

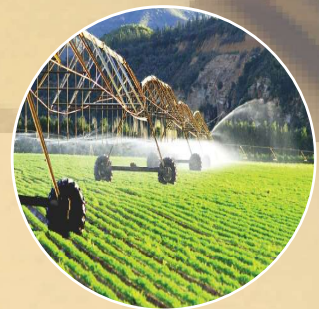
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MAY 2022



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PLUTUS IAS WEEKLY CURRENT AFFAIRS 1-05-2022 to 6-05-2022

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CURRENT AFFAIRS

MAY 2022

Role of labor Movement in International Politics (An analysis in special context to Indian Labor movement)

CONTEXT :

1st may is celebrated in the world as the International labor /Workers day .In India it is celebrated as Kamgar Divas, Kamgar Din and Antarrashtriya Shramik Divas. In some countries of the world, it is a very auspicious day. On this occasion the laborers and the workers of the world remember the glorious day of the first International where the demand of the fixing working hours for the laborers was raised and most of the countries had accepted the fixation of the working hours . this was the victory of the labor class on the capitalist class

Introduction :

1st May is the sacred day for all the workers and labor of the world. On this occasion, people across the world conduct protests and march for the rights of workers and save them from economical exploitation of the capitalist class. The Labor Movement not only influenced the politics of India but also politics of the world. However, the organized labor movement in the world had started during the 2nd quarter of the 19th century with the Industrial revolution in Europe while in India the organized labor movement came to existence after the 1st decade of the 20th century with the establishment of the Indian Industries

HISTORY OF LABOR MOVEMENT IN EUROPE

- As the Industrial revolution started in Europe , a new social class came to existence because the bourgeoisie class exercised their control over the economy of Industrial countries . Therefore the exploitation of the labor class / working class starts in such circumstances . therefore some socialist thinkers came to existence who started to criticize capitalism and rejected the trend of labor exploitation for maximum profit
- Socialists' and the labor movements were concomitant consequences of Industrial revolution . An effective response against various restrictions imposed by the capitalist on the working class was socialism ; whereas the fusion of mutual cooperation and organizing spirit in workers for improvement in their conditions was known as labor

movement

- Labor movements in Europe derive from the reaction of the newly urbanized workers to industrialization in the nineteenth century. In Britain , the nature of the labor movement was reformist rather than revolutionary in Germany and other European countries . The Chartist Movement was the precursor of the labor movement . Therefore during the last decade of the 19th century we see the emergence of labor in England .
- In 1900, in a meeting of certain trade unions in England several political parties like Fabian Society, independent labor Party and democratic federation and an organization under the name of labor Representation committee were constituted in that meeting . In the election of 1906, the committee secured 30 seats in the parliaments , Very soon the committee changes its name to labor party
- We see the revolutionary changes in the after the evolution of the labor organization everywhere in the world . During the last decade in the 19th century , the socialist movement started spreading its roots in japan as well . On 14th July , 1889 , a conference was convened in Paris with the view to threading socialist movement into an international organization and 400 representatives from 20 countries attended the conference . This was known as the second international . It was decided to celebrate 1st May every year as the unity day of labor . On 1st may , 1890 lacs of the workers went on strikes in entire Europe and in America and staged huge demonstrations .
- The most important achievement of the second international was the struggle against militarism and the war . And in 1917 , just because of the socialism the Russian revolution occurred and a socialists government was formed. It is true to consider that capitalism is always the cause of international war. In any war the interests of the upper class, mainly rulers and capitals would be protected. The Second international condemned colonialism and encouraged the socialist party to oppose the loot and slavery of colonies . When the first world war broke out the second international collapsed

HISTORY OF LABOR MOVEMENT IN INDIA

- In Indian context, the swadeshi upsurge was a landmark in the history of the national movement. The number of strikes rose sharply . But these strikes of labor were against the European Mill owners . Up to this time Indian industries could not be established . The most significant feature of the labor movement during this time was the shifting of agitation against economic questions towards the involvement of Indian laborers in politics .
- In India, the most important development was the formation of All India trade Union Congress in 1920 . Lala Lajpat rai was the first president and Diwan Chaman Lal was its general secretary . Lala Lajpat Rai emphasized – “Indian labor should lose no time to organize itself on a national scale .. the greatest need of this country is to organize , agitate and educate.

- The manifesto issued to the workers by the AITUC urged them not to organize themselves only but also to intervene in national politics . Lala Lajpat Rai was among the first in India to link capitalism with imperialism and he stated – “militarism and imperialism are the twin children of capitalism, they are one in three and three in one . their shadow, their fruit, their bark, all are poisonous and the antidote of this poison had been discovered and that is organized labor ”
- During the second half of the 20th century the labor movement in India has now turned towards Marxism . Various communist group in different part of India had organized themselves into Workers and Peasant party (WPP) under the leadership of S.A. dange, Mujjaffar Ahemad , P.C Joshi, Sohen Singh Josh etc
- After the 1930s the labor movement suffered a major setback due to government offensives and due to a shift in Communist led wing of the movement . In this way we see the organized labor movement played an important role in national politics before independence of India .

CONCLUSION

After the independence of India , however, the working class, mainly workers of the unorganized sector are still being exploited. Workers employed in these sectors are not getting minimum wage because of the corruption and awareness. The workers of these sectors are deprived of several other social rights. Without socioeconomic freedom, political freedom is completely worthless . The first May is the symbol of economic freedom . On this date , all the workers and labor class of the world feel a common interest irrespective of the international boundaries

Dr. Anshul Bajpai

Cryptos and CBDC

The central bank must note that a Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC) can only be a fiat currency and not a crypto.

WHAT ARE CRYPTO ASSETS?

- A crypto asset is a digital asset; but not all digital assets are crypto assets.
- The distinguish features of crypto assets:
 - o uses cryptography
 - o depends on distributed ledger technology
 - o no need for a third party such as a bank to issue crypto assets
 - o have three primary uses: as an investment, a medium of exchange, and to access goods and services.

- Crypto assets are commonly known as cryptocurrencies such as Litecoin, Ripple, Bitcoin, and Ethereum.

WHAT IS CBDC?

- A CBDC is a legal tender issued by a bank in a digital format.
- Also known as digital base money or digital fiat currencies, a CBDC is no different from hard cash, apart from the fact that they are in a digital or virtual form.
- It is not meant to replace hard cash but coexist as an additional form of payment method

WHAT WERE THE DIFFERENT STANDS TAKEN ON CRYPTOS?

- Finance minister– In the Budget session, it was said that Cryptocurrency will be discouraged via taxation and capital gains provisions.
- RBI Governor– The Governor of the RBI highlighted that private cryptocurrencies are a big threat to our financial and macroeconomic stability.
- Also he said that these cryptocurrencies have no underlying asset.
- Deputy Governor of RBI– A Deputy Governor of the RBI called cryptos worse than a Ponzi scheme and argued against legitimizing them.
- Supreme Court– The Supreme Court of India has asked the Government whether or not cryptos are legal.

HOW DO CRYPTOS BECOME ACCEPTABLE AS TOKENS FOR EXCHANGE?

- A currency is a token used in market transactions.
- Historically, commodities (copper coins) have been used as tokens since they themselves are valuable.
- But paper currency is useless till the government declares it to be a fiat currency as it derives its value from state backing.
- Cryptos are a string of numbers in a computer programme and there is no state backing.
- Cryptos acquire value and can be transacted via the net which enables them to function as money.

IS IT POSSIBLE TO BAN CRYPTOS?

- The total valuation of cryptos recently was upward of 2 trillion dollars which is more than the value of gold held globally.

- Cryptos which operate via the net can be banned only if all nations come together.
- Even then, tax havens may allow cryptos to function, defying the global agreement

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN CBDC AND CRYPTOCURRENCIES?

WHAT ARE THE CONCERNS OF CBDC?

- Blockchain enables decentralisation where everyone on the crypto platform has a say but, central banks want a fiat currency to be exclusively issued and controlled by them.
- Theoretically everyone can 'mine' and create crypto unlike the centrally controlled CBDC.
- Solving the 'double spending' problem and being a crypto (not just a digital version of currency) seems impossible.
- A centralised CBDC will require the RBI to validate each transaction.
- CBDCs at present cannot be a substitute for cryptos that will soon begin to be used as money. This will impact the functioning of central banks and commercial banks.

Anshum Verma

Indian Federalism : An analysis regarding its future

CONTEXT:

India consciously adopted a version of federalism that made the Union government and State governments interdependent on each other (with latter more vis-a-vis the former) thereby violating the primal characteristic of a federal constitution i.e., autonomous spheres of authority for Union and State governments.

Introduction

India adopted federalism of a specific nature .After independence federalism is continuously strengthening. In fact, the objective of a welfare state can be achieved only through federalism. The structure of the Indian constitution seems sometimes quasi federalism, sometimes cooperative federalism and sometimes hybrid federalism where some features of federalism and some features of unitary can be seen .

In fact our freedom fighters, mainly revolutionaries, wanted to establish federal governance in India. The HRA (Hindustan republican Association /Army) and HSRA (Hindustan socialist republican Association /Army) wanted to establish a federal Republic of the United States of India whose basic principle would be adult Franchise. However, J.L, Nehru was initially in the fever of extreme federalism before the partition. But as the partition was executed he supported unitary and gradually tending towards federalism. The contemporary discourse on

federalism in India is moving on a discursive note across multiple dimensions, be it economic, political and cultural, to the extent that one is compelled to regard India to be at an inflection point vis-a-vis Center-State relations owing to increasing asymmetry. Without an active and committed citizenry a democracy can devour itself and, in this context, it is worth engaging with India's federal ethos and the associated asymmetries

WHY INDIA ADOPTED CENTRALIZED FEDERAL STRUCTURE

In fact, In the Indian constitution, our constitution makers did not use the term federalism. Instead of it, they used the term Union which is indestructible. There are two types of government in India, the Union government and the state government. Both are mutually dependent over each other which is contradictory to the primary concept of federalism. In Indian constitution, big states has more representation in Lok Sabha and in Rajya Sabha . In fact in every manner of the constitution , big states are more powerful in comparison to small state .Article 3 of the Indian Constitution which allows the Union to alter the boundaries of a State without the latter's consent, emergency powers, and concurrent list subjects of the Seventh Schedule wherein the Union possesses more authority than the State barring a few exceptions .

There are several reason because of which India had to adopt centralized federal structure

- At the time of partition of India , a threat of disintegration of India emerged because of the formation of Pakistan . Our leaders never wanted to accept any further disintegration of India . Therefore they advocated for the strong center. However they knew this fact very well that in such huge diversity extreme centralization could be survived for long time therefore they promised for proving federalism to India in future (Gradually states would provide more autonomy in future and) and in the Directive Principles of State Policy , the federalism was promised to provide (Article 40 – More autonomy up to the lowest unit of the administration/ establishment of Panchayati raj System). And hence our supreme court considered federalism as a fundamental structure of the constitution and in the case of S.R. Bommai vs Union of India case(1994) it was declared . However initially our leaders like J.B. Kripalani too spoke in favor of maximum autonomy to the States and regarded centralization to be at odds with liberty.
- We had not developed as a nation (Common feelings/ unanimous interest). Therefore , through extreme centralization we wanted to develop ourselves as a nation . therefore , initially through strong centralization , first , we wanted to unite us politically , then through common programme, we wanted to create common feelings and then we decided to provide autonomy gradually
- In such a diverse culture any central government policy could not be implemented. therefore we advocated extreme centralization
- The final reason involved the alleviation of inter-regional economic inequality. We could

not resolve such problems without extreme centralized rule

FUTURISTIC NATURE OF THE FEDERALISM

In diversified and pluralist countries , extreme centralism cannot survive for a long time. The public welfare state can be established only through federalism or decentralization . However at the time of independence of India , extreme centralization was our compulsion but now the nationalism of India has been strengthened and the binding elements of the center and state have become more strong , so therefore we should provide autonomy at the lowest unit of the administration gradually. Now , in future , the federalism would be stronger . linguistic reorganization would not have been possible if India followed a rigid or conventional federal system.

CONCLUSION

As per the above discussion , presently, the Indian constitution is not the federal constitution in its true means. It is quasi federal but it is tending towards federalism . In future the federal elements of the constitution would be stronger and it is true and should be accepted that federalism is only a tool to provide the public welfare state in a pluralistic country like India . federalism is the strength of India . Indian federalism is non destructible union of the state . the concept of the federalism is not new for India . we have been practiced federalism for thousands of the years . hence , for Indian context , the federalism would be intact .

Dr. Anshul Bajpai

INDIA'S POWER CRISIS

Despite high coal production, thermal power plants in India are suffering from shortages.

IS INDIA HEADING TOWARDS A POWER CRISIS?

Coal-based power generation accounts for about 53% of India's total power capacity as on March 2022.

- Several States across the country are expected to face coal shortages that might lead to power shortages in the coming weeks.
- India had faced a similar energy crisis in October 2021, but the crisis this time around may be worse with peak power demand expected to rise higher due to increasing temperatures.
- Reasons for this crisis
 - o Depleting coal supplies at thermal power plants
 - o High global thermal coal prices (the prices of coal are over 350% higher year on year)

- o Below normal imports
- o Interruption in coal supply mainly due to heavy rains
- o High demand for coal (Demand for coal has increased by 9% over the previous year)
- o Temperature rise

HOW CRITICAL IS THE COAL SHORTAGE?

- The situation at thermal power plants is deteriorating consistently and has reached critical levels.
- As per the National Power Portal, both imported coal-based (ICB) power plants and domestic coal-based power plants were facing critical stocks.
- As per the Central Electricity Authority report, of the total 173 thermal power plants in the country, 100 thermal power plants' coal stock situations are critical.
- The total stocks available were 23.17 million tonnes (MT) against a daily requirement of 2.76 MT.
- The stocks at this level will last for less than nine days.
- States like Gujarat and Maharashtra already declare load shedding (the deliberate shutdown of electric power in a part or parts of a power-distribution system, generally to prevent the failure of the entire system when the demand strains the capacity).

WHAT STEPS HAS THE GOVERNMENT TAKEN TO TACKLE THIS PROBLEM?

- Revised coal stocking norms- The government has issued revised coal stocking norms, which mandate the power plants to maintain sufficient stocks at all times
- Constitution of Groups- An Inter-Ministerial Sub Group with senior officials from Ministries of Power, Coal, Railways, CEA, CIL and SCCL meet regularly to take various operational decisions to enhance supply of coal to thermal power plants.
- Imports- Power Ministry has advised power plants to import about 36 MT coal for blending during 2022-23 with a view to build sufficient coal stock at power plants.
- Monitoring- The Ministry has a Core Management Team (CMT) to ensure close monitoring of coal stocks at thermal power plants.
- Role of Coal India- Coal India, the state-owned miner claims that it has ramped up supplies to thermal power plants by nearly 12% annually.

WHY IS THIS CRISIS RECURRING EVERY YEAR?

- **Lack of coordination-** The lack of coordination between various ministries involved in the process such as the Power Ministry, Coal Ministry and Railways is the foremost

reason.

- **Blaming game-** The Coal Ministry blames the Indian Railways for non-availability of adequate rakes.
- **Similarly, the Railways has pointed out the mismanagement in loading and unloading of rakes by Coal India.**
- **Poor planning-** Despite high coal production and dispatch of miners, the supply at power plants has still not gone above 15 days in the last six months which implies poor planning.

Anshum Verma

Cooling off time Period Must be required before Joining any political party after the retirement of big government officials (Judiciary and Executive)

CONTEXT :

Recently During the hearing on writ petition seeking a direction to the legislature to frame a law imposing a cooling-off period for retired bureaucrats with political ambitions, A Bench of Justices Indira Banerjee and A.S. Bopanna (Supreme Court of India) stated that this is the work of Legislators to decide whether a cooling-off period is required for government officials before they join politics and contest elections after retirement..

Introduction

- For the contesting in election and joining in politics, presently there are no restrictions on civil servants. generally being as a civil servant , they attracts with the ideology of several political parties and after retirement, immediately they Join the political party
- For the last few years it has been observed that many government servants, just after retirement, join any of the political parties and contest in elections and win and enter in the parliament , either through Rajya Sabha or through Lok Sabha. Even in this process the retired Judges, However Judges of High courts and the supreme courts are not untouched. However, constitutionally, every citizen of India is free to opt any of the professions and presently there is no cooling off time period after the retirement of the government servants before joining any political party. It has been also observed that most of the retired civil servants join that political party which is either in the power or about to come in Power.
- Recently, during the UP legislative election, many working civil servants (As senior police

officers like ACP/DCP and CP) voluntarily retired and joined the ruling party BJP and contested in the election and won. This is not a simple thing. These practices are the more corrupt practices of democracy and must be stopped.

WHY THE COOLING OFF TIME IS REQUIRED

- Generally, those civil servants/government servants which are very much ambitious, during their service they can work beyond the ethical values of civil services. They can be influenced with fear or favor of political parties, mainly ruling political parties. Therefore, to maintain the highest ethical standards of integrity and honesty, political neutrality, fairness and impartiality in the discharge of duties, Civil servants should be stopped from joining any political party immediately after their retirement. Some government services which are not much important in the administration (executive or Judiciary both) and the officials of lower ranking can be exempted from this provision.
- Democracy is the fundamental requirement for the survival of the country and for strengthening of the democratic values, the transparency of the administration (Executive and Judiciary) must be ensured. But If the highest officials of the government services join the ruling political party after retirement, then how integrity, transparency, honesty would be enacted .
- This is not the responsibility of the judiciary only to protect and conserve our democratic values, this is the responsibility of all the citizens of India to protect and conserve our democratic values our freedom , which we have achieved after huge sacrifices . Therefore , the legislature which is formed by us must take initiative in this regard. This is the region , court dismissed this petition. The dismissing of the petition does not mean that this issue is worthless. But the dismissal of this petition emphasizes that all the citizens of India must understand their responsibility. If any political party does such practices should be rejected in the election or we, the people should pressurize our legislature to form such laws which restrict the joining of any political party immediately after the retirement of the big government officials

CONCLUSION

The issue of the cooling off time period after the retirement of any big government official before joining any political party, mainly the ruling party, is not a small issue. It is related to the malpractices of the administration . generally political parties misuse these flaws of the Indian constitution . Therefore, our intellectuals and responsible media channels must bring this issue to public debate so that the government/ our legislature could make some rules and regulations on this also .

Dr Anshul Bajpai

FREEDOM OF PRESS : A TOOL TO STRENGTHEN DEMOCRACY

Context :

India falls 8 positions to 150th rank in RSF 2022 World Press Freedom Index. World Press Freedom Day is celebrated on 3rd may every. On this occasion, we should analyze the degrading ranking of freedom of media.

Introduction

- Media is known as the fourth pillar of democracy. Other three pillars are executive, legislative and the Judiciary. If these three pillars destroy democracy, only free media protects the democracy by providing the information to the public.
- The concept of the press was involved not only to collect the information but also to criticize the government. Media originated as a tool to criticize the government. In the Indian context we had to fight for hundreds of years to secure its freedom. Therefore, the freedom of the press must be ensured in any democratic country.
- If we have a poor ranking at international level, we should think how to remove the obstacles which are brought in front of the freedom of press. We have to find out the tools through which maximum freedom of the press could be ensured. The poor ranking of India in the World press freedom index paints a negative portrait among democratic countries. And If we have lower ranking in World Free press Index in comparison to our neighboring countries. It must be thinkable



THE PARAMETER ON WHICH THIS WPFI IS BASED ON

There are 5 parameters on which this ranking is based on

- Legal framework
- Political context
- Economical Context
- Safety of journalist
- Socio cultural content

Among these parameters, India is ranked worst on this parameter of the safety of journalists. Safety regarding their job, regarding their personal security. India's ranking on this parameter is 163. Therefore these journalists have to work as a puppet of their editors and the management of the media groups and if the media groups are the pro government, these journalists have no dare to write anything against the will of their management.

Besides job security, journalists have to face Psychological or emotional distress that could result from intimidation, coercion, harassment, surveillance, doxing (publication of personal information with malicious intent), degrading or hateful speech, smears and other threats targeting journalists.

In such a situation How e can think about the authentic and impartial news and information which we are getting.

The parameter legal framework defines the degree to which journalists and media are free to work without censorship or Judicial sanction. Since our country is a democratic country therefore the constitution provides more rights to journalists legally. On this parameter,

however, India's ranking is satisfactory. It is the 120 in the world. However Government always tries to censor the contents which are against the government on the ground of sedition and many sections of the IPC of the British time are still functioning to frame charge against journalist

The parameter Political context defines the degree of support and respect of the media autonomy vis-s-vis political pressure from the state or from other political actors. On this parameter India has 145 ranking in the world. Only few media channels like NDTV and press The Hindu have authentic regarding to provide news to public and some channels and the press world without any political pressure and they have dare to criticize the government's policies

The Parameter economical context defines the economic constraints linked to governmental policies (including the difficulty of creating a news media outlet, favoritism in the allocation of the state subsidies) . Besides it depends on the economic constrains linked to non-state actors (advertisers and the commercial partners) as well as it also linked to the business interest of the media owners. On this parameter, India's ranking is also bad. This is 149

The parameter Socio Cultural context defines social constraints resulting from the denigration and attacks on the press based on such issues as gender, class, ethnicity and religion . However the ranking of India on this parameter is 127 but it is still satisfactory.

WHY INDIAN MEDIA IS BIASED

Most of the media houses in India are run by the big big businessmen of the India and it is obvious that business man works only for the profit . No businessman would work in loss making ventures for a long time. Therefore, these media houses have to write in the favor of those Industrialists and institutions from where they get the financial support and the advertisement. These media houses shows those news which would be demanded by the public. Therefore for the TRP, every media channel is competition. In the cat run of the media channels for the TRP, the real news and the real issues have been lost. If the demand of the viewers would be changes the nature of the media houses may change.

HOW TO INCREASE THIS RANKING AND WHAT GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE SHOULD DO TO STRENGTHEN THE IMPARTIALITY OF OUR MEDIA

- To strengthen democracy, our media should be unbiased and impartial . But the question remain, how the media houses would be unbiased. We should remove all those obstacles which are there in front of the freedom of the press. Among of those, the economical context is the most important parameter. Government should ensure that media houses would be subsidized in case of economic loss and without any partiality the government would give financial support to all media houses.
- Another important parameter is the security of media houses. The job of the journalist

must be secured. They should not be fired at any cost during their services period. They should be provided personal security in case of any threat. Once the security of the journalist would be ensured, up to maximum extent the media houses can be made more impartial and unbiased.

CONCLUSION

As per the above discussion, it has been observed that the credibility of the Indian press is continuously declining at international level. In world Free Press Ranking, India rank is 150, which is continuously trending downward. It is the issue of concern and the government should find out the measures how to increase this ranking in future so that credibility of Indian media and democratic values could be increased. In the above discussion some measures have been suggested but this is the duty of the people and the politicians to bring this issue to the stage of debate. So that new measure could be discovered in the well being of the Indian media

Dr. Anshul Bajpai

Fortified food and health

The government has recently announced a fast schedule of spreading rice fortification in India. According to this schedule, the supply of fortified rice to the Integrated Child Development Services, midday meals, other nutrition and welfare schemes as well as to the vast public distribution system is to be completed by 2024.

This rapid rollover of rice fortification is likely to be harmful in various ways. Rice fortification should not be seen in isolation, but together with programmes and proposals for fortification of several other essential foods like salt, milk, edible oils, and wheat, apart from the fact that fortification is also used in several other widely sold packaged food products.

HEALTH CONCERNS OF FORTIFIED FOOD

The first risk is that there can be health problems arising from excess intake of some of the micronutrients in fortified foods like iron and vitamins. The fact that such excess can lead to several health problems is well established as is the fact that this is much more likely to arise from artificial fortification than from natural foods. The process of fortification involving the processing in heavy machines can also lead to some undesirable residual products finding their way to our food.

In the case of fortified rice, if the fortified kernels do not blend optimally with normal rice, the consumer can be confused regarding whether there are some undesirable contaminants to be removed. The next step can be to promote only a few rice varieties, or to give a better price for only such varieties, or even to root for patented or genetically modified varieties in

the name of varieties that blend well.

While the need is to encourage smaller, village-level processing of rice and all other food, thus generating local livelihoods, this rice fortification will take us in the opposite direction of further increasing the centralisation of rice production by a few big businesses. The idea of local village-level rice processing will be dashed forever. It will become difficult to establish even a cottage industry based on rice produced in the nearby fields of villages as the rice grown here cannot be used directly without fortification.

Now, rice processing will be in the hands of those big companies, including multinational companies, which control the fortification technology. Other rice millers will survive only after taking loans and adding the new expensive machinery and then too only as junior partners of those who control fortification technology, who can keep dictating to them to make improvements in processing and machinery, thus imposing added costs on them.

FOOD SECURITY

It has been seen time and again that staple food becomes more expensive once its processing passes into the hands of big business interests. To give an example, even at the time of the influx of cheap corn in Mexico as a result of a free trade agreement with the United States, the price of tortillas remained high because the maize milling and flour industry was concentrated in a few big business units. Thus, farmers (due to higher maize imports) and consumers (due to higher prices) both suffered. In fact, at the time of the farmers' movement in 2021, the main point precisely was that both the ordinary farmers and consumers will be harmed with the increasing domination of big businesses. But it appears that the government has still not learned this lesson.

In the case of indigenous rice varieties, it is often stated that the flavor improves with time. So, it has been usual to store and eat something later. The shelf life of the fortified rice kernels is stated to be only around 12 months or so. We need to remember that storage periods in the Food Corporation of India warehouses can be quite long and then transportation across vast distances, ultimately to the fair price shops (FPSs), takes its own time too..

PROCUREMENT SYSTEM

An important need in India is highly decentralized procurement so that a significant part of the food procured in a village ends up in the same village's FPSs and nutrition programmes, reducing food transportation that is good both for the environment and food security. Mandatory food fortification can shut the door on such ideas.

CONCLUSION

Now let us see if we can achieve better nutrition enhancement objectives in other ways. Even official reviews say that the need for fortification arises because the present-day milling removes essential nutrients from rice significantly. Hence, the most obvious way is to move

away from milling that indulges in excessive removal and polishing to milling, which results in a much lower removal and polishing, thus reducing this as much as possible. Such technology is certainly available, and so the real solution is actually very simple and inexpensive. However, the biggest gains for nutrition will come from following the social agroecology approach in farming and food, which is based on improving soil health and the overall natural conditions of farming on the one hand and reducing inequalities on the other. As soil is nursed back to its health, its balance of micronutrients will return, and the nutrition of plants grown in this soil will improve too. Reducing inequalities at all levels and promoting creative, sustainable, and ecologically protective livelihoods of people remain the best means of chasing away hunger and malnutrition, but well-implemented nutrition programmes in both villages and cities will also help

Ritu

Naga Problem : A threat for Integrity of India

Context :

Recently an annual report was released by the Ministry of Home Affairs government of India . According to which Nagas are still involved in violent activities, it was stated in that report that the Isak-Muivah faction of the National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN-IM) was involved in 44% of insurgency-related incidents in Nagaland in 2020.

INTRODUCTION

The Naga problem has emerged in India as India got freedom . An ethnic group residing near Naga hill demanded sovereignty from the Indian rule and they started a pseudo war against the Indian government . Nagas are various ethnic groups native to northeastern India and northwestern Myanmar.

