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INDUS WATER TREATY

RELEVANCE

❒ **Syllabus:**

- **PSIR:** India and South Asia: (a) Regional Co-operation
- **GS2:** India and its Neighborhood- Relations

INDUS WATERS TREATY (IWT)

INTRODUCTION

The Indus Water Treaty, negotiated in 1960 between India and Pakistan, is a significant transboundary water-sharing mechanism. However, disagreements have persisted between the two nations over the treaty.

India called for amendments to the treaty last year, expressing dissatisfaction with the dispute resolution process and attributing issues to Pakistan's continued "intransigence" in implementing the treaty. Pakistan, on the other hand, has raised objections regarding India's construction of the Kishenganga and Ratle hydroelectric projects.

HISTORY BEHIND THE INTRODUCTION OF THE INDUS WATER TREATY

Before partition, the six rivers of the Indus basin (Indus, Sutlej, Beas, Ravi, Jhelum, and Chenab), originating in the Himalayas/Tibet, formed a common network for both India and Pakistan.

At the Time of Partition The partition of India raised questions about the distribution of water between the two nations. Since the rivers flowed from India, Pakistan felt threatened by the potential control of river waters by India.

Inter-Dominion Accord (May 4, 1948) The Inter-Dominion Accord of May 4, 1948, stipulated that India would release sufficient water to

Pakistan in exchange for annual payments from Pakistan. However, this arrangement soon proved problematic, necessitating the search for an alternative solution.

Indus Water Treaty 1960 India and Pakistan signed the Indus Water Treaty in 1960, facilitated by the World Bank. The treaty provided specific details on the distribution of water between the two nations.

MAIN PROVISIONS OF THE INDUS WATER TREATY

1. **Water Allocation**
   - The treaty allocated the three eastern rivers (Ravi, Beas, and Sutlej) to India.
   - The three western rivers (Indus, Jhelum, and Chenab) were allocated to Pakistan.
2. **Usage Rights**
   - India was granted rights to use the waters of the western rivers for non-consumptive uses such as navigation, power generation, and agriculture, provided it does not affect the flow of water to Pakistan.
3. **Construction and Projects**
   - The treaty allowed India to construct storage works on the western rivers up to a cumulative volume of 3.6 million acre-feet and limited agricultural use from these rivers.
   - Pakistan was allowed to construct projects on the western rivers, with the stipulation that these should not interfere with the flow of water to India.
4. **Dispute Resolution Mechanism**
   - The treaty established a Permanent Indus Commission, consisting of one commissioner from each country, to oversee implementation and resolve disputes.
   - Disputes unresolved by the commission could be referred to a neutral expert or the International Court of Arbitration.
5. **Financial Provisions**
   - India agreed to provide financial assistance for the construction of replacement canals and storage facilities for Pakistan to compensate for the water allocated to India.
6. **Monitoring and Data Exchange**
   - Both countries agreed to exchange data and cooperate in monitoring the flows of the rivers to ensure adherence to the treaty's provisions.

MAIN PROVISIONS OF THE INDUS WATER TREATY

Eastern Rivers with India

- All waters of the three eastern rivers—Ravi, Sutlej, and Beas (with a mean annual flow of 33 Million Acre-feet (MAF))—are allocated to India for exclusive use.

Western Rivers with Pakistan

- Pakistan has control over the three western rivers—Chenab, Indus, and Jhelum (with a mean annual flow of 80 Million Acre-feet (MAF)).

Western River Water Utilization Permitted for India

- **Limited Irrigation Use**: India is allowed to use the waters of the western rivers for limited irrigation purposes.
- **Non-consumptive Use**: India can use the waters for applications such as power generation and navigation. This includes the generation of hydroelectricity through run-of-the-river projects (without storing water) on the western rivers, subject to specific criteria for design and operation.
- **Storage Level Permitted**: India is permitted to store up to 3.75 MAF of water from the western rivers for conservation and flood storage purposes.

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Water Division Ratio

- The treaty allocates 20% of the water from the Indus River System to India and the remaining 80% to Pakistan.

Dispute Resolution Mechanism

- The Indus Water Treaty provides a three-step mechanism for resolving disputes:

1. **Permanent Commission**: Disputes can be resolved at the Permanent Commission or taken up at the inter-government level.
2. **Neutral Expert (NE)**: For unresolved questions or 'differences' between the countries on water-sharing, either party can approach the World Bank to appoint a Neutral Expert (NE) to make a decision.
3. **Court of Arbitration**: If either party is dissatisfied with the Neutral Expert's decision or in cases of 'disputes' regarding the interpretation and extent of the treaty, matters can be referred to a Court of Arbitration.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE INDUS WATER TREATY

1. **Only Cross-Border Water Sharing Treaty in Asia**:
   - The Indus Water Treaty is unique as it stands as the only cross-border water-sharing agreement between two nations in Asia.
2. **Generous Towards Lower Riparian State**:
   - The treaty is notable for compelling an upper riparian state (India) to defer to the interests of a downstream state (Pakistan). Pakistan receives 80% of the river water system, a volume significantly greater than other international water-sharing agreements, such as the 1944 pact between the US and Mexico.
3. **Passed the Crisis Test**:
   - The Permanent Commission, part of the treaty's dispute resolution mechanism, has continued to meet even during periods of war between India and Pakistan (1965 and 1971), underscoring the treaty's resilience.
4. **India's Generosity**:
   - Despite facing multiple terrorist attacks, India has chosen not to invoke the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties to withdraw from the Indus Water Treaty, showcasing India's commitment to trans-boundary river agreements.
5. **Successful Model**:
   - The Indus Water Treaty serves as a successful model of cooperation, demonstrating how two rival countries can manage shared water resources peacefully.

CONCERNS WITH THE INDUS WATER TREATY

India's Concerns:

1. **Most Generous Treaty**:
   - The treaty has been criticized for its unequal sharing of waters, with India allotted only 20% of the resources.
2. **Prevents India from Building Storage Systems on Western Rivers**:
   - Pakistan has frequently blocked India's attempts to construct storage systems on Western Rivers, even though such projects are permitted under specific conditions by the treaty.
3. **Dispute Over India's Hydroelectric Projects**:
   - Disputes over projects like Kishenganga and Ratle have intensified, with Pakistan bypassing treaty-compliant proceedings and seeking arbitration directly at The Hague.
4. **Climate Change Impact**:
   - The Indus basin, ranked as the world's second most over-stressed aquifer by NASA in 2015, is heavily impacted by climate change. India seeks amendments to the treaty to address these issues.

5. **Economic Loss to Indian States**:
   - States in the Indus River Basin, particularly Jammu & Kashmir, suffer significant economic losses due to the treaty. Reports indicate losses amounting to hundreds of millions annually.

Pakistan's Concerns:

1. **Lower Riparian Concerns**:
   - As a downstream state, Pakistan fears that India's infrastructure projects will reduce downstream water flows.
2. **Accusations of 'Water Terrorism'**:
   - Pakistan has accused India of "water terrorism" for projects like the Shahpurkandi barrage, despite their compliance with the IWT.
3. **Environmental Flow Issues**:
   - Pakistan insists on maintaining environmental flows, supported by the 2013 Permanent Court of Arbitration ruling on India's obligation to release flows downstream of the Kishanganga project.

CONCERNS WITH TERMINATION OR ABROGATION OF THE IWT

1. **Escalation of Geopolitical Tensions**:
   - Renegotiating or terminating the treaty could escalate political tensions and increase the risk of water conflicts between nuclear-armed neighbors.
2. **Threat to Regional Stability**:
   - Instability in the IWT could affect water cooperation in the wider region, impacting India, Pakistan, China, and Afghanistan.
3. **Damage to India's International Standing**:
   - Unilaterally withdrawing from the treaty could harm India's image as a responsible global power and complicate future water treaty negotiations with other countries.

WAY FORWARD

1. **Integration of Ecological Perspectives**:
   - Incorporate Environmental Flows (EF) to sustain Indus Valley ecosystems, as recommended by the Brisbane Declaration and the 2013 Permanent Court of Arbitration ruling on Kishanganga.
2. **Recognition of Climate Change Impacts**:
   - Develop strategies to manage the impacts of climate change. India should consider using climate change as a basis for renegotiating the treaty.
3. **Enhanced Water Data-Sharing**:
   - Establish a World Bank-supervised, legally binding data-sharing framework to monitor water quality and flow changes, ensuring accurate and dependable data for both nations.
4. **Incorporation of International Legal Standards**:
   - Align treaty provisions with the 1997 UN Watercourses Convention and the 2004 Berlin Rules on Water Resources for sustainable water use.
5. **Proactive Utilization of Allocated Water Share**:
   - Repair and enhance canal systems in Punjab and Rajasthan to fully utilize India's entitlement of waters from Western Rivers.
6. **Use of Pressure Tactics**:
   - In case of future hostilities, India can consider suspending Permanent Commission meetings, effectively halting the dispute redressal process as suggested by some experts.

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ISRAEL-LEBANON ESCALATION

RELEVANCE

❒ **Syllabus:**

- **PSIR:** India and the Global Centres of Power
- **GS2:** International Relations

INTRODUCTION

The Israel-Lebanon war has seen a dramatic escalation in recent weeks. Israel has stepped up its military campaign against Hezbollah, launching numerous airstrikes across Lebanon. Israel has carried out more than 1,300 attacks on Hezbollah's key military positions and strongholds. The conflict has escalated into a full-scale war, leading to widespread violence, with around 600 Lebanese casualties, and a growing humanitarian crisis.

WHAT IS THE HISTORY OF THE ISRAEL-LEBANON WARS?

The Israel-Lebanon conflict has been defined by multiple wars and clashes, most notably the 1982 Lebanon War and the 2006 Lebanon War.

HEZBOLLAH'S ROLE

Hezbollah is central to the Israel-Lebanon conflict. It is a Shiite militant group and political party based in Lebanon, formed in the early 1980s with Iranian support after Israel's invasion of Lebanon in 1982. Over time, Hezbollah has become a dominant force in Lebanese politics and operates a military wing that regularly engages in skirmishes with Israeli forces. Israel views Hezbollah as a major security threat because of its military capabilities.

ISRAELI MILITARY OPERATIONS

Israel has conducted several military invasions in Lebanon, with the 1982 invasion being the most significant. Initially, Israel's military efforts in southern Lebanon were aimed at destroying the

Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) in the 1990s, and more recently, they have focused on combating Hezbollah.

OTHER CONTRIBUTING FACTORS TO THE ISRAEL-LEBANON CONFLICT

1. **Shebaa Farms Dispute**: The Shebaa Farms, located at the junction of Lebanon, Israel, and Syria, remains a contentious area between Hezbollah and Israel after Israeli occupation.
2. **Iran-Israel Proxy War**: Iran's financial and military support for Hezbollah is a major factor in the ongoing conflict, as Israel views Hezbollah as an extension of Iranian influence in the region.

GLOBAL IMPACTS OF THE ISRAEL-LEBANON WAR

1. **Disruption to Geopolitical Realignment in the Middle East**: The recent Israel-Lebanon and Israel-Palestine conflicts have disrupted ongoing geopolitical realignments in the Middle East, such as Israel-Arab reconciliation and the Iran-Saudi détente.
2. **Middle East as a War Zone**: The Middle East has historically been a battleground, and the current Israel-Palestine conflict has the potential to escalate into a full-scale war involving foreign powers like the US and EU, turning the region into a proxy war theater.
3. **Impact on Global Connectivity Projects and Transport Routes**: Prolonged conflict in West Asia, including the escalation of the Israel-Lebanon war, threatens global connectivity projects like the India-Middle East Economic Corridor (IMEC) and puts strategic routes like the Strait of Hormuz and Red Sea at risk.
4. **Disruption of Global Supply Chains and Rising Inflation**: The conflict affects oil production and supply chains, further aggravating global inflation, which is already pressuring the world economy.
5. **Increased Radicalization in the Middle East**: The war may become a rallying point for extremist groups in the region, with organizations like al-Qaeda or ISIS potentially using the conflict to recruit by framing it as a broader jihad against Israel and the West.

IMPACT OF THE ISRAEL-LEBANON CONFLICT ON INDIA

1. **Challenges to India's De-hyphenation and West Asia Policy**: India's balanced relations with both the Arab world and Israel are threatened by the conflict, making it harder for India to maintain its de-hyphenation strategy in the region.
2. **Rising Inflation**: A full-scale Israel-Lebanon war could disrupt oil and gas production, raising inflation in India, which heavily relies on imported energy.
3. **Depreciation of the Indian Rupee**: The conflict could reduce Foreign Portfolio Investment (FPI) and Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in India, increase oil prices, widen the Current Account Deficit (CAD), and lead to a depreciation of the Indian rupee.
4. **Impact on India-Israel Trade**: Israel is a key defense and strategic partner for India. However, prolonged Israeli involvement in the war could reduce bilateral trade, which in FY23 was valued at $8.4 billion in Indian exports to Israel and $2.3 billion in imports.

