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SEVEN IMPORTANT ISSUES

1. LAWMAKERS AS LAWYERS: NO NEED TO BAN

Why in News?

The Supreme Court recently dismissed a plea seeking to ban lawmakers from practising as advocates. The apex court said there was no provision either under the Rules and the law regulating the profession of the lawyers to restrict them from practising on becoming members of Parliament, state assemblies or state councils.

Introduction

The Centre did not accept the proposition that lawyers should be banned from being legislators. The Attorney General said such a ban is not correct or justifiable as being an MP/MLA is not a full time job. The Attorney General added that there cannot be any "prohibition" as membership of Parliament is not a job under the government of India.

The Bar Council of India (BCI) decided to allow members of Parliament and legislative assemblies to practise as advocates, but said that those who move an impeachment motion against any judge of the higher judiciary will not be allowed to appear before that court. The BCI said that the lawyer-MPs have their privilege as parliamentarians to move impeachment motion, but "as lawyers, the BCI can put the condition under which they can be allowed to practise or not".

Rules

Section 30 of the Advocates Act, 1961, confers the right on every advocate

whose name is interred in the common roll to practise in all courts or before any tribunal or authority. But there are restrictions contained in the Bar Council Rules. Rule 47 places a bar on an advocate personally engaging in any business. Under Rule 48, an advocate cannot be a Managing Director or Secretary of a Company but he can be a Director or Chairman without the performance of any executive functions.

The real catch is in Rule 49 which stipulates that a practising advocate shall not be a "full-time salaried employee of any person, government, firm, corporation or concern." On taking up such employment, advocates are bound to intimate the State Bar Council under which they are enrolled and suspend their practice. There is a narrow window provided in Rule 52, which allows, with the consent of the State Bar Council, part-time employment, with two riders – that it does not come into conflict with law practice and is not inconsistent with the dignity of the legal profession.

Arguments against the Verdict

- ◆ The principal objection to legislators donning the black robes is that as they draw salaries from the Consolidated Fund of India, they are 'employees' of the State, a position that warrants suspension of practice under the Advocates Act and Bar Council Rules.
- ◆ The second reason cited is that MPs can initiate impeachment proceedings against judges and therefore, appearing before them as lawyers would be a conflict of interest.
- ◆ The third reason is that both law practice and the role of representatives of the people are full time professions and one cannot do justice to both simultaneously. The country needs dedicated and full-time legislators.
- ◆ Lawmakers receive their salaries and perks solely to discharge their public duty.
- ◆ There is a argument that under Prevention of Corruption Act, MLAs and MPs are public servants. Allowing them to practice as advocate and restricting other public servants is arbitrary and violation of right to equality under Article 14.
- ◆ It amounts to "professional misconduct" when MLAs and MPs, who get salary and other benefits from the public fund appear against the government. The lawmakers appear as advocates even when parliament or assemblies in session and participates in matter that affects financial interests of the country despite receiving salaries and other perquisites drawn on the public exchequer.
- ◆ Many lawmakers are regularly seen on television and at news

conferences and tend to have a heavy social media presence. Such visibility is against the BCI rules.

Arguments in Favour of Verdict

- ◆ A public servant is not allowed to practise as an advocate and lawmakers are public servants under Section 21 of the Indian Penal Code and Section 2(c) of the Prevention of Corruption Act.
- ◆ Legislators, many of whom are designated Senior Counsel, argue that their law practice does not involve signing vakalats and drafting work that other advocates need to do and that their court appearances will not be during the Parliament or Assembly sessions. Further, with a battery of juniors and briefing counsel, clients will not suffer due to their dual roles. And with staff to man their MP or MLA offices, they need not necessarily be torn between conflicting loyalties.
- ◆ The legal qualification of legislators should be seen as an asset as it helps in improving the quality of lawmaking.
- ◆ Lateral entry from legal profession or some field of expertise is not necessarily a bad thing. It is supposed to enrich and improve parliamentary discourse.

Past Judgements

In an interesting and landmark case in which a medical doctor who studied law challenged the Bar Council's rejection of his application for enrolment as an advocate, the Supreme Court in *Dr. Haniraj L. Chulani Vs Bar Council of Maharashtra and Goa* held that "the legal profession requires full time attention and would not countenance an Advocate riding two horses or more at a time". The doctor had contended that the medical profession was in no way a less dignified profession, that he was qualified to be enrolled as an

advocate under the statute and that he was ready to give an undertaking that during court hours he would not carry on his medical practice. The Court visualised a possible dilemma of a practising surgeon having to perform emergency operations or deal with patients beyond court hours and the dictates of the legal profession involving meeting clients, getting instructions, reading briefs and preparing for arguments for the next day in court. The apex court was unambiguous in the *Dr. Haniraj Chulani* case noting that "law is a jealous mistress that calls for undivided loyalty and unflinching attention".

The Supreme Court in *R.S. Nayak Vs A.R. Antulay* had held that the legislators do not fall under the rubric of public servants within the meaning of Section 21 of the Indian Penal Code. But, in the *P.V. Narasimha Rao* case, the majority view was that legislators are public servants for the purpose of the Prevention of Corruption Act.

Supreme Court Verdict

The Supreme Court held that the provisions of the Advocates Act, 1961 and the Rules framed there under, do not place any restrictions on the legislators to practise as advocates during the relevant period. The closest rule framed by the Bar Council of India is Rule 49 which, however, has no application to the elected people's representatives as they do not fall in the category of full-time salaried employee of any person, firm, government, corporation or concern.

The top court said that legislators cannot be characterised as full-time salaried employees as there is no relationship of employer and employee. The employment postulates a master-servant relationship and the government of India is not the master of a Member of Parliament. The status of legislators (MPs, MLAs and MLCs) is of a member of the House (Parliament/

State Assembly). The mere fact that they draw salary under the Salaries and Allowances of Member of Parliament Act, 1954 or different allowances under the relevant Rules framed under the said Act does not result in creation of a relationship of employer and employee between the government and the legislators, despite the description of payment received by them in the name of salary.

The apex court said that although the legislators are deemed to be public servants, their status is unique and certainly not one of a full-time salaried employee of any person, government, firm, corporation or concern as such.

The legislators being elected people's representatives occupy a seat in Parliament/ Legislative Assembly or Council as its members but are not in the employment of or for that matter full-time salaried employees as such. They occupy a special position so long as the House is not dissolved. The fact that disciplinary or privilege action can be initiated against them by the Speaker of the House does not mean that they can be treated as full-time salaried employees. Similarly, the participation of the legislators in the House for the conduct of its business, by no standards can be considered as service rendered to an employer.

The court, further, observed that legislators are not appointed but are elected by the electors from respective territorial constituencies. The fact that they have to take oath administered by the President/Governor before they take their seat in the House, does not mean that they are appointed by the President/Governor as such, unlike in the case of the Prime Minister/Chief Minister and Ministers in the Council of Ministers.

The legislators receive payment in the form of salary and allowances or pension from the Consolidated Fund, is not enough to debar them from practising as advocates, sans being a full-

time salaried employee of the specified entities. They continue to remain only as members of the House representing the territorial constituencies from where they have been elected until the House is dissolved or if he/she resigns or vacates the seat for having incurred disqualification as may be prescribed by law.

The three-judge bench said that merely because the advocate concerned is an elected people's representative, it does not follow that he or she has indulged in professional misconduct. Similarly, the conferment of power on the legislators (MPs) to move an impeachment motion against the judges of the Constitutional Courts does not per se result in conflict of interest or a case of impacting constitutional morality or for that matter institutional integrity.

The top court also refused to go into the question that India needed dedicated and full-time legislators, who

will sincerely attend Parliament on all working days when called upon to do so. It had also said that the MPs had the power of voting on the impeachment of judges of the Supreme Court and the high courts.

Way Forward

Fundamentally lawmakers, either as MPs or MLAs, are expected to be sufficiently qualified in law so as to help lawmaking bodies in enactment of law. In fact, it should be desirable if India was to advance and bring in the best piece of legislation it could even be considered for members of legislative bodies to have minimum qualification of graduation in law.

There cannot be interference with the profession. The only condition is that no one should be engaged in anything that causes indignity to the legal profession.

Being an MP or MLA does not in any way put a question mark on the dignity

of the legal profession. Traditionally and historically, the lawyers have played a major role in parliamentary affairs and public life and it would be a very regressive step to debar them from parliament.

Thus, the scope of Article 19(1)(g) of the Constitution on the freedom to practise any profession and the reasonable restrictions, in the context of law-makers also functioning as lawyers, has to be seen in broader perspective.

General Studies Paper- II

Topic: Structure, organization and functioning of the Executive and the Judiciary; Ministries and Departments of the Government; pressure groups and formal/informal associations and their role in the Polity.

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2. AN ACTION TANK: IS REALLY DOING ACTION

Why in News?

NITI Aayog is introducing new ideas and bringing about a greater level of accountability in the system. India cannot transform with new ideas without having a paradigm of planning for development. So it will need to evolve into a much stronger organisation than it is now.

Introduction

There have been wide ranging discussions on the role of the new institution to replace the Planning Commission ever since the Prime Minister in his 2014 Independence Day address declared that the Planning Commission would be replaced by a new institution. In the cabinet resolution passed in 7th January 2015, the government has come out with the broad contours of the new institution,

National Institution for Transforming India (NITI). The remit and functioning of NITI Aayog will become clearer as it evolves over time.

Not many will shed tears on the abolition of the Planning Commission. In fact, the previous prime minister himself had called for redefining its role to suit changing realities. The planning exercise that was followed had hardly any relevance for the market economy. It did very little to plan and implement even public sector investments for infra structure and its role in promoting public private partnership was mostly seen as obstructive. The whole exercise of giving approvals to state plans smacked of dispensing patronage. The proliferation of various centrally sponsored schemes (CSS) with "one size fits all" design and conditionality

contributed to severe distortions in public spending. Often, the Planning Commission came up with discretionary transfers to states to meet nonplan revenue deficits negating the norms set by the Finance Commissions. The presence of a member of the Planning Commission as a parttime member of the Finance Commission did very little to correct this anomaly.

Need of the New Institution

There were two contradictions between the Indian development strategy and the institutional framework constraining structure deficits and the lack of competitiveness of the economy. However, the framework failed to adapt to the transition after the liberalising reforms were initiated. With fiscal constraints becoming more and more binding and political economy

factors crowding out infrastructure spending with subsidies and transfers, the planning exercise lost much of its relevance.

The architecture, engineering and management aspects of the new institution, NITI Aayog, will have to be crafted carefully, if it has to serve as an institution to impart dynamism to the developmental process in a harmonious manner.

- ◆ Economic liberalisation has created a vibrant private sector and the new institution should assist in policy making to enable private entrepreneurs to unleash their animal spirits and not to constrain them.
- ◆ Horizontal and vertical competition in a multilevel fiscal system can be an important source of economic dynamism so long as a certain measure of “competitive equality” and “cost benefit appropriability” are ensured and predatory competition is prevented.
- ◆ “Laboratory federalism” can be a source of innovations, imitations and learning and facilitating this is important.
- ◆ At the core of NITI Aayog’s creation are two hubs – Team India Hub and the Knowledge and Innovation Hub. The Team India Hub leads the engagement of states with the Central government, while the Knowledge and Innovation Hub builds NITI’s thinktank capabilities. These hubs reflect the two key tasks of the Aayog.
- ◆ Coordination costs are higher when there are coalition governments and the parties in power in the states are different from that of the centre.

There is an urgent need for an institution to promote healthy intergovernmental competition while preventing the “race to the bottom”. All these underline the need for an

institution to promote “Coasean bargains” in the spirit of cooperative federalism and ensure resolution of issues when such bargains fail.

National Institution for Transforming India (NITI) Aayog

The National Institution for Transforming India, also called NITI Aayog, was formed via a resolution of the Union Cabinet on January 1, 2015. NITI Aayog is the premier policy ‘think tank’ of the government of India, providing both directional and policy inputs. The government of India, in keeping with its reform agenda, constituted the NITI Aayog to replace the Planning Commission instituted in 1950. This was done in order to better serve the needs and aspirations of the people of India. An important evolutionary change from the past, NITI Aayog acts as the quintessential platform of the government of India to bring states to act together in national interest and thereby fosters Cooperative Federalism. The governing council consists of all state Chief Ministers, Chief Ministers of Delhi and Puducherry, Lieutenant Governor of Andaman and Nicobar and vice chairman nominated by the Prime Minister. In addition to full members, there are two parttime members and four exofficial members and a chief executive officer. The temporary members are selected from the leading universities and research institutions.

In essence, effective governance in India will rest on following ‘pillars’:

- ◆ Pro-people agenda that fulfils the aspirations of the society as well as individual.
- ◆ Pro-active in anticipating and responding to their needs.
- ◆ Participative, by involvement of citizenry.
- ◆ Inclusion of all groups.
- ◆ Equality of opportunity to our country’s youth.

- ◆ Sustainable development, by protecting environment.
- ◆ Transparency that uses technology to make government visible and responsive.

Role and Remit

The cabinet resolution lists 13 different tasks to it which may be grouped under four major heads, namely: (i) fostering cooperative federalism by providing structured support to states on a continuous basis; (ii) formulation of a strategic vision and long term policies and programme framework both for the macro

Planning Commission

The Planning Commission was set up by a Resolution of the government of India in March 1950 in pursuance of declared objectives of the government to promote a rapid rise in the standard of living of the people by efficient exploitation of the resources of the country, increasing production and offering opportunities to all for employment in the service of the community. The Planning Commission was charged with the responsibility of making assessment of all resources of the country, augmenting deficient resources, formulating plans for the most effective and balanced utilisation of resources and determining priorities. Jawaharlal Nehru was the first Chairman of the Planning Commission.

Finance Commission after emergence of NITI Aayog

The abolition of the Planning Commission paves the way for restoring the role of the Finance Commission to assess the total requirements of the states in the revenue account without making a distinction between plan and nonplan spending. However, the Finance Commission does not have a comparative advantage in recommending specific purpose transfers unless it is made a permanent body. Of course, the constitutional provision does not require it to be a temporary body – Article 280 simply states that the commission should be appointed every five years or earlier; the appointed commission can continue until the new commission is appointed. However, so long as the Finance Commission continues to be a temporary body, the NITI Aayog will have a role in designing and implementing these programmes.

economy and for different sectors; (iii) acting as a knowledge and innovation hub and providing research inputs by undertaking and accessing globally available research; and (iv) providing a platform for interdepartmental coordination.

The second contradiction was between the centralised command over resource allocation and the developmental role of the states in a federal polity. The end of single party rule and the emergence of coalition governments and regional parties as members of the central coalition brought to the fore the contradiction between centralised planning in a federal framework. The response of the central government was to further centralise even by intruding into the legislative domains of the states by various means including the proliferation of CSS. The consequence of the above was that the two important sources of economic dynamism, the private sector and the states, had to function in a constrained environment.

How different it is from Planning Commission?

The major differences between NITI Aayog and Planning Commission are:

- ◆ Role of States increased, which was limited in Planning commission.
- ◆ Planning Commission followed topdown approach while Niti Aayog is based on Bottom –up approach of policy formation.
- ◆ While the Planning Commission used to formulate Government Plans, NITI Aayog is mainly responsible for evaluating the implementation of programmes.
- ◆ The Planning Commissions function of allocating funds to States has been scraped in this new arrangement.

Argument in favour of the NITI Aayog

It is introducing new ideas and bringing about a greater level of accountability

in the system. The NITI Aayog was formed to bring fresh ideas to the government. Its first mandate is to act as a think tank. It can be visualised as a funnel through which new and innovative ideas come from all possible sources — industry, academia, civil society or foreign specialists — and flow into the government system for implementation.

- ◆ Initiatives like Ayushman Bharat and the draft bill to establish the National Medical Commission to replace the Medical Council of India have all been conceptualised in NITI Aayog and are being taken forward by the respective Ministries. In that sense, NITI Aayog as an action tank rather than just a think tank.
- ◆ By collecting fresh ideas and sharing them with the Central and state governments, it pushes frontiers and ensures that there is no inertia, which is quite natural in any organisation or institution. If it succeeds, NITI Aayog could emerge as an agent of change over time and contribute to the Prime Minister's agenda of improving governance and implementing innovative measures for better delivery of public services.
- ◆ It also work to cut across the silos within the government. NITI Aayog is best placed to achieve this convergence across a number of Ministries and between Central and state governments and push the agenda forward.
- ◆ NITI Aayog has established a Development Monitoring and Evaluation Office which collects data on the performance of various Ministries on a real-time basis. The data are then used at the highest policymaking levels to establish accountability and improve performance and improving the efficiency of governance.
- ◆ The Atal Innovation Mission, which is also established under NITI Aayog, has already done commendable work in improving

the innovation ecosystem in India.

With its current mandate that is spread across a range of sectors and activities, and with its unique and vibrant work culture, NITI Aayog remains an integral and relevant component of the government's plans to put in place an efficient, transparent, innovative and accountable governance system in the country.

Argument against the NITI Aayog

In the original Nehruvian vision, the public sector was entrusted with the economy, given the weak market mechanism which was dominated by mercantile capital and a feudalistic system, especially in rural areas. Even then, the Planning Commission controlled only half of the total investment in India, since what was consciously adopted was a mixed economy system. It also fitted well with our republican democratic Constitution. India cannot transform with new ideas without having a paradigm of planning for development.

- ◆ The rise of neoliberalism, the decline of erstwhile socialist regimes worldwide, and the rise of right-wing market fundamentalists within the country paved the way for the demise of the Planning Commission. Its replacement by NITI Aayog looks more apologetic than substantial for the task of transforming a deeply unequal society into a modern economy that ensures the welfare of all its citizens, irrespective of their social identity.
- ◆ It has no role in influencing, let alone directing, public or private investment. It does not seem to have any influence in policymaking with long-term consequences (for instance, demonetisation and the Goods and Services Tax).
- ◆ NITI Aayog is supposed to be a think tank. This implies that while generating new ideas, it maintains a respectable intellectual distance

from the government of the day. Instead, what we see is uncritical praise of government-sponsored, acronym-infested schemes.

- ♦ It sings paeans to the virtues of the private corporate sector as the saviour of the Indian economy without realising, let alone appreciating, the foundational and socially oriented contribution of India's vast public sector.

Achievement of NITI Aayog

The NITI Aayog established with the aim to achieve Sustainable Development Goals and to enhance cooperative federalism by fostering the involvement of state governments of India in the economic policy-making process using a bottom-up approach. Its initiatives include "15 year road map", "7-year vision, strategy and "3 year action plan", AMRUT, Digital India, Atal Innovation Mission, Medical Education Reform, agriculture reforms (Model Land Leasing Law, Reforms of the Agricultural Produce Marketing Committee Act, Agricultural Marketing and Farmer Friendly Reforms Index for ranking states), Indices Measuring States' Performance in Health, Education and Water Management, Sub-Group of Chief Ministers on Rationalization of Centrally Sponsored Schemes, Sub-Group of Chief Ministers on Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, Sub-Group of Chief Ministers on Skill Development, Task Forces on Agriculture and Elimination of Poverty and Transforming India Lecture Series, were some of work done by NITI Aayog after its formation.

Learning from the experience of the now-industrialised countries, the Chinese state ensured that after its market-oriented economic reforms began, its State Planning Commission became more powerful in the state apparatus. The result was growth and poverty reduction on a scale unprecedented in history. China

became the "factory of the world" — backed by an industrial policy driven by the National Development and Reforms Commission. Similarly, in all East Asian and Southeast Asian countries, industrial policy was planned and executed as part of five-year or longer-term plans. It was precisely because these countries had planning institutions which went hand in hand with industrial policy that they managed to steer policies through turbulent times in the global economy, thus sustaining growth.

In most of Latin America/ Caribbean (LAC) countries and in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), two full decades of potential economic growth and human development were lost when per capita income barely rose even as populations continued to grow. These countries abandoned planning and became captives of the Washington Consensus. On the other hand, the important identifier of East Asian and Southeast Asian countries, which did not experience such "lost decades" in the 1980s and 1990s, were their planning structures, backed by an industrial policy and implemented by learning bureaucracies. That is how they were able to ride the wave of their demographic dividend, which comes but once in the life of a nation. India cannot risk going the LAC/ SSA way, since it is already past the midpoint of its dividend.

