free foodgrains to the poor, for another three months, comes as a surprise for many reasons.

First, in the months prior to the latest extension made in late September 2022, there was much debate on the relevance of freebies.

Second, there were reports in June that the Expenditure Department at the Centre did not favour it, citing a funds crunch.

It also held the view that such a scheme was no longer needed “in non-pandemic times”.

However, this has to be viewed in the **context of the Russia-Ukraine conflict**, raging since February 2022, and its adverse impact on the world’s food and energy sectors.

Government’s reason was that it wanted to **support the poor and the vulnerable**, estimated to be 80 crore during the festive season.

Critics of the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party point out that the scheme’s extension is with an eye on the Assembly elections in Himachal Pradesh and Gujarat, respectively.

What are the achievements associated with this scheme?

Policymakers and experts concede that the scheme made a difference to **food security and public health** during the pandemic.

From the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Food and Public Distribution or the authors of an IMF-published working paper, “**Pandemic, Poverty, and Inequality: Evidence from India**” the scheme has received commendation.

What is the way forward?

The central authorities should **commission a study** and make its findings public.

To keep the budgetary allocation under control, **rules on quota** for rice or wheat can be changed suitably.

The central and State authorities need to ponder over the scheme’s continuance, given the chronic **problem of diversion** from the Public Distribution System (PDS).

The proposed study should be the basis for **updating the database** of foodgrain, drawing card holders, scrutinising the data critically and zeroing in on the needy.

The task should not be onerous, given the **widespread application of technological tools** in the PDS .

The culture of providing essential commodities free of cost at the drop of a hat has to go.

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The elimination of the problem of diversion of foodgrains has to be taken up with **renewed vigour** as farmers toil hard in the fields to produce the grains and many deserving persons remain outside the food security net.

18. [Why our obsession with ranking universities does more harm than good](#)

Source– The post is based on the article **“Why our obsession with ranking universities does more harm than good”** published in **The Indian Express** on **18th November 2022**.

Syllabus: GS2- Issue related to development and management of education

Relevance: Higher education

News- The article explains the issue related to our continued obsession with ranking universities.

What are the issues related to ranking universities?

The universities that occupy no significant place in the list suffer from chronic anxiety. They are compelled to feel a sense of **“lagging behind”**. It leads to their stigmatisation by people.

We are preoccupied with the **“value-neutral”** scale of ranking. In this process, most of us will lose the **moral courage** to problematize this scale and reimagine the relationship between the university and the world.

Universities become **more concerned about showcasing their products** through the numbers, calculations, tables. These numbers include citations per paper, papers per faculty, proportion of international students, employer reputation, faculty-student ratio or international research network.

While the statisticians can quantify the papers per faculty, they are incapable of understanding the **relevance** of these papers, even if published in “international” journals. It is difficult to tell whether these tools are really contributing to the development of refreshingly **new ideas in natural and social sciences**, and simultaneously enhancing the **ethical conscience** of the world.

In this academic race for publications, citations and international networking, professors have mastered the technique of indulging themselves in the practice of **manufacturing papers**. They are capable of managing the cleverly developed circuits of networking for enhancing the citations.

What is the way forward?

Good universities need to equate knowledge **with awakened intelligence**. It should aim at uniting **engaged pedagogy** and meaningful research.

It must nurture **sensitive and compassionate learners**. These learners should sharpen their academic skills in the process of eradicating social evils like caste, patriarchy, racism and religious bigotry; and

It should **equate knowledge with wisdom**. The wisdom needs to redefine the meaning of research in science, technology, economics and sociology to strive for an egalitarian, ecologically sensitive and spiritually elevated world.

19. [India must resume its vanguard role in ridding the world of nuclear weapons](#)

Source– The post is based on the article **“India must resume its vanguard role in ridding the world of nuclear weapons”** published in **The Indian Express** on **19th November 2022**.

Syllabus: GS2- International relations

Relevance: Nuclear threat to world security

News- The article explains the ICJ ruling on nuclear weapons and international law on this subject. It also explains India’s position on this matter.

What are the main points of ICJ ruling on nuclear weapons in 1996?

It permitted a state to use nuclear weapons in self-defence when its survival was at stake.

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In the absence of a definitive law on the prohibition of nuclear weapons, the ICJ cannot conclude definitively whether the threat or use of nuclear weapons would be lawful or unlawful.

What is the current opinion of the world community about nuclear weapons?

Now, we do have an international law on this subject.

The UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) was passed in January 2021

It was passed by 122 members of the UN General Assembly, a clear majority.

It entered into force after its ratification by 50 member-States of the UN. The number of signatories has since risen to 91.

Any threat or use of nuclear weapons is now a clear violation of international law.

What has been India's position on nuclear weapons?

Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru and Indira Gandhi were opposed to possession, threat and use of nuclear weapons.

Rajiv Gandhi presented to the UN in 1988 a detailed action plan on how to arrive in stages to a nuclear-weapons-free and nonviolent world order within a timeline of 22 years.

Pranab Mukherjee, as foreign minister, proposed in the UN in 2006 a summary of the main objectives of the action plan as a working paper

India appears to have disavowed both the action plan and the working paper after the NDA government came to power.

What is the way forward for India?

India should assume its vanguard role for elimination of nuclear weapons.

It is the only state with the capacity and stockpile of nuclear weapons to join the current tide of world opinion for prohibition of these weapons.

20. The Governor is under the Constitution, not above it

Source: The post is based on an article "**The Governor is under the Constitution, not above it**" published in **The Hindu** on **19th November 2022**.

Syllabus: GS 2- Governance

Relevance: concerns associated with misuse of powers by the Governor

News: The misuse of power by the governor in some states has created a tussle with the state governments.

What does the Constitution of India say regarding the Governor?

Article 153 provides a Governor for each State.

Article 154 says that the executive power of the State shall be vested in the Governor and the powers shall be exercised by him directly or through officers' subordinate to him in accordance with Constitution.

Article 163 provides that there shall be a Council of Ministers with the Chief Minister at the head to aid and advise the Governor except on the matter of his discretion.

What has the Supreme Court said regarding the discretionary powers of the Governor?

The issue of discretionary powers of the governor was taken by SC in **Shamsher Singh vs State of Punjab and Anr**. The following observations were made by SC –

The court ruled that wherever the Constitution **requires satisfaction** of the President or the Governor for the exercise of any power or function, the satisfaction is in the Constitutional sense under the Cabinet system of the Government.

It held that the discretionary power given to the Governor by the Constitution on which he/she can act on his own is only Article 356.

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Whereas in exercising all other discretionary powers, the Governor will act in harmony with his **Council of Ministers**. Moreover, the Governor should have a proper justification in using Article 356.

The court further said that the Constitution does not aim at providing a parallel administration. It said that **the basic philosophy in a democracy** is that the elected Ministers must accept responsibility for every executive act and that the Council of Ministers alone represents a responsible form of government in the States.

Moreover, the role of Governor was also debated in the Constituent Assembly.

What were the debates in the Constituent Assembly?

The **appointment methods** of the Governor were debated whether the Governor should be appointed by the President of India or should be elected.

However, the Constituent Assembly adopted the appointment of the Governor by the President fearing that election would create a **parallel State leadership**.

Prof. K.T. Shah, a member of the Constituent Assembly, while debating **Article 154** demanded that the Constitution must include the provisions that guides the Governor to use its power in accordance with the Constitution and the Law, i.e., on the advice of his Ministers.

Further, while debating Article 163 he said that it will be the responsibility of the Chief Minister who will **advise the Governor** about the appointment of his Minister or their removal if necessary.

He said that Article 163 is a very **limited clause**. It is not a general clause that gives the Governor power to disregard the advice of his ministers in any matter in which he finds not suitable.

