

PERFECT 7

WEEKLY

CURRENT AFFAIRS

March : 2020 / Issue- 1

PERMANENT COMMISSION FOR WOMEN

A Progressive Approach

- Global Social Mobility Report 2020 : An Overview
- Bodo Peace Accord 2020 : Ensure A Gloden Future for Assam
- India - Brazil : Deepening Ties
- India - Turkey Relations : Drifting Apart
- Pornography and Its Impact on Children and Society
- Surrogacy in India : Issues and Challenges



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DHYEYA IAS : AN INTRODUCTION



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

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Vinay Kumar Singh
CEO and Founder
Dhyeya IAS



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Q H Khan
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Dhyeya IAS

PERFECT 7 : AN INTRODUCTION



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

Qurban Ali

Chief Editor

Dhyeya IAS

(Ex Editor- Rajya Sabha TV)



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

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

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

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

Ashutosh Singh

Managing Editor

Dhyeya IAS

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

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PREFACE

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

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

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

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

Omveer Singh Chaudhary
Editor
Dhyeya IAS

Perfect 7

The Weekly Issue

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Our other initiative



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SEVEN IMPORTANT ISSUES

1. PERMANENT COMMISSION FOR WOMEN : A PROGRESSIVE APPROACH

Why in News?

The Supreme Court of India gave historical judgement directing that women officers of the Indian Army, serving under Short Service Commission (SSC), be considered for grant of Permanent Commission (PC), irrespective of tenure of service, and also for command posts in non-combat areas since “an absolute bar on women seeking criteria or command appointments would not comport with the guarantee of equality under Article 14”.

Background

The induction of women officers in the Army started in 1992. They were commissioned for a period of five years in certain chosen streams such as the Army Education Corps, Corps of Signals, Intelligence Corps, and Corps of Engineers. Recruits under the Women Special Entry Scheme (WSES) had a shorter pre-commission training period than their male counterparts who were commissioned under the SSC scheme. In 2006, the WSES scheme was replaced with the SSC scheme, which was extended to women officers. They were commissioned for a period of 10 years, extendable up to 14 years. Serving WSES officers were given the option to move to the new SSC scheme, or to continue under the erstwhile WSES. They were to be however, restricted to roles in streams specified

earlier — which excluded combat arms such as infantry and armoured corps. While male SSC officers could opt for permanent commission at the end of 10 years of service, this option was not available to women officers. They were, thus, kept out of any command appointment, and could not qualify for government pension, which starts only after 20 years of service as an officer.

In 2003, a PIL was filed by Babita Puniya before the Delhi High Court for grant of PC to women SSC officers in the Army. Another writ petition was filed by Major Leena Gurav on October 16, 2006. Further, in September 2008, the Defence Ministry passed an order saying PC would be granted prospectively to SSC women officers in the Judge Advocate General (JAG) department and the Army Education Corps (AEC). This circular was challenged before the Delhi High Court by Major Sandhya Yadav and others on the ground that it granted PC only prospectively, and only in certain specified streams.

The Delhi High Court heard the 2003, 2006, and 2008 challenges together, and passed its judgment in 2010. Women officers of the Air Force and Army on SSC who had sought PC but were not granted that status, would be entitled to PC at par with male SSC officers, it ruled. However, this benefit was only available to women officers in service who had instituted proceedings before the High Court, and had retired

during the pendency of the writ petitions. Women officers who had not attained the age of superannuation for permanently commissioned officers would be reinstated with all consequential benefits.

The government challenged the order in the Supreme Court, and even though the High Court judgment was not stayed, the Defence Ministry did not implement those directions. While the proceedings were on, the government passed an order in February 2019 for the grant of PC to SSC women officers in eight streams of the Army, in addition to the JAG and AEC, which had been opened up in 2008. But they would not be offered any command appointments, and would serve only in staff posts.

Key Highlights of the Judgement

The government puts forth certain arguments before the Supreme Court to justify the proposal on the grounds of the permanent commission, grants of pensioner's benefits, limitations of judicial review on policy issues, occupational hazards, reasons for discrimination against women, SSC as a support cadre, and rationalization on physiological limitations for employment in staff appointments. The apex court has rejected these arguments and said that there was a "fundamental fallacy" in the Centre's

policy of considering only women with less than 14 years of experience for permanent commission. The court said the Army could not discriminate between men and women, striking down blatant gender bias propagated for years. On sex stereotypes premised on assumptions about socially ascribed roles of gender which discriminate against women". It has also said that it only shows the need "to emphasise the need for change in mindsets to bring about true equality in the Army".

The SC has done away with all discrimination on the basis of years of service for grant of the PC in 10 streams of combat support arms and services, bringing them on a par with male officers. It has also removed the restriction of women officers only being allowed to serve in staff appointments, which is the most significant and far-reaching aspect of the judgment.

The exclusion of women from combat operations was not examined by the court as it was not the contested in the appeal.

The order castigated the government for submitting a note containing written submissions portraying women as physiologically unfit for answering the "call beyond duty" of the Army. The note had shown women officers in a poor light, saying isolation and hardships would eat into their resolve and that they would have to heed to the call of pregnancy, childbirth and family. The note had mentioned that women ran the risk of capture by enemy and taken prisoner of war.

The SC also appreciated the government's February, 2019 decision and said that the policy decision of the Union government is recognition of the right of women officers to equality of opportunity.

Implications

Women officers will be granted Permanent Commission in the Indian Army in all the ten branches where women are inducted for SSC. So, besides the existing two streams of

JAG and AEC, now PC will be granted in Signals, Engineers, Army Aviation, Army Air Defence, Electronics and Mechanical Engineers, Army Service Corps, Army Ordnance Corps and Intelligence also to women officers. SSC women officers will give their option for PC before completion of four years of Commissioned Service and they will exercise option for grant of PC and their choice of specialisation.

A woman can rise to the rank of Colonel and above is based on merit, like their male counterparts. At the rank of Colonel, an officer picks up a substantive command and would be delegated to carry out independent tasks. A Colonel commands a battalion, which typically consists of 850 men. A woman officer who is successful in this position could technically rise to the highest ranks of the Army though, at the moment, women officers will not be inducted into the combat arms such as the Infantry, Artillery or Armored corps.

Women in command

It's an order

Here are some of the salient features of the order:

- Accepts government policy to grant PC to short service commission (SSC) women officers in 10 streams of the Combat Support Arms and Services wings
- SSC women officers are eligible for command assignments and not just staff appointments
- SSC women officers granted PC will be entitled to all consequential benefits, including promotion and financial gains

For the women in uniform, career progression is now becoming a reality with the Supreme Court directing the Centre to grant permanent commission (PC) within three months. Here is a snapshot of the long years of the fight women officers have conducted against discrimination:

1992: Centre notifies women eligible for appointment as officers for five years in the Army Postal Service, Judge Advocate General Department, Army Education Corps, Signal Corps, Intelligence Corps, Corps of Engineers, Corps of Electrical and Mechanical Engineering and Regiment of Artillery, among other Corps

Dec. 1996: Ministry of Defence deletes the five-year clause for enrollment

Nov. 2005: The initial process of induction of women officers under the WSES was replaced by SSCs with an

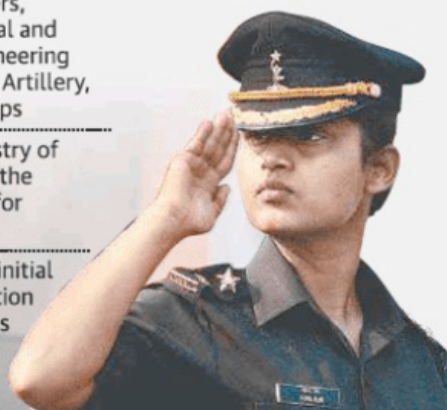
outer period of 14 years. The first batch of women officers under the new scheme entered the Army in 2008

2003 and 2006: Writ petitions filed in the Delhi High Court by advocate

Babita Puniya and several SSC women Army officers for permanent commission and equality of opportunity in the Army

March 2010: Delhi HC holds that women SSC officers of the Air Force and Army who had opted for PC, but not granted that status would be entitled to PC at par with male SSC officers with all consequential benefits. Contempt proceedings were then initiated by the women officers against the Union of India for non-compliance with the HC judgment. Contempt was later stayed

September 2, 2011: The case reaches the Supreme Court in appeal



Position in Other Forces

The Indian Air Force and the Indian Navy have also granted a permanent commission to women officers even as both have opened up some combat roles for women. The Air force allows women as officers in flying and ground duties. Women IAF SSC officers flies helicopter, transport aircraft and now even fighter jets. In the navy, women officers inducted through SSC are allowed in logistics, law, observers, air traffic control, maritime reconnaissance pilots and Naval Armament Inspectorate Cadre.

The details of the percentage of women working for armed forces are as under:

Name of the Service	Percentage (%)
Army	03.80
Air Force	13.09
Navy	06.00
Medical Officers	21.63
Dental Officers	20.75
Nursing Officers	100.00

Global Experience

Women undertaking Frontline combat roles in armies have been a contentious issue around the world. According to National Geographic, at least 16 industrialized nations permit women to serve on the Frontline or in combat roles.

- ◆ In 2018, the UK military lifted its ban on women serving in close combat ground roles and allowed them to serve in elite special forces.
- ◆ Women have served in the US



AIR FORCE

Will witness the **maximum impact of the SC judgement** as a similar case by air force officers could go the same way in the court this week

IAF has the highest proportion of women officers – at 13.28% and, importantly, it has opened all its arms for entry. This ranges from air traffic controllers to combat and transport pilots

As per internal assessments, **women officers will qualify in large numbers for command positions** because they have got top-of-the-line ratings and the requisite experience. If the SC judgment goes the same way, women officers could take over the command of Air Force bases and units in the immediate future

THE FUTURE

If equal opportunities principle is applied uniformly, it is a matter of time before the male-only training academies open up to women

The tri-services National Defence Academy is the bedrock of officers training – a case can be made for entry of women cadets to the academy. Similarly, other 'male only' academies could open up in the near future

military in noncombat roles and in 2016 the United States lifted Pentagon's ban on allowing women in frontline combat roles.

- ◆ People's Liberation Army Ground Force (PLAGF) of China, the world's largest Army, has a ground force consisting of approximately five per cent or less women officers. This means that out of its 1.4 million troops, only 53,000 are women officers.
- ◆ According to estimates by the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS), Pakistan, has 3,400 women serving in its armed forces.
- ◆ Countries like Canada, Denmark and Israel opened combat roles for women in the mid and late 80s. In 1989, Canada allowed women in combat roles, Denmark has had a total inclusion policy since 1988 and Israel in 1985 started recruiting women into combat positions.
- ◆ In the mid-1980s, Norway became the first North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) country to let women join the forces in all combat capacity.

Way Forward

The implications of the judgement will have to be borne by the human resources management department of the Army, which will need to change policy in order to comply. But the biggest shift will have to take place in the culture, norms, and values of the rank and file of the Army, which will be the responsibility of the senior military and political leadership. After the Supreme Court's progressive decision, they have no choice but to bite the proverbial bullet.

General Studies Paper- I

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

General Studies Paper- III

Topic: Various Security forces and agencies and their mandate.

○○○

2. GLOBAL SOCIAL MOBILITY REPORT 2020 : AN OVERVIEW

Why in News?

India has been ranked very low at 76th place out of 82 countries on a new Social Mobility Index compiled by the World Economic Forum, while Denmark has topped the charts.

Introduction

The World Economic Forum's Global Social Mobility Index provides a new, holistic assessment of 82 global economies according to their performance on five key dimensions of social mobility distributed over 10 pillars:

- ◆ **Pillar 1: Health** - It measures the ability of countries to provide high-quality healthcare to their populations. Access to high-quality healthcare is a crucial factor that has a lifelong impact on the ability to experience social mobility.
- ◆ **Pillars 2–4: Education (Access, Quality and Equity and Lifelong Learning)** - These three pillars—Education Access, Education Quality & Equity, and Lifelong Learning—measure the ability of countries to give access to education and ensure that high quality education is available throughout life to all its

citizens, regardless of their socio-economic backgrounds.

- ◆ **Pillar 5: Technology Access** - The Technology Access pillar measures the level of technology access and adoption among the population. Access to technology has the potential to act as a further equalizer, by providing information to everyone irrespective of their socio-economic background. Technology has the potential to ignore such distinctions and provide unrestricted access to knowledge. The emergence of online learning has lowered the barriers to learning resources. Alongside formal education structures, online learning is instrumental in providing access to lifelong learning.
- ◆ **Pillars 6–8: Fair Work Opportunities** - These three pillars—Work Opportunities, Fair Wages, and Working Conditions—measure the ability for economies to provide access to work opportunities, ensure good working conditions and provide fair wages to its citizens regardless, of their education level and socioeconomic background.

Social mobility outcomes are heavily dependent on education, but they are also directly related to labour market factors. Skills must be converted into earnings to enable income mobility. Such a process of conversion needs to rely on appropriate labour market factors.

- ◆ **Pillars 9–10: Social Protection & Inclusive Institutions** - These two pillars—Social Protection and Inclusive Institutions—measure the ability of economies to provide social protection and inclusive institutions and efficient public services to their population.

Significance of Social Mobility Study

Economies with greater social mobility provide more equally shared opportunities—namely, an equal and meritocratic footing irrespective of socio-economic background, geographic location, gender or origin. There is a direct and linear relationship between a country's income inequality and its social mobility score on the index. Low social mobility entrenches historical inequalities and higher income inequalities fuel lower social mobility. Enhancing social mobility can convert this vicious cycle into a virtuous one and has positive benefits on broader economic growth.

The Global Social Mobility Index equips policy-makers with a tool to identify areas for improving social mobility and promoting equally shared opportunities for the entirety of their citizens, regardless of their development stage.

Research has shown that in high-income countries, since the 1990s, there is stagnation at both the bottom and the top end of the income distribution—a phenomenon



that social mobility experts describe as 'sticky floors' and 'sticky ceilings'. In other words, how far an individual can move up in society determines a lot whether one is closer to the income "floor" (or poor) or "ceiling" (or rich). For instance, in Denmark or Finland (which rank highest in social mobility index), if Person A's parent earns 100% more than Person Z, it is estimated that the impact on Person A's future income is around 15%, but in the US the impact is far more – about 50%– and in China, the impact is even more – roughly 60%.

World Economic Forum (WEF), based in Cologny-Geneva, Switzerland, is an NGO, founded in 1971. The WEF's mission is cited as "committed to improving the state of the world by engaging business, political, academic, and other leaders of society to shape global, regional, and industry agendas". The WEF hosts an annual meeting at the end of January in Davos, which brings together some 3,000 business leaders, international political leaders, economists, celebrities and journalists to contemplate on global matters. Besides it publishes various reports which helps in policy formulations and other decision making.

Social mobility levels, then, can help us understand both the speed – that is, how long it takes for individuals at the bottom of the scale to catch up with those at the top – and the intensity – that is, how many steps it takes for an individual to move up the ladder in a given period – of social mobility. It would take a whopping 7 generations for someone born in a low-income family in India to approach mean income level; in Denmark, it would only take 2 generations.

Conceptual Understanding of Social Mobility

Social mobility can be understood as the movement in personal circumstances either "upwards" or "downwards" of an individual with those of their parents. Social mobility, movement of individuals, families, or groups through a system of social hierarchy or

stratification. If such mobility involves a change in position, especially in occupation, but no change in social class, it is called "horizontal mobility." An example would be a person who moves from a managerial position in one company to a similar position in another. If, however, the move involves a change in social class, it is called "vertical mobility" and involves either "upward mobility" or "downward mobility." An industrial worker who becomes a wealthy businessman moves upward in the class system; a landed aristocrat who loses everything in a revolution moves downward in the system.

Different Aspects of Social Mobility

- ◆ **Intra-generational Mobility:** The ability of an individual to move between socio-economic classes within their lifetime.
- ◆ **Inter-generational Mobility:** The ability for a family group to move up or down the socio-economic ladder across the span of one or more generations.
- ◆ **Absolute Income Mobility:** The ability of an individual to earn, in real terms, as much as or more than their parents at the same age.
- ◆ **Absolute Educational Mobility:** The ability of an individual to attain higher education levels than their parents.
- ◆ **Relative Income Mobility:** How much of an individual's income is determined by their parents' income.
- ◆ **Relative Educational Mobility:** How much of an individual's educational attainment is determined by their parents' educational attainment.

Key Findings

The Global Social Mobility Index reveals that there are only a handful of nations with the right conditions to foster social mobility. Furthermore, most countries

underperform in four areas: fair wages, social protection, working conditions and lifelong learning.

The index also reveals that achieving higher levels of social mobility needs to be perceived as an important element of a wider move towards a stakeholder-based model of capitalism.

Looking at all economies and average income levels, those children who are born into less affluent families typically experience greater barriers to success than their more affluently born counterparts. Furthermore, inequalities are rising even in countries that have experienced rapid growth.

In most countries, individuals from certain groups have become historically disadvantaged and poor social mobility perpetuates and exacerbates such inequalities. In turn, these types of inequalities can undermine the cohesiveness of economies and societies

India's Performance

India ranks 76th out of 82 economies with a score of 42.7. It ranks 41st in lifelong learning and 53rd in working conditions. Despite a significant decrease in the percentage of people living in absolute poverty, there are several areas for improvement for India to provide more equally shared opportunities to its population. First, because of low life expectancy and low health access and quality performance, it scores 54.6 on the Health pillar.

On the education front, it scores 41.1 on the Education Access pillar and 31.3 on Education Quality and Equity, due to its pupil-to-teacher ratios, which are still very high across pre-primary, primary and secondary levels, among other factors.

In terms of work opportunities, India has the second-highest level of workers in vulnerable employment in the ranking (76.2%), behind Saudi Arabia and a low female labour

participation rate (29.8% of the male labour participation).

Among the G7 economies, Germany is the most socially mobile, ranking 11th with 78 points, followed by France in 12th position. Canada comes next (14th), followed by Japan (15th), the United Kingdom (21st), the United States (27th) and Italy (34th).

Among the world's large emerging economies, the Russian Federation is the most socially mobile of the BRICS grouping, ranking 39th, with a score of 64 points. Next is China (45th), followed by Brazil (60th), India (76th) and South Africa (77th).

Another area where real structural reform needs to take place is in terms of fair wages (79th). Social protection coverage (76th) is also very low in comparison with its regional peers, and overall social protection expenditure is very low (2.68% of GDP). The combination of these factors is detrimental to the social mobility of its population.

Impediments to Social Mobility

- ◆ Having grown up in families with little or no wealth and having parents with poor health are the two main predictors of own poor health.
- ◆ About a third of children from, manual workers, remain manual workers themselves.
- ◆ Individuals with higher educated parents tend to have better educational outcomes in terms of literacy and numeracy than those whose parents have low educational achievement. Children end up in similar occupations to their affluent parents.
- ◆ There is thus substantial risk for middle-income households to fall into low income and poverty over their life course.
- ◆ Across generations, earnings mobility prospects tend to be usually weaker in countries where income inequality is high

and stronger in countries where inequality is low.

