

GENERAL STUDIES

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INDEX TABLE			INSTRUCTIONS	
Q.No	Max.Marks	Marks Obtained		
1	10	04	1. Please write your Name, Email, UPSC Roll No. and Mobile number in the answer sheet	
2	10	04	2. There are 20 questions printed in English, all questions are compulsory	
3	10	04	3. The number of marks carried by a question or part is indicated against it.	
4	10	05	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.	
5	10	05	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.	
6	10	05		
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9	10	05	Any specific message from Educrat IAS Mentors/Evaluators with respect to your copy?	
10	10	06	Mentor's Remarks:	
11	15	07	
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19	15	03	Start Time:	End Time:
20	15	01	Mode of Examination:	Online <input type="checkbox"/> Offline <input type="checkbox"/>
Total Marks		101	TEST CODE:	Medium of Examination:



1. Basic structure doctrine may be derived from the abstract. But that scarcely means it doesn't exist within the Constitution. Discuss.
(Answer in 150 words, 10 marks)

Basic structure doctrine was evolved by Keshavananda Bharati (1973) vs State of Kerala case (1973). It was a judicial invention and the term 'basic structure' is not ~~meant~~ explicitly mentioned in constitution.

Good introduction.

However, the idea of a basic structure was always there in Indian constitution.

① Fundamental Rights - enshrined in Part III of the constitution in inalienable rights available to Indian citizens. Art-13 prescribes removal of laws inconsistent to FRs → This proves the basic nature of Fundamental rights.

Fair points.

② Separation of power (mentioned in DPSP, Article-50) is a basic structure mentioned by Judiciary. However, the



checks and balances provided in Indian constitution ensures separation of power between three organs of government.

③ Judicial Review (Art 32, Art 226)

↳ ensures judicial review on infringement of FRs

Article 13

writ jurisdiction

④ secular nature of Indian democracy

↳ mentioned in preamble

↳ mentioned in FRs (Art 25-28)

⑤ Equality before law & rule of law

↳ mentioned in Art-14 & other fundamental rights

⑥ constitutional supremacy

↳ core of the constitutional morality.

Hence, 'Basic structure' doctrine is not abstract and was always engrained in constitution. One of the best judicial inventions, it has saved india from political tyranny.

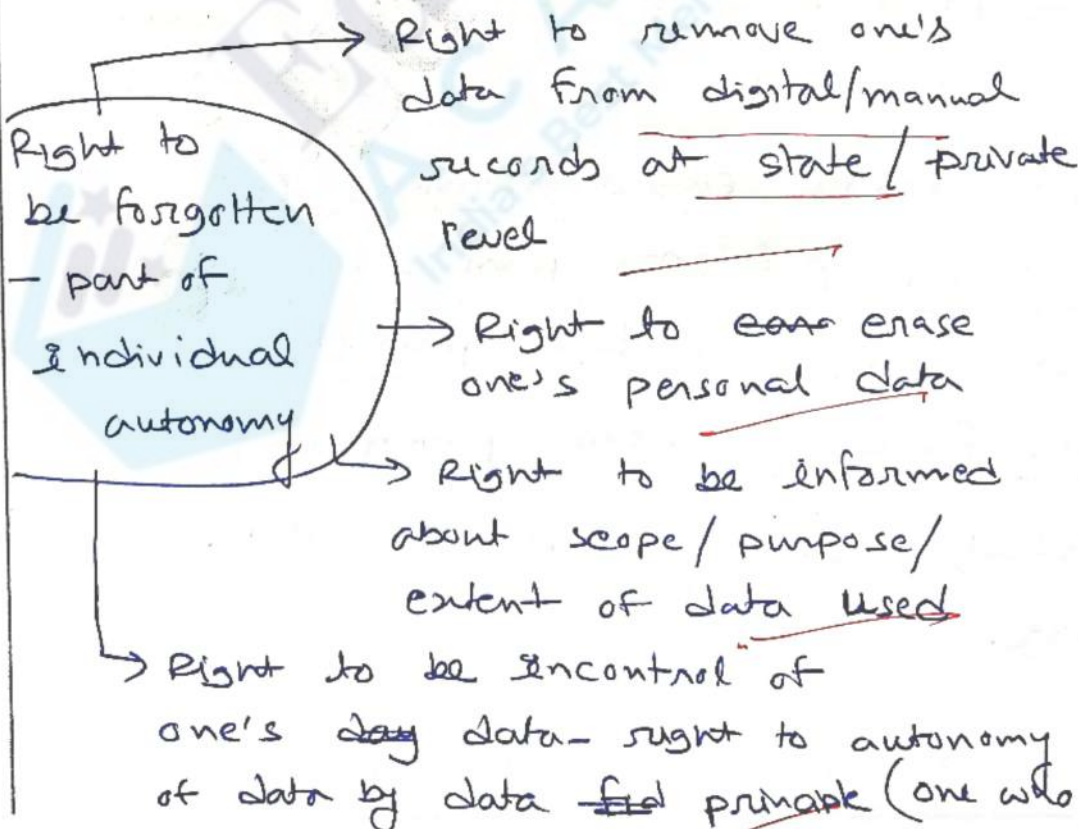


2. The 'Right to be Forgotten' is an integral part of individual autonomy and forms a basic pillar of the right to privacy. Comment. (Answer in 150 words, 10 marks)

Justice K. S. Puttaswamy (2017) ~~judgment~~ judgement evolved the idea of right to privacy as a fundamental right under Article 21.

Good introduction.

'Right to be forgotten' means individuals right to be removed from the data stored by any organisation/state. It entails right to privacy.



Relevant points.



creates data)

Also discuss about the need of right to be forgotten

Right to be forgotten as a part of right to privacy

→ right of data principle to withdraw request for approval to use of data

→ Right to know about data

storage policies

→ Right to non-personification of data

→ division between personal / non personal / private data

→ Right to consent about Purpose
time limit of data usage

The recently passed Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023 provides for rights and duties of data principle & data fiduciary, hence paving way of ethical, consensual, informed data usage.

3. Analyze the significance of the office of the speaker in improving the legislative quality of the Parliament. (Answer in 150 words, 10 marks)

The office of speaker is very important in India's legislative scenario. In the first session of Loksabha (after general election), one member from LS is chosen to be the speaker of the Lok Sabha.

Good introduction

Powers & significance of speaker

- ① He is ^{one of} the ~~most~~ powerful ~~chair~~ persons of Lok Sabha.
- ② He maintains order in the house.
- ③ He maintains quorum and adjourns session in absence of a quorum.
- ④ He puts the casting vote in case of a deadlock.
- ⑤ He decides on the ~~anti~~ disqualification of defector politicians under Anti-defection law.
- ⑥ His call is final about a ~~bill~~.

6 fair points.

is money bill.

⑦ He is the signing authority of a bill passed by Lok Sabha.

⑧ He is expected to be neutral in his actions.

⑨ Submits resignation to deputy speaker.

⑩ He can be present during his call for his removal from post of speaker & ~~can cast vote~~ due.

⑪ He can decide on the timeline of a non-confidence motion.

Member,
Sense of
the contemporary
issues
with the
Office of
Speaker

→ Non political nature
→ once a speaker, always a speaker policy
to improve → Resignation from party upon being chosen as speaker (UK model) to ensure protection of rights of opposition & neutrality.

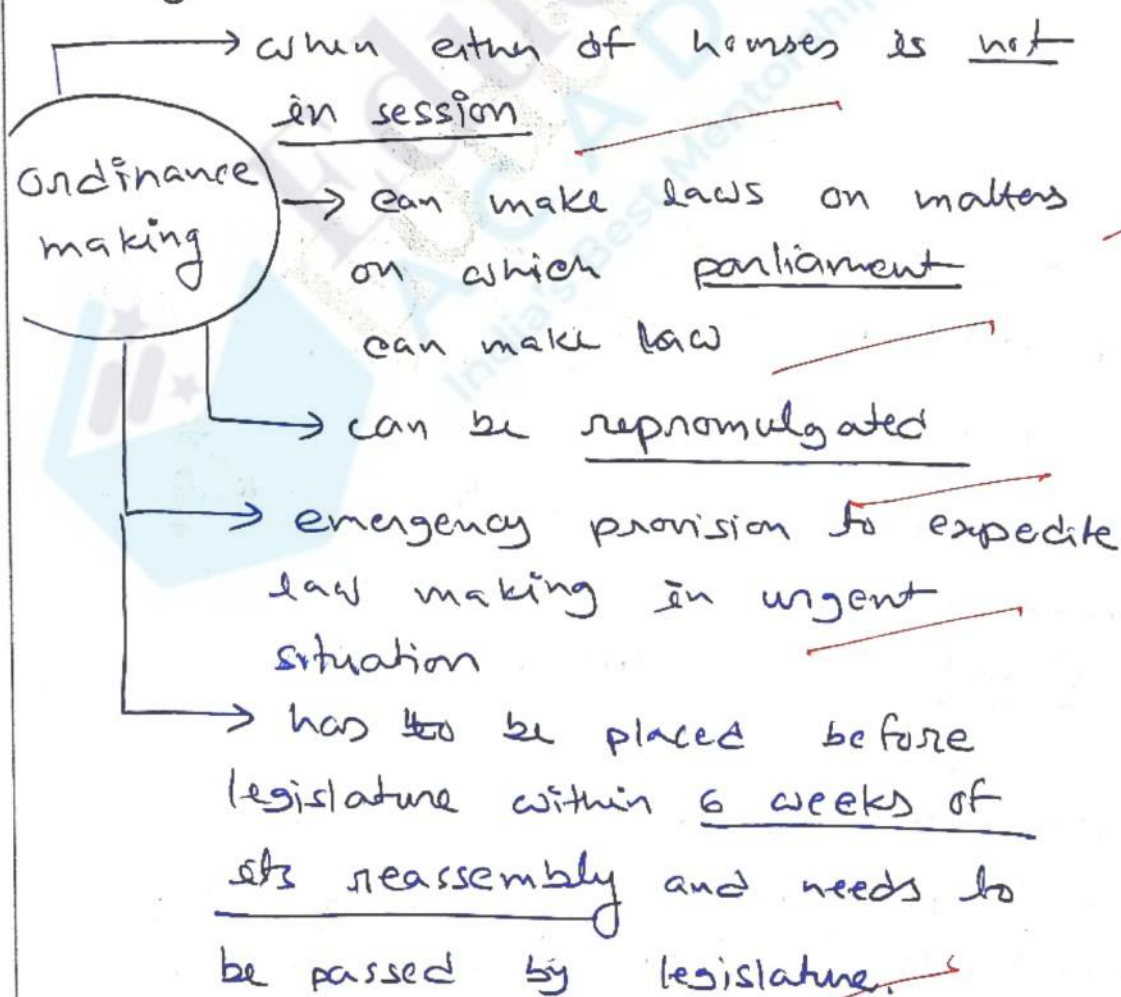
The office of speaker indeed ~~is~~ is of much significance and should be kept neutral for legitimacy of legislative process.