K.M. Munshi said that it would be better to have a Governor nominated by the Centre, who is free from the passions and jealousies of local party politics.

B.R. Ambedkar said that the Governor will not have any such power that he will use on his own discretion or judgment but he is required to follow the advice of his ministry in all matters.

Therefore, it is clear from these debates that the Governor has no powers to interfere with the administration in day-to-day affairs including to refuse assent to Bills passed by the Assembly.

He should act according to the powers given by the Constitution.

General Studies Paper – 3

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General Studies - 3

1. [The coal reality: How coal is phased out is India's policy choice, the transition cannot be decided by West's interests](#)

Source: The post is based on the article “**The coal reality: How coal is phased out is India's policy choice, the transition cannot be decided by West's interests**” published in **The Times of India** on **14th November 2022**.

Syllabus: GS 3 – Infrastructure: Energy, Ports, Roads, Airports, Railways etc.

Relevance: About phase out coal.

News: Far from the phase-down of coal that COP26 called for in Glasgow, now in COP27 India has proposed that the decision text should call for phasing down all fossil fuels rather than focusing only coal.

This is because, **a)** Natural gas and oil do contribute to GHG emissions as well, **b)** India gets targeted for heavy coal reliance for its energy needs, and **c)** The energy security of many countries still dependent on coal.

How rich countries are performing in climate change pledge?

Rich countries have fallen horribly short of their commitments to help developing countries make a just transition from fossil fuels. For instance, US energy use per capita is 6,804 kg of oil equivalent compared to India's 637 kg.

What are the challenges in phasing out coal in India?

Needs internal just-transition: 85% of coal production is concentrated in the relatively poor eastern and central states. On the other hand, over 60% of renewable energy potential and 80% of current capacity is concentrated in relatively wealthy southern and western states. So, while phasing out coal India needs an internal just-transition.

Need longer time to eliminate coal: More finance and technology support is required before phasing out coal.

Why India needs to phase out coal?

a) Regular accidents that show open-cast mines to be death traps, **b)** Cleaning up coal is very much in workers' interests, **c)** Sickening smog hovering over northern India and global carbon emissions from fossil fuels expected to hit a record level this year. So, phasing out them is essential to improve environmental conditions.

Overall, India should put hard timelines to phase out coal and extract and deploy cleaner technologies.

2. [Green yields – Transparency will be critical for green bonds](#)

Source: The post is based on the article “**Green yields – Transparency will be critical for green bonds**” published in the **Business Standard** on **14th November 2022**.

Syllabus: GS 3 – Indian economy

Relevance: About India's Sovereign Green Bonds Framework

News: Union government issued a robust framework for sovereign green bonds. This will allow the government to issue green bonds as announced in the Union Budget.

What are Green Bonds?

[Click Here to read](#)

About India's Sovereign Green Bonds Framework

[Click here to read](#)

Funds: The funds raised by green bonds will be deposited as usual in the Consolidated Fund of India. However, a separate account will be maintained by the finance ministry to make funds available for green projects.

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Green Register: The Finance ministry will set up an information system to maintain a “Green Register” with details such as the bond issuances, funds raised, and allocations made.

Annual assessment: The government further intends to involve an external third-party reviewer to provide an annual assessment of allocation.

What is the need for Sovereign Green Bonds Framework?

Need resources for India’s climate commitments: A report submitted to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change showed that India’s emission intensity declined by 24% between 2005 and 2016. It has committed itself to reduce the emission intensity of a gross domestic product by 45% by 2030 compared to the level of 2005.

This would obviously need resources and investment in a variety of areas, and green bonds are one of the enabling factors for investment

To take advantage of Greenium: “Greenium” is defined as the yield difference between similar conventional bonds and green bonds. It is higher in developing economies.

For instance, according to estimates, greenium in emerging markets is about 49 basis points for dollar-denominated bonds. The same is 5-6 basis points in advanced economies. The difference can partly be explained by the usual yield difference between advanced and emerging economies.

What are the challenges with Sovereign Green Bonds Framework?

a) A sustained higher fiscal deficit and inflation could undermine the potential of green bonds, **b)** India lacks transparency in the proceeds of green bonds, **c)** History shows that the government often doesn’t spend on the stated purpose for which the funds are raised as is the case in various kinds of cess and surcharge levied.

But the overall conditions in the framework should be able to boost transparency.

3. [Preserving the precious: On ground water use](#)

Source– The post is based on the article “**Preserving the precious: On ground water use**” published in The Hindu on **14th November 2022**.

Syllabus: GS3- Environment

Relevance: Groundwater conservation related

News– The article explains the issues related to management of groundwater.

What do the facts reveal?

According to a report by the Ministry of Water Resources, the total annual groundwater recharge is, 437.60 billion cubic metres. The quantity extracted out of it was 239.16 bcm

The 2022 assessment suggests that groundwater extraction is the lowest since 2004, when it was 231 BCM. The above facts reveal that a decrease in groundwater extraction may indicate better water management.

However, [National Compilation on Dynamic Ground water Resources of India](#) says that the improvement is only **marginal**. It may be explained by **natural conditions** and **changes in methodology** by the Central Ground Water Board and States, which conduct the survey.

Also, the percentage of blocks where the groundwater was ‘**critically**’ low was around 14%. It is roughly similar to that in previous years.

What are the Regional consumption trends?

Firstly, regions with the most blocks with critical groundwater levels are in Punjab, Haryana, Delhi and western Uttar Pradesh. Despite replenishable systems, indiscriminate groundwater withdrawal in these regions has depressed the water table.

Secondly, other endangered blocks are in Rajasthan and Gujarat. Here arid climate has limited the groundwater recharge.

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Finally, in parts of Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Telangana and Andhra Pradesh, groundwater availability is low due to inherent characteristics of crystalline water-storing aquifers.

What are challenges to groundwater management?

At present, there is no central law governing the use of groundwater.

Various States have their own laws on regulating its extraction. These are deployed in a perfunctory manner.

What is the way forward?

Water ought not to be considered a **free, private resource** but one whose costs must be **measured and borne equitably**.

The climate crisis should inspire consensus across the political spectrum on **disincentivizing wasteful consumption** of this precious resource.

A **draft National Water Policy** recommends a shift in usage from water-guzzling crops and prioritising recycling over freshwater for industrial purposes.

4. [Behind the smokescreen around private climate finance](#)

Source– The post is based on the article “**Behind the smokescreen around private climate finance**” published in **The Hindu** on **14th November 2022**.

Syllabus: GS3- Environment

Relevance: Climate change

News- The article explains the issues related to climate finance.

What are the main points emphasised by developed countries on climate finance?

They claim that their commitment of \$100 billion in climate finance a year for developing countries is close to being met.

They view the mobilisation of private finance as the critical component of climate finance.

What are the issues related to climate finance goals by developed countries?

The **UNFCCC Standing Committee on Finance (SCF)** released a report on the progress made by developed countries towards achieving the goal of mobilising \$100 billion per year. It says that the \$100 billion goal has not been achieved in 2020. Efforts to mobilise private finance by the developed countries have met with comprehensive failure.

The SCF report relied mainly on the **Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development and Oxfam reports**. The OECD report claims that developed countries have mobilised \$83.3 billion in climate finance in 2020. The latest Oxfam report challenges this figure. It claims that the actual value of climate assistance is only around \$21–\$24.5 billion.

In 2016, developed countries issued a “**Roadmap to \$100 billion**” with forward-looking projections of climate finance in 2020. The road map indicated that public finance would reach \$67 billion. Remaining \$33 billion would be provided by private finance.

The OECD 2020 data shows that the **mobilisation of private climate finance has underperformed** against the expectations of developed countries. It is \$13.1 billion in 2020 against \$33 billion in the road map.

What are the concerns of developing countries?

Developing countries have for a long time insisted that a significant portion of climate finance should come from public funds. Private finance will not address their needs.