Social Mobility in India

Unlike the colonial stereotype, India has not been a stagnant, other-worldly society, devoid of ideas of equality and egalitarianism. Different indexes have different criteria. What we see today is an increasing desire for socio-economic mobility, not just the end of untouchability and exclusion, or caste representation. Our political class, too, is stuck in the 20th century framework of thinking. Even parties claiming to represent Dalits, backward, and the poor have failed to understand the shift — something that was clearly visible in elections.

In a report, called Addressing Inequality in South Asia (World Bank), which compared the share of consumption among three developing countries - Vietnam, Bangladesh and India - and the United States, divided along transitioning class lines - moving out of poverty, those moving from poverty into the middle class, falling back to poverty, falling out of middle class. The findings of the analysis were that "within the same generation, mobility in earnings - measured by the ability to move out of poverty and into the middle class - is comparable to that of the United States. The report said that in India 15% of the total population moved above the poverty line. By the given measures, the report claimed "upward mobility within a generation in India was comparable to that of dynamic societies such as the United States."

Much of India's upward mobility can be attributed to increased urbanisation in the country. Urban jobs have become a ticket to the middle class. Upward mobility is much stronger in cities, where even self-employment and casual work can lead to substantial gains in consumption. While there is robust mobility, but there is inequality

in access to public services, which can largely be traced to factors such as gender, location, and caste. India's population growth rates in urban areas are double those of rural areas, but its sustainability is fragile.

Increasingly, jobs are beating class and caste routes to prosperity. While they still do matter, factors like where you were born and your parent's occupation matter less and less in modern India. Upward mobility has been stronger, relative to the population, among the lowest castes, known as 'untouchables'. Where children would usually take up the jobs of their parents, occupational mobility of the younger generation has increased to greater levels than the general population. While much is made of India's diminishing poverty, it doesn't necessarily stop the middle class from falling back there.

India's Initiatives

India as a developing nation is striving to balance the aspirations of the citizens and the resources at hand. Social mobility is in itself a holistic paradigm and policy decisions also address it in the same manner. Following are a few examples of how the government is providing a platform to address the challenges to social mobility:

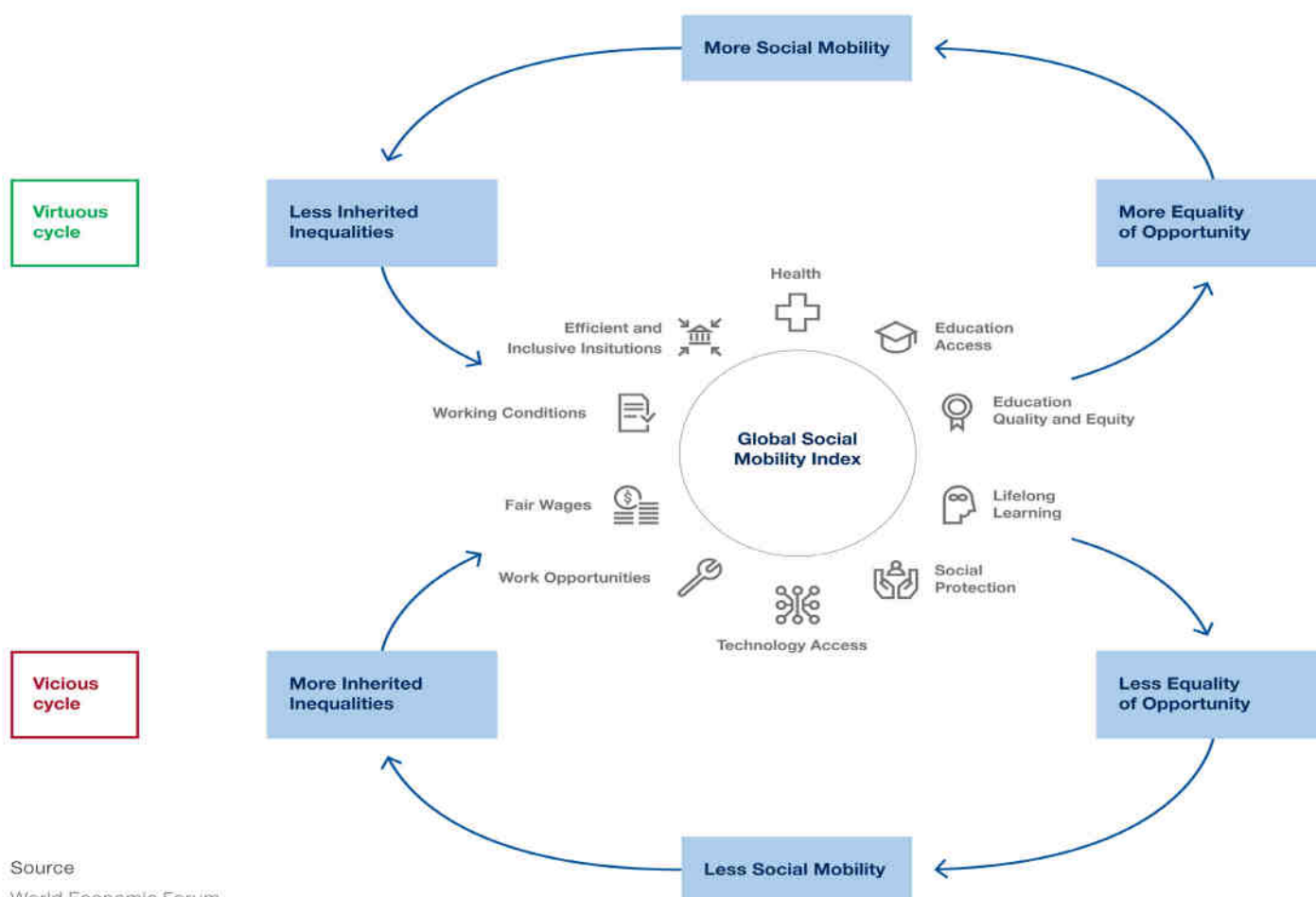
1. Education Sector Initiatives:

Samagra Shiksha (A comprehensive programme subsuming Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) and Teacher Education (TE)); Swayam platform; inclusion of Right to Education as a Fundamental Right, etc.

2. Health Sector Initiatives:

Ayushman Bharat, 'Kayakalp', Midwifery initiative, AYUSH initiative for multiple forms of medical treatments; Free health check up schemes and Aanganwadi services; a wide network of government dispensaries; POSHAN

Global Social Mobility Index Framework



Abhiyaan ; Mission Indradhanush (MI) and Intensified Mission Indradhanush (IMI), etc.

3. Labour Market and Work Opportunities:

Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Kendra; National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme; SANKALP; STRIVE; Wage Code Bill; etc.

4. Technology:

Digital India Initiative; National e-governance Plan, National Knowledge Network; National Policy on Universal Electronic Accessibility, etc.

5. Social Protection:

Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana ; Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana; Atal Pension Yojana; National Pension Scheme; Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana; Pradhan Mantri Vaya Vandana Yojana ; Atal Bimit Vyakti Kalyan Yojana; Pradhan

Mantri Rojgar Protsahan Yojana, etc.

Conclusion

There is nothing inevitable about inequality and social immobility. They are the products of decades of focus on maximization of profit and the pursuit of economic growth without a commensurate focus on equity and inclusion. Reversing the current trends is a daunting challenge that requires political will, concerted efforts and time. The large differences revealed by the Global Social Mobility Index suggest that it is possible to make societies more socially mobile and more resilient, without compromising on economic performance.

Increasing social mobility implies leveling the playing field for individuals throughout life, from birth

to adulthood. However, the need for a comprehensive approach to social mobility is unquestionable. While some areas may be prioritized, no area can be neglected, regardless of a country's stage of development.

General Studies Paper- II

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

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

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3. BODO PEACE ACCORD 2020 : ENSURE A GLODEN FUTURE FOR ASSAM

Why in News?

Recently in fervent appeal the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi gave a clarion call to those pursuing the path of violence to lay down their arms and return to the mainstream like the Bodo Cadres. Prime Minister was participating in the celebrations of the signing of the Bodo Agreement at Kokrajhar in Assam. This was his first visit to the North-East since the signing of the historic accord on the 27th of January 2020.

Background

The Bodos have had a long history of separatist demands, marked by armed struggle. In 1966-67, the demand for a separate state called Bodoland was raised under the banner of the Plains Tribals Council of Assam (PTCA), a political outfit. In 1987, the All Bodo Students Union (ABSU) renewed the demand. "Divide Assam fifty-fifty", was a call given by the All Bodo Students Union (ABSU's) then leader, Upendra Nath Brahma. The unrest was a fallout of the Assam Movement (1979-85), whose culmination — the Assam Accord — addressed the demands of protection and safeguards for the "Assamese people", leading the Bodos to launch a movement to protect their own identity. In December 2014, separatists killed more than 30 people in Kokrajhar and Sonitpur. In the 2012 Bodo-Muslim riots, hundreds were killed and almost 5 lakh were displaced.

Cronology of the Dispute

- ◆ **1929** - Bodo leader Gurudev Kalicharan Brahma submits a memorandum to the Simon Commission asking for reservations in the Legislative assembly, and a separate political entity for his people. His efforts go in vain.
- ◆ **1960s and 1970s** - There was calls from Bodos and other tribes for a separate state of 'Udayachal' as immigrants were accused of illegally encroaching on Bodo-inhabited lands.
- ◆ **Late 1980s** - Calls for a separate state for Bodos - Bodoland - and for Assam to be divided "50-50" were raised. Some, like Bodo leader and ABSU president Upendranath Brahma, adopt a peaceful approach, but it was at this time that armed separatist groups like the Bodoland Liberation Tigers (BLT) and The National Democratic Front of Bodoland (of which NDFB(S) was a faction) are founded.
- ◆ **February 1993** - The Bodoland Autonomous Council (BAC) was constituted after the Centre, the Assam government and the ABSU sign a tripartite agreement as First Bodo accord.
- ◆ **February 2003** - The Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC) was formed after the Centre, the Assam government and the BLT sign a tripartite agreement. The BLT is disbanded. The BTC would administer the Bodoland Territorial Area - an entity based on the idea of a 'state-within-a-state' and created by the reorganization of seven Assamese districts into four contiguous districts- Kokrajhar, Chirang, Udalguri and Baksa. Hagrama Mohilary, who headed the Bodo Territorial Council, was a leader in the now defunct armed separatist group Bodo Liberation Tigers.
- ◆ **2005** - The National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NSFB) agreed to a ceasefire with the Assam government and the Centre. After the treaty was signed, the group split into three factions. One of those factions, the NDFB (S), continued to carry out violent attacks in the state.
- ◆ **2012** - Ethnic riots involving Bengali-speaking Muslims and Bodos in Bodoland Territorial Area District killed 100 and render four lakh homeless. This wasn't an isolated incident. Bloody clashes between Bodos and non-Bodos, especially Bengali-speaking Muslims, have been routinely reported in the region.
- ◆ **May 2014** - Bodo terrorists killed more than 30 people in Kokrajhar and Baksa districts, allegedly believing that the victims hadn't voted for their candidates in the Lok Sabha elections held in April.
- ◆ **December 2014** - Attacks by Bodo terrorists kill at least 81 people - including 76 Adivasis - and render 2 lakh homeless.
- ◆ **August 2016** - Terrorists kill 14 civilians at a market in Kokrajhar district. NDFB(S) was suspected to be behind the attack.
- ◆ **August, 2017:** The movement group comprising ABSU, NDFB (P) and People's Joint Action Committee for Boroland Movement (PJACBM) supported by Ranjan Daimary-led NDFB faction, who is currently under peace parley with the Government of India, had announced the series of movement seeking early solution to the Bodoland issue.
- ◆ A crucial meeting of the movement group was held at Bodofa House, Baganshali in Kokrajhar on 20 August, 2017, and discussed the future course of action and movement strategy.

- ◆ **January 2020:** As the ABSU continued with its movement for creation of a Bodoland state and NDFB carried out hit-and-run operations, several rounds of negotiations with New Delhi, four factions of NDFB and the ABSU led to the signing of the third Bodo accord.

About Bodos

The Bodos are among the earliest known inhabitants of the Brahmaputra Valley. They enjoyed royal positions in Assam in ancient and medieval periods and established kingdoms under different names, at different points of time. The most famous among those kingdoms are the Chutiya kingdom, the Dimasa kingdom and the Koch kingdom. It is generally accepted that there are 18 sub-groups under the larger Bodo family. In the present times, they are the largest plain tribes of Assam who inhabit the northern areas of the Brahmaputra Valley, namely, in places like Kokrajhar, Udalguri, Chirang, Baksa, Darrang, Sonitpur, Kamrup, Nalbari, Barpeta, and Dhubri among other places (Ibid). The Bodos are also found in various North Eastern states like Nagaland, Tripura, Meghalaya and Arunachal Pradesh and also spread across international boundaries.

First Bodo Peace Accord, 1993

The first Bodo accord was signed with the ABSU in 1993, leading to the creation of a Bodoland Autonomous Council with limited political powers. It provides for the creation of Bodoland Autonomous Council within the state of Assam, within the frame work of the Constitution of India.

However the Bodo militant organization rejected the Bodoland Accord and demanded an independent Bodoland. At this stage the Bodo militant started ethnic cleansing operation in kokrajhar districts in 1996, which latter resulted in ethnic

riot between communities in Assam. About more than one lakh people were killed and thousands were being displaced. The communities who were killed are mostly Nepalese, santhals, Muslim immigrants and also Assamese speaking individuals.

As a result of mass killing other communities also started forming militant groups and organisations in order to protect their communities from the onslaught of Bodos. Such groups were Adivasi Cobra Force (ACF), Birsra Commando Force (BCF), Bengal Tiger Force (BTF) and many other have emerged. Apart from mass killing NDFB and BLTF had also indulged in extortion bid in the name of Bodoland Tax.

Second Bodo Peace Accord, 2003

After a series of talk it reached to a cease fire agreement between the Bodo militant organization and Government of India on 29th march 2000. Finally the memorandum of settlement was signed on 10th February 2003 in New Delhi. The main objectives of the agreement was to create self- governing body to known as Bodoland Territorial Council Assam (BTC) within the state of Assam and to administer a territory spanning 3082 villages making four districts – kokrajhar, Chirang, Baksa, and Udalguri under the provision of sixth schedule of the constitution of India, to fulfil economic, linguistic and educational aspiration and preservation of land right, socio cultural and ethnic identity of Bodos and to speed up infrastructural development in the newly formed BTC area.

Bodo Peace Accord, 2020

In the past, not being satisfied with the settlements of 1993 and 2003, the Bodos have been consistently demanding more powers. A comprehensive and final resolution to their demands has been arrived at,

while retaining the territorial integrity of the state of Assam.

- ◆ Commission to be set up for inclusion of villages contiguous to BTAD and having majority of tribal population.
- ◆ Exclusion of villages currently under Bodoland Territorial Area Districts (BTAD) which are contiguous non Sixth Schedule areas and having majority non-tribal population.
- ◆ Increase of constituencies from 40 to 60.
- ◆ Commission to submit its report within six months.
- ◆ The existing BTC will be known as BTR.
- ◆ Principal secretary will have monitoring department within BTR.
- ◆ Executive functions will be exercised by CEO in the ranks of a Principal Secretary to Government of Assam.
- ◆ DCs, SPs to be posted in consultation with BTR authorities .
- ◆ DCs have to report to CEM of BTR through CEO.
- ◆ A tripartite mechanism headed by a cabinet minister with BTC CEM and a representatives of MHA to be set up to review (once in six months) the status of all legislations and laws .
- ◆ Bodo Kachari Welfare Council to be set up for development of Bodo villages outside BTR.
- ◆ Advisory committee to be set up to identify the needs of the Bodo villages outside BTR.
- ◆ Bodos living in Karbi Anglong and Dima Hasao to be accorded ST (Hills) status.
- ◆ Assam government to notify Bodo language in Devanagari script as associate official language.



- ◆ Assam government to provincialise schools and colleges in BTR and Bodo medium schools outside BTR.
- ◆ Assam government to set up separate directorate for Bodo medium schools.
- ◆ Cultural complex cum centre of excellence to be set up in the name of Bodofa Upendra Nath Brahma in Kokrajhar.
- ◆ Government to enact special provision for protection of land rights to tribal in tribal belts and blocks.
- ◆ Assam government to set up separate department to look after councils under sixth schedule 8 Assam government to create one post of DIG in addition to the existing post of IG 8 An administrative staff college to be set up.
- ◆ Assam government to provide Rs. 5 lakh compensation to each of next of kin of Bodoland Agitation martyrs.
- ◆ NDFB-S to be disbanded.
- ◆ Union and state government to take up measures for rehabilitation of surrendered militants.
- ◆ Criminal cases against activists of all NDFB factions will be withdrawn.
- ◆ Assam government to provide Rs. 250 crore an annual financial package per year. The Centre also to provide Rs. 250 crore per annum.

Current Issue and Challenges

Granting ST (Hill) status to the Bodos living outside BTAD is a commitment which the Centre had made in 2003 but could not implement it as there has been a resistance in some areas, particularly the hill district of Karbi Anglong, from other ethnic communities. They fear if the Bodos settled there are granted ST status, they would cut into their benefits, including reservation of seats for STs in various fields.

While welcoming the peace accord between the Centre, state government and four factions of NDFB, the Autonomous State Demand Committee (ASDC) said the decision to grant Scheduled Tribe (Hills) status to Bodos living in Karbi Anglong and Dima Hasao is unfortunate which shows dissent with this new accord.

There has also been a growing divide between Bodos and non-Bodos living in BTAD in 600 villages, following Centre's signing of the second Bodo accord with erstwhile insurgent group Bodo Liberation Tigers. The non-Bodos living in BTAD are likely to resist any move to include any new village in BTAD even if it has a tribal majority population.

Conclusion

The Bodo movement is a complex one with the transition from one

phase to another with the change in demands and leadership. The Bodo movement can fit into the categories of movements for separate statehood; insurgent movements and cultural rights movements. All throughout these process, the middle class has played an important role from the mass movement to the arms struggle i.e. preservation of ethnic identity, culture, norms, values, etc. and the issue of land alienation and the protection of their ancestral land from the dominant community. The demand for autonomy was mainly the drove by the desire for self-determination and the feeling of step-motherly treatment of the state government in terms of allocation of resource and allocation of funds in which there exist economic and social backwardness.

The 'historic' accord with the Bodos in Assam solves a near four-decade-old insurgency problem but it is likely to face a challenge in implementing particularly two commitments made through the accord. The first one being, the inclusion of villages contiguous to BTAD having a majority tribal population to BTAD. The second being the protection of the rights of Bodos living outside BTAD by way of inclusion of them in the list of Scheduled Tribes (Hill) of Assam in a time-bound manner. Government has also initiated numerous policy level interventions that have improved infrastructure, connectivity, economic growth, tourism and social development of the region.

General Studies Paper- III

Topic: Role of external state and non-state actors in creating challenges to internal security.



4. INDIA - BRAZIL : DEEPENING TIES

Why in News?