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5. **Reduced Remittances from West Asia and Risks to Indian Emigrants**: A large portion of India's diaspora lives in West Asia, sending home significant remittances (~$40 billion). A broader conflict could reduce remittances and pose evacuation challenges for the Indian government.

THE WAY FORWARD

1. **UNSC Intervention**: The UN Security Council should take the lead in mediating peace talks between the warring parties to prevent the Middle East from becoming a war zone again.
2. **Indirect Negotiations**: Third-party mediation, possibly by the UN, the US, or European countries, could help defuse tensions between Israel and Lebanon.
3. **Strengthening UNIFIL's Role**: The mandate and capacity of the UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), which maintains peace along the Lebanon-Israel border, should be strengthened to prevent further conflict.
4. **De-militarization of the Shebaa Farms Area**: Demilitarizing the Shebaa Farms and placing it under international control could reduce future conflicts over the disputed territory.
5. **Engaging Regional Powers**: Countries like Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and Qatar, along with the Arab League, could play a pivotal role in mediating the Israel-Palestine conflict and fostering a more peaceful regional environment.

MALDIVIAN PRESIDENT VISITS INDIA

RELEVANCE

❒ **Syllabus:**

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

INTRODUCTION

The visit of Maldivian President Mohamed Muizzu to India from October 6 to 8, 2024, signifies an important diplomatic effort to repair and enhance the relationship between the two countries, which has seen ups and downs in recent years. The electoral issue in the Maldives revolved around pro-India and anti-India sentiments, with Muizzu's victory initially perceived as a win for the "India Out" campaign. However, this visit suggests a shift toward resetting relations and reaffirming ties.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF INDIA-MALDIVES RELATIONS

India and Maldives share deep-rooted connections that extend back to ancient times, including cultural, religious, and linguistic ties. The Maldives is believed to have been inhabited by settlers from Sri Lanka and Southern India as early as the 5th century BC. Trade relations flourished between the two regions throughout history, creating a strong foundation for diplomatic cooperation in modern times.

Key Developments in India-Maldives Relations

- **1965**: Maldives gained independence from the British, and India was one of the first nations to establish diplomatic relations.
- **1978**: Maumoon Abdul Gayoom became president, initiating frequent diplomatic visits between the two countries.
- **1988**: India helped thwart a coup in the Maldives, strengthening security ties.
- **2008**: Under President Mohamed Nasheed, security cooperation increased, with India providing Maldives with patrol boats and helicopters.
- **2013-2018**: President Abdulla Yameen's pro-China policies led to strained relations with India. Yameen signed a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with China and sidelined Indian strategic interests.
- **2018**: Ibrahim Mohamed Solih's presidency marked a shift toward India's "India First" policy, with increased Indian investment and infrastructure projects.

INDIA OUT CAMPAIGN VS. INDIA FIRST POLICY

The **India Out** campaign is a political movement in the Maldives, particularly driven by former President Yameen, opposing Indian military presence in the country. It gained traction around issues like the signing of the **Uthuru Thilafalhu (UTF) harbor development deal**, which was seen as allowing India's strategic presence in the Maldives.

On the other hand, the **India First Policy** advocates for prioritizing relations with India in security, development, and COVID-response cooperation. Ibrahim Mohamed Solih's administration fully embraced this policy, reversing the anti-India stance of the Yameen administration.

SIGNIFICANCE OF MALDIVES FOR INDIA

1. **Geo-Economic Importance**: The Maldives' location at the crossroads of key Indian Ocean trade routes is crucial for India. A significant portion of India's external trade and energy imports pass through these sea lanes.
2. **Geo-Political Importance**: Maldives is a key partner for India in regional groupings such as the **Colombo Security Conclave (CSC)** and the **Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA)**. It also supports India's bid for a permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council (UNSC).
3. **Security Importance**: The Maldives plays a critical role in India's defense strategy, particularly in combating terrorism, piracy, and drug trafficking in the Indian Ocean. Its location is also strategically significant in terms of regional chokepoints like the Strait of Malacca and Strait of Hormuz.

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4. **Indian Diaspora**: Many Indians work in vital sectors of the Maldivian economy, such as healthcare, education, and tourism.

AREAS OF COOPERATION BETWEEN INDIA AND MALDIVES

1. **Economic Cooperation**:
   - India is the second-largest trading partner of the Maldives.
   - Major Indian investments include the **$500 million Greater Male Connectivity Project** and various financial grants and loans.
2. **Infrastructure Development**:
   - India is spearheading crucial infrastructure projects like the **Greater Male Connectivity Project** and the redevelopment of **Hanimaadhoo International Airport**.
   - India is also involved in developing strategic assets like the **Uthuru Thila Falhu (UTF) harbor**, which is vital for Maldives' maritime security.
3. **Military and Security Cooperation**:
   - India supports the Maldives with equipment, training, and joint military exercises like **Ekuverin** and **Dosti**.
   - India has also provided crucial assets, including **patrol boats** and **helicopters**, to enhance Maldivian maritime security.
4. **Humanitarian Assistance**:
   - India has consistently provided Maldives with humanitarian aid, such as during the **2004 tsunami** and the **COVID-19 pandemic** through operations like **Sanjeevani**.

CHALLENGES IN INDIA-MALDIVES RELATIONS

1. **Political Challenges**: Muizzu's association with the "India Out" campaign, supported by Abdulla Yameen, presents a challenge to Indian diplomatic efforts.
2. **Radicalization**: The rising influence of extremist groups like the Islamic State (IS) in the Maldives, with many recruits from the country, poses a security threat to India.
3. **Growing Chinese Influence**: China's increasing presence in the Maldives, especially through investments and the "String of Pearls" strategy, challenges India's influence in the region.
4. **Climate Change**: Both countries are vulnerable to rising sea levels, a key concern for future cooperation.

WAY FORWARD FOR INDIA-MALDIVES RELATIONS

1. **Engage with the Newly Elected Government**: India should continue to engage constructively with Muizzu's government, emphasizing the benefits of India-supported projects like the Hanimaadhoo airport redevelopment.
2. **Increase Development Assistance**: By focusing on high-impact projects, especially those benefitting the local population, India can strengthen its goodwill among the Maldivian people.
3. **Timely Completion of Infrastructure Projects**: Ensuring the swift completion of projects like the **Greater Male Connectivity Project** will offer a clear alternative to Chinese projects.
4. **Target Youth Employment**: India's development projects should aim to foster entrepreneurship and employment among the Maldivian youth, reducing the risk of radicalization.

CONCLUSION

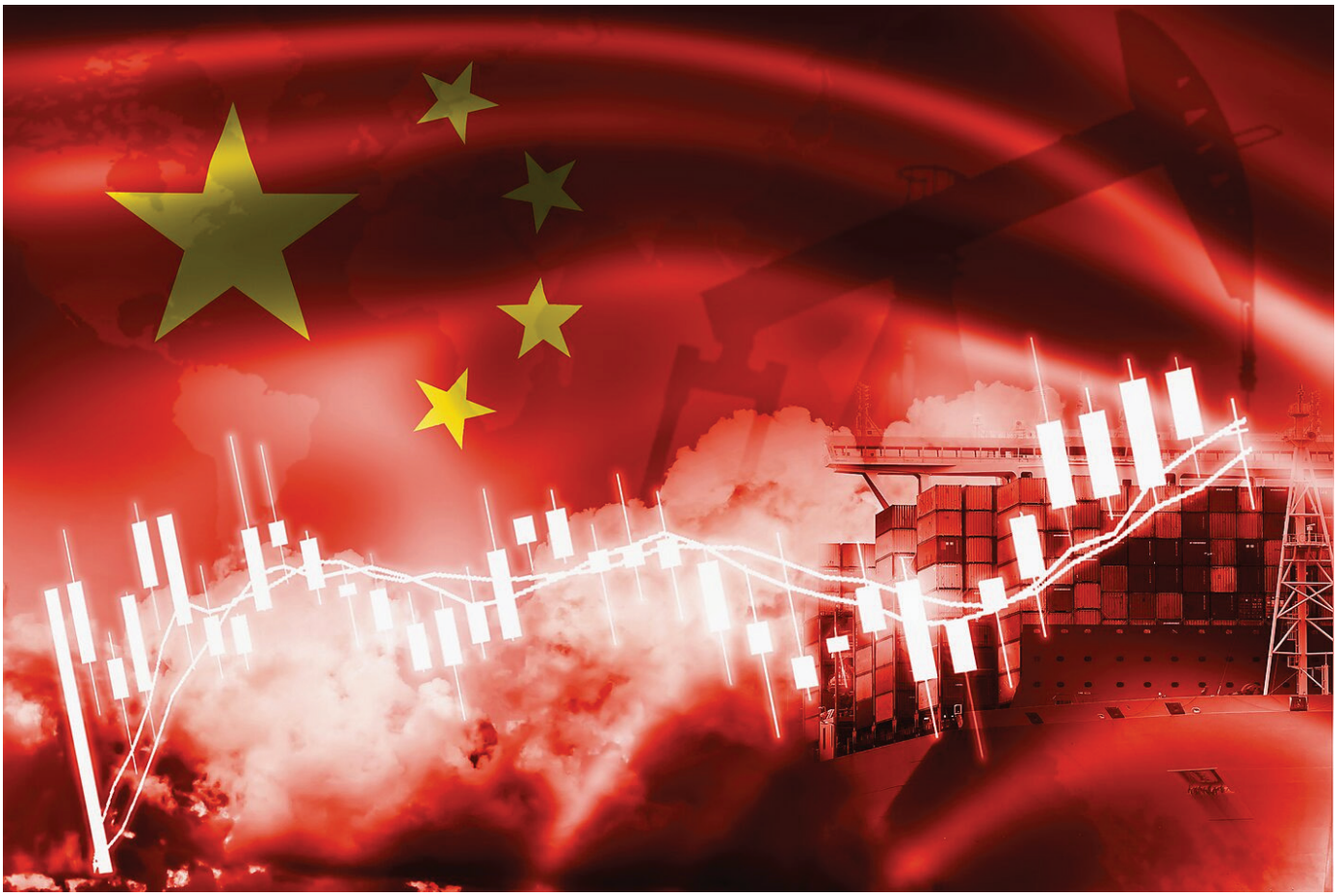
The recent visit of President Muizzu is a positive step toward resetting ties between India and the Maldives. India must balance engaging with the new leadership while advancing its strategic, economic, and humanitarian objectives.

CHINA SHOCK!

RELEVANCE

❒ **Syllabus:**

- **PSIR:** India and the Global Centres of Power
- **GS2:** International Relations



INTRODUCTION

What is China Shock? China Shock refers to the economic disruptions caused by the large-scale flooding of low-cost Chinese goods into global markets. This shock leads to a dramatic decline in global prices for such goods, causing significant challenges for domestic industries in many countries, including massive job losses and sectoral shifts.

HISTORY OF CHINA SHOCK

1. **China Shock 1.0**: After China's entry into the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2001, its manufacturing capabilities and competitive pricing overwhelmed global markets. The influx of Chinese products led to job losses in several industrial sectors in countries like the U.S., Europe, and India. The U.S. had hoped China's inclusion in the WTO would foster political reforms and open the Chinese market to U.S. goods. Instead, China leveraged its competitive advantage to become a major global exporter, earning the nickname of the "capitalist tiger" despite its communist political framework.
2. **China Shock 2.0**: Following the COVID-19 pandemic, China's export market has again

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surged despite a global economic slowdown. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) observed a 1.5 percentage point increase in China's share of global exports while many other major economies, including the U.S., Japan, and the U.K., saw declines. This resurgence has prompted new protective measures from countries like India and the U.S. to prevent another wave of economic displacement.

INDIA'S RISING DEPENDENCE ON CHINESE IMPORTS

Several Indian sectors have seen increasing dependence on Chinese imports, even as the Indian government tries to reduce this dependency.

1. **Renewable Energy**: Despite India investing $4.5 billion in clean energy, nearly 80% of its solar cells and modules are still imported from China. This has impeded the growth of domestic manufacturing in this critical sector.
2. **Steel**: Steel imports from China reached a seven-year high in 2024, while India's domestic steel exports have declined. The influx of cheap Chinese steel has hurt Indian manufacturers by eroding their profit margins.
3. **Electronic Components**: India's electronic sector remains heavily reliant on China for components. In FY24, India imported over $12 billion in electronic components from China, accounting for more than half of India's total electronics imports. This reliance is particularly pronounced in mobile phone manufacturing.

