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GENERAL STUDIES

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INDEX TABLE			INSTRUCTIONS	
Q.No	Max.Marks	Marks Obtained	<p>1. Please write your Name, Email, UPSC Roll No. and Mobile number in the answer sheet</p> <p>2. There are 20 questions printed in English, all questions are compulsory</p> <p>3. The number of marks carried by a question or part is indicated against it.</p> <p>4. Answers must be written in the medium authorized in the admission Certificate (English), which must be stated clearly on the cover of this Question-Cum-Answer (QCA) Booklet in the space provided.</p> <p>5. Word limit in questions, if specified, should be adhered to. Any page or portion of the page left blank in the Question-Cum-Answer Booklet must be struck off.</p> <p>Any specific message from Educrat IAS Mentors/Evaluators with respect to your copy? Mentor's Remarks:</p> <p>Very Good. Keep it up. Keep writing. All the Best.</p>	
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20	15	08	Mode of Examination:	Online <input type="checkbox"/> Offline <input type="checkbox"/>
Total Marks		110	TEST CODE:	Medium of Examination:



1. Analyze the reasons behind judicial pendency in India. Also, give some practical solutions to remedy this malady. (Answer in 150 words, 10 marks)

According to National Judicial Data Grid, Supreme Court has around 57000 cases pending while lower courts pendency rate is more than 1 crore.

Good introduction with data.

Reasons behind judicial pendency

- 1) Low judge to population ratio
- In India it is 20 per million people.
- 2) Increase in crime - according to NCRB, crime rates have increased in past few years.
- 3) system of appeals: leads to increasing time of case disposal.
- 4) Judicial vacancy: the number of judges at lower courts are less than sanctioned strength.

- Multiplicity of laws (civil and criminal)
- Lack of awareness and faith in ADR.
- Lack of digital infrastructure in judiciary.

- 5) COVID 19: further added to pendency due to court closure
- 6) Delay by investigation agencies to complete investigation on time

Solutions to reduce judicial pendency

- 1) Increase judge to population ratio to ^{at least} 50 per million
- 2) Creation of All India judicial services to fill vacancy
- 3) e court system to allow trials inspite of closure
- 4) Focus on Alternate Dispute Resolution mechanism to solve small cases
- 5) Increase in retirement age of judges to allow functioning of courts at proper strength.

Good conclusion

Judiciary is the guardian of fundamental rights of people. It should reduce pendency as justice delayed is justice denied.

2. Does the Parliament seem to have lost its lustre as the temple of democracy in recent years? Critically examine. (Answer in 150 words, 10 marks)

Indian Parliament is a bicameral body that represents the electorate and make laws as representatives of the people.

Good introduction.

Indian Parliament is called the temple of democracy. However, it has lost its lustre as:

Association for democratic reforms.

1) Increase in criminalisation of politics - According to AAR - 44%.
MPs have criminal cases against them

2) Bypassing constitutional values
eg: 45 ordinances passed in 16th Lok Sabha.

3) Reducing accountability
eg: Question Hour cut short to 19% in 17th Lok Sabha's session.

AS per PRS Legislative Research.

4) Lack of inclusivity eg: only 14%
MPs are women.

5) Increasing tyranny of ruling party
eg: passing ordinary bills as money
bills. (e.g. Aadhar Bill, 2016)

Well-
Balanced
answer.

However, Parliament continues to hold
relevance as it represents wishes of
the electorate.

↳ Increasing debates and discussions
hold government accountable.

2) Dealing with major changes in
society eg: amending IPC, CrPc

3) It protects Fundamental Rights
of citizens eg: Data Protection Bill
to protect privacy

4) Continued elections every 5 years
shows democratic spirit

Good
conclusion

While there have been some
issues in Parliament's functioning, it
still continues to exemplify the
democratic spirit of India.



3. India and USA are two large democracies. Examine the basic tenants on which the two political systems are based. (Answer in 150 words, 10 marks)

USA is the world's first democracy while India is the world's largest democracy.

Good introduction.

The political system of these two nations are based on certain similar tenets.

1) Fundamental Rights are important in both the nations.

2) Judicial review ~~is~~ exists in order to control the tyranny of government.

3) Equal protection of law is the fundamental right of every citizen in both the nations.

Relevant points.

However, the political system also shows some differences between the two:

India

1) Follows a Parliamentary form of government

Good coverage of points

2) Principle of checks and balances

3) Has an integrated judiciary

4) Prime Minister is the de facto head

5) A single citizenship is the norm

6) India is federal but with a unitary bias

7) Follows both India procedure established by law

USA

1) Follows a Presidential form of government

2) Strict separation of powers between the three organs

3) Follows a system of federal judiciary

4) President is the de facto head

5) Allows for dual citizenship

6) It is a federal state.

