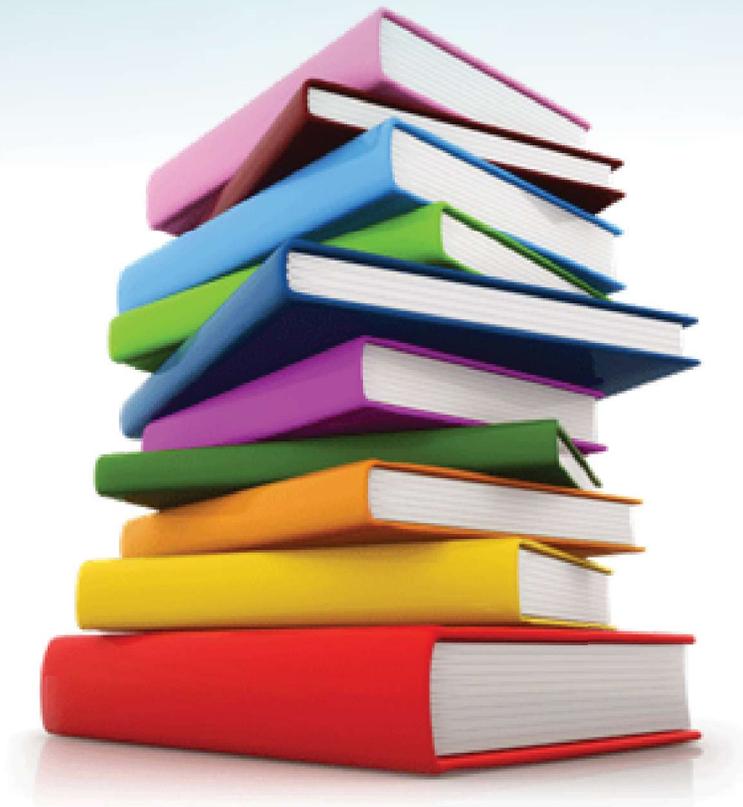




PLUTUS IAS

Weekly CURRENT AFFAIRS



PLUTUS IAS WEEKLY CURRENT AFFAIRS 25-04-2022 to 30-04-2022

Basement C59 Noida, Opposite to Priyagold Building Gate, Sector 2, Pocket 1, Noida, Contact No.: 8448440231

www.plutusias.com



CURRENT AFFAIRS

APRIL 2022

Rule of Law : A fundamental of democratic politics : An Analysis in special context to Bulldozer drive

RULE OF LAW : A FUNDAMENTAL OF DEMOCRATIC POLITICS – TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

Context : Recently , It has been observed that , state generally used bulldozers for demolishing the property (House and shops) of accused before any proper judicial trial. However this policy of the government is being praised by some section of the society and these people compare bulldozer drive with quick justice but the question remain that without any faire judicial trial whether these types of activities are not the violation of law , whether these activities are not the symbol of dictatorship of the state and not the the harmful of any civilization. Whether these activities do not damage the democratic prestige of India in the world. Whether these are not the violation of the constitution and the violation of international law. These types of the issues must be brought for the discussion and if required, some amendments must be done in IPC /CrPC and Indian constitution .

Today Current Affairs

Introduction :

The rule of law is the political philosophy that all citizens and institutions within a country, state, or community are accountable to the same laws. It means state would not discriminate among the people on the bases of the caste , creed, race, sex while imposing any law . The Indian constitution also consists of the rule of Law . Article 14 of the Indian constitution clearly explains the rule of law. For the democratic politics , rule of law is a mandatory element .

HISTORY OF RULE OF LAW : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

- Generally , it is considered that Aristotle described rule of law during the 4th century BC and he clearly distinguished between rule of law and the rule of individuals. In Arthashastra however , the rule of law is clearly given but it should not be ignored that in ancient India discriminations had been based on the varna system. But the provisions for all the varnas were clearly described in the religion text (Dharma Shastra). The Hindu Analysis
- By the 18th century Montesquieu describe the rule of law and it is called the legitimate authority of the monarch. In general, the rule of law implies that the creation of laws, their enforcement, and the relationships among legal rules are themselves legally regulated, so that no one—including the most highly placed official—is above the law. However some privileges should also be given to selective important persons .

- Bulldozer drive and Violation of rule of law are nowadays the subject of debate . Many people say that bulldozer drive is the means of quick justice Government also justify bulldozer drive either on the ground of illegal encroachment or pressurizing the accused . The statement of the NDMC that the demolition was a part of a drive against “illegal encroachments” seems to be a legal smokescreen for its more insidious action.
- If we observe the legalities of the colonies of Delhi, only 24 % of the settlement in Delhi is legal, should the remaining 76 % of the settlement be demolished? Definitely not , it should be regularized . The Hindu Analysis
- he Draft Master Plan of Delhi, 2041 also acknowledges the informality that characterizes Delhi when it states that such unplanned areas have “emerged as high density, mix-use hubs, providing affordable options for housing, micro, small and medium enterprises”. Within the web of such urban informality, people make claims over property through various legal, political, and documentary means. Since the 1970s, there have been many waves of regularization of “unauthorized colonies” initiated by the state. Central government has passed PM-UDAY (Unauthorized Colonies in Delhi Awas Adhikar Yojana) scheme and through this yojna, the property rights of unauthorized colonies were also recognized by the state .
- Besides , no public authority can demolish buildings without giving any prior notice and the right to hear that party. It is a complete violation of natural justice also (Delhi Municipal Corporation Act, 1957 and the Delhi Development Act, 1957). Section 343 of the Delhi Municipal Corporation Act, 1957, however allows the authority to demolish the building but it shall be made” unless a notice is served to give the affected person “a reasonable opportunity of showing cause why such order shall not be made”.

TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

CONCLUSION :

As per the above discussion, it is almost clear that , in a civilized society and a democratic country such type of bulldozing can not be justified . Government should be more rational in this regard. This is the era of communication . These incidents definitely would fade the democratic character of India in front of other democratic countries of the world . India is one of the most democratic countries as well as the country of oldest civilization in the world . The rule of law had been followed in India even in the Ancient period . therefore we must follow the instruction of constitution, judgment of the honorable supreme court and high courts (Udama Singh vs Government of Delhi , 2010 Delhi high court gave a verdict which mandated that the state should comply with fair procedure before undertaking any eviction which got further crystalized in the Delhi Slum & JJ Rehabilitation and Relocation Policy, 2015. In Ajay Makan vs Union of India (2019), a case concerning the legality of the demolition of Shakur Basti, the Delhi High Court held that no authority shall carry out eviction without conducting a survey, consulting the population that it seeks to evict and providing adequate rehabilitation for those eligible.)

Source : The Hindu (Editorial)

Dr. Anshul Bajpai

Goal of Energy Resources in South Asia : An analysis in special reference to India

GOAL OF ENERGY RESOURCES IN SOUTH ASIA – TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

Context :

The chief goal of the South Asian Countries is to provide electricity to every household. However some countries are far behind this goal. The objective is not only to provide electricity to each house but it should be provided on reliable cost and efficient electricity protecting the interest of the customer

Today Current Affairs

INTRODUCTION

- South Asia is the southern region of Asia . It can be defined as both geographical and ethno-cultural terms. It consists almost 4th of the world population , however it has 5-5% of land mass of the world's land mass. The region consists of the countries of Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. In recent year it has been observed that the production of electricity has risen exponentially from 340 terawatt hours (TWh) in 1990 to 1,500 TWh in 2015. Small countries like Bangladesh has also achieved the target of 100% electrification recently while Bhutan, the Maldives, and Sri Lanka accomplished this in 2019.
- India and Afghanistan are closing to achieve the target of 100 electrification . Both have achieved almost 95 % of the target of electrification. Pakistan is far behind this target . Pakistan could achieve 73.91% of targeted electrification. The cost of electricity is the cheapest in Bhutan while In India the electricity cost is the highest in all south Asian countries. The Bangladesh government has significantly revamped power production resulting in power demands from 4,942 kWh in 2009 to 25,514 MW as of 2022. The objective of India is to transmit renewable energy to provide for 40% of total consumption. Among all the south Asian countries the condition of the Pakistan is the worst condition. The Hindu Analysis
- The main issues which should be addressed by these countries include generation, transmission, distribution, rural electrification, research and development, environmental issues, energy conservation and human resource training.
- Because of the geographical diversity, every country depends on different energy sources . For example India relies heavily on coal, accounting for nearly 55% of its electricity production, 99.9% of Nepal's energy comes from hydropower, 75% of Bangladesh's power production relies on natural gas, and Sri Lanka leans on oil, spending as much as 6% of its GDP on importing oil.

