



# Mains

# Answer Writing

**(Consolidation)**

**October**  
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## GENERAL STUDIES PAPER-1

### History

1. Assess the importance of the Civil Disobedience Movement in India's quest for independence. What were its key features and outcomes? (250 words)

#### Approach:

- Introduce the answer by mentioning the significance of the Civil Disobedience Movement in India's freedom struggle.
- Give Key Features of the Civil Disobedience Movement
- Highlight the Outcomes of the Civil Disobedience Movement
- Conclude suitably.

#### Introduction:

The **Civil Disobedience Movement**, led by **Mahatma Gandhi**, was a pivotal turning point in India's struggle for independence. This nonviolent resistance campaign, launched in **1930**, aimed to challenge British rule through **peaceful defiance of unjust laws**.

#### Body:

##### Importance of the Civil Disobedience Movement:

- **Creation of a National Political Culture:** The movement fostered a culture of civil disobedience, **institutionalized non-violent resistance**, and laid the ideological groundwork for the demand for complete independence
- **Set the Stage for Future Movements:** The movement laid a foundation for subsequent campaigns like the **Quit India Movement**.
  - ◆ It demonstrated India's determination and willingness to challenge British authority on a mass scale.
- **International Focus:** It brought **global attention to India's independence cause**, with significant international media coverage, which embarrassed the British government and exposed colonial injustices.

##### Key Features of the Civil Disobedience Movement:

- **Mass Participation:** The movement marked a **significant shift from earlier campaigns by involving a much wider cross-section of Indian society**. It brought together people from various backgrounds, including women, students, and rural populations.

- ◆ The **Dandi March**, which initiated the movement, saw thousands of people joining Gandhi on his **240-mile journey to break the salt laws**.
- **Non-violence (Ahimsa):** Gandhi's principle of **non-violent resistance** was the cornerstone of the movement.
  - ◆ Despite facing brutal police action during the **Dharasana Satyagraha**, where protesters were beaten while attempting to raid the salt depot, the satyagrahis largely remained non-violent.
- **Breaking Unjust Laws:** The movement encouraged the deliberate and open violation of specific laws deemed unjust.
  - ◆ The forest laws were defied in **Maharashtra, Karnataka, and the Central Provinces**.
  - ◆ In the Northwest Frontier Province, **Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan** led the non-violent Khudai Khidmatgars in protests against colonial laws.
- **Promotion of Khadi and Indigenous Products:** The movement emphasized economic self-reliance through the use of **locally made goods**.
  - ◆ **Spinning wheels became a common sight in Indian households**, with many, including prominent leaders, taking up spinning as a daily activity to support the swadeshi movement.
- **Shift of Nature of Congress:** The Congress' shift towards **greater radicalism is evident in the background of Civil Disobedience like the Purna Swaraj Resolution and the Karachi Resolution**, which introduced ideas like Fundamental Rights, socialist economic policies, and the abolition of zamindari.
  - ◆ In 1934, the **Congress Socialist Party** was also founded under Congress' umbrella, led by **Fabian socialists** like **Jai Prakash Narayan, Acharya Narendra Deva, and Ram Manohar Lohia**.

##### Outcomes of the Civil Disobedience Movement:

- **Gandhi-Irwin Pact:** The movement led to negotiations between Gandhi and the Viceroy, Lord Irwin, **resulting in a pact in 1931**.
  - ◆ As part of the pact, the government agreed to release political prisoners and allow salt production for domestic use in coastal villages.
- **International Attention:** The movement drew global attention to India's freedom struggle.

- ◆ American journalist **Webb Miller's eyewitness accounts** of the Dharasana Satyagraha were published in **1,350 newspapers globally**, creating international pressure on the British government.
- **Strengthening of the Nationalist Movement:** The movement broadened the base of the freedom struggle and prepared the ground for future campaigns.
  - ◆ The **participation of women in large numbers** set a precedent for their increased involvement in subsequent phases of the freedom movement.
    - Women like **Sarojini Naidu** emerged as prominent leaders.
- **Partial Success in Reforms:** While immediate independence was not achieved, the movement contributed to gradual constitutional reforms.
  - ◆ The movement influenced the discussions at the **Round Table Conferences** and contributed to the eventual formulation of the **Government of India Act 1935**, which introduced provincial autonomy.

#### Conclusion:

The **Civil Disobedience Movement** was a watershed moment in India's quest for independence. It significantly expanded the **scope and reach of the nationalist movement**, challenged British authority on multiple fronts, and **laid the groundwork for future struggles that would ultimately lead to India's independence in 1947.**

2. Analyze the impact of the Bengal School of Art on the development of modern Indian painting. **(150 words)**

#### Approach:

- Introduce the answer by highlighting the emergence of Bengal School of Arts
- Give the impact of the Bengal School of Art on the development of modern Indian painting
- Conclude suitably.

#### Introduction:

The Bengal School of Art emerged in the **early 20th century as a response to the dominance of Western artistic styles** imposed during British colonial rule. **Spearheaded by figures like Abanindranath Tagore**, it aimed to revive indigenous artistic traditions and establish a distinct Indian identity in modern art.

#### Body:

##### Key Impacts of the Bengal School of Art on the Development of Modern Indian Painting:

- **Revival of Indian Artistic Traditions:** The Bengal School revitalized interest in traditional Indian art forms, particularly **Mughal and Rajput miniature paintings.**

- ◆ It emphasized the use of indigenous techniques, materials, and themes.
- ◆ **Example: Abanindranath Tagore's famous painting "Bharat Mata" (1905)** incorporated elements of Ajanta cave paintings and Mughal miniatures.
- **Development of a Distinct Indian Style:** The school created a unique fusion of **Eastern and Western artistic elements**, establishing a new Indian artistic identity.
  - ◆ It **promoted the use of wash technique in watercolors**, moving away from European oil painting traditions.
  - ◆ **Example: Nandalal Bose's paintings**, such as **"Sati" (1907)**, exemplified this fusion of styles.
- **Nationalistic Themes and Imagery:** The Bengal School artists often depicted themes from **Indian mythology, history, and everyday life**, fostering a sense of national pride.
  - ◆ This approach contributed to the broader Indian independence movement.
- **Influence on Art Education:** The establishment of **Kala Bhavana at Santiniketan by Rabindranath Tagore in 1919** institutionalized the Bengal School's approach to art education.
  - ◆ This model influenced art curricula across India, emphasizing the importance of Indian artistic traditions.
  - ◆ **Example: The Government School of Art in Calcutta (now Kolkata)** adopted many of the Bengal School's principles under the leadership of **E.B. Havell.**
- **Pan-Asian Artistic Exchange:** The Bengal School fostered artistic exchanges with other Asian countries, particularly **Japan**, promoting a sense of Asian cultural unity.
  - ◆ This led to the incorporation of East Asian artistic techniques in Indian painting.
  - ◆ **Example: Arai Kampo, a Japanese artist**, influenced artists like Nandalal Bose.
- **Critique of Western Academic Realism:** The school challenged the dominance of Western academic realism in Indian art institutions.
  - ◆ It promoted a more **stylized, symbolic approach to representation.**

◆ **Example:** Abanindranath Tagore's "The Passing of Shah Jahan" (1902) rejected photographic realism in favor of a more **emotive, stylized depiction**.

- **Preservation and Promotion of Traditional Crafts:** The Bengal School's emphasis on indigenous art forms extended to traditional crafts, helping to preserve and promote these practices.

◆ **Example:** Nandalal Bose's efforts to revive traditional **alpona designs in Bengal**.

- Indra Dugar's works **depict rural Bengali scenes and Indian mythology**. Some of his most notable works are "The Ferry" and "Village Scene."

#### Conclusion:

The Bengal School of Art had a **profound and lasting impact on the development of modern Indian painting**. It successfully challenged **Western artistic dominance**, revived interest in **indigenous art forms**, and **created a uniquely Indian artistic identity**. While its direct stylistic influence may have waned, its broader principles of engaging with tradition while embracing modernity continue to shape Indian art.

3. "Integration of princely states under Sardar Patel offers lessons for modern India's federal challenges." Analyze this statement in context of recent issues arising out of demand for regional autonomy. **(250 words)**

#### Approach:

- Introduce the answer by highlighting how Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel effectively integrated princely states into India, managing tensions.
- Give arguments to how Patel's approach offers lessons for resolving current regional autonomy issues or how it is being resolved.
- Conclude suitably.

#### Introduction:

**Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel's** integration of nearly **560 princely states post-independence** laid a foundation for unified India amid challenges of **diversity, partition, and security threats**.

- With regional autonomy demands and federal tensions today, Patel's approach offers insights into **balancing unity with diversity**.

#### Body:

- **Unity in Diversity:** Patel encouraged integration by respecting cultural uniqueness, fostering a sense of national identity alongside local diversity.
  - ◆ For instance, he promised the Maharaja of Jodhpur **for famine relief and rail connectivity to meet local needs**, building trust in India's unity without undermining regional interests.

◆ Today, recognizing regional languages (through **recognition as classical languages as done recently for Marathi, Pali, Prakrit, Assamese and Bengali**) and cultures echoes Patel's method of uniting through respect for diversity.

- **Flexible Federalism:** Patel combined diplomacy with strategic force when necessary. In Hyderabad's case, after all negotiations failed, he authorized "**Operation Polo**" to secure integration.

◆ Elsewhere, he peacefully used concessions like **privy purses**.

◆ This flexibility allowed smooth integration while respecting regional governance, a principle mirrored today in **tackling insurgency cases** like in **Manipur**.

- **Balancing Security and Autonomy:** Patel was alert to security risks in border states. For Kashmir, he secured communications and mobilized defense when threats arose. His swift military response to the **1947 invasion reinforced India's stance**.

◆ This approach reflects today's balance in **regions like Jammu and Kashmir**, where revocation of **Article 370** involved a combination of legal and administrative strategies.

- **Economic Inclusivity:** Patel worked to absorb princely states economically, mitigating disparities. His assurance of **privy purses eased transitions**, while in **Junagadh**, he used local sentiment for peaceful accession.

◆ Today, demands for **economic inclusivity**, such as **Bihar and Andhra Pradesh's special status request**, underscore the need to address regional disparities, as Patel did to foster unity.

- **Constitutional Integrity:** Patel ensured all accessions respected India's Constitution, prioritizing national unity within federalism.

◆ When rulers hesitated, such as **Jodhpur's Maharaja**, Patel balanced guarantees with constitutional compliance.

◆ The current case of **Naga peace talks** underscores the importance of a constitutional framework in accommodating autonomy while ensuring the **sovereignty of the Indian state**.

- **Diplomacy over Force:** Patel relied primarily on diplomacy, reserving force for exceptional cases like Hyderabad.

◆ Today's autonomy demands in northeastern states highlight the need for proactive diplomacy rather than coercive measures.

- ◆ Today's regional autonomy demands, such as those in **Maharashtra (related to Maratha reservation)** or **Bodoland** (Assam), underscore a need to balance **regional identities with national priorities**.

### Conclusion

Sardar Patel's approach to integrating princely states laid the groundwork for a **cohesive federal structure** that accommodates diversity without compromising unity. His pragmatic use of **flexible federalism, economic inclusivity, and limited force** offers valuable lessons for managing contemporary regional autonomy demands in India.

## Geography

4. Explain the process of weathering. How do different weathering processes contribute to the formation of various landscapes and soil types? (250 words)

### Approach:

- Introduce the answer by defining weathering
- Give Key Weathering Processes
- Delve into the Impact of Weathering on Landscape Formation
- Highlight its Impact on Soil Formation
- Conclude suitably.

### Introduction:

**Weathering** is the **breakdown and alteration of rocks and minerals** at or near the Earth's surface through **physical, chemical, and biological processes**. It's a crucial component of the rock cycle and plays a significant role in **shaping landscapes and forming soils**.

### Body:

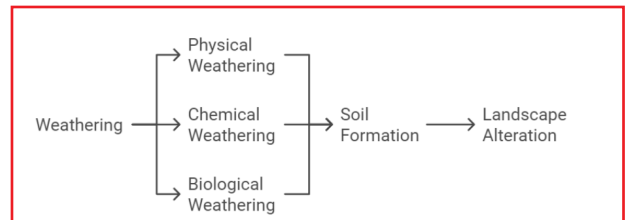
#### Key Weathering Processes:

- **Physical (Mechanical) Weathering:** Physical weathering breaks rocks without changing their composition.
  - ◆ Key processes involve **frost wedging** (water freezing in cracks), **thermal expansion** (heating and cooling), **salt weathering** (salt crystal pressure), and **exfoliation** (layers peeling off).
  - ◆ **Examples: Exfoliation domes** in places like **Yosemite National Park, USA**
- **Chemical Weathering:** Chemical weathering alters rock minerals, usually involving water.
  - ◆ Key processes involve **hydrolysis** (water replaces ions), **oxidation** (oxygen causes rust), **carbonation** (carbonic acid dissolves minerals, especially limestone), and **hydration** (minerals absorb water and expand).

- ◆ **Examples: Reddish lateritic soils in tropical regions** due to intense oxidation

- **Biological Weathering:** Biological weathering involves the breakdown of rocks by organisms. Key processes involve **root action** (roots widen cracks), **organic acids** (from plants dissolve minerals), and **lichen/moss growth** (break down rock surfaces).

