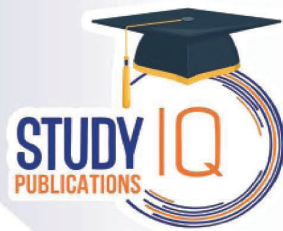


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GEOPOLITICS AT GLANCE

INDIA-INDONESIA RELATIONS

RELEVANCE

□ Syllabus:

- **PSIR:** India and the South Asia
- **GS2:** International Relations



INTRODUCTION

Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto's attendance as the chief guest at India's 76th Republic Day marked a key moment in India-Indonesia relations. The two nations share deep-rooted historical, cultural, and trade connections. Notably, Indonesia's first President, Sukarno, was the chief guest at India's inaugural Republic Day in 1950, highlighting the enduring nature of their bilateral ties.

During the visit, both countries signed several Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) in areas such as healthcare, digital infrastructure, and defense, further reinforcing their cooperation as key Indo-Pacific democracies.

EVOLUTION OF INDIA-INDONESIA RELATIONS

Post-Independence Phase (1940s-1950s)

India played a crucial role in Indonesia's independence struggle against Dutch colonial rule. Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru strongly advocated for Indonesia's freedom on the global stage. Major developments during this period included:

- **Treaty of Friendship (1951):** Strengthened trade, cultural, and military cooperation.
- **Shared Ideologies:** Both countries embraced non-alignment, peaceful coexistence, and anti-colonialism, leading to their participation in the 1955 Bandung Conference and the 1961

establishment of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM).

Diplomatic Strains (1960s)

Despite early collaboration, relations faced challenges due to geopolitical shifts:

- ❑ **Sino-Indian War (1962):** While India's ties with China soured after the 1959 Tibetan uprising and the 1962 war, Indonesia maintained friendly relations with China.
- ❑ **India-Pakistan War (1965):** Indonesia supported Pakistan during the conflict, even providing military assistance, which strained bilateral relations.

Cold War and Renewed Engagement (1966-1980s)

A shift in Indonesia's leadership led to a gradual restoration of ties:

- ❑ **Suharto's Leadership:** Indonesia distanced itself from China and worked to rebuild relations with India.
- ❑ **Maritime Agreement (1977):** Strengthened cooperation in maritime security.
- ❑ **Suharto's India Visit (1980):** Marked a significant diplomatic step in improving relations.

Look East Policy (1990s)

India's economic liberalization and the introduction of the 'Look East' policy in 1991 significantly enhanced ties:

- ❑ **Economic Expansion:** Bilateral trade and investments surged.
- ❑ **Comprehensive Partnership:** Economic, security, and cultural cooperation deepened.

Act East Policy and Recent Developments (Since 2000s)

The 2014 launch of India's 'Act East' policy positioned Indonesia as a strategic partner. Key advancements include:

- ❑ **Trade Growth:** Indonesia became India's second-largest trading partner in ASEAN after Singapore, with trade rising from \$4.3 billion in 2005-06 to \$29.4 billion in 2023-24.
- ❑ **Strategic Partnership (2018):** PM Modi's Jakarta visit led to a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership and an Indo-Pacific maritime cooperation vision.
- ❑ **Maritime Security:** Both nations advocate for maritime dispute resolution and the South China Sea Code of Conduct under UNCLOS.
- ❑ **Defense Ties:** Indonesia is in discussions with India to acquire BrahMos missiles in a \$450 million deal.

KEY AREAS OF COOPERATION

1. Economic & Trade Engagement

- **Bilateral Trade:** Reached \$29.4 billion in 2023-24, with a \$50 billion target by 2025. Indonesia is India's second-largest ASEAN trade partner.
- **Trade Composition:** India imports coal, palm oil, and rubber, while exporting refined petroleum, telecom equipment, and agricultural products.
- **Investment:** India has invested \$1.56 billion in Indonesia, focusing on mining, textiles, and infrastructure. Conversely, Indonesia's \$653.8 million investment in India is mainly in manufacturing and trade.
- **Trade Facilitation:** Both nations are reviewing the ASEAN-India Trade in Goods Agreement (AITIGA) and signed an MoU on Local Currency Settlement to promote local currency trade.

2. Strategic & Security Cooperation

- **Defense Engagement:** Joint military initiatives include coordinated patrols, Ex Garuda Shakti (Army), and Ex Samudra Shakti (Navy). Plans for a Bilateral Maritime

Dialogue and Cyber Security Dialogue are also in place.

- **Defense Industry Collaboration:** The 2024 India-Indonesia Defense Industry Exhibition highlighted potential defense technology and manufacturing cooperation.

3. Energy & Health Collaboration

- **Clean Energy & Minerals:** Focus on joint exploration of nickel and bauxite and collaboration in biofuels and sustainability.
- **Healthcare:** Signed MoUs on health and traditional medicine, emphasizing digital health and professional training.

4. Technology & Digital Advancements

- **Digital Cooperation:** India's Aadhaar, UPI, and CoWIN models are aiding Indonesia's digital transformation.
- **Joint Research:** Both countries are collaborating in AI, cybersecurity, quantum communication, and space technology.

5. Cultural & Educational Exchanges

- **Heritage Conservation:** India is aiding in the restoration of the UNESCO-listed Prambanan Temple. Indian Cultural Centers in Jakarta and Bali promote Indian arts and yoga.
- **Educational Collaboration:** Scholarships for Indonesian students are available through ITEC and ICCR programs.

6. Multilateral Cooperation

- **Regional Engagement:** Both nations emphasize ASEAN centrality and collaborate in forums such as the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific, the India-Indonesia-Australia Trilateral, the Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI), BRICS, and the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA).

CHALLENGES IN INDIA-INDONESIA RELATIONS

1. Trade & Economic Hurdles

- **Lack of CECA:** Unlike Malaysia and Singapore, Indonesia lacks a Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA) with India, reducing its trade competitiveness.
- **AITIGA Utilization:** ASEAN-India Trade in Goods Agreement (AITIGA) has a low utilization rate of 25%, limiting trade benefits.
- **Trade Deficit:** India's large imports of palm oil (\$11 billion in 2022) and coal create an unfavorable trade balance.
- **Untapped Trade Potential:** Bilateral trade could rise by 33% to reach \$61 billion, highlighting significant growth opportunities.

2. Investment & Chinese Influence

- **Chinese Investment Dominance:** Under President Joko Widodo, China's investment in Indonesia has surged, overshadowing Indian investments. In 2024, Indonesia signed \$10 billion in business deals with China.
- **Protectionism in India:** Indian industries, particularly textiles, worry about rising competition from Indonesian exports like Viscose Staple Fibre (VSF).

3. Geopolitical & Strategic Constraints

- **China's Expanding Influence:** Indonesia's involvement in China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and major infrastructure projects, such as railways, raises strategic concerns for India.
- **Defense Procurement Issues:** Regulatory differences in defense procurement slow down joint projects, limiting strategic cooperation.

- 4. Connectivity & People-to-People Challenges**
- **Limited Direct Flights:** Few direct air routes restrict tourism, business, and people-to-people ties.
 - **Visa Restrictions:** Stringent visa policies hinder student mobility, business engagements, and cultural exchanges.

PATH FORWARD

- 1. Trade Enhancement:** Speeding up the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) and expanding cooperation in renewable energy and agriculture can address trade imbalances.
- 2. Strategic Alliances:** Encouraging Indonesia to join global platforms like the International

Solar Alliance and the Global Biofuels Alliance can drive joint innovation.

- 3. Regional Collaboration:** Strengthening engagement in ASEAN, IORA, and the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium will align strategic interests and ensure regional stability.
- 4. Economic & Security Synergy:** Joint defense projects, maritime security efforts, and infrastructure development will strengthen the Indo-Pacific framework, countering China's growing influence.
- 5. Deeper Bilateral Ties:** Expanding partnerships in IT, energy, and tourism, while enhancing cultural and educational exchanges, will reinforce India's role as a dependable strategic partner for Indonesia.

INDIA AND GLOBAL SOUTH

RELEVANCE

Syllabus:

- **PSIR:** India and the global south
- **GS2:** International relations



INTRODUCTION

India has firmly positioned itself as a leading advocate for the Global South, voicing the concerns of developing nations on international platforms. At the 18th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas in January 2025, Prime Minister Narendra Modi reiterated India's dedication to strengthening their representation. Similarly, during the 3rd Voice of Global South Summit in August 2024, he emphasized India's commitment to pushing for inclusive global governance reforms.

Since gaining independence in 1947, culminating in its G20 presidency in 2023, India has consistently championed the issues of the Global South. However, these nations remain marginalized in key global forums, leading to the neglect of their concerns.

WHAT IS THE GLOBAL SOUTH?

1. The term **Global South** generally refers to developing, less developed, or underdeveloped countries, predominantly located in Africa, Asia, and Latin America.
2. These nations often experience higher levels of poverty, income disparity, and limited access to resources compared to the wealthier nations of the **Global North**.
3. In contrast, the Global North comprises economically advanced nations, mainly in North America and Europe, with some exceptions in Oceania and beyond.

THE BRANDT LINE: DIVIDING THE GLOBAL NORTH AND GLOBAL SOUTH

1. Proposed by Willy Brandt in the 1980s, the **Brandt Line** is an imaginary boundary that categorizes nations into wealthier (predominantly Northern Hemisphere) and poorer (mostly Southern Hemisphere) economies.
2. It primarily signifies the socio-economic divide between the Global North and the Global South.

INDIA'S HISTORICAL TIES WITH THE GLOBAL SOUTH

Given its colonial past and developmental challenges, India has historically aligned itself with the Global South. Under Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, newly independent India emerged as a key advocate for these nations.

INDIA'S ROLE IN THE GLOBAL SOUTH

- ❑ **Non-Aligned Movement (NAM):** India was instrumental in establishing NAM, which addressed the socio-economic and political priorities of the Global South. It also led efforts to promote a **New International Economic Order (NIEO)** to challenge the dominance of Bretton Woods institutions.
- ❑ **Formation of G-77:** India played a leading role in forming the **Group of 77 (G-77)**, a coalition of 134 developing nations at the UN, aimed at strengthening the collective voice of the Global South.
- ❑ **Stockholm Conference 1972:** India actively championed the concerns of the Global South regarding environmental policies. Its leadership helped shape principles such as **Sustainable Development (Brundtland Report)**, **Common But Differentiated Responsibilities (CBDR)**, and the **Polluter Pays Principle**.

INDIA'S FOREIGN POLICY SHIFT POST-COLD WAR

With the Cold War's end and India's domestic economic crisis, a pragmatic shift occurred in foreign policy, prioritizing national economic and security interests over broad Global South solidarity.

- ❑ **Reduced Engagement with NAM:** India scaled back its involvement, with its participation at NAM summits declining significantly—e.g., the Prime Minister skipped the 18th NAM Summit in 2019.

- ❑ **Strengthened Ties with the Global North:** India deepened strategic partnerships with the US, EU, and Japan, exemplified by the India-US Civil Nuclear Deal.
- ❑ **Focus on New Multilateral Platforms:** India increased its participation in BRICS, SCO, and ASEAN, sometimes at the expense of G-77 and NAM.

Despite this shift, India's growing economic and geopolitical influence has once again positioned it as a key voice of the Global South.

CHALLENGES FACING THE GLOBAL SOUTH

1. **Limited Representation in Global Governance:** Africa and Latin America lack permanent seats in institutions like the UN Security Council (UNSC).
2. **Debt Crisis:** According to UNCTAD's **A World of Debt Report 2024**, public debt in developing nations is rising at twice the rate of developed economies.
3. **Outdated Global Financial Structures:** The WTO's dispute resolution mechanism is ineffective, while developing nations remain underrepresented in financial institutions like the World Bank and IMF.
4. **Policy Differences with the Global North:** Divergent views on democracy, human rights, and climate policies complicate global consensus-building.
5. **Impact of Geopolitical Conflicts:** Wars, such as the Russia-Ukraine conflict, have exacerbated food and energy inflation, disproportionately affecting the Global South.

INDIA AS THE VOICE OF THE GLOBAL SOUTH

1. **New Delhi Declaration:** India leveraged its G20 presidency to ensure issues like debt relief, climate justice, and gender equality were included in the declaration.

2. **G20 Expansion:** India facilitated the inclusion of the **African Union**, ensuring greater representation of the Global South.
3. **Voice of Global South Summit:** India initiated this summit to foster solidarity among developing nations facing shared challenges.
4. **Vaccine Maitri Initiative:** During COVID-19, India supplied vaccines and medicines to several Global South nations.
5. **Inclusive Multilateral Forums:** India has pushed for broader representation in BRICS and SCO, leading to the transformation of **BRICS into BRICS Plus**.
6. **Climate Leadership:** India has played a key role in climate negotiations, advocating for Global South interests—for example, securing the **Loss and Damage Fund** at COP28.