The President of Brazil Jair Bolsonaro was the Chief Guest at India's Republic Day celebration. 15 agreements were signed between the two countries during the Presidential visit on diverse areas such as investments, trade, health, social security, agriculture, science and technology, clean energy and cyber security showcased the huge potential that the two countries had of working together.

Introduction

On the sidelines of the 11th BRICS summit in Brazil, the enthusiasm of Indian Prime Minister, Narendra Modi to engage Brazilian President, Jair Bolsonaro was evident as he extended an invitation to the Brazilian leader to be the chief guest at India's Republic Day celebration, signalling New Delhi's desire to probe a meaningful relationship with Brazil. The possibility of stronger India-Brazil ties will have an underlying effect on the future world order, especially resource-rich Brazil and the demands of a "rising" India, two countries that have for long shared similar worldviews.

Since the institutionalization of the BRICS grouping in 2009, India's interest to redefine its relations with Brazil regional power in South America that has global aspirations, has been gaining momentum. Though little attention has been paid to the dynamics of India-Brazil ties, the

various complementarities shared by India and Brazil in their foreign policy history makes the relationship more interesting.

India - Brazil Relations

India and Brazil share a very close and multifaceted relationship at bilateral level as well as in plurilateral fora such as BRICS, BASIC, G-20, G-4, IBSA, International Solar Alliance, Biofuture Platform and in the larger multilateral bodies such as the UN, WTO, UNESCO and WIPO. The bilateral strategic partnership, which has opened a new phase for India-Brazil relations in 2006, is based on a common global vision, shared democratic values, and a commitment to foster economic growth with social inclusion for the welfare of the people of both countries.

In recent years, Brazil and India have demonstrated an interest in having a more decisive role in international institutions, one that is proportional to their geographic size and share in world population. Both have campaigned for a UN Security Council permanent seat. Like India, Brazil has intended to preserve autonomy in its foreign policy against the whims and fancies of Washington. For a considerable period, both also saw themselves as leaders of the third world by raising issues that concern developing countries and demanding a reform of the international institutions such as the United Nations (UN) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

for Indian businesses in Brazil. "Brazil's potential is unmatched," Bolsonaro said, adding that opportunities are right before the two countries waiting to be tapped.

- ◆ Increase in cooperation in clean energy, especially in ethanol, can help both the countries to become a low carbon economy.
- ◆ Brazil could export sesame seeds to India and there was huge investment potential in the agriculture sector for both sides.
- ◆ The future areas for intensifying cooperation infrastructure were a specific sector where the two countries could work together. India also wants to take its relationship with Brazil in areas such as defence, clean energy and start-ups to the next level.
- ◆ Railways are another area where the two countries could work together, India expects to run the entire network of railways on electricity by 2024. It will be the first railway in the entire world, of this scale and size.

Bilateral Trade

In the ranking for the largest trading partners of Brazil, India rose to 10th position from 11th position in the year 2016. Brazil is one of the most important trading partners of India in the entire LAC (Latin America and Caribbean) region trade between the two countries will grow to USD 15 billion by 2022. India-Brazil bilateral trade has increased substantially in the last two decades. However, the global drop in commodity prices and the economic recession in Brazil started in 2015 affected Brazil's overall trade.

India and Brazil will activate the Business Leaders Forum constituted



Major Areas of Cooperation

Addressing business representatives from the two countries, the Brazilian President Bolsonaro said that there was a huge potential

some years ago to facilitate bilateral trade and work towards achieving the target of \$15 billion by 2022 from the present level of \$8.2 billion and even going beyond it. In 2018-19, India's exports to Brazil were worth \$3.8 billion while its imports from the country were to the tune of \$4.4 billion. Major Indian exports to Brazil include agro-chemicals, synthetic yarns, auto components and parts, pharmaceuticals and petroleum products. Brazilian exports to India include crude oil, gold, vegetable oil, sugar and bulk mineral and ores.

Economies Potential

Agribusiness is the most immediate and obvious opportunity. Complementary growing seasons and sizeable internal markets make the two countries ideally suited for partnerships in agriculture.

- ◆ Promoting Brazilian ethanol exports to India will be a major aim of President Bolsonaro.
- ◆ In exchange, Brazil is poised to help Indian farmers implement a more efficient ethanol programme that reduces reliance on subsidies and helps improve urban India's air quality.
- ◆ Despite scepticism in both over the costs that developing countries may have to bear to combat climate change and expanding the use of solar power. Each could benefit from a cross-fertilization of investment in solar power.
- ◆ Changing trade policies are also creating momentum for collaboration.
- ◆ Many of these small and medium-sized firms are providing innovative solutions to meet the demands of the middle classes in both countries.



- ◆ These firms are reshaping access to financial products and services through digital payments, microinsurance and online banking, to the benefit of entrepreneurs and small business owners.

Way Forward

It can be hard to appreciate the similarities between the two countries, as the differences predominate. One has a history dating back thousands of years, anciently settled and a true cradle of civilization. The other is a much younger country that still feels like a frontier nation pushing into its hinterland. They share little in common ethnically or religiously and, other than tiny Goa, no common language. Soccer and cricket could not be more different.

And yet, the differences mask enormous similarities. Both countries are vigorous democracies, where political parties form and merge and divide in a continual kaleidoscope. The press in both countries is robust, free and quite feisty. Politicians in both countries are free-wheeling and quick to speak out, and yet bureaucrats can be narrow and slow to the point of paralysis. States are politically

influential and economically powerful, and commercial success often requires engagement at both the national and state levels.

The rise of Brazil and India, both of whom are known as the leaders of the right-wing in their countries and have nationalistic orientations, might be useful internal shocks that could eventually transform this stagnant relationship. More importantly, both countries face similar challenges including the daunting task of alleviating poverty, rising income inequalities, tackling corruption, and inefficiency in the government. Rich in human resources, both economies are driven by expanding middle classes clamouring for improved public services. Consumers in both are value-conscious, demanding durability and affordability.

General Studies Paper- II

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

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5. INDIA - TURKEY RELATIONS : DRIFTING APART

Why in News?

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has become the latest to speak against the government's decision to repeal Article 370 from Jammu and Kashmir in August last year. Recently, Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan expressed his country's deep love and affection for Pakistan, strongly backed its position on Kashmir.

Background

India, Turkey have enjoyed good bilateral relations over decades but have also seen tensions due to the Turkey government's constant support for the Pakistani position on Kashmir, as well as its backing of Pakistan at the Financial Action Task Force (FATF).

Apart from Pakistan and China, countries like Malaysia and Turkey have been fiercely critical of the central government's decision to repeal Article 370 from Jammu and Kashmir and divide the state into two Union Territories. Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad has more than once voiced his opinion against the government's decision, including at the United Nations General Assembly in September.

Earlier on August 6, 2019, the day after India removed the special status of Jammu and Kashmir; the Turkish Foreign Ministry had issued a statement expressing "concern" at what it had called "annulment of the Article 370" that "could further increase the existing tension".

Last year, India strongly condemned the unilateral Turkish military action in northeastern Syria which has a dominant Kurdish population and expressed fears for the stability of the region and the fight against terrorism is, in all probability, what it seems to be — a hit at Turkey for its critical statements against India on Kashmir.

This is Delhi's latest signal to the international community that siding

with Pakistan will entail disapproval from India. However, it is unusual for India to hit out in this manner. Delhi has not commented before on Turkey's ambivalent role in the crisis that has unfolded in the region since ISIS erupted on the scene in the middle of 2014. In general, India does not comment on actions by a country not in its neighbourhood and unlikely to have an impact, at least immediately, on it.

Bilateral Relations

Turkey and India, though not the best of friends, have been trying for the past three decades to overcome their differences, and strike a balance in ties, with a little give and take from both sides. But the relation appears to have nosedived of late under the Presidentship of Recep Tayyip Erdogan, who has taken on the mantle of becoming a "global Islamic leader".

India's economic engagement with Turkey saw new momentum in recent years. Bilateral trade grew 22% to cross US\$ 8.6 billion in 2018. India ranked 6 in Turkey's overall imports in 2018. The major Indian exports to Turkey include: petroleum products, auto components/parts, man-made yarn, fabrics, made ups, aircraft & spacecraft parts, plastic raw materials, organic chemicals, dyes, industrial machinery, etc. Imports from Turkey include: industrial machinery, broken/unbroken poppy seeds; machinery and mechanical appliances, iron and steel articles thereof, inorganic chemicals, pearls and precious/semi precious stones and metals (including imitation jewellery), granite and marble, etc. Further, the two countries have also fixed an ambitious target to take trade volume to \$10 billion by 2020.

Besides commercial ties, tourism is a largely untapped area, which

can further enhance the bilateral relationship through people's interaction from both sides. Turkey received 147,000 Indian tourists in 2018, about 85% more than the 79,000 arrivals in 2016, while Turkish citizens' visits to India witnessed around 30% growth over three years, from 26,000 in 2015 to 33,000 in 2017.

India-Turkey Relations: Drifting Apart

Turkey's support to Pakistan on the Kashmir issue has been an obstacle between India and Turkey, given the tensed situation between New Delhi and Islamabad. President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's sharp statement on Kashmir at the UN General Assembly, where he raked up the UN resolutions, and accused the world of ignoring the plight of "eight million people stuck" in Kashmir, have not gone down well with India. He has been trying to be the mediator between India and Pakistan in resolving the Kashmir issue. New Delhi has turned down his offers. On the Kashmir issue, India has maintained its position that the Kashmir issue is a bilateral issue and would not want any third party's intervention.

Apart from the Kashmir issue, Ankara's insistence, like that of Beijing's, on Pakistan's membership in the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) and their support along with Malaysia in not blacklisting Islamabad by the FATF for its support in financing terror activities does not bode well with India.

President Erdogan is also thought that India for allegedly not cracking down on the institutes of his close rival - Fethullah Gulen. Turkey blames the Fethullah Gulen Terrorist Organisation (FETO) for a failed coup to topple Erdogan in 2016. Ankara has alleged that FETO has "infiltrated" India, and Erdogan feels India is not doing enough to curb its activities.

Close defence cooperation between Turkey and Pakistan is another factor that hinders the cooperation between New Delhi and Ankara. Turkey has markedly increased its defence cooperation with Pakistan. Ankara is building four MILGEM medium-sized warships for the Pakistan Navy, in a deal estimated to be worth over \$1 billion. According to the deal, two ships would be built in Turkey and the other two in Pakistan under technology transfer. The two countries last year also inked a \$1.5 billion deal for the supply of 30 Turkish attack helicopters - in the largest defence deal between the two sides.

Further, the way Turkey's support to Pakistan is not well accepted by India, likewise, India's non-recognition of Northern-Cyprus is an issue between New Delhi and Ankara. India has always supported Greek-Cyprus's independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and unity of Cyprus. It recognises the Greek-Cyprus as the legitimate government of the island. Pakistan's position is contrary to that of India's. Moreover, New Delhi has good relations with Armenia and Greece, the two countries with whom Ankara has tensed bilateral relationships because of historical problems.

In South Asia, Turkey's growing role in Afghanistan could be of concern to India. While India wants a stable centre of power in Kabul and avoids political association with any particular ethnic group, Turkey has declared open support for the Uzbek leader and

Afghanistan's former Vice President Abdul Rashid Dostum against President Ashraf Ghani. Moreover, Turkey believes that the Taliban should be part of the Afghan political mainstream.

Turkey-Pakistan: Traditional Good Ties

Turkey and Pakistan have historically had good relations. The Turkey-Pakistan friendship goes back to the days of the Cold War, when both countries were American allies. Ankara has almost always endorsed Pakistan's position on Kashmir. Both are also members of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation, which in its resolutions has traditionally supported Pakistan on this issue. However, while the founder of modern Turkey, Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, had a secular vision for his country, Erdogan is the leader of an Islamist party and likes to think of himself as a new age Ottoman Caliph speaking for all the Muslims of the world.

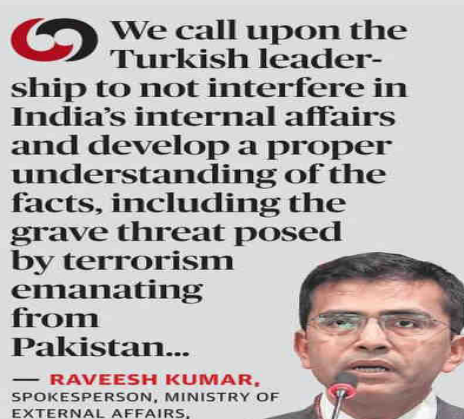
Way Forward

India should not let contentious issues dictate the overall tenor of bilateral relations. Foreign policy decisions should not be made in a huff. However, India's recent decision to put off Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Turkey last year contradicts this fundamental principle of policymaking. Apparently, New Delhi decided to do so to express its displeasure over Turkish President RecepTayyipErdogan's United Nations General Assembly speech over Kashmir issue.

The statement on Turkey may be part of the "with us, or against us" style of diplomacy that has taken hold in South Block in recent years, where

a country must profess loyalty to India and be critical of Pakistan to make the cut. This would be all very well if India was an economic powerhouse. But to be struggling along in terms of growth rate, and to make enemies of other nations in this manner, is not the wisest thing to do. As India knows, every country is worth its weight in votes at many multilateral forums. The election of India's nominee to the International Court of Justice at The Hague came in 2017 because of the widespread support that India garnered. As many as 183 countries voted for India's nominee. There were zero votes against him, and 10 abstentions. Hence, New Delhi should learn to isolate contentious issues.

Further, despite the recent progress in India-Turkey relations, however, there is still a lack of strategic convergence between the two countries on multiple issues, e.g. Ankara's stance on the Kashmir issue, which is still pro-Pakistan; its conflicting role in Afghanistan; and lastly, Turkey's prioritisation of its relations with China over India. In this rapid changing geopolitical landscape, relationships will become complicated. Countries supporting each other on ideology mostly on religion would not be wise. In today's time, religion which is being used to achieve political and national interests is nothing but dangerous. It will be important for India and Turkey to address the fundamental issues through serious and genuine dialogues at every level. It will also be prudent in Ankara's part to not bring up the Kashmir issue as it is an integral part of India.



General Studies Paper- II

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



6. PORNOGRAPHY AND ITS IMPACT ON CHILDREN AND SOCIETY

Why in News?

Recently, the Adhoc Committee of the Rajya has made 40 far reaching recommendations to prevent sexual abuse of children and to contain access to and transmission of child pornography content on the social media.

Background

Despite many of our popular beliefs, the internet is not a safe place for children to be roaming around. Pornography and predators seem to be lurking everywhere, just waiting to hook your child into their schemes. It is becoming increasingly important for parents to know the facts about their teenagers' time spent online, as well as how to approach this topic with them. 9/10 boys and 6/10 girls are exposed to porn before they turn 18, before they are fully mature. Not to mention that one out of every seven teenagers will be subject to an online sexual advance. The Internet has created an exciting, new world of information and communication for anyone with access to online services. While this technology offers unparalleled opportunities for children and adults to learn about the universe in which we live, it has also had an immeasurable impact on the sexual exploitation of children, specifically through the distribution of sexually exploitive images of children.

Most statistics on pornography use said the average age of a child's first exposure to pornography is 11 years old. New research from the security technology company Bit defender, has reported children under the age of 10 now account for 22% of online porn consumption under 18-years old. Particularly alarming is that the site most visited by children under 10

include porn mega sites like. The less than 10 age group is now accounting for one in 10 visitors to porn video sites, per Bit defender.

Pornography has significant effects during all stages of family life. For a child exposed to pornography within a family setting, causes stress and increase the risk for developing negative attitudes about the nature and purpose of human sexuality. For adolescents who view pornography, their attitudes toward their own and others' sexuality change, and their sexual expectations and behaviour are shaped accordingly.

Impact of Pornography on Society and Children in Particular

Due to the high neuroplasticity, any values or ideas that are learned from pornography will have a lasting impact on children's lives if they are not addressed appropriately. In addition, habits built during this time become the trigger that drives the continual use of pornography as we age. Along with the habits and triggers that are created from pornography exposure, research suggests other negative effects also carry over.

Rape

Male subjects in particular tended to objectify women, or view them as more object than individual, an attitude linked to current rape theories. Pornography portrays women (and men) as enjoying degrading and/or violent sexual encounters which can influence young men to believe women might enjoy being raped—or that they would welcome it. Naturally this could create laissez faire attitude about rape in general, that it is not a big deal. Worst

case scenario, pornography cultivates a culture of men who do not take rape seriously. These views will often be associated with an interest in more extreme forms of pornography—often more violent. It has been shown that the more pornography is consumed, the more the viewer will begin to desire “novel” forms of pornography.

Devaluing Commitment

For children in general, there is a strong indication that the exposure to pornography results in a hyper-sexual view of the world. The subjects tended to have a high rate of devaluing marriage; they are twice as likely to believe that marriage is unimportant. Pornography commercializes and devalues the role of sex in our culture. When you adopt the view that pornography is normal and acceptable, to have sex with whomever you want, whenever you want, then the ideals of long, extensive, relationships with a single partner are valued less highly.

More than anything, the pornographic worldview creates a culture of recreational sex. It destroys the basis for intimacy and promotes infidelity for both sexes. When seen regularly, it gives a sense of sexual gratification and sexual obsession, which leads to a willingness to do the same things in real life.

Other Impacts

Effect on the Mind: Pornography significantly distorts attitudes and perceptions about the nature of sexual intercourse. Men who habitually look at pornography have a higher tolerance for abnormal sexual behaviors, sexual aggression, promiscuity, and even rape. In addition, men begin to view women and even children as “sex objects,”

commodities or instruments for their pleasure, not as persons with their own inherent dignity.

Effect on the Body: Pornography is very addictive. The addictive aspect of pornography has a biological substrate, with dopamine hormone release acting as one of the mechanisms for forming the transmission pathway to pleasure centers of the brain. Also, the increased sexual permissiveness engendered by pornography increases the risk of contracting a sexually transmitted disease or of being an unwitting parent in an out-of-wedlock pregnancy.

Effect on the Heart: Pornography affects people's emotional lives. Married men who are involved in pornography feel less satisfied with their marital sexual relations and less emotionally attached to their wives. Women married to men with a pornography addiction report feelings of betrayal, mistrust, and anger. Pornographic use may lead to infidelity and even divorce. Adolescents who view pornography feel shame, diminished self-confidence, and sexual uncertainty.

Laws for Pornography in India

There is no law banning watching pornography in personal space. But, the Indian Penal Code and the Information Technology (IT) Act prohibit the production or transmission of so-called "obscene material" even though there is no law explicitly prohibiting pornography. Further, publishing or transmitting obscene material electronically can carry a three years sentence, if an offender is convicted under the IT Act.

Recently, the government of India and Supreme Court both have taken firm steps to tackle the rising number of sexual offences against children. The Supreme Court ordered the central government to set up in 60 days

exclusive courts in every district of the country to deal with cases related to child abuse and sexual assault. At present, there are no courts set up exclusively for dealing with POCSO (protection of children from sexual offences) cases. Some of the existing courts handle them, making trial impossible within the mandated one-year period under POCSO Act.