THE BEGINNING OF THE NAGA ISSUE

- In fact the issue of Naga's sovereignty starts before the freedom of India . When the British annexed Assam in 1820 , the Naga hill was also brought under British control. But the British provided Naga autonomy up to a certain extent. The British provided them autonomy in their internal affairs. Nagas could protect their traditional life, cultures and costumes etc. British controlled them through the laws implemented on the top level.
- After the second world war , when it was realized that the British would provide freedom to India , Nagas also started their organizations and demanded separate freedom. In Fact they declared their freedom . The reason for the discontent among the Nagas was because of the infiltration of the plain people from Assam . Naga people formed Naga Hills District Tribal Council in 1945, which was renamed the Naga National Council (NNC) in 1946.

Under the uncertain situation of the future of Nagas after the liberation of India , a section of the NNC, led by Naga leader A.Z. Phizo declared the independence of the Nagas on August 14, 1947, a day before India's declaration.. After that a huge insurgency emerged in those regions. However at that time newly independent India was facing so many other problems so India could not control it at that time .

- In the early 1950s when Mr. Phizo founded the Naga Federal Government (NFG) and its armed wing, the Naga Federal Army (NFA), He refused to accept the Indian constitution and during this time insurgency activities have increased rapidly . The Indian government had to send armed forces to control such insurgency and the central government had to impose the Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA), which is still in place in parts of Nagaland. The Nagas, led by Mr. Phizo, demanded an independent state outside of India. Which could not be accepted at any cost . Indians could be given autonomy under the Indian constitution. These people boycotted the general election of 1952 and 1957 also .
- This type of problem of autonomy not only emerged in Naga hill region but many other tribal groups of the Assam region demanded autonomy . But these groups agreed to accept autonomy under the Indian constitution . Some Naga groups , however, were interested in negotiation with the Indian government , therefore conflicts among those groups could also be seen . Finally , to satisfy Naga people, an Independent state Nagaland was formed in 1963, however, it did not satisfy many in the NNC (Naga National Council)and NFG (Naga Federal Government). during the time Indira Gandhi , in 1975 Shillong Accord was came into force with signing by NNC and NFG. and they agreed to surrender their arms and to accept the Constitution.

WHAT IS THE RECENT ISSUE

- Some top leaders of the NNC who were operating NNC from Myanmar did not accept the Shillong accord , therefore Three NNC leaders — Thuingaleng Muivah of the Tangkhul Naga tribe of Manipur's Ukhrul district, Isak Chishi Swu of the Sema tribe, and S. S. Khaplang from Myanmar's Hemis tribe, formed the National Socialist Council Of Nagaland (NSCN) to continue the armed movement. In fact , NSCN is demanding complete freedom from the constitution of India and it continued its armed revolt/ movement .
- During 1988 , because of some internal issue (regarding killing of one innocent Naga people) the NSCN split into two factions. One, led by Mr. Muiwah and Swu called the NSCN split into two factions. One, led by Mr. Muiwah and Swu called the NSCN-IM and the other, led by Mr. Khaplang is called the NSCN-K.
- NSCN-IM group continues its demand to free Nagaland from the Indian constitution and nowadays it is the most powerful and big insurgent group of the North east. Now it has extended its demand for Greater Nagaland including some regions of Assam , and Arunachal Pradesh where Naga tribes reside. Its armed operations intensified along with illegal activities like tax extortion, smuggling of weapons and so on. The demand of the

Nagalingam (Greater Nagaland) can never be accepted by Indian government.

WHAT IS THE SITUATION OF THE PEACE TALK NOW

- In 1997, the Government of India got the NSCN-IM to sign a ceasefire agreement to begin the holding of talks with the aim of signing a Naga Peace Accord. After this more than 100 rounds of peace talk have been done but the solution is still awaited. New Delhi has been holding peace parleys simultaneously with the NSCN-IM, and the Naga National Political Groups (NNPGs) comprising at least seven other extremist groups, including the NSCN (K).
- A Framework Agreement with the NSCN (IM) signed in 2014 was the real step of the peace accord. Joint Intelligence Chief R.N. Ravi was appointed the interlocutor for Naga peace talks and signed the agreement on behalf of the Center. In 2019, he was appointed as the governor of Nagaland. Nagas are continuously demanding the separate constitution and the separate flag which was not accepted by the Indian government. Hence after the demand of the removal of Ravi and the interlocutor, the Center government appointed an Intelligence Bureau officer A.K. Mishra who continued this peace talk. Indians at any cost would not accept the demand of the separate constitution and the flag

CONCLUSION

There are many internal and external problems which our country is passing on. The Naga issue is a big issue related to the sovereignty and integrity of India. The Naga problem of Naga is a big problem in comparison to the Kashmir problem. However we prefer peace up to the maximum extent but we prefer integrity of the country more also

Dr. Anshul Bajpai

Pandemic and delayed MGNREGA payments

The COVID-19 pandemic has wreaked havoc on the global economy in 2020–21 and India is no exception. In the past one and a half years, an uncontrollable rise in the COVID-19 cases has compelled the Government of India (GoI) to resort to a series of curbs and lockdowns as a convenient measure to contain the spread of the virus. The perceptible slowing down of economic activities has pushed the nation into a deep economic crisis, with the year 2020–21 seeing the Indian gross domestic product (GDP) contract by 7.3% (GoI 2021).

The unorganized sector of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs), which absorbs a significant proportion of rural–urban migrants, saw a 46% dip in its business volume in the pandemic years due to which it was compelled to severely cut down on its workforce. Even in 2021, it continues to be in an appalling situation in the midst of a global supply chain crisis. Businesses that had resumed operations after the first wave in 2020 had to shut shop again due to the restrictions forced on the country because of the consequences of the second wave

in 2021. There was nothing the

MSMEs could resort to ensuring a continual supply chain as they did not have the financial capability to do that.

Currently, the working MSMEs are performing with one-third capacity, and as per the observation of the experts, the Indian MSME segment will take good time to achieve full recovery to the pre-COVID-19 levels of March 2020. Other urban informal jobs that cater to the employment needs of the semi/unskilled migrants include manufacturing/construction and vendoring. Continual restrictions at a variable extent followed by different states to arrest the spread of the infection have led to the situation of the migrants en masse returning to their native villages during the first wave and a sudden closure of economic activity. A large section of them are yet to resume their city-based works. Due to the large-scale “reverse migration,” their “fallback” employment option emerges to be the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS).

With the rate of unemployment touching the 10% mark by the mid-2000s and the glaring rise in rural unemployment, pressure was mounted on the government to implement new measures to bring unemployment and poverty under check. This led the GoI to launch the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGA) in 2006, the largest ever public works programme (PWP) in the world. It mandates “work as a right” and, at the same time, meets the parameter of gender equity through a concrete legal framework. The programme, renamed as “MGNREGS” in 2008, has been legally fortified to conform to the role of providing income insurance to the rural laborers against building of long-term capital assets as the scheme promises guaranteed employment for 100 days in a financial year per eligible household The Hindu Analysis.

Since its inception, it has generated 18–20 crore person-days all over India on an average every year. Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs) account for 25% of the total person-days. However, despite this success, since years the scheme is facing criticism from several corners. One of the major criticisms is the problem of delayed MGNREGA payment, which is alleged to be limiting its success. Prior to 2010, NREGs wages were paid in cash based on the entries made in the “muster roll” (or attendance sheet) by the implementing agency, namely the gram panchayat. The muster roll, prepared every week, is a record of the number of days worked and wages due to each laborer. After the muster roll was submitted to the block office, funds were transferred to the gram panchayat account. The money was then withdrawn by the implementing agency to make cash payments to the laborers. Under this system of cash payments, the implementing and payment agencies were the same. This made misappropriation of funds easier owing to the presence of corrupt officers at the panchayat level. Against this backdrop, introducing bank payments (or, in some areas, post office payments) was a cloud with a silver lining. But then, the situation improved a little because of the half-hearted implementation of the electronic Fund Management System (eFMS).

DELAYED PAYMENTS IN INDIA THE HINDU ANALYSIS

As per several reports at an all-India level since October 2021, the problem of delayed payment has aggravated. In October 2021, 33% of the MGNREGA workers' households failed to receive payment for their work. The percentage of pendency was more than 40% in November 2021.

The center's flagship rural employment scheme ran out of funds by October 2021 and showed a negative net balance of `8,686 crore (Jebaraj 2021). By then, already 21 states had exhausted their allocated funds. Supplementary budget allocations were required to come to the rescue but it could take place only after the next parliamentary session. So by then, the states tried to utilize their funds in whatever capacity possible to tide over the crisis. As a result, November sees a further rise in the burden of pendency. Today Current Affairs

Of the major 19 states, the ones suffering from the severe delay in payments are Arunachal Pradesh, West Bengal, and Tamil Nadu (TN). In Arunachal Pradesh, more than 35% of beneficiaries have not received their due wages for more than two months. It is followed by West Bengal where 26% of participants are waiting to receive the remuneration of their PWP work. For TN, the percentage is 15%. Though in percentage share it may seem small but in absolute numbers it is a sizeable quantity given that there is more than 30% increase in the number of households participating in MGNREGS post the pandemic

MICRO-LEVEL STUDY: THE HINDU ANALYSIS

West Bengal stands at the second position in terms of wage pendency under the MGNREGA. Wage delay is likely to have a lot of grave ramifications on the livelihood of job cardholders' households, particularly in view of the pandemic when alternative economic activities have conspicuously declined. To assess them, West Bengal is chosen as the study area. The time frame of the study is between September 2021 and November 2021. Familiarity with culture and language was another major reason to choose the aforementioned state for carrying out this study. The process of selecting the panchayat where the actual survey was conducted is discussed below.

Since in 2021, the average person-days worked per household at an aggregate level was found to be 40 person-days, such a study area was selected wherein the MGNREGS performance would be consistent with the national average. It was difficult to get a rough picture of the national experience pertaining to the problem of delayed payment and its impact on the beneficiaries in these trying times of economic crisis. To shortlist the study area, initial attention was given to picking the district that met the above-mentioned criteria. Among the 23 districts of West Bengal, Bankura emerged to be the one where the participants had received around 40 person-days per household as was observed till September 2021, a figure in compliance with the national average.

ANALYZING SOCIO-ECONOMIC BACKGROUNDS: THE HINDU ANALYSIS

Bankura is one of the most backward districts of West Bengal. The economy of Bankura district is characterized by an overwhelming agro-economic base and low urbanization. Agriculture is the primary occupation with the average land size available per cultivator being around 0.41 hectare (ha). Sixty-six percent of the rural population is engaged in various forms of agricultural labour occupation, whereas 32% of the rural workforce derives its livelihood from self-employment in farming (Census 2011).

Coming to the socio-economic background of the participant and non-participant households, Bankura is a Hindu-dominated district and the same is reflected in the study area (Table 7). The beneficiaries were a combination of households coming from SCs and Other Backward Classes (OBCs) who took part in MGNREGS activities. The sample shows that SC families' participation (83%) largely superseding that of OBCs' (17%).

MGNREGS AND INDEBTEDNESS: THE HINDU ANALYSIS

One of the most abhorrent ramifications of MGNREGA wage payment delay was rising indebtedness in the job cardholders' households. Practically, among large sections of the labour households, indebtedness was the most common feature as they resorted to multiple borrowings to combat shortage in consumption expenditure and economic emergencies during the pandemic. Now, delay in the payment under MGNREGA added to the agony.

Table 8 shows that around `10,000 to `11,000 was the average borrowing of the surveyed households (including both MGNREGS participant and non-participant households), which they had resorted to owing to economic and medical reasons at different points of 2021. However, due to delay in payment of MGNREGA wages, the participants had to go for an additional 27% borrowing. The preferable source of borrowing was private moneylenders because they were easily accessible. Besides that, private moneylenders often do not ask for any collateral as mortgage unlike banks. As a result, even after demanding a high percent interest rate per annum, the respondents opted for them. For the MGNREGS works carried out in September, wages were credited in the beneficiaries' account in mid-November. The outstanding loan as in November 2021 before the arrival of MGNREGA payment stood at 6% more than the basic. This is the interest amount payable on the principle charged by the private lenders. Though the beneficiaries did engage in different forms of casual works during October and November both in farm and non-farm sector, the money went for smoothening household consumption and no surplus could be generated that can be leveraged on to settle even a minimal portion of the rising debt. With credit of the MGNREGA wages in a lump sum volume, around 50% of the cumulative remuneration was said to be utilized by the participants to service off 14% of the outstanding loan in lieu to alleviate the debt pressure. But even then, 14% comes to be the extra financial burden caused as a consequence of MGNREGA deferred payment per household when the net payable credit of participant households was calculated. When compared with the net outstanding loan of MGNREGA non-participants (as in

in November 2021), the onus of the participants is calculated to be a significant 23% more indicating a graver situation of the MGNREGA beneficiaries relative to their counterpart colleagues.

CONCLUSIONS

In the troubling times of the pandemic which has triggered an economic shock, the most prominent negative repercussion was the threat to the livelihoods of the people working in the private sector. However, the first victims of job lay-offs were the people working in the unorganized urban economy, which saw a 46% dip in their business volume in 2020 (Jacob 2021). These employees usually hailed from rural roots who migrated in search of better income opportunities. On the close-down of several MSMEs in 2020, they were compelled to return to their villages. In 2021 as well, the MSMEs continued to suffer due to the global supply chain crisis as a result of which large sections of the migrants had failed to resume their urban-based informal works (Dewan et al 2021). In the rural hinterland, the MGNREGS was expected to come to the rescue and provide employment relief but the actual picture seems very different. Not only did the union labour budget sanctioned for MGNREGS was curtailed by 23% in 2021, many states were observed to be suffering from conspicuous delay in the MGNREGA payment since September–October 2021, because they had exhausted their share of the allocated budget under the MGNREGA and supplementary budget could be decided upon only in the next Parliament session.

Taking note of this serious predicament, a primary survey was conducted in West Bengal, which stands second in terms of the severity of delay in MGNREGS payment. Fieldwork was done in Babarda panchayat of Bankura district where the MGNREGS performance was in compliance of the national average. The selection was purposive in order to get a rough picture of the national experience pertaining to the problem of delayed payment and its implications on the beneficiaries in this period of economic crisis. The microanalysis shows that the participants were actually at a loss working in the said income assurance programme. They sacrificed agricultural work that was taking place during September in order to work in MGNREGA. However, the MGNREGS failed to reach on time and a conspicuous deferment forced them to go for additional borrowing, which augmented their burden of debt. The incapability of the union government to estimate a proper budget despite high demand for work under such social protection programmes given limited availability of other forms of employment owing to ongoing fear pandemic can be held responsible for such fallout.

In view of the rising rural poverty, the union government should emphasize on reverting back to the “bottom-up approach” in estimating the budget. This involves instructing the individual states to prepare a financial estimate on the basis of the prevailing demand pattern for the PWP at the ground level. This would help the center to keep that sum aside and promptly release the same on the submission of master rolls. Given the current plight, this is the appropriate step if the programme has to really meet its goal of alleviating destitution in this testing time.

Rubber (Promotion and Development)

The repeal of the Rubber Act, 1947 (hereafter the act) and the enactment of Rubber (Promotion and Development) Bill, 2022 (hereafter the bill) have been under heated discussion ever since the bill was uploaded on the website of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoCI) for comments and it is expected to be introduced in Parliament forthwith.

LEGISLATIONS IN RUBBER SECTOR

The Rubber (Production and Marketing) Act, 1947: After the end of World War II, deliberations on setting up a statutory body for regulatory and development activities in the rubber sector were expedited and the central government passed the Rubber (Production and Marketing) Act, thus establishing the Indian Rubber Board, which came into force from 19 April 1947.

CONTEXT OF THE NEW BILL: THE HINDU ANALYSIS

Implications

The implications of the bill are examined with regard to the scope of the act: autonomy, constitution, functions, and powers of the board and powers of the central government.

Scope of the act: As per the original version of the act, the purpose of the legislation was “to provide for the development, under the central control of the rubber industry, so far as regards the production and marketing of rubber and for regulating export and import of rubber.” The amendment in 1954 revised the purpose of the act as “to provide for the development under the control of the union of the rubber industry.” However, as “rubber industry” was not defined in the act and as “rubber” was defined as natural rubber obtained from rubber trees, the revision had just taken away the limiting condition of “so far as regards the production and marketing of rubber and for regulating export and import of rubber.” In the bill, the purpose is stated as “to promote and develop the Indian rubber industry, enable the functioning of a modern rubber board and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto” and “rubber industry” is defined. As per the bill, “rubber industry” means “the industry engaged in the production, manufacture, supply, distribution, trade and commerce, utilization of rubber and rubber products, and includes rubber plants, the production, processing, and of Hevea wood, research, development of rubber estates, and services related thereto.”

Rubber board's autonomy: The term “board” here means the rubber board constituted by the central government (as per Section 4 of the act and Section 13 of the bill) comprising the

chairman, executive director, members of Parliament, and representatives of state governments and stakeholders and not the establishment of the board headed by executive director with departments/divisions undertaking extension, research, training, and other activities. The board is primarily a statutory advisory body and executive powers are vested with the principal executive officer who reports to the central government.

CONSTITUTION OF THE BOARD

Nine members were nominated or appointed by the central government in 1947 to the board. The stakeholder associations could nominate 11 members, whereas six members were nominated by the state governments of Travancore–Cochin and Madras. By amendment in the act in 1954, the provision of nominations by stakeholder associations was discontinued, the number of representatives allotted to the states of Travancore–Cochin and Madras were raised to 10, and the central government could nominate/appoint 12 persons. The central government officials, as representatives in the board, were excluded and the representatives of the states of Madras and Travancore–Cochin were made, not necessarily nominated by the respective governments.

Another development was the inclusion of three members of Parliament in the board. The change in the 1980 was the addition of an executive director to the board, and in the 2010, three officials of the central government were included. Meanwhile, the Rubber Rules, 1955 have been amended on several occasions, which included the number of members to be nominated by the central and state governments, the number of small and large growers, etc. The major change in the bill is that except for the three members nominated by Parliament, all the members of the board will be either nominees or appointees of the central government.

CENTRAL GOVERNMENT'S POWERS

The allegation that the central government would acquire the powers of the board through the bill is not right as almost all the powers are vested with the central government even in the existing act. There are also accusations that Section 30 of the bill was dubiously added to enable the central government to prevent any increase in the rubber prices by notifying maximum prices to help the rubber product's manufacturing sector. Section 30 of the bill is just a reproduction of Section 13 of the act, on notification of minimum and maximum prices, and nothing new at all. This provision has been there from 1947 and the only changes made were omitting the PAC in 1954 and adding "if it deems necessary" in 2010 to avoid compulsion in the notification of prices in the context of a high court order. There is no change between the act and the bill with regard to the provisions on control of import and export of natural rubber, and the central government has similar powers even under Section 3 of the Foreign Trade (Development and Regulation) Act for all commodities (GOI 1992). The added power of the central government in the bill is vide Section 27, which enables it to supersede and reconstitute the board any time.

POWERS OF THE BOARD

The power to import rubber for sale, or to purchase rubber, in the internal market under Section 8A of the act is not included in the bill, but this was provided to be carried out only with the prior approval of the central government. Through Section 5 of the bill, the board is empowered to issue directions to dealers, exporters, growers, manufacturers, processors, and such other persons in the rubber industry and the contravention of such directions can lead to penalties under Section 9. The functions of the board have been expanded in the bill by including rubber products in research, technical advice, and export promotion. However, most of the functions additionally mentioned in the bill are activities already being undertaken by the board to a certain extent. Thus, in fact, the functions and powers of the board have not been undermined in the bill.

SUGGESTIONS

(i) Scope of the bill: Several sections in the act have been modified in the bill to include the downstream rubber products manufacturing and rubberwood sectors within its scope. This is appropriate as the legislation shall cover the entire rubber industry value chain as well as the ancillary sectors. Rubber products manufacturing sector consumes natural rubber, synthetic rubber, and reclaimed rubber (rubber recovered from used rubber products). In most of the products, combinations of natural rubber and synthetic rubber are used for better performance and properties, whereas in other products, reclaimed rubber is used for cost-effectiveness. It is appropriate to cover synthetic rubber and reclaimed rubber also in the legislation so that the entire rubber industry value chain is within its scope.

(ii) Representation in the board: The bill has included additionally the dealers, processors, exporters, and institutes or authorities specializing in research in the rubber industry as categories eligible for getting appointed as members of the Rubber Board. The act had specified the number of members in the board representing different segments, such as small growers, large growers, manufacturers, and labour interests.

(iii) Ex officio members in the board: The chairman, executive director and rubber production commissioner (RPC) are the ex officio members in the board as per the act. The bill includes the chief financial officer and secretary who head the finance and administration departments of the board also as ex officio members. The core functions of the board are plantation development and research activities handled by the rubber production department and the Rubber Research Institute of India (RRII), respectively, as substantiated in Section 3, under the objectives of the bill.

CONCERNS

- Declaring rubber cultivation as an industry: it would have many domestic legal implications, for instance if rubber plantation is not considered by courts as agricultural land it would have far reaching implications on bank loans etc.
 - The government is once and for all closing the doors of re-negotiating with the WTO to make rubber an agricultural product by explicitly defining rubber cultivation as an industrial activity.

to make rubber an agricultural product by explicitly defining rubber cultivation as an industrial activity.

- Confusions regarding quality standards: according to the bill quality standards to be implemented for all rubber produced in India and imported to India but it also adds that quality standards would be enforced for rubber produced in India and not for imported rubber.
 - ▶ It has been said that there is a huge pressure from very high levels on the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) and the Rubber Board to agree to import low-quality cup lumps.
 - ▶ The lumps are a form of unprocessed, often decaying natural rubber of uncertain quality. The above provision would make it easy to import poor quality, cheap rubber.
- Timely re-plantation: the Bill does not provide a framework for timely replanting of plantations once they cross their economic life.
 - ▶ The demand for rubber would more than double in the next decade and triple by 2040.
- Safeguarding the interests of small and marginal farmers: Concerns have been raised that the bill favors the industry and harms the interests of the growers. The bill defines a Grower as one who owns the state but it is not the case, the mean size of rubber holding is hardly 0.5 hectare.
 - ▶ Rubber growers are small and marginal farmers, and safeguarding their interests is crucial to sustaining rubber production in the country.
 - ▶ Natural rubber cultivation gives livelihood to more than 1.3 million households.
- Fixing a fair Price: The bill provides for fixing the minimum or maximum price for rubber however it does not provide for fixing a fair price, the Grower needs a fair price and not a minimum price.

Ritu

Implications of the declining rate of fertility and Rise in obesity

CONTEXT :

Recently some data released by the NFHS (National Family Health Survey). According to which the fertility rate at National level is continuously declining while obesity rises

INTRODUCTION :

- The National Family Health Survey (NFHS) is a large-scale, multi-round survey conducted in a representative sample of households throughout India. Recently this institute released data .
- This data shows that The Total Fertility Rate (TFR), an average number of children per woman, has further declined from 2.2 to 2.0 at the national level. There are only five States — Bihar (2.98), Meghalaya (2.91), Uttar Pradesh (2.35), Jharkhand (2.26) Manipur (2.17) — in India which are above replacement level of fertility of 2.1 as per the national report of the NFHS-5.
- This data also highlighted that institutional births increased from 79% to 89% across India and in rural areas around 87% births were delivered in institutions and the same is 94% in urban areas. This is a good thing that the people started trusting on institutional birth.

IMPLICATIONS : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

- We have to analyze the reasons for the fertility rate. One of the most significant reasons is late marriages. In urban areas most of the females are working professionals so they prefer marriage after their career settlement . Apart from it , because of the western culture , some couples prefer to live in a relationship without marriage and they (the lady)do not prefer to be an early mother so many of the time it has been seen that these people aborted many times . This is another cause of the less fertility
- The level of stunting among children under five years has marginally declined from 38% to 36% in the country since the last four years. Stunting is higher among children in rural areas (37%) than urban areas (30%) in 2019-21. We also have the fact that more than three-fourths (77%) children aged between 12 and 23 months were fully immunized, compared with 62% in NFHS-4.
- As the awareness and the infrastructure would be strong these health facilities would be diffused up to the lowest level of the society
- Besides, Some other data are also related to the health of the married women who usually participate in three household decisions (about health care for herself; making major household purchases; visit to her family or relatives) that the status of the women is rising gradually. They are participating in the decision making process . In this regard, Nagaland and Ladakh are one of the best in India . The Index for Nagaland is given 99% while for Ladakh is given 80 %. Rural (77%) and urban (81%) differences are found to be marginal.. However , because of the government policies, the number of women who have a bank or savings account has increased from 53% to 79% in the last four years. . In fact , direct benefit transfers come only in the account of the women therefore we see the increment in such numbers . However it should be in increasing mode gradually
- The data provided by NFHS explains that there is a continuous rise in obesity. At the national level, it increased from 21% to 24% among women and 19% to 23% among men. This data shows malnutrition or the impact of the office work culture . In some state this situation is more dangerous like Kerala, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Andhra Pradesh, Goa, Sikkim, Manipur, Delhi, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, Punjab, Chandigarh and Lakshadweep where more than one third women are overweight

CONCLUSION

However, the data provided by the survey agencies do not always present the real picture of health . But these data are very much helpful regarding the evaluation of our health policies and the other benefits scheme. Through These data we can analyze the cause and consequences of the health

issues . We should change our lifestyle to reduce obesity because it is the cause of other health issues .

Dr. Anshul Bajpai

India's Relation with

INDIA'S RELATION WITH EUROPE

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

Source: Indian Express

WHY IN NEWS?

The visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Europe comes at a time when the region is experiencing its worst security crisis since the Cold War ended.

WHAT IS THE PM'S THREE NATION VISIT? THE HINDU ANALYSIS

Mr. Modi and German Chancellor Olaf Scholz reaffirmed the two countries' alliance. Berlin also promised a ten-billion-euro investment in bilateral collaboration. Mr. Modi met with the leaders of Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Iceland in Copenhagen for the Second India-Nordic Summit.

The Prime Minister had fruitful conversations with Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen, during which the two leaders discussed India's unique 'Green Strategic Partnership' with Denmark. He also took part in a business roundtable between India and Denmark.

The Prime Minister met with French President Emmanuel Macron, who was just re-elected, in Paris.

In the wake of Russia's actions against Ukraine, he discussed bilateral and mutual interests, as well as regional and global trends.

In 2020, India and Denmark will upgrade their relationship to a Green Strategic Partnership in order to advance political cooperation, expand economic relations and green growth, create jobs, and strengthen cooperation on global challenges and opportunities, with a focus on an ambitious implementation of the Paris Agreement and the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

WHAT IS THE POSITION OF THESE NATIONS OVER RUSSIA'S AGGRESSION AGAINST UKRAINE? THE HINDU ANALYSIS

Germany's position—Like India, Germany has strong economic links with Russia, as it relies on Russia for over 40% of its gas imports.

While Russian aggressiveness has spurred Germany to increase its defence spending and join Western sanctions, it has been hesitant to deliver arms to Kyiv.

Mr. Scholz asked Russian President Vladimir Putin to put an end to the needless killings and evacuate the troops, saying that the only way out was through discussion.

Sweden and Finland, two of the Nordic five, are considering abandoning their decades-long neutrality and seeking NATO membership.

India's stance on the war- New Delhi has maintained a neutral stance on the conflict, drawing both condemnation and engagement from the West.

India has not voted on a UN Security Council resolution that condemns Russia's aggression towards Ukraine, citing the importance of dialogue in resolving issues.

The West has paid multiple high-level trips to India, with some top officials pressuring New Delhi to reduce commerce with Russia.

WHAT LIES AHEAD FOR INDIA? THE HINDU ANALYSIS

India has managed to forge strong ties with both the West and Russia in the post-Cold War environment of relative stability in Europe.

