

PERFECT 7

WEEKLY

CURRENT AFFAIRS

December : 2019/ Issue- 2

INCREASING INCIDENTS OF SEXUAL ABUSE IN INDIA

A Matter of National Shame

- The Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019
- Governor's Office in India : Continuance of Conflicts
- Maternal Mortality Rate in India : A Reducing Trend
- Rural Education in India : An Overview
- Quad : Advocating a Free and Open Indo-Pacific
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DHYEYA IAS : AN INTRODUCTION



The guiding philosophy of the institute, throughout, has been creation of knowledge base. Dhyeya IAS inculcates human values and professional ethics in the students, which help them make decisions and create path that are good not only for them, but also for the society, for the nation, and for the world as whole. To fulfill its mission in new and powerful ways, each student is motivated to strive towards achieving excellence in every endeavor. It is done by making continuous improvements in curricula and pedagogical tools.

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Vinay Kumar Singh
CEO and Founder
Dhyeya IAS



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Q H Khan
Managing Director
Dhyeya IAS

PERFECT 7 : AN INTRODUCTION



With immense pleasure and gratitude I want to inform you that the new version of 'Perfect-7', from the Dhyeya IAS, is coming with more information in a very attractive manner. Heartily congratulations to the editorial team. The 'Perfect-7' invites a wider readership in the Institute. The name and fame of an institute depends on the caliber and achievements of the students and teachers. The role of the teacher is to nurture the skills and talents of the students as a facilitator. This magazine is going to showcase the strength of our Institute. Let this be a forum to exhibit the potential of faculties, eminent writers, authors and students with their literary skills and innovative ideas.

Qurban Ali

Chief Editor

Dhyeya IAS

(Ex Editor- Rajya Sabha TV)



We have not only given the name 'Perfect 7' to our magazine, but also left no stone unturned to keep it 'near to perfect'. We all know that beginning of a task is most challenging as well as most important thing. So we met the same fate.

Publishing 'Perfect 7' provided us various challenges because from the beginning itself we kept our bar too high to ensure the quality. Right from the very first issue we had a daunting task to save aspirants from the 'overdose of information'. Focusing on civil services exams 'Perfect 7' embodies in itself rightful friend and guide in your preparation. This weapon is built to be precise yet comprehensive. It is not about bombardment of mindless facts rather an analysis of various facets of the issues, selected in a systematic manner. We adopted the 'Multi Filter' and 'Six Sigma' approach, in which a subject or an issue is selected after diligent discussion on various levels so that the questions in the examination could be covered with high probability.

Being a weekly magazine there is a constant challenge to provide qualitative study material in a time bound approach. It is our humble achievement that we feel proud to make delivered our promise of quality consistently without missing any issue since its inception.

The new 'avatar' of 'Perfect 7' is a result of your love and affection. We feel inspired to continue our efforts to deliver effective and valuable content in interesting manner. Our promise of quality has reached you in previous issues and more are yet to come.

Ashutosh Singh

Managing Editor

Dhyeya IAS

Send us your suggestions, comments, views and feedback for guiding us towards continuous improvement & enhancement of 'Perfect 7' on

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PREFACE

Dhyeya family feels honoured to present you 'Perfect 7' - a panacea for Current Affairs. 'Perfect7' is an outstanding compilation of current affairs topics as per the new pattern of Civil Service examination (CSE). It presents weekly analysis of information and issues (national and international) in the form of articles, news analysis, brain boosters, PIB highlights and graphical information, which helps to understand and retain the information comprehensively. Hence, 'Perfect 7' will build in-depth understanding of various issues in different facets.

'Perfect7' is our genuine effort to provide correct, concise and concrete information, which helps students to crack the civil service examination. This magazine is the result of the efforts of the eminent scholars and the experts from different fields.

'Perfect 7' is surely a force multiplier in your effort and plugs the loopholes in the preparation.

We believe in environment of continuous improvement and learning. Your constructive suggestions and comments are always welcome, which could guide us in further revision of this magazine.

Omveer Singh Chaudhary
Editor
Dhyeya IAS

Perfect 7

The Weekly Issue

Perfect 7

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Our other initiative



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Monthly
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DHYEYA TV
Current Affairs Programmes hosted
by Mr. Qurban Ali
(Ex. Editor Rajya Sabha, TV) & by Team Dhyeya IAS
(Broadcasted on YouTube & Dhyeya-TV)

SEVEN IMPORTANT ISSUES

1. INCREASING INCIDENTS OF SEXUAL ABUSE IN INDIA : A MATTER OF NATIONAL SHAME

Why in News?

Gang rape and then murder of a female doctor in Hyderabad, the capital of Telangana across the country, has created an atmosphere of anger. Demonstrations are being held against this impunity in the entire country. Expressing serious concern over incidents of sexual violence against women, the National Human Rights Commission issued notices to the Centre and all states and UTs seeking reports on the standard operating procedures to deal with such cases and use of the Nirbhaya Fund.

Introduction

India, the largest democracy of the world, which has adopted the longest written constitution and has a rich cultural heritage of gender equality, is today being criticized for having the most unsafe environment for women. The incidents of rapes, molestation, gender-based discrimination and other such atrocities against women have, unfortunately, become routine media headlines. There have been constitutional and statutory provisions to ensure that the women are not subjected to any kind of discrimination and harassment but there is an alarming trend indicating that the things are getting worse amounting to violation of right to life, liberty, dignity and equality of women across the country. Recently, a number of

such cases have been reported by the media wherein, the women have been subjected to sexual abuse, utmost cruelty and inhuman treatment by the perpetrators showing grave disrespect towards law. There have been instances where the incidents have been reportedly, occurred due to gross negligence by the administration and the law enforcing public agencies.

On the other side, as more and more women turn out to work study and simply occupy public and private spaces with assertion, both governments and the larger society must be forced to a reboot. For law enforcement agencies, that means the culprits must be brought to book. For the state governments, it implies that the push to make cities and towns safe for women's mobility, their entertainment, their freedom to simply be becomes the priority. For the larger society, the violence is a reminder to continue the difficult conversation about power and patriarchy, to not just train girls in self-defence but to teach boys empathy. Most important of all is the work that remains unfinished — of re-imagining women's freedoms beyond curfews, dress codes and propriety.

Scale of the Problem

There is need to acknowledgement of the scale of the problem. Amid all the outrage, anguish and protests against laxity in security and administrative

lacunae that contributed to the heinous crime, the focus has shifted to the brutality and frequency of violence against women in Indian society and why, despite tougher laws against sexual violence, a woman is raped every 15 minutes in India. And that statistic, we would do well to remember, is based only on crimes that are reported. In India, most rape crimes go unreported.

- ◆ A Reuters Foundation survey in 2018 names India as one of the most unsafe places in the world (the government denied it then, claiming the report was inaccurate and partisan). Several surveys on women have found that many feel increasingly unsafe.
- ◆ The National Crime Records Bureau which released its 2017 data this October said a total of 3.59 lakh cases of crimes against women were reported, a 6% rise compared to 2016. Of this, assault on women with intent to outrage her modesty comprised 21.7%, and rape 7%. For every rape reported, there are many which go unrecorded as patriarchal mindsets remain unchanged.
- ◆ Preventing women from stepping out is in no way a proven deterrent to rape. According to the most recent data on rape released by the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), as 32,559 rapes were

reported in India in 2017 and in 93.1% of the cases, the accused were known to the victims.

- ◆ Of 30,299 such cases, the accused were members of the victim's family in 3,155 cases. As many as 16,591 rape cases were against "family friends", employers, neighbours or other known persons. In 10,553 cases, the accused were friends, online friends, live-in partners or separated husbands of the victims.
- ◆ Data from 2017 NCRB further reveals that in Delhi alone, 92.9 percent cases of crime against women were pending in various district courts with a conviction rate of just 33.2 percent.
- ◆ Just nine percent of over 40,000 women who participated in a nationwide survey on road safety felt safe when travelling through public transport.
- ◆ Additionally, despite strengthened rape laws especially against rape of minors under age 12, official crime data shows the number of reported rapes of minors actually increased from 8,541 in 2012 to 19,765 in 2016.

Factors Responsible for Increasing Sexual Assault

Violence against women has an age-old history. Women worldwide have been forced to suffer abuses, harassment, torture, humiliation and exploitation since the inception of the society. In India, rape is a serious issue. The problem involves diverse dimensions including:

Treating Women as Inferior:

Our society is still finding it difficult to accept even the basics of gender equality. We still have very high rates of child marriage, teenage pregnancy, and domestic violence including marital rape. The notion that women are less important is deeply rooted in the minds of common people. This

proves to be endemic because it leads to male superiority in the sense that women are there to serve men. So, the need is to bring down the idea of gender equality from the unheard articles of the Constitution to homes, schools, workplaces and everyday life because like everything else, change starts at the grass-root level.

Low Representation of Women:

Research shows that having women in government can lead to more and better laws that safeguard women's well-being. India's population is 48% female. But women hold just 12% seats in national legislature. In short, women are nowhere to be seen. The key to making people accept the first point is to increase the representation of women in every sphere of life. They have been suppressed since centuries, so maybe it's the right time to give them a hand while they try their hardest to rise.

The Lack of Gender Education:

Indians generally are not comfortable talking about sexuality, reproductive rights, menstruation or sexual desire – anywhere – whether it is our home or our classroom or the workplace. Some small changes in adolescent education and even earlier in primary school might address the root cause of the problem. But our governments and society outrightly discard this because they hold the notion that sexual education equals to encouraging sex.

Ignoring the Relationship between Poverty and Violence:

Whether it's the Delhi rape case of 2012 or the recent one in Hyderabad, both cases seem to exhibit a pattern. This is a very critical issue to address – the relationship between predatory sexual violence and urban destitution – an enormous, unsolved challenge in India. Being exposed to violence right from birth does not promote a sense of the integrity or the delicacy of the human body or respect for laws and

moral values. It generates despair, anger, fury, a sense of desperate social rejection. This feeling of being rejected by the society perhaps leads to the breakdown in a sense of shared values and understanding of basic code of conduct. Although it is no excuse for the violence, maybe the brutalisation we are witnessing is a manifestation of the radical failure of current engagement of different stratas of society. This issue demands an urgent call to action.

The Stigma and Blame Attached to Rape: After the Delhi rape case, some very prominent Indian politicians including an High Court Judge, emphasised the damage done to female dignity rather than the horrific violence, as if vaginal purity were the main casualty.

Similarly, the culture of victim-blaming is equally disappointing. It is true that changing these attitudes – for instance, the tendency to question a woman's clothes and conduct, suggesting she 'invited' or did not 'resist' rape – won't happen overnight. But, the government can play a role in that change, and it must start now.

The Difficult Path to Justice: There are just too many laws in India and too little justice. The Verma committee formed after the Delhi rape case of 2012 recommended that rather than focusing on introducing new laws, the focus must be on implementation and sensitivity on the ground. If a woman is coming forward against the violence, then it becomes the duty of government and police that she must be provided with the protection (along with the witnesses) and counselling. Delayed trials, poor investigation, a low rate of conviction and impunity are some of the other areas which need improvement on the war-footing.

Justice Verma Committee Report and Its Impact

After the Nirbhaya incident, the United Nations (UN) Human Rights chief had

Nirbhaya Fund

The States and Union Territories have utilised less than 20% of the budget allocated to them under the Nirbhaya Fund for safety of women by the Central government between 2015 and 2018, according to official data. A sum of 1,813 crore has been disbursed by the Centre from 2015 to 2019. As per the data, of the Rs. 854.66 crore released by the Centre, a mere Rs. 165.48 crore has been spent by various States and UTs on different schemes launched by the Centre as well as other schemes for which the local governments sought funds.

The top five States ranked in terms of utilisation of money across various schemes under the Nirbhaya Fund were Chandigarh (59.83%), Mizoram (56.32%), Uttarakhand (51.68%), Andhra Pradesh (43.23%) and Nagaland (38.17%). However, the government data shows more money was utilised by Chandigarh than what was allocated to it under Central Victim Compensation Fund as well as Women Helpline Scheme. The worst five States include Manipur, Maharashtra, Lakshadweep – which didn't spend even a single penny – and were followed by West Bengal (0.76%) and Delhi (0.84%).

The Nirbhaya Fund was set up by the UPA-II in the aftermath of the gang rape of a paramedical student in a moving bus in New Delhi in December 2012 with an initial corpus of Rs. 1,000 crore. The Fund supports schemes for safety of women, and over the past six years it has swelled to Rs. 3,600 crore through allocation in the Finance Budgets. Though the Fund was instituted in 2013, its disbursement gathered pace only from 2015. The key schemes under which the States have been allocated money include Emergency Response Support System, Central Victim Compensation Fund, Cyber Crime Prevention against Women and Children, One Stop Scheme, Mahila Police Volunteer, and Universalisation of Women Helpline Scheme.

called rape and violence against women in India a “national problem” which would need “national solutions”. Justice Verma Committee was constituted to recommend amendments to the Criminal Law so as to provide for quicker trial and enhanced punishment for criminals accused of committing sexual assault against women. Justice Verma Committee report put forward

some key recommendations, which includes make voyeurism, stalking and intentional touching an offence, amend rape laws, human trafficking, review security laws in conflict zones, monitor illegal patriarchal village councils, review medical examination of rape victims, police reforms, electoral reforms, gender sensitisation through education and Bill of rights for women, along the lines of similar bills in South Africa and New Zealand.

After the 2012 Nirbhaya outrage in Delhi, and on the recommendations of the Justice J.S. Verma Committee, the Criminal Law (Amendment) Act, 2013 was passed, by bringing in changes to the Indian Penal Code, the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973, the Indian Evidence Act, 1872, and the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012. Key amendments were brought in to provide for death penalty for rape that led to death of the victim or reduced the survivor to a persistent vegetative state and anyone found guilty of rape more than once. In 2018, further changes introduced death as the maximum punishment for every perpetrator in a gang-rape when the victim is less than 12, and life-long imprisonment if the victim is less than 16.

Way Forward

The offences of rape and the sexual violation have notoriously low reporting rate in India. Underreported crime is due to the reason of disbelief in police and investigation system. As patriarchal legacies among the whole system of police and their attitude towards women especially in rape cases making it difficult for survivors to approach police. Survivors are often reluctant to make police reports for various reasons- undeniably fear of re-victimisation by criminal justice professionals, survivor fear they will be shamed, disbelieved, coerced, re-traumatized, or dismissed.

In research and media reports has shown that our police officers are not even aware of the current rape law, which shows their incompetency but not a challenge. The police response to the issue of rape is stereotyped and patriarchal as they judge the women through traditional mindset. Better policing, fast-track courts, quick sentencing are the need of the hour as each can serve as a deterrent. What should be included in every curriculum is gender sensitisation, right from school. Public places must be made safer for all. Boys and girls should be raised right in an atmosphere of freedom and a culture of mutual respect. The cycle of rapes, outrage and amnesia must end. A country where women are oppressed is unlikely to progress. If India desires to be the next world economic power, the equality, dignity and safety of all women should be at the high priorities.

A lot of water swept under, while women are still considered as an object of desire and their role in family and society was extremely filtered through the lens of patriarchy. This humiliating and stereotype mindset is needed to be changed. There is need to effectively address the core issue as this serious challenge has not only created an atmosphere of fear and uncertainty in our society but has also badly tarnishing the image of our country.

General Studies Paper- I

Topic: Social empowerment, Communalism, Regionalism & Secularism.

General Studies Paper- II

Topic: Welfare schemes for vulnerable sections of the population by the Centre and States and the performance of these schemes; mechanisms, laws, institutions and Bodies constituted for the protection and betterment of these vulnerable sections.



2. THE TRANSGENDER PERSONS (PROTECTION OF RIGHTS) ACT, 2019

Why in News?

The Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Bill, 2019, which was passed by the Lok Sabha on August 5, 2019, during its monsoon session, was cleared by the Rajya Sabha by voice vote, without any amendments.

Introduction

The third gender known better as transgender have existed in every culture, race, class and religion since the inception of human life has been recorded and analyzed. The transgender are individuals of any age or sex whose personality, appearance, attitude, behavior or personal characteristics differ from stereotypes. It means they differ in identity of about how men and women are supposed to be.

Further, 'transgender' signifies those individuals who are different in their biological constructions. They are different for the stereotype gender roles. Their gender makes them different and compelled to face discrimination in society. Despite of all the constitutional rights, they are denied to have their basic rights like Right to Personal Liberty, Freedom of Expression, Right to Education, Empowerment, and Right against Discrimination, Exploitation and Violence, etc.

As per the Census of 2011, the total population of transgender in India is 4.88 lakh. There are various types of transgender communities in India. The most prominent of these communities are known as Kothi (Represent themselves as male), Hijras (Biological males but reject masculine identity), Aravanis (Woman wrapped in male body), Jogappa (Serve as servant of Goddess Renukha Devi), Shiv-shaktis (Males but have feminine gender

expressions). The transgender indeed are integral part of community but most neglected and denied one also. It is a biological phenomenon which brings changes in human body. In India, they indeed can be found and seen in each and every place as the most neglected one. When the child take birth in any Hindu family, they are called to give blessings to the child and even at the time of marriages, they are invited to bless the newly couple. Except these situations, they are treated as sin and curse to the society.

Background

The problems being faced by the transgender community have been brought to the notice of the government in the recent past. In this regards, in 2013, the government set up an Expert Committee to examine issues related to transgender persons. The Committee stated that transgender persons faced issues of social stigma and discrimination which affected their access to education, healthcare, employment and government documents. In 2014, the Supreme Court in its NALSA judgement recognised a transgender person's right to self-identification as male, female or the third gender. Further, the Court directed central and state governments to grant legal recognition to transgender persons, address issues of social stigma and discrimination, and provide social welfare schemes for them.

A private member Bill was introduced in Rajya Sabha by Mr. Tiruchi Siva in 2014 to guarantee rights and provide welfare measures for transgender persons. This Bill was passed in Rajya Sabha in 2015, and is currently pending in Lok Sabha. In August 2016, the government

introduced the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Bill, 2016 in Lok Sabha. The 2016 Bill has been referred to the Standing Committee on Social Justice and Empowerment. The Committee submitted its report on July 21, 2017. The Committee gave several recommendations with regard to: (i) definition of transgender persons, (ii) process of certification as a transgender persons, (iii) inclusion of definition of discrimination against transgender persons; and (iv) requirement of complaints officer in all establishments. However, the 2016 Bill lapsed with the dissolution of the 16th Lok Sabha. The Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Bill, 2019 was introduced in Lok Sabha on July 19, 2019 to replace the 2016 Bill.

Salient Features of the Act

The Act defines a transgender person as one whose gender does not match the gender assigned at birth. It includes trans-men and trans-women, persons with intersex variations, gender-queers, and persons with socio-cultural identities. It prohibits discrimination against a transgender person, including denial of service or unfair treatment in relation to: (i) education; (ii) employment; (iii) healthcare; (iv) access to, or enjoyment of goods, facilities, opportunities available to the public; (v) right to movement; (vi) right to reside, rent, or otherwise occupy property; (vii) opportunity to hold public or private office; and (viii) access to a government or private establishment in whose care or custody a transgender person is.