BARRIERS TO INDIA'S LEADERSHIP IN THE GLOBAL SOUTH

1. **UNSC Membership Roadblock:** India's bid for a permanent UNSC seat faces resistance from the **Coffee Club**, which includes some Global South nations.
2. **Neglect of NAM and G-77:** India's disengagement from traditional Global South platforms has weakened its influence in these coalitions.
3. **China's Influence:** China's extensive economic aid and development initiatives challenge India's leadership ambitions.
4. **Inconsistent Engagement:** India has failed to sustain momentum with certain regions—e.g., no **India-Africa Summit** has been held since 2018, and it skipped the 2023 **Pacific Island Summit**.
5. **Perceived Big Brother Approach:** Accusations of interference in domestic affairs have led to skepticism about India's leadership—e.g., the **India Out Campaign** in the Maldives.

6. **Project Delays:** India's slow execution of development projects—e.g., **Kaladan Project, Asia-Africa Growth Corridor**—undermines its credibility as a reliable partner.

WAY FORWARD FOR INDIA

1. **Establish an Indian Development Bank:** A dedicated bank could provide alternative development financing to the Global South, countering China's economic influence.

2. **Revitalize NAM:** In the wake of geopolitical conflicts like the Russia-Ukraine and Israel-Hamas wars, India should reinvigorate NAM as a neutral diplomatic platform.

3. **Improve Project Execution:** Faster and more efficient implementation of development initiatives is crucial.

4. **Adopt a Partnership-Based Approach:** India must foster relationships built on trust rather than dominance.

5. **Regular Summits:** Institutionalizing summits with African and Indo-Pacific nations will strengthen diplomatic ties.

6. **Capacity-Building Initiatives:** India should share its expertise in MSMEs, digital infrastructure, climate solutions, and food security to deepen engagement with the Global South.

ISRAEL-HAMAS CEASEFIRE AGREEMENT

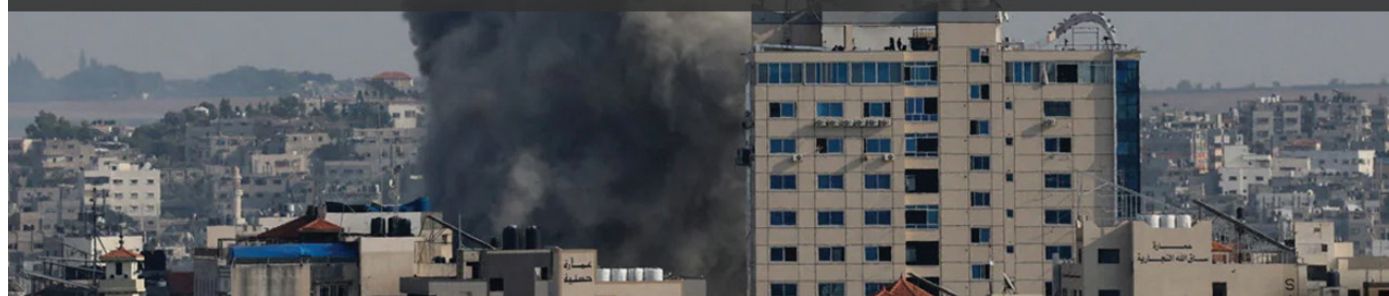
RELEVANCE

□ Syllabus:

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



ISRAEL-HAMAS WAR



INTRODUCTION

The **Israel-Hamas ceasefire agreement** announced on **May 6, 2024**, represents a **significant diplomatic breakthrough** in the ongoing conflict that began after Hamas's **October 7, 2023, attack on Israel**. This deal, mediated by **Qatar, the United States, and Egypt**, aims to **end hostilities, facilitate hostage-prisoner exchanges, and provide humanitarian relief** to Gaza. However, the **fragile nature of the agreement** raises concerns about its durability and long-term impact.

KEY ASPECTS OF THE PROPOSED CEASEFIRE AGREEMENT

The **proposed Gaza ceasefire** spans a **126-day period**, divided into **three phases**, focusing on a **gradual cessation of violence, prisoner exchanges, and long-term reconstruction**.

First Stage (42 days): Initial Cessation of Hostilities and Humanitarian Relief

1. Cessation of Military Operations:

- Both **Israel and Hamas** agree to a **mutual halt** in military actions.
- **Israeli forces withdraw** from **densely populated areas** to positions **near the Gaza border**.
- **Israeli air operations restricted** for **10-12 hours daily** to prevent escalation.

2. Humanitarian Relief & Reconstruction:

- **600 aid trucks per day** allowed into Gaza, including **50 fuel trucks**.
- **Restoration of electricity, healthcare services, and shelter** for displaced persons.
- **Clearing of rubble and debris** to facilitate reconstruction.

3. Prisoner Exchange:

- **Hamas releases 33 Israeli hostages** (alive or dead), prioritizing **women, children, and elderly individuals**.

- **Israel, in exchange, releases Palestinian prisoners** in a phased manner.
- **Improvement in prison conditions** for Palestinian detainees.

4. Preparations for the Next Stages:

- **Discussions on Stage 2 begin by Day 16**, focusing on further exchanges and conditions for sustainable peace.

Second Stage (42 days): Formal Ceasefire and Full Israeli Withdrawal

- Formal ceasefire agreement** between Israel and Hamas.
- Exchange of all remaining Israeli hostages, including men, soldiers, and civilians, for additional Palestinian prisoners.**
- Complete withdrawal of Israeli forces from Gaza.**

Third Stage (42 days): Final Exchange and Long-Term Reconstruction

- Exchange of deceased hostages and prisoners from both sides.**
- Large-scale reconstruction efforts** spanning **3-5 years** under **international supervision**.
- Complete lifting of the Gaza blockade**, ensuring economic relief for Palestinian civilians.

Guarantors of the Agreement:

- Qatar, Egypt, the United States, and the United Nations** will oversee **implementation and compliance** with the ceasefire.

CHALLENGES AND UNANSWERED QUESTIONS REGARDING THE CEASEFIRE AGREEMENT

1. Hostage and Prisoner Issues

- **Uncertainty regarding the status of hostages:** It remains unclear how many Israeli hostages **are still alive**, whether Hamas knows their locations, and which prisoners Hamas prioritizes for release.

2. Fragility of the Agreement

- **Past ceasefire violations:** Previous Israel-Hamas ceasefires have **frequently broken down** due to **mutual distrust, sporadic violence, and external interventions.**
- **Complex implementation:** The **multi-stage structure** and **strict timelines** make the agreement vulnerable to **even minor disruptions.**

3. Unclear Long-Term Israeli Objectives

- Despite **weakening Hamas's operational and governing capacity**, Israel has **not completely eliminated Hamas**, leading to uncertainty over **Israel's long-term military and political strategy.**

BROADER CAUSES OF THE ISRAEL-PALESTINE CONFLICT

1. Normalization of Israel-Arab Relations

- The **Abraham Accords (2020)** facilitated normalization between **Israel, UAE, Bahrain, Sudan, and Morocco.**
- **Saudi Arabia-Israel economic projects (IMEC)** signal further diplomatic engagement.
- **Hamas opposes normalization**, fearing it undermines the **Palestinian cause** and strengthens **Israel's regional position.**

2. Hamas's Political Rivalry with the Palestinian Authority (PA)

- The **Palestinian Authority (PA)**, which signed the **Oslo Accords**, is widely seen as **ineffective and corrupt.**
- **Hamas aims to displace the PA** as the primary representative of Palestinian interests.

3. Hamas's Support from Iran, Hezbollah, and Qatar

- **Iran and Hezbollah (Lebanon)** provide Hamas with **logistical, intelligence, and financial support.**

- **Qatar funds Hamas operations**, raising concerns about its role in regional destabilization.

4. The Jerusalem Dispute

- **Both Israel and Palestine claim Jerusalem** as their capital.
- **Israel controls all of Jerusalem**, while Palestinians insist on **East Jerusalem** as their future capital.
- **Recurring Al-Aqsa Mosque clashes** escalate tensions.

5. Expansion of Israeli Settlements in the West Bank

- **Since 1967**, Israel has established **140 settlements in the occupied West Bank and East Jerusalem.**
- The **international community considers these settlements illegal**, though Israel disputes this claim.

6. Unresolved Border Disputes

- **Palestinians demand pre-1967 borders**, while **Israel insists on expanded security borders up to the Jordan River.**

7. Political Divisions Among Palestinians

- The **PA and Hamas remain divided**, weakening the Palestinian position in negotiations.
- **Israel refuses to engage with Hamas**, citing its designation as a terrorist organization.

8. Lack of Commitment to the Peace Process

- Israel has continued **settlement expansion and military operations** in Palestinian territories.
- **Hamas's attacks on Israeli civilians** further escalate hostilities and diminish diplomatic possibilities.

POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS AND THE WAY FORWARD

- 1. Adoption of the Arab Peace Initiative (2002)**
 - Saudi Arabia proposed the initiative requiring Israel to return to pre-1967 borders in exchange for full Arab recognition.
 - This framework remains a potential pathway for a lasting peace agreement.
- 2. Expanding the Negotiation Framework Beyond Israel-Hamas**
 - The conflict involves not just Israel and Hamas but also Egypt, Jordan, Iran, Syria, and other Arab nations.
 - A broader regional peace conference, backed by the UN General Assembly and the UNSC, could facilitate progress.
- 3. Strengthening UN and ICC Oversight**
 - UNSC must play a more active role in peace negotiations and ceasefire monitoring.
 - Implementation of UNSC Resolution 2334 (2016), which calls for an end to Israeli settlements, is crucial.

- ICC Ruling (February 2021) permits war crimes investigations in the Palestinian territories, ensuring accountability for human rights violations.
- 4. India's Role as a Mediator**
 - India maintains strong relations with both Israel and the Arab world.
 - Instead of taking sides, India should leverage its diplomatic neutrality and global influence to mediate peace efforts.

CONCLUSION

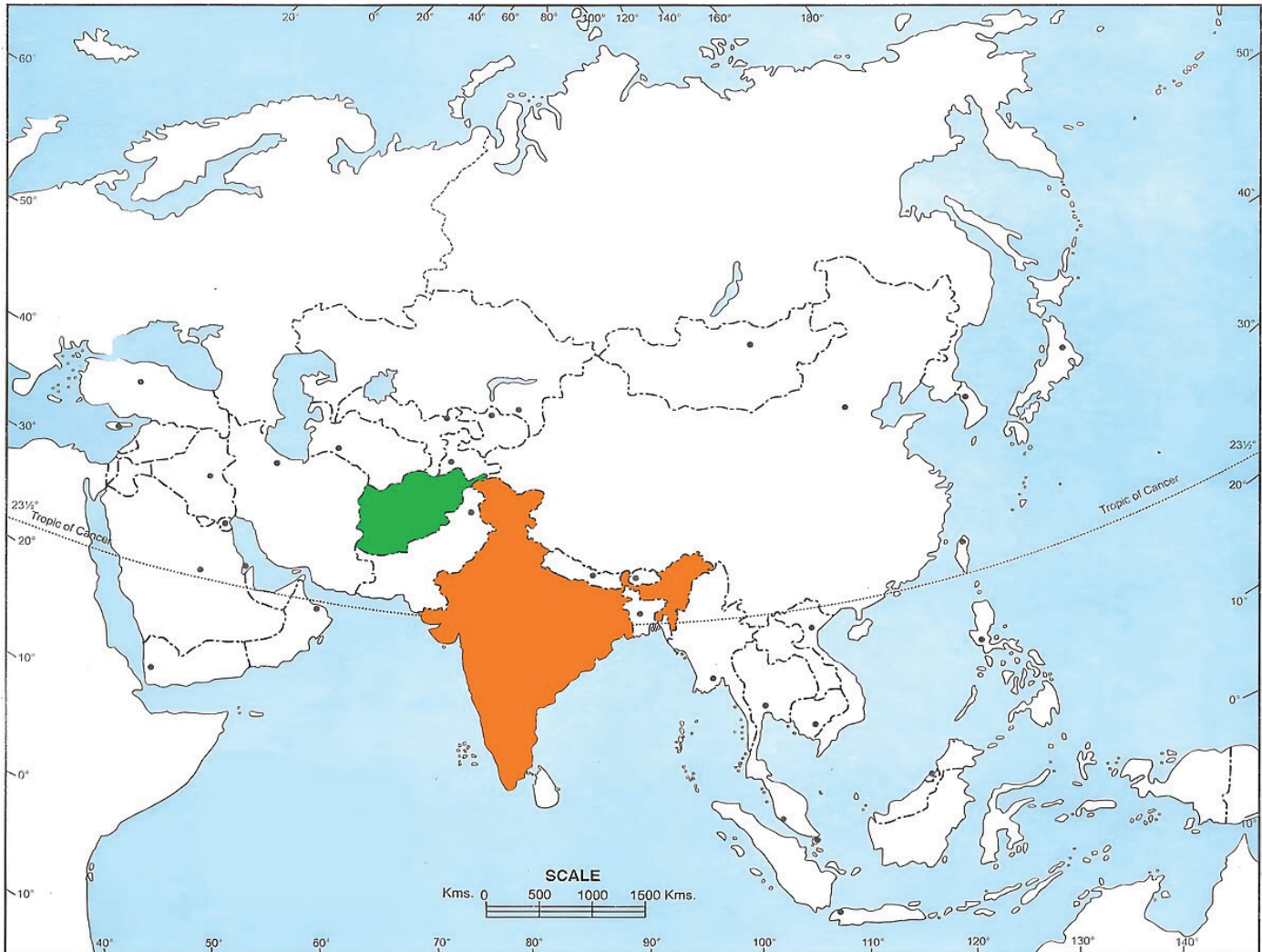
The Israel-Hamas ceasefire agreement represents a temporary pause in a longstanding conflict. While it offers humanitarian relief and a roadmap for peace, its fragility and unresolved political issues make its success uncertain. Achieving lasting peace will require international mediation, a broader diplomatic framework, and long-term commitments from all parties involved.

