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SEVEN IMPORTANT ISSUES

I. THE GDP FORECASTING MODEL IN ACTION

Why in News?

Recently the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has decided to switch back to Gross Domestic Product (GDP)-based model from Gross Value Added (GVA) measure to provide its estimate of economic activity in the country.

As per the RBI, the Central Statistical Office (CSO) has also begun using GDP as the main measure of economic activities from January 15 this year. While government had switched to the GVA methodology from January 2015, it also changed the base year to 2018 from January.

GDP as a Measure of Economic Growth

The gross domestic product (GDP) is a comprehensive scorecard of the country's economic health. As an aggregate measure of total economic production for a country, GDP represents the market value of all goods and services produced by the economy during the period measured, including personal consumption, government purchases, private inventories, paid-in construction costs and the foreign trade balance (exports are added, imports are subtracted).

GDP consists of the total value of the nation's production and is made up of purchases of domestically produced goods and services by individuals, businesses and the government.

On a quarterly basis, GDP is often presented on an annualized percent basis. Most of the individual

data sets are also given in real terms, meaning that the data is adjusted for price changes and is therefore net of inflation.

Measuring GDP

There are several types of GDP measurements:

- Nominal GDP is the measurement of the raw data.
- Real GDP takes into account the impact of inflation and allows comparisons of economic output from one year to the next and other comparisons over periods of time.
- GDP growth rate is the growth in GDP from quarter to quarter.
- GDP per capita measures GDP per person and is a great way to compare GDP data between various countries.

GDP at Market Prices = GVA (from all sectors) at basic prices + product taxes – product subsidies.

Utility and Implications of GDP Data

- Investors look at the growth rate in GDP as part of their asset allocation decision. They can also compare the GDP growth rates of different countries and make decisions about allocating their assets to stocks in these fast-growing economies.
- The Reserve Bank uses the growth rate and other GDP statistics as part of their decision process

in determining what type of monetary policies to implement. If the growth rate is slowing they might implement an expansionary monetary policy to try to boost the economy. If the growth rate is robust they might use monetary policy to slow things down in an effort to ward off inflation.

- Real GDP is the indicator that says the most about the health of the economy and the advance release will almost always move markets. It is widely followed and discussed by economists, analysts, investors and policy makers.
- The corporate profits and inventory data in the GDP report are a great resource for equity investors, as both categories show total growth during the period; corporate profits data also displays pre-tax profits, operating cash flows and breakdowns for all major sectors of the economy. The biggest downside of this data is its lack of timeliness; investors only get one update per quarter and revisions can be large enough to significantly change the percentage change in GDP.

Advantages of GDP-Model

- GDP is considered the broadest indicator of economic output and growth.
- Real GDP takes inflation into account, allowing for comparisons against other historical time periods.

- There are available official analysis document with each GDP release, which is a great investor tool for analyzing figures and trends and reading highlights of the very lengthy full release.

Limitations with GDP-Model

- The data is not very timely—it is only released quarterly.
- Revisions can change historical figures significantly.

There is almost universal agreement that GDP alone is an imperfect metric for growth and prosperity. The limitations on data across a large number of countries and a long historical time frame meant GDP was the metric that made sense. GDP may fail entirely to capture the complex trade-offs between present and future, work and leisure, 'good' growth and 'bad' growth. Its great virtue, however, remains that it is a single, concrete number. For the time being, we may be stuck with it.

The Gross Value Added (GVA)-Model

GVA is a measure of total output and income in the economy. It provides the rupee value for the amount of goods and services produced in an economy after deducting the cost of inputs and raw materials that have gone into the production of those goods and services. It also gives sector-specific picture like what is the growth in an area, industry or sector of an economy.

At the company level, this metric could be calculated to represent the gross value added by a particular product or service the company currently produces or provides. In other words, the gross value added number reveals how much money the product or service contributed towards meeting the company's fixed costs and potentially creating a bottom-line profit. Once the consumption of fixed capital and the effects of depreciation

are subtracted, the company knows how much net value the operation adds to its bottom line.

On the country level, gross value added is the output of the country less the intermediate consumption, which is the difference between gross output and net output. Gross value added is important because it is used in the calculation of gross domestic product (GDP), which is a key indicator of the state of a nation's total economy.

Measuring GVA

At the macro level, from national accounting perspective, it is the sum of a country's GDP and net of subsidies and taxes in the economy. When measured from the production side, it is a balancing item of the national accounts.

Gross Value Added = GDP + subsidies on products - taxes on products

Where,

GDP = private consumption + gross investment + government investment + government spending + (exports - imports)

Advantages of GVA

- GVA provides better measure of economic activity. Because GDP can record a sharp increase just on the account of increased tax collections due to better compliance/coverage and not necessarily due to increase in output.
- GVA is a better reflection of the productivity of the producers as it excludes the indirect taxes which could distort the production process. However, it can also be argued that GVA is distorted due to presence of subsidies.
- A sector-wise breakdown provided by the GVA measure can better help the policymakers to decide which sectors need incentives/stimulus or vice versa.

GVA v/s GDP

Gross value added (GVA) is defined as the value of output less the value of

intermediate consumption. It is used to measure the output or contribution of a particular sector. When such GVAs from all sectors are added together and adding taxes (product) and reducing subsidies (product), we can get the GDP (at market price). GVA thus shows the production contribution of a particular sector.

Technically,

GDP at Market Prices = GVA (from all sectors) at basic prices + product taxes – product subsidies.

In this context, when GVA from all sectors are added together and necessary adjustment for taxes and subsidies are made, we will get the GDP for the economy. Following points must also be kept in mind:

- GVA is for a particular sector.
- GVA (from all sectors) is for the economy.
- GDP is for the economy.

When the value of taxes on products (less subsidies on products) is added to the gross value added, the sum of gross value added for all resident units gives the value of gross domestic product (GDP). Thus, Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of any nation represents the sum total of gross value added (GVA) in all the sectors of that economy during the said year after adjusting for taxes and subsidies.

Thus, Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of any nation represents the sum total of gross value added (GVA) (i.e., without discounting for capital consumption or depreciation) in all the sectors of that economy during the said year after adjusting for taxes and subsidies. "

Why Switch to GDP- Model?

- As per the RBI, the change was done in order to conform to global best practices and for ease of comparison.
- While GVA gives a picture of the state of economic activity from the

producers' side or the supply side, GDP gives the picture from the consumers' side or the demand perspective.

- Some consider GVA as a better gauge of the economy because a sharp increase in the output, only due to higher tax collections which could be on account of better compliance or coverage, may distort the real output situation.
- More so because this is also the approach followed by multilateral institutions, international analysts and investors and primarily they all stick to this norm because it helps in cross-country analysis and comparing the incomes of different economies.

Though there are sound economic reasons to employ GVA as the supply-

side measure of economic activity, RBI decided to switch to GDP-based methodology for the above-mentioned reasons.

Way Forward

The extraordinary economic expansion of the past 50 years was clearly a success in terms of GDP: the world economy is six times larger and average per capita income has almost tripled. But what about the environmental impact of sustained high economic growth? Or growing concern in the developed world about stagnating median incomes and widening inequality?

A sector-wise breakdown provided by the GVA measure helps policymakers decide which sectors need incentives or stimulus and accordingly formulate sector-specific policies. But GDP is a

key measure when it comes to making cross-country analysis and comparing the incomes of different economies.

Whether growth is measured by GDP or any other metric, its pursuit has real-world implications. Any new conversation needs to include fundamental questions about how the world economy is run and every assumption about growth and the role it plays in people's lives needs to be robustly debated.

General Studies Paper- III

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

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2. MUDRA: FUNDING THE UNFUNDED

Why in News?

Recently PM interacted with Mudra Yojana beneficiaries from across the country through a video bridge and claimed that MUDRA Yojana has opened up new opportunities for youth, women and those who wanted to start or expand their businesses. Of the total loans disbursed, 74% of the beneficiaries were women and 55% belonged to SC/ST and OBC communities. He added the scheme has transformed the lives of the poor.

Introduction

In India many things revolve around mere perceptions, while getting into detail it often paint a different picture. It is a common misperception people have that large industries create more employment, though the truth is that "in India only 1.25 crore people find employment in large industries, whereas small enterprises employ 12 crore people". In India, small businesses

play an important role by providing employment to a large number of people. It is the second largest sector engaging uneducated and unskilled people after agriculture. Further,

millions of low income earning group person aspire to set up small businesses but are unable to start, mostly due to credit limitations. Since banks do not find them eligible for credit loan.

MUDRA (Micro Units Development and Refinance Agency)

Shishu Loan Scheme

This is for starter or small entrepreneur, under this scheme the lending amount will be Rs. 50,000. That means If anyone wants to start a small business then he/she will get a loan cover up to Rs. 50,000/-

The rate of interest charged under this scheme by the banks is around 10% to 12%. And public sectors banks are charging at lower rate.

Kishor Loan Scheme

This scheme is meant for the mid-level business organizations. If you have set your business then you may receive a term loan from Rs. 50,000/- to Rs. 5 lakh from MUDRA for further expansion and growth.

The rate of interest is from 14% to 17% depends on bank to bank.

Tarun Loan Scheme

This is the next level scheme and it for those business /manufacturing organizations who wish to have a large and better (automation) business setup. The loan provided in this scheme will cover a sum of rupees from Rs. 5 lakh to Rs. 10 lakh.

The rate of interest starts at 16%

It should be noted that at least 60% of the credit flows to Shishu Category Units and the balance to Kishor and Tarun Categories are ensured.

After identifying the importance of self-employment people and small business units, government of India launched MUDRA Yojana to address the financial and other constraints.

The MUDRA Scheme

Pradhan Mantri MUDRA Yojana (PMMY) is a scheme launched by the government on April 8, 2015 for providing loans upto Rs.10 lakh to the non-corporate, non-farm small/micro enterprises. These loans are classified as MUDRA loans under PMMY. These loans are given by Commercial Banks, RRBs, Small Finance Banks, Cooperative Banks, MFIs and NBFCs. The scheme is based on the premise that providing institutional finance to micro/small business units will turn these entities into instruments of growth, employment generation, and development.

The funding supports from MUDRA are of four types:

A. Micro Credit Schemes

Micro Credit Scheme is offered mainly through Micro Finance Institutions (MFIs), which deliver the credit upto Rs.1 lakh, for various micro enterprise activities. Although, the mode of delivery may be through groups like (Self Help Groups/Joint Liability Groups) SHGs/JLGs, the loans are given to the individuals for specific income generating micro enterprise activity. The MFIs for availing financial support need to enroll with MUDRA by complying to some of the requirements as notified by MUDRA, from time to time.

B. Refinance Schemes for Banks

Different banks like Commercial Banks, Regional Rural Banks and Scheduled Cooperative Banks are eligible to avail of refinance support from MUDRA for financing micro enterprise activities. The refinance is available for term loan and working

capital loans, upto an amount of 10 lakh per unit. The eligible banks, which have enrolled with MUDRA by complying with the requirements as notified, can avail of refinance from MUDRA for the loan issued under Shishu, Kishor and Tarun categories.

Disbursement through MUDRA Card

MUDRA Card is an innovative product introduced during the year to take care of the frequent and flexible credit needs of small borrowers. The card is issued as a debit card on RuPay platform and can be used for drawl of funds and also repayment as and when there is surplus, so that the loan amount can be managed judiciously. The card was introduced during the year which was adopted by most of the PSBs, RRBs and a few private sector banks too.

C. Women Enterprise Programmes

In order to encourage women entrepreneurs the financing banks /MFIs may consider extending additional facilities, including interest reduction on their loan. At present, MUDRA extends a reduction of 25bps in its interest rates to MFIs / NBFCs, who are providing loans to women entrepreneurs.

D. Securitization of Loan Portfolio

MUDRA also supports banks / NBFCs / MFIs for raising funds for financing micro enterprises by participating in securitization of their loan assets against micro enterprise portfolio, by providing second loss default guarantee, for credit enhancement and also participating in investment of pass through certificate

(PTCs) either as senior or junior investor.

For getting loan under MUDRA Yojana business units or entrepreneurs have to contact their nearest public or private banks or RRBs or other authorized NBFCs/MFIs with their business plan. After sanctioned the loan from MUDRA Yojana, business units/ entrepreneurs will get a MUDRA Card like credit card which can be used for purchasing business raw materials etc. the Card's limit will be 10% of the loan amount subject to maximum Rs. 10,000. Many entrepreneurs or small business units has availed finance under this scheme since its launching.

Nature of assistance

The primary role of MUDRA is to assist the micro and small business unit in the following cases:

- Need based term loan,
- OD limit,
- Composite loan to eligible borrowers for acquiring capital assets,
- Loan for working capital, v. Loan for marketing.
- Loan for technical up gradation for manufacturing firm. Viz. latest machinery, software tools, automation equipment etc.

Significance of PMMY

Growth of MSMEs will contribute to the development of 'Make in India' initiative. Bank like MUDRA will hugely

CATEGORY-WISE ANALYSIS OF PMMY SCHEME

(₹ in crore)						
Category	No. of loan accounts for FY 2016-17	Loan sanctioned 2016-17	Loan sanctioned 2015-16	% change	Share 2015-16	Share 2016-17
Shishu	3,64,97,813 (92)	85,100.74	62,894.96	35.31%	45.76%	47.14%
Kishor	26,63,502 (7)	53,545.14	43,052.55	24.37%	31.32%	29.66%
Tarun	5,39,732 (1)	41,882.66	31,501.76	32.95%	22.92%	23.20%
TOTAL	3,97,01,047 (100)	1,80,528.54	1,37,449.27	31.34%	100.00%	100.00%

benefit to small manufacturing units and self-employed individuals in rural and urban areas. PMMY scheme will contribute to the well-being of the individuals engaged in small scale industries which will positively affect the progress of the economy as a whole. MUDRA creates a vision of formalizing the informal and thereby funding the unfunded. Its role as an apex refiner, providing low-cost finance is likely to be its USP, thereby hoping to fill a yawning gap in India's microfinance space. These measures will greatly increase the confidence of our young educated and skilled workers who are able to become the first generation enterprises and existing small businesses will be able to expand their activities.

Performance of MUDRA Scheme: Report Card

Among three categories, Shishu loans had the highest share in terms of number of accounts and which was followed by Kishor and Tarun. The share of Kishor loans fell by 1.66% in FY 2016-17 compared to FY 2015-16. In contrast, the share of Shishu and Tarun loans went up marginally in FY 2016-17, as compared to FY 2015-16.

The average loan size under PMMY during FY 2016-17 increased to Rs 45,471.98 as against Rs 39,405.28 crore in the previous year. Similarly, the average loan size under Shishu category at Rs 23,317 has been higher than that of Rs 19,411 in the previous year. There is little change in the average loan size under Kishor and Tarun in FY 2016-17 with respect to FY 2015-16.

The participation of women was very high under PMMY during FY 2016-17 also with 73% of the loan accounts and 44% of loan amount sanctioned being the share of women borrowers. The share of women in the Shishu category is at 78%, in terms of number of accounts under Shishu and

it formed 98% of the loan accounts of women borrowers. This is mainly due to the high share of MFIs in Shishu loans, where women are the major beneficiaries of micro finance loan. The corresponding percentage of MUDRA loan account of women was slightly higher at 79% during FY 2015-16.

The participation of the weaker sections of the society in the PMMY programme was at 57%, in terms of loan accounts and 38% in terms of loan amount sanctioned. The share of SC, ST and OBC categories were 18%, 5% and 34%, respectively, in terms of the loan accounts sanctioned. Here again, the major portion of their share belongs to Shishu category. The Minority category of borrowers accounted for 13% and 11% in terms of number of accounts and amount share, respectively in FY 2016-17.

Challenges to MUDRA

It is also said that Banks and MFIs are converting previous loans into MUDRA and that's why government is able to showing large numbers of loans have already been given.

As much as 1.5 per cent of the total disbursement of Mudra loans or Rs 2,955.51 crore have turned into NPAs as on December 30, 2016. With the government aggressively promoting Mudra loans, borrowers have come to see them as their right. This feeling of the right for a loan, coupled with the events of farm loan waiver has set the ground for Mudra loans turning into NPAs.

As government banks provides financial services to more than 70% population of India, the bureaucratic nature of government employees (like lethargic or chalta hai attitude etc.) is among major hurdles in implementation of Mudra scheme.

For most other Mudra loans, there is no collateral for the bank to turn to in the case of non-repayment.

The poor grievance redressal is another major problem where government scheme end to a failure or without success. The government has created new schemes and institutions for special focus on micro business by passing the existing mechanism or institutions, but remains depend on same mechanism of grievance redressal which is universally poor in India.

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Observations

As per the research done by SKOCH Group on MUDRA scheme, MUDRA Yojana has led to the creation of a total number of 54,479,763 jobs. This includes 37,753,217 direct jobs and 16,726,545 indirect jobs. Out of the total jobs created, 47.77 per cent were created under the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Class categories.

The MUDRA Yojana has been found to be the best performing scheme till date undoubtedly even from the perspective of creating entrepreneurship and providing institutional working capital—which small entrepreneurs as well as enterprises in the unorganised sector never had access to. Still, there are certain areas, which need to be taken care of. For instance, approximately 70 percent of disbursements are concentrated in 10 states and efforts must be taken to really penetrate into the 'hard to-reach-areas' since the segment of population, which is targeted has vast untapped potential but needs funding support to match its aspirations. In addition, SKOCH believes that stabilisation of Cloud, Aadhar and Mobile (CAM) is expected to improve MUDRA loans in a big way. One of the areas where MUDRA has been criticized

initially is slow progress of RuPay cards for easy transactions of loan money. This has to be taken care of at present to match the number of accounts and corresponding disbursement of funds. There are laudable efforts in terms of expanding MUDRA's reach by sector and one such effort by the government is formulating a new model under the MUDRA Yojana for providing credit to the handloom sector—benefiting 5 lakh weavers—which can be emulated by other relevant ministries.

