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Shashank Tyagi

Faculty PSIR Optional, StudyiqIAS
Ex. Consultant, Office of Minister
Social Welfare, GNCTD



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GEOPOLITICS AT GLANCE

INDIA AND GLOBAL SOUTH

RELEVANCE

□ Syllabus:

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



INTRODUCTION

India positions itself as a prominent advocate for the interests of the Global South. Given this situation, there is a requirement to overhaul current systems to create a more comprehensive and equitable framework that prioritizes development.

GLOBAL SOUTH

The Global South denotes nations often described as developing, less developed, or underdeveloped, primarily situated in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. These countries typically experience higher levels of poverty, income inequality, and challenging

living conditions in comparison to the wealthier nations of the Global North.

The Global North comprises wealthier nations primarily located in North America and Europe, with some additional presence in Oceania and other regions.

BRANDT LINE

The Brandt Line was introduced by Willy Brandt during the 1980s.

It serves as an imaginary boundary dividing the world into affluent countries (predominantly in the Northern Hemisphere) and less affluent countries (mostly in the Southern Hemisphere).

Essentially, the line illustrates the socio-economic disparity between northern and southern nations. It highlights the contrasting levels of wealth, development, and opportunities across different regions of the world.

HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

India's historical association with the Global South stems from shared colonial struggles and experiences of underdevelopment. Under the leadership of Prime Minister Nehru, post-independence India assumed a leading role in advocating for the concerns of Global South nations.

- ❑ **Establishment of Non-Aligned Movement (NAM):** India actively contributed to the formation of NAM, representing the socio-economic and political priorities of the Global South. It also took a leadership role in shaping NAM's agenda for a New International Economic Order, aiming to counter the dominance of institutions like the Bretton Woods organizations.
- ❑ **Establishment of G-77:** India played a pivotal leadership role in founding the G-77, a coalition comprising 134 developing nations within the UN. The primary objective of G-77 was to present a unified voice for the Global South in forums like the UN General Assembly and various UN committees.
- ❑ **Stockholm Conference of 1972:** India played a significant role in articulating the concerns of the Global South regarding climate change during the Stockholm Conference. India's leadership at the conference contributed to the development of principles such as Sustainable Development (as outlined in the Brundtland Report), Common But Differentiated Responsibilities (CBDR), and the Polluters Pay Principle. These principles aimed to address environmental challenges while recognizing

the differing capacities and responsibilities of nations in the Global South.

ERA OF PRAGMATISM

However, following the end of the Cold War and faced with domestic economic challenges, India began to adopt a more pragmatic approach in its foreign policy, prioritizing its own national economic and security interests over the principles of justice and equity for the Global South. This shift is evident in the following examples:

- ❑ **Neglect of NAM after the Cold War:** India allowed the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) to lapse into a state of dormancy after the Cold War. In recent years, India's engagement at NAM Summits has been less prominent, with the Indian Prime Minister opting to skip the 18th NAM Summit in 2019.
- ❑ **Closer ties with the Global North:** India has pursued deeper strategic relations with countries of the Global North, such as the United States, European Union, and Japan. One notable example is the India-US Civil Nuclear Deal.
- ❑ **Engagement with new multilateral forums:** India has intensified its involvement in new multilateral platforms like BRICS, SCO, and ASEAN, diverting attention from groups like G-77 and NAM.

Nevertheless, with the increasing economic and geopolitical influence of India, it has once again emerged as a prominent advocate for the interests of the Global South.

INDIA BECOMING VOICE OF THE GLOBAL SOUTH

India is increasingly becoming the voice of the Global South through various initiatives and actions:

- ❑ **New Delhi Declaration:** During its G-20 presidency, India advocated for the inclusion of Global South issues such as debt financing,

climate justice, and gender equality in the New Delhi Declaration, thereby amplifying their concerns on the global stage.

- ❑ **Expansion of G-20:** India played a crucial role in ensuring the representation of Global South members at the G-20 by advocating for the inclusion of the African Union, thus providing a platform for their voices to be heard.
- ❑ **Voice of Global South Summit:** India has been organizing the Voice of Global South Summit to foster solidarity among Global South countries, addressing the unprecedented challenges they face collectively.
- ❑ **Vaccine Maitri:** India has played a pivotal role in supporting Global South countries during the COVID-19 pandemic by supplying free vaccines and medicines through initiatives like Vaccine Maitri, saving numerous lives in the process.
- ❑ **More representative multilateral fora:** India has worked towards making multilateral forums like BRICS and SCO more inclusive by advocating for the inclusion of countries from the Global South, as seen in the transformation of BRICS into BRICS PLUS.
- ❑ **Climate Justice:** India has taken on a leadership role in climate negotiations, championing the interests of the Global South. For instance, it recently spearheaded the establishment of a Loss and Damage Fund at COP28 to address climate-related challenges faced by developing nations.

CHALLENGES

India faces several headwinds that inhibit its ability to emerge as a leader of the Global South:

- ❑ **UNSC Membership:** India's campaign for a permanent seat at the UN Security Council (UNSC) as part of the G-4 group faces opposition from the Coffee Club members, which include Global South countries from Africa and Asia.

- ❑ **Neglect of NAM and G-77:** India's neglect of the oldest groupings of the Global South, such as the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and the Group of 77 (G-77), has led to breakdowns in effective communication among Global South countries.
- ❑ **China Factor:** China's extensive economic aid and developmental assistance to Global South countries, coupled with its rivalry with India, pose a challenge to India's aspirations of leadership within the Global South.
- ❑ **Lack of Consistent Engagement:** Despite launching summits with regions such as Africa and the Indo-Pacific, India has failed to maintain consistent engagement with them. For example, no India-Africa Summit has been held since the series of summits from 2015-2018, and India did not participate in the Pacific Island Summit in Papua New Guinea in 2023.
- ❑ **Big Brother Attitude:** India has been accused of interfering in the domestic politics of Global South countries, leading to mistrust regarding India's leadership role. For instance, the 'India Out Campaign' in the Maldives exemplifies this perception.
- ❑ **Delays in Project Implementation:** India's aim to position itself as the 'Voice of the Global South' is hindered by delays in implementing development projects within agreed time frames. Examples include delays in projects like the Kaladan Project and the Asia-Africa Growth Corridor.

WAY FORWARD

Establishment of an Indian Development Bank: India should create its own development bank to offer assistance to the Global South, presenting an alternative to China.

- ❑ **Reinvigoration of NAM:** India should rejuvenate the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) in the post-COVID era to address rising ideological

divisions and geopolitical conflicts like the Ukraine-Russia War and Israel-Hamas conflicts.

- ❑ **Enhanced Project Delivery Capacity:** India should prioritize efforts and resources to enhance the quality and timely completion of its development projects.
- ❑ **Abandoning a Patronizing Attitude:** India should discard any perceived patronizing

behavior and instead foster relationships built on mutual trust and respect with Global South countries.

- ❑ **Sustained Summit Engagements:** India should maintain engagement with African and Indo-Pacific nations by institutionalizing events like the Indo-Africa summit.

METAMORPHOSIS OF INDIAN FOREIGN POLICY

RELEVANCE

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



EVOLUTION OF INDIAN FOREIGN POLICY

India's foreign policy language has transitioned from a defensive stance to one that is more assertive and confident. This shift mirrors India's increasing global influence and economic advancement.

An example of this change can be seen in India's approach to the India-US nuclear deal in the mid-2000s. Initially, India was apprehensive that forging a close relationship with the US would compromise its "strategic autonomy." However,

over time, India has cultivated a much closer relationship with the US. This shift demonstrates a significant evolution in India's foreign policy mindset, moving from viewing strategic autonomy simply as freedom from the influence of major powers to leveraging its own power on the global stage.

This evolution in language is also evident in the emergence of new terms such as "leading power," "net security provider," and "first responder" to regional crises. These terms signify a proactive stance in global affairs, indicating India's willingness to play a more prominent and responsible role in addressing regional and global challenges.

ROLE OF POLITICAL CLASS

- ❑ **Adaptation to New Diplomatic Language:** The political class, including the Opposition, has been relatively slow in embracing India's evolving assertive foreign policy language. There persists a degree of resistance among politicians and intellectuals to recognizing India as a major power on the global stage.
- ❑ **Contribution to India's Growth:** Political parties, including the Opposition, have played a significant role in India's growth trajectory, particularly through their involvement in coalition governments since 1991. Today, the Opposition's role is crucial in engaging constructively to shape India's path towards further development.
- ❑ **Debating India's Future Goals:** There is a pressing need for focused political debate regarding India's ambitious goal of achieving developed nation status by 2047, as outlined by the government. Such discussions are vital for charting a clear course towards achieving national objectives and garnering political consensus on key developmental priorities.

RESPONSIBILITIES INCREASING

As India experiences growth, it also shoulders increasing responsibilities in shaping the regional and global landscape. These responsibilities include:

- ❑ **Contribution to Regional Security:** India is expected to play a crucial role in maintaining stability and security in its immediate neighborhood and beyond, thereby promoting peace and cooperation.
- ❑ **Management of Global Commons:** India has a role to play in managing shared resources such as oceans, outer space, and the environment, ensuring their sustainable use for the benefit of all.
- ❑ **Setting Rules for International Commerce:** As an emerging economic power, India is positioned to influence global trade and commerce policies, contributing to a more equitable and inclusive international economic system.
- ❑ **Influence on International Institutions:** India's growing stature grants it a greater voice in shaping the agendas and decisions of international organizations, allowing it to advocate for the interests of developing nations.

References to India as a "leading power," "Vishwa Mitra," and "net security provider" underscore its evolving responsibilities on the global stage.

CHALLENGES FACED

However, India also faces several challenges in realizing its potential:

- ❑ **Developmental Challenges:** Despite economic growth, India's low per capita income highlights ongoing developmental challenges such as poverty, healthcare, and education.
- ❑ **Goal of Becoming a Developed Country:** The ambitious goal set by the Indian government to become a developed country by 2047

requires substantial economic growth and comprehensive policy reforms.

- ❑ **Economic Growth Targets:** Achieving a per capita income of \$12,000 by 2047 from the current level of less than \$3,000 necessitates sustained and inclusive economic growth, which may be hindered by structural and institutional constraints.
- ❑ **Formulating Effective Policies:** India must formulate and implement effective economic strategies and industrial policies to drive growth, create employment, and reduce poverty.

- ❑ **Addressing Inequality and Environmental Degradation:** Tackling issues of inequality and environmental degradation is crucial for sustainable development and ensuring that the benefits of growth are shared equitably across society.

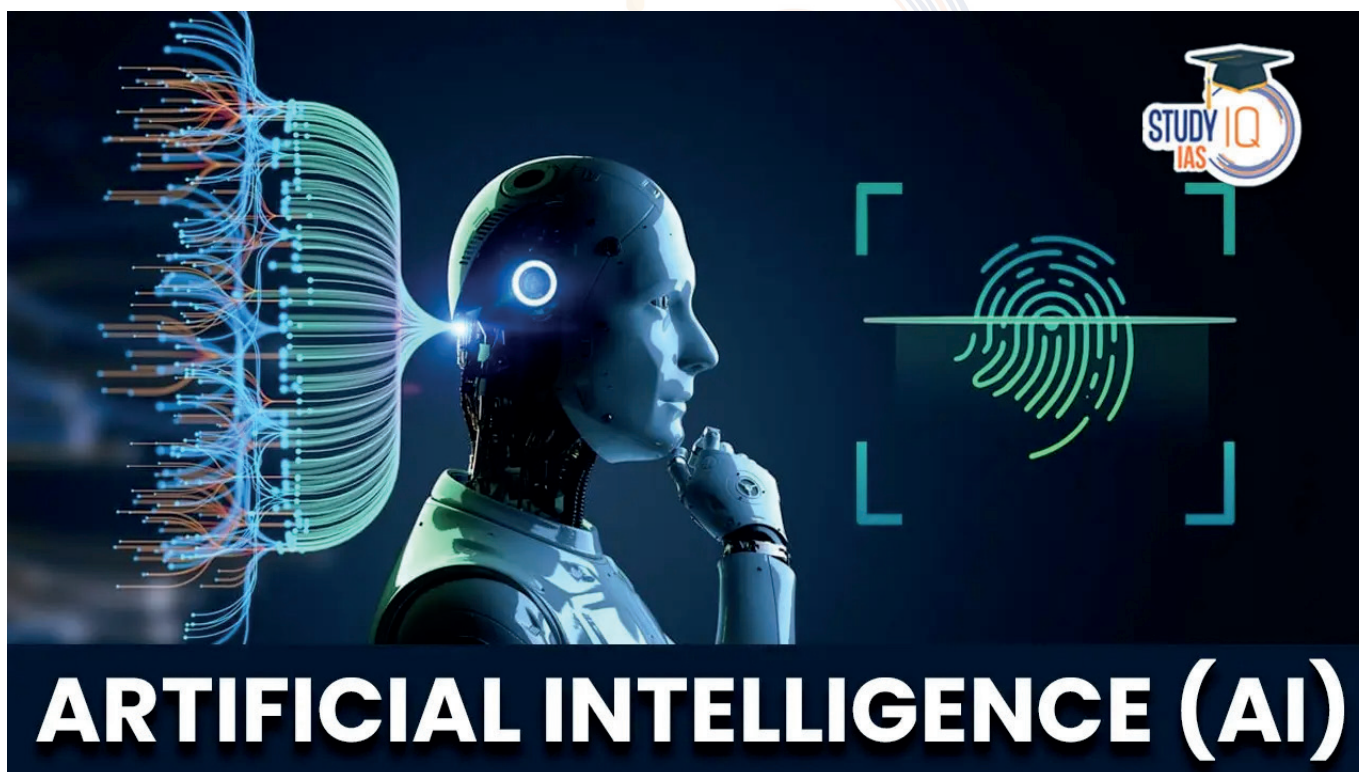
- ❑ **Navigating a Changing Global Order:** India faces the challenge of navigating a rapidly evolving global order characterized by shifting geopolitical dynamics, emerging technologies, and complex international relations, requiring adept diplomacy and strategic foresight.