Climate finance already remains skewed towards **mitigation** and projects that yield profit on investment. Low-income countries with poor credit ratings need more **adaptation finance**.

What is the future plan of developed countries for climate finance and associated challenges?

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Developed countries pushed the target year for achieving it to 2025 from 2020. At COP26 in Glasgow, developed countries came up with a **Climate Finance Delivery Plan (CFDP)** to meet the goal. They claimed that the goal would be met in 2023.

The CFDP scenario implies that the composition of public climate finance portfolios will progressively change. It will go **towards a larger share of activities with low private finance mobilisation potential for adaptation**, and capacity building, as grants, for least developed and small island developing countries. In these scenarios, financing the urgent adaptation needs of developing countries is pushed further into the future.

What is the way forward?

The climate finance needs of developing countries cannot be left to private climate finance by developed countries.

Grant-based and concessional international public climate finance is needed in addressing the needs of developing countries.

5. [Why India cannot afford to ignore the GM crop revolution](#)

Source– The post is based on the article “**Why India cannot afford to ignore the GM crop revolution**” published in **The Indian Express** on **14th November 2022**.

Syllabus: GS3- Agriculture and Science & Technology

Relevance: Recombinant technology

News- The article explains the issues related to GM crops.

What are arguments in support of GM crops?

GM crops have spread around the world since 1996. By 2019, roughly 190 million hectares were under GM crops. There has been no harmful impact on human or animal health or the environment per. More than 70 countries have accepted the use of GM crops.

Cotton production increased remarkably from a mere 13.6 million bales in 2002-03 to 39.8 million bales in 2013-14. **Cotton productivity** increased from 302 kg per hectare in 2002-03 to 566 kg per hectare in 2013-14.

Bt cotton has made India the second-largest producer and the second-largest exporter of cotton in the world today.

GMOs have been in our food systems for years. India heavily depends on imported edible oils. A large portion of this comes from Argentina, Brazil, Canada, the US, which is all from GM technology. Cotton seed is also fed to cattle which gives the milk its fat content. Even poultry feed, such as soya and corn, is being imported.

By not allowing GM crops, we are denying the **basic rights of farmers** who want to increase their incomes. The best way to do so is by raising productivity in a sustainable manner. The field trials of GM mustard at different locations showed 25-28 per cent higher yield and better disease resistance compared to indigenous varieties.

What are concerns associated with GM crops?

There has been enhanced sucking pest damage in Bt cotton. It has led to an increase in secondary pests such as mired bugs and emergence of pest resistance.

It has **environmental and health implications** in terms of toxicity and allergenicity that can cause hepatotoxic reactions in the human body.

There is increased exposure of farmers to a **greater risk of monopoly** in the seed business.

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6. [Spare a thought for the trilemma of central bank digital currencies](#)

Source: The post is based on an article “**Spare a thought for the trilemma of central bank digital currencies**” published in **Live Mint** on **14th November 2022**.

Syllabus: GS 3- Growth and Development

Relevance: challenges with CBDC

News: Central banks around the world have started to issue their own digital currencies (CBDC) but it has challenges too.

Why are central banks issuing CBDC?

One of the reasons behind issuing CBDC is that it will be **accessible** to masses that will bring **financial inclusion** and **ease of payments**. However, there are other ways of financial inclusion which India has already tried.

How has India tried to achieve financial inclusion?

The Prime Minister’s People’s Wealth Scheme has addressed the issue of offering zero-balance, low-cost accounts to underbanked rural residents. This led around 400 million people to open the account.

Further, the **United Payments Interface (UPI)** is also a low cost electronic-payments infrastructure that has also helped in financial inclusion.

What are the challenges with CBDC?

It is argued that CBDC will help in facilitating the **cross-border payments** and might be a **digital alternative** to the dominance of the US dollar.

Central banks with help from the Bank for International Settlements have also experimented with a platform ‘**mBridges**’ to globally exchange CBDC.

However, there are political concerns with the use of CBDC globally and it would also be difficult to adopt such a common platform worldwide.

For example, it would be difficult for China and the US to come to an agreement on a single platform of exchanging CBDC.

Therefore, central banks face a trilemma when issuing CBDC as they can have only two of three things – a **digital currency, confidentiality of transactions and financial stability**.

Further, if CBDCs are used for bank transfers then commercial banks will be disintermediated from the system which will raise financial risk and imbalances for the central banks.

7. [Importance of agri exports — and what Govt can do to boost India’s farm trade surplus](#)

Source: The post is based on an article “**Importance of agri exports — and what Govt can do to boost India’s farm trade surplus**” published in **The Indian Express** on **14th November 2022**.

Syllabus: GS 3- Agriculture

Relevance: concerns associated with increase in imports of agri-products.

News: The article discusses position of India in importing agri-products and measures to improve it.

What is the position of India in agri-exports?

India’s agriculture exports have grown 16.5% in the period of April-September and are expected to grow further.

This growth has come at a time when the government has brought measures to ban the export of wheat, broken rice and sugar.

However, despite the ban all three have shown a rise in exports from the last year. For example, sugar exports grew 45.5% in April-September this year compared to last year.

However, imports have increased more than exports.

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What is the position of India in import?

The first six months of the current fiscal (2022-23) have seen a **narrow trade surplus** because imports grew at a faster rate (27.7%) than exports (16.5%).

India's **trade deficit** in overall merchandise trade account has widened from \$76.25 billion in April-September 2021 to \$146.55 billion in April-September 2022.

Even with a wide trade deficit, India's surplus in agriculture trade reduced only from \$7.86 billion to \$7.46 billion.

Therefore, surplus in agricultural trade matters because this is one sector, apart from software services, where India has some comparative advantage.

Which agri-products have seen increase in import?

Exports of all agri-products have been good except **cotton, spices, cashew and vegetable oils**. Exports of cotton have declined and its import has increased due to the **lower domestic production** which has turned India a net cotton importer.

In spices, India has become an importer of **pepper and cardamom**. Vietnam, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, and Brazil have out-priced India in pepper, while India has lost market share to Guatemala in cardamom.

India has also increased its import of cashew compared to its export.

Further, India is a major importer of vegetable oils. Imports have increased by more than 25% in the first half of this fiscal year. **Vegetable oils** are the country's fifth biggest import item after petroleum, electronics, gold, and coal.

That is why the government has come up with important decisions to reduce its import of vegetable oil.

What are the decisions taken by the government?

a) government has raised the MSP of mustard from Rs 5,050 to Rs 5,450 per quintal for the 2022-23 crop season, **b)** government has granted clearance for commercial cultivation of genetically modified (GM) hybrid mustard.

The yield from GM hybrid mustard is claimed to be 25-30% more than from currently-grown popular varieties and it would be also useful in developing new mustard hybrids giving higher yields.

What is the way forward?

A similar kind of approach is needed to boost high yields of cotton production.

GM Bt technology has helped in the increase in the cotton production but a new approach is required as production has started to fall down touching a 12-year low in 2021-22.

Therefore, India should focus on domestic production and productivity by leveraging technologies.

8. [The shape of the Indian economic pie must change](#)

Source– The post is based on the article **“The shape of the Indian economic pie must change”** published in **The Hindu** on **15th November 2022**.

Syllabus: GS3- Economy

Relevance: Issues related to current economic structure

News- The article explains the increasing inequalities and unfair distribution of wealth across the world. It explains the dominant position acquired by the financial sector.

With the decision of Supreme Court on EWS reservation and recent debates on subsidies, the issue of inequality has come to surface.

What are the issues with the present economic structure?

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Shape of the economy is disturbed. Decent jobs and social security are available to too few. Good education and health care is not available to all.

Issues about **fair distribution of opportunities** and the need for subsidies will become harder for the Government to resolve until the current pattern of economic growth continues.

