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SEVEN IMPORTANT ISSUES

1. SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE: A DEFIANT PATRIOT

Why in News?

To mark the 75th anniversary of raising of the Indian national flag by Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, as he is popularly known, and his 122nd birth anniversary, government had last year renamed three islands of Andaman and Nicobar. Ross Island, Neil Island and Havelock Island were renamed by the PM as Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose Dweep, Shaheed Dweep and Swaraj Dweep respectively.

Introduction

Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose was one of the greatest revolutionaries who dedicated his life to gaining India's independence. A true revolutionary and an Indian nationalist leader, Subhas Chandra Bose is, undoubtedly, one of the prominent names that feature in the list of people who gave their lives for India's independence. He is popular across the country for his adage, "Give me Blood and I will give you Freedom", which very well sums up his profound patriotism and love for the country. Like many other Indian nationalist leaders, he envisioned an independent India and a complete Swaraj from British Raj. Though Bose's ideology and philosophy did not match with Mahatma Gandhi and other Indian National Congress leaders, his vision was just the same as any other nationalist hero.

Netaji was influenced by Swami Vivekananda, describing him as a "maker of modern India". He was also inspired by the teachings of the Bhagavad Gita. In his fervent wait to

see India as an independent, federal and republic nation, he emerged as a charismatic and firebrand youth icon. He was admired within the congress for his great ability in organization development. He served several stints in prison for his nationalist activities during this time. Bose's correspondences prove his faith in democracy in Independent India.

He is known for his political acumen and military knowledge and his struggle which he often referred to as a moral crusade. Founder of the Azad Hind Radio, Azad Hind Fauj and Azad Hind Government in exile, Bose made his intentions clear right from the very beginning. Though he did not achieve much success in his effort, his determination and hard work are nevertheless commendable. Interestingly, Clement Attlee, under whose prime-ministerial rule India gained independence, is said to have claimed that it was the Bose-led INA that weakened the very foundation of British troops and inspired the Royal Navy mutiny in 1946, leading the British to believe that they no longer were in a position to rule India.

Childhood & Early Life

Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose was born on 23 January, 1897 in Cuttack (Orissa) to Janakinath Bose and Prabhavati Devi. Subhas was the ninth child among eight brothers and six sisters. His father, Janakinath Bose, was an affluent and successful lawyer in Cuttack and received the title of "Rai

Bahadur". He later became a member of the Bengal Legislative Council.

A brilliant student since childhood, Bose excelled at his studies attaining an overall second position in the matriculation examination. He enrolled at the Presidency College in 1911 but was sacked out from the same for assaulting Professor Oaten for the latter's anti-India comments. Bose, then, completed his graduation from Scottish Church College at the University of Calcutta, attaining a BA in philosophy in 1918. Following year, he gained admission at the Fitzwilliam College, Cambridge to appear in the Indian Civil Services Examination (ICS). Following his father's wish, Bose did crack the examination with a fourth rank and secured a job with the civil service department but could not continue with the same for long. For Bose, continuing the work would be working under an alien government and serving the British, which he morally did not approve of. However, Subhas Chandra Bose was deeply disturbed by the Jallianwalla Bagh massacre, and left his Civil Services apprenticeship midway to return to India in 1921.

Association with Indian National Congress

Bose forego the hard-earned, lucrative job and came back to India, where he joined the Indian National Congress to contribute in the Independence struggle. For the same, the first step was starting the newspaper, 'Swaraj'. After returning to India Netaji Subhas

Chandra Bose came under the influence of Mahatma Gandhi. On Gandhiji's instructions, he started working under Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das, whom he later acknowledged his political guru. Subhas Chandra Bose played an important role in enlightening the students, youths and labourers of Calcutta. Soon he secured the chair of the President for the All India Youth Congress and served as the Secretary for the Bengal State Congress in 1923. Bose also rose to the position of the editor for the newspaper, 'Forward', founded by Chittaranjan Das and qualified to the post of the CEO of Calcutta Municipal Corporation. His nationalistic attitude and contribution in the Indian struggle for independence did not go well with the British and in 1925, he was sent to prison in Mandalay.

A Falling-Out With Gandhi

Released in 1927, he returned to find Bengal Congress affairs in disarray after the death of Das, and Bose was elected president of the Bengal Congress. Shortly thereafter he and Jawaharlal Nehru became the two general secretaries of the Indian National Congress. Together they represented the more militant, left-wing faction of the party against the more compromising, right-wing Gandhian faction.

Vocal support for Gandhi increased within the Indian National Congress, meanwhile, and, in light of this, Gandhi resumed a more commanding role in the party. When the civil disobedience movement was started in 1930, Bose was already in detention for his associations with an underground revolutionary group, the Bengal Volunteers. Nevertheless, he was elected mayor of Calcutta while in prison. Released and then rearrested several times for his suspected role in violent acts, Bose was finally allowed to proceed to Europe after he contracted

tuberculosis and was released for ill health.

He returned from Europe in 1936, was again taken into custody, and was released after a year. Meanwhile, Bose became increasingly critical of Gandhi's more conservative economics as well as his less confrontational approach toward independence. In 1938 he was elected president of the Indian National Congress and formed a national planning committee, which formulated a policy of broad industrialization. However, this did not harmonize with Gandhian economic thought, which clung to the notion of cottage industries and benefiting from the use of the country's own resources.

Bose's vindication came in 1939, when he defeated a Gandhian rival for reelection. Nonetheless, the "rebel president" felt bound to resign because of the lack of Gandhi's support. He founded the Forward Bloc, hoping to rally radical elements, but was again incarcerated in July 1940. His refusal to remain in prison at this critical period of India's history was expressed in a determination to fast to death, which frightened the British government into releasing him.

Activity In Exile

In enforced exile and still ill, he wrote *The Indian Struggle, 1920–1934* and pleaded India's cause with European leaders. On the 41st day of house arrest, Bose dressed as a Maulavi escaped from his house to reach Germany under the Italian passport with the name Orlando Mazzota. He reached Germany, via Afghanistan, Soviet Union, Moscow and Rome. Under the guidance of Adam von Trott zu Solz, Bose founded the Special Bureau for India, which broadcasted on the German-sponsored Azad Hind Radio. He believed in the fact that 'an enemy's enemy is a friend in turn' and thus, sought the cooperation of Germany and Japan against the British

Empire. Bose founded the Free India Center in Berlin and created the Indian Legion out of Indian prisoners of war who had previously fought for the British in North Africa. A total of almost 3000 Indian prisoner had signed up for the Free India Legion.

Formation of the INA and World War-II

Bose vehemently opposed the Congress decision to support the British during the Second World War. With the aim to initiate a mass movement, Bose called out to Indians for their whole-hearted participation. There was tremendous response to his call "Give me blood and I will give you freedom".

Germany's fall in the war and the eventual retreat of the German army, however, led Bose to believe the fact that the German army was no longer in position to help India drive out the British from their motherland. Devastated, Bose slipped out of Germany aboard a submarine to reach Japan in 1943.

Bose's arrival at Singapore gave hopes of revival of INA (Indian National Army), originally founded in 1942 by Captain General Mohan Singh and then headed by nationalist leader Rash Behari Bose. Rash Behari Bose handed complete control of the organisation to Subhas Chandra Bose. The INA came to be known as the Azad Hind Fauj and Subhas as 'Netaji'.

Netaji not only re-organized the army troops but attracted immense support from the emigrant Indians in Southeast Asia. Apart from enrolling themselves in the Fauj, people began to lend financial support as well. The Azad Hind Fauj also came up with a separate women unit, the first of its kind in Asia.

The Azad Hind Fauj expanded considerably and started functioning under a provisional government, Azad Hind Government. They had their own postage stamps, currency, courts and

civil codes and were recognized by nine Axis states.

It was in 1944 that Netaji gave his motivational speech where he asked his people to give him blood while he promised freedom of the country in return. Inspired by the highly provocative words, people joined him in large numbers for his fight against the British Raj. With Netaji as the Chief Commander of the Azad Hind Fauj, the army proceeded towards India to liberate the country from the British Raj. En-route it freed the Andaman and Nicobar Islands and named the two islands as Swaraj and Shaheed. Rangoon became the new base camp for the army. With their first commitment at the Burma front, the army fought a competitive battle against the British and finally managed to hoist the Indian national flag on the grounds of Imphal, Manipur.

The unanticipated counter-attack by the commonwealth forces, however, took the Japanese and the German army by surprise who took to retreat to Burma. The retreat and fall of Rangoon base camp destroyed the dreams of Bose to become an effective political entity and with it the hope of the provisional government to ever establish a base at mainland India. Undeterred by the fall and the defeat of the Azad Hind Fauj, Netaji planned to travel to Russia to ask for help. However, unfortunately, he did not reach the Russian soil and met with an unfortunate accident that led to his death.

Gandhi and Bose Ideology

The doctrinaire conflict between two individuals can be unambiguously identified when they consistently articulate their principled stands and follow their principles through their actions. The distinction becomes challenging when one or both vacillate and/or act contrary to their stated

principles. Subhas Chandra Bose has been consistent throughout in his demand for political independence by virtue of complete severance from the British. While in India, he pushed Congress to launch mass movements demanding complete independence, and from outside India he led the Indian National Army to liberate India through war. He wanted to develop free India as a modern, industrialised nation with focus on advances in science, livelihood, and education for the masses. He has also been unambiguous that he would seek political emancipation through the most efficacious means which could involve armed conflict or even a total war.

Mahatma Gandhi, on the other hand, identified Spiritual Swaraj, which would cure Indian civilisation from evils such as doctors, lawyers, railways, mill made cloth, heavy machinery, medicine and contraceptives, as his goal early on. He subsequently verbally demanded Dominion Status with membership in the British Commonwealth most of the time, without, however, revoking his articulation of spiritual Swaraj. In 1942, however, expecting that the British would lose the second world war, he sought complete severance from them, but reverted to demanding Dominion Status as soon as the tides of the war turned. Nonetheless, other than the Quit India movement of 1942, none of the mass movements launched by Gandhi demanded even Dominion status - they were mostly centered around social agenda, specific grievances, extra-territorial Muslim Caliphate, and financial reforms.

Unlike what is commonly believed, Gandhi and Bose did not differ on their choices between communism and capitalism. Both were socialists, as per their stated positions, and disassociated themselves from Communism (Bose certainly did). Again, unlike what is commonly believed, Gandhi was

not opposed to violence per se, (he helped British recruit soldiers from India during the first world war); he was however opposed to the violent overthrow of British by Indians, except during 1942 when he appeared to condone violence. But, he reverted to his insistence on eschewing violence against the British as soon as they were back to their winning ways in the second world war. Given Gandhi's substantial flexibility in doctrines, or "flexible conscience" as Bose would call it, the conflict between the two had more to do with personal control over Indian dissent and perhaps collateral British and business interests that conflicted with Bose's agenda.

Conclusion

Subhas Chandra Bose, affectionately called as Netaji, was one of the most prominent leaders of Indian freedom struggle. Though Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru have garnered much of the credit for successful culmination of Indian freedom struggle, the contribution of Subhas Chandra Bose is no less. He has been denied his rightful place in the annals of Indian history.

Bose's primary ideology was always the freedom of his motherland even if it meant taking help from fascists like Mussolini or Hitler. Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose has left deep impact on the psyche of his countrymen. His slogan, 'Jai Hind' is still used in reverence to the country. The International airport in Kolkata has been named Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose International Airport to commemorate the charismatic leader.

Bose firmly believed that in this process of fundamental transformation of society, the youth had a key role to play. But for this the youth needed, together with their characteristic idealism and enthusiasm, thoughts and ideas, character development which comes through action.

We have now crossed seventy years as a free nation. But sadly, we have not succeeded in creating the just socio-economic order and a genuine democracy that Bose had envisioned. We are still mired in poverty, illiteracy and diseases. Some of our young people have made great strides in technology and the sciences. But an unacceptable

number of our youth have little access to education and life's opportunities. The time is opportune now to realize our shortcomings and to cherish and live the vision of 'Netaji'. For this we need not only strong determination but also sustained will so that India could defeat these taints of poverty and illiteracy and cruise on the way of becoming a shining star of the world.

General Studies Paper- I

Topic: Modern Indian history from about the middle of the eighteenth century until the present- significant events, personalities, issues.

Topic: The Freedom Struggle - its various stages and important contributors/contributions from different parts of the country.

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2. SKILL INDIA: AN ANALYSIS

Why in News?

A report - 'Fueling India's Skill Revolution' - by global technology services company Accenture estimated that India could forgo up to 2 to 3 percentage points, or \$1.97 trillion in potential cumulative GDP growth over the next 10 years if skill-building does not catch up with the rate of technological progress. According to the report, this would mean a further increase in unemployment and widening income inequality in the country. In this context, it is pertinent to analyse skill scenario in India.

Introduction

The roots of every nation's development are based on its people. The country's progress is directly proportional to the skilled workforce. India with a population of over 1.3 billion possesses the largest pool of scientists, engineers, and doctors in the world. With such vast resource and a progressively functional skill development plan can take India to the frontier amongst the developed nations. India, the second most populous country in the world, has more than 50% of the young population which once skilled can contribute to the growth of the national economy. Because skill development and re-skilling of the workforce drives the growth of a nation and it can lead to the sustainability of the economy as well.

The United Nations in the epic summit of 2015 on 'Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development' defined 17 Sustainable Development Goals which included 'Skill' apart from the 'basic necessities' for people across the world. The SDGs have defined skill development requirement as – to promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all. The SDGs report 2018 by the United Nations shows that 42% of the world population is young with a global youth unemployment rate of 13%, which can be brought down drastically by skilling the youth. The Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE) defined the unemployment rate in India to be 6.32% which is greater than the global unemployment rate of 5.6% defined by the UN for 2018. The complete scenario gives a clarion call for the speeding up the skilling through policy implementation on a Public Private Partnership (PPP) model.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the Skill India initiative on July 15, 2015, with PMKVY as the flagship programme. The first edition of PMKVY (2015-16) faced implementation challenges. The second edition (PMKVY 2.0) was launched in July 2016 to make it more effective and transparent, with an aim to skill 10 million youth over four years (2016-20), with a budgetary outlay of Rs 12,000 crore.

Background

India is a country today with 65% of its population in the working age group. If ever there is a way to reap this demographic advantage, it has to be through skill development of the youth so that they add not only to their personal growth, but to the country's economic growth as well. Skill India is an initiative of the Government of India which has been launched to empower the youth of the country with skill sets which make them more employable and more productive in their work environment.

Rarely comes a time in the life of a nation which transforms it forever. This time came in India in 1980s in the shape of a demographic dividend when we started having a large young population and economy started growing at a rate of about 5.5 %. Economic reforms started in 1991, in the wake of an economic crisis. It was time when we should have transformed our Vocational Education and Training System but we did not do it. The onset of millennium brought new challenges and opportunities when we started growing at the rate of 7-8%. The demand for skilled manpower from the economy started growing. In 2004-05, we started modernization of 100 ITIs at a cost of 160 crore.

In 2007-08 the World Bank extended a credit assistance of

US\$280 million, the largest ever by the multilateral body to any country for modernization of another 400 ITIs. The same year the government decided to grant an interest free loan of Rs 3540 crore to the remaining 1395 government ITIs. The demand for skilled manpower from the industry was so big that government decided to impart short-term training under Skills Development Initiative Scheme the same year. In order to mobilize the private sector to participate in skill development, a public private partnership company, National Skill Development Corporation was created in 2008. The Corporation was supposed to mobilize resources to assist the private sector industry to create training infrastructure and provided training to large number of youth. A new governance structure was created- Prime Minister National Council on Skill Development under the chairmanship of the Prime Minister, which was conceived as an apex institution for policy direction and review. A National Skill Development Coordination Board was setup under the chairmanship of Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission for periodical review of the skill development efforts.

A dedicated Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) was set up in 2014 to implement the National Skill Development Mission, which envisions skilling at scale with speed and standards. On July 15, 2015, on the first ever World Youth Skills Day, the Honourable Prime Minister launched the Skill India scheme.

To improve the relevance and quality of courses offered by industrial training institutes (ITIs), polytechnics and private training providers, sector skill councils (SSCs) have been involved in curriculum up-gradation/preparation, and in the assessment and certification process. Courses are being aligned to the National Skills

Qualifications Framework (NSQF). Recognition of prior learning (RPL) has been introduced to ensure certification of and bridge training for the existing work force. The year-end review 2017 released by MSDE suggests that government initiatives are gathering pace. Until 2017, 2.5 crore candidates have been skilled under the ministry's programmes since its inception. This includes 40.5 lakh candidates trained under the Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY), and 74 lakh candidates under fee based training programmes run by National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC).

Skill Ecosystem

The success of a nation always depends on the success of its youth and Skill India is certain to bring a lot of advantage and opportunities for these young Indians. The time is not far when India will evolve into a skilled society where there is prosperity and dignity for all. There are five pillars of the skills ecosystem:

1. The secondary schools/polytechnics;
2. Industrial training institutes;
3. National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC)-funded private training providers offering short-term training;
4. 16 Ministries providing mostly short-term training; and
5. Employers offering enterprise-based training.

India is a young nation and a skilled workforce will be able to certainly cater to not only the market demand within the country but also the global market demands. Skill India is no more just limited to the domestic market but is actively engaging with countries across the world to promote cross geographical exposure and opportunities in the international market.

Current Scenario

According to the National Policy for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, more than 54 per cent of India's population is below 25 years of age and 62 per cent of India's population is aged between 15 and 59 years. This demographic dividend is expected to last for the next 25 years. With most of the developed world experiencing an aging population, India has the opportunity to supply skilled labour globally and become the world's skill capital. However, the demographic advantage might turn into a demographic disaster if the skills sets of both new entrants and the existing workforce do not match industry requirements.

Budgetary allocation to the ministry of skill development and entrepreneurship (MSDE) has witnessed a 237% increase over the last four years, from Rs 1,007 crore (actual expenditure) in 2015-16 to Rs 3,400 crore (budget estimate) in 2018-19, according to ministry data. The 2018-19 allocation, however, represents a "drastic cut" by the ministry of finance against the Rs 7,696.54 crore requested by the MSDE, due to underutilisation of funds allocated to the MSDE in previous years, revealed a parliamentary committee report in March 2018. The committee warned that the budget cut would "adversely affect various schemes" implemented by the ministry tasked with skilling India's youth. The MSDE responded that it has shortage of manpower. Further, responding to issue of underutilization of fund allocated to MSDE, it said that the new schemes like PMKVY-2 involved various quality parameters which took considerable time for implementation. Therefore, the expenditure under the scheme could not be incurred as per expectations.

In November 2018, the government's aim to skill 10 million youth under the Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY, or Prime Minister's Skill Development programme) by 2020 was found to be 64% short of meeting the target. Just over 3.6 million people had been enrolled in PMKVY by November 30, 2018, government data showed. In addition to it, out of the 1.84 million who had been trained and certified under the PMKVY short term training programmes by August 31, 2018, just over 1 million (1,009,638) had been placed in jobs.

The unemployment rate for people aged 15 years and above in India was 3.4% in 2013-14, which saw a further increase to 3.7% in 2015-16, according to a government reply to the Lok Sabha on July 23, 2018, which did not provide data on numbers of unemployed. The unemployment rate rose to a four year high (3.9%) in 2016-17, Business Standard reported on January 11, 2019, citing the labour bureau's sixth annual employment-unemployment survey.

Post 2016-17, the government has not released employment data. But, about 4.75 million people are added to the labour force in India every year. Thus, over 20 million will have joined the workforce during the planned course of the PMKVY--double the numbers targeted by the programme.

The demand for skilled labour was estimated to be over 128 million between 2017 and 2022 in 34 sectors across industries, according to MSDE's annual report, 2017-18. But less than 5% of India's workforce is formally skilled, compared to South Korea (96%), Japan (80%), Germany (75%), United Kingdom (68%) and the United States (52%), according to MSDE's annual report, 2015-16.

Challenges

The National Skill Development Policy estimates that only 5.4 per cent of the workforce in India has undergone formal skill training as compared to 68 per cent in the UK, 75 per cent in Germany and 96 per cent in South Korea.

The India Skill Report 2018 states that only 47 per cent of those coming out of higher educational institutions are employable. Given that 83 per cent of the workforce is engaged in the unorganized sector with limited training facilities, upgrading of skills, both in manufacturing and services sectors remains a challenge.

The major challenges to skill development are the following:

- ◆ Mapping skill requirements sector-wise and geographically.
- ◆ Making vocational training an aspirational choice.
- ◆ Involving industry for improved quality and relevance – scaling up the apprenticeship programme.
- ◆ Integrating the informal sector into the skill development ecosystem.
- ◆ Putting in place an effective, internationally recognized assessment and certification system.
- ◆ No separate allocation of funds for research and development (R&D) in the field of skill development

Conclusion

India is one of the youngest nations in the world, with more than 54% of the total population below 25 years of age and over 62% of the population in the working age group (15-59 years). The country's population pyramid is expected to bulge across the 15-59 age group over the next decade. This demographic advantage is predicted to last only until 2040. India therefore has a very narrow time frame to harness

its demographic dividend and to overcome its skill shortages.