INDIA-AFGHANISTAN RELATIONS

RELEVANCE

□ Syllabus:

- **PSIR:** India and its neighbourhood
- **GS2:** International Relations



RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN INDIA-AFGHANISTAN RELATIONS

In **January 2025**, India's **Foreign Secretary** met with the **Taliban Foreign Minister** in **Dubai** for the first time, marking a cautious yet significant diplomatic engagement. Afghanistan has historically played a crucial role in India's **geopolitical strategy**, serving as a bridge between **South Asia and Central Asia**

and facilitating trade, cultural exchange, and political alliances.

Since the Taliban's **return to power in 2021**, India has had to **reassess its foreign policy approach** to protect its **strategic interests** while maintaining historical ties. The meeting in Dubai signals a shift in India's **engagement policy** as it explores ways to navigate the new political reality in Afghanistan.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF INDO-AFGHAN RELATIONS

Ancient Links and Cultural Exchanges

- ❑ **Indus Valley Civilization:** Relations between the two regions date back to this era, with trade and cultural exchanges flourishing.
- ❑ **Silk Road Connection:** Afghanistan's strategic position along the **Silk Road** enabled commercial and cultural exchanges between **India and Central Asia**.
- ❑ **Gandhara Civilization:** Afghanistan was home to the **Gandhara school of art**, which had a profound impact on Indian Buddhist **sculpture and architecture**, including the famous **Bamiyan Buddhas**.
- ❑ **Religious & Literary References:** Ancient Indian texts such as the **Mahabharata and Rigveda** reference Afghanistan, highlighting the deep historical ties. Emperor **Ashoka** also played a key role in spreading **Buddhism** to the region.

Medieval Period and Islamic Empires

- ❑ **Durrani Empire:** Under **Ahmad Shah Durrani** in the **mid-18th century**, Afghanistan became a dominant regional power, shaping Indo-Afghan relations.
- ❑ **Mughal Empire:** The **Mughals**, with Afghan roots, brought Indo-Persian influences to **Indian art, culture, and administration**. Babur, the **founder of the Mughal Empire**, first established his rule in India after campaigns in Afghanistan.

British Colonial Era (19th-20th Century)

- ❑ **Anglo-Afghan Wars:** The British sought to control Afghanistan as a **buffer state** against Russian expansion, which led to three Anglo-Afghan wars.
- ❑ **Partition of India (1947):** Afghanistan **refused to recognize the creation of Pakistan**, instead advocating for **Pashtun autonomy**, which influenced its relations with India.

Post-Independence and Cold War Period

- ❑ **1947-1979:** India and Afghanistan maintained strong diplomatic ties, formalized by the **Indo-Afghan Friendship Treaty (1950)**.
- ❑ **Soviet Invasion (1979-1989):** India **supported Soviet-backed Afghan governments**, whereas **Pakistan and the U.S.** aided the Mujahideen fighters.
- ❑ **Kandahar Hijacking (1999):** The hijacking of **Indian Airlines Flight IC-814**, with Taliban involvement, raised **serious security concerns** for India.

Post-Taliban Era (2001-Present)

- ❑ **Strategic Partnership (2001-2021):** India played a leading role in **Afghanistan's reconstruction**, investing in key **infrastructure, education, and health** projects.
- ❑ **Taliban Takeover (2021):** The return of the **Taliban regime** led to the **closure of India's embassy**, forcing New Delhi to reassess its **Afghanistan policy**.

IMPORTANCE OF AFGHANISTAN TO INDIA

Geostrategic Significance

- ❑ **Gateway to Central Asia:** Afghanistan serves as India's **link to energy-rich Central Asia**, bypassing Pakistan.
- ❑ **Countering Pakistan's Influence:** A stable Afghanistan reduces Pakistan's **strategic depth** and counters its influence.
- ❑ **Chabahar Port Connectivity:** India's investment in **Iran's Chabahar Port** ensures trade with Afghanistan while **circumventing Pakistan's trade barriers**.

Regional Security Concerns

- ❑ **Terrorism Threats:** Afghanistan's stability is crucial to **India's national security**, particularly concerning **cross-border terrorism** from groups like the **Haqqani Network**.

- ❑ **Taliban-Pakistan Nexus:** Taliban's close ties with Pakistan raise concerns about militant activities in Kashmir.

Economic Benefits

- ❑ **Trade & Transit:** India has set up air freight corridors and the Chabahar Port to boost trade with Afghanistan.
- ❑ **Natural Resources:** Afghanistan possesses large reserves of lithium, copper, and rare earth metals, which are vital for India's energy and technology sectors.

KEY AREAS OF INDIA-AFGHANISTAN ENGAGEMENT

Development Assistance

- ❑ **Infrastructure Development:**
 - **Zaranj-Delaram Highway:** Connects Afghanistan to the Iranian border, boosting trade.
 - **Salma Dam:** Provides hydroelectric power and irrigation.
 - **Afghan Parliament Building:** Symbol of Indo-Afghan cooperation, built with Indian assistance.
- ❑ **Healthcare & Education:** India has set up hospitals, medical missions, and scholarships for Afghan students.

Trade & Economic Relations

- ❑ **Air Freight Corridor:** Provides direct trade bypassing Pakistan's restrictions.
- ❑ **Chabahar Port:** Strengthens Afghanistan's access to global markets.

Security & Counterterrorism

- ❑ **Capacity Building:** India has trained Afghan security personnel.
- ❑ **Engagement with Taliban:** India is maintaining low-profile diplomatic channels to safeguard its interests.

Humanitarian Assistance

- ❑ **Food & Medical Support:** India provided wheat, COVID-19 vaccines, and essential medicines to Afghanistan.
- ❑ **Community Development:** India has implemented over 200 local projects, including schools and water supply systems.

CHALLENGES IN INDIA-AFGHANISTAN RELATIONS

Political Instability

- ❑ **Taliban Rule (2021-Present):** Lack of inclusive governance complicates bilateral relations.
- ❑ **Uncertain Policies:** Indian-funded development projects face operational risks.

Security & Pakistan Factor

- ❑ **Pakistan's Influence:** The Taliban's close ties with Islamabad may sideline India's interests.
- ❑ **Cross-Border Terrorism:** Taliban's support for extremist groups could destabilize Kashmir and other Indian territories.

Geographic Barriers

- ❑ **No Direct Land Route:** India's trade with Afghanistan is reliant on Iran's Chabahar Port.
- ❑ **Limited Air Connectivity:** Air freight corridors are not sufficient for large-scale trade.

Drug Trafficking

- ❑ **Afghanistan is the world's largest producer of opium,** contributing to regional instability and crime networks that affect India.

HOW SHOULD INDIA RESHAPE ITS AFGHANISTAN POLICY?

Strategic Recalibration

- ❑ **No Official Recognition of Taliban:** India continues to withhold formal recognition, advocating for an inclusive government.
- ❑ **Humanitarian Focus:** India prioritizes aid, education, and healthcare rather than direct political involvement.

Cautious Diplomatic Engagement

- ❑ **Limited Embassy Operations:** India resumed basic consular functions in June 2022.
- ❑ **High-Level Meetings:** India's Foreign Secretary met Taliban leaders in 2025, signaling a shift toward controlled engagement.

Adherence to UN Resolutions

- ❑ **Security Council Resolution 2593:** India aligns with the UN's framework for peace, counterterrorism, and human rights in Afghanistan.

CONCLUSION

India's relationship with Afghanistan is shaped by **historical ties, economic interests, and security concerns**. The Taliban's return presents challenges, but India remains committed to **stability, development, and regional security**. A **balanced approach**, combining **humanitarian aid, strategic investments, and diplomatic caution**, will be crucial for protecting India's interests while supporting Afghanistan's reconstruction.

-1B VISA PROGRAM

RELEVANCE

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



INTRODUCTION

The H-1B visa program is a non-immigrant visa in the United States that allows employers to temporarily hire foreign workers in specialty

occupations requiring specialized knowledge and a bachelor's degree or higher. These occupations span various fields, including information technology, engineering, medicine, and finance.

KEY FEATURES OF THE H-1B VISA PROGRAM:

- ❑ **Duration:** The H-1B has an initial period of up to three years, with the possibility of extension for a total of six years. After this period, the visa holder must either leave the U.S. for at least 12 months before reapplying or pursue permanent residency (Green Card).
- ❑ **Requirements:**
 - A bachelor's degree or its equivalent in a related field.
 - Sponsorship by a U.S. employer.
 - A valid job offer for a position requiring specialized knowledge.
 - The employer must attest that hiring the foreign worker will not adversely affect the wages and working conditions of similarly employed U.S. workers.
- ❑ **Annual Cap:** There is an annual limit of 85,000 H-1B visas: 65,000 for general applicants and an additional 20,000 for individuals holding advanced degrees from U.S. institutions. Certain positions, such as those in higher education or affiliated research organizations, may be exempt from this cap.

BENEFITS OF THE H-1B VISA PROGRAM:

1. **Economic Contributions:** The program allows U.S. businesses to fill critical positions that require specialized skills, enabling them to continue operating and growing domestically. This growth leads to job creation, increased wages, and overall economic prosperity.
2. **Global Talent Acquisition:** By attracting highly skilled professionals from around the world, the H-1B program enhances innovation and competitiveness in the U.S. economy.

CONCERNS RELATED TO THE H-1B VISA PROGRAM

1. **Impact on Domestic Workforce:** Critics argue that the program may displace U.S. workers,

particularly in the tech sector, by allowing employers to hire foreign talent, potentially at lower wages.

2. **Program Misuse:** There are allegations that some companies exploit the H-1B program by hiring foreign workers to replace qualified U.S. employees, leading to concerns about wage suppression and job displacement.

RECENT DEBATES AND PROPOSED REFORMS

The H-1B visa program has been a focal point in recent political discussions. Figures like Elon Musk have described the program as “broken” and in need of significant reform. He advocates for making it more expensive to hire foreign workers than domestic ones, aiming to prioritize American labor while still attracting top global talent.

This perspective has sparked debates within political circles, with some advocating for stricter immigration policies to protect U.S. workers, while others emphasize the importance of skilled foreign labor in maintaining the country's competitive edge.

POTENTIAL REFORMS AND SOLUTIONS:

1. **Policy Adjustments:** Implementing stricter compliance measures to prevent misuse while maintaining the program's core objective of addressing skill shortages.
2. **Domestic Skill Development:** Investing in STEM education and training programs within the U.S. to reduce reliance on foreign talent.
3. **Bilateral Collaboration:** Enhancing cooperation between the U.S. and countries like India in technology and skill development to ensure mutual benefits from the H-1B program.
4. **Encouraging Brain Circulation:** Facilitating the return of skilled professionals to their home countries to mitigate brain drain and foster domestic innovation.
5. **Expanding Opportunities:** Diversifying visa programs to include sectors beyond technology

and emphasizing merit-based selection systems to ensure equitable access for all nationalities.

CONCLUSION

The ongoing discussions surrounding the H-1B visa program highlight the need to balance economic

advantages with the challenges it presents, ensuring that the system benefits both the U.S. and the global community.

