



**Mains Marathon**  
**Compilation**

**December, 2023**

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**Analyze the intersection of disability with social, economic, and gender vulnerabilities in India. How does this intersectionality impact the formulation of policies for the disabled?**

**Introduction:** Briefly describe the context of the question

**Body:** Analyse the intersectionality of disability with various factors and their impact

**Conclusion:** Way forward

Disability refers to a condition or impairment—physical, cognitive, sensory, emotional, or a combination thereof—that significantly limits an individual's ability to perform one or more major life activities. Approximately 1.3 billion individuals worldwide, or almost the whole population of India, are living with some form of disability. Individuals with disabilities have greater rates of poverty, limited access to opportunities and education, informality, and other forms of social and economic discrimination.

**Analysis of the intersectionality and its impact on policy formulation**

- **Social Intersectionality:** Individuals with disabilities frequently experience discrimination and social stigma, which makes them ineligible for jobs, education, and community involvement, among other facets of society. People with disabilities experience social isolation due to limited accessibility and unfavourable societal attitudes, which has an impact on their mental health and general well-being.
- **Economic Intersectionality:** Because of discrimination, inaccessible workplaces, and a lack of accommodations, people with disabilities frequently face obstacles while trying to get employment prospects. The absence of inclusive policies makes disabled people more economically vulnerable and makes it more difficult for them to become financially independent.
- **Gender Intersectionality:** Due to double discrimination based on both gender and disability, women with impairments are less able to access resources and are more susceptible to societal biases. Access to reproductive healthcare may be a barrier for women with impairments, which can create further issues with family planning and maternal health.

**Impact on Policy Formulation**

- **Inclusive Education:** To guarantee that people with disabilities have equitable access to education, policies must promote inclusive practices, accessible infrastructure, and the appropriate support services.
- **Employment Policies:** To improve the employability of people with disabilities, governments should create and put into place policies that support inclusive hiring practices, appropriate workplace accommodations, and skill development initiatives.
- **Healthcare Accessibility:** To ensure that people with disabilities, particularly women, have access to adequate and inclusive healthcare services, policies must concentrate on reducing healthcare inequities.
- **Initiatives for Social Inclusion:** To counteract social stigma and promote an inclusive society, it is imperative to implement initiatives that raise awareness, increase sensitivity, and facilitate community integration.

**Conclusion**

The goal of social justice cannot be achieved without the inclusion of persons with disabilities in all spheres of development, starting with rural areas and rural resilience. Projects like SPARK, unique ID for persons with disabilities (UDID) card, robust legal framework, and engaging the private sector are some of the ways to promote inclusive development for the disabled.

**Critically examine the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Home Affairs' recommendation to re-criminalize adultery on gender-neutral grounds. What are the implications of this recommendation on the legal and social fabric of India?**

**Introduction:** Give context of the question

**Body:** Implications of recriminalizing adultery on gender neutral lines.

**Conclusion:** Way forward

Parliamentary Committee recently suggested criminalizing adultery on gender-neutral lines thereby making both men and women equally culpable under the law to safeguard the sanctity of the institution of marriage. This comes after a five-judge Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court unanimously decriminalized adultery in 2018 on several grounds including discrimination. In ***Joseph Shine vs Union of India***, a five-judge Bench of the Supreme Court unanimously struck down Section 497 (adultery provision) of the IPC on grounds that included discrimination.

#### How does it impact other aspects?

- **Gender Neutrality:** The goal of achieving gender neutrality is to guarantee that men and women are treated equally in the eyes of the law. Still, it's unclear if re-criminalizing adultery promotes gender equality or if it just upholds an unjust legal system that restricts individual freedoms.
- **Impact on Privacy:** Making adultery a crime raises concerns about how the government may meddle in private matters and restrict people's right to privacy. Opponents contend that these rules are excessively invasive and that the government has no business controlling consenting adult relationships.
- **Shifting Cultural Norms:** The discussion surrounding adultery laws is a reflection of cultural norms and beliefs. While opponents contend that legal frameworks should change to reflect the evolving public perspectives on partnerships, proponents of re-criminalization may argue that it is in line with traditional values and the sanctity of marriage.

#### Impact on legal and social fabric

- **Legal impact:** Re-criminalizing adultery could have negative legal repercussions for anyone, regardless of gender. This could involve court cases, fines, and possible effects on divorce processes.
- **Social impact:** Making adultery a crime might exacerbate social stigma and moral judgments about relationships outside of marriage. People's relationships, personal lives, and mental health may be impacted by this.
- **Increase in divorce cases:** Making adultery a crime could reduce no of divorce cases and could even lower no of suicides which are often the result of sarcastic comments of society to the spouses of parties indulged in adultery.

#### Conclusion

The suggestion that adultery be criminalized in India based on gender would require a thorough analysis of the social, moral, and legal ramifications. Maintaining equality, upholding individual autonomy, and protecting marital sacredness all require a delicate balance. Civil society, legal professionals, and public discourse all have a significant influence on how such policy decisions are shaped and how they affect the nation's legal and social structures.

### Evaluate the potential benefits of crop diversification and multi-cropping systems rooted in agroecology principles for improving soil health, biodiversity, and farmers' nutritional security in India.

**Introduction:** Describe crop diversification briefly.

**Body:** Highlight benefits of crop diversification and multi-cropping system

**Conclusion:** Way forward

Crop diversification is the process of adding new crops or cropping systems to a farm's agricultural output while taking into account the various returns from value-added crops with complementary marketing prospects. By using this technique, farmers can increase their output and, consequently, their income. Crop diversification is recognized as a pro-environment, cost-effective, and reasonable approach to reducing uncertainty in agriculture, particularly due to climate change.

#### Benefits of crop diversification and multi-cropping systems

- **Improved Nutritional Security:** A wider variety of crops helps to fill in nutritional gaps by making a meal more diversified and nutrient-dense. Farmers can increase their overall economic stability by diversifying their revenue streams through the cultivation of a range of crops.
- **Socio-Economic Benefits:** One of the greatest options for improving the economic standing of farmers in the nation is crop diversification. The danger presented by shifting market prices is lessened by crop diversification. Reducing reliance on a single crop and fostering cooperative farming methods are two ways that diverse cropping systems foster community resilience.
- **Increased Biodiversity:** A variety of crops produces different microhabitats that are home to a variety of helpful insects, birds, and other creatures. This enhances the resilience and general health of the ecosystem. To preserve agricultural biodiversity, diverse cropping patterns can aid in the preservation of traditional and indigenous crop varieties.
- **Improved Soil Health:** A wide variety of soil organisms are drawn to a variable root exudate profile created by a diverse crop mix. As a result, the soil microbiome is healthier, and microbial diversity is increased. Improved ground cover from diverse crops with different root systems lowers soil erosion. This aids in preserving the fertility and structure of the soil.
- **Soil Fertility and Nutrient Cycling:** In multi-cropping systems, leguminous crops can fix atmospheric nitrogen, which lowers the requirement for synthetic fertilizers and improves soil fertility. Because various crops require different amounts of nutrients, there is less chance of nutrient depletion and the nutrient cycle can be sustained.

### Conclusion

The implementation of agroecology-based crop diversification and multi-cropping systems has the potential to enhance India's agricultural system's sustainability, resilience, and nutritional security. These methods adhere to ecological principles and assist farmers as well as the larger ecosystem in the long run by improving the environment and the socioeconomic situation.

### Critically examine the challenges faced by the transgender community in accessing healthcare in India, despite legal provisions for equal access.

**Introduction:** Give brief context to the question

**Body:** Highlight challenges faced by transgender community in accessing healthcare

**Conclusion:** Way forward

A Centre of Excellence for transgender healthcare is set to open at the All India Institute of Medical Science (AIIMS), located in New Delhi, in 2024. Structural hurdles, such as segregated infrastructure, a dearth of services, and healthcare personnel who lack proper training and sensitivity, prevent the population from accessing healthcare. In *NALSA v. Union of India* (2014), the community received legal recognition for the first time in India.

### Challenges faced by the transgender community in accessing healthcare

- **Discrimination and Stigma:** A lot of medical professionals have prejudices toward transgender people, which results in prejudiced views. This prejudice may lead to poor treatment, a refusal to offer essential services or even inferior care. The stigma that transgender people frequently experience in society can be reinforced in medical settings. This stigma has the potential to discourage people from seeking medical attention and to erode their trust in medical experts.
- **Lack of Sensitization and Training:** Medical personnel frequently lack sufficient transgender healthcare training. This includes recognizing the diversity of genders, being culturally competent, and being aware of certain health requirements that could result in insufficient or improper care. The issue may be made worse by healthcare organizations' potential lack of policies or programs to raise staff awareness and foster inclusive workplaces.
- **Social Stigma and Family Rejection:** Transgender people may experience mental health problems as a result of societal stigma and family rejection, which may make mental health care more urgent. These difficulties may be made worse by a lack of transgender-inclusive mental health resources.



- **Documentation and Identity Issues:** Getting access to gender-specific healthcare services may be hampered by inaccuracies in the gender markers on identification documents. Gender identification and legal documents that are not aligned can result in denial of care and humiliation.
- **Geographic Disparities:** Access to transgender-inclusive healthcare is frequently concentrated in urban areas, resulting in limited or non-existent access to essential services for persons living in rural or isolated places.
- **Absence of Data:** It is difficult to address particular needs and create focused interventions when there is a lack of data on transgender health issues.

### Conclusion

Despite strict guidelines of Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act 2019, which emphasizes the role of governments in providing holistic healthcare services to the community, there has not been much progress in their human development. A comprehensive strategy including legal reforms, education and training for medical professionals, awareness campaigns, and the active participation of the transgender community in policy-making processes is needed to address these issues. Furthermore, promoting an inclusive healthcare environment depends on society de-stigmatizing transgender identities.

### Analyze the position of major countries, including India, in the global efforts to reduce plastic pollution. How do economic interests and environmental concerns intersect in these negotiations?

**Introduction:** Give brief context to the question

**Body:** Position of various nations to curb plastic pollution and the intersection between economic and environmental concerns

**Conclusion:** Way forward

Recently, the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC), under the UNEP came together to negotiate a “zero draft” which proposes an international legally binding treaty to end plastic pollution. The zero draft contains options such as imposing a plastic-pollution fee to be paid by plastic polymer producers, and another on reducing the financial flow into projects with a high carbon footprint.

### Position of different countries to reduce plastic pollution

- **India:** India has shown a growing awareness of the environmental impacts of plastic pollution. The country has implemented various measures, such as bans on single-use plastics in certain regions, and it has expressed its commitment to tackling plastic waste. Plastic Waste Management Rules have established a framework that assigned responsibilities for plastic waste management to the urban local bodies.
- **China:** China has seen serious pollution problems, and the effects of plastic waste on the environment are becoming more widely acknowledged. The nation has responded to this problem by imposing limitations on the importation of plastic garbage.
- **European Union & USA:** When it comes to international measures to reduce plastic pollution, the EU and USA have taken the lead. It has put up plans to outlaw single-use plastics, established high recycling goals, and placed a major focus on sustainable practices and the circular economy.

### Intersection of Economic Interests and Environmental Concerns

- **Difficulties with Regulation:** One of the main difficulties with regulation is determining how to cut plastic pollution efficiently without negatively affecting economies and industries.
- **Innovation and Alternatives:** Fostering innovation in sustainable practices and plastic substitutes is often necessary to strike a balance between economic interests. This may open up fresh business prospects.
- **Global Supply Chains:** To combat plastic pollution, worldwide cooperation is required due to the interconnectedness of global supply chains. Countries may be concerned about maintaining their competitiveness in a global market.

## Conclusion

It is essential that views of the African group of countries and Small-Island Developing States (SIDS) are carefully taken into account as they championed the voices of waste-pickers and indigenous peoples, and approached the plastic pollution problem from a human-rights and public health perspective. It takes cooperation and subtlety to strike a balance between economic interests and environmental sustainability. Governments must collaborate to create laws that take into account the financial effects on all parties involved in addition to reducing plastic pollution.

### Evaluate India's stance on coal usage in the context of its commitments to renewable energy expansion by 2030. How does this position reflect the broader global dilemma in transitioning from fossil fuels to renewable energy?

**Introduction:** Give brief context to the question

**Body:** Give India's position on the usage of coal and dilemma it faces in the transition from fossil fuel to renewable energy.

**Conclusion:** Way forward

India recently underlined the core principles of its climate diplomacy—equity and justice—while restating its commitment to reducing global warming on the fringes of COP 28 in Dubai. India has made it clear how important coal is to its economy, and it will not yield to outside pressure at the expense of its progress. Coal-fired plants are responsible for nearly 70% of India's greenhouse gas emissions.

#### India's Stance on Coal Usage

- **Commitments to Renewable Energy:** As part of its commitment to the Paris Agreement, India has set high goals for renewable energy. By 2030, the nation wants to generate 40% of its electricity from non-fossil fuel sources. To meet its goal of increasing renewable energy capacity from the present 170 GW to 500 GW, India has been actively investing in solar and wind energy projects. Additionally, the capacity of renewable energy installations has increased significantly.
- **Problems with Coal:** India still significantly depends on coal to meet its energy demands, and the country's energy security policy is based on it. A significant amount of India's electricity is produced by coal-fired power stations. Reducing reliance on coal necessitates tackling financial difficulties, such as probable employment losses in the coal industry.
- **National Electricity Plan:** India's National Electricity Plan outlines a gradual reduction in the share of coal in the energy mix. The plan emphasizes the expansion of renewable energy capacity while recognizing the need for a balanced approach to ensure grid stability.