7) Follows due process of law

Good conclusion

Both India and USA while having different elements, have come together to promote a global spirit of democracy.



4. Over the years, several demands have been made, for reasons that could be either political or administrative, to change the name of some states in India. In this context describe the procedure to change the name of the state in India and implications of it. (Answer in 150 words, 10 marks)

India has witnessed
reorganisation of states since independence.
There have been increasing
demands to change names of certain
states due to political or administrative
reasons.

Good
introduction.

Procedure for name change of a state

- 1) Under Article 3, only Parliament has the power to change the name of the state.
- 2) It needs to inform the State legislature but are not bound by their opinion.
- 3) In case of state union territories (UT) informing UTs is not needed.
- 4) Prior approval of President is

fair
points.

mandatory.
5) It can be done by a simple majority i.e. an amendment under Article 368 is not needed.

Implications of changing state's name

Positive

- 1) Overcoming colonial hangover eg: Calcutta changed to Kolkata
- 2) Dropping imperialist remnants eg: changing name of Allahabad
- 3) Promoting own identity, honouring indigenous leaders eg: Chhatrapati Shivaji

Negative

- 1) Can create communal disharmony eg: dropping muslim names can lead to conflict
- 2) Politicisation of the issue - in order to appease voters

Relevant points

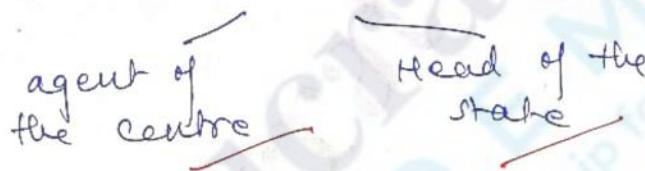
Good concept on

While changing name of states is an attempt of decolonisation of discourse, it should be done after taking into account the aspirations of citizens and state governments.



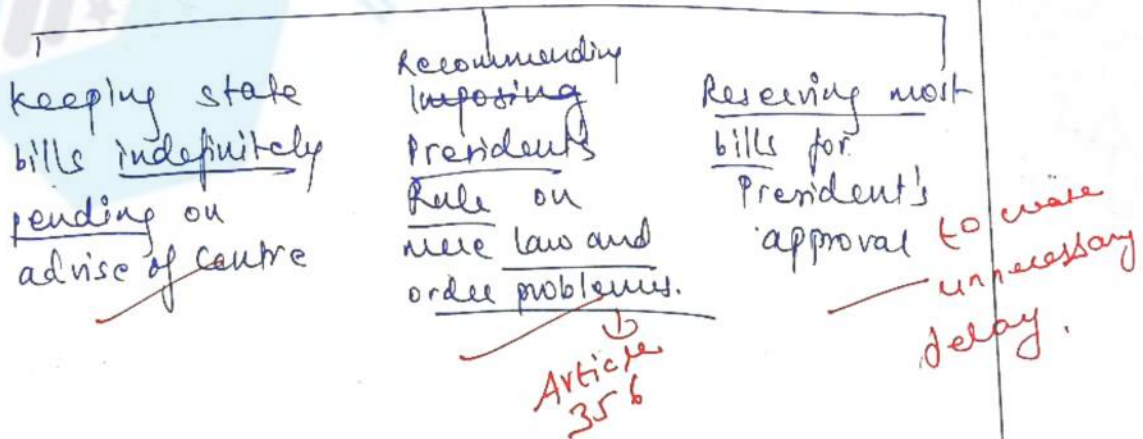
5. "A Governor should be discharging his/her duty in accordance with the spirit of the Constitution, not just be an agent of the centre". Discuss the statement in the light of the role of Governor in the Indian polity. (Answer in 150 words, 10 marks)

Governor of a state is appointed by the President under warrant of hand and seal. In India, Governors act in a dual capacity



Governor should focus on discharging his duties and not only acting as an agent of centre.

Governor acting as agent of centre





Governor should discharge state duty as well:

- Panchaj Commission
- Rajmangal Commission
- Examples of States of Emergency: West Bengal, Maharashtra, Rajasthan etc.

- 1) Sarkaria Commission: Governor should not recommend President's rule on law and order issues merely.
- 2) Governor should try to form a government during hung assembly and if not possible, ^{only} then dissolve it.
- 3) He should attempt to get an ordinance passed by Parliament before promulgation - D C Wadhwa case
- 4) Danish Rebia case: Governor should act on aid and advise of Council of Ministers and use discretion only when Constitutionally allowed.

Good connection Governor can act as an agent of federalism - a link between centre and state government. There is a need to strengthen the governor's position to ensure the above.



6. "A data protection law is needed more than ever in the recent times." Do you agree? (Answer in 150 words, 10 marks)

With Industrial Revolution
4.0 on the rise, data has become the
new oil. Today, data is one of the
most important resources in the world.