From the perspective of social as well as financial inclusion, MUDRA can be termed as a successful initiative. Its focus has been on the under privileged sections of society. Nearly half of the beneficiaries under the scheme belong to underprivileged class. This includes 20 per cent of the SCs, 5 per cent STs and 35 per cent from Other Backward Classes. Over 70 per cent beneficiaries are women. This clearly indicates that the scheme is well targeted.

The MUDRA Yojana has had a very positive impact on the rural economy. This has led to an upswing

in the rural consumption in the past two years. Study reveals that there is around 30-40 per cent increase in rural consumption driven by MUDRA loan scheme. Increase in jobs and improved economic activity has had to a positive socio-economic impact.

Overall, PMMY has been a success so far, in creating new jobs and entrepreneurs across the country and is expected to become one of the fastest vehicles to carry financial and social inclusion supported by policy and technology tools.

Conclusion

Government of India started MUDRA scheme to formally support small scale enterprises so that they can participate in mainstream financial activities and directly contribute to Indian economy. Scheme is well accepted by banking and other financial institutions. With MUDRA, certain things have changed and it is helping more and more people to become selfemployed. If the MUDRA scheme works well in future, then there will be increased market of the domestic/ indigenous products. When

the products born out of the MUDRA scheme will get foreign currency in the country which will improve the stand of the Indian Rupees in the international currency market. The Mudra Scheme is trying its best to improve the status of women and other backward sections of the society especially those who are not well educated and semiskilled. The financial support in the form of various loans encouraging them to start new ventures and thereby empowering them. Its impact in developing a strong economy will be seen in the coming years.

General Studies Paper- II

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

General Studies Paper- III

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



3. PROTECTION OF WOMEN IN INDIA: NEED OF THE HOUR

Why in News?

Recently, Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has created a new Division to address issues of women safety comprehensively. This Division would deal with all aspects of women safety in coordination with relevant ministries, departments and state governments.

Introduction

In order to address offences against women particularly rape in a holistic and time bound manner, the Division would focus to enhance capacity of the existing administrative, investigative, prosecution and judicial machinery, along with appropriate measures for rehabilitation of victims and bringing

attitudinal changes in society. Until now, issues related to women safety at the MHA, were under the Centre-State division that primarily looks after the relationship between the Centre and state governments, the imposition of Governor's rule and other issues related to the President.

The division will collect, collate and analyse data on crime against women and children along with the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), which may also be used later for drawing up a national framework for the safety of women and children.

The new Division will deal with the following subjects:

- Crimes against women, SCs&STs.

- Crimes against children, elderly persons.
- Anti-trafficking Cell.
- Matters relating to prison legislation and prison reforms.
- All schemes under NIRBHAYA fund.
- Crime and Criminal Tracking & Network System (CCTNS)
- National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB)

Issues Related to Women

Over the years, violence against women in various forms has reached epic proportions. As per NCRB data, as many as 34,651 cases of rape were registered in 2015, which increased to 38,947 in 2016. Overall, crimes

against women rose from 3,29,243 in 2015 to 3,38,954 in 2016. A majority of cases categorised as crimes against women were reported under “cruelty by husband or his relatives” (32.6 per cent), followed by “assault on woman with intent to outrage her modesty” (25 per cent), “kidnapping and abduction of women” (19 per cent) and “rape” (11.5 per cent). The highest number of rapes have been reported from Madhya Pradesh (4,882), followed by Uttar Pradesh (4,816) and Maharashtra (4,189) in 2016. Among the cities, Delhi accounted for 33 per cent of the total crimes committed against women and also accounted for 40 percent of rape cases lodged in the metros, according to NCRB.

Sexual Assault

Societally sanctioned rape and sexual assault is not new in India. It has been repeatedly established that Indian men assert a claim over the bodies of women because somehow, families believe that in Indian society a woman exists as an appendage to some man in her life — father, brother, son or husband. If a woman steps across an invisible line (lakshman rekha), where her behaviour is seen as outrageous and unacceptable, then many people still believe that she is opening herself up to sexual assault. Rape and sexual assault are not only occurring in homes, streets and offices, but also take on a unique group dynamic in situations of communal riots where a woman’s body become a site of violence in the battle between caste or religious groups. Sexual violence was a strong component of the rioting in India. It is suspected that some cases have not yet been reported because the women, now in refugee camps, have refused to step forward as they are afraid of losing their honour.

A Mismatch

The process of giving rights with one hand, while the other takes it

away — shows that people resent an expansion of rights for women and go to extreme lengths to make sure that the law of the land has no stronghold in their local communities. The Indian state may make many laws that protect women.

However, none of this means much unless law enforcement agencies actually implement the law. This mismatch between the existence of good laws and their actual implementation is itself a commentary on state capacity in India. The Indian state has failed Indian women by allowing khaps to issue diktats that contradict constitutionally sanctioned rights women have. In ignoring the khap question and not taking them head-on as groups that violate human rights, the Indian state seems to be saying that its job is done when it passes good legislation. Rights may be apparent or self-evident and constitutionally secured; however, they do not automatically implement themselves.

Women in Rural India

Khaps in rural India have been asserting much power over the lives of people in rural India, the weakest of whom are women of all communities. These clan-based khap panchayats and sabhas have had a long history in India. Khaps are unconstitutional and informal law-giving bodies that have captured much rural terrain in north and eastern India. Khaps have sanctioned several honour killings and have suggested a level of misogyny that is completely at odds with what the leading courts in the country are articulating. For instance, in the state of Haryana, there are several local khaps. They imposed dress codes on women and one even said that girls are “agents who pollute society and bring a bad name to the community.” For these bodies, policing women is easy. In rural India, police presence is

low and many local notables have links with local law enforcement agents. These notables are also involved in the functioning of khaps. So, they are reasonably confident that their diktats policing women’s behaviour will not be challenged. The Indian state has been quite reticent in initiating any action against khaps even though it is apparent that khap diktats are blatantly undercutting women’s rights and thereby contradicting the verdicts of the highest constitutional law-making bodies.

Incarcerated Women

In most parts of the world, including India, there are prisons exclusively for women. Tamil Nadu has some, with one recent estimate putting their current occupancy at 25%. Creches for children up to the age of 3 and nurseries for children up to 6 years are available. Older children are entrusted to relatives or voluntary organisations. There are no reliable reports on how well these are run. There are now three challenges for criminal justice policy makers. That a conscious effort should be made to reduce female incarceration is the general consensus. However, there is a general lack of will arising from an assessment that any radical departure from the law and practices is not going to earn votes for a government. It is sad that there is such a lack of empathy despite research that women offenders are themselves victims of crime before they turn to crime. Therefore, there is a clear case for the award of community service to those women who have been jailed for non-violent offences.

The second challenge is on protecting the children of women prisoners. The one thing common is that most of them do not have physical and emotional support. Many are single parent children, usually with their mothers. This is one more reason why many nations should adopt

community service for female convicts who have had no record of violence. It would be an entirely different matter if such a convict commits an offence again after community service. In such cases she would be on a par with a male recidivist.

The final challenge is in protecting women inmates from sexual/non-sexual violence and their forceful initiation into substance abuse while in custody. An all-female warden system is difficult as a small complement of male security staff is needed despite its attendant consequences. In this, technology can play a role.

Government Initiatives

Recently, an ordinance providing the death penalty for rapists of girls below 12 years of age and other stringent penal provisions for rape has been promulgated in the aftermath of horrific crimes in Kathua and Unnao. The Criminal Law (Amendment) Ordinance, 2018 will amend the Indian Penal Code, 1860 (IPC), the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973, (Cr.Pc), with consequential amendments in the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences, 2012 (POSCO) and the Indian Evidence Act 1872.

In order to effectively implement amendments made in criminal law, the Cabinet has also approved following measures:

- **Setting up of Fast Track Special Courts:** A centrally funded scheme will be launched to set up fast-track special courts to exclusively decide rape cases and to strengthen such courts where they already exist. Such a scheme will cover strengthening of the physical infrastructure and manpower for Fast Track Special Courts, etc. in consultation with the High Courts and state governments concerned.
- **Strengthening of the Prosecution Machinery:** On similar lines, the prosecution machinery in states will

be strengthened and a dedicated capacity will be created for effective and timely prosecution of the cases for the Fast Track Special Courts, by sanction of additional posts for public prosecutors, office infrastructure and supporting manpower.

- **Improving the Quality of Investigation:** The rate of conviction in cases of rape depends crucially on the quality of evidence collected by the investigating agencies. Adequate provision of special forensic kits for rape cases should be made in all police stations as well as hospitals where such medico-legal cases are handled to improve the quality of forensic evidence and thereby strengthen the case of the prosecution. Dedicated and trained manpower will be provided for investigation of sexual offences in a time bound manner.
- **Special Forensic Laboratories:** One or more specialized forensic laboratories adequately staffed and equipped, will be set in each state to exclusively deal with the forensic needs of the rape cases, in an efficient and time bound manner.

The government would also create a national mission for the safety of women, with participation of stakeholder ministries and departments who would undertake specified actions. The national mission for safety of women would result in following:

- For giving a credible response to emerging situation of crimes against women, especially minor girls.
- Focus on time bound implementation of measures with tangible impact on women safety.
- Improved coordination by stakeholder departments such as justice, school education, health and legal affairs.

- Improved monitoring at mission level of the time bound prosecution and investigation in cases of rape and other matters related to women safety.

Way Forward

Women safety is a big social issue which needs to be solved urgently by the effort of all. It is inhibiting the growth and development of the country and most importantly hurting the half population of the country in all aspects (physically, mentally, and socially). Despite of formation of various effective rules and regulations by the Indian government to handle and control the crimes against women, the number and frequency of crimes against women are increasing day by day. Women status in the country has been more offensive and dreadful in the last few years. It has decreased the confidence level of women for safety in their own country. Women are in doubtful condition for their safety and have fear while going anywhere else outside their home (office, market, etc).

As far as women in jail are concerned a jail term should be the last resort. Once detained, a woman prisoner not only deserves compassion but should also be given standards of facilities more liberal than for men. We may have to go a step further if a prisoner has children living with her in prison. It is the fundamental duty of the state to do everything possible to see to their physical and emotional needs.

General Studies Paper- II

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



4. INDIA-SOUTHEAST ASIA RELATIONS: ENHANCING MUTUAL BENEFITS

Why in News?

Prime Minister recently concluded his three-nation, five-day visit to Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore. The PM also went to Clifford Pier and unveiled a plaque to commemorate the immersion of Mahatma Gandhi's ashes in the country's waters. This was significant as in 1948, Mahatma Gandhi's ashes had been sent to various parts of India and the world, including Singapore.

While addressing the parties at Shangri-La Dialogue the PM stressed on national security and highlighted that India's relationship with China is crucial for the future of Asia.

Background of India's Relations with the Three Nations

Indonesia

India and Indonesia have shared two millennia of close cultural and commercial contacts. The Hindu, Buddhist and later Muslim faith travelled to Indonesia from the shores of India. The Indonesian folk art and dramas are based on stories from the great epics of Ramayana and Mahabharata. The shared culture, colonial history and post-independence goals of political sovereignty, economic self-sufficiency and independent foreign policy have unifying effect on the bilateral relations.

During the two country's respective struggles for independence, the national leaderships of India and Indonesia led by Jawaharlal Nehru and President Sukarno collaborated closely in supporting the cause of independence of Asian and African countries and later laid the foundation of the Non-Aligned Movement at the Asian-African Conference held in Bandung in 1955. Since the adoption

of India's 'Look East Policy' in 1991, there has been a rapid development of bilateral relations in political, security, defence, commercial and cultural fields. The current government wants to further deepen the relationship with East Asia and has therefore rightly titled its policy as "Act East".

Malaysia

India established diplomatic relations with the Federation of Malaya (predecessor state of Malaysia) in 1957 immediately on Malaysia's independence. The two countries enjoyed a strong relationship in the 1960s as a result of the personal friendship between Prime Ministers Nehru and Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra. The relations continued on an upward trajectory. PM Abdullah Badawi (2004 - 2009) took this relationship forward with some important initiatives. This trend has been strongly re-enforced by the former prime minister, Dato' Sri Mohd. Najib Tun Abdul Razak and current Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad who was sworn in as Malaysia's seventh prime minister in May this year after a stunning election comeback, defeating the coalition that has ruled the nation for six decades since independence from Britain.

Economic and commercial relations are the mainstay of the bilateral partnership. A bilateral Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA) covering goods, services and investment has come into effect from 1 July 2011. Malaysia is our third largest trading partner in ASEAN besides Indonesia and Singapore. India is the largest trading partner for Malaysia from among the countries of the South Asia, excluding Singapore and China.

Marking 60 years of bilateral diplomatic relations, PM Najib paid

a state visit to India from 30 March-4 April 2017. PM Najib and PM Shri Narendra Modi held bilateral talk which covered all aspects of India-Malaysia relations and global issues of mutual concern. While addressing the press, the two leaders noted that the relations between the two countries were at a "historic high" and addressed various aspects of our multi-faceted relations.

Singapore

The close ties between India and Singapore have a history rooted in strong commercial, cultural and people-to-people links. India's connection with Singapore dates back to the Cholas. The more modern relationship is attributed to Sir Stamford Raffles who, in 1819, established a trading station in Singapore on the route of the Straits of Malacca which became a colony under British India, governed from Calcutta (1830-1867). The colonial connection is reflected in a similarity of institutions and practices, usage of English and the presence of a large Indian community.

India was one of the first countries to recognize Singapore in 1965. India's economic reforms in 1990s and the Look East Policy provided opportunities to recreate a new framework for cooperation, which included the Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA) of 2005. This robust relationship was elevated to a Strategic Partnership during the visit of Prime Minister Modi in November 2015 who signed a Joint Declaration on a Strategic Partnership with Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations.

India - Singapore relations are based on shared values and approaches, economic opportunities and convergence of interests on key

issues. Both countries have a full calendar of more than 20 bilateral mechanisms, dialogues and exercises, many of which take place annually.

During the Recent Visit

- India signed an agreement with Indonesia to develop a port in the city of Sabang (Northern Tip of Sumatra, Indonesia) that would overlook the Western entrance to the Strait of Malacca, one of the world's busiest waterways and agreed a pact with Singapore on logistical support for naval ships, submarines and military aircraft during visits.
- The Prime Minister of India also underlined the need to have equal access as a right under international law to the use of common spaces on sea and in the air that would require freedom of navigation, unimpeded commerce and peaceful settlement of disputes in accordance with international law. The PM's statement came amidst China flexing its military muscles in the South and East China seas.
- The Prime Minister of India visited the National Orchid Garden of Singapore where an orchid was named after him. PM also paid visits to Singapore's oldest Hindu temple Sri Mariamman, Chulia mosque in Chinatown and Buddha Tooth Relic Temple and Museum.
- During the bilateral engagement with the leaders of Indonesia and Singapore the Prime Minister of India laid the foundation for maritime cooperation with key littoral states that connect the Indian Ocean to the Pacific. Securing the Eastern Indian Ocean in partnership with Southeast Asian littorals like Singapore, Indonesia and Thailand could be one of the important near-term Indian contributions to peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific.

- The PM declared that Southeast Asia is the geographic core of the Indo-Pacific and that the ASEAN must remain central to the construction of any architecture for the Indo-Pacific. The PM also sought to dispel the misperception among the Southeast Asian partners that India's support for the Indo-Pacific and the participation in the Quad would undermine the ASEAN.
- An important announcement was that India plans to conduct trilateral exercises in the near future with Singapore and other ASEAN nations.
- India has also begun to look beyond joint naval exercises towards more substantive maritime cooperation. During Modi's talks with Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong, the two sides formalised the agreement on mutual logistics support between the two navies that was signed last November.
- In Jakarta, Modi and the Indonesian president Joko Widodo unveiled a document on a shared vision for the Indo-Pacific that will facilitate exchanges between the two coast guards, maritime intelligence sharing, collaboration on disaster relief operations and joint production of weapons. The two sides also agreed on Delhi's participation in the development of port infrastructure in Sumatra and promoting greater connectivity between it and the Andaman and Nicobar Island chain.

Regular trilateral and plurilateral exercises in the Andaman Sea and the Malacca Straits between India and the Southeast Asian nations, greater interoperability between their naval forces and the joint development of infrastructure across this vital maritime estate will help develop a security architecture for the eastern Indian Ocean that is at the heart of the Indo-Pacific.

Significance of the Visit

The Indo-Pacific as a geopolitical construct is growing in meaning and importance. That is one major takeaway from this year's Shangri La Dialogue, the annual Asian security conclave in Singapore which was organised by the London-based International Institute of Strategic Studies. While the US strongly defended the proposition that India is vital to the stabilisation of the Indo-Pacific, Prime Minister of India articulated in great detail Delhi's own understanding of the new geography in his keynote speech.

The Prime Minister told that India is willing to work with the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) to promote a rules-based order in the Indo-Pacific region. To which several delegates, including U.S. Defense Secretary General, voiced support while China reacted to the event differently.

Reactions and Support

The term "Indo-Pacific" has grown in usage across diplomatic and security circles in the United States, Australia, India and Japan in recent years, shorthand for a broader and democratic-led region in place of "Asia-Pacific", which according to some views places China too firmly at the centre.

While endorsing India's growing regional stature, the U.S. military's Pacific Command in Hawaii formally changed its name to the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command in a ceremony held in May 2018.

Despite an expression of friendship between China and India and PM's comments about the strong relations between them, Beijing gave a distinctly cool response to India's strategy. In line with the cold response, according to Chinese Media, "if India really seeks military access to the strategic island of Sabang, it might wrongfully entrap itself into a strategic competition with

China and eventually burn its own fingers." This response from Chinese press says a lot about China's view on India's efforts under Act East Policy.

Assertive India?

While it was officially accepted that there was a strong element of self-interest in New Delhi's efforts to secure open access to the Malacca Strait as it carries about 60 percent of its foreign trade. But at the same time India's intended footprint looks to be of wider meaning. Recently, Indian warships staged exercises with the Vietnamese navy for the first time in the South China Sea (which is claimed almost wholly by China). Vietnamese submariners are trained in India, while the two sides have significantly increased intelligence sharing and are exploring advanced weapons sales.