4. Ordinance making by the executive is violative of the Principle of Separation of Power. Do you agree that the constitutional and Judicial safeguards have been successful in preventing the misuse of such powers? (Answer in 150 words, 10 marks)

The constitution provides for separation of power (Article 50) between legislature, executive, judiciary. However, when ~~none~~ ^{not} of the houses are ^{either} in session, the executive is empowered to make laws by ordinances (president's ordinance making power = Art 123, governor's Art 213)

Good introductory.



fair points.

The provision of placing Ordinance before parliament legislature is a safeguard against breach of separation of power.

constitutional & Judicial safeguards

provision of ~~par~~ legislature passing ordinance within 6 weeks

Judicial pronouncements against ordinances

① R.C. Cooper case → Ordinance needs to be placed before legislature.

② D.C. Wadhwa case → Mechanical repromulgation of ordinance is unconstitutional. *(fraud on const. / H.W. 104)*

③ Repeated repromulgation & fraud - misuse of ordinance making power - is a fraud on constitution.

The constitutional & judicial safeguards are ~~an~~ only as strong as the ethical principles of the executive promulgating ordinances. Hence, Executive needs to use ordinance judiciously & not to ~~bypass legislature~~



5. What do you understand by the principle of subsidiarity? Explain how the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act strives to achieve this principle. (Answer in 150 words, 10 marks)

The principle of subsidiarity guides to bottoms up approach of working and decision making. It says that if a task/decision can be ~~done~~ ^{made} at a lower level, it should not be made at a higher level. Hence, ensuring democratic / task oriented decentralisation.

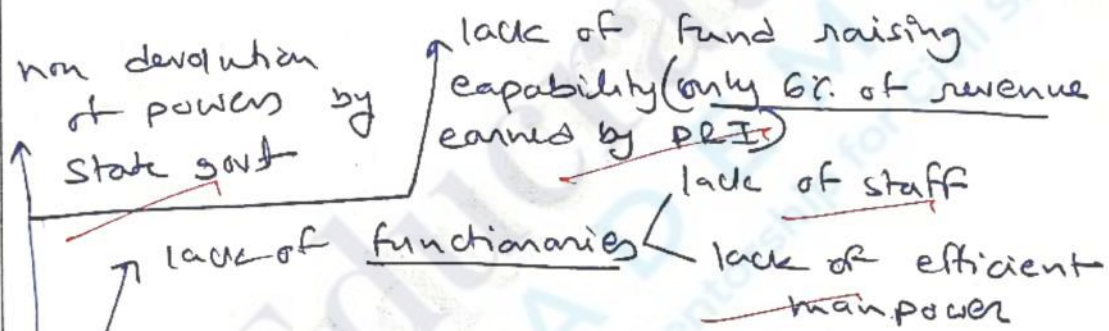
Good intro. with definition.

The 73rd amendment Act of 1992 gave constitutional status to Panchayat Raj Institutions as the third ~~last~~ tier of governance (Article 243 has provisions for it). It helps to achieve the principle of subsidiarity by the following way.

- ① Democratic decentralisation of decision making
- ② participative governance of local people
↳ local issue based solutions

Also mention some of the powers of Gram Sabha

- ③ representative governance → 33% to women, SC, ST reservation
- ④ power to gram sabhas → grass root level governance
- ⑤ Achieving gandhian idea of swaraj
- ⑥ ~~low~~ power to tax & raise own revenue
- ⑦ Efficient ~~power~~ utilisation of rural assets



issues in achieving principle of subsidiarity

lack in proper ^{representation} ~~awareness~~ (Sarpanch-pati) syndrome

low ~~non~~ awareness

- Solutions
- ① fund raising by self revenue
 - ② proper representation
 - ③ fund, functions & functionary to be strengthened

Thus, for the PRIs to achieve principle of subsidiarity in true sense, proper devolution of power & funds by the state government is needed.

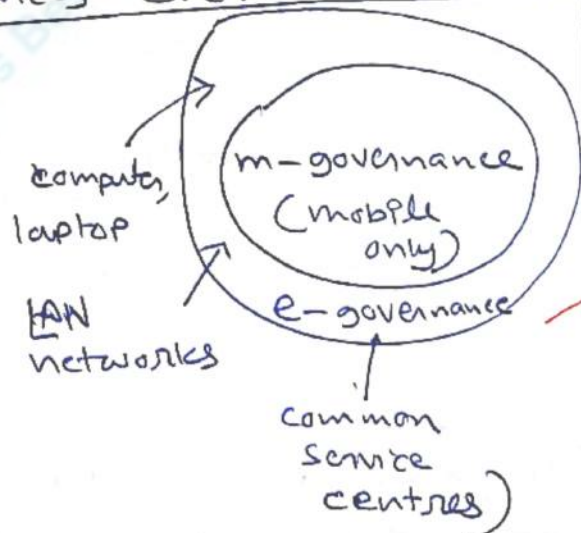
6. What is the difference between e-governance and m-governance? Analyze the benefits of m-governance over e-governance in the Indian context. (Answer in 150 words, 10 marks)

E-governance means sharing the benefits of ~~government~~ governance through internet based systems. This includes governance through mobile, computer, broadband, and all other internet mediums.

Good introduction.

M-governance is a subset of e-governance where governance benefit is shared through mobile. via apps, flash messages, voice recorded messages and extension services etc.

~~They~~ Due to huge ~~use~~ use of mobile phones (India second largest mobile phone market in the world)



Good definition.

fig- e-governance & m-gov.

m-governance is turning out to be a more

favourable model.

Benefits of e-governance over
e-governance

Good
Points

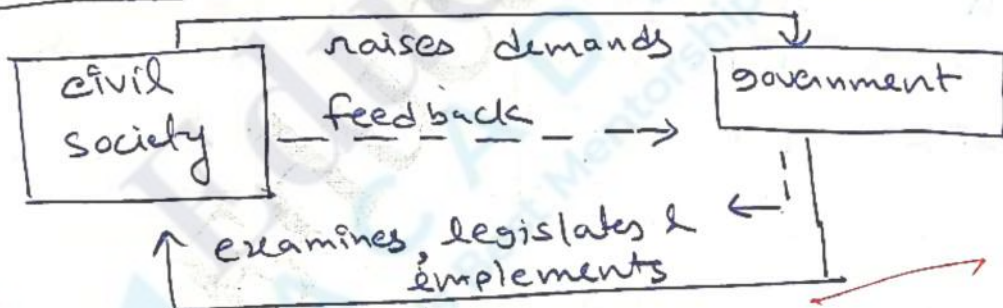
- ① Higher usage → almost every person
uses a personal mobile phone
↳ can be given personalised,
user based governance
(eg. ~~the~~ cowin portal's
mobile number based vaccine service)
- ② Higher Accessibility over computer
→ users had to go to common
service centres to access mobile
- ③ Better usability - user friendly mobile
interface eases use of beneficiary
- ④ Higher accessibility, Affordability,
reduced data charges
↳ by ease of use for
beneficiary
- ⑤ Disabled Friendly Applications - es.
RBI's Mani app
- ⑥ Portability of mobile → sense of nearness
with governance architecture - For these reasons
e-governance is becoming a favourable model



7. A healthy democracy rests on the twin pillars of a functioning civil society and a responsive government. Justify the statement in the context of India with suitable examples. (Answer in 150 words, 10 marks)

civil society organisations are part of the society apart from politicians, legislature, judiciary and bureaucracy i.e. all other apart from the three organs of the government. For a healthy, vibrant democracy, continuous feedback mechanism & implementation is needed.

Good introductory.