It further criminalizes denial of use of public places to transgenders, removal of transgenders from household and village, etc. To ensure identity of a transgender, the Act

prescribed that a transgender person may make an application to the District Magistrate for a certificate of identity, indicating the gender as 'transgender'. Further, a person may obtain a revised certificate if he/she undergoes surgery to change his/her gender either as a male or a female. It also proposed the establishment of a National Council for Transgender Persons consisting of various members from Central Ministries, NHRC, Niti Aayog, and State Governments, to monitor the impact of policies, legislation and projects with respect to transgender persons and to also redress their grievances.

Why is Transgender Community Unhappy with New Act?

The Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019 passed by the Parliament, was much awaited by the transgender community. However, the transgender community termed the day as 'Gender Justice Murder Day'.

- ◆ Activists pointed out that it is inappropriate to include the intersex community in the definition of transgenders, which the Act does, as not all intersex people identify themselves as trans-people. It dilutes their rights.
- Rejecting 'Transgender' as the nomenclature, they suggested instead that the title should be a comprehensive "Gender Identity, Gender Expression and Sex Characteristics (Protection of Rights) Act".
- ◆ While the Act is progressive in that it allows self-perception of identity, it mandates a certificate from a district magistrate declaring the holder to be transgender. This goes against the principle of self determination itself, activists argue, also pointing out that there is no room for redress in case an appeal for such a certificate is rejected. One long-pending demand has been to declare forced,

unnecessary and non-consensual sex reassignment surgery illegal, and to enforce punitive action for violations.

- ◆ Transgender and intersex persons might require a range of unique health care needs, and that should have been incorporated into the Act, but were largely ignored.
- ◆ While the Act envisages the setting up of a National Council for Transgender Persons to provide the institutional framework for its implementation, suggestions on the composition of such a council, or the demand to set up a working group for a Council for Intersex Persons were also ignored.
- ◆ If young trans persons want to leave home because of pressure to conform to the sex they were born with, they can no longer join the trans community. They must go instead to a court, which will send them to a "rehabilitation centre".
- ◆ There is no discussion regarding reservations in public jobs, education, etc. Bullying in schools and at the workplace is frequent but there is no discussion about this issue as well.
- ◆ The Act says that there will be just one committee at the national level including maximum five representatives from the transgender community. This is unfair representation for the transgender population.
- ◆ The penalty for rape is just six months to two years when it is life imprisonment for raping a woman. Even endangering their life is punishable by a maximum of two years in prison.
- ◆ This time, the government said most amendments suggested have been accepted. However, activists said there are only two major positive inclusions — removal of criminalisation of begging and

removal of medical screening committees.

- ◆ Overall, the Act lacks the how part. Their right to residence, the prohibition of discrimination, inclusive education, livelihood, protection at the workplace, and healthcare are discussed but how it will happen is missing.

Transgender Communities in India

Transgenders, for the first time, were identified as the third sex in the 2011 Census. A trans person's struggle to survive starts from childhood. Most are abandoned by their families, denied formal education and have restricted entry in jobs. Transgenders, often identified as hijras, aravanis, kothis, kinnars or sakhis, have existed in the Indian historical records since the 9th century BCE. They held prominent positions in the society like political advisors to the king and administrators.

- ◆ **Kothi:** A local language term used in South East Asia to refer to PAGMB (Person Assigned Gender Male at Birth), who identify with characteristics, roles and behaviors conventionally associated with the feminine. Kothis have also been defined as effeminate PAGMBs, who like to cross dress and see themselves as women and use the female pronoun to describe themselves.
- ◆ **Hijras:** Hijras are biological males who reject their 'masculine' identity in due course of time to identify either as women, or "not-men", or "in-between man and woman", or "neither man nor woman". There are regional variations in the use of terms referred to Hijras, for example, Kinnars (Delhi) and Aravanis (Tamil Nadu).
- ◆ **Aravanis and 'Thirunangi':** Hijras in Tamil Nadu identify as "Aravani". Tamil Nadu Aravanigal Welfare Board, a state government's

initiative under the Department of Social Welfare defines Aravanis as biological males who self-identify themselves as a woman trapped in a male's body. Some Aravani activists want the public and media to use the term 'Thirunangi' to refer to Aravanis.

- ♦ **Jogtas/Jogappas:** Jogtas or Jogappas are those persons who are dedicated to and serve as a servant of Goddess Renukha Devi (Yellamma) – whose temples are present in Maharashtra and Karnataka.
- ♦ **Shiv-Shakthis:** Shiv-Shakthis are considered as males who are possessed by or particularly close to a goddess and who have feminine gender expression. Usually, Shiv-Shakthis are inducted into the Shiv-Shakti community by senior gurus, who teach them the norms, customs, and rituals to be observed by them.

Problems Faced by Transgenders

The transgender fall under the category of LGBT group (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender). They belong to the marginalized group of the society which faces legal, social, cultural and economic difficulties. The problems faced by the transgender community in India includes:

1. **Discrimination:** Discrimination is the major problem of transgender. They are discriminated in terms of education, employment, entertainment, justice etc.
2. **Disrespect:** They are disrespected in each and every aspect of life except in few cases like after the birth of a child for their blessings or to bless the newly wedded couple.
3. **Downtrodden:** These people are treated badly or oppressed by people in power. They are prone to struggle for social justice because

of their identity as transgender.

4. **Prostitution:** They are forced to enter the profession of prostitutions by their community, friends or relatives. Even, in some cases, it is seen that their parents are involved in it.
5. **Forced to leave parental home:** Once their identity is identified, they are forced and pressurize to leave the parental home by the society as they can't be a part and parcel of normal community and class.
6. **Lack of educational facilities:** Like normal people, they are not entitled to take education in schools and colleges. Even in terms of education, they are treated differently.
7. **STI and HIV/AIDS problems:** The term MSM stands for 'Men who have sex with Men'. Because of this, transgender are likely to have problems like sexually transmitted disease (STI) and HIV AIDS. Most of the transgender belongs to lower socio-economic status and have low literacy level. It seeks to have improper health care.

The major problem in the whole process is that they are socially excluded from the society. They are excluded from participating in social, cultural and economic life.

Way Forward

Seldom, our society realizes or cares to realize the trauma, agony and pain which the members of transgender community undergo, nor appreciates the innate feelings of the members of the transgender community, especially of those whose mind and body disown



their biological sex. They are sidelined and treated as untouchables, forgetting the fact that the moral failure lies in the society's unwillingness to contain or embrace different gender identities and expressions, a mindset which we have to change.

The genesis of the problems of transgender persons in India lie in the stigma and discrimination they face in the society, resulting in their exclusion from socio - economic - political spectrum. They are one among the marginalized sections of the society. The solution of their problems will, therefore, require concerted efforts to mainstream them and adoption of an inclusive approach in all spheres of life. The transgender community is one of the disadvantaged groups and without their inclusion in the development efforts; the objective of inclusive growth cannot be fully realised.

General Studies Paper- II

Topic: Welfare schemes for vulnerable sections of the population by the Centre and States and the performance of these schemes; mechanisms, laws, institutions and Bodies constituted for the protection and betterment of these vulnerable sections.



3. GOVERNOR'S OFFICE IN INDIA : CONTINUANCE OF CONFLICTS

Why in News?

The political battle to form a government in Maharashtra finally seems to be over. Yet, the entire episode once again forces us to scrutinize the role of Governors in appointing a Chief Minister, whenever there is a fractured electoral mandate in a State.

Introduction

The governor's role has become increasingly controversial with allegations of partiality and lack of objectivity in exercise of the discretionary powers. The part played by some Governors, particularly in recommending president's rule and in reserving state bills for the consideration of the President, had evoked strong resentment. There are cases aplenty of Governors, as the constitutional heads, dismissing state governments by invoking Article 356 of the Constitution. Several of them have not been held accountable for their actions.

Frequent removals and transfers of Governors before the end of their tenure have also lowered the prestige of this office. Criticism has also been levelled that the Union government utilises the Governors for its own political ends. Many Governors, looking forward to further office under the Union or active role in politics after their tenure, came to regard themselves as agents of the Union. The Governor thus became a major issue affecting the equation between the Centre and the states.

Courts have been wary of transgressing the limits of powers of the judiciary vis-a-vis that of Parliament and the legislatures. Governors have, time and again, acted beyond their brief, triggering debates on how this constitutional office was degraded to one serving the interests of those

in power in Delhi. It is an irony that, on Constitution Day (November 26), a three-judge bench of the Supreme Court had to order an immediate floor test in Maharashtra (November 27) to determine if the incumbent government commanded majority in the legislative assembly. The court's order also suggests that it did not find Governor's decision to appoint Fadnavis as Chief Minister as based on reliable material.

The Maharashtra Episode

The Maharashtra episode appears to be a replica of the events in Karnataka in 2018, when the Chief Minister (belonging to the ruling party in the Centre), initially appointed by the Governor without showing clear majority, subsequently resigned even before going for the floor test to prove majority support.

The rarely used Rule 12 of the Government of India (Transaction of Business) Rules, 1961, was deployed to revoke-without the need for the Union cabinet's approval-president's rule in Maharashtra early morning on November 23 and pave the way for the oath-taking of BJP's Devendra Fadnavis as chief minister and the NCP's Ajit Pawar as his deputy.

Powers and Discretion of Governor

The assumed limits of authority of a Governor to appoint a Chief Minister are being breached with alarming regularity. The track record of some Governors has been biased and questionable. Both loyal political retainers and favoured bureaucrats, including military top brass, have been picked for what many consider to be sinecure plum posts-as a reward for 'services' rendered earlier. In most cases, it is virtually a retirement package. Warning against this explicitly, the 1988 Sarkaria Commission report on Centre-state relations had underscored that the honour and prestige of the office of the Governor

could be maintained only when 'eminent' individuals from outside the state with no 'vested' interests were appointed to the post. But coloured choices continue to be made.

Analysts argue for a need to define norms for such appointments and set the boundaries of Governors' use of discretion in inviting parties to form governments, particularly in the case of fractured verdicts. Among the open-ended issues are parliamentary independence, extent of judicial review and the validity of the Governor's 'satisfaction'. Any such satisfaction would have to be based on material before the Governor. The court cannot examine the veracity of such material, but only whether a Governor's actions were mala fide and arbitrary. Any adverse finding would imply that the Governor step down on grounds of political propriety. Only then would Raj Bhavans be restrained from using undue discretion and, as a result, reducing democracy to a mockery.

Constitutional Provisions for Governor

The Constitution of India under Article 155 says that the Governor of a state shall be appointed by the President by warrant under his hand and seal. Under Article 156 he shall hold office during the pleasure of the President. The Governor shall hold office for a term of five years from the date on which he assumes it.

Article 163 specifically provides that in determining which matters fall within the discretion of the Governor, the Governor's decision will be final. A literal interpretation of this clause would mean that were there any doubts in the constitutional scheme as to whether a Governor could act on his own accord in relation to a matter or not, such decision would rest with the

Governor as the highest constitutional authority in a State. It would not be the domain of the courts. However, for the Supreme Court, an appeal to the scheme of the Constitution and the basic structure doctrine is sufficient to deny the Governor such discretion.

Supreme Court Ruling on Different Cases

The functioning of the Governor as a political partisan is anathema for a just constitutional order. But in the rough and tumble of politics, it is an expedient tool to prevent the full play of democracy. Here is a recap of cases from various states and the circumstances that led to the apex court's intervention.

S R Bommai v Union of India (1994): The concept of floor test was first established by the Supreme Court in 1994 in the landmark case of S R Bommai. In this case, it was alleged that the Janata Party government led by Bommai did not enjoy a majority in the Karnataka legislature. The court held that, wherever a doubt arises whether the Council of Ministers has lost the confidence of the House, the only way of testing it is on the floor of the House, not the subjective opinion of the Governor.

Supreme Court issued the historic order, which in a way put an end to the arbitrary dismissal of State governments under Article 356 by spelling out restrictions. The verdict concluded that the power of the President to dismiss a State government is not absolute. The verdict said the President should exercise the power only after his proclamation (imposing his/her rule) is approved by both Houses of Parliament.

Rameshwar Prasad Vs Union of India, 2006, case, a five-judge Constitution Bench, clearly recommended the suggestions made by the R S Sarkaria Commission in its report on Centre-State relations, which

had emphasized on the impartiality of Governors and their role in upholding the constitutional mandate.

Recommendations of Various Commissions

Three important commissions have examined this issue:

The Sarkaria Commission recommended that a person to be appointed as a Governor should satisfy the following criteria: (i) He should be eminent in some walk of life; (ii) He should be a person from outside the state; (iii) He should be a detached figure and not too intimately connected with the local politics of the state; and (iv) He should be a person who has not taken too great a part in politics generally and particularly in the recent past. It also recommended that Governors must not be removed before completion of their five year tenure, except in rare and compelling circumstances. The presidential disposition of Bills sent for consideration should be done within four months of their receipt.

The Venkatachaliah Commission (2002) recommended that the appointment of the Governor should be entrusted to a committee comprising the Prime Minister of India, Union Minister for Home Affairs, the Speaker of the Lok Sabha and the Chief Minister of the concerned state and provision should be made for the impeachment of the Governor by the State Legislature on the same lines as the impeachment of the President by the Parliament.

M M Punchhi Commission also elaborated that the governor should follow "constitutional conventions" in a case of a hung Assembly. Further, in a case of a Hung Assembly, the Punchhi Commission prescribed:

1. The party or alliances which get the widest support in the Legislative Assembly should be called upon to form the government.
2. If there is a pre-poll coalition or alliance, it should be treated as

one political party. And in case, such coalition gets a majority, the leader of such alliances shall be called by the Governor to form the government.

3. In case no pre-poll coalition or party has a clear majority, the governor should select the Chief Minister in the order of priorities indicated here:

- (i) The group of parties which had a pre-poll alliance of the largest number.
- (ii) The largest single party which claims to form the government with the support of others;
- (iii) A post-electoral alliance with all partners joining the government;
- (iv) A post-electoral alliance where parties are joining the government and the remaining including independents are supporting the government from outside.

Further, the Venkatachaliah Commission and Punchhi Commission (2010) suggested that the phrase "during the pleasure of the President" should be deleted from the Constitution.

Way Forward

It is expected from a Governor that she/he won't misuse the discretion granted to her/him under the Constitution for partisan gains. The constitutional office of Governor cannot be converted to that of a political emissary. It is for this reason that the remarks made by the Supreme Court, while ordering the floor test in Maharashtra, about fostering and imbibing of constitutional morality by the constitutional functionaries, must be welcomed. A Governor should imbibe constitutional morality, in simple terms, means that she/he would exercise the discretion conferred upon her/him by the framers of the Constitution in all fairness.

During the framing of the Constitution, Dr Ambedkar had a fear that wherever there will be absence of constitutional morality, there could be misuse of power.

In order to prevent the abuse of discretion by a Governor for political motives, it is necessary to institutionalize the procedure to be followed by her/him regarding the formation of government whenever

there is a fractured mandate in a State election. The Supreme Court must therefore lay down guidelines to be followed by a Governor in such circumstances. Only when a Governor's discretion is minimized, we can witness better political as well as constitutional processes. This would also facilitate cultivation of constitutional morality, which Dr Ambedkar had wished for, around 70 years ago.

General Studies Paper- II

Topic: Separation of powers between various organs, dispute redressal mechanisms and institutions.

Topic: Parliament and State Legislatures - structure, functioning, conduct of business, powers & privileges and issues arising out of these.

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4. MATERNAL MORTALITY RATE IN INDIA : A REDUCING TREND

Why in News?

According to the latest Sample Registration System (SRS) Bulletin 2015-2017, India's Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR) has seen a decline from 130 per 1 lakh live births in 2014-2016 to 122 per 1 lakh live births in 2015-2017.

Introduction

India's maternal mortality rate is high and accounts for 20 percent of global deaths occurring due to preventable causes related to pregnancy and childbirth. Though the MMR has dropped from 212 deaths per 100,000 live births in 2007 to 130 deaths in 2014-16, further it reduced to 122 per 1 lakh live births in 2015-2017, registering a 6.15 per cent reduction since the last survey figures of 2014-2016. However, the decline is not enough to meet the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) target of 70 deaths per 1,00,000 live births, and only three states- Kerala, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu have been able to meet the target till date.

To understand the maternal mortality situation in the country better and to map the changes, especially at the regional level, the government has categorised states into three groups: empowered action group (EAG), Southern States and other states. EAG states comprise Bihar, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Odisha, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and

Uttarakhand, and Assam. The southern states are Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu and the "other" states categories cover the remaining states and Union territories.

The decline has been most significant in EAG States from 188 to 175. The ratio has reduced considerably from 77 to 72 per 1,00,000 live births among southern states and in the other states from 93 to 90. While the figures have been averaged out for the purpose of analysis, MMR in individual states like Kerala is the lowest and stands at 42, whereas its the highest in Assam at 229. Uttar Pradesh follows close on Assam's heels at 216 and the third highest MMR is in Madhya Pradesh at 188. Independent MMR data of Jharkhand (76), Chhattisgarh (141) and Uttarakhand (89) has been released for the first time in the SRS 2015-2017 bulletin.

While Rajasthan's MMR has shown the highest decrease by 13 points, followed by Odisha (12 points) and Karnataka (11 points), the States of Andhra Pradesh, Bihar and Punjab have not shown any change in the ratio. Retaining its first position, Kerala has reduced its MMR from 46 in 2014-2016 to 42 in 2015-2017. Likewise, Maharashtra retained its second position with 55 (down from 61) and Tamil Nadu its third position with 63 (down from 66).

According to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the MMR is defined as the number of maternal deaths during a given time period per 100,000 live births during the same time period. It depicts the risk of maternal death relative to the number of live births and essentially captures the risk of death in a single pregnancy or a single live birth. Maternal deaths: The annual number of female deaths from any cause related to or aggravated by pregnancy or its management (excluding accidental or incidental causes) during pregnancy and childbirth or within 42 days of termination of pregnancy, irrespective of the duration and site of the pregnancy, expressed per 100,000 live births, for a specified time period.

India's Achievement

In 2018, the World Health Organisation (WHO) has lauded India's progress in reducing the MMR saying the progress puts the country on track towards achieving the SDG target of an MMR below 70 by 2030. There are some key actions responsible for India's remarkable achievement:

India has committed itself to the latest UN target for the SDGs for MMR at 70 per 1,00,000 live births by 2030. As per National Health Policy (NHP) 2017, the target for MMR is 100 per 1,00,000 live births by 2020.

First, India has made a concerted push to increase access to quality maternal health services. Since 2005, coverage of essential maternal health services has doubled, while the

proportion of institutional deliveries in public facilities has almost tripled, from 18% in 2005 to 52% in 2016 (including private facilities, institutional deliveries now stand at 79%).

Second, state-subsidized demand-side financing like the 'Janani Shishu Suraksha Karyakram' – which allows all pregnant women delivering in public health institutions to free transport and no-expense delivery, including caesarian section – has largely closed the urban-rural divide traditionally seen in institutional births. Overall, 75% of rural births are now supervised, as compared to 89% of urban deliveries.

Third, India has put significant emphasis on mitigating the social determinants of maternal health. Women in India are more literate than ever, with 68% now able to read and write. They are also entering marriage at an older age, with just 27% now wedded before the age of 18. These factors alone have enabled Indian women to better control their reproductive lives and make decisions that reflect their own interests and wants.

