



Mains Marathon
Compilation

21st to 26th November, 2022

Mains Marathon Compilation for the Month of November, (Fourth Week) 2022

- 1. The COP27 agreement on loss and damage is significant, but the meeting did not address several other pressing issues. Analyze the statement.**
- 2. Highlight the key takeaways from the recently concluded summit of the Group of 20 nations in Bali, Indonesia. What lessons can India learn from it?**
- 3. Do you think the Digital Personal Data Protection Bill, 2022 is an improvement over Personal Data Protection Bill, 2019? Provide reasons in support of your arguments.**
- 4. Highlight the strategic and ecological significance of the Great Nicobar project. Also, discuss the concerns associated with it.**
- 5. What are the reasons behind the increasing suicide rate in India? How does the National Suicide Prevention Strategy aim to tackle this menace?**
- 6. Highlight the significance of the India-Australia Free Trade Agreement.**
- 7. Critically analyze the mechanisms available to resolve inter-state boundary conflicts in India?**
- 8. Processed food regulation is too lenient to make a difference to snacking's serious health costs. Comment.**
- 9. Millets are considered to be "powerhouses of nutrition". In the light of the statement, comment on the significance of the Millet for India.**
- 10. The Constitution has a clear imprint on day-to-day life, though we may not be really conscious of it. Discuss the Significance of inculcating awareness of the constitution among the common citizens.**

Q.1) The COP27 agreement on loss and damage is significant, but the meeting did not address several other pressing issues. Analyze the statement.

IE, TheHindu,

Introduction: Contextual introduction.

Body: Explain why COP27 agreement on loss and damage is significant. Also write several other pressing issues that are not addressed by COP27 meeting.

Conclusion: Write a way forward.

Loss and damage (L&D) refers to impacts of climate change that cannot be avoided either by mitigation or adaptation. They also include not only economic damage to property but also loss of livelihoods, and the destruction of biodiversity and sites that have cultural importance. The countries at the COP27 in Egypt have decided to establish a **'Loss and Damages' fund.**

Why COP27 agreement on loss and damage is significant?

- The fund will be aimed at **helping** developing countries that are **“particularly vulnerable”** to the effects of climate change.
- The establishment of such a fund could have **positive repercussions** in climate circles and beyond. For example, several Pacific Island nations have been pushing for the International Court of Justice to strengthen international laws to include climate change. The establishment of a loss and damage fund could augment those arguments.
- It also involves loss of livelihoods, the eradication of biodiversity, and the demolition of culturally significant locations. This increases the potential for impacted **countries to seek compensation.**
- The fund would initially draw on contributions **from developed countries** (greatest emitters) and other private and public sources such as international financial institutions.

Other issues:

- The COP27 does mention that \$4 trillion will be required every year to meet the renewable energy targets till 2030. Yet, the rich countries are nowhere close to delivering on their commitment to provide \$100 billion every year.
- It leaves discussions for **how this fund is to be set up and who will pay** how much to it, for future COP negotiations.
- It is **not clear whether the new fund will be housed within the UNFCCC or outside** of it.
- The **definition of “particularly vulnerable”** is a bone of contention, with experts commenting that such distinctions only serve to sow divisions among developing countries, and that the fund should be open to all developing countries.

Even while the progress is gradual, nations must maintain their momentum and put up more effort to make sure that COPs continue to serve as credible catalysts.

Q.2) Highlight the key takeaways from the recently concluded summit of the Group of 20 nations in Bali, Indonesia. What lessons can India learn from it?

Business Standard

Introduction: Contextual introduction.

Body: Write the key takeaways from the recently concluded summit of the Group of 20 nations in Bali, Indonesia. Also write what lessons India can learn from it.

Conclusion: Write a way forward.

G20 members currently account for nearly **80% of world GDP, 75% of global trade, and 60% of the global population.** Next year the “Troika” of G-20 will be made up of emerging

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economies for the first time with **India, Indonesia and Brazil**. The motto for the Bali G-20 summit is **Recover Together, Recover Stronger**.

