

PERFECT 7

Weekly Current Affairs

An Initiative of Dhyeya IAS



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An Overview

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DHYEYA IAS : AN INTRODUCTION



Vinay Kumar Singh
Founder & CEO

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

The rigorous syllabi not only instills in them, a passion for knowledge but also attempts to teach them how to apply that knowledge in real-life situations. The programmes lay emphasis on well-rounded personality development of the students and also in inculcating the values of honesty and integrity in them.



Q.H. Khan
Managing Director

Dhyeya IAS is an institution that aims at the complete development of the student. Our faculty are hand-picked and highly qualified to ensure that the students are given every possible support in all their academic endeavors. It is a multi-disciplinary institution which ensures that the students have ready access to a wide range of academic material. Our brand of education has broad horizons as we believe in exposure. Our students are encouraged to widen their knowledge base and study beyond the confinements of the syllabus. We aim to lend a gentle guiding hand to make our students recognize their inner potential and grow on their own accord into stalwarts of tomorrow's society.

PERFECT 7 : AN INTRODUCTION



Kurban Ali
Chief Editor

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

Please do visit our website www.dhyeyaias.com and our youtube channel for regular and updated information on current affairs.



Ashutosh Singh
Managing Editor

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

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

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

Your suggestions and popular demands always motivate us and keep our morale high.

May this version of 'Perfect 7' instill a new energy and a new spirit in you. We wish that the bond of affection between you and Dhyeya IAS reaches at a new height.



Send us your suggestions, comment, views and feedback for guiding us on

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PREFACE



Dhyeya family has decided to bring a new colourful and vibrant version of **'Perfect 7'** – a panacea for current affairs, which will add positive and dynamic energy in your preparation.

'Perfect7' is an outstanding compilation of current affairs topics as per the new pattern of Civil Services Examination (CSE). It presents weekly analysis of information and issues (national and international) in the form of Articles, News Analysis, Brain Boosters, PIB Highlights and Graphical Information, which helps to understand and retain the information comprehensively. Hence, **'Perfect 7'** will build in-depth understanding of various issues in different facets.

'Perfect7' is our genuine effort to provide correct, concise and concrete information, which helps students to crack the CSE. This magazine is the result of the efforts of the eminent scholars and the experts from different fields. **'Perfect 7'** is surely a force multiplier in your effort and plugs the loopholes in the preparation.

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

Omveer Singh Chaudhary

Editor
Dhyeya IAS

As a proud jewel of Dhyeya IAS, **'Perfect 7'** now comes in a new coloured avatar. **'Perfect 7'** is a quintessential part of your preparation strategy for Civil Services Examination. A regular and manageable dose of current affairs will now reach you in new format, making it more reader friendly. Our humble attempt to serve you is surely rewarded by your appreciations. It encourages us to innovate and provide the best as per our ability.

A dedicated team of experts at Dhyeya IAS toils night and day to make your dream of Civil Services come true. I heartily thank and express my gratitude to the esteemed readers and all the people involved in making this magazine a shining star in the galaxy of Dhyeya IAS.

Rajat Jhingan

Editor
Dhyeya IAS

PERFECT 7

Weekly Current Affairs

An Initiative of Dhyeya IAS

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(Ex. Editor Rajya Sabha, TV) & by Team Dhyeya IAS
(Broadcasted on YouTube & Dhyeya-TV)

7 IMPORTANT ISSUES

01 India - China Border Disengagement Process : An Overview

Why in News?

- ◆ Almost nine months into the military standoff in Ladakh along the LAC, India and China have announced that a limited and phased disengagement of troops is under way from February 10 on the northern and southern banks of Pangong Tso — the first tentative strides of a multi-step, protracted process expected to last weeks, if not months, before a final disengagement and de-escalation is achieved on terms suitable for both sides.
- ◆ The Pangong Tso disengagement is by no means the end of the Ladakh standoff, as both troops are still deployed offensively at Gogra-Hot Springs, Galwan Valley and Depsang Plains, that should be part of the next stage of extrication.

Background

- ◆ Days after Defence Minister Rajnath Singh informed the Parliament of the disengagement of the Indian and Chinese troops underway at the northern and southern shores

of the Pangong lake, new images and videos of the process surfaced on 16 February.

- ◆ Satellite imagery of some areas on the northern bank of Pangong Tso supplied by Maxar Technologies showed multiple Chinese military camps seen in late January now removed.
- ◆ Videos and images released by the army earlier this week also showed Chinese troops dismantling bunkers and tents, and tanks, soldier and vehicles moving out as part of the disengagement process.
- ◆ The four-step disengagement included first pulling back armour, artillery and other heavy equipment, followed by infantry.
- ◆ In what would mark a significant breakthrough in the over nine-month-long standoff in eastern Ladakh, the first phase of disengagement between Indian and Chinese troops, from both, the north and the south bank of Pangong Tso, is complete and the next round of the senior military commander-level talks are scheduled to be held soon.

- ◆ The tenth round of the talks, which were supposed to be held within 48 hours of the completion of the first phase of disengagement, would be held on the Chinese side of the Chushul-Moldo Border Personnel Meeting Point (BPM) at 10 am on 20th February 2021 morning to discuss other friction points.
- ◆ The ninth round of the meeting was also held in Moldo on January 24th. Moldo is on the Chinese side of the Line of Actual Control across the Indian Chushul sector in eastern Ladakh.
- ◆ The Indian side will be led by Lt Gen PGK Menon, 14 Corps Commander and the Chinese side will be headed by Maj Gen Lin Liu, Commander of South Xinjian Military District.

From Escalation to Disengagement

- ◆ The border standoff between the Indian and Chinese militaries erupted on May 5 following a violent clash in the Pangong lake areas and both sides gradually enhanced their deployment by rushing in tens of thousands of soldiers as well as heavy weaponry

even as the two sides continued military and diplomatic talks.

- ◆ Last year, the Chinese military built several bunkers and other structures in the areas between Finger 4 and 8 and had blocked all Indian patrols beyond Finger 4, triggering strong reaction from the Indian Army.
- ◆ In the nine rounds of military talks, India had specifically insisted on withdrawal of Chinese troops from Finger 4 to Finger 8 on the north bank of Pangong Lake. The mountain spurs in the area are referred to as Fingers.
- ◆ On its part, the Chinese side was insisting on withdrawal of Indian troops from several strategic peaks on the southern bank of the lake.
- ◆ Around five months back, Indian troops occupied a number of strategic heights in the Mukhpari, Rechin La and Magar hill areas around the southern bank after the Chinese PLA attempted to intimidate them in the area.
- ◆ Both sides had rushed a large number of battle tanks, armoured vehicles and heavy equipment to the treacherous and high-altitude areas of eastern Ladakh region after tension escalated following a deadly clash in the Galwan Valley in June last.
- ◆ The “fingers” refer to protruding mountainous spurs along the north bank of Pangong Lake. India has maintained that the undefined Line of Actual Control (LAC) with China starts along Finger 8, while China claims that it starts at Finger 2.

◆ The effectively phantom nature of the LAC implies that where it lies is essentially a matter of mutual perception, and tacit agreement based on patrolling patterns. China’s construction of a blacktopped road reaching Finger 4 from Finger 8 – which would have effectively shifted the LAC to India’s detriment – served as a one of the key triggers of the ongoing standoff.

◆ On June 15 last year, Chinese and Indian troops clashed in the Galwan Valley north of Pangong Lake, leading to fatalities for the first time since 1975.

◆ In late August last year, India launched a significant operation to capture unoccupied peaks in the Kailash range along the south bank of Pangong Lake, near Spangur Lake.

◆ The operation was designed to provide India with a negotiating chip to force an acceptable solution along the north bank of the lake as well as defensively consolidate India’s position in the south.

Significant Kailash Range

◆ The Kailash Range was the theatre of conflict during the 1962 Chinese offensive, with key battles at Rezag La and Gurung Hill.

◆ In 2020, Indian troops secured Kailash Ridge in an operation that took the Chinese by surprise.

◆ The Karakoram Range ends on the northern side of the Pangong Tso. The Kailash Range originates from the southern bank and

runs northwest to southeast for over 60 km. The Kailash Ridge is characterised by rugged, broken terrain with heights varying between 4,000-5,500m, and its key features include Helmet Top, Gurung Hill, Spangur Gap, Muggar Hill, Mukhpari, Rezag La and Rechin La. The Ridge dominates Chushul Bowl; an important communications centre.

◆ In 1962, it was on the Kailash Ridge that Indian soldiers proved their mettle and made the Chinese army pay a heavy price, despite being poorly equipped and ill-prepared.

◆ Today, given a rich experience in high altitude-cum-glacial warfare, coupled with vastly improved equipment and infrastructure, the Indian Army is well positioned to hold the Kailash Range for good. The Chinese, on the other hand, are beginning to realise the harsh realities of winters at the Line of Actual Control (LAC).

◆ Aware of the inability to regain Kailash Ridge with the current force level, and with the window for launching major operations already foreclosed due to the onset of winter, the Chinese may use all ploys to negotiate the Indian Army’s pull-back from south of



Pangong Tso. India should be wary of past mistakes and avoid falling into the Chinese trap.

- ◆ The Kailash Ridge marks a tryst with history, a turning point, as it is the first piece of territory that has been recovered from Chinese illegal occupation, but definitely not the last one as India's claim line is the Johnson Line of 1865. External Affairs S Jaishankar recently said that India was being tested in the seven-month-long standoff with China in eastern Ladakh.

Conditional Victory for India

- ◆ The biggest takeaway that emerges is that India can claim (albeit conditional) success in the battle of attrition. The facts are clear. China is rolling back its troops from Finger 4 to Finger 8 in the northern bank, acquiesced to a similar procedure on the southern bank, and crucially, has agreed to demolish the "structures that had been built by both sides since April 2020" on both banks of the lake.
- ◆ This must qualify as a "win" in India's battle of attrition because the standard operating procedure of China's territorial expansion involves erecting structures on ground and creating faits accomplis to change "facts on the ground" and implementing "gray-zone tactics" to tire out its rival.
- ◆ China had put up a massive 81x25 metre signage written in Mandarin



and a map of China between fingers 4 and 5 in a clear attempt for the illustrations to be spotted in satellite imagery and create an illusion of their control over the area over which India asserts sovereign control.

- ◆ The demolition of these structures is a forced reversal of the tactical procedure and a clear setback for China.
- ◆ The truth is that India's tough military and diplomatic posture has paid off, resulting in an honourable disengagement. If tensions could be defused at Galwan, where much blood was shed, and at Pangong, it should be equally possible to fashion mutually acceptable terms for disengagement at Gogra/Hot Springs as well as the resolution of patrolling issues in Depsang.

Way Forward

- ◆ Trust between the two sides is at such a low ebb that India cannot afford to drop its guard. The lesson from Doklam is that verification will be crucial to this process.
- ◆ Carrying out simultaneous disengagement in a phased and coordinated manner, with proper verification, is key to its success. There is little doubt that cautious diplomatic and military planning and hawk-like vigil will be called for throughout the implementation.



General Studies Paper- II

Topic:

- India and its neighborhood-relations.

Q. India-China eastern Ladakh stand-off has been going through a disengagement in February 2021. India sees it as a conditional victory and an eventual recognition of India's diplomatic and military power. Comment.

02

Issue of India's Internal Migration : Need Urgent Attention

Context

- ◆ It is almost a year since the Covid-induced nationwide lockdowns were announced in India. It may not be an exaggeration to state that the distressing images of migrant workers walking back to their homes — often hungry and utterly hassled, often with small children in tow — with little support from the government is the most enduring memory of that period. The displacement of people has been described as the second-largest since the Partition of the country. This pandemic has offered an opportunity for the policy makers to understand the issues related to internal migration and to address the gaps or improve the policy formulation and implementation for the welfare of the masses.

Background

- ◆ The exodus of migrant workers from the cities following the announcement of the 21-day lockdown threw the spotlight on the vast number of Indians who live outside their home states.
- ◆ The total number of internal migrants in India, as per the 2011 census, is 45.36 crore or 37% of the country's population. This includes inter-state migrants as well as migrants within each state, while the recent exodus is largely due to the movement of inter-state migrants.

- ◆ The annual net flows amount to about 1 per cent of the working age population. As per Census 2011, the size of the workforce was 48.2 crore people. This figure is estimated to have exceeded 50 crore in 2016 — the Economic Survey pegged the size of the migrant workforce at roughly 20 per cent or over 10 crore in 2016.
- ◆ While there is no official data for the inter-state migrants in the country, estimates for 2020 have been made by Professor Amitabh Kundu of Research and Information System for Developing Countries. His estimates, which are based on the 2011 Census, NSSO surveys and economic survey, show that there are a total of about 65 million inter-state migrants, and 33 per cent of these migrants are workers. By conservative estimates, 30 per cent of them are casual workers and another 30 per cent work on regular basis but in the informal sector.

Who is a Migrant?

- ◆ Data on internal migration in India is principally drawn from two main sources — the decennial population Census and the quinquennial migration surveys carried out by the National Sample Survey Office. Both these sources provide a wealth of data on migration.
- ◆ The Census defines a migrant as a person residing in a place other than his/her place of birth (Place of Birth

definition) or one who has changed his/ her usual place of residence to another place (change in usual place of residence or UPR definition). The NSS confines itself to the UPR (Usual Place of Residence) definition.

- ◆ In both the surveys, a resident is defined as one who has been staying in a location for six months or more (except newly born infants).
- ◆ Migration can result in the permanent relocation of an individual or household, which we may term permanent migration.
- ◆ But if individuals migrate leaving their families and land and property in the area of origin, they may do so with the intention of reverting back to the area of origin.
- ◆ One of the main lacunae of both the Census and NSS surveys is their failure to adequately capture seasonal and/or short-term circular migration, and their coverage is best for permanent migrants and reasonably adequate for semipermanent migrants

A Nation of Mass Migration

- ◆ As of 2020, according to Prof S IrudayaRajan (Centre for Development Studies, Kerala), India has an estimated 600 million migrants.
- ◆ In other words, roughly half of India is living in a place where it wasn't born.

