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GEOPOLITICS AT GLANCE

INDIA-GREECE RELATIONS

RELEVANCE

□ Syllabus:

- **GS2:** International Relations
- **PSIR:** Recent developments in Indian Foreign Policy



RECENT DIPLOMATIC ENGAGEMENTS

- The visit by Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis is the first by a Greek Prime Minister to India since 2008.
- In August 2023, Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Greece, marking the first visit by an Indian Prime Minister since Indira Gandhi's visit in 1983.
- During PM Modi's visit, India and Greece elevated their cooperation to a strategic partnership, indicating a deepening of their relationship.

OUTCOMES OF GREEK PM'S VISIT

- **Focus on Bilateral Trade:** India and Greece aim to double their bilateral trade to nearly \$4 billion by 2030, with bilateral trade amounting to \$1.9 billion in the fiscal year 2022-23.

- **Key Sectors Identified:** Both nations identified pharmaceuticals, ports, chemicals, shipping, food, communications, and defence as crucial sectors for boosting bilateral trade and cooperation.
- **Enhanced Defence Collaboration:** A joint working group on defence, maritime security, counterterrorism, and cybersecurity was established, emphasizing the commitment to strengthening defence collaboration between India and Greece.

HISTORY OF INDIA-GREECE DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS

Ancient Interactions:

- **4th Century BCE:** The interactions between India and Greece began with Alexander the Great's campaign.

- ❑ **Diplomatic Relations:** The Edicts of Ashoka mention diplomatic, trade, and cultural relations between Seleucus I and Chandragupta Maurya.
- ❑ **Indo-Greek Rule:** In the 2nd century BCE, Greek rulers like Demetrius I and Menander I established rule in northwestern India, marking a new era of cultural exchange.
- ❑ **Cultural Exchanges:** The Indo-Greek period witnessed significant cultural exchanges in art, sculpture, and architecture, evident in artifacts like the Bamiyan Buddha and the Gandhara school.

Modern Diplomatic Phase:

- ❑ **Establishment of Relations:** India and Greece formally established diplomatic relations in May 1950. India opened its resident Embassy in Athens in March 1978.
- ❑ **Elevation to Strategic Partnership:** In 2023, India and Greece elevated their cooperation to a strategic partnership, signifying a deepening of bilateral ties.

SIGNIFICANCE OF INDIA-GREECE RELATION

Geostrategic Importance:

- ❑ **Gateway to Europe:** Greece, with its Piraeus port in the Aegean Sea, holds a strategic location to become a key player in the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC), providing India with a gateway to Europe.
- ❑ **Countering Chinese Influence:** India's strengthened ties with Greece serve as a strategic counterbalance to China's expanding influence in the Mediterranean region.
- ❑ **Countering Trilateral Alliances:** Deepened relations with Greece and Armenia could potentially form a new trilateral alliance to counter the influence of existing alliances like

the one between Azerbaijan, Pakistan, and Turkey in the Mediterranean.

- ❑ **Interconnected Regional Stability:** The security dynamics of the East Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean regions are interconnected, underscoring the importance of the Greece-India partnership in maintaining global stability.

Geopolitical Significance:

- ❑ **Anti-Terrorism Stand:** Greece has consistently supported India on issues related to Kashmir and Pakistan-sponsored terrorism, indicating a shared commitment to counterterrorism efforts.
- ❑ **Common Vision on International Political Issues:** India and Greece share similar perspectives on various international initiatives, including UN reforms and the Cyprus issue, showcasing alignment on key political issues.
- ❑ **Shared Vision of Rule-Based Order:** Both countries advocate for a free, open, and rules-based order in their respective regions—the Mediterranean Sea and the Indo-Pacific—aligned with the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

Geo-Economic Significance:

- ❑ **Development of Indian Shipping Industry:** Greece, with its significant stake in the global shipping fleet, presents an opportunity for India to collaborate in modernizing its shipping industry. Partnership with Greece could facilitate investment opportunities for Indian firms in Greek ports, fostering growth in the Indian shipping sector.
- ❑ **Support for Economic Cooperation with EU:** Greece's endorsement of the EU-India Bilateral Trade and Investment Agreement strengthens India's economic ties with the European Union, enhancing prospects for economic cooperation and trade.

- ❑ **Boost to India's Defence Exports:** Greece's plans to invest €10 billion in upgrading its military capabilities present an opportunity for India to emerge as a major defence supplier. This potential collaboration could bolster India's defence exports and deepen bilateral defence cooperation between the two nations.

ARENAS OF COOPERATION

Political Cooperation:

- ❑ **Regular Exchanges between Heads of State:** India and Greece maintain strong diplomatic ties through regular exchanges between their leaders. Recent visits by the heads of state of both countries within a year highlight the commitment to diplomatic engagement.
- ❑ **Support for India's Inclusion in Multilateral Fora:** Greece has consistently supported India's aspirations for inclusion in various multilateral forums, including the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) in 2008 and the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR), Wassenaar Arrangement, and Australia Group in 2016.
- ❑ **Participation in India-Led International Solar Alliance (ISA):** Greece has ratified the Framework Agreement of the International Solar Alliance (ISA), indicating cooperation in renewable energy initiatives led by India.

Economic Cooperation:

- ❑ **Increasing Indian Investments in Greece:** Indian investments in Greece have surged, particularly in the privatization of public assets. For instance, the GMR Group's bid for the upgradation and management of Heraklion Airport at Crete Island exemplifies this trend.
- ❑ **Growing Bilateral Trade:** Bilateral trade between India and Greece has witnessed steady growth, reaching \$1.9 billion in 2022-23. Key exports from Greece to India include cotton, scrap (aluminium, ferrous, copper, and lead), marble, granite, and calcium carbonate, while India exports petroleum products (jet fuel),

automobile components, automobiles (cars and SUVs), and flat rolled steel items to Greece.

- ❑ **Regular Interactions between Entrepreneurs:** Indian entrepreneurs, supported by organizations like the India Trade Promotion Organisation (ITPO) and the Ministry of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSME), actively participate in events like the Thessaloniki International Fair in northern Greece, fostering bilateral business interactions.

Defence and Security Cooperation:

- ❑ **MoU on Defence Cooperation:** India and Greece signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on defence cooperation in 1998, paving the way for collaboration in defence-related matters.
- ❑ **Joint Defence Exercises:** The Indian and Hellenic Air Forces participated in joint exercises such as the 'Blue Flag' exercise in Israel in 2021 and the multinational air exercise INIOCHOS-23 hosted by the Hellenic Air Force. These exercises enhance interoperability and cooperation between the defence forces of both nations.

Cultural Cooperation:

- ❑ **Participation in Greek Cultural Festivals:** Cultural groups sponsored by the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) regularly participate in Greek dance and music festivals, fostering cultural exchanges between the two nations.
- ❑ **Promotion of Indian Culture:** Various organizations, including the Indo-Hellenic Society for Culture and Development (ELINEPA) and the Shantom Indian Dance Center, actively promote Indian culture in Greece through events, workshops, and cultural exchanges.

FACTORS STRENGTHENING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GREECE AND INDIA

- ❑ **Strategic Geographic Positions:** Both countries occupy significant geopolitical positions,

fostering mutual interest and strategic partnership in their respective regions.

- ❑ **Military Cooperation:** Joint military exercises between Indian and Greek armed forces demonstrate a growing strategic and defense collaboration, enhancing mutual security.
- ❑ **Economic and Infrastructure Development:** Economic reforms in Greece, coupled with the potential India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC), create opportunities for business collaborations and infrastructure projects.
- ❑ **Advocacy for Broader Relations:** Greece's support for the EU-India Bilateral Trade and Investment Agreement and its role as a reliable partner in the EU and NATO strengthen its relationship with India, advocating for broader cooperation.
- ❑ **Interconnected Regional Stability:** The interconnected security dynamics of the East Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean regions highlight the importance of the Greece-India partnership in maintaining global stability.
- ❑ **Cultural and Educational Exchanges:** Initiatives to enhance people-to-people ties through student exchange programs, cultural events, and media cooperation deepen mutual understanding and respect between the two nations.

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES EMERGING

- ❑ **Infrastructure Projects:** Collaborations between Indian and Greek firms in infrastructure development, such as building new airports, present lucrative business opportunities.
- ❑ **Banking and Finance:** Partnerships between Greek and Indian financial institutions to sell mutual fund products globally indicate a growing financial relationship and potential for investment.

- ❑ **Investment by Business Leaders:** Investments by Indian business families in sectors like the Greek food industry demonstrate the potential for cross-industry investment and economic cooperation.
- ❑ **Shipping Industry Expansion:** Indian shipping companies establishing brokerage firms in Greece aim to capitalize on opportunities in the trans-Atlantic shipping market, signaling growth potential in maritime trade.
- ❑ **Support from Influential Investors:** Endorsement of Greek-Indian business cooperation by influential investors like Indian-Canadian billionaire Prem Watsa underscores the investment appeal and potential for mutually beneficial partnerships between the two countries.

CHALLENGES IN INDIA-GREECE RELATIONS

- ❑ **Global Geopolitical Volatility:** The deepening of India-Greece relations faces challenges from recent global geopolitical tensions, such as escalations in the Red Sea, which can disrupt trade routes between the two countries.
- ❑ **Triad of Turkey, Azerbaijan, and Pakistan:** India's efforts to strengthen ties with Greece are hindered by the growing influence of the triad of Turkey, Azerbaijan, and Pakistan in the Mediterranean region, Middle East, and Central Asia.
- ❑ **Low Bilateral Trade and Investment:** The relatively low levels of bilateral trade and investment between India and Greece present a challenge to the further development of economic relations between the two countries.

WAY FORWARD FOR INDIA-GREECE RELATIONS

- ❑ **Mobility and Migration Partnership Agreement (MMPA):** Prompt finalization of the Mobility and Migration Partnership Agreement (MMPA)

will facilitate skilled migration between India and Greece, promoting mutual economic growth.

- ❑ **Extensive Military Cooperation Memoranda:** Strengthening military cooperation through extensive memoranda will enable joint exercises, technology sharing, and intelligence collaboration, enhancing security ties between the two nations.
- ❑ **Robust Connectivity:** Improving connectivity between India and Greece, such as establishing

more direct flight routes, will promote ease of travel and facilitate enhanced trade and cultural exchanges.

- ❑ **Educational Exchange Programs and Academic Collaborations:** Increasing university student exchange programs, cultural exchanges, and scholarships will foster people-to-people connections and deepen understanding between India and Greece.

INTELLIGENCE DIPLOMACY

RELEVANCE

❑ Syllabus:

- **PSIR:** Indian Foreign Policy
- **GS2:** International Relations



WHAT IS INTELLIGENCE DIPLOMACY?

“Intelligence Diplomacy” involves sharing information and intelligence with allied governments and their security agencies to address common security challenges. For India, engaging in intelligence diplomacy, as evidenced by exchanges with like-minded countries during events like the

Raisina Dialogue, is crucial for enhancing national security and promoting regional stability

RISING ROLE OF INTELLIGENCE

The increasing challenges posed by international terrorism, cross-border criminal networks, economic competition, intellectual property

protection, and great power rivalry have elevated the importance of intelligence cooperation among nations.

EXPANDING INDIAN DIPLOMATIC FOOTPRINT

- ❑ **“Discourse Diplomacy”** of the Raisina Dialogue: The annual Raisina Dialogue, organized by the Observer Research Foundation and the Ministry of External Affairs, serves as a platform for global leaders, policymakers, and scholars to discuss and promote an India-centric global agenda.
- ❑ **“Naval Diplomacy”** of the Milan Exercises: The biennial Multilateral Naval Exercise (Milan) in the Bay of Bengal attracts naval leaders from around the world for professional exchanges on maritime issues. With 50 countries expected to participate this year, it enhances cooperation and understanding among maritime forces.
- ❑ **“Intelligence Diplomacy”**: India engages in intelligence diplomacy by convening meetings of top intelligence officials from like-minded countries on the sidelines of events like the Raisina Dialogue, facilitating the sharing of information and enhancing security cooperation.

RISING IMPORTANCE OF THESE FORA

- ❑ **Interest in Geopolitical Affairs**: There is a growing interest in international commercial, political, technological, and military affairs, leading to the proliferation of forums discussing

foreign and security issues worldwide, such as the Aspen Security Forum and the Munich Security Conference.

- ❑ **Conflict-Ridden World**: Increasing military crises, global economic challenges, and great power rivalry have heightened the need for dialogue and collaboration to address emerging risks to global peace and prosperity.

INDIA’S INITIATIVES

- ❑ **Foreign Office Outreach**: The External Publicity (XP) Division and Indian embassies conduct outreach activities to engage with foreign governments, organizations, and experts.
- ❑ **Business Chambers’ Networks**: Business chambers like CII and FICCI play a proactive role in building networks and fostering international cooperation.
- ❑ **Raisina Dialogue**: Launched in 2016, the Raisina Dialogue has emerged as a significant event for the global strategic community interested in India’s perspectives on various geopolitical issues.
- ❑ **Global Technology Summit**: Organized by Carnegie India annually, the Global Technology Summit provides a platform to discuss the intersection of technology, policy, and geopolitics.
- ❑ **Other Dialogues**: Events like the Asia Economic Dialogue by Pune International Centre and the Indian Ocean Dialogue by the India Foundation contribute to fostering dialogue and cooperation on regional and global issues.

INDIA’S FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS PALESTINE: CONTINUITY AND CHANGE

RELEVANCE

- ❑ **Syllabus**:
 - **PSIR**: Indian Foreign Policy
 - **GS2**: International Relations

INTRODUCTION

Initially opposing Israel's creation, India now balances supporting Palestine with strong ties to Israel. Despite recent events like the October 7 Hamas attack and voting patterns at the UN, India still advocates for a two-state solution and condemns violence. This shows a continued commitment to Palestine while maintaining its relationship with Israel.

INDIA'S PALESTINE POLICY HAS TRANSFORMED OVER TIME:

From 1947 to 1992:

- ❑ India opposed the 1947 UN partition plan for Palestine and voted against creating Israel.
- ❑ Prime Minister Nehru compared Zionist settlers to the Muslim League in undivided India.
- ❑ In 1950, India recognized Israel but didn't establish full diplomatic relations.
- ❑ Throughout the Cold War, India strongly advocated for Palestine, supporting a Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital.

From 1992 to October 7, 2023:

- ❑ India established full diplomatic relations with Israel in 1992.
- ❑ Despite closer ties with Israel, India upheld support for a two-state solution and a sovereign Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital.
- ❑ India backed international initiatives like the Arab Peace Initiative and the Quartet Roadmap.

Post October 7, 2023:

- ❑ After the October 7 Hamas attack, India's stance seemed to shift, showing solidarity with Israel.
- ❑ However, India's UN votes still favored Palestinian rights and opposed Israeli settlements.
- ❑ India balanced its historical support for Palestine with its strategic partnership with Israel.

WHY SUPPORTING PALESTINE MATTERS FOR INDIA:

- ❑ **Moral and Historical Commitment:** India's historical stance against the partition of Palestine and support for a Palestinian state reflect its commitment to anti-colonial and anti-imperial principles.
- ❑ **Humanitarian Concerns:** The Gaza conflict, resulting in significant casualties and displacements, represents a major humanitarian crisis. India's support for Palestine reflects its concern for human rights and civilian lives.
- ❑ **Alignment with Global South:** India aims to lead the Global South, where there is strong opposition to Israel's actions.
- ❑ **Balancing International Diplomacy:** India criticizes Israel while engaging with various global players, maintaining a principled stance.
- ❑ **Strategic Interests:** The conflict impacts India's strategic interests in the region, especially regarding the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor and broader stability in West Asia.
- ❑ **Preventing Regional Escalation:** The ongoing conflict poses a risk of broader regional instability involving Iran, Israel, and America, all key partners for India.
- ❑ **Act West Policy:** An immediate end to the war and a permanent resolution to the Palestine question are integral to India's Act West policy.

WAY FORWARD

India should continue supporting the two-state solution while balancing ties with Israel and advocating for Palestinian self-determination. This approach aligns with India's aspirations to lead the Global South and address humanitarian concerns in Gaza.

AGALEGA ISLAND

RELEVANCE

❑ Syllabus:

- **PSIR:** Recent developments in Indian Foreign Policy
- **GS2:** India and its Neighborhood- Relations

INTRODUCTION

Prime Ministers of India and Mauritius have jointly inaugurated an airstrip and the St James Jetty on North Agaléga Island in the Indian Ocean. The Agalega island is situated in the Indian Ocean, approximately 1,000 kilometers (about 621.37 miles) north of the main Mauritius island.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF CREATING BASIC INFRASTRUCTURE IN AGALEGA ISLAND FOR MAURITIUS

Economic Significance:

- ❑ **Reduced Travel Time:** Infrastructure development will decrease the travel time from Agalega island to Mauritius to less than an hour's flight, boosting connectivity and facilitating economic activities.
- ❑ **Job Creation:** The project will generate employment opportunities for the local population, leading to improved livelihoods and overall well-being.
- ❑ **Tourism Potential:** Enhanced infrastructure will enable Mauritius to tap into the tourism potential of the Agalega islands, attracting visitors and boosting the tourism sector.