Economic inequalities have been increasing in all countries, even the rich ones. Governments are struggling to meet conflicting demands for a smooth business climate and decent living for common citizens.

Populism is on the rise. On the left, populism demands rights for all workers, across races and religions. On the right, populism wants to protect racial and religious majorities from immigrants and minorities competing with them for limited economic opportunities.

What are the viewpoints of Thomas Piketty about inequality?

He describes that **societies were historically divided into three classes**– a religious class, a noble and warrior class, and labouring class. **Merchant and financial class later emerged** and became dominant.

Every human society must justify its inequalities. Unless it does not do so, there will be **social and political instability**.

Modern inequality is said to be just because everyone enjoys **equal access to the market** and to property. It benefits automatically from the wealth accumulated by the wealthiest individuals.

How has the financial sector become dominant in the economy?

The **financing of wars** gave money-owning class power over governments. International trade provided another avenue for growth of the financial class. With the victory of **neo-liberalism** over welfarism, money became the master. Central banks with responsibility to look after the health of money, acquired independence from elected governments.

The role of banks and financial institutions was to provide **lubrication to the wheels of the real economy**, rather than making large profits themselves. By the 21st century, profits seem to have become the purpose of financial institutions.

What are the impacts of the dominant position of the financial sector?

Innovative **ways of making money from money** also became the fastest way to increase personal wealth. Inequalities have increased because a much larger share of wealth is sucked into the financial sector.

The **rules of the economic game** are now set by the wealthiest. They influence governments' policies the most. They can determine the wages they will pay workers and prices for small enterprises.

Lives of common citizens have become precarious. Formal jobs in large enterprises are becoming fewer with the changing shape of the **modern, post-industrial economy**.

What should be the course of action?

The **shape of the economic pie** must change so that the majority benefits much faster than a tiny minority on top. This will require **reforms of institutions and economic ideology**.

The Government must listen and respond to the needs of common citizens more than to big business lobbies.

Ease of living for the majority must drive government policies more than policies for attracting big investments with ease of doing business.

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9. [India's long-term strategy to transition to a 'low emissions' pathway involves more nuclear power, more ethanol](#)

Source– The post is based on the article “**India’s long-term strategy to transition to a ‘low emissions’ pathway involves more nuclear power, more ethanol**” published in The Hindu on **15th November 2022**.

Syllabus: GS3- Environment

Relevance: Climate change

News– The article explains India’s [long-term strategy to transition to a “low emissions” pathway](#) at the [United Nations Conference of Parties](#) ongoing in Sharm el-Sheikh.

What is the recent long term strategy announced by India?

It is premised on expanding its nuclear power capacity by **at least three-fold** in the next decade. There is focus on becoming an international hub for producing **green hydrogen** and increasing the proportion of ethanol in petrol.

The LT-LEDS ([Long Term-Low Emission Development Strategy](#)) has been prepared in the framework of India’s right to an **equitable and fair share of the global carbon budget**. The strategy emphasises **energy security, energy access, and employment**, while keeping focus on our vision of Atmanirbhar Bharat.

The **journey to net-zero** is five-decade-long. India’s vision is therefore evolutionary and flexible. It accommodates new technological developments and developments in the global economy and international cooperation.

The LT-LEDS are **qualitative in nature**. It is a requirement emanating from the 2015 Paris Agreement.

LTS says that the transition to low carbon development pathway will entail several costs pertaining to the development of new technologies, new infrastructure, and other transaction costs. The cost of transition falls generally in the range of trillions of dollars by 2050.

Provision of climate finance by developed countries will play a very significant role. It needs to be considerably enhanced, in the form of grants and concessional loans, ensuring scale, scope and speed. It should be predominantly from public sources, in accordance with the principles of the UNFCCC.

What is the strategy adopted by India to achieve net zero targets?

India aspires to maximise the use of electric vehicles. It aims for **ethanol blending to reach 20%** by 2025 which is currently 10% .

India will also focus on improving energy efficiency by the **Perform, Achieve and Trade (PAT) scheme**, the **National Hydrogen Mission, increasing electrification, enhancing material efficiency; recycling** and ways to reduce emissions.

India’s forest and tree cover act as a **net carbon sink** absorbing 15% of CO₂ emissions in 2016. Also, the country is on track to fulfilling its **Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC)** commitment of 2.5 to 3 billion tonnes of additional carbon sequestration in forest and tree cover by 2030.

India’s most **updated NDC** commits to ensuring half its electricity is derived from non-fossil fuel sources by 2030. It aims at reducing the **emissions intensity** by 45% below 2005 levels by 2030.

What is the way forward for LTS?

India’s long-term strategy (LTS) can guide the growth of Indian industry, urban planning, and infrastructure creation.

India needs to create a **legal or institutional framework** to pursue policies based on its long-term goal.

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LTS should include **carbon pricing through a domestic emissions trading scheme** as a key element of India's strategy, given that the government has already announced the creation of the same in India.

Provision of **climate finance** by developed countries will play a very significant role. It needs to be considerably enhanced, in the form of grants and concessional loans.

10. India's LT-LEDS: Setting the COP agenda

Source: The post is based on the following articles "**Setting the COP agenda**" published in the **Indian Express** on **16th November 2022**.

"COP-27: India's net-zero strategy lays out the challenge before it, and the world" published in the **Indian Express** on **16th November**.

Syllabus: GS 3 – Conservation, environmental pollution and degradation.

Relevance: About the key takeaways of India's LT-LEDS.

News: At COP27, India submitted its long-term strategy (LTS) for low carbon development and joined the coveted list of 56 countries that have submitted their LTS.

Must read: [India Submits its Long-Term Low Emission Development Strategy to UNFCCC](#)

Why India's LT-LEDS is significant?

India's announcements at the 26th and 27th Conference Of Parties (COP) are now the pillars of its climate leadership. This is because,

a) COP26 last year was a watershed moment because of the country's plan to go net-zero by 2070, **b)** This year's COP27 will be remembered for India's path-breaking announcement of a long-term strategy (LTS) for low carbon development.

The LT-LEDS is consistent with India's net-zero targets and mentions India will need "trillions of dollars" to become carbon-neutral by 2070.

What are the five key takeaways from India's LT-LEDS?

Sectoral transformations are key: India's LTS has prioritised six strategic sectors — electricity, transport, urban, industry, carbon dioxide removal(CDR) and forests. Of these, electricity and industry sectors together account for over three-fourths of India's CO2 emissions.

The focus areas of each sector are, **1) Electricity sector:** More renewable power, demand side reductions and a just transition for phase down of coal, **2) Industrial sector:** Improve energy efficiency, electrification, material efficiency, green hydrogen and decarbonisation of hard-to-abate sectors, **3) Transport:** Transition to cleaner fuels, increase energy efficiency, and aggressive electrification, **4) Urban transition:** material efficiency of buildings, **5) CDR:** Using methods such as carbon capture and storage (CCS) to remove GHGs before they enter the atmosphere and **6) Forest cover:** Protect India's forest and expand tree cover.

Finance and investments: According to a Council on Energy, Environment and Water assessment, India will need \$10 trillion to achieve the 2070 net-zero target. The LTS has gauged the country's financial requirement, potential sources, the importance of mainstreaming of climate finance and international climate finance, and multilateral arrangements for climate finance flows.

Changes to LiFE: The LTS nudges people to make simple yet effective sustainable choices, industries and markets to scale these, and government policies to support them.

Invest in research and innovation: The LTS notes the relevance of research and innovation, and identifies multiple technologies in the energy and industry sectors.

Adaptation, resilience and international cooperation: India's 75% of districts are hotspots of extreme weather events. So, the LTS emphasises the **a)** need for strengthening basic infrastructures like irrigation systems and disaster-resilient buildings, institutional

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infrastructure for better disaster response, and **b)** raising incomes to bolster the capabilities of individuals and communities.