Fourth, the government has put in substantive efforts to facilitate positive engagement between public and private health care providers. Campaigns such as the 'Pradhan Mantri Surakshit Matritva Abhiyan' have been introduced with great impact, allowing women access to antenatal check-ups, obstetric gynecologists and to track high-risk pregnancies – exactly what is needed to make further gains and achieve the SDG targets.

Overall, focus on quality and coverage of health services through public health initiatives under the 'National Health Mission' such as 'Labour Room Quality Improvement Initiative' (LaQshya), 'Poshan Abhiyan', 'Pradhan Mantri Surakshit Matritva Abhiyan', 'Janani Shishu Suraksha Karyakram', 'Janani Suraksha Yojana'

and 'Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana' have contributed to this decline. India is now committed to ensuring that not a single mother or newborn dies due to a preventable cause and move towards zero preventable maternal and newborn deaths through the recently launched 'Surakshit Matritva Aashwasan Initiative (SUMAN)'.

Causes of Maternal Death

Haemorrhage remains the leading cause of maternal mortality, accounting for over one quarter (27 per cent) of deaths. Similar proportions of maternal deaths were caused indirectly by pre-existing medical conditions aggravated by the pregnancy. Hypertensive disorders of pregnancy, especially eclampsia, as well as sepsis, embolism and complications of unsafe abortion also claim a substantial number of lives.

Anemia is also known cause of maternal deaths and risk factor for low birth weight. This is a major determinant for infant morbidity, mortality and long-term impact on health outcomes in adult life. Evidence suggests ante-natal care and institutional delivery as key health interventions to reduce maternal and child deaths.

The complications leading to maternal death can occur without warning at any time during pregnancy and child birth. Most maternal deaths can be prevented if births are attended by skilled health personnel – doctors, nurses or midwives – who are regularly supervised, have the proper equipment and supplies, and can refer women in a timely manner to emergency obstetric care when complications are diagnosed. Complications require prompt access to quality obstetric services equipped with life-saving drugs, including antibiotics, and the ability to provide blood transfusions needed to perform Caesarean sections or other surgical interventions.

The Sustainable Development Goals and Maternal Mortality

In the context of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), countries have united behind a new target to accelerate the decline of maternal mortality by 2030. SDG 3 includes an ambitious target: "reducing the global MMR to less than 70 per 100 000 births, with no country having a maternal mortality rate of more than twice the global average".

Challenges

The shortage of trained human resources, especially doctors and auxiliary nurse midwives, remains a key challenge to improving maternal health outcomes. Human resource compensation packages for personnel working in remote and rural areas need to be made more attractive. Additionally, the focus in gynaecology training needs to be on imparting practical skills in the management of labour and deliveries.

While there has been positive action by the Centre, several states are lagging behind. The CAG released a report in July this year, which highlighted this discrepancy. Its report also said states are spending way too little on health. To address the fund crunch, the government has launched a new scheme called 'SUMAN', under which free healthcare benefits would be provided to pregnant women, sick newborns, and mothers for up to six months after the date of delivery.

In addition, lack of efficient infrastructure is also posing major challenge. As per a United Nations (UN) report, almost three-fourths of India's health infrastructure is concentrated in urban areas, where just over a fourth of India's population lives. Once this gap is bridged, maternal deaths will become history.

Although India has performed far better than the global average as far as reducing maternal deaths between 1990 and 2016 is concerned, we have a fair bit of catching up to do with

major economies like Brazil (44), China (27) and Japan (5). Ultimately though even one maternal death is too many and concerted efforts need to be made by all stakeholders to ensure that no woman loses her life to a preventable cause.

Way Forward

While the progress has undoubtedly been impressive, in order to achieve the SDG of reducing MMR to 70 by 2030 or earlier, systematic efforts need to be made to eliminate disparities in maternal health outcomes across the

country, adopt a comprehensive and coordinated policy approach as well as ensure a relentless focus on monitoring the implementation of safe birthing guidelines.

India will need to further accelerate its rate of decline and ensure that all women have access to care before, during, and after pregnancy. To do this, it is not only about health care issues like making sure medical interventions are available but also improving the education of girls, avoiding early marriage, and ensuring gender equality. We should also not forget that ensuring

that a wide range of contraceptive options is important to help women plan and space, and avoid pregnancies. India should also continue its efforts to conduct special studies on maternal mortality, as it helps to provide data. All of these actions will help India reach its SDG on maternal mortality.

General Studies Paper- II

Topic: Issues relating to development and management of Social Sector/ Services relating to Health, Education, Human Resources.



5. RURAL EDUCATION IN INDIA : AN OVERVIEW

Context

Even though India's literacy rate has registered a sound growth over the last few years, but it has not been able to impart the kind of education that modern times demand. If a country's rural education sector is working well, it reflects on the entire economic state of a country.

Introduction

Mahatma Gandhi once said, "India lives in her villages." And even after fast-paced urbanisation in India, the statement made by the Father of the Nation several decades ago still seems to hold true. According to the World Bank figures compiled from officially recognised sources, rural population as per cent of total population in India was reported at 66.46 per cent in 2017. And as we celebrate the 150th Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi this year, we are once again reminded that rural India needs to be accorded top priority to ensure sustainable growth and development of the country.

Talking about literacy, level of education is not only a reflection of the level of development attained by a society but in turn it also gives impetus

to growth and modernization of the society. As a result, promoting rural education becomes a prime objective of the government to ensure an overall balance in development.

Status of Rural Education in India

As per Census 2011, literacy rate in rural areas was around 68 per cent while it was 84 per cent in urban areas. Furthermore, only 59 per cent of rural women were estimated to be literate as compared to nearly 80 per cent urban women being literate in 2011.

Some interesting findings have been thrown up by the survey on 'Social Consumption: Education' during the National Sample Survey (NSS) 71st Round, brought to light several ground level realities of education in rural India vis a vis urban India which are of relevance to a policy maker.

- ◆ The survey found that literacy rates in rural India were much lower in comparison to urban India across different age groups.
- ◆ While overall literacy rate among persons (aged 5 years and above) in India was 76 per cent, in rural areas it was 71 per cent compared to 86 per cent in urban areas.

- ◆ In both rural and urban areas, more than 90 per cent per cent households reported availability of primary school within 1 km from the house as per the survey.
- ◆ In rural areas, the major reason for 'never-enrolment' for persons of ages 5-29 years was 'not interested in education' (33 per cent male and 27 per cent female) while in urban areas, nearly 33 per cent males and 30 per cent females in the age group of 5-29 years never enrolled because of 'financial constraints'.
- ◆ The survey showed that nearly 6 per cent of rural households and 29 per cent of urban households possessed a computer. Among households with at least one member of age 14 years and above, nearly 16 per cent among rural households had internet access as compared to 49 per cent urban households. Among persons of age 14-29 years, nearly 18 per cent in rural areas and 49 per cent in urban areas were able to operate a computer.
- ◆ As per Unified District Information System for Education (U-DISE) 2016-17, total number of schools in India were 15.3 lakhs out of which

nearly 12.97 lakh schools were in rural areas. Total enrolment in schools was 25.13 crore out of which 18.02 crore was enrolment of students from rural areas.

This data pertains to all the schools from Class I to Class XII across the country. Therefore, rural areas account for 84.46 per cent of total schools in India and 71.72 per cent of total student enrolment in India. In addition, 73.04 per cent teachers are placed in rural locations.

Challenges before Rural Education in India

Limited Number of Schools:

According to the Ministry of Human Resource Development, literacy in rural areas was 64.7 per cent as opposed to 79.5 per cent in urban areas in 2018. The rural areas are struggling with the objective of imparting education because there is a paucity of schools. Moreover, poor transportation and connectivity further compound the

problem. So parents are unable to send their children to schools. This acts as a huge obstacle to education.

Lack of Financial Resources:

Poverty continues to be a major social issue and it affects rural India more. Children are unable to afford education because of financial constraints. Private schools are an expensive option and out of budget for most rural households. They can either educate children or lead a basic life with the limited money they have.

Poor Infrastructure: Rural schools are bogged down by poor infrastructure. To begin with, the teacher-student ratio is highly imbalanced. Even the existing teachers are not well-trained. Naturally, this affects the quality of education being imparted. Even basic facilities such as textbooks, drinking water, and library are not adequate.

Traditional Way of Teaching: While pedagogy has gone up several notches in urban areas with newer teaching techniques being introduced, these

remain primitive and traditional in Indian villages. The urban schools have adopted concept learning but the rural ones are still stuck to rote.

Lack of Technology: Even in the 21st century, the rural schools are still devoid of technology and upgraded techniques. Basic computer literacy is a must for every child. However, schools in rural India often don't have computers or teachers to take up the subject. This alienation causes a digital divide in our country.

Rural-Urban Divide: Difference in teaching methods, varying magnitude of subjects and themes taught mean that there is a huge difference between rural and urban education.

Ignorance of Parents: The dropout rate in rural schools is high. Approximately, 50 per cent students drop out from school before completing the 12th standard. All of this clearly signals that the state of first generation learners is very alarming and certainly needs the attention of the government.

Impact of the Right to Education

The Right to Education (RTE) Act has been one of the country's most defining moments. Like all momentous decisions, the decision to bring about this legislation was also the culmination of deep thought and earnest attempts over a number of decades, to usher in universal education. We have come a long way from 1910 when Gopal Krishna Gokhale demanded 'Free and Compulsory Primary Education' in India to 2002 when the Article 21 -A was inserted in the Constitution of India which declared that "The State shall provide free and compulsory education to all children of the age of six to fourteen years in such manner as the State may, by law, determine."

In June 2014 Report published by the Ministry of Human Resource and Development (MHRD) shows that the Central Government has achieved a reasonable degree of success in ensuring that the policies outlined in the RTE have been implemented in many states. Increase in enrolment has been one of the most significant achievements under the RTE.

In 2016, only about 3 per cent of children in the 6-14 years of age were out of school. Enrolment in schools is the very first step to overcome the malaise of illiteracy. A crucial factor that merits mention here is the 'Swachh Bharat-Swachh Vidyalaya' campaign which has been responsible for creation and maintenance of hygienic sanitation and drinking water facilities in schools. This has resulted in a large number of female students not only enrolling but also staying on in schools up to higher grades than before.

The 2015 Annual Report of the MHRD also suggests that most states have adopted the curriculum mandate under the RTE Act. About 80 per cent government teachers are professionally qualified as per the prescribed norms, which is a positive indicator for quality of teaching.

The goal of 'access to education' is more or less considered to be achieved at elementary level and the focus is now shifting to Secondary and Higher Secondary level. However, considering the challenges in actual realisation of the RTE objectives, high dropouts and residual (disadvantaged) children remaining out of school, there is a demand of continuous efforts at elementary level also.

Strategies to Promote Equitable Education

There are many areas of rural India that are still bogged down by poverty, poor health, starvation, unemployment and inequality. Although the government has been working to alleviate the conditions and some achievements have been recorded, it is still a long road that we need to travel. And, the government is taking right steps in this direction. The various areas which needs to be focussed upon are:

♦ **Availability of Teachers:** The teacher is central to good education; at its core, education is the process between the teacher and the student. If education is to improve, teaching has to improve. Any change effort has to recognize the centrality of the teacher. Teaching is an intellectually and ethically demanding profession. Teachers must be seen as

independent, capable, and responsible professionals with respect given to their professional identity and knowledge.

- ◆ **Trained Teachers:** The first and foremost thing is to train each recently appointed non-permanent teachers. The expert teachers can understand student psychology, and they will be able to handle and improve their students better. Therefore, training the teachers should be the first step to ensure that the most fundamental requirement can be met.
- ◆ **Decentralization in School Management:** There is no doubt that decentralization in school/college management and governance is the key for fixing and reviving the broken governance system of rural education in India. In this connection, the role of local bodies and self-help groups becomes most crucial in reviving and improving the quality of education in rural areas of the country.
- ◆ **Rural Connectivity:** Most of the students and teachers opt out going to schools because of the difficulty getting in there. The rural areas lack the basic railroad connectives which makes the traveling a strenuous process. The improvements in railroad connectives in rural areas will, of course, improve the education systems.
- ◆ **Student Incentives:** The mid-day meal is an excellent incentive for students from poor backgrounds to go to school. The government should come to develop more such schemes designed to appeal to students so that they have a reason to go to school every day.
- ◆ **Proper Toilets and Sanitation:** Everyone knows that the saying 'A sound mind in a sound body'. Proper toilets and sanitation is

an essential requirement in every school. The availability of proper toilets for girls and boys will alone help to increase the number of students in schools.

- ◆ **Digitalisation of Education:** Digital Literacy is an important part of education, especially in a world where technological development is the flag bearer of progress. Not only is the thrust on infrastructure

but also on quality and unique solutions through technology to improve delivery systems of education. The student community has shown great enthusiasm for e-Resources for learning. This holds great promise for the future since as the internet penetration increases, the major beneficiaries of online courses and facilities will be the rural and far flung areas.

Teacher's Education: Challenges and Reforms

The Government of India has set up many committees and commissions to improve the quality of teachers and for their professional development. Teacher education is a process for preparing professional teachers by inculcating necessary knowledge, competence, skills among them for teaching at various stages of school education. In our country, programmes are being conducted in the teacher training institutes and departments of education in the universities for preparing professional teachers

The University Education Commission (1948) recommended that theory and practice of pre-service teacher education must support each other. The theory courses must be flexible and adaptable to local circumstances. The teachers should also be kept active and fresh through in-service education.

The Secondary Education Commission (1952-53) recommended the adoption of new techniques of evaluation and suggested that more capable and intelligent persons should be attracted to the teaching profession. There should be two types of training institutions (i) two years training for those who have taken the school leaving certificate and (ii) one year training for the graduates.

Education Commission (1966) recommended that quality of training institutions and teacher education programme should be improved. A substantial allocation of funds should be made available to UGC for improvement of teacher education in the universities.

Another important landmark was setting up of the State Institute of Education (SIE) in 1964 for providing greater coverage and regional specificity in the programmes of in-service education and training of teachers and other education-related personal concerned with primary education.

The National Policy on Education (NPE) and Programme of Action (POA), 1986, 1992 (revised) calls for overhauling the teacher education system. NPE (1986) made three recommendations i.e. (i) teacher education as a continuous process and its pre-service and in-service components inseparable (ii) the need for new programmes of teacher education to meet the thrusts envisaged in policy and (ii) the need for creating new structures and strengthening institutions to concretise the vision of NPE.

In 1990, the Acharya Ramamurti Committee suggested that the training programme should be competency-based and there should be integration of theory and practice.

The Yashpal Committee Report (1993) on Learning Without Burden noted "The content of the programme should be restructured to ensure its relevance to the changing needs of school education. The emphasis of these programmes should be on enabling the trainees to acquire the ability for self-learning and independent thinking."

National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education of NCFTE (2009) suggested to improve the design and Impact greater rigour and professionalism to the teacher education programmes. Justice Verma Commission in 2012 also made many recommendations for improving the professionalism among teachers. The duration of teacher education programmes were increased. NCTE revised the norms and standards of fifteen programmes of teacher education during 2014 for improving quality and standard of teacher education programme in turn to improve the quality of teachers and professional development.

In the end, it is concluded that many reforms have taken place in the area of teacher education from time to time in the light of recommendations made by different commissions and committees set up by Government of India for the professional development of teachers and teacher educators.

Spread over an enormous landscape, impacting over 18 crore students (71 per cent of the nation's students), the rural school education sector accounts for over 84 per cent of the total schools in India. Despite an increasing trend in urbanization, it is projected that the majority of India will still reside in rural regions even in the year 2050. Given the country's ripe demographic opportunity, the development of rural India is critical to forge the nation's progress.

Government Initiatives for Rural Areas

Expansion of 'Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas', pan-India expansion of 'Samagra Siksha' and voluminous increase in budgetary allocations, expansion of 'Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas', improvements in quality of 'Mid-Day Meal Scheme', 'Unnat Bharat Abhiyan', 'Swachhta Abhiyan', 'Massive Online Courses', expansion of 'Eklavya Model Residential School Scheme', digital initiatives and promoting several other education related interventions by the states are some of the important efforts of the government for the development of rural education. While some of the programmes/ schemes/ projects are specific to rural areas;

expansion of infrastructure and quality improvement of teachers in rural areas are also likely to receive a major thrust under flagship programmes like 'Samagra Shiksha'.

The ambitious programme, 'Samagra Shiksha' has been introduced to promote holistic education, while incorporating three major initiatives of 'Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA)', 'Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA)' and 'Teacher Education (TE)', for providing integrated school education from pre-school to higher secondary level. Special provisions for 'Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas', 'Special Focus Districts (SFDs)', 'Educationally Backward Blocks (EEBs)', 'Left Wing Extremism (LWE)' affected districts, etc., are a major part of this umbrella scheme. Interventions like in-service training of teachers and school heads, grants for library, sports and physical activities also fall under the programme.

Conclusion

The government is working round the clock to bring positive changes in the education system in the country so that world-class education can be provided to the students. Efforts are being made to make India a knowledge superpower

by equipping its students with the necessary skills and knowledge and to eliminate the shortage of manpower in science, technology, academics and industry.

Quality infrastructure is also being developed by the centre and the states— especially in the north-eastern region—for better education prospects. Special focus is being given by the government to develop the education infrastructure in the rural and backward areas of the country through wide ranging schemes, policies and programmes.

Development of any nation is dependent on the education of its citizens. The numerous policies and schemes aimed at providing education to all shows the government's endeavor towards inclusive development. The massive effort in recent times to revamp and expand the education system in India has far reaching implications.

General Studies Paper- II

Topic: Issues relating to development and management of Social Sector/ Services relating to Health, Education, Human Resources.



6. QUAD : ADVOCATING A FREE AND OPEN INDO-PACIFIC

Why in News?

In a significant development for the region, the Quadrilateral Strategic Dialogue (Quad) between India, Australia, Japan and the United States (US) held its first Minister level meeting recently.

It focused on three ostensibly disparate issues — the Indo-Pacific Region, economic and climate security. Its goal was to look at security in a holistic manner, examining the

intersection between geopolitics and geo-economics.

Introduction

The shift in the epicenter of global politics from the trans-Atlantic to the Indo-Pacific marked by America's relative decline and the rise of China has significant geopolitical implications for the region. Although the ongoing uncertainty is bound to have global repercussion, Asian states will be at the forefront of this strategic flux. This

is intertwined with their security and sovereignty. Asian states benefited from the US-led post-Cold War order and now America's withdrawal from that order as a result of an increasing inward focus is causing anxiety in these states regarding the future of the liberal order and the US capability and willingness to defend it.

Meanwhile, China's hegemonic designs are a growing cause of concern for countries like India, Japan, Vietnam, the Philippines, and other Asian states.

Beijing is using its enhanced military capabilities to pressure neighboring countries by asserting its territorial claims. Its transgressions in Doklam and India's Arunachal Pradesh, constantly pressuring Japan over Senkaku islands (referred by China as Diaoyu islands), threatening Vietnam over drilling oil in the areas of South China Sea, and blatantly ignoring the 2016 verdict favoring the Philippines on the South China Sea exemplify this drive towards a unilateral assertion of interests. China's rhetoric about its peaceful rise isn't convincing anyone anymore. The economic good emanating from China's rise has quickly turned into a security threat. China's aggressive behavior over the last decade led to the revival of the Quad 2.0 on the sidelines of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) summit in Manila in 2017. All the four countries in their separate briefings emphasized, among other things, the free and open Indo-Pacific, a rules-based order, freedom of navigation and respect for international law, and maritime security, all code words for managing China.

