



PERFECT

WEEKLY
CURRENT AFFAIRS

Contents

July- 2018
Issue-3

Seven Important Issues

1-20

- India's Hunt for Helium-3
- Turbulence in India- US Relations
- Pradhan Mantri Surakshit Matritva Yojana: Empowering Mothers
- Teachings of Kabir: Still Relevant
- Winning the Battle against Poverty
- Refashioning of Higher Education in India
- Drug Menace in India

Seven Subjective Questions with Model Answers

21-25

Seven Important National & International News

26-30

Seven Brain Boosters & Seven MCQ's Based on Them

31-39

Seven Important Facts For Prelims

40

Seven Perfect Quotes (Important for Essay and Answer Writing)

41

Seven Practice Questions for Main Exam

42

SEVEN IMPORTANT ISSUES

I. INDIA'S HUNT FOR HELIUM-3

Why in News?

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) is planning to mine the Moon for helium-3 (He-3), that isotope is limited on Earth yet so abundant on the Moon that it theoretically could meet global energy demands for 250 years if harnessed. Chandrayaan-2 mission which is planned to launch during second half of 2018 will discover information about He-3 deposits.

Introduction

India's space program wants to go where no nation has gone before — to the south side of the Moon and once it gets there, it will study the potential for mining a source of waste-free nuclear energy that could be worth trillions of dollars. The rover landing is one step in an envisioned series for ISRO that includes putting a space station in orbit and, potentially, an Indian crew on the Moon. The nation's equivalent of NASA will launch a rover in October to explore virgin territory on the lunar surface and analyze crust samples for signs of water and helium-3. A primary objective, though, is to search for deposits of helium-3. Solar winds have bombarded the Moon with immense quantities of helium-3 because it's not protected by a magnetic field like Earth is.

The mission would solidify India's place among the fleet of explorers racing to the Moon, Mars and beyond for scientific, commercial or military gains. The governments of the U.S., China, India, Japan and Russia

are competing with startups and billionaires Elon Musk, Jeff Bezos and Richard Branson to launch satellites, robotic landers, astronauts and tourists into the cosmos. ISRO has an impending Moon mission, in October/November this year, over the course of which the organisation hopes to deploy its first rover on the lunar surface.

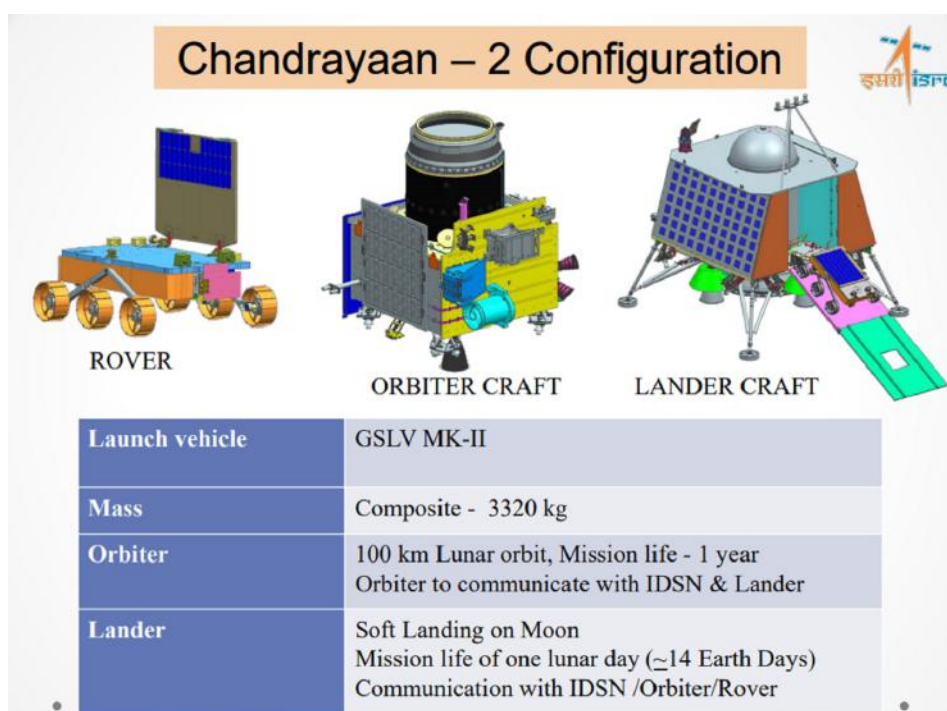
It's worth noting that the presence of the He-3 isotope on Moon's surface has been confirmed by the samples brought back by multiple Apollo missions from NASA over the years. China is the only country to put a lander and rover on the Moon this century with its Chang'e 3 mission in 2013. The nation plans to return later this year by sending a probe to the unexplored far side.

About Chandrayaan-2

Chandrayaan-2 will be an advanced version of the previous Chandrayaan-1 mission to Moon. Chandrayaan-2 is configured as a two module system comprising of an Orbiter Craft module (OC) and a Lander Craft module (LC) carrying the rover developed by ISRO.

India's second mission to the Moon is a totally indigenous mission comprising of an Orbiter, Lander and Rover. After reaching the 100 km lunar orbit, the lander housing the rover will separate from the orbiter. After a controlled descent, the lander will soft land on the lunar surface at a specified site and deploy a rover.

The rover will move around the landing site in semi-autonomous mode



as decided by the ground commands. The instruments on the rover will observe the lunar surface and send back data, which will be useful for analysis of the lunar soil.

The Chandrayaan-2 weighing around 3290 kg and would orbit around the Moon and perform the objectives of remote sensing the Moon. The payloads will collect scientific information on lunar topography, mineralogy, elemental abundance, lunar exosphere and signatures of hydroxyl and water-ice.

Objectives of Chandrayaan – 2

- Expand technologies from Chandrayaan-1 and demonstrate newer technologies for future planetary missions.
- Deploy a Lunar Lander-Rover capable of soft landing on a specified lunar site and deploy a Rover to carry out in-situ analysis of chemicals.
- Carry payloads in the Orbiter craft to enhance the scientific objectives of Chandrayaan-1 with improved resolution.

What is Helium-3?

It is the second element in the periodic table having 2 protons, 2 neutrons and 2 electrons - having an atomic mass of 4. But another form of Helium has been in the news lately and it is called Helium-3. Helium-3, also written as ^3He , is a light isotope of helium having 2 protons but only one neutron and an atomic mass of 3. The existence of Helium-3 was first proposed in 1934 by the Australian nuclear physicist Mark Oliphant. Helium-3 was originally thought to be a radioactive isotope until it was found in samples of natural helium, taken both from the terrestrial atmosphere and from natural gas wells. Other than ^1H , helium-3 is the only stable isotope of any element with more protons than neutrons. Its presence is rare on Earth, it is sought after for use in nuclear fusion research, and it is abundant in the moon's soil.

A Second-Generation Fusion Fuel

Most fusion experiments, to date, have used first-generation reactors, fuelled with the isotopes of hydrogen—deuterium and tritium. Deuterium may be fused with tritium (D-T) or fused with itself (D-D). This type of reaction, however, presents a big problem because most of the energy from the fusion reaction is in the form of neutrons, rather than charged particles. A D-T fusion reaction releases 80 per cent of its energy in a stream of high energy neutrons. As particles with no charge, neutrons cannot be contained by the magnetic field used to contain the fusion reaction and they are highly destructive to anything they hit, including the reactor containment vessel. A second-generation approach to controlled fusion power involves combining He-3 and deuterium. This reaction produces He-4 nuclei and high-energy protons. Some D-D side reactions occur, producing neutrons, but upwards of 90 per cent of the energy produced is in the form of charged particles, which can be directed away from the reactor walls by magnetic fields and used for generating electricity.

Fusion Technology

Fusion power is a form of power generation in which energy is generated by using nuclear fusion reactions to produce heat for electricity generation. In a fusion process, two lighter atomic nuclei combine to form a heavier nucleus and at the same time, they release energy. This is the same process that powers stars like our Sun. Devices designed to harness this energy are known as fusion reactors.

The fusion reaction that is easiest to accomplish is the reaction between two hydrogen isotopes: deuterium, extracted from water and tritium, produced during the fusion reaction through contact with lithium. When deuterium and tritium nuclei fuse, they form a helium nucleus, a neutron and a large amount of energy. Only 150 kg of deuterium and 2-3 tons of lithium are needed for a full year of electricity supply for 1 million people.

Helium-3 Potential

Helium-3 is gas that has the potential to be used as a fuel in future nuclear fusion power plants. Helium-3 may be the fuel for a new generation of clean, nuclear fusion power plants. Unfortunately, helium-3 is also exceptionally rare on the Earth. There is, however, thought to be an abundant supply of helium-3 on the surface of the Moon. Mining lunar helium-3 may also become a large part of our "solution" to peak oil, broader fossil fuel depletion and climate change.

In the case of He-3 fusion, even technological feasibility, leave alone readiness, is not at hand; it is somewhat like talking about building advanced heavy-water reactors in the early 1930s, after the neutron was discovered but before the Chicago Pile went critical and with a world war set to change everything – the way climate change is poised to do for our generation.

It is entirely possible that, following this line of sight, He-3 fusion will be in India's crosshairs as a feasible nuclear fuel in the distant future – but not before that. Supporting technologies whose development and implementation we have a realistic chance of guiding is also what makes us more able to predict the future and gives us more control over determining long-term research goals and policy directions.

Nuclear fusion is the same process that powers the Sun and involves smashing hydrogen atoms together to produce helium, which releases a ton of energy in the process. If this fusion energy can be captured, it would effectively be a source of unlimited energy on Earth. Unfortunately, building a nuclear fusion reactor, aka a "star in a jar," has proven to be incredibly difficult.

Challenges

Work on helium-3 fusion has been slow going because it is so rare on Earth, but initial results have been incredibly promising. Last year, for example, researchers increased the efficiency of a fusion reaction by an order of magnitude after adding small amounts of helium-3 to a fuel cell containing hydrogen and deuterium. Other research that uses two helium-3 isotopes instead of a deuterium-helium-3 mix has also proven to be remarkably efficient in small reactors.

The subject of mining helium-3 on the Moon as a fuel for future clean, safe nuclear power plants is a fascinating one that raises many questions. Some of these questions are highly technical and relate to the feasibility of the involved nuclear physics. Other questions concern the not inconsiderable practicalities associated with getting to the Moon, mining and super-heating large quantities of lunar rock and then getting the precious cargo back to the Earth.

- One of many problems associated with using helium-3 to create energy via nuclear fusion is that, at least on the Earth, helium-3 is very, very rare indeed.
- This helium-3 could potentially be extracted by heating the lunar dust to around 600 degrees C, before bringing it back to the Earth to fuel a new generation of nuclear fusion power plants.
- He-3 fusion is untested technology. It's important to get our reasons right for doing anything, especially when crores of rupees are involved, because they are proxies for the things that people value, which in turn influence policymaking,

governance and ultimately the allocation of funds.

Global Players in Moon Exploration

Several of the largest governments on the planet have on various occasions made announcements that they are either actively considering or would like to go to the Moon to mine helium-3. Whether or not the science will actually work, this is surely major news. Given that public debates concerning the construction of future nuclear fission power plants and even wind farms now rage with great vigour and a high media profile, why helium-3 power plants as part of a potential future energy strategy are rarely if ever even mentioned is exceptionally hard to fathom.

- In 2006 Nikolai Sevastyanov, head of the Russian space corporation Energia, was reported to have said that Russia is planning to mine lunar helium-3, with a permanent Moon base to be established by 2015 and industrial-scale helium-3 production to commence by 2020.
- American plans from the early nineties to "establish a permanent base on one of the Moon's poles by 2024", with helium-3 signalled as one of the reasons behind this mission, are also sadly likely to come to nothing.
- China's lunar exploration programme is proceeding apace and is being led by a scientist with a strong belief in potential helium-3 lunar mining. In December 2013, China managed to land a robot lander on the Moon, so successfully completing stage 3 of its lunar exploration programme. By the end of 2017, the fifth and final stage of

the current programme has the intention of sending a robotic craft to the Moon that will return lunar rocks to the Earth. If all goes well, a manned programme may follow in the 2020s, so laying the potential foundation for China to mine for helium-3 on the Moon in the 2030s or beyond.

Looking Ahead

- To be sure, there are numerous obstacles to overcome before the material can be used – including the logistics of collection and delivery back to Earth and building fusion power plants to convert the material into energy. Those costs would be stratospheric.
- There are an estimated 1 million metric tons of helium-3 embedded in the moon, though only about a quarter of that realistically could be brought to Earth. That's still enough to meet the world's current energy demands for at least two, and possibly as many as five, centuries. The estimated helium-3's value at about \$5 billion a ton, meaning 250,000 tons would be worth in the trillions of dollars.
- If that can be cracked, India should be a part of that effort, if the cost makes sense, it will become a game-changer, no doubt about it.

General Studies Paper- III

Topic: Achievements of Indians in Science & Technology; indigenization of technology and developing new technology.

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



2. TURBULENCE IN INDIA- US RELATIONS

Why in News?

The much anticipated dialogue, between the Defence and Foreign Ministers of India and the United States scheduled for July, has been postponed. The talks were expected to boost bilateral ease of ties in the backdrop of growing disagreement over the Iran nuclear deal and the brewing tariff war between the two sides.

Overview

India-U.S. bilateral relations have developed into a "global strategic partnership", based on shared democratic values and increasing convergence of interests on bilateral, regional and global issues. The emphasis placed by the government in India on development and good governance has created opportunity to reinvigorate bilateral ties and enhance cooperation under the motto – "Chalein Saath Saath: Forward Together We Go", and "Sanjha Prayas, Sab ka Vikas" (Shared Effort, Progress for All) adopted during the first two summits of Prime Minister Modi and President Obama in September 2014 and January 2015 respectively. Regular exchange of high-level political visits has provided sustained momentum to bilateral cooperation, while the wide-ranging and ever-expanding dialogue architecture has established a long-term framework for India - U.S. engagement. Today, the India - U.S. bilateral cooperation is broad-based and multi-sectoral, covering trade and investment, defence and security, education, science and technology, cyber security, high-technology, civil nuclear energy, space technology and applications, clean energy, environment, agriculture and health. Vibrant people-to-people interaction and support across the political spectrum in both countries nurture our bilateral relationship.

Introduction

Prime Minister of India and President of U.S. have both built their politics on the promise of making their countries great again. Placing India and the U.S., respectively, as leaders on the world stage is the stated objective of their foreign policy. The public differences on key issues, ranging from trade, to work visas and the Iran sanctions, coupled with questions around the personal chemistry between India and US have left many speculating on the future of this relationship. It is worth reiterating some characteristics and realities that have shaped the India-US partnership in recent decades. The transformational changes in world politics through the 1990s were important and sparked a realisation in both capitals that investing in each other was a priority. Overtime, top-level political leadership in both countries have translated this into a sustained partnership with great potential to shape regional and global affairs.

Theatre as Strategy

The remarkable growth in India-U.S. relations since the turn of the century had been nurtured by three U.S. Presidents, Bill Clinton, George W. Bush and Barack Obama, two Democrats and one Republican who have all been the target of Mr. Trump's. India neither promises him the opportunity of a spectacle nor offers the grounds for destructing the legacy of a predecessor. So he told Secretary of State Mike Pompeo to deal with North Korea and Russia and 2+2 with India could wait. North Korea, Syria, Afghanistan, trade deficit and all global challenges before America are the faults of his predecessors, he repeatedly tells supporters. Such rhetoric may sound familiar to Indians. In Mr. Trump's war on the legacy of all Presidents before him, India is on the wrong side.

Impact on Ties

To buttress one's own claim to be a trailblazer by denying the achievements of predecessors may be good political tactics for these leaders, but trying to wish away history itself is not a sustainable strategy. Against the backdrop of a programmatic negation of history in both countries, Mr. Trump's bursts of unhinged rhetoric against China and Pakistan lend themselves to easy and convenient interpretations by supporters of improved U.S.-India ties as moments of enlightenment for the U.S., even as turning points.

China today threatens the dominance of the U.S., but the America's security establishment and political elite are obsessed with Russia. India gets caught in that internal American fight too, such as in the case of an American law that now requires the President to impose sanctions on any country that has significant security relations with Russia. Mr. Trump sees the challenges posed by China, but not in a manner helpful for India. For, India and China are in the same basket for Mr. Trump on many issues that agitate him. He has repeatedly mentioned India and China in the same breath as countries that duped his predecessors on climate and trade deals. His administration considers India and China as violators of intellectual property laws, as countries that put barriers to trade and subsidise exports and use state power to control markets.

Iran sanctions

The Iran sanctions issue is arguably one of the biggest and potentially most intractable tension points in the US-India relationship that is suddenly chock full of tension points. It is a rare example of divergent interests in a relationship ripe with strategic

convergences. Countering Iran has become a core and fundamental goal of US foreign policy. By contrast, for New Delhi, Iran is a key regional player and friend, thanks in great part to an important bilateral energy partnership. India can't be expected to happily jettison its energy relationship with a country that serves as its third-biggest oil supplier. Similarly, there are quite a few irritants in the US-India relationship and some of them – such as trade disputes – predate the Trump administration. Many of them can be easily addressed with some well-timed high-level meetings.

2-by-2' dialogue

Two plus two meeting is a kind of dialogue mechanism where two important portfolios of the countries taking part in the meeting discuss and agree upon a bilateral framework. The delegates from both the countries related to the concerned portfolios exchange views on the bilateral relations. The 2-by-2 ministerial dialogues are considered more significant as strategic and defense interests reinforce each other. However, balancing commercial and strategic issues might get difficult. The US already has this format of consultation with Australia, Japan and the Philippines, while India only has it with Japan.

The Indian delegation, which comprised Foreign Secretary and Defence Secretary, was in the US. Meanwhile, during the preparatory talks in Washington last month, the US side pressed the Indian side to sign the two foundational agreements for defence cooperation: Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement (COMCASA), earlier known as the Communications and Information Security Memorandum of Agreement (CISMOA); and Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement (BECA).

Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement: COMCASA, is needed if any classified military information is required to be exchanged between US and Indian armed forces and would allow India to fully utilise the communication security equipment on military platforms it imports from the US.

CISMOA, meanwhile, would allow the United States to supply India with its proprietary encrypted communications equipment and systems, allowing secure peacetime and wartime communication between high-level military leaders on both sides. CISMOA would extend this capability to Indian and U.S. military assets, including aircraft and ships.

Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement: BECA provides for sharing and data gathering of geospatial information between the two militaries. BECA would set a framework through which the United States could share sensitive data to aid targeting and navigation with India.

United States and Global Order

There are enough signs that relations between India and the United States have suffered, with officials in both capitals now freely conceding that their interests are diverging. From the U.S. side, policy decisions by President Donald Trump to walk out of the multilateral nuclear deal with Iran and the U.S. Congress's CAATSA (Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act) law sanctioning Iran and Russia have set up an inevitable conflict. Mr. Trump's insistence on tough sanctions against all those continuing to engage with Iran and Russia limits India's options on energy security and defence procurement. The U.S.'s tough policy on trade tariffs, applied to ally and adversary alike, including India. For its part, the government has taken a policy

turn away from four years of a pro-U.S. tilt. PM Modi's speech at the Shangri-La Dialogue last month, in which he invoked the long-lapsed phrase "strategic autonomy", set at rest any doubt that there is a reset in his foreign policy. Since January, he has personally reached out to the Chinese and Russian Presidents in informal summits and invited the Iranian President to Delhi. At variance with the U.S. position on limiting engagement with these very countries, India promised to raise oil imports from Iran this year, committed to far greater engagement on the Chabahar port project and oilfields in Iran, while negotiating a \$5.5 billion deal with Russia for the S-400 Triumf missile systems. These will trigger U.S. sanctions unless the two countries reach a compromise.

What is more troubling for bilateral ties are that despite the obvious problems, the political will to address these issues is now considerably diminished. In contrast to his meetings with the Russian and Chinese leaderships, Mr. Modi has had little contact with Mr. Trump since their meeting in Manila last November, which by all accounts did not go well. Now, the postponement of the Indian Foreign and Defence Ministers' "2+2" dialogue with their U.S. counterparts has denied the governments a chance to gather together the fraying bilateral threads. It is imperative that the dialogue be quickly rescheduled. While the U.S. has traditionally applied pressure on its allies to limit their engagement with countries it considers to be threats to the international order, the manner in which deadlines have been publicly issued by the state department will only make its demands more difficult for India to even consider. India must now decide how best to deal with the ultimatums, with U.S. sanctions kicking in by November. The clock is ticking on the relationship.

Conclusion

It is important to note that the India-US strategic relationship has significantly improved over the last one-and-a-half decade without these agreements. Defence cooperation has been the most visible aspect of this evolving relationship. The US has in fact emerged as the top arms supplier to India and currently India conducts more military exercises with the US than with any other country. Therefore, with or without these foundational agreements, the India-US defence and strategic relationship is going to expand further including in the areas of joint research, development and production of high end defence technology. However, having these agreements will yield greater benefits for both the nations. Both sides need to make vigorous efforts to build consensus and arrive at a more acceptable version of the agreements, consistent with their respective national interests and policies.

India and the US must embrace their roles as the most consequential democracies of the 21st century. However, their current differences may well stem from adjusting to this reality and some others. Allowing

such differences to snowball will be a very expensive mistake — especially as China wastes no time in executing its own agenda for the international order. Indeed, now more than ever, Washington will need New Delhi to balance China's rise, given the coterminous nature of India's rise and its own relative decline. Capitalising on the opportunity presented by the India-US partnership will require both countries to institutionalise dialogue and identify differences capable of derailing the relationship in the long-term. Elites in Washington and Delhi must realise that a partnership of equals will require a more finely tuned calibration of their foreign policy priorities.

Way Ahead

Moreover, the United States' strategic priorities and not India's concerns, will determine how the United States will choose friends and partners. In this context, New Delhi has to balance out an "America First" foreign policy with an "India First" foreign policy. New Delhi needs to be pragmatic about where it can expect U.S. support and where it has to go it alone. India's ability to rise to America's expectations

as a counter against China has often been questioned. However, this is a narrative that Delhi should be mindful of. India and the United States should be aligning their interests to build and maintain peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific, which is inclusive of common threats perceptions pertaining to China's activities in the western Pacific and the Indian Ocean. However, the India-U.S. relationship should not be sold as a partnership based on aligning threats and countering China. Doing so will end up reducing New Delhi's ability to bargain its national interest with both Washington as well as Beijing.

The practice of India's strategic autonomy has always been about creating traction for the pursuit of India's national interest and India's ability to do so will be tested in how it manages its great power relationship with the United States and China.

General Studies Paper- II

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

○○○

3. PRADHAN MANTRI SURAKSHIT MATRITVA YOJANA: EMPOWERING MOTHERS

Why in News?

In just 23 months, Ministry Health and Family Welfare have achieved 1.3 crore antenatal check-ups at 12,900 healthcare facilities across the country and also identified 6.5 lakh high-risk pregnancies. India has shown impressive gains with 22% reduction in Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR) since 2013. This has resulted in identifying more than 650,000 high risk pregnancies, considered to be a major contributor in preventable maternal deaths. Strengthening the mission's objectives, around 13000 government

healthcare facilities like Primary Health Care (PHCs), Community Health Centres (CHCs) and district hospitals are providing Pradhan Mantri Surakshit Matritva Abhiyan (PMSMA) services on 9th of every month.

Introduction

As India strives towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and looks ahead to the post-2015 era, progress in reducing maternal mortality becomes an important frontier. Every pregnancy is special and every pregnant woman must receive

special care. Any pregnant woman can develop life-threatening complications with little or no advance warning, so all pregnant women need access to quality antenatal services to detect and prevent life-threatening complications during childbirth. India has made considerable progress over the years in the sector of health, which was further accelerated under the National Health Mission (NHM) that has improved the availability and access to quality health care by people, especially for the poor women and children residing in rural areas.

Janani Suraksha Yojana (JSY), a demand promotion scheme involves conditional cash transfer to pregnant women coming into the institutional fold for delivery. It promotes timely Ante Natal Care (ANC), institutional delivery and Post Natal Care (PNC). However, expenses were incurred by the beneficiaries on drugs, diagnostics, transport etc. which was a barrier in accessing quality services.

Janani Shishu Suraksha Karyakram (JSSK) that entitles all pregnant women with free treatment, drug, diagnostics, diet and transport was then launched under the umbrella of National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) to minimize the indirect costs to the pregnant women and thereby improve accessibility of care during ANC, PNC and institutional delivery. Even with improved access to maternal health care services, MMR still remains high at 167/ 100000 live births. Timely detection of risk factor during pregnancy and childbirth can prevent deaths due to preventable causes. This can only be possible if the complete range of the required services is accessed by the pregnant women.

About PMSMA

The Pradhan Mantri Surakshit Matritva Abhiyan has been launched by the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (MoHFW). The program aims to provide assured, comprehensive and quality antenatal care, free of cost, universally to all pregnant women on the 9th of every month.

Launched in June 9th, 2016 as part of the Reproductive Maternal Neonatal Child and Adolescent Health (RMNCH+A) strategy, this program is a national-level campaign that strives to provide free-of-cost, assured and comprehensive antenatal care, including diagnostics and counselling services, universally to all pregnant women. The PMSMA, thus, guarantees a minimum package of quality maternal healthcare services as part of antenatal care in the 2nd/3rd trimesters of pregnancy through a fixed-day strategy, on the 9th of every month across the country at designated government health facilities. If the 9th day of the month is a Sunday/ a holiday, then the clinic should be organized on the next working day.

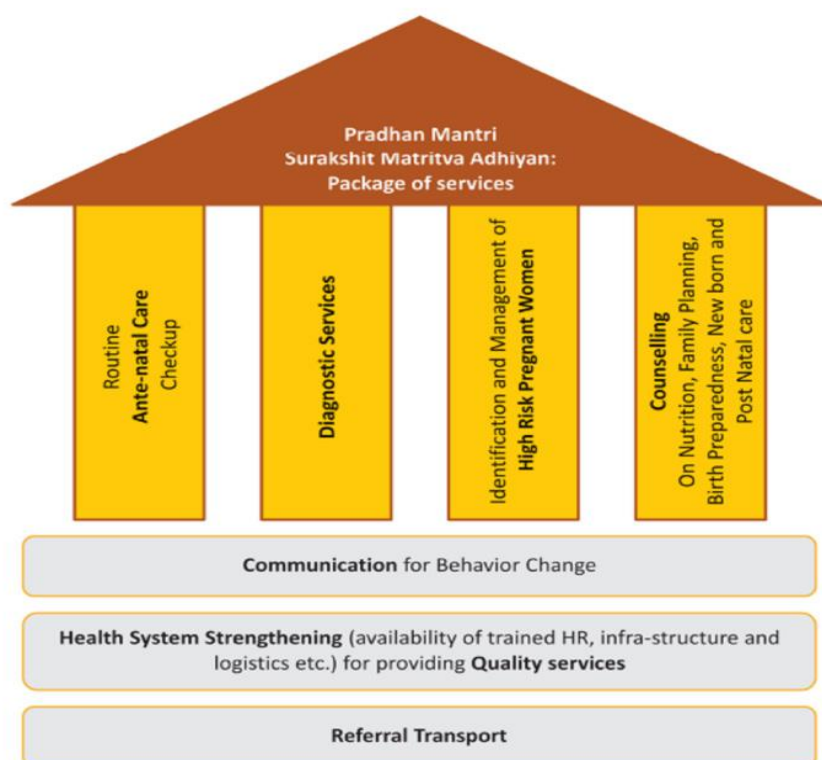
The program also makes a systematic attempt to engage the private sector health practitioners in the campaign strategy development and to motivate them to work as volunteers towards generating awareness and bringing more of the private sector into the gamut of the program. Facilitated through a national portal and a mobile application, the PMSMA leaves no stone unturned to garner enough engagement from the private/voluntary sector. The “IPledgeFor9” achievers awards have specially been devised to acknowledge and celebrate individual and team voluntary contributions for the program in states and districts across India.

Rationale for the Program

Data indicates that Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR) in India was very high in the year 1990 with 556 women dying during child birth per hundred thousand live births as compared to the global MMR of 385/lakh live births. As per study MMR of India has now declined to 167/lakh live births against a global MMR of 216/lakh live births (2015). India has registered an overall decline in MMR of 70% between 1990 and 2015 in comparison to a global decline of 44%. While India has made considerable progress in the reduction of maternal and infant mortality, every year approximately 44000 women still die due to pregnancy-related causes and approximately 6.6 lakh infants die within the first 28 days of life. Many of these deaths are preventable and many lives can be saved if quality care is provided to pregnant women during their antenatal period and high risk factors such as severe anemia, pregnancy-induced hypertension etc are detected on time and managed well.

Empowering Mothers with Health: Key Benefits

The PMSMA initiative is a mission to empower women with health through proper diagnostic, counselling and



Target Beneficiaries: The program aims to reach out to all Pregnant Women who are in the 2nd or 3rd Trimesters of pregnancy.

care management. It empowers every woman, between their 3rd and 9th month of pregnancy, to approach any government hospital/public healthcare facility/accredited private hospital for free check-ups. In addition, the following centers, too are covered under the PMSMA program:

- **Rural Areas:** Rural hospitals, sub-district/district hospitals, primary health centers, community health centers.
- **Urban Areas:** Urban dispensaries, health posts and maternity homes.

In addition, all information about the PMSMA services and the nearest government health facility designated for PMSMA services can also be received by pregnant women and their families through the ANMs/ASHAs/health-workers in their area.

To avail the benefits under the scheme, all beneficiaries require a one-time registration to the program. The registration entitles them to all the services under the PMSMA at the PMSMA center and they are provided with a mother and child protection card (MCP Card) and safe motherhood booklet. Every beneficiary is mandatorily required to get their MCP cards filled by the ANM/Nurse at the PMSMA clinic. A sticker indicating the condition and risk factor (as under) of the beneficiary are added onto this card at each visit:

- **Green Sticker:** No risk factor detected.

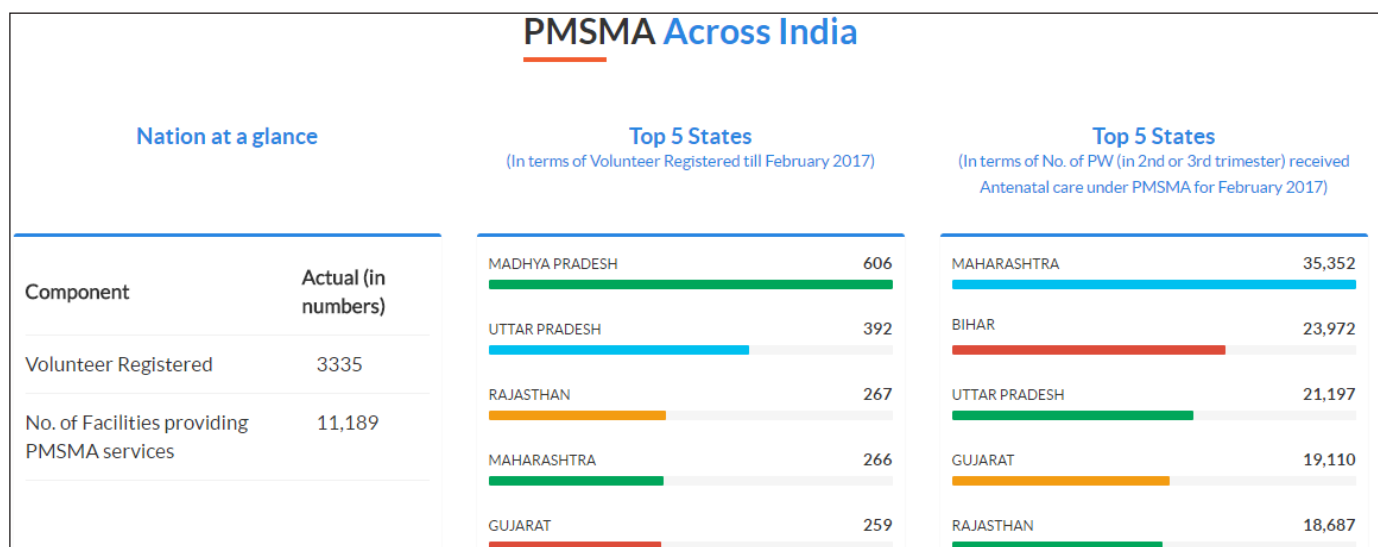
- **Red Sticker:** High - risk pregnancy.
- **Blue:** Pregnancy - induced hypertension.
- **Yellow:** Indicative of co-morbid conditions like STIs, hypothyroidism, diabetes, etc.

The following key services and benefits are available as part of the PMSMA program:

- **Examination:** This involves taking the height / weight, blood pressure, pulse of the beneficiary, per abdominal examination, fetal heart beat examination by the staff nurse/ANM followed by the medical officer, before the routine laboratory diagnostics.
- **Lab Investigations:** The following lab investigations with proper documentation are covered under the PMSMA program: CBC, hemoglobin, urine albumin, ESR, rapid malaria test, blood grouping, sugar, VDRL, HIV, screening for GDM & other basic investigations.
- **Ultrasonography (USG):** All registered PMSMA beneficiaries would receive an USG examination by an obstetrician, especially during the 2nd/3rd trimester of pregnancy.
- **Immunization & Supplementation:** Vaccinations including tetanus injections, folic acid, iron and calcium supplementation and any other medication prescribed by the medical officer are available

free-of-cost under this scheme.

- **Counselling:** All pregnant women are entitled to receive group counseling (in groups of 10-12) on nutrition, diet, sleep, care during pregnancy, identification of danger signs, regular ANC check-up, birth preparedness, institutional delivery, breastfeeding & post-natal care, post-partum family planning, contraceptives & safe sex, etc. In addition, they are also entitled to counselling about their entitlements and provisions under the Janani Suraksha Yojana (JSY) and Janani Shishu Suraksha Karyakaram (JSSK).
- **Transportation:** PMSMA also provisions for state-owned ambulances / private empaneled ambulances for pregnant women residing in inaccessible areas that lack public transport, those who are very poor or are from vulnerable communities and for women with high-risk.
- **Coverage for High-risk Pregnancies:** One of the critical components of the program involves the identification and follow up of high-risk pregnancies. Pregnant women with a red sticker on their MCP card are given special care and delivery options in a facility with assured emergency obstetric care services.
- **Abortions:** PMSMA also covers unwanted pregnancies and



provides safe abortion care services following proper counselling.

Strategies for Operationalization

It includes formation of planning and execution committees at national, state and district level. Adequate planning and proper implementation is crucial to the success of this initiative. Traditionally, the ante-natal care provision at public health facilities has been plagued by issues of non-availability of all diagnostic services at the service delivery platform, sub-optimal availability of adequate and appropriate trained human resources at the point of care and lack of mechanisms for forward and backward linkages for women identified with clinical conditions which pre-disposes her to risks of complications during pregnancy and childbirth. PMSMA is an initiative which is aimed at addressing these issues during provision of ante-natal care, with immediate effect.

A national level committee comprising of program managers from the maternal health division of Ministry of Health and Family Welfare will be formed to provide an overarching support to the states in implementation of the PMSMA.

- 'IPledgeFor9' achievers awards have been devised to celebrate individual and team achievements and acknowledge voluntary contributions for PMSMA in states and districts across India.

Similarly, state level and district level committees comprising of program managers from NHM, Department of Health & Family Welfare will be formed to guide the execution of this campaign. Representatives from the Federation of Obstetric and Gynecological Societies of India (FOGSI), Indian Medical Association (IMA) as well as NGOs working in maternal health having strong community presence can also be part of the committee. These organizations can support in publicizing the campaign as well as making the services of specialist

doctors available on a voluntary basis. The committee at the state level will be headed by the mission director and by civil surgeon/chief medical officer at the district level. State and district level nodal person will be identified and nominated for execution of the PMSMA. Development partners can play a pivotal role in coordinating with different stakeholders and provide continuous programmatic guidance through monitoring and supportive supervision activities.

Government Organizations

The government functionaries such as the PMSMA state and district level committees are more deeply associated with the program and support it through:

- Implementation, planning and program management for logistics, availability of drugs and diagnostics, human resources, space, information dissemination, education and communication, etc.
- Tracking and monitoring of high-risk pregnancies.
- Encouraging the private sector obstetricians/physicians to volunteer their services at designated public health facilities through generating awareness, facilitating participation and recognizing their contributions.
- Ensuring quick grievance redressals.

Challenges

Like any other program, the PMSMA too is faced with several roadblocks and challenges that it must overcome to succeed. Lack of electricity in rural areas, chronic diseases, lack of infrastructure and mobile ambulances and the growing instances of high-risk pregnancies bring to the fore immense challenges in the successful implementation of the program.