In the West of Indian Ocean, India signed an agreement for access to the port of Duqm on Oman's southern coast through which the Indian navy will be able to use the port for logistics and support, allowing it to sustain long-term operations in the western Indian Ocean. Also, India finalised a logistics exchange arrangement with France, earlier this year under which it

can use French military facilities in the Indian Ocean.

Conclusion

The Prime Minister of India was convinced quite early in his prime ministerial tenure that India must play a larger role in both the Indian and Pacific Oceans. At Shangri La, the PM called the Indo-Pacific "a natural region" that stretches from the east coast of Africa to the west coast of America. He called the building of a "stable, secure and prosperous Indo-Pacific Region" an "important pillar" of India's partnership with the United States. At the same time, the PM emphasised that India's conception of Indo-Pacific is not directed against any other nation.

There is some pressure (in ASEAN) for diversification of security relationships, taking insurances. In such scenario an active India then actually fits in. But although India has started strongly, it is not clear how well its strategy would be sustained. As implementation has always been a major challenge for India. The Prime Minister is working to improve the capacity of Delhi to do things outside borders. There's been some advance

but that is a structural challenge to tackle. Prime Minister of India made it clear that the region can prosper if countries do not return to the age of great power rivalries.

While stressing that India's friendships are not alliances of containment he assured that India's own engagement in the Indo-Pacific Region - from the shores of Africa to that of the Americas - will be inclusive. In conclusion, India will engage with the world in peace, with respect, through dialogue and absolute commitment to international law. India will promote a democratic and rules-based international order, in which all nations, small and large, thrive as equal and sovereign.

General Studies Paper- II

Topic: India and its neighborhood relations.

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

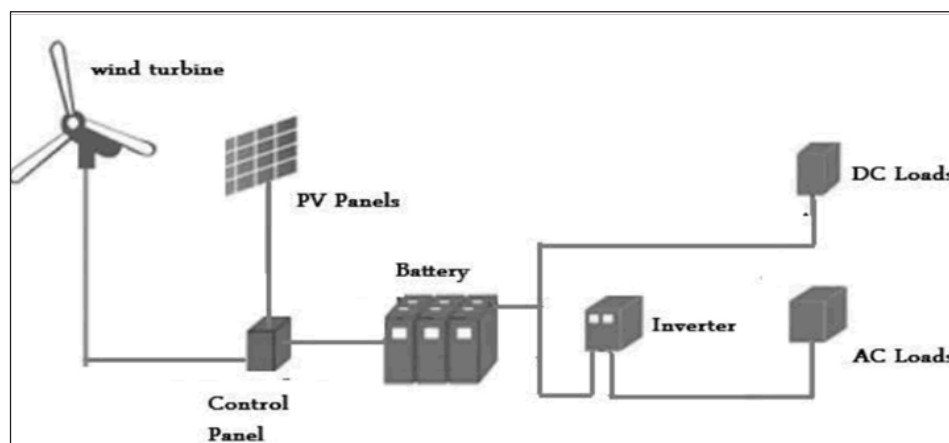
Topic: Effect of policies and politics of developed and developing countries on India's interests, Indian diaspora.

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5. WIND ENERGY: MEETING INDIA'S ENERGY NEED

Why in News?

Recently, with the intention of connecting the local Taiwanese companies with international firms, Neoventure International held Taiwan Offshore Wind Energy Summit 2018 in Taipei on May 15-16, 2018. TOWES 2018 was dedicated to building a networking and match-making platform for all concerned industrial players to share the knowledge and to expand business contacts in this emerging market. What TOWES 2018 provide was not only the topical sessions to update the market intelligence, but also to get connected with key project developers



and potential technology partners in Taiwan.

India is also looking forward in this direction and has already formulated

"National Wind-Solar Hybrid Policy". This is needed to synergise the efforts for the renewable energy generation and to optimise the locations usage

and to increase the efficiency in the proper exploitation of resources. In order to reduce the dependence on oil and fossil fuels and to serve the ever increasing energy demand of the hungry developing economy, such hybridisation technique is not just quintessential but also serves as the model for the integration of other technologies to serve the mankind.

Solar-wind Hybrid Renewable Energy System

India's Ministry of New & Renewable Energy has released its 'National Wind-Solar Hybrid Policy' seeking to encourage hybridisation of projects due to the benefits they offer for grid integration.

A draft policy was first issued in June 2016 and is finalised after consultation with stakeholders. Studies have shown that combining wind and solar helps to minimise the variability of power output from such technologies and thereby reduce the threats posed to grid security and stability. Moreover, wind and solar resource maps have discovered significant areas in India where both solar and wind have a high to moderate potential.

Hybrid systems involves solar Photovoltaic PV systems and wind turbine generators being configured at the same point of connection. In order to be classed as 'hybrid', the rated power capacity of one source of energy must be at least 25% of the rated power capacity of the other resource.

Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) said that in areas of good wind power density, the size of solar PV added can be relatively smaller. Whereas, the amount of solar should be relatively higher if the wind power density is moderate or lower.

Adding battery storage to such projects has also been deemed an appropriate method of further smoothening the power output.

The new policy aims to provide a framework for large-scale hybrids, while also encouraging new technologies and methods to carry out hybridisation. It is also encouraging the procurement of hybrid power through transparent bidding processes, which could take into account capacity delivered at grid interface point, effective capacity utilisation factor (CUF) and the unit price of electricity.

Power generated from hybrids may be used for:

- Captive purpose.
- Sale to third-party through open access.
- Sale to Discoms either at tariff determined by the respective State Electricity Regulatory Commissions (SERC) or at tariff discovered through a transparent bidding process.
- Sale to Discoms at average power purchase cost (APPC) under Renewable Energy Certificate (REC) mechanism and avail RECs.

Meeting India's Need

The country's energy mix now boasts a share of 14-15% of renewable energy in terms of installed capacity, contributing about 5% to the electricity generation mix. Wind power accounts for 70% of this renewable installed capacity. The Indian wind energy sector has an installed capacity of 20 GW (as on 31.5.2013). In terms of wind power installed capacity, India is ranked 5th in the world and is a considered a

major player in the global wind energy market.

The potential is far from exhausted. The Centre for Wind Energy Technology has re-assessed that with the current level of technology, the 'on-shore' potential for utilization of wind energy for electricity generation is of the order of 102000 MW at 80 meters hub-height, up from the earlier estimate of 49,000 MW. The unexploited resource availability has the potential to sustain the growth of wind energy sector in India in the years to come. The states with highest wind power concentration are Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh.

Growing concern for the environmental degradation has led to the world's interest in renewable energy resources. Wind is commercially and operationally the most viable renewable energy resource and accordingly, emerging as one of the largest source in terms of the renewable energy sector. Today, the Indian market is emerging as one of the major manufacturing hubs for wind turbines in Asia.

According to Global Wind Energy Council (GWEC), India could have 89 GW of installed wind capacity by 2020 up from 19GW at present, helping to fight a growing power shortage in the country. Wind energy will witness abundant opportunities in the developing economies such as India, where the power supply situation and

Renewable Energy Target (2022)			
Solar Energy			
	Ultra Mega Park Solar Projects	40 GW	
	Rooftop Solar Projects	40 GW	
	Utility Scale Solar Projects	20 GW	
	Total Solar Target		100 GW
Wind Energy	60 GW		
Bio Mass	10 GW		
Small Hydel Projects	5 GW		
Total Renewable Energy Target			175 GW

infrastructure development efforts provide a huge market for active investment.

Advantages of Wind Power

- Wind energy is a clean fuel source.
- Wind power does not use water, unlike conventional electricity sources.
- Wind is a domestic source of energy.
- Wind power is inexhaustible.
- Wind power is cost-effective.
- Wind turbines can be built on existing farms or ranches.
- Wind energy is an emerging sector with promising returns and jobs.

Challenges of Wind Power

- Wind power must compete with conventional generation sources on a setup cost basis.
- Good wind sites are often located in remote locations, far from cities where the electricity is needed.
- Turbines might cause noise and change the view shed.
- Though wind turbines harm wildlife less than some conventional sources of electricity, turbine blades could damage local wildlife.
- Wind energy requires huge tracts of land.

Recent Initiative

National Wind-Solar Hybrid Policy: India

India has set an ambitious target of reaching 175 GW of installed capacity from renewable energy sources by the year 2022, which includes 100 GW of solar and 60 GW of wind power capacity. Various policy initiatives have been taken to achieve this target. At the end of 2017-18 the total renewable power installed capacity in the country was almost 70 GW.

Studies revealed that in India solar and wind resources are complementary to each other and hybridization of

these two technologies would help in minimizing the variability apart from optimally utilizing the infrastructure including land and transmission system. Superimposition of wind and solar resource maps shows that there are large areas where both wind and solar have high to moderate potential.

Aims and Objective

The main objective of the policy is to provide a framework for promotion of large grid connected wind-solar PV hybrid system for optimal and efficient utilization of transmission infrastructure and land, reducing the variability in renewable power generation and achieving better grid stability.

Policy also aims to encourage new technologies, methods and way outs involving combined operation of wind and solar PV plants.

Wind-Solar Hybrid Systems

Under the category of wind-solar hybrid power plants, Wind Turbine Generators (WTGs) and Solar PV systems will be configured to operate at the same point of grid connection. There can be different approaches towards integrating wind and solar depending upon the size of each of the source integrated and the technology type. However, a wind-solar plant will be recognized as hybrid plant if the rated power capacity of one resource is at least 25% of the rated power capacity of other resource.

Significance of the Policy

National Wind-Solar Hybrid Policy will help the country meet the target of 175 Gw renewable energy capacity by 2022 (up from 69 Gw now), by cutting generation costs by a quarter.

The cost reduction would be enabled by nearly doubling the generation at a nominal cost, thanks to reduced variability of output through optimal utilisation of assets, where

wind turbines and solar systems will be configured at the same grid connection points.

Industry experts believe with the same evacuation infrastructure — transmission lines and substations — developers can set up additional wind and solar sites at the same locations, increasing the generation efficiency with the average plant load factor (PLF) rising to 40% from 22%.

Way Forward

The demand for electricity is increasing day by day, which cannot be fulfilled by non-renewable energy sources alone. Renewable energy sources such as solar and wind are omnipresent and environmental friendly. The renewable energy sources are emerging options to fulfill the energy demand, but unreliable due to the stochastic nature of their occurrence. Hybrid renewable energy system (HRES) combines two or more renewable energy sources like wind turbine and solar system.

On technology front, the policy provides for the integration of both the energy sources i.e. wind and solar at Alternating Current (AC) as well as Direct Current (DC) level. The policy also provides for flexibility in the share of wind and solar components in the hybrid project. This is subject to the condition that rated power capacity of one resource should be at least 25 per cent of the rated power capacity of other resource for it to be recognised hybrid project.

With significant capacity additions in renewables in recent years and with hybrid policy aiming at better utilisation of resources, it is envisaged that the hybrid policy will open-up a new area for availability of renewable power at competitive prices along with reduced variability.

General Studies Paper- III

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



6. THE MENACE OF CYBERBULLYING

Why in News?

Online abuse, trolling and cyber bullying are rampant in cyberspace. Reports suggest that 76 per cent of women under age 30 have faced some form of online abuse or harassment. A cyberbullying incident from a Gurgaon school where a Class 8 student threatened to rape a teacher and harm her daughter in an Instagram post had caused much concern and consternation among parents and schools, prompting a rethink of policies dealing with such behaviour.

Introduction

Children are digital natives while my generation is made of digital migrants. Unlike our children, we were introduced to the world of the internet and easy access to it through our smartphones after years of having experienced life. We had seen the good and the bad of the world and were then introduced to digital tools and the internet. It is probably for that reason that many in our generation and generations before us feel apprehensive about the "intrusion" of technology in almost all our day-to-day activities. "Online trolling is a reflection of the ailments plaguing our society. Limiting them requires a mind-set change more than anything else. There is a huge gender gap in the internet population, one big reason for this is the insensitive behavior towards women users.

Social media is full of incidents of online abuse, trolling and cyber bullying on a daily basis. In the last few years, the number of abusive and unwanted intruders and trolls has only increased on social media and people are losing their right to express themselves freely or fear the abusive counter. In other words, virtual public spaces are often spaces that are antisocial, violent,

intimidating, unfriendly, untrustworthy and unsafe. There is a need to tackle this issue sensitively. Many of these women never report such incidents out of societal fear. It is crucial that when faced with harassment of this kind, people are aware of the options available to them to counter this abuse.

According to a recent report released by UNICEF, titled The State of the World's Children 2017: Children in a Digital World—one in three internet users worldwide is a child. A growing body of evidence indicates that children are accessing the internet at increasingly younger ages. The same report states that youth (ages 15-24) are the most connected age group. Worldwide, 71% of people in the age group of 15-24 are online compared with 48% of the total population online. Yet, one-third of the world's youth (or 346 million persons) are not online, exacerbating inequities and reducing children's ability to participate in an increasingly digital economy. In India, the percentage of those online is even more skewed. It's not just children and youth who are missing out on opportunities available online but also rural and marginalized groups. Women, too, are largely excluded from Digital India. Only 29% of all internet users in India are females, thanks to deep roots of patriarchy that pose social and economic challenges to women when it comes to mobile ownership and access to the internet.

Women Act against Trolls (WAAT), provides a central repository of information one must be equipped with to report online abuse. The web page compiles information about cybercrime cells in India, cybercrime laws in the country, digital security tool kits, resources to help those facing cyber bullying and a discussion board where people can share their stories and find support through our friends of WAAT.

WAAT: Women Act Against Trolls (WAAT) is an initiative by Digital Empowerment Foundation and OLX Web Aware to build a community to fight back against trolls, cyber bullies and online stalkers. We believe that in order to combat online harassment, which is rampant and insidious, we need to make a collective effort. And anybody going through harassment needs to be armed with the right information in order to fight back.

Digital Empowerment Foundation (DEF): For 15 years, DEF has been using digital tools to bring rural communities out of information darkness and equipping them with skills to thrive. As part of its internet rights programme, it has been fighting to preserve and protect civil liberties online.

OLX WebAware: WebAware is an online safety initiative of OLX India. It aims to raise awareness among users about measures to keep oneself safe while transacting online. Through this initiative, OLX is reaching out to its users to communicate its safety features and user guidelines. OLX WebAware is an attempt to educate and help create a safer online experience for buyers and sellers on the platform.

What Is Cyberbullying?

Cyberbullying happens when someone threatens, harasses or embarrasses the victim using technology by digital device. Cyberbullying is done by teens and adolescents. There have been cyberbullying laws enacted in India to punish the offenders and protect the victims and they are known as Anti bullying laws. Other than these laws one must also take certain steps to deal with bullies. Cyber bullying can be in different forms, for example:

- Posting any kind of humiliating content of the victim.
- Hacking the victim's account.
- Sending or posting vulgar messages online.
- Threatening to commit acts of violence.
- Stalking by means of calls, messages, etc..
- Threats of child pornography.

The bar association of India gave its definition as, "Bullying means systematically and chronically inflicting physical hurt or psychological distress on one or more students or employees. It is further defined as unwanted and repeated written, verbal, or physical behaviour, including any threatening, insulting, or dehumanizing gesture, by a student or adult, that is severe or pervasive enough to create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment; cause discomfort or humiliation; or unreasonably interfere with the individual's school performance or participation; and may involve but is not limited to: teasing, social exclusion, threat, intimidation, stalking, physical violence, theft, sexual, religious, or racial harassment, public humiliation, or destruction of property.

Facts of Cyber bullying

Statistics of cyber bullying which helps in discovering that bullying in schools kids is at the majority. To understand what is cyber bullying and how to stop bullying first let's get to know some facts of the cyber bullying :

- 1 in 4 kids have been bullied more than once and in total 43% of the kids have fallen prey to cyber bullying or anti bullying.
- India ranks at number 3 in the list of online bullying cases as per the

survey conducted by Microsoft in 2012 in 25 countries.

- 70% of the cyber bullying or anti bullying activities happen over Facebook.
- Usage of mobile phones by almost 80% of the teens makes it a common and most popular medium for anti-bullying.
- It has been believed by the 81% of youth that getting away with online bullying is easy as compared to traditional bullying.
- 90% of teens agree that have ignored the cyber bullying while some of the youth has taken a step to stop bullying.
- Girls are more preferred victims of cyber bullying as compared to boys.
- Victims of cyber bullying or anti bullying are 2 to 9 times more prone to committing suicide.

Cyber Bullying Laws in India

Cyber bullying is a practice that is causing hue and cry in the whole legal system but till date there are no special legislation to deal with cyberbullying in India. It is a new phenomenon which has arisen in this internet age. In India in the case of Vishaka v. State of Rajasthan, the Supreme first time dealt with issue of bullying and it laid down certain guidelines for the protection of woman employees from sexual harassment. But it only dealt with bullying against men at workplaces. Further, there is a need to consider different types of bullying at workplaces. In the West, bullying at workplace is recognized as violence in workplaces. Bullying can be in different subtle forms like invalid criticism, exclusion, false allegations, constant bantering, humiliation or unnecessary written warnings. The most vulnerable to this plight are the subordinates in offices. This is a scenario in private as well as public sector. Most of the

bullying is done by seniors, hierarchy plays a key role.

Raghavan Committee Report: This report came out in 2007 listing out various recommendations to control ragging and bullying in schools and colleges. It is interesting to know that this report categorised ragging as an abuse of human rights. Following this report, various laws and regulations have been issued to curb this menace. There is no specific legislation which provides for the specific cyber bullying laws in India however provisions such as Section 67 of the Information Technology Act deals with cyber bullying in a way. Section 67 of the act prescribes punishment for publishing or transmitting obscene material in electronic form for a term which may extend to five years and also with fine which may extend to ten lakh rupees. Other than Section 67 of the IT Act following are the provisions of the cyber bullying laws in India :

- **Section 507 IPC-** The section states that if anyone receives criminal intimidation by way of an anonymous communication then the person giving threats shall be punished with imprisonment upto two years. By virtue of word anonymous the offence of anti bullying and cyber bullying is included in this section.
- **Section 66 E of IT Act-** The section prescribes punishment for violation of privacy. The section states that any person who intentionally violates the privacy by transmitting, capturing or publishing private pictures of other shall be punished with upto three years imprisonment or fine upto three lakhs.