Quad: Background

The Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QSD), better known as the 'Quad', started as a strategic dialogue in 2007. The dialogue members included India, the US, Australia and Japan. It was established to check the growth of Chinese power in what was still referred to as 'Asia-Pacific', and which has since become 'Indo-Pacific'. The Quad had its real genesis in the response to the 2004-2005 Asian Tsunami when India showed prowess in spearheading the relief and rescue effort in South East Asia. However, the principal aim of the Quad was strategic, with a quest to manage the consequences for the regional balance of power in the Indo-Pacific due to the scale and scope of China's rise.

In 2007, Japan's Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, an early advocate of the Indo-Pacific, took steps to formalise the grouping through an initial summit and joint naval exercises in the Bay of Bengal. Despite Abe's efforts, the Quad failed to cohere as a formal group after Australia withdrew in 2008 over concerns that the group might antagonise China. Australia's withdrawal at that time rankled some in the respective foreign and defence policy communities and raised suspicions, including within India, that Australia might be a weak link in the grouping. Arguably though, formalising the Quad at that stage would have been pre-emptory, as it lacked the agreed strategic framework and purpose. Indeed, aside from Australia, India and Japan harboured their own doubts about taking the initiative forward. As Indonesia's former foreign minister, Marty Natalegawa suggests, it was "a solution looking for a problem." Nonetheless, a complex web of interwoven bilateral and trilateral security links sustained a loose coalition between the four nations, allowing reconstitution some ten years later, at least at the official level, in a format that some have labelled "Quad 2.0."

Reviving the Quad: An Indo-Pacific focus

The revival of the Quad, a mechanism which enables dialogue between four major democracies within the Indo-Pacific region, Australia, Japan, India, and the US, on issues of regional security signals an important development within the Indo-Pacific, and reflects a convergence of strategic interests between four major democracies of the region. Underscored by principles of openness, freedom of movement, and respect for the rules-based international order, the Quad builds on a complex and overlapping web of bilateral and trilateral alliances and partnerships between the four nations. Its revival, albeit at officials

level only, offers a constructive platform for embedding core principles into the narrative of the emerging regional order, while building the trust and confidence needed to support cooperative initiatives between the nations involved, and others.

However, caution is warranted. The re-appearance of the Quad has prompted speculation about its strategic purpose and intent. To suggest that the Quad is an alternative to the China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), or a mechanism aimed at containing China, or to conflate it with understandings of the Indo-Pacific construct assigns far too much strategic gravitas to the grouping at this stage. Furthermore, such notions obscure significant regional mechanisms already in existence, and undermine prospects for cooperation and inclusion across the breadth of the Indo-Pacific region.

Relevance of Quad Group

For Japan, the Quad is an important step towards a collective regional security arrangement at a time when the nation faces increasing pressure from China, especially in surrounding maritime domains. While Japan's security relationship with the US endures, Abe is clearly working to keep the Trump-led administration engaged in the region, while shoring up bilateral partnerships with Australia and India. Japan has cultivated trilateral cooperation — Japan-India-US and Japan-Australia-US — to ensure semi-regular diplomatic consultation alongside accelerated military cooperation and defence technology transfer. Abe has taken steps to enhance and extend Japan's ability to participate in the latter.

Australia's defence and foreign policy white papers explicitly identify the Indo-Pacific as a more fitting descriptor of the nation's trans-oceanic strategic outlook. The 2017 Foreign Policy White Paper sets out

Australia's vision for the Indo-Pacific as a neighbourhood "in which adherence to rules delivers lasting peace, where the rights of all states are respected, and where open markets facilitate the free flow of trade, capital and ideas." Much like Japan, the US Indo-Pacific strategy provides Australia with a critical platform for engaging its strategic ally in the region at a time when the US appears more intent on withdrawal. It also offers important opportunities to consider and develop deeper partnerships across the region, including with India and Japan, as well as with other regional democracies, like Indonesia. Indeed, while the Quad offers a useful mechanism for security consultation and cooperation with key partners in support of a free and open Indo-Pacific, it was never intended to define or substantiate Australia's Indo-Pacific outlook.

The US, while aware of Japan's initiative on the Indo-Pacific and the role of the Quad in it, hedged between its commitment to the Asia-Pacific, which was anchored in the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) context since 1989, and its looming conflict of strategic interests with China (which had been a part of APEC since 1991). Both Australia and Japan were an integral part of the APEC. The US kept China out of the proposed Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), which was signed in April 2016, but repudiated by the Trump Administration of the US on 23 January 2017. The decision by the other TPP countries, including Australia and Japan, to go ahead with the agreement without the US created strategic space for the Trump Administration for endorsing the Indo-Pacific framework, and refocus on the Quad.

India's Quad Question

Notwithstanding the euphoria, India has exercised strategic caution while welcoming the Quad overtures. The China-dominated narrative of the

Quad seems to have prompted this caution as India is the only country in the group sharing a land boundary with China. The Sino-Indian relationship hit rock bottom during Doklam crisis last year. However, diplomatic dexterity on both the sides helped diffuse tension, culminating into the Wuhan reset. Given India's challenges on the domestic front, prolonged hostility with China would be the last thing it would want. The carefulness pertaining to the Quad seems to be stemming from this. India's perception of the Indo-Pacific too is different from other Quad countries. For instance, India views Pakistan as a troubled littoral of the Indo-Pacific just like the US views North Korea. There is still a need for a wider consultation mechanism to reach a broader consensus among the participating countries on important issues (like terrorism).

PM Modi at Shangri-La Dialogue last year described the Indo-Pacific as a "natural region" extending from the "shores of Africa to that of America," even as he challenged the idea of the "Indo-Pacific" as any sort of strategy or an exclusive club. Nevertheless, he emphasized a "free, open and transparent Indo-Pacific grounded in respect for international maritime laws." The speech also tried to assuage the concerns of Southeast Asian nations by placing ASEAN as central to India's vision of Indo-Pacific. Indian strategic concerns need to be viewed holistically and not be compartmentalized into eastern and western reaches. Asserting ASEAN's centrality is also a rejection of Chinese centrality and is aimed at injecting a new life into a concept which for many has become too obsessed with China. Although ASEAN member states are mindful of not getting caught in the crossfire, their concerns regarding China are for real. The emphasis on ASEAN centrality can be viewed as a way to leverage its support and make the ongoing deliberations on

alternative security architecture more dynamic. It also reflects India's quest to build a regional partnership with Southeast Asian nations that it deems less provocative.

Shangri La Dialogue

India's vision for the Indo-Pacific Region is, **One**, It stands for a free, open, inclusive region, which embraces us all in a common pursuit of progress and prosperity. It includes all nations in this geography as also others beyond who have a stake in it.

Two, Southeast Asia is at its centre. And, ASEAN has been and will be central to its future. That is the vision that will always guide India, as we seek to cooperate for an architecture for peace and security in this region.

Three, India believe that our common prosperity and security require us to evolve, through dialogue, a common rules-based order for the region. Such an order must believe in sovereignty and territorial integrity, as well as equality of all nations, irrespective of size and strength. This is the foundation of India's faith in multilateralism and regionalism; and, of our principled commitment to rule of law.

Four, all countries have equal access as a right under international law to the use of common spaces on sea and in the air that would require freedom of navigation, unimpeded commerce and peaceful settlement of disputes in accordance with international law.

Five, This region, and all of us, have benefitted from globalisation. India stands for open and stable international trade regime. We will also support rule-based, open, balanced and stable trade environment in the Indo-Pacific Region, which lifts up all nations on the tide of trade and investment.

Six, Connectivity is vital. It does more than enhance trade and prosperity. It unites a region. India has been at the crossroads for centuries. We understand the benefits of connectivity. There are many connectivity initiatives in the region. If these have to succeed, we must not only build infrastructure, we must also build bridges of trust.

India's caution also emanates from the increasing uncertainty characterizing American foreign policy. The Trump administration's protectionist policies have further emboldened the strategic caution.

Meanwhile, there exists a severe capability differential between India and China. Between, 2000-2018, China's military spending has grown three times as fast as that of India. The figures suggest around \$176.1 billion in spending in China compared to \$61.5 billion in India. Similarly, China's economy at around \$6 trillion stands at roughly three times the size of India's at \$2.1 trillion. Therefore, New Delhi's concern to be not dragged into the US strategy and antagonize China beyond a point appears to be grounded in these material realities. Dual concerns arising from an unwillingness to aggravate China and growing uncertainty about the US strategic intent in the region are likely to underpin India's cautious engagement with the Quad for now.

Challenges before Quad

The coming together of India, the US, Japan and Australia is being seen as building a strategic partnership to deal with China's rise and its implications. As all these countries have noted in different ways, China's rise has presented a serious challenge to a rules-based international order. India, the US and Japan already engage with each other in a ministerial-level trilateral dialogue and annual naval exercises. The logic of expanding membership in a security-focused group is not very obvious. Unlike, say, trade negotiations where the involvement of more

countries helps achieve uniformity of standards and, consequently, greater scale, more intra-supply chain compatibility and higher efficiency for businesses and economies, security collaboration among a larger group is a challenging task as success depends on the credibility and commitment of each participant. Moreover, the greater the number of people at the table, the narrower the agenda on which a consensus can be achieved.

Focusing on Cooperation in the Face of Challenge

The future of the Quad beyond its current consultative format is not certain. The opportunity to discuss emerging regional issues, from piracy to maritime pollution and disaster management, through such a platform should be seen as a positive. At the same time, assuring ASEAN of its role and relevance to Indo-Pacific, including through established dialogue mechanisms like the East Asia Summit (EAS), could reinforce notions of inclusivity, build support for the key rules shaping behaviour, and mitigate against the threat of strategic drift within the region. Engaging others, including China, in dialogue about the Indo-Pacific project through such mechanisms will be integral to realising the long-term vision for a stable and inclusive region. However, there is no

also prove useful. Finally, learning from the recent developments in the Pacific, refocusing the diplomatic efforts of the Quad towards other smaller partners across the region, including the island nations of the South Pacific, is critical. Not only does it reinforce a sense of strategic clarity for members of the Quad outlook, it also offers an important opportunity to bring the concerns of small and micro maritime states to the fore of the Indo-Pacific diplomatic agenda.

Way Forward

The Quad would do well by collaborating on actionable issue areas like piracy. It should focus on building a robust regional consultation mechanism and coordinate with ASEAN nations on issues of regional importance. Initiatives like the Indo-Pacific business forum could be expanded and alternative institutions like Indo-Pacific Bank or Indo-Pacific infrastructure investment agency could be contemplated to encourage private investment in crucial sectors like energy, the digital economy, the blue economy, and infrastructure. The India-Japan collaboration on Asia-Africa Growth Corridor seems to be a welcome step in the direction.

India needs to be innovative in dealing with challenges and leveraging opportunities that arrangements like the Quad present. The Quad framework derives its geopolitical validation from India's association and presents a unique opportunity for India to be an active participant in shaping regional security architecture with global undertones.



reason that the Quad might not continue to meet informally on the sidelines of the EAS. Each of the Quad partners has much to learn from the others, and drawing other regional democracies, like Indonesia, into the dialogue might

General Studies Paper- II

Topic: Bilateral, regional and global groupings and agreements involving India and/or affecting India's interests.



7. CONFERENCE ON LANDSLIDES RISK REDUCATION AND RESILIENCE-2019

Why in News?

National Institute of Disaster Management (NIDM) held the first International Conference on Landslides Risk Reduction and Resilience in New Delhi. The incidents of landslides have attracted global attention as they may cause huge havoc on communities, live stock, environment leading to huge loss of lives. Further, on the one hand landslides effect loss of infrastructures-roads, buildings, bridges, communication systems etc., on the other, they may lead to stagnation of human activity and mobility.

Introduction

Landslide disasters have fetched global concern in recent years. The ubiquitous disasters cost enormous human fatalities and billions of economic losses around the world. Based on Global Fatal Landslide database 2004-2016, globally in 4,862 distinct landslide events 55,997 fatalities were recorded (earthquake triggered landslide events were not taken in account in this study). Continent-wise, Asia suffers the maximum damages due to landslides and among the Asian countries, South Asian nations are the worst sufferers and even among South Asian countries India is one of the worse affected by landslides. As landslides are frequent and widespread, the annual cumulative losses worldwide amount to tens of billions of USD in terms of lost property, environmental damage, repair works, and the maintenance of defence measures.

As per Geological Survey of India, the window of economic loss due to landslides may reach between 1-2% of the gross national product in many developing countries. India, the seventh-largest country in the world apropos of area, is persistently

being knocked by landslides of varied magnitude throughout the history.

Landslides are among the major hydro-geological hazards that affect large parts of India, especially in the Himalaya, the northeastern hill ranges, the Western Ghats, the Nilgiris, the Eastern Ghats and the Vindhya. A rough estimate of landslide losses in the country indicates that about 500 lives are lost annually with economic damages up to 4 billion INR. India has a sensational record of catastrophes due to landslides, unique and unparalleled. Many reported and unreported landslides take toll of life, property causing widespread destruction and economical and social losses.

About Landslides

When slope forming materials that constitute mass of rock, debris or Earth, moves downwards and outwards, under the influence of gravity and triggered by various factors, it is termed as landslide.

Landslides mostly occur in areas having unstable slope i.e., a surface having one end or side at a higher level than another.

They often take place in conjunction with heavy rainfall, earthquakes, floods, cloud burst, mining, excavation, erosion or with loading/unloading of slopes.

- ◆ Landslides of different types occur frequently in the geo-dynamically active spheres in the Himalayan and North-eastern parts of India as well as relatively stable spheres in the Western Ghats and Nilgiri hills in the southern part of the country.
- ◆ The occurrence of landslides has also been reported in the Eastern Ghats, Ranchi Plateau, and Vindhyan Plateau. In all, states namely Himachal Pradesh,

Conference on Landslides Risk Reduction and Resilience-2019

The aim of Conference is to explore and debate the most recent advances in a discipline. This will be directed towards understanding past and present processes and through different approaches involve in landslide risk reduction and resilience with the following objectives:

- To enhance the understanding of the issues and solutions on governance and administration for landslides risk reduction and resilience
- To discuss about current practices in the landslides risk assessment, mitigation and monitoring technologies for landslide risks and resilience with case examples
- To highlight the environmental and emerging issues in context with urbanization, development and climate change
- To share experiences related to community based landslides risk reduction and resilience
- To disseminate information related to national and local strategies for landslides risk reduction and resilience as well as to develop a network mode roadmap for addressing the gaps by engaging with the institutions, researchers and experts.

The International Conference focused towards landslide risk reduction, understanding and reducing landslide disaster risk, wider and stronger framework for the landslide risk reduction. NIDM will also collaborate with education / training / research institutes under the respective Ministry / Department for organizing trainings, workshops and meetings as well as publication and documentation of materials with focus on various activities related to disaster risk reduction and resilience.

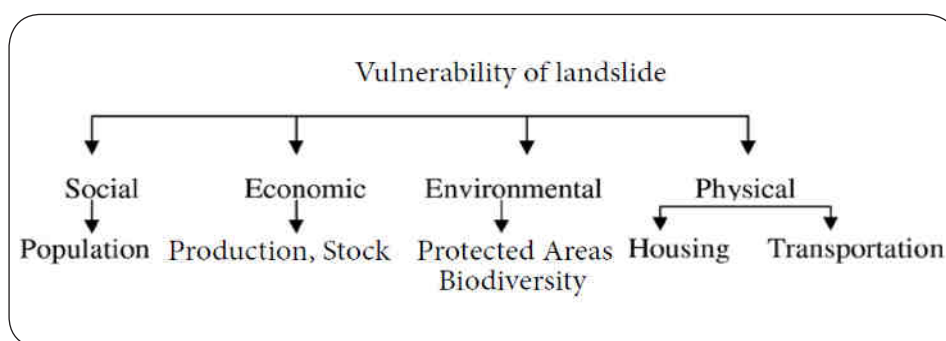
Uttarakhand, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Manipur, Nagaland, Sikkim, Tripura, Kerala, Karnataka, Tamilnadu, Andhra Pradesh, Goa, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and parts of the Union Territories of Puducherry, Jammu & Kashmir,

Ladakh and Andaman & Nicobar Islands of the country are affected by this hazard.

Characteristics of Landslides

Based on failure process and materials involved, landslides are classified in following types:

- Falls:** Landslide is referred as fall when Earth/debris/ rock move down with rapid to extremely rapid movement after detaching from steep slope due to loss of cohesive forces. Free fall if slope exceeds 76 degrees and rolling at or below 45 degrees.
- Slides:** Movement of material along a recognizable shear surface, slides are of two types:
 - Rotational:** When material rolls down the slope due to weakening of cohesive forces, it is termed as Rotational slide.
 - Translational:** When material simply slides down due to fissures or failures in joints, it is termed as Translational slide.
- Topples:** Over end motion of rocks or Earth/debris on a down slope due to disturbance or cracks is known as toppling. Topples range from extremely slow to extremely rapid movements.
- Lateral Spreads:** When cohesive rock or soil mass spreads horizontally over a deforming mass of softer underlying material due to shear or tensile failure it is termed as lateral spread.
- Flows:** When failure transforms the material into a viscous fluid consisting of soil and rock particles suspended in water material, it flows down.
- Creep:** When slope progresses down gradually (often at extremely slow rates) usually a few millimeters per year due to disturbance in material of slope, it is defined as creep.



- Complex:** Combination of one or more of the above mechanisms of landslides is termed as complex as the nature of failure process is not consistent and changes with time.

Causes of Landslides

Slopes are made up of rocks, Earth and debris. When gravity force that drives these materials (in effect to slope angle, climate, slope material and water) to fall exceeds the resistance force that is due to shear strength of material, cohesion and internal friction leads to instability and loosening of the materials. This entire process triggers landslide. The factors responsible for such occurrence are geological and anthropogenic factors.

Geological Factors

- ◆ Weak strength of the materials below the ground surface.
- ◆ Saturation of slope material from rainfall or seepage making it loose.
- ◆ Undercutting of cliffs and banks from wind or water erosion.
- ◆ Vibrations caused by earthquake.
- ◆ Loosening of rock masses from vegetating growth within joints.
- ◆ Failure due to instability of steep slopes as chance of increasing sliding force is more. Slopes greater than 30° are at risk.

Anthropogenic Factors

- ◆ **Construction Practices:** Rapid expansion of settlements and non-engineered building construction in hills increases the load on already deteriorated slopes and no proper measures are taken, giving rise to landslides.

- ◆ **Continuous Horizontal Vibrations** from heavy traffic along the road and blasting or excavation done for construction gradually destabilise the slopes.
- ◆ **Drainage Problems:** No proper drainage of water makes it accumulate in soil and increases underground water and pore water pressure. This decreases the strength of soil making it vulnerable to slide and also increase in groundwater puts pressure on foundation of buildings.
- ◆ **Deforestation:** Clearing vegetation makes the soil vulnerable to erosion and loss of cohesive forces (forces that bind the soil together) as roots of trees/plants keep the soil in place and also maintains water in soil.
- ◆ **Erosion:** Erosion is a natural process caused by wind, water and many other external forces, but due to deforestation, construction and agricultural practices, soil gets more vulnerable to erosion.
- ◆ **Mining:** Blasting done for mining produce vibrations affecting soil particles making the slope unstable.