The West is now attempting to weaken Russia, while Moscow warns of a new world war.

New Delhi faces a difficult task in forging a stronger strategic future with Europe without jeopardizing its complex but crucial relationship with Russia.

Unemployment in India

WHY IN NEWS?

India's unemployment rate rose to 7.83% in April from 7.60% in March according to data from the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE) .

IMPORTANT FACTS:

The urban unemployment rate has increased from 8.28 per cent in March to 9.22 per cent in April. Rural unemployment rate decreased from 7.29 per cent to 7.18 per cent.

Unemployment rate was the highest in Haryana at 34.5% followed by Rajasthan at 28.8%, Bihar 21.1% and Jammu and Kashmir 15.6%.

The sluggish domestic demand and the slow pace of economic recovery amid rising prices has impacted the Job opportunities.

Employment has fallen in India from 408.9 million in 2019-20 to 387.2 million in 2020-21 and then recovered to 401.8 million in 2021-22.

The recovery in 2021-22 was inadequate. As the Employment was stagnant 1.7%, or 7 million short of the employment level of the pre-pandemic year of 2019-20.

CONCERNS: THE HINDU ANALYSIS

- Near about 78 million jobs were lost during the period of June 2020, which roughly coincides with the first wave of COVID-19 and 13 million jobs were lost during the second wave during the period of June 2021.
- The unemployed who were actively seeking work but were unable to find any were estimated at 33 million during 2021-22
- Women lose jobs disproportionately during economic shocks and this repeated itself during the pandemic.
- The female labour force participation rate among urban women was as low as 9.4% in 2019-20 and fell to 7% in 2021-22.
- It was difficult to offer appropriate jobs in adequate numbers to aspiring women.
- When India was subjected to the most stringent lockdown in April 2020, 79 million small traders and daily wage labourers lost employment.
- The lockdowns showed both the vulnerability and the flexibility of this category of workers.
- The two big challenges that the pandemic has posed is employing women and providing salaried jobs are going to be difficult to tackle soon.

INITIATIVES TAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA: THE HINDU ANALYSIS

- MGNREGA-Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act: to provide minimum 100 days of guaranteed wage employment in a financial year to every rural household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work.
- Atma Nirbhar Bharat Rojgar Yojana (ABRY) was launched to incentivize employers for creation of new employment along with social security benefits and restoration of loss of employment during Covid-19 pandemic.
- PMRPY-Pradhan Mantri Rojgar Protsahan Yojana: for incentivising employers for creation of new employment.
- NCS-National Career Service: to provide a variety of career related services like job matching, career counselling, vocational guidance, information on skill development courses, apprenticeship, internships etc
- Garib Kalyan Rojgar Abhiyaan (PMGKRA), is a 125-day Abhiyan , with a mission to address the issues of returnee migrant workers and similarly affected rural population by Covid-19 pandemic through a comprehensive strategy of providing immediate employment & livelihood opportunities to the distressed.
- National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM)-AJIVIKA:aims at creating efficient and effective institutional platforms for the rural poor, enabling them to increase household income through sustainable livelihood enhancements and improved access to financial services.
- PM- SVANidhi Scheme, to provide collateral free working capital loan to Street Vendors, vending in urban areas, to resume their businesses which were adversely affected due to COVID-19 induced lock-down.

- PMMY-Pradhan Mantri MUDRA Yojana: is a scheme for providing loans up to 10 lakh to the non-corporate, non-farm small/micro enterprises. The loans are provided by the Commercial Banks, RRBs, Small Finance Banks, MFIs and NBFCs.

WAY FORWARD

- This situation of unemployment can be tackled by providing skill development training at an adequate pace.
- Greater investment needs to be directed to small enterprises rather than to large enterprises in order to bring about the employment objective and the output objective
- Central government needs to give a directive and incentive to the industries to train rural and tribal youth in their occupations so that skill development training can take place.
- Also there should be emphasis over providing social security to the poor, so that people do not die out of hunger and malnutrition.

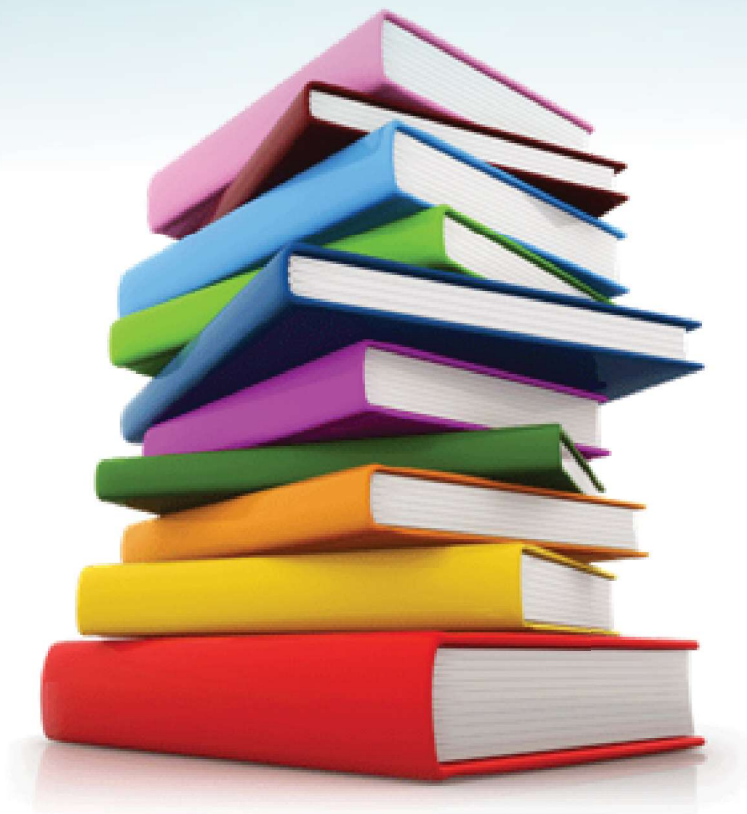
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MAY 2022

Ravindra Nath Tagore and His Nationalism : An analysis

RAVINDRA NATH TAGORE AND HIS NATIONALISM – TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

Context : The Country is celebrating the 161th birth anniversary of Ravindra Nath Tagore . He was a great poet and the preserver of Indian culture . His views on nationalism is relevant in modern context also

Today Current Affairs

Introduction

Ravindra Nath Tagore , a great Bengali legend who had played an important role in the national and cultural movement of India . He had been a great poet .He won the nobel prize for his famous book Gitanjali. He wrote the National Anthem for two popular songs. These songs are the national anthem of two countries . His Jan gan man is the national anthem of the India while Amar Sonar bangla is the national anthem of the Bangladesh

His Views on nationalism and patriotism are still relevant in the modern context . He used to say that nationalism should never rise beyond humanism . He was a true nationalist , patriot and humanist also. There are some rumors popular in History like he wrote the national anthem in praise of the British prince George V when he came to India in the year 1911, during the time of Lord Hardinge II. A Delhi durbar was organized.

MYTHS AND REALITY ABOUT TAGORE : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

- Many people think that Tagore was very much influenced by British culture therefore He believed in the justice of British rule . Therefore he criticized the Non cooperation Movement of Gandhi ji. It is rumored that He wrote the National Anthem in praise of the British crown and this national anthem describes that our fortunate lie in the feet/ mercy of the British crown . Some people raise the question on his patriotism and the nationalism

- But the reality is that he was an extreme patriot and loved the ancestral Indian culture and philosophy. He loved Bengalis. However, he went British for higher education but returned without completing the course. In the National anthem, he wanted to describe that the extreme sovereignty of the Nations lay in the people of (Jan Gana Man) of India who must be the supreme authority to run the governance. But since British journalists of that time period interpreted that Tagore praised the British authoritative state and still such types of rumors are flying everywhere on social media without analyzing the fact. The Hindu Analysis
- However , on many occasions he criticizes Gandhi Ji but he was the person who called Gandhiji Mahatma . At the time of the Jallianwala incident, he immediately returned the prestigious title of knighthood. He loved Indian soil, particularly Bengal . But simultaneously he loved Indian people and never propagated patriotism on the cost of humanism . Nationalism is a psychological concept . All the humans who are guided through some commonness , are the elements of the Nation . Therefore Nationalism must be in equilibrium with Humanism .
- Like other Utilitarian scholars he also criticized the international war . After the first world war he was unhappy and openly criticized such patriotism and nationalism which hamper humanism . For acquiring more land , more colors , war could never be justified, killing of the innocent people can never be justified .

NATIONALISM OF TAGORE : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

- Tagore was a great patriot and in the 20th century when , the policy of divide and rule compelled the British for the partition of Bengal to curtail the emerging nationalism of Bengal. Tagore was the person who criticized it . And he knew that the basic objective of the partition of the Bengal is to promote communal violence / communalism therefore Tagore worked for the Hindu Muslim unity during the 1905. His songs of patriotism such as Banglar Maati Banglar Jol (Earth of Bengal, Water of Bengal) bolstered the movements and also epitomized Hindu-Muslim unity. The Hindu Analysis
- He worked for the reforms in every dimension of the society . When communal violence erupted after the Barisal incident (During Swadeshi Movement) , He became very sad and criticized communism . Hw emphasizes that patriotism and nationalism should be promoted through the promotion of art, music and culture.
- In a letter to his friend A. M Bose Tagore wrote that patriotism could never be our final destination and spiritual shelter . I would never buy the glass for the price of diamonds. I will never allow patriotism to triumph over humanity as long as I live.”
- Gandhi and Tagore met in 1921 in Calcutta where Tagore warned Gandhi that there remained a thin line that divided nationalism and xenophobia.
- Gandhi had famously commented, on being criticized by Tagore, that “the poet lives in a

magnificent world of his own creation — his world of ideas”.

Today Current Affairs

Conclusion

However, Tagore was one of the great poets, nationalism and Nobel laureate and he explained his spiritual ideas through his writing and his artwork. He criticizes the worship of a nation like a god and he also criticizes the idol form of any country. He used to say that , if we worship our country we must worship the elements that are all the people residing in the boundary of the country, and must be respected . Therefore in this way he emphasizes humanism . However Gandhi ji criticizes Tagore through his writing that poets; writing are just imaginations of spiritualism . Any way we must pay our tribute to the Great poet of the world and the Pride of India Rabindra Nath Tagore Guruji

Dr. Anshul Bajpai

Laws that govern Tapping a Phone

LAWS THAT GOVERN TAPPING A PHONE : TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

Sanjay Raut, a political party leader has accused the Centre of protecting IPS officer Rashmi Shukla, under probe for tapping the phones of political leaders in 2019.

TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

HOW ARE PHONES TAPPED IN INDIA?

- During the times of fixed-line phones, mechanical exchanges would link circuits together to route the audio signal from the call.
- When exchanges went digital, tapping was done through a computer.
- Authorities make a request to the service provider, which is bound by law to record the conversations on the given number and provide these in real time.
- Competent authority to tap phones– In the states, police have the power to tap phones. The Hindu Analysis
- At the Centre, 10 agencies are authorised to do so including the Intelligence Bureau, CBI, Enforcement Directorate, National Investigation Agency, R&AW and Delhi Police Commissioner.
- Tapping by any other agency would be considered illegal.

- The competent authority must record reasons for tapping in writing.

WHAT LAWS GOVERN PHONE TAPPING? THE HINDU ANALYSIS

- **Act**– Phone tapping in India is governed by the The Indian Telegraph Act, 1885.
- **Time**– Phone tapping can be done
 - On the occurrence of any public emergency
 - In the interest of the public safety
- **Conditions**– Phone tapping can be done by the Centre or States if they are satisfied it is necessary in the interest of
 - Public safety
 - Sovereignty and integrity of India
 - Security of the State
 - Friendly relations with foreign States
 - Public order
 - Preventing incitement to the commission of an offence
- **Exception**– An exception has been given for the press.
- The press messages of correspondents accredited to the Central Government or a State Government that are intended to be published in India shall not be intercepted, unless their transmission has been prohibited under this subsection.
- **Authorisation**- Rule 419A of the Indian Telegraph (Amendment) Rules, 2007 talks about the authorising orders that has to be conveyed to the service provider in writing.
- Phone tapping orders is issued by
 - The Secretary to the Government of India (Ministry of Home Affairs) in the case of Government of India
 - The Secretary to the State Government in-charge of the Home Department in the case of a State Government
- **Emergency situations**– In unavoidable circumstances, such an order may be issued by an officer, not below the rank of a Joint Secretary to the Government of India, who has been authorised by the Union Home Secretary, or the State Home Secretary.
- If it is not feasible to get prior directions, a call can be intercepted with the prior approval of the authorised officers.
- The order has to be communicated within 3 days to the competent authority, who has to

approve or disapprove it within 7 working days.

WHAT ARE THE CHECKS AGAINST MISUSE? THE HINDU ANALYSIS

Telephone conversation is an important facet of a man's private life. Telephone tapping would thus infract the Right to Privacy under Article 21 of the Constitution.

- **Last resort** – Interception must be ordered only if there is no other way of getting the information.
- **Directions for interception**– The directions for interception remain in force, unless revoked, for a period not exceeding 60 days.
- They may be renewed, but not beyond a total of 180 days.
- **Review Committee**– Any order issued by the competent authority has to contain reasons, and a copy is to be forwarded to a review committee within seven working days. The Hindu Analysis
- When the Review Committee is of the opinion that the directions are not in accordance with the provisions, it may set aside the directions and orders for destruction of the copies of the intercepted messages.
- **Destruction of records**– Records pertaining to such directions shall be destroyed every six months. The Hindu Analysis
- Service providers are required to destroy records pertaining to directions for interception within two months of discontinuance of the interception.
- **Unauthorised interception**– In case of unauthorised interception, the service provider may be fined or even lose its licence.

Anshum Verma

Sikh Separatism : Must be eliminated completely

CONTEXT:

For the last few days , It has been observed that the Sikh separatism is still alive however it is now feeble, but vigilance is essential. The incident of the Patiala riot and the incident of the Dharamshala show that the elements of the Punjab separatism are still active . These elements must be oppressed quickly and there are still some forces which are promoting these activities

Today Current Affairs

Introduction

For internal security it is essential the elimination of any separatist movement. Punjab separatist movement, however had been ended by the Rajiv–Longowal Accord on 4 July 1985. But this movement has been operating continuously from abroad. Pakistan is supporting such type of separatist movement for taking revenge of the disintegration of Bangladesh. Indian security agency must be alert in this regard.

WHAT IS THE ISSUE OF KHALISTAN : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

- Akhalistan is a Sikh separatist movement which demands for the Sikh state to be separated from India. In that proposed state the region of the Punjab of India and the Punjab of Pakistan, both are included. However indirectly Pakistan is supporting this movement. The Hindu Analysis
- This movement started in 1983 after the control of Golden temple by religious militant leader Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale. In this golden temple, he organized his armed forces and challenged the sovereignty of the Indian government. Our Prime minister Indira Gandhi successfully tackled this situation and through the operation blue star the Golden temple was besieged and freed. Therefore, in the process of the protection of the integrity and the sovereignty of India, we have to sacrifice our beloved prime minister Indira Gandhi and she was assassinated by her own Sikh bodyguards. But up to the 1990s this movement had been almost eliminated. But once again, through some incident it is alarming our internal security.

WHAT ARE THE RECENT INCIDENT : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

- One incident happened in Patiala when the communal riots started when some Hindu people were raising the slogan of the Khalistan Murdabad. Police actively arrest all the culprit and the investigation is continuing.
- Another incidents occurred in Himachal Pradesh Assembly complex in Dharamshala where Purported flags of imaginary Khalistan were put up on the gate of the complex, and slogans scrawled on the walls. However police took immediate action in this regard. On the same day, the police in Punjab said they had averted a terror attack after arresting two men, said to be Khalistani sympathizers, with explosives in Tarn Taran district. A U.S.-

based Khalistani separatist have been charged in Himachal Pradesh under the UAPA and the Indian Penal Code. The Hindu Analysis

- But this is the misfortune of India that every incidents is tried to be politicized . In fact this time this Khalistan movement is managing from the land of Canada . Australia and other European countries .

TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

WHAT MEASURES SHOULD BE ADOPTED TO ELIMINATE THIS SEPARATIST MOVEMENT

Since this movement has been almost ended from the land of India but it is still alive on the foreign land , these separatist are working abroad and they are planning to conduct referendum in India regarding separatism . But it is almost impossible because the Indian Sikh community is too loyal to the country and they believe in national integration . Many people from the Punjab had participated in the national movement and fought for the integrity of India . There are some people funded by Pakistan abroad who are creating the problem. The following measures should be adopted to eliminate them completely

- Government should pressurize those countries not to encourage such separatist movement on their land. The Hindu Analysis
- Government should not tolerate any type of this incidents and the culprit of the separatism must be immediately strictly punished
- Government should ensure not to free and illegal flow of the foreign currencies to Punjab for such illegal activities. The Hindu Analysis
- Government of India and the Punjab should work together in this regard
- Government should eliminate the illegal trade of the Drugs in Punjab , because this trade of the drugs is also involved such type of separatist movement

TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

CONCLUSION

As per the above discussion , however the Khalistan issue had been during the decade of 1990s but recent incidents of the Patiala and the Dharamshala Himachal Pradesh are alarming us that the forces of the separatism is still alive . Government should take strong action and eliminate these forces completely before they become more effective . All the political parties should work together for the interest of India as a nation.

Dr. Anshul Bajpai

Smart Cities Mission

Smart Cities Mission

The government has announced that 80 of the 100 planned Integrated Command and Control Centres have been set up, with the rest to be completed by August 15.

WHAT IS THE SMART CITIES MISSION?

India is urbanizing exponentially with the expected influx of over 400 million people over the next 35 years.

- Smart city is defined as a one that makes optimal use of all the interconnected information available to better understand and control its operations and optimise the use of limited resources.
- Smart Cities Mission was launched in 2015 under the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs.
- The Mission is operated as a Centrally Sponsored Scheme.
- Objective- To promote cities that provide core infrastructure, clean and sustainable environment and give a decent quality of life to their citizens through the application of smart solutions.
- 100 cities have been selected to be developed as Smart Cities through a two-stage competition.
- Area based development- It includes city improvement (retrofitting), city renewal (redevelopment) and city extension (greenfield development).
- Key focus areas
 1. Construction of walkways, pedestrian crossings, cycling tracks
 2. Efficient waste-management systems
 3. Integrated traffic management and assessment
- Assessment of indices- It also assesses various indices to track urban development such as the Ease of Living Index, Municipal Performance Index, City GDP framework, Climate Smart Cities assessment framework, etc.
- Fundamental principles of Smart Cities
 1. Community at the Core
 2. More from less
 3. Co-operative and Competitive Federalism
 4. Integration, Innovation , Sustainability
 5. Technology as a means
 6. Convergence

WHAT IS AN INTEGRATED COMMAND AND CONTROL CENTRE (ICCC)?

The ICCCs are envisaged to be the brain for city operation as it will act as a decision support system for city administration to respond to the real time events by consuming data feeds from different data sources and by processing information out of the data sets.

The Smart Cities Mission includes setting up ICCCs for each smart city.

- **Monitoring-** These ICCCs are designed to enable authorities to monitor the status of various amenities (water, power supply, traffic movement, city connectivity and internet infrastructure, etc.) in real time.
- **Operations management-** The ICCC of a smart city acts as a “nerve centre” for operations management.
- **Data processing-** The ICCC is the nodal point of availability of all online data and information relating to smart services included in a smart city.
- **War rooms-** During the pandemic, they also served as war-rooms for Covid-19 management.
- **Link with CCTNS-** The ICCCs are linked to the CCTNS (Crime and Criminal Tracking Networks and Systems) network under the Ministry of Home Affairs.

WHAT IS THE CURRENT STATUS OF THE SMARTS CITIES MISSION?

- The project had an initial deadline of 2021 for the first lot of 20 smart cities out of the 100 selected.
- The cities were selected over a period of two years between 2016 and 2018, each with a deadline of completion within five years from the time of their selection.
- On the recommendation of NITI Aayog, the timeline was extended last year until 2023 due to delays caused by the pandemic.
- According to Ministry data, the SCM has so far covered over 140 public-private partnerships, 340 smart roads, 78 vibrant public places, 118 smart water projects and over 63 solar projects.
- The Ministry noted that almost 100% of these projects have been work-ordered.
- Currently, the Centre is preparing a 60-point action plan.
- The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs has begun work to finalise its recommendation for providing ICCCs as a service to states and smaller cities.
- The Ministry is also aiming to finalise an ICCC model and implement a pilot project across 6 states — Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Tamil Nadu.

A sedition Law : An analysis in special reference to its relevance

CONTEXT :

Recently the honorable supreme court asked the government for the reexamination of this sedition Law. Government is instructed strictly to give response as soon as possible (Within 24 Hrs.) and the government is asked to explain how it intended to protect the interests of people already arrested and facing prosecution under Section 124A (sedition) of the Indian Penal Code.

Today Current Affairs

Introduction :

The sedition law is a colonial law which had been used to crucial the voice of the opponents to the government during the colonial period . My renowned journalist and the freedom fighters like B.G Tilak and S.N Banerjee had been booked through this section of IPC during the 19-20th century. The government , whether the central governments or the state governments, has misused this section of IPC to suppress the voice of opponents. In modern context, since we are living in a democratic state and every citizen of the Indian have right to speak and expression therefore this section must be examined as said by the honorable supreme court.

WHAT IS THE SECTION 124 A : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

The section 124 A of the Indian penal code pimpls that if any body is involved in any activities against the government or in other word it can be said that Whoever, by words, either spoken or written, or by signs, or by visible representation, or otherwise, brings or attempts to bring into hatred or contempt, or excites or attempts to excite disaffection towards, the Government established by law in [India] shall be punished . This punishment may be up to life time imprisonment . During colonial period British government used such section against the prominent Indian leaders.

THE COURT'S ARGUMENT AGAINST IT : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

For the several month the honorable supreme count has been raised the question of the relevance of this section of the IPC and many time court has appealed to the legislature to repeal it but the central government argues to the court that this section controls anti

national activities however there are many sections in IPC to control anti national activities.

The Hindu Analysis

In fact all the governments, whether the government of the center or the government of the states , use this section in their favor . Recently in the case of Navneet Rana, the court asked the central government whether the security should be given to the accused person. Then the central government said that this allegation is false . therefore court asked to reexamine the validity and the relevance of this section.

THE EXAMPLES OF ITS MISUSE : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

There are many examples of the misuse of this section of the IPC. Recently MP of the Maharashtra Navneet Rana was booked through this section and earlier my protesters have been booked by the central government through this section and the central government knows this fact very well that the government could curtail the voices of the opponents only through this section . In recent cases however, the government argued that “These cases are booked by the State governments. The Centre does not do it. The aim of Section 124A is to protect the sovereignty and integrity of the nation... Whenever there is misuse, there are the constitutional courts and remedies,” In Bengal , Bengal CM had also booked my professors and the artist through this section

TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

CONCLUSION

Conclusively it can be said this section of the IPC was introduced by the British government to strengthen colonialism . But In independent India our government used this section to show the power of the state and through this section the IPC state was moving towards its authoritarian nature which is dangerous for democracy . Therefore Court should review the validity of this section of INPC and if possible , it should be eliminated from the law book (IPC)

Dr Anshul Bajpai

Comparative analysis of the Pardon Powers of Governor and the president

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE PARDON POWERS OF GOVERNOR AND THE PRESIDENT – TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

Context :

By 11 May 2009, the honorable supreme court slammed the central government that presidents have exclusive rights on the power. During last days, in the case of A. G. Perarivalan, an accused of the assassination of Rajeev Gandhi, supreme court asked the central government whether the president has exclusive right of the pardon and the court also argued regarding the cases in which governors have already used his pardoning power for the last 70-75 years. A. G. Perarivalan is on life imprisonment along with Murugan and Santhan who were other two convicts of the same case.

Today Current Affairs

Introduction

In Indian constitution, president and governors, both have right to pardon any convict of any cases. However there are some differences in the exercising of the pardoning powers by governor and the president but it does not mean that the president has exclusive pardoning power and each case of the governor should be transferred for consent of the president. The Hindu Analysis

In recent case of the A. G. Perarivalan, an accused of the assassination of Rajeev Gandhi, the central government asked the governor to transfer this case to center. Therefore Tamil Nadu's state government had to approach the honorable supreme court. A three-judge Bench, led by Justice L. Nageswara Rao, said the government's argument, if taken on face value, would leave Article 161 (the constitutional power of Governors of States to grant pardon) a "dead letter". Additional Solicitor-General K.M. Natraj had appeared in the case from the side of the central government. The Hindu Analysis

Honorable supreme court asked if, president has exclusive power of the pardoning then what about those cases in the history in which the accused had already pardoned by the governors of the states without the interfering of the center government (President)

COMPARE BETWEEN THE PARDONING POWER OF THE PRESIDENT AND THE GOVERNOR : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

As per the Indian constitution , the president has the power of pardon to any accused or convicted in any of the cases including the cases related to court marshals also (Article 72) . Similarly the Governor has the power of pardon to any accused or convicted in any of the causes but The governor does not have the power to pardon the sentence inflicted by the court-martial on the convict. (Article 161). The Hindu Analysis

However, the governor and president both have the right of pardoning in the case of death sentence but the The President can also pardon the death sentence through commutation or in its entirety while on the other side the governor can not pardon any convicted for death sentence before the 14 years of his/her imprisonment . The jurisdiction of both the president and the governors are clearly defined . The president can pardon if the convict had offenses against the union and if the office was done by the convict against the state , the governor has the right to pardon. Here it should be very well understood that if the state governor does not interfere in the pardoning case then , the president can pardon the convict however the committed crime is related to the state . But if the committed crime is related to the integrity of India and the Union , then the governor can not use the power of pardoning . The Hindu Analysis

It should also be very well understood that whether the governor or president both use the power of pardoning with the consent of the cabinet.

TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

CONCLUSION

India is a country whose administration is cooperative federalism . It means up to an extent, the state government has the right to make the laws for the well being of the people of the state . And it is generally expected that the central government would not interfere in internal affairs of the state until or unless the matter is not related to the unity and integrity of India as a nation . Therefore generally in every matter, the governor should not transfer the case to the central government . Punishment should be reformative in its nature . if government thinks that a particular person should be given one opportunity for remorse, it would bring the fundamental change in our judicial system.

Dr. Anshul Bajpai

The issue of Gyanvapi Mosque and Kashi Vishwanath temple : An analysis in special reference to its Historical point of view

Context:

Recently another controversial issue in India has emerged . This issue is related to Gyanvapi mosque of the Varanasi . Against some Hindu petitioners claimed that the sacred Shiva Linga is still under the mosque and that group against claimed its right on the mosque also. and this is also surprising that the district court of the Varanasi allowed for the survey and videography inside the Gyanvapi mosque premises.

TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

INTRODUCTION

- The regime of the Aurangzeb has always been the subject of debate and the name of Aurangzeb is registered in the books of history as the demolisher of the temples .In recent days , numerous communal issues have erupted . The issue of the Gyanvapi is one of those issues . In fact a petition was filed by five Hindu plaintiffs who demanded daily access to a Hindu site, Maa Shringar Gauri, for prayers, claimed by them to be located outside the western wall of the mosque. The Hindu Analysis
- In fact it is believed that the Aurangzeb has demolished the famous kashi Vishwanath temple of the Varanasi and at the place he constructed the Gyanvapi mosque .during latter period Ahilyabai Holker reconstructed the Hindu temple (kashi Vishwa Nath temple) but the original Linga is still installed under that temple . Therefore Hindu devotee are demanding to discover that Linga and to reinstall against in the temple .