Good
introduction.

Issues due to data increase:

cyber
crime privacy
threat data
warefare violation of
privacy

Need of a data protection law:

1) Increasing digital population:
there is a rise in the number of
people using social media, OTT etc -
thus their data is out there.

2) Privacy is a fundamental Right
under Art 17-21 - hence data protection
becomes important. (Puttaswamy Judgment)

3) Rise in electronic aggression

- Political manipulation
(Cambridge Analytica case)

- Promotion of consumerism by targeted advertisements

eg: ransomware - money in exchange of data.

4) Data manipulation can lead to violation of human rights eg: Deepfakes targeting women.

5) Data can be used by other countries for surveillance eg: Chinese spyware.

6) Data is used by companies for profits without consent eg: sharing data of customers with 3rd parties.

Need of the hour

Right to be forgotten should be a part of Data Protection Law.

Norms on data localisation is needed

Recommendation of BN Srikrishna Committee

fine and punishment for data violation

The Data Protection Bill 2023 is tabled in the Parliament. It has the potential to ensure data protection and privacy of citizen.



7. What is a no confidence motion and how different it is from a censure motion. Explain the procedure to move a no confidence motion? (Answer in 150 words, 10 marks)

Article 75 (3) of the constitution puts forward the idea of collective responsibility i.e. the executive is accountable to the Lok Sabha. *Good introduction.*

A No confidence motion is tabled on the house when the Lok Sabha feels that the executive has lost support of its majority in the Parliament and no longer represents the wishes of the electorate. *You can also give recent context of No-confidence motion.*

No confidence motion

It does not need a reason to be tabled.

Censure motion

A reason is necessary to pass a censure motion.



Relevant
Points

2) It can only be
put against the entire
Council of Ministers
(COM)

3) It aims to ascertain
the confidence of COM

4) Passing of the motion
leads to resignation of
government

2) It can be motioned
against the entire
COM or an individual
minister

3) It aims to
cease a minister

4) It may or may
not lead to
resignation

Procedure of no confidence motion:

1) It needs support of 50 members to
be accepted.

2) If accepted, all matters are put
aside and discussion on no confidence
begins.

3) It needs support of majority of
members of Lok Sabha - Rajya Sabha
does not vote.

4) If passed, the COM has to resign.

Till date, India has not
witnessed passing of any no confidence
motion. It shows the stability of Indian
democracy.

Better to mention -
All no-confidence
motion had been
defeated or
remained inconclusive



8. How is India tackling the menace of malnutrition? How can this problem be eliminated from the society? (Answer in 150 words, 10 marks)

According to National Family Health Survey (NFHS) 5, ^{Good introduction with data.} stunting rate is 31.9% in India, while 2% of the population is overweight.

Malnutrition is the condition of not receiving adequate nutrition for growth of body. It leads to:

under stunting, wasting, anaemia, ^{micro}nutrient deficiency

Measures taken by Indian government to tackle this menace

- 1) National Food Security Act: NFSA: basic nutrients to all registered citizens
- 2) Mid day meal scheme: ^(MDM) balanced diet being served in schools.



and distribution
through PDS.

- 3) Fortification of rice and pulses
- 4) Awareness of on malnutrition -
National Nutrient Month.
- 5) Campaign to tackle anaemia
eg: Anaemia Mukh Bharat.

The following measures are needed
to eliminate malnutrition.

Relevant
Points

- 1) Developing nutri gardens in every
school for MDM - Poshan Vahikas
- 2) Focus on biofortification eg: Black rice
- 3) Supplement diet with nutrition tablets
eg: multivitamins.
- 4) Increase WASH facilities for better
absorption of nutrients
- 5) Creating diversity in agriculture
eg: growth in pulses, millets etc.

Good
conclusion

In order to reap benefits
of demographic dividend,
malnutrition must be curbed through
interventions at various levels.



9. Critically examine the aims and objectives of SCO. What importance does it hold for India? (Answer in 150 words, 10 marks)

Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) is a Eurasian economic, political and security grouping with countries included like India, Pakistan, Russia, China, Central Asian nations (except Turkmenistan) etc.

Good introduction.

Aims and objectives of SCO

- 1) Promoting regional growth - focusing on developing Asia.
- 2) Economic ties should be strengthened
eg: increasing trade within SCO
- 3) Fighting against terrorism
eg: RATS establishment in Tashkent
- 4) Curbing the hegemony of West - forum of emerging Asian nations.

fair points.

5) Ensuring security in the grouping and in the wider region. eg: fight against extremism.

- Energy security
- Iran's Industries
- China's Assertion / dominance

SCO's importance for India

- 1) It provides a forum to engage with landlocked Central Asian nations
 - key market for India
- 2) It can act as a platform to solve various disputes of India - Pakistan.
- 3) It serves to achieve one of India's major goal - fight against terrorism
- 4) It provides ^{as a} forum to counter hegemony of USA.