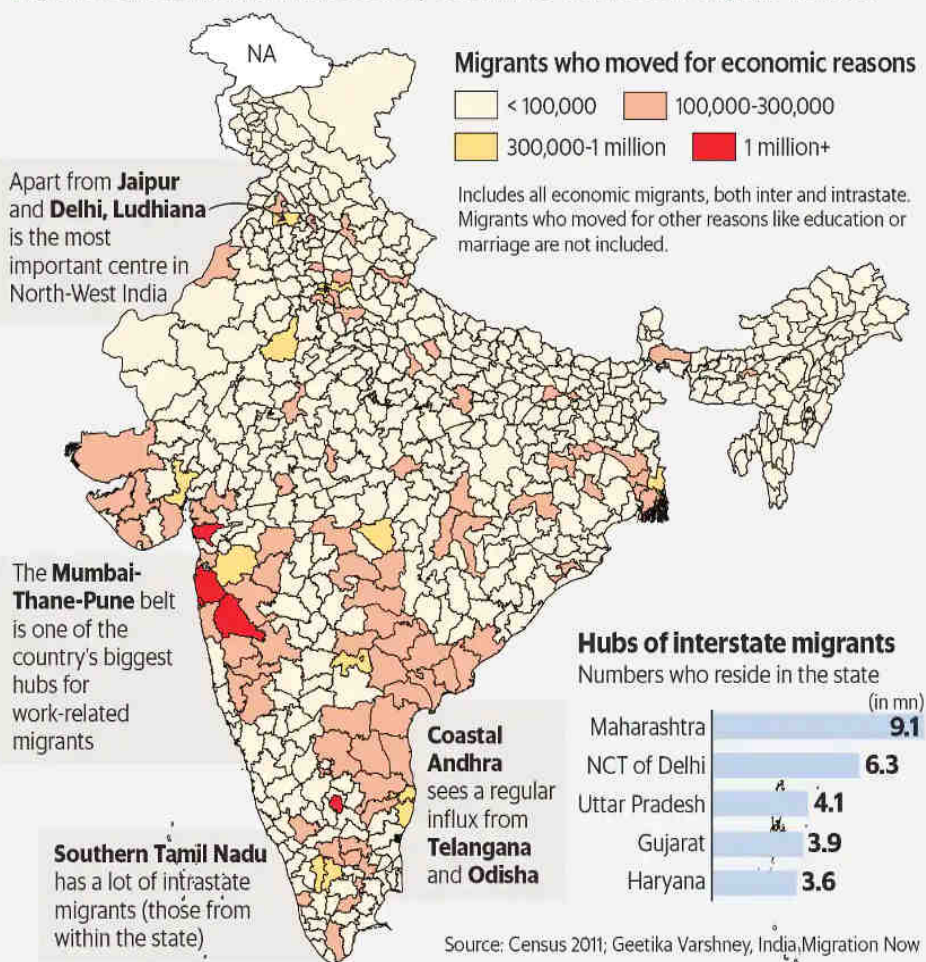
- ◆ To further put this number in perspective, if one imagines all these migrants as one nation then not only would that nation be the third-largest country on the planet — that is, after China and India — but also, it would be roughly double the size of the fourth-largest nation on the planet — the United States.
- ◆ But this doesn't mean that 600 million Indians were crisscrossing between Indian states in 2020. That's because the bulk of the internal migration in India is within one district itself. An estimated 400 million Indians "migrate" within the district they live in. The next 140 million migrate from one district to another but within the same state. And only about 60 million — that is, just 10% of all internal migrants — move from one state to another.
- ◆ From a Covid perspective, the 400 million that migrate within the same district were less of a worry. But 200 million were broadly affected by the Covid disruption. Even within these 200 million, only about 140 millions migrated for earning a livelihood. The balance is family members who migrate with the bread-earner.

Emerging Migration Patterns

- ◆ Typically, it is thought that most migration happens when people from rural areas move to urban areas. That is incorrect. The most dominant form of migration is from rural to rural areas. Only about 20% of the total migration (600 million) is from rural to urban areas.

THE MIGRANT HOTSPOTS

Some districts, like Thane or Mumbai suburban, house over a million economic migrants. Just 22 districts in the country account for a third of all migrant workers.



- ◆ 20% of the total migration is from one urban area to another urban area. As such, urban migration (rural to urban as well as urban to urban) accounts for 40% of the total migration.
- ◆ But even at these staggeringly high absolute numbers, India's proportion of internal migrants (as a percentage of the overall population) is much lower than some of the comparable countries such as Russia, China, South Africa and Brazil — all have much higher urbanisation ratios, which is a proxy for migration level.
- ◆ In other words, as India adopts a strategy of rapid urbanisation — for example, by building so-called smart cities and essentially using cities as centres of economic growth — levels of internal migration will increase further.

Major Gaps in Developmental Planning

- ◆ Migration is an old phenomenon in India, but exploded as growth soared with liberalisation in 1991, birthing a paradox: Booming cities needed cheap labour but the high cost of living was far beyond what migrant workers could afford.

- ◆ As workers sought to tap into opportunities offered by inhospitable cities, they worked out a variety of complex, and often personally devastating, arrangements.
- ◆ At the centre of this phenomenon, was a post-liberalisation development strategy that didn't factor in issues such as location of industries. As a result districts towards the north and the east of the country have seen a major movement out of agriculture without a commensurate growth in industry. Workers are thus forced to seek work towards the south and the west of the country.
- ◆ The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS), which allots 100 days of paid work to its beneficiaries, is of some assistance but the job card of many of the villagers is with the local Gram Rozgar Sevak, a government appointee who oversees the distribution of job cards and allocation of work to applicants, and who often pockets a fixed percentage of the money meant for villagers.

Lockdown Induced Migration and Issues that Emerged

- ◆ The crisis laid bare the spatial rift of India's unequal development. Experts linked migration to the

Green Revolution that enabled some dominant agrarian castes to accumulate capital in the west and south even as the absence of state intervention deprived the east.

- ◆ Crisis showed how dependent the big cities were on migrant labour. Within weeks of their leaving, labour shortages were reported from major projects in Delhi and Mumbai.
- ◆ Crisis shone a light on the continued precarity of workers who do not consider cities they live in for decades as their home – because of uncertainties around food, health care, care-giving and housing.
- ◆ Policy measures such as one-nation-one-ration card, which allows holders to draw benefits from any fair-price shop in the country regardless of home state, may alleviate some of this
- ◆ Migration induced by Covid underlined the growing chasm between the economic reality of migration and the political rhetoric on nativism. In the past two years, a number of states have moved to reserve large chunks of jobs for local populations amid rising tension over the figure of the “outsider” taking up jobs. How this will square with migration remains to be seen.
- ◆ The crisis showed the absence of any hard data on migrants.

Way Forward

- ◆ Though the lowering of coronavirus case-load in India while the developed industrial world is imposing lockdowns again, is a proof of India's success in handling the pandemic. The so-called strictest lockdown protected lives and gave a head start to improve the economy. The issue of migration and plight of workers need more than urgent attention. Lack of data and policy measures have highlighted that the crisis has given ample opportunity to the policy makers to revisit their planning rooms and build a resilient and integrated urban-rural economy.



General Studies Paper- II

Topic:

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

Topic:

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

Q. India's Covid induced lockdown has proved to be a success as India is returning to normalcy while the global west is imposing lockdowns in 2021. But the crisis has brought forward the urgent need to address the migrant economy of India with a humane and welfare approach. Discuss.

03

Lateral Entry into the Administrative Services : Issues & Challenges

Why in News?

- ◆ The Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) has issued an advertisement to recruit 30 persons at the Joint Secretary and Director level in the Central administration through lateral entry in the second round. Earlier, eight persons, mostly domain experts, were selected for various Departments and Ministries.
- ◆ In the latest round, of the 30 positions advertised by the UPSC, three are for Joint Secretary, and 27 are for the Director level.
- ◆ Lateral entry means the appointment of specialists from the private sector in government organisations. For the Joint Secretary level, the lateral entry positions have been opened in the Ministries of Agriculture and Farmers' welfare, Commerce and Industry, and Finance, while for the Director level, the applications have been invited for more than half-a-dozen Departments and Ministries.

Background

- ◆ A high degree of professionalism ought to be the dominant characteristic of a modern bureaucracy. The fatal failing of the Indian bureaucracy has been its low level of professional competence. The IAS officer spends more than half of his tenure on policy desks where domain knowledge is a vital prerequisite.
- ◆ However, in the present environment, there is no incentive for a young civil servant to acquire knowledge or to improve their skills. As years pass by, there is thus an exponential growth in both his ignorance and arrogance.

- ◆ As a general rule, scientific ministries, such as space or atomic energy, are less hierarchically organised and have allowed lateral entry of professionals more liberally.
- ◆ Moreover, Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officers have little expertise in subjects like civil aviation, defence, coal, shipping, etc., as the states where the IAS officers spend most of their early career do not deal with these subjects.
- ◆ The Second Administrative Reforms Commission too had recommended lateral entry at senior positions. It is likely that some of the joint secretaries who would be recruited through the new process are already working as consultants in the same ministry.
- ◆ IAS officers too lack the necessary domain knowledge, so essential for effective policymaking and delivery. This service is primarily responsible for India's failure in achieving millennium development goals (MDG) goals in hunger, health, malnutrition, sanitation, and gender, as most IAS officers can neither design effective programmes nor can implement them with accountability.
- ◆ The current system of having generalists at all levels of government is flawed. Bringing in domain experts will sharpen decisionmaking and delivery of services.

Vacancies and Resource Tapping

- ◆ One of the main reasons for permanent vacancies in IAS posts is that the Lal Bahadur Shastri National

Academy has a ceiling on how many officers it can train.

- ◆ Instead of expanding the facility to train the required number of officers, the academy effectively determines how many officers there can be. The entire concept of having sanctioned posts is treated with disdain.
- ◆ To overcome the academy's limitations, lateral entry for senior positions is a good option.
- ◆ The government must start with at least 100 people and then increase their strength to around 10% of the sanctioned posts. Presently, the total number of sanctioned IAS officers is 6,500. This will ensure that the bureaucracy gets more domain expertise along with fresh thinking while retaining its basic character.
- ◆ As for the argument that good candidates would not apply for lateral entry, there are many people in the 40-55 age group who have proved themselves and earned adequately, and have a strong desire to serve the country. Many of them might not have tried for the civil services in their 20s but would be happy to serve the nation after crossing 40. The government must be encouraged to tap this resource.

Challenges of Decaying Bureaucracy

- ◆ The fear that the outsider joint secretary would be ideologically inclined to the present regime needs to be judged in the context of mushrooming growth of "committed" bureaucracy that has been observed over the decades for a variety of

reasons. The most important being cut-throat competition that exists in the IAS for important positions, both at the state and central levels.

- ◆ Due to the control that the IAS lobby exerts on the system, a large number of redundant posts in the super-time and superior scales have been created to ensure them quick promotions.
- ◆ Often a senior post has been split, thus diluting and diminishing the scale of responsibilities attached with the post. For instance, in Uttar Pradesh against the post of one chief secretary, there are 18 officers now in equivalent but far less important posts drawing the same salary.
- ◆ This inverted pyramid (too many people at the top and too few in the middle and lower rungs) has apparently been created to avoid demoralisation due to stagnation, but the net result has been just the opposite.

Concerns

- ◆ Once they join the civil service in the states, they are shuffled after short tenures from one to the other department, so much so that they hardly get an opportunity to develop an understanding of technical aspects of a problem, or acquire the necessary professional expertise.
- ◆ Getting a few joint secretaries from the open market through UPSC is not enough to radically professionalise the civil service.



- ◆ A key concern about lateral entry is that the selection process will not be transparent. The criterion for selection should be properly determined and experts brought in for each domain. There should be at least one interview with the shortlisted candidates that is telecast to the public. This would ensure the selected candidates are subjected to public scrutiny.
- ◆ Another objective of inducting specialists is to improve efficiency and create competition in governance delivery.
- ◆ The government needs to promote internal specialisation by insisting on stable tenure in the states, so that there is an incentive for the IAS to acquire expertise in their chosen sectors.



Way Forward

- ◆ It is counterproductive to fill up senior positions with career civil servants who do not have previous experience in that broad field.
- ◆ The government's idea is to bring in domain expertise from the private sector to the Central administration, which also faces a shortage of IAS (Indian Administrative Service) officers working on deputation in the Centre.

General Studies Paper- II

Topic:

- Important aspects of governance, transparency and accountability, e-governance-applications, models, successes, limitations and potential; citizens charters, transparency & accountability and institutional and other measures.

Topic:

- Role of civil services in a democracy.

Q. Write a short-note on lateral entry into India's civil services. What concerns and challenges are faced with the lateral entry system?

04

Self - Regulatory Codes for OTTs : An Understanding

Why in News?

- ◆ India's Internet-based Over-The-Top (OTT) streaming services have operationalised a code of self-regulation from February 10, soon after the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (I&B) announced that it had prepared a set of guidelines and directives for the industry.

Background

- ◆ Just as the print media has the Press Council of India, films have the Central Board of Film Certification and TV channels are broadly regulated under The Cable Television Networks Regulation Act, there is no institution/official body regulating the content published by digital media.
- ◆ The Government has put in a lot of time and effort in drafting a long-awaited and necessary self-regulatory code for online media and OTT platforms, keeping in mind the legal regime 'should not curtail the freedom enjoyed by the sector'.
- ◆ On this issue, two advocates Shashank Shekhar Jha and Apurva Arhatia filed a petition to put in place a 'proper board/institution /association for monitoring and managing the content of different OTT/streaming and digital media platforms'.
- ◆ Responding to this, the Government stated that it is 'contemplating' the regulations put in for OTT platforms, to which the Supreme Court appeared highly unmoved.
- ◆ Issuing a notice, Chief Justice of India Sharad A. Bobde addressed Additional Solicitor General K.M. Nataraj for the government, and responded, "Everybody in the world can contemplate... You put it out in an affidavit what you are doing."