Internationally, the law framed by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Therefore, it is vital that the voices of children and young people are heard and actively embedded in policy and practice, including the development of statutory guidance on the addressing bullying in schools. In this way, the participation

CYBERBULLYING

Harassing someone directly



Email and text / SMS / instant messaging are favorites among bullies. Posting rumors about someone on a social network or a blog is also a common attack.

Impersonating someone



Bullies create an online identity similar to the victim's, or they steal the victim's credentials. They use these accounts to do things that are meant to damage the victim's reputation.

Photographs & video



Unguarded and private moments are used by the cyberbully to harass and embarrass the victim. These photos and videos are posted online or shared widely via SMS.

rights of children are upheld and our responses are informed by their experiences. To work towards a society where children and young people can live free and feel safe from bullying.

Anti-Bullying Laws in India for Schools and Colleges

The Ministry of Women and Child Development has suggested for inclusion of suitable content in the Course about cyber laws, internet ethics, cyber safety measures, what all to avoid online and why, as well as psychosocial impact of internet addiction. National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) has developed Information and Communication Technology (ICT) curriculum for teachers and students in school education. As part of this Curriculum, social and ethical issues related to use of internet have been dealt with. The focus of the curriculum is on safe and secure use of web space by students and teachers. NCERT has also prepared guidelines in the form of do's and don'ts for its use in school education system. Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) has also developed guidelines on cyber safety and security and shared them with schools affiliated to it across the country.

Anti-Bullying Committees: The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) ordered the setting up of Anti-Bullying Committees in 2015, by issuing guidelines for prevention of bullying and ragging in schools. Various methods to deal with this menace have been suggested including warnings, suspension and in extreme cases, rustication/expulsion of the bullies. This circular suggests that anti-bullying committees be set up in schools.

Counsellors: The circular suggests that counsellors be engaged in schools where students have complained of bullying. If you receive complaints of bullying from your child or hear of instances of bullying in your child's school, you can propose that the school engages a trained counsellor to deal with these issues.

Parent-Teacher-Student Meetings:

It is important to note that the circular recognises the importance of family background and the influence of parents in cases of bullying. Where your child has complained of bullying in school and even in instances where you have received complaints about your child, it is important that you go and speak to the teachers and parents of other children as a first step. This may make all the difference in your child's school life and future.

Prevent Cyberbullying

A child may be involved in cyberbullying in several ways. A child can be bullied, bully others, or witness bullying. Parents, teachers and other adults may not be aware of all the digital media and apps that a child is using. The more digital platforms that a child uses, the more opportunities there are for being exposed to potential cyberbullying. With rising concerns over cyberbullying, parents should play a more proactive role in their children's online lives. They should actively monitor their child's online experience until they get a sense of judgement and this is more important than ever.

The ReThink App: This is an app developed by an American-Indian teenager in an effort to curb cyberbullying. In many cases, children or adolescents unthinkingly send out hurtful and bullying messages to their peers. This app recognises certain word patterns and prompts the user to rethink sending out the message. Its introduction has shown a drop in cyber-bullying cases. It may be a good idea to install this app in your children's electronic devices so that they are prompted to watch their words as a matter of course.

Prevention is always better than cure. Difficult emotions such as humiliation, embarrassment and social isolation that result from bullying form negative beliefs in the child. This negative loop can carry on into adult life, manifesting in academic under-

performance, interpersonal problems, work-related performance issues and difficulties in personal relationships. So, it is always better to prevent bullying from happening.

Way Ahead

Bullying is culturally unacceptable and where every child and young person is safe and feels safe from bullying and every child and young person's diversity should be preserved. The role of government is to develop responsive and restorative anti-bullying ethos. Bullying in any form is wrong and should not be tolerated and that any environment that encourages bullying or shows indifference to prejudice and discrimination is unacceptable. We should respect and celebrate diversity in our children, young people and society in general and our work should be inclusive of all. Children and young people should be empowered to actively participate in decisions that affect them. The needs of children and young people are best served by organisations working together, understanding each other strengths and avoiding duplication of effort.

Bullying is a serious problem that can dramatically affect the ability of students to progress academically and socially. A comprehensive intervention plan that involves all students, parents, and school staff is required to ensure that all students can learn in a safe and fear-free environment. Our children deserve to be able to learn in a safe and secure learning environment. It is up to all educators to provide this for them. Bullying and harassment thrive on silence and educators and parents have the strength and ability to make a difference.

General Studies Paper- II

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



7. INDIA'S RACE TO CONSERVE ENVIRONMENT

Why in News?

The Indian government hosted 45th World Environment Day-2018 at New Delhi in collaboration with UN Environment and also launched a joint World Environment Day Report: "Single-use Plastics: A roadmap for Sustainability".

India is among the bottom five countries on the Environmental Performance Index-2018, plummeting 36 points from 141 in 2016, according to a biennial report by Yale and Columbia Universities along with the World Economic Forum. While India is at the bottom of the list in the environmental health category, it ranks 178 out of 180 as far as air quality is concerned. Its overall low ranking — 177 among 180 countries — was linked to poor performance in the environment health policy and deaths due to air pollution categories.

Introduction

Around the world, one million plastic drinking bottles are purchased every minute, while up to 5 trillion single-uses plastic bags are used worldwide every year. In total, half of all plastic produced is designed to be used only once — and then thrown away. Plastic has been highlighted as one of the biggest environmental threats facing the world by the UN in a call to action issued to mark World Environment Day. India went big in their commitment to Beat Plastic Pollution, with an announcement to eliminate all single-use plastic in the country by 2022. This unprecedented ambitious move against disposable plastic will drastically stem the flow of plastics from 1.3 billion people and business in the fasted growing economy in the world. The country further showcased innovative solutions to environmental challenges. The Western state of

Maharashtra introduced an urban e-mobility program to scale back emissions. Meanwhile, the state of Andhra Pradesh in India's Southeast launched a scale-out plan to transition 6 million farms from conventional synthetic chemical agriculture to Zero-Budget Natural Farming.

It is the duty of each one of us, to ensure that the quest for material prosperity does not compromise our environment. The choices that we make today, will define our collective future. The choices may not be easy.

Single-use Plastics: A Roadmap for Sustainability

If current consumption patterns and waste management practices do not improve, by 2050 there will be about 12 billion tons of plastic litter in land fills and the natural environment warns this new UN report released on June 5, World Environment Day 2018. It also provides a road map to reduce single-use plastics.

A new report from UN Environment finds a surging momentum in global efforts to address plastic pollution. The first-of-its-kind accounting finds governments are increasing the pace of implementation and the scope of action to curb the use of single-use plastics. In what is framed as the first comprehensive review of 'state of plastics', UN Environment has assembled experiences and assessments of the various measures and regulations to beat plastic pollution in a report: "Single-use Plastics: A roadmap for Sustainability."

Environmental Issues in India

With a population of over 1.3 billion, India is soon set to dislodge China as the most populous country of the world. While India has one of the fastest growing populations in the world today, it's far behind most others when it comes to preserving the environment and the ecology. Today, our country is riddled with a number of environmental concerns which have only aggravated in the last few

decades. Following are some of the major environmental concerns India is grappling with today.

Air Pollution: Air pollution is one of the worst scourges to have affected India. According to a report from the International Energy Agency (IEA), by 2040 there are likely to be about 9 lakh premature deaths in the country due to the drastic rise in air pollution in the country. Average life expectancies are likely to go down by about 15 months because of air pollution. India is also home to 11 out of 20 of the most polluted (in terms of air pollution) cities in the entire world. According to the rankings of the 2018 Environmental Performance Index, India ranks 177 out of 180 countries in terms of air pollution.

Groundwater Depletion: Rapidly depleting levels of groundwater is one of the biggest threats to food security and livelihood in the country. Accessing the groundwater has become increasingly difficult over the decades. According to news reports, excessive exploitation of limited groundwater resources for irrigation of cash crops such as sugarcane has caused a 6 percentage point decline in the availability of water within 10 metres from ground level. Low rainfall and drought are also reasons for groundwater depletion. The North Western and Southeastern parts of the country are the worst hit. These are also the regions responsible for most of the country's agricultural production and food crisis is a natural corollary.

Climate Change: In 2018, Phalodi in Rajasthan recorded a temperature of 51 degrees Celsius — the highest ever in the country. The increasingly tormenting heat waves in the past years are but an indication that global warming and climate change are real challenges that the country is facing

now. With the Himalayan glaciers melting at an alarming rate, floods and other such natural disasters are occurring with increasing frequency. The number of forest fires, floods, earthquakes and such other calamities over the past five years has been unprecedented.

Use of Plastics: Unrestrained use of plastics is another major concern for the country. According to data from the Plastindia Foundation, India's demand for polymers is expected to go up from 11 million tonnes in 2012-13 to about 16.5 million tonnes in 2016-17. India's per capita plastic consumption went up from about 4 kg in 2006 to some 8 kg in 2010. By 2020, this is likely to shoot up to about 27 kg. To understand the damage that this can cause to the environment, it is important to understand that plastics are one of the least biodegradable materials. An average plastic beverage bottle could take up to 500 years to decompose naturally.

Garbage Disposal and Sanitation: According to a report by 'The Economist', about 130 million households (and 600 million population) in the country lack toilets. Over 72 percent of India's rural population defecates in the open. Ancient practices such as manual scavenging are still in vogue in the country. Lack of safe garbage disposal systems in the country make India one of the most unhygienic countries in the world. The rural regions of the country are worse off than urban tracts in this regard. This is one of the areas where the country's government and people need to work hard and improve the prevailing conditions.

Loss of Biodiversity: According to the International Union for Conservation of Nature's Red Data Book, some 47 species of plants and animals in India are listed as critically endangered. Loss of ecology and natural habitats have left many indigenous species, including important ones

such as the Siberian crane, Himalayan wolf and Kashmir stag in grave danger of going extinct. Rapid urbanization, poaching and indiscriminate hunting for leather fur etc. have rendered these animals critically endangered and the flora or herbal treasure of India in near-extinction conditions. Many of the plants commonly harvested for their medicinal properties are vanishing along with the legacy of Ayurvedic treatment.

Environment legislation in India

The National Committee on Environmental Planning and Coordination was established in 1972 to investigate and propose solutions to environmental problems resulting from continued population growth and consequent economic development; in 1980, the Department of the Environment was created. The sixth development plan (1979-84), which for the first time included a section on environmental planning and coordination, gave the planning commission veto power over development projects that might damage the environment; this policy was sustained in the seventh development plan (1985-90). The National Environmental Engineering Research Institute has field center areas throughout the country.

The Wildlife Act of 1972 prohibits killing of and commerce in threatened animals. The Ministry of Environment, Forests and climate change was established in 1985, which today is the apex administrative body in the country for regulating and ensuring environmental protection and lays down the legal and regulatory framework for the same. Since the 1970s, a number of environment legislations have been put in place. The MoEF and the pollution control boards ("CPCB", i.e., Central Pollution Control Board and "SPCBs", i.e., State Pollution Control Boards) together form the

regulatory and administrative core of the sector. Some of the important legislations for environment protection are as follows:

- The National Green Tribunal Act, 2010
- The Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981
- The Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974
- The Environment Protection Act, 1986
- The Hazardous Waste Management Regulations, etc.

The need for protection and conservation of environment and sustainable use of natural resources is reflected in the constitutional framework of India and also in the international commitments of India. The Constitution under Part IVA (Art 51A-Fundamental Duties) casts a duty on every citizen of India to protect and improve the natural environment including forests, lakes, rivers and wildlife and to have compassion for living creatures. Further, the Constitution of India under Part IV (Art 48A-Directive Principles of State Policies) stipulates that the state shall endeavour to protect and improve the environment and to safeguard the forests and wildlife of the country.

National Action Plan on Climate Change

Launched in 2008, India's National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC) identifies a number of measures that simultaneously advance the country's development and climate change related objectives of adaptation and mitigation. The implementation of the NAPCC is designed to take place through eight National Missions, which form the core of the National Action Plan and incorporate multi-pronged, long-term and integrated strategies for achieving India's key goals in the context of climate change. For the

realisation of these proposed actions at the sub national level, in August 2009 the Prime Minister of India called upon state governments to prepare their own State Action Plan on Climate Change (SAPCC) consistent with strategies in the NAPCC.

India's National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) has been accredited as a National Implementing Entity (NIE) for India for the adaptation fund created under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). At present, NABARD is the only NIE in the Asia-Pacific Region.

Global Effort: United Nations Environment Programme

The United Nations Environment Programme (UN Environment), headquartered in Nairobi, Kenya, is the leading global environmental authority that sets the global environmental agenda, promotes the coherent implementation of the environmental dimension of sustainable development within the United Nations system and serves as an authoritative advocate for the global environment.

The UN Environment mission is to provide leadership and encourage partnership in caring for the environment by inspiring, informing and enabling nations and peoples to improve their quality of life without compromising that of future generations.

UN Environment categorize work into seven broad thematic areas: climate change, disasters and conflicts, ecosystem management, environmental governance, chemicals and waste, resource efficiency and environment under review. UN Environment also hosts the secretariats of many critical multilateral environmental agreements and research bodies, bringing together nations and the environmental community to tackle the greatest

challenges of our time. These include the following:

The Convention on Biological Diversity: The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) entered into force on 29 December 1993. It has 3 main objectives:

1. The conservation of biological diversity.
2. The sustainable use of the components of biological diversity.
3. The fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources.

The objectives of this Convention, to be pursued in accordance with its relevant provisions, are the conservation of biological diversity, the sustainable use of its components and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources, including by appropriate access to genetic resources and by appropriate transfer of relevant technologies, taking into account all rights over those resources and to technologies and by appropriate funding.

CITES: The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) is an international agreement between governments. Its aim is to ensure that international trade in specimens of wild animals and plants does not threaten their survival. CITES was drafted as a result of a resolution adopted in 1963 at a meeting of members of IUCN (The World Conservation Union). The text of the Convention was finally agreed at a meeting of representatives of 80 countries in Washington, D.C., the United States of America, on 3 March 1973 and on 1 July 1975 CITES entered into force.

The Minamata Convention on Mercury: The Minamata Convention on Mercury was the first new global Convention on environment and health adopted for close to a decade.

It is named after the place in Japan where, in the mid-20th century, mercury-tainted industrial wastewater poisoned thousands of people, leading to crippling symptoms that became known as the "Minamata disease". Since 2001, UNEP has been actively engaged in bringing the science of mercury poisoning to policy implementation. In February 2009, the Governing Council of UNEP decided to develop a global legally binding instrument on mercury. The Minamata Convention entered into force on 16 August 2017, on the 90th day after the date of deposit of the 50th instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession.

The Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions: The Secretariats of the Basel and Stockholm conventions are administered by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and are located in Geneva, Switzerland. The Secretariat of the Rotterdam Convention is jointly served by UNEP and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). It is based in Geneva, Switzerland and in Rome, Italy. In 2012, the Secretariats of the Basel and Stockholm conventions, as well as the UNEP-part of the Rotterdam Convention Secretariat, moved from three separate secretariats with a programmatic structure to a single Secretariat with a matrix structure serving the three conventions.

The Vienna Convention for the Protection of Ozone Layer: The Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer was adopted in 1985 and entered into force on 22 Sep 1988. In 2009, the Vienna Convention became the first Convention of any kind to achieve universal ratification. The Ozone Secretariat is the secretariat for the Vienna Convention for the protection of the Ozone layer and for the Montreal Protocol on Substances that deplete the Ozone layer.

The Convention on Migratory Species (CMS): As an environmental treaty under the aegis of the United Nations Environment Programme, as the only global convention specializing in the conservation of migratory species, their habitats and migration routes, CMS complements and co-operates with a number of other international organizations, NGOs and partners in the media as well as in the corporate sector.

Migratory species threatened with extinction are listed on Appendix I of the Convention. Migratory species that need or would significantly benefit from international co-operation are listed in Appendix II of the Convention. The agreements may range from legally binding treaties (called Agreements) to less formal instruments, such as Memoranda of Understanding and can be adapted to the requirements of particular regions.

The Carpathian Convention: The Carpathians are one of Europe's largest mountain ranges, constitute a major ecological, economic, cultural, recreational and living environment in the heart of Europe, shared by numerous people and countries. The Carpathian Convention is a subregional treaty to foster the sustainable development and the protection of the Carpathian region. It has been signed in May 2003 by seven Carpathian States (Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovak Republic, Ukraine).

The Bamako Convention: The Bamako Convention is a treaty of African nations prohibiting the import into Africa of any hazardous (including radioactive) waste. The convention came into force in 1998. The Bamako convention uses a format and language similar to that of the Basel convention, but:

- Its much stronger in prohibiting all imports of hazardous waste.

- It does not make exceptions on certain hazardous wastes (like those for radioactive materials) made by the Basel convention.

The Convention covers more wastes than covered by the Basel Convention as it not only includes radioactive wastes but also considers any waste with a listed hazardous characteristic or a listed constituent as a hazardous waste.