SIGNIFICANCE OF ELECTRIFICATION : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

- Electrification of the countries does not only fulfill the requirement of energy but also it helps in increment of the GDP as well as the objective of Global sustainable development . For middle income countries, generation of electricity plays an important role in the development of the country . More electricity encourages more investment which would further lead to more production and more employment . In such a way electricity provides the overall increment in any economy. Today Current Affairs
- The production of electricity played a greater role in some south Asian countries . For example, 50.3% of Bangladesh's GDP comes from industrial and agricultural sectors which cannot function efficiently without electricity. Nepal's GDP growth of an average of 7.3% since the earthquake in 2015 is due to

rapid urbanization aided by increased consumption of electricity. Because of the less electrification in Pakistan, it has to face the rapid reduction in Industrial growth

- Bangladesh is moving faster towards the goal of SDGs (Global sustainable development .) She is focusing on the electricity production from solar energy . In This way she can achieve the 7 goals of SDGs (Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all” for 2030) . The solar energy is being distributed to households also so that the maximum household could be benefited in Bangladesh . In this way She is achieving the 5th Gold of SDGs gradually (achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls”)
- India’s pledge to move 40% of total energy produced to renewable energy is also a big step. India is also improving the accessibility of the electricity for all and in this way she is also achieved the 9th goal of SDGs gradually (“build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation) Today Current Affairs
- India’s focus is to reduce carbon, therefore India is increasing the clean energy sources. Recently in Palli village , our prime minister inaugurated the solar plan for the electrification of the village . South Asia has vast renewable energy resources — hydropower, solar, wind, geothermal and biomass which must be exploited for fulfilling the electricity requirements . The region is moving towards green growth and energy as India hosts the International Solar Alliance.

REGIONAL COOPERATION FOR ENERGY : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) prepared the regional energy cooperation framework in 2014 but its implementation is still in vain .However there are multiple bilateral , multilateral treaties among South Asian countries but still energy cooperation could not be made feasible so that the energy requirement of them all could be fulfilled. ‘South Asia’s regional geopolitics is determined by the conflation of identity, politics, and international borders. This is the main obstacle in front of the treaties . India exports 1,200MW of electricity to Bangladesh, sufficient for almost 25% of the daily energy demand, with a significant amount from the Kokrajhar power plant in Assam worth U.S.\$470 million. Bhutan exports 70% of its own hydro powered electricity to India worth almost U.S.\$100 million.

NEED TO IMPROVEMENT IN SUCH A WAY : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

South Asian countries are rapidly improving their energy resources and fulfilling the requirement of energy but in this field, more cooperation among the countries is needed despite the local geopolitical issues . these countries should develop infrastructure for the distribution of the electricity among the countries

Today Current Affairs

Conclusion

As per the above discussion , it can be said that energy is the key factor for the development of any country . so all the south Asian countries should develop energy resources and through mutual cooperation they should distribute the electricity so that it could fulfill the requirements of each country . In this way the entire region would be benefited and we will achieve the goals of the SDGs. Since South Asian countries represent the 4th largest population of the world in 5 % of land therefore for these countries development of energy is a must .

Source : The Hindu (Editorial)

Dr. Anshul Bajpai

Criminal Procedure (Identification) Bill, 2022

CRIMINAL PROCEDURE (IDENTIFICATION) BILL, 2022 – TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

The government has introduced the Criminal Procedure (Identification) Bill, 2022 in Lok Sabha amid strong protests from the Opposition.

Today Current Affairs

WHAT IS THE PROPOSED LAW?

- Earlier law– The Bill seeks to repeal the Identification of Prisoners Act 1920 that provided for the collection of only fingerprints and footprints.
- Measurements– It authorises law enforcement agencies to collect, store and analyse physical and biological samples including retina and iris and behavioural attributes including signatures and handwriting for identification and investigation in criminal matters. Today Current Affairs
- Repository of samples– The National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) will be the repository of physical and biological samples, signature and handwriting data.
- Coverage- It proposes that the law apply to three categories of individuals.
 1. Convicted persons
 2. Suspected criminals or habitual offenders
 3. Persons held under any preventive detention law
- Storage of samples– The record of these measurements will be retained in digital or electronic form for a period of 75 years from the date of collection.
- Exemptions– A person accused of any offence other than offences committed against a woman or a child, or for any offence punishable with imprisonment for a period that is not less than 7 years can refuse to allow taking of his biological samples. Today Current Affairs
- Destruction of records– The records are to be destroyed in the case of any person who is released without trial or discharged or acquitted by the court, after exhausting all legal remedies.
- Resisting the measurements– Refusal to allow the taking of measurements under this Act shall be deemed to be an offence under section 186 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC).

WHAT IS THE NEED FOR SUCH A BILL? THE HINDU ANALYSIS

- To suit the changed nature and trend of crimes
- For reliable results
- To aid the investigation agencies in identification and investigation of criminal matters
- To increase prosecution
- To increase the conviction rates in courts
- To promote modern techniques to capture and record appropriate body measurements in place of existing limited measurements.

WHAT ARE THE ISSUES BEING RAISED ABOUT THE BILL? THE HINDU ANALYSIS

- Lack of clarity– The statement of objects says it provides for collection of measurements for “convicts and other persons” but the expression “other persons” is not defined.

- The provisions cast a wide net on the range of individuals — even those who are not booked for any offence but are simply “suspected” of committing one or “likely” to commit one.
- Conflict with fundamental rights– The Bill is beyond the legislative competence of Parliament as it violated fundamental rights of citizens including the right to privacy. Today Current Affairs
- The proposed law will be debated against Article 20(3) of the Constitution, which is a fundamental right that guarantees the right against self-incrimination.
- Human right violations– The Bill is said to violate the human rights provisions as laid in the United Nations charter.
- Right to be forgotten– The Bill also brings to focus rights of prisoners and the right to be forgotten since biometric data can be stored for 75 years.
- Disrupts federalism- Given that policing is a state subject, it remains to be seen if any states refuse to share this information.

WHAT WAS THE SUPREME COURT’S RULING REGARDING PRIVACY? THE HINDU ANALYSIS

- The Supreme Court’s landmark ruling in Puttaswamy v Union of India recognised the right to privacy as a fundamental right
- It made it clear that any state action infringing on the right needs to be backed by legislation.
- It also laid down a three-fold test to allow such laws.
 1. The activity must be backed by a law
 2. The state must have a legitimate interest in the subject to bring such a law that collides with fundamental rights
 3. The state’s infringement must be proportional to its aim
- In the Puttaswamy II case in 2018, the Supreme Court upheld the Aadhaar scheme and allowed the state to collect fingerprints and iris scans for welfare schemes.

Anshum Verma

Higher Inflation in Rural India

HIGHER INFLATION IN RURAL INDIA – TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

The retail inflation rate surged to 6.95% while the rural inflation surged to 7.66% this March. Inflation is the rate at which the value of a currency is falling and, consequently, the general level of prices for goods and services is rising.

Today Current Affairs

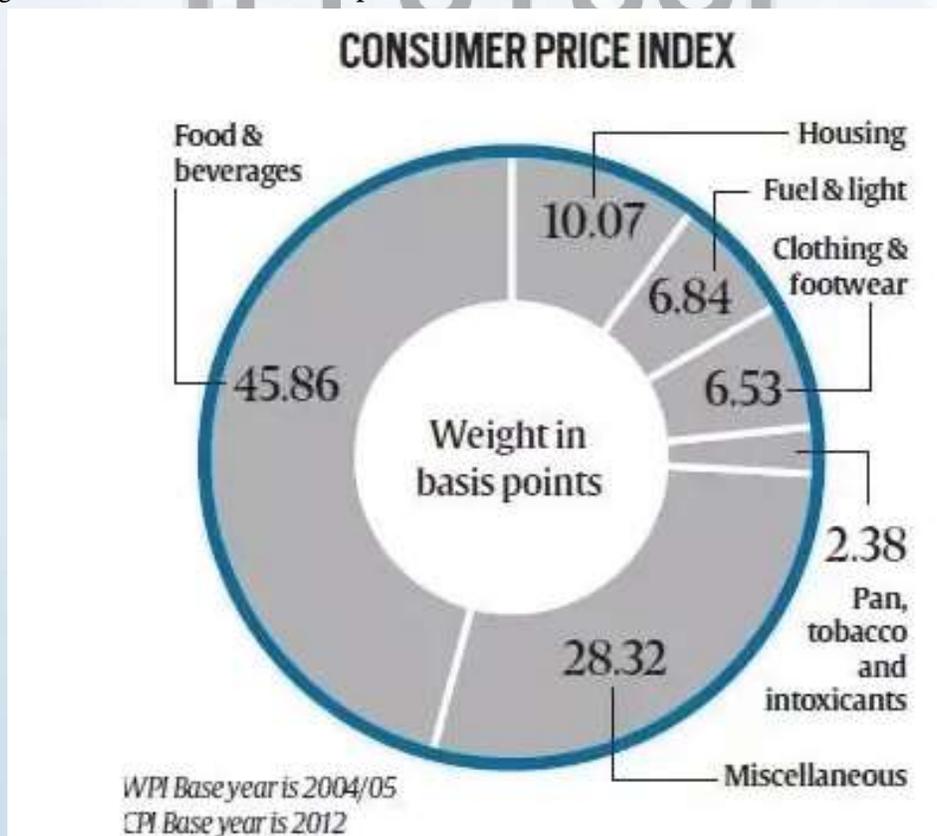
How Have Urban And Rural Inflation Trends Differed Over The Past Year?