EFFECTS OF AI ON THE POLITICAL AND SOCIAL

RELEVANCE

- ❑ **Syllabus:**

- **PSIR:** Contemporary Global Concerns
- **GS2:** International Relations



INTRODUCTION

Artificial Intelligence (AI) refers to the simulation

of human intelligence processes by machines, particularly computer systems. AI encompasses

various techniques and methodologies aimed at enabling machines to perform tasks that typically require human intelligence, such as problem-solving, learning, reasoning, perception, and language understanding.

Generative AI is a specific subset of artificial intelligence technology that focuses on creating new content, including text, images, and audio, based on certain input parameters. Generative AI models are designed to generate new data rather than simply analyzing existing data or making predictions based on patterns. These models can be trained on large datasets to learn patterns and generate new content that is realistic and coherent. For example, a generative AI model could be used to create lifelike facial images by providing parameters such as facial features, hair color, and skin tone. Generative AI has wide-ranging social, political, and ethical implications, as it has the potential to revolutionize various industries, including art, entertainment, and content creation, while also raising concerns about misinformation, privacy, and authenticity.

POSITIVE POLITICAL IMPACTS OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

- ❑ **Innovative Policy Development:** AI facilitates innovative policy development, such as AI-drafted bills in the US Congress, streamlining legislative processes.
- ❑ **Enhanced Political Messaging:** AI enables the crafting of resonant political messages through advanced analytics, revolutionizing campaign strategies and voter engagement.
- ❑ **New Political Platforms:** AI serves as a platform for political engagement and ideological development, exemplified by Denmark's Synthetic Party using AI Chatbox for shaping political ideology.
- ❑ **Economic Contributions:** AI-driven fundraising and business ventures contribute to political

finance dynamics, enabling efficient resource allocation in campaigns.

- ❑ **Campaign Strategies:** Generative AI enhances campaign strategies, facilitating tasks like live translation of election speeches into multiple languages, broadening outreach.

NEGATIVE POLITICAL IMPACTS OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

- ❑ **Promotion of 'Liar's Dividend' through Deepfakes:** Deepfake technology fosters the dissemination of false information, eroding trust in political discourse as authentic content is questioned.
- ❑ **Erosion of Trust in Democratic Processes:** Deepfakes and manipulated content undermine trust in democratic processes like elections, leading to a democratic deficit and social instability.
- ❑ **Manipulation Risks:** AI poses risks of election manipulation and public opinion sway through the proliferation of false political narratives, distorting democratic decision-making.
- ❑ **Ethical and Legal Challenges:** Acceptance of AI-generated political contributions raises complex ethical and legal questions, necessitating frameworks to ensure transparency and accountability in democratic processes.

POSITIVE SOCIAL IMPACTS

- ❑ **Advancements in Healthcare:** AI has the potential to transform healthcare by enhancing diagnostic accuracy, such as converting medical images for more precise diagnoses.
- ❑ **Agricultural Improvements:** AI enables precision farming, increasing crop yields through accurate data on farming conditions and weather patterns.
- ❑ **Empathy for Conflict Zones:** Initiatives like the Deep Empathy Project create AI-generated images to raise awareness and empathy for war-torn regions like Syria.

- ❑ **Voice Restoration:** AI technology aids in restoring the voices of patients with conditions like amyotrophic lateral sclerosis through voice cloning initiatives.
- ❑ **Creative Applications:** AI, including deepfake technology, can enhance entertainment by improving dubbing in films and bringing historical figures to life.

NEGATIVE SOCIAL IMPACTS

- ❑ **Misuse in Crimes:** Deepfake technology is exploited to create non-consensual pornographic content, violating individuals' dignity and privacy.
- ❑ **Amplifying Radicalization:** Terrorist groups utilize fake videos to incite violence and spread propaganda, fueling anti-state sentiments.
- ❑ **Job Displacement:** AI implementation in various industries raises concerns about job losses due to automation and efficiency improvements.
- ❑ **Privacy Concerns:** AI's data analysis capabilities pose risks to privacy and cybersecurity, as large amounts of personal data are processed.
- ❑ **Environmental Impact:** The energy-intensive nature of AI systems contributes to carbon emissions and environmental degradation, especially during model training processes.

REGULATION OF AI: STATUS IN INDIA AND GLOBALLY

India

- a. **Development of Digital India Framework:** India is formulating a comprehensive Digital India Framework to regulate AI, aimed at safeguarding digital citizens and ensuring the safe and trustworthy utilization of AI.
- b. **Establishment of National AI Programme:** India has initiated a National AI Programme to encourage the efficient and responsible deployment of AI technologies.

c. Implementation of National Data Governance

Framework Policy: India has adopted a National Data Governance Framework Policy to govern the collection, storage, and utilization of data, including data utilized in AI systems, to ensure ethical and responsible data handling within the AI ecosystem.

- d. **Drafting of Digital India Act:** The Ministry of Information Technology and Electronics (MeitY) is in the process of drafting the Digital India Act, which will replace the current IT Act. This new legislation will include a dedicated chapter addressing emerging technologies, particularly AI, and their regulation to protect users from potential harm.

Global Efforts

- a. **European Union:** The European Union is developing the Artificial Intelligence Act (AI Act) to regulate AI comprehensively.
- b. **United States:** The White House Office of Science and Technology Policy has released a non-binding Blueprint for the Development, Use, and Deployment of Automated Systems, outlining principles to mitigate potential AI-related harms.
- c. **Japan:** Japan's regulation of AI is guided by the Society 5.0 project, which aims to tackle societal issues through innovative means.
- d. **China:** China has implemented the "Next Generation Artificial Intelligence Development Plan" and issued ethical guidelines for AI. Specific laws governing AI applications, such as algorithmic recommendation management, have also been introduced.

WAY FORWARD

- ❑ **Bias Mitigation:** Efforts should be made to ensure fairness in AI training data to prevent the perpetuation or amplification of social biases, including gender and racial biases.

- ❑ **Transparency:** Users must be provided with transparent information regarding the limitations and risks associated with AI.
- ❑ **Privacy Protection:** Stringent implementation of data protection laws is essential to safeguard user data and confidentiality.
- ❑ **Ethical AI Use:** AI should be utilized exclusively for beneficial purposes, with a push for

universal adoption of ethical principles like those outlined in the Bletchley Declaration.

CONCLUSION

AI has the potential to offer valuable insights in addressing major global challenges such as climate change and pandemics. Responsible AI usage can contribute to longer, healthier, and more fulfilling lives worldwide.

THE NEW ALIGNMENTS IN INDIAN FOREIGN POLICY

RELEVANCE

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

INDIA'S NEW FOREIGN POLICY FOCUS

- ❑ **Strategic Islands and Maritime Regions:** India is placing emphasis on the strategic significance of islands and maritime territories, such as in the Maldives, Papua New Guinea, Mauritius, and the development of Andaman and Lakshadweep.
- ❑ **Adopting the Indo-Pacific Framework:** India has embraced the Indo-Pacific concept, moving beyond perceiving it as solely an American initiative. This shift is in response to tensions with China and aligns with the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad) involving Australia, India, Japan, and the US.
- ❑ **Increased Focus on Eurasia and Europe:** India's engagement with Eurasia is growing, evidenced by its membership in the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation. Additionally, there's a deepening engagement with Europe, including heightened diplomatic visits and negotiations for a free trade agreement with EFTA countries.
- ❑ **Broadening Relations with the Middle East and Africa:** India is strengthening its ties with the Middle East, forging partnerships with countries like the UAE and Saudi Arabia, and

demonstrating a naval presence in the Red Sea region. This reflects a more comprehensive approach towards the Middle East, Africa, and the eastern Mediterranean.

- ❑ **Shifting Attention from South Asia:** With the decline of SAARC, India is shifting its focus from South Asia to sub-regional and trans-regional cooperation, particularly with the Bay of Bengal nations.
- ❑ **New Focus on Zomia and Khorasan:** India is exploring new regions like Zomia and Khorasan due to geopolitical shifts on its eastern and western borders.

CHALLENGES IN SHAPING INDIA'S NEW FOREIGN POLICY

- ❑ **Tension with China:** India's strained relations with China, marked by military standoffs, present a significant challenge, particularly in adopting the Indo-Pacific strategy and managing regional dynamics.
- ❑ **Balancing Ties with Russia and the West:** India's evolving approach to Eurasia is complicated by the escalating conflict between Russia and the West, as well as the strengthening alliance

between China and Russia. Balancing relations with both sides poses a challenge for India.

- ❑ **Economic Engagement with Europe:** While India is enhancing its diplomatic and trade ties with Europe, the successful negotiation and finalization of a comprehensive free trade agreement remain complex challenges.

Internal Challenges in South Asia: The failure of SAARC and evolving dynamics with Pakistan necessitate India to adjust its approach in South Asia, with a greater focus on sub-regional cooperation.

KATCHATHEEVU ISLAND CONTROVERSY

RELEVANCE

❑ Syllabus:

- **PSIR:** India and South Asia
- **GS2:** India and its Neighborhood- Relations



Katchatheevu Island

INTRODUCTION

The Katchatheevu Island dispute has reemerged ahead of the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, frequently serving as a tool for political parties to target their opponents. The current NDA administration has criticized the former Congress government for allegedly relinquishing the contested territory to

Sri Lanka in 1974 as part of the Maritime Boundary Agreement, accusing them of acting insensitively. Katchatheevu Island, a small uninhabited landmass covering 285 acres, is situated in the Palk Strait, between India and Sri Lanka. It lies approximately 33 km northeast of Rameswaram and about 62 km southwest of Jaffna. Despite its geographical

location, the island lacks a resident population due to the absence of drinking water sources. It emerged from volcanic activity during the 14th century.

The island's primary structure is St. Anthony's Church, constructed in the early 20th century. Annually, during a festival, Christian clergy from both India and Sri Lanka collaborate to conduct services, attracting pilgrims from both nations.

HISTORICAL TIMELINE OF THE DISPUTE

- ❑ **Oct 21, 1921:** During discussions on the delimitation of the Palk Strait and the Gulf of Mannar between the governments of Madras and Ceylon (now Sri Lanka), both claimed sovereignty over the island. Sri Lanka asserted its claim based on Portuguese occupation from 1505 to 1658 CE, while India argued that the erstwhile Raja of Ramnad (Ramanathapuram) had possession of it as part of his zamin. The British, referring to the traditional claims of the Ramnad zamindari, attached it to the Madras Presidency.
- ❑ **Till Independence:** The zamin of Ramanathapuram collected taxes until 1947, after which the island came under the jurisdiction of the State government following the Zamindari Abolition Act.
- ❑ **Post-Independence:** Disputes over the island's control resurfaced after Independence, particularly concerning fishing rights around the island.
- ❑ **June 28, 1974:** Under the 1974 'Indo-Sri Lankan Maritime Agreement,' the government led by Indira Gandhi agreed to cede Katchatheevu Island to Sri Lanka in a bid to resolve the discord and strengthen ties. However, opposition parties, including the DMK, AIADMK, Jan Sangh, Swatantra, and the Socialist Party, opposed the agreement and staged walkouts in both Houses.

