

Social ISSUES

MAINS
365

Classroom Study Material 2025

June 2024 to May 2025



SOCIAL ISSUES

Table of Contents

| | | | |
|--|-----------|---|-----------|
| 1. INDIAN SOCIETY AND IMPACT OF TECHNOLOGY | 2 | 4.2. Atrocities against Scheduled Castes | 40 |
| 1.1. Emerging Technologies and Contemporary Society | 5 | 4.3. Persons with Disability (PwDs) at a Glance | 42 |
| 1.1.1. Technology and Education at a Glance | 6 | 4.3.1. Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPwD) Act, 2016 | 42 |
| 1.1.2. Technology and Socialization at a Glance | 7 | 4.4. Senior-care at a Glance | 44 |
| 1.1.3. Technology and Family at a Glance | 7 | 4.4.1. Inter-generational Communication Gap | 45 |
| 1.1.4. Technology and Sexual Behaviour at a Glance | 8 | 4.5. Manual Scavenging | 45 |
| 1.1.5. Financial Revolution and Society at a Glance | 8 | 4.6. Keywords | 47 |
| 1.2. Tier-2 Influencers redefining Cultural Capital in Digital India | 9 | 4.7. Practice Question | 47 |
| 1.3. Cinema and Society | 10 | 5. EDUCATION | 48 |
| 1.4. Social Identities at a Glance | 13 | 5.1. School Education at a Glance | 48 |
| 1.5. Changing Institution of Family | 14 | 5.2. Three-Language Formula | 48 |
| 1.5.1. Family - based Childcare | 15 | 5.3. Learning Outcomes | 50 |
| 1.6. Marriage at a Glance | 18 | 5.4. Quality Higher Education in India | 51 |
| 1.7. Caste System at a Glance | 19 | 5.4.1. Performance of Indian Universities in QS World University Rankings | 52 |
| 1.8. Keywords | 19 | 5.5. Foreign University campus in India | 53 |
| 1.9. Practice Question | 20 | 5.6. Ragging in India | 55 |
| 2. WOMEN | 21 | 5.7. Keywords | 56 |
| 2.1. Women-led Development | 21 | 5.8. Practice Question | 56 |
| 2.2. Women-led Self-Help Groups (SHGs): Lakhpati Didi | 22 | 6. HEALTHCARE | 57 |
| 2.3. Violence against Women at a Glance | 25 | 6.1. Ayushman Bharat PM-JAY | 57 |
| 2.4. Rising Manosphere threatening Gender Equality | 25 | 6.2. Digital Health | 58 |
| 2.5. Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace | 27 | 6.3. Mental Healthcare at a Glance | 61 |
| 2.6. Care Economy at a Glance | 29 | 6.4. Maternal Health and Family Planning | 61 |
| 2.7. Keywords | 29 | 6.5. Keywords | 62 |
| 2.8. Practice Question | 30 | 6.6. Practice Question | 63 |
| 3. CHILDREN | 31 | 7. NUTRITION AND DEVELOPMENTAL ISSUES | 64 |
| 3.1. Technology and Children at a Glance | 31 | 7.1. Middle-Income Class | 64 |
| 3.2. Social Media Addiction in Children | 31 | 7.2. Social Implications of Workplace Automation | 65 |
| 3.3. Child Sexual Exploitative and Abuse Material (CSEAM) | 32 | 7.3. Work from Home | 66 |
| 3.4. Child Labour at a Glance | 35 | 7.3.1. 'Right to Disconnect' in India | 68 |
| 3.5. Child Marriage in India | 35 | 7.4. Population Growth and Management | 69 |
| 3.6. Keywords | 37 | 7.5. Global Hunger Index | 70 |
| 3.7. Practice Question | 37 | 7.6. Urbanization at a Glance | 73 |
| 4. OTHER VULNERABLE SECTIONS | 38 | 7.7. Internal Displacement | 74 |
| 4.1. Tribal Population in India at a Glance | 38 | 7.8. Loneliness | 75 |
| 4.1.1. Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan | 39 | 7.9. Keywords | 76 |
| | | 7.10. Practice Question | 76 |
| | | 8. SOCIAL ISSUES PREVIOUS YEAR QUESTION 2013- 2024 (SYLLABUS-WISE) | 77 |
| | | 9. APPENDIX: KEY FACTS AND DATA | 83 |

Preface

To the Aspirant Who Dares to Dream

In the quiet corners of libraries across India, in the solitude of late-night study sessions, and in the hearts of millions who dare to dream of serving the nation, lies an unwavering determination to crack one of the world's most challenging examinations – the UPSC Civil Services Examination.

Mains 365 was born from that very spirit of determination and the recognition that success in UPSC CSE Mains 2025 demands more than just hard work; it requires strategic preparation, comprehensive understanding, and the ability to connect diverse streams of knowledge into coherent, impactful answers.

Q.1 Why 90% of UPSC aspirants fail to crack mains?

- **Scattered Information:** Jumping between multiple sources creates confusion.
- **Lack of Relevance:** Many resources fail to map current issues with the UPSC syllabus.
- **Missing Analysis:** Factual content without perspectives, stakeholders, or solutions lacks impact.
- **Overlooking Diversity:** Ignoring regional, gender, caste, and economic dimensions limits answer depth.
- **Poor Answer Structure:** Not knowing how to present knowledge effectively.

But what if you could overcome ALL these challenges with ONE comprehensive resource?



Q2. Why Mains 365 Social Issues?

This document is your **one-stop annual compendium** of the most relevant, examinable, and multidimensional developments in Indian society and emerging social issues—**curated, analyzed, and organized** strictly according to the UPSC syllabus and evolving examination pattern.

The document enriches your preparation not just for GS-I (Indian Society) and GS-II (Social Justice) but also enhances essay writing on topics such as “Social media is triggering ‘Fear of Missing Out’ amongst the youth, precipitating depression and loneliness” asked by the UPSC in Essay paper in 2024.



Q3. Will it actually save my time in the exam hall?

Yes – when used correctly. Visual aids and infographics serve as quick recall tools. The multidimensional treatment of topics ensures that your answers reflect nuance, depth, and awareness—the very things UPSC values.



1.1. WOMEN-LED DEVELOPMENT

Why in the News?

→ CAN BE USED AS INTRODUCTION

Recently, on the 30th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, governments adopted a declaration on the empowerment of women and girls reaffirm the principle of Women-led Development.

Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BPA)

- ▶ It was adopted in 1995 at the Fourth World Conference on Women, stressing on upholding all human rights and fundamental freedoms for every woman and girl, without exception.
- ▶ On its 30th anniversary, Beijing+30 Action Agenda, with 6 priority actions (Digital Revolution, zero violence, etc.) were released.

| Women's Development | Women-led Development |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Involves programmes designed to help women, without necessarily involving them in their planning, implementation, and evaluation. ▶ e.g., maternal health programs, girls' education projects, quotas for women in educational institutions, etc. ▶ Women are seen as passive recipients of development programs. ▶ Top-down approach to decision-making about women development lacking women's adequate participation. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ A paradigm shift where women are seen not just as beneficiaries, but as leaders, decision-makers, and innovators in the process of development. ▶ e.g., enhanced women's representation in local governance, corporate leadership, etc. ▶ Recognizes that women often have unique insights into community needs and can offer innovative solutions based on their lived experiences. ▶ Bottom-up approach to encourage women's participation in decision-making. E.g., SHG movement. |

CONTRAST TABLE

Significance of Women-led Development

- ▶ **Women Empowerment:** Shifting the narrative from women as mere recipients of welfare to Agents of Empowerment.
- ▶ **Gender Equality:** Tackles generational inequality by breaking gender stereotypes and rejecting norms that sustain gender disparity.
 - **Global Gender Gap Index 2025:** India ranked 131th out of 148 countries, slipping 2 places compared to 2024.
- ▶ **Economic Empowerment** Bridging the gender gap in employment could potentially lead to a **30% increase in the country's GDP**.
- ▶ **Rural Development and Poverty Alleviation: Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana - National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM)** mobilised a total of 8.01 Crore women from poor and vulnerable communities in SHGs, increasing household incomes by 22%.
- ▶ **Sustainability:** Deccan Development Society collaborates with nearly 5,000 Dalit and Indigenous women small farmers to restore thousands of hectares of farmland through sustainable agricultural practices

ANALYSIS SUPPORTED BY DATA

Q4. What gives my answers extra credibility?

What gives your answers extra credibility is the integration of **authentic data, real-life case studies**, and **legal-constitutional references**, along with **global frameworks** like SDGs and CEDAW.



Q5. How is it structured for the 3-hour examination?

Every topic follows the golden sequence—Introduction(context)→Necessary Background information→Multi-dimensional analysis—so you can lift the framework, plug in your insights, and write at full speed while others are still outlining.



Q6. Can you demonstrate with an actual question?

PYQ: “Do you think marriage as a sacrament in losing its value in Modern India?”

Quick extract from Mains 365 – Social Issues Marriage at a Glance →

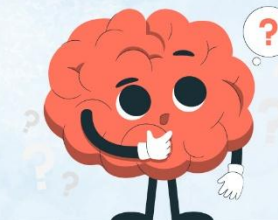
- Traditional functions of marriage
- Contemporary structural changes in the institution of marriage
- Contemporary functional changes in the institution of marriage
- Factors behind the changes in the institution of marriage

Plug these into Intro–Body–Conclusion:

Start by defining the marriage and its functions. Illustrate contemporary structural and functional changes in the institution of marriage with relevant examples and the factors behind them. Conclude by suggesting the need of adaptation of the institution of family with the changes in the institution of marriage.

Result will be a focussed 150 words answer linking the recent context with the arguments substantiating them with relevant facts and examples – just what UPSC expects in the Mains examination.

Result: A focused, enriched answer grounded in theory and contemporary ethical discourse—exactly what UPSC expects.



Q7. Any final pro tip?

Approach this document not as a book to read once but as a repository of frameworks. Internalize the use of contemporary examples and structure your answers with the cues provided. You'll write faster, think clearer, and score better.



Best Wishes,

Team VisionIAS





1. INDIAN SOCIETY AND IMPACT OF TECHNOLOGY

1.1. EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES AND CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY

Why in the News?

Technologies such as ICT, Artificial Intelligence, etc., are playing significant role in shaping and transforming various aspects of the contemporary society.

Positive impact of technology on society

- **Communication and Connectivity: Social Media** platforms such as Facebook have changed the way people communicate, share information, and build relationships.
- **Information Access:** Internet has **democratized the access to information**.
- **Work and Employment: Remote work**, transformed traditional office dynamics, rise of **Gig economy**, etc.
- **Social Relationships:** Interest-based forums facilitate connections with like-minded individuals, support for long-distance relationships, online spaces for marginalized groups to find support and connection, etc.
- **Sexuality: Contraceptive and assisted reproductive technologies** have freed sexuality from the needs of reproduction and played an important role for individuals to explore their sexuality.
 - Internet has also provided a **platform for individuals to explore and express their sexual identity**, including those who identify as LGBTQIA+.
- **Entertainment:** The rise of **streaming platforms** has **changed how people consume entertainment**, moving away from traditional TV and movie-watching methods.
 - **Online gaming** has created vast virtual communities, allowing gamers to connect and collaborate globally.

Negative impact of technology on society

- **Digital Divide:** Disparities in access to information, technology, and opportunities have exacerbated existing social inequalities.
- **Social Isolation:** Prevalence of online communication and social media contributes to reduced face-to-face interaction, potentially leading to feelings of isolation and loneliness.
 - **New parenting challenges**, such as managing screen time and navigating online safety for children.
- **Job Displacement: Automation and AI** may lead to job displacement in certain sectors, creating socio-economic challenges for affected individuals and communities.
- **Addiction and Mental Health issues:** Excessive use of digital devices, social media, and online entertainment can contribute to addiction adversely affecting mental health.
 - Online environment facilitate cyber-bullying, leading to mental health issues among victims.
- **Loss of traditional skills:** Reliance on technology leads to a decline in certain skills, potentially affecting employment prospects and self-sufficiency.
- **Social comparison and image concerns:** Promotion of unrealistic standards, contributing to feelings of inadequacy, body image issues, and social comparison.
- **Polarization and intolerance: Algorithmic biases** over social media reinforce users' existing beliefs by showing content that aligns with their perspectives, through '**Filter Bubbles**' and '**Digital Echo-chambers**'.
 - **Deepfakes and manipulated media** can be used to spread false and misleading information, contributing to intolerance and discrimination.
 - **Sexuality and relationships:** Virtual relationships, secretive communications, digital intimacy, etc., **encourages adultery to sabotage existing monogamous relationships**.

Conclusion

Embracing the positives, understanding the pitfalls, and steering with ethical mindfulness pave the path to a future where technology uplifts humanity with compassion and inclusivity.

1.1.1. TECHNOLOGY AND EDUCATION AT A GLANCE

Technology and Education

Technology has changed the way of learning, empowered educators to deliver immersive, personalized learning experiences, and enhanced accessibility.

Key Initiatives

| | | | |
|---------------------------------|--|--|--|
| National Education Policy, 2020 | National Programme on Technology Enhanced Learning (NPTEL) | ICT-based Initiatives such as DIKSHA (Digital Infrastructure for Knowledge Sharing), SWAYAM (Study Webs of Active –Learning for Young Aspiring Minds), etc. | Integration of AI in Education with the help of IndiaAI Mission |
|---------------------------------|--|--|--|

Positive Impacts

- **Personalized Learning Opportunities:** For example, **schools in Kerala** using **virtual reality (VR)/augmented reality (AR)** to teach geography, science etc.
- **Improved Teacher productivity and efficiency** (E.g. Projector, smart whiteboards etc.)
- Accessibility**
 - Online education during COVID-19 pandemic
 - Covering remote areas E.g. Distance Education
 - Access to foreign Universities, content, etc.
 - Breaking caste and class barrier.
- **Other:** Improved resource management, etc.

Negative Impacts

| | | | |
|--|---|---|---|
| Reduced interaction with teachers in formal setting | Barrier in inculcating values in comparison to conventional system | Reduction in quality as monitoring becomes difficult | Distraction and Misuse E.g. use of social media, screen time etc. |
|--|---|---|---|

Way Forward (by National Digital Education Architecture)

| | | | |
|---|--|---|--|
| Blended approach with online and experiential learning | Educational programmes to be made available 24x7 in different languages | Availability of affordable computing devices to eliminate digital divide | Provide assistive tools for monitoring progress of diverse group of learners |
|---|--|---|--|

1.1.2. TECHNOLOGY AND SOCIALIZATION AT A GLANCE

Technology and Socialization

Socialization refers to the process through which individuals **acquire social behaviors, norms, and values** from various social agents such as families, schools, peers, and the mass media.

➤ The new pattern is also sometimes referred as "**socio-virtualization**," **blending virtual interactions with traditional socialization agents**.

Positive Impacts

- Enhanced exposure to different **cultures**, races, **socio-economic** backgrounds, and **religions**.
➤ This exposure has also helped in comparing, analyzing norms and social issues from different perspectives.
- Interaction with **peers** has increased and they emerged as new dominant factor of socialization especially in young age. E.g. prominent increase in use of WhatsApp
- **Gamification of social skills** (e.g. opinion polls) enables real-time learning.
- Provided **democratized medium** to express one-self to make an intended social impact.

Negative Impacts

Accepting **norms** and **values** without much scrutiny especially children

Decreased **human contact**. E.g. Experts highlight that mobile phones are replacing **Child cuddling**

Promoting **vested interest**. E.g. Religious and caste norms

Conclusion

The negative consequences of the Socio-virtualization can be managed by promoting face-to-face socialization, setting up boundaries and expectations etc.

1.1.3. TECHNOLOGY AND FAMILY AT A GLANCE

Technology and Family

In the recent times, technology has affected different aspects of family ranging from interaction to parenting.

Positive Impacts

- **Increased Communication and Connectivity:** E.g. Enhanced interaction with the help of video calls etc.
- **Work-life Balance:** E.g. Hybrid working culture
- **Leisure time for Women:** Domestic chores can be finished efficiently with the help of advanced machines such as Microwave.
➤ Devices based on **Internet of Technology (IoT)** will further **increase their efficiency**.

Negative Impacts

Reduced Interaction "Alone Together" Paradox: Family members are spending more time on phones than with each other leading to issues like **Social Isolation**

Reduced quality of Parenting: Child cuddling has been compromised, erosion of **Intergenerational Authority**

New forms of conflict: Technology (smart phones, social media) impact **marital relations**; conflicts related to **privacy** etc.

Conclusion

The negative impact of technology on the institution of family can be checked by ensuring face-to-face interaction, reducing the screen time, creating awareness about rational and ethical use etc.

1.1.4. TECHNOLOGY AND SEXUAL BEHAVIOUR AT A GLANCE

Technology and Sexual Behaviour

Discussion on topics like Sexuality and Reproduction were considered as a taboo, however, technology has provided platform for people to exchange ideas and share information.

Positive Impacts

- **Access to credible information:** Facilitating **informed decisions** related to sexual and Reproductive Rights, family planning etc. **E.g. Telemedicine**
- **Voicing Concerns of significance:** Of Women and LGBTQ community. E.g. Social media aiding debates on marital rape, dowry, same-sex marriages
- **Other:** Self-expression (less control of patriarchal norms), seen as alternative to sex education, etc.

Negative Impacts

Unwanted exposure (e.g., to sexually explicit materials).
E.g. pornography

Compulsive sexual behaviour patterns in kids and minors, leads to sexual crime against women.

Spread of **negative notions, orthodox patriarchal ideas online** against certain sections such as women and LGBTQIA.

Conclusion

Parenting, filtration of content along with access to latest technologies will help in breaking misconception regarding sexuality in the society.

1.1.5. FINANCIAL REVOLUTION AND SOCIETY AT A GLANCE

Financial Revolution and Society

Advancement in the technologies such as **Blockchain** led to adoption of use of **cryptocurrency**.

- The **Fintech sector** is growing at pace, number of **UPI** transaction are also rising, etc.
- These developments have changed the way in which financial transactions are conducted in society.

Positive Impacts

- **Increased Financial Inclusion:** Vulnerable sections such as women, People of scheduled caste, etc. are main beneficiaries. E.g. UPI
- **Easier access to credit:** Availability of multiple options of micro-finance and peer-to-peer lending.
- **Transparency and Resource Efficiency:** Aadhaar-based transactions are ensuring that eligible beneficiaries get the benefits. E.g. DBT
- **Social relation with money:** Increased risk-taking and spending capacity, digitization of transactions, Emergence of new millionaire young generations, etc.

Negative Impacts

Increased Inequality
E.g., People of certain class have access to the cryptocurrency.

Rise in **financial frauds**, tapping socio-psychological fears to scam people. E.g. Digital arrest

Middle class people are mainly impacted by the **volatility** and **instability** of financial markets.

By utilising loopholes, financial products can be used for **money laundering**, etc. **E.g. darknet**

Conclusion

Adequate **regulatory mechanism, adopting best international practices etc.** will ensure that all the sections of society are benefited from the financial revolution.



1.2. TIER-2 INFLUENCERS REDEFINING CULTURAL CAPITAL IN DIGITAL INDIA

Why in the News?

Recent emergence of **Tier-2 and Tier-3 digital influencers** – content creators from smaller towns and regional cities – have had profound impact on the dynamics of digital influence and cultural capital in India.

What is Cultural Capital?

- **Cultural capital** refers to non-economic assets like education, language, and cultural knowledge that confer social mobility. (**Pierre Bourdieu**)
- **Traditional Cultural Capital in India**
 - **Metro dominance:** Cities like Delhi and Mumbai shaped cultural trends in media, fashion, and entertainment.
 - **Language hierarchy:** English and upper-caste dialects dominated intellectual and aesthetic spaces.
 - **Elite institutions:** Cultural validation stemmed from associations with institutions like FTII, NSD, Doordarshan, and elite universities.

Rise of Tier-2 Influencers

- It includes Creators from cities like Jaipur, Patna, Surat, Guwahati with large social media following but rooted in regional identity.
- **Platform access:** Social media (YouTube, Instagram, etc.) democratized content creation.

How Tier-2 Influencers Redefine Cultural Capital

- **Decentralization of Taste and Influence**
 - Previously urban-centric symbols of sophistication are now complemented by rural/regional symbols.
 - **E.g.,** Village-based creators like Kiran Dembla create mass trends.
- **Vernacular as Cultural Power**
 - **More than 50% of urban internet users** prefer consuming content in regional language. (IAMAI)
 - Platforms like **ShareChat (Bharat-first app)** boast 180M+ monthly users across 15 languages.
 - Content in Bhojpuri, Haryanvi, and Marathi garners millions of views.
- **Revival of Folk and Local Traditions**
 - Tier-2 influencers integrate **folk music, traditional cuisine, and regional rituals** into digital content.
 - **E.g.,** Rajasthan's Manganiyar music promoted through Instagram Reels.
 - **YouTube channels** like Village Cooking Channel (Tamil Nadu) have 20M+ subscribers.
- **Democratisation of Aspiration**
 - Influencers like Saurav Joshi featuring his simple life, family, and relatable activities, refines **success as authenticity, not sophistication**.
 - **Local heroes → National icons:** Many Tier-2 influencers inspire youth to create content in native accents.
- **Platform for Subaltern Voices**
 - Creators from marginalized communities (Dalit, tribal, OBC) find space to articulate identity and lived experience.
 - **E.g.,** Khabar Lahariya, a grassroots rural digital newsroom, is run entirely by Dalit women.

Implications for Indian Society

- **Cultural Democratization:** Legitimizes diverse aesthetics, customs, and practices once considered '**non-mainstream**'.
- **Economic Empowerment:** ~80% of creators on ShareChat and Moj are from Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities utilizing new monetisation models such as microtransactions, to drive the majority of creator earnings.

- **Changing Political Landscape:** Tier-2 influencers become **digital opinion-makers** in elections and policy discourse; political parties use them to **mobilize regional youth** on issues like jobs, caste, and local pride, etc.
- **Bridging the Urban-Rural Divide** Creates a sense of **shared national identity** that accommodates local pride; challenges stereotypes of rural India as regressive or culturally inferior.

Challenges and Ethical Concerns

- **Digital Divide:** Rural internet penetration still lags urban India; quality content from lower-income creators is limited by access to devices and training.
- **Algorithmic Bias:** Social media algorithms prioritize clickbait or sensational content; big businesses still favour polished metro creators for brand partnerships.
- **Stereotyping and Tokenism:** Rural culture sometimes showcased as “exotic” rather than authentically represented; Brands may co-opt regional identity without genuine engagement, etc.
- **Commodification of Culture:** Local rituals or practices often oversimplified for virality, risking distortion.

Conclusion

As Digital India grows, by making **vernacular visible, regional relevant, and subaltern powerful**, Tier-2 influencers herald a more inclusive and democratic cultural discourse, valuing **authenticity over elitism** and **diversity over uniformity**.

1.3. CINEMA AND SOCIETY

Why in the News?

The Kerala High Court emphasized that although violent content in media can have significant social impact, any measures taken must uphold the fundamental right to free speech.

About Cinema

- Cinema, a **popular form of mass media** is regarded as the “**seventh art**”, the newest form of art which simultaneously combines the existing ancient disciplines of art.
 - Painting, Sculpture, Architecture, Literature, Theatre and Music are the remaining 6 forms of art.
- By blending diverse artistic and cultural elements, Indian cinema has crafted a unique language that **reflects both individual and societal narratives**.

Art is not a mirror held up to reality but a hammer with which to shape it.



— Bertolt Brecht

Evolution of Indian Cinema (1950s-2025)

Indian cinema has evolved from the wave of nationalism, reflecting traditional norms, social realism, and reflecting on contemporary issues such as gender equality, caste discrimination, and LGBTQ+ rights.

| Time Period | Description |
|--|--|
| 1950s-60s: Social Realism and Nationalism | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nationalism: Films like Haqeeqat depicted real-life experiences of Indian soldiers during the Sino-Indian War, boosting the stature of the armed forces. • Social realism: Do Bigha Zamin depicted farmer hardship, Satyajit Ray's 'Pather Panchali', depicted the inherent hardship associated with rural Bengal. |
| 1970s: Angry Young Man and Social Unrest (emergency period) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Injustice: Calcutta 71' by Mrinal Sen reflects the times of Naxal plagued Bengal. • Parallel Cinema and social satire: Movies like Manthan, Sparsh highlighted issues like struggles of marginalized communities, and complex human relationships. |



| | |
|---|---|
| 1990s: Commercial Cinema and Cultural Shifts | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Globalization, Materialism and Identity: Themes of wealth, individualism, and happiness became central, alongside discussions on changing gender roles in movies like Mirch Masala. • Patriarchy and Reform: Films like Astitva critiqued male chauvinism, extramarital affairs, and spousal abuse. • Relationships and Individuality: 'The Play of God' (Malayali, 1997) was an adaption of Shakespeare's Othello, 'Antareen' by Mrinal Sen. |
| Early 2000s: Realism, and Social Critique | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Realism: Films like Chandni Bar, and Black Friday exposed the harsh realities of Mumbai's underworld, including exploitation, prostitution, and violence. • Globalization and Identity: The Namesake explored migration, cultural assimilation, and generational divides in a changing world. • Social issues: Movies like Pink, and Malayali movie 'Jaya Jaya Jaya Hey' highlighted the prejudices women face. • LGBTQ+ Representation: 'Kaathal', 'Samo -The Equals' explored LGBTQ+ issues, promoting societal acceptance and challenging stigma. |
| Post 2020: OTT Cinema and Regional cinema | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional cinema, that have traditionally, struggled for space in multiplexes, have got due recognition on OTT platforms. • OTT's content-focused approach has especially helped low-budget regional films with powerful storytelling. • For instance, The Great Indian Kitchen (Malayalam) gained national attention for its strong feminist narrative, while Court and Sairat (Marathi) found widespread acclaim. |

How Cinema Shapes Society

Positive Impact of Cinema on Indian Society

- **Global Recognition:** Indian films like *RRR* and *The Elephant Whisperers* winning Oscars create national pride and showcase Indian culture internationally.
- **Cultural Diversity:** Films reflect **regional cultures** - *Dedh Ishqiya* (Nawabi culture), *Piku* (Bengali culture), *Khoobsurat* (Rajasthani heritage).
- **Evolving Family Values:** Cinema has evolved from traditional family conflicts (*Khandaan*, 1965) to addressing **taboo** topics like illegitimacy (*Masoom*) and modern issues like extramarital relationships (*Kabhi Alvida Naa Kehna*) and intergenerational gaps (*Goodbye*).
- **Women Empowerment:** Films like *Durga Sohay* show female protagonists challenging social limitations.
- **Educational Awareness:** *Nil Battey Sannata* highlights education's transformative power through a housemaid's journey back to school.
- **Societal Change Tool:**
 - **Raises awareness** (*Paa*, *Taare Zameen Par* on progeria and dyslexia)
 - **Changes attitudes** (*Fire*, *Aligarh* on LGBTQ+ rights)
 - **Shapes nationalism** (Tamil political cinema, Bollywood's *Swadesh*)

Negative Impact of Cinema on Indian Society

- **Gender Issues:** Item songs objectify women, films normalize domestic violence (*Pushpa*) and movies like *Kabir Singh* and *Animal* glorify toxic masculinity.
- **Body Standards:** Cinema promotes fair skin superiority and encourages body shaming of both thin and overweight individuals.
- **Traditional Values:** Films often favor love marriages and live-in relationships (*OK Jaanu*) over traditional family structures.
- **Cultural Shift:** Western dance and music styles overshadow traditional Indian art forms like **Bharatnatyam** and Kathak.

- **Poor Representation:** Vulnerable communities including LGBTQ individuals and disabled people are stereotyped or mocked (*Dostana, Golmaal*).
- **Substance Glorification:** Films like *Dev D* portray drinking and smoking as trendy lifestyle choices.
- **Political Division:** Propaganda-driven cinema promotes specific ideologies and deepens social divides by manipulating emotions.

Regulation of Content in Cinema

- **Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), 2023:** Criminalizes obscene acts, with penalties including fines and imprisonment.
- **Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act, 1986:** This law prohibits the indecent portrayal of women in publications, advertisements, and media.
- **Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995:** Ensures telecasted programmes meet societal decency standards, with penalties for violations.
- **Cinematograph Act, 1952:** Mandates certification of films by the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) before their public exhibition.
- **Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI):** ASCI (self-regulatory body) aims to regulate advertisements and ensure they meet public decency standards. (Self-regulation)

Conclusion

Cinema is a powerful mirror of society that reflects our values, however, it also challenges our beliefs, and shapes how we think and feel. Cinema should evolve as a force for social change that promotes inclusivity, diversity, and empathy, while also respecting public sensibilities and promoting **Constitutional and Social morality**.

“You are as strong as your Foundation”

FOUNDATION COURSE

GENERAL STUDIES

PRELIMS CUM MAINS

2026, 2027 & 2028

Approach is to build fundamental concepts and analytical ability in students to enable them to answer questions of Preliminary as well as Mains Exam



Live - online / Offline Classes

Scan the QR CODE to download **VISION IAS** app





- ▶ Includes Pre Foundation Classes
- ▶ Includes comprehensive coverage of all the topics for all the four papers of GS Mains, GS Prelims & Essay
- ▶ Access to LIVE as well as Recorded Classes on your personal student platform Includes All India GS Mains, GS Prelims, CSAT & Essay Test Series
- ▶ Our Comprehensive Current Affairs classes of PT 365 and Mains 365 of year 2026, 2027 & 2028

DELHI : 8 JULY, 11 AM | 15 JULY, 8 AM | 18 JULY, 5 PM
22 JULY, 11 AM | 25 JULY, 2 PM | 30 JULY, 8 AM

GTB Nagar Metro (Mukherjee Nagar): 10 JULY, 8 AM | 29 JULY, 6 PM

हिन्दी माध्यम 15 जुलाई, 2 PM

| | | | |
|--------------------|--------------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| AHMEDABAD: 12 JULY | BENGALURU: 22 JULY | BHOPAL: 27 JUNE | CHANDIGARH: 18 JUNE |
| HYDERABAD: 30 JULY | JAIPUR: 20 JULY | JODHPUR: 2 JULY | LUCKNOW: 22 JULY |
| | | PUNE: 14 JULY | |

1.4. SOCIAL IDENTITIES AT A GLANCE

Social Identities

Social identity refers to people's **self-categorization** in relation to their **group memberships** (the "we"). These categorizations are generally assigned to us or something we are born into.