Though Government of India has recognized the need for a well-defined framework for skill development and has formed various organizations at national and state levels to take the responsibility of skill development, still there is a need to put lot more effort to develop skill culture in India. Skill gap can have a serious impact, not only on the employers, but also on the economy as a whole. One of the major concerns is the loss of productivity and revenues as the many of the jobs remain vacant for significant time due to lack of skilled labour.

India needed a four-pronged approach for government departments, industry bodies, academia, non-profit organizations and corporates to ensure that the country's workforce has the skills needed for the digital economy. These include: collaboration of multiple stakeholders including employers, education providers, startups and public agencies to work in a collaborative manner, use of blended learning models formats "that offer the optimal mix of in-person interaction, on-the-job learning and online learning." India also needs to create skills-based learning path in schools and colleges, and build technology solutions that are, "affordable, device-agnostic, multi-lingual, and compatible with offline infrastructure".

General Studies Paper-II

Topic: Government policies and interventions for development in various sectors and issues arising out of their design and implementation.

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



3. INDIAN DIASPORA IN MAKING 'NEW INDIA'

Why In News?

The 15th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) Convention is being held on 21-23 January 2019 in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh. The theme of PBD Convention 2019 is "Role of Indian Diaspora in building New India". Mauritius Prime Minister Pravind Jugnauth was the chief guest at the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas. These Conferences are chaired by the Minister of External Affairs.

Introduction

India has the second largest Diaspora in the world after China, estimated at over 31 million (3.1 crore) spread across the globe whose ancestral roots can be traced to traders, indentured labourers, political deportees, business entrepreneurs among others. Although the migration of Indian expatriates through centuries can be attributed to several factors, today their sheer size and potential to contribute towards the India growth story have opened our eyes to endless possibilities. It is in this light that a meaningful dialogue and mutually beneficial engagement between India and its Diaspora assumes great significance.

Overseas Indians are not just content with tried and tested professions and vocations; many of them have successfully carved a career in politics, government, and diplomacy. In many countries, such as Mauritius, Fiji, Trinidad & Tobago and Portugal, PIOs have become heads of state and government. The Indian diaspora has contributed enormously to strengthening India's cultural, literary, political and economic bonds across the world. India sees in them an important bridge with the countries where they are living.

The Diaspora population bring technical and domain expertise to domestic startups and often act as

angel investors. Diaspora Indian faculty abroad volunteer time and resources to help faculty on Indian campuses improve the quality of education — as in the case of member institutions of the Indo Universal Collaboration of Engineering Education. This was reflected in advancing projects whether through government arrangements or private commercial deals related to Make in India, Skill India, Digital India, Start Up India as well as those aimed at improving our infrastructure and transportation links and fostering all round sustainable development in urban or energy sectors.

India must work towards making the country a global manufacturing hub. The conclave cited that about 54 million young Indians will be looking for jobs in the next decade and since the agriculture sector does not have the capacity to keep pace with the required number of jobs to be created, it is necessary to enhance the manufacturing sector's contribution to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) to increase employment opportunities.

The government continued to accord high priority for safeguarding the biggest asset, NRIs, with a slew of initiatives and policies. The Ministry continued to improve the institutional framework towards ensuring a safe, orderly, legal and humane migration process. One of the priority areas was to strengthen the eco-system that supports migrant workers in all stages of migration cycle — pre-departure, in countries of destination, as well as on return. New initiatives were launched towards skills upgradation and certification of vocational skills of Indian emigrant workers.

Pravasi Bharatiya Divas

Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) is celebrated on 9th January to mark

the contribution of Overseas Indian community in the development of India. January 9 was chosen as the day to celebrate this occasion since it was on this day in 1915 that Mahatma Gandhi, the greatest Pravasi, returned to India from South Africa, led India's freedom struggle and changed the lives of Indians forever.

The decision to celebrate PBD was taken based on the recommendations of the High-Level Committee (HLC) on the Indian Diaspora under the chairmanship of L.M. Singhvi. The first PBD was celebrated in 2002 and the PBD was held every year on 9th January since then. In 2015, center has taken a decision that PBD will be celebrated once in two years in different states and a smaller event would be held every alternate year. These conventions provide a platform to the overseas Indian community to engage with the government and people of the land of their ancestors for mutually beneficial activities. These conventions are also very useful in networking among the overseas Indian community residing in various parts of the world and enable them to share their experiences in various fields.

Defining 'Diaspora'

Diaspora is not homogenous since migration involves human mobility over multiple time periods, encompassing a whole spectrum and types of movements. The Indian example of migration began in large numbers during the British rule as indentured labourers to former colonies like Fiji, Kenya and Malaysia. It continued in the post-independence period with Indians from different social strata moving to countries like the United Kingdom, the United States, and Gulf countries. The term "diaspora" is derived from the Greek word diaspeirein, which means

“dispersion”. Over time, the term evolved, and now loosely refers to any person/s belonging to a particular country with a common origin or culture, but residing outside their homeland for various reasons.

The Government of India does not follow a specific definition, although it attempted to define the term in 2004 as “a generic term to describe the people who migrated from territories that are currently within the borders of the Republic of India. It also refers to their descendants.” Today, ‘diaspora’ is commonly understood to include Non-Resident Indians (NRIs), Persons of Indian Origin (PIOs) and Overseas Citizens of India (OCI). Broadly speaking, for the Indian government, the diaspora encompasses a group of people who can either trace their origins to India or who are Indian citizens living abroad, either temporarily or permanently. As of December 2016, the Indian diaspora comprised approximately 31 million people, of which PIOs were 17 million and NRIs were 13 million, spread across 146 countries in the world. The US, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Malaysia, Myanmar, the UK, Sri Lanka, South Africa and Canada host an Indian diasporic population of at least one million each.

Diaspora Diplomacy

A less tangible but important advantage in having a large emigrant group is “diaspora diplomacy”. For long, their ability to make their presence acknowledged corresponded to the “visibility of India itself on the world stage”. Moreover, for diaspora diplomacy to work effectively, India needs to share good relations with that country. Perhaps the most successful role the diaspora played was in ensuring the passage of the India-US Nuclear Deal in 2008.

India’s permanent membership to the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) can become a reality with

support from the diaspora. India has demonstrated its diplomatic influence with the reappointment of Justice Dalveer Bhandari to the International Court of Justice in November 2017, when it secured two-thirds of the votes at the UN. Apart from political pressures and ministerial and diplomatic level lobbying, India can leverage its diaspora to influence states such as Canada and Mexico to support India’s membership. The diaspora could give a new impetus for India to secure its seat at the UNSC.

India is also a rising power and a key stakeholder in the security dynamics of South Asia and Southeast Asia. Its role in East Asia is taking shape. Although not yet an economic power, its military capabilities, common interests and willingness to go beyond rhetoric have raised expectations of its capabilities and the role it can play in the region. The large populations of Indian expatriates in countries like Thailand, Malaysia and Singapore present an opportunity to nurture a growing, mutual relationship.

India needs delicate balancing between its relationships with Saudi Arabia, Israel and Qatar as it has interests engaged with all three countries. Currently, India enjoys a favourable relationship with the three countries, perhaps to an extent due to the presence of the diaspora. Indians in the Middle East are known to be honest and hard workers. This “soft power” asset may have helped in convincing Saudi Arabia that India is and will remain a long-term trading partner despite government pursuing stronger ties with Israel.

However, the support of the diaspora is neither automatic nor continuous. They have been critical of bureaucratic procedures in India among other issues. The Canadian politician, Jagmeet Singh, for example has been very critical of the treatment of minority groups in India. Yet, the diaspora can help further India’s

interests and have risen to the occasion when India needed them. Moreover, the expectations of the diaspora, in return for their help from the Indian government is varied. While those from countries like Australia, the US and Canada demand dual citizenship and easier routes to invest in India, immigrants in the Gulf states require more help in day-to-day survival, and people of Indian origin in countries like Fiji, Kenya and Trinidad and Tobago look to India for cultural ties.

PBD as an Opportunity

Diaspora can bring their new Ideas from their native land and share their best practices

- ◆ **Entrepreneurship:** The government can further tap transnational entrepreneurship, including support for entrepreneurs and small businesses in India in the form of technical knowledge transfers and finances from the diaspora. Some examples to illustrate this phenomenon are Bengaluru, Gurugram and Hyderabad as thriving Information Technology hubs that not only house multinational companies (MNCs) like Amazon, Google, Facebook and Uber, but also multiple Indian start-ups like Flipkart, Ola, Swiggy and Zoho.
- ◆ **Innovation and Technology:** Another tangible long-term advantage in nurturing ties with an active diaspora is an accelerated technological sector and increased socio-economic development.
- ◆ **Domestic Investment:** Authorities have done well to ease Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and remittance norms. Perhaps the most mutually beneficial policy is the government’s 2015 move to treat NRI/OCI holders’ investment as domestic investment and not FDI. This makes it easier for the diaspora to invest in India;

the country, in turn, benefits as the money earned cannot be easily repatriated overseas. The measure is also expected to result in increased investment and a rise in inflow of foreign exchange remittance, both of which will aid in the growth of the economy.

- ◆ Indian Diaspora may support through contributions made to Swachh Bharat, Namami Gange and other flagship programmes. Some others may feel motivated to spare their valuable time and effort in volunteering in India, helping the under-privileged or contributing to capacity building programs in various sectors.
- ◆ Be it “Make in India”, “Start up India”, “Digital India” or “Swachh India”; all these programs provide ample opportunities for diaspora to participate, contribute and benefit.
- ◆ **Remittances:** Perhaps one of the greatest benefits of engaging with the 30-million-strong Indian diaspora has been in terms of remittances. In an Indian Economic Review survey using National Sample Survey Organisation data, the researchers point to the fact that remittance-receiving households were not only better-off than non-remittance-receiving households, but also that the remittance was mostly used to purchase food items, other consumer goods, and healthcare.

Challenges

- ◆ First, support of the diaspora is neither automatic nor continuous, and their interests need not be India's priorities. For example, the Indian community in the US was not vocal enough in criticising President Donald Trump's proposal to restrict the H-1B visa programme that has benefited many Indians.
- ◆ Another challenge is that remittances may not always be

used for beneficial purposes. For instance, India faced problems due to foreign funding for extremist movements like the Khalistan movement. Moreover, the diaspora is unfair in expecting India to stand by them at all times of need. This contradictory attitude of the diaspora and the Indian government will need to be worked out.

- ◆ Moreover, with the economic downturn in some countries in the Middle East, many Indians found their contracts being terminated—this posed difficulties for the Indian missions in these countries as the affected workers had to return to India. Rescuing these workers is costly, but India rescued 4,600 workers from Saudi Oger and Saad Group companies alone.
- ◆ Reports suggest that the e-Migrate system and the Minimum Referral Wages policy have been detrimental to India as companies now find it easier to hire labour from countries like Bangladesh and Pakistan. These statistics hint at heavily reduced remittances for India and perhaps even a need to establish rehabilitation centres for returning workers.
- ◆ Finally, there are other problems such as the wealthier diaspora from the US, Canada and the UK wanting dual citizenship and voting rights. Meanwhile, those who contribute more in terms of remittances to India from Gulf countries are wanting more support and security.

Government Recent Policies

In recognition of Diaspora's contribution to the development of India and to connect young diaspora to their ancestral roots, several flagship programmes have been taken by Government of India. Foremost among them are Know India Programme, Bharat Ko Janiye Quiz and Scholarship Programme for Diaspora Children.

- ◆ **Know India Program (KIP):** KIP is a flagship initiative for Diaspora engagement which familiarizes Indian-origin youth (18-30 years) with their Indian roots and contemporary India, through a three-week orientation programme organised by the Ministry of External Affairs.
- ◆ **Pravasi Bharatiya Kendra (PBK):** PBK, located in Chanakyapuri, New Delhi, is a tribute to the overseas Indian community; and commemorates their migration to various parts of the world, the challenges they faced abroad, their achievements and contributions. Activities, seminars, events, workshops pertaining to the Indian Diaspora are organized in PBK.
- ◆ **e-Migrate system:** e-Migrate project is a transformational initiative of the Overseas Employment Division of MEA, Government of India, to automate the current emigration processes and eco-system. All foreign employers are required to register with the system. These policies are a step in the right direction but have faced criticism from countries like the UAE who claim it is a “breach of our sovereignty”.
- ◆ **Study India Programme (SIP):** The SIP enables Overseas Indian youth to undergo short term course in an Indian University to familiarize them with the history, heritage, art, culture, and socio-political, economic developments etc. of India. The focus of the programme is on academic orientation and research. Cost of boarding, lodging, local transportation, course fee during the programme and 90% of the cost of air-ticket by economy class is borne by Govt. of India. Gratis Visas by Indian Missions are granted to the participants.
- ◆ **Bharat Ko Jano:** youth-centric outreach programmes

include scholarships to pursue undergraduate courses in recognised University Grants Commission universities in India, as well as Bharat Ko Jano online quizzes that test the participants' knowledge of India's heritage, history and culture.

- ◆ **Scholarship Programmes for Diaspora Children:** Under the Scheme, PIO/NRI students are awarded scholarship of up to US\$ 4000 per annum for payment of tuition fee, admission fee and post admission services for Under Graduate courses in Engineering, Technology, Humanities, Liberal Arts, Commerce, Management, Journalism, Hotel Management, Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and some other courses.
- ◆ **Minimum Referral Wages (MRW),** applicable only to Emigration Check Required (ECR) countries, increased the minimum wage of Indian workers employed as industrial workers, domestic servants, cleaners and labourers. To partially reduce the risk of vulnerability from fraudulent contracts, nurses for example can now only be recruited through one of the six state government placement agencies.

The government's initiatives towards the diaspora are two-pronged.

For one, they cater to the needs of NRIs and OCIs by providing them with consular services, protection and conduct outreach activities to engage with them. At the same time, they create policies to encourage the diaspora to contribute to India's growth through philanthropy, knowledge transfers, investments in innovation and assistance in other development projects

Conclusion

Over the years, the diasporic populations have become an increasingly important factor in international politics. Many of them are willing to exert their influence in electoral politics and are engaged in multinational businesses, and are thus highly visible. This makes for a ripe environment for India to aggressively tap on their potential.

Historically, India has benefitted from its diaspora. Two instances stand out: lobbying for the US-India Civilian Nuclear Agreement Bill in 2008, and their remittance inflow. Today, while there is more potential for the diaspora to contribute to India's growth story, their success will also be a reflection of the Indian government's schemes, policies and outreach activities toward them. Poor schemes coupled with ineffectual implementation will hinder the diaspora's contribution towards

the growth of India. In the past, policies towards the diaspora have been inconsistent and often followed by poor implementation. Today, the government's foreign-policy strategy of a strong outreach to the Indian diaspora stands out.

Yet it must be remembered that having a strong diaspora does not always translate to benefits for the home country. India has had problems with negative campaigning and foreign funding, coming from abroad, for separatist movements like the Khalistan movement. The Indian government, while continuing to engage with the diaspora as a part of its foreign policy, will have to be cautious of these sensitive issues that may impact the security of the state.

As much of India's foreign policy aims to translate partnerships to benefits for key projects like Swachh Bharat, Clean Ganga, Make In India, Digital India, and Skill India, the diaspora has plenty of scope to contribute. The diaspora can provide the requisite strategic impulse, which makes it all the more important to unlock their potential.

General Studies Paper- II

Topic: Effect of policies and politics of developed and developing countries on India's interests, Indian diaspora.

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4. EMERGING GLOBAL RISKS AND CHALLENGES

Why In News?

The 14th edition of the Global Risks Report, prepared by the World Economic Forum with the support of Marsh & McLennan Companies and other partners, examines the evolving macro-level risk landscape and highlights major threats that may disrupt the world in 2019 and over the next decade.

Introduction

The world has moved into a period of divergence following one of globalization that profoundly altered the global political economy. Reconfiguring the relations of deeply integrated countries is fraught with potential risks. This was borne out during 2018, as trade and investment ties deteriorated among many of the

world's powers, notably including the United States and China.

This, in turn, has led to increased nervousness about the resilience of the world economy, which remains in a post-crisis recovery phase. It is not just a question of how much policy firepower is now at the disposal of monetary and fiscal authorities. Deepening fissures in the international

system might stoke more fundamental vulnerabilities. If another global crisis were to hit, would the necessary levels of global cooperation and support be forthcoming? Probably, but the tension between the globalization of the world economy and the growing nationalism of world politics is a growing risk.

Is the world sleepwalking into a crisis? Global risks are intensifying but the collective will to tackle them appears to be lacking. Instead, divisions are hardening. The world's move into a new phase of state-centred politics, noted in last year's Global Risks Report, continued throughout 2018. The idea of "taking back control"—whether domestically from political rivals or externally from multilateral or supranational organizations—resonates across many countries and many issues. The energy now being expended on consolidating or recovering national control risks weakening collective responses to emerging global challenges. We are drifting deeper into global problems from which we will struggle to extricate ourselves.

Highlights of Report

The Global Risks Report demonstrates how high the stakes are, it will also help to build momentum behind the need to act. It begins with a sweep of the global risks landscape and warns of the danger of sleepwalking into crises. It goes on to consider a number of risks in depth: geopolitical and geo-economic disruptions, rising sea levels, emerging biological threats, and the increasing emotional and psychological strain that many people are experiencing.

The most striking aspect of this year's report is the level of concern about geopolitical issues. Of the top ten risks expected to deteriorate in 2019, seven are connected to the political environment. Over 90% of respondents expect economic confrontations/frictions between

major powers to deteriorate in 2019, with a similar number anticipating the erosion of multilateral trading rules and agreements. The Global Risks Perception Survey (GRPS) is the World Economic Forum's source of original risks data, harnessing the expertise of the Forum's extensive network of business, government, civil society and thought leaders.

Economic: During 2018, macroeconomic risks moved into sharper focus. Financial market volatility increased and the headwinds facing the global economy intensified. The rate of global growth appears to have peaked: the latest International Monetary Fund (IMF) forecasts point to a gradual slowdown over the next few years. This is mainly the result of developments in advanced economies, but projections of a slowdown in China—from 6.6% growth in 2018 to 6.2% this year and 5.8% by 2022—are a source of concern. So too is the global debt burden, which is significantly higher than before the global financial crisis, at around 225% of GDP. In addition, a tightening of global financial conditions has placed particular strain on countries that built up dollar-denominated liabilities while interest rates were low.

Some economic risks are:

- ◆ **Asset bubbles in a major economy:** Unsustainably overpriced assets such as commodities, housing, shares, etc. in a major economy or region
- ◆ **Deflation in a major economy:** Prolonged near-zero inflation or deflation in a major economy or region
- ◆ **Failure of a major financial mechanism or institution:** Collapse of a financial institution and/or malfunctioning of a financial system that impacts the global economy
- ◆ **Failure/shortfall of critical infrastructure:** Failure to adequately invest in, upgrade and/

or secure infrastructure networks (e.g. energy, transportation and communications), leading to pressure or a breakdown with system-wide implications

- ◆ **Fiscal crises in key economies:** Excessive debt burdens that generate sovereign debt crises and/or liquidity crises
- ◆ **High structural unemployment or underemployment:** A sustained high level of unemployment or underutilization of the productive capacity of the employed population
- ◆ **Illicit trade (e.g. illicit financial flows, tax evasion, human trafficking, organized crime, etc.):** Large-scale activities outside the legal framework such as illicit financial flows, tax evasion, human trafficking, counterfeiting and/or organized crime that undermine social interactions, regional or international collaboration, and global growth
- ◆ **Severe energy price shock (increase or decrease):** Significant energy price increases or decreases that place further economic pressures on highly energy-dependent industries and consumers
- ◆ **Unmanageable inflation:** Unmanageable increases in the general price levels of goods and services in key economies

Environmental: Environmental risks continue to dominate the results of our annual Global Risks Perception Survey (GRPS). This year, they accounted for three of the top five risks by likelihood and four by impact. Extreme weather was the risk of greatest concern, but survey respondents are increasingly worried about environmental policy failure. Having fallen in the rankings after Paris, "failure of climate-change mitigation and adaptation" jumped back to number two in terms of impact this year. The results of climate inaction are becoming increasingly clear. The

accelerating pace of biodiversity loss is a particular concern. Species abundance is down by 60% since 1970. In the human food chain, biodiversity loss is affecting health and socio-economic development, with implications for well-being, productivity, and even regional security.