- ◆ As per the plea filed by the two advocates in the SC, the absence of a law or autonomous body for monitoring/regulating the content uploaded by digital platforms, which is purely unscreened/unfiltered, needs urgent attendance to.
- ◆ The SC too, initially asked the petitioning advocates to directly tangle in conversation with the Government, however now, the court has sought the government to file a written reply to the petition.

The Toolkit

- ◆ The Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI), on 11 February, announced the adoption of a 'toolkit' to implement the Universal Self-Regulation Code that was signed by 17 major streaming services and put in motion on 4 September 2020.
- ◆ According to IMAI, the core purpose of this 'toolkit' is to provide for procedures to implement the provisions of the Code, assist the OTT platforms in fulfilling their commitments and responsibilities, and to achieve effective self-regulation goals as envisioned by the signatories of the Code.
- ◆ In November, the cabinet secretariat had brought OTT streaming services under the administrative jurisdiction of the I&B Ministry – which has not given its nod to the Code over a perceived lack of independence in the appeals bodies and absence of a list of prohibited content.
- ◆ The 'toolkit', prepared by IMAI in consultation with the streaming platforms, primarily aims to iron out the issues with the industry's self-regulation code that was put in motion on 4 September 2020.
- ◆ The toolkit provides details of the functioning of OTT platforms' grievance redressal mechanism

for complaints received, including composition of their internal panel and advisory panels.

- ◆ The streaming platforms, referred to as 'Online Curated Content providers' (OCCP) in the Code titled "Universal Self-Regulation Code for OCCPs" had agreed to a slew of updated measures following two unsuccessful attempts at self-regulation.
- ◆ These include a modified grievance redressal mechanism, elimination of a stifling 'prohibited content' list as well as of penalties for violation of the code.

Objectives of the Toolkit:

- ◆ Set out the guiding principles and code of ethics for the reference of the Signatories
- ◆ Provide for procedures to effectuate the provisions of the self-regulation code
- ◆ Assist the Signatories in fulfilling their commitments and responsibilities as set out in the Code
- ◆ Achieve effective self-regulation goals as envisioned by the signatories in the Code.

OTT Consumption

- ◆ India's over-the-top streaming (OTT) market remains one of the fastest growing markets in the world. Over the past twelve months, spurred on by the Covid-19-induced lockdown, total domestic OTT consumption increased from 181 billion minutes to 204 billion minutes.
- ◆ The differences not surprisingly followed the pattern of the lockdowns imposed by the government, dipping to 195 billion minutes of OTT consumption in June, and then jumping to 231 billion minutes in October.
- ◆ According to a Boston Consulting Group report from two years ago,

India's OTT market is poised to reach \$5 billion in size by 2023, although this number should likely to be revised upwards on the back of the rapid uptake seen during Covid-19. More systematic drivers of growth are rising affluence, increase in penetration of data into rural markets and adoption across demographic segments including women and older generations.

- ◆ OTT is a segment of the media & entertainment sector, which is according to PwC poised to grow at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of more than 10% in the years up to 2024, which will see it pass the \$55 billion mark.

On-going Approach

- ◆ The government, is not keen on pre-censorship of content. It is in the favour of age-appropriate classification by platforms, among other things. It is also veering towards a Singapore-like model, which functions under the Infocomm Media Development Authority (IMDA). As per its regulation, service providers are required to obtain a licence, classify content on their platforms, display ratings and content descriptors and spell out the prohibited content.
- ◆ Also, much like the Singapore rules, the Indian government is keen to introduce penalties for code violation.
- ◆ Even as the government is mulling its options, 17 of India's largest streaming services hurriedly signed a self-regulation toolkit under the aegis of the Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI). The signatories said they have included government suggestions after their first content code was rejected by the ministry in September 2020.

- ◆ Despite prodding from the government, the video streaming services could not come up with a unanimously acceptable code for two years. And when they did, the government found a two-tier complaints redressal mechanism missing.
- ◆ The signatories include ZEE5, Viacom 18 (VOOT), Disney+ Hotstar, Amazon Prime Video, Netflix, SonyLIV, MX Player, Jio Cinema, Eros Now, ALTBalaji, Arre, Hoichoi, Hungama, Shemaroo, Discovery Plus, Aha and Lionsgate Play.
- ◆ The Confederation of Indian Industry has welcomed the tool kit for implementation of the code for self-regulation of online curated content providers brought out by the Internet and Mobile Association of India.

Upcoming Regulations

- ◆ The government will soon issue guidelines for regulation of OTT (over the top) platforms that will address issues such as sensitive content, the Rajya Sabha was informed.
- ◆ Replying to a Zero Hour mention, Information and Broadcasting Minister Prakash Javadekar said a lot of suggestions and complaints on the regulation of OTTs have been received.
- ◆ Earlier, raising the issue through a Zero Hour mention, a Member of Parliament said the content and language on OTT platforms was discriminatory and offensive.
- ◆ Objectionable content on OTT platforms includes sexual discrimination and abusive language, he said adding that the government should, without delay, implement the Internet regulations.

Way Forward

- ◆ India is a democratic republic where the sovereign people rule and make laws through parliament. Being a vibrant democracy, "Freedom of speech and expression" is necessary for human development. Article 19 of our Constitution says Indians have the right to "freedom of speech and expression," but the law also specifies that this is not applicable if it affects "public order, decency or morality or in relation to contempt of court, defamation or incitement to an offence."
- ◆ The Toolkit states that "the signatories have agreed to adhere to all applicable laws of the land. These include the IT Act, Indian Penal Code, 1860; Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act, 1986; Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967; Contempt of Courts Act, Official Secrets Act. This has been done ostensibly to address the Ministry's objections related to the absence of a list of prohibited content in the self-regulation code. 🔄🔄🔄

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:

- Awareness in the fields of IT, Space, Computers, robotics, nano-technology, bio-technology and issues relating to intellectual property rights.

Q. Online web content cannot be allowed to be unregulated. An oversight of body is necessary in order to ensure the accountability and the transparency of the OTT platforms. Discuss.

05

Regulations of Crypto Currencies in India

Why In News?

- ◆ The prospect of a fresh ban on cryptocurrencies in India has sent an army of crypto investors scrambling to think of ways to protect or liquidate their holdings. This, as the government appears to be in final stages of bringing in a new legislation governing Bitcoin and other such tokens in India.

Background

- ◆ A statement by the ministry of finance on cryptocurrencies warned investors to "stay away from such Ponzi schemes" as there is a "heightened risk of investment bubble of the type seen in Ponzi schemes". This is the latest in a series of warnings and advisories issued by the government and the central bank in India.
- ◆ Countries across the world are grappling with the choice of an optimal regulatory framework in this field. Any regulatory framework in this field requires a comprehensive understanding of the functioning and structure of cryptocurrencies.
- ◆ The ongoing Budget session of Parliament is expected to consider a bill that prohibits all private cryptocurrencies in India and provides for an official digital currency to be issued by the Reserve Bank of India.
- ◆ As per the Lok Sabha schedule, The Cryptocurrency and Regulation of Official Digital Currency Bill, 2021 is slated for introduction,

consideration and passing. The law is intended to create a facilitative framework for an official digital currency issued by the RBI and to "prohibit all private cryptocurrencies in India" But, certain exceptions will be permitted "to promote the underlying technology of cryptocurrency and its uses,".

- ◆ India's central bank had in 2018 barred banks and other financial institutions from facilitating transactions involving cryptocurrencies. Cryptocurrency exchanges responded with a lawsuit in the Supreme Court in September and won respite in March 2020. A bench, headed by Justice Rohinton F Nariman, quashed the RBI circular on grounds of disproportionality.
- ◆ In 2018, an Indian government panel recommended banning all private cryptocurrencies and proposed up to 10 years of jail time for offenders.
- ◆ Central Economic Intelligence Bureau, an arm of the Finance Ministry, conducted a study on levying GST on cryptocurrency and has put forward the proposal to the Central Board of Indirect Taxes & Customs, suggesting that the cryptocurrency can be treated as current assets and GST charged on the margins made in its trading.

India: A Resilient and Rising Economy

- ◆ Many countries — including the United States, China, Japan,

Canada, Venezuela, Estonia, Sweden and Uruguay — have explored developing digital currencies of their own.

- ◆ However, there are significant differences between national digital currencies and private cryptocurrencies such as bitcoin. Cryptocurrencies such as bitcoin are decentralized, while national digital currencies are typically centralized.
- ◆ With a GDP of nearly \$2.9 trillion, India is the world's fifth-largest economy, ahead of the United Kingdom, France and Italy, according to The World Bank.
- ◆ And while foreign investment decreased overall in 2020, India was one of the only major economies in the world to record an increase. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development estimates that foreign direct investment in India jumped 13% in 2020 compared to 2019.
- ◆ Mastercard, Bank of New York Mellon, Tesla — these are some of the world's biggest firms that have jumped aboard the crypto train.
- ◆ India, however, has decided to go a different route and plans to introduce a law banning trade in all cryptocurrencies — except for those issued by the government itself.

Crypto Currency is Different from Electric Money

- ◆ At the outset, it is essential to understand the difference between

virtual currencies (VCs)—a term now synonymous with cryptocurrencies—and electronic money.

- ◆ While electronic money is legal tender that can be stored on a chip, VCs are a form of money or currency which does not derive its value from any sovereign authority, but by its technology.
- ◆ More specifically, cryptocurrency relies on principles of cryptography to implement a decentralized peer-to-peer ledger.
- ◆ The key ideas that underpin bitcoin have been elaborated upon in its

creator, Satoshi Nakamoto's 2008 white paper, where bitcoin was introduced as an electronic, peer-to-peer, fully decentralized cash system, which does away with the need for a centralized entity.

- ◆ Since the validity of a transaction is arrived at through solving a computationally challenging exercise based on a cryptographic hash (known as proof of work), any malformed transaction is rejected by the participants (or miners) who keep working on finding the next valid block, after the successful completion of which they are rewarded with a transaction fee

and a newly issued unit of currency. Transactions in this network are identified by public-private keypairs—a string of letters and numbers used to protect messages cryptographically.

- ◆ These widespread cryptocurrency transactions have also led to concerns regarding consumer protection, money laundering, and financing of criminal activities. By design, cryptocurrencies allow anonymous funding; potentially acting as conduits for money laundering and terror financing.
- ◆ The consumer protection, in particular retail consumer protection concerns, stem from their volatile nature.
- ◆ Section 26 of the RBI Act states that, 'every banknote shall be legal tender at any place in India in payment or on account for the amount expressed therein, and shall be guaranteed by the Central Government'. The virtual currency is not guaranteed by the Central Government, so, in order for any virtual currency to be declared legal tender, it will have to be expressly guaranteed by the Central Government. In that case, parties are legally bound to accept it as a mode of payment. So, privately issued cryptocurrencies would not be safe.

Doors Shut for Crypto

PANEL ON VIRTUAL CURRENCY PROPOSED STRINGENT LAW

» **COMPLETE BAN** on any activity involving cryptocurrency

» **ALL MAJOR OFFENCES** will be cognisable and non-bailable

» **FINE UP TO ₹25 cr** or 3 times of loss caused/ gains made

» **UP TO 10 YEARS JAIL** for direct or indirect use of cryptocurrency

» **ALL PRIVATE cryptocurrencies** be banned in India

» **HAVE AN OPEN** mind towards a Central Bank Digital Currency

» **DEA, RBI, MEITY, DFS** to examine, develop a model of digital currency

» **RBI SHOULD** regulate this digital currency

» **DEA TO FACILITATE** use of DLT in the entire financial field

BUT, WITH SOME CONCESSIONS

Makes provision for 'Digital Rupee' to be issued by RBI

RBI can recognise foreign digital currency as foreign currency

Law permits use of DLT for research, experiments not involving crypto



Economic and Other Challenges

- ◆ The Indian government has been skeptical of cryptocurrency, vacillating between wanting to regulate cryptocurrencies and banning. While the government wishes to actively encourage

blockchain technology, it has been resisting popular usage of cryptocurrency because once the unit of account of one of these transactions changes from rupees to any cryptocurrencies, then the possibility of recovery of tax would become farcical. So, if the government wishes to reap the revenues from blockchain transactions, it will have to recognise cryptocurrency, and not just INR, as a unit of account.

- ◆ A serious problem associated with crypto-transactions is that, because of the anonymity that it provides, it becomes a haven of sorts for criminals, enabling them to finance all manner of malicious activities. A certain BTC wallet that belonged to the Islamic State or ISIS received around \$23 million in one month at the height of its expansion in 2015. This trend is likely to increase in the future. With increasing law enforcement scrutiny on hawala transactions and formal banking systems, terrorists are likely to gravitate towards the anonymity of virtual currencies.
- ◆ Worldwide cryptocurrency scammers raked in \$4.3 billion worth of digital money in 2019. Between 2017 and 2019, Indian investors are estimated to have lost more than \$500 million in cryptocurrency scams. Many initial coin offerings have turned out to be scams.

Future Belongs to Crypto Currency

- ◆ Cryptocurrencies carry huge potential to make the financial system genuinely global.
- ◆ The speed and simplicity of paperless crypto-transactions, which are unregulated by any banking system, makes them a genuine asset to the vast population which is underserved by the banking system.
- ◆ Varied dynamics, ranging from security concerns to garnering acceptance from the market and customers will influence the potential usage of cryptocurrency in India.
- ◆ While there are a lot of complexities related to cryptocurrency on an immediate basis, proper legislation relating to it is needed to eliminate every risk related to the use of crypto assets.
- ◆ Even as the cryptocurrency touches \$51,000, governments will continue to protect their monopoly over money. Governments like India are worried that cryptocurrencies will make it very easy for individuals to move their money out of the country, circumventing existing controls.
- ◆ Ban or heavy regulations will keep citizens from taking advantages of global technological and financial advances only for maintaining control.