Strategic Significance:

The construction of a new jetty and airstrip will enable the stationing or forward deployment of ships belonging to the Mauritius Coast Guard. This will significantly bolster marine surveillance and security capabilities, ensuring the protection of Mauritius' maritime interests.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF AGALEGA ISLAND HOLDS SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS FOR INDIA:

Deepening of India-Mauritius relations:

- ❑ **Enhanced Goodwill:** The development project strengthens the goodwill and trust between India and Mauritius. India's assistance portrays it as a benign and friendly country, fostering positive relations with other maritime neighbors.
- ❑ **Multi-dimensional Cooperation:** India and Mauritius collaborate across various areas, including monitoring Exclusive Economic Zones, joint patrolling, hydrography, and Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief. This cooperation enables India to sustainably utilize its exclusive economic zone in the Indian Ocean region.

Geostrategic significance:

- ❑ **Strengthening SAGAR Initiative:** The joint development of Agaléga island aligns with India's commitment to the Security and Growth for All in the Region (SAGAR) initiative. It demonstrates India's support for smaller maritime nations in capacity-building and capability development.
- ❑ **Countering String of Pearls:** India's involvement in the development of ports in Agalega provides strategic access, countering China's "String of Pearls" strategy. This strategy aims to establish Chinese military and commercial presence in the Indian Ocean region, posing challenges to India's security interests.

- ❑ **Enhanced Surveillance of Indian Ocean:**
Through the Agalega project, India gains improved surveillance capabilities in the Western Indian Ocean, enabling effective monitoring of crucial oceanic routes.
- ❑ **Reinforcing India's Role as a Net Peace Provider:**
The development of Agalega enhances India's

stature as a blue-water power and a leading advocate for peace in the Indian Ocean region. India's engagement in the project underscores its commitment to maintaining peace, stability, and security in the region, further solidifying its role as a net peace provider.

STALEMATE AT WTO'S 13TH MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE

RELEVANCE

❑ Syllabus:

- **PSIR:** Evolution of the International Economic System
- **GS2:** Bilateral, Regional and Global Groupings and Agreements involving India and/or affecting India's interests.



INTRODUCTION

The recent 13th Ministerial Conference (MC13) of the World Trade Organization (WTO) concluded without any significant breakthroughs, maintaining a status quo on key issues. Despite deliberations, no consensus was reached on most of the critical matters, highlighting the ongoing challenges surrounding WTO reforms.

THE OUTCOMES OF THE 13TH MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE (MC13) OF THE WTO FOR INDIA

Dispute Settlement Mechanism:

Demand: India advocated for a fully functional dispute settlement system to resolve trade disputes effectively.

Outcome: Countries resolved to establish a fully functioning dispute settlement system accessible to all members by the end of 2024.

Impact on India: The establishment of an efficient dispute settlement system will expedite the resolution of India-related trade disputes, ensuring timely and fair outcomes.

Agriculture:

Demand: India, alongside other developing nations, pushed for a 'permanent solution' to the public stock holding issue, crucial for ensuring domestic food security through policies like the Minimum Support Price (MSP) Scheme.

Outcome: Unfortunately, no consensus was reached on this matter. Developed countries, notably the European Union, opposed such programs citing potential impacts on global food security.

Impact on India: Despite the lack of immediate threat due to the 'peace clause', which shields developing countries from legal challenges over subsidies, the lack of progress hampers long-term certainty for India's public stock holding initiatives.

E-Commerce:

Demand: India opposed the continued exemption of Customs duties on e-commerce transactions, arguing for a reassessment of the moratorium's scope and its impact on revenue collections.

Outcome: WTO members agreed to extend the moratorium on Customs duties for electronic transmissions until the next ministerial conference or March 31, 2026.

Impact on India: The extension affects India's tax revenue collections and constrains its ability to pursue digital industrialization initiatives, potentially exposing it to digital colonization by tech giants.

Fisheries Subsidies:

Demand: India stressed the need to address harmful subsidies in fisheries, particularly distant

water fishing, recognizing their adverse effects on marine ecosystems and small-scale fishermen.

Outcome: However, no agreement or outcome document materialized concerning fisheries subsidies. The issue was not addressed in the ministerial declaration.

Impact on India: Despite the lack of progress, India maintains policy autonomy to safeguard its artisanal fisheries, crucial for the livelihoods of fishermen operating within its territorial waters.

MILESTONES OF WTO

- ❑ **Facilitation of International Trade:** The WTO has established binding rules for global trade in goods and services, leading to a dramatic expansion in cross-border business activity. The real volume of world trade has increased substantially, facilitating economic integration and development.
- ❑ **Reduction in Tariffs:** One of the primary achievements of the WTO has been the significant reduction in average tariffs worldwide. Since its inception, average tariffs have nearly halved, from 10.5% to 6.4%, promoting greater trade openness and market access for countries across the globe.
- ❑ **Boost to National Incomes:** Accession to the WTO has provided a lasting boost to the national income of several developing economies. By adhering to WTO principles and participating in global trade, countries have been able to enhance their economic prosperity and raise living standards for their citizens.
- ❑ **Rise of Global Value Chains:** The predictable market conditions fostered by the WTO, coupled with advancements in communication and technology, have facilitated the rise of global value chains (GVCs). Today, trade within these GVCs accounts for a significant portion of total merchandise trade, promoting efficiency and specialization in production processes.

- ❑ **Reduction in Poverty:** The principles of free and fair trade promoted by the WTO have contributed to the reduction of poverty levels worldwide. By promoting economic growth, creating job opportunities, and fostering access to international markets, the WTO has played a crucial role in lifting millions of people out of poverty. According to World Bank estimates, the poverty level has declined from around 33.33% in 1995 to approximately 10% today, demonstrating the positive impact of global trade on poverty alleviation efforts.

CHALLENGES FACED BY WTO

- ❑ **Rising Protectionism and Trade Restrictions:** The proliferation of protectionist measures and trade restrictions, particularly by developed and advanced economies, has impeded international trade and investment flows. These barriers have resulted in significant disruptions to global supply chains and hampered economic growth.
- ❑ **Failure of Dispute Resolution Mechanism:** The WTO's dispute resolution mechanism has encountered challenges, particularly with the Appellate Body. Disagreements among members over reforms to the Appellate Body have led to a deadlock, undermining the WTO's effectiveness as a forum for resolving trade disputes and enforcing global trade rules.
- ❑ **Misuse of Special and Differential Treatment (S&DT):** Provisions for special and differential treatment, intended to support developing countries, have been misused by some countries, including high-income nations like South Korea and China. This misuse has led to trade distortions and undermined the principle of fairness in international trade.
- ❑ **Shift to Plurilateral Agreements:** There has been a notable shift towards plurilateral agreements outside the framework of the WTO, such as the Trans-Pacific Partnership

(TPP) Agreement. These agreements often favor developed countries and may exclude developing nations, limiting their ability to participate in negotiations and shape global trade rules.

- ❑ **Lack of Consensus on Reforms:** The WTO faces challenges in achieving consensus on much-needed reforms. Developing countries prioritize issues such as fisheries subsidies and public stockholding programs, while developed nations push for rules on e-commerce and other areas where they hold a competitive advantage. The lack of consensus hinders progress toward meaningful reforms that address the diverse needs and interests of WTO members.

SUGGESTED REFORMS FOR WTO

- ❑ **30 for 30 Initiative:** India has proposed the "30 For 30" initiative, aiming to implement at least 30 operational improvements to the WTO before its 30th anniversary in 2025. This includes a cooling-off period before hiring diplomats, resolving old issues before taking up new ones, and enhancing accessibility to dispute settlement for developing countries.
- ❑ **New Rules on Emerging Trade Domains:** Consensus-based agreements on emerging trade domains like electronic commerce, investment facilitation, and domestic regulation in services are proposed to make trade more efficient and predictable in cutting-edge sectors.
- ❑ **Increasing Participation in Global Trade:** Efforts should focus on making it easier, safer, and more viable for women and smaller businesses to participate in global trade, promoting inclusivity in trade activities.
- ❑ **Depoliticization of Appointment Process:** The appointment process for the dispute settlement body should be made independent of political control to ensure impartiality and fairness.

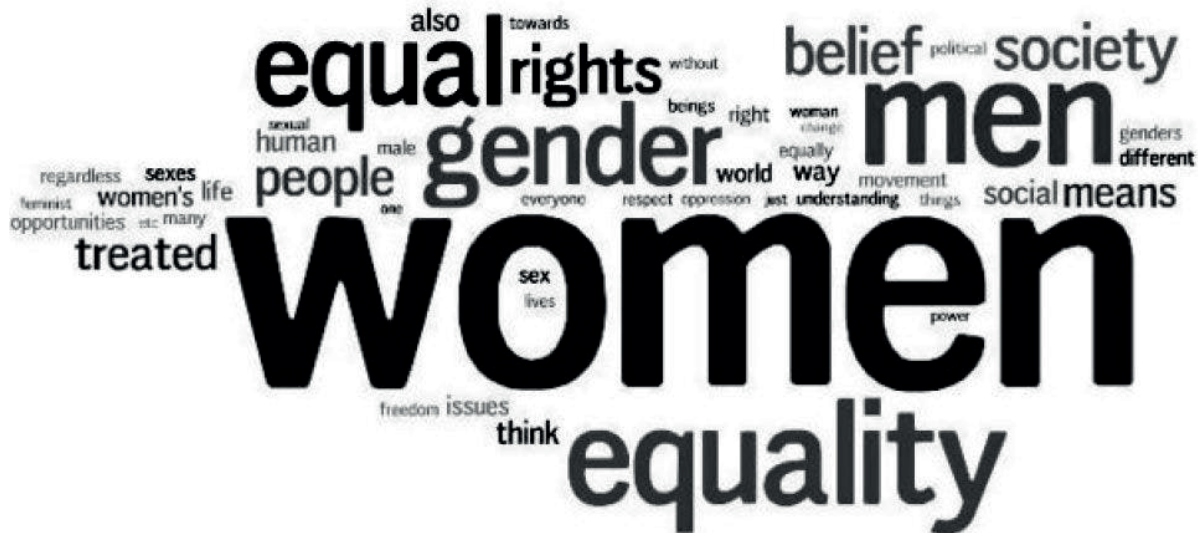
- ❑ **Reforming the Voting Process:** Clear guidelines should be established on when a country may use its veto power, considering the interests of all WTO members and the organization's mandate.
- ❑ **Dispute Settlement Reform:** Proposed reforms include expanding the Appellate Body panel, redefining membership from part-time to full-time, and allocating more resources to the Appellate Body Secretariat to enhance dispute resolution mechanisms.

- ❑ **Independent Panel as Arbiter:** An independent panel could serve as an arbiter, evaluating competing claims and facilitating resolution to overcome political deadlock.
- ❑ **Increasing Transparency:** WTO members should proactively disclose their subsidies to promote trust and transparency among members, fostering a more open and accountable trading system.

BREAKING BARRIERS: EMPOWERING WOMEN FOR A BRIGHTER TOMORROW

RELEVANCE

- ❑ **Syllabus:**
 - **PSIR:** Gender justice
 - **GS2:** Vulnerable Sections



INTRODUCTION

Women empowerment involves promoting women's self-worth, their ability to make decisions, and their right to influence social change. It is often said that empowering a man benefits an individual, but empowering a woman benefits an entire generation.

TYPES OF WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

- ❑ **Economic Empowerment:** Economic empowerment entails providing women with equal access to employment opportunities and ensuring their participation in various markets. This helps women overcome barriers

of inequality and challenge traditional gender roles.

- ❑ **Political Empowerment:** Political empowerment refers to women having equal access to leadership roles in the political arena. It amplifies the voices of women's rights and promotes their issues in the political sphere.
- ❑ **Social Empowerment:** Social empowerment aims to elevate the social status of women by granting them equal decision-making power in matters related to health, family, marriage, and childbirth.

ADVANTAGES OF WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

Social Empowerment

Social Justice: Women's social empowerment is integral to achieving social justice by combating gender-based discrimination, violence, and oppression. It fosters a more equitable and just society where all individuals have equal opportunities and rights.

Sustainable Development Goals: Promoting the social empowerment of women aligns with the Sustainable Development Goals outlined in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It contributes to the achievement of broader development objectives by addressing gender disparities and promoting inclusivity.

Economic Empowerment

Economic Growth: Women's economic empowerment contributes to economic diversification and income equality, leading to overall economic growth. Studies suggest that closing the gender gap could potentially add USD 7 trillion to the global economy, fostering shared prosperity.

Business Growth: Increased employment and leadership opportunities for women benefit businesses, enhancing organizational effectiveness and growth. Companies with more women in

senior management roles tend to perform better across various dimensions of organizational performance.

Political Empowerment

Democratic Functioning: Women's political participation is crucial for achieving gender equality and fostering genuine democracy. It enables direct involvement in public decision-making processes and promotes better accountability to women, ensuring a more inclusive democracy.

Gender-Sensitive Policies: Political empowerment leads to the implementation of gender-sensitive governance reforms. Elected officials are better equipped to promote gender equality through public policies and ensure their effective implementation, as evidenced by laws protecting against workplace sexual harassment.

CHALLENGES WITH WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

Social Empowerment Challenges

- ❑ **Gender Disparities in Education:** Disparities in male-female literacy rates persist due to factors such as inadequate girls' schools, female infanticide, early child marriage, and dowry practices, leading to educational disenfranchisement among women.
- ❑ **Healthcare Burden:** Women face challenges related to access to sanitary products, menstrual hygiene, and higher incidence rates of cervical and breast cancers, increasing their healthcare burden.
- ❑ **Social Safety Concerns:** Women are vulnerable to various forms of violence and discrimination, including female feticide, domestic violence, rape, trafficking, forced prostitution, honor killings, and sexual harassment in the workplace, contributing to their marginalization in society.

Economic Empowerment

- ❑ **Disparity in Employment Opportunities:** Globally, women face unequal access to

employment opportunities, with men's participation in the labor force consistently higher than women's. Women often experience the "motherhood penalty," leading to reduced employment prospects after having children.

- ❑ **Informal and Vulnerable Employment:** A significant portion of women's employment, approximately 60% globally according to UN Women, is in the informal economy. In low-income countries, this figure can be as high as 90%, exposing women to greater vulnerabilities.
- ❑ **Wage Gap and Unpaid Care Work:** Women continue to face disparities in pay compared to men, with the gender wage gap estimated at around 20%. Additionally, women disproportionately bear the burden of unpaid care work, contributing to their economic disadvantage.

Political Empowerment

- ❑ **Low Representation in Legislature:** Women remain underrepresented in legislative bodies, including in India, where rankings indicate a significant gap in the number of elected female representatives in parliament compared to other countries.
- ❑ **Lack of Intra-Party Democracy:** Political parties often lack intra-party democracy, hindering the development of women leaders. The patriarchal nature of politics presents a significant obstacle to women's political empowerment.

ACHIEVEMENTS OF SOME INDIAN WOMEN

Avani Chaturvedi – Trailblazer in the Skies: Avani Chaturvedi made history as the first Indian woman to fly solo in a fighter aircraft. She piloted a MiG-21 'Bison', renowned for its high-speed capabilities.

Mithali Raj – Cricket Icon: Mithali Raj, often hailed as the Lady Tendulkar of Indian women's cricket, achieved a significant milestone by participating in her 200th One Day International (ODI) match during India's series against New Zealand Women.

Mary Kom – Boxing Legend: Mary Kom, known as Ms. Knock-out, brought laurels to India by clinching the World Amateur Boxing championship title six times, and becoming the first Indian woman boxer to win an Olympic medal.

Gita Gopinath – Economic Luminary: Gita Gopinath, an Indian-American economist, made history as the first woman to assume the role of Chief Economist at the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

Arunima Sinha – Mountaineering Pioneer: Arunima Sinha etched her name in the annals of mountaineering history by becoming the world's first female amputee to conquer Mount Everest in 2013.

Usha Kiran – Exemplary Service in CRPF: Usha Kiran created waves as the youngest female officer in the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), serving in the insurgency-affected Bastar region of Chhattisgarh.

Tessy Thomas – Architect of India's Missile Program: Tessy Thomas, known as the Missile Woman of India, made remarkable strides as the first woman to lead an Indian missile project. She achieved a career milestone with the successful launch of the Agni-V missile project.

GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES FOR WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

Social Empowerment

Ending Child Marriage: Efforts to end child marriage and protect sexual and reproductive health rights have been undertaken through legislation such as The Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006, and the Medical Termination of Pregnancy Amendment Act of 2021.