Some environmental risks are:

- ◆ **Extreme weather events (e.g. floods, storms, etc.):** Major property, infrastructure, and/or environmental damage as well as loss of human life caused by extreme weather events.
- ◆ **Sea Levels And Cities:** Rapidly growing cities and ongoing effects of climate change are making more people vulnerable to rising sea levels. Two-thirds of the global population is expected to live in cities by 2050 and already an estimated 800 million people live in more than 570 coastal cities vulnerable to a sea-level rise of 0.5 metres by 2050.
- ◆ **Failure of climate-change mitigation and adaptation:** The failure of governments and businesses to enforce or enact effective measures to mitigate climate change, protect populations and help businesses impacted by climate change to adapt.
- ◆ **Major biodiversity loss and ecosystem collapse (terrestrial or marine):** Irreversible consequences for the environment, resulting in severely depleted resources for humankind as well as industries.
- ◆ **Major natural disasters (e.g. earthquakes, tsunamis, volcanic eruptions, geomagnetic storms):** Major property, infrastructure, and/or environmental damage as well as loss of human life caused by geophysical disasters such as earthquakes, volcanic activity, landslides, tsunamis, or geomagnetic storms.

- ◆ **Man-made environmental damage and disasters (e.g. oil spills, radioactive contamination, etc.):** Failure to prevent major man-made damage and disasters, including environmental crime, causing harm to human lives and health, infrastructure, property, economic activity and the environment.

Geopolitical: Geopolitical and geo-economic tensions are rising among the world's major powers. These tensions represent the most urgent global risks at present. The world is evolving into a period of divergence following a period of globalization that profoundly altered the global political economy. Reconfiguring the relations of deeply integrated countries is fraught with potential risks, and trade and investment relations among many of the world's powers were difficult during 2018. Against this backdrop, it is likely to become more difficult to make collective progress on other global challenges—from protecting the environment to responding to the ethical challenges of the Fourth Industrial Revolution. Deepening fissures in the international system suggest that systemic risks may be building.

Some of geopolitical risks are:

- ◆ **Failure of national governance (e.g. failure of rule of law, corruption, political deadlock, etc.):** Inability to govern a nation of geopolitical importance as a result of weak rule of law, corruption or political deadlock.
- ◆ **Failure of regional or global governance:** Inability of regional or global institutions to resolve issues of economic, geopolitical, or environmental importance.
- ◆ **Interstate conflict with regional consequences:** A bilateral or multilateral dispute between states that escalates into economic (e.g. trade/currency wars, resource

nationalization), military, cyber, societal, or other conflict.

- ◆ **Large-scale terrorist attacks:** Individuals or non-state groups with political or religious goals that successfully inflict large-scale human or material damage.
- ◆ **State collapse or crisis (e.g. civil conflict, military coup, failed states, etc.):** State collapse of geopolitical importance due to internal violence, regional or global instability, military coup, civil conflict, failed states, etc.
- ◆ **Weapons of mass destruction:** The deployment of nuclear, chemical, biological, and radiological technologies and materials, creating international crises and potential for significant destruction

Societal: The importance of the various structural changes that are under way should not distract us from the human side of global risks. For many people, this is an increasingly anxious, unhappy and lonely world. Worldwide, mental health problems now affect an estimated 700 million people. Complex transformations—societal, technological and work-related—are having a profound impact on people's lived experiences. A common theme is psychological stress related to a feeling of lack of control in the face of uncertainty. These issues deserve more attention: declining psychological and emotional wellbeing is a risk in itself—and one that also affects the wider global risks landscape, notably via impacts on social cohesion and politics.

- ◆ **Failure of urban planning:** Poorly planned cities, urban sprawl and associated infrastructure that create social, environmental and health challenges.
- ◆ **Food crises:** Inadequate, unaffordable, or unreliable access to appropriate quantities and quality of food and nutrition on a major scale.

- ◆ **Large-scale involuntary migration:** Large-scale involuntary migration induced by conflict, disasters, environmental or economic reasons.
- ◆ **Profound social instability:** Major social movements or protests (e.g. street riots, social unrest, etc.) that disrupt political or social stability, negatively impacting populations, and economic activity.
- ◆ **Rapid and massive spread of infectious diseases:** Bacteria, viruses, parasites, or fungi that cause uncontrolled spread of infectious diseases (for instance as a result of resistance to antibiotics, antivirals and other treatments) leading to widespread fatalities and economic disruption.
- ◆ **Water crises:** A significant decline in the available quality and quantity of fresh water, resulting in harmful effects on human health and/or economic activity.

Technological: Technology continues to play a profound role in shaping the global risks landscape. Concerns about data fraud and cyber-attacks were prominent again in the GRPS, which also highlighted a number of other technological vulnerabilities: around two-thirds of respondents expect the risks associated with fake news and identity theft to increase in 2019, while three-fifths said the same about loss of privacy to companies and governments. There were further massive data breaches in 2018, new hardware weaknesses were revealed, and research pointed to the potential uses of artificial intelligence to engineer more potent cyberattacks. Last year also provided further evidence that cyber-attacks pose risks to critical infrastructure, prompting countries to strengthen their screening of cross-border partnerships on national security grounds.

- ◆ **Adverse consequences of technological advances:** Intended or unintended adverse consequences of technological

advances such as artificial intelligence, geo-engineering and synthetic biology causing human, environmental, and economic damage

- ◆ **Breakdown of critical information infrastructure and networks (Critical information infrastructure breakdown):** Cyber dependency that increases vulnerability to outage of critical information infrastructure (e.g. internet, satellites, etc.) and networks, causing widespread disruption
- ◆ **Large-scale cyber-attacks:** Large-scale cyber-attacks or malware causing large economic damages, geopolitical tensions, or widespread loss of trust in the internet
- ◆ **Massive incident of data fraud/theft:** Wrongful exploitation of private or official data that takes place on an unprecedented scale

Biological Risks: Another set of risks being amplified by global transformations relate to biological pathogens. Changes in how we live have increased the risk of a devastating outbreak occurring naturally, and emerging technologies are making it increasingly easy for new biological threats to be manufactured and released either deliberately or by accident. The world is badly under-prepared for even modest biological threats, leaving us vulnerable to potentially huge impacts on individual lives, societal well-being, economic activity and national security. Revolutionary new biotechnologies promise miraculous advances, but also create daunting challenges of oversight and control—as demonstrated by claims in 2018 that the world's first gene modified babies had been created.

Way Forward

This is a globalized world, as a result of which historic reductions in global poverty have been achieved. But it is also increasingly clear that change

is going around. Polarization is on the rise in many countries. In some cases, the social contracts that hold societies together are fraying. This is an era of unparalleled resources and technological advancement, but for too many people it is also an era of insecurity. Renewing and improving the architecture of our national and international political and economic systems is this generation's defining task. While the risks facing the global community require specific, distinct solutions, they cannot be solved in a go-at-it-alone manner. At a time when there is criticism of global institutions, we need to reaffirm the importance of a well-functioning multilateral system.

A critical lesson of the post-World War II era has been that goals that once seemed impossible can be a reality. Historic achievements over the past seven decades, such as cutting the percentage of people who are living in extreme poverty by more than a half, increasing global average life expectancy by 22 years and mitigating conflict between global powers, have only been possible through a cooperative framework. Similarly, the urgent challenges we face today of economic uncertainty, climate change, and threats associated with new technologies, can only be solved through coordinated action. It is clear that the ultimate global risk is for geopolitical divisions to harden. While there is room to make improvements to our global system, unless we find a way to restore global cooperation this year, we will be unable to truly solve our world's most urgent challenges.

General Studies Paper- II

Topic: Effect of policies and politics of developed and developing countries on India's interests, Indian diaspora.

General Studies Paper- III

Topic: Conservation, environmental pollution and degradation, environmental impact assessment



5. RISING INEQUALITY AND INDIA

Why in News

The International Rights group, Oxfam has released its annual inequality report recently. The report titled "Public Good or Private Wealth", shows that the wealth of the few rich people has continued to grow, while the poor majority has seen their wealth shrinking.

Introduction

The latest report of Oxfam is just another reminder of the effect of world capitalism on the poorest people. These statistics are telling us what we know and reminding us of the inequities of a system that condemns hundreds of millions of human beings to lives of brute survival and exposes the hypocrisies of those who benefit from this state of affairs.

What is more surprising is that despite these figures, there are many "leaders" who are still arguing that what we need to solve this economic mess is more neoliberalism and not less of it. There is no real commitment to accelerating shared economic growth and in transforming the structures of production and ownership by the most government. We can expect more of this if we insist on sticking to macroeconomic policies that do not support economic growth, job creation and poverty eradication on a sustainable basis.

The report observes that 26 richest people on earth in 2018 had the same net worth as the poorest half of the world's population, some 3.8 billion people. It also says that billionaire fortunes increased by 12 percent last year, or a collective \$2.5 billion a day, while the world's 3.8 billion poorest people saw their wealth drop a collective \$500 million every day.

In the context of India, Oxfam International Executive Director Winnie Byanyima, observed that it is "morally outrageous" that a few wealthy

individuals are amassing a growing share of India's wealth, while the poor are struggling to eat their next meal or pay for their child's medicines. If this obscene inequality between the top 1 percent and the rest of India continues then it will lead to a complete collapse of the social and democratic structure of this country.

Key Highlights of the Report with Regards to India

Economic Inequality

India's top 10 percent of the population holds 77.4 percent of the total national wealth. The contrast is even sharper for the top 1 percent that holds 51.53 percent of the national wealth. The bottom 60 per cent, the majority of the population, own merely 4.8 per cent of the national wealth.

Indian billionaires saw their fortunes swell by Rs 2,200 crore a day last year, with the top 1 percent of the country's richest getting richer by 39 percent as against just 3 percent increase in wealth for the bottom-half of the population. Wealth of top 9 billionaires is equivalent to the wealth of the bottom 50 per cent of the population. The report reveals that India added 18 new billionaires last year raising the total number of billionaires to 119, and their wealth crossed the \$400 billion mark for the first time. It rose from \$325.5 billion in 2017 to \$440.1 billion in 2018.

Gender Inequality

Oxfam said inequality has a "female face" in India, where women are less likely to have paid work when compared to men, while even among the richest there are only nine women in the country's 119-member billionaires club.

In India, the unpaid work done by women looking after their homes and children is worth 3.1 percent of the country's GDP. Women spend 312

minutes per day in urban areas and 291 minutes per day in rural areas on such unpaid care work, it added. In comparison, men spend only 29 minutes in urban and 32 minutes in rural areas on unpaid care work.

Public Service Expenditure

According to the report between 2018 and 2022, India is estimated to produce 70 new dollar millionaires every day. While billionaire wealth soars, public services are suffering from chronic underfunding or being outsourced to private companies that exclude the poorest people. It said that the combined revenue and capital expenditure of the centre and states for medical, public health, sanitation and water supply is Rs. 2,08,166 crore, which is less than the country's richest man Mukesh Ambani's wealth of Rs. 2.8 lakh crore.

Healthcare

In India, government neglect of public healthcare means the private sector dominates. The highest-quality private medical care is only available to those who have the money to pay for it. The country is a top destination for medical tourism, with some of the best-quality care in the world available to those who can afford it.

At the same time, levels of public spending on health are some of the lowest in the world. In South Asia, including India, poor-quality care kills more people than lack of access to treatment and care. Eighty percent of payments to the government health insurance scheme go to private providers. India is home to the largest number of people pushed into poverty by health expenses; paying for medicines is the chief cause.

Denied a longer life

Across the world, it is the poorest children who are most likely to die. Children from poor families in India are

three times more likely to die before their first birthday than children from rich families. The average number of children dying before they are five has decreased in almost every country in recent years. Nevertheless, poorer people, and especially women and girls, feel the effects of inequality far more than others. In India, a woman from the so-called lowest caste can expect to live almost 15 years less than a high-caste woman.

Privatisation in Education Sector

Like healthcare, privatisation in the education sector is also a major problem in India. One study in Uttar Pradesh found that even low-cost private schools are unaffordable for the poorest 40 percent of families, with girls and children from lower castes or religious minorities less likely to attend.

Taxing Wealth

In India, there were so many exemptions to the tax on net wealth that a typical individual was paying over eight times less than they should have been. In 2016, instead of addressing the exemptions, the government abolished the tax.

According to the report, governments should focus their efforts on raising more from the very wealthy to help fight inequality. For example, getting the richest to pay just 0.5 percent extra tax on their wealth could raise more money than it would cost to educate all 262 million children out of school and provide healthcare that would save the lives of 3.3 million people.

Cutting taxes on wealth predominantly benefits men who own 50 percent more wealth than women globally, and control over 86 percent of corporations. Conversely, when public services are neglected poor women and girls suffer most.

Prisoners for not paying hospital bills

In India, at times some poor people are held prisoner in hospitals until they

can pay; sometimes they are even chained. These precedents can only be seen in countries like Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).

Boosting Social Cohesion

In India, traditionally those from so called high-caste backgrounds are not supposed to use the same eating utensils as those from so called low-caste backgrounds. While prejudice still continues to exist, there is some evidence that school feeding programmes in public schools have contributed to breaking down this practice, as positive instances have been observed where all children eat together.

Reasons behind Rising Income Inequality in India

In India, inequality in the distribution of income has increased for various reasons. Some of the major reasons can be enlisted as follows:

Unemployment

The main reason for low level of income of the majority of Indian people is unemployment and underemployment and the consequent low productivity of labour. Low labour productivity implies low rate of economic growth which is the main cause of poverty and inequality of the large masses of people. In fact, inequality, poverty and unemployment are inter-related. Since sufficient employment could not be created through the process of planned economic development, it was not possible to increase the income levels of most people.

Tax Evasion

In India, the personal income tax rates are very high. High tax rates encourage evasion and avoidance and give birth to a parallel economy. This is exactly what has happened in India during the plan period. Here, the unofficial economy is as strong as (if not stronger than) the official economy. High tax rates are responsible for inequality in the distribution of

income and wealth. This is due to undue concentration of incomes in a few hands caused by large-scale tax evasion.

Regressive Tax

The indirect taxes give maximum revenue to the government. But they are regressive in nature. Such taxes have also created more and more inequality over the years due to growing dependence of the Government on such taxes.

New Agricultural Strategy

No doubt, India's new agricultural strategy led to the Green Revolution and raised agricultural productivity. But the benefits of higher productivity were enjoyed mainly by the rich farmers and landowners. At the same time, the economic conditions of landless workers and marginal farmers deteriorated over the years. Most farmers in India could not enjoy the benefits of higher agricultural productivity. As a result, inequality in the distribution of income in the rural areas has increased.

Inflation

Another cause of inequality is inflation. During inflation, few profit earners gain and most wage earners lose. This is exactly what has happened in India. Since wages have lagged behind prices, profits have increased. This has created more and more inequality. Moreover, during inflation, money income increases no doubt but real income falls. And this leads to a fall in the standard of living of the poor people since their purchasing power falls.

Prevalent Unorganised Economy

No doubt, inequality has increased due to rise in prices. During inflation workers in the organised sector get higher wages which partly offset the effect of price rise. But wages and salaries of workers in unorganised sectors (such as agriculture and small-scale and cottage industries)

do not increase. So their real income (purchase income) falls. This is how inequality in the distribution of income increases between the two major sectors of the economy — organised and unorganised.

Impact of Inequality

Since 1990, the per-capita gross domestic product has increased almost six times – from \$1,130 to \$6,572. Life expectancy, infant and maternal mortality, sanitation, mean years of schooling and female literacy registered significant improvements for the population of more than 1.3 billion.

The surging economic growth has improved living conditions of its citizens, but these improvements were not uniformly distributed among India's diverse population. Despite being among the richest countries in the world, India has attracted negative attention in recent years as the second most unequal country in the world, after Russia.

Higher income inequality impedes class formation and poverty reduction. In particular, the growth of the middle class plays a significant role in strengthening democratic structures and cultures. But rising income inequality in India is hampering the formation and growth of the middle class. If one were to take an income of \$10-\$20 per day in 2011 as an indicator of the middle class, then India has not done as well as Malaysia, Indonesia and China in growing its middle class. According to the International Monetary Fund, the higher income inequality has lowered the effectiveness of growth to combat poverty and significantly slowed the building of a sizeable middle class in India.

Rising income inequality has developmental implications. The super-rich can avoid taxes by using innovative schemes to shelter their wealth and manipulate the political system without repercussions. This impedes the government's ability to

raise revenues that contribute to slower poverty reduction and also adversely impacts social spending to reduce social inequalities of health, education and employment. India already fares poorly in this area. Currently, 2.7% of the GDP goes towards education and only 1.2% towards health. By comparison in China, percentage of GDP allocated to education and health is 4.3 and 5.4, respectively.

Economic inequality can adversely exacerbate a range of social problems, including inter-group relations and conflict, social cohesion and violent crime. Inequality hurts not only the poor but everyone with increased crime and increased workplace accidents. India ranks 108 out of 149 countries in the Gender Gap Index of World Economic Forum. In a range of indicators including mean years of schooling, gross national income per capital and labor force participation rates, Indian women lag significantly behind Indian men. Cumulative effects of entrenched inequality will worsen their deprivations. Inequality is also affecting India's urban landscape. Recent studies show that class, ethnicity and caste inequalities represent the growing axis of residential segregation in contemporary urban India.

Way Forward

Spectacular economic growth over the past three decades has made India a global economic powerhouse. Between 1990 and 2016, India's economy grew at a compound rate of around 7%. The Indian economy is now the third largest in the world by purchasing power parity after China and the United States. But in India, the upper classes were the main beneficiary of the nation's surging economic development and poverty rates are also significantly lower among the upper caste rather than the other backward classes, the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes, and minorities.

The factors affecting wealth/income concentration include economic growth rate, demographic trends, savings rates, globalization,

inheritance and government policies. Governments need to do more to fund high-quality, universal public services through tackling tax dodging and ensuring fairer taxation, including on corporations and the richest individuals' wealth, which it said were often undertaxed.

Efforts should be made to eliminate tax avoidance and evasion by corporates and the super-rich. Also policies to deliver universal free health care, education and other public services taking special considerations for women and girls should be made. Privatisation of public services should be minimized.

Also free up women's time by easing the millions of unpaid hours they spend every day caring for their families and homes. Let those who do this essential work have a say in budget decisions and make freeing up women's time a key objective.

While economic growth is absolutely crucial in raising living standards of India's vast population, the distributional effects of economic growth, as measured by income distribution, play a significant role in determining the long-term development trends and socio-economic well-being of the citizens. India is one the richest countries in the world, and yet, the average Indian is relatively poor as a result of highly-skewed income distribution.

General Studies Paper- III

Topic: Indian Economy and issues relating to planning, mobilization of resources, growth, development and employment.

Topic: Inclusive growth and issues arising from it.

Topic: Effects of liberalization on the economy, changes in industrial policy and their effects on industrial growth.



6. INDIAN AVIATION SECTOR AND VISION 2040

Why in News?

The first-of-its-kind Global Aviation Summit was inaugurated by Union Minister for Civil Aviation and Commerce & Industry, Shri Suresh Prabhu in Mumbai. Delegates from around 86 countries are attending the two-day Summit. The Vision 2040 document for Indian aviation sector and the Air Cargo Policy document were also released on the occasion.

Introduction

The 21st century is an era of connectivity, where physical distances have ceased to exist. India is currently the third largest domestic civil aviation market in the world: it is forecast to soon become the third largest overall aviation market. With technological innovations and fast-paced communication, the concept of global village has today become a reality. Air travel has seen massive growth around the world with hundreds of millions of people joining the global middle class. The global citizens travel over long distances, providing a boost to travel and tourism. Aviation industry is one of the most critical sectors, as it generates employment and fuels economic growth.

With around 200 million passenger trips annually now, we foresee Indian aviation market to grow more than five times to a billion trips in the next decade or two. Indeed, we are building our infrastructure with such a vision. Our airlines, airports and other stakeholders in the aviation community have worked hard to offer world-beating and yet low-cost services to the consumer. This has led the Aviation sector in India to emerge as one of the fastest growing sectors during the last five years. It is a matter of pride that even as passenger traffic, number of planes and number of airports have increased dramatically, our safety,

quality and customer service scores have improved substantially.

Government has launched 'UDAN' (Ude Desh ka Aam Nagrik) Yojana to ensure that air travel becomes increasingly affordable for the common people. We have also implemented a regional connectivity scheme to link smaller airports to India's aviation circuit.

Indian Aviation Industry: Current Situation

The civil aviation sector contributed USD8.9 billion to India's GDP in 2014 and supported 1.31 million direct, indirect and induced aviation jobs.³ In 2016, the demand for domestic air travel was twice that in China.

India's domestic air traffic made up 69 per cent of total airline traffic in South Asia. The World Economic Forum's Global Competitiveness Report, 2018 ranks India as 53rd out of 140 countries worldwide in air transport infrastructure.

The Airport Authority of India (AAI) aims to bring around 250 airports under operation across the country by 2020. The Ministry of Civil Aviation's regional connectivity scheme, UDAN, is a 10-year scheme, which will promote balanced regional growth and make flying affordable for the population. It will help enhance connectivity to the country's unserved and underserved airports. India's civil aviation sector has been growing steadily; the number of passengers was 158 million in 2016-17. Domestic passenger traffic increased at a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of almost 10 per cent between 2007-08 and 2016-17 and international passenger traffic grew at a CAGR of 8.07 per cent during the same period. Between 2014-15 and 2016-17 in particular, traffic growth in the domestic passenger segment was 48 per cent and 20 per cent in

the international segment. India is also catching up with other leading aviation markets in terms of market penetration.

