

UPSC

MAIN STORMING

JUNE - 2016



SHANKAR IAS ACADEMY

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MAIN STORMING

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Main storming - GS - I

A 'TOLERANT' STATE

EPW

THREE years after the rationalist thinker Narendra Dabholkar was gunned down in Pune on August 20, 2013, the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has made its first arrest in the case—Dr Virendrasinh Tawade, a 48-year-old ENT specialist. Tawade is believed to be a member of the Sanatan Sanstha and the Hindu Janajagruti Samiti, both self-professed Hindutva organisations.

The case was initially investigated by the Maharashtra Police, but the Bombay High Court took notice of a public interest petition filed by the former journalist Ketan Tirodkar that there was no progress in the case several months after the killing and ordered the CBI to take over the investigation. The CBI filed an FIR on May 9, 2014.

Black Magic Act

- Dabholkar had campaigned for several decades against black magic and similar superstitious practices, and debunked several so-called godmen in the process.
- The crusade led by his Maharashtra Andhashraddha Nirmoolan Samiti— MANS (committee for eradication of superstitious practices) brought him many enemies, among them the Sanatan Sanstha and the Hindu Janajagruti Samiti.
- The Maharashtra Prevention and Eradication of Human Sacrifice and other Inhuman, Evil and Aghori Practices and Black Magic Act, 2013, the

country's first comprehensive law against black magic and other superstitious practices, was enacted on December 13, 2013, four months after Dabholkar was killed.

Pro – Hindutva forces

- The MANS had consistently complained about the intimidation and harassment against it as well as the rumours and “propaganda” carried out by pro-Hindutva forces in their attempts to influence devout Hindus into believing that they were being persecuted and discriminated against.
- Dabholkar and the members of his organisation were termed “Naxalites” receiving foreign funds from Christians and of wanting to destroy Hinduism.
- They were also accused of financial fraud and misuse of foreign funds.

Powerful politicians

- The ruling political establishment, the police and later, the investigation agencies did not take these complaints seriously is the most important insight that can be derived from this episode.
- There have been, and continue to be, demands to ban the Sanstha. These demands are being made by the same politicians who failed to initiate legal and punitive action against it when complaints were made.
- Existing provisions of the law would have been sufficient to take cognisance of the complaints but this was not done.

- The Sanstha was allowed to carry on its activities even as the media reported on its propaganda and how influential individuals, including powerful politicians, were endorsing its work.
- The reasons why this happened are hardly a mystery. Rarely does a politician or a policeman dare to antagonise an organisation with such a wide reach and influence among professionals like doctors, lawyers, teachers and even journalists.
- Dabholkar and many other anti-superstition activists in “progressive” Maharashtra consistently faced harassment with hardly any relief from the state machinery.

Tolerate dissenting views

- Dabholkar, Govind Pansare and M M Kalburgi's murders as well as the harassment meted out to others like them.
- The silence of large sections of the population and the continuing support of political interests to their tormentors.
- The lack of response is a clear indication that citizens feel they are not safe if they speak out against entrenched religious vested interests and that the state will not take their complaints seriously.
- A society that cannot tolerate dissenting views or keeps quiet in the face of a violent reaction to such views, is staring at a cultural and intellectual abyss.

Main storming - GS - I

CONTRACT TEACHERS IN INDIA EPW

The liberalisation of India's economy in the early 1990s, the government began increasingly employing contract workers to perform a range of state functions from cleaning sewers to collecting taxes. The education sector was no different. Since the late 1980s, states in India, including Haryana,

Himachal Pradesh, Punjab and Rajasthan decided to appoint contract teachers.

Contract teachers employed for a fixed period of time or whose contracts can be terminated relatively easily have been an important feature of the school system in India since the 1990s. The aim of rapidly extending education to an increasing number of children in a fiscally affordable manner, states across the country began to hire contract teachers. These teachers were hired for a fixed term, typically just under a year, and were paid a small fraction of what regular teachers were paid. While expected to perform the same job as regular teachers, the bar on their educational qualifications was lower than for regular teachers.

Salient feature in education

- Over the next 15–20 years, contract teachers became an increasingly salient feature of the education system in India, with most states having hired them and researchers examining their ability to improve student performance.
- Depending on the state, time period, and source of funding, contract teachers were referred to by multiple names, such as para-teachers, ad hoc teachers, temporary teachers, guest teachers, as well as a number of names designated by central and state government programmes.
- The SarvaShikshaAbhiyan (SSA) in 2001 and increasing enrolments, the Government of India encouraged states to hire contract teachers using SSA funds.
- New teachers were called SSA teachers presumably indicating that they were project employees who may or may not be absorbed into the regular teaching cadre once the mission ends.
- Different names and terms notwithstanding, these teachers are all expected to do work similar to other teachers, that is, regular

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teachers, but are retained on contracts that are for limited duration, or can be easily terminated (at least in theory), and generally receive far less pay and other benefits.

No-transfer policy

- Contract teachers in general have little scope for career progression in terms of promotion within the contract teacher cadre. Their only scope for career mobility lies in becoming a part of the cadre of regular teachers.
- Across all states contract teachers cannot be transferred, at least in policy. In effect, they belong to a school cadre, although they cannot typically choose their school.
- In Rajasthan (till 2014), with close to 50% of teachers on contract, and a no-transfer policy for contract teachers, the study team was informed that transfers could be done if there was sufficient pressure from the “right” quarters.
- Regular teachers are eligible for leave in all states, although their nature and duration varies.
- The main categories of leave for regular teachers in all states are: casual, earned, paid, half-pay, maternity, paternity and medical.
- Apart from these, in some states, regular teachers are also entitled to privileged leave, extraordinary leave and unpaid leave as well as paid leave to get a higher degree

New type of corruption

- An important aspect of recruiting contract teachers instead of regular teachers was the expectation that locally appointed teachers could be held accountable by the local government and local community more easily, relative to a distant bureaucrat sitting in the state capital or district headquarter.

- However, over the years there have been instances in many states where local elites doled out contract teacher jobs to individuals defeating the goals of accountability from the start.
- In addition to routine reports of corruption related to appointing teachers in all the study states, those with contract teachers now had a new type of corruption: that related to regularising contract teachers.

NCTE guidelines

- The late 1990s and early 2000s, when there was an increasing tendency in states to hire contract teachers on one–two year contracts, the trend appears to be reversing in a number of states.
- Although many states continue to hire contract teachers, there is an increasing propensity to regularise them, either based upon years of service or/and additional qualifications acquired.
- In Madhya Pradesh, all new teachers are hired initially on contract for a period of three years, after which they are due for regularisation. Similarly, in Odisha, contract teachers are regularised after completing six years of service. In Uttar Pradesh the government has decided to regularise contract teachers and refrain from hiring more contract teachers.
- The trend towards regularisation and increasing parity between regular and contract teachers has been driven by technical, political, and legislative pressures.
- The recognition after RTE 2009 and the NCTE guidelines on teachers that all teachers need to be qualified as per NCTE guidelines has strengthened the argument in favour of parity between teachers with similar qualifications playing similar roles.
- In Madhya Pradesh, an important contribution towards regularisation of teachers was the

Dube Committee report that recommended the government rebuild the teaching cadre. Most of its recommendations were accepted and notified as the adhyapak samvarg cadre rules 2008.

- In several states, prominently, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh, pressure from teacher unions on the government to treat all teachers equally has contributed towards regularisation.

Main storming - GS - I

TRIBAL CITIZENS AND BORDER THINKING IN INDIA

EPW

The site of the minority and the marginalised, instead of breaking from the past, evinces continual interlinkages of past and present. The minorities indigenous in modernising societies or the migrant culture in metropolitan modern is often defined by the Western national culture as “behind” or “belated in time still to catch up with the modernity of national culture;” this foundationalist liberal notion could be critiqued by arguing that the partial culture of minority is temporally disjunctive, neither contemporaneous with modernity of the dominant culture nor simply out of date or lagging behind that modernity.

Moving away from the “right-discourses” of minority groups within a nation state, minority theorists have engaged with the forms of agency that are collective and affective. Without opposing “the individual” or her “rationality” the attempt is to point out at the minority subject of agency that provides alternative accounts of historical chronology and hierarchy. For minority or marginalised subjects have to “constitute their subjectivities and collectivises through dislocated and exclusionary practices”. The marginalised minority therefore is a possible form of existence that is beyond the binary of “being assimilated” or “being different only to be represented in the structures of modern state;” it, instead, presents a third space. This is a domain that brings in the argument that the marginalised

indigenous are inhabiting the borderline conditions of temporal disjunction; it is both inside and outside the logic of nation state, market and the capital.

Dominant national culture

- The “community” becomes the site of social agency that the nation forms and its homogeneous empty time claims to liberate, acts of defiance and acts of resistance can perhaps be seen as agentic political practices in non-Western societies.
- The minority with its out sidedness, collective agency and lived experience rearticulates what it means to belong to a traditional and atavistic culture (like that of the indigenous people in Latin America, Australia or New Zealand or the Adivasi in India).
- The concern, therefore, is to engage with the border thinking or the community practices, which are neither contemporaneous with the modernity of the dominant national culture, nor simply “out of date” or lagging behind that modernity.
- The Adivasi in India is a possible form of existence that cannot be fitted either in the procedural dissent of the political minority or in the cultural minority group negotiating inclusion of their difference through representation.
- A member of cultural community, the tribal citizen, in her otherwise collective life, would be apt to invoke her “individual” scheduled tribe–citizen status only to ensure that the state is not depriving her of the constitutionally guaranteed freedom.

Ethnic communities

- The Sikkim gets identified as the only state in India with richest biodiversity, the Sikkim’s government proudly announces that all the three indigenous ethnic communities of the state (that is Lepcha, Bhutia and Limbu) possess

rich traditional knowledge of biodiversity and have their own indigenous ways of “conserving” nature.

- The Mundhumi explanations of flowers make the Limbu community worship “Nam Yo,” a flower of an herbal plant as the only material representative of the goddess of wisdom. This goddess has endowed nature not only with the aesthetics of beauty but also with the power of healing. At the same time, the tradition of morality makes the local “primitive” Lepcha nurture the richest biodiversity zone in India.
- It is community knowledge that helped the indigenous people of Dzongu in North Sikkim continue with their traditional occupations of hunting gathering and slash and burn cultivation and yet retain the best forest cover in their natural habitat.
- The Lepcha intervention in nurturing biodiversity, in many ways, introduces the ethical/political in the cultural debate. The community’s ecological prudence is most vivid in the emotional bonding its members have with the non-human world—the high altitude lakes, mountains, springs, rivers, females of wild animal species, rare breed of animal, or the system of sparing a portion of edible roots in the soil.

Indigenous community

- The cultural communities in east Himalayas, as the study suggests, are sites of non-modern knowledge in the form of oral traditions and has different thinking to offer.
- The Mundhumi oral scriptures and its transcriptions part of the school curriculum in Sikkim new generations of Limbu language subjects are becoming aware of the non-human world— birds and flowers indigenous to eastern Himalayas—and its relation to their very own well-being.
- At the same time, the predominantly hunter gatherer tribe of Lepchas is making ethical/

political interventions in the cultural debate with their ecological wisdom.

- In spite of relying on slash and burn cultivation, this indigenous community of north Sikkim preserves one of the best biodiversity zones in entire South Asia.
- The minority, or marginalised cultural groups intervene from a position of colonial difference.
- The rationale is to look at the self-governing communities of Adivasis or the STs in India as an alternate sites, where modern governance/modernisation is contested not merely for retention of community knowledge but also for abiding by the diversity of knowledge practices.
- The need for engaging with the life world practices of the dominated communities the world over arises from the enormous diversity of ecological, artistic and intellectual riches that these self-governing communities have nurtured over centuries.
- The indigenous community articulates through its lived experience what it means by non-modern culture, prevalent among many cultural communities the world over, be it the Zapatistas in Mexico or the Adivasis in India.
- In such situations of cultural relativism the liberal understanding of accommodating diversity or integrating difference through representation appears inadequate as the minorities indigenous stands for the singularity of the singular that can neither be “assimilated” nor “represented” within the homogeneous time and space of a nation state.

Main storming - GS - I

MIGRANT AND THE NEO-LIBERAL CITY

EPW

The reinforce the point, which is not novel and is common sense to the migrants, that the migrant sits at the heart of the city in neo liberal

times; A provisional theoretical framework that can accommodate the figure of the migrant labour as a critical element in the transformation of the city to a rental outlet and at the same time a site of extraction. These points reflect on the relationship between labour and urban space, the fundamental problematic in the emergence of the neo-liberal city. They also reflect on the hidden processes of the shift of the modern city as a site of industrial production to a site of knowledge-based economy, which requires besides localised concentrations of human capital, a complex of place-based services to support the knowledge-based economy.

The Kolkata and Mumbai indicates, the neo-liberal city encapsulates the central social contradiction of modern global capitalism, namely, increased return from global connectedness accompanied by hyper-commodification of land and new forms of social marginalisation, most notably the increasing informality of labour and life

Studies of urban governance

- Infrastructure reorganises the city in a way that not only fragments work and reproduces the old social conditions, but calls for the permanent presence of the migrant as the impossible but necessary factor in this process.
- The reorganisation of the city is also a reorganisation of space that depends on rent economy.
- Yet the reorganised city (always in the process of reorganisation) in terms of urban governance has a permanent problem posed by the anomalous figure of the migrant, the migrant labourer, who cannot be dispensed with and who cannot be settled.
- The city is not a harmonious entity brimming with the energy of the citizens, but an extremely contentious place marked by groups of people fighting for resources, space, rights, claims and justice.

Issues of labour migration and displacement

- The given historical narrative of urbanisation and zoning practices in the city in the 1960s and picks out few threads, which still seem relevant in studies of contemporary modes of urbanisation.
- The practice of “thika tenancy” in the Kolkata slums—the most prominent site of habitation of the migrant workers in the city, and challenges the hypothesis of the “bypass model” of urbanisation in Kolkata.
- Introduces the concept of “urban recycling,” which facilitates a continuous juxtaposition of displacement and accumulation of human and other resources as part of the urbanisation process.
- The gendered question of waste picking cannot be addressed by just understanding the act of waste picking but in conjunction with their spatiality of dwelling which is often subsumed in our a priori understanding that waste pickers must be migrants for they do not belong to the city’s formal regime of tenancy.
- To understand the time, territory, family structures, and the pattern of shifts in occupation taking place in and around a particular dwelling area.
- The act of aggregation and segregation of waste is at the heart of the informal waste picking economy.

The homeless and insecure

- The homelessness of the migrants, and locate these experiences in the larger processes of a neo-liberal envisioning of Mumbai as the global city.
- The dual reality of Mumbai results in an ever-growing in formalisation of labour, displacement, and inadequate resettlement, which in turn restricts access to affordable housing, services, workspaces, and social welfare.

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- A permanent condition of suspended citizenship for the homeless migrants, whose domestic life will be always under public gaze and who face violence and the civil society's growing assertion for rights over public spaces.
 - The interrelated dynamics of work, workplace, and shelter conjoin to extract the maximum labour from a worker and, at the same time, keep the worker homeless and insecure.
 - The world over, unfailingly provides a fertile field to understand the nuances of their precarity, insecurity, struggle, coping, and ability to negotiate with city space and society at large.
 - The evolving nature of the urban labour market, where age, skill, body capacity, location, caste, and gender act as interstices of urban economy.
 - The market is not the market with equal access as the neo-liberal agenda of urban reforms would have us believe.
- of destitute labour. At the same time, they indicate that the neo-liberal city is based on a combination of the most virtual and primitive forms of accumulation. In this paradoxical combination, migrant labour becomes the "transit labour."
- The phenomenon of transit labour becomes comprehensible when we keep in mind the conjunction of infrastructure, logistics, and labour at which the Indian economy stands today.
 - Hundreds of projects involving construction of the special economic zones (SEZs), power plants, airports, railway corridors, highways, bridges, new towns and new buildings and houses, flyovers, information and technology parks, and other residential and commercial projects, need not only steel, cement, and aluminium but also labour, particularly in the construction and mining sectors.

The scale and form of migration

- Informalisation of work is linked to the availability of migrant labour—whether in the scrap metal industry, or waste processing zones (including processing of e-waste), or care and entertainment industry that has expanded enormously, or the rental economy that has expanded exponentially, requiring all kinds of new services to be performed by the migrant labour.
 - The construction sector accounting for a substantial chunk of migrant labour, featuring urban transformation along neo-liberal lines.
 - Yet what is important to remember is that the migrant labour—we have the construction labour in mind here—never settles. It also unsettles the city. Roving bands of labourers, moving from one construction site to another, remind us of the late 19th century phenomenon
- The construction industry is one of India's largest employers. Thousands of construction workers build new apartments and offices, while living in squalor in roadside tents along the new buildings that come up in due course.

Right to the city

- The neo-liberal city in order to be a logistical hub becomes an extraction site. It survives on extraction of physical power, air, waste, soil, water, and other conceivable re-sources.
- The postcolonial milieu of this transformation makes more acute the contradictions of urban policy regime and neo-liberal urbanity as a whole.
- The migrant stands at the centre of these contradictions. The issue of justice has to be seen from this angle. Else, the slogan, "right to the city," will remain vacuous.

Main storming - GS - I

RIGHTS OF SECOND WIVES

EPW

- The Bombay High Court recently held that a second wife can claim retirement benefits of the deceased husband. The status of second wives in India has been precarious. In 2010, the Supreme Court of India had observed that a woman who married an already-married man was not entitled to maintenance and other protections. Referring to the second wife in scathing feudal terms, including calling her “keep” and “mistress,” it not only refused legal status to second wives, but contributed to perpetuating the social stigma attached to being one.
- The recent decision protects the interests of the second wife in limited circumstances—when the husband has divorced the first wife and taken steps that made explicit his intention to exclude her from monetary benefits, like cancelling her nomination towards his pension. It is apparent then that in order to secure benefits from a marriage, women—as second wives—have several hoops to jump through. Moreover, the state’s legal system adopts an all or nothing approach.

Protect the rights

- The status of second wives is particularly precarious in India, where second marriages, during the subsistence of the first marriage, are void, lack any legal validity under the Hindu law that applies to Hindu, Buddhist, Jain and Sikh communities.
- A sizeable Indian “Hindu” population that practises polygamy. As per the census data of 2011, there are 6.6 million more married women than men in India. Contrary to popular beliefs, polygamy is most common among tribal communities.

- The state has attempted to deter polygamy by criminalising it. However, the brunt of the outcome is borne by second wives, who are denied a legal claim to maintenance and access to the household.
- The law both victimises second wives, denying them access to maintenance, and simultaneously treats them as victims of men’s deceit and greed for money.
- Judicial intervention to protect the rights of second wives is proscribed by statutory limitations and precedents.

Under The Indian law

- The process adopts an all-or-nothing and blame game approach, in which truth becomes elusive. For instance, as discussed, the law places a premium on ignorance of subsisting marriage of the man.
- A claim of a second wife who has made commitments and contributed to a household, it requires her to prove, among other things, deception by the husband.
- A case of maintenance under Indian law, the wives’ rights are conceptualised to be in conflict.
- The rights of the second wife extinguish upon the determination that the marriage with the first wife subsisted—as if the claim to maintenance can only be made by one wife.
- In the 2013 Indra Sarma Case, the court observed, we are conscious of the fact that if any direction is given to the (husband) to pay maintenance or monetary consideration to the (second wife), that would be at the cost of the legally wedded wife and children...

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UNIFORM CIVIL CODE

EPW

The latest trigger is that the government has asked the Law Commission to examine the issue

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of implementing the uniform civil code. This is the first time a government has asked the commission, which has a crucial advisory role on legal reform, to look into the politically controversial issue of a uniform civil code.

Currently, there is a Hindu Marriage Act, a Muslim Personal Law (Shariat) Application Act, 1937, a Christian Marriage Act and a Parsee Marriage and Divorce Act. Hindu Marriage Act applies to any person who is a Hindu, Buddhist, Jain or Sikh by religion. There is also a Special Marriages Act, 1954 under which people can perform marriage irrespective of the religion followed by either person.

These laws deal with the matters involving marriage, divorce, inheritance, adoption, and maintenance of the respective religions. Having a Uniform Civil Code will mean that all these laws will be replaced by a new law which will be applicable for all irrespective of their religions.

The colonial era law

- The British applied a common criminal code for all but allowed the religious laws to be applied in the case of personal matters.
- The latter laws were to be applied by the local courts when dealing with personal disputes between people of the same religion. Even amongst the Hindus, different rules were used in different regions and for different castes.
- The Shariat law of 1937 was passed to govern the personal matters of all Indian Muslims would be governed by Islamic laws
- At the time of drafting our constitution, there were extensive debates regarding these personal laws.
- A Uniform Civil Code would help in constructing an Indian national identity and eradicate those based on caste and religion. But the proposal was also resisted on the grounds that it would destroy the cultural identity of minorities.

- The UCC was placed under the Directive principles, which the state shall endeavour to achieve but which is non-binding.

Nehru codification

- Nehru saw such codification as necessary to unify the Hindu community, which he saw as a first step towards unifying the nation.
- Split the Code Bill into four parts, including the Hindu Marriage Act, the Hindu Succession Act, the Hindu Minority, and Guardianship Act, and the Hindu Adoptions and Maintenance Act. These were met with significantly less opposition and were passed in the mid-1950s.
- The Directive Principles of State Policy are only guiding principles, not enforceable by any court.
- The apex court has sometimes, directly or indirectly, expressed itself in favour of a uniform civil code or expressed displeasure at the government's inability to enact it.

Muslim

- A Muslim husband can divorce his wife by simply saying 'Talaq, Talaq, Talaq', without providing any reason, whereas a Muslim wife has to file a petition in court, which might take years, and she has to provide some ground for divorce, like cruelty, adultery etc.
- To produce witnesses or documentary evidence in support of that ground. Thus there is discrimination against the wife in two ways—both in the time required for the divorce and also for the obligation for providing reason being waived off for men.
- A Muslim man can marry four wives, but a woman can, at a time, have only one husband.

Christians

- Given separate standards for divorce—which makes it more difficult for them than it is for Hindus. There are also some other significant

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disparities with regards to divorce law between different religions.

- Indian Christians (except in the state of Goa) are governed by the Indian Christian Marriage Act 1872 and their divorce-related matters fall under the Indian Divorce Act of 1869.
- Goa has a Common Family Law, which is also called Goa Civil Code. It is a set of civil laws that governs all Goans, irrespective of religion.

Hindu

- A mother has equal rights over the property as do the children and the widow in the event of her son's death. But when a married daughter dies, the mother ranks after the husband's heirs.
- These are only some of the significant differences between the different personal laws. Many of them clearly do not treat women at par with men.
- The proponents of UCC argue that we should have a common law treating women equally as men in

The loss of culture

- The vast diversity of the personal laws, along with the devotion to which they are adhered to, makes uniformity of any sort very difficult to achieve.
- Even under the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955, marriages may be solemnised in accordance with the rites and ceremonies of a variety of people who come under the definition of a Hindu.
- In the Muslim law too, though there are no elaborate rites or ceremonies, there exist some differences between the Sunni and Shia marriages.
- Many people still do not know what the uniform civil code really means. There are still false conceptions surrounding it, especially amongst

the minorities, which make a rational debate on its implementation quite difficult.

- UCC is also sometimes perceived as the imposition of the Hindu code and procedures, and this adds to its opposition from the minorities.
- The Hindu law has already been reformed, and yet the amount of land actually inherited by Hindu women is only a fraction of the land they are entitled to under the reformed Hindu law.
- The backwardness of Muslim women cannot be solely explained by their personal law.
- Some people also argue that it would lead to a loss of the culture and the identity of the minorities in the Indian society.

Main storming - GS - I**COMMUNAL CLASHES**

After 14 long years, a Special Sessions Court in Ahmedabad convicted 24 people and pronounced 36 others as innocent in the sensational Gulbarg Society massacre case in Gujarat in which 69 people, including former Congress MP Ehsan Jafri, were brutally killed in 2002 in Ahmedabad. On 28 February — a day after a coach of Sabarmati Express was burnt near Godhra railway station, killing 58 people — 250 people, most of them upper class Muslims, took refuge in the house of former Congress MP Ehsaan Jafri in Gulbarg Society, Chamanpura (a Hindu-dominated area), Ahmedabad, expecting his political status to shield them from the impending doom.

The Hindu mob in the following hours ravaged the society, leaving at least 65 dead, including Jafri, who according to a Human Rights Watch report was hacked and burned to death. The report further pointed out that no help was sent by the closest police station, which was less than a kilometre away from the society. Jafri had also made numerous calls

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to the police, the Chief Minister and the central home minister, asking for protection, but the mob remain unconstrained for more than six hours.

The Gulbarg riots case

- The victims of the massacre have argued that the incident was pre-planned in order to target minority members living in the society.
- However, the defence, in its reply, stated that the mob turned violent only after Jafri had fired several rounds on them.
- The government had initially appointed assistant commissioner of police P N Barot, an officer with strong VHP connections, to investigate the incident.
- The case was later transferred to someone else. The media too questioned the credibility of the reports filed in the case.
- Zakia Jafri, wife of Ehsan, on 8 June 2006 filed a complaint, alleging that the police had not registered FIRs against the then Chief Minister as well as the 62 other perpetrators, including several ministers and top officials of the state administration.
- In 2007, the Gujarat High Court refused to entertain her plea. In 2008 the Supreme Court ordered the Gujarat government to re-investigate nine cases in the 2002 Gujarat riots, one of which was the Gulbarg Society massacre.

Constitute the SIT

- The Special Investigation Team constituted by the Supreme Court to probe specific cases of the post-Godhra riots, after serious misgivings were expressed on the manner in which the cases were being investigated and tried.
- That identified members of a mob have been found guilty of murder, and several others

for rioting, arson and unlawful assembly, will go some way in giving the victims a sense of closure.

- The quantum of punishment will be known shortly, but nothing short of life imprisonment is in store for at least 11 found guilty of capital offences.
- The India's long experience of seeing perpetrators of communal violence get away, it is some consolation that many of the Gujarat riots cases are reaching a logical judicial conclusion.
- The Best Bakery and Bilkis Bano cases ended in convictions after being transferred out of Gujarat.
- Naroda Patiya massacre, in which 97 Muslims were killed, resulted in a historic verdict, as the trial court upheld the conspiracy angle and sentenced a former Gujarat Minister and a Bajrang Dal leader to life.
- For a riot at Sardarpura, in which 33 people were killed, 31 were convicted and 42 acquitted.
- The prosecution was unable to prove any conspiracy behind the communal violence with the court finding insufficient evidence of pre-planning, never easy to establish in a case such as this.
- The collapse of the conspiracy angle does not imply an acceptance of the narrative that the Gujarat riots were an angry, reflexive response to the Godhra train carnage.
- The lines between spontaneity and subtle orchestration are hard to delineate.
- A difficulty in assessing the varying degree of moral culpability between commission and wilful omission. It would be well to remember this as the Gujarat riot cases reach their judicial closure.