Read more: [“In our LiFetime” Campaign launched by India at COP 27, Sharm El-Sheikh](#)

What should be done to improve India’s LT-LEDS further?

a) India’s LT-LEDS only focuses on technology-related innovations. This should be expanded to innovation in **business models**. **b) India should include carbon pricing**, and **c)** India’s LT-LEDS does not specify mid-term targets or goals. So, the strategy **should present a mechanism to assess progress** towards its intermediate goals and course corrections if necessary.

11. [A call to action to avoid climate catastrophe](#)

Source: The post is based on the article **“A call to action to avoid climate catastrophe”** published in **The Hindu** on **16th November 2022**.

Syllabus: GS 3 – Conservation, environmental pollution and degradation.

Relevance: About the required actions to avoid climate catastrophe.

News: Climate change is a global problem that requires cooperation between all nations. Hence, more than 30 newspapers and media organisations in more than 20 countries have taken a common view about what needs to be done.

What was the view of media organisations on present actions against climate catastrophe?

Media organisations think that the world is heading towards climate catastrophe because,

1) Instead of phasing out fossil fuels, many wealthy nations are **a)** Reinvesting in oil and gas, **b)** Failing to cut emissions fast enough and **c)** Bargaining over the aid they are prepared to send to poor countries.

2) Since the Cop26 in Glasgow last year, countries have only promised to do one-fiftieth of what is needed to stay on track to keep temperatures within 1.5°C of pre-industrial levels.

3) No continent has avoided extreme weather disasters this year — from floods in Pakistan to heatwaves in Europe, and from forest fires in Australia to hurricanes in the US. With rising temperatures, the world can expect far worse to come.

4) After the Russia-Ukraine crisis, many nations seek to reduce their energy reliance on Russia. So, the world is experiencing a **“gold rush” for new fossil fuel projects**.

Why do rich countries need to take climate responsibility?

Clear moral responsibility: Rich countries account for just one in eight people in the world today but are responsible for half of the greenhouse gases.

From melting ice sheets to crop failures, the world’s poorest people are bearing the brunt of climate destruction.

Read more: [COP-27: An opportunity for rich nations to help vulnerable communities](#)

What needs to be done to avert climate catastrophe?

Humanity should end its addiction to fossil fuels: Developed countries should focus on clean and renewable energy instead of focusing on fossil fuels at present.

Rich nations should deliver on the promise: Rich nations should provide the previously committed funds – such as the \$100bn a year from 2020. This will signal their climate seriousness.

This can be done by levying a bare minimum windfall tax on the combined profits of the largest oil and gas companies.

Need radical approach in funding: During the pandemic, central banks across the world lubricated states’ expenditures by buying up their own governments’ bonds. Such radical thinking is essential as trillions of dollars are needed to deal with the ecological emergency.

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The other steps are, **a)** Using cash to support the most vulnerable as demanded by the United Nations, **b)** Poor nations are burdened with debts that make it impossible for them to recover after climate-related disasters or protect themselves from future ones. So, the Creditors should write off loans for those on the frontline of the climate emergency.

Read more: [The questions that CoP-27 must answer to ensure climate justice](#)

To make all this an urgent reality, the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change should be about the power of argument not the argument of power.

12. [Health as the focus of air pollution policy](#)

Source: The post is based on the article “**Health as the focus of air pollution policy**” published in **The Hindu** on **16th November**.

Syllabus: GS 3 – environmental pollution and degradation.

Relevance: About the status of health in India’s pollution policy-making.

News: The harmful effects of air pollution on health has again been highlighted by the poor winter air quality in north India.

Why status of health in India’s pollution policy-making is essential?

Clearly mentioned in Indian environmental laws: The primacy of protecting public health is clearly laid out in the statement of objects and reasons of India’s key environmental laws.

Impact of air pollution on health: According to the Lancet, in India, in 2019, 17.8% of all deaths and 11.5% of respiratory, cardiovascular and other related diseases are attributable to high exposure to pollution.

Read more: [The action plan against Delhi’s air pollution](#)

What is the present status of health in India’s pollution policy-making?

Non representation of health experts: India’s environmental regulators, expert groups and decision-making entities do not have any health expertise.

For instance, **a)** the recently constituted Commission for Air Quality Management also lacks any health representation, **b)** Recent papers published by the Centre for Policy Research revealed that health sector representatives comprise less than 5% of the membership of State Pollution Control Boards.

What are the contributions of the Ministry of Health’s Steering Committee on Air Pollution on pollution policymaking?

Ministry of Health’s Steering Committee on Air Pollution was India’s only effort to include health in India’s pollution policymaking The committee took an exposure-centred view of policy.

The committee **a)** Prioritised interventions that contributed the most to reducing exposure and thereby providing health benefits, **b)** Brought the local and global epidemiological evidence on the harmful effects of air pollution to light, and **c)** Defined policy measures aligned with science.

Read more: [The weakest link in air pollution fight](#)

What needs to be done to include health in India’s pollution policy-making?

Mention explicit health benefits: Health must be turned into a feature and eventually a function of the air pollution policy. For instance, foregrounding health in ambient air quality standards (NAAQS) will improve awareness among people.

Radical rethinking policy design: India should centre science and health to permanently fix the problem of air pollution.

Must read: [Air pollution in Delhi: In the hopes for a clear blue sky](#)

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13. [The monetary policy committee should slow its pace of tightening](#)

Source– The post is based on the article “**The monetary policy committee should slow its pace of tightening**” published in **Live Mint** on **16th November 2022**.

Syllabus: GS3 – Economy

News- The article explains monetary policy related matters.

What is the present Monetary Policy stance?

Indian monetary policy easing began in early 2001.

The pace of easing quickened after the pandemic struck in early 2020. They have increased the **benchmark repo rate by 190 basis points** since May 2022. It is due to a recovery in economic activity which allowed policymakers to focus more on the challenge of rising prices.

Monetary conditions have also become **tighter** since the evaporation of **excess liquidity** in the money market. It was also led by a sharp fall in **foreign exchange reserves**.

Why should RBI follow the policy of modest interest rate hike?

It would signal that the **battle against inflation** is still not over. The MPC meeting in October has already revealed how interest rate hikes in recent months have been curtailing domestic demand, rather than maintaining the recent pace of rate hikes.

Another argument is that there is not enough evidence whether the spike in inflation has had significant second-round effects. It usually happens through either the **labour market or corporate pricing power**.

The Indian labour market still has slack, especially if we look at the **labour force participation ratio** rather than the unemployment rate. **Wage growth** is likely to be muted in such a labour market.

On the other hand, companies have greater **pricing power** now because of the multiple shocks to small and informal enterprises over the past five years.

How does Indian inflation compare with the price situation in other major economies?

The numbers show that the Western world is in the midst of **full-fledged inflation shocks**. They chose oversized stimulus packages during the pandemic

For reasons specific to each country, **India, China and Japan are better off**.

A good thumb-rule is that countries with greater distance from their inflation targets as well as past inflation need to react more strongly to price pressures. For example, the US has more reason to push its real interest rate beyond its estimated neutral interest rate than India does right now.

What is the way forward?

The Indian MPC needs to figure out whether it wants to use the interest rate solely to **target inflation**, or also use it to **manage the exchange rate** as well as **financial stability**.

Ideally, RBI should manage the exchange rate by using its foreign exchange reserves. But the sharp fall in its reserve during the recent defence of the rupee. It means that the interest rate tool will have to be used for inflation control as well as curbing volatility of the exchange rate.

14. [Boosting production](#)

Source– The post is based on the article “**Boosting production**” published in **The Business Standard** on **16th November 2022**.