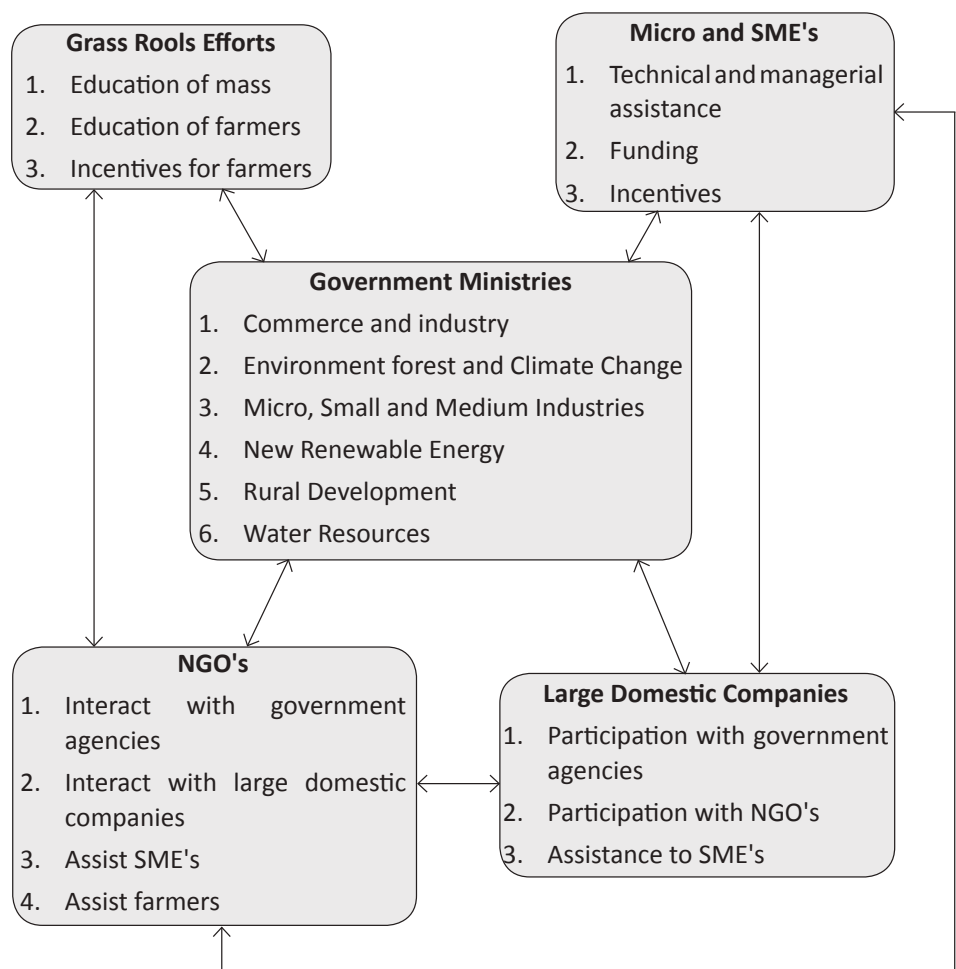
The Tehran Convention: The Tehran Convention is the first regional legally binding instrument signed by all five Caspian littoral states, entered into force in 2006 for the protect and preserve the Caspian Sea's natural resources by five parties Azerbaijan, Iran, Kazakhstan, Russia and Turkmenistan confirmed their readiness to go the path of sustainable development and to take

environmental concerns into account in their development planning.

Challenges

The environment plays a significant role in life. It provides indispensable necessities to humans, animal life and plant life, such as water, food, shelter, and air resources. Meanwhile, human everyday actions and decisions are negatively impacting the environment, causing pollution, deforestation, overfishing. There are two main reasons India's environmental challenges are assuming gigantic proportions. Firstly, the exploding population and the needs of billions makes environmental sustainability a very difficult issue. The other big challenge is lack of environmental awareness and conservation. Despite the efforts of government and environmental agencies, there is a lack

Process for Improving India's Environmental Concerns



of substantial efforts from the masses. Unless this changes, there is little hope for improvement. We can only look forward to the youth and the younger generations of the nation to remain conscientious and act in the best interests of future generations.

Conclusion

The rapid economic growth experienced by India is resulting in adverse and harmful environmental conditions that are affecting the people of India as well the wider global population. In the case of India, this is further exacerbated by the high population density and growth rates. The existing environmental laws, although cover a wide spectrum of environmental concerns, they seem to be ineffective due to lack of enforcement, the lack of resources, and technical challenges

faced by a large number of Indian companies, especially the SMEs. Under these conditions, India has to adopt some sustainable actions that need to address the myriad issues facing the country including environmental degradation in order to sustain its prospects for continued economic growth.

Sustainable development, that is, both a prosperous economy and a healthy environment that in many respects is the goal of diverse interest in the area of environmental issues, is the key for the future of India and the world. Sustainable development implies managing the diverse interests of a prosperous economy and simultaneously maintaining a healthy environment. For fast-growing economies such as India, a shift to resource efficient production and

consumption systems that produce less waste is the only way to bridge developmental deficits and ensure sustained growth and well-being. Persisting with business-as-usual will lead to further environmental degradation—poor air, water and land—and that will endanger the efforts to improve lives and livelihoods. As hosts of the World Environment Day 2018, India must take this lesson to heart and make it the centrepiece of its development strategy.

General Studies Paper- III

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



SEVEN SUBJECTIVE QUESTIONS WITH MODEL ANSWERS

The GDP Forecasting Model in Action

Q1. Critically examine why the Reserve Bank of India switched back to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) based measure to offer its growth estimates from the Gross Value Added (GVA) methodology.

Hints:

- Recently the Reserve Bank of India has decided to switch back to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) based model from Gross Value Added (GVA) measure to provide its estimate of economic activity in the country.
- As per the RBI, the Central Statistical Office (CSO) has also begun using GDP as the main measure of economic activities from January 15 this year. While government had switched to the GVA methodology from January 2015, it also changed the base year to 2018 from January.
- As per the RBI, the change was done in order to conform to global best practices and for ease of comparison. While GVA gives a picture of the state of economic activity from the producers' side or the supply side, GDP gives the picture from the consumers' side or the demand perspective.
- Gross value added (GVA) is defined as the value of output less the value of intermediate consumption. It is used to measure the output or contribution of a particular sector. When such GVAs from all sectors are added together and adding taxes (product) and reducing subsidies (product), we can get the GDP (at market price). GVA thus shows the production contribution of a particular sector.
- Thus, Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of any nation represents the sum total of gross value added (GVA) (i.e., without discounting for capital consumption or depreciation) in all the sectors of that economy during the said year after adjusting for taxes and subsidies.
- A sector-wise breakdown provided by the GVA measure can better help the policymakers to decide which sectors need incentives/stimulus or vice versa. Some consider GVA as a better gauge of the economy because a sharp increase in the output, only due to higher tax collections which could be on account of better compliance or

coverage, may distort the real output situation.

- More so because this is also the approach followed by multilateral institutions, international analysts and investors and primarily they all stick to this norm because it helps in cross-country analysis and comparing the incomes of different economies. Though there are sound economic reasons to employ GVA as the supply-side measure of economic activity.
- GDP is a key measure when it comes to making cross-country analysis and comparing the incomes of different economies.
- Whether growth is measured by GDP or any other metric, its pursuit has real-world implications. Any new conversation needs to include fundamental questions about how the world economy is run and every assumption about growth and the role it plays in people's lives needs to be robustly debated.

MUDRA: Funding the Unfunded

Q2. Highlight the significance and the impact of MUDRA scheme with respect to the "funding the unfunded" and linking entrepreneurial growth to the objective of job creation in the economy.

Hints:

- In India, small businesses play an important role by providing employment to a large number of people. It is the second largest sector engaging uneducated and unskilled people after agriculture. Further, millions of low income earning group person aspire to set up small businesses but are unable to start, mostly due to credit limitations. Since banks do not find them eligible for credit loan. After identifying the importance of self-employment people and small business units, government of India launched MUDRA Yojana to address the financial and other constraints.
- The primary role of MUDRA is to assist the micro and small business unit in the cases such as need based term loan, OD limit, composite loan to eligible borrowers for acquiring capital assets, loan for working capital, loan for marketing, loan for technical up gradation

for manufacturing firm viz. latest machinery, software tools, automation equipment etc.

- MUDRA creates a vision of formalizing the informal and there by funding the unfunded. Its role as an apex refiner, providing low-cost finance is likely to be its USP, thereby hoping to fill a yawning gap in India's microfinance space. These measures will greatly increase the confidence of our young educated and skilled workers who are able to become the first generation enterprises and existing small businesses will be able to expand their activities.
- Challenges to MUDRA:
 - ♦ It is also said that banks and MFIs are converting previous loans into MUDRA and that's why government is able to showing large numbers of loans have already been given.
 - ♦ As much as 1.5 per cent of the total disbursements of Mudra loans or Rs 2,955.51 crore have turned into NPAs as on December 30, 2016. With the government aggressively promoting Mudra loans, borrowers have come to see them as their right. This feeling of the right for a loan, coupled with the events of farm loan waiver has set the ground for Mudra loans turning into NPAs.
 - ♦ As government banks provides financial services to more than 70% population of India, the bureaucratic nature of government employees (like lethargic or chaltahai attitude etc.) is among major hurdles in implementation of Mudra scheme.
 - ♦ For most other Mudra loans, there is no collateral for the bank to turn to in the case of non-repayment.
- Government of India started MUDRA scheme to formally support small scale enterprises so that they can participate in mainstream financial activities and directly contribute to Indian economy. Scheme is well accepted by banking and other financial institutions. With MUDRA, certain things have changed and it is helping more and more people to become self-employed.

Protection of Women in India: Need of the Hour

Q3. Discuss why is it that while there has been a legal expansion of women's rights in India, the societal trends that maintain a violent order against women have remained intact.

Hints:

- Over the years, violence against women in various forms has reached epic proportions. As per NCRB data, as many as 34,651 cases of rape were registered

in 2015, which increased to 38,947 in 2016. Overall, crimes against women rose from 3,29,243 in 2015 to 3,38,954 in 2016. A majority of cases categorised as crimes against women were reported under cruelty by husband or his relatives, followed by assault on woman with intent to outrage her modesty, kidnapping and abduction of women and rape.

- The highest number of rapes have been reported from Madhya Pradesh (4,882), followed by Uttar Pradesh (4,816) and Maharashtra (4,189) in 2016. Among the cities, Delhi accounted for 33 per cent of the total crimes committed against women and also accounted for 40 percent of rape cases lodged in the metros.
- Societally sanctioned rape and sexual assault is not new in India. It has been repeatedly established that Indian men assert a claim over the bodies of women because somehow, families believe that in Indian society a woman exists as an appendage to some man in her life — father, brother, son or husband. If a woman steps across an invisible line (lakshmanrekha), where her behaviour is seen as outrageous and unacceptable, then many people still believe that she is opening herself up to sexual assault.
- The process of giving rights with one hand, while the other takes it away — shows that people resent an expansion of rights for women and go to extreme lengths to make sure that the law of the land has no stronghold in their local communities. The Indian state may make many laws that protect women. However, none of this means much unless law enforcement agencies actually implement the law. This mismatch between the existence of good laws and their actual implementation is itself a commentary on state capacity in India.
- Khaps in rural India have been asserting much power over the lives of people in rural India, the weakest of whom are women of all communities. These clan-based khap panchayats and sabhas have had a long history in India. Khaps are unconstitutional and informal law-giving bodies that have captured much rural terrain in North and Eastern India. Khaps have sanctioned several honour killings and have suggested a level of misogyny that is completely at odds with what the leading courts in the country are articulating.
- Recently, Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has created a new Division to address issues of women safety comprehensively. This Division would deal with all aspects of women safety in coordination with relevant ministries, departments and state governments.
- In another initiative, government has been promulgated an ordinance providing the death penalty for rapists of

girls below 12 years of age and other stringent penal provisions for rape, in the aftermath of horrific crimes in Kathua and Unnao.

- Women safety is a big social issue which needs to be solved urgently by the effort of all. It is inhibiting the growth and development of the country and most importantly hurting the half population of the country in all aspects (physically, mentally and socially). Despite of formation of various effective rules and regulations by the Indian government to handle and control the crimes against women, the number and frequency of crimes against women are increasing day by day. Women status in the country has been more offensive and dreadful in the last few years. It has decreased the confidence level of women for safety in their own country. Women are in doubtful condition for their safety and have fear while going anywhere else outside their home (office, market, etc).

India-Southeast Asia Relations: Enhancing Mutual Benefits

Q4. What are the key take aways of Prime Minister's recent visit to Southeast Asian Nations? Discuss the significance of Shangri-La Dialogue in changing geopolitics of Asia-Pacific region.

Hints:

- Prime Minister recently concluded his three-nation, five-day visit to Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore. The PM also went to Clifford Pier and unveiled a plaque to commemorate the immersion of Mahatma Gandhi's ashes in the country's waters. This was significant as in 1948, Mahatma Gandhi's ashes had been sent to various parts of India and the world, including Singapore.
- India signed an agreement with Indonesia to develop a port in the city of Sabang (Northern Tip of Sumatra, Indonesia) that would overlook the western entrance to the Strait of Malacca, one of the world's busiest waterways and agreed a pact with Singapore on logistical support for naval ships, submarines and military aircraft during visits.
- During the bilateral engagement with the leaders of Indonesia and Singapore the Prime Minister of India laid the foundation for maritime cooperation with key littoral states that connect the Indian Ocean to the Pacific. Securing the eastern Indian Ocean in partnership with Southeast Asian littorals like Singapore, Indonesia and Thailand could be one of the important near-term Indian contributions to peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific.

- The PM declared that Southeast Asia is the geographic core of the Indo-Pacific and that the ASEAN must remain central to the construction of any architecture for the Indo-Pacific. The PM also sought to dispel the misperception among the Southeast Asian partners that India's support for the Indo-Pacific and the participation in the Quad would undermine the ASEAN.
- The term "Indo-Pacific" has grown in usage across diplomatic and security circles in the United States, Australia, India and Japan in recent years, shorthand for a broader and democratic-led region in place of "Asia-Pacific", which according to some views places China too firmly at the centre.
- At Shangri La, the PM called the Indo-Pacific "a natural region" that stretches from the East coast of Africa to the West coast of America. He called the building of a "stable, secure and prosperous Indo-Pacific Region" an "important pillar" of India's partnership with the United States. At the same time, the PM emphasised that India's conception of Indo-Pacific is not directed against any other nation.
- While stressing that India's friendships are not alliances of containment he assured that India's own engagement in the Indo-Pacific Region - from the shores of Africa to that of the Americas - will be inclusive. In conclusion, Prime Minister of India said, India will engage with the world in peace, with respect, through dialogue and absolute commitment to international law. India will promote a democratic and rules-based international order, in which all nations, small and large, thrive as equal and sovereign.

Wind Energy: Meeting India's Energy Need

Q5. In the efforts of meeting India's need, briefly describe the National Wind-Solar Policy 2018 and its significance in achieving renewable energy targets.

Hints:

- India is looking forward in this direction and has already formulated "National Wind-Solar Hybrid Policy". This is needed to synergise the efforts for the renewable energy generation and to optimise the locations usage and to increase the efficiency in the proper exploitation of resources. In order to reduce the dependence on oil and fossil fuels and to serve the ever increasing energy demand of the hungry developing economy, such hybridisation technique is not just quintessential but also serves as the model for the integration of other technologies to serve the mankind.
- India's Ministry of New & Renewable Energy has released its 'National Wind-Solar Hybrid Policy' seeking to encourage hybridisation of projects due to the

benefits they offer for grid integration. Hybrid systems involves solar PV systems and wind turbine generators being configured at the same point of connection. In order to be classed as 'hybrid', the rated power capacity of one source of energy must be at least 25% of the rated power capacity of the other resource.

- The new policy aims to provide a framework for large-scale hybrids, while also encouraging new technologies and methods to carry out hybridisation. It is also encouraging the procurement of hybrid power through transparent bidding processes, which could take into account capacity delivered at grid interface point, effective capacity utilisation factor (CUF) and the unit price of electricity.
- Under the category of wind-solar hybrid power plants, Wind Turbine Generators (WTGs) and Solar PV systems will be configured to operate at the same point of grid connection. There can be different approaches towards integrating wind and solar depending upon the size of each of the source integrated and the technology type.
- In terms of wind power installed capacity, India is ranked 5th in the world and is considered a major player in the global wind energy market.
- The potential is far from exhausted. The Centre for Wind Energy Technology has re-assessed that with the current level of technology, the 'on-shore' potential for utilization of wind energy for electricity generation is of the order of 102000 MW at 80 meters hub-height, up from the earlier estimate of 49,000 MW. The unexploited resource availability has the potential to sustain the growth of wind energy sector in India in the years to come. The states with highest wind power concentration are Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh.
- Growing concern for the environmental degradation has led to the world's interest in renewable energy resources. Wind is commercially and operationally the most viable renewable energy resource and accordingly, emerging as one of the largest source in terms of the renewable energy sector. Today, the Indian market is emerging as one of the major manufacturing hubs for wind turbines in Asia.
- According to Global Wind Energy Council (GWEC), India could have 89 GW of installed wind capacity by 2020 up from 19GW at present, helping to fight a growing power shortage in the country. Wind energy will witness abundant opportunities in the developing economies such as India, where the power supply situation and infrastructure development efforts provide a huge market for active investment.

- National Wind-Solar Hybrid Policy will help the country meet the target of 175 Gw renewable energy capacity by 2022 (up from 69 Gw now), by cutting generation costs by a quarter. The cost reduction would be enabled by nearly doubling the generation at a nominal cost, thanks to reduced variability of output through optimal utilisation of assets, where wind turbines and solar systems will be configured at the same grid connection points.
- With significant capacity additions in renewables in recent years and with hybrid policy aiming at better utilisation of resources, it is envisaged that the hybrid policy will open-up a new area for availability of renewable power at competitive prices along with reduced variability.

The Menace of Cyberbullying

- Q6. What Is Cyberbullying? With rising concerns over cyberbullying, parents should play a more proactive role in their children's online lives. Discuss.**

Hints:

- Cyberbullying happens when someone threatens, harasses or embarrasses the victim using technology by digital device. Cyberbullying is done by teens and adolescents. Social media is full of incidents of online abuse, trolling and cyber bullying on a daily basis. In the last few years, the number of abusive and unwanted intruders and trolls has only increased on social media and people are losing their right to express themselves freely or fear the abusive counter. In other words, virtual public spaces are often spaces that are antisocial, violent, intimidating, unfriendly, untrustworthy and unsafe. There is a need to tackle this issue, and sensitively.
- According to the State of the World's Children 2017: Children in a Digital World, one in three internet users worldwide is a child. With the role of internet increasing in our day to day life, cyber bullying poses a big challenge especially for one's safety online. When bullying moves online, it gets much more difficult to track; and unlike the physical playing field or classroom, there is no escaping it even at home.
- A child may be involved in cyberbullying in several ways. A child can be bullied, bully others, or witness bullying. parents, teachers, and other adults may not be aware of all the digital media and apps that a child is using. The more digital platforms that a child uses, the more opportunities there are for being exposed to potential cyberbullying. With rising concerns over cyberbullying, parents should play a more proactive role in their children's online lives. They should actively monitor their child's online experience until they get a sense of judgement and this is more important than ever.