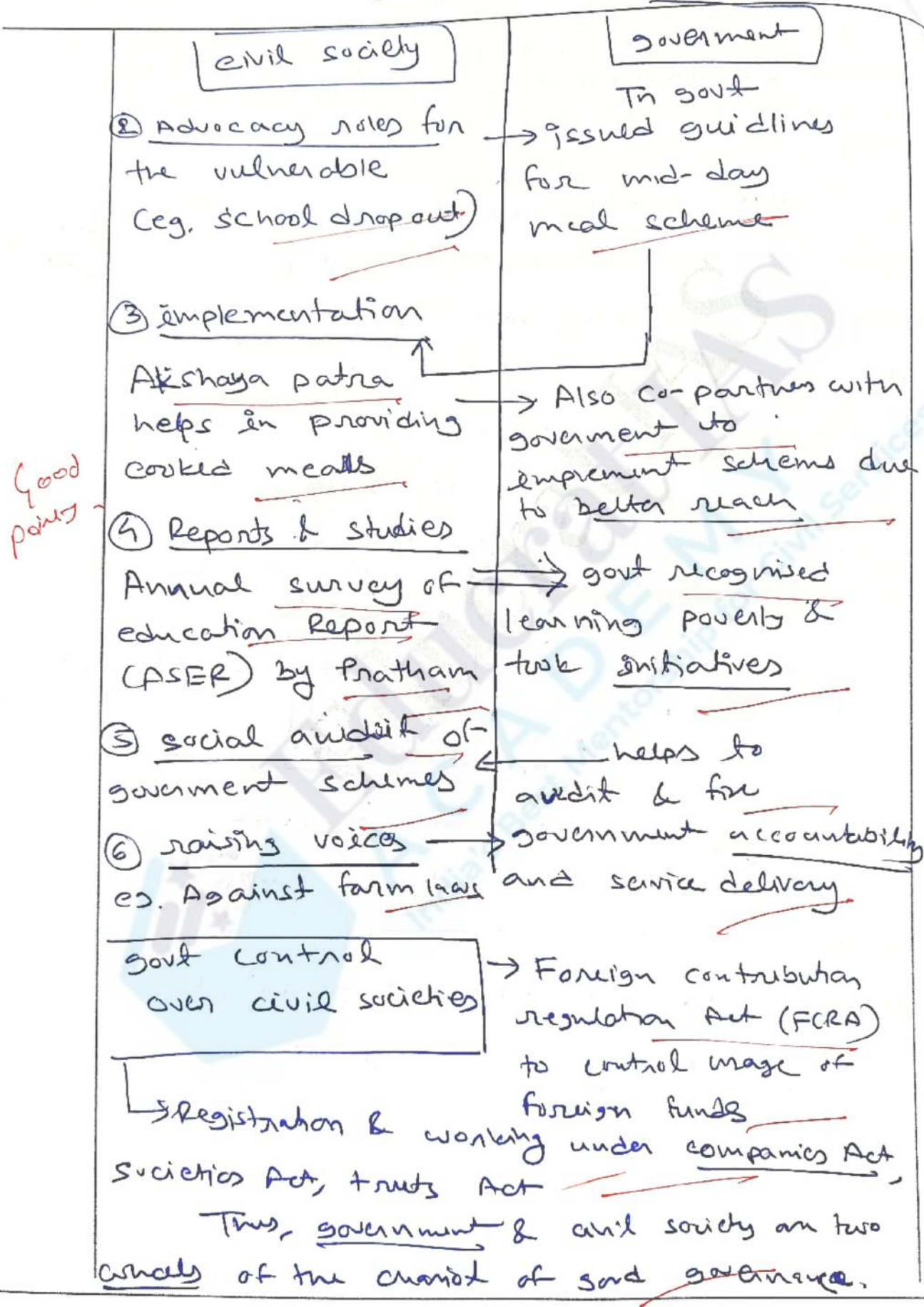
Good depiction.

fig - responsive government & ~~state~~ functioning civil society for democracy

Need of both (civil society & government)

① raises demands on behalf of the society → government examines the need & provides as a facilitator.

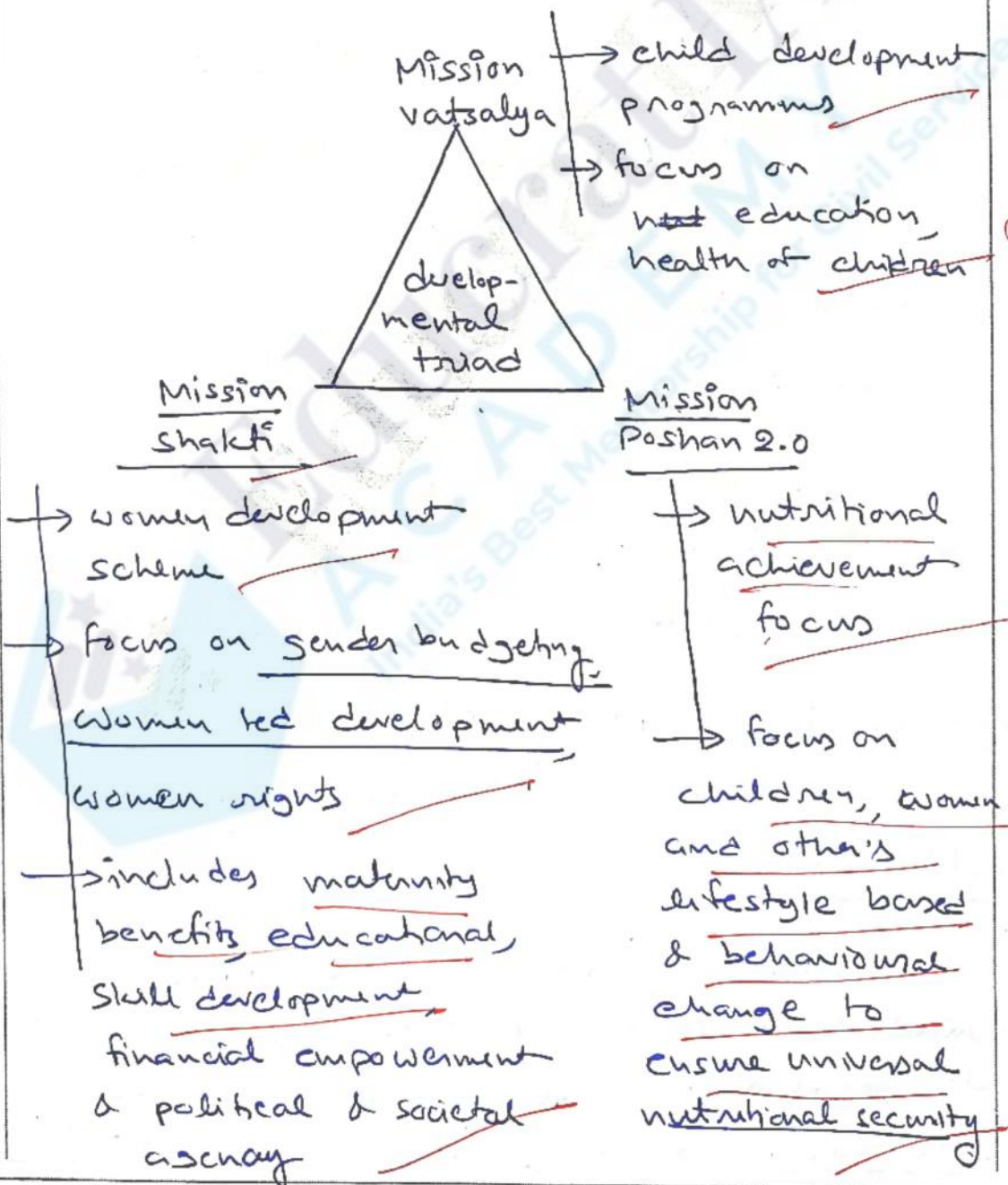
8. How far do
under a ne
woul?



Good points

8. How far do you think that the reclassification of the schemes under a new triad- Mission Vatsalya, Mission Shakti, and Poshan 2.0 would lead to a better implementation on the ground? (Answer in 150 words, 10 marks)

The ^{recent} budget has reclassified the existing women & child development schemes in the triad of →



ways to provide better implementation

- ① schemes divided under 3-triads
- ② better focusing & targeting of beneficiaries.
- ③ Reduced inclusion - exclusion errors
- ④ Better target based deliverables
- ⑤ Easy to track jobs and program
- ⑥ inter-departmental and inter-governmental (centre-state-local) co-ordination.
- ⑦ Better division of civil society & other partnership (based on focused beneficiary group)
- ⑧ over all complete circle to ensure - sabka saath, sabka vikash, sabka vishwas