Women's Land Rights: The Digital India Land Records Modernisation Programme (DILRMP) has been instrumental in protecting women's land rights. Additionally, gender-responsive budgeting

initiatives have been implemented to promote gender equality

Economic Empowerment

Promotion of Equal Pay: The government has advocated for equal pay for equal work through the implementation of four new labour codes.

Maternity Benefits: The Maternity Benefit (Amendment) Act 2017 has been enacted to establish maternity leave and childcare policies.

Access to Finance and Entrepreneurship: Initiatives such as the Mudra Yojana and the Mahila Udyam Nidhi Yojana have been introduced to provide women with access to finance and entrepreneurship training.

Political Empowerment

Women Reservation Act: The Nari Shakti Vandana Adhiniyam, also known as the Women Reservation Act, has been passed to ensure 33% reservation for women in the Lok Sabha and state legislative assemblies.

Local Body Reservation: The 73rd and 74th Amendment Acts have provided 33% reservation for women in local bodies, with some states like Bihar increasing this reservation to 50%.

Nomination of Women Candidates: The government has encouraged political parties to nominate more women candidates and has facilitated leadership training programs for women.

WAY FORWARD FOR WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

Enhanced Education Opportunities: Effective implementation of the New Education Policy to safeguard girls' right to education and ensure freedom from discrimination within educational institutions.

Skill Development and Micro Financing: Providing training to women in non-traditional skills aligned with market demand, such as machine textiles. Additionally, creating more public and private sector job opportunities for women.

Ensuring Women's Safety: Strict enforcement of the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition, and Redressal) Act, 2013, to establish safe working environments for women. Measures such as panic buttons and Nirbhaya Police Squads can contribute to enhancing women's safety.

Improving Basic Amenities in Rural Areas: Enhancing health and education standards for women in rural areas to foster overall development and create a more productive female workforce.

Shifting Focus to Women-Led Development: Empowering women as drivers of India's progress and development, rather than passive recipients of development benefits, can lead to more inclusive and sustainable growth.

INDIA-EFTA TRADE AGREEMENT IN FOCUS

RELEVANCE

□ Syllabus:

- **PSIR:** Recent developments in Indian Foreign Policy
- **GS2:** Bilateral, Regional and Global Groupings and Agreements involving India and/or affecting India's interests.



INTRODUCTION

The India-EFTA TEPA (Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement) represents a pivotal moment in India's trade relations with the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) nations, as emphasized by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. This agreement signifies a significant step forward in strengthening bilateral economic ties between India and the EFTA countries.

Under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership, the Indian government has been actively pursuing comprehensive trade agreements with major nations and groups, following its FTA 2.0 approach. Recent accomplishments include the signing of comprehensive trade pacts with Mauritius, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and Australia, aimed at enhancing trade relations, promoting investment, and facilitating economic cooperation.

Additionally, India is currently engaged in comprehensive trade discussions with the United Kingdom (UK) and the European Union (EU), highlighting its commitment to expanding its trade network and fostering mutually beneficial relationships on the global stage.

EFTA

The India-EFTA TEPA (Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement) is a trade agreement signed between India and four European countries that are members of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA): Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, and Switzerland. EFTA is an intergovernmental organization comprising countries in Europe that are not part of the European Union (EU).

ECONOMIC SIGNIFICANCE OF THE EFTA BLOC

- ❑ EFTA countries collectively have a GDP exceeding \$1 trillion.
- ❑ They rank as the world's ninth-largest merchandise trader and fifth largest in commercial services.
- ❑ India stands as the EFTA's fifth-largest trading partner, following the EU, the US, Britain, and China.
- ❑ EFTA holds significant importance as a trading partner for the EU in both goods and services.

OBJECTIVES OF THE INDIA-EFTA TEPA

- ❑ EFTA nations have pledged to invest \$100 billion in India over 15 years, with \$50 billion earmarked for the first decade and \$10 billion for the subsequent five years.
- ❑ The agreement aims to generate one million direct jobs within the span of 15 years.
- ❑ It seeks to reduce or eliminate tariffs and non-tariff barriers across various product categories, facilitating trade and investment between India and the EFTA countries.
- ❑ The TEPA endeavors to establish fair and transparent market access conditions for service providers and investors, while also enhancing cooperation on intellectual property rights protection and enforcement.
- ❑ Additionally, the agreement aims to establish effective mechanisms for resolving disputes between the parties involved.

CURRENT STATUS OF INDIA-EFTA TRADE

- ❑ **Trade Deficit:** India experiences a significant trade deficit with the EFTA countries. In 2023, bilateral trade between India and EFTA amounted to approximately \$25 billion, with India's exports to EFTA reaching \$2.8 billion

and imports totaling around \$22 billion during that period.

- ❑ **Merchandise Trade:** In the fiscal year 2022-23, the combined merchandise trade between India and EFTA amounted to approximately \$6.1 billion. Major imports into EFTA countries from India included organic chemicals, accounting for 27.5% of total imports. Conversely, India's imports from EFTA primarily comprised machinery (17.5%) and pharmaceutical products (11.4%).
- ❑ **Investment and Trading Partners:** EFTA's investment in India stood at \$10.7 billion in 2022. Switzerland emerges as India's leading trading partner within the EFTA bloc, followed by Norway. Switzerland alone accounts for a substantial 91% share of trade between India and EFTA.
- ❑ **High Tariffs:** Goods imported from EFTA countries face notably high tariffs upon arrival in India. For instance, India imposes a 20% import duty on Swiss watches and a 30% duty on chocolates originating from European countries, contributing to trade challenges and imbalances.

MAIN FEATURES OF EFTA

- ❑ **Tariff Reduction:** India has extended tariff reductions on 83% of its tariff lines, encompassing 95.3% of EFTA's exports. This elimination of duties covers a wide array of industrial goods such as Swiss watches, pharmaceuticals, chocolates, minerals, textiles, smartphones, and iron and steel products.
- ❑ **Market Access:** EFTA's market access offer extends to 100% of non-agricultural products exported from India, with EFTA offering reductions on 92% of its tariff lines.
- ❑ **Services Sector Vitality:** The agreement includes provisions aimed at enhancing market access for various services sectors, including

financial services, telecommunications, and maritime personnel.

- ❑ **Investments and Technology Transfers:** Provisions within the agreement facilitate investments and technology transfers in sectors such as agriculture, renewables, pharmaceuticals, garments, and medical instruments.
- ❑ **Collaboration in Infrastructure:** The agreement promotes collaboration in the infrastructure sector, with initiatives such as partnerships with Swiss transport companies for railway development and collaboration with Flughafen Zürich AG for improved air transport connectivity.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE INDIA-EFTA TEPA

- ❑ **Comprehensive Trade Pact:** Serving as a wide-ranging agreement, TEPA addresses numerous critical economic issues and trade aspects, including labour rights, human rights, trade in goods and services, rules of origin, and intellectual property rights (IPR). It stands as India's second most comprehensive trade pact after its agreement with the UAE.
- ❑ **Template for Other Trade Agreements:** The TEPA's inclusion of a 'behind-the-border' requirement, linking tariff reductions with substantial investment mobilization by EFTA countries, may serve as a model for future trade agreements, particularly with developed nations like the EU and UK.
- ❑ **Benefits for Indian Consumers:** Reduced tariff rates under TEPA are expected to lower prices for Indian consumers on various products such as seafood, chocolates, biscuits, watches, medical equipment, and energy drinks.
- ❑ **Enhanced Service Sector Cooperation:** The agreement aims to stimulate services exports, particularly in areas like information technology and audio-visual capabilities, while also facilitating the movement of skilled personnel.

- ❑ **Facilitation of Technology Transfer:** Technology transfer provisions in the agreement are set to bolster India's productivity and export competitiveness across various sectors, including agriculture, renewables, pharmaceuticals, garments, and medical instruments.
- ❑ **Employment Generation:** Increased trade and investment opportunities under TEPA are anticipated to generate around one million jobs, particularly in the manufacturing and services sectors.
- ❑ **Expanded Investment Opportunities:** TEPA is expected to attract financial investments into India, leveraging Switzerland's banking sector, Norway's sovereign wealth fund, and Liechtenstein's ESG investing sector.
- ❑ **Trade Diversification:** The agreement aims to diversify India's trade channels, reducing its heavy import dependence on China, which could help balance trade deficits.

CHALLENGES FOR THE INDIA-EFTA TRADE AND ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT (TEPA)

- ❑ **No Reduction on Gold Tariffs:** The deal does not offer any significant tariff benefits on gold, which constitutes a significant portion of bilateral trade between India and EFTA countries. As a result, the impact of the agreement is limited to other sectors, affecting its overall effectiveness.
- ❑ **Switzerland's Tariff Policies:** Switzerland's policy of allowing tariff-free entry for all industrial goods from any country could impact the benefits to Indian companies, potentially creating an uneven playing field.
- ❑ **Non-Tariff Barriers:** Non-tariff barriers in Switzerland, such as stringent quality standards and approval requirements, pose challenges for Indian agricultural exports to the country, hindering market access.

- ❑ **Exclusion of Agricultural Products:** Sensitive agricultural items like dairy and soy have been excluded from the agreement, limiting opportunities for trade in this sector.
- ❑ **Possibility of Trade Distortions:** EFTA countries, being part of the European Economic Area (EEA), enjoy free movement of goods, capital, services, and persons within the EU single market. This integration may lead to trade distortions in the absence of a comprehensive India-EU Free Trade Agreement (FTA).

STEPS THAT CAN BE TAKEN

- ❑ **Early Conclusion of India-EU FTA:** The conclusion of the India-EU FTA is crucial to prevent trade distortions resulting from the

India-EFTA TEPA. Efforts should be made to expedite negotiations and reach a mutually beneficial agreement.

- ❑ **Proactive Measures:** Establishing dispute resolution mechanisms and dedicated EFTA offices can help address challenges and fully realize the benefits of the TEPA agreement.
- ❑ **Strong Political Involvement:** Strong political involvement and guidance are essential to navigate challenges and ensure the successful implementation of the TEPA agreement. Government support and leadership will be crucial in overcoming obstacles and maximizing the agreement's potential.

UNVEILING INDIA'S NUCLEAR DETERRENCE

RELEVANCE

❑ Syllabus:

- **PSIR:** India and the Nuclear Question: Changing perceptions and policy.
- **GS2:** International Relations



INDIA'S NUCLEAR DOCTRINE

INTRODUCTION

The recent successful test of the Agni-V ballistic missile, codenamed Mission 'Divyastra,' marks a significant milestone in India's nuclear deterrence capabilities. With a remarkable range of 5000 kilometers and the inclusion of Multiple Independently Targetable Re-entry Vehicles (MIRVs), the Agni-V has significantly strengthened India's nuclear deterrence posture. This development underscores India's commitment to maintaining a credible and effective deterrent against potential adversaries.

NUCLEAR DETERRENCE

Nuclear deterrence is a strategic concept utilized by states possessing nuclear weapons to dissuade potential adversaries from launching a nuclear attack. The premise is to convince adversaries that the costs and repercussions of such an attack would outweigh any potential gains.

PRINCIPLE BEHIND NUCLEAR DETERRENCE

Nuclear deterrence operates based on the principle of Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD), wherein both sides possess sufficient nuclear capabilities to inflict devastating damage on each other, thereby deterring hostile actions.

In India's Nuclear Policy:

- ❑ **Credible Minimum Deterrence:** India adheres to the principle of credible minimum deterrence, whereby it maintains a modest arsenal of nuclear weapons solely to deter potential nuclear aggression. India does not seek to match the size of other countries' nuclear arsenals.
- ❑ **Retaliation to a Nuclear Attack:** India's policy dictates that in the event of a nuclear attack on its territory, it reserves the right to retaliate with overwhelming force, inflicting significant damage on the aggressor. This serves as a

deterrent against potential nuclear aggression directed towards India

EVOLUTION OF INDIA'S NUCLEAR DETERRENCE

- ❑ **1947:** Post-Independence, India initiated efforts to develop nuclear weapons capability due to regional tensions and the emergence of nuclear-armed neighbours, particularly China and Pakistan.
- ❑ **1974:** India conducted its first nuclear test, codenamed 'Smiling Buddha,' demonstrating its nuclear deterrence capabilities.
- ❑ **1974-1998:** During this period, India maintained nuclear ambiguity, neither confirming nor denying the possession of nuclear weapons. This ambiguity served as a form of deterrence, keeping uncertainty about India's nuclear status.
- ❑ **1998:** The Pokhran Tests of 1998, which included five nuclear detonations, marked India's formal declaration as a nuclear weapons state.
- ❑ **Post-1998 Tests:** Following the tests, India outlined its Nuclear Doctrine, which includes a No First Use (NFU) policy, minimum credible deterrence, and retaliation only in response to a nuclear attack. Additionally, India established the Strategic Forces Command (SFC) to manage, deploy, and control its nuclear forces effectively.

DIFFERENT FORM OF DETERRENCE ADOPTED BY INDIA

Land-Based Deterrence:

- ❑ **Agni Series:** India's Agni series of ballistic missiles includes Agni-I to Agni-V, with ranges varying from 700 km to 5,000 km. Agni-V, equipped with Multiple Independent Re-entry Vehicles (MIRVs), is an intermediate-range ballistic missile capable of reaching targets in Europe and China.

- ❑ **Prithvi Series:** Developed by DRDO, the Prithvi series consists of short-range ballistic missiles such as Prithvi-I and Prithvi-II, with ranges from 150 km to 350 km, capable of carrying both conventional and nuclear warheads.
- ❑ **Shaurya:** Shaurya is a land-based hypersonic missile designed for precision delivery of nuclear payloads at hypersonic speeds, with a range of 700-1,000 km, enhancing India's deterrence capabilities.

Sea-Based Deterrence:

- ❑ **INS Arihant:** India's first indigenous Ballistic Missile Submarine (SSBN), INS Arihant, has conducted successful test-firings of nuclear-capable submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs), augmenting India's sea-based deterrence.
- ❑ **S-4:** The S-4 submarine, India's third indigenous nuclear ballistic missile submarine (SSBN), is larger than INS Arihant, providing more space for nuclear-tipped ballistic missiles.

Air-Based Deterrence:

Rafale Aircraft: The induction of Rafale aircraft into the Indian Air Force's fleet has strengthened India's air-based nuclear deterrence capabilities. The Rafale aircraft are equipped to carry nuclear warheads, enhancing India's strategic flexibility and response options.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE AGNI-V MISSILE

- ❑ **Enhanced Nuclear Deterrence:** Agni-V strengthens India's nuclear deterrence against adversaries like China. As a core component of India's land-based nuclear deterrence, Agni-V's MIRV capability makes it difficult to intercept, bolstering India's deterrent posture in the Sino-Indian power equation.
- ❑ **Nuclear Retaliation Capability:** With its long range and MIRV capability, Agni-V enables India to develop credible nuclear retaliation capabilities, in line with its "no first use"

nuclear doctrine. This enhances India's ability to retaliate effectively in the event of a first strike, ensuring maximum damage to the aggressor.

- ❑ **Intercontinental Range Capability:** Agni-V's range of 5,000 km places it in the category of Intercontinental Range Ballistic Missiles (ICBMs), capable of reaching distant targets including parts of China and even Europe. This development elevates India's status among nations with advanced ballistic missile capabilities.
- ❑ **Boost to Defense Capabilities:** The induction of Agni-V into India's defense arsenal significantly enhances the country's overall defense capabilities. It provides India with a potent strategic asset, reinforcing its deterrence posture and strengthening national security

CHALLENGES TO INDIA'S DEVELOPMENT OF DETERRENCE CAPABILITIES

- ❑ **Inadequate Nuclear Testing Facilities:** The limited testing infrastructure hampers the design and testing of re-entry vehicles, potentially limiting the effectiveness of warhead delivery systems.
- ❑ **Opacity Surrounding Warhead Numbers:** Uncertainty persists regarding the number of warheads Agni-V can carry, posing challenges for strategic planning and deterrence calculations.
- ❑ **Low Yield of Nuclear Warheads:** India's relatively small number of atomic tests may result in limited yield capabilities for nuclear warheads, affecting their effectiveness in deterring adversaries.
- ❑ **Issues with Sea-Based Deterrence:** Deep-sea communications challenges with SSBNs may disrupt operations, affecting the reliability and effectiveness of sea-based deterrence strategies.

- ❑ **Rapid Expansion of Chinese Nuclear Arsenal:** China's swift advancements in missile and missile defense programs pose a significant challenge, necessitating India to adapt and respond effectively.

WAY FORWARD

- ❑ **Early Testing of SLBM:** India should prioritize testing its long-range Submarine-Launched Ballistic Missile (SLBM) to enhance its nuclear arsenal and diversify deterrence capabilities.
- ❑ **Investment in Missile Defense Systems:** To counter China's nuclear advancements, India should invest in advanced missile defense

systems like the development and deployment of Agni VI, bolstering defensive capabilities.