HISTORICITY OF THIS ROW : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

- If we evaluate the facts described by the historians that definitely Aurangzeb was the big demolisher of the temple and during his period many temples were demolished however he adopted such policy as political compulsion. Many historians have evidence of the donation and land grant to the temples during the time of Aurangzeb. If suppose , it is true that Aurangzeb demolished many temple of India then reconstruction of such historiography which could create the conflict in the society , should be avoided .. beside Aurangzeb , during the time of other Muslim ruler, temples were demolished and even during the time of many Hindu and Muslim rulers the the Buddhist places and the Christian places were demolished. We have been colonized by the British for more than 150 years and during colonialism they exploited Indians in every manner. But we should not take revenge for our exploitation from the British . The Hindu Analysis
- If history would be constructed on the ground of black chapter of the past , then ,in this

world once again the conflicts among the communities would start . We should not be trapped in the process of revenge . In world politics there are numerous examples in which one specific race mascaaed another race . but It does not mean that the victim races should take revenge.

TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

CONCLUSION

The Gyanvapi mosque issue may be true as per the history but reconstruction and revival of those elements of the history which could create the conflict in the society should not be reconstructed as per the ethics of the History . The objective of the subject history is to find out the evil practices and other mistakes which we had done in the past so that we could reform ourselves . and on the other side we should find out those incidents of our past which could inspire us to do better. This is against the ethics of the history that we reconstruct unnecessarily those incidents of the past which creates a conflict in the society. We Should avoid such type of historiography.

Dr. Anshul Bajpai

Digital bank and inclusive banking concordant

Last month, the union finance minister reiterated the government's resolve to open 75 digital banks in 75 districts. Explaining the rationale for the initiative, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) noted that the new digital banking units (DBUs) will improve the availability of digital infrastructure for accelerating and extending the delivery of banking services. Conceptually, a DBU can provide any banking product or service that can be delivered through the internet or mobile banking. The DBUs can also engage digital business facilitators or business correspondents to further expand their operations into unbanked areas.

The RBI guidelines now allow any scheduled commercial banks (excluding regional rural banks, local area banks, and payment banks) with past digital banking experience to open DBUs in Tier-1 to Tier-6 centers. The DBUs have the option to insource or outsource banking services facilities, but they are to be housed separately from the existing banking outlets. However, the DBUs can share their core banking system with incumbent systems and their governance and administrative structure are to be aligned with the digital banking activities of the promoter banks. The Hindu Analysis

The initiative to launch DBUs gained momentum soon after the Niti Aayog published a discussion paper on their licensing and regulation in November 2021. Noting that the technology stack for launching DBUs is already in place, the paper pointed out that the DBUs will help tackle some of the major policy challenges faced by the banking sector, like promotion of inclusive banking, and also help extend the use of digital technology to a larger segment of the population.

The launch of the DBUs is also broadly in line with the Nachiket Mor Committee Report (2014) that argued for a differentiated banking policy to support specialized banking institutions and expand financial inclusion. One of the offshoots of this policy was the creation of payment banks and small finance banks. The cost-efficiency of operations will now help DBUs to further extend credit to small ticket holders as well as micro and small business. This is crucial because the current credit gap in the micro, small, and medium industry sector alone is estimated to be a huge `25 trillion. The Hindu Analysis

However, while encouraging niche operations to promote inclusive banking can go a long way in nurturing inclusive banking and improving efficiency of operations, the problems of the sector are much more substantial. Despite repeated tweaking of the policy, the Indian banking sector has lost traction in recent years, while other financial sector segments like pension and mutual funds and stock markets have gained momentum.

One major indicator of the constraints faced by the banks is the stagnant level of bank credit available to the private sector. This has remained at around 50% of the gross domestic product (GDP) for around a decade now. In contrast, the domestic credit available to the private sector as a percentage of the GDP is substantially higher in our Asian neighbors like Singapore (120%), Malaysia (121%), Thailand (143%), South Korea (152%), and China (165%). The larger credit available to the private sector in these countries is broadly in line with that in developed countries like France (108%), Sweden (133%), the United Kingdom (UK) (134%), Japan (177%), and the United States (US) (191%).

However, Indian banks perform more reasonably in the case of many other efficiency parameters. Numbers for the last decade ending 2020 show that the after-tax return on bank assets averaged 0.5% in India, which was higher than in Germany, France, the UK, Switzerland, and Japan but marginally less than in South Korea, Singapore, and Sweden and only less than half of that in China, Russia, and the US. Similarly, the after-tax return on bank equity was 7% in India during this period. This was higher than in Germany, Japan, France, Switzerland, and the UK but lower than in Russia, Singapore, Sweden, and the US and just around half that in China. The Hindu Analysis

Other efficiency indicators like the ratio of the bank overhead costs to total assets and the bank cost to income ratio show contrasting results. The ratio of bank overhead costs to total assets of 1.8% in India was higher than that in Germany, Japan, France, China, Singapore, and the UK and generally similar to that in South Korea and Switzerland but lower than that in Russia, Sweden, and the US. But when it comes to the cost to income ratio of banks, India's ratio of 46% was slightly higher than that of China and similar to that of Singapore but significantly lower than that of the US, France, Russia, Switzerland, Germany, the UK, South Korea, Japan, and Sweden.

A closer analysis of the reasons for the constraints on the availability of bank credit shows that the large share of non-performing assets is a major hurdle to the expansion of the credit markets. In fact, the one major parameter where the Indian banks have consistently and grossly underperformed than its peers is in the case of non-performing loans or assets. Trends over the last decade ending 2019 show that the ratio of non-performing loans to gross loans averaged 6.1% in India, 1.4% in China, 3.3% in Brazil, 3.8% in South Africa, and 8.1% in Russia. Among the developed economies, it was the lowest in South Korea (0.5%) followed by Switzerland (0.7%), Sweden (0.8%), Singapore (1.4%), Japan (1.8%), the US (2.1%), Germany and the UK (2.2% each), and France (3.7%).

Clearly, the government and the central bank have to delve deeper to find solutions to these major issues that handicap the Indian banking sector.

Ritu

Two Academic Programmes and UGC Guidelines

The University Grants Commission (UGC) of India has issued the “Guidelines for Pursuing Two Academic Programmes Simultaneously” in April 2022 to allow for “multiple pathways to learning” and earning degrees (UGC 2022). Under the new guidelines, two full-time academic programmes may be undertaken simultaneously in (i) regular modes, (ii) one in regular and another in open and distance learning ODL/open learning (OL), or (iii) up to two ODL/online programmes.

THE RATIONALE OF THE GUIDELINES

Against the background of these guidelines, a substantive question to answer is: “What happened in 2022 that compelled the UGC, taking a polar opposite view, to declare that two academic programmes can be pursued simultaneously in regular or ODL/OL or mixed mode?” Another question is “whether the UGC’s decision is contrary to the mandate of the maintenance of standards by the UGC and hence against the constitutional provision that directs the union to maintain standards in higher education institutions.” I would like to raise a third question: “Whether or not pursuing two academic degrees simultaneously results in devaluation of degree.” In my view, these are substantive questions. Directions of reform cannot be undertaken without reason in a hurry to implement the National Education Policy (NEP), 2020. If the UGC guidelines 2022 lead to the deterioration of the standards of an academic programme, this goes against the constitutional mandate of maintenance of standards by the union government. Further, any further devaluation of degrees on account of “degree mills” may create confusion in the labour market as well as internationally to judge the worth of a degree.

RATIONALE OF PURSUING TWO ACADEMIC DEGREES SIMULTANEOUSLY : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

Before I proceed to answer the three questions posed above, it is important to understand the rationale of pursuing two academic degrees. The UGC guidelines 2022 note that increasing demand–supply gap has made it necessary to promote ODL/OL modes “to meet the aspiration of students” (UGC 2022: 2). Besides, technology enables learners to study outside the formal setting of a classroom. Hence, flexibility to pursue an academic programme in a non-formal setting may be ensured to the learners. So far, there is nothing wrong in the argument that technology is used judiciously to enrich the learning experiences of students. However, the rationale is too supportive of ODL/OL modes of learning to meet the demand–supply gap in higher education rather than through the expansion of regular programmes of public higher education. The ODL/OL modes of learning may, in reality, be promoted by private providers giving a fillip to the commodification of higher education. Such a market-based process of expansion of higher education through ODL/OL modes may not only be against the objective of equity, it will rather lead to the decline in quality. Hence, the rationale given in the UGC guidelines is a weak argument in favor of pursuing two academic programmes simultaneously.

PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

I will now return to the questions posed above, namely what led to the change in the mindset of the UGC to allow two academic programmes to be pursued by the students. First, the gross

enrolment ratio (GER) has increased at a slow pace from 24.5% to 27.1% during the last five years from 2015–16 to 2019–20 at a compound annual growth rate of 2% (AISHE 2019–20). Projected GER in 2035 turns out to be 36% as opposed to the 50% target in the NEP 2020. It is likely that allowing two courses may increase the prospects of reaching the target. Second, the UGC has been trying hard in recent years to leverage technology to increase access to higher education. Students may be lured to enroll in online courses while pursuing a regular degree programme. This would obviate the necessity to meet the expansion through public-funded institutions in the regular mode. Third, the UGC has not shown its concern to the structural issues facing higher education. For example, extreme shortage of teachers and infrastructure continues to exist as a major problem. Instead, the UGC has been shifting its strategy through outcome-based education, choice-based credit system, accreditation, ranking, flexibility in learning strategies, national credit transfer enabling students to move from one institution to another, allowing dual degree and joint degree with foreign universities, etc. The Hindu Analysis

This leads to the probing of the second question. Is a choice-centric approach for the learners quality-enhancing? We need to differentiate between rational choice and real choice. Rational choice is an ex ante choice made by the learner over various alternatives, and given the constraints, an optimal choice yields maximum satisfaction. For example, pursuing one regular degree, one ODL, two regular degrees, one regular and one ODL, etc, may be the alternatives available to the learner. Depending upon the constraints relating to the costs in relation to income and, perhaps, constraints relating to the number of hours of learning, a rational learner might choose an option that maximizes their satisfaction. Quality in this rational paradigm is the choice that yields maximum satisfaction.

However, rational choice should not be mistaken to be a real choice. In the real world, such choices may not be available. For example, a regular degree in a public-funded institution may be available to the learner with a host of alternatives of cheap and low-quality distance education courses by various providers, which the learner may not like to pursue. In an alternative scenario, a learner may even be lured to take up two cheap, low-quality courses in order to gain two degrees just for the sake of it. In the real-world scenario, choice-making is not rational. It is guided by different motives, preferences, and constraints. Granting more choices may sometimes be dangerous. Policy design, in all such cases, should be guided by practical rationality.

Do the UGC guidelines 2022 mean that a student could pursue one more degree simultaneously by sacrificing the quality benchmark of the first one? Does it not go against the quality benchmark set by the UGC in credit terms? The argument may be given that students vary in abilities—some may be fast learners whereas other students may be slow learners. Hence, a

fast learner may complete the course requirement of 1,080 hours in less time, say, 700 or 800 hours. The surplus time may be used by the fast learner in pursuing another degree. However, another degree may also require 1,080 hours in a semester. In that case, a fast learner may have to work for extra hours, otherwise they may not be able to meet the quality benchmark for another degree programme. Working for extra hours for fast learners may occur at the cost of their mental and physical health. Hence, from this point of view, taking up two degrees and meeting the quality benchmark of credit by the UGC is not justified. However, add-on courses for skill development may be pursued by the learner, and there is no restriction on certificate or diploma courses if it adds value to the learner's education. Pursuing two regular degrees simultaneously, however, goes against the quality benchmark set by the UGC. Any such guidelines have serious implications as it directly violates the constitutional obligation of the union government to maintain the standards of higher education. The Hindu Analysis

There is also a practical consideration of meeting the 75% attendance requirement for pursuing an academic programme in the regular mode. If a student enrolls for another regular programme, then the 75% attendance requirement will have to be met. How is this possible unless two institutions are in close proximity and the time table of both do not overlap with each other? It is possible if another degree programme is through the ODL/OL mode. Hence, for all practical purposes, UGC guidelines 2022 shall promote ODL/OL programmes.

I now come to the third question of the devaluation of degrees when two academic programmes are pursued simultaneously. "Degree or Diploma Mill" is a term that refers to a degree or transcript that is sold by legitimate or illegitimate providers of education through fraudulent practices. A degree can be managed without putting in the hard work necessary to complete an academic programme. The attendance, assignments, and even the examination can be managed by the institution at a hefty price to be paid by the student to the providers of education. Basically, the degree is manufactured and sold in a market. In the United States (US), degree mills became prominent in different time periods when the mushrooming of institutions or high demand for a programme was created. In India, our memory has not faded when the mushrooming of private universities in Chhattisgarh became a source of degree mills. The Supreme Court declared in 2005 the Chhattisgarh Private Universities (Establishment and Operation) Act as unconstitutional so that such degree mills could be controlled. Whenever the demand for BEd courses increased in the past, many degree mills became operative, and recently, degree scams have also been reported. Important personalities and even professors are caught with fake degrees.

THE DANGER OF SUBSTANDARD DEGREES : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

The UGC, in a letter dated 7 October 2020, has released a list of 24 fake universities operating in India. The phenomenon of degree mills is present in many colleges, which admit tens

of thousands of students and without completing the teaching–learning process, degrees are awarded to lakhs of students. There are numerous instances where fake degrees were sold in India and students seeking admission in the US, Singapore, and Malaysia or seeking jobs in foreign countries were asked to prove the genuineness of their degrees. In such a vulnerable scenario, it will not be surprising that the UGC guidelines 2022 may lead to the rise of degree mills, which will add to the devaluation of degrees. Judith S Eaton and Stamenka Uvalic-Trumbic (2008) note that “Colleges and universities are harmed because their legitimate efforts to provide quality higher education are undermined.” It is important to note that ODL/OL providers of higher education in India are hardly accredited, except for the Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU). There are recognised providers of ODL/OL by the Distance Education Council. However, students may easily be cheated by unrecognized providers in pursuing two degrees. The job market will be skeptical of degrees and higher education institutions will not be able to judge the worth of such degrees that were simultaneously pursued.

TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

CONCLUSIONS

The UGC guidelines 2022 can become a reality only after it is approved by different academic bodies of the university. I hope that responsible academic bodies will consider the potential threats of degree devaluation while assessing these guidelines. The academia will be sensitive to the benchmark determined by the UGC of completing 1,080 hours of student engagement in a semester. They will be sensitive to the academic burden imposed on students in pursuing two degrees. Hopefully, they will be sensitive to the physical and mental health of students due to the exertion of passing out from two simultaneous courses. Learners will be lured to complete two courses, say post-graduation along with BEd, in two years in a hurry to get a job. However, degree devaluation caused by the UGC guidelines 2022 will not help fetch a job or pursue higher studies in India or abroad as they will be looked at with suspicion.

Quality education demands a deep engagement of students with teachers, journal articles, books and a supportive environment of peer interaction and critical debates. The public-funded university needs to be supported by the state for quality education as high-quality human resources are capable of contributing to nation-building. The purpose of this article was to create more discussions in academia so that a rational decision is taken within universities in the interests of students at large.

Ritu

Jute Industry in India : Crises and Solution

Context :

The crisis in West Bengal's jute industry is getting exacerbated, with several mills suspending operations this year. Jute industry has been one of the core Industry of India for long time but after the partition of India the land of the raw material has been shifted to Pakistan . and recently because of the declining demand the price of Jute products declined rapidly and thus the Jute industry has to face the big crises mainly in Bengal

TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

INTRODUCTION

- The history of the Jute industry goes back to 170 years in the Indian context . The Acland Mill was the first jute mill established in India. It was established in 1855 by British entrepreneur George Acland and financially supported by Babu Bysumber Sen. This factory was installed in modern west Bengal (Rishra).
- India is the world's largest country in the production of the Jute followed by Bangladesh. Presently there are 93 Jute mills in India out of which 70 mills are located in Bengal. Of the 70, 54 are located in the three districts of North 24 Parganas (25), Howrah (15) and Hooghly (14).. Apart from west Bengal , Jute is grown in Odisha, Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Andhra Pradesh.. Jute is a labor intensive industry and Jute is the only crop where earnings begin to trickle in way before the final harvest.

CLIMATE REQUIRED FOR THE JUTE : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

In comparison to Rice , it requires less water and fertilizer . Jute is the second most abundant natural fiber in the world. It has high tensile strength, acoustic and thermal insulation, breathability, low extensibility, ease of blending with both synthetic and natural fibers, and antistatic properties. Jute can be grown in those areas where the temperature lies between 35 to 40 degree centigrade.

ISSUE OF THE JUTE INDUSTRY : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

- Recent crises related to Jute Industry starts when the Office of the Jute Commissioner, which comes under the Ministry of Textiles, fixed the maximum price of raw jute at ₹6,500 per quintal. If The capacity of the mill is 100 tones a day, The market price of raw jute has climbed to 7,200 per quintal which is 700 more than the 6,500 cap by the government. Another issue which the jute mill management of the State is non-implementation of the

Tariff Commission's report for fair price of B (Jute bag.)the declining demand of the Jute bag is the reason of the loss. The Hindu Analysis

- According to a report of the Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP), 2022-2023, India's jute production has been declining during the last decade. The main reason for this is the decrease in acreage, which is mostly due to cultivation of crops such as paddy, maize, groundnut and sesame. The availability of various types of synthetic substitutes is also reducing the demand for jute. One thing is good that in comparison to the previous year, this year the production of the Jute increased
- Because of the changing climate , the production of Jute per Bigha has declined and another big issue is to extract that fiber from the crop , first the crop is left to rot in water bodies for almost 15 days. And every farmer does not own water bodies. The labor who extracts the fiber from the crop are outsiders so approx 500 per day is paid as the wage to them . Hence for the farmer , the invested cost is more to profit. The Hindu Analysis
- These issues have been turned into political issues. On this issue members of the BJP won for the parliament but still the issue is unresolved . In 2021 when the farmers supported the TMC on this issue , but still they did not get any resolution from the side of TMC also . and the most interesting thing is that no trade union has protested up to now in this regard and this is more interesting that West Bengal Labor Minister Becharam Manna publicly praised the laborers of the jute industry. "They do not strike even though they are suffering,"

TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

CONCLUSION

As per the above discussion, it is clear that there are many issues related to the Jute industry in India . The labor and the farmers of the Jute industry , both are being exploited by the system but still nobody raised this issue , none of them had gone for the protest. In fact their limit of tolerance is too high because of the less awareness level. Once they understand their problem and demand it in front of the government , the government will find out the solution for the issue of the Jute industry. The issues of the Jute industry are always political but nobody tries to resolve the issues of the Jute industry.

The farmers must be insured with the loss of the crops and on the other side the Jute mill owner must provide the required atmosphere for the markets of the Jute products and simultaneously minimum wage of the laborers must be fixed . But all those issues would be addressed by the government if the people related to the Jute industry would raise these issues .

Dr. Anshul Bajpai

Social media and digital democracy

Arguably, the digital format of democracy does suggest a qualitative shift in the forms of protest and dissonance that were hitherto mediated by the text and content written on a physical object such as paper or wood or leaves. Needless to mention that the written texts, used particularly to encourage and perpetuate social dominance and the oppression of the suppressed section both in the West and in India, were consigned by the victims of such texts to fire. The “rebellious” texts written by the victims of social oppression and cultural domination were, conversely, destroyed by the counter-reformists in the West and counter-revolutionaries in India. Paper as a physical object, thus, did provide the background condition for the protagonist of social change to protest against or drive home the point that a particular text was considered as an assault on human freedom.

Destroying written documents, banishing and branding “rebellious” texts that were written both as resistance and transcendence or, conversely, the texts that preached domination—both these forms of protests are no longer required or feasible in the digital mode of expression that is arguably intellectually or discursively more democratic. It is democratic as it makes the resources of expression such as blogs easily available to people across the table. However, such access does require intellectual preparation or discursive homework for writing more sensible content for it to be processed through different digital platforms. Since the differentially textualised content gets rendered in digital forms such as blogs or on social media like Facebook or WhatsApp, the very process of digitisation makes the content fire-free. It is almost impossible to consign them to real fire. The Hindu Analysis

Ideally, various digital platforms that seek to facilitate the process of debate and dialogue would not only encourage but also require its participants to take recourse to the ideas and arguments as an intellectual means for making intelligent and hence persuasive arguments. It would force these participants to, at least, read from the screen relevant content that would make their interventions as protest more intellectually substantive rather than emotionally sizzling. Normative claims and counterclaims that are made using digital platform, thus, do not suffer from arbitrariness.

Digital democracy propels the act of protest to move from one level, which accommodates the “fugitive” forms of dissonance such as torching the documents with hands or consigning it to fire, to another level where it is not the hand but the mind that assigns normative elevation to the very idea of protest. Viewed from this angle, one could then argue that the baseline of accessing digital democracy is primarily intellectual, which by implication has the potential

to keep from the act of torching or outrageous shredding that in some cases is often done without reading and thinking. Today Current Affairs

Ironically, the digital also becomes the medium through which the content of truth, both historical and empirical, gets trampled down in the swarm of fake news or visual violence that ultimately anticipates the real violence. The sacred thoughts and ideas are likely to be consumed by the visual fire of hate speech circulated day in and day out. The digital is then put into misuse where the socially regressive forces tend to regulate the linear or the top-down flow of command to circulate highly prejudiced messages. It is an irony in the life of deliberative democracy that the digital is not able to sustain the deliberative thrust of democracy. This regulation of the linear or the top-down flow of command in the circulation of prejudiced messages militates against the very basic principle of the digital, which accords autonomy at every level of its operation and plurality of opinion that follows the non-linear mode. This is why digital is operationally democratic.

POSITIVE IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON DEMOCRACY : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

- Digital Democracy: Democratic values can evolve when people have freedom of expression. In this way, social media enables the concept of digital democracy through these platforms of freedom.
- Setting Accountability: Social media acts as an instrument that can question the seemingly invincible governments, make them accountable and bring sustained change driven by people beyond one vote in years. The Hindu Analysis
- Giving Voice: Social media has enormous power to keep people informed. This can be seen, when social media played a critical role in the Arab Spring in places like Tunisia, it was heralded as a technology for liberation.
- Civic Engagement: Social media's implications for civic engagement are profound, as many people tend to discuss & debate news over these platforms.
 - It has long been observed that when people discuss the news, they're more likely to be involved in their community, whether by volunteering or reaching out to elected officials.

NEGATIVE IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON DEMOCRACY : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

- Political Polarization: One of the most common criticisms of social media is that it creates echo chambers where people only see viewpoints they agree with — further driving us apart.
 - As unprecedented numbers of people channel their political energy through this

medium, it's being used in unforeseen ways with societal repercussions that were never anticipated. The Hindu Analysis

- **Propaganda Setting:** According to Google Transparency Report, political parties mostly in the last two years have spent around \$800 million (Rs 5,900 crore) on election ads.
 - Micro-targeting can enable dishonest campaigns to spread toxic discourse without much consequence.
- **Foreign Interference:** Around the US 2016 election, Russian entities set up and promoted fake Pages on Facebook to influence public sentiment — essentially using social media as an information weapon. The Hindu Analysis
 - In this way, social media enables nation-states to use these platforms to wage a cyberwar intended to divide society.
- **Fake News:** Social media gives people more voice and can sometimes be used, by anyone, to spread hoaxes and misinformation.
- **Unequal Participation:** Social media also distorts policymakers' perception of public opinion. This is because it is believed that social media platforms tend to represent every walk of life, but not everyone is using their voice equally.

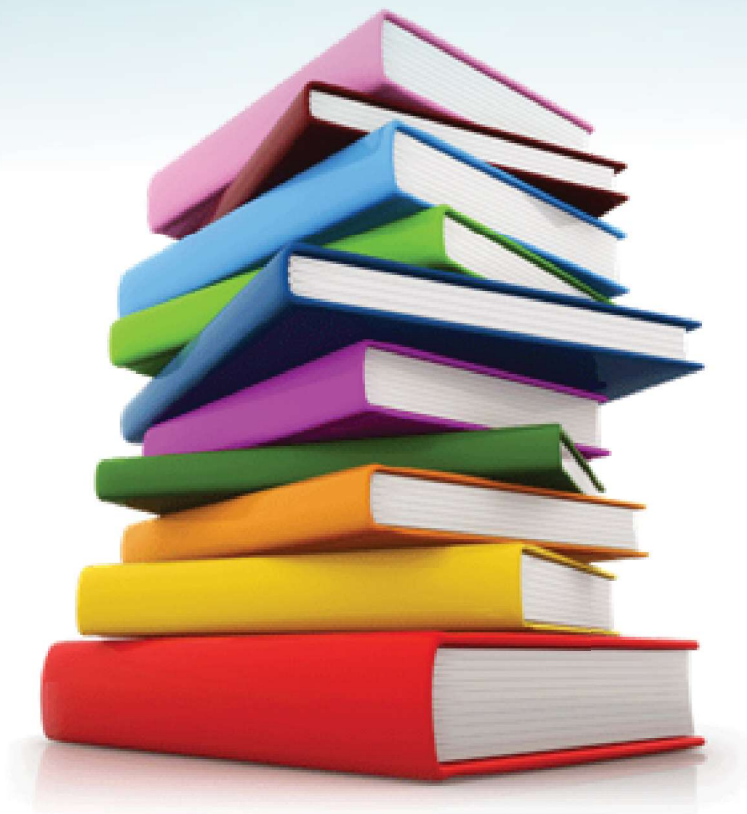
In a digitized space, when the opponent does not understand the language of argument, they then adopt disinformation, fake news, and morphed images. This causes a serious threat to digital democracy. Democratizing digital as a means of defending the constitutional values and protecting the principles of collective harmony has to be made available to everyone. Through the digital, it is then possible to keep a steady vigil to arrest the flow or spread of disinformation. Digital vigilance is not only active even in its passive version inasmuch as it aims at ensuring protection from the regressive onslaught on constitutional values and public ethics but also in its active mode offers the possibility to expand the space of such vigilance against the growing threat of fake news and hate speech.

Ritu



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CURRENT AFFAIRS

MAY 2022

Sri Lanka Issue

SRI LANKA ISSUE

WHAT IS THE ISSUE?

There have been violent scenes in Sri Lanka, with mobs targeting the homes of prominent political figures including the ruling Rajapaksa family.

WHY HAVE PEOPLE TAKEN TO THE STREETS?

- Protests over rising prices and shortages flared up in early April in the capital and have grown in size and spread across the country.
- People are furious because the cost of living has become unaffordable.
- People are now paying up to 30% more for food than a year ago which has forced many people to skip meals.
- There are also fuel shortages and power cuts.
- The lack of medicines has brought the health system to the verge of collapse.
- The daily demonstrations and attacks have forced at least some, including Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa, to resign.
- Sri Lankan citizens have also been protesting and asking the current President to step down.

WHY IS THERE AN ECONOMIC CRISIS IN SRI LANKA?

- **Neglect of foreign market**– At the end of its civil war in 2009, Sri Lanka chose to focus more on its domestic markets instead of selling to foreign ones.