In July 2019, the government of India had strengthened the POCSO Act by including death penalty for sexual assault on children, after which the Ministry of Women and Child Development revised the penalty for possessing and distributing child pornography.

Challenges

- ◆ The effect of pornography is different in children belonging to the lower class compared to children belonging to the high class. A single approach won't be able to handle the issue effectively.
- ◆ Lack of sex education courses and workshops in the school curriculum.
- ◆ In India, talk on sex is considered as taboo (something which should be hidden). There is no healthy family dialogue regarding sex. It leads the child to learn about it from outside world which has led to an addiction to pornography.
- ◆ It's very difficult for agencies to detect the activities of child pornography and monitor them effectively.
- ◆ Availability of obscene content on regular websites and OTT (over the top) services like Amazon Prime, Netflix, Hotstar, etc. make it difficult to differentiate between the non-vulgar content and vulgar content.

Recent Developments

The Ad-hoc Committee of the Rajya Sabha has given 40 far reaching recommendations to prevent sexual abuse of children and to contain access to and transmission of child pornography content on social media.

Legislative Measures

- ◆ The Committee has recommended some important amendments to the POCSO Act, 2012 and the IT Act, 2000 with corresponding changes to be carried out in the Indian Penal Code.
- ◆ A clause to be inserted in the POCSO Act, 2012 under which advocating or counseling sexual activities with a person under the age of 18 years through any written material, visual representation or audio recording or any characterization is made an offence under the Act.
- ◆ Another clause to be inserted in the POCSO Act, 2012 prescribing a Code of Conduct for intermediaries (online platforms) for maintaining child safety online, ensuring age appropriate content and curbing use of children for pornographic purposes.
- ◆ Under the POCSO Act, 2012, school management should be responsible for safety of children within schools, transportation services and any other programmes with which the school is associated.



- ◆ National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal shall be designated as the national portal under reporting requirements in POCSO Act in case of electronic material.
- ◆ A new section be included in the IT Act 2000, providing for punitive measures for those providing pornographic access to children and also those who access, produce or transmit Child Sexual Abuse Material(CSAM).
- ◆ Union Government shall be empowered through its designated authority to block and/or prohibit all websites/intermediaries that carry child sexual abuse material.



• **Gender bias in protecting girls make boys more vulnerable**

• **System should help children to outgrow guilt of abuse**

• **Child sexual abuse is widely prevalent**

• **Both boys and girls are equally at risk**

• **Perpetrators of abuse mostly known to victim**

• **Focus only on girl victim may lead to imbalance in evolving support system for boys**

Institutional Measures

- ◆ The Committee recommended an upgraded and technologically empowered National Commission for Protection of Child Rights(NCPCR) to be designated as the nodal agency to deal with the issue of child pornography. NCPCR should have necessary technological, cyber policing and prosecution capabilities.
- ◆ The National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) shall mandatorily record and report annually cases of child pornography of all kinds. A national Tipline Number should be created where child sexual abuse as well as distribution of child pornographic material can be reported by concerned citizens.

Social and Educational Measures

- ◆ Ministries of Women and Child Development and Information and Broadcasting shall launch campaigns for greater awareness among parents to recognize early signs of child abuse, online risks

and improving online safety for their child. Schools shall undertake training programmes for parents at least twice a year, making them aware of hazards for children of free access to smart phones, internet at an early age. Based on the experiences of other countries, a proper practicable policy for restricting use of smart phones by under aged kids needs to be considered.

State Level Implementation

- ◆ The committee recommended that each State and Union Territory shall have empowered State Commission for the Protection for Child Rights mirroring capabilities and capacities of the NCPCR. E-safety Commissioners be appointed at state level to ensure implementation of social media and website guidelines relating to removal of pornographic content, age verification, issuing warnings etc.

Way Forward

No country is immune from this form of child sexual exploitation, and it will take a concerted effort from governments, law enforcement, and

civil society to ensure that the world's children are protected. India has tried that approach and criminalization of a complete ban on pornography adopt.

Hence, awareness and sex education is a must and should be made compulsory in schools. Parents and teachers must be skilled to deal with children in the modern era and technology. It is important for parents and teachers to be able to initiate open conversations about their child's online experiences. Providing sex education to children makes them more aware of various protective laws, good touch-bad touch, etc.

General Studies Paper- II

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

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.



7. SURROGACY IN INDIA : ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

Why in News?

Recently, the Select Committee of Parliament has recommended 15 major changes in the surrogacy (Regulation) Bill, 2019. It also suggested to remove the contentious clause limiting surrogacy only to “close relatives” from the Bill, to make the benefits of modern technology more easily available to infertile couples. Earlier, the government referred the surrogacy (Regulation) Bill, 2019 to a 23-member select committee of Rajya Sabha.

Background

The Surrogacy (Regulation) Bill, 2019, which proposed to ban commercial surrogacy, was passed by Lok Sabha on August 5, 2019. However, it is yet to be passed by the Rajya Sabha and the committee has held ten meetings since the Bill was referred to it by the Lok Sabha on November 21, 2019. The Bill proposed to allow altruistic ethical surrogacy to intending infertile Indian

married couples in the age groups 23-50 years (women) and 26-55 years (men).

What is Surrogacy?

Surrogacy is defined as the practice in which a woman gives birth to a child for a couple, referred to as an “intending couple”, with the intention to hand over the child to that couple. The Bill defines surrogacy procedures as “all gynaecological, obstetrical or medical procedures, techniques, tests, practices or services involving the handling of human gametes and the human embryo in surrogacy”.

An ‘intending couple’ is a couple who have medically been proved as infertile. Ordinarily, in surrogacy, eggs are extracted from the intending mother and after fertilisation, are implanted in the surrogate mother’s uterus. Surrogacy can be either altruistic or commercial. In the former, no monetary considerations are involved, except medical expenses and insurance. In the case of commercial surrogacy, the woman who gives birth to a child for the intending couple is rewarded for it in cash or kind.

Surrogacy (Regulation) Bill, 2019 : An Overview

According to the Bill, the surrogate mother needs to be a close relative of the intending couple and can become a surrogate only once in her lifetime. Additionally, a woman cannot become a surrogate mother by providing her own gametes (unfertilised eggs). The intending couple should not have any surviving biological child, through adoption or through surrogacy. An exception is made if the intending couple has a surviving child who is mentally or physically challenged, or is suffering from a fatal illness with no permanent cure.

Further, the couple should have been legally married for at least five years and should be Indian citizens. They cannot have a surviving child, either biological or adopted, except when they have a child who is mentally or physically challenged or suffers from a life-threatening disorder with no permanent cure. The Bill has already been scrutinised once earlier by the Standing Committee on Health and Family Welfare. It requires surrogacy clinics to be registered, and national and state surrogacy boards to be formed, and makes commercial surrogacy, and abandoning or disowning a surrogate child punishable by imprisonment up to 10 years and a fine up to Rs 10 lakh.

Issues and Challenges

The provisions of the Bill showcases the state’s heavy reliance on criminal law for managing social issues, criminalisation of choice and prejudiced ideas of what constitutes a family. The Bill disallows single, divorced or widowed persons, unmarried couples and homosexual couples from pursuing surrogacy to have children. It stipulates that only a man and woman married for at least five years, where either or both are proven infertile, can avail of surrogacy. This is blatantly discriminatory and arbitrary. India’s jurisprudence recognises the reproductive autonomy of single persons, the rights of persons in live-in relationships and fundamental rights of transgenders. In Navtej Singh Johar vs Union of India, Supreme Court, having decriminalised consensual same-sex between consenting adults, held that the law cannot discriminate against same-sex partnerships and that it must “take positive steps to achieve equal protection”. Single persons have the right to adopt children in India. The Bill is out of step with these developments.

Parliamentary Standing Committee Recommendations

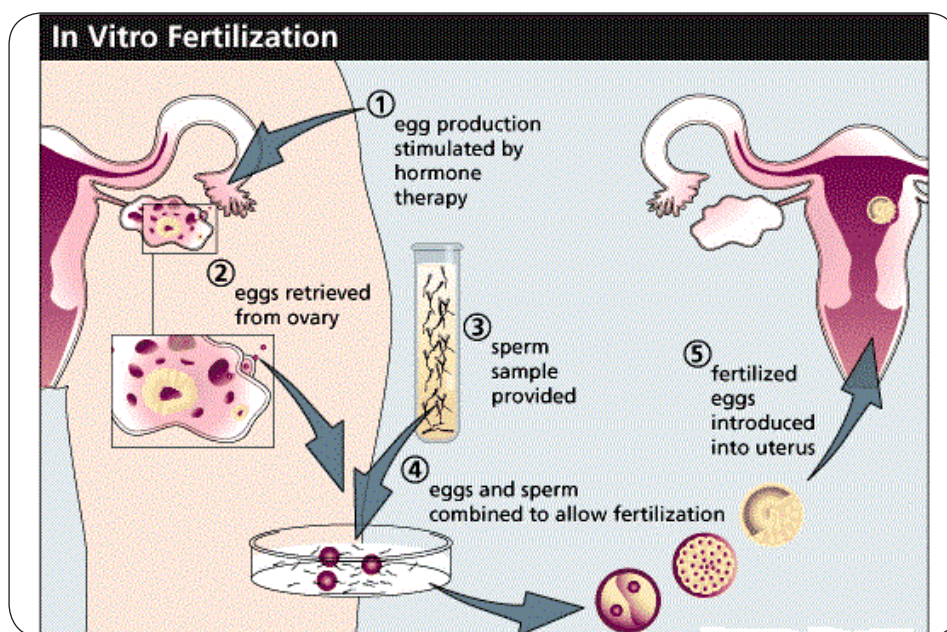
The Bill was earlier scrutinised by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Health and Family Welfare. That committee had recommended that compensation should be the norm and the word “altruistic” should be replaced with “compensated”. Couples — including those in live-in relationships — should be allowed to choose surrogates from both within and outside the family. Altruistic surrogacy, it observed, is tantamount to exploitation.

The “close relative” condition is open to misuse in a patriarchal setup, the committee had observed. “Given the patriarchal familial structure and power equations within families, not every member of a family has the ability to resist a demand that she be a surrogate for another family member. A close relative of the intending couple may be forced to become a surrogate who might become even more exploitative than commercial surrogacy.” Those recommendations were not accepted by the government.

There is undoubtedly a danger of exploitation and abuse in commercial surrogacy. The cases that have come up establish that possibility. But a blanket ban of commercial surrogacy has evoked criticism for the reason that such a ban would deprive women from poor socio-economic backgrounds from earning some money. It can of course be argued that surrogacy need not be a medium for financial empowerment. However, financial empowerment is incidental and nothing more than a compensation for the services rendered as a surrogate. Hence, surrogacy should of course never become a tool for exploitation of indigent women, nor should it come to be viewed as a source of making money by exploitative clinics or avaricious women unaware of the consequences of subjecting their body to multiple surrogacies.

Exploitation takes place because of the unequal bargaining power between the surrogate mother and the surrogacy clinics, agents and intending parents. This can be addressed by a strong regulatory mechanism that introduces transparency and mandates fair work and pay for the surrogate mothers. Viewing commercial surrogacy as inherently exploitative and banning it only expands the potential for exploitation as it would force the business underground.

Further, criminalisation of commercial surrogacy is a refusal by the state to actually consider the exercise of agency that leads a woman to become a surrogate mother. Interviews with women who chose to provide gestational services for a fee have shown that it is a well-considered decision made in constrained economic conditions. A ban on commercial surrogacy stigmatises this choice and reinforces the notion of the vulnerable “poor” woman who does not understand the consequences of



her decisions and needs the protection of a paternalistic State.

As far as “close relative” of the couple is concerned, the concept is premised on the mistaken belief that exploitation and vulnerability do not exist within the family. Knowing the reality of patriarchal families in India, the stigma of infertility, the pressure of producing children to maintain lineage and the low bargaining power of women, it can be expected that young mothers will be coerced into becoming surrogates for their relatives. The Bill moves the site of exploitation into the private and opaque sphere of the home and family. One cannot but question the ethics of this.

Key Recommendations of the Committee

The Select Committee recommended that the “close relatives” clause should be removed and any “willing” woman should be allowed to become a surrogate mother provided all other requirements are met and the appropriate authority has cleared the surrogacy. It has strongly backed the ban on commercial surrogacy.

It has also recommended that divorced and widowed women aged between 35 and 45 years should be able to be a single commissioning parent,

and the need for a five-year waiting period for childless married couples could be waived if there is a medical certificate that shows that they cannot possibly conceive. It has recommended that persons of Indian origin should be allowed to avail surrogacy services.

The committee has not, however, recommended expanding the definition of commissioning parent to include singles, either men or women. This means people like Tusshar Kapoor, Karan Johar and Ekta Kapoor, all from the entertainment industry, would still not qualify for using the surrogacy route for children. All of them have already used that route.

The Select Committee also recommended that the Assisted Reproductive Technology (ART) Bill (which deals with assisted reproductive technologies) should be brought before the Surrogacy (Regulation) Bill, 2019, so that all the highly technical and medical aspects could be properly addressed in the Surrogacy (Regulation) Bill, 2019. In this direction, the Union Cabinet has recently approved the ART Regulation Bill, 2020. ART Bill primarily deals with technical, scientific and medical aspects, including the storage of embryos, gametes, oocytes, etc. as contained in the Surrogacy Bill.

The Bill mandates the commissioning couple to only pay for the medical expenses and an insurance cover of sixteen months for the surrogate mother. The Standing Committee had recommended a model of compensated surrogacy which would cover psychological counselling of the surrogate mother and/or her children, lost wages for the duration of pregnancy, child care support, dietary supplements and medication, maternity clothing and post-delivery care. The Bill should, at the very least, incorporate these provisions.

Way Forward

According to the CII figures, surrogacy in India is estimated to be a \$ 2.3 billion

industry, but surrogate mothers are paid less than a tenth of what they get in the other countries. The mushrooming of IVF clinics, absence of a regulatory framework, and the availability of poor women willing to rent out their wombs has made India an attractive option for foreigners seeking a surrogate child. Several questions have been raised over the alleged exploitation of surrogate mothers, and over the need to safeguard their, the child's, as well as the commissioning parents' rights. To resolve these issues, bouquet of legislation like ART Bill; the Surrogacy Bill; the amendment to the Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act; and the older Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques Act will have a

positive impact on the reproductive rights and choices of women in India.

General Studies Paper- II

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

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

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SEVEN SUBJECTIVE QUESTIONS WITH MODEL ANSWERS

1. Permanent Commission for Women: A Progressive Approach

Q. The Supreme Court has paved the way for permanent commission for women in army. Discuss its implications.

Hints:

- ◆ The Supreme Court of India, gave historical judgement directing that women officers of the Indian Army, serving under Short Service Commission (SSC), be considered for grant of Permanent Commission (PC), irrespective of tenure of service.
- ◆ Women officers will be granted Permanent Commission in the Indian Army in all the ten branches where women are inducted for SSC. So, besides the existing two streams of JAG and AEC, now PC will be granted in Signals, Engineers, Army Aviation, Army Air Defence, Electronics and Mechanical Engineers, Army Service Corps, Army Ordnance Corps and Intelligence also to women officers.
- ◆ A woman can rise to the rank of Colonel and above is based on merit, like their male counterparts. At the rank of Colonel, an officer picks up a substantive command and would be delegated to carry out independent tasks.
- ◆ The implications of the judgement will have to be borne by the human resources management department of the Army, which will need to change policy in order to comply. But the biggest shift will have to take place in the culture, norms, and values of the rank and file of the Army, which will be the responsibility of the senior military and political leadership.

2. Global Social Mobility Report 2020 : An Overview

Q. What do you understand by social mobility. Discuss India's performance on global social mobility index 2020.

Hints:

- ◆ Social mobility can be understood as the movement in personal circumstances either "upwards" or

"downwards" of an individual with those of their parents. If such mobility involves a change in position, especially in occupation, but no change in social class, it is called "horizontal mobility." If, however, the move involves a change in social class, it is called "vertical mobility" and involves either "upward mobility" or "downward mobility."

- ◆ India ranks 76th out of 82 economies with a score of 42.7. It ranks 41st in lifelong learning and 53rd in working conditions. Despite a significant decrease in the percentage of people living in absolute poverty, there are several areas for improvement for India to provide more equally shared opportunities to its population.
- ◆ Much of India's upward mobility can be attributed to increased urbanisation in the country. Upward mobility is much stronger in cities, where even self-employment and casual work can lead to substantial gains in consumption. While there is robust mobility, but there is inequality in access to public services, which can largely be traced to factors such as gender, location, and caste.
- ◆ Upward mobility has been stronger, relative to the population, among the lowest castes, known as 'untouchables'. Where children would usually take up the jobs of their parents, occupational mobility of the younger generation has increased to greater levels than the general population. While much is made of India's diminishing poverty, it doesn't necessarily stop the middle class from falling back there.

3. Bodo Peace Accord 2020 : Ensure A Golden Future for Assam

Q. The Bodo Peace Accord 2020 will ensure a golden future for Assam. Do you agree? Give reasons.

Hints:

- ◆ The Bodos are among the earliest known inhabitants of the Brahmaputra Valley. They enjoyed royal positions in Assam in ancient and medieval periods and established kingdoms under different names, at different points of

time. The most famous among those kingdoms are the Chutiya kingdom, the Dimasa kingdom and the Koch kingdom.

- ◆ In the past, not being satisfied with the settlements of 1993 and 2003, the Bodos have been consistently demanding more powers. A comprehensive and final resolution to their demands has been arrived at, while retaining the territorial integrity of the state of Assam.
- ◆ The demand for autonomy was mainly the drove by the desire for self-determination and the feeling of step-motherly treatment of the state government in terms of allocation of resource and allocation of funds in which there exist economic and social backwardness.
- ◆ The 'historic' accord with the Bodos in Assam solves a near four-decade-old insurgency problem but it is likely to face a challenge in implementing particularly two commitments made through the accord. The first one being, the inclusion of villages contiguous to BTAD having a majority tribal population to BTAD. The second being the protection of the rights of Bodos living outside BTAD by way of inclusion of them in the list of Scheduled Tribes (Hill) of Assam in a time-bound manner.
- ◆ Government has also initiated numerous policy level interventions that have improved infrastructure, connectivity, economic growth, tourism and social development of the region.

4. India - Brazil : Deepening Ties

Q. The possibility of stronger India-Brazil ties will have an underlying effect on the future world order, especially resource-rich Brazil and the demands of a "rising" India. Comment.

Hints:

- ◆ India and Brazil share a very close and multifaceted relationship at bilateral level as well as in plurilateral fora such as BRICS, BASIC, G-20, G-4, IBSA, International Solar Alliance, Biofuture Platform and in the larger multilateral bodies such as the UN, WTO, UNESCO and WIPO.
- ◆ In recent years, Brazil and India have demonstrated an interest in having a more decisive role in international institutions, one that is proportional to their geographic size and share in world population. Both have campaigned for a UN Security Council permanent seat.
- ◆ The rise of Brazil and India, both of whom are known as the leaders of the right-wing in their countries and

have nationalistic orientations, might be useful internal shocks that could eventually transform this stagnant relationship. More importantly, both countries face similar challenges including the daunting task of alleviating poverty, rising income inequalities, tackling corruption, and inefficiency in the government.