- ❑ **Strengthening Conventional Capabilities:** While maintaining a credible nuclear deterrent, India should strengthen its conventional military capabilities to deter conflicts that could escalate to the nuclear level.
- ❑ **Cooperation with Allies:** India should continue collaborating with allies, such as the United States, to enhance deterrence through intelligence sharing, joint exercises, and coordinated defense strategies. Such partnerships can bolster India's deterrence posture and promote regional stability.

KURIL ISLAND DISPUTE BETWEEN JAPAN AND RUSSIA

RELEVANCE

- ❑ **Syllabus:**
 - **PSIR:** Contemporary Global Concerns.
 - **GS2:** Effect of policies of Developed and Developing countries on India's interest.



As the ongoing Russia-Ukraine conflict continues, Moscow finds itself increasingly allocating greater military and economic resources towards its western border. In Tokyo, there are conservative voices alluding to the possibility that this war could create an opportunity for Japan to assert control over what they refer to as the Northern Territories. These islands, known as the Kuril Islands in Russia, were captured by Soviet forces in the final stages of World War II.

Despite past discussions between Moscow and Tokyo regarding the Iturup (Etorofu in Japanese), Kunashir (Kunashiri), Shikotan, and Habomai Islets, a mutually acceptable resolution has not been reached. Consequently, the two nations have never formally concluded a peace treaty to officially end the conflict.

Contemporary Japan does not intend to employ military intervention to settle this dispute. Nevertheless, there are individuals who speculate that the regime led by Vladimir Putin might become susceptible to change, potentially opening avenues for diplomatic and economic incentives to bring about progress.

However, even if the Ukraine conflict were to escalate to a degree that poses a threat to Russia's control over this distant region, there is the additional factor of China, Russia's ally, which might harbor its own intentions and plans.

WHAT ARE THE KURIL ISLANDS/ NORTHERN TERRITORIES?

- ❑ These four islands are located between the Sea of Okhotsk and the Pacific Ocean, situated to the north of Japan's northernmost prefecture, Hokkaido.
- ❑ Despite being under Russian control since the conclusion of World War II, both Moscow and Tokyo assert their sovereignty over these islands.
- ❑ Following the conclusion of World War II, the Soviet Union took possession of the islands

and subsequently expelled their Japanese inhabitants by 1949. Tokyo maintains that these contested islands have been integral to Japan since the early 19th century.

WHAT LIES BEHIND THE DISPUTE?

- ❑ Tokyo, Japan asserts its sovereignty over the islands based on a number of historical treaties. These include the Shimoda Treaty of 1855, the 1875 Treaty of St. Petersburg which facilitated the exchange of Sakhalin for the Kuril Islands, and the Portsmouth Treaty of 1905. The latter was signed following Japan's victory in the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-05.
- ❑ On the contrary, Russia contends its sovereignty over the islands citing the Yalta Agreement (1945) and the Potsdam Declaration (1945). Furthermore, Russia argues that the San Francisco Treaty of 1951 serves as legal evidence of Japan's recognition of Russian sovereignty over the islands.

PRESENT CONTEXT AND HOW CHINA FACTORS IN THE CONFLICT?

The nationalist Japanese newspaper, Sankei Shimbun, recently published articles drawing attention to Russia's perceived decline, using the war in Ukraine and the short-lived Wagner rebellion as illustrative examples.

According to the paper, the Wagner rebellion underscored the potential vulnerability of Moscow's defense against a modest ground force armed with tanks and anti-aircraft weapons. This led to questions about Russia's overall defensive capabilities and the potential lack of protection along its borders. The Sankei Shimbun article raised the point: "If such concerns extend to the capital, could this indicate a broader weakness in Russia's border security?" The translated version from the Japan Forward website quoted the article as suggesting that Japan should be prepared in case Russia undergoes collapse or fragmentation.

Another article from the same paper speculated that Russia's President Putin's regime could be at risk of being toppled by further military setbacks or internal unrest. Such an outcome could result in various federal republics seeking independence from Moscow, potentially leading to the breakup of the country. In this context, Japan might explore the possibility of negotiating with a new governing authority that oversees disputed islands. The article speculated that Japan could offer economic assistance in exchange for the return of the contested territory.

Even if Putin manages to hold onto power, the paper proposes that he might consider relinquishing control of the islands in exchange for aid, particularly if international sanctions persist over an extended period.

ECHOES OF THE YELTSIN ERA

"When Boris Yeltsin held the reins of leadership in Russia, Japan came remarkably close to striking an agreement that might have led to the return of some of the disputed islands under Japanese authority, in exchange for economic aid. Regrettably, this potential deal fell apart," stated Yoichi Shimada, an expert in international relations at Fukui Prefectural University.

Shimada acknowledged, "This historical context indeed establishes a precedent for the current situation. It's plausible that if Russia experiences a period of instability, the succeeding leadership in Moscow could inherit an array of intricate economic and diplomatic predicaments. Consequently, they might be open to revisiting discussions regarding the Northern Territories."

Nevertheless, Shimada acknowledges that any diplomatic endeavors initiated by Tokyo could swiftly lose relevance if China were to opt for a military intervention to capture territories in the Russian Far East—an action that Japan could not feasibly contemplate.

CHINA SEES IT AS ITS TICKET TO THE PACIFIC

Until the mid-1800s, a significant portion of what is now known as the Russian Far East was a part of Chinese Manchuria. There is a potential interest for the Chinese government in tapping into the vast energy and raw material reserves beneath Russia's expansive steppes.

Reports from Japanese analysts highlight that Beijing has recently begun using the former Chinese names for Russian Far East cities, including Vladivostok and Sakhalin Island. Sakhalin, which is home to around 7 million Russian residents, might face challenges in resisting a hypothetical Chinese encroachment.

From a strategic standpoint, China could find reasons to assert control over this territory. China's geographical movement is somewhat restricted by the string of islands consisting of Japan, Taiwan, and the Philippines, all of which are unsupportive of China's territorial ambitions.

Professor Yoichi Shimada suggests that if China were to acquire the Kuril Islands, it could gain "entry to the Arctic region and direct naval access to the North Pacific."

"As the potential for instability in Russia increases, we must exercise caution concerning China," he cautioned.

HOWEVER SPLINTERING OF RUSSIA 'NOT ALL THAT LIKELY'

Yakov Zinberg, a professor specializing in international relations at Kokushikan University in Tokyo, suggests that while Japan holds aspirations for the Northern Territories, the prospect of China taking actions to establish control over the Russian Far East appears to be a more practical scenario.

Even if Russia were to engage in discussions with Japan regarding the Kuril Islands, Zinberg argues that China would swiftly intervene, leveraging their close alignment with Russia to orchestrate a

resolution that aligns more favorably with Chinese interests. Zinberg, who hails from St. Petersburg, emphasizes that he doesn't find the idea of a complete collapse of Russia and the subsequent relinquishing of its territory to Japan to be highly

probable. He acknowledges the potential for Russia's economic weakening, but he doesn't believe it would reach a point where Moscow would seriously consider ceding its territory to Japan.



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INDIAN GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS (IGP)

THE SUSTAINED DECLINE IN INDIA'S PARLIAMENTARY PRACTICES

RELEVANCE

- ❑ Syllabus:
 - **GS2: Parliament**
 - **PSIR: Principal Organs of the Union Government**



FUNCTIONING OF INDIAN PARLIAMENT

CURRENT STATUS OF INDIA'S EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL DYNAMICS

External Dynamics:

- ❑ **India's Stability Amid Global Turmoil:** Despite global unrest, including the Ukraine conflict and tensions in West Asia, India remains relatively stable.
- ❑ **Vigilance Concern with China:** While China is a concern, India views it with vigilance rather than immediate threat.
- ❑ **Limited Threat from Pakistan:** Internal issues in Pakistan mitigate its threat perception to India.

Internal Dynamics:

- ❑ **Terror Attacks:** India has been fortunate to avoid major terrorist incidents recently.
- ❑ **Internal Security Challenges:** Challenges like farmer protests in Punjab and Haryana, and unrest in Manipur, are present but manageable.
- ❑ **Communal Harmony:** Communal tensions, though controlled, could escalate during election seasons.
- ❑ **Left-Wing Extremism:** Currently low, but there's potential for resurgence during elections.

ISSUES WITH INDIA'S PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACY:

- ❑ **Parliamentary Practices Decline:** Recent parliamentary sessions have seen significant conflicts and deviations from traditional practices.
- ❑ **Political Polarization:** Heightened political division, with the Prime Minister accusing the opposition of creating regional divides.
- ❑ **Strained Federalism:** Concerns arise over the central government's encroachment on state autonomy, with allegations of interference through governors.
- ❑ **Political Defections:** Engineered defections, like the Bihar Chief Minister's switch to the BJP, undermine democratic processes.

FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO THE SITUATION:

- ❑ **Intense Party Rivalries:** Increasing hostility between ruling and opposition parties fuels the divide.
- ❑ **Electoral Strategies:** Divisive issues like the Ram Temple construction are used to polarize voters.
- ❑ **Manipulation of Democratic Processes:** Notable defections indicate a trend of political

loyalty manipulation, eroding democratic norms.

- ❑ **Misuse of Constitutional Powers:** Alleged misuse of gubernatorial powers disrupts the balance of Centre-State relations.
- ❑ **Lack of Adherence to Constitutional Principles:** Deviation from mandated practices in governance and parliamentary conduct worsens the situation.

WAY FORWARD

- ❑ **Reinforcing Parliamentary Practices:** Focus on upholding parliamentary norms and traditions.
- ❑ **Promoting Political Tolerance:** Fostering an environment of tolerance and respect among political parties.
- ❑ **Adhering to Constitutional Principles:** Ensuring strict adherence to constitutional principles in governance and decision-making.
- ❑ **Strengthening Centre-State Relations:** Respecting state autonomy and refraining from undue interference.
- ❑ **Ensuring Electoral Integrity:** Upholding the integrity of electoral processes, particularly in preventing political defections.

ENDING DISCRIMINATION-SUPREME COURT'S DECISION ON WOMEN'S EMPLOYMENT

RELEVANCE

❑ Syllabus:

- **GS2: Government Policies**
- **PSIR: Feminism**



INTRODUCTION

Terminating the employment of a woman on the ground that she has got married is a “coarse case of gender discrimination and inequality”, the Supreme Court remarked recently

WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES WOMEN FACE IN THE CIVILIAN WORKFORCE?

- ❑ **Personal Questions in Interviews:** Women often encounter uncomfortable personal questions about their marital status and future family plans during job interviews, which can be intrusive and discriminatory.
- ❑ **Low Workforce Participation:** Despite advancements, the workforce participation

rate for women in India remains low at 19.9%, indicating significant gender disparities in employment opportunities and access.

- ❑ **Education Barriers:** Many girls, especially from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, face barriers to education, including lack of access to proper facilities like toilets, which can limit their opportunities for skill development and employment.
- ❑ **Restrictive Social Norms:** Societal and cultural norms often place restrictions on women's mobility, behavior, and career choices, which can impede their ability to pursue meaningful and fulfilling careers.

- ❑ **Unequal Domestic Responsibilities:** Women are typically burdened with a disproportionate share of household chores and caregiving responsibilities, which can affect their ability to balance work and family commitments and advance in their careers.

WHAT WAS THE SUPREME COURT'S DECISION ON WOMEN'S EMPLOYMENT?

- ❑ **Ruling on Marriage and Employment:** The Supreme Court of India declared the practice of terminating women's employment upon marriage as unconstitutional, affirming women's right to equal treatment in the workforce.
- ❑ **Case Example – Selina John:** The decision stemmed from the case of Selina John, a former lieutenant in the Military Nursing Service, who was discharged from service in 1988 due to her marriage.
- ❑ **Compensation Ordered:** The Court ordered the Indian Government to provide Ms. John with ₹60 lakh in compensation for the unfair termination of her employment based on her marital status.

HOW DOES THIS AFFECT GENDER EQUALITY?

- ❑ **Promotes Equal Treatment:** The Supreme Court's decision reinforces the principle of equal treatment and non-discrimination in employment practices, regardless of marital status or gender.

- ❑ **Encourages Women's Participation:** By eliminating the fear of discrimination based on marriage, this decision may encourage more women to enter and remain in the workforce, contributing to higher levels of female labor force participation and economic empowerment.
- ❑ **Supports Broader Gender Parity Efforts:** This decision aligns with broader efforts to achieve gender parity in various sectors, including the military, where women have recently gained equal opportunities for permanent commission.
- ❑ **Challenges Patriarchal Norms:** By challenging patriarchal norms and societal expectations that limit women's professional opportunities and autonomy, this decision paves the way for greater gender equality and social justice.

WAY FORWARD

"To progress, we must change societal norms limiting women's opportunities and ensure workplaces support women regardless of marital status. Increasing women's workforce participation, currently at 19.9% in India, is vital for gender equality. This requires removing entry barriers, providing work-life balance, and challenging gender stereotypes. Collaboration between government, private sector, and civil society is key to fostering an inclusive environment for women's empowerment and economic participation."

REGIONAL BENCHES OF SUPREME COURT

RELEVANCE

- ❑ **Syllabus:**
 - **GS2:** Structure, Organization and Functioning of the Judiciary
 - **PSIR:** Principal Organs of the Union Government

INTRODUCTION

The debate over the establishment of regional benches of the Supreme Court has been reignited once again. The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Personnel, Public Grievances, Law and Justice apprised the Lok Sabha that the Law Ministry has accepted its recommendation to establish regional benches of the Supreme Court across India.

However, the standing committee report also pointed out that the Supreme Court has been “consistently” rejecting the idea of establishment of regional benches. The matter of regional benches is sub-judice with the SC.

CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISION

The recommendations regarding establishment of regional benches find their root in Article 130 of the Constitution of India. Article 130 provides that the Supreme Court shall sit in Delhi or in such other place or places as the Chief Justice of India may, with the approval of the President, from time to time, appoint.

REGIONAL BENCHES OF SC

Recommendations of the Law Commission- The Eighteenth Law Commission in its 229th Report suggested that a Constitutional Bench be set up at Delhi and four Cassation Benches be set up in the Delhi (Northern region), Chennai/Hyderabad (Southern region), Kolkata (the Eastern region) and Mumbai (Western Region).

The cassation bench deals with all appellate work arising out of the orders/judgments of the High Courts of the particular region.

Note- Court of Cassation— Many countries around the world have instituted Courts of Cassation that decide cases involving non-Constitutional disputes and appeals from the lower level of courts. These are courts of last resort that have the power to reverse decisions of lower courts. (Cassation: annulment, cancellation, reversal).

Recommendations of Standing Committees of Parliament- Standing Committees of Parliament in 2004, 2005, and 2006, also recommended the establishment of regional benches.

REASONS BEHIND THE DEMAND FOR REGIONAL BENCHES OF THE SUPREME COURT INCLUDE:

- ❑ **Geographical Bias in Cases:** A significant majority of cases before the SC originate from High Courts close to Delhi, indicating a geographical bias.
- ❑ **Geographical Barriers to Citizen Judicial Activism:** Citizen judicial activism has surged, with more PILs filed against arbitrary state actions. However, the SC’s sole location in Delhi creates geographical barriers for many citizens to access the court directly.
- ❑ **Impact on Lawyer Careers:** The SC’s location in Delhi disproportionately affects lawyers who cannot afford to relocate, potentially hindering their career advancement.
- ❑ **Legal Marginalization of the Underprivileged:** The SC’s location in Delhi poses challenges for underprivileged individuals residing in remote areas, as traveling to Delhi or engaging expensive SC counsel is often financially unfeasible.
- ❑ **International Examples:** Countries like France and the US have distinct courts for appeal and cassation, alleviating the burden on their top judiciary. This model serves as an example for addressing workload and geographic accessibility concerns.

ADVANTAGES OF ESTABLISHING REGIONAL BENCHES OF THE SUPREME COURT:

- ❑ **Fulfillment of Constitutional Mandate:** Article 39A of the Constitution emphasizes equitable access to justice for all. Regional benches

ensure that justice is accessible to citizens across the country.

- ❑ **Reduction of Judicial Pendency:** With over 80,000 pending cases in the overburdened Supreme Court, regional benches can alleviate the workload. Increased judges and lawyers in the SC would enhance the rate of case disposal.
- ❑ **Enhanced Focus on Constitutional Matters:** Establishing regional benches allows the principal bench in Delhi to concentrate solely on constitutional matters. This specialization enables SC judges to thoroughly scrutinize and deliver impactful judgments in constitutional cases.
- ❑ **Democratization of the SC Bar:** Regional benches promote diversity in the SC Bar by providing opportunities for lawyers from various geographical regions. Similar to the division of Tis Hazari Court's jurisdiction into three district courts, regional benches create avenues for young judges to excel in their careers.