POLITICAL SCIENCE & INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

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INDIAN GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS (IGP)

ARTICLE 356 OF THE INDIAN CONSTITUTION

RELEVANCE

□ Syllabus:

- PSIR: Making of the Indian constitution
- GS2: Indian Constitution



INTRODUCTION

President's Rule under Article 356 of the Indian Constitution is a significant yet controversial provision in India's federal structure. It grants the central government direct authority over a state when its constitutional framework fails or governance collapses, often due to political instability, a hung assembly, or a breakdown in law and order.

Although originally designed as an emergency measure, its frequent usage—particularly for political advantage—has attracted criticism and judicial scrutiny. The recent developments in Manipur's political crisis, following the resignation of Chief Minister N. Biren Singh, have once again brought Article 356 into focus.

WHAT IS ARTICLE 356 OF THE INDIAN CONSTITUTION?

Article 356 authorizes the President to impose central rule in a state based on the Union Council of Ministers' advice if convinced that governance cannot function per constitutional norms. Once enforced, the state government's powers are transferred to the Centre, and Parliament assumes legislative authority over the state during this period.

Exception: The only exception to this rule is that the functioning of High Courts remains unaffected.

CONSTITUTIONAL BASIS FOR PRESIDENT'S RULE

Articles 355 to 357 in Part XVIII, along with Article 365 in Part XIX, govern President's Rule:

- ❑ **Article 355:** Obliges the Union to protect states from external aggression and internal disturbances while ensuring constitutional governance.
- ❑ **Article 356:** Permits the President to assume state governance upon determining a constitutional breakdown.
- ❑ **Article 357:** Grants Parliament the power to legislate for a state under an Article 356 proclamation.
- ❑ **Article 365:** Specifies that if a state government fails to comply with Union directives, the President may take direct control.

WHAT IS THE PROCEDURE AND DURATION FOR IMPOSING PRESIDENT'S RULE UNDER ARTICLE 356?

1. **Governor's Report:** The process begins when the President, upon receiving a report from the Governor, determines that governance cannot proceed as per the Constitution.
2. **Presidential Satisfaction:** If convinced of the crisis, the President issues a proclamation imposing President's Rule.

3. **Parliamentary Approval:** The proclamation must be approved by both Houses of Parliament within two months by a simple majority.

4. **Duration:** Initially, the rule lasts for six months and can be extended up to three years with parliamentary approval every six months.

5. **Extension Beyond One Year:** Under the 44th Amendment Act of 1978, President's Rule can extend beyond a year under these conditions:
 - a. The Election Commission certifies that elections cannot be held in the concerned state.
 - b. A national emergency is in effect across India or in the entire or part of the state.

COMMON CIRCUMSTANCES FOR IMPOSING PRESIDENT'S RULE

- ❑ The state legislature fails to elect a Chief Minister within the Governor's prescribed timeframe.
- ❑ A coalition government collapses, leaving the Chief Minister without a legislative majority and unable to prove support within the given timeframe.
- ❑ A no-confidence motion leads to the loss of the ruling party's majority.
- ❑ Postponement of elections due to crises like natural disasters, epidemics, or war.

CONSEQUENCES OF PRESIDENT'S RULE

1. **Governor's Role:** The Governor assumes executive control and runs administration on behalf of the President.
2. **Legislative Assembly:** The state assembly is either dissolved or kept in suspended animation.
3. **Parliament's Role:** The Union Parliament assumes legislative authority over the state.
4. **Impact on Governance:** New state laws cannot be enacted, and administration is managed by bureaucrats.

5. Fresh Elections: The Election Commission must conduct elections within six months unless an extension is granted.

Additionally, ongoing public and welfare policies often remain stalled during President's Rule.

HISTORY OF PRESIDENT'S RULE IN INDIA

1. Since 1950, President's Rule has been imposed 134 times across 29 states and Union Territories.
2. Manipur and Uttar Pradesh have witnessed the highest number of impositions, ten times each.

However, these states have not experienced the longest durations under President's Rule.

States/UTs with the Longest Duration Under President's Rule:

1. **Jammu & Kashmir** – Over 12 years (4,668 days) due to prolonged insurgency and separatist movements.
2. **Punjab** – Over 10 years (3,878 days) amid violent militancy.
3. **Puducherry** – Over 7 years (2,739 days) due to recurrent government collapses from internal conflicts and defections.

LANDMARK SUPREME COURT JUDGMENT ON PRESIDENT'S RULE

The 1994 **S.R. Bommai v. Union of India** case introduced strict judicial oversight of Article 356:

1. **Judicial Review:** The President's decision to impose President's Rule is subject to judicial examination.
2. **Material Consideration:** Courts can assess whether relevant grounds justified the imposition.
3. **Limited Scope:** The ruling affirmed that states are not mere extensions of the Centre, reinforcing federalism.
4. **Reinstating Dismissed Governments:** If Parliament does not approve the proclamation

within two months, the dismissed state government is restored.

CRITICISM AND KEY REFORM RECOMMENDATIONS

Despite being a constitutional safeguard, Article 356 has been widely criticized for its misuse, often for political motives:

1. **Frequent Usage:** Invoked over 100 times, including 39 instances under Indira Gandhi alone.
2. **Political Manipulation:** Used to dismiss opposition-led state governments.
3. **Centralization of Power:** Weakens the federal structure by placing states under direct central control.
4. **Democratic Disruption:** Suspends elected governance, depriving citizens of a functional state government.
5. **Dubious Grounds:** Some dismissals were based on internal party disputes rather than genuine governance failures.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR REFORM

Several commissions have suggested reforms to curb Article 356's misuse:

1. **Sarkaria Commission:** Suggested using Article 356 as a last resort and recommended prior warning before its application.
2. **Punchhi Commission:** Advocated a localized approach, applying President's Rule to specific state regions instead of the entire state.

THE WAY FORWARD

1. **Strict Guidelines:** The Centre must follow Supreme Court guidelines set in the **S.R. Bommai** case.
2. **Strengthening Federalism:** Institutional mechanisms should resolve state crises without invoking Article 356.

3. **Judicial Oversight:** Speedy judicial review can prevent politically motivated misuse.
4. **Alternative Measures:** Encouraging dialogue, financial assistance, or Governor's intervention before imposing President's Rule.
5. **Limited Scope:** Exploring decentralized emergency provisions instead of imposing blanket central rule over a state.

CONCLUSION

President's Rule under Article 356 is a vital constitutional tool for maintaining governance

in states facing breakdowns. However, its history includes frequent political misuse. While judicial interventions, especially the **S-R. Bommai** case, have restricted arbitrary impositions, further safeguards are needed to uphold India's federal structure. Moving forward, striking a balance between constitutional stability and federal autonomy is essential to sustain a robust democracy.

BETI BACHAO BETI PADHAO (BBBP) INITIATIVE

RELEVANCE

□ Syllabus:

- **PSIR:** Women movements
- **GS2:** Government Policies



INTRODUCTION

The Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP) initiative, launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on January 22, 2015, marked a transformative effort

aimed at improving the Child Sex Ratio (CSR) and ensuring the survival, protection, and education of the girl child. As the program celebrates its 10th anniversary in 2025, the initiative has shown notable successes but also encountered persistent

challenges. Here's an overview of the BBBP scheme:

LAUNCH AND OBJECTIVES

The scheme, introduced in Panipat, Haryana, aimed to:

- Arrest the decline in CSR
- Prevent gender-biased sex selection
- Promote the survival, protection, and education of girls

Initially targeting 100 districts, the program expanded to cover all 640 districts of India. It is now integrated into Mission Shakti, with sub-schemes like **Sambal** (focused on safety and grievance redressal) and **Samarthya** (promoting empowerment through various welfare programs).

KEY OBJECTIVES

The BBBP scheme has aimed to achieve several critical targets, including:

1. **Improve Sex Ratio at Birth (SRB)** by 2 points annually.
2. **Increase institutional deliveries** to 95% or above.
3. **Boost enrollment of girls in secondary education** and reduce dropout rates.
4. **Promote awareness of Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM).**

FINANCIAL STRUCTURE

The scheme is funded centrally under Mission Shakti, with allocations based on the SRB of the districts:

- Rs. 40 lakh/year for districts with SRB \leq 918
- Rs. 30 lakh/year for SRB between 919-952
- Rs. 20 lakh/year for SRB $>$ 952

CURRENT PERFORMANCE AND PROGRESS

1. **Sex Ratio at Birth (SRB):** The national SRB improved from 918 in 2014-15 to 930 in 2023-

24. However, disparities exist across states, with some showing improvement and others seeing a decline.

2. **Gender Gap in Under-Five Child Mortality:** The gender gap reduced from 7 points in 2014 to 2 points in 2020, showing positive progress.
3. **Institutional Births:** The national progress in institutional deliveries rose from 78.9% in 2015-16 to 88.6% in 2019-21.
4. **Antenatal Checkups (ANC):** ANC in the first trimester improved from 58.6% in 2015-16 to 70% in 2019-21.
5. **Girls' Enrollment in Secondary Education:** Despite progress, the national enrollment target of 82% by 2018-19 was missed, with the rate increasing from 75.5% to 76.9%.

TRANSFORMATIVE INITIATIVES

The BBBP has also implemented innovative campaigns at the grassroots level:

- Digital Guddi-Gudda Board:** A platform displaying gender disparity data.
- Udaan – Sapne Di Duniya De Rubaru:** Empowering girls by letting them shadow professionals.
- Collector Ki Class:** Free coaching and career counseling for underprivileged girls.
- Yashaswini Bike Expedition (2023):** A 10,000 km bike journey by women symbolizing empowerment.
- Kanya Shiksha Pravesh Utsav (2022):** Re-enrolled over 100,000 out-of-school girls.

ACHIEVEMENTS

1. **Increased Awareness:** The campaign has shifted perceptions in many areas where daughters were once seen as a burden.
2. **Grassroots Impact:** Village-level programs like "Guddi-Gudda Boards" and celebrations of girl births have been impactful.

3. **Improved Enrollment and Deliveries:** Both girls' education and institutional deliveries have seen notable progress.
4. **Legislative Backing:** Strengthened laws such as the PCPNDT Act (Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques) to combat sex selection.

CHALLENGES

Regional Disparities: Some states still struggle with persistent issues like low SRB and high dropout rates.

1. **Secondary Education Enrollment:** The target for girls' enrollment in secondary education remains unmet.
2. **Dropout Rates:** High dropout rates, especially among adolescent girls, need focused attention.

FUTURE GOALS

The program's future goals include:

- Stronger Enforcement of the PCPNDT Act** to curb gender-biased sex selection.
- Addressing Dropout Rates:** Ensuring more robust measures for skill development and continuous support for girls.
- Increasing Female Labor Force Participation (FLFP):** At 41.7%, FLFP remains low, with a need for greater employment opportunities for women.
- Economic Impact:** Bridging gender gaps could boost global GDP by 20%, aligning with India's trillion-dollar economy ambition.

MERI-BETI FRAMEWORK FOR FUTURE

1. **M:** Monitoring through data collection and third-party audits.
2. **E:** Regular evaluations for impact refinement.
3. **R:** Equitable resource allocation based on district needs.
4. **I:** Innovative approaches to engage girls, such as gamification.
5. **B:** Promoting social change by involving men and boys.
6. **E:** Focus on girls' empowerment through leadership and skill development.
7. **T:** Leveraging technology for education, health, and information access.
8. **I:** Ensuring inclusion of marginalized communities.

CONCLUSION

The Beti Bachao Beti Padhao scheme has made commendable strides in addressing gender inequality in India by improving CSR, promoting education, and enhancing health for girls. However, challenges like regional disparities, unmet educational targets, and persistent gender bias remain. With a focus on inclusive policies, community involvement, and innovative solutions, BBBP can continue to foster gender equity, aligning with India's Vision 2047 for an Amrit Kaal of prosperity.

NEW UGC GUIDELINES

RELEVANCE

□ Syllabus:

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



ज्ञान-विज्ञान विमुक्तये

UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMISSION (UGC)

INTRODUCTION

Recently, the Universities Grants Commission (UGC) has released The UGC (Minimum Qualifications for Appointment and Promotion of Teachers and Academic Staff in Universities and Colleges and Measures for the Maintenance of Standards in Higher Education) Regulations, 2025. Several states have objected to provisions in the regulations, as they fear that the regulations could give the Chancellor – who is typically the state Governor – a bigger role in appointing Vice Chancellors (VCs) of state universities.

FEATURES OF NEW UGC GUIDELINES (2025)

The **UGC (Minimum Qualifications for Appointment and Promotion of Teachers and Academic Staff in Universities and Colleges) Regulations 2025** aim to streamline the process

of faculty appointments and promotions in higher education institutions while aligning with national educational goals. The new guidelines emphasize **holistic evaluation** and **interdisciplinary teaching**, aiming to improve quality, inclusivity, and flexibility in the academic sphere.