#### Global Dilemma in Transitioning

- **Economic Concerns:** Historically, the development of economies in many nations, particularly rising economies, has depended on the use of fossil fuels like coal. Shifting away from these sources necessitates a major reorganization of the economy, potentially affecting sectors and jobs.
- **Technological Difficulties:** Energy storage and grid dependability are affected by the intermittent nature of renewable energy sources. Technological developments in energy storage are necessary to ensure a smooth transition.
- **Energy Access and Equity:** Developed and developing countries have different energy transition difficulties. Developed nations may possess the financial means to allocate resources toward renewable energy, but underdeveloped countries may encounter challenges concerning accessibility and price.
- **Financial and Technological Support:** To enable a quicker and more seamless transition, numerous developing nations—including India—have stressed the significance of financial and technological support from industrialized nations. It's critical to have access to inexpensive green technologies.

## Conclusion

India faces the difficult challenge of reconciling its environmental obligations with its socioeconomic goals, especially in light of its coal-dependent economy. Global cooperation, technological advancements, and supportive policies are essential elements in navigating the transition to a sustainable and low-carbon energy future.

**India's energy distribution is skewed towards coal. This dependence on coal may impact India's commitments under the Paris Accord. Analyse.**

**Introduction:** Give a brief description of India's commitment to the Paris Agreement.

**Body:** Highlight concerns and challenges in meeting international commitments.

**Conclusion:** Way forward

India's significant reliance on coal for energy production has several ramifications, particularly in light of its obligations under the Paris Agreement. With attempts to keep the increase to 1.5 degrees Celsius, the 2015 Paris Agreement seeks to keep global warming far below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels. Like many other nations, India has committed to lowering its greenhouse gas emissions and moving toward a low-carbon, more sustainable economy.

**Several concerns and challenges in meeting International commitments**

- **High Carbon Emissions:** Burning coal emits a considerable amount of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) into the atmosphere, making it a fossil fuel with high emissions. India's high reliance on coal for electricity generation raises the country's carbon footprint considerably. To fulfill the targets outlined in the Paris Agreement, reducing emissions from the energy sector is essential.
- **Impact on Air Quality and Health:** Burning coal releases air pollutants such as particulate matter, Sulphur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>), and nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>) that are hazardous to human health in addition to being a key cause of climate change. In addition to being a local environmental issue, addressing air quality concerns supports more general sustainable development objectives.
- **Economic and Energy Security:** By lowering reliance on a single energy source, diversifying the energy mix can improve energy security. India's high reliance on coal exposes it to changes in the price of the commodity as well as interruptions in supply. A more secure and robust energy system can benefit from having a diverse energy portfolio that includes renewable energy sources.
- **International Cooperation and Reputation:** To combat climate change collectively, the Paris Agreement promotes international cooperation. India's standing in the international world depends on its commitment to cutting emissions and moving away from coal. India can enhance its standing and make a valuable contribution towards a more sustainable future by harmonizing its energy policies with the worldwide climate goals.
- **Policy and Regulatory Framework:** Robust policy measures and regulatory frameworks are necessary to achieve the shift away from coal. India must put laws into place and uphold them that encourage the use of renewable energy sources, increase energy efficiency, and progressively phase out the production of electricity from coal.

**Conclusion**

India's reliance on coal as a source of energy has a big impact on its obligations under the Paris Agreement. Making the switch to greener, more sustainable energy sources is crucial for achieving climate goals as well as for improving energy security, addressing regional environmental and health concerns, and promoting global collaboration in the fight against climate change.

**Dealing with cyclones requires a holistic multi-sectoral approach involving urban development, public awareness, sound infrastructure, etc., rather than working in silos.**

**Discuss in the context of the havoc caused by Cyclone Michaung in Chennai.**

**Introduction:** Give brief context of the question

**Body:** Highlight key aspects of multi sectoral approach to deal with cyclone

**Conclusion:** Way forward

Cyclone Michaung is a tropical cyclone as formed over the Bay of Bengal & moved westward and intensified into a severe cyclonic storm. It caused widespread damage in Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu. Cyclones or any similar natural disaster, demands a comprehensive and multi-sectoral approach for effective preparedness, response, and recovery.

### Key aspects of a holistic multi-sectoral approach

- **Urban Development and Planning:** It's critical to have a robust infrastructure that can resist cyclone effects, such as storm surges and intense rains. This entails including cyclone-resistant elements into the construction of roadways, buildings, and other vital infrastructure. The impact on vulnerable communities can be reduced by implementing and enforcing zoning restrictions that prohibit construction in high-risk regions, such as coastal zones susceptible to storm surges.
- **Public Education and Awareness:** Keeping the public informed about approaching cyclones requires the establishment and upkeep of efficient early warning systems. Early warnings lower the chance of casualties by allowing people to flee to safer locations. Community readiness and resilience are increased by regularly holding training sessions and drills to inform the public about emergency shelters, evacuation protocols, and fundamental first aid techniques.
- **Community Engagement and Social Support:** Involving local communities in decision-making processes and disaster risk reduction initiatives empowers them to actively participate in building resilience. Developing social safety nets and support systems to assist vulnerable populations, including those who may face displacement or loss of livelihoods due to cyclones.
- **Emergency Services and Healthcare:** It's critical to fortify the healthcare system to meet the surge in demand that occurs during and after storms. Making sure hospitals and other healthcare facilities are resistant to natural catastrophes is part of this. preparing and supplying specialist emergency response teams to manage medical crises, conduct search and rescue missions, and evacuate populations that are deemed vulnerable.
- **Protection of Critical Infrastructure:** Keeping key services operational both during and after cyclones depends on the resilience of critical infrastructure, such as communication networks, water supply systems, and power grids.
- **Government Coordination and Policy:** To guarantee a coordinated response to cyclones, coordination procedures between different government agencies, such as meteorological departments, disaster management authorities, and local administrations, must be established. Long-term resilience can be increased by incorporating climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction techniques into urban planning and development regulations.

### Conclusion

Dealing with cyclones like Michaung requires a collaborative, holistic approach across urban development, public awareness, healthcare, infrastructure resilience, and international cooperation.

**India's fertilizer subsidy bill has been rising continuously due to a variety of reasons. What are the issues with India's fertilizer subsidy regime? What reforms, in your opinion, can be undertaken to counter the ill effects arising due to it?**

**Introduction:** Give brief context to the question

**Body:** Highlight issues with the fertilizer subsidy regime and measures to improve it.

**Conclusion:** Way forward

The rising fertilizer subsidy bill which has increased from Rs 81,124 crore in 2019-20, to Rs 1,53,758 crore in 2021-22, Rs 2,51,339 crore in 2022-23, and a budgeted Rs 1,75,100 crore this year has raised concern for the Government as it impacts the finances and farmers directly.

### Issues with India's fertiliser subsidy regime

- **Skewed NPK Ratio:** The overemphasis on urea and DAP, which are nitrogen and phosphorus-rich fertilizers, has led to an imbalanced Nitrogen-Phosphorus-Potassium (NPK) ratio in the soil. The ideal ratio for healthy plant growth is approximately 4:2:1 (N:P: K).

- **Soil Health and Crop Productivity:** Imbalanced nutrient ratios can result in nutrient deficiencies or excesses, affecting the overall health of the soil. This, in turn, can lead to reduced crop productivity, poor crop quality, and increased susceptibility to pests and diseases.
- **Groundwater and Surface Water Pollution:** Overuse of fertilizers can lead to the leaching of excess nutrients, such as nitrogen compounds, into groundwater. This contamination can also find its way into surface water bodies through runoff. The pollution of water sources with nitrates can have detrimental effects on aquatic ecosystems.
- **Health Impacts:** High levels of nitrates in drinking water, which can result from the overuse of nitrogen-based fertilizers, pose health risks. Infants who consume water or foods with elevated nitrate levels may be at risk of developing methemoglobinemia, commonly known as Blue-Baby Syndrome.

### Potential Reforms for the Subsidy Regime

- **Nutrient-Based Subsidy (NBS) System:** The government should swiftly bring urea under the nutrient-based subsidy regime, deregulate its Maximum Retail Price (MRP), and extend this decontrol to other fertilizers. By providing a per-tonne subsidy linked to nutrient content, farmers would be incentivized to consider alternatives to urea, fostering a more diversified and balanced use of fertilizers.
- **Extend the subsidy on a per-hectare basis:** The next measure involves extending the subsidy on a per-hectare basis. The government should permit farmers to purchase any fertilizer using this subsidy. This approach will compel companies to introduce innovative, cost-effective fertilizer products tailored to specific crops, soils, and agro-climatic regions.
- **Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT):** Implementing a system of direct benefit transfer to farmers can help target subsidies more effectively, ensuring that the intended beneficiaries receive the support.
- **Promoting Organic Farming:** Encouraging and incentivizing organic farming practices can reduce the dependency on chemical fertilizers and promote sustainable agriculture.

### Conclusion

Union Government should engage stakeholders, including farmers, state government, and fertilizer companies in the reform process for the success and sustainability of any changes to the fertilizer subsidy regime.

### Recent geopolitical happenings in the case of Maldives point to China's growing influence in India's neighbourhood. Explain how this is a threat to India's aspirations as a strong regional power. What should India's foreign policy look like in this regard?

**Introduction:** Give brief context to the question

**Body:** What are the threats posed by China; 's influence and response from India to mitigate these threats?

**Conclusion:** Way forward

India's foreign policy is facing a significant challenge in its relations with the Maldives, highlighted by the recent presidential elections in which Dr. Mohamed Muizzu emerged victorious over Ibrahim Mohamed Solih. The election was perceived as a contest between India First and India Out campaigns, and Muizzu's win is viewed as a triumph for the India Out faction.

### Threat to India's aspirations because of China's growing influence in the region

- **Growing Chinese Influence:** China has enhanced its influence in Maldives. Maldives is an essential 'pearl' in China's 'String of Pearls' initiative in South Asia. With the return of the pro-Chinese government in Maldives, India's diplomatic space will reduce in the region.
- **Economic Dependency:** India may find itself in a situation where neighbouring countries become economically dependent on China due to China's investments in infrastructure projects and economic aid. The political clout that can result from this economic power could potentially damage India's standing in the region.

## Mains Marathon Compilation for the Month of December 2023

- **Security Concerns:** India may have security concerns due to China's military presence or strategic alliances in the area. It may challenge India's security interests and alter the balance of power.
- **Effect on Security in the Indian Ocean:** India considers the Indian Ocean to be strategically significant, and China's influence and presence in the area may pose a threat to India's interests in maritime security.

### Response to India's foreign policy

- **Increase in Development Assistance:** India ought to augment its development assistance to the Maldives, focusing on projects with a substantial impact on the general population. This strategic approach will not only foster goodwill among the Maldivian people but also counter concerns that have fueled the 'India Out' campaigns.
- **Timely Completion of Infrastructure Projects:** Ensuring the timely completion of infrastructure projects, such as the Greater Male Connectivity Project (GMCP), is imperative. This will provide a credible and attractive alternative to Chinese initiatives, reinforcing India's commitment to delivering tangible and beneficial outcomes for the Maldives.
- **Prioritize Youth Employment:** India's High Impact Community Development Projects (HICPs) in the Maldives should incorporate initiatives focused on enhancing youth employability and fostering entrepreneurship. This strategic emphasis aims to mitigate the risks of radicalization and extremism originating within the region.
- **Cooperation with the new government:** India needs to actively connect with the newly elected Maldivian government, addressing their concerns. Emphasizing that ongoing projects like the Hanimadhoo redevelopment aim to boost tourism by enhancing runway and terminal capacities is crucial, as tourism is vital to the Maldivian economy.

### Conclusion

India's foreign policy should be flexible, adaptive, and driven by a comprehensive understanding of the geopolitical landscape to effectively navigate and mitigate challenges arising from the growing influence of China in its neighbourhood.

## Evaluate the effectiveness of India's drug regulatory framework in controlling the proliferation of unapproved FDCs. Suggest reforms needed to strengthen the regulatory mechanisms.

**Introduction:** What are FDC

**Body:** Highlight the effectiveness of India's drug regulatory framework

**Conclusion:** Way forward

Fixed-dose combination (FDC) refers to a pharmaceutical formulation that contains two or more active ingredients combined in a fixed ratio of doses within a single dosage form, such as a tablet or capsule. A recent study in the *Journal of Pharmaceutical Policy and Practice* documents that in the year 2020, 60.5% of FDCs of antibiotics were unapproved and another 9.9% were being sold despite being banned in the country.

### Effectiveness of India's Drug Regulatory Framework

- **Unapproved FDCs:** India has faced challenges in regulating the market for FDCs, with concerns about the safety and efficacy of many combinations. Some FDCs entered the market without adequate scientific rationale or approval from regulatory authorities. Since FDCs are not covered under the Drugs (Prices Control) Order (DPCO) (which enables the government to fix the prices of individual drugs), manufacturing FDCs is a way to escape the ambit of the DPCO.
- **Regulatory Delays:** Delays in the approval process and inadequate monitoring mechanisms have contributed to the proliferation of unapproved FDCs. The backlog of pending approvals and the slow pace of regulatory decisions have allowed some questionable combinations to remain in the market.

- **States' inability to implement norms:** State drug controllers continue to ignore legal provisions and issue manufacturing licenses for FDCs not approved by the Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI).

### Reforms to Strengthen Regulatory Mechanisms

- **Improved Approval Procedures:** Delays can be avoided by streamlining and speeding up the FDC approval process while upholding strict scientific review. Ensuring that only combinations with demonstrated therapeutic benefits and safety profiles are permitted on the market requires the establishment of strong approval criteria.
- **Boosting Post-Marketing Surveillance:** To keep an eye on the effectiveness and safety of medications once they are on the market, a strong post-marketing surveillance system must be put in place. Manufacturing facilities can benefit from routine audits and inspections to help guarantee continuous adherence to quality standards.
- **Regular Review and Update of Regulations:** To stay up to date with evolving medical needs and scientific discoveries, regulations should be reviewed and updated regularly. The regulatory framework's weaknesses and potential areas for improvement can be found through periodic assessments.