While East Asian and Southeast Asian countries still had and have, five-year plans, what was also integral to their planning was productive use of labour, through an export-oriented manufacturing strategy. It was this strategy that was lacking in India's planning. Giving 'planning' per se a bad name for poor policy is indicative of an ahistorical understanding of planning.

Conclusion

The legacy issues do not end merely with the abolition of the Planning Commission. There are parallel institutions in the states and it is

important to transform them to meet the new requirements. Similarly, the Constitution requires the establishment of district planning committees and metropolitan planning committees. Their role in the new environment needs to be specified. Although the cabinet resolution states that NITI Aayog will facilitate grass roots planning, how exactly this will be carried forward needs to be seen.

If NITI Aayog is to implement such a strategy within a planning framework in India, two major changes in governance structures are needed. First, planning will have to become more decentralised, but within a five-year plan framework. Second, bureaucracy will need to change from generalist to specialist, and its accountability will have to be based on outcomes achieved, not inputs or funds spent. NITI Aayog should spell out how these reforms will be implemented.

The success of the institution in achieving interministerial, inter-departmental coordination will depend on the trust and cooperation it receives from them and the harmony with which the Aayog and various ministries work. There could be tensions between the technocrats in the Aayog and various ministers on the one hand and between the technocrats and bureaucrats on the other. There is also the danger of bureaucratisation of the Aayog. Similarly, success in fostering cooperative federalism will depend on the trust of and cooperation from the states. In particular, the first Aayog will have a tremendous task of shaping the character and charting a course to make it an important institution in Indian federal polity to transform India.

General Studies Paper- II

Topic: Statutory, regulatory and various quasi-judicial bodies.



3. AYUSHMAN BHARAT: TO CHANGE INDIA'S HEALTHCARE LANDSCAPE

Why in News?

India takes a giant leap towards providing accessible and affordable healthcare to the common man with the launch of Ayushman Bharat – Pradhan Mantri Jan Aarogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY) by the Prime Minister, on 23rd September, 2018 at Ranchi, Jharkhand. This is the “world’s largest government funded healthcare program” targeting more than 50 crore beneficiaries.

Introduction

Health and health care need to be distinguished from each other for no better reason than that the former is often incorrectly seen as a direct function of the latter. Health is clearly not the mere absence of disease. Good health confers on a person or groups freedom from illness - and the ability to realize one's potential. Health is therefore best understood as the indispensable basis for defining a person's sense of well being. The health of population is a distinct key issue in public policy discourse in every mature society. They include its cultural understanding of ill health and well-being, extent of socio-economic disparities, reach of health services and quality and costs of care and current bio-medical understanding about health and illness.

Health care covers not merely medical care but also all aspects of preventive care too. Nor can it be limited to care rendered by or financed out of public expenditure- within the government sector alone but must include incentives and disincentives for self care and care paid for by private citizens to get over ill health. Where as in India, private out-of-pocket expenditure dominates the cost of financing health care, the effects are bound to be regressive. Health care at its essential core is widely recognized to be a public good. Its demand and

supply cannot therefore, be left to be regulated solely by the invisible hand of the market. Nor can it be established on considerations of utility maximizing conduct alone.

Healthcare has become one of India's largest sectors both in terms of revenue and employment. During 2008-22, the market is expected to record a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 16.28 per cent. The total industry size is expected to touch US\$ 160 billion by 2017 and US\$ 372 billion by 2022. Indian companies are entering into merger and acquisitions with domestic and foreign companies to drive growth and gain new markets. The hospital industry in India stood at Rs 4 trillion (US\$ 61.79 billion) in 2017 and is expected to increase at a CAGR of 16-17 per cent to reach Rs 8.6 trillion (US\$ 132.84 billion) by 2023.

India has achieved significant public health gains and improvements in health care access and quality over the last three decades. The health sector is amongst the largest and fastest growing sectors, expected to reach US\$ 280 billion by 2020. At the same time, India's health sector faces immense challenges. It continues to be characterized by high out-of-pocket expenditure, low financial protection, low health insurance coverage amongst both rural and urban population. It is a matter of grave concern that we incur a high out-of-pocket expenditure on account of health and medical costs. 62.58% of our population has to pay for their own health and hospitalization expenses and are not covered through any form of health protection. Besides using their income and savings, people borrow money or sell their assets to meet their healthcare needs, thereby pushing 4.6% of the population below the poverty line. The government of India is committed to ensuring that

its population has universal access to good quality health care services without anyone having to face financial hardship as a consequence.

Background

In the matter of inclusion, over 15 years ago, the Vajpayee government commissioned the Institute of Health Systems (IHS), Hyderabad to develop a ‘family welfare linked health insurance policy’. In 2003, the Director of the IHS Hyderabad delivered a broad-based Family Health Protection Plan (FHPP), open to all individuals. The fact is that any discourse on universal health care in India gets stymied by the sheer size and ambivalence of the numbers involved. This 2003 solution of the Vajpayee-era recommended, inter alia, that good governance lies in aligning the income lines for health and housing. In other words, de-link entitlement to health care from the poverty line. In that event, the income lines for housing (updated from time to time), could be simultaneously applicable for health entitlement. The government could then proceed, as per capacity, to scale the health premium subsidy in line with housing categories — economically weaker sections (entitled to 75-90%), lower income (entitled to 50%), and middle income groups (entitled to 20%).

For the government, Ayushman Bharat is an attempt at creating purchasing capacity among the poor. There are two ways of tackling the problem of affordable healthcare. It's either by financing services to keep price affordable or by financing the paying capacity of people. The first idea hasn't worked as more than 70% of the healthcare is concentrated in the private sector. It's a known fact that government facilities suffers from

acute shortage of human resources so the old school model of government-run clinics hasn't worked. It was against this backdrop that Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana (RSBY) was designed.

However, RSBY (which preceded PMJAY) got plagued by a host of issues. "The cover of Rs. 30,000 was found to be low and many states started introducing their own scheme with a higher cover and it covered tertiary care as well," said Malti Jaswal, former chief operating officer of Health Insurance TPA of India Ltd, who now is consulting on Ayushman Bharat.

Apart from focusing only on insurance cover, the government, under PMJAY, is establishing wellness centres that will focus on primary, preventive and promotive healthcare through public facilities. Further, Ayushman Bharat not only provides a comprehensive cover, but its sheer size can pull the pricing down.

Health Initiatives in India

Some of the major initiatives taken by the government of India to promote Indian healthcare industry are as follows:

- In August 2018, the government of India has approved Ayushman Bharat-National Health Protection Mission as a centrally sponsored scheme contributed by both center and state government at a ratio of 60:40 for all states, 90:10 for hilly North Eastern states and 60:40 for Union Territories with legislature. The center will contribute 100 per cent for Union Territories without legislature.
- The government of India has launched Mission Indradhanush with the aim of improving coverage of immunisation in the country. It aims to achieve at least 90 per cent immunisation coverage by December 2018 which will cover unvaccinated and partially vaccinated children in rural and urban areas of India.
- In April 2018, the government of India apprised the signing of Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) between India and World Health Organisation to facilitate in improving public health in India.

- In May 2018, the government of India approved financial outlay of Rs 14,832 crores (US\$ 2.30 billion) for FY2017-18 to FY2019-20.
- In May 2018, the government of India approved Rs 1,103 crore (US\$ 170.14 million) for setting up All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) in Deoghar, Jharkhand.
- In March 2018, the Union Cabinet of India approved the continuation of National Health Mission with a budget of Rs 85,217 crore (US\$ 13.16 billion) from 1st April 2017 to 31st March 2020.
- In April 2018, the government of India approved to sign Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the medical agencies of BRICS countries for cooperation in the field of medical products.
- In April 2018, the government of India apprised the signing of Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) between India and World Health Organisation to facilitate in improving public health in India

Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana

Universal health coverage is getting prioritised as a part of political reform with the launch of two pillars of the Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY): Ayushman Bharat (AB), where 1.5 lakh health sub-centres are being converted into health and wellness centres; and the National Health Protection Mission (NHPM), which aims to provide health cover of Rs. 5 lakh per family, per annum, reaching out to 500 million people.

Features of the Scheme

Ayushman Bharat- Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY) will provide a cover of up to Rs. 5 lakhs per family per year, for secondary and tertiary care hospitalization. It adopts a continuum of care approach, comprising of two inter-related components: Creation of 1,50,000 health and wellness centres which will bring health care closer to the homes of the people. These centres will provide Comprehensive Primary

Health Care (CPHC), covering both maternal and child health services and non-communicable diseases, including free essential drugs and diagnostic services.

Financial protection from catastrophic expenditure: 71st Round of National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO) has found 85.9% of rural households and 82% of urban households have no access to healthcare insurance/assurance. PMJAY primarily targets approximately 10.74 crore identified the poor, deprived rural families and identified occupational category of urban workers' families as per the latest Socio-Economic Caste Census (SECC) data for both rural and urban areas as well as the active families under the Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana (RSBY).

Hospitalization cover and post hospitalisation care: The objectives of the Yojana are to reduce out of pocket hospitalisation expenses, fulfil unmet needs and improve access of identified families to quality inpatient care and day care surgeries. The Yojana will provide a coverage up to Rs. 5,00,000 per family per year, for secondary and tertiary care hospitalization through a network of Empanelled Health Care Providers (EHCP).

Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana in alliance with the States: The scheme architecture and formulation has undergone a truly federal process, with stakeholder inputs taken from all States and UTs through the national conclaves, sectoral working groups, intensive field exercises and piloting of key modules. States have the option to use an existing trust/society or set up a new trust/society to implement the scheme as state health agency and will be free to choose the modalities for implementation.

Fraud detection and Data privacy: Detailed guidelines have been prepared to address the issues around potential fraudulent activities that

could be committed by any individual or organization.

Anti-fraud cells will be established at the national and state level, and strong IT tools will be deployed to prevent and detect fraud.

IT systems update: Beneficiary Identification System (BIS) has been developed to identify and verify the beneficiaries at CSCs and point of care. Transaction Management System (TMS) has been developed to facilitate transactions from hospitals (such as filing pre-authorization requests and claims submission).

Challenges

The NHPM is pushing for hospitalisation at secondary- and tertiary-level private hospitals, while disregarding the need for eligible households to first access primary care, prior to becoming 'a case for acute care'. We are in danger of placing the cart (higher level care) before the horse (primary care). The National Health Policy 2017 proposed "strategic purchasing" of services from secondary and tertiary hospitals for a fee.

The "best health care at the lowest possible cost" should be: inclusive; make health-care providers accountable for cost and quality; achieve a reduction in disease burden, and eliminate catastrophic health expenditures for the consumer. All of this is not happening overnight simply because an audacious, nation-wide health-care programme is on the anvil.

The credo for participating private providers should be "mission, not margin". Health-care providers (public/private) should be accredited without any upper limit on the number of service providers in a given district. The annual premium for each beneficiary would be paid to those service providers, for up to one year only (renewable), as selected by beneficiaries. The resultant competition would enhance quality and keep costs in check. Upgrading

district hospitals to government medical colleges and teaching hospitals will enhance capacities at the district level. Service providers will become accountable for cost and quality if they are bound to the nuts and bolts of good governance outlined above.

The lack of proper hospitals in smaller towns and few empanelled hospitals, can lead to unhappy experiences. While PMJAY creates demand, it will need to provide supply—for that to happen, the private sector will have to rise to the occasion. The immediate challenge is to get the private sector to participate. Ayushman Bharat, at present, has about 8,500 hospitals empanelled, and this includes public hospitals as well. According to experts, there are about 30,000-40,000 eligible hospitals in the country.

The population is underserved when it comes to healthcare. This means that many of its healthcare needs are either unrealized or taken care of outside the formal healthcare system. If Ayushman Bharat is able to deliver on the outreach and infrastructure front, a rise in walk-ins and the subsequent realization of risk are inevitable.

Another challenge with regard to Ayushman Bharat relates to unavailability of data with insurers. Insurers live and die by data—actuarial databases that allow them to calculate probability distributions for different health risks and treatments. No such data exists in India for the vast segment of the population that Ayushman Bharat will cover.

The travails of Ayushman Bharat's predecessor, the Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana (RSBY), point to another challenge. RSBY's outcomes were unflattering. In targeting and effects of Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana on access to care and financial protection, it had failed both in targeting and in reducing health-related poverty in the households it did reach. This was down

largely to poor regulation that failed to check insurers cutting corners or medical procedure inflation on the part of health providers looking for a heftier insurance payout.

In the absence of healthcare regulations, some believe that PMJAY will meet with little success. But for others, the sheer magnitude of the scheme will herald much needed health insurance regulations. Indeed, the architecture of PMJAY inspires hope. "For the first time we have seen the focus on national pricing for health services, standardized protocols and coding. It has led to the creation of an independent body (National Health Agency) that will coordinate and improve the scheme over time, through investments in a robust IT infrastructure. "If successful, this can well be replicated for the remaining 60% of the population on a contribution basis. The scheme also gives incentives to hospitals that get accredited for quality.

The next issue relates to the desirable level of public expenditure towards health services. China devotes 4.5% to its GDP as against India devoting 5.1%. But this hides the fact that in China, public expenditure constitutes 38% whereas in India, it is only 15% of total health expenditure. An optimistic forecast would be that the level of public expenditure will be raised progressively such that about 30% of total health expenditure would be met out of public funds by progressively increasing the health budget in states and the central and charging user fees in appropriate cases. The figure mentioned would perhaps correspond to the proportion of the population which may still need assistance is social development.

Conclusion

Elimination of catastrophic health expenditures for the consumer can come about only if there is sustained

effort to modernise and transform the primary care space. Bring together all relevant inter-sectoral action linking health and development so as to universalise the availability of clean drinking water, sanitation, garbage disposal, waste management, food security, nutrition and vector control. The Swachh Bharat programme must be incorporated in the PMJAY. These steps put together will reduce the disease burden.

Kerala and Tamil Nadu have demonstrated that high-performing, primary health-care systems do

address a majority of community/individual health needs. The health and wellness clinics must connect with early detection and treatment. Robust delivery of preventive, clinical and diagnostic health-care services will result in early detection of cancers, diabetes and chronic conditions, mostly needing long-term treatment and home care

Technology and innovation are further reducing costs. AI-powered mobile applications will soon provide high-quality, low-cost, patient-centric and smart wellness solutions.

The scaleable and inter-operable IT platform being readied for the Ayushman Bharat is encouraging. As we integrate prevention, detection and treatment of ill-health, the PMJAY will win hearts if people receive a well-governed 'Health for All' scheme.

General Studies Paper- II

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



4. INDIA AND MALDIVES: REBUILDING THE RELATIONSHIP

Why in News?

On September 23, 2018, the Maldives' joint opposition coalition candidate Ibrahim Mohamed Solih emerged victorious in the presidential elections. Voters in Maldives have decisively ensured that their country remains firmly within the comity of democratic nations, by voting out incumbent and controversial President Abdulla Yameen. The result also validates India's strategic patience to await the election result, without being stampeded into any intervention in the domestic affairs of a friendly neighbour. The election result will reopen avenues for mending fences and bringing India-Maldives ties to an even keel.

Introduction

In the third multi-party presidential election, democratic values, institutions and the survival of both were at stake. New President-elect Solih is viewed as a clean and efficient lawmaker in the Maldives, where corruption and nepotism remain prominent issues. The dwindling state of the economy and popular protests had brought Yameen to power as the Maldives' President in 2013 after Nasheed resigned. Then the fragile democracy

in the Indian Ocean commenced its journey toward a controlled regime. Jailing rivals and judges, cracking down on dissent, suppression of freedom of speech and expression and stringent media control, were increasingly visible facets of Yameen's presidential tenure. Moreover, the country seemed to be drifting out of the political orbit of the United States, the United Kingdom and India, and toward China.

Solih campaigned in the election on the promises of reviving the economy, putting a check on rising extremism, reviving democratic institutions and rebuilding ties with the Maldives' neighbours, especially India. International media simplified the election battle into a choice between "pro-China" Yameen and "pro-India" Solih. Some analysts are of the opinion that with the victory of the "pro-India" candidate, India is assured greater engagement with its Indian Ocean neighbour and convergence of interests in the region, which indirectly means a lessening of China's influence.

Background

The Maldivian islands are situated close to the South-Western tip of the mainland India. The archipelago nation

consists of 1192 islands out of which about 200 hundred are inhabited. The other remaining islands are used either for tourism or agriculture. Maldives is spread over roughly 90,000 square kilometres and is one of the world's most geographically dispersed countries. It is the smallest south Asian country in both land area and in population. The Maldivian islands have an average groundlevel elevation of 1.5 meters above sea level that makes it the lowest country of the planet. Historically, this country has been linked to the Indian subcontinent.

The islands gained independence from the United Kingdom in 1965, becoming a republic in 1968. Maldives became a member of the United Nation in 1965 and is one of the founding members of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC). It is also a member of the Commonwealth of Nations, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and the Non-Aligned Movement.

Importance of Maldives

The importance of the Maldives is because of its crucial geo-strategic location. It sits astride important Sea Lanes of Communication (SLOCs). The world's three major economies China,

Japan and India depend for their energy supply on the Gulf oil. This further enhances the importance of the Maldives.

The Indian Ocean has always been crucial to global connectivity and all world powers have sought their presence here. Now China too claims status of a global power. It also wants to be a maritime power. To prevent Chinese from enhancing their influence in the Maldives, Americans are playing their own games.

India and Maldives Relations

India's relations with Maldives have been frayed for some time and particularly since 2012 when Nasheed, the first democratically elected President, was deposed by force and Abdullah Yameen became President in 2013 after a highly controversial and dubious election. Since then, Maldives has progressively cosied up to China at the expense of India. This started with the cancellation of the Indian company GMR's contract for building Male airport and awarding it to China during President Xi Jinping's 2015 visit. Yameen has enthusiastically boarded the bandwagon of the Maritime Silk Road initiative launched by China in 2013. During Yameen's presidency, Maldives has leased out several islands to China which could be used for building bases as part of the "string of pearls" strategy to encircle India and reduce its influence. The latest development in this narrative was the signing of an Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with China after a suspiciously hurried approval by the Maldivian Parliament.

India has two main interests in the Maldives. It wants political stability in the country. It also wants to prevent the Maldives from falling under influences (both state and non-state) that are inimical to Indian security interests. The Indian foreign policy seems to be facing difficulty in meeting both these objectives.

The strategic significance of Maldives for India has been growing over the last many years. In addition to the growing influence of China in the country, Maldives has been getting increasingly radicalized and coming under the influence of fundamentalist Wahhabi ideology. Islamic State (IS) and Lashkar-e-Taiba are also reported to have established bases in the country. Several hundred young men and women have deserted their homes to fight for the IS in Syria and Iraq. The rapid growth of radical Islam in India's vicinity is a matter of serious concern for India and for regional security.

In addition, India has about 25,000 Indian expatriates in Maldives who are engaged in a number of professional pursuits. Their safety and security is a matter of acute concern. India could be forced to take some military action if its nationals come under imminent threat. No indication of this has been evident so far.

As in Malaysia, where a pro-Beijing regime was ousted in recent elections, Mr Solih's victory is expected to lead to intensified scrutiny of China's investments in the Maldives. For India, which has described Mr Solih's win as the triumph of democratic forces, the latest developments provide an opportunity to forge a closer relationship with the new administration

Impact on the Security Environment in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR)

India needs to tread cautiously in promoting democracy in the Maldives as the democratic transition in the country has coincided with greater rivalry for the control of the IOR. The Chinese, of course, want to increase their hold over the Maldives, especially after losing their political influence in Sri Lanka and Myanmar. The Maldives,



on its part, still claims that it sees its security interests through the lens of India and Sri Lanka, but other powers too want to be its security partners, namely China and the US.

Certainly, American presence in the Maldives would have dramatically changed the strategic landscape of the IOR. However, from the Indian perspective, to counter increasing Chinese naval presence in the Indian Ocean, welcoming increased US military presence in the region may not be a very judicious idea. It is not necessary that increased American military presence in the Indian Ocean region would be benign and to India's advantage. It may only create further complications for the Indian foreign policy towards the Maldives and worsen rivalry among external powers in the IOR.