JUDICIAL ACTIVISM

Finance Minister Arun Jaitley cautioning legislators against ceding more powers to the judiciary is a timely reminder of the courts' increased intrusion into the government's actions. "Step-by-step, brick-by-brick, the edifice of India's legislature is being destroyed," he recently warned in the Rajya Sabha after the Opposition sought a court-monitored dispute redress mechanism in case of the GST.

The Supreme Court has been activist in its interpretation of certain provisions in the Constitution but it is the day-to-day judicial control and correction of the executive branches of government that set it apart from other common law countries. This judicial activism began when access to courts was opened up to the poor, indigent and disadvantaged sections of the nation and their basic rights were enforced through what has now become the Public Interest Litigation (PIL). The judiciary, led by the Supreme Court, became an active participant in the dispensing of social justice and increased its relevance to the nation in a manner not envisaged by the makers of the Constitution.

The basic rights of citizens

- The judiciary in India has acquired the supremacy over the legislature and the executive, despite not having, in Hamilton's famous words, the power of the purse or the sword.
- The Supreme Court in 1980 entertained complaints by social activists drawing its attention to the conditions of certain sections of society or institutions deprived of their basic constitutional rights.
- This easy approach by disregarding the conventional requirement of the applicant's locus standing and the non-adversarial character of the courts' intervention, came to be widely

appreciated and even imitated by other common law jurisdictions.

- Article 38 of the Constitution of South Africa adopted the relaxed locus standing rules for anyone acting in public interest to enforce the Bill of Rights.
- The Emergency came to an end in 1977, the Supreme Court, as if to refurbish its image in a new political climate, became more responsive to socio-economic changes in legislation.
- The right to property was deleted from the chapter of Fundamental Rights in the Constitution (44th Amendment Act, 1978), leaving no scope for invalidation of property laws by the courts.
- Thereafter, by a process of reinterpretation of two fundamental rights — the Right to Personal Liberty in Article 21 and the Right to Equality before Law in Article 14 — the court gave the judiciary an enlarged power of review to protect the basic rights of citizens.

Established by law

- The "law" in Article 21 required more than mere laws made by a legislature and that the procedure referred to had to conform to the requirement of reasonableness in terms of fundamental rights.
- The "procedure established by law" of Article 21 now meant that the law or action by the government must be just, reasonable and fair.
- The apex court also adopted a revisionist interpretation of "life" in Article 21, by enlarging its dimensions from not being deprived of life without authority of law but as an affirmative guarantee for the dignity of the individual and the worth of the human life.
- Enabled the court to assume jurisdiction in almost all matters for the purpose of ensuring good human existence.

- The apex court, in a new interpretation of the Right to Equality before law in Article 14, imposed the condition of reasonableness on every law and action of the government.
- It ordered control over automobile emissions, mandatory wearing of seat belts and helmets, action plans to control and prevent the menace of monkeys in cities and towns, among others.

Public cause litigation

- The PIL was originally conceived as a jurisdiction firmly grounded on the enforcement of basic human rights of the disadvantaged unable to reach courts on their own.
- The courts' function was to supplement the other government departments in improving the social and economic conditions of the marginalised sections.
- It did not assume the functions of supervising and correcting the omissions and actions of government or public bodies; it, rather, joined them in a cooperative effort to achieve constitutional goals.
- Over the years the unexceptional social action dimension of the PIL has been diluted, converted, and eclipsed by another type of "public cause litigation".
- In this type of legal process, the court's intervention is not sought for enforcing the rights of the disadvantaged but to simply correct the actions or omissions of public officials, government departments or other public bodies.
- The court was moved to correct the discretionary powers of ministers to allot petrol pump sites, shops sites and stalls. It laid down rules for the conduct of important public institutions and authorities.
- The Election Commission to order candidates to disclose their criminal convictions, their assets and liabilities at the time of elections, called for quotas in medical and engineering colleges and issued orders to safeguard women from sexual harassment at workplaces.

2G spectrum case

- A two-judge bench differed from the policies of the expert body, the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India, and of the government, which had issued spectrum licenses at a fixed price and on a first come, first served basis.
- The court invalidated 122 spectrum licences allotted by the government and held that all public resources and assets can only be disposed of through a public auction.
- The far-reaching policy direction led the president to make a reference to the court for its advice, under Article 143 of the Constitution, as to whether such a direction was correct and was to be followed.
- A larger bench of the court made a correction: The policy of auctioning was not for every public resource.
- The public in India has now become accustomed to seeing the Supreme Court correcting government action in trifling matters which should not be its concern.
- The apex court has original jurisdiction only to entertain petitions for breach of fundamental rights under Article 32 of the Constitution, and therefore these micro-managing exercises are hung on the tenuous jurisdictional peg of Article 32 taken with Article 21 or Article 14.
- In reality, no legal issues are involved in such petitions; the court is only moved for better governance and administration in such cases, which does not involve the exercise of any judicial function.

Main storming - GS - II

NUCLEAR WORLD IS SHIFTING TO ASIA- PACIFIC

On May 27, Barack Obama became the first serving American President to visit Hiroshima, 71 years after nuclear bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki by the United States, the only country to have ever used nuclear weapons. Richard Nixon visited Hiroshima in 1964, four years before he won the presidential election, and Jimmy Carter had visited in 1984, three and a half years after he left the White House. Mr. Obama's historic visit will go down as part of his nuclear legacy, which remains a mixed one. Though the visit took place when he has no more elections to fight, it was nevertheless an act of political conviction reflecting his deep disdain for the "Washington playbook".

World free nuclear weapons

- The U.S. President Harry Truman in 1945 to use the nuclear bomb, none of Mr. Obama's predecessors has been willing to court the inevitable controversies that would surround a presidential visit.
- The most significant was the question of an "apology" which the Obama administration laid to rest early on by making clear that there would be no revisiting the 1945 decision, and, consequently, no apology.
- The symbolism of the imperative for moral reflection was very apparent, both in President Obama's speech and his gesture of meeting the hibakushas (atomic bomb survivors).
- Promising U.S. leadership, the vision of a world free of nuclear weapons. Seven years later, progress in this direction has been modest.
- The New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) concluded with Russia limiting both countries to 800 launchers (Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles, submarine-launched ballistic

missiles and heavy long-range bombers) and 1,550 warheads each was concluded in 2010 after which the dialogue has stalled.

- The Nuclear Security initiative which Mr. Obama launched with a summit in 2010 and concluded with another summit earlier this year were limited to the securing of and restricting the civilian use of highly enriched uranium (HEU) and plutonium so that it does not fall into terrorist hands.
- The U.S. has announced ambitious plans to spend \$1 trillion for modernisation of its nuclear arsenal over the next three decades.
- In a Nuclear Posture Review, the U.S. has maintained the right of "first-use" of nuclear weapons though limited to "extreme circumstances".

Greater role in global affairs

- The nuclear disarmament agenda, stating that new and destructive technologies needed a "moral revolution".
- The World War II involving all the major powers of the day had taken a toll of 60 million lives and nations that prided themselves on their civilisational achievements had fallen prey to the "base instincts of conquest".
- The "US can lead" this process of "change", nor did he put forward any concrete proposals.
- Japan beyond the "guilt" of World War II and the imposed pacifism, to becoming a "normal country" ready to play a greater role in global affairs.
- Chinese commentators recalled the horrors inflicted by Japanese militarism, emphasising that this could not be obliterated by claiming nuclear victimhood.
- In the Philippines, there were calls for atonement for the Bataan death march in 1941, in which nearly 10,000 American and Filipino prisoners of war perished.

Current global nuclear threat

- The Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) nuclear programme and the deployment of tactical nuclear weapons by Pakistan as the most worrying aspects of the current global nuclear threat.
- Since 2006, North Korea has conducted four nuclear tests, January 2016 claiming it as a hydrogen bomb.
- The Sanctions have not been effective and there are clear limits to which China will push the North Korean regime (or Pakistan for that matter).
- Regime change in the DPRK is a scary prospect for both China and South Korea. The North Korean threat serves a U.S. purpose;
- The U.S. maintains nearly 30,000 soldiers on the peninsula and deploys modern systems including ballistic missile defences.
- The U.S. presence certainly curbs nuclear ambitions in Japan, South Korea and Taiwan which China acknowledges but grudgingly.
- More than a fourth of South Korea's electricity is generated by its two dozen reactors, but unlike Japan, it undertakes no enrichment or reprocessing, making it completely dependent on other countries for its nuclear fuel.

The military utility

- The horrors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki has helped generate a norm against the use of nuclear weapons though nuclear abolition remains a distant goal. Part of the reason lies in the myth-making associated with this issue.
- The U.S. conventional narrative that using the nuclear bomb was necessary to end the war and save the loss of American and Japanese lives resulting from a prolonged invasion.
- The idea of the military utility of nuclear weapons has been a key driver for the pursuit

of nuclear weapons and set the stage for the obscene accumulation of more than 70,000 weapons by the U.S. and the Soviet Union during the 1970s and 1980s.

During Cold War

- The best route to nuclear disarmament was through non-proliferation and the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).
- The truth is that the NPT has had no impact on nuclear arms reductions. Its limitations are apparent in that it recognises only five nuclear weapon states (the U.S., Russia, the United Kingdom, France and China) but is unable to deal with the reality of India, Pakistan, Israel and North Korea's weapon programmes.
- Today's nuclear world is very different from the bipolar world of the Cold War dominated by nuclear rivalry between the U.S. and the Soviet Union, the two superpowers.
- The centre of gravity is inexorably shifting from the Euro-Atlantic to the Asia-Pacific, a more crowded geopolitical space.
- The number of nuclear players has grown, and asymmetry in doctrines and arsenals makes the search for security more elusive.
- Outer space and cyber space have become new domains of contention even as missile defences and conventional precision strike capabilities blur the threshold between conventional and nuclear weapons.

Main storming - GS - II

INDIA'S FOREIGN POLICY

The India's engagement with the war-ravaged country. Coming close on the heels of the Indian investment in Iran's Chabahar port complex and opening a land route onwards to Afghanistan, the ongoing strategic engagement with Tehran and Kabul represents New Delhi's ambitious foray into

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its extended neighbourhood. Momentous though these initiatives are, there is considerable scepticism within the strategic community regarding India's material and political wherewithal to stay the course vis-à-vis these long-term projects, especially in the context of India's not-so-impressive record when it comes to delivering on strategically important projects in the region and beyond.

India's strategic engagements in the region and beyond suffer from several handicaps. New Delhi lacks the financial resources to invest in crucial projects in a sustained manner due to budget constraints and compulsions of domestic priorities. New Delhi's inability to accept Colombo's offer to build the Hambantota Port some years ago is a case in point. Clearly, there is only so much that a developing country like India can do to assist others.

There is also a problem of severe attention deficit resulting from an inability to commit diplomatic and political capital to pursue key strategic objectives. Many of India's strategic initiatives in the region, Chabahar for instance, often get portrayed in competitive terms, thereby getting into the cross hairs of adversarial/insecure neighbours.

The fact that New Delhi has traditionally displayed a self-imposed "unilateral bias" in addressing key challenges in the neighbourhood and near abroad. Indeed, this tendency to "go solo" partly explains the lacklustre performance of at least some of India's strategic initiatives, and has, indeed, contributed to a certain "strategic diffidence" in our strategic culture.

Iran's Chabahar port

- The Indian investment in Iran's Chabahar port complex. It is important to be cognisant of important issues.
- The Indian commentary has overstated the strategic significance of the recently signed Chabahar deal, with some overenthusiastic media commentators even positing it as a counter to the Chinese-built Gwadar port in Pakistan.

- The Iran was unambiguous in stating that it is not an "Indian" complex (the Indian presence would be limited to developing a small part of a huge complex).
- It is delusional to think we can develop the port complex and the land access to Afghanistan onwards to Central Asia all on our own and maintain them.
- The even if able to, hypothetically speaking, carry out all these grand plans on our own, we may not be able to sustain them in the longer run due to financial and security reasons.
- Let's recall that the Chabahar project was conceived of 13 years ago but it could not be completed due to a number of reasons, including financial commitment issues and U.S. sanctions on Iran.

Long-term geopolitical

- India should also try to engage China more proactively and with a long-term geopolitical imagination. Even though the two sides have a "strategic partnership", it remains one of India's most underutilised strategic partnerships.
- The both India and China have traditionally viewed each other through the Pakistan prism, and the resultant faulty view of each other has constrained us from fully utilising our potential in addressing the challenges faced by the region.
- India is more at the receiving end of terrorist violence, China has also started feeling the heat and will increasingly do so both on its own territory and its assets abroad, including in Pakistan.
- Late last year the two countries issued a joint statement on combating international terrorism and described potential steps such as "exchanging information on terrorist activities, terrorist groups and their linkages, exchanging experiences on anti-hijacking, hostage situations and other terrorism related crimes and coordinating positions on anti-terrorism endeavours at regional and multilateral levels and supporting each other".

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- The Beijing has been less than helpful in confronting terrorism emanating from Pakistani soil, this joint statement is a rare opportunity for New Delhi to nudge China to cooperate more on the terror question.
- A Sino-Indian joint task force on terrorism to discuss the spread of terrorism in the region and to devise methods to deal with it would be a useful way ahead.
- The New Delhi is serious about getting Chinese cooperation on fighting terror, a lot more high-level engagement with Beijing would be required.
- China today is a major contributor to South Asia's developmental needs.
- The India had traditionally wielded a great deal of influence in the region due to ethnic, political and economic linkages, there is no point in crying foul about increasing Chinese forays into the region: it's perhaps natural for a rising global power to do so, and there is hardly anything we can do to prevent that.
- New Delhi should therefore join hands with Beijing to develop the region's economy, trade and infrastructure.

One Belt, One Road

- Indian reactions to China's One Belt, One Road (OBOR) project need not be either dismissive or worried, nor should we dismiss it as a "Chinese national project" and look the other way.
- Our objective should be to see how we can utilise the many economic, infrastructural and other opportunities opened up by OBOR.
- The rise of China, and the attendant geopolitical transformation of the region, will take place with or without India: so let's try to use this transformation to further our own national interests.
- It is important for New Delhi's strategic planners to recognise that when it comes to dealing

with key regional challenges and opportunities, unilateralism is not the way.

- Need to create alliances and coalitions to confront challenges and better utilise opportunities, and in today's "loose multipolar" world, our alliance behaviour should be guided by clear strategic objectives rather than traditional friendships alone.

Main storming - GS - II**RACISM- AFRICANS ATTACK IN INDIA**

The five-day India-Africa Summit held in New Delhi in October 2015 seemed to have paved the way to both strengthen and push the boundaries of the relationship between India and countries in Africa. Subsequently, New Delhi announced a doubling of India's assistance to African states, through a \$10 billion loan concession and \$600 million in terms of grant assistance. Viewed as the cementing of long standing friendships between the two continents, an attempt to take this forward crystallized in the form of the May 2016 Africa Day Celebrations in New Delhi with the Indian Council for Cultural Relations. However, in the wake of attacks against African nationals in the country and the murder of Masonga Kitanda Olivier, a 23-year-old Congolese French teacher, 42 countries threatened to boycott the event, declaring that they were in mourning.

Insecurity in Delhi

- The pervading climate of fear and insecurity in Delhi, the African heads of mission are left with little option than to consider recommending to their governments not to send new students to India, unless and until their safety can be guaranteed.
- A strong letter demanding improved safety measures was sent to the Indian Government by envoys.

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- The Association of African Students of India and scores of individual African students had intended to hold an anti-racism rally to condemn the act and bring to light the issue of discrimination that they faced, though the rally was put on hold subsequently.
- Students endure racial slurs on the street, refusal from landlords to grant accommodation, and some African students have even said that they are feared by locals and constantly stereotyped.
- Moreover, while the most disturbing incidents get reported, several smaller instances of daily racism continue to go unreported.
- The stance itself seems contradictory—if the government firmly believed that there was no racial intent, and then the emphasis on sensitization programs, as opposed to merely pumping up security, seems unwarranted.
- It appears as though the government as well as law enforcement officials do recognize the racial basis, but are unwilling to acknowledge it—either due to a misplaced intent to suppress panic among the African nationals, or to nip a diplomatic nightmare in the bud.
- The promises of support and assurances of security can only be carried forward effectively if the government legitimizes the fears of the African student community in India.

Maintain diplomatic relations

- New Delhi has been quick to react to this situation. Five arrests have been made in the wake of Olivier's death, as well as some instances of assault that took place the subsequent week.
- The victim's family a speedy trial and harsh punishment to the perpetrators of the crime, and a sensitization program has been launched to address larger concerns regarding violent outbreaks.
- The context of India's need to maintain diplomatic relations and to prevent the incidents in affecting its foreign policy.
- It is important to regard these reactions in the context of the numerous instances of victimization of Africans in India.
- Even if the incidents are as isolated as the public statements seem to suggest, it does not take away from the growing unease that the community is experiencing.
- As long as the government shies away from acknowledging even a smidgen of the problem of xenophobia, it runs the risk of developing severely ineffective policies of remediation and settling into complacency while the situation escalates.
- Already there have been instances of mob retaliation against Indians in Congo. If the government truly wishes to make the African community feel welcome and safe once more, perhaps it needs to act the way it would expect other governments to act when Indians are attacked abroad.

Accusationsof xenophobia

- Defensive reactions by the Indian government, as well as the police force that underplay any accusations of xenophobia will not help address such insecurities.
- The strategy adopted seems to be geared more towards immediate appeasement rather than long-term redress.

Main storming - GS - II**TAPI PROJECT**

The multi-billion dollar TAPI project could be off to a year-end start, as the legal framework is expected to be in place by September followed by the announcement of the consortium. The 1,078-mile Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India

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(TAPI) pipeline that will transport natural gas off the Caspian Sea resort of Avaza to India via Afghanistan and Pakistan will be announced shortly. All the beneficiary countries are on the same page pushing for early implementation of the project. Continued violence in Afghanistan has been considered a reason for the delay in the execution of works related to the pipeline with a capacity to carry 90 million metric standard cubic metres of gas, of which India and Pakistan will get 38 mmscmd of gas, while the remaining 14 mms cmd will be supplied to Afghanistan.

Closest regional powers

- India is one of the closest regional powers that has invested in institution and infrastructure building in Afghanistan. For India, Afghanistan has immense strategic potential.
- The TAPI pipeline project that aims to bring natural gas from Turkmenistan through Afghanistan and Pakistan to India.
- More important, a friendly, stable regime in Kabul is geopolitical insurance against Pakistan's deep state.
- The both countries share concerns about Pakistan's good-terrorist-bad-terrorist nuancing.
- Afghanistan is currently going through a particularly turbulent transition.
- The government in Kabul has been stretched in trying to stop Taliban advances over the past few months.

India bigger role

- President Ashraf Ghani seems to have realised that a complete military victory is improbable.
- The New Delhi's engagement should be limited to infrastructure development or whether it should expand its relationship.
- India has signalled a small shift in its policy by delivering M-25 attack helicopters to Kabul.

- The India from playing a bigger role in a country whose stability is vital for its regional ambitions and whose people traditionally count India as a well-meaning friend.
- The Chabahar agreement brought together India, Afghanistan and Iran, New Delhi should work to bring together more regional powers invested in Afghanistan's stability and economic development.

Main storming - GS - II**NSG****What happened?**

- Last week, the special meeting of the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) held in Vienna, to consider the issue of India's application for joining the group, ended inconclusively.
- The matter will now be taken up at the plenary meeting scheduled in Seoul. In mid-May, India formally applied to join the NSG.

What is NSG?

- The NSG (initially known as the London Club) came into being in 1974, in response to India's peaceful nuclear explosion.
- Its original members were the U.S., U.S.S.R., U.K., France, West Germany, Canada and Japan.
- Realising that the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) was not robust enough, these seven countries adopted stringent guidelines for nuclear exports.
- Today, the NSG has grown to 48 countries and the members are now called 'Participating Governments'.
- After the first few years, the NSG remained dormant and, in fact, did not meet after 1977 till 1991, when concerns about Iraq's nuclear programme surfaced after the 1st Gulf war.

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- By this time, the NSG had moved quickly to expand controls to cover dual-use items and technologies that had contributed to Iraq's programme.
- The second key change was that for non-nuclear weapon states, full-scope safeguards became the conditionality for nuclear transfers.
- Legally, it remains an informal grouping. Decisions in the group are taken by consensus.

India's long journey:

- India has maintained an impeccable non-proliferation record with a strong commitment to controlling exports of nuclear materials, equipments and technologies.
- Since 1998, the India-U.S. dialogue has gone through three phases.
 1. To obtain relief from the sanctions imposed on India by the U.S. and other countries. This objective was achieved in large measure by 2003.
 2. The launch of the 'Next Steps in Strategic Partnership' by then PM Atal Bihari Vajpayee and U.S. President George Bush.
 3. Following its conclusion, then PM Manmohan Singh and President Bush decided to move towards restoring bilateral civil nuclear cooperation. This needed changes in U.S. law which, in turn, required waiver from the NSG guidelines. This challenging third phase took three years.
- In 2008, the NSG provided an exceptional waiver to India clearing the way for India to enter into civilian nuclear cooperation agreements.
- Agreements with the U.S., France and Russia relating to setting up of new nuclear power plants and long-term agreements for supply of uranium fuel with nearly a dozen countries have since been concluded.

India – A voluntary adherent:

- To put an end to the myth of India being an 'outlier' to the non-proliferation regime, India declared its intention to join NSG, MTCR, Australia Group and Wassenaar Arrangement.
- The U.S. backed India's decision and the joint statement was issued and this has been reiterated at subsequent summits.
- The reality is that joining NSG offers political advantage because the 2008 waiver has already enabled India to engage in civil nuclear cooperation.
- Today, India is a voluntary adherent to NSG guidelines; as a PG, this will become a legal obligation.

The five factors:

- Since the NSG is an informal grouping, it has set out five factors for considering applications of prospective PGs.
 1. the ability to supply items on NSG control lists;
 2. acting in accordance with NSG guidelines;
 3. a legally based export control system;
 4. support international non-proliferation efforts; and,
 5. membership of treaties like the NPT that require full-scope safeguards.
- Evidently India more than fulfils the first four but cannot meet the last 'consideration'; however, these are not mandatory criteria.

Two-track diplomacy:

- In Vienna, knowing that the meeting would be inconclusive, India's objective was to gauge opposition and ensure that the matter be discussed in Seoul.

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- Meanwhile India needs to pursue two diplomatic tracks simultaneously. First track should focus on those countries that reportedly raised concerns about the impact of an India exception on the regime.
- The second track should focus on China. The reality is that Pakistan is not ready to join the NSG. It has not separated its military and civilian nuclear programmes.
- China knows this and is employing dilatory tactics.
- India could be admitted this year at Seoul and Pakistan's application would be considered on merit after it completes the necessary requirements thereafter.
- Major powers do not seek favours from each other nor do they push each other into inextricable corners; they extract favourable outcomes by blocking moves of others.
- The Go board (Chinese strategy game) is interestingly set and needs skilful and sensitive play to ensure a positive outcome.
- The fundamental requirement that every member to join NSG – should be a signatory to the NPT, was brought up not only by China but several others.
- There was similar opposition in the case of the exemption from NSG guidelines at the time of the India-USA nuclear deal also, but our bilateral efforts and heavy lifting by the U.S., resulted in the exemption. But that was an one-time exemption with no strings attached.
- What is Multilateral export control regime?
- MECR is an international body that states use to organize their national export control systems. There are currently four such regimes:
 1. The Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG), for the control of nuclear related technology.
 2. The Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR), for the control of rockets and other aerial vehicles capable of delivering weapons of mass destruction. India joined MTCR recently.
 3. The Wassenaar Arrangement on Export Controls, for Conventional Arms and Dual-Use Goods and Technologies.
 4. The Australia Group, for control of chemical and biological technology that could be weaponized.

An American initiative:

- The NSG was invented to prevent Indian advance towards possession of nuclear weapons after the technology demonstration test of 1974.
- If India joins it, the very nature of the NSG will change and dilute its fundamental position that all members should be signatories to the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).
- An US think tank suggestion – was not that India should be given membership of the NSG, but that India should join all multilateral export control regimes. It appeared then that the whole proposal was to drag us into Wassenaar Arrangement and the Australia Group by presenting them as a package.
- We had refrained from joining both, though they were open for us from the beginning, for our own reasons.

No great gains in the offing:

- Interestingly, the NSG is an informal grouping, and there is no precise procedure for seeking admission.
- But since the group takes all its decisions by consensus, it follows that new members should also be by consensus.
- For those outside the group, there is an outreach programme. New Delhi hosted an outreach meeting a few years ago, but it was found that the exercise was not of much use in influencing the guidelines.

China's Argument

- Membership of the group will not immediately open up nuclear trade as India has already pledged not to transfer nuclear know-how to other countries. If we attempt to dilute the guidelines to liberalise supply, it will be resisted by the others.
- Membership of the NSG will only mean greater pressure on us to sign the NPT and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and commit in advance to a Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty, which would impose restrictions on existing stockpiles of fissile material.
- Unlike India, Pakistan has not even sought an exemption from the NSG. To say, therefore, that India and Pakistan should be equated on nuclear matters is unreasonable.
- But the NSG did not even challenge the supply of two new reactors to Pakistan by China. The NSG's ineffectiveness in countering proliferation makes it even less attractive as a group India should join.

- There's little possibility that India's effort to join the NSG — the most hallowed high table of the nuclear elite — will meet with success any time soon. The problem is a simple one.
- China argues that since India is being allowed to join the NSG without signing the Nuclear NPT, until now a precondition, the rules of club membership need to be amended for all. The argument is designed to benefit Pakistan.
- Indian diplomats have worked hard to bring other countries with reservations on making an exception for India on board — among them, Switzerland and Mexico.
- There's now a broad consensus that Indian membership of the NSG would strengthen the global non-proliferation regime.
- However, since that broad consensus doesn't include China, it means nothing.

Way Forward:

- Membership of the MTCR, which restricts the weight and range of missiles, is being projected as clearing the way for NSG.
- This is not likely because of China except that we can now threaten to veto China if it applies for membership of the MTCR.
- When India is not anywhere near the permanent membership of the Security Council, the high-level pursuit of NSG membership may give the impression that India is unrealistic in its expectations from the international community.
- It will be better for India to concentrate on one or two fundamental objectives rather than fritter away our diplomatic resources on matters of marginal interest.

How significant a setback is this for India?