- Urban inflation has usually tended to be higher than rural inflation by an average of about 0.8 percentage points through 2021 except August and May 2021.
- The rural inflation surpassed the urban inflation by 0.2 percentage points in January 2022 and reached 6.38% in February even as urban inflation declined to 5.75%.

- In March 2022, the gap between the two had surpassed 1.5% with urban inflation at 6.12% and rural inflation hitting 7.66%.

WHAT ARE THE KEY DRIVERS OF HIGHER INFLATION IN THE HINTERLAND? THE HINDU ANALYSIS

- Food inflation- Food has a higher weight in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) and food inflation was the key driver for the headline inflation rate jump in March.
- The food inflation in rural India reached 8.04% whereas food inflation in urban India was a full percentage point lower.
- The vegetable price trends have been most worrisome that reached 10.6% in March 2022.
- Fuel inflation- The inflation in fuel and light and clothing, were the key factors driving up rural prices. Today Current Affairs
- The fuel prices are higher in rural areas due to connectivity issues and prices of traditional fuel like firewood have also risen simultaneously.
- Education- A persistently higher inflation in education costs of about 1 to 1.5 percentage points was witnessed.
- Labour shift- This trend could also be explained by the shift of labour between urban and rural areas in the last two years, which has also injected volatility into demand dynamics.
- Others- The inflation rates for items such as oils and fats, clothing, footwear, fuel and light and personal care were higher than the urban counterparts.



WHICH SECTIONS ARE AFFECTED THE MOST? THE HINDU ANALYSIS

- Sections affected– While high inflation affects the poor the most in general, the fact that price rise in food is driving the current surge.
- Also, the food inflation is expected to rise along with both fuel and core inflation (excluding food and energy prices).
- The bottom 20% of the population in urban as well as rural India is facing the worst effects. Today Current Affairs
- The rural bottom 20% faced the highest inflation at 7.7% in March, while the upper 20% of the income segment in the rural area experienced 7.6% inflation.
- Reasons– While food price risks have risen due to the Russia-Ukraine conflict, higher prices for farm sector inputs could further drive the food inflation.
- Future prospects– The cost of production is likely to increase by around 8-10% and the MSP should at least be higher by around 12%-15%.
- With a normal monsoon anticipated this year, this would determine whether rural consumer demand will rebound or remain constricted in upcoming months.

Anshum Verma

Evaluation of Mission Antyodaya : How far it is successful in terms of Social Justice

EVALUATION OF MISSION ANTYODAYA – TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

Context :

Mission Antyodaya is the programme through which the government wants to reduce economical diversity in India . This mission is helpful to provide benefits to the marginalized people also . But recently statistical data released by the governments expose some flaws of this mission. These flaws must be addressed and resolved because this mission is the hope of marginalized people and it should not fall fall by the wayside

Today Current Affairs

INTRODUCTION :

- Mission Antyoday was adopted in the Union Budget 2017-18. is a convergence and accountability framework aiming to bring optimum use and management of resources allocated by 27 Ministries/ Department of the Government of India under various programmes for the development of rural areas. It is envisaged as a state-led initiative with Gram Panchayats as focal points of convergence efforts.
- As per the Indian constitution , social justice is the fundamental structure of the Indian constitution . In article Articles 243G and 243W of the Indian constitution, local governments are empowered to prepare and implement plans for 'economic development and social justice'. Several complementary institutions and measures such as the gram sabha to facilitate people's participation. District Planning Committees (DPC) make the plans for the bottom level while the state finance commission provides the financial assistance to such programmes . But , if we observed as ground level, the objective of the

Indian constitution for the decentralization has not been seems too much successful in rural areas because of the lack of awareness of the people

WHY MISSION ANTYODAY WAS INTRODUCED : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

In fact, some data were brought into the public domain by the Socio Economic and Caste Census (SECC) 2011, which showed the vulnerable conditions of the marginalized people and these people were demanding some remedies for them. According to these data , approx. 90 % of the rural household have no job (No salary) 53.7 million households are landless, 6.89 million female-headed households have no adult member to support, 49% suffer from multiple deprivations, 51.4% derive sustenance from manual casual labor, 23.73 million are with no room or only one room to live, and so on.

The above data can not be ignored by any democratic government at that time. Therefore the Antyodaya mission was brought. It was the compulsion for the center government who had come into power on the ground of poverty reduction

THE KEYS GOALS OF THE MISSION ANTYODAYA : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

- The fundamental objective of this mission is to ensure optimum use of resources through the convergence of various schemes that address multiple deprivations of poverty
- To make gram panchayat the hub of a development plan
- The collection of the data regarding health and nutrition, social security, good governance, water management, so that government could make plan accordingly. The Hindu Analysis
- To identify the gaps in basic needs at the local level, and integrating resources of various schemes, self-help groups, voluntary organizations and so on to finance them needs coordination and capacity-building of a high order.

EVALUATION : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

- The concept of Social justice is still distant. The reason behind this is the gap among the gram panchayats. Some Gram Panchayats are well developed and have many resources but some are not . First, this gap among all the gram panchayats should be reduced . First time the data was collected in a survey of The 'Mission Antyodaya' in 2019-20 which threw light on the infrastructural gap among the Gram panchayats. The data was collected through the survey which was conducted in 2.67 lakh gram panchayats, comprising 6.48 lakh villages with 1.03 billion population. For an insight into the gap report, we may use the State-wise break-up of the score-values. The Hindu Analysis
- The maximum score values assigned will add up to 100 and are presented in class intervals of 10. On this ground , no state of India could get a score of 90 . 1,484 gram panchayats are in the lowest bracket. Only 10 states come in the bracket of 80 to 90 . If we consider a score range of 70-80 as a respectable attainment level, Kerala tops but accounts for only 34.69% of gram panchayats of the State, the corresponding all-India average is as low as 1.09%. Even for Gujarat which comes next to Kerala, gram panchayats in this bracket are only 11.28%.All the gram panchayats in Kerala are above this and stand out in contrast to the rest of the States. While in the country as a whole only 7.37% have a composite index in the 70-100 bracket, Gujarat (which tops the list) has 20.5% in the range, followed by Kerala (19.77%) and Karnataka (17.68%).

THE HINDU ANALYSIS

The above data , definitely compels us to think about the success and flaws of the Mission Antyodaya .With

such a gap, how we can provide social justice in India. This is the big question. There are definitely several laps which must be rectified .

- Government should focus on universal primary health care, literacy, drinking water supply
- Government should implements some central governments plans like Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, the National Rural Livelihood Mission, National Social Assistance Programme, Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana, etc.) effectively. The Hindu Analysis
- Government should reduce expenditure on the governance
- Another big lapse is the failure to deploy the data to India's fiscal federalism. Government should rectify these flaws so that the goal of social justice could be achieved

TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

Conclusion

On the basis of the above discussion, it can be said that social justice is not only the constitutional compulsion but also the mandatory element of the development of India. If inequality is there in India , it will create discontent among people which would hamper the law and order of the country. Therefore government should ensure the minimization of the gap between upper and lower class which could be done only through providing financial assistance to marginalized people.