Way Forward

- ◆ There is no denying that a robust interest in India for crypto-assets. Despite government efforts to reign it, the demand and popularity for cryptocurrencies has grown steadily in India. Soon after the RBI lifted the ban, multiple domestic cryptocurrency exchange platforms and trade markets came up. Besides, many international crypto-exchanges also set up shop in India.
- ◆ Legislation rather than focusing on a ban should ensure that effective levels of verification are processed to determine a crypto-transfer's money laundering or terrorism financing risk. Even supposing suitable legislation is drafted for cryptocurrency, its regulation will require agencies with cyber savvy cadre to discern these transactions.



General Studies Paper- III

Topic:

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

Topic:

- Awareness in the fields of IT, Space, Computers, robotics, nano-technology, bio-technology and issues relating to intellectual property rights.

Q. Cryptocurrencies are a new asset class that has been misunderstood by the governments so far. Many nations have banned them, some regulated them and some have opted to issue their own cryptocurrencies. Comment on the statement with regard to recent trends in India.

06

Contribution of Pulses to Food Security and Sustainable Future

Why in News?

- ♦ The celebration of World Pulses Day (10th February) is an opportunity to heighten public awareness of the nutritional benefits of pulses and their contribution to sustainable food systems and a #ZeroHunger world. Pulses have intrinsic value being packed with nutrients, high protein content, low fat and high fiber, which keeps cholesterol and blood sugar under control. Not only do they improve food security and create economic stability, but they also contribute to climate change mitigation by reducing greenhouse gases.

Background

- ♦ Agriculture began more than 10,000 years ago when gatherers and hunters turned into farmers; since then, pulses have been part of the human diet. Lentils (*Lens culinaris Medik.*), chickpeas (*Cicer arietinum L.*), peas (*Pisum sativum L.*) and bitter vetch (*Vicia ervilia [L.] Willd.*) are Neolithic founder crops, as they were among the plant species that were domesticated by early farming communities in the Fertile Crescent region and have since accompanied humankind.
- ♦ Pulses are nutrient-rich crops. They are an excellent source of plant-based protein and micronutrients and low in fat and high in dietary fibre.

- ♦ Eating pulses as part of a healthy diet can contribute to addressing the multiple facets of malnutrition, ranging from undernutrition and micronutrient deficiency to overweight and obesity.

- ♦ Furthermore, pulses, and legumes in general, play an equally important role in soil health maintenance and improvement. The ancient Roman scholar Marcus Terentius Varro, in his *Rerum Rusticarum* (37 BCE), recommended that legumes be planted in poor soils because they do not require many nutrients.

- ♦ These crops should not only be planted for an immediate return, namely high yields, but because they will also enrich the soil for subsequent crops.

- ♦ The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) declared 2016 as the International Year of Pulses (IYP) to raise awareness about the importance of these plants and highlight their role in healthy diets and family farmers' livelihoods as well as their contribution to soil health and the environment.

- ♦ In 2019, the General Assembly proclaimed 10 February as the World Pulses Day.

- ♦ 2021 theme for World Pulse Day is "Nutritious Seeds for a Sustainable Future", which explains in itself the value of pulses.

- ♦ Additional benefits of pulses include helping to eradicate hunger, increase agricultural productivity,

improve human health and reduce soil degradation, thus contributing to towards the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Alarming Hunger Situation

- ♦ India ranks 94 out of 107 countries on the Global Hunger Index 2020.
- ♦ It falls under the category of 'serious' level of hunger.
- ♦ The Lancet attributed two-thirds of the 1.04 million deaths in children under the age of five in India to malnutrition.
- ♦ Of the 144 million stunted under-five children in the world, India alone accounts for 46.6 million.
- ♦ Furthermore, India is home to 25.5 million off the 47 million wasted under-five children globally.
- ♦ The COVID-19 pandemic will possibly take the toll up by ten to twenty percent, worsening India's malnutrition problem.
- ♦ According to the NFHS-4 2015-16 (National Family Health Survey), only 9.6 percent children (6-23 months) are fed a minimum acceptable diet.
- ♦ Going by the latest NFHS-5 for 22 states/UTs, there is a slight improvement in percentage of children receiving an adequate diet, ranging from 5.9 percent in Gujarat to 29.8 percent in Meghalaya.
- ♦ According to the Eat-Lancet Commission on Food, Planet,

Health, India needs to enhance dietary diversity and behaviour change as it is crucial to achieving nutrition security.

- ◆ Pulses can contribute to the overarching issue of food security in a number of ways, as elicited in figure.

Policy Mismatch

- ◆ India's food policy has focused on cereals since the Green Revolution in the mid-1960s. But today, Indian food consumption baskets have changed significantly. Yet, agricultural policy continues to favour cereals, and the Food Corporation of India (FCI) buys millions of tons of wheat and rice at minimum support prices (MSP). As a consequence, farmers prefer to produce cereals. This has meant more than adequate supply. It is not a surprise that the prices of cereals have remained stable, while the prices of vegetables see wild swings.
- ◆ Nutrition norms as well as rising household incomes should have pushed food production away from cereals to non-cereals. But owing to a pro-cereal policy, this has not happened. The supply of vegetables, milk and pulses in the country has not risen as it should have.
- ◆ India spends lakhs of crores to produce wheat and rice, which then doesn't get sold. It's because the food policy has remained pro-cereal since the 1960s.
- ◆ The 68th round of NSSO indicates that currently, cereals constitute



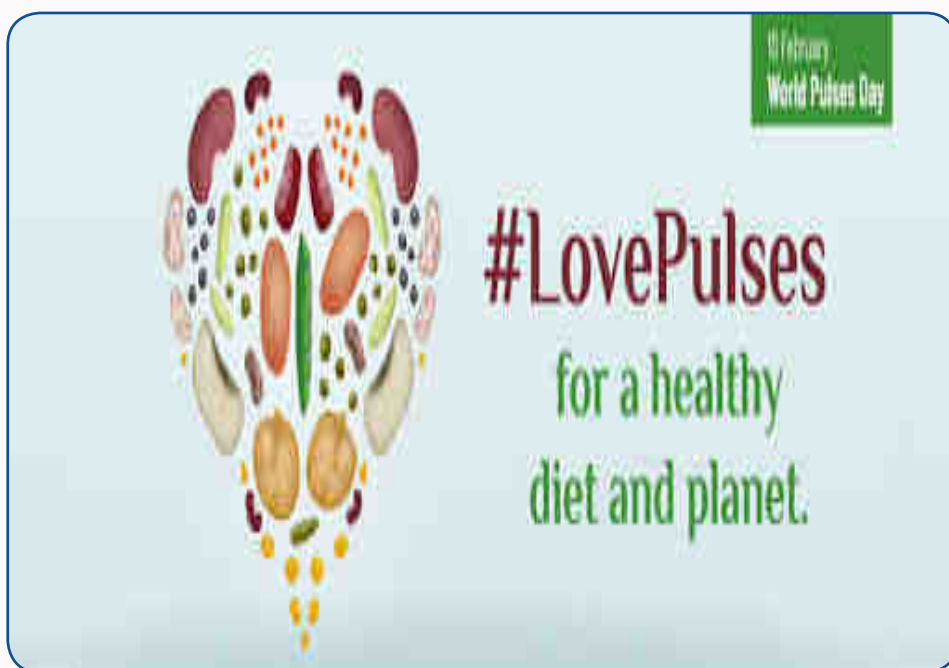
the major source of protein to Indians, despite the fact that pulses are the cheapest source of protein.

- ◆ Pulses contribute 10 percent of dietary protein, with a modest increase in monthly per capita consumption.

Sustainable Diet

- ◆ Red gram and Bengal gram (chana) account for most of India's pulse production, followed by black gram and green gram. They are grown in rice fallow cultivation (coastal regions) of Andhra and Orissa. Red gram (kharif crop) is grown mainly in the Deccan plateau, while Bengal gram (rabi crop) is grown in different parts. Increasing population, improved incomes and enhanced awareness about nutrition has boosted demand for pulses in the last two decades.
- ◆ Balancing farmers' welfare and consumers' welfare is a tough ask. The MSP for pulses has increased every year.
- ◆ Although these support prices provided relief for the farmers, on many occasions, the market price was less than the support price, especially when large-scale imports took place, and when the government did not procure enough quantities at the support price.
- ◆ By 2030, when our population crosses 150 crore, the estimated demand for pulses will be 33 mt. If we have to meet the requirements and avoid imports, our current yields of 835kg/ha have to go up by at least 30% in this decade.
- ◆ Efforts to develop higher-yielding varieties are going on, especially at the Directorate of Pulses Research, based at Kanpur, and ICRISAT, Hyderabad.
- ◆ Since pulses are mostly rainfed crops, there is an acute need to develop varieties which mature faster. We must invest in using modern science and technology to develop hybrids in red gram.

- ◆ Farmers use heavy doses of pesticides to control the pod borer in red gram and the diseases in black gram and green gram. Researchers have been trying to develop varieties that are tolerant to borer but have not been very successful. There is a strong case to use Bt technology, used in cotton to control the same insect. This can dramatically reduce the use of pesticides and increase yields in red gram and Bengal gram.
- ◆ Micro-irrigation tool like Hose Reel technology-based irrigation system could be perfectly suited for these crops.
- ◆ To fight yield-reducing water stress, we should not hesitate to use modern technology like the GM trait Water Use Efficiency, which will act as an insurance policy for the farmers against drought.
- ◆ Similarly, we should use modern genomics and dig deeper into their genome to find useful genes that can help these crops to resist pests, diseases and water stress conditions. Private investments could be encouraged in this area through strong PPP projects.
- ◆ Market reforms to improve profitability are critical. While the new e-NAM is expected to help, we may have to make more efforts



- in setting up village-level primary processing and grading centres. The government may encourage new entrepreneurs and FPOs to jump in by providing them with policy and funding support.
- ◆ Pulses need to be included in PDS and in the mid-day meals to improve nutrition standards.

Way Forward

- ◆ Supplementing cereal-based diets with pulses can potentially bring down malnutrition. Evidence suggests that individuals with more frequent consumption of pulses are more nutritionally secure. As a policy, the PDS should provide pulses at subsidised rates to make them more affordable and available. This will provide the

much-needed nutritional security, especially to the vulnerable section of our population. There is an urgent need to create awareness on the consumption of macronutrient rich pulses for the dual benefit of nutrition and sustainability. 🔄🔄🔄

General Studies Paper- III

Topic

- Issues related to direct and indirect farm subsidies and minimum support prices; Public Distribution System-objectives, functioning, limitations, revamping; issues of buffer stocks and food security; Technology missions; economics of animal-rearing.

Q. India's nutrition basket has been majorly dominated by cereals. But now it is the time to consider pulses as a major component which is more than a nutritional advantage, it is also a sustainable and a food security enabling option. Discuss.

07

Social Media Platforms and Unbridled Power

Why in News?

- Hours after it was pulled up by the government for non-compliance, Twitter has blocked nearly 97% of the handles flagged by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY). MeitY had directed the micro-blogging platform to take down 1,435 accounts in two separate orders for allegedly spreading misinformation on farmers' protest.

Background

- On January 31, exercising its powers under Section 69 of the IT Act, the MeitY had passed an emergency order asking Twitter to block 257 accounts. The ministry had in its notice said that these handles were "spreading misinformation" about the farmers' protest, which had the potential to "lead to imminent violence affecting public order situation in the country".
- Twitter had subsequently blocked the accounts and their access for some time, but reversed its ban on some of the users, citing that these accounts did not violate its policy of free speech.
- On February 4, the IT Ministry had issued a fresh notice, seeking the blocking of nearly 1,200 accounts, asking it to either suspend or block them in India.
- In a blogpost, Twitter had reiterated its stand that the accounts it had

not blocked, either on January 31 or after the February 4 notice, were "consistent with their policies on free speech" and said the platform believed "that the notices sent to it were not consistent with laws in the country".

- The blogpost had also listed the action taken on the ministry's notices, saying it had "suspended more than 500 accounts" and "withheld a portion of the accounts identified in the blocking orders" of the MeitY. It also said that it had not "taken any action on accounts that consist of news media entities, journalists, activists, and politicians" as it "would violate their fundamental right to free expression under Indian law".
- Even the country's Supreme Court has gotten involved. It has asked the government and Twitter for input on litigation over how to curb toxic content and fake news online.
- There has been global incidents where big technology giants have tried to change or re-shape public discourse based on their own rules and guidelines and ignored or even trampled the constitutional provisions of the host country. As there are not regulation on these global technology giants, every nation's sovereignty gets affected as there are no clear intelligible justification on what criteria is used by these technology giants to allow or block data.

Bone of Contention

- Twitter has extended a commitment to "restructure" its India team and assign more senior executives to its local offices so that it can better handle legal compliance-related issues.
- Executives from Twitter agreed to some structural changes at a meeting with officials from MeitY. The ministry pushed for these changes as part of its effort to "better manage communications" between the Government of India and the global team of Twitter.
- While multiple concerns have been raised by the government on Twitter's "failure" to comply with its orders, officials indicated that the most "objectionable" from their perspective was the social media company's lack of willingness to act on multiple posts that used the word "genocide" regarding the handling of the farm protest.
- "A term genocide cannot be casually thrown around. Most of the tweets that we flagged (on January 31) to Twitter had a mention of the word along with provocative images, which had nothing to do with India. Their (Twitter) failure to act upon it was like sitting on a tinderbox waiting to explode," said a senior IT Ministry official who attended the meeting.
- Twitter cannot be the judge, jury and executioner of what it thinks its interpretation of the Indian

laws is. If they had a problem with the notices we sent, there are adequate redressal mechanisms for that,” another senior official who attended the meeting said.