- ◆ **Examples: Lichen-covered rocks** in temperate and arctic regions



### Impact on Landscape Formation:

- **Differential Weathering:** Harder rocks resist weathering, forming ridges or peaks.
  - ◆ Softer rocks weather faster, creating valleys or depressions.
- **Karst Topography:** Formed by chemical weathering of soluble rocks like limestone.
  - ◆ Features include sinkholes, caves, and underground drainage systems. (**Tham Luang cave system in Thailand**)
- **Desert Landscapes:** Dominated by physical weathering due to extreme temperature changes.
  - ◆ Features like **mushroom rocks** and **pedestal rocks** form through differential weathering.
- **Coastal Landforms:** Wave action combined with weathering creates features like sea arches and stacks. (**Twelve Apostles along the Great Ocean Road, Australia**)

### Impact on Soil Formation:

- **Residual Soils:** Formed in-situ from weathered bedrock. Characteristics depend on parent rock and local climate. (Terra rossa soils)
- **Transported Soils:** Formed from weathered materials moved by wind, water, or ice.
- **Soil Horizons:** Weathering intensity influences the development of soil layers (horizons).
  - ◆ More intense weathering leads to **deeper, more well-developed soil profiles**.
- **Soil Texture and Composition:** Physical weathering influences soil particle size.
  - ◆ Chemical weathering affects **mineral composition and nutrient availability**. (**Clay-rich soils in humid tropical regions** due to intense chemical weathering)

**Conclusion:**

**Weathering processes** are fundamental in shaping the Earth's surface and creating diverse landscapes and soil types. The interplay between physical, chemical, and biological weathering, along with factors like **climate, topography, and time**, results in the rich variety of landforms and soil resources observed across the globe.

**Indian Heritage and Culture**

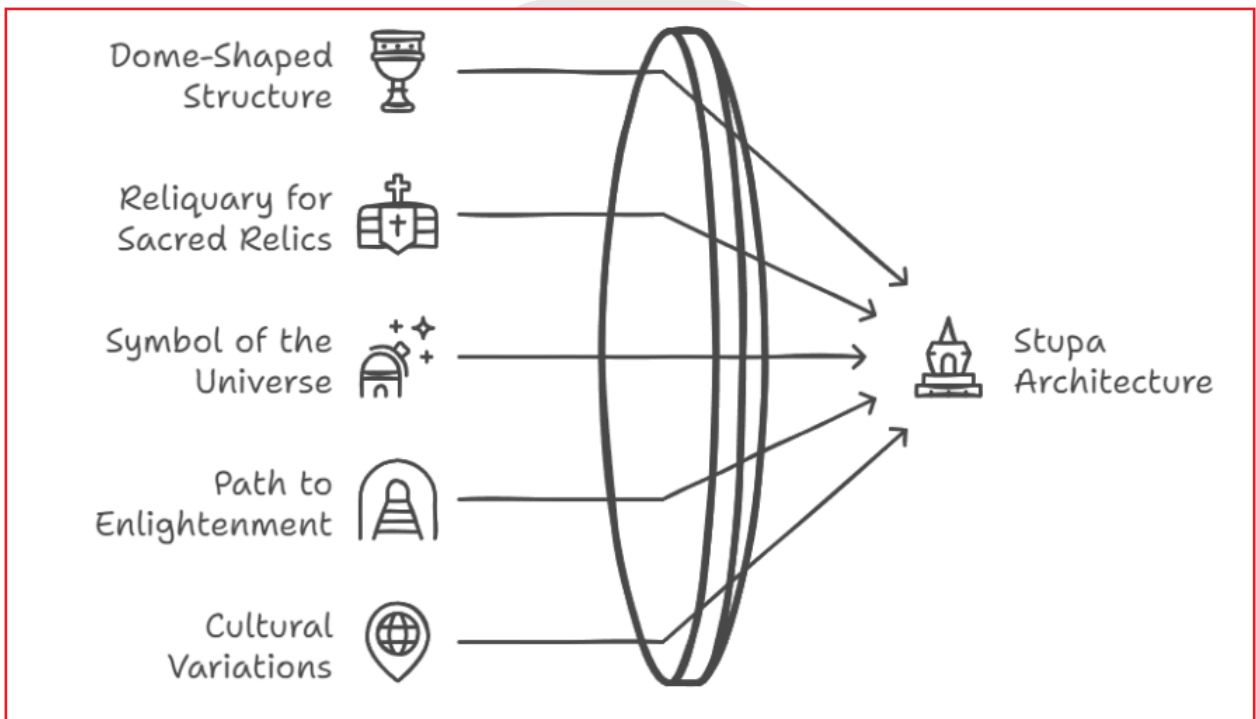
5. "The stupa architecture of ancient India reflects not just religious beliefs but also the political and social dynamics of its time." Discuss with special reference to the stupas of Sanchi. (150 words)

**Approach:**

- Introduce the answer by mentioning the significance of Stupa Architecture
- Give its role in understanding Religious, Political, and Social Dynamics of Ancient India
- Conclude suitably.

**Introduction:**

The **stupa architecture of ancient India** serves as a profound testament to the **religious, political, and social landscape of its time**. These monumental structures, particularly exemplified by the **stupas of Sanchi**, offer valuable insights into the complex interplay between **Buddhist theology, royal patronage, and societal norms**.

**Body:****Stupas- Window into Ancient India's Religious, Political, and Social Dynamics:**

- **Religious Significance:** Its development reflects the evolution of Buddhist practices and beliefs:
  - ◆ **Aniconic Representation:** The earliest art at Sanchi, dating to the **Mauryan period**, represents Buddha through symbols rather than human form.
    - This reflects early Buddhist reluctance to **depict the Buddha figuratively**.
  - ◆ **Jataka Tales:** The **gateways (toranas)** are adorned with scenes from **Buddha's life and Jataka tales**, illustrating the growing importance of narrative traditions in Buddhism.

- ◆ **Relics:** Stupa 3 at Sanchi contained relics of **Sariputra and Maudgalyayana**, chief disciples of Buddha.
  - This highlights the importance of relic worship in early Buddhism.
- **Political Dynamics:** The development of Sanchi over centuries reflects changing political landscapes:
  - ◆ **Mauryan Patronage:** Emperor Ashoka's establishment of the site in the 3rd century BCE demonstrates the Mauryan empire's role in spreading Buddhism.
    - The **Ashoka pillar at Sanchi** symbolizes imperial power aligned with Buddhist values.
  - ◆ **Sunga Expansion:** The enlargement of Stupa 1 during the Sunga dynasty (2nd-1st century BCE) shows continued royal patronage despite the Sungas' **reputation for favoring Brahmanism**.
  - ◆ **Satavahana Contributions:** The **ornate gateways added during the Satavahana period (1st century CE)** reflect the expanding wealth and artistic sophistication of this dynasty.
- **Social Dynamics:** The art and architecture at Sanchi provide insights into ancient Indian society:
  - ◆ Inscriptions at Sanchi reveal donations from various social groups, including **monks, nuns, laypeople, and guilds**. This reflects the **broad social base of Buddhism** and the participatory nature of stupa construction.
  - ◆ The reliefs on the gateways **depict scenes of city life**, showing the **growing urbanization of ancient India** and Buddhism's appeal to urban populations.
  - ◆ The presence of **non-local artistic influences (such as Achaemenid-inspired lion capitals)** suggests Sanchi's connection to wider trade networks.

#### Conclusion:

The **stupa architecture of ancient India**, particularly exemplified by the Sanchi complex, stands as a **multifaceted cultural artifact**. It not only embodies core Buddhist principles but also **reflects the political aspirations of rulers, the social dynamics of communities**, and the artistic and technological achievements of the time.

### Indian Society

6. Discuss the concept of 'social entrepreneurship'. How can it contribute to addressing societal challenges in India? (150 words)

#### Approach:

- Introduce by defining social entrepreneurship
- Give Key Aspects of Social Entrepreneurship
- Highlight its Contributions to Addressing Societal Challenges in India
- Give challenges related to it in brief
- Conclude suitably with a way forward.

#### Introduction:

**Social entrepreneurship** is an approach that combines business principles with social objectives to create innovative solutions to pressing societal issues. It aims to achieve sustainable social impact while maintaining financial viability.

#### Body:

##### Key Aspects of Social Entrepreneurship:

- **Mission-driven approach:** Social entrepreneurs prioritize creating social value over generating profits. Their primary goal is to address societal challenges and improve people's lives.
  - ◆ **Aravind Eye Care System**, founded by **Dr. Govindappa Venkataswamy**, aims to eliminate needless blindness.
- **Innovation:** Social entrepreneurs often develop novel approaches to tackle long standing problems, leveraging technology, new business models, or creative partnerships.
  - ◆ **Barefoot College**, founded by Bunker Roy, trains rural women to become solar engineers.
  - ◆ This innovative approach addresses **both energy poverty and women's empowerment in remote villages**.
- **Scalability and Sustainability:** Successful social enterprises aim to scale their impact while ensuring financial sustainability, often through earned income strategies.
  - ◆ **Amul**, a cooperative dairy enterprise, has scaled its model across India, **empowering millions of small dairy farmers** while building a successful brand.
- **Stakeholder Engagement:** Social entrepreneurs actively involve their beneficiaries and other stakeholders in designing and implementing solutions.
  - ◆ **SEWA (Self-Employed Women's Association)** engages its members - **poor, self-employed women** - in decision-making processes, ensuring that interventions address their real needs.



### Contributions to Addressing Societal Challenges in India:

Social entrepreneurship can significantly contribute to addressing various societal challenges in India:

- **Poverty Alleviation:** By creating economic opportunities and providing essential services to underserved communities.
  - ◆ **Rang De, a peer-to-peer lending platform,** provides low-cost microcredit to **rural entrepreneurs**, helping them start or expand small businesses and escape poverty.
- **Education:** Improving access to quality education, especially for marginalized groups.
  - ◆ **Pratham, an NGO turned social enterprise,** has developed innovative, low-cost teaching methodologies to improve learning outcomes in government schools across India.
- **Women's Empowerment:** Creating opportunities for women's economic and social empowerment.
  - ◆ **Lijjat Papad, a women's cooperative,** has empowered thousands of women by providing them with employment opportunities in papad production and distribution.
- **Financial Inclusion:** Extending financial services to unbanked and underbanked populations.
  - ◆ **Eko India Financial Services** uses a network of small shopkeepers to provide basic banking services in urban and rural areas, bringing financial inclusion to underserved communities.
- **Agriculture and Rural Development:** Improving agricultural productivity and rural livelihoods.
  - ◆ **Digital Green** uses video-based approaches to disseminate agricultural best practices among small and marginal farmers, improving crop yields and incomes.
- **Skill Development and Employment:** Bridging the skills gap and creating employment opportunities.
  - ◆ **LabourNet** provides skill training and job placement services to informal sector workers, improving their employability and income potential.
- **Disaster Management and Resilience:** Developing innovative solutions for disaster preparedness and response.
  - ◆ **Goonj's "Cloth for Work"** initiative provides dignified rehabilitation to disaster-affected communities by exchanging donated materials for community development work.

While social entrepreneurship shows great promise, it faces several challenges in India:

- **Lack of supportive ecosystem:** Limited access to funding, mentorship, and regulatory support.
- **Balancing social impact and financial sustainability:** Maintaining the dual focus on social mission and financial viability.
- **Scaling impact:** Overcoming barriers to growth while maintaining quality and impact.
- **Measuring and communicating impact:** Developing robust metrics to evaluate and demonstrate social impact

### Conclusion:

To unlock the full potential of social entrepreneurship in addressing India's societal challenges, key steps include **establishing supportive policies, ensuring access to capital, and building capacity through training and mentorship.** Collaboration between **social enterprises, government, corporations, and NGOs is essential**, along with promoting research and knowledge sharing. With an enabling environment, social entrepreneurship can drive inclusive growth and sustainable development in India.

7. Analyze the role of education in addressing social inequalities in India. Has the Right to Education Act achieved its objectives? **(150 words)**

### Approach:

- Introduce the answer by highlighting the significance of education
- Give supporting arguments to Role of Education in Addressing Social Inequalities
- Propose the Evaluation of the Right to Education Act's Objectives of Social Inclusion
- Cite Right to Education Act's limitations
- Conclude suitably.

### Introduction:

Education is a **transformative tool in bridging social disparities**, especially in India, where caste, class, and gender inequalities remain significant. The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 (RTE Act), aims to universalize quality education and foster social inclusion.

### Body:

#### Role of Education in Addressing Social Inequalities:

- **Economic Empowerment:** Education equips individuals with skills and knowledge necessary for **better employment opportunities and economic independence.**

- ◆ **Example:** The success story of **Kalpana Saroj**, resembles that of “**Slumdog Millionaire**,” as she transitions from a **Dalit child bride** to a **multi-millionaire**.
- **Social Mobility:** Education provides opportunities for **upward social mobility, allowing individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds** to improve their socio-economic status.
  - ◆ **Example:** The story of **Dr. B.R. Ambedkar**, who came from a Dalit background and went on to become one of India’s most prominent leaders and the **chief architect of the Indian Constitution**, exemplifies how education can facilitate social mobility.
- **Gender Equality:** Education plays a crucial role in empowering women and promoting gender equality.
  - ◆ **Example:** The **Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya scheme** has set up residential schools for girls from marginalized communities, improving their access to education.
- **Breaking Caste Barriers:** Education helps in breaking down caste-based discrimination by promoting interaction and understanding among different social groups.
  - ◆ **Example:** The **mid-day meal scheme in schools has been successful in breaking caste barriers**, as children from different castes eat together.
- **Awareness and Empowerment:** Education raises awareness about rights, social issues, and government schemes, empowering marginalized communities to assert their rights.
  - ◆ **Example:** The **Right to Information Act** is partly attributed to increased awareness through education.