1. VC Appointment:

- Clear composition of the Search-cum-Selection Committee, with nominees from the Chancellor, UGC Chairman, and the university's apex body.
- Expansion of VC eligibility to include professionals from industry, public administration, and other sectors with proven academic contributions.
- Alignment with **NEP 2020**, promoting leadership, governance, and collaboration skills.

2. Teacher Recruitment:

- A shift from the API-based system to a **holistic, qualitative approach**, focusing on innovation, societal contributions, and multidisciplinary expertise.
- **Flexibility in UGC-NET:** Allowing candidates to qualify in a subject of their choice, irrespective of degree disciplines.
- **Removal of cap on contract-based faculty**, though rigorous selection and periodic reviews are mandated.

3. Promoting Indian Languages & Cultural Heritage:

- The guidelines encourage academic contributions in regional languages and the promotion of **Indian knowledge systems**.

4. NEP 2020 Alignment:

- Breaks down disciplinary silos, encouraging **interdisciplinary teaching** and research.
- Focuses on enhancing **quality, inclusivity, and innovation** in higher education.

LATEST CASES OF CENTRE-STATE CONFLICTS OVER VC APPOINTMENTS

The ongoing conflicts between states and the Centre primarily revolve around the **appointment of Vice Chancellors (VCs)**, with several states seeking to reduce the influence of Governors (who typically act as Chancellors) in the appointment process.

1. **Kerala:** Passed a Bill in 2023 to replace the Governor with eminent educationists as Chancellors, which is pending Presidential assent.
2. **Karnataka:** Passed a Bill in December 2024 to replace the Governor with the Chief Minister as Chancellor for a state university.
3. **Maharashtra:** In 2021, Maharashtra sought to limit the Governor's role in VC appointments, but the Bill was withdrawn in 2022 under a new government.

4. **Tamil Nadu:** In 2022, the state passed two Bills allowing the state government to appoint VCs, but these remain unapproved by the Governor.

RATIONALE BEHIND UGC'S NEW GUIDELINES

1. **Holistic Evaluation:** Replacing the rigid API-based system with a more flexible, qualitative approach that accounts for contributions beyond mere publication counts, such as teaching innovation and societal impact.
2. **Inclusivity and Flexibility:** Dedicated pathways for recruiting individuals from diverse backgrounds, including athletes, artists, and people with disabilities.
3. **Interdisciplinary Teaching:** The guidelines promote **multidisciplinary expertise**, allowing faculty to teach subjects aligned with their highest qualifications.
4. **Clearer Processes:** The regulations aim to enhance **transparency and accountability** in recruitment and promotion.
5. **Cultural Preservation:** The emphasis on promoting Indian languages and knowledge systems aligns with national objectives of **cultural relevance**.

CONCERNS WITH THE NEW UGC GUIDELINES

1. **State Autonomy:** States argue that the guidelines erode their autonomy, particularly regarding VC appointments, which could increase the central government's influence over state universities.
2. **Subjectivity in Assessments:** Critics express concerns that qualitative assessments could lead to inconsistencies and subjectivity without clear rubrics.
3. **Politicization:** With Governors playing a larger role in VC appointments, there is a concern about the **politicization** of university leadership and potential erosion of academic autonomy.

4. **Contract Faculty:** The removal of caps on contract-based faculty raises concerns about job security and the impact on academic integrity.
5. **Resource Disparities:** Unresolved issues like uneven funding and infrastructure still remain major challenges.

THE WAY FORWARD

The “HOLDER” Approach provides a roadmap for addressing the concerns and challenges:

- H: Holistic Assessment** – Continue evaluating faculty comprehensively, beyond traditional metrics.
- O: Openness and Transparency** – Ensure transparent and accountable processes for recruitment, promotions, and grievance redressal.
- L: Leadership and Governance** – Promote effective leadership and strengthen university governance to ensure institutional autonomy.

- D: Diversity and Inclusion** – Address systemic barriers and foster a diverse, inclusive academic environment.
- E: Excellence and Innovation** – Encourage excellence and innovation in research, teaching, and community engagement.
- R: Resource Allocation and Sustainability** – Ensure equitable resource allocation and address infrastructure challenges.

CONCLUSION

The **UGC Regulations 2025** represent a significant step toward modernizing the academic recruitment process in India, aligning with the broader vision of **NEP 2020**. If implemented effectively, the guidelines could promote **inclusive, flexible, and dynamic academic environments** that focus on a broader range of academic contributions. However, successful implementation will depend on navigating governance challenges and addressing concerns related to state autonomy and the politicization of academic institutions.

JUDICIAL APPOINTMENTS IN INDIA

RELEVANCE

- Syllabus:**
 - **PSIR:** Judiciary
 - **GS2:** Government Policies



JUDICIAL APPOINTMENTS

INTRODUCTION

Judicial appointments in India have been a long-standing subject of debate. Recently, two key developments related to the Supreme Court Collegium have emerged—the introduction of interviews for judicial candidates and the decision to exclude relatives of sitting or former judges. The issue of judicial appointments has historically been a point of contention between the judiciary and the executive regarding the procedural authority over the selection of judges.

Here we have historical conflict between the executive and judiciary on judicial appointments, the current appointment system, associated concerns, and the National Judicial Appointments Commission (NJAC), which was proposed to replace the Collegium system. Additionally, it explores judicial appointment practices in other countries.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN THE SUPREME COURT COLLEGIUM

- 1. Candidate Interviews:** The Collegium has decided to conduct interviews of candidates recommended for elevation to High Courts. This step aims to enhance the selection process by allowing decision-makers to assess candidates directly.
- 2. Exclusion of Relatives:** The Collegium has resolved to exclude individuals from judicial appointments if they have close family members serving as judges in the High Courts or the Supreme Court. This measure is intended to promote diversity and address concerns of nepotism, although it may lead to the exclusion of deserving candidates.

These changes are crucial as they address long-standing concerns about transparency, accountability, and diversity in judicial appointments. The reforms seek to improve public confidence in the Collegium system by ensuring a more open and equitable selection process.

CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS ON JUDICIAL APPOINTMENTS IN INDIA

- 1. Article 124(2):** The President appoints Supreme Court judges through a warrant under his hand and seal, following consultation with Supreme Court and High Court judges as deemed necessary. The Chief Justice of India must always be consulted in appointing judges other than the Chief Justice.
- 2. Article 217:** The President appoints High Court judges after consulting the Chief Justice of India, the Governor of the respective state, and the Chief Justice of that High Court, except in the case of the Chief Justice's own appointment.

HISTORICAL CONFLICT BETWEEN THE EXECUTIVE AND JUDICIARY OVER APPOINTMENTS

- Colonial Rule:** Judicial appointments were predominantly controlled by the executive.
- Constitutional Debates:** Concerns about excessive executive influence led the framers of the Constitution to devise a balanced approach through Articles 124(2) and 217, ensuring judicial independence.
- Judicial Interventions:** Landmark Supreme Court judgments in the First, Second, and Third Judges cases led to the establishment of the Collegium system, shifting appointment powers from the executive to the judiciary.

EVOLUTION OF THE COLLEGIUM SYSTEM THROUGH JUDICIAL PRECEDENTS

- First Judges Case (1981):** The Supreme Court ruled that the President's consultation with the Chief Justice did not mean concurrence, allowing executive discretion in judicial appointments.
- Second Judges Case (1993):** The Court overturned the First Judges Case, interpreting consultation as concurrence and requiring

the Chief Justice's advice to be based on a Collegium of the CJI and two senior Supreme Court judges.

- ❑ **Third Judges Case (1998):** The Collegium was expanded to include the Chief Justice and the four senior-most Supreme Court judges.

NJAC AND THE JUDICIAL RESPONSE

- ❑ **99th Constitutional Amendment Act (2014) & NJAC Act:** The NJAC was introduced to replace the Collegium system with a six-member body including the Chief Justice of India, two senior Supreme Court judges, the Union Law Minister, and two eminent persons nominated by a panel.
- ❑ **Fourth Judges Case (2015):** The Supreme Court struck down the NJAC, declaring it unconstitutional as it compromised judicial independence and violated the Constitution's basic structure.

CRITICISM OF NJAC

1. **Membership Concerns:** The inclusion of non-legal experts created concerns over judicial independence.
2. **Ambiguity in Criteria:** Terms such as "fitness" for appointment were left undefined.
3. **Veto Power:** The ability of any two NJAC members to block appointments was problematic.
4. **Absence of Casting Vote:** The CJI lacked a tie-breaking vote, potentially leading to deadlocks.
5. **Risk of Executive Overreach:** The NJAC's power to frame regulations on judicial appointments could be overridden by Parliament, allowing excessive legislative control over the judiciary.

CURRENT SYSTEM OF JUDICIAL APPOINTMENTS IN INDIA

- ❑ **Collegium System:** The Supreme Court Collegium, consisting of the Chief Justice and four senior-most judges, recommends judicial appointments and transfers.

- ❑ **Executive Background Checks:** The government conducts background checks through agencies like the Intelligence Bureau. While the government may return recommendations for reconsideration, it must accept them if reaffirmed by the Collegium.

ADVANTAGES OF THE COLLEGIUM SYSTEM

1. **Judicial Independence:** Shields appointments from executive influence.
2. **Prevents Political Interference:** Protects judicial impartiality, particularly since the government is a major litigant.
3. **Judiciary's Expertise:** Judges are best suited to assess judicial qualifications.
4. **Constitutional Safeguarding:** Prevents potential manipulation of the judiciary by the executive.

CONCERNS WITH THE COLLEGIUM SYSTEM

1. **Lack of Constitutional Backing:** The system is based on judicial interpretation rather than explicit constitutional provisions.
2. **Transparency Issues:** The selection process lacks formal guidelines and public disclosure.
3. **Accountability Deficit:** The system operates without oversight from the executive or legislature.
4. **Allegations of Nepotism:** The presence of "Uncle Judges" leads to favoritism in appointments.
5. **Subjectivity in Selection:** The absence of set criteria creates room for bias.
6. **Lack of Global Precedent:** India remains unique in its judge-led appointment system.

GLOBAL BEST PRACTICES IN JUDICIAL APPOINTMENTS

- ❑ **United Kingdom:** The Constitutional Reform Act (2005) established judicial selection

commissions with both judicial and executive representation.

- ❑ **South Africa:** A Judicial Service Commission advises the President on appointments.
- ❑ **France:** Judges are appointed through a process involving the High Council of the Judiciary.

WAY FORWARD

1. **Reform NJAC to Address Criticisms:** Revise NJAC while ensuring judicial independence and clear criteria for membership and decision-making.
2. **Finalize the Memorandum of Procedure (MoP):** Establish transparent guidelines on eligibility, complaints, and selection mechanisms.
3. **Enhance Transparency:** Collegium should disclose reasons for selecting or rejecting candidates.

4. **Establish an All India Judicial Service (AIJS):** Improve lower judiciary appointments through competitive examinations.

5. **Create a Judicial Appointments Secretariat:** Maintain a candidate database and track judicial vacancies to streamline the appointment process.

CONCLUSION

The judiciary and the government must work collaboratively to refine the appointment system, ensuring a balance between independence and accountability. Judicial vacancies contribute to case pendency, making prompt appointments essential. Until a new framework is developed, the government should promptly adhere to Collegium recommendations, avoiding unnecessary delays and conflicts.

MSP GUARANTEE LAW AND FARMER'S PROTEST

RELEVANCE

- ❑ **Syllabus:**
 - **PSIR:** Social Movements
 - **GS2:** Government Policies



INTRODUCTION

The hunger strike led by Samyukta Kisan Morcha (non-political) leader Jagjit Singh Dallewal has entered its 43rd day, prompting farmers to announce a nationwide tractor march on January 26 in protest against the Central government. Their demands include a law guaranteeing Minimum Support Price (MSP), debt waivers, pension schemes, no hikes in electricity tariffs, withdrawal of police cases, and justice for victims of the 2021 Lakhimpur Kheri violence.

UNDERSTANDING MINIMUM SUPPORT PRICE (MSP)

Definition of MSP: Minimum Support Price (MSP) is the price at which the government commits to purchasing crops from farmers to protect them from falling market prices.

Process of Determining MSP

1. The **Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP)** recommends MSP based on various factors like production costs, supply-demand dynamics, and market trends.
2. The **Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA)**, chaired by the Prime Minister, approves the final MSP after consulting states and considering the overall demand-supply situation.
3. The **Food Corporation of India (FCI)**, along with state agencies, procures crops at the MSP during the sowing season.