- Types of social identities **include caste, race, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, social class, etc.**
- Social identities have undergone significant changes owing to **structural transformations** marked by **shift from agriculture to secondary and tertiary activities, rural-to-urban migration, demographic transition**, etc.



Relationship between Social Identities and Structural transformations

- Inequality and Marginalization:** Challenging for certain marginalised groups like tribal populations to adapt attributing to disparities in wealth, income, and employment and related opportunities.
- Political power:** Can either reinforce existing power imbalances or create opportunities for marginalized groups to challenge and reshape these dynamics.
- Labour Market:** Changes such as automation or globalization, can affect different social groups differently, depending on factors like skill levels, education, and historical patterns of **discrimination**.
- Social Movements:** Social identities can be a driving force behind social movements and activism advocating for economic justice and structural changes.



Contemporary changes in Social identities

| | Positives | Negatives |
|---------------|--|---|
| Caste | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase in upward mobility due to formalization of labour, reduced caste-based industrial segregation, etc. Social identity used for political mobilization, empowering the marginalized castes in democratic systems. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Over-representation of marginalized identities in low-paying jobs, low number of 'lower' caste entrepreneurs, etc. In-group ideology and antagonism towards out-group leading to caste-based violence, increased intolerance. E.g. honour killings |
| Gender | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduced gender earning gaps, increase in regular wage employment, recognition and acceptance of Third Gender, etc. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decline in rural female labour force participation, feminization of agriculture, etc. |



Way Forward

- Monitoring mechanism:** Establish mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating progress of structural transformation for impact assessment and informed decision making.
- Policy interventions:** To address discrimination, promote equal opportunities, and drive inclusive development. **E.g., 1/3rd reservation for women in Legislatures.**
- Equitable access to Knowledge:** Invest in education and training programs that provide equal opportunities for all segments of society.
- Social safety nets:** Unemployment benefits, reskilling/ upskilling of labour force, etc., to mitigate potential negative effects of structural transformation on vulnerable populations.
- Gender equality policies:** Addressing gender disparities in employment, wages, and opportunities through SHG movement



1.5. CHANGING INSTITUTION OF FAMILY

Why in the News?

Recently, Supreme Court remarked that **family values are eroding**, with parents and children litigating against each other over property and maintenance, pushing the country toward a "**One Person, One Family**" model, in contrast to the '**Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam**'.

More on the News

- In **Samtola Devi v. State of Uttar Pradesh & Ors.**, the Supreme Court also ruled that the **Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act, 2007** ensures maintenance for elderly parents but does not explicitly permit eviction of children from the home of the said parents.

Changing Institution of Family in India

| Aspect | Traditional Family | New Trends |
|---------------------------|--|---|
| Structure | Joint family system with multiple generations including grandparents, uncles, aunts, nieces, and nephews living together in the same household. | Predominantly nuclear families , often consisting of parents and non-adult children only. |
| Decision-Making | Patriarchal hierarchy with decisions made collectively by elders . | Increasingly more egalitarian approach with shared decision-making between men and women. |
| Marriage Practices | Arranged marriages often negotiated by elders; emphasis on lineage and family unity. | Increased acceptance of love marriages , live-in relationships , and non-traditional unions like same-sex partnerships . |
| Values | Collectivism emphasizing family loyalty, unity, and interdependence over individualism. | Growing individualism with focus on privacy, independence, and personal aspirations . |

Factors behind the changes in Indian family institution

- Economic factors:** Urbanization, expanding labour market demand, higher cost of living in urban areas, dual-income households, etc.
- Changing gender role:** Improved women's access to education and formal employment challenged the traditional patriarchal norms in households.
- Westernization:** Emphasis on values like **individualism**, leads to a preference for **smaller and more private family settings**.
- Globalization:** Exposure to global cultures through **media and physical connectivity** has introduced alternative family models and values. **E.g., Multi Nation Corporations' (MNCs) work cultures** often favour smaller and more flexible family units.
- Role of Technology:** **Enhanced communication through modern tools (e.g., Skype, WhatsApp)**, though allows families to stay connected but have **reduced face-to-face interactions, affecting the depth of relationships and emotional bonding**.

Impact of Changing Family Institution

| Positive Impacts | Negative Impacts |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Active parenting: Fathers now actively participate in child-rearing beyond traditional financial roles. Strong parent-child bonds: Nuclear families enable focused attention on children's education and development, | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inter-generational conflicts: Value and lifestyle differences between parents and children, worsened by technology, create misunderstandings and conflicts. Loss of traditional values: Emphasis on individualism may cause children to miss learning respect for elders, collectivism, and social norms from joint families. |



creating deeper emotional connections and open communication.

- **Reduced conflict:** Nuclear living minimizes intergenerational disputes over control and property.
- **Greater autonomy:** Individuals, particularly women, gain independence.

- **Loneliness:**

- **Children:** Fewer siblings/cousins can cause isolation, affecting child welfare.
- **Parents:** Neglect in old age leads to physical, mental health issues and social marginalization.

- **Social infrastructure pressure:** Increased demand for elder care, childcare, and public health services.

Way Forward

- **Strengthen community-based support systems:** Encourage RWAs and Panchayats to foster **local social capital**. Example: **Kerala's Kudumbashree network** integrates community and care economy, especially for the elderly and women.
- **Education and social awareness:** Include value education and emotional intelligence in school curricula to nurture family empathy.
- **Redefining the concept of family:** States policies and governance framework need to move beyond traditional definition of families to include and accommodate single-parent families, elderly living alone, etc.
 - This can help in **effective targeting and delivery of welfare programmes** for different types of families.
- **Policy Interventions:** Effective implementation of **Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act, 2007** which specifies that children can be legally held liable for not supporting their parents.
 - Also, **free legal aid for elderly** can help them assert their rights and challenge neglect or abuse.

Conclusion

As the Indian family structure evolves, it is essential to strike a balance between modern aspirations and traditional values. Strengthening institutional and community support, while embracing diverse family forms, can ensure social cohesion, intergenerational solidarity, and dignified living for all.

1.5.1. FAMILY - BASED CHILDCARE

Why in the News?

Recently, a shift from Institutional Childcare towards **Kinship Childcare or Family Based Childcare** is being witnessed in India.

About Family-Based Childcare or Kinship Care

- It is a form of **alternative care**, defined as “**Care of the child under extended family or with close friends of the family** known to the child, whether formal or informal in nature” (**UN Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children**).
- It got renewed focus as an important form of alternative care for children post the **UN General Assembly 2019 Resolution on the Rights of the Child** that emphasised on the importance of **growing up in a family** and the **child's Right to a Family**.
 - **Non-Institutional (Mission Vatsalya Guidelines)**
 - **Adoption:** Permanent placement of a child with adoptive parents.
 - > Legal relationship between the child and its biological family ends.
 - > Adopted Child gains rights including inheritance rights from the adoptive parents.
 - **Sponsorship:** Necessary support service for families and children (for education, health, etc.,) which have been identified as at risk.
 - **Foster Care:** Temporary arrangement ranging for a few months to several years.
 - > Legal relationship between the child and their biological family remains intact.
 - > Child does not gain inheritance rights from the foster family.
 - **After Care:** After care is a programme for children without family or other support who leave institutional care after they attain 18 years of age to sustain themselves during the transition from institutional to independent life.

- **Juvenile Justice Act** provides for institutional care structures separately for children in need of care and protection (CNCP) and children in conflict with law (CCL).

Comparison between Institutional and Family-Based Childcare

| Parameters | Institutional Childcare | Family-Based Childcare |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| Level of Formalisation | Formalised system with professional care givers to look after the well-being of children. | Informal kinship care is already quite prevalent. |
| Community Involvement | Denial of community support systems due to isolation over long periods of time. | Also, regarded as Community-Based Childcare , keeps children within their communities. |
| Nurturing and Support | Lack of a nurturing environment and one to one attention to the child. | Familial environment brings an extra level of emotional support. |
| Education & other services | Inadequate quality education. | Minimizes disruption to education, cultural and social life. |
| Relation with Caregiver | Professionally assigned caregiver has little knowledge about the emotional needs of the child. | Kinship caregivers understand background, family history, giving better support. |

Initiatives taken for Childcare

Global

- **United Nations Convention on the Rights of Children (UNCRC):** Under **Article 20** covers the **Right of Every Child to a Family**.
- **Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children (UNGAC):** Endorsed by the **United Nations General Assembly in 2009**, contains basic principles on **Alternative care** (see infographic).

UN Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children (UNGAC)

| | | | | |
|--|--|--|---|--|
| <p>Family-based solutions: Preferred over institutional care.</p> | <p>Permanent solutions: Preferred due to its security, safety and helps to develop attachments and bonds.</p> | <p>National solutions: Involves keeping a child in the country of origin.</p> | <p>Principle of Necessity: No unnecessary separation of children from their families of birth or origin.</p> | <p>Principle of Appropriateness: Care options selected as per child's specific needs.</p> |
|--|--|--|---|--|

India

- **Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act 2015** provides for institutional care structures for children.
- **Mission Vatsalaya:** Aims to **promote family based non-institutional care of children** in difficult circumstances
 - It is based on the principle of institutionalization of children as a measure of last resort.
- **PM CARES for Children Scheme:** It aims to support children who have lost both the Parents or legal Guardian or Adoptive Parents or Surviving Parent to COVID-19 pandemic during the period starting from 11th March 2020.

Challenges with the Family-Based Childcare

- **Lack of Legal Framework:** Family-based Childcare **does not** find mention in the central legislation and policy despite being traditionally practiced.
- **Absence of Support to Caregivers:** Due to the belief that the child is the **extended family** of the caregiver, who do not need support being their **moral obligation** to provide care.
- **Lack of Documentation:** Alternative care, although **informally prevalent** in many societies, remains an **under-researched, undocumented area**.
- **Restricted Mindset:** Stakeholders generally view **institutionalisation** as the easiest way to rehabilitate children **without parental ties**.
- **Poor Awareness:** Due to **inadequate investment in knowledge and skill development** of **frontline workers** on issues of child protection.

Way Forward on Strengthening Family-Based Childcare

- **Financial assistance to caregivers:** Through a range of measures like social protection schemes, access to free education, health services, etc.
- **Capacity building of social workforce:** State in collaboration with academic institutions should prepare a **child protection workforce** through specialised programmes on child rights and alternative care.
- **Strengthening Local communities:** Involvement of local entities like **Village Child Welfare Committees, District Welfare Committees**, etc.
- **Research and knowledge sharing:** It is necessary to encourage collaborative research involving government, academic/research institutions and civil society organisations to generate evidence on effective models of non-institutional alternative care.

Conclusion

Family-based childcare offers a more nurturing, community-rooted alternative to institutional care, aligning with a child's right to grow up in a family environment. Strengthening its legal, financial, and institutional support can ensure that every child receives care that upholds dignity, emotional well-being, and long-term development.



फाउंडेशन कोर्स सामान्य अध्ययन

प्रारंभिक एवं मुख्य परीक्षा 2026

इनोवेटिव क्लासरूम प्रोग्राम

- प्रारंभिक परीक्षा, मुख्य परीक्षा और निबंध के लिए महत्वपूर्ण सभी टॉपिक का विस्तृत कवरेज
- मौलिक अवधारणाओं की समझ के विकास एवं विश्लेषणात्मक क्षमता निर्माण पर विशेष ध्यान
- एनीमेशन, पॉवर प्वाइंट, वीडियो जैसी तकनीकी सुविधाओं का प्रयोग
- अंतर - विषयक समझ विकसित करने का प्रयास
- योजनाबद्ध तैयारी हेतु करेंट ओरिएंटेड अप्रोच
- नियमित क्लास टेस्ट एवं व्यक्तिगत मूल्यांकन
- प्री फाउंडेशन कक्षाएं

- सीसेट कक्षाएं
- PT 365 कक्षाएं
- MAINS 365 कक्षाएं
- PT टेस्ट सीरीज
- मुख्य परीक्षा टेस्ट सीरीज
- निबंध टेस्ट सीरीज
- सीसेट टेस्ट सीरीज
- निबंध लेखन - शैली की कक्षाएं
- करेंट अफेयर्स मैगजीन

नोट: ऑनलाइन छात्र हमारे पाठ्यक्रम की लाइव वीडियो कक्षाएं अपने घर पर ऑनलाइन प्लेटफॉर्म पर देख सकते हैं। छात्र लाइव चैट विकल्प के माध्यम से कक्षा के दौरान अपने संदेह और विषय संबंधी प्रश्न पूछ सकते हैं। वे अपने संदेह और प्रश्न नोट भी कर सकते हैं और दिल्ली केंद्र में हमारे कक्षा सलाहकार को बता सकते हैं और हम फोन/मेल के माध्यम से प्रश्नों का उत्तर देंगे।

DELHI : 15 जुलाई, 2 PM

JAIPUR : 20 जुलाई

JODHPUR : 2 जुलाई

Scan the QR CODE to download VISION IAS app





1.6. MARRIAGE AT A GLANCE

Marriage

Marriage is a social institution providing social and legal sanction for the union of a man and a woman as partners.

Laws governing marriages in India

| | | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|---|--|
| Hindu Marriage Act, 1955 | Special Marriage Act, 1954 | Personal Laws of different communities. | Prohibition of Child Marriages Act, 2006 |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|---|--|

Functions of marriage

- **Biological:** Providing **social recognition** to sexual union, one function of marriage is to beget children.
- **Social:** Social acceptance of couple forms basis of formation of a family. **Rituals** from birth to death are linked to marriage and related **responsibilities**.
- **Cultural and Religious Significance:** Marriage as a sacred institution, often with rituals and traditions.
- **Inheritance and Kinship:** Marriage often helps define inheritance rights and establish kinship ties.

Contemporary changes in institution of marriage

- **Structural**
 - **Delayed marriages:** Due to focus on **education and career** and the idea of **individualism**.
 - **Inter-caste and inter-religious marriages:** Norms of caste **endogamy** have weakened to some extent as **secular factors** like **education, class, status**, etc. E.g., [iimimatrimony.com](https://www.iimimatrimony.com).
 - **Increased instances of Divorce:** Taboo around divorce has reduced. There are increased instances of **serial monogamy- divorce and remarriage**.
 - **Live-in relationships:** Challenging the notion of marriage, long-term cohabitation **without marriage**.
- **Functional**
 - **Changed functions:** **Traditional functions of procreation** and sexual division of labour have weakened. Marriages have adopted a significant **role of emotional support**. E.g., Double-Income-No-Kid (**DINK**) families.
 - **Changes in sexual division of labour:** As both husband and wife are employed and earn, it has reduced the **patriarchal division of labour**.
 - **Same-sex relationships:** **LGBTQIA+ relationships** reflect a **shift in traditional function** of marriage **from procreation to companionship** by embracing gender fluidity of relationships.

Factors behind changes in the institution of marriage

- **Economic:** Increased economic independence among women leading to later marriages, higher divorce rates, and more single-parent households.
- **Cultural shifts:** Liberal attitudes towards marriage, sexuality, and family result in greater acceptance of cohabitation, same-sex marriage, and non-traditional family structures.
- **Individualism:** Modern societies emphasize individualism and personal fulfilment. This has shifted the focus of marriage from economic and social obligation to personal happiness and compatibility.
- **Demographics:** Demographic trends, such as aging populations and declining birth rates, also influence marriage patterns.
- **Legal Changes:** Legal and policy reforms, such as the legalization of same-sex marriage, and improved legal protections for women and children.

Conclusion

The institution of marriage will likely continue to evolve, reflecting greater diversity, inclusivity, and an ongoing redefinition of roles and relationships within the family unit.

1.7. CASTE SYSTEM AT A GLANCE

Caste System

Caste is a system of social stratification involving the ranking according to birth, prescribing a set of norms, values and sanctions which govern social behaviour within caste.

Key features of Caste system

Social segregation determined by birth, not by accomplishments.

Hierarchy, ranking of castes based on status, occupation, and other primordial considerations.

Civil and Religious Disabilities, such as Caste-based access to public roads, public well, temples, etc.

Endogamy, prescription of marriage within caste.

Weakening of Caste identities

- **Education:** Increased access to education has exposed people to diverse ideas and challenged some caste-based notions.
- **Urbanization:** Migration to urban areas result in loosening traditional caste ties and restrictions, better occupational mobility, etc.
- **Inter-caste marriages:** Increasing occurrence of inter-caste marriages is gradually blurring caste lines.
- **Legal and policy:** Anti-discrimination laws such as Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act (1989), provision of reservation for backward classes, etc.
- **Globalization:** Exposure to global cultures and values has influenced younger generations' perspectives on caste.

Strengthening of Caste identities

- **Demand for Caste Census:** Demand of caste-based census to officially recognize their population size and socio-economic status. E.g., Census 2027 to include 1st caste enumeration since independence.
- **Political mobilization:** Rise of caste-based political parties has reinforced caste identities for political gain. E.g., Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP).
- **Demand for reservation:** Demands for reservation by various communities (e.g., Jats, Marathas) have intensified caste-based mobilization.
- **Social media and technology:** Caste-based groups on platforms like WhatsApp have made it easier for people to connect based on caste identities.
- **Marriage preferences:** e.g., Proliferation of caste-based matrimonial websites.

Conclusion

While significant progress has been made in reducing caste-based discrimination and promoting social mobility, continuous efforts in education, legal reforms, economic development, and cultural change are essential to further weaken caste identities and promote a more inclusive and equitable society.

1.8. KEYWORDS

| | | | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| Surveillance Capitalism | Digital 'Echo-chambers' | Filter Bubble | Intergenerational Bonding | Disinformation |
| Blended Learning | Creator Economy | Cultural Capital | Commodification of Culture | Democratization of Fame |
| Glocalization | Glocalization | Cultural Homogenization | DINK Families | Inter-Caste Mobility |

1.9. PRACTICE QUESTION

Answer Canvas

Technology is evolving to be the 3rd wheel of socialization of children after family and education. But it may harm more than it benefits. Do you agree?

| Introduction | Body Part: 1 | Body part: 2 | Conclusion |
|-----------------|---|---|---|
| Current context | Role of technology in socialization and interlinkages with family and education | Opinion based on logical arguments on the benefits and disadvantages of technology in socialization | Suggestions for social adaptation to changing digital environment |
| | | | |



"Personalise Your UPSC Prelims Preparation"

2026

ENGLISH MEDIUM
20 JULY

हिन्दी माध्यम
20 जुलाई

HINDI & ENGLISH MEDIUM



Access **25000+** questions



Choose your **subject** and topic



Create your test from **VisionIAS** or UPSC PYQs



Performance and Progress Analysis

2. WOMEN

2.1. WOMEN-LED DEVELOPMENT

Why in the News?

Recently, on the 30th anniversary of the **Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action**, governments adopted a **declaration** on the **empowerment of women and girls** reaffirming the principle of **Women-led Development**.

Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BPfA)

- It was adopted in **1995** at the **Fourth World Conference on Women**, stressing on upholding all **human rights** and **fundamental freedoms** for **every** woman and girl, without exception.
- On its 30th anniversary, **Beijing + 30 Action Agenda**, with **6 priority actions** (Digital Revolution, zero violence, etc.) were released.

Women's Development vs. Women-led Development

| Women's Development | Women-led Development |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Involves programmes designed to help women, without necessarily involving them in their planning, implementation, and evaluation. e.g., maternal health programs, girls' education projects, quotas for women in educational institutions, etc. Women are seen as passive recipients of development programs. Top-down approach to decision-making about women development lacking women's adequate participation. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A paradigm shift where women are seen not just as beneficiaries, but as leaders, decision-makers, and innovators in the process of development. e.g., enhanced women's representation in local governance, corporate leadership, etc. Recognizes that women often have unique insights into community needs and can offer innovative solutions based on their lived experiences. Bottom-up approach to encourage women's participation in decision-making. E.g., SHG movement. |

Significance of Women-led Development

- Women Empowerment:** Shifting the narrative from women as mere **recipients of welfare** to **Agents of Empowerment**.
- Gender Equality:** Tackles **generational inequality** by breaking gender stereotypes and **rejecting norms** that sustain gender disparity.
 - Global Gender Gap Index 2025:** India ranked **131th** out of 148 countries, **slipping 2 places** compared to 2024.
- Economic Empowerment** Bridging the gender gap in employment could potentially lead to a **30% increase** in the country's **GDP**.
- Rural Development and Poverty Alleviation:** **Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana - National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM)** mobilised a total of 8.01 Crore women from poor and vulnerable communities in SHGs, increasing household incomes by 22%.
- Sustainability:** Deccan Development Society collaborates with nearly 5,000 Dalit and Indigenous women small farmers to restore thousands of hectares of farmland through sustainable agricultural practices.

Obstacles on the Path to Women-led Development

- Patriarchal Social Norms:** NFHS-5 (2019-21) states only 3% of women make decisions independently.
- Education:** Female literacy rate in India is 62.3% which is lower than global average of 79.9%.



- **Workplace Discrimination: Gender-based industry segregation** persists, with **women** concentrated in **lower-paying, people-centric industries** like Healthcare and Care (58.5%) and Education (52.9%). (Global Gender Gap Report 2025)
- **Gender digital divide: Only 1 in 3 women in India (33%) have ever used internet**, compared to more than half the men (57%). (NFHS 2019-21)
- **Subtle Gender discrimination:** Manifests through **attitudes** and behaviors that seem **supportive** but **reinforce traditional gender roles** and perpetuate **inequality**.
 - **Examples of Subtle forms of Gender Discrimination:**
 - > **Reinforce Stereotyping:** Positive comments that reinforce traditional gender roles and undermine women's capabilities. E.g., Women as Annapoorna, women bearing childcare responsibility solely-idealizing motherhood.
 - > **Hiring, Promotion, and Evaluation:** Subconscious bias towards male candidates (subtle sexism, glass ceiling effect) for roles traditionally perceived as requiring physical strength or leadership.
 - > **Work-Life Balance Assumptions: Microaggressions** due to assumptions about work-life balance affecting commitment to work in women more due to **societal expectations around family responsibilities**.
- **Early Marriage and Motherhood Penalty:** Women are **55.2% more likely** than men to take **career breaks**, and for **longer durations**, largely due to **parenting responsibilities**. (Global Gender Gap Report 2025)

India's Initiatives to ensure Women-Led Development

- **Gender Budgeting:** Gender Budget allocation in the total Union Budget **increases to 8.86% in FY 2025-26** from **6.8% in 2024-25**.
- **Asset Ownership:** **72%** women ownership under **PM Awas Yojana Gramin**.
- **Political Empowerment:** **Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam 2023**.
- **Entrepreneurship and Skill Development:** Startup and Stand up India, establishment of Women Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs), and Women Technology Parks (WTPs).
- **Economic Empowerment:** PM MUDRA Yojna, Lakhpati Didi, Common Service Centres.

Global Initiatives to ensure Women-Led Development

- **Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), 1979**
- **International Women's Day:** Celebrated on **March 08** recognizing achievements of women across national, ethnic, linguistic, cultural, economic or political boundaries.

Conclusion

Empowering women as equal participants in development **fosters inclusive growth**. Through political, economic, and social reforms, women are transforming from welfare recipients to active change-makers. Ensuring equal rights, opportunities, and representation paves the way for sustainable progress and a truly women-led development model in India.

2.2. WOMEN-LED SELF-HELP GROUPS (SHGS): LAKHPATI DIDI

Why in the News?

Recently, Prime Minister felicitated 11 lakh new 'Lakhpati Didis' in a function organised at Jalgaon in Maharashtra.

About Lakhpati Didi Initiative

- Launched in **2023**, Lakhpati Didi initiative aims to enable 3 crore Lakhpati Didis under the **Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana – National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM)** scheme of the Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD).
 - DAY-NRLM aims to bring **at least 1 woman member** from **each rural poor household** into the fold of **SHGs** and to support them to take **economic activities**.

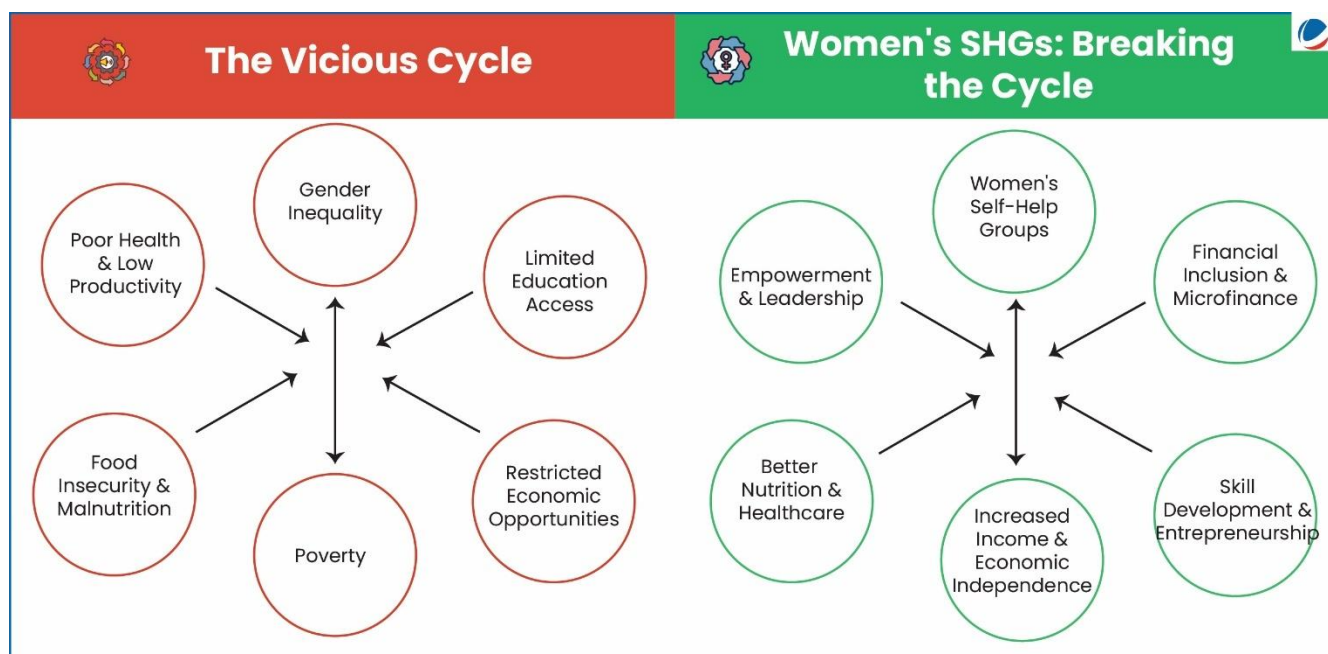
- **Self-Help Groups (SHGs)** are self-governed, peer-controlled, informal associations of up to 20 members with similar socio-economic background who choose to come together for a **common purpose**.
- A Lakhpati Didi is a **SHG member** who earns an **annual household income of ₹1 Lakh or more**.

Significance of Women-led SHGs

- **Women Entrepreneurship:** SHGs are empowering women to pursue entrepreneurial ventures and move towards higher income brackets.
- **Social Capital:** Increased involvement in financial decision-making, strengthened social connections, ownership of assets, and diversification of livelihoods.
- **Economic development:** E.g., Women SHG members as **Banking Correspondent Sakhis** have aided in lowering of gross NPAs for the loans taken by women SHGs to 1.6%.
- **Public service delivery:** E.g., Tribal women SHGs in Gumla, Jharkhand handled the supply chain under Mission Ragi. It helped tackle anaemia and malnutrition with improving farmers' income.
- **Poverty alleviation and Social mobility:** 65% of rural SHG members have improved their incomes between FY19 and FY24 (SBI report).
- **Pressure Groups and Political participation:** Act as Pressure Groups to highlight issues such as alcoholism, open defecation, primary healthcare, etc.

Challenges faced by Women-led SHGs

- **Socio-cultural rigidities:** Patriarchy, caste dynamics, lack of exposure and literacy etc. limit participation and growth of women-led SHGs.
- **Lack of quality training and skilling:** Women SHGs lack the digital knowledge and skills, access to technology and internet impacting growth of their micro-enterprises.
- **Regional disparities:** 68.56% of total SHGs are located in South India. (NABARD)
- **Lack of awareness:** Poor women have limited access to knowledge and guidance about benefits of SHGs and often, elite capture of SHGs is prevalent, undermining the original purpose.



Initiatives for promotion of SHGs

- **Capitalization Support:**
 - **Revolving Fund of ₹ 2,500 crore** to accelerate the process of internal lending
 - **Community Investment Fund (CIF):** Up to ₹ 2.50 lakh per SHG for SHGs and their federations.