- ❑ **August 15, 1991:** Tamil Nadu Chief Minister, Jayalalitha, urged the central government to reclaim Katchatheevu and restore fishing rights for Tamil fishermen in her Independence Day address.
- ❑ **Oct 31, 1991:** The Tamil Nadu Assembly adopted a resolution demanding the retrieval of Katchatheevu.
- ❑ **2001:** Chief Minister Jayalalitha met Indian PM A.B. Vajpayee, urging India to obtain the island on lease-in-perpetuity.
- ❑ **2008, 2013:** Both major political parties, AIADMK and DMK, approached the Supreme Court to declare the Katchatheevu agreements of 1974 and 1976 null and void.
- ❑ **July 2014:** The Central Government informed the Supreme Court that Katchatheevu is a sovereign property of Sri Lanka and that the 1974 and 1976 agreements between India and Sri Lanka do not grant fishing rights to Indian fishermen.
- ❑ **December 2022:** The Union government, referring to the 1974 and 1976 agreements, stated in its reply in the Rajya Sabha that Katchatheevu lies on the Sri Lankan side of the India-Sri Lanka International Maritime Boundary Line and that the matter was sub-judice in the Supreme Court.



THE PROVISIONS OF THE MARITIME BOUNDARY AGREEMENT, PARTICULARLY THE 1974 AND 1976 AGREEMENTS

1974 Agreement:

- ❑ Each country (India and Sri Lanka) shall possess sovereignty, exclusive jurisdiction, and control over the waters, islands, continental shelf, and subsoil on its respective side of the boundary.
- ❑ Navigational rights of vessels from both Sri Lanka and India in each other's waters are preserved.
- ❑ Activities allowed for Indian fishermen on the island include resting, net drying, and visiting the annual St. Anthony's festival without requiring a visa.
- ❑ Prohibited activities for Indian fishermen on the island include engaging in fishing in Sri Lanka's historic waters, territorial sea, and Exclusive Economic Zone.

1976 Agreement:

- ❑ Each party shall respect navigation rights through its territorial sea and exclusive economic zone in accordance with its laws, regulations, and international law.

INDIA'S CONCERNS WITH THE KATCHATHEEVU ISLAND:

- ❑ **Detaining of Indian fishermen:** Sri Lankan authorities frequently detain Indian fishermen from Tamil Nadu, with thousands detained and fishing vessels seized over the past two decades.
- ❑ **Impact on traditional fishing communities' livelihoods:** The controversy limits the mobility of traditional fishing communities, affecting their ability to sustain their livelihoods and impacting economic stability.
- ❑ **Threat to socio-cultural fabric:** The dispute jeopardizes the cultural and social cohesion of the Indo-Sri Lankan region, leading to actions

such as fishermen associations boycotting the St. Anthony's Church festival.

- ❑ **Geostrategic significance:** The island gains strategic importance due to increasing Chinese influence in the Indian Ocean. India's sovereignty over the island could counterbalance Chinese interests in the region.
- ❑ **Undermining cooperative federalism:** The transfer of Katchatheevu has sparked opposition, particularly from Tamil Nadu, alleging lack of consultation with the state government before ceding the territory to Sri Lanka.

IMPLICATIONS OF KATCHATHEEVU ISLAND CONTROVERSY

- ❑ **Impact on India-Sri Lanka ties:** Reviving the controversy could harm the recently improving relations between India and Sri Lanka, particularly amidst Sri Lanka's economic crisis.
- ❑ **Perception of India's dominance:** It may reinforce perceptions of India's "big brother" attitude among neighboring countries, undermining regional cooperation and trust.
- ❑ **Damage to agreements:** Raising old agreements could damage the entire architecture of boundary agreements with neighboring countries. This may set a negative precedent and raise concerns for other countries like Bangladesh.
- ❑ **Boost to Chinese influence:** Any hostile actions by India may inadvertently strengthen Chinese influence in the region, posing challenges to India's strategic interests.

WAY FORWARD

- ❑ **Avoid political rhetoric:** National political discourse should not undermine India's stance on sovereignty and territorial integrity. It's crucial to maintain a diplomatic approach.
- ❑ **Respect finalized agreements:** There should be no revisiting of settled and operational

agreements, as doing so could erode India's credibility and trustworthiness as a partner.

- ❑ **Focus on improving relations:** India must prioritize efforts to enhance relations with its neighbors. The progress made through its neighborhood policy should not be jeopardized by contentious issues like Katchatheevu.

CONCLUSION

By refraining from political posturing, respecting established agreements, and fostering positive relationships with neighboring countries, India can navigate the Katchatheevu Island Controversy while upholding its national interests and regional stability.

MYANMAR- CRYING FOR HELP

RELEVANCE

- ❑ **Syllabus:**
 - **PSIR:** India and south Asia
 - **GS2:** India and its Neighborhood- Relations

India Myanmar

Relations

#UPSC #IAS

by Shashank Tyagi

STUDY IQ

INTRODUCTION

Myanmar is currently grappling with the aftermath of the 2021 military coup, which has led to a deeply divided nation. The country is split between areas controlled by the military government, known as the State Administration Council (SAC), and regions where resistance against the coup persists.

The United Nations has expressed grave concerns over the escalating conflict and the risks faced by civilians caught in the crossfire. The situation has led to a significant displacement crisis, with approximately 2.7 million people already displaced from their homes. It is predicted that another 1 million people may become displaced by the end of 2024 if the situation does not improve.

Furthermore, an estimated 18.6 million people in Myanmar, including 6 million children, are in urgent need of humanitarian assistance due to the ongoing crisis. This includes access to essential services such as food, water, healthcare, and shelter. The humanitarian situation in Myanmar remains dire, with the conflict exacerbating existing challenges faced by the population.

MAIN CONCERNS IN MYANMAR

- ❑ **Escalation of Conflict:** The deepening conflict in Myanmar is a source of grave concern, as violence continues to intensify across the country.
- ❑ **Risk to Civilians:** Civilians are increasingly vulnerable to harm as the conflict persists, facing greater threats to their safety and well-being.
- ❑ **Expansion in Rakhine State:** The conflict is spreading to Rakhine State, exacerbating existing vulnerabilities and tensions in this region.
- ❑ **Forced Military Recruitment:** A new law on conscription has led to the coerced enlistment of young people into the military, worsening the humanitarian crisis and violating human rights.
- ❑ **Increased Air Strikes:** Military airstrikes have surged fivefold in recent months, intensifying the violence and adding to the suffering of civilians.
- ❑ **Aid Delivery Challenges:** Delivering humanitarian assistance is hindered by logistical obstacles and limited access to conflict-affected areas, impeding efforts to address the urgent needs of the population.
- ❑ **Lack of Consensus:** Discord between the military government (SAC) and the Resistance complicates efforts to de-escalate the conflict and provide humanitarian aid, exacerbating the crisis and prolonging the suffering of the people.

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE

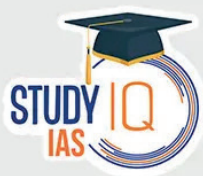
- ❑ **Establishing Dialogue:** It is imperative to devise a new and innovative mechanism for dialogue that involves all relevant stakeholders in Myanmar to facilitate communication and negotiation towards a peaceful resolution.
- ❑ **Humanitarian Corridor:** Exploring the creation of a designated “humanitarian corridor” within Myanmar, possibly with the support and cooperation of neighboring countries like Thailand, could help facilitate the safe passage of humanitarian aid to affected areas and alleviate the suffering of civilians.
- ❑ **External Assistance:** The support and assistance of neighboring countries like ASEAN nations, China, India, and Bangladesh are essential in addressing the humanitarian crisis in Myanmar. These countries should collaborate and offer practical, context-sensitive proposals to guide policymakers in providing effective aid and support to the affected population.
- ❑ **Addressing the Constitution Issue:** Resolving the longstanding constitutional issue in Myanmar requires finding a compromise between the military-backed 2008 constitution and the demands of the Resistance for a new constitution that reflects the will of the people. Negotiating a middle ground that accommodates the interests of all parties is crucial for achieving lasting stability and democracy in the country.
- ❑ **Ensuring Regional Stability:** Recognizing that the crisis in Myanmar has implications beyond its borders, it is essential to prioritize efforts to address the root causes of the conflict and instability. Regional stability hinges on finding sustainable solutions to Myanmar’s crisis, making it imperative for neighboring countries and regional organizations to actively engage in supporting peace-building efforts and promoting progress in Myanmar.

DIAMOND JUBILEE OF NATO

RELEVANCE

□ Syllabus:

- **PSIR:** Changing International Political Order
- **GS2:** Important International Institutions, agencies and fora - their Structure, Mandate



NATO COUNTRIES



NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION



INTRODUCTION

April 4, 2024 commemorated 75 years since the establishment of NATO. During the celebration, Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg emphasized that NATO has grown larger, more robust, and more cohesive than ever before.

Indeed, NATO has undergone expansion over the years, with its membership increasing from the original 12 countries to 32. However, this expansion is considered a significant factor contributing to Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022 and the ongoing conflict. Additionally, NATO encounters numerous challenges as an organization.

DETAILS OF NATO

The rationale behind the creation of NATO was to establish a Western security alliance during the Cold War era, aiming to deter Soviet expansionism. This was in response to the perceived risk of the Soviet Union extending its control from Eastern Europe to other parts of the continent. NATO was founded on April 4, 1949, with 12 original member states signing the Washington Treaty, which drew upon Article 51 of the United Nations Charter, reaffirming the inherent right of independent states to individual or collective defense.

As for its present structure and membership, NATO has expanded significantly since its inception.

Originally consisting of 12 founding members including Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, the United Kingdom, and the United States, it has since grown to encompass 32 member countries.

The expanded membership includes Greece and Turkey (1952), West Germany (1955; later as Germany), Spain (1982), the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland (1999), Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia (2004), Albania and Croatia (2009), Montenegro (2017), North Macedonia (2020), Finland (2023), and Sweden (2024).

OBJECTIVES OF NATO

- 1. Collective Defense:** The primary objective of NATO, as articulated in Article 5 of the Washington Treaty (North Atlantic Treaty), is collective defense. This principle asserts that an attack on any member state constitutes an attack on all, requiring collective action in response.
- 2. Political Cooperation:** NATO aims to foster political cooperation among its members, promoting democratic values and facilitating consultation and cooperation on defense and security issues. This collaboration is intended to address common challenges, build trust, and prevent conflicts.
- 3. Military Assistance:** Additionally, NATO is tasked with providing military assistance and conducting crisis management operations when diplomatic efforts fail to resolve disputes. This includes interventions aimed at maintaining stability and security in the face of emerging threats or conflicts.

ACHIEVEMENTS OF NATO

- ❑ **Safeguarding Against Superpower Threats:** Throughout the Cold War era, NATO played a crucial role in protecting European nations

from potential threats posed by the Soviet Union. In the contemporary landscape, NATO continues to support European countries in navigating ideological, economic, and strategic competition, particularly against emerging powers like China.

- ❑ **Managing Conflicts in Eastern Europe:** NATO has effectively managed and contained militarized conflicts in Central and Eastern Europe, contributing to stability within the region and promoting peace among former Soviet bloc nations.
- ❑ **Promoting Stability in Western Europe:** NATO's presence has facilitated the stabilization of Western Europe, fostering reconciliation and cooperation among historically adversarial states. Notably, NATO initiatives have contributed to improved relations between countries such as France and Germany.
- ❑ **Crisis Management Operations:** NATO has actively engaged in crisis management operations, providing assistance to countries facing various challenges. This includes humanitarian aid efforts, such as delivering relief supplies following natural disasters like the 2005 Kashmir Earthquake, as well as participating in counter-terrorism operations in regions like the Mediterranean and Somalia.
- ❑ **Invocation of Collective Security:** Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty, which stipulates collective defense measures in the event of an attack on any member state, has been invoked only once in NATO's history. Following the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks in the United States, NATO forces were deployed to Afghanistan for nearly two decades in response.
- ❑ **Humanitarian Support in Ukraine:** NATO has publicly condemned Russia's invasion of Ukraine and has provided significant humanitarian aid to the country. The conflict in Ukraine has underscored NATO's relevance and importance, prompting efforts by nations

like Finland and Sweden to enhance their engagement with the alliance

CHALLENGES FACED BY NATO

- 1. Funding Issues:** Many member states have not met the agreed-upon defense spending target of 2% of GDP, leading to a disproportionate reliance on the United States for defense expenditures. This imbalance has been a source of contention, particularly among American politicians.
- 2. Intra-Alliance Tensions:** Disputes among member countries have resulted in tensions within NATO. Examples include Turkey's opposition to Sweden and Finland's potential NATO membership due to criticism of Turkey's human rights record, as well as France's criticism of NATO's lack of strategic coordination.
- 3. Deteriorating Relations with Russia:** NATO's support for Ukraine in the Russia-Ukraine conflict has escalated tensions with Russia, leading to direct confrontations and strained relations between the two entities.
- 4. Involvement in Global Military Conflicts:** NATO's participation in numerous military engagements worldwide has drawn criticism for its role in exacerbating conflict and instability. Operations such as the bombing of Yugoslavia, the invasion of Iraq, and military interventions in Syria have raised concerns about NATO's impact on peace and stability.
- 5. Perception as a Relic of Colonialism:** Some view NATO as perpetuating colonial practices under the guise of promoting democracy, human rights, and freedom. This perception, particularly among third-world countries, challenges NATO's legitimacy and credibility.