India is trying to develop cooperative structures in the IOR through Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) and more recently through the trilateral maritime agreement with Sri Lanka and the Maldives. However, the desire of China to become a maritime power has also brought in competition in this region. The Chinese are already trying to project power by sending submarines in the Indian Ocean. These submarines have docked at Colombo and Gwadar and a submarine is also suspected to have travelled in the Maldivian waters.

For this, India needs an effective national maritime security strategy that creates a synergy between its foreign policy, the strength of Indian

Navy, and the domestic defence and maritime industry which in turn can create lasting friendly relations with all littorals in the region.

Issues and Challenges

Maldives, which is famous for its high-end Indian Ocean resorts, has become a scene of strategic contestation between India and China. This situation has been leavened by Maldivian President Yameen Abdul Gayoom, who is trying to extricate his country from India's arc of influence by building close a relationship with China.

The root cause of the mistrust between India and the Maldives has been the growing Chinese footprint on the archipelago. The geostrategic significance of the Maldives lies in its proximity to the Sea Lines of Communication in the Indian Ocean. More than 60% of trades and energy supplies traverse via this. China's foothold in the Maldives became a sore point for India, as well as the USA. For India, China's spreading tentacles into the neighbourhood pose a strategic threat to the nation's security given China's hegemonic ambitions have been evident in the South China Sea. The Maldives, under Yameen, emerged second only to Pakistan for its growing embrace of China. India's neighbours have all played the China card, to varying degrees for balancing India.

The Chinese sponsored Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and dollops of hard cash doled out as bribes were the tools of geo-economic seduction to which Yameen and his collaborators succumbed easily. During Yameen's tenure, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia also became major players in the Maldives.

China's sustained effort to spread its influence and create strategic beachheads in the Indian Ocean, has led Sri Lanka into a debt trap which was "resolved" by handing over of

the China-built Hambantota Port to a Chinese company on a 99-year lease. This has given China a long-term foothold very close to Indian shores. This lesson has not gone unnoticed in Maldives. The election result is a direct reflection of this concern and other mostly domestic issues. Solih has also promised to review Chinese-funded projects to avoid being sucked into a Chinese debt trap leading to unintended consequences.

But the establishment in India should not forget that it is not so easy to push aside China's hard economic power and its "debt-trap" diplomacy. The case of Sri Lanka is a classic example. Even though the current establishment tried to reassess the nature of Chinese investments and reframe what it called "unjust" conditions when it came to power, Sri Lanka has to live with the reality of Chinese debt and its presence in the strategically located Hambantota port. The case of Pakistan is somewhat similar, where Islamabad has decided to go ahead with the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) without any reassessment by the new administration. China's ubiquitous presence in the Maldives cannot be erased easily due to economic entanglements. Moreover, the United States and the United Kingdom enjoyed more diplomatic dividend than India even when Nasheed was in power.

Way Forward

This election result is an opportunity for India to gain some lost ground. There should, however, be no doubt that even a friendly Solih government will continue to balance China and India, albeit in a more nuanced manner. China is likely to mount a major effort to protect its strategic investments and ongoing projects in Maldives. Clearly, some deft diplomacy will be required to address a host of pressing issues but

India can and should earn goodwill by extending whatever assistance is asked of it as Mr Solih takes on the task of rebuilding the fragile democracy in the Maldives.

India has been a timely friend for the Maldives, which is evident from numerous efforts by India in helping maintain stability in Male. From "Operation Cactus" in 1988 to fending off a severe water crisis in the island nation, India has played the role of a responsible neighbor. It is in India's interest to continue with such critical engagements and work toward building confidence and assurances to the extent that Maldives emerges out of its "Big Brother Syndrome."

Moreover, strengthening democratic institutions, infrastructure support and capacity building should remain India's priorities in engagement with the Maldives. India has proved its commitments in the past with the establishment of a medical complex, the Indira Gandhi Memorial Hospital, in Male, as well as the Maldives' first institute of technical education which was set up as a grant-in-aid project of India in 1996. Policymakers in India have a renewed chance for fruitful engagement with Male. This opportunity should not be lost in weighing third parties' interests and involvement. India should act responsibly by allowing the internal equations in the Maldives to settle first and then engage constructively in the process of restoring democratic institutions. A stable Maldives is essential for a stable neighborhood across South Asia.

General Studies Paper- II

Topic: India and its neighborhood-relations.



5. ECONOMIC FREEDOM OF THE WORLD-2018 AND INDIA

Why in News?

Cato Institute and Fraser Institute have released its annual Economic Freedom of the World (EFW) report. The report has calculated economic freedom on the basis of self ownership. It measures the degree to which the policies and institutions of countries are supportive of economic freedom. Three countries - Belarus, Iraq, and Sudan - were added this year, bringing the total number of jurisdictions in the index to 162.

The Economic Freedom of the World: An Overview

There is a strong correlation between economic freedom and well-being. "Nations in the top quartile of economic freedom had an average per capita GDP [gross domestic product] of \$40,376 in 2016, compared to \$5,649 for bottom quartile nations" in terms of purchasing power parity in constant 2011 US dollar terms. Besides, there is a gulf of almost two decades in life expectancy of the nations in the top and bottom quartiles. Political and civil liberties and gender equality levels show similar divergence.

The index published in EFW measures the degree to which the policies and institutions of countries are supportive of economic freedom.

Top-rated Countries

Hong Kong and Singapore, have retained the top two positions. The next highest scoring nations are New Zealand, Switzerland, Ireland, United States, Georgia, Mauritius, United Kingdom, Australia and Canada, the latter two tied for 10th spot. It is worth noting that the United States returned to the top 10 in 2016 after an absence of several years. Canada also returned to the top 10 after coming in 11th in 2015.

Other Major Countries

The rankings of some other major countries are Germany (20th), Japan (41st), Italy (54th), France (57th), Mexico (82nd), Russia (87th), India (96th), China (108th) and Brazil (144th).

Lowest-rated Countries

The 10 lowest-rated countries are: Sudan, Guinea-Bissau, Angola, Central African Republic, Republic of Congo, Syria, Algeria, Argentina, Libya and lastly Venezuela.

What is Economic Freedom?

Economic freedom is based on the concept of self ownership. Because of this self ownership, individuals have a right to choose—to decide how to use their time and talents to shape their lives. On the other hand, they do not have a right to the time, talents, and resources of others. Thus, they have no right to take things from others or demand that others provide things for them.

The cornerstones of economic freedom are personal choice, voluntary exchange, open markets and clearly defined and enforced property rights. Individuals are economically free when they are permitted to choose for themselves and engage in voluntary transactions as long as they do not harm the person or property of others. When economic freedom is present, the choices of individuals will decide what and how goods and services are produced. Put another way, economically free individuals will be permitted to decide for themselves rather than having options imposed on them by the political process or the use of violence, theft, or fraud by others.

The degree of economic freedom in five broad areas:

Size of Government

- ◆ As government spending, taxation and the size of government-controlled enterprises increase, government decision-making is substituted for individual choice and economic freedom is reduced.

Legal System and Property Rights

- ◆ Protection of persons and their rightfully acquired property is a central element of both economic freedom and civil society. Indeed, it is the most important function of government.

Sound Money

- ◆ Inflation erodes the value of rightfully earned wages and savings. Sound money is thus essential to protect property rights. When inflation is not only high but also volatile, it becomes difficult for individuals to plan for the future and thus use economic freedom effectively.

Freedom to Trade Internationally

- ◆ Freedom to exchange—in its broadest sense, buying, selling, making contracts and so on—is essential to economic freedom, which is reduced when freedom to exchange does not include businesses and individuals in other nations.

Regulation

- ◆ Governments not only use a number of tools to limit the right to exchange internationally, they may also develop onerous regulations that limit the right to exchange, gain credit, hire or work for whom you wish, or freely operate your business.

Areas, Components, and Sub-components of the EFW Index

1. Size of Government

- Government consumption
- Transfers and subsidies
- Government enterprises and investment
- Top marginal tax rate

2. Legal System and Property Rights

- Judicial independence
- Impartial courts
- Protection of property rights
- Military interference in rule of law and politics
- Integrity of the legal system
- Legal enforcement of contracts
- Regulatory costs of the sale of real property
- Reliability of police
- Business costs of crime

3. Sound Money

- Money growth
- Standard deviation of inflation
- Inflation: most recent year
- Freedom to own foreign currency bank accounts

4. Freedom to Trade Internationally

- Tariffs
- Regulatory trade barriers
- Black-market exchange rates
- Controls of the movement of capital and people

5. Regulation

- Credit market regulations
- Labor market regulations
- Business regulations

freedom or civil freedoms

- ◆ They are a prerequisite for growth and development
- ◆ They are a prerequisite for broader human development

Economic Freedom in India

The Economic Freedom Index has come as a harbinger of good news for India as the country has risen up the charts by two positions. The report placed India on 96th position among the 162 countries. Based on the data of 2016, India has climbed up from 98th position on the basis of improvement recorded in parameters like legal system and property rights, access to sound money, freedom to trade internationally and regulation of credit, labour and business. The country was unable to score as much in size of the government.

India has made more progress against this kind of grinding poverty in the quarter century and change since liberalization started widening the scope of citizens' economic choices than in all the prior decades. By 2022, the number of Indians living in extreme poverty is expected to drop to 20 million, according to the Brookings Institution. This is startling progress seeing where India stood at the turn of the century.

Unsurprisingly, the EFW index reflects this, with the caveat that rankings and scores are crude means of pinning down such changes. India's overall ranking has dropped from 83 in 1990, when it stood on the cusp of liberalization, to 96 in 2016. This is due to expansion in the number of countries the index looks at, as well as the progress made by them. In terms of summary scores, though, India has made appreciable progress on some fronts—from the government vacating space for the private sector in various industries to monetary policy with the

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) adopting an inflation-targeting regime in 2015.

On too many fronts, however, it has stagnated. The EFW's conception of small government reflects a hard-nosed approach that can be reductive here, particularly in the context of a country like India. An efficient government—one that draws down its intervention where it is distortionary and goes big where it needs to—is a better goal. The Indian state has made the wrong call too often. Judicial and law and order capacity, for instance, continue to lag. So do labour market regulations.

The index's transfer and subsidies category is particularly illustrative. India's score has barely budged between 1990 and 2016. Little wonder; while a trend towards direct benefits transfers is making subsidy regimes more efficient, the logic of the underlying policy decisions remains ruinous. The RBI, for instance, has noted on multiple instances that farm loan waivers don't work. They don't improve farm productivity, they reduce formal farm credit and they cause fiscal slippage.

On property rights, likewise—the backbone of a market economy—the scores indicate insufficient progress. The United Progressive Alliance government's National Land Records Modernization Programme, which the National Democratic Alliance government has folded into its Digital India push, is a move in the right direction. Indeed, state governments are doing some of the most interesting work here from Karnataka's Bhoomi Project to Rajasthan's Urban Land (Certification of Titles) Act, 2016. And the Andhra Pradesh government's push to use blockchain technology for preventing property fraud has perhaps the most potential of the lot.

Why is Economic Freedom Important?

At its core, such freedom is about an individual's ability to act as a free economic agent making voluntary decisions and choices. The greatest enemy to this is poverty. Economic agency for the poor is a shabby thing. Their choices are too constrained for it to have much substance.

- ◆ Economic rights are fundamental rights in the sense that without them there can be no political

A Socialistic and Nationalised Economy

The year 1947 saw India in new light and a free India was born. But this new India faced a serious challenge of stabilising its economy. The nation had just taken a beating from the Second World War and was left to deal with the repercussions of the Indo-Pakistan partition. The economic turmoil left the new government headed by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, to deal with poverty, health hazards, illiteracy and many other social and economic problems. Following the crisis, the Indian economy saw a shift to a socialistic system. In the 1950s, nationalisation began with mining, electricity generation, steel, water, machine tools, insurance, telecommunications and other industries falling into the nationalised category. The banking sector followed suit in 1969.

With the introduction in the Industries Act of 1951 and the birth of the “Licence Raj,” the country faced stagnation. Innovation was subdued and domestic production was curtailed. The onslaught of high tariffs and taxes hit the economy badly and foreign investments dried up under the stringent restrictions. Although this was done in a purview of encouraging self-sufficiency and supporting small scale and domestic production, economic growth was not strong enough to sustain the country.

In the period from 1950 to 1973, India's annual growth rate was only 3.7%, translating to a per capita of 1.6%, while the Japanese economy boomed at a pace almost 10 times faster and the Chinese economy was able to sustain a growth rate of 8%.

The Change to Capitalism

India's economy began to shift towards capitalism in 1991. However, this shift from socialism was not voluntary. When the economy started to sink in 1973, there were severe budgets deficits and balance of payment problems, which led to an

extreme foreign-exchange crisis. This tipped the country to a point where it could not even finance three weeks' worth imports.

The crisis saw a new government sworn in; and under the prime ministerial leadership of PV Narasimha Rao, who roped in Manmohan Singh as the finance minister, hope was reborn. Together, they opened the doors for globalisation, liberalisation, privatisation (LPG) and foreign investment. The new era saw the economy booming, with information technology at the forefront. With inflation in check, Indian companies were finally given the freedom to borrow funds from foreign capital markets. The literacy rate in the country soared in the subsequent years and sowed the seeds for private entrepreneurship. Telecommunications became privatised, along with the airlines, during this decade.

The Move Towards a Free Market

When we look back, historically, India is one of those countries that have had a better free market orientation than others. Post crisis, India has seen a steep increase in the GDP, with the annual rate finally reaching 8%. Foreign Institutional Investors are now pumping billions of dollars, sustaining FDIs at a constant high. Although this does paint a rosy picture of the country's economy, India's journey towards a free market is still unfinished.

The bureaucracy and post-liberalisation, failed to stay with the changing times and the current structure has led to the creation of several bottlenecks, which continue to remain sealed. One case in point is poverty. It is important to understand that the effect of the LPG system has given millions of people below the poverty line a hope for a better future. But post-liberalisation, the gross inequalities have started widening rather than moving closer. As one part of India develops at a rapid rate, the other part of the economy continues to be impoverished. The key isn't

reverting to the old ways, but to reform the existing mechanics of the bureaucracy.

Free market economy has allowed city life to touch rural India, although that is not enough. Rural India also needs to be technically educated and qualified to be able to contribute towards sustainable development, which is where India is lacking today.

Conclusion

The EFW report notes that support for free markets has been dipping across the world from well before the financial crisis—since their late 20th century heyday, in fact. This is not particularly surprising. When the benefits of an economic system become baked into it, they can be hard to see. The missteps, meanwhile—from declining labour shares of income to the threat of increasing monopoly power—have come increasingly into prominence. They should be addressed, certainly. But the Indian experience shows how foolish it would be to underestimate the importance of free markets and the economic freedoms they underwrite.

Therefore, India must improve along the key dimension of international trade over time in the index. Similarly, too many regulations have hampered the prospects of economic growth. The government has done well to identify and weed out key laws and regulations that are not in accordance with the present times. Better regulations over time will help in improvement along the regulation dimension of the Index. This calls for introspection and more reforms, some of which are being presently undertaken. More such reforms in the land, labour and capital markets will certainly be beneficial for unleashing the creative potential and freedom of Indian citizens.

General Studies Paper- III

Topic: Inclusive growth and issues arising from it.



6. DEEP SEA MINING: A RACE TO THE BOTTOM OF THE OCEAN

Why in News?

In September 2018, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) convened the first Intergovernmental Conference on Marine Biodiversity. The conference follows the recommendations of the preparatory committee established by the UN with the primary objective of finalising the text of the international legally binding instrument on the conservation and use of marine biodiversity in Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (ABNJ).

Introduction

Oceans are the lifeblood of planet Earth and humankind. They flow over nearly three-quarters of our planet and hold 97 per cent of the planet's water. They produce more than half of the oxygen in the atmosphere and absorb most of the carbon from it. About half of the world's population lives within the coastal zone and ocean-based businesses contribute more than \$500 billion to the world's economy. With credentials such as these, oceans of the world need to be treated with utmost care. Sadly, this is not the case. According to the Ellen MacArthur Foundation report, oceans are already filled with about 165 million tonnes of plastic and it is estimated that by 2050, the weight of plastic floating in the oceans of the world will far outweigh the combined weight of fishes in it. To make matters worse, the prospect of deep-sea mining for precious metals, gas and petroleum is emerging as a serious threat.

High Seas

The ABNJ, more commonly known as the "high seas", are defined by Article 86 of UNCLOS as "all parts of the sea that are not included in the exclusive economic zone, in the territorial sea or in the internal waters of a State,

or in the archipelagic waters of an archipelagic State".

The high seas are defined as the oceans that lie beyond exclusive economic zones. These zones are usually within 370km (200 nautical miles) of a country's coastline. These waters cover one and a half times the total land area of the planet and are home to some of the rarest and most charismatic species - but all countries have the right to navigate, fly over, carry out scientific research and fish on the high seas without restriction.

At present, the oceans are governed by the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) which was adopted and signed in 1982 and the high seas are currently governed by principles of "freedom of high seas" and "common pool resources".

- ◆ The deep sea consists of the seabed and water column below a depth of 200 m. It accounts for 95% of the volume of the oceans, making it the largest habitat for life on Earth.
- ◆ The deep seabed contains valuable mineral deposits. Due to the growing demand for metals and the depletion of some terrestrial reserves, three of those are of increasing commercial and strategic interest: polymetallic nodules, ferromanganese crusts and seafloor massive sulphides.
- ◆ Though deep-sea mineral deposits are often mentioned in the same breath, they are very different in terms of formation, composition and extent. These differences require different mining technologies and strategies, which are currently being tested and developed.
- ◆ Deep-sea mining will affect the diverse communities of living organisms in the vicinity of mining sites; ecosystems which, because

of their remoteness, remain poorly understood. There may be ways to limit and perhaps contain the impact, but deep sea mining without environmental effects is impossible.

Technological Development

Remotely Operated Vehicle (ROV) ROSUB 6000 which was suitable for exploration in deep waters. It was successfully operated at a maximum depth at 5,289 metres in the Central Indian Ocean Basin. It also contributed to the exploration of deep ocean minerals such as gas hydrates, polymetallic nodules and hydrothermal sulphides, which occur at water depths ranging between 1,000 and 6,000 metres.

The Geological Survey of India (GSI) has launched a deep sea exploration ship 'RV SamudraRatnakar' — a state-of-the-art research vessel designed to meet the fast-growing challenges of the modern geo-scientific oceanographic researches.

Deep Sea Mining

Deep seabed mining (DSM) is the process which involves extracting submerged minerals and resources from the sea floor, either by dredging sand or lifting material in any other manner. Although the distinction between shallow-water mining and DSM is not formally demarcated, an emerging consensus says that DSM is the removal of minerals from sea beds deeper than 500 meters.

Deep inside the ocean is a world as vibrant and rich as the one outside. There are mountain ranges, ridges, forests, seamounts, volcanoes and a unique ecology that defies common knowledge. For example, life here thrives without sunlight. This barely explored territory is also believed to hold vast quantities of precious metals and minerals that can sustain the modern world for centuries.

The vast repository of minerals, including the precious cobalt, zinc, manganese and rare earth materials

that are needed for smart phones, laptops and hybrid cars, are present in three forms of ore—polymetallic manganese nodules that remain strewn across the ocean floor; cobalt-rich ferromanganese crusts that cover the seamounts; and massive polymetallic sulphide deposits around hydrothermal vents. These vents are cracks in volcanic areas of the ocean floor through which seeps iron- and sulphur-rich magma. As these minerals meet cold bottom water, they precipitate, creating high-grade deposits. Typically, an ore from seabed deposit is seven times enriched with minerals than that mined from land. This beguiles governments who are fast running out of reserves on land.

The idea of mining these nodules, in part, led to the U.N. Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) in 1982. It also resulted in the establishment of the International Seabed Authority (ISA) which oversees exploration claims in international waters. In total 29 exploratory licences have been issued by the authority up to now.

Need for Regulation

In 1982, the UN adopted the Convention of the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) which, when it became active in 1994, regulated sea-bed mining and cable-

laying to some extent. There are also a host of other international groups, including the International Whaling Commission that look after aspects of the seas, but there is no overarching treaty that would protect biodiversity or limit exploitation.