○ **Women Enterprise Acceleration Fund:**

- **Aajeevika Grameen Express Yojana (AGEY):** SHGs to provide rural road transport in backward areas.
- **Startup Village Entrepreneurship Program, Vulnerability Reduction Fund (VRF)**

Way Forward

- **Quality Training and skilling:** For empowering SHG members as **agents of social change**.
- **Technological advancement:** Promote the use of technology in SHG operations by enhancing **digital literacy** and access. E.g., **Project EShakti** by **NABARD**.
- **Regional focus:** Targeted initiatives like the Scheme for promoting Women SHGs in **backward and LWE-affected** districts.
- **Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL):** Implement a robust system to assess internal processes and effectiveness, ensuring transparency and accountability.
- **Coordination with stakeholders:** Link SHGs with **corporates and civil society** organizations to provide support and scale up their enterprises.

Conclusion

The **Lakhpatri Didi initiative** exemplifies transformative rural development, empowering women through SHGs to achieve economic independence and social mobility. With strategic support, technology integration, and stakeholder collaboration Women SHGs aid in creating sustainable livelihoods and fostering inclusive growth across India's rural landscape.

ABHYAAS
MAINS 2025
ALL INDIA MAINS
(GS + ESSAY + OPTIONAL)
MOCK TEST (OFFLINE)

| PAPER | GS - I & II | GS - III & IV | ESSAY | OPTIONAL - I & II |
|-------|-------------|---------------|-------|-------------------|
| DATE | 26 JULY | 27 JULY | 2 AUG | 3 AUGUST |

OPTIONAL SUBJECTS | ANTHROPOLOGY | GEOGRAPHY | HINDI | HISTORY | MATHS | PHILOSOPHY | PHYSICS | POLITICAL SCIENCE | PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION | SOCIOLOGY

SCAN HERE OR REGISTER @:
WWW.VISIONIAS.IN/ABHYAAS

AHMEDABAD | BENGALURU | BHOPAL | BHUBANESWAR | CHANDIGARH | CHENNAI | CHHATARPUR (MP) | DEHRADUN | DELHI - KAROL BAGH | DELHI - MUKHERJEE NAGAR | GHAZIABAD | GORAKHPUR | GURUGRAM | GUWAHATI | HYDERABAD | INDORE | JABALPUR | JAIPUR | JAMMU | JODHPUR | KANPUR | KOLKATA | KOTA | LUCKNOW | MUMBAI | NAGPUR | NOIDA | ORAI | PATNA | PRAYAGRAJ | PUNE | RAIPUR | RANCHI | ROHTAK | SHIMLA | THIRUVANANTHAPURAM | VARANASI | VIJAYAWADA | VISAKHAPATNAM

2.3. VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AT A GLANCE

Violence against Women

Key Data and Facts

4.5 lakh crimes (4% increase between 2021-22) against women. (NCRB)

Cruelty by husband or his relatives (31.4%), assault on women with intent to outrage her modesty (18.7%), and rape (7.1%).

13,479 cases were registered under the **Dowry Prohibition Act**.

Reasons for Violence against Women

Patriarchy, power imbalance due to male domination
E.g. economic dependency

Gender inequality and Stereotypes
E.g. Objectification, victim blaming

Impunity, lack of accountability of persons in authority, lack of support services

Lack of awareness, education and **empowerment of women**

Normalization, cultural acceptance and justification E.g. dressing "provocatively"

Legal provisions related to violence against women

Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act, 1986

Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956

The Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961

Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (Prohibition of Sex Selection) Act, 1994

The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005

The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013

Initiatives to curb violence against Women

Chapter-V of the Bhartiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS): Offences against women and children

Mission Shakti with its two sub-schemes –
➤ **'Sambal' for safety and security of women**: One Stop Centre (OSC), Women Helpline (WHL), Beti Bachao Beti Padhao, Nari Adalats, etc.
➤ **'Samarthya' for women empowerment**: Ujjwala, Swadhar Greh Working Women Hostel, National Creche Scheme, etc.

Sexual Harassment electronic Box (SHe-Box): To facilitate registration of complaints related to sexual harassment.

Nirbhaya Fund: Dedicated non-lapsable fund for ensuring safety and security of women.

Project Stree Manoraksha (NIMHANS) for Psychosocial Support

Role of NGOs: Invisible Girl Project (stop Female gendercide), Shakti Vahini

International Measures

UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (**CEDAW, 1979**)

UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (**1993**)

Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BPfA)

2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (SDG 5)

UN Spotlight Initiative: By UN and EU to ensure all women are free from violence.

2.4. RISING MANOSPHERE THREATENING GENDER EQUALITY

Why in the News?

UN Women has warned about a growing network of online communities known collectively as the "manosphere" is emerging as a serious threat to gender equality.



What is Manosphere?

- **Definition:** The **manosphere** encompasses online communities promoting narrow, aggressive definitions of masculinity and the false narrative that feminism has harmed men's rights.
 - These communities equate male worth with **emotional control, material wealth, physical appearance, and dominance** over women.
- Rooted in misogyny & anti-feminist rhetoric, the manosphere weaponizes digital platforms to spread hate, sexist ideologies, and reinforce deep gender bias.

Causes of rise of Manosphere

- **Increased access to internet:** It has in turn enabled access to social media and various manosphere influencers online.
 - Total internet subscribers increased from 251 million in 2014 to 954 million in March 2024.
- **Manosphere influencers:** Self-proclaimed lifestyle coaches attract young men by teaching personal responsibility while claiming men are victims of society's **misandry** (prejudice against men).
- **Algorithm influence:** "Watch next" algorithms recommend increasingly sexist and anti-feminist content such as "**AWALT: All women are like that**" ideology.
- **Insecurities and validation needs:** Social isolation due to nuclear families and individualism and desire for belonging drive young men toward the manosphere seeking support and validation.
- **Growing conservatism:** UN Women studies show younger men hold more stereotypical gender views than older men.
- **Social changes:** Gender equality and LGBTQI+ rights challenge traditional gender roles, unsettling some men facing new social expectations and pressures.
- **Digital anonymity:** Reduces social and legal consequences, enabling easier spread of misogyny and hatred.

Negative impacts of the Manosphere

- **Increased misogyny:** Degrades gender equality. According to Movember Foundation, a men's right group; found two-thirds of young men regularly engage with masculinity influencers online.
 - For example, **Gamergate** was a harassment campaign in which female gamers were targeted by men.
- **Normalized violence:** Extreme manosphere language normalizes violence against women and girls, with growing links to radicalization and extremist ideologies.
- **Societal harm:** Gender inequality hurts both men and women. Men with restrictive gender attitudes are more likely to engage in risky behaviors, substance abuse, depression, and suicidal thoughts.
- **Men's health impacts:** Movember's survey shows manosphere exposure reduces confidence in men, leading to feelings of worthlessness and nervousness, risky supplement use, working out despite injury, and decreased mental health prioritization.
- **Reversing gender equality:** Manosphere stereotypes promote myths that hold women back. International surveys show younger men hold more regressive gender views than older men, threatening hard-won equality gains.
- **Online violence risks:** Studies show 16-58% of women and girls face online violence. Cyber violence exploits digital platform anonymity and reach.

Existing mechanisms to tackle manosphere

- **World**
 - **Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995):** Calls for balanced & non-stereotypical portrayals of women in media, including digital spaces.
 - **UN Women:** Has adopted **multi-pronged approach** which includes **Research and data collection** on the spread and impact of online hate.
 - **'Making All Spaces Safe' Initiative (UNFPA):** To combat technology-facilitated gender-based violence.
 - **EU's Digital Services Act:** Prohibits misogynistic & gender-based hate content on digital platforms.



• India

- **Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act, 1986:** Outlaws indecent/derogatory portrayal of women in digital media.
- **IT Rules, 2021:** Requires social media to remove objectionable content within 24 hours of complaint.
- **Digital Shakti: By The National Commission for Women (NCW)** for digitally empowering women & girls in cyberspace.
- **Information Technology (Amendment) Act, 2008:** Addresses emerging cybercrimes against women such as Section 67A which is critical in cases involving digital abuse.
- **Section 75, 78, 79, of the BNS:** Online Harassment and Cyber Bullying against women is crime under Bhartiya Nyaya Samhita.

Way Forward

- **Legal measures:** Such as Online Safety Act of UK; where sites and apps must also protect children and women from harmful material, including some hateful and abuse misogynistic content.
- **Education as Prevention: Promoting media literacy** to promote and research media literacy, including understanding how people navigate their online worlds and their interactions with potentially harmful content.
- **A rights-based response suggested by UN Women: Steps including Support for survivors** of online abuse, Youth-focused programming aimed at building digital resilience and promoting gender equality.
- **Promoting anti-manosphere content creators:** Reddit forums and creators such as HeForShe support men leaving the manosphere.

Conclusion

The rising Manosphere reflects **deep societal insecurities and digital distortions of gender roles**, posing a serious threat to gender equality. Addressing it requires a **multi-stakeholder approach** that blends legal safeguards, media literacy, and positive male role models to foster inclusive and respectful digital spaces.

2.5. SEXUAL HARASSMENT OF WOMEN AT WORKPLACE

Why in the News?

The **Justice Hema Committee report** revealed exploitation and sexual harassment of women and gender inequality in the Malayalam film industry.

Sexual Harassment at Workplace

- **Definition:** It refers to any **unwelcome sexual advance, demand for sexual favors**, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature that occurs at workplace. (POSH Act)
 - Over **419 cases** were reported in the country in **2022**. (NCRB)
- **Forms of Sexual Harassment at Workplace:**
 - **Quid Pro Quo:** Seeking sexual favors or advances in **exchange for work benefits** such as promises of promotion, higher pay, etc.
 - **Hostile Work Environment:** Subjecting employees to pervasive **unwanted sexual behavior** that creates an offensive, intimidating, or **abusive workplace**. E.g., sexual jokes, inappropriate touching, etc.
- **Challenges in Prevention of sexual harassment at Workplace:** Under-reporting due to Fear of Retaliation, **non-formation of ICCs** in companies, limited recourses for women in informal sector, lack of awareness, etc.

Impact of Sexual Harassment at Workplace

On Individuals

- **Career Disruption:** It creates an unsafe and **hostile work environment**, impeding women's **professional growth** and their overall well-being.



- **Health Impact:** Victims of sexual harassment often experience **heightened levels of stress** and **anxiety** and suffer from diminished self-worth and confidence.
- **Violation of Fundamental rights of women:** It violates women's **right to equality (Article 14-15)** and right to **live with dignity (Article 21)** of the Constitution.

On Workplace

- **Toxic Work Culture:** Normalizing inappropriate behavior makes workplace **unsafe and non-inclusive** for women.
- **Decline in Productivity:** Sexual harassment often impacts **trust** in the organization, **organizational efficiency, and financial performance**.

On Society

- **Perpetuating gender inequality:** Sexual harassment at workplace **reinforces gender inequality** by discouraging women's professional development.
- **Lower women workforce participation:** Threat of sexual harassment at workplace **discourages women's labour force participation**. Harassment-related **job changes or career disruptions** contribute to the **gender pay gap**.

Initiatives Undertaken

- **Vishaka Guidelines (1997):** Supreme Court guidelines laid down in the **Vishaka vs. State of Rajasthan case** addressing **workplace sexual harassment in India**.
- **Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 (POSH Act):** To prevent and address sexual harassment of women at workplace, provide a mechanism for **complaints redressal (Internal Complaints Committee (ICC) and Local Complaints Committees (LCCs))**.
- **Sexual Harassment electronic - Box (SHe-Box):** **Online complaint management system** for complaints related to Sexual Harassment at workplace.
- **Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW):** Recognizes protection against sexual harassment and right to work with dignity as **universal human rights**.

Way Forward

- **Strengthening Implementation of the POSH Act:** **Audits** ensuring that companies set up **ICCs** and introducing **stricter penalties** for failing to comply. **LCCs** should be made more accessible to women in **informal sector**.
- **Promoting Gender Equality at Workplace:** **Gender diversity** in senior positions helps **dismantle patriarchal structures** and reduces the occurrence of harassment.
- **Collaboration with Civil Society:** In educating and empowering women, especially in informal sector.
- **Recommendations of Hema Committee:**
 - **Characterisation of Women in cinema:** Depicting women holding powerful positions like Civil Servant etc.
 - **Gender Awareness Training Program:** Challenging the patriarchal mindset; projecting gender equality.
 - **Redefining Masculinity and Femininity:** Masculinity to be equated to justice, equality, and compassion instead of violence and aggression. **Femininity** to be divorced from **passiveness** and silent suffering.
 - **Creation of a Welfare Fund:** To support women in job break due to childbearing or other responsibilities.

Conclusion

Safe workplace for women is essential for women's rights, career growth, and societal progress. Strengthening POSH Act implementation, promoting gender equality, and fostering inclusive work cultures are essential for creating safer, more equitable professional environments for all.

2.6. CARE ECONOMY AT A GLANCE

Care Economy

It entails **production and consumption of goods and services** necessary for **physical, social, mental and emotional well-being of care-dependent groups**, such as children, the elderly, the ill and people with disabilities, as well as healthy, prime working-age adults. (UN Women)

➤ It includes both:

➤ **Paid care work:** Performed by nurses, domestic workers, educators, etc.

➤ **Unpaid care work:** Cooking, cleaning, and caring for children and the elderly, often performed at home.

Key Data and Facts

Economic value of women's unpaid domestic and care work in India ranges between **15% - 17% of GDP**.

Women of working age spend **5.6 hours (~6X more) on unpaid work daily**, versus 30 minutes for men (Time Use Survey-NSO).

Globally, investment in care infrastructure and services could create **300 million jobs by 2035, with 70-90%** of these jobs expected to **benefit women. (ILO)**

Need for Investing in Care Economy

Economic Growth
Increased Female LFPR, can have multiplier effect due to its labor-intensive nature, etc.

Addressing Demographic challenges
Needs of growing elderly population, nuclear families and migration trends, etc.

Gender equality
Recognition and redistribution of unpaid care work, reduction of 'dual-burden' of work, etc.

Social Capital
Fosters trust, wellbeing, and interdependence in communities.

Human Capital
Improve long-term educational and health outcomes, improve quality of life and reduce long-term public health costs, etc.

5 Pillar Framework for Care Economy

Leave Policies
Parental leave regulations, support mechanisms for maternity leave costs at MSMEs and Start-ups, etc.

Subsidies for Care Services
Incentives to SHGs/ CBOs providing childcare, elderly care services

Investment in Care Infrastructure
Central schemes for greenfield/ brownfield care infrastructure facilities, mobilize private investment through PPPs, etc.

Skill training for Care workers
Establish skill training framework in line with established norms by National Skill Development Council (NSDC)

Institutional mechanism for quality assurance
Regular collection and analysis of gender disaggregated data, monitoring service delivery and minimum service benchmarks for private / public / and community-based care services, etc.

Conclusion

Investing in the care economy is not a "cost" — it's a **long-term investment** in people, productivity, and prosperity. It brings **economic returns, social justice, and gender equality**, all while enhancing the **quality of life** for everyone.

2.7. KEYWORDS

| | | | | |
|-----------------------|------------------------------|------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Beijing Declaration | Self-Help Groups | Gender Budgeting | Subtle Gender Discrimination | Global Gender Gap Report |
| Women-led Development | Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam | Care Economy | Vishakha Guidelines | Manosphere |

2.8. PRACTICE QUESTION

Answer Canvas

Cases of educated and working women facing domestic violence, dowry deaths are on the rise. In this context, critically analyse the present path of women empowerment in India. What are the reforms needed to ensure holistic empowerment?

| Introduction | Body Part: 1 | Body part: 2 | Conclusion |
|--|--|-------------------------------------|---|
| Recent data on domestic violence/ increased participation of women in education and work | Positives and lacunae of the present path of women empowerment | Reforms needed in women empowerment | Social imperative for women empowerment, women-led development and/or successful case studies |

ALL INDIA MAINS TEST SERIES

GS Mains, Essay & Ethics

ENGLISH & हिन्दी



GS MAINS 2025 & 2026
20 JULY

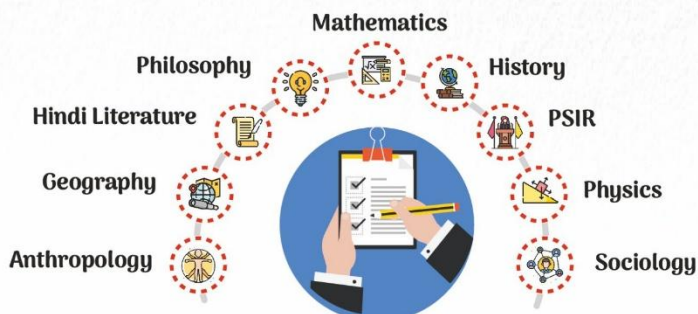
ESSAY & ETHICS TEST SERIES 2025
20 JULY

OPTIONAL TEST SERIES

2025

ENGLISH MEDIUM
20 JULY

हिन्दी माध्यम
20 जुलाई



3. CHILDREN

3.1. TECHNOLOGY AND CHILDREN AT A GLANCE

| Technology and Children | | | |
|--|--|--|---|
| 71 % of youth are online compared with 48% of total population globally. (UNICEF) | 2/3rd of the world's school-age children (1.3 billion) aged 3-17 years lack access to internet at home. (UNICEF-ITU report) | More than 1/3rd youth in 30 countries report being Cyberbullied , resulting in 1 in 5 skipping school . | 82% of children aged 14-16 know how to use a smartphone ; 57% of rural children use smartphones for educational purposes but 76% use them for social media . (ASER 2024) |
| Positive Impacts of Technology on Children | | | |
| Enhanced Learning Opportunities due to Access to Information through the internet | Development of Digital Literacy and Skills E.g. problem-solving, critical thinking | Improved Communication and Social Connection across diverse communities | Fostering Creativity and Self-Expression of children |
| Negative Impacts of Technology on Children | | | |
| Physical and mental Health E.g. vision problems, sleep issues, addiction-like behaviors | Social and Developmental Challenges E.g. Reduced face-to-face interactions hinders development of social skills, provide source for familial conflict | Reduced Attention Span and impact on Academic Performance due to low focus E.g. Brain Rot | Exposure to Inappropriate Content and Online Risks. E.g., Cyberbullying. |
| Way Forward | | | |
| Policy interventions: By Tech companies and Governments to ensure parental consent, regulation of age-appropriate content. E.g. EU's Better Internet for Kids (BIK+) Strategy , Meta's Teen Accounts | | Social: Prioritizing Real-Life Connections and Family Time to combat social media addiction | Education and awareness: Inculcating digital skills among children empowering them to navigate the digital world safely. |

3.2. SOCIAL MEDIA ADDICTION IN CHILDREN

Why in the news?

In the context of negative impacts of social media on children, Australia has become the first country to pass a law banning social media use for children under the age of 16.

Reasons for Social Media Addiction in Children

- **Peer Influence:** Social media's validation system (**likes, comments, shares**) influences children to be active in the '**Fear of Missing Out**' (**FOMO**).
- **Instant Gratification:** Social media offers immediate rewards, **releasing dopamine**, which can lead to addictive behavior.
- **Parents:** With the rise of **nuclear families**, **both working parents** fail to provide **adequate attention** to their child, leading to a modern phenomenon of the "**iPad kid**".
- **Escapism:** Social media provides an escape from real-world issues like **loneliness and stress**, developing **emotional dependency** on the platforms.
- **Algorithm-Driven Engagement:** Algorithms are tailored to increase engagement, making it **hard to stop** using social media.



Arguments supporting and opposing the ban

| Supporting the ban | Opposing the ban |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cyberbullying: Social media can spread harmful content, causing depression, anxiety, and suicide. • Excessive Screen Time: It can lead to reduced physical activity, poor sleep patterns, etc. • Attention Problems & Academic Impact: Constantly switching between digital content reduces focus, affecting school performance. E.g. reel scrolling • Impaired Social Skills: Excessive social media use limits face-to-face interactions, impairing relationship-building and emotional intelligence. • Dangerous Viral Trends: E.g. “Blackout Challenge” (breath-holding), “Devious Lick” (stealing) and “Blue Whale Challenge” (requires player to commit suicide) can result in injuries, legal trouble, and other harmful outcomes. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Socialization and Learning: Social media helps teens stay connected, collaborate on homework, and develop skills like creativity and problem-solving. • Ineffectiveness of Ban: Banning social media is hard to enforce and may push teens to unsafe spaces, like the Dark Web. • Impractical Age Limits: Setting age limits (like 13 or 16) does not guarantee readiness, as maturity levels vary. • Focus on Improving Platforms: Instead of banning, the focus should be on reforming social media platforms safer and more child-friendly. • Learning from Mistakes: Banning social media may prevent children from learning digital skills and information on digital safety. |

Way Forward

- **Safety-by-Design:** Tech companies must provide default privacy settings for minors (**E.g. Meta’s Teen Accounts, UK’s Age Appropriate Design Code**); use AI for detection and removal of harmful content etc.
- **Regulation:** Promoting **self-regulation** in social media platforms along with ensuring appropriate **legislative accountability** for creating safer, child-friendly spaces. E.g. **Meta** set **age limit (13+)** on its platforms.
- **Improving Digital Skills:** Educate children and parents about digital skills, responsible online behavior, digital literacy, and **self-regulation**.
 - E.g. **Kerala’s Digital De-Addiction (D-DAD)** centers offer free counseling for kids with digital addiction.
- **Parental Involvement and Control:** **Parental consent in account creation, privacy settings and content regulation can be incorporated for children’s accounts.**
- **Technological interventions:** Using **applications** to limit screen time, enable activity reports and reporting and blocking unwanted interactions can be encouraged to protect children from online crimes.

Conclusion

A ban on social media usage by children potentially has benefits in addressing serious risks like cyberbullying and addiction, but comprehensive solutions require platform reforms, digital literacy education, parental involvement, and technological safeguards rather than outright prohibition alone.

3.3. CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATIVE AND ABUSE MATERIAL (CSEAM)

Why in the News?

Supreme Court penalised the possession and storage of Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Material (CSEAM) under the **Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012**.

Key highlights of the Judgment of Supreme Court

- **Overtaken Madras High Court Ruling:** **High Court** had held that **mere possession** of child pornographic material **does not violate the law** unless the individual had actively used a child for pornographic purposes.
- **Criminalized CSEAM Possession:** **Physical as well as constructive possession** (power to control combined with knowledge of that control) would fall under **Section 15 of POCSO Act**.



- Section 15 of POCSO Act **penalizes storage or possession** of pornographic material involving children.
- **Common Malevolent Intent:** Acts of **viewing CSEAM** and engaging in **child sexual abuse** share a common, **malevolent intent**- exploitation and degradation of a child for the sexual gratification of the abuser.
- **Violation of Fundamental Rights:** CSEAM is violative of the rights of children to **live with dignity**.
- **Change in Terminology:** SC has directed all Courts to abstain from using the term "child pornography" and instead use **"Child Sexual Exploitative and Abuse Material" (CSEAM)**.
 - Court suggested **amending the POCSO Act** to the Parliament to change the terminology.

Impact of CSEAM

- **Psychological Trauma:** Can manifest as depression, anxiety and post-traumatic stress disorder.
- **Victimization Cycle:** Social stigmatization and isolation exacerbates feelings of shame, guilt and worthlessness in the victim.
- **Dehumanization:** Children are treated as a commodity, psychologically harming them.
- **Economic Impact:** Impact on academics, difficulty in securing employment and economic hardships.

Suggestions of the Supreme Court

- **Adolescent Education Program:** Implementing comprehensive adolescent/ sex education programs including awareness about the **legal and ethical ramifications** of child pornography.
 - E.g., Court stressed on successful sex education programs like **Udaan program in Jharkhand**.
- **Constitution of Expert Committee:** For devising a comprehensive program for raising awareness about POCSO among children.
- **Support and Rehabilitation:** Services like **psychological counselling, therapeutic interventions, and educational support** to address underlying issues of depression and stigmatization.
- **Early Identification of At-Risk Youth:** Intervention strategies for youth with problematic sexual behaviour.
- **Role of Government:** POCSO obligates Central and State Governments to undertake measures and ensure their wide **publicity through media** including the television, radio and print media.
- **Compassionate Society: Sensitization** of society towards **victims** of POCSO Act offences by inducing **behavioral change**.

POCSO Act 2012

- It is a self-contained comprehensive legislation for the purpose of **enforcing the rights of all children to safety, security and protection from sexual abuse and exploitation**.
 - POCSO defines '**child**' as someone **below 18 years of age**.
- **Offences: 3 broad categories of sexual offences** - Sexual Assault, Sexual Harassment, and using a child for pornography.
- **2019 Amendment:** Introduced more stringent punishments E.g. **death penalty** for **sexual crimes** on children.
- **Special Court:** POCSO Rules provide for special courts to provide **interim compensation** for child's relief or rehabilitation needs.

Other Measures to protect Children

Legal Measures

- **Information Technology (IT) Act, 2000:** Imposes **stringent penalties** and fines for online transmission of obscene or pornographic content including CSEAM.
 - Other statutory measures include **Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, (2015), Digital Personal Data Protection Act (2023), Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (2023)** etc.
- **Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021:** Requires **large social media platforms** to deploy technology-based measures to identify and block CSEAM.

Policy and Schemes

- **National Action Plan for Children (2016):** It focuses efforts on preventing crimes against children, especially sexual offences.
- **Fast Track Special Courts (FTSCs) Scheme (2019):** For **expeditious disposal** of rape and POSCO Act cases, complementary to the POSCO Special Courts.
 - FTSCs have exhibited a **high disposal rate (94%)** in 2023. (India Child Protection report)
- **Online Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation (OCSAE) Prevention/Investigation Unit** set up by CBI.
- **Cyber Crime Prevention against Women and Children (CCPWC):** For awareness under Nirbhaya Fund.
- **Operation Hawk:** By CBI to crack down on **global cybercrime networks** involved in **online child sexual exploitation**.

Global

- **UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UN-CRC), 1990:** India ratified the CRC, strengthening CRC's provisions for online and offline offences against children.
- **SDG 16.2:** End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children
- **Initiatives by Social Media Platforms:** YouTube uses an automatic tool called **Child Sexual Abuse Imagery (CSAI) Match** to proactively weed out CSAM.

Conclusion

The Supreme Court's decision marks a significant shift in the legal landscape concerning child sexual exploitation in India. By criminalizing mere possession of CSEAM and expanding legal protections for children, the Court has set the stage for **stronger enforcement of child protection laws**.

DAKSHA MAINS

MENTORING PROGRAM 2026

DAKSHA MAINS MENTORING PROGRAM 2026

(A Strategic Revision, Practice, and Enrichment Mentoring Program for Mains Examination 2026)

DATE
17 July

DURATION
5 Months

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE PROGRAMME

| | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highly experienced and qualified team of mentors Scheduled group sessions for strategy discussions, live practice, and peer interaction Well-structured revision and practice plan for GS Mains, Essay & Ethics Access to Daksha Mains Practice Tests | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emphasis on score maximization and performance improvement Personalized one-to-one sessions with mentors Subject-wise strategy documents based on thorough research Continuous performance assessment, monitoring and smart interventions |
|--|--|

For any assistance call us at:
+91 8468022022, +91 9019066066
enquiry@visionias.in

3.4. CHILD LABOUR AT A GLANCE

Child Labour

Child labour comprises work that children are too young to perform and/or work that, by its nature or circumstances, is likely to **harm children's health, safety or morals**.

➤ **25th anniversary** of ILO **Convention No. 182 (worst forms of child labour)** was celebrated in 2024.

Status of Child Labour

| | | | |
|--|--|---|---|
| ~138 million (7.8%) children (5-17 years) worldwide engaged (54 million (3.1%) in hazardous work) (ILO-UNICEF) | 10.1 million (3.9%) children engaged in child labour in India (Census 2011) | Agriculture remains the largest sector for child labor | Reduction of ~20 million children in child labour since 2000 but the target of eliminating child labour by 2025 (SDG 8.7) not achieved. |
|--|--|---|---|

Constitutional Provisions

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| Article 24: Prohibition of employment of children in factories, etc. | Article 23: Prohibition of traffic in human beings and forced labour. | Article 39(e): Directs the state to ensure that the tender age of children is not abused. |
|---|--|--|

Legal Provisions

| | | | |
|--|---|--|--|
| Child and Adolescent Labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Act, 1986: Completely prohibits employment of children below 14 years and employment of adolescents (14 to 18 years of age) in hazardous occupations or processes. | Commission for Protection of Child Rights Act, 2005: Establishes National Commission for Protection of Child Rights. | Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 | Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015 |
|--|---|--|--|

Indian Initiatives

- National Policy on Child Labour, 1987
- National Child Labour Project (NCLP) Scheme, 1988 (Merged with Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan since 2021)
- PENCIL (Platform for Effective Enforcement for No Child Labour) portal

Global Initiatives

- UN Declaration of the Rights of the Child, 1959
- UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), 1989
- ILO Conventions on Child Labour (138 and 182). India ratified in 2017

Reasons for Persistence of Child Labour

- **Vicious cycle of poverty** (lack of access to education, informal economy, menial jobs) hinders upward **socio-economic mobility**.
- **Weak law enforcement** and exploit loopholes E.g. 'family enterprise' clause under Child Labour Act
- **Cultural acceptance and demand for child labour** due to lower wages, malleability, and perceived nimbleness.
- **Vulnerabilities in distress:** Migration, trafficking, Humanitarian crises, conflicts, and climate-related disasters push children into child labour.

Way Forward in Eradicating Child Labour

- **Enforcement of laws:** Prevent child labour in enterprises through Inter-ministerial coordination, data aggregation and analysis involving civil society.
- **Socio-economic empowerment:** Break the vicious cycle of poverty by providing access to education, skilling, employment to the poor families.
- **International cooperation:** Strengthen collaboration with neighboring countries (Nepal, Bangladesh) on cross-border trafficking, participation in South Asia Initiative to End Violence Against Children (SAIEVAC), etc.

3.5. CHILD MARRIAGE IN INDIA

Why in the News?