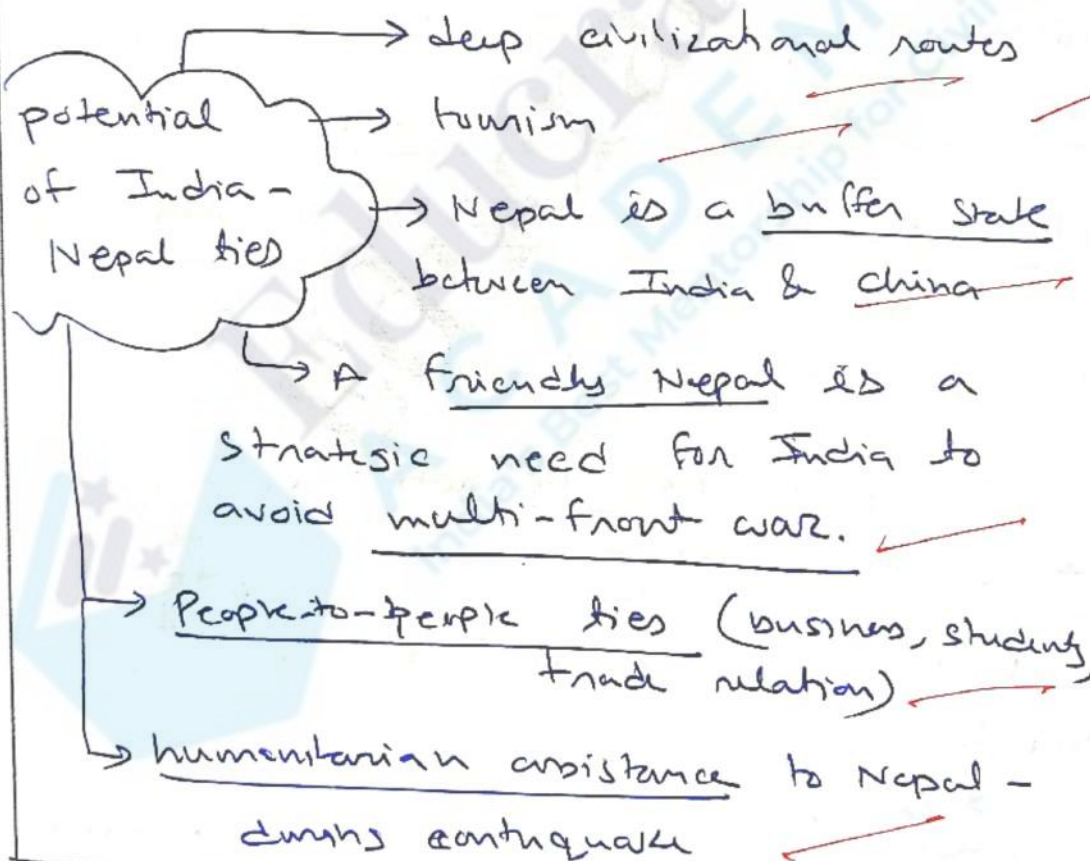
Thus, the renewed, reclassified triad would ensure better governance at grassroot level by ushering better targeting & policy making.



9. India - Nepal relationships holds the immense potential for both countries. In the light of the statement, highlight the prevailing issues between the two countries. (Answer in 150 words, 10 marks)

India & Nepal has been old allies and have deep rooted civilizational ties. However, currently, India is witnessing varied response from different political parties of Nepal which is a major cause of concern.

Relevant
introductions



Gorkha
Regiment

Prevailing issues

① Border dispute → res. Kalapani river boundary. The border between the

two countries is decided by treaty of Sugauli during British era. this demarcates west of Kali river as Indian territory. However, Nepal & India have diverse opinion on the origin of Kali river - Nepal claims some part of uttarakhand as its own.

② Chinese aggression → debt trap diplomacy

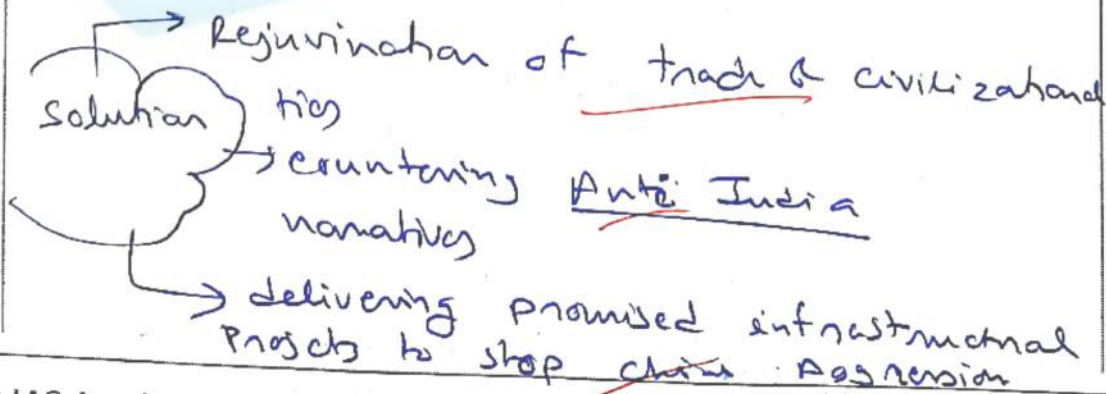
③ Tibetan issue with china

④ Presence of trade ties with china
↳ important for security - development hypernation

⑤ changing political narratives in Nepal
against India

China is killing

⑥ Decreasing trade ties between India - Nepal

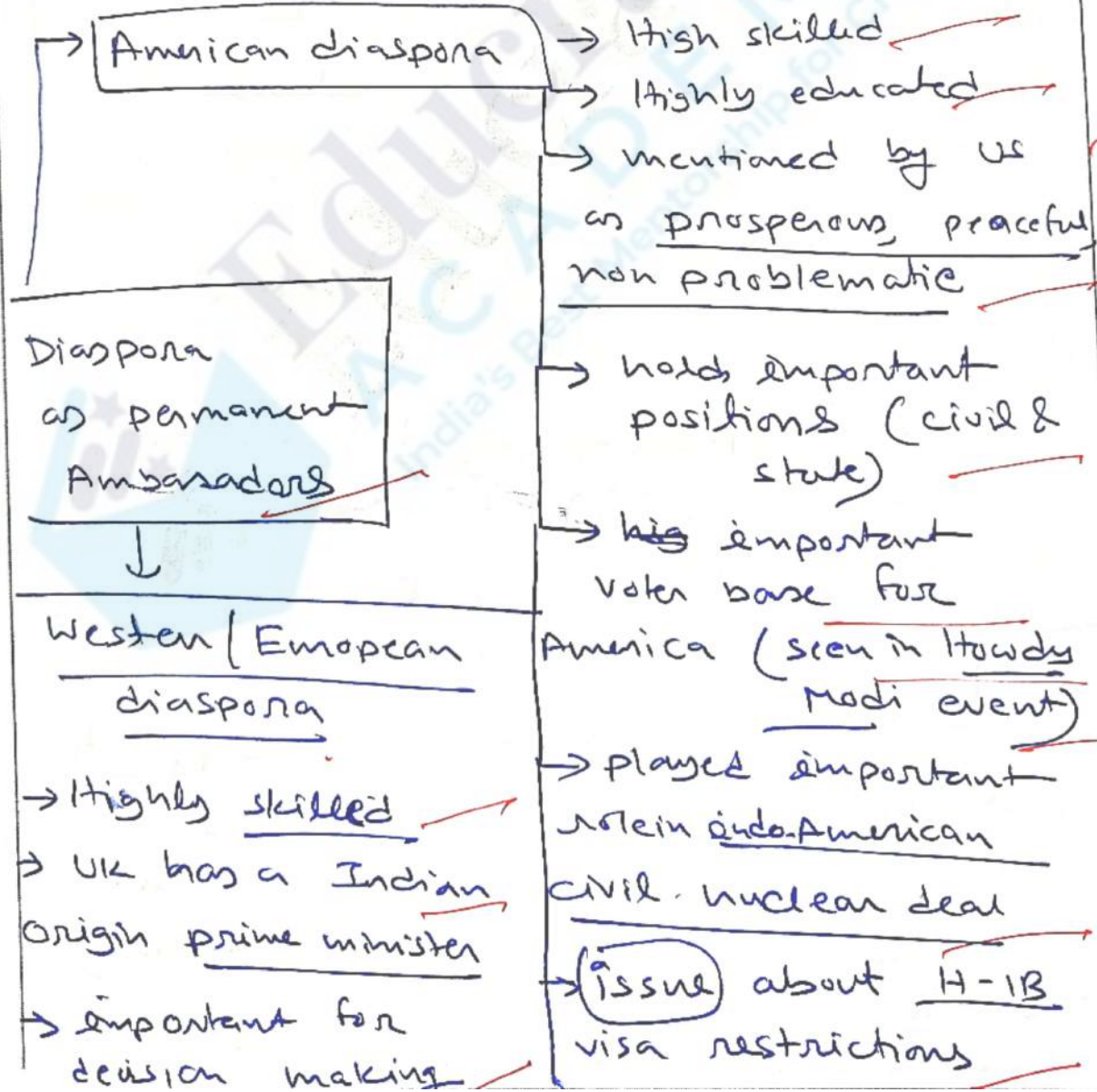




10. "Indian Diaspora is the true and permanent ambassadors of the country". In this context, bring out the significance of the Indian diaspora with suitable examples. (Answer in 150 words, 10 marks)

India is a country with highest number of remittances (111 bn \$ in 2022) and hence Indian diaspora is an important consideration aspect of Indian foreign policy. Hon'ble PM called them as the 'living bridges' of Indian civilization.

Good introductory.



Relevant Points



11. There seems to be an extent for

diaspora in West Asia → exploited in some areas
→ issues like Nika Nikabat

- mainly low skilled diaspora
- highest no of diaspora
- Major forces behind these economies

diaspora in South Asia & South East Asia, Australia, island countries → varied skillset & income level
→ significant policy decision maker, educationists, business persons

Overall, a well addressed answer

- efforts to improve diaspora interaction
- Pravasi Bharatiya DIVAS (15th January)
 - Address by higher officials during foreign visits
 - Address by PM, President & higher authorities
 - swift evacuation & supports in case of need & crisis
 - ↳ operation Kaveri (~~Sardar~~)
 - ↳ operation Ganga (~~Uttarakhand~~)

Thus, Indian diaspora is an important part of Indian policy & actions.



11. There seems to be no end to the debate surrounding the nature and extent of parliamentary privileges. In this regard, assess the need for codification of Parliamentary Privileges. Also, highlight the judicial pronouncements in the direction of bringing clarity to parliamentary privileges. (Answer in 250 words, 15 marks)

Parliamentary privileges are privileges and benefits provided to parliamentarians in order to allow them to efficiently deliver their duties and obligations towards the legislative process of the country.