Regulating the high seas is of critical importance from multiple angles. In addition to the conservation value of being home to a wide range of exotic species, most yet undiscovered, the high seas are increasingly coming under the lens due to specific discoveries such as housing rare minerals. In 2017, exploration of the tropic seamount in the Atlantic Ocean led to the discovery of high concentrations of Tellurium, which is a component of solar panels and has raised the possibility of deep sea mining to fuel renewable energy demands on land.

Another issue under the spotlight is intellectual property rights of marine genetic resources. The multinational company BASF alone owns half of the patents issued on the DNA sequencing of 13,000 marine organisms. The genetic resources are of interest to pharmaceutical companies and research shows that 84% of the patents issued over the last three decades are owned by just 30 companies.

The ISA acknowledges mining as a threat to the fragile sea ecology, but is not ready with an environmental safeguard. The conditions and rules for mining have not been readied till now. A protocol to minimise the environmental impact is still being drawn up.

United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea

The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) is an international treaty which was adopted and signed in 1982 in Montego Bay (Jamaica), at the end of almost ten years of negotiations (1973-1982). It replaced the four Geneva Conventions of April, 1958, which respectively concerned the territorial sea and the contiguous zone, the continental shelf, the high seas, fishing and conservation of living resources on the high seas. The Convention thus confirms already existing marine areas, from the coast to the open sea and from the surface to the seabed or, as in the case of Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs), creates them in the course of its development.

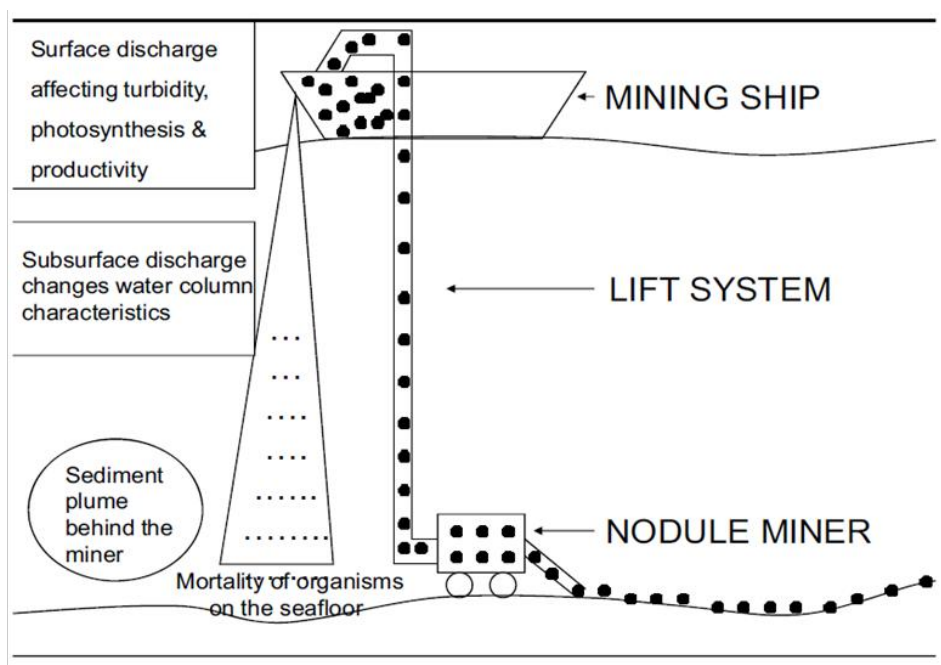
Over time, the Convention has become the legal framework for marine and maritime activities. The Convention has created three new institutions on the international scene:

- The International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea, headquartered in Hamburg (Germany).
- The International Seabed Authority, headquartered in Kingston (Jamaica).
- The Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf, based in the United Nations Headquarters in New York.

The Convention came into effect in November, 1994. It now has 162 Parties including the European Union for its share of jurisdictions.

India: Exploring the Deep Waters

India is the first country to have received the status of a pioneer investor in 1987 and was allocated an exclusive area in Central Indian Ocean Basin by United Nations (UN) for exploration and utilization of nodules. India is one among the top 8-countries/contractors and is implementing a



The Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ)

UNCLOS precisely defines the EEZ: it extends 200 nautical miles (nm) from the baseline from which the breadth of the territorial sea is measured. The EEZs of opposite countries can overlap, in which case the EEZ's extent will be less than 200 nm, depending on the location and configuration of the coast. The countries involved need to figure out a boundary in this instance, preferably by mutual agreement, much the same way adjacent countries should delineate their maritime zones as well.

long-term programme on exploration and utilization of Polymetallic Nodules through Ministry of Earth Sciences. This includes survey and exploration, environmental studies, technology development in mining and extractive metallurgy, in which significant contributions have been made.

India's exclusive rights to explore polymetallic nodules from seabed in Central Indian Ocean Basin (CIOB) have been extended by five years on August 18, 2017. These rights are over 75000 sq. km of area in international waters allocated by International Seabed Authority for developmental activities for polymetallic nodules. The estimated polymetallic nodule resource potential is 380 million

tonnes, containing 4.7 million tonnes of nickel, 4.29 million tonnes of copper and 0.55 million tonnes of cobalt and 92.59 million tonnes of manganese. It is envisaged that 10% of recovery of that large reserve can meet the energy requirement of India for the next 100 years. It has been estimated that 380 million metric tonnes of polymetallic nodules are available at the bottom of the seas in the Central Indian Ocean. India's Exclusive Economic Zone spreads over 2.2 million square kilometres and in the deep sea, lies "unexplored and unutilised."

Deep Ocean Mission

The government of India has unveiled a \$1.2 billion "Deep Ocean Mission" to emulate the success of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) in ocean exploration for energy, food, medicine and other natural resources that surround the Indian subcontinent. Two key projects planned under DOM include a desalination plant along the Chennai coast, powered by tidal energy; and a submersible vehicle that can explore depths of at least 6,000 meters with three people on board. The desalination plant would be located at least 40 kilometers away

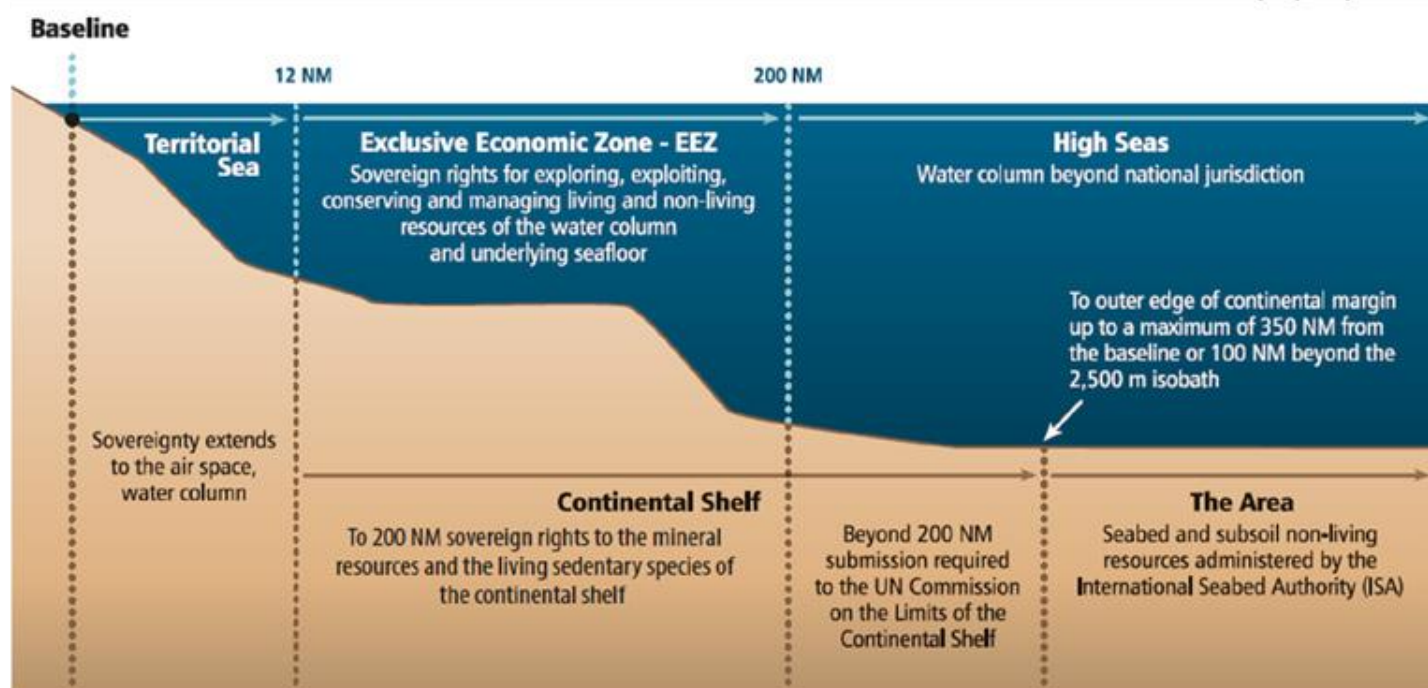
from the shore and would convert seawater into drinking water. The plant would be powered by locally generated low-cost thermal electricity, instead of diesel, and is expected to give millions of underprivileged Indians access to safe drinking water.

The seabed can consist of numerous materials from iron, nickel, manganese and cobalt. It is estimated that 10% of recovery of that reserve can meet India's energy requirements for the next 100 years.

India vs China sea Mining

India's deep sea exploration capability must, however, be tempered with the reality of its efforts so far in this area. Despite being a "pioneer investor" in the Indian Ocean's mineral exploration and mining sector and the allotment of 75,000 sq. km in the Central Indian Ocean Basin by the ISBA for exploitation of polymetallic nodule India's lack of initiative and action in deep-sea mining has been striking.

By a rough estimate, the total mass of nodules in the area allocated to India in the Indian Ocean is about 380 million metric tonnes. But merely having a deep sea exploration vessel



will not be sufficient to find and extract the material. India will need trained scientists and onboard equipment operators and a focused action plan to get to the minerals at the bottom of the sea.

While a start has undoubtedly been made, if India desires to seriously challenge China's sea-bed mining superiority, it will need to develop its capability to explore for hydro-thermal sulphides deposits and the chance to extract valuable rare-earths. Until then China's dominance in the field will continue to be a cause for concern for India.

The Environmental Cost of Deep-Sea Mining

The prospect of a race to the bottom of the ocean has alarmed scientists. The reason is deep seas are not marine deserts as thought. The deep sea is the largest habitat on earth. It is incredibly important to humans and it is facing a variety of stresses, from increased human exploitation to impacts from climate change. But just like the terrestrial environment, oceans are facing the conflicts between development and environment—overfishing, industrial waste and plastic debris are just a few of the factors ailing them.

- ◆ Mining will introduce light to an environment where life thrives in darkness. This may attract or deter some fish or benthic species and alter their feeding and reproductive behaviours. As the ores mixed with seawater are processed in surface support vehicles for extracting minerals, this will create massive swirls of debris and sediments. The treated seawater, of different salinity and temperature and containing trace amounts of toxic chemicals, will then be dumped in the sea, which will have profound impacts on the ecosystem.
- ◆ Besides, mining will require site closure, which will restrict the

movement of species both at deep and shallow sea. The huge machines and vessels involved in the process may lead to inadvertent introduction of invasive species, cause noise, air pollution and vibration and result in fluid leaks and discharges from vessels and equipment. Together, these will further contaminate the marine environment.

- ◆ Regarding the deep sea species, the ISA warns, "If this base population is destroyed by mining, the result could be the extinction of rare species." Even small-scale mining can wipe out the vent communities. The vents also form mineral deposits known as polymetallic sulfides. The ISA has issued exploration licenses for these, but if active vents are mined then the life that thrives in these rare ecosystems will be destroyed.
- ◆ Numerous species residing on the sea floors are filter feeders like the cold deep-water coral and sponges and rely on a clean current for nutrition supply. During mining, sediments on the sea floor are disturbed and the presence of particulate matter can alter their food supply. Experiments in the Peru basin and the Clarion Clipperton Zone show though mobile species may return after disturbances, sessile species do not recover.

Way Forward

Since, offshore mining may become a reality in future to replenish the mineral resources for industrial development in future; steps should be taken to arrive at such design parameters that the mining operation will cause least possible damage to the marine environment. Marine biological communities survive in a fragile ecosystem by maintaining a very delicate balance with their environment.

- ◆ Organizations tasked with developing, implementing and enforcing

the regulatory framework, whether at the national or international level, should be provided the proper financial means, infrastructure and expertise to accomplish and report on their task. This is particularly relevant to the ISA, an organization entrusted with the development and conservation of nearly half of the surface of the planet and therefore subject to the highest levels of transparency.

- ◆ The ISA's mandate to regulate both the development and the protection of the deep sea will become more difficult to balance as deep-sea mining makes the transition from exploration to exploitation. To avoid possible conflicts of interest, it is appropriate for the ISA to consider divesting some responsibilities to autonomous review, inspection and/or enforcement entities.
- ◆ Given the vital importance of the deep sea to the planet, it is recommended that a significant part of the revenues collected by the ISA for the benefit of mankind is to be re-invested in the deep sea through training, education, marine science and conservation programs, thereby ensuring that those benefits also accrue to future generations.
- ◆ Resolving deep-sea mining issues requires cooperation, clear communication and mutual respect among the various stakeholders. Diverging views must be clearly communicated and discussed in an atmosphere of mutual respect in search of balanced solutions.

General Studies Paper- III

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

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



7. BEHAVIOURAL INSIGHTS IN POLICY MAKING

Why in News?

According to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, 202 institutions around the world are applying behavioural insights to public policy. While most of them are found in the U.S., the U.K., Europe and Australia, some are found in developing countries in West Asia, Africa and Latin America. These institutions partner with behavioural and social scientists and combine psychology, sociology, anthropology and politics to understand human behaviour to design effective public policies. These units help governments design incentives so that individual behaviour is nudged in a particular direction.

Introduction

In his book 'The Theory of Moral Sentiments', Adam Smith wrote: "How selfish soever man may be supposed, there are evidently some principles in his nature, which interest him in the fortune of others, and render their happiness necessary to him, though he derives nothing from it except the pleasure of seeing it." What he wrote in 1759 can be traced as the foundation of behavioural economics, a field that lies at the cusp of psychology and economics. A wide set of our choices are driven and limited by our cognitive ability, attention and motivation.

Across the world, forward-thinking governments are embracing behavioural, evidence-based policy as the more tenable alternative to laws driven purely by ideology or assumptions. The UK, US, Australia, Denmark, Germany, France, Singapore and many other countries have found significant success in the application of behavioural insights to public policy issues: behavioural interventions can help people save more for retirement,

consume less energy and be more likely to pay taxes on time, for instance. What is more, behavioural interventions can save governments money: a recent cost-benefit analysis found that across diverse policy areas in the UK and the US, the impact per dollar spent was significantly higher for behavioural interventions than traditional policy tools.

Economic Cooperation and Development

The OECD is a unique forum where governments work together to address the economic, social and environmental challenges of globalisation. The OECD is also at the forefront of efforts to understand and to help governments respond to new developments and concerns, such as corporate governance, the information economy and the challenges of an ageing population. The organisation provides a setting where governments can compare policy experiences, seek answers to common problems, identify good practice and work to co-ordinate domestic and international policies.

Governments across the world have been inspired by the potential benefits of using insights from behavioural and social science to inform policy (hereafter referred to as Behavioural Insights (BI) and an increasing number have established behavioural insights or nudge units to accomplish such goals. Applying science to policy is enticing for scientists. It creates potential pathways to apply and test the generalizability of ideas, access large data sets and contribute to major societal issues. Governments and the public are the intended ultimate beneficiaries of these collaborations. Despite the mutual benefits, many scientists remain cautious about conducting experiments on policy initiatives and this work remains rare. We argue that this caution is for good reasons. While there has been substantial public debate about the benefits and ethics of BI, there has

been little discussion about how best to bring the two different worlds of government and science together, or what infrastructure, procedures and conditions best facilitate such collaboration.

What are Behavioural Insights, Economics and Science?

Behavioural insights refers to the application of behavioural economics or the "nudge theory". There is a growing trend among countries around the world on the use of behavioural insights. The United States and United Kingdom have pioneered some of the work related to this and they have recently been followed by Australia, Canada, Columbia, Denmark, Germany, Israel, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Singapore, South Africa, Turkey, and the European Union.

Behavioural insights aim at improving the welfare of citizens and consumers through policies and regulations that are formed based on empirically-tested results, derived using sound experimental methods. Behavioural insights is one discipline in a family of three, the others being behavioural sciences and behavioural economics, which mix traditional economic strategies with insights from psychology, cognitive science and other social sciences to discover the many "irrational" factors that influence decision making.

The application of behavioural insights to policy has its origins in the relationship between cognitive science, psychology and economics and the use of methods imported from experimental psychology. It often involves the use of experiment and observation to identify patterns of behaviour and use these findings to inform policies and regulation. It is

about taking an inductive approach to policy-making, where experiments replace and challenge established assumptions based on what is thought to be the rational behavior of citizens and business. In this way, behavioural insights inform decision makers with evidence of “actual” behaviours for policy making and implementation, while not substituting their role or competence to make decisions with models and calculations.

Behavioural science research provides insights into how people make decisions. Behavioural insights incorporate findings and methodologies from psychology, cognitive science, and neuroscience to better understand human behaviour. When this scientific approach is applied to the delivery of public services, these insights can help governments design and promote services that reflect people's needs and perspectives, making them more accessible and ultimately easier to use.

Behaviorally Informed Policy

- ◆ Emphasizes the importance of context for decision making and behavior - a behaviorally informed diagnosis takes account of social, psychological, economic influences.
- ◆ Addresses details in bureaucracies, technologies and service delivery

that are sometimes overlooked in standard policy design but that dramatically affect development policies and initiatives, especially in a low-income context.

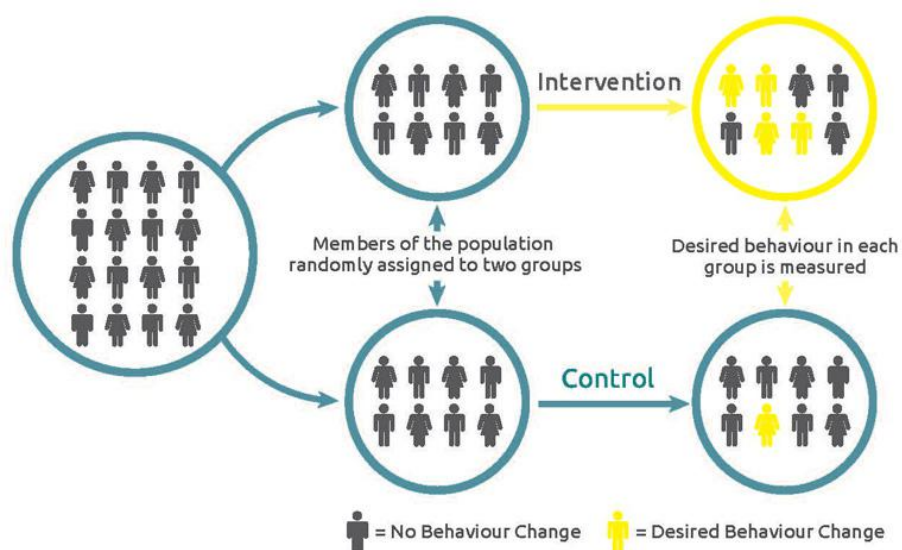
- ◆ Helps policy makers themselves avoid some of the decision traps and biases that affect all individuals, sparking the use of innovative, low-cost solutions.