- Cyber bullying is a practice that is causing hue and cry in the whole legal system but till date there are no special legislation to deal with cyberbullying in India. Raghavan Committee recommended controlling ragging and bullying in schools and colleges and categorised ragging as an abuse of human rights. National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) has developed Information and communication Technology (ICT) curriculum for teachers and students in school education. As part of this curriculum, social and ethical issues related to use of internet have been dealt with. The focus of the curriculum is on safe and secure use of web space by students and teachers.
- Bullying is a serious problem that can dramatically affect the ability of students to progress academically and socially. A comprehensive intervention plan that involves all students, parents and school staff is required to ensure that all students can learn in a safe and fear-free environment. Proper supervision by parents and teachers and regulating the time spent on internet through various productive activities and hobbies might be regarded as some of the ways in which the ill effects of social media on children might be minimized.
- Natural resources that are managed sustainably, transparently and on the basis of the rule of law can be the engine for sustainable development as well as a platform for peace and justice. Environmental rule of law is central to sustainable development. It integrates environmental needs with the essential elements of the rule of law and provides the basis for improving environmental governance. Strong environmental law is the bedrock of environmental governance and a cornerstone of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
- The need for protection and conservation of environment and sustainable use of natural resources is reflected in the constitutional framework of India and also in the international commitments of India. The Constitution under Part IVA (Art 51A-Fundamental Duties) casts a duty on every citizen of India to protect and improve the natural environment including forests, lakes, rivers and wildlife and to have compassion for living creatures. Further, the Constitution of India under Part IV (Art 48A-Directive Principles of State Policies) stipulates that the state shall endeavour to protect and improve the environment and to safeguard the forests and wildlife of the country.
- Multilateral environmental agreements are one of the most effective ways in which governments of the world meet environmental commitments to protecting biodiversity, safely managing chemicals and waste, sustainably managing land and mitigating and adapting to climate change. By coordinating activities, pooling resources and sharing information across environmental conventions countries can maximize the results and impacts of their efforts to meet environmental commitments in the most efficient ways possible.
- Pollution is the cause of 16 percent of all deaths and costs over a trillion dollars yearly. Environmental issues are best handled with participation of all concerned citizens, at the relevant level in reducing pollution by adopting cleaner policies, technologies and standards that will help eliminate pollution and its threats.

India's Race to Conserve Environment

Q7. Environmental pollution is hazardous effect on the natural world and on the activities of living beings. In the absence of strong environmental laws and institutions, we will be unable to protect and restore our planet. Explain.

Hints:

- Increasing environmental pressures from climate change, biodiversity loss, water scarcity, air and water pollution, soil degradation, among others, contribute to poverty and to growing social inequalities.
- Conflicts over natural resources and environmental crimes intensify the problems. At least 40% of internal conflicts over the last 60 years have a link to natural resources. The risks of violent conflict increase when exploitation of natural resources causes environmental damage, loss of livelihood, or unequal distribution of benefits.



SEVEN IMPORTANT NATIONAL & INTERNATIONAL NEWS

NATIONAL

1. Linking Medicine Prices to Wholesale Inflation

The government is considering the feasibility of linking the permitted annual increase in prices of non-scheduled formulations to the Wholesale Price Index (WPI) in a bid to regulate the prices of drugs. The NITI Aayog has recommended an amendment to the Drug Price Control Order (DPCO) 2013, suggesting that prices of non-scheduled drugs be also be linked to WPI to regulate them like the

prices of scheduled drugs. It has also suggested development of a separate index for pharmaceutical products. The medicine prices may be linked to pharma commodities WPI rather than general WPI for both scheduled as well as non-scheduled drugs. According to DoP, only about 850 drugs are under price control as against the more than 6,000 medicines available in the market of various strengths and dosages.

According to DPCO 2013, prices of scheduled drugs are revised in line with the wholesale price index (WPI) of the previous calendar year. As a corollary, the companies are even required to cut the prices if there is a decline in the annual WPI. However, manufacturers of medicines not under price control are allowed to increase the maximum retail price by 10% annually.

2. Asia's First 'Blue Flag' Tag Beach

The Chandrabhaga beach on the Konark coast of Odisha will be the first in Asia to get the Blue Flag certification — the tag given to environment-friendly and clean beaches, equipped with amenities of international standards for tourists. Twelve more beaches in the country are being developed by the Society for Integrated Coastal Management (SICOM), an Environment Ministry's body working for the management of coastal areas, in accordance with the Blue Flag standards. Among them are the Chiwla and Bhogave beaches in Maharashtra and one beach each from Puducherry, Goa, Daman and Diu, Lakshadweep and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

About Blue Flag Tag

Ministry of Environment launched this project in December 2017. The prime objective of the project is to enhance standards of cleanliness, upkeep and basic amenities at beaches. Under the project, each state or union territory has been asked to nominate a beach which will be funded through the ongoing Integrated Coastal Management Programme. To achieve the Blue Flag standards, a beach had to strictly comply with 33 environment and tourism-related conditions. The



standards were established by the Copenhagen-based Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE) in 1985.

3. Use of Blockchain Technology in Telecom Sector

Telecom regulator (TRAI) issued new draft norms to curb pesky calls and SMSes by using blockchain technology to ensure that telemarketing messages are sent only to those who have subscribed to them and that too by authorized entities. Blockchain will ensure two things — non-repudiation and confidentiality. Only those authorised to access details will be able to access subscriber details and only when they need to deliver service. TRAI will become the first organisation to implement this kind of regulation.

Key Facts

- The new technology aims to ensure that telemarketing messages are

sent only to those who have subscribed to them and that too by authorized entities.

- The draft proposes to check misuse of repeated unsolicited calls being made even to those subscribers who have given consent.
- The new technology based norms will record all communication between subscribers and entities, capturing customer consent for information and authorised telemarketing agencies.
- A subscriber may have given consent for a service but that consent is liable to be misused. Under the proposed regulation the

subscriber will be able to revoke consent given to entities whenever he or she desires through TRAI app and other mechanism that will be provided under the regulation.

About Blockchain Technology

Blockchain is the digital and decentralized ledger that records transactions without the need for a financial intermediary, which in most cases is a bank. A blockchain is an anonymous online ledger that uses data structure to simplify the way we transact. Blockchain allows users to manipulate the ledger in a secure way without the help of a third party. ■

4. GI Tag for Five Rural Crafts

The Chau mask of Purulia, the wooden mask of Kushmandi, the Patachitra, the Dokras of Bengal and Madhurkathi (a kind of mat) have been presented with the Geographical Indication (GI) tag by the Geographical Indication Registry and Intellectual Property India. GI tags for these five rural crafts would not only help the artisans create their own brand but would also provide legal protection to artisans

practising the crafts against attempts to duplicate them in other regions.

While 500 families were involved in the making of large and colourful Chau masks used in the Chau dance, also known as Chhau, in Baghmundi block of Purulia, around 200 families in Kushmandi make the wooden masks used for the Mukha dance. In Paschim Medinipur, a few hundred families in Pingla village make the beautifully painted scrolls called Patachitra and

3,000 families in two districts were into making Madurkathi.

About GI Tag

A GI is primarily an agricultural, natural or a manufactured product (handicrafts and industrial goods) originating from a definite geographical territory. Once the GI protection is granted, no other producer can misuse the name to market similar products. It also provides comfort to customers about the authenticity of that product. ■

5. Hyderabad's Ashoorkhana

Telangana government and Aga Khan Trust are working to restore the Hyderabad's Badshahi Ashoorkhana.

About Badshahi Ashoorkhana

It is the 400-year old monument. It was built sometime in 1611 by Hyderabad's founder, Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah. It was a house of mourning, where large congregations of Muslims gathered in memory of the martyrdom

of Imam Hussain during the month of Muharram. The building consists of a Kaman, Naqqar Khana (where ceremonial drums are beaten), Niyaz Khana (where visitors are fed), Sarai Khana (place to rest), Abdar Khana (drinking water is stored), the chabutra (platform) and a guard room. The Ashoorkhana, turns into a pilgrimage site when alams (battle standards) are installed to commemorate the

battle of Karbala in 680 A.D. Ashoora or 10th day of Muharram is when the battle took place. The monument was lost for several decades when Emperor Aurangzeb's forces turned it into a bandikhana to keep wheeled vehicles. The eight wooden pillars were reconstructed and the alams were reinstalled. During this time, the main entrance, Bab-e-Faiz-e-Imam-e-Alamiyan, was also constructed. ■

6. Health Insurance Scheme for Journalists

Odisha government launched "Gopabandhu Sambadika Swasthya Bima Yojana" for working journalists. In the first phase, as many as 3,233 working journalists from across the state will get health insurance coverage up to Rs 2 lakh. At least five members of a journalist's family would be covered under the scheme. The scribes will get their health insurance card from the District Information and

Public Relations Officer (DIPRO) in their respective districts.

About Gopalbandhu Das

Gopabandhu Das (1877–1928) was a social worker, reformer, political activist, journalist, poet and essayist from Odisha. He was popularly known as Utkalamani (Jewel of Utkal or Orissa). He established a school at Sakhigopala,

near Puri. Popularly known as Satyabadi Bakul Bana Bidyalaya, but called the Universal Education League by Das, it was inspired by the Deccan Education Society, operated in the gurukula tradition and aimed to impart a liberal education on a non-sectarian basis, despite opposition from orthodox Brahmins.

7. Mission Raftaar

Recently, the Indian Railways conducted a one-day workshop 'Mission Raftaar' in which officials discussed ways to increase the average speed of freight and passenger trains. Issues such as punctuality, rolling stock, removing bottlenecks in terms of traffic, elimination of unmanned level crossings were discussed at the workshop.

About Mission Raftaar

With a view to increasing speed of trains in Indian Railways, 'Mission

Raftaar' was announced in the Railway Budget 2016-17. The mission envisages a target of doubling of average speed of freight trains and increasing the average speed of all non-suburban passenger trains by 25 kmph in the next 5 years.

The average speed of freight trains is 24 kmph and that of passenger trains, excluding suburban trains, is 44 kmph. Increasing the average speed of trains is considered essential for reducing travel time for passengers, transit time for cargo, operational

cost and improving revenues and the railway's market share.

Principal routes have been identified for raising of speed under Mission Raftaar. These are six routes on Golden Quadrilateral and diagonals namely, Delhi – Mumbai, Delhi – Howrah, Howrah- Chennai, Chennai – Mumbai and Delhi – Chennai and Howrah – Mumbai. These six routes carry 58% of freight traffic and 52% of coaching traffic with a share of only 16% of the network. Golden Quadrilaterals and its Diagonal routes have been

prioritized for replacement of loco hauled short distance passenger trains by MEMUs/ DEMUs having better acceleration and deceleration characteristics for fast pickup and braking.

Blueprint of Mission Raftaar

Removal of constraints on high-priority

9,100
route km

Raising of Sectional Speed to minimum 130 kmph: Out of 9,100 route km, 6,400 km (70%) have sectional speed of less than 130 kmph

Removal of Level Crossings: There are 2,736 level crossings on 9,100 route km. 931 are already sanctioned for elimination

Removal of Speed Restrictions: On these routes, there are speed restrictions at about 730 locations due to various factors pertaining

to design and maintenance of fixed assets. There is a restriction every 15 km on these routes

Raising of Speeds on Turnouts: At present 10% of turnouts on these routes have a speed of less than 30 kmph and all have a speed of less than 50 kmph

LHB coach		Talgo coach	
			
160	Top-speed (kmph)	220	
78	Seating capacity	36	
506	Weight per seat ratio (kg)	341	
8	Wheels per coach	2	between 2 coaches

Talgo coach attractions

30% more energy efficient as compared to LHB

45% lighter than LHB

Low-centre of gravity leads to higher speed and stability on curves

INTERNATIONAL

1. Room-Temperature Ferromagnetic Element: Ruthenium

A platinum-group chemical element called ruthenium (Ru) is the fourth single element to have unique ferromagnetic properties at room temperature. Ferromagnetism is the basic mechanism by which certain materials form permanent magnets, or are attracted to magnets. The use of ferromagnetism reaches back as far as ancient times when lodestone was used for navigation.

Since then only three single elements have been found to be ferromagnetic at room temperature:

iron (Fe), cobalt (Co) and nickel (Ni); the rare earth element gadolinium (Gd) nearly misses by only 8 degrees Celsius. The discovery could be used to improve sensors, devices in the computer memory and logic industry, or other devices using magnetic materials.

About Ru

Ruthenium is a chemical element with symbol Ru and atomic number 44. Ruthenium is generally found in ores with the other platinum group metals

in the Ural Mountains and in North and South America. Small but commercially important quantities are also found in pentlandite extracted from Sudbury, Ontario and in pyroxenite deposits in South Africa. From an application perspective, Ru is interesting because it does not oxidize easily and theoretical predictions indicate it is particularly temperature-stable, which is an important property allowing scaling of magnetic memories. ■

2. Irish Abortion Referendum

In its recent referendum, Ireland voted decisively to repeal one of the world's more restrictive abortion bans, sweeping aside generations of conservative patriarchy and dealing the latest in a series of stinging rebukes to the Roman Catholic Church. The vote repeals the 'Eighth Amendment' of the Constitution. The eighth amendment is a clause inserted into the Irish

constitution after a referendum in 1983. It recognises an equal right to life for both mother and unborn child, effectively prohibiting abortion in almost all cases.

Repeal of the 8th amendment would allow the government to legislate on abortion. The proposed legislation will bring Ireland into line with the majority of European countries, allowing for

abortion on request up to the 12th week of pregnancy (subject to medical regulation). After 12 weeks abortion would only be available in cases of fatal foetal anomaly, if the pregnant woman's life was at risk or if her health was at risk of serious harm. Cases after 12 weeks would have to be approved by two doctors. ■

3. Self-destruction of Cells can help us Live Longer

Scientists have found that it would be safer to increase autophagy in humans through gene mutation so that they can live longer and healthier lives. Autophagy is body's natural mechanism for self-destruction of cells, which is critical for human survival, as it helps the body get rid of unwanted or toxic substances. However, this ability to perform autophagy declines with age and is likely to contribute to ageing and onset of age-related

diseases, including renal, cardiac and neuro-degenerative disorders.

It had been known for decades that the body's ability to self-destruct cells (autophagy) could make us live longer and earlier researches had confirmed results in model organisms, including yeast and fruit fly. But despite these clues, a definitive evidence of its role in promoting longevity in humans was lacking. Researchers were confounded with crucial questions on whether

autophagy can actually extend lifespan of humans and, if yes, would it be safer to increase autophagy using drugs or inducing mutation in genes.

The latest findings, corroborated with genetic proof, have important implications for human health and efforts to develop drugs to prevent age-related diseases, neuro-degeneration and to combat cancer. ■

4. International Air Transport Association

The International Air Transport Association (IATA) on Monday castigated India for taxing international tickets, even as it asked governments to facilitate the growth of worldwide connectivity by avoiding creeping re-regulation, maintaining the integrity of global standards and addressing a capacity crisis. India is taxing international tickets in contravention of the resolutions of the UN body International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO). India helped

develop ICAO resolutions prohibiting tax on international tickets.

The Indian government had announced the implementation of the GST from July 1, 2017. The tax covers airline products and services including tickets, ancillary, change, refund and other products and fees.

About IATA

The International Air Transport Association (IATA) is the trade association for the world's airlines,

representing some 290 airlines or 82% of total air traffic. It support many areas of aviation activity and help formulate industry policy on critical aviation issues. It is headquartered in Montreal, Quebec, Canada with Executive Offices in Geneva, Switzerland. It supports airline activity and helps formulate industry policy and standards. It also provides consulting and training services in many areas crucial to aviation. ■

5. South Africa Commemorates 125th year of Satyagraha

The screening of the biopic 'Making of a Mahatma' marked the opening of a three-day series of events to commemorate the historic incident 125 years ago when Mahatma Gandhi was evicted from a train because the compartment he was in was reserved for whites only. On the night of June 7, 1893, Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, a young lawyer then, was thrown off the train's first class compartment at Pietermaritzburg station for refusing to give up his seat.

The incident led him to develop his Satyagraha principles of peaceful resistance and mobilise people in South Africa and in India against the discriminatory rules of the British.

About Satyagraha

The concept of Satyagraha was introduced in the early 20th century by Mahatma Gandhi to designate a determined but nonviolent resistance to evil. Gandhi's satyagraha became a major tool in the Indian struggle against British imperialism and has

since been adopted by protest groups in other countries.

According to this philosophy, satyagrahis— practitioners of satyagraha — achieve correct insight into the real nature of an evil situation by observing a nonviolence of the mind, by seeking truth in a spirit of peace and love and by undergoing a rigorous process of self-scrutiny. In so doing, the satyagrahi encounters truth in the absolute. ■

6. An Air Cleaner with Potential

Scientists have developed a nanocomposite material that can selectively convert environmental carbon monoxide into less toxic carbon dioxide. Carbon monoxide (CO) is a major air pollutant that poses a serious threat to health. The new composite material is made of graphene and an alloy of platinum and palladium in the form of nanoparticles. In the project, graphene was used as a substrate and then "decorated" with alloy nanoparticles made of platinum and palladium. The novel catalytic structure was then used for selective

oxidation of CO into CO². The use of a metal particle of certain orientation which absorbs or interacts with CO at lower energy helped the conversion.

The catalytic behaviour of the nanocomposite was studied using different morphologies for the oxidation of CO. The conversion rate varied along with the flow rate of CO as well as temperature, showing full conversion at temperatures ranging from 75° to 125°.

The new material could find potential use in chemical industries as well as environmental cleaning.