- In practical terms, the stakes in this battle are relatively low. The fight is, in some senses, about prestige, not tangible ends.
- India needs nuclear technology and fuel; an exemption granted to India by the NSG in 2008 allows it access to both.
- The truth is that India, mired in domestic debates over liability for nuclear accidents, has been slow to capitalise on the opportunities the exemption opened up.
- Indian companies could find markets overseas if the country gains NSG membership. They are not, however, likely to emerge as major exporters of nuclear technology, at least in the short term.

How might things proceed from here?

There are at least three options.

1. India could relegate its NSG bid to the back-burner, and focus on growing its domestic nuclear energy infrastructure.
 2. It could, alternately, work towards a bargain where China is allowed entry into the Missile Technology Control Regime, where India is now assured of membership, in return for dropping its veto in the NSG.
 3. India could explore whether a door could be opened for Pakistani membership of the NSG, in return for that country opening up its notoriously opaque nuclear programme to international scrutiny.
- NSG membership might be a means to induce it to come on board with a verifiable means to cap its arsenal. So, it's time for quiet, and creative diplomacy.

Main storming - GS - II**MEDICAL TREATMENT OF TERMINALLY-ILL PATIENTS BILL, 2016****What is the definition of euthanasia?**

The painless killing of a patient suffering from an incurable and painful disease or in an irreversible coma. The practice is illegal in most countries. Once the disease reaches this stage, euthanasia or mercy killing is the only recourse.

- Euthanasia has always been fraught with moral, social, and religious tensions across jurisdictions.
- Ministry of Health and Family Welfare's draft Medical Treatment of Terminally-Ill Patients (Protection of Patients and Medical Practitioners) Bill, 2016 – creates a flimsy framework.
- The Bill, which has been put up for public comments, has attracted a range of views so

far. In particular, its refusal to give legal effect to advance medical directives ('living wills') is an abdication of legislative responsibility and a violation of Article 21 (protection of life and personal liberty).

Bill does the bare minimum:

- The Bill does the bare minimum to give effect to the rights of competent terminally ill patients to refuse or request the withdrawal of life-sustaining treatment.
- This legal recognition of passive euthanasia has been a long time coming — the 196th Report of the Law Commission of India made this recommendation as far back as 2006.
- Supreme Court gave effect to it in Aruna Ramchandra Shanbaug v. Union of India in 2011 — which makes the Bill's content more disappointing.
- The Bill virtually reproduces the model legislation set out in the 241st report of the Law Commission without attempting to assess the merits of the Commission's objection.

Rights and limitations:

- It recommended that an advance directive in exercise of the right to refuse medical treatment be overridden because of the fear that such directives would lead to unnecessary litigation.
- This position finds expression in the Bill. This is a conceptually problematic understanding of rights and their limitations.
- While rights are not absolute, the limitations that they are usually subjected to are imposed in order to give effect to other interests that are valued by society.
- The answer perhaps lies in a strong law that pre-empts litigation, rather than in refusing to give effect to the right altogether.
- Earlier this year, the court deferred the hearing in order to allow the government to draft

legislation legalising passive euthanasia. It is desirable that it be governed by comprehensive parliamentary legislation rather than by judicial guidelines.

- The draft Bill negates the basic common law rights of a patient to autonomy over her own body and the determination of what treatment she is willing to undergo. The government has thus denied the patient's fundamental right to life and liberty.

Absence of safeguards:

- There are several safeguards that the Bill could have incorporated from laws in other countries to ensure that advance directives are properly executed by medical practitioners.
- For example, a valid advance directive would have to be in writing and executed in the presence of witnesses.
- A provision audio-visual recording could be considered to record the process of making an advance directive. If doubts about the validity of the directive were to arise, such a recording might prove useful in resolving them.
- The Bill creates an irrational distinction between patients who are competent at the time at which a decision has to be made about refusing or withdrawing life-sustaining treatment, and those who are incompetent at such time.
- Clause 3 of the Bill states that the decision of the former category of patients to refuse such treatment is binding on their medical practitioners. For the second category of patients, Clause 9 of the Bill requires medical practitioners or relatives to move the High Court for permission to withdraw treatment.
- Apart from being an infringement of the right to life under Article 21, the classification stands the risk of being struck down as unreasonable and therefore a violation of the right to equality under Article 14.

Conclusion:

- The definition of "terminal illness", seems to include even mental health issues!
- The choice of the High Court as a forum to obtain permission for the withdrawal of treatment from incompetent patients imposes an unrealistic burden on medical practitioners as well as relatives.
- Also does not take into account the fact that High Courts are unlikely to be able to deliver swift judgment in such cases.
- However, the Bill's biggest fault lies in its failure to protect the constitutional rights of patients who wish to have their decisions about medical treatment respected.
- Given that the Bill is in the draft stage, there is hope that the government will see the wisdom in recognising advance directives made by individuals and put in place a mechanism for their enforcement.

Main storming - GS - II

INDIAN CONSTITUTION

Snapchat controversy – What happened?

- Tanmay Bhat's video of a mock conversation between Lata Mangeshkar and Sachin Tendulkar has provoked a howl of protests and faces a ban.
- Police complaints have been filed against Mr Bhat by Maharashtra's ruling BJP and also Raj Thackeray's Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS).
- The video, captioned "'Sachin vs Lata Civil War'", was posted on Snap chat and Facebook.
- The video has the revered singer and the master blaster - both enacted by Mr Bhat using Snapchat's face-swap feature - "arguing" about who is the better player, Sachin or Virat Kohli.

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- By Sunday, the video had been widely shared and had triggered far more outrage.

What is defamation?

- Defamation refers to the act of publication of defamatory content that lowers the reputation of an individual or an entity when observed through the perspective of an ordinary man.
- If defamation occurs in spoken words or gestures, then it is termed as slander and the same if in written or printed form is libel.
- Defamation in India is both a civil and a criminal offence.
- Under Criminal Law, Defamation is bailable, non-cognizable and compoundable offence. Therefore, the police cannot start investigation of defamation without a warrant from a magistrate.
- Sections 499 and 500 in the IPC deal with criminal defamation.

Recent SC judgment?

- The incident brings back focus on the recent judgment of the Supreme Court in *Dr Subramanian Swamy v Union of India*, upholding the constitutional validity of criminal defamation.
- The judgment generated disappointment in some quarters for its “chilling effect” on free speech.
- The judgment ought not be seen in that narrow light as the law on defamation has a more pressing relevance today than it possibly ever did.

Arguments & SC’s observations:

- Defamation is one of the recognised exceptions to the fundamental right to free speech and expression under Article 19(1)(a) of the Constitution.

- Each one of the carefully crafted grounds under Article 19(2) of the Constitution, under which the freedom of speech can be reasonably restricted, relates to matters of public or societal concern.

- Each one of these grounds reflects not just an individual interest but a social one.

- The argument by Swamy that criminal defamation must be excluded from these exceptions because it pertains to an individual wrong and not a societal wrong was rejected by the court.

- The necessity to protect individual esteem must be seen as a shared value. Human interactions and relationships are premised on the esteem people hold one another in.

- Serious injury to reputation through false imputations violates shared values that define society. Protection of reputation is, therefore, an important societal interest, and not merely an individual one.

- The right to reputation is, therefore, recognised as an integral facet of the right to life under Article 21 of the Constitution.

- And the civil remedy for defamation can be a very inadequate one as a loss of reputation cannot always be valued in money terms. If civil suits are to be a viable remedy, they must also afford quick relief (which usually takes up to 20 years).

Role of Technology:

- Technology, with its speed, reach and efficiency has exacerbated matters.

- This makes the consequences of injury to reputation almost irreversible.

- It is no surprise then, that the European Court of Justice fashioned a new right on the internet — the right to be forgotten.

- A petitioner in India is now agitating for the same right before the Delhi high court.

Conclusion:

- The difficulty with criminal defamation is the law is often abused and the process itself becomes a punishment. That process is in desperate need of reform.
- Criminal complaints should not be entertained unless the damage to reputation is prima facie, a serious one.
- Frivolous complaints should be dismissed at the threshold.
- Complaints cannot be entertained except on behalf of the “person aggrieved”.
- The courts have held that merely admirers or busybodies do not have locus to complain.
- That is to say that unless Tendulkar or Mangeshkar feel compelled to complain, which they do not seem to, nobody can take up club for them.

Main storming - GS - II

WELFARE SCHEMES FOR VULNERABLE SECTIONS

Swiss’ rejection to the idea of Basic Income:

- In the first vote of its kind, Swiss voters have rejected the proposal to introduce a guaranteed basic income for everyone living in the country, irrespective of employment status or social contribution.
- The idea behind providing a basic income is to ensure that everyone has the wherewithal to enjoy a “basic” standard of living.

How and why it happened?

- There are two broad reasons why this idea has gathered momentum to reach the stage of a national vote in a well-off European country.

1. the growing disenchantment with inefficient welfare delivery systems of governments across the board.
2. rapid technological change has led to growing apprehensions about the labour market.

Views of Left and Right:

- Paradoxically, the idea has often found support both from the ideological Left as well as the Right.
- For Left-wingers, a basic income is a means to provide equal opportunity and counter exploitation.
- While for Right-wingers it is a way out of the ever-expanding bureaucratic maze.

Why it was rejected?

- The Swiss government opposed it because the proposal would have reportedly cost three times the current annual government spending.
- And the unemployment rates are relatively low in Switzerland.
- There is another problem: Funding it would require raising tax rates to levels that are not politically feasible.
- Add to that the implausibility of taking away existing schemes especially those related to old-age healthcare etc.,

Lesson for India:

- Governments, national and local, in countries such as Brazil, Finland, as well as India have been trying to implement direct cash transfers.
- From India’s perspective, the vote shows that irrespective of capability — and India has been pushing hard to ensure that the enabling conditions exist — there exists a question of the desirability of such a policy tool in the real world.

- It allows people to look at reforming existing welfare schemes with renewed vigour.

Main storming - GS - II

REACHING OUT THROUGH E-GOVERNANCE

E-Governance is the application of information and communication technologies to transform the efficiency, effectiveness, transparency and accountability of informational and transactional exchanges within government between govt and govt, agencies of National, State, Municipal and Local levels, citizen and businesses and to empower citizens through access and use of information.

The rise of e-governance has been one of the most striking developments of the web. As the Internet supported digital communities and assuming that they do indeed grow to incorporate individuals around the country (and globe), they present the national, government with a number of challenges and opportunities. Governments in democratic states are primarily a representative mechanism whereby, the selected few debate and enact the legislation for and on behalf of the nation state's citizens. There are several aspects to this that might prove to be important in the context of e-governance.

E-citizenship

- The technology as well as e-governance initiatives have come a long way since then. With the increase in Internet and mobile connections, the citizens are learning to exploit their new mode of access in wide ranging ways.
- They have started expecting more and more information and services online from governments and corporate organizations to further their civic, professional and personal, lives, thus creating abundant evidence that the new "e-citizenship" is taking hold.
- The Introduction of e-governance in India started in the late 60s and early70s with an emphasis on computerising applications for

defence services economic planning, national census elections, tax collections, etc.

- However' from the early 90s, e-governance has taken on a broader dimension, using IT for wider sectoral applications with a policy emphasis is on reaching out to rural areas and taking in greater inputs from NGOs and the private sector.

National e-Governance Plan (NeGP)

- The Implementation of the NeGP in May 2006 was with the vision of making all government services accessible to the common man in his/her locality through common-service delivery outlets to ensure efficiency, transparency and reliability of such services at affordable costs.
- The NeGP currently consists of 27 mission mode Projects (MMPs) and 8 support components to be implemented at the Central, State and Local government level.
- Income tax, customs and excise and passports at the Central level.
- Land records, agriculture and e-district at the State level and panchayats and municipalities at the local level.
- The effective use of ICT services in the Government has greatly enhanced existing efficiencies, driven down communication costs and increased transparency in the functioning of various departments.
- It has also given citizens an easy access to tangible benefits, be it through simple applications such as online form filling, bill sourcing and payments, or complex applications like distance education and telemedicine.

Recent steps taken by government to promote E-governance:

Pahal

- Objective of giving cash subsidy on cooking gas via DBT.

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- Streamlined the benefactors, checked leakage.
- Give it up campaign launched by government to convince the affluent households to give up their subsidy.
- National Centre for Flexible electronics-promotion of R&D in emerging flexible electronics sector.
- CoE on lot-joint initiative of deity, Ernet and Nasscom>

Digital India initiative

- Centred on 3 key areas:
 - ✓ Digital infra as a utility for every citizen
 - ✓ Governance and services on demand
 - ✓ Digital empowerment of citizens
- Coordinated by Deity in collaboration with, central and state governments
- Last mile connectivity is the vision
 - ✓ Government looking for ISP entrepreneurs to create an internet ecosystem in all the gram panchayats.
 - ✓ Key Projects:
 - ✓ Broadband Highways
 - ✓ Universal Access to Mobile Connectivity
 - ✓ Public Internet Access Programme
 - ✓ e-Governance – Reforming Government through Technology
 - ✓ eKranti - Electronic delivery of services
 - ✓ Information for All
 - ✓ Electronics Manufacturing
 - ✓ Digital or IT for Jobs
 - ✓ Early Harvest Programmes

Policy initiatives by Deity

- BPO Policy-to create new BPO in NE states and small/mofussil towns
- EDF- this fund seeks to create a self sustaining ecosystem of Venture Funds to promote innovation, R&D

Main storming - GS - II**FOR INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT AND LARGER FOOTPRINTS**

The India's diplomacy rose to the challenge and within a short span of time underwent the required re-orientation. The foreign policy in its new incarnation, is now a proactive, pragmatic, fine amalgamation of political, economic and cultural diplomacy and development centric. The focus is on the creation of an external environment which will be conducive and congenial for inclusive internal growth in the country. The idea is to synchronise diplomatic initiatives with the priorities of domestic agenda.

The initiatives are aimed at addressing trust deficit, particularly in the neighbourhood and building bridges of friend of friendship, understanding for mutually beneficial cooperation throughout the world and finally to enhance India's footprints and visibility at the global arena as an influential player. India's politico-economic diplomatic initiatives to harness international partners for the realization of long-term vision of India have received palpably good response.

Infrastructure Investment Fund

- The target to mobilized \$75bn to support investments in India's plans for rapid expansion of next generation infrastructure in India.
- UK and India have instituted a Partnership Fund under the overall umbrella of India's National Infrastructure Investment Fund. The Indian Railways and roads, in particular, are expected to benefit from foreign collaboration and assistance.

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- Japan is ready to provide loans for the improvement of road network connectivity in the North East. India and Japan have agreed to build a high speed bullet train which will cut down the travel time on the Mumbai-Ahmedabad route from seven to two hours.
- India and China have agreed to enhance cooperation in the railway sector. The proposed projects include the increasing of the speed on the existing Chennai-Bengaluru-Mysore sector.

India's Global Diplomacy

- Besides P-5, all important regions in the world – South Asia, South East Asia, Central Asia, West Asia Gulf, Africa, Asia Pacific, - were the destinations for India's global diplomatic outreach.
- The India was in also engaged the important regional groupings such as ASEAN, EAS, NAM, G-20, BRICS, SCO, besides participating in UN deliberations.
- The outcome of India's Neighbourhood First initiative can be described as more than satisfactory. Our relations with Bhutan and Bangladesh are stable and on the ascendency.
- PM's visits to USA, China UK, Russia and France were instrumental in reinvigoration of relations with all P-5 countries and laid the foundations for acceleration of multi-faceted cooperation with these countries.
- The Look East policy enunciated in early 1990s was elevated to Act East Policy, reflecting India's new thrust on imparting substantive content particularly economic to relations with ASEAN.
- The India has also raised its commitment from \$1 mn to \$5mm for ASEAN India Science and Technology Development Fund.

Large Indian Diaspora

- The diplomatic initiative to take on board the island countries such as Maldives, Sri Lanka,

Mauritius, Seychelles have an important dimension in the context of maritime security and blue/ocean economy.

- The Gulf and West Asia/Middle East are important in the context of India's energy security and presence of large Indian Diaspora, and of late for reasons of security in the wake of rise of fundamental and violent forces such as ISIS.
- The UAE Provided a fresh impetus to bilateral engagement and elevated it to a "comprehensive strategic partnership"
- The India – African forum (October, 2015) brought 41 Heads of State and Government and representatives from all other countries of Africa to New Delhi together for the first ever time.
- An excellent opportunity to reflect on the past, rejuvenate the age old relations and unveil a "dynamic and transformative agenda" which is expected to bring India and Africa closer in the years and decades to come.
- The "Delhi Declaration 2015" Placed development cooperation at the heart of India- Africa partnership India announced \$10bn in credit lines for development projects, grant assistance of \$600mn, as well as 50,000 scholarships over the next five years.

India's international stature

- The India's robust engagement with major multilateral for an including UN, G20 ASEAN, EAS, NAM, BRICS, SCO, has helped raise India's international stature. Indi's international stature.
- The India's relentless campaigns on issues such as trans- national terrorism, reform of global governance structures, climate change, piracy, cyber security, and global trade negotiations have resulted in significantly influencing the international approach and shaping the global agenda.

- The India's status in Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) has been elevated from Observer to Full Member.
- The support for India's membership of global Nuclear Export Control Regimes i.e. Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR), Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG), Australia Group and Wassenaar Arrangement is now louder than ever.
- Declarations/ reiterations of support for India's candidature for Permanent Seat in an expanded UN Security Council has multiplied.

Main storming - GS - II

UNIVERSAL HEALTH COVERAGE

- The beginning of the 21st century embarked the global mobilisation towards achievement of the eight Millennium Developmental Goals (MDG). These MDGs with a projected 15 year plan were adopted by 191 countries at millennium summit United Nations in September 2000. The 8 basic, quantifiable and time bound goals with 21 targets and 60 indicators created a paradigm shift towards human development through emphasis on eradicating poverty and hunger, improving literacy rarest; focusing on health care and gender equality along with environmental sustainability.
- The culmination of the MDGs in 2015, a new era of post - 2015 development agenda is ushered with the enunciation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). It comprises an even more ambitious set of 17 goals and 169 targets, of which the 3rd goal pertains to health. Goal 3 which specifically pertains to health ensures healthy lives and promotes well-being for all infants and all ages has 13 measurable targets. In the wake of all these global developments, India is poised at a very important junction with regard to the action on health sector.

The Health System

- The Universal Health Coverage, as envisaged by the World Health Organization, implies provision of quality health care services to all those who need, without any financial hardship.
- The concept of UHC is not something which is new for health sector policies.
- The Health Survey and Development Committee chaired by Sir Jospeh Bhole in 1946 also promulgated provision of health care services to all those who needed, equitably and free of cost.
- The health system had been too much geared towards provision of reproductive, maternal and neonatal health services.
- A review of the past eleven development plans testifies to this statement. Health systems performance was always reviewed in terms of how much is the coverage provision of antenatal care and immunization.
- The recent Twelfth Five Year plan which urges the States to undertake pilot projects at district level to try various strategies to organize and deliver holistic health services encompassing the prevention, cure and rehabilitation.

Universal Health Coverage

- The UHC discourse has brought to greater attention, the importance of financing as both an important function of the health system and determinant of its performance.
- The way resources for health are collected, pooled and finally care is purchased ultimately has a significant bearing on the overall extent of persons who utilize services and who get a greater share of public subsidy whether or not services are equitably utilized.
- The concept of UHC is not new, it does bring significant novelty and benefit for its application in the health system. As a result- the SDGs place a great importance on the achievement of UHC.

- The inclusion of universal health coverage as the overarching goal for monitoring Post 2015-Millennium Development Goal framework.
- The Sustainable Development Goals call for “achieving universal health coverage, including financial risk protection, access to quality essential health-care services and access to safe, effective, quality and affordable essential medicines and vaccines for all .
- While it does not include achieving the goal of universal health coverage as the single overarching monitorable health indicator, nevertheless, there is significant merit in focusing on its achievement.

Quality Health Services

- The High Level Expert Group (HELG) was constituted in 2011, the report of which was considered while drafting of the 12th Five Year plan.
- Even prior to the HELG started expanding coverage for services in a targeted manner through introduction of the publicly financed health insurance schemes.
- The earliest of such schemes has the Rajiv Aarogya Shri Scheme (RAS) in Andhra Pradesh which focused on provision of the high-end tertiary care.
- The government of India’s Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana (RSBY) subsequently, several other State governments have either introduced their own schemes, or have added more benefits in terms of coverage to the existing RSBY scheme.
- The impetus for introduction of these demand-side financing mechanisms was the prevailing argument about the failure of the existing supply-side funded public health care delivery system in terms of providing quality health care services to all those in need.

- Together, these health insurance schemes increased the coverage of the health insurance among general population from about 3 per cent to 15 per cent currently.

National Health Mission

- The Government of India also stated a program of architectural corrections in the public health care delivery in the form of National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) in 2005, now called National Health Mission (NHM) after inclusion of an urban component to the erstwhile rural-focused program.
- The NHM systematically strengthened the capacity of public health infrastructure, human resources and supply through a number of important changes in organization of health services, its financing and governance, besides strengthening the management information and supply management.
- When the country needs to plan for a way forward towards UHC in the context of SDGs, the debate on whether to go via the publicly financed health insurance schemes or the supply-side, strengthening public sector route is inevitable.
- A systematic review of publicly financed health insurance schemes was undertaken to inform policies in Himachal Pradesh.
- A total of 14 impact evaluation studies with a control group were found from India which evaluated the publicly financed insurance schemes at national and state level.

Main storming - GS - II

SOCIAL INCLUSION THROUGH SOCIAL PROTECTION PROGRAMMES

The Indian economy has witnessed a significant growth (around 6 per cent per annum) during the last two and half decades. Currently, it is the fastest

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growing economy in the world. With a steady rise in economic growth, there has been a significant increase in per capita income and decline in the overall incidence of poverty in the country. However, this growth has been accompanied with rising levels of inequality, both across groups and regions. Like elsewhere in the world, high inequality is a major policy concern for India as it undermines the efforts to promote inclusive growth and leads to exclusion.

Large sections of the Indian population like the rural and urban poor, tribal, disabled, homeless, among others have not proportionally benefitted from this high growth and a significant proportion of them continue to live in vulnerable conditions. India has a large plethora of social protection schemes, both at the Central and State levels, which cater to different segments of the population. The ambit of these schemes is quite large, covering basic education and health, employment creation and promotion, workers' social security, food and nutrition security, and social pensions.

The largest public programme

- The MGNREGA is a flagship programme of the Government of India which guarantees every rural household 100 days of wage employment and an unemployment allowance on failure to provide such employment.
- It is the largest public programme ever undertaken in any part of the world. At All India level, the number of households demanded and provided employment is 49.4 million and 40.9 million respectively during the year 2013-14.
- As per the mandate, a household may be given employment of 100 days per year but at All India level per households' 46 person day's works have been created during 2013-2014.
- The programme differs across states and some poor states such as UP, Jharkhand, Bihar and Assam need to take more efforts to further strengthen this programme.

- An important positive aspect of the implementation of this programme is the inclusion of the large proportions of the poor and vulnerable groups.
- The providing employment to members of Scheduled Castes (SC) & Scheduled Tribes (ST) households in 2013-14, the figure stood at 22 per cent and 20 per cent as compared to their actual population share of 16 per cent and 8 per cent respectively at all India level.

Distribution of food grains

- The Public Distribution System evolved as a system of management of scarcity and for distribution of food grains at affordable prices.
- Over the years, it has become an important part of Government's policy for management of food economy in the country.
- It is operated under the joint responsibility of the Central and the State Governments.
- In the 1990s, the scheme was revamped to improve access of food grains to people in hilly and inaccessible areas, and to target the poor.
- Subsequently, in 1997, the government launched the Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS), with a focus on the poor.
- The TPDS aims to provide subsidized food and fuel to the poor through a network of ration shops.
- In September 2013, Parliament enacted the National Food Security Act, 2013 covering 67 per cent of the population (75 per cent rural and 50 per cent urban).
- Under TPDS, beneficiaries two categories
 1. Households below the poverty line or BPL
 2. Households above the poverty line or APL
- Each state government was responsible for identifying eligible BPL households on the basis of inclusion and exclusion criteria developed

by the Ministry of Rural Development. Such households were entitled to receive a BPL ration card.

- APL households were not identified and any household above the poverty line could typically apply for an APL ration card.

Direct benefits transfer scheme

- Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana is an ambitious scheme for comprehensive financial inclusion launched by the Prime Minister on 28th August, 2014.
- The scheme has been started with a target to provide universal access to banking facilities like basic banking accounts with overdraft facility of Rs.5000 after six months and RuPAY Debit Card with inbuilt accident insurance cover of Rs.1 Lakh and RuPAY Kisan card.
- The main objective of this scheme is to provide easy financial services for the excluded sections belonging to low income groups.
- The process of opening an account has been made easier in order to bring about comprehensive financial inclusion for all households in the country.
- The plan also envisages channelling all government benefits to the beneficiaries' accounts and pushing the direct benefits transfer scheme of the union government.
- People can get access to financial services, such as banking accounts, remittance, credit, insurance deposit accounts and pension in an affordable manner.
- The scheme focuses on coverage of households as against the earlier plan which focused on coverage of villages in both rural and urban areas.
- In globalized scenario, it is important to financially include all sections of the society in this scheme to achieve the goal of inclusive growth of the nation.

Main storming - GS - II

SKILL DEVELOPMENT AND THE PRIVATE SECTOR

India's advantage of having low labour-cost and a rich talent pool has clearly indicated its global position and competitiveness as a knowledge-based society. With the country poised to become home to a billion strong workforce by 2030, education and training are critical to accelerate its future growth and economic development. To further strengthen India's position of being a dominant service economy, skilling and training, the available human capital is the need of the hour. It is absolutely imperative that we as a country invest in this. Despite the emphatic stress laid on skill development and training, there is still a shortage of skilled manpower. Human resource development ought to gain significance in the overall development of the country.

- By 2025, India's demographic dividend is expected to contribute 35 per cent of the global workforce. This is a massive economic asset and represents our biggest strength. In July last year, the Rs.1, 500-crore Skill India campaign was launched which aims to train 40 crore people in by 2022. The initiatives include National Skill Development Mission, National Policy for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship 2015, Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY) and the Skill Loan scheme.

Focus skill development

- India had not focused on skill development until the Eleventh Five Year Plan, Which has resulted in a huge skill gap. The accelerated growth in India has increased the demand for skilled manpower tenfold, at same time, it has openly highlighted the dearth of skilled manpower in the country across all sectors.
- Out of 30 lakh graduates entering the Indian job market every year, only about 5 lakh are considered employable. Sectors like IT, BFSI, Healthcare, Infrastructure, Retail, Auto and

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Consumer Durables, amongst others, are facing a huge manpower shortage.