Dr Anshul Bajpai

India's Green Hydrogen Policy : An step toward energy independence

INDIA'S GREEN HYDROGEN POLICY – TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

Context : India's Green Hydrogen Policy released on February 17, 2022. Despite being several challenges , this is the first step towards getting energy independence . It can help lay the foundation of a new India which aims to be a global climate leader. Hydrogen is the source of clean energy . hence , hydrogen energy would reduce the dependency of Indian on the petroleum products

Today Current Affairs

Introduction :

Recently, Indian has declared its Green hydrogen policy where hydrogen was suggested as the alternative of the traditional fuels like petroleum products . At the 26th Conference of Parties (COP26) in November 2021, India committed tp reduce its carbon emission up to 0 % by 2070. India, along with 32 other countries plus the EU, signed a five-point “Glasgow B . In this pact India has shown that its commitment would be fulfilled through the substitution of the petroleum products as the source of energy with the clean hydrogen gas

India's Green Hydrogen Policy which was released at 17 Feb 2002 would be facilitating green hydrogen production through easing the process of hydrogen energy as well as the financial and other support from the government . there would be time bound clearance , power banking of surplus unconsumed renewable power for 30 days, providing access to power markets and interstate grids and long-term (25 years) interstate power transmission charge waivers, and easing port storage set-ups for hydrogen or

ammonia export and use by the shipping sector.

SEVERAL CHALLENGES : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

There are several challenges for promoting the production of clean energy Hydrogen . These Challenges are

- open access
- waiver of inter-state transmission charge
- Financial assistance
- time-bound clearances

However government has promised to facilitate to overcome from these challenges

NEED OF ALTERNATIVE OF TRADITIONAL ENERGY SOURCE : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

India is the second most populated country in the world and it is a developing country. The consumption of the fuel in India is about one-third of the global average and this consumption is continuously increasing . We have seen the price hike of the petroleum during Ukraine crisis and because of such price hikes , the inflation in India increases . therefore we must find out some alternative of the petroleum product in culture

The new age fuel, hydrogen, is touted as India's gateway to energy independence. Hydrogen can play an important role for fulfilling the energy requirement of India . It can be stored and can be used for long-haul transport, or for decarbonization of the industrial sector. Definitely , the culture of energy would not be the petroleum product , it would be depending on electricity and hydrogen. Electricity and hydrogen are the energy resources of the future .

Hydrogen would be a game changer for India. However , In India electric vehicles are used in which a lion battery is inbuilt. But these are not of long range and these take more time for refueling /charging. In the industrial segment, hydrogen can decarbonize 'hard-to-abate' sectors such as iron and steel, aluminum, copper etc. It is a huge prospect to produce fuels such as methanol, synthetic kerosene and green ammonia.

AN STRATEGY : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

There must be the requirement of the following strategy

- Government should create the demand first , for which the government could encourage the customer by providing some financial assistance as well as the financial support to the industries also. Without incentives these Industries would not be ready to take any risk
- Blending hydrogen with natural gas can act as a big booster shot which can be facilitated by framing blending mandates, regulations and promoting H-CNG stations.
- Government would encourage the fuel stations everywhere in India mainly on road side/ Highways . without the availability of the refueling , the demand of the hydrogen could not be created . The Hindu Analysis
- Similar to European countries , the concept of carbon tariffs needs to be introduced
- Government should invest more money in Research and development
- Sustainable Alternative Towards Affordable Transportation (SATAT) scheme with a target to produce 15 MMT of compressed biogas could be leveraged by exploring biogas conversion into hydrogen. Today

Current Affairs

- To commercialize and scale-up nascent technologies, a Viability Gap Funding (VGF) scheme may be introduced for hydrogen-based projects.
- The most important thing is the cost effectiveness. This fuel must be cost effective so that the cost could easily bear it
- For the transportation purpose, government can promote the use of ammonia,
- Government can use the hydrogen for domestic purpose and for the transportation through the already built infrastructure for the natural gas (PNG)

TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

Conclusion

Hence, it can be concluded that, for India, the searching of the alternative of traditional energy is must. We should invest in the production of hydrogen as the source of renewable energy. We should reduce our dependence on traditional energy sources like petroleum. Definitely India's Green Hydrogen Policy will be a milestone for India in the path of energy independence.

Dr. Anshul Bajpai

Significance of new Global Security Initiative of Chinese president in International politics

SIGNIFICANCE OF NEW GLOBAL SECURITY INITIATIVE OF CHINESE PRESIDENT IN INTERNATIONAL POLITICS – TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

Context :

Recently on the behalf of the Chinese media, it is found that Chinese President Xi Jinping wants to put forward A new Global Security Initiative that will look to counter the U.S. Indo-Pacific strategy and the Quad — the India, U.S., Australia, Japan grouping

Today Current Affairs

Introduction :

Recently, it has been observed that China is very much conscious of QUAD. In fact, during the Ukraine crisis and the indirect support of Russia by India, China thought about the dilution of the QUAD. but contrary to this, the QUAD has become a more committed organization regarding mutual cooperation. In fact China wants to increase her influence in south pacific sea, hence he wants to dilute QUAD

PROPOSAL OF THE CHINESE PRESIDENT : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

China wants to show the world that she is very much concerned towards world peace and security. Therefore he proposed an initiative called Global Security Initiative which would reduce “hegemonism, power politics and bloc confrontation”. This initiative would be committed to the vision of common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security,” In this way this initiative would be helpful to reduce aggression, unilateralism, group politics and bloc confrontation.” therefore the objective of this initiative was declared

to establish international peace. The Hindu Analysis

In fact some countries whose interests could be protected in small groupings or small circles . but these small groups may be confronted . Therefore the size of the group should be big in which the economical , political and social interest of many countries could be addressed .

As per the Chinese president. This new initiative would counter those groups which are destroying the world order under the banner of so-called ‘rules’ and the dragging of the world under the cloud of the ‘new cold war’. In fact, the Chinese president wants to clearly instruct those powerful countries of the western world that they are destroying the world order in the name of democracy and in this way they are gradually demolishing peace . So China want to ensure the security of Asian country based on mutual respect, openness and integration”

In fact, the objective of China is to stop any grouping of the countries of the south pacific region backed by America . During the last QUAD meeting , it was signaled by America to farm an organization like ASIAN NATO however the member of QUAD has rejected any grouping based on military cooperation . More military groups in the world would be more dangerous for the world order. Alliance should be made based on **broad cooperation, including on vaccines and technology.**

CONCLUSION AND SIGNIFICANCE : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

However , China is showing to the world that she is very much conscious towards international peace and order but the reality is every country of the world first protects own interest and then thinks about international politics. For interest of the India, QUAD type organization should be formed so that it could maintain balance in the south pacific sea . However military alliances should be avoided at international level because it will create the atmosphere of conflict . The initiative of China is definitely a good initiative and it should be appreciated but this initiative to establish peace in the world is doubtful because of the historical characteristic of China .

Dr. Anshul Bajpai

A need of a National Language : An Analysis in special reference to imposing Hindi in entire India

A NEED OF A NATIONAL LANGUAGE – TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

Context :

Recently , It has been observed that unnecessarily dispute is being tried to evolve regarding the imposing of Hindi as a National language . Southern Indian states started their open criticism in this regard . In this way an atmosphere of linguistic conflict is created which would not be good for the integrity of the country . The issue of language is the most sensitive issue . Several examples of disintegration of the country on the bases of languages are there in history . therefore these type of issues must be avoided

Today Current Affairs

Introduction :

Language is the means of communication and we all are very much glued with the language . We learn language as we take birth and from the atmosphere gradually. Therefore we are very much psychologically associated with the language . We can not accept any other language easily .

Language is a more sensitive factor in comparison to other factors which bring us together (However religion is a secondary factor and it is less effective than language) . Those languages or dialects which originated from a one linguistic family can be easily substituted with one language gradually but if there are fundamental differences among various languages , could not be brought together. For example north Indian languages and the dialects are the originated from one linguistic family (Indo European family) while the languages of the southern India is indigenous languages and originated from Dravidian family. Therefore it is very difficult to intermingle both the languages and the imposing Hindi , which is quite different from the Dravidian linguistic group .

WHETHER NATIONAL LANGUAGE IS REQUIRED FOR STRENGTHENING INDIA AS A NATION : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

We must understand that diversity is the fundamental characteristic of Indian nationalism (Unity). Indian nationalism is quite differ from European nationalism where race , culture , language plays an important role for nationalism. In India, despite being a diversified culture, language, race, religion , our glorified long history and culture provides us unity . Therefore, we should clearly find out those elements through which Indian nationalism could be strengthened . Those are promoting maximum autonomy up to the lowest unit of the administration, maximum freedom of cultural practice etc. However , Hindi should be promoted but it should not be imposed everywhere in India .