#### Evaluation of the Right to Education Act’s Objectives of Social Inclusion:

- **Increased Enrollment:** The RTE Act has significantly improved school enrollment rates, particularly for disadvantaged groups. ( **Economic Survey 2023-24** reports India has **26.52 crore students** in schools and **4.33 crore** in higher education)
- **Infrastructure Development:** The Act has led to improvements in school infrastructure, making education more accessible. (More than **90% of schools provide potable tap water**, with **95.5% of government schools** having toilets for boys and **97.4% having toilets for girls**)

- **Inclusion of Disadvantaged Groups:** The **25% reservation for economically weaker sections and disadvantaged groups** in private schools has promoted social inclusion.
- **Focus on Quality Education:** The Act emphasizes the importance of quality education, including norms for **pupil-teacher ratios and teacher qualifications**. (The **UDISEPlus 2021-22** data shows India’s pupil-teacher ratio averaging **26:1 for primary, 19:1 for upper primary, 17:1 for secondary, and 27:1** for higher secondary education)

#### Limitations:

- **Quality Concerns:** While enrollment has improved, the quality of education remains a concern, particularly in government schools. (**ASER 2023** report reveals that about **25% of youth in the age group of 14-18** still cannot read a Class 2 level text fluently in their regional language)
- **Implementation Gaps:** Uneven implementation of the Act across states has led to disparities in its effectiveness. (While states like **Kerala have achieved near-universal elementary education**, others like **Bihar** still struggle with high dropout rates).
- **Teacher Shortages:** Many schools face teacher shortages, affecting the quality of education. ( As per **Ministry of Education data**, there were over **10 lakh teacher vacancies** in government schools across India).
- **Exclusion of Certain Groups:** Despite improvements, certain groups like children with disabilities and migrant children continue to face exclusion. (**75% of children with disabilities** do not attend schools in India: **UNESCO**)
  - ◆ Also, the gender gap widens in secondary school (Class 9 and 10), with girls **dropping to 47.9% of enrolled children**.
- **Private School Resistance:** Some private schools have resisted the **25% reservation clause, citing financial constraints**. (In 2020, many private schools in Delhi threatened to shut down due to **non-reimbursement of fees for EWS students**)

#### Conclusion:

To truly harness the potential of education in addressing social inequalities, India needs to focus on **improving the quality of education, ensuring effective implementation of the RTE Act, 2009 in consonance with National Education Policy 2020 across all states**, and addressing the specific needs of the most disadvantaged groups. **Only then can education become a true equalizer in Indian society**, bridging social, economic, and cultural divides.

8. "The rise of the app-based gig economy has created new forms of social stratification in urban India." Analyze this statement in the context of emerging class structures. (150 words)

#### Approach:

- Introduce the answer by justifying the rise of app-based gig economy and overall impact on society.
- Give supporting arguments to Gig Economy Leading to New Forms of Social Stratification in Urban India
- Delve into the arguments that despite creating new stratifications, Gig Economy has also been key in ensuring economic empowerment.
- Conclude suitably.

#### Introduction:

The **Economic Survey of 2020-21** noted that India had emerged as a leading country for flexi-staffing or gig and platform workers

- The rapid rise of the app-based gig economy in India with a **gig workforce projected to reach 23.5 million by 2030** has reshaped urban employment and created new forms of social stratification.
- While it has democratized access to jobs, it has also **entrenched inequalities due to unstable incomes**, lack of social security, and differential access to opportunities.

#### Body:

##### Gig Economy Leading to New Forms of Social Stratification in Urban India:

- **Creation of a Precarious 'Gig Worker' Class:** Gig workers face **income instability** and lack benefits like health insurance or paid leave, unlike salaried employees.
  - ◆ This creates a **"working poor" class**, vulnerable to economic volatility. For instance, delivery partners for **Swiggy and Zomato** earn based on demand, leading to unpredictable earnings.
- **Wage Disparity and Economic Vulnerability:** The gig economy has widened wage gaps between **"high-skill" (e.g., IT freelancers)** and **"low-skill" (e.g., delivery drivers)** workers.
  - ◆ While high-skill workers enjoy more autonomy and better pay, **low-skill workers struggle with low wages** and limited bargaining power.
- **Lack of Social Security and Growing Inequality:** Unlike **salaried workers**, gig workers lack social protections like **provident funds and pensions**, making them susceptible to economic and health shocks.

- ◆ The **Covid-19 lockdown** exposed this **vulnerability**, with many gig workers losing income without compensatory support.

- **Algorithmic Control and Exploitation:** Gig workers are managed by algorithms that dictate their schedules, tasks, and earnings.
  - ◆ Frequent changes to policies by platforms can lead to **arbitrary pay adjustments and job insecurity**, contributing to stress and power imbalances in worker-employer relations.
    - **Example:** A **24-year-old gig worker** was made to pledge to skip toilet and water breaks until all packages from **six large trucks were unloaded**.
- **Rating-Based Class System:** Workers with 4.5+ ratings gets better time slots, creating an **"elite class" of highly-rated workers**.
  - ◆ Workers with better ratings get access to premium localities and earn significantly more than those in peripheral areas.
  - ◆ **Example:** Food delivery workers in **South Mumbai** earn more than suburban counterparts.

#### Despite creating new stratifications, Gig Economy has also been key in:

- Significantly increasing economic opportunities and social mobility, with **platform workers' average earnings rising by 48% in 2023** compared to traditional low wage employment.
- Offering flexible work options for **28% of women**. (**Taskmo Gig Index**).
- Enabling workers to pursue education while working with **47%** of the gig work now in medium skilled jobs (**NITI Aayog**).
  - ◆ Additionally, large numbers of **migrant workers** have found quick employment in urban areas through the gig economy.
- Playing a crucial role in addressing income inequality and reducing unemployment to help India to reach a **USD 5 trillion economy by 2025**.

#### Conclusion:

The rise of the **app-based gig economy** has undoubtedly expanded job opportunities in urban India but has also introduced **distinct social stratifications**. Addressing these emerging inequities requires a strict implementation of **Social Security Code, 2020** and fair labor practices within the gig economy.



## GENERAL STUDIES PAPER-2

### Polity and Governance

9. Lateral entry of experts into civil services is seen as a way to bring fresh perspectives and expertise into governance. Discuss the merits and demerits of this approach. (150 words)

#### Approach:

- Introduce the answer by mentioning what is lateral entry
- Delve into merits and demerits of Lateral Entry
- Conclude in a balanced manner quoting 2nd ARC.

#### Introduction:

**Lateral entry**, the practice of bringing in experts from outside the civil service to fill **mid-level and senior positions**, offers a potential solution to the challenges of governance in a rapidly changing world.

- While it can bring in **fresh perspectives** and **specialized knowledge**, it also raises concerns about disrupting the bureaucratic hierarchy

#### Body:

##### Merits of Lateral Entry:

- **Specialized Expertise:** Lateral entrants can bring in domain-specific knowledge and skills that may be lacking within the existing civil service.
  - ◆ This can be particularly valuable in areas such as **technology, finance, and healthcare**, where rapid advancements require specialized expertise.
  - ◆ The **appointment of R.V. Shahi as Power Secretary in 2002** led to significant electricity reforms.
    - His private sector experience in power generation proved invaluable in tackling complex sectoral challenges.
- **Fresh Perspectives:** External experts can offer a different viewpoint on **policy issues, challenging the status quo and fostering innovation**.
  - ◆ **Vijay Kelkar's experience in fiscal reforms** made substantial impacts.
    - The **Kelkar Task Force on indirect tax reforms** suggested the introduction of a national-level GST, which has since been implemented.
- **Increased Efficiency:** Lateral entrants may be more accustomed to **working in a results-oriented environment**, which can help to improve efficiency and decision-making within government departments.

- ◆ Lateral entrants in the **Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology** could bring insights on **AI implementation or cybersecurity measures** that are current with global best practices, potentially streamlining processes and improving efficiency.

- **Attracting Top Talent:** Lateral entry can be a way to **attract highly qualified individuals who might not otherwise consider a career in the civil service**.

- ◆ This can help to enhance the quality of governance and improve public service delivery.
- ◆ As of **August 2024**, a total of **63 appointments** through lateral entry have been made over the past 5 years, with 57 lateral entrants actively serving.

##### Demerits of Lateral Entry:

- **Disruption of Bureaucratic Hierarchy:** Introducing **external experts into the middle and senior ranks of the civil service** can disrupt the existing hierarchy and create tensions between career bureaucrats and lateral entrants.
  - ◆ The **resistance from career bureaucrats** who may view lateral entry as a threat to their career progression can **manifest in various forms**, from non-cooperation to active sabotage of initiatives led by lateral entrants.
- **Cultural Mismatch:** Lateral entrants may **struggle to adapt to the bureaucratic culture** and processes, which can lead to inefficiencies and conflicts.
  - ◆ A lateral entrant **accustomed to quick decision-making** might struggle with the multi-layered approval processes typical in government.
  - ◆ This cultural **mismatch could result in frustration, reduced effectiveness**, and potentially high turnover rates among lateral entrants.
- **Potential for Misalignment of Interests:** External experts may have their **own personal or professional interests** that could influence their decision-making.
  - ◆ This could lead to conflicts of interest and undermine public trust.
- **Challenges in Integration:** Integrating lateral entrants into existing teams and projects can be difficult, requiring careful planning and management.

**Conclusion:**

In addition to encouraging lateral entry into civil services, as recommended by the **2nd Administrative Reforms Commission**, there should be a focused effort to cultivate specialization within the bureaucracy. This could involve creating **specialized cadres for sectors such as technology, finance, and healthcare**, introducing mandatory domain specialization after ten years of service, and forming partnerships with leading universities for the ongoing professional development of civil servants.

10. The role of civil society in governance has evolved significantly in recent decades. Discuss its impact on policy formulation and implementation in democratic systems. (250 words)

**Approach:**

- Introduce the answer by highlighting the evolving role of civil society in governance
- Give Role of Civil Society in Policy Formulation and Implementation in Democratic Systems
- Highlight challenges and considerations related to it
- Conclude with a forward looking approach

**Introduction:**

The role of **civil society** in governance has evolved significantly in recent decades. Initially focused on **nation-building and rights-based advocacy** in the **post-independence era**, civil society organisations shifted towards **filling service delivery gaps and promoting accountability in the 1990s and 2000s**.

- More recently, their role has expanded to **include digital engagement, collaborative governance, and data-driven advocacy**, reflecting the changing landscape of democratic participation and technological advancements.

**Body:****Role of Civil Society in Policy Formulation and Implementation in Democratic Systems**

- **Enhanced Public Participation in Policymaking:** **Civil society organisations (CSOs)** have increased citizen involvement in the policymaking process, bridging the gap between the public and government.
  - ◆ In India, the **Right to Information (RTI) movement**, spearheaded by civil society groups like the **Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan (MKSS)**, led to the enactment of the RTI Act in 2005.
- **Advocacy and Agenda-setting:** CSOs play a crucial role in **bringing important issues** to the forefront of public discourse and political agendas.

- ◆ The **Narmada Bachao Andolan, led by Medha Patkar**, brought attention to the environmental and social impacts of large dam projects
- **Policy Research and Expertise:** Civil society often provides valuable research and expert knowledge to inform policy decisions.
  - ◆ The **Centre for Policy Research (CPR)** in New Delhi regularly produces policy papers and recommendations that inform legislative debates and policymakers across various sectors.
- **Watchdog Function:** CSOs act as watchdogs, monitoring government actions and holding public officials accountable.
  - ◆ The **Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR)** acts as a watchdog for electoral processes in India (e.g, Recent **Association for Democratic Reforms and Another v. Union of India and Others Case on Electoral Bonds**).
- **Service Delivery:** In many cases, civil society organisations complement or supplement government efforts in service delivery, particularly in areas where the state's reach is limited.
  - ◆ The **Akshaya Patra Foundation in India** works in partnership with the government to implement the Mid-Day Meal Scheme, providing nutritious meals to millions of school children.
- **Representation of Marginalised Groups:** Civil society often advocates for and represents the interests of marginalised or underrepresented communities in the policy process.
  - ◆ The **National Campaign on Dalit Human Rights (NCDHR)** has been instrumental in advocating for Dalit rights.
- **Policy Implementation and Feedback:** Civil society organisations often participate in policy implementation and provide valuable feedback on the effectiveness of policies.
  - ◆ **Pratham**, an NGO focused on education, conducts the **Annual Status of Education Report (ASER)**, which has become a crucial tool in assessing and improving the quality of education in rural India.
- **Mobilisation of Public Opinion:** CSOs can mobilise public opinion on critical issues, influencing policy decisions through grassroots movements.
  - ◆ The anti-corruption movement led by **Anna Hazare in India** mobilised massive public support, leading to the creation of the **Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act, 2013**.