- The National Sample Survey Office earlier this year had released data from its 2011-12, the 15-59 age group, only about 2.2 per cent reported to having received formal vocational training and 8.6 per cent non-formal vocational training.
- India having the second-highest population of working age (15-59 years) individuals in the world, the skill set of this population group plays a critical role in the growth of the country.
- It is imperative that adequate skill training is provided to this age group to make them productive.

Private sector role

- The current vocational education is shifting from its earlier supply mode largely with a welfare approach to a demand driven approach. With several ambitious skill development initiatives, the private sector will have to play a critical part in the skilling ecosystem of India.
- Being the major job creator and employer, the private sector has the potential to influence the scale, quality and sustainability of skill development programs and in integrating them with employment and livelihoods for not only the formal, but the informal sector as well.

Consumer – Skilled manpower

- Non-profit facilitator – Quality knowledge
- For-profit enterprise – Provide education and training

Skilling landscape in India

- The private sector comes into play here with its ability to match better the demand for workforce by the industry with a supply of superior skilled manpower.

- Since the sector creates a variety of jobs – salaried, contractual, wage based and also absorbs them, they are the best informed to forecast demands and ensure that a resource pool of trained, employable, skilled manpower is always available at their disposal.
- The private sector can contribute by identifying skill gaps in current job roles and setting quality standards for training courses in developing and validating existing as well as new job roles through National Occupation Standards (NOS).
- They should proactively tie up with trainers to align their human resource requirement and create a talent pipeline for their needs.
- The private sector should open its doors to trainees in large numbers through on the job training and apprenticeship opportunities.
- Corporate in partnership with trainer's providers can fund and supplement various elements of skill training delivery including infrastructure, facilities technology and pedagogy.

Strategic partnerships

- The Sector Skills Council (SSCs), training, Industrial Training Institute (ITIs) and government bodies, the private sector can significantly impact the success of any skilling initiatives.
- To foster our growth as an emerging service driven economy with quality human capital as our competitive edge, it is critical to realize the importance of possessing a skilled workforce.
- The acquired knowledge, workers will contribute towards productivity at a national level to determine India's competitive edge.
- The role and participation of the private sector is absolutely indispensable and the government's ambitious program for skilling should be supported by similar efforts by the corporate entities.

- India's private sector to partner with these major government initiatives and take these forward.
- Our demographics can make us very powerful in providing the work force to the world but this will only happen when we build an excellent partnership between the private sector and the government, can make this weakness a huge success and strength for India.

Main storming - GS - II

QUALITY EDUCATION IN CONTEMPORARY INDIA

The Indian education system is peculiarly positioned. On the one hand, there are a large number of students who go abroad for higher education/ work and do exceedingly well. On the other hand, there is sharp disparity between 'bright sparks' and a large majority of school students who struggle to acquire basic literacy and numeracy skills, leave alone make sense of their schooling in particular and world at large. Assertions of mechanically memorising decontextualized bits of facts and information from prescribed textbooks with the primary objective of clearing examinations abound and are often found to be true. The nature of education imparted is one significant concern of the Indian school system, the other is a differentiated education offered to its children, based on their social locations.

Children with multiple identities (caste, class, religion, tribe, gender etc.) are hierarchically placed in our 'not just diverse but unequal' society and there is synch between children's social locations and the schools that they go to. There are schools which have the finest state-of-the-art technology, adequate infrastructure and qualified and highly competent teachers to teach children from privileged socio-economic backgrounds.

Education system

- The schools which are struggling at all levels- inadequate infrastructure, incompetent and demotivated teachers and unwilling and irregular students.
- The ills plaguing our education system- some of which have emerged from relevant research and others which have been reactions to the performance of school children in achievement surveys conducted either by national (both state and non-state) and international agencies.
- The issues of quality, and social justice go hand in hand and quality education cannot be restricted to a few children in limited pockets.
- Most primary responsibility of providing equitable, good quality education needs to lie with the government and not the private players who venture into education to seek profits.
- The neo-liberal environment that the structural adjustment policies created in the early 1990s seem to have swiftly swept the education space as well.

Free and Compulsory Education

- The landmark Right to Free and Compulsory Education for children (RTE), which made education a Fundamental Right in 2009. This Act ensures free and compulsory elementary education for all children in the age group of 6-14 years.
- To ensuring quality education in schools are- laying down of norms and standards relating to Pupil Teacher Ratios (PTRs), buildings and infrastructure, school- working days, teacher- working hours.
- The provisions of this Act are fundamentally sound in nature, it is important that mechanisms for implementing them are properly spelled out and executed with utmost sincerity and accountability.

The National Curricular Framework

- The Act also recognizes the importance of a contextualized, vibrant and meaningful curriculum, which accepts the agency of the child and a pedagogy and environment where children can learn without fear.
- The National Curricular Framework (NCF), 2005, recognised the failure of our curriculum and schools to evoke the interest of children and retain them in schools.
- It stated upfront that the issues with the educational experiences that children have in schools and efforts should be made in the direction of ensuring an all-round development of children and building on their knowledge and experiences.

Important Govt Schemes

- The Beti Bachao Beti Padhao Abhiyan - An award is being instituted to those School Management Committees which achieve 100 per cent transition of girls at different levels of education.
- UDAAN - An initiative of the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) to enable disadvantaged girl students and other students from SC/ST & minorities to transit from school to post-school professional education specially in Science and Maths.
- SWAYAM (Study Webs of Active – Learning for Young Aspiring Minds) – The Professors of centrally like IITs, IIMs and Central universities will offer free on- line courses to citizens of our country. This is certainly a positive attempt to break the exclusivity of such Institutions which have traditionally favoured only a selected few.
- National E-Library- Has been envisaged as an on-line portal that will democratize access to knowledge by ensuring that quality content developed in central universities and other premier educational institutions is available in

a digital format and easily accessed by variety of stakeholders through laptops, smart phones and tablets, etc.

Rashtriya Avishkar Abhiyan (RAA)

- A convergent framework aimed at nurturing a spirit of inquiry and creativity, love for Science and Mathematics and Effective use of technology amongst children.
- NCERT's e- Pathshala- a novel idea addresses, the question of free and easy access to quality teaching – learning resources to all school students.

Main storming - GS - II

**AMBIVALENCE OF CITIZENSHIP
IN ASSAM**

EPW

The citizenship question in Assam has a long postcolonial history fraught with conflicts, and is reflected in the manner in which the citizenship law in India has responded to the contests over citizenship in Assam. The Citizenship Act, 1955 was amended in 1986 to inscribe an exception in the law in recognition of the extraordinary conditions prevailing in Assam. The 1986 amendment came in the wake of the Assam Accord, and pertained to the identification and sifting out of foreigners and illegal migrants from Bangladesh. While migration into Assam from Bangladesh has a long history, it was in 1971, in the course of the liberation war in Bangladesh, that several lakhs of Hindu and Muslim refugees fled to Assam.

On 8 February 1972, the Prime Ministers of India and Bangladesh issued a joint declaration in which the Government of India assured “all possible assistance to the Government of Bangladesh in the unprecedented task of resettling the refugees and displaced persons in Bangladesh”. Not all refugees returned, and Bangladeshi migrants continued to cross the border into Assam and other parts of India in search of livelihood. Within Assam, the presence of large numbers of “foreigners” instilled a sense of

unease at the change in demography, language and culture, and pressure over resources.

Erupt Powerful Movement

- A powerful popular movement erupted in the 1980s, led and steered by the All Assam Students Union (AASU) demanding the ouster of foreigners.
- The movement lay claim to a distinctive Assamese identity and based on this, differentiated citizenship.
- Grounded in the principle of “different yet equal,” difference was articulated in the initial years of the movement in terms of the linguistic/cultural identity of Assamese people.
- Later with the United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA) taking over the struggle, in terms of unequal development and discrimination.
- Yet the model of citizenship that the Assam movement invoked replicated the universal form that it was seeking to roll back in its own relationship with the Indian state.
- These contradictions played out in the articulation of citizenship at the national and state levels and within the state between the “ethnic” Assamese and the Bodos, the Assamese and the Bengalis, the Assamese and the tribals, etc.
- The accord reached between the leaders of the movement and the Indian government in 1985, and the amendment in the Citizenship Act following the accord in 1986, put in place a template of graded citizenship in Assam, and shifted the chronological boundary of citizenship for the state to 25 March 1971, from 19 July 1948, which was the constitutional deadline for the rest of the country.
- The signed on 15 August 1985, included the promise by the central government that it would ensure “constitutional, legislative and administrative safeguards...to protect, preserve

and promote the cultural, social, linguistic identity and heritage of the Assamese people” and the “all round economic development of Assam.”

Adding Section 6A

- In November 1986, Parliament amended the Citizenship Act, 1955 by adding Section 6A which introduced a sixth category of citizenship in India along with birth, descent, registration, naturalisation, and by incorporation of foreign territory into India.
- The amended act laid down that all persons of Indian origin who came to Assam before 1 January 1966 from a specified territory (meaning territories included in Bangladesh) and had been ordinarily resident in Assam will be considered citizens of India from the date unless they chose not to be.
- It also added that persons of Indian origin from the specified territories who came on or after 1 January 1966 but before 25 March 1971 and had been resident in Assam since and had been detected as “foreigner” in accordance with the provisions of the Foreigners Act, 1946 and Foreigners (Tribunals) Orders, 1964, upon registration will be considered as citizens of India, from the date of expiry of a period of 10 years from the date of detection as a foreigner.
- In the interim period they will enjoy all facilities including Indian passports, but will not have the right to vote.
- All other persons who entered the state on or after 25 March 1971, upon identification as illegal migrants under the Illegal Migrants (Determination by Tribunal) (IMDT) Act, 1983, will be deported.

National identity systems

- The rest of the country, the cut-off date for citizenship inscribed in the Constitution is 19 July 1948, with the 1986 amendment in the

Citizenship Act, Assam became an exception to the constitutional deadline, with 24 March 1971 becoming the new cut-off applied exclusively to Assam.

- The “National” Register of Citizens (NRC) in Assam works on the principle of tracing citizenship to a legacy of Assamese descent going back to the 1951 NRC and to next signpost, 1971—the “additional load,”
- Yet, the NRC is not only about integration and closure, or even the recognition of an Assamese identity by descent or through affirmation of legal residence in Assam.
- It is equally about a humongous bureaucratic exercise of identification and enumeration of citizens, of putting in place efficient and effective identification regimes and associated documentation practices, often associated with the exercise of state power, and state-formative practices.
- Fixing territorial boundaries, and making its inhabitants legal are important ingredients of statecraft, which seek to make the citizen a stable and enumerable category, amenable to specific governmental practices.
- The regimes of national identity systems enumerating entire populations of nation states, make these systems more comprehensive and consequential.
- In recent years, digitalised and biometric identification systems have made identification regimes more efficient but also intrusive than the older paper-based documentation regimes, for their potential for surveillance of citizens.
- The diverse components of surveillance such as tools and technologies of survey, measurement, census, etc, have long been used for marking what lies within the purview of the state’s powers of extraction and control, enhancing and

entrenching its powers of revenue collection, garnering military service, law enforcement, and policing.

Notion of citizenship

- The NRC marks continuity with a notion of citizenship that can be traced to the Assam Accord, the contestations around the amendment of the citizenship act in 1986, and subsequently the Supreme Court judgment in the Sarbananda Sonowal case 2005.
- The constitutional validity of Section 6A of the Citizenship Act, have added fresh dimensions to the debate, which became significant in the electoral competition in the state in the 2016 state assembly elections.
- The widespread acceptance of the NRC among the Assamese people is indicative of a consensus among the Assamese people on the resolution of the question of citizenship.
- There are different streams in the political consensus, with one strand seeing it as a continuing commitment to the Assam Accord and its potential to alleviate the crisis in citizenship, and another preferring to contest the accord’s capacity to resolve the problem.
- The efficiency of the tools developed by the NRC office to update the NRC, others have expressed the fear that it may only legitimise the Bangladeshi immigrants.

Main storming - GS - II

MANUAL SCAVENGING

EPW

The practice of manual scavengers who clean dry latrines, sewers and septic tanks, are forced to carry on this dehumanising work despite laws against it, officially banned since decades in India, continues with impunity in several States. The latest Socio-Economic Caste Census data released on July

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3 reveals that 1, 80, 657 households are engaged in this degrading work for a livelihood. Maharashtra, with 63,713, tops the list with the largest number of manual scavenger households, followed by Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Tripura and Karnataka, as per Census data.

The 1961 census, in which 3.5 million manual scavenging households had been found and roughly 8 lakh persons were engaged in manual scavenging, the present census findings show the great reduction in the numbers of people engaging in this degrading practice.

The movement continue

- India celebrated the 125th birth centenary of B R Ambedkar on 14 April this year, continuing the movement he began long ago when he asked the Dalits not to do jobs like manual scavenging.
 - The Safai Karamchari Andolan undertook the Bhim Yatra that travelled across the country for 125 days, passing through 500 districts in 30 states.
 - The organisers called it “a journey of pain and anguish, to tell the country” and the government to “stop killing us” (the manual scavengers) in dry latrines, sewers and septic tanks.
 - The dehumanising practice of manual scavenging still continues in spite of laws created to abolish it, and thousands dying in sewers and septic tanks is a reality.
 - The occupation and those engaged in it have been glorified by Mahatma Gandhi and later the Gandhians, who equate “a manual scavenger to a mother taking care of a child.”
- The occupational history of the respondents and their families shows a drastic shift in occupation among the migrants.
 - Over three generations one observes that the members of the marginal castes from rural areas who were predominantly agricultural labourers in the rural economy are assimilated in the urban labour market as scavengers, first largely in the organised sector in local bodies and then in the informal sector.
 - The processes of urbanisation, and to a certain extent the policies of the state, have been instrumental in diverting a specific caste group to the occupation of scavenging in the cities.
 - Today when the links between castes and traditional occupation have almost disappeared, urbanisation has made the members of the marginal castes even more closely identified with the scavenging occupation and the local authorities perceive scavengers as indispensable functionaries of the state.
 - Although they are employed in the organised as well as the informal sector, the state is the largest agency which employs and pays over a million scavengers.
 - In urban areas, all functions related to sanitation are carried out mostly by the marginal castes and a large majority of them are women (IDSN).
 - They have, therefore, become sweepers and scavengers and a niche has been created for them in the urban areas.

Study of scavengers

- The very process of urbanisation and the state itself have played significant roles in establishing the members of the marginal castes as scavengers in urban areas.
- **Focusing of Bhim Yatra**
 - The Bhim Yatra focused on the issue of manual scavengers inviting the nation to look beyond the occupation.
 - Men continue to die, not the practice of manual scavenging—and the practices of untouchability and discrimination inherent in it survive.

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- A large majority of women it is considered part of their destiny to inherit the dehumanising profession—“the custom of the household”—to which they are forced at a young age with their mothers, leaving behind their education and future prospects.
- They continue to die, with ill-health and the deprivation of basic dignity of life.
- A large number of women supporters who travelled across India to convince those engaged in such occupations to leave and campaign against this caste occupation.
- The measure of untouchability that exists in our society will define the extent of “clean (swachh) Bharat” and “clean Indians.”
- However, a true change of attitude of the clean Indians is beyond the Bhim Yatra.

Main storming - GS - II

MANUAL SCAVENGING IN MAHARASHTRA

EPW

Swachh Bharat campaign

- Men go down the septic tank, and not sure whether they will come alive or not.
- Day by day numbers of deaths are increasing and every other day we hear in the news of septic tank death.
- Thousands of men and women in her community are dreaming of belonging to a clean people of clean India, where attitudes and values of equality, of equal treatment and of equal opportunities are part of dignified citizenship.
- Will Swachh Bharat campaign, a pet project of the government, address the heart of the issue, that is, manual scavenging is an “unclean occupation” and needs to be uprooted from its association with caste and untouchability in India?
- In years to come protest movements like the Bhim Yatra may succeed in liberating manual scavengers from the inhuman practice and many engaged in manual scavenging may be saved from being killed in the name of “cleanliness” and “hygiene.”
- One day India, through its Swachh Bharat campaign, may take the matter more seriously to mechanise and modernise the sanitation system with toilets everywhere.

- Manual scavenging refers to the act of cleaning a dry latrine or carrying human waste to dispose it off, without use of proper gears of safety.
- Even Safai Karamchari Andolan focused on dry latrine cleaning followed by septic tank cleaning and left out mechanisms and practices of waste disposal and manual scavenging in civic municipalities where dry latrines do not exist
- Maharashtra has the highest number of manual scavengers

Manual Scavenging In Maharashtra

- Most of the sewage workers come into direct contact of human waste during their work
- Some clean the manual waste with bare hands and some use basic equipments like spade and basket
- The equipments provided are of poor quality
- The soaps are substandard and the gloves are either too big or too small for the workers

The Rules and The Reality

- Most of the sewage workers do not receive any kind of training
- Those who receive , they receive informal training

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- Many workers have to get into round chambers of 6 to 14 ft. depth which proves that the claims of mechanizing this process are false
- According to the rules, there should be a minimum of three persons should be there at the time of sewage cleaning, one of them should be a supervisor. but in reality, they hardly work under any supervision
- The atmosphere within the confined space of drainage system should be checked for oxygen deficiency and presence of combustible and poisonous gases. The procedure is not followed. Even workers do not know about it
- The workers should check the presence of harmful gases by holding a lead acetate paper but in reality they just hold a lighted matchstick at the mouth of the sewer to do so
- Rehabilitation and special assistance to the children of these workers

Conclusion

- To conclude, the workers have to be trained and provided with better working conditions
- As a society, we should understand the importance of their work and their humiliation
- Without correcting the discrepancies in the cleaning systems, we cannot aim for a 'SWACCH BHARAT'

Main storming - GS - II**HEALTH INEQUALITY IN INDIA****EPW****The Caste and the Family**

- Most of the toilet cleaners, sewage cleaners in municipalities and hospitals belong to Scheduled Caste followed by OBC (Valmikis Mehtars and Bhangis in Maharashtra)
- A large proportion of workers receiving jobs from general category are from Uttar Pradesh and Bihar
- Most of them are from the family of manual scavengers
- Most of the children of these workers do the job of their parents in case of retirement or injury under the hereditary system provided to class 4 workers

The solutions

- Abolition of dry latrines and open defecation
- Establishing scrutiny mechanisms for the work process of the municipalities
- Arresting contractualisation

- India has a long history of collecting data on population and health, but it is neither integrated nor systematic, especially in small geographical areas. The National Population Register should be completed, completeness of the coverage of the Civil Registration System (CRS) should be ensured, and their linkage should be established with census and other household surveys in India to document health disparities by class, caste, and region.
- Since the initiation of the millennium development goals (MDGs), India has become a locus of global health research, because its enormous population can let it play a major role in shaping global health indicators, and because health inequality across class, caste, religion, and regions is extreme. Health inequality is the main challenge for national and subnational public health policies. Special policies and programmes have been introduced over the years to address the health needs of backward regions and socio-economically deprived populations. In the light of these policies and programmes, demographers, public health researchers, and other social scientists are continually attempting to assess the tempo and quantum of health inequality.

Voluntary registration

- Data on mortality and causes of death make up one of the basic requirements for assessing health inequality.
- The developed world's experience taught us that registration of deaths serves as the best source of mortality data.
- The British introduced the Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act, 1886 in India, it was hardly successful, because registration was purely voluntary.
- The Registration of Births and Deaths Act, enacted in 1969 made the registration of births and deaths compulsory, and the failure to register births and deaths punishable.
- The latest estimate of the coverage of deaths, for 2010, is about 67%. The coverage in some states (Goa, Mizoram, and Kerala) is as high as 95% but as low as 20% in Bihar.
- The Deaths are registered at the place of death rather than at the place of usual residence. Therefore, it is difficult to match the number of death cases to the persons exposed to compute the accurate rate for small areas even where the coverage of deaths is good.
- Further, the CRS provides very limited information on the socio-economic characteristics of dead persons.

State level estimate

- Estimation only at the state level, and not at the district level. Indian districts are well known for their huge population size (70% have a population of more than a million) and extreme inter-district mortality inequality.
- Indirect demographic estimates of mortality measures show that intra-state variation in mortality might be as high as inter-state variation in mortality.

- It does not provide information on the socio-economic condition of the deceased; hence, it limits one of the prime objectives of health inequality research—to document mortality inequality among socio-economic subgroups.
- It does not provide unit-level information. Since unit-level data forms the basis of most advanced methods to estimate health inequality precisely, additional analyses and explorations of different inequality hypotheses cannot be tested from Sample Registration System (SRS) aggregate data.

Introduce NRHM

- The health delivery system in India is expected to record deaths in institutions. Because over 75% of total deaths take place at home, the system cannot capture these.
- The introduction of the National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) in 2005, demand for micro-level data on population and health has increased tremendously at the health facility level.
- In 2008, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) introduced an ambitious Health Management Information System (HMIS) to capture all vital events and transmit the information electronically to ensure quick collation and tabulation of data on maternal and child health indicators at small geographical/administrative/health facility level.
- Government health facilities grossly under-report deaths, and private health facilities do not report deaths at all, HMIS data on mortality are grossly under-reported.
- Further, as the HMIS does not provide information on the exposed population, it is not possible to calculate the mortality rate.

Anthropometric data for Indian children

- The three rounds of NFHS data provide anthropometric measurements of children

under five and women aged 15–49. This data can be used to effectively estimate important nutritional indicators, such as the percentages of wasted and stunted children.

- The third round of NFHS also provided anthropometric data for men aged 15–54 years. These data are quite useful for understanding the socio-economic differential in the nutritional status of children and adults in India, and the trend of changes from one round to another.
- Various rounds of surveys of the National Sample Survey Office (NSSO) data also provide rich information on the nutritional intake of Indian households.
- The Ministry of Women and Child Development recently published a Rapid Survey on Children 2013–14, but it is only a fact sheet that contains certain indicators; no report has been published so far.

Utilisation of Healthcare

- The NFHS and DLHS provide significant information on the utilisation of healthcare services in districts in India over the past three decades, especially in the area of maternal and child health (MCH), and by socio-economic characteristics and sub regions and trends in various indicators on antenatal care, delivery care, post-natal care, and the immunisation pattern.
- Demographers, epidemiologists, health economists, and other social scientists have analysed the NFHS and District Level Household Survey (DLHS) data extensively to examine the magnitude of inequality in the utilisation of MCH services. But these surveys do not pay much attention to the general population's utilisation of healthcare.
- The NSSO and IHDS, also give limited information on the utilisation of healthcare services.

However, the sampling design of the IHDS is not suitable for estimating inequality in health indicators.

- The purpose of including a health section in this survey is to test association between socio-economic factors and health indicators, not to measure levels and inequalities in health.
- To provide service utilisation at decentralised level, the HMIS was launched recently; however, it might take time for the HMIS to stabilise and provide quality data for researchers to understand the magnitude and trend of inequality in service utilisation across time, space, and population subgroups.
- The most important contribution of the NSSO and IHDS in the assessment of health inequality in India is that these provide information on financial risk protection arising out of healthcare expenditure. This crucial information was missing in other large surveys on health and well-being in India. Information on health expenditure, source of expenditure, and insurance coverage is a critical input for assessing unequal access to care and its differential impact on various socio-economic groups.

Indian system of data

- The Government of India should ensure the universalisation of civil registration through adequate legal, budgetary, and administrative support.
- Civil registration lies at the heart of inclusive development in India, as it provides its citizens legal identity that, in turn, enables voice, choice, and protection.
- Currently, the main obstacles to improving civil registration include poorly trained part-time registrars, poor access to registration offices in remote areas, and the poor perception of government officials and citizens towards civil registration and their negative attitude towards it.

- The registration of births and death events is carried out part-time by schoolteachers, gram sevaks, village accountants, etc. These local registrars are usually overloaded with their primary job, and receive little training or incentives for their part-time job.
- Proper training and incentives might help to increase the coverage of CRS in India. Raising mass awareness through all types of media will be a crucial step.
- Use of technology (say, mobile phone) in registration of vital events in remote areas can improve registration significantly.
- The sake of “transparency” and to ensure there is no “favouritism”, is the government’s argument.
- The Collegium’s counter-argument is that “recordings of reasons for overlooking a Chief Justice or a senior puisne Judge will be counter-productive” as the reasons specified may mar his/her prospects of being elevated to the Supreme Court at a “future point of time”.
- Moreover, it may also affect his/her duties as judge or Chief Justice and may become a “permanent blot on his/her career”.

Main storming - GS - II

JUDGING THE JUDGES

EPW

- The Supreme Court, in October 2015, struck down the National Judicial Appointments Commission (NJAC) Act and the 99th Constitutional Amendment which gave politicians and civil society a final say in the appointment of judges in High Courts and the Supreme Court.
- It was this judgment that had recommended “appropriate measures” to improve the working of the Collegium system. A separate order, passed by a five-judge bench in December 2015, listed factors — these included eligibility criteria, transparency in the appointment process, secretariat and complaints — for preparing the Memorandum of Procedure (MoP).

Need Transparency

- The government has proposed that “in case a senior Chief Justice being overlooked for elevation to the Supreme Court, the reasons for the same be recorded in writing”.
- The five judges of the Collegium for appointing Supreme Court judges, the views of each one must be made known to the government.

Presidential reference

- The judges quote a 1998 judgment of a Supreme Court Constitution Bench in response to a Presidential reference on the issue of appointment and transfer of judges. “Where therefore, there is outstanding merit”.
- “The possessor thereof deserves to be appointed regardless of the fact that he may not stand high in the all-India seniority list or in his own High Court.. All that then needs to be recorded when recommending him for appointment is that he has outstanding merit.”\
- The government thinks that merely recording that “has outstanding merit” is not enough — and not acceptable.
- The government claims, the 1998 judgment does not imply that reasons need not be given when senior judges are being overlooked.

Fixing a quota

- The government proposed that up to three judges may be appointed from the Bar or from distinguished jurists with proven track records.
- All judges of the Supreme Court should be open to recommend names for these postings. But “up to three” tantamount to “either restricting the intake from the bar or fixing a quota of the bar”.

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- In neither case does it fall within the framework of the Constitutional provisions. After deliberation, the government has agreed with this view that fixing a limit is not necessary so long as their representation is assured.
- The secretariat would help cast a wider net for better candidates and for the Collegium to decide, it should have comparative data.