Issues of SCO

- no clear goal has been defined
- India - Pakistan issues continue to be unresolved
- China's influence within SCO is increasing.

Good conclusion

India should use SCO effectively to achieve the idea of multipolar Asia as well as to resolve longstanding disputes for regional prosperity.



10. Discuss the impediments India is facing in its pursuit of a permanent seat in UN Security Council. (Answer in 150 words, 10 marks)

UN Security Council (UNSC) is one of the six major organs of UN aimed at promoting peace and security across the globe. It has 15 members. *Good introduction.*

10 non permanent members - decided on basis of rotation

5 permanent members
- china, Russia, USA, UK, France

India has been demanding a permanent seat in UNSC as:

<p>It is the world's <u>largest democracy</u></p>	<p>It acts as a voice for <u>Global South</u></p>	<p>It has contributed to UN <u>peacekeeping forces</u> regularly</p>
<p>India has support of many <u>nations of G4</u></p>		<p>UNSC no longer reflects <u>geopolitical reality</u></p>

four points.



Impediments to India's permanent membership

- India's ambivalent approach
 - India's image as a soft state
 - India's inability to take concrete stance on global issues (e.g. - Russia - Ukraine)
 - Expectation of European nation acting as a hindrance from China's side
- 1) China continues to veto India's request for permanent membership
 - 2) Opposition by coffee club - Pakistan , Italy etc block India's candidature
 - 3) Other UN members like UK are also not ready for UNSC permanent membership expansion
 - 4) Human rights violation in India eg: UN Human Rights Commission criticised National Human Rights Commission due to political interference
 - 5) Financing : India is not able to match the finance provided by other permanent members.

Good conclusion

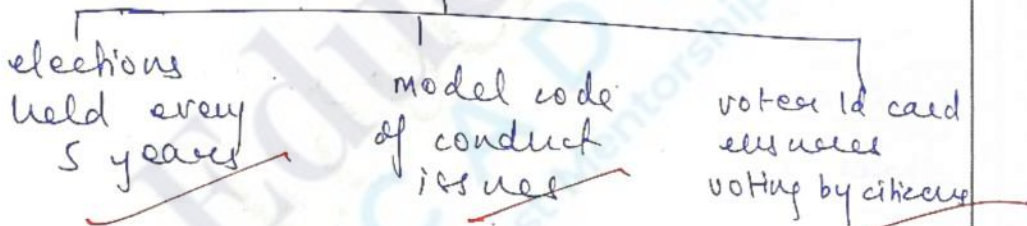
India is an emerging economy and represents the voice of the global South . There is a need to expand UNSC to capture changing geopolitical realities and India's inclusion as a permanent member would be the first logical step.



11. There is a dire need for electoral reforms in India, discuss various challenges related to elections in India and suggest some measures to resolve them. (Answer in 250 words, 15 marks)

Article (Art) 324 of the ^{Good use of} Indian Constitution mandates ^{Constitutional} Election Commission of India (ECI) ^{article.} to conduct free, fair and transparent elections.

Success of elections



However, there are certain challenges related to elections in India

1) Use of money power eg: according to ECI, more than 50% of election finances were from unknown sources

2) Increasing criminalisation of

- politics eg: ADR report: 44% MPs have criminal charges against them.
- 3) Rising money capitalisation eg: corporates funding elections
- 4) Role of muscle power is on the rise as well eg: More than 40 people killed during Bengal elections
- 5) No cap on party expenditure
- it gives rise to issues of freebies, Randi culture.
- 6) Low inclusivity within political parties eg: only 14% women MPs in India
- 7) Violation of Model code of conduct as it is not binding
- 8) Lack of power of ECI to deregister parties - it can only de recognise them.
- 9) Low voter turnout eg: due to migration.

- Electoral Bonds.

- Remote voting

- Lack of

proper monitoring mechanism

to have

Speech →

Communal

Politics

Electoral reforms needed to solve the issues:

- 1) Transparency in funding eg: data should be available for electoral bonds
- 2) Parity between small and big parties eg: National Electoral Fund: give all parties same amount from donations received.
- 3) Strengthen ECI eg: power to de register parties
- 4) Binding nature of Model Code of Conduct for fair elections.
- 5) Use of technology to prevent booth capture, fraud etc - eg: linking voter Id and adhaar.
- 6) Remote voting technology for increasing voter turnout
- 7) Involving citizens in ensuring free elections eg: eVigil mobile app

State funding of election one nation, one election.
Use of VVPAT in all constituencies.
Indrajit Gupta Committee
Dinesh Goswami Committee
24th Law Commission report.