### Conclusion

As pointed out in the study Ministry of Health needs to regulate FDCs, otherwise this unapproved FDC may end up contributing to the AMR problem in India. These reforms need to be implemented in a coordinated manner, involving collaboration between regulatory bodies, healthcare professionals, industry stakeholders, and the public to ensure the safety and efficacy of drugs in the Indian market.

## Discuss the potential benefits and challenges associated with the proposed land connectivity project between India and Sri Lanka in the context of regional economic integration.

**Introduction:** Give brief context to the question  
**Body:** Highlight benefits and challenges associated with the project  
**Conclusion:** Way forward

The Sri Lankan Government has put forward a proposal to establish land connectivity with India by linking Rameswaram in Tamil Nadu with Talaimanar in the Northern Province of Sri Lanka.

### Potential benefits associated with the project

- **Increased Economic Integration and Trade:** Enhanced land connectivity has the potential to promote trade and economic integration between India and Sri Lanka by easing the movement of people and goods between the two countries.
- **Development of Infrastructure:** The project may result in the construction of roads and bridges, among other transportation infrastructure, which would improve connectivity and boost the economy as a whole.
- **Lower Transport Expenses:** Effective land connectivity can lower transportation costs, increasing trade's profitability and stimulating the economies of the two nations.
- **Travel and Intercultural Communication:** Increased connectivity can boost travel and cross-cultural interactions, which will be economically advantageous to both nations and strengthen ties between individuals.
- **Creation of Jobs:** Projects aimed at developing the local infrastructure frequently result in the creation of jobs for the local populace.

### Challenges associated with the project

- **Political and Geopolitical Considerations:** Political and geopolitical factors can have an impact on projects of this kind, and disputes between countries may hinder the initiative's advancement and success. Eg, China has used its geoeconomics to achieve its geopolitical objectives in Sri Lanka.

- **Environmental Issues:** Projects involving infrastructure may have an impact on the environment. It is important to take precautions to guarantee that the development is environmentally friendly and sustainable.
- **Financing and Funding:** It can be difficult to secure funding for significant infrastructure projects. Such initiatives must have sufficient funding and a well-defined financial plan to be implemented successfully.
- **Public Opposition:** Local communities like Sinhalese Buddhists may have concerns about the impact of the project on their livelihoods, environment, or cultural heritage. Addressing these concerns and ensuring community involvement is crucial.
- **Security Concerns:** Ensuring the security of the infrastructure and the safety of goods and people traveling through the land route is paramount. Cooperation on security measures is essential.

### Conclusion

India's relationship with Sri Lanka is framed within India's "Neighbourhood First" policy and "SAGAR" framework. The India-Sri Lanka relationship is multi-dimensional and deeply rooted in historical ties which can aid in regional economic integration, encompassing both nations and generating more opportunities for economic growth.

### How do cyclones affect the socio-economic fabric of coastal communities in India, and what long-term measures can be implemented to mitigate these impacts?

**Introduction:** Give brief context to the question

**Body:** Impact of cyclone on socio-economic fabric of coastal communities in India

**Conclusion:** Way forward

Cyclone Michaung has swept through India's southern coast, causing extensive flooding in Chennai and disrupting normal life. With India experiencing numerous cyclones annually, effective disaster management measures are crucial to mitigate damage. Severe tropical cyclones consistently impact 8% of the geographical area in 13 Coastal States and Union Territories, highlighting the persistent need for proactive measures.

#### Effect of the cyclone on the socio-economic fabric of coastal communities

- **Infrastructure Damage:** Cyclones can lead to the destruction of homes, leaving people homeless and vulnerable. Cyclones impact transportation, communication, electricity, water supply, roads, bridges, and ports disrupting transportation networks and making it difficult for people to access essential services.
- **Livelihood Disruption:** Agriculture and fishing are major sources of income for many coastal communities. Cyclones can cause financial loss by destroying crops and interfering with fishing operations. Communities that depend on animals for farming and other purposes may lose livestock as a result of cyclones.
- **Education and Health:** Damage from cyclones might hinder communities' ability to obtain emergency medical assistance. Damaged or unusable schools might interfere with children's education and negatively affect their prospects in the long run. Post-cyclone conditions can lead to the spread of waterborne diseases, creating a public health crisis.

#### Long-term measures to mitigate these impacts

- **Preparation and Early Warning Systems:** Allocate resources to enhance meteorological technology for precise and timely cyclone predictions. Establish and execute efficient early warning systems to notify communities well in advance. Regularly organize drills and awareness initiatives to educate communities about evacuation procedures and enhance overall preparedness.
- **Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) Project:** It aims to bolster the resilience of coastal regions by promoting sustainable environmental practices. The initiative involves mapping areas prone to vulnerability, advocating for conservation efforts, and implementing sustainable livelihood strategies for the benefit of local communities.



- **National Cyclone Risk Mitigation Project (NCRMP)**- NCRMP, supported by the World Bank, aims to enhance the preparedness and resilience of coastal communities. This is achieved through the construction of cyclone shelters, infrastructure development, and improved access routes for effective evacuation.
- **Coordinated efforts**- Effective disaster management requires coordinated efforts among various agencies, such as the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), State Disaster Management Authorities (SDMAs), IMD, and local administrations.

### Conclusion

Implementing a combination of these measures can contribute to the long-term resilience of coastal communities in India and mitigate the socio-economic impacts of cyclones.

### What are the key regulatory challenges in managing the proliferation of unapproved and potentially harmful FDC drugs in the Indian market?

**Introduction:** What is FDC?

**Body:** Key challenges in managing harmful FDC drugs in India

**Conclusion:** Way forward

Fixed-dose combination (FDC) refers to a pharmaceutical formulation that contains two or more active ingredients combined in a fixed ratio of doses within a single dosage form, such as a tablet or capsule. A recent study in the *Journal of Pharmaceutical Policy and Practice* documents that in the year 2020, 60.5% of FDCs of antibiotics were unapproved and another 9.9% were being sold despite being banned in the country.

### Key regulatory challenges

- **Compromises Drug Effectiveness:** The combination of active or inactive ingredients in Fixed-Dose Combinations (FDCs) can interact, diminishing the therapeutic effectiveness of drugs or leading to the formation of toxic metabolites.
- **Legal Liability Avoidance Tool:** FDCs fall outside the purview of the Drugs (Prices Control) Order (DPCO), providing a means for manufacturers to avoid government-regulated pricing of individual drugs and potential legal liabilities.
- **Production of Unjustified Combinations:** Many FDCs lack a sound medical basis, featuring combinations such as anti-inflammatory drugs with vitamins or vitamins with analgesics.
- **Absence of Quality Standards:** Regulatory bodies have not established standardized testing protocols for the quality of these drugs, making it challenging to hold manufacturers accountable for substandard FDCs.
- **Increased Drug Costs:** Manufacturers may market a new FDC as a unique product addressing specific needs, allowing them to charge higher prices until competitors introduce similar products, leading to a subsequent reduction in prices.
- **Weak Implementation of Licensing Norms:** State drug controllers often neglect legal provisions and issue manufacturing licenses for FDCs not approved by the Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI).
- **Legal Challenges Hampering Prohibition Orders:** Ministry of Health prohibitions on specific FDCs face complex litigation and inconsistent court decisions.
- **Contribution to Anti-Microbial Resistance (AMR):** The unregulated use of FDCs adds to the Anti-Microbial Resistance issue in India.
- **Regulatory Delays:** Delays in the approval process and inadequate monitoring mechanisms have contributed to the proliferation of unapproved FDCs. The backlog of pending approvals and the slow pace of regulatory decisions have allowed some questionable combinations to remain in the market.

### Conclusion

A comprehensive strategy that closes licensing norm loopholes strengthens regulatory capacity, clarifies legislative frameworks, improves post-marketing surveillance measures, and streamlines approval processes are needed to address these regulatory problems. International cooperation and coordination amongst regulatory bodies can also help to address the problem more skillfully.

### How can the Indian government balance the need for fertilizer subsidies with the environmental and health impacts of their overuse?

**Introduction:** Define fertilizer subsidy

**Body:** How can government balance need for fertilizer subsidy with environmental and health impact?

**Conclusion:** Way forward

A fertilizer subsidy is a subsidy that the government provides to fertilizer producers, enabling farmers to purchase fertilizers at rates below the market prices. The subsidy portion borne by the government is the variance between the production/import costs of fertilizer and the amount paid by farmers.

#### Several strategies the Government could consider to balance the use of fertilizer with environmental and health impact

- **Education and Awareness Campaigns:** Educate farmers on the best practices for using fertilizers, including the right amounts, times, and techniques of application. Farmers who receive more knowledge will be better equipped to make judgments.
- **Subsidy Targeting:** Implement targeted subsidy programs that focus on supporting small and marginalized farmers who may face financial constraints. This ensures that subsidies are directed to those who need them the most.
- **Promote Precision Agriculture:** To maximize fertilizer use based on particular crop and soil requirements, promote the implementation of precision agriculture techniques, such as soil testing and nutrient management strategies. This lessens the negative effects on the environment and usage.
- **Encourage Organic Farming:** Encourage organic farming methods that enhance soil fertility naturally and lessen the need for chemical fertilizers. Biodiversity and soil health may benefit from this.
- **Research & Development:** Make research and development investments to create and encourage the use of nutrient-efficient and environmentally friendly fertilizers. Investigating substitutes that reduce the effects on the environment and human health is part of this.
- **Subsidy Reform:** Reform fertilizer subsidy policies to ensure they are efficient, and transparent, and do not encourage overuse. Consider moving towards a nutrient-based subsidy system that focuses on supporting the application of specific nutrients rather than generic fertilizers.
- **Integrated nutrition Management (INM):** Promote the use of INM techniques, which combine nutrition inputs from both organic and inorganic sources. This strategy reduces its negative effects on the environment while maintaining soil fertility.
- **Crop rotation & diversification:** Encourage crop rotation and diversification to disrupt the cycles of pests and diseases and lessen the need for constant high fertilizer inputs.
- **Agroecology Practices:** Encourage and support the application of ecological principles to agricultural systems through agroecology practices that minimize reliance on outside inputs and emphasize sustainability.
- **Community Involvement:** Make sure that policies reflect the needs and reality of local communities by involving them and farmers in the decision-making process. As a result, people may feel more accountable and invested in sustainable farming methods.

#### Conclusion

For any modifications to the fertilizer subsidy program to be successful and long-lasting, the Union Government should involve all relevant parties, like as farmers, state governments, and fertilizer companies, in the reform process.

**Odisha's transformation in agriculture is a testament to the effectiveness of community-driven approaches and climate-resilient practices in achieving food security. Discuss the statement in light of Odisha's agricultural policies and their impact on food security and sustainability. How can these practices be integrated into the national agricultural policy framework?**

**Introduction:** Give brief context to the question

**Body:** Highlight policies which has helped in the transformation of agriculture and which can be replicated elsewhere.

**Conclusion:** Way forward

In the face of an escalating global food crisis exacerbated by the intensifying climate crisis, growing conflicts, and jeopardized livelihoods, Odisha's transformative path is gaining recognition as a model and a wellspring of ideas for establishing food security rooted in equity and sustainability.

### State's policies and its impact on food security and sustainability

- **Increased agriculture productivity:** The state has achieved record production in the past two decades with food grain production amounting to 13.606 million tonnes in 2022. This has been due to an increase in income of small and marginal farmers which has directly contributed to strengthening their food security and creating resilient livelihoods. Implementing flagship programs like KALIA and promoting scientific crop management through traditional and digital methods has increased non-paddy crop cultivation, reducing reliance on paddy. Initiatives like the Odisha Millet Mission further contribute to crop diversification and climate resilience.
- **Climate Change Action Plan:** Odisha has proactively developed a comprehensive Climate Change Action Plan to address the issue of climate change & its impact on agriculture. The Crop Weather Watch Group monitors crops through meetings and field visits to address adverse weather conditions. District-level planning focuses on climate-resilient practices, leading to increased food production through integrated farming and better water management.

### Integration into the National Agricultural Policy Framework

- **Knowledge sharing:** The UN World Food Programme and Odisha government's partnership innovates in food security, such as biometric tech in distribution, and rice fortification to improve food security. These types of initiatives can be replicated in other states which could help support sustainable and climate-resilient agriculture.
- **Technology Adoption:** Innovate technologies like crop planning, climate-resilient cultivation practices, that include integrated farming, zero-input-based natural farming, non-paddy crops, better water management, water-saving devices, e-pest surveillance, and large-scale farm mechanization can be integrated into National Agricultural Policy Framework. To boost food grain production state has focussed on training farmers in crop-specific techniques, including integrated nutrient and pest management which can help states build a robust agriculture sector.

### Conclusion

The success of agriculture transformation in Odisha is reflected in statistics for 2020-21 as Odisha produces 9% of the total rice in India and accounts for 4.22% of the total food-grain production of the country. It's essential to tailor policies to local contexts while promoting innovation, collaboration, and resilience in the face of climate challenges.

**The SC judgment on abrogation of Article 370 in Jammu and Kashmir represents a significant shift in the federal structure of India, with implications that extend beyond the region. Examine the statement.**

**Introduction:** Give brief context to the question

**Body:** Implications of Article 370 on various aspects.

**Conclusion:** Way forward

The Supreme Court's judgment on the abrogation of Article 370 in Jammu and Kashmir indeed marks a significant shift in the federal structure of India, carrying implications that reach beyond the region.