The key takeaways from the recently concluded summit of the G20 nations in Bali, Indonesia are as follows:

- **Condemning Russian aggression:** leaders adopted a declaration deploring Russia's aggression in Ukraine "in the strongest terms" and **demanding its unconditional withdrawal**. Most members stressed that it is causing immense human suffering and exacerbating existing fragilities in the global economy - constraining growth, increasing inflation, disrupting supply chains, heightening energy and food insecurity, and elevating financial stability risks.
- **U.S.-China ties on better footing:** major differences, especially over Taiwan, trade restrictions and technology transfers, still the two agreed to keep communications open and avoid confrontation.
- **Focus on global economy:** The G20 economies agreed to pace interest rate rises carefully to avoid spillovers and warned of "increased volatility" in currency moves. They said further fiscal stimulus measures should be "temporary and targeted".
- **Food security:** The leaders promised to take **coordinated action** to address food security challenges and applauded the **Black Sea grains initiative**.
- **Climate change:** G20 leaders agreed to pursue efforts to limit the global temperature increase to 1.5 degrees Celsius.

What lessons can India learn from it?

- Like Indonesia, India too needs to **lay the groundwork** for dealing with the agenda well in advance.
- The G20 agenda must not be driven by the West or by Moscow and Beijing. Instead, it should be **driven by middle powers** such as Argentina, Mexico, Saudi Arabia, Brazil, etc.
- India must **find like-minded allies** like the Indonesians clearly relied on the Indians.
- India should **underline the importance** of the G-20.

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

Q.3) Do you think the Digital Personal Data Protection Bill, 2022 is an improvement over Personal Data Protection Bill, 2019? Provide reasons in support of your arguments.

The Hindu

Introduction: Contextual introduction.

Body: Explain how the Digital Personal Data Protection Bill, 2022 is an improvement over Personal Data Protection Bill, 2019. Also write several issues in it.

Conclusion: Write a way forward.

The Union Government has released the fourth iteration of a data protection law in India, now called the Digital Personal Data Protection Bill, 2022. The Personal Data Protection Bill, 2018, was proposed by the **Justice Srikrishna Committee**.

An improvement:

- **Cross border data flows:** The PDP Bill, 2019 provided for local storage of data within India's geography. The DPDP Bill, 2022 allows for cross border data flow to "countries and territories" notified by the Central government.

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- **Regulatory framework:** the current draft considerably reduces the scope of the proposed Data Protection Board of India (DPB). Out of the 22 clauses in the DPDP Bill, the Central government has been provided with rule making power in around 14 clauses.
- **Disempowering the data principals:** the DPDP Bill, 2022 does not allow them to seek compensation from data fiduciaries for harms they have suffered due to unlawful processing.
- **Penalties:** the quantum of penalties that can be imposed, with the cap being placed at ₹500 crore, are of a much higher magnitude than provided for under the PDP Bill, 2019. It places **duties on data principals**.
- The bill recognises the **data principal's right to postmortem privacy** (Withdraw Consent) which was missing from the PDP Bill, 2019.

Concerns:

- **Age of digital consent** continues to be 18. It would result in **unequal access to the internet** and, finally, requiring consent from parents would hamper autonomous development of children. Such restrictions are in violation of India's obligations under the Convention on Rights of the Child.
- It does not provide for the **right of data portability** which empowered data principals by allowing them to choose between different platforms and enhanced competition to increase consumer welfare.
- It **subsumes the right to be forgotten under the right to erasure**. This compromises on the right to freedom of speech and expression of other individuals.
- Moreover, the DPDP Bill, 2022 **fails to provide adequate legislative guidance** for framing these rules. This leads to the concern of excessive delegation of legislation.
- The Central government **exercises greater control** over the proposed Data Protection Board of India (DPB) because it will appoint members of the DPB, set out the terms and conditions of appointment and lay out its functions.

The exemption provided under the Bill should be “just, fair, reasonable and proportionate procedure”. So, providing greater power to the government as opposed to an independent statutory authority, need to be re-examined.

Q.4) Highlight the strategic and ecological significance of the Great Nicobar project. Also, discuss the concerns associated with it.

Indian Express

Introduction: Contextual introduction.

Body: Explain some strategic and ecological significance of the Great Nicobar project. Also write concerns associated with it.

Conclusion: Write a way forward.

Recently, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change gave environmental clearance for the development project on the strategically important Great Nicobar Island. A “**greenfield city**” has been proposed, including an **International Container Transshipment Terminal (ICTT)**, a greenfield international airport, a power plant, and a township for the personnel who will implement the project.

Strategic and ecological significance of the Great Nicobar project:

- The proposed port will allow Great Nicobar to participate in the regional and global maritime economy by becoming a **major player in cargo trans-shipment**.
- The port will **cater to tourism** as well. Roads, public transport, water supply and waste management facilities, and several hotels have been planned to cater to tourists.
- More than **1 lakh new direct jobs and 1.5 lakh indirect jobs** are likely to be created on the island over the period of development.