Syllabus: GS3- Industrial policy

Relevance: **Fertiliser sector**

News- The article explains the situation of the fertiliser sector in India. It tells about the issues related to fertiliser subsidy.

What is the current situation of fertiliser production in our country?

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Government has recently commissioned a fertiliser plant at Ramagundam in Telangana last week.

This is one of the five public-sector fertiliser plants that were taken up for revival under the New Urea Policy of 2015. These units would add over 6 million tonnes to the country's existing urea production capacity.

The new urea policy has helped enhance the **energy-use efficiency** of the existing gas-based urea units. It has led to an increase in their net output.

India is close to achieving **self-sufficiency** in urea production.

What are the issues related to fertiliser subsidy?

Government's **fertiliser subsidy bill** may still remain high. It is because of the unabated imports of phosphatic and potassic fertilisers and heavy discounts on their sale.

A bag of DAP, priced in the international market at around Rs 4,000, is being supplied to farmers at only around Rs 2,500.

What are some facts about nano urea?

It is developed and patented by Indian Farmers Fertiliser Cooperative (IFFCO). It contains nitrogen nutrient in a size that is **much thinner** than that in normal **granular urea**.

Government is lending full support for production and promotion of this product.

IFFCO has **licensed the technology** for the production of this liquid fertiliser to a couple of public-sector urea producers free of cost. The purpose is to make this critical plant nutrient available to farmers at cheaper rates.

One 500 ml bottle of nano urea is deemed equivalent to a bag of normal urea.

15. How we can further our efforts in curbing terror financing

Source– The post is based on the article “**How we can further our efforts in curbing terror financing**” published in **The Indian Express** on **16th November 2022**.

Syllabus: GS3- linkages of organised crime with terrorism

Relevance: Terror funding

News- The article explain the issue of terror funding.

What are new emerging challenges related to terrorism?

Amorphous terror groups are emerging a big threat.

Terrorist are using newer cyber linked methods of recruitment of radical elements.

The increasingly **lethal lone wolf attacks** are all adding to the threats emanating from extremist violent elements.

What are methods used by terrorist groups for global flow of funds?

Traditional channels– First, is direct smuggling of cash through international borders.

Second is the use of **hawala networks**.

Third is banking networks including SWIFT and other international channels.

Terrorist organizations raise money through several sources like travel agencies, money changers, real estate, retail outlets, NGOs, charitable trusts, and even from state sponsors.

Terrorists also derive funding from a variety of criminal activities ranging from low-level crime to organized fraud, narcotics smuggling, and illegal activities in failed states and other safe havens.

But now, swift technological developments in areas of **blockchain or cryptocurrencies** which transcend national boundaries and international currency systems have emerged as a new channel for financing terrorist.

What are global instruments used to tackle terror funding?

Financial Action Task Force (FATF) was formed in 1989 to tackle terror financing and money laundering.

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The UNSCR resolution 1267 in 1999 and UNSCR resolution 1373 in 2001 formed the bedrock of the financial sanctions regime for terrorist organizations and individuals.

FATF has developed its entire paradigm around the **word risk**. It used the United Nations Security Council sanctions against terrorists and terrorist organizations to begin to evolve a complex body of documentation in order to assess **technical compliance and effectiveness** of countries in implementing those UN designations.

What is the way forward resolve the issue of terror funding?

The first step to stop the flow of funds to terrorists is **to understand the funding requirements** of modern terrorist groups. The costs associated are not only for conducting terrorist attacks. These are also related to developing and maintaining a terrorist organization and its ideology.

Funds are required to promote a **militant ideology**, pay operatives and their families, arrange for their travel, train new members, forge documents, pay bribes, acquire weapons and stage attacks.

Accurate and **well linked financial intelligence** is needed to reveal the structure of terrorist groups and also the activities of individual terrorists.

16. OTT services should not have an unfair edge over Indian telcos

Source: The post is based on the article **“OTT services should not have an unfair edge over Indian telcos”** published in the **Livemint** on **17th November**.

Syllabus: GS 3 – Infrastructure: Energy, Ports, Roads, Airports, Railways etc.

Relevance: About the Draft Telecom Bill and status of (telecom service providers) TSPs and OTTs (over-the-top).

News: The proposed regulation of over-the-top (OTT) communication services in India's Draft Telecom Bill has stirred up an intense debate.

About the draft Indian Telecommunication Bill

Read here: [Draft Telecommunication Bill, 2022 – Explained, pointwise](#)

What are the concerns associated with the draft Indian Telecommunication Bill?

Read here: [Draft Telecom Bill enhances unease of doing biz amid regulatory overlaps](#)

Why TSPs and OTTs should be seen as one entity?

This is because **a)** All digital technology-enabled voice communication today requires applications of data, **b)** The external environment and associated risks are the same for both the telecom service providers (TSPs) and OTTs. So, they need to be governed by the same statutory agencies/bodies which oversee security aspects.

Findings of Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI): TRAI's consultation paper on 'Regulatory Framework for Over-the-Top (OTT) Services' said that **a)** The technological differences between OTTs and TSPs have led to a situation where both TSPs and OTT service providers become capable of providing similar services to customers, **b)** The communication OTT players are actually competing with traditional TSPs. But the TSPs bear the costs for the infrastructure, and spectrum management and also pay licence fees for use of spectrum.

Department of Telecom committee view on OTT platforms: [Voice over Internet Protocol] OTT communication services bypass the existing licensing and regulatory regime. Thus creating a non-level playing field between TSPs and OTT providers despite both competing for the same services.

So, Each has its own value and should be looked at through similar lenses. They must contribute similarly too.

Read more: [Draft telecom Bill: A move that turns back the clock](#)

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Why TSPs are in a disadvantageous position compared to OTTs?

1) OTT players can pass on the cost to their consumers, **2)** TSPs are not allowed to monetize the data of their subscribers as per Indian laws, while OTT services do so at will, **3)** TSPs continue to invest heavily in infrastructure for high-tech networks that serve Indian citizens. On the other hand, OTTs make direct/indirect profits off these networks and use them towards their development, **4)** TSPs have exclusive rights of the spectrum, interconnection, right of way, unique numbering resources, etc, but OTT services don't, **5)** TSPs pay exorbitant levies and taxes (of above 30% of their revenues). TSPs also contribute to India's Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF). However, OTT services, despite their growing revenues, pay nothing to the government, and **6)** The average revenue per user of TSPs is abysmally low, even as they must make large capital investments in spectrum and infrastructure and also pay taxes/levies, while OTT profits usually go abroad, and they have no such commitments.

So, under the new Draft Telecom Bill, India must introspect and decide.

17. [Handling external shocks – on economic policy](#)

Source– The post is based on the article “**Handling external shocks**” published in the **Business Standard** on **16th November 2022**.

Syllabus: GS3- Economy

Relevance: Global economic scenario

News– The article explains impacts of rapid tightening of monetary policy by US and other Advanced Economies. It also explains its implications for India.

Why blindly following the federal reserve policy is not appropriate?

This is designed for the **excess macro-stimulus** and **tight labour markets** in the US. Moreover, interest parity holds tightly only for AEs that are fully open to capital flows.

following the Fed involves letting the **exchange rate** depreciate while tightening monetary and financial conditions. But this could aggravate **external shocks**, creating sharp price movements in thin markets.

A **sharp currency depreciation** hurts those who have borrowed abroad but a sharp interest rate rise hurts domestic debtors. It can push **leveraged sectors** into crisis.

Exporters who typically sell in contested markets gain little, while the cost of commodity imports that are invoiced in dollars rise immediately.

We are seeing the consequences of **demand over-stimulus** that ignored **supply-chain bottlenecks** in advanced economies' response to pandemic.

The belief that Advanced Economies can borrow at low rates regardless of the size of borrowing ignores history. Even in the US, which has the advantage of being able to print dollars, inflation, interest rates and deficits were high in the 1970s. Fiscal rules were implemented later and debt was brought down.