### Implications from abrogation of Article 370

- **Corruption:** Corruption has been a longstanding issue in Kashmir, where several of India's anti-corruption laws did not apply. It is widely acknowledged that political figures in the region have historically benefited financially from various sources. With the abrogation of Article 370, the central government now has the authority to address corruption effectively, opening avenues for the development of the region.
- **Administrative changes:** The reclassification of Kashmir to a union territory puts it under direct central government control, mirroring Puducherry and Delhi, while Ladakh aligns with territories like Andaman and Nicobar. This change facilitates increased central involvement in regional development, and the application of the 73rd and 74th Amendments is expected to boost local participation in governance.
- **Security concerns:** Reclassifying Kashmir as a union territory is expected to improve security by allowing swift anti-terrorism actions. The strengthened National Intelligence & police aims to enhance control over violence in Kashmir. The central government's direct involvement in security operations will lead to better coordination among security forces, the army, and state police.
- **Constitutional Implications:** The judgment emphasizes the constitutional unity and integration of Jammu and Kashmir with the rest of India, asserting a common constitutional framework for all states and union territories. Supreme Court's decision sets a legal precedent, reinforcing the supremacy of the Indian Constitution over special provisions that grant autonomy to specific regions.
- **Federal Structure Shift:** The abrogation of Article 370, coupled with the bifurcation of the state into two union territories (Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh) in 2019, marks a departure from the historical autonomy enjoyed by Jammu and Kashmir. The removal of special status implies a move towards greater centralization, aligning Jammu and Kashmir with the governance structure of other Indian states.

### Conclusion

The Supreme Court's ruling on the abrogation of Article 370 marks a pivotal juncture in India's federal structure, symbolizing a shift towards a more standardized governance framework and questioning the longstanding autonomy of Jammu and Kashmir. Its repercussions go beyond the region, impacting constitutional interpretations, national cohesion, and geopolitical dynamics. The aftermath of this decision is an ongoing force shaping political and social dynamics in the area, drawing attention both nationally and internationally.

### Discuss the ethical implications of using CRISPR-Cas9 technology in gene therapy, considering the risks and benefits.

**Introduction:** Give brief context to the question

**Body:** Benefits of CRISPR Technology and risks associated with it.

**Conclusion:** Way forward

CRISPR-Cas9 technology has brought about revolutionary possibilities in the field of gene therapy, allowing scientists to edit parts of the genome by removing, adding, or altering sections of the DNA sequence with unprecedented precision.

### Benefits of technology

- **Treatment of Genetic Disorders:** By correcting the underlying genetic mutations causing these problems, CRISPR-Cas9 has the potential to treat or perhaps cure genetic disorders. This covers illnesses such as muscular dystrophy, sickle cell anemia, and cystic fibrosis.

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- **Precision and Specificity:** Highly targeted gene editing is made possible by CRISPR-Cas9, which minimizes off-target effects and lowers the possibility of unexpected outcomes. When compared to conventional gene therapy techniques, this precision represents a breakthrough.
- **Personalized Medicine:** CRISPR-Cas9 makes it possible to customize medicines based on a patient's particular genetic composition. This may lessen negative effects and improve the effectiveness of the treatment.
- **Scientific Research:** CRISPR-Cas9 has emerged as a vital tool in science, enabling researchers to mimic diseases, investigate gene function, and create new therapeutic approaches.

### Risks associated with technology

- **Consent and Ethical Usage:** When using CRISPR-Cas9 for ethical purposes, it is important to carefully analyze concerns like informed consent, particularly in the case of germline editing (editing genes that can be passed on to future generations). Concerns regarding "designer babies" and their unintended consequences are brought up ethically by the ramifications for future generations.
- **Inequality and Access:** The use of CRISPR-Cas9 raises concerns about inequality in access to gene therapies. If these treatments become available, there may be ethical questions about who gets access to these potentially life-changing interventions and who does not.
- **Unknown Long-Term Effects:** It is yet unclear how gene editing with CRISPR-Cas9 will affect people in the long run. Given the novelty of the technology, its long-term safety is questionable.
- **Unintended Consequences:** Changing a gene to fix one issue could unintentionally cause unintended side effects or other issues that are not immediately evident. This intricacy emphasizes the necessity of extensive study and testing before the adoption of wider therapeutic applications.

### Conclusion

The moral ramifications of applying CRISPR-Cas9 to gene therapy underscore the fine line that must be drawn between the necessity of carefully weighing the hazards involved and the possibility of groundbreaking medical breakthroughs. Harnessing the benefits of CRISPR-Cas9 while reducing possible harm requires an ethical framework and, a responsible and transparent approach to research, development, and clinical applications.

### Analyze the economic implications of restricting the diversion of sugarcane for ethanol production, considering the interests of farmers and the sugar industry.

**Introduction:** Give brief description about ethanol blending program

**Body:** Highlight economic implications of restricting diversion of sugarcane for ethanol production.

**Conclusion:** Way forward

Ethanol is a primary biofuel that is obtained by natural fermentation of carbohydrates by yeasts or petrochemical methods like ethylene hydration. The Ethanol Blending Programme (EBP) is aimed at reducing the country's dependence on crude oil imports, cutting carbon emissions, and boosting farmers' incomes. The Government of India has advanced the target for 20% ethanol blending in petrol (also called E20) to 2025 from 2030.

### Economic implications of restricting diversion of sugarcane for ethanol production

- **Diversification of Income:** The ability to sell sugarcane for the production of both sugar and ethanol is a major advantage for many farmers who cultivate the crop. Farmers may have fewer options to diversify their revenue streams if ethanol production is restricted.
- **Market Demand and Prices:** The need for sugarcane to produce sugar becomes more urgent if ethanol production is constrained. Price fluctuations may affect sugar demand, which may affect sugarcane growers' earnings. If there is an excess of sugar on the market, farmers can have difficulties.

- **Investment in Alternative Crops:** If ethanol production limits have a major negative influence on the sugarcane market, farmers may want to think about diversifying their crops or switching to alternative crops with more consistent demand and better economic prospects.
- **Dependency on Government Policies:** Diversion limitations policies can have a big impact on farmers' financial well-being in areas where the government is strongly involved in regulating and assisting the sugar and ethanol businesses.

### Implications for the Sugar Industry

- **Revenue and Profitability:** The equilibrium between the production of sugar and ethanol has a significant impact on the revenue and profitability of the sugar business. Limitations on the manufacturing of ethanol could result in an increased dependence on sugar sales, increasing the industry's susceptibility to changes in sugar prices and worldwide market circumstances.
- **Employment Impact:** Ethanol production often involves additional processing facilities and jobs. Restrictions on ethanol could limit job creation in this sector, affecting employment opportunities in regions with a strong focus on sugarcane-based ethanol.
- **Infrastructure connected to Ethanol:** Should ethanol output be curtailed, the sugar sector could find it difficult to defend investments in infrastructure connected to ethanol, such as distribution networks and processing centers. This might affect the competitiveness and long-term growth of the industry.
- **Global Competition:** A nation's standing in the world sugar market can be impacted by shifts in the dynamics of its production. The global sugar industry is quite competitive. Production limitations on ethanol could make a nation less competitive with those that value ethanol as a green energy source.

### Conclusion

Restricting the use of sugarcane for ethanol production has a variety of economic ramifications that vary depending on the strength of the agricultural industry, the state of the world market, and government regulations. The long-term viability of the agricultural sector, the possibility for diversification, and the interests of farmers and the sugar business must all be carefully taken into account.

**Examine the shift in India's foreign policy from the era of non-alignment to its current stance, particularly in the context of the Israel-Gaza conflict. Discuss the factors that have influenced this evolution and its implications on India's global standing.**

**Introduction:** Give brief context to the question  
**Body:** Highlight factors influencing the shift in policy and its implications.  
**Conclusion:** Way forward

India's foreign policy has undergone a notable shift from the era of non-alignment to its current stance, particularly evident in the context of the Israel-Gaza conflict. The evolution of India's foreign policy can be attributed to various factors that have shaped its geopolitical considerations and national interests. During the non-alignment era, spanning from the post-independence period to the Cold War's end, India pursued a policy of non-alignment, aiming to maintain independence from the power blocs led by the United States and the Soviet Union. This approach prioritized principles such as sovereignty, self-determination, and anti-imperialism.

### Factors Influencing the Shift

- **Economic Interests:** One important element has been the increasing economic interaction between India and Israel. In sectors like agriculture, technology, and defense, Israel is a crucial ally. India's scientific and economic goals are in line with fortifying its relations with Israel.
- **Counterterrorism Cooperation:** India's top priority now is combating terrorism worldwide. With its background in intelligence, security, and counterterrorism, Israel has proven to be a useful friend for India as it tackles shared security issues.

- **Realignment of Strategies:** India's foreign policy has been strategically realigned in response to shifting global power dynamics, particularly the ascent of China. India's efforts to maintain a balance of power in the area are aided by stronger connections with the United States and other like-minded countries, such as Israel.

### Implications on India's Global Standing

- **Diversified Alliances:** A more varied approach to alliances is demonstrated by India's relations with Israel. India is establishing relationships based on mutual benefits and shared interests, all the while retaining its strategic autonomy.
- **International reputation:** India's credibility and reputation abroad are bolstered by its diplomatic relations with countries such as Israel. This change indicates India's readiness to interact on the international scene with a wider variety of partners.
- **Security Cooperation:** India's defense capabilities and counterterrorism activities are strengthened by increased cooperation with Israel. The dynamics of regional and international security are affected by this.

### Conclusion

India's foreign policy under the present Government represents a significant shift in its relations with Israel which is in alignment with the geopolitics of the Middle East following the Abraham Accords, India joining a quadrilateral dialogue dubbed the "I2U2" (India, Israel, the United Arab Emirates and the United States & announcement of IMEC (India-Middle East-Europe-Economic Corridor), an India-Middle Eastern Economic Co-operation initiative whose trade route would go from India through Saudi Arabia to the Israeli port of Haifa.

**Critically analyze the health vulnerabilities faced by different regions in India due to climate change. How do these vulnerabilities vary across different districts, and what are the underlying causes?**

**Introduction:** Give brief context to the question

**Body:** Analyse health vulnerabilities and underlying causes across districts

**Conclusion:** Way forward

Climate change poses significant health vulnerabilities across different regions in India, impacting districts in varied ways as highlighted in the article "*Climate change and human health*" published in *Climatic Change*.

### Health Vulnerabilities Across Regions

- **Malnutrition and Food Insecurity:** The productivity of agriculture is impacted by climate change, which causes a shortage of food and a rise in malnutrition. Agriculturally reliant areas are more susceptible to health problems because of broken food supply systems and malnutrition.
- **Issues with the Respiratory System:** Air pollution has increased due to climate change, which aggravates respiratory systems. Air pollution levels are frequently higher in urban areas and locations with heavy industrial activity, which can harm respiratory health.
- **Heat-Related Illnesses:** As temperatures rise, there is a greater chance of developing heat-related ailments like dehydration and heatstroke. Individuals in vulnerable demographics, such as the elderly and those with underlying medical concerns, are particularly vulnerable.

### Regional Disparities Across Districts

- **Geographical Variations:** The study shows that more than half of India's population, living in 344 districts, face high or very high health vulnerability induced by climate change. Coastal districts may experience health vulnerabilities due to sea-level rise and extreme weather events, impacting water and food security.

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- **Urban-Rural Divide:** Because of increased pollution and the urban heat island effect, urban districts may have greater rates of respiratory problems and heat-related illnesses. Agricultural interruptions can harm nutrition and livelihoods in rural areas.
- **Socioeconomic Factors:** Districts with lower socioeconomic levels may be more vulnerable to health concerns associated with climate change because they lack the resources for quality healthcare.

### Causes of Health Vulnerabilities

- **Inadequate Healthcare Infrastructure:** Increasing public expenditure on health could have a significant impact on reducing out-of-pocket expenditure. Studies suggest that poorly developed primary healthcare remains a major factor for high infant mortality rates and poor child health indicators.
- **Poor Climate Resilience:** Regions that are not equipped with climate-resilient policies and infrastructure are at risk from the negative health effects of extreme weather events like cyclones and floods. Due to disruptions in livelihoods and food supply, districts that strongly rely on climate-sensitive sectors like agriculture are more vulnerable to the health effects of climate change.
- **Policy Gaps:** Increasing vulnerabilities are a result of district-level health and climate adaptation strategies being implemented inconsistently or insufficiently. A lack of coordination or prioritizing of climate-health issues may lead to policy gaps.

### Conclusion

To reduce vulnerability and enhance adaptive capacities in the face of the climate crisis, it's crucial to create sustainable jobs, improve working conditions, establish social safety nets, and boost education and employability. Achieving these goals is contingent on the active engagement of local governance institutions, alongside making the healthcare system more accountable to the community.

### Discuss the implications of the recent security breach in the Indian Parliament on national security and the measures needed to prevent future occurrences.

**Introduction:** Give brief context to the question

**Body:** Implications and measures needed to deal with such incidents

**Conclusion:** Way forward

Recent case of intruders breaching the security of Parliament and entering the building has raised exposed a major flaw in a security system which is otherwise extremely robust. Security breaches in sensitive government institutions, such as the Parliament, can have significant implications for national security.