ARGUMENTS AGAINST THE IDEA OF REGIONAL BENCHES:

- ❑ **Dilution of Supreme Court's Sanctity:** Critics argue that establishing regional benches may Balkanize the Supreme Court, diminishing its authority and the binding force of its decisions.
- ❑ **Territorial Jurisdiction Issues and Divergent Views of Justice:** Regional benches may interfere with the territorial jurisdiction of High Courts, potentially leading to conflicts. Additionally, divergent views among benches could harm the justice system.

- ❑ **Increase in Litigations:** Easier access to justice through regional benches might result in a surge of litigation, including frivolous petitions, adding to the burden on the judiciary.
- ❑ **Huge Infrastructural Costs:** Setting up regional benches requires significant financial and human resources, posing challenges in terms of infrastructure and funding.

WAY FORWARD

- ❑ **Mechanism for Virtual Hearings:** Implement a mechanism for virtual hearings in the SC, combining virtual and physical proceedings to enhance accessibility without the need for physical regional benches.
- ❑ **Certification of Special Leave Petitions (SLPs):** Introduce a mechanism where only SLPs certified by High Courts are admitted to the Supreme Court, reducing the case load.
- ❑ **Improve Efficiency of Existing Courts:** Streamline judicial vacancies, infrastructure, and processes to address judicial pendency. Initiatives like the All-India Judicial Service can enhance the quality of judicial appointments.
- ❑ **Scrutiny of Cases:** Establish a mechanism to scrutinize petition types admitted in the Supreme Court, transferring certain cases like transfer petitions and arbitral appeals to respective High Courts.
- ❑ **Retain Exclusive Jurisdictional Powers:** Ensure that the principal bench in Delhi retains its original, advisory, and writ jurisdiction under Articles 131, 143, and 32 of the Constitution, even with the establishment of regional branches.

FISCAL FEDERALISM: THE VERTICAL DEVOLUTION AND ITS ISSUES

RELEVANCE

❑ Syllabus:

- **GS2:** Federal Structure
- **PSIR:** Federalism

CONCERNS IN INDIA'S FISCAL FEDERALISM

- ❑ **Increasing Retention of Tax Proceeds:** The central government's growing retention of tax proceeds, particularly through cesses and surcharges, is a significant concern. This trend reduces the divisible pool, with such collections expanding from 11.3% to 16.3% of the gross tax revenue between 2009-10 and 2022-23. Consequently, states face limitations on their spending autonomy due to more tied transfers.
- ❑ **Shrinking Divisible Pool:** The aforementioned rise in cesses and surcharges contributes to the shrinking of the divisible pool, which adversely affects the fiscal autonomy of states. With a smaller pool of funds available for distribution among states, their financial flexibility and ability to address local needs are constrained.
- ❑ **Non-compliance with Finance Commission Recommendations:** The central government's failure to adhere to the recommendations of the Finance Commission regarding revenue sharing exacerbates the fiscal imbalance. This non-compliance undermines the principles of fiscal federalism and leads to disputes between the central and state governments.
- ❑ **Mismanagement of Funds:** Reports by the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) highlight instances of mismanagement of funds by the central government, further complicating fiscal relations between the center and the states. Such mismanagement erodes trust and transparency in the fiscal

transfer mechanism, hindering effective fiscal federalism.

REASONS FOR THE SHRINKING OF THE DIVISIBLE POOL

- ❑ **Introduction of Cesses and Surcharges:** The central government has been introducing new cesses and surcharges, such as the Agriculture Infrastructure and Development Cess in 2021-22, and retaining them exclusively.
- ❑ **Exclusion from Divisible Pool:** These cesses and surcharges are excluded from the net divisible pool, which is the portion of tax revenue shared with states.
- ❑ **Rising Share of Exclusions:** The proportion of tax revenue excluded has increased significantly, from 11.3% of the gross tax revenue in 2009-10 to 16.3% in 2022-23.

INDICATION GIVEN BY THE CAG ON SHARING OF RESOURCES BETWEEN THE UNION AND STATES

- ❑ **Non-Transfer or Short Transfer of Cesses:** The CAG has highlighted instances where cesses collected were either not transferred or inadequately transferred to designated funds.
- ❑ **Specific Examples of Mismanagement:** For example, only 60% of the Health and Education Cess collected in 2021-22 was transferred to its reserve fund. Similarly, a small fraction (9.6%) of the Research and Development Cess collected over two decades was transferred to its respective fund.

- ❑ **Large Scale of Discrepancy:** The extent of short transfers is substantial, with billions not reaching the intended funds. This includes shortfalls in the Swachh Bharat Cess and under-transfers in the Road Cess and Clean Energy Cess

THE SPIRIT OF COOPERATIVE FISCAL FEDERALISM IN INDIA IS DILUTING DUE TO

- ❑ **Deviation from Finance Commission's Recommendations:** The Union government has not fully adhered to the Finance Commission's recommended sharing rates. For example, during the 15th Finance Commission period, the actual share devolved was only 38.1%, below the recommended 41%. This deviation undermines the principles of cooperative fiscal federalism.
- ❑ **Rise in Tied Transfers:** States are receiving more funds tied to specific central schemes, limiting their discretion to allocate resources according to local needs. Tied transfers restrict the autonomy of states in fiscal matters and weaken the cooperative federalism framework.
- ❑ **Credit Usurpation by the Union Government:** There is a tendency for the Union government to claim credit for projects, even when states contribute significantly. This undermines the partnership principle in fiscal federalism, as states' contributions are not duly acknowledged or recognized.
- ❑ **Conditionalities on Grants:** Several grants provided to states come with conditions

attached, such as specific labeling or requirements. These conditionalities impose Union government preferences over state priorities, reducing the flexibility of states in utilizing funds according to their needs and preferences. This imposition undermines the cooperative aspect of fiscal federalism and may lead to friction between the center and states.

TO ADDRESS THE ISSUES SURROUNDING COOPERATIVE FISCAL FEDERALISM, SEVERAL REFORMS ARE NEEDED:

- ❑ **Compensation for Historical Wrongs:** The 16th Finance Commission should consider compensating states for historical discrepancies in devolution, ensuring a fair distribution of resources. This would help rectify past imbalances and promote equity among states.
- ❑ **Transparency in Budget Documents:** Accurate estimates of "net proceeds" should be published in budget documents to enhance transparency and accountability in fiscal transfers. This would enable stakeholders to understand the allocation and utilization of funds more effectively.
- ❑ **Legislative Limits on Cesses and Surcharges:** The Union government should enact legislation imposing strict limits on the collection of cesses and surcharges. This would prevent excessive accumulation of funds outside the divisible pool and ensure a more equitable distribution of resources among states.

DEMOCRACY'S DOLLARS: UNVEILING THE COMPLEXITIES OF ELECTORAL FUNDING

RELEVANCE

□ Syllabus:

- **GS2:** Elections
- **PSIR:** Party System



THE CURRENT STATUS OF ELECTION EXPENDITURE IN INDIA

- **Government Ad Spending:** The central government's expenditure on advertisements has witnessed a significant spike during election years, indicating a potential misuse of public funds for political purposes. This trend raises questions about the impartiality of government communication and its impact on voters' perceptions.
- **Candidate Expenditure Limits:** While there are set limits on expenditure for individual candidates contesting elections, these limits are often exceeded, especially in larger states. This suggests a lack of enforcement

mechanisms and accountability in regulating campaign spending by candidates.

- **Party Spending:** Political parties are not subject to any spending caps, resulting in unchecked and excessive expenditure during election campaigns. The substantial amounts spent by major parties like the BJP and Congress highlight the dominance of money power in Indian elections.

CONCERNS WITH ELECTION EXPENDITURE:

- **Lack of Spending Caps for Parties:** The absence of spending limits for political parties allows them to engage in lavish spending, which

can distort the electoral playing field and disadvantage smaller or less affluent parties.

- ❑ **Influence of Money on Fairness:** The disproportionate spending by major parties raises concerns about the fairness of elections and the ability of candidates with limited resources to compete on an equal footing. Money power can influence voter perceptions and undermine the democratic principle of equal representation.
- ❑ **Illegal Practices and Opacity:** Apart from legal campaign expenditures, the prevalence of illegal practices such as the distribution of cash to voters and the use of opaque funding sources erodes public trust in the electoral process. These practices contribute to corruption and undermine the integrity of democratic institutions.

SEVERAL PROACTIVE MEASURES WHICH CAN BE TAKEN

- ❑ **Implementing Proposed Electoral Reforms:** The recommendations put forth by the Election Commission of India in 2016, such as banning pre-election government advertisements and equalizing spending limits for political parties and candidates, should be implemented to ensure fairness and transparency in elections.
- ❑ **Enhancing Transparency in Party Financing:** Introducing stringent measures to disclose party financing sources and expenditure can

help reduce the influence of undisclosed donations and corporate funding on electoral outcomes. This could involve mandating regular disclosures of party finances and imposing penalties for non-compliance.

- ❑ **Strengthening Legal Enforcement:** Swift legal action should be taken against violations of spending limits and other electoral laws to deter candidates and parties from engaging in illegal practices. Increasing the number of judges dedicated to resolving election-related cases can expedite the legal process and ensure timely justice.
- ❑ **Exploring State Funding of Elections:** Considering the feasibility of state funding for elections, as recommended by various committees and commissions, could help reduce the reliance on private donations and curb the influence of money power in politics. State funding would ensure a level playing field for all candidates and parties, irrespective of their financial resources.

CONCLUSION

By implementing these measures, India can take significant strides towards ensuring the integrity, fairness, and transparency of its electoral process, thereby strengthening its democratic institutions and upholding the principles of free and fair elections.

DEFECTION DILEMMA

RELEVANCE

□ Syllabus:

- **GS2:** Parliament
- **PSIR:** Principal Organs of the Union Government



INTRODUCTION

The Tenth Schedule, also known as the Anti-Defection Law, was added to the Indian Constitution in 1985 to address the issue of frequent political defections that caused instability in the political arena during the 1960s and 1970s

STRATEGIES TO MANIPULATE DEFECTIONS INCLUDE

- **Pre-Defection Tactics:** Potential defectors may first write a no-confidence letter against the Speaker before defecting, citing justifications from legal precedents like the Nabam Rebia case.
- **Speaker's Bias:** Speakers, often affiliated with the ruling party, may exhibit bias by delaying or expediting disqualification decisions based

on the defector's new political alignment, impacting opposition and ruling party defectors differently.

- **Election Commission and Party Symbols:** Defectors may petition the Election Commission (EC) to recognize them as the authentic representatives of their party, vying for the party symbol. The EC's reliance on a legislative majority test can favor defectors.
- **Fast-Tracked EC Hearings:** While the Speaker prolongs disqualification disputes, the EC hearings may be expedited under external influence, legitimizing defections.
- **Engineered Resignations:** Opposition parties may orchestrate resignations within the ruling party, enticing defectors with promises

of prominent roles in a prospective new government.

LANDMARK JUDGMENTS REGARDING TENTH SCHEDULE

- ❑ **Manipur Judgment:** The Supreme Court ruled that Speakers must decide on disqualification petitions within three months to ensure timely decisions.
- ❑ **Kihoto Hollohan Case:** This case affirmed that the Tenth Schedule is not an unreasonable restriction on free speech and that the Speaker's decisions can be subject to judicial review.
- ❑ **Ravi Naik and Balasaheb Patil Cases:** These cases broadly defined 'voluntary giving up of membership,' extending beyond resignation to include various conduct indicators such as being incommunicado or engaging in activities against the party's interests.
- ❑ **Vishwanathan Case:** It was decided that an expelled member remains part of their original party unless they join a new one, preventing immediate disqualification.
- ❑ **Shiv Sena Case:** This case mandated that the Election Commission should use the organizational test to determine a party's true representation, considering factors beyond just legislative majority.

WHAT CAN BE DONE TO COUNTER THIS PHENOMENON

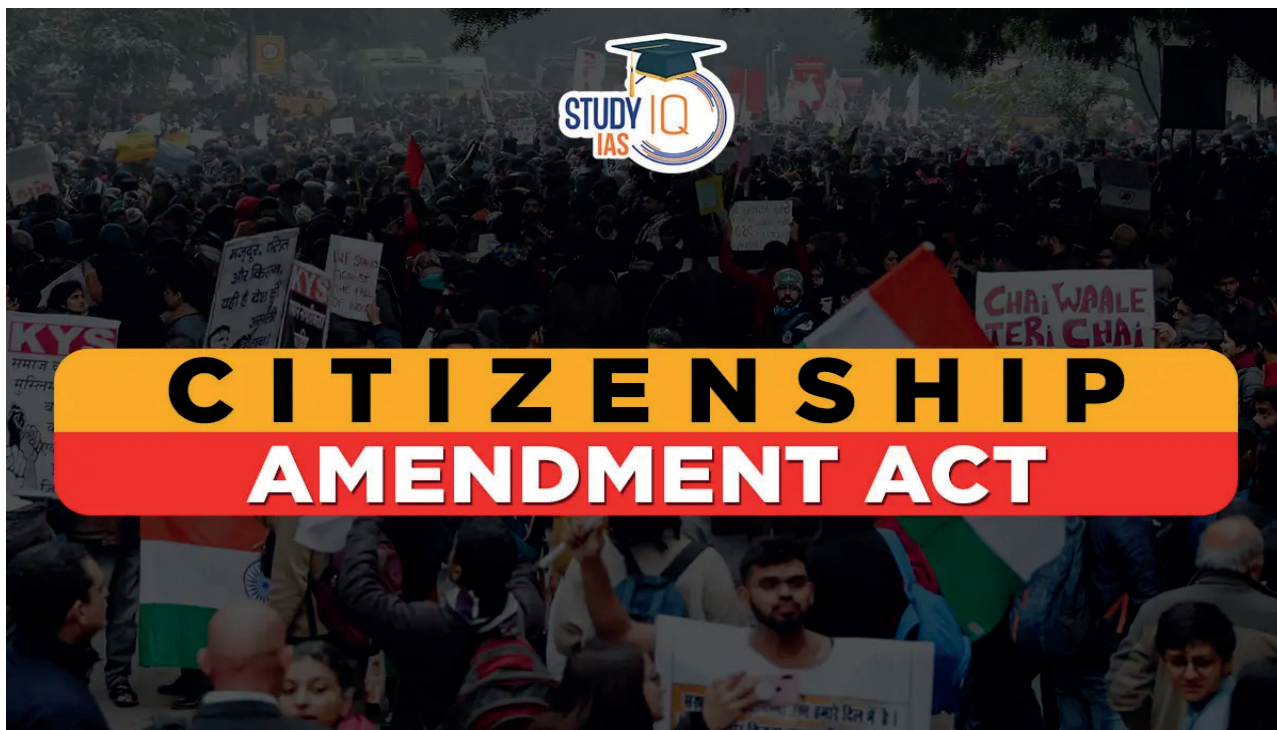
- ❑ **Abolish the 10th Schedule:** Replace the current anti-defection law with a simpler legislation stating that any elected representative changing party affiliation must resign from their position and seek re-election. This would ensure accountability and transparency in political realignments.
- ❑ **Prohibit Ministerial Appointments Without Re-Election:** Implement a rule prohibiting defectors from holding ministerial positions unless they are re-elected in a by-election. This would discourage opportunistic defections aimed at securing personal gains such as ministerial positions.
- ❑ **Streamline Disqualification Process:** Simplify the process for disqualification of defectors by eliminating the need for adjudication by the Speaker, which often leads to delays and allegations of bias. Instead, establish clear criteria for disqualification to be determined by an independent body.
- ❑ **Ensure Neutrality of Speaker:** If the role of the Speaker in adjudicating defection cases is retained, ensure that the Speaker is selected through a neutral process agreed upon by all political parties before elections. This would help prevent partisan influence and ensure fairness in decision-making.

ANALYZING THE CITIZENSHIP AMENDMENT ACT (CAA) 2019

RELEVANCE

□ Syllabus:

- **GS2:** Government Policies
- **PSIR:** Government Policies



INTRODUCTION

The government has recently issued rules for the enforcement of the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) 2019. With these rules in place, the process of acquiring Indian citizenship has been streamlined for individuals belonging to the Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, Jain, Parsi, and Christian communities from Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Afghanistan. This provision applies to those who entered India prior to December 31, 2014.

MAIN FEATURES OF THE CITIZENSHIP AMENDMENT ACT (CAA) 2019

- **Grants citizenship to six minority groups** (Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, Jain, Parsi, and Christian) fleeing religious persecution from Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Bangladesh.

- Provides citizenship to those who entered India from these countries on or before **December 31, 2014**.
- **Changes in the Naturalization Process:** The amendment relaxes the residence requirement for naturalization of these migrants from eleven years to five.
- **Exemption from Criminal Cases and Deportation:** Members of the six communities are exempted from any criminal cases and deportation under the Foreigners Act, 1946, and the Passport Act, 1920.
- **Exceptions to the Act:** The citizenship provisions for illegal migrants do not apply to regions protected by the 'Inner Line Permit' and areas covered under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution.