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- Great Nicobar is equidistant from Colombo to the southwest and Singapore to the southeast, and positioned close to the East-West international shipping corridor, through which a very large part of the world's shipping trade passes. The proposed ICTT can potentially become a **hub for cargo ships travelling** on this route.
- It is important for **national security and consolidation** of the Indian Ocean Region as increasing Chinese assertion in the Bay of Bengal and the Indo-Pacific.

Concerns:

- The proposed massive infrastructure development is in an ecologically important and **fragile region, including the felling of almost a million trees**. This is doubly significant because these are primary evergreen tropical forests with high biological diversity and also high endemism.
- The loss of tree cover will not only affect the flora and fauna on the island, it will also lead to **increased runoff and sediment deposits** in the ocean, **impacting the coral reefs** in the area.
- Environmentalists have also flagged the **loss of mangroves** on the island as a result of the development project.
- The project area is home to **rare flora and fauna**. These include the leatherback sea turtles, Nicobar megapode (a flightless bird endemic to the Nicobar islands), Nicobar Macaque and saltwater crocodiles.
- The project is likely to affect 1,761 people, including the indigenous Shompen and Nicobarese communities.

Given its physical location, the A&N Islands are the natural platform for collaboration between India and Southeast Asia. Proper steps should be followed to mitigate concerns associated with this project.

Q.5) What are the reasons behind the increasing suicide rate in India? How does the National Suicide Prevention Strategy aim to tackle this menace?

The Hindu 1, The Hindu 2

Introduction: Contextual introduction.

Body: Explain the reasons behind the increasing suicide rate in India. Also write how the National Suicide Prevention Strategy aims to tackle this menace.

Conclusion: Write a way forward.

In India, more than one lakh lives are lost every year to suicide. In the past three years, the suicide rate has increased from 10.2 to 11.3 per 1,00,000 population. As per **National Crime Records Bureau** statistics, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal and Karnataka have the highest percentage share of suicides (2018-2020), ranging between 8% to 11%.

Reasons behind the increasing suicide rate in India:

- **Family problems:** account for 34% of all suicide-related deaths. With urbanisation and the breakdown of the traditional large family support system, suicide tendencies increase.
- **Unemployment:** Unemployment rate in India is very high. In Sikkim, about 27% of the state's suicides were related to unemployment and found to be most common among those between 21 and 30 years of age.
- **Failure in exams:** Academic pressure, social pressures, and the breakdown of support systems are a few major causes of suicide among youth.
- **Lack of professional help:** According to a report by India Spend, India has 87% shortage in mental-health professionals and low public spending on mental health.
- Nearly 18% of all suicide-related deaths are due to **illness**.

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Recently, the **Ministry of Health and Family Welfare** announced a **National Suicide Prevention Strategy**, to achieve reduction in suicide mortality by 10% by 2030. The National Suicide Prevention Strategy is significant to tackle this menace:

- The strategy is in line with the **WHO's South East-Asia Region Strategy for suicide prevention**.
- The Strategy is etched with **evidence-based practices** to reduce the number of suicides and strings together multiple sectoral collaborations to provide a cohesive strategy and achieve the intended reduction in the number of suicides.
- It commits to establishing **effective surveillance mechanisms** within the next three years, and establishes psychiatric outpatient departments to provide suicide prevention services through the District Mental Health Programme in all districts within the next five years.
- The Strategy also intends to write in **mental health in the curriculum in educational institutions** within the next eight years.
- **Addressing issues relevant to India**, including access to pesticides, and alcoholism, has set the Strategy on the path towards achievement of the goals.
- Develop **community resilience and societal support** for suicide prevention.

States need to participate enthusiastically in the rollout of the Suicide Prevention Strategy to ensure its proper implementation of the strategy in the federal country.

Q.6) Highlight the significance of the India-Australia Free Trade Agreement.

Business Standard

Introduction: Contextual introduction.

Body: Explain the significance of the India-Australia Free Trade Agreement.

Conclusion: Write a way forward.

India and Australia signed an Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement (ECTA). Currently, Australia is the 17th largest trading partner of India and India is Australia's 9th largest trading partner. The ECTA is expected to increase trade between the two sides to \$45-50 billion over five years, from the current estimate of \$27 billion, and create over 10 lakh additional job opportunities.