Supreme Court, in the **Society for Enlightenment and Voluntary Action & Anr. v. Union of India** case, issued comprehensive **guidelines for prohibition of child marriage**.



Status of Child Marriage in India (NFHS-5)

- **23.3%** of women aged 20-24 years were **married before age 18 years**.
- **17.7%** of men aged 25-29 years were **married before age 21 years**.
- Prevalence of child marriage has **reduced by half from 47% (2006) to 23.3% (2019-21)**.
- As per **NCRB**, **number of cases** registered under **Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006** during the last five years have increased from 395 (2017) to 1050 (2021).

Reasons for prevalence of child marriages in India

- **Poverty and Resource Scarcity:** Girls face child marriage as they are viewed as **economic liabilities** due to **patrilineage** (property transferred through male lineage) and practice of **dowry**.
- **Cultural and Traditional Beliefs:** **Social acceptances for child marriage as a way to preserve family honour**, ensure **virginity and chastity**, and protect girls from premarital sexual relationships.
- **Lack of educational opportunities:** **Low value** is placed on **girl's education** due to traditional **gender roles**, **hindering the empowerment** of the girls needed to resist marriage.
- **Fear of Safety and Security:** Child marriage is justified by parents as a step to ensure **security** of **girl's future** as young girls face **safety risks** due to **physical or sexual harassment**.
- **Legal and Enforcement Gaps:** Weak law enforcement and lack of awareness leads to continuation of menace of child marriage. E.g. Low conviction and reporting of child marriage cases.

Consequences of Child Marriages

- **Physical:** Early marriages can lead to forced sexual activity, **domestic violence**, affecting the **girl's reproductive health**.
 - E.g., 6.8% of women age 15-19 years were already mothers or pregnant at the time of the survey (NFHS-5)
- **Developmental:** It can result in **low education and life skills**, increasing girl's dependence and vulnerability, resulting in lower Labor Force Participation Rate.
- **Human Rights violations:** Child marriage violates the right to a free and joyful childhood, choice, etc.
- **Marital Rape:** In child marriages, the girl often lacks the legal and social agency to refuse sexual intercourse, making her highly vulnerable to marital rape.
- **Psychological:** Girl is **burdened** with the **familial responsibilities**, impacting her psychological well-being.
- **Global Impact:** Child marriage is included in **Sustainable Development Goals- SDG 5** "Gender Equality- Eliminate harmful practices like child, early and forced marriages."

Initiatives to Prevent Child Marriages

India

- **Prohibition of Child Marriage Act (PCMA), 2006:** Prohibits marriage of girls under **18** and boys under **21** years. Provision of **Child Marriage Prohibition Officers (CMPO)** for protection of victims and prosecution of offenders.
- **Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015:** Provisions for care and protection of children at imminent risk of child marriage.
- **Schemes and programs:** Beti Bachao Beti Padhao Scheme, Bal Vivah Mukta Bharat campaigns, Emergency Outreach Services like CHILDLINE, etc,
- **National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR):** It undertakes various activities with stakeholders (e.g. Child Welfare Committees (CWC), Police) on the issue of child marriages.
- **Role of Civil Society:** Bringing socio-cultural and mindset changes at grassroots. E.g. UNICEF, in Bihar, is building capacity of local faith-based leaders and kathavachaks on child marriage.

Global

- **United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child:** Mandates protection of children from harmful practices, including child marriage. India is a signatory.



- **Global Programme to Accelerate Action to End Child Marriage:** By UNICEF and UNFPA to address child marriage through the entire **lifecycle of a child**.

Way Forward

The **Supreme Court guidelines** to prevent child marriages in India covering various components:

- **Legal Enforcement:** Establishment of a **Special Police Unit** and **Special Child Marriage Prohibition Unit**.
- **Judicial Measures:** Empower Magistrates to take **Suo moto action** to prevent solemnization of child marriage.
 - Forming **Special Fast-Track Courts** for Child Marriage Cases, holding neglectful public servants accountable.
- **Community Involvement:** **Child Marriage Free Village Initiative** and “**Child Marriage Free**” certification for villages and gram panchayats on the lines of “Open Defecation Free Village”.
- **Awareness and Capacity Building:** Comprehensive **Sexuality and Rights Education** to be integrated into school curricula, training for community health workers, educators, etc.
- **Use of Technology:** Establishment of a **Centralized Reporting Portal for Child Marriages** by Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Women and Child Development, and NALSA.
 - **E.g., ‘Bal Vivah Mukht Bharat’ portal** by Ministry of Women and Child Development for effective reporting of cases and providing information on CMPOs.
- **Funding:** Dedicated Budget Allocation for each State specifically aimed at preventing child marriage.
 - Institutionalization of **Juvenile Justice Fund** established under the **Juvenile Justice Act**.

Conclusion

Efficient law enforcement, role of community and civil society in opposing the social acceptance and sensitization of parents in high-incidence areas will aid eradicating the practice. **Assam’s Nijut Moina scheme** (encourage higher education among girls to reduce child marriage) shows the way forward.

3.6. KEYWORDS

| | | | | |
|---|--|------------------------|---------------------------|---------------|
| Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006 | Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015 | Bal Vivah Mukht Bharat | Screen Addiction | iPad Kid |
| FOMO | Digital De-addiction | Algorithmic Targeting | ILO Conventions 138 & 182 | PENCIL portal |

3.7. PRACTICE QUESTION

Answer Canvas

Australia has banned social media usage below the age of 16. In this context, do you think that such a policy needs to be adopted in India? Critically analyse.

| Introduction | Body Part: 1 | Body part: 2 | Conclusion |
|-----------------|--|--|---|
| Current context | Arguments for ban of social media for children | Arguments against ban of social media for children | Balanced approach towards social media usage by children, role of parents and social media platforms. |
| | | | |

4. OTHER VULNERABLE SECTIONS

4.1. TRIBAL POPULATION IN INDIA AT A GLANCE

Tribal Population in India

Tribal people are distinct social and cultural groups that share collective ancestral ties to the lands and natural resources where they live. e.g., Maori, Inuit, etc.

Key Data and Facts

Population: 10.45 crore (8.6%) (2011 census).

40.6% ST population is below poverty line (Tribal Health Report).

75 Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs), living mostly in remote and hard-to-reach areas.

Genetic Disorders: Sickle Cell Disease (SCD) is prevalent in 1 in 86 births.

Criteria for identifying PVTGS

Pre-agricultural level of technology

Low level of literacy

Economic backwardness

A declining or stagnant population

Issues faced by the Tribal People

Erosion of identity: Traditional systems clash with modern ones, e.g., Extinction of tribal dialect.

Forced displacement: Development, disasters, and conflict displace tribals from their lands.

Low literacy: Literacy rate among STs is just 59% which is 73% among the general population. (Census 2011).

Triple health burden: Malnutrition and communicable diseases, non-communicable diseases, and mental illness and addiction plague tribal communities.

Climate vulnerability: Close connection to nature exposes tribals to climate change impacts.

Measures undertaken for Tribal Welfare

Constitutional Measures

Legislative Measures

Government Schemes

➤ **Article 342:** Notification of STs

➤ **Schedule V and VI (Article 244)**

➤ **Article 275:** Grant of special funds for promoting the welfare of STs.

➤ **Article 338A:** National Commission for STs.

➤ Panchayat (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996

➤ Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006

➤ SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989

➤ Eklavya Model Residential School (EMRS)

➤ Pradhan Mantri Vanbandhu Vikas Yojana

➤ Pradhan Mantri Adi Adarsh Gram Yojna (PMAAGY)

➤ Pradhan Mantri Khanij Kshetra Kalyan Yojana (PMKKKY)

Way Forward (as per Panchsheel Principles)

Identify and assess PVTG vulnerabilities: Conduct a special census to assess health, education, and nutrition, and objectively assess their debt levels.

Rights-based development: Implement policies protecting and promoting tribal rights, including requiring free, prior, and informed consent for any development on their land.

Participatory governance: Integrate PVTGs into existing governance structures and programs, while strengthening their traditional institutions and systems

Culturally sensitive services: Develop preventive and curative healthcare systems considering ecological and cultural aspects.

Relevant education: Develop locally relevant, culturally sensitive education curricula in tribal languages.

4.1.1. DHARTI AABA JANJATIYA GRAM UTKARSH ABHIYAN

Why in the News?

The Prime Minister launched the Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan, also known as **Pradhan Mantri Janjatiya Unnat Gram Abhiyan (PM-JUGA)**, for improving socio-economic conditions of tribal communities.

Key Features of the Scheme

- **Objective:** Improve **socio-economic condition of tribal communities**, by adopting **saturation** coverage of various **schemes** for tribal families in **tribal-majority** villages and **aspirational districts** by convergence and outreach.
- **Time Period:** 5 years (2024-25 to 2028-29)
- **Mission Components:**
 - **Inter-Ministerial Convergence:** Comprises **25 interventions** to be implemented by **17-line ministries**.
 - **Funding:** Under **Development Action Plan for Scheduled Tribes (DAPST)**.
 - **Whole-of-government approach:** aims to improve access to education, healthcare, and skills
- **Mapping and Monitoring:** Tribal villages covered would be **mapped and monitored on PM Gati Shakti Portal**.

| Goals under the Mission | |
|---|---|
| Goal-1: Developing Enabling Infrastructure | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For Tribal Households: Pucca house (PM Awaas Yojana (Gramin), access to tapped water (Jal Jeevan Mission) and electricity supply, Ayushman Bharat Card. • Improving Village infrastructure: All weather road connectivity (PM Gram Sadak Yojana), access to mobile connectivity (Bharat Net) and internet, etc. |
| Goal-2: Economic Empowerment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skill Development, Entrepreneurship promotion and Enhanced Livelihood: Access to training (Skill India Mission/ JSS), Marketing support through Tribal Multipurpose Marketing Centre (TMMC), Tourist Home Stays, etc. |
| Goal-3: Access to Good Education | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) to the national levels in school and higher education, setting up tribal hostels at district/ block level. |
| Goal-4: Healthy Lives and Dignified Ageing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure access to quality health facilities to ST households, immunization coverage through Mobile Medical Unit, etc. |

Innovative Schemes under PM-JUGA

- Developing **1000 Tribal Home Stays** under **Swadesh Darshan** through Ministry of Tourism.
- **Sustainable Livelihood for Forest Right Holders (FRA):** Expedite the process of recognizing and securing forest rights of **~22 lakh FRA patta holders**, empowering tribal communities to ensure conservation of forest.
- **Improving infrastructure of Government residential Schools and Hostels** on the lines of PM-SHRI Schools.
- **Centre of Competence (CoC) for diagnosis of Sickle Cell Disease (SCD) with advanced facilities.**
- **100 Tribal Multipurpose Marketing Centre (TMMC)s to be set up** to ensure fair remuneration and marketing of tribal products.

Other Initiatives for Socio-Economic Development of Tribals

- **Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006 (FRA):** To recognize forest rights of the Forest Dwelling Scheduled Tribes.
- **Education: Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRS)** for ST students (Class VI-XII) in remote areas.
 - Presently, **more than 1.38 lakh students** are enrolled in **479 Functional EMRS**.
- **Economic Empowerment:**
 - **Minimum Support Price (MSP) for Minor Forest Produce,**



- **Pradhan Mantri Jan Jatiya Vikas Mission:** Marketing support for tribal products.
- **Pradhan Mantri Vanbandhu Vikas Yojana:** Promoting entrepreneurship in ST youth through a **venture capital fund** and **Van Dhan Vikas Kendras (VDVK)**.
- **Infrastructure: Pradhan Mantri Adi Adarsh Gram Yojana (PMAAGY):** Transforming villages with significant tribal population into model villages.
- **Health Outcomes: National Health Mission** guideline to control and prevent **Haemoglobinopathies**, including Sickle Cell Disease, affecting tribal population.

Conclusion

With a comprehensive approach that focuses on infrastructure development, economic empowerment, and access to quality education and healthcare, this initiative aims to bridge the critical gaps faced by tribal populations. This commitment to uplift and empower tribal communities will be pivotal in achieving inclusive growth in the country.

4.2. ATROCITIES AGAINST SCHEDULED CASTES

Why in the News?

Standing Committee on Social Justice and Empowerment has raised concerns over the failure of several States to establish the necessary **mechanisms** to effectively **address cases of atrocities against Scheduled Castes**.

About Scheduled Castes (SCs)

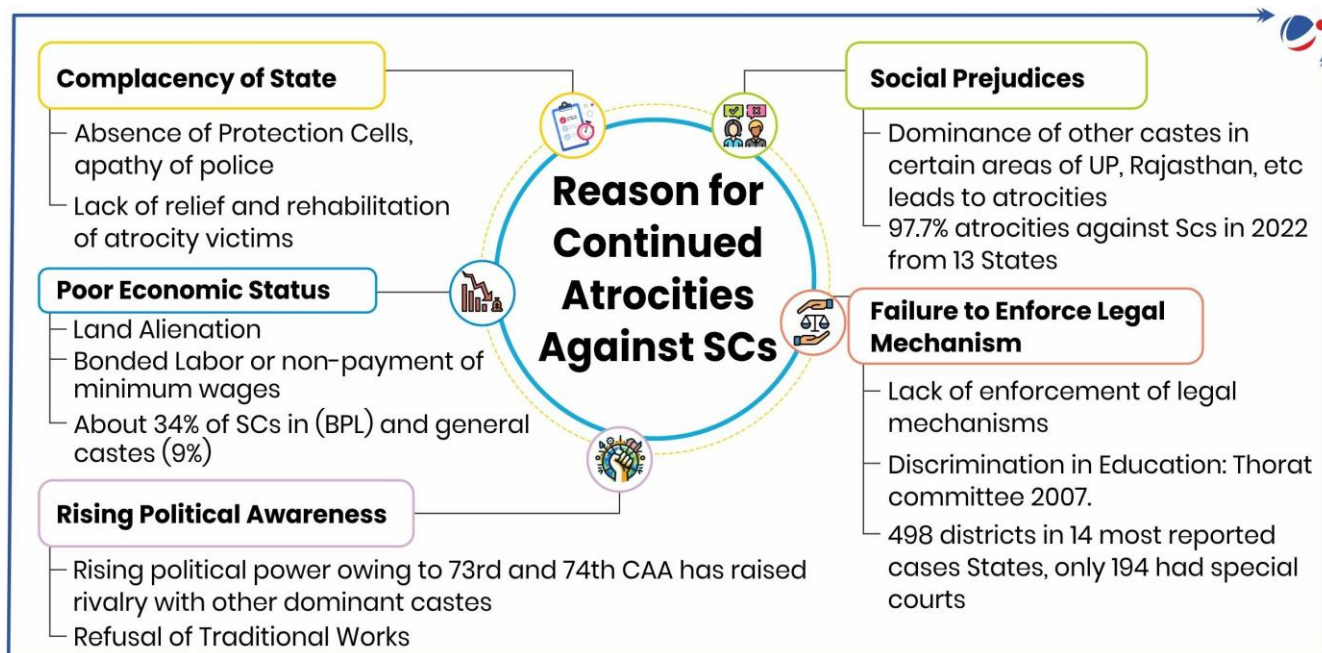
- **Article 341 defines** the term ‘**Scheduled Caste**’: The President may notify the Scheduled Castes for a state or UT after consulting the State governor (of the respective State). Parliament can amend this list by law.
 - The term, “**Scheduled Castes**” was **first incorporated** in the **Government of India Act of 1935**.

Status of SCs

- **SCs** constitute **16.6%** of India's population (2011 Census).
- **71% SC farmers** work as **agricultural labourers** for salaries on land that they do **not own**. (USDA)
- Only **66.1%** of the population is **literate**, compared to **73.3%** of Indians overall.
- According to NCRB report,
 - **Crime rate increased** from 25.3% (2021) to 28.6% (2022).

Mechanism to tackle Caste based atrocities

- **Constitutional**
 - **Fundamental Rights: Article 14, 15, 16, 17.**
 - **DPSP: Article 46** (promotes the educational and economic interests of SCs) and **Article 338 (National Commission for SCs)**
- **Legal**
 - **Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1955:** ‘Untouchability’ as a result of religious and social disabilities was made punishable.
 - **Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989**
 - **Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013.**



Initiatives for empowerment of SCs

- **Education:**
 - The Scholarship for Higher Education for Young Achievers Scheme (SHREYAS).
 - Scheme For Residential Education For Students in High Schools in Targeted Areas (SHRESHTA)
 - National Overseas Scholarship (NOS) Scheme for SC etc. candidates
- **Economic empowerment and Entrepreneurship:**
 - Credit Enhancement Guarantee Scheme for the Scheduled Castes (SCs)
 - Pradhan Mantri Anusuchit Jaati Abhyuday Yojana (PM AJAY)
 - National Scheduled Castes Finance and Development Corporation (NSFDC)
 - Ambedkar Social Innovation and Incubation Mission (ASIIM)
- **Eliminate manual scavenging:** National Action for Mechanised Sanitation Ecosystem (NAMASTE)

Way Forward

- **Utilize the funds for welfare schemes:** **Accountability** of States/UTs in **efficient fund utilization** needs to be ensured by upholding the spirit of cooperative federalism. Inefficiency in scheme implementation **should be dealt strictly**.
- **Quantifiable targets:** Fix the physical targets of all the welfare schemes so that there is no laxity in the implementation of the Schemes at any stage by the States or other Implementing Agencies.
- **Empowerment of National Institute of Social Defence (NISD):** It addresses critical areas such as Drug Abuse prevention, rehabilitation of socially marginalized and vulnerable groups etc.
- **Process of identifying the poorest households of SCs:** To ensure targeted delivery of the services under welfare schemes. E.g. enrolling eligible SC students under SHREYAS Scheme.
- **Skill training:** Schemes like Pradhan Mantri Dakshta aur Kushalta Sampaan Hitgrahi (**PM-DAKSH**) for SCs, OBCs, sanitation workers and others should have **larger outlay to cover large populace**.
- **Caste-sensitivity training:** Caste-awareness and anti-discrimination training for public officials, police personnel, judiciary, and frontline workers to ensure empathetic and fair service delivery and law enforcement.

Conclusion

Despite constitutional protections and welfare schemes, Scheduled Castes face persistent discrimination and atrocities. Effective implementation requires stronger state accountability, targeted fund utilization, quantifiable targets, and expanded skill development programs for meaningful empowerment.

4.3. PERSONS WITH DISABILITY (PWDS) AT A GLANCE

Persons with Disabilities (PwDs)

PwD means a person with long term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairment which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.

Current Status in India

2.21% of the total population are PwDs

44% of PwDs are women

69% PwDs live in Rural areas

55% PwDs are illiterate

Challenges faced by PwDs

Stereotype:

PwDs have to face stigma, prejudice, and discrimination at multiple levels.

Accessibility:

Inaccessible facilities hinder access to schools, hospitals, and shopping.

Communication challenges:

Faced by people having disabilities for hearing, speaking, reading, writing, and/or understanding.

Policy barriers:

Lack of awareness or enforcement of supportive laws.

Poverty and disability reinforce one another:

Poor health and nutrition can lead to disability and vice versa.

Social barriers:

Disability is seen to limit rights and opportunities of PwDs in employment, education or sufficient income, impacting their social status.

Initiatives for mainstreaming PwDs

Legal:

➤ Right to free education for every PWD child up to 18 years of age.

➤ Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPD) Act, 2016: Prescribes 4% and 5% reservation in government employment and education (respectively).

Policies:

National Education Policy (NEP), 2020; National Policy for Persons with Disabilities, 2006

Schemes:

➤ ADIP Scheme (Assistance to Disabled Persons for Purchase/ Fitting of Aids and Appliances) & ADIP & RVY Joint Interface for Unique Nomination (ARJUN) Portal

➤ Deendayal Divyangjan Rehabilitation Scheme (DDRS)

➤ National Divyangjan Finance and Development Corporation (NDFDC)

➤ Accessible India Campaign

Addressing as 'Divyangjan': remove stigma and enable dignified living of PwDs.

Global: United Nations Convention on Rights of Person with Disabilities (UNCRPD), Biwako Millennium Framework and adoption of Incheon Strategy for PwDs in Asia and Pacific.

Way forward for mainstreaming and easing life of PwDs

Attitudinal Change:

Sensitization of society for supporting PwDs to live independent and dignified lives.

Early diagnostic and intervention: Aid primary prevention

(prevention of the manifestation of the disability) and Secondary prevention (reducing the duration or severity of disability).

Providing support:

Improve disability data collection, access to Social Protection and assistive care.

Participatory Approach:

PwDs should be consulted and actively involved in formulating and implementing policies, laws, and services based on the 'Nothing about us, without us' principle.

4.3.1. RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES (RPWD) ACT, 2016

Why in the News?

In **Rajive Raturi vs Union of India & Ors.**, the Supreme Court directed the Centre to frame **mandatory rules** under the **Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPwD) Act, 2016** to ensure **accessibility in public places and services**.

Key highlights of the Judgment

- **Rights-based approach to Accessibility:** Right to access environments, services and opportunities is a human and fundamental right.
- **Social model of disability:** The judgement upholds the **social model of disability** which focuses on **social change** for inclusion and equality of PwDs by **removing social barriers** preventing their full participation.
- **Legislative Gap:** Declared **Rule 15(1)** (accessibility to the establishment) of the **2017 Rules ultra vires** to the RPWD Act as it lacks the **mandatory or non-negotiable** prescription.
 - **Section 40** of the **RPwD Act, 2016** requires framing of **mandatory accessibility standards** based on the **principles of accessibility**.
 - Principles like **Universal Design, comprehensive inclusion** across disabilities, **integration of assistive technologies** should be considered while carrying out the exercise.

Key Provisions of the RPwD Act, 2016

- **Definition of PwD:** A person with long term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairment which, in interaction with barriers, hinders their full and effective participation in society equally with others.
- **Recognized Disabilities:** Recognises **21 types of disabilities** including acid attack victims, intellectual disability, mental illness, etc.
- **Social security:** Mandates **government** programs to ensure an adequate standard of living, enabling independent or community living for PwDs.
- **Other Provisions:** **National and State Funds** for financial support, **Chief Commissioner and Commissioners** to safeguard the rights of PwDs, Establishment of **Central & State Advisory Boards on Disability** as policy-making bodies; **Special Courts and Special Public Prosecutors** by the State Governments to try offenses under the Act.

Conclusion

Supreme Court's directive ensures mandatory accessibility standards, upholding disability rights through **social model approach** and comprehensive inclusion.

OPTIONAL ADVANCED COURSE for UPSC CSE MAINS 2025



Geography

Starts: 12th June



Public Administration

Starts: 30th June



Anthropology

Starts: 25th June

Online / Offline

AVAILABLE IN **ENGLISH MEDIUM**



4.4. SENIOR-CARE AT A GLANCE

| Senior-care | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| Senior citizens (aged 60 years and above) comprise ~10% (104 million) of the population in India | India's elderly population will exceed 20% of the total by 2050 . (UNFPA 2023) | Global population aged 60+ was 1 billion in 2020 , projected to reach 2.1 billion by 2050 | Two-thirds of the elderly will live in low- and middle-income countries by 2050 |
| Constitutional Provisions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Article 41: State shall make effective provisions for securing the right to work, to education, and to public assistance in cases of old age, etc. ➤ 7th Schedule: Provisions related to old age pension, social security and insurance, and economic and social planning. | Legislative Measures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act, 2007 ➤ NALSA (Legal Services to Senior Citizens) Scheme, 2016 | Policy Measures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ National Policy for Older Persons (NPOP), 1999 ➤ National Social Assistance Program (NSAP): Indira Gandhi Old Age Pension Scheme (IGNOAPS) and Indira Gandhi National Disability Pension Scheme (IGNDPS) ➤ National Programme for the Health Care for the Elderly (NPHCE): preventive, curative, and rehabilitative treatment. | |
| Indian Initiatives and Schemes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Pradhan Mantri Vaya Vandana Yojana (2015): Senior citizens pension scheme. ➤ Atal Vayo Abhyudaya Yojana (AVYAY): Integrated Program for Senior Citizens. ➤ Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana (2017): To provide assisted-living devices and support to BPL senior citizens. ➤ Senior Able Citizens for Re-Employment in Dignity (SACRED portal): To connect senior citizens with job providers in the private sector. ➤ The Senior Ageing Growth Engine (SAGE) initiative: Promotion of senior care products and services. ➤ Others: Vayoshreshtha Samman; Accessible India Campaign (Sugamya Bharat Abhiyaan), Senior Citizen Welfare Portal | | Global Initiatives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ UN Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (2002): Promotes better quality of life for older adults. ➤ WHO Global Strategy (2016–2020): Focuses on healthy aging and age-friendly environments. ➤ UN SDGs: Address aging through Goals 3 (Health) and 10 (Reduced Inequality). ➤ UN Decade of Healthy Ageing (2021–2030) ➤ Japan "Healthy Japan 21 Program" Promotes active ageing ➤ WHO's Global Network of Age-friendly Cities and Communities (GNAFCC): Kohikode, Kerala made a member | |
| Challenges and Issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Health: Lack of focus on Geriatric care and in silos approach to health. ➤ Social: Rural-urban disparities, gender-based inequalities, and inadequate elder-friendly infrastructure limit access and support. ➤ Economic Dependency: due to implementation gaps in social security schemes. E.g. 70% elderly depend of family for daily needs ➤ Underdeveloped Care economy: Care jobs are undervalued and underpaid hindering its development and burdening family especially women with care work. ➤ Other: digital illiteracy and divide, etc. | | Way Forward <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Promoting Healthy Ageing and Silver economy to treat the senior citizens as assets especially for experience-sharing. E.g. Kerala 1st state to create a commission for senior citizens. ➤ Health empowerment: Development of Geriatric care, increase health literacy, incentivize Preventive healthcare. ➤ Social empowerment: Elder for elderly model (peer support groups), community sensitization promoting social inclusion of elderly. ➤ Economic empowerment: Promoting re-skilling and re-employment, providing social security like pensions. | |



4.4.1. INTER-GENERATIONAL COMMUNICATION GAP

Why in the News?

The report, '**Understanding Intergenerational Dynamics & Perceptions on Ageing**', released by **HelpAge India** highlights the recent demographic shift and evolving family structures have **transformed intergenerational dynamics**.

Key Findings

- **Negative Perceptions of Ageing:** 54% of elders associate ageing with negative feelings, primarily loneliness (47%).
- **Youth vs. Elder Reality:** Youth associate elders with loneliness (56%), dependence (48%), and wisdom (51%), but underestimate their emotional distress depth.
- **Emotional Disconnect:** Despite frequent daily contact (66% elders, 61% youth), elders feel "told the plan, not asked," indicating poor listening.
- **Digital Divide:** Only 41% of elders own smartphones, 13% use social media. Many find technology confusing (66%) or fear errors (51%).
- **Digital Teaching Challenges:** Youth teach elders technology (54% children, 52% grandchildren) but perceive them as disinterested (78%) or forgetful (66%). Elders cite youth impatience (71%) and rushed explanations (49%).
- **Shared Old Age Fears:** Both generations fear loneliness (68% elders, 69% youth), poor health (61% elders, 67% youth), and financial insecurity (58% elders, 62% youth).
- **Family Care Priority:** 88% of youth and 83% of elders prefer family-based elder care.
- **Geographic Variations:** Non-metro cities show stronger intergenerational bonds than metro areas with faster lifestyles.

Key Reasons that Disrupt Intergenerational Communications

- **Generational Gap Perception Index:** Reveals that the disconnection is shaped more by education, dependence, and emotional distance than by age alone.
- **Communication Barriers:** Both elders (76%) and youth (74%) identify busy youth schedules as the top barrier to interaction.
- **Comfort Levels:** It varies by topic and relationship, i.e., discussions on "life advice" are moderately comfortable for both groups, while "career or education plans" are least comfortable.

Recommendations on fostering effective Intergenerational Communications

- **Aging Sensitization:** To be included as curricula in schools/colleges fostering empathy among youths regarding emotional realities of aging.
- **Youth-Led Training Initiatives:** Establishing "**Digital Buddy**" programs to pair tech-savvy youth with elders for patient digital learning.
- **Community-based elder support centres:** Offering holistic services, including emotional counselling, etc.
- **Intergenerational Programs:** Like "**Wisdom Exchange**" programs where elders share traditional skills while youth offer modern knowledge.

Conclusion

Despite frequent contact, intergenerational disconnect persists due to busy schedules and digital divides. Bridging gaps requires empathy education and community-based intergenerational exchange initiatives.

4.5. MANUAL SCAVENGING

Why in the News?

The Supreme Court (SC) sought an action taken report on its directions issued on **Dr Balram Singh V. Union of India & Ors. (2023) case**.



Dr Balram Singh V. Union of India & Ors. (2023) Case

The SC issued directions to the Centre and States to take measures to eradicate manual scavenging and hazardous cleaning in the country. The Directions are as follows:

- Centre to frame **Policies and guidelines** for all departments and statutory bodies (e.g. Railways) ensure that manual sewer cleaning is **completely eradicated in a phased manner**.
- Ensure **full rehabilitation** (including employment to the next of kin, education to the wards, and skill training) in respect of sewage workers, and those who die.
- **Enhance the compensation** payable for **sewer deaths to ₹30 lakh** from the earlier **₹10 lakh**.
 - In case of **sewer victims suffering disabilities**, compensation to be **₹ 20 lakhs** instead of **₹ 10 lakhs**.
- Conduct a **National Survey** within one year to **identify manual scavengers** and assess the situation.
- NCSK, NCSC, NCST and the Union government to coordinate in time-bound setting up of state level, district level committees, **prepare training modules, a Portal and Dashboard** for information and use by district and state level agencies, under the **2013 Act**.