Implementation of Behavioural Policy

So far, behavioural insights appear to be used relatively late in the design of policy, for example to fine-tune and improve implementation and compliance. There is potential to do more. At the end of the policy cycle, behavioural insights can be applied to evaluate the effectiveness of implementation to feed lessons on what works and what does not into the early design of policies. This use would also reduce the need for correcting issues once a policy is in the implementation stage. Behavioural insights can no longer be seen as a fashionable short-term foray by public bodies. They have taken root in many ways across many countries around the world and across a wide range of sectors and policy areas. This including applications related to consumer protection, education,

energy, environment, finance, health and safety, labour market policies, public service delivery, taxes and telecommunications. In addition, there is great potential for applying behavioural insights in areas beyond their current scope. In particular, the report recommends that public institutions and practitioners:

- ◆ Consider applications of behavioural insights to the formal rules and practices that govern the work of public organisations to strengthen the effectiveness of these organisations.
- ◆ Broaden the application to include the behaviour of regulated firms, for instance the behaviour of capital markets/banks; energy consumption for large industrial firms; means of transportation used by big business, etc.
- ◆ Develop some consistency in the organisation, methodologies, quality controls and capacity support functions of the different behavioural initiatives.
- ◆ Encourage the development of knowledge and capacity among public officials to understand and apply behavioural insights within public bodies, for example through mainstreaming, training and information.
- ◆ Take into consideration behavioural insights when designing and evaluating policy implementation.
- ◆ Develop processes to determine when there is a behavioural issue that can be successfully addressed through the application of behavioural sciences. Equally, determine when a behavioural intervention may not be appropriate and understand why.
- ◆ Exploit the full potential of behavioural insights as a tool for engaging with stakeholders and collect feedback on what works.



Behavioural Insights and Modern Policymaking in India

Insights from behavioural economics can help us answer several important questions. They can help us understand why attendance rates remain low in schools (often because of poor course design), why some people choose to defecate in the open (often because they find toilets disgusting), how farmers are slow to adopt a new useful technology (often because there may not be enough know-how about this new machine or equipment).

To better utilize the insights from behavioural economics, a recent issue of the peer-reviewed journal *Review of Income and Wealth* explores some of the central issues in designing policies focused on developing countries. Sendhil Mullainathan of Harvard University and Saugato Datta of the non-profit organization *ideas* offer seven core principles in designing a behavioural intervention which depends on the nature of problem.

First, designing incentives for self-control can have powerful effects. For instance, consider the problem of low productivity among workers in India. In a study on data entry operators in India, that the workers chose a payment mechanism that laid a penalty for missing targets. Such commitment contracts could also help tackle the widespread problem of absenteeism among public-sector workers in developing countries such as India, where 25% of government school teachers are absent from work on any given day.

Secondly, we should find solutions to avoidable self-control problems. For instance, farmers face enormous financial distress before the harvest season because of which they borrow large sums of money. If farmers spend more judiciously in the post-harvest season or have access to commitment savings accounts, this would solve the self-control problem.

Thirdly, it is important to remove the hassles involved in securing benefits of public programmes. They quote a study in Morocco which showed that nearly 70% of households who were helped with the administrative steps needed to get a piped water connection signed up for piped water, compared with just 10% of those who did not receive similar help.

Fourthly, small monetary incentives can bring in bigger change. Take the case of low rates of immunization in India. Abhijit Banerjee and his colleagues at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) conducted an experiment in which they offered parents a half-kilo bag of lentils for each immunization done in 134 villages in Rajasthan. They found this small incentive worked very well; the immunization rate almost doubled by the end of the experiment.

Fifthly, reminders that take care of the problem of inattention are especially effective in driving behavioural change. Consider a farmer who tends to forget to spray pesticide on his crops; an SMS service that disseminates information on pesticide schedule could work well as a reminder.

Sixthly, a large number of public programmes intended for the poor do not succeed because of poor advertisement. This could be mitigated by better framing—presenting information about these schemes in such a manner that intended recipients notice them. People notice the negative effects more than positive ones. In case of open defecation, posters and radio ads could be designed which show the ill-effects from not using a toilet.

Seventhly, linked to last point, information should be framed or designed to fit the mental model of recipients; people often ignore those messages which do not conform to their beliefs.

Challenges in India

The behavioural insights team in India will have to grapple with some peculiar constraints in addition to the failure of the citizen to make informed choices. In the Indian context of Behaviourally Induced Governance ideas (BIG ideas), there are three main challenges that we are likely to face.

- ◆ The first is inadequate economic growth and development with serious inadequacy in infrastructure. Both educated public and effective infrastructure serve as the backbone of a successful nudge plan.
- ◆ Secondly, in a vastly diverse country like India, the contexts and social norms are so locally specific that a broad generic nudge from the centre is likely to be ineffective. The behavioural team will have to come up with creative thinking on reaching the larger audience through a universal approach that is flexible to cater to the local specificities. In a cultural context sensitive to social norms, this is democratically respectful.
- ◆ The final challenge is something that has bothered the societies of the West as well. Creating choice architectures that nudges use to choose one option over another is 'paternalistic' in that choices are being made for us.

Public policy design and implementation in India have been mired in obscure intentions and borrowed rationale most of the times in our country. Sometimes, even the well intentioned policies of the government remains ineffective due to a number of unforeseen circumstances especially that of public perception, collective social norms and behaviour. In this scenario, a more scientifically approached policy design can be an inexpensive and creative tool in the hands of government. However, wider

education on the policy approaches taken and deliberation about its desirability within the democratic set up will help us take a genuine departure towards an inclusive participatory policy making.

Way Forward

Some of our greatest challenges today are large-scale, complex problems of public policy, public perception and public action: climate change, vaccinations against infectious diseases, diversity and inclusion of historically marginalized groups, humanitarian crises, to name a few. Behavioural science promises empirically validated solutions that are derived from an understanding of the human beings that make up that “public.” And it rests its propositions on evidence in favour of what works to help people themselves make decisions that are better for them, so they can lead better lives.

Policymakers are increasingly turning to the behavioral sciences to tackle intractable policy challenges, including increasing student learning, raising savings rates, promoting energy and resource conservation, increasing productivity, improving sanitation practices, strengthening institutions, and reducing corruption.

Behaviorally informed policy emphasizes the importance of context for decision making and behavior. It examines a wide set of influences, paying attention to the social, psychological, and economic factors that affect what people think and do. It addresses details in bureaucracies, technologies, and service delivery that are often overlooked in standard policy design but that dramatically influence the effectiveness of development programs and projects, especially in low-income contexts. Behaviorally informed policy can provide creative solutions to difficult challenges, often at low cost. Finally, it helps policy makers themselves avoid some of the decision traps and biases that affect all individuals.

The NITI Aayog has decided to come up with a behavioural science unit as part of planning strategy. This is a departure from the governance style of the current government that favours technology as a primary tool to effectively implement policy. The government has backed technology-driven policy like Aadhaar and targeted social policy projects using information and communication technology (ICT).

India has taken a leaf out of Britain’s book to bring behavioural economists and advertising gurus on board to sensitise people at the grassroots towards the government’s flagship programmes such as Swachh Bharat, Jan Dhan Yojana, Digital India and Skill Development through social messaging and new ad campaigns.

To achieve this in practice will require the NITI Aayog to overcome two key challenges: accessing high-quality researchers in multiple disciplines who can partner with policymakers, and creating a willingness among policymakers to learn from evidence instead of relying solely on intuitions or ideologies.

General Studies Paper- II

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

General Studies Paper- IV

Topic: Attitude: content, structure, function; its influence and relation with thought and behaviour; moral and political attitudes; social influence and persuasion.



SEVEN SUBJECTIVE QUESTIONS WITH MODEL ANSWERS

Lawmakers as Lawyers: No Need to Ban

Q1. What are the concerns regarding lawyers elected as lawmakers? Analyse them in the light of recent Supreme Court judgment.

Hints:

- ◆ The Supreme Court recently dismissed a plea seeking to ban lawmakers from practising as advocates. The Supreme Court held that the provisions of the Advocates Act, 1961 and the Rules framed there under, do not place any restrictions on the legislators to practise as advocates during the relevant period.
- ◆ The closest rule framed by the Bar Council of India is Rule 49 which, however, has no application to the elected people's representatives as they do not fall in the category of full-time salaried employee of any person, firm, government, corporation or concern.
- ◆ The principal objection to legislators donning the black robes is that as they draw salaries from the Consolidated Fund of India, they are 'employees' of the State, a position that warrants suspension of practice under the Advocates Act and Bar Council Rules.
- ◆ There is a argument that under Prevention of Corruption Act, MLAs and MPs are public servants. Allowing them to practice as advocate and restricting other public servants is arbitrary and violation of right to equality under Article 14.
- ◆ Legislators, many of whom are designated Senior Counsel, argue that their law practice does not involve signing vakalats and drafting work that other advocates need to do and that their court appearances will not be during the Parliament or Assembly sessions. Further, with a battery of juniors and briefing counsel, clients will not suffer due to their dual roles. And with staff to man their MP or MLA offices, they need not necessarily be torn between conflicting loyalties.
- ◆ Fundamentally lawmakers, either as MPs or MLAs, are expected to be sufficiently qualified in law so as

to help lawmaking bodies in enactment of law. In fact, it should be desirable if India was to advance and bring in the best piece of legislation it could even be considered for members of legislative bodies to have minimum qualification of graduation in law.

- ◆ There cannot be interference with the profession. The only condition is that no one should be engaged in anything that causes indignity to the legal profession. Being an MP or MLA does not in any way put a question mark on the dignity of the legal profession. Traditionally and historically, the lawyers have played a major role in parliamentary affairs and public life and it would be a very regressive step to debar them from parliament.
- ◆ Thus, the scope of Article 19(1)(g) of the Constitution on the freedom to practise any profession and the reasonable restrictions, in the context of law-makers also functioning as lawyers, has to be seen in broader perspective.

An Action Tank: Is Really Doing Action

Q2. "India requires planning that addresses social justice, reduces regional and gender inequalities and ensures environmental sustainability." Critically examine in respect of NITI Aayog.

Hints:

- ◆ The architecture, engineering and management aspects of the new institution, NITI Aayog, will have to be crafted carefully, if it has to serve as an institution to impart dynamism to the developmental process in a harmonious manner.
- ◆ Economic liberalisation has created a vibrant private sector and the new institution should assist in policy making to enable private entrepreneurs to unleash their animal spirits and not to constrain them.
- ◆ Horizontal and vertical competition in a multilevel fiscal system can be an important source of economic dynamism so long as a certain measure of "competitive equality" and "cost benefit

appropriability” are ensured and predatory competition is prevented.

- ◆ “Laboratory federalism” can be a source of innovations, imitations and learning and facilitating this is important.
- ◆ NITI Aayog as an action tank rather than just a think tank. By collecting fresh ideas and sharing them with the Central and State governments, it pushes frontiers and ensures that there is no inertia, which is quite natural in any organisation or institution. If it succeeds, NITI Aayog could emerge as an agent of change over time and contribute to the Prime Minister’s agenda of improving governance and implementing innovative measures for better delivery of public services.
- ◆ The cabinet resolution lists 13 different tasks to it which may be grouped under four major heads, namely: (i) fostering cooperative federalism by providing structured support to states on a continuous basis; (ii) formulation of a strategic vision and long term policies and programme framework both for the macro economy and for different sectors; (iii) acting as a knowledge and innovation hub and providing research inputs by undertaking and accessing globally available research; and (iv) providing a platform for interdepartmental coordination.
- ◆ The rise of neoliberalism, the decline of erstwhile socialist regimes worldwide and the rise of right-wing market fundamentalists within the country paved the way for the demise of the Planning Commission. Its replacement by NITI Aayog looks more apologetic than substantial for the task of transforming a deeply unequal society into a modern economy that ensures the welfare of all its citizens, irrespective of their social identity.
- ◆ The success of the institution in achieving interministerial, interdepartmental coordination will depend on the trust and cooperation it receives from them and the harmony with which the Aayog and various ministries work. There could be tensions between the technocrats in the Aayog and various ministers on the one hand and between the technocrats and bureaucrats on the other. There is also the danger of bureaucratisation of the Aayog. Similarly, success in fostering cooperative federalism will depend on the trust of and cooperation from the states. In particular, the first Aayog will have a tremendous task of shaping the character and charting a course to make it an important institution in Indian federal polity to transform India.

Ayushman Bharat: To Change India's Healthcare Landscape

Q3. The role of the government in influencing population health is not limited within the health sector but also by various sectors outside the health systems. Review of the existing government machinery for public health needs in India, its success, limitations and future scope.

Hints:

- ◆ India takes a giant leap towards providing accessible and affordable healthcare to the common man with the launch of Ayushman Bharat – Pradhan Mantri Jan Aarogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY) by the Prime Minister, on 23rd September, 2018 at Ranchi, Jharkhand. This is the “world’s largest government funded healthcare program” targeting more than 50 crore beneficiaries.
- ◆ Health and health care need to be distinguished from each other for no better reason than that the former is often incorrectly seen as a direct function of the latter. Health is clearly not the mere absence of disease. Good health confers on a person or groups freedom from illness - and the ability to realize one's potential. Health is therefore best understood as the indispensable basis for defining a person's sense of well-being.
- ◆ India has achieved significant public health gains and improvements in health care access and quality over the last three decades. The health sector is amongst the largest and fastest growing sectors, expected to reach US\$ 280 billion by 2020. At the same time, India’s health sector faces immense challenges. It continues to be characterized by high out-of-pocket expenditure, low financial protection, low health insurance coverage amongst both rural and urban population. It is a matter of grave concern that we incur a high out-of-pocket expenditure on account of health and medical costs. 62.58% of our population has to pay for their own health and hospitalization expenses and are not covered through any form of health protection.
- ◆ The lack of proper hospitals in smaller towns and few empanelled hospitals, can lead to unhappy experiences. While PMJAY creates demand, it will need to provide supply—for that to happen, the private sector will have to rise to the occasion. The immediate challenge is to get the private sector to participate.
- ◆ The population is underserved when it comes to healthcare. This means that many of its healthcare needs are either unrealized or taken care of outside the formal healthcare system. If Ayushman Bharat is

able to deliver on the outreach and infrastructure front, a rise in walk-ins and the subsequent realization of risk are inevitable.

- ◆ The next issue relates to the desirable level of public expenditure towards health services. China devotes 4.5% to its GDP as against India devoting 5.1%. But this hides the fact that in China, public expenditure constitutes 38% whereas in India, it is only 15% of total health expenditure.
- ◆ Elimination of catastrophic health expenditures for the consumer can come about only if there is sustained effort to modernise and transform the primary care space. Bring together all relevant inter-sectoral action linking health and development so as to universalise the availability of clean drinking water, sanitation, garbage disposal, waste management, food security and nutrition and vector control. The Swachh Bharat programme must be incorporated in the PMJAY. These steps put together will reduce the disease burden.

India and Maldives: Rebuilding the Relationship

Q4. China fears losing the existing diplomatic and economic clout which it currently enjoys in the Maldives, but can India regain its lost influence in the Maldives? Discuss.

Hints:

- ◆ On September 23, 2018, the Maldives' joint opposition coalition candidate Ibrahim Mohamed Solih has emerged victorious in the presidential elections. Voters in Maldives have decisively ensured that their country remains firmly within the comity of democratic nations, by voting out incumbent and controversial President Abdulla Yameen. The result also validates India's strategic patience to await the election result, without being stampeded into any intervention in the domestic affairs of a friendly neighbour. The election result will reopen avenues for mending fences and bringing India-Maldives ties to an even keel.
- ◆ Solih campaigned in the election on the promises of reviving the economy, putting a check on rising extremism, reviving democratic institutions and rebuilding ties with the Maldives' neighbors, especially India. International media simplified the election battle into a choice between "pro-China" Yameen and "pro-India" Solih. Some analysts are of the opinion that with the victory of the "pro-India" candidate, India is assured greater engagement with its Indian Ocean neighbor and convergence of interests in the region, which indirectly means a lessening of China's influence.

- ◆ The importance of the Maldives is because of its crucial geo-strategic location. It sits astride important Sea Lanes of Communication (SLOCs). The world's three major economies China, Japan and India depend for their energy supply on the Gulf oil.
- ◆ The strategic significance of Maldives for India has been growing over the last many years. In addition to the growing influence of China in the country, Maldives has been getting increasingly radicalized and coming under the influence of fundamentalist Wahhabi ideology. Islamic State (IS) and Lashkar-e-Taiba are also reported to have established bases in the country. Several hundred young men and women have deserted their homes to fight for the IS in Syria and Iraq. The rapid growth of radical Islam in India's vicinity is a matter of serious concern for India and for regional security.
- ◆ India should not forget that it is not so easy to push aside China's hard economic power and its "debt-trap" diplomacy. The case of Sri Lanka is a classic example. Even though the current establishment tried to reassess the nature of Chinese investments and reframe what it called "unjust" conditions when it came to power, Sri Lanka has to live with the reality of Chinese debt and its presence in the strategically located Hambantota port.
- ◆ Policymakers in India have a renewed chance for fruitful engagement with Male. This opportunity should not be lost in weighing third parties' interests and involvement. India should act responsibly by allowing the internal equations in the Maldives to settle first and then engage constructively in the process of restoring democratic institutions. A stable Maldives is essential for a stable neighborhood across South Asia.

Economic Freedom of the World-2018 and India

Q5. India is definitely moving towards a free market economy. However, the goal is still miles away, reaching which would translate what the country must achieve in order to become a developed and sustainable economy. Examine.

Hints:

- ◆ Cato Institute and Fraser Institute have released its annual Economic Freedom of the World (EFW) report. It measures the degree to which the policies and institutions of countries are supportive of economic freedom. Three countries - Belarus, Iraq, and Sudan - were added this year, bringing the total number of jurisdictions in the index to 162.

- ◆ There is a strong correlation between economic freedom and well-being. “Nations in the top quartile of economic freedom had an average per capita GDP [gross domestic product] of \$40,376 in 2016, compared to \$5,649 for bottom quartile nations” in terms of purchasing power parity in constant 2011 US dollar terms.
- ◆ Economic freedom is based on the concept of self-ownership. Because of this self-ownership, individuals have a right to choose—to decide how to use their time and talents to shape their lives. On the other hand, they do not have a right to the time, talents and resources of others. Thus, they have no right to take things from others or demand that others provide things for them.
- ◆ The cornerstones of economic freedom are personal choice, voluntary exchange, open markets and clearly defined and enforced property rights. Individuals are economically free when they are permitted to choose for themselves and engage in voluntary transactions as long as they do not harm the person or property of others. When economic freedom is present, the choices of individuals will decide what and how goods and services are produced. Put another way, economically free individuals will be permitted to decide for themselves rather than having options imposed on them by the political process or the use of violence, theft, or fraud by others.
- ◆ India has made more progress against poverty in the quarter century and change since liberalization started widening the scope of citizens’ economic choices than in all the prior decades. By 2022, the number of Indians living in extreme poverty is expected to drop to 20 million, according to the Brookings Institution. This is startling progress seeing where India stood at the turn of the century.
- ◆ The bureaucracy, post-liberalisation, failed to stay with the changing times and the current structure has led to the creation of several bottlenecks, which continue to remain sealed. One case in point is poverty. It is important to understand that the effect of the LPG system has given millions of people below the poverty line a hope for a better future. But post-liberalisation, the gross inequalities have started widening rather than moving closer. As one part of India develops at a rapid rate, the other part of the economy continues to be impoverished. The key isn’t reverting to the old ways, but to reform the existing mechanics of the bureaucracy.
- ◆ Free market economy has allowed city life to touch rural India, although that is not enough. Rural India also

needs to be technically educated and qualified to be able to contribute towards sustainable development, which is where India is lacking today.

Deep Sea Mining: A Race to the Bottom of the Ocean

Q6. Countries are delving deeper into the ocean to explore its mineral wealth. The deposits on the ocean floor are enormous and the ecology of this largest habitat on earth, unexplored. How will deep sea mining impact the ecology and shape the mechanism to share common resources? Discuss.

Hints:

- ◆ Deep inside the ocean is a world as vibrant and rich as the one outside. There are mountain ranges, ridges, forests, seamounts, volcanoes and a unique ecology that defies common knowledge. The prospect of a race to the bottom of the ocean has alarmed scientists. The reason is deep seas are not marine deserts as thought. The deep sea is the largest habitat on earth. It is incredibly important to humans and it is facing a variety of stresses, from increased human exploitation to impacts from climate change. But just like the terrestrial environment, oceans are facing the conflicts between development and environment—overfishing, industrial waste and plastic debris are just a few of the factors ailing them.
- ◆ Deep-sea mining will affect the communities of living organisms near the mining sites; ecosystems which, because of their remoteness, remain poorly studied and understood. The habitats most likely to be affected are those near polymetallic nodule fields on the abyssal plains, on polymetallic crust-covered seamounts and near hydrothermal vents and seeps. The huge machines and vessels involved in the process may lead to inadvertent introduction of invasive species, cause noise, air pollution and vibration and result in fluid leaks and discharges from vessels and equipment. Numerous species residing on the sea floors are filter feeders like the cold deep-water coral and sponges and rely on a clean current for nutrition supply. During mining, sediments on the sea floor are disturbed and the presence of particulate matter can alter their food supply.
- ◆ The idea of mining these nodules, in part, led to the U.N. Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) in 1982. It also resulted in the establishment of the International Seabed Authority (ISA) which oversees

exploration claims in international waters. In total 29 exploratory licences have been issued by the authority up to now.