Electoral reforms will ensure the constitutional mandate of free and fair elections. It must be done to realis uphold constitutional morality.

12. What is delimitation and why is it needed? Describe the procedure for the delimitation process in India. Is there any need to change the process of delimitation in India? (Answer in 250 words, 15 marks)

Good introduction

Delimitation is the process of drawing up of boundaries within the territory for creation of constituencies in order to conduct elections.

Need of delimitation

Good points

Principle of one vote, one value

It ensures smooth elections as constituencies are drawn.

It creates parity within the country - ratio of population and seat throughout is same.

It fulfills constitutional goal of delimitation of territory.

It allows to determine reserved constituencies eg: for SC/STs.

It reflects the changing population dynamics within the nation and leads to constituency formation accordingly.



Procedure for delimitation process in India

- 1) The Constitution mandates Parliament to create a delimitation Commission after every Parliament election. Article 82, Article 170.
- 2) Parliament forms delimitation Commission as a statutory body consisting of 3 members - Retired Supreme court judge, Chief election commissioner and EC of states.
- 3) It creates constituencies across the nation such that: the ratio between population and constituencies is same throughout the country.
- 4) It's decisions cannot be challenged in a court of law.

Need of reform of delimitation

The current delimitation is based on 1971 census 2001 census it will continue 42nd CAA, 1976 84th CAA, 2001 till 2026 so that Southern states 87th CAA, 2003



who have controlled population are not penalised.

Alteration of
allocation of
seats to
the states

However, there is a need to conduct a new census - 2021 as most states have now achieved population reduction. The new boundaries should reflect this.

- Mention about
delimitation is
56K - Issues
Assam - Issues

Also, the population of scheduled caste and tribes cannot be effectively captured by surveys. Delimitation and

Also, suggest
a way forward
to maintain
transparency

reservation should be based on new census rather than 2001 census as ~~mandated~~ mandated by 7th CAA.

Delimitation
Process -

The process of delimitation need not be changed as it effectively captures needs of Indian society. There is a need, however, to change the data on which delimitation is based. It must capture the changing population.



13. Though there have been several different estimates of poverty in India, all indicate reduction in poverty levels over time. Do you agree?
(Answer in 250 words, 15 marks)

India has witnessed a reduction in poverty since independence. There have been several different estimates to capture poverty.

- 1) Cost of jail living - capturing cost of nutrition in jail
- 2) Poverty line concept - as setting incidence of poverty on calorie intake
- 3) Sachin Tendulkar committee - 21% of India's population as below poverty line (BPL)
- 4) Raghuram Rajan committee - using modified mixed recall period
- 5) Multidimensional poverty index (MPI) measuring poverty across three areas.

Relevant introductory

- J.K. Agrawal committee
- Lakdawala committee

Rangarajan committee

- World Bank definition.

India has witnessed reduction in poverty at all estimates.

1) According to United Nation Development Program (UNDP) - India lifted 415 million people out of poverty between 2005 - 15.

Good points

2) ~~MPP~~ Poverty on basis of MPI has also reduced to 16% of the population - UNDP

3) Only 10% of the population is BPL from 21%.

4) Reduction in stunting and wasting rates eg: Stunting only 32% - National Family Health Survey (NFHS)

5) Food Security is given to almost 67% of the population - PDS

6) Out of pocket expenditure declined to 44% - NFHS 5. Increase in savings.

7) Basic necessities like housing etc provided eg: PM Awas Yojana



While poverty has declined considerably, it continues to exist in many parts:

1) COVID 19 - according to Pew Research centre, more than 45 crore people lost their jobs

2) While incidence of poverty has declined, depth of poverty is persistent

3) Feminisation of poverty: vulnerable groups continue to dominate BPL category

4) Relative poverty has increased as bottom 50% of population hold only 10% wealth - Oxfam report

- Quantitative growth is plain of qualitative
- No major improvement in socio-economic indicators (Health, Nutrition, Education etc.)

Way Forward

Government schemes at multiple levels to combat poverty

Increase in progressive taxation

Social sector development - health, education etc.

India has the world's largest poor population. It must be dealt with effectively to achieve SDG 1 - zero poverty

14. Public health system has limitations in providing universal health coverage. Do you think that the private sector could help in bridging the gap? What other viable alternatives would you suggest? (Answer in 250 words, 15 marks)

Good introduction

The 2023-24 Budget saw a 3.3% allocation to health sector in India. Public health systems while having some benefits are not enough to deal with increasing health crisis.

Benefits of public health system

affordability universality goal of welfare state

However, it has certain limitations

1) low expenditure and budget allocation. in health sector.

- Rural-urban divide

WHO recommendation (1:1000) d)

2) lack of doctors eg: India has 1:1450 (doctor to patient ratio)

- Lack of tertiary care facilities.

3) Corruption in public healthcare system eg: profiteering by doctors

- poor diagnosis facility.