The role of the social organizations, the mindset of the civil society and an active participation from the private sector are pivotal to its success,

especially at the grass-root levels. In addition, the preparation of the government in making the supporting mechanisms such as PHCs and sufficient staff available at the PMSMA facilities would also go a long way in ensuring the success of the scheme.

Conclusion

The PMSMA still has some scope of extending the basic tenets of its program to include a government-sponsored nutritional diet supply and access plan. Grass-root level organizations need to be created, activated and incentivized to extend the program outreach. However, prima-facie it would not be wrong to conclude that if followed through, this initiative holds the promise of ensuring a significant drop in both maternal and infant mortality rates.

India has made impressive progress in reducing maternal deaths and achieving the targets of SDGs. Nearly 1000 fewer women are now dying of pregnancy related complications each month as compared to 2013. The government's efforts at improving access to maternal health services leading to increase in institutional births has significantly contributed to groundbreaking reduction in Maternal Mortality Rate (MMR) by 22 percent from 2013 levels. Emphasis on mitigating the social determinants of maternal health like increase in girl's education and reduction in child marriages are other enabling factors that contributed to this notable success.

General Studies Paper- II

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

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



4. TEACHINGS OF KABIR: STILL RELEVANT

Why in News?

Recently, Prime Minister laid the foundation stone of a research institute at Maghar in Uttar Pradesh to mark the 500th death anniversary of Kabir Das, the mystic poet and saint. As a historical fact, we do not know whether Kabir did live till 1518 but having no better alternative, scholars tend to use this heuristic date.

Background

The bhakti movement – that cut across all distinctions of high and low birth, the learned and the unlettered, men and women - opened the doors of spiritual realisation to one and all. It triggered a synthesis of cultures and set out a roadmap for unity in diversity. Ramananda Swami, who had settled down at Panch Ganga in Varanasi, was an unusual teacher. His disciples included untouchables, barbers, cobblers and a woman – something unheard of in those days. It was a new wave in which the life of devotion to God was not confined to a privileged few but to all, irrespective of caste, colour, creed or sex. One such disciple was Kabir.

Saint Kabir was one of the greatest mystics who brought an authentic spiritual revolution in the collective psyche of a large number of people who were either atheists or belonging to the traditional religions. And he did it in such a wonderful way — with his unique bhajans in simple Hindi language. Kabir enthralled people and inspired them with his devotional poems and songs of love and humanism.

Though Kabir was an illiterate, without any schooling, a poor weaver — unlike Buddha, Mahavira, Ram and Krishna — yet he could transform the lives of millions of people. He liberated them from the bondage of

superstitions. He was truly a rebellious spirit. Kabir awakens the consciousness of people who want to seek God and offers them a song- "Moko Kahaan Dhoondhe Re Bande, Mein to tere pas mein".

Kabir was a highly quoted poet, who, despite having criticized every sect, has people from various religious backgrounds accepting him and regarding him as a wise person with saintly leanings. Kabir's poems essentially teach humility, religious tolerance and that faith leads us to be humble. He was a man of absolutely independent thoughts and broadly criticised the evils of both the religions. Kabir addressed mixed gatherings consisting of Muslim and Hindus and made disciples from both. He denounced the brahmins and the mullahs alike to be sole custodian of their religious orders and took them to task for their orthodox and exploitative attitude. He refused to accept the sanctity of Vedas as well as Quran to be the revealed scriptures.

Kabir's Teachings

Kabir believed in oneness of God, irrespective of the names by which the human being addressed him. Kabir vehemently opposed the idol-worship, caste system and untouchability as practiced by the Hindus and simultaneously condemned the orthodoxy and meaningless rituals of the Muslims. Kabir's teaching was in perfect harmony with the social and religions needs of the times; he identified himself completely with the concept of an integrated Indian society and won the hearts of millions. His dohas and popular saying of revolutionary social import are widely known and have become a part and parcel of the medieval Indian cultural heritage. After his death the followers

of Kabir, both Hindus and Muslims, became known as Kabirpanthis.

Against Idol Worship

He did not believe in idol worship. He was also against the performance of rituals and superstitions or pilgrimage to the so called holy places.

Antagonist of Caste System and Evil Practices

Kabir was a great opponent of the caste system. He stressed that in God's creation all were equal. He advised his followers to give up such inhuman practices as untouchability, feelings of high and low etc. He further opposed the worship of stone images or even the worship of different gods and goddesses and was against rituals and ceremonies in religion.

Love

Love for all was Kabir's principal tenet. He emphasized that love was the only medium which could bind the entire human kind in an unbreakable bond of fraternity. Kabir detested the frivolities and rituals in Hinduism and Islam for, these could never bind together mankind. Hence he advised all to give up hatred and perpetuate love for one and all.

Impermanence of the World

Kabir asserted the impermanence of all things in the world. All living and non-living things like insects, animals, trees, rivers, mountains and human beings are only temporary and all would cease to exist someday. He advised his followers not to lament the death of something which was bound to die. Hence he emphasized that in this impermanent world, the only truth and permanent reality was God, who could be attained through Bhakti.

Kabir did not establish any separate religious sect. Both Hindus and Muslims were his followers and came to be known as Kabirpanthis. His views and teachings, challenged and rejected by the upper castes, were largely accepted by the lower strata of the society and later on some of his hymns were incorporated in the Adi-granth of the Sikhs.

Wide Acceptance

As a poet, Kabir transcended many of the divisions that existed in India. He can be celebrated as Dalit hero or as a Brahmin. Kabir and the KabirPanth are accepted as a part of Hinduism. He is one of the Bhagats of the Sikhs and a large corpus of his poems is included in the Guru Granth Sahib. His presence in Indian Islamic thought, Qawwali singing and architecture has also been well documented. His rauza in Maghar (Uttar Pradesh) is a part of the architectural heritage of the country. Nineteenth century missionaries noted the similarity of his thoughts to Christianity, speculating that he must have composed his poems under Christian influence. His indebtedness to Buddhist Siddhas has been a subject of scholarship in the last century. Jain poets emulated his style, so much so that the 17th century Anandghan was dubbed as the "Jain Kabir". As far as Parsis are concerned, one of the earliest non-Hindi mentions of Kabir comes from the Dabistan-i Mazahib composed by a neo-Zoroastrian (around 1653).

Kabir has also transcended space and time. In archives in North India, from Maharashtra to West Bengal, one can find his poems almost everywhere. Even modern readers and listeners are fascinated by his couplets and songs as they are a catalyst in creating new poetry. Over the past centuries, the Kabir textual corpus has seen a substantial enlargement as new songs were written bearing his signature.

Relevance of Kabir's Teachings

Kabir and Indian Constitution

The Constitution describes India as a secular and welfare state and guarantees certain fundamental rights to all citizens. The Directive Principles of State Policy further strengthen the concept of a welfare state as they are to be borne in mind while making laws and implementing them. Social welfare and wellbeing of all the citizens are the essence of the Indian Constitution. In this context the teachings of Kabir are quite relevant even if these were preached in the 14th century. Kabir perceived certain ideals to be the first foot-steps on the path to a welfare state and to eradicate inhuman exploitative practices during that time. He was not only a religious teacher but also a social reformer for Hindu-Muslim unity, equality of caste and gender and, at the same time, a revolutionary against the blind faith in the forms of illogical practices and rituals performed both by the Hindus and the Muslims. To sum up, as an enlightened visionary, he advocated a new social order on the basis of equality, liberty and fraternity.

Social Life

Today the world has reached on its highest point of physical development. Though this development of science, technology and materialism has facilitated the general walk of life, yet so many social issues are yet to be solved like: - terrorism, blind race of competition, prejudices, jealousy, communalism, lack of common peace and brotherhood feeling, casteism, a new kind of capitalism, corruption, falsehood in politics, hollowism in religion, women education and equality, rape, violence and lack of patience etc. Consequently human life is not comfortable and peaceful at all. In a world torn apart by religious

strife today, Kabir's writings take on even more relevance. Kabir is relevant because he urges us to rise above identity politics. We're seeing growing polarization in our society on the basis of language and identity and borders.

In almost all of the countries and civilizations and especially in the countries who are well advanced in materialism and scientific technologies, there has been left no eternal and spiritual knowledge by their ancestors on the basis of whom one can make a balance in physical development and social life.

The researcher thinks that the philosophy of saint Kabir is quite capable even today also to make world community free from sorrows, sufferings and pains.

Way Forward

Sant Kabir had contributed immensely to both literary and spiritual world. He always stood by humanity and tried to unify all religions. He believed in universal brotherhood and harmony. He fought against blind faiths and superstitions. Kabir is considered the most influential and most remarkable poet of the Bhakti movement in Northern India. While his writings are a scathing comment on the socio-religious-ideological inconsistencies of that period, they also contain a vision for a new society. A vision of a human centered society which remains till today, a source of inspiration not only for the people of North India but for people all over the world, who are fighting against injustice and inequality. Undoubtedly, Kabir was a product of the historical times in which he lived; but he left an indelible imprint on that history and gave it a new direction, in resonance with the aspirations of the people. He upheld that every idea must be tested in terms of the ground reality of the concrete necessities of life. The direction he showed served to transform ideas from the realm of

imagination to the practical reality on the ground. This process shook the very foundations of the religious ideas that held sway over the masses at that time and began to lay the foundations of a new humanist philosophy of life, a process which continues even today.

By 2018, the range of scholarship on Kabir has grown exponentially, with scholars on four continents engaged

with his study. Several academic bodies abroad have expressed interest in paying tributes to Kabir. There is a discussion about a panel on Kabir at the Annual Conference on South Asia at Madison, U.S. China may also organise an event next year while Oxford is going to have online, one of the earliest available dated manuscripts of Kabir's Bijak.

General Studies Paper- I

Topic: Indian culture will cover the salient aspects of Art Forms, Literature and Architecture from ancient to modern times.

General Studies Paper- IV

Topic: Contributions of moral thinkers and philosophers from India and world.



5. WINNING THE BATTLE AGAINST POVERTY

Why in News?

According to the study done by Brookings Institution the number of Indians living in poverty has fallen significantly in the past two years — from 125 million in 2016 to 75 million in 2018.

Poverty figures drop by 50 million, India on way to become middle-income nation. The study, based on World Bank data, projects that poverty numbers will further fall to 20 million by 2022.

Introduction

Poverty is one the major problems faced by India. Along with poverty, there are other major problems faced by India, such as corruption, black money, huge population, illiteracy and many others. These problems are somehow correlated with each other. The rapidly rising population causes lack of education and job opportunities, which results in poverty. India is perhaps no longer home to the highest number of people living in extreme poverty. Researchers at Brookings Institution say Nigeria had 87 million people living in extreme poverty in May 2018, compared to 73 million in India. They predict that the Indian number is expected to drop to around 20 million over the next four years. The World Bank defines a

person as extremely poor if she is living on less than 1.90 international dollars a day, which are adjusted for inflation as well as price differences between countries.

The Brookings prediction is based on data provided by a host of international agencies. Economist Surjit Bhalla said that the results of the recently concluded consumer expenditure survey conducted by the National Sample Survey Organisation—which is used to generate estimates of absolute poverty—will show that there are 50 million Indians now living below the poverty line defined by the Suresh Tendulkar committee. The poverty decline since the beginning of this century has been quite dramatic.

This notwithstanding, the fundamental dynamics of global extreme poverty reduction are clear. Given a starting point of about 725 million people in extreme poverty at the beginning of 2016, we needed to reduce poverty by 1.5 people every second to achieve the goal and yet we've been moving at a pace of only 1.1 people per second. Given that we've fallen behind so much, the new target rate has just increased to 1.6 people per second through 2030. At the same time, because so many countries are falling behind, the actual pace of poverty reduction is starting

to slow down. Our projections show that by 2020, the pace could fall to 0.9 people per second and to 0.5 people per second by 2022.

As we fall further behind the target pace, the task of ending extreme poverty by 2030 is becoming inexorably harder because we are running out of time. We should celebrate our achievements, but increasingly sound the alarm that not enough is being done, especially in Africa.

What is Poverty?

Leaving aside all these differences it can be broadly said that poverty is a situation where a section of the society, having no fault of their own, is denied of even basic necessities of life. In a country, where a chunk of the population is deprived of even minimum amenities of life since long period, the country is suffering from a vicious circle of poverty.

Poverty in India is defined keeping in mind all the dimensions of economy, semi-economy and the definitions which are devised according to international conventions. India judges poverty levels on the basis of both consumption and income. A poverty line can be defined as the estimated minimum level of income that a family needs to be able to secure the basic necessities of life. As of 2014,

the poverty line is set at Rs 32 per day in rural areas and Rs 47 in towns and cities.

Types of Poverty

Poverty has different meanings for different people. The perception of poverty differs from person to person. There are basically two types of poverty.

Absolute poverty is measured against a pre-determined level of living that families should be able to afford. Consumption of food grains, vegetables, milk products and other items that are necessary for a healthy living and access to other non-food items are included in the absolute minimum consumption basket. These standards are then converted into monetary units and defined as the poverty line. People with consumption expenditure below this threshold are considered poor.

Relative poverty is closely associated with the issues of inequality. The income or consumption of the last quintile of the population would be termed poor even though on absolute poverty definition none of the people in the last quintile group may be poor. Per capita income of a country could also be used to identify the poor. Persons with per capita incomes of half the country's per capita income could be termed as poor even though they may be in a position to afford the minimum basket of goods and services that may represent the poverty line. This again reflects concerns of equality.

Relative poverty is thus different from absolute poverty, which looks more at a household's consumption, or income available for it to meet its minimum consumption needs.

Poverty Estimation in India

The percentage of the population living below the poverty line in India decreased to 22% in 2011-12 from 37% in 2004-05, according to data

released by the Planning Commission in July 2013. This blog presents data on recent poverty estimates and goes on to provide a brief history of poverty estimation in the country. The Planning Commission estimates levels of poverty in the country on the basis of consumer expenditure surveys conducted by the National Sample Survey Office (NSSO) of the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation.

Year	Rural	Urban	Total
1993 – 94	50.1	31.8	45.3
2004 – 05	41.8	25.7	37.2
2009 – 10	33.8	20.9	29.8
2011 – 12	25.7	13.7	21.9

The current methodology for poverty estimation is based on the recommendations of an Expert Group to Review the Methodology for Estimation of Poverty (Tendulkar Committee) established in 2005. The Committee calculated poverty levels for the year 2004- 05. According to these estimates, poverty declined at an average rate of 0.74 percentage points per year between 1993-94 and 2004-05, and at 2.18 percentage points per year between 2004-05 and 2011-12.

History of Poverty Estimation in India

Pre Independence Poverty Estimates: One of the earliest estimations of poverty was done by

Dadabhai Naoroji in his book, 'Poverty and the Un-British Rule in India'. He formulated a poverty line ranging from Rs 16 to Rs 35 per capita per year, based on 1867-68 prices. The poverty line proposed by him was based on the cost of a subsistence diet consisting of 'rice or flour, dhal, mutton, vegetables, ghee,

vegetable oil and salt'. Next, in 1938, the National Planning Committee (NPC) estimated a poverty line ranging from Rs 15 to Rs 20 per capita per month. Like the earlier method, the NPC also formulated its poverty line based on 'a minimum standard of living perspective in which nutritional requirements are implicit'. In 1944, the authors of the 'Bombay Plan' suggested a poverty line of Rs 75 per capita per year.

Post Independence Poverty

Estimates: In 1962, the Planning Commission constituted a working group to estimate poverty nationally and it formulated separate poverty lines for rural and urban areas – of Rs 20 and Rs 25 per capita per year respectively. VM Dandekar and N Rath made the first systematic assessment of poverty in India in 1971, based on National Sample Survey (NSS) data from 1960-61. They argued that the poverty line must be derived from the expenditure that was adequate to provide 2250 calories per day in both rural and urban areas. This generated debate on minimum calorie consumption norms while estimating poverty and variations in these norms based on age and sex.

Tendulkar Committee: In 2005, another expert group to review methodology for poverty estimation,

IS INDIA WITNESSING A RECORD PACE OF POVERTY REDUCTION?

	TYPE 1			TYPE 2	
	2004/05	2011/12	2017/18 ⁴	2011/12	2017/18 ⁴
Population (in mil)	1097	1217	1327	1217	1327
Per Capita Consumption (per month, in Rs.)					
Nominal	712	1627	3203	1773	3489
Real	1200	1483	1990	1619	2172
Per Capita Consumption growth (per year, annualised ¹ in %)					
Nominal	-	11.8	11.3	-	11.3
Real	-	3.0	4.9	-	4.9
Poverty line (in current Rs per person per month)					
Tendulkar ²	485	893	1311	893	1311
World Bank ³	817	1504	2208	1504	2208
Poverty Rate (in % of total population)					
Tendulkar	37.7	22.2	6.3	14.9	3.7
World Bank	77.6	65	41.6	58.1	32.2
Number of Poor (in mil)					
Tendulkar	414	270	84	181	49
World Bank	851	791	552	707	427

chaired by Suresh Tendulkar, was constituted by the Planning Commission to address the following three shortcomings of the previous methods:

- (i) Consumption patterns were linked to the 1973-74 poverty line baskets (PLBs) of goods and services, whereas there were significant changes in the consumption patterns of the poor since that time, which were not reflected in the poverty estimates.
- (ii) There were issues with the adjustment of prices for inflation, both spatially (across regions) and temporally (across time).
- (iii) Earlier poverty lines assumed that health and education would be provided by the state and formulated poverty lines accordingly.

It recommended four major changes:

- (i) A shift away from calorie consumption based poverty estimation.
- (ii) A uniform poverty line basket (PLB) across rural and urban India.
- (iii) A change in the price adjustment procedure to correct spatial and temporal issues with price adjustment.
- (iv) Incorporation of private expenditure on health and education while estimating poverty.

Committee (2004-05)	Rural	Urban	Total
Lakdawala Committee	28.3	25.7	27.5
Tendulkar Committee	41.8	27.5	37.2

The Committee computed new poverty lines for rural and urban areas of each state. It concluded that the all India poverty line was Rs 446.68 per capita per month in rural areas and Rs 578.80 per capita per month in urban areas in 2004-05.

Year	Rural	Urban
2004-05	446.7	578.8
2009-10	672.8	859.6
2011-12	816.0	1000.0

The Committee also recommended a new method of updating poverty lines, adjusting for changes in prices and patterns of consumption, using the consumption basket of people close to the poverty line.