PROVISIONS OUTLINED IN THE NOTIFIED CAA RULES

- ❑ **Elimination of Passport Requirement:** The rules no longer mandate a valid passport from Pakistan, Bangladesh, or Afghanistan, along with a residential permit issued by India, as was previously required. Now, various documents can serve as evidence of nationality or citizenship, such as birth or educational certificates, identity documents, licenses or certificates, land or tenancy records, or any other document issued by these countries providing citizenship. Additionally, documents showing lineage to citizens of these countries are accepted.
- ❑ **Removal of Visa Requirement:** The rules have eliminated the compulsory need for a visa, accepting even a certificate from an elected member of a local body as sufficient proof.
- ❑ **Exemption from Eighth Schedule Languages Certificate:** Previously required certification from an educational institution confirming proficiency in languages mentioned in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution is no longer necessary. A declaration of proficiency and the ability to speak the language is now satisfactory.
- ❑ **Proof of Entry before December 31, 2014:** The rules specify twenty admissible documents as proof of entry into India before December 31, 2014, including a valid visa, residential permit issued by FRRO, driving license, Aadhaar card, ration card, Indian birth certificate, land or tenancy records, and others.
- ❑ **Limited State Government Participation:** The rules modify the citizenship grant process to restrict the involvement of state governments, altering the process of citizenship grant.

Under the earlier rules for granting citizenship, applications were submitted to the district collector, who operates under the jurisdiction of

the state government. However, under the new regulations, an empowered committee and a district-level committee are established by the Centre to receive and process applications, which must be submitted electronically.

COMPOSITION OF THE EMPOWERED COMMITTEE

- ❑ Headed by a director (census operations).
- ❑ Members include a Deputy Secretary or higher-ranking officer from the Subsidiary Intelligence Bureau, FRRO, and the State informatics officer of the National Informatics Centre, as well as the postmaster general of the state.
- ❑ Invitees consist of a representative from the office of the principal secretary (home) or additional chief secretary (home) of the concerned state government or Union Territory, and a representative from the jurisdictional divisional railway manager of the Railways.

JUSTIFICATIONS SUPPORTING THE CITIZENSHIP AMENDMENT ACT 2019

- ❑ **Enhancing the quality of life for refugees** - The CAA aims to eliminate legal obstacles to resettlement and citizenship, offering a dignified existence to long-suffering refugees.
- ❑ **Safeguarding rights** - Granting citizenship safeguards refugees' cultural, linguistic, and social identities, along with ensuring economic, commercial, free movement, and property acquisition rights.
- ❑ **Providing relief to Partition victims** - The CAA offers respite to those affected by Partition who faced religious persecution due to becoming religious minorities post the conversion of Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Afghanistan into Islamic republics.

ARGUMENTS OPPOSING THE CITIZENSHIP AMENDMENT ACT 2019?

- ❑ **Challenge to equality** - Critics contend that using religion as a criterion infringes upon the

constitutional right to equality enshrined in Article 14.

- ❑ **Breach of secularism** - Making religion a basis for citizenship eligibility contradicts the secular nature of the Constitution.
- ❑ **Discrimination against Muslims** - The combination of the National Register of Citizens (NRC) in Assam and the CAA, which excludes Muslims from citizenship, raises concerns about targeting Muslims.
- ❑ **Neglect of other persecuted groups** - The Act overlooks persecuted minority groups such as Tamil Hindus in Sri Lanka, Rohingya in Myanmar, and minority Muslim sects like Ahmadiyyas and Hazaras in Pakistan and Afghanistan.
- ❑ **Concerns of North-Eastern States to preserve identity** - North-eastern states fear that illegal migrants could threaten their cultural and linguistic identities and strain resources and economic opportunities.
- ❑ **Violation of Assam Accord** - Protests in Assam argue that extending the citizenship cut-off date for illegal migrants violates the original Assam Accord, with the CAA pushing the date to December 31, 2014, from the original March 25, 1971.

WHAT SHOULD BE THE PATH FORWARD

- ❑ **Address Concerns of the Muslim Community:** The government needs to address the concerns

of the Muslim community regarding the fear of a nationwide NRC, which they perceive as potentially depriving them of citizenship rights if they fail to provide the necessary documents.

- ❑ **Supreme Court's Verdict on Constitutionality:** The Supreme Court should provide its verdict on the petitions challenging the Act, similar to its handling of recent contentious cases such as Electoral Bonds and Article 370.
- ❑ **Reassure the International Community and Neighboring Countries:** The government should assure neighbouring countries and the international community about the effective implementation of the CAA provisions and ensure that there is no discrimination against Muslims.
- ❑ **Inclusion of Other Persecuted Minorities:** Consideration should be given to gradually including other persecuted minorities such as Tamil Hindus in Sri Lanka, Rohingya in Myanmar, and minority Muslim sects like Ahmadiyyas and Hazaras in Pakistan and Afghanistan under the Act.
- ❑ **Collaboration with State Governments:** The central government must collaborate with state governments, particularly those in the North-eastern region like Assam, to address concerns about the impact of CAA on their cultural and ethnic identity, fostering cooperation and understanding.

JUDGES TRANSITIONING INTO POLITICS

RELEVANCE

□ Syllabus:

- **GS2: Functioning of the Judiciary**
- **PSIR: Principal Organs of the Union Government**



INTRODUCTION

The contentious matter of judges and bureaucrats transitioning into politics has once again become a focal point of discussion. A recent incident involving the resignation of a judge from the Calcutta High Court and a senior IPS officer in West Bengal, followed by their entry into political parties, has sparked debates about the appropriateness of such actions by independent constitutional authorities.

CONSTITUTIONAL RESTRICTIONS ON POST-RETIREMENT BENEFITS

Constitutional restrictions have been put in place to prevent individuals holding certain constitutional posts from seeking post-retirement benefits that could lead to favoritism or conflicts of interest. These restrictions are outlined in various articles of the Indian Constitution:

- **Article 124(7):** A judge of the Supreme Court, upon ceasing to hold office, is prohibited from

practicing as a lawyer before any court or authority in India.

- **Article 220:** Similarly, a judge of a High Court, after demitting office, is not allowed to plead or act in any court or before any authority in India, except the Supreme Court and other High Courts.
- **Article 148(4):** The Comptroller and Auditor-General (CAG) is barred from seeking further employment under the Government of India or any State government after ceasing to hold office.
- **Article 319:** The Chairman and members of the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) are ineligible for further employment under the Government of India or any State government after their tenure ends.

It's important to note that while these restrictions prevent individuals from certain forms of

employment after retirement, there are no explicit limitations on joining political parties, contesting elections, or being nominated to certain posts.

WHAT ARE THE CASES OF JUDGES AND BUREAUCRATS JOINING POLITICS?

Cases of judges and bureaucrats transitioning into politics or taking up political appointments have occurred throughout India's history. Some notable instances include:

- ❑ In **1952**, Justice Fazl Ali was appointed as the Governor of Orissa shortly after retiring from the Supreme Court.
- ❑ Chief Justice of the Bombay High Court, M.C. Chagla resigned in **1958** to become India's Ambassador to the United States.
- ❑ Chief Justice of India, Koka Subba Rao, resigned in **1967** to contest elections for the position of President.
- ❑ In **1983**, Supreme Court judge Baharul Islam resigned from his position to contest Lok Sabha elections from Assam.
- ❑ Former Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG), T.N. Chaturvedi, was appointed as the Governor of Karnataka in **2002** after retirement.
- ❑ Former Chief Election Commissioner, M.S. Gill was nominated as a member of the Rajya Sabha and appointed as a minister in **2004**.
- ❑ In **2020**, former Chief Justice of India, Ranjan Gogoi, was nominated to the Rajya Sabha within four months after his retirement.

Additionally, many bureaucrats have also joined political parties and contested elections after resigning from service or upon retirement. Examples include Mani Shankar Aiyar (IFS), Asim Arun (IPS), and Rajeshwar Singh (IRS). These instances raise questions about the transition from independent constitutional posts to political roles and the potential implications for governance and the integrity of institutions.

ISSUES ASSOCIATED WITH JUDGES AND BUREAUCRATS JOINING POLITICS

- ❑ **Breach of oath:** Swearing to perform duties without fear or favor is a requirement for constitutional authorities. Joining political parties after holding such positions raises concerns about impartiality and adherence to the oath.
- ❑ **Undermining independence:** Political affiliations post-retirement can compromise the independence of constitutional positions, potentially leading to biased judgments or actions in favor of political interests.
- ❑ **Lack of cooling-off period:** While rules exist for senior bureaucrats to observe a cooling-off period before joining private jobs, there's no similar requirement before entering politics, highlighting a discrepancy in treatment.
- ❑ **Violation of judicial conduct principles:** Joining political parties after retirement may contravene established principles of judicial conduct, including independence, impartiality, integrity, and propriety.
- ❑ **Breach of public trust:** Judicial pronouncements have highlighted concerns that post-retirement benefits enjoyed by judges could be seen as a breach of public trust, especially if they transition into political roles.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND JUDICIAL OBSERVATIONS REGARDING THE ISSUE

- ❑ **Election Commission's recommendation:** In 2012, the Election Commission suggested to the Union government the implementation of a cooling-off period for top bureaucrats after retirement, before they could engage in political activities.
- ❑ **Government rejection based on Attorney General's opinion:** The government rejected the Election Commission's recommendation, citing the Attorney General's opinion. The Attorney General opined that while a cooling-

off period for commercial employment aims to avoid conflicts of interest, imposing similar restrictions on officials contesting elections may not align with democratic principles.

- ❑ **Supreme Court's stance:** In May 2022, the Supreme Court dismissed a writ petition seeking a directive to the legislature to enact a law mandating a cooling-off period for retired bureaucrats before they join politics. The court noted that it is the prerogative of the legislature to decide whether such a cooling-off period is necessary.

THE WAY FORWARD

- ❑ **Legislation implementing a cooling-off period:** Parliament should enact legislation mandating a cooling-off period of at least two years for constitutional authorities before they can join political parties or hold political posts after retirement.

- ❑ **Increase retirement age for judges:** Consider increasing the retirement age of judges from 60 to 70 to mitigate the risk of conflicts of interest in post-retirement employment.

- ❑ **Establish conditions for tribunal appointments:** Implement transparent criteria for appointing retired judges to tribunals, considering factors like their experience in constitutional matters or public interest litigations, research expertise, and past judicial service.

- ❑ **Self-regulation by constitutional authorities:** Encourage self-regulation among individuals occupying constitutional positions, with retired justices setting examples by abstaining from post-retirement political involvement or nominations.

By implementing these measures, the principles of justice and impartiality can be upheld, ensuring the integrity of constitutional authorities and preserving public trust in the democratic process.

HARMONIZING INDIA'S DEMOCRATIC RHYTHM: THE DEBATE OVER SIMULTANEOUS ELECTIONS

RELEVANCE

- ❑ **Syllabus:**
 - **GS2:** Elections
 - **PSIR:** Party System



INTRODUCTION

The Kovind Panel recently submitted its report on simultaneous elections to President Droupadi Murmu. This committee, dedicated to One Nation, One Election, suggests holding Lok Sabha and state Assembly elections simultaneously. It also proposes synchronizing local body elections within 100 days after state and national elections.

ABOUT THE COMMITTEE

The Kovind Panel on Simultaneous Elections was established by the Union government on September 2, 2023, to explore the viability of implementing 'one nation one election'. Led by former President of India, Ram Nath Kovind, the committee comprised members such as Home Minister Amit Shah, former Leader of Opposition in the Rajya Sabha Ghulam Nabi Azad, former Finance Commission chairperson N K Singh, former Lok Sabha secretary-general Subhash C Kashyap, senior advocate Harish Salve, and former Chief Vigilance Commissioner Sanjay Kothari.

ARGUMENTS IN FAVOR OF ONE NATION ONE ELECTION

- ❑ **Financial Burden Reduction:** Continuous election cycles impose a significant financial burden on the state exchequer. Implementing 'One Nation One Election' would decrease overall expenditure on the political process by the Election Commission of India (ECI).
- ❑ **Better Resource Utilization:** Simultaneous elections would lead to reduced campaign expenditure for political parties and candidates, enabling better management of financial resources, particularly for smaller regional parties.
- ❑ **Reduced Model Code of Conduct Duration:** Frequent imposition of the Model Code of Conduct (MCC) during elections hampers development work for extended periods. Implementing 'One Nation One Election' would minimize policy paralysis caused by the MCC.

- ❑ **Focus on Governance:** Adopting simultaneous elections would ensure continuity of government policies and programs, reducing disruptions in public life caused by political rallies and enhancing the delivery of essential services.
- ❑ **Administrative Efficiency:** Conducting elections requires extensive deployment of state machinery and high-ranking officers, impacting administrative efficiency. Simultaneous elections would streamline the administrative process.
- ❑ **Improvement in Internal Security:** Frequent deployment of security forces during elections diverts resources from addressing internal security issues such as naxalism. 'One Nation One Election' would allow better allocation of security resources.
- ❑ **Reduced Black Money Circulation:** Elections involve significant expenditure, much of which is black money. Implementing simultaneous elections would decrease the circulation of black money in the economy.
- ❑ **Reduction of Populist Measures:** Frequent elections incentivize short-term electoral gains over long-term policies. Simultaneous elections would reduce the focus on populist measures and encourage long-term governance.
- ❑ **Increased Voter Turnout:** Simultaneous elections are expected to increase voter turnout, as it would be more convenient for people to cast multiple votes at once.
- ❑ **Enhanced Social Harmony:** Frequent elections exacerbate caste, religious, and communal tensions. Adopting simultaneous elections would mitigate these tensions by reducing the polarization associated with multiple elections.

ARGUMENTS AGAINST ONE NATION ONE ELECTION

- ❑ **Reduced Accountability:** Regular elections ensure government accountability by providing

a mechanism for people to express their will regularly. Critics argue that fixed-term elections may lead to reduced accountability and potential autocratic tendencies.

- ❑ **Undermining Federal Power:** Simultaneous elections may overshadow state issues with national ones, undermining the autonomy and importance of state governments, particularly in federal systems like India.
- ❑ **Disadvantage for Regional Parties:** Simultaneous elections could disadvantage regional parties, as national issues may dominate the political narrative, making it challenging for regional parties to compete against well-funded national parties.
- ❑ **Against Democratic Spirit:** Critics argue that imposing simultaneous elections contradicts the essence of democracy, as it restricts voter choice and imposes an artificial election cycle.
- ❑ **Influence on Electoral Behavior:** Simultaneous elections may influence voters to choose the same party at both national and state levels, potentially disadvantaging regional parties. Research suggests a high likelihood of voters favoring the same party or alliance if elections are held simultaneously.
- ❑ **Threat to Internal Security:** Coordinating heavy security deployment for simultaneous elections poses logistical challenges and may compromise internal security efforts.
- ❑ **Tampering with Democratic Will:** Altering the election system would interfere with the democratic right of people to express their will through regular elections, which has been a foundational aspect of democracy.

THE WAY AHEAD

- ❑ **Building Consensus:** The government should strive to build consensus among all political parties before introducing the proposed constitutional amendment bills. This will ensure widespread support for the initiative.
- ❑ **Awaiting Law Commission Recommendations:** It's essential to await the recommendations of the 22nd Law Commission Report on simultaneous polls before proceeding further with the idea. This will provide comprehensive insights and recommendations for effective implementation.
- ❑ **Public Awareness:** Public awareness campaigns through media deliberations should be conducted to inform citizens about the concept of simultaneous elections, its benefits, and implications.

CONCLUSION

Implementing simultaneous elections is a significant step for India. However, given its impact on the federal structure of the Constitution, thorough discussion and debate across the political spectrum are necessary to address the concerns of regional parties. This inclusive approach will facilitate smoother implementation of the idea in the country.

If India adopts 'one nation, one election,' it will join a select group of countries, including Belgium, Sweden, and South Africa, setting a unique example as the world's largest democracy conducting simultaneous elections.

MAINS PRACTICE QUESTION

Q. “Due to its combination of diplomatic tactics and the utilization of military power, power is frequently characterized as an elusive concept, lacking a fixed form or structure.” Discuss the above statement with the various meanings and forms of power in international relations.

Power in the context of international relations can be defined in various ways. In contemporary discussions, it is commonly associated with state power, encompassing both economic and military capabilities.

The elusive nature of power can be attributed to a general transition from military power to economic power as well as the alleged decline of ‘hard’ power, which includes both military and economic power, and the simultaneous rise of ‘soft’ power.

Soft power, as defined by Joseph Nye, is the ability to achieve desired outcomes through attraction rather than coercion or payment. It relies on a country’s culture, political values, and foreign policies.