### Some potential implications include

- **Data Compromise:** Sensitive information, such as classified documents, legislative deliberations, and possibly even information about public figures, may be compromised as a result of breaches.
- **National Security Risks:** Enemies may gain access to parliamentary systems and learn about intelligence gathering techniques, national security plans, and other vital details that could jeopardize national security.
- **Political instability:** Political Instability could result from a decline in public confidence in the government's ability to safeguard private information due to security breaches.
- **Cyber Espionage:** State-sponsored or cybercriminal groups may carry out such breaches with the intention of conducting espionage, gathering intelligence, or influencing political decision-making.
- **Physical Threat to Parliamentarians:** Intruders physically entering the Parliament building pose a direct threat to the safety of elected officials, staff, and visitors. The potential for violence and harm to individuals could have severe consequences.
- **Disruption of Legislative Processes:** The chaos caused by intruders could disrupt parliamentary proceedings, leading to a breakdown in the legislative process. This could hinder the functioning of the government and impact the passage of critical legislation.



### Measures that can be implemented

- **Enhanced Cybersecurity Measures:** Using intrusion detection systems, firewalls, and advanced encryption to fortify cybersecurity infrastructure and procedures in order to fend off cyberattacks.
- **Frequent Security Audits:** To find gaps and vulnerabilities in the systems and quickly fix any problems, conduct regular security audits and assessments.
- **Employee Education:** Educating legislative staff members in-depth on cybersecurity best practices, such as phishing attack and social engineering awareness.
- **Multi-Factor Authentication:** This additional security measure makes it harder for unauthorized users to obtain access by requiring two factors of identity verification.
- **Response Plans:** Creating and testing incident response plans on a regular basis will help to guarantee a prompt and well-coordinated reaction in the case of a security breach.
- **Continuous Monitoring:** Putting in place mechanisms for continuous monitoring can help you quickly identify and address possible security incidents.

### Conclusion

It's crucial for both state and Union government to adapt and evolve their security strategies continually to counter emerging threats and protect national security interests. Given the significance of Parliament which is temple of democracy there need to be high level inquiry to analyse the situation and take action against those responsible for the breach.

### **Examine the concept of climate justice in the context of international cooperation, with a focus on India's position and responsibilities as a major developing economy.**

Climate justice is a concept that emphasizes the ethical and equitable dimensions of addressing climate change, particularly in the context of the disproportionate impact of climate change on vulnerable and marginalized communities. In the context of international cooperation, climate justice aims to ensure fairness in the global response to climate change and to address historical and current inequalities.

### India's position on climate justice

- **Historical Responsibilities:** India contends that industrialized nations, who have traditionally been in the forefront of reducing greenhouse gas emissions, ought to assume the primary role in climate change mitigation. India places emphasis on the UNFCCC's (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change) "common but differentiated responsibilities" principle, which takes previous contributions to emissions into account.
- **Current Emission Levels:** India, a major emitter due to its population and economic activities, seeks additional time and support for economic development without jeopardizing climate goals, citing its lower per capita emissions compared to developed countries.
- **Poverty Alleviation:** India's development goals include poverty alleviation and improving the standard of living for its population. The argument is that addressing climate change should not hinder economic growth and the improvement of living conditions for the millions living in poverty.
- **Adaptation Needs:** India needs to adapt to the effects of climate change, which include increased sea levels, extreme weather events, and altered precipitation patterns. India emphasizes the need for wealthy nations to provide financial and technological help in order to enable adaptation to these impacts as part of the climate justice narrative.

### Responsibilities and Measures

- **Technology Transfer and Finance:** India places a strong emphasis on the necessity for rich nations to uphold their pledges to provide financial assistance and technology transfer to poor countries. The execution of mitigation and adaptation strategies in these nations depends heavily on this help.

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- **Capacity Building:** India emphasizes the significance of capacity building, particularly for poor nations, in order to effectively address climate change. Developing institutional capability and technical know-how to carry out climate-related projects and policies is part of this.
- **Mitigation Attempts:** India has promised to make a major effort to lower its carbon intensity. Initiatives include boosting energy efficiency, expanding the amount of renewable energy in the energy mix, and undertaking afforestation initiatives.
- **Adaptation Strategies:** India is currently engaged in the development of adaptation techniques aimed at enhancing its ability to withstand the effects of climate change. This involves taking steps like creating infrastructure that is robust to climate change, conserving water, and advancing sustainable agriculture.

### Conclusion

The recently concluded COP 28 in UAE has paved the way from “transitioning away” from “all fossil fuels” as opposed to only coal which goes against India’s position of climate justice. India calls for differentiated responsibilities, fair support mechanisms, and global cooperation to ensure a just and sustainable response to climate challenges.

### Analyze the impact of the recent conflicts in the Red Sea region, particularly the Houthi militia’s involvement, on global trade and regional stability. Discuss how these developments could influence India’s foreign policy and maritime security strategy.

**Introduction:** Give brief context to the question

**Body:** What is the impact of conflict on global trade and India’s maritime strategy?

**Conclusion:** Way forward

The recent involvement of the Houthi militia in the war against Israel has raised concern regarding the region’s stability. This will be critical for nations bordering the Red Sea region which connects the Suez Canal. The Suez by itself carries nearly 15% of all global trade between the West and the East.

### Impact on Global Trade and Regional Stability

- **Disruption of the Suez Canal:** The Red Sea is an important maritime route, and any hostilities in the area, particularly those carried out by the Houthis, could jeopardize the safety of global shipping. Potential disruptions to the Suez Canal, a vital chokepoint that connects the Mediterranean to the Red Sea, may have a significant impact on world trade by raising shipping rates and creating delays.
- **Humanitarian catastrophe:** There is a serious humanitarian catastrophe as a result of the Houthi militia’s involvement in the Yemeni conflict. The fighting has caused regional instability that extends to neighbouring nations and has wider ramifications for the political and economic stability of the Middle East.
- **Oil Transit:** With oil tankers traveling through the Bab el-Mandeb strait, the Red Sea is also essential for the transit of oil. Price variations in the global oil market could result from any disruptions or security threats in this area.

### Influence on India's Foreign Policy

- **Energy Security:** Because of its heavy reliance on Middle Eastern energy resources, India may have energy security issues in the event of a disruption in the Red Sea region.
- **Collaboration against Terrorism:** The Houthi movement has been charged with having connections to Iran. India may coordinate its foreign policy with measures to address the underlying causes of the conflict and work with international partners on counterterrorism projects, given that it is a nation concerned with maintaining regional peace and combating terrorism.
- **Diplomatic Engagement:** India may support international mediation efforts and push for diplomatic channels as a means of resolving regional problems, such as those in the Red Sea.

### Maritime Security Strategy

- **Naval Presence:** To safeguard its economic interests and guarantee the security of maritime routes, India may increase its naval presence in the Indian Ocean due to its strategic location. To handle security issues in the Red Sea and its environs, this might entail stepping up patrols and collaborating with foreign fleets. Eg, Operation Sankalp.
- **Diplomatic Initiatives:** India may take up diplomatic measures to support Red Sea region stability. This might be taking part in international forums, lending support to initiatives aimed at resolving conflicts and pushing for amicable settlements of local conflicts.
- **Relief Work:** India has a track record of taking part in relief work. India may support global efforts to help impacted populations in the Yemeni crisis by contributing humanitarian aid.

### Conclusion

India's foreign policy response is likely to be multifaceted, focusing on diplomatic initiatives, economic diversification, and a strategic naval presence to safeguard its interests in the region.

**Discuss the role of delimitation in ensuring political equality in India. How does the process of delimitation impact the principle of 'one person, one vote, one value' in the context of Indian democracy?**

**Introduction:** Briefly describe Delimitation Commission

**Body:** Highlight role of delimitation in ensuring political equality in India

**Conclusion:** Way forward

The process of drawing the borders of parliamentary or assembly seats is referred to as delimitation. A Delimitation Commission oversees this process following each census, and its decisions are final and unchallengeable in court. Seats reserved for the SC and ST communities in the state assembly or the Lok Sabha are also a result of delimitation. Article 82 of the Constitution states that following a ten-year census, Parliament enacts a Delimitation Act.

### Role of delimitation in ensuring political equality in India

- **Ensuring Proportional Representation-** Delimitation Exercise provides equal representation to equal segments of the population. The Delimitation Commission chooses the number and boundaries of the constituencies in such a way that the population of each seat is the same, as far as possible.
- **Periodic Review:** To take into consideration changes in the population's distribution and demographics, delimitation is not a one-time task but rather is done regularly. By doing this, political equality is maintained throughout time by ensuring that election borders continue to reflect changing demographics.
- **Avoiding Malapportionment:** Malapportionment is the term used to describe the unequal distribution of voters among constituencies, which results in differences in the weight of each vote. Delimitation lessens the effects of population fluctuations and shifts by redrawing constituency boundaries, which helps prevent malapportionment.

### Impact of delimitation on the "one person, one vote" principle

- **Preserving the Honesty of the Democratic Process:** The core tenet of democracy is "one person, one vote, one value." By taking into account population fluctuations over time, preventing the concentration of political power in particular areas, and encouraging a more equitable allocation of electoral constituencies, delimitation protects the integrity of this ideal.
- **Fair Representation:** The goal of delimitation is to give various communities and areas of the nation equitable representation. It facilitates demographic shifts by guaranteeing that political power is dispersed proportionately to the population across a range of geographic locations.
- **Social and Regional Equity:** Delimitation considers factors such as social diversity and regional representation. By taking into account the distribution of different communities and regions,

delimitation strives to ensure that diverse groups have proportional political representation, contributing to the democratic principle of equality.

### Conclusion

The upcoming delimitation exercise should take into account the concerns of southern states and minorities in the matter of allocation of seats to give them fair representation in the exercise's major role in strengthening or weakening democracy through redrawing of boundaries.

## Analyze the significance of international collaborations in Arctic research. How does India's participation in the Arctic research base reflect its commitment to global scientific endeavors?

**Introduction:** Give a brief description of the Arctic region

**Body:** Highlight the significance of collaborations in Arctic research and India's efforts in such endeavors.

**Conclusion:** Way forward

Recently, India sent off its first winter expedition, comprising four scientists from four different institutions, to India's Arctic Research Station Himadri. The region north of latitude 66° 34' N, above the Arctic Circle, is a section of the Arctic Ocean and the eight nations that comprise the Arctic Council: the US, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russia, Sweden, and Denmark. Aside from the national laws of the Arctic countries, international agreements such as the UN Convention on the Law of the Seas and the Svalbard Treaty of 1920 regulate scientific study in the region.

### Significance of international collaborations in Arctic research

- **Shared Scientific Resources:** Research in the Arctic is costly and logistically tough due to its large and demanding environment. Through collaborations, nations can pool resources—financial and scientific—to make the best use of their finite resources.
- **Environmental Monitoring and Conservation:** International cooperation makes it easier to set up research stations and monitoring networks, which supports continuous attempts to determine how climate change is affecting the Arctic environment. Having this knowledge is essential for creating conservation and adaptation plans that work.
- **Political Cooperation:** Research collaboration promotes diplomatic relations and peaceful cooperation among the various governments involved in the Arctic. It creates a framework for cooperating across countries to achieve shared objectives, fostering stability in the area.

### Regarding India's participation in Arctic research

- **Scientific Diplomacy:** India's participation in Arctic research is indicative of its dedication to international scientific projects as well as scientific diplomacy. India offers its scientific resources and experience to international collaborations to tackle global concerns. Eg, India set up Himadri research base, IndArc a multi-sensory observatory & Gruevbadet Atmospheric Laboratory in Norway.
- **Developing Policies:** Information from research conducted in the Arctic is essential for developing policies about environmental preservation, sustainable development, and climate change. India's involvement enables it to actively participate in the development of international policy grounded in solid scientific data. Eg, India's Arctic Policy 2022 has been synchronized with Sustainable Development Goals.
- **Information Exchange:** India's involvement in Arctic research helps other Arctic and non-Arctic countries exchange technology and information. The scientific community in India can gain from this interchange, and it can further advancements across a range of sectors.

### Conclusion

India's involvement in such endeavors demonstrates its commitment to advancing scientific knowledge, contributing to global initiatives, and engaging in diplomatic efforts for the collective benefit of the planet.

**Discuss the significance of the Chief Justice of India's interpretation of Article 200 of the Constitution in the context of law-making at the state level. How does this interpretation impact the legislative autonomy of states?**

**Introduction:** Give a brief overview of judgment.

**Body:** Highlight the significance of judgment in the interpretation of Article 200

**Conclusion:** Way forward

The recent judgment of SC in the State of Punjab vs Principal Secretary to the Governor of Punjab and Another gave a new interpretation to Article 200 which relates to the options before a Governor when a Bill, after being passed by the State Legislature, is presented to him for his assent. The judgment says that if the Governor decides to withhold assent, he has to send it back to the Assembly immediately for reconsideration, in which case he has no other option except to give assent.

**Significance of CJI interpretation of Article 200**

- **Rights of legislature:** The judgment seeks to protect the rights of state assemblies in matters of lawmaking as it is common for an unelected Governor to withhold assent to the bills passed by the assembly without any reasonable cause.
- **Delay in law-making exercise:** Governors tend to not give assent to the bills and keep the bills pending for two or three years, virtually negating the legislative exercises of the State. In the Punjab case, the Indian Supreme Court made it clear that governors could not postpone the Bills' decision. Consequently, Article 200 now has more clarity thanks to the Supreme Court's ruling, and governors must act swiftly to decide on the Bills.
- **Strengthen the principle of federalism:** The judgment further strengthens the principle of federalism and gives state assemblies autonomy in respect of law-making by placing a constitutional mandate on the duty of the Governor to give assent to the bills within a time frame.