There has been an increase in air cargo, both domestically and internationally, in 2016-17. International Air Transport Association (IATA) has forecasted that India will cross over into the top 10 air freight markets in 2018-19.

Global Aviation Summit

The platform provided by Global Aviation Summit, the 1st ever comprehensive aviation event, would enable eminent dignitaries from different corners of the world to speak about various aviation policies and plans. With a shared ambition of enabling flying for all, the dignitaries would be able to discuss more effectively on how to connect the world through air transport. Aviation is one of the most "global" industries: connecting people, cultures and businesses across continents. To maximize the benefits of air transport, it is necessary for all stakeholders and partners to work together and support the sustainable growth of aviation by connecting more people and more places, more often.

The Global Aviation Summit is taking place at an opportune time. As the Indian aviation sector has demonstrated a growth trend which sets an example for other emerging aviation countries, India is the most appropriate location for such an event, which aims to bring together members of the aviation fraternity from across the globe.

There are global challenges in aviation: safety and security, tackling climate change, and the new, nascent and emerging technology of drones. These challenges will require international coordination in setting standards and deploying effective counter measures without hampering customer convenience or growth.

About Vision 2040

The airline landscape in India has transformed radically over the past 15 years. In 2003, there were just five leading carriers - Air India, Indian

Airlines, Jet Airways, Air Sahara and Air Deccan, all operating full service models except the last. By 2018, the scenario has changed completely with Low Cost Carriers like IndiGo, SpiceJet, GoAir, AirAsia, JetLite and TruJet controlling nearly 72% of the passenger market share.

Aviation is a long term play. Aircraft procurement, airport development, air navigation system changes, skill development etc., can't be planned for the short term. Technology developments like artificial intelligence, machine learning, block chain, biometrics, composites, super-alloys, bio-fuels etc. are changing the face of aviation. The infrastructure shortage that Indian aviation is grappling with, is perhaps due to the fact that there was no 10 or 20 year plan other than the incremental 5-year plans prepared by the erstwhile Planning Commission of India. It is therefore important for India to have a robust 20 year plan that lays out the targets and the path to get there along with timelines and clear accountability.

Key Highlights

According to civil aviation vision 2040 report, India, the seventh-largest aviation market with 187 million passengers (to, from and within India) in 2017-18, is expected to become the third-largest by 2022, inching closer to the U.S., projected number two. The air passenger traffic in India is expected to grow to six fold to 1.1 billion by 2040. Top 31 cities will have two airports each; passenger traffic is expected to grow six fold to touch 1.1 billion.

- ◆ India is the seventh-largest country by area and the second-most populous with a population of over 1.35 billion. India is one of the fastest growing economies of the world and is likely to become the 5th largest in 2019.
- ◆ There are over 450 airports and airfields in India out of which 101

are operational as in December 2018.

- ◆ The government-owned Airports Authority of India (AAI) owns 125 airports. It is one of the largest airports companies of the world.
- ◆ Despite global headwinds on crude oil and currency, domestic passenger traffic in the period Jan-Nov 2018 grew by 19.2% year on year. Total passenger traffic to, from and within India, during Apr-Nov 2018 grew by around 15% year on year.
- ◆ Air cargo accounts for less than 1% of the global cargo movement by tonnage, but over 35% by value. It is critical for industries such as e-commerce, pharmaceuticals, electronics, marine exports, Floriculture, fashion garments, etc. where shipments are highly time-sensitive.
- ◆ With its growing aircraft fleet size, strategic geographic location, rich pool of engineering expertise and low labor cost, India has a huge potential to be the global Maintenance, Repair and Overhaul (MRO) hub given a long-time perspective. The current market size of the MRO industry in India is assessed at about \$700-800 million which is expected to reach \$1.2 billion by 2020.
- ◆ Over the next two decades, the global commercial aircraft fleet size is expected to grow at a CAGR of around 4%. Around 45,000 new aircraft are likely to be delivered globally between 2018 and 2040.
- ◆ Remotely piloted aircraft (RPA), commonly known as drones are the next big revolution in aviation. RPA usage in India have been restricted to scattered operations and aerial photography due to legitimate concerns around privacy, safety and national security. The government acknowledges the huge potential

of drones and plans to develop India as a drone hub of the world.

- ◆ AAI is responsible for providing Air Navigation Services (ANS) over the India airspace and the Indian Ocean region covering around 9.6 million sq. km, nearly thrice of India's land area of 3.3 million sq. km.
- ◆ The current direct employment in the aviation and aero-manufacturing sector is around 200,000. Given the nearly six-fold increase in air traffic, quadrupling of the aircraft feet and doubling of the number of airports by 2040, the number of direct employees is expected to increase to roughly around one million.

Constraints and Challenges

- ◆ **Capacity and infrastructure:** Due to the rapid expansion of India's civil aviation sector, airspace, parking bays and runway slots will become increasingly scarce over the next few years, especially at metro airports. Inadequate hangar space and unavailability of land to expand airports at their current sites, particularly in major cities, are two of the major constraints that face the sector.
- ◆ **Skilled workers:** According to a study conducted by the Ministry of Civil Aviation, Indian aviation could directly support 1.0 to 1.2 million jobs by 2035. This implies that about 0.25 million persons will need to be skilled over the next 10 years.
 - ◆ Shortage and gaps in availability of industry- recognised skills – from airline pilots and crew to maintenance and ground handling personnel – could constrain the growth of different segments of the sector.
 - ◆ Aviation Gasoline (AvGas) is used as fuel by almost all training aircraft. This fuel is imported,

its supply is not assured and it attracts a tax of 18 per cent (earlier 28 per cent) under GST. Coupled with a shortage of instructors, this makes flying training an expensive and time-consuming exercise.

- ♦ High cost to passengers and of air cargo:

- ♦ **Tariff determination:** The Ministry of Civil Aviation has mandated that all airports move from a single to a 'hybrid till' structure. Although this is beneficial as it incentivizes infrastructure investment, it raises costs for airlines and passengers.

- ♦ **Taxes on aviation turbine fuel (ATF):** Due to high taxes and lack of competition among providers, ATF is relatively expensive in India. Since it remains outside the GST network, there are also regional disparities in its price. The price of aviation fuel in India may be up to 60 per cent per cent higher than prices in ASEAN and the Middle East countries because of high central and state taxes. Fuel cost as a percentage of operating charges amounts to 45 per cent in India as compared to the global average of 30 per cent.

- ♦ **Incidence of GST on Aircraft Leases and Spare Parts:** GST of 5 per cent is applied on aircraft lease rentals; GST ranges between 5 per cent and 28 per cent on aircraft engines and spare parts. This also raises costs for the sector.

- ♦ **Aviation safety:** Although, the number of aviation safety violations in 2017 (337) has declined in comparison to 2016 (442), the absolute number still remains high.

Reforms: Civil Aviation Policy

By 2022, New India will provide a solid foundation for clean, inclusive, sustained and sustainable growth for the next three decades. The 'Strategy for New India @ 75' reflects our preparedness to make this transition. Its recommendations are practical and detailed to facilitate time-bound implementation.

- 1. Enhance aviation infrastructure:** Complete the planned airports under the UDAN initiative in a time-bound manner. Revival of 50 unserved and under-served airports/airstrip should be completed. It include provisions for domestic hub development while auctioning traffic rights.

- 2. Increase investment in the sector through financial and infrastructure support**

- ♦ Reduce taxes on Maintenance Repair and Overhaul (MRO) services and consider granting infrastructure status for MRO.
- ♦ Increase aircraft parking infrastructure and facilities at metro airports.

- 3. Address shortage of skilled manpower:**

Promote collaboration between original equipment manufacturers (OEMs), industry and educational institutes to teach the latest concepts in the aviation industry including management principles, IT in aviation, etc. Expedite courses by the National Aviation University, Facilitate greater involvement of the private sector in sponsoring aviation institutions, industrial training and R&D projects. Enhance the affordability of flying to enable an increase in domestic ticket sales from 103.75 million in 2016-17 to 300 million by 2022.

4. Promote air cargo growth

- ♦ Promote "Fly-from-India" through the creation of transshipment hubs. Develop an integrated digital supply chain or e-cargo gateway based on the National Air Cargo Community System (NACCS) platform.

5. Ease the regulatory environment for airports

- ♦ Deregulate aviation market, adopt a consistent model for tariff determination, Align taxation and pricing structure to global benchmarks by considering bringing aviation turbine fuel (ATF) under the rubric of GST. Amend the AAI Act to allow commercial usage of land with airports by liberalising end-use restrictions for existing and future airports.
- ♦ Strengthen regulatory capacity with respect to public private partnerships and ensure that the DGCA acts as a truly independent regulator, with the Ministry of Civil Aviation focusing on policies. Meet the regulatory and security requirements prescribed by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) at all times.

6. Prioritize aviation safety:

Shift focus to pre-empting and preventing accidents/incidents. There should be zero tolerance of safety violations. DGCA should be given autonomy for an effective aviation safety oversight system.

Conclusion

Growth in aviation sector is being driven by a growing economy, rising incomes, intense competition among airlines and a supportive policy environment. The National Civil Aviation Policy (NCAP 2016) signaled the government's intent to radically alter the sector's growth trajectory. NCAP's flagship program

- Regional Connectivity Scheme (RCS or UDAN) is taking aviation sector to the masses by offering subsidised fares as low as USD 35 for a one hour flight. The government decided to privatise its national carrier Air India and helicopter company Pawan Hans, something unthinkable in the past. Initiatives like Nabh Nirman (for airport capacity augmentation), Digi Yatra (for paperless travel) and AirSewa (for online passenger grievance redressal) etc. are bringing in radical changes. The tax structure for Aviation Turbine

Fuel (ATF), Maintenance, Repair and Overhaul (MRO) and aircraft leasing may be gradually aligned with leading global jurisdictions.

Indian aviation's Vision 2040 targets are lofty and aspirational. The road to 2040 will not be easy. The Indian government, industry and academia will need to work closely together. India will also need to collaborate with aviation leaders across the globe for knowledge and advice. With the right policies and a relentless focus on execution, India can surprise the world

by not just meeting but exceeding the Vision 2040 targets.

General Studies Paper- II

Topic: Government policies and interventions for development in various sectors and issues arising out of their design and implementation.

General Studies Paper- III

Topic: Infrastructure: Energy, Ports, Roads, Airports, Railways etc.

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7. MILITARY MODERNIZATION: A DIRE NEED

Why in News?

The Army will carry out major reforms and organisational restructuring in the next few months and has decided to roll out an Integrated Battle Group (IBG) as part of overall plan to enhance combat capability of the force. The plans are the brainchild of Army Chief General Bipin Rawat who wants to rightsize the Army for future battles.

Introduction

The 1.2 million-strong Indian Army, the world's second largest after China's 2.1 million-strong People's Liberation Army (PLA), hopes this restructuring will cut back up to 100,000 soldiers and reduce its crippling revenue budget (what it spends on manpower). The goal of Gen. Rawat reform plan is to make the army fighting fit and to find the resources within the existing budget to make it happen. At the heart of the plan is the new concept of bulked-up brigades-called Integrated Battle Groups or IBGs-to replace division-sized forces. As Gen. Rawat puts it, his plan has three objectives: "to be prepared for future warfare by strengthening our capabilities, become more efficient and better manage our budget."

The army's Land Warfare Doctrine, released in December, bears the Rawat stamp. It reiterates conventional war as being central to the army's operations

and that it will continue to wage counter-terrorism and counter-insurgency operations to 'ensure deterrence through punitive responses, against state-sponsored proxy war'. This army reform is based on the report prepared by former Northern Army Commander, Lt Gen. D.S. Hooda Committee. It has submitted its report to the National Security Advisory Board, which operates under NSA Ajit Doval, last November. It recommended, cutting 20 per cent of the standing army into reserve formations to save costs.

Background

As far back as 1975, then Lt Gen. K.V. Krishna Rao headed a panel that spoke of the need to reduce the army's teeth-to-tail ratio or the ratio of fighting personnel to the supply and logistics personnel. The last time this was done was in the mid-1980s when the visionary army chief General K. Sundarji adapted the US air-land battle concept to reshape four infantry divisions into the Reorganised Army Plains Infantry Divisions or RAPIDs, mobile divisions each comprising an armoured brigade equipped with battle tanks that would punch through enemy lines and two mechanised infantry brigades that would carry troops in newly acquired armoured personnel carriers. In 1998,

under what was informally called 'save and raise', Gen. V.P. Malik 'suppressed' 50,000 vacancies within the army. The army would work with manpower deficiencies and not replace retiring soldiers. It was a great idea, but got scuppered by the Kargil war of 1999. Overnight, the army grew by over 150,000 soldiers as it raised two new corps, one in Ladakh and another in Pathankot, to man the gaps along the LoC. In order to brighten career prospects in the armed forces, they pushed for higher pay and allowances and pensions under the sixth and seventh pay commissions over the past 20 years.

The foundation of current reforms based on four study groups to move into thrust areas identified by Gen. Rawat. The four studies, each headed by a Lt Gen., have a fourfold mission. They are meant to reshape the field army into an agile, operationally effective force capable of handling conventional and hybrid warfare, restructure the army headquarters in New Delhi; give its officer cadre a younger profile and revise the terms of engagement of the soldiers, a vast majority of whom retire at the age of 35. The army is yet to project the savings on account of reorganisation, but back of the envelope calculations

show it could shave off up to Rs 6,000 crore from its revenue budget if it reduces 50,000 soldiers. While the Shekatkar committee reforms, the brainchild of former defence minister Manohar Parrikar, targeted the flab within the army's support elements like the supply corps and the engineers, it left the field army untouched. That's where these new reforms aimed for restructuring.

Defence Budget

The defence budget (as is normally understood), for 2018-19, is around 2,79,305 crores, out of the total MoD budget of 4,04,365 crores (which includes defence pensions, expenditure on Coast Guard, BRO, ECHS, MF, Def Estates, JAK LI) – roughly 70% of the MoD budget, and 1.49 percent of India's GDP. Even this amount (Defence Budget) is around 11.4 percent of total Central Government expenditure, while the total MoD budget works out to 16.6 percent of Central Government expenditure. The revenue expenditure of 1,85,323 crores is 66 percent of the total defence budget today, when just seven years earlier in 2011-12, it was 60 percent. The defence budget has grown by a factor of 2 from 2009-10 to 2018-19, but the pension budget has increased by a factor of 5 for the same period. The total manpower cost (salaries and pensions) is 56 percent of the MoD's total budget for 2018-19, up from 44 percent in 2011-12. And during this period, capital procurement has declined from 26 to 18 percent. The figures speak for themselves.

Military Modernisation And Force Restructuring

India's strategic canvas now spreads far beyond its land borders. There is a variety of threats – territorial, seaborne, environmental, natural disasters, migration, drug trafficking, radicalization, terrorism, piracy – threats to the economy, energy security, with delivery means ranging from the conventional to space, cyberspace and nuclear. Hybrid warfare is a military strategy that is a lethal cocktail of conventional warfare with irregular warfare, lawfare, cyber warfare and diplomacy. This proposed specialist vertical will enable the army to fight

a defensive hybrid warfare challenge. These are issues, which merit examination when deciding on future military requirements and integrated perspective plans, when updating or revamping national security policies, and what does this imply for military modernization, i.e., capabilities desired for our respective services, and apportioning of funds accordingly. Yet another Revolution in Military Affairs which is quietly taking place is driven by technology, proliferation of sensors and smart devices, creation of sophisticated information networks, and the exponential growth of automated systems and artificial intelligence

Developing capabilities in the cyber and space domains, to incapacitate the adversary's communications, command and control, weapon systems, guidance mechanisms and so on, as also their equivalents through which the target nation's economy and services are governed is another priority area. And for prosecuting unconventional warfare, the need to expand and integrate our Special Forces, for achieving strategic aims requires no further iteration. Most importantly is the requirement for hands on, real time battlefield transparency on land and sea, through UAVs and satellites, while leveraging artificial intelligence to deliver munitions remotely using robots, swarms and the like.

China is working on a national strategy towards development of next-generation 'Artificial Intelligence' for commercial and military applications, while actively pursuing military robotics. It is steadily building up its strategic rocket forces. It plans to achieve preeminence in the fields of quantum cryptography and communications. On the similar lines India needs to beef up its capacity in these domains to counter effectively the upcoming challenges.

Integrated Battle Groups

The decision to form all arms integrated battle groups has the potential to completely upset the conventional

strategic balance that has prevailed between India and Pakistan for the last four decades. Equipped with infantry, tanks, artillery and mechanised infantry, the IBGs will be commanded by a major general and operate under the 14 corps-sized formations in the army. The concept is similar to the US army's basic manoeuvre unit, the infantry brigade combat group, and the PLA's 'combined arms brigades', a feature of China's military reorganisation under way since 2013. The IBGs will replace the primary all-arms fighting unit, the infantry division. Each infantry division is a force of around 14,000 soldiers backed by an armoured brigade of 80 tanks and artillery brigade of 500 guns, and can independently fight a ground war. One school of thought within the army calls for replacing all the 40 infantry divisions with nearly 140 IBGs.

The army has proposed doing away with all its division headquarters because the corps will now directly control the IBGs. They will also abolish the NCC Directorate, the Military Training Directorate and the Deputy Director General Military Farms. Several other separate directorates will be merged.

Government Initiatives Towards Military Modernization

The army reforms are a continuation of the ones set in motion by the defence ministry in 2017, when it began implementing the recommendations of the Lt Gen. (retd) D.B. Shekatkar committee report of December 2016. Some Recommendations taken up for implementation include:

- ◆ Optimization of Signals Establishments to include Radio Monitoring Companies, Corps Air Support Signal Regiments, Air Formation Signal Regiments, Composite Signal Regiments and merger of Corps Operating and Engineering Signal Regiments.
- ◆ Better utilization of Supply and Transportation echelons and Animal Transport Units.

- ◆ Enhancement in standards for recruitment of clerical staff and drivers in the Army.
- ◆ Improving the efficiency of the National Cadet Corps.

Government has brought New Defence Procurement Policy 2016. It has stressed on reducing delays in procurements by eliminating repetitive procedures. DPP will have a new category of Indigenously Designed Developed and Manufactured (IDDM) as most preferred category for procurements. The three sub procedures under “Make” category will boost domestic private and small scale industry. The ministry of defence (MoD) has also decided to allow private firms to manage and operate all the Army Base Workshops (ABWs).

Recently, government has established a Defence Planning Committee (DPC) under the chairmanship of the National Security Adviser (NSA). DPC will be a permanent interministerial body. It will consist of the Chairman of the Chiefs of the Staff Committee (COSC), other service chiefs, Defence Secretary, Foreign Secretary and Secretary (expenditure) in the Finance Ministry. NSA is also empowered to co-opt other members as and when required. It will analyse and evaluate national defence and security priorities, foreign policy imperatives, operational directives and associated requirements, relevant strategic and security-related doctrines, defence acquisition and infrastructure development plans.

Recently, three new formations under Defence Ministry namely Defence Cyber Agency(DCA), Defence Space Agency(DSA) and a Special Operations Division(SOD) have been proposed. DCA will work in close co-ordination with the National Cyber Security Advisor. Its experts will be distributed to various formations of the Army, Navy and IAF, and will focus on noncivilian cyber issues, including safeguarding critical infrastructure. DSA will work closely with ISRO and DRDO for better utilisation and integration of

space resources including information from surveillance satellites. SOD will have central pool of personnel from the Special Forces of the Army (Para commandoes), Navy (Marcos) and IAF (Garud's). They will be equipped and trained together for unconventional warfare capabilities.

Government is yet to act on one of the most contentious recommendations of the Shekatkar committee-the creation of just three joint theatre commands: north, south and west-which will merge the existing 17 commands. Each command will report to a theatre commander. The theatre commanders will report to the Chief of Defence Staff (CDS), the single point military advisor to the government. It is also yet to act on the proposal for a permanent chairman, Chiefs of Staffs Committee (a halfway house to a CDS). The post is presently held in rotation by the seniormost of the three service chiefs. For years, the services could never build a consensus on the roles and responsibilities of the permanent chairman.

Restructuring is critical

The world's second largest army faces multiple challenges, each of which has changed in varying degrees over the past three decades. It is fighting an insurgency in Jammu and Kashmir that has flickered with varying intensity. Its troops are strung out over 4,000 km of disputed boundaries with Pakistan and China. Fighting a full-scale conventional war on a collusive Sino-Pak axis is now cast in stone in its military strategy. It's not just about fighting a two-front war, it's also about obtaining decisive military objectives on both fronts.

According to Lt General Deependra Singh Hooda, the military strategy that emerges from internal army discussions must be formalized and shared with the political leadership. They must be aware of the capability of the army as well as its limitations, and how the army intends to prosecute a war. This will enable the complete harmonizing of the political and military aims,

something that is conspicuous today only by its absence.