REASONS FOR RISING CHINESE IMPORTS INTO INDIA

1. **Slump in Prices from Chinese Dumping**: China's predatory pricing strategies have allowed it to dominate high-tech sectors like solar equipment, electric vehicles, and semiconductors. The dumping of goods has led to price collapses, making imports from China highly attractive despite domestic efforts to build capacity.
2. **China's Export-Led Growth Amid Domestic Challenges**: With domestic economic issues such as a property crisis and low consumer demand, China has turned to export growth to drive its economy, leading to a significant surge in exports.
3. **Global Supply Chain Dominance**: China has gained a near-monopoly on certain supply chains, especially in sectors like solar technology. China produces 85% of solar cells and 97% of silicon wafers globally, making it difficult for India to move away from dependence on Chinese imports.
4. **Lack of Domestic Manufacturing Capacity**: In some sectors, India has struggled to build sufficient manufacturing capacity or match China's scale and quality. This is particularly true in electronics, where India still depends on China for smartphones, semiconductors, and display technologies.
5. **Technological and Innovation Gap**: China's advancements in high-tech sectors (e.g., electronics and telecom equipment) have left India behind in research and development. India's reliance on Chinese technology stems from this innovation gap.
6. **Industrial Policy Limitations**: India's domestic manufacturing sector faces challenges such as regulatory hurdles, infrastructure bottlenecks, and high input costs, further widening the gap with China.

INDIAN GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES TO REDUCE IMPORT DEPENDENCE ON CHINA

1. **Make in India Initiative (2014)**: Aimed at promoting India as a global manufacturing hub, the initiative focuses on boosting both domestic and foreign investments across 25

sectors, including electronics, automobiles, textiles, and defence.

2. **Production-Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme**: This scheme offers financial incentives to companies that increase production in key sectors such as electronics, pharmaceuticals, and automobiles, thereby reducing reliance on imports.
3. **National Infrastructure Pipeline (NIP)**: NIP focuses on improving infrastructure to support manufacturing by developing projects worth ₹111 lakh crore (~$1.5 trillion) in sectors like energy, transport, and water infrastructure.
4. **Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan**: This initiative aims to promote self-reliance in key sectors, especially manufacturing, to reduce import dependence and boost domestic production.
5. **Ease of Doing Business Reforms**: India has made significant strides in improving its business environment by simplifying processes, reducing bureaucratic hurdles, and improving regulatory frameworks.

WAY FORWARD FOR INDIA

1. **Adopt Industry 4.0**: India should embrace advanced manufacturing technologies (Industry 4.0) such as artificial intelligence, IoT, and robotics to modernize its manufacturing sector. This will help Indian industries become more competitive on a global scale.
2. **Invest in Industrial Infrastructure**: To reduce logistics costs and attract investment, India must prioritize infrastructure development to enhance manufacturing capabilities.
3. **Promote Export-Oriented Manufacturing**: Encouraging export-focused manufacturing can help Indian businesses gain access to new markets and improve their global competitiveness.
4. **Provide Financial Support for MSMEs**: Ensuring greater financial assistance to Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in the manufacturing sector will enable their growth and contribution to India's self-reliance.

CONCLUSION

The ongoing "China Shock 2.0" has reshaped global trade dynamics. Nations like India and the U.S. are implementing protective measures to safeguard their domestic industries. To reduce dependency on Chinese goods and protect local industries, India must continue strengthening its manufacturing sector, while balancing economic growth with the need for global competitiveness.

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INDIA-SRI LANKA RELATIONS

RELEVANCE

❒ **Syllabus:**

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

INTRODUCTION

The **National People's Power (NPP)** is a coalition in Sri Lanka, consisting of various interest groups such as artists, business people, academics, and women's groups. It is primarily built around the left-wing **Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP)**, which has a history as an anti-capitalist nationalist movement. In the past, the JVP had an anti-Indian stance and espoused Sinhala nationalism.

NPP'S AND ANURA KUMARA DISSANAYAKE'S RELATIONSHIP WITH INDIA

1. **Refutation of Anti-India Bias**: Anura Kumara Dissanayake (AKD) has sought to move away from the anti-Indian rhetoric historically associated with his party. He visited India earlier this year, meeting with key figures like the External Affairs Minister and National Security Advisor. He also promptly responded to PM Modi's congratulatory message after

his election and welcomed India's continued cooperation. India's High Commissioner in Colombo was one of his first visitors after taking office.

2. **Acknowledgement of India's Support**: AKD has recognized India's significant help during Sri Lanka's 2022 economic crisis, when India provided substantial financial aid and materials to stabilize the country.
3. **India's Role in Elections**: India was not portrayed negatively in the recent elections. In fact, India's assistance and willingness to partner in Sri Lanka's debt restructuring process have been seen positively across party lines.

INDIA'S APPROACH TOWARDS NPP IN RECENT TIMES

India's approach towards the NPP has evolved, especially in light of Sri Lanka's economic crisis and the growing pragmatism of Dissanayake's leadership. Despite the party's historical anti-Indian stance, India has engaged diplomatically with Dissanayake, recognizing the strategic importance of maintaining strong ties with Sri Lanka amidst regional challenges.

HISTORICAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INDIA AND SRI LANKA

- **Ancient Ties and Cultural Relations**: India and Sri Lanka share more than 2,500 years of historical, cultural, religious, and linguistic bonds, with Buddhism being a significant connecting factor.
- **Civil War and Indian Intervention**: Relations became strained during the Sri Lankan Civil War, particularly due to India's involvement through the Indo-Sri Lankan Accord (1987) and the deployment of the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF), which faced significant backlash.
- **Post-Civil War Relations**: After the end of the civil war in 2009, India played a vital role in Sri Lanka's reconstruction, although tensions occasionally resurfaced due to India's stance on human rights violations and related UN resolutions.

INDIA'S ROLE IN SRI LANKA'S ECONOMIC CRISIS (2022)

India provided critical financial support during Sri Lanka's economic crisis, including:

- **Credit Lines and Currency Support**: India extended $4 billion in credit, a $400 million currency swap, and trade liability deferrals worth $500 million.
- **Debt Restructuring**: India was the first country to support Sri Lanka's debt restructuring efforts with the IMF.
- **Humanitarian Aid**: India provided essential goods and services to alleviate the hardships faced by Sri Lanka's population.

India's assistance improved its influence and bargaining power in Sri Lanka, with tangible outcomes such as the Trincomalee oil tank farm deal and power plant projects.

IMPORTANCE OF SRI LANKA FOR INDIA:

1. **Strategic Location**: Sri Lanka's location in the Indian Ocean is critical for securing sea lanes that transport a large portion of the world's oil and container shipments.
2. **Maritime Security**: Ports in Sri Lanka, such as Hambantota, are of strategic importance to India in securing its interests in the Indian Ocean.
3. **Geographical Proximity**: Close to India, Sri Lanka holds significance for India's regional security, especially in countering China's rising influence.
4. **Peace and Stability**: India values peace and stability in Sri Lanka to safeguard its economic and strategic investments and to counter China's aggressive footprint in the region.

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INDIA'S CONCERNS

- **Chinese Influence**: China's increasing presence in Sri Lanka, including naval activities, poses security concerns for India.
- **Exclusion of Minorities**: India is concerned about the exclusion of Tamils and Muslims in Sri Lanka's political structure.
- **Fishing Disputes**: Ongoing maritime disputes, particularly regarding Katchatheevu Island, continue to strain relations.
- **Tamil Issue**: India is pressing for Sri Lanka to fulfill its commitment to finding a political solution to the Tamil issue, especially through the implementation of the 13th Amendment.

WAY FORWARD

- **Address India's Security Concerns**: The newly elected government should ensure that China's activities in Sri Lanka do not compromise Indian security interests.
- **Diplomatic Engagement**: India should continue engaging diplomatically to safeguard its strategic interests, including energy projects.
- **Wait-and-Watch Policy**: India could adopt a cautious approach, observing how the new government shapes its policies.
- **Established Framework**: Relations should operate within India's "Neighbourhood First" policy and the "SAGAR" (Security and Growth for All in the Region) framework to maintain long-term stability.

BULLDOZER JUSTICE- THE DEBATE

RELEVANCE

- **Syllabus:**
  - **PSIR:** Human rights
  - **GS2:** Government Policies

WHAT IS BULLDOZER JUSTICE?

"Bulldozer Justice" refers to the controversial practice in India where state authorities use bulldozers and heavy machinery to demolish the properties of individuals accused of serious crimes, such as communal violence, rape, or murder. This action is often carried out swiftly and without following due legal procedures, raising concerns about the violation of established legal processes and constitutional rights. The term has gained prominence as the frequency of such demolitions has increased in several states across India.

RECENT HISTORY OF BULLDOZER JUSTICE

The practice has been observed in several states, including Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Haryana, Maharashtra, and Delhi. Examples include:

- **Uttar Pradesh**: Since 2017, bulldozer demolitions have been used against individuals accused of serious crimes, such as the demolition of the properties of Vikas Dubey and Atiq Ahmed.
- **Madhya Pradesh**: Following communal clashes, authorities demolished 16 houses and 29 shops across Khargone.
- **Haryana**: The state witnessed bulldozer action in Nuh after communal violence.
- **Maharashtra**: A portion of Kangana Ranaut's bungalow was demolished in 2020 after her controversial comments.
- **Delhi**: Bulldozers were used in Jahangirpuri in April 2022 following communal clashes.

STATE'S JUSTIFICATIONS FOR BULLDOZER JUSTICE

1. **Legal Compliance**: State governments argue that demolitions are carried out according to municipal laws, such as the U.P. Municipal Corporation Act and U.P. Urban Planning and Development Act, in cases of illegal construction.
2. **Effective Deterrence**: The practice is seen as a deterrent to illegal activities and a measure to maintain public order.
3. **Restoration of Law and Order**: In times of communal tension or unrest, demolitions are used to restore calm and prevent further violence.
4. **Non-discriminatory**: Authorities claim that demolitions target illegal constructions regardless of the community or religion of the accused.
5. **Public Demand**: The action is seen as a response to public demand for quick, visible consequences for serious criminal offenses.

CONCERNS WITH BULLDOZER JUSTICE

1. **Violation of the Rule of Law**: Demolitions without proper legal notice or due process violate the rule of law and principles of natural justice.
2. **Infringement of Fundamental Rights**: The right to shelter is part of the right to life under Article 21 of the Indian Constitution. Bulldozer demolitions, especially when done hastily, infringe on this right.
3. **Presumption of Innocence**: Demolishing properties based on mere accusations violates the principle that individuals are innocent until proven guilty.
4. **Targeting of Minorities**: Critics argue that this practice disproportionately targets minorities, particularly Muslims. Reports, such as one by Amnesty International, indicate that Muslim-owned properties were frequently targeted in certain states.
5. **Authoritarianism**: Bulldozer justice may be seen as a shift towards authoritarianism, with authorities bypassing judicial processes and using the practice for political retribution.
6. **Ethical Concerns**: The practice can affect the innocent family members of the accused and

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conflates the roles of the judiciary and the executive, undermining the separation of powers.

SUPREME COURT OBSERVATIONS ON DEMOLITIONS

- **Maneka Gandhi vs Union of India (1978)**: The Supreme Court held that executive actions must be fair, just, and reasonable.
- **Municipal Corporation of Ludhiana vs Inderjit Singh (2008)**: Authorities cannot proceed with demolitions without giving proper notice and an opportunity to be heard.
- **Olga Tellis vs Bombay Municipal Corporation (1985)**: Evictions without notice were deemed unconstitutional as they violate the right to livelihood.
- **Punjab and Haryana High Court's Intervention in Nuh Demolitions**: The court intervened to halt demolitions in Nuh, citing concerns about due process and potential ethnic targeting.

WAY FORWARD

1. **Adequate Surveys Before Demolition**: Authorities should conduct surveys and follow basic procedural requirements, such as serving proper notices before demolishing properties.
2. **Pan-India Procedural Guidelines**: A standardized set of guidelines for demolitions should be incorporated into municipal legislation to ensure uniformity and adherence to legal procedures across the country.
3. **Shifting the Burden of Proof**: The responsibility to justify demolition should lie with the authorities, ensuring accountability and protecting the fundamental right to shelter.
4. **Independent Review Mechanism**: An independent review committee consisting of judicial and civil society members should assess the legality of proposed demolitions.
5. **Focus on Rehabilitation**: Guidelines should be drafted to provide compensation and rehabilitation for innocent victims, following international human rights standards that emphasize the right to adequate housing and compensation for forced evictions.

This debate on Bulldozer Justice highlights the need to balance law enforcement with constitutional protections and human rights, ensuring that justice is not only done but is seen to be done fairly and impartially.