Effect of Earthquake

Earthquake forces shake the ground that sets underlying rock into motion. This motion is communicated to soil cap but the inertia of soil prevents it to respond instantly. Consequently,

- Liquefaction of soil.
- Failure of slope due to loss of pressure of soil on the rock.
- Development of tension cracks.
- Lateral spreading of soil.

Mitigation of Landslides

Landslides can be moderated, if proper measures while construction and before taking up a construction are considered.

Areas where Construction should be Avoided: Before constructing a house, take into account of following areas where construction shall be avoided.

- ◆ Areas where landslides had already taken place.
- ◆ Developed hillsides where leach field septic systems/drain fields are used.
- ◆ In or at the base of minor drainage hollows.
- ◆ At the base or top of an old fill slope and steep cut slope.

Check for Slope Failure: Before constructing a house on slopes one should always consult a professional, such as a Geotechnical Engineer or a Civil Engineer as they can solve slope instability problems effectively owing to site conditions.

Check for Soil Erosion: Instability increases with increasing erosion as it exposes the soil, soil being sensitive to outer forces and reduces its strength resisting deformation.

Check for Rising Ground Water Levels: For slope and soil stability, drainage plays an important role. It helps in reducing the seepage forces and also keeps a check on ground water as increasing ground water leads pressure on building that may lead to failure due to increased forces.

Check for Building Failure: After taking all necessary steps for stability of slope, construction should be done according to Indian standard norms so that the building do not fail.

International Agreements

India's proneness to multiple disasters caused by natural and human induced factors aggravated by climate change

impacts pose many threats and challenges for communities and agencies involved in management of disasters. With the enactment of Disaster Management Act, 2005 and adoption of National Policy on Disaster Management 2009, Government of India has established improved institutional arrangements and Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) mechanisms to deal with any threatening disaster situation or disaster.

In view of challenges caused by landslides, the 'National Landslide Risk Mitigation Project' (NLRMP) has been proposed to be launched. It aims at strengthening the structural and non-structural landslide mitigation efforts, reducing the landslide risk and vulnerability in the hilly districts prone to

landslides and mud flows and minimise the risks arising out of disasters in landslides. NDMA has been entrusted to prepare Detailed Project Report (DPR) on Landslide Mitigation Project and is in the process of appointing consultants to conduct a study and prepare DPR after defining the scope of work in consultation with all the stakeholders.

In the year 2015, government of India has adopted three landmark international agreements having bearing on disaster management:

- ◆ Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (SFDRR) in March 2015;
- ◆ Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (2015-30) in September 2015; and
- ◆ Paris Agreement on Climate Change at the 21st Conference of Parties (COP 21), under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in December 2015.

These international agreements should not be seen in isolation. A sustainable development needs to be disaster resilient and be adaptive

to climate change impacts. Keeping this in mind the revised plan has put special emphasis on establishing coherence between the three international agreements with special consideration to Ten Point Agenda on DRR, enunciated by Prime Minister during Asian Ministerial Conference on DRR (AMCDRR) in November 2016 in New Delhi. This will help all concerned stakeholders in central government as well as in States and UTs in striving to achieve the national goals.

Way Forward

In order to reduce the enormous destructive potential of landslides and to minimise the consequential losses, it is necessary that the hazard must first be recognised, the risk analysed and an appropriate strategy developed at the national level to mitigate its impact. Further, to minimise the incidences and impacts of landslides, the importance of the individual level in extenuation has to be realised and collective synergized steps can be followed easily or brought into action through authorities, planners and developers.

There are various materials used for construction purposes in hilly areas, but the most important part is following the proper steps for construction so that it could prove to be beneficial in the long run and, particularly when disaster strikes. There are some basic things that can be observed before landslides and acts as a warning signs for the individuals. Some do's and don'ts especially for the people living in hilly areas can be followed in pre, during and post landslide phases.

General Studies Paper- III

Topic: Disaster and disaster management.



SEVEN SUBJECTIVE QUESTIONS WITH MODEL ANSWERS

1. Increasing Incidents of Sexual Abuse in India : A Matter of National Shame

Q. Despite several laws and constitutional provisions, rape is a serious issue in India. Discuss the reasons behind it.

Hints:

- ◆ The incidents of rapes, molestation, gender-based discrimination and other such atrocities against women have, unfortunately, become routine media headlines. There have been constitutional and statutory provisions to ensure that the women are not subjected to any kind of discrimination and harassment but there is an alarming trend indicating that the things are getting worse amounting to violation of right to life, liberty, dignity and equality of women across the country.
- ◆ Our society is still finding it difficult to accept even the basics of gender equality. We still have very high rates of child marriage, teenage pregnancy, and domestic violence including marital rape. The notion that women are less important is deeply rooted in the minds of common people. This proves to be endemic because it leads to male superiority in the sense that women are there to serve men.
- ◆ Indians generally are not comfortable talking about sexuality, reproductive rights, menstruation or sexual desire – anywhere – whether it is our home or our classroom or the workplace. Some small changes in adolescent education and even earlier in primary school might address the root cause of the problem. But our governments and society outrightly discard this because they hold the notion that sexual education equals to encouraging sex.
- ◆ A lot of water swept under, while women are still considered as an object of desire and their role in family and society was extremely filtered through the lens of patriarchy. This humiliating and stereotype mindset is needed to be changed. There is need to effectively address the core issue as this serious challenge has not only created an atmosphere of fear and uncertainty in our society but has also badly tarnishing the image of our country.

2. The Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019

Q. The Parliament has passed the 'Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019, but transgender community unhappy with that. Discuss.

Hints:

- ◆ The Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019 passed by the Parliament, was much awaited by the transgender community. However, the transgender community termed the day as 'Gender Justice Murder Day'.
- ◆ Activists pointed out that it is inappropriate to include the intersex community in the definition of transgenders, which the Act does, as not all intersex people identify themselves as trans-people. It dilutes their rights.
- ◆ While the Act is progressive in that it allows self-perception of identity, it mandates a certificate from a district magistrate declaring the holder to be transgender. This goes against the principle of self-determination itself, activists argue, also pointing out that there is no room for redress in case an appeal for such a certificate is rejected. One long-pending demand has been to declare forced, unnecessary and non-consensual sex reassignment surgery illegal, and to enforce punitive action for violations.
- ◆ The penalty for rape is just six months to two years when it is life imprisonment for raping a woman. Even endangering their life is punishable by a maximum of two years in prison.
- ◆ Overall, the Act lacks the how part. Their right to residence, the prohibition of discrimination, inclusive education, livelihood, protection at the workplace, and healthcare are discussed but how it will happen is missing.
- ◆ The transgender community is one of the disadvantaged groups and without their inclusion in the development efforts; the objective of inclusive growth cannot be fully realised.

3. Governor's Office in India : Continuance of Conflicts

Q. Governor should imbibe constitutional morality, in simple terms, means that she/he would exercise the discretion conferred upon her/him by the framers of the Constitution in all fairness. Discuss the responsibilities of Governor in the light of above phrase.

Hints:

- ◆ The governor's role has become increasingly controversial with allegations of partiality and lack of objectivity in exercise of the discretionary powers. The part played by some Governors, particularly in recommending president's rule and in reserving state bills for the consideration of the President, had evoked strong resentment.
- ◆ It is expected from a Governor that she/he won't misuse the discretion granted to her/him under the Constitution for partisan gains. The constitutional office of Governor cannot be converted to that of a political emissary.
- ◆ Governor should imbibe constitutional morality, in simple terms, means that she/he would exercise the discretion conferred upon her/him by the framers of the Constitution in all fairness. During the framing of the Constitution, Dr Ambedkar had a fear that wherever there will be absence of constitutional morality, there could be misuse of power.
- ◆ In order to prevent the abuse of discretion by a Governor for political motives, it is necessary to institutionalize the procedure to be followed by her/him regarding the formation of government whenever there is a fractured mandate in a State election.

4. Maternal Mortality Rate in India : A Reducing Trend

Q. What is 'Maternal Mortality Rate (MMR)'? Discuss the reasons behind the reducing trend of MMR in India.

Hints:

- ◆ According to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the MMR is defined as the number of maternal deaths during a given time period per 100,000 live births during the same time period. It depicts the risk of maternal death relative to the number of live births and essentially captures the risk of death in a single pregnancy or a single live birth.

- ◆ According to the latest Sample Registration System (SRS) Bulletin 2015-2017, India's Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR) has seen a decline from 130 per 1 lakh live births in 2014-2016 to 122 per 1 lakh live births in 2015-2017.
- ◆ First, India has made a concerted push to increase access to quality maternal health services. Since 2005, coverage of essential maternal health services has doubled, while the proportion of institutional deliveries in public facilities has almost tripled, from 18% in 2005 to 52% in 2016 (including private facilities, institutional deliveries now stand at 79%).
- ◆ Third, India has put significant emphasis on mitigating the social determinants of maternal health. Women in India are more literate than ever, with 68% now able to read and write. They are also entering marriage at an older age, with just 27% now wedded before the age of 18. These factors alone have enabled Indian women to better control their reproductive lives and make decisions that reflect their own interests and wants.
- ◆ Overall, focus on quality and coverage of health services through public health initiatives under the 'National Health Mission' such as 'Labour Room Quality Improvement Initiative' (LaQshya), 'Poshan Abhiyan', 'Pradhan Mantri Surakshit Matritva Abhiyan', 'Janani Shishu Suraksha Karyakram', 'Janani Suraksha Yojana' and 'Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana' have contributed to this decline. India is now committed to ensuring that not a single mother or newborn dies due to a preventable cause and move towards zero preventable maternal and newborn deaths through the recently launched 'Surakshit Matritva Aashwasan Initiative (SUMAN)'.

5. Rural Education in India : An Overview

Q. If a country's rural education sector is working well, it reflects on the entire economic state of a country. Discuss it in context of present status of rural education in India.

Hints:

- ◆ As per Census 2011, literacy rate in rural areas was around 68 per cent while it was 84 per cent in urban areas. Furthermore, only 59 per cent of rural women were estimated to be literate as compared to nearly 80 per cent urban women being literate in 2011.
- ◆ In rural areas, the major reason for 'never-enrolment' for persons of ages 5-29 years was 'not interested in

education' (33 per cent male and 27 per cent female) while in urban areas, nearly 33 per cent males and 30 per cent females in the age group of 5-29 years never enrolled because of 'financial constraints'.

- ◆ According to the Ministry of Human Resource Development, literacy in rural areas was 64.7 per cent as opposed to 79.5 per cent in urban areas in 2018. The rural areas are struggling with the objective of imparting education because there is a paucity of schools. Moreover, poor transportation and connectivity further compound the problem. So parents are unable to send their children to schools. This acts as a huge obstacle to education.
- ◆ Talking about literacy, level of education is not only a reflection of the level of development attained by a society but in turn it also gives impetus to growth and modernization of the society. As a result, promoting rural education becomes a prime objective of the government to ensure an overall balance in development.

6. Quad : Advocating a Free and Open Indo-Pacific

Q. Critically discuss why 'Quad' is advocating a free and open Indo-Pacific.

Hints:

- ◆ The Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QSD), better known as the 'Quad', started as a strategic dialogue in 2007. The dialogue members included India, the US, Australia and Japan. It was established to check the growth of Chinese power in what was still referred to as 'Asia-Pacific', and which has since become 'Indo-Pacific'.
- ◆ The shift in the epicenter of global politics from the trans-Atlantic to the Indo-Pacific marked by America's relative decline and the rise of China has significant geopolitical implications for the region.
- ◆ Meanwhile, China's hegemonic designs are a growing cause of concern for countries like India, Japan, Vietnam, the Philippines, and other Asian states. Beijing is using its enhanced military capabilities to pressure neighboring countries by asserting its territorial claims. Its transgressions in Doklam and India's Arunachal Pradesh, constantly pressuring Japan over Senkaku islands (referred by China as Diaoyu islands),

threatening Vietnam over drilling oil in the areas of South China Sea, and blatantly ignoring the 2016 verdict favoring the Philippines on the South China Sea exemplify this drive towards a unilateral assertion of interests. China's rhetoric about its peaceful rise isn't convincing anyone anymore.

- ◆ The economic good emanating from China's rise has quickly turned into a security threat. China's aggressive behavior over the last decade led to the revival of the Quad 2.0 on the sidelines of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) summit in Manila in 2017. All the four countries in their separate briefings emphasized, among other things, the free and open Indo-Pacific, a rules-based order, freedom of navigation and respect for international law, and maritime security, all code words for managing China.

7. Conference on Landslides Risk Reducation and Resilience-2019

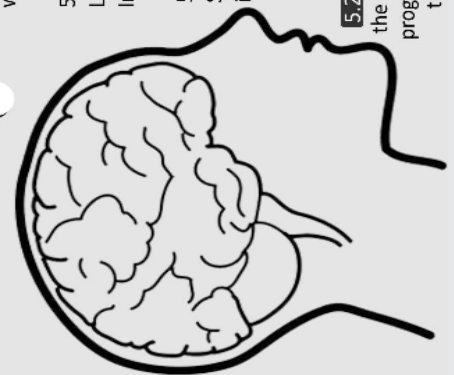
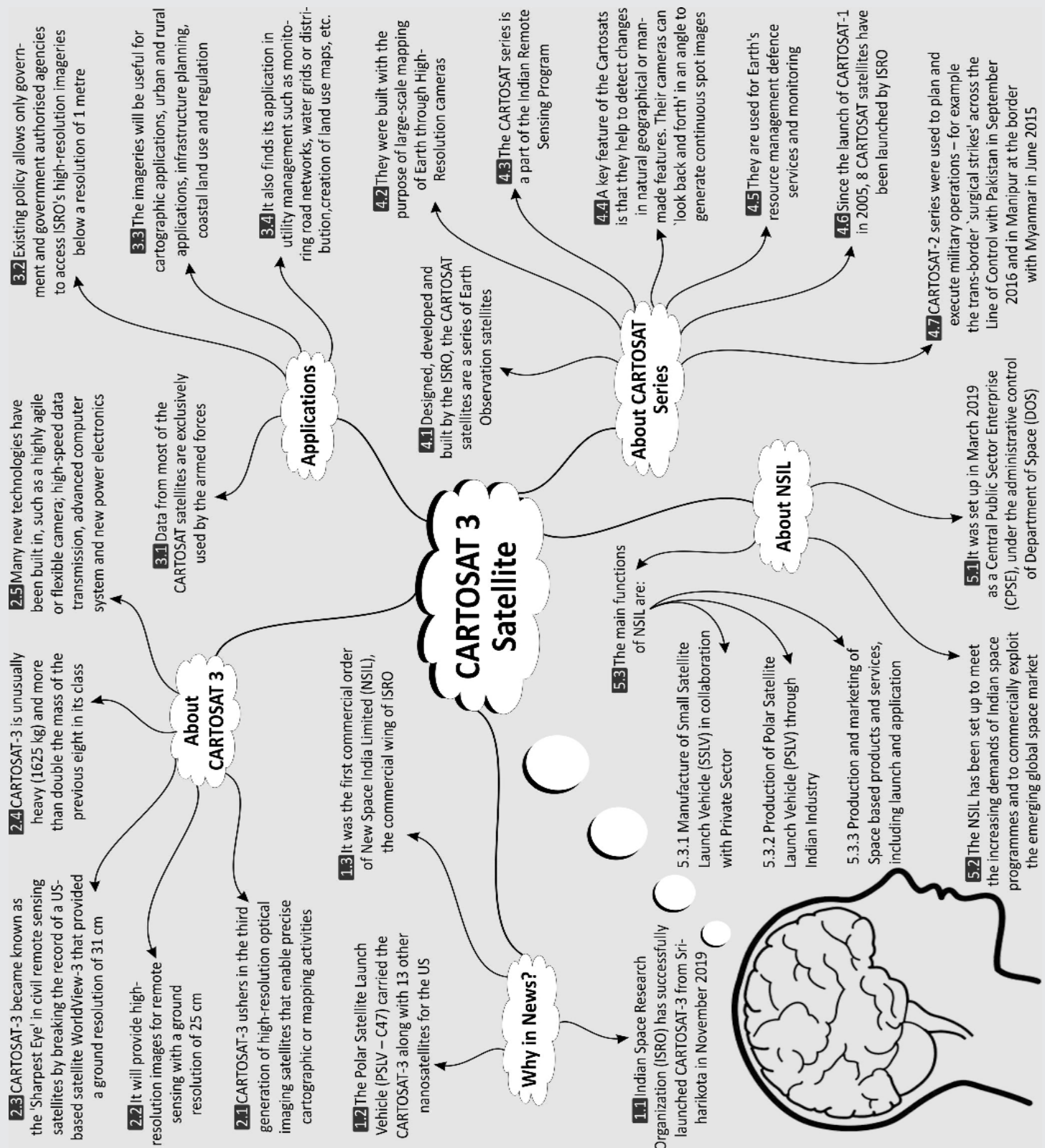
Q. Landslides are among the major hydro-geological hazards that affect large parts of India. Discuss the reasons behind it.