HINDI CAN BE PROMOTED THROUGH SEVERAL MEANS : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

- All the research works should be translated in Hindi (from every language)
- Some anomalies in Hindi grammar should be removed .
- Some common terms which are there is Dravidian languages must be used in Hindi
- The Hindi words and the Words of Dravidian languages should be exchanged
- The brotherhood between north Indian people and South Indian people must be strengthen
- Center government should provide maximum services (Like opening central schools, universities , colleges where Hindi should be taught from primary level)
- Through culture exchange between north Indian culture with south Indian culture , Hindi can be promoted
- In central governance most of the Southern Indian people should be appointed to senior posts . For their survival in north Indian politics, they would willingly promote and learn Hindi
- In the process of the encouraging Hindi, other languages must be equally respected
- Through attracting southern Indian people in Northern India and northern Indian people to southern India . As the free flow of the population would e increasing the Hindi languages would be automatically promoted
- Hindu should not be related with a particular religion . “Hindi , Hindu Hindustan” , types of slogans are

completely worthless in modern days . these type of aggressive slogan would hamper the promotion of Hindi

WHY SOME PEOPLE ARE OPPOSING HINDI : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

We as a human being want maximum happiness only which can be obtained through freedom up to maximum extent . We always oppose those things which are forcefully imposed on us . Similarly , Hindi should not be aggressively imposed . First we should promote Hindi as a secular language. It is the language of all . It should not be related to Hindus only . Language is related to society , not religion . India has a harmonious symphony of linguistic pluralism. Sir George Grierson's Linguistic Survey of India (1903-1923) had identified 179 languages and 544 dialects in India. The 1961 Census reports mentioned a total of 1,652 'mother tongues', out of which 184 'mother tongues' had more than 10,000 speakers, and of which 400 'mother tongues' had not been mentioned in Grierson's survey, while 527 were listed as 'unclassified'. This is a complete myth that Hindi has been the language of Pan India for a long time . In fact Hindi has developed as a language during the first decade of the 20th century .

SOME EXAMPLES OF THE CRISES BECAUSE OF THE NATIONAL LANGUAGE IN INDIAN SUBCONTINENT : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

The Indian subcontinent has been the witness of human settlement for a long time . various types of the languages emerged . After the independence of Pakistan, Pakistan adopted Urdu as the national language which the people of east Pakistan were opposing and They fought for the recognition of Bengali as well and we see the result of such clashes in the form of the disintegration of Pakistan . However the Urdu language is similar to Punjabi , therefore in present day Pakistan it is acceptable. In a monochromatic country one language can be accepted as the national language but in a diversified country one language should not be accepted as the national language . The reason for the collapse of Sri Lanka is the civil war which has been continuing for a long time based on the languages – Tamil and Sinhali languages . Everywhere in the world the conflict occurred because of the languages . Therefore in a plural country like India one language should not be imposed in Pan country . In South Africa, the national anthem of this Rainbow Nation, since 1997, is a five-language lyrical composition, making it the most unique anthem in the world in this regard. The languages are Xhosa, Zulu, Sesotho, Afrikaans and English. India should emulate the multi-linguistic accommodative policy of Singapore and South Africa; not the disastrous linguistic chauvinism of Pakistan or Sri Lanka.

India should emulate the multi-linguistic accommodate India should emulate the multi-linguistic accommodative policy of Singapore and South Africa; not the disastrous linguistic chauvinism of Pakistan or Sri Lanka

TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

Conclusion

As per the above discussion, It can be concluded that imposing Hindi on Pan Indian would not only be the encouraging factor of the conflict but also It would be hampering the integrity and the unity of India . India is the country of huge diversity (Linguistic). We should accommodate all the languages and the dialects . instead of the one language as the national languages we can promote the group of the languages . Since Indian nationalism originated in the diversity of India hence it can be strengthened through strengthening the diversity only . Cultural diversity is the strength of India , it is not the weakness of India . Hindi, Hindu,

Hindustan , types of slogans must be avoided. If we want a strong and prosperous India we should respect the plurality of India.

Dr. Anshul Bajpai

The Issues of Freebies

THE ISSUES OF FREEBIES – TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

Today Current Affairs

Why in news?

The 15th Finance Commission chairperson Mr. N.K. Singh has warned about how the race to provide freebies to voters could prove expensive for the economy, life quality and social cohesion, leading towards fiscal disaster in the long run.

HOW DO FREEBIES HAMPER ECONOMIC GROWTH? THE HINDU ANALYSIS

The Freebies disturbs the basic framework of macroeconomic stability. In case of Punjab, some have predicted that the promise of freebies is going to have an additional impact of 3% of GSDP.

The freebies politics distort expenditure priorities. For example, Rajasthan Government's decision to go back to the old pension scheme is regressive because 6% of the population, which is made up of civil servants, stands to benefit from 56% of the state's revenues. The Hindu Analysis

The case of intergenerational equity leads to greater social inequalities because of expenditure priorities being distorted away from growth-enhancing items.

The Provision of free power, water, etc. distracts outlays from environment and sustainable growth, renewable energy and the efficient public transport systems.

The depletion of groundwater is an important issue to consider when speaking of freebies pertaining to free consumption goods and resources. Today Current Affairs

The Freebies lower the quality and competitiveness of the manufacturing sector by detracting from efficient and competitive infrastructure.

It raises the question of whether the time has come to consider recourse mechanisms like subnational bankruptcy.

THE POSITIVE ROLE PLAYED BY FREEBIES : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

According to the Article 282 of the Constitution, the Union or a State may make any grants for any public purpose.

At various occasions, the freebies build a healthier and a stronger workforce, which is a necessary part of any growth strategy.

For instance , the spending in MGNREGA and subsidies in the form of food ration schemes. The Hindu Analysis

The subsidies going into education, such as for Smartphones and laptops have now become necessities for increasing productivity, knowledge and skills.

FUTURE COURSE OF ACTION : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

The politics built around the freebies is coupled with danger,there is great ambiguity regarding what “freebies” mean. So,It is required to distinguish between the concept of merit goods and the public goods in which the expenditure outlays have overall benefits.

The empowering of the public distribution system, employment guarantee schemes, support to education and enhanced outlays for health are considered to be desirable expenditures. Today Current Affairs

Further, It's not about how cheap the freebies are but how expensive they are for the economy, life quality and social cohesion in the long run.

Various centrally sponsored schemes are dealing with classic subjects in the domain of the states, such as employment, food, education.

So there is a need to revisit the Seventh Schedule which classifies the subjects into three lists. The Hindu Analysis

The quest for the bottom means government deregulation of markets and businesses. Which means that over a period of time states compete to underscore each other in lowering down taxes, expenditure and regulation. There is a need for a race to efficiency through the democratic norms and concept of federalism where states use their authority to inculcate innovative ideas and solutions to common problems which other states can follow.

Vivek Raj

Indian banks- productivity and sustainability

INDIAN BANKS- PRODUCTIVITY AND SUSTAINABILITY – TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

In 2017–18, the scheduled commercial banks incurred losses of ` 324 billion with gross non-performing assets (GNPAs) rising to 11.6% of gross advances. The losses and GNPs for public sector banks (PSBs) were

higher, amounting to `854 billion and 15.6% of gross advances, respectively. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has cautioned that growing GNPA's and losses of banks may endanger the stability of the banking sector. Moreover, the gross domestic product (GDP) growth rate of India has declined from 8.17% in 2016 to 6.98% in 2018, causing serious concern for all the stakeholders.

The measurement and analysis of the productivity of banks is important as it affects the financial stability. It will provide insights for taking corrective actions and stimulating economic development. Economic growth is augmented by several factors, such as efficiency of financial intermediaries, increased credit, and reduction in the interest margins. Thus, financial sector development leads to economic growth. It is possible that there exists a two-way relationship between economic growth and financial development. But whatever be the direction of relationship, the efficiency of the banking sector is important.

The Government of India has been addressing deteriorating condition of banks for a long time. In 2015, it had announced capital infusion of `700 billion in PSBs over a period of four years. In 2016, the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) was introduced providing for time-bound resolution of non-performing assets (NPAs). In 2018, the government had announced massive recapitalisation of PSBs by infusion of capital amounting to `2,110 billion (Press Information Bureau of India 2018). Of this, an amount of `1,350 billion was to be financed through recapitalisation bonds and the balance through budgetary provisions.