PM Aarogya Yojana

- 1) Low level of infrastructure development
eg: Rural Health Statistics - more than 50% of rural centres do not operate at full capacity

Private sector can help bridge the gap in healthcare system

- 1) Increase in doctor to patient ratio as mandated by WHO - 1:1000
- 2) Better infrastructure availability
eg: PM Jan Aarogya Yojana in private hospitals.
- 3) Increase in insurance facilities eg: increase in mental health insurance from 0.7%. *press & verify the data.*
- 4) Provision of better e health systems
- 5) International connectivity can be provided at private hospitals.
eg: collaboration with international doctors.

6) Increase in investment in rural areas eg: developing primary health care centres

Viable alternatives for plugging health care system

Relevant points

- ↳ Public - private partnership at tertiary care systems.
- a) Provision of e health services in primary health centres eg: e Sanjeevani
- ↳ Encouraging startups in health care eg: Practo etc.
- H) Increase research and development for dealing with rising health burden eg: National Research Authority
- S) ~~to~~ increase health expenditure as part of GDP to 6%.

Good conclusion

India has come a long way in developing the health ecosystem. It should collaborate with private sector to realise SDG 3 - healthy population.



15. The quality of higher education in India requires major improvements to make it internationally competitive. Do you think that the entry of foreign educational institutions would help improve the quality of higher and technical education in the country? Discuss.
(Answer in 250 words, 15 marks)

University Grants Commission (UGC) has recently allowed foreign Higher educational Institutes (HEIs) to set up campuses in India.

Good content introduction.

- Australian university in GIFT city

The entry of foreign HEIs can improve the quality of education and make education a competitive sector.

Firstly, you should mention the issues related to HEIs in India.

Benefits of setting up ^{foreign} HEIs in India

- 1) Increase enrollement ratio in HEIs to a substantial level.
- 2) Foreign faculty will be able to provide better and diverse %.

perspectives on various disciplines.

3) It will lead to creation of multidisciplinary institutions which is lacking in India at present.

Relevant points

- Promotion of research ecosystem

- Skills-oriented rather than marks-oriented education

- Growth of entrepreneurial abilities

4) It will make Indian HEIs more competitive in order to match with foreign HEIs.

5) It will prevent brain drain - ~~more~~ many students leave India for foreign education opportunities.

6) India can become a global hub for education - it will attract brain gain from other nations as well.

However, there might be some issue with the above proposal.

If UGC mandates that any course detrimental to India will not be allowed. The vague criteria might hinder setting up foreign HEIs.



- a) No foreign HEIs can leave without UGC permission. Such exit barriers might impact their set-up.
- b) It will lead to commodification of education - as fee is decided by HEIs.
- c) Issue of reservation - it is not clear if seats will be reserved for backward sections. This can create an elitistic tendency.
- d) It will lead to decline in Indian HEIs as they have limited resources to compete.

Relevant points.

Way Forward

there is a need to create a cluster of Indian universities with same standard eg: Ivy league

Foreign and Indian HEIs should complement each other eg: twin degree programme

Foreign HEIs will promote quality education in India. Indian HEIs must be organised in these lines as well.

Good conclusion.

16. Blanket bans on digital connectivity not only violate the fundamental right to access the internet but also have wider implications for society. Discuss. (Answer in 250 words, 15 marks)

Good introduction.

India is known as the internet shutdown capital of the world as it has the highest number of internet shutdowns since past five years — internet Access Report.

Laws for banning digital connectivity

Good mentioning of Acts

Telegraph Act 1885

Section 144 of Cr.P.C.

Sec 69 A of IT Act, 2008

However, blanket ban on digital connectivity has negative implications for society

↳ Economic loss: according to Standing Committee of Information Technology, internet ban led to loss of 24 million house



2) chilling effect on fundamental right of speech and expression - violates article (Art) 19

3) Targeting political dissent
eg: Sec 69A used to block government criticising channels

4) Human rights violation eg: lack of internet connectivity led to no information on COVID restrictions, education loss etc

5) Internet connectivity itself is a fundamental right - Anuradha Bhatnagar case - Good use of case

6) It can create trust deficit between citizens and government
eg: in Kashmir.