- **Collaborative Governance:** There's a growing trend of collaborative governance where civil society organisations work in partnership with government bodies to co-create and implement policies.

- ◆ **Swachhta Hi Seva Campaign** saw extensive collaboration between the government and civil society organisations like **Sulabh International** in implementing sanitation programs across the country.

#### Challenges and Considerations:

- While civil society has significantly enhanced democratic governance, there are concerns about the **representativeness and accountability of some CSOs**.
- In some contexts, there are concerns about the foreign funding of NGOs and their potential influence on domestic policies. (In 2020, **Amnesty International India** ceased operations after its bank accounts were frozen by the government, citing violations of foreign funding regulations)
- The **digital divide (only 24% of rural Indian households have access to the Internet)** may limit the participation of certain sections of society in newer forms of civic engagement.

#### Conclusion:

The evolution of civil society's role in governance has **undoubtedly deepened democratic processes**, making policy formulation and implementation more **participatory, transparent, and responsive to public needs**. As democracies continue to evolve, **finding the right balance and fostering productive partnerships between government and civil society** will be crucial for effective and inclusive governance.

11. The Indian judiciary is vital to safeguarding democracy yet faces significant systemic challenges. Propose judicial reforms that can address these challenges and enhance the efficiency and transparency of the judicial system. (250 words)

#### Approach:

- Briefly mention the role of the judiciary as a pillar of democracy
- Highlight the challenges faced by the Indian judiciary.
- Propose judicial reforms to address challenges in the Indian Judiciary
- Conclude Suitably.

#### Introduction:

The judiciary is the third pillar of democracy, tasked with upholding the Constitution, protecting fundamental rights, and ensuring the rule of law. It acts as a check on the executive and legislative branches, preserving the balance of power in a democratic system.

#### Body:

**Despite its vital role, the Indian judiciary faces several systemic challenges:**

- **Pendency of Cases:** The Indian judiciary is grappling with an enormous backlog of cases, severely impacting the timely delivery of justice.
  - ◆ The Supreme Court is currently dealing with over 80,000 pending cases, while High Courts have more than 620,000, and subordinate courts face over 40 million unresolved cases as of the end of 2023.
- **Judicial Vacancies:** The shortage of judges across all levels of the judiciary continues to be a pressing concern, contributing significantly to case backlogs.
  - ◆ India has 25 High Courts with a sanctioned strength of 1,114 judges, but only 782 positions are currently filled, leaving 332 judge posts vacant.
- **Lack of Judicial Accountability:** The absence of a robust mechanism for ensuring judicial accountability has been a point of concern, potentially affecting public trust in the judiciary.
  - ◆ The proposal for a **National Judicial Appointments Commission (NJAC)** to replace the collegium system was struck down by the Supreme Court in 2015
- **Infrastructure and Technological Gaps:** Despite efforts to modernize, many Indian courts still lack adequate infrastructure and technological support, hindering efficient justice delivery.
  - ◆ For the sanctioned strength of 25,081 judges in the district judiciary, there is a shortage of 4,250 courtrooms and 6,021 residential units.
- **Executive Interference and Judicial Independence:** Recent years have seen several instances of perceived executive interference in judicial matters, raising concerns about the erosion of judicial autonomy.
- **Accessibility Issues:** The complexity of legal processes, high litigation costs, and the lack of legal aid make it difficult for marginalized sections of society to access justice.
- **e-filing and Digitisation of Case Records:** As of 31st July 2023, 18,36,627 cases have been e-filed of which 11,88,842 (65%) were e-filed in District Courts. However, as per data submitted by judicial officers on iJuris, only 48.6% of District Court complexes have a functional e-filing facility.

### Proposed Judicial Reforms

- **Addressing Judicial Backlogs:** India can significantly reduce case pendency by fully implementing and expanding the e-Courts project, focusing on digitization of court records, online case filing, and AI-assisted case management.
- **Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Mechanisms:** Promoting and strengthening ADR mechanisms like mediation, arbitration, and Lok Adalats can significantly reduce the burden on formal courts
- **Filling Vacancies:** Expedited processes for filling judicial vacancies must be prioritized.
  - Introducing an autonomous and transparent Judicial Appointment Commission (JAC) can add transparency and accountability to the judicial appointment process
- **Legal Aid and Access to Justice:** Enhancing legal aid services is crucial for improving access to justice. India can draw inspiration from the Netherlands' system, where every citizen is entitled to subsidized legal aid based on income levels.
- **Court Infrastructure and Resource Management:** Improving court infrastructure is crucial for efficient justice delivery.
  - ◆ The Union Government's Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS) to develop infrastructure in district and subordinate courts, with a total outlay of ₹9,000 crore, is a positive step, but implementation needs to be accelerated.

### Conclusion:

A transparent, efficient, and accountable judiciary is essential not only for the functioning of a democratic society but also for maintaining public confidence in the legal system. If implemented in both letter and spirit, judicial reforms will enhance the judiciary's role as a steadfast guardian of constitutional values and democratic principles.

12. Examine the role of Competition Commission of India in promoting economic democracy. What challenges does it face in regulating digital markets? (250 words)

### Approach:

- Start the answer with a brief introduction about Competition Commission of India
- Give Role of CCI in Promoting Economic Democracy
- Delve into Challenges in Regulating Digital Markets
- Suggest a way forward
- Conclude suitably.

### Introduction:

The **Competition Commission of India (CCI)**, established under the **Competition Act, 2002**, plays a pivotal role in promoting economic democracy in India. Its mandate is to **ensure fair competition, protect consumer interests, and prevent anti-competitive practices.**

### Body:

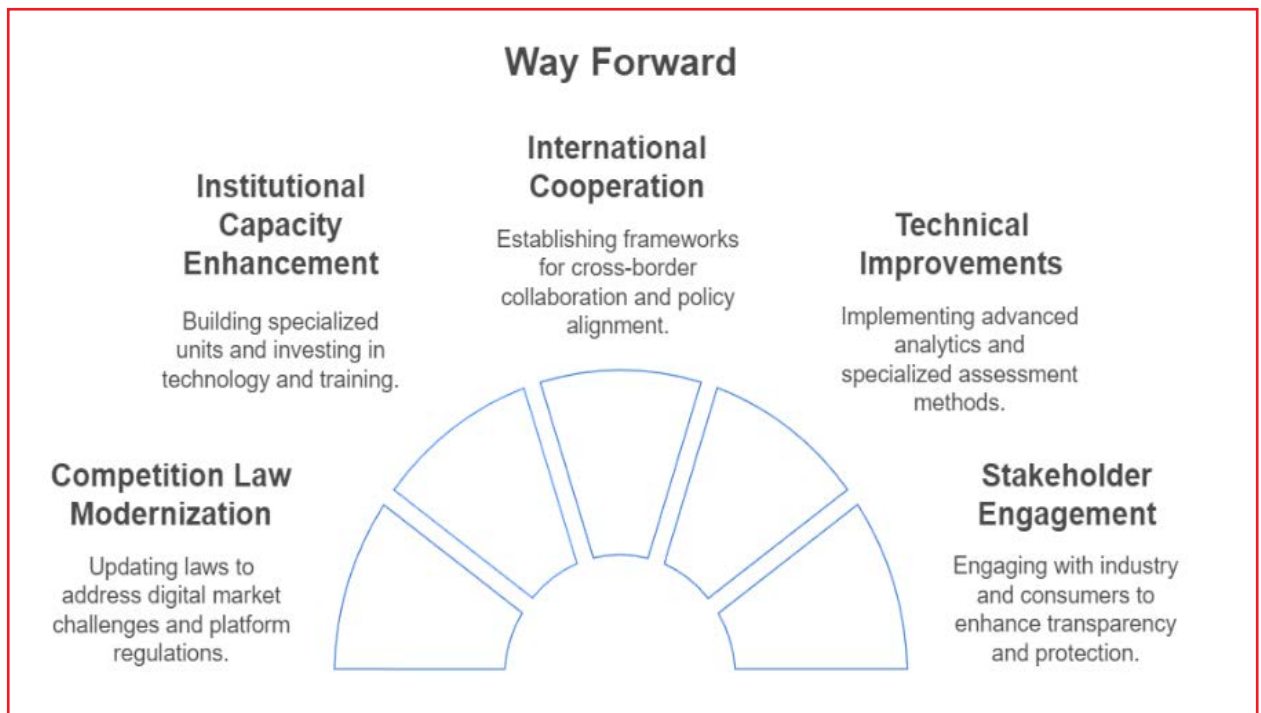
#### Role of CCI in Promoting Economic Democracy:

- **Preventing Anti-Competitive Practices:** The CCI actively investigates and prohibits anti-competitive agreements, such as cartels, price-fixing, and bid-rigging. These practices can stifle competition, reduce consumer choice, and inflate prices, harming the interests of consumers and small businesses.
  - ◆ In 2022, the **National Company Law Appellate Tribunal** upheld the Rs 873-crore penalty imposed by the **CCI on beer manufacturers.**
- **Regulating Mergers and Acquisitions:** The CCI **reviews mergers and acquisitions to assess their potential impact on competition.**
  - ◆ By preventing anti-competitive mergers, the CCI ensures that markets remain contestable and that consumers benefit from a variety of choices.
  - ◆ In 2023, CCI approved **Air India's acquisition of Vistara with certain conditions.**
- **Addressing Abuse of Dominant Position:** The CCI monitors the behavior of dominant firms to prevent them from abusing their market power.
  - ◆ Such practices can include **predatory pricing, tying, and bundling**, which can harm smaller competitors and limit consumer options.
  - ◆ **Example:** Investigation into **Google's Play Store billing policies** violation of **Section 4 of the Competition Act.**

#### Challenges in Regulating Digital Markets:

- **Global Nature of Digital Markets:** Digital platforms often operate on a global scale, making it difficult for **national antitrust authorities to regulate them effectively.**
  - ◆ Coordination and cooperation with international regulators are essential to address cross-border competition issues.
- **Rapid Technological Advancements:** The rapid pace of technological change in the digital economy can **make it challenging for the CCI to keep up with the latest developments** and identify potential anti-competitive practices.

- **Data Privacy Concerns:** The collection and use of personal data by digital platforms like **WhatsApp's privacy policy**, raise privacy concerns and can create barriers to market entry for smaller competitors. Balancing competition concerns with privacy interests is a complex task.
- **Network Effects:** Digital markets often **exhibit network effects**, where the value of a platform increases with the number of users. This can create **barriers to entry and allow dominant platforms** to exercise significant market power.
- **Measurement of Market Power:** In digital markets, traditional measures of market power, such as **market share**, **may not be as effective**. The CCI needs to develop new tools and methodologies to assess market power in the digital context.



### Conclusion:

CCI plays a crucial role in promoting economic democracy by ensuring a **level playing field and protecting consumer interests**. By strengthening international cooperation, investing in technological expertise, and **developing new tools to assess market power in the digital age**, the CCI can continue to promote a competitive and inclusive market environment for the benefit of Indian consumers and businesses.

13. Discuss the significance and challenges of Corporate Social Responsibility(CSR) in India. What measures can be adopted to enhance the effectiveness of CSR in India? (250 words)

### Approach:

- Provide a brief introduction to Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR).
- Discuss the significance and challenges of CSR activities in India.
- Suggest measures to enhance CSR Effectiveness.
- Conclude Suitably.

### Introduction:

**Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)** is a business model where companies voluntarily integrate **social, environmental, and ethical considerations** into their operations and interactions with stakeholders. CSR mandatory provisions under **Section 135 of the Companies Act, 2013**, became effective from **April 1, 2014** in India.



**Body:****The Significance of CSR Activities in India:**

- **Educational Opportunities and Skill Development:** Education and skill development continues to get the **highest amount under companies' CSR** expenditure with **Rs 10,085 crore**, making it a significant area of impact
- **Enhancement of Community Infrastructure:** Vedanta's CSR efforts including 'Swasth Gaon Abhiyaan', provides end-to-end healthcare services across **1,000 villages**, enhancing sanitation and reducing health risks.
- **Boosting Economic Self-Sufficiency and Livelihood Programs:** Hindustan Unilever's 'Prabhat' initiative focuses on rural women's empowerment by training them in entrepreneurial skills.
- **Environmental Sustainability and Climate Action:** **Mahindra Group** has been planting **one million trees** every year which has boosted its brand value as a socially responsible corporation, attracting greater investor confidence.
- **Alignment with Sustainable Development Goals:** As of 2023, about **60% of CSR projects** in India directly target **Sustainable Development Goals (Health, Education and Environment)**, marking a trend of integrating global development goals with local action

**Major Issues Related to CSR in India:**

- **Implementation Gaps & Project Timeline Mismanagement:** Companies often rush to complete CSR projects within **shortened timelines due to delayed board approvals** and budget allocations.
- **Uneven Geographic Distribution:** According to 2023 data, **Maharashtra, Gujarat, and Karnataka** received a major **chunk of total CSR funds**.
  - ◆ Despite the government advocating CSR investment in **Aspirational Districts**, **only about 2.15% of the total CSR during 2014-22** has been invested in these districts
- **Monitoring & Evaluation Challenges:** The current framework emphasizes quantitative metrics over qualitative impact assessment.
- **Compliance Over Impact:** The tendency to prefer **safe, established projects over innovative solutions** with a minor share of CSR projects involved in innovative approaches or risk-taking.
  - ◆ This **compliance-focused approach limits CSR's potential** for transformative social impact.