MSP Coverage

- The government sets MSP for **22 agricultural crops** and also fixes a **Fair and Remunerative Price (FRP) for sugarcane**.

Note: Currently, MSP is set at **50% over the A2+FL cost**.

ARGUMENTS IN FAVOR OF AN MSP GUARANTEE LAW

1. **Financial Security** – A legally guaranteed MSP would protect farmers from unpredictable market fluctuations.

2. **Risk Protection** – It would offer a safety net against crop losses due to climate change, pest attacks, and diseases.
3. **Encourages Crop Diversification** – Farmers may shift to less water-intensive crops like pulses and millets instead of water-consuming crops like wheat and sugarcane.
4. **Establishes a Market Benchmark** – MSP acts as a price signal to private buyers, discouraging them from offering prices below MSP.
5. **Rural Economic Stability** – MSP infuses liquidity into the rural economy, mitigating financial distress exacerbated by demonetization and COVID-19.
6. **Legal Right to Sell at MSP** – Currently, only **6% of farmers** benefit from MSP, according to the **Shanta Kumar Committee**. A legal MSP would guarantee that all farmers can sell to government agencies like FCI.

ARGUMENTS AGAINST AN MSP GUARANTEE LAW

1. **Fiscal Burden** – Implementing MSP for all crops would cost the government an estimated **₹5 trillion**, straining public finances.
2. **Crop Choice Distortion** – Farmers may grow high-yield crops unsuitable for their region, disrupting agricultural balance.
3. **Inflationary Pressures** – Increased government procurement costs would raise food prices, impacting consumers, especially the poor.
4. **Market Disruptions** – A legally guaranteed MSP could discourage private buyers, making the government the primary buyer of farm produce, which is economically unsustainable.
5. **Impact on Farm Exports** – If MSP is higher than international prices, India's agricultural exports may suffer.
6. **WTO Violation** – MSP support could be challenged by **World Trade Organization**

(WTO) rules on subsidies, similar to the **2019 WTO ruling against China**.

7. **Demands from Other Sectors** – Farmers in dairy, horticulture, and fisheries might demand MSP if crop farmers receive legal MSP protection.
8. **Storage Challenges** – The government may struggle to store and distribute certain crops procured under MSP.

GOVERNMENT'S ALTERNATIVE APPROACH

The government has focused on **income support schemes** rather than MSP-based price support, ensuring compliance with WTO rules. Key initiatives include:

- PM-Kisan Samman Nidhi** – Direct income support to farmers.
- Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY)** – Crop insurance.
- Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY)** – Improved irrigation facilities.
- Agri Infrastructure Fund (AIF)** – ₹1,00,000 crore for farm infrastructure.
- Kisan Credit Cards (KCC)** – Loans for dairy, fishery, and agricultural activities.

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS AND WAY FORWARD

1. **Price Deficiency Payment Schemes (PDPS)**
 - Farmers receive the difference between market price and MSP without government procurement.

- Example: **Madhya Pradesh's Bhavantar Bhugtan Yojana, Haryana's Bhavantar Bharpai Yojana.**

2. Market Intervention Schemes

- State governments procure perishable commodities like vegetables to stabilize farmer incomes.

3. Investment in Agricultural Infrastructure

- Cold storage and modern logistics can help farmers get better prices in open markets.

4. Strengthening Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs)

- Better financial support to FPOs could replicate the **AMUL model** in agriculture.

5. Gradual Expansion of MSP Coverage

- Extending MSP to a wider range of crops will encourage **crop diversification** and reduce dependence on rice and wheat.

CONCLUSION

The demand for an MSP Guarantee Law reflects farmers' deep-seated concerns about price security and rural distress. However, implementing such a law comes with financial, economic, and policy challenges. Instead of direct MSP guarantees, a mix of **market intervention, price deficiency schemes, income support, and infrastructure development** could create a **sustainable and farmer-friendly** agricultural system.

DIGITAL PERSONAL DATA PROTECTION RULES, 2025: A COMPREHENSIVE OVERVIEW

RELEVANCE

□ Syllabus:

- **PSIR:** Social movements
- **GS2:** Government Policies



INTRODUCTION

The Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) Rules, 2025, have been introduced to provide a detailed implementation framework for the Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023 (DPDP Act). The DPDP Act, which received presidential assent on August 11, 2023, aims to regulate the processing of personal data while ensuring transparency, accountability, and security.

KEY FEATURES OF THE DIGITAL PERSONAL DATA PROTECTION ACT, 2023

1. **Fairness** – Organizations must process personal data fairly and transparently.
2. **Consent** – Personal data must only be processed with prior, informed consent for a lawful purpose.

3. **Data Protection Rights** – Individuals have the right to **access information** on how their data is used, request **corrections or deletions**, and ensure **data security**.

FRAMEWORK OF DIGITAL DATA PROTECTION

1. Data Principal

- Refers to **individuals whose personal data is being processed**.
- For **children**, their **parents/legal guardians** serve as Data Principals.
- For **persons with disabilities**, **legal guardians** act as Data Principals.

2. Data Fiduciary

- The **entity responsible for determining how and why personal data is processed**.
- Must ensure **data accuracy, security, and timely deletion** when no longer needed.

3. Data Protection Board (Board)

- Functions as a **digital office to monitor compliance and address grievances**.
- The **Chairperson and Members** of the Board act as decision-makers through a **majority vote**.

SALIENT FEATURES OF THE DRAFT DPDP RULES, 2025

1. Notice to Data Principals by Data Fiduciaries

- Data Fiduciaries must provide clear notices** before collecting data.
- Notices should detail:
 - **Type of data being processed**.
 - **Purpose and services** linked to data processing.
 - **Process for withdrawing consent and filing complaints**.

2. Consent Management

- Processing requires prior, clear, and informed consent** from Data Principals.

- Consent can be withdrawn anytime**.

- Consent Managers** will be responsible for:
 - **Tracking and managing consent**.
 - **Facilitating the withdrawal of consent**.

3. Obligations of Data Fiduciaries

- Significant Data Fiduciaries (SDFs)** must:
 - Conduct **Annual Data Protection Impact Assessments**.
 - Ensure **algorithms do not infringe on individual rights**.
 - Restrict **certain data transfers outside India**.
- General Obligations** include:
 - **Transparency in processing activities**.
 - **Public disclosure of terms of service and grievance redressal mechanisms**.

4. Rights of Data Principals

- Right to Access and Erasure** – Individuals can request access to their data or demand its deletion.
- Grievance Redressal** – Complaints must be addressed **within set time limits**.
- Nomination Rights** – Data Principals can **nominate someone** to manage their rights in case of incapacity or death.
- Transparency** – Data Fiduciaries must **clearly disclose how data is collected, processed, and shared**.

5. Processing of Personal Data Outside India

- Transfers of personal data to foreign entities** are subject to:
 - **Government-specified requirements**.
 - **Restrictions on critical data related to national security**.

6. Data Processing by the State for Public Benefits

- The **government can process personal data** for:
 - Issuing **subsidies, benefits, or public services**.

- Ensuring linkage with laws and public welfare programs.

7. Security Safeguards

Data Fiduciaries must implement **strong security protocols**, including:

- Encryption and access controls.**
- Monitoring mechanisms for unauthorized access.**
- Maintaining logs for at least one year** unless otherwise specified.
- Contractual obligations for third-party data processors.**

8. Personal Data Breach Notification

- In case of a **data breach**, Fiduciaries must:
 - Inform **affected individuals** about the **nature, extent, and consequences** of the breach.
 - Detail **steps taken to mitigate damage.**
 - Report the breach to the **Data Protection Board within 72 hours.**

9. Erasure of Personal Data

- Data must be **deleted when no longer needed.**
- Users must be given **48-hour prior notice** before data deletion, allowing them to **opt to retain it.**

10. Consent for Children and Persons with Disabilities

- Parental/guardian consent** is mandatory for processing children’s data.
- Verification mechanisms include **identity checks via Digital Locker or similar services.**

11. Government Powers

- The government can **request data** under conditions specified in **the Seventh Schedule.**
- Fiduciaries **must seek government approval** before disclosing sensitive data related to **national security or sovereignty.**

ADVANTAGES OF THE DPDP RULES, 2025

The framework follows a **“LIGHT BUT TIGHT” approach**, balancing **legal certainty with data security.**

- 1. Legal Certainty** – Provides **clear rules** for businesses and individuals, reducing **legal risks.**
- 2. Increased Trust** – Strengthens **public confidence** in data protection.
- 3. Global Competitiveness** – Aligns with **international standards**, enabling **cross-border data flow.**
- 4. Harmonized Approach** – Ensures **uniform data protection** across sectors.
- 5. Technological Innovation** – Encourages **privacy-enhancing technologies** like **data anonymization and encryption.**
- 6. Business Benefits** – Reduces risks **associated with data breaches** and enhances **brand credibility.**
- 7. User Empowerment** – Grants individuals **more control over their personal data.**
- 8. International Relations** – Facilitates **data-sharing agreements** and **global cooperation.**
- 9. Thriving Digital Economy** – Promotes **fair competition** in the **digital space.**

CHALLENGES ASSOCIATED WITH THE DPDP RULES, 2025

While the framework is **light but tight**, it is **“NOT SO LIGHT”** in some areas.

- 1. New Technologies (N):** Challenges from **AI, IoT, and Blockchain** in ensuring **data security and transparency.**
- 2. Technological Limitations (T):** **Cybersecurity threats** like **ransomware and hacking** remain a **major risk.**
- 3. Social Impact (S)**
 - **Digital divide** may **disproportionately impact marginalized groups.**

– Mass surveillance concerns could restrict fundamental rights.

4. **Operational Challenges (O):** Implementation and enforcement require substantial resources.
5. **Transparency & Accountability (T):** Lack of clarity in how companies handle data breaches.
6. **International Cooperation (I):** Difficulties in aligning data protection laws across jurisdictions.
7. **Global Trends (G):** Need to continuously adapt to evolving global data standards.
8. **Human Rights Considerations (H):** Ensuring that data protection measures uphold privacy and freedom of expression.
9. **Trust & Confidence (T):** Ensuring public trust in the government's role in data regulation.

WAY FORWARD

1. **Public Awareness & Education** – Increase digital literacy about data privacy rights.

2. **Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIAs)** – Organizations should assess risks before implementing new data policies.

3. **Stronger Enforcement Mechanisms** – Empower the Data Protection Board with robust penalty mechanisms.
4. **User-Centric Approach** – Individuals should have greater control over their data.
5. **Adaptive Legal Framework** – Frequent updates to keep pace with emerging technologies.
6. **Technological Innovation** – Foster privacy-preserving solutions like differential privacy.
7. **International Collaboration** – Strengthen cross-border cooperation on data security.

CONCLUSION

The DPDP Rules, 2025, provide a structured, transparent, and rights-focused approach to digital data protection. While challenges persist, the “light but tight” framework ensures a balance between privacy, innovation, and regulatory oversight, fostering a secure and dynamic digital economy.

AD HOC JUDGES: ADDRESSING JUDICIAL PENDENCY IN INDIA

RELEVANCE

❑ Syllabus:

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



INTRODUCTION

To address the **rising backlog of criminal cases in High Courts**, the **Supreme Court (SC)** has suggested the **temporary appointment of retired judges as ad hoc judges** under **Article 224A** of the Constitution. While this measure offers several **advantages**, it also raises **constitutional, administrative, and financial concerns**.

JUDICIAL PENDENCY IN INDIA: THE CURRENT SCENARIO

Case Backlogs in Indian Courts

According to the **National Judicial Data Grid (NJDG)**, **over 50 million cases** are currently **pending** across Indian courts. The **breakdown of pending cases** is as follows:

Court	Pending Cases
Supreme Court	71,411
High Courts	~6 million
Subordinate Courts	~41 million

With such alarming figures, **ad hoc appointments of retired judges** are being considered as a **temporary measure** to reduce pendency.

CONSTITUTIONAL BASIS FOR APPOINTMENT OF AD HOC JUDGES

Article 224A of the Indian Constitution

- ❑ Enables the **Chief Justice of a High Court (CJHC)** to request a **retired High Court judge** to serve as an **ad hoc judge**, subject to the **President's approval**.

- Key Features:**
 - Appointees hold the same powers and privileges as regular judges.
 - The retired judge and the President must both agree to the appointment.
 - Allowances and benefits are determined by the President.

Procedure for Appointment (1998 Memorandum of Procedure - MoP)

1. CJHC secures the retired judge's consent and forwards the recommendation to the State Chief Minister.
2. Chief Minister forwards the proposal to the Union Law Minister.
3. Law Minister consults the Chief Justice of India (CJI) and sends the recommendation to the Prime Minister.
4. Prime Minister advises the President, who grants or denies approval.

