Mains Marathon

Compilation

1st Week June, 2024

INDEX

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Discuss the key challenges faced by India in transitioning from a fossil fuel-based energy policy to a green energy framework. How can India balance its energy needs with environmental sustainability?

Introduction: Give a brief contextual introduction
Body: Highlight challenges and measures in the transition from a fossil fuel-based energy policy to a green energy framework.
Conclusion: Way forward

India faces several key challenges in transitioning from a fossil fuel-based energy framework.
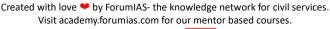
Challenges

- **Heavy Reliance on Fossil Fuels:** Coal still dominates India's energy mix, crucial for powering industries and homes. Shifting away from this established infrastructure requires significant investment.
- **Storage Solutions:** Unlike coal-fired plants, solar and wind power are intermittent. Efficient and cost-effective energy storage solutions like advanced batteries are needed to ensure consistent power supply.
- **Grid Integration:** Integrating large-scale renewable energy sources into the existing grid infrastructure poses technical challenges.
- **Financing the Shift:** Building new renewable energy plants and upgrading the grid requires substantial funds. Attracting private and international investment is crucial.
- **Job Market Disruption:** Transitioning from fossil fuels may lead to job losses in coal mining and related sectors. Reskilling and creating new opportunities in green industries are essential.

Balancing Energy Needs with Sustainability

- **Diversifying Renewable Energy:** India is well-positioned in the solar energy sector. Yet, investigating additional choices like biomass, hydropower, and wind can result in a more stable and dependable blend of renewable energy.
- **Policy and Incentives:** Feed-in tariffs and tax rebates are examples of government policies that encourage the generation of renewable energy and can serve as incentives for investment. Eg, the PLI scheme incentivizes domestic manufacturers.
- **Technological Innovation:** Long-term success depends on funding research and development of energy storage and renewable energy technologies.
- **Public-Private Partnerships:** Working together, the public and private sectors can draw funding and expedite the building of infrastructure.
- **Just Transition:** To facilitate the shift and open up new prospects in the green economy, support and skill-development initiatives for employees in the fossil fuel industry can be provided.

Conclusion

By addressing these challenges India can achieve long-term commitment to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2070 to the shorter/medium term objectives of reducing carbon intensity of GDP and creating 500 GW of electricity generation capacity from non-fossil fuels by 2030.

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Analyze the challenges and consequences of the linguistic reorganization of states in India, with a special focus on the bifurcation of Andhra Pradesh. What lessons can be learned from this division for future reconfigurations of states based on language?

Introduction: Brief contextual introduction
Body: Highlight challenges, consequences & lessons of linguistic reorganization.
Conclusion: Way forward

The linguistic reorganization of states in India, initiated in 1956, aimed to create administrative boundaries that aligned with linguistic and cultural identities. While this policy had several benefits, it also posed challenges and had far-reaching consequences, particularly highlighted by the bifurcation of Andhra Pradesh into Andhra Pradesh and Telangana in 2014.

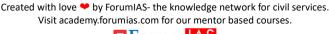**Challenges and Consequences of Linguistic Reorganization**

- **Uneven Development:** The bifurcation often results in economic disparities between newly formed states. For instance, Telangana inherited Hyderabad, a major economic hub, leading to concerns about economic viability and resource allocation for the remaining Andhra Pradesh.
- **Distribution of Resources:** Division of assets, liabilities, water resources, and administrative infrastructure can lead to prolonged disputes. The Krishna and Godavari river water sharing issues between Andhra Pradesh and Telangana exemplify such challenges.
- **Reduced Political Clout:** The bifurcation reduced the combined political clout of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana from 42 Lok Sabha seats to 25 and 17 respectively, weakening their influence compared to larger states. This redistribution may create federal inequalities.
- **Potential for Regionalism and Discontent:** While major unrest hasn't occurred, underlying grievances persist. Telangana's initial euphoria may fade as unfulfilled promises and challenges emerge. In Andhra Pradesh, the focus on capital building and welfare schemes masks deeper issues. Financial strains and unfulfilled central promises could eventually lead to political dissatisfaction.