**Measures to Enhance the Effectiveness of CSR in India :**

- **Strategic Long-term Planning Framework:** CSR projects must shift from annual cycles to mandatory 3-5 year commitments, ensuring sustained impact and proper implementation.
- **Digital Integration & Smart Monitoring System:** Implementation of an integrated digital platform connecting all stakeholders - **companies, NGOs, beneficiaries, and government agencies** - through a single interface.
- **Professional Management & Capacity Building:** Establish dedicated CSR departments led by sector specialists and supported by professional project managers with **domain expertise**.
- **Geographic Integration & Community Ownership:** Implement **cluster-based development approaches** focusing on comprehensive transformation of specific geographic areas rather than scattered interventions.
- **Impact Measurement & Sustainability Framework:** Create comprehensive impact measurement systems **combining quantitative metrics with qualitative assessments of social change**.

**Conclusion:**

To enhance **CSR's impact**, India needs long-term planning, **digital integration, professional management, collaborative implementation, geographical focus**, and robust impact measurement. By addressing these issues, India can ensure CSR contributes meaningfully to sustainable development.

**International Relations**

14. Analyze the implications of the growing Russia-China strategic partnership for global power dynamics. How should India navigate its relationships with these two powers in this context? **(250 words)**

**Approach:**

- Introduce the answer by mentioning growing Russia-China Ties
- Give implications of the growing russia-china strategic partnership for global power dynamics
- Give how India can navigate relationship with Russia and China
- Conclude suitably.

**Introduction:**

The **burgeoning strategic partnership** between **Russia and China** is a significant development with profound implications for global power dynamics.

- As these two major powers deepen their cooperation across various domains, including **military, economic, and diplomatic spheres**, the international landscape is undergoing a profound transformation.

### Body:

#### Implications of the Growing Russia-China Strategic Partnership for Global Power Dynamics:

- **Challenge to US-led Global Order:** The Russia-China partnership presents a significant challenge to the US-led global order, potentially accelerating the shift towards a multipolar world.
  - ◆ The **joint Russia-China naval exercises in the Baltic Sea in 2017** signaled their growing military cooperation and willingness to project power far from their borders, **directly challenging NATO's influence in the region.**
- **Economic integration and Alternative Financial Systems:** Russia and China are working to reduce their dependence on the **US dollar and Western-dominated financial systems.**
  - ◆ The development of alternatives to SWIFT, such as **China's Cross-Border Interbank Payment System (CIPS)** and **Russia's System for Transfer of Financial Messages (SPFS)**, demonstrates their efforts to create parallel financial structures less vulnerable to Western sanctions.
- **Technological Cooperation:** Increased collaboration in **high-tech sectors, including 5G, artificial intelligence, and space exploration**, could accelerate technological advancements in both countries.
  - ◆ **Huawei's involvement in developing Russia's 5G network**, despite US pressure on its allies to exclude the Chinese company, showcases the deepening technological ties between the two nations.
- **Energy Partnership:** Strengthened energy cooperation between Russia and China affects global energy markets and geopolitics.
  - ◆ The **Power of Siberia pipeline**, not only strengthens energy ties between the two countries but also **reduces Russia's dependence on European markets.**
- **Diplomatic Alignment:** Increased coordination in forums (like **BRICS, SCO**) and on global issues can reshape diplomatic dynamics.

#### Navigating India's Relationships with Russia and China:

- **Maintain strategic autonomy:** India should continue its policy of strategic autonomy, balancing its relationships with **Russia, China, and the West** without aligning exclusively with any bloc.
  - ◆ India's participation in both the **Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO)** and the **Quadilateral Security Dialogue (Quad)** demonstrates its ability to engage with seemingly opposing groups to serve its national interests.
- **Leverage Economic Opportunities:** India should seek economic benefits from both countries while safeguarding its own interests.
  - ◆ India's **continued oil imports from Russia** despite Western pressure, and its participation in **Chinese-led initiatives like the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB)**, show its pragmatic approach to economic engagement.
- **Strengthen Defense Partnerships:** Maintain and enhance defense ties with Russia while diversifying sources of military equipment.
  - ◆ India's purchase of the **S-400 missile defense system from Russia**, alongside growing defense cooperation with the US, illustrates its balanced approach to defense partnerships.
- **Enhance Regional Partnerships:** Strengthen ties with other regional powers to create a more balanced Asian power dynamic.
  - ◆ **India's "Act East" policy** and growing partnerships with countries like **Japan, Australia, and Vietnam** help create a counterweight to China's influence in the region.

#### Conclusion:

The growing Russia-China strategic partnership presents both challenges and opportunities for India. By maintaining its **strategic autonomy, leveraging economic opportunities, strengthening defense partnerships, engaging in multilateral forums, addressing border issues, enhancing regional partnerships, focusing on domestic capacity building, and playing a mediating role where possible**, India can effectively navigate its relationships with these two powers **while advancing its own interests in the evolving global order.**

15. Analyze India's strategic objectives in joining the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO). How has its membership impacted regional geopolitics? (150 words)

**Approach:**

- Introduce the answer by highlighting India's membership in SCO.
- Delve into India's objectives in joining SCO along with its implications on Regional Geopolitics
- Conclude suitably.

**Introduction:**

India's membership in the **Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO)**, achieved in **2017**, is a strategic move reflecting its broader objectives to bolster regional connectivity and enhance security cooperation.

- The SCO, primarily driven by **China and Russia**, provides a platform for India to pursue its goals in a multipolar framework and **assert influence within Central Asia's political and economic landscape**.

**Body:**

**India's Strategic Objective in SCO and its Impact on Regional Geopolitics:**

● **Counterterrorism and Security Cooperation**

◆ **Objective:** To collaborate on security initiatives to address regional threats such as **terrorism, radicalization, and drug trafficking**.

◆ **Impact:** Given the direct impact of terrorism on India's national security, particularly from **Pakistan**, India utilises the **SCO's Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS) for intelligence sharing** and counterterrorism coordination.

○ The **Karachi Airport Explosion** ahead of the **SCO Summit 2024** highlights the need for stronger SCO cooperation against terrorism, a key priority for regional security and India's interests.

○ India participates in the **SCO's "Peace Missions"** joint anti-terrorism exercise, demonstrating its commitment to practical security cooperation.

● **Energy Security and Economic Integration**

◆ **Objective:** India seeks to secure energy supplies from **resource-rich Central Asian nations and diversify its energy imports**.

○ The SCO offers a framework for negotiating energy agreements and participating in infrastructure projects like the **TAPI (Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India) pipeline**

◆ **Impact:** India's SCO membership has improved its access to energy resources and regional infrastructure.

○ Despite geopolitical challenges delaying initiatives like **TAPI**, India's participation in SCO meetings has facilitated discussions on alternative routes.

○ Recent engagements, such as **expanding the Chabahar Port** and connecting it with the **International North-South Transport Corridor**, demonstrate the SCO's role in enhancing India's energy and trade security.

● **Balancing Influence with China and Russia**

◆ **Objective:** India aims to maintain a **strategic balance with China and Russia in the SCO**, especially considering China's strong presence in Central Asia through its Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).

◆ **Impact:** India has leveraged the SCO platform to advocate for territorial integrity and **refrained from engaging in BRI-related projects within the SCO**, reflecting its efforts to navigate competing pressures while reinforcing its regional strategic interests.

● **Leveraging Diplomatic Engagement with Afghanistan and Regional Stability**

◆ **Objective:** In light of **regional instability related to Afghanistan**, India views the SCO as a key platform for promoting dialogue and stability following the Taliban's return.

○ India advocates for a stable, inclusive Afghan government to mitigate terrorism, drug trafficking, and refugee flows that threaten neighbouring regions.

◆ **Impact:** Its active participation in the **SCO-Afghanistan Contact Group** underscores India's commitment to advocating for **regional stability and cooperation**.

● **Economic Partnerships and Trade Expansion**

◆ **Objective:** India seeks to enhance trade relationships with **Central Asian economies and explore investment opportunities**.

◆ **Impact:** India's involvement in the SCO has enabled trade discussions, although it still lags behind China in economic presence in Central Asia.

- Nonetheless, India has leveraged the SCO to formalise agreements on education, healthcare, and IT with Central Asian nations.
- **Recent MoUs with Uzbekistan in IT and healthcare** exemplify how the SCO serves as a diplomatic channel for bolstering economic collaboration and goodwill through development projects.

### Conclusion:

India's SCO membership aligns with its **strategic goals of combating terrorism**, securing energy resources, balancing regional power dynamics, and enhancing connectivity with Central Asia. Through the SCO, India effectively positions itself as a **key player in Central Asia's geopolitical and economic landscape**, promoting its interests within a collaborative framework.

**16.** How has the Red Sea crisis impacted global trade and India's maritime interests? Examine. (150 words)

### Approach:

- Introduce the answer by the mentioning the Red Sea crisis
- Give me impact of Red Sea Crisis on Global trade
- Highlight the impact of Red Sea Crisis on India
- Conclude suitably.

### Introduction:

The **Red Sea**, a **vital maritime choke point**, has witnessed increasing tensions in recent years, with the **Houthi rebels in Yemen** posing significant threats to commercial shipping. This crisis has had far-reaching implications for global trade and India's maritime interests.

### Body:

- **Impact on Global Trade:**
  - ◆ **Disruption of Supply Chains:** The Red Sea is a crucial route for global trade, especially between **Asia and Europe**.
    - Attacks on commercial vessels have led to **delays, rerouting, and increased insurance premiums**, disrupting supply chains and raising costs for businesses worldwide.
    - Major shipping companies like Maersk rerouted vessels around Africa's **Cape of Good Hope in January 2024**, adding 10-14 days to journey times
  - ◆ **Increased Freight Rates:** The heightened risk to shipping has forced carriers to adopt more cautious measures, **including slower speeds and increased security**.

- This has resulted in **higher freight rates**, which are passed on to consumers in the form of increased prices.
- Also, the cost of insuring a ship through the Red Sea has **more than doubled** since the start of **September 2024**.

◆ **Energy Security Concerns:** The Red Sea is a **major oil transit route**, and disruptions in the region can impact global energy markets.

- Attacks on tankers carrying crude oil or refined products can lead to supply shortages and price volatility.
- Oil tanker "**Marlin Luanda**" was attacked in **January 2024**, causing temporary suspension of shipments by several major oil companies

### ● Impact on India's Maritime Interests:

◆ **Energy Security:** India is heavily reliant on oil imports, and a significant portion of its crude oil passes through the Red Sea.

- The crisis has **increased India's vulnerability to supply disruptions** and price fluctuations.

◆ **Trade Routes:** The Red Sea is a key trade route for India, connecting it to **Europe, Africa, and the Middle East**.

- Disruptions in the region can impact India's exports and imports, particularly of essential commodities.
- **Freight rates at Indian ports have increased by nearly 70% year-on-year** in August 2024 due to global shipping disruptions

◆ **Security Concerns:** The crisis has highlighted the importance of maritime security for India.

- The Indian Navy intensified anti-piracy efforts, with the offshore patrol vessel **INS Sumitra** successfully foiling a piracy attempt on FV Iman in **January 2024**.

### Conclusion:

The **Red Sea crisis** has had a significant impact on global trade and India's maritime interests. The disruption of **supply chains, increased freight rates, and energy security concerns** have posed significant challenges to businesses and governments worldwide. India has responded by **increasing its naval presence, engaging in diplomatic efforts, and diversifying its trade routes**.

17. How does the concept of United Nations (UN) peacekeeping as a “necessary but imperfect tool” reflect its role in maintaining the global peace order? What role has India played in supporting these missions? (250 words)

#### Approach:

- Provide a brief introduction to UN peacekeeping and its objectives
- Discuss the necessity and challenges of UN peacekeeping missions.
- Highlight the role of India in UN peacekeeping missions.
- Conclude by suggesting measures to enhance the effectiveness of peacekeeping missions.

#### Introduction:

UN Peacekeeping refers to the **activities carried out by the United Nations (UN) to help maintain or restore international peace and security** in conflict-affected areas. Over the past seven decades, more than **1 million men and women** have served under the UN flag in over **70 peacekeeping operations**.

#### Body:

##### Necessity and Achievements of UN peacekeeping mission:

- **Conflict Resolution:** UN peacekeepers have successfully resolved conflicts in countries such as **Cambodia, El Salvador, Mozambique, and Sierra Leone**. Overall, interstate conflicts have **decreased by 40% since 1945**.
- **Humanitarian Aid:** Peacekeepers have protected over **125 million civilians in conflict zones** and facilitated the delivery of humanitarian assistance, supporting refugee returns and resettlement.
- **State Building:** They have supported **democratic elections in over 75 countries** and helped establish functioning government institutions, alongside assisting in security sector reforms and training.