Supreme Court Ruling (2021: Lok Prahari v. Union of India)

- Mandated that all ad hoc judge recommendations must pass through the

Supreme Court Collegium (CJI + two senior-most SC judges).

- Established clear guidelines for initiating ad hoc appointments.

CRITERIA FOR AD HOC JUDGE APPOINTMENTS

1. Supreme Court Guidelines (2021)

- Ad hoc appointments should only be made if:
 - High Court vacancies exceed 20% of the sanctioned strength.
 - More than 10% of pending cases are older than five years.
- Panel Selection Process:
 - A panel of retired or soon-to-retire judges should be created.
 - 2-5 ad hoc judges per High Court should be appointed for 2-3 years.
 - A periodic review should be conducted to assess effectiveness.
- SC Clarification: Article 224A should not replace regular appointments but should be used as a supplementary measure.

HISTORICAL INSTANCES OF AD HOC JUDGE APPOINTMENTS

Judge	High Court	Year	Purpose
Justice Suraj Bhan	Madhya Pradesh	1972	Election petitions
Justice P. Venugopal	Madras	1982	General case backlog
Justice O. P. Srivastava	Allahabad	2007	Ayodhya title suits

Since 2021, no ad hoc judges have been appointed.

- The SC has warned that frequent use of Article 224A could delay regular judge appointments.

ADVANTAGES OF APPOINTING RETIRED JUDGES AS AD HOC JUDGES

1. Utilizing Judicial Expertise

- Retired judges possess vast legal experience, allowing them to handle complex cases efficiently.

- Example:** Justice O.P. Srivastava was appointed in 2007 to resolve the Ayodhya title suit.

2. Cost-Effective and Immediate Relief

- No need for long training periods for new judges.

- ❑ **Example:** Justice P. Venugopal's appointment in **Madras HC (1982)** helped clear backlogs without additional resource strain.

3. Parliamentary Support

- ❑ The **133rd Parliamentary Standing Committee Report** emphasized ad hoc judges as a key strategy to manage case backlogs.

4. Reduction in Judicial Pendency

- ❑ With **50 million pending cases**, ad hoc judges can significantly accelerate case resolution in High Courts.

CHALLENGES IN APPOINTING AD HOC JUDGES

1. Risk to Judicial Independence

- ❑ Frequent reliance on ad hoc judges may weaken the judiciary's independence.
- ❑ Retired judges may face pressure from the executive to rule in favor of certain cases.

2. Financial and Resource Allocation

- ❑ Ad hoc judges require salaries, allowances, and court resources, straining the judicial budget.
- ❑ Funds allocated to retired judges could be better used for infrastructure upgrades.

3. Temporary Nature and Disruptions

- ❑ Short-term tenure (2–3 years) may lead to inconsistency in long-pending cases.
- ❑ A lack of continuity may disrupt the case hearing process.

4. Executive Overreach

- ❑ Appointments require executive approval, increasing the risk of political bias.
- ❑ Delays in approvals can undermine the purpose of the appointments.

5. Suitability and Expertise Issues

- ❑ Some retired judges may lack expertise in specialized fields like intellectual property, cyber law, or commercial disputes.

- ❑ Health concerns may also limit the ability of older judges to handle workload pressures.

WAY FORWARD: "AD-HOC" APPROACH

| **A** | **Alignment** | Ad hoc appointments should align with constitutional principles and judicial independence. | | **DH** | **Defined Horizon** | The scope and tenure should be fixed to prevent misuse. | | **O** | **Objectivity** | Selection criteria should be transparent and merit-based. | | **C** | **Constitutionalism** | Ad hoc appointments must not compromise judicial autonomy. |

ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Judicial Vacancy Reduction:

- Prioritize regular judge appointments over ad hoc solutions.
- Streamline the HC judge recruitment process to minimize vacancies.

2. Periodic Review of Ad Hoc Appointments:

- A panel of soon-to-rotate judges should be regularly updated.
- Performance assessments should guide reappointments.

3. Improved Infrastructure and Technology:

- Digitization of court records can help resolve cases faster.
- Use AI-based case management tools to prioritize long-pending cases.

4. Adherence to Collegium Guidelines:

- The Collegium must retain full control over appointments.
- Ad hoc judges should not be appointed due to political pressures.

CONCLUSION

While ad hoc appointments offer a temporary solution to address the massive backlog of cases, they must not replace regular judge recruitment. Instead, the focus should be on long-term judicial reforms, including speeding up regular

appointments, upgrading court infrastructure, and improving case management systems.

The judiciary and executive must work together to ensure fair, transparent, and effective judicial

appointments, upholding constitutional values and the rule of law.



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MAINS PRACTICE QUESTIONS

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. Elaborate on Plato's ideal state.

(15 Marks)

Demand of the question: This question expects the candidate to give a detailed view on Plato's idea of Ideal State.

Structure:

- Introduction:** give a general introduction about Plato, his time, space and context in which he built upon his concept of ideal state.
- Body:** Elaborate on how Plato developed his Theory of ideal state and the underlying reasons for that.
- Conclusion:** Give Criticism of Plato's conception of Ideal State.

Plato, often regarded as the father of political philosophy, presented his theory of the "ideal state" in his renowned work "The Republic." This theory emerged from the tumultuous circumstances Athens faced during a period of political crisis and instability. The city had suffered defeat at the hands of Sparta, experienced inequalities in wealth distribution, and encountered various problems associated with its democratic system. Plato, perceiving democracy as the "rule of ignorance," sought to address these issues and construct an ideal state.

According to Plato, the foundation of the ideal state lies in the principle of justice. He views justice as the concept of "functional specialization," wherein every unit of society performs its designated task. This arrangement fosters interdependence among different segments of society, leading to social cohesion. Plato asserts that knowledge should hold the highest position in society, as he equates virtue with knowledge itself. Consequently, he proposes the establishment of the "Philosopher King" institution, whereby states are governed by rulers who possess a spirit of philosophy, resulting in virtuous governance. Plato maintains

that resolving the problems of political life is contingent upon philosophers ruling or rulers adopting a philosophical mindset.

Plato emphasizes the pivotal role of education in achieving excellence and constructing an ideal state. He considers education as the primary responsibility of the state. Individuals would become eligible to become philosopher kings after completing 50 years of educational training. Plato also criticizes the prevalent corruption in Athens, identifying the institutions of family and private property as the root causes. Consequently, he advocates for a system of communism of property and family specifically for the Guardian Class.

Criticism of Plato's ideas has been significant, with Karl Popper labeling him the chief totalitarian theorist of the ancient world. In modern times, figures like Nassim Nicholas Taleb have expressed their discontent with Plato's mode of philosophizing. However, despite these criticisms and the utopian nature of Plato's theory of the ideal state, he continues to hold a significant place in the history of Western Political thought. Ralph Waldo Emerson goes so far as to declare, "Plato is philosophy and philosophy is Plato," emphasizing the profound impact of Plato's contributions to the discipline of politics.

Q. Critically evaluate Kautilya's concept of "danda" (coercion) in the context of maintaining internal security and external relations.

Kautilya's Arthashastra, a seminal text on statecraft, posits "danda" (coercion) as a key pillar of state power. While essential for maintaining internal security and navigating external relations, a critical evaluation reveals both its strengths and limitations, raising questions about its compatibility with contemporary democratic principles.

Strengths

- **Internal Security:** Danda acts as a deterrent against crime and rebellion, ensuring stability and order within the kingdom. Kautilya outlines a meticulous system of law enforcement, espionage, and surveillance, aimed at preventing internal threats and punishing transgressors.
- **External Relations:** Danda enables a state to deter aggression, defend its borders, and enforce treaties. Kautilya advocates for strategic alliances, vyuha formations for warfare, and skillful diplomacy, all backed by military prowess. This pragmatic approach to foreign policy allowed the Mauryan empire to expand its territory and command respect on the international stage.
- **Effective Governance:** Danda, when exercised judiciously, can be a tool for social justice and efficient administration. Kautilya prescribes graded punishments for different offenses, ensuring proportional justice. He also suggests utilizing danda to enforce fair taxation and protect vulnerable sections of society.

Limitations

- **Potential for Abuse:** Unchecked danda can morph into tyranny and oppression. The emphasis on coercion and surveillance can stifle dissent, freedom of expression, and individual liberties.
- **Moral Implications:** Kautilya's danda, while pragmatic, often blurs the lines between ethical and ruthless statecraft. This raises concerns about whether the ends justify the means, especially in a contemporary context.
- **Contextual Relevance:** The rigid hierarchical structure and harsh punishments prescribed by Kautilya's danda might not be compatible with modern democratic societies. Contemporary approaches to

security and diplomacy emphasize dialogue, cooperation, and international law, rendering Kautilya's purely coercive methods outdated in certain aspects.

Kautilya's danda remains a fascinating concept that offers valuable insights into statecraft and diplomacy. However, a critical evaluation reveals its potential dangers and limitations. In a contemporary world that values democracy and human rights, it's crucial to acknowledge the need for alternative approaches to security and international relations that prioritize dialogue, cooperation, and the rule of law.

Q. Subhash Kashyap asserts that although many contributed to shaping the constitution's form and design, Nehru played a paramount role in imbuing it with its essence, ethos, guiding principles, and rational foundation. Discuss.

The Constitution of India, crafted by the Constituent Assembly, is not merely a product of that assembly alone. Its core principles were shaped during the prolonged struggle for independence. The nationalist movement extensively deliberated numerous pivotal questions that had relevance to the constitution-making process: the structure of government for India, the upheld values, and more. In essence, the Constituent Assembly translated the principles inherited from the nationalist movement into tangible form. The "Objective Resolution," put forth by Jawaharlal Nehru in 1946, succinctly captures the principles brought by the nationalist movement to the Constituent Assembly. This resolution encapsulated the aspirations and values underlying the constitution, setting out the foundational philosophy of the constitutional framework and profoundly influencing its subsequent evolution.

The Objective Resolution aimed to establish an "Independent Sovereign Republic of India" in which both the nation and its constituent states derived their powers and authority from the people. It aimed to concretely institutionalize fundamental commitments such as liberty, equality, justice, safeguards for minorities and vulnerable groups, democracy, sovereignty, and a cosmopolitan identity.

Hence, it can be argued that Nehru's introduction of the Objective Resolution represented liberal and welfare-oriented ideals, which find full reflection in the Preamble of the Indian Constitution—a statement that articulates the essential philosophy of the independent Indian state.

However, the conventional Marxist interpretation of the Indian national movement, which employed a narrow class-based approach, has faced criticism from later generations of Marxist scholars. S.N. Mukherjee contends that Indian nationalism was a multi-layered and intricate process that cannot be comprehended through reductionist class analysis.

Sumit Sarkar, in his work "Modern India," contends that R.C. Dutt's brand of Marxist interpretation falls short by simplistically attributing direct and straightforward economic motivations to political actions. Sarkar argues that the Indian National Congress did not have a deliberate or calculated strategy against the masses.

Bipan Chandra, a Marxist scholar, asserts that the freedom struggle led by the Congress was a remarkable mass movement. He argues that, in pursuit of resolving the primary contradictions between Indian and British rule, secondary contradictions rooted in caste, class, and so on were set aside, and all segments of society rallied under the nationalist ideology.

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.

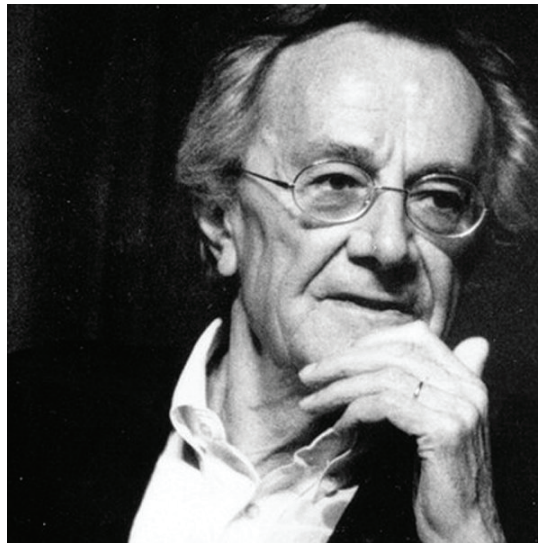
DEPENDENCY THEORY

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.

JEAN-FRANÇOIS LYOTARD



INTRODUCTION

Jean-François Lyotard, a renowned French philosopher, made significant contributions to postmodern philosophy. His ideas challenged traditional notions of truth, power, and narratives, influencing various fields such as philosophy, sociology, and cultural studies. This article delves into Lyotard's main ideas and their implications, highlighting his concept of incredulity towards metanarratives, critique of grand narratives, and the relationship between language and knowledge.