HC VERDICT ON FACT-CHECK UNIT

RELEVANCE

❒ **Syllabus:**

- **PSIR:** Social Movement: Civil liberties
- **GS2:** Government Policies

DEALING WITH FAKE NEWS IN INDIA

INTRODUCTION

The Bombay High Court has invalidated a provision from the 2021 IT Rules that permitted the government to label 'fake news' on social media via a Fact Check Unit (FCU). In a ruling decided by a 2-1 majority, the court found the amended provision of the IT Act that established the Fact Check Unit to be unconstitutional.

Earlier this year, the Government of India designated the PIB's Fact Check Unit (PIB-FCU) under the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (MIB) as the central government's official fact-checking entity. The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) had issued a notification establishing the PIB's FCU as the recognized fact-checking unit according to the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Amendment Rules, 2023.

BACKGROUND OF THE CASE

Introduction of IT Rule Amendment The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) introduced the IT (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Amendment Rules,

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2023, which revised the earlier IT Rules established in 2021. This amendment was a significant development in the regulatory landscape concerning online platforms and their obligations.

Provision of the Amendment The amendment notably expanded the definition of 'fake news' to encompass information related to 'government business'. Following this, MeitY officially recognized the Press Information Bureau's Fact Check Unit (PIB-FCU) as the designated fact-checking body under the amended provisions of these rules.

Aim of the FCU The primary objective of the FCU was to identify and flag any social media posts that it deemed to be 'fake,' 'false,' or 'misleading' concerning government affairs. Additionally, the FCU had the authority to compel social media platforms to remove such flagged content to maintain their "safe harbour" status, which provides them with legal immunity from being held liable for user-generated content. This aspect of the amendment raised significant concerns about free speech, as it effectively positioned the government as the sole authority in determining what constituted truthful information regarding its own actions.

JUDGEMENT OF THE BOMBAY HIGH COURT

The Bombay High Court issued a ruling declaring the amended rules unconstitutional, arriving at a decision with a 2-1 majority.

Key Findings:

1. **Restriction of Fundamental Rights**: The majority opinion articulated that the amended rules infringed upon Articles 14 (which guarantees the right to equality), 19(1)(a) (which protects the freedom of speech), and 19(1)(g) (which safeguards the right to practice any profession) of the Constitution. The court found that the restrictions imposed by the amended rules exceeded what is permissible under these fundamental rights.
2. **Vague and Misleading Terms**: The court highlighted that terms such as 'fake, false, or misleading' were vague and overly broad in nature. It asserted that it is not the responsibility of the state to ensure that citizens are provided only with what is considered 'truthful' information.
3. **Chilling Effect on Freedom of Speech**: The ruling acknowledged that the threat posed to social media platforms of losing their "safe harbour" status created a chilling effect on freedom of speech, as it might deter users from expressing their opinions freely for fear of repercussions.
4. **Overarching Powers of the FCU**: The verdict criticized the expansive powers granted to the Fact Check Unit (FCU) as overreaching. It concluded that the state classifying speech as true or false and imposing restrictions on its publication was tantamount to censorship, which is unacceptable in a democratic society.

PIB'S FACT-CHECK UNIT (PIB-FCU)

Establishment: The PIB's Fact-Check Unit (PIB-FCU) was established in November 2019. Its stated objective was to serve as a deterrent against the creators and disseminators of fake news and misinformation. The unit aims to provide citizens with a straightforward avenue to report any suspicious or questionable information related to the Government of India.

Functions/Mandate of PIB-FCU:

1. The PIB-FCU is tasked with countering misinformation regarding government policies, initiatives, and schemes, either on its own initiative (suo motu) or in response to complaints received from the public.
2. The unit actively monitors, detects, and counters disinformation campaigns, ensuring that any false information concerning the Government is promptly exposed and corrected to maintain public trust.

3. When the PIB-FCU identifies a piece of content as fake, it requires social media platforms to remove that content as part of their due diligence obligations under the IT Rules. Furthermore, internet and telecom service providers, such as Jio and Airtel, are obligated to block the web links associated with the flagged fake news information.

GOVERNMENT'S RATIONALE FOR NOTIFYING PIB-FCU

1. **Addressing the Issue of Fake News**: The government contended that the establishment of a dedicated fact-checking body would significantly aid in addressing the rampant issue of fake news and misinformation circulating on online platforms, which has the potential to cause societal harm.
2. **Improved Accountability of Social Media Intermediaries**: By designating PIB's Fact-Check Unit as the Central Government's official fact-checking unit, the government aimed to increase the accountability of social media intermediaries like Facebook and Twitter, compelling them to act more responsibly in removing false and misleading content.
3. **Enhancement of Cybersecurity**: The government argued that the PIB's Fact-Check Unit could contribute to improved cybersecurity by preventing the misuse of online platforms for illegal or harmful activities. This includes the regulation of the sharing of deepfakes and other deceptive content.
4. **Prevention of Hate Speech and Violence**: The Fact-Check Unit sought to ensure compliance with existing Indian laws, including the IT Act and laws related to national security. This proactive approach was intended to prevent the misuse of social media platforms and other digital media outlets for inciting violence or disseminating hate speech.

CONCERNS WITH NOTIFICATION OF FACT-CHECK UNIT BY THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

1. **'Chilling Effect' on Freedom of Speech and Expression**: There were substantial concerns that the powers granted to the PIB's Fact-Check Unit could result in a chilling effect on freedom of speech and expression, as enshrined in Article 19(1)(a). Critics feared that individuals might hesitate to express their opinions online, fearing censorship or potential legal repercussions.
2. **Potential for Misuse by the Government**: Observers expressed apprehension that the powers vested in the fact-check unit could be exploited by the government to silence dissenting voices or criticism of government actions. Such misuse could have severe implications for democracy and human rights in India.
3. **Conflict of Interest**: The role of the fact-checking unit raised concerns of a significant conflict of interest, as it effectively assumed the roles of judge, jury, and executioner regarding the truthfulness of information.
4. **Lack of Clarity on What Constitutes 'Fake, False, or Misleading' Information**: There was a notable lack of clear definitions outlining what types of information would qualify as 'fake, false, or misleading.' This ambiguity could lead to arbitrary censorship, undermining individuals' rights to free speech.
5. **Short-Circuiting Established Legal Procedures**: The notification of a fact-checking unit, endowed with powers to issue directives for content removal, could circumvent established legal procedures, safeguards, and conditions laid out in landmark judgments such as Shreya Singhal v. Union of India. These precedents extend the right to free speech into the online domain, ensuring protections against arbitrary content removal.

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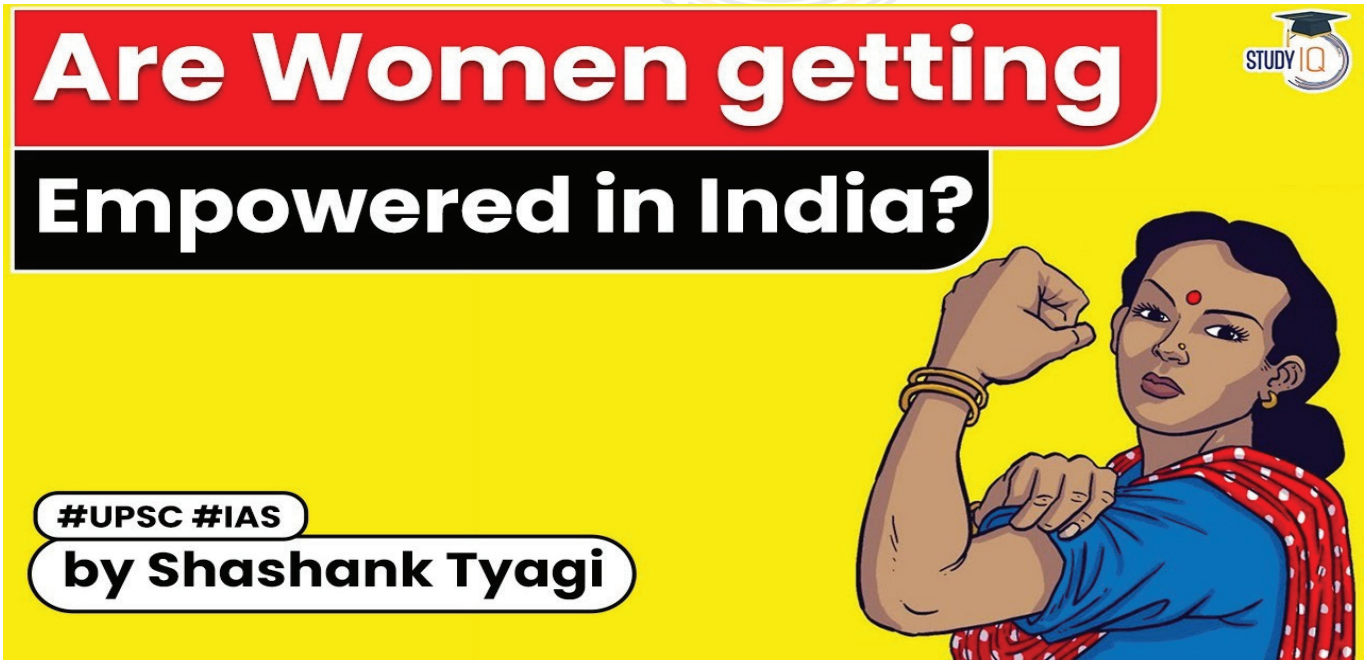
WHAT SHOULD BE THE WAY FORWARD?

1. **Final Verdict of the Supreme Court**: Following the Bombay High Court's verdict in the Kunal Kamra v. Union of India (2023) case, which ruled the establishment of fact-check units under the amended rules as unconstitutional, it is crucial for the Supreme Court to deliver a final verdict on other pressing concerns related to the IT Rules. This includes mandates for social media platforms to establish effective grievance redressal and compliance mechanisms.
2. **Develop a More Transparent and Participatory Process**: The government should engage with civil society, media organizations, and various stakeholders to develop a more transparent and participatory approach to determining which content should be classified as fake or misleading.
3. **Need for an Independent and Non-Partisan Fact-Checking Body**: It is essential for the government to ensure that any body tasked with fact-checking operates independently and impartially. This includes establishing clear guidelines that dictate how decisions regarding misinformation are made.
4. **Ensure Functioning According to Judicial and Legal Guidelines**: The government must guarantee that any takedown requests are executed in accordance with the judicial and legal guidelines established in Shreya Singhal v. Union of India and under Section 69A of the IT Act. These provisions outline and restrict the conditions under which the government can take down online content, safeguarding individuals' rights to free speech and expression.

WOMEN EMPOWERMENT- POLITICAL ANGLE

RELEVANCE

- **Syllabus:**
  - **PSIR:** Gender Justice
  - **GS2:** Gender Equality



INTRODUCTION

With the historic passage of the **Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam** (Women's Reservation Bill), 2023, the **Rajya Sabha Chairman** and **Vice President of India** introduced several progressive reforms to the Rajya Sabha's operations and Secretariat.

These reforms aim to further the **political empowerment of women**, and the Vice President asserts that these initiatives will send a strong message internationally, signifying that women held a **commanding position** during this pivotal phase of India's political landscape.

MEASURES TAKEN IN THE RAJYA SABHA FOR POLITICAL EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN

1. **Reconstitution of the panel of vice-chairpersons** to include only women: The Vice President initiated the practice of nominating four women, making up **50%** of the panel of vice-chairpersons. **S. Phangnon Konyak** became the first woman from Nagaland in Rajya Sabha to preside over the House, and **P.T. Usha**, an eminent athlete, made history by being the first **nominated MP** to become a Vice Chairperson in the Rajya Sabha.
2. **Training of Women Secretariat officers for House-related duties**: Female officers of the Secretariat have been trained for responsibilities associated with the House, a domain traditionally dominated by men due to **late sittings**.
3. **Womanisation of Table of the House: The Table of the House is increasingly being managed by female officers, who are also assigned chamber duties.**
4. **Women in key positions in the Rajya Sabha Secretariat**: Women have been appointed to prominent roles within the Secretariat, including critical areas like **human resources**, the **legislative section**, and **capacity building**. A woman officer has been designated as the **master trainer** for the iGOT-Karmayogi Bharat initiative.
5. **Enhanced responsibilities for women in Parliamentary Standing Committees**: Women have been entrusted with handling **highly skilled roles** such as officiating in **Parliamentary Standing Committees** across different levels.
6. **Women Safety Considerations**: A mobile-based system called **'Vahan'** has been launched to address commuting issues during **late sittings**.
7. **Celebration of Women's Day**: **Women's Day programmes** are organized, conceptualized, and executed entirely by women officers and employees within the Rajya Sabha Secretariat.
8. **Internships for Women in Rajya Sabha**: Five female interns from **Miranda House** have been selected for a **15-day course** focusing on **parliamentary procedures**.