However, sometimes a ban on digital connectivity is needed :

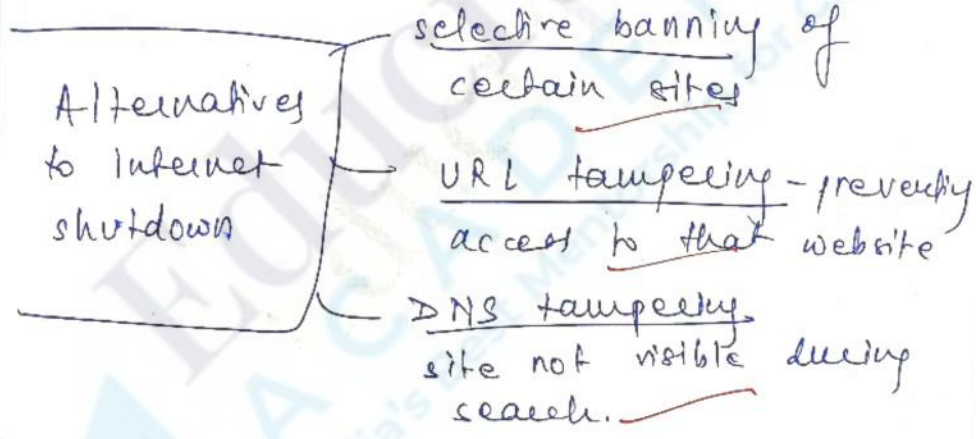
↳ Maintain peace and harmony
eg: after abolition of Art 370

Relevant points -



Misinformation is not a ground for reasonable restriction under article 19(2).

- 2) Prevent fake news eg: in Manipur conflict
- 3) Curb extremist practices eg: during Khalistan attacks
- 4) Prevent cheating in exams eg: in Bihar.
- 5) It is a reasonable restriction under Art 19 → in contradiction to Supreme Court's observation.



Good Constitution While internet shutdown is a reasonable restriction, it should be used cautiously in order to prevent formation of an Orwellian State. It should be based on proportionality.



17. Microfinancing was introduced in India as a solution to poverty and to empower Self Help Groups (SHGs). Despite its strong potential, the microfinance sector faces challenges related to accessibility in India. Analyse. (Answer in 250 words, 15 marks)

Microfinance was introduced in India in order to meet the small credit requirements of SHGs in order to reduce poverty.

Good introduction.

Potential of microfinance in India

1) It has led to ~~increase~~ decrease in poverty eg: SHGs using small loans in rural areas.

Economic Independence.
Growth of Entrepreneurship
(e.g.:- MUDRA).

2) It has increased employment opportunities eg: MSME sector

3) Promoted financial inclusion in the country.

4) ~~Lead~~ Microfinance has led to regional development of under-developed areas eg: RBI lead scheme.

↳ Lead Bank Scheme

- 5) It has allowed resurgence in activity after COVID eg: SWANidhi scheme
- 6) It is an agent of women empowerment eg: loans to women cooperatives.

challenges faced by the microfinance sector in India

- Skewed distribution
- Lack of approach of Bank of India
- Stigma in rural areas
- Non-availability of loan documents in vernacular language barrier

1) low awareness among people on availability of microfinance

2) decline in credit activities after COVID eg: SHGs saw decline of 19% in credit activities

3) issue of refinance eg: MUDRA dependent on NABARD for refinance

4) Profiteering by banks through exploiting poor sections. eg: banks charging higher

interest rate despite government schemes.

- 5) Stressed assets increasingly due to no collateral in most schemes.
eg: No collateral in svaidhi schemes.
- 6) Microfinance units limited to certain sectors only eg: not much in Eastern India (Red Corridor)

Relevant points.

Way Forward

increasing awareness among people about microfinance

increasing ^{credit} activities among SHGs

timely refinancing of smaller units.

Microfinance can go a long way to improve SHGs and reduce poverty in India. It should be encouraged at all levels.

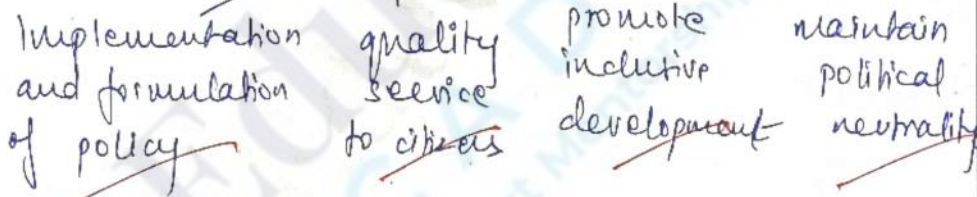
Good conclusion.

18. Initially Civil Services in India were designed to achieve the goals of neutrality and effectiveness, which seems to be lacking in the present context. Do you agree with the view that drastic reforms are required in Civil Services. Comment. (Answer in 250 words, 15 marks)

You can quote Sardar Patel's 'Vallabh Bai'

Indian Civil Services is called the steel framework of India. It was developed to achieve goals of neutrality and effectiveness.

Aims of civil service



However, in recent times, civil services had witnessed value erosion.

Issues in civil services today

↳ corruption and Red tapism - corruption is seen as grease to wheels of bureaucracy.



1) Political ye manuship: Supreme court noted that bureaucracy is acting in a committed manner.