- So income from exports remained low, while the bill for imports kept growing.
- **Debt crisis**– The government racked up huge debts with countries including China, to fund what critics have called unnecessary infrastructure projects.
- Sri Lanka's government has racked up \$51bn in foreign debt and the government failed to make repayments totalling \$78m.
- Reduced forex reserves– Sri Lanka's problems come down to the fact that its foreign currency reserves have virtually run dry.
- Affects tourism– The government blames the Covid pandemic, which killed off Sri Lanka's tourist trade – one of its biggest foreign currency earners.
- Tax cuts– President Rajapaksa decided to offer big tax cuts because of which the government now has less money to buy foreign currency.
- Banning chemical fertilisers– Banning all imports of chemical fertilizers and promoting the use of organic fertilisers instead led to widespread crop failures.
- An IMF report said the fertiliser ban (reversed in November 2021) had also hurt tea and rubber production, leading to substantial export losses.

What is the current movement about?

- Young social activists had been organising things over the last year for a new political culture.
- Inspired by the Occupy Wall Street movement, Black Lives Matter, the Arab Spring, the Indian farmers' movement and Shaheen Bagh, they created an enclave for an alternative vision of Sri Lanka.
- The emphasis was on non-violence, democracy, ethnic harmony and creative expression.
- Trade unions, the environmental movement, professional associations, all-island students, academic unions, civil society groups and religious leaders of all faiths also made their way.
- Lawyers also mingled with the protesters and intervened if there was any tension or difficulty.

What about the participation of people from the north and the east?

- The protests have celebrated the Tamil culture and language as never before in a Sri Lankan gathering but there is no discussion of devolution or a Tamil nation.
- There is also deference to the rank and file of the army .

- Many from the Jaffna University Students Union and women from the north and the east have been quite active in their participation.
- Tamils have participated at the local level and were a part of the hartals that have taken place throughout the island but it is not the fullest active participation.

WHAT LIES AHEAD?

- There will be no stability until the resignation of President Gotabaya Rajapaksa.
- Ranil Wickremesinghe was sworn in as Prime Minister and he should command not only the confidence of Parliament but also the confidence of the protesters as well.
- Bar Association in Sri Lanka has proposed to return to the 19th Amendment, especially its provisions on
 - the independent judiciary and independent commissions
 - abolishing of the executive presidency through a 21st Amendment
 - setting up of the economic framework for International Monetary Fund (IMF) negotiations
- The IMF has signalled that it will go ahead with its negotiations since there seems to be an all-party consensus for that to happen.

Vivek Raj

Political and strategic importance of Lumbini : An analysis in special context to PM's visit

CONTEXT:

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's scheduled visit to the Lumbini, a birthplace of the Mahatma Buddha, founder of Buddhism, would renew the political cultural relationship of India and Nepal. Lumbini is situated in Nepal and for India's perspective Nepal is the most significant country for the security of India. However this visit of the PM would be of few hours only but this visit of the PM would have more political implications in changing geopolitical atmosphere of the world. For the last few decades no Indian prime minister has visited the Lumbini.

INTRODUCTION

The world is celebrating the birth anniversary of the Mahatma Buddha on 16th May 2022. Amid the strife and turmoil and the hatred atmosphere, the Buddha is more relevant in contemporary society. This tour of the PM also provides a moment for quiet reflection and a reiteration of the message of peace, compassion and non-violence preached by the Buddha and spread by the roaring lions in the four directions, as depicted in the Lion Capital of Ashoka, our national emblem

CULTURAL IMPORTANCE OF THE LUMBINI

It is the birthplace of the Mahatma Buddha. It is equal sacred place for the Buddhist people as mecca for Muslims and the Jerusalem for the Christians. Because of Buddhism, China has been continuously increasing her presence and investment also. Recently the largest monastery has been built by the Chinese government. China is organising several seminars and conferences on Buddhism in Lumbini. In pre-COVID-19 times, there was a steady flow of Chinese tourists to Lumbini and reports about potential Chinese investments in the region. In this way China is trying to bring Nepal closer to China emotionally.

There are many sacred places related to Buddhism in India. Bodhi Gaya, where Buddha was enlightened and the Sarnath where Lord Buddha delivered his first sacred speech and Kushinagar, the place of his mahaparinibbana are the most sacred places for Buddhism. and this is not counting Shravasti, where the Buddha preached for many years; Nalanda; and Rajgir, among several others. Therefore Culturally India is closer to Nepal but unfortunately we could not use this privilege to provide our more representation in Lumbini. Only a small museum building was constructed with Indian assistance in the late 1990s.

There are several monasteries in Nepal. The first foreign monastery in Lumbini was built by a Vietnamese monk, Thay Huyen Dieu. He subsequently built another one in Bodhi Gaya (in large part, due to his efforts, a visit to Bodhi Gaya has become de rigueur for every visiting communist politician from Vietnam.) India does not have a monastery in Lumbini. Now we have an opportunity to increase our more representation in Lumbini after the Modi's visit

An international committee for the development of Lumbini was set up by UNO 50 years ago and there is lot of scope through which India could increase her presence

Both Gaya and Lumbini, both are UNESCO World Heritage sites. India could build infrastructure on both places and India could connect both places with the roads. However India is thinking in this regard but Unfortunately, talk has not fully translated into action.

India is very much advanced in road network the link roads connecting Nepal with the Indian highway system need to be upgraded. It is a nightmare to cross the Sunauli-Bhairahawa India-Nepal check post along the Uttar Pradesh-Nepal border that is designated for tourists. India can take the initiative of a Buddhist circuit connecting all the sacred places of Buddhism . A master plan should be formed in this regard with the coordination of the central government and the state government as well as the foreign monestries . The monasteries are headed by monks who are greatly revered in their home countries and should be treated with respect and reverence. Efforts should be made for the entire Buddhist circuit, namely Lumbini-BodhGaya-Sarnath-Kushinagar, to be declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site with master plans for each segment of the circuit.

CONCLUSION:

The PM Modis; visit to Lumbini has more implications. India should take initiative for the development of the Buddhist circuit connecting all the sacred places of Buddhism . In this way India can increase her presence in the cultural relationship with Nepal. In comparison to China ,India has more opportunities to bring Nepal closer to herself . We should use this privilege and definitely the visit of the prime minister to Lumbini will strengthen the Indo Nepal relation .

Dr. Anshul Bajpai

The Concept of Sustainable Development : Aa analysis in context to the achievement of the Odisha

THE CONCEPT OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT : AA ANALYSIS IN CONTEXT TO THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE ODISHA – TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

CONTEXT:

Recently a report is published regarding the achievement of the goals of the sustainable development and Odisha has made good strides in implementing the ‘climate action’ and ‘life below water’ sustainable developments goals.

TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

INTRODUCTION

Recently a report was published by the NITI Aayog based on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of 2020-21 . In this report it is informed that the United nation provided the index to the country States and Union Territories (UTs). And as per the index of the United nation, it seems that we are gradually moving towards the goals of SDGs and no State fared in the

‘Aspirant’ category, the lowest in the index. All the states of India scored more than 50 (United Nations gives marks between 0 to 100 to each region based on its performance).

Among Indian states, 13 States featuring in the ‘Performer’ category and 15 in the ‘Front Runner’ category (the second-highest position). If we see the overall performance of the India stepped into the ‘Front Runner’ category with a score of 60.07 points (Regarding SDG implementation).

However our performance remained good but still the index dropped two ranks in the ordinal scale. Some of our neighboring countries performed better than us (Bangladesh, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka, China). We scored 60.07 (Rank 120 / 193.) India did well in implementing SDGs 6, 7, 11 and 12, which are ‘clean water and sanitation’, ‘affordable and clean energy’, ‘sustainable cities and communities’, and ‘sustainable consumption and production’, respectively, but did not do well in many others.

WHAT IS THE CONCEPT OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

The Concept of Sustainable development is the overarching paradigm of the United Nations. Sustainable development refers to the development in the present keeping the availability of the resources for future. In other words, sustainable development is the development intacting the resources for the future also. The Hindu Analysis

We learnt the concept of sustainable development from our history. There is much evidence in history in which we find the decline of any civilization after the excess urbanization. In excess urbanization, people exploited the natural resources beyond the limit. Gradually, it became the reason for the degradation of the environment and it brought natural disasters in the form of flood, earthquake drought etc. Therefore we should extract the natural resources in such a way it could be saved for the future generation. This concept is the concept of sustainable development.

PERFORMANCE OF THE ODISHA : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

However the national ranking dropped, Odisha saw a three-point improvement in its overall score and settled at 61 points. It topped in the implementation of two SDGs — 13 and 14, which are ‘climate action’ and ‘life below water’, respectively. This is a big achievement for Odisha. Odisha did commendable job in the field of climate change disaster risk measures with sustainable natural resource management into national development strategies, the State scored 70 points. This successfully reduced the emission of carbon. Odisha government successfully saved the carbon dioxide through promoting LED bulbs.

In the 'life below' water SDG, which aims to conserve oceans, seas and marine resources by preventing marine pollution and illegal fishing practices, Odisha scored 82. The State showed improved shore water quality and saw a 3.19% increase in the area under mangroves. The ranking of Odisha in these two goals are everywhere appraisable because as per the Asia and the Pacific SDG Progress Report 2021, the Asia-Pacific region showed a decline/regression in its commitment to goals 13 and 14 of the SDGs. The Hindu Analysis

Odisha's improvement in these two goals brought overall good score for India otherwise the score of India could be reduced more. The Odisha government allocated a good fund for the climate change of various departments including forests, fisheries, disaster management and agriculture. In the budget of 2022, the Odisha government allocated a separate budget for the SDG. The SDG Budget provides cross-department linkages and shows the State's commitment towards implementing SDG 4 (quality education), SDG 10 (reduced inequalities), and SDG 2 (zero hunger). These goals will be provided 16.8%, 15.4%, and 10.2% of the SDG Budget, respectively. Odisha also scored 83 points on SDG 15, 'life on land' (protecting, restoring and promoting the sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems). The Hindu Analysis

In the 21st century, the issue of climate change and global warming is the most significant issue. This climate change can bring natural disasters in the future. Therefore we all, mainly the developed countries should come forward in this regard.

TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

CONCLUSION

To achieve the goals of sustainable development, India is moving gradually and very soon India would achieve the goals of sustainable development. For achieving the task of the country every state of India should play its important role. Odisha is playing its role very well but some of the states of India, their performance in this regard is very poor (Like Bihar, Jharkhand and Assam). The performance of the states of Kerala, Tamil Nadu as well as Odisha is good. All other states of India should give their contribution to the country for achieving the SDGs. Odisha also scored 83 points on SDG 15, 'life on land' (protecting, restoring and promoting the sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems).

Dr. Anshul Bajpai

MOVING FROM THE COAL

MOVING FROM THE COAL – TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

Decline in coal stocks and the resulting power outages in several States have spurred queries of renewable energy's potential to fill in for the conventional resource.

TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

WHAT IS THE ISSUE?

- Earlier this week, coal stocks in more than 100 thermal power plants in India fell below the critical mark (less than 25% of the required stock).
- Tamil Nadu Chief Minister wrote to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, requesting him to ensure adequate supply of coal to the power-generating units in the State.
- In Maharashtra, the Deputy Chief Minister said the State government planned to import coal to cope with the power crisis.
- The other top power-consuming State in the country, Gujarat, is also planning to import coal.

IS THERE A COAL CRISIS? THE HINDU ANALYSIS

Coal accounts for 55% of the country's energy needs.

- Demand- The India Energy Outlook 2021 report of the International Energy Agency (IEA) said energy use in India has doubled since 2000, with 80% of demand still being met by coal, oil and solid biomass.
- Reasons for high consumption of coal
 - Abundant availability
 - Has shorter gestation periods
 - Have lower capital costs than hydel and nuclear plants
 - Stability in energy production
 - Most viable enabler of energy security

REASONS FOR THE CURRENT CRISIS : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

- Pandemic-related disruptions prevented the mining and stock-up of coal.
- Monsoons hampered the mining operations and delayed the arrival of stocks.
- With household demand for power picking up and the arrival of summer, combined with the sudden acceleration in economic activity, it has resulted in a demand-supply mismatch. The Hindu Analysis

- The IEA estimates that despite the shock from COVID-19, India's demand is expected to grow by almost 5% a year till 2040.

WHERE DOES INDIA STAND ON RENEWABLE ENERGY SOURCES? THE HINDU ANALYSIS

- A total of 152.90 GW of renewable energy capacity has been installed in the country as of February 2022.
- In accordance with the Prime Minister's announcement at COP26, the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy aspires to install 500 GW of electricity capacity from non-fossil fuel sources by 2030.
- In 2020-21, as per the Central Electricity Authority (CEA), renewable energy sources' share represents 21.5% of the overall generation and is expected to reach 40% by 2029-30.

WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES? THE HINDU ANALYSIS

- Losses– The capacity of a plant does not necessarily translate into the actual power it generates for the grid as some of it may be lost due to external factors such as heat or transmission losses.
- Variability– Solar and wind energy are variable resources.
- Seasonal variability– In monsoons, solar energy is barely available with wind energy available in abundance creating a seasonal variation.
- Spatial variability– Regions near coastal areas like Gujarat possess greater ability to produce wind energy, in comparison to States like Rajasthan which are drier.
- The duck curve issue- Solar energy is abundantly available during daytime in summers.
- However, domestic consumption peaks in the evenings when we turn on the air-conditioner after returning from work.
- This discrepancy results in a net demand curve that takes the shape of a duck, and the duck curve gets more pronounced each year.

WHAT IS THE NEED OF THE HOUR? THE HINDU ANALYSIS

- Energy-efficient behaviour– Transition to renewable energy would depend a lot on inculcating energy-efficient behaviour such as operating ACs more flexibly through the day and opting for energy-efficient products.
- Lifestyle changes– Models such as Japan's 'Cool Biz Campaign' permitting employees to wear light and casual clothes at work instead of the conventional jackets and tie in order to reduce the need for air-conditioning can be inculcated.

Dr. Anshul Bajpai

Anthropology Planner

TOPIC

- Meaning, Scope and Development of Anthropology

OBJECTIVES TO UNDERSTAND

- Etymology and Definitions of Anthropology
- Bio-Social Nature
- Comparative, Integrative and Holistic Nature
- Major branches of Anthropology
- Relationship of Anthropology with other disciplines

STUDY MATERIALS

- Refer to Ppt and Pdfs by Dr Huma Hassan

FEW THINKERS OF THE TOPIC

- Herodotus
- Protagoras
- Socrates
- Plato
- Aristotle
- Charles Darwin
- Herbert Spencer
- E B Tylor, James Frazer, Henry Maine, and L. H. Morgan,



PREVIOUS YEARS QUESTIONS RELATED TO THE TOPIC

- Elaborate the scope of anthropology and elucidate its uniqueness in the field of other Social Science. Upsc, 2021, 20 marks
- Mention the major branches of Linguistic anthropology and discuss language use in social and cultural settings. Upsc, 2020, 15 marks
- How can synergising the core branches of anthropology reinvigorate the holistic spirit of the discipline. Upsc, 2019, 10 marks
- The relationship between linguistics and Social-Cultural Anthropology. Upsc, 2019, 10 marks
- The relevance of Anthropology. Upsc, 2018, 10 marks
- Define Anthropology. Describe the major branches of Anthropology elaborating on any one branch. Upsc, 2017, 20 marks
- Differences between Social Anthropology and

Sociology. Upsc, 2016, 10m

- Archaeological Anthropology Upsc, 2015, 10 m
- Major Subdivisions of Anthropology. Upsc, 2014, 10 marks
- Ecological Anthropology Upsc, 2013, 10 m
- Epidemiological Anthropology Upsc, 2013, 10 m
- How do you situate Anthropology in Social Sciences Upsc, 2013, 10 m
- Linguistic Anthropology Upsc, 2013, 10 m
- Differentiate between economics and Economic Anthropology 10 marks.

Dr. huma hassan

Freebies Vs Economic Growth

FREEBIES VS ECONOMIC GROWTH – TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

- N.K. Singh, the chairperson of the 15th Finance Commission, warned about how the race to provide freebies to voters could be a quick path to fiscal disaster.

TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

HOW DO FREEBIES HAMPER ECONOMIC GROWTH?

- Macroeconomic stability– Freebies undercut the basic framework of macroeconomic stability.
- In the case of Punjab, some have speculated that the promise of freebies is going to have an additional impact of 3% of GSDP. The Hindu Analysis
- Expenditure priorities– The politics of freebies distort expenditure priorities.
- For instance, Rajasthan's decision to revert 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.
- Social inequalities– The issue of intergenerational equity leads to greater social inequalities because of expenditure priorities being distorted away from growth-enhancing items. Today Current Affairs
- Unsustainable– Provision of free power, water, etc. distracts outlays from environmental and sustainable growth, renewable energy and more efficient public transport systems.
- Distortion of agricultural priorities- The depleting supply of groundwater is an important issue to consider when speaking of freebies pertaining to free consumption goods and resources. The Hindu Analysis
- Manufacturing- Freebies lower the quality and competitiveness of the manufacturing

sector by detracting from efficient and competitive infrastructure.

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

DO FREEBIES HAVE ANY PRODUCTIVE ROLE? THE HINDU ANALYSIS

- Constitutional provision– As per Article 282, the Union or a State may make any grants for any public purpose.
- Better workforce– Sometimes, freebies build a healthier and a stronger workforce, which is a necessary part of any growth strategy.
- For example, the MGNREGA type of spending and subsidy in the form of food ration schemes. The Hindu Analysis
- Increased productivity- Subsidies going into education, such as for laptops have now become necessities for increasing productivity, knowledge and skills.

WHAT IS NEEDED IN THIS RESPECT? THE HINDU ANALYSIS

- Differentiation- We need to distinguish between the concept of merit goods and public goods.
- The strengthening of the public distribution system, employment guarantee schemes, support to education and enhanced outlays for health are considered to be desirable expenditures. The Hindu Analysis
- Sustainability– 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.
- Revisiting the Seventh Schedule- Most of the centrally sponsored schemes are subjects which are classic subjects in the domain of the states, such as employment, food, education.
- So the Seventh Schedule which classifies the subjects into three lists requires a revisit. The Hindu Analysis
- Revisiting the Article 282- The entry under Article 282 of the Constitution has been used and misused for having all the centrally sponsored schemes.

Anshum Verma

Significance and Legality The Places of Worship (Special Provisions) Act, 1991: An analysis in special case of Gyanvapi dispute

CONTEXT

In the midst of an economical crisis and inflation , another controversial issue has erupted in India . That issue is related to the Gyanvapi issue. Many Hindu people claimed that , earlier there was a temple at the place of this mosque and Aurangzeb demolished this temple of Visweswara (Kashi Vishnatha) and constructed the mosque . After the petition given by Hindu community, a survey is conducted after the order of the Varanasi court. In this survey , also called Shivling is found . Now Supreme Court has also ordered the District Magistrate of Varanasi to ensure protection of the area at the Gyanvapi mosque complex where a 'shivling' is said to have been found during the survey there.

TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

INTRODUCTION

- There is an Act related to place of worship which was enacted in 1991 (The Places of Worship (Special Provisions) Act, 1991) . This Act directs to freeze the status of all places of worship in the country as on August 15, 1947. The survey of this mosque and the claim over this mosque is the violation of this act or not, it must be checked by the honorable supreme court . The Hindu Analysis
- However some places of the worship are exempted from this act like Ram Janmbhumi and Babri Mosque. In fact , when this act was enacted , the issue of Ram Janmbhumi was prejudiced . But The issue of Gyanvapi would be exempted from this act or not , the honorable court will explain it .

WHAT IS GYANVAPI AND KASHI VISHWANATH TEMPLE : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

- Gyanvapi is a mosque contiguous to Kashi Vishwanath Temple . As per the historians (mainly A. S Altekar) , the temple of Kashi Vishvanath was demolished by the Aurangzeb and the main Shiva Ling was uprooted , instead of this temple a mosque was built during the time of Aurangzeb .
- In fact ,this was the place where Darasikoh had translated many Sanskrit texts (Mainly Upanishad) therefore, because of the political reason Aurangzeb had to order to demolish it . But it is surprising that idols are still secured. Nobody broke those idols. Before the Gyanvapi mosque, was there any mosque ? Some historians explain that during the time of Razia (12th century) a mosque was also there. The Hindu Analysis

- As per the sacred Sanskrit text (Puranas and the Vedas , mainly the interpretation of Vedas), on this place , lord Shiva Shiva had dug the trident in the earth and water came out from here and on the same trident Kashi is constructed . Local folk also explain in this regard. The Vapi means the water and the Gyan means the knowledge . Therefore Muslim community also accepted this folk .
- If we look geographically , this is the place of Varanasi where the maximum gravitational force and the magnetic force is found (Many surveys had been done by the geography department of the BHU). Therefore definitely this place was the place of concern and during the ancient period a temple might be there . We recovered a seal from Rajghat on which the Visveswara is written. All these explain that Varanasi has been famous for the worship of Lord Shiva for thousands of years . The Hindu Analysis
- During the period of Akbar a temple was also built on this place . It is generally accepted by historians that the old Kashi Vishwanath temple was constructed by Man Singh during the time of Akbar and after its demolition , it was again reconstructed during the time of Ahilyabai Holkar . Ahilyabai Holkar , if wanted could take concern about the mosque also. But she did not.
- When the British arrived in India, they started to interpret Indian history for colonial purposes and this was the James prince who did a lot of work on Varanasi and he explained how Aurangzeb demolished the temple and built the mosque .

WHAT IS THE PLACE OF WORSHIP ACT 1991 : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

- In March 2021, the Supreme Court asked the Center to respond to a petition that challenged the Places of Worship (Special Provisions) Act, 1991. The law was enacted to freeze the status of all places of worship in the country as on August 15, 1947.
- The Act says that no person shall convert any place of worship of any religious denomination into one of a different denomination or section. It contains a declaration that a place of worship shall continue to be as it was on August 15, 1947. it prohibits any legal proceedings from being instituted regarding the character of a place of worship, and declares that all suits and appeals pending before any court or authority on the cut-off date regarding the conversion of the character of a place of worship shall abate. In other words, all pending cases will come to an end, and no further proceedings can be filed. The Hindu Analysis
- Now the decision of the Varanasi court regarding survey is limited only up to survey or it would give birth to another controversial issue, time will tell .
- However there are some exemptions to this act . It will not apply to ancient and historical monuments and archaeological sites and remains that are covered by the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958. It will also not be applicable on those disputes which have been finally settled . In fact these types of exemptions were given to resolve the issue of the Ram Janmbhumi. But the question is that , if this act was not legally valid , then the honorable supreme court should raise the issue in this regard . In Fact this act is a tool through which the secular structure of India would be protected . In

the final verdict of the Ayodhya case , honorable supreme court has accepted that the Act “imposes a non-derogable obligation towards enforcing our commitment to secularism”. A five judges bench had already stated regarding this act that the law can not improve those mistakes which had done in the past . and to maintain the communal structure of India such an act plays a significant role . In preserving the character of places of public worship, Parliament has mandated in no uncertain terms that history and its wrongs shall not be used as instruments to oppress the present and the future.” The Hindu Analysis

- The Hindu petitioners are arguing that The Hindus has been worshiping on this place for long time and there has not been any changes of this worship place after 1957

TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

CONCLUSION

- We are residing in a secular and independent country and we achieved this independence after a long struggle and huge sacrifices . Therefore this must be the duty of every citizen to create such an atmosphere where the element of integration could be generated. We should work only for the construction of this country , not destruction. In the history of the world there have been many mistakes done during that time but this is not the time to take revenge for the mistakes done in our past . We should know the crux of the religion which is humanism , which is morality and righteous conduct . These types of the issue are being erupted only for the political benefits so that the mind of the public could be destructed and deviated from the real issues like increasing poverty, unemployment, inflation etc .
- This is also the duty of the state and the honorable court to maintain the communal harmony in this country. Those things which could hamper the brotherhood of the country should be avoided and completely banned .

Dr. Anshul Bajpai

As FPI exits hit forex reserves, RBI stepped up gold purchases:An analysis and Significance

AS FPI EXITS HIT FOREX RESERVES, RBI STEPPED UP GOLD PURCHASES:AN ANALYSIS AND SIGNIFICANCE – TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

India's gold holdings have gone up to 760.42 tones, with the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) adding another 16.58 tones of the yellow metal to the country's foreign exchange kitty during the six months ended March 2022.

RBI's gold acquisition happened at a time when foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) were exiting India and forex reserves declined by \$44.73 billion from \$642.45 billion in September 2021 to \$597.72 billion on April 29, 2022, as per Reserve Bank data.

TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

WHAT ARE FOREIGN EXCHANGE RESERVES?

Foreign Exchange Reserves are assets held by a central bank in foreign currencies

India's Forex Reserve include:

Foreign Currency Assets

Gold reserves

Special Drawing Rights

Reserve Tranche Position with the International Monetary Fund

ADVANTAGES OF HOLDING HIGH FOREX RESERVE : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

- Provides import cover
- Helps in meeting short-term foreign currency debt
- Acts as buffer against global fallouts
- Improves international credibility of the economy
- It is important resource which can be used for

Investment in Infrastructure

Repayment of External Debt

DISADVANTAGES OF HOLDING HIGH FOREX RESERVE : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

There is opportunity cost in holding high forex reserves as resources are kept idle.

WHAT ARE FOREIGN PORTFOLIO INVESTORS? THE HINDU ANALYSIS

Foreign Portfolio Investor (FPI) = Foreign Institutional Investors (FII) + Qualified Foreign Investors (QFI)

Where,

Foreign Institutional Investors (FII) – an Institution established or incorporated outside India which proposes to

make investment in India and which is registered with the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI).

Qualified Foreign Investors (QFI) – refers to any foreign individuals, groups or associations, or resident, however, restricted to those from a country that is a member of Financial Action Task Force (FATF) and a country that is a signatory to International Organization of Securities Commissions Multilateral Memorandum of Understanding (IOSCO-MMOU), and is registered with SEBI.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF FPIs? THE HINDU ANALYSIS

Accessibility to International Credit:

Investors may be able to reach an increased amount of credit in foreign countries, enabling the investor to utilize more leverage and generate a higher return on their equity investment.

Increases the Liquidity of Domestic Capital Markets:

As markets become more liquid, they become more profound and broader, and a more comprehensive range of investments can be financed.

As a result, investors can invest with confidence knowing that they can promptly manage their portfolios or sell their financial securities if access to their savings is required.

Promotes the Development of Equity Markets:

Increased competition for financing leads to rewarding superior performance, prospects, and corporate governance.

As the market's liquidity and functionality evolve, equity prices will become value-relevant for investors, ultimately driving market efficiency.

TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN FPI AND FDI?

Foreign Direct Investment FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT (FDI)

- FDI refers to investment by non-resident entity/person, resident outside India, in the capital instruments of:
 - Any listed Indian company where investment is 10% or more
 - Any Unlisted Indian company with any amount of investment.
- This can be done by either buying a company or by expanding operations of an existing business.
- FDI brings foreign capital, technology & management.
- FDI are more stable in nature and are less volatile than FII/FPI

FOREIGN PORTFOLIO INVESTMENT (FPI) : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

- Any investment by a Foreign Portfolio Investor or Investor Group in a listed Indian company that is less than 10% of the paid-up share capital.
- For eg. Investments in the Mutual Funds, Govt./Corporate bonds, Pension Funds and Insurance House.
- This can be done by purchasing security from share market
- A portfolio investment does not entail active
- management or control of the target organization.
- FPI brings only capital, not technology and management. Hence, FII are more volatile in
- nature ('Hot Money').