Section 69A of the IT Act, 2000

- ◆ At the heart of this is Section 69A of the IT Act, 2000.
- ◆ Section 69A of the IT Act, 2000, allows the Centre to block public access to an intermediary “in the interest of sovereignty and integrity of India, defence of India, security of the State, friendly relations with foreign States or public order or for preventing incitement to the commission of any cognisable offence relating to above”.
- ◆ According to the definition under Section 2(w) of the IT Act, an intermediary includes “telecom service providers, network service providers, internet service providers, web-hosting service providers, search engines, online payment sites, online auction sites, online marketplaces, cyber cafes etc”.
- ◆ While Section 69A provides the government the power to take such steps, the procedure to do so is listed in the Information Technology (Procedure and Safeguards for Blocking of Access of Information by Public) Rules, 2009.
- ◆ While no time is given to the stakeholder to respond before the action is taken in the case of an emergency situation, Rule 9 of the IT blocking rules allows for a review committee to send “recommendations regarding the case, including whether it is justifiable to block the accounts” in order to uphold the blocking of an account permanently.
- ◆ Shreya Singhal v/s Union of India judgment: The striking down of Section 66A of the IT Act — under which posting ‘offensive’ comments online was a crime punishable by jail — by the

Supreme Court in 2015 was hailed by many, but mixed feelings have remained. While Section 69A was also challenged, it was upheld by the court.

- ◆ However, it is Rule 16 of the IT Blocking Rules — which states that requests and complaints to block accounts must remain confidential — that has been repeatedly criticised for being “unconstitutional”.
- ◆ Rule 8 of the blocking rules extends pre-decisional hearing to the content creator or originator.
- ◆ Under Rule 16 of IT blocking rules of 2009, public disclosure of the request made for blocking and the actions taken thereof is not allowed.

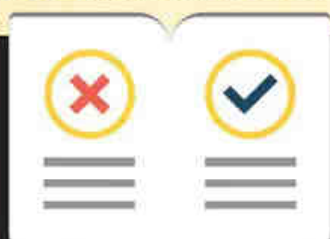
Big Tech Circumventing Governments

- ◆ Former US President Donald Trump was removed from Twitter, Facebook, Youtube, Snapchat, Twitch and Reddit. Stripe suspended payment processing for Trump’s campaign, Shopify removed stores affiliated with Trump merchandise, and even Trump’s email providers suspended his service. Parler, a social networking app promising refuge for Trump supporters, was removed by both Apple and Google from their app stores before Amazon Web Services pulled it offline altogether. Facebook banned the Trumpist rallying cry, “Stop the Steal.”
- ◆ In a world where most communication takes place on platforms like these, that’s a lot

What the Amended Rules Propose

Cos have to **trace and report origin** of messages within **72 hours** of receiving a complaint from law enforcement agencies

Will have to **disable access within 24 hours** to content deemed defamatory or against national security and under other clauses of Article 19 (2) of the Constitution



Such info and associated records will have to be **preserved for 180 days**

Platforms with more than **5m users** must have **registered entity** in India under Cos Act

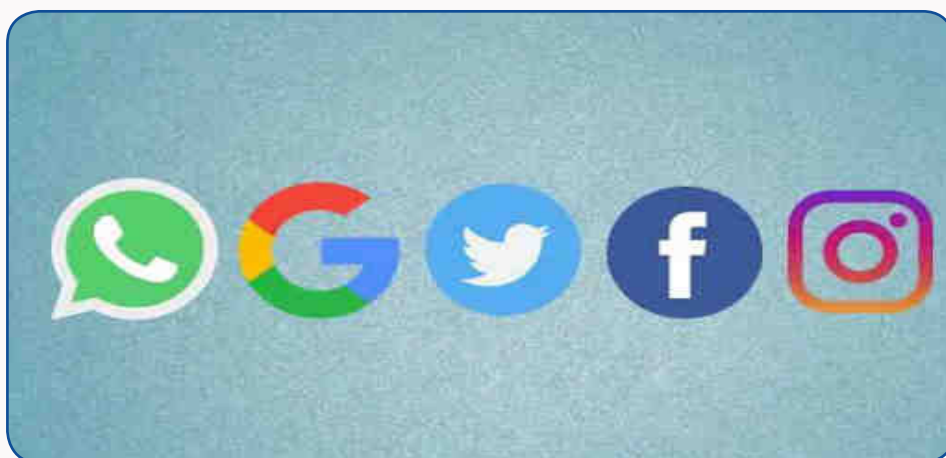
They will have to appoint a nodal officer in India to deal with law enforcement agencies on a **24x7 basis**

Cos also must **send communication to users ONCE a month** about their privacy policies

Platforms must **deploy tools to identify and remove** or disable public access to unlawful information or content

of censorship, justified or not! Whether it's effective is another matter.

- ◆ The tightrope walk between regulating fake news/hate content and fostering free speech is a difficult one, and more subjective than what constitutes censorship. On one hand, there is a growing view that social media companies were right to suspend Trump's accounts; there is on the other a compelling realisation of the enormous power that these platforms wield over the public discourse, and thereby the impact that they have on democracy.
- ◆ Leaders from the European Union, which has taken a leading role in regulating the tech giants with investigations, fines, and legislation, were the first to criticise the de-platforming of Trump. German Chancellor Angela Merkel and Russian dissident Alexei Navalny expressed concern, and a bevy of EU officials raised fresh questions on the regulation of Big Tech.
- ◆ The action to black out Trump came after the Capitol mayhem was over and Congress had ratified the victory of President-elect Joe Biden.
- ◆ Twitter in India has been accused of bias against right-wing voices on



the platform, including allegations that it is disproportionately suspending accounts espousing right-wing views in India. Not just political bias, Twitter has been in the eye of the storm over several issues around hate speech, fake news, fake profiles and the bots menace.

Way Forward

- ◆ Free speech and expression are given by the Constitution of India to its citizens. This right is not an absolute right but is restricted to certain exceptions, which are "public order, decency or morality or in relation to contempt of court, defamation or incitement to an offence". A parliament in a democratic setup representing the will of the people is qualified to protect the rights and restrict them if needed. Additionally, there are courts and other legal remedies to address any excess.

- ◆ A foreign media company which provides a platform for communication should adhere to the laws and provisions of the host nation. The nation is sovereign and run by the will of people, not private MNCs like Twitter, Facebook, Amazon, Twitch or any other company. Twitter's own rules and guidelines cannot and should not overrule constitutional provisions of any host country.



General Studies Paper- III

Topic:

- Challenges to internal security through communication networks, role of media and social networking sites in internal security challenges, basics of cyber security; money-laundering and its prevention.

Q. Social media giants have grown to be more powerful than the established democracies and governance systems of the world. Discuss on the given statement in light of recent spat between Indian government and Twitter.

7

IMPORTANT BRAIN BOOSTERS

01

India Energy Outlook 2021 Report

1. Why in News?

- Recently, the International Energy Agency has released the India Energy Outlook 2021 report which examines the opportunities and challenges faced by the planet's third-largest energy-consuming country as it seeks to recover from the COVID-19 crisis.



4. India Energy Outlook 2021 Report

- The India Energy Outlook 2021 is a new special report from the International Energy Agency's World Energy Outlook series.
- The report examines pathways out of the crisis that emerged from the Covid-19 pandemic, as well as longer-term trends, exploring how India's energy sector might evolve to 2040 under a range of scenarios.

3. International Energy Agency

- The International Energy Agency is a Paris-based autonomous intergovernmental organisation established in the framework of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development in 1974 in the wake of the 1973 oil crisis.
- The IEA was initially dedicated to responding to physical disruptions in the supply of oil, as well as serving as an information source on statistics about the international oil market and other energy sectors.

2. Key Highlights

➤ Energy Consumption

- India will make up the biggest share of energy demand growth at 25% over the next two decades, as it overtakes the European Union as the world's third-biggest energy consumer by 2030.
- India's energy consumption is expected to nearly double as the nation's gross domestic product (GDP) expands to an estimated \$8.6 trillion by 2040 under its current national policy scenario. This is underpinned by a rate of GDP growth that adds the equivalent of another Japan to the world economy by 2040.

➤ Oil Demand

- India's oil demand is expected to rise to 8.7 million barrels per day (bpd) in 2040 from about 5 million bpd in 2019 while its refining capacity will reach 6.4 million bpd by 2030 and 7.7 million bpd by 2040, from 5 million bpd.
- The world's second-biggest net oil importer after China currently imports about 76% of its crude oil needs. That reliance on overseas oil is expected to rise to 90% by 2030 and 92% by 2040.
- Rising oil demand could double India's oil import bill to about \$181 billion by 2030 and nearly treble it to \$255 billion by 2040 compared with 2019.

➤ Gas Demand

- The world's fourth-largest LNG importer, which ships in about half of its natural gas needs by tanker currently, is spending billions of dollars to build infrastructure to boost use of the cleaner fuel.
- Liquefied natural gas (LNG) imports are expected to quadruple to 124 billion cubic metres (bcm), or about 61% of overall gas demand by 2040. That would be up from imports of 76 bcm, or about 58% of gas consumption by 2030.

➤ Imports Reliance

- India's growing energy needs will make it more reliant on fossil fuel imports as its domestic oil and gas production has been stagnant for years despite government policies to promote petroleum exploration and production and renewable energy.

➤ Urbanisation and industrialisation in India

- Over the period to 2040, an estimated 270 million people are likely to be added to India's urban population, the equivalent of adding a new city the size of Los Angeles every year.
- Even with such rapid urbanisation on a very large scale, the share of India's population living in urban areas in 2040 is still expected to be less than 50%.
- Urbanisation underpins a massive increase in total residential floor space from less than 20 billion square metres today to more than 50 billion in two decades' time.
- This prompts huge growth in demand for energy-intensive building materials.

02

Assessment of Climate Change over the Indian Region

1. Why in News?

- The 'Assessment of Climate Change over the Indian Region' report has stated that the snowfall over the higher reaches of the Hindukush Himalayan mountain ranges has been increasing in recent decades, which has shielded the region from glacier shrinkage.
- The recent massive flooding in the Alaknanda river, probably due to glacial bursts, left a trail of destruction near Joshimath area in Chamoli district.
- Assessment of Climate Change over the Indian Region report is published by the Ministry of Earth Sciences in June 2020. This was the first such report prepared for India.



2. Hindu Kush

- The Hindu Kush is an 800-kilometre-long (500 mi) mountain range that stretches through Afghanistan, from its centre to Northern Pakistan and into Tajikistan.
- The range forms the western section of the Hindu Kush Himalayan Region (HKH) and is the westernmost extension of the Pamir Mountains, the Karakoram and the Himalayas.
- It divides the valley of the Amu Darya (the ancient Oxus) to the north from the Indus River valley to the south.
- The range has numerous high snow-capped peaks, with the highest point being Tirich Mir or Terichmir at 7,708 metres (25,289 ft) in the Chitral District of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan.

3. Key Highlights

- Several areas of Hindukush Karakoram Himalayas have experienced a declining trend in snowfall and also retreat of glaciers in recent decades.
- The high-elevation Karakoram Himalayas have experienced higher winter snowfall that has shielded the region from glacier shrinkage.
- The overall climate along the Hindukush Karakoram region is undergoing warming at a higher rate during the winter season as compared to other seasons.
- The warming reported from this region is higher than global mean temperatures.
- The snow cover over the Hindukush Karakoram ranges has shown varying tendencies from 1980 to 2018, with moderate declining rate observed since 2000.
- About 50 per cent of the region's annual precipitation occurs during winter months, with snowfall being the primary source for water for the rest of the dry months of the year. Monsoon causes precipitation during summers too.

6. Major Significance

- **Main Drivers of the Monsoon System:** The Hindukush Karakoram ranges, along with the Tibetan Plateau, are the main drivers of the Indian Summer Monsoon.
- **Source of Livelihood:** These ranges form the source to 10 major river systems in Asia, supporting drinking water, irrigation and power supply to 1.3 billion people in the continent.
- Major Indian rivers which replenish due to the melted snow are Indus, Ganges and Brahmaputra.
- After the North and the South poles, the Hindukush – Karakoram ranges, along with the Tibetan Plateau, hold the largest reserves of fresh water and are known as the 'Third Pole'.

4. Reasons

- Weather dynamics is intricate in the Himalayan region, arising due to extensive interactions of tropical and extratropical weather systems.
- The Himalayas have been warming at a faster rate than the rest of Indian land mass during 1951 – 2018.
- Warming Trend
 - The decadal warming trend recorded over these ranges from 1951 to 2014 was 1.3 degree Celsius.
 - This is a rise from 0.16 degree Celsius recorded from 1900 to 1950, when global warming was less pronounced.

5. Effects

- **Increase in annual mean surface temperature:** The Climate Assessment report has forecast an increase in annual mean surface temperature by 2.2 degree Celsius during 2040 – 2069 and a further increase by 3.3 degree Celsius during 2070 – 2099, along these ranges.
- **Increase in the precipitation:** Due to this warming trend, there is an expected increase in the precipitation projected over the region.

03

The Lancet Countdown on Health and Climate Change

1. Why in News?

- New research from 'The Lancet Countdown on Health and Climate Change', highlights the benefits to health if countries adopt climate plans – Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) – that are consistent with the Paris Agreement aim of limiting warming to "well below 2°C".



2. The Lancet Countdown on Health and Climate Change

- The Lancet Countdown on health and climate change, published annually, is an international, multidisciplinary collaboration, dedicated to monitoring the evolving health profile of climate change, and providing an independent assessment of the delivery of commitments made by governments worldwide under the Paris Agreement.
- The countries considered in the study represent 50 per cent of the world's population and 70 per cent of the world's emissions – Brazil, China, Germany, India, Indonesia, Nigeria, South Africa, the UK and the US.