Lessons from Andhra Pradesh Bifurcation

- **Comprehensive Planning and Consultation:** The division of Andhra Pradesh highlights the need for thorough planning and stakeholder consultation in state reorganizations. Poor planning led to disputes and economic issues. Future reconfigurations should include detailed resource distribution plans, economic assessments, and clear legal frameworks.
- **Economic Viability and Balanced Development:** Ensuring the economic stability of new states is crucial. Special economic packages and infrastructure support can address disparities. Andhra Pradesh's experience shows the need for balanced development to avoid financial strain and ensure stability.
- **Political Stability and Governance:** Effective governance structures in new states are essential. The central government must actively support new states during transitions to ensure continuous governance and administration.
- **Cultural Sensitivity and Social Integration:** While linguistic reorganization preserves cultural identities, promoting national integration and harmony is vital. Policies should encourage inter-state cooperation and cultural exchange to prevent regionalism and foster unity.

Conclusion

The bifurcation of Andhra Pradesh provides critical insights into the complexities of state reorganization based on linguistic lines. It highlights the need for careful planning, economic support, and political stability to manage such transitions effectively.

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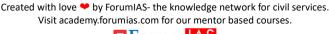**Challenges and Consequences of Linguistic Reorganization**

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Critically assess the objectives and outcomes of Mission Karmayogi in enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of Indian civil services. (250 words)

Introduction: Give a brief contextual introduction
Body: Highlight the objectives and outcomes of the Mission Karmayogi program
Conclusion: Way forward

Mission Karmayogi is a nationwide program to lay the foundation for the capacity building of civil servants. It focuses on grooming civil servants of the future by making them more technology-enabled, innovative, progressive, and transparent. As part of Mission Karmayogi, the Capacity Building Commission (CBC) was constituted in 2021 to provide policy guidance and tools to enhance the capabilities of all levels of India's vast civil services.

Objectives

- **Competency-based training:** Shifting from a "rule-based" to a "role-based" approach by focusing on competencies specific to each role.
- **Anytime-anywhere learning:** The iGOT Karmayogi platform offers online, face-to-face, and blended learning opportunities for continuous skill development.
- **Data-driven decision making**: Aims to leverage data from the platform to optimize training programs and identify areas for improvement.
- **Citizen-centric approach:** Emphasizes enhancing government-citizen interaction by training officials to become better facilitators for public needs.

Potential Outcomes

- **Improved Skills**: Equipping civil servants with the right skills for their roles could lead to better decision-making and problem-solving.
- **Increased Efficiency**: Streamlined training and focus on relevant skills could lead to a more efficient workforce.
- **Enhanced Public Service**: A citizen-centric approach, coupled with better-trained officials, could improve public service delivery.
- **Data-driven HR Management**: Data analysis can help identify skill gaps and tailor training programs for better workforce management.

Conclusion

Overall, Mission Karmayogi has the potential to be a game-changer for Indian civil services. However, its success hinges on effectively addressing the challenges and ensuring the program's long-term sustainability.

Analyze the evolution of property rights in India post-independence and its impact on the balance between individual rights and the state's power of eminent domain. (250 words)

Introduction: Give a brief introduction
Body: Highlight the evolution of property rights and its impact on the balance between individual rights and state power.
Conclusion: Way forward

Property rights in India have undergone a significant transformation since independence, with a complex interplay between individual rights and the state's power of eminent domain (land acquisition for public purposes).

- **Property Rights as a Fundamental Right**: Initially, the property right enjoyed the highest level of protection as a fundamental right. A landmark case, Bela Banerjee, established the concept of "just compensation" for acquired property. This limited the government's power to take land cheaply.