- ◆ Rich in human resources, both economies are driven by expanding middle classes clamouring for improved public services. Consumers in both are value-conscious, demanding durability and affordability.

5. India - Turkey Relations : Drifting Apart

Q. The relations between India and Turkey are drifting apart. Elaborate.

Hints:

- ◆ Turkey and India, though not the best of friends, have been trying for the past three decades to overcome their differences, and strike a balance in ties, with a little give and take from both sides. But the relation appears to have nosedived of late under the Presidentship of Recep Tayyip Erdogan, who has taken on the mantle of becoming a "global Islamic leader".
- ◆ Turkey's support to Pakistan on the Kashmir issue has been an obstacle between India and Turkey, given the tensed situation between New Delhi and Islamabad.
- ◆ Apart from the Kashmir issue, Ankara's insistence, like that of Beijing's, on Pakistan's membership in the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) and their support along with Malaysia in not blacklisting Islamabad by the FATF for its support in financing terror activities does not bode well with India.
- ◆ Close defence cooperation between Turkey and Pakistan is another factor that hinders the cooperation between New Delhi and Ankara. Turkey has markedly increased its defence cooperation with Pakistan.
- ◆ In South Asia, Turkey's growing role in Afghanistan could be of concern to India. While India wants a stable centre of power in Kabul and avoids political association with any particular ethnic group, Turkey has declared open support for the Uzbek leader and Afghanistan's former Vice President Abdul Rashid Dostum against President Ashraf Ghani. Moreover, Turkey believes that the Taliban should be part of the Afghan political mainstream.

6. Pornography and Its Impact on Children and Society

Q. Critically discuss the impact of pornography on society, especially on children.

Hints:

- ◆ Due to the high neuroplasticity, any values or ideas that are learned from pornography will have a lasting impact on children's lives if they are not addressed appropriately. In addition, habits built during this time become the trigger that drives the continual use of pornography as we age.
- ◆ Pornography significantly distorts attitudes and perceptions about the nature of sexual intercourse. Men who habitually look at pornography have a higher tolerance for abnormal sexual behaviors, sexual aggression, promiscuity, and even rape. In addition, men begin to view women and even children as "sex objects," commodities or instruments for their pleasure, not as persons with their own inherent dignity.
- ◆ Pornography is very addictive. The addictive aspect of pornography has a biological substrate, with dopamine hormone release acting as one of the mechanisms for forming the transmission pathway to pleasure centers of the brain. Also, the increased sexual permissiveness engendered by pornography increases the risk of contracting a sexually transmitted disease or of being an unwitting parent in an out-of-wedlock pregnancy.
- ◆ Pornography affects people's emotional lives. Married men who are involved in pornography feel less satisfied with their marital sexual relations and less emotionally attached to their wives. Women married to men with a pornography addiction report feelings of betrayal, mistrust, and anger. Pornographic use may lead to infidelity and even divorce. Adolescents who view pornography feel shame, diminished self-confidence, and sexual uncertainty.

7. Surrogacy in India : Issues and Challenges

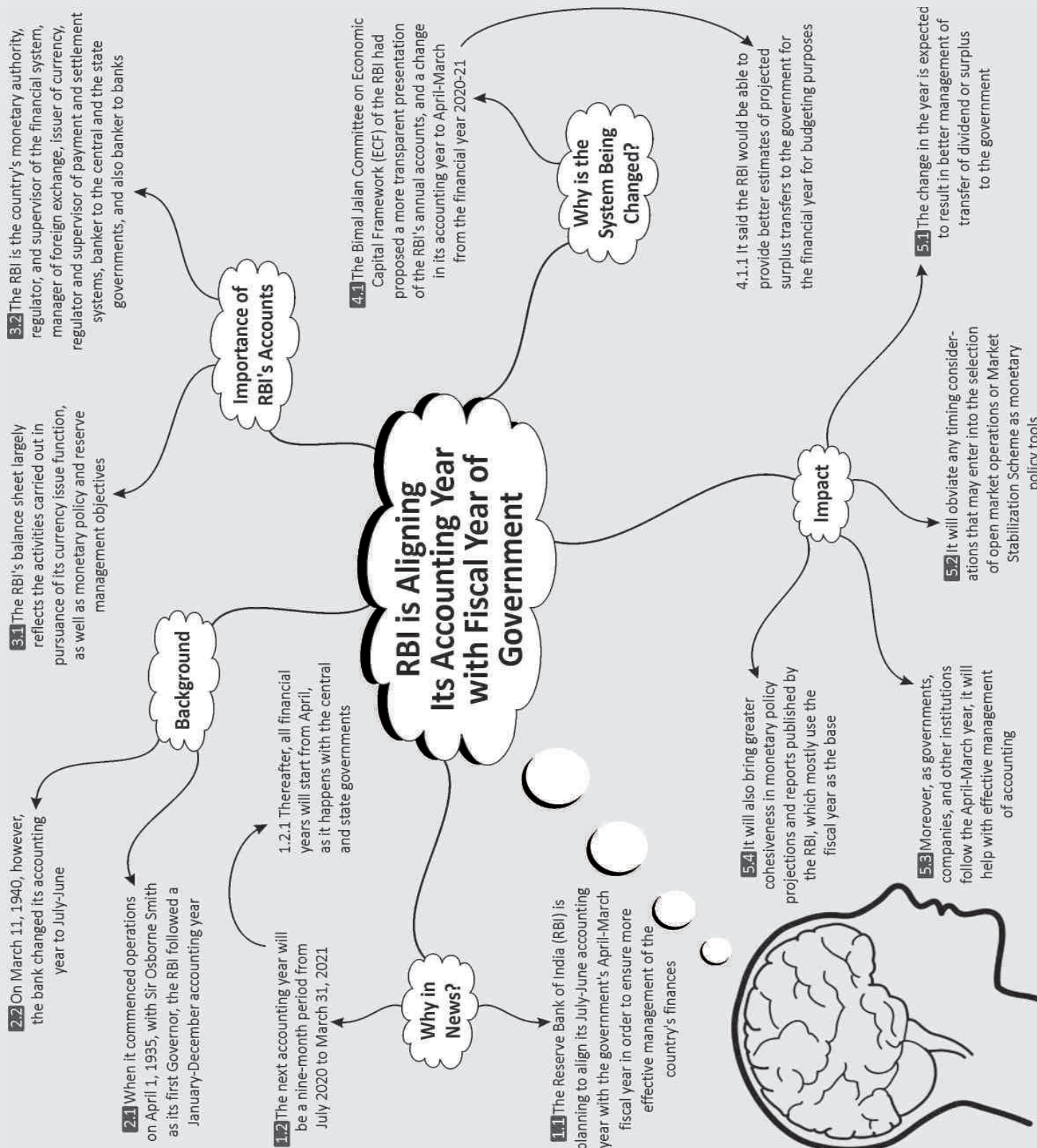
Q. Discuss the issues and challenges related to surrogacy in India.

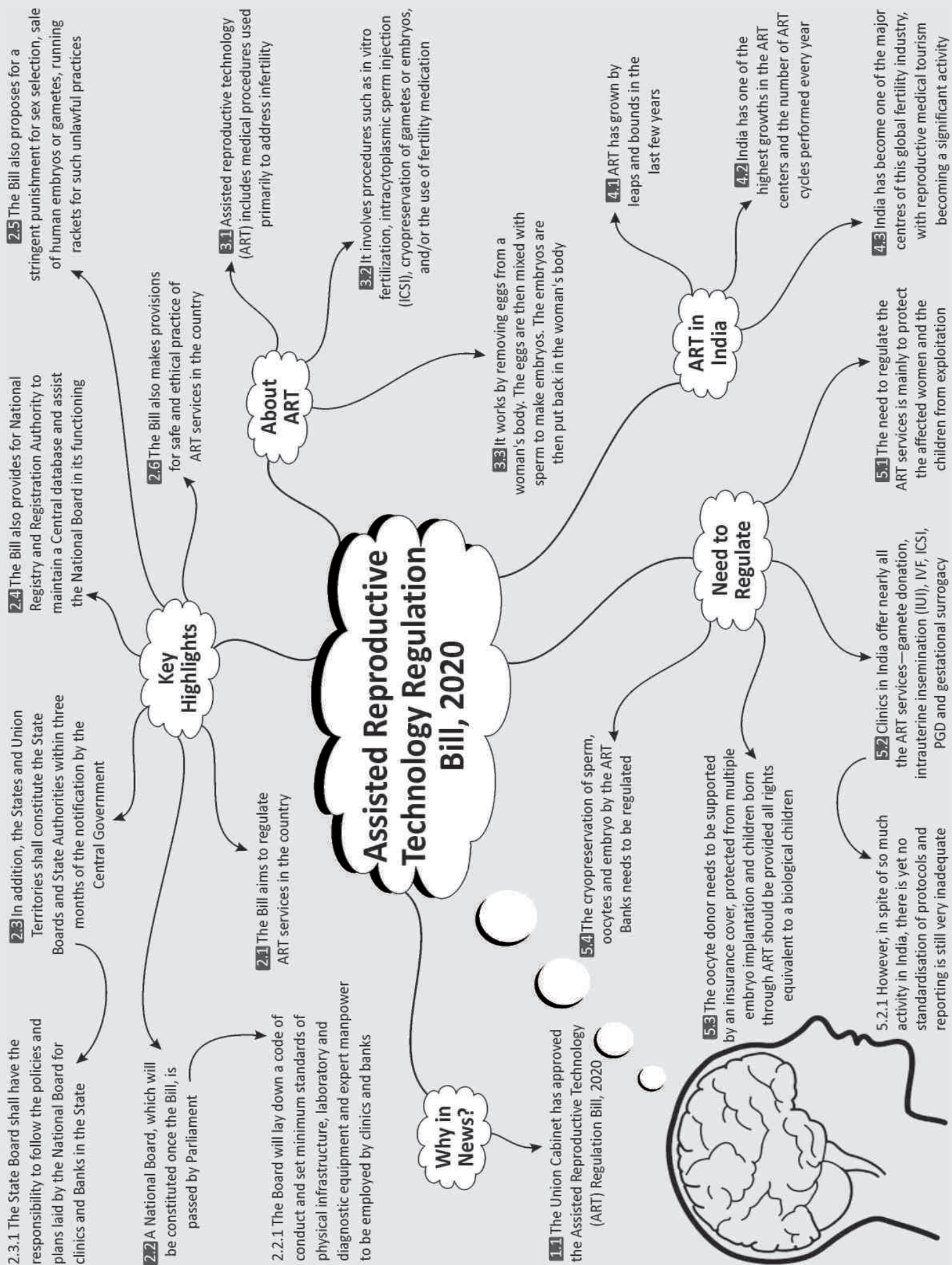
Hints:

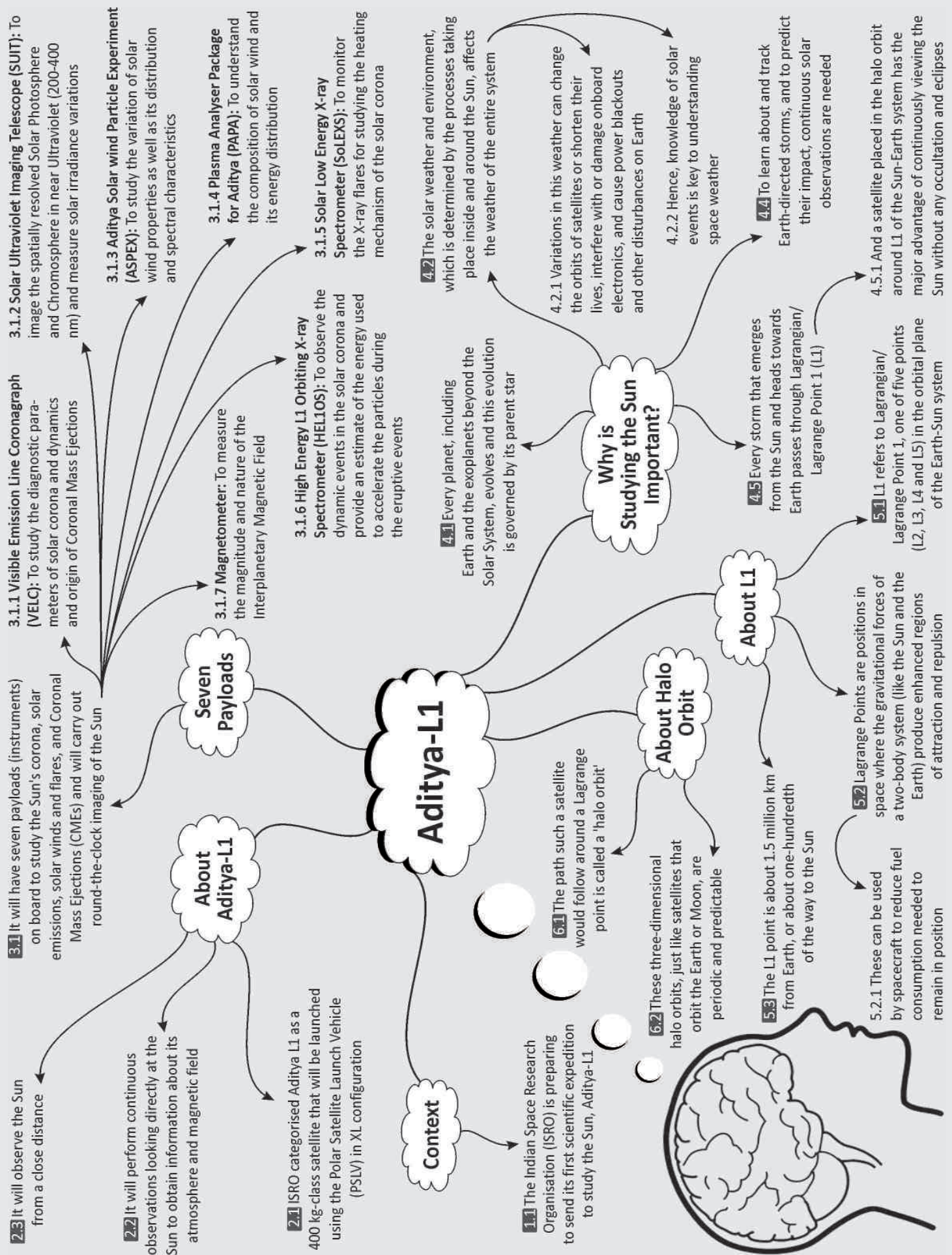
- ◆ Surrogacy is defined as the practice in which a woman gives birth to a child for a couple, referred to as an "intending couple", with the intention to hand over the child to that couple.
- ◆ There is undoubtedly a danger of exploitation and abuse in commercial surrogacy. The cases that have come up establish that possibility. But a blanket ban of commercial surrogacy has evoked criticism for the reason that such a ban would deprive women from poor socio-economic backgrounds from earning some money. It can of course be argued that surrogacy need not be a medium for financial empowerment.
- ◆ Criminalisation of commercial surrogacy is a refusal by the state to actually consider the exercise of agency that leads a woman to become a surrogate mother. Interviews with women who chose to provide gestational services for a fee have shown that it is a well-considered decision made in constrained economic conditions. A ban on commercial surrogacy stigmatises this choice and reinforces the notion of the vulnerable "poor" woman who does not understand the consequences of her decisions and needs the protection of a paternalistic State.
- ◆ The mushrooming of IVF clinics, absence of a regulatory framework, and the availability of poor women willing to rent out their wombs has made India an attractive option for foreigners seeking a surrogate child. To resolve these issues, bouquet of legislation like ART Bill; the Surrogacy Bill; the amendment to the Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act; and the older Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques Act will have a positive impact on the reproductive rights and choices of women in India.