3. Methods Adopted

- The health co-benefits of existing NDCs and related policies (ie, the current pathways scenario) for 2040 in nine countries around the world.
- These health co-benefits were compared with two alternative scenarios, one consistent with the goal of the Paris Agreement and the Sustainable Development Goals (ie, the sustainable pathways scenario), and one in line with the sustainable pathways scenario, but also placing health as a central focus of the policies (ie, the health in all climate policies scenario).
- For each nation, emissions generated from energy, agriculture and transport sectors, and annual deaths due to air pollution, diet-related risk factors and physical inactivity, were estimated for the year 2040 for three different NDC scenarios.
- Estimating for the year 2040, this scenario was designed to be aligned with the commitments of the Paris Agreement to limit the increase in global temperature to well below 2°C within the century and also to meet SDG2 (zero hunger), SDG3 (good health and wellbeing), SDG7 (affordable and clean energy), and SDG13 (climate action).

7. Outlook

- Unlike the direct benefits of carbon mitigation which are ultimately long-term and understood in terms of damage limitation, the health co-benefits of ambitious climate policies have an immediate positive impact.
- Not only does delivering on Paris Agreement prevent millions dying prematurely each year, the quality of life for millions more will be improved through better health.

4. Findings of the Study

- Compared with the current pathways scenario, the sustainable pathways scenario resulted in an annual reduction of 1•18 million air pollution-related deaths, 5•86 million diet-related deaths, and 1•15 million deaths due to physical inactivity, across the nine countries, by 2040.
- Adopting the more ambitious health in all climate policies scenario would result in a further reduction of 462 000 annual deaths attributable to air pollution, 572 000 annual deaths attributable to diet, and 943 000 annual deaths attributable to physical inactivity.
- These benefits were attributable to the mitigation of direct greenhouse gas emissions and the commensurate actions that reduce exposure to harmful pollutants, as well as improved diets and safe physical activity.
- If India can adhere to its commitments, then the study indicates the country would be able to save as many as 4.3 lakh lives due to cleaner air and 17.41 lakh lives due to better diet.

6. Concerns

- Currently, NDCs globally are not strong enough to achieve the Paris agreement (risking a global temperature rise of greater than 3°C), and the authors emphasise that the lives saved through better diet, cleaner air and increased exercise provide yet another rationale for strengthening commitments.

5. Paris Agreement

- The Paris Agreement is a legally binding international treaty on climate change. It was adopted by 196 Parties at COP 21 in Paris, on 12 December 2015 and entered into force on 4 November 2016.
- Its goal is to limit global warming to well below 2, preferably to 1.5 degree Celsius, compared to pre-industrial levels.
- To achieve this long-term temperature goal, countries aim to reach global peaking of greenhouse gas emissions as soon as possible to achieve a climate neutral world by mid-century.

04

Major Port Authorities Bill, 2020

1. Why in News?

- Recently, Parliament passed the Major Port Authorities Bill, 2020. It seeks to replace the Major Port Trusts Act, 1963.



2. Key Highlights of the Bill

- With a view to promote the expansion of port infrastructure and facilitate trade and commerce, the bill aims at decentralizing decision making and to infuse professionalism in governance of major ports.
- It imparts faster and transparent decision making benefiting the stakeholders and better project execution capability.
- The Bill is aimed at reorienting the governance model in central ports to landlord port model in line with the successful global practice. This will also help in bringing transparency in operations of Major Ports.
- It will empower the Major Ports to perform with greater efficiency on account of full autonomy in decision making and by modernizing the institutional framework of Major Ports.
- The Bill will apply to the major ports of Chennai, Cochin, Jawaharlal Nehru Port, Kandla, Kolkata, Mumbai, New Mangalore, Mormugao, Paradip, V.O. Chidambaranar, and Vishakhapatnam.

3. Major Port Authorities Board

- Under the 1963 Act, all major ports are managed by the respective Board of Port Trusts that have members appointed by the central government.
- The Bill provides for the creation of a Board of Major Port Authority for each major port.

4. Composition of Board

- The Board will comprise of a Chairperson and a deputy Chairperson, both of whom will be appointed by the central government on the recommendation of a selection committee.
- It will include one member each from (i) the respective state governments, (ii) the Railways Ministry, (iii) the Defence Ministry, and (iv) the Customs Department.
- The Board will also include two to four independent members, and two members representing the interests of the employees of the Major Port Authority.

5. Corporate Social Responsibility

- The Bill provides that the Board may use its funds for providing social benefits.
- This includes development of infrastructure in areas such as education, health, housing, and skill development.
- These benefits could be provided for the Board's employees, customers, business partners, local communities, environment and the society at large.

7. Adjudicatory Board

- An Adjudicatory Board has been proposed to be created to carry out the residual function of the erstwhile TAMP for Major Ports, to look into disputes between ports and PPP concessionaires, to review stressed PPP projects and suggest measures to revive stressed PPP projects and to look into complaints regarding services rendered by the ports/ private operators operating within the ports.

6. Public Private Partnership (PPP) projects

- The Bill defines PPP projects as projects taken up through a concession contract by the Board.
- For such projects, the Board may fix the tariff for the initial bidding purposes.
- The appointed concessionaire will be free to fix the actual tariffs based on market conditions, and other conditions as may be notified.
- The revenue share in such projects will be on the basis of the specific concession agreement.

05

Price of Crude Oil

1. Why in News?

- India has urged Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and allied oil producers to ease production cuts as higher crude prices are hitting fuel demand in Asia's third largest economy and adding to inflation.
- The price of Brent crude crossed the \$60 per barrel mark recently after over a year on the back of oil-producing countries maintaining production cuts and expectations of improvements in global demand as the Covid-19 vaccine is rolled out across the world.



2. Oil Prices in India

- The retail price of regular petrol hit a three-figure mark for the first time across the country after it was hiked by 26 paise to Rs 100.13 a litre in Rajasthan's Sri Ganganagar on 17th Feb 2021, while diesel got dearer by 27 paise to Rs 92.13
- Fuel prices vary from state to state and taxes are levied on them by both central as well as the state governments.
- The government had hiked central taxes on petrol and diesel by Rs 13 per litre and Rs 11 per litre in 2020 to boost revenues amid lower economic activity.
- The increase in taxes had prevented consumers from getting the benefit of low fuel prices as international prices crashed during the first quarter of this fiscal and is now contributing to record high prices as international prices have recovered.
- Central and state taxes make up for 60% of the retail selling price of petrol and over 54% of diesel.

3. Crude Oil and India

- Nearly 160 different types of crude oil are traded in the global market with variation in viscosity, density, weight, fluidity and volatility.
- Crude oil is known by their geographical identities such as Brent Crude, Oman Crude, Dubai Crude, Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) Reference Basket, West Texas Intermediate (WTI).
- The Indian Basket of the crude price is a weighted average price of Brent, Oman and Dubai.
- India imports nearly 84 per cent of its crude oil requirements from abroad.
- Crude oil needs to be refined by refineries and Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs).

4. One-way Pricing Policy

- In the domestic market, fuel price is partly shaped by actual supply and demand, and mostly by taxation and dealer commission.
- India follows the dynamic fuel pricing system to determine the cost of petrol and diesel. Fuel prices are revised daily, and the government has no control over pricing.
- This means that if crude prices fall, retail prices should come down and vice versa. But this is just a theory and in practice this does not happen in India.
- When the global prices of crude oil increases, the burden is passed on to the consumer who pays the extra price for oil.
- When the reverse happens, government slaps fresh taxes and levies to ensure that it rakes in extra revenues.
- So the main beneficiary in this price decontrol mechanism is the government.

6. Reducing Oil Dependence

- The rise in the price of Brent crude will lead to an increase in India's import bill.
- India is not able to contain the inflationary pressure due to the rising crude oil prices, Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas Dharmendra Pradhan has said.
- PM Modi has said his government is sensitive to concerns of the middle-class and so has focussed on raising share of ethanol mixing in petrol.
- The government is working towards raising the share of natural gas in the energy basket to 15 per cent from the current 6.3 per cent and is committed to bringing it under the Goods and Services Tax (GST) regime to eliminate cascading effect of multiple taxes, he added.

5. De-control of Fuel

- Fuel price decontrol has been a step-by-step exercise, with the government freeing up prices of ATF in 2002, petrol in the year 2010 and diesel in October 2014.
- Prior to that, the Government used to intervene in fixing the price at which the fuel retailers used to sell diesel or petrol.
- Fuels such as domestic LPG and kerosene still are under price control.

06

Arbitration and Conciliation (Amendment) Bill, 2021

1. Why in News?

- The Lok Sabha has passed the Arbitration and Conciliation (amendment) Bill 2021 to replace an ordinance that enabled certain arbitral awards to be “unconditionally stayed”.
- Law minister Ravi Shankar Prasad said the Bill seeks to check “fly-by-night operators” who take advantage of the law to get favourable award by fraud.



2. Ordinance in 2020

- The Arbitration and Conciliation (Amendment) Ordinance, 2020 was promulgated on November 4, 2020. It seeks to amend the Arbitration and Conciliation Act, 1996. The Act contains provisions to deal with domestic and international arbitration and defines the law for conducting conciliation proceedings.
- The Law Ministry ordinance said the amendment was necessary “to address the concerns raised by stakeholders after the enactment of the Arbitration and Conciliation (Amendment) Act, 2019 and to ensure that all the stakeholder parties get an opportunity to seek an unconditional stay of enforcement of arbitral awards where the underlying arbitration agreement or contract or making of the arbitral award are induced by fraud or corruption.”
- The ordinance added a proviso in Section 36 of the Arbitration Act to effect this change to come into effect retrospectively from October 23, 2015.

3. Changes Sought in Ordinance

- **Automatic stay on awards:**
 - The 1996 Act allowed a party to file an application to set aside an arbitral award (i.e., the order given in an arbitration proceeding). Courts had interpreted this provision to mean that an automatic stay on an arbitral award was granted the moment an application for setting aside an arbitral award was made before a court. In 2015, the Act was amended to state that an arbitral award would not be automatically stayed merely because an application is made to a court to set aside the arbitral award.
 - The Ordinance specifies that a stay on arbitral award can be provided (even during the pendency of the setting aside application) if the court is satisfied that: (i) the relevant arbitration agreement or contract, or (ii) the making of the award, was induced or effected by fraud or corruption.
- **Qualifications of arbitrators:**
 - The Act specified certain qualifications, experience and accreditation norms for arbitrators in a separate schedule.
 - The Ordinance omits the Schedule for arbitrators and states that the qualifications, experience, and norms for accreditation of arbitrations will be specified by regulations.

5. Arbitration for Dispute Resolution

- Arbitration is a form of Alternative Dispute Resolution.
- ADR methods enjoy significant advantages such as lower costs, greater flexibility of process, higher confidentiality, greater likelihood of settlement, choice of forum, choice of solutions etc.
- Arbitration Law in India, is primary contained in the Act of 1996. An Act that was passed to consolidate the laws relating to domestic, international arbitration and its enforcement.
- The arbitration provides an alternative mode of dispute resolution through an arbitrator. It includes a selection of the neutral third person who is an expert in the area of the arbitral issue. All the parties are bound by the rule and the time limits fixed by the arbitrator within which the dispute is to be settled.

4. Significance of Amendment

- Till recently, an arbitration award was enforceable even if an appeal was filed against it in the court under Section 36 of the law. But the court could grant a stay on the award on conditions as it deemed fit.
- As per the proposed amendment, if the award is being given on the basis of an agreement based on fraud or corruption, then the court will not impose a condition to stay the award and grant an unconditional stay during the pendency of the appeal if it has been challenged under Section 34 of the arbitration law.
- The bill, according to the statement of objects and reasons, provides for “unconditional stay of enforcement of arbitral awards, where the underlying arbitration agreement, contracts or arbitral award is induced by fraud or corruption”.

07

Saksham Portal and Seaweed Mission

1. Why in News?

- The Technology Information, Forecasting and Assessment Council (TIFAC) has launched two new initiatives - SAKSHAM (Shramik Shakti Manch) Job Portal and a Seaweed Mission.



2. TIFAC Initiatives

- TIFAC is an autonomous organization set up in 1988 under the Department of Science & Technology to look ahead in technology domain, assess the technology trajectories, and support innovation by networked actions in select areas of national importance.
- TIFAC will demonstrate a model along with other in-line ministries for commercial farming of seaweeds and its processing for value addition towards boosting the economy.
- TIFAC's role would be to network and orchestrating the operations, demonstrating farming, nucleating value addition products, support policy changes and advice on regulatory issues, market control, etc.
- The initiatives were launched on TIFAC's 34th foundation day.

4. SEaweeds

- Out of the global seaweed production of 32 million tons fresh weight valued around 12 billion US dollars.
- China produces 57 %, Indonesia 28% followed by South Korea, whereas India is having a mere share of 0.01-0.02%.
- Despite several advantages, commercial seaweeds cultivation has not been taken place in the country at an appropriate scale, as being practiced in South-East Asian countries.
- By an estimate, if cultivation is done in 10 million hectares or 5% of the EEZ area of India, it can
 - ☛ provide employment to 50 million people;
 - ☛ set up new seaweed industry;
 - ☛ contribute to national GDP; ocean productivity;
 - ☛ abates algal blooms,
 - ☛ sequesters millions of tons CO₂;
 - ☛ Healthier ocean;
 - ☛ bio-ethanol of 6.6 billion litres.
- The Mission envisages the following activities
 - ☛ Establishing model demonstration farms over one hectare for cultivation of economically important seaweeds in nearshore and onshore along the Indian coast.
 - ☛ Establishment of seaweed nurseries for supplying seed material for large scale farming of economically important seaweeds in the country.
 - ☛ Establishment and demonstration of processing technologies/ recipes for edible seaweeds in line with consumer acceptability or cultural food habits.
 - ☛ Setting up of processing plant for integrated production of plant growth stimulants (sap) along with industrially important cell wall polysaccharides (phycocolloids) such as agar, agarose, carrageenan and alginates from fresh seaweeds.
 - ☛ An activity on seaweed cluster development including value chain development, supply chain development, collection of data on environmental, economic and social impacts of seaweed projects in the country.