##### Imperfections and Limitations of UN peacekeeping missions:

- **Power Politics and Veto Exploitation:** The increasing polarization among P5 members has led to **frequent use of veto power, particularly in critical situations**.
  - ◆ Since 2011, **Russia has used its veto 19 times**, with 14 focused on Syria with remaining vetoes addressed **Ukraine, Srebrenica, Yemen, and Venezuela**.
- **Resource Constraints and Funding Challenges:** Major powers' reluctance to increase funding has led to understaffed missions.
  - ◆ For instance, **UNIFIL in Lebanon** operates with limited resources despite increased tensions.

- **Changing Nature of Conflicts:** Modern conflicts involve complex **urban warfare, cyber elements, and non-state actors**, which traditional peacekeeping isn't equipped to handle.
  - ◆ The Gaza conflict exemplifies this, where **traditional buffer-zone peacekeeping approaches are inadequate for urban combat situations**.
- **Credibility Crisis and Past Failures:** Historical failures continue to haunt UN peacekeeping's reputation.
  - ◆ The **inability to prevent genocides in Rwanda and Srebrenica**, coupled with recent inaction in contemporary conflicts, has eroded global confidence.
- **Emerging Regional Alternatives:** Regional organizations are increasingly taking lead roles in peacekeeping operations.
  - ◆ The **African Union's peace operations in Somalia (ATMIS)**, and Arab League's growing role in regional disputes show a shift toward regional solutions.
- **Lack of Political Will for Reform:** Despite numerous proposals for reforming UN peacekeeping, including the **2015 HIPPO report recommendations**, implementation remains slow.
  - ◆ The proposed expansion of the **Security Council to include nations like India** and reforms in veto power remain stalled.

##### India's Contribution to Peacekeeping Missions:

- **Historical Leadership and Personnel Contribution:** India has been the largest **cumulative contributor of UN peacekeepers**, with more than **2,53,000 troops, participating in more than 49 missions**.
- **Medical Expertise:** India has mobilized efforts to assemble two teams of medical specialists to be deployed in the **Hospitals at the UN Missions in DR Congo and South Sudan**.
- **Specialized Military Capabilities:** **Indian Aviation Contingent-I (IAC-I)** was inducted at **Goma (with four Mi-25 attack helicopters and five Mi-17 utility helicopters)** in 2003 providing critical air support.
- **Training and Capacity Building:** The **Centre for UN Peacekeeping (CUNPK) in New Delhi** has a track record of having more than 67,000 personnel who have participated in 37 out of the 56 U.N. peacekeeping missions.
- **Women in Peacekeeping:** India has deployed **Female Engagement Teams (FETs) in Democratic Republic of Congo and Abyei (the second-largest Indian women contingent after Liberia)**.

**Conclusion:**

To enhance the effectiveness of peacekeeping missions, the UN should implement structural reforms in the Security Council, create rapid response mechanisms, and establish clear mandates. Financial enhancements, such as mandatory funding and public-private partnerships, should be prioritized alongside technological modernization using AI and surveillance.

**Social Justice**

18. Discuss the persistence of manual scavenging in India. How does the NAMASTE scheme contribute to its eradication? (250 words)

**Approach:**

- Briefly introduce the issue of manual scavenging in India.
- Discuss the persistence of manual scavenging in India
- Explain about NAMASTE Scheme and its role in eradicating manual scavenging in India
- Conclude Suitably.

**Introduction :**

Manual scavenging refers to the practice of manually cleaning, handling, and disposing of human excreta and other waste materials from dry latrines, open drains, and sewers. It has been a long-standing issue in India despite being officially banned since 1993 under the Employment of Manual Scavengers and its Prohibition Act, 2013.

**Body :****Reasons for the persistence of manual scavenging in India :**

- **Inadequate Implementation of Laws:** India has enacted several laws aimed at prohibiting manual scavenging, including the Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013. However, challenges remain in enforcing these laws effectively.
- **Inefficiency in Demolishing Insanitary Latrines:** The root cause of manual scavenging are insanitary latrines that remain unaddressed due to slow and ineffective administrative actions.
  - ◆ According to **Socio-Economic and Caste Census (SECC) 2011**, India has over a million of insanitary latrines, many of which still dispose of night soil into open drains and are manually serviced.
- **Lack of Alternative Livelihood Opportunities :** Many individuals engaged in manual scavenging lack access to alternative employment options, which perpetuates their involvement in this occupation.

- **Barriers to Accessing the Criminal Justice System:** Dalits and marginalised communities face significant barriers to justice, as police often ignore or refuse to investigate crimes against manual scavengers, particularly when perpetrators are from dominant castes.

- ◆ This systemic bias undermines legal protections and discourages victims from seeking redress.

**NAMASTE Scheme and its Role in Eradication:**

- **Eliminating Manual Scavenging: The National Action for Mechanised Sanitation Ecosystem (NAMASTE) scheme,** a joint initiative of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (MoSJE) and the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA), focusing on eliminating manual scavenging and promoting sanitation worker safety.
  - ◆ NAMASTE, with an outlay of Rs. 349.70 crore, aims to cover all 4800+ ULBs by 2025-26, replacing the earlier Self-Employment Scheme for Rehabilitation of Manual Scavengers (SRMS).
- **Identification:** As per the new modified scheme, profiling of Sewer/Septic Tanks Workers (SSWs) engaged by Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) would be undertaken.
  - ◆ As of September 2024, 3,326 ULBs have profiled approximately 38,000 SSWs.
- **Occupational Training:** These SSWs are proposed to receive occupational safety training, and personal protective equipment (PPE) kits.
- **Extending Health Insurance Scheme Benefits:** To identified SSWs and their families under the Ayushman Bharat- Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY).
- **Livelihood Assistance:** The Action Plan will promote mechanization and enterprise development by providing funding support and subsidy (capital interest) to the sanitation workers, to procure sanitation-related equipment.
- **IEC (Information Education and Communication) Campaign:** Massive campaigns would be undertaken jointly by the ULBs & NSKFDC (National Safai Karamcharis Finance & Development Corporation) to spread awareness about the interventions of NAMASTE.

**Conclusion:**

The persistence of manual scavenging in India represents a significant violation of human dignity and a manifestation of deep-rooted social inequities. Achieving the complete eradication of manual scavenging will require sustained political will, strict law enforcement, and comprehensive rehabilitation efforts, ensuring a dignified life for all citizens.



## GENERAL STUDIES PAPER-3

### Economy

19. Evaluate the performance of India's Manufacturing sector under the 'Production Linked Incentive' initiative. What challenges need to be addressed to boost manufacturing growth? (250 words)

#### Approach:

- Introduce by mentioning role of PLI to revitalize the domestic manufacturing sector
- Performance Evaluation of India's Manufacturing Sector under PLI
- Give the challenges that needs to be addressed
- Conclude suitably.

#### Introduction:

The **Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme**, aimed to revitalize the domestic manufacturing sector and enhance India's global competitiveness.

- By offering financial incentives to manufacturers in various sectors, the **PLI aimed to attract investments, create jobs, and promote technology adoption.**

#### Body:

#### Performance Evaluation of India's Manufacturing Sector under PLI:

- **Increased Investment:** The PLI scheme has attracted significant investments across various sectors.
  - ◆ In the mobile manufacturing sector, the scheme has attracted investments from major global players like **Apple and Samsung.**
  - ◆ Apple's contract manufacturers like **Foxconn** have committed to investments worth billions of dollars in India.
- **Job Creation:** The scheme has led to the creation of numerous direct and indirect jobs.
  - ◆ The PLI scheme for the textile sector is expected to create **over 7.5 lakh direct jobs in the next five years.**
- **Export Promotion:** The scheme has boosted exports in several sectors.
  - ◆ India's electronics exports are growing rapidly, now the country's fifth largest export commodity, expanding at a **23% annual rate.**

- **Diversification of Manufacturing Base:** The PLI scheme has helped in diversifying India's manufacturing capabilities.

- ◆ In June 2024, the **Index of Industrial Production (IIP)** indicated a year-on-year growth of 4.2%, with the **manufacturing sector specifically growing by 2.6%.**

- **Technological Advancement:** The scheme has promoted the adoption of cutting-edge technologies in manufacturing.

- ◆ In the **automotive sector**, the PLI scheme has incentivized the production of **electric and hydrogen fuel cell vehicles**, pushing manufacturers to invest in advanced technologies.

#### Challenges to be Addressed:

- **Infrastructure Bottlenecks:** Inadequate infrastructure remains a significant hurdle for manufacturing growth.

- ◆ **The lack of reliable power supply and poor logistics infrastructure (logistics costs are currently at 13-14 percent of the GDP)** increases production costs and delays.

- **Skill Gap:** There is a mismatch between the skills required by the industry and those possessed by the workforce with potential skill deficit of **30-32 million people by the end of fiscal 2025**

- ◆ In the **electronics manufacturing sector**, there is a shortage of skilled workers for advanced manufacturing processes, potentially hindering the full realization of PLI benefits.

- **Regulatory Hurdles:** Complex regulations and bureaucratic processes can deter investments and slow down manufacturing growth.

- ◆ **The multiple approvals required for setting up a manufacturing unit**, involving various departments, can lead to delays and increased costs.

- **Raw Material Availability:** Dependence on imported raw materials for certain sectors can impact manufacturing competitiveness.

- ◆ The **semiconductor industry**, crucial for electronics manufacturing, faces challenges due to the lack of domestic chip manufacturing capabilities (India imported **USD 5.38 billion worth of semiconductor devices**)

- **Global Competition:** Indian manufacturers face stiff competition from other manufacturing hubs, particularly in Southeast Asia.
  - ◆ Countries like **Vietnam and Thailand** offer competitive advantages in terms of labor costs and established supply chains in sectors like electronics and textiles.
- **Technology Adoption:** Many small and medium enterprises (SMEs) struggle to adopt new technologies due to financial constraints.
  - ◆ In the auto components sector, many SMEs find it challenging to invest in **Industry 4.0 technologies**, potentially making them less competitive compared to larger firms.

#### Recommendations to Boost Manufacturing Growth

- Invest in **infrastructure development**, particularly in **industrial corridors and logistics**.
- Enhance skill development programs **aligned with industry needs building upon the Ireland Model**.
- Streamline regulatory processes through **single-window clearance systems**.
- Promote domestic production of **critical raw materials and components, with notification of critical minerals for India as a step in the right direction**.

#### Conclusion:

Production Linked Incentive scheme has shown promising results in **boosting India's manufacturing sector**. However, addressing the challenges related to infrastructure, raw materials, skill development, regulations, and global trade is crucial for **sustaining and accelerating manufacturing growth in the country**.

20. Evaluate the role of the e-NAM in reducing price disparities and improving market integration for agricultural commodities. What challenges does it face in its implementation? (250 words)

#### Approach:

- Introduce the answer by mentioning about the e-NAM platform
- Give Role of e-NAM in Reducing Price Disparities and Improving Market Integration
- Highlight the challenges related to it
- Conclude suitably.

#### Introduction:

The **electronic National Agriculture Market (e-NAM)** is a pan-India electronic trading platform launched in **April 2016** to create a unified national market for agricultural commodities.

- By integrating various **Agricultural Produce Market Committees (APMCs)** across the country, e-NAM seeks to address the longstanding challenges of price disparities and fragmented markets

#### Body:

##### Role of e-NAM in-

#### ● Reducing Price Disparities:

- ◆ **Transparency and Price Discovery:** e-NAM provides a platform for **real-time price discovery**, allowing farmers to access information about prices in different markets.

- This transparency reduces the potential for price manipulation and exploitation by intermediaries.

- ◆ **Expanded Market Access:** By connecting farmers with buyers across the country, e-NAM **expands their market reach**, enabling them to sell their produce to the highest bidders.

- This reduces the dependence on local markets, which often suffer from limited competition and price fixing.

- ◆ **Competition and Efficiency:** The **increased competition fostered by e-NAM** encourages efficiency among traders and processors, leading to lower costs and fairer prices for farmers.

#### ● Improving Market Integration:

- ◆ **Unified Market:** e-NAM creates a **unified market for agricultural commodities**, breaking down barriers between different regions and states.

- This integration promotes a more efficient allocation of resources and helps to stabilize prices.

- ◆ **Reduced Transaction Costs:** By streamlining the trading process and **reducing the need for physical transportation**, e-NAM lowers transaction costs for farmers and traders.

- This benefits both parties and contributes to a more integrated market.

- ◆ **Improved Logistics:** The platform's integration with **logistics providers facilitates the efficient movement of agricultural produce**, reducing wastage and ensuring timely delivery to markets.



### Challenges Faced in e-NAM Implementation:

- **Infrastructure Limitations:** Inadequate **warehousing** (since the last 5 years, **warehousing demand** has outpaced supply by a whopping ~40%), **grading, and assaying facilities** in many APMCs.
- **Digital Literacy and Connectivity Issues:** Low digital literacy among farmers (Only **23.4% of adults in rural India** lack even basic digital literacy skills) and **poor internet connectivity in rural areas**.
- **Resistance from Intermediaries:** Traditional commission agents and traders often resist the transition to e-NAM.
- **Limited Participation of Private Players:** Insufficient involvement of the private sector in the e-NAM ecosystem.
  - ◆ Only **1 and 3% of farmers from Uttar Pradesh and Gujarat** were using e-NAM mobile apps as of 2020, limiting competition and price discovery.
- **Quality Assessment Challenges:** Lack of uniform quality standards and limited capacity for quick quality assessment.
- **Payment and Logistics Issues:** Delays in online payments and lack of integrated logistics solutions.