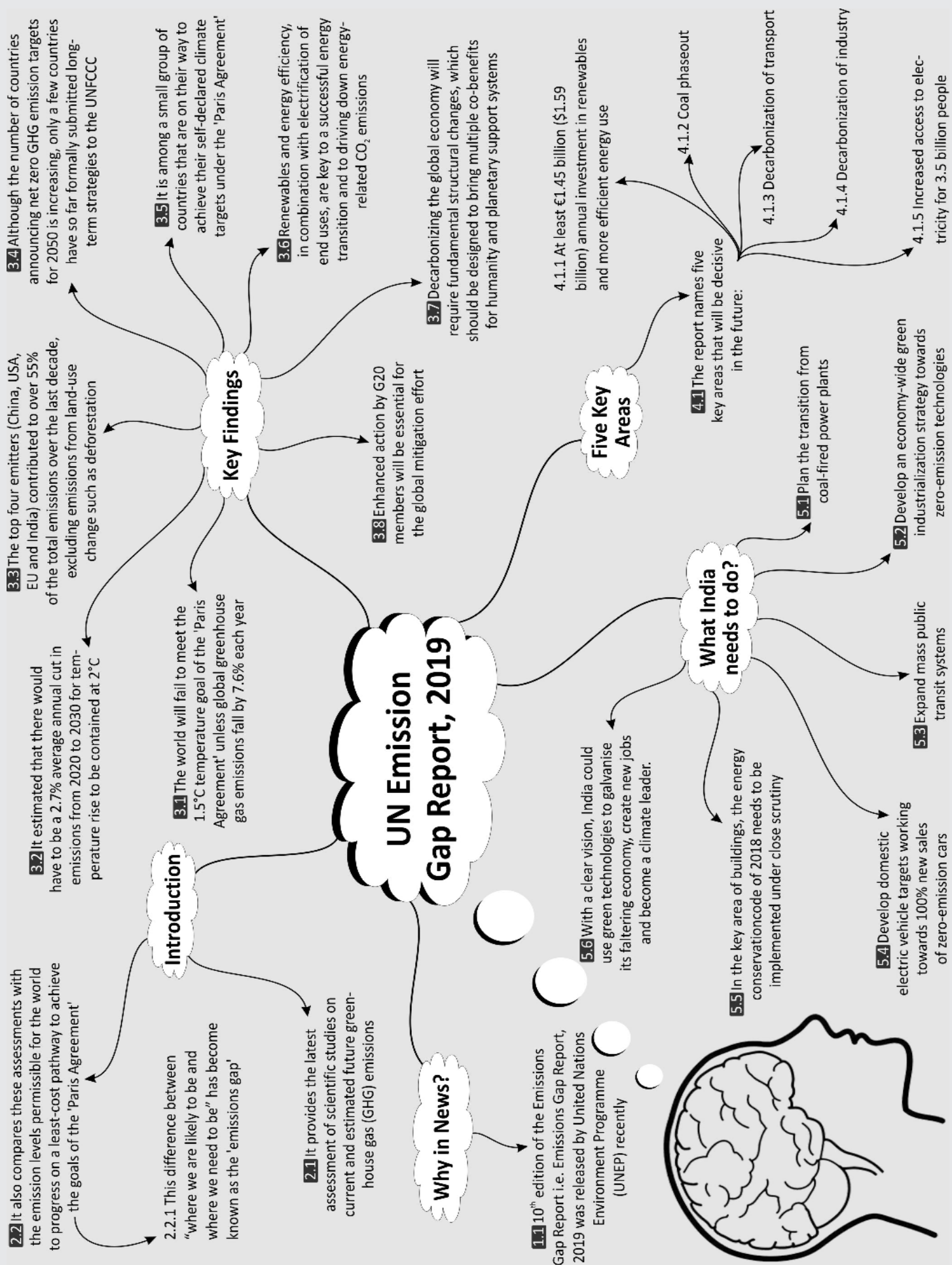
Hints:

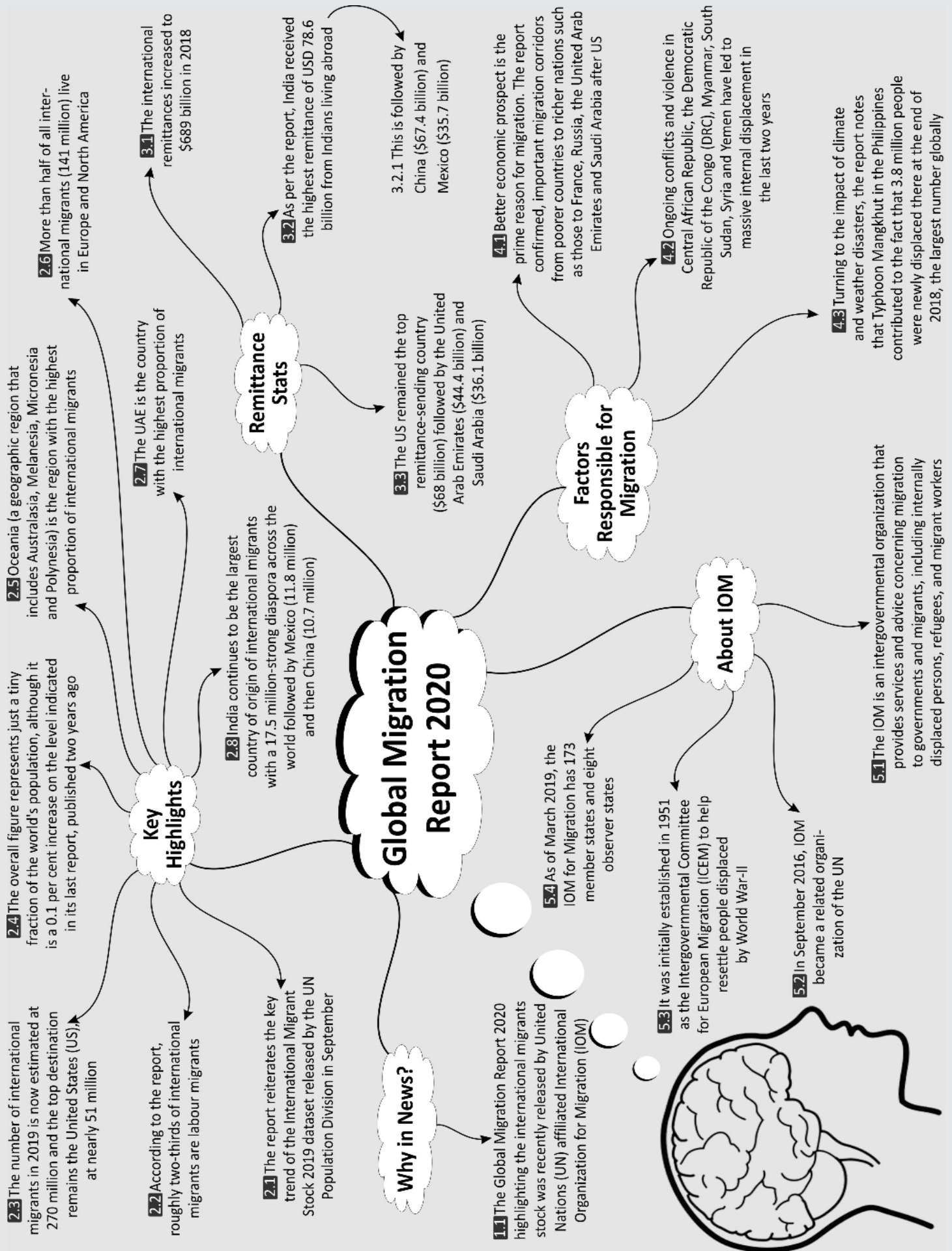
- ◆ When slope forming materials that constitute mass of rock, debris or Earth, moves downwards and outwards, under the influence of gravity and triggered by various factors, it is termed as landslide.
- ◆ Landslides are among the major hydro-geological hazards that affect large parts of India, especially in the Himalaya, the northeastern hill ranges, the Western Ghats, the Nilgiris, the Eastern Ghats and the Vindhyas.
- ◆ Landslides mostly occur in areas having unstable slope i.e., a surface having one end or side at a higher level than another. They often take place in conjunction with heavy rainfall, earthquakes, floods, cloud burst, mining, excavation, erosion or with loading/unloading of slopes.
- ◆ Slopes are made up of rocks, Earth and debris. When gravity force that drives these materials (in effect to slope angle, climate, slope material and water) to fall exceeds the resistance force that is due to shear strength of material, cohesion and internal friction leads to instability and loosening of the materials. This entire process triggers landslide.

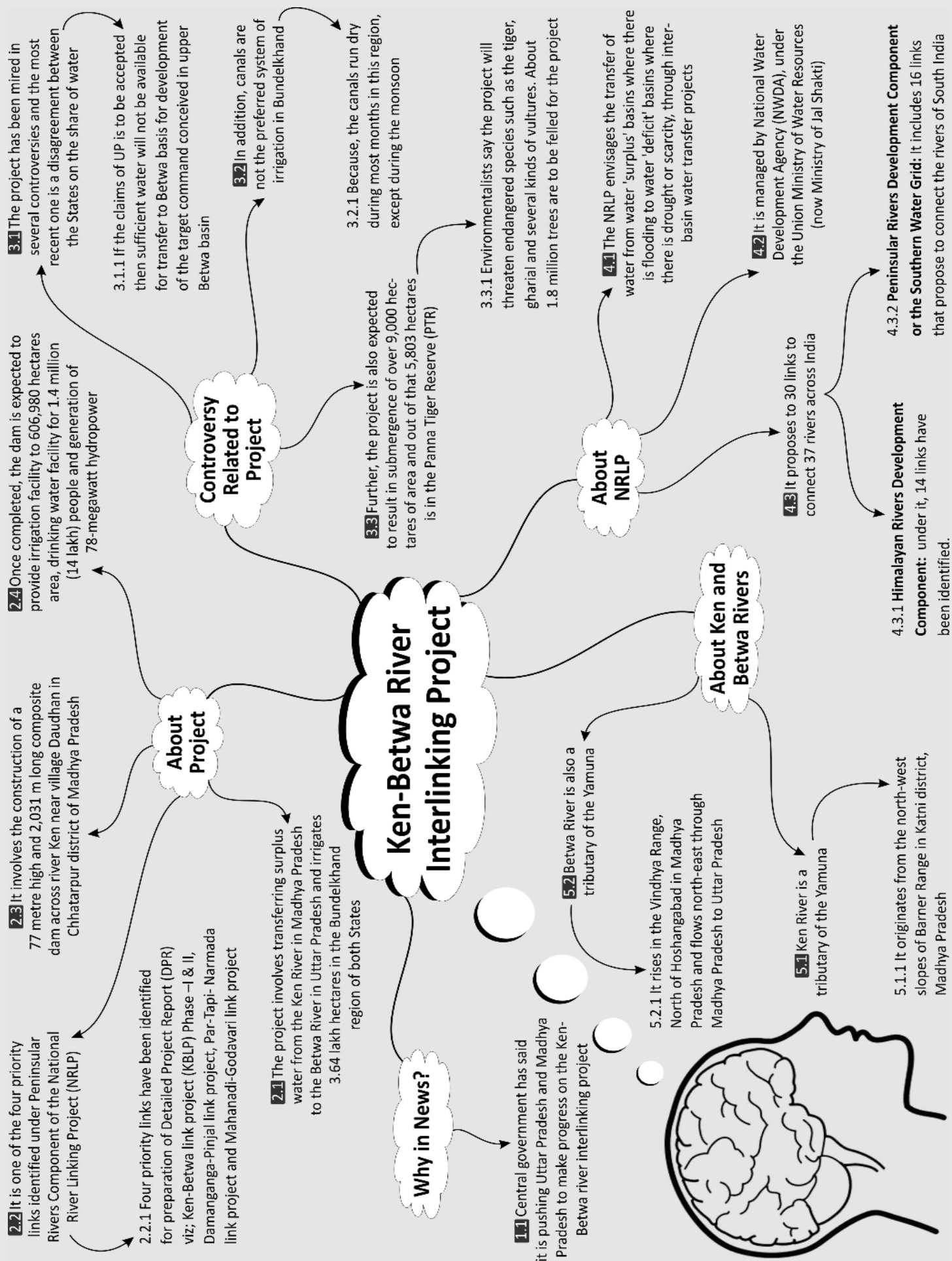


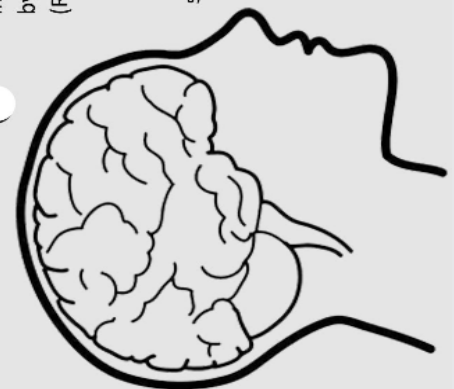
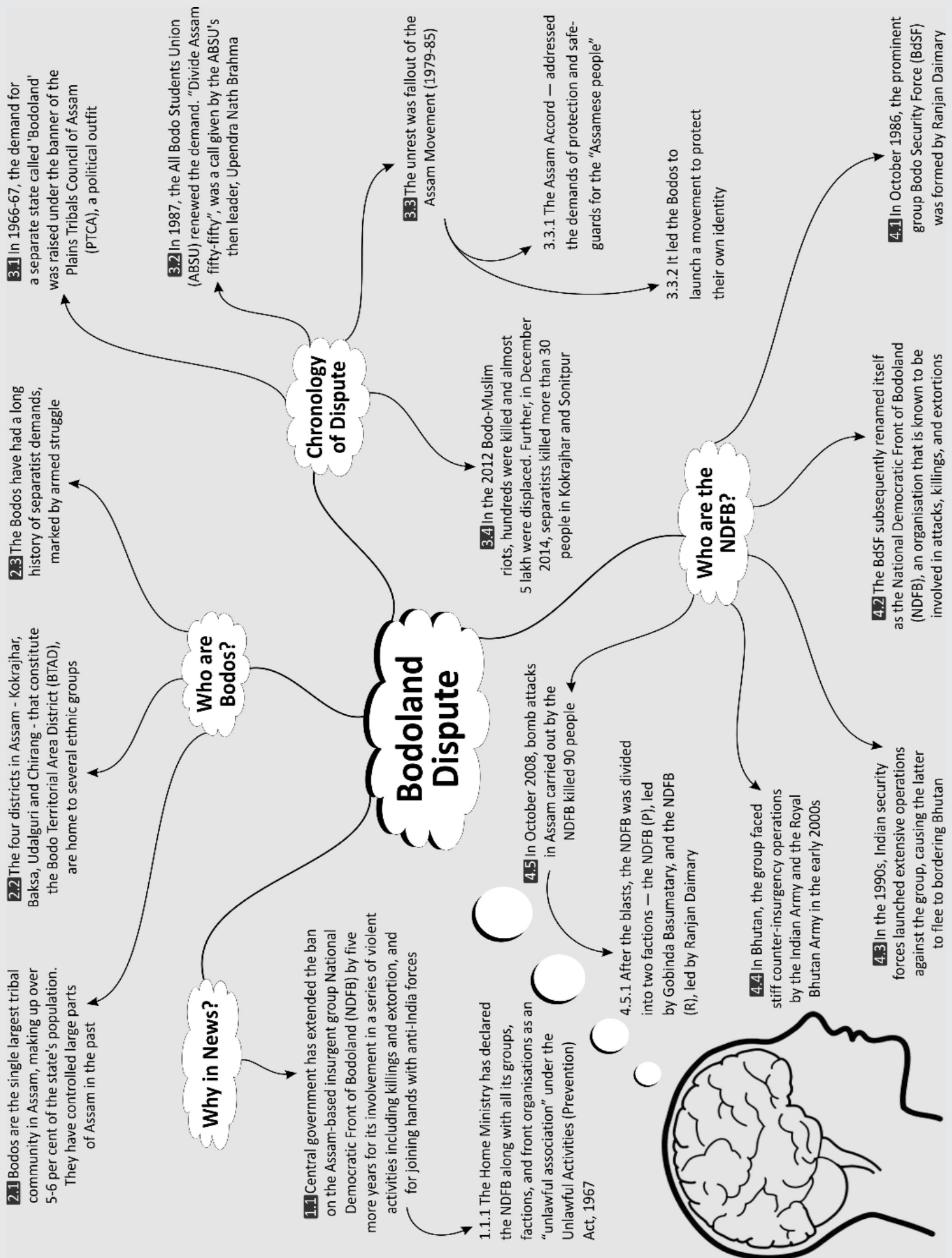
SEVEN BRAIN BOOSTERS

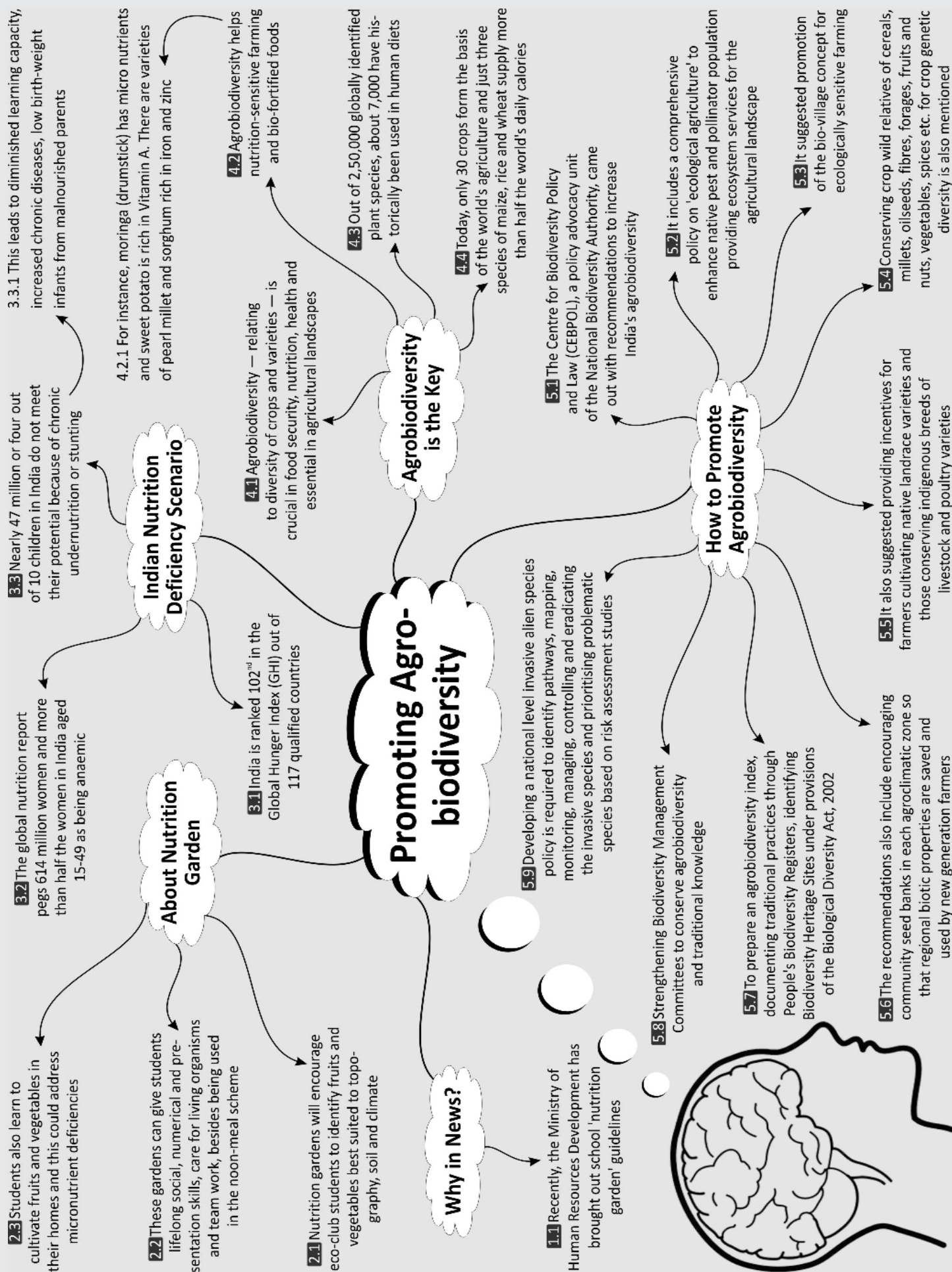


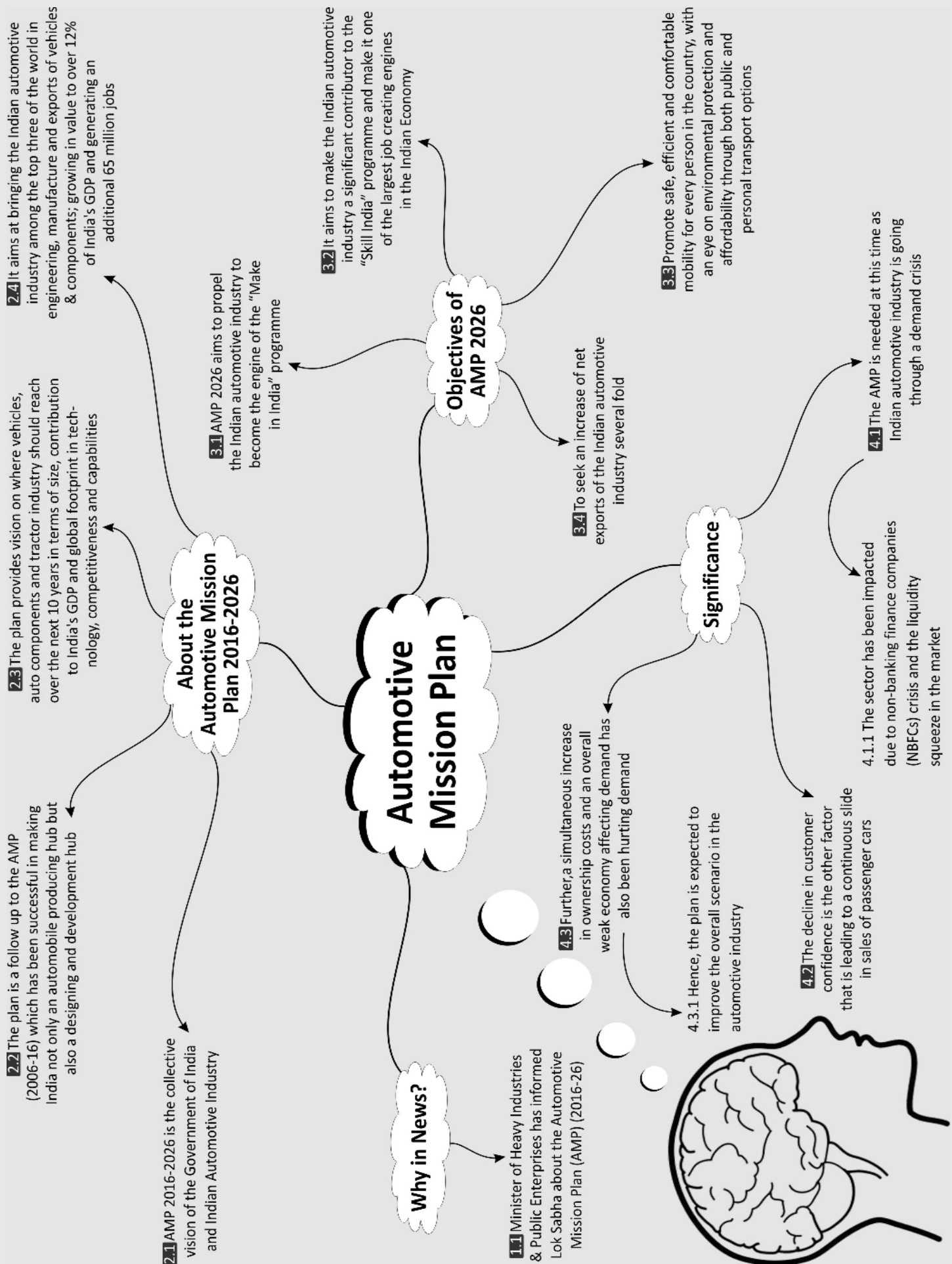












SEVEN MCQ's WITH EXPLANATORY ANSWERS

(Based on Brain Boosters)