- 6. Expansionism Concerns:** NATO's expansion into post-Soviet and Eurasian territories has fueled tensions and alienated countries in these regions. The prospect of Ukraine joining NATO has been a particularly contentious issue, contributing to the conflict between Russia and Ukraine.

WAY FORWARD

- 1. Reinitiate Dialogue with Russia:** NATO should reconsider its stance towards Russia and engage in dialogue to address mutual concerns and reduce tensions. This includes abandoning the portrayal of Moscow as the primary threat and restarting diplomatic channels with Russia.
- 2. Promote a Positive Agenda for Peace:** NATO should articulate a positive agenda aimed at fostering global peace and security. This entails dispelling concerns about expansionism and colonial practices by enhancing transparency and cooperation in its activities.
- 3. Address Non-Traditional Threats:** NATO must adapt to address emerging non-traditional threats such as terrorism, cyber attacks, disinformation campaigns, and threats to supply chain security. These challenges require coordinated and proactive responses from the alliance.
- 4. Strengthen Policy Committees:** The efficacy of NATO's policy committees, including the Military Committee, Political Committee, Policy Coordination Group, Executive Working Group, and Senior Resource Board, should be enhanced to ensure better quality, coherence, and timely advice for decision-making.

INDIAN GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS (IGP)

PIB IN NEWS

RELEVANCE

□ Syllabus:

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



DEALING WITH FAKE NEWS IN INDIA

INTRODUCTION

The Government of India has officially designated the Fact-Check Unit (FCU) of the Press Information Bureau (PIB) under the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (MIB) as the central government's fact-check unit. This notification was issued by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) in accordance with the provisions outlined in the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules of 2021.

The PIB's Fact-Check Unit (PIB-FCU) was established in November 2019 with the primary objective of combating the spread of fake news and misinformation. It serves as a deterrent to those who create and disseminate false information while also providing a platform for individuals to report suspicious content related to the Government of India.

THE KEY FUNCTIONS AND MANDATE OF THE PIB-FCU

- a. **Counteracting Misinformation:** The PIB-FCU is tasked with debunking misinformation related to government policies, initiatives, and schemes. It does so either proactively or in response to complaints received.
- b. **Monitoring and Detection:** The unit actively monitors various platforms to detect and counter disinformation campaigns. Its aim is to promptly expose and correct false information pertaining to the government.
- c. **Enforcement of IT Rules:** When the PIB-FCU identifies content as fake, social media platforms are required to remove it as part of their due diligence obligations under the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules. Additionally, internet and telecom service providers such as Jio and Airtel must block the web link associated with the fake news information.

RATIONALE BEHIND THE DECISION

The rationale behind notifying PIB's Fact-Check Unit (PIB-FCU) as the Central Government's Fact-Check Unit includes:

- ❑ **Addressing the issue of fake news:** By establishing a dedicated fact-checking body, the government aims to tackle the rampant spread of fake news and misinformation on online platforms, which can have detrimental effects on society.
- ❑ **Improved accountability of Social Media Intermediaries:** Designating PIB's Fact-Check Unit as the government's fact-checking unit will enhance the accountability of social media intermediaries such as Facebook and Twitter. These platforms will be required to remove false and misleading content in line with government directives.

- ❑ **Enhancement of Cybersecurity:** PIB's Fact-Check Unit can contribute to improving cybersecurity by preventing the misuse of online platforms for illegal or harmful activities. This includes regulating the sharing of deepfakes and other forms of manipulated media that can be used maliciously.
- ❑ **Prevention of Hate Speech and Violence:** The Fact-Check Unit's efforts aim to ensure compliance with Indian laws, including the Information Technology Act and laws related to national security. By enforcing these regulations, the unit helps prevent the misuse of social media platforms and other digital media outlets to incite violence or spread hate speech.

WHAT MORE CAN BE DONE

- ❑ **Early Judgement of the Bombay High Court:** The Bombay High Court should expedite the hearing and deliver a judgement on the constitutionality of the notification of the Central Government's Fact-Check Unit, such as in the case of Kunal Kamra v. Union of India (2023).
- ❑ **Building Consensus among Political Parties:** The government should engage in dialogue with opposition parties to address their concerns regarding the notification of PIB's Fact-Check Unit as the official fact-checking body. Building consensus and assuring credible functioning of the unit is essential.
- ❑ **Transparent and Participatory Process:** It's crucial for the government to collaborate with civil society, media organizations, and other stakeholders to develop a transparent and participatory process for determining what content should be considered fake or misleading. This will enhance trust and accountability.
- ❑ **Independent and Non-Partisan Fact-Checking Body:** The government must ensure that the

Fact-Check Unit is independent and non-partisan, with clear guidelines for decision-making. Establishing independence will bolster credibility and legitimacy.

- ❑ **Compliance with Judicial and Legal Guidelines:** Any takedown requests made by the Fact-Check Unit should strictly adhere to the procedures

and safeguards outlined in landmark judicial decisions such as *Shreya Singhal v. Union of India* and Section 69A of the IT Act. Upholding legal standards ensures protection of freedom of expression and prevents misuse of governmental authority.

PREVENTION OF MONEY LAUNDERING ACT (PMLA)

RELEVANCE

- ❑ **Syllabus:**

- **GS2:** Important Aspects of Governance
- **PSIR:** Principal Organs of the Union Government: Executive Functioning



INTRODUCTION

The Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002 (PMLA) is a legislative framework enacted by the Parliament of India with the primary objective of preventing money laundering and enabling the confiscation of assets derived from illicit activities. Money laundering involves the process of concealing the origins of illegally obtained money,

typically through complex financial transactions, to make it appear legitimate.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The enactment of the PMLA was necessitated by India's commitment to international efforts to combat money laundering. The late 1990s witnessed a global push towards addressing

the issue of money laundering, with various international organizations, including the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), highlighting the importance of implementing robust anti-money laundering measures.

India, as a member of the international community, recognized the significance of combating money laundering to safeguard its financial system and curb criminal activities such as drug trafficking, smuggling, and terrorism financing. The need for comprehensive legislation to address money laundering became evident, prompting the Indian government to introduce the PMLA.

The PMLA was enacted in 2002 to provide a legal framework for preventing and combating money laundering in India. It aimed to establish mechanisms for the detection, investigation, and prosecution of money laundering offenses, as well as the confiscation of proceeds derived from such activities.

Since its enactment, the PMLA has undergone amendments to strengthen its provisions and align with evolving international standards and best practices in the fight against money laundering. The Act reflects India's commitment to international cooperation in combating financial crimes and underscores the importance of robust regulatory measures to maintain the integrity of the financial system.

VARIOUS CONVENTIONS RELATED TO MONEY LAUNDERING

- 1. United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (1988):** This convention urged all countries to take urgent steps to prevent the laundering of proceeds from drug crimes and other connected activities, emphasizing the global need to combat money laundering.
- 2. Establishment of Financial Action Task Force (FATF):** FATF was established to examine the problem of money laundering and make

recommendations to combat it. India adopted FATF recommendations as a basis for enacting the PMLA, reflecting its commitment to international efforts against money laundering.

- 3. United Nations General Assembly's Political Declaration and Global Programme of Action:** This resolution urged all member countries to enact suitable legislation to effectively prevent the laundering of drug money, highlighting the importance of international cooperation in addressing the issue.
- 4. UN Special Session 'Countering World Drug Problem Together':** During this session, a declaration was adopted emphasizing the urgent need to combat money laundering as part of the broader effort to address the global drug problem.
- 5. UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime of 2000 (Palermo Convention):** This convention advocated legislative and other measures to combat organized crime, including the criminalization of money laundering. It underscored the international consensus on the need to address money laundering as a transnational crime.

The Prevention of Money Laundering Act was enacted under Article 253 of the Indian Constitution to fulfill India's obligations under these international treaties and conventions. It reflects India's commitment to combat money laundering and related offenses in line with global standards and best practices.

OBSERVATIONS OF THE SUPREME COURT (SC) REGARDING THE PREVENTION OF MONEY LAUNDERING ACT (PMLA)

- 1. Strict Bail Conditions:**
 - In the case of Nimesh Tarachand Shah vs Union of India (2018), the SC deemed the bail provision of the PMLA Act unconstitutional,

citing violations of Article 14 (Right to Equality) and Article 21 (Right to Life and Personal Liberty).

- ❑ Following this ruling, Parliament restored the strict bail provisions with certain amendments.
- ❑ In *Vijay Madanlal Choudhary vs Union of India* (2022), the SC upheld the constitutionality of the strict bail provision, stating that it is reasonable and directly linked to the objectives of the PMLA Act.

2. ED's Overreach:

- ❑ In the case of *Pankaj Bansal vs Union of India*, the Supreme Court highlighted inconsistencies and lack of transparency in the operations of the Enforcement Directorate (ED), the agency responsible for enforcing the PMLA.
- ❑ The SC emphasized the need for the ED to act with fairness and within the bounds of the law.

3. Procedural Violations:

- ❑ In *Pavana Dibbur vs The Directorate of Enforcement* (2023), the Supreme Court observed procedural violations and instances of misuse of the PMLA.
- ❑ The SC underscored the importance of strict adherence to legal standards by the ED and other authorities involved in the enforcement of the PMLA.

These observations highlight the judiciary's role in scrutinizing the implementation of the PMLA and ensuring that its provisions are applied fairly and in accordance with constitutional principles.

WHAT CAN BE DONE

- 1. Precise Definition of 'Proceeds of Crime':** Incorporate a precise definition of 'Proceeds of Crime' under the PMLA to mitigate potential

abuse of its definition by authorities. This would provide clarity and consistency in identifying assets subject to confiscation.

- 2. Reassessment of Burden of Proof:** Amend the PMLA to establish a more equitable distribution of the burden of proof between the prosecution and the accused. This would ensure fairness in legal proceedings and safeguard the rights of individuals.

- 3. Safeguards Against Overreach by Officers:** Establish an independent oversight mechanism to review and monitor the actions of law enforcement officers involved in PMLA enforcement. This would help prevent potential abuses of power and ensure accountability.

- 4. Review of Stringent Bail Conditions:** Reevaluate the stringent bail conditions, particularly for minor and non-serious economic offenses, to ensure that they are proportionate and fair. This would prevent undue hardship for individuals accused of lesser offenses.

- 5. Enhanced Independence and Transparency of ED:** Implement measures to enhance the independence and transparency of the Enforcement Directorate (ED). This could include regular reporting and disclosure of cases handled, convictions secured, and actions taken by the ED. Such measures would foster public confidence in the ED's operations and prevent perceptions of politicization.

CONCLUSION

By implementing these measures, the government can address concerns surrounding the PMLA and ensure that it serves its intended purpose of combating money laundering while upholding due process and protecting individual rights.

COMMITTEE REPORT ON DIGITAL COMPETITION LAW

RELEVANCE

❑ Syllabus:

- **PSIR:** Planning and Economic Development
- **GS2:** Government Policies



INTRODUCTION

The Committee Report on Digital Competition Law has proposed significant changes to the regulatory framework for digital markets in India.

KEY POINTS

1. Shift from Ex-post to Ex-ante Regulation:

- ❑ Currently, the Competition Commission of India (CCI) takes ex-post measures, intervening after an anticompetitive event occurs in the digital sector.
- ❑ The Committee recommends adopting ex-ante regulation, allowing authorities to intervene

before anticompetitive practices occur. This proactive approach aims to prevent market distortions and promote competition in digital markets.