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- **Legislative Response**: The government, unhappy with Bela Banerjee, passed the 4th Amendment, preventing courts from questioning compensation adequacy. In response, courts scrutinized the principles used by the government to determine compensation, ensuring some fairness.
- **Weakening of Property Rights**: The 25th Amendment replaced "compensation" with "amount" in Article 31(2), making the amount non-reviewable by courts. Kesavananda Bharati upheld the amendment but allowed courts to examine the principles for determining the amount, partially restoring the "just compensation" concept.
- **Deletion of Property Rights as Fundamental Rights**: The Janata Party, aiming for a socialist state, saw property rights as an obstacle. The 44th Amendment removed the right to property from fundamental rights and introduced Article 300A with a weaker guarantee. The Supreme Court linked Article 300 A to Articles 14, 19, and 21, demanding a just, fair, and reasonable process. The Kolkata Municipal Corporation case established seven facets protected under Article 300A, including fair compensation.
- **Land Acquisition Act of 2013**: The Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation, and Resettlement Act of 2013 further reshaped the landscape of property rights in India. This Act was introduced to address the widespread dissatisfaction with forcible land acquisitions under the previous framework.

Impact on Balancing Individual Rights and Eminent Domain

- The evolution of property rights in India post-independence shows a shift from strong individual protections towards greater state intervention. Initially, the Constitution aimed to safeguard individual property rights, but socio-economic imperatives necessitated greater state control over land acquisition.
- The transition from Article 31 to Article 300A marked a crucial shift in favor of the state, while the 2013 Act introduced safeguards to ensure fair treatment of landowners, yet maintained the state's overarching authority.

Conclusion

The evolution of property rights in India reflects the ongoing tension between individual rights and the state's need for development projects. While the right is no longer fundamental, the judiciary strives to create a balance by ensuring fair treatment and compensation during acquisition.

Discuss the significance of decolonization in the context of modern India. How can cultural and intellectual decolonization contribute to the resurgence of Bharat's identity?

> **Introduction:** Briefly describe Decolonization
> **Body:** Highlight the significance of decolonization & cultural and intellectual decolonization contribution.
> **Conclusion:** Way forward

Decolonization in the context of modern India is an essential process that involves undoing the lingering effects of colonial rule on the country's cultural, intellectual, and socio-political landscape. It is about reclaiming and revitalizing India's indigenous identity, which was significantly altered during British colonial rule.

Significance of Decolonization in Modern India

- **Political Freedom:** The most immediate impact was the end of British rule, allowing India to chart its political course.
- **Social and Economic Transformation:** Decolonisation aimed to dismantle colonial structures like the Zamindari system (landlordism) and establish a more equitable society.

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- **International Role:** India emerged as a leader in the Non-Aligned Movement, advocating for self-determination for colonized nations.
- **Policy Making:** Decolonization implies greater autonomy in policy-making, free from neo-colonial influences.
- **Language and Literature:** Decolonization involves promoting and preserving regional languages and literature, which are repositories of local cultures, histories, and knowledge systems.

Cultural and Intellectual Decolonisation:

- **Revaluing Indian Knowledge Systems:** This involves reviving indigenous languages, philosophies, and scientific advancements sidelined during colonial rule.
- **Reclaiming Narratives:** Decolonisation of education involves challenging Eurocentric perspectives and highlighting India's rich historical and cultural contributions.
- **Critical Re-evaluation:** Examining colonial institutions and practices to understand their lasting impact on social structures and power dynamics.

Resurgence of Bharat's Identity:

- **Cultural Confidence**: By rediscovering and celebrating its heritage, India can foster cultural self-assurance.
- **Inclusive Identity**: Decolonisation should promote a national identity that respects and integrates all of India's diverse communities and traditions.
- **Global Influence:** A decolonized India can contribute to a more balanced world order by offering alternative perspectives and knowledge systems.