About Manual Scavenging

- **Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation (PEMSR) Act, 2013** defines Manual scavenging as the practice of manually cleaning, carrying, or handling human excreta from insanitary latrines, open drains, or pits.
 - Every offence under Act is a **cognizable and non-bailable** offence.
- **Manual Scavenging was banned** under the Employment of Manual Scavengers and its Prohibition Act, 1993.
- Out of the 775 districts, **456 districts** no longer have manual scavenging (as on January 29, 2025).

Factors sustaining Manual Scavenging

- **Underreported Data:** Social stigma leads to underreporting as workers hide their identity during official manual scavenging surveys.
- **Cultural Resistance:** Caste prejudices support manual scavenging.
 - **> 97% Manual Scavengers** belonged to **Scheduled Castes**. (2021)
- **Lack of Regulation:** Absence of safety measures and equipment.
- **Lack of Enforcement:** Weak implementation of laws allows violations.
- **Poor Sewer Design:** Sewer designs prevent mechanized cleaning.

Initiatives to end manual scavenging

- **Schemes**
 - **National Action for Mechanised Sanitation Ecosystem (NAMASTE scheme) 2023:** A Central Sector Scheme to ensure safety, dignity and rehabilitation of hazardous sanitation workers.
 - **Swachh Bharat Mission (Urban 2.0):** Funding to States for mechanization of sewage cleaning. E.g. Bandicoot
- **Dedicated Institutions**
 - **National Commission for Safai Karamcharis (NCSK):** Initially created as a statutory body in **1994** for three years, became a **non-statutory body** under Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (MoSJ&E).
 - **National Safai Karamchari Financial Development Corporation (1997):** A non-profit company under MoSJ&E to uplift Safai Karamcharis.

Way Forward

- **Recommendations of NHRC**
 - The distinction between **sanitation workers and manual scavengers** in the 2013 Act is necessary.
 - **Empanelment of de-sledging market** and regulating its operations.
 - Providing of **safety gear** and conducting of **awareness workshops**.

- **Give financial assistance** to those coming up with technological innovations for hazardous waste cleaning.
- **Technological intervention:** Modern sanitation technologies such as automated sewer cleaning machines and robots can significantly reduce the dependence on human labour for cleaning sewers and septic tanks.
 - **Example like Kerala's Bandicoot**, which a robotic scavenger.
- **Upgrading sanitation infrastructure:** Investments in improved sanitation infrastructure, including sewage and sewage treatment systems.
- **Survey and Identification of Manual Scavengers:** Periodic surveys to identify manual scavengers across India to ensure they receive benefits under rehabilitation schemes. **Last survey was conducted in 2018.**

Conclusion

Supreme Court's enhanced compensation and rehabilitation directives, combined with technological interventions like robotics and comprehensive surveys, are crucial for eliminating manual scavenging and ensuring worker dignity.

4.6. KEYWORDS

| | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups | Forest Rights Act (FRA), 2006 | Eklavya Model Residential Schools | Triple Burden of Health | PM Van Dhan Yojana |
| Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1955 | Accessible India Campaign | Skewed Dependency ratios | Communication Breakdown | Inclusive Socialization |

4.7. PRACTICE QUESTION

Answer Canvas

Global population is ageing, requiring focused interventions towards their health and mental well-being. What are the challenges in ensuring an active and healthy senior population. What are the initiatives taken to ensure healthy ageing?

| Introduction | Body Part: 1 | Body part: 2 | Conclusion |
|---|--|--------------------------------|---|
| Recent context and/or data to support the context | Challenges in ensuring senior-care focused on health and mental well-being | Initiatives for healthy ageing | Global initiatives or case studies, promoting active ageing |
| | | | |

5. EDUCATION

5.1. SCHOOL EDUCATION AT A GLANCE

| School Education | | | |
|---|--|---|---|
| Key Data and Facts | | | |
| Gross Enrolment Ratio (UDISE+ 2023-24) Elementary: 93% Secondary: 77.4% Higher secondary (class11-12):56.2 % | Dropout rate (UDISE+) Primary: 1.9% Secondary: 14.1% | Mean years of schooling: 13 years. (increased from 8.2 years in 1990) (UNDP's 2025 Human Development Report) | Gender Parity Index Foundational: 1 Preparatory: 1.03 Middle: 1.02 Secondary: 1.04 |
| Key issues plaguing School Education in India | | | |
| Poor Learning Outcomes: Despite improvements in learning outcomes, more than half of Std V students cannot read a basic text from two grades below. (ASER, 2024) | Poor pedagogy: Rote-based learning, one-size-fits-all teaching model, and unhealthy competition affecting students' mental health and self-esteem | Teaching issues: Shortage of qualified teachers, engagement of teachers in non-teaching tasks etc | Infrastructure deficit: Inadequate fundamental facilities like drinking water, power, study materials. |
| Way Forward | | | |
| Exchange Programs: Student and teacher exchange programs to enhance exposure to improve standards of school education in rural areas. ➤ India Post unveils ' Gyan Post ' to boost education access across the country. | Adoption of schools: Private schools can adopt schools in remote areas through CSR Model. | Teacher training: First professional degree/ diploma in teacher education must be offered only in face-to-face mode and distance learning must only be pursued for professional development of teachers. (Justice Verma Committee, 2012) | |
| Enhancing accountability: Transparent and credible accreditation mechanism for teacher education as well as schools. | Reshaping pedagogy: Experiential learning like arts-integrated education, story-telling-based pedagogy, stakeholder collaboration, etc. | Continuous assessment: Replicate and implement CBSE's Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE) system, with improvements based on feedback. | |

5.2. THREE-LANGUAGE FORMULA

Why in the news?

Some states have opposed the implementation of the three-language formula recommended by the National Education Policy (2020).

Evolution of Three Language Formula Policy

- **Constitutional provisions:** State to facilitate instruction in **mother-tongue at primary stage** especially for linguistic minorities (**Article 350A**) and Directives for development of **Hindi language (Article 351)**.
- **National Education Policy, 1968:** Adopted 3-language formula based on the recommendation of **Kothari Commission (1964-65)**.
- **1992 Programme of Action:** **Mother tongue/ regional language** should be the medium of communication at the pre-school level.
- **RTE Act, 2009:** As far as possible, the **medium of instruction** in school should be the child's **mother tongue**.

- **National Education Policy (NEP), 2020:** Advocates utilization of home language, mother tongue, local language, or regional language as the medium of instruction at least until **Grade 5**, but preferably till **Grade 8** and beyond.
 - **NEP 2020** requires **at least 2** of the 3 languages to be **Indian** as against **NEP 1968** which mandated **Hindi, English, and a regional language**.

Advantages of Three Language Formula

- **Fulfills Constitutional Mandate:** **Articles 350A and 351** make it the **imperative** for **States** to promote development of Hindi and mother tongue/ regional languages.
- **Promotes Multilingualism:** **Multilingual education** widens educational **access and inclusion (e.g., tribals)**, improves **learning outcomes** by enhancing cognitive abilities of children and simplifying their understanding and expression. (UNESCO Report)
- **Cultural significance:** 3-language formula promotes **multiculturalism** among the diverse population of India and promotes **national unity, integrity and tolerance**.

Arguments against Three-Language Formula

- **Politicisation:** Multilingual education is seen to endanger **cultural and linguistic identity**. **E.g., Son-of-the-soils** protests in **Maharashtra, Karnataka**.
- **Choice v. imposition:** Learning languages should be a **choice** rather than **imposition**.
- **Overburdening Primary students:** Including three languages in **primary education burdens** children in an already stressed education system with **basic literacy issues**.
- **Implementation challenges:** **Lack of qualified teachers and infrastructure, linguistically diverse states (e.g. Nagaland) have multiple languages and limited resources, etc.**
 - **Technology** like **real-time translation** using AI makes learning varied languages **less necessary**.

Steps Taken to Promote Multilingualism In Indian Education System



ASMITA Initiative: ASMITA (Augmenting Study Materials in Indian Languages through Translation and Academic Writing) aims to produce 22,000 books in 22 scheduled languages over five years.



Bahubhasha Shabdkosh: Aims to create a multilingual dictionary repository.



Real-time Translation Architecture: led by the National Education Technology Forum (NETF) in collaboration with Bharatiya Bhasha Samiti for developing technology for real-time translation in Indian languages.



Bharatiya Bhasha Pustak Scheme: Provides digital textbooks and study materials in multiple Indian languages.



Bhashini: It is an AI-led language translation system that enables people to speak in their own language while talking to speakers of other Indian languages

Way Forward for Effective Implementation of Three Language Formula

- **Prioritizing Quality Education:** Avoid politicization of language education, provide **choice** of language selection and focus on improving **teaching and learning outcomes**.
- **Strengthening Cooperative Federalism:** Encourage dialogue between the Centre and States to ensure smooth NEP 2020 implementation and avoid funding delays.
- **Aligning with UNESCO's Multilingual Education Guidance**
 - **Data-Driven Policy:** Collect socio-linguistic and educational data for effective planning.
 - **Learning Materials & Assessments:** Develop resources in learners' languages and adapt assessments.
 - **Qualified Teachers:** Train educators fluent in both the mother tongue and official language.



- **Community Engagement:** Involve parents, caregivers, and indigenous groups in designing effective multilingual programs.

Conclusion

Three-language formula promotes multilingualism and constitutional mandates but faces implementation challenges. Success requires depoliticization, teacher training, community engagement, and flexible state-specific approaches respecting linguistic diversity.

5.3. LEARNING OUTCOMES

Why in the News?

Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) 2024 and the Unified District Information System for Education Plus (UDISE+) 2023-24 Report on School Education were released, throwing light on the learning outcomes of school education in India.

Status of Learning Outcomes (ASER 2024)

- **Reversal of Post-pandemic Learning Gap: Improvement** in both **reading & arithmetic levels** for all elementary grades (**Std I-VIII**) since 2022 with **arithmetic** levels being **highest** over the decade.
- **Digital Literacy:** Despite **close to universal access** to smartphones at home, there exists a **Gender Gap in Smartphone Ownership**.
 - **36.2% of boys** own a smartphone compared to just **26.9% of girls**.
- **Smartphone Usage More for Social Media than Education:** Only **57%** of teenagers use smart devices for educational purposes, while **~76%** use them for social media.

Reasons for Improvements in learning outcomes

- **Policy Reforms:** NEP 2020 aims at systemic transformation across curriculum, pedagogy, assessment, and technology integration to shift from rote-learning to holistic **Competency-Based Education (CBE)**.
 - E.g., Maharashtra's over 90% schools provide access to diverse activities, in line with **NEP's multi-dimensional learning** objective; **Delhi's "Happiness Curriculum."**
- **Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN) Initiatives:** Initiatives like **NIPUN Bharat** and **ULLAS** have ensured improved learning outcomes.
- **Digitization of education:** Access to digital learning tools and platforms through initiatives like **PM eVidya**, **Diksha**, and **Swayam Prabha TV** channels etc. have ensured better understanding and learning continuity.
 - Percentage of **schools having computers increased** from 38.5 % (2019-20) to 57.2 % (2023-24) while schools having **internet facility increased** from 22.3 % (2019-20) to 53.9 % (2023-24). (UDISE+)
- **Others:** Strong parental involvement, the use of vernacular medium education, community involvement (e.g. local reading clubs) and consistent investment in government schools.

Challenges in improving Learning Outcomes

- **Persistent Socio-Economic Disparities:** Unequal access of educational infrastructure across socio-economic strata (Rural-Urban, Income, Caste, medium of education).
 - E.g., male children prioritized for education in the context of financial constraints
- **Inadequate infrastructure and resource allocation:** Public expenditure on education in India stood at **3.1% of GDP (2023)**, well below **NEP's target of 6%**.
- **Lack of quality education:** Inefficiencies in teaching (training, shortage of teachers etc.), pedagogy and curriculum.
- **Prevalence of Rote Learning and Exam-Centric Focus:** Focus on marks, not appreciating cross-questioning by students and rote-learning based evaluation hamper improvement in learning outcomes.
- **Issues with government schools:** shortage of qualified teachers, Teacher absenteeism and 'proxy teachers', etc.



Way Forward

- **Ensure continued improvements in Learning Outcomes:** Ensure the improvements in learning outcomes are capitalized and sustained.
- **Sharing of Best practices:** E.g., **Goa's AI-powered** remedial systems, **gamified learning** applications, online capacity-building for teachers.
- **Improving 'Hardware' of education:** Physical and digital infrastructure, access to knowledge sources, extra-curricular equipment, etc.
- **Improving 'software' of education:** Teaching methodology, quality of teacher training, curriculum, quality of student-teacher and student-student interaction, etc.

Conclusion

Focus on learning outcomes is a reflection of India's **NEP 2020** and the **National Curriculum Framework (NCF) 2023**. The policies aim to move away from rote learning towards holistic, experiential, value-based learning that fosters student agency.

5.4. QUALITY HIGHER EDUCATION IN INDIA

Why in the News?

NITI Aayog launched a policy report titled '**Expanding Quality Higher Education through States and State Public Universities**'.

Scenario of Higher Education in India (AISHE Report 2021-2022)

- **Access & Enrolment**
 - **Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER):** Increased 71 times from **0.4 (1950-51)** to **28.4 (2021-22)**; National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 aims for **50% by 2035**.
 - **Gender Parity Index (GPI):** Improved from **0.87 (2011-12)** to **1.01 (2021-22)**.
- **Funding:** Combined expenditure by the Centre and States (as % of GDP)-
 - **University & Higher Education:** 0.62%
 - **Overall Tertiary Education:** **1.57%** (outperformed most European nations, slightly behind the US & UK).

Key Challenges to Quality Higher Education in India

- **Inefficient Accreditation:** Only **39%** of universities **accredited** with **NAAC** system due to high costs.
- **Financing Gap:** Despite ranking **4th** globally in **tertiary education budget**, **per capita spending** is 35 times lower than USA.
- **Suboptimal Research:**
 - **Low R&D expenditure (0.7% of GDP)** by government and HEIs.
 - Lack of **researcher incentives** (funding, recognition, and commercialization) causes **PhD student shortage** and **faculty gaps**.
- **Policy & Governance Issues:**
 - Weak **MERU (Multidisciplinary Education & Research Universities)** framework and gaps in technology/AI policies.
 - **University tax burden** on CSR grants and utilities affects **financial sustainability**.
 - **Limited autonomy** in fee/curriculum decisions hinders innovation.
- **Regional Disparities (AISHE 2021-22):**
 - **University Density** (per 1 lakh eligible students): Highest in Sikkim (10.3), lowest in Bihar (0.2) and UP (0.3).
 - **GER: Southern states** (Tamil Nadu-47, Kerala, Telangana) **lead**; Bihar, Jharkhand, Odisha **lag**.

Key Initiatives for Higher Education

- **Budget 2025-26:**
 - **10,000 Prime Minister's Research Fellows (PMRF)** selected for doctoral research.



- 6,500 additional seats in **second-generation IITs**.
- **Bharatiya Bhasha textbook scheme** for regional language education.
- **Assessment & Ranking:**
 - **National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) (2015):** Standardized methodology for ranking Indian HEIs.
- **Infrastructure Development:**
 - **Higher Education Financing Agency (HEFA):** Finances capital assets and research infrastructure in premier institutions.
 - **National Digital Education Architecture (NDEAR) (2021):** Comprehensive digital education infrastructure.
 - **Pradhan Mantri Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (PM-USHA):** Funds state universities and colleges for quality improvement.
- **R&D:**
 - **Anusandhan National Research Foundation (ANRF):** Seeds and promotes research across universities and labs.
 - **Scheme for Promotion of Academic and Research Collaboration (SPARC):** Facilitates partnerships between top Indian HEIs and global institutions.
 - **One Nation One Subscription (ONOS) Scheme:** Democratizes access to scholarly research.
 - **PAIR Programme:** High-ranking institutions (hubs) guide emerging ones (spokes) in research.
- **Employability:**
 - **National Credit Framework (NCrF):** Integrates academic learning with vocational education under NEP 2020
 - **PM Internship Scheme:** Provides 1 crore internships over five years.

Way Forward for Quality Higher Education

- **Funding:** e.g., **Telangana's Telangana Academy for Skill and Knowledge (TASK)** bridges industry-academia gaps.
- **Governance:** Adopt '**regulatory-facilitator**' model; grant **universities autonomy** in curriculum and faculty recruitment.
- **Infrastructure:** Scale programs like **Odisha's OHEPEE**, which upgraded 850 colleges' standards and facilities.
- **Digitalization:** Establish **digital learning centers** and adopt platforms for student management.
 - e.g., **Kerala's 'Let's Go Digital' ICT initiative**.
- **Improve Research Quality:**
 - Develop **National Research Policy** aligned with ANRF.
 - Build faculty capacity through programs like **Maharashtra's State Faculty Development Academy**.
 - Enable **internationalization** via zones like **GIFT City** allowing foreign university campuses.
 - Foster **industry collaboration** through university IRCs and partnerships with CII, FICCI, NASSCOM.
 - Create **incubation centers** supporting student startups.

Conclusion

India's higher education shows progress with improved GER and gender parity. However, concerted efforts are required to overcome funding gaps, research challenges, and regional disparities to achieve enhanced autonomy, improve infrastructure investment, and industry collaboration.

5.4.1. PERFORMANCE OF INDIAN UNIVERSITIES IN QS WORLD UNIVERSITY RANKINGS

Why in the News?

India has seen significant improvement in Indian institutions in QS World University Rankings 2026.

About QS World University Rankings

- **Published:** Annually by London-based global higher education analytics firm **Quacquarelli Symonds**.
- **Five Lenses with different weightage:** Research and Discovery, Employability and Outcomes, Global Engagement, Learning Experience, Sustainability.

Key findings of ranking

- **Five-fold increase:** India grew from 11 universities in 2015 to 54 in QS World Rankings 2026, making it the fourth most represented country after the US, UK, and China.
 - This is India's strongest performance across the G20.
- **IIT dominance:** 12 IITs featured, with IIT Delhi ranking highest at 123rd globally.

Why Indian University Rankings has improved?

- **Academic reputation seeing slow but steady development:** Eight Indian universities rank among the world's top 100 for Citations per Faculty parameter, higher than that of Germany, and the US.
- **Good performance of Engineering and technology:** Indian institutions excel in Engineering & Technology, with a high concentration of top 100 placements in the field.
- **Infrastructure Development:** Various initiatives are taken recently for infrastructure development **such as PM-USA.**
- **Enhanced employability:** Government initiatives like PM Internship Scheme, National Apprenticeship Training Scheme, and NATS 2.0 portal improve job readiness.
- **India's higher education sustainability performance:** Indian universities currently have one of the greatest impacts in knowledge exchange, environmental research.
- **Policy reform:** National Education Policy 2020 is promoting high-quality, equitable, and inclusive higher education.

Mechanism for Higher Institutions Rankings in India

- **National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF):** For creating inter-institutional competition and institutional reforms it was launched in 2015, framework outlines a methodology to rank institutions across the country.
- **All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE):** From 2010-11, it covers several parameters such as teachers, student enrolment, programmes, examination results, and education finance, infrastructure.

Conclusion

The remarkable rise of Indian universities in the QS World University Rankings reflects the outcome of sustained reforms, focused policy initiatives, and growing global engagement. However, addressing persistent structural challenges remains essential to translate this global recognition into long-term academic excellence and innovation leadership.

5.5. FOREIGN UNIVERSITY CAMPUS IN INDIA

Why in the News?

University of Southampton, UK, becomes the global university to open campus under UGC (Setting up and Operation of Campuses of Foreign Higher Educational Institutions in India) Regulations, 2023.

UGC (Setting up and Operation of Campuses of Foreign Higher Educational Institutions in India) Regulations, 2023

- **Aim:** Facilitate entry of **top-ranked foreign universities** as per **NEP 2020** to **internationalize higher education**.
- **Criteria:** FHEIs ranked in **top 500 overall/ subject-wise (globally)** or with outstanding expertise; multiple FHEIs can collaborate if individually eligible.
- **Approval:** **UGC** shall grant **in-principle approval**; campuses must be established **within 2 years**.
- **Faculty Autonomy:** FHEIs decide qualifications, salary, and service conditions independently.
- **Award of Degrees:** Qualifications awarded under FHEI's home country name and seal.
- **Student Mobility:** **Credit transfers** permitted between main campus-India campus and between Indian institutions-FHEI campuses.

Impact of Establishing Foreign University campus

| Arguments in Favor | Arguments Against |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Global Exposure: International curriculum and teaching methodologies enhance students' global competitiveness • Improved Access: World-class education locally available, making it more affordable and accessible • Skill Development: Programs aligned with global industry standards boost employability • Innovation and Knowledge Transfer: Foreign universities bring cutting-edge research and technology, boosting local research capacities • Competition: Local institutions improve to match global standards, enhancing overall quality • Positioning India as a Global Study Hub: Enhances India's reputation, attracting international students and fostering cross-cultural exchange. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disadvantage for Domestic Institution: Foreign universities may attract students and resources away from local universities struggling to compete. • Education Commercialization: Profit focus over quality improvement leads to high fees, favouring wealthy students and undermining equitable access • Brain Drain: Foreign campuses may encourage overseas employment after globally recognized degrees • Unequal Access: Higher costs limit access for lower socioeconomic students, widening education inequalities • Financial Viability: Significant investment required while balancing costs with affordable tuition fees. |

Challenges in Regulation of Foreign Universities

| | | | | |
|--|--|--|---|---|
| <p>Conflict between Regulation in FHEI's main campus in abroad & Regulations in India</p> | <p>Balancing Autonomy Demands by Foreign Universities & Inclusivity Goals</p> | <p>Lack of clarity about Intellectual Property and Research Regulations</p> | <p>Existence of Multiple Regulatory Bodies</p> | <p>Faculty recruitment and visa/work permit issues</p> |
|--|--|--|---|---|

Way Forward

- **Ensuring Compliance with National Educational Standards:** Ensure foreign campuses maintain consistent academic standards.
- **Balancing Autonomy and Oversight:** Avoid excessive commercialization or unfair practices.
- **Align programs with India's needs:** Align programs with India's economic needs, emphasizing employability and industry requirements.
- **Coordination between Multiple Regulatory Bodies:** UGC, All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) and others must collaborate effectively to oversee the operations of foreign campuses.
- **Regulatory clarity: Legal clarity** regarding intellectual property (IP) rights, safeguarding Indian research interests, data privacy, fee's structure and financial transparency, etc.
- **Collaboration:** Facilitating research / teaching collaborations and faculty /student exchange with high-quality FHEIs.
 - a. **E.g., IITB-Monash Research Academy**, a joint initiative between IIT Bombay and Monash University, Australia, focused on collaborative, multi-disciplinary research.

Conclusion

Foreign university campuses offer global exposure and enhanced access but require balanced regulation to prevent commercialization, ensure equitable access, and protect domestic institutions while maintaining educational standards.



5.6. RAGGING IN INDIA

Why in the News?

Recently, Kerala High Court has directed state government to create a working group to draft rules for anti-ragging law enforcement amid rise in incidents of ragging.

Consequences of Ragging on various stakeholders

| On Victims (Junior Students) | On Family |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD): Anxiety, depression, PTSD, and emotional distress among students. • Decline in Academic Performance: Loss of focus, absenteeism. • Other: Low Self-Esteem and Confidence, etc. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emotional and Psychological Distress: Families experience helplessness, guilt, and anger. • Financial Burden: Incur additional expenses for counselling or medical treatment. |
| On Institutions | On Perpetrators |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of Reputation: Bring negative publicity to the institution affecting funding and enrolment of students. • Undermines Ethical Values: Weakens the moral and ethical culture within educational institutions. • Administrative Challenges: Leads to issues such as lawsuits, disciplinary actions, and regulatory scrutiny. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career Setbacks: Expulsion from institutions, record of misconduct affects future employment and reputation. • Moral and Ethical Degradation: Normalization of violence and lack of empathy. |

Challenges in Eradication

- **Deep-Rooted Cultural & Traditional Acceptance:** Perceived as a tradition which prepares newcomers for the challenges of academic life and the real world.
- **Fear of Retaliation:** Victims often hesitate to report incidents due to fear of retaliation, further harassment or ridicule by others.
- **Lack of Strict Enforcement:** Weak enforcement of anti-ragging laws and the burden of proof on victims often allow perpetrators to go unpunished.

UGC Regulations on Curbing Ragging (2009)

Ragging is a criminal offense and UGC has framed regulations on curbing the menace of ragging in higher educational institutions. These regulations are **mandatory** for all universities/ institutions.

- **During admission:** Institution shall organize **joint sensitization programmes** of 'freshers' and seniors.
- **Burden of Proof:** It shall lie on the perpetrator of ragging and not on the victim.
- **Role of police, local administration and Institution:** All of them should ensure vigil on incidents that may come within the definition of ragging.

Way Forward

- **Safety of student over reputation of Institution:** Proactive Reporting of ragging incidents by institutions as an indicator of student safety and institutional integrity rather than damage to institutional reputation.
- **Raghavan Committee Recommendations (2007)**
 - **National Assessment and Accreditation Council** bodies should factor incident of ragging in accreditation.
 - Setting up '**Mentoring Cells**' in institutions to engage senior students as mentors for freshers.
- **Follow 2009 Supreme Court Directives on Anti-Ragging Measures**
 - Institutions must prominently display contact details of **anti-ragging committee nodal officers**.

- Annually, institutions must inform parents/guardians about anti-ragging regulations and their legal consequences.

Conclusion

Ragging poses severe **psychological, academic, and ethical consequences** for all stakeholders and undermines the credibility of educational institutions. A zero-tolerance approach, strict enforcement of anti-ragging laws, and cultural shift through awareness and mentorship are essential to create safe and inclusive campuses.

Ragging is neither a means of **familiarization** nor an **introduction** with **freshers**, but a **form of psychopathic behaviour** and a **reflection of deviant personalities**. Further, **ragging reproduces** the entrenched **power configurations** prevalent in civil society.

— R K Raghavan



5.7. KEYWORDS

| | | | | |
|------------------------------------|---|------------------------|-----------------|----------------------------|
| Foundational Literacy and Numeracy | Early Childhood Care & Education | Linguistic Diversity | Multilingualism | Pedagogical Innovation |
| Evidence-based Policy | National Curriculum Framework for Adult Education | Gross Enrollment Ratio | Brain Drain | Globalization of Education |

5.8. PRACTICE QUESTION

Answer Canvas

Multilingual education in schools ensures holistic development of children, opening a wider horizon of opportunities for them. In this context, critically evaluate the three-language policy. What are the implementation challenges and what measures are needed to ensure implementation.

| Introduction | Body Part: 1 | Body part: 2 | Conclusion |
|--|--|--|--|
| Current context and/or brief introduction to three language policy | Three-language policy: evaluating the arguments for and against the policy | Highlight the implementation challenges and provide solutions to ensure implementation | Case studies and/or global initiatives promoting multilingual education while preserving mother tongue |

6. HEALTHCARE

6.1. AYUSHMAN BHARAT PM-JAY

Why in the News?

Union Cabinet approved health cover for **senior citizens (aged 70 and above)** regardless of their income) under the Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB PM-JAY).

Details of expansion of Scheme

- **Eligibility Criteria:** All senior citizens **aged 70 and above** regardless of their income.
 - The scheme is set to benefit **about 6 crore** senior citizens who will be issued a **distinct card**.
- **Benefits offered:** Senior citizens will receive a family-based **cover of Rs. 5 lakh annually**.
 - Those already covered by AB PM-JAY will receive an **additional top-up of Rs. 5 lakhs annually**, separate from their family's existing cover.
- **Other Key features:**
 - **Senior citizens provided choice between any existing public health insurance scheme** or AB PM-JAY.
 - Senior citizens under **private health insurance or Employees' State Insurance schemes** are also eligible for AB PM-JAY benefits.

Need of Covering Senior Citizens under AB PM-JAY

- **Rising Population:** **70+ aged** population has grown from **2.8% (2001) to 4.3% (2021)** and is expected to **double by 2031**.
- **Inadequate Security Net:**
 - Only around **1/5th** of the elderly population (60+) is covered by **health insurance**.
 - Nearly **78%** remain without any pension coverage (NITI Aayog)
- **Dependent over Family:** Almost **70%** of the elderly are **dependent** on family and/or relatives.

About AB PM-JAY (2018)

- **Type:** **Centrally Sponsored Scheme** under Ayushman Bharat Mission.
- **Purpose:** Reduce financial burden on poor/vulnerable groups for hospital care, ensure **quality health service access**, advance **Universal Health Coverage (UHC)**.
- **Coverage:**
 - **Target:** 12 crore families (~55 crore beneficiaries), prioritizing **poorest 40% of population**
 - **Beneficiaries:** Identified through Socio-Economic Caste Census-2011 (**SECC-2011**) and **RSBY families not in SECC-2011**
- **Funding:**
 - Share of Centre and State/ UT with legislature is **60:40 (90:10 for North Eastern States and Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Jammu and Kashmir; 100% for UTs without legislature)**
- **Implementing Agency:** National Health Authority (NHA)

Key Components of AB PM-JAY

- **Ayushman Arogya Mandirs (AAMs):**
 - **1.5 lakh AAMs** (formerly Ayushman Bharat Health and Wellness Centres (AB-HWCs)) providing **comprehensive primary healthcare - universal and free**.
 - **Expanded services beyond maternal/child health:** Non-communicable diseases, palliative/rehabilitative care, oral/eye/ENT care, mental health.
- **Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY):** Provides **Health cover of Rs. 5 lakh/family/year** for **secondary and tertiary care hospitalization**.
 - Covers up to **3 days of pre-hospitalization** and **15 days post-hospitalization** expenses.
 - All **pre-existing** medical conditions covered from **day one of enrolment**.