1. CARTOSAT 3 Satellite

Q. Consider the following statements with respect of 'CARTOSAT-3':

1. CARTOSAT-3 is an Earth observation remote sensing satellite.
2. The imageries of this satellite will be useful for cartographic applications, urban and rural applications, infrastructure planning, coastal land use and regulation.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 only b) 2 only
c) Both 1 and 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer: (c)

Explanation: Both statements are correct. CARTOSAT-3 ushers in the third generation of high-resolution 'optical imaging' satellites that enable precise cartographic or mapping activities. It will provide high-resolution images for remote sensing with a ground resolution of 25 cm. The Cartosat series is a part of the Indian Remote Sensing Program.

Further, the imageries will be useful for cartographic applications, urban and rural applications, infrastructure planning, coastal land use and regulation.

2. UN Emission Gap Report, 2019

Q. With reference to the 'Emissions Gap Report, 2019', consider the following statements:

1. It has been jointly released by the World Bank and United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).
2. The difference between "where we are likely to be and where we need to be" has become known as the 'emissions gap'.
3. The top four emitters (China, USA, EU and India) contributed to over 55% of the total emissions over the last decade.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 and 2 only b) 2 and 3 only
c) 1 and 3 only d) 1, 2 and 3

Answer: (b)

Explanation: Statement 1 is not correct. 10th edition of the Emissions Gap Report i.e. Emissions Gap Report, 2019 was released by United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

Statement 2 and 3 are correct. It compares the emission levels permissible for the world to progress on a least-cost pathway to achieve the goals of the 'Paris Agreement'. This difference between "where we are likely to be and where we need to be" has become known as the 'emissions gap'. The top four emitters (China, USA, EU and India) contributed to over 55% of the total emissions over the last decade, excluding emissions from land-use change such as deforestation.

3. Global Migration Report 2020

Q. Consider the following statements with respect of 'Global Migration Report 2020':

1. It has been released by International Labour Organisation (ILO).
2. India received the highest remittance of USD 78.6 billion from Indians living abroad.
3. India also continues to be the largest country of origin of international migrants with a 17.5 million-strong diaspora across the world.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 and 2 only b) 2 and 3 only
c) 1 only d) 1, 2 and 3

Answer: (b)

Explanation: Statement 1 is not correct. The Global Migration Report 2020 highlighting the international migrants stock was recently released by UN-affiliated International Organization for Migration (IOM).

Statement 2 and 3 are correct. As per the report, India received the highest remittance of USD 78.6 billion from Indians living abroad. This is followed by China (\$67.4 billion) and Mexico (\$35.7 billion).

India continues to be the largest country of origin of international migrants with a 17.5 million-strong diaspora across the world followed by Mexico (11.8 million) and then China (10.7 million).

4. Ken-Betwa River Interlinking Project

Q. Consider the following statements with respect of 'Ken-Betwa river interlinking project':

1. The project will be built in Bundelkhand, the region straddling Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh.
2. Both rivers are the tributary of the Ganga River and originate in Uttar Pradesh.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer: (a)

Explanation: Statement 1 is correct. The project will be built in Bundelkhand, the region straddling Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh.

Statement 2 is not correct. Both rivers are the tributary of the Yamuna. Ken River originates from the north-west slopes of Barner Range in Katni district, Madhya Pradesh. And Betwa River rises in the Vindhya Range, North of Hoshangabad in Madhya Pradesh and flows north-east through Madhya Pradesh to Uttar Pradesh.

5. Bodoland Dispute

Q. Consider the following statements:

1. The Bodos have had a long history of demand for a separate state called 'Bodoland'.
2. Bodos are the single largest tribal community in Arunachal Pradesh, making up over 5-6 per cent of the state's population.
3. The Ministry of Home Affairs has declared the National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB) as an "unlawful association" under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) 1 and 2 only
- c) 2 and 3 only
- d) 1 and 3 only

Answer: (d)

Explanation: Statement 1 is correct. The Bodos have had a long history of separatist demands, marked by armed struggle. In 1966-67, the demand for a separate state called 'Bodoland' was raised under the banner of the Plains Tribals Council of Assam (PTCA), a political outfit.

Statement 2 is not correct. Bodos are the single largest tribal community in Assam, making up over 5-6 per cent of the state's population. The four districts in Assam — Kokrajhar, Baksa, Udalguri and Chirang — that constitute the Bodo Territorial Area District (BTAD), are home to several ethnic groups.

Statement 3 is correct. The Ministry of Home Affairs has declared the National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB) as an "unlawful association" under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967.

6. Promoting Agrobiodiversity

Q. Consider the following statements:

1. Agrobiodiversity — relating to diversity of crops and varieties — is crucial in food security, nutrition, health and essential in agricultural landscapes.
2. Agrobiodiversity helps nutrition-sensitive farming and bio-fortified foods.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer: (c)

Explanation: Both statements are correct. Agrobiodiversity — relating to diversity of crops and varieties — is crucial in food security, nutrition, health and essential in agricultural landscapes. Agrobiodiversity helps nutrition-sensitive farming and bio-fortified foods. For instance, moringa (drumstick) has micro nutrients and sweet potato is rich in Vitamin A. There are varieties of pearl millet and sorghum rich in iron and zinc.

7. Automotive Mission Plan

Q. Consider the following statements with respect of 'Automotive Mission Plan (2016-26)':

1. Automotive Mission Plan (AMP) 2016-2026 is the collective vision of the NITI Aayog and Indian automotive industry.
2. It aims to make the Indian automotive industry a significant contributor to the "Skill India" programme and make it one of the largest job creating engines in the Indian Economy.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer: (b)

Explanation: Statement 1 is not correct. Automotive Mission Plan (AMP) 2016-2026 is the collective vision of the Government of India and Indian automotive industry.

Statement 2 is correct. It aims to make the Indian Automotive Industry a significant contributor to the "Skill India" programme and make it one of the largest job creating engines in the Indian Economy.



SEVEN IMPORTANT FACTS FOR PRELIMS

1. Which party has recently got the status of a 'State Party' and "Key" as reserved symbol?

–Jannayak Janta Party (Haryana)

2. Which player has unofficially hit a world record score in the men's skeet final at the 63rd National Shooting Championships for Shotgun?

–Angad Vir Singh Bajwa

3. Who authored the book "The Legacy of Militancy in Punjab: Long Road to Normalcy"?

–Inderjit Singh Jaijee and Dona Suri

4. Which noted poet has been chosen for the 55th Jnanpith Award?

–Malayalam Poet Akkitham

5. Which international organisation has declared a global 'climate and environmental emergency'?

–The European Union

6. Who has been awarded the 'International Children's Peace Prize for the year 2019'?

–Greta Thunberg (16)

7. Which organisations will develop 'Gandhipedia', a one-stop portal for browsing Gandhian literature, life-events and his social network?

**–IIT Kharagpur along with National Council of Science
Museums and IIT Gandhinagar**

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SEVEN PRACTICE QUESTIONS FOR MAINS EXAM

1. Tackling air pollution requires a holistic approach, not scapegoating farmers. Discuss it in context of air pollution in northern India.
2. Secularism is caught in a crisis not because it is irrelevant, but because it is subjected to rank overuse and invested with too many expectations. Do you agree? Discuss.
3. What is meant by the term 'constitutional morality'? How does one uphold constitutional morality?
4. What do you understand by Gross Domestic Product (GDP)? Why it matters for any country's economy?
5. From trade to geopolitical significance, it is time for India to look again at Mauritius. Discuss.
6. What are the reformative steps taken by the Government to make food grain distribution system more effective?
7. Can the strategy of regional resource-based manufacturing help in promoting employment in India?

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SEVEN IMPORTANT NEWS

1. Saudi Arabia assumed G20 Presidency

Saudi Arabia has become the first Arab nation to take over the G20 presidency as it seeks to bounce back onto the world stage following global uproar over its human rights record.

Key Highlights

The G20 presidency, which Saudi Arabia takes over from Japan, will see it host world leaders for a global summit in its capital on November 21-22, 2020.

Saudi Arabia will guide the work of the G20 under the theme of "Realising Opportunities of the 21st Century for All" and will focus on three aims -- empowering people, safeguarding the planet, and shaping new frontiers. The oil-rich kingdom has promoted a

liberalisation drive, including granting greater rights to women, but faced strong criticism over a crackdown on dissent and the murder last year of journalist Jamal Khashoggi. Rights groups have urged G20 member states to exert pressure on the kingdom over its intensifying crackdown on dissent, which has seen several women activists, journalists and political dissidents jailed.

About G20

G20 countries make up about two-thirds of the global population, 85 per cent of its gross domestic product



and over 75 per cent of trade. The G20 grouping includes the US and UK, four of the leading economies in the EU, China, Japan, India, South Korea, Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Indonesia, Mexico, Russia, South Africa, Turkey, France, Germany, Saudi Arabia and Italy. ■

2. India Corruption Survey 2019

An independent survey which was conducted by Transparency International India (TII) and Local Circles, has been released recently.

Key Highlights

- ◆ Incidents of bribery in the country have reduced by 10 per cent since last year.
- ◆ People in Delhi, Haryana, Gujarat, West Bengal, Kerala, Goa and Odisha reported low instances of corruption, while Rajasthan, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Telangana, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Jharkhand and Punjab had higher occurrences of corruption.

- ◆ Gujarat is one of the least corrupt states in the country.
- ◆ According to the survey, 78% people in Rajasthan said they had to bribe to get their work done. Whereas Goa, Odisha, Kerala, and Haryana are among the least corrupt states.
- ◆ Thirty-five per cent of the respondents said they gave cash as bribe in the last 12 months to get their work done, it stated and added that 16 per cent said they always managed to get their work done without paying bribes.
- ◆ Though CCTV cameras are a slight deterrent, bribery still continues

in government offices despite major computerisation and agents continue to thrive.

- ◆ The highest number of incidents of bribery were in authorities involved in property registration and land issues.
- ◆ The survey also shows that most state governments have been unable to take concrete and effective steps to reduce corruption. The percentage of citizens who felt that no effective steps have been taken was 48 per cent.

3. Center approved 3.31 lakh more Houses under PMAY(U)

The 49th Meeting of the Central Sanctioning and Monitoring Committee (CSMC) under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban) has approved 606 proposals from participating states for the construction of 3,31,075 houses with an overall investment of Rs. 15,125 Cr. involving central assistance of Rs. 5,092 Cr. This includes six Light Houses Projects (LHPs) for construction of 6368 houses to be built across 6 States namely Gujarat (1,144), Jharkhand (1,008), Madhya Pradesh (1,024), Tamil Nadu (1,152), Tripura (1,000) and Uttar Pradesh (1040).

The number of houses approved by the CSMC are in Andhra Pradesh

(2,58,648), Karnataka (30,777), Madhya Pradesh (15,245), Gujarat (13,805), Maharashtra (4,691) & Uttarakhand (1,541). The state of Andhra Pradesh has proposed the largest number of new houses and is now the leading state with the highest ever cumulative sanctions for 16,34,748 houses followed by Uttar Pradesh with 14,53,989 houses under the PMAY(U) Mission.

The proposal received are under Beneficiary Led Construction or Enhancement (BLC) and Affordable Housing Project (AHP) verticals of the scheme. The houses proposed under Light Houses Projects (LHPs)

will be constructed by using new and innovative technologies and will serve as live laboratories for research, testing, technology transfer, increasing mass awareness and for mainstreaming them in the country.

Background

As on date, PMAY(U) Mission has sanctioned more than 96.50 Lakh houses under PMAY(U) against the validated demand of 1.12 crore houses. A total of 56 Lakh houses are grounded for construction of which 28.4 Lakh have been completed.

4. Survey of Persons with Disabilities

Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation has released the Survey of Persons with Disabilities. It was conducted by the National Statistical Office (NSO). The main objective of the survey was to estimate indicators of incidence and prevalence of disability, cause of disability, age at onset of disability, facilities available to the persons with disability, difficulties faced by persons with disability in accessing/using public building/public transport, arrangement of regular care giver, out-of pocket expenses relating to disability, etc.

Key Highlights

- ◆ Overall percentage of persons with disability in the population was 2.2 per cent during July 2018 to

December 2018 in the country.

- ◆ In India, prevalence of disability (percentage of persons with disability in the population) was 2.2 per cent - with 2.3 per cent in rural and 2 per cent in urban areas. Prevalence of disability was higher among males than females.
- ◆ Among persons with disabilities of age 7 years and above, 52.2 per cent were literate.
- ◆ Among persons with disabilities of age 15 years and above, 19.3 per cent had highest educational level as secondary and above.
- ◆ Among persons with disabilities of age 3 to 35 years, 10.1 per cent attended pre-school intervention programme. Percentage of persons

with disabilities of age 3 to 35 years, who were ever enrolled in ordinary school, was 62.9 per cent.

- ◆ Percentage of persons with disabilities living alone was 3.7 per cent, while 62.1 per cent had care giver. About 21.8 per cent had received aid/help from government, and another 1.8 per cent had received aid/help from organisations other than government.
- ◆ Among persons with disabilities of age 15 years and above, Labour Force Participation Rate in usual status was 23.8 per cent, the survey said adding that for these aged 15 years and above, it was 22.8 per cent.

5. International Day for the Abolition of Slavery 2019

International Day for the Abolition of Slavery is celebrated every year on December 2. The focus of the day is to strengthen efforts to eradicate contemporary forms of slavery (modern

day slavery), such as "trafficking in persons, sexual exploitation, the worst forms of child labor, forced marriage and the forced recruitment of children for use in armed conflict.

Key Highlights

According to the International Labour Organisation (ILO) an estimated 40.3 million people are in modern slavery, including 24.9 in forced labour and

15.4 million in forced marriage. Although modern slavery is not defined in law, it is used as an umbrella term covering practices such as forced labour, debt bondage, forced marriage, and human trafficking. Essentially, it refers to situations of exploitation that a person cannot refuse or leave because of threats, violence, coercion, deception, and/or abuse of power. In addition, more than 150 million children are subject to child labour, accounting for almost one in ten children around the world.

Out of the 24.9 million people trapped in forced labour, 16 million

people are exploited in the private sector such as domestic work, construction or agriculture; 4.8 million people in forced sexual exploitation, and 4 million people in forced labour imposed by state authorities. Women and girls are disproportionately affected by forced labour, accounting for 99% of victims in the commercial sex industry, and 58% in other sectors.

ILO has adopted a new legally binding Protocol designed to strengthen global efforts to eliminate forced labour, which entered into force in November 2016.

The '50 for Freedom' campaign aims to persuade at least 50 countries to ratify the Forced Labour Protocol by the end of 2019.

Background

The day was initiated by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) on 2nd December. The Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others was passed by the Assembly on 2nd December, 1949.

6. Spike Anti-tank Guided Missile

The Indian Army has successfully test-fired two newly-acquired Spike LR (long-range) anti-tank missiles at the Infantry School at Mhow, Madhya Pradesh. As of date, more than 5,000 Spike missiles have been fired worldwide, with the overall hit percentage being more than 95 per cent. India is the 33rd country to have the Spike missile as part of its inventory.

Key Highlights

Spike LR is a fourth generation missile that can engage a target with precision

at ranges up to four km. In addition to fire and forget capability, the missile also has the ability to fire, observe and update, providing substantial flexibility to the firer to pinpoint the impact point, as also the ability to switch to a different target mid-flight, should he want to do so. The firer also has the option to fire from either low or high trajectory.

The missile has an inbuilt seeker, which gives the firer the flexibility to use any of two modes: Day (CCD) and

Night (IIR). The dual seeker adds to the missile's reliability, already established at more than 90 per cent during the field evaluation by the Indian Army in 2011.

Spike-LR can be installed on light combat vehicles and can also be used to target tanks, armoured vehicles, hardened shelters and low flying targets such as helicopters.

7. The Hong Kong Human Rights and Democracy Act

President Donald Trump has signed the Hong Kong Human Rights and Democracy Act, a bill which requires the State Department to ensure that Hong Kong's "one country, two systems" agreement with China is upheld each year for the US government to continue to afford Hong Kong with a special trade status. The Act mandates an annual review, to check if Hong Kong has enough autonomy to justify special status with the US.

Implications

- ◆ The new law requires Washington to monitor Beijing's actions in

Hong Kong. The US could revoke the special trading status it has granted the territory if China undermines the city's rights and freedoms.

- ◆ Among other things, Hong Kong's special status means it is not affected by US sanctions or tariffs placed on the mainland.
- ◆ The Act also said that the US should allow Hong Kong residents to obtain US visas if they have been arrested for being part of non-violent protests.
- ◆ Further, analysts argued that the move could complicate

negotiations between China and America to end their trade war.