**How does it impact the legislative autonomy of the state?**

- **No clear definition:** The second provision of Article 200 of the Constitution only mentions that bills that endanger the powers of the High Court are to be reserved by the Governor for consideration by the President. However, owing to a lack of clarity in definition Governor uses his discretion to send any Bill to the President.
- **Ordinance-making power:** Under Article 213 of the Constitution Governor can in certain cases promulgate an ordinance only with instruction from the President. This article also impacts the legislative autonomy of the state.
- **Distribution of legislative powers between the Union and State:** Under Article 254 repugnancy arises when there is a conflict between a central law and a state law on a subject in the Concurrent List. The only exception is that state law may prevail when it has been reserved for the consideration of the President and has received his assent.

**Conclusion**

The drafters of the Constitution did not foresee the possibility of Governors indefinitely delaying their decisions on Bills under Article 200. This phenomenon is a recent development that demands a fresh solution within the constitutional framework. As a result, it is suggested that the Supreme Court establish a reasonable timeframe within which Governors must make a decision on a Bill passed by the Assembly. This proposed intervention is seen as essential for preserving the principles of federalism in the country.

**Evaluate the need for procedural reforms in the Indian Parliament to balance the need for discipline with the necessity of robust debate and opposition. How can Parliament ensure effective functioning while accommodating diverse viewpoints?**

**Introduction:** Give a brief context to the question

**Body:** Why there is a need for procedural reforms in the functioning of Parliament?

**Conclusion:** Way forward

The recent suspension of 141 MPs from Parliament has raised concern about the functioning of Parliament which is India's highest legislature and deliberative body, embodying the spirit of the Constitution. It also raises concern about the representative role of MPs which is a cardinal principle of parliamentary democracy.

**Need for Procedural Reforms in Parliament**

- **Enhancing Efficiency:** Procedural reforms are necessary to streamline legislative processes and reduce procedural bottlenecks. This can lead to more efficient decision-making and timely passage of legislation.
- **Curbing Disruptions:** The Indian Parliament often faces disruptions, leading to adjournments and the stalling of proceedings. Procedural reforms can introduce mechanisms to curb disruptions, ensuring a more disciplined and focused parliamentary environment.
- **Strengthening Committee System:** Reforms can focus on empowering and strengthening parliamentary committees. These committees play a crucial role in scrutinizing legislation, and reforms can enhance their effectiveness in conducting in-depth examinations.
- **Role of Speaker:** The Speaker should act impartially, ensuring that all voices are heard while maintaining order during debates.

**Ensuring Effective Functioning**

- **Clear Rule of Conduct:** Create and implement a clear rule of conduct that forbids personal attacks and encourages polite discourse. This keeps discussions from devolving into hostilities and keeps them on topic.
- **Dedication to Pluralism:** Promote an environment that honours a range of viewpoints, making sure that every participant feels appreciated and heard regardless of their ideas, political beliefs, or background.
- **Sensitization and Training:** Offer lawmakers courses on effective negotiation, communication, and dispute resolution. Sensitization training sessions help foster a more cooperative atmosphere and improve comprehension of differing points of view.
- **Frequent discussions:** Holding regular, informal discussions outside of formal sessions between the opposition and the ruling party can promote mutual understanding and collaboration. Inclusion is promoted by actively involving all political parties and making sure that the opinions of minorities are heard during the decision-making process.

**Conclusion**

Achieving a balance between discipline and lively debate should be the goal of procedural improvements in the Indian Parliament. By putting these ideas into practice, the legislative process can become more inclusive and successful, allowing for a range of opinions and maintaining the democratic system's integrity.

**Critically examine the role of fiscal measures, such as taxation on High Fat Sugar Salt (HFSS) foods, in addressing public health challenges like obesity and diabetes in India. How can such measures be effectively implemented without being regressive?**

**Introduction:** Give a brief context to the question

**Body:** Highlight the role of fiscal measures in addressing public health challenges and measures for effective implementation

**Conclusion:** Way forward

HFSS food consumption contributes to health issues globally, challenging the misconception that obesity is limited to affluent urban areas. In India, Non-Communicable Diseases rose from 38% (1990) to 65% (2019), causing 1.2 million annual deaths. The economic impact was \$23 billion in 2017, with a projected increase to \$480 billion by 2060 if unaddressed.

**Role of fiscal measures in addressing public health challenges**

- **Incentives for Behavioural Change:** Taxes on high-fat, high-sugar foods (HFSS) act as a deterrent, urging people to choose healthier foods and cutting back on the intake of unhealthy products associated with diabetes and obesity.
- **Revenue Generation:** By taxing foods high in fat, sugar, and salt, money may be set aside for public health campaigns, healthcare programs, and interventions. This creates a steady stream of financing for tackling health issues.
- **Sector Reformulation:** By providing incentives, taxes can stimulate the food sector to reformulate and produce healthier substitutes. This encourages a change in production towards goods that cause fewer health problems.
- **Lowering External Costs:** The use of HFSS results in higher healthcare costs, which are external. Taxes aid in the internalization of these expenses, placing the onus of these items' negative externalities on customers and the industry.

### Measures to ensure effective implementation

- **Designing Effective Tax Structures:** The current GST rates on highly processed goods, like sugar-sweetened drinks (SSGs) and salty snacks, are not commensurate with their nutritional value. Various discrepancies don't take into account the different nutritional effects of various goods, hence they do not affect changing dietary preferences for healthier options. Therefore, the need is to design tax structures that consider the nutritional impact of foods, with higher rates for HFSS products and lower or zero rates for healthier alternatives, can be more effective.
- **Consumer Education:** Unhealthy consumption patterns are a result of both the influence of aggressive marketing and a lack of customer awareness. In addition to taxing, encouraging nutrition knowledge and offering unambiguous food labels can enable consumers to make more informed and health-conscious decisions. These measures can be supplemented with other measures such as the promotion of nutrition literacy and effective food labeling, as more potent tools to combat the rising epidemic of overweight and obesity by creating a more sustainable and equitable food system.

### Conclusion

India could create a specific tax system and study the finest methods that other countries, such as the United States, the United Kingdom, Denmark, France, Hungary, Mexico, and South Africa, have implemented as a deterrent to consuming HFSS, promote healthier food choices and foster the nation's well-being.

## Analyze the challenges faced by India in balancing its defence budgeting with the need for effective deterrence. How can India optimize its defence spending in the face of evolving security threats?

**Introduction:** Give a brief context to the question

**Body:** Highlight challenges faced by India in balancing its defence budgeting.

**Conclusion:** Way forward

India faces several challenges in balancing its defence budget with the need for effective deterrence. These challenges are complex and multifaceted, and they require careful consideration and strategic planning. The challenges on our northern borders and western borders warrant a judicious assessment of India's defence budget.

### Challenges faced by India in balancing its defence budgeting

- **Modernization and Technological Upgradation:** The rapid pace of technological advancements requires constant modernization of defence capabilities, which can strain the budget. The focus should be on developing asymmetric capabilities in space, cyber, artificial intelligence, quantum technologies, and blockchain. These are likely to be the battle-winning technologies of the future, and to get technology transfer for them will be difficult.

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- **Manpower Costs:** A significant portion of the defence budget is allocated to personnel costs, including salaries, pensions, and benefits. The arrears to be paid for schemes like One Rank One Pension would put a strain on the budget.
- **Geopolitical Shifts and Regional Dynamics:** Defence priorities and budget distribution may need to be reevaluated in light of the changing geopolitical environment. Increased funding for defence is required in areas such as the Malacca Strait, West Asian rescue missions, and competition with China in the Indo-Pacific.

### Potential ways to optimize defence spending

- **Indigenous manufacturing:** Enhance defence-industrial capabilities to reduce dependency on imports and stimulate the domestic defence industry through programs like Atmanirbhar Bharat, and the Innovations For Defence Excellence (iDEX) scheme are notable achievements. These efforts should be supplemented with an increase in allocation for research and development and support from the private sector.
- **Policymaking:** Policy initiatives like restructuring of the Ordnance Factory Board, the promulgation of negative lists for imports, the higher allocation for capital expenditure, or even institutionalized support like the non-lapsable Modernisation Fund for Defence and Internal Security (MFDIS) can help to optimize defence spending.
- **Strategic partnerships:** The need is to regularly assess geopolitical threats and align defence priorities. Creating strategic alliances with like-minded countries such as the US, UK, Japan, and South Korea to share defence budget burdens & collaborate on research and development to mitigate security challenges.

### Conclusion

A well-thought-out defence strategy, coupled with prudent resource allocation and effective management, can enable India to maintain a strong deterrent capability in the face of evolving security threats.

### Examine the role of spectrum allocation in national security and economic development. How does the administrative allocation of spectrum for satellite broadband services impact India's strategic interests?

**Introduction:** Give a brief context to the question

**Body:** What role does spectrum allocation play in national security and economic development?

**Conclusion:** Way forward

Recently passed Telecommunication Bill, 2023 proposes significant and far-reaching changes in the regulatory architecture governing the telecom sector in India. It allows for the administrative allocation of spectrum for satellite broadband services. The Bill also allows the Central government to take over control and management of telecommunication services in the interest of national security or the event of a war.

### Role of Spectrum Allocation in National Security & Economic Development

- **Defence Communication:** The electromagnetic spectrum is crucial to military communication. Defence forces can maintain situational awareness, conduct operations without hindrance, and communicate effectively when resources are allocated securely and efficiently.
- **Surveillance and Reconnaissance:** Spectrum is essential for various surveillance and reconnaissance technologies, including radar systems. Proper allocation allows for the development and deployment of advanced defense technologies for monitoring and safeguarding national borders.
- **Broadband services and telecoms:** Spectrum serves as the foundation for both of these industries. The expansion of telecommunications networks is facilitated by efficient allocation, which also promotes economic development by enabling better internet services and connectivity.
- **Innovation and Technology Development:** A lot of new technologies are dependent on particular spectrum bands, like 5G and the Internet of Things (IoT). Allotting spectrum for innovation promotes the creation of new technologies, which boosts the economy and generates employment.



## Impact of Administrative Allocation of Spectrum for Satellite Broadband Services on India's Strategic Interests

- **Strategic Communication:** Satellite communication is a robust means of communicating strategically. India's strategic communication infrastructure is improved when a spectrum is allotted for satellite broadband services, including defence and diplomatic uses.
- **Global Competitiveness:** India can establish itself as a major player in the space and satellite industries by allotting spectrum for satellite broadband services. This boosts India's strategic influence internationally in addition to aiding in economic development.
- **Connectivity and Digital Inclusion:** Improved connectivity, particularly in rural and underserved areas, can be facilitated by the administrative distribution of spectrum for satellite broadband services in India. Ensuring universal access to information and communication technologies is imperative in mitigating the digital divide.
- **Emergency Response and Disaster Management:** The utilization of satellite broadband services can be extremely important in these scenarios. The spectrum allotted for these services bolsters India's capacity to efficiently handle emergencies, crises, and natural disasters.

### Conclusion

A balanced and strategic approach to spectrum management is essential to meet the growing demands of various sectors while ensuring the country's security and competitiveness on the global stage.

## Examine the constitutional validity of the Post Office Bill, 2023, in light of Supreme Court rulings on state surveillance powers and the right to privacy.

**Introduction:** Give a brief context to the Bill.

**Body:** Highlight key features of the Bill and concerns related to it.

**Conclusion:** Way forward

Parliament recently passed Post Office Bill, 2023 that seeks to replace the colonial-era Indian Post Office Act, 1898. The legislation is an attempt to ensure the effective functioning of the Postal Department as a messenger service and as a provider of banking facilities.

### Key features of the Bill

- **Interception of Articles:** Section 9 of the bill confers upon the Centre the power, through official notification, to authorize officers for the interception, opening, or detention of shipments in the pursuit of state security, fostering amicable relations with foreign states, maintaining public order, addressing emergencies, ensuring public safety, or ensuring compliance with other laws.
- **Exemption from Liability:** Section 10 of the legislation provides immunity to the Post Office and its officers, shielding them from liability related to loss, mis-delivery, delay, or damage during services, except as explicitly prescribed. The Post Office Act of 1898 has undergone substantial amendments, with the removal of the majority of offenses and penalties, except for non-payment cases, which remain recoverable as arrears of land revenue.
- **Special features:** The current bill abolishes Section 4 of the 1898 Act, which granted exclusive postal transportation privileges to the Centre. It also empowers the Director General of Postal Services to oversee specified extra services and set fees without parliamentary approval.

### Concerns related to Bill

- **Unauthorized State Surveillance:** Critics argue that the Bill threatens privacy rights by allowing unchecked interception of postal articles, raising the risk of unauthorized state surveillance and abuse. The Supreme Court, in the *PUCL v. Union of India (1996)* case, mandated safeguards to align with the right to privacy under Articles 19(1)(a) and Article 21.
- **Violation of Privacy:** In *Justice KS Puttaswamy versus Union of India (2017)*, the Supreme Court unanimously declared the right to privacy to be a fundamental right of all Indians. The broad powers given to the Central Government under the Bill violate six conditions for any state measure impacting privacy: legality, legitimate goal, suitability, necessity, proportionality, and procedural safeguards.

- **Vague Terms:** The term 'emergency' is not clearly defined anywhere in the Constitution and Bill. Hence, giving sweeping powers to the state of interception cannot serve as a reasonable ground for suspension of fundamental rights under Article 19(1).

### Conclusion

The government needs to address concerns related to the Bill raised by Opposition parties & establish clear, transparent rules for mail interception, ensuring these are fair and include procedural safeguards. Defining vague definitions and framing grievance redressal mechanisms can serve as a bedrock to balance concerns of national security with the right to privacy.

### Evaluate the ethical and legal challenges in the enforcement of money laundering laws in India, considering recent judicial observations on the ED's functioning and the potential for abuse of authority.