→ Art 121, 211 → Judges cannot discuss or enquire into proceedings of legislature

Some parliamentary privileges

→ parliamentarians or legislators cannot be held personally liable for their conduct/speech inside parliament

→ prevention of arrest/detention from parliament's premises during parliament is in session

→ provision salary/emoluments & privileges to provide them enough

Good
introduction

stability to focus on legislative proceedings.

Need of codification of parliamentary privileges:

- ① misuse of privileges by parliamentarians
- ② Legislative loopholes and grey areas due to non-codified privileges
- ③ Blame ~~on~~ by opposition/other parties about misuse - Parliamentary transparency and accountability should not only be upheld but also should seen to be upheld.
- ④ Increasing criminalisation of politics - use of money & muscle power in politics - Need of codification to stop this.
- ⑤ Accountability and collective



responsibility of parliament council
of ministers to parliament Article 75(3)

→ 'triple chain of accountability',
evolved in 'Anoop barnawal
case

Judicial
pronouncements

→ free and fair elections &
political accountability
in ADR vs UOI case

→ Lily Thomas case → prevent
criminalisation of politics

→ PUCJ case → Accountability of
legislators

Thus, a codified set of
parliamentary privileges would pave
way for more transparent &
Accountable legislators which is
needed for a vibrant democracy.

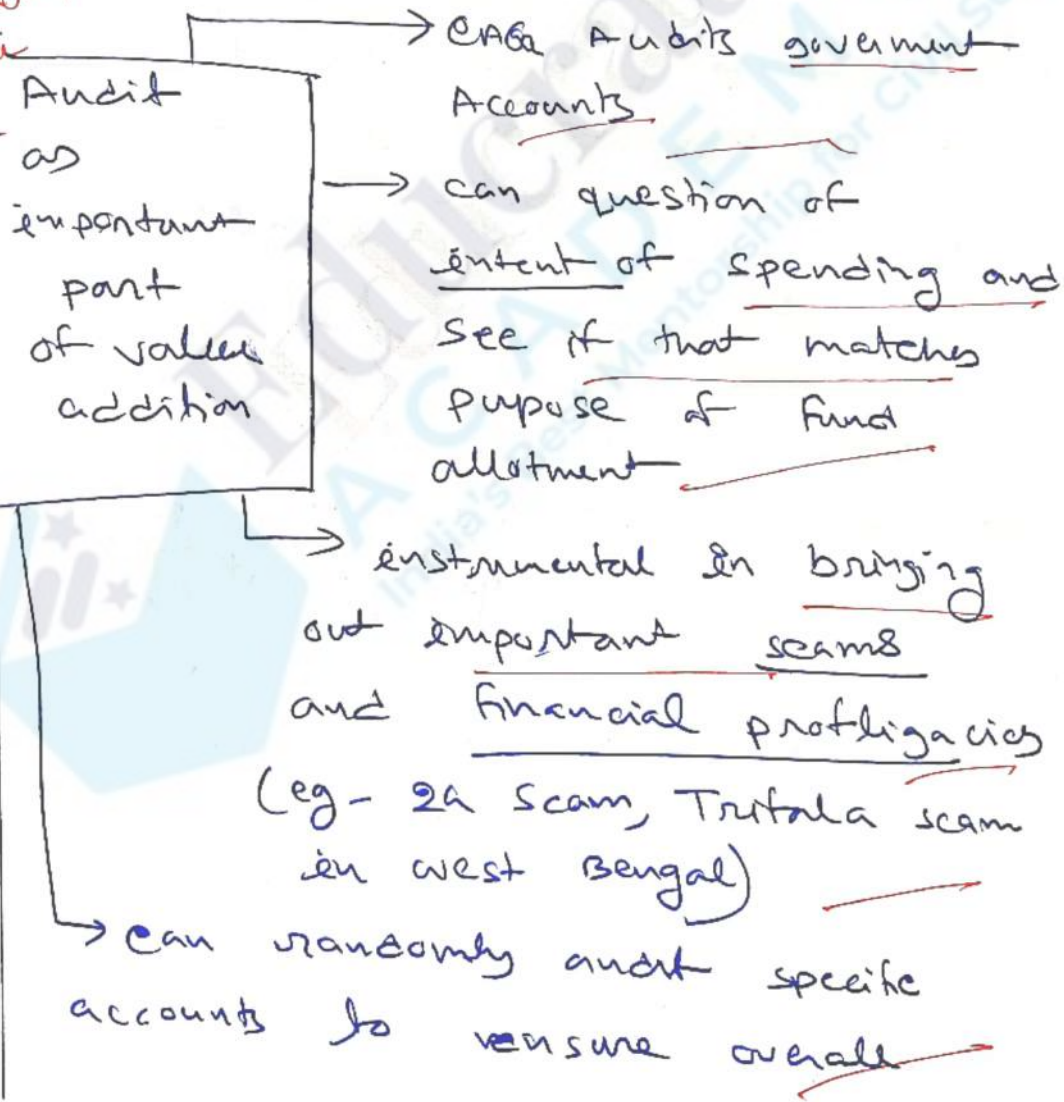
Keshav
Singh case
Searchlight
case.
Raja Ram
Puri case
The Hindu
case.

12. "Today audit is considered an important part of value addition". Discuss this statement in light of importance of the CAG. (Answer in 250 words, 15 marks)

Article 148

Comptroller & Auditor general (CAG) is a constituted office responsible for audit of offices under government departments and those organisations who are funded majority by government.

- CAG the guardian of public purse



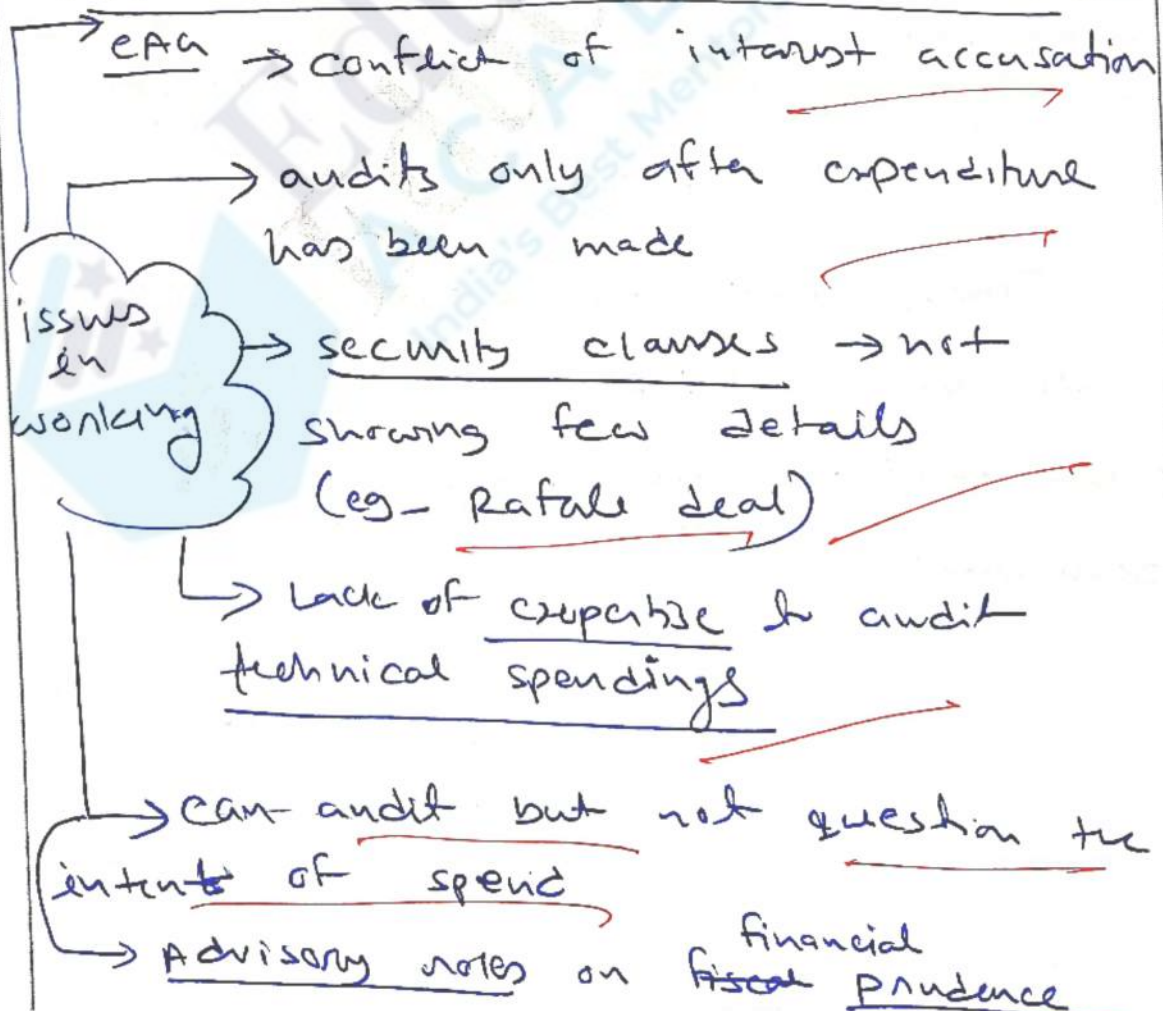


^{financial}
~~Fiscal~~ prudence in spending.