What is the pragmatic policy that is needed by India?

To sustain growth while keeping inflation low, **supply-side reforms** must continue. It should be supported by **counter-cyclical tax rates**, a larger share of expenditure on **capacity building**, real repo rate that are based on expected inflation, **competitive real exchange rate** without **excessive nominal depreciation** and **capital flow management policies**.

A widening of the **current account deficit** due to a persistent rise in oil prices does require reduction in aggregate demand as well as depreciation, but within limits. Continuous depreciation is **inflationary** and results in real appreciation, which encourages more imports.

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Therefore, to reduce deficits **multiple policy levers** are needed. More emphasis should be on **longer-term sustainable measures** such as encouraging exports, reducing **oil intensity** and energy imports.

Why is this type of policy feasible for India?

Growth and reform induced **tax buoyancy** gives **fiscal space** consistent with adequate consolidation.

India does not have full **capital account convertibility**. So, **capital flow management policies** can be fine-tuned to selectively encourage or discourage different types of flows.

Micro and macroprudential regulation can be relaxed to counter tightening of financial conditions due to outflows. Reserve loss further tightens **liquidity** but can be sterilised by increasing holdings of government securities. The surplus reserves are adequate for cyclical US tightening.

Policy cannot work against fundamentals. **Rupee depreciation and stock market correction** have been less than in most other advanced and emerging markets. This indicates that markets are factoring in India's comparatively better prospects and lower inflation.

18. COP27: To decarbonise by 2050, India needs investments of at least \$7 trn

Source: The post is based on an article "**COP27: To decarbonise by 2050, India needs investments of at least \$7 trn**" published in **Business Standard** on **18th November 2022**.

Syllabus: GS 3- Climate Change

Relevance: concerns associated with transition from fuel-based economy to green economy.

News: India's transition from fuel-based economy to a green economy and achieving net zero by 2070 is based on multiple factors and challenges.

What are the climate targets set by India?

India announced its goal to become a **net-zero emitter by 2070** last year at COP26. It will be the last major economy to get there.

India has committed to reduce its power generation by half from fossil fuel-based plants by 2030. Thus, achieving a **45 per cent reduction** in emissions intensity from 2005 levels. However, there are challenges in achieving these.

What are the challenges with India?

Investment: Power, industry and agriculture are the three major sectors that emit around 80 percent of the carbon emission. India is also currently the world's third largest emitter of CO2 even though its emission per capita is less than the US and China.

Further, India has the second highest emissions intensity or volume of emissions per unit of GDP after Russia. The US and Japan by comparison are lower.

Therefore, decarbonizing the economy will require **investments of \$7-12 trillion** until 2050 which is around 6 percent of GDP.

Economic growth: India's economy is expected to grow further by 2070 and this will **increase demand** across power and steel sectors which would ultimately **increase the greenhouse gas emission**.

About 70 percent of India's emissions are driven by **six sectors**: power, steel, automotive, aviation, cement and agriculture. Out of these electricity generation contributes 34 per cent, industry at 28 per cent and agriculture at 18 per cent.

Therefore, India would need **to create 500 Gw of non-fossil fuel-based plants** to achieve net zero.

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Changing Priorities: Electric vehicles (EVs) are effective only if they are powered by renewables and not coal. Vehicular emission in India only accounts for 9 per cent of total greenhouse gas emissions.

Therefore, there is a need to look at bigger emitters of greenhouse gas such as power, agriculture, etc.

Moreover, India has reduced the emissions intensity by 1.3 percent of GDP per year over the last decade. However, this speed of reduction is not enough.

What is the way forward?

First, India needs **proper implementation** of the existing policies because climate action must match with the intensity of the climate crisis.

Second, India needs to **increase its renewable capacity** by five times to 50 Gw per year in 2030 and nine times a year in 2040 to achieve net zero by 2070.

Third, all two-wheelers, three-wheelers and light truck sales may need to be electric early in the next decade and all car sales electric by 2035.

- The **cost of the battery needs to decline** by 40 percent in 2030 and **charging stations would need to increase** 40 times by 2040 to boost the sales of EVs.

Fourth, the government should provide **subsidies to green hydrogen** along with carbon pricing. However, there will be challenges with this transition as employment, tax revenues from the automotive fuel would decline with increased issues on land acquisition for renewable plants.

19. [Three decades after military opened doors to women, they remain at courts' mercy](#)

Source– The post is based on the article “**Three decades after military opened doors to women, they remain at courts' mercy**” published in **The Indian Express** on **18th November 2022**.

Syllabus: GS3- Security

Relevance: Women empowerment

News- The article explains the issue of women induction into armed forces.

What is the position of higher courts on this matter?

The Supreme Court yesterday directed the Centre and the Indian Air Force to consider granting **Permanent Commission** to 32 retired women Short Service Commission officers based on their suitability with the purpose of giving them pensionary benefits.

In 2010, Delhi HC directed the government to give permanent commission to women serving in the army.

What are steps taken by the government for induction of women into the army?

Women have been inducted into the army since 1992.

Government has followed a **piecemeal approach** for induction of women. It is taking decisions at various times on whether girls can enter the National Defence Academy, Sainik Schools or RIMC.

What are the issues related to women induction into the army?

Women have been allowed in combat in the Air Force, but we are yet to see women in **combat roles** in the army and navy. All career options in the armed forces are not offered to them.

They are not considered fit for many roles in the armed forces. There are doubts on their capabilities for core work of the army that is traditionally performed by males.

There still exist many gaps. Court has also not given full judgment about women's induction into the army.

What is the way forward?

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The military should **consolidate its position** on the matter. The policymakers need to go back to the drawing board and decide on all the cases as a whole rather than having to address the issue piecemeal.

20. [Why regulators must take a coordinated approach to protect financial consumers](#)

Source– The post is based on the article “**Why regulators must take a coordinated approach to protect financial consumers**” published in **The Indian Express** on **19th November 2022**.

Syllabus: GS3- Mobilisation of resources

Relevance: Financial services

News- The article explains the G20/OECD draft of the proposed revisions to their 2011 High-level Principles on Financial Consumer Protection.

What has been proposed by G20/OECD released a draft of the proposed revisions to their 2011 High-level Principles on Financial Consumer Protection (FCP)?

The 2011 principles covered 10 thematic areas reflecting the market and consumer issues, including **equitable and fair consumer treatment, disclosures and transparency, and financial education**.

In 2022, two additional principles were included, that are **access and inclusion and quality financial products**.

The updated principles also recommend intervention by regulators in certain high risk products, cultivating appropriate firm culture and using **behavioural insights** to better consumer outcomes.

These principles deal with three cross-cutting themes — **financial well-being, digitalisation and sustainable finance**.

What should be the consideration of FCP policies?

Financial well-being– FCP policies must contribute to overall financial well-being and resilience of consumers.

An effective FCP regime should provide information to consumers that is **adequate and understandable**. However, merely providing information for compliance is not enough, especially in India where financial literacy is low.

Digitalisation– FCP must factor in the increasing number of digital channels used by consumers to interact with financial products and services. The impact of greater use of **artificial intelligence** and other emerging technologies also needed to be considered.

Additionally, concerns regarding **redress of grievances** against payment service providers in the UPI ecosystem should be taken care of.

Sustainable finance– There is growing consumer demand for **sustainable financial investments**. Financial services providers are incorporating **environmental, social and governance factors** into their operations, products and services.

FCP recommends improved **transparency** to help consumers make informed choices.

Avoid greenwashing– The 2022 draft also warns against “**greenwashing**”. Financial regulators must monitor that corporations are not misleading consumers with false claims regarding progress towards climate targets.

What steps are taken by India regulators in this regard?