Institutional mechanism

- Surely, the binding nature of the Collegium's recommendation is what's bothering the government.
- As per the existing system, the Collegium's recommendations can be sent back but if it reiterates then the same, it is binding on the President.
- The government's proposal to set up an institutional mechanism in the form of a committee to assist the Collegium in evaluation of the suitability of prospective candidates.
- Two retired judges of the Supreme Court and an eminent person/jurist to be jointly nominated by the Chief Justice of India and the government.
- The Collegium feels that's not necessary.
- The government counters that "wider consultation is necessary to select best candidates". To underline this, it argues that "consultation" is embedded in the Constitution when it comes to judges' postings.
- Article 124(2) says: "Every Judge of the Supreme Court shall be appointed by the President by warrant under his hand and seal after consultation with such of the Judges of the Supreme Court and of the High Courts in the States as the President may deem necessary for the purpose."

Permanent secretariat

- The government has also proposed that there be a secretariat that maintains a database of judges, schedules Collegium meetings, maintains records and receives recommendations and complaints related to judges' postings.
- The judiciary hasn't rejected the idea of "a permanent secretariat" but it believes that forming and functioning of it should be left to the wisdom of the CJI and it should be under the ambit of the Registrar of the apex court. The government, however, wants it to be under the Law Ministry.

Main storming - GS - II**RAISING A STINK****EPW**

- The 70 percent of households in India don't have access to toilets, whether in rural areas or urban slums. Roughly 60 percent of the country's 1.2 billion people still defecate in the open. And the consequences for women are huge. These range from polluted water leading to women and children dying from childbirth-related infections to the risk and reality of being attacked and raped, most infamously the gang rape of two teenage girls in rural northern India two years ago.
- More than 1 million toilets have been planned or built. But even where they have been built, studies have shown that the vast majority are not being used, especially in rural areas. In some cases, it's because the toilets still aren't connected to clean water and sewers. But more importantly, there's been no widespread education effort to change the country's culture of open defecation and lack of sanitation.

Happen in the National Capital

- In between December 2013 and March 2015, as many as 171 children were missing from the Shahbad Dairy slum in outer Delhi. Of these 66 remain untraced. The common link in the story was that their parents had sent them to the

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nearby forest to defecate because there was no toilet in the slum with around 500 households. Of the 171 missing, five had been killed, 28 girls had been raped and 17 girls had been sexually assaulted.

- The crisis of sanitation is not just an issue of aesthetics or polite behaviour, but one of life and death for the most vulnerable.
- One in every two Indians continues to defecate in the open.
- The price for the lack of toilets is paid not just by women, who are often attacked, molested, raped and shamed, but also by children who are sent out unaccompanied to defecate in the open.
- Not only was the Shahbad Dairy slum without a single toilet, there was no toilet within a two kilometre radius. After the disappearances, parents stopped feeding their children any food after sunset.
- If this can happen in the national capital, in the shadow of the institutions that plan campaigns like Swachh Bharat and the earlier Nirmal Bharat Abhiyan, one can just imagine the reality in other parts of the country.

NSSO survey

- Since the Swachh Bharat programme was launched in October 2014, an estimated 9,093 crore has been spent to build around 1.8 crore toilets.
- According to a National Sample Survey Office (NSSO) study, only 42.5% of rural households had water that they could use in their toilets. In other words, more than half or 57.5% of rural households with toilets did not have any water.
- While the NSSO survey addresses rural households with toilets, less than half or 45.3% of rural households have toilets, with or without water.

- More than half of India's rural population continues to defecate in the open.
- The absence of water, the NSSO survey revealed that only a little over a third, that is 36.7% of these rural toilets had a pakki nail, or a lined drain, to take away the waste, 16% of the liquid waste drained directly into a local pond and another 7% went into the local river.
- While urban areas are better served than villages, the urban poor are in many ways worse off than their rural counterparts because of the density of population and the lack of open spaces.

Public Health Issue

- The recent studies have suggested that stunting in children in India could be linked to open defecation because children are more likely to contract intestinal infections in an environment where there is no safe method to dispose of faecal waste.
- Frequent illnesses compound the health problems of poor children who are malnourished. Even if they survive, their growth is severely affected.
- According to some studies, stunting in India's children is greater than in some countries in sub-Saharan Africa.
- The challenge of ending open defecation requires detailed planning and implementation of sustainable water and sanitation programmes rather than grand declarations of intent.
- In the absence of such planning, we cannot expect a magic wand that will make open defecation disappear in India.
- It is shameful that while Indian politicians, including the Prime Minister, boast about the country's growth rate, its children cannot be protected from predators, human and animal, because they are forced to defecate in the open.

The current era of Indo-US relations began after the Clinton administration's containment policies failed to isolate India following its 1998 nuclear tests. India emerged from these sanctions a resurgent country under the leadership of prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee. The United States then adopted a policy of accommodation towards India, with the two countries transforming their estranged relations into a strategic partnership. When Modi came to power, he did not allow his personal differences with the United States to dictate bilateral ties. Instead, Modi decided to redirect efforts to sustain and deepen ties. This quickly became evident when Modi made a state visit to the United States in September 2014 on the invitation of President Obama. Subsequently, Obama became the first US president to be the chief guest at the Republic Day Parade in New Delhi in January 2015.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's recent trip to the United States (US) has been lauded at home as a major step forward in Indo-US relations. This is true inasmuch as Modi has gone further and faster than any of his predecessors in locking India in a tight strategic embrace with the US.

Maritime Supremacy in Asia

- The China's increasing hard power and its tough stance on maritime disputes in the South China Sea. While India is not a party to the dispute, it has legitimate concerns about whether China might unilaterally rewrite the rules of the road in Asia.
- The China is allowed to bulldoze its smaller neighbours in South - East Asia, it may well set a precedent for its behaviour elsewhere.
- India is also keen to ensure open, balanced, and transparent security architecture in Asia.

- The US, India has expressed concern about "freedom of navigation" in the South China Sea. If there was indeed a genuine threat to freedom of navigation and commerce in the South China Sea, then India might be well advised to call for upholding it.
- Freedom of navigation is an American euphemism for freedom for the US Navy to patrol close to China's coastline. The so-called "freedom of navigation patrols" is nothing but an assertion of American maritime supremacy in Asia.
- The putative threat from China is but a fig leaf behind which to reinvigorate American maritime presence and alliances in the region.
- An overwhelming amount of China's own trade and energy pass through this region, what interest does China have in impeding freedom of navigation.
- The "Indo-Pacific" being an indivisible strategic arena hold much water.
- Each sub region of this vast area—East China Sea, South China Sea and Indian Ocean—has distinctive security problems.

Hierarchical Order

- The alternative to US "leadership" in Asia would be a hierarchical order led by the "Middle Kingdom;" one in which the sovereignty of its neighbours would be curtailed.
- The implicit assumption is that American hegemony is not hierarchical and does not impinge on the sovereignty of its allies.
- In short, by embracing the American "line" on this issue, we are signalling our willingness to help uphold US military dominance in Asia, and to do so in theatres where we have no direct interests at stake.
- Whether or not we are prepared to participate in US-led patrols, the fact remains that we are willing to accommodate ourselves to the overall strategic conception of the US.

Global partnership

- China's policy of propping up Pakistan as a counterweight to India in South Asia is well known.
- The US too has worked with Pakistan to undercut India's regional interests.
- The past decade, the Americans were unwilling to allow India to play a larger role in Afghanistan owing to Pakistan's "sensitivities."
- Now, as Washington is scaling back its commitment to Afghanistan, it wants India to step up.
- A couple of months ago, the US and China were working with Pakistan to get the Afghan government and the Taliban to talk.
- The US will prefer to work with Pakistan and will be prepared to accommodate its illegitimate interests in Afghanistan.
- India pointed out that a "global partnership" with the US can obscure the fundamentally lopsided nature of this developing relationship.

Problematic economic dimension

- The Bilateral Investment Treaty remains stuck on differences over taxation and investor-state dispute settlement.
- Washington has made it clear that "progress" on this front is critical for American capital's embrace of India.
- The two sides are also divided on intellectual property rights (IPR). Indeed, India continues to remain on the US government's IPR "watchlist." Nor has there been any significant progress in negotiating the Totalisation Agreement.
- In the multilateral arena, too, the economic interests of India and the US remain divergent.
- The two countries are at loggerheads in the World Trade Organization.

- The US continues to portray India as a "spoiler" in multilateral trade negotiations and has effectively placed these on ice.
- In an effort to rewrite the rules of globalisation, the US has taken the lead in negotiating the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) and the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership with the European Union.
- The TPP is billed as an agreement embodying new and more progressive norms on such issues as labour and environment standards, and state support for public enterprises.

TPP Agreement

- In fact, it is an attempt to get Asian countries to harmonise their regulatory frameworks with the norms set by the US.
- Washington to break down the final barriers of protectionism in countries like Japan. Most importantly, by keeping China out of the TPP, the US hopes to undercut its economic competitiveness.
- India is but collateral damage of this US policy against China. Even if the US were to invite India to join the TPP, it is inconceivable that we can accept the "reforms" demanded of members.
- However, if the TPP agreement is ratified by the US Congress, the fallout will be serious. India will effectively face huge non-tariff barriers in accessing the most dynamic economies of the Asia-Pacific.
- The implications for Modi's flagship "Make in India" programme are worth pondering about.
- Let alone the TPP, the US is unwilling to facilitate India's membership in the Asia-Pacific Economic Community (APEC).
- A misshapen relationship with the US. India has already made a hefty down payment: diluting our law on nuclear liability to accommodate

unreasonable American demands, and whittling down our concerns about entering into a logistics exchange memorandum of agreement, which will benefit the US much more than us.

Main storming - GS - II

STUDYING CHILDHOOD IN INDIA | EPW

- Our ability to use childhood as an analytical term depends upon the amount and type of knowledge we possess about parenting , teaching , children’s literature and children themselves – both past and present
- In India , there is diversity of circumstances in which childhood unfolds – different economic conditions , caste , gender and rural or urban areas

EUROPE’S CHILD

- In the mid 18th century in Europe , children’s education and health became the highest priority , both politically and socially
- Two facets of ideas of protection in Europe are
 1. Physical protection of children from induction into work
 2. Protection of children from the knowledge of sexual good and evil , from the social practice of sexuality
- The first resulted in the right of children to be compulsorily looked after , not merely by the family , but by an institutional apparatus designed by the state
- The other resulted in the notion of childhood as a period of sexual innocence coinciding with and extending the psychological stage of latency
- Freedom from sexual exploitation during childhood has proved far more elusive than freedom from induction in work

Problems in India

- In rural areas , children often participate in the agricultural or craft related occupational life of their families
- Child labour has taken forms of prostitution and domestic servitude in cities
- Law and order are struggling to provide justice to exploited children
- Even after a substantial decline in cases of child marriages , girls are always taught to place their matrimony and motherhood above all other things
- The children of lower castes are less likely to get proper education
- Many poor families cannot afford to educate all their children , ending u educating only their sons
- It is a misconception that educated class is not conscious about the caste system

Conclusion

- With the growing use of information technology , we have come into a world where parents and teachers can no longer play the role of protectors(more pro-action required)
- This area of internet needs to be carefully regulated as it blurs all the boundaries of states , i.e , caste and nations making children more vulnerable
- Strengthening of juvenile laws, and protecting childhood via schemes like operation smile is a welcome step.

Main storming - GS - II

THE ANTI-SPITTING INITIATIVES IN INDIA?

EPW

In the developed world, the practice of spitting in public has declined largely due to behavioural and cultural changes. However, in the less developed

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countries, people are known to spit indiscriminately in public places, especially where there is a corner. The practice is not limited to the betel leaf-chewing population which discolours room corners and stairs in public offices. One can also observe people spitting on the roads, commuters dirtying public transport, moviegoers spitting in cinema halls. The act of spitting has socio cultural and especially gender dimensions, spitting is largely practised by men and one rarely finds women spitting in public places.

The recent anti-spitting initiatives in India, it is important to debate the efficacy of legislations in the complex Indian scenario and suggest a comprehensive strategy for controlling the practice. An international spitting survey Asian countries such as India, China and South Korea feature amongst the three most significant spitting nations in the world.

Spitting in India

- Betel-chewing and spitting in spittoons which more or less disappeared in recent times.
- Betel-chewing and spitting in public places and on the corners of public offices, stairs.
- Compulsive spitting in public places and on the roads.
- Spitting from moving vehicles (cars, buses and trains).
- Spitting for religious reasons—for example on fasting days.
- The spitting pattern in India is more complex than in the West, although Indians never practised the under the dining table spitting as was common in Britain and the US.
- Spitting into a “spittoon,” a vessel meant for spitting, was a common sight through most of the Mughal period and is seen in some homes in India, where the spittoon would be circulated amongst guests to spit out the betel leaf juice or paan as it is locally called.

Culture Bound Syndrome

- Spitting as a culture-specific or culture-bound syndrome (CBS).
- CBS is a combination of psychiatric and somatic symptoms that are considered to be a recognisable disease only within a specific society or culture, compulsive spitting as a culture-bound syndrome and concluded that more research was needed to understand the “why” of spitting in the Indian context.
- Spitting has cultural significance as well; spitting on the sides of a child is believed to ward off the evil eye or nazar.
- The economic burden of indiscriminate spitting could also be very high. For example, data shows that the Indian Railways spends crores of rupees every year in cleaning and scrubbing the spit marks (Spit Free India Campaign).

Public Health

- Kerala was one of the first states in India which banned spitting and blowing of nose in public places way back in 2006 on the basis of a directive from the high court. The court noted that this act posed serious health hazards to the public.
- The government responded that spittoons will be provided in public places!
- The order identified that diseases such as TB, influenza, pneumonia, chicken pox, diphtheria, endemic fever, and whooping cough were spread through phlegm and spit.
- Evidently, the government response did not, however, evoke any response from the official machinery.
- The Maharashtra government came up with a new anti-spitting law;
- The Maharashtra Health Safety and Spitting Prohibition Act, 2015, which banned public spitting and imposed a fine of up to 5,000 and

mandatory social service in a hospital or in a public office .

- The increase in TB cases as one of the reasons for bringing out a new law and according to him, the anti-spitting norms would be made more stringent although till date nothing is implemented administratively and statutorily.

Change Socio Cultural Values

- The attempt to curb spitting at public place is limited to the enactment of laws against it. However, due to poor implementation of these rules, we have hardly made any progress except in highly monitored environment like the metro stations, etc.
- The Abhiyans (campaigns) may not always lead to “Swachh Bharat.” This also leads us to think about the new strategies to curb this practice apart from enactment of laws. It requires change in social and cultural values and alignment of values at all levels.
- Alignment of values and ownership is an important component which is missing in the present public “prescriptions” against public spitting.
- The difficult to unlearn behaviour and learn new behavioural pattern at the individual level, it is easier to create a culture for the particular behaviour through alignment of common values for the common good.
- The sanitary indiscretions or infractions and the so-called “crimes against public health” in India are perhaps wide and interconnected which may require a much more concerted strategy.
- For instance, the Pan Parag and pan culture in Delhi, many North Indian states, and in Mumbai actively encourage a spitting population and even render provision of spittoons or billboards, as tried in Britain, inefficient.
- The Pan Parag and gutkha culture has now been exported to many South Indian states, including Kerala, where the migrant workers from the

North Indian states use it extensively and have created a market for it and even transferred the habit to the local people.

- The socio cultural underpinnings of the practice of betel-chewing are deep-rooted and are probably difficult to eradicate with legislations.
- A package using a combination of different strategies, such as educational, behavioural and legal, using formal and informal channels can be experimented.
- Similarly cross-cultural empirical studies have to be carried out to understand the factors that motivate/compel people to practise public spitting.
- However, what is needed is evidence regarding the bacteriological and other biomedical impacts due to spitting and a pattern-wise risk assessment.
- The name of “Swachh Bharat Abhiyan” is a half-hearted aesthetic and civilising approach which would fizzle out after sometime.

Main storming - GS - II

“BREXIT”

EPW

Issue:

- A referendum – a vote in which everyone of voting age can take part was held to decide whether the UK should leave or remain in the European Union.
- Leave camp won the referendum

Quick facts:

- Great Britain - England, Wales, Scotland.
- United Kingdom - England, Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland.
- British Islands- UK + Great Britain + Isle of Man + Channel Islands (Guernsey, Jersey).

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- British Isles - Great Britain + UK + British Islands + Republic of Ireland.
- Republic of Ireland - It is a separate country. Capital is Belfast. Separated from UK in 1920.
- Only 19/28 EU countries are part of it. Obviously UK is not party to it.
- Euro is also used by 4 other European countries – Vatican, Andorra, San Marino, Monaco.

Why referendum?

- As a part of its election manifesto, the Conservative party announced the referendum.

European Union:

- It is an economic and political partnership involving 28 European countries.
- It is a single market (common market) allowing goods and people to move around, basically as if the member states were one country.
- 1951- Treaty of Paris (European Coal and Steel community).
- 1957- Treaty of Rome (European Economic Community).
- 1992- Maastricht Treaty (EU formally came).
- 2002- Euro currency replaced the national currencies.

Schengen area:

- Schengen VISA is a common visa within European countries.
- There are 26 Schengen countries (22 /28 EU + 4 Non EU)
- 4 Non EU – Iceland, Norway, Switzerland, Liechtenstein .
- 6 EU not party – Croatia, Cyprus, Bulgaria, Romania, Ireland and the UK.

EURO currency:

- Euro currency is used by Euro zone countries.
- Euro zone is subset of EU.

Reasons for BREXIT:

- Sovereignty – that Britain ceded its sovereignty, right to pass its own laws to bureaucrats sitting in EU.
- Regulations – The EU imposed too many regulations that hurt British business interest
- Money – Billions of pounds of entry fee with very little to show in return . Britain don't have many farmers to get agriculture subsidies.
- Open borders/ migration – even though Britain is not part Schengen, workers from rest of the EU can come their freely and work there.
 - o Large numbers from eastern europe came just to claim British benefits, social security so called welfare tourism.

Remain camp Vs Leave camp :

- The “remain” in the EU campaign put its biggest emphasis on the economic benefits of the UK staying in the EU.
- While the “leave” campaign increasingly emphasised immigration and the fact that there is free movement of labour within the EU, exploiting populist and xenophobic concerns about immigration as well as encouraging voters to see immigration as the cause of their concerns on education, the National Health Service (NHS) and housing.

Impact of BREXIT:

- The populists in France and the Netherlands rapidly called, after the Brexit vote, for referendums on EU membership in their countries too.

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- Pound dipped dramatically.
- The Euro also fell on the currency markets and stock markets fell across the EU with the turmoil affecting wider global markets too.
- The move could trigger the disintegration of the UK as majority of Scots opted to stay in EU.
- With Scotland and Northern Ireland voting to stay in the EU, against England and Wales voting to leave, a political and constitutional as well as economic crisis has been unleashed.
- One of the extra ordinary features of the referendum campaign was that the leave side had no coherent proposal or description of what sort of future relationship the UK would have with the EU.
- This lack of clarity has led to many banks and other financial organisations now looking to move staff and operations elsewhere in the EU, a process starting within the first few days of the result.
- It will embolden the political tendency to experiment risky alternatives.
- A healthy utopian aspiration has been rejected in favour of a nation state.
- Close margin of victory and geographical support shows the clear divide within the society of United Kingdom.

Impact on India:

- Little turbulence in stock markets due to panics of BREXIT.
- In future FTAs can be made with Britain.
- Delhi C.M. hinted about a referendum regarding the Statehood of delhi.

Is BREXIT a Lehman moment ?

- The Lehman moment is the moment when Lehman Brothers—one of the largest investment

banks in the United States (US) at the time—collapsed on 2008.

- The world equity markets recovered their losses after the Brexit moment. But, this was because of the expected coordinated interventions by the world’s major central banks, which they fulfilled.

Majority anxieties:

- Brexit campaigners fought the battle on the plank of anti-migrants — only if immigrants are prevented from entering the British Isles, people’s lives would be better.
- This appealed to supporters of Brexit, many of whom are rural-based, poor, and less educated citizens of England. Hit hard by austerity measures of the Conservative government, they lead lives embedded in anxiety.

Popular sovereignty:

- Certainly referral of contentious matters to ‘the people’, and the majority principle puts into practice the basic presupposition of democracy: popular sovereignty. However, democracy cannot be reduced to majority rule.
- The majority principle is workable, but it is morally unjustified because it violates the right of minorities to secure ‘voice’ in decision-making.

Lessons from a Swiss canton

- A system of checks and balances has to be devised for referendums/plebiscites.
- Three referendums should be held over a period of six years to vote on the issue. The gap between enables the cooling down of political passions, provides opportunities for reasoned and informed debate, rational examination of the complexities of the issue at hand, and rethinking.

- The decisions should be binding only if a two-third or a three-fourth majority approves of a course of action, as in the case of constitutional amendments.
- The outcomes of referendums need not be binding; they merely place an obligation on a democratically elected government to proceed in a certain way.

Democracy deficit:

- Unfortunately, politics today has become like instant coffee or noodles; a matter of reaching out to people via the social media instantaneously and unreflectively.
- Social media, which hosts completely irresponsible, vicious messages, has replaced face-to-face interaction and mobilisation.

Brexit and terror:

- When Brexit becomes a reality, the British resolve to counter jihad and all that goes with it will be greatly diluted
- There is a possible disruption of international law enforcement networks and its effect on counterterrorism.
- There is one view that in isolation from the rest of the present European Union (EU), Britain may actually be better equipped to deal with infiltration of jihadist elements through stricter border control and monitoring of traffic from the EU countries, which have had a considerable influx from West Asia last year.
- The U.S. State Department's annual Country Reports for 2015 released a fortnight ago highlights the growing decentralised and diffused nature of terrorism globally.

Main storming - GS - II

THE ROLE OF NGOS, SHGS, VARIOUS GROUPS AND ASSOCIATIONS

EPW

- The Central government has acted against a number of NGOs in India in the past two years for allegedly violating the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act.
- In a recent analysis report, the UN Special Rapporteur on rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association said, "there are currently serious obstacles to the right to freedom of association that violate international law."

Excerpts from 'his' interview:

- Concern about India's FCRA regulations:
- Clearly there is evidence of a problem, and reason to be concerned. He received a number of reports over the years from activists and organisations who feel that they have been targeted by the government.

Indian government stifling NGOs?

- Currently there are some serious obstacles to the right to freedom of association that violate international law, and that these obstacles have increased in recent years.
- Some sources reporting tens of thousands of NGOs losing their licences to receive foreign funding.
- At the same time, civil society in India remains vibrant — at least for the moment. India is seen as a leader for other countries, but unfortunately in this area it is leading in the wrong direction.

FCRA appears to contravene India's obligations under the ICCPR. What measures can India take in this regard?

- The first, which can be done tomorrow, is to be more permissive in interpretation of the law.

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- The second, which would take legislative action, is to repeal the law.
- The third is for a domestic court to find the law unconstitutional or in violation of international law.
- Even a democracy and its legislative institutions have to respect the international obligations of the state.

Can't a country mandate that organisations raise funds internally?

- Under international law, governments clearly can't put a blanket restriction on organisations receiving any foreign funding.
- Government of India is a massive player when it comes to overseas development aid — both as a donor and a recipient.
- Why should it be okay for the government to receive and donate funds, but not for independent organisations?

What's the way forward?

- The best-case scenario would be for India to invite UN Special Rapporteur to conduct an official country visit, where he can meet with government officials and civil society in person.
- And UN Special Rapporteur would like to see the Government of India — whether via the executive, legislative or judicial branch — so that he can act on his analysis and make the appropriate adjustments to the FCRA.

Main storming - GS - III

SUSTAINING GDP GROWTH

The latest GDP growth data released by the Central Statistics Office show that India's economy expanded by 7.9 per cent in the three months ended March, a sharp acceleration from the marginally

downsized 7.2 per cent achieved in the preceding quarter. Significantly, that this growth has been achieved despite a prolonged and widespread drought, which would certainly have dampened rural demand, is noteworthy. Even if it is assumed that this provisional figure is likely to be revised downward by about 10 basis points, in line with the revisions for recent quarters, the number would still end up keeping India at the top of the heap among the world's fastest-growing major economies.

The result of the strong fiscal fourth-quarter performance is that growth for the full year was lifted to 7.6 per cent, from 7.2 per cent in 2014-15. And the wind in the sails was clearly the robust private consumption expenditure, which increased 7.4 per cent last fiscal compared with 6.2 per cent the year earlier. But then, different statistics offer different perspectives, and some of the other data released by the CSO paint a more modest picture of the economy.

The current quarter outlook

- Gross Value Added at basic prices provisionally grew 7.2 per cent for the full year, barely nudging up from the 7.1 per cent pace posted in 2014-15, and slower than the Reserve Bank of India's projection for 7.4 per cent growth.
- The GVA figure is significant because it strips the impact that taxes and subsidies have on the overall GDP number.
- Thus a substantial 5.6 per cent contraction in the amount the government spent on subsidies helped inflate GDP, and by extension the pace of growth.
- The volume of rainfall, and then critically in its geographical and seasonal distribution.
- Heavy rains in areas that faced flooding last year or with crops standing in the fields ready for harvest can do more damage to the rural economy than help provide the widely expected demand fillip.

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- The CSO data revealing private sector investment having slowed and showing barely any signs of revival, the onus of providing some investment stimulus may rest squarely with the government — through increased public expenditure outlays.
- RBI Governor also has his task cut out to present the bi-monthly monetary policy statement on June 7. Given the growth data, the forecast for a normal monsoon, and the global uncertainties, he would be justified if he opts to hold interest rates and wait and watch instead.
- The “Real GDP or GDP at constant (2011-12) prices for the year 2015-16 is now estimated at Rs.113.50 lakh crore, showing a growth rate of 7.6 per cent over the First Revised Estimates of GDP for the year 2014-15 of Rs.105.52 lakh crore,” according to a statement from the Central Statistics Office.
- The statistics office also revised downwards the GDP growth rate for the previous quarters of 2015-16.
- The first quarter grew at 7.5 per cent, slightly lower than the 7.6 per cent as per the advance estimates.
- The second quarter witnessed a growth rate of 7.6 per cent compared to the 7.7 per cent in the advance estimates. The third quarter grew at 7.2 per cent compared to the previous estimate of 7.3 per cent.

The fastest-growing

- The agriculture sector grew 1.2 per cent compared to the advance estimate of 1.1 per cent. The sector contracted 0.2 per cent in the previous year.
- Manufacturing grew 9.3 per cent, slower than the 9.5 per cent forecast in the advance estimates. But this is much higher than the 5.5 per cent seen in 2014-15.
- The consolidated services sector grew 8.8 per cent in 2015-16 compared to 9.05 per cent mentioned in the advance estimates.
- Private final consumption expenditure, a proxy for private demand, grew at 7.4 per cent in 2015-16 compared to 6.4 per cent in the previous year.
- Growth in gross fixed capital formation, a measure of private sector investment, slowed down to 3.9 per cent from 4.9 per cent in 2014-15.
- Construction sector grew 3.9 per cent in 2015-16 compared to 4.4 per cent in the year-earlier period.
- The sector grew at 4.5 per cent in the fourth quarter of FY16 compared to 2.6 per cent in the year earlier period.