Rangarajan Committee: In 2012, the Planning Commission constituted a new expert panel on poverty estimation, chaired by C Rangarajan. The poverty line should be based on certain normative levels of adequate nourishment, clothing, house rent, conveyance and education and a behaviorally determined level of other non-food expenses. Accordingly, the energy requirement works out to 2,155 kcal per person per day in rural areas and 2,090 kcal per person per day in urban areas. The protein and fat requirements have been estimated on the same lines as for energy. These requirements are 48 gms and 28 gms per capita per day, respectively, in rural areas; and 50 gms and 26 gms per capita per day in urban areas. The new poverty line thus work out to monthly per capita consumption expenditure of Rs.972 in rural areas and Rs.1,407 in urban areas in 2011-12. For a family of five, this translates into a monthly consumption expenditure of Rs.4,860 in rural areas and Rs.7,035 in urban areas. The committee recommended the updation of the poverty line in the future using the Fisher Index.

Effects of Poverty

- **Illiteracy:** Poor people constitutes greater share of illiterate population. Education becomes extremely difficult when people are deprived of basic necessities of life.
- **Child Labor:** In India, a large number of young boys and girls are engaged in child labour.

- **Nutrition and Diet:** Poverty is the leading cause of insufficient diet and inadequate nutrition. The resources of poor people are very limited and its effect can be seen in their diet.
- **Poor Living Condition and Housing Problems:** Poor people don't get proper living conditions. They have to fight the hardship of poverty to secure food, clothes and shelter. A large number of poor families live in houses with one room only.
- **Unemployment:** Poor people move from villages to towns and form one town to another in search of employment and work. Since, they are mostly illiterate and un-skilled, there are very few employment opportunities open for them. Due to unemployment, many poor people are forced to live an unfulfilled life.
- **Hygiene and Sanitation:** These people have little knowledge about hygiene and proper sanitation system. They are not aware of the harmful consequences of not maintaining proper hygiene. The government is taking initiatives to make available clean and safe water and proper sanitation system to them.
- **Feminization of Poverty:** Women are the worst victims of poverty. Poverty affects greater number of women than men. The total of poor women outnumbers the total population of poor men. The causes include low income, gender-inequality, etc. They are deprived of proper-diet, medicines and health treatment.
- **Social Tensions:** Poverty is often characterized with income disparity and unequal distribution of national wealth between the rich and the poor. Concentration of wealth in the hands of few rich people leads to social disturbances and revolts. Fair or

even distribution of wealth leads an overall improvement in general standard of living of people.

Poverty Alleviation Programmes

India's performance in reducing poverty has been modest compared to some countries in East Asia, for example Indonesia and Thailand. Poverty reduction has been an important goal of development policy since the inception of planning in India. Various antipoverty, employment generation and basic services programmes have been in operation for decades in India. The ongoing reforms attach great importance to removal of poverty and addressing specifically the wide variations across states and the rural-urban divide. Anti-poverty strategy has three broad components: promotion of economic growth; promotion of human development; and targeted programmes of poverty alleviation to address multi-dimensional nature of poverty. The various programmes targeted at the poor have been streamlined and strengthened in recent years, including through the NREGS. Most of the schemes are clouded with implementation challenges. Programs

are plagued by leakages on subsidies that limit its impact on the poor. These programs need to be centralized under one organization so that leakages can be prevented at multiple levels.

Conclusion

Government efforts to alleviate poverty in India cannot be overlooked while discussing poverty. It needs to be brought to the forefront that whatever marginal drops that has been observed in the poverty ratios have taken place due to the government initiatives aimed at uplifting people from poverty. Though, a lot still needs to be done as far as the poverty levels are concerned.

- (i) Special efforts will be made for the development of small and rural industries so as to provide employment in rural sector in non-agricultural area.
- (ii) Special efforts will be made for consolidating economic conditions of marginal and small farmers, artisans and untrained labourers.
- (iii) Special encouragement will be given for alleviating poverty among female section by introducing special schemes, especially by introducing food for work schemes

in natural calamities affected areas.

- (iv) Village committee will be provided with funds only when their own contribution in total expenditure ranges between 5% to 15%.
- (v) In emergent areas, a wage employment programme should be implemented. Special attention should be paid for running/ productive works such as rural roads, water shed development, cleanliness and proper maintenance of rural ponds, growing more trees, irrigation and drainage system etc.
- (vi) Rural development funds should be used for the state-run successful rural development schemes. Their implementation and increase in budget allocation should be properly scrutinized.

General Studies Paper- I

Topic: Role of women and women's organizations, Population and associated issues, Poverty and developmental issues, Urbanization, their problems and their remedies.



6. REFASHIONING OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN INDIA

Why In News?

In a landmark decision, a Higher Education Commission of India (Repeal of University Grants Commission Act) Bill, 2018 which seeks to repeal UGC Act and provides for setting up of Higher Education Commission of India has been prepared by the Ministry of Human Resource Development (HRD) and placed in public domain for comments and suggestions. The focus of Higher Education Commission of India will be on improving academic standards and the quality of higher education.

Introduction

The provisions of the new Higher Education Commission of India (HECI) Bill drafted by the Centre have far-reaching implications for the expansion and quality of human resource development, at a time when access to skill-building and educational opportunity are vitally important. There were 864 recognised universities and 40,026 colleges in the country in 2016-17, while the gross enrolment ratio of students was only about 26%. To put this in perspective, there were

only 20 universities and 500 colleges at the time of Independence.

Previous attempts at system reform involving expert committees and even legislation to create a new body for higher education and research had advocated changes, with an emphasis on promoting autonomy, access, inclusion and opportunity for all. That challenging goal will fall to the HECI, the proposed successor body to the University Grants Commission. For this very reason, the Centre should give sufficient time to academia, the teaching community and society at

large to submit considered opinions on the draft proposals. Among the key questions that need resolution is the future role of multiple regulatory bodies that currently exist for engineering, medicine and law. The Yash Pal Committee had recommended that they should be brought under the ambit of a single commission. There is a case to include other professional education streams as well, including architecture and nursing. The aim should be to set academic benchmarks for each stream, with sufficient autonomy to innovate on courses and encourage studies across disciplines.

Higher Education Commission of India (HECI) Bill, 2018

The draft Bill is in accordance with the commitment of government for reforming the regulatory systems that provide for more autonomy and facilitate holistic growth of the education system which provides greater opportunities to the Indian students at more affordable cost. The transformation of the regulatory set up is guided by the following principles:

- **Less Government and more Governance:** Downsizing the scope of the regulator. No more interference in the management issues of the educational institutions.
- **Separation of Grant Functions:** The grant functions would be carried

out by the HRD Ministry and the HECI would focus only on academic matters.

- **End of Inspection Raj:** Regulation is done through transparent public disclosures, merit-based decision making on matters regarding standards and quality in higher education.
- **Focus on Academic Quality:** HECI is tasked with the mandate of improving academic standards with specific focus on learning outcomes, evaluation of academic performance by institutions, mentoring of institutions, training of teachers, promote use of educational technology etc. It will develop norms for setting standards for opening and closure of institutions, provide for greater flexibility and autonomy to institutions, lay standards for appointments to critical leadership positions at the institutional level irrespective of university started under any law (including state law).
- **Powers to Enforce:** The regulator will have powers to enforce compliance to the academic quality standards and will have the power to order closure of sub-standard and bogus institutions. Non-compliance could result in fines or jail sentence.

The UGC and its regulatory regime have been criticised by a number

single education regulator to rid higher education of red tape and lethargy.

Determinants of Higher Education Access

Monetary Variables

Family income determines whether the student can afford the costs of the college. There are three monetary barriers to entry into tertiary education: the cost-benefit barrier, the cash-constraint barrier and the debt-aversion barrier.

Cost-benefit Barrier: A certain segment of the population (usually, lower-income or minority groups), when deciding on whether to attend university or not, performs a cost-benefit analysis of the costs of and expected returns to higher education. The barrier arises when the group decides that the cost of attending university is greater than its expected return to the education investment.

Cash - constraint Barrier: Also known as the “liquidity” constraint, it occurs when students who have decided that the returns to education outweigh the costs still cannot put together the resources to obtain entry to universities. They believe in the value of higher education but simply cannot afford to attend university even after pooling internal (family funds, savings and wages) and external (grants and loans) funds. Financial aid, particularly the amount of aid, will increase liquidity.

Debt-aversion Barrier: Described by the economist Richard Thaler as an “internalized liquidity constraint,” debt aversion arises when an individual does not want to borrow even if he or she believes that the benefits of higher education outweigh the costs. Debt aversion occurs when this individual refuses to use the funds at his or her disposal because part of the funds might be loans, which at some point will have to be repaid.

Course Correction

Specify learning outcomes for courses | Lay down standards for teaching, assessment, research, curriculum development, teacher training

Annually evaluate academic performance of institutions on laid down criteria

Bring in a robust accreditation system

Provide for mentoring of deficient institutions

Order closure of institutions which fail to comply with minimum standards

Advise central govt or any state govt on issues referred

Prescribe proactive public disclosure of various academic parameters and outcomes

Specify norms for fixing of fee and advise on making education affordable for all



of committees and their reports for its restrictive and suffocating processes. Several committees including the Prof Yash Pal committee and the National Knowledge Commission of the UPA era and the Hari Gautam committee in the Present NDA regime have recommended a

Nonmonetary variables

Parental education, race and ethnicity, gender and geographical location—all play a role in the college decision-making process. So does prior academic achievement, measured by the rigor of secondary courses and the quality of that education.

Reviving Higher Education in India

This century has witnessed a revival of higher education reforms worldwide. India is no exception. Several reform measures recently introduced have contributed to the expansion of the system, quality improvement and enhanced relevance.

Reforms to Expand the System:

India's higher education sector has moved from a period of slow growth and low gross enrolment ratios (GERs) to an era of unprecedented expansion. Over the past 15 years, student enrolment has quadrupled to reach 34 million with a GER of 24 percent in 2015-2016. The size of India's education system has now surpassed the United States, becoming the world's second largest after China.

Massification of the education system has heavily relied on non-state funding. Market friendly reforms introduced by the state include cost recovery measures in public institutions and the promotion of the private sector to own and operate universities. While privatization started slow, private universities are proliferating and now account for more than 60 per cent of the enrolment share both in terms of institutions and enrolment. Massification in India is also accompanied by persisting social inequalities and widening regional inequalities in enrolment in higher education.

Reforms to Improve Quality:

India established external quality assurance agencies and internal quality assurance mechanisms to enhance higher education quality.

Although accreditation is mandatory to obtain public funding, a majority of private higher education institutions still remain non-accredited.

Ranking has been another effort to enhance quality. Indian institutions do not fare well in the world ranking of universities. In response, India initiated a national ranking process with the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) in 2015. The results published in April 2016 and 2017 clearly indicated that the top ranking institutions are mostly public funded central universities.

It is currently believed that creating world class universities will boost India's position in the global rankings. This prompted India to plan to support the creation of 20 world class universities in the immediate future. It appears that India, like many other developing countries, is on a fast track towards the reorientation of existing institutions into world class universities.

Reforms to Enhance Relevance:

Despite the sector's growth, many employers in India have lost confidence in the quality of the qualifications awarded by the country's universities. It is questioned whether these universities offer the skills and competencies to its graduates as expected in the labour market. In order to regain the credibility and enhance the relevance of university qualifications, India is now in the process of developing a National Higher Education Qualification Framework (NHEQF), which is focusing on learning outcomes, employability skills and competencies. This follows the 2013 development of a National Skills Qualification Framework (NSQF).

Criticism to HECI

Among the more contentious issues arising out of the draft Bill is the Centre's decision to shift grant-giving powers for higher education

institutions to the Ministry of Human Resource Development or a separate body. The UGC has been doing this so far, covering a variety of functions and whatever the flaws, it ensured a separation of funding decisions from political considerations.

- Maintaining a balance on allocation of funds and ensuring transparency will now depend on the proposed advisory council to the HECI.
- It is welcome that the states are represented on the advisory council, giving it a federal character, although it is the Centre that will have the final say in all matters, not even the apex HECI.
- At a broader level, higher education is challenged today by fast-paced technological changes affecting the economy and the need to create a workforce that has the requisite skills.
- The new body should not be allowed to become yet another bureaucratic 'Big Boss', largely controlled by the government. What is needed is an academic vision and a unified regulator, filled with professionals from myriad fields, that seeks to provide greater autonomy, set minimum standards and ensure compliance by all institutions across the higher education spectrum.
- There is no doubt that an ineffective UGC has far outlived its utility and has failed to refashion strategies to meet the changing needs of the country.
- There is a need to establish a new body that brings under one umbrella all the existing regulators like All India Council for Technical Education, National Council for Teacher Education and Distance Education Council.
- It must also bring under its ambit the academic functions of bodies such as the Medical Council of India and

the Bar Council of India. This will allow for creating and maintaining of minimum standards across the spectrum and interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary efforts.

- It must have the power to enforce compliance, oversee accreditation of institutions through a professional and transparent system and the authority to create new universities and degree granting institutions.

Looking to the future

The massification of higher education is accompanied by a widening of regional disparities, persisting social inequalities and commercialization of the sector. The challenge now is

to address the issues of equity and diversity to provide affordable, quality higher education in a period of market-led reforms. It is expected that the national policy on education currently in development will hopefully address some of these concerns.

The higher education commission could transform the sector and improve the standards. So far, the grant-giving powers of the UGC has resulted in over-regulation and its inspection regime led to a steady decline in the quality of education. The higher education commission, on the other hand, will have no funds to dole out and can single-mindedly focus on academics and monitoring standards. Keeping the regulator off the financial

matters will help bridge the trust deficit associated with the UGC which has become outdated. There is need for a single higher education regulator that can help clean up the regulatory mess and create an ecosystem conducive for nurturing institutions of excellence. If India has to reap the benefits of the knowledge economy, more private resources need to flow into the education sector.

General Studies Paper- II

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

○○○

7. DRUG MENACE IN INDIA

Why in News?

Punjab set to take on drug menace with dope test for all government employees. Demanding the death penalty can also be seen as an 'act of intent' on the part of the Punjab government. But that might not be enough to placate the people of the state, who have been protesting against the inaction and inefficiency of the government in curbing the drug menace.

Introduction

The population of India has reached over 1 billion people and is rising. The country is growing at an incredible pace. Its culture, social values, demographics and economy is rapidly changing and these stresses are having an impact on the people. Some evidence suggests that there is an increasing use of illicit drugs and reported numbers point to over 3 million drug addicts in India. However, the World Health Organization does note that there is significant difficulty in estimating

drug usage and addiction rates in the country due to poor bureaucratic processes and census reporting.

The drug trafficking scenario in India is largely attributed to various external and internal factors.

One of the prime external factors happens to be India's close proximity to the major opium producing regions of South West and South East Asia known as the 'Golden Crescent' and the 'Golden Triangle', respectively. The geographical location of India as such, makes it vulnerable to transit, trafficking and consumption of opium derivatives in various forms along the known trafficking routes. The major internal factors responsible are illicit cultivation of poppy and the diversion from the licit opium sources into illicit production in interior areas.

Proximity to South East Asian countries i.e. Myanmar, Laos & Thailand (Golden Triangle) and South West Asian countries i.e. Pakistan, Afghanistan & Iran (Golden Crescent) provides the context for drug trafficking in India.

Unhindered air and sea linkages with other countries also make India vulnerable to drug trafficking. India is mainly a transit country for trafficking of Heroin.

The main internal factors influencing drug trafficking in India is illicit cultivation of opium poppy in some pockets of the country. The diversion from licit opium sources into illicit production is a matter of major concern. Similarly, illicit cultivation and wild growth of cannabis in hilly and remote areas of Himachal Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Tripura, Odisha, Jharkhand, etc., lead to interstate cannabis trafficking.

What Is Drug Addiction?

In the past, addiction was viewed as a moral failing or a sign of a weakness. Today, we realize that drug addiction is a devastating, chronic brain disease. Each year, millions of people try drugs like alcohol, marijuana, cocaine, or heroin for the first time and a disturbing percentage of these people will be unable to stop without help.

Types of Addictive Drugs

Illicit drugs comprise opioids, depressants, stimulants, hallucinogens and cannabis.

Opioids: The term opioids describe natural opiates, such as morphine and synthetic drugs made from opium. These drugs are used medically as pain relievers. They work by binding to opioid receptors in the brain and other organs in the body, reducing an individual's perception of pain. Opioids include heroin and opium as well as prescription medications such as fentanyl, oxycodone and methadone.

Depressants: Depressants, also known as CNS depressants, slow down brain activity to put the body in a state of extreme relaxation. Misuse occurs when people take high doses to achieve euphoria or use the drugs with alcohol or other drugs to enhance their effects. Sexual predators also use depressants such as GHB and Rohypnol to take advantage of their victims.

Stimulants: Stimulants make people more attentive, alert and energetic. Typically used to treat conditions such as ADHD and narcolepsy, stimulants have a high potential for abuse. A stimulant addiction may lead to dangerously high fevers, cardiovascular failure or seizures. Stimulants such as Adderall and Ritalin are popular among students, who use them to enhance their academic performance.

Hallucinogens: Naturally or synthetically derived, hallucinogens cause sensory distortions. Although little is known about hallucinogen dependence, prolonged use may cause people to experience hallucination flashbacks long after taking these drugs.

Cannabis: Primarily consumed as marijuana, cannabis is a sedative with hallucinogenic properties. Marijuana use has soared since 2007. More than 50 percent of new illicit drug users

start with marijuana. Researchers have associated cannabis use with brain damage and memory impairment. According to their reports, the continual use of marijuana contributes to slow reaction times and mental processes.

Problem of Drug Abuse and Addition in India

Drug abuse and addiction is one of the great evils of our time. It has become a serious problem in India. Young and old alike everywhere are addicted to drugs. It has resulted in increased crime, tension, disease, horror and lack of peace and security.

In India drug abuse has become wide-spread and a cause of concern for the people and the government.

- The cities have attracted large number of youth who come in search of employment. Such people live a lonely and isolated life and become anti-social. They fall into evil company and get addicted.
- The children who are deprived of the loving care and affection, and do not get right type of education are prone to be addicted to drugs.
- In the beginning it comes as an escape from the monotony or drudgery of routine life, as an object of thrill, stimulation or excitement. Gradually the addicts depend more and more upon drugs. They develop a kind of madness. They add to the number of anti-social elements who disrupt peaceful social life.
- Drugs are often smuggled from one country to another and sold through the agents and sub-agents who work secretly.
- Our education is such that it does not prepare students to fit into life. Coming out of the schools and colleges, they find that they have no future, no prospects in life.