These measures will not be successful unless the individual banks take appropriate steps to improve their performance. This paper attempts to measure the productivity of 31 major Indian banks (constituting 93.61% of loan portfolio of the banking industry in 2018), for the period from 2005 to 2018. It benchmarks individual banks and suggests corrective measures for improvement in productivity. The Hindu Analysis

The purpose of this paper is to identify the factors affecting the productivity of banks and to suggest measures to improve it. The paper also compares the productivity of PSBs with that of the private sector banks and further examines the movement of their mean productivities over the period under study. The productivity-wise benchmarking of banks is done, which will be useful in strategic decision-making. The paper significantly contributes to the literature and has several policy implications.

Period of study: There is a strong relationship between bank credit and GDP growth. The author further observes that during the period of high credit growth, banks often compromise on quality standards in credit management.

We have considered 2005 as a base year for the calculation of MPCI, and the period of study is 2005 to 2018. In 2005, the GDP growth rate was high at 9.28%, and the credit growth rate was very high at 30.88%. During subsequent years, the GDP growth rate dipped to 3.89% (in 2008), and there was a corresponding dip in the credit growth rate too, though it continued to be as high as 22.30%. From 2011, the gap between GDP and credit growth rate started narrowing and came closest to each other in 2014.

PRODUCTIVITY OF BANKS (2006–18) : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

The paper looked at the changes in the productivity of public and private sector banks during the period under study. The movement of groupwise annual means of the productivity of both the groups and that of the sample (all banks) is shown in Figure. The Hindu Analysis

The productivity of PSBs was higher during 2006–08. During 2009–15, the private sector outperformed the public sector. In 2016 and 2017, the productivity of both the groups was negative, but the private sector suffered more as compared to the public sector. Thereafter, the productivity of the private sector improved but that of the public sector declined significantly.

ANALYZING PRODUCTIVITY CHANGE : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

We have calculated MPCII by considering capital, borrowings, and expenditure as the inputs and credit portfolio and profit as the outputs. The researchers have observed that there are several factors such as cash holdings, size of the organization, investments, NPAs, etc, which influence cost or income of the banks.

Cash holdings: The banks are required to keep cash balances with the RBI in proportion to their net demand and time liabilities (NDTL). Cash held is a non-interest earning asset. In addition to the opportunity cost, there are other costs associated with cash holdings such as transport cost, handling cost, and insurance. Therefore, the efficiency of banks is affected by the level of cash holdings. Today Current Affairs

Asset size: It is found that the profitability of banks increases with its size, that is, the total assets. However, it argues that productivity is negatively related to the growth of assets. This is because when the size grows beyond the optimum level, the productivity declines, leading to diseconomies of scale. As a result, the profitability also declines.

Investments: The banks in India are required to invest 18.25% of the NDTL in the form of government-approved securities as a statutory requirement. These are highly liquid. The Hindu Analysis

investments and carry lower rates of return as compared to the average return on loans. However, banks are investing 8.4% of the NDTL in excess of the statutory requirement, and the proportion of investments in other market securities is declining because of the associated risks. The earning on investments constitutes a substantial portion of the banks income and has significant impact on profitability.

Non-performing assets: The NPAs negatively impact profitability due to the loss of interest income and additional provisioning (Koutsomanoli et al 2009). These may be due to

endogenous factors like poor management, resulting in the failure to control risks and costs of recovery. However, the net non-performing assets (NNPAs) level of 9.46% is a cause for concern. Today Current Affairs

Cost of funds: The average cost of funds for the sample increased to 5.32% in 2018 from 4.90% in 2006, with fluctuations during the period. The average cost gradually increased from 4.90% (2006) to 6.76% (2009) and declined to 5.49% (2011). From 2011, it increased to 7% in 2013 and progressively declined to 5.32% in 2018.

Net interest margin: The NIM is reduced by increasing costs, which in turn reduces profitability. The NIM for the sample has declined from 3.04% in 2006 to 2.50% in 2018. However, the decline was not progressively downwards. The NIM gradually declined from 3.04% in 2006 to 2.53% in 2008. In 2009, it increased to 2.63%; in 2010, it decreased to 2.59%; and in 2011, it again increased to 2.94%. In the subsequent period from 2011 to 2018, the NIM gradually declined from 2.94% to 2.50%.

CONCLUSIONS AND LIMITATIONS : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

We have measured the change in the total factor productivity of 31 Indian banks from 2005 to 2018 using MPI, taking 2005 as a base year. Inputs taken are net worth, total debt, and expenses, whereas outputs are outstanding loan portfolio and income. The sample comprises 21 PSBs and 10 private sector banks constituting 86.34% and 93.61% of the loan portfolio of scheduled commercial banks in 2005 and 2018, respectively.

Amongst the PSBs, Vijaya Bank and Bank of Baroda are ranked first and second, respectively, in respect of all the three efficiency changes. This indicates that the merger initiatives between Vijaya Bank, Dena Bank and the Bank of Baroda were an attempt to strengthen the three PSBs by merging one strong bank with three weak ones. It seems that the attempt was to strengthen two moderately weak banks with one strong bank amongst the public sector by merging them.

In the private sector, Kotak Mahindra Bank is at the bottom of the list, followed by ICICI Bank in respect of total factor productivity change. The latter is the largest bank in the private sector in India. As such, the paper has benchmarked banks in India with reference to productivity. The results can be used as one of the inputs in deciding merger schemes of the banks. The Hindu Analysis

It is found that efficiency, technical efficiency, and TFP for private sector banks (mean values) are higher than those of PSBs, respectively. However, public and private sector banks have performed differently during the periods under study. The productivity of PSBs was higher during 2006–09 (as compared to private sector), whereas the productivity of

private sector banks was higher than that of PSBs during 2009–13. In 2016, the productivity of both the groups was negative, but the private sector's performance was worse than that of the public sector. In the subsequent years, the productivity of private sector improved but that of public sector declined significantly.

Banks in India are paying a higher rate of interest to senior citizens on deposits and are charging lower rates of interest on priority sector advances as compared to the market rates. As these are social welfare security measures, the interest differential should be reimbursed by the government to the banks. This will reduce the cost of funds, improve NIM, and enhance the productivity of banks. There is a case for a reduction in the rate of interest on deposits by the banks. This might lead to lower mobilization of funds but will also reduce the cost of funds.

It is found that the improvement in technology after 2005 has facilitated the growth of bank deposits. The deposits constitute a major portion of the banks' funds and as the average cost of deposits is rising since 2006, the average cost of funds for banks is also rising. This is negatively impacting the productivity of banks. This is because the banks are investing in low-return, low-risk government securities and are not lending enough on account of perceived high risks. This has led to mobilizing higher deposits at increased costs, nullifying the benefits of technology. It is found that the "growth rate of assets" is negatively impacting the technology change component of productivity. This implies that banks are acquiring non-remunerative assets. Today
Current Affairs

In order to facilitate the reduction in cash holdings of the banks and cash reserve ratio, it is suggested to take measures to improve the digitisation of economy. Moreover, lowering of the statutory liquidity ratio will increase lendable resources of the bank and will improve profitability with the reduction of investments in low-yielding government securities. The reduction in NPAs of banks through legal reforms, faster execution of law suits for recovery, realistic assessment of credit proposals, and strict monitoring of loan accounts is suggested.

Ritu

SDGs and India's achievements so far

SDGs AND INDIA'S ACHIEVEMENTS SO FAR – TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

The SDGs were adopted by India along with all countries in the world at a United Nations (UN) summit on sustainable development in 2015 in order to address the core development issues facing the planet, and to embrace priorities in social, economic, and environmental areas. These core global development priorities were identified through widespread consultations leading to a global consensus.

The lack of discussion on India's progress towards the SDGs keeps domestic stakeholders ignorant of where their country is heading in these vital development areas. The SDGs should not suffer the same fate as befell the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) that ended in 2015, remaining largely unknown and ignored in domestic development discourses. The lack of sufficient discussion and feedback may have contributed to their mixed outcomes for India. Assessments conducted on India's performance on the MDGs show that its performance on the MDGs left much to be desired.