Conclusion

In contemporary India, the process of decolonization is complex and aims to restore and revitalize the country's native intellectual and cultural legacy. By doing this, India can help its people feel proud, resilient, and anchored in their particular historical and cultural settings as they develop a national identity.

Evaluate the role of NOTA as a tool for expressing voter dissatisfaction in democratic elections. How effective is it in bringing about political and electoral reforms?

Introduction: What is NOTA?
Body: Highlight the role of NOTA & its effectiveness in bringing about political and electoral reforms.
Conclusion: Way forward

Recently, NOTA secured 2,18,674 votes in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections from the Indore constituency. It is the most votes that the "None Of The Above" (NOTA) option has ever received in any constituency to date. The previous NOTA record-holder was Gopalganj, Bihar, in 2019, when 51,660 voters chose this option. The Supreme Court directed the Election Commission of India (ECI) in _**PUCL v Union of India**_ to introduce the NOTA option for voters in 2013, to protect the secrecy of voters' choice.

Role of NOTA in Expressing Voter Dissatisfaction

- **Empowerment of the Voter:** NOTA gives voters a formal way to voice their disapproval of any candidate, making it evident that they are dissatisfied with the political options available to them.
- **Democratic Integrity:** By permitting voters to cast ballots without endorsing a particular candidate, it preserves the democratic ideal that voting should be a choice rather than a mandate.
- **Political Accountability:** Given that a sizable NOTA vote signifies broad discontent, the existence of NOTA can put pressure on political parties to select more deserving candidates.
- **Public conversation**: NOTA promotes public conversation on electoral changes by bringing attention to the caliber of candidates and the need for improved governance.

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Effectiveness of NOTA in Bringing About Reform

- **No Electoral Repercussions**: In India, NOTA votes have no bearing on the results of elections. The candidate with the most votes wins even if NOTA earns the majority of the vote. This reduces its ability to directly affect election outcomes.
- **Lack of Motivation for Change**: Political parties may not feel driven to enhance candidate quality based alone on NOTA counts, as it does not disqualify candidates or force reelections.
- **Public Pressure**: A high percentage of NOTA votes can serve as a wake-up call for political parties, potentially leading to internal discussions and reforms to address voter dissatisfaction.
- **Policy Advocacy**: Civil society and advocacy groups can use NOTA results to push for reforms, such as stricter candidate vetting processes, anti-corruption measures, and electoral transparency.

Conclusion

Complementary reforms are required to maximize the impact of NOTA. This might involve enforceable NOTA clauses that mandate re-elections or the disqualification of candidates upon a majority NOTA vote. Furthermore, the Supreme Court & ECI should create regulations about the debarring of candidates from running in any election for five years, should their vote total be less than that of the NOTA.

Examine how the concentration of political and economic power affected federalism and democratic institutions.

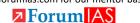| |
|---|
| **Introduction:** Brief introduction |
| **Body:** Effect of centralization of power on federalism and democratic institutions |
| **Conclusion:** Way forward |

The concentration of political and economic power in India has had significant effects on federalism and democratic institutions, leading to both challenges and transformations in the country's governance.

Key ways this concentration has impacted federalism

- **Erosion of State Autonomy:** The increasing concentration of power in the central government has eroded the autonomy of state governments.
- **Governor's Role:** The role of the Governor, appointed by the central government, has been contentious, with allegations of using this office to undermine state governments not aligned with the central ruling party.
- **GST Implementation**: The introduction of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) centralized tax collection, impacting states' fiscal autonomy. Although it streamlined taxation, it also reduced the financial independence of states.
- **Legislative Overreach:** The use of central legislative powers to pass laws on subjects traditionally under state jurisdiction has weakened the federal structure. For example, the central government's intervention in agricultural laws sparked widespread protests and was perceived as encroaching on state powers.
- **Electoral Dominance**: The dominance of a single political party at the center can diminish the competitive nature of state politics, leading to weakened regional parties and reduced political pluralism.