POLITICAL REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN IN INDIA:

a. Representation of Women in Parliament Over the Years:

1. Women made up **4.41%** of the Lok Sabha's strength in **1952**. By the next decade, this percentage rose to over **6%**.
2. However, this figure dipped below **4% in 1971**, despite **Indira Gandhi**—India's first and only female Prime Minister—leading the country.
3. The rise in female representation has been **slow but steady**, with occasional exceptions. Women's representation crossed **10% in 2009** and peaked at **14.36% in 2019**.
4. In the 2024 elections, out of the **74 women MPs**, **43** are first-timers. These women MPs have an **average age of 50 years**, which is younger than the overall average age of **56 years** for the House. **78%** of these women MPs are **graduates**, placing them on par with their male colleagues in terms of education.

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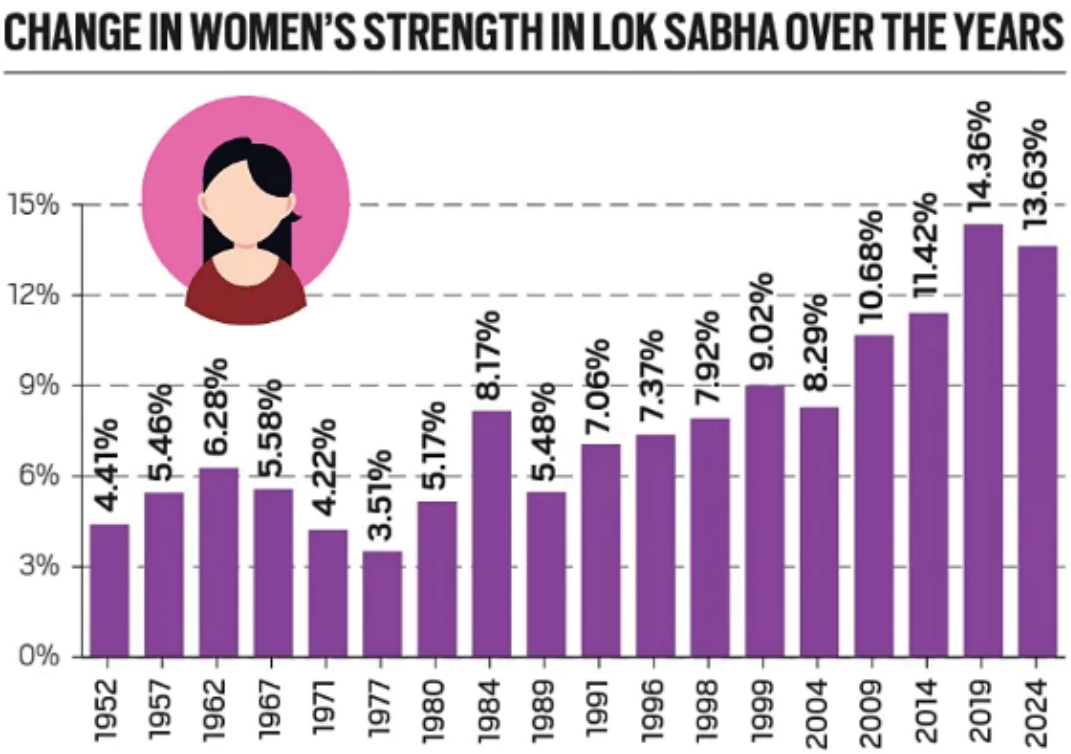
b. State Legislative Assembly Representation:

Women's representation in **State Legislative Assemblies** remains low. The highest proportion is in **Chhattisgarh (14.4%)**, followed by **West Bengal (13.7%)**, and **Jharkhand (12.4%)**.

c. Comparison with Global Standards:

According to the **Inter-Parliamentary Union's (IPU) 2021 Report**, women globally make up **26.1%** of national parliaments. India ranks behind **over 140 countries** in terms of women's representation in its national legislature, even though women's representation in the **17th Lok Sabha** reached **16%**. Countries like **Nepal, Pakistan**, and **Sri Lanka** outperform India in this regard.



Women in Lok Sabha 2024. (Data via PRS Legislative Research)

WHY IS THERE A NEED FOR GREATER POLITICAL EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN IN INDIA?

1. **Accountability and Gender-sensitive Governance**: Women's political involvement ensures more **accountability** and better promotion of **gender equality** in governance and public policy.
2. **Breaking the Patriarchal Mold of Indian Politics**: Women's increased presence in Parliament is essential to dismantle the **patriarchal nature** of Indian politics, where men traditionally dominate key positions.
3. **Focus on Gender Issues**: According to **UN Women**, a greater number of women in Parliament generally leads to stronger advocacy for **women's issues**.
4. **Gender Equality**: Women's political engagement is a fundamental requirement for achieving **gender equality** and **true democracy**.
5. **Change of Stereotypes**: Increased female representation works with the **media** and the **women's movement** to shift the perception of

women from being primarily **'homemakers'** to **'lawmakers'**.

6. **Improvement of Economic Performance and Infrastructure**: Research by **UN University** indicates that **women legislators** enhance the economic performance of their constituencies by **1.8%** more than their male counterparts. Under schemes like the **Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana**, the share of incomplete road projects is **22 percentage points lower** in constituencies led by women.

WHAT ARE THE REASONS FOR LOW POLITICAL REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN IN INDIA?

1. **Gender Gaps in Political Ambition**: Gender norms condition women to have less **political ambition** and drive compared to men. This manifests in several ways, including:
   - Women receive less encouragement to run for office.
   - The highly **competitive nature** of politics deters many women.
   - **Self-doubt, stereotypes**, and societal expectations prevent even talented women from entering politics.
   - Family considerations also play a role. For instance, in **Sweden**, women who are promoted to mayor experience higher **divorce rates**, unlike men.
2. **Patriarchal Society**: The patriarchal structure of Indian politics limits female participation. This is influenced by:
   - **Gender disparities** in education and access to resources.
   - The **sexual division of labor**, where women bear most domestic responsibilities, restricting their political engagement.
   - **Cultural and social norms** that discourage women from seeking political roles.
3. **Cost of Elections**: The **high cost** of contesting elections, coupled with limited financial access for women, is another significant hurdle.
4. **Male Politicians as Gatekeepers**: **Male politicians** and party leaders often act as gatekeepers, restricting opportunities for female candidates due to biases about their **electability**.
5. **Criminalization and Corruption in Politics**: The growing **criminalization** and **corruption** in Indian politics drive women away from the political arena due to a lack of **political education** and opportunities.

WHAT MEASURES HAVE BEEN UNDERTAKEN FOR WOMEN'S POLITICAL EMPOWERMENT?

Legislative Measures:

1. **Nari Shakti Vandana Adhiniyam (Women's Reservation Act)**: Passed in 2023, this law guarantees **33% reservation for women** in the **Lok Sabha** and **State Legislative Assemblies**.
2. **73rd and 74th Amendment Acts**: These amendments provided **33% reservation** for women in **local bodies**, with some states like **Bihar** increasing the quota to **50%**.
3. **Parliamentary Committee on Empowerment of Women**: Formed in **1997** (11th Lok Sabha) to enhance the position of women in society.
4. **Gender-neutral Rules of Lok Sabha**: The rules of the Lok Sabha were made gender-neutral in **2014** under **Meira Kumar**'s leadership.

Constitutional Measures:

1. **Article 14 & 15**: These articles ensure **equality before the law** and prohibit gender-based discrimination.
2. **Article 243D**: Mandates **33% reservation for women** in Panchayati Raj institutions.

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International Covenants:

1. **Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (1979)**: Protects women's right to participate in public life.
2. **Beijing Platform for Action (1995)**, **Millennium Development Goals (2000)**, and **Sustainable Development Goals (2015-2030)**: These frameworks call for the removal of barriers to equal participation and stress the importance of increasing **women's representation** in national parliaments.

WAY FORWARD

1. **Curb Criminalization in Politics**: Reform efforts should focus on addressing the **criminalization of politics** and the influence of **black money** to ensure a more level playing field for women candidates.
2. **Promote Intra-party Democracy**: Encouraging **intra-party democracy** can help expand the pool of qualified women candidates for elections.
3. **Nominate Women to Rajya Sabha and State Legislative Councils**: Political parties should aim to nominate **33% women** for elections to the **Rajya Sabha** and **State Legislative Councils**.
4. **Promote Women's Participation at the Panchayat Level**: Strengthening **women's self-help groups** at the **panchayat level** can help nurture capable women leaders who can eventually run for **MP/MLA** elections.
5. **Strengthen Women's Organizations**: Strengthening **women's agencies and organizations** will help build a society with **equal opportunities** for all citizens.
6. **Encourage Women in College Politics**: Promoting **political engagement** among girls in **colleges and universities** can help develop their political acumen for the future.
7. **Commitment to G20 New Delhi Leaders' Declaration**: India must reaffirm its commitment to the **G20 New Delhi Leaders' Declaration**, which stresses investment in the **political empowerment of women and girls**.
8. **Gender Sensitization and Internships**: Implementing **gender sensitization workshops** and offering internships in **parliamentary processes** will help foster a culture of **gender parity** in politics.

SIXTH SCHEDULE FOR LADAKH

RELEVANCE

❒ **Syllabus:**

- **PSIR:** Salient Features of the Indian Constitution
- **GS2:** Government Policies

INTRODUCTION

The recent detainment of climate activist Sonam Wangchuk while protesting for Ladakh's inclusion in the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution highlights the long-standing demand for greater autonomy in the region. This has been a recurring issue not only in Ladakh but also in states like Arunachal Pradesh and Manipur. The underlying focus is the protection of ethnic groups and local identities under special constitutional provisions.

HISTORICAL ROOTS OF THE FIFTH AND SIXTH SCHEDULES

The demands for inclusion under the Fifth and Sixth Schedules stem from the concept of **asymmetrical federalism** in India. Unlike symmetrical federations like the U.S., where all states share equal powers, India has granted special provisions to certain areas, particularly those with unique ethnic compositions.

Colonial Legacy

The Fifth and Sixth Schedules trace their origins back to colonial-era policies that recognized the distinct nature of tribal populations. Prior to British rule, many tribal communities maintained autonomy over their lands. However, British forest policies in the 19th century restricted these rights, leading to significant rebellions like the Kol (1831-32) and Santhal (1885) uprisings. In response to such discontent, the **Government of India Act of 1935** introduced the concept of "excluded" and "partially excluded" areas, laying the groundwork for the Fifth and Sixth Schedules in the Indian Constitution.

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DISTINCTIVE FEATURES OF THE SPECIAL SCHEDULES

Fifth Schedule

- **Applicability:** Covers Scheduled Areas, identified by criteria such as high tribal population and economic backwardness.
- **States Covered:** Spans across 10 states.
- **Governance:** Tribes Advisory Councils (TACs) offer recommendations on tribal welfare.
- **Governors' Powers:** The Governor has the authority to regulate land allocation and manage practices like money-lending to protect tribal interests.

Sixth Schedule

- **Applicability:** Focuses on tribal areas in Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram, and Tripura.
- **Governance:** Autonomous District Councils (ADCs) manage matters like land use, inheritance laws, and local customs. ADCs hold legislative, executive, and financial powers, and can levy taxes and manage resources.
- **Distinction from Fifth Schedule:** ADCs possess more autonomy, including the power to pass laws that supersede those of the state, subject to the Governor's approval.

Special Provisions for Northeastern States

Northeastern states enjoy additional protections under **Part XXI of the Constitution (Articles 371A-H)**. These provisions safeguard local customs, land ownership, and governance structures, particularly in states like Nagaland, Assam, Manipur, and Arunachal Pradesh.

WHY IS LADAKH DEMANDING INCLUSION IN THE SIXTH SCHEDULE?

1. **Political Representation and Autonomy:** After the creation of the Union Territory of Ladakh in 2019, political representation diminished since Ladakh no longer has a legislature. The region is now governed entirely by bureaucrats, prompting demands for Sixth Schedule status to restore political autonomy.
2. **Employment Concerns:** The lack of local job opportunities, compounded by the absence of a public service commission, has fueled demands for the Sixth Schedule. This would facilitate the creation of job policies tailored to Ladakh's needs.
3. **Cultural Preservation:** Ladakh's diverse tribal groups, such as the Gujjars, Bakarwals, and Changpas, possess distinct cultural identities that could be better preserved under the Sixth Schedule's protections.
4. **Ecological Protection:** Ladakh's fragile ecosystem, including its glaciers and alpine meadows, is vulnerable to exploitation. Sixth Schedule status would grant greater authority to protect the environment from harmful mining and industrial activities.
5. **Domicile Policy Issues:** The change in Jammu and Kashmir's domicile policy has raised concerns in Ladakh about the influx of non-locals, prompting demands for domicile safeguards.
6. **Strengthening Democratic Institutions:** The establishment of autonomous councils with more powers would strengthen local governance through bodies like the **Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Councils (LAHDC).**

ADVANTAGES OF SIXTH SCHEDULE INCLUSION

1. **Democratic Decentralization:** The creation of Autonomous District Councils allows for legislative and administrative autonomy, enhancing grassroots governance.
2. **Cultural Protection:** Regions under the Sixth Schedule can protect local languages, customs, and cultural practices. For instance, the Bodo language received recognition and protection under this framework.