INCREdulITY TOWARDS METANARRATIVES

Lyotard questioned the legitimacy of metanarratives, which are overarching narratives claiming to provide comprehensive understandings of the world. Metanarratives include concepts like progress, enlightenment, or Marxism. Lyotard argued that these narratives had lost credibility, as society became increasingly skeptical of their claims to truth and universality. He advocated for embracing micro-narratives, recognizing the diversity and incommensurability of different perspectives and experiences.

CRITIQUE OF GRAND NARRATIVES

A central aspect of Lyotard's work was his critique of grand narratives and their connection to power.

He argued that grand narratives often functioned as tools of domination, allowing those in power to legitimize their control over society. By imposing a singular narrative, those in authority marginalize alternative viewpoints and suppress dissent. Lyotard believed that by dismantling grand narratives, we create space for a multiplicity of voices and foster a more democratic and inclusive society.

LANGUAGE AND KNOWLEDGE

Lyotard explored the relationship between language and knowledge, emphasizing the limitations and complexities of linguistic representation. He rejected the idea that language could provide an objective and transparent representation of reality. Instead, he argued that language is inherently unstable, fragmented, and subject to different interpretations. Knowledge, according to Lyotard, is contingent upon language games, which are socially constructed systems of meaning. These language games shape our understanding of reality, but they are not universally valid or comprehensive.

THE POSTMODERN CONDITION

Lyotard's ideas were influential in defining the postmodern condition. He described the postmodern era as characterized by a skepticism

towards grand narratives, a celebration of diversity, and a recognition of the fragmentation of knowledge. In the postmodern condition, truth becomes a matter of individual interpretation and subjective experience. This challenges traditional notions of authority and encourages a constant reassessment of knowledge and its foundations.

IMPLICATIONS AND CRITICISMS

Lyotard's ideas have both positive and negative implications. On one hand, his emphasis on the plurality of narratives and the rejection of grand narratives allows for a more inclusive and democratic society, where diverse perspectives are valued. It promotes critical thinking, as individuals are encouraged to question dominant narratives and engage in dialogue. On the other hand, critics argue that Lyotard's ideas can lead to a relativistic stance, where all narratives are considered equally valid, undermining the pursuit of objective truth.

Furthermore, some critics argue that Lyotard's work lacks concrete solutions or a coherent alternative to grand narratives. They suggest that while skepticism towards metanarratives is valuable, it is essential to find a balance between acknowledging the limitations of overarching narratives and maintaining a shared understanding of the world.

CONCLUSION

Jean-François Lyotard's ideas have left a significant impact on postmodern philosophy and the understanding of knowledge, power, and narratives. His skepticism towards metanarratives and emphasis on the plurality of narratives challenged established notions of truth and authority. While his ideas have faced criticism, they continue to stimulate intellectual debates and encourage critical engagement with dominant discourses.

JOHN JOSEPH MEARSHEIMER



INTRODUCTION

John Joseph Mearsheimer, born on December 14, 1947, in New York, New York, is a distinguished American academic specializing in international relations. He is most renowned for developing the concept of offensive realism within this field.

MAJOR WORKS

John Mearsheimer is well known for his work "The Tragedy of Great Power Politics". In 2007, John Mearsheimer collaborated with Stephen M. Walt on a book titled "The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy," which garnered significant attention but also sparked controversy. The book

argued that a influential lobby had a distorting effect on U.S. foreign policy, leading it to prioritize unwavering support for Israel over the nation's own interests. While some critics dismissed the work as propagating conspiracy theories or lacking in factual accuracy, supporters commended the authors for their willingness to address a significant policy matter.

Mearsheimer's body of work also encompassed other notable titles such as "Conventional Deterrence" (1983), "Liddell Hart and the Weight of History" (1988), "Why Leaders Lie: The Truth About Lying in International Politics" (2011), and "The Great Delusion: Liberal Dreams and International Realities" (2018).

INFLUENCES

Much like many scholars specializing in international relations from his era, Mearsheimer was significantly shaped by the ideas of Kenneth Waltz, the originator of neorealism in the field. While classical realists like Hans Morgenthau attributed global conflicts to the inherent drive of political leaders to enhance their own power, neorealists (also called structural realists) such as Waltz attributed the root cause of war to the arrangement of international relations. In Waltz's framework, the absence of a higher authority governing states (referred to as anarchy) compels them to form alliances as a means of containing potential threats emanating from competing powers. Essentially, the global order is shaped by the equilibrium of power among states. According to Waltz, the pursuit of security prompts states to support the existing state of affairs and to assume a defensive stance towards their rivals.

THEORY OF OFFENSIVE REALISM IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Mearsheimer's alternative perspective, termed "offensive realism," posits that the pursuit of security and, fundamentally, survival drives states to aggressively seek to maximize their power.

Rather than cooperating extensively, states predominantly engage in temporary alliances while consistently striving to weaken rivals and strengthen themselves.

Mearsheimer's theory rests on five fundamental assumptions:

1. The international system operates without a central authority to mediate state conflicts.
2. All states possess some degree of military capability, regardless of its extent.
3. States are unable to definitively discern the intentions of other states.
4. Survival ranks as the paramount concern for states.
5. States act rationally to advance their own interests.

According to Mearsheimer, these conditions generate strong incentives for states to adopt aggressive behavior towards one another. Since states cannot accurately predict the intentions of others, it becomes rational for them to bolster their military strength and adopt assertive stances to counteract potential aggression.

MEARSHEIMER'S CRITICISM OF IRAQ WAR AND USA'S FOREIGN POLICY

While Mearsheimer acknowledged war as a viable tool of statecraft, he held reservations about its blanket justification. He notably expressed strong disapproval of the Iraq War (2003–2011), viewing it as an instance where the United States sought to exert global policing authority. Concerning U.S. foreign policy, his stance favored a strategy of "global balancing" over "global hegemony." He believed that powerful nations, like the U.S., should refrain from imposing their dominion across all continents, intervening selectively when a major rival poses a threat to a strategically significant region.

Mearsheimer applauded U.S. involvement in World War II, deeming it appropriate due to the ambitions

of Nazi Germany and imperial Japan to establish dominance in their respective regions. However, he criticized the post-Cold War U.S. foreign policy for overestimating its military prowess and its ability to exert force at its discretion. A notable aspect

of Mearsheimer's viewpoint was his proposition for the complete withdrawal of U.S. forces from Europe, contending that their continued presence lacked rationale given the absence of any current dominant threat to the continent.

SAMUEL P. HUNTINGTON



INTRODUCTION

Samuel P. Huntington was an American political scientist known for his role as a consultant to several U.S. government agencies and his significant contributions to national discussions concerning U.S. foreign policy during the late 20th and early 21st centuries. He was born on April 18, 1927, in New York, N.Y., and passed away on December 24, 2008, on Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts.

CLASH OF CIVILIZATION THESIS

"The Clash of Civilizations" is a thesis put forth by American political scientist Samuel P. Huntington, which posits that in the post-Cold War world, cultural and religious identities will be the primary sources of conflict. According to Huntington, wars in this new era will not be fought between countries, but rather between different cultures.

Huntington's line of thought began by examining various theories about the nature of global politics in the post-Cold War era. Some thinkers argued that human rights, liberal democracy, and the capitalist free market economy had become the sole remaining ideological options for nations. Francis Fukuyama, for instance, suggested that the world had reached the 'end of history' in a Hegelian sense.

However, Huntington contended that the age of ideology had concluded, and the world had returned to a more typical state of affairs characterized by cultural conflicts. In his thesis, he proposed that cultural lines would be the primary source of conflict in the future.

Huntington went on to predict and describe major clashes that would occur among different civilizations. He anticipated potential cooperation

between Islamic and Sinic cultures in opposition to the West, identifying three key issues that separated the West from the rest. These issues included the West's ability to maintain military superiority by controlling the proliferation of emerging powers, the promotion of Western political values like human rights and democracy, and the restrictions on non-Western immigrants and refugees entering Western societies. Non-

Western countries saw these actions as Western attempts to impose and preserve their cultural dominance.

In one of his chapters, titled "The Global Politics of Civilizations," Huntington foresaw a "small, fault line war" between Islam and the West, as well as the potential for an "intercivilizational war of core states" between the United States and China.

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ENRICH YOUR ANSWER

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

B) (Mention similarities)

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

(Conclusion)

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

Q. Circulation of elites. Comment

Approach to Answer

Intro: Start by explaining the concept of Power

Body

1 Explain the elitist theory of Power including Pareto's Circulation of Elites theory.

→ Elitist theory accepts broad division of society into dominant and dependent group.

→ Pareto's theory of Power divides society into 'governing elite' and 'non governing elite'.

→ Explain the 'governing elites' and 'non *governing elites'.

→ Can give criticism of his theory

Conclusion

Show the significance of Pareto's theory in understanding the concept of Power

Q. Examine communitarian critique of Rawls theory of Justice.

Introduction:

- Start with key tenets of Rawlsian theory:
 - i) Individualism
 - ii) Original position
 - iii) Justice as fairness
 - iv) Veil of ignorance
- Mention Rawls book - "A theory of Justice"
- Communitarian critique of key tenets
 - use Michael Sandel
 - ↳ book - Liberalism & the limits of justice "
 - Michael Walzer
 - ↳ book → "spheres of justice"

Conclusion

- Rawls accepted reasonable pluralism as pre-condition in book 'Political Liberalism'
- gave concept of overlapping consensus.

Q. 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

① 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'

→ Conservative Perspective

* ideology is equated with dogmatism of beliefs that are divorced from complex real world.

② Distinguish between 'End of Ideology' and 'End of History'

End of Ideology
Daniel Bell

* Economics has triumphed over politics and political ideology has come to an end

End of History
Francis Fukuyama

* With triumph of liberalism, the history of ideas has ended.

PRELIMS PRACTICE QUESTIONS

Q. Consider the following statements:

With reference to the Constitution of India, the Directive Principles of State Policy constitute limitations upon

- 1. legislative function.**
- 2. executive function.**

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Q. Consider the following statements :

- 1. The Parliament of India can place a particular law in the Ninth Schedule of the Constitution of India.**
- 2. The validity of a law placed in the Ninth Schedule cannot be examined by any court and no judgement can be made on it.**

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Q. In the federation established by The Government of India Act of 1935. Residuary Power were given to the

- | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| (a) Federal Legislature | (b) Governor General |
| (c) Provincial Legislature | (d) Provincial Governors |

Q. With reference to the “G20 Common Framework”, consider the following statements

- 1. It is an initiative endorsed by the G20 together with the Paris Club.**
- 2. It is an initiative to support Low Income Countries with unsustainable debt.**

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

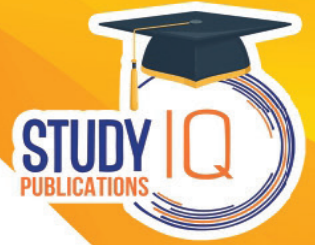
- | | |
|------------------|---------------------|
| (a) 1 only | (b) 2 only |
| (c) Both 1 and 2 | (d) Neither 1 nor 2 |

Answers

- (d)** The term ‘Directive Principles of State Policy’ refers to the guiding principles that the State should consider when creating policies and passing laws. These principles serve as constitutional directives or recommendations to the State in legislative, executive, and administrative affairs. Prominent constitutional scholar Granville Austin characterizes DPSP as the “affirmative duties” of the state. Contrary to the initial statements, the correct answer is (d).
- (a)** The first statement correctly states that the 1st Amendment to the Constitution in 1951 introduced new Articles 31A and 31B along with the Ninth Schedule, which aimed to secure the constitutional validity of zamindari abolition laws and similar legislation. These provisions specified that such laws could not be challenged on the grounds of violating Fundamental Rights. Subsequent governments have also added other progressive laws to the Ninth Schedule through parliamentary action, thus confirming the accuracy of the first statement.
 - However, the second statement is incorrect. In the I.R. Coelho case of 2007, the Supreme Court did indeed rule that there cannot be a blanket immunity from judicial review for laws included in the Ninth Schedule. Therefore, the second statement is inaccurate.
- (b)** Residuary powers were in the hands of Governor General.
- (c)**

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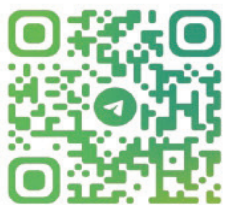


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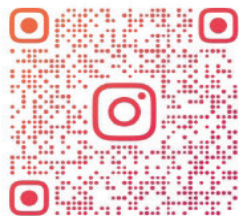
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