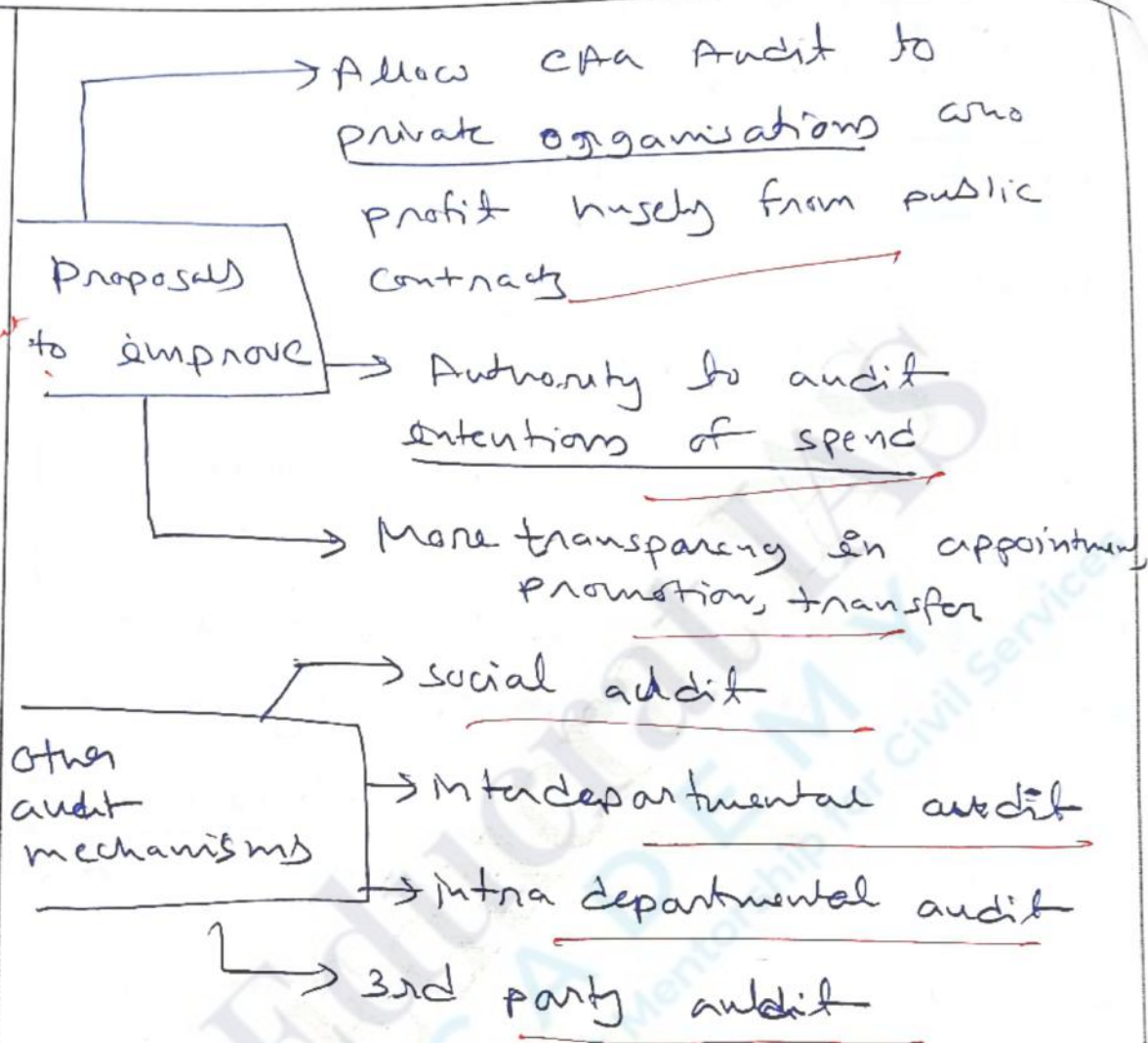
How it adds value:

- ① Improves accountability & legitimacy to government offices
- ② Ensures public faith in working of government organisations
- ③ Makes sure government authorities are alert & prudent in spending

Appointment of finance secretary as



Relevant
Points



Thus, Audit by CAA & other audits are an important part of value addition in working of government.

13. Without any checks and balances, resting unbridled powers with the executive to regulate the digital content raises a fundamental, legal and ethical question; making it contra-constitutional. Elucidate. (Answer in 250 words, 15 marks)

The constitution is built on the doctrine of checks and balances and separation of power. Any unbridled ~~any~~ power on any one organ of the government without scope of censure or oversight by the other two organs is definitely a question of fundamental, legal, ethical lines.

Relevant
in introduction

Power of executive to regulate digital content :-

- ① to regulate non-personal digital content
- power to regulate data fiduciaries (eg. facebook, twitter & other data social media intermediaries)
 - Executive framed guidelines to control digital intermediaries. (eg. social

media intermediaries guidelines, 2021

→ power to direct social media intermediaries to take down content flagged by executive

→ proposal to set up fact checking agency to remove misinformation/ fake news

→ power for internet shutdown to control law & order situation → thus cutting down access to information of public (eg. 500+ days in J&K & since May, 2023 in Manipur)

Power to regulate personal digital data - Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023

① Proposed rights & duties of data principle & data fiduciary

② Based on the informed consent of data principles

③ Relaxed data localisation norms



④ consent of provided with data principle

- time use
- purpose use
- extent of use

⑤ consent for vulnerable groups

- parental consent for minor
- nominee consent

Good depiction.

→ No, because of the following factors

Is this power unbridled?

Yes

→ data principles not always well aware to make educated choice.

- scope of judicial review exists

- scope of withdrawal of consent

- Executive is chosen from legislators chosen by people (hence they have to be trusted for data governance)

- 'parens patriae' role of government to control digital data generated by digitally unaware customers citizens.

However, the power vested on executive is not unbridled and can be subjected to social & judicial review

14. Highlight the need for the creation of an independent umbrella authority for central investigation agencies. Do you think it will solve the concerns associated with the status of 'Caged Parrot' of CBI? (Answer in 250 words, 15 marks)

Called caged by Justice Lodha

The central ^{Bureau} Investigation (CBI) is an important & prime investigating body of government of India. However, it faces several criticisms: ~~etc~~

CBI as caged parrot :

Issues with CBI

① Autonomy issues - in 2013, Supreme Court termed CBI as caged parrot speaking its master's voice

↳ for being used by central govt to threaten opposition & state govt with other political parity

② Appointment issue → 'parking lot' for favourite bureaucrats

↳ internal conflict about pushing transfer

③ Inordinate delay in important cases - Jain hawala case of 1990s.



④

can be bypassed
by high court/
SC order

Need state's
consent to
investigate

consent of
central govt to
investigate officers
of Add. secy
rank and above

Good points.

(eg.

general
consent
(eg. west
Bengal
withdrew
this)

special
consent
(case to
case)

Jurisdiction issues

consent of
speaker to
investigate MPs

consent of governor
to investigate
state ministers

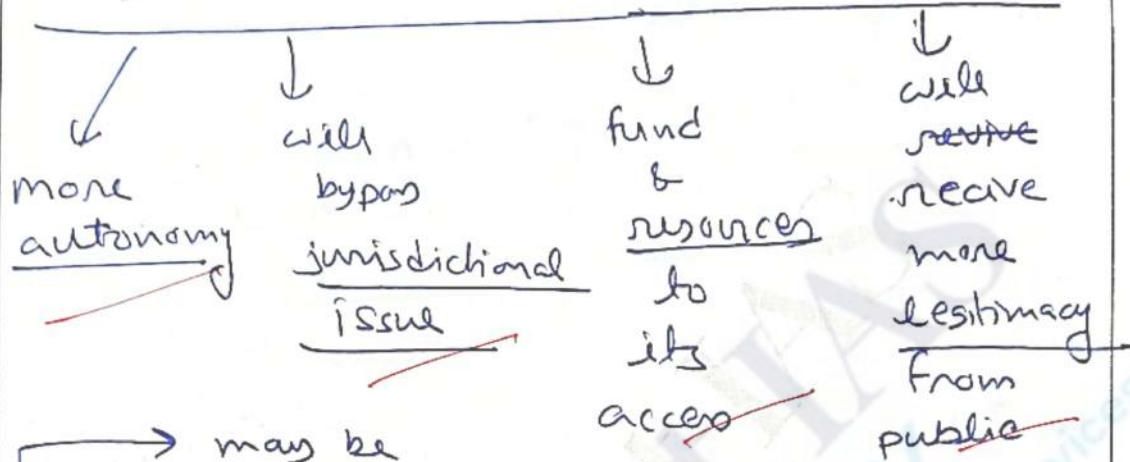
consent
of state legislature
speaker to investigate MLAs