Remedial Measures

Parents, teachers, educationists and governments should think how best to improve education, so that it brings a full development of the personality and teaches the essence of life and the art of decent living.

- Moral instructions should form a part of teaching.
 - Mass media and voluntary organizations should do their best in the field and highlight the dangers of drug addiction.
 - The various drugs are capturing the market and holding young and old alike in their grip.
 - The anti-narcotic squads and drug enforcement agencies should work in a more vigilant manner to prevent drug trafficking and trade.
 - There should be more counseling centers and rehabilitation centers. Government and voluntary agencies should have co-ordinate efforts to deaddict people and spread awareness against the great evil.
 - Police can play a great role to check smuggling and drug trafficking.
 - The constitutional provision about prohibition of intoxicating drinks and drugs must be strictly enforced by all state governments in our country.
- Efforts from paediatricians and primary care providers to overcome these barriers can assist in identifying substance abusers and eventually lead to their treatment.
- Physicians should teach them how to prevent and avoid the evil and how to lead a normal healthy life.
 - Parents should pay more care, attention and love to their sons and daughters.
 - Reading of moral and religious books is also helpful to addicts.

Government Response

India has adopted a comprehensive approach to reducing supply as well as demand for narcotics and drugs. The approach comprises four elements –

- Enacting legislation such as the Narcotics Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act (NDPS).
- Ensuring physical security of the borders and coasts by strengthening patrolling and surveillance.
- Eliciting cooperation from neighbours by entering into several bilateral and multilateral agreements on prevention of illicit traffic of drugs and chemicals.
- Co-operating with voluntary organisations in the endeavour to prevent abuse of narcotics and synthetic drugs.

India has braced itself to face the menace of drug trafficking both at the national and international levels. Several measures involving innovative changes in enforcement, legal and judicial systems have been brought into effect. The introduction of death penalty for drug-related offences has been a major deterrent. The Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985, were enacted with stringent provisions to curb this menace. The Act envisages a minimum term of 10 years imprisonment extendable to 20 years and fine of Rs. 1 lakh extendable up to Rs. 2 lakhs for the offenders.

International Coordination

India is signatory to following United Nations and South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Conventions:

- Single Convention on Narcotic drugs, 1961.
- UN Convention on Psychotropic Substances, 1971.

- Convention against the Illicit Trafficking in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, 1988.
- SAARC Convention on Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, 1993.
- Transnational Crime Convention, 2000.

Comprehensive strategy involving specific programmes to bring about an overall reduction in use of drugs has been evolved by the various government agencies and NGOs and is further supplemented by measures like education, counseling. India has bilateral agreements on drug trafficking with 13 countries, including Pakistan and Burma. Prior to 1999, extradition between India and the United States occurred under the auspices of a 1931 treaty signed by the United States and the United Kingdom, which was made applicable to India in 1942. However, a new extradition treaty between India and the United States entered into force in July 1999. A mutual legal assistance treaty was signed by India and the United States in October 2001.

Conclusion

The abuse of alcohol and drugs has resulted in significant morbidity and mortality among adolescents worldwide. Many of these youth will lose their lives to drugs and alcohol and a significant number are likely to grow up to become problem drug users. Although, the substance abuse problem is complex and large in magnitude, there is a substantial amount of evidence-based research available to physicians, community leaders and schools to implement interventions that can decrease adolescent substance abuse rates. Because this issue is not peculiar to any one community or culture, we recognize that individual interventions may not be universally effective.

Much progress has been made in understanding the relationship between substance abuse and the family. Family factors have an important role in explaining the onset, development and amelioration of substance abuse. Encouraging gains have been made in treating couples and families with substance abuse problems. More research is needed involving diverse and international populations, but efficacious treatments are growing in type and number that bodes well for improving the lives of millions worldwide.

Way Ahead

The spread and entrenchment of drug abuse needs to be prevented, as the cost to the people, environment and economy will be colossal. The unseemly spectacle of unkempt drug abusers dotting lanes and by lanes, cinema halls and other public places should be enough to goad the authorities to act fast to remove the scourge of this social evil. Moreover, the spread of such reprehensible habits among the relatively young segment of society ought to be arrested at all cost. There is a need for the government enforcement agencies, the non-governmental philanthropic agencies and others to collaborate and supplement each other's efforts for a solution to the problem of drug addiction through education and legal actions.

General Studies Paper- I

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



SEVEN SUBJECTIVE QUESTIONS WITH MODEL ANSWERS

India's Hunt for Helium-3

Q1. What is Helium-3? Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has plans to mine helium-3 from the Moon to help manage India's energy needs. Discuss the technology, legal and logistical challenges for utilization of Helium-3 as a nuclear fuel.

Hints:

- It is the second element in the periodic table having 2 protons, 2 neutrons and 2 electrons - having an atomic mass of 4. But another form of Helium has been in the news lately and it is called Helium-3. Other than 1H , helium-3 is the only stable isotope of any element with more protons than neutrons. Its presence is rare on Earth, it is sought after for use in nuclear fusion research and it is abundant in the moon's soil.
 - Helium-3 is a valuable type of fuel for purportedly 'cleaner' nuclear fusion. However, nuclear fusion has not been achieved on Earth even with the lighter and thus more easily fuseable, atoms of deuterium and tritium and both isotopes of hydrogen. Although helium-3 fusion may be an attractive alternative if sufficient quantities can be mined and transported at an economical rate, the main difficulty is technological.
 - There were still no commercial fusion reactors even if there have been promising results from attempts to achieve one.
 - The technological barrier hasn't deterred everyone. Public and private enterprises around the world have expressed interest in mining the Moon – either for helium-3 or for lunar water and perhaps storing the former until a suitable reactor is built. The reality is not so clear-cut.
 - Moon-mining is a "very, very dicey area". The sole legislative document here is the Outer Space Treaty (OST). It permits mining on extraterrestrial bodies subject to a clutch of riders. For example, before it can begin work, ISRO will have to notify all stakeholders of its plans and also consult with those whose operations might be affected by ISRO's. The traditional spacefaring nations have argued that what is not specifically prohibited by the OST is permitted. The resource-restricted agencies like India's and others have argued that what has not been specifically permitted is prohibited.
- ISRO's success on this front will also help reduce pollutants and India's fuel imports. This assumes significance given India's energy import bill of around \$150 billion, which is expected to reach \$300 billion by 2030. India imports around 80% of its oil and 18% of its natural gas requirements. India imported 202 million tonnes of oil in 2015-16.

Turbulence in India- US Relations

Q2. The practice of India's strategic autonomy has always been about creating traction for the pursuit of India's national interest. Critically analyze India's ability to manage its relationship with the United States and China.

Hints:

- The much anticipated dialogue, between the Defence and Foreign Ministers of India and the United States scheduled for July, has been postponed. The talks were expected to boost bilateral ease of ties in the backdrop of growing disagreement over the Iran nuclear deal and the brewing tariff war between the two sides.
- Today, the India-U.S. bilateral cooperation is broad-based and multi-sectoral, covering trade and investment, defence and security, education, science and technology, cyber security, high-technology, civil nuclear energy, space technology and applications, clean energy, environment, agriculture and health. Vibrant people-to-people interaction and support across the political spectrum in both countries nurture our bilateral relationship.
- The remarkable growth in India-U.S. relations since the turn of the century had been nurtured by three U.S. Presidents, Bill Clinton, George W. Bush and Barack Obama, two Democrats and one Republican who have all been the target of Mr. Trump's. India neither promises him the opportunity of a spectacle nor offers the grounds for destructing the legacy of a predecessor.
- The Iran sanctions issue is arguably one of the biggest and potentially most intractable tension points in a US-India relationship that is suddenly chock full of tension points. It is a rare example of divergent interests in a relationship ripe with strategic convergences. Countering Iran has become a core and fundamental goal of US foreign policy.

- There are enough signs that relations between India and the United States have suffered, with officials in both capitals now freely conceding that their interests are diverging. From the U.S. side, policy decisions by President Donald Trump to walk out of the multilateral nuclear deal with Iran and the U.S. Congress's CAATSA (Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act) law sanctioning Iran and Russia have set up an inevitable conflict. Mr. Trump's insistence on tough sanctions against all those continuing to engage with Iran and Russia limits India's options on energy security and defence procurement.
- It is important to note that the India-US strategic relationship has significantly improved over the last one-and-a-half decade without these agreements. Defence cooperation has been the most visible aspect of this evolving relationship. The US has in fact emerged as the top arms supplier to India and currently India conducts more military exercises with the US than with any other country. Therefore, with or without these foundational agreements, the India-US defence and strategic relationship is going to expand further including in the areas of joint research, development and production of high end defence technology. However, having these agreements will yield greater benefits for both the nations. Both sides need to make vigorous efforts to build consensus and arrive at a more acceptable version of the agreements, consistent with their respective national interests and policies.
- India and the US must embrace their roles as the most consequential democracies of the 21st century. However, their current differences may well stem from adjusting to this reality and some others. Allowing such differences to snowball will be a very expensive mistake — especially as China wastes no time in executing its own agenda for the international order. Indeed, now more than ever, Washington will need New Delhi to balance China's rise, given the coterminous nature of India's rise and its own relative decline. Capitalising on the opportunity presented by the India-US partnership will require both countries to institutionalise dialogue and identify differences capable of derailing the relationship in the long-term. Elites in Washington and Delhi must realise that a partnership of equals will require a more finely tuned calibration of their foreign policy priorities.

Pradhan Mantri Surakshit Matritva Yojana: Empowering Mothers

- Q3. India has shown impressive gains with 22% reduction in Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR) since 2013. What makes the Pradhan Mantri Surakshit Matritva Yojana scheme successful and what are the challenges for the successful implementation of the scheme?**

Hints:

- In just 23 months, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare have achieved 1.3 crore antenatal check-ups at 12,900 healthcare facilities across the country and also identified 6.5 lakh high-risk pregnancies. This has resulted in identifying more than 650,000 high risk pregnancies, considered to be a major contributor in preventable maternal deaths. Strengthening the mission's objectives, around 13000 government healthcare facilities like Primary Health Centres (PHCs), Community Health Centres (CHCs) and district hospitals are providing PMSMA services on 9th of every month.
- Every pregnancy is special and every pregnant woman must receive special care. Any pregnant woman can develop life-threatening complications with little or no advance warning, so all pregnant women need access to quality antenatal services to detect and prevent life-threatening complications during childbirth. India has made considerable progress over the years in the sector of health, which was further accelerated under the National Health Mission (NHM) that has improved the availability and access to quality health care by people, especially for the poor women and children residing in rural areas.
- Data indicates that Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR) in India was very high in the year 1990 with 556 women dying during child birth per hundred thousand live births as compared to the global MMR of 385/lakh live births. MMR of India has now declined to 167/lakh live births against a global MMR of 216/lakh live births.
- India has registered an overall decline in MMR of 70% between 1990 and 2015 in comparison to a global decline of 44%. While India has made considerable progress in the reduction of maternal and infant mortality, every year approximately 44000 women still die due to pregnancy-related causes and approximately 6.6 lakh infants die within the first 28 days of life. Many of these deaths are preventable and many lives can be saved if quality care is provided to pregnant women during their antenatal period and high risk factors such as severe anemia, pregnancy-induced hypertension etc are detected on time and managed well.
- Like any other program, the PMSMA too is faced with several roadblocks and challenges that it must overcome to succeed. Lack of electricity in rural areas, chronic diseases, lack of infrastructure and mobile ambulances, and the growing instances of high-risk pregnancies bring to the fore immense challenges in the successful implementation of the program.
- The role of the social organizations, the mindset of the civil society and an active participation from the private sector are pivotal to its success, especially at the grass-root levels. In addition, the preparation of

the government in making the supporting mechanisms such as PHCs and sufficient staff available at the PMSMA facilities would also go a long way in ensuring the success of the scheme.

- The PMSMA still has some scope of extending the basic tenets of its program to include a government-sponsored nutritional diet supply and access plan. Grass-root level organizations need to be created, activated and incentivized to extend the program outreach. However, prima-facie it would not be wrong to conclude that if followed through, this initiative holds the promise of ensuring a significant drop in both maternal and infant mortality rates.
- The government's efforts at improving access to maternal health services leading to increase in institutional births has significantly contributed to groundbreaking reduction in Maternal Mortality Rate (MMR) by 22 percent from 2013 levels. Emphasis on mitigating the social determinants of maternal health like increase in girl's education and reduction in child marriages are other enabling factors that contributed to this notable success.

Teachings of Kabir: Still Relevant

Q4. "The philosophy of saint Kabir is quite capable even today also to make world community free from sorrows, sufferings and pains." Discuss.

Hints:

- Recently, Prime Minister laid the foundation stone of a research institute at Maghar in Uttar Pradesh to mark the 500th death anniversary of Kabir Das, the mystic poet and saint. As a historical fact, we do not know whether Kabir did live till 1518 but having no better alternative, scholars tend to use this heuristic date.
- Saint Kabir is one of the greatest mystics who brought an authentic spiritual revolution in the collective psyche of a large number of people who were either atheists or belonging to the traditional religions. And he did it in such a wonderful way — with his unique bhajans in simple Hindi language. Kabir enthralled people and inspired them with his devotional poems and songs of love and humanism.
- Kabir vehemently opposed the idol-worship, caste system and untouchability as practiced by the Hindus and simultaneously condemned the orthodoxy and meaningless rituals of the Muslims. Kabir's teaching was in perfect harmony with the social and religious needs of the times; he identified himself completely with the concept of an integrated Indian society and won the hearts of millions.
- The Constitution describes India as a secular and welfare state and guarantees certain fundamental rights to all

citizens. The Directive Principles of State Policy further strengthen the concept of a welfare state as they are to be borne in mind while making laws and implementing them. Social welfare and wellbeing of all the citizens are the essence of the Indian Constitution. In this context the teachings of Kabir are quite relevant even if these were preached in the 14th century.

- Kabir perceived certain ideals to be the first foot-steps on the path to a welfare state and to eradicate inhuman exploitative practices during that time. He was not only a religious teacher but also a social reformer for Hindu-Muslim unity, equality of caste and gender and, at the same time, a revolutionary against the blind faith in the forms of illogical practices and rituals performed both by the Hindus and the Muslims. To sum up, as an enlightened visionary, he advocated a new social order on the basis of equality, liberty and fraternity.
- In almost all of the countries and civilizations and especially in the countries who are well advanced in materialism and scientific technologies, there has been left no eternal and spiritual knowledge by their ancestors on the basis of whom one can make a balance in physical development and social life. The researcher thinks that the philosophy of saint Kabir is quite capable even today also to make world community free from sorrows, sufferings and pains.
- Kabir is considered the most influential and most remarkable poet of the Bhakti movement in Northern India. A vision of a human centered society which remains till today, a source of inspiration not only for the people of North India but for people all over the world, who are fighting against injustice and inequality. Undoubtedly, Kabir was a product of the historical times in which he lived; but he left an indelible imprint on that history and gave it a new direction, in resonance with the aspirations of the people. He upheld that every idea must be tested in terms of the ground reality of the concrete necessities of life. The direction he showed served to transform ideas from the realm of imagination to the practical reality on the ground. This process shook the very foundations of the religious ideas that held sway over the masses at that time and began to lay the foundations of a new humanist philosophy of life, a process which continues even today.

Winning the Battle against Poverty

Q5. Is India winning the battle against extreme poverty? What are the political, policy and administrative reforms required to fight extreme Poverty? Discuss.

Hints:

- According to the study done by Brookings Institution the number of Indians living in poverty has fallen

significantly in the past two years — from 125 million in 2016 to 75 million in 2018. Poverty figures drop by 50 million, India on way to become middle-income nation. The study, based on World Bank data, projects that poverty numbers will further fall to 20 million by 2022.

- Researchers at Brookings Institution say Nigeria had 87 million people living in extreme poverty in May 2018, compared to 73 million in India. They predict that the Indian number is expected to drop to around 20 million over the next four years. The World Bank defines a person as extremely poor if she is living on less than 1.90 international dollars a day, which are adjusted for inflation as well as price differences between countries.
- Given a starting point of about 725 million people in extreme poverty at the beginning of 2016, we needed to reduce poverty by 1.5 people every second to achieve the goal and yet we've been moving at a pace of only 1.1 people per second. At the same time, because so many countries are falling behind, the actual pace of poverty reduction is starting to slow down. Our projections show that by 2020, the pace could fall to 0.9 people per second and to 0.5 people per second by 2022.
- As we fall further behind the target pace, the task of ending extreme poverty by 2030 is becoming inexorably harder because we are running out of time.
- The ongoing reforms attach great importance to removal of poverty and addressing specifically the wide variations across states and the rural-urban divide. Anti-poverty strategy has three broad components: promotion of economic growth; promotion of human development; and targeted programmes of poverty alleviation to address multi-dimensional nature of poverty.
- The various programmes targeted at the poor have been streamlined and strengthened in recent years, including through the NREGS. Most of the schemes are clouded with implementation challenges. Programs are plagued by leakages on subsidies that limit its impact on the poor. These programs need to be centralized under one organization so that leakages can be prevented at multiple levels.

Refashioning of Higher Education in India

Q6. The UGC and its regulatory regime have been criticized by a number of committees and their reports. Discuss the current departures from the existing regulatory framework of higher education, bringing us closer to global best practices.

Hints:

- In a landmark decision, a Higher Education Commission of India (Repeal of University Grants Commission Act)

Bill, 2018 which seeks to repeal UGC Act and provides for setting up of higher education commission of India has been prepared by the Ministry of Human Resource and Development and placed in public domain for comments and suggestions. The focus of higher education commission of India will be on improving academic standards and the quality of higher education.

- The provisions of the new Higher Education Commission of India (HECI) Bill drafted by the Centre have far-reaching implications for the expansion and quality of human resource development, at a time when access to skill-building and educational opportunity are vitally important. There were 864 recognised universities and 40,026 colleges in the country in 2016-17, while the gross enrolment ratio of students was only about 26%. To put this in perspective, there were only 20 universities and 500 colleges at the time of Independence.
- India's higher education sector has moved from a period of slow growth and low gross enrolment ratios (GERs) to an era of unprecedented expansion. Over the past 15 years, student enrolment has quadrupled to reach 34 million with a GER of 24 percent in 2015-2016. The size of India's education system has now surpassed the United States, becoming the world's second largest after China.
- Massification of the education system has heavily relied on non-state funding. Market friendly reforms introduced by the state include cost recovery measures in public institutions and the promotion of the private sector to own and operate universities. While privatization started slow, private universities are proliferating and now account for more than 60 per cent of the enrolment share both in terms of institutions and enrolment. Massification in India is also accompanied by persisting social inequalities and widening regional inequalities in enrolment in higher education.
- India established external quality assurance agencies and internal quality assurance mechanisms to enhance higher education quality. Although accreditation is mandatory to obtain public funding, a majority of private higher education institutions still remain non-accredited.
- Despite the sector's growth, many employers in India have lost confidence in the quality of the qualifications awarded by the country's universities. It is questioned whether these universities offer the skills and competencies to its graduates as expected in the labour market. In order to regain the credibility and enhance the relevance of university qualifications, India is now in the process of developing a National Higher Education Qualification Framework (NHEQF), which is focusing on learning outcomes, employability skills and competencies. This follows the 2013 development of a national skills qualification framework (NSQF).