Pradeep Kumar

Drought in World : A natural disaster

DROUGHT IN WORLD : A NATURAL DISASTER – TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

CONTEXT:

Recently a data was released by the United Nations regarding the drought regions of India . On the basis of this data it seems that India's vulnerability to drought. These data are based on the effect of droughts on our ecosystem and how they can be mitigated through efficient planning for the future. This data also explain that because of the drought the GDP of India reduced by 2 to 5% between 1998 and 2017 and in current years the possibility of the drought is still high and many regions are identified which may be affected with drought

TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

INTRODUCTION :

- Drought is a situation of the prolonged dry period in the natural precipitation season (Monsoon in Indian context). It is also a type of natural disaster . This situation occurs in the lack of precipitation and unavailability of the means of irrigation . This drought can impact the health , agriculture ,and economy of India .
- Recently data released by the UN, India is also facing the problem of the natural disaster of drought . It may bring more vulnerable economic crises because of the drought . Government should adopt server measures to tackle this situation . A report is presented

by the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) based on the data of the drought regions of India

- The Drought in Numbers report is a collection of data on the effects of droughts on our ecosystem. This report would be helpful to us for getting the information of the negotiations surrounding key decisions by the UNCCD's 197 member parties at the 15th Conference of Parties (COP15). Presently this COP15 is underway in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire (Côte d'Ivoire is a West African country it was a French-colony in the past. Therefore it has French culture . Abidjan, on the Atlantic coast, is the country's major urban center.) The issues like drought, land restoration, and related aspects such as land rights, gender equality and youth empowerment are the key subjects of the discussion . The Hindu Analysis
- In this conference it is discussed that the number and duration of droughts around the world has increased by an alarming 29% since 2000. The reason behind such droughts are the unconsciousness of the governments of the world towards climate change . The trajectory of the drought is in an upward direction . This is the subject of the concern .

WHAT IS COP15 : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

- The term COP stands for the conference of the Parties . This is related to biodiversity and climate change . UNCCD's COP15 focuses on desertification, land degradation, and drought, with the theme for the conference being "Land. Life. Legacy: From scarcity to prosperity." The conference has brought together government representatives, private sector members, and civil society stakeholders to ensure that land continues to benefit present and future generations. 2nd part of the COP15 would be in the month of October in China . In such a biodiversity conference , several goals for nature over the next decade through the Convention on Biological Diversity would be set and the countries of the world would adopt the measures to opt for such goals. The Hindu Analysis
- The first part of the COP15 consisted of the opening of the Meetings , discussing on the agenda items, essential adopting measures to protect the climate and administrative matters and technical issues related to CBD (Convention on Biodiversity) programmes.

WHAT IS THERE IN THAT REPORT : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

- It is estimated by the World Bank that the drought conditions of the world would impact the economy of the world . Along with the drought conditions other factors like water scarcity, declining crop productivity, rise in sea levels, and overpopulation would also be responsible for the reduction of the production and overall economy . These factors would be responsible for the suicide and the deaths of the Kisan (farmers) in the world . The state of the developing country is very dangerous. Nine in ten of these deaths have occurred in developing countries.
- During the period of 2020 and 2022, many countries had to face the political instabilities like Afghanistan, Angola, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Chile, Ethiopia, Iraq, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Lesotho, Mali, Mauritania, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, Niger, Somalia, South

Sudan, Syria, Pakistan, the U.S., and Zambia. And because of the political emergencies these countries could not opt for required measures to tackle these natural disasters. The Hindu Analysis

- It is also assumed that more than a billion people around the world were affected by drought in 2000-19. The drought is the second worst disaster after flooding . Flooding and drought are interconnected also. In those areas where first drought would occur and then followed would occur . The World Health Organization has noted that globally, approximately 55 million people are directly affected by droughts annually. The impact of the drought is not uniform in the world but the vulnerable class like women and girls and the developing countries are mostly impacted with such natural disasters .The burden of water collection also disproportionately falls on women (72%) and girls (9%). The report notes that they may spend up to 40% of their caloric intake fetching water.

TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

CONCLUSION

In fact these natural disasters are the product of men's activities . Because of the greediness of the men , the temperature of the world increased continuously and scientists are predicting that if global warming reaches 3°C by 2100, drought losses could be five times higher than today's levels. The largest increase in drought losses is projected in the Mediterranean and the Atlantic regions of Europe. Today Current Affairs

Therefore , this is the responsibility of all the people living on this earth to think for the environment . Governments of all countries should opt for strong measures to protect nature. The goals of sustainable development should be achieved strictly . developed countries should take more responsibility in this regard . because they can play an important role in reducing the carbon. These developed country should assist developing countries or the under developed countries financially so that they could also play their role in the protection of this environment

Dr. Anshul Bajpai

Monkeypox Spreading Through “Possible Sexual Transmission”

MONKEYPOX SPREADING THROUGH “POSSIBLE SEXUAL TRANSMISSION” – TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

MONKEYPOX

WHY IN NEWS?

A case of monkeypox has been confirmed in US after infections were reported across Europe. Monkey pox is rare and potentially dangerous.

WHAT IS THE MONKEYPOX?

Monkey pox is rare disease that is caused by infection with monkey pox virus. Monkey pox virus belongs to the Orthpoxvirus genus in the family Poxviridae.

Monkeypox is a viral zoonotic disease that occurs primarily in tropical rainforest areas of Central and West Africa and is occasionally exported to other regions.

It was first time discovered in 1958 in monkeys, when outbreaks of a pox-like disease occurred. After the research the name given that ‘monkeypox’. The first human case recorded in 1970 in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) during a period of intensified effort to eliminate smallpox. Since then monkeypox has been reported in several other countries of the Africa continent (e.g., Cameroon, Central African Republic, Cote d’Ivoire, Gabon, Liberia, Nigeria and Sierra Leone).

TRANSMISSION : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

Outside of the Africa monkeypox have occurred due to linked international travel or imported animals including cases in the US. The natural source of monkeypox remains unknown. However

African rodents and non-human primates (monkeys, rope squirrels, tree squirrels, Gambian poached rats, dormice) may spread the virus and infect people. Monkeypox can be spread from a bite by an infected animal, or by touching its blood, body fluids or fur.

The virus that causes monkeypox has only been recovered (isolated) twice from an animal in nature. In the first instance (1985), the virus was recovered from an apparently ill African rodent (rope squirrel) in equator region of the DRC. In the 2nd (2012), the virus was recovered from a dead infant mangabey found in the Tai National Park, Cote d'Ivoire.

SYMPTOMS : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

In humans, the symptoms of monkeypox are similar to but milder than the symptoms of smallpox. Monkeypox begins with fever, headache, muscle aches, and exhaustion. Monkeypox causes lymph nodes to swell.

The incubation period for monkeypox is usually 7-14 days. But can range from 5-21 days.

After 1 to 5 days a rash typically appears. The rash is confused with chickenpox, because it starts as raised spots which turn into small scabs filled with fluid.

DIAGNOSIS : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

DETECTION OF VIRAL DNA BY POLYMERS CHAIN REACTION (PCR) IS THE PREFERRED LABORATORY TEST FOR MONKEYPOX.

PREVENTION : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

- Avoid contact with animals that could spread the virus.
- Avoid contact with any materials, such as bedding, that has been in contact with a sick animal.
- Isolation (infected person)
- Hygiene – for example, washing your hands with soap and

water or using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

- Use PPE

RISK OF LIFE : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

According to WHO, in Central Africa, where people have less access to quality health care, show the disease kills as many as one in 10 infected people.

TREATMENT : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

Currently, there is no proven, safe treatment for monkeypox virus infection. For controlling a monkeypox outbreak, smallpox vaccine, antivirals, and vaccinia immune globulin (VIG) can be used.

TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

WAY FORWARD

Countries should put in place regulations restricting trade of rodents and non-human primates. WHO should provide support to states with surveillance, preparedness and outbreak response activities for monkeypox in affected countries.

Pradeep Kumar

Ethanol blending policy of India : An Analysis

ETHANOL BLENDING POLICY OF INDIA – TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

CONTEXT:

Context : The government of India's policy is to increase the percentage of ethyl alcohol in petrol. For which the Union Cabinet approved amendments to the National Policy on Biofuels, 2018. Now the fuel companies have to increase the percentage of ethanol in petrol

to 20%, from 2030 to 2025.

TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

INTRODUCTION

India is completely dependent on the export of raw petroleum . To reduce its dependency on the export of the raw petroleum, the Indian government has amended its fuel policy. Now the government is promoting the blending of biofuel into petrol . Government asked the fuel companies to blend 20% of ethanol blending in the petrol .The policy of introducing 20% ethanol is expected to take effect from April 1, 2023.

HISTORY OF ETHANOL-BLENDING : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

- Ethanol is a hydrocarbon and after its burning , heat and energy can be generated. India has been working on the policy of using Ethanol or Ethyl alcohol for two decades . This ethanol can be used as the fuel in four wheelers and the two wheelers . However to run any vehicle we need more ethanol in comparison to petrol and simultaneously ethanol is harmful for the life of the engine . Engine would be damaged earlier if it is run by ethanol but we can produce the ethanol in India and we are completely dependent on the export of the petroleum and ethanol can be obtained through sugarcane, molasses, maize, which given India's agricultural base
- From 2001 , the Government has been testing the feasibility of ethanol-blended petrol by supplying 5 % of the ethanol . In 2002 , India launched the ethanol mixed petrol in nine states of India and four Union Territories that was extended to twenty States and four UTs in 2006. However the percentage of blending never goes beyond 1.5 % . The Hindu Analysis
- The Government of India notified that E5 [blending 5% ethanol with 95% gasoline] petrol, the rubber and plastic components used in gasoline vehicles, is compatible with the E10 fuel [blending 10% ethanol with 90% gasoline]. India has been announcing since 2020 that the target of the government is to blend 10 % ethanol in petrol by the end of the 2022 and the 20% by 2030 and 5 % with diesel by 2030

WHY GOVERNMENT IS SWITCHING TO E20 : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

In fact we have to import petroleum products on a large scale and nowadays our economy has been continuously slowing down . The exchange rate is continuously increasing . In this situation we have to reduce our petroleum export through blending ethanol . However it

would be on the cost of the engine's life

HOW DOES THIS AFFECT ENGINES? THE HINDU ANALYSIS

- When we sue E20, there is an estimated loss of 6-7% fuel efficiency for four wheelers which are originally designed for E0 and calibrated for E10, 3-4% for two wheelers designed for E0 and calibrated for E10 and 1-2% for four wheelers designed for E10 and calibrated for E20. Car makers have said that with modifications in engines (hardware and tuning), the loss in efficiency due to blended fuel can be reduced. To compensate the consumers for a drop in efficiency from ethanol blended fuels, tax incentives on E10 and E20 fuel may be considered. The test vehicles worked well in several test-situations, the report noted.
- Flex Fuel Engine technology (FFE) which runs in Brazil based on ethanol . We have to change our engine technology . If we compare the price of ethanol in India and the US, our price is higher than in the US. It means if we successfully change our technology it is difficult to say whether we would be benefited economically or not because we have to sacrifice with the loss of engine

TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

CONCLUSION

As per the above discussion , it is observed that we have to reduce our dependence on the export of the petrol through the blending of ethanol in the petrol and diesel but simultaneously it would reduce the efficiency of the life of the engine and another concern is that whether it relates nitrous oxide after burning of the ethanol or not . However India has shown that there is no reduction in nitrous oxides, one of the major environmental pollutants. . Indian should encourage the agriculture of the maize and the sugarcane for meeting its target of the blending of ethanol in petrol and diesel.

Dr. Anshul Bajpai

A need to learn lessons from turmoil of Sri Lanka

A NEED TO LEARN LESSONS FROM TURMOIL OF SRI LANKA – TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

CONTEXT:

Nowadays Sri Lanka is going through a huge turmoil . Being our neighbor, definitely , it would impact us . We should analyze the reasons behind such turmoil of the Sri Lanka and

learn some lessons from it

TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

INTRODUCTION :

- The crisis of Sri Lanka has not suddenly erupted. The seeds of the crises in Sri Lanka had been shown in 2016 when Sri Lanka took a huge loan from China . In 2016, India opted for a different foreign policy and it was an aggressive foreign policy that New Delhi would use all its levers to prevail over any uncooperative South Asian neighbor. But this time, India has opted the foreign policy contrast to previous one . The first difference is that New Delhi has not been held responsible in any of its neighboring capitals for attempting to interfere in their political processes. Second, South Block has abandoned its uniformly muscular “one size fits all” approach to the region. The Hindu Analysis
- This government continued its tie with Myanmar however there is a military government. Myanmar is a more significant neighbor so we need the cooperation of Myanmar against China and in Afghanistan it severed ties with the Taliban . In the affairs of Nepal and Sri Lanka , India has been largely supportive of the processes of Changing (In Nepal where Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba came to power after the dismissing of K.P. Oli by Supreme court while in Sri Lanka, President Gotabaya Rajapaksa had to appoint Opposition leader Ranil Wickremesinghe as the new Prime Minister after public protest). India is ignorant towards the political changes in Pakistan

THE LESSON WHICH WE LEARNT FROM OUR NEIGHBOR : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

- We learned that , unnecessary, we should not intervene in influencing the internal politics of any country. For us, all the leaders of neighboring countries are equal. Another lesson we learnt was that we should focus on the public of any country rather than the leaders of the country. However we have not any relationship with the Taliban government but still we sent 50,000 MT of wheat meant for the Afghan through the negotiation and the support of Pakistani officials . In Sri Lanka, we are helping the people of Sri Lanka irrespective of the leadership of Sri Lanka . Another lesson which we learnt is that we should not give any statement related to the internal affairs of the foreign countries .
- However another lesson which we must learn , that the position of neutrality in foreign affairs would not be long lasting . Indians would not be untouched from any type of changing geopolitical situation of the Pacific sea. India should not be silent for long on the Russian aggression on Ukraine and the Chinese aggression on Hong Kong. The Hindu Analysis
- The important lesson which should be learnt by us that populism does not pay in the long run. Though extreme nationalism religious majoritarianism, and a strident anti-elitism majority was gotten by Rajapaksa in Sri Lanka but Now same people who supported

Rajapakse, are protesting against them. So we should not ignore the real issue under the shadow of patriotism and the populism

- This should also be learnt that the popularity of a leader can decline sharply and suddenly for one or a combination of reasons. We can take the example in this regard the KP Oli, ex pm of Nepal and Rajapaksa-led Sri Lanka People's Party (SLPP) as well as Imran Khan of Pakistan who won with huge majority because of the issue of the curbs on corruption but could not do so, All those PMs of their respective countries are removed after huge protest of the public. Therefore, Winning with a huge majority does not mean that the popularity would be long lasting. The crisis erupted in these countries because of inexperienced and inefficient leadership of those countries. At international level these leaders could not do better for their own countries. The Hindu Analysis
- The economic matter is the important factor in this regard. We should learn many lessons from the decline of these leaders. During their regime, the economy of their countries collapsed, people were facing the problem of price hike, inflation, lack of essential commodities and just because of the economic crisis, the popular leaders of these countries (Sri Lanka, Nepal, and Pakistan) declined. We should learn from their decline.
- Economical factors play an important role in the popularity of any leader. Public can not tolerate the economic crises for long time. New Delhi must not only study the causes of the economic mismanagement that brought change in the neighborhood but must also survey the impact of new vulnerabilities on smaller neighboring countries that could be exploited by global powers as they seek a more direct influence in the region. Given the common challenges the region faces, New Delhi must find newer ways to energize regional groupings such as the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) and the Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal (BBIN) Initiative, and even to reconsider SAARC, in order to discuss shared approaches to reviving tourism and exports, supporting South Asian expatriate labor abroad, and building common pools of food and fuel stocks to soften inflationary blows on the South Asian economy.

TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

CONCLUSION

As per the above discussion, it can be summarized that we should learn many lessons from the changing situation and the crises in our neighboring countries. We must learn from the lessons in political culture that let down the "alpha leaders" in neighboring democracies. One of the common threads in each of the governments (Rajapaksa, Oli and Khan) was an abhorrence for consensus building. These leaders turned the opposition as their enemy. They were ready to listen to any suggestion from their opponents. The opponents' voices were suppressed. They brought the media in their favor. But through such false shadows the reality of the countries could not be hidden for a long time. Now when the economies of these countries have been almost ruined then, a new government came into power. Therefore, Indian government should also focus on the declining economy and should opt the measures

how to tackle economic challenges of 2022.

Dr. Anshul Bajpai

Local Body Polls: OBC Quota

LOCAL BODY POLLS: OBC QUOTA – TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

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

Source: Indian Express

TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

WHY IN NEWS?

The Supreme Court decided to permit Madhya Pradesh to implement 14 percent OBC reservation.

WHAT IS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SUPREME COURT'S ORDER? THE HINDU ANALYSIS

The Supreme Court had previously ordered that the elections be held without an OBC quota since the state had failed to meet the “triple criteria” for establishing such a reservation.

Madhya Pradesh has filed a petition in the court, claiming that the backward class commission had prepared a second report that met the triple-test requirement.

The Court concentrated on OBC reservation at the local body level, keeping in mind the Supreme Court's maximum reservation restriction of 50%.

For the time being, it also allowed Madhya Pradesh State Election Commission to notify the election schedule for the different local bodies. The Hindu Analysis

The Court has ruled that the social and educational backwardness standards for job and school reservations do not apply to local government reservations. After the decree was passed, Maharashtra's authorities urged that the same be allowed in their state.

WHAT WAS THE SUPREME COURT'S DECISION IN THE MAHARASHTRA CASE? THE HINDU ANALYSIS

The Maharashtra government had previously been ordered by the Supreme Court to furnish statistics on OBCs to the Maharashtra State Commission for Backward Classes (MSCBC).

The MSCBC proposed to provide a 27 percent quota to OBCs in its interim report after analysing the data. The Hindu Analysis

The Supreme Court, on the other hand, dismissed it, claiming that it had been prepared without empirical facts.

The Maharashtra State Election Commission was ordered by the Supreme Court to notify the election timetable for local bodies based on the previous delimitation exercise.

WHAT IS THE SUPREME COURT'S "TRIPLE TEST"? THE HINDU ANALYSIS

In 2010, the triple prerequisites for OBC reservation in local bodies were created. It consists of:

A state commission must conduct a thorough empirical investigation into the nature and consequences of the state's local government capacity deficit.

In light of the commission's recommendations, specify the percentage of reservations that must be provided locally. The Hindu Analysis

The total number of seats reserved must not exceed 50% of the total number of seats available.

WHAT IS THE ISSUE WITH COLLECTING OBC DATA? THE HINDU ANALYSIS

The door-to-door survey does not appear practical for obtaining empirical evidence for granting OBC quota since it may disrupt the state's social fabric.

The dominating communities questioned the findings of the Karnataka government's caste census and protested the state government's decision to make it public. Even the union government, which has the power to undertake a caste census, has refused. The Hindu Analysis

While quotas have proven to be a useful tool for empowerment and justice, competitive politics frequently results in political and governance gridlock.

To avoid reservation programmes becoming divisive, political parties and governments must work together with the judiciary.

Vivek Raj

FDI : AN ANALYSIS

CONTEXT:

“India has recorded the highest ever annual FDI inflow of USD 83.57 billion in 2021-22,” the ministry noted in a statement. It said that the foreign inflows are increasing despite challenges like a military operation in Ukraine and COVID-19 pandemic.

These inflows have increased 20-fold since 2003-04, when the inflows were USD 4.3 billion only, it added.

The ministry also informed that FDI equity inflow in manufacturing sectors has increased by 76 per cent in 2021-22 (USD 21.34 billion) compared to 2020-21 (USD 12.09 billion).

WHAT IS FDI

It is an investment through which an investor establishes/acquires a business entity in a foreign country along with management control.

IMF HAS DEFINED FDI AS,

“an investment through which an investor acquires lasting and substantial management control (at least 10% equity or voting rights) in the foreign affiliate”

Arvind Mayaram committee recommended that FDI should include,

- a) Foreign equity investment of 10% or more in listed companies.
- b) Any amount of investment in unlisted companies.

COMPONENTS OF FDI

- a) Foreign equity investment of 10% or more in listed companies.
- b) Any amount of investment in unlisted companies.
- c) Intra Company Debt transfer [Loan from parent to subsidiary company]

SOURCES OF FDI

- a) Branches of MNCs (Multi National Companies)
- b) Subsidiaries of MNCs
- c) Joint Venture of two or more MNCs

The ministry said that in terms of top investor countries, Singapore is at the top with a 27 per cent share, followed by the US (18 per cent) and Mauritius (16 per cent) during the last fiscal. These trends “are an endorsement of its status as a preferred investment destination amongst global investors,” the ministry added.

Among sectors, computer software and hardware attracted maximum inflows. It was followed by the services sector and automobile industry.

Karnataka is the top recipient state with a 38 per cent share of the total FDI equity inflow reported during 2021-22 followed by Maharashtra (26 per cent) and Delhi (14 per cent), according to the statement.

ADVANTAGES OF FDI/MNC's:-

- a) They bring modern technology, managerial and entrepreneurial skills, marketing strategies etc. along with the foreign capital.

- b) They promote competition by suppressing domestic monopolies. It compels domestic firms to improve efficiency.
- c) They provide a wide variety of quality products to consumers at competitive prices. It enhances standard of living of people.
- d) They promote industrial diversification we may not have technology. But they can establish industry.
- e) They promote infrastructural development in host countries by directly investing in infrastructure projects as well as by creating demand for such services.
- f) They promote infrastructural development in host countries by directly investing in infrastructure projects as well as by creating demand for such services.
- g) It provides significant tax revenue to the host govt.
- h) They tend to reduce factor price differentials across the nations i.e., they tend to increase wage rates and decrease interest rates in developing countries and vice-versa.

DISADVANTAGES OF FDI

- a) They adversely affect domestic companies especially MSMEs. It may worsen unemployment situation in developing countries.
- b) FDI creates possibility of intervention in domestic economic policies.
- c) FDI aggravates or worsens income and regional inequalities.
- d) FDI induces dualism in developing countries. Dualism means sharp difference between traditional and modern sector.
- e) They repatriate (Send back) huge forex in various forms like high dividends, interest, royalties, etc.
- f) They indulge in various malpractices like transfer pricing, base erosion and profit shifting.

g) They induce consumerism by indulging in excessive advertisement and superficial product differentiation. It adversely affects savings and capital formation.

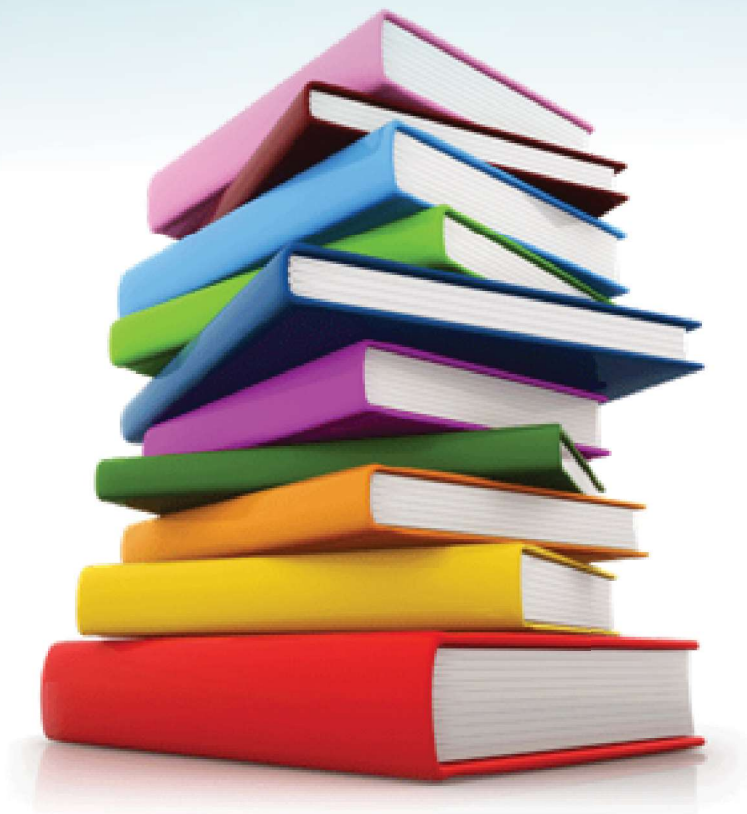
Pradeep Kumar





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CURRENT AFFAIRS

MAY 2022

Biodiversity : The Fundamental of Indian culture

CONTENT :

- India celebrated 22nd May as International Day of Biodiversity. On this occasion, we again took the oath to protect biodiversity. We decided to protect biodiversity as an integral part of our culture for a long time. We repeated our commitment to nurture and protect all the many forms of life with which we share our planet.

INTRODUCTION :

- For Indian culture, the diversity is not new. For thousands of years biodiversity has been an integral part of our culture. The accommodation of various cultures and various plants, trees, animals, and creatures has been the fundamental characteristic of Indian culture for a long time. This is the reason for richness in biodiversity as well as cultural diversity in India. For Indian context the words 'diversity' and 'India' have become synonymous. Our ethnic, cultural, and linguistic diversity has been greatly influenced by the unique features of our land, climate and geography, as well as the forces of migration and evolution. All these forces have been enriching the biodiversity of India (Through the species of plants, animals, and other organisms).
- As human beings, we are also an integral part of such biodiversity. Our life is integrally dependent on such biodiversity. As the biodiversity would decline, it would inversely impact our own life. This biodiversity provides a unique cultural shape and specific customs, rituals, ceremonies, food habits, clothing habits, all are dependent on biodiversity. For the last several decades it has been observed that, because of climate change and global warming, biodiversity is continuously declining. One side, in northern India, excess

heat became the reason for the loss in biodiversity while another side flooded the biodiversity in northeast India (Assam and Meghalaya).

- However there are several solutions to protect biodiversity, but the nature based solution is the most appropriate solution. In this way , we could enrich biodiversity.

NATURE BASED SOLUTION

- Today , climate change is the big challenge to protect biodiversity. This climate change should be tackled through maximum forestation. This maximum forestation would protect the land from degradation . Once the land is protected from degradation , the life of the plants of various species would be protected easily . As per the Paris accord , it is the commitment of us to protect the land from degradation also . All the countries of the world have committed in Paris and in Glasgow to reduce climate change through rejuvenation of our soils and agriculture, elimination of hunger, and improvement of nutrition depending upon our prudent use of biodiversity in the prevailing agricultural systems. Fostering the return of biodiversity to degraded lands and enhancing blue carbon in oceans have immense environmental and considerable economic benefits. Definitely , once the land degradation would be reduced , it will create the thousands of the jobs in the agricultural field and in this way the problem of the hunger would be also tackled

CONCLUSION

- As per the above discussion it can be said that biodiversity is not essential only for the environment perspective and for sustainable development but also it is significant for economic benefits of the contemporary period . Environment is closely related to our culture, to our economy , to our survival. Hence the protection of the diversity , on side will enrich the endogenous characteristic of Indian culture on other side through it many other contemporary issues of economy would be tackled
- To conserve biodiversity , we should be aware of biodiversity science. Government has launched National Mission on Biodiversity and Human Well-Being conceived and planned by the Biodiversity Collaborative pulling together public and private institutions. This mission is associated with the various sectors of f agriculture, health, bioeconomic, ecosystem services, and

climate change mitigation and hence definitely this initiative of the government will enrich the biodiversity and the cultural diversity both as well as it will brimming the UN's Sustainable Development Goals closer to achieve.

Dr. Anshul Bajpai

Tax revenue boost or expenditure cuts can help meet fiscal deficit target

CONTEXT :

- With not even the first two months of FY23 over, it is becoming increasingly clear that unless there is a massive boost in tax revenue or major cuts in expenditure, the fiscal deficit target of 6.4 per cent of the GDP is unlikely to be met.