⑤ Lack of infrastructure

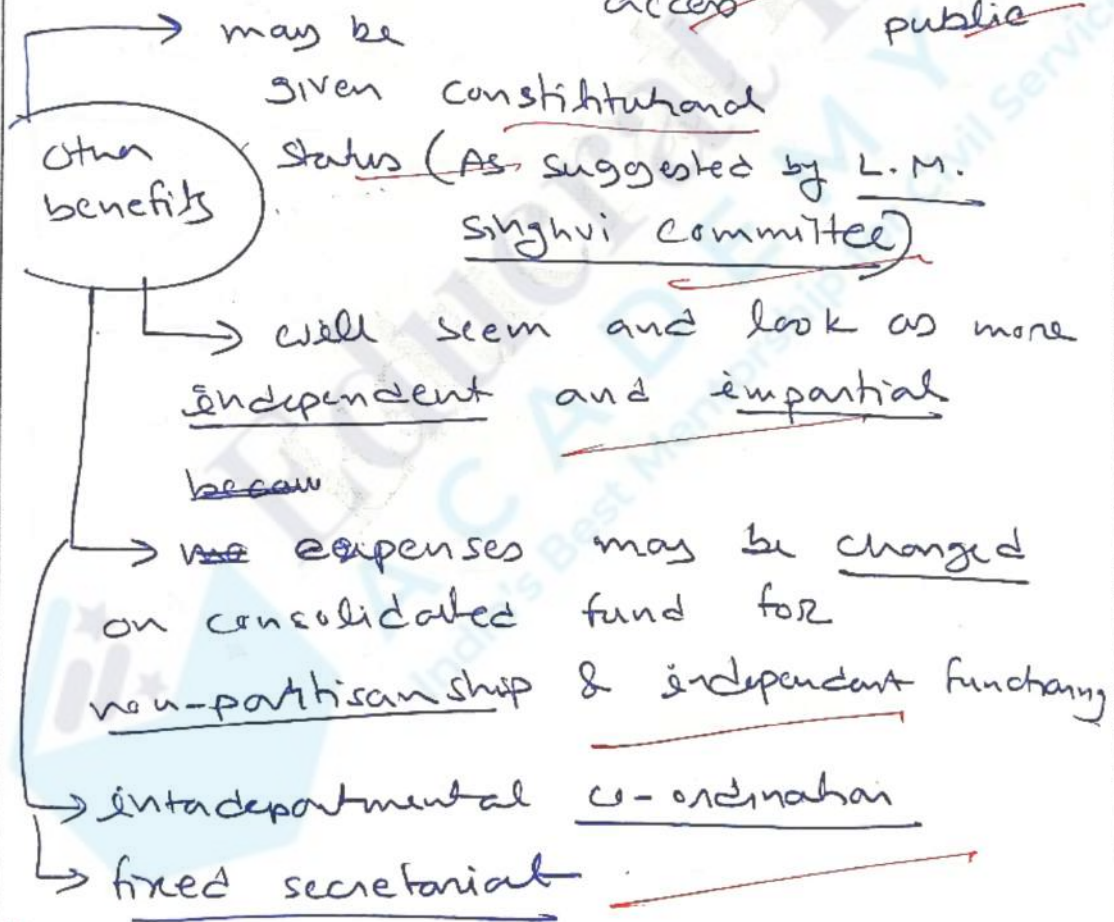
- ↳ old investigative method
- ↳ digital infra lacking
- ↳ funds for resource mobilisation

⑥ Not a statutory body constitutional
body. Powers from Delhi
Special Police Establishment Act.

How independent umbrella investigative body will solve this



Fair points



Relevant conclusion

A umbrella investigative body with more powers is a good idea as it will ensure that independent investigation is not only done but also seen to be done!

15. Timely ventilation and redress of grievances ensure public trust in the government. In light of this statement, present an account of the various steps taken by the government of India for effective public grievance redressal. (Answer in 250 words, 15 marks)

The supreme court in various occasions has mentioned that grievance redressal is essential and of prime importance to maintain good governance and public trust in governance.

Good introduction,

Steps taken by government for effective grievance redressal

① In built grievance redressal mechanism in various ~~best~~ laws

1.1 Right to information act

↳ clearly mentions timeline of information and appellate body

1.2 Citizen charter

↳ mentions rights of public & services to be delivered in time bound manner.

↳ mentions appellate authority

U
Social

② Appellate bodies for various organisations and regulator
es - ombudsmen for banking regulator, appellate bodies for various judicial-quasi-judicial bodies

③ Time bound service delivery

④ open discussion with executive & government authorities

es. chief minister complaint cells

⑤ grievance address systems at local/district/state level for various services

⑥ Use of social media for grievance redressal

↳ Responsive governance

es. Rail Madad App, Indian

Indian Railways active response on twitter app

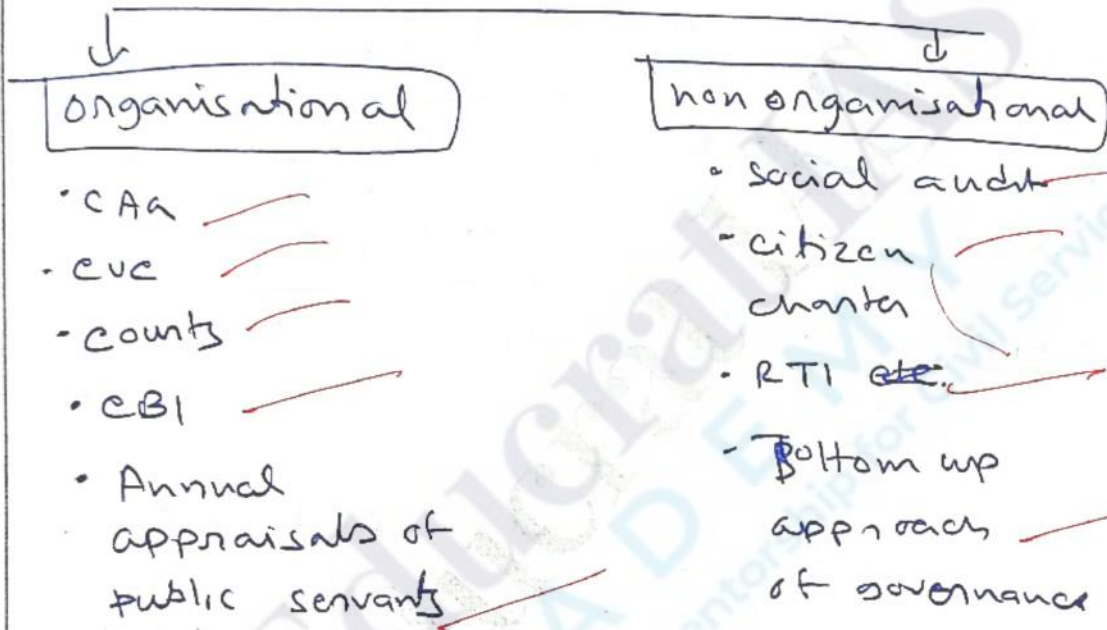
→ public authorities present on

Fair points



social media for easy accessibility & grievance redressal.

⑦ strengthening Accountability mechanism



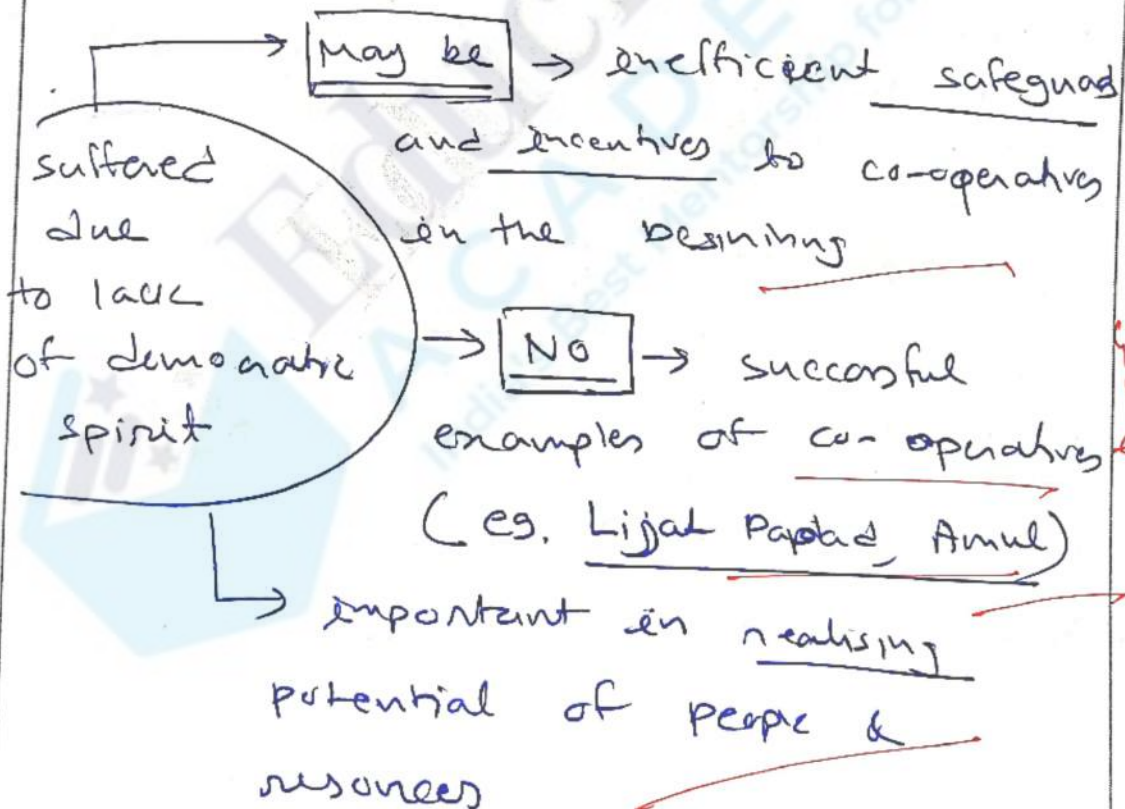
Relevant points.

By these ways government is trying to maintain 'minimum government, maximum governance' by ensuring public trust and efficient grievance redressal.



16. Do you think that the cooperative sector has suffered due to a lack of democratic spirit & skewed geographical penetration? Argue your case with suitable examples. (Answer in 250 words, 15 marks)

co-operative sector has been an important part of Indian democratic set up and financial-social strengthening. Govt has set up 'ministries of co-operation' to embolden co-operative movement.



Good use of examples



Skewed
geographical
presence

→ may be → concentrated
in few progressive
areas (not much
presence in UP, Bihar,
MP region)

→ No → improved geographical
presence over the time.