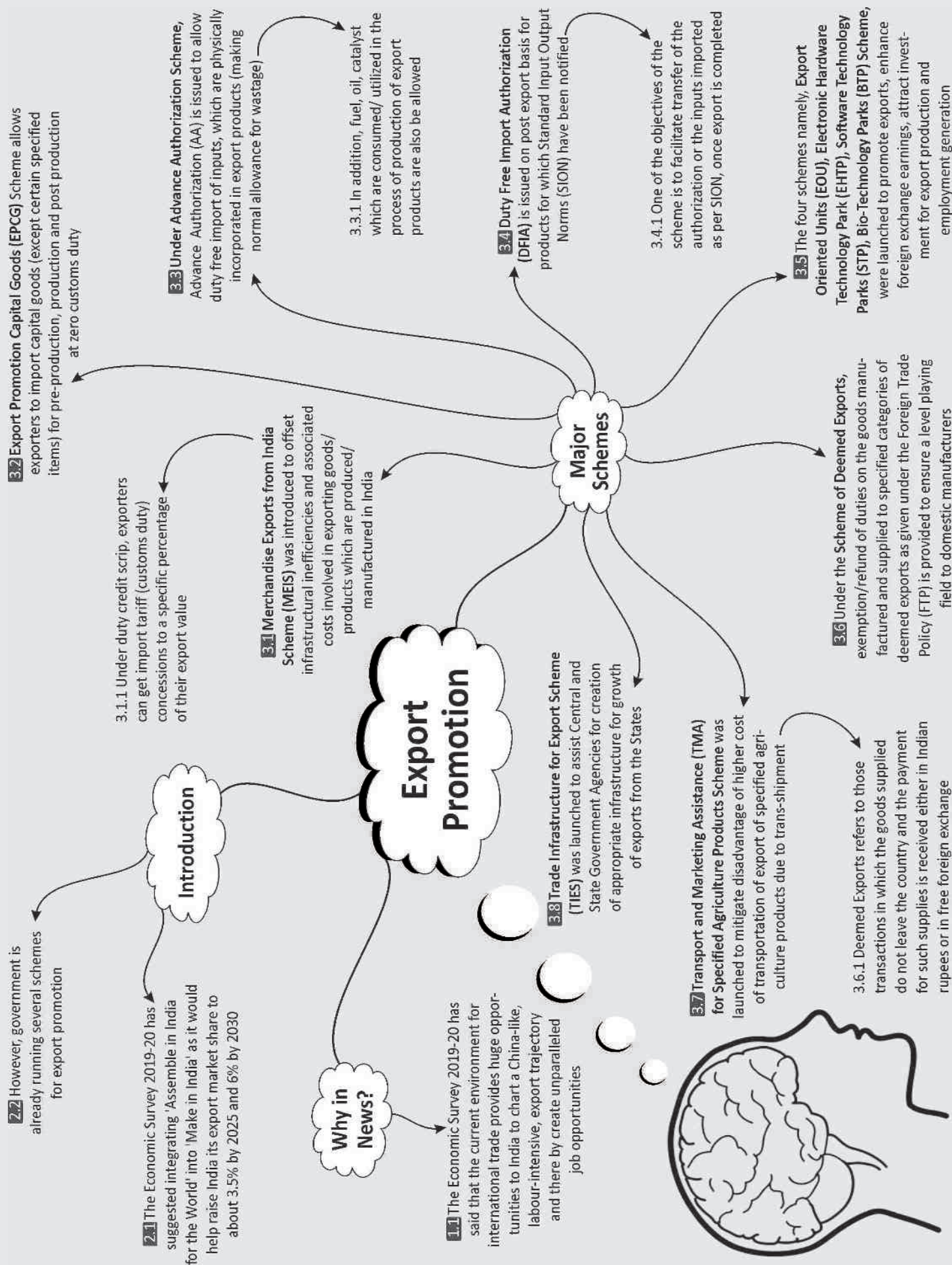
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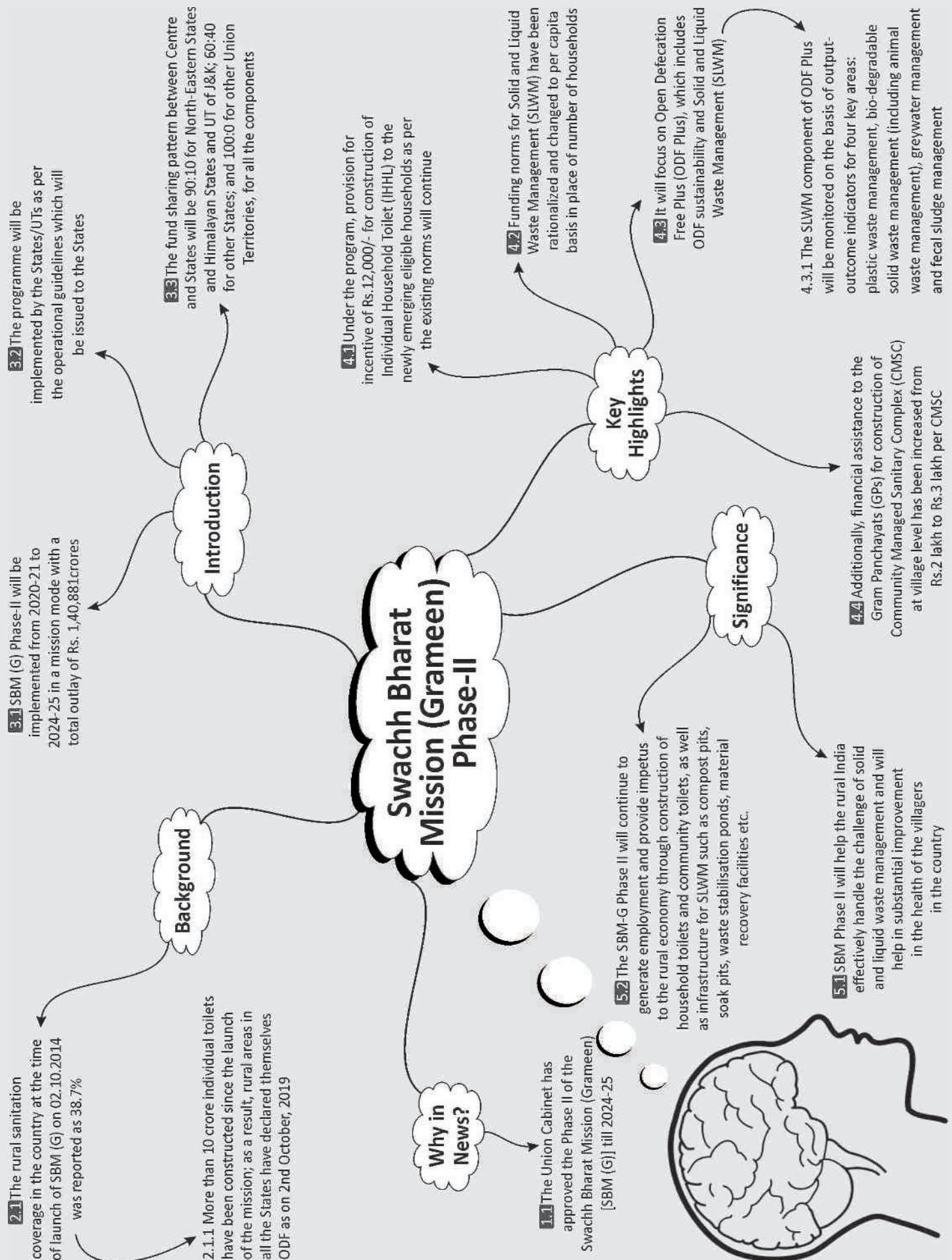
SEVEN BRAIN BOOSTERS

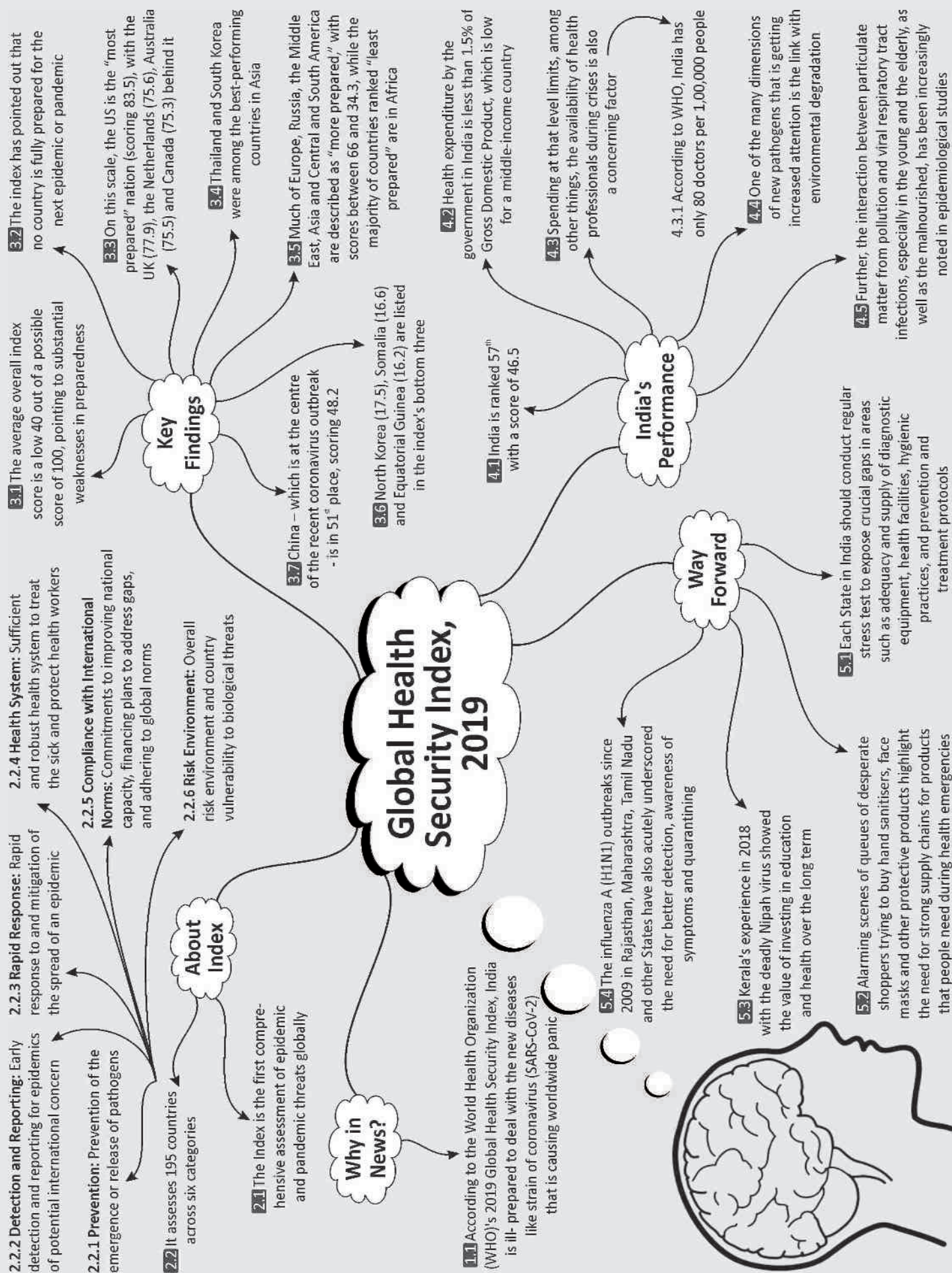


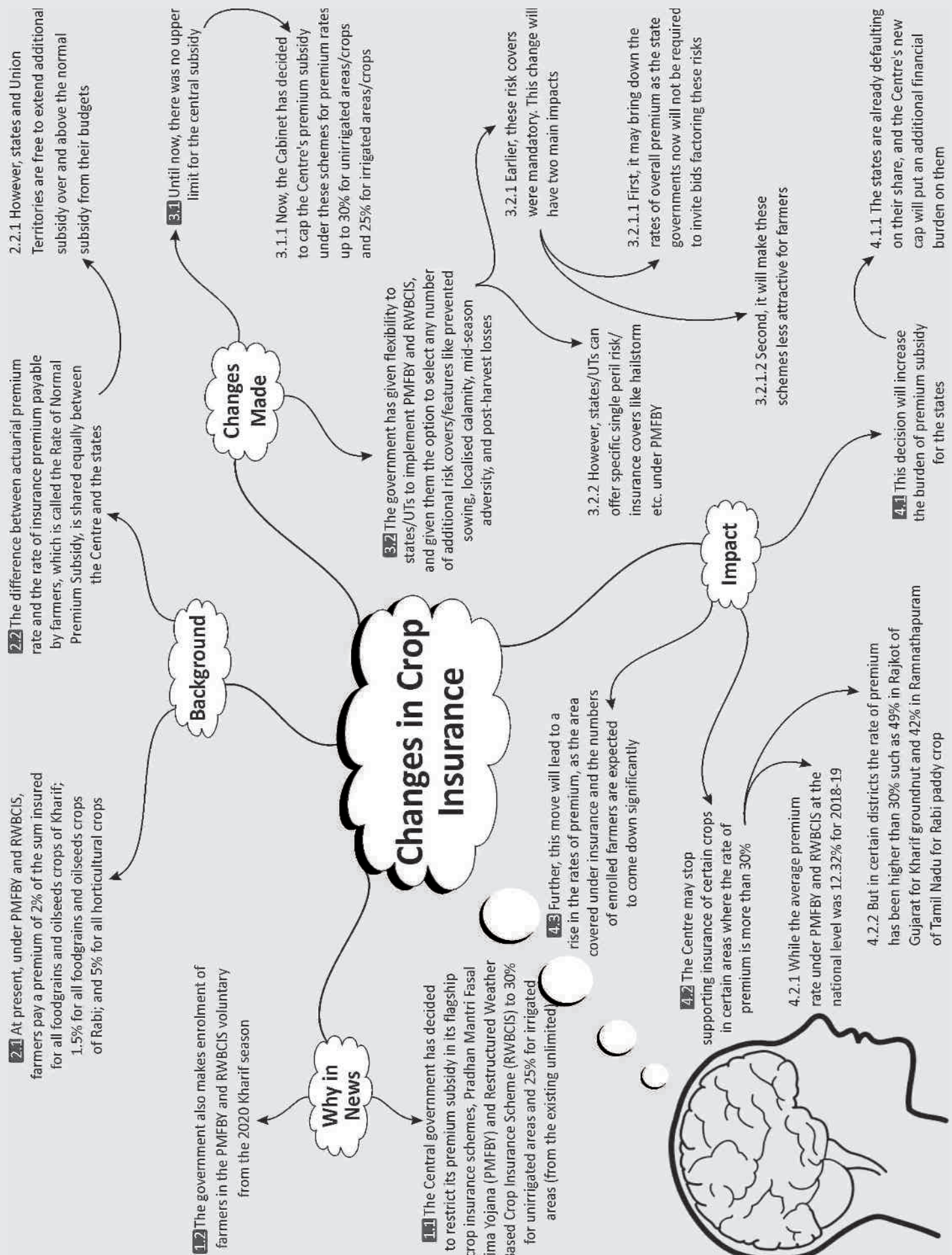












SEVEN MCQ's WITH EXPLANATORY ANSWERS

(Based on Brain Boosters)

1. RBI is Aligning Its Accounting Year with Fiscal Year of Government

Q1. Consider the following statements:

1. Reserve Bank of India will change the accounting year from July-June to January – December from the financial year 2021-22.
2. The government of India is also planning to change fiscal year from April-March to January-December from the financial year 2021-22.

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 incorrect.

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) is aligning its July-June accounting year with the government's April-March fiscal year. The next accounting year will be a nine-month period from July 2020 to March 31, 2021. Thereafter, all financial years will start from April, as it happens with the central and state governments.

A panel set up by the NITI Aayog in July 2016 had recommended starting the next fiscal year from 1 January to 31 December after the end of the current five-year plan. But the government has revived plans to change the fiscal year to January-December from the current April-March. Opposition from the states had forced the central government to put the idea on the backburner after first being very enthusiastic about it.

2. Assisted Reproductive Technology Regulation Bill, 2020

Q. Consider the following statements with respect of 'Assisted Reproductive Technology Regulation Bill, 2020:

1. It would lead to creation of National Board to regulate ART services in the country.
2. ART services involve procedures such as in vitro fertilization, intracytoplasmic sperm injection

(ICSI), cryopreservation of gametes or embryos among others.

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 Assisted Reproductive Technology (ART) Regulation Bill, 2020 has proposed the creation of a National Board. It will lay down a code of conduct and set minimum standards of physical infrastructure, laboratory and diagnostic equipment and expert manpower to be employed by clinics and banks.

ART involves procedures such as in vitro fertilization, intracytoplasmic sperm injection (ICSI), cryopreservation of gametes or embryos, and/or the use of fertility medication.

3. Aditya-L1

Q. What is 'Aditya-L1' that is often mentioned in news?

- a) Rover sent to Mars by Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO).
b) Half-humanoid developed by ISRO for mission Gaganyaan.
c) ISRO's first scientific expedition to study the Sun.
d) ISRO's first telescope to study the outer atmosphere of Sun.

Answer: (c)

Explanation: Option 'c' is correct. The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) is preparing to send its first scientific expedition to study the Sun, Aditya-L1. It will perform continuous observations looking directly at the Sun to obtain information about its atmosphere and magnetic field.

4. Export Promotion

Q. Consider the following statements:

1. The Economic Survey 2019-20 has suggested integration of 'Assemble in India for the World' into 'Make in India'.

2. This step would help raise India its export market share to about 3.5% by 2025 and 6% by 2030.
3. Deemed Exports refers to those transactions in which the goods supplied do not leave the country and the payment for such supplies is received either in Indian rupees or in free foreign exchange.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (d)

Explanation: All statements are correct. The Economic Survey 2019-20 has suggested integrating 'Assemble in India for the World' into 'Make in India' as it would help raise India its export market share to about 3.5% by 2025 and 6% by 2030.

Deemed Exports refers to those transactions in which the goods supplied do not leave the country and the payment for such supplies is received either in Indian rupees or in free foreign exchange.

5. Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen) Phase-II

Q. With reference to the 'Swachh Bharat Phase II (G), consider the following statements:

1. SBM (G) Phase-II will be implemented from 2020-21 to 2024-25.
2. The programme will construct Community Managed Sanitary Complex (CMSC) at village level by 2024.
3. For this, it has increased the financial assistance from Rs. 2 lakh to Rs. 5 lakh per CMSC.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (c)

Explanation: Statement 1 is correct. The Union Cabinet has approved the Phase II of the Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen) [SBM (G)] till 2024-25.

Statement 2 and 3 are incorrect. The programme will not construct Community Managed Sanitary Complex (CMSC) at village level by 2024. But, it has increased financial assistance to the panchayats for the construction of CMSC. from Rs. 2 lakh to Rs. 3 lakh.

6. Global Health Security Index, 2019

Q. Consider the following statements with respect of '2019 Global Health Security Index':

1. It has been ranked India at 57th with a score of 46.5.
2. In Asia, India is the second most prepared country for the next epidemic or pandemic.
3. North Korea, Somalia and Equatorial Guinea are listed in the index's bottom three.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (b)

Explanation: Statement 1 is correct. India is ranked 57th with a score of 46.5, falling in the middle tier.

Statement 2 is incorrect. On this scale, the US is the "most prepared" nation (scoring 83.5), with the UK (77.9), the Netherlands (75.6), Australia (75.5) and Canada (75.3) behind it. Thailand and South Korea were among the best-performing countries in Asia.

Statement 3 is correct. North Korea (17.5), Somalia (16.6) and Equatorial Guinea (16.2) are listed in the index's bottom three.

7. Changes in Crop Insurance

Q. Consider the following statements:

1. The government makes enrolment of farmers in the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) and Restructured Weather Based Crop Insurance Scheme (RWBCIS) voluntary from the 2020 Kharif season.
2. The Central government also restricts its premium subsidy in its flagship crop insurance schemes to 30% for unirrigated areas and 25% for irrigated areas.

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 government makes enrolment of farmers in the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) and Restructured Weather Based Crop Insurance Scheme (RWBCIS) voluntary from the 2020 Kharif season.

The Central government has also decided to restrict its premium subsidy in its flagship crop insurance schemes to 30% for unirrigated areas and 25% for irrigated areas (from the existing unlimited).



SEVEN IMPORTANT FACTS FOR PRELIMS

1. Which state has launched 'Atal Kisan -Majdoor Canteens' to farmers and labourers at concessional rate of Rs 10 per plate in mandis and sugar mills?

- Haryana

2. Which ministry is the implementing body of 'Shyama Prasad Mukherji Rurban Mission'?

- Ministry of Rural Development

3. Which state has launched 'Project Tej', a platform to help entrepreneurs test their innovative ideas in the field of medical technologies?

- Telangana

4. Which institute has topped the 'Nature Ranking Index 2020'?

- Council of Scientific and Industrial Research

5. What will be the duration of 22nd Law Commission of India?

- Three Years

6. Which country will host the Commonwealth Shooting and Archery Championships in January 2022?

- India

7. Which country will host the 'International Hockey Federation (FIH) Junior Men's World Cup 2021'?

- India

○○○

SEVEN PRACTICE QUESTIONS FOR MAINS EXAM

1. Why is India taking a keen interest in the Antarctica region? Discuss.
2. Discuss whether formation of new states and merger of union territory in recent times is beneficial or not for the economy of India.
3. 'Women's movement in India has not addressed the issues of women of lower social strata.' Substantiate your view.
4. 'Globalisation is generally said to promote cultural homogenisation but due to this cultural specificities appear to be strengthened in the Indian society.' Elucidate.
5. Why do you think the committees are considered to be useful for parliamentary work? Discuss, in this context, the role of the Estimates Committee.
6. Indian and USA are two large democracies. Examine the basic tenets on which the two political systems are based.
7. Assess the importance of the Panchayati Raj system in India as a part of local government. Apart from government grants, what other sources the Panchayats can seek for financing developmental projects?



SEVEN IMPORTANT NEWS

1. Three Species under Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals

Three Indian species – the mainland Asian elephant, Great Indian Bustard and the Bengal Florican were selected for priority bio-diversity conservation at the 13th Conference of the Parties to the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS COP13). All the three animals were included in the 'Appendix I' of the CMS. Inclusion in the 'Appendix I' is for 'migratory species threatened with extinction' would lead to push for greater habitat protection, prohibition against poaching and facilitation of their movement in the regions and countries that are part of these species ranges.