The reforms are meaningless without the government finalising a national security strategy after which it can kick off resource-intensive modernisation plans like seamlessly linking up soldiers on the battlefield through information-technology and sensory networks like those in the armies of the US or China. Technology acquisition is an expensive exercise which needs the government on board. Since this is not a priority for the government, this (the reforms) will remain nothing more than a plan for internal reforms.

Conclusion

A preface on the ingredients which will shape such contours becomes necessary. The understanding of what to expect from our armed forces, derives from an appraisal of how India's national aims are to be achieved in the current and future geo-strategic environment. India is a responsible power in a multi-polar world, currently the dominant power in the Indian Ocean and South Asia, and as envisaged by Price Waterhouse Cooper, the second largest economy by 2050. There is an envisaged role for India based on these formulations, which many nations large and small share. To achieve this, India has to devise corresponding security policies, and conceptualise as to what are the ends the military is required to achieve to attain these. This would lead us to the appropriate strategies to adopt, thereby connecting the two in a constantly changing environment. This essentially, is the baseline.

General Studies Paper- III

Topic: Security challenges and their management in border areas; -linkages of organized crime with terrorism.

Topic: Various Security forces and agencies and their mandate.



SEVEN SUBJECTIVE QUESTIONS WITH MODEL ANSWERS

Subhas Chandra Bose: A Defiant Patriot

Q1. Highlight the differences in the approach of Subhash Chandra Bose and Mahatma Gandhi in the struggle for freedom.

Hint:

Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose was one of the greatest revolutionaries who dedicated his life to gaining India's independence. After returning to India Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose came under the influence of Mahatma Gandhi and joined the Indian National Congress. On Gandhiji's instructions, he started working under Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das, whom he later acknowledged his political guru. Bose was advised by Gandhi to work under Chittaranjan Das, a politician in Bengal.

Bose became increasingly critical of Gandhi's more conservative economics as well as his less confrontational approach toward independence. In 1938 he was elected president of the Indian National Congress and formed a national planning committee, which formulated a policy of broad industrialization. However, this did not harmonize with Gandhian economic thought, which clung to the notion of cottage industries and benefiting from the use of the country's own resources.

The doctrinaire conflict between two individuals can be unambiguously identified when they consistently articulate their principled stands and follow their principles through their actions. The distinction becomes challenging when one or both vacillate and/or act contrary to their stated principles. Subhas Chandra Bose has been consistent throughout in his demand for political independence by virtue of complete severance from the British.

Mahatma Gandhi, on the other hand, identified Spiritual Swaraj, which would cure Indian civilisation from evils such as doctors, lawyers, railways, mill made cloth, heavy machinery, medicine and contraceptives, as his goal early on. He subsequently verbally demanded Dominion Status with membership in the British Commonwealth most of the time, without, however, revoking his articulation of spiritual Swaraj. In 1942, however, expecting that the British would lose the second world war, he sought complete severance

from them, but reverted to demanding Dominion Status as soon as the tides of the war turned.

Gandhi and Bose did not differ on their choices between communism and capitalism. Both were socialists, as per their stated positions, and disassociated themselves from Communism (Bose certainly did). Given Gandhi's substantial flexibility in doctrines, or "flexible conscience" as Bose would call it, the conflict between the two had more to do with personal control over Indian dissent and perhaps collateral British and business interests that conflicted with Bose's agenda.

Skill India: An Analysis

Q2. The study highlights how serious it is for the government and other stake holders to work together in order to create skilled workforce to bridge the skill gap and boost the economic growth.

Hint:

India is one of the youngest nations in the world, with more than 54% of the total population below 25 years of age and over 62% of the population in the working age group (15-59 years). The country's population pyramid is expected to bulge across the 15-59 age group over the next decade. This demographic advantage is predicted to last only until 2040. India therefore has a very narrow time frame to harness its demographic dividend and to overcome its skill shortages.

The Government of India, Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship in 2016 constituted a Review Committee for Rationalisation and Optimization of the Functioning of the Sector Skill Councils. In last year The Sharda Prasad Committee on Skill India Reforms submitted its report. The framework was to be implemented by December 27, 2018.

The success of a nation always depends on the success of its youth and Skill India is certain to bring a lot of advantage and opportunities for these young Indians. The time is not far when India will evolve into a skilled society where there is prosperity and dignity for all. Major Issues Facing Vocational Education & Training System are as Follow:

- ◆ Absence Of A Sound National Vocational Education And Training System

- ◆ Absence Of National Vocational Education And Training Standards
- ◆ Absence Of Ownership Of The National Standards
- ◆ Inadequate Training Capacity In The Country
- ◆ Poor Quality Outcomes
- ◆ Skills For The Future
- ◆ Need For A Comprehensive Legislation

India is a country today with 65% of its youth in the working age group. If ever there is a way to reap this demographic advantage, it has to be through skill development of the youth so that they add not only to their personal growth, but to the country's economic growth as well. Skill India is an initiative of the Government of India which has been launched to empower the youth of the country with skill sets which make them more employable and more productive in their work environment.

Though Government of India has recognized the need for a well-defined framework for skill development and has formed various organizations at national and state levels to take the responsibility of skill development, still there is a need to put lot more effort to develop skill culture in India. Skill gap can have a serious impact, not only on the employers, but also on the economy as a whole. One of the major concerns is the loss of productivity and revenues as the many of the jobs remain vacant for significant time due to lack of skilled labour.

Indian Diaspora in Making 'New India'

Q3. Over the years, the diasporic populations have become an increasingly important factor in international politics. As much of India's foreign policy aims to translate partnerships to benefits for key projects like Swachh Bharat, Clean Ganga, Make In India, Digital India, and Skill India, the diaspora has plenty of scope to contribute. Discuss.

Hint:

India has the second largest Diaspora in the world after China, estimated at over 31 million (3.1 crore) spread across the globe whose ancestral roots can be traced to traders, indentured labourers, political deportees, business entrepreneurs among others. Overseas Indians are not just content with tried and tested professions and vocations; many of them have successfully carved a career in politics, government, and diplomacy. In many countries, such as Mauritius, Fiji, Trinidad & Tobago and Portugal, PIOs have become heads of state and government. The Indian diaspora has contributed enormously to strengthening

India's cultural, literary, political and economic bonds across the world. India sees in them an important bridge with the countries where they are living.

The Diaspora population bring technical and domain expertise to domestic startups and often act as angel investors. Diaspora Indian faculty abroad volunteer time and resources to help faculty on Indian campuses improve the quality of education — as in the case of member institutions of the Indo Universal Collaboration of Engineering Education. This was reflected in advancing projects whether through government arrangements or private commercial deals related to Make in India, Skill India, Digital India, Start Up India as well as those aimed at improving our infrastructure and transportation links and fostering all round sustainable development in urban or energy sectors.

This is a globalized world, as a result of which historic reductions in global poverty have been achieved. But it is also increasingly clear that change is needed. Polarization is on the rise in many countries. In some cases, the social contracts that hold societies together are fraying. This is an era of unparalleled resources and technological advancement, but for too many people it is also an era of insecurity. Renewing and improving the architecture of our national and international political and economic systems is this generation's defining task. While the risks facing the global community require specific, distinct solutions, they cannot be solved in a go-at-it-alone manner. At a time when there is criticism of global institutions, we need to reaffirm the importance of a well-functioning multilateral system.

But, support of the diaspora is neither automatic nor continuous, and their interests need not be India's priorities. For example, the Indian community in the US was not vocal enough in criticising President Donald Trump's proposal to restrict the H-1B visa programme that has benefited many Indians. Further, a strong diaspora does not always translate to benefits for the home country. India has had problems with negative campaigning and foreign funding, coming from abroad, for separatist movements like the Khalistan movement. The Indian government, while continuing to engage with the diaspora as a part of its foreign policy, will have to be cautious of these sensitive issues that may impact the security of the state.

Today, the government's foreign-policy strategy of a strong outreach to the Indian diaspora stands out. As much of India's foreign policy aims to translate partnerships to benefits for key projects like Swachh Bharat, Clean Ganga, Make In India, Digital India, and Skill India, the diaspora has plenty of scope to contribute. The diaspora can provide the requisite strategic impulse, which makes it all the more important to unlock their potential.

Emerging Global Risks and Challenges

Q4. The world is facing a growing number of complex and interconnected challenges—from slowing global growth and persistent economic inequality to climate change, geopolitical tensions and the accelerating pace of the Fourth Industrial Revolution. Examine the evolving macro-level risk landscape and highlights major threats that may disrupt the world over the next decade.

Hint:

The Global Risks Report demonstrates how high the stakes are my hope is that this year's report will also help to build momentum behind the need to act. It begins with a sweep of the global risks landscape and warns of the danger of sleepwalking into crises. It goes on to consider a number of risks in depth: geopolitical and geo-economic disruptions, rising sea levels, emerging biological threats, and the increasing emotional and psychological strain that many people are experiencing.

- ◆ During 2018, macroeconomic risks moved into sharper focus. Financial market volatility increased and the headwinds facing the global economy intensified.
 - ◆ From trade wars to the dissolution of weapons treaties, cooperation between countries is on the decline. Leaders are concerned that this divergent geopolitical climate may continue to inhibit collective progress on important global challenges.
 - ◆ As the influence of technology creeps into more aspects of everyday life, cyber-attacks and lax cybersecurity protocols are becoming more of a concern. In one dramatic example information theft, multiple breaches of India's government ID database reportedly left the information of over 1 billion registered citizens exposed. Technology is influencing society in other ways too, such as the pervasive issue of "fake news".
 - ◆ Extreme weather was the risk of greatest concern, but our survey respondents are increasingly worried about environmental policy failure: having fallen in the rankings after Paris, "failure of climate-change mitigation and adaptation" jumped back to number two in terms of impact this year. The results of climate inaction are becoming increasingly clear. The accelerating pace of biodiversity loss is a particular concern.
 - ◆ One of the major themes of this year's forum will be addressing increasing polarization in many countries.
- The deep interconnectedness of our international

systems – economic, political, technological, environmental – is transforming the global risks landscape. Nostalgia for simpler times is a tempting but inadequate response, not least because previous periods in history have hardly been free of global risks. The task now is not to wish complexity away, but to try to understand the global changes that are taking place and learn how best to respond collectively to the challenges they present.

Rising Inequality and India

Q5. "It is 'morally outrageous' that a few wealthy individuals are amassing a growing share of India's wealth, while the poor are struggling to eat their next meal or pay for their child's medicines." Discuss the statement in context of rising inequality in India.

Hint:

India's top 10 percent of the population holds 77.4 percent of the total national wealth. The contrast is even sharper for the top 1 percent that holds 51.53 percent of the national wealth. The bottom 60 per cent, the majority of the population, own merely 4.8 per cent of the national wealth. Inequality in India has a "female face", where women are less likely to have paid work when compared to men, while even among the richest there are only nine women in the country's 119-member billionaires club.

In India, traditionally those from so called high-caste backgrounds are not supposed to use the same eating utensils as those from so called low-caste backgrounds. Further, at times some poor people are held prisoner in hospitals until they can pay; sometimes they are even chained.

Children from poor families in India are three times more likely to die before their first birthday than children from rich families. The highest-quality private medical care is only available to those who have the money to pay for it. India is a top destination for medical tourism, with some of the best-quality care in the world available to those who can afford it.

Some of the major reasons of rising income inequality in India:

- ◆ **Unemployment** - Since sufficient employment could not be created through the process of planned economic development, it was not possible to increase the income levels of most people.
- ◆ **Tax Evasion** - High tax rates encourage evasion and avoidance and give birth to a parallel economy.
- ◆ **Regressive Tax** - The indirect taxes give maximum revenue to the government.

- ◆ **New Agricultural Strategy** - Most farmers in India could not enjoy the-benefits of higher agricultural productivity. As a result, inequality in the distribution of income in the rural areas has increased.
- ◆ **Inflation** - During inflation, few profit earners gain and most wage earners lose. Since wages have lagged behind prices, profits have increased.

According to the International Monetary Fund, the higher income inequality has lowered the effectiveness of growth to combat poverty and significantly slowed the building of a sizeable middle class in India. Rising income inequality has developmental implications. The super-rich can avoid taxes by using innovative schemes to shelter their wealth and manipulate the political system without repercussions. This impedes the government's ability to raise revenues that contribute to slower poverty reduction and also adversely impacts social spending to reduce social inequalities of health, education and employment. India already fairs poorly in this area. Further, economic inequality can adversely exacerbate a range of social problems, including inter-group relations and conflict, social cohesion and violent crime.

Efforts should be made to eliminate tax avoidance and evasion by corporates and the super-rich. Also policies to deliver universal free health care, education and other public services taking special considerations for women and girls should be made. Privatisation of public services should be minimized.

Indian Aviation Sector and Vision 2040

Q6. The Indian aviation sector is on a high growth path which is currently among the top seven global aviation markets. It is expected to become the third largest market in the world by 2022. Indian aviation's Vision 2040 targets are lofty and aspirational. Discuss opportunities for investment and challenges in new growth areas in the domain of civil aviation.

Hint:

The civil aviation sector contributed USD8.9 billion to India's GDP in 2014 and supported 1.31 million direct, indirect and induced aviation jobs.³ In 2016, the demand for domestic air travel was twice that in China. India's domestic air traffic made up 69 per cent of total airline traffic in South Asia. The World Economic Forum's Global Competitiveness Report, 2018 ranks India as 53rd out of 140 countries worldwide in air transport infrastructure.

According to civil aviation vision 2040 the report, India, the seventh-largest aviation market with 187 million passengers (to, from and within India) in 2017-18, is

expected to become the third-largest by 2022. Over the next two decades, the global commercial aircraft fleet size is expected to grow at a CAGR of around 4%. Around 45,000 new aircraft are likely to be delivered globally between 2018 and 2040. Challenges faced by aviation sector:

- ◆ **Capacity and infrastructure:** Due to the rapid expansion of India's civil aviation sector, airspace, parking bays and runway slots will become increasingly scarce over the next few years, especially at metro airports.
- ◆ **Skilled workers:** According to a study conducted by the Ministry of Civil Aviation, Indian aviation could directly support 1.0 to 1.2 million jobs by 2035.
- ◆ Shortage and gaps in availability of industry- recognised skills – from airline pilots and crew to maintenance and ground handling personnel – could constrain the growth of different segments of the sector.
- ◆ Aviation Gasoline is used as fuel by almost all training aircraft. This fuel is imported, its supply is not assured and it attracts a tax of 18 per cent (earlier 28 per cent) under GST.
- ◆ **Aviation safety:** Although, the number of aviation safety violations in 2017 (337) has declined in comparison to 2016 (442), the absolute number still remains high.

Indian aviation's Vision 2040 targets are lofty and aspirational. The road to 2040 will not be easy. The Indian government, industry and academia will need to work closely together. India will also need to collaborate with aviation leaders across the globe for knowledge and advice. With the right policies and a relentless focus on execution, India can surprise the world by not just meeting but exceeding the Vision 2040 targets.

Military Modernization: A Dire Need

Q7. Does India, with one of the world's largest military force, have the wherewithal to play a role in consonance with its geographical spread, size of populace, economic strength and its anticipated ascendance in a few decades? Discuss.

Hint:

The 1.2 million-strong Indian Army is the world's second largest after China's 2.1 million-strong People's Liberation Army (PLA). India's strategic canvas now spreads far beyond its land borders. There is a variety of threats – territorial, seaborne, environmental, natural disasters, migration, drug trafficking, radicalization, terrorism, piracy – threats to the economy, energy security, with delivery means ranging from the conventional to space, cyberspace and nuclear.

The army has proposed doing away with all its division headquarters because the corps will now directly control the Integrated Battle Groups (IBGs). They will also abolish the NCC Directorate, the Military Training Directorate and the Deputy Director General Military Farms. Several other separate directorates will be merged. The DGs of Perspective Planning and Weapons & Equipment directorates are to be merged into a single director general (PP & WE).

The army reforms are a continuation of the ones set in motion by the defence ministry in 2017, when it began implementing the recommendations of the Lt Gen. (retd) D.B. Shekatkar committee report of December 2016. These reforms will see the redeployment and restructuring of 57,000 men, including officers, junior commissioned officers (JCOs) and soldiers.

The government is yet to act on one of the most contentious recommendations of the Shekatkar committee- the creation of just three joint theatre commands: north, south and west-which will merge the existing 17 commands. Each command will report to a theatre commander. The theatre commanders will report to the Chief of Defence Staff (CDS), the single point military advisor to the government. It is also yet to act on the proposal for a permanent chairman,

Chiefs of Staffs Committee (a halfway house to a CDS). The post is presently held in rotation by the seniormost of the three service chiefs.

The world's second largest army faces multiple challenges, each of which has changed in varying degrees over the past three decades. It is fighting an insurgency in Jammu and Kashmir that has flickered with varying intensity. Its troops are strung out over 4,000 km of disputed boundaries with Pakistan and China. Fighting a full-scale conventional war on a collusive Sino-Pak axis is now cast in stone in its military strategy.

The reforms are meaningless without the government finalising a national security strategy after which it can kick off resource-intensive modernisation plans like seamlessly linking up soldiers on the battlefield through information-technology and sensory networks like those in the armies of the US or China.

The understanding of what to expect from our armed forces, derives from an appraisal of how India's national aims are to be achieved in the current and future geo-strategic environment. India is a responsible power in a multi-polar world and currently the dominant power in the Indian Ocean and South Asia.



SEVEN IMPORTANT NATIONAL & INTERNATIONAL NEWS

NATIONAL

1. ASI Finds 2,300-year-old Artefacts in Odisha

Archaeologists have unearthed artefacts believed to be 2,300-year-old while carrying out excavation at the Asurgarh Fort in Odisha's Kalahandi district. A nine member team of Archaeological Survey of India led by Dibishada B. Garnayak, excavated the items dating from Mauryan to Kushan period.

The present archaeological work reveals a number of brick structures. Wedge shaped bricks are also noticed in the circular structures. Most of the structures have terracotta tiles with grooves and hole for socketing. The Asurgarh people during that time probably used stone rubbles and tile

fragments for flooring their houses and the streets. Besides, silver punch marked coins, silver and copper toe ring and ear rings, beads of carnelian, jasper, beryl, garnet, agate and coral have been found. Other discovered artefacts include, glass bangle pieces of different designs and colours, sling balls, pestle, iron equipment like small wheel, ring, and arrow head. Some of the artefacts were as old as 2,300 year.

The findings of coral beads and imperial variety of silver punch mark coins strongly indicates about long distant trade and association of hinterland people with seafaring people.

It is believed that the fort is surrounded by moat on its northern, eastern and southern sides. Close to the western rampart, the river Sandul flows to the north thereby forming a natural moat on the western side of the fort. On the eastern side of the fort there is an extensive lake. The fort had four wide gates in four cardinal directions and at each gate was installed one guardian deity. These guardian deities are named as Ganga at the eastern gate, Kalapat at the western, Vaishnavi at the northern and Dokri at the southern gate.

2. Microsat-R and KalamSat Satellite

In its first mission in 2019 the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) in 2019 had put Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO's) Microsat-R satellite and the first student-made payload KalamSat into the outerspace. ISRO workhorse Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) blasted off from the first launchpad of the Satish Dhawan Space Centre.

In a textbook launch, the 44-metre tall, four-stage PSLV-C44 injected the 740-kg Microsat-R into orbit precisely 13 minutes and 30 seconds after

its launch. The fourth stage of the rocket with co-passenger KalamSat, a students' payload, would now be moved to a higher circular orbit, around 450 kms from earth, so as to establish an orbital platform for carrying out experiments. According to ISRO it would take about 90 minutes for the fourth stage to reach the desired orbit.

Although specific details are not provided by ISRO, Microsat-R, an imaging satellite, is meant for military purposes. Built at a cost of around Rs 12 lakh, the KalamSat is an

experimental satellite for studying the communication system of nano satellites, which can be useful in many fields, predominantly disaster management.

Contributed by college students and the members of a Chennai-based organisation — Space Kidz India — KalamSat is the first to use PS4 (the fourth stage of the vehicle) as a platform to orbit around the earth. It is also the lightest ever satellite to be launched by India.

3. GST Appellate Tribunal (GSTAT)

The Union Cabinet approved the creation of a National Bench of the Goods and Services Tax Appellate Tribunal (GSTAT), which would serve as the forum of second appeals to do with the applicability of GST, and will also be the first common forum of dispute resolution between the Centre and the States.

The National Bench of the Appellate Tribunal, to be situated in New Delhi, will be presided over by its president. It will consist of a technical member from the Centre and a representative of the States. The disputes they would be looking at would be appeals under GST law wherein the taxpayer is contesting the

tax demand put by the tax department. The mechanism envisaged is that the assessment would be done by people below the rank of Commissioner. The appeal based on the assessment would be made to the Commissioner (Appeals) and from there there would be an appeal to the Appellate Tribunal.