Reactions

China's foreign ministry summoned the US ambassador to demand that Washington stops interfering in Chinese internal affairs.

Hong Kong's government also reacted, saying the American bill would send the wrong signal and would not help to ease the situation.

But a key activist in the Hong Kong protest movement, Joshua Wong, said the US law was a "remarkable achievement" for "all Hongkongers". ■

SEVEN IMPORTANT HIGHLIGHTS FROM PIB

1. NuGen Mobility Summit-2019

Recently, International Center of Automotive Technology (ICAT) has organised NuGen Mobility Summit-2019 at ICAT, Manesar in Haryana.

Key Objective

The objective of the Summit was to share new ideas, learnings, global experiences, innovations and future technologies trends for the faster adoption, assimilation and development of advanced automotive technologies for a smarter and greener future.

Significance

Keeping in mind that new generation mobility shall be green, safe and affordable, the theme of this event was around new generation topics

like e-mobility, hydrogen mobility, connected vehicles and ITS.

Experts working with leading international scientific and research organizations and testing laboratories from various parts of the world like USA, Europe, Japan and other Asian countries took part and shared their experiences and knowledge on development of smart and green technologies and the challenges that the industry needs to overcome.

About ICAT

ICAT Manesar is a division of NATRIP Implementation Society (NATIS) under



the Department of Heavy Industries. ICAT provides services for testing, validation, design and homologation of all categories of vehicles and has a mission to assist the automotive industry in adopting cutting edge technologies in vehicle evaluation and component development to ensure reliability, durability and compliance to the current and future regulations in new generation mobility solutions.

2. Exercise Mitra Shakti -VII - 2019

The seventh edition of Exercise Mitra Shakti - 2019 aimed at enhancing interoperability and operational efficiency amongst the armies of both India and Sri Lanka when deployed as part of United Nations (UN) peace

keeping forces has commenced at Aundh Military Station, Pune.

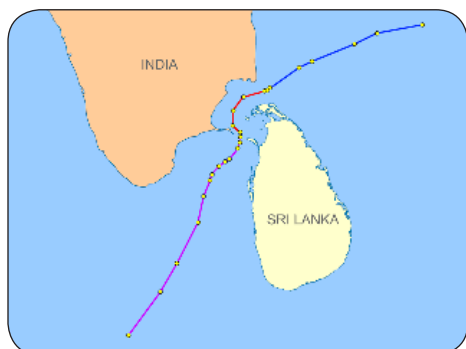
Key Highlights

The objective of the exercise is to build and promote positive relations between armies of India and Sri Lanka through focus on sub unit level training on counter insurgency and counter terrorism operations in urban and rural environment under UN mandate.

The joint training exercise also signifies the strength of India-Sri Lanka relations in the field of military cooperation and engagement, which is

vital for refining the interoperability and operational preparedness. The joint exercise is designed for incorporating the current dynamics of UN peace keeping operations through practical and comprehensive discussions and tactical exercises. The primary focus of the joint training exercise will remain on field craft, battle drills and procedures as also the ability to operate jointly with seamless interoperability.

As member nations of the UN, the participating contingents will gain immensely through joint operability and enhanced military and diplomatic association.



3. Sahyog Sankalp Resolution

The 'Sahyog Sankalp' resolution was adopted during the Regional Conference on 'Ek Bharat Shreshta Bharat' with focus on 'Jal Shakti and Disaster Management'. The conference was organized by the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG) in collaboration with Governments of Tamil Nadu and Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir.

Key Highlights

The Conference resolved that the Government of India and the participating Governments of Tamil

Nadu and the Union Territories of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh shall collaborate to:

Promote unity in diversity envisaged under the 'Ek Bharat - Shreshta Bharat' Programme through enhanced exchange of information in the fields of Jal Shakti and Disaster Management;

Make concerted efforts to resolve mutually concerning issues in the areas of Jal Shakti and Disaster Management through improved monitoring and a deep and structured engagement between the paired governments;

Hold regional conferences throughout the year, alternatively, between the paired governments, on mutually agreed subjects related to Jal Shakti and Disaster Management. The first of these Conferences will be convened in Chennai in 2020 by Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG);

Share technical expertise in the areas of water harvesting, cutting down farm water consumption, preventing urban flooding and rejuvenation of rivers.

4. MoU signed between India and Myanmar

The Union Cabinet has given approval for the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between India and Myanmar on bilateral cooperation for prevention of trafficking in persons; rescue, recovery, repatriation and re-integration of victims of trafficking.

Key Objectives

- ◆ To strengthen the bonds of friendship between the two countries and to increase bilateral cooperation on the issues of prevention, rescue, recovery and repatriation related to human trafficking.
- ◆ Ensure speedy investigation and prosecution of traffickers and

organized crime syndicates in either country.

- ◆ To strengthen immigration and border controls cooperation and implementation of strategies with relevant ministries and organizations to prevent trafficking in persons.
- ◆ Develop and share database on traffickers and victims of trafficking in a safe and confidential manner and exchange information through designated focal points of India and Myanmar
- ◆ Strengthening cooperation between border control agencies and

establishment of direct channels of communication between India and Myanmar can be an effective tool in countering trafficking in persons and promoting cross-border and regional cooperation.

Background

Human trafficking has national as well as international ramifications. The complex nature of human trafficking calls for a multidimensional strategy in tackling it at domestic, regional and international level. Being global in scope, international cooperation and collaboration is essential to check trafficking in persons.

5. MoUs signed between India and Saudi Arabia

The Union Cabinet has given ex-post facto approval for the Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs) between India and Saudi Arabia in the field of combating illicit trafficking and smuggling of narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and chemical precursors.

Key Benefits

The MoU shall facilitate and enhance the cooperation between the two

countries in combating illicit trafficking and smuggling of narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and chemical precursors, as defined by the United Nations international Drug Control Conventions.

Under the MoU, there is a provision for the exchange of relevant information as well as methods, identities and suspicious activities of producers, smugglers and traffickers

of narcotic drugs, details of trafficking of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances (NDPS) and Precursors Chemicals on requisitions and financial details of the traffickers arrested on drug related charges.

Under the MoU, there is also a provision for notification of the details of the arrested citizen of the other Party for committing the crime of illicit trafficking or smuggling of narcotic

drugs, psychotropic substances and chemical precursors and consular access to the arrested person.

The MoU also provides for exchange of chemical reports/analysis of narcotic drug, psychotropic substances and chemical precursors seized within the territory of either party and data/information about illegal laboratories of narcotic drugs, psychotropic

substances and chemical precursors and their technical specifications.

Background

Illegal drug trafficking is a global illicit trade. Massive production and circulation of drugs through various convenient routes especially through Afghanistan is paving ways for high consumption of drugs amongst youth

thus creating a negative impact on public health and adding to criminalization of the society. Drug trafficking has also provided funding for insurgency and terrorism in various regions throughout the world. Narco-terrorists and international criminal organizations that thrive on the illegal drug trade now threaten the security of many nations.

6. Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement between India and Chile

The Union Cabinet has approved the signing of the Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement (DTAA) and Protocol between India and Chile for the elimination of double taxation and the prevention of fiscal evasion and avoidance with respect to taxes on income.

Key Highlights

The DTAA will facilitate elimination of double taxation. Clear allocation of taxing rights between contracting states through the agreement will provide tax certainty to investors & businesses of both countries while

augmenting the flow of investment through fixing of tax rates in source state on interest, royalties and fees for technical services.

The agreement and protocol implements minimum standards and other recommendations of G20 OECD Base Erosion Profit Shifting (BEPS) Project. Inclusion of Preamble Text, a Principal Purpose Test, a general anti-abuse provision in the Agreement along with a Simplified Limitation of Benefits Clause as per BEPS Project will result in curbing of tax planning strategies which exploit gaps and mismatches in tax rules.

About BEPS

BEPS refers to tax planning strategies used by multinational enterprises that exploit gaps and mismatches in tax rules to avoid paying tax. Developing countries' higher reliance on corporate income tax means they suffer from BEPS disproportionately. BEPS practices cost countries USD 100-240 billion in lost revenue annually. Working together within OECD/G20 Inclusive Framework on BEPS, over 130 countries and jurisdictions are collaborating on the implementation of 15 measures to tackle tax avoidance, improve the coherence of international tax rules and ensure a more transparent tax environment.

7. Hallmarking to be Mandatory for Gold Jewellery from 2020

The hallmarking of gold jewellery will become mandatory across the nation from January 15, 2020. However, the Centre has given a year's time to comply with the new norm, which means that while the notification will be issued by January 15 next year, jewellers will be given time until January 2021, after which they will only be allowed to sell hallmarked ornaments.

Key Highlights

Gold hallmarking is a purity certification of the precious metal and is voluntary in nature at present. The Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) is already running a hallmarking scheme for gold jewellery since April 2000 and around

40 per cent of gold jewellery is being hallmarked currently. The BIS has formulated standards for hallmarking gold jewellery in three grades -- 14 carat, 18 carat and 22 carat.

As per global trade rules of World Trade Organisation (WTO), a member country has to notify a quality control order with the Geneva-based multilateral body and the process takes about two months time. Exporting nations have to comply with the BIS quality norms specified for gold in the quality control order. India is a part of the 164-member WTO since 1995.

India is the largest importer of gold, which mainly caters to the demand of

jewellery industry. In volume terms, the country imports 700-800 tonne of gold annually.

According to World Gold Council data, India's cumulative gold demand declined to 496.11 tonnes during the first nine months of 2019 from 523.9 tonnes in the year-ago period. The 2018 full year gold demand stood at 760.4 tonnes.

Similarly, the cumulative gold import declined to 502.9 tonnes in the first nine months of 2019 from 587.3 tonnes in the corresponding period of the previous year. India's gold imports stood at 755.7 tonnes in 2018.



SEVEN IMPORTANT CONCEPTS THROUGH GRAPHICS

1. India-Pakistan

Key Facts

- In 1947, before they withdrew colonial authority, the British Government divided the Indian subcontinent into two states, based largely on religious demographics. The primarily Muslim nation, Pakistan, was formed on August 14, 1947 and the largely Hindu state, India, was formed on August 15, 1947.
- After that India and Pakistan embroiled into a territorial dispute over Kashmir. The two countries have fought three wars over the region since. The first, which began in 1947, ended with the partition of Jammu and Kashmir between India and Pakistan under a 1949 United Nations-brokered ceasefire. Wars in 1965 and 1999 ended in stalemate.
- Pakistani Kashmir consists of Azad Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan, Indian Kashmir includes Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh.
- As the India–Pakistan border gradually opens up for increased trade and travel, a number of issues such as infiltration by terrorists and militants, cross-border shelling and sniping, trafficking of drugs and arms and so on pose a challenge to the effective management of the border.
- Ministry of Home Affairs has sanctioned the implementation of Comprehensive Integrated Border Management System (CIBMS) to establish an integral security system at border providing all round security.



2. India-China

Key Facts



- The border between India and China is not clearly demarcated throughout. Along certain stretches of its 3,488-km length, there is no mutually agreed Line of Actual Control (LAC).
- India, following Independence, believed it had inherited firm boundaries from the British, but this was contrary to China's view.
- The India-China border is divided into three sectors, viz. Western, Middle and Eastern. The boundary dispute in the Western Sector pertains to the Johnson Line proposed by the British in the 1860s that extended up to the Kunlun Mountains and put Aksai Chin in the then princely state of Jammu and Kashmir.
- In the Middle Sector, the dispute is a minor one. It is the only one where India and China have exchanged maps on which they broadly agree.
- The disputed boundary in the Eastern Sector of the India-China border is over the MacMahon Line.
- Issues such as smuggling of Chinese electronics, building of dams on its side for reducing water flow, surveillance capabilities near the border are posing challenge to the effective management of the border.
- For its effective management, India has constructed Dhola-Sadiya bridge to cut down time for troop movement, Ministry of Defence has decided to delegate administrative and financial powers to Border Roads Organisation, among others.

3. India-Bangladesh

Key Facts

- The India-Bangladesh border is 4,096.7 km long, covering the states of West Bengal (2,216.7 km), Assam (263 km), Meghalaya (443 km), Tripura (856 km), and Mizoram (318 km).
- After the partition of India in 1947, the Radcliffe Line became the border between India and East Pakistan and following the liberation of Bangladesh in 1971, the same line became the border between India and Bangladesh.
- An agreement was reached between India and Bangladesh concerning the demarcation of the land boundary between India and Bangladesh and related matters, on May 16, 1974.
- The Protocol (referred to as the 2011 Protocol) to the 1974 LBA, signed on 6th September 2011 during the visit of then Prime Minister Manmohan Singh to Bangladesh, paves the way for a settlement of the outstanding land boundary issues between the two countries.
- As part of the implementation of the Land Boundary Agreement of 1974 and its 2011 Protocol, India handed Bangladesh 111 enclaves in dispute and received 51 enclaves in return, with the formal transfer occurring on July 31, 2015. Talks over Muhurichar, however, have remained inconclusive.
- India shares its longest border with Bangladesh, but this border is not attentively managed. The problems include illegal migration, smuggling, and trans-border movement of insurgents, which are serious threats to the security of the country.
- To control these issues, several measures such as establishment of Border Protection Grid, installation of border surveillance device, etc. are being taken.



4. India-Myanmar

Key Facts



- India shares a 1643 km long border with Myanmar, of which 171 km is not demarcated. The northeast states of Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur and Mizoram share the border with Myanmar.
- Myanmar is important to India due to historical, ethnic and cultural ties. Myanmar is of great strategic importance as it is a gateway to South East Asia and holds huge economic potential for India.
- This border is manned jointly by the army and Assam Rifles which has 46 battalions guarding the border.
- The cross border movement of Nagas and Mizos for training, purchase of arms and shelter when pursued by Indian security forces, combined with the difficult terrain obtaining in the area makes this border extremely challenging to manage.
- Apart from that the border area is vulnerable due to the narco-terrorism, smuggling of arms and fake Indian currencies compared to other borders.
- India-Myanmar border has a unique arrangement in place called the Free Movement Regime (FMR). The FMR permits the tribes residing along the border to travel 16-km across the boundary without visa restrictions.
- Government of India has set up 13 new integrated check posts to encourage India's engagement with SAARC countries along with Thailand and Myanmar.

5. India-Nepal

Key Facts

- The border of Nepal is surrounded by India to the three sides- south, east, and west and by China to the north.
- Two areas in particular strike a chord in Nepal: Kalapani and Susta, which lie on the western and eastern border of Nepal, respectively.
- Nepal shares an open border with India which facilitates the free movement of people, creating economic opportunities for both sides. Millions of Nepalese move to India for work. However, the open border is under growing threat of criminal enterprises which use it for human trafficking, mainly of women and children, narcotics trade, and the transport of fake currency.
- The movement of Indian and Nepalese citizens across the Indo-Nepal border is governed by Indo-Nepal Treaty of Peace and Friendship, 1950, which provides for free movement of citizens of both the countries across the border.
- Issues like cross border terrorism and anti India-activities, maoist insurgency, trafficking of narcotic drugs, transportation. of fake Indian currency Notes from third country via Nepal to India, among others are posing challenge for effective management.
- Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) has been deployed at Indo-Nepal Border as a Border Guarding Force. SSB regularly carries out various operational activities like patrolling and laying of nakas along the border. Further, government of India has established a new intelligence section in SSB at Indo -Nepal border to ensure better operational efficiency.



6. India-Bhutan

Key Facts

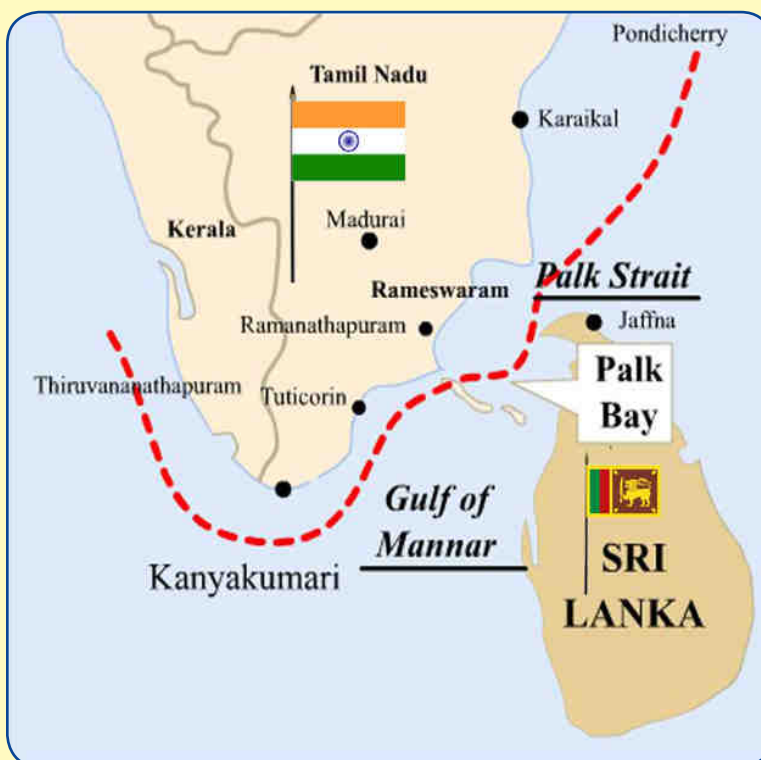


- Bhutan is another landlocked country that shares an open border with India. This border is defined by foothills, unlike the complex topography of dense forests, rivers and populations that defines the borders of India and Nepal, and India and Bangladesh.
- The two countries share warm bilateral ties and strong border coordination. There are concerns that the open border is being abused by both criminals and insurgency groups. Insurgents from neighbouring Indian states often sneak into Bhutan for sanctuary. Although Bhutan succeeded in flushing them out of its territory in a major operation in 2003, fears are persistent about criminal and militant activity.
- Migration is another issue in Bhutan-India border management. As areas bordering Bhutan are largely underdeveloped, many Indians work as manual labour in construction sites in that country, where they manage to earn more decent wages. This migration has provoked concerns of altering demographics in both countries. Migrants and infiltrators are also accused of deforestation, poaching, and wildlife smuggling.
- For better management of the border, the government of India has taken up many initiatives such as cooperation with Bhutanese army to prevent sanctuary to insurgents in their soil, establishment of new posts in Sikkim along the Bhutan frontier near Doklam among others.

7. India-Sri Lanka

Key Facts

- India-Sri Lanka maritime boundary agreements were signed in 1974 and 1976 between India and Sri Lanka to define the international maritime boundary between the two countries. Treaties on maritime boundary were necessary to facilitate law enforcement and resource management, and to avoid conflict, in the waters since both countries located closely in the Indian ocean, particularly in Palk Strait.
- Palk Strait, the narrow strip of ocean between India and Sri Lanka has been a crucial factor in determining relations between the two countries.
- Inevitably, the longstanding dispute over fishermen in the Palk Strait has created administrative, logistical and security problems for both India and Sri Lanka.
- Further, Sri Lanka has long expressed concerns about illegal fishing by Indian fishermen within its territorial waters across the Palk Strait. Palk Strait separates the northern coast of Sri Lanka from the southeast coast of India.
- There have been continuous talks between the two nations to propose a possible mechanism to help find a permanent solution to the fishermen issues. Both sides agreed to release fishermen from their custody—a regular practice meant to establish goodwill—thus encouraging progress on the longstanding dispute.



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STUDENT PORTAL

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