2. Introduction of Digital Competition Bill:

- ❑ To implement its recommendations, the Committee has drafted the Digital Competition Bill.
- ❑ This proposed legislation aims to establish a comprehensive regulatory framework for digital markets, addressing issues such as market dominance, unfair competition practices, data protection, and consumer welfare.

3. Focus on Antitrust Measures:

- ❑ The Digital Competition Bill is expected to empower regulatory authorities to scrutinize digital market players for antitrust violations.
- ❑ Measures may include imposing restrictions on mergers and acquisitions, prohibiting abusive behavior by dominant players, and promoting fair competition among market participants.

4. Addressing Emerging Challenges:

- ❑ The proposed legislation is designed to address the unique challenges posed by digital markets, such as network effects, data monopolies, and algorithmic biases.
- ❑ It aims to foster innovation, protect consumer interests, and ensure a level playing field for businesses in the digital ecosystem.

5. Public Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement:

- ❑ Before finalizing the Digital Competition Bill, the Committee may conduct public consultations and engage with stakeholders to gather feedback and refine the proposed regulatory framework.
- ❑ This inclusive approach aims to ensure that the legislation effectively addresses the complexities of digital markets while balancing the interests of various stakeholders.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COMMITTEE

1. Need for Ex-ante Regulation:

- ❑ The current ex-post framework under the Competition Act, 2002 is deemed inadequate for addressing anti-competitive conduct by digital enterprises in a timely manner.
- ❑ To address the irreversible dominance of large digital enterprises, the Committee recommends enacting the Digital Competition Act to enable proactive regulation by the Competition Commission of India (CCI) before anticompetitive events occur.

2. Designation of Systemically Significant Digital Enterprises (SSDEs) and Associate Digital Enterprises (ADEs):

- ❑ Core digital service providers such as search engines, social networking services, operating systems, and web browsers should be designated as SSDEs.
- ❑ Entities directly or indirectly involved in providing core digital services within the SSDE group should be notified by the CCI as Associate Digital Enterprises (ADEs).

3. Thresholds for SSDE Classification:

- ❑ **Quantitative Criteria:** The Committee proposes a dual test based on significant financial strength and spread.
- ❑ Parameters for significant financial strength include turnover, gross merchandise value, and market capitalization.
- ❑ Parameters for significant spread include the number of business users and end users of the core digital service in India.
- ❑ **Qualitative Criteria:** Qualitative factors such as the resources of the enterprise and the volume of data aggregated should also be considered to complement quantitative thresholds.

These recommendations aim to establish a robust regulatory framework for addressing competition issues in the digital sector, ensuring fair competition, and safeguarding consumer interests in the rapidly evolving digital economy.

OBLIGATIONS AND THE ENFORCEMENT MECHANISMS

Obligations of SSDEs:

- ❑ **Prohibition of Favoritism:** SSDEs are prohibited from favoring their own products or services, or those of related parties, over competitors' offerings.
- ❑ **Non-Use of Non-Public Data:** SSDEs are barred from using non-public data of business users

operating on their core digital service for unfair competitive advantage.

- ❑ **Non-Restriction of Third-Party Applications:** SSDEs cannot restrict users from using third-party applications on their core digital services, ensuring a level playing field for app developers.
- ❑ **Prohibition of Incentivization:** SSDEs are prevented from incentivizing users of their core digital service to use other products or services offered by the SSDE, preventing unfair market practices.

Enforcement Mechanisms:

- ❑ **Investigation by Director General:** The Director General, appointed under the Competition Act 2002, is tasked with investigating contraventions of these obligations when directed by the Competition Commission of India (CCI).
- ❑ **Establishment of Special Bench:** A separate bench of the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal must be constituted to ensure timely disposal of appeals related to SSDEs.

Penalties:

- ❑ **Imposition of Civil Penalties:** CCI has the authority to impose civil penalties on SSDEs found to be engaging in anti-competitive practices.
- ❑ **Monetary Penalties:** Monetary penalties for non-compliance with ex-ante obligations or CCI orders can be imposed, capped at 10% of the global turnover of the SSDE.

These obligations and enforcement mechanisms are designed to promote competition, protect consumer interests, and maintain a fair and open digital marketplace by holding SSDEs accountable for their actions.

THE NEED FOR DIGITAL COMPETITION LAW

1. Abuse of Dominant Market Position:

- ❑ Core digital service providers, such as Google, have been found to abuse their dominant

market position. For example, Google pressures app developers to use its proprietary billing system, creating barriers for competitors.

2. Self-Preferencing and Platform Bias:

- ❑ Companies like Amazon promote their own services or subsidiaries on their platforms, creating unfair competition for third-party sellers.

3. Restrictions on Third-Party Applications:

- ❑ Instances such as Apple's restrictions on installing third-party applications on iPhones limit consumer choice and innovation.

4. Bundling and Tying:

- ❑ Big tech firms compel consumers to purchase related services by bundling them with their main products, leading to pricing asymmetry and market competition elimination.

5. Anti-Steering Practices:

- ❑ Practices like Apple's anti-steering prevent users from exploring alternative services, restricting consumer choice and competition.

6. Network Effects and Economies of Scale:

- ❑ Companies benefit from network effects, leading to rapid user growth and market fixation, making it challenging for new competitors to enter the market.

7. Concerns Over Data Privacy:

- ❑ Digital companies gather vast amounts of user data, raising concerns about data privacy, surveillance, and security.

8. Killer Acquisitions and Mergers:

- ❑ Killer acquisitions, such as Facebook's acquisition of Instagram and WhatsApp, can lead to monopolization and hinder competition.

THE ADVANTAGES OF IMPLEMENTING DIGITAL COMPETITION LAW

- ❑ **Reduction in Time for Redressal:** Ex-ante measures will expedite the resolution of anti-

competitive cases, reducing the time taken for redressal compared to ex-post measures.

- ❑ **Level Playing Field:** The law will ensure fair competition, creating a level playing field for all digital service providers in India.
- ❑ **Catalyst for Startup Growth:** By mitigating the advantage of established players, the law will foster the growth of digital startups, encouraging innovation and competition.
- ❑ **Address Data Privacy Concerns:** Penalties for data privacy violations will strengthen India's data privacy regime, enhancing consumer protection.
- ❑ **Boost to Digital Economy:** Effective regulation through the Digital Competition Law is expected to stimulate growth in India's digital markets, contributing significantly to the digital economy's expansion.

PREVAILING CONCERNS

- ❑ **Stifling Innovation:** Strict regulations may inhibit innovation and growth in the digital sector, stifling creativity.
- ❑ **Potential for Misuse:** The draft Bill's ex-ante approach might grant excessive discretionary

power to regulators, raising concerns about potential misuse.

- ❑ **Duplication with Existing Laws:** Overlap with provisions in the current Competition Act may lead to regulatory complexity and confusion.
- ❑ **Potential for Conflicting Decisions:** Overlapping laws could result in parallel inquiries and divergent rulings, creating uncertainty.

WAY FORWARD

- ❑ **Revamping of CCI:** Enhance the institutional structure of the Competition Commission of India (CCI) to effectively address digital anti-competitive practices.
- ❑ **Early Establishment of Separate Bench:** Promptly establish a separate bench in the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT) for expedited adjudication of anti-competitive cases.
- ❑ **Effective Checks and Balances:** Implement mechanisms to ensure checks and balances, preventing abuse of discretionary powers by regulatory authorities.

ELECTORAL REFORMS

RELEVANCE

☐ Syllabus:

- **PSIR:** Election Commission
- **GS2:** Elections



ELECTORAL REFORMS IN INDIA

INTRODUCTION

As the General Elections of 2024 approach, the issue of electoral reforms in India gains momentum. India, being both the largest and one of the most populous democracies globally, places significant importance on elections. They are the cornerstone of Indian democracy, ensuring its sustenance and vibrancy. Despite several electoral reforms implemented over time, the process remains ongoing, emphasizing the continuous effort required to uphold free and fair elections in the country.

WHAT ARE ELECTORAL REFORMS? WHAT ELECTORAL REFORMS HAVE BEEN TAKEN IN INDIA?

Electoral reforms in India encompass changes and improvements made to the electoral system to uphold principles like clean politics, free and fair elections, and the selection of ideal legislators.

India has witnessed electoral reforms since its independence. Here's an overview of significant reforms categorized by timelines:

Major Electoral Reforms Before 1996:

- 1. Introduction of Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) in 1982:** EVMs were first used in the Kerala general election, gradually becoming the norm across the country by 2004.

2. Lowering of Voting Age in 1988: The voting age was reduced from 21 years to 18 years, encouraging greater youth participation in the electoral process.

3. Increase in the Number of Proposers in 1988: The number of proposers required for filing nomination papers to the Rajya Sabha and State Legislative Council was increased.

4. Anti-Booth Capturing Provisions in 1989: Measures were introduced to adjourn polls or countermand elections in cases of booth capturing.

5. Introduction of Elector's Photo Identity Card (EPIC) in 1993: The Election Commission began issuing EPICs for registered voters.

Major Electoral Reforms in 1996 (on the recommendations of the Dinesh Goswami Committee):

1. Listing of Names of Candidates: Candidates were categorized into political party, registered and unregistered party, and independent candidates.

2. Disqualification under Prevention of Insults to National Honour Act: A person convicted under the Prevention of Insults to National Honour Act of 1971 was disqualified from contesting elections to Parliament and State Legislature for six years.

3. Increase in the Number of Proposers: Nomination of a candidate in a constituency required 10 registered electors as proposers if not sponsored by a recognized political party.

4. Restriction on Contesting from More Than Two Constituencies: Candidates were restricted from contesting in more than two parliamentary/assembly constituencies or Rajya Sabha/State Legislative Council.

5. By-Elections: By-elections were mandated to be held within six months of a vacancy.

6. Introduction of Strict Prohibitions: Stringent prohibitions were imposed on the possession of arms and sale of liquor near polling areas.

Major Electoral Reforms After 1996:

1. Increase in the Number of Proposers and Seconders in 1997:

The number of proposers and seconders required for contesting the election to the President and Vice President was increased.

President: Raised from 10 to 50.

Vice President: Raised from 5 to 20.

2. Introduction of Postal Ballot in 1999:

Provision was made for voting through postal ballot under specific circumstances with the permission of the Election Commission, catering to certain groups.

Electoral Reforms in 2003:

1. Introduction of Proxy Voting:

A provision was made for voters from the Armed Forces to cast their votes through proxy.

2. Declaration of Criminal Antecedents and Assets:

Candidates were required to disclose information regarding criminal convictions, accusations, assets, and liabilities.

3. Free Supply of Electoral Rolls and Travel Exemptions:

The Election Commission mandated the free supply of electoral rolls and provided exemptions in traveling expenses for candidates.

4. Reporting Political Contributions:

Political parties were obligated to report any contributions exceeding ₹20,000 to the Election Commission for income tax relief.

5. Allocation of Time on Media:

The Election Commission allocated time on media and cable for each candidate to share their message.

6. Introduction of Braille Signage Features in EVM:

- ❑ Electoral Voting Machines (EVMs) were enhanced with Braille signage features for visually impaired voters.

ELECTORAL REFORMS SINCE 2003

1. Prohibition on Exit Polls in 2009:

- ❑ Exit polls were prohibited, and the publication of their results was restricted.

2. Time Limit for Submitting a Case for Disqualification in 2009:

- ❑ A three-month time limit was imposed for submitting cases of corrupt practice to the President for determining disqualification.

3. Increase in Security Deposit in 2009:

- ❑ The security deposit amount for candidates contesting Lok Sabha elections was raised from ₹10,000 to ₹25,000.

4. Registration of Indian Citizens Living Outside India in 2010:

- ❑ Indian citizens residing abroad were granted the right to register their names in parliamentary or assembly constituencies near their mentioned residence in the passport, ensuring their voting rights.

ELECTORAL REFORMS IN 2013

1. Introduction of Online Electoral Roll Application:

- ❑ The Election Commission enabled online submission of application forms for inclusion in the electoral roll, facilitating easier registration.

2. Addition of NOTA Option in EVMs:

- ❑ The Supreme Court of India directed the Election Commission to incorporate the “None of the Above” (NOTA) option in Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs), providing voters with the choice to reject all candidates.

3. Introduction of VVPAT:

- ❑ The Election Commission introduced Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) for verifying the votes cast by voters, enhancing the transparency and integrity of the electoral process.

4. Allowing Persons in Jail or Police Custody to Contest Elections:

- ❑ The Representation of the People Act, 1951, was amended to permit individuals in jail or police custody to contest elections.