Main storming - GS - III**THE WETLAND ISSUES**

The government is all set to change the rules on wetlands. The Draft Wetlands (Conservation and Management) Rules, 2016, which will replace the Wetland (Conservation and Management) Rules of 2010, seek to give power to the States to decide what they must do with their wetlands. This includes deciding which wetlands should be protected and what activities should be allowed or regulated, while making affable calls for ‘sustainability’ and ‘ecosystem services’.

On the face of it, this appears to favour decentralisation and federalism. But the peculiar reality of wetlands shows that local pulls and pressures are not the best determinants for their protection. Both water in liquid form and wetlands in the form of ‘land’ are hotly contested, making wetlands the most imperilled natural ecosystem worldwide. It is imperative that the Draft Wetlands

GDP growth rate

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Rules, 2016 (comments for which close today) be looked at with a hard, if not cynical, eye. Three issues are of immediate concern.

First, the draft does away with the Central Wetlands Regulatory Authority, which had suo moto cognisance of wetlands and their protection. Second, the draft rules contain no ecological criteria for recognising wetlands, such as biodiversity, reefs, mangroves, and wetland complexes. And finally it has deleted sections on the protection of wetlands, and interpretation of harmful activities which require regulation, which found reference in the 2010 rules.

The complex case of wetlands

- The particularly complex case of wetlands warrants more checks and balances.
- In the proposed scenario, with an absence of scientific criteria for identifying wetlands, it is imperative to have a second independent functioning authority.
- Historically, as wetlands did not earn revenue, they were marked as ‘wastelands’.
- The Wetland Atlas of India says the country has 1, 88,470 inland wetlands, the actual number may be much more: U.P. itself has more than one lakh wetlands, mostly unidentified by the government.
- Significantly, the 2010 rules outline criteria for wetland identification including genetic diversity, outstanding natural beauty, wildlife habitats, corals, coral reefs, mangroves, heritage areas, and so on.

Ramsar site

- The Ramsar Convention rules are the loftiest form of wetland identification that the world follows.
- Ramsar has specific criteria for choosing a wetland as a Ramsar site, which distinguishes it as possessing ‘international importance’.

- An important distinguishing marker is that Ramsar wetlands should support significant populations of birds, fish, or other non-avian animals. This means that it is ecological functioning which distinguishes a wetland from, say, a tank, which is just a source of water.
- However, man-made tanks or sources of water can also evolve into wetlands. For instance, Kailveli tank in Tamil Nadu, an important bird area, is fed by a system of tanks and man-made channels forming a large and vibrant landscape.
- A wetland is more than a source of water, or a means for water storage, though it is often reduced to only that.
- By removing ecological and other criteria for wetland identification and protection, and the examples of activities that could hamper this physical functioning, the new draft underlines the same malaise which misses the wetlands for the water.

The 2016 Draft Wetland Rules

- The new draft calls for sustainability; this is a difficult concept to enforce, particularly with regard to water.
- Regulation of activities on a wetland and their “thresholds” are to be left entirely too local or State functionaries. There are insufficient safeguards for the same, with the lack of any law-based scientific criteria or guidance.
- The regulation of activities in the draft rules do not make any obvious connection with existing groundwater legislations because these two aspects are still seen as separate.
- The 2016 Draft Wetland Rules also call for wise use of wetlands. ‘Wise use’ is a concept used by the Ramsar Convention, and is open to interpretation.
- It could mean optimum use of resources for human purpose. It could mean not using a

wetland so that we eventually strengthen future water security. It could also mean just

- Leaving the wetland and its catchment area as is for flood control, carbon sequestration, and water recharge functions.
- A country which is both water-starved as well as seasonally water-rich, it is not just politics and use that should dictate how wetlands are treated. Sustainability cannot be reached without ecology.
- Towards this end, our wetland rules need to reinforce wetlands as more than open sources of water, and we need to revise how wetlands should be identified and conserved.

Main storming - GS - III

A SINKING MIGRANT BOAT

A sinking migrant boat carrying at least 700 migrants and refugees in the Mediterranean Sea south of Crete, The coast guard roughly 25-meter vessel that resembled a large fishing boat was located half-sunk about 75 nautical miles south of Crete in international waters, and within Egypt's search and rescue area of operation.

The death of about 700 people in three shipwrecks in the Mediterranean Sea is another reminder of the horrors of the refugee crisis confronting Europe. Despite the obvious danger of crossing the sea on small, unseaworthy vessels, tens of thousands of refugees from Africa and West Asia make this perilous journey every year, fleeing war and misery. This year, more than 2,000 people have drowned trying to reach Europe, a number that may well surpass last year's 3,700. Europe's response to the crisis has been far from effective. Globally there is a spike in the number of refugees over the past few years, mainly due to the wars and civil strife in West Asia and North Africa. Europe cannot insulate itself from such problems in its wider neighbourhood.

The rescue operation

- Greece was sending two patrol vessels, a military airplane and three helicopters, while five passing ships were participating in the rescue operation and one more was on its way.
- The coast guard operation was continuing to locate any potentially missing passengers from migrant boat.
- The boat's passengers were from, or where the vessel had set off from or was heading to.

Turkish coast to Greek

- The short crossing from the Turkish coast to Greek islands was the preferred route for migrants heading to Europe until Balkan countries closed their borders and the European Union reached an agreement with Turkey to stem the flow of people.
- Under that deal, those arriving on Greek islands from March 20 onwards face deportation back to Turkey unless they successfully apply for asylum in Greece, a financially troubled country few migrants or refugees want to stay in.

Dangerous crossing

- The deal has led to a dramatic decrease in the number of people arriving on Greek islands from Turkey.
- The European border patrol agency Frontex had rescued 164 people in four separate incidents on Thursday off the islands of Lesbos and Chios. Before the E.U.-Turkey deal, thousands would arrive each day.
- However, the deal has led refugees and migrants to seek alternative routes, with many attempting the much longer and more dangerous crossing from North Africa towards Italy.
- Hundreds have died in the past few weeks when overcrowded boats attempting the crossing sank.

One In, One Out

- Refugees have taken two major routes to reach Europe: from Turkey to the Greek islands, and from Libya to Italy.
- The 'One In, One Out' deal reached recently between the European Union and Turkey, under which Europe will resettle one Syrian refugee in the continent for every Syrian returned to Turkey from the Greek islands, has seen the arrival of refugees from Turkey subside.
- The closure of this route has prompted those who smuggle refugees to shift their focus to Libya, resulting in a surge of arrivals on the Italian coast.

Comprehensive plan

- First, welcome more people. But for Germany and Sweden, European countries have largely been shy of accepting refugees.
- Second, Europe needs to have a more efficient and proactive search and rescue mission with the required financial muscle. Italy has proposed the creation of euro bonds to finance the response facility, a move Germany opposes. If Europe wants to prevent people from drowning, rescue teams should be provided the resources they ask for.
- Third, the official European position is that more should be done to stop refugees from leaving for Europe in the first place. This cannot be done unless there are functional, cooperative governments in these countries.
- The EU could reach an agreement with Turkey because there is a stable authority in Ankara that could implement the plan. But Libya has been in the midst of a violent civil war ever since the regime of Muammar Qadhafi was toppled in a war led by Europeans.

- Makes it difficult to crack down on the sophisticated smuggling network that has developed over the last few years. Any plan to check the flow needs to be supplemented by efforts to find peace in Libya.

Main storming - GS - III**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT****The Sourcing Caveat:**

- Given the Centre's focus on attracting investment and improving India's 'Ease of Doing Business' ranking, it is time it took a clear stand on foreign direct investment in retailing.
- While the government has eased some rules relating to investment in single-brand retail, the norm on 'sourcing' locally remains a significant grey area.
- The Centre eased the rules permitting 100% FDI in 'Single Brand Retail' subject to the sourcing caveat – 'companies with more than 51% foreign ownership must source 30% of the value of goods in India, preferably from medium, small or micro enterprises.'
- The requirement of a certain proportion of domestic content in the products has a socio-economic relevance, given its potential to create jobs and protect livelihoods.
- But the sourcing norm has inhibited FDI inflow; worse, it could fall foul of the WTO's National Treatment norms.
- The Centre therefore amended this condition allowing for an exemption to entities selling "products having 'state-of-the-art' and 'cutting-edge' technology", and even more ambiguously, in cases "where local sourcing is not possible".
- Predictably Apple has sought waivers citing the exemption clause.

- Its case seems to have found support with Commerce Minister who was in talks on allowing Apple to open company-owned stores in India and to explore whether there was a need for separate guidelines for sourcing waivers.

What's the way forward?

- The best course, given the circumstances, is to drop the sourcing condition altogether.
- It is counterproductive and open to charges of arbitrariness.
- Allowing officials the discretion to decide on what constitutes 'cutting-edge' technology or whether local sourcing is possible or not opens the door for less-than-transparent outcomes and the possibility of litigation.
- The Centre's objectives for relaxing FDI norms:
 1. improving the availability of such goods for the consumer.
 2. enhancing the competitiveness of Indian enterprises through access to global designs, technologies and management practices.
- Those would be rendered fruitless if overseas companies, subject to the whims of interpretation, opt out of either entering the market or from making significant investment.
- Ultimately, keeping it simple works best, especially when it concerns investment rules.
- Social impact and controversy with retail reforms: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Retailing_in_India#Social_impact_and_controversy_with_retail_reforms

he has chosen to leave all options on the table and wait to see how various global and domestic factors pan out.

- RBI has opted for watchfulness, notwithstanding the prospect of an "above normal" and well-distributed monsoon – "a source of disinflationary pressure", is testimony to the RBI's concern about keeping inflation expectations well-anchored.
- Consumer price inflation posted a rapid acceleration to 5.39 per cent in April on the back of a jump in the prices of food items.
- Separately, international prices of commodities have started to strengthen, including that of crude oil; this has begun feeding through into higher transport and communication costs.
- The elephant in the room is the anticipated implementation of the 7th Pay Commission's recommendations: to what extent the increased payouts will fan inflation has yet to be quantified, and will ultimately depend on the Centre's timetable for implementation.

The challenges:

- The RBI has also flagged the challenges to sustaining India's economic momentum:
 - ✓ global growth is uneven and struggling to gain traction,
 - ✓ world trade is floundering for want of demand,
 - ✓ the U.S. is weighed down by contracting industrial activity and exports,
 - ✓ deflationary pressures are building in Japan, and
 - ✓ the slowdown in China shows no signs of reversing.
- Besides, if Britain votes to leave the European Union, there is a real risk of "some turmoil in

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LEAVING THE RATES UNCHANGED

- In leaving interest rates unchanged while retaining an "accommodative" monetary policy,

the financial markets."And RBI is armed with adequate reserves to weather any volatility that may emerge.

Conclusion:

- On the domestic front, green shoots are visible on many fronts.
- The RBI's own surveys reveal healthier order books and a pick-up in capacity utilisation that can help trigger a revival in private investment.
- Ultimately though, a lot will hinge on how the monsoon fares, and how much the Centre is willing to invest by way of capital to bolster public sector banks.

Main storming - GS - III

DISASTER AND DISASTER MANAGEMENT

A colossal planning failure:

- If governments paid attention to the economic geography of India's cities, they would be doing a lot more to prepare for annual weather events.
- UN Habitat estimates that by 2030 India will have 14 major clusters of cities accounting for 40% of its GDP. And nearly 80% of economic production will be in urban areas by that year.
- What this underscores? The extremely vulnerable condition of cities as economic assets. Proof: Unprecedented flooding in Chennai in 2015.
- The volume of insurance claims in Chennai crossed Rs.5,000 crore, highlighting the avoidable losses arising out of infrastructure deficits.
- Cities devote vast amounts of their revenue merely to repair roads after the monsoon rather than create new assets.
- This is a colossal planning failure, and governments should at least now begin with the creation of information systems that

tell administrators about weather patterns, anomalies, flooding data and population impacts.

What needs to be done?

- The Chennai floods exposed the mindless permissions for construction in floodplains, and the high tolerance to commercial encroachment of wetlands.
- They also highlighted the indifference among policymakers over providing decent housing for migrants.
- Megacities should be provided with more water harvesting facilities in the form of urban wetlands with connected drains. Suburban lakes have to be revived.
- A transparent building code is vital. Equally, governments need to ensure that during the monsoon, basic requirements such as safe water supply are not severely disrupted.
- City residents have a higher degree of education and capability and these should help administrations find durable solutions.
- Much of urbanising India is yet to be built, and it can be designed to withstand the vagaries of monsoons and other weather events.

Main storming - GS - III

CHALLENGES TO INTERNAL SECURITY

2016 Mathura clash – What happened?

- On 2 June 2016, 2 policemen and 22 squatters were killed in an armed conflict at Jawahar Bagh public park in Mathura city of Uttar Pradesh.
- The squatters, an armed group led by a Ram Vriksh Yadav, had been occupying the site since 2014.
- Ram Vriksh Yadav, originally from Ghazipur, was running a parallel government, complete

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- with administration, revenue and armed forces, within the park.
- After a court ordered their eviction in 2016, the police tried to forcibly evict them.
 - According to amateur criminal psychologist, panic compounded by extremist leadership led to mob violence.
 - As a result, the squatters responded violently, killing two senior police officers, including the superintendent of police. The police then returned fire, killing several squatters.
 - Chief Minister Akhilesh Yadav stated that police went unprepared but then he should also tell who should be held accountable for this unpreparedness? Is the CM squarely blaming the police, as politicians often conveniently do?
 - The DGP of UP, is reported to have said the police knew the encroachers were in possession of weapons but they didn't know they would be fired upon? Has anyone heard anything as bizarre from the senior-most police officer of the state?

The Intelligence Machinery:**Questions From Mathura:**

- Since early 2014 a fringe outfit — calling themselves the Swadheen Bharat Subhash Sena — usurped a large chunk of land belonging to the horticulture department in Jawahar Bagh.
- They were acting under the tutelage of Ram Vriksha Yadav, who had attracted nearly 3000 people from several parts of the Hindi heartland.
- They had also managed to amass firearms and store over a thousand LPG cylinders inside the encroached property.
- Was there a hidden agenda to act against the government on the lines of sedition? Was there a blueprint to propagate a separate cult for a controversial sect like Anand Marga?
- The state government has been blissfully ignorant about everything and several suspicions abound.
- Did authorities deliberately turn a blind eye to the anti-social activities of this so-called “sena” possibly also due to the district magistrate's alleged proximity to the Samajwadi Party heavyweight Ram Gopal Yadav?
- It was only thanks to a high court order that the police was forced to act and when they did, they faced a violent and brutal backlash.
- Every district has a local intelligence unit (LIU) headed by a deputy SP or an SP-level officer.
- The LIU is the eyes and ears of the district police chief. How could the free flow of arms to Jawahar Bagh and the swelling number of goons to over three thousand go unnoticed by the LIU?
- As per rules, they are duty bound to submit a daily report, in writing, to their superior. Assuming they did, then why was no preventive action taken?
- Was the intelligence lacking because of political reasons and thus, officers turned a blind eye?
- The intelligence bureau (IB), too, has its presence in every district of the country and its task is to alert the Union home ministry in case of any perceived threats. We don't know if Delhi or Lucknow were alerted.
- Remember, UP is heading for elections in 2017 and if this is the quality of our existing intelligence infrastructure then we have much to worry about.
- One should not lose sight of the communal atmosphere in areas such as Aligarh, Meerut, Moradabad, Sambhal, Muzaffarnagar among several others.
- It's a time when netas will look to whip up sentiments to polarise opinions and a well-functioning intelligence machinery is a must.

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ISSUES RELATING TO INTELLECTUAL
PROPERTY RIGHTS**National Intellectual Property Policy:**

- The Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion released a document on the National Intellectual Property Policy seeking to promote “creative and innovative” India.
- The surprise is that only a few years ago India undertook legislative measures to amend the patent, copyright, and trade mark and no new measures are on the anvil.
- Further, recent years witnessed wide ranging and contentious debates over issues relating to “compulsory licensing” and “ever greening” of patents by foreign drug majors.

Pressure from US Pharma Lobby:

- India has continued to be under pressure from the US pharma lobby and the US Trade Representative to tighten IPR laws beyond India’s international obligations.
- In response to fears expressed by NGOs, the government reassured critics that it would not succumb to foreign pressure in instituting IPR amendments.
- Unfortunately, the current document on IPR, especially the objectives of IPR, seems to send a different message.

IPR Policy – What it says?

- The basic thrust in it raises more doubts than it seeks to resolve.
- For instance, it specifies that all “knowledge” should be “transformed into IP assets.”
- It suggests that national policy should “spread the importance of IP rights” by using “eminent personalities as ambassadors”.

- Sadly, it betrays an imbalance in the IPR regime that can tilt the balance away from access to important public goods.
- Economists and the scientific community, by and large, agree that IPR in itself has limited ability to promote innovation.
- The policy further lays emphasis on publicly funded research institutions like those under the Council of Scientific & Industrial Research to generate more property rights through IPR.

What we really need?

- India needs a clear vision and guidelines on how scientists’ work using public money can be commercialised and covered through IPRs.
- The policy in its current form fails to take note that an IPR policy has to balance the concerns of all stakeholders in a reasonable manner.

The third objective:

- Third objective – discussing the legal and legislative framework.
- It reiterates that India will utilise the flexibilities available in international agreements and reaffirms its commitment to the Doha Declaration on TRIPS agreement and public health.
- But, instead of discussing how these flexibilities have afforded a strong position to India as “the pharmacist of the poor world”, the document strays into a discussion over protection for traditional knowledge.
- Unfortunately, traditional knowledge is not universally recognised as an IP right yet.
- Therefore, it is important that it should not be linked to existing IP rights and the fight for protection to traditional knowledge should be separated from the current debates on IPRs.

Conclusion:

- The need to strengthen the management of IP offices is commendable. But, without a proper cost benefit analysis, the well-intended suggestion loses its relevance.
- Elsewhere, it suggests that IP disputes should be adjudicated through “commercial courts, set up at the appropriate level.” But the document fails to note the fate of the Intellectual Property Appellate Board.
- Promoting and creating IP requires broader understanding of the competing issues.
- A policy that uniquely posits IP as the central fulcrum or the key to innovation lacks a holistic understanding of the complexities attached to it.

Main storming - GS - III**“VIEWS TO WATCH”****Issue:**

- India recently refused to allow Google to launch its Street View Service, which gives users a 360-degree view of public spaces.

Google’s Street View:

- Google Street View is a technology featured in Google Maps and Google Earth that provides panoramic views from positions along many streets in the world.
- It was launched in 2007 in several cities in the United States, and has since expanded to include cities and rural areas worldwide.

Maps vs Street view:

- Street View goes a step further than the maps. It displays panoramic views of public spaces, thanks to images captured by Google’s moving vehicles, adding a layer of depth and reality to the maps.

Reasons for rejection:

- The proposal was rejected following objections raised by the Defence Ministry.
- The decision is said to have come in the backdrop of the terror attack on the Pathankot airbase in January, with investigators suspecting that terrorists used Google Maps to study the topography of the targeted area.
- Security agencies and defense forces feel that it would compromise country’s security interest.

Street view in other countries:

- In the U.S., Google was asked to remove sensitive information, and its image-capturing cars were ordered to keep off military bases.
- In Germany, households were given the option of blurring their buildings
- In Japan, the height from which the cameras scanned the neighbourhoods was lowered and local governments were notified prior to Google’s photography.
- Even Israel, which takes internal security very seriously, gave the green signal to Street View five years ago, reportedly making sure Google doesn’t show images in real-time and only photographs public spaces open to all.
- The Street View imagery has run into trouble in Germany, Greece, Switzerland, Poland and the United Kingdom amid privacy concerns and data protection issues.
- Geospatial Information and Regulation Bill, 2016:
- Primary objective of the bill is to ensure the protection of ‘security, sovereignty and integrity of India’.
- This bill contains many regressive and punitive content which will have greater impact on the Street View Service.

Way Forward:

- While there is an obvious tourism angle involved, Google representatives have spoken of Street View's usefulness in disaster management.
- Numerous satellites are in orbit and it may be difficult to conceal key locations. This is also the era of high-resolution digital cameras.
- A better solution would be to increase vigil over and security in vulnerable places rather than black out such services altogether.

Main storming - GS - III**"MERGER MAKES WAVES AGAIN"****Issue:**

- Recently, Gravitational waves, the cosmic ripples that distort space-time itself, have been directly detected for the first time.

Significance:

- In 1915, Albert Einstein predicted the presence of gravitational waves in his General theory of Relativity.
- For the first time, scientists have observed ripples in the fabric of space-time called gravitational waves, arriving at the earth from a cataclysmic event in the distant universe
- Physicists have concluded that the detected gravitational waves were produced during the final fraction of a second of the merger of two black holes to produce a single, more massive spinning black hole.

Gravitational waves:

- Gravitational waves are distortions or 'ripples' in the fabric of space-time caused by some of the most violent and energetic processes in the Universe

- These ripples would travel at the speed of light through the Universe, carrying with them information about their cataclysmic origins, as well as invaluable clues to the nature of gravity itself.

Importance:

- Discovery of gravitational waves would represent a scientific landmark, opening the door to an entirely new way to observe the cosmos and unlock secrets about the early universe and mysterious objects like black holes and neutron stars.

LIGO:

- LIGO(Laser Interferometer Gravitational Wave Observatory) is the world's largest gravitational wave observatory and a cutting edge physics experiment
- LIGO has 2 widely separated identical detector sites working in unison as a single "observatory": one in Hanford, south eastern Washington State and the other in rural Livingston, Louisiana
- LIGO has a very close collaboration with the VIRGO collaboration that analyzes data from VIRGO, a 3 km gravitational wave interferometer located near Pisa, Italy

LIGO and INDIA:

- Known as the LIGO-India project, it is piloted by Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) and Department of Science and Technology (DST).
- The LIGO-India project will be jointly coordinated and executed by three Indian research institutions: the Inter-University Centre for Astronomy and Astrophysics (IUCAA), Pune and Department of Atomic Energy organisations: Institute for Plasma Research (IPR), Gandhinagar and the Raja Ramanna Centre for Advanced Technology (RRCAT), Indore.
- The RRCAT, which has expertise in lasers and IPR, with expertise in the high vacuum and cryogenic

systems, will be the institutions who will be responsible for execution of the project while IUCAA, the key science stakeholder of LIGO-India, will be responsible for the science teams, human resources development, data acquisition and scientific data computation, according to a press statement by the consortium.

- LIGO-India will also bring considerable opportunities in cutting edge technology for the Indian industry.

Impact:

- Simultaneous operation of the three detectors and the 26 millisecond difference in the arrival time of incoming gravitational wave signals between LIGO and VIRGO will improve the ability to locate the source of each new event.
- The precision of source location will further improve when the arrival time difference increases to 39 milliseconds as LIGO-India, the fourth detector, begins operations by January 2023.

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“SCIENCE AND THE SCIENTIST IN A CHANGING CLIMATE”

Issue:

- Regarding sustainability and then discuss the role of science and technology in the context of sustainability.
- Defining sustainability:
- Sustainability is defined in multiple ways and the emphasis provided in the definition is usually a function of the subject discipline from where the definition originates.
- An example of this is the pre- fix often used in defining sustainability: ecological sustainability, environmental sustainability, economic sustainability, social sustainability etc.

Evidence of sustainable living:

- Practices by local and indigenous communities such as: protecting specific areas as sacred spaces since they were sources of water and bio diverse forests; practising shifting cultivation in hilly areas, with long periods of fallow (between 10 and 20 years); raising multiple crops agro-ecologically etc.,

Human and Sustainable living:

- The focus on human development alone has diluted the idea of sustainability.
- Human society must recognise that achieving sustainability and human well-being is impossible if our understanding does not encompass all life forms, human and non-human.

Science and Technology:

- In the context of sustainability, science explains natural phenomena and the effects on natural systems as a result of the transformations caused by human action.
- Technology, drawing from science, allows human society to use nature and natural resources to sustain, support and transform human life in multiple ways.
- Modern science and technology has led to improved health, increased longevity of humans, and innovative ways of maximising human comforts from natural resources.
- However, some people and societies have benefited more from this than others and more importantly at the cost of others.
- Take for instance the impact of increased access to private transport. As more and more people are able to afford multiple cars and/or motorcycles, the air quality of a lot of cities has deteriorated significantly: the deteriorating air quality in Beijing and New Delhi are cases in point.

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- While the more affluent can protect themselves in air-conditioned cars/homes/offices there are large sections of the population who are facing irreversible damage to their health because they cannot afford this form of “insulation” or protection.
- While science can explain the cause and effect of a number of these phenomena, information on their potential long-term impact and risk is typically based on predictions.
- To the layperson and even to policymakers this “uncertainty” is difficult to comprehend as it seems intangible and too far into the future to make a decision about.
- However, what needs to be understood that there is enough evidence to indicate that there are long-term risks to human life and the planet.
- In 1992, at the Earth Summit in Rio, the signing of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) witnessed the first international response to climate change, recognising it as a phenomenon that needed immediate attention.
- The impact of climate change like all other natural or anthropogenic events, is strongest on the economically vulnerable. There is a geographic, political, economic separation between those causing the problem and the affected.
- Science and the scientist therefore need to be part of a larger, inclusive and collective effort.
- Social movements and representatives of indigenous communities from all over the world who had wanted to share their efforts to adapt to and mitigate climate change impacts were not accorded any place in the deliberations.

Science and Scientist:

- Science and technology have a pivotal role in helping society understand both the problems it faces and identify appropriate solutions. The scientist’s role in society has been to share data and information emerging from research.
- Communication of scientific information in a timely, easily accessible and relevant manner is becoming critical.
- The scientific approach does not necessarily lead automatically to sustainable ways of addressing the various environmental phenomena unfolding around us.
- They need to work together with and learn from communities that have adapted to face major shifts in their environment. Any “solution” or way of understanding and resolving an issue must be done collectively with the affected communities.

Climate change and Science:

- Today, all discussions around sustainability—political, cultural, scientific, social—are subsumed within the frame of climate change.

Challenges:

- The ongoing agrarian crisis in India and the long-term food security of the country is one such complex situation where scientists need to engage actively with diverse viewpoints and experiences to contribute to a sustainable long-term policy for the country.
- Dominant, technology-driven food production needs to be viewed in the context of land, water and seed politics. Scientists need to collaborate with peasants and build on the latter’s experiential knowledge of agro ecological practice-based resilient food systems.
- More often than not, policymakers and state-run programmes adopt a one-size-fits-all approach using technology as the solution to a problem.
- An integrated and complete solution requires an understanding of the local social, economic, ecological and political context of the problem.
- For this the affected population and the scientist have to sit at the same table, learn from

each other and arrive at a solution through a democratic process.