WHAT IS FISCAL DEFICIT ?

- A country's fiscal balance is measured by its government's revenue vis-à-vis its expenditure in a given financial year. Fiscal deficit, the condition when the expenditure of the government exceeds its revenue in a year, is the difference between the two. Fiscal deficit is calculated both in absolute terms and as a percentage of the country's gross domestic product (GDP).
- The fiscal deficit of a country is calculated as a percentage of its GDP or simply as the total money spent by the government in excess of its income. In either case, the income figure includes only taxes and other revenues and excludes money borrowed to make up the shortfall.

HOW IS FISCAL DEFICIT CALCULATED?

- The fiscal deficit, in mathematical terms, is [total revenue generated — total expenditure]. The total revenue is the sum of revenue receipts, recovery of loans and other receipts of the government.
- While most countries continue to project a deficit in their economies, a surplus is a rare phenomenon. A high deficit at times also emerges if the government

is spending on developmental works like construction of highways, ports, roads, airports which will later generate revenue for the government.

WHAT ARE COMPONENTS OF THE FISCAL DEFICIT CALCULATION?

- The fiscal deficit calculations are based on two components — income and expenditure.
- Income component: The income component is made of two variables, revenue generated from taxes levied by the Centre and the income generated from non-tax variables. The taxable income consists of the amount generated from corporation tax, income tax, Customs duties, excise duties, GST, among others. Meanwhile, the non-taxable income comes from external grants, interest receipts, dividends and profits, receipts from Union Territories, among others.
- Expenditure component: The government in its Budget allocates funds for several works, including payments of salaries, pensions, emoluments, creation of assets, funds for infrastructure, development, health and numerous other sectors that form the expenditure component.

HOW IS FISCAL DEFICIT BALANCED OUT?

- While a rising deficit is a challenge for the government in the long term, to balance it out in short-term macroeconomics, the government looks at market borrowings by issuing bonds and selling them in through banks. Banks buy these bonds with currency deposits and then sell them to investors. Government bonds are considered an extremely safe investment instrument, so the interest rate paid on loans to the government represents risk-free investment.

WHAT IS TAX REVENUE?

- Taxation is the primary source of income for the government. The most important revenue receipts for the government, taxes are involuntary fees levied on individuals and corporations to finance government activities. Revenue receipts can be of two types — non-tax revenue and tax revenue. Tax revenue is the income gained by the government through taxation.
- Tax revenue forms a part of the Receipt Budget, which in turn is part of the Annual Financial Statement of the Union Budget.
- Tax revenue is the result of the application of a tax rate to a tax base. Total tax

revenue as a percentage of GDP indicates the share of the country's output collected by the government through taxes. Tax revenue can be regarded as one measure of the degree to which the government controls the economy's resources.

- Taxes collected from both direct tax and indirect tax are the government's tax revenue. It includes collections from income tax, corporation tax, customs, wealth tax, tax on land revenue, etc.
- Direct tax is the tax that is paid directly to the government by the person or company on whom it is levied. Income tax, wealth tax, corporation tax and property tax are some examples of direct tax. Indirect taxes are those that are collected by intermediaries from individuals and corporations who bear the burden of the tax and passed on to the government. Goods and Services Tax (GST) is an example of indirect tax. Corporation tax forms a large chunk of the government's tax revenue.

PLUTUS
IAS

Pradeep Kumar

Strengthening the Ayush Industry

- Ayush has always been sidelined and its integration into mainstream systems will give wider acceptance to traditional systems of the country.

WHAT IS THE SCOPE FOR HERBAL MEDICINE WORLDWIDE?

AYUSH refers to Ayurveda, Yoga, Unani, Siddha and Homoeopathy systems of medicine.

- The global market for herbal medicine was valued at 657.5 billion dollar in 2020 and is expected to grow to 746.9 billion dollars in 2022.
- The Indian herbal medicine market is worth 18.1 billion dollars and the Indian Ayush sector has grown by 17% between 2014 and 2020.
- In China, the value of traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) market was 37.41 billion dollars in 2018.
- In 1982, the Constitution of China gave full recognition to TCM.

- Since 2009, there has been continuous support for TCM in health policies.
- China has focused upon developing quality infrastructure for TCM to coexist with modern medicine under the same roof.

WHAT IS THE NAM SCHEME ABOUT?

- The National Ayush Mission (NAM) is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme that was launched in 2014 by the Ministry of AYUSH.
- The basic objective of NAM is to
 - promote AYUSH medical systems through cost effective AYUSH services
 - strengthening of educational systems
 - facilitate the enforcement of quality control of Ayurveda, Siddha and Unani & Homoeopathy (ASU &H) drugs
 - sustainable availability of ASU & H raw-materials
- Components of the Mission
 - Mandatory Components
 - AYUSH Services
 - AYUSH Educational Institutions
 - Quality Control of ASU &H Drugs
 - Medicinal Plants
 - Flexible Components
- Under the 'Medicinal Plants' component of the NAM scheme, the cultivation of prioritised medicinal plants in identified clusters/zones is being supported.
- For the cultivation of plants, subsidies at 30%, 50% and 75% of the cultivation cost for 140 medicinal plants are being provided.
- The National Medicinal Plant Board (NMPB) implements the medicinal plant component of Ayush through state bodies—State Medicinal Plant Boards (SMPBs).

WHAT EFFORTS HAVE BEEN TAKEN TO PROMOTE AYUSH INDUSTRY?

- WHO-Global Centre for Traditional Medicine- The foundation of the WHO-

Global Centre for Traditional Medicine was laid in Jamnagar. This will be the first and only global outpost centre for traditional medicine across the world.

- Committees- NITI Aayog has constituted a committee and four working groups on integrative medicine to provide deeper insights and recommendations in the areas of education, research, clinical practice and public health and administration.
- Financial assistance- The Ministry of Finance has announced a Rs. 4000-crore package under the Atma Nirbhar Bharat Abhiyaan for the promotion of herbal cultivation.
- Medicinal plant production- In 2021, Union Ayush Minister had announced that medicinal plants will be cultivated on 75,000 hectares of land.
- Yoga Certification Board (YCB) – YCB has been established to bring synergy, quality and uniformity in knowledge and skills of Yoga professionals across the world through certification programs.

WHAT IS THE NEED OF THE HOUR?

- Need for a thrust- The Ayush sector requires a multi-dimensional thrust, ranging from initiatives at the institutional level, massive awareness and promotion of cultivation of medicinal plants by farmers, to trade-related interventions and quality focus measures.
- Strengthening of SMPBs- The organisational structure of SMPBs should have experts for conservation, cultivation, R&D, herbal garden and nurseries, IEC and marketing and trade of medicinal plants.
- Comprehensive databases on Ayush trade, products and raw materials are needed.
- Expansion of HS (Harmonised system) codes to accommodate various features of traditional medicine and medicinal plant products based on existing requirements is required.
- Integration of Ayush- Integration of Ayush systems into mainstream systems will certainly give wider acceptance for traditional systems of the country.

Anshum Verma

Implications of Gyanvapi and Krishna Janmbhumi issues : An analysis

CONTEXT :

- The situation of India in May 2022 is now a replica of 1992, the time of demolition of Babri mosque . today , the issues are not just about the opening of Gyanvapi mosque and the dispute of Krishna Janam Bhumi, but the issues are related to its repercussions which are about to begin like the target of the demolition of the tomb of Aurangzeb etc. The opening up of Gyanvapi is not about history; it is about reclamation and is central to a larger supremacist project. And the present situation looks more dangerous than the situation of 1992 .

TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

INTRODUCTION :

- The issues of Gyanvapi and the Krishna Janmbhumi are not the issue of religion but these issues are raised for political purposes. In both the cases it has been claimed that the mosque of Mathura and the Kashi were constructed after the demolition of the temples of both places . Therefore , it was demanded for further survey and excavation by the team of archaeologists so that the reality of the history could be known. The Hindu Analysis
- However there are many literary works on the grounds of which, it can be said clearly that the many temples of northern India were demolished during the time of Aurangzeb and on those places of the temples mosques were constructed. Most of the historians including Muslim historian like Irfan Habib are agree with this facts. But these issues are not only related to the extraction of the truth but these issues are related to creating the conflict atmosphere . Same situation had erupted in 1992 , and we have seen the consequences of the Babri mosque issue .

PLACES OF WORSHIP (SPECIAL PROVISIONS) ACT, 1991 : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

- However, there is an act now through which the situation of the conflict can be avoided. The Supreme Court verdict in 2019 went on to underline the

importance of the 1991 Act in 10 pages (pages 116-125) and how it “protects and secures the fundamental values of the Constitution”. A five judges bench at that time explained the importance of such Act in these words – “The Places of Worship Act imposes a non-derogable obligation towards enforcing our commitment to secularism under the Indian Constitution.” The Hindu Analysis

- The place of worship act was brought by the government to protect India from such types of the conflict but by giving the permission for the survey of Gyanvapi is an act to open a Pandora's box. Similar and multiple cases are bound to begin mushrooming; the plea to remove Mathura's Shahi Idgah and dig around the Qutub Minar have reached the courts. Thirty years on, despite witnessing the ruptures that Babri led to, if Gyanvapi is allowed to fester, it would signal that India is re-opening issues that the Constitution had settled. That can only signal more upheaval.

THE DEGRADATION OF THE INSTITUTIONS OF INDIA : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

- It is very surprising that we are evaluating the two different incidents on the same frame of reference . what mistakes were done in the past , whether those mistakes were done in monarchy or in democracy we should think in this regard. There were many mistakes made in the monarchy and the mistakes of the monarchical period should not be reopened in democratic period , otherwise it will create the disaster in the country . There are several examples in ancient India where Buddhist supported kings had massacred hundreds of the Brhamanas and the vice versa. In the Monarchical period generally kings used to take revenge after getting power which should not be expected in democratic structure .
- For the last several years some institutions of India have been losing their significance continuously. This decline underlies India's sharp democratic backslide. India is classified as an 'electoral autocracy' (V-Dem Institute), 'partly free' (Freedom House), scores 'at the level of 1975' when a formal Emergency was in place (International IDEA) and it is now among the 30 worst countries of 180, as far as freedom of the press goes (RSF). The World Values Survey and the Pew Research Center tell us that it is in India that support for civil rights as a feature of democracy and even democracy has fallen the most, since 2015. The Justice J.S. Verma's report, (when he was National Human

Rights Commission chairman) about violence in 2002 is unimaginable today.
The Hindu Analysis

- The situation of the 1992 and the situation of 2022 is quite different. At that time we did not opt for liberalization and openness completely. The USSR has collapsed, but now we have opted for liberalization and globalization. We have approached every country of the world. Definitely such a type of the dispute emerged in India will fade the secular image of India at international level. Today India is facing several economic challenges, and these challenges can be tackled only through the collaboration of the world. If the secular and democratic image of India would be fed-up, our economy would definitely suffer. Therefore these national interest must be considered by the important institutions of India.

THE FUNDAMENTAL CHARACTERISTIC OF INDIAN CULTURAL : AN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

- The history of India is not mere the history of two religion Hindu and Muslim. There have been several belief systems residing in India for a long time. We have evidence of the peaceful coexistence of the various belief systems in the period of great kings like the Mauryan and the Gupta. but for the political benefits, however some kings took revenge from their enemies by destroying their religious place (Shunga demolished many Buddhist places and Harsh Vardhan killed Brahmans, Shashank cut the Bodhi tree). The Hindu Analysis
- The significance of history is only up to that extend when it would bring the positive element for the society

TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

CONCLUSION

- Now as per the above analysis it can be concluded that the situation of 2022 is more dangerous in comparison to 1992. It would not hamper the communal harmony in India but this situation would push the Indian economy in the worst situation. Therefore it is the duty of all the responsible persons and the institution not to create such an atmosphere. However, the work of the survey of the Gyanvapi is going on. but it is expected from the responsible institution to limit this case up to the survey only. Other cases should not be

accepted for the debate and for the further discussion . We should resolve the contemporary problem including national and international problems(China issue) first.

IN THIS ARTICLE WE MENTION ALL INFORMATION ABOUT IMPLICATIONS OF GYANVAPI AND KRISHNA JANMBHUMI ISSUES TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS.

Dr. Anshul Bajpai

India signs up for 13-nation Indo-Pacific economic framework

INDIA SIGNS UP FOR 13-NATION INDO-PACIFIC ECONOMIC FRAMEWORK – TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

CONTEXT

India, along with 12 other countries joined the Indo Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF) that seeks to establish a trading bloc in the region led by the United States. This is the first plurilateral deal that India has agreed to join after exiting the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) deal at the last minute in 2019.

TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

Members of Indo Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF)

United States of America (USA), India, Australia and Japan Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, South Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam

WHAT DOES IPEF INTEND TO DO? THE HINDU ANALYSIS

IPEF proposes to have four pillars: Trade; supply chains; clean energy, decarbonization and infrastructure; and tax and anti-corruption. Under the trade pillar, IPEF seeks to build “high-standard, inclusive, free and fair trade commitments”. The supply chain pillar is meant to ensure access to key raw and

processed materials, semiconductors, critical minerals and clean energy technology for member countries. “Clean Energy, decarbonization and infrastructure” involves mobilizing finance, including concessional finance, and enhancing connectivity by supporting the development of sustainable and durable infrastructure. The tax and anti-corruption pillar seeks to promote fair competition by enacting and enforcing tax, anti-money laundering, and anti-bribery regimes in line with existing multilateral obligations to curb tax evasion and corruption in the Indo-Pacific region. The Hindu Analysis

IPEF will also be employed to curtail much needed efforts for digital industrialisation and sovereignty of countries, and herald a new era of digital colonialism.

“The IPEF cannot meet its claimed goals of improving workers’ rights and environmental standards without a far more transparent process with genuine involvement of unions, environment groups and other civil society groups. It will certainly not meet such goals if it is modelled on the TPP...”,

WHAT IS INDIA’S POSITION ON IPEF? THE HINDU ANALYSIS

On the face of it, India has welcomed IPEF. At the IPEF launch, Modi said India would work with other members to build an “inclusive and flexible” IPEF. “The Indo-Pacific Economic Framework is a declaration of our collective will to make the region an engine of global economic growth. I believe that there should be three main pillars of resilient supply chains: Trust, transparency and timeliness. I am confident that this framework will help strengthen these three pillars, and pave the way for development, peace and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific region,” Modi said, without mentioning the other three pillars of the proposed trade deal.

WILL IPEF BE BENEFICIAL FOR INDIA? THE HINDU ANALYSIS

IPEF gives India an opportunity to be part of the value chain in the Asia-Pacific region after it exited the RCEP trade deal at the last minute. It also takes care of India’s concern of China being part of RCEP as IPEF by design excludes China. However, the agenda of IPEF poses significant challenges to India’s stated position. On issues like digital commerce, labour and environmental standards,

India and the US have diametrically opposite views. India strongly resists putting such standards in any of the free trade agreements it signs. India didn't join the Osaka Track on the digital economy at the G20 leaders' summit in 2019 as it remains reluctant on setting global rules on e-commerce, holding that this may deny policy space to developing countries to expand their nascent e-commerce sector. India has also been strongly advocating data localization because of its perceived economic benefits and protection of personal data for national security reasons and law enforcement purposes.

HERE WE MENTION ALL INFORMATION ABOUT INDIA SIGNS UP FOR 13-NATION INDO-PACIFIC ECONOMIC FRAMEWORK TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS.

Pradeep Kumar

Significance of Section 153A IPC and Section 295A of IPC : An analysis in special context to its increasing charges and decreasing conviction rate

Context : recently a Dalit professor of Department of History of Delhi university was arrested with the charge of Significance of Section 153A IPC and Section 295A of IPC (objectionable' post on the Gyanvapi mosque row.). He was alleged to have promoted disharmony or enmity between religious groups (Section 153A in the Indian Penal Code) and intentionally and maliciously hurt religious sentiments (Section 295A in the IPC).

TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

INTRODUCTION

The Section 153A IPC and Section 295A of IPC are two important sections which are in consideration among the law experts and the intellectuals . As per the report provided by the National Crime Records Bureau. The use of these sections increased exponentially during some years (After 2014, the numbers of the book cases with such sections increased almost four times). But it does not mean that the incidents of hurtful comments increased at the same pace . In fact

it decreased. The conviction rate in those cases is below 21% (20.4%) as per the data provided by the National Crime Bureau . However there is no data available for the separate sections 295 .

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY OF THESE SECTIONS : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

The objective of the Section 153 A is to punish persons who indulge in wanton vilification or attacks upon the religion, race, place of birth, residence, language etc of any particular group or class or upon the founders and prophets of a religion. The offense is a cognizable offense and the punishment for the same may extend to three years, or with fine, or with both.

This section of IPC was already there when in 1927, Section 295A was brought on the demand of a religious minority community . Actually , the objective of this section was to book any of the British opponents on the allegation of destruction of communal harmony . This section was introduced to appease Muslims so that British policy of Divide and Rule could be implemented easily during that time. However the Assembly members found it a temporary remedy for a temporary aberration. But this is serving that these colonial laws are still there in IPC and are being issued for political benefits .

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF SECTION 295A : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

It is described in the way that through this section the spirit of tolerance amidst religious diversity can be safeguarded. But the reality is that this section has been misused by the police to stop the voice of honest interpretation of religious history , any historical data based on religion, historical research and the social reforms. IOf there are some antisocial elements in the religious practices, or if there are some evil religious practices which are not appropriate in the modern era should be evaluated , but in this case this section may be also used .

However , there must be the need of such provision in the IPC through which communal harmony can be enacted but there are some unnecessary sections in IPC made during colonial period to fulfill the interest of the British rule , those sections must be revives and removed. The Hindu Analysis

However these sections are significant because communal harmony can be protected through these sections but , our Judiciary must be more efficient in This regard . Judiciary should check whether the speech could create communal conflict or not, whether the speech hurts the majority of the people of a particular community or not . Then definitely the section 153 is relevant . but the significance of section 295 A lies in the careful evaluation of the offense.

Unlike other crimes, it is very difficult to check whether the speech would warm the sentiments of any community or any single person. The subjectivity of this section reduces its significance

A critical inquiry of orthodox practices and superstitious beliefs encourages social reforms. an intelligent evaluation is required much more amid the aggressive assertion of religious beliefs by the socio-political hegemon. Even the 1927 Joint Select Committee appreciated the argument that a religious insult inflicted in good faith, with the object of steering reform, would bring the follower's required attention to the critique. The Hindu Analysis

India is a diversified country and there is the guarantee of free speech in the Indian constitution but reliable restrictions are imposed on these rights. The use of this section would discourage the people /intellectuals to bring any rational inquiry

TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

CONCLUSION

On the basis of the above discussion , it can be said that , in a democratic and a plural country, everybody has the right to free speech and expression but those free speech should not hurt the sentiment of the minorities or any other community . In this regard several provisions are there in IPC through which any offender can be punished but the question is whether the use of such sections are not being done to crush the voice of any opponent . In fact , if in any section of the IPC , the conviction rate is less than 50 % , our legislature should revise all those sections ,

and such responsibilities must be fixed for the investigating agencies to increase the conviction rate. If the investigating agencies fail to prove the charges / sections imposed on the accused , must be fined at least .

IN THIS ARTICLE WE MENTION ALL INFORMATION ABOUT SIGNIFICANCE OF SECTION 153A IPC AND SECTION 295A OF IPC : AN ANALYSIS IN SPECIAL CONTEXT TO ITS INCREASING CHARGES AND DECREASING CONVICTION RATE TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS.

Dr. Anshul Bajpai

Railways on the Right Track on Train Manufacture

- In the latest Budget, there was an announcement of 400 new-generation Vande Bharat trains to be built in three years.

WHAT ARE VANDE BHARAT TRAINS?

- Vande Bharat is a semi-high speed (maximum speed of 160 kmph), indigenously designed and manufactured train each of 16 coaches.
- The train is self-propelled as they do not require an engine.
- Also dubbed as Train 18, they operate without a locomotive and are based on a propulsion system called distributed traction power technology.
- Distributed power gives the train higher acceleration and deceleration compared to loco-hauled trains, which take a much longer time to reach top speed or to gradually come to a halt.
- The first Vande Bharat was manufactured by the Integral Coach Factory (ICF), Chennai, in about 18 months as part of the 'Make in India' programme, at a cost of about Rs. 100 crore.
- It has an intelligent braking system with power regeneration for better energy efficiency thereby making it cost, energy and environment efficient.

- The current Vande Bharat trains have seating only in two classes — chair car and executive chair car.
- It incorporates passenger amenities including on-board WiFi entertainment, GPS-based passenger information system, CCTVs, automatic doors, rotating chairs and bio-vacuum type toilets.
- Currently, two Vande Bharat Expresses are operational —one between New Delhi and Varanasi and the other from New Delhi to Katra.

WHAT IS THE GOVERNMENT'S APPROACH TOWARDS THE RAILWAYS?

- The massive jump in investments in railway projects reflects the government's resolve to invest in key sectors of the economy.
- It is clear that the government is betting strongly on Vande Bharat trains.
- While 104 rakes would be manufactured mainly at the ICF and its other factories, there is speculation that the 400 trains were to be manufactured by rolling stock majors of the world and their associates in India.
- However, the government is not following up on its recent radical projects like
- Operation of private trains
- Corporatisation of the Railways' production units (PUs) into a corporation called Indian Railways Rolling Stock Company
- Also, efforts by the Railways to engage major rolling stock manufacturers through a tender for modern train sets under PPP at Kanchrapara had ended in vain.

WHAT BIG MOVES LIE AHEAD?

- Recently, there was news of tendering for a massive 90,000 freight wagons at a cost of Rs. 30,000 crore.
- This was followed by the notice to manufacture 1,200 locomotives at its Dahod factory in PPP mode.
- It has become increasingly clear that the government would pursue its vision to order 400 trains from the private sector at a cost of Rs. 52,000 crore.
- The Railways has floated a large tender of around Rs. 26,000 crore for the procurement of 200 upgraded equivalents of Vande Bharat trains to be built by

a contractor in ICF and at Latur factory.

- It is expected that bids would be called for another lot of 200 aluminium Vande Bharat trains since aluminium trains are lighter, aesthetically-superior and more energy-efficient.
- But, a judicious mix of government and private play for the manufacture of trains is necessary.

Anshum Verma

US Taiwan Relation : An Analysis in reference to recent changes in world politics

IUS TAIWAN RELATION – TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

CONTEXT :

- Recently in the QUAD summit the American President clearly stated that America will continue to give aid to Taiwan militarily in case of an invasion by China. In fact , recently China is again moving towards Taiwan , therefore America had to declare in this regard .
- On the issue of Taiwan, America has declared her view that she would protect the sovereignty of Taiwan from the invasion of China. As per the 1979 communique, the U.S. recognized China, but stated that it merely “acknowledges the Chinese position that there is but one China and Taiwan is part of China”. India’s stand is clear in the matter of Taiwan that India will oppose every means of the Chinese aggression in Indo pacific region

TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

INTRODUCTION :

- The issue of Taiwan had evolved with the declaration of independence of China. America did not recognize the People’s republic of China and on the issue of Taiwan , several meetings were held between Taiwan and China like the Shanghai Communique (1972), the Normalization Communique (1979) and the 1982 Communique. As per the 1979 communique, the U.S. recognized

China, but stated that it merely “acknowledges the Chinese position that there is but one China and Taiwan is part of China”. The Hindu Analysis

- During the Russo Ukrainian conflict indirect support of China to Russia gives a clear indication , that on the matter of Taiwan Russia may support China

WHAT IS TAIWAN ISSUE : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

- Taiwan is a small country across a Taiwan strait and it disintegrated from the mainland of China during the process of the Chinese Civil war . The ruling Kuomintang Part (So called nationalist Party) in the leadership of Chiang kai Shek had to flee to Taiwan and formed a government in taiwan (Republic of China) and simultaneously the Communist Party of China under the leadership of Mao formed the People’s Republic of China (PRC) in the mainland.
- Since then, the PRC considers the island as a renegade province awaiting reunification by peaceful means, if possible. ROC retained its permanent seat in UNSC. But during the cold war , PRC was recognised as a member of UNSC , when US president Nixon visited China (PRC) and China was recognized as one China principle recognizing PRC and not the ROC as China. Taiwan transitioned from a single party state to a multi-party democracy. At the same time China reformed in economic policy and China became one of the leading economic country of the world to tackle for the worst possible scenario of international politics. The Hindu Analysis
- According to the 1972 communique, the U.S. agreed to the ‘one China principle’, with an understanding that it “acknowledges” and “does not challenge” that “all Chinese on either side of the Taiwan Strait maintain that there is but one China and that Taiwan is a part of China.”
- As per the 1979 communique, the U.S. recognized PRC, but simultaneously it recognised Taiwan , as the part of China and established unofficial relations with Taiwan through this communique in the name of the people of both the countries. In this way America continued to provide arms to Taiwan. China had to accuse in this regard in 1982 . and America convinced the world that she is giving arms only for the defensive purpose

WHAT IS THE ISSUE IN 21ST CENTURY : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

- Democracy is flourishing everywhere in the world. And on the ground of democratic values America is justifying its support to Taiwan. The Democratic

People's Party (DPP) became the most powerful political force in Taiwan. The DPP government, led by Tsai Ing Wen has been bringing the drastic change in its international economic relations away from China . This made China worry.

- For the China, Taiwan is a significant island for geopolitical point of view also. This is due to its central location in the First Island Chain between Japan and the South China Sea, which is seen as the first benchmark or barrier for China's power projection. The Reunification of the China will give the birth to supremacy of China in world politics , mainly in Indo pacific region . Therefore, in past some days , China has been continually patrolling near Taiwan strat so that Taiwan could be merged peacefully

US STRATEGY TOWARDS : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

- US strategy is unclear .However US recognized the PRC but simultaneously it is stated that US will accept the peaceful resolution of the future of Taiwan . The US will not accept any aggression from China in the matter of Taiwan .Hence, there is no clear guarantee here that the U.S. will be militarily involved in a situation where China attempts to invade Taiwan, short of supplying “defensive weapons”.

TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

CONCLUSION

As per the above discussion , the situation of the world is gradually worsening. Any Chinese aggression in the matter of Taiwan can provoke America for further reaction and direct support to Taiwan. Since in the Russian Ukrainian conflict, China supports Russia and hence Russia would also support in this matter . The American president has already declared in this regard in the meeting of the Quad. The situation in India is very specific . However , in the matter of Russian Ukrainian conflict India indirectly supported Russia but , in the Indo pacific region , India is making alliances with Japan, Australia and America (rivals of China) because India will also resist any type of Chinese aggression in the matter of LAC.

Dr. Anshul Bajpai

China – A new bully in town

CHINA – A NEW BULLY IN TOWN – TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

Hollywood movie spiderman has a dialogue asserting that “with great powers comes great responsibility”. However, in real life it has been seen that “for a man with a hammer, everyone is a nail”. Keeping that in mind, we can see the same happening in international sphere, where who so ever is powerful violates international norms with impunity. For instance, the invasion of USA in Afghanistan and Iraq or Russia’s invasion in Ukraine.

TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

In this context it is being argued that the rise of China is a case of “New Bully in Town”. This article will try to dive into the question, look at various arguments in favour and against the proposal.