Chapter XVIII of the CGST Act provides for an appeal and review mechanism for dispute resolution under the GST regime. Section 109 of this chapter empowers the Centre to constitute, on the recommendation of the GST Council, an appellate tribunal for hearing appeals against the orders passed by the Appellate Authority.

The dispute resolution forum would be extremely crucial in the coming months as several states may end up fighting among themselves and with central government over indirect tax revenues. Up until now there was no resolution mechanism such disputes.

This would be the forum of second appeal in the GST regime. While typically not many litigations should have been adjudicated, still early formation of this Appellate Authority would help prevent any unwarranted delays in the adjudication of appeals to be filed in the future.

4. Mekedatu Project

The Tamil Nadu government on Friday sought Prime Minister Narendra Modi's intervention on the Mekedatu issue, urging him to instruct the Ministry of Water Resources and Central Water Commission to "reject outright" Karnataka's Detailed Project Report (DPR) on constructing a Balancing Reservoir cum Drinking Water Project at Mekedatu across Cauvery river.

About the Project

The Government of Karnataka is planning to build a dam across river Cauvery near Mekedatu in Ramanagara district. The proposed capacity of dam is 48 TMC (thousand million cubic feet). The objective of the dam is to supply drinking water to Bengaluru and recharge the groundwater table in the region.

in impounding of the flows in the intermediate catchment below the Krishnaraja Sagar and Kabini reservoirs, and Billigundulu in the common border of Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. Tamil Nadu also suspects that with the proposed project Karnataka intends to extend the area under irrigation.

Karnataka's Arguments

Karnataka argues that Mekedatu project will not come in the way of releasing the stipulated quantum of water to Tamil Nadu, nor will it be used for irrigation purposes. It is willing to hold talks with Tamil Nadu on this issue. Karnataka has again made it clear that the reservoir is only for storing water meant to generate electricity and provide drinking water to Bengaluru as well as its neighbouring areas.

The feasibility study of the dam is already cleared by the Central Water Commission (CWC) earlier.



Why Tamil Nadu is Opposing the Project?

Tamil Nadu's main argument is that the project violates the final award of the Cauvery River Water Tribunal. It argues that the construction of the reservoir would result

5. Size India Project

The Clothing Manufacturers Association of India (CMAI) will work with the Union Ministry of Textiles in the "Size India" project, which is expected to be launched next month. CMAI will conduct a study across India to arrive at standard sizes.

About 'Size India' Project

The 'Size India' project will help create a India-specific size chart for the textiles and garment industry. It aims to arrive at standard Indian sizes for apparels. The project will reduce overall prices and the consumers will stand to benefit from it.

Under the project, anthropometric data will be collected from 25,000 sample (with men and women in equal numbers) population in age group 15 to 65 years across six major cities. The six cities are Kolkata (east), Mumbai (west), New Delhi (north), Bengaluru (south), Hyderabad (centre), and Shillong (northeast). It will create database of measurements that will result in standardized size chart which is representative of Indian population and can be adopted by apparel industry.

Apparel retail is one of the important drivers of modern retail in

India, with its total size estimated to be \$72 billion. Developed countries such as the U.S. and U.K. have standard sizes for apparels. Having standard sizes will reassure customers when they purchase a product, both online and at outlets, and will reduce wastages for the apparel manufacturers. At present, large percentage of population face difficulty in finding clothes that fit them perfectly according to their body measurements. This is mainly due to differences in anthropometric built of people in different geographical regions across the country.

6. Sea Vigil 2019

The India Navy along with the Coast Guard successfully conducted a coastal Defence exercise titled 'Sea Vigil' in close coordination with all maritime stakeholders, including the fishing and coastal communities, from January 22 to 23.

The exercise underwent along the entire 7,516.6 km coastline and Exclusive Economic Zone in the

country with over 30 ships and aircraft of the Navy and Coast Guard as well as 85 patrol boats manned by various security agencies.

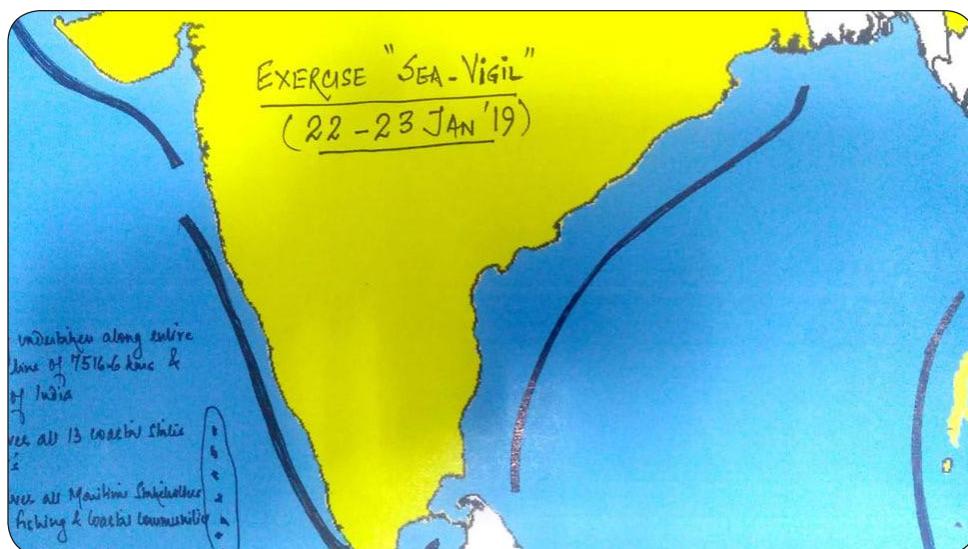
During the exercise, all coastal police stations, control rooms, fishing harbours, landing centres and other operational centres were activated and security was beefed up at all vital installations. Audit of the International

Ship and Port Facility Security (ISPS) code was also carried out by the ports.

The exercise, facilitated by different Union Ministries, State Governments, Union Territories and other agencies, covered the entire coast of India.

The main goal of this large-scale exercise is to test the overall security of the coastal regions and their preparedness in thwarting an attack by infiltration through the sea route. A wide range of contingencies, including simulated attacks on vital installations and assets along the coastline, will be exercised to assess the response, coordination and information sharing between agencies.

The exercise is being conducted under the aegis of Commander-in-Chief, Coastal Defence, Southern Naval Command, Kochi and is being monitored from the Joint Operations Centre, Kochi.



7. Triple-Drug Therapy for Lymphatic Filariasis

A pilot project to administer triple drug therapy with the long term aim of eradicating lymphatic filariasis was recently launched in Nagpur, Maharashtra. Nagpur is one of the five districts in the country and only one in Maharashtra where this triple drug therapy campaign is being launched.

Lymphatic Filariasis

It is caused by infection with parasitic worms living in the lymphatic system. The larval stages of the parasite (microfilaria) circulate in the blood and are transmitted from person to person by mosquitoes. The parasites

are transmitted by four main types of mosquitoes: Culex, Mansonia, Anopheles and Aedes.

Manifestation of the disease after infection takes time and can result in an altered lymphatic system, causing abnormal enlargement of body parts, and leading to severe disability and social stigmatization of those affected. Lymphatic filariasis, commonly known as elephantiasis, is a neglected tropical disease.

Triple Drug Therapy

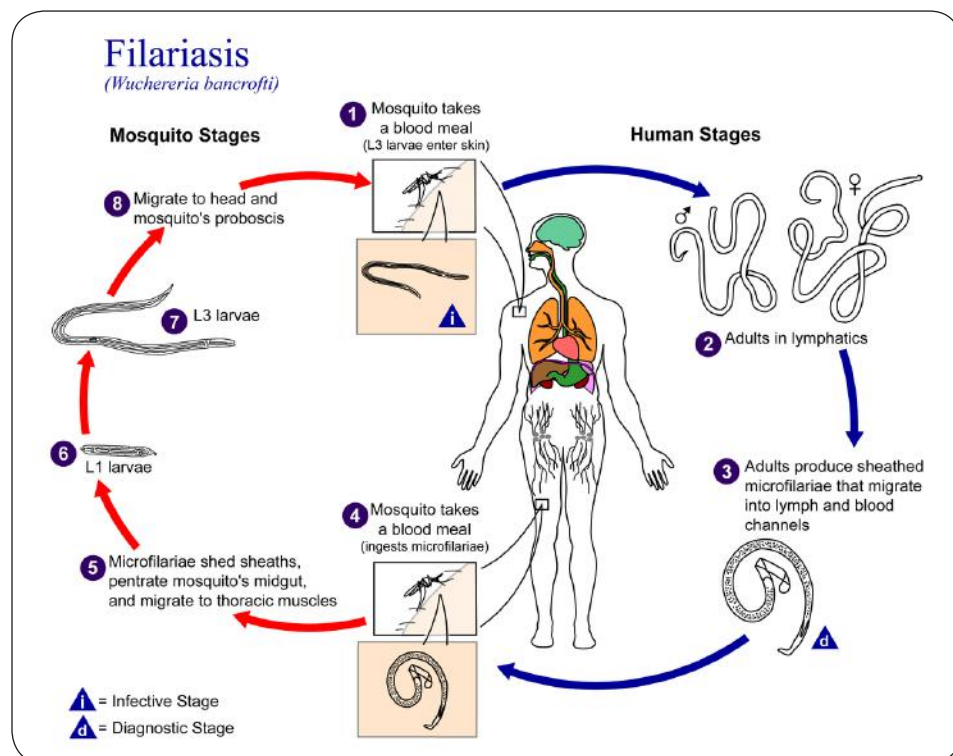
The World Health Organization (WHO) is recommending three drug treatment

to accelerate the global elimination of lymphatic filariasis. The treatment, known as IDA, involves a combination of ivermectin, diethylcarbamazine citrate and albendazole. It is being recommended annually in settings where its use is expected to have the greatest impact.

The third drug being used in this therapy will help control adult worms of lymphatic filariasis. Micro filariasis, which is produced by adult worms, is the cause of swollen leg. Previously the adult worms were sterilized by drugs and remained inactive for a year. Now that period will increase to two years. The plan is to administer these drugs for two consecutive years. The life of the adult worm is hardly four years, so it would die a natural death without causing any harm to the person.

Lymphatic filariasis poses a grave threat to India. Over 40% of worldwide cases are found in India. Since 2004, two drug therapy for lymphatic filariasis has been in place but the addition of the third drug now will give a boost to the overall campaign.

India has missed earlier deadlines to eradicate the disease by 2015 and 2017. The global deadline now is 2020 and the three drug approach may help the country get there.



INTERNATIONAL

1. Global Talent Competitiveness Index

India has been ranked 80th on the annual global index of talent competitiveness. While Switzerland continues to top the list, India has moved up one position from 81st last year. In 2017, India was placed at the 92nd rank. The index measures how countries grow, attract and retain talent.

Key Highlights

- ◆ Though India has improved its position on the list, it still lags behind the other BRICS nations.
- ◆ While India was ranked the lowest in the group, China fared the best with 45th rank, followed by Russia at 49th, South Africa at 71st and Brazil at 72nd position.

- ◆ Among the top countries on the index this year, Switzerland is followed by Singapore and then the United States of America.
- ◆ In the top ten of talent competitiveness ranking, only two non-European countries can be seen: Singapore and the USA. This underlines that Europe remains a talent powerhouse
- ◆ The talent gap between higher and lower-income countries has increased over the last five years.

About Global Talent Competitiveness Index

- ◆ It is an annual index created in partnership with Adecco, Insead and Tata Communications.

- ◆ The index is an annual report that measures the ability of countries to compete for talent.
 - ◆ The report measures levels of Global Talent Competitiveness by looking at 68 variables such as ease of hiring, gender earnings gap, and prevalence of training in firms.
- According to the report, India's biggest challenge is to improve its ability to attract and retain talent. It further added, there is a need to address its poor level of Internal Openness in particular with respect to weak gender equality and low tolerances towards minorities and immigrants—and its disappointing showing in lifestyle indicators.

2. Alliance to End Plastic Waste

An alliance of global companies from the plastics and consumer goods value chain has launched a new organisation- Alliance to End Plastic Waste (AEPW) - to advance solutions to eliminate plastic waste, especially in the ocean.

About

It is a not-for-profit organization that includes companies that make, use,

sell, process, collect, and recycle plastics. This includes chemical and plastic manufacturers, consumer goods companies, retailers, converters, and waste management companies, also known as the plastics value chain.

The cross value chain AEPW, currently made up of nearly thirty member companies, has committed over \$1.0 billion with the goal of investing \$1.5 billion over the next five years to help end plastic waste in the environment. It will develop and bring to scale solutions that will minimize and manage plastic

waste and promote solutions for used plastics by helping to enable a circular economy. The membership of alliance represents global companies and located throughout North and South America, Europe, Asia, Southeast Asia, Africa, and the Middle East.

Infrastructure development to collect and manage waste and increase recycling; Innovation to advance and scale new technologies; Education and engagement of governments, businesses, and communities to mobilize action and clean up of concentrated areas of plastic waste already in the environment are some key areas of collaboration.



3. Arab Economic and Social Development Summit

The leaders from the Arab World met in Beirut, Lebanon to discuss economic and social development. In addition to agreement on a 29-item economic agenda, Arab leaders and officials have also urged the international community to support nations hosting Syrian refugees and take steps to minimise the impact of the refugee crisis. The call was made in the Beirut Declaration at the Arab Economic and Social Development Summit that concluded in the Lebanese capital recently.

The Arab Economic and Social Development summits are summits of the Arab League, held at the level of head of state to address issues of economic and social development among member-states.

Beirut Declaration

A joint statement called the Beirut

Declaration was issued in the summit. The important aspects of the Declaration are:

- ◆ The declaration calls for the establishment of an Arab free trade zone.
- ◆ The declaration notes that the refugee crisis in Arab countries is the worst humanitarian problem since World War II and points out that the crisis leads to an economic slowdown, increases the expenditure and deficit, imposes burdens on public sectors and infrastructure and poses risks to the society.
- ◆ Full commitment to implement the decisions that were taken and the projects adopted by previous Arab Development Summits in their successive sessions.

What is Arab League?

The Arab League is a regional organization of Arab countries in and around North Africa, the Horn of Africa and Arabia. It was formed in Cairo on 22 March 1945 with six members: Kingdom of Egypt, Kingdom of Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, and Syria. Currently, the League has 22 members, but Syria's participation has been suspended since November 2011, as a consequence of government repression during the Syrian Civil War.

The League's main goal is to "draw closer the relations between member States and co-ordinate collaboration between them, to safeguard their independence and sovereignty, and to consider in a general way the affairs and interests of the Arab countries".

4. Gene-Edited Monkeys

Chinese scientists cloned five monkeys from a gene-edited macaque with circadian-related disorders. The cloned monkeys were born in Shanghai at the Institute of Neuroscience of Chinese Academy of Sciences. Researchers knocked out BMAL1 — a critical transcription factor for activating circadian rhythms — through gene editing at the embryo stage, then cloned a monkey with the mutation. Genetic editing tool known as CRISPR/Cas9 were used for knocking out the gene from healthy embryos.

The absence of the BMAL1 gene will affect the operation of the animals' biological clocks, and could induce a wide range of diseases, sleep problems, nighttime hyperactivity, hormonal disorders, depression and

even schizophrenia. All five macaques were born with identical genes, which include the mutation.

For decades, researchers around the world had struggled to achieve this scientific know-how because some proteins were easily damaged in the cloning process. But, this has changed with last year's breakthrough, which used technology that remains a secret. China is at present the only country that has the technology to clone a primate, announcing the birth of two healthy cloned monkeys last year. The researchers have already bred a group



of gene-edited monkeys and the latest experiment involved cloning an adult male that had displayed the most severe symptoms.

The creation of monkeys with a uniform genetic background is useful for developing models of human diseases, which can be used to study therapeutic treatments.

5. Madagascar Elected its New President

Andry Rajoelina sworn in as Madagascar's President on January 23, 2019 at a fully-packed 42,000-seater stadium in the capital, Antananarivo. His victory on December 19 runoff was followed by days of violent protests before rival Marc Ravalomanana accepted defeat.

In 2009, the military deposed former president Marc Ravalomanana and installed Rajoelina. Both men were banned from contesting the 2013 election as part of an international agreement to end the country's political crisis. Rajoelina won with nearly 56% of the vote against businessman Ravalomanana, who secured 44 percent, according to the

electoral commission. Madagascar, a former French colony, is well known for its vanilla and precious redwood, yet is one of the world's poorest nations. According to World Bank data, 76 percent of people of this country are living in extreme poverty. The island, which is also famed for its unique wildlife, is dependent on foreign aid and has a long history of coups and unrest.

Madagascar is one of eight 'hottest' biodiversity hotspots based on richness and endemism of plants and vertebrates, and on habitat loss. Madagascar also stands out because of its endemism at higher taxonomic levels among plants and vertebrates.

The environmental situation is dire. Madagascar has lost nearly half of its forests since the 1950s, and satellite data indicate that deforestation hit a record high in 2017, with the loss of tree cover on more than 500,000 hectares.

An assessment of 23 biodiversity hotspots in Madagascar, by International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), published last year, found that 43% of the freshwater species in these areas are in the state of imperil. Scientists have also warned that all but 6 of the country's 111 lemur species are threatened with extinction.

6. Dedicated TV Channel for Human Rights

The world's first television channel dedicated to human rights, IOHRTV, was launched in London with a promise to deliver hidden stories ignored by mainstream media into people's living rooms.

The International Observatory of Human Rights (IOHR) said its web-based channel would bring human rights issues to audiences in over 20 countries across Europe, Latin America

and the Middle East. There are so many people in the world who cannot speak up, and it seems to be getting worse and worse. There are lots of niche channels, but so far not one dedicated to human rights.

The Channel would focus on issues like refugees, press freedom and the incarceration of journalists, extremism, women's rights, LGBT+ issues and the plight of the world's

stateless people. The channel has the following programmes in the pipeline, China 30 years after the crackdown on the Tiananmen Square pro-democracy protests, the positive and negative impacts of technology on women, and the human rights implications of Brexit, Britain's departure from the European Union in March.

International Observatory of Human Rights (IOHR)

The International Observatory of Human Rights is an independent non-profit and non-governmental organization. IOHR partners with local and international human rights group to drive and promote positive changes and push for justice and the respect of human rights worldwide.

IOHR aims to defend the dignity of people stripped of their rights including unjustly jailed journalists, human rights defenders, refugees and victims.



7. US, Taliban Draft Framework for Peace Talks With Afghanistan

According to Washington's top negotiator, Zalmay Khalilzad, US and Taliban Officials have agreed on a draft framework for a peace deal seeking to put an end to the 17-year conflict in Afghanistan. He has been leading a month-long diplomatic push to convince the Taliban to negotiate with the Afghan government, but the terrorists have steadfastly refused, dismissing authorities in Kabul as "puppets". The flurry of activity culminated in an unprecedented six straight days of talks in Qatar last week, with both the US and

the Taliban citing progress over the weekend.