- Another issue that a lot of scientists have been grappling with is their role in advocacy.
- Many in the scientific community feel very strongly that scientists must take on an advocacy role, particularly when there are ethical conflicts.
- In India, we have seen reputed, leading senior scientists, for example, molecular biologist Pushpa Bhargava, ecologist Madhav Gadgil and nuclear scientist and engineer A Gopala krishnan take strong and public positions on issues such as moratorium on genetically modified foods, community-led conservation in ecologically fragile areas, and India's civilian nuclear programme, respectively.

Way ahead:

- Science and scientists also have a public role in education.
- Science must be demystified and become inclusive and integrative of all ways of knowing and learning if it is to enable a sustainable world view.

Main storming - GS - III

UNLEASHING GROWTH THROUGH EMPOWERMENT

The Government of India since May 2014, has been making efforts to reinvigorate India and help growth reach its potential of above 9 percent. Since then, in a series of measures that government of India announced, the focus has been on development oriented policies to achieve higher rate of growth. The country, under foreign rule for nearly eight centuries, suffered from depletion of resources and lower rate of per capita economic growth. In 1951, 53 per cent (200 million) of population was below the poverty line and India was considered a very low income country. The post-independence

era witnessed adoption of mixed pattern of society where socialist planning was pre-dominant. India was recognized as an important emerging market economy by early 2000s.

Since 2015, India is the fastest growth economy of the world which successfully reduced poverty levels, despite revised and higher benchmarks, to less than 30 per cent of the population. And now, a growth rate of 7.3 Per cent and above for the next 5 years. To achieve growth, and ensure build-up of industrial base, availability of finance, besides many other factors is the most important. The initial stages of development, the banking system plays an important role and therefore, effort were made to not only establish a network of banking institutions, but also ensure that banking penetration is high and that financial resources are easily available to citizens who require them.

Indian Banking System

- To ensure a steady growth a robust financial system is necessary, especially banking, to facilitate efficient allocation of resources from savers to investors with productive investment opportunities.
- The banks undertake asset transformation whereby, a depositor can place resources in a bank and the bank, in turn, can lend to the market.
- Banks can also help reduce Poverty in an economy through facilitating growth and by providing universal access to financial services.
- To ensure widespread availability of banking finance especial in rural areas. State Bank of India was nationalized in July 1955.
- A few business houses might acquire control over the country's banking assets through bank and to achieve economic growth with social justice, the Government nationalized 14 commercial banks in 1969 and more banks in 1980.

Prime Minister's Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY)

- In August 2014 Government initiated PMJDY
- Aimed at ensuring universal access to financial services viz banking and deposit accounts, remittances, credit, Insurance and pension in an affordable manner.
- PMJDY successful opening 21.7 crore accounts by April 27. 2016, a quantum leap when compared with an outstanding number of 122 crore existing accounts held in all commercial banks on March 31 2014.
- The 17.9 crore accounts have been issued RuPAY cards. 9.7 crore are Aadhaar seeded and 81.0 Per cent are operational.
- The most important fact is that more than 95 per cent of households have access to banking facilities after these initiatives.
- PMJDY is also included in JAM number trinity, i.e. Jan Dhan Yojana - Aadhaar Mobile Number, which focuses on providing support to poor household in a targeted way.

MUDRA Bank

- On April 8. 2015, The Government of India introduced Micro Units Development Refinance Agency (MUDRA) Bank (MB) to focus on providing credit to small entrepreneurs.
- Nearly 6 crore enterprises, mostly individual enterprises, running small manufacturing, trading or services business and only 4 per cent of such units received institutional finance.
- A focus on micro sector having financing requirements of up to Rs.10 lakh, will act as a regulator and a refinance institution for micro-finance institutions which lend to very small units to help them develop.
- MB would help in preparing policy guidelines, as well as enforcing client protection principles

so that small scale enterprises are not cheated to pay more than.

- On May 9.2015 the Central Government extended social security to masses through schemes to be operated through banking accounts
 - ✓ Atal Pension Yojana
 - ✓ Jeevan Jyothi Bima Yojana and Suraksha

Start-upin India

- Launched April 2016.
- The Stand-up India programme to promote entrepreneurship especially amongst the deprived sections of society and women, providing loans in the range of Rs.10 lakh to Rs.1 crore.
- The Government had announced a series of measures to encourage and strengthen Start-ups in India, allocating resources, initiating skill programs, providing tax concessions, and facilitating ease of doing business.
- The aimed to strengthen the Start-up initiative launched still earlier in January 2016 to take India to the much needed last-forward 'Job-creation 'mode.

Main storming - GS - III

AGRICULTURE AND FARMER WELL BEING

Agriculture remains the largest sector of the Indian Economy. The sector contributed 16.1 per cent to the overall Gross Value Added in 2014 15 (based on 2011-12 prices under new series). Apart from the economic indicators, the sector is the most vital 1br social security in terms of the food and nutrition and the employment that it provides to the largest population and rural work force. The share of workforce employed in the sector has declined from 64.8 per cent in 1993-9.1 to, 48.9

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per cent 2011-12, but it still employs the largest workforce, although the earnings are much lower than the workers employed in other than workers employed in others economic sectors like industries and services.

The climate change induced weather aberrations are on the rise and extreme weather related events often make normal institutional support inadequate and meagre. In India, such extreme events are on the rise and have made a strong case for vigorous efforts for the welfare of the millions of them families. While measures for farmer's wellbeing would be on course, these should go along with the measures on institutional reforms and technology generation and its transfer to provide higher income to farmers as well as meeting the rising demands for food grains and other commodities.

Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana (PMKSY)

- In a country where 55 per cent of cropped area is water distressed, the farmer's wellbeing could only be achieved through Har Khet Ko Pani and More Crop Per Drop.
- PMKSY has put this in a right perspective with larger emphasis on low hanging fruits and efficient use of water. To be implemented in a mission mode and 28.5 lakh ha will be brought under irrigation.
- The implementations of 89 irrigation projects under AIBP, which have been languishing, are to be fast tracked to help irrigate 80.9 lakh hectares of agriculture land.
- Targeted to complete 23 of these projects before 31st March, 2017. A dedicated Long Term Irrigation Fund has been envisaged in NABARD.
- Many state have started innovative practices for water conservation and harvesting and other states have also implemented very innovative water positive and convergence practices for water conservation, water harvesting and efficient use of water.

Pradhan Mantri Krishi Bima Yojana (PMKBY)

- The Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana has been implemented from Kharif, 2016 replacing National Agricultural Insurance Scheme (NAIS) and Modified National Agricultural Insurance Scheme (MNAIS).
- The share of the farmer in actuarial premium has been rationalized for crops areas throughout the country
- Reduced to a lower level subject to a maximum ceiling of 2 per cent of sum insured for Kharif food grains, pulses and oilseed crops, 1.5 per cent for Rabi food grains, pulses and oilseed crops and 5 per cent for Kharif and Rabi annual commercial/annual horticulture crops.
- The state has been requested to implement this scheme beginning kharif 2016.
- The scheme will bring great relief to farmers whose crop production is often at risk due to natural calamities

National Agricultural Market (NAM)

- The agricultural produce marketing systems suffer from major distortions and multiplicities of levies and mandi taxes. These are neither transparent, nor uniform across the states and are a major barrier to farmers realizing remunerative prices.
- A model has been developed by Karnataka which has integrated a number of markets into a single licensing system with a joint venture of state government agency and NCDEX spot exchange, which offers automated auction and post auction facilities.
- The scheme envisages implementation of NAM through Small Farmers Agri-business Consortium (SFAC), which is an autonomous organization under the Department of Agriculture, Cooperation and Farmers welfare.

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- The NAM provides the scope for a Pan-India Electronic Trading Portal which will network selected Agricultural Produce Marketing Committees (APMCs) market Yards to create a Unified National Market for Agricultural Commodities.

Rashtriya Gokul Mission

- Launched in 2014-15 for conservation of indigenous breeds
- Livestock contributes 25 per cent of Gross Value added in the agriculture sector and provides self-employment to about 21 million People.
- It is one of the fast growing sectors of agriculture and offers great resilience against any distress and additional income to farmers.
- The mission also envisages establishment of integrated Cattle Development Centres (Gokul Grams) to develop indigenous breeds including 40 percent non-descript breeds.

Main storming - GS - III**AGRICULTURE AND FARMER WELL BEING: PRESENT SCENARIO****Key facts and figures-Agriculture in India**

- 16.1% contribution in Gross value added in the year 2014-15
- Still most vital sector for social security viz. food, employment
- Though the share of workforce has declined, still the highest-48.9%
- Stressed due to climatic factors
- The new government is keeping this sector on high priority. Several schemes like Krishonnati yojana, PMFBY etc launched to cater to different issues challenging growth in this sector.

Farmer's Well being

- Support is being given to farmers at both input levels- seed, fertilizer availability, irrigational facilities and output (post harvest)-insurance against crop failures, price volatility etc.
- To raise the income levels of farmers value chains and better marketing facilities like NAM are being implemented.
- Crop diversification along with sustainable farming methods are being promoted
- Creating Awareness and handheld guidance: Kisan channel, Soil health card etc.

PMKSY (Pradhan mantra krishi sinchai yojana)

- Motto- Har khet ko pani, More crop per drop
- Envisages last mile connectivity along with augmentation of water storage and its efficient use, particularly to uncatered areas.
- 28.5 lakh ha land to be brought under irrigation under a mission mode.
- Languishing projects under AIBP are to be fast tracked

PMFBY

- MN AIS and NAIS have been subsumed under this scheme.
- Share of farmer in actuarial premium have been rationalized.

Maximum ceiling

- ✓ of 2% for:- Kharif food grains, pulses and oilseeds
- ✓ of 1.5% for:- Rabi food grains, pulses and oilseeds
- ✓ 5%-commercial crops (RABI & Kharif both)

Soil health card scheme

- To inform farmer about the nutritional level of his farms, to enable him to use fertilizers judiciously.

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- Targets to cover all farm holdings by March 2017

Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana(PKVY)

- With the vision to increase crop yields in rainfed areas, which account to 55% of arable lands in india, organic farming is being promoted.

Two important schemes:

- PKVY –to bring 5 lakh acres under organic farming in 3 years period
- Organic Value chain development in NER- To promote sale in domestic markets and exports

NAM

- Addresses the previous shortcomings of-multiplicities of levies and mandi taxes, accessibility,transparency,easier movement of commodities.
- Offers automated auction and post auction facilities
- Utilises ATIF (Agri-Tech infra fund)
- Implementaion via SFAC , under DAC&FW
- Selected APMCs would be brought under a unified National market for Agri-commodities.

Rashtriya gokul mission

- Focuses on conservation of indigenous breeds
- Envisages creation of Integrated Cattle development centres(Gokul Grams)

National Kamdhenu Breeding centre

- Development ,consecration and preservation of all the indigenous bovine breeds(39 cattle and 133 buffalo), Mithun and Yak
- The centre would be a certified repository for GERM-PLASM

Main storming - GS - III**FOR INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT AND LARGER FOOT PRINTS****Why is foreign policy of so much relevance today?**

- It is an instrument available to protect and promote our national interests
- Several programmes of the government like Make in India,Skills India, Smart Cities require substantial Foreign inputs like- FDI,Technology transfer, Financial assistance and grants.
- In the coming decade India aspires to be a global power, maximising its Demographic dividend

Diplomacy @ Home

- Infrastructure and finance
 - ✓ To boost the infrastructure for tapping higher economic economic growth and better service delivery, India has been able to attract various foreign player
 - ✓ UAE-India:\$75 bn agreement;
 - ✓ Uk-india:partnership fund under NIIF
 - ✓ Japan: Bullet train; improvement of road connectivity; ODA loans for Chennai and ahmedabad metro projects.
 - ✓ France-Variou metro projects, Alstom to build an electric locomotive plant
 - ✓ IFC Masala bonds at LSE –rupee denominated offshore debt instruments

Make in India

- Engagement with Russia
- Joint production of KA 226 helicopters
- Rosatom and DAE to build Nuclear power plant (NPP)

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- Areva of France – NPP @ Jaitapur
- Being to build Apache helicopters

Foreign investments

- In 2015 india was one of the most attracting destinations for FDI
- Besides P-5, india received investments from South Asia, SE Asia, Central asia,Gulf, Asia-pacific
- Energy sector –International Solar alliance was a big initiative of india

Diplomacy in Global arena

- Promoting our national interests-Strategic interest, trade agreements etc.
- Neighbourhood first policy
 - ✓ Relevance- good relations with bordering countries promote security and development
 - ✓ Our relations with Bhutan and Bangladesh are stable and on ascendancy.
 - ✓ LBA signed with Bangladesh caused the extension of legitimate identity and rights to more than 50k stateless persons.
 - ✓ Regrettably, despite much flexibility shown by India, Indo-Pak relations did not have
- From look east to ACT EAST
 - ✓ Greater cooperation with the ASEAN group
 - ✓ India Science and Technology fund raised from 1 to 5 million dollars
- Islands and littoral nations
 - ✓ Naval base @ Seychelles-Assumption Island a counter-balance to China's presence in Djibouti
 - ✓ Broader agenda for ensuring India's presence in INDIAN OCEAN REGION, to safeguard its Maritime interest, safeguards from piracy

- Central Asia
 - ✓ India joined SCO
 - ✓ TAPI and Ashbagat agreement: to develop a transport corridor, Energy security, Collective development and engagements.
- Africa
 - India 's approach towards this region has been focused on multilateral agreements rather bilateral.
 - Importance:
 - ✓ Oil- Nigeria is the largest exporter
 - ✓ India – Africa have a common stand of getting permanent seats in UNSC
 - ✓ Market for generic medicines of India
 - ✓ Value added chains can be set up here for tapping onto trade concessions

Main storming - GS - III**ECONOMIC GROWTH AND ISSUES**

- With the view of enhancing growth and overall development viz. industrial sector, MAKE IN INDIA program was launched.
- Important factors in achieving higher industrial growths:
 - Banking System- To insure financial inclusion, credit availability(particularly to msme and marginal sections),access to financial resources
 - Ease of doing business, holistic ecosystem, handholding etc.
 - Major initiatives by Government to boost industrial growth:- Stand up/Start up india; Atal inovation mission ;SETU;Mudra etc.

Bank's Role

- Providing Capital

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- Financial inclusion- Schemes like PMJDY ensures banking services for the weaker sections too.
- Customer centric approach ensuring hassle free services. For e.g JAM trinity ensures easy delivery of services via mobile banking.

Mudra and Stand up india

- Under both the schemes government is attending to the needs of refinancing Brownfield businesses for expansion
- Focus is largely upon MSME's and the weaker sections.
- Ensures fare rate of interests for this large under-served group

Social Security Schemes

- Insurance penetration in india is around 4%. Any major crisis can impoverish the households that are a hint above the BPL, while rendering the lower-middle class's savings to a minimum
- Hence the government's initiative –Atal pension Yojana; PMJJBY;PMSY is a major step in furthering insurance penetration largely to the uncatered and unorganised labour.

Major Challenges

- Low availability of credit, and that too at higher cost. people still prefer going to money-lenders in spite of presence of a bank in vicinity, largely due to non-conformity towards using new-technology products.
- Accessibility to financial system is less owing to lower income/assets; lack of awareness; higher transaction costs etc.

Way Ahead and conclusion

- Creating awareness among people about the new financial products, and there benefits.
- Look out for ways to include more labour into the formal sector, where the social security schemes are more pruned.

- Bridging the technical divide
- More diversification of financial services and products.

Main storming - GS - III**ISSUES OF FOOD SECURITY IN INDIA****EPW**

The Government of India has enacted the National Food Security Act (NFSA) on September 12, 2013. The NFSA aims to provide subsidized food grains to approximately two thirds of India's population. The legislation is a landmark, and perhaps the largest food security program in the world. The ambitious programme of the Government, besides offering several opportunities, throws many challenges in its implementation. The food grain sector has to grow by 3.75 % annually to match provision of food grains according to the norm set by the act. Apart from the targeted food grains sector, we noticed some indirect impact on other sectors such as Chemicals and Chemical Products, Mineral Fuels, Livestock products and Other Oilseeds and Crops. Overall the country needs to gear up in terms of food grain productivity, otherwise, NFSA must be supplemented by import, which would entail huge burden to country's exchequer.

Insecurities Food

- Bihar, Jharkhand, West Bengal, Odisha, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh in June found that even as coverage of the public distribution system (PDS) has increased since the implementation of NFSA, serious food insecurities remain.
- Names continue to be missing in ration cards in these states, including in Chhattisgarh, considered a better-off state that began reforming its PDS even before the NFSA was implemented. Bihar and Jharkhand fared the worst in the survey with high exclusion of those in need as well as gaps in supply of food grain.
- Odisha has had massive cuts in Antyodaya Anna Yojana cards, which affect the poorest of the poor.

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- The quality of wheat in Madhya Pradesh, and of wheat flour in West Bengal were found to be poor.
- The aged, especially widows, remain vulnerable and tend to be excluded from coverage under the NFSA. Systems to add new members of households to ration cards are also slow and fraught with difficulty.

Food shortage in 1960s

- The food shortages of the 1960s, also the time of two wars, led to a significant expansion of ration shops, or fair price shops to distribute food, including imported wheat. It was during these years that the availability of affordable food became an important political issue, which also led to the drive to expand food production.
- State governments were forced to respond to people's need for affordable food. The Tamil Nadu's then Chief Minister K Kamaraj began providing free cooked meals during 1962–63, which was later strengthened further during M G Ramachandran's tenure in the late 1970s.
- This link between entitlements and electoral politics only became deeper in the southern states over the next four decades, while it appeared not to have affected the politics of the poorer and more populous states in central, eastern and northern India.

Right to Food

- A writ petition, filed in 2001 in the Supreme Court by the People's Union for Civil Liberties, Rajasthan, demanded that India's large food stocks be used to protect people from starvation and hunger.
- The state to recognise the importance of consistent support with clear entitlements for the rural poor in terms of food and work.
- The Indian subcontinent's longer fight against famine, and chronic hunger.

Ad hoc relief commission

- From the early efforts to provide relief during famines that occurred in different parts of the subcontinent, there was clear recognition that employment needed to be generated and food needed to be provided.
- The British organised ad hoc relief in this manner, which remained largely contingent on the will of the local elites.
- The Famine Codes of the 1880s recognised that a clear strategy and a standard response had to be developed for relief to distressed persons, unable to afford food. Often agricultural failures would create localised famine-like conditions.
- Commission reports of the time reiterated that famines were usually the result not of a shortage of food production in general, but were caused more by the unavailability of affordable food.
- The worst affected were, and continue to be, agricultural labourers, usually economically and socially disadvantaged peoples, who remain dependent on wages from agriculture.

The role of NFSA

- Even as such interventions did provide some relief in times of crises, famines and chronic malnourishment remained serious challenges.
- The NFSA has played a significant role in focusing on improving distribution to prevent hunger and malnutrition.
- Even as these are significant achievements, challenges remain. The pace at which the NFSA is being implemented nearly three full years since its enactment is worrisome.
- The problems of identifying and updating beneficiaries remain, and will be ongoing.
- The state intervention in the grain market has moderated prices, and recent evidence shows

that better management of the PDS can reduce leakages, corruption and make sure that more persons in need are provided their fundamental right to food, thereby perhaps reducing the need for cash transfers as an alternative.

- The struggle for food entitlements clearly shows that public political pressure remains essential to ensure that the entitlements are increased, and those won are safeguarded and not lost.

Main storming - GS - III

"DE-PLOUGHING THE "RURAL"

EPW

Last year's monsoon made a hasty exit, after an erratic and merely ritualistic annual appearance. Instead it has rained suicides in the countryside, signifying the acuteness of the crisis that has set on rural India. It is therefore understandable why almost all mainstream political parties are championing the cause of the rural during election rallies, even if it is in a slightly warped manner. One of the most telling and ubiquitous images in these rallies of late, has been the offering of a miniature wooden plough by the so called "kisaan netas" to their political bosses.

A large number of farmers in India still lead a marginal existence, yet one would like to argue that this symbolic appearance of the wooden plough in our largely metropolitan imagination, is at best a continuation of our romanticisation, and at worst our ignorance of the world of rural. If not, then we better get real with the rural. A recent study on farm mechanisation, done at the Central Institute of Agricultural Engineering, Bhopal, reveals that the share of human power available for carrying out varied farm operations has shrunk to a mere 5%. Four decades ago, in 1971-72, 60% of the power was provided by humans and animals: 15% by farm labourers and 45% by animals. In 1991-92, this collective share had dropped to 26% (labour accounted for 9%). Tractors have made the biggest stride, from a mere 7% to 47%.

Shock value

- The National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO) data for the year 2011-12 was released a few years back, the growth rate of rural consumption which had outstripped the urban, stunned a lot of observers.
- In 2011-12, the total rural consumption was Rs. 12.9 lakh crore against the urban figure of Rs. 10.45 lakh crore. Between 2009-10 and 2011-2012, the urban consumption grew at 17 percent while the corresponding figure was 19 percent for the rural.
- The shock value of this revelation, to a great extent, stems from the manner in which the "rural" has been produced, projected and perceived in the dominant discourse, whether academic or otherwise.
- The image of "rural" as the quintessential "inferior other" of the "urban" is a by-product of the grand thesis of modernisation and its accompanying network of folklores and meta narratives. "Rural" became regressive, traditional, backward and unmodern.
- In contrast "urban" was seen as progressive, modern and developed. While rural always "pushed", the urban only "pulled".
- The "rural" produced for its subsistence, the "urban" consumed for its gratification. The world was about binaries.

Decline of agriculture

- The decline in agriculture coupled with sustained growth in urban economy because of the service sector, and combined with the boom in real estate, facilitated and hastened the exodus of landless and marginal farmers to these urban pockets.
- The erstwhile agriculture labourer's, laced with mobile phones and a new found identity-consciousness, and preferred the anonymity and caste neutral spaces that cities provided them.

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- The soil of the village smelled of caste and its wretched history to the young generation of the subalterns in the villages.
- Agriculture was the worst hit. On many occasions, there was money, there was technology, there were landlords but there were no hands around to till the land.
- Much improved rural infrastructure and use of motorised vehicles, people went for petty jobs in the morning to nearby towns and came back when the cows returned homes.
- The data on increasing trend of Rural Non-Farm Employment (RNFE) and the decline of agriculture sector bear testimony.

The non-farm sector

- Contrary to the trend in the 1980s when the agriculture sector used to contribute about two-third of the rural Net Domestic Product (NDP), studies of 2009-10 show that it is the non-farm sector that contributes about two-third of the rural NDP.
- The migrants, predominantly male, send cash from the city and the women in villages dot the farms leading to what is referred to as feminisation of agriculture.
- About 70 percent of the total income of the labour force in the urban sector, mostly migrant from rural areas, is remitted to their homes in villages.
- The developmental emphasis of governments on rural infrastructure like roads, education and other communication networks made it possible, for instance, for a barber in a village to start a roadside salon in a nearby city rather than be a part of the exploitative jajmani system and it's largely non-monetised world.

Ambivalent trends

- To understand the "rural" need to look beyond the binaries and signposts. Our refusal to face

facts amidst the soporific haze of rural utopia has made us look idiotic when faced with the realities of the rural, which is clearly not just about wooden ploughs anymore.

- Today is far more complex and dynamic and we perhaps need to invent newer conceptual tools to grasp this diversity and multilayerity.
- Rural at the moment is in a flux, carrying bagful of contradictory signs, of patches of prosperity and extreme impoverishment, of promises of pesticides and suicides, of glittering dish antennae and broken wheels of bullock carts, of rack filled of soft drinks at local kirana shops and drying sources of natural drinking water.
- Agriculture is declining but not necessarily the rural; the rural is getting reconstituted amidst this confusion with utterly ambivalent trends.

Main storming - GS - III**CLEAN GANGA****EPW**

The Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), leading to the Ganga Action Plan (GAP) to clean up the river. For the implementation of GAP, ex-Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi set up the Central Ganga Authority, in February 1985 (renamed as the National River Conservation Authority in September 1995). The government also established the Ganga Project Directorate (GPD) in June 1985, as a wing of the department of environment, to execute the project. It was renamed as the National River Conservation Directorate (NRCD) in June 1994, setting on track the GAP at Varanasi on 14 June 1986. Nothing tangible came about in more than two decades.

Ganga was declared a national river, and yet another new body—the National Ganga River Basin Authority (NGRBA) was constituted on 23 September 2009, bringing curtains down on earlier two tranches of GAP. A sum of `7,000 crore was approved in April 2011 for the Clean Ganga project, including a share of `1,900 crore by state

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governments of Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh (UP), Bihar, Jharkhand and West Bengal.

Affecting biodiversity

- The Ganga River, like many rivers of the world, sustains diverse flora and fauna, which has helped the river maintain purity of its water.
- Indiscriminate use of pesticides in agriculture has posed new threats and resulted in accumulation of these hazardous chemicals in the tissues of fish as well as of other higher vertebrates due to bio-magnification.
- Rampant killings of Ganga turtles, especially the soft-shelled turtles by fisher-men, have reduced the scavenging capacity of the river system, thereby affecting its self-purifying capacity.
- Direct and accidental trapping and habitat destruction due to various developmental activities, besides pollution, pushed the only cetacean in the Ganga, the Ganga River Dolphin, to the verge of extinction.
- The ceaseless influx of noxious pollutants from human settlements and riverbank industries that have added to the river's woes, distorting the natural dynamic of its equilibrium and affecting its biodiversity.
- Nearly all the sewage in addition to considerable quantity of garbage and human/animal excreta go directly into the river, along with the run-off from the 6 million tonne of fertilisers and 9,000 tonne of pesticides used in agriculture within the basin, besides large quantities of solid waste, including thousands of animal carcasses and hundreds of human corpses released into the river every day.

Ganga Action Plan

- The GAP focused primarily on urban waste water and funded a large number of waste water treatment plants and related urban waste water infrastructure.

- The GAP was fully financed by the central government, with the assets created by it to be used and maintained by the state governments.
- Efforts to clean the Ganga concentrated on a few highly polluting towns and centres and addressed "end-of-the-pipe" waste water treatment, without adequate attention to developing a basin-level, multi-sectorial approach.
- The major problem of pollution from domestic municipal sewage arising from the 25 selected towns was handled directly by financing the creation of facilities for interception, diversion and treatment of the waste water, and also by preventing the other city wastes from entering the river.