**Introduction:** Describe the formation of ED.

**Body:** What are the ethical and legal challenges in the enforcement of money laundering laws in India?

**Conclusion:** Way forward

The origin of the Enforcement Directorate (ED) dates back to May 1, 1956, when an 'Enforcement Unit' was established within the Department of Economic Affairs. Its initial purpose was to address violations of Exchange Control Laws under the Foreign Exchange Regulation Act (FERA). Over time, the ED has evolved into a multi-dimensional organization, now tasked with investigating economic offenses under various laws, including the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), Fugitive Economic Offenders Act, Foreign Exchange Management Act, and FERA.

### Ethical and Legal Challenges in enforcement of money laundering laws in India

- **Jurisdiction Overreach:** Criticism of the Enforcement Directorate's overreach was especially noted in the case Pankaj Bansal vs Union of India, where the Supreme Court highlighted issues with the ED's actions, including searches, seizures, and arrests, which have been deemed outside its powers & criticized the ED for not exercising its powers with probity, fairness, and consistency.
- **Limited Interpretation by the Supreme Court:** The Supreme Court, in the Vijay Madanlal Choudhary and Ors vs Union of India and Ors. (2022) case, interpreted the PMLA in a way that restricts its application to "wrongful and illegal gain of property" resulting from criminal activity related to scheduled offenses. The court emphasized the necessity for the property to qualify as "proceeds of crime" under Section 2(1)(u) of the 2002 Act.
- **Selective Targeting and Abuse of Process:** There have been concerns about the ED's selective targeting of individuals in states governed by the Opposition. There have been instances where the ED has conducted inquiries into offenses not covered by the PMLA, such as the alleged illegal mining of sand, which falls under state jurisdiction.
- **Impact on Federalism:** Absolute powers given to CBI & ED have eroded the principles of federalism as investigating agencies target states based on political considerations, potentially damaging the foundations of the Constitution.

### Conclusion

Concerns related to the ED's conduct, selective targeting, potential abuse of authority, and violations of federalism demand a closer examination of practices and actions of the enforcement agencies particularly by Constitutional bodies like courts to prevent further erosion of democracy and emphasize the need to uphold constitutional values.

**Critically analyze the relationship between sovereign credit ratings and a country's macroeconomic fundamentals, with a specific focus on India's experience. How do credit rating agencies' methodologies impact emerging economies like India?**

**Introduction:** Give a brief description of Sovereign credit ratings.

**Body:** What is the relationship between Credit ratings and macroeconomic fundamentals?

**Conclusion:** Way forward

Sovereign credit ratings, evaluations offered by credit rating agencies (CRAs), gauge a country's capacity to fulfill its debt obligations. These ratings hold significant sway in shaping the decisions of global investors, impacting a nation's borrowing expenses and its ability to tap into capital markets. The correlation between sovereign credit ratings and a nation's macroeconomic fundamentals is intricate and multifaceted.

**Relationship between Sovereign Credit Ratings and Macroeconomic Fundamentals**

- **Fiscal Policy:** Credit ratings are greatly impacted by a nation's budgetary management, government debt levels, and fiscal restraint. Downgrades could result from high levels of government debt relative to GDP.
- **Monetary policy:** The stability of a country's currency, inflation rates, and central bank policies are considered. A stable and predictable monetary environment is generally favourable for higher credit ratings.
- **Economic Growth:** Credit ratings are positively impacted by sustainable economic growth. A booming economy has the potential to increase revenue and decrease the overall amount of debt.
- **External factors:** Credit ratings can be adversely affected by external factors, including but not limited to global economic trends, political stability, social and political unrest, and trade dynamics that impact a country's credit rating.

**Credit Rating Agencies' Methodologies and Impact on Emerging Economies**

- **Focus on Short-Term Indicators:** Some methodologies may heavily rely on short-term indicators, potentially overlooking long-term growth prospects and structural reforms that are crucial for emerging economies.
- **Limited Diversity in Methodologies:** There is a concern that the methodologies used by major credit rating agencies may not fully capture the complexities and nuances of emerging economies, leading to a lack of diversity in assessment approaches.
- **Opaque Methodologies:** Rating agencies rely on qualitative factors based on subjective assessment, as opposed to objective measures of a sovereign's ability and willingness to pay its debts.
- **Ignoring macroeconomic fundamentals:** Rating agencies tend to rely on factors like Good governance, democracy, citizen's voice and accountability, rule of law, and control of corruption while giving less weight to factors like GDP growth, inflation, government debt-GDP ratio, fiscal and current account balances, external liabilities & forex reserve levels thereby lowering ratings of countries like India.

**Conclusion**

India should focus on fiscal consolidation & improving data collection especially related to Census and expenditure surveys. A diversified and comprehensive assessment framework would better capture the unique dynamics of emerging economies like India.

**Analyze the impact of the Telecommunications Bill, of 2023, on India's digital landscape, particularly in terms of government control and surveillance. Discuss the balance between national security and individual privacy in the context of this bill.**

**Introduction:** Give a brief context to the question

**Body:** Highlight the impact of the bill on India's digital landscape.

**Conclusion:** Way forward

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The newly introduced Telecommunications Bill, 2023 aims to bring in structural changes to the current regulatory mechanisms in the telecom sector. It seeks to replace the Indian Telegraph Act of 1885, the Indian Wireless Telegraphy Act of 1933, and the Telegraph Wires (Unlawful Possession) Act of 1950.

### Impact of the new bill on Digital Landscape

- **Powers of Interception:** In the event of a public emergency or a threat to national security, the government may halt, take over, or monitor any telecom service. In the event of a public emergency, interest, or safety concern, the Bill gives the central and state governments, or a government-authorized officer, the authority to request power suspension, disclosure, and interception.
- **Data Security and Privacy Issues:** The government is also authorized to announce standards and guarantee adherence to data processing and encryption in telecommunications. It is unclear whether the Centre will be able to stop widely used chat apps from encrypting text messages. The right to privacy of the user is violated by this.
- **Vague definitions:** The new Bill has left open different interpretations of definitions of telecom, telecom services, and what defines a message. It is purported that these definitions have been intentionally left vague to potentially regulate online platforms as well (OTT Platforms, and messaging apps like WhatsApp).

### Considerations for Balancing National Security and Individual Privacy

- **Data Protection Measures:** Adequate provisions for data protection and privacy are crucial. The legislation should align with or complement existing data protection laws to ensure the secure handling of personal information.
- **Transparency and Accountability:** To maintain public trust, the legislation should mandate transparency regarding surveillance practices. Regular reporting on the use of surveillance powers and accountability for abuses can help strike a balance.
- **Consultation with stakeholders:** In the spirit of democratic governance, involving the public & tech industry is vital to understanding the practical implications of the legislation on digital infrastructure, ensuring that it doesn't stifle innovation while meeting security objectives.
- **Explicit Legal Protections:** Strong and unambiguous legal safeguards against the abuse of surveillance authority should be a part of the bill that covers mechanisms for accountability, transparency, and judicial oversight.

### Conclusion

The impact of the Telecommunications Bill, of 2023, on India's digital landscape will largely depend on the specific provisions of the bill. Striking the right balance between government control, surveillance for national security, and protection of individual privacy is a delicate task. It requires a thoughtful approach that considers legal safeguards, data protection, transparency, and public participation to create a framework that addresses both security imperatives and the rights of individuals.

**Discuss the role of sanitation systems in urban areas in safeguarding public health and the environment. How do different types of sanitation systems, like twin pits and septic tanks, contribute to this goal?**

**Introduction:** Give a brief context to the question

**Body:** Highlight the role of sanitation in safeguarding health and the environment.

**Conclusion:** Way forward

Sanitation systems play a crucial role in safeguarding public health and protecting the environment in urban areas. Effective sanitation is essential for preventing the spread of diseases, ensuring a clean- living environment, and promoting overall well-being.

### Role of sanitation system in urban areas in safeguarding public health and environment

- **Disease Prevention:** Sanitation systems manage human waste to prevent waterborne diseases like cholera. Adequate sanitation also reduces breeding sites for disease-carrying vectors like mosquitoes, helping to prevent diseases such as malaria and dengue fever.
- **Water Quality Protection:** Sanitation systems treat wastewater to prevent water contamination. Proper sanitation also manages stormwater runoff to protect water bodies from urban pollutants, ensuring clean water resources for urban areas.
- **Resilience to Climate Change:** Resilient sanitation infrastructure can withstand climate change impacts. Urban sanitation planning must consider adaptation strategies for challenges like increased precipitation. Sustainable sanitation practices enhance urban resilience to climate-related issues.
- **Conservation of Environment:** Sanitation systems handle urban solid waste, promoting environmental conservation through proper management like recycling. Controlled waste disposal and reduced burning enhance air quality by curbing harmful pollutants.

### How do different sanitation systems contribute to the goal of public health?

- **Twin pits:** Twin pit latrines help in pathogen reduction, minimizing the risk of waterborne diseases and contamination of the surrounding environment. Twin pits promote sanitation with minimum environmental impact as waste gets decomposed in pits reducing the volume of waste thereby converting the waste into a more stable form, reducing the risk of groundwater contamination and soil pollution. Another major use of twin pits is they allow for the reuse of treated waste as a nutrient-rich fertilizer promoting resource conservation.
- **Septic tanks:** Septic tanks, in a decentralized approach, treat wastewater on-site, safeguarding water resources by preventing pollution of nearby bodies of water through a well-designed drain field. Properly designed and maintained septic tanks help prevent the direct release of untreated sewage into the environment, reducing the risk of diseases. Septic Tanks reduce the risk of waterborne diseases, minimize foul odours, and enhance the quality of life for residents.

### Conclusion

Effective implementation, proper maintenance, and community awareness are essential for the success of any sanitation system in achieving its public health and environmental protection goals.

## Critically examine the legal provisions related to medical negligence in India. How does the Bharatiya Nyaya (Second) Sanhita Bill, 2023, impact the accountability and protection of medical practitioners?

**Introduction:** Define medical negligence.

**Body:** Highlight legal provisions related to medical negligence in India and their impact on doctors.

**Conclusion:** Way forward

Medical negligence is the term used to describe when a healthcare provider or medical professional violates their duty of care and causes harm, injury, or death to a patient. In India, complaints involving medical malpractice are usually filed as civil lawsuits in the relevant court, seeking damages. If a patient dies as a result of a healthcare professional's negligence, in certain situations, criminal charges may also be brought against them.

### Provisions related to medical negligence in India

- **Indian Medical Council (Professional Conduct, Etiquette and Ethics) Regulations, 2002:** These guidelines outline the duties and responsibilities of medical practitioners, including the need to obtain informed consent from patients, maintain medical records, and adhere to medical ethics.
- **Consumer Protection Act of 2019:** This important piece of legislation protects the rights of customers, including those who are looking for medical services. The Act offers a legal path to compensation in the event of medical malpractice and inadequate medical care.

- **Indian Penal Code (IPC):** Sections 304A and 337-339 of the IPC deal with offenses related to causing death or harm by a rash or negligent act, including those committed by medical professionals. These sections may be invoked in cases of criminal negligence.

### Impact of Bharatiya Nyaya (Second) Sanhita Bill, 2023 on accountability and protection of medical practitioners:

- **Less severe punishment:** Under the BNS, the punishment for causing accidental death (like road traffic death) was increased to a maximum of five years while if such an act is committed by a medical practitioner during a medical procedure shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to two years, and shall also be liable to a fine. This provision allows the same penalty that was specified under Section 304(A) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC).
- **Accountability:** The newly drafted bill takes note of *Jacob Mathew vs the State of Punjab & Anr. (2005)* which lays down the accountability of medical practitioners in cases of medical negligence. The case highlights a framework that focuses on professional standards and the importance of medical ethics, the opinion of experts to establish negligence, and establishing principles of defining “gross” negligence leading to criminal liability.

### Conclusion

The new bill instills confidence in doctors, especially in critical situations, eliminating the fear of imprisonment and allowing them to take calculated risks which is beneficial for the doctor-patient relationship making it a positive development for public health.

### Discuss the role of international cooperation in addressing non-traditional security threats like drone attacks in maritime regions. What strategies can India adapt to enhance regional security collaboration?

**Introduction:** Give a brief context to the question

**Body:** What is the role of international cooperation in countering such threats and what strategies India can adopt to enhance regional security?

**Conclusion:** Way forward

A suspected armed drone strike on a merchant ship in the Western Indian Ocean has posed a concern for India in addressing non-traditional security attacks in the maritime region. These threats transcend national borders, making collaborative efforts essential to effectively manage and mitigate their impact.

### Role of international cooperation in addressing such threats

- **Information Exchange:** It is critical to set up efficient channels for the prompt exchange of intelligence about drone activity in marine areas. This may entail setting up local forums for exchanging intelligence.
- **Legal frameworks:** It is essential to create and uphold international legal frameworks that control the use of drones in maritime environments. It is possible to create bilateral and multinational agreements to establish uniform guidelines and rules.
- **Joint Training and Exercises:** Coordinating training sessions and exercises for maritime security helps foster interoperability between local security forces and navies.
- **Regional Forums and Organizations:** Joining regional security forums and associations, like ASEAN or the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), can offer forums for cooperation and debate of shared security issues.

### Strategies for India to enhance regional security collaboration

- **Cooperation in Intelligence:** India may contribute by sharing its intelligence, actively engaging in international forums, and working with other countries to improve collective situational awareness.

- **International Agreements:** India can advocate for and actively participate in the creation of international agreements that address the responsible use of drones, as well as the consequences of malicious drone activities.
- **Capacity Building and Technology Sharing:** India can assist neighbouring nations in developing and implementing drone detection and counter-drone technology by sharing best practices and technical know-how.
- **Diplomacy and Conflict Prevention:** To address common issues and advance regional stability, India can have diplomatic discussions with its neighbours. Misunderstandings and confrontations can be avoided with open lines of communication.
- **Public-Private Partnerships:** India can help international businesses form alliances with its private sector, which will promote innovation and strengthen the country's defense against drone threats.