China’s megalomaniac attitude can be seen in its action in South China Sea and East China sea, where it has imposed air defence zone. In South China Sea particularly, China claims almost entire South China Sea defined by its Nine Dash Line. China even defied the Hague based Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA) ruling that the China has no legal basis to claim islands in the South China Seas on historical basis because such rights are extinguished to the extent of incompatibility with the exclusive economic zones provided in the UNCLOS. On the contrary, China Imposed the Air Defence Zone in South China Sea. Moreover, it is kept on making new islands with impunity to claim the Exclusive Economic Zone in the South China Sea and thereby ability to exploit the resources. Foreign Policy Analyst Brahma Chellaney, has put the blame on successive US governments, for Chinese expansionism and the substitution of a free, open, and democratic Indo-Pacific to an illiberal, repressive regional order. For example, USA did not take sides on Sankaku island issues and remained silent on China’s capture of Scarborough shoal. Both are islands in South China Sea. Basically he argues that by camouflaging offence as defence, China presents a targeted state with a Hobson’s choice, that is, to endure the territorial loss (salami slicing) or face a dangerous and costly war

with a great power.

Similarly, Chinese President Xi Jinping has ordered the People's Liberation Army (PLA) to be always ready for battle. China's Major focus has been on USA, as US has now categorically designated China as a strategic challenge. Moreover, the PLA is restructuring itself to prepare itself for the bigger war. At the heart of this lies the development of integrated command, control, communications, computer intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (C4ISR) structure which will enhance their joint operational capacity. Furthermore, the PLA's Strategic Support Force (PLASSF) has sought to integrate capabilities in space, cyberspace and the electro-magnetic spectrum into the PLA's combat arms to fight 'informationised' wars. The Hindu Analysis

Moreover, China has been expanding its military and politico-economic footprints around the world. A point is case the Chinese premier dream project of "Belt and Road Initiative". This project aims to increase Chinese presence around the world. Most importantly putting China as a "Net Security Provider" replacing USA in future. China is also using the BRI to put itself as the new super power in the world – a befitting competitor to USA. Richard N Haass, president of the Council on Foreign Relations, has argued that BRI came as a counter to the Obama Administration "Pivot to Asia Policy". Furthermore, there are voices of concern on the possibility "Thucydides Trap". Thucydides Trap is a situation of conflict in case of rise of one power which challenges the established power leading to wars. Here the rise of China is being seen as a challenge to the Pax Americana. It may lead to wars in future, a glimpse of which we saw in Trade Wars in recent past between USA and China.

It is not like China is sitting ideal. China is trying its best to convince the world that it is indeed not a threat to any nation. The rise of China would be useful for every other country in the world. China's deep pocket would help developing countries and Least Developed Countries (LDCs) to develop. For Example, China argues that BRI (Belt and Road Initiative) is helpful for various countries around the world to get funds to develop themselves. Moreover, USA is doing nothing but carrying out a negative propaganda to defame the peaceful rise of China.

However, if recent events are to be believed, in which China has shown unapologetic use of forceful measures to achieve its goals, Chinese argument of Peaceful rise does not hold much water. This is what Indian foreign policy analyst Brahma Chellaney argues, emphasizing that China always camouflages its offence as defense. The Hindu Analysis

Thus, it is evident from above discussion that dialogue of Spider Man movie may appeals emotional and moral side of man; but in real life “Might always stays Right”. Keeping that in mind the world must make create new arrangements to deal with the Chinese threat. The evolution of QUAD (Quadrilateral grouping), JAI (Japan-Australia-India) grouping and US initiated Summit of Democracies are indeed good measure. Now they must be substituted with more assertive measures to make one thing clear in Chinese leadership that any aggressive expansion and assertive use of power will be resisted at any cost.

Vikas Gupta

Bharat Bill payment: RBI lowers networth bar for non-bank units

CONTEXT

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has reduced the minimum networth requirement for non-bank Bharat Bill Payment Operating Units (BBPOUs) from Rs. 100 crore to Rs. 25 crore.

This move is aimed at facilitating more bill payments through Bharat Bill Payment System (BBPS) and to encourage participation of non-bank Bharat Bill Payment Operating Units (BBPOUs) in BBPS.

WHAT IS BBPS?

Bharat Bill Payments System is an integrated online platform which is being developed by the National Payments Corporation of India for all kinds of bill payments. The platform intends to build an interoperable service through a network of agents, enabling multiple payment modes along with instant generation of receipts of payments. It would connect the utility service companies on one end and all payments service providers on the other.

WHAT IS THE SCOPE OF BBPS?

BBPS aims to make regular bill payments for all utility services easy. That includes water, DTH and telecom. However, the plan is to expand its service area to include school fee, university fee, municipality taxes, mutual funds, insurance premiums etc., but as per clearances from the RBI.

BENEFITS OF USING BBPS?

Customer Benefits: The biggest advantage is that the bill can be paid anywhere and anytime. There would be retail points for bill payments across the country who would be able to accept all kinds of bills payments made through credit cards, debit cards, mobile wallets, net banking (IMPS, NEFT). The BBPS outlets would include banks, ATMs, business correspondents, kiosks etc. and payments would be made securely through the NPCI network with instant receipts getting generated.

Participants Benefits: Utility service providers would be able to get payments instantly, they would not need to maintain bill collection centres by themselves, value added services can be added by the operators, bills can be generated electronically and disbursal can also be electronic. Along with these, the BBPS platform would have fraud monitoring and risk mitigation systems in place in order to ensure smooth online transactions.

Instant Payment: Electronic payments are much faster than the traditional methods of payments such as cash or cheques. In the case of online payments,

you do not have any constraint of time or location. You can easily make payments at any time from anywhere across the globe.

E-payment systems have eliminated the need for going to the banks to make payments. Now your customers do not have to waste their time standing in the long lines at banks. They can easily pay you by using an electronic payment app.

Higher payment security: Despite its robust features, electronic payments systems has not become so popular among the merchants. They are still using the same old methods for accepting payments. Due to which, they are missing out the opportunity for serving more customers.

Electronic payment systems offer you multiple ways of securing your payments such as tokenization, encryption, SSL, etc. Now your customers do not have to enter their card details every time as they can save their card details or complete their transactions by using a One Time Password.

Better customer convenience: Electronic payments can help you to provide convenient payment experience to your customers. It allows your customer to purchase goods on credit by offering them with the pay later facility. Instead of sending constant reminders for payment to your customers, you can automatically collect money after a specific period.

Saves processing costs: If you want to provide payment services to your customers then you first need to tie up with a card processor. The processor will provide you with a payment gateway for processing and in exchange, it will charge a fixed cost from you. This cost is very high.

On the other hand, if you are using an electronic payment system in your business then you do not have to incur such high charges. You just have to pay a fixed subscription to your service provider.

Low risk of theft: The phrase 'Cash is the king' is popular in the business world, but this king has also had some limitations. If you are using cash for accepting

payments from customers, chances are there it can be stolen. Also, you need to take high safety measures in depositing cash into your bank account.

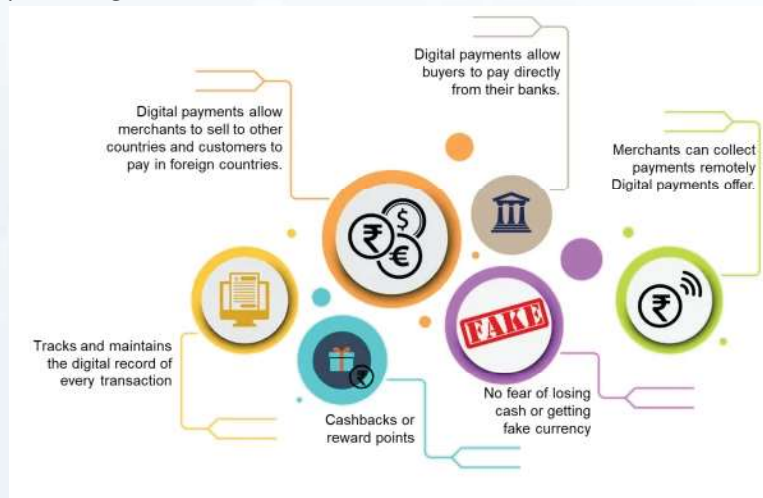
But this risk can be decreased if you are using a secure electronic payment system in your business. By using it, you do not have to worry about your payment record. You can easily get an accurate record of all your transactions at the end of the day.

Transparent: Transparency becomes an essential factor when it comes to payments. And when you are using the digital medium for accepting payments, then it becomes essential for you to maintain transparency in your transactions.

In the case of electronic payments, you do not have to worry about the record of your payment details. Also, you can provide the payment details to your customers beforehand. So that there will be fewer chances of confusion.

Contactless: In the times of the COVID-19 pandemic, people have started finding ways of avoiding human touch to save themselves from getting affected by the coronavirus. Due to this, the need for contactless payments has increased.

You can use contactless POS terminals in your business to avoid the human touch. In this system, the payee needs to hold his phone near the terminal and his payment will get automatically processed. Also, you can enable your customers to make payments by using QR codes or One Time Passwords (OTP).



CONCLUSION

The cash transactions have started decreasing after the integration of an electronic payment system in the markets. This means the small businesses need to start using the latest technology to prevent the risk of being overtaken by the competitors.

Pradeep Kumar

Jawaharlal Nehru : A Visionary leader of India

Context : its death anniversary of our first prime minister J. L Nehru. Entire country is paying a humble tribute to our visionary leader and his great statements.

INTRODUCTION:

The great freedom fighter, a great statesman and the maker of India as a Nation J. L Nehru took birth on 14 November 1889 in Allahabad (Modern Prayagraj). He was an eminent leader of congress, who sacrificed his entire life for the consolidation of India as a nation . He had to face many ups and downs in his life . His vision for modern India is still inspirable for us . His idea of democratic socialism is still relevant in Indian politics. He laid the foundation of Indian foreign policy . The NAM (Non alignment Movement) initiated by Nehru played an important role in world politics regarding decolonization during 20th century but also in 21st century , the NAM is leading all developing countries and successfully countering the economic monopoly of the capitalist countries

CONTRIBUTION OF NEHRU IN INDIA'S FREEDOM STRUGGLE :

- After completion of his study of law , Nehru returned India by 1912 and started his practice of law but very soon he left this practice , and joined home rule league of Annie Besant and demanded for the Swaraj . He participated in the Non Cooperation movement of Mahatma Gandhi also.
- He was the leader among those who criticize the act of Mahatma Gandhi of Withdrawing the Non Cooperation Movement after a small incident of Chauri Chaura in 1922 . In 1923, he became the general secretary of the congress.

Nehru demonstrated against the Simon commission from the land of Lucknow . With Subhash , Nehru also strongly condemned the Nehru report (A report introduced by Motilal Nehru, The father of J.L. Nehru ,) on the ground of the dominion state. Nehru rejected the demand of dominion state and sought for the Purna Swaraj (Complete freedom) in 1929.

- In the Lahore session of congress in 1929 the resolution of Purna Swaraj was passed . In his presidential address during this session Nehru declared his vision and stated – “ I am complete socialism and I do not have any faith in prince and princes ”
- Nehru led the Civil Disobedience Movement in 1930-31 from Lucknow and Here he was arrested two times . In his entire life Nehru was arrested 9 times and for more than 3000 days , he was kept in jail during the freedom struggle . During the freedom struggle , Nehru had already declared the foreign policy of India .
- In his presidential address in 1936 Lucknow session he stated that _ “We see the world divided into two vast groups today – the imperialist and fascist on one side , the socialist and the nationalist on other . Inevitably , we take our stand with the progressive forces of the world which are ranged against fascism and imperialism” and after Independence , Nehru had declared the all the newly independent countries should maintain equidistant from the both poles of the world (Socialist- under the leadership of the USSR and the Capitalist under the leadership of the USA) Gandhi ji loved Nehru and hence he declared Nehru his political heir . Nehru was elected the prime minister of Interim government also

CONTRIBUTION OF NEHRU AS A PRIME MINISTER

When Nehru became prime minister , he had to face several challenges

- How to merge princely state in India at maximum extent
- How to consolidate India as a nation
- How to resolve the issue of language based demand of the state
- How to resolve the issue of tribals
- How to tackle the communal riots

- How to tackle the issue of Kashmir, Goa, Pondicherry and the North east state
 - How to tackle the Chinese aggression
 - How to develop India economically with the support of the big countries without compromising its own sovereignty
 - How to create the maximum unitary elements in the diversified culture
 - How to accommodate the tribal culture keeping their identities intact
 - How to conduct election peacefully
 - How to bring rapid economic growth without hampering the employment
-
- Nehru successfully tackled all those challenges and provided us a strong and consolidated India . It was only Nehru and his vision through which these challenges could be tackled and India proved the prediction of all the big leaders of Britain as well as some intellectuals of India that the democracy would not survive in India for long time
 - Nehru believed in dissent and diversity. Nehru appointed all his opponents in his cabinet. This type of tolerable political policy is inspiring for modern politics. Nehru appointed Syama Prasad Mukherjee from Jan Sangh, who was the staunch opponent of the Nehru

CONCLUSION

- As per the above discussion, it is almost clear that Nehru is the maker of new India . He not only consolidated India politically but also culturally and emotionally . He accommodated all the diversified cultures . Socialism and secularism were the fundamentals of Nehru's vision . Through the planning commission , Nehru tried to develop India economically in a justified way . However, Nehru was not also free from criticism .
- In his leadership , India lost the Indo China war and we had to lose some land and the stand of Nehru in the matter of Kashmir is still questionable that why he raised the issue of referendum . But If we analyze both the elements of Nehru's failure , we conclude , in such failures up to certain extent the success is also hidden . During Indo China war , we showed the world his independent foreign policy and gave the shelter to Dalai lama and the issue of referendum

in Kashmir was raised with this hope that the people of Kashmir would be brought in India's favor and simultaneously, In world politics India was in upper hand, India's army was deployed there. So if Pakistan accepted the demand for a referendum, the situation may be in the favor of India .

- In Sum, we on behalf of India, today are remembering our great leader , and architect of the modern and consolidated India J. L Nehru

Dr. Anshul Bajpai

International Day of Action for Women's Health

The date 28th may is recognised as the International Day of Action for Women's Health by the united nation in the year of 1987. The Latin American and Caribbean Women's Health Network (LACWHN) and Women's Global Network for Reproductive Rights (WGNRR) are working together to make this campaign successful.

INTRODUCTION

- Women in the world have been deprived for thousands of years and this has always been the issue of how to establish equality based on gender . Women are physically weak in comparison to men therefore they could not play more role in the production and therefore they were deprived from the several social , economica, religious , political and educational rights. Therefore the status of the women deteriorated continuously . Gradually several socio religious evil practices have evolved (Especially in India) like Sati, purdah etc. but in modern days , it is the need of the world to uplift the status of the women which could not be possible without improving their health. Once they would be healthy and educated they would be more economically self reliant . Once All Women will be aware and economically self reliant. They could easily raised there issue inform of the world and in this way they could protect themselves from any type of the harassment

THE OBJECTIVES OF THIS DAY

- The main objective of this day is to make the women aware regarding their sexual harassment. For this purpose this platform can be used. This is the platform which would continuously remind the governments of the world to make laws for the right of the women related to Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR).
- There are the following rights related to Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR), on which governments of the world should make the law
- Women should be aware regarding the sexual information. Many women can not get whether she is sexually harassed or because of the lack of sex education. In modern society, through the sex education, not only women but also child can also be protected from the sexual harassment
- Every Woman has the right to choose her partner. However in many orthodox societies of the world, parents are the decision makers in this regard. But if the woman is educated and economically self-reliant, she generally enjoys this right
- Generally, the right on the sexual activeness should also be taken by the woman. It must be decided by the woman whether she is ready for the sex or not. Generally in orthodox society, the wife is considered mere a lady to whom husband can have sex when he needs. In such sexual relationship the consent of the wife is generally ignored. However some progressive governments are making such laws and a significant debate on the marital rape is going on whether it should be criminal offence or not
- Women should have the right to decide the numbers of the children and the time of having children. Generally, husband has the right of the family planning. In most countries, without marriage, children can not have children
- Apart from it, there are many issues like the Safe abortion and post-abortion care must be resolved. In India like countries where the abortion is socially prohibited. There must be several laws in this regards

CONCLUSION

As per the above discussion it is concluded that the countries of the world should have resolved all the health issues of women. In Indian context, many sex workers,

however are not having general fundamental right , however honorable supreme court has instructed to the police to respectfully behave with sex workers, They are also human and they cannot be deprived from the human rights .

Besides, society should also change their value system as per the needs of the world . Several progressive value systems should be evolved in society related to the health issues of women . On this occasion of 28 may, the entire world is discussing the issue of what should be done for women's health and what measures should be adopted by the countries of the world for the health of women .

Dr. Anshul Bajpai

Dip in Forex Reserves

- India's foreign exchange reserves have now fallen below the \$600 billion mark amid capital outflows and strengthening dollar.

WHAT ARE FOREIGN EXCHANGE RESERVES?

- Foreign exchange reserves are assets denominated in a foreign currency that are held by a central bank.
- These may include foreign currencies, bonds, treasury bills, and other government securities.
- These assets are held to ensure that a central government agency has backup funds if their national currency rapidly devalues or becomes all together insolvent.
- It helps to check the balance payments and influences the foreign exchange rate of its currency and maintains stability in financial markets.
- The two most popular foreign assets are US dollar-denominated assets and euro-denominated assets.
- China is the largest foreign currency reserve holder in the world.

WHAT ABOUT THE COMPOSITION OF FCAs?

- The FCAs comprise multi-currency assets that are held in multi-asset portfolios as per the existing norms conforming to the best international practices.
- The forex reserves include
 - Investments on foreign securities
 - Investments on other central banks and the BIS
 - Deposits with commercial banks overseas
 - Gold holdings

WHAT HAPPENED TO THE FOREX RESERVES OF INDIA?

- The foreign exchange reserves declined from \$642.45 billion (September, 2021) to \$597.72 billion (April 2022).
- The RBI's special drawing rights and reserve position in the International Monetary Fund also dipped by \$33 million and \$26 million.

REASONS FOR THE DECLINE

- Fall in foreign currency assets (FCAs) – The foreign currency assets also include the effect of appreciation or depreciation of non-US units like the euro, pound and yen held in the reserves.
- Appreciation of the US dollar- The demand for dollars remained high as the Russia-Ukraine war led to a spike in oil and commodity prices.
- Capital outflows by foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) – FPIs pulled out \$21.43 billion since September 2021 as the US Federal Reserve started monetary policy tightening and interest rate hikes.
- Effect of gold prices- Decline in gold prices has also played a part in the decline in foreign exchange reserves.

WHAT IS THE IMPACT ON THE RUPEE?

- The rupee depreciated 57 paise and touched a low of 76.96 just below the all-time low of 76.97 to close at 76.92 against the US dollar.

- If the rupee slides further, the RBI will be forced to intervene in the forex market by selling dollars from its forex reserves.
- If the RBI gives preference to sustain the forex reserves level, there could be some rupee depreciation in the horizon.

Anshum Verma

The Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act

THE MEDICAL TERMINATION OF PREGNANCY ACT – TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

- Despite amendments, the Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act does not establish the prominence of the woman's right to decide.

TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

WHAT IS THE PROVISION AVAILABLE UNDER THE GENERAL CRIMINAL LAW?

- Under the Indian Penal Code, voluntarily causing a woman with child to miscarry is an offence attracting a jail term of up to 3 years or fine or both
- An exception has been provided when it was done in good faith where the purpose was to save the life of the pregnant woman.
- A pregnant woman causing herself to miscarry is also an offender apart from the person causing the miscarriage.

WHAT IS THE MEDICAL TERMINATION OF PREGNANCY (MTP) ACT ABOUT? THE HINDU ANALYSIS

- The MTP law is an exception to the IPC provisions and allows abortion until 20 weeks of pregnancy.
- Accessing MTP- The MTP can be accessed
 - If the continuation of pregnancy would involve a risk to the life of the pregnant woman or result in grave injury to her physical or mental health.

- If the pregnancy is as a result of rape or failure of contraceptive used by the pregnant woman or her partner to limit the number of children or to prevent a pregnancy. The Hindu Analysis
- If there is a substantial risk that if the child was born, it would suffer from serious physical or mental abnormality
- Also, the medical opinion of the medical practitioner registered under the MTP Act is required.
- Gestational limitation– The pregnancy can be terminated for any of the above reasons, in the opinion of a single registered medical practitioner up to 20 weeks of the gestational age.
- From 20 weeks up to 24 weeks, the opinion of two registered medical practitioners is required. The Hindu Analysis
- This extended gestational limit is applicable to certain categories of women – survivor of sexual assault or rape, minors, change of marital status during the ongoing pregnancy, major physical disabilities, mentally-ill, pregnancy in humanitarian settings or disaster.
- Any decision for termination of pregnancy beyond 24 weeks gestational age, only on the ground of foetal abnormalities can be taken by a Medical Board as set up in each State. The Hindu Analysis
- Consent– The termination of pregnancy cannot be done in the absence of the consent of the pregnant person, irrespective of age and mental health.
- Exception– The law provides that where it is immediately necessary to save the life of the pregnant woman, the pregnancy can be terminated at any time by a single registered medical practitioner.

WHAT ARE THE CONCERNS DESPITE LEGALISING ACCESS TO ABORTION IN CERTAIN CASES? THE HINDU ANALYSIS

- Increased cases- Just before the lockdown following the COVID pandemic, courts across the country over the preceding four years had seen close to 500 cases of pregnant women seeking permission to terminate their pregnancy.
- In a number of these cases, the courts had articulated the right of a pregnant woman to decide on the continuation of her pregnancy as a part of her right to health and right to life. The Hindu Analysis
- Right to privacy and life– The landmark right to privacy judgement of the Supreme Court even held that the decision making by a pregnant person on

whether to continue a pregnancy or not is part of such a person's right to privacy as well and, therefore, the right to life.

- The standards set out in this judgement were also not incorporated in the amendments being drafted. The Hindu Analysis
- Non-sync with other laws– The new law is not in sync with other central laws such as the laws on persons with disabilities, on mental health and on transgender persons.
- Conflation of laws-The amendments did not make any attempts to remove the confluences between the MTP Act and the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act or the Drugs and Cosmetics Act.

Anshum Verma

Internal security threats : An analysis in context to changing paradigm in past years

INTERNAL SECURITY THREATS – TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

CONTEXT :

- For the last two months , everywhere in print media and the electronic media the main headlines are related to the Russia – Ukraine conflict . India is facing several challenges for internal and external securities. These are completely ignored by mainstream media . Apart From it , the increasing economic crisis that evolved during several months is also ignored . Recently , several killings in J&K and Punjab and increasing Maoist activities are the most prominent incidents related to threats for internal security

TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

INTRODUCTION

- It has been observed that incidents of personal killings have increased for the last several months. Almost daily such types of incidents are happening in Jammu and Kashmir. However the militant activities have been continuing in Kashmir ever since 1947, but after the dilution of 370, the trend and the nature

of militant activities had changed during the last 2 years . Most of the militants are locally supported , however the across border support is also continuing . but the increasing local support of the militant definitely must be analyzed . One reason behind this may be the absence of any representative governments.

- Similarly the Maoist activities are also increasing for several months. Recently , in Chhattisgarh Maoist killed many leaders of the congress as well as security personals .Another shocking challenge for the internal security are the incidents of the individual killings in Punjab in past one month .

WHAT ARE SHORTCOMINGS AND LIMITATIONS OF THE SECURITY VIGILS IN INDIA : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

There are several limitations of the security vigils in India which should be shorted out

- Security agencies can keep a close eye on the security of the country but these agencies must be in proper coordination with the police (Security forces) of the particular states . These forces can only deal with the immediate threat. If these forces have led to any security threat on time, it could be stopped . Therefore proper coordination is required. The Hindu Analysis
- A permanent measure and plan must be adopted by the state. But it can tackle the forthcoming incidents. To tackle immediate incidents , the state government should also develop such efficient information channels coordinating with central agencies
- All agencies should not think that priority must be given to border security challenges . Internal and external, both securities are equally needed . For internal security, agencies must be more efficient and professional , because the forces threatening the state have lately become nimbler in adopting new technologies and modes of warfare. The Hindu Analysis
- Both the authorities and security agencies should acknowledge the importance of resorting to statecraft as a vital adjunct to the role played by the security agencies. Because statecraft involves fine-grained comprehension of inherent problems; also an ability to quickly respond to political challenges.
- Equal emphasis on implementation of policies and programmes must be given. Everything should not leave on the security agencies

A SECURITY THREAT IN SOUTH : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

- Apart from the security threat in J and K, intelligence and police officials appear concerned about a likely revival of Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE)-sponsored activities in Tamil Nadu. a possible revival of LTTE-sponsored militancy in Sri Lanka following the recent economic crises is also observed . It is also observed that an attempt could be made to reach out to elements in Tamil Nadu to revive the spirit of the 1980s. This situation again needs deft statecraft to prevent a resurgence of the past.

SECURITY THREAT IN PUNJAB : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

- Recently it has also been observed that some incidents of the pro Khalistan movement and the individual killings have increased which is the result of the failure of the cooperation of state security agencies and the central agencies. These pro Khalistani incidents are the acts of the sleeper cells .pro-Khalistan sentiment is present in pockets in the United Kingdom and in Europe, it has not been in evidence in India for some time.

THE SECURITY THREAT IN NORTHEAST REGION : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

- In Northeast regions, however, up to maximum extent we have successfully settled the issues of the tribal , but this is some evidence of the revival of the ULFA (United Liberation Front of Asom-Independent) again in Assam . Currently all the militant operations in northeast regions are being operated from Myanmar with the support of China or Pakistan. Latest report of the security agencies is more dangerous in which it is stated that ULFA had started the recruitment of the soldiers . Similarly, the National Socialist Council of Nagalim (I-M) again started shouting for the resolution of their issue . Both instances merit the use of statecraft so that the situation does not get out of hand.

THE MAOIST SECURITY THREATS IN TRIBAL AREAS : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

- After a long gap , the Maoist activities again restarted in the tribal regions of Chhattisgarh. Generally Maoist never believed in the killings of the civilians , they are inspired from the Charu Majumdar who demanded for their rights. But after the observation of the trends of the killing in tribal regions by the Nuclides it is almost clear that they are now being influenced with the foreign

countries

SECURITY THREATS IN KASHMIR : THE HINDU ANALYSIS

- If we observe the style of the individual killings in Kashmir , we clearly point out the changing trends before the dilution of the art 370. Before the dilution of article 370, however militant activities were there but generally militants were not supported by the local people. Earlier culprits were either army personnel or politicians or any loyal to the government of India . But recently it has been observed that the killings are the targeted and done individually supported by the locals . Evidently, the doctrine of containment pursued by the Jammu and Kashmir police and security agencies is not having the desired effect. Security analysts believe that a sizable segment of the new cadres fall into what they perceive as 'unpredictable', and this further aggravates the situation. In Jammu and Kashmir today, as also elsewhere, there is no all-in-one grand strategy to deal with the situation. The missing ingredient is statecraft which alone can walk in step with the changing contours of a long-standing problem.

TODAY CURRENT AFFAIRS

CONCLUSION :

- As per the above discussion , it is almost clear that India is facing several challenges of internal security as well. Our main concern is that those organizations (militant) which had been crushed before 2-3 decades are again trying to revive . This situation can be only tackled by the strategy of statecraft. A multi tier security strategy is needed with the coordination of state security forces and the state security agencies , central security forces and the agencies and some other new institutions, if needed should be constituted. Because, internal security is more essential in comparison to border security. Our Armed forces are ready to counter any external threat but the internal threats can be countered only with the coordination of all agencies and the political parties as well as the public irrespective of any caste, religion etc. Increasing communalism is also a big threat for the internal security. These security challenges are the by product of the communalism.

Dr. Anshul Bajpai