National Mission

- The most recent has been a "Ganga manthan," a national dialogue organised on 7 July 2014 by National Mission for Clean Ganga, a society under the aegis of Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change and an implementation arm of the National Ganga River Basin Authority, supported by state-level Project Management Groups of the five basin states.
- To avoid diversion of funds by state governments, it has now been decided to make releases of money directly to the implementing agencies.
- To minimise slippage on account of delays in land acquisition, the state governments have been asked to process the schemes of land acquisition first before the schemes of sewage treatment plants, etc, are approved.
- The matter of continuous supply of electricity for operation of assets has also been taken up. The State Pollution Control Boards issued showcase notices to local bodies responsible for non-operation of assets in Bihar and UP under the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974. CPCB also issued notices to such local bodies under the Environment (Protection) Act 1986.

Raise country's bar

- The successful completion of the clean-Ganga project within five years will raise country's bar world over and provide the country-men great pride of performance.
- The project has a wonderful opportunity to raise popular enthusiasm and zeal.
- There should be public contribution solicited through reputed and reliable institutions. Indians look upon the river as Ganga maata.
- The Clean Ganga project can leverage the Swachh Bharat campaign, as the Prime Minister has envisaged, generating a new awakening across the country.

Main storming - GS - III**DRAFT GUIDELINES FOR SAFE HANDLING OF NANO MATERIALS****EPW**

- A task force of eminent experts under the Nano Mission by the Department of Science and Technology has come out with the draft " Guidelines and Best Practices for Safe Handling of Nano materials in Research Laboratories and Industries "
- Involving the control of matter at nano scale, nano materials are characterized by small dimensions , large surface area and high reactivity
- They are amenable to a large variety of applications in various sectors
- But they are potentially dangerous for human health and environmental safety , with considerable scientific uncertainty regarding risks

The Guidelines

- They prescribe a combination of engineering controls , work practices and personal protective equipment as part of a robust exposure control strategy

- They lay down the process for identifying hazards , taking note of the specific effect of surface chemistry , shape , size and morphology on toxicity caused to various organs
- These address the potential exposure pathways and necessary safety measures to mitigate the same
- A precautionary approach is advocated with detailed life cycle , assessment and strong binding procedures with respect to stakeholder involvement for various players while formulating best practices in the food sector particularly

The challenges

- Where most of the developed countries focus on regulating its risk , India is almost single minded about focussing on promotion of nano materials in initial years
- A large number of nano based products are already out in the markets without any regulation
- Few Indian scientists take special precautions while working with nano materials
- Very few are interested in taking up risk researches
- A very small number of projects are being publically funded to look into toxicity issues
- There is almost no engagement with the social sciences and humanities due to lack of funding
- There is a lack of resources , expertise and regulatory mandate

The solutions

- Enhance public engagement
- Participation of civil society organisations
- More funding on risk research

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- Creating of new laws for regulation of nano materials
- Establishment of a regulatory framework
- Self regulation
- Adoption of information regulation which obliges the government to disclose the related information and leaves the responsibility to the third party
- The Chemical Rules should be amended so that they can be applied to nano materials

Conclusion

- Nano materials are a useful development but only when they are used by due care and precaution
- The Government of India has spent a huge amount of money for its success , but the project will only be successful if appropriate risk research is carried out

Main storming - GS - III

GDP GROWTH IN INDIA	EPW
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- India's GDP of the financial year ending 31 March , 2016 stood at 7.6%
- Out of this growth , 2.4% were accounted for discrepancies
- The GDP without discrepancies remained 7.1% in 2014-15 and 5.2% in 2015-16

The Short comings

- The manufacturing sector has grown by 8.1% but the Index of Industrial Production for this financial year registered a rise of only 2.4%
- Exports have declined continuously month after month in this year
- The alteration of figures is occurring because of the new methodology of CSO to calculate

GDP using the data on company finances using the e-governance initiative database of the Ministry of Corporate Affairs

- The government claims the better coverage of manufacturing data of small and medium enterprises and superior estimates of value addition in the new methodology which is not approved by the experts

Working Of CSO

- CSO keeps updating and revising the data
- It starts with putting out advanced estimates
- They then become provisional estimates (PE)
- They then become revised estimates (RE)
- They are changed more than once before arriving at the final figures
- By comparing PE of 2015-16 to 2014-15 , the GDP growth figures come down to 6.6%

Conclusion

- An independent committee of experts should be appointed to examine the new methodology
- The governor of RBI and chief economic advisor also raised questions on the veracity of data
- The manipulation of figures for short term political benefits will cause huge damage to the image and creditability of the government

Main storming - GS - III

LANDOWNING NON-CULTIVATING HOUSEHOLDS	EPW
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There is an increasing importance of landowning households that do not cultivate and a significant presence of urban households owning rural land, which constrains the growth of the agrarian economy, as such households have low incentives

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to invest in agriculture, and tend to use land for residential purposes, reducing the cropped area. Agricultural labour households tend to lease in land and become cultivators.

The evolving structure of the agrarian economy and its nature of growth have been much debated. One aspect of the debate is the unviability of small/marginal farmers in the agrarian economy, and the reasons for their continued sustenance. Another aspect is the process of generating growth in the sector, which is dominated by small and marginal farmers. A particular aspect, which is missed out, is the increasing importance of households who own land but do not self-cultivate the land. An increase in importance of these households in the rural economy influences the decision-making processes of economic agents within the production system of the rural economy. On the one hand, if these households own cultivable land but do not cultivate the land for various reasons, this land would enter the tenancy market reflecting a low level of incentives to invest, and by implication low growth as well. On the other hand, if these households convert land use from agriculture to non-agriculture, again one would have issues related to growth of the agrarian sector.

- The farm sector
- The rural economic structure has two parts: the farm sector and the non-farm sector.
- The farm sector consists of individuals who take part in the agricultural production process.
- The non-farm sector consists of individuals who facilitate production (artisanal community or input traders), or facilitate transfer of goods across spaces from rural to urban or urban to rural or within the rural sector (output traders), or might even be rentiers (the landlords).
- In the post-1980s period, there has been a significant decline in the share of households dependent on agriculture, while there has been an expansion in the share of households in the non-farm sector.
- The structural changes witnessed are a decline in the farm sector, predominantly due to a decrease in the share of cultivator households and an increase in the share of “other” households in the rural sector.
- The “other” households are increasing their share in total households and their impact on the production structure is also increasing.
- The share of land owned by these households is also increasing in the rural structure. At the structural level, there is an increasing importance in the farm sector of households who own land but do not self-cultivate.
- Changing rural structure
- The National Sample Survey Office (NSSO) reports on Households Assets and Liabilities in India provide some indicators of the changing rural structure.
- The survey was conducted for rural as well as for urban areas, but this commentary concentrates only on the rural sector.
- In the earlier rounds, rural households were classified into two major groups. One, the cultivators who are identified as households operating at least 0.002 hectares of land and the second, the non-cultivators who operate no land or operate land less-than 0.002 hectares.
- Households in the farm sector are identified as households who are cultivators and agricultural labour households, and the rest of the households were identified as belonging to the non-farm sector.
- Increase households
- An increase in the share of non-cultivating households as well as an increase in the share of rural households who own land but do not cultivate the land.
- But between 2003 and 2013 there was a decline in the share of non-cultivating households and also a decline in the share of non-cultivating households who own land.

- The share of non-cultivating households declined from 40.3% in 2003 to 38% in 2013 and the share of non-cultivating households who own land also decreased by 1.7 percentage points in the same period.
- Agricultural labour households are leasing in land to become cultivators. An increase in pure tenants is a possible indication of this trend.
- Non-cultivating households might have shifted to urban areas and have become non-resident households leading to a decrease in share of non-cultivating households.
- Urban households who own land in rural areas are not part of the sample as we had only studied the rural households.
- The Indian rural sector
- Classified as land for cultivation purposes, for orchards/plantations, for water bodies, non-agricultural use, residential use, and other areas.
- In 2003, the major share of land owned by non-cultivating households was for cropped areas (81%) followed by residential areas which was 12% of land owned by non-cultivating households.
- In 2013, the share of land owned by non-cultivating households allocated to cropped areas significantly reduced to 25.7% and land allocated to residential areas witnessed an increase to 71% by 2013.
- The land allocated to all other uses witnessed a decline and land allocated to residential areas only increased. A change in the nature of the non-cultivating households who earlier looked at land as a productive asset with the potential to derive rental income.
- The share of land owned by non-cultivating households is increasing but these households are diversifying their land from cultivation to

residential plots and reducing the cropped area. Maybe the non-cultivating households are looking at land not as a productive asset (to derive ground rent) but as a store of value.

- In addition, there is evidence, of significant share of urban households holding land in rural areas. So there is an increase in land owned by non-cultivating households in rural areas as well as increase in non-resident households owning land.
- The distress of the agricultural labour households is increasing and these households are converting themselves into cultivators by leasing in land in the general context of unviability of agriculture.

Main storming - GS - III

INDIAN RESIDENTIAL RENTAL HOUSING

EPW

- Residential tenancy is a contract between a landlord and a tenant that permits the tenant to occupy the former's residential premises for a fixed period of a time at a fixed amount to be paid monthly or as decided

The Demand And Supply

- Demand side of rental housing
 - ✓ Permanent - households settled but unable to buy a house
 - ✓ Transient - households / individuals migrating from other parts for the purpose of education , employment etc
 - ✓ Captive - households which live in tenements provided by the employer (government , corporate or parastatals)
- Supply side of rental housing
 - ✓ Individual landlords - unorganized landlords who provide rental housing to households or individuals

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- ✓ Institutional landlords - large companies which provide organized rental housing to households and individuals
 - ✓ Hostels / dormitories - large and small providers who offer shared stay primarily to individuals
 - ✓ Corporate / captive housing - employers who provide housing to staff
- It helps to ease the organization of public transport as more tenants choose to live near bus or train routes
 - Renting dwellings accommodate people in transitory periods of their lives
 - Such housing allows people to send more remittances to their relatives
 - It facilitates housing options closer to the place of work and hence has the potential to improve productivity and promote entrepreneurship
 - It helps to generate additional income for the landlords

Determinants

- Location of the house
- Income and affordability of the household
- Availability of socio-economic opportunities
- Mobility and migration
- Lack of access to affordable ownership housing
- Stage in life cycle of the household
- Tenure of housing requirement
- Size , legal sanction condition and quality of the house
- Availability of amenities and services and their quality

Levers for the Business

- Incentive related levers such as taxations and deductions
- Subsidies and mandates
- Regulatory levers such as eviction policies and procedures , grievance redressal etc
- Market related levers such as rent pricing

Benefits

- Housing tenants increase population densities, reducing urban sprawl and cutting demand for expensive infrastructure in peri-urban areas
- An affordable rental accommodation discourages poor families to mount land invasions or buy plots in illegal subdivisions

Conclusion

- Renting residential accommodations has become a fast growing industry in recent years
- More than one tenth of the population are living in rented houses
- Out of them , four fifths are living on rent in urban areas
- Many steps like verification of tenants help in ensuring the safety
- Schemes like Rajiv Gandhi Awaas Yojana also focus on these kind of accommodations
- They have become an inseparable part of city life and a fast growing industry providing benefits to a large section of the society

Main storming - GS - III**MANUFACTURING CHILDREN****EPW**

- 23 and Me , a genetic testing company filed a patent for technology that would enable the prospective parents to select a sperm or egg donor with whom they can produce a baby with certain characteristics they desire

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- The patent is being granted in US which is socially and morally unacceptable

The Supporters' View

- Supporters say that law and morality are separate subjects
- They say that people anyway pick a sperm donor after examining their traits
- This decision will encourage technological advancements and new inventions
- In US , intellectual property is focused on innovation and private property with no moral constraints

The Opposers' View

- The software will destroy the natural birth process
- There will be a drastic transformation of the human society
- The society will be devoid of diversity and all children will be the clones of one another
- It will destroy the natural law principle that there should be no discrimination on the basis of physical and mental abilities of a person
- It is socially, ethically and morally treacherous

Conclusion

- There should be a balance between the scientific advancements and the laws of nature
- There should be a balance between the economic and moral subjects
- The TRIPS (Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights) agreement provides members may refuse patents “ to protect human , animal or plant life or health or to avoid serious prejudice to the environment “

- The patent would be rejected in India on moral grounds

- It is no wonder that it was granted permission in US where science and business are placed above the morals and ethics

- But it is surely a dangerous invention for the world and a threat to human diversity

Main storming - GS - III

PERFORMANCE OF ENVIRONMENT MINISTRY	EPW
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- The Union Minister of Environment , Prakash Javadekar , has been boasting about reducing waiting period of projects from 600 days to 190 days

- It is alarming that projects are cleared in a hurry , making way for the destruction of environment , not its protection

The Important Decisions

- The norm for setting up a mining or an industrial project near a protected area or a forested area has been reduced from a distance of 10 km to 5 km

- The moratorium on new industries has been lifted in critically polluted industrial areas such as Ghaziabad , Indore , Ludhiana , Panipat Potencheru , Singrauli , Vapi and two other locations

- The State Governments can clear projects occupying less than 10,000 hectares without an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)

- Public hearings are not mandatory for establishment of private coal mines with a capacity of less than 16 million tonnes per annum

- The new rules issued regarding wetlands have no prohibitions , only criteria for what is permitted [The Draft Wetland (conservation

and management) Rules 2016]. According to the new rules , the Central Wetlands Regulatory Authority will be dismantled and the jurisdiction rights of the wetlands will be with the state governments

Main storming - GS - III

RELIANCE JIO CASE

EPW

The Shortcomings

- Most environmental clearances rely on data provided by the project proponents
- There are direct conflicts of interests
- The prerequisite public hearing is often stage managed
- The process is opaque

The Consequences

- Hydroelectric projects in Uttarakhand were unreliable and led to devastating floods
- Most of the EIA's were done on the false information provided by project proponents
- The 4.7 % area of wetlands in India , which moderate the impact of cyclones and floods , give shelter to endangered flora and fauna and include forests are in danger due to the new laws
- Adverse effects on wetlands will disturb the storing , purifying and recharging of ground water

Conclusion

- The ministry has also tried to dilute the Forest Rights Act giving the reason that gram sabhas should not have veto on important mining projects in forestlands
- It has also tried to trim the powers of National Green Tribunal
- Expediting clearances for projects should not come at the price of environment/forest dwellers' rights

The decision of the Supreme Court to dismiss a petition questioning the manner in which Reliance Jio (RJio) obtained a license to provide a range of mobile voice services ignores evidence relating to criminal forgery of a bank document and rigging of auction procedures (Centre for Public Interest Litigation V Union of India 2016) has caused a series of debates.

The Background

- Mobile Service Providers (MSP's) build and maintain networks through which the electromagnetic waves connecting mobile phones to one another travel.
- For this , they are allocated specific blocks of frequencies in RF range by a public auction by the government
- The country has been divided into 22 administrative areas known as " telecom circles " or " service areas "
- Three kinds of licenses were
 - ✓ Cellular Mobile Telephone Services License - for voice calls and text messages only
 - ✓ Internet Service Provider License - for both fixed and wireless internet networks
 - ✓ Unified Access Services License - for text messages , voice calls and data services
- On 25 February , 2010 , DOT announced an auction for spectrums of 3G and 4G technologies for 3 or 4 blocks in each circle
- The 3G spectrum could be used for both voice calls and internet and 4G for internet only

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- ISBPC , a small company with ISP license won the deal
- It merged with Reliance group after winning the auction
- ISBPL did not mention Reliance group as its partner or anything
- The Unified License (license given to ISP license holders to extend voice services) was given to the company at a much lower price

Forgery in Bank Guarantee

- DOT needed all the aspiring companies to deposit earnest money deposit of Rs. 252.5 cr to show their commitment to bidding in the auction
- ISBPL did it in the form of a Bank Guarantee from Axis Bank
- The name of the beneficiary – ISBPL was written in ink by hand in the bank guarantee replacing the name of the actual beneficiary
- No disclosure has been made of any margin money paid for the Bank Guarantee in ISBPL's accounts

Rigged Auction

- ISBPL acquired spectrum of 22 telecom circles in India at a final price of 5000 times its net worth
- When all the major MSP's dropped out of the auction due to high prices , ISBPL with negligible net worth was allowed to proceed
- Where large bidders concentrated on Category A in metropolitan cities , ISBPL bid equally for all spectrums
- On 22 June , 2010 , ISBPL paid the staggering bid amount
- On 23 January , 2013 , it was renamed Reliance Jio Infocomm Limited

Other Questionable Acts

- The SC has not withdrawn license or imposed any penalty on RJio for not completing its roll out obligations of extending the services to rural regions in 5 years

- The low rate of SUC paid by the company

Conclusion

- `ISBPL's suspicious behavior was never questioned by the government
- The company was allowed to use 4G spectrum for voice calls also , although it was originally decided to use them for internet services only
- Even the apex court of the country neglected all the evidences against the company of the richest man of the country questioning the fact " everyone is equal before the law "

Main storming - GS - III**SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT****EPW**

The Minister of State for Environment, Forest and Climate Change statement at an international conference in Delhi in 2015, touches on significant aspects of the concept of sustainable development. The principle has universal appeal which demands almost ritual obeisance from national political leaders. There is precious little that these leaders will agree on what constitutes sustainable development in terms of practice. Formal reiteration in several treaty texts has continued to reflect this fact. Lack of content, and therefore unenforceability, has been both the strength and its Achilles' heel.

Lack of depth has also been found to be elemental in the construct of the concept itself which promotes multiple values, but ignores the necessary trade-offs that may be required in reality. An empty vessel approach has also helped in indigenising the principle and this opportunity

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has been robustly exploited first by the Supreme Court, followed by the policymakers and now by the National Green Tribunal (NGT).

At the international level, the sustainable development goals (SDGs) have been adopted; they have to be attained by 2030. Interestingly, although the SDGs cover an entire spectrum of environmental goals, the emphasis seems to be on cleaning up pollution rather than on prevention. Acutely reflecting the inherent tensions that the principle of sustainable development has embodied in terms of focusing on soft goals with greater political acceptability rather than attempting a paradigm shift in economic policy was possibly envisaged by its framers and regularly demanded by civil society activists. Yet, one should not lose sight of the fact that the “empty vessel approach” has allowed great diversity in national measures and flexibility in the application of this principle.

Thus, it is this national regulatory space that assumes more importance in this regard than the international legal arena. Consequently, despite the international antecedents of the principle of sustainable development, it is the national legal and policy regime and the principal actors engaged in the development and enforcement of this regime, that are the focus of my inquiry here.

The principle of Sustainable Development

- The story of principle of sustainable development in India begins with Vellore Citizens Welfare Forum v Union of India (1996).
- The judgment was given—more than a decade after the principle had gained international recognition in 1987.
- The Supreme Court in adopting this principle into the national environmental regime, the context of an increasingly activist judiciary, who was raring to produce a jurisprudence that would (if not obliterate) at least atone for its failure to adequately respond to the Bhopal gas tragedy.

- The principle of sustainable development has been the vision of an alternative economic structure that would give due emphasis to environmental costs of economic activity. This would quite clearly take the Supreme Court into the domain of policymaking, and therefore, into the executive’s ambit.
- The Supreme Court despite its activism was unwilling to do this. It was only in the early 1990s with the loose formulation of the principle in the Rio Conference that the principle was given adequate interpretational flexibility to be explored within the national context.
- The Supreme Court seized this opportunity to fashion jurisprudence on sustainable development that did not fundamentally challenge the existing state of affairs.

The Polluter Pays

- The polluting industries are absolutely liable to compensate for the harm caused by them to villagers in the affected area, to the soil and to the underground water, and hence, they are bound to take all necessary measures to remove sludge and other pollutants lying in the affected areas.
- The ‘Polluter Pays’ principle as interpreted by this Court means that the absolute liability for harm to the environment extends not only to compensate the victims of pollution, but also the cost of restoring the environmental degradation.
- Remediation of the damaged environment is part of the process of ‘Sustainable Development’ and as such polluter is liable to pay the cost to the individual sufferers as well as the cost of reversing the damaged ecology.
- The sole emphasis on the PPP is not surprising since environmental pollution had already occurred.
- However, the Court missed an opportunity to elaborate on the species of hazardous

activities that would attract application of the precautionary principle.

- Remediation (rather than prevention) has been the primary response of the Court to environmental pollution and this has shaped the Court's accommodative and "business as usual" response that has epitomised the Supreme Court's discourse on sustainable development.

Ecological disaster

- The principle of sustainable development would come into play which will ensure that mitigative steps are and can be taken to preserve the ecological balance.
- Sustainable development means what type or extent of development can take place which can be sustained by nature/ecology with or without mitigation
- The objective is to reduce the environmental footprint of the project without fundamentally challenging the nature of the project itself.
- This also seems evident from the arguments which were marshalled by the Court to support the dam project despite several instances of lack of non-compliance.
- A strategy for conserving or resources-effective use of non-renewable resources is the imperative demand of modern times.
- Whereas, minimum sustainable development must not endanger the natural system that supports life on earth, constant technological efforts are demanded for resources effective production, so that sacrifice of one eco-system is counter balanced or compensated by recreating another system.

The National Green Tribunal Act

- The NGT was set up in 2010 through the NGT Act.
- The demand for a specialised environmental court has been one that has found resonance

not only in the various judgments of the Court, but also in the report of the Law Commission of India (2003).

- Principal bench in Delhi, the NGT has only five benches, and there-fore, has limited physical reach. On the other hand, the act provides for any aggrieved person to move an application for grant of relief and compensation, thus substantially liberalising access for litigants
- It includes both judicial members and expert members, and is headed by a chairperson who is from the judiciary. Decision-making is by majority. This unique constitution of the bench allows the NGT flexibility in investigations for establishing facts. It has been quite forthcoming in appointing local commissioners to undertake spot investigations and also for supervising progress on enforcement of its orders.
- The NGT is not a court because unlike courts its powers are statutorily limited.
- The tribunal shall, while passing any order, or decision or award, apply the principles of sustainable development, the precautionary principle and polluter pays principle.
- Although there have been several environmental legislations previously that have made general references to the goal of sustainable development, this is the first time that a clear reference has been made to the principle of sustainable development and a statutory obligation specified for the NGT to apply it in the context of environmental disputes.

Main storming - GS - III

CHALLENGES IN COAL AND POWER SECTORS

EPW

Power is one of the most critical components of infrastructure crucial for the economic growth and welfare of nations. The existence and development of adequate infrastructure is essential for sustained growth of the Indian economy. India's power

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sector is one of the most diversified in the world. The sources of power generation range from conventional sources such as coal, lignite, natural gas, oil, hydro and nuclear power to viable non-conventional sources such as wind, solar, and agricultural and domestic waste.

Electricity demand in the country has increased rapidly and is expected to rise further in the years to come. In order to meet the increasing demand for electricity in the country, massive addition to the installed generating capacity is required. India ranks third, just behind US and China, among 40 countries with renewable energy focus, on back of strong focus by the government on promoting renewable energy and implementation of projects in a time bound manner.

Power for all

- Indian power sector is undergoing a significant change that has redefined the industry outlook.
 - The Government of India's focus on attaining 'Power for all' has accelerated capacity addition in the country.
 - The competitive intensity is increasing at both the market and supply sides (fuel, logistics, finances, and manpower).
 - Total capacity of renewable energy plants in India stood at 42,850 megawatts as on April 30, 2016, thereby surpassing the 42,783 megawatts capacity of large hydroelectricity projects in the country.
 - Cumulative solar installations in India crossed the 7.5 giga watt (GW) mark in May 2016, about 2.2 GW more than all of the solar installations in 2015.
 - The per capita primary commercial energy consumption remains the single-most definitive indicator of a country's economic and human development with an almost perfect correlation.
- India's per capita primary commercial energy consumption is only 27.2% of the global average, about 22.6% of China and 6.7% of the United States.
 - The numbers for relative per capita consumption of electricity, a secondary form of commercial energy, are marginally lower.
 - The Indians pay the highest prices in the world for all primary and secondary forms of commercial energy. And while the popular rhetoric is about energy subsidies, the truth is that the total direct taxes imposed on energy far exceed the subsidies on primary and secondary energy in India.

Coal based generation

- The domestic target of 1.5 billion tonnes of conventionally mined coal per annum by 2020 economically optimal/desirable.
- Further, is it sustainable given the nature and quantity of India's coal reserves, the associated social and environmental costs of conventional coal mining, and the globally accepted production planning norm that requires that a horizon of at least 40–50 years be kept in mind for optimally exploiting a domestic coal resource.
- It might surprise one, but the truth is that India is not as rich in mineable coal as some believe.
- Value creation in the mining sector requires raising the level of extractable reserves, raising the amount and quality of the mineral extracted from a given reserve and realising efficiency gains along the mining and distribution value chain through best practices and technologies.
- The cancellation of 204 blocks by the Supreme Court offered a golden opportunity to usher in commercial exploration and mining of Indian coal by leading global players and instituting an independent regulatory regime to foster genuine competition in the coal sector.

- India's long-term interest lies in making Coal India, a \$40 billion inefficient behemoth, compete with world-class mining companies instead of allotting fragmented blocks to companies that have never mined coal before.
- Yet in India, where bulk of the infrastructure is still to be built, we continue to push the integrated utility model and are in fact putting most of the planned solar capacity on the grid.

Biggest source of energy

- The government has given a boost to non-fossil energy, especially solar. The targets set are backed by even a rudimentary analysis of what is optimal for our power system in light of its current state and likely development.
- Unclear if our policy czars realise that even if we achieve the targeted 40% non-fossil power generation capacity by 2030, including 2,30,000 megawatts of wind and solar, these two intermittent sources will provide just about 12% of the projected electricity demand by 2030.
- About 80% of the projected demand for electrical energy by 2030 will still have to come from fossil fuels.
- The average electricity tariffs in India are already the highest in the world relative to paying capacity. This is why our per capita consumption is at sub-Saharan levels. More importantly, there is sufficient empirical data to show that the financial losses of the discoms that we are restructuring for the third time have in the past risen in tandem with tariff increases.
- The solar is a distributed energy source and given where energy storage technology is heading, people have already written the obituary of the integrated large utility model of today.
- The nature of grid extension that we are undertaking to achieve village electrification targets leaves much to be desired with respect to their design for meeting current and future domestic and productive load needs of the villages being connected to the grid.
- More importantly, the ground reality is that in many electrified villages, over half of the households do not have electricity.
- The 2011 Census data concluded that over one-third of the Indian households had no electricity. If one takes this fact along with the data on how the size of households varies across income levels and the rural–urban divide, one concludes that, at the very least, some 450 million Indians did not have access to electricity in 2011.
- It might surprise that non-commercial energy might still be the biggest source of energy used in India. It is unfortunate that we do not have any reliable data on how much non-commercial energy (including human and animal draught energy) India currently uses.
- Overlooking technologies that could potentially make available and widely distribute non-commercial energy as a healthy and economically more desirable option for meeting domestic and productive energy needs of rural households.