3. **Tribal Land Rights:** Autonomous councils have the authority to legislate on key issues such as land and forest management, ensuring that tribal communities retain control over their ancestral lands.
4. **Financial Support:** Sixth Schedule areas receive greater financial grants from the central government, enabling faster development. The Finance Commission's recommendations ensure additional funds for these regions.
5. **Sustainable Development:** The focus on local governance allows for socio-economic development tailored to the region's specific needs, prioritizing sustainability.

ISSUES WITH THE SIXTH SCHEDULE

1. **Limited Geographical Coverage:** The Sixth Schedule only applies to certain regions, leaving out many tribal communities in other states.
2. **Ineffective Decentralization:** In practice, real decentralization is often lacking. For example, the Bodo Territorial Area has only one district council for its entire region.
3. **State Legislature Power:** While district councils can pass laws, they require the Governor's assent. In cases of conflict, the state legislature's laws prevail.
4. **Financial Dependency:** Many councils rely heavily on state governments for funding, leading to delays in resource allocation.
5. **Corruption:** The councils have been criticized for financial mismanagement and corruption, undermining their effectiveness.
6. **Lack of Skilled Professionals:** Development projects are often poorly planned due to a shortage of skilled professionals.
7. **Uncodified Customs:** Councils have failed to codify the customary laws of local tribes, leading to inconsistencies in their application.
8. **Political Interference:** The autonomy granted by the Sixth Schedule is often undermined by political meddling from the central and state governments.
9. **Pending Reforms:** The **125th Constitutional Amendment Bill**, aimed at empowering ADCs, remains stalled in Parliament.
10. **Non-implementation of the Forest Rights Act (FRA):** The 2006 Act, designed to protect tribal land rights, has not been implemented in many Sixth Schedule areas.

WAY FORWARD

1. **Village Councils:** Elected village councils accountable to Gram Sabhas should be established to ensure genuine local governance.
2. **Regular Elections:** Autonomous councils must hold regular, free, and fair elections to reduce the influence of tribal elites.
3. **Women and Minority Representation:** Adequate representation of women and ethnic minorities in autonomous councils is essential.
4. **Geographical Expansion:** The Sixth Schedule should be expanded to other tribal regions in need of protection, including Ladakh.
5. **Transparency:** To ensure effective development, the functioning of autonomous councils must be transparent, particularly in terms of funds and administration.

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INDIAN PENSION SYSTEM

RELEVANCE

❒ **Syllabus:**

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

INTRODUCTION

India's pension system has gone through three key phases: the Old Pension Scheme (OPS), the National Pension System (NPS), and the proposed Unified Pension Scheme (UPS). Each scheme marks a shift in the government's approach towards retirement security, with distinct advantages and disadvantages.

OVERVIEW OF DIFFERENT PENSION SCHEMES

Pension Scheme	Applicability	Features
Old Pension Scheme (OPS)	Applicable to government employees appointed before January 1, 2004.	a. Defined benefit scheme with pension as 50% of the last drawn salary plus Dearness Allowance (DA). b. Entire pension borne by the government; employee contributions went to the General Provident Fund (GPF).
National Pension System (NPS)	Applicable to central government employees appointed after January 1, 2004. States could voluntarily join.	a. Defined contribution scheme where employees contribute 10% of basic pay and DA, with matching government contribution. b. Pension tied to market performance; no fixed benefits. c. Voluntary for the unorganized sector.

Pension Scheme	Applicability	Features
Unified Pension Scheme (UPS)	Expected to apply from April 1, 2025, to those retired under NPS from 2004 onwards. Employees can opt to remain in NPS	a. Assured pension scheme combining elements of OPS and NPS. b. Funded contributory scheme with an assured pension, alongside employee contributions. c. Initially for central government employees, but states can adopt it.

CONCERNS WITH THE OLD PENSION SCHEME (OPS)

1. **Limited Coverage**: OPS only covered government employees (~12% of the workforce).
2. **Fiscal Burden**: Increasing basic salaries and pension costs posed a growing burden on the central and state governments. In 2004-05, civil service pension expenses were 2.31% of GDP, while the implicit pension debt was 56% of GDP.
3. **Burden on Future Generations**: OPS involved transferring resources from current taxpayers to pensioners, creating inter-generational debt.
4. **Disincentivized Early Retirement**: Employees were incentivized to remain until retirement, leading to underutilization of human resources.

ADVANTAGES OF NPS

1. **Flexibility**: Employees could choose their fund managers and investment preferences.
2. **Portability**: Permanent Retirement Account Number (PRAN) allowed portability across jobs.
3. **Regulation**: Oversight by an NPS Trust, with regular performance checks of fund managers.

ISSUES WITH NPS

1. **Market Volatility**: NPS returns depend on market conditions, causing uncertainty in pension outcomes.
2. **Increased Employee Burden**: Employees faced a reduction in disposable income due to mandatory contributions, unlike in OPS where the government bore the entire pension burden.
3. **No GPF Benefits**: NPS did not offer the fixed returns of GPF.
4. **No Family Pension**: Unlike OPS, NPS did not guarantee family pension.
5. **Lack of Inflation Indexation**: NPS pension was not indexed for inflation.

SIGNIFICANCE OF UNIFIED PENSION SCHEME (UPS)

1. **Assured Pension**: Employees with 25+ years of service will receive 50% of their last drawn salary as a fixed pension.
2. **Higher Government Contribution**: Government's contribution rate is set at 18.5%, higher than the 14% under NPS.
3. **Inflation Indexation**: Pension will be adjusted for inflation.
4. **Family Pension**: Assured family pension (60% of basic pay) for dependents after the employee's death.
5. **Combination of OPS and NPS Benefits**: UPS offers the guaranteed pension of OPS with the flexibility of NPS.

CONCERNS WITH UNIFIED PENSION SCHEME

1. **Increased Fiscal Burden**: The government may face significant financial pressure, with initial arrears estimated at ₹800 crore and annual expenses at ₹6,250 crore.
2. **Unsustainable Liabilities**: Combining OPS and NPS features could create long-term liabilities, potentially straining future budgets.

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3. **Limited Coverage**: Like OPS, UPS primarily benefits central government employees, leaving many public sector and informal workers outside its scope.
4. **Transition Issues**: Questions remain on how existing NPS contributors will transition to UPS.
5. **Disadvantage for Late Joiners**: The requirement of 25 years of service could disadvantage employees who join government service later in their careers.
6. **Lower Returns**: UPS could offer lower returns compared to market-linked NPS during high-growth periods.

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF PENSION SCHEMES

Feature	Old Pension Scheme (OPS)	National Pension System (NPS)	Unified Pension Scheme (UPS)
Pension Amount	50% of last drawn salary	Market-linked; no guaranteed amount	Guaranteed 50% of average basic pay over the last 12 months
Inflation Indexation	Adjusted for inflation through DA	Not applicable	Indexed for inflation (AICPI-IW)
Employee Contribution	None	10% of basic pay and DA	10% of basic pay and DA
Government Contribution	Full funding	14% of basic pay and DA	18.5% of basic pay and DA
Family Pension	Yes	Dependent on corpus	Yes (60% of pension)
Risk	No risk	Market-linked risk	Lower risk than NPS
Flexibility	Low	High	Limited

WAY FORWARD

1. **Expand Coverage**: UPS should extend to informal labor and public sector employees for broader pension security.
2. **Periodic Assessments**: Regular evaluations to ensure financial viability and sustainability of the scheme.
3. **Stakeholder Consultations**: Engaging with employees, unions, and experts to refine and address concerns.
4. **Performance Metrics**: Establish clear criteria for evaluating the success of UPS, ensuring balanced retirement security without excessive fiscal burden.

The Unified Pension Scheme aims to blend the best aspects of previous systems, offering security while balancing government responsibility with market-based contributions.

STATE CONTROL OVER TEMPLES

RELEVANCE

- **Syllabus:**
  - **PSIR:** Salient Features of the Indian Constitution
  - **GS2:** Government Policies

INTRODUCTION

The issue of state control over temples in India has long been a subject of debate, reignited recently by the controversy over the Tirupati Laddu Prasadam. Hindu religious organizations have critiqued this control, accusing the state of treating temples as financial assets rather than religious institutions. Here's an analysis of the history, arguments, and potential solutions regarding the state control of temples in India.

HISTORY OF STATE CONTROL OF TEMPLES IN INDIA

Colonial Period:

- **East India Company (1810-1817)**: The Company passed laws in Bengal, Madras, and Bombay to regulate temple administration and prevent misappropriation of temple income.
- **Religious Endowments Act (1863)**: This act aimed to secularize temple management by transferring control to committees, while the British government maintained oversight through legal frameworks like the Civil Procedure Code and Charitable and Religious Trusts Act (1920).
- **Madras Hindu Religious Endowments Act (1925)**: It created the Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments (HR&CE) Board, empowering provincial governments to legislate on temple administration and management.

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Post-Independence Period:

- **Law Commission Recommendations**: The Law Commission of India recommended laws to prevent misuse of temple funds.
- **State Acts**: States like Tamil Nadu and Bihar passed legislation such as the Tamil Nadu Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments Act (1951) and the Bihar Hindu Religious Trusts Act (1950) to regulate and manage temple administration.

CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS FOR STATE CONTROL OF TEMPLES

- **Article 25(2)**: This provision allows the state to regulate secular, economic, and financial activities associated with religious practices and enact laws for social welfare and reform.
- **Seventh Schedule**: Religious endowments and institutions fall under the Concurrent List, allowing both the central and state governments to legislate on this issue.

JUDICIAL PRECEDENTS ON STATE CONTROL OF TEMPLES

1. **Shirur Mutt Case (1954)**: The Supreme Court ruled that the state could regulate the administration of religious or charitable institutions.
2. **Ratilal Panachand Gandhi v. State of Bombay (1954)**: The Court upheld state regulation of trust properties.
3. **Pannalal Bansilal Pitti v. State of Andhra Pradesh (1996)**: The SC upheld a law abolishing hereditary rights over temple management.

ARGUMENTS IN FAVOR OF STATE CONTROL OF TEMPLES

1. **Prevention of Mismanagement**: Government oversight is seen as necessary to ensure transparency and reduce corruption in temple fund management.
2. **Protection from Commercialization**: State control prevents the commercialization and exploitation of temple assets by vested interests.
3. **Promotion of Gender Equality**: State involvement ensures temple access for all genders, as seen in the Sabarimala case where the government supported equitable access for women.
4. **Redistribution of Resources**: Temple revenue is used for state-run initiatives benefiting society, such as infrastructure development and social welfare programs.
5. **Inclusivity**: State control ensures that temples adhere to constitutional principles of inclusivity, providing access to marginalized groups.
6. **Prevention of Exploitation**: Government management protects devotees from exploitation by temple authorities regarding excessive fees for rituals.

ARGUMENTS AGAINST STATE CONTROL OF TEMPLES

1. **Unfair Treatment**: Hindu temples are controlled by the government, while institutions of other religions, such as mosques and churches, are allowed to manage their own affairs.
2. **Bureaucratic Inefficiency**: Government-appointed officials often lack the religious understanding required for effective temple management, leading to inefficiency and mismanagement.
3. **Diversion of Funds**: Temple funds are often diverted for secular purposes, which many devotees view as a violation of the temple's religious function.
4. **Erosion of Heritage**: State control sometimes conflicts with temple traditions, as seen in the support for women's entry into Sabarimala, which has been criticized as an attack on ritual practices.

5. **Decline in Devotee Participation**: Bureaucratic control reduces the involvement of devotees in temple management, leading to a decline in trust.
6. **Economic Mismanagement**: Cases of temple land encroachment in Tamil Nadu and Karnataka highlight concerns about the state's handling of temple assets.
7. **Private Trusts as Better Managers**: Critics argue that temples run by private trusts, such as the Shirdi Sai Baba Temple Trust, are better managed and more successful in running charitable programs.