5. Immediate Disqualification of Convicted MPs and MLAs:

- ❑ In the Lily Thomas case (2013), the Supreme Court ruled that convicted Members of Parliament (MPs) and Members of Legislative Assemblies (MLAs) would be immediately disqualified from holding membership without a three-month appeal period.

ELECTORAL REFORMS AFTER 2013

1. Increase in Election Expenditure in 2013:

- ❑ The government raised the maximum expenditure ceiling for Lok Sabha elections from ₹40,00,000 to ₹70,00,000. Similarly, in larger states, the assembly seats’ expenditure limit was increased from ₹16,00,000 to ₹28,00,000.

2. Inclusion of Candidate Photos on EVMs in 2015:

- ❑ The Election Commission mandated that EVMs display the candidate’s photo, name, and party symbol to prevent confusion among voters.

ELECTORAL BONDS IN 2017

1. Lowering the Ceiling on Cash Donations:

- ❑ The limit for anonymous cash donations to political parties by any individual was reduced from ₹20,000 to ₹2,000.

2. Lifting the Cap on Corporate Contributions:

- ❑ The restriction on corporate contributions, which was previously capped at 7.5% of the company's net profit over the past three financial years, was eliminated.

CHALLENGES IN CONDUCTING FREE AND FAIR ELECTIONS IN INDIA

1. Booth Capturing:

- ❑ Despite advancements, instances of violence and voter intimidation at polling booths persist, as seen in incidents like the violence during Bengal Panchayati Elections.

2. Criminalization of Politics:

- ❑ Political parties continue to field candidates with serious criminal records, despite measures by the Election Commission to disclose such information. Approximately 40% of sitting MPs have criminal cases against them, with 25% facing charges as serious as murder.

3. Violation of Model Code of Conduct:

- ❑ Candidates and political parties often flout the model code of conduct during elections, engaging in illegal activities such as the unauthorized use of public spaces, loudspeakers, and offering money for votes.

4. Electoral Finance:

- ❑ Laundered and black money remain significant sources of electoral finance, posing challenges to transparency. The Supreme Court recently struck down the Electoral Bond scheme due to concerns over funding transparency.

5. Electoral Overspending:

- ❑ Lack of expenditure limits for political parties allows candidates to overspend during elections, with expenses like those for star

campaigners not included in candidate expenditure calculations.

6. Use of Casteism and Communalism:

- ❑ Political parties frequently exploit casteism, communalism, and regionalism to secure votes, leading to social division among voters. Instances of hate speech during elections exacerbate these issues.

AIMS OF ELECTORAL REFORMS

1. Ensuring Free and Fair Elections (Article 324):

- ❑ Electoral reforms aim to combat electoral malpractices and uphold the principle of conducting elections in a free and fair manner, as outlined in Article 324 of the Constitution.

2. Enhancing Voter Participation:

- ❑ Electoral reforms strive to increase voter turnout and address issues such as voter apathy and accessibility challenges to polling booths.

3. Reducing the Influence of Money and Muscle Power:

- ❑ These reforms seek to curb the influence of money and muscle power in elections by regulating campaign finances and ensuring the safety of voters from coercion.

4. Encouraging Transparency and Accountability:

- ❑ Measures such as mandatory disclosure of candidates' criminal records and the use of technology for monitoring elections contribute to greater transparency and accountability in the electoral process.

5. Addressing Electoral Inequalities:

- ❑ Electoral reforms target the reduction of inequalities, such as the under-representation of women and marginalized communities, to ensure fair and inclusive representation in governance.

WAY FORWARD FOR ELECTORAL REFORMS

1. Implementation of EC Recommendations:

- The Electoral Commission's suggestions, such as implementing a one candidate per constituency rule and a lifetime ban on contesting elections after conviction, should be enacted to uphold the integrity of elections.

2. Advertisement Regulations:

- Prohibiting government advertisements six months prior to elections can prevent undue influence and ensure a level playing field for all candidates.

3. Criminalization of False Declarations:

- Making false declarations related to elections a punishable offense under the Representation of the People Act can deter candidates from resorting to deceitful practices.

4. Empowering the Election Commission:

- Granting rule-making authority to the Election Commission, rather than the Central

Government, can streamline electoral processes and ensure greater autonomy in decision-making.

5. Unified Electoral Rolls:

- Adopting common electoral rolls across elections conducted by both the Election Commission and State Election Commissions can enhance efficiency and accuracy in voter registration.

6. Strengthening Anti-defection Measures:

- Empowering the Election Commission in the disqualification process under the anti-defection law can safeguard against political defections and ensure stability in governance.

7. Exploring National Electoral Fund:

- Consideration of the National Electoral Fund as proposed by former Chief Election Commissioner T.S. Krishnamurthy could provide an alternative to state funding of elections, promoting transparency and accountability in political financing.

ANDAMAN AND NICOBAR- NOT JUST ANY OTHER ISLAND

RELEVANCE

□ Syllabus:

- **PSIR:** Planning and Economic Development
- **GS2:** India and its Neighborhood



INTRODUCTION

The significance of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands in both strategic and economic terms is gaining prominence within the corridors of power in New Delhi. This heightened attention is evident through the renewed emphasis on enhancing major military infrastructure in the region, including the revamping of airfields, jetties, and troop habitats. To address the holistic socio-economic development of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, the Government of India has previously established the Islands Development Agency (IDA) and a committee within NITI Aayog. These

initiatives underscore the growing recognition of the islands' strategic importance and the need for comprehensive development measures to unlock their economic potential.

HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY OF THE ISLAND

The Andaman and Nicobar Islands are located in the Bay of Bengal, closer to the Southeastern coast of India. The entire island chain, consisting of two groups - the Andaman Islands and the Nicobar Islands, spans an area of 8,249 square kilometers. Of the 836 islands, including islets and rocky outcrops, only 38 are permanently inhabited.

Governance of the islands is overseen by the Central Government of India through the Andaman and Nicobar Administration, which governs them as a single Union Territory.

The historical association of India with the Andaman and Nicobar Islands dates back to various significant events:

- 1. Post-1857 War of Independence:** The British established a penal colony in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, where they incarcerated many Indian revolutionaries and freedom fighters for life.
- 2. February 1942:** During World War II, the islands were occupied by the Japanese, who viewed them as a potential springboard for invading India after their capture of Singapore.
- 3. December 1943:** The islands saw a moment of liberation when Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose visited Port Blair and hoisted the Indian National Army (INA) tricolor flag.
- 4. 1945:** Following the Japanese surrender, the British reoccupied the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.
- 5. Independence:** On the eve of India's independence, the fate of the islands was uncertain. While the British Chiefs of Staff recommended retaining them as Crown possessions due to their strategic location, Prime Minister Clement Atlee decided to hand them over to India.
- 6. 1962:** In the years following independence, the islands experienced neglect from New Delhi, partly due to their dark symbolism associated with the penal colony and their remoteness. However, in 1962, concerns about security led to the deployment of a naval garrison after reports of a Chinese submarine sighting.
- 7. 2001:** In response to security challenges and the need for a unified command structure, India established its first joint and Unified operational

command, the Andaman Nicobar Command (ANC), in Port Blair, following a security review after the Kargil War.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE ANDAMAN AND NICOBAR ISLANDS

Geo-strategic and Geo-Political Significance:

- 1. Crucial Node for Peace and Security:** The strategic position of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands allows India to emerge as a key security provider in the Indo-Pacific region.
- 2. Enhanced Maritime Partnership:** The islands' location strengthens India's maritime partnerships with countries like the US, Japan, Australia, and France, facilitating joint exercises and cooperation.
- 3. Counterbalancing Chinese Influence:** India's military presence on the islands acts as a deterrent to growing Chinese influence, particularly in the Bay of Bengal and the Indian Ocean region.
- 4. Protection of Maritime Chokepoints:** By securing the Malacca Strait, the Andaman and Nicobar Islands play a crucial role in ensuring the safe passage of merchant ships, thus safeguarding global trade.

Geo-Economic Significance:

- 5. Mineral Deposits:** The islands offer significant potential for undersea hydrocarbon and mineral deposits, contributing to India's economic growth.
- 6. Tourism Potential:** The pristine beaches and natural beauty of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands attract tourists, offering opportunities for foreign direct investment (FDI) in the hospitality sector.
- 7. Maritime and Startup Hub:** Initiatives by NITI Aayog aim to develop the islands as a maritime and startup hub, fostering economic development and innovation.

Social Importance:

8. Cultural Diversity: Home to several indigenous tribes, the islands contribute to India's cultural diversity and serve as a repository of anthropological knowledge.

9. Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR): The islands serve as a base for India to undertake HADR operations, providing assistance during natural disasters, medical emergencies, and search and rescue operations in the Indo-Pacific region.

Overall, the Andaman and Nicobar Islands hold immense strategic, economic, and social significance for India, playing a crucial role in shaping its regional influence and fostering development.

CHALLENGES FACED BY ANDAMAN AND NICOBAR ISLANDS

1. Environmental Concerns: Development projects can endanger the islands' unique flora and fauna, leading to ecological imbalance and loss of biodiversity.

2. Geopolitical Insecurity: The presence of Chinese military facilities in the vicinity poses a threat to India's maritime security and blue economy.

3. Maritime Challenges: Illegal migration, human trafficking, poaching, and other maritime threats undermine the islands' security and stability.

4. Geological Vulnerability: The islands are prone to natural disasters like earthquakes and tsunamis, which can devastate communities and infrastructure.

5. Lack of Coordination: Development efforts require coordination among various ministries, departments, and agencies, leading to administrative challenges and delays.

6. Encroachment in Tribal Areas: Development initiatives often encroach upon tribal lands,

leading to conflicts and displacement of indigenous communities.

7. Socio-economic Challenges: Influx of settlers and migrants, coupled with high cost of living and limited employment opportunities, create socio-economic disparities and tensions among the local population.

Addressing these challenges requires comprehensive planning, sustainable development practices, and inclusive policies that prioritize environmental conservation, indigenous rights, and socio-economic well-being.

GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES FOR THE ANDAMAN ISLANDS

1. Japan's Overseas Development Assistance: Japan approved a USD 265 crore grant aid for development projects in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands in 2021.

2. NITI Aayog's Project for Great Nicobar: This project aims to develop an international container transshipment terminal, an airport, a power plant, and a township on Great Nicobar Island.

3. NITI Aayog's Proposal for Little Andaman: The plan involves the development of a new greenfield coastal city on Little Andaman Island, envisioning it as a competitor to cities like Singapore and Hong Kong.

4. Modernisation of Defence Infrastructure: Initiatives include the establishment of a modern hangar and dispersal system at INS Utkrosh in Port Blair, as well as the development of Naval Communication Network (NCN) Centres at various locations to enhance communication and operational capabilities.

5. Submarine Cable Connectivity to Andaman & Nicobar Islands (CANI): A 2300 km submarine Optical Fibre Cable (OFC) is being laid to connect the Andaman & Nicobar Islands to the

mainland, thereby improving connectivity and communication infrastructure.

WAY FORWARD

- 1. Embrace Sustainable Development:** Ensure that development activities in the Andaman and Nicobar Region align with the Sustainable Island Development Framework. Mandate Environmental and Social Impact Assessments for all projects to mitigate negative impacts. Encourage planned habitation of uninhabited islands by offering incentives like free or subsidized land to promote eco-friendly entrepreneurial ventures.
- 2. Strengthen Island Security:** Develop a comprehensive Capability Development Plan for the Andaman and Nicobar Command, Coast Guard, and Andaman Police to establish an effective Island Security Model. Enhance

maritime security to effectively monitor and secure the vast area surrounding the islands.

- 3. Accelerate Development Initiatives:** Expedite socio-economic and infrastructural development projects to ensure holistic progress in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. Focus on enhancing infrastructure, especially in the southern group of islands strategically positioned along key shipping routes, to bolster India's maritime economy.
- 4. Establish Maritime Dominance:** Transform the Andaman Islands into a formidable maritime bastion to extend India's defensive perimeter and enhance its ability to project power and foster diplomatic relations with maritime neighbors. Strengthening maritime capabilities will contribute to regional stability and security.



MAINS PRACTICE QUESTIONS

Q. Discuss the effects of colonial legacy in India's foreign Policy.

The concept of foreign policy is closely tied to a nation's sovereignty, with the formulation of foreign policy being the key function that distinguishes a sovereign country from a colony. While aspects of Indian polity such as governance, constitution, and administration have clear connections to British India, foreign policy is often seen as unrelated to the foreign policy of colonial India.

According to C. Raja Mohan, the notion that British rule greatly influenced independent India's foreign policy is rooted in the fact that modern India's political geography, which shapes its foreign policy, is inherited from the British Raj.