- ◆ Since, offshore mining may become a reality in future to replenish the mineral resources for industrial development in future; steps should be taken to arrive at such design parameters that the mining operation will cause least possible damage to the marine environment. Marine biological communities survive in a fragile ecosystem by maintaining a very delicate balance with their environment.
- ◆ Organizations tasked with developing, implementing and enforcing the regulatory framework, whether at the national or international level, should be provided the proper financial means, infrastructure and expertise to accomplish and report on their task. This is particularly relevant to the ISA, an organization entrusted with the development and conservation of nearly half of the surface of the planet and therefore subject to the highest levels of transparency.
- ◆ To comply with UNCLOS' directive to ensure protection for the marine environment from deep-sea mining and provide regulators with the information they need to do so, these threats and effects must now be clearly identified and assessed: a task that requires additional research, collaboration between science and industry and the best environmental management tools.

Behavioural Insights in Policy Making

Q7. Why are governments including behavioural science in policymaking? Is there evidence on how behavioural interventions are perceived by policymakers in India?

Hints:

- ◆ "Behavioural insights" lessons derived from the behavioural and social sciences, including decision making, psychology, cognitive science, neuroscience, organizational and group behaviour are being applied by governments with the aim of making public policies work better. As behavioural insights increasingly contribute to shaping and implementing public policies, questions are being raised about the effectiveness as well as the philosophical underpinnings of some of these applications.
- ◆ People's choices and decisions are not rational but determined by a far more complex set of psychological, cognitive and behavioural factors. Given their limited

attention and computational capacity, people gravitate towards the status quo, which often results in a gap between the policy's intent and action.

- ◆ There are a few aspects that could be considered while applying this science. One, the advantages of deploying these insights can only be reaped if national contexts and differences in socio-economic, cultural and political narratives are appreciated. So, while success stories from across the world showcase the potential of informed behavioural adjustments to policies, these can't be simply emulated in developing countries. There first needs to be an analysis of social norms.
- ◆ One such effort is cognitive scientist Christine Legare's work in Bihar, to improve the quality of health-care service delivery by front-line workers. It takes into account popular 'rituals', like keeping a baby away from the ground in a cot (palna), or marking decorations around her hearth (chulah), for transmitting messages that are culturally acceptable.
- ◆ Behavioural science can be applied to large-scale programmes. The very nature of the science being imbued in a social and cultural context enables it to generate effective and sustained results to public service programmes.
- ◆ Interventions that are designed using this science can reduce the intent-to-action gap. There is a plethora of tools like defaults, reminders, prompts and incentives that can reduce poor adherence and increase compliance for sustained impact throughout the life of an intervention — for example, Kilkari, a mobile service by the government that delivers free, weekly and time-appropriate audio messages about pregnancy, childbirth and childcare directly to families' mobile phones. It focuses on improving uptake of health services.
- ◆ Policymakers are increasingly turning to the behavioral sciences to tackle intractable policy challenges, including increasing student learning, raising savings rates, promoting energy and resource conservation, increasing productivity, improving sanitation practices, strengthening institutions and reducing corruption.
- ◆ If behavioural insights are to realise their full potential, guiding principles and standards must be set to guide future applications and maintain the trust of public bodies and citizens. Good or reliable data is also required if behavioural insights are to become a robust policy tool and results should be published and shared.

SEVEN IMPORTANT NATIONAL & INTERNATIONAL NEWS

NATIONAL

1. Sabarimala Temple Open for Women of All Ages

The Supreme Court has lifted the centuries-old practice of prohibiting women from the age of menarche to menopause to enter the Lord Ayyappa temple at Sabarimala in Kerala. The five-judge constitution bench headed by Chief Justice Dipak Misra, in its 4:1 verdict, said that banning the entry of women into the shrine is gender discrimination and the practice violates rights of Hindu women.

Background

The temple does not open its doors to women of menstruating age (10 to 50 years). The legend has it that the temple deity Ayyappa followed

celibacy all through his life. Therefore, women devotees of menstruating age are considered "impure" by supporters of the ban and are prohibited from entering the temple, on the pretext that they would disturb the celibacy of the deity.

Supreme Court's View

- ◆ Devotion cannot be subjected to discrimination and patriarchal notion cannot be allowed to trump equality in devotion. Devotees of Lord Ayyappa do not constitute a separate denomination.
- ◆ Religion cannot be used as cover to deny rights of worship to women

and it is also against human dignity. The prohibition on women is due to non-religious reasons and it is a grim shadow of discrimination going on for centuries.

- ◆ Justice Malhotra, the lone woman judge in the bench, passed a dissenting judgement and said that issues which have deep religious connotation should not be tinkered with to maintain secular atmosphere in the country. She was of the view that it is not for courts to determine which religious practices are to be struck down except in issues of social evil like 'Sati'. ■

2. Sustainable Development Framework for 2018-2022

NITI Aayog and United Nations in India have signed the Sustainable Development Framework (UNSDF) for 2018-2022. The agreement is a reflection of the commitment and efforts made by India towards attaining the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The UNSDF was framed following a highly participative process, in consultation with government entities, civil society representatives, academia and the private sector. The focus areas include poverty and urbanization; health, water and sanitation; education; nutrition and food security; climate change, clean

energy and disaster resilience; skilling, entrepreneurship and job creation; and gender equality and youth development. Across outcome areas, the UN will support the government of India on South-South Cooperation, in partnership with the Ministry of External Affairs.

The UNSDF also includes a set of UN flagship programs that are aligned with major government schemes. The flagship programs will be scalable innovative, multi-sectoral solutions to some of the most pressing development challenges that India faces, while also serving as catalysts for increased investment of development

finance. The programmes range from affordable housing for the poor to increasing access to clean energy in rural off-grid areas; from protecting all children from vaccine-preventable diseases to quality education for all children and skilling for young people, especially young girls; and from ending stunting to improving the child sex ratio.

It targets the seven low-income states (Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, MP, Odisha, Rajasthan and UP), the North-East region and the aspirational districts identified earlier this year by the NITI Aayog. ■

3. WAYU- Air Pollution Control Device

The National Environmental Engineering Research Institute (NEERI) has developed a device to address air pollution at high traffic zones like traffic intersections and parking areas. Prototypes of the device, named WAYU, have been installed at the ITO Junction in Central Delhi and Mukarba Chowk in North Delhi. Over the next one month, 54 more units would be installed in other parts of the city. The cost of purifier is Rs 60,000 each.

About WAYU

The device, which brings together developments in chemistry, physics and micro-meteorology on a single platform, consists of two stages. In the first stage, a fan sucks air around the device and pollutants like dust and particulate matter are separated using three filters of different dimensions. After this, the air is led into a specially designed chamber where

carbon monoxide and hydrocarbons content in the air are oxidized into less harmful carbon dioxide using activated carbon coated with titanium dioxide. The oxidation is supported by two ultraviolet lamps. The purified air is then ejected with force into the atmosphere so as to help dilute pollutant content in the outside air. ■

4. Ban on Adoption by Live-in Partners has Lifted

Individuals in a live-in relationship will once again be able to adopt children from and within India after the country's nodal adoption agency, Central Adoption Resource Authority (CARA), decided to withdraw a circular issued earlier this year disallowing them from doing so.

CARA has barred applicants in a live-in relationship from adopting a child on the ground that "the Authority would like the children to be placed only with a stable family

and individuals in a live-in relationship cannot be considered as stable family."

The eligibility criteria under Adoption Regulations, 2017, permit single women to adopt a child of any gender, while single men can adopt only boys. When a married couple seeks to adopt a child, it needs to give its consent for adoption and should be stable marriage for at least two years. Applicants have to be physically, mentally and financially stable to raise a child.

About CARA

It is a statutory body of Ministry of Women & Child Development. It functions as the nodal body for adoption of Indian children and is mandated to monitor and regulate in-country and inter-country adoptions. It is also designated as the Central Authority to deal with inter-country adoptions in accordance with the provisions of the Hague Convention on Inter-country Adoption, 1993, ratified by government of India in 2003. ■

5. Triple Talaq Ordinance

President Ram Nath Kovind has cleared the ordinance making triple talaq a punishable offence that was moved by the government, after the government failed to pass the bill through both Houses of the Parliament. The ordinance would have similar provisions as the Muslim Women Protection of Rights in Marriage Act, popularly known as the triple talaq bill, which was cleared by the Lok Sabha in December last year.

Key Features

- ◆ It includes the provision of a jail term of three years for the husband. It also includes the amendments

made by the government in a cabinet meeting last month that made a provision for the magistrate to grant the husband bail after a hearing with wife.

- ◆ The bill also envisages a provision for the aggrieved wife to seek subsistence allowance and custody of her minor children by moving the court. The bill will make instant talaq, proclaimed verbally, through writing or electronic form, illegal and void.
- ◆ The law drafted by the Law Ministry will make grant of instant talaq a cognisable and a non-

bailable offence. Any aggrieved Muslim woman would be entitled to approach a magistrate court to seek redress.

- ◆ The custody of children from the marriage will go to the woman.
- ◆ The law doesn't affect Jammu and Kashmir.

India and 22 other countries have banned triple talaq. India's neighbours Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka are among the countries that have banned the practice of instant triple talaq prevalent among Muslims for divorce. ■

6. NeelaKurinji Plants

Tamil Nadu government has announced a novel scheme for the protection of the exotic Neelakurinji (*Strobilanthes kunthianus*) plants that flower only once in 12 years. Following complaints that these rare and ecologically unique flowers are being packaged and sold on the commercial basis, the state department has warned that strict fines will be imposed on offenders.

The NeelaKurinju, native to the Western Ghats, is a major attraction to foreign and native tourists and one of the prime foreign exchange earners from tourism.

Why once in 12 years?

Among plants, there are annuals and perennials. Annual plants complete their life cycle in one year. They grow from the seed, bloom, produce seeds and die in one growing season.

Perennials live for more than two years and usually flower every year and set seeds.

Monocarpic plants flower only once in their lifetime, set seeds and die. The next generation of the plants is established from these seeds and the cycle is repeated. Monocarpic plants flower only after attaining maturity. The time taken by different species may differ in this respect. The time taken to mature varies in different species of Kurinjis, so different species of Kurinjis have different intervals of flowering. Neelakurinji matures in 12 years' time and flowers gregariously every 12 years.

About NeelaKurinji Plants

- ◆ Neelakurinji plant is a tropical plant species which is generally found in Asia and Australia.

- ◆ It belongs to the genus *Strobilanthes* which has around 450 species of which 146 are found in India and of them, about 43, in Western Ghats.
- ◆ While the blooming is associated primarily with Munnar in Kerala, the flowers are found in some parts of Tamil Nadu too.
- ◆ Nilgiri Hills, which literally means the blue mountains, got their name from the purplish blue flowers of Neelakurinji.
- ◆ Each shrub reproduces once in its lifetime and dies after flowering.
- ◆ The Paliyan tribal people living in Tamil Nadu used it as a reference to calculate their age.

7. Model Code of Conduct

Election Commission (EC) has announced that Model Code of Conduct comes into force immediately in states where legislative assemblies have been dissolved prematurely and the caretaker government as well as the Central government will be barred from announcing new schemes. The commission made it clear that all other prohibitions, such as use of official resources for any non-official purposes, combining of official visit with electioneering, will be applicable on all

ministers and other authorities of the caretaker state government, Central government as well as governments of other states.

The decision assumes importance as the Telangana assembly was dissolved recently before its term came to an end. Its term was to end in June, 2019.

What is Model Code of Conduct?

- ◆ The Model Code of Conduct for guidance of political parties and candidates is a set of norms which has been evolved with the consensus of political parties who have consented to abide by the principles embodied in the said code and also binds them to

respect and observe it in its letter and spirit.

- ◆ The Model Code of Conduct is enforced from the date of announcement of election schedule by the Election Commission and is operational till the processes of elections are completed.
- ◆ Applicability of code
 - During general elections to House of People (Lok Sabha), the code is applicable throughout the country.
 - During general elections to the Legislative Assembly (Vidhan Sabha), the code is applicable in the entire State.
 - During bye-elections, the code is applicable in the entire district or districts in which the constituency falls.



INTERNATIONAL

1. Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism

External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj has reiterated India's demand for a Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism (CCIT) at the UN General Assembly. India had proposed a draft document on CCIT at the UN in 1996 but till today, that draft has remained a draft, because so far a common language has not been agreed upon.

The CCIT is currently being discussed at the Sixth Ad Hoc Committee of the United Nations. The committee is the primary forum for the consideration of legal questions in the UNGA. Despite India's efforts to push a global intergovernmental convention to tackle terrorism, the conclusion and ratification of the CCIT remains

deadlocked, mainly due to opposition from three main blocs – the US, the Organization of Islamic Countries (OIC) and the Latin American countries.

Although consensus eludes towards adoption of the terrorism convention, but discussions have yielded three separate protocols that aim to tackle terrorism: International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings, adopted on 15th December 1997; International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism, adopted on 9th December 1999; and International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, adopted on 13th April 2005.

About CCIT

It provides a legal framework which makes it binding on all signatories to deny funds and safe havens to terrorist groups. The objectives of CCIT are following:

- ◆ To have a universal definition of terrorism that all 193-members of the UNGA will adopt into their own criminal law.
- ◆ To ban all terror groups and shut down terror camps.
- ◆ To prosecute all terrorists under special laws.
- ◆ To make cross-border terrorism an extraditable offence worldwide.

2. GCTF Terrorist Travel Initiative

The United States and Morocco, under the auspices of the Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF) has launched the GCTF Terrorist Travel Initiative in New York on the margins of the UN General Assembly. Formally named the "Initiative on Improving Capabilities for Detecting and Interdicting Terrorist Travel through Enhanced Terrorist Screening and Information Sharing," the terrorist

travel initiative will bring together national and local governments, law enforcement and border screening practitioners and international organizations to share expertise on how to develop and implement effective counterterrorism watchlisting and screening tools.

The initiative will hold four regional workshops in 2018 and 2019 to develop a document that shall be endorsed at the 2019 GCTF ministerial meeting.

In December 2017, the UN Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 2396 (UNSCR 2396), requiring all member states to use these tools, including by implementing systems to collect traveler data and develop watchlists of known and suspected terrorists.

Terrorist travel is being curbed at the moment through Advanced Passenger Information (API), Passenger Name Record (PNR) and biometrics that have been prescribed in Resolution 2396. The new initiative will strengthen this resolution while aiming to stop terrorist travel altogether.

About GCTF

It was launched officially in New York on 22nd September 2011. It is an international forum of 29 countries and the European Union with an overarching mission of reducing the vulnerability of people worldwide to terrorism by preventing, combating, and prosecuting terrorist acts and countering incitement and recruitment to terrorism.



GCTF

GLOBAL COUNTERTERRORISM
FORUM

3. Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS)

Third meeting of Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS) on Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) was held at the Eastern Naval Command (ENC), Vishakapatnam. Besides the hosts, it was attended by IONS member nations, including Australia, Bangladesh, France, Indonesia, Iran, Kenya, Oman and Thailand.

Chiefs of Navies, heads of Maritime agencies and representatives of 32 member and observer nations are expected to attend the 10th anniversary celebrations of IONS, in November this year.

As part of the regatta event, four Indian Navy sailing vessels are scheduled to embark an international crew and undertake a unique sailing venture from Kochi to Muscat, re-tracing the ancient maritime trade routes from the Malabar Coast to Persian Gulf that catalysed the spread of Indian culture to all parts of the world and brought high levels of prosperity to the region.

The participants shared their experiences gained and lessons learnt during the conduct of various HAD Roperations by their navies and

deliberated on best practices that can be imbibed during Joint HADR operations in the Indian Ocean Region.

About IONS

Initiated in 2008 by the Indian Navy, IONS primarily seeks to enhance maritime cooperation amongst navies of the littoral states of the Indian Ocean by providing an open and inclusive forum for discussion on regionally relevant maritime issues and promotes friendly relationship among member nations. It presently has 24 members and eight observer navies. ■

4. China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC)

Pakistan has invited Saudi Arabia to join CPEC as the 3rd strategic partner. This move apparently aimed at rescuing the government of Pakistan from the perilous economic condition faced by the country. Saudi participation in this mega project will ensure huge investment in Pakistan through this platform.

Saudi Arabia has a history of bailing out Pakistan financially. In 2014, six months after Pakistan obtained its last IMF bailout, Saudi Arabia loaned it \$1.5 billion that the government used to strengthen its rupee currency.

About CPEC

The CPEC is the flagship project of the multi-billion dollar Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), a pet project of Chinese President Xi Jinping. It aimed at enhancing Beijing's influence around the world through China-funded infrastructure projects.

The CPEC aims to construct and upgrade the transportation network, energy projects, a deep-water port at Gwadar and special economic zones to eventually support Pakistan's industrial development as a manufacturing hub by 2030.

Beijing has pledged \$60 billion to build power stations, major highways, new and upgraded railways and higher capacity ports, to help turn Pakistan into a major overland route linking western China to the world. The proposed project will be financed by heavily-subsidised loans, that will be disbursed to the government of Pakistan by Chinese banking giants such as Exim Bank of China, China Development Bank and the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China. ■

5. World Wildlife Foundation's 'Tx2' Programme

Nepal is set to become the first country to double its tiger population as part of the World Wildlife Foundation's (WWF) "Tx2" programme which aims to double the number of tigers all over the world. Nepal's tiger population has risen to 235 from the baseline population of 121 counted in 2009.

Nepal was the first country to achieve global standards in managing tiger conservation areas, an accreditation scheme governed by the Conservation Assured Tiger Standards

(CA|TS). With four more years to go, the TX2 goal of doubling tiger numbers globally can only be achieved if all the tiger range countries step up and commit to a similar level of excellence.

Thirteen countries with tiger ranges agreed to the plan, which hinges on "encouraging trans-boundary collaboration" to achieve increased protection and maintain habitats for the endangered creatures. In 2016, of the 13 countries with tiger ranges, India had the largest population with

2226. Russia and Indonesia had 433 and 371 tigers respectively. China had fewer than five and Vietnam fewer than seven tigers in 2016.

About Tx2 Programme

In 2010, at the Tiger Summit in St Petersburg, 13 tiger range countries committed to the most ambitious and visionary species conservation goal ever set: TX2 – to double wild tiger numbers by 2022- the next Chinese year of the tiger. ■

6. NASA Balloon Mission

A NASA balloon has captured rare images from right at the very edge of Earth's atmosphere, where it has been examining a thin group of electric blue clouds with high-powered cameras. Forming 50 miles above the poles in summer, these clouds are known as noctilucent clouds or polar mesospheric clouds— PMCs. The resulting photos, which scientists have just begun to analyze, will help us better understand turbulence in the atmosphere, as well as in oceans, lakes and other planetary atmospheres and may even improve weather forecasting.

On July 8, 2018, NASA's PMC Turbo mission launched a giant balloon to study PMCs at a height of 50 miles above the surface. For five days, the balloon floated through

the stratosphere from its launch at Esrange, Sweden, across the Arctic to Western Nunavut, Canada. During its flight, cameras aboard the balloon captured 6 million high-resolution images filling up 120 terabytes of data storage — most of which included a variety of PMC displays, revealing the processes leading to turbulence. Scientists are now beginning to go through the images and the first look has been promising.

The mission aimed at studying atmospheric motions, such as airflow over mountains or the motions caused by thunderstorms, which can cause disturbances in the atmosphere which are generated through something called gravity waves. Besides, with this mission, scientists want to understand

the processes of matter in near-Earth space, including how matter there interacts with Earth's atmosphere and weather.