- **Nationwide Portability** through empanelled public or private hospital across India.

Key Achievements of AB PM-JAY

- **Improved Healthcare Accessibility**
 - Over 35.4 crore Ayushman cards issued.
 - 7.79 crore hospital admissions authorised.
- **Reduction in Healthcare Burden**
 - 21% reduction in out-of-pocket expenditure (OOPE).
 - 8% decrease in the incidence of emergency loans for health-related expenses.
- **Gender equity in healthcare**
 - 49% of the Ayushman cards issued to women.
- **Promoting Healthcare Infrastructure**
 - District hospitals have experienced an annual net benefit of \$26.1 million.

AB PM-JAY Challenges (CAG Report 2023)

- **Database Errors: Invalid beneficiary data** - unrealistic birth dates, duplicate PMJAY IDs, incorrect family sizes lead to **inclusion-exclusion errors**. E.g. Tamil Nadu had 4,761 registrations against seven Aadhaar numbers
- **Infrastructure Issues: Empanelled providers** failed to meet minimum infrastructure and quality standards.
- **Financial Irregularities: Inadequate validation** of data and processes (E.g. payments before claims, invalid transaction dates; Public hospitals not utilizing PMJAY funds for designated purposes.
- **Implementation Delays: Processing delays** in claims submission, preauthorization approval, grievance resolution; Absence of common data format hampering **master data management**.

Conclusion

AB PM-JAY has transformed healthcare by providing essential coverage to millions and reducing medical financial burdens. NHA must implement proactive measures including efficient validation processes, improved infrastructure, hospital geo-tagging, and regular verification to ensure effective scheme implementation.

6.2. DIGITAL HEALTH

Why in the News?

World Economic Forum's (WEF) article '**India Can Be a Global Pathfinder in Digital Health**', highlighted India's potential in building a global resilient digital healthcare ecosystem.

Digital Health

- It is the field of knowledge and practices associated with the development and use of **digital technologies to improve health**. It includes digital health applications and technologies. (WHO)
 - E.g. Electronic Health Records, wearable medical devices, **software as a medical device (SaMD)**, personalised medicine, mobile health (**mHealth**), and **telemedicine**.

Significance of Digital Health

- **Enhanced accessibility and efficiency:** Reduces the administrative workload on healthcare professionals and provides services irrespective of space and time. E.g. telemedicine.
- **Personalized Care:** Improved outcomes through tailored treatment plans, **real-time health tracking**, seamless record sharing, etc.
- **Early Diagnosis and Chronic Disease Management:** Regular monitoring assists early detection of critical disease progression changes.
- **Evidence-based healthcare:** Provisions like **Unique Health ID**, digital record-keeping via a registry aids in tracking interventions for evidence-based treatments.
- **Cost Reduction:** Decreased healthcare costs for patients and providers.



Concerns Associated with Digital Health

- **Privacy and Security:** Unauthorized access leads to **data breaches and identity theft**. E.g. **AIIMS 2022 cyber-attack affected 4 crore patients**.
- **Algorithmic Bias:** E.g., AI in the US prioritized healthier white patients over sicker Black patients due to cost-based training data.
- **Equity and Access:** 30% of Indian healthcare institutions have **poor connectivity**; rural areas lack internet access and **digital literacy**.
- **Standardization Issues:** India struggles with **digital card standardization** (ESIC, PM-JAY, Aadhaar) causing **data migration and security concerns**.
- **Data Consent:** Patients reluctant to share data due to **privacy concerns**, impacting **trust and engagement** with digital health systems.
- **Accountability Challenges:** Difficult to assign liability for device failures; network errors can **threaten patient safety** beyond hospital control.
- **Quality Concerns:** Patients worry about **telehealth accuracy** without physical examination; vast hospital data **complicates personalized care delivery**.
- **Communication Barriers:** India's linguistic and cultural **diversity** creates challenges in healthcare ecosystems.

Global Initiative on Digital Health (GIDH)

- It is a **WHO Managed Network** for improving global health through standardized digital health solutions aligned with country priorities.
- It eliminates duplicated efforts and product-focused approaches via four foundational pillars.
- **Four GIDH Pillars:** **Country Needs Tracker** (resource optimization); **Country Resource Portal** (centralized digital health resources); **Transformation Toolbox** (quality-assured solutions, local capacity building); **Convening & Knowledge Exchange** (best practice sharing platform).
- **Key Objectives:**
 - Align with **WHO Global Strategy on Digital Health 2020-2025** for health-related SDGs.
 - Support quality-assured **technical assistance** for interoperable, standards-based systems.
 - Facilitate quality-assured digital transformation tools for **government-managed health digitization**.

Way Forward for Digital Health

- **Enhance Universal Reach:** Evaluate digital health solutions across diverse populations including displaced and culturally diverse groups to improve quality of life and decision-making.
- **Strengthen Skills:** Improve digital literacy among medical professionals and students; upskill health professionals and public through awareness initiatives
- **Health Stack:** Accelerate **implementation and adoption of National Health Stack**, on the lines of India Stack, to create unified and interoperable digital infrastructure for healthcare in India.
- **Governance and Ethics:** Establish formal oversight bodies for data frameworks and code of ethics; prioritize digital health governance over discrete interventions
- **World Bank Digital-in-health approach** aims at integrating digital and health focusing on 3 areas:
 - **PRIORITIZE** interventions solving health challenges for **underserved populations**
 - **CONNECT** global collaboration, infrastructure, and partnerships for seamless services
 - **SCALE** digital skills, PPPs, and financing for equitable healthcare access
- **Data Protection:** Increase sharing willingness through consent mechanisms, consumer data access, ethical oversight, and deletion rights
- **AI Utilization:** Leverage AI to process healthcare data for targeted, personalized services

Conclusion

India's **digital healthcare infrastructure** holds **immense potential to enhance healthcare accessibility and efficiency**. At the same time, with **continued policy support** (e.g., through **enhanced cyber security frameworks** etc.), **infrastructure development** (e.g., through **BharatNet, Blockchain-based health records**

etc.), more **public-private collaborations**, technological advancements etc., India's healthcare system is **expected to evolve into a globally recognized model** for digital health transformation, setting benchmarks for other nations.

Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM)

- **Aim:** Connect the **digital health solutions** of hospitals across the country through a **Digital Ecosystem** enabling **facilities like digital consultation, consent of patients, etc.**
- **Key Principles:** Free registration, voluntary participation, opt-out facility, privacy protection through federated structure, single source of medical records truth.
- **Implementation:** National Health Authority (Ministry of Health & Family Welfare)
- **ABDM Architecture Components:**
 - **Ayushman Bharat Health Accounts (ABHA) ID:** 14-digit unique health identifier for storing/managing records
 - > ~79 crore ABHA accounts created with over 60.78 crore linked health records.
 - **Healthcare Professionals Registry (HPR):** Unified repository of healthcare professionals
 - > ~6.57 lakh healthcare professionals verified under ABDM.
 - **Health Facility Registries (HFR):** Repository of public and private health facilities
 - > More than 4 lakh verified facilities on HFR
 - **Health Information Exchange & Consent Manager (HIE-CM):** Ensures consent-driven data exchange
 - **Unified Health Interface (UHI):** Facilitates health service discovery and delivery
 - **National Health Claims Exchange (HCX):** Standardizes insurance payment ecosystem
- **Key Initiatives:**
 - **QR-based Outpatient Department (OPD)** reducing waiting times and improving efficiency
 - **Digital Health Incentive Scheme (DHIS)** offering up to 4 crores in financial incentives for wider adoption
 - **Microsites** for Private Sector to address ABDM adoption challenges.

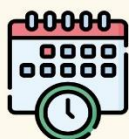
All India GS Mains PYQs plus

Test Series 2025

(Decode Past to Master the Present)



**Medium
English**



**Start
13th July**



6.3. MENTAL HEALTHCARE AT A GLANCE

Mental Healthcare at a Glance

Mental health is a state of well-being, where an individual realises their capabilities, can cope with the normal stressors of life, work productively, and is able to contribute to their community.

➤ Mental illnesses or disorders refer to a wide range of mental health conditions like depression, anxiety disorders, schizophrenia, eating disorders and addictive behaviors.

Current status of mental illness in India

10.6% of adults in India suffer from mental disorders. (National Mental Health Survey 2015-16)

70-92% Treatment gap for different mental disorders. (NMHS)

Individuals **aged 25-44 years** are the **most affected** by mental illnesses

One in every eight people (or 970 million people globally) were living with a mental disorder. (**WHO**)

Key initiatives to support Mental healthcare

Mental Health Care Act, 2017: Decriminalizes suicide, bans harmful treatments, and has a 6.5x Return on Investment

TeleMANAS: Provides free, round-the-clock tele-mental health services

National Mental Health Programme: Includes REDS (Reinforcing, Enhancing, Developing, and Strengthening) path for suicide prevention

Manodarpan (For students' mental well-being); **KIRAN Helpline** (Psychological support, and distress management)

Foundation of **basic ecosystem functions** and helps **regulate Earth's temperature**.

Challenges in tackling mental illness

- **Access to treatment:** Social stigma, higher cost, and long duration of treatment.
- **Inadequate Professional:** Only 0.75 psychologists per lakh population.
- **Regional disparity:** Inadequate resources in rural and remote areas.
- **Rehabilitation issues:** Inadequate community-based rehabilitation facilities.

Way Forward

- **WHO** provided **5 key areas of Reform** in its **new Guidance (2025):**
 - o Strengthening leadership and governance,
 - o Community-based Mental Health services,
 - o Workforce development,
 - o Person-centered assessments & interventions, and
 - o Addressing social and structural determinants of mental health.
- **Evidence-based interventions:** Research and data collection, proportional budget allocation
- **Social:** Sensitization and awareness creation, eliminating social stigma.
- **Affordability:** Making mental health services more accessible, digitization of services.

6.4. MATERNAL HEALTH AND FAMILY PLANNING

Why in the News?

United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) recognizes India's **Progress** in advancing **Maternal Health and Family Planning** while celebrating a landmark 50-year partnership between UNFPA and the Government of India.

India's Advancements in Maternal health and Family Planning

- India has **reduced Maternal Mortality Rate (MMR) by 70% (between 2000 and 2020)** to **97** (per 1,00,000 live births), positioning India to achieve SDG target of MMR below 70 by 2030.
- **Total Fertility Rate** (2.0 in 2020) reduced **below Replacement level Fertility** (2.1). (NFHS - 5)

- In 2019–2021, **89% of women delivered in a health facility**, up from 79% in 2015–2016.
- **Infant Mortality Rate (IMR)** has declined from 39 in 2014 to 28 in 2020.

Significance of Maternal health and family planning

- **Social:** Maternal health directly impacts the well-being of women and their families. A healthy mother is better equipped to care for her children, contribute to household chores, and participate in community life.
- **Economic:** Poor maternal health can lead to a loss of productivity for women and their families, increased healthcare expenditures, and a drain on national resources.
- **Demographic:** Maternal health impacts family planning and the path of demographic transition the country goes through.
 - **Lower TFR** is also seen as an **indicator for women's increased participation in education and employment**.

Challenges

- **Regional Disparities:** Disparities exist between various states as well as along the rural-urban divide. Some underserved regions yet lack the access to quality maternal care. E.g. high TFR in Bihar, Meghalaya etc.
- **Quality of Care and Service Delivery:** Issues of inadequate healthcare infrastructure like medicine supplies, skilled workforce limit quality service delivery to mothers and their children.
- **Socio-cultural hurdles: Patriarchal** practices lead to unmet needs of contraception, Early Marriages and Adolescent Pregnancies. Traditional gender norms can limit women's autonomy in making reproductive health decisions.

India's Initiatives for advancing Maternal Health and Family Planning

- **Surakshit Matritva Aashwasan Yojana (SUMAN):** Assured, dignified and respectful delivery of quality healthcare services at **no cost** and zero tolerance for denial of services to any woman and newborn visiting a public health facility.
- **Pradhan Mantri Surakshit Matritva Abhiyan (PMSMA):** Provide assured, comprehensive, and quality antenatal care, free of cost, universally to all pregnant women.
- **Midwifery Services Initiative:** Training about **90,000 midwives** as they can provide about 90% of all sexual, reproductive, maternal, new-born and adolescent health (SRMNAH) care.

Conclusion

India's reduction in maternal mortality and below-replacement fertility demonstrate significant progress, yet regional disparities and socio-cultural barriers require continued focused intervention for equitable maternal healthcare access.

6.5. KEYWORDS

| | | | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Universal Health Coverage | Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission | E-Sanjeevani Platform | National Digital Health Mission | Mental Healthcare Act, 2017 |
| Tele-MANAS | Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana | Adolescent Health | Birth Spacing | Reproductive Autonomy |

6.6. PRACTICE QUESTION

Answer Canvas

Sexual and reproductive rights of women are fundamental human rights. In this context, highlight the significance and challenges in ensuring access to these rights. List the initiatives promoting sexual and reproductive rights of women.

| Introduction | Body Part: 1 | Body part: 2 | Conclusion |
|---|--|---|--|
| Current context and/or definition of Sexual and reproductive rights | Significance and challenges in ensuring access to these rights | Initiatives promoting sexual and reproductive rights of women | Necessity for upholding these rights and constitutional imperative |
| | | | |

Lakshya

MAINS MENTORING PROGRAM 2025

30 Days Expert Intervention

A Strategic Revision, Practice, and Mentoring Program for UPSC Prelims Examination

15 JULY 2025

- Highly experienced and qualified team of Mentors for continuous support and guidance
- A structured plan of revision for GS Prelims, CSAT, and Current Affairs
- Effective Utilization of learning resources, including PYQs, Quick Revision Modules (QRMs), and PT-365

Lakshya

PRELIMS & MAINS INTEGRATED MENTORING PROGRAM

Lakshya Prelims & Mains Integrated Mentoring Program 2026

(A Strategic Revision, Practice, and Mentoring Program for UPSC Prelims and Mains Examination 2026)

VisionIAS introduces the Lakshya Prelims & Mains Integrated Mentoring Programme 2026, offering unified guidance for UPSC aspirants across both stages, ensuring comprehensive support and strategic preparation for success

2026 | 13.5 MONTHS | 16 JULY

Highlights of the Program

- Coverage of the entire UPSC Prelims and Mains Syllabus
- Highly experienced and qualified team of senior mentors
- Development of Advanced answer writing skills
- Special emphasis to Essay & Ethics

7. NUTRITION AND DEVELOPMENTAL ISSUES

7.1. MIDDLE-INCOME CLASS

Why in the News?

The new income tax structure offering income tax relief to the annual income of ₹12 lakh provides the much-needed tax relief to the **middle-income class** in India.

About Middle Income Class (MIC)

- **OECD** defines middle-income households as **those with incomes between 75% and 200% of the median national income**.
- On average **across OECD** countries, approximately **61% of people live in middle-income households**.

Growth of Indian Middle-Income Class

- **Post-Liberalization Expansion:** LPG reforms of 1990s opened the Indian economy to MNCs, creating new job opportunities in services and IT sectors. This expanded the MIC significantly, especially in urban areas.
- **Current and Future Projections:** According to PRICE, India's middle class is projected to grow **from 31% in 2021 to 38% by 2031** and further to 60% by 2047.

Impact on Various Domains

| Economy | Urban Infrastructure | Social |
|--|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumption driver: Rising incomes reshape consumption in apparel, communication, personal care; middle-class households driving \$2.7 trillion incremental spend by 2030-31. • New markets: Urban middle-income creates revenue source for companies; promotes entrepreneurial environment through startup demand. • Inclusive growth: Strong middle class supports investment in education, health, corruption intolerance. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tier II/III cities: Rising affluence makes smaller cities attractive demand centers. • Growth centers: Aspirational consumption patterns drive entertainment venues, malls, recreation centers. • Residential societies: Gated communities expand from upper class to tier II cities. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better outcomes: Higher middle-class share creates better institutions and socioeconomic results. • Democratic values: Wealth increase promotes democratic values, free speech, environmental concern, reduced religious emphasis. |

Challenges

- **Economic:** **Rising inflation, Unemployment** (High joblessness creates financial insecurity), **Stagnant wages** (Salaries not rising proportionately with economic growth), **tax burden, etc.**
- **Middle class also face debt burden due to the** Consumer loans for lifestyle aspirations; household debt reached 38% of GDP (FY23).
- **Technology threat:** Automation displacing predominantly middle-class jobs like banking, IT, manufacturing.
- **Social constraints:** Patriarchal attitudes limit women's career growth.
- **Policy challenges:** **Heterogenous composition** (public employees, unorganized workers, gig workers) make targeted incentives difficult.
- **Political challenges:** Political neglect (Low political participation-voter turnout); Underrepresented in policymaking dominated by business lobbies or rural agendas; lack organized pressure groups.



Conclusion

Empowering the middle class requires a multifaceted approach, including tax benefits, affordable housing, and strengthened labour market policies. A comprehensive, stakeholder-driven action plan is essential to address their vulnerabilities, enhance financial security, and promote sustainable growth, ensuring their continued contribution to the economy and society.

7.2. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF WORKPLACE AUTOMATION

Why in the News?

Major tech firms are rapidly adopting AI including **generative AI**, enhancing customer interactions and **workplace efficiency**, but concerns about its **impact on workers** persist.

About Workplace Automation

- **Meaning:** It is the **use of technology** such as AI, Machine Learning, Augmented Reality, etc., to **perform tasks and processes** with minimal **human intervention**.
- **India and Automation:** India's Industrial Automation Market Growth is expected to reach **\$29.43 bn by FY2029**.
 - **Key drivers for Workplace Automation in India:** Accelerating digitalisation and technological innovation, changing customer expectation, enhanced competition, rising labour costs, Ageing population, etc.

Social benefits associated with the Workplace Automation

- **Bridging skill-job gap and workforce productivity:** AI-driven systems and algorithmic management assign tasks based on skills and availability, improving productivity. Identifies gaps and helps target upskilling efforts.
- **Promoting Gender Equity and diversity at workplace:** Automation can reduce biases in hiring and performance evaluation, supporting diversity efforts and promoting **social mobility**.
- **Safer Workplaces:** Machines take over hazardous and physically demanding tasks.
- **Enhanced work-life Balance:** Automation of routine work allows employees **more personal time**. Less repetitive work **decreases mental fatigue and burnout**. Thus, employees can do **strategic, creative, and decision-making roles**.
- **Improved Customer Service:** Greater consistency, faster responses, and improved access and affordability of customer experience.

Social Challenges of Workplace Automation

- **Rising Income Inequality**
 - **Wage polarization:** High-skilled workers benefit while **low-skilled** face **job losses**.
 - > **E.g.,** Automation is expected to create 69 million new jobs, whereas 83 million jobs will become obsolete by 2027, resulting in a **net loss of 14 million jobs**. (Future of Jobs Report, WEF)
 - **Reskilling barriers:** Unequal access to digital training deepens socio-economic divides.
 - **Gender disparities:** Automation replaces female-dominated clerical roles without targeted support.
 - **Gig worker insecurity:** Automation encourages short-term contracts, reducing stability and protection.
- **Mental Health:** Continuous monitoring and algorithmic control increase **stress**, reduce autonomy, causing **digital fatigue** and **work-life imbalance**.
- **Reduced Human Oversight:** Over-dependence on automation may **erode human judgment** in critical areas like healthcare, creating safety risks.

How AI is transforming the Workplace Structure?

The Workplace structure is undergoing a **shift from a pyramidal to hourglass structure**.

- **Traditional Pyramidal Structure:** Broad base of lower-level employees, a mid-sized managerial layer, and a narrow top leadership tier.

- It reflects a **hierarchy, clear chain of command**, with layers of supervision and control.
- **Hourglass structure:** AI is gradually taking over the role of **coordination, management, and decision-making**, with a **wider top layer of strategic leaders** and a **growing top tier of knowledge workers** while the **bottom diversifies** into a mix of people and tools.

Way Forward for Inclusive Automation

- **Income Equity**
 - **Universal social security:** Extend protection to informal/gig workers; Code on Social Security 2020 covers all sectors.
 - **Reskilling support:** Industrial Relations Code 2020 provides worker reskilling funds.
 - **Bridge gender gap:** Inclusive policies and targeted upskilling.
- **Legal Frameworks**
 - **Update safety laws:** Include gig/teleworkers under workplace safety; align with ILO Conventions 155 (OSH CONVENTION) and 187 (Promotional Framework for OSH).
 - **Robotics regulations:** Clear safety norms for human-robot collaboration.
 - **Right to disconnect:** Prevent overwork and digital burnout.
- **Human-Centric Algorithm Management:** Ensure transparent, ethical algorithmic tools with human oversight and grievance systems incorporating worker feedback.
- **Awareness & Sustainability:** Promote digital rights awareness and green automation for environmental resilience.

Conclusion

A **collaborative, worker-centric, and forward-looking approach** is essential to ensure that workplace **automation enhances** rather than undermines **safety, equity, and well-being**. With the right balance of technology, policy, and participation, automation can lead to more sustainable, inclusive, and humane workplaces.

7.3. WORK FROM HOME

Why in the News?

Recently, CII and Faculty of Management Studies (FMS), University of Delhi published a first-of-its-kind study titled **“Work-from-Home: Benefits and Costs; An Exploratory Study in the Indian Context”**.

Key Findings of the Report

- **Sustenance of WFH:** 68% of companies continue **remote work** practices post-COVID-19.
- **Hybrid model:** Nearly half of companies use hybrid practices with limited weekly office attendance.
- **Short-term gains, long-term losses:** WFH provides immediate benefits but may harm social, emotional, and human capital formation long-term.
- **Effectiveness concerns:** Remote work may be less effective for collaborative cultures, communication, and teamwork than traditional office practices.

Evolving nature of Work: Rise and Reversal of WFH Trends

- **COVID-19 Pandemic:** Movement restrictions necessitated remote work shifts.

“People are more productive working at home than people would have expected. Some people thought that everything was just going to fall apart, and it hasn't.”

— Mark Zuckerberg





- **Technological development:** Advances in personal technology and digital connectivity enabled remote work potential.
- **Work from Anywhere:** Digital infrastructure allows employees to work from villages, travel destinations, creating digital nomad lifestyles.
- **Rolling back WFH:** Many employers are reversing work-from-home policies post-pandemic, with companies like **Starbucks, Google, and Amazon** implementing return-to-office schedules.

Benefits connected to WFH

| | Benefits connected to WFH |
|-----------------------|--|
| Employees | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced costs: For commutation and rental residence near workplace. • Increased Work productivity: WFH eliminates the hassle of commutation, allows flexible scheduling of work and rest. |
| Employers/ Corporates | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced costs: Office rentals, employee compensation packages, etc. • Flexibility in hiring: Employers have access to the best talents across the world with elimination of geographical constraints. • Increased retention of employees: According to a Stanford study, resignations fell by 33% for workers who shifted to a hybrid schedule. |
| Macro Environment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable work practices: Reduced transportation and electricity usage reduces carbon footprint and aiding organizations achieve their Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) goals. • Work satisfaction among workers: Due to Work-life balance. • Equitable development: Remote work negates concentration of industrial development in few metropolitan cities. It may aid decentralized development and mitigate migration-related issues. |
| Family Relationships | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work-life balance: The flexibility of time and location of WFH helps balancing work with family and personal commitments. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ E.g., WFH is attractive for parents of newborn children. • Dissipating work stress: Spending more time with family can be positive for managing work- related stress. • Gender equality: Men with WFH can contribute better to household chores against the traditional gender roles and positively impact work productivity of married women. |
| Women | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Juggling duties: Flexibility of WFH aids women to better manage personal duties like childcare or caring for parents. • Labour force participation: WFH may improve women's job opportunities and performance, narrow the motherhood pay gap, and increase labour force participation of married women. |

Concerns with WFH

For Employees

- **Blurring boundaries between work and home:** Causes stress, low productivity; E.g., a study showed 33% reduction in physical activity during COVID-19.
- **Workspace constraints:** Lack of dedicated home workspace increases **costs** for co-working spaces.
- **Lack of rest:** Creates **unhealthy 24/7 work cycles** and constant availability pressure.

For Employers

- **Intra-organisational Communication issues:** Virtual interactions impact team bonding, work culture, and organizational success.
- **Management difficulties:** Training, mentoring, and supervision methods become less effective.
- **Professional isolation:** It is challenging for organizations to ensure Employee alienation is avoided as it affects work quality.



- **Privacy concerns:** Protecting organizational data is challenging in WFH; India lacks dedicated cybersecurity laws.

For Family Relationships

- **Family stress:** Extended confinement at home strains relationships; domestic violence rose during pandemic.
- **Dual responsibilities:** Childcare and elderly care while working increases burden especially on the women.
- **Mental health:** Reduced social interaction and work-home tensions cause stress.
 - E.g., Being **impulsive** and **angry** with **child** due to a bad day at work.

For Women

- **Career barriers:** Remote working women earn less with reduced company visibility impacting career growth.
- **Double burden:** Of traditional gender roles along with work is amplified during WFH (e.g. cooking expectations).
- **Stigmatization:** Women choosing flexibility face more judgment than men as they are seen as **prioritizing family over work**, reinforcing patriarchal mindset.

Way Forward

- **Reformed arrangements:** Change management philosophy, practices and performance monitoring.
- **Hybrid ecosystem:** Balance traditional and remote work benefits.
- **Policy development:** Governments and Organizations to provide clear **guidelines** for work considering **accountability and privacy**.
- **Infrastructure:** Strengthen internet connectivity in remote areas through Smart Villages, **BharatNet**.

Conclusion

The future of work lies in crafting inclusive, flexible, and resilient models that leverage the benefits of remote work while addressing its inherent challenges. A well-designed hybrid approach, supported by robust infrastructure and sensitive policy interventions, can ensure productivity, equity, and well-being for all stakeholders.

7.3.1. 'RIGHT TO DISCONNECT' IN INDIA

Why in the News?

Recently, various sections in India have raised voices on the **need to bring a law on 'Right to Disconnect'** in the backdrop of **death of a young female employee due to work stress**.

What is 'Right to Disconnect'?

- It means that **employees are not obliged to reply to calls** made by employers after work hours and such an employee shall not be subject to any disciplinary action by employers.

Need for 'Right to Disconnect' in India

- **Psycho-Social:** **Weakens social bonds and leads to isolation** and may even elevate risk of mental health issues, cardiovascular diseases, etc.
- **Impact on women:** A recent report reveals that **Indian women in professional jobs**, such as auditing, IT, and media, **work more than 55 hours a week**.
- **Others:** Loss of productivity; insomnia, disrupted sleep cycles, etc., due to prolonged screen time, among others.

Status of 'Right to Disconnect' in India

Although, India **lacks specific laws** recognizing 'right to disconnect' from work, following provisions and judgments accommodate this aspect to a certain extent:

- **Constitutional Provisions: Article 38** (directs state to promote welfare of people) and **Article 39(e)** (directs state to secure strength and health of its workers).
- **Judicial pronouncements: Vishakha v State of Rajasthan, 1997** (on safe working environment for women), **Ravindra Kumar Dhariwal and Ors v. UoI, 2021** (accommodate persons with disabilities).
- **Recent Initiative:** In 2018, a **Private Member's Bill** was introduced in Lok Sabha, which aimed to delineate the right to disconnect from work after working hours.

Global Position on 'Right to Disconnect'

- **France:** Labour Chamber of the French Supreme Court ruled in 2001 that an employee is under no obligation to work from home or take home files and working tools.
- **Portugal:** It has a 'Right to Disconnect' law, which makes it illegal for employers to contact employees outside working hours, except in emergencies.
- **Spain:** Public workers and employees have the right to switch off devices.
- **Australia:** Parliament gave employees the right to disconnect from work outside of working hour.

Conclusion

With digitization, the nature and form of work are changing. This has social implications on family relations, relations among colleagues and work-life balance. Work-from-home has both positive and negative sides to it and the future lies in hybridization and promoting flexibility in work.

7.4. POPULATION GROWTH AND MANAGEMENT

Why in the News?

In the context of the **rising global depopulation**, experts have been countering the **fear of population explosion** by reasoning the importance of steady **population growth and management**, as against the historic approach of **population control**, especially in India.

Evolution of Population Policy in India

| Post-independence Policies of Population control | Shift to Policies of Population Management |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Family Planning Program (1952): Aimed to lower fertility rates and slow population growth as a means to propel economic development. • First Five-Year Plan (1952-57): Upholding the health rationale of family planning, explicitly mentions need to reduce birth rates as a means to population control. E.g. incentives for birth control etc. • Fourth Five-Year Plan (1969-74): Domination of the demographic rationale over the health rationale, use of coercive policies with progressive intensification of state intervention. • E.g. setting concrete targets for sterilization and IUCD | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Health Policy of 1983: Formulated after public backlash towards coercive policies of population control. It replaced the target-based approach to a "community needs assessment approach," signifying a move towards more responsive and less prescriptive interventions. • International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) Programme of Action (PoA) (1994): Fundamentally reoriented population policies globally by placing individual rights, needs, and aspirations at the center of sustainable development efforts. • National Population Policy (NPP) 2000: Overhaul of approach away from fertility control to a holistic framework integrating population issues with broader human development goals. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Goals: Address the 'unmet needs' for contraception, improve healthcare infrastructure, enhance health personnel, and provide integrated service delivery for basic reproductive and child healthcare. • Schemes focused on Population Management: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Integration of family planning with with National Health Mission (NHM): Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child, and Adolescent Health Plus (RMNCH+A) approach. |

| | |
|--|---|
| (Intrauterine Contraceptive Device) insertions, mass sterilization campaigns during Emergency period. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Janani Suraksha Yojana (JSY) and Janani Shishu Suraksha Karyakram (JSSK), Mission Parivar Vikas (in high-focus states) |
|--|---|

India's current Population Growth Status

- **Lower Fertility Rates:** India's TFR is 2.0 (NFHS-5) which is lower than the replacement level (2.1). Some states like Kerala and West Bengal have even lower TFRs.
- **Ageing of Population:** With improved health services, improved life expectancy, Indian population is seeing an increase in the proportion of elderly population.
- **Demographic dividend:** India has **33 years** to capitalize demographic dividend (as it reaches support ratios at par developed countries).