2) Partisanship among civil servants
eg: ignoring demands of minorities

3) Promoting Babu culture — placing themselves above citizens.

4) Reduced efficiency eg: more than 1000 seats vacant in IAS.

This calls for reforms in civil services

1) Performance review of civil servants
eg: 360° review.

2) Using technology to promote accountability eg: Sankalp platform to connect with civil servants.

3) Seperate board for civil servants transfer — 2nd ARC : to reduce political interference.

Issues relating to recruitment process, committed Bureaucracy.

fair points..



Relevant
Points

- 4) Mid career training to ensure adaptability to situations eg: Mission Karanyogi
- 5) Compulsary retirement of non performing civil servants
- 6) Lateral entry at higher level to develop expertise in certain areas.
- 7) Changing discourse - from Babu culture to Sevak culture

Good
concepts

While reforms are needed, drastic reforms are not called for.

The above reforms can ensure that loopholes in civil services functioning can be plugged leading to increased efficiency in performance.



19. "The key to a more settled Sino-Indian relationship is a greater acceptance by both countries of multi-polarity and mutuality, building on a larger foundation of global rebalancing." Critically analyse the above statement. (Answer in 250 words, 15 marks)

Sino Indian relations have been characterised by progression and regression since independence.

The major areas of contention today in Sino Indian relations are:

- Recent points.*
- 1) Border disputes - aggression across line of actual control (LAC)
 - 2) Water bomb: non sharing of data on Brahmaputra river by China can create issues for India as it is a downstream state. *- Both are continuing civilization but a competing economy.*
 - 3) Belt and Road Initiative (BRI): it is passing through Pakistan occupied Kashmir (PoK) which is against India's sovereignty. *- Salami slicing strategy of China and it's belligerence.*

Probability of a
war

- 4) China-Pakistan alliance is a threat to India
- 5) India-US alliance is viewed negatively by China.
- 6) China's effort to block India's seat in UNSC
- 7) China's aggression in South China sea - aim to establish hegemony. : 9 dash line

The only way to balance Sino India relations is by acceptance of multipolarity and mutuality by both nations

- 1) China and India should harness their potential to fulfill the idea of Asian century
- 2) Use of multilateral forums to solve disputes eg: BRICS, SCO etc
- 3) China should accept multipolarity



Asia and resist domination of South China Sea.

Voice of Global South.

4) India, on the other hand, should also accept mutuality and shed its Big Brother image which is causing concerns among smaller nations.

common interests in climate change negotiations

5) China and India should collaborate to resist Western hegemony in Indo Pacific.

Way Forward

hold informal summits yearly like Wuhan summit
 ~~we~~ solve border disputes bilaterally

Revive Panchsheel for future agendas.

This can be only realised when territorial integrity is respected by China. India should use its soft diplomacy to revive links with China while stopping border incursions.

Good connection.

20. Strategic autonomy and no military alliances are two tenets of India's foreign policy. In this regard what do you understand by 'strategic autonomy'? Do you think India is strictly pursuing strategic autonomy? Critically analyse. (Answer in 250 words, 15 marks)

Good
introduction

Strategic autonomy is the ability of a nation to pursue its own security needs, its own foreign policy according to own needs rather than being constrained by other nations.

Relevant
para
↓
You can also
define
military
alliances

India maintains its strategic autonomy by pursuing a policy of no military alliance i.e. not being part of any military group like NATO or Warsaw Pact. It ensures that India can modify its military ~~no~~ alliances according to ^{its own} needs.



~~India is pursuing~~

India's strategic autonomy is however being seen as diluted:

1) India's participation in Indo Pacific QUAD is seen as a security bloc

- India's import of Russian oil is a pipe
West's apprehension

2) Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) is also a Eurasian security bloc of which India is a member

- India's engagement with Iran and US simultaneously -
Israel - Palestine

3) Colombo Security Conclave also aims to defend partners in case of aggression.

4) India's growing closeness to USA has diluted India's autonomy
eg: Chabahar port construction delayed due to USA's sanctions.

However, while it is seen as dilution as India's autonomy, it is false from true. India has made multiple alliances to guide its various interests.



This part should have been mentioned earlier

- Despite growing closeness with USA, India continues to maintain it's ties with Iran — Chabahar port
- 2) SCO allows India to balance QUAD — India is a part of both East and West groupings
 - 3) Despite CATSA, India continues to import oil and defence equipments from Russia — a clear example of strategic autonomy.
 - 4) India has abstained from voting against Russia over Russia-Ukraine war — following own stand
 - 5) India is not part of any military grouping that has binding demands
 - 6) India maintains ties with both Israel and Saudi Arabia who are regional rivals.

Very good conclusion.

There are no permanent friends or enemies in international relations, only permanent national interests. India follows this maxim realpolitik and thus maintains its strategic autonomy.