- The higher education commission could transform the sector and improve the standards. So far, the grant-giving powers of the UGC have resulted in over-regulation and its inspection regime led to a steady decline in the quality of education. The higher education commission, on the other hand, will have no funds to dole out and can single-mindedly focus on academics and monitoring standards. Keeping the regulator off the financial matters will help bridge the trust deficit associated with the UGC which has become outdated. There is need for a single higher education regulator that can help clean up the regulatory mess and create an ecosystem conducive for nurturing institutions of excellence. If India has to reap the benefits of the knowledge economy, more private resources need to flow into the education sector.

Drug Menace in India

Q7. It is a commonly accepted fact that drug abuse is on the rise in India. Drug problem is a serious threat to public health, safety and well-being of humanity. Discuss the role of government to tackle drug menace in India?

Hints:

- According to estimates, there are approximately 70 million drug abusers in India. Data on drugs seizure by the Narcotics Control Bureau shows that consumption and smuggling of synthetic drugs, which are much more dangerous and addictive than natural ones, has been steadily increasing while that of natural drugs has been decreasing.
 - Our global society is facing serious consequences of drug abuse and it undermines the socio-economic and political stability and sustainable development. Besides, it also distorts the health and fabric of the society and it is considered to be the originator for petty offences as well as heinous crimes like smuggling of arms & ammunition and money laundering,
 - Drug trafficking and abuse has continued its significant toll on valuable human lives and productive years of many person around the globe. With the growth and development of world economy, drug traffickers are also seamlessly trafficking various type of drugs from one corner to other ensuring the availability of the contrabands for vulnerable segment of the society who fall into the trap of drug peddlers and traffickers.
 - Due to the presence of 'Golden Crescent' and 'Golden Triangle' in the region, part of South West and South East Asia are more vulnerable for drug trafficking and its abuse. Due to India's close proximity with major opium growing areas of the region, India is facing the
- serious menace of drug trafficking and as a spillover effect, drug abuse especially among the youth is a matter of concern for us.
 - ♦ Government of India has also taken many steps in this field of demand reduction like;
 - ♦ Formulation of national policy for drug demand reduction.
 - ♦ National awards for institutions & individuals working in the field of prevention of drug abuse which are conferred on 26th June every year, which is the International Day against Drug Abuse & Illicit Trafficking.
 - ♦ Creation of national drug abuse helpline number which helps the victims of drug abuse and their families in counseling and other aids.
 - ♦ To target the drug network in the ste to reduce the drug supply.
 - ♦ Introducing "Outpatient Opioid Assisted Treatment" in order to improve thye current conditions of the de-addiction centres.
 - ♦ Building mass awareness on drug abuse to reduce demand for drugs.
- India's approach towards tackling the menace of drugs is well enshrined in our Constitution which in the directive principles lay down that the state shall make endeavors to bring about the prohibition of substances injurious for health except for medicinal and scientific purposes. Being signatory to all the three UN conventions and SAARC convention, India has enacted Narcotics Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985 and Prevention of Illicit Trafficking of Narcotics Drug and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1988 through which the country is addressing various aspects of drug problem. In order to enhance inter-governmental cooperation and coordination with neighboring and other countries, government of India has entered into various arrangements like bi-lateral agreements, memorandum of understandings, joint working groups on counter terrorism and judicial cooperation with the countries in the region.
 - India's National Policy on Narcotics Drugs and Psychotropic Substances has given equal emphasis on supply and demand reduction. The trafficking of drugs and its linkages with other organized crimes is a major challenge for the drug law enforcement agencies. Drug trafficking is a trans-national phenomenon and the international and domestic laws should be so legislated so that they are in sync and coherence so as to act as a real deterrent for the drug traffickers, who otherwise are able to go scot free because of lack of consonance between the laws of different countries.



SEVEN IMPORTANT NATIONAL & INTERNATIONAL NEWS

NATIONAL

1. ISRO's First 'Pad Abort' Test

ISRO conducted the first pad abort test (PAT) critical for a future human space mission. The Pad Abort Test demonstrated the safe recovery of the crew module in case of any exigency at the launch pad. It is the first in a series of tests to qualify a crew escape system technology of a manned mission in the future. The Crew Escape System is an emergency escape measure to quickly

pull the crew module — the astronaut cabin — along with astronauts out to a safe distance from the launch vehicle in the event of a launch abort.

India does not have a human space flight programme. Only three countries USA, Russia and China have human space flight programmes. The only Indian citizen to ever travel to space was fighter pilot Rakesh Sharma who



flew aboard Soyuz T-11, a spacecraft of the former USSR in 1984.

2. Four Species Added to Recovery Programme

The National Board for Wildlife (NBWL) recently added four species—the Northern River Terrapin, Clouded Leopard, Arabian Sea Humpback Whale and Red Panda to a Recovery Programme for Critically Endangered Species. The programme, which already covers 17 species across the country, includes legal sanction against hunting, financial assistance to states to protect the species, creation of sanctuaries and even the CBI's

assistance in prosecuting the poachers.

About Species

Norther River Terrapin, which is a species of riverine turtle found in the rivers that flow in Eastern India, is hunted for its meat and carapace. It is a native of Bangladesh, Cambodia, India, Indonesia and Malaysia.

Clouded Leopard, found in the Himalayan foothills, is threatened due to habitat loss, poaching for its skin

and is also as a live pet trade. The IUCN has categorized the species as 'Vulnerable' and indicates a 'declining trend in its population.

Arabian Sea Humpback Whale is a species found in all of major oceans but ship strikes, unforgiving fishing gear and seismic exploarations

pose grave threat to it. The species migrates from the Oman coast through the Arabian sea, along the Indian coasts till the Sri Lankan coast.

Red Panda which is closely associated with montane forests with dense bamboo-thicket, is found Sikkim, West Bengal and Arunachal Pradesh. It is poached for its meat and for use in medicines and as a pet. The IUCN has categorized Red Panda as 'Endangered'.

At present, the following species fall under the recovery programme: Snow Leopard, Bustard (including Floricans), Dolphin, Hangul, NilgiriTahr, Marine Turtles, Dugongs, Edible Nest Swiftlet, Asian Wild Buffalo, Nicobar Megapode, Manipur Brow-antlered Deer, Vultures, Malabar Civet, Indian Rhinoceros, Asiatic Lion, Swamp Deer and Jerdon's Courser.



3. Recapitalization of Regional Rural Banks

The government approved extension of recapitalisation scheme for Regional Rural Banks (RRBs) for next three years up to 2019-20 with an aim to strengthen their lending capacity. The scheme started in 2010-11 and was extended twice in 2012-13 and 2015-16. The last extension was up to March, 2017. A total of Rs 1,107.20 crore, as government's share, out of Rs 1,450 crore, has been released to RRBs till March last year. The remaining Rs 342.80 crore will be utilised to provide recapitalisation support to RRBs whose Capital to Risk Weighted Assets Ratio

(CRAR) is below 9 per cent, during 2017-18, 2018-19 and 2019-20.

Impact

- A strong capital structure and minimum required level of CRAR will ensure financial stability of RRBs which will enable them to play a greater role in financial inclusion and meeting the credit requirements of rural areas.
- This will enable the RRBs to maintain the minimum prescribed Capital to Risk Weighted Assets Ratio (CRAR) of 9 per cent.

About RRB

RRBs were set up with the objective to provide credit and other facilities, especially to the small and marginal farmers, agricultural labourers, artisans and small entrepreneurs in rural areas for development of agriculture, trade, commerce, industry and other productive activities. RRBs are jointly owned by government of India, the concerned state government and sponsor banks with the issued capital shared in the proportion of 50%, 15% and 35% respectively.

4. National Health Stack

The NITI Aayog has proposed creation of the the National Health Stack (NHS), a shared digital healthcare infrastructure, with a view to implement the Centre's flagship scheme Ayushman Bharat and other public healthcare programmes in the country.

The National Health Stack (NHS) envisages a centralized health record for all citizens of the country in order to streamline the health information and facilitate effective management of the same.

The proposed NHS is an approach to address the challenge and seeks to employ latest technology including big data analytics and machine learning artificial intelligence, a state of the art policy mark-up language and create a unified health identity of citizens - as they navigate across services across levels of care, i.e. primary, secondary and tertiary and also across public and private.

The innovativeness of the proposed NHS design lies in its ability to leverage

a shared public good – a strong digital spine built with a deep understanding of the incentive structures of the system.

Once implemented, the National Health Stack will significantly bring down the costs of health protection, converge disparate systems to ensure a cashless and seamlessly integrated experience for the poorest beneficiaries and promote wellness across the population.

5. Legal Entity Status to the Entire Animal Kingdom

The Uttarakhand High Court has declared the "entire animal kingdom including avian and aquatic" as legal entities with a distinct persona and corresponding rights, duties and liabilities of a living person. The court also declared all Uttarakhand natives the guardians of animals and endowed them with the duty to ensure their welfare and protection.

The entire animal kingdom, including avian and aquatic ones, are declared as legal entities having a distinct persona with corresponding rights, duties and liabilities of a living person. All the citizens throughout the state of Uttarakhand are hereby declared persons in loco parentis as the human face for the welfare/protection of animals.

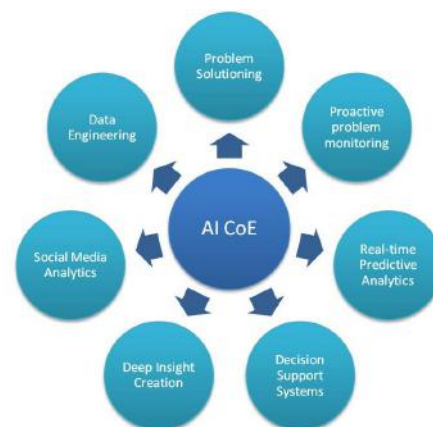
What is Legal Entity?

Legal or juristic persons are created by law and recognised as a legal entity, having distinct identity, legal personality and besides duties and rights. They include private business firm or entity, non-governmental or government organisations, trusts and societies, besides others.

6. Center of Excellence for Data Science and Artificial Intelligence

The National Association of Software and Services Companies (NASSCOM) have opened a Center of Excellence (CoE) for Data Science and Artificial Intelligence. NASSCOM also signed a MoU with NITI Aayog to collaboratively foster applied research, accelerating adoption and ethics, privacy and security. The CoE initiative is a nationwide programme on innovation, focusing on solutions in smart manufacturing, automotive,

healthcare, agriculture, energy, IoT, banking and financial services, retail, telecom and host of emerging technologies. The center aims to “support SMBs, by fast-tracking their product development, provide market access to enterprises and assist them by co-creating programs along with other industry partners and start-ups to solve complex and real-world business problems.



7. Behdienkhlam Festival

Behdienkhlam, one of the most colourful festivals of Meghalaya, was celebrated in the Jaintia Hills. It is celebrated to invoke the gods for a bumper harvest and drive away plague, drew hundreds of people from all across the state and abroad. It is the ritualistic expression of the relentless struggle of mankind to overcome the destructive forces of nature, including

diseases, since the dawn of civilization.

During the festival, decorated and colourful raths were immersed in ‘Wah Ainar,’ a muddy pool. The non-Christian ‘Pnar’ people who believe either in the traditional faith of ‘Niamtre’ or Hinduism observe this festival.



INTERNATIONAL

1. Einstein's Theory of Relativity

Einstein's theory of general relativity has proven correct even in a massive three-star system. The experiment showed that the scientist was right about gravity even at the most extreme scales. The researchers observed gravitational behavior in a three-star system known as PSR J0337+1715. The massive system located 4,200 light years away consists of two white dwarfs and a neutron star, an ideal

example of an extreme scale. The neutron star system was discovered back in 2014, which speculated that the system could be used to test Einstein's theory. After years of study, the researchers reported finding no detectable difference indicating no alternative theories of gravity were in motion. The results were consistent with Einstein's theory of relativity.

About Theory

In 1915, Albert Einstein presented his theory of general relativity, which proposed that gravity itself was the result of a warping of spacetime by massive objects like stars and planets. Einstein's theory of relativity indicates that all objects fall the same way regardless of mass or composition. ■

2. UN Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan

UN Secretary - General Antonio Guterres has appointed a veteran Uruguayan Army official as head of the United Nations mission tasked with monitoring the ceasefire line between India and Pakistan.

About UNMOGIP

It was established in January 1949. Following the India-Pakistan war in 1971 and a subsequent ceasefire

agreement of 17 December of that year, the tasks of UNMOGIP have been to observe, to the extent possible, developments pertaining to the strict observance of the ceasefire of 17 December 1971 and to report thereon to the Secretary-General.

India's Position

India has maintained that UNMOGIP has outlived its utility and is irrelevant

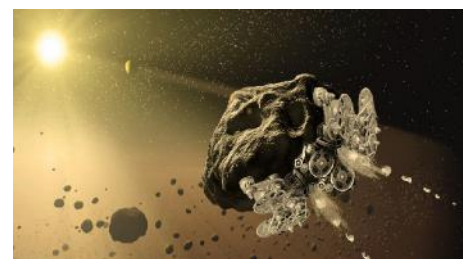
after the Simla Agreement and the consequent establishment of the Line of Control (LoC). The military authorities of India have lodged no complaints since January 1972 limiting the activities of the UN observers on the Indian-administered side of the Line of Control, though they continue to provide necessary security, transport and other services to UNMOGIP. ■

3. Project RAMA

NASA has recently announced it would give funds to Made in Space's project- RAMA (Reconstituting Asteroids into Mechanical Automata), for finding ways to turn asteroids into giant, autonomous spacecraft, which could fly to outposts in space. Made in Space's project, known as RAMA (Reconstituting Asteroids into Mechanical Automata), could one day enable space colonization by helping make off-Earth manufacturing efficient and economically viable.

About RAMA

It has been designed to leverage the advancing trends of additive manufacturing (AM) and in-situ resource utilization (ISRU). It aims to enable asteroid rendezvous missions in which a set of technically simple robotic processes convert asteroid elements into very basic versions of spacecraft subsystems (GNC, Propulsion and Avionics). These techniques could be beneficial to scientific goals for understanding the solar system and its formation, as it is estimated that



an order of magnitude increase in NEO targets could be explored for the same mission cost compared to the SOA. It would enable this by removing the need to launch all spacecraft subsystems and instead converting the asteroid material in-situ. ■

4. China Launched Two Satellites for Pakistan

China successfully launched two remote sensing satellites PRSS-1 and PakTes-1A for its "all-weather" ally Pakistan, which will also help the two countries monitor progress as they build the strategic USD 50 billion China-Pakistan Economic Corridor. The PRSS-1 will be used for land and

resources surveying, monitoring of natural disasters, agriculture research and urban construction and providing remote sensing information for the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) under the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) of the Chinese government.

The PRSS-1 is China's first optical remote sensing satellite sold to Pakistan. A scientific experiment satellite, PakTES-1A, developed by engineers of the Pakistan Space and Upper Atmosphere Research Commission (SUPARCO), was sent into orbit using the same rocket. ■

5. Alternative to the Oxytocin

The World Health Organization (WHO) has come up with a safe and effective alternative to the controversial drug oxytocin. After considering the results of its clinical trials on a new formulation, carbetocin, WHO has asked the Guideline Development Group to consider if the new drug should be recommended for the prevention of postpartum haemorrhage instead of oxytocin.

At present, WHO recommends oxytocin as the first-choice drug for

preventing excessive bleeding after childbirth. Carbetocin could save thousands of women in low- and lower-middle-income countries. While Oxytocin, must be stored and transported at 2–8 degrees Celsius and becomes less effective when exposed to heat, Carbetocin does not require refrigeration and retains its efficacy for at least three years even if it is stored at 30 degrees Celsius and in 75% relative humidity.

In India oxytocin is misused by dairy owners for more milk. Considering the problem, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has restricted the manufacture of Oxytocin formulations for domestic use to public sector only from 1st July 2018. It has also banned the import of Oxytocin and its formulations. From 1st July 2018, no private manufacturer will be allowed to manufacture the drug for domestic use. ■

6. China's Population would be 65% of India's by 2050

A Chinese expert has called for an end to China's controversial family planning policy, claiming the world's second largest economy's population will be only 65 per cent of India's by 2050 due to the one-child policy pursued by the government. China ended its decades-old one-child policy in 2016 and permitted couples to have two children as the population of elderly

rose with declining numbers of young people. China had more than 230.8 million people aged 60 or above at the end of 2016, 16.7 per cent of the country's total population.