### Conclusion:

The **e-NAM platform** has shown potential in **reducing price disparities and improving market integration for agricultural commodities** through enhanced price discovery, expanded market access, and increased transparency. Furthermore, **greater involvement of private players and integration with logistics and warehousing services** could significantly enhance the platform's effectiveness in creating a truly unified national agricultural market.

**21.** A Universal Basic Income in India could provide a foundation for social security while reducing the complexity of the welfare state. Critically Examine. (250 words)

### Approach:

- Provide a brief introduction to Universal Basic Income (UBI)
- Discuss the benefits of UBI.
- Mention the challenges and criticisms of UBI in India.
- Conclude Suitably.

### Introduction :

Universal Basic Income (UBI) is a social welfare proposal in which all the beneficiaries regularly receive a guaranteed income in the form of an unconditional transfer payment. The then Chief Economic Advisor described it as a **“conceptually appealing idea”** in the 2016-17 Economic Survey.

### Body:

#### Potential Benefits of UBI:

- **Foundation for Social Security:** Reduces poverty and income inequality by providing a minimum income floor for everyone, especially the most vulnerable and marginalized groups.
- **Simplified Welfare System:** Can streamline the existing welfare system by replacing various targeted social assistance programs. This reduces administrative costs and eliminates the complexities associated with means-testing, eligibility requirements, and benefit cliffs
- **Structural Economic Transformation:** Implementing UBI could catalyze a structural transformation of India's economy by addressing the persistent issue of disguised unemployment in the agricultural sector.
- **Redefining Work and Productivity:** By providing basic economic security, it could value forms of work currently unrecognized, such as care work, community service, or artistic pursuits.
  - ◆ According to the **National Sample Survey**, women spend 299 minutes a day on unpaid domestic services for which men spend only 97 minutes.
- **Enhancing Individual Freedom:** UBI provides individuals with financial security and It can empower people to pursue entrepreneurship, take risks, and engage in creative or socially beneficial activities that may not be economically viable otherwise.

#### Challenges and Criticisms of UBI in India :

- **Cost and Fiscal Sustainability:** UBI is very expensive and would require higher taxes, spending cuts, or debt to finance it.
  - ◆ For instance, a UBI of just ₹1,000 per month for all adults would cost approximately 3-4.9% of GDP, based on current population estimates.
- **Opportunity Cost and Development Trade-offs:** Allocating a large portion of government expenditure to UBI could crowd out investments in critical areas like healthcare, education, and infrastructure.

- **Creates Perverse Incentives:** Decreases motivation to work and reduces productivity and efficiency. It could also create a culture of dependency, entitlement, and laziness.
- **Targeting and Equity Concerns:** A universal program by definition would provide benefits to both poor and non-poor, raising questions of equity and efficient use of limited resources.
- **Global Economic Competitiveness:** Implementing UBI could potentially impact India's global economic competitiveness, particularly in labor-intensive industries.

#### Conclusion:

While UBI may not be a **silver bullet**, phased implementation through pilot programs and leveraging existing cash transfer schemes like PM-KISAN could offer a viable pathway toward a more inclusive and resilient economy. Careful consideration of trade-offs and a balanced approach is essential for its success.

## Science and Technology

22. Explain the concept of synthetic biology. How might it revolutionize medicine, agriculture, and environmental remediation, and what ethical concerns does it raise? (150 words)

#### Approach:

- Introduce by defining the concept of Synthetic biology
- Give its Potential Revolutionary Applications in medicine, agriculture, and environmental remediation
- Mention ethical concerns related to it in brief
- Conclude suitably.

#### Introduction:

**Synthetic biology** is an interdisciplinary field that combines **biology, engineering, genetics, chemistry, and computer science**. It involves redesigning organisms for useful purposes by engineering them to have new abilities.

- The core idea is to **treat genetic sequences as interchangeable biological parts** that can be artificially designed and assembled to construct new biological systems or modify existing ones.

#### Body:

#### Potential Revolutionary Applications:

- **Medicine:**
  - ◆ **Engineered Cell Therapies:** Custom-designed cells to target specific diseases.
    - **Example: CAR-T cell therapy** for cancer treatment, where T cells are engineered to recognize and attack cancer cells.
  - ◆ **Synthetic Antibiotics:** Designing new antibiotics to combat antibiotic-resistant bacteria.
    - **Example:** MIT researchers used a machine-learning algorithm to identify a drug called **halicin that kills many strains of bacteria**.
  - ◆ **Personalized Medicine:** Tailoring treatments based on an individual's genetic makeup.
    - **Example: Synthesizing specific proteins or enzymes** for patients with genetic disorders.
- **Agriculture:**
  - ◆ **Crop Enhancement:** Engineering crops for increased yield, nutrient content, or resistance to pests and environmental stresses.
    - **Example: Golden Rice**, genetically modified to produce beta-carotene, addressing Vitamin A deficiency in developing countries.
  - ◆ **Sustainable Biofuels:** Designing microorganisms to efficiently produce biofuels.
    - **Example:** Engineered algae or bacteria that can **convert sunlight and CO2 directly into biofuels**.
  - ◆ **Precision Fermentation:** Producing animal proteins without animals.
    - **Example: Perfect Day's animal-free dairy proteins** produced by engineered yeast.
- **Environmental Remediation:**
  - ◆ **Bioremediation:** Engineered organisms to clean up pollutants.
    - **Example: *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*** that can convert mercury into nontoxic forms
  - ◆ **Biodegradable Materials:** Developing new biodegradable plastics using engineered bacteria.
    - **Example: PHA (polyhydroxyalkanoate) plastics** produced by bacteria, which are fully biodegradable.

While synthetic biology offers immense potential, it also raises significant ethical concerns:

- **Biosafety:** Risk of engineered organisms escaping into the environment and causing unintended ecological consequences. **Example:** Concerns about **gene drive technology potentially altering entire wild populations.**
- **Biosecurity:** Potential misuse of synthetic biology for bioterrorism or creation of biological weapons. **Example:** The possibility of **recreating extinct viruses or enhancing the virulence of existing pathogens.**
- **Playing God:** Philosophical and religious concerns about humans assuming the role of creators. **Example:** Debates on using CRISPR technology for human embryo editing

#### Conclusion:

**Synthetic biology** presents a powerful toolset for addressing global challenges in health, agriculture, and the environment. However, its transformative potential is accompanied by **complex ethical considerations that require careful deliberation and robust regulatory frameworks.**

23. Discuss the key drivers and challenges in India's innovation ecosystem. Suggest measures to enhance the growth of the Innovation ecosystem in India. (250 words)

#### Approach:

- Provide a brief introduction to India's innovation ecosystem.
- Discuss the key drivers and challenges in India's innovation ecosystem.
- Suggest measures to enhance the growth of the Innovation ecosystem in India.
- Conclude Suitably.

#### Introduction:

India's innovation landscape has been on a remarkable upward trajectory, as evidenced by its climb from 81st to 40th position in the Global Innovation Index between 2015 and 2022.

#### Body:

##### Key Growth Drivers of India's Innovation Ecosystem:

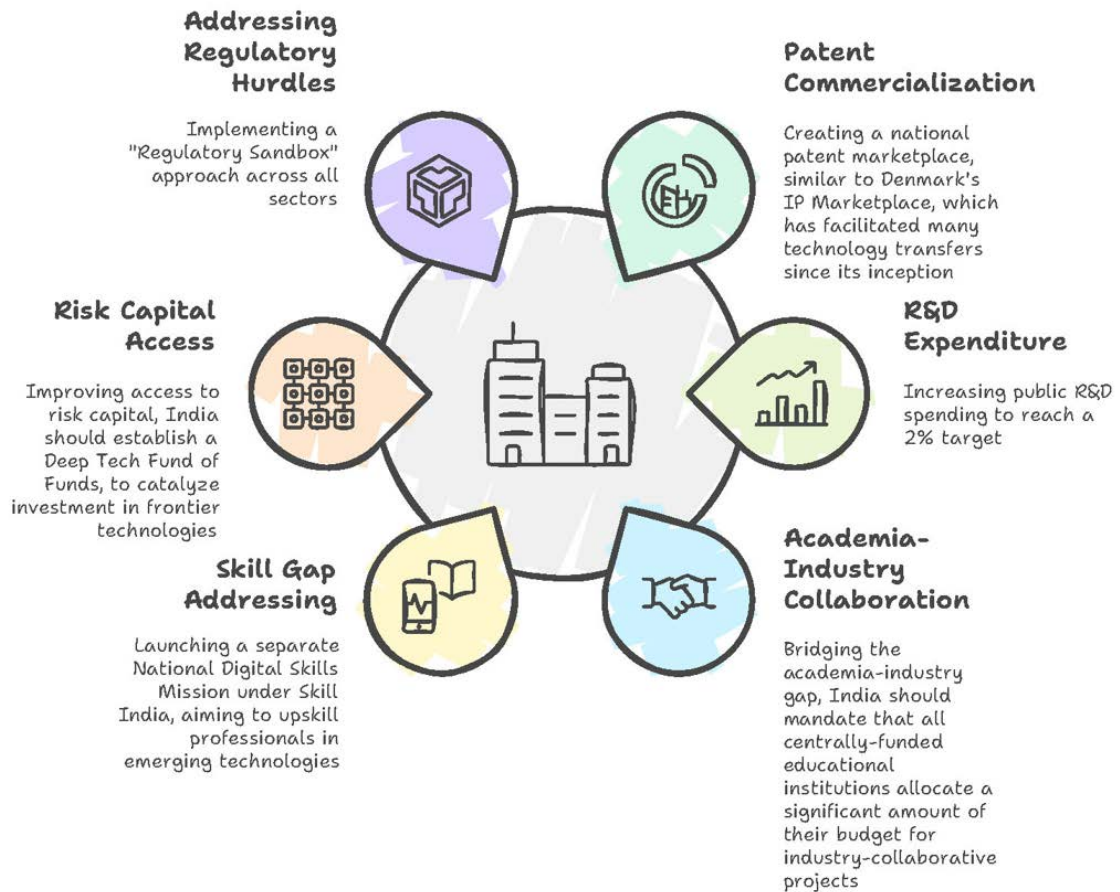
- **Government Initiatives and Policy Support:** Flagship programs like 'Digital India' and 'Startup India' have created a conducive environment for tech innovation and entrepreneurship.
- **Thriving Startup Ecosystem:** The number of technology startups in India surged from around 2,000 in 2014 to approximately 31,000 in 2023.

- **Academia-Industry Collaboration:** The establishment of research parks at IITs and the setting up of industry-sponsored labs are bridging the gap between academic research and commercial application.
  - ◆ The government's push for industry-relevant curricula through the National Education Policy 2020 is expected to further strengthen this collaboration.
- **Geographical Diversification of Innovation Hubs:** While Bangalore remains India's Silicon Valley, there's a notable rise of innovation clusters across tier-2 and tier-3 cities.
  - ◆ Cities like Indore, Jaipur, and Kochi are emerging as new hotspots for startups and R&D centers.
- **Frugal Innovation and Reverse Innovation:** India's unique market conditions are fostering a culture of frugal innovation, creating high-quality, low-cost solutions that are increasingly finding global applications.

#### Challenges in India's Innovation Ecosystem :

- **Underutilization and Commercialization of Patents:** Despite a significant increase in patent filings, with over 100,000 patents granted in 2023, the commercialization of these patents remains a major challenge.
- **Inadequate R&D Spending:** India's R&D expenditure as a percentage of GDP stands at a mere 0.65%, significantly lower than countries like South Korea (4.8%) and China (2.4%).
- **Weak Academia-Industry Linkages:** The collaboration between academic institutions and industry in India remains suboptimal, hindering the flow of knowledge and innovation.
- **Skill Gap and Talent Retention:** Despite having a large youth population, India faces a significant skill gap in emerging technologies.
  - ◆ As technology evolves and adoption increases manifold, the World Economic Forum predicts that 50% of all employees will need reskilling by 2025 to stay relevant.
- **Limited Access to Risk Capital:** While India's startup ecosystem has seen significant growth, access to risk capital, especially for deep-tech and hardware startups, remains a challenge.
- **Regulatory Hurdles and Ease of Doing Business:** Despite improvements in India's ease of doing business ranking, regulatory complexities continue to hinder innovation, especially in emerging technology areas.

## Enhancing India's Innovation Ecosystem



### Conclusion

India's innovation landscape has made remarkable strides, driven by proactive government initiatives, a thriving startup ecosystem, and growing academia-industry collaborations. By addressing persisting issues through targeted reforms, stronger partnerships, and enhanced skill development, India can solidify its position as a global innovation leader.

### Biodiversity and Environment

**24.** Groundwater depletion is a growing concern in many parts of India. Evaluate the factors contributing to this issue and discuss sustainable water management practices that can address this problem. (150 words)

#### Approach:

- Introduce the answer by highlighting the extent of groundwater depletion in India
- Give Factors Contributing to Groundwater Depletion
- Highlight key Sustainable Water Management Practices
- Conclude suitably.