Significance of the India-Australia Free Trade Agreement:

- **Boost to bilateral trade:** India is expected to get zero-duty access to Australia for its goods over five years. India will also allow Australia to export raw materials under preferential terms like coal and mineral ores.
- **Services sector:** It covers key areas of the Indian services sector like IT, ITES, business services, health, education and audio-visual services. STEM graduates, doctoral students will get 4 years of work visa in Australia. Postgraduate will get 3 years' work visa.
- **Pharmaceuticals sector:** India and Australia have agreed to enable **fast track approval** for patented, generic and biosimilar medicines. Both sides have agreed to audits of imports that require sanitary and phytosanitary inspection as per the law of the land.
- **Dispute Settlement Mechanism:** This is the first trade deal signed by India that has a compulsory review mechanism after 15 years of implementation.
- **Rules of origin:** Products should be "wholly obtained or produced in the territory of one or both of the parties". This section ensures that waste material will not be exported by either side unless they contribute to the production of any of the items listed in the ECTA. It aims at creating **anti-dumping measures**.
- **Strategic Importance:** ECTA will further boost India's partnership with Australia along with Japan in trilateral **Supply Chain Resilience Initiative (SCRI) and QUAD** Grouping along with U.SA. and Japan.

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ETCA will further cement the already deep, close and strategic relations between the two countries. It will significantly raise living standards, and improve the general welfare of the peoples of the two countries.

Q.7) Critically analyze the mechanisms available to resolve inter-state boundary conflicts in India?

The Hindu

Introduction: Contextual introduction.

Body: Explain some mechanisms available to resolve inter-state boundary conflicts in India. Also write associated issues.

Conclusion: Write a way forward.

According to the Union Home Ministry (MHA) 11 States and one Union Territory have boundary disputes between them and “occasional protests and incidents of violence are reported from some of the disputed border areas”. Recently, a dispute between Assam and Meghalaya at the border resulted into loss of lives. Also, a border dispute between Karnataka and Maharashtra is boiling.

Available mechanisms to resolve inter-state boundary conflicts:

- Inter-state border disputes can be resolved by the states themselves or by the Centre through dialogue and political settlements.
- **Inter-state council:** Under **Article 263** of the Constitution, the Inter-state council is **expected to inquire and advise** on disputes, discuss subjects common to all states and make recommendations for better policy coordination.
- **Judicial mechanism:** **Article 131** confers, on the Supreme Court of India, exclusive jurisdiction to deal with disputes which involves any question (whether of law or of fact), on which the existence or extent of a legal right depends.
- **Zonal Councils:** under the **States Re-organisation Act, 1956**, five Zonal Councils have been set up. Besides this, a North Eastern Council has been set up under the **North Eastern Council Act, 1971**.

Issues:

- These conflicts are **rooted in reorganisation of states**. Initially the states were reorganised on linguistic lines and later over other issues. It left many matters unresolved over borders and river water sharing.
- The zonal councils with CMs, although meet regularly, it is not enough. For example, Maharashtra and Karnataka fall in different zones.
- The national level mechanisms like **Inter-State Councils (ISCs) are ineffective**. In the last 16 years, just two meetings of ISCs have been held. It is merely an **advisory body** with no bindings on either the centre or the state. Thus, often its recommendations are ignored by the government at the centre as well as the states.

Way forward:

- Regular meetings of Inter-State Councils (ISCs) must be held.
- Zonal councils need to be revived to discuss the matters of common concern to states in each zone—matters relating to social and economic planning, border disputes, inter-state transport, etc.

Q.8) Processed food regulation is too lenient to make a difference to snacking's serious health costs. Comment.

Times of India

Introduction: Contextual introduction.

Body: Explain how the processed food regulation is too lenient to make a difference to snacking's serious health costs.

Conclusion: Write a way forward.

The comprehensive national nutrition survey-2016 states that more than half the children between the ages of 5 and 19 show biomarkers of non-communicable diseases. And, consuming highly processed foods increases the risk of obesity, diabetes, hypertension, heart diseases, stroke, and kidney disease. The non-communicable diseases account for 60% of all deaths in the country.

Too lenient to make a difference:

- **Limited ability to control quality and safety:** The sheer number of players, especially in the large unorganized segment, involved in the food value-chain, makes implementation of quality and safety norms difficult.
- **High limits:** Lifestyle diseases like diabetes, hypertension and cardiac ailments are already at alarming levels but FSSAI limits for permissible sugar, salt and fat content in processed foods are very high.
- **Long time for FOPL:** FSSAI has given the snack industry a long four-year-period before front of packet labelling (FOPL) becomes mandatory. Moreover, 'positive nutrients' may mask the negative impact of high fat, salt and sugar in the food and the industry will use it to **mislead the consumer**.
- **Labelling format:** The labelling format appears to be aimed only at individuals who are literate and nutritionally aware. Further, limited general and nutrition literacy mean understanding of the text-intensive nutrient information is difficult.
- **Issues with star rating:** the positive factors for a higher rating like presence of vegetables, fruits, nuts, millets, fibres, etc are no consolation if the sugar, salt or fat content are also high in the same product.
- FSSAI's **baseline reference value** for food risk factors at 21 gms per 100 gms serving for sugar in solid foods is **too high** considering that WHO had recommended keeping daily sugar intake to below 25 gms ideally.