### Conclusion

India as a responsible global power needs to collaborate with Western nations' navies to escort convoys of merchant ships to their destination or create a safe transit corridor with warships on independent patrols. Alongside Indian navy should develop the ability to acquire laser systems and high-power microwave weapons that are more effective in countering armed drones.

### Critically examine the suitability of the WHO Growth Standards for measuring child undernutrition in India. What are the challenges and benefits of using these global standards?

**Introduction:** Describe WHO Growth Standards briefly.  
**Body:** Highlight the challenges and benefits of these standards.  
**Conclusion:** Way forward

The World Health Organization (WHO) Growth Standards are widely used to assess child growth and nutritional status globally. Child undernutrition remains a longstanding challenge in India, and it is widely acknowledged that the factors influencing undernutrition are diverse. These include elements such as food consumption, dietary variety, health conditions, sanitation, the status of women, and the overarching context of poverty.

### Challenges of using these standards

- **Environmental Factors:** In India, there might be significant variations in the quality of the water, sanitation, and exposure to illnesses. The health and development of children can be impacted by several factors, which makes it difficult to apply global standards consistently.
- **Socioeconomic Disparities:** There are large socioeconomic differences in India. The impact of socioeconomic factors on child nutrition may not be sufficiently taken into account by the WHO Growth Standards, which could result in an insufficient understanding of undernutrition.
- **Population Diversity:** India's population is diverse, exhibiting differences in socioeconomic status, ethnicity, and genetic makeup. Some subgroups' nutritional status may be misinterpreted as a result of the WHO Growth Standards' incomplete representation of this variability.
- **Reference Population Age:** The nutritional baseline of children in India may not fully match the WHO guidelines, which are based on a reference population of well-nourished youngsters. This could lead to youngsters being incorrectly classified as malnourished even though their nutritional status may be within the usual range for the community.

### Benefits of using these standards

- **International Comparisons:** India can evaluate the nutritional status of its children to global standards by using the WHO Growth Standards to facilitate international comparisons. This is especially crucial for monitoring the development of global health objectives.

## Mains Marathon Compilation for the Month of December 2023

- **Measurement Consistency:** Standardization makes it easier for nations to adopt uniform monitoring and measurement procedures. It gives academics, decision-makers, and medical professionals a common language to interact and exchange data.
- **Evidence-Based Approach:** The WHO Growth Standards offer a solid methodology and a wealth of research as the basis for evaluating child growth. The scientific method improves the accuracy of growth evaluations.
- **Initiatives for Global Health:** Respecting international norms is in line with global health goals, which facilitates India's ability to work with others and obtain assistance from international health organizations.

### Conclusion

India needs to adopt a multi-pronged approach to address child growth and nutritional status by making efforts to meet the requirements of a 'minimum acceptable diet' as defined by WHO like quality of the meals under food security schemes, including eggs in meals for children and pulses in the Public Distribution System. Finally, multiple interventions such as better sanitation, access to health care, childcare services, and so on are required for better nutritional outcomes.

### Analyze the impact of civilian deaths in military operations on civil-military relations in conflict zones like Jammu and Kashmir. How can the Indian Army balance counter-insurgency operations with maintaining civilian trust?

**Introduction:** Give a brief context to the question

**Body:** Highlight the impact of civilian death on civil-military relations and how to deal with this.

**Conclusion:** Way forward

The impact of civilian deaths in military operations on civil-military relations in conflict zones like Jammu and Kashmir is significant and complex. In the year 2023, Rajouri, Poonch, and Reasi districts in the Jammu region recorded a total of 55 fatalities, comprising 20 security personnel and 28 individuals identified as terrorists.

### Impact of civilian deaths on civil-military relations

- **Erosion of Public Trust:** When civilians are killed in military operations, there is frequently a serious decline in public trust between the local populace and the armed forces. The military may be viewed by the public as an occupying force, inciting animosity and hatred.
- **Possibilities for Radicalization and Recruitment:** Insurgent groups might use civilian losses as powerful propaganda to attract recruits and support. The number of potential insurgents may rise as a result of people becoming radicalized in response to their sadness and outrage over the killings of civilians.
- **Effect on Civil-Military collaboration:** When civilian casualties are excessive, civil-military collaboration is strained. The military finds it difficult to work effectively with civilian authorities in areas like development, governance, and reconstruction, which makes efforts to maintain general stability more difficult.

### Measures that can be taken to balance counter-insurgency operations & maintain civilian trust

- **Engagement and Dialogue with people:** To gain the trust of the local people and learn about their issues, the armed forces should maintain open lines of communication. Organize frequent community gatherings to resolve complaints and guarantee openness in military activities.
- **Legal Accountability:** Armed forces should ensure that human rights norms and international humanitarian law are followed throughout military operations. This can be complemented with efforts to Integrate human rights education into military training programs to instill respect for civilian rights and international humanitarian law.
- **Training and Rules of Engagement:** Ensuring that soldiers receive thorough training on the significance of safeguarding civilians and following stringent rules of engagement is crucial. To



coordinate efforts in upholding order and attending to the needs of impacted communities, armed forces could collaborate closely with civil authorities.

### Conclusion

It takes years to win over the support of the populace and is a laborious process. The backing of the majority of Gujjar and Bakarwal communities was the most heartening aspect of the army's actions in the past operations. Village Defence Committees took up arms against the insurgents and fought alongside the Indian Army as a result of which the counter operations were successful. Balancing effective counter-insurgency operations with minimizing civilian harm is essential for restoring trust and achieving long-term stability in conflict zones like Jammu and Kashmir.

### Analyze the factors contributing to the increase in illegal migration from India to developed countries, particularly the U.S., and discuss the policy challenges it poses for the Indian government.

**Introduction:** Give a brief context to the question

**Body:** Highlight factors and policy challenges contributing to the increase in illegal migration.

**Conclusion:** Way forward

Recently, a plane carrying 303 Indians majority of which belonged to Punjab, Haryana and Gujarat suspected of human trafficking were detained near Paris which shows that people affected by distress in their homeland seek opportunities in the developed world despite the enormous risks during their journeys.

#### Factors contributing to the increase in illegal migration

- **Economic discrepancies:** People travel overseas in search of better job possibilities and greater living standards due to the economic discrepancies between industrialized countries and India.
- **Jobs Available:** People move in quest of better economic conditions because they are drawn to industrialized nations by the lure of higher-paying jobs and career potential.
- **Aspirations for Education:** Many people look for student visas as a means of immigration because they want access to top universities in industrialized nations and high-quality education.
- **Smuggling and Trafficking Networks:** The existence of formalized networks for smuggling and trafficking encourages illegal migration by taking advantage of weak people who ask for help crossing borders.
- **Policy gaps and Enforcement Difficulties:** Illegal migration is given room to grow due to policy gaps and enforcement difficulties in immigration laws, both in India and in the countries of destination.
- **Document Fraud:** The use of fraudulent documents and identity theft further enables individuals to navigate immigration processes and enter developed countries illegally.

#### Policy challenges for the Indian government in addressing illegal migration include

- **Enhanced Border Security:** To stop unauthorized border crossings and human trafficking, border security measures are being strengthened.
- **International Cooperation:** Working together with the countries of destination to improve information exchange, collaborative investigations, and coordinated countermeasures against unauthorized migration.
- **Economic Development:** Putting into practice strategies that address the underlying reasons of India's economic downturn by fostering employment growth and higher living standards.
- **Education and Awareness:** Spreading knowledge about the dangers of illegal immigration as well as the legal immigration routes.
- **Stricter Immigration Laws:** Putting stronger immigration laws into place, enforcing them, and penalizing individuals who engage in illegal immigration.
- **Consular services:** The objective is to enhance consular services for Indian nationals residing overseas and to tackle problems of lawful migration.

## Conclusion

It is time the Indian government paid attention to the trafficking racket that appears to be widespread, especially across parts of rural Punjab and Haryana, where gullible people fall prey to tall promises of a better future in the U.S. Their situation has been exacerbated by the crisis that they face in farming with plummeting incomes and overexploited and fragmented farmlands which is worsened by allegation of religious persecution.

### Evaluate the impact of eliminating market-distorting subsidies, such as those on farm inputs and outputs, and redirecting these funds towards schemes like PM-Kisan. How would this approach affect smallholders versus large-scale farmers?

**Introduction:** Give a brief context to the question

**Body:** Impact of eliminating subsidies on farmers

**Conclusion:** Way forward

Eliminating market-distorting subsidies, particularly those on farm inputs and outputs, and redirecting funds towards schemes like PM-Kisan, can have significant implications for both smallholders and large-scale farmers.

#### Impact on Smallholders

- **Initial Difficulties:** Smallholders may face challenges initially as they often heavily rely on subsidies for essential inputs like fertilizers, seeds, and irrigation. The sudden removal of these subsidies could lead to increased production costs, reducing their competitiveness.
- **Transition Period:** Depending on how well the income support program works, switching from input/output subsidies to direct income assistance (like PM-Kisan) will not be successful. Smallholders may receive direct financial aid through PM-Kisan or comparable programs, enhancing their financial security.
- **Empowerment:** By giving smallholders the freedom to make decisions based on their unique needs, direct income support can empower them. This could promote crop rotation, diversification, or investments in more environmentally friendly farming methods.
- **Risk Mitigation:** Income support schemes can act as a safety net during periods of low agricultural productivity or adverse weather conditions. This can help smallholders manage risks more effectively.

#### Impact on large-scale farmers

- **Decreased Reliance on Subsidies:** Government assistance to large-scale farmers, who frequently get a sizable portion of subsidies, may decline. On the other hand, if they are profitable, they may be in a better position to adjust to conditions dictated by the market.
- **Market Orientation:** Farmers may become more responsive to price signals and consumer needs in an agricultural sector that is more market-oriented as a result of the removal of subsidies. Large-scale farmers might be better able to adjust to these changes since they have better access to resources and market knowledge.
- **Enhanced Efficiency:** By focusing on maximizing their profits without depending on government assistance, large-scale farmers may be more inclined to implement sustainable and efficient farming methods as a result of the elimination of subsidies.
- **Income Support vs. Subsidies:** The redirection of funds towards income support schemes like PM-Kisan may not have a significant impact on large-scale farmers, especially if they are not heavily dependent on input subsidies. However, the overall fiscal policy and how funds are allocated will determine the extent of its impact.

## Conclusion

The intention of the government to take the total number of farmer-beneficiaries under the PM-Kisan to about 8.75 crores, from the current 8.12 crore is well thought which will require certain refinements in

policy like direct income support on a per acre basis & adding money to the scheme by eliminating market-distorting & environmentally-disastrous subsidies.

**Analyze the role of the Indian Navy in ensuring the safety of maritime trade routes, particularly in the context of threats like the Houthi rebels in the Red Sea. How does maritime security impact global and national economies?**

**Introduction:** Give a brief context to the question

**Body:** Highlight the role played by the Indian Navy in the Red Sea and the impact of maritime security on the economy.

**Conclusion:** Way forward

The Indian Navy plays a crucial role in ensuring the safety of maritime trade routes, not only for India but also for the global economy. In the context of threats like the Houthi rebels in the Red Sea, the Navy's role becomes even more significant due to the potential disruptions to vital shipping lanes.

### Role of the Indian Navy

- **Multilateral Cooperation:** To combat shared risks, the Navy works with international maritime security initiatives and organizations. To improve overall marine security, this involves taking part in cooperative patrols, information exchange, and capacity-building initiatives.
- **Protecting Sea Lanes of Communication (SLOCs):** India's maritime interests, especially its sea lines of communication, are the responsibility of the Indian Navy. This entails making sure that trade ships pass through vital chokepoints safely, such as the Red Sea, where shipping can be hampered by groups like the Houthi rebels.
- **Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR):** Apart from security concerns, the Indian Navy is often involved in HADR operations. Rapid response to natural disasters or accidents at sea is crucial for ensuring the continuity of maritime trade and minimizing economic losses.
- **Counter-Piracy Operations:** The Indian Navy actively engages in counter-piracy operations in regions prone to piracy, such as the Gulf of Aden. Piracy not only poses a direct threat to maritime trade but also contributes to increased insurance costs and operational challenges for shipping companies.

### Impact of Maritime Security on Global and National Economies

- **Global Trade and Supply Chains:** A significant portion of global trade is conducted through maritime routes. Any disruption to these routes, whether due to piracy, conflict, or geopolitical tensions, can lead to delays, increased shipping costs, and potential shortages of goods. This can impact the overall efficiency of global supply chains and contribute to economic uncertainty.
- **Energy Security:** Many countries, including India, rely on maritime transport for the import of energy resources such as oil and natural gas. Disruptions in sea lanes can lead to energy shortages, affecting not only individual nations but also global energy markets.
- **Economic Impact on Nations:** For countries like India, with a substantial maritime trade volume, disruptions in sea routes can have severe economic consequences. The cost of insurance for ships passing through high-risk areas can increase, impacting the overall cost of goods. Additionally, interruptions in trade can affect industries, employment, and economic growth.
- **Geopolitical Stability:** Ensuring maritime security is vital for maintaining geopolitical stability. Unresolved conflicts or tensions in key maritime regions can have a cascading effect on international relations and, consequently, global economic stability.

### Conclusion

The waters of the Indian Ocean annually, carry 80 percent of the world's oil and 10 trillion tons of cargo to Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Americas making it the lifeblood of the global economy. Cooperative efforts like India's good relations with Israel and Iran can help address these challenges efficiently.