#### Introduction:

**Groundwater depletion** has emerged as a critical environmental and socio-economic challenge in India, threatening **water security, agricultural sustainability, and overall economic development.**

- The total estimated groundwater depletion in India is in the range of **122–199 billion meter cubes.**

**Body:****Factors Contributing to Groundwater Depletion:**

- **Over-extraction for Irrigation: Agriculture accounts for about 80-90% of India's freshwater use, with groundwater supplying 60% of irrigation needs.**
  - ◆ In Punjab, the water table has been declining at a rate of **0.7-1.2 meters per year** due to intensive rice-wheat cultivation.
  - ◆ The Central Ground Water Board reports that **1,186 out of 6,881 assessed units in India are over-exploited**, primarily due to agricultural use.
- **Population Growth and Urbanization:** Increasing water demand for domestic and industrial use in rapidly growing urban areas.
  - ◆ In Delhi, groundwater levels have dropped by **24 meters in the 2011-2020** due to population growth and urbanization.
  - ◆ India's urban population is projected to reach **600 million by 2036**, further straining groundwater resources.
- **Inefficient Water Use and Distribution:** High water losses due to leakages, inefficient irrigation methods, and outdated infrastructure.
  - ◆ The city of Mumbai loses about **30-35% of its water supply** due to leakages and theft.
- **Climate Change:** Altered precipitation patterns and increased evaporation rates affect groundwater recharge.
  - ◆ The **2018 Kerala floods, followed by severe droughts**, highlight the impact of climate change on water resources.
  - ◆ The Indian Meteorological Department reports a **6% decline in mean annual rainfall since the 1950s**.
- **Lack of Regulation and Enforcement:** Weak groundwater laws and inadequate monitoring of extraction rates.
  - ◆ Despite the implementation of the **Model Bill for groundwater regulation** in several states, enforcement remains a challenge.
  - ◆ As of 2021, only **19 states/UTs have enacted legislation for the management of ground water** and among them, the legislation was only partially implemented in four states.

**Sustainable Water Management Practices**

- **Improved Agricultural Practices:** Promote water-efficient crops and irrigation methods.
  - ◆ The **System of Rice Intensification (SRI) in Tamil Nadu** has reduced water use by 40% while increasing yields.

- **Rainwater Harvesting and Artificial Recharge:** Implement large-scale rainwater harvesting and groundwater recharge projects.
  - ◆ The "**Jal Shakti Abhiyan**" campaign aims to create rainwater harvesting structures in 256 water-stressed districts, a significant step.
- **Demand Management and Water Conservation:** Promote water-saving technologies and practices in urban and rural areas.
  - ◆ The city of **Bengaluru** has made rainwater harvesting mandatory for all buildings with a roof area of **2,400 sq ft or more**, which can be replicated in more cities.
- **Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM)** Adopt a holistic approach to water management, considering surface and groundwater resources.
  - ◆ The principles of **Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM)** outlined in the **National Water Policy 2012** need to be implemented more effectively.
- **Strengthening Regulatory Framework:** Enhance groundwater legislation and enforcement mechanisms.
  - ◆ The **proposed National Water Framework Bill** to establish a uniform national legal framework for water management, should be expedited.

**Conclusion:**

Addressing **groundwater depletion in India** requires a multi-faceted approach combining **improved agricultural practices, efficient water use, artificial recharge, demand management, and strengthened regulations**. By implementing these sustainable water management practices, India can work towards ensuring water security for its growing population and economy while preserving this critical natural resource for future generations.

25. "Urban biodiversity management is as crucial as protecting wilderness areas." In light of this statement, evaluate India's initiatives to preserve biodiversity in metropolitan areas. Cite successful examples. (250 words)

**Approach:**

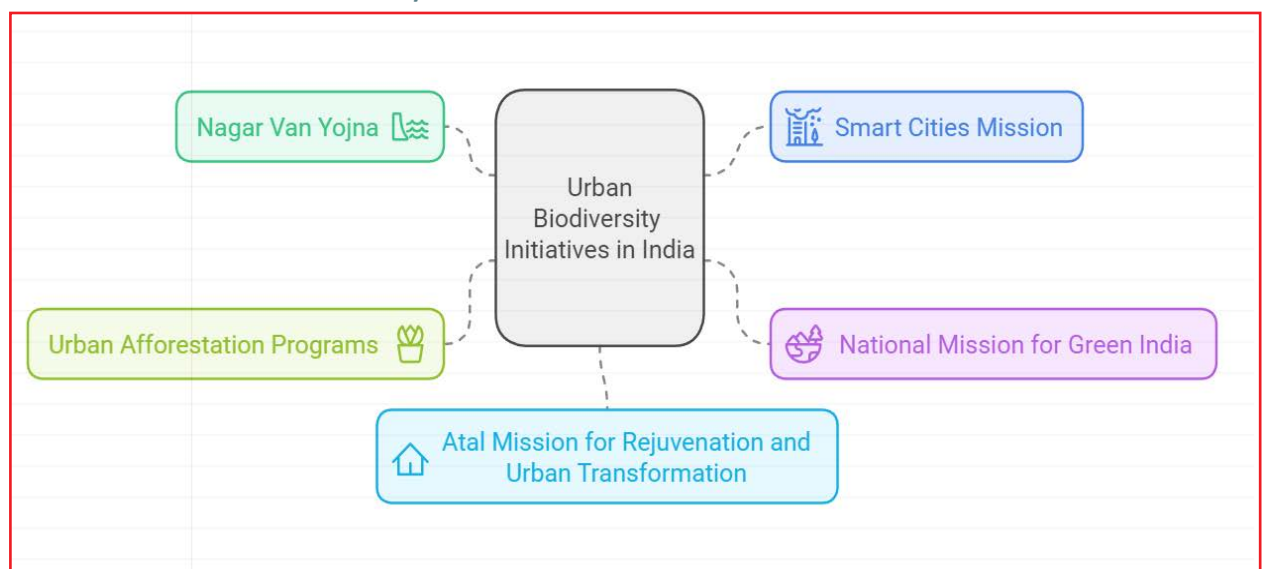
- Introduce the answer highlighting Urban biodiversity management as critical component for environmental conservation,
- Give Significance of Urban Biodiversity Management
- Highlight India's Initiatives for Urban Biodiversity Conservation
- Cite successful examples and their impact
- Conclude suitably.

**Introduction:**

**Urban biodiversity management** has emerged as a critical component of environmental conservation, particularly in rapidly urbanizing countries like India. **Protecting biodiversity within cities is equally important as conserving wilderness areas.**

**Body:****Significance of Urban Biodiversity Management:**

- **Human Well-being and Direct Impact:** Urban areas currently house **over 55%** of the global population, a figure projected to reach **68% by 2050**.
  - ◆ This rapid urbanization directly impacts human health in various ways.
  - ◆ Urban trees improve gaseous air pollution via airborne particle interception and gas absorption
  - ◆ **Mental health benefits** are also notable; studies indicate that areas with urban green spaces **report lower stress levels among residents.**
- **Ecosystem Services and Economic Benefits:** Urban biodiversity provides essential ecosystem services valued in the billions, including **pollination for urban agriculture, natural water filtration, and flood control**.
  - ◆ For example, The **East Kolkata Wetlands** with an area of 125 square km enjoys the **unique distinction of being the largest 'wastewater-fed aquaculture system'** in the world where the sewage is recycled for pisciculture and agriculture.
- **Educational and Research Opportunities:** Urban biodiversity acts as a **living laboratory**, offering educational and research opportunities.
  - ◆ It facilitates **environmental education, citizen science initiatives, and studies on adaptation and resilience.**
- **Species Preservation and Adaptation Studies:** Urban areas often harbor unique ecosystems and endemic species, with **some species thriving exclusively in urban environments** and others finding refuge from habitat loss.
  - ◆ **Thousands of flamingos visit Mumbai's Thane Creek annually.** Moreover, **leopards in Mumbai's Sanjay Gandhi National Park** exemplify successful urban adaptation.
- **Climate Change Resilience:** Urban biodiversity also plays a crucial role in strengthening climate resilience.
  - ◆ It provides **natural cooling effects, flood mitigation, and carbon sequestration.** For instance, **Chennai's urban mangroves** protect coastal areas during cyclones.

**India's Initiatives for Urban Biodiversity Conservation:**

## Successful Examples and Their Impact

**Conclusion:**

India's urban biodiversity initiatives demonstrate **growing recognition of cities as important biodiversity zones**. The successful examples from cities like Mumbai and Bangalore show that with **proper planning, community involvement, and institutional support**, urban biodiversity conservation can be achieved alongside development.

**Internal Security**

26. "Private sector participation is crucial for strengthening India's cybersecurity architecture." Analyze this statement with reference to recent initiatives and challenges. **(150 words)**

**Approach:**

- Introduce the answer by highlighting cybersecurity a critical national priority and private role in it.
- Give Importance of Private Sector Participation in Strengthening India's Cybersecurity Architecture
- Highlight Recent Government Initiatives Promoting Private Participation
- Suggest a way forward
- Conclude suitably.

**Introduction:**

The **rapid digitalization of India's economy** has made **cybersecurity a critical national priority**. While government agencies play a central role, private sector participation has become increasingly vital for building a robust cybersecurity ecosystem.

**Body:****Importance of Private Sector Participation in Strengthening India's Cybersecurity Architecture:**

- **Technical Expertise and Innovation:** Private companies possess cutting-edge technological capabilities and specialized talent

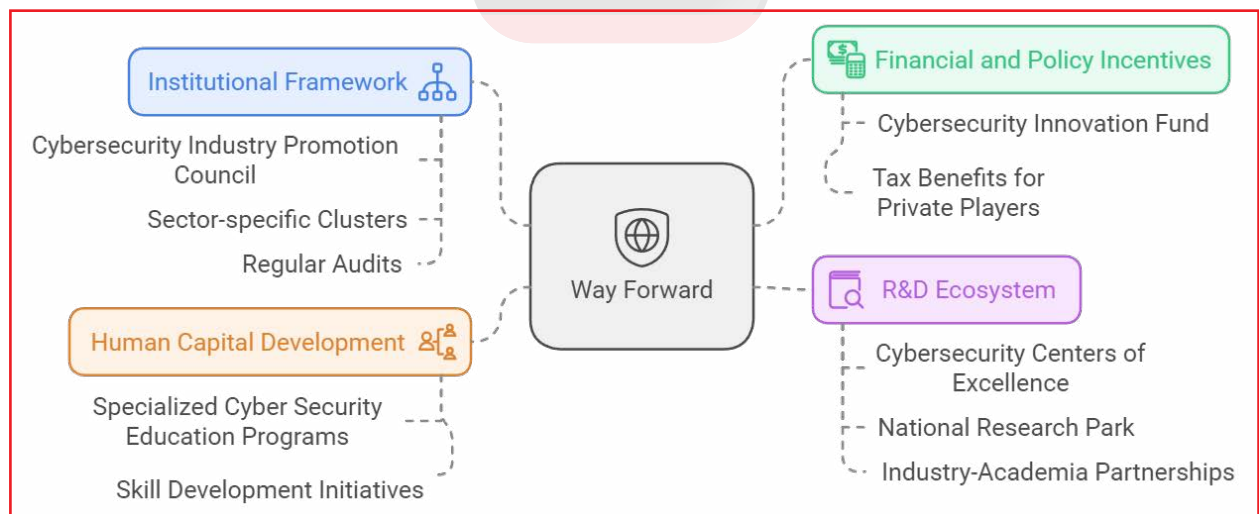
- ◆ Companies like **Tech Mahindra** have developed advanced threat detection systems and security solutions specifically tailored to Indian contexts
- ◆ Private firms can **adapt more quickly to emerging threats** compared to government agencies
- **Investment Capacity:** Private sector can provide much-needed capital investment in cybersecurity infrastructure
  - ◆ **Private investments help bridge the funding gap** in building sophisticated security systems
- **Global Best Practices:** Private companies, especially those with international exposure, **bring global cybersecurity standards and practices**
  - ◆ **IBM's Security Command Center in Bengaluru** provides training and simulation exercises based on global cyber threat scenarios

#### Recent Government Initiatives Promoting Private Participation:

- **National Critical Information Infrastructure Protection Centre (NCIIPC)** works closely with private sector for protecting critical infrastructure
- **Digital Personal Data Protection Act 2023** mandates businesses to report all data breaches to the Data Protection Board and affected individuals.
  - ◆ The Board can also direct remedial measures and impose **hefty penalties (up to 250 crore rupees)** for inadequate security safeguards.
- Mandatory appointment of **Chief Information Security Officers (CISOs)** in organizations

#### Challenges:

- **Trust and Information Sharing:** Reluctance in sharing sensitive security information between public and private sectors
- **Regulatory Compliance Burden:** Complex regulatory requirements may discourage smaller private players. **Cost of compliance** affecting competitiveness
- **Skills Gap:** Shortage of qualified cybersecurity professionals. In May 2023, nearly **40000 cybersecurity professional job vacancies** in India were not filled due to talent shortages
- **Rapidly Evolving Threat Landscape:** The pace of technological advancement and the corresponding evolution of cyber threats **can outstrip the capabilities of many organizations.**
  - ◆ For instance, the rise of **sophisticated ransomware attacks** has caught many businesses unprepared (like the **recent Casio Ransomware attack**), resulting in significant financial losses and operational disruptions.



#### Conclusion:

Private sector participation is **not just crucial but indispensable for India's cybersecurity architecture**. While challenges exist, the