With only eight years remaining for the SDGs to end, more attention to achieving them is therefore called for. In addition, in the last two years, the COVID-19 pandemic has not only decelerated India's progress on the SDGs, but in some cases, it likely has even reversed them, such as extreme poverty. Both the World Bank (2020) and Asian Development Bank (2021) simulations indicate that COVID-19 has harmed progress towards the SDGs significantly.³ Therefore, bringing the country back on track to achieve them by 2030 must be an overriding task post the COVID-19 development priority. The Hindu Analysis

However, a reading of the chapter on the SDGs in the Economic Survey 2021–22 leaves one somewhat disappointed on several counts. The chapter discusses mainly comparative progress on the SDGs between Indian states and union territories with hardly any discussion on India's overall progress as a country. The inclusion of specific themes and topics in the Economic Survey, which is released just before the union budget, leads usually to an expectation that it would provide rationale for adjustment in budgetary allocations or major changes in policies, etc, concerning the topic. However, the focus almost entirely on the states and union territories in the chapter on SDG belies this. While obviously achieving the SDGs are the collective responsibility of both the centre and the states, each have major roles to play. More attention to India's overall status on the SDGs and the centre's role in achieving them was, therefore, necessary.

A similar neglect of India's overall performance on the SDGs can be observed in the SDG reports that have been brought out by the NITI Aayog.⁴ While an assessment of the progress being made by the states and union territories—measured through an SDG index and dashboard developed by the NITI Aayog—is very

useful, the SDG reports should also deal prominently with the country's progress as a whole, which has been largely missing.

PROGRESS ON THE SDGs : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

As indicated earlier, the chapter on SDG in the Economic Survey 2021–22 provides only minimal reference to India's progress as a whole, merely stating that India's overall score on the NITI Aayog SDG India Index and Dashboard improved to 66 in 2020–21 from 60 in 2019–20 and 57 in 2018–19, showing progress in India's journey towards achieving the SDGs.

Such a statement may lead to the erroneous conclusion that India is making rapid progress towards achieving the SDGs since the overall index improved by 10% in 2020–21 over the previous year and reaching a score of 100 in another 10 years would therefore appear to be easily in India's grasp. In fact, the actual picture is quite different. Using the NITI Aayog's own data gleaned from the three years that the SDG reports have appeared, India's individual composite indices for 15 SDGs with data are presented in Table 1. Simple forecasts using linear regression of these indices for 2030 using the previous data points provides some idea of the likelihood of the targets (that is, maximum value of 100) being achieved. The results show that as many as eight of the 15 SDGs with data are unlikely to be achieved, including the important goals of poverty; hunger; education; employment; inequality; climate action; life on land; and peace, justice, and institutions. Today Current Affairs

But these overall Goal indices are too aggregative and therefore deceptive, as discussed earlier, as they do not reveal the true situation as far as critical constituent indices are concerned. Also, the composite indicators are not comparable as the composition of sub-indices has varied over the years. Hence, it will be useful to take a more disaggregated look, focusing more attention on individual SDG indicators, which the rest of this article will do.

To better appreciate the status of some critical SDG indicators, two questions will be sought to be answered: (i) How does India stand vis-à-vis the world and East Asia and the Pacific? and (ii) What is the likelihood of India achieving the SDGs with respect to these individual indicators?

GEOGRAPHICAL COMPARISONS : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

One way to assess India's standing on the SDGs is to compare the current levels of attainment with other countries. To facilitate this, two important comparisons are being made: the world average (which includes apart from developed countries, 155 developing countries with over 84% of the world's population);⁵ and the average of countries of East Asia and the Pacific (EAP), excluding high-income countries,⁶ to which India is compared with, comprising China, South East Asian countries, and developing Pacific Island countries/nations. With India's aspirations towards a \$5 trillion economy, we should be doing better than the world average, which consists overwhelmingly of developing countries and soon catching up or exceeding the EAP countries' average.

Forty-one indicators, mainly from the World Bank's SDG database,⁷ were chosen, primarily on the basis of data availability, to conduct this comparison. These represent the most relevant indicators for the concerned Goals among those with data availability. These are shown against the corresponding Goals and the concerned target numbers. The Hindu Analysis

Of the 41 indicators, 19 (46.3%) show that India's present SDG indicator has a lower value than both the world and EAP averages. In the case of another 13 indicators (31.7%), India's attainment is either worse than the world or worse than the EAP average. Together, these two sets of indicators represent 78% of all the indicators and indicate a relatively poor state of attainment of India's SDG indicators, when matched with other countries' performance.

FORECASTING INDIA'S SDG STATUS : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

Apart from the current status of the SDGs, compared to other countries, it is necessary to make some assessment of whether India's progress on the SDGs is sufficient for achieving them by 2030 or not. If progress is weak, efforts must be stepped up in the lagging areas to ensure that India does not fail to attain the targets. This type of exercise needs to be carried out regularly by the central government and the results be made available to the public.

GOALS THAT ARE OF CONCERN : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

Considering both international comparisons and the likelihood of missing SDG targets, the following goals and highlighted areas within them are of concern and more efforts should be focused on attaining them.

Goal 2: Hunger—especially incidence in children; and low agricultural productivity given by low cereal yields.

Goal 3: Health—particularly non-communicable diseases and insufficient health personnel. Reducing high deaths from road accidents is also a priority.

Goal 4: Education—concerns are regarding ensuring education for all at pre-primary, primary, and secondary.

Goal 5: Gender equality—several indicators show that considerable gender inequality persists.

Goal 7: Clean energy—concerns are about inadequate access to clean fuels for cooking; and insufficient renewable energy mix in the total electricity production.

Goal 8: Decent work—the main concern is the rising unemployment in general and particularly among youth.

Goal 9: Industry and innovation—concerns are related to inadequate manufacturing share in the GDP and insufficient spending on research and development (R&D).

Goal 10: Reducing inequalities—rising inequality is a major concern.

Goal 11: Liveable cities—air pollution is a major problem.

Goals 14 and 15: Protection of natural resources—insufficient protection is being provided for both marine and terrestrial natural resources.

TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

Conclusions

This article attempts to present a quick assessment of India's status on the SDGs. It is clear from even a preliminary perusal of the data that India's current status compared to other developing countries is unsatisfactory; and its progress towards achieving the SDGs by 2030 is slow for more than half of the critical indicators that could be studied. India is falling behind in several critical economic, human, and environmental areas of development. The Covid-19 pandemic has further hampered the development efforts, and unless India rebounds quickly from the pandemic, the effort to attain the SDGs will falter even further.

To rectify the situation, the first action needed is to make a full and thorough assessment of India's overall SDG performance, in addition to that for the states. A regular national-level stocktaking is essential so that appropriate policies can be designed to rectify what is obviously an unsatisfactory situation and bring the SDGs well within India's reach.

Ritu

The appointment of VCs of state universities by the Governor

THE APPOINTMENT OF VCs OF STATE UNIVERSITIES BY THE GOVERNOR – TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

(GS Paper-II, Polity, Constitution, Governance, Social Justice and International Relations)

Source: The Hindu

Today Current Affairs

Why in News?

Tamil Nadu has enacted two bills that take away the Governor's power to appoint vice chancellors of state universities.

THE HIGHLIGHTS OF THE BILL : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

The bills also aim to give the state government the last decision on whether or not VCs should be removed.

PROCEDURE : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

The dismissal will be carried out based on the conclusions of an investigation undertaken by a retired High Court judge or a bureaucrat who has served as Chief Secretary.

THE REASONS FOR PASSAGE OF LAWS : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

According to Chief Minister MK Stalin, The Bills were required because the Governor had rejected the state government's position on the appointment of VCs.

On a range of topics, including education, elected administrations have frequently accused the Governors of acting on orders from the Centre.

Which other states have enacted similar legislation?

West Bengal and Maharashtra are two states in India which have enacted similar legislations and Kerala and Odisha have attempted to increase the number of appointments to state institutions under their authority in a similar manner.

THE ROLE OF UNIVERSITY GRANT COMMISSION : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

Despite the fact that education is covered under the Concurrent List, the Union List's items no. 66 gives the Centre extensive authority over higher education.

The University Grants Commission (UGC) has a standard-setting function even in the case of appointments at universities and colleges.

According to the 2018 UGC Regulations, the "Visitor/Chancellor" – in most states, the Governor — should appoint the VC from a panel of candidates proposed by search-cum-selection committees. The Hindu Analysis

It is expected to be followed by higher education institutions, especially those which receive UGC funding.

The following are some of the observations made by the Supreme Court:

In March 2022, the Supreme Court reversed Shirish Kulkarni's appointment as Vice-Chancellor of Gujarat's Sardar Patel University.