Key ways this concentration has affected democratic institutions

- **Media and Civil Society**: The concentration of economic power has also influenced media and civil society, with corporate ownership and political affiliations affecting media independence and civil liberties.
- **Bureaucratic Control:** The central government's control over the bureaucracy can affect state administration, where officials may be more aligned with central directives than state interests.

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- **Economic Disparities:** Centralized economic policies often fail to address regional disparities adequately, leading to uneven development and social tensions.
- Policy Implementation: Policies like centrally sponsored schemes sometimes lack local contextualization, affecting their efficacy and reception among state populations.
- **Judicial Appointments:** The central government's influence over judicial appointments through bodies like the National Judicial Appointments Commission (though struck down by the Supreme Court) raises concerns about the judiciary's independence.

Conclusion

The concentration of power in India challenges federalism and democracy, leading to centralization and weakened state autonomy. However, regional politics, judicial oversight, and civil society activism help maintain balance, reflecting ongoing power negotiations in a diverse democracy.

Discuss the role of proxy advisors in enhancing corporate governance in India. How do they influence shareholder decisions and ensure accountability within companies?

Introduction: Define Proxy Advisor
Body: Highlight the role of proxy advisor in corporate governance and their influence on companies
Conclusion: Way forward

Proxy advisors (PA) play a crucial role in enhancing corporate governance in India by providing independent research, analysis, and recommendations to institutional investors on matters that are up for shareholder vote.

Role of Proxy Advisors in Enhancing Corporate Governance

- **Board Accountability:** Recommendations on board elections and structures encourage companies to appoint qualified, independent directors and maintain balanced and effective boards.
- **Executive Compensation:** Proxy advisors often critique excessive executive compensation packages, advocating for pay structures that align with company performance and shareholder interests.
- **ESG Factors:** Increasingly, proxy advisors focus on environmental, social, and governance (ESG) issues, pushing companies to adopt sustainable and ethical practices.

Influencing Shareholder Decisions

- **Voting Guidance:** Institutional investors often rely on proxy advisors for voting guidance at shareholder meetings. This can lead to more strategic and consistent voting patterns, aligned with best practices in corporate governance.
- **Standardized Practices:** Proxy advisors promote standardized voting practices among institutional investors, which can lead to more predictable and uniform outcomes on governance issues.

Ensuring Accountability

- **Monitoring and Reporting:** By scrutinizing company practices and management proposals, proxy advisors help ensure that companies adhere to good governance standards. Their reports often highlight potential governance issues or areas of concern.
- **Encouraging Transparency:** Companies aware of proxy advisor scrutiny are more likely to adopt transparent practices and disclose necessary information to avoid negative recommendations.
- **Shareholder Activism:** Proxy advisors support shareholder activism by facilitating informed and organized shareholder actions against poor management practices or proposals that are not in the best interest of shareholders.

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Conclusion

Proxy advisors significantly enhance corporate governance in India by guiding shareholder decisions, promoting transparency, and ensuring company accountability. Their role in scrutinizing management practices and advocating for good governance helps maintain a balanced and fair corporate environment.

Discuss the implications of examination paper leaks on the integrity of the educational system in India. Provide suggestions to prevent such occurrences in the future.

Introduction: Brief introduction
Body: Highlight the implications of paper leaks on the education system and measures to address the issue.
Conclusion: Way forward

Exam paper leaks and scams in Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, and Bihar, among other states, have been a key concern for young voters in the age group of 18-25.

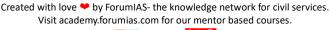**Implications for the integrity of the education system**

- **Unfair Advantage and Demotivation**: Leaks create an uneven playing field. Students who gain access to leaked papers have a significant advantage over those who rely on genuine preparation. This discourages honest effort and fosters a culture of shortcuts.
- **Erosion of Trust:** When leaks happen repeatedly, students and society lose faith in the fairness of the system. This can lead to apathy towards education and a questioning of the value of academic credentials.
- **Diminished Standards**: When rote memorization of leaked papers becomes a strategy, the focus shifts away from critical thinking and in-depth learning. This ultimately weakens the quality of education and the skills graduates possess.
- **Financial and Emotional Burden:** Leaks often lead to exam cancellations and rescheduling, causing immense stress and financial strain on students and families who have to prepare again.