Potential issues resulting from declining population

- **Demographic winter:** Phenomenon of declining birth rates and a shrinking or aging population, resulting in pressure on working age population.
- **Reduced working age population:** Working age population is vital for overall growth of an economy as it provides the necessary human capital.
- **Migration challenges:** The regional disparities in population growth in India may have future implications on the pattern of migration, creating socio-cultural challenges. E.g North- South migration pattern in India
- **Political implications:** Issue of delimitation due to varied population policy implementation.

Global Lessons

- **Japan:** Population crisis leading to issues like labour shortages, declining productivity, and increased health and pension costs.
- **China's Shift from One-Child Policy to Three-Child Policy:** to counteract the decline in birth rates and maintain economic productivity.
- **Policies by Hungary, Russia promoting increased child-bearing.**

Way Forward: Promoting the Population Management Approach

- **Steady benefits of demographic dividend:** It will benefit the socio-economic development of India.
- **Promoting Agency approach:** Fertility and family planning measures need to prioritize agency, especially of the women involved. This will aid in sustainable population management.
- **Education and awareness:** Provide access to all information regarding sustainable family planning for people to take informed decisions.
- **Empowering the population:** Empowering the youth with education, quality healthcare and basic amenities will ensure growth of a healthy population.

Conclusion

India's population policy has undergone a significant transformation according to the evolution of population dynamics. For India to become truly 'Viksit' management of population sustainably is vital.

7.5. GLOBAL HUNGER INDEX

Why in the News?

Global Hunger Index (GHI) 2024 has been released by **Concern Worldwide** and **Welt Hunger Hilfe**, Non-Government organizations from Ireland and Germany respectively.

GLOBAL HUNGER INDEX SCORES

The Global Hunger Index (GHI) is a tool for **comprehensively measuring** and **tracking hunger at global, regional, and national levels**. GHI scores are based on the values of **four component indicators**:



Undernourishment: the share of the population with **insufficient caloric intake**.



Child wasting: the share of children under age five who have **low weight for their height**, reflecting acute undernutrition.



Child stunting: the share of children under age five who have **low height for their age**, reflecting chronic undernutrition.

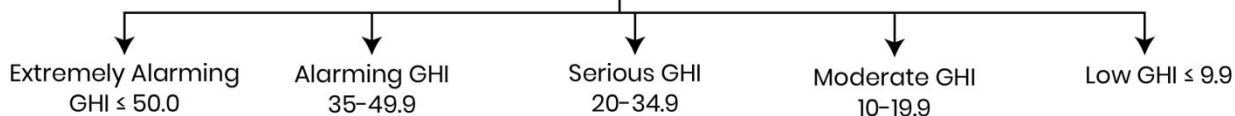


Child mortality: the share of children who **die before their fifth birthday**, partly reflecting the fatal mix of inadequate nutrition and unhealthy environments.

These four indicators are aggregated as follows:

$$\frac{1}{3} \text{ Under nourishment} + \frac{1}{6} \text{ Child stunting} + \frac{1}{6} \text{ Child wasting} + \frac{1}{3} \text{ Child mortality} = \text{GHI SCORE}$$

GHI Severity of Hunger Scale



Key Findings of the GHI

Global:

- **42 countries** are at **alarming hunger levels**, making **Zero Hunger by 2030 unattainable**.
- Current pace won't achieve low hunger level until **2160**.
- **World GHI score: 18.3 (moderate severity)**
- **Gender-climate-hunger link**: Women/girls hardest hit by food insecurity, malnutrition, and climate emergencies.

India:

- **Rank: 105th of 127 countries (improved from 111th in 2023)**
- Placed under **"Serious" category** with 41 nations including Pakistan, Afghanistan.
- **GHI score: 27.3** (improved since 2000) however, **Child wasting/stunting remain very high**.
- **Child under-nutrition** linked to **poor maternal nutrition**, highlighting need for maternal health focus.
- According to GHI, 13.7% of India's population suffers from undernourishment; 35.5% of children under the age of five are stunted; 18.7% experience child wasting and 2.9% of children do not reach their fifth birthday.

Key Issues with GHI

Methodological limitations and data constraints compromise GHI's accuracy in reflecting actual hunger conditions.

- **Flawed Methodology**: Three of four indicators focus on child health, not representing entire population. **Child stunting, wasting, under-5 mortality** result from complex factors (water, sanitation, genetics, environment, food utilization) beyond hunger alone.
- **Faulty Indicators**: Studies challenge stunting as under-nutrition indicator, showing it occurs in well-nourished populations too.



- **Outdated Data:** GHI uses outdated, unconvincing data sources. **NFHS data** on child stunting/wasting available every 8-10 years, not annually.
- **Small Sample Size: Proportion of Undernourished (PoU)** based on small opinion poll sample. Report lowers India's rank using **16.3% PoU estimate** for India.

Factors behind Hunger Crisis

- **Conflict:** Nearly **70%** of 309 million facing **acute hunger** live in **fragile/conflict-hit countries**.
 - Violence in Middle East, Africa, Caribbean, southern Asia, Eastern Europe disrupts food production, displaces people from homes/income, hinders humanitarian access.
- **Climate Crisis:** Leading cause of rising global hunger. Climate shocks like **droughts** destroy lives, crops, livelihoods, undermining people's ability to feed themselves.
- **Economic Challenges: Sluggish growth and stressors** from slow pandemic recovery and conflicts impact **low/middle-income countries**, limiting social protection investment amid crisis-level food prices.
- **Displacement: Forcibly displaced** people face specific **vulnerabilities** - limited employment, livelihood, food, shelter access, reliance on dwindling humanitarian aid (e.g., Sudan's Darfur area).

Factors behind persistence of Malnutrition in India

- **Urbanization:** Reshapes food systems, increasing access to cheap ultra-processed foods, promoting sedentary lifestyles. Euromonitor International (2019) shows processed food sales nearly doubled between 2012-2018.
- **Undernourished Mothers:** Most Indian women are anemic - NFHS-5 shows 57% anemia in women (15-49 years), 59.1% in adolescent girls, 52.2% in pregnant women. Poor, undernourished mothers birth undernourished babies.
- **Low Education/Socio-economic Status:** 46% of children born to mothers with no schooling are stunted, compared with 26% of children born to mothers with 12 or more years of schooling. **(NFHS - 5)**
- **Vulnerable Sections:** Minimum Dietary Diversity Failure rates: OBC (79%), Scheduled Castes (77.2%), Scheduled Tribes (76%).

Initiatives taken for Tackling Hunger in India

- **National Food Security Act (NFSA), 2013:** To provide subsidised food grains to approximately two-thirds of India's 1.2 billion people, recognizes the right to food as a statutory right.
- **Government schemes:** Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY), Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojna, POSHAN Abhiyan (National Nutrition Mission), Eat Right Movement, etc.

Initiatives taken for Tackling Global Hunger:

- **SDG 2 (Zero hunger):** It aims to end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture.
- **World Food Programme:** Food assistance branch of United Nations, established in 1961. Its mission is to combat hunger worldwide by providing food aid, promoting food security, and enhancing nutrition.
- **Zero Hunger Challenge:** An initiative by the UN Secretary-General that invites countries to work towards a future where everyone has access to adequate nutrition.
- **Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO):** It aims to ensure people have regular access to enough high-quality food.

Conclusion

Policy recommendations made in the document include **strengthening accountability to international law** and the **enforceability of the right to adequate food**, promoting **gender-transformative approaches to food systems** and climate policies and programs, and making investments that **integrate and promote gender, climate, and food justice**.

7.6. URBANIZATION AT A GLANCE

Urbanization

Urbanization is the increase in the proportion of people living in towns and cities. It is determined based on size and density of population, prominent economic activity (non-agricultural) and administrative structure.

➤ Urban areas are **melting pot of cultures, languages, and traditions**. The developing **composite culture** presents both challenges and opportunities for growth of urbanization.

Status of Urbanization in India

Urban population: 36.87% (World Bank, 2024); 31.1% (Census 2011)

Future projections on urbanization: 40% population by 2036 (World Bank)

Contribution to GDP: ~60% (NITI Aayog, 2022)

Urban slums constitute around **49%** of urban population. (World Bank, 2020)

Drivers of Urbanization

Social: Population growth, rural-urban migration, improved standard of living, social mobility, education and skill development, modernization, individualism and freedom etc.

Economic: Agglomeration economies (economies of scale due to concentration of investment, industries, jobs, talent and infrastructure), etc.

Government policies: Industrial policies favouring urban-centric growth (e.g. SEZs, Smart Cities, AMRUT), etc.

Others: Townships developed by industrialists e.g., Jamshedpur, expansion of city boundaries, etc.

Challenges of Urbanization

- **Urban sprawl: Unplanned development** leading to rise of **slums**, worsened quality of life, urban poverty and **environmental degradation**.
- **Ghettoisation: Social segregation** based on **identities** like class, caste, religion. E.g. Gated communities
- **Lack of social cohesion:** Rise of individualism leads to social isolation and psychological stress.
- **Inadequate infrastructure:** High population density, results in **high pressure** on existing infrastructure with inadequate maintenance. E.g., Railway Bridge stampede in Mumbai.
- **Others:** Disasters like urban floods, traffic and issues with public transport, lack of cleanliness etc.

Key Initiatives for Urban Development

Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban)

PM SVANidhi Scheme (Pradhan Mantri Street Vendor's AtmaNirbhar Nidhi)

Smart Cities Mission, Swachh Bharat Mission (Urban)

UN SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities; New Urban Agenda by UN Habitat III advocating inclusive, sustainable, participatory and integrated urban development.

Way Forward

- **Balanced urbanization:** Emphasize on development of Tier-II, Tier-III cities, and rural areas to curb distressed migration on overpopulation.
- **Urban planning: Transit-oriented development**, integration of green spaces, etc.
- **Social inclusion:** Expand access to social security and financial services, provide training and skill development tailored to the needs of the urban poor, etc.
- **Governance:** Decentralize decision-making, encourage community-driven initiatives and support self-help groups (SHGs) in slums, etc.

7.7. INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT

Why in the News?

83.4 million individuals were living in internal displacement at the end of **2024**, according to a newly released report by Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC).

About Internal displacement

- **Displacement** is a particular **form of migration**, in which individuals are forced to move against their will. (UNFCCC)
 - Where people are forced to **move within their country of origin**, this is referred to as **internal displacement**.
- **Internally displaced persons (IDPs)** are those who have been **forced to flee to leave their homes in order to avoid** the effects of armed conflict; situations of generalized violence; violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters.
- **India:** Internal displacements by conflict and violence (1,700) and Internal displacements by disasters (5.4 millions).

Migration

Migration is a form of spatial mobility of population between one geographical unit and another involving a permanent change of Residence.

➤ Migration in the Census of India is of two types – Migration by Birthplace and Migration by place of last residence.

Reasons for migration in India

| | | | | | |
|-------------------------|----------------------|----------|---|--|---|
| For employment/ work | To pursue studies | Marriage | Natural disaster (drought, flood, tsunami, etc) | Social / political problems (riots, terrorism, political refugee, bad law and order, etc.) | Displacement by development project |
|-------------------------|----------------------|----------|---|--|---|

Leading reason for migration among women is **marriage (81%)**, followed by migration of **family members (10%)**, **employment (2.42%)**, and **migration for education opportunities (0.48%)**.

Issues affecting IDPs

- **Lack of Basic Services:** IDPs often struggle with inadequate access to essential services like healthcare, education, and clean water.
 - About 80% of seasonal **migrant children in major destinations lack access to education** near work sites.
- **Lack of Social Security:** Apathy of states prevents migrants from accessing welfare entitlements.
- **Vulnerability of Labour Market:** According to the PLFS, approximately three quarters of migrant women are unemployed, approximately 14% of migrant women are in self and wage-employed jobs and approximately 12% are in casual labour.
- **Political Participation:** Interstate migrants cannot exercise voting right since voting is determined by one's inclusion in the local constituency's electoral roll.
- **Inadequate data:** This hinders informed decision making.

Initiatives taken for betterment of Internal Migrants

- **National policy for rehabilitation and resettlement 2007** to minimize large-scale displacement.
- **Enhancing accessibility to welfare schemes** like 'One Nation One Ration Card', Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana 2.0, Ayushman Bharat.

Way Forward

- **Address research gaps:** Revise Census design to better capture sex-disaggregated migration data.
- **Targeted policy framework:** For migrants within public services and government policies.
- **Institutional reforms:** Establish 'migrant labour cells' in states; and form inter-district and inter-state coordination committees for improved service delivery.
- **Minimize development induced displacement:** Ensure compliance with PESA Act, Forest Rights Act, and Land Transfer Regulations to prevent displacement.
- **Raise awareness:** Sensitize policymakers, employers and financial institutions regarding issues faced by migrants.

Conclusion

There is a need for coordinated policy reforms, improved data collection, and enhanced social protection systems to address the multifaceted challenges faced by the internally displaced persons.

7.8. LONELINESS

Why in the News?

Recently, **WHO Commission on Social Connection** released a report titled '**From Loneliness to Social Connection**' highlighting that social isolation and loneliness are widespread, with serious but under-recognized impacts on health, well-being, and society.

Scale of the problem of Loneliness

- Between 2014-2023, **~16% of people worldwide** – one in six – **experienced loneliness**.
- **In low-income countries, about 24% of people feel lonely while in richer countries, 11% feel lonely.**
- **Marginalized groups** – such as people with disabilities, LGBTIQ+ individuals and migrants – are **more likely to experience loneliness and isolation** than other groups.

Drivers for Social Isolation and Loneliness

- **Migration Issues:** Relocation can lead to isolation due to language barriers, financial struggles, and cultural adaptation.
- **Personality traits:** Higher conscientiousness and neuroticism increase loneliness.
- **Internet Addiction:** Excessive online activity reduces face-to-face interactions.
- **Extended Working Hours:** Long work hours and limited leisure time can lead to preferred solitude.
- **Professional Failures:** Comparisons and evaluations can lower self-esteem, causing isolation.
- **Older Adults:** Retirement, empty nest syndrome, and loss of colleagues intensify loneliness.
- **Social Exclusion:** Gender, race, and other exclusions lead to isolation and loneliness.

Impact of social isolation and loneliness

- **Health Risks:** About a **50% increased risk of dementia, 29% increased risk of heart disease** and **32% increased risk of stroke**.
- **Adoption of unhealthy habits:** Substance abuse, disrupted cycle and poor quality of sleep etc. lead to daytime fatigue, irritability, lack of focus and loss of productivity.
- **Increased risk of premature deaths** from all causes, which may rival those of **smoking, obesity, and physical inactivity**.
- **Diminished job satisfaction and performance results** from experiencing a sense of isolation and lack of support in workplace. Loneliness costs US economy an estimated \$406 billion a year.
- **Poor education outcome:** Young people experiencing loneliness in high school are more likely to drop out of university.

Way Forward

- **Strengthen social infrastructure:** It includes intentional design for social interaction, equitable accessibility, investment in community programmes to connect people and community involvement in planning.
 - **Social infrastructure** comprises diverse assets, including public resources (e.g. libraries, parks, transport networks) and social policies, rights and services (e.g. those relating to civic and cultural identity).
- **Community Level**
 - Ensure accessible, secure infrastructure like parks and community centers.
 - Promote engagement in social causes and activities like volunteering at old age homes.
 - Create intergenerational support programs to reduce loneliness for older adults.
- **Individual Level**
 - Adopt personalized programs like mindfulness and meditation.
 - Build meaningful relationships and support systems.
- **Societal Level**
 - Launch educational campaigns on loneliness.
 - Advocate for policies addressing social isolation.
 - Secure funding for loneliness program development and evaluation.

7.9. KEYWORDS

| | | | | |
|--------------------|---------------------|------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------|
| Hidden Hunger | Mid-Day Meal Scheme | Affordable Housing | Transit-oriented Development | Demographic Dividend |
| Demographic Winter | Population Momentum | Urban Decentralization | Digital Burnout | Distress Migration |

7.10. PRACTICE QUESTION

Answer Canvas

AI is impacting the nature of work, with rise of automation and remote work. In this context, analyse the social implications of adoption of AI. What impact does AI and digitization have on social intelligence?

| Introduction | Body Part: 1 | Body part: 2 | Conclusion |
|--|--|--|---|
| Current context of changing nature of work | Social implementations of adoption of AI | Impact of AI and digitization on social intelligence | Society's adaptation to digitization and changing nature of work and related government initiatives |
| | | | |



8. SOCIAL ISSUES PREVIOUS YEAR QUESTION 2013-2024 (SYLLABUS-WISE)

GS I: Indian Heritage & Culture, History & Geography of the World & Society

Society: Salient features of Indian Society, Diversity of India.

- Critically analyse the proposition that there is a high correlation between India's cultural diversities and socio-economic marginalities. (Answer in 250 words) (2024) 15
- Do you think marriage as a sacrament is losing its value in Modern India? (150 Words) (2023) 10
- Why is caste identity in India both fluid and static? (250 word) (2023) 15
- Given the diversities among tribal communities in India, in which specific contexts should they be considered as a single category. (150 words) (2022) 10
- Analyse the salience of 'sect' in Indian society vis-a-vis caste, region and religion. (250 words) (2022) 15
- Examine the uniqueness on tribal knowledge system when compared with mainstream knowledge and cultural system. (150 words) (2021) 10
- How does Indian society maintain continuity in traditional social values? Enumerate the changes taking place in it. (250 words) (2021) 15
- Customs and traditions suppress reason leading to obscurantism. Do you agree? (250 words) (2020) 15
- What makes Indian society unique in sustaining its culture? Discuss. (150 words) (2019) 10
- Do we have cultural pockets of small India all over the nation? Elaborate with examples. (250 words) (2019) 15
- In the context of diversity of India, can it be said that the regions form cultural units rather than the States? Give reasons with examples for your viewpoint. (150 words) (2017) 10
- The spirit tolerance and love is not only an interesting feature of Indian society from very early times, but it is also playing an important part at the present. Elaborate. (250 words) (2017) 15
- Describe any four cultural elements of diversity in India and rate their relative significance in building a national identity. (2015) 12.5
- The life cycle of a joint family depends on economic factors rather than social values. Discuss. (2014) 10

Role of women and women's organization

- Distinguish between gender equality, gender equity and women's empowerment. Why is it important to take gender concerns into account in programme design and implementation ? (Answer in 150 words) (2024) 10
- Explain why suicide among young women is increasing in Indian Society. (150 words) (2023) 10
- Can the vicious cycle of gender inequality, poverty and malnutrition be broken through microfinancing of women SHGs? Explain with examples. (150 words) (2021) 10
- Examine the role of 'Gig economy' in the process of empowerment of women. (150 words) (2021) 10
- Discuss the desirability of greater representation to women in higher judiciary to ensure diversity, equity and inclusiveness. (Answer in 150 words) (2021) 10
- "Though women in post-Independence India have excelled in various fields, the social attitude towards women and feminist movement has been patriarchal." Apart from women education and women empowerment schemes, what interventions can help change this milieu? Answer in 250 words) (2021) 15
- "Empowering women is the key to control population growth". Discuss (150 words) (2019) 10



- What are the continued challenges for women in India against time and space? (250 words) (2019) 15
- 'Women's movement in India has not addressed the issues of women of lower social strata. Substantiate your view. (Answer in 250 words) (2018) 15
- How do you explain the statistics that show that the sex ratio in Tribes in India is more favourable to women than the sex ratio among Scheduled Castes? (2015) 12.5
- How does patriarchy impact the position of a middle-class working woman in India? (2014) 10
- Discuss the various economic and socio-cultural forces that are driving increasing feminization of agriculture in India. (2014) 10
- Why do some of the most prosperous regions of India have an adverse sex ratio for women? Give your arguments. (2014) 10
- Male membership needs to be encouraged in order to make women's organization free from gender bias. Comment. (200 words) (2013) 10

Population and associated issues: Poverty and developmental issues

- What is the concept of a 'demographic winter'? Is the world moving towards such a situation? Elaborate. (Answer in 150 words) (2024) 10
- In dealing with socio-economic issues of development, what kind of collaboration between government, NGOs and private sector would be most productive? (Answer in 150 words) (2024) 10
- Child cuddling is now being replaced by mobile phones. Discuss its impact on the socialization of children. (150 words) (2023) (10)
- COVID-19 pandemic accelerated class inequalities and poverty in India. Comment. (2020) 10
- 'Despite implementation of various programmes for eradication of poverty by the government in India, poverty is still existing.' Explain by giving reasons. (Answer in 150 words) (2018) 10
- Mention core strategies for the transformation of aspirational districts in India and explain the nature of convergence, collaboration and competition for its success. (Answer in 250 words) (2018) 15
- Critically examine whether growing population is the cause of poverty OR poverty is the main cause of population increase in India. (2015) 12.5
- Discuss the changes in the trends of labour migration within and outside India in the last four decades. (2015) 12.5
- "An essential condition to eradicate poverty is to liberate the poor from deprivation." Substantiate this statement with suitable examples (2016) 12.5
- Defying the barriers of age, gender and religion, the Indian women became the torch bearer during the struggle for freedom in India. Discuss. (200 words) (2013) 10

Urbanization, their problems and their remedies

- Why do large cities tend to attract more migrants than smaller towns? Discuss in the light of conditions in developing countries. (Answer in 150 words) (2024) 10
- Does urbanization lead to more segregation and/or marginalization of the poor in Indian metropolises? (250 words) (2023) 15
- How is the growth of Tier 2 cities related to the rise of a new middle class with an emphasis on the culture of consumption? (150 words) (2022) 10 marks
- What are the main socioeconomic implications arising out of the development of IT industries in major cities of India? (250 words) (2021) 15
- Account for the huge flooding of million cities in India including the smart ones like Hyderabad and Pune. Suggest lasting remedial measures. (Answer in 250 words) (2020) 15
- How is efficient and affordable urban mass transport key to the rapid economic development of India? (250 words) (2019) 15



- “The ideal solution of depleting ground water resources in India is water harvesting system.” How can it be made effective in urban areas? (Answer in 250 words) (2018) 15
- The growth of cities as I.T. hubs has opened up new avenues employment but has also created new problems. Substantiate this statement with examples. (250 words) (2017) 15
- With a brief background of quality of urban life in India, introduce the objectives and strategy of the ‘Smart City Programme’. (2016) 12.5
- Major cities of India are becoming more vulnerable to flood conditions. Discuss. (2016) 12.5
- Mumbai, Delhi and Kolkata are the three mega cities of the country, but the air pollution is much more serious problem in Delhi as compared to the other two. Why is this so? (2015) 12.5
- Smart cities in India cannot sustain without smart villages. Discuss this statement in the backdrop of rural-urban integration. (2015) 12.5
- Discussion the various social problems which originated out of the speedy process of urbanization in India. 2013

Effects of Globalization on Indian society

- Globalization has increased urban migration by skilled, young, unmarried women from various classes. How has this trend impacted upon their personal freedom and relationship with family? (Answer in 250 words) (2024) 15
- Elucidate the relationship between globalization and new technology in a world of scarce resources, with special reference to India. (250 words) (2022) 15
- Explore and evaluate the impact of ‘Work from Home’ on family relationship. (2022) 10
- Is diversity and pluralism in India under threat due to globalisation? Justify your answer. (2020) 15
- Are we losing our local identity for the global identity? Discuss. (250 words) (2019) 15
- ‘Globalization is generally said to promote cultural homogenization but due to these cultural specificities appear to be strengthened in the Indian Society. Elucidate. (Answer in 250 words) (2018) 15
- Discuss the positive and negative effects of globalization on women in India. (2015) 12.5
- To what extent globalization has influenced the core of cultural diversity in India? Explain. (2016) 12.5
- Critically examine the effects of globalization on the aged population in India. 2013

Social empowerment

- Intercaste marriages between castes which have socio-economic parity have increased, to some extent, but this is less true of interreligious marriages. Discuss. (Answer in 150 words) (2024) 10
- How have digital initiatives in India contributed to the functioning of the education system in the country? Elaborate your answer. (Answer in 250 words) (2020) 15
- Has caste lost its relevance in understanding the multi- cultural Indian Society? Elaborate your answer with illustrations. (Answer in 150 words) (2020) 10
- “Caste system is assuming new identities and associational forms. Hence, caste system cannot be eradicated in India.” Comment. (Answer in 150 words) (2018) 10
- What are the two major legal initiatives by the State since Independence, addressing discrimination against Scheduled Tribes (STs)? (150 words) (2017) 10
- Why are the tribals in India referred to as the Scheduled Tribes? Indicate the major provisions enshrined in the Constitution of India for their upliftment. (2016) 12.5
- Mahatma Gandhi and Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, despite having divergent approaches and strategies, had a common goal of amelioration of the downtrodden. Elucidate. (2015) 12.5
- Debate the issue of whether and how contemporary movements for assertion of Dalit identity work towards annihilation of caste. (2015) 12.5



Regionalism

- What is regional disparity? How does it differ from diversity? How serious is the issue of regional disparity in India? (Answer in 250 words) (2024) 15
- Do you agree that regionalism in India appears to be a consequence of rising cultural assertiveness? Argue. (Answer in 150 words) (2020) 10
- Discuss whether formation of new states in recent times is beneficial or not for the economy of India. (Answer in 250 words) (2018) 15
- Has the formation of linguistic States strengthened the cause of Indian Unity? (2016) 12.5
- What is the basis of regionalism? Is it that unequal distribution of benefits of development on regional basis eventually promotes regionalism? Substantiate your answer. (2016) 12.5
- Growing feeling of regionalism is an important factor in the generation of demand for a separate state. Discuss. (200 words) (2013) 10

Secularism & Communalism

- Discuss the impact of post-liberal economy on ethnic identity and communalism. (250 words) (2023) 15
- Are tolerance, assimilation and pluralism the key elements in the making of an Indian form of Secularism? Justify your answer. (250 words) (2022) 15
- What are the challenges to our cultural practices in the name of secularism? (150 words) (2019) 10
- How the Indian concept of secularism is different from the western model of secularism? Discuss. (Answer in 150 words) (2018) 10
- 'Communalism arises either due to power struggle or relative deprivation. Argue by giving suitable illustrations. (Answer in 250 words) (2018) 15
- Distinguish between religiousness/religiosity and communalism giving one example of how the former has got transformed into the latter in independent India. (250 words) (2017) 15
- How do the Indian debates on secularism differ from the debates in the West? (2014) 10

GSII: Social Issues

Welfare schemes for vulnerable sections of the population by the Centre and States and the performance of these schemes; Mechanisms, laws, institutions and Bodies constituted for the protection and betterment of these vulnerable sections.