Any appointment as a Vice Chancellor made in violation of the UGC Regulations can be considered to be in violation of the legislative provisions, necessitating the issuance of a writ of quo warranto." Today Current Affairs

The UGC Act of 1956 is the cornerstone for all of the UGC's subordinate statutes. As a result, the UGC Regulations are included in the Act as a subordinate statute.

Because the subject of 'education' is so broad, in the event of a dispute between state and central legislation, the central legislation will win by applying the rule/principle of repugnancy enunciated in Article 254 of the Constitution.

Vivek Raj

Homemaker's labor entitled to pay as a part of social engineering

HOMEMAKER'S LABOR ENTITLED TO PAY AS A PART OF SOCIAL ENGINEERING – TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

Social engineering is a concept introduced by Roscoe Pound, formulated on the idea that rules and regulations should be made to shape society and regulate people's behavior. It is an attempt to control human conduct through the help of law, one such effort from time to time is being initiated by all international and national organizations with respect to women and work. Women's role is always a matter of debate in the family and workplace in contemporary society.

Despite the achievement of modern education women are still facing lot of discrimination at workplace, one such example disparity of payment, multiple reports suggest that equal pay for same work or having higher position in almost every industries is a journey for many women which full of obstacles. Equal pay for equal work is just a dormant right given to women, it stimulates good feeling factors to so-called leaders and social engineers who raise flag for women empowerment. Gender pay gaps represent one of today's greatest social injustices and it is being covered by portraying image of women as if they are less ambitious or work only for buying their cosmetics, however, those females who contributes more than male at workplace seen as courageous or superwoman as a matter of fact they are simply discharging their duties with efficiency, unfortunately but will not achieve same pay as their male counterparts. Recent research has shown that although women now enter professional schools in numbers nearly equal to men, they are still substantially less likely to reach the highest position of their professions. In a societies where women has to go through multiple discrimination in such society if we hear that homemakers must get pay for their domestic work may be seen as another pointless argument raise by categorised radical feminist. Today Current Affairs

Most women lacked significant education—and women with little education were mostly engaged as piece workers in factories or as domestic workers, jobs that were dirty and often unsafe. Educated women were scarce. Further, due to patriarchal cultural beliefs, availability of limited choice of market jobs makes it difficult for women to do work particularly after marriage and children. In the name of godly representation of women as mothers make it more ethically difficult for women to work with children. But what is the definition of work and who is entitled for pay? The philosophical basis for the right to pay is that if something arises as a product of an individual's labor, that individual is entitled to the benefit and use of such a product because its existence was the result of that individual's labor. It derives from the concept of being. It doesn't matter if these are services or not, the product of the housewife's work takes care of the children and takes care of all the domestic affairs. Housewives are good for society because they not only support their families, but also have time to help others through volunteering and caring for their children after school.

Today Current Affairs

Dependence is one of the most important factors in suppressing women's rights, especially in developing countries. Women often stay home because of violence, lack of opportunity, or social stigma in favor of her husband. Her housewife pays herself if she doesn't get her salary, especially if she has a child to take care of. Economic empowerment gives more freedom to women in countries where women are confined to their homes. By making women an economic agent, women will be able to engage in diverse social structures, have a stake in the center of their economic power, and maintain their status. This is the most powerful tool we can offer to women in most countries around the world.

Also, for elevating women roles housewives must get paid as it would put greater emphasis and importance on the role of the women that tend to this job. It would add prestige to the inferior and neglected position of women in the household by make them economically empowered, consequently, it inculcates new dimensions to the societal views of homemakers by valuing their significant contributions to the household and society in both tangible and intangible ways that consequently would help males to be raised with accurate values and thought process and world can become better place to live dominated by peace as women comprises all the capabilities to rule both domestic as well as macro world affairs such as politics. The Hindu Analysis

Thus, by paying the labor force to homemakers, we provide women around the world with one of the most powerful forms of social and political empowerment.

Dr. huma hassan

Raisina Dialogue: The India's Foreign Policy

RAISINA DIALOGUE: THE INDIA'S FOREIGN POLICY – TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

Raisina Dialogue is India's flagship conference to discuss geo-economic and geo-political strategies held annually since 2016. The seventh dialogue held in April 2022 involved more than 200 speakers from more than 90 countries and multilateral organisation to discuss the most challenging issues the global world is facing today. In the last conference, representatives from around the globe like US, Canada, Europe, Japan, Singapore, Czech Republic, Germany, Russia, Maldives, Norway, Armenia, Nepal, World Health Organisation, the United Nations, World Bank, defence experts, International relations and business professionals. The theme of debate was 'Teranova: Impassioned, Impatient and Imperilled' which included six indispensable keynote ,namely, Rethinking Democracy: Trade, Tech, and Ideology; End of Multilateralism: A Networked Global Order?; Water Caucuses: Turbulent Tides of Indo-Pacific; Communities Inc: First Responders to Health, Development and Planet; Achieving Green Transitions: Common Imperatives and Diverging Realities; and Samson vs Goliath: The Persistent and Relentless Tech Wars. The entire dialogue contemplates changing international political order which is intertwined with economic, security, culture, strategic and people to people ties.

The first concept 'Rethinking Democracy: Trade, Tech and Ideology' is urgently required to contemplate in the wake of democratic decay, Russia-Ukraine Crisis and rise of electoral autocracy in the world. The Covid-19 Pandemic has brought economic stress culminating in the problem of anarchy, political populism and reactionary nationalism. The Russia-Ukraine war has accentuated the decline of democracy and rise of economic distress around the globe including Europe, Asia, Latin America and Africa. International order is under transformation and India needs to project herself as an independent actor in global politics. India is a world largest democracy and always respected sovereignty of all and advocated for peaceful resolution as per the United Nations Charter. India's position is a "open, free and rule based international order" and free market liberalism for trade and commerce. It recently engaged in a free trade agreement with UAE, Australia and is likely to do the same free trade agreement with the UK, Republic of South Korea and European Union. India is looking for international globalism where cooperation and coordination among nation-states is a priority to bring prosperity and happiness to its own people and to the globe. It would foster maximum globalization and minimum discontent. Today Current Affairs

The next ideas, namely, 'End of Multilateralism: A Networked Global Order?' reflects India's commitment to rule based, just and fairer multilateral international trading systems regulated through institutions like the World Trade Organisation. The Pandemic and the Russian-Ukraine war has influenced the international trading system. The entire trade norms are under disarray which needs to be re-corrected. The geo-economics and ego-politics between countries which favour the liberal political order like the US, Canada, Japan, the UK and the EU and the countries which stand in opposition to the liberal political order like Russia and China has brought new challenges to India's foreign policy. India needs an independent foreign policy which serves national interest. Our national interest is our first priority.

Today the Indo-Pacific region is the most contested region in international politics. India's Indo-Pacific Ocean Initiative (IPOI) announced in 2018 at Shangri La Dialogue "calls for a free, open and inclusive order in the Indo-Pacific, based upon respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity of all nations, peaceful resolution of disputes through dialogue and adherence to international rules and laws. India's concept of the Indo-Pacific is inclusive in nature, and supports an approach that respects the right to freedom of navigation and overflight for all in the international seas. India's IndoPacific vision is premised upon the principle of 'ASEAN-Centrality.'" The rising China is a major challenge to a peaceful, free and open Indo-Pacific" from which fifty percent of the world trade passes. China has coerced its neighbour, claimed its undue sovereignty in South China sea, created artificial islands, manipulated its currency, and through One Belt One Road (OBOR) influenced the small countries brought them under 'debt trap' diplomacy. In addition, it has pushed the US influence beyond the Philippines and did 'no limits' partnership with Russia. It has tried several times, however, unsuccessfully to change the Line of Actual Control (LoC). India's engagement with the QUAD, QUAD+ and SAGARMALA project along with revival of regional organizations like BIMSTEC and IORA shows India's commitment to face any kind of challenges posed by authoritarian China. The Raisina dialogue has debated these issues at greater length and tried to find opportunities to engage European (especially France and Germany) countries on this issue. This is really a strategic move of India's foreign policy. The Hindu Analysis

To achieve the sustainable development goals and tackle climate change at the global level is also a major challenge to India. The third world is facing a severe food crisis and struggling for basic amenities, like water and major victims of climate related disasters. In the post-liberalisation era, India did excellently well in expanding the economy and reducing inequality and poverty yet needed to work on human security and development. India needs to collaborate with the rest of the world and need to avail all opportunities to bring prosperity to the people. In this case, interacting with world leaders for new business, issues of improvement in sectors like health and education, at New Delhi, would certainly work as new drivers of India's foreign policy.

Dr Bijendra jha