Asian Elephant

The Asian elephant, an endangered species, once used to range from west

Asia to north of Yagtzee river in China but currently, the range has shrunk to 13 Asian countries, and their population in India to 29,964 in 2017.

Great Indian Bustard

Its range stretching across India and Pakistan, it is a critically endangered species with a population of just around 150 individuals and its present habitat having shrunk to 10% of its historical range. India said there is prima facie evidence that the birds fly across the India-Pakistan border and hence the need for bilateral cooperation for recovery of the species.

Bengal Florican

This too is a critically endangered species of bird that belongs to the

bustard family. In its proposal, the present population of the South Asian subspecies has shrunk to around 1,000 individuals and its present habitat been restricted to the Terai and Dooars grassland regions of the Indo-Gangetic and Brahmaputra floodplains.

About CMS

CMS is a treaty agreed by 129 countries plus the European Union, and functions under the UN Environment Programme (UNEP). It works for protection and conservation of species that migrate across frontiers and are facing threats of extinction or require urgent attention.



2. Thai Mangur Fish

The government of Maharashtra has launched a special drive to destroy the cultivation centres of the exotic Thai Mangur fish. The fish is popularly known as Thai Mangur or African Mangur or foreign Mangur, as appearance is somewhat like fresh water Mangur. But the Thai Mangur



is cultivated in highly unhygienic conditions, which may lead to people falling sick after consuming it.

This fish came to India in the late 1980s and early 1990s as it was promoted by the government authorities among fishermen who fish in inland waters as it breeds faster and gives high returns on low investment. As the species grows to a good size, when compared to their smaller indigenous counterparts, farmers have found it more lucrative and reared them on the sly. The central government had

banned breeding, transportation and sale of the invasive species in 2000.

About Fish

A carnivorous-freshwater fish, Magur feeds on water organisms that reportedly has an adverse impact on indigenous biodiversity and reduces food base for water birds. Known to grow up to 3-5 feet long, the species is also suspected to cause diseases like Argulosis, commonly known as fish lice.



3. 22nd Law Commission of India

The government has formally announced the constitution of the 22nd Law Commission for a period of three years. The law panel advises the government on complex legal issues and has a term of three years.

Benefits

The government will have the benefit of recommendations from a specialised body on different aspects of law which are entrusted to the Commission for its study and recommendations, as per its terms of reference.

The Law Commission of India shall, inter-alia:

- ◆ Identify laws which are no longer needed or relevant and can be immediately repealed;
- ◆ Examine the existing laws in the light of Directive Principles of

State Policy and suggest ways of improvement and reform and also suggest such legislations as might be necessary to implement the Directive Principles and to attain the objectives set out in the Preamble of the Constitution;

- ◆ Consider and convey to the government its views on any subject relating to law and judicial administration that may be specifically referred to it by the government through Ministry of Law and Justice (Department of Legal Affairs);
- ◆ Consider the requests for providing research to any foreign countries as may be referred to it by the government through Ministry of Law and Justice;

- ◆ Take all such measures as may be necessary to harness law and the legal process in the service of the poor; and
- ◆ Revise the Central Acts of general importance so as to simplify them and remove anomalies, ambiguities and inequities;

Background

The Law Commission of India is a non-statutory body constituted by the government of India from time to time. The Commission was originally constituted in 1955 and is re-constituted every three years. The tenure of twenty-first Law Commission of India was upto 31st August, 2018. The Law Commission has so far submitted 277 reports.

4. Asur Tribe

The Asur tribe has been using mobile radio to transmit local news and songs along with spreading the popularity of the language within their geographical limits. As per the 2011 Census, the tribe has a population of around 23,000 in Latehar and Gumla districts. In the community, 50% of population could barely speak in Asur language. They are not fluent in the language. Only 7,000 to 8,000 Asur tribals are left in the community who are well conversant in the language.

About Tribe

The Asur Adivasis draw their lineage from the buffalo demon Mahishasur,

and were portrayed as demons and enemies of gods in prominent Hindu texts. They are also credited with being the country's first community of iron smelters. Asuri, their language, is on the verge of extinction, with less than 8,000 people speaking it. The Asur language figures in the list of UNESCO Interactive Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger.

Asur is among the nine Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) found in Jharkhand. Of the 32 different tribes recorded in the State, only four to five tribes, including Santhali, Ho and Kuruk, have recorded language scripts.

About PVTGs

In 1973, the Dhebar Commission created Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs) as a separate category, who are less developed among the tribal groups. In 2006, the government of India renamed the PTGs as PVTGs. PVTGs are more vulnerable among the tribal groups. Due to this factor, more developed and assertive tribal groups take a major chunk of the tribal development funds because of which PVTGs need more funds directed for their development. 75 tribal groups have been categorized by Ministry of Home Affairs as PVTGs. PVTGs reside in 18 States and UT of A&N Islands.

5. India is Now the World's 5th Largest Economy

India has become world's fifth largest economy in 2019 in terms of nominal gross domestic product

(GDP), leapfrogging France and the UK, according to data from the International Monetary Fund's (IMF's)

October World Economic Outlook. India's economy now has a nominal GDP of \$2.94 trillion. While, the UK

economy amounts to \$2.83 trillion and France with \$2.71 trillion.

Key Highlights

As per the report, India's rise is even more dramatic across the past 25 years. Since 1995, the country's nominal GDP has jumped more than 700%.

In purchasing power parity (PPP) terms, India's GDP (PPP) is \$10.51 trillion, exceeding that of Japan and Germany. However, India's real GDP growth has been dropping down for

the last three consecutive years from 7.5% to 4.5%. The GDP of the country fell 4.5% in the second quarter (July-September) of the year 2019-20. This was a fall of 0.5% points compared to the previous quarter.

India's economic growth took a hit due to a number of factors - including slowdown in private consumption, investment and export - but the key indicator is lack of credit (money to produce goods) growth and demand in the market.

Challenges Ahead

Despite its strong economic growth, the country still faces its share of challenges. Access to development and new opportunities has been uneven. Furthermore, India remains home to one quarter of the world's poor. Just 39% of its rural residents can access sanitation facilities and nearly half the total population still defecate in the open, according to the UN.

6. Worldwide Education for the Future Index 2019

The Economist Intelligence Unit has released 35th in Worldwide Education for the Future Index 2019. The index ranks countries based on their abilities to equip students with skill-based education. The report analyses education system from the perspective of skill-based education "in areas such as critical thinking, problem-solving, leadership, collaboration, creativity and entrepreneurship, as well as digital and technical skills."

Key Highlights

Among the world's largest economies, the US, UK, France and Russia all fell back in the index, while China, India and Indonesia took steps forward. Finland was at the apex of the index,

with strengths across each category followed by Sweden.

India ranked 35th on the overall index in 2019 with a total score of 53, based on three categories – policy environment, teaching environment and overall socio-economic environment. The country ranked 40th with an overall score of 41.2 across categories in 2018.

In 2019, India scored 56.3 in policy environment falling from a 61.5 score in 2018. India's score of 52.2 in the teaching environment category and 50.1 in the socio-economic environment category increased significantly from 32.2 and 33.3 in 2018 respectively.

India has made particular strides in the policy environment, with a new national education policy published in early 2019 that explicitly mentions future-oriented skills such as critical thinking, communication and entrepreneurship.

Challenges

The report had highlighted the shortcomings in India's education system emphasizing upon its inability to utilise the opportunity of internationalising its higher education system.

A decentralised education system is another shortcoming of India's education policy.

7. Galaxy XMM-2599

An international team of astronomers led by scientists at the University of California has found an unusual monster galaxy that existed about 12 billion years ago, when the universe was only 1.8 billion years old. Dubbed XMM-2599, the galaxy formed stars at a high rate and then died. Why it suddenly stopped forming stars is unclear. Even before the universe was 2 billion years old, XMM-2599 had already formed a mass of more than 300 billion suns, making it an ultra massive galaxy. In general, early-formed galaxies should be smaller in

mass, because the current model of structure formation is hierarchical – small, low-mass galaxies would be expected to form first, and then they would merge to form bigger more massive galaxies at a later time. But XMM-2599, with six times the mass of the Milky Way, completely defies these predictions.

The team spotted XMM-2599 by measuring the electromagnetic radiation emanating from distant stars, which allows researchers to determine the chemical and physical properties of galaxies. The radiation must often travel

across vast expanses of space before reaching Earthbound instruments, and the journey can take a long time. That means that, by taking spectroscopic measurements, scientists can glimpse what our universe looked like in the distant past.

During XMM-2599's peak, it created more than 1,000 solar masses in stars every year. By comparison, the Milky Way galaxy creates just one new star every year. However, it has stopped producing any new stars, puzzling researchers.

SEVEN IMPORTANT HIGHLIGHTS FROM PIB

1. Formation and Promotion of Farmer Producer Organizations

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs has given its approval for 10,000 Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs) to be formed in five years period from 2019-20 to 2023-24 to ensure economies of scale for farmers.

Key Highlights

Initially there will be three implementing agencies to form and promote FPOs, namely Small Farmers Agri-business Consortium (SFAC), National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC) and National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD). States may also, if so desire, nominate their implementing agency

in consultation with Department of Agriculture Cooperation & Farmers Welfare (DAC & FW).

There will be a National Project Management Agency (NPMA) at SFAC for providing overall project guidance, data compilation and maintenance through integrated portal and Information management and monitoring.

Initially the minimum number of members in FPO will be 300 in plain area and 100 in North East & hilly areas. However, DAC&FW may revise the minimum number of membership based on experience/need with approval of Union Agriculture Minister.

FPOs will be promoted under "One District One Product" cluster to promote specialization and better processing, marketing, branding & export by FPOs.

Benefits

Small and marginal farmers do not have economic strength to apply production technology, services and marketing including value addition. Through formation of FPOs, farmers will have better collective strength for better access to quality input, technology, credit and better marketing access through economies of scale for better realization of income.

2. Animal Culture Linked to Conservation Action

Animal culture, the learning of non-human species through socially transmitted behaviours, is being linked to conservation action for the first time. There is evidence that whales, dolphins, elephants and primates acquire some of their knowledge and skills through social learning. In addition to individual learning, some animals may learn socially from adults or peers about various behaviours, including optimal migration routes.

Need

Human activities that disrupt the social fabric of culturally developed species

can have severe impacts. Once a species has vanished from an area, critical knowledge can be also be lost. For example, the Southern Right Whales' knowledge of migration routes around New Zealand's coastline was lost to the species as a result of commercial whaling in the 1800s. Nowadays, a handful of whales have again started to calve around New Zealand.

Protecting cultural knowledge among peers and across generations may be vital for the survival and successful reproduction of certain species. Supporting individuals that act as 'repositories' of social knowledge

such as elephant matriarchs, or groups of knowledgeable elders, may be just as important as conserving critical habitat.

The Convention on the Conservation on Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) has been spearheading efforts to use scientific knowledge on animal culture, to better protect endangered wildlife. Scientific research has made significant progress in animal culture. However, it is necessary to develop findings and recommendations that show how this complex issue can be further considered in conservation efforts under CMS.

3. Atal Bhujal Yojana

The government of India and the World Bank has signed a \$450 million loan

agreement to support the national programme to arrest the country's

depleting groundwater levels and strengthen groundwater institutions.

Key Highlights

The World Bank-supported Atal Bhujal Yojana (ABHY) – National Groundwater Management Improvement Programme will be implemented in the states of Gujarat, Maharashtra, Haryana, Karnataka, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, and Uttar Pradesh and cover 78 districts. These states span both the hard rock aquifers of peninsular India and the alluvial aquifers of the Indo-Gangetic plains. They were selected based on several criteria, including degree of groundwater exploitation and degradation, established legal and regulatory instruments, institutional readiness, and experience in implementing initiatives related to groundwater management.

The programme will, among others, enhance the recharge of aquifers and introduce water conservation practices; promote activities related to water harvesting, water management, and crop alignment; create an institutional structure for sustainable groundwater management; and equip communities and stakeholders to sustainably manage groundwater.

Scale of the Problem

The last few decades saw an exponential growth in the exploitation of groundwater through the construction of millions of private wells. Between 1950 and 2010, the number of drilled tube wells increased from 1 million to nearly

30 million. This allowed the area irrigated by groundwater to increase from approximately 3 million ha to more than 35 million ha. Groundwater currently provides approximately 60 percent of irrigation water. Over 80% of the rural and urban domestic water supplies in India are served by groundwater making India the world's largest user of groundwater. If the current trends persist, 60% of districts are likely to reach critical level of groundwater depletion within two decades, which in turn will render at least 25% of the agriculture production at risk. Climate change will likely exacerbate current pressures on groundwater resources.

4. Technology Group

The Union Cabinet has approved the Constitution of an empowered "Technology Group". Cabinet has approved constitution of a 12-Member Technology Group with the Principal Scientific Adviser to Government of India as its Chair. This Group is mandated to render timely policy advice on latest technologies; mapping of technology and technology products; commercialisation of dual use technologies developed in national laboratories and government R&D organisations; developing an indigenisation road map for selected key technologies; and selection of appropriate R&D programs leading to technology development.

Major Impact

The Technology Group will render the best possible advice on technology to be developed for a technology supplier and the technology procurement strategy; develop in-house expertise in aspects of policy and use of emerging technologies; and ensure sustainability of public sector technology developed/being developed at PSUs, national labs and research organisations.

Implementation Strategy and Targets

The three pillars of the work of the Technology Group include policy support; procurement support; and support on research and development proposals.

Background

In the technology sector, five important issues were: (a) silo-centric approaches to development of technology (b) technology standards either not developed or applied, leading to sub-optimal industrial development (c) dual use technologies not being optimally commercialised (d) R&D programs not aligned to efforts at technology development (e) need for mapping of technologies important for applications in society and industry. The Constitution of Technology Group is an effort at addressing the above problems.

5. RAISE 2020

The Government of India has announced the mega event, RAISE 2020- 'Responsible Artificial intelligence (AI) for Social Empowerment 2020,' to be held from April 11-12 in New Delhi. RAISE 2020 is India's first AI summit to be organized by the government in partnership with industry & academia.

Key Points

The summit will be a global meeting of minds to exchange ideas and charter a course to use AI for social empowerment, inclusion and transformation in key areas like healthcare, agriculture, education and smart mobility amongst other sectors. Ahead of the summit, MeitY organized

an Industry Consultation with industry representatives to bring in synergies within India's AI landscape.

'RAISE 2020' is a first of its kind, global meeting of minds on AI to drive India's vision and roadmap for social empowerment, inclusion and transformation through responsible AI.

The event will start with a Startup Challenge – Pitchfest followed by the two-day summit, organized by Government of India along with Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology will witness robust participation from global industry leaders, key opinion makers,

Government representatives and academia.

Significance

A data-rich environment like India has the potential to be the world's leading AI laboratory which can eventually transform lives globally. AI technology

is a powerful tool that can be used to create a positive impact in the Indian context, further becoming the AI destination for the world.

Through this summit we will outline India's vision for utilizing the power of AI to responsibly transform the social landscape for a better tomorrow.

6. Market Intelligence and Early Warning System for TOP Crops

The government has launched the– Market Intelligence and Early Warning System (MIEWS) Web Portal. The MIEWS Portal is a 'first-of-its-kind' platform for 'real time monitoring' of prices of tomato, onion and potato (TOP) and for simultaneously generating alerts for intervention under the terms of the Operation Greens(OG) scheme. The portal would disseminate all relevant information related to TOP crops such as Prices and Arrivals, Area, Yield and Production, Imports and Exports, Crop Calendars,

Crop Agronomy, etc in an easy to use visual format.

Key Features

- ◆ A dashboard that would indicate low price and high price alerts as well as price forecasts for 3 month forward.
- ◆ Prices and arrivals of TOP crops across the country including interactive charts and comparisons with previous seasons.
- ◆ Crop agronomy and trade profile of each of the TOP crops.

- ◆ Regular and special reports on the market situation of the TOP crops. The portal will have public and private sections into which the aforementioned features would be divided. Sections like prices and arrivals, area, yield and production, crop agronomy and trade profile would be accessible to the public while the regular and special market intelligence reports and price forecasts would be accessible only to the policy makers.

7. Higher Education Leadership Development Programme for Administrator

The government has launched 'Higher Education Leadership Development Programme for Administrator'– a joint initiative of UGC and British Council under the auspices of UK India Education and Research Initiative (UKIERI). It aims to deliver a leadership development programme for middle and senior level administrative functionaries in Indian Universities.

Key Highlights

The main objective of the programme is to train the senior and middle level academic administrators to enable

them to bring about systemic changes with renewed approaches, capacity, tools and skill in Universities in India.

This programme ensures effectiveness on the part of the administrative functionaries of the Universities.

This programme includes two workshops conducted by UK trainers, which will train about 300 academic administrators in the level of Registrar and Joint/Deputy/Assistant Registrar to enable them to bring about professional transformation in the higher education institutions. Further to make the programme sustainable 30 potential future leadership development programme trainers from among the 300 participants will be chosen and will be given additional training to train others.

Significance

The programme will be a step towards institutional development in line with governments' commitment to improve the quality of education being imparted in our Universities.

The programme will lead to developing a more global outlook and promote learning for inclusive and internationally connected higher education systems that support the economic and social growth in UK and India.

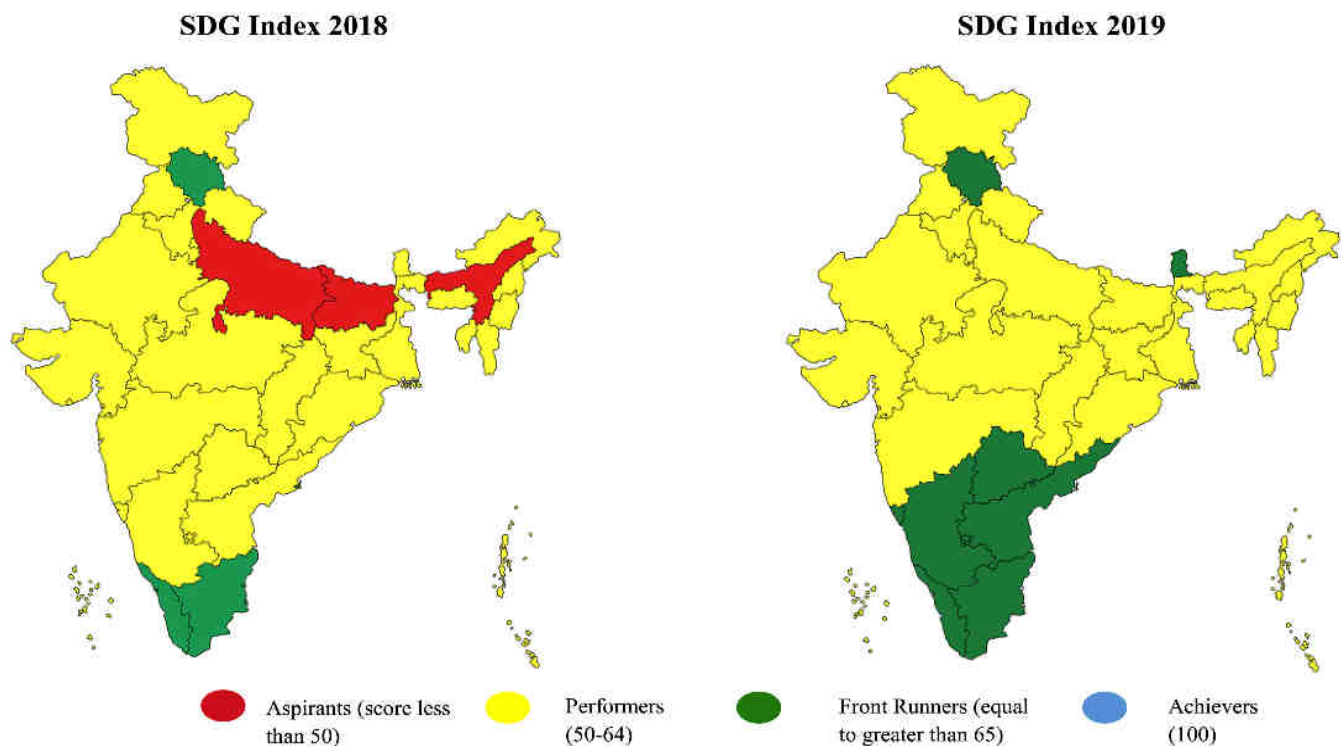
The programme will also serve as a stimulant for the functionaries to improve their performance and capabilities which consequently shall enhance institutional profile and reputation of Universities in India.