- Despite comprehensive policies for equity and social justice, underprivileged sections are not yet getting the full benefits of affirmative action envisaged by the Constitution. Comment. (Answer in 250 words) (2024) 15
- "Development and welfare schemes for the vulnerable, by its nature, are discriminatory in approach." Do you agree? Give reasons for your answer. (250 words) (2023) 15
- Reforming the government delivery system through the Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) is a progressive step, but it has limitations too. Comment. (150 words) (2022) 10
- The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 remains only a legal document without intense sensitisation of government functionaries and citizens regarding disability. Comment. (150 words) (2022) 10
- Do you agree with the view that increasing dependence on donor agencies for development reduces the importance of community participation in the development process? Justify your answer. (250 words) (2022) 15
- "Besides being a moral imperative of a Welfare State, primary health structure is a necessary precondition of sustainable development." Analyze. (150 words) (2021) 10



- “Earn while you learn scheme needs to be strengthened to make vocational education and skillful training meaningful.” Comment. (150 words) (2021) 10
- Performance of welfare schemes that are implemented for vulnerable sections is not so effective due to absence of their awareness and active involvement at all stages of policy process – Discuss. (2019) 15
- Does the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 ensure effective mechanism for empowerment and inclusion of the intended beneficiaries in the society? Discuss. (2017) 10
- Is the National Commission for Women able to strategise and tackle the problems that women face at both public and private spheres? Give reasons in support of your answer. (2017) 15
- Examine the main provisions of the National Child Policy and throw light on the status of its implementation. (2016) 12.5
- Do government’s schemes for up-lifting vulnerable and backward communities by protecting required social resources for them, lead to their exclusion in establishing businesses in urban economies? (2014) 12.5
- The Central Government frequently complains on the poor performance of the State Governments in eradicating suffering of the vulnerable sections of the society. Restructuring of Centrally sponsored schemes across the sectors for ameliorating the cause of vulnerable sections of population aims at providing flexibility to the States in better implementation. Critically evaluate. (2013) 10
- The basis of providing urban amenities in rural areas (PURA) is rooted in establishing connectivity. Comment. (2013) 10

Issues relating to development and management of Social Sector/Services relating to Health, Education, Human Resources

- What are the aims and objects of recently passed and enforced. The Public Examination (Prevention of Unfair Means) Act, 2024? Whether University / State Education Board examinations, too, are covered under the Act? (Answer in 250 words) (2024) 15
- In a crucial domain like the public healthcare system the Indian State should play a vital role to contain the adverse impact of marketisation of the system. Suggest some measures through which the State can enhance the reach of public healthcare at the grassroots level. (Answer in 250 words) (2024) 15
- The crucial aspect of development process has been the inadequate attention paid to Human Resource Development in India. Suggest measures that can address this adequacy. (150 words) (2023) 10
- Skill development programs have succeeded in increasing human resources supply to various sectors. In the context of the statement analyze the linkages between education, skill and employment. (250 words) (2023) 15
- The rights of Children to Free and Compulsory Education, 2009 remains inadequate in promoting incentive-based system for children’s education without generating awareness about the importance of schooling. Analyse. (250 words) (2022) 15 marks
- Has digital illiteracy, particularly in rural areas, coupled with lack of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) accessibility hindered socio-economic development? Examine with justification. (250 words) (2021) 15
- In order to enhance the prospects of social development, sound and adequate health care policies are needed particularly in the fields of geriatric and maternal health care. Discuss. (2020) 10
- National Education Policy 2020 is in conformity with the Sustainable Development Goal-4 (2030). It intends to restructure and reorient education system in India. Critically examine the statement. (2020) 15
- Appropriate local community-level healthcare intervention is a prerequisite to achieve ‘Health for All’ in India. Explain. (2018) 10



- 'To ensure effective implementation of policies addressing water, sanitation and hygiene needs, the identification of beneficiary segments is to be synchronized with the anticipated outcomes'. Examine the statement in the context of the WASH scheme. (2017) 10
- "Demographic Dividend in India will remain only theoretical unless our manpower becomes more educated, aware, skilled and creative." What measures have been taken by the government to enhance the capacity of our population to be more productive and employable? (2016) 12.5
- Professor Amartya Sen has advocated important reforms in the realms of primary education and primary health care. What are your suggestions to improve their status and performance? (2016) 12.5
- The quality of higher education in India requires major improvements to make it internationally competitive. Do you think that the entry of foreign educational institutions would help improve the quality of technical and higher education in the country? Discuss. (2015) 12.5
- Public health system has limitations in providing universal health coverage. Do you think that private sector could help in bridging the gap? What other viable alternatives would you suggest? (2015) 12.5
- Should the premier institutes like IITs/IIMs be allowed to retain premier status, allowed more academic independence in designing courses and also decide mode/criteria of selection of students. Discuss in light of the growing challenges. (2014) 12.5
- Identify the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) that are related to health. Discuss the success of the actions taken by the Government for achieving the same. (2013) 10

Issues relating to poverty and hunger

- Poverty and malnutrition create a vicious cycle, adversely affecting human capital formation. What steps can be taken to break the cycle? (Answer in 150 words) (2024) 10
- Besides the welfare schemes India needs deft management of inflation and unemployment to serve the poor and the underprivileged sections of the society. Discuss. (250 words) (2022) 15
- Discuss the main objectives of population education and point out the measure to achieve them in India in detail. (250 words) (2021) 15
- "The incidence and intensity of poverty are more important in determining poverty based on income alone". In this context analyze the latest United Nations Multidimensional Poverty Index Report. (2020) 15
- There is a growing divergence in the relationship between poverty and hunger in India. The shrinking of social expenditure by the government is forcing the poor to spend more on Non-Food essential items squeezing their food – budget. Elucidate. (2020) 10
- How far do you agree with the view that the focus on lack of availability of food as the main cause of hunger takes the attention away from ineffective human development policies in India? (2018) 15
- "Poverty Alleviation programs in India remain mere showpieces until and unless they are backed up by political will." Discuss with reference to the performance of the major poverty alleviation program in India. (2017) 15
- Hunger and Poverty are the biggest challenges for good governance in India still today. Evaluate how far successive governments have progressed in dealing with these humongous problems. Suggest measures for improvement. (2017) 10
- Though there have been several different estimates of poverty in India, all indicate reduction in poverty levels over time. Do you agree? Critically examine with reference to urban and rural poverty indicators. (2015) 12.5
- The concept of Mid-Day Meal (MDM) scheme is almost a century old in India with early beginnings in Madras Presidency in pre-independent India. The scheme has again been given impetus in most states in the last two decades. Critically examine its twin objectives, latest mandates and success. (2013) 10



9. APPENDIX: KEY FACTS AND DATA

| Topics | Facts and Data |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Marriage | Laws governing marriages in India <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hindu Marriage Act, 1955 Special Marriage Act, 1954 Prohibition of Child Marriages Act, 2006 |
| Women-led Development | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> India ranked 131th out of 148 countries, slipping 2 places compared to 2024. (Global Gender Gap Index 2025) Female Labour Force Participation: Bridging the gender gap in employment could potentially lead to a 30% increase in the country's GDP. Digital divide: Only 1 in 3 women in India (33%) have ever used internet, compared to more than half the men (57%). (NFHS 2019-21) Only 3% of women make decisions independently. (NFHS-5) Gender Budget allocation in the total Union Budget increases to 8.86% in FY 2025-26 from 6.8% in 2024-25. Women-led Self-Help Groups (SHGs): 65% of rural SHG members have improved their incomes between FY19 and FY24 (SBI report). Key Initiatives: Lakhpati Didi, Mudra Yojana, Stand up India Global: Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BPfA) (1995) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Beijing + 30 Action Agenda: 6 priority action areas (closing digital gender gap, ensuring freedom from poverty, eliminating violence, promoting equal decision-making power, fostering peace and security, and achieving climate justice) |
| Care Economy (Purple Economy) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Economic value of women's unpaid domestic and care work in India ranges between 15% - 17% of GDP. Women of working age spend 5.6 hours (~6X more) on unpaid work daily, versus 30 minutes for men. (Time Use Survey- NSO) 5 Pillar Framework for Care Economy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leave policy Subsidies for Care Services Investment in Care Infrastructure Skill training for Care workers Institutional mechanism for quality assurance |
| Violence against Women | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.5 lakh crimes (4% increase between 2021-22) against women. (NCRB) Cruelty by husband or his relatives (31.4%), assault on women with intent to outrage her modesty (18.7%), and rape (7.1%). Over 419 cases of sexual harassment at workplace were reported in the country in 2022. (NCRB) Initiatives to curb Violence against women: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter-V of the Bhartiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS): Offences against women and children Mission Shakti (Sambal and Samarthya), She-Box Vishaka Guidelines (1997): Supreme Court guidelines addressing workplace sexual harassment in India. Global: UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (1993), UN Spotlight Initiative, SDG 5 |
| Sexual and Reproductive Rights | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A woman's right to reproductive choices is protected under Article 21, as a part of personal liberty. (Suchita Srivastava v. Chandigarh Administration, 2009). |



| | |
|---|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maternity leave is an integral part of maternity benefits and forms a core aspect of a woman's reproductive rights. (K. Umadevi v. Government of Tamil Nadu) • Maternity Benefit Act, 1961: 26 weeks of paid leave for women with less than 2 surviving children and 12 weeks for those with 2 or more children. |
| Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) | <p>Initiatives taken to improve SRH</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • India: Medical Termination of Pregnancy (MTP) Amendment Act, 2021, Surrogacy (Regulation) Act, 2021 (prohibit commercial surrogacy), Rashtriya Kishor Swasthya Karykram, Mission Parivar Vikas, Draft Menstrual Hygiene Policy 2023. • Global: Nairobi Summit, 2019 (ICPD+25) (integrate SRH into Universal Healthcare), Beijing Platform for Action, 1995. |
| Child Marriage | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 23.3% of women aged 20-24 years were married before age 18 years. • Prevalence of child marriage has reduced by half from 47% (2006) to 23.3% (2019-21). • As per NCRB, number of cases registered under Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006 during the last 5 years have increased from 395 (2017) to 1050 (2021). • Prohibition of Child Marriage Act (PCMA), 2006: Prohibits marriage of girls under 18 and boys under 21 years. |
| Technology and Children | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 71 % of youth are online compared with 48% of total population globally. (UNICEF) • 2/3rd of the world's school-age children (1.3 billion) aged 3-17 years lack access to internet at home. (UNICEF-ITU report) • 82% of children aged 14-16 know how to use a smartphone; 57% of rural children use smartphones for educational purposes but 76% use them for social media. (ASER 2024) |
| Child Labour | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ~138 million (7.8%) children (5-17 years) worldwide engaged (54 million (3.1%) in hazardous work) (ILO-UNICEF) • 10.1 million (3.9%) children engaged in child labour in India. (Census 2011) • Constitutional Provisions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Article 24: Prohibition of employment of children in factories, etc. ○ Article 39(e): Directs the state to ensure that the tender age of children is not abused. • Child and Adolescent Labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Act, 1986: Completely prohibits employment of children below 14 years and employment of adolescents (14 to 18 years of age) in hazardous occupations or processes. |
| Tribal Population | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Population: 10.45 crore (8.6%) (2011 census). • 40.6% ST population is below poverty line. • Low literacy: Literacy rate among STs is just 59% which is 73% among the general population. (Census 2011). • Constitutional Measures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Article 342: Notification of STs ○ Schedule V and VI (Article 244) ○ Article 275: Grant of special funds for promoting the welfare of STs ○ Article 338A: National Commission for STs • Legislative Measures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Panchayat (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996 ○ Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006 ○ SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989 |



| | |
|---|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government Schemes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Panchasheel Principles for Tribal Development ○ Eklavya Model Residential School (EMRS) ○ Pradhan Mantri Vanbandhu Vikas Yojana ○ Pradhan Mantri Adi Adarsh Gram Yojna (PMAAGY) ○ Pradhan Mantri Khanij Kshetra Kalyan Yojana (PMKKKY) |
| Scheduled Castes (SCs) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Article 341 defines the term ‘Scheduled Caste’ • SCs constitute 16.6% of India's population (2011 Census). • 71% SC farmers work as agricultural labourers for salaries on land that they do not own. (USDA) • Only 66.1% of the population is literate, compared to 73.3% of Indians overall. • Mechanism to tackle Caste based atrocities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constitutional <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Fundamental Rights: Article 14, 15, 16, 17. ○ DPSP: Article 46 (promotes the educational and economic interests of SCs) and Article 338 (National Commission for SCs) • Legal <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1955: ‘Untouchability’ because of religious and social disabilities was made punishable. ○ Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989 ○ Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013. ○ Initiatives for empowerment of SCs ○ Scheme For Residential Education For Students in High Schools in Targeted Areas (SHRESHTA) ○ Pradhan Mantri Anusuchit Jaati Abhyuday Yojana (PM AJAY) ○ Ambedkar Social Innovation and Incubation Mission (ASIIM) |
| Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2.21% of the total population are PwDs • 69% PwDs live in Rural areas • 55% PwDs are illiterate • Initiatives for mainstreaming PwDs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ADIP Scheme (Assistance to Disabled Persons for Purchase/ Fitting of Aids and Appliances) ○ Deendayal Divyangjan Rehabilitation Scheme (DDRS) ○ Global: United Nations Convention on Rights of Person with Disabilities (UNCRPD), Biwako Millennium Framework and Incheon Strategy for PwDs in Asia and Pacific. |
| Manual Scavenging | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation (PEMSR) Act, 2013 defines Manual scavenging. • Out of the 775 districts, 456 districts no longer have manual scavenging (as on January 29, 2025). • Manual Scavenging was banned under the Employment of Manual Scavengers and its Prohibition Act, 1993. • Initiatives to end manual scavenging <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Safai Karamcharis Finance and Development Corporation (NSKFDC), National Action for Mechanised Sanitation Ecosystem (NAMASTE), Rashtriya Garima Abhiyan, etc. • International conventions: Universal Declaration of Human Rights, International Convention for Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, etc. |

| | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Senior-care | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Senior citizens (aged 60 years and above) comprise ~10% (104 million) of the population in India India's elderly population will exceed 20% of the total by 2050. (UNFPA 2023) Constitutional Provisions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Article 41: State shall make provisions for securing the right to work and public assistance for old age, etc. 7th Schedule: Provisions related to old age pension, social security and insurance, and economic and social planning. Policy Measures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Social Assistance Program (NSAP): National Programme for the Health Care for the Elderly (NPHCE): preventive, curative, and rehabilitative treatment. Initiatives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> India: Accessible India Campaign, Pradhan Mantri Vaya Vandana Yojana, Atal Vayo Abhyudaya Yojana (AVYAY), Senior Able Citizens for Re-Employment in Dignity (SACRED portal), The Senior Ageing Growth Engine (SAGE) initiative Global: UN Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (2002), UN Decade of Healthy Ageing (2021-2030), Japan "Healthy Japan 21 Program" Promotes active ageing |
| School Education | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gross Enrolment Ratio (UDISE+ 2023-24): Elementary (93%), Secondary (77.4%), Higher secondary (class11-12) (56.2 %) Dropout rate (UDISE+): Primary (1.9%), Secondary (14.1%) Mean years of schooling: 13 years. (increased from 8.2 years in 1990) (UNDP's 2025 Human Development Report) Poor Learning Outcomes: Despite improvements in learning outcomes, more than half of Std V students cannot read a basic text from two grades below. (ASER, 2024) |
| Three-Language Formula | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Constitutional provisions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Article 350A: State to facilitate instruction in mother-tongue at primary stage especially for linguistic minorities. Article 351: Directives for development of Hindi language. Policies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Education Policy, 1968: Adopted 3-language formula based on the recommendation of Kothari Commission (1964-65). 1992 Programme of Action: Mother tongue/ regional language should be the medium of communication at the pre-school level. RTE Act, 2009: As far as possible, the medium of instruction in school should be the child's mother tongue. National Education Policy (NEP), 2020: Advocates utilization of home language/ mother tongue as the medium of instruction at least until Grade 5, preferably till Grade 8 and beyond. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > NEP 2020 requires at least 2 of the 3 languages to be Indian as against NEP 1968 which mandated Hindi, English, and a regional language. Initiatives promoting Multilingualism: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> India: ASMITA Initiative, Bahubhashi Shabdkosh, Bhashini, Anuvadini (AI-based App), e-KUMBH Portal, Natural Language Translation Mission, etc. Global: UNESCO Global Guidance on Multilingual Education, International Mother Language Day (21 Feb) |
| Literacy in India | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall literacy rate (aged seven and above): 80.9% Urban vs Rural: 88.9% (urban); 77.5% (rural) Gender divide: Male literacy is 87.2%; female literacy is 74.6% |



| | |
|---|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of non-literates in 15 years and above age group is 25.76 crore (Census 2011). Top 3 States/UTs: Mizoram, Lakshadweep, Nagaland Bottom 3 States/UTs: Arunachal Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh Initiatives: ULLAS: New India Literacy Programme (NILP), National Literacy Mission (NLM), NIPUN Bharat Mission (Under NEP 2020), SDG 4.6: Ensuring all youth and adults achieve literacy and numeracy by 2030. States/UTs like Mizoram, Goa, Ladakh achieved full functional literacy. |
| Quality Higher Education in India | <p>As per AISHE Report 2021-2022</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access & Enrolment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER): Increased 71 times from 0.4 (1950-51) to 28.4 (2021-22); National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 aims for 50% by 2035. Gender Parity Index (GPI): Improved from 0.87 (2011-12) to 1.01 (2021-22). Funding: Combined expenditure by the Centre and States (as % of GDP)- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> University & Higher Education: 0.62% Overall Tertiary Education: 1.57% Low R&D expenditure (0.7% of GDP) by government and HEIs. Initiatives for Higher Education: Prime Minister's Research Fellows (PMRF), National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF), Pradhan Mantri Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (PM-USHA), One Nation One Subscription (ONOS) Scheme India grew from 11 universities in 2015 to 54 in QS World Rankings 2026, making it the 4th most represented country after the US, UK, and China. |
| Healthcare | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government Health Expenditure: ~1.35% of GDP (41.41% of Total Health Expenditure) (2019-20) Out-of-pocket expenses (OOPE): 47.1% of the total health expenditure (2019-20) Health insurance coverage: 41% of households with any usual member covered under a health insurance. (NFHS-5) Under-five mortality rate (U5MR): 41.9 (NFHS-5) Low doctor to patient ratio: 1:834 (including both allopathic doctors AYUSH doctors) (1:1000 prescribed by the WHO) Geographical inequality: Around 2/3rd population in rural areas, yet 73% of the public hospital beds in urban areas. |
| Ayushman Bharat: Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB PM-JAY) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Covering Senior Citizens under AB PM-JAY <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 70+ aged population has grown from 2.8% (2001) to 4.3% (2021) and is expected to double by 2031. Only around 1/5th of the elderly population (60+) is covered by health insurance. Nearly 78% remain without any pension coverage (NITI Aayog) Almost 70% of the elderly are dependent on family and/or relatives. Key Achievements of AB PM-JAY <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Healthcare Accessibility: Over 35.4 crore Ayushman cards issued; 7.79 crore hospital admissions authorised. Reduction in Healthcare Burden: 21% reduction in out-of-pocket expenditure (OOPE). Gender equity: 49% of the Ayushman cards issued to women. Healthcare Infrastructure: District hospitals have experienced an annual net benefit of \$26.1 million. |

| | |
|--|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenges (CAG Report): Database Errors (Invalid beneficiary data), Infrastructure Issues, Financial Irregularities, Implementation Delays |
| Digital Health | <p>Government Initiatives to promote Digital Health</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM): Integrated digital health infrastructure • Covid Vaccine Intelligence Network (COWIN) system: Digital COVID vaccine distribution • eSanjeevani: National telemedicine service • Poshan Didi: Chatbot-based nutrition counseling • Nikshay 2.0 portal: Community support for TB patients • Tele-MANAS: Free tele-mental health services. <p>Global: Global Initiative on Digital Health (GIDH) (WHO Managed Network for improving global health through standardized digital health solutions aligned with country priorities.)</p> |
| Mental Healthcare | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10.6% of adults in India suffer from mental disorders with a 70-92% treatment gap. (National Mental Health Survey 2015-16) • Individuals aged 25-44 years are the most affected by mental illnesses. • One in every eight people (or 970 million people globally) were living with a mental disorder. (WHO) • Inadequate professionals: Only 0.75 psychologists per lakh population. • Initiatives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ India: Mental Health Care Act, 2017, TeleMANAS, National Mental Health Programme, Manodarpan, KIRAN Helpline, ○ Global: Paris Declaration (universal Access to People-centred Mental Health Care and Services); WHO Guidance (2025) provided 5 key areas of Reforms. |
| Maternal Health and Family Planning | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maternal Mortality Rate (MMR): 97 per 1 Lakh Live births 2018-20 (Economic Survey 2022-23) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ SDG target of MMR below 70 by 2030. • Total Fertility Rate (2.0 in 2020) reduced below Replacement level Fertility (2.1). • Neonatal mortality rate (NMR): 24.9 (NFHS-5) • Institutional delivery: 89% (2019–2021), up from 79% (2015–2016). • Infant Mortality Rate (IMR): declined from 39 in 2014 to 28 in 2020. • Initiatives: Surakshit Matritva Aashwasan Yojana (SUMAN), Pradhan Mantri Surakshit Matritva Abhiyan (PMSMA). |
| Hunger | <p>Initiatives taken for Tackling Hunger in India</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • India: National Food Security Act (NFSA), 2013 (recognizes the right to food as a statutory right.), Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY), Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojna, POSHAN Abhiyan (National Nutrition Mission), Eat Right Movement, etc. • Global: SDG 2 (Zero hunger), World Food Programme (Food assistance branch of United Nations, to combat hunger worldwide by providing food aid, promoting food security, and enhancing nutrition.) |
| Global Hunger Index | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Released by Concern Worldwide and Welt Hunger Hilfe. • GHI has 4 component indicators: Undernourishment, Child stunting (low height for their age), Child wasting (low weight for their height), Child mortality • Key Findings • Global: |



| | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 42 countries are at alarming hunger levels, making Zero Hunger by 2030 unattainable. ○ World GHI score: 18.3 (moderate severity) ○ Gender-climate-hunger link: Women/girls hardest hit by food insecurity, malnutrition, and climate emergencies. ○ Nearly 70% of 309 million facing acute hunger live in fragile/conflict-hit countries. • India: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Rank: 105th of 127 countries (improved from 111th in 2023) ○ Placed under “Serious” category ○ 13.7% of India’s population suffers from undernourishment; 35.5% of children under the age of five are stunted; 18.7% experience child wasting and 2.9% of children do not reach their fifth birthday. |
| Urbanization | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban population: 36.87% (World Bank, 2024); 31.1% (Census 2011) • Future projections: 40% population by 2036 (World Bank) • Contribution to GDP: ~60% (NITI Aayog, 2022) • Urban slums constitute around 49% of urban population. (World Bank, 2020) • Initiatives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban), PM SVANidhi Scheme (Pradhan Mantri Street Vendor’s AtmaNirbhar Nidhi), Smart Cities Mission, Swachh Bharat Mission (Urban) ○ UN SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities; New Urban Agenda by UN Habitat III advocating inclusive, sustainable, participatory and integrated urban development. |
| Population | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3rd stage of demographic transition: Here population growth rate declines still the overall population increases. • Falling mortality: The IMR has decreased from 40.7 in 2015-16 to 35.2 in 2019-21. (NFHS-5) • Increasing Life expectancy at birth: reached to 69.7 years in the 2015-19 period from 31 in 1947. • Unintended pregnancies: 1 in every 7 unintended pregnancies of world occurs in India. • Lack of female education, child marriage and early marriages, etc. |
| Demographic Dividend | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Global Depopulation: By 2100, major economies may see population declines of 20–50%. • Shifting Age structures: From pyramids (many young, few old) to obelisks (many old, fewer young). • By 2050, the working-age population in first wave regions (advanced economies, China) will shrink from 67% to 59%. • Later wave regions (India, Latin America, and Emerging Asia) will experience similar shifts within one to two generations. India-specific: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • India has one of the youngest populations globally, 65% of India’s population is under 35. • India’s TFR is below the replacement level of 2.1. • The demographic dividend contributed 0.7% annually to GDP per capita growth in recent decades. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ This is projected to drop to 0.2% annually by 2050. • Demographic dividend would peak around 2041, with 59% of total population will be of working age group. (Economic Survey 2018-19) |

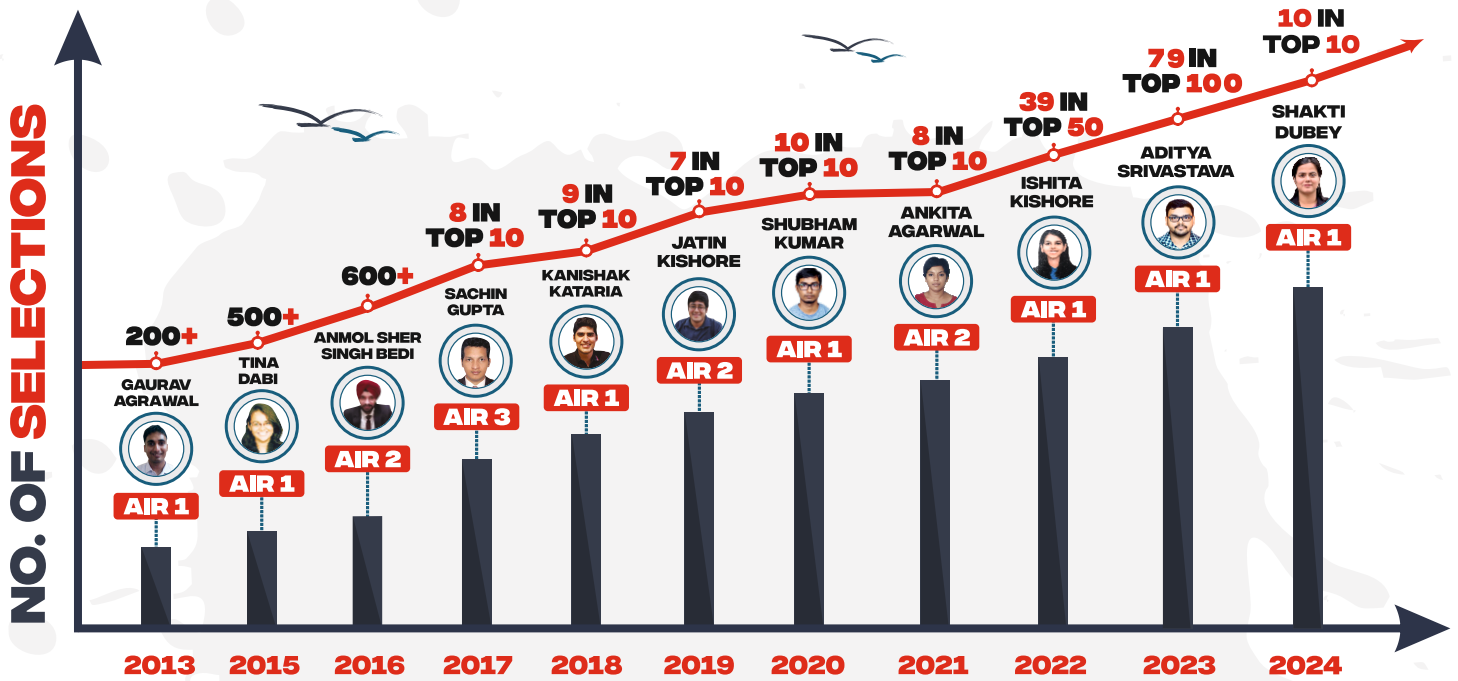


| | |
|------------------------------|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> India's support ratio (workers per senior) is 9.8 which is projected to halve by 2050. |
| Middle-income Class | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> According to PRICE, India's middle class is projected to grow from 31% in 2021 to 38% by 2031 and further to 60% by 2047. Middle class face debt burden due to the Consumer loans for lifestyle aspirations; household debt reached 38% of GDP (FY23). |
| Work from Home (WFH) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 68% of companies continue remote work practices post-COVID-19. According to a Stanford study, resignations fell by 33% for workers who shifted to a hybrid schedule. |
| Workplace Automation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> India's Industrial Automation Market Growth is expected to reach \$29.43 bn by FY2029. (Invest India) Automation is expected to create 69 million new jobs, whereas 83 million jobs will become obsolete by 2027 (WEF). Key drivers for Workplace Automation in India: Accelerating digitalisation and technological Innovation, changing customer expectation, enhanced competition, rising labour costs, Ageing population, etc. |
| Internal Displacement | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 83.4 million individuals were living in internal displacement at the end of 2024. (Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre). India: Internal displacements by conflict and violence (1,700) and by disasters (5.4 millions). Approximately three quarters of migrant women are unemployed, approximately 14% of migrant women are in self and wage-employed jobs and approximately 12% are in casual labour. Initiatives taken for betterment of Internal Migrants: National policy for rehabilitation and resettlement 2007, 'One Nation One Ration Card', Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana 2.0, Ayushman Bharat. |

Copyright © by Vision IAS

All rights are reserved. No part of this document may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without prior permission of Vision IAS.

OUR ACHIEVEMENTS



LIVE/ONLINE
Classes Available
www.visionias.in



Foundation Course GENERAL STUDIES PRELIMS cum MAINS 2026, 2027 & 2028

**DELHI : 8 JULY, 11 AM | 15 JULY, 8 AM | 18 JULY, 5 PM
22 JULY, 11 AM | 25 JULY, 2 PM | 30 JULY, 8 AM**

GTB Nagar Metro (Mukherjee Nagar): 10 JULY, 8 AM | 29 JULY, 6 PM

हिन्दी माध्यम 15 जुलाई, 2 PM

AHMEDABAD: 12 JULY

BENGALURU: 22 JULY

BHOPAL: 27 JUNE

CHANDIGARH: 18 JUNE

HYDERABAD: 30 JULY

JAIPUR: 20 JULY

JODHPUR: 2 JULY

LUCKNOW: 22 JULY

PUNE: 14 JULY

फाउंडेशन कोर्स सामान्य अध्ययन 2026

► प्रारंभिक, मुख्य परीक्षा और निबंध के लिए महत्वपूर्ण सभी टॉपिक का विस्तृत कवरेज

DELHI : 15 जुलाई, 2 PM

JAIPUR : 20 जुलाई

JODHPUR : 2 जुलाई



Scan the QR CODE to download VISION IAS App. Join official telegram group for daily MCQs & other updates.

[/visionias.upsc](https://www.facebook.com/visionias.upsc)

[/c/VisionIASdelhi](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCVnIAsDelhi)

[/c/VisionIASdelhi](https://www.instagram.com/visioniasdelhi)

[/t.me/s/VisionIAS_UPSC](https://t.me/s/VisionIAS_UPSC)

Heartiest Congratulations

to all Successful Candidates

10

in TOP 10 Selections in CSE 2024

from various programs of Vision IAS



Shakti Dubey



Harshita Goyal

GS Foundation
Classroom Student



Dongre Archit Parag

GS Foundation
Classroom Student



Shah Margi Chirag



Aakash Garg



Komal Punia



Aayushi Bansal



Raj Krishna Jha



Aditya Vikram Agarwal



Mayank Tripathi

79 in TOP 100
Selections in CSE 2023



Aditya Srivastava



Animesh Pradhan



Ruhani



DELHI

GMMR ENQUIRY & CLASSROOM CENTRE

33, Pusa Road,
Near Karol Bagh Metro Station,
Opposite Pillar No. 113,
Delhi - 110005

MUKHERJEE NAGAR CENTER

Plot No. 857, Ground Floor,
Mukherjee Nagar, Opposite Punjab
& Sindh Bank, Mukherjee Nagar

GTB NAGAR CENTER

Classroom & Enquiry Office,
above Gate No. 2, GTB Nagar
Metro Building, Delhi - 110009

FOR DETAILED ENQUIRY

Please Call:
+91 8468022022,
+91 9019066066



enquiry@visionias.in



[/c/VisionIASdelhi](https://www.youtube.com/c/VisionIASdelhi)



[/visionias.upsc](https://www.facebook.com/visionias.upsc)



[/vision_ias](https://www.instagram.com/vision_ias)



[VisionIAS_UPSC](https://www.telegram.com/VisionIAS_UPSC)