About Graphene

It is a form of carbon that can be used to develop smaller, slimmer batteries but with higher capacity. It has been touted in the global electronics industry as a "miracle material" given its strength, electrical conductivity and elasticity and has been seen as an alternative to lithium-ion batteries. Its thin composition and high conductivity means it is used in applications ranging from miniaturised electronics to biomedical devices. ■

7. Global Economy is Healthy but Growth will Slow

According to the World Bank, world economy is generally healthy but must contend with rising interest rates in wealthier countries and weaker demand for commodities in developing nations. It also faces risks from trade disputes, financial volatility and geopolitical tensions. The anti-poverty agency predicts global growth will decelerate slightly from a solid 3.1 per cent this year to 3 per cent next year and 2.9 per cent in 2020.

The World Bank predicts that US growth will register 2.7 per cent in 2018, aided by tax cuts, before slowing to 2.5 per cent next year and 2 per cent in 2020. China's growth is projected at 6.5 per cent this year, 6.3 per cent in 2019 and 6.2 percent in 2020.

About World Bank

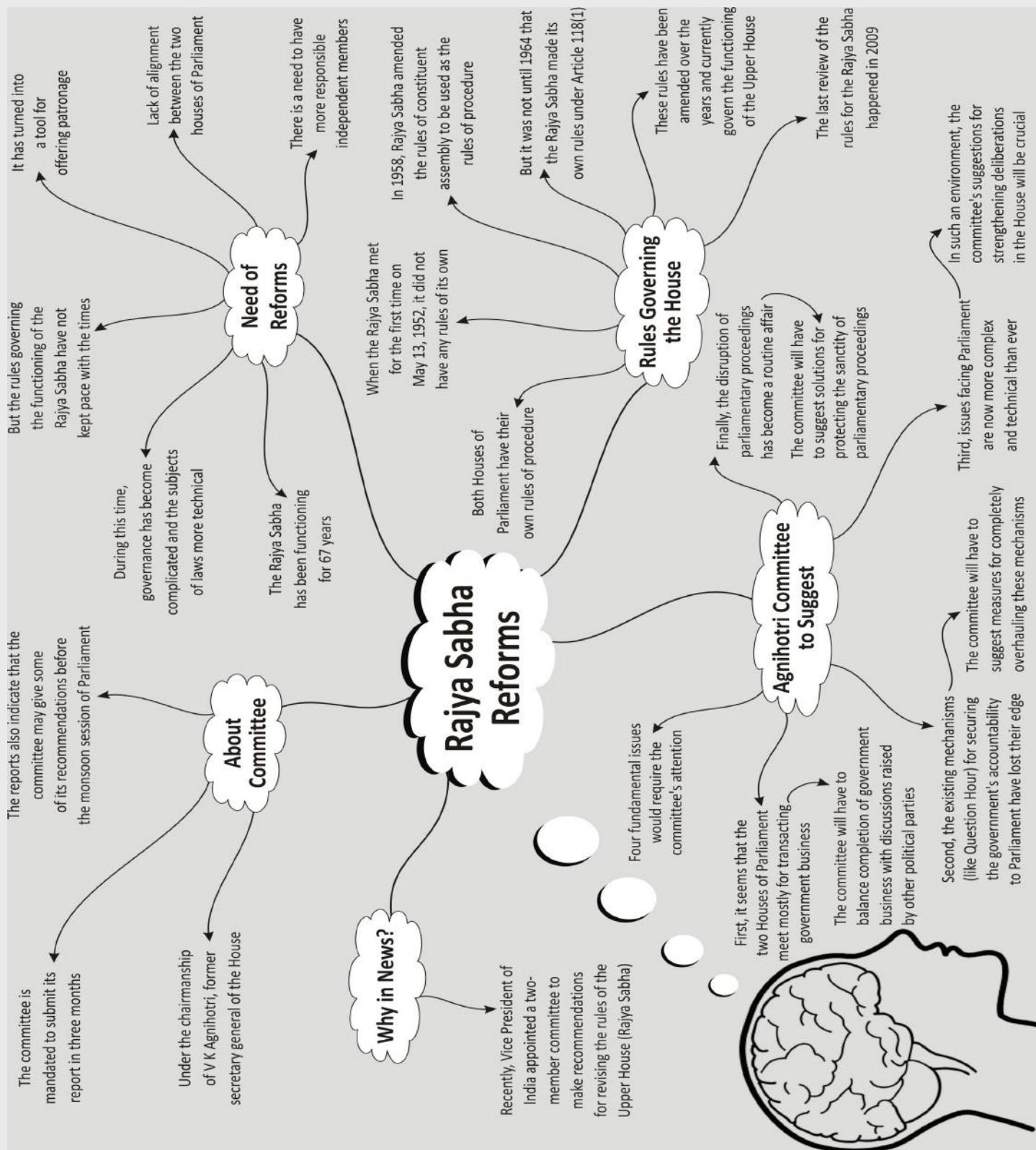
The World Bank Group (WBG) was established in 1944. It functions as an international organization that fights poverty by offering developmental assistance to middle-income and low-income countries. It is not a bank in the conventional sense of the word. Instead, it consists of two development institutions. One is the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development. The second is the International Development Association. The Bank's 189 member countries share ownership. The Bank works closely

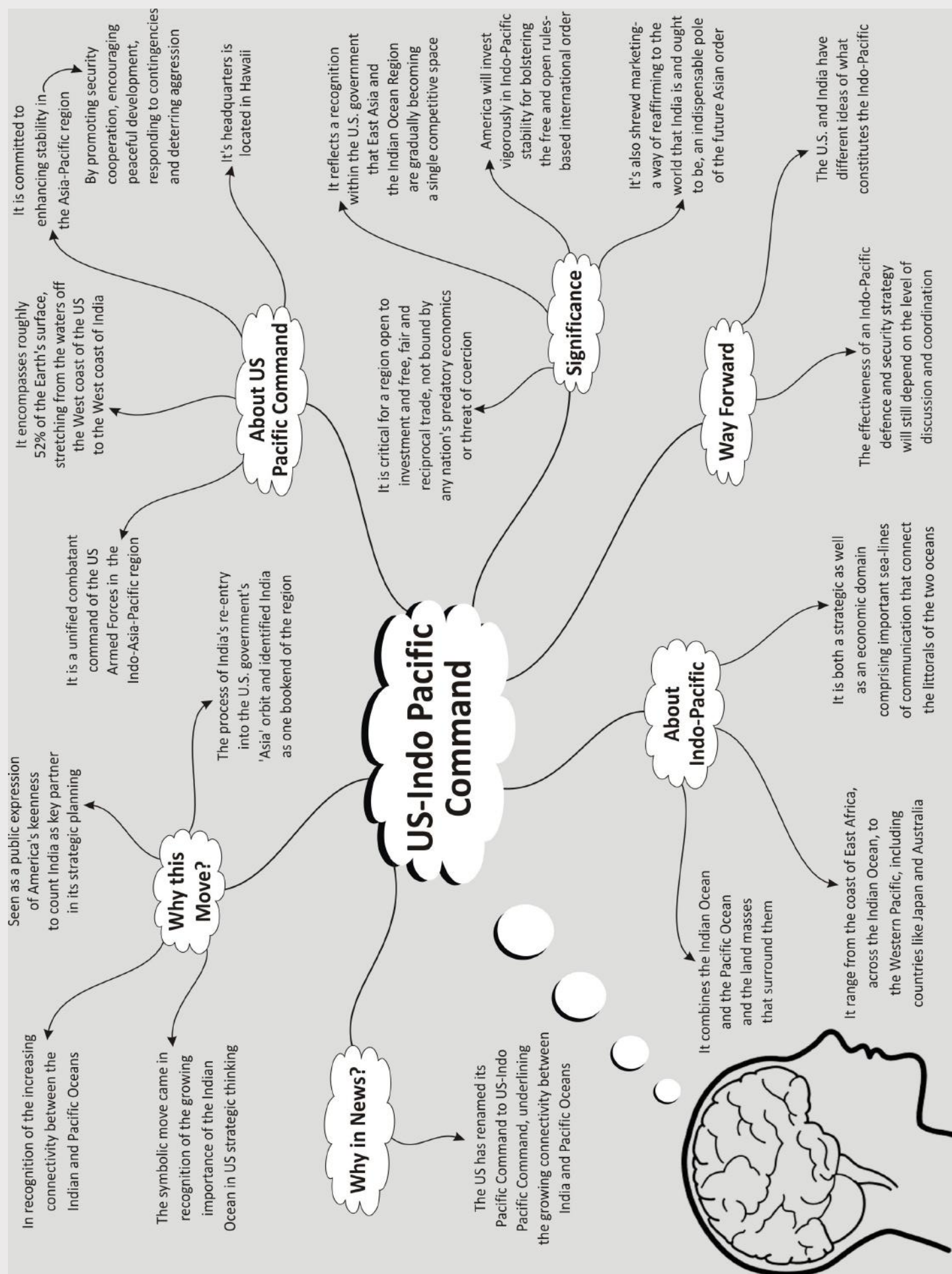


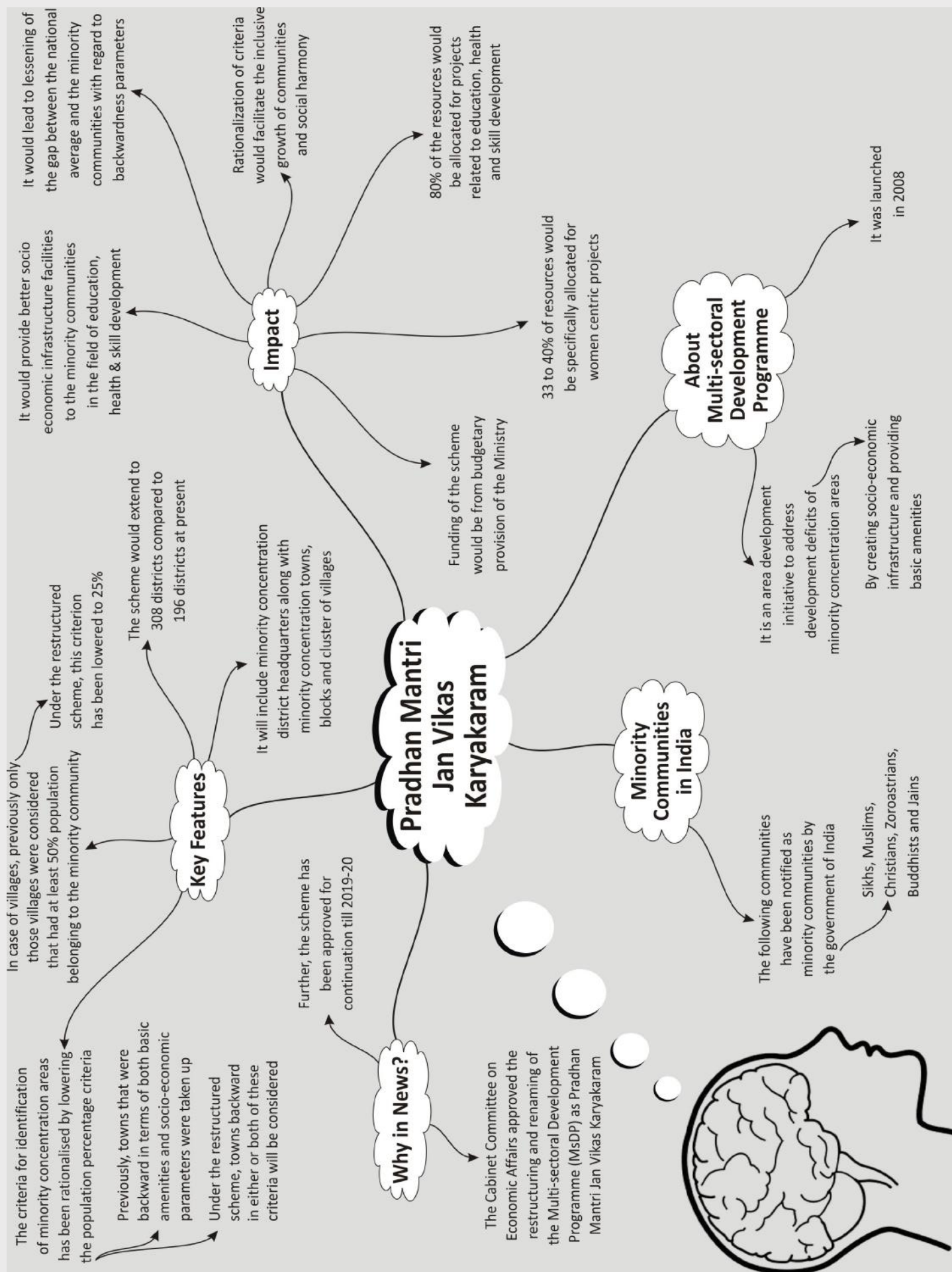
with three other organizations: the International Finance Corporation, the Multilateral Guarantee Agency and the International Centre for the Settlement of Investment Disputes. All five organizations make up the World Bank Group.