Other
issues → inter organisational &
inter governmental co-ordination
issue (multistate co-operatives
managed by multiple bodies)

→ not able to leverage economics
of scale & full potential

→ lacks forward backward linkage

→ lack of govt policy support
earlier

→ Lack of technological support



Relevant
Conclusion

Though for a long time
Co-op sector has suffered
due to various reasons, the
recent push to co-operative
movement by ministry of cooperation
& streamlining oversight mechanism
ensuring unity of command
will help address these issues.

17. Panchayats
was enacted
How



17. Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996 (PESA) was enacted to deepen grass-root-level democracy in tribal areas. How far has the Act been successful in achieving the same? Critically evaluate. (Answer in 250 words, 15 marks)

Bhunia
committee

PESA Act was ~~not~~ envisioned to deepen grass root level democracy.

success

- ① gram ~~sabha~~ has power to control resources e.g., forest, mining, water resources
- ② effective control of own life and sovereignty by tribal people
- ③ Access to forest

failures

- ① Lack of representation
- ② low level of awareness in tribal people
- ③ High illiteracy- and cultural cohesion → capture of power by few powerful people
- ④ political entanglement

2 minor
forest produce

④ forest rights

⑤ representative
governance

(women - 33%
representation)

⑥ Ability to
generate own
revenues from
resources - taxing
power

⑦ Ability to
~~access~~ have
democratic
decentralisation

⑧ Lack of
fund, function &
functionaries

⑨ Lack of
effective
devolution of
functions in
many states.

⑩ Lack of
effective power
to access
rights.

⑪ cultural
construct;
superstition, social
immobility -
lack of effective
decentralisation

UP



However, - proper implementation
of PESA act would help
improve the situation.

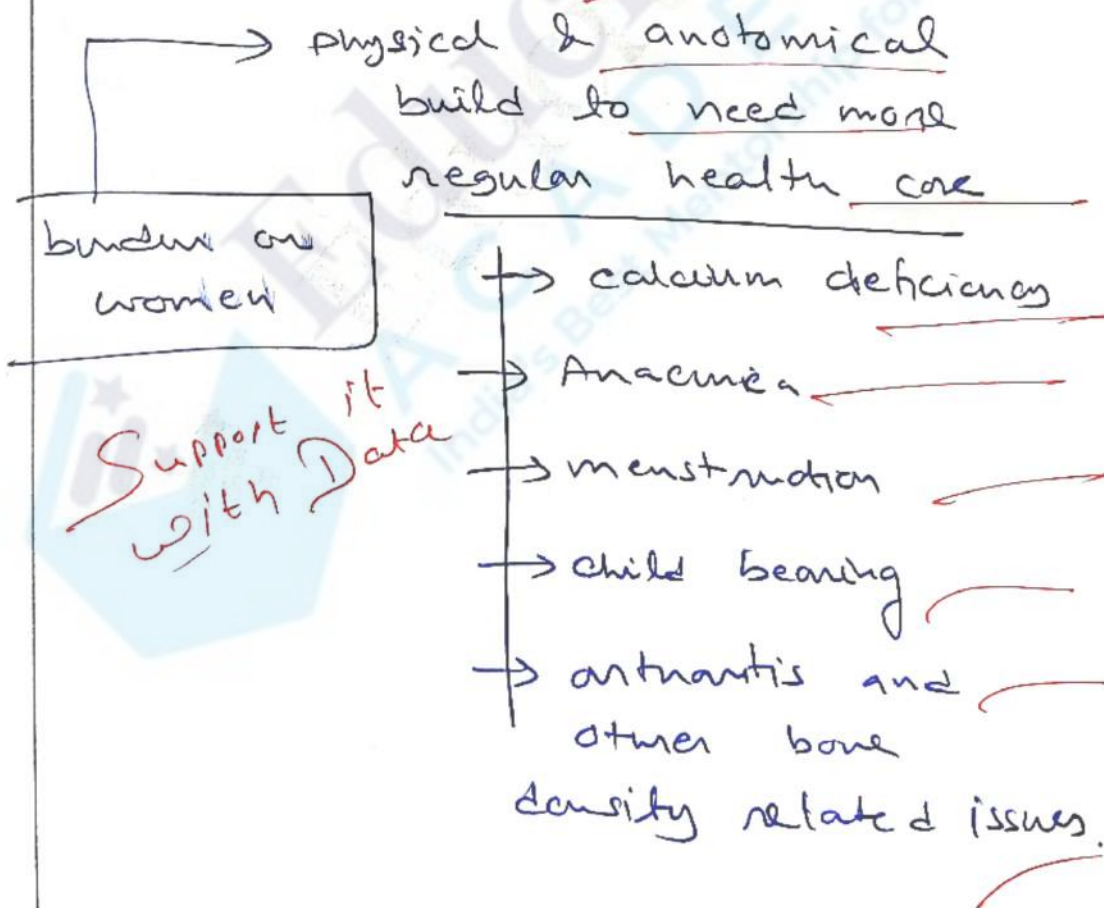


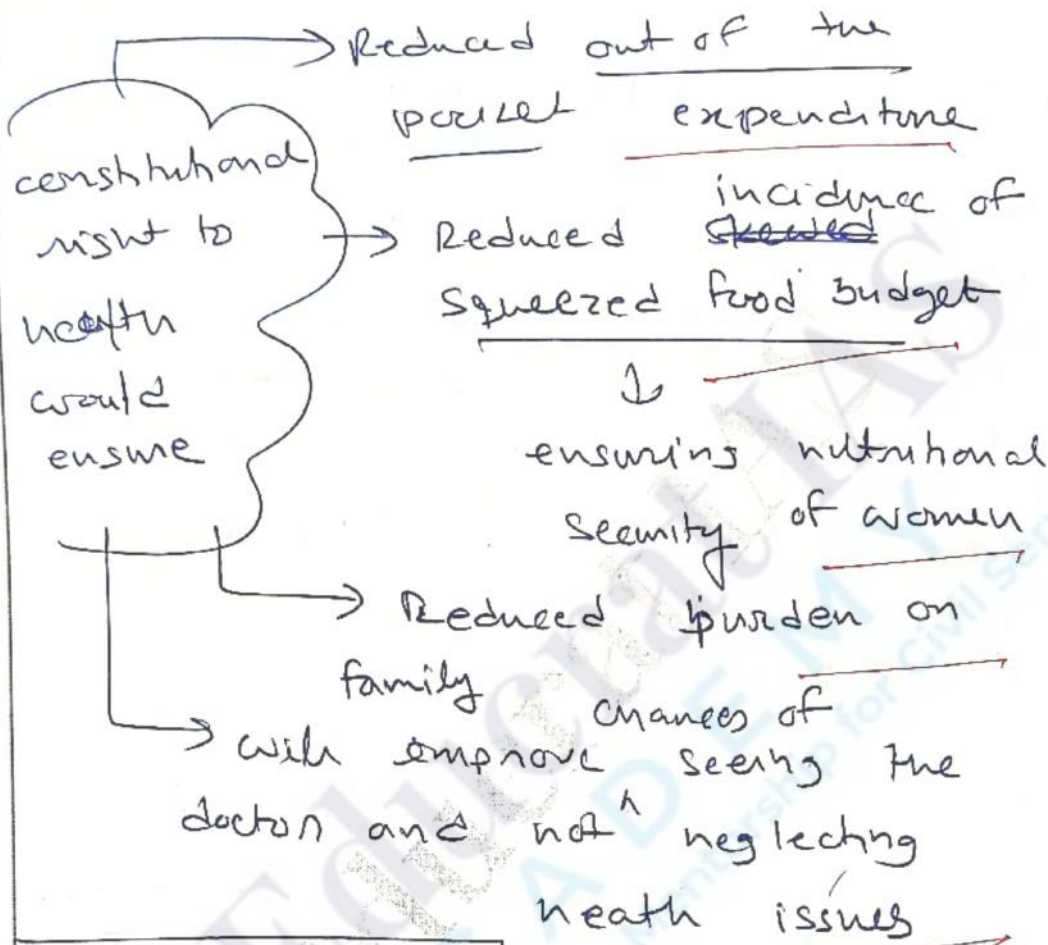
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18. Women bear a disproportionate burden of the gaps in our health-care system. Do you think a constitutional right to health will help in bridging this gap? Also, suggest suitable alternatives. (Answer in 250 words, 15 marks)

The issue in our health system is also disproportionately heavy on women, apart from being disproportionate in poor/unorganised sector.





Discuss how right to health will solve the problem

Govt efforts

right to health

→ PM - Ayushman Bharat Yojana

↳ health coverage to poor people



Conclusion is missing

19. "BIMSTEC lies at the crossroads between SAARC & ASEAN, drawing its energy from the natural convergence of the countries around the Bay of Bengal". Discuss. (Answer in 250 words, 15 marks)

Introduction is missing.

Importance of BIMSTEC:

- ① Important for India's regional influence on Indo-Pacific
- ② will help India come out as a voice of global south
- ③ would ensure India voices regional concerns (As mentioned by Papua New Guinea president in FIPIC conference)
- ④ would help India emerge as a major global power by leveraging support of the BIMSTEC Group.

⑤ without Pakistan and China's
presence, BIMSTEC is
important for India's
Counter terrorism & counter
Aggression endeavours

You should write
how BIMSTEC
addresses the
deficiencies
of ASEAN and
SAARC

⑥ Convergence of SAARC &
ASEAN

↳ improved national
security

↳ improved access in
Indo-pacific

→ Better transport &
trade ties



20. The recent Russia-Ukraine war has deepened the Sino-Russian engagement. Analyze its geopolitical implications for India. (Answer in 250 words, 15 marks)

Russia-ukraine war

↳ deepened sino - Russian engagement