WAY FORWARD

1. **Greater Autonomy with Oversight**: Independent temple trusts consisting of religious leaders, community representatives, and financial experts should manage temple affairs, while the government should only have oversight roles, akin to the management of the Golden Temple by the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC).
2. **Transparency and Accountability**: Regular financial audits and mandatory public disclosure of temple funds would ensure better transparency and accountability in the use of temple resources.
3. **Formation of Devotee Councils**: Local councils comprising devotees could advise on temple management and rituals, empowering communities to preserve religious traditions.
4. **State as Custodian of Heritage**: The state should focus on preserving the heritage and architecture of temples rather than controlling their day-to-day management.
5. **Collaboration with Religious Leaders**: Temple funds should only be used for social welfare programs after consultation with temple authorities to ensure alignment with religious principles.

CONCLUSION

The debate over state control of temples in India is complex, involving legal, religious, and administrative issues. While state oversight may be necessary to ensure transparency and prevent misuse, there is a growing demand for greater autonomy for temples, allowing them to manage their religious and cultural affairs with minimal government interference.

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MAINS PRACTICE QUESTIONS

Q. Salig S. Harrison termed the first two decades following the Independence as the ''most dangerous decades" referring to the linguistic or communal conflicts which took place in the country at that time. Explain the above statement with reference to the ethnic challenges of India.

The challenges to nation-building and nation-state building in India related to ethnic identity have had significant implications for the country's social fabric and governance. Here is a more detailed elaboration on each of the forms mentioned:

1. Autonomy movements: Autonomy movements typically arise from a desire for greater self-governance and decision-making powers within a specific region or community. Various ethnic groups in India, such as the Kashmiris, Nagas, and Mizos, have demanded autonomy or regional self-rule. These movements often seek to address historical grievances, preserve cultural identity, protect economic interests, and secure political representation. Autonomy movements challenge the centralized authority of the state and call for decentralized governance structures that recognize the distinct needs and aspirations of specific regions or communities.
2. Demands for secession: Some ethnic groups have gone beyond autonomy movements and called for outright secession from India. These demands for separate nationhood are often rooted in historical, cultural, linguistic, or religious differences. The most notable example is the demand for an independent Khalistan by some sections of the Sikh community in Punjab during the 1980s. While secessionist demands have not gained widespread support, they reflect the deep-seated frustrations and grievances of certain ethnic communities that feel marginalized within the Indian state.
3. Insurgency: Insurgency refers to armed rebellions or uprisings by ethnic groups seeking political, social, or economic change through forceful means. Insurgencies often arise when peaceful means of redress are perceived as inadequate or ignored. For instance, the insurgency in Jammu and Kashmir has been a long-standing challenge for the Indian state, with various militant groups seeking independence or merger with Pakistan. Insurgency movements involve armed confrontations with state security forces and have resulted in significant human rights abuses and disruptions in affected regions.
4. Conflicts and riots on the basis of identity markers: India has experienced numerous conflicts and riots based on identity markers such as language, religion, caste, and tribal identity. These conflicts often arise from perceived or real social, economic, or political inequalities between different communities. Examples include the communal violence between Hindus and Muslims during the partition of India, caste-based conflicts in various regions, and clashes between tribal communities and non-tribal settlers in resource-rich areas. These conflicts can lead to loss of life, displacement of communities, and deepening social divisions.

It is important to note that these forms of challenges to nation-building do not occur in isolation but are often interconnected. Ethnic identity-based movements and conflicts can stem from historical grievances, socio-economic disparities, cultural differences, and political marginalization. Addressing these challenges requires inclusive governance, equitable development, respect for cultural diversity, and mechanisms for meaningful participation and dialogue among various ethnic groups.

Q. Political theory is much more than mere science. Comment

According to Rajeev Bhargava, political theory is a form of systematic reflection characterized by conceptual sensitivity, rational structure, aspiration for a humanly achievable truth and objectivity, generality, and an explicit mandate to uncover deeper insights. Scholars assert that political theory transcends mere scientific knowledge. George Catlin notes that political theory is divided into political science and political philosophy. It is scientific in nature as it incorporates concepts like justice and equality, which are observable and testable, and adheres to the principles of reason and rationalism.

Conversely, political philosophy is a part of normative political theory, addressing questions such as the nature of justice, the concept of rights, and the distinction between 'is' and 'ought.' Additionally, political philosophy seeks to resolve conflicts between political theories that might appear equally valid under certain circumstances.

Andrew Hacker, in his work "Political Theory: Philosophy, Ideology, Science" (1961), highlights the dual nature of political theory. He contends that every political theorist must fulfill both the roles of a scientist and a philosopher, arguing that lasting contributions to political knowledge require integrating these dual roles in both science and philosophy.

Thus, political theory broadly encompasses political science and political philosophy, collectively performing three functions: description, criticism, and reconstruction

Q. End of ideology. Discuss

Destutt de Tracy described ideology as the "science of ideas," broadly defined as a set of accepted truths by a group or nation without further scrutiny.

The concept of ideology has a complex reputation in political theory due to varying interpretations. Some thinkers argued for the end of ideology, linking it to totalitarianism (Hannah Arendt) or dismissing it as meta-narratives (Jean-François Lyotard). The debate on the end of ideology gained traction in the 1960s with scholars like Daniel Bell, Raymond Aron, Seymour Martin Lipset, and Edward Shils. They suggested that ideology became irrelevant as countries adopted similar technocratic models. Daniel Bell's "The End of Ideology" argued that post-industrial societies develop similarly regardless of ideological differences. Lipset in "Political Man" contended that in Western societies, left-right distinctions are diminishing. In 1992, after the USSR's collapse, Francis Fukuyama proposed in "The End of History" that Marxism-Leninism lost significance, marking the triumph of Western liberal capitalism.

Critics like Richard Titmuss, C. Wright Mills, C.B. Macpherson, and Alasdair MacIntyre challenged the end of ideology thesis. Titmuss argued that champions of this thesis ignored issues like economic monopolies and social disorganization within capitalism. Wright Mills criticized it as endorsing the status quo, while MacIntyre saw it as a product of its time and place. Michael Freeden emphasized that ideologies provide frameworks essential for political action. Ideologies compete in shaping societal understanding and public policy. As long as power remains central to politics, ideologies will remain relevant. For instance, Pratap Bhanu Mehta noted the ascendance of "Putinism" aligning with global political tendencies amid the Russia-Ukraine conflict.

Clifford Geertz likened ideologies to cultural maps, providing symbols to understand complex social dynamics, ensuring their enduring relevance in political analysis.

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Q. Discuss the legitimacy of recognizing political philosophy for its critical role.

Political philosophy, according to Sabine, can be understood as mankind's attempt to deliberately comprehend and resolve the issues of group life and organization.

Political philosophy plays a vital role in the critical examination and analysis of political institutions, ideologies, and practices. Nonetheless, it is frequently contrasted with political science, which is believed to deal with what is 'real,' while political philosophy is limited to what is 'ideal.' This narrow perspective overlooks the extensive scope of political philosophy and its critical function in numerous key areas. DD Raphael, in his book "Problems of Political Philosophy," argued that the main purpose of philosophy has been the critical evaluation of beliefs. He explained that while science seeks explanation, philosophy seeks justification, meaning rational grounds we typically take for granted. For instance, Plato's aim in illustrating an ideal state was to critique the existing social order and promote an understanding of social concepts like justice. Furthermore, political philosophy's capacity to evaluate the legitimacy and efficacy of political systems and institutions, identify gaps and contradictions in existing political systems, and propose alternative ways of organizing society that better serve the interests of all, has been crucial. It also functions as a critical tool for evaluating assumptions and values in light of moral and social criteria, such as the debate over the legitimacy of the death penalty in modern societies. As the world and political systems continually evolve, there is a constant need for critical analysis and reflection on the current state of politics. Political philosophy provides the framework for such analysis through its critical tools of analysis, synthesis, and improvement.

However, political philosophy can be perceived as too abstract and disconnected from real-world political issues, rendering its criticisms irrelevant or impractical at times. Its critical function may not effectively translate into tangible political action, leaving its insights without real-world impact. It is also prone to bias and subjectivity, often reflecting the values and perspectives of the philosopher rather than objective analysis, and has even been used to justify the status quo. For example, many classical liberals argue that inequality is a natural or necessary feature of society. A Hacker cautions to distinguish political theory from ideology, noting that a theory, whether it takes the character of science or philosophy, must be impartial and unbiased.

Therefore, through this critical examination, political philosophy has helped reveal the limitations and flaws of political systems and has driven the development of alternative political visions, working towards a more just and equitable society.

SCHOLAR DIGEST: KNOW YOUR SCHOLARS

A.G. FRANK

INTRODUCTION

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

DEPENDENCY THEORY

Frank's central argument revolved around the idea that in our interconnected and globalized world, some countries thrive while others suffer. According to dependency theory, the citizens of less-developed countries should not be held responsible for the lack of progress in their societies. Instead, Frank posited that Western nations actively hindered the development of these countries. He contended that historically, the "core" nations like the USA and UK, forming the privileged "metropolis," exploited the "peripheral" nations by keeping them in a state of dependency and underdevelopment. Developed nations accumulated wealth by exploiting the poorest nations, utilizing them as sources of cheap raw materials and labor.

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

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IMMANUEL WALLERSTEIN

INTRODUCTION

Immanuel Maurice Wallerstein (September 28, 1930 – August 31, 2019) was an American sociologist and economic historian, renowned for pioneering the world-systems approach within sociology.

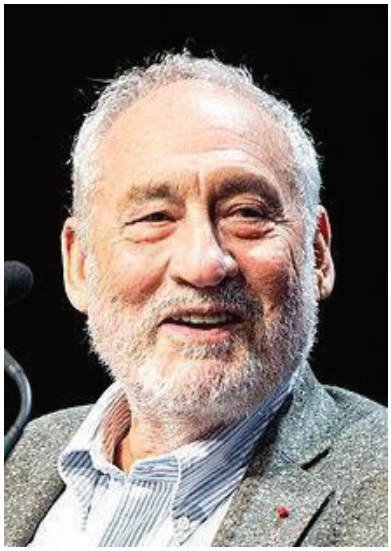
WORLD SYSTEM THEORY

World-systems theory, developed by American sociologist and historian Immanuel Wallerstein (1930–2019) in his 1974 work "The Modern World System," presents a contrasting perspective to modernization theory. While modernization theory posits that economic development will eventually spread globally, Wallerstein's theory argues that economically powerful regions primarily benefit themselves at the expense of peripheral areas. This concept can be traced back to a notion proposed by Vladimir Ilyich Lenin (1870–1924), the leader of the Bolshevik Revolution (1917), who suggested that class struggles in capitalist Europe had, to some extent, shifted into the international economic arena, with Russia and China representing proletarian countries. Wallerstein's focus was on the period when European capitalism first expanded into Africa and the Americas, but he also emphasized that world-systems theory could be applied to earlier systems where Europeans did not hold dominance.

In line with Wallerstein's perspective, German-born American economist André Gunder Frank (1929–2005) argued for the existence of an ancient world system, indicating an early tension between core and periphery. He further extended the application of world-systems theory to the 20th century, asserting that "underdevelopment" wasn't just a matter of falling behind but resulted from the exploitative economic power wielded by industrialized nations. This idea, often referred to as the "development of underdevelopment" or "dependency theory," offered an alternative narrative for world history, one that lacked a positive outcome for the majority of humanity.

Similar to modernization theory, world-systems theory has faced criticism for its Eurocentric perspective. Additionally, many economists have questioned the empirical evidence supporting it. While the theory has been productive in raising important questions, its proposed answers have generated significant controversy.

JOSEPH STIGLITZ



INTRODUCTION

Joseph Eugene Stiglitz, born on February 9, 1943, in Gary, Indiana, USA, is an American economist renowned for his pioneering work on the theory of markets characterized by unequal access to information. Alongside A. Michael Spence and George A. Akerlof, he was awarded the Nobel Prize for Economics in 2001 for his contributions to this field.

CONCEPT OF INFORMATION ASYMMETRY

Joseph Stiglitz is renowned for his significant contributions to the field of information economics, a sub-discipline of microeconomics that explores the impact of information and information systems on economic dynamics and decision-making. His groundbreaking work on information asymmetry played a pivotal role in securing him the Nobel Prize in Economics in 2001.

Information asymmetry refers to an unequal distribution of information between participants in an economic exchange. In such situations, one party involved in the transaction may possess more comprehensive information compared to the other party. For instance, a buyer might be better informed than a seller, or a borrower could have greater insights into their ability to repay a loan compared to the lender.

One of Joseph Stiglitz's notable contributions is the development of the screening technique, a method designed to bridge the information gap necessary for optimizing economic transactions in markets. Stiglitz's screening technique has found widespread application, particularly in industries such as insurance and lending.