SEBI prescribes certain financial service providers to assess **customer suitability** and undertake **risk profiling** before providing services.

The RBI has released guidelines on digital lending. It has mandated entities providing digital lending services to have a grievance redress officer, assess a borrower’s creditworthiness before extending credit and allow a borrower to exit without penalty.

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SEBI has transitioned from “**business responsibility reporting**” to “**business responsibility and sustainability reporting**”. The purpose is to promote responsible **corporate governance** for climate change. Eligible companies under BRSR must provide **environmental sustainability** related disclosures, including a **sustainability performance report**.

21. Why and how the focus of our industrial policy needs to shift

Source– The post is based on the article “**Why and how the focus of our industrial policy needs to shift**” published in **The Indian Express** on **19th November 2022**.

Syllabus: GS3- Changes in industrial policy and their effects on industrial growth

Relevance: Reforms in industrial sector

News- The article explains the important aspects that should be considered while designing the industrial policy.

Which aspects should be considered while designing industrial policy?

Job creation– The industries need to be very carefully selected. Many of the industries currently chosen to be under PLI are highly **capital and skill intensive**. **Goal of job creation** for our massive numbers of unskilled workers should be considered.

Job creation or even economic growth may not always be the main goal of industrial policy. In a world of **geo-political conflicts and supply chain disruptions**, **national security** is often considered a major goal. But unnecessary subsidies should be avoided.

Disciplining the firms– In **policy implementation**, there is a need for **monitoring the performance** of the target firms. We have to be strict with non-performing firms. If necessary, we can withdraw support from them. It requires extra efforts that go beyond the **traditional culture of bureaucracy** in India.

We have to be careful while disciplining the firms. They should not become **white elephants** or they acquire too much market power. South Korea and Taiwan used the discipline of success in export markets to nudge the firms supported by their industrial policy to have international standards of quality and cost-consciousness. They followed a **stick-and-carrot policy**: The stick of export market discipline and the carrot of generous credit subsidies.

Soft industrial policies- These are policies like encouraging research and development, extension services, vocational training, improving regulations and infrastructure are needed. The goal should be to develop domestic policies of coordination that improve **productivity** more than interventions that distort prices.

soft industrial policies need to be customised to **local decentralised contexts**, particularly when you want to help small and medium sized firms.

Focus on green products– The **2017 United Nations publication on Green Industrial Policy** suggests many examples of new green products and service opportunities that have a great deal of job-creating potential. These are from renewable energy generation and storage, bioplastics, decentralised miniature electric grids, technologies of drip irrigation and rainfall harvesting, the reinforcement of sea walls, green energy-powered three-wheeler public transportation, and so on.

The support for industrial policy has to be **nuanced, multi-faceted and vigilant** in its disciplining functions.

22. Vikram-S launch

Source- The post is based on the articles “**The Vikram-S launch opens exciting possibilities for space exploration in India**” published in **The Indian Express** and “**The Skyroot Of Our Final Frontier**” published in **The Times of India** on **19th November 2022**.

Syllabus: GS3- Awareness in the field of space

Relevance: Participation of private sector in space exploration

News- The article explains the importance of the private sector in manufacturing quick launch capabilities for small satellites.

What is the potential of the Indian private sector in the space sector?

India has more than 350 private firms in the space sector making it the fifth-largest in the world in this respect after the US, UK, Canada and Germany. But the country's share in the global space economy is barely 3%.

According to this year's **Economic Survey**, the country's space regulator has received close to 40 proposals from the private sector and the academia for activities ranging from manufacturing launch vehicles to **earth observation applications**.

Other private firms are close to emulating Skyroot. Agnikula Cosmos, a Chennai-based start-up, is planning the commercial launch of its rocket Agnibaan in the first quarter of next year.

What are the steps taken by the government to increase private sector participation?

The government intends to increase the country's share in the global space economy to 10 per cent by 2030.

In June 2020, it approved the **participation of private players** in all sectors of space activity. It also instituted the **Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre**, a unit of ISRO, to enable private companies to become independent players.

What is the utility of small satellites?

Small satellites can be assembled today in less than a week at a fraction of the cost of conventional satellites.

Currently, ISRO launches less than ten rockets each year. India must hit double-digit launches each year to stay competitive with its peers.

Small rockets allow light payloads weighing 500 kg or less to be placed precisely in preferred orbits.

What are the advantages of rapid launch capabilities?

A decade ago, **rapid and tactical space launch capabilities** were considered extremely difficult to acquire due to the high costs of constructing rockets. They are now a reality because of innovations like 3D printing of components and carbon-fibre body construction.

The primary use is for **military purposes**. During a conflict with an adversary, India's communications assets might be destroyed by an adversary's **offensive cyberattacks, kinetic kill capabilities or directed energy weapons**.

This would be requiring quick replacement. In such cases, accessing reliable rockets launched on short notice becomes a **strategic necessity**.

Other use cases could include the deployment of small satellites for **surveillance of borders** during a crisis.

For small satellites, we can not rely on vehicles designed for satellites weighing around 1500 kg to launch these satellites.

At present ISRO's **Small Satellite Launch Vehicle** is the only rocket in the small launch vehicle range capable of delivering a payload of up to 500 kg into orbit. But its tech demonstration mission earlier this year failed.

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SSLV is a three-stage rocket powered by solid rocket motors. But having a solid propellant rocket for quick response comes with limitations. We need more innovative launch vehicles.

What is the way forward?

Private sector participation is necessary for making India a thriving space power.

GoI must remain consistent with its current policy to achieve its goals.

Developing an ecosystem for private players will not be possible without ISRO's support. In the US, NASA still reserves a part of its budget for such enterprises.

There is a need for **close collaboration** between India's premier space research institution and private players.

23. [Yes, the Indian Air Force needs a new doctrine](#)

Source: The post is based on an article "**Yes, the Indian Air Force needs a new doctrine**" published in **The Hindu** on **19th November 2022**.

Syllabus: GS 3 – Security

Relevance: challenges with the Indian Air Force.

News: There has been an increase in the indigenization of the defense sectors in India which is leading India towards the Atmanirbhar in defense.

But the doctrine of Indian Air Force (IAF) is old and it needs to be revised to meet the current challenges.

What are the challenges with the IAF?

Weaponization of space: There is a need to examine the role of IAF as space would be a major source of conflict in the future. The weaponization of space with emphasis on unmanned platforms and space assets needs to be addressed.

Capital: Technologies have been increasing with the development of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML). Therefore, including these advanced technologies would require **good investment** which would be a challenge in the future.

Integration: Department of Military Affairs and Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) are the new areas that require proper integration with the military forces including IAF. The creation of these two areas should not act as a hurdle for the IAF.

Further, **Airborne Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR)** and **precision attack capabilities** of the IAF would need to be merged effectively.

Threat: India faces two major threats: **Pakistan and China**. Therefore, there is a need for **joint operations** with friendly nations including commitments in partnerships such as the Quad.

Conflicts: India should also be ready to face future conflicts with other developing economies. India in the future would need raw material from other countries to fulfill its requirement which may be the reason for the conflict from other competitors of the world.

Technology: Multiple technologies in all areas such as cyber, space, electromagnetic spectrum, etc. require proper approach to meet the national objectives. Therefore, IAF would require a proper synchronization with these technologies.

Human Resource: The IAF personnel should be trained well to handle new technologies and information from these technologies should not act as a stress for them.

Politics: IAF new doctrine should also focus on keeping IAF out of politics as **national defence is a national endeavour**.

Combat Enablers: There is a need to **integrate combat enablers** such as aerial refuellers, Airborne Warning and Control System, transport and helicopter fleets, etc. with the air force. Neglecting them would act as a disadvantage for India as they are required for proper military functioning.

Therefore, looking at challenges of security and limited finance IAF needs a revised doctrine.