3. SAKSHAM

- SAKSHAM (Shramik Shakti Manch) is a dynamic portal for jobs/ mapping the skills of Shramiks vis-à-vis requirements of MSMEs and other industries all across the country.
- The portal with the demand and supply data uses algorithm and Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools, for geo spatial information on demand and availability of Shramiks, and also provide analysis on skill training programmes of Shramiks.
- The pilot portal originally initiated with two districts is now being launched as an all India portal.
- **Key Features**
 - ☛ A dynamic job portal - opportunity for Shramiks and MSMEs
 - ☛ Facilitate creation of 10 lakh blue collar jobs
 - ☛ Direct connect between Shramiks and MSMEs, no middleman in between
 - ☛ Minimise migration of Shramiks – job opportunity in proximate MSMEs
- **Advantages**
 - ☛ The portal is expected help both Shramiks and MSMEs to take advantage of technology in this era of economic revival.
 - ☛ This would empower Shramiks by projecting their candidature directly to the MSMEs & other employers and would also address aspects related to their skill proficiency levels.
 - ☛ This would also eliminate the dependence of industry on the middlemen / labour contractor for their manpower requirements.

7 MCQ's WITH EXPLANATORY ANSWERS

(Based on Brain Boosters)

01 India Energy Outlook 2021 Report

1. Consider the following statements with reference to the 'India Energy Outlook 2021' report:

1. India's energy consumption is expected to nearly double as the nation's gross domestic product (GDP) expands to an estimated \$8.6 trillion by 2040.
2. India's oil demand is expected to rise to 8.7 million barrels per day (bpd) in 2040 from about 5 million bpd in 2019.
3. Liquefied natural gas (LNG) imports are expected to quadruple to 124 billion cubic metres (bcm), or about 61% of overall gas demand by 2040.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 and 2 only
- b) 2 and 3 only
- c) 1 and 3 only
- d) All of the above

Answer: (d)

Explanation: All the statements are correct. India's energy consumption is expected to nearly double as the nation's gross domestic product (GDP) expands to an estimated \$8.6 trillion by 2040 under its current national policy scenario. This is underpinned by a rate of GDP growth that adds the equivalent of another Japan to the world economy by 2040.

India's oil demand is expected to rise to 8.7 million barrels per day (bpd) in 2040 from about 5 million bpd in 2019 while its refining capacity will reach 6.4 million bpd by 2030 and 7.7 million bpd by 2040, from 5 million bpd.

Liquefied natural gas (LNG) imports are expected to quadruple to 124 billion cubic metres (bcm), or about 61% of overall gas demand by 2040. That would be up from imports of 76 bcm, or about 58% of gas consumption by 2030.



02 Assessment of Climate Change over the Indian Region

2. With reference to the 'Assessment of Climate Change over the Indian Region' report, consider the following statements:

1. Assessment of Climate Change over the Indian Region report is published by the Ministry of Earth Sciences in June 2020.
2. About 50 per cent of the region's annual precipitation occurs during winter months, with snowfall being the primary source for water for the rest of the dry months of the year.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (c)

Explanation: Both the statements are correct. Assessment of Climate Change over the Indian Region report is published by the Ministry of Earth Sciences in June 2020. This was the first such report prepared for India.

About 50 per cent of the region's annual precipitation occurs during winter months, with snowfall being the primary source for water for the rest of the dry months of the year. Monsoon causes precipitation during summers too.



03 The Lancet Countdown on Health and Climate Change

3. Consider the following statements:

1. The Paris Agreement is a legally binding international treaty on climate change, adopted by 194 Parties at COP 21 in Paris, on 4 November 2016.
2. Its goal is to limit global warming to below 1 degree Celsius, compared to pre-industrial levels.

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: (d)

Explanation: Both the statements are incorrect.

The Paris Agreement is a legally binding international treaty on climate change. It was adopted by 196 Parties at COP 21 in Paris, on 12 December 2015 and entered into force on 4 November 2016.

Its goal is to limit global warming to well below 2, preferably to 1.5 degrees Celsius, compared to pre-industrial levels.



04 Major Port Authorities Bill, 2020

1. Consider the following statements with reference to the Major Port Authorities Bill, 2020:

1. Under the 1963 Act, all major ports are managed by the respective Board of Port Trusts that have members appointed by the state government.
2. The Bill provides that the Board may use its funds for providing social benefits.
3. The Bill is aimed at reorienting the governance model in central ports to landlord port model in line with the successful global practice.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 and 2 only
- b) 2 and 3 only
- c) 1 and 3 only
- d) All of the above

Answer: (b)

Explanation: Statement 1 is incorrect. Under the 1963 Act, all major ports are managed by the respective Board of Port Trusts that have members appointed by the central government.

Statement 2 and 3 are correct. The Bill provides that the Board may use its funds for providing social benefits. The Bill is aimed at reorienting the governance model in central ports to landlord port model in line with the successful global practice. This will also help in bringing transparency in operations of Major Ports.

It will empower the Major Ports to perform with greater efficiency on account of full autonomy in decision making and by modernizing the institutional framework of Major Ports.

The Bill will apply to the major ports of Chennai, Cochin, Jawaharlal Nehru Port, Kandla, Kolkata, Mumbai, New Mangalore, Mormugao, Paradip, V.O. Chidambaram, and Vishakhapatnam.



05 Price of Crude Oil

5. With reference to the international crude oil crossing 60\$ per barrel, consider the following statements:

1. In India the prices of petrol and diesel are not controlled by the government. They are linked to international prices. This is called dynamic pricing policy.
2. Under dynamic pricing policy, in India, when the crude prices fall, retail prices should also come down and when the international crude prices rise, so the domestic prices also rise.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (a)

Explanation: Statement 1 is correct. In the domestic market, fuel price is partly shaped by actual supply and demand, and mostly by taxation and dealer commission. India follows the dynamic fuel pricing system to determine the cost of petrol and diesel. Fuel prices are revised daily, and the government has no control over pricing.

Statement 2 is incorrect. If crude prices fall, retail prices should come down and vice versa. But this is just a theory and in practice this does not happen in India. When the global price of crude oil increases, the burden is passed on to the consumer who pays the extra price for oil. When the reverse happens, government slaps fresh taxes and levies to ensure that it rakes in extra revenues.



06 Arbitration and Conciliation (Amendment) Bill, 2021

6. Consider the following statements:

1. Arbitration and Conciliation (Amendment) Bill, 2021 was introduced in the budget session of the parliament on a backdrop of an ordinance which was issued last year.
2. Arbitration and Conciliation (Amendment) Bill, 2021 has introduced an amendment where the courts can stay the award of arbitration if the agreement or the award is based on fraud or corruption.
3. As per Arbitration and Conciliation (Amendment) Bill, 2021 there is a provision of automatic stay of the implementation of the award once the application is filed to stay the order.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 and 2 only
- b) 2 and 3 only
- c) 1 and 3 only
- d) All of the above

Answer: (a)

Explanation: Statement 1 and 2 are correct. The Lok Sabha has passed the Arbitration and Conciliation (amendment) Bill 2021 to replace an ordinance that enabled certain arbitral awards to be "unconditionally stayed".

Till recently, an arbitration award was enforceable even if an appeal was filed against it in the court under Section 36 of the law. But the court could grant a stay on the award on conditions as it deemed fit. As per the proposed amendment, if the award is being given on the basis of an agreement based on fraud or corruption, then the court will not impose a condition to stay the award and grant an unconditional stay during the pendency of the appeal if it has been challenged under Section 34 of the arbitration law.

Statement 3 is incorrect. The 1996 Act allowed a party to file an application to set aside an arbitral award (i.e., the order given in an arbitration proceeding). Courts had interpreted this provision to mean that an automatic stay on an arbitral award was granted the moment an application for setting aside an arbitral award was made before a court. In 2015, the Act was amended to state that an arbitral award would not be automatically stayed merely because an application is made to a court to set aside the arbitral award.



07 Saksham Portal and Seaweed Mission

7. Consider the following statements:

1. SAKSHAM (Shramik Shakti Manch) is a dynamic portal for jobs/ mapping the skills of Shramiks vis-à-vis requirements of MSMEs and other industries all across the country.
2. India is the largest producer of seaweed whereas China produces 57 %, Indonesia 28% followed by South Korea.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (a)

Explanation: Statement 1 is correct. SAKSHAM (Shramik Shakti Manch) is a dynamic portal for jobs/ mapping the skills of Shramiks vis-à-vis requirements of MSMEs and other industries all across the country.

Statement 2 is incorrect. For Seaweed production, China produces 57 %, Indonesia 28% followed by South Korea, whereas India is having a mere share of 0.01-0.02%.



7 IMPORTANT NEWS

01

NASA's Perseverance

- ◆ NASA's science rover Perseverance, the most advanced astrobiology laboratory ever sent to another world, streaked through the Martian atmosphere recently and landed safely on the floor of a vast crater, its first stop on a search for traces of ancient microbial life on the Red Planet.
- ◆ The robotic vehicle sailed through space for nearly seven months, covering 293 million miles (472 million km) before piercing the Martian atmosphere at 12,000 miles per hour (19,000 km per hour) to begin its approach to touchdown on the planet's surface.

About Mission

- ◆ A primary objective for Perseverance's mission on Mars is astrobiology research, including the search for signs of ancient microbial life. The rover will characterize the planet's geology and past climate and be the first mission to collect and cache Martian rock and regolith, paving the way for human exploration of the Red Planet.
- ◆ The Mars 2020 Perseverance mission is part of NASA's Moon to Mars exploration approach, which includes Artemis missions

to the Moon that will help prepare for human exploration of the Red Planet.

- ◆ NASA's Perseverance rover has been equipped with a record 25 cameras and two microphones. Several of these cameras were turned on during the rover's descent to the planet, thereby capturing striking images which show phenomenal details of the rover's landing till about 2 meters off the ground. The images were snapped during the crucial last minutes of the rover's descent, also referred to as the "seven minutes of terror", when it was travelling at 12,000 miles per hour.
- ◆ Larger and packed with more instruments than the four Mars rovers preceding it, Perseverance is set to build on previous findings that liquid water once flowed on the Martian surface and that carbon and other minerals altered by water and considered precursors to the evolution of life were present.



- ◆ Perseverance's payload also includes demonstration projects that could help pave the way for eventual human exploration of Mars, including a device to convert the carbon dioxide in the Martian atmosphere into pure oxygen.
- ◆ Another experimental prototype carried by Perseverance is a miniature helicopter, Ingenuity. Unlike the Perseverance rover, the Ingenuity Mars helicopter is not carrying any science equipment onboard. Instead, its primary objective is to check whether flight is possible in Mars' extremely thin atmosphere. The helicopter was able to send a status update to NASA's Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter, which relays messages between Mars and Earth and has been orbiting the red planet since 2006. 📡🔍🚀

02

Gaint Leatherback Turtle

- Recent proposals of the government for tourism and port development in the Andaman and Nicobar (A&N) Islands have conservationists worried over the fate of some of the most important nesting populations of the Giant Leatherback turtle in this part of the Indian Ocean.

About Turtle

- The largest of the seven species of sea turtles on the planet and also the most long-ranging, Leatherbacks are found in all oceans except the Arctic and the Antarctic. Within the Indian Ocean, they nest only in Indonesia, Sri Lanka and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands and are also listed in Schedule I of India's Wildlife Protection Act, 1972, according it the highest legal protection.

Habitat

- For the Leatherback, perhaps even more important is Great Nicobar Island, the southernmost of the A&N group. Large numbers

have been recorded nesting here — mainly on the long and wide beaches at the mouth of the Dagmar and Alexandira rivers on the west coast and at the mouth of the Galathea river along its south eastern coast.

- The A&N Islands are prominent in the National Marine Turtle Action Plan released on February 1, 2021, by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change. The plan notes that "India has identified all its important sea turtle nesting habitats as 'Important Coastal and Marine Biodiversity Areas' and included them in the Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) - 1". South Bay and West Bay on Little Andaman and Galathea on Great Nicobar, along with other nesting beaches in the islands, find a specific mention here as "Important Marine Turtle Habitats in India" and the largest Leatherback nesting grounds in India.

Concerns

- Surveys conducted in the A&N Islands over the past three

decades have shown that the populations here could be among the most important colonies of the Leatherback globally.

- There is concern now, however, that at least three key nesting beaches — two on Little Andaman Island and one on Great Nicobar Island — are under threat due to mega "development" plans announced in recent months. These include NITI Aayog's ambitious tourism vision for Little Andaman and the proposal for a mega-shipment port at Galathea Bay on Great Nicobar Island.
- The Little Andaman plan has sought the de-reservation of over 200 sq km of pristine rainforest and also of about 140 sq km of the Onge Tribal Reserve. Two sites where key components of the tourism plan are to be implemented are both Leatherback nesting sites — South Bay along the southern coast of the island and West Bay along its western coast. <<>>

03

National Hydrogen Mission

- Recently, the government of India has started preparations for holding auctions for green hydrogen, which is hydrogen produced from renewable energy sources. The step came closely after Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharam proposed the introduction of a "National Hydrogen Energy Mission" in her budget speech.