SEVEN IMPORTANT CONCEPTS THROUGH GRAPHICS

Economic Survey 2019-20

1. India and the SDGs

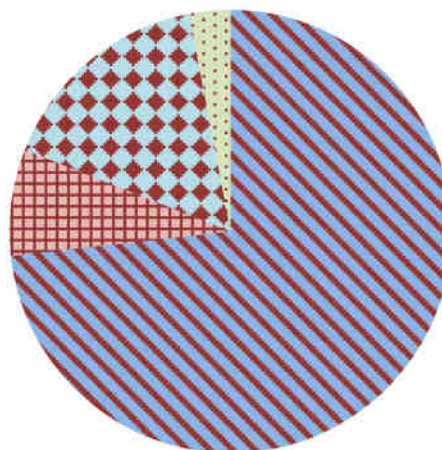


Source: NITI Aayog.

- India follows a holistic approach for achieving the sustainable development goals (SDGs) by implementing a comprehensive array of schemes.
- The progress towards SDGs has been assessed by SDG India Index.
- The 2018 SDG India Index had given a composite score for each state and Union Territories based in their performance on 62 indicators across 13 of the 17 SDGs.
- The 2019 SDG India Index Report is more comprehensive and highlights the progress being made by the States/UTs on a wider set of 100 indicators spread across 16 goals.
- Overall, it is encouraging to note that the composite score for India has improved from 57 in 2018 to 60 in 2019, indicating the impressive progress made by the country in its journey towards achieving the SDGs.
- This positive stride towards achieving the target is largely driven by commendable country wide performance in five goals - 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation), 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy), 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure), 15 (Life on Land) and 16 (Peace, Justice and Social Institutions) - where India has scored between 65 and 99.
- The goals that demand special attention are – 2 (Zero Hunger) and 5 (Gender Equality) – where the overall country score is below 50.
- The overall country score lies between 50 and 64, indicates the scope for improvement in the coming years.

2. India's National Green House Gas Inventory

- India submitted its Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) under the Paris Agreement on a "best effort basis" keeping in mind the developmental imperatives of the country.
- In its NDC, India promised to reduce its emission intensity of GDP by 33 to 35% below 2005 levels by the year 2030; 40% of cumulative electric power installed capacity would be from non-fossil fuel sources by 2030 and increase its forest cover and additional carbon sink equivalent to 2.5 to 3 billion tons of carbon dioxide by 2030.
- As a Party to the UNFCCC, India submitted its Second Biennial Update Report (BUR) to the UNFCCC towards fulfillment of the reporting obligation under the Convention.
- As per the BUR, the emission intensity of India's GDP has reduced by 21% over the period of 2005-2014 which is the result of India's proactive and sustained actions on climate change. India is on track to achieve its nationally determined targets. In 2014, the net national GHG emissions after including LULUCF (Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry) were 23,06,295Gg CO equivalent (around 2.306 billion tons of CO equivalent).

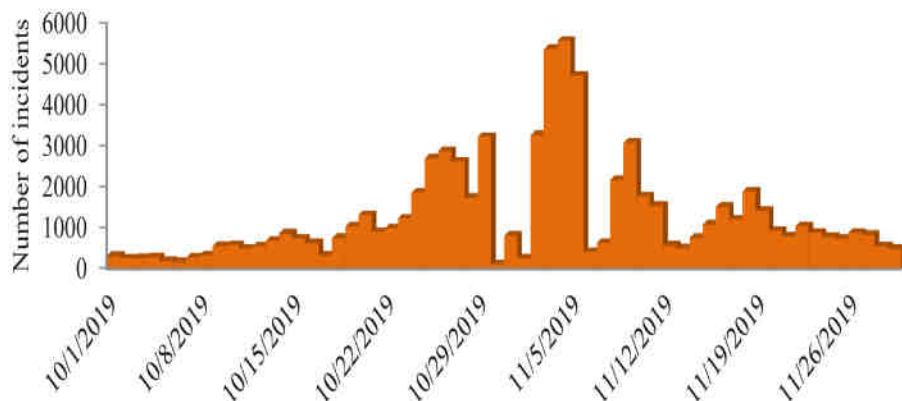


■ Energy ■ Industrial Process and Product Use ■ Agriculture ■ Waste

Source: Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of India.

1 Gigagram (Gg) = 10^9 grams; Greenhouse gases are converted to CO₂ equivalent (CO₂e or CO₂eq) using their respective Global Warming Potentials. *TOTAL without LULUCF.

3. Agriculture Residue Burning



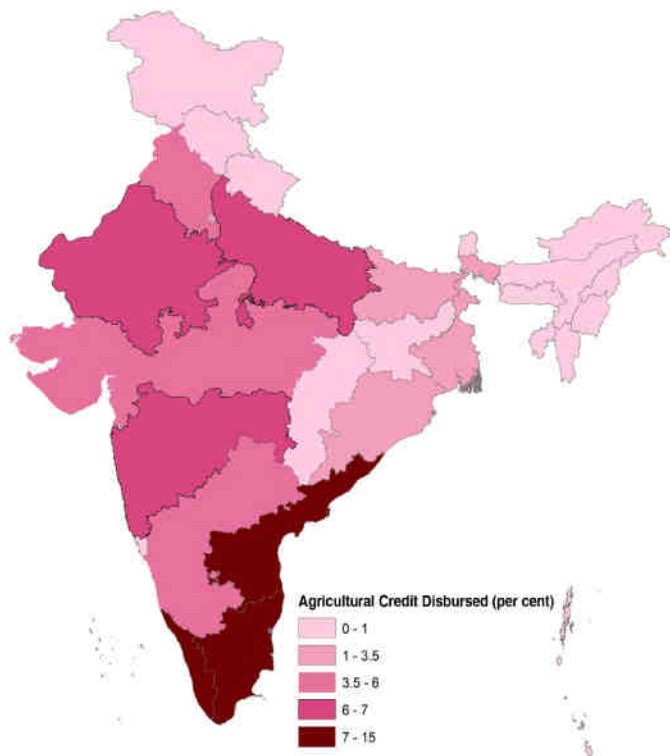
Stubble Burning Incidents during October-November, 2019

Source: NASA.

- Burning of agricultural wastes in the fields is a practice that results in a number of environmental problems. India, being the second largest agro-based economy with year-round crop cultivation, generates a large amount of agricultural waste, including crop residues.
- Open burning of crop residues in the agricultural fields has become an environmental concern in India, particularly during paddy harvesting season.
- The stubble burning incidents in the month of October and November, 2019 showed that the number of fire events are high from the mid of October till the first week of November, 2019.

- This has led to an increase in PM_{2.5} and PM₁₀ in Delhi in the month of October and November as compared to that of September, 2019.
- In the month of September, the highest level of PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} was 134 and 80.34 respectively. In the month of October, the highest level of PM₁₀ was 384 which is more than double as compared to the maximum PM₁₀ of September, 2019.
- Similarly, the highest level of PM_{2.5} in the month of October was 306 which is higher than the September assessment. In the month of November, PM₁₀ crossed 550 and PM_{2.5} crossed 510. PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} started falling in December, 2019 and the lowest level of PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} was 188 and 153 respectively.
- With various efforts, overall, the total number of burning events recorded significant reduction. However, continuation of this practice by farmers is reported every year starting winter and the serious concerns about its impact on air quality are raised.

4. Agricultural Credit

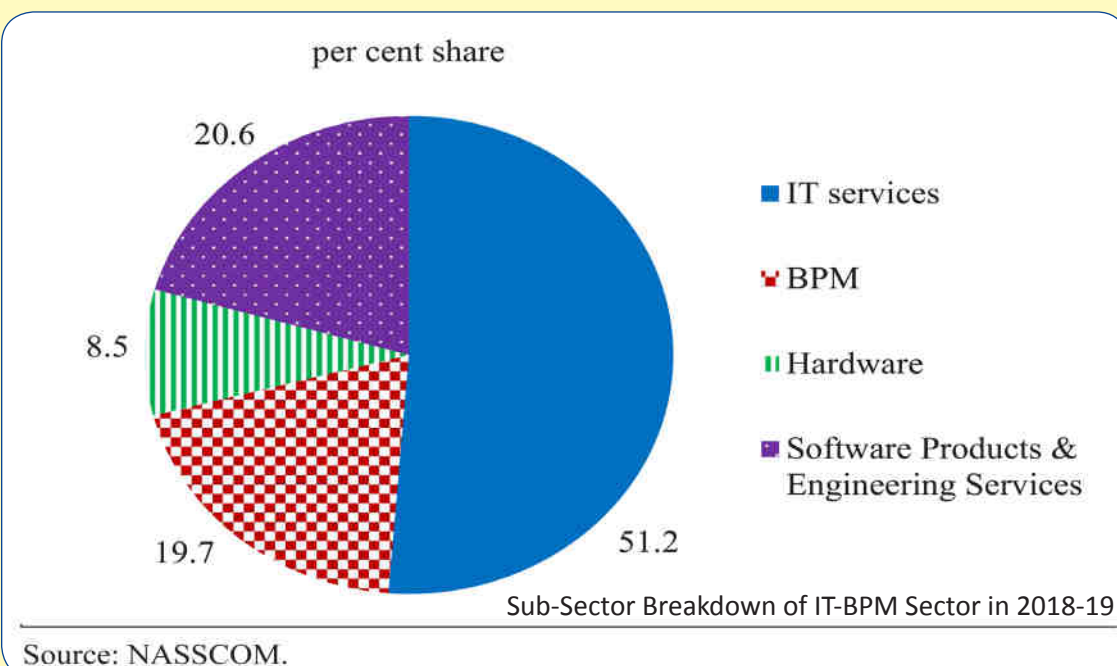


Source: Based on the data from DAC&FW

- The agricultural credit flow target for 2019-20 has been fixed at Rs. 13,50,000 crore, and till 30 November, 2019, a sum of Rs. 9,07,843.37 crore has been disbursed.
- The regional distribution of agricultural credit in India is highly skewed. It is observed that credit is low in North Eastern, Hilly and Eastern States. The share of North Eastern States has been less than one percent in total agricultural credit disbursement.
- According to the Reserve Bank of India's report, credit disbursement to the farm sector was higher than their agricultural gross domestic (GDP) product. In Kerala and Tamil Nadu, agricultural credit was almost 180% more than the average agriculture GDP of the state in the years 2015, 2016 and 2017.
- In contrast, Jharkhand, West Bengal, Chhattisgarh, Bihar, Odisha, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan were not getting credit even to meet their basic input requirement of seed, organic manure, fertiliser, repair, maintenance, irrigation charges, electricity, pesticides and insecticides. Labour charges and lease rentals were not included in this calculation.
- The report also stated that "the number of (loan) accounts under the small and marginal category are 5,13,88,257 and the total number of small and marginal farmers in the country as per Agriculture Census, 2015-16 was 12,56,35,000. This means, despite so many initiatives aimed at financial inclusion, only 40.90% of small and marginal farmers could be covered by State Co-operative Banks (SCBs).

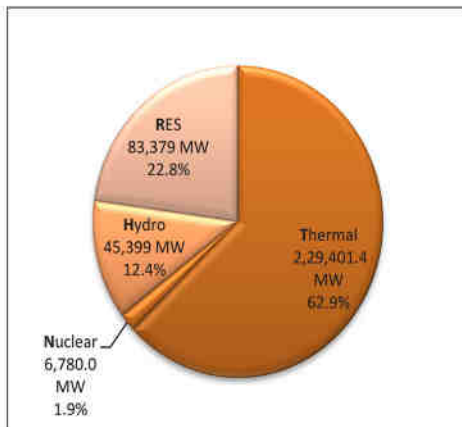
5. Information Technology and Business Process Management (IT-BPM) Services

- The Indian IT-BPM industry has been the flag-bearer of India's exports for the past two decades, with industry size reaching about US\$ 177 billion in March 2019. The sector contributes significantly to the economy via employment growth and value addition.
- A significant part (about 83%) of the IT-BPM industry (excluding hardware) continues to be export driven, with export revenues in excess of US\$ 135 billion in 2018-19.
- Out of the total US\$ 135.5 billion in exports of the IT-BPM sector in 2018-19, IT services accounted for 55% of the exports, and BPM and Software Products & Engineering services accounted for the remaining 45% with each accounting for almost half of the share.
- IT services constituted 51% of the IT-BPM sector in 2018-19, followed by Software & Engineering Services (20.6% share) and BPM Services (19.7% share). Within the IT-BPM sector, IT services remained the dominant segment with about US\$ 91 billion in revenues in 2018-19. Out of the IT services, digital revenues grew more than 30% to reach US\$ 33 billion.



6. Power Sector

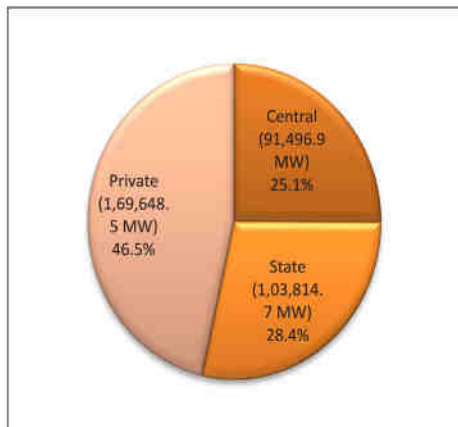
Fuel-wise Power Generation



Source: Ministry of Power.

Note: RES- Renewable Energy Sources.

Sector-wise Power Generation



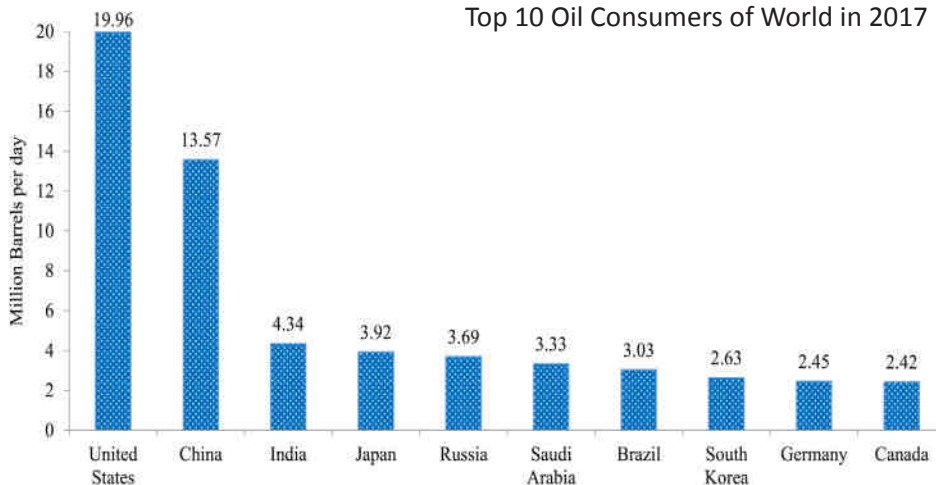
- Power sector in India has witnessed a paradigm shift over the years due to the constant efforts of Government to foster investment in the sector. As a result, India has improved its ranking to 76th position in the Energy Transition Index published by the World Economic Forum (WEF).
- In India, total installed capacity has increased from 3,56,100 MW in March 2019 to 3,64,960 MW as on 31.10.2019.
- The fuel-wise and sector-wise distribution shows that thermal power accounts for about 63% of total installed capacity and roughly half of the generation capacity is in the private sector.

- Thermal power generation is followed by renewable energy sources (22.8%), hydro (12.4%) and nuclear (1.9%) of total installed capacity.
- As far as sector-wise distribution is concerned, private sector is followed by state governments (28.4%) and central government (25.1%).
- Under the Pradhan Mantri Sahaj Bijli Har Ghar Yojana (Saubhagya) scheme, all the States have reported electrification of all households on Saubhagya portal, as on 31.03.2019, except few households in Left Wing Extremism (LWE) affected Bastar region of Chhattisgarh.
- Supply of electricity to the rural domestic consumers is a good indicator of inclusive growth. As a result of various initiatives taken by Government of India along with the State governments, 18 States have reported supply of more than 20 hours of electricity supply while remaining states have reported about 15 or more hours.

7. Petroleum and Natural Gas

- India is the third largest energy consumer (4.34 million barrels per day) in the world after USA (19.96 million barrels per day) and China (13.57 million barrels per day).
- India is followed by Japan, Russia, Saudi Arabia and Brazil with a consumption of 3.92, 3.69, 3.33 and 3.03 millions barrels per day respectively.
- With a share of 5.8% of the world's primary energy consumption, India's energy requirement is fulfilled primarily by coal, crude oil, renewable energy and natural gas. However, India's oil production is one of the lowest among the major economies of the world and has been declining over a period of time.
- But, the decline in reserves till 2018 has seen a reversal in 2019, with reserves rising from 594 MMT in 2018 to 619 MMT in 2019.
- India with a refining capacity of 249.4 MMTPA is the fourth largest in the world after the United States, China and Russia. Refinery capacity increased from 234.0 MMT in 2017-18 to 247.6 MMT in 2018-19, while crude oil processed rose to 257.2 MMT in 2018-19 as against 251.9 MMT in 2017-18.
- However, refinery capacity utilisation fell to 103.9% in 2018-19, compared to 107.7% in 2017-18. There is a need to augment refining capacity to meet growing demand for petroleum fuels and petrochemicals.

Top 10 Oil Consumers of World in 2017



Source: US Energy Information Administration.

Note: Oil includes crude oil, all other petroleum liquids, and biofuels.

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