About Noctilucent Clouds

Noctilucent clouds coalesce as ice crystals on tiny meteor remnants in the upper atmosphere. The clouds are only visible during twilight, when the angle of the sun reflects off them and causes them to shine a bright electric blue or white colour. These clouds are affected by what's known as atmospheric gravity waves — caused by the convecting and uplifting of air masses, such as when air is pushed up by mountain ranges. The waves play major roles in transferring energy from the lower atmosphere to the mesosphere. ■

7. Global Media Compact to Raise Awareness of the SDGs

The United Nations has announced the launch of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Media Compact, an initiative marking a new drive to advance awareness of the SDGs that were unanimously adopted by all world leaders at the United Nations in 2015. The Compact seeks to inspire media and entertainment companies around the world to leverage their resources and creative talent to advance the Goals.

Collectively, the founding members of the SDG Media Compact already comprise an audience in the billions spanning over 80 countries on 4 continents and many more companies are expected to join.

The SDG Media Compact is inclusive and aims to embrace media companies from all regions and all platforms. The Compact is an initiative of the United Nations, in collaboration

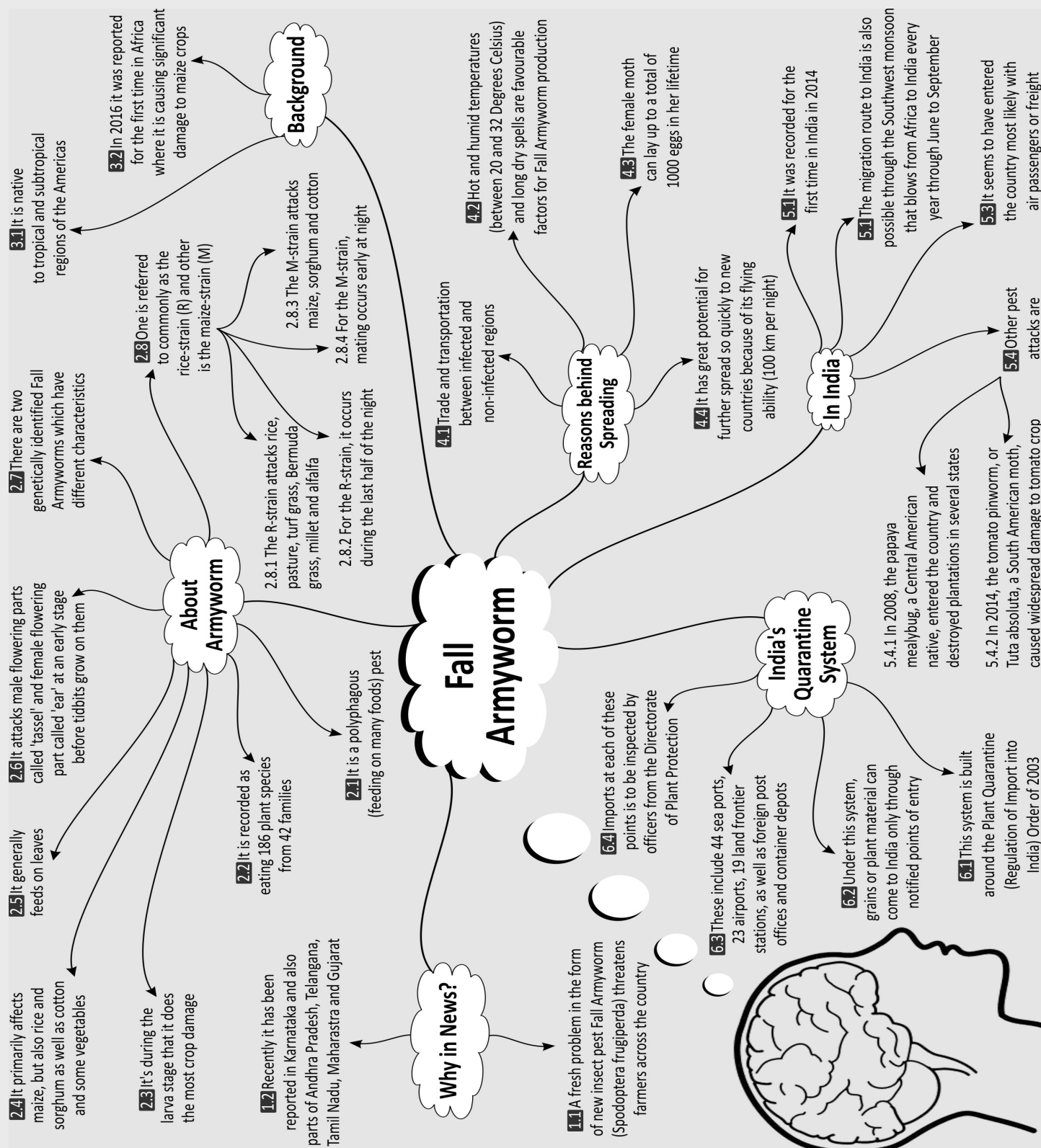
with the UN Foundation and with the support of FleishmanHillard. Participating organizations will have the opportunity to create content partnerships with the United Nations, whereby the organization will increase its efforts to source and share high-value media content and newsworthy opportunities relating to the SDGs. Regular monitoring and review meetings will gauge engagement.

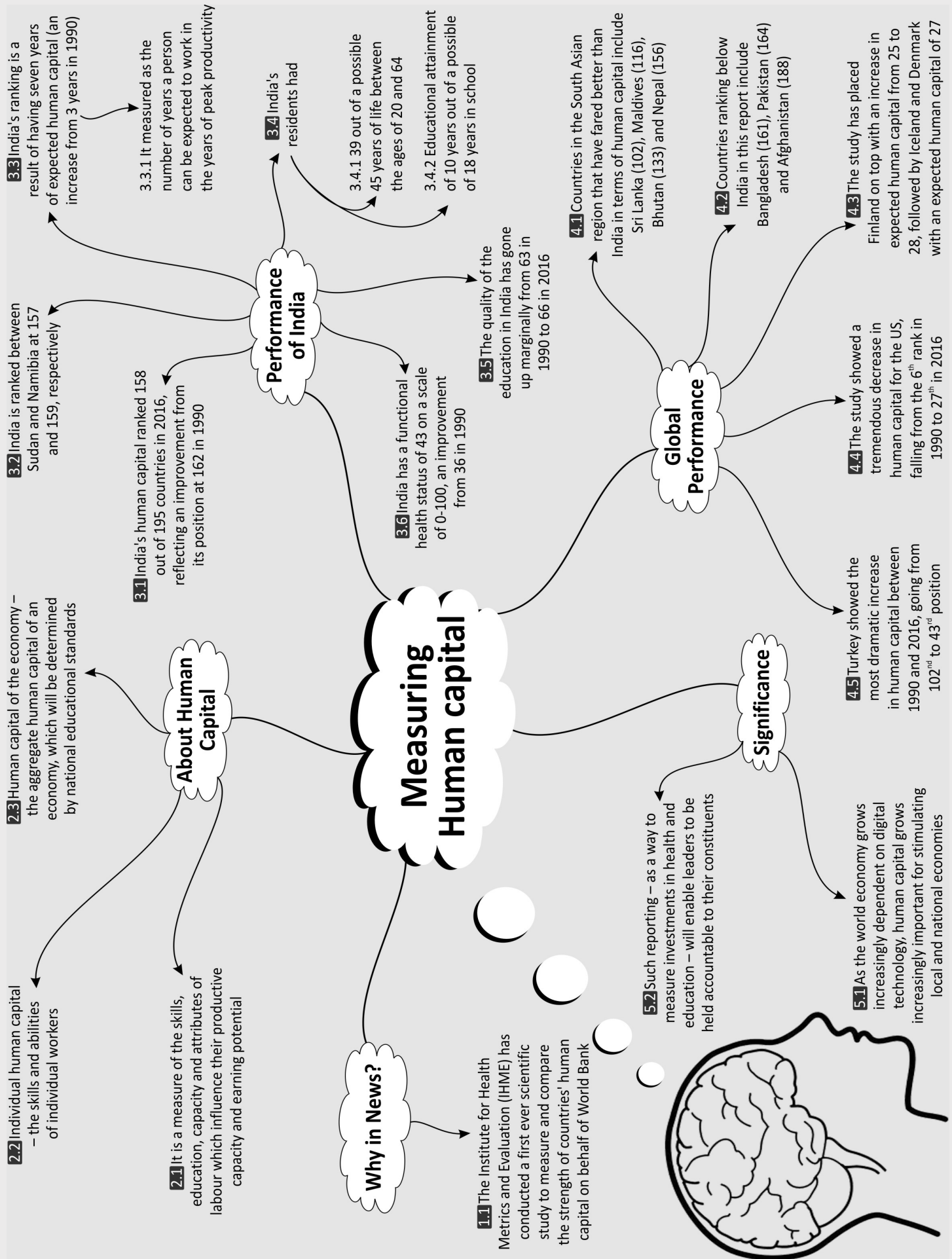
About the SDGs

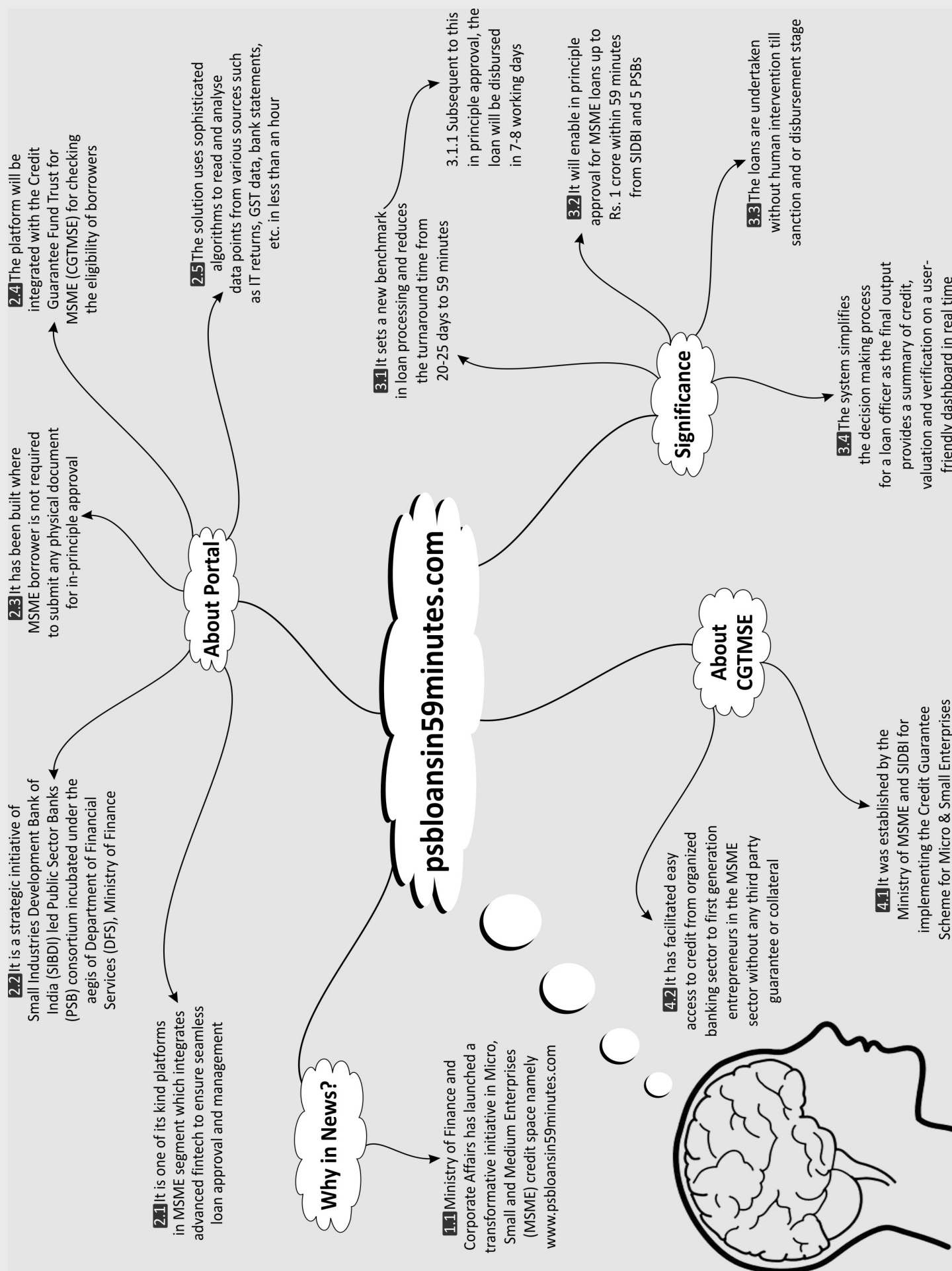
The 17 Sustainable Development Goals were adopted by world leaders at the historic Sustainable Development Summit in September 2015. Encompassing everything from health, to gender equality and education, the Goals will mobilize efforts around the world to end all forms of poverty, fight inequalities and tackle climate change, while ensuring that no one is left behind. ■