C. Raja Mohan argues that India's insistence on non-interference by external powers in the internal and international affairs of South Asia is a direct continuation of the Raj's determination to prevent other great powers from encroaching upon the empire constructed by British rule in India. He suggests that China perceived Nehru's policy towards Tibet as an extension of British policy.

Additionally, India's strong commitment to anti-imperialism, opposition to oppression, sympathy for the struggle against colonialism in the Asian-African community, and support for developing countries are all seen as influenced by India's historical struggle against British imperialism.

C. Raja Mohan goes further to claim that independent India's foreign policy exhibits institutional continuity with the Raj legacy. He traces the modern "Foreign Office" back to 1783 when the "Secret and Political Department" was established by the East India Company to handle relations with various kingdoms in the Indian subcontinent. Furthermore, the Indian Foreign Service is considered the successor of the colonial "Indian Political Service" established in 1937.

Therefore, due to the evident continuity in certain aspects of India's foreign policy, it is argued that considering 1947 as the birth of Indian foreign policy misplaces the origins of India's foreign policy.

Q. Discuss new world order in the context of Asia.

Over the past few decades, the Asia-Pacific region has become the new center of gravity for the global economy, surpassing the Atlantic. Asia is now home to major economies such as China and Japan, ranking as the second and third largest economies in the world. India and China, in particular, have emerged as the fastest growing large economies globally, and they are expected to continue driving global economic growth. The relative political stability and social cohesion in Asia's major powers have also enabled them to exert increasing influence in regional and global affairs.

In terms of economic size, India already ranks as the world's third-largest economy based on purchasing power parity (PPP), and it is projected to overtake the UK and become the fifth-largest economy in nominal terms. Additionally, countries like South Korea, Australia, Taiwan, and the ASEAN nations collectively contribute significantly to the region's economic strength.

The rise of Asia as a global power center signifies the reality of an Asian world order. A multipolar world order cannot exist without a multipolar Asia. An Asian hegemon would naturally aspire to global hegemony. While the United States remains the most dominant military power in Asia, its economic influence in the region has diminished as China's has grown. However, it is worth noting that projecting China's current

growth rate linearly into the future may not be realistic, as historical patterns suggest slowdowns in major economies.

China, despite its economic and military capabilities, faces challenges as a political entity. The rising insecurity within its political leadership contrasts with the overconfidence and arrogance of power it often portrays. Furthermore, China's historical tendency towards insularity conflicts with the interconnected nature of the contemporary world, which demands a more cosmopolitan approach from any aspiring global power.

In reality, neither a China-centric Asia nor a world centered solely around China is emerging. China may continue to expand its economic and military strength and potentially become the most powerful country globally, but the emerging world will still consist of several substantial powers, both old and new, including those in Asia. The future global landscape will likely be characterized by the coexistence and competition among multiple influential players.

Q. Elaborate on the philosophical basis of grassroots democracy.

Grassroots democracy is a form of democratic governance that emphasizes the participation and empowerment of ordinary citizens in decision-making processes at the local level. It is based on the belief that political power should be decentralized and that individuals and communities should have a direct say in the issues that affect their lives. Several philosophical ideas have influenced the concept of grassroots democracy, including those put forth by Rousseau, Aristotle, MN Roy, Vinoba Bhave, and Gandhi. Let's explore each of these in more detail:

- 1. Rousseau's Idea of General Will:** Jean-Jacques Rousseau, an influential 18th-century philosopher, emphasized the concept of the "general will" in his work "The Social Contract." According to Rousseau, the general will represents the collective interest and common good of the community as a whole, transcending individual and factional interests. In grassroots democracy, the idea of the general will suggests that decisions and policies should be made through inclusive and participatory processes that take into account the interests and concerns of all members of society.
- 2. Aristotle's Civic Republicanism:** Aristotle, an ancient Greek philosopher, developed the concept of civic republicanism, which highlights the importance of active citizenship and the common good. He argued that citizens should actively participate in the affairs of the state and strive to promote the well-being of the community. In grassroots democracy, Aristotle's ideas find resonance in the emphasis on civic engagement, public deliberation, and collective decision-making at the local level.
- 3. MN Roy's Idea of Radical Democracy:** MN Roy, an Indian philosopher and political activist, advocated for the idea of radical democracy. He argued that true democracy should go beyond mere political representation and extend to economic and social realms as well. Roy believed in the empowerment of marginalized sections of society and called for the redistribution of wealth and power. In the context of grassroots democracy, Roy's ideas emphasize the need for inclusivity, social justice, and equal participation of all citizens in decision-making processes.
- 4. Vinoba Bhave's Idea of Antyodaya:** Vinoba Bhave, a prominent Indian social reformer, championed the concept of Antyodaya, which translates to "upliftment of the last person" or "the welfare of the poorest of the poor." Bhave believed in the importance of decentralized governance and self-sufficiency at the local level. In grassroots democracy, the idea of Antyodaya underscores the need to prioritize the needs and concerns of the most vulnerable and marginalized members of society, ensuring their active participation in decision-making processes.

5. Gandhi's Idea of Swaraj Coupled with Gram Swaraj: Mahatma Gandhi, the leader of India's independence movement, advocated for the concept of Swaraj, which means self-rule or self-governance. Gandhi envisioned a society where individuals would have the freedom to govern themselves and communities would have the autonomy to make decisions that affect them directly. He emphasized the importance of decentralized village-level governance, known as Gram Swaraj, where communities would have control over their own affairs. In grassroots democracy, Gandhi's ideas highlight the significance of local self-governance, participatory decision-making, and the empowerment of individuals and communities.

These philosophical foundations provide intellectual and ethical support to grassroots democracy by promoting values such as equality, participation, social justice, and community empowerment. They emphasize the importance of involving citizens in decision-making processes and nurturing a sense of collective responsibility and solidarity within society. By incorporating these ideas, grassroots democracy seeks to create a more inclusive and egalitarian system of governance that addresses the needs and aspirations of all members of society, particularly those at the grassroots level.

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.

SCHOLAR DIGEST: KNOW YOUR SCHOLARS

HAMZA ALVI



INTRODUCTION

Hamza Alvi was a Pakistani Marxist Sociologist who is known for his analysis of State in Post Colonial Societies. His most notable contribution is the concept of **Overdeveloped State** which he gave in context of state of Pakistan.

STATE IN POST COLONIAL SOCIETIES: CONCEPT OF OVERDEVELOPED STATE

Hamza Alvi, a neo-Marxist scholar, employed a structural approach to analyze the nature of the state in Pakistan. Interestingly, his theory can be applied beyond Pakistan and is equally valuable for understanding the state in other third-world countries. Alvi firmly rejected the instrumentalist approach when it comes to third-world nations, as he believed it was only applicable to fully developed capitalist Western states.

According to Alvi, there exists a significant structural imbalance between the political and social development within postcolonial states. This imbalance implies that the political and socio-economic structures have not progressed in harmony. Consequently, these states often possess highly developed political apparatuses while their socio-economic structures remain in transition from primitive to modern. In essence, the political structure, or the state, is disproportionately advanced compared to the socio-economic framework. Conversely, in Western countries, there is a seamless alignment between the political and socio-economic systems because both economic and political development evolved concurrently.

Alvi argues that this disparity in post-colonial states can be attributed to their colonial history. Unlike Western nations, where capitalist states naturally developed alongside the emergence of indigenous bourgeois classes, post-colonial societies inherited modern states imposed by imperial powers upon pre-modern societies. These states were primarily designed to serve the colonial masters rather than the indigenous populations. Consequently, states in these regions wield more power and enjoy greater immunity than their Western counterparts.

Regarding Pakistan specifically, Alvi contends that the state assumes the form of a military-bureaucratic oligarchy, where executive power is concentrated in the hands of a permanent ruling class. He suggests that states in such societies possess a distinct relative autonomy, allowing them to act as mediators or

equilibrium maintainers among various classes, including the indigenous bourgeoisie, individual classes, feudal elites, and urban bourgeoisie.

CRITICISM OF OVERDEVELOPED STATE CONCEPT OF ALVI

Critics of Alavi's theory on the overdeveloped state argue that his analysis simplifies the state's role to a mere concentration of bureaucrats and military personnel. John Saul, in particular, highlights a critical aspect missing in Alavi's analysis, which is the ideological dimension. Saul contends that Alavi's perspective overlooks the essential function of ideology in maintaining the state's role in upholding the capitalist system.

ROBERT GILPIN



Robert Gilpin was a prominent American political scientist known for his significant contributions to the field of international relations, particularly in the study of political economy and global politics. Born on October 2, 1930, Gilpin's academic career spanned several decades, during which he produced influential works that continue to shape scholarly debates and understanding of international relations theory.

One of Gilpin's most notable contributions to the field was his concept of the "hegemonic stability theory." This theory, outlined in his seminal work "War and Change in World Politics," posits that the stability of the international system is often maintained by a dominant hegemon—a powerful state that provides leadership, stability, and order to the global economy. According to Gilpin, hegemonic stability is essential for ensuring economic openness, trade liberalization, and overall stability in the international system. He argued that periods of hegemonic decline or transition are often characterized by increased competition, protectionism, and geopolitical tensions.

Gilpin's analysis of hegemonic stability has been instrumental in shaping debates about the role of great powers in the international system and the dynamics of global economic governance. His work has influenced scholars, policymakers, and practitioners alike, providing valuable insights into the relationship between economic power, political influence, and international order.

In addition to his contributions to hegemonic stability theory, Gilpin also made significant contributions to the study of international political economy. His book "The Political Economy of International Relations" is considered a seminal work in the field, offering a comprehensive analysis of the complex interplay between

economics and politics in the international arena. In this work, Gilpin explores how states and non-state actors navigate economic issues, such as trade, finance, and development, within the broader context of global power dynamics and geopolitical competition.

Gilpin's interdisciplinary approach to the study of international relations, drawing on insights from political science, economics, and history, has been praised for its analytical rigor and theoretical sophistication. His work continues to inspire scholars to explore the multifaceted nature of global politics and the complex interactions between states, markets, and societies in an interconnected world.

Beyond his academic contributions, Gilpin was also a respected educator and mentor, influencing generations of students and scholars through his teaching and mentorship. He held various academic positions throughout his career, including professorships at Princeton University and the University of Denver, where he made significant contributions to the development of international relations as a discipline.

Robert Gilpin's legacy as a pioneering scholar in the field of international relations continues to endure, with his work serving as a foundation for further research and inquiry into the complexities of global politics and economics. His insights into hegemonic stability, international political economy, and the nature of power in world politics have left an indelible mark on the study of international relations and continue to shape our understanding of the dynamics of the international system.

KENICHI OHMAE



Kenichi Ohmae is a renowned Japanese management consultant, author, and strategist known for his influential work in the field of business strategy and globalization. Born on February 21, 1943, Ohmae has been a leading figure in shaping contemporary thinking on corporate strategy, competitive advantage, and international business.

Ohmae rose to prominence in the 1980s and 1990s as a key proponent of the concept of "The Borderless World." In his seminal book of the same name, published in 1990, Ohmae argued that advances in technology, telecommunications, and transportation were eroding traditional barriers to trade and investment, leading to the emergence of a new global economy characterized by interconnectedness and interdependence. According to Ohmae, in this borderless world, national borders are becoming increasingly irrelevant, and companies must adapt to a new reality where competition is truly global.

One of Ohmae's central insights was the importance of strategic thinking and flexibility in navigating the complexities of the global marketplace. He emphasized the need for companies to focus on their core competencies, leverage their strengths, and continuously innovate in order to maintain a competitive edge in an increasingly dynamic and interconnected world. Ohmae's ideas have had a profound impact on corporate strategy, influencing how companies approach international expansion, market positioning, and strategic partnerships.

Ohmae's work also extended beyond the realm of business strategy to encompass broader issues of economic development and public policy. He advocated for a more decentralized approach to economic management, arguing that regional economies should have greater autonomy and flexibility to respond to local conditions and challenges. Ohmae's ideas on regionalism and decentralization have been influential in shaping debates about economic governance and regional integration.

In addition to his work as a management consultant and strategist, Ohmae has authored numerous books and articles on a wide range of topics, including globalization, innovation, and leadership. His writings are characterized by their clarity, depth of insight, and practical relevance, making them accessible to both academics and practitioners alike. Ohmae's ability to distill complex ideas into simple, actionable principles has made him a highly sought-after advisor and speaker on issues related to business and economics.