Soft power is not only an alternative to hard power but also complements it. While hard power draws upon resources such as force, sanctions, payments, and bribes, soft power operates primarily through culture, political ideas, and foreign policies. India, for example, possesses a rich array of soft power resources including spirituality, yoga, entertainment, dance and music, principles of non-violence, democratic institutions, diverse society, and cuisine, all of which have attracted global attention. Analyst C Raja Mohan has noted that India holds significant cards in the realm of soft power, which can further its foreign policy goals.

Similarly under the concept of **“smart power,”** coined by Joseph Nye, combines both hard and soft power strategies. Smart power emphasizes the importance of a strong military while also investing in alliances, partnerships, and institutions at various levels to expand influence and establish legitimacy of actions. This concept gained popularity through the advocacy of Hillary Clinton, who argued for a skilful utilization of military, economic, cultural, and diplomatic powers in a rapidly changing world.

Another concept worth considering is **“fast power,”** introduced by John Chipman. According to Chipman, speed has become a determining factor in national power. He coined the principle of Neo-Darwinism, which suggests that survival now depends on being fast rather than simply being the strongest. In the 21st century, agility and adaptability have become more important than sheer size or strength. Power, therefore, has taken on an amorphous nature, shaping the current landscape of international politics.

Overall, power in international relations is a multifaceted and dynamic concept, encompassing different dimensions and evolving mechanisms of its exercise.

**Q. Political theory is a great mix of philosophy and science, however philosophy still dominates.”
Comment.**

The term ‘theory’ denotes a structured body of knowledge. Therefore, ‘political theory’ refers to an organized understanding of political occurrences. Consequently, Political Theory can be defined as “a collection of ideas aiming to assess, elucidate, and anticipate political phenomena. Within the realm of Political Science, it encompasses the explanation and prediction of political conduct.

Within political theory, 'Polity' signifies a system where regulations are established and choices are made for an entire community, exercising authority over each member. 'Political' pertains to matters of the 'public' domain, distinct from the private sphere or something relevant to a limited group of individuals.

In a broader context, Political theory is divided into two primary branches: political philosophy or normative theory, which addresses value, analytic, historical, and speculative aspects, and empirical theory, which seeks to elucidate, forecast, direct, investigate, and systematize knowledge by forming abstract models and testable propositions.

Defining the scope of political philosophy, Catlin elucidated: "Our focus lies in the realm of ultimate goals or ultimate values. As soon as a person begins to inquire, 'What serves the greater good of the nation?' or 'What defines a just society?' they are engaging in philosophical inquiries." In essence, Catlin identifies the nature of political theory by highlighting its essential components: political science and political philosophy. As suggested, political science addresses the realities of political existence (i.e., the actual situation and the laws governing behavior), while political philosophy concerns itself with values (i.e., determining what is beneficial).

Aligned with the principles of scientific methodology, political science proceeds through the following steps:

- a) Observation, which relies solely on sensory experiences and excludes supernatural or metaphysical causation (due to its lack of sensory support);
- b) Generalization, rooted in observing regular patterns that lead to establishing relationships and correlations between different factors or variables.

The Political Science approach is embraced by Behaviorists who emphasize studying real human behavior within political contexts, rather than merely describing key features of political institutions and their legal standings.

According to Raphael, the primary goal of Political philosophy has been the critical examination of beliefs: "Science seeks explanations, whereas philosophy seeks justifications." Thus, Political philosophy endeavors to provide rational foundations for either embracing or rejecting commonly accepted beliefs that often go unquestioned. It is concerned with elucidating concepts such as society, authority, social class, justice, liberty, and democracy.

In this light, Political theory, employing its two approaches, strives to elucidate political phenomena and establish norms and values that steer political actions. Andrew Hacker aptly noted that "Every political theorist performs a dual role – that of a scholar and a philosopher." Political theory transcends being merely a discipline; it serves as both an intellectual pursuit and an active endeavor. It is requisite as a philosophy just as much as it is indispensable as a science.

Q. The concept of equality developed over time and has a long history since the time of Ancient Greece. Elaborate

The concept of equality has evolved over time, with a rich history dating back to Ancient Greece. Aristotle, in his book "Politics," recognized distinct social classes and emphasized the significant differences between citizens and slaves, as well as between men and women, in terms of rational and civic capacities. This led to the exclusion of non-citizens from participation in the Polis.

During medieval times, feudalism prevailed, and legal privileges were primarily based on social status and birthright. This contributed to various forms of enduring inequality, leading to the belief that inequality was an inevitable aspect of social relations. Justifications for inequality were often rooted in notions of race, ancestry, age, gender, religion, military strength, culture, wealth, and knowledge.

The emphasis on reason during the medieval period sparked demands for equality to challenge existing inequalities in society. The Renaissance and Reformation movements raised powerful voices against the legal privileges held by the clergy and nobility based on birthright, advocating for equality by birth. From the 15th to the 17th centuries, calls for equality were directed against the privileged status of landowners and religious intolerance, championed by natural rights theorists like John Locke. The French Revolution and the American Civil War further promoted the idea of equality.

In the modern world, equality has been widely accepted as a fundamental principle in organizing human life. The economic and social dimensions of equality emerged during the 19th century as a result of conflicts and struggles between capitalist/industrial classes and workers and peasants. This led to demands for economic and social equality from liberal socialists and Marxist writers such as J. S. Mill, T. H. Green, and Karl Marx.

Throughout the 20th century, the demand for equality became even more persistent. It is now considered essential for the socio-economic mobility that characterizes highly industrialized societies. National liberation movements against imperialism and colonialism, as well as movements against apartheid, brought the issue of equality to the forefront.

Today, virtually every modern political constitution incorporates the notion of human equality as a fundamental principle, and numerous important political theories have contributed to our understanding of the nature and feasibility of socio-economic equality.

Q. Evaluate the significance of the political sociology approach in the context of comparative politics.

Political sociology is a multidisciplinary field that has evolved into a hybrid discipline, attracting significant attention and research. It seeks to examine the complex interaction between politics and society. Essentially, political sociology aims to understand how governments, decision-making institutions, and conflicting social forces and interests interact and shape each other.

The relevance of the political sociology approach became apparent with the emergence of new states following the decolonization process. Traditional legal-institutional frameworks were insufficient to comprehend the political processes in these countries. It was recognized that a political sociology approach would be more suitable for understanding the political phenomena in Third World Countries. In these societies, the study of constitutions and political structures alone was inadequate. Instead, a broader understanding of the socio-economic context and the role of political actors, institutions, and processes within that context was necessary.

Political sociologists focus on analyzing and understanding the interface between politics and society. They explore the social origins of political competition, including social divisions and identities. They also examine the social and political factors that shape political culture and political socialization. Furthermore, they investigate the processes of political engagement, such as elections, interest aggregation, and interest articulation. Additionally, political sociologists study the social foundations for the formation, change, and maintenance of political institutions, including democratic systems and welfare states.

Over time, political sociology lost some of its initial appeal among political scientists who were concerned that it would overshadow the independent identity of political science by making politics a dependent variable on society. Some scholars, like Theda Skocpol, advocated for bringing “the state back in” and emphasizing the centrality of the state in political analysis. Despite these debates, political sociology remains a relevant approach that offers valuable comparative and analytical perspectives. While it may not be completely scientific due to its normative nature, it provides a more comprehensive understanding of political phenomena compared to traditional political systems and structural functional approaches.

Q. Mention the founding principles that define India’s Constitution.

Granville Austin posited that India’s political revolution culminated in 1947 with its independence, marking the beginning of a socio-economic revolution. This transformation was driven by the adoption of the Constitution of India, which served as a revolutionary document embodying essential founding principles that laid the cornerstone of Indian democracy.

One of these fundamental principles is federalism, evident in Article 246 and the 7th schedule of the constitution. These provisions delineate powers between the central and state governments, establishing a dual polity with a strong union government—a concept B.R. Ambedkar referred to as “holding together federalism.”

Secularism is another vital aspect of the Indian constitution, reflected in Articles 25-30. It ensures individual as well as group rights, promoting unity in the country’s diverse fabric. The Supreme Court affirmed the significance of secularism as a basic tenet of the Indian Constitution in the S.R. Bommai case.

The Directive Principles in Part 4 of the Indian Constitution form the bedrock of socio-economic democracy, guiding India toward becoming a welfare state.

The principle of Rule of Law is enshrined in Article 14, emphasizing that people should be governed by established rules rather than arbitrary decisions of rulers. It requires rules to be general, abstract, known, and applicable equally to all.

Equality, guaranteed by Articles 14 to 18, extends beyond formal equality to include substantive equality through affirmative actions like reservations for weaker sections of society.

Moreover, the Indian Constitution upholds principles such as separation of powers, independence of the judiciary, fundamental rights, and single citizenship, all of which contribute to the strong foundation of Indian democracy.

SCHOLAR DIGEST: KNOW YOUR SCHOLARS

JOSEPH NYE



INTRODUCTION

Joseph Nye Jr., born on January 19, 1937, is an influential American political scientist known for co-founding the international relations theory of neoliberalism with Robert Keohane. This groundbreaking theory was articulated in their 1977 book, "Power and Interdependence." In collaboration, they introduced the concepts of asymmetrical and complex interdependence, shedding light on the intricacies of global relations.

During the 1970s, Nye and Keohane delved into transnational relations and world politics, contributing significantly to the field through an edited volume. More recently, Nye has been a trailblazer in the realm of soft power, pioneering this concept and exploring its implications in contemporary geopolitics. His work has left a lasting impact on the understanding of international relations, shaping the way we perceive power dynamics and cooperation on the global stage.

CONCEPT OF SOFT POWER

In his book "Bound to Lead: The Changing Nature of American Power," Joseph Nye introduced the concept of Soft Power. Nye's framework identified three key dimensions of power. First, there's the

traditional approach of coercion through military force. Second, there's influence achieved by offering economic incentives. The third dimension, and the one Nye emphasized, is the ability to co-opt other states by projecting a nation's appeal based on its culture and values. This involves shaping a positive perception that leads other states to modify their preferences in alignment with your interests. Despite the relative decline in the United States' military dominance since World War II, Nye argued that the country possessed a unique source of power. In addition to using military force for control, the U.S. could leverage its soft power—its ability to attract and persuade without coercion—to solidify its leadership position in the global arena. It's about getting others to willingly do what they might not otherwise do, drawn in by the compelling narrative of the nation's culture and values.

ISSUES AND RELEVANCE OF SOFT POWER

In the realm of democracy promotion and the spread of liberal ideals, the journey has been far from smooth. From the third wave democracies of the 1970s and 1980s to the eager Eastern European

states joining the EU and NATO post-Cold War, and more recently, the nations navigating the complexities of the Arab Spring—liberal democracy has struggled to establish a lasting presence. In fact, in many instances, attempts at instilling it led to catastrophic consequences for those involved.

The United States, along with Europe, grew overly confident in the persuasive power of their soft influence, especially during the era when President George W. Bush boldly declared the U.S. as “a moral nation” with universal moral truths. This confidence, however, bred an illusion that soft power could stand alone, detached from hard power. This notion, even though not endorsed by soft power theorist Joseph Nye, became a driving force in global diplomacy.

In reality, soft power has always been intertwined with hard power. The European project, in particular, built on a foundation of misconceptions about soft power, benefited for years as a free rider in the global arena. The U.S. ensured its

security, and economic prosperity relied on the U.S.-led global economic order. As the United States shifted focus to a more assertive hard power approach, Europe found itself grappling with substantial challenges.

Soft power, once seemingly unstoppable, has proven to be fragile and susceptible to manipulation. Facilitated by the internet and social media, it played a role in numerous uprisings and regime changes, from the color revolutions to the upheavals in Cairo’s Tahrir Square and Kiev’s Maidan. The West celebrated when platforms like Facebook and Google fueled revolutions, but the tune changed when Russia employed the same tactics to undermine Western politics. The lesson learned is that the dynamics of soft power are nuanced and demand a more realistic understanding, recognizing its inherent connection to hard power and its vulnerability in the face of evolving geopolitical landscapes.

KENNETH WALTZ



INTRODUCTION

Kenneth Waltz, an influential figure in the field of international relations, left an indelible mark on the study of political science with his groundbreaking

theories and insightful analyses. Born on June 8, 1924, in Ann Arbor, Michigan, Waltz’s intellectual journey paved the way for new perspectives and paradigms in understanding global politics.

Waltz's academic pursuits began at Oberlin College, where he earned his undergraduate degree in 1948. He furthered his studies at Columbia University, obtaining a master's degree in 1949 and a doctorate in political science in 1954. Throughout his career, Waltz's work reflected a deep commitment to scholarly rigor and analytical precision.

One of Waltz's most influential contributions to the field of international relations is his neorealism theory, outlined in his seminal work "Theory of International Politics," published in 1979. Neorealism, also known as structural realism, posits that the anarchic nature of the international system, characterized by the absence of a central authority, is the primary determinant of state behavior. According to Waltz, states operate in a self-help environment, where their primary goal is to ensure survival in the face of potential threats from other actors. Neorealism emphasizes the distribution of power among states as the key factor shaping their interactions, with the balance of power serving as a stabilizing force in the international arena.

Waltz's neorealism theory challenged prevailing assumptions in international relations, particularly the dominant school of thought known as classical realism. While classical realists focused on human nature and individual leaders' motivations, Waltz shifted the focus to the systemic level, arguing that the structure of the international system fundamentally shapes state behavior. Neorealism offered a more parsimonious explanation of international relations, emphasizing the structural constraints that limit state action.

In addition to neorealism, Waltz made significant contributions to nuclear deterrence theory. In his work "The Spread of Nuclear Weapons: More May Better," published in 1981, Waltz controversially

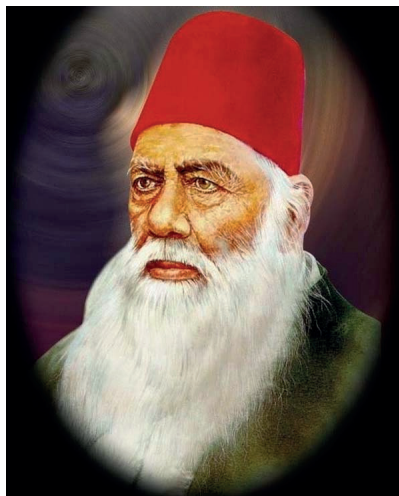
argued that the proliferation of nuclear weapons could contribute to stability rather than increase the likelihood of conflict. He contended that nuclear weapons deter aggression by raising the costs of war, leading to a state of mutually assured destruction (MAD) that incentivizes states to avoid direct confrontation. While this argument sparked debate among scholars and policymakers, it underscored Waltz's willingness to challenge conventional wisdom and explore unconventional ideas.

Waltz's intellectual legacy extends beyond his theoretical contributions to international relations. He was a prolific writer and educator, mentoring generations of scholars and shaping the academic discourse on global politics. Waltz taught at prestigious institutions such as Columbia University, the University of California, Berkeley, and the University of Chicago, leaving a lasting impact on his students and colleagues.

Throughout his career, Waltz received numerous accolades and honors for his scholarly achievements, including the prestigious Johan Skytte Prize in Political Science in 1987. His work continues to inspire scholars and practitioners alike, offering valuable insights into the complexities of international politics.

Kenneth Waltz's enduring legacy lies in his relentless pursuit of intellectual inquiry and his ability to challenge conventional wisdom. By introducing innovative theories and reshaping the discourse on international relations, Waltz cemented his reputation as one of the most influential scholars in the field. As the world grapples with evolving geopolitical challenges, Waltz's insights remain as relevant and insightful as ever, serving as a guiding beacon for future generations of scholars and policymakers alike.

SIR SYED AHMED KHAN



INTRODUCTION

Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, a prominent figure in Indian history, was a pioneer of social reform and education for the Muslim community during the 19th century. Born on October 17, 1817, in Delhi, Sir Syed belonged to a family of Mughal nobility with strong ties to the Mughal court.

During his formative years, Sir Syed witnessed the decline of the Mughal Empire and the upheaval caused by the Indian Rebellion of 1857. These events deeply influenced his outlook and motivated him to work towards the upliftment of his community in the face of socio-political challenges.

Sir Syed was a visionary who recognized the importance of education as a tool for empowerment. He was deeply concerned about the educational backwardness of Muslims in India, who were lagging behind their Hindu counterparts in modern education. To address this disparity, he founded the Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College in Aligarh in 1875, which later evolved into the Aligarh Muslim University (AMU). The institution aimed to provide Western education while retaining Islamic values, thereby preparing Muslim youth for the challenges of the modern world.

One of Sir Syed's most significant contributions was his advocacy for social and religious reform

within the Muslim community. He emphasized the importance of adapting to changing times and encouraged Muslims to embrace modern education and scientific knowledge while remaining true to their faith. His progressive ideas challenged orthodox beliefs and paved the way for a more enlightened approach to religion and society.