By international standards, a country or region is considered to be an "ageing society" when the number of people aged 60 or above comprises at least 10 per cent of the

total population. China is planning to scrap the family planning policy altogether. Since the 1970s, due to the rapid population growth, China implemented the family planning program. Without the policy, it would have been difficult to stimulate China's production capability and drag the country out of the low-income trap. ■

7. Mattala Airport of Sri Lanka

India has agreed to form a joint venture with Sri Lanka to operate the country's loss-making Mattala Rajapaksa International Airport in Hambantota. The \$210-million facility, 241 km South-east of Colombo, is dubbed the "world's emptiest airport" due to a lack of flights. The joint venture would see India gain a major stake of the

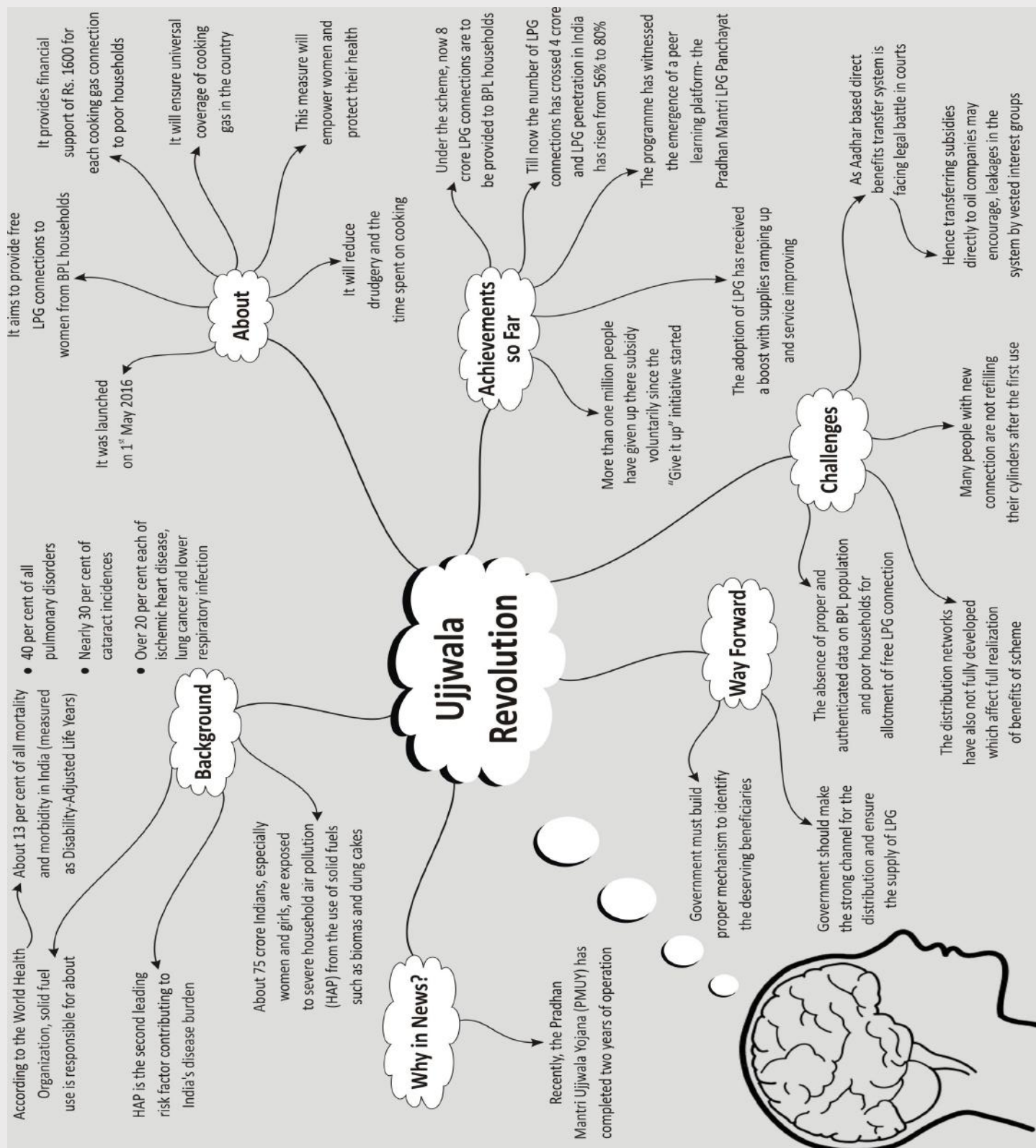
airport. The airport has the capacity to handle one million passengers a year and is expected to handle five million passengers, 50,000 tonnes of cargo and 6,250 air traffic operations per annum by 2028.

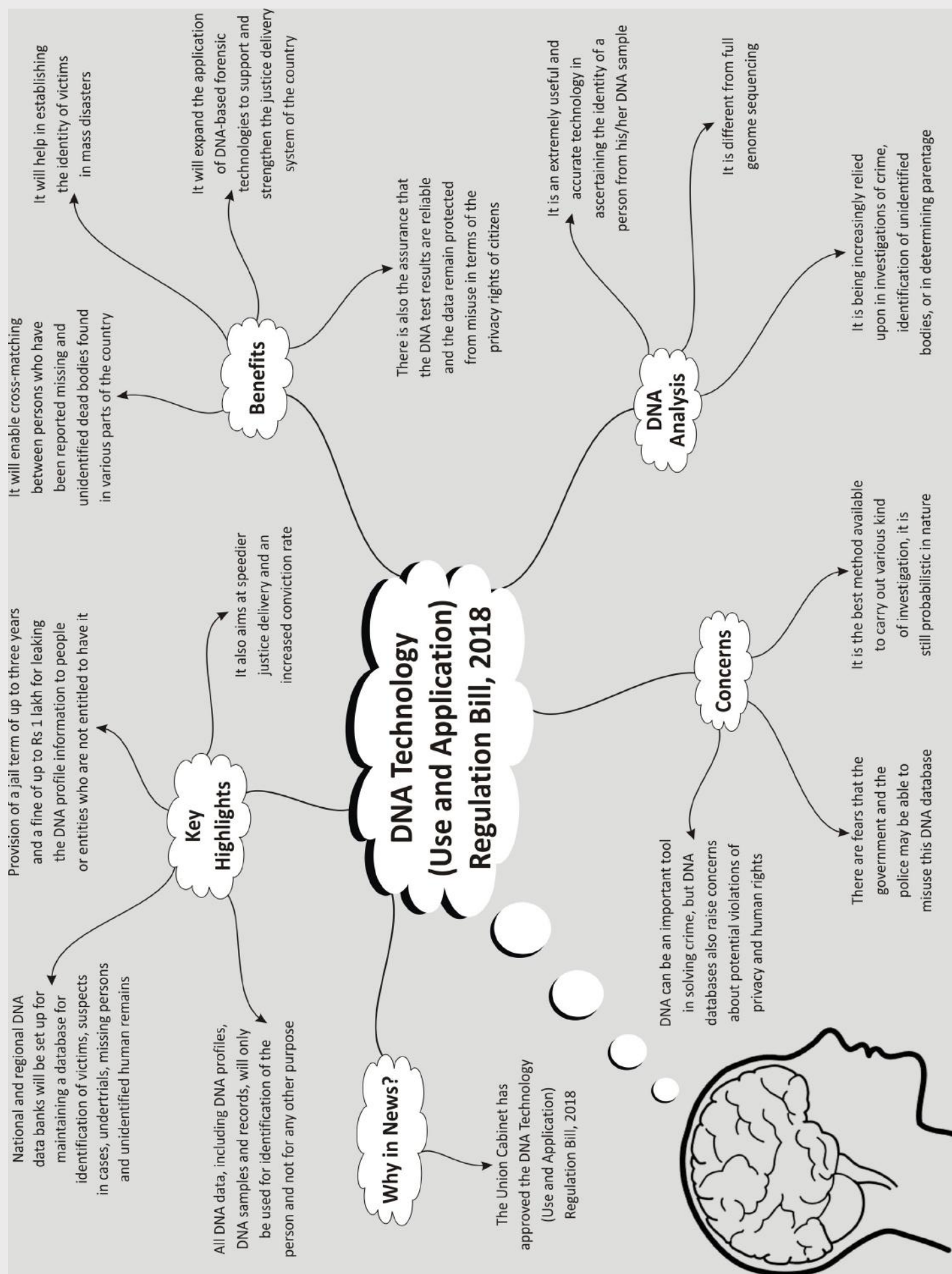
The project was funded through high interest Chinese commercial loans. The airport was officially opened

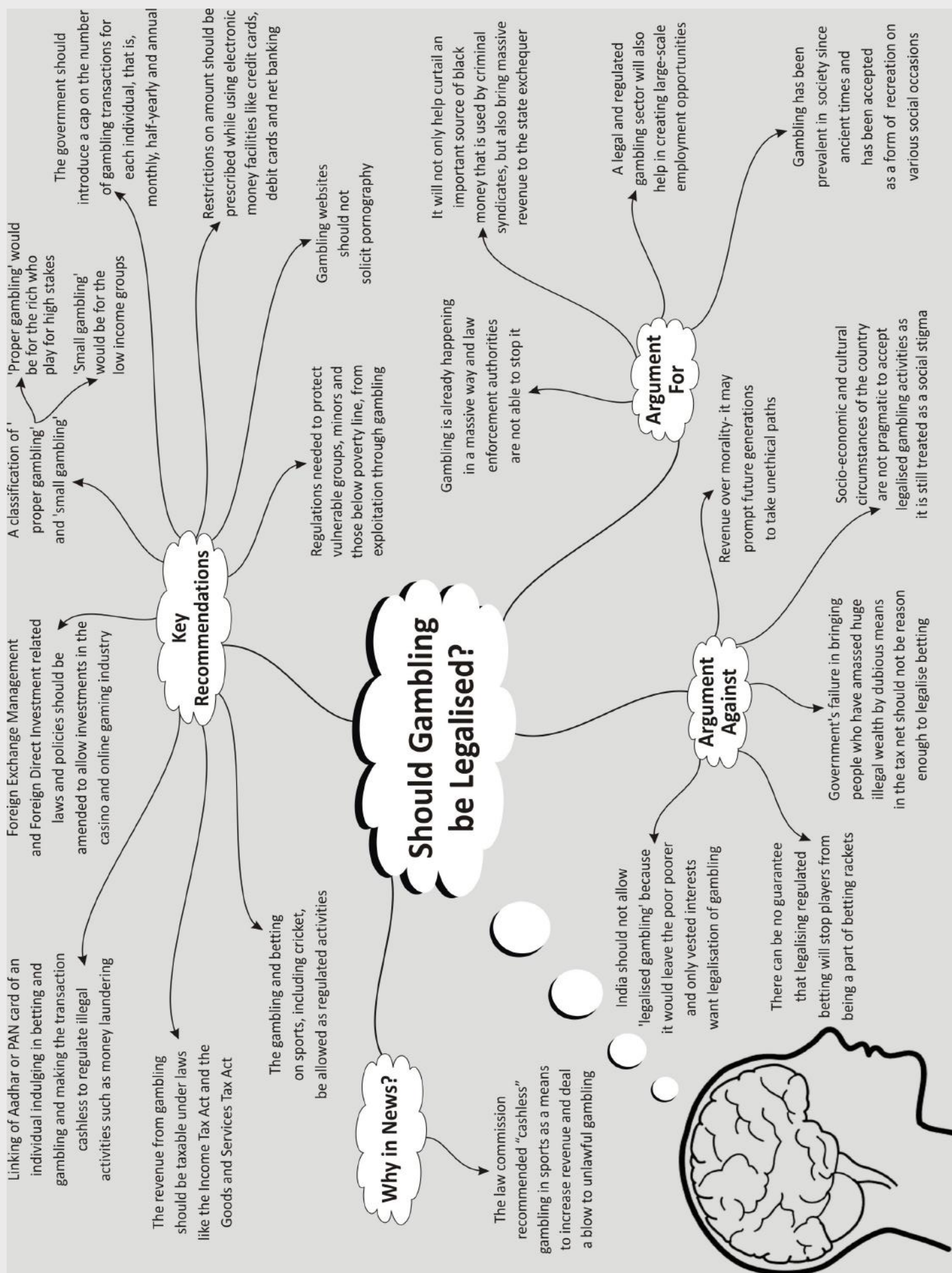
in March 2013. The only international flight operating from there was halted in May due to recurrent losses and flight safety issues.

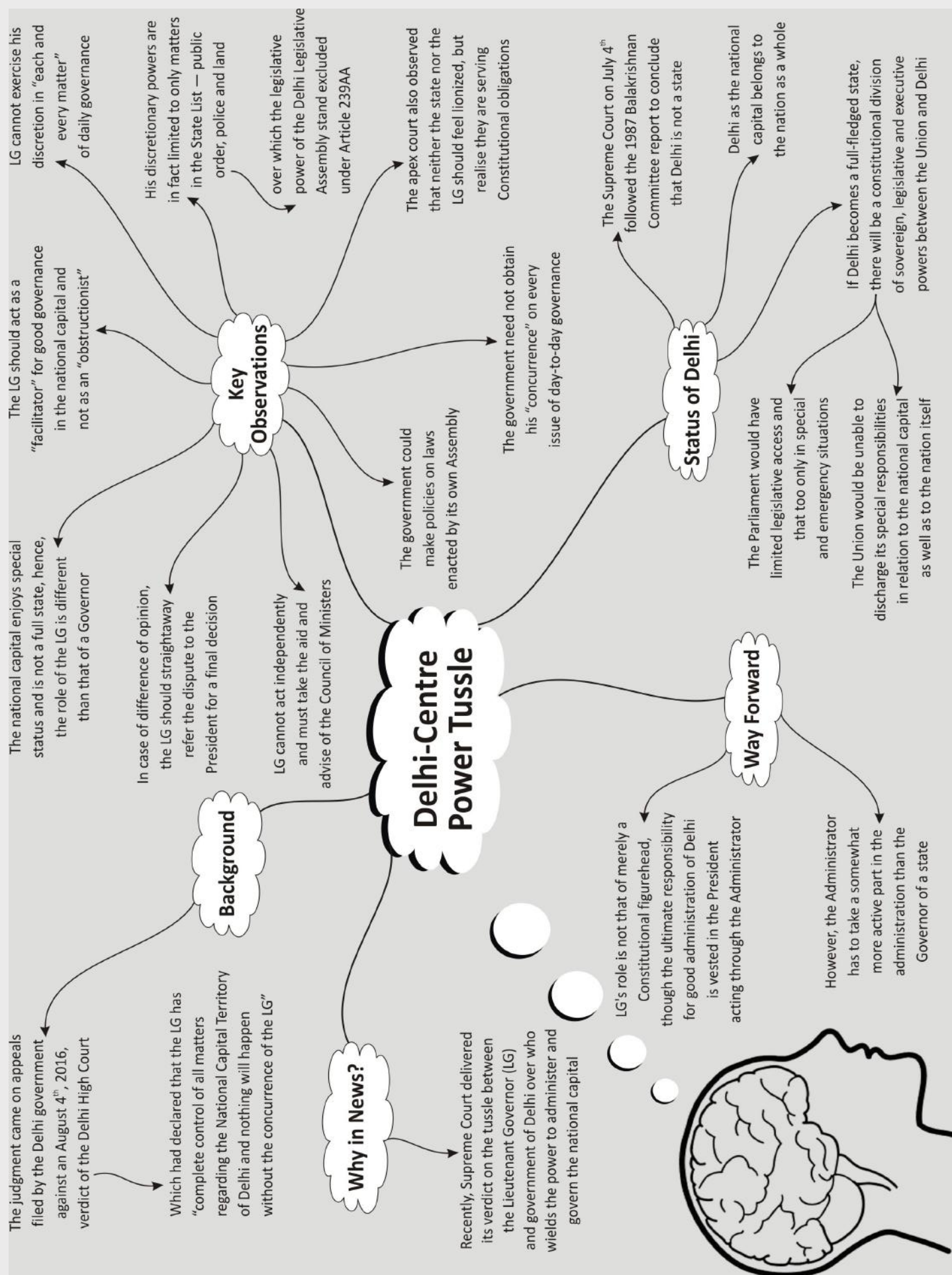
The seaport built in Hambantota, another Rajapaksa pet project, has been leased to China to set off Chinese loans as equity. ■