Suggestions

- **Enhanced Security Measures**: Implement stricter protocols for paper storage, transportation, and printing. Explore secure digital storage and encrypted communication for question banks.
- **Embrace Technology**: Consider online question paper generation and delivery systems to minimize human intervention in the vulnerable stages of the process.
- **Stronger Penalties**: Increase the severity of punishment for those involved in leaks, including students, educators, coaching centers, and administrators. This will act as a deterrent.
- **Whistleblower Protection**: Establish robust mechanisms to protect whistleblowers who report leak attempts. This encourages honesty and exposes vulnerabilities.
- **Focus on Learning**: Move beyond rote memorization by designing exams that assess critical thinking, application of knowledge, and problem-solving skills.
- **Continuous Improvement**: Regularly review and update security protocols to stay ahead of evolving methods used for leaks.

Conclusion

Addressing examination paper leaks requires a multifaceted approach that combines technology, strict enforcement, and a culture of integrity. The passing of ***Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) 2024***, presents the opportunity for the government to deploy special task forces to investigate the organized use of unfair means in examinations that can make India's education system strive towards a future free from the shadow of paper leaks.

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Critically evaluate the potential impact of the Global Plastics Treaty on the informal waste sector. What steps can be taken to ensure a just transition for informal waste collectors and recyclers? (250 words)

Introduction: What is the Global Plastics Treaty?
Body: Highlight the impact of the treaty on the informal waste sector and steps to ensure a just transition
Conclusion: Way forward

The Global Plastics Treaty is an ambitious initiative involving at least 175 United Nations member nations to eliminate the use of plastics. The goal is to finalize a legal document by the end of 2024 with timelines by which countries must agree to curb plastic production, eliminate its uses that create wastage, ban certain chemicals used in its production, and set targets for recycling.

Impact on the Informal Waste Sector

- **Formalization and Recognition**: The treaty's focus on "just transition" could lead to the formalization of the informal waste sector. This would provide workers with social security, better working conditions, and potentially higher incomes.
- **Increased Demand for Recycled Plastics**: The treaty's focus on plastic reduction and recycling could lead to a rise in demand for recycled materials. This could benefit informal waste collectors by increasing the value of the plastics they collect.
- **Loss of Livelihoods**: Stricter regulations on waste collection and recycling could lead to increased competition from formal waste management companies. This might threaten the livelihoods of some informal waste collectors, particularly those who struggle to adapt to new regulations.
- **Focus on Automation**: Investments in waste management infrastructure might favor automated sorting systems. While these could improve efficiency, they could also displace some informal waste collectors who rely on manual sorting.

Ensuring a Just Transition for Informal Waste Workers

- **Stakeholder Engagement**: Informal waste workers' organizations should be actively involved in discussions and decisions around the implementation of the treaty. Their knowledge and expertise are crucial for designing policies that address their specific needs.
- **Skill Development Programs**: Training programs can equip informal waste collectors with the skills needed to adapt to new technologies and regulations, such as operating sorting machines or managing waste collection centers.
- **Social Protection Schemes**: Social safety nets can provide a cushion for informal waste collectors who might lose their livelihoods due to stricter regulations or automation.
- **Focus on Inclusion**: The design of new waste management systems should prioritize the inclusion of informal waste collectors by integrating them into formal collection routes or providing them with designated collection points.

Conclusion

According to the United Nations Environment Programme, of **the 9% recycled plastic, 85% was done by informal recycling workers**. As a key member of Global South, India should raise concerns about informal waste pickers and promote an approach that enhances repair, reuse, refill, and recycling without necessarily eliminating the use of plastics.

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