Sir Syed was also a prolific writer and intellectual who penned numerous works on diverse subjects ranging from religion and philosophy to history and science. His writings, including his seminal work "Asar-us-Sanadid" (The Remnants of Ancient Heroes), played a crucial role in shaping public discourse and promoting rational thinking among his contemporaries.

In addition to his educational and intellectual pursuits, Sir Syed was actively involved in political and social affairs. He advocated for political representation for Muslims and sought to bridge the gap between the British authorities and the Indian populace. His efforts towards fostering Hindu-Muslim unity were particularly noteworthy, as he believed that communal harmony was essential for India's progress and stability.

Despite facing opposition and criticism from conservative elements within the Muslim community, Sir Syed remained steadfast in his

commitment to reform and modernization. His enduring legacy lies in his tireless efforts to empower his community through education, enlightenment, and social upliftment. Today, Sir

Syed Ahmed Khan is remembered as a visionary leader and a beacon of hope whose ideas continue to inspire generations of Indians.

ANDRE GUNDER FRANK



INTRODUCTION

Andre Gunder Frank, born on February 24, 1929, and passing away on April 25, 2005, was a prominent figure in the fields of sociology and economic history. Andre Gunder Frank, a German national, was a prominent left-wing economist and political activist. His extensive body of work spanned various domains, including economics, social and political history, development studies, and international relations. His most enduring legacy lies in his exploration of concepts such as the 'development of underdevelopment' and 'dependency theory.' Furthermore, he offered critical insights into the 'world system' of the 1970s and 1980s, shedding light on how it perpetuated global inequality.

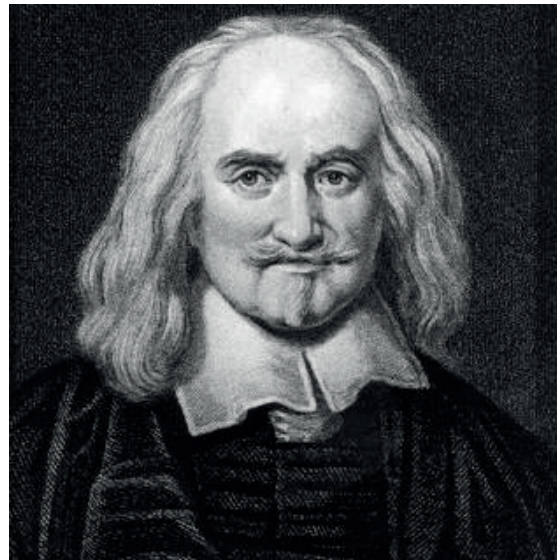
DEPENDENCY THEORY

Frank's central argument revolved around the idea that in our interconnected and globalized world, some countries thrive while others suffer. According to dependency theory, the citizens

of less-developed countries should not be held responsible for the lack of progress in their societies. Instead, Frank posited that Western nations actively hindered the development of these countries. He contended that historically, the "core" nations like the USA and UK, forming the privileged "metropolis," exploited the "peripheral" nations by keeping them in a state of dependency and underdevelopment. Developed nations accumulated wealth by exploiting the poorest nations, utilizing them as sources of cheap raw materials and labor.

Frank asserted that this exploitative relationship had persisted throughout history, evident in practices like slavery and Western colonization of various regions. Moreover, he argued that this pattern continued into the twentieth century, facilitated by Western countries' domination of international trade, the rise of large multinational corporations, and the reliance of less-developed nations on Western aid.

THOMAS HOBBS



INTRODUCTION

He was an English political philosopher who lived in the 17th century. He is best known for his work "Leviathan," which laid the groundwork for modern political theory. Hobbes believed that humans are naturally selfish and violent, and that a strong, centralized government was necessary to keep society from descending into chaos.

STATE OF NATURE

Hobbes believed that the natural state of humans is one of war and chaos. In the absence of government, individuals are in a constant state of competition and conflict, where life is "solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short." This state of nature is characterised by a "war of all against all," where individuals are constantly at risk of being harmed or killed by others. According to Hobbes, this makes life in the state of nature "nasty, brutish, and short."

SOCIAL CONTRACT

To escape the state of nature, Hobbes argued that individuals must enter into a social contract with each other. In this contract, individuals agree to give up some of their natural rights in exchange for protection from the government. The government,

in turn, is responsible for maintaining law and order, and ensuring the safety and security of its citizens. Hobbes believed that the social contract was necessary to prevent society from descending into chaos and violence.

ABSOLUTE SOVEREIGNTY

Hobbes believed that the best form of government was an absolute monarchy, where the ruler has unlimited power and authority. According to Hobbes, the sovereign should have complete control over all aspects of society, including religion and the economy. He believed that this was necessary to maintain order and prevent dissent. In Hobbes' view, the ruler's power was absolute and could not be challenged by the people.

RELEVANCE TO MODERN POLITICS

Hobbes' political philosophy has been influential in modern political theory, particularly in the areas of political sovereignty and social contract theory. His ideas about the need for a strong government to maintain order and prevent chaos have been echoed by many modern political thinkers. However, his view of absolute monarchy has been criticized as undemocratic and authoritarian.

CONCLUSION

Thomas Hobbes was a pioneering political philosopher whose work laid the foundation for modern political theory. His belief in the need for a strong, centralized government to prevent society from descending into chaos and violence remains relevant today. However, his view of

absolute monarchy has been met with criticism and has been replaced by more democratic forms of government. Nonetheless, his contributions to the field of political philosophy have been significant and continue to be studied and debated by scholars today.

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Q. Discuss the challenges that India faces in harnessing its soft power potential.

Approach to Answer

Intro: Define soft power
ie ability of a country to persuade others to do what it wants through persuasion and attraction.

Body

→ Discuss India's soft power potential
ie spiritualism, yoga, movies, television soaps, principles of Non-violence, democratic institutions, plural society etc.

→ Mention challenges to India's soft power:

- eg * Lack of diversification in diaspora engagement.
- * India's negative perception for widespread corruption, violence against women & minorities etc
- * Lack of state's efforts to harness soft power etc

Conclusion

Give way forward for harnessing India's soft power potential.

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- * Lack of state's efforts to harness soft power etc

Conclusion

Give way forward for harnessing India's soft power potential.

Q. Explain Gramsci's Concept of Hegemony.



Candidates must not write on this margin

Introduction:

- Mention school of thought - neo-marxism
- Book name → Prison notebooks

Background

- To analyse why Marx's prediction of worker's revolution did not happen

Body

- Explain hegemony → manufactured consent
- concept of integral state
- role of civil society
- Traditional individuals vs organic individuals.
- War of position & war of manoeuvre

Conclusion

- Not just domestic, but even international application → inspired hegemonic stability theory.

Q. Compare Gandhi and Ambedkar views on social justice.

Q1) Compare Ambedkar and Gandhi's views on Social Justice.

Intro: Start answer by defining social justice.
Also give general introduction about Gandhi & Ambedkar

Body

A) Mention the differences between views of Gandhi & Ambedkar

- ① Ambedkar was critic of Manusmriti (Manuvad) while Gandhi believed in Varna system.
- ② Ambedkar held Vedas and Manusmriti responsible for social injustice while Gandhi didn't believe in it.
- ③ To achieve social justice
→ Ambedkar emphasised on Affirmative Actions
→ Gandhi emphasised on social reforms (raising the conscience of people)
- ④ Ambedkar pre-conditioned social justice to Nationalism while Gandhi believed that freedom struggle will result into social justice.

B) Mention similarities

- ① Both believed in social justice and eradication of poverty.
- ② Both have vision of egalitarian society.
Ambedkar → a society free of contradictions
Gandhi → Ramrajya.

Conclusion

Can mention that both Gandhian and Ambedkar's ideas on social justice found place in Indian Constitution

Q. Explain the evolution of doctrine of basic structure and what are the criticisms levelled against the doctrine of basic structure.

Q Explain the evolution of doctrine of Basic structure and what are the criticism levelled against the doctrine of basic structure?

Approach

(Intro): Define the doctrine of Basic structure

(Body): Discuss the evolution of the doctrine

→ Champokam Dorairajon Case 1951

→ 1st Constitutional Amendment Act

→ Shankari Prasad Case (1951)

→ Sajjan Singh Case 1965

→ Grodtkhath Case 1967

→ 24th Constitutional Amendment Act 1971

→ Keshwanand Bharti Case 1973

→ 42nd Constitutional Amendment Act

→ Minerva Mills Case 1980

(Criticism)

→ No Unanimity in the bench on doctrine

→ Judiciary oversteering letters of constitution and inventing its soul

→ It brings judicial sovereignty from Constitutional morality.

PRELIMS PRACTICE QUESTIONS

1. **A parliamentary system of government is one in which**
 - (a) All political parties in the parliament are represented in the government
 - (b) The government is responsible to the parliament and can be removed by it
 - (c) The government is elected by the people and can be removed by them
 - (d) The government is chosen by the parliament but cannot be removed by it before completion of a fixed term
2. **Which part of the Constitution of India declares the ideal of Welfare state?**
 - (a) Directive principles of state policy
 - (b) Fundamental rights
 - (c) Preamble
 - (d) Seventh schedule
3. **Consider the following statements:**
 1. **The Constitution of India defines its 'basic structure' in terms of federalism, secularism, fundamental rights and democracy.**
 2. **The Constitution of India provides for 'judicial review' to safeguard the 'citizens' liberties and to preserve the ideals on which the constitution is based.**

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

 - (a) 1 only
 - (b) 2 only
 - (c) Both 1 and 2
 - (d) Neither 1 nor 2
4. **One common agreement between Gandhism and Marxism is:**
 - (a) The final goal of a stateless society
 - (b) Class struggle
 - (c) Abolition of private property
 - (d) Economic determinism
5. **The ongoing conflict between Israel and Palestine is primarily centered around which issue?**
 - (a) Control over water resources
 - (b) Access to oil reserves
 - (c) Border disputes
 - (d) Palestinian statehood and Israeli settlements
6. **The Strait of Hormuz, a strategically important waterway, connects the Persian Gulf with which larger body of water?**
 - (a) Red Sea
 - (b) Mediterranean Sea
 - (c) Indian Ocean
 - (d) Caspian Sea
7. **The Delhi Government vs LG controversy revolves around the interpretation and implementation of which constitutional article?**
 - (a) Article 239AA
 - (b) Article 356
 - (c) Article 370
 - (d) Article 368
8. **Which country is considered a "P5" member under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)?**
 - (a) India
 - (b) Iran
 - (c) North Korea
 - (d) China
9. **The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) aims to:**
 - (a) Encourage the spread of nuclear technology
 - (b) Promote disarmament among non-nuclear states
 - (c) Establish a global ban on nuclear energy
 - (d) Limit the use of conventional weapons

10. According to the Constitution of India, which of the following are fundamental for the governance of the country?

- (a) Fundamental Rights
- (b) Fundamental Duties
- (c) Directive Principles of State Policy
- (d) Fundamental Rights and Fundamental Duties

11. Consider the following statements:

1. An amendment to the Constitution of India can be initiated by an introduction of a bill in the Lok Sabha only.
2. If such an amendment seeks to make changes in the federal character of the Constitution, the amendment also requires to be ratified by the legislature of all the States of India.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

12. Which of the following bodies does not/do not find mention in the Constitution?

1. National Development Council
2. Planning Commission
3. Zonal Councils

Select the correct answer using the codes given below.

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

13. Consider the following statements:

1. The National Development Council is an organ of the Planning Commission.
2. The Economic and Social Planning is kept in the Concurrent List in the Constitution of India.
3. The Constitution of India prescribes that Panchayats should be assigned the task of preparation of plans for economic development and social justice.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

14. According to the Constitution of India, it is the duty of the President of India to cause to be laid before the Parliament which of the following?

1. The Recommendations of the Union Finance Commission
2. The Report of the Public Accounts Committee
3. The Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General
4. The Report of the National Commission for Scheduled Castes

Select the correct answer using the codes given below :

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 and 4 only
- (c) 1, 3 and 4 only
- (d) 1, 2, 3 and 4

15. Which of the following is/are among the Fundamental Duties of citizens laid down in the Indian Constitution?

1. To preserve the rich heritage of our composite culture
2. To protect the weaker sections from social injustice
3. To develop the scientific temper and spirit of inquiry

4. To strive towards excellence in all spheres of individual and collective activity

Select the correct answer using the codes given below :

- (a) 1 and 2 only (b) 2 only
(c) 1, 3 and 4 only (d) 1, 2, 3 and 4

16. The distribution of powers between the Centre and the States in the Indian Constitution is based on the Act provided in the

- (a) Morley-Minto Reforms, 1909 (b) Montagu-Chelmsford Act, 1919
(c) Government of India Act, 1935 (d) Indian Independence Act, 1947

17. With reference to Indian History, the Members of the Constituent Assembly from the Provinces were

- (a) directly elected by the people of those Provinces (b) nominated by the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League
(c) elected by the Provincial Legislative Assemblies (d) selected by the Government for their expertise in constitutional matters

18. According to the Constitution of India, which of the following are fundamental for the governance of the country?

- (a) Fundamental Rights (b) Fundamental Duties
(c) Directive Principles of State Policy (d) Fundamental Rights and Fundamental Duties

19. Consider the following statements:

1. An amendment to the Constitution of India can be initiated by an introduction of a bill in the Lok Sabha only.
2. If such an amendment seeks to make changes in the federal character of the Constitution, the amendment also requires to be ratified by the legislature of all the States of India.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

20. Which of the following bodies does not/do not find mention in the Constitution?

1. National Development Council
2. Planning Commission
3. Zonal Councils

Select the correct answer using the codes given below.

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

21. Consider the following statements:

1. National Development Council is an organ of the Planning Commission.
2. The Economic and Social Planning is kept in the Concurrent List in the Constitution of India.
3. The Constitution of India prescribes that Panchayats should be assigned the task of preparation of plans for economic development and social justice.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answers:

1. (b)

2. (a)
3. (b)
4. (a)
5. (d)
6. (c)
7. (a) Article 239AA
8. (d) China
9. (b) Promote disarmament among non-nuclear states
10. (c) Directive Principles of State Policy are guidelines to the central and State government of India to be kept in mind while framing laws and policies. DPSPs aim to create social and economic conditions under which the citizens can lead a good life. They also aim to establish social and economic democracy through a welfare state. They act as a check on the government. It is a yardstick in the hands of the people to measure the performance of the government. It shall be the duty of the state to apply these principles in making laws.
11. (d) An amendment to the constitution of India can be initiated by an introduction of a bill in either house of the parliament. If such an amendment seeks to make changes in the federal character of the constitution, the amendment also requires to be ratified by the legislature of at least half of the states.
12. (d) National Development council is not a constitutional body. It is an extra-constitutional body. Planning Commission is a non-constitutional and non-statutory body. It was created by the Govt. of India in 1950 by a resolution. Zonal councils were set up under the states Re-Organization Act, 1956 (So it is not a constitutional body) to foster interstate co-operation and co-ordination among the states. Currently there are a total five zonal councils viz Northern, Western, Eastern, Central and Southern.
13. (b) Directive Principles of State Policy lays down that the State shall take steps to organize village panchayats and endow them with such powers and authority as may be necessary to enable them to function as units of self government. Planning for economic development and social justice is one such power given to village panchayats. There are 52 items in the concurrent list. Economic and social planning is placed under entry no. 20. Article -40 of the constitution of India has the provision for organisation of village panchayats Directive Principles of state policy lays down that the state shall take steps to organise village panchayats and endow them with such powers and authority as may be necessary to enable them to function as units of self government. Accordingly village panchayats have been entrusted with the task of preparation of plans for economic development and social justice. The national development council includes members of the planning commission, but it is a separate body.
14. (c) CAG gives three audit reports to president which are laid by the president before both the houses of the parliament. Subsequently the Public Accounts committee examines them and reports its findings to the parliament.
15. (c) All the statements except 2 regarding the Fundamental Duties of citizens are correct.
16. (c) Distribution of power between the Centre and the States in the Indian Constitution is based on the Government of India Act. 1935.
17. (c) The members of the constituent Assembly from the provinces were indirectly elected by the members of the provincial assemblies, who themselves were elected on a limited franchise.
18. (c) Directive Principles of State Policy are guidelines to the central and State government of India to be kept in mind while framing laws and policies. DPSPs aim to create social and economic conditions under which the citizens can lead a good life. They also aim to establish social and economic democracy through a welfare state. They act as a check on the government. It is a yardstick in the hands of the people to measure the performance of the government. It shall be the duty of the state to apply these principles in making laws.
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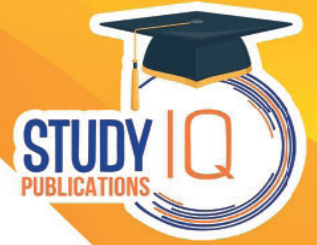


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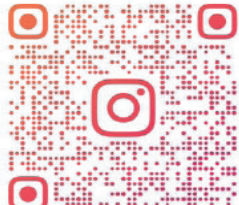
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