Throughout his career, Ohmae has been a vocal advocate for bold, forward-thinking approaches to business and management. He has encouraged companies to embrace change, take calculated risks, and constantly adapt to evolving market conditions. Ohmae's ideas have resonated with executives and entrepreneurs around the world, inspiring them to think creatively, act decisively, and strive for excellence in everything they do.

In recognition of his contributions to the field of management and business strategy, Ohmae has received numerous awards and honors throughout his career. He continues to be actively involved in consulting, writing, and speaking engagements, sharing his insights and expertise with audiences around the globe. Ohmae's enduring legacy as a visionary thinker and strategic advisor underscores the importance of innovation, adaptability, and strategic vision in an ever-changing world.

JACQUES DERRIDA: DECONSTRUCTION AND THE CRITIQUE OF BINARY THINKING



INTRODUCTION

Jacques Derrida, a prominent figure in 20th-century philosophy, revolutionised the field with his **concept of deconstruction**. Through his critical approach to language, meaning, and interpretation, Derrida challenged traditional notions of truth, presence, and fixed meanings. This article explores Derrida's main ideas, including **deconstruction, différance, and the critique of binary oppositions**, and their lasting impact on philosophy, literary theory, and cultural studies.

DECONSTRUCTION AND THE UNRAVELLING OF BINARY THINKING

At the heart of Derrida's philosophy is the **concept of deconstruction**, which seeks to expose and disrupt the underlying assumptions and **hierarchical structures** within texts and discourses. Deconstruction challenges the notion of fixed meanings and binary oppositions by revealing the inherent instability and fluidity of language. Derrida argues that language is inherently fragmented, and meaning is constructed through a web of interconnected signs, rather than fixed definitions.

DIFFÉRANCE AND THE PLAY OF SIGNIFIERS

A key concept in Derrida's work is **différance**, a term he coined to emphasize the dual nature of language. Différance denotes the simultaneous deferral and difference inherent in signification. According to Derrida, **meaning is deferred in language**, as signs continually refer to other signs, creating an infinite chain of signifiers. This deferral undermines the notion of fixed meanings and invites a constant play of interpretation and reinterpretation.

CRITIQUE OF BINARY OPPOSITIONS AND LOGOCENTRISM

Derrida critiques the traditional Western philosophical tradition, which relies heavily on binary oppositions such as good/evil, presence/absence, and male/female. He argues that these dichotomies are not fixed and stable, but rather constructed through hierarchical and exclusionary processes. Derrida exposes the inherent biases and power dynamics embedded within binary thinking, challenging the privileging of one term over the other.

DECONSTRUCTION AND TEXTUAL ANALYSIS

Derrida's deconstructive approach extends beyond philosophy and infiltrates literary theory and cultural studies. Deconstruction offers a method for analyzing texts by uncovering the multiple meanings, contradictions, and tensions within them. It highlights the interplay between the explicit and implicit, the intended and unintended, and the conscious and unconscious aspects of a text, revealing the complexity and indeterminacy of meaning.

LEGACY AND CRITICISMS

Derrida's ideas have had a profound impact on various fields, including philosophy, literary theory, and cultural studies. His emphasis on the decentering of meaning, the critique of binary oppositions, and the play of signifiers has opened up new avenues of inquiry and challenged established paradigms. However, Derrida's work has **faced criticism for its perceived obscurity and its potential to undermine foundational concepts of truth and knowledge**. Critics argue that deconstruction's emphasis on the indeterminacy of meaning can lead to a nihilistic stance and a rejection of objective understanding.

CONCLUSION

Jacques Derrida's concept of deconstruction has reshaped our understanding of language, interpretation, and meaning. Through his critique of binary thinking and the play of signifiers, Derrida invites us to question fixed meanings and embrace the inherent complexity and ambiguity of texts. His legacy continues to inspire critical thinking and challenge established paradigms in philosophy and cultural studies.



ENRICH YOUR ANSWER

Q. Is it possible to bring together the perspective of Gandhi and Ambedkar on modern India. In what ways do their perspectives differ and in what aspects can it be reconciled?

Q: Is it possible to bring together the perspectives of Gandhi and Ambedkar on modern India. In what ways do their perspective differ and in what aspect can it be reconciled.

Approach

Intro: Upendra Baxi → Understanding Gandhi is incomplete without understanding relation between Gandhi's and Ambedkar's views.

Body:

(A) Mention the differences in perspectives.

- On the issue of caste.
- On Varna System.
- On Path of development
- On method of social change.

(B) In what aspects their perspectives be reconciled.

- both shared vision of social justice.
- both supported secular state.
- both believed in social harmony, bridging gaps by compromises, avoiding conflicts.

Conclusion: Considering contemporary social movements which has lost emancipatory zeal, there is need to revisit the ideas of Gandhi and Ambedkar.

Q. Examine communitarian critique of Rawls theory of Justice.

Introduction:

→ Start with key tenets of Rawlsian theory:

- i) Individualism
- ii) Original position
- iii) Justice as fairness
- iv) Veil of ignorance

→ Mention Rawls book - "A theory of Justice"

→ Communitarian critique of key tenets

→ use Michael Sandel

↳ book - Liberalism & the limits of justice "

→ Michael Walzer

↳ book → "spheres of justice"

Conclusion

→ Rawls accepted reasonable pluralism as pre-condition in book 'Political Liberalism'

→ gave concept of overlapping consensus.

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

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

→ Golokhnath Case 1967

→ 24th Constitutional Amendment Act 1971

→ Keswanand Bhardi 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.

Q. Analyse the role of the election commission towards electoral reforms.

Q → Analyse the role of Election Commission towards electoral reforms.

Approach of Answer

(Intro): Briefly write about Election Commission

(Body)

Write about positive role played by ECI towards electoral reforms.

- eg → Introduction of EVM's.
- Launch of website for information sharing
- Computerisation of Electoral rolls 1998
- Introduction of VVPAT.
- Introduction of NOTA in 2014
- Recently launched SVEEP for voter's education.

What more can be done

- ECI be given rule making power under RPA
- ECI be given more powers than Model Code of Conduct.

Conclusion

Election reforms are mother of all reforms and should be given prime importance.

PRELIMS PRACTICE QUESTIONS

1. Which one of the following reflects the nicest, appropriate relationship between law and liberty?
 - (a) If there are more laws, there is less liberty.
 - (b) If there are no laws, there is no liberty.
 - (c) If there is liberty, laws have to be made by the people.
 - (d) If laws are changed too often, liberty is in danger.
2. Which of the following are regarded as the main features of the "Rule of Law" ?
 1. Limitation of powers
 2. Equality before law
 3. People's responsibility to the Government
 4. Liberty and civil rights

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

 - (a) 1 and 3 only
 - (b) 2 and 4 only
 - (c) 1, 2 and 4 only
 - (d) 1, 2, 3 and 4
3. Right to Privacy is protected as an intrinsic part of Right to Life and Personal Liberty. Which of the following in the Constitution of India correctly and appropriately imply the above statement?
 - (a) Article 14 and the provisions under the 42nd Amendment to the Constitution
 - (b) Article 17 and the Directive Principles of State Policy in Part IV
 - (c) Article 21 and the freedoms guaranteed in Part. III
 - (d) Article 24 and the provisions under the 44th Amendment to the Constitution
4. Consider the following statements :
 1. The 44th Amendment to the Constitution of India introduced an Article placing the election of the Prime Minister beyond judicial review.
 2. The Supreme Court of India struck down the 99th Amendment to the Constitution of India as being violative of the independence of the judiciary.

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
5. Which of the following initiatives has been undertaken by India to promote the international use of the Indian Rupee (INR)?
 - (a) Establishment of the International Financial Services Centre (IFSC).
 - (b) Adoption of a fixed exchange rate regime for the INR.
 - (c) Imposing strict capital controls to limit INR flows across borders.
 - (d) Encouraging the use of foreign currencies for trade transactions.
6. The Cauvery River dispute primarily involves which Indian states, each vying for a fair share of its waters?
 - (a) Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka
 - (b) Karnataka and Tamil Nadu
 - (c) Tamil Nadu and Kerala
 - (d) Kerala and Karnataka
7. The Election Commission of India consists of how many members, including the Chief Election Commissioner?
 - (a) One
 - (b) Two
 - (c) Three
 - (d) Four

- 8. Which article of the Indian Constitution outlines the provisions for the Election Commission of India?**
- (a) Article 320 (b) Article 340
(c) Article 324 (d) Article 330
- 9. Which Schedule of the Constitution of India contains : Special provisions for the administration and control of Scheduled Areas in several States?**
- (a) Third (b) Fifth
(c) Seventh (d) Ninth
- 10. Under which one of the following Constitution Amendment Acts, four languages were added to the list of languages under the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution of India, thereby raising their number to 22?**
- (a) Constitution (Ninetieth Amendment) Act (b) Constitution (Ninety-first Amendment) Act
(c) Constitution (Ninety-second Amendment) Act (d) Constitution (Ninety-third Amendment) Act
- 11. Which one of the following Constitutional Amendments states that the total number of Ministers, including the Prime Minister, in the Council of Minister shall not exceed fifteen percent of the total number of members of the House of the People?**
- (a) 90th (b) 91st
(c) 92nd (d) 93rd
- 12. With reference to the Constitution of India, consider the following :**
1. Fundamental Rights
 2. Fundamental Duties
 3. Directive Principles of the State Policy
- Which of the above provisions of the Constitution of India is/are fulfilled by the National Social Assistance Programme launched by the government of India?**
- (a) 1 only (b) 3 only
(c) 1 and 3 only (d) 1, 2 and 3
- 13. Which of the following are envisaged by the Right against Exploitation in the Constitution of India?**
1. Prohibition of traffic in human beings and forced labour
 2. Abolition of untouchability
 3. Protection of the interests of minorities
 4. Prohibition of employment of children in factories and mines
- Select the correct answer using the code given below:**
- (a) 1, 2 and 4 only (b) 2, 3 and 4 only
(c) 1 and 4 only (d) 1, 2, 3 and 4
- 14. Which one of the following statements is correct?**
- (a) Rights are claims of the State against the citizens.
(b) Rights are privileges which are incorporated in the Constitution of a State.
(c) Rights are claims of the citizens against the State.
(d) Rights are privileges of a few citizens against the many.
- 15. In the context of India, which one of the following is the correct relationship between Rights and Duties?**
- (a) Rights are correlative with Duties.
(b) Rights are personal and hence independent of society and Duties.
(c) Rights, not Duties, are important for the advancement of the personality of the citizen.
(d) Duties, not Rights, are important for the stability of the State.

16. Who/Which of the following is the custodian of the Constitution of India?

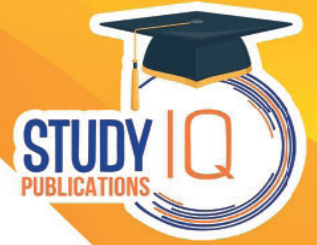
- (a) The President of India (b) The Prime Minister of India
(c) The Lok Sabha Secretariat (d) The Supreme court of India

Answers

1. (b)
2. (c)
3. (c)
4. (b)
5. (a) Establishment of the International Financial Services Centre (IFSC)
6. (b) Karnataka and Tamil Nadu
7. (c) Three
8. (c) Article 324
9. (b) Fifth schedule relates to the control and administration of scheduled areas in states other than Tripura, Assam, Meghalaya and Mizoram. While Sixth Schedule deals with administration and control of tribal areas in the state of Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram and Tripura.
10. (c) 92nd Amendment Act 2003 added Bodo, Santhali, Maithali and Dogri languages in the 8th Schedule of the Constitution. Originally there were 14 languages in the 8th schedule. 21st amendment act added Sindhi language. 71st amendment act added Konkani, Manipuri and Nepali languages.
11. (b) The above provision has been added by 91st Constitutional Amendment Act 2003.
12. (b) The National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP) which came into effect from 15th August, 1995 represents a significant step towards the fulfillment of the Directive Principles in Article 41 (Right to Work, to Education and to Public Assistance in certain cases) of the Constitution.
13. (c)
14. (c) New NCERT, Std. 11, Political Theory Chapter 5: Rights, Page 72. Through these rights, people make demands upon the state. So, "C" is the most fitting answer.
15. (a) Rights and duties are correlative and inseparable, hence A is the answer.
16. (d) The Supreme Court of India is the apex court in India. As stated by the Indian Constitution, the function of the Supreme Court of India is that of the custodian of the Constitution.

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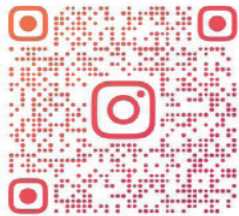
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