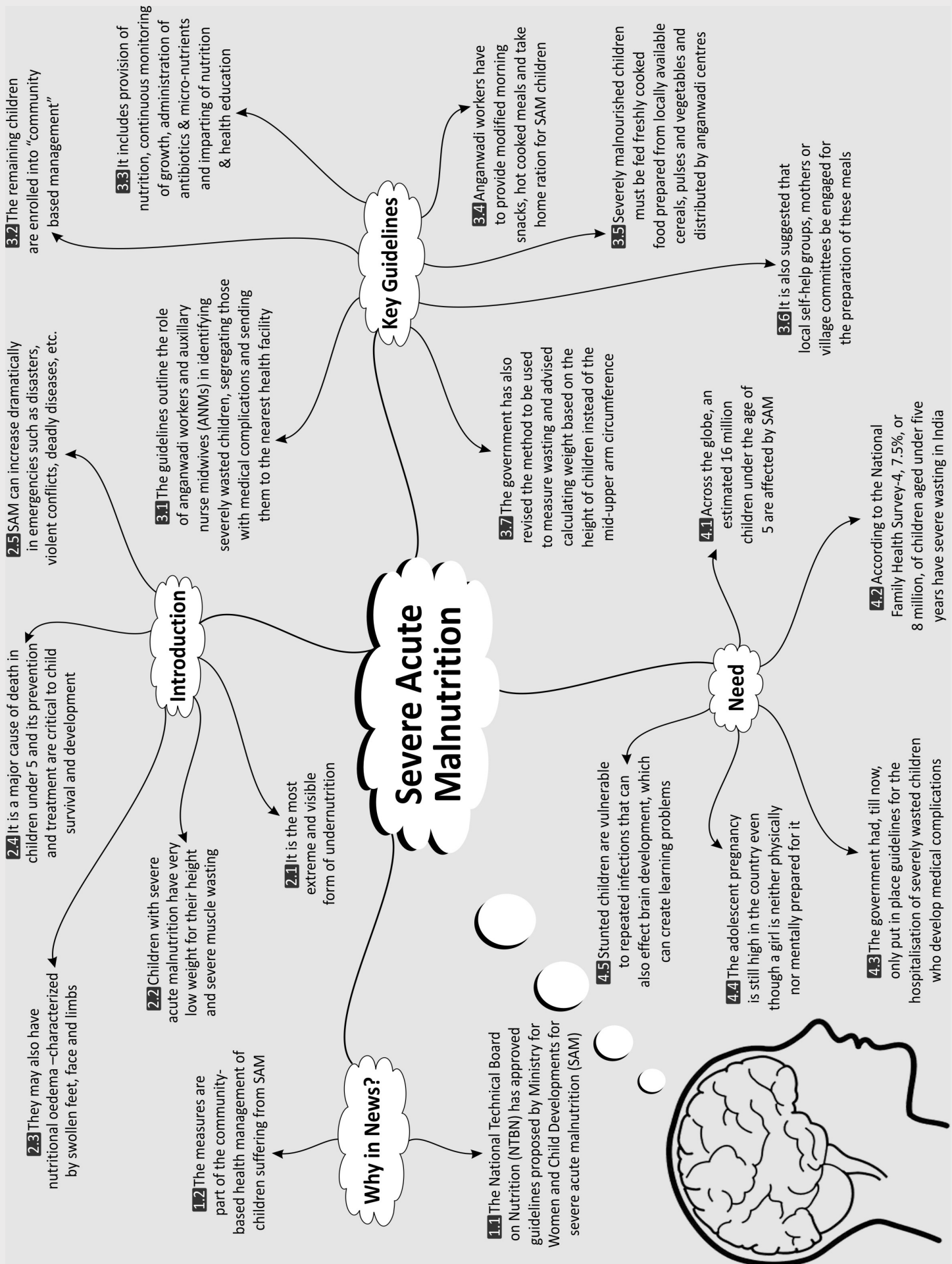


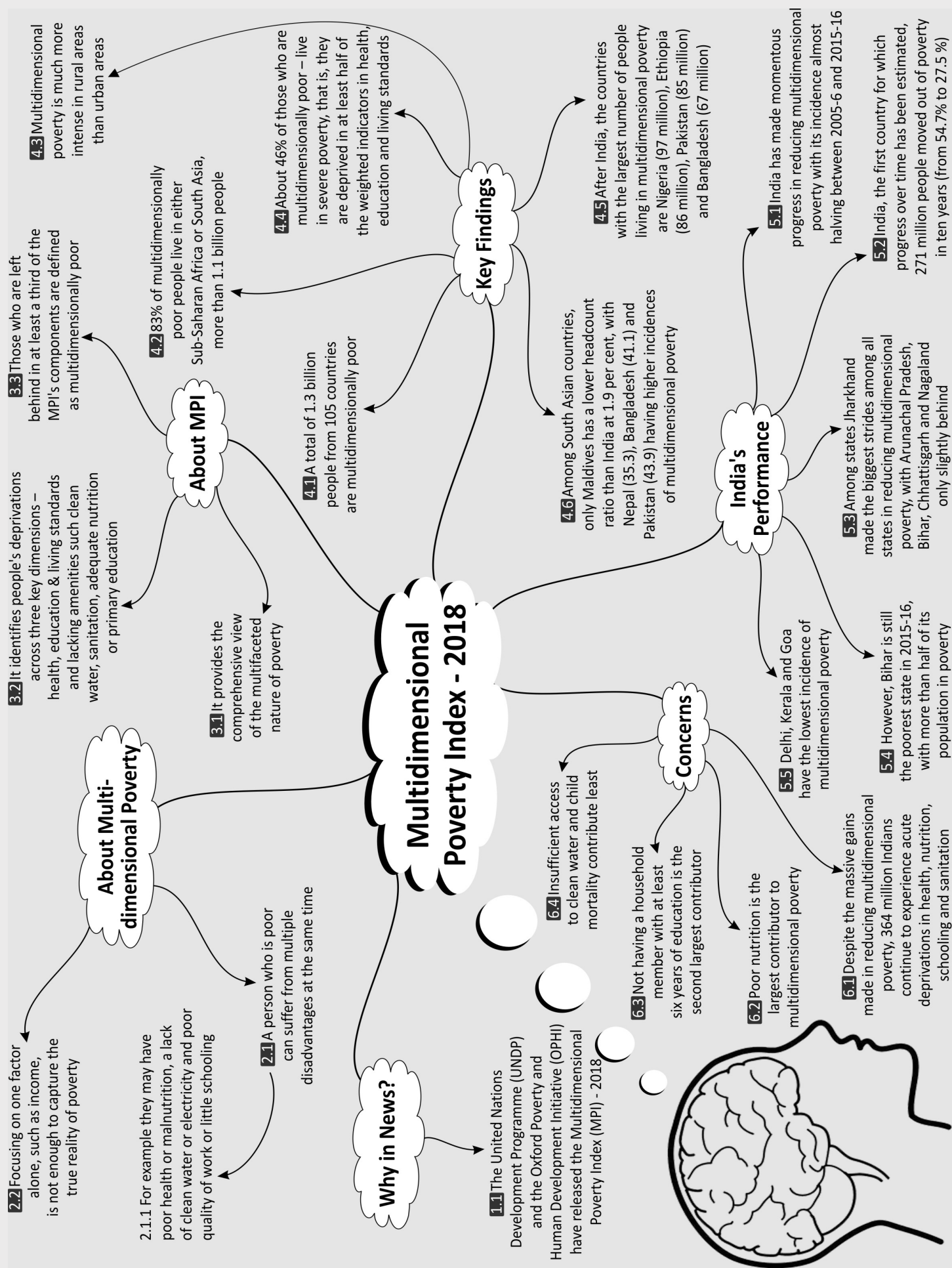
SEVEN BRAIN BOOSTERS

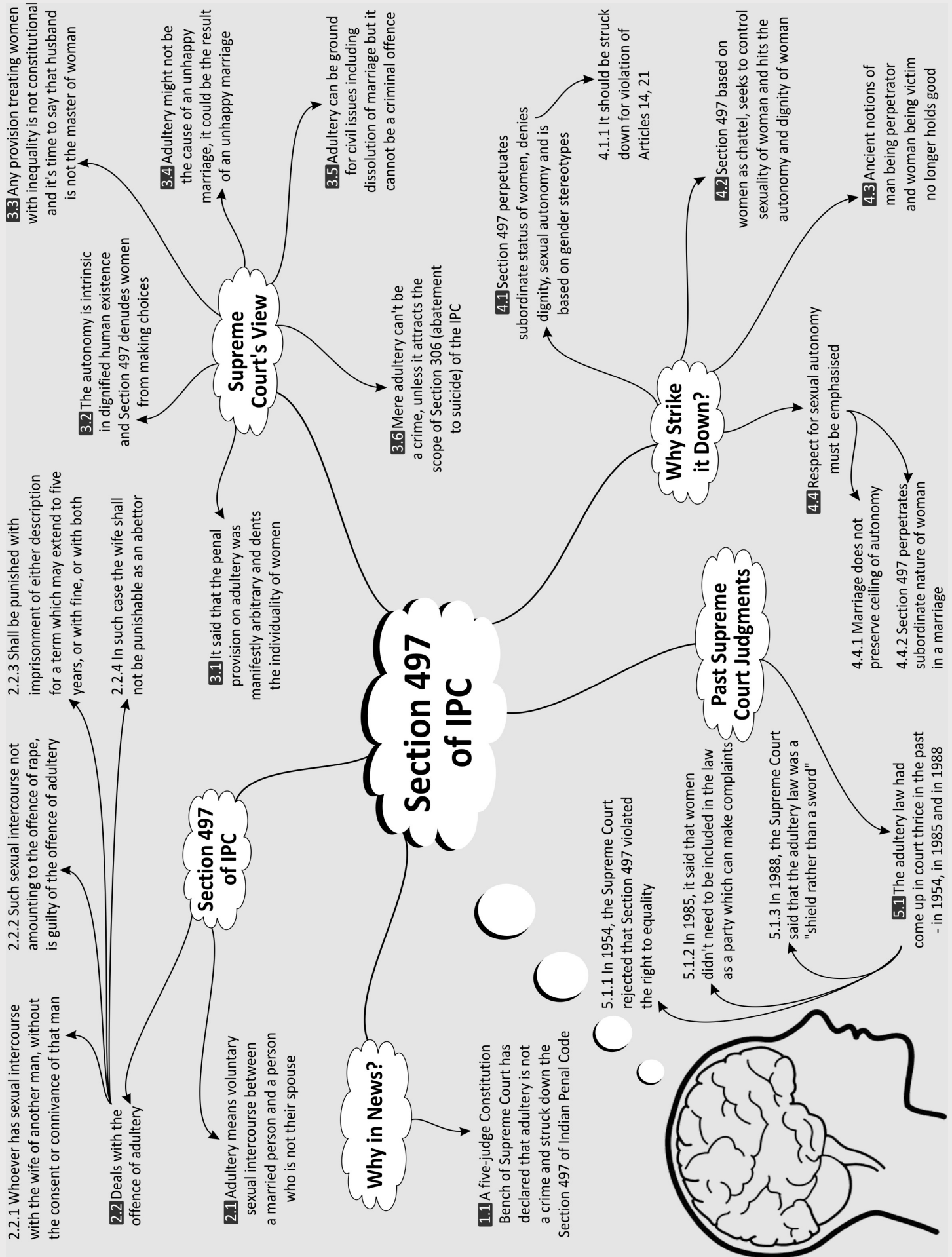


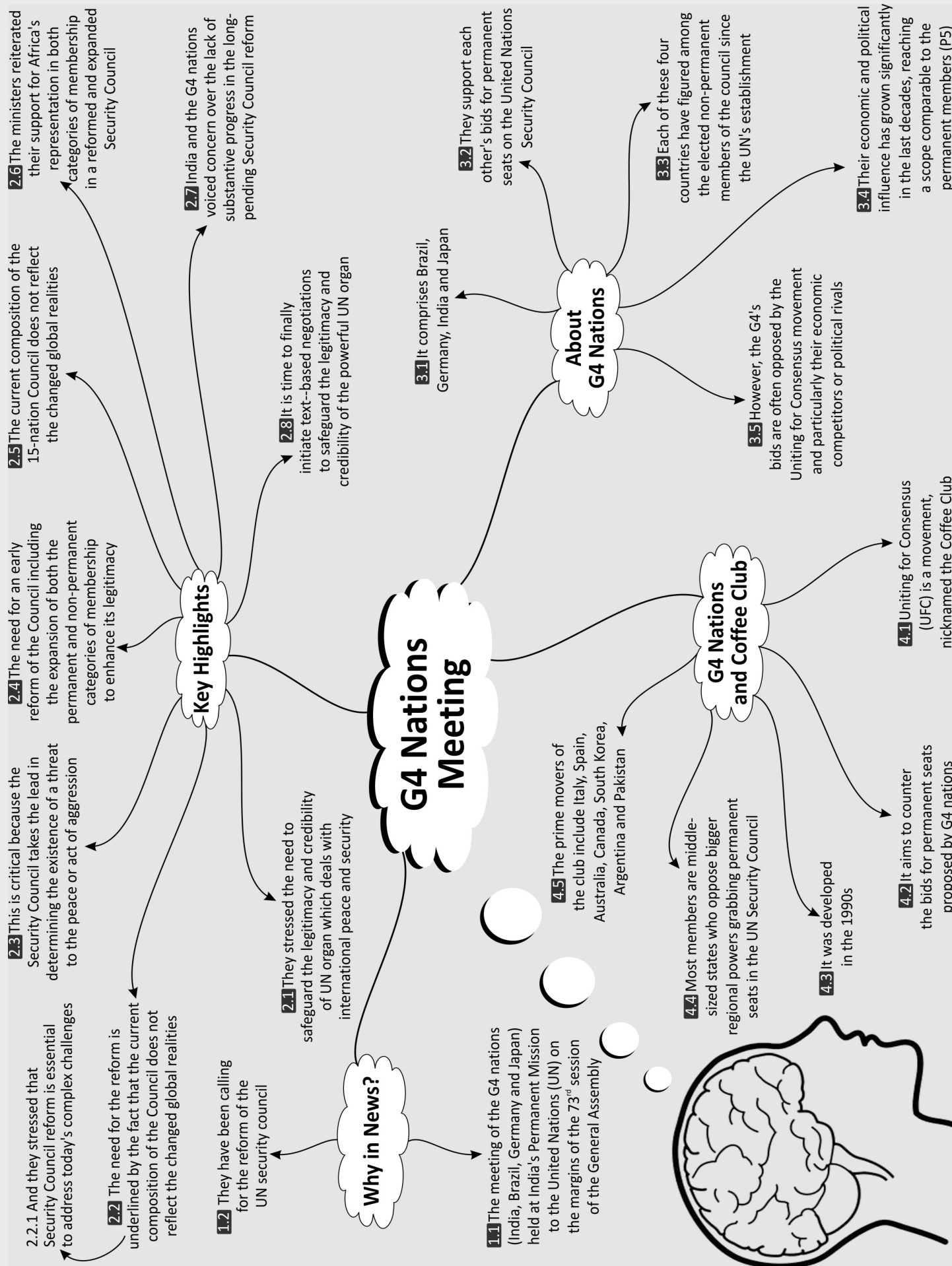












SEVEN MCQ's WITH EXPLANATORY ANSWERS

(Based on Brain Boosters)

Fall Armyworm

Q1. With reference to the 'Fall Armyworm', consider the following statements:

1. It can attack the maize crop only.
2. It is an insect native to tropical and subtropical regions of the Africa.

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: Statement 1 is not correct. Fall Armyworm primarily affects maize, but also rice and sorghum as well as cotton and some vegetables. It generally feeds on leaves.

Statement 2 is also not correct as it is an insect native to tropical and subtropical regions of the Americas. In 2016 it was reported for the first time in Africa where it is causing significant damage to maize crops. In India, the pest which was first found in Karnataka in the early months of this year. Later it has spread rapidly to West Bengal and Gujarat. Hot and humid temperatures (between 20 and 32 Degrees Celsius) and long dry spells are favourable factors for Fall Armyworm production.

Measuring Human capital

Q2. Consider the following statements in respect of Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation's Human Capital Survey.

1. It is a measure of the skills, health, capacity and attributes of labour which influence their productive capacity and earning potential.
2. India's human capital ranked 158 out of 195 countries in 2016.

Which of the statements given above is / are correct?

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

Answer: (b)

Explanation: Statement 1 is not correct. It is a measure of the skills, education, capacity and attributes of

labour which influence their productive capacity and earning potential. It doesn't consider health while measuring human capital.

Statement 2 is correct. India's human capital ranked 158 out of 195 countries in 2016, reflecting an improvement from its position at 162 in 1990. India is ranked between Sudan and Namibia at 157 and 159, respectively.

psbloansin59minutes.com

Q3. Consider the following statements in respect of 'psbloansin59minutes.com':

1. It is a strategic initiative of Industrial Development Bank of India (IBDI) led Public Sector Banks (PSB).
2. It sets a new benchmark in loan processing and reduces the turnaround time from 20-25 days to 59 minutes.

Which of the statements given above is / are correct?

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

Answer: (b)

Explanation: Statement 1 is not correct. It is a strategic initiative of Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) led Public Sector Banks (PSB) consortium incubated under the aegis of Department of Financial Services (DFS), Ministry of Finance. It has been built where MSME borrower is not required to submit any physical document for in-principle approval.

Statement 2 is correct. It sets a new benchmark in loan processing and reduces the turnaround time from 20-25 days to 59 minutes. Subsequent to this in principle approval, the loan will be disbursed in 7-8 working days. It will enable in principle approval for MSME loans up to Rs. 1 crore within 59 minutes from SIDBI and 5 PSBs.

Severe Acute Malnutrition

Q4. With reference to the Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM), consider the following statements:

1. SAM is the most extreme and visible form of over nutrition.

2. Children with SAM have very over weight for their height and severe muscle wasting.

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: **Statement 1 is not correct.** It is the most extreme and visible form of under nutrition rather than over nutrition. Under nutrition denotes insufficient intake of energy and nutrients to meet an individual's needs to maintain good health.

Statement 2 is also not correct. Children with severe acute malnutrition have very low weight for their height and severe muscle wasting. They may also have nutritional oedema – characterized by swollen feet, face and limbs. It is a major cause of death in children under 5 and its prevention and treatment are critical to child survival and development.

Multidimensional Poverty Index - 2018

Q5. Consider the following statements:

1. Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) has been released by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI).
2. MPI identifies people's deprivations across three key dimensions – health, education & living standards and lacking amenities such clean water, sanitation, adequate nutrition or primary education.
3. Multidimensional poverty is much more intense in urban areas than rural areas.

Which of the statements given above is / are correct?

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

Answer: (a)

Explanation: **Statement 1 is correct.** The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI) have released the Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) – 2018.

Statement 2 is also correct. MPI provides the comprehensive view of the multifaceted nature of poverty. It identifies people's deprivations across three key dimensions – health, education & living standards and lacking amenities such clean water, sanitation, adequate nutrition or primary education. Those who are left behind in at least a third of the MPI's components are defined as multidimensionally poor.

Statement 3 is not correct. Multidimensional poverty is much more intense in rural areas than urban areas.

Section 497 of IPC

Q6. Consider the following statements in respect of section 497 of IPC:

1. It deals with the offence of adultery.
2. Supreme Court has declared that adultery is not a crime.

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: **Statement 1 is correct.** Section 497 of IPC deals with the offence of adultery. Adultery means voluntary sexual intercourse between a married person and a person who is not their spouse.

Statement 2 is also correct. A five-judge Constitution Bench of Supreme Court has declared that adultery is not a crime and struck down the Section 497 of Indian Penal Code. It said that the penal provision on adultery was manifestly arbitrary and dents the individuality of women. Further it said that any provision treating women with inequality is not constitutional and it's time to say that husband is not the master of woman.

G4 Nations Meeting

Q7. Consider the following statements in respect of 'G4 nations':

1. The G4 nation comprises India, Japan, Brazil and South Africa.
2. They support each other's bids for permanent seats on the United Nations Security Council.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (b)

Explanation: **Statement 1 is not correct.** The grouping comprises Brazil, Germany, India and Japan. Each of these four countries has figured among the elected non-permanent members of the council since the UN's establishment.

Statement 2 is correct. They support each other's bids for permanent seats on the United Nations Security Council. However, the G4's bids are often opposed by the Uniting for Consensus movement and particularly their economic competitors or political rivals.



SEVEN IMPORTANT FACTS FOR PRELIMS

1. Who was awarded the 2018 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine?
–James P Allison (USA) and Tasuku Honjo (Japan) for their discovery of cancer therapy by inhibition of negative immune regulation
2. Who was awarded the 2018 Nobel Prize in Physics?
–Arthur Ashkin (USA) for groundbreaking inventions in the field of laser physics
– Gerard Mourou (France) and Donna Strickland (Canada) for the optical tweezers and their application to biological systems
3. Which state has launched a new wage compensation scheme for pregnant women in tea gardens?
–Assam
4. Which Indian was awarded with the UN Champions of the Earth Award-2018?
–Prime Minister Narendra Modi
5. Which airport was recognised with the UN Champions of the Earth Award-2018?
–Cochin International Airport
6. Which country will host the Deaf T20 World Cup in 2018?
–India
7. Which player won the Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna 2018 award, the country's highest sporting honour?
–Virat Kohli

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SEVEN IMPORTANT SPORT EVENTS

1. Australian Open - 2018

- ♦ **Men's Singles:** Roger Federer (Switzerland)
- ♦ **Women's Singles:** Caroline Wozniacki (Denmark)
- ♦ **Men's Doubles:** Oliver Marach (Austria) and Mate Pavic (Croatia)
- ♦ **Women's Doubles:** Timea Babos (Hungary) and Kristina Mladenovic (France)
- ♦ **Mixed Doubles:** Mate Pavic (Croatia) and Gabriela Dabrowski (Canada)

2. French Open - 2018

- ♦ **Men's Singles:** Rafael Nadal (Spain)
- ♦ **Women's Singles:** Simona Halep (Romania)
- ♦ **Men's Doubles:** Pierre-Hugues Herbert (France) and Nicolas Mahut (France)
- ♦ **Women's Doubles:** Barbora Krejickova (Czech Republic) and Katerina Siniakova (Czech Republic)
- ♦ **Mixed Doubles:** Latisha Chan (Chinese Taipei) and Ivan Dodig (Croatia)

3. Wimbledon Championships - 2018

- ♦ **Men's Singles:** Novak Djokovic (Serbia)
- ♦ **Women's Singles:** Angelique Kerber (Germany)
- ♦ **Men's Doubles:** Mike Bryan (USA) and Jack Sock (USA)
- ♦ **Women's Doubles:** Barbora Krejickova (Czech Republic) and Katerina Siniakova (Czech Republic)
- ♦ **Mixed Doubles:** Alexander Peya (Austria) and Nicole Melichar (USA)

4. US Open - 2018

- ♦ **Men's Singles:** Novak Djokovic (Serbia)
- ♦ **Women's Singles:** Naomi Osaka (Japan)
- ♦ **Men's Doubles:** Mike Bryan (USA) and Jack Sock (USA)
- ♦ **Women's Doubles:** Ashleigh Barty (Australia) and CoCo Vandeweghe (USA)
- ♦ **Mixed Doubles:** Bethanie Mattek-Sands (USA) and Jamie Murray (UK)

5. BWF World Badminton Championships - 2018

- ♦ China got top position with 8 gold medals including 2 gold, 2 silver and 4 bronze medals.
- ♦ India got 1 silver medal and got fourth position in the medal table.
- ♦ This is the fourth medal of the world championship of P.V. Sindhu.
- ♦ Before that, she has won bronze in 2013 and 2014 and silver medal in 2017.
- ♦ **Men's Singles**
 - Gold Medal-Kento Momota (Japan)
 - Silver Medal-She Yuki (China)
 - Bronze Medal-Chen Long (China) and Luu Darren (Malaysia)
- ♦ **Women's Singles**
 - Gold Medal- Carolina Marin (Spain)
 - Silver Medal- P.V. Sindhu
 - Bronze Medal - O Bing Jiao (China) and Akane Mamagu Chi (Japan)

6. Women's Cricket World Cup - 2017

- ◆ The 11th edition of the Women's Cricket World Cup was held in England from 24 June to 23 July 2017.
- ◆ **Hosts:** England and Wales
- ◆ England defeated India by 9 runs in the final (Lords, London) to win the World Cup title for the fourth time
- ◆ **Player of the Match (final):** Anna Shubasole (India)
- ◆ **Player of the Series:** Tammy Beaumont (England)
- ◆ **Captain:** Heather Knight (England) and Mithali Raj (India)
- ◆ Mitali is the world's first female player to captain two World Cups (2005 and 2017).
- ◆ Mitali became the first Indian player to score over 1000 runs (1139 runs so far) in the World Cup.
- ◆ Mithali Raj became the first woman player to cross the 6,000-run mark by breaking the record of 5992 one-day runs of most of Charlotte Edwards in England.
- ◆ Harmanpreet Kaur of India scored an unbeaten 171 against Australia in the semi-final.

- ◆ This is the highest individual score of the women's World Cup knock-out stage so far.
- ◆ 11 consecutive ICC Women's World Cup titles have been won by Australia 6 times, England 4 times and New Zealand 1 time.
- ◆ 12th ICC Women's World Cup will be held in New Zealand in the year 2021.

7. 'Vivo' Indian Premier League -2018

- ◆ The 11th edition of the Indian Premier League (IPL) T-20 Cricket League was held in India from April 7 to May 27 2018
- ◆ **Final Match:** Wankhede Stadium (Mumbai)
- ◆ Chennai Super Kings won the title by defeating Sunrisers Hyderabad by 8 wickets
- ◆ **Captain:** Mahendra Singh Dhoni (Chennai Super Kings) and Kane Williamson (Sunrisers Hyderabad)
- ◆ **Man of the Match (Final):** Shane Watson
- ◆ **Orange Cap:** Kane Williamson (735 runs)
- ◆ **Purple Cap:** Andrew Tye (24 wickets)
- ◆ **Most Valuable Player:** Sunil Narine (357 runs and 17 wickets in 16 matches), Kolkata Knight Riders.
- ◆ This is the third title won by Chennai Super Kings.



SEVEN PRACTICE QUESTIONS FOR MAIN EXAM

Answer each of the following questions in 200 words:

- Q1. "The issues which have deep religious connotation should not be tinkered with to maintain secular atmosphere in the country." Critically analyse.
- Q2. The issue of candidates facing criminal charges getting elected to Parliament and State legislative Assemblies is often raised. What do you understand by criminalisation of politics? Discuss why it is time for legislation to thoroughly clean up electoral politics.
- Q3. The Supreme Court finds a pragmatic middle path between the Aadhaar scheme's excesses and its benefits to the marginalised. Discuss the implications of the verdict.
- Q4. "There is no requirement to collect quantifiable data of backwardness of SC/STs to provide reservation." Discuss the verdict of Supreme Court in M Nagaraj case.
- Q5. Construction and demolition waste (C&D) is an environment and public health hazard. What do you understand by construction and demolition waste? Discuss the environmentally sustainable alternatives for C&D.
- Q6. 'Communalism arises either due to power struggle or relative deprivation.' Argue by giving suitable illustrations.
- Q7. Distinguish between 'code of ethics' and 'code of conduct' with suitable examples.

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