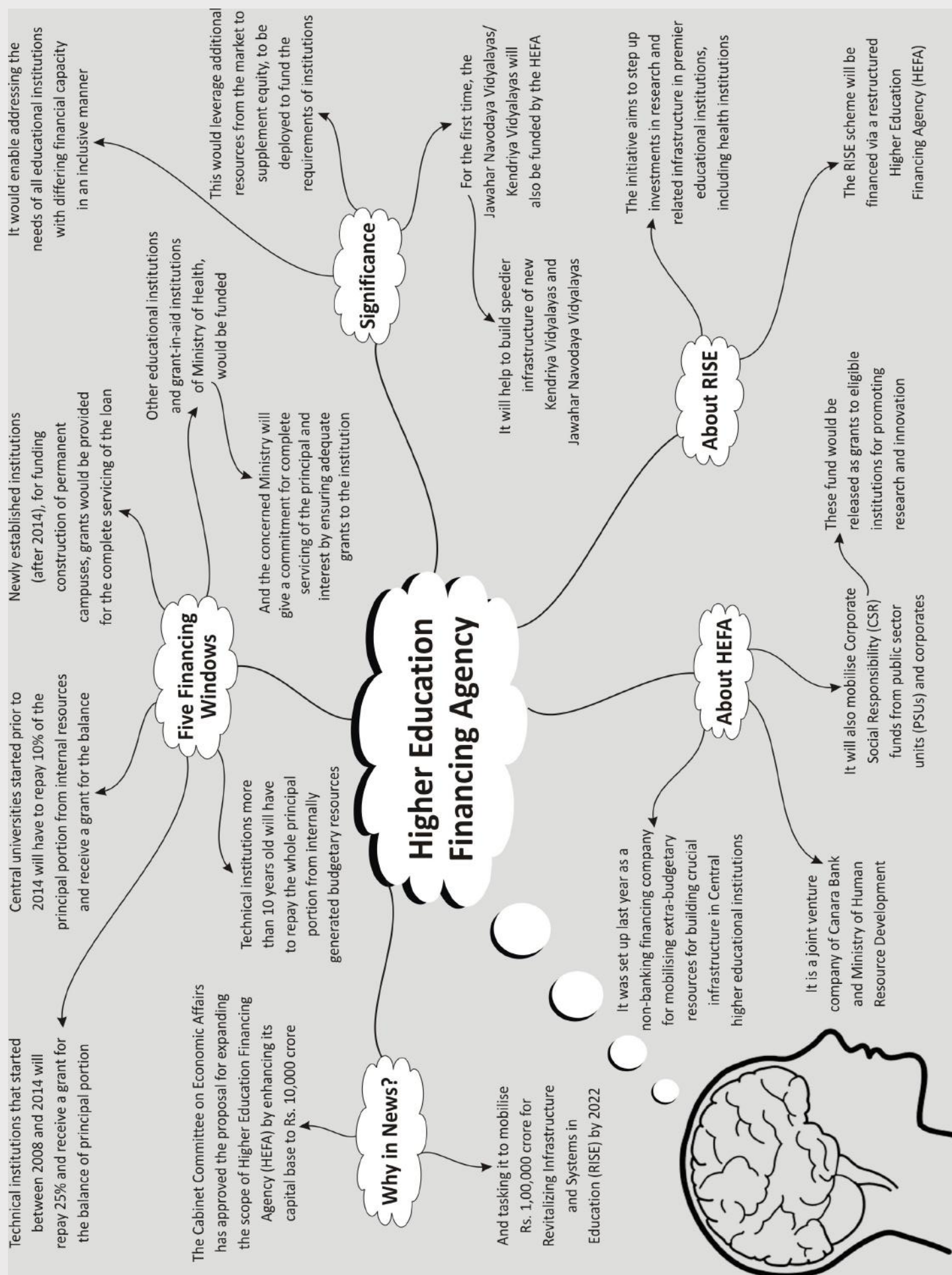
SEVEN BRAIN BOOSTERS

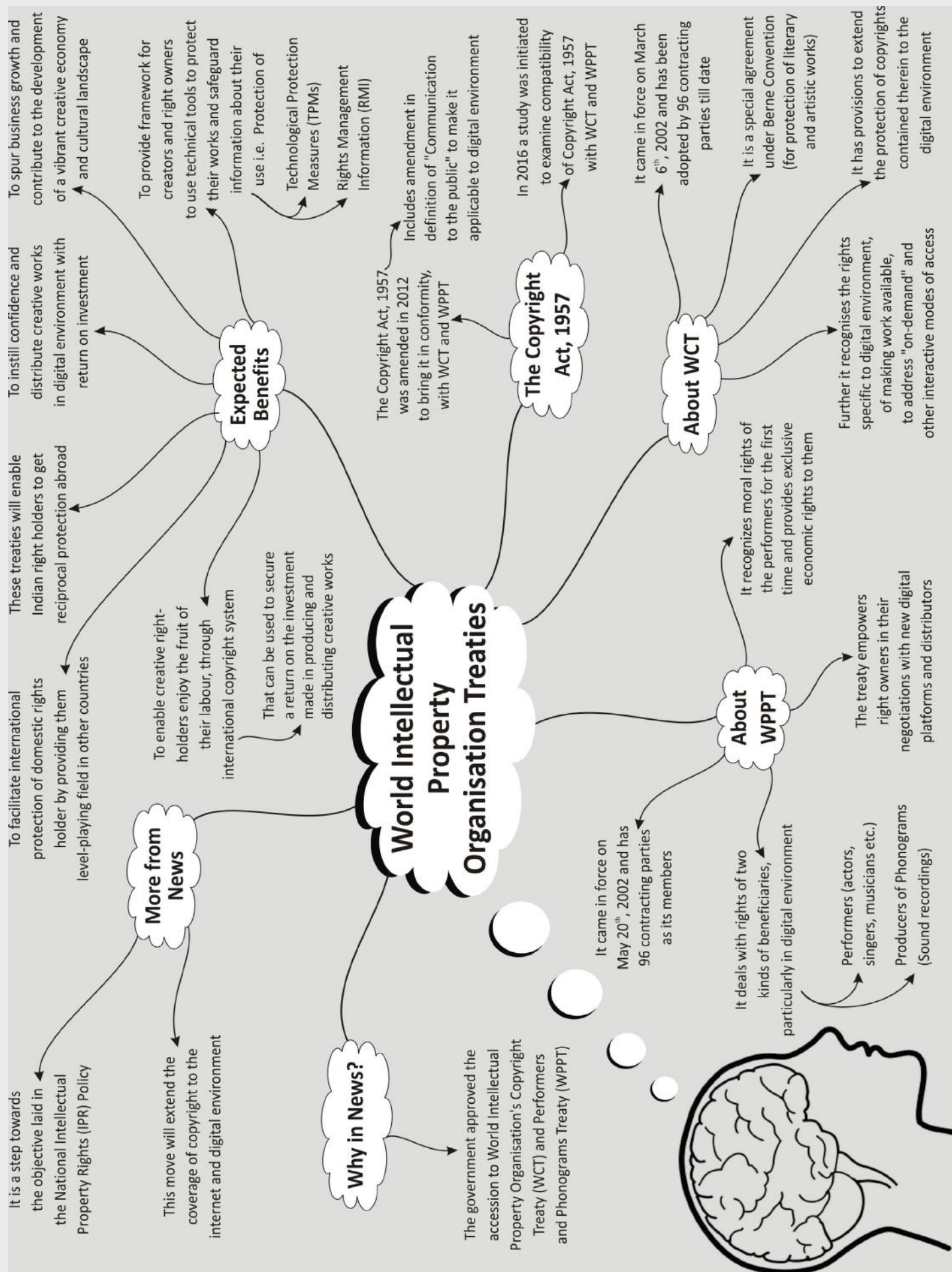


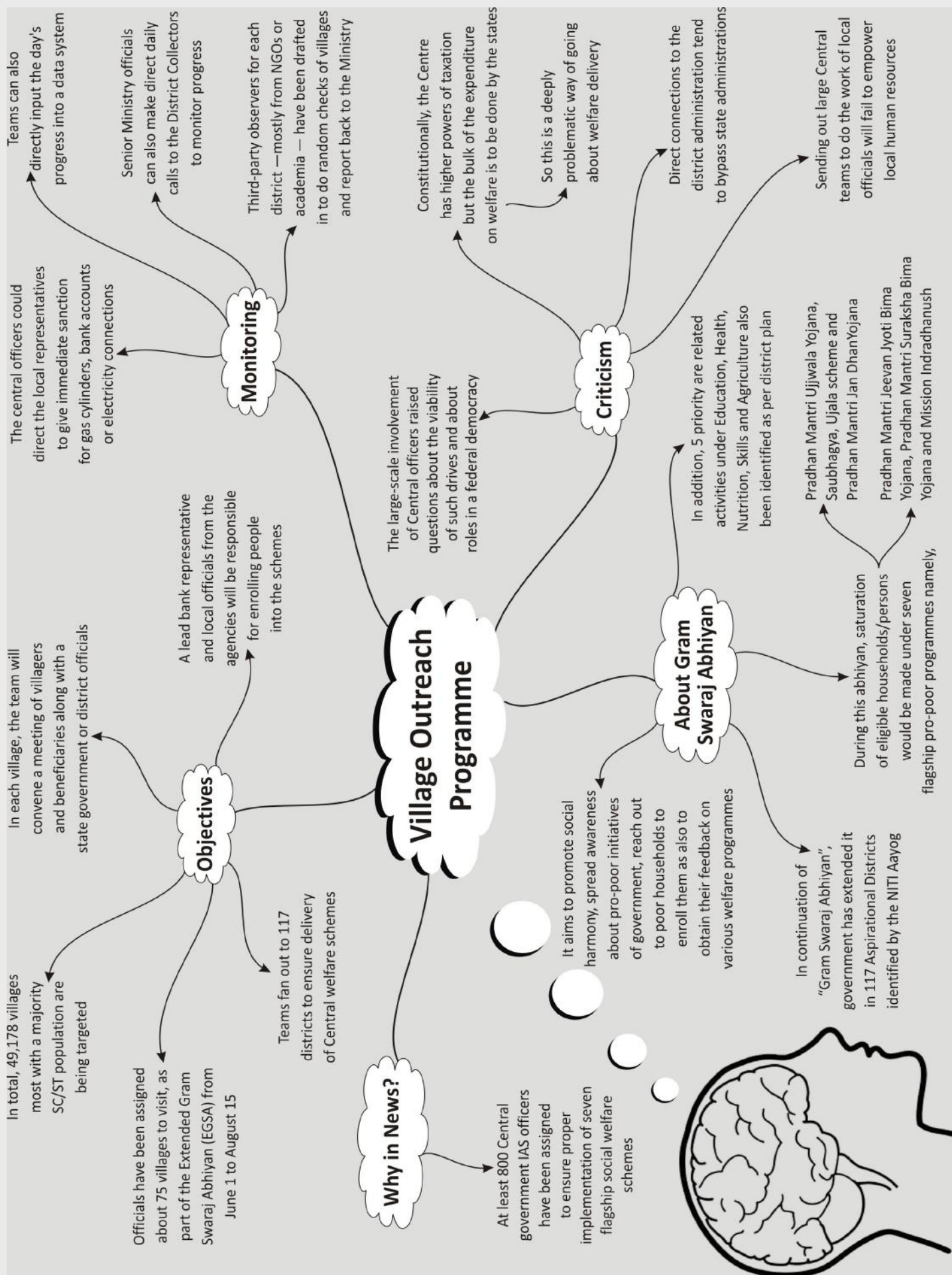












SEVEN MCQ's WITH EXPLANATORY ANSWERS

(Based on Brain Boosters)

Ujjwala Revolution

Q1. Consider the following statements in respect of 'Ujjawala Yojana':

1. The motive of scheme is to provide efficient lighting programme by distributing LED to households.
2. It is first social welfare scheme implemented by Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (b)

Explanation: Statement 1 is not correct. Ujjawala Yojana was launched in 2016 with tagline of SwachhIndhan, Behtar Jeevan. The scheme's motive is to provide free of cost LPG (cooking gas) connections to women from BPL Households. Through it, cash assistance is given to beneficiaries to get a deposit-free new connection.

Statement 2 is correct. It is first social welfare scheme implemented by Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas. In February 2018, Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) had approved to enhance target base of PMUY from 5 crore to 8 crore.

DNA Technology (Use and Application) Regulation Bill, 2018

Q2. With reference to the 'DNA Technology (Use and Application) Regulation Bill, 2018, consider the following statements:

1. National and regional DNA data banks will be set up for maintaining a national database for identification of victims, suspects and missing persons.
2. All DNA data, including DNA profiles, DNA samples and records, will only be used for identification of the person and not for any other purpose.

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)

Both statements are correct. The Union Cabinet has approved the DNA Technology (Use and Application) Regulation Bill, 2018. The draft bill also states that all DNA data including DNA profiles, DNA samples and records, will only be used for identification of the person and not for any other purpose. As per bill national and regional DNA data banks will be set up for maintaining a national database for identification of victims, suspects in cases, under trials, missing persons and unidentified human remains.

Should Gambling be Legalised?

Q3. Consider the following statements in respect of legalisation of gambling in India:

1. Recently law commission recommended "cashless" gambling only in cricket as a means to increase revenue and deal a blow to unlawful gambling.
2. The commission has also divided gambling into two types - 'small gambling' and 'proper gambling'.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (b)

Explanation: Statement 1 is not correct. Recently law commission recommended "cashless" gambling in sports as a means to increase revenue and deal a blow to unlawful gambling. The money generated can be used for public welfare activities.

Statement 2 is correct. The commission recommended a classification of 'proper gambling' and 'small gambling.' 'Proper gambling' would be for the rich who play for high stakes, while 'small gambling' would be for the low income groups.

Delhi-Centre Power Tussle

Q4. Recently, Supreme Court delivered its verdict on the power tussle between the Lieutenant Governor (LG) and government of Delhi. Consider the following statements:

1. The Lieutenant Governor is bound by the aid and advice of elected council of ministers including issues on land, public order and police.
2. Delhi government has the power to legislate and govern on all issues including land, public order and police.

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: (d)

Explanation: Both statements are not correct. In a landmark verdict, the Supreme Court ruled that the Delhi Lieutenant Governor doesn't have independent decision making powers and that he is bound to act on the aid and advice of the Council of Ministers. It added that except for three issues — land, police and public order, the Delhi government has the power to legislate and govern on other issues.

Higher Education Financing Agency

Q5. With reference to the 'Higher Education Financing Agency', consider the following statements in this regard:

1. It is a joint venture company of State Bank of India and Ministry of Human Resource Development.
2. It will also mobilise corporate social responsibility funds from corporates which will in turn be released for promoting research and innovation in institutions on grant basis.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (b)

Explanation: Statement 1 is not correct. HEFA was set up last year as a non-banking financing company for mobilising extra-budgetary resources for building crucial infrastructure in Central higher educational institutions. It is a joint venture company of Canara Bank and Ministry of Human Resource Development.

Statement 2 is correct. It will also mobilise Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) funds from public sector units (PSUs) and corporates. These would be released as grants to eligible institutions for promoting research and innovation.

World Intellectual Property Organisation Treaties

Q6. Recently the government of India approved the accession to World Intellectual Property Organisation's Copyright Treaty (WCT) and Performers and Phonograms Treaty (WPPT). Consider the following statements in this regard:

1. This move will extend the coverage of copyright to the internet and digital environment.
2. World Intellectual Property Organisation's Copyright Treaty (WCT) came into force in 2002, while Performers and Phonograms Treaty (WPPT) came into force 2003.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (a)

Explanation: Statement 1 is correct. The government approved the accession to the WIPO Copyright Treaty and WIPO Performers and Phonograms Treaty which extends coverage of copyright to the internet and digital environment. The move is aimed at getting value for IPRs through commercialisation by providing guidance and support to EPR owners about commercial opportunities of e-commerce through internet and mobile platforms.

Statement 2 is not correct. Both, World Intellectual Property Organisation's Copyright Treaty (WCT) and Performers and Phonograms Treaty (WPPT) came into force in 2002.

Village Outreach Programme

Q7. Consider the following statements in respect of village outreach programme:

1. Officials have been assigned about 75 villages to visit, as part of the Extended Gram Swaraj Abhiyan (EGSA).
2. It ensures the ground implementation as the Centre races to saturate 117 "aspirational districts" with seven flagship social welfare schemes.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (c)

Explanation: Both statements are correct. At least 800 Deputy Secretaries, Under-Secretaries and Director-level officers have been assigned about 75 villages to visit, as part of the Extended Gram Swaraj Abhiyan (EGSA) from June 1 to August 15. In total, 49,178 villages — most with a majority SC/ST population — are being targeted. This programme will ensure the ground implementation as the Centre races to saturate 117 "aspirational districts" with seven flagship social welfare schemes by Independence Day.



SEVEN IMPORTANT FACTS FOR PRELIMS

1. Which state government has banned the use of thermocouple cutlery ?

–Himachal Pradesh

2. Which state government has signed a pact with UNESCO to set up Design University for Gaming?

–Andhra Pradesh

3. Which state government has announced that it would be enrolling nomadic tribes for Aadhaar?

–Haryana

4. Which is the most spoken Indian language as per the Language Census-2011?

–Hindi

5. India's first-ever e-waste recycling unit will be set up in which state?

–Karnataka

6. Which state government has launched the subsidised power scheme 'Sambal'?

–Madhya Pradesh

7. Which state government has launched a 'happiness curriculum' for school students?

–Delhi

○○○

SEVEN PERFECT QUOTES

(IMPORTANT FOR ESSAY AND ANSWER WRITING)

"We are not rich by what we possess but by what we can do without."

–Immanuel Kant

"Success often comes to those who dare to act. It seldom goes to the timid who are ever afraid of the consequences."

–Jawaharlal Nehru

"The only thing we have power over in the universe is our own thoughts."

–Rene Descartes

"One individual may die for an idea, but that idea will, after his death, incarnate itself in a thousand lives."

–Subhas Chandra Bose

"What worries you, masters you."

–John Locke

"Faith is of no avail in absence of strength. Faith and strength, both are essential to accomplish any great work."

–Sardar Vallabh Bhai Patel

"People who know little are usually great talkers, while men who know much say little."

–Jean-Jacques Rousseau

○○○

SEVEN PRACTICE QUESTIONS FOR MAIN EXAM

Answer each of the following questions in 200 words:

- Q1. One of the biggest challenges facing the Indian economy is the size of the informal sector. What India needs, as economists have advocated time and again, is a simpler regulatory framework. Justify.
- Q2. Any top-down regulation that defines fake news simply as containing falsehood may be setting itself up for failure. Critically analyse why regulating fake news in India is tough task.
- Q3. The divide between urban and rural voters in India is not as sharp as in the US and Europe. Unlike in the US and Europe, the urban Indian voter, for now, is siding with the centre-right political party. Discuss which way will the new urban Indian voter tilt?
- Q4. The spate of violence in the West Bengal panchayat elections is rooted in a larger question of governance in India. Is space for local governance shrinking in India? Discuss.
- Q5. "Despite being a fastest growing economy, India has taken a "quantum jump in the wrong direction" since 2014 and because of the backward movement, it is now the second worst in the region". Do you agree? Give suitable example.
- Q6. Supreme Court has let go of the opportunity to immunise the allocation of cases from abuse of power by the CJI and to democratise the process. Discuss it in the light of recent verdict of Supreme Court on the issue of 'master of roster'.
- Q7. "Cashless gambling in sports as a means to increase revenue and deal a blow to unlawful gambling." Should gambling be legalised in India? Discuss it in the light of law commission's recommendation on gambling.

○○○

CALL US

FACE-TO-FACE CENTRES

MUKHERJEE NAGAR

635, Ground Floor, Main Road Dr. Mukherjee Nagar,
Delhi 110009, Ph: 011-47354625/26, +91 9205274741
/ 42 / 43

RAJENDRA NAGAR

25B, 2nd Floor, Pusa Road, Old Rajendra Nagar,
Metro Pillar Number 117, Ph: +91 9205274745

LAXMI NAGAR

1/53, 2nd Floor, Lalita Park, Laxmi Nagar, Delhi 110092,
Ph: 011 43012556, +91 9311969232

ALLAHABAD

2nd & 3rd Floor, Shri Ram Tower, 17C, Sardar Patel Marg,
Civil Lines, Allahabad-211001, Ph: 0532 2260189,
+91 8853467068

LUCKNOW

A-12, Sector-J, Aliganj Lucknow, U.P., Ph: 0522 4025825,
+91 9506256789

GREATER NOIDA

Plot No. 28/1A Knowledge Park III, Greater Noida,
U.P. 201306, Ph: +91 9205336037, 38

LIVE STREAMING CENTRES

BIHAR – PATNA 9334100961, **CHANDIGARH** -
8146199399 **DELHI & NCR**- FARIDABAD
9711394350, 01294054621, HARYANA-
KURUKSHETRA 8950728524, 8607221300,
YAMUNANAGAR 9050888338, **MADHYA
PRADESH** - GWALIOR 9098219190, JABALPUR
8982082023, 8982082030, REWA 9926207755,
7662408099 **PUNJAB**- PATIALA 9041030070,
RAJASTHAN- JODHPUR 9928965998,
UTRAKHAND- HALDWANI 7060172525
UTTAR PRADESH- BAHRAICH 7275758422,
BAREILLY 9917500098, GORAKHPUR
7080847474, 7704884118, KANPUR
7275613962, LUCKNOW (ALAMBAGH)
7570009004, 7570009006, LUCKNOW (GOMTI
NAGAR) 7570009003, 7570009005,
MORADABAD 9927622221, VARANASI
7408098888

**FOR DETAILS, VISIT US ON
DHYEYAIAS.COM**



DHYEYA IAS®
most trusted since 2003

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 aspirants realize their dreams which is evident from the 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 may 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 individuals 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.

DSDL Prepare yourself from distance

Distance Learning Programme, DSDL, primarily caters the need of 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.