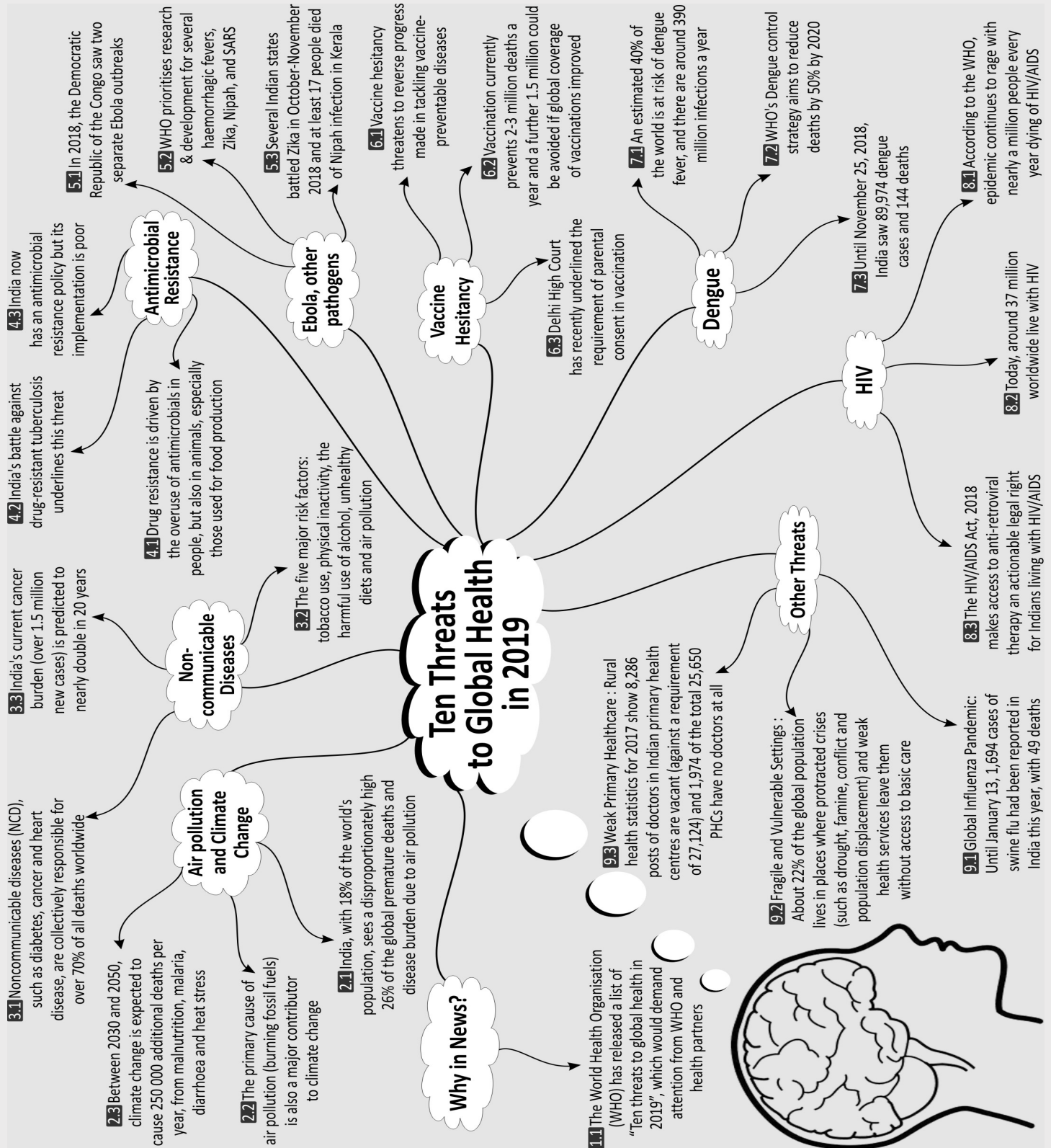
The Trump administration's strategy has been to put pressure on the Taliban to negotiate with the Afghan government. It is exploring a full withdrawal of US troops - in return for a ceasefire and a commitment by the Taliban to these direct talks. The Taliban say they will only begin negotiations with the government once a firm date for troop withdrawal has been agreed. The 17-year conflict has caused huge loss of life. According to UN figures, between 6,000 and

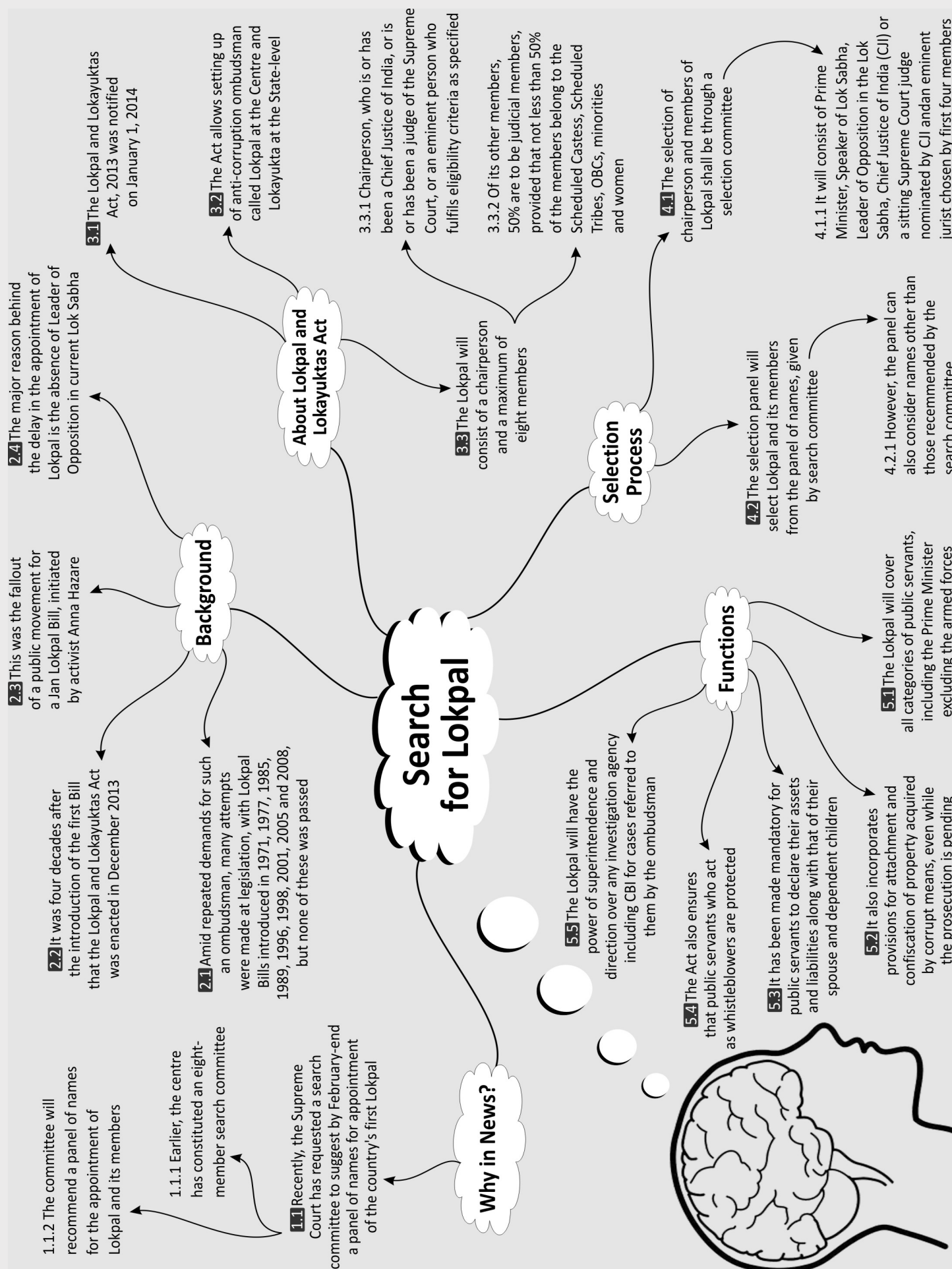
11,000 civilians have been killed every year since 2009.

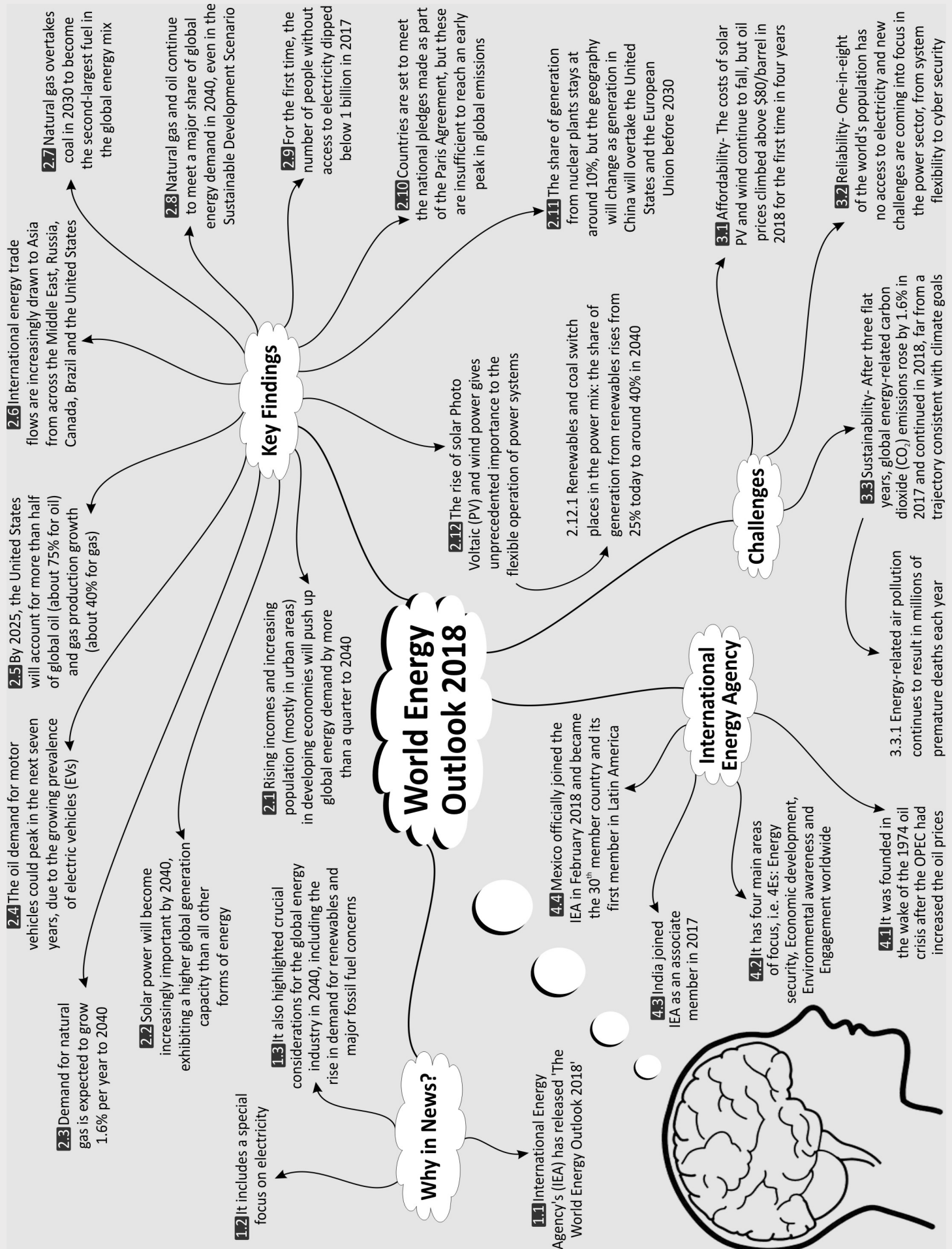
In the framework both sides had agreed to form two committees to draw up detailed plans on how to implement agreements in principle on two key issues i.e. withdrawal of US-led troops and commitment from the Taliban that the group will not allow international jihadist groups like al-Qaeda to use the country as a base in the future thus prevent Afghanistan from ever becoming a platform for international terrorist groups or individuals.

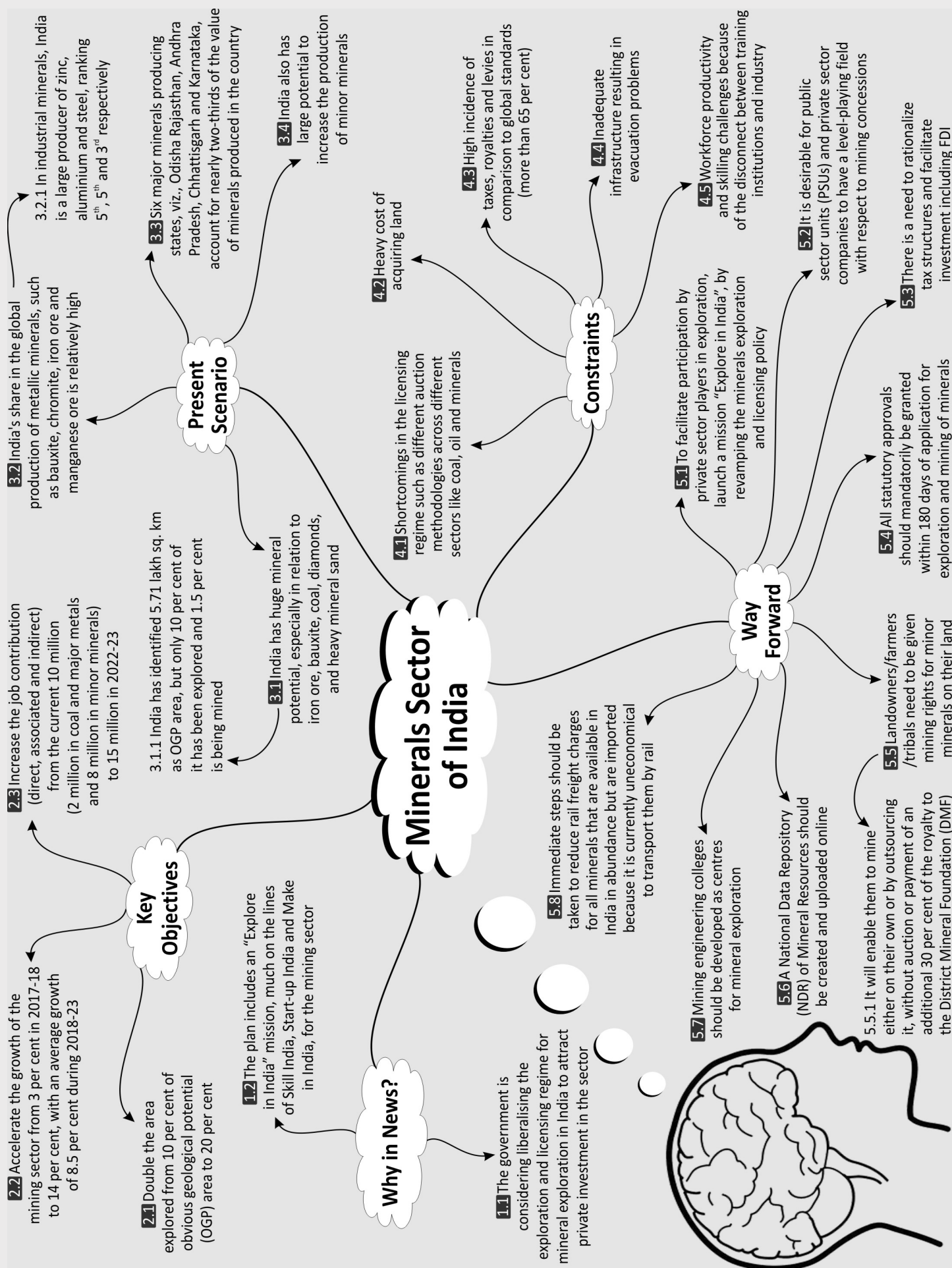
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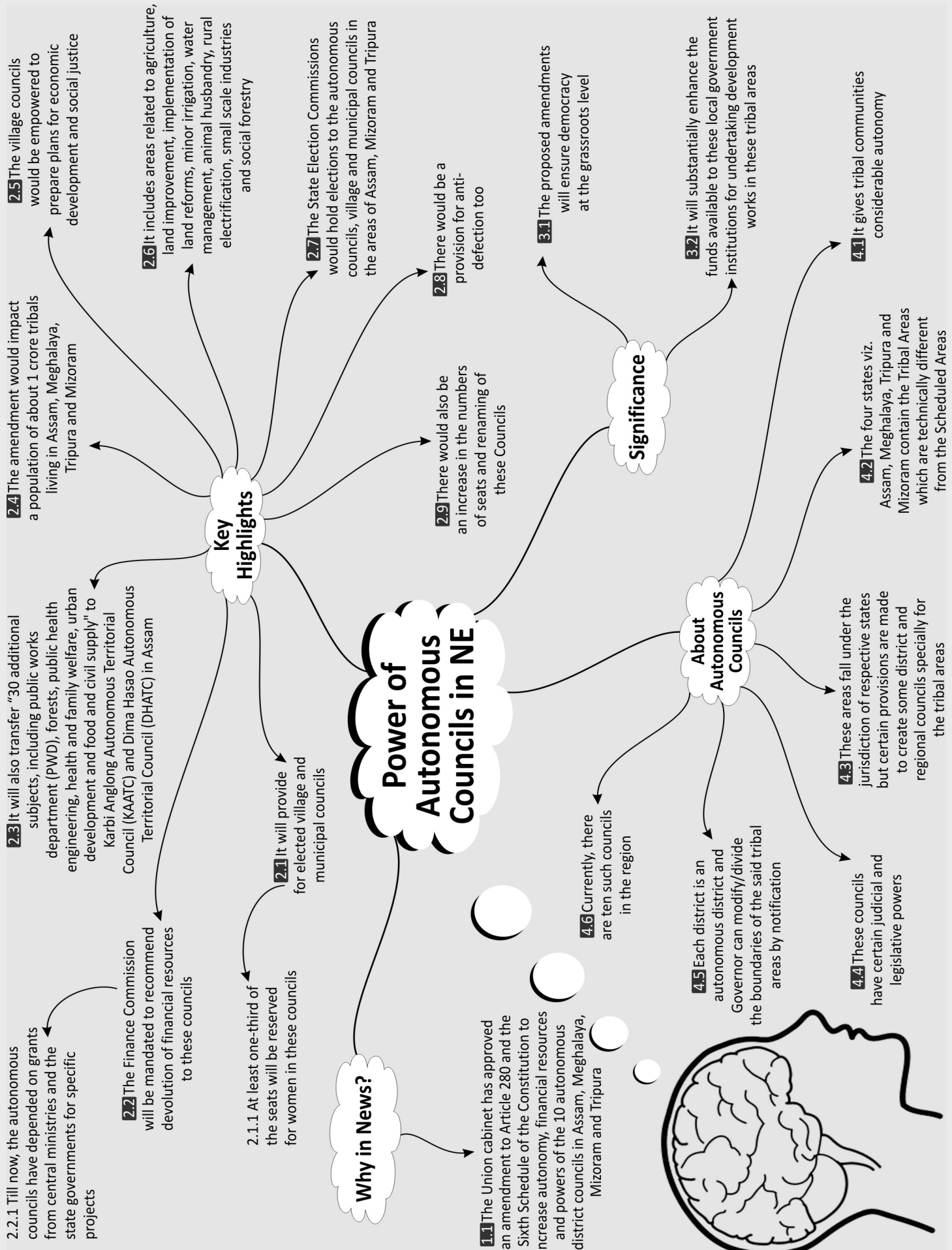
SEVEN BRAIN BOOSTERS