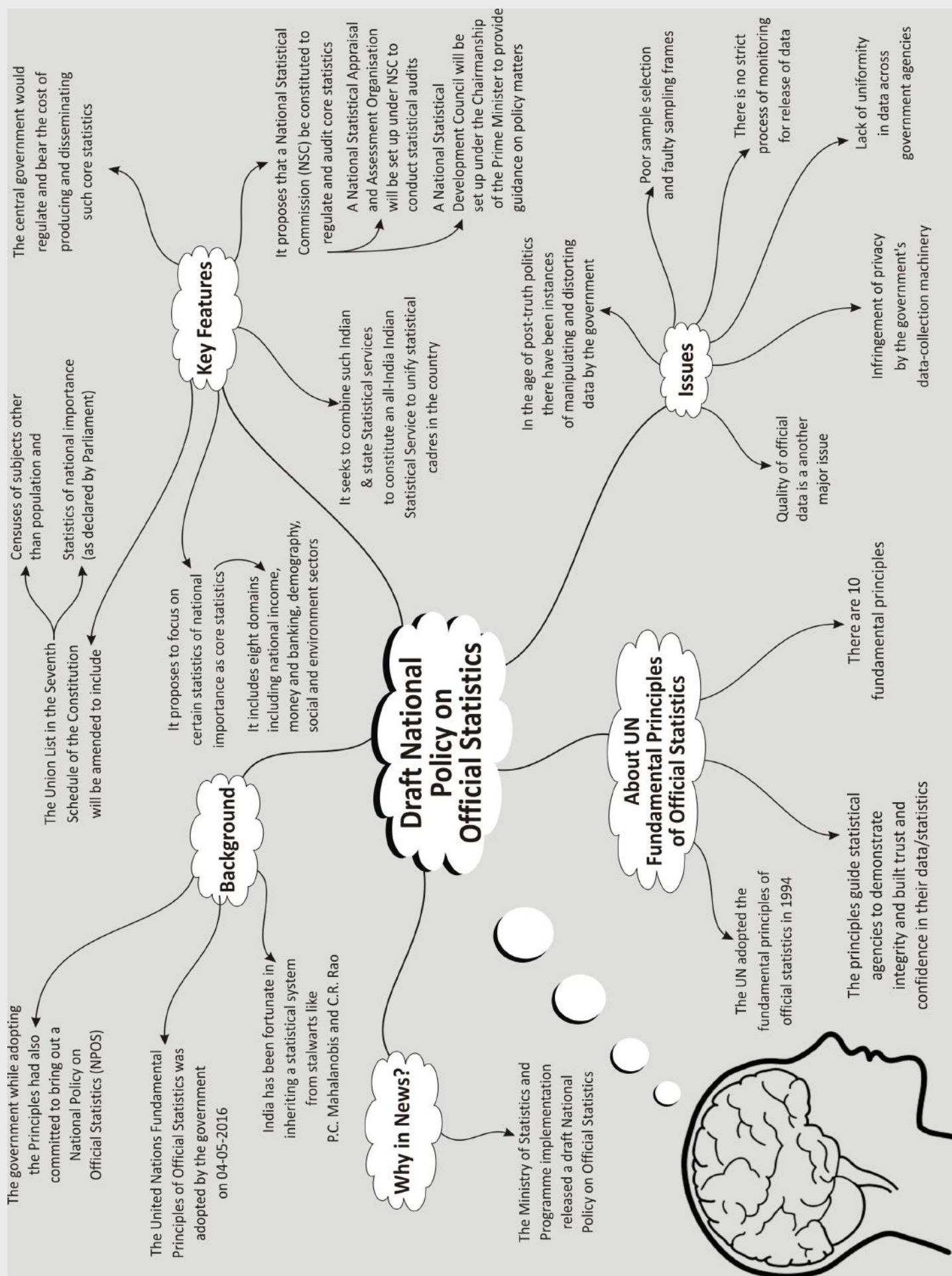


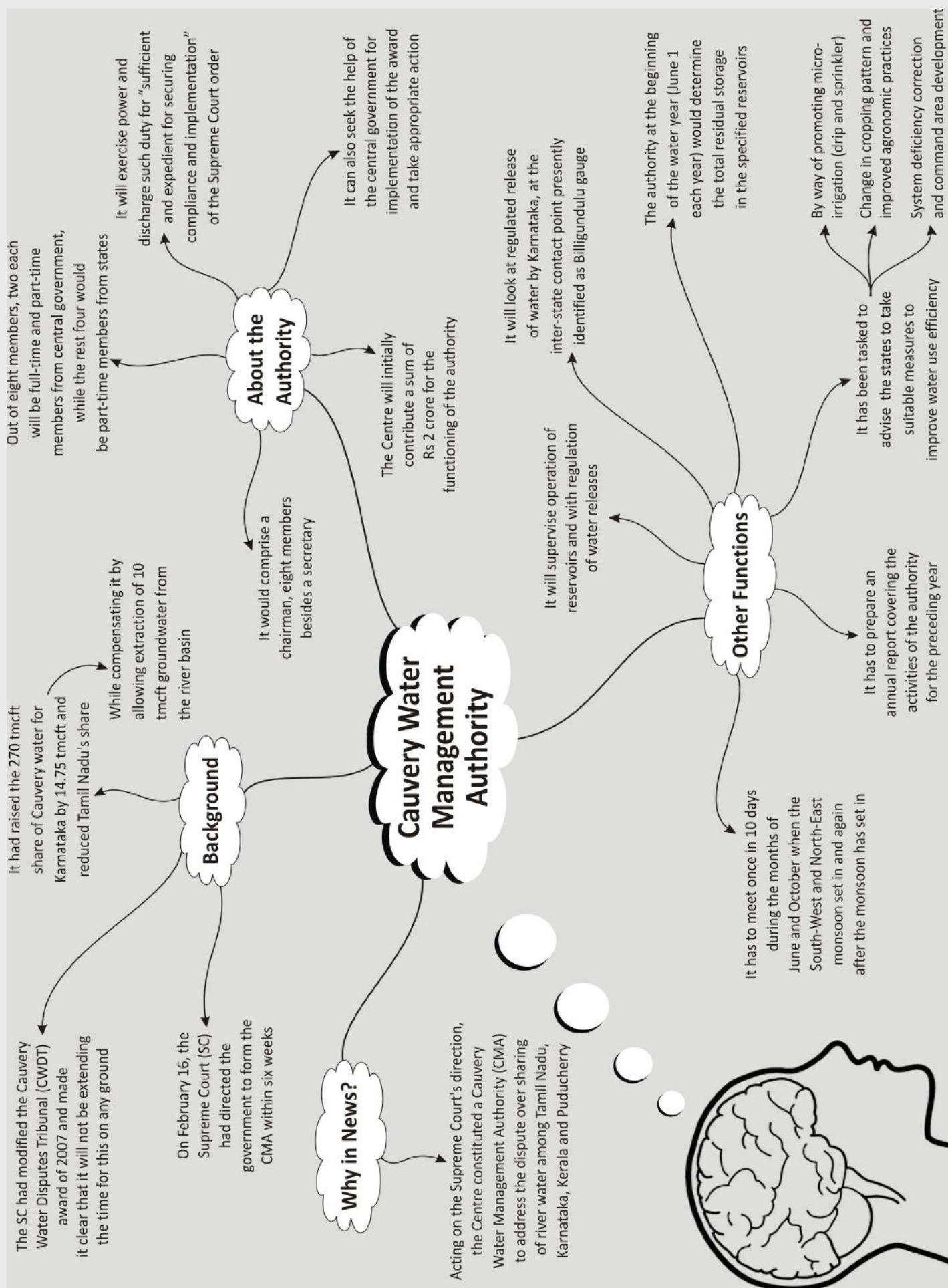
SEVEN BRAIN BOOSTERS

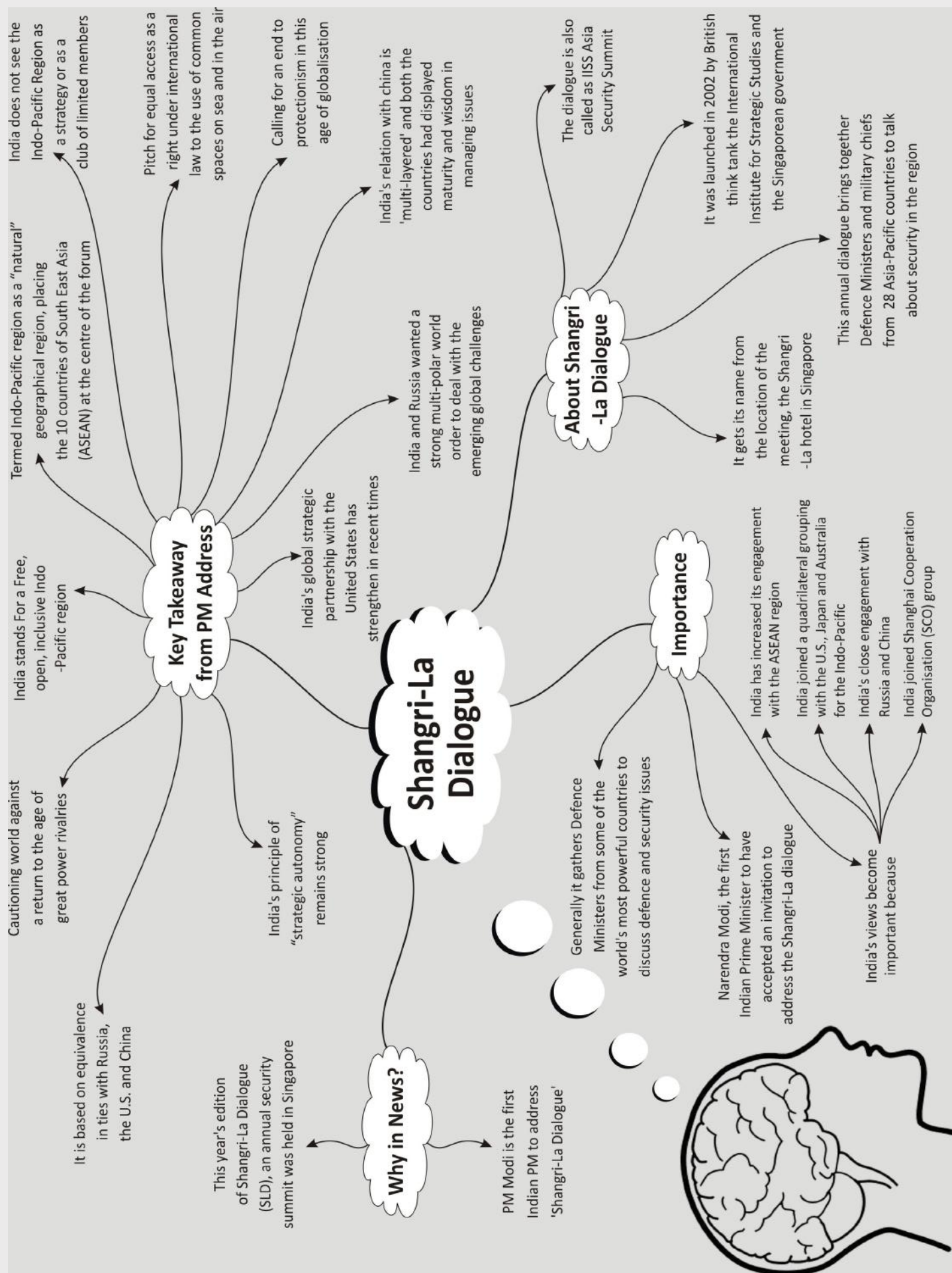


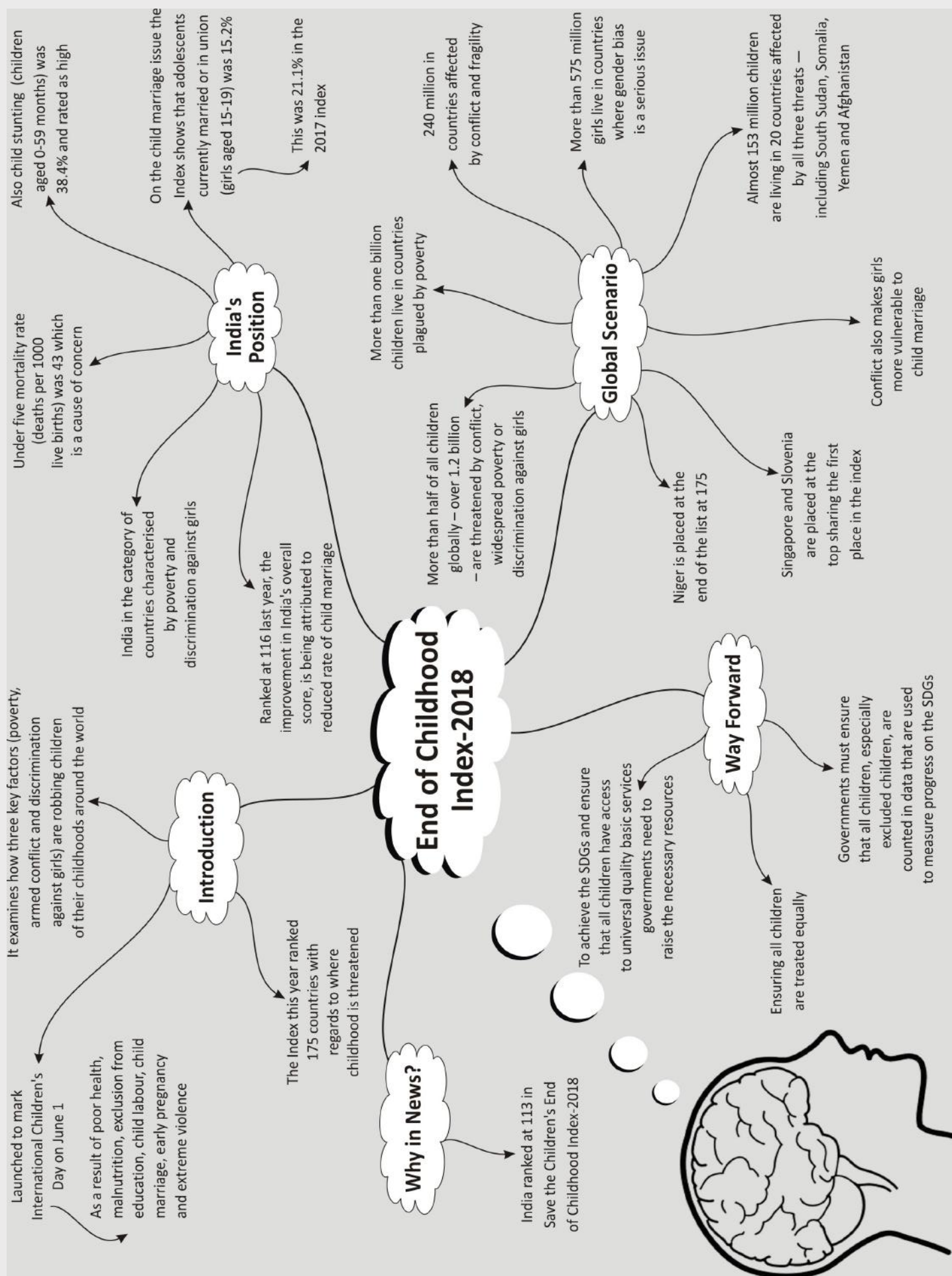












SEVEN MCQ's WITH EXPLANATORY ANSWERS

(Based on Brain Boosters)

Rajya Sabha Reforms

Q1. Consider the following statements:

1. Vice President of India appointed a committee under the chairmanship of N.K. Singh for revising the rules of the Upper House.
2. Article 118(1), gives only the Rajya Sabha the power to make rules to regulate their functioning.

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. Vice President appointed a two-member committee to make recommendations for revising the rules of the Upper House under the chairmanship of V K Agnihotri. Both Houses of Parliament have their own rules of procedure. The Constitution, through Article 118(1), gives the two Houses of Parliament the power to make rules to regulate their functioning.

US- Indo Pacific Command

Q2. Recently the term 'Indo-Pacific Command' is mentioned in the news with reference to

- a) It is a new naval base of the Indian Navy in the Indonesia.
- b) It is a unified combatant command of the US Armed Forces in Indo-Asia-Pacific region.
- c) It is a unified combatant and trade command of the ASEAN countries and India in Pacific Ocean.
- d) It is a unified combatant command of the Pacific countries and India in the Indian Ocean.

Answer: (b)

Explanation: The United States renamed its oldest and largest military command - the Pacific Command - to Indo-Pacific Command, in a largely symbolic move to signal India's importance to the US military amid heightened tensions with China over the militarisation of the South China Sea. It is one of the unified combatant commands of the US Armed Forces responsible for the Indo-Asia-Pacific region.

Pradhan Mantri Jan Vikas Karyakaram

Q3. With reference to the 'Pradhan Mantri Jan Vikas Karyakaram', consider the following statements:

1. Multi-sectoral Development Programme (MsDP) will be renamed and restructured as Pradhan Mantri Jan Vikas Karyakram (PMJVK).
2. A cluster of villages having 35% population of Minorities is eligible under PMJVK.
3. It will include minority concentration district headquarters along with minority concentration towns, blocks and cluster of villages.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (c)

Explanation: Statement 1 and 3 are correct. The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs approved the restructuring and renaming of the Multi-sectoral Development Programme (MsDP) as Pradhan Mantri Jan Vikas Karyakaram. Further, the scheme has been approved for continuation till 2019-20. It will include minority concentration district headquarters along with minority concentration towns, blocks and cluster of villages.

Statement 2 is not correct. Under the restructured scheme the criteria for identification of minority concentration towns and clusters of villages have been rationalized by lowering the population percentage to 25% from 50%.

Draft National Policy on Official Statistics

Q4. Consider the following statements in respect of newly drafted National Policy on Official Statistics:

- 1) It proposes a National Statistical Commission to regulate and audit core statistics and advise the central government.
- 2) The government of India adopted the United Nations Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics in 2016.

- 3) The central government and respective states would regulate and bear the cost of producing and disseminating such core statistics.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (c)

Explanation: Statement 1 and 2 are correct. The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation released a draft National Policy on Official Statistics. It proposes that a National Statistical Commission (NSC) be constituted to regulate and audit core statistics and advise the central government on improving other official statistics.

The United Nations Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics was adopted by the government on 04-05-2016. The government while adopting the principles had also committed to bring out a National Policy on Official Statistics (NPOS) to give furtherance to the principles.

Statement 3 is not correct. Only central government would regulate and bear the cost of producing and disseminating such core statistics.

Cauvery Water Management Authority

Q5. With reference to the 'Cauvery Water Management Authority', consider the following statements:

- 1) The chairman of the authority will be appointed by the Central government for tenure of five years.
- 2) It can seek the help of the central government for implementation of the award in case of no cooperation from party states.
- 3) Cauvery river water dispute involving the states of Kerala, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (d)

Explanation: Statement 1 and 2 are correct. The chairman of the authority will be appointed by the Central government for tenure of five years. He has to be a senior and eminent engineer with wide experience in water resource management or an IAS office in the rank of secretary or additional secretary.

If the Authority finds that any government of the party states do not cooperate in implementing the decision or direction of the Tribunal, it can seek the help of the central government for implementation of the Award of the Tribunal as modified by the Supreme Court vide Order of 16th February, 2018.

Statement 3 is not correct. It is a major water sharing dispute among Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Puducherry and Kerala.

Shangri-La Dialogue

Q6. Consider the following statements in respect of 'Shangri-La Dialogue':

- 1) The forum gets its name from the Shangri-La hotel in Singapore where it has been held since 2002.
- 2) It brings together defence ministers and military chiefs from 28 Asia-Pacific countries to talk about security in the region.

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. The IISS Shangri-La Dialogue is Asia's premier defence summit, a unique meeting of ministers and delegates from over 50 countries including 28 Asia-Pacific countries. The forum gets its name from the Shangri-La hotel in Singapore where it has been held since 2002. Since its inception it has built confidence and fostered practical security cooperation, by facilitating easy communication and fruitful contact among the region's most important defence and security policymakers.

End of Childhood Index-2018

Q7. Consider the following statements in respect of 'End of Childhood Index-2018':

1. India ranked at 115 in Save the Children's End of Childhood Index-2018.
2. It puts India in the category of countries characterised by poverty and discrimination against girls.

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. India ranked at 113 in Save the Children's End of Childhood Index-2018. Last year it was ranked at 116, the improvement in India's overall score by 14 points from 754 to 768 on a scale of 1000.

Statement 2 is correct. The improvement in India is being attributed to reduced rate of child marriage. The study however, puts India in the category of countries characterised by poverty and discrimination against girls.



SEVEN IMPORTANT FACTS FOR PRELIMS

1. Which state government has decided to paternity leave to all its male government employees?

–Haryana

2. Which Indian digital payment system has been linked to Singapore's NETS?

–RuPay

3. Which state government launched the 'Prakriti Kheti Khushhaal Kisaan Yojana'?

–Himachal Pradesh

4. What is the new state animal of Andhra Pradesh?

–Blackbuck

5. India's resolution on digital health was recently adopted by which international organisation?

–World Health Organisation

6. Which Indian state would soon be providing sanitary napkins to girl students at Re 1?

–Haryana

7. Which Indian cartoonist won the award in the best caricature category at the 2018 World Press Cartoon awards?

–Thomas Antony

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SEVEN PERFECT QUOTES

(IMPORTANT FOR ESSAY AND ANSWER WRITING)

"All persons ought to endeavor to follow what is right and not what is established."

—Aristotle

"One should use common words to say uncommon things."

—Arthur Schopenhauer

"If freedom of speech is taken away then dumb and silent we may be led, like sheep to the slaughter."

—George Washington

"An investment in knowledge always pays the best interest."

—Benjamin Franklin

"Before you embark on a journey of revenge, dig two graves."

—Confucius

"Only a life lived for others is a life worthwhile."

—Einstein

"However many holy words you read, however many you speak, what good will they do you if you do not act on upon them?"

—Gautam Buddha

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SEVEN PRACTICE QUESTIONS FOR MAIN EXAM

Answer each of the following questions in 200 words:

- Q1. India is on track to curb cigarette use, but chewable tobacco is a health emergency. India must turn its focus to the smokeless tobacco segment. Discuss it in the light of World Health Organisation's report on tobacco.
- Q2. Explain the term 'zone of peace'. Why is India abandoning its commitment to secure the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace? Critically analyse.
- Q3. Trade theory has consistently been a strong proponent of free trade of goods, services, capital and labour. However, a growing wave of protectionism has dominated global trade. India must tread carefully on free trade agreements such as RCEP. Critically analyse.
- Q4. The idea of making MSP work by forcing private players to buy the crop at this price is a bad one. It will hurt the interest of both the farmers and the industry. Critically analyse.
- Q5. "BIMSTEC is the 'natural choice' for India to fulfil its foreign policy objectives in the neighbourhood towards the East." Comment.
- Q6. Today India occupies a special position as a responsible state with advanced nuclear technology. India should not focus too much on joining NSG. Examine in the light of the evolution of India as a responsible nuclear power.
- Q7. "The media has gone from being the saviour to democracy to being one of the principal threats to it." Comment.

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