Government should consider using taxation as an instrument to discourage junk foods and incentivise healthy food as regular tax hikes on cigarettes have helped discentivise smoking. Also recommended dietary allowance (RDA) claims of the packaged food industry need rigorous laboratory testing.

Q.9) Millets are considered to be "powerhouses of nutrition". In the light of the statement, comment on the significance of the Millet for India.

Indian Express

Introduction: Contextual introduction.

Body: Explain the significance of the Millet for India.

Conclusion: Write a way forward.

Millets is used to describe small-grained cereals like sorghum (jowar), pearl millet (bajra), little millet (kutki), finger millet (ragi/ mandua), etc. Millets are mainly a **kharif crop in India**. They have high nutritional value. The Agriculture Ministry has also declared millets as "**Nutri Cereals**". The year **2023** will be celebrated as the **International Year of Millets**.

Significance of the Millet for India:

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- **Social benefits:** Millets possess immense potential in the battle against poverty and provide food, nutrition, fodder and livelihood security. In rainfed farming areas, millet cultivation provides livelihood to 50% of tribal and rural population.
- **Millets market:** India is the largest global producer with a 41% market share. It is estimated that the millets market is set to grow from its current market value of more than USD 9 billion to over USD 12 billion by 2025.
- **Restoration of ecosystems and sustainability:** Land degradation has been a major problem in India. Drought-tolerant crops (like millets) with low dependence on chemical inputs would put far less pressure on ecosystems.
- **Biofuel and climate resilience:** Millets also offer a significant cost advantage over maize as a feedstock for bio-ethanol production. They have higher photosynthetic efficiency. Their potential yield is unaffected by higher carbon dioxide levels.
- **Addressing SDGs:** Millet farming has led to women's empowerment. The Odisha Millet Mission saw 7.2 million women emerge as 'agripreneurs'.
- **Nutritional benefits:** They are a rich source of macronutrients and micronutrients like calcium, protein and iron. They have a **low glycemic index** that prevents type 2 diabetes. They can help to prevent cardiovascular diseases, lower blood pressure.
- **Water efficient:** They require less water. It is about one-third of rice, wheat and sugarcane.
- Boosting millet cultivation will **empower the average farmer** and achieve the objectives of enhancing incomes and improving crop diversification.

There is a need to promote **agribusiness startup incubation centres** and increase popular awareness of benefits of millets among consumers. We have to enhance millet cultivation. There is a need to increase crop area under millet cultivation.

Q.10) The Constitution has a clear imprint on day-to-day life, though we may not be really conscious of it. Discuss the Significance of inculcating awareness of the constitution among the common citizens.

The Hindu

Introduction: Contextual introduction.

Body: Explain the significance of inculcating awareness of the constitution among the common citizens.

Conclusion: Write a way forward.

A Constitution helps serve as a set of principles, rules and procedures on which there is a consensus. These form the basis according to which the people want the country to be governed and the society to move on. This includes not only an agreement on the type of government but also on certain ideals that the country should uphold.

Significance of inculcating awareness of the constitution among the common citizens are as follows:

- Every individual in our society should be aware of their rights which will **help people to vote for the right government**. With the help of Constitutional awareness, an individual can be a **responsible citizen**.
- Constitutional awareness is important because each generation needs to know not only the **rights and privileges** granted by the Constitution, but also the obligations of its citizens.
- The constitution contains provisions relating to the **powers and duties of government**, the relations between government and people and the rights and duties of people.
- This helps in **maintaining discipline in the society**, makes government responsible and makes people aware that the government belongs to them.

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- The importance of fundamental duties is that they define the **moral obligations of all citizens** to help in the promotion of the spirit of patriotism and to uphold the unity of India.
- Constitutional knowledge allows young people to understand how they fit into the world around them — and the role civic responsibility plays in Indian society.
- It allows for the **greatest level of transparency** and the ability for students to citizens between the varying quality of information sources.

The Constitution should get **due recognition** across the educational system. We should not restrict ourselves to symbolism. We should look at the substantive issues dealt with by the Constitution.