Key Highlights of the Mission

- NHM aims for generation of hydrogen from green power resources. The Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) has also disclosed that the draft regulations for NHM will be finalised by the end of this month and will thereafter proceed for approval of the Union Cabinet. Though it is speculated

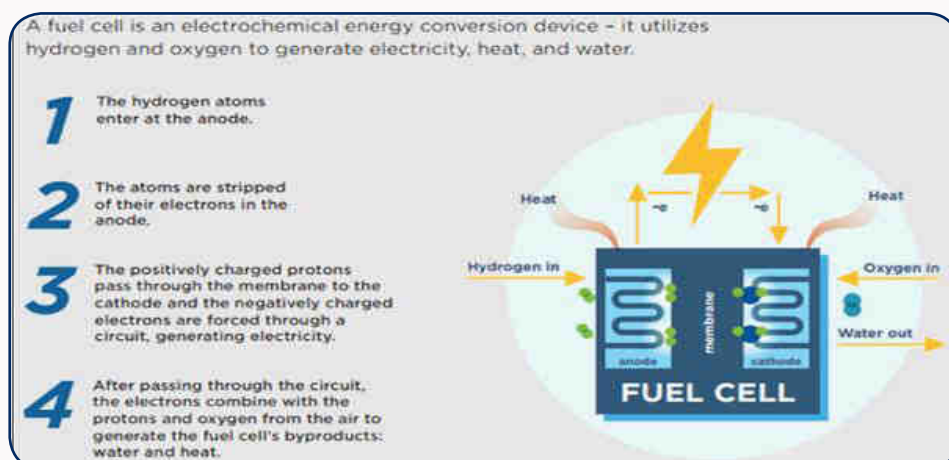
that NHM will emphasize on generating green hydrogen and enabling its commercial use as a transportation fuel, however, it is yet to be seen what roadmap the government has envisioned in its draft regulations.

- The ministry also planning to increase the penetration of domestic green hydrogen in industries such as fertilizer, steel

and oil refineries, which otherwise import natural gas and ammonia to produce hydrogen. There are also discussions to put a mandate on using around 10% of domestic green hydrogen in such industries.

About Hydrogen Fuel

- Hydrogen is primarily used in petrochemicals and fertiliser industry and is produced largely from natural gas, thereby emitting enormous amounts of carbon dioxide. Depending on the nature of the method of its extraction, hydrogen is categorised into three categories, namely, grey, blue and green. There is growing focus on increasing production of green and blue hydrogen due to its no carbon emission and use of carbon offset technology, respectively.



India's Potential

- India has a huge edge in green hydrogen production owing to its favorable geographic conditions and presence of abundant natural elements. The government has given impetus in scaling up the gas pipeline infrastructure across

the length and breadth of the country, and has introduced reforms for the power grid, including the introduction of smart grids. Such steps are being taken to effectively integrate renewable energy in the present energy mix.



04

Draft Blue Economy Policy for India

- The Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) has rolled out the Draft Blue Economy policy for India in the public domain inviting suggestions and inputs from various stakeholders including industry, NGOs, academia, and citizens.

Key Features of the Policy

- The MoES prepared the draft blue economy policy framework in line with the Government of India's Vision of New India by 2030. It highlighted blue economy as one of the ten core dimensions for national growth. The draft policy framework emphasizes policies across several key sectors to achieve holistic growth of India's economy. The document recognizes the following seven thematic areas.
 - National accounting framework for the blue economy and ocean governance.
 - Coastal marine spatial planning and tourism.

- Marine fisheries, aquaculture, and fish processing.
- Manufacturing, emerging industries, trade, technology, services, and skill development.
- Logistics, infrastructure and shipping, including trans-shipments.
- Coastal and deep-sea mining and offshore energy.
- Security, strategic dimensions, and international engagement.

Significance

- The draft blue economy policy document outlines the vision and strategy that can be adopted by the Government of India to utilize the plethora of oceanic resources available in the country.
- The policy document aims to enhance contribution of the blue economy to India's Gross Domestic Product (GDP), improve lives of

coastal communities, preserve marine biodiversity, and maintain the national security of marine areas and resources.

India's Potential

- With a coastline of nearly 7.5 thousand kilometers, India has a unique maritime position. India's Exclusive Economic Zone of over 2 million square kilometers has a bounty of living and non-living resources with significant recoverable resources such as crude oil and natural gas. With these vast maritime interests, the blue economy occupies a vital potential position in India's economic growth. It could well be the next multiplier of GDP and well-being, provided sustainability and socio-economic welfare are kept center-stage. Therefore, India's draft blue economy policy is envisaged as a crucial framework towards unlocking country's potential for economic growth and welfare.



05

Production Linked Incentive Scheme for Telecom Sector

- ◆ The Union Cabinet has approved a Rs 12,195-crore Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme for domestic manufacturing of telecom and networking products such as switches, routers, radio access network, wireless equipment and other internet of things (IoT) access devices.
- ◆ With the inclusion of telecom equipment manufacturing under the ambit of PLI schemes, the total number of sectors under such programmes stands at 13. All the sectors included under the various PLI schemes are mostly labour intensive and aim to attract global manufacturing giants into the Indian manufacturing space.

Key Highlights

- ◆ The core component of this scheme is to offset the huge import of telecom equipment worth more than Rs 50,000 crore and reinforce it with 'Made in India' products, both for domestic markets and exports.
- ◆ Like the other PLI schemes, the incentives for companies in the telecom and networking

equipment manufacturing space would be on achievement of a minimum threshold of cumulative incremental investment and incremental sales of manufactured goods net of taxes.

- ◆ Eligible Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) will get an incentive of 7 per cent for the first and the second year, followed by an incentive of 6, 5, and 4 per cent in the third, fourth and fifth year, respectively.
- ◆ Other companies, which do not fall under the MSME category but are eligible, will receive an incentive of 6 per cent for the first two years, 5 per cent for the next two years and 4 per cent in the fifth and final year.
- ◆ The minimum investment threshold for MSMEs has been kept at Rs 10 crore, while for other companies it has been kept at Rs 100 crore. The scheme, which will be operational from April 1, will run over the next five years with a total outlay of Rs 12,195 crore for providing these incentives.

About PLI

- ◆ In April last year, the central government had for the first time



notified the PLI scheme for mobile phones and allied component manufacturing. As a part of the scheme, companies which set up new mobile and specified equipment manufacturing units or expanded their present units would get incentives of 4 to 6 per cent, with the total outlay on the scheme amounting to Rs 41,000 crore.

- ◆ In November, the PLI scheme was expanded to include 12 more sectors such as automobile and automobile components, pharmaceutical drugs, textile products, food products, high efficiency solar photo-voltaic modules, white goods such as air conditioners and LED bulbs, and speciality steel products.

06

Arjun Main Battle Tank MK-1A

- ◆ Recently, Prime Minister of India has handed over the indigenously developed Arjun Main Battle Tank (MK-1A) to the Indian Army.
- ◆ The army will get 118 units of the Main Battle Tank, indigenously designed, developed and manufactured

by Combat Vehicles Research and Development Establishment (CVRDE) and Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) along with 15 academic institutions, eight labs and several Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs).

About Arjun Main Battle Tank

- ◆ The Arjun Main Battle Tank project was initiated by DRDO in 1972 with the CVRDE as its lead laboratory. The objective was to create a "state-of-the-art tank with superior fire power, high mobility, and excellent protection".

- ◆ The Arjun tanks stand out for their 'Fin Stabilised Armour Piercing Discarding Sabot (FSAPDS)' ammunition and 120-mm calibre rifled gun. It also has a computer-controlled integrated fire control system with stabilised sighting that works in all lighting conditions. The secondary weapons include a co-axial 7.62-mm machine gun for anti-personnel and a 12.7-mm machine gun for anti-aircraft and ground targets.
- ◆ The Indian Army received the first batch of 16 tanks in 2004 and they were inducted as a squadron of the 43 Armoured Regiment. In 2009, the first Arjun regiment of the Indian Army had 45 tanks. By 2011,



over 100 tanks had been delivered. In 2010, the Indian army ordered another 124 Arjuns.

- ◆ The Mk-1A version has 14 major upgrades on the earlier version. It is also supposed to have missile firing capability as per the design,

but this feature will be added later as final testing of the capability is still on. However, the biggest achievement with the latest version is 54.3 per cent indigenous content against the 41 per cent in the earlier model. 

07

'Go Electric' Campaign

- ◆ The Union Minister for Road Transport & Highways and, Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises Nitin Gadkari has launched the "Go Electric" Campaign to spread awareness on the benefits of e-mobility and Electric Vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure as well as electric cooking in India.

Key Features of the Campaign

- ◆ The Campaign is an initiative aimed at reducing the import dependence of our country in the coming years and has also been projected as an important step towards a cleaner and greener future.
- ◆ The campaign is also aimed at creating awareness at PAN-India

level and is expected to boost the confidence of EV manufacturers.

- ◆ To implement the 'Go Electric' campaign at National and State level, Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) will extend technical support to the State Designated Agencies (SDAs). As a Central Nodal Agency, BEE will provide content and details to State Designated Agencies and other partners to ensure uniformity of information.
- ◆ The electric fuel is a major alternative for fossil fuels which have an import bill of Rs. 8 lakh Crore. When compared to conventional fuels the electric fuel has low cost, reduced emissions and it is also indigenous.

- ◆ The Union Minister observed that electrification of public transport is not only economical but also eco friendly. While speaking about diversification of agriculture towards the energy and power sector the Transport Minister said that the Ministry of Power should promote generation of green power from agriculture waste and biomass which can also benefit the farmers across the country.

About BEE

- ◆ The Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE), under the aegis of the Ministry of Power has been mandated to undertake an awareness drive for promoting Public Charging, e-mobility & its ecosystem. 

7

IMPORTANT PRACTICE QUESTIONS (For Mains)



01

Nature-based solutions provide cost-effective strategy to meet key economic development goals while conserving nature. Elaborate.

02

What is 'S-CNG'? Describe its different uses.

03

Explain the child welfare schemes of government of India and its role.

04

What is meant by 'Line of Poverty'? Explain the 'Poverty Alleviation' programme of India.

05

Explain the 'New Education Policy 2020' of India.

06

Examine the role of Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs) for the rural development of India.

07

Analyse various aspects relating to management of human resources in India.

7

IMPORTANT FACTS (For Prelims)



01



03



05

01

Who has been appointed as Executive Secretary of the UN Capital Development Fund?

Preeti Sinha

02

Which state has opened its first toilet for transgenders?

Uttar Pradesh

03

Who has been appointed the new chief of the World Trade Organization (WTO)?

Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala

04

Which swadeshi app has been launched an instant messaging platform on the lines of WhatsApp?

Sandes

05

Which homegrown microblogging platform has dubbed as another Indian version of Twitter?

Koo

06

Which player has won 'Australian Open 2021 Men's Single Final'?

Novak Djokovic

07

Which player has won 'Australian Open 2021 Women's Single Final'?

Naomi Osaka

7

IMPORTANT QUOTES (For Essay and Answer Writing)

01



01

"The identity of an individual is essentially a function of her choices, rather than the discovery of an immutable attribute."

Amartya Sen

02

"You should not give up and we should not allow the problem to defeat us."

Dr. A.P. J Abdul Kalam

03

"People want government to deliver - here and now."

Atal Bihari Vajpayee

04

"To be in good moral condition requires at least as much training as to be in good physical condition."

Pt. Jawahar Lal Nehru

05

"Ability is not always gauged by examination."

Indira Gandhi

06

"Let your life lightly dance on the edges of Time like dew on the tip of a leaf."

Rabindranath Tagore

07

"Talk to yourself once in a day, otherwise you may miss meeting an intelligent person in this world."

Swami Vivekananda

AN INTRODUCTION

Dhyeya IAS, a decade old Institution, was founded by Mr. Vinay Singh and Mr. Q.H. Khan. Ever since its emergence it has unparalleled track record of success. Today, it stands tall among the reputed institutes providing coaching for Civil Services Examination (CSE). The institute has been very successful in making potential realize their dreams which is evident from success stories of the previous years.

Quite a large number of students desirous of building a career for themselves are absolutely less equipped for the fairly tough competitive tests they have to appear in. Several others, who have a brilliant academic career, do not know that competitive exams are vastly different from academic examination and call for a systematic and scientifically planned guidance by a team of experts. Here one single move invariably put one ahead of many others who lag behind. Dhyeya IAS is manned with qualified & experienced faculties besides especially designed study material that helps the students in achieving the desired goal.

Civil Services Exam requires knowledge base of specified subjects. These subjects though taught in schools and colleges are not necessarily oriented towards the exam approach. Coaching classes at Dhyeya IAS are different from classes conducted in schools and colleges with respect to their orientation. Classes are targeted towards the particular exam. Classroom guidance at Dhyeya IAS is about improving the individual's capacity to focus, learn and innovate as we are comfortably aware of the fact that you can't teach a person anything you can only help him find it within himself.

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Distance learning Programme, DSDL, primarily caters the need for those who are unable to come to metros for economic or family reason but have ardent desire to become a civil servant. Simultaneously, it also suits to the need of working professionals, who are unable to join regular classes due to increase in work load or places of their posting. The principal characteristic of our distance learning is that the student does not need to be present in a classroom in order to participate in the instruction. It aims to create and provide access to learning when the source of information and the learners are separated by time and distance. Realizing the difficulties faced by aspirants of distant areas, especially working candidates, in making use of the institute's classroom guidance programme, distance learning system is being provided in General Studies. The distance learning material is comprehensive, concise and exam-oriented in nature. Its aim is to make available almost all the relevant material on a subject at one place. Materials on all topics of General Studies have been prepared in such a way that, not even a single point will be missing. In other words, you will get all points, which are otherwise to be taken from 6-10 books available in the market / library. That means, DSDL study material is undoubtedly the most comprehensive and that will definitely give you added advantage in your Preliminary as well as Main Examination. These materials are not available in any book store or library. These materials have been prepared exclusively for the use of our students. We believe in our quality and commitment towards making these notes indispensable for any student preparing for Civil Services Examination. We adhere all pillars of Distance education.

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