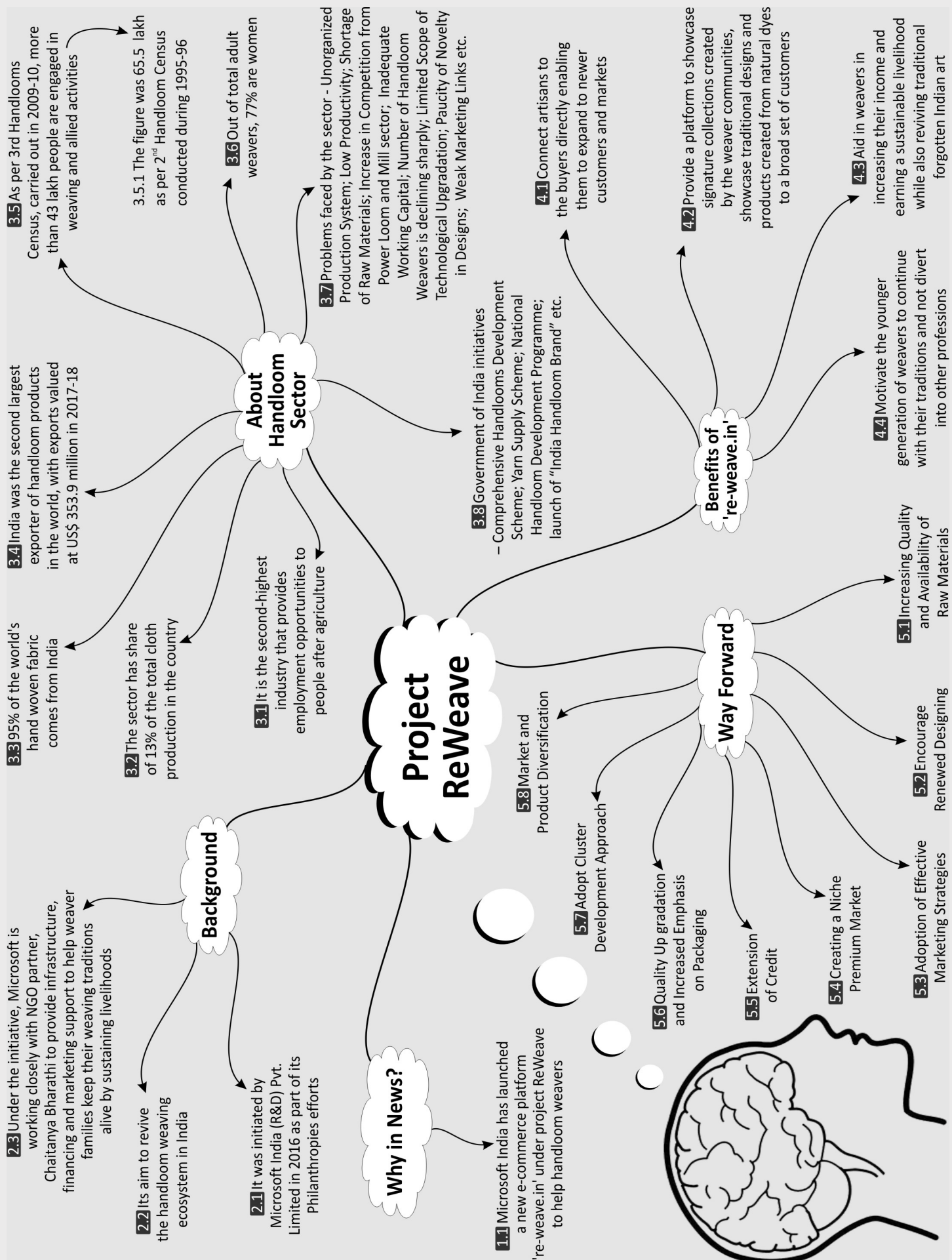


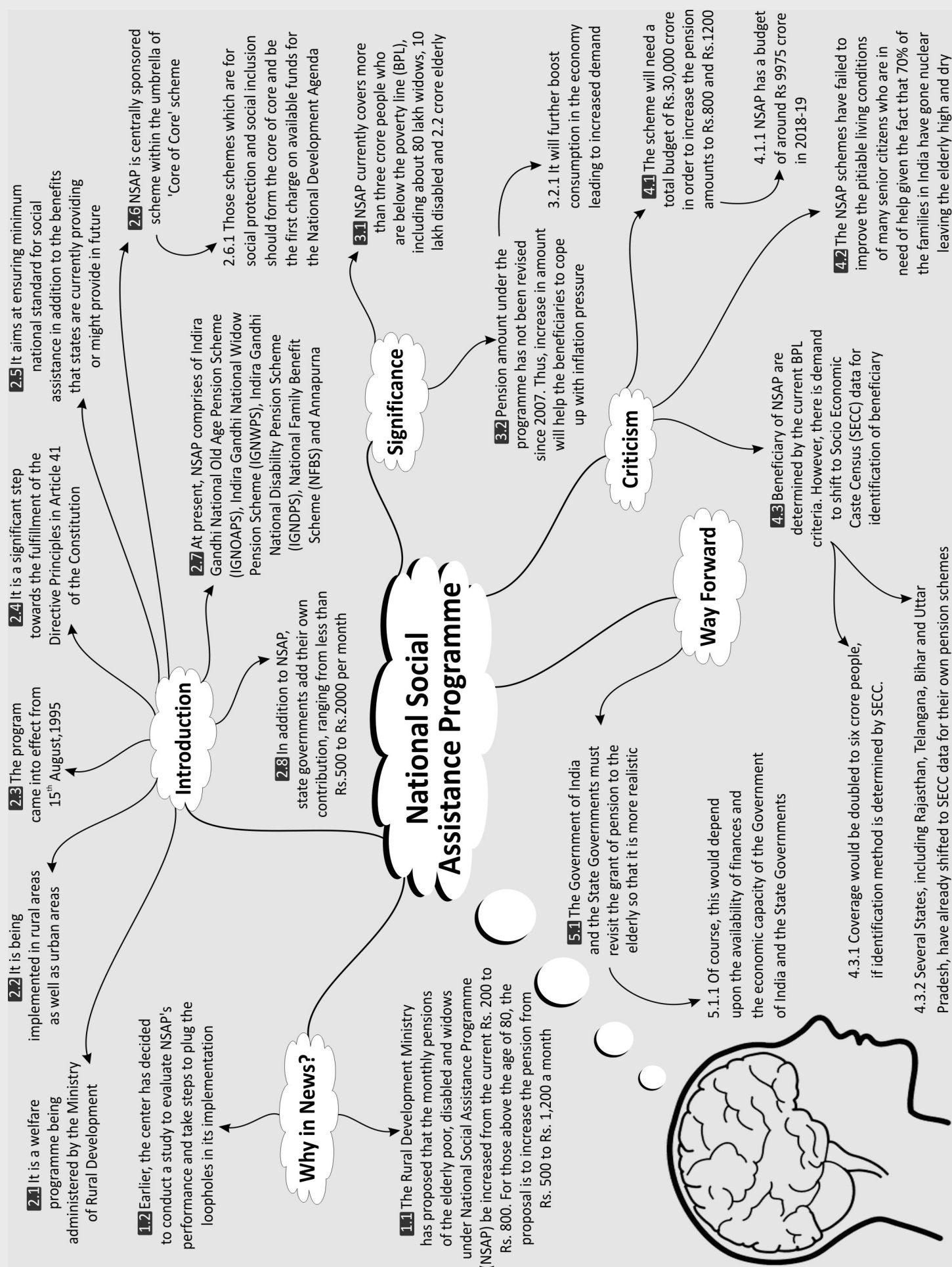












SEVEN MCQ's WITH EXPLANATORY ANSWERS (Based on Brain Boosters)

Ten Threats to Global Health in 2019

Q1. Consider the following statements in respect of the WHO's list of ten threats to global health:

1. Communicable diseases collectively responsible for more than half of all death worldwide.
2. WHO's Dengue Control Strategy aims to reduce deaths by 50% by 2020.
3. Drug resistance is driven by the overuse of antimicrobials in people only.

Which of the following statements given above is/are incorrect?

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

Answer: (b)

Explanation: Statement 1 is not correct. Non-communicable diseases (NCD), such as diabetes, cancer and heart disease, are collectively responsible for over 70% of all deaths worldwide. The five major risk factors: tobacco use, physical inactivity, the harmful use of alcohol, unhealthy diets and air pollution.

Statement 2 is correct. An estimated 40% of the world is at risk of dengue fever, and there are around 390 million infections a year. WHO's Dengue control strategy aims to reduce deaths by 50% by 2020. Target 3.3 of Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) states: "By 2030, end the epidemics of AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria and neglected tropical diseases and combat hepatitis, water-borne diseases and other communicable diseases."

Statement 3 is not correct. Drug resistance is the reduction in effectiveness of a medication such as an antimicrobial or an antineoplastic in treating a disease or condition. It is driven not by the overuse of antimicrobials in people only, but also in animals, especially those used for food production.

Search for Lokpal

Q2. Consider the following statements in respect of Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act, 2013:

1. The Lokpal will consist of a chairperson and a maximum of eight members.
2. The Lokpal will cover all categories of public servants excluding the armed forces.

Which of the following 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. The Lokpal will consist of a chairperson and a maximum of eight members. Chairperson, who is or has been a Chief Justice of India, or is or has been a judge of the Supreme Court, or an eminent person who fulfils eligibility criteria as specified. Of its other members, not exceeding eight, 50% are to be judicial members, provided that not less than 50% of the members belong to the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, OBCs, minorities and women. The Lokpal will cover all categories of public servants, including the Prime Minister excluding the armed forces.

World Energy Outlook 2018

Q3. With reference to the 'World Energy Outlook 2018' report, consider the following statements in this regard:

1. The report is released by the Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC).
2. The number of people without access to electricity dipped below 1 billion in 2017.

Which of the following 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 incorrect. 'World Economic Outlook' is released by International Energy Agency every year.

Statement 2 is correct. For the first time, the number of people without access to electricity dipped below 1 billion in 2017. Target 7.1 of Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) states: "By 2030, ensure universal access to affordable, reliable and modern energy services."

Minerals Sector of India

Q4. Consider the following statements about minerals sector of India:

1. India is 3rd largest producer of steel globally.
2. Presently, landowners/farmers/tribals are entitled for mining rights of minor minerals on their land.

Which of the following 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. India's share in the global production of metallic minerals, such as bauxite, chromite, iron ore and manganese ore is relatively high. India is a large producer of zinc, aluminium and steel, ranking 5th, 5th and 3rd respectively.

Statement 2 is incorrect. Presently, landowners/farmers/tribals are not entitled for mining rights of minor minerals on their land. But, it has been suggested that mining rights of minor minerals should be given to those who owns the land. It will enable them to mine either on their own or by outsourcing it.

Power of Autonomous Councils in NE

Q5. Consider the following statements about the recent approval to the amendments in Article 280 and 6th Schedule of the constitution by the cabinet:

1. Amendment will provide for elected village and municipal councils.
2. The Finance Commission will be mandated to recommend devolution of financial resources to autonomous councils in sixth schedule areas.

Which of the following 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. Amendment will provide for elected village and municipal councils. At least one-third of the seats will be reserved for women in these councils. The village councils would be empowered to prepare plans for economic development and social justice. It includes areas related to agriculture, land improvement, implementation of land reforms, minor irrigation, water management, animal husbandry, rural electrification, small scale industries and social forestry. After the amendment will be passed by the parliament, then the Finance Commission will be mandated to recommend devolution of financial resources to autonomous councils in sixth schedule areas.

Project ReWeave

Q6. Consider the following statements about Handloom sector of India:

1. India is the second largest exporter of handloom products in the world.
2. Number of handloom weaver is rising steadily.

Which of the following 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. Handloom sector has share of 13% of the total cloth production in the country. 95% of the world's hand woven fabric comes from India. India was the second largest exporter of handloom products in the world, with exports valued at US\$ 353.9 million in 2017-18.

Statement 2 is incorrect. Number of Handloom Weavers is declining sharply. As per 3rd Handlooms Census, carried out in 2009-10, more than 43 lakh people are engaged in weaving and allied activities. The figure was 65.5 lakh as per 2nd Handloom Census conducted during 1995-96.

National Social Assistance Programme

Q7. With reference to the National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP), consider the following statements:

1. NSAP is centrally sponsored scheme within the umbrella of 'Core of Core' scheme and being administered by the Ministry of Rural Development.
2. At present, NSAP comprises of Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme (IGNOAPS), Indira Gandhi National Widow Pension Scheme (IGNWPS), Indira Gandhi National Disability Pension Scheme (IGNDPS), National Family Benefit Scheme (NFBS) and Annapurna.

Which of the following 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. NSAP is centrally sponsored scheme within the umbrella of 'Core of Core' scheme. It is a welfare programme being administered by the Ministry of Rural Development. It is being implemented in rural areas as well as urban areas. It is a significant step towards the fulfillment of the Directive Principles in Article 41 of the Constitution. At present, NSAP comprises of IGNOAPS, IGNWPS, IGNDPS, NFBS and Annapurna.



SEVEN IMPORTANT FACTS FOR PRELIMS

1. Recently, which renowned hindi author and winner of the Sahitya Akademi Award has died at the age of 93?

–Krishna Sobti

2. Recently, cabinet has approved amendment to which article of the constitution to strengthen the autonomous district councils of North East?

–Article 280 (Finance Commission)

3. For enhancing the participation of the citizens in the electoral process, the National Voters Day is celebrated on which date in India every year?

–25th January

4. Which country has ended diplomatic relation with the United States recently?

–Venezuela

5. To promote awareness on a range of issues including education, health, and nutrition, the National Girl Child Day is celebrated on which date in India every year?

–24th January

6. The data collected by which spacecraft of NASA has revealed the age of Saturn's ring in between 10 to 100 million years?

–Cassini Spacecraft

7. Which city has been named as the UNESCO's first World Capital of Architecture?

–Rio de Janeiro



SEVEN IMPORTANT AWARDS

1. Bharat Ratna Award – 2019

- ♦ **Related Field:** Awarded in recognition of exceptional service/performance of the highest order in any field of human endeavour
- ♦ **Related Organisation:** Government of India
- ♦ **Award Contains:** The recipient receives a Sanad (certificate) signed by the President and a peepal-leaf-shaped medallion. The Award does not carry any monetary grant.
- ♦ **Winners:** Pranab Mukherjee, Nanaji Deshmukh and Bhupen Hazarika
- ♦ **Facts:**
 - It is the highest civilian Award of the country.
 - It was instituted in the year 1954.
 - Its recipients rank seventh in the Indian order of precedence.
 - The number of annual awards is restricted to a maximum of three in a particular year.
 - The recommendations for Bharat Ratna are made by the Prime Minister himself to the President.
 - The award can also be bestowed posthumously, as per the provision inserted in January 1966. The former Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri was the first individual to be honoured posthumously in 1966.
 - The first recipients of the Bharat Ratna were C Rajagopalachari, scientist C V Raman and Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan in 1954.

2. Sahitya Akademi Award – 2018

- ♦ **Related Fields:** Conferred annually on Indian writers for their outstanding works of literary merit
- ♦ **Related Organisation:** Sahitya Akademi
- ♦ **Award Contains:** The award consists of a casket containing an engraved copper-plaque (designed by film-maker Satyajit Ray), a shawl and cheque of Rs.1 Lakh
- ♦ **Winners:** Seven books of poetry, six novels, six short stories, three of literary criticism and two of essays have won the Sahitya Akademi Awards, 2018
- ♦ **Facts:**
 - It is conferred annually on writers of outstanding works in one of the twenty-four major Indian languages (22 Scheduled Languages+ English and Rajasthani).
 - The first award were given in 1955.

3. Gandhi Peace Prize

- ♦ **Related Field:** Given for social, economic and political transformation through non-violence and other Gandhian methods
- ♦ **Related Organisation:** Government of India
- ♦ **Award Contains:** A cash prize of Rs 1 crore, a citation in a scroll, a plaque and a traditional handicraft/handloom item
- ♦ **Winners:**
 - **2015:** Vivekananda Kendra, Kanyakumari
 - **2016:** Akshaya Patra Foundation and Sulabh International
 - **2017:** Ekal Abhiyan Trust
 - **2018:** Shri Yohei Sasakawa

◆ **Facts:**

- It was constituted by the government of India in 1995 as a tribute to the ideals espoused by Mahatma Gandhiji, father of the Nation.
- The winners are selected by a jury headed by Prime Minister, the Leader of the Opposition (or the leader of the single largest opposition party) in the Lok Sabha, the Chief Justice of India and two other eminent persons. The decision of the jury shall be taken by consensus.
- The Award is open to all persons regardless of nationality, race, creed or sex.

4. United Nations Human Rights Prize

- ◆ **Related Field:** An honorary award given to individuals and organizations in recognition of outstanding achievement in human rights
- ◆ **Related Organisation:** United Nation General Assembly
- ◆ **Award Contains:** A metal plaque bearing the UN seal and an artistic design, and engraved with an appropriate citation. The prize does not contain any monetary grant.
- ◆ **Winners:** Ms. Rebeca Gyumi, Ms. Joênia Wapichana, Front Line Defenders, and Ms. Asma Jahangir (posthumously)
- ◆ **Facts:**
 - The prize was instituted by General Assembly in 1966.
 - It was awarded for the first time in 1968 on the occasion of 20th anniversary of Universal Declaration of Human Rights and are given every five years since then.
 - Prize winners are chosen by a special committee comprising of the President of the General Assembly, the President of the Economic and Social Council, the President of the Human Rights Council, the Chair of the Commission on the Status of Women and the Chair of the

Advisory Committee of the Human Rights Council, as mandated by the UN General Assembly.

- So far, only one Indian personality – Baba Amte has been awarded United Nations Human Rights Prize. Baba Amte was given this prize in 1988.

5. Padma Awards 2019

- ◆ **Related Field:** The award seeks to recognize achievements in all fields of activities or disciplines where an element of public service is involved.
- ◆ **Related Organisation:** Government of India
- ◆ **Award contains:** the awardees are presented a Sanad (certificate) signed by the President and a medallion. The recipients are also given a small replica of the medallion, which they can wear during any ceremonial/State functions etc.
- ◆ **Winners:** Conferment of 112 Padma Awards including one duo case (in a duo case, the Award is counted as one) has been approved for the year 2019. It comprises 4 Padma Vibhushan, 14 Padma Bhushan and 94 Padma Shri Awards. 21 of the awardees are women and the list also includes 11 persons from the category of Foreigners/NRI/PIO/OCI, 3 Posthumous awardees and 1 transgender person.
- ◆ **Padma Vibhushan Awardee 2019 :** Ms. Teejan Bai, Shri Ismail Omar Guelleh (Foreigner), Shri Anilkumar Manibhai Naik and Shri Balwant Moreshwar Purandare
- ◆ **Facts:**
 - Padma Awards is given in three categories. 'Padma Vibhushan' is awarded for exceptional and distinguished service; 'Padma Bhushan' for distinguished service of high order and 'Padma Shri' for distinguished service in any field.
 - The awards are announced on the occasion of Republic Day every year.

- All persons without distinction of race, occupation, position or sex are eligible for these awards. However, Government servants including those working with PSUs, except doctors and scientists, are not eligible for these Awards.
- The total number of awards to be given in a year (excluding posthumous awards and to NRI/foreigners/OCIs) should not be more than 120.
- All nominations received for Padma Awards are placed before the Padma Awards Committee, which is constituted by the Prime Minister every year. The Padma Awards Committee is headed by the Cabinet Secretary and includes Home Secretary, Secretary to the President and four to six eminent persons as members. The recommendations of the committee are submitted to the Prime Minister and the President of India for approval.

6. Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna 2018

- ◆ **Related Field:** It is given for spectacular and most outstanding performance in the field of sports over a period of four years at international level.
- ◆ **Related Organisation:** Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports
- ◆ **Award Contains:** A cash prize of Rs. 7.5 lakh, a medal and a citation.
- ◆ **Winners:** Ms. S. Mirabai Chanu (Weightlifting) and Shri Virat Kohli (Cricket)

◆ Facts:

- It is the highest sporting honour of the Republic of India.
- This award was instituted in 1991-92.
- Chess Grandmaster Viswanathan Anand was the first recipient of this award.
- From 1992 to 2018, 35 sportsmen got this award.

7. Saraswati Samman 2017

- ◆ **Related Field:** Bestowed upon Indian citizen for their outstanding literary work in any 22 scheduled Indian language
- ◆ **Related Organisation:** K.K. Birla Foundation
- ◆ **Award Contains:** A cash prize of Rs 15 lakhs, a citation and a plaque
- ◆ **Winner:**
 - **2017:** Sitanshu Yashaschandra (Language - Gujarati)
 - **2016:** Mahabaleshwar Sail (Language - Konkani)
 - **2015:** Padma Sachdev (Language - Dogri)
- ◆ **Facts:**
 - It was established in 1991.
 - It has been named after an Indian goddess of learning and is considered to be among the highest literary awards in India.
 - Harivansh Rai Bachchan was the first recipient of this award for his autobiography.



SEVEN PRACTICE QUESTIONS FOR MAINS EXAM

Answer each of the following questions in 200 words:

- Q1. The leadership role provided by Indian Police Service (IPS) to Central Armed Police Force (CAPF) should be abolished or curtailed at the very least. Examine the merit behind the argument.
- Q2. A simplistic universal basic income will not solve the fundamental problems of the economy, it needs a structural overhaul. Critically analyse.
- Q3. 'Agrarian distress' has become the buzzword in recent times. Discuss the reasons and solutions to relieve farmers from this mire.
- Q4. An institutional display of pure and simple discrimination dressed up as legal reasoning is unacceptable. Analyse the statement in context of supreme Court Judgement in Surendra Mohan vs. Union of India case.
- Q5. Waste-to-Energy plants that use solid waste as feedstock pose threat to environment. Discuss
- Q6. Editing the 'human germline' is an exercise fraught with unknown risks. Critically analyse.
- Q7. Discuss the different components of Bharatmala Pariyojana. What significance does the programme hold?





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**02
Dec.**

Test-1 - (12:00Noon-3:00pm)

Modern India, India After Independence,
World History, History of Uttar Pradesh

**09
Dec.**

Test-2 - (12:00Noon-3:00pm)

Social Issues, Art & Culture ,
Uttar Pradesh (Social Issues, Art & Culture)

**16
Dec.**

Test-3 - (12:00Noon-3:00pm)

World Geography, Indian Geography,
Geography of Uttar Pradesh

**23
Dec.**

Test-4 - (12:00Noon-3:00pm)

Indian Polity, Constitution,
In special reference of Uttar Pradesh

**30
Dec.**

Test-5 - (12:00Noon-3:00pm)

Governance and Public Policy,
International Relation
In Special Reference of Uttar Pradesh

**06
Jan.**

Test-6 - (12:00Noon-3:00pm)

Indian Economy, Internal Security
in Special Reference of Uttar Pradesh

**13
Jan.**

Test-7 - (12:00Noon-3:00pm)

Science & Tech., Disaster Management,
Ecology & Environment

**20
Jan.**

Test-8 - (12:00Noon-3:00pm)

Ethics (Paper-I)
Ethics and Human Interface, Attitude,
E.I. and Thinkers with Case Study

**27
Jan.**

Test-9 - (12:00Noon-3:00pm)

Ethics (Paper-II)
Aptitude and Value of Civil Services, Ethics
in P.A., Probity in Govt. with Case Study

**03
Feb.**

Test-10 - (12:00Noon-3:00pm)

General Studies (Paper-I) Full Test

Test-11 - (3:30pm-6:30pm)

Hindi Full Test

**10
Feb.**

Test-12 - (12:00Noon-3:00pm)

General Studies (Paper-II) Full Test

Test-13 - (3:30pm-6:30pm)

Essay

**17
Feb.**

Test-14 - (12:00Noon-3:00pm)

General Studies (Paper-III) Full Test

Test-15 - (3:30pm-6:30pm)

Hindi Full Test

**24
Feb.**

Test-16 - (12:00Noon-3:00pm)

General Studies (Paper-IV) Full Test

Test-17 - (3:30pm-6:30pm)

Essay

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