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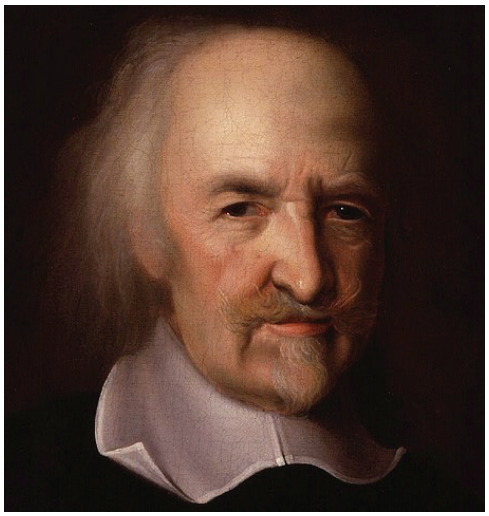
THOMAS HOBBES



INTRODUCTION

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

STATE OF NATURE

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

SOCIAL CONTRACT

To escape the state of nature, Hobbes argued that individuals must enter into a social contract with each other. In this contract, individuals agree to give up some of their natural rights in exchange for protection from the government. The government, in turn, is responsible for maintaining law and order, and ensuring the safety and security of its citizens. Hobbes believed that the social contract was necessary to prevent society from descending into chaos and violence.

ABSOLUTE SOVEREIGNTY

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

RELEVANCE TO MODERN POLITICS

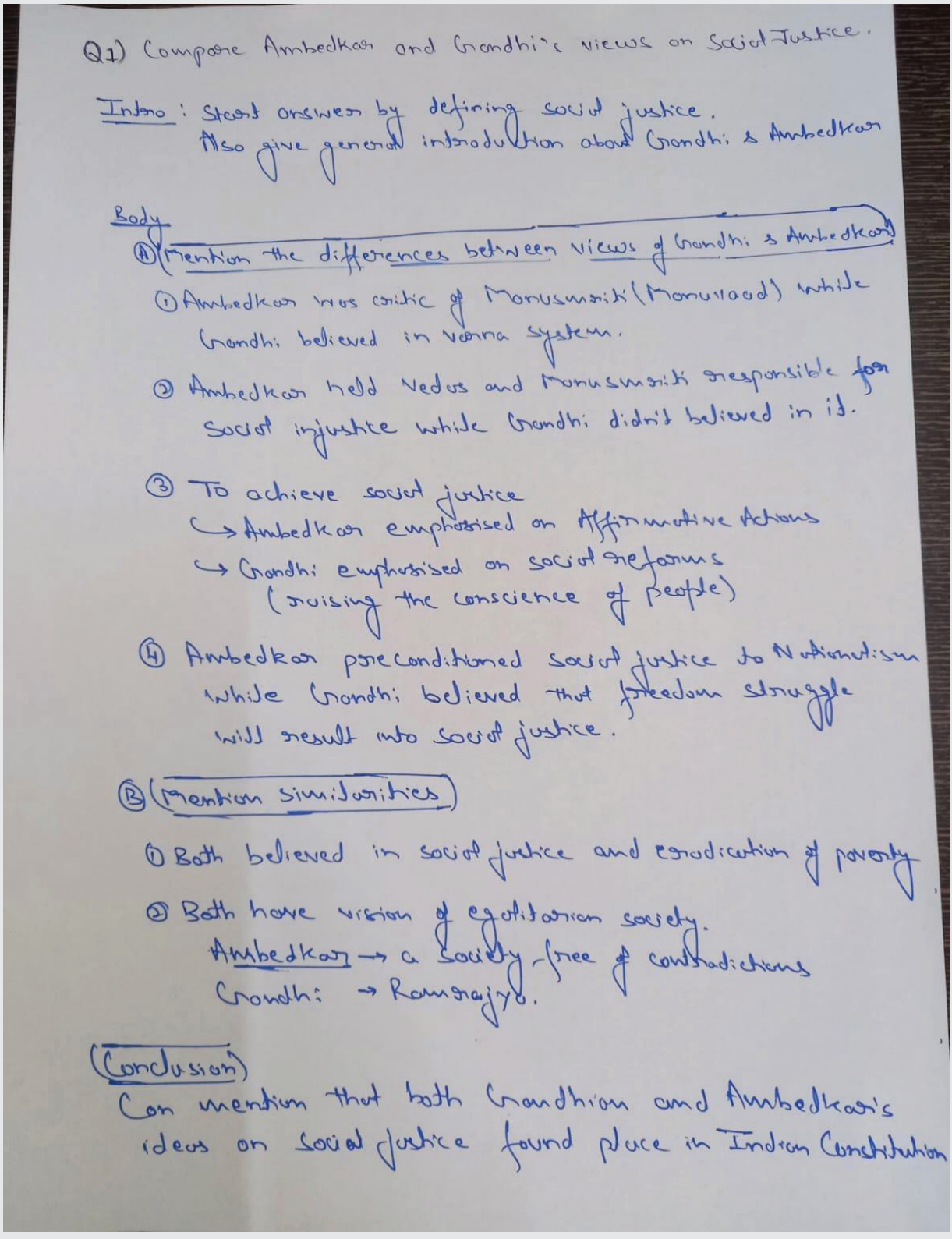
Hobbes' political philosophy has been influential in modern political theory, particularly in the areas of political sovereignty and social contract theory. His ideas about the need for a strong government to maintain order and prevent chaos have been echoed by many modern political thinkers. However,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

CONCLUSION

Thomas Hobbes was a pioneering political philosopher whose work laid the foundation for

modern political theory. His belief in the need for a strong, centralized government to prevent society from descending into chaos and violence remains relevant today. However, his view of absolute monarchy has been met with criticism and has been replaced by more democratic forms of government. Nonetheless, his contributions to the field of political philosophy have been significant and continue to be studied and debated by scholars today.

Q. Compare Ambedkar and Gandhi's views on social justice.



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

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

Body

(A) Mention the differences between views of Gandhi & Ambedkar

① Ambedkar was critic of Manusmriti (Manuvaad) while Gandhi believed in Varna system.

② Ambedkar held Vedas and Manusmriti responsible for social injustice while Gandhi didn't believed in it.

③ To achieve social justice
↳ Ambedkar emphasised on Affirmative Actions
↳ Gandhi emphasised on social reforms (raising the conscience of people)

④ Ambedkar preconditioned social justice to Nationalism while Gandhi believed that freedom struggle will result into social justice.

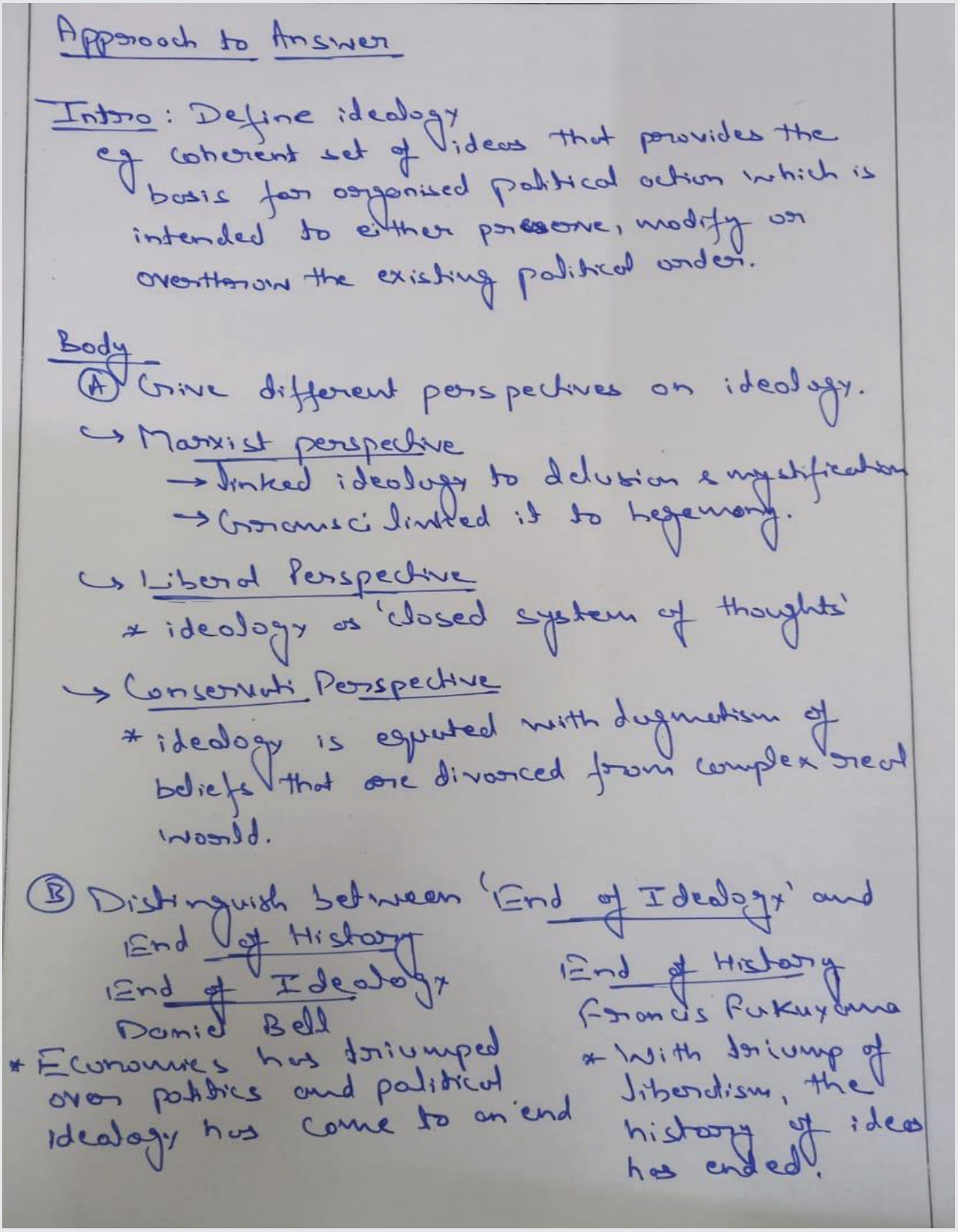
(B) Mention similarities

① Both believed in social justice and eradication of poverty

② Both have vision of egalitarian society.
Ambedkar → a society free of contradictions
Gandhi → Ramrajya.

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

Q. Analyze the concept of ideology from various viewpoints and distinguish between the ideas of the "End of Ideology" and the "End of History."



Approach to Answer

Intro: Define ideology
eg coherent set of ideas that provides the basis for organised political action which is intended to either preserve, modify or overthrow the existing political order.

Body
(A) Give different perspectives on ideology.
↳ Marxist perspective
→ linked ideology to delusion & mystification
→ Gramsci linked it to hegemony.
↳ Liberal Perspective
* ideology as 'closed system of thoughts'
↳ Conservati Perspective
* ideology is equated with dogmatism of beliefs that are divorced from complex real world.

(B) Distinguish between 'End of Ideology' and End of History

End of Ideology
Daniel Bell
* Economics has triumped over politics and political ideology has come to an end

End of History
Francis Fukuyama
* With triump of liberalism, the history of ideas has ended.

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Q. India needs some creative diplomacy to address the changing environment of the relations between China and Srilanka. Comment

Q→ "India needs some creative diplomacy to address the changing environment of the relations between China and Sri Lanka". Comment.

Answer

Intro: Give India's relations with respect to Sri Lanka.

↳ Relationship between India and SriLanka is inter twined in historical bond. (Rajasingham Jayadevan)

Body: Tell the emerging China-Srilanka relations

↳ Hambantota port lease to Srilanka.

↳ Sri Lanka's debt to China tripled in last decade.

Give ideas of creative Diplomacy

↳ Using Buddhism as a common link

↳ Resolving small disputes of fishing etc

↳ Economic interdependence.

Conclusion

↳ Resolve the impending issues and build people to people relations.

PRELIMS PRACTICE QUESTIONS

1. Which concept in international relations refers to the use of nuclear weapons as a means of preventing an adversary from taking aggressive actions?

(a) Non-proliferation
(b) Deterrence
(c) Containment
(d) Disarmament

2. The term "nuclear taboo" refers to:

(a) A legal framework for regulating nuclear weapons
(b) A collective norm opposing the use of nuclear weapons
(c) A doctrine encouraging nuclear proliferation
(d) A strategy for nuclear disarmament

3. Which country is considered a "P5" member under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)?

(a) India
(b) Iran
(c) North Korea
(d) China

4. The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) aims to:

(a) Encourage the spread of nuclear technology
(b) Promote disarmament among non-nuclear states
(c) Establish a global ban on nuclear energy
(d) Limit the use of conventional weapons

Answers

1. (b) Deterrence
2. (b) A collective norm opposing the use of nuclear weapons
3. (d) China
4. (b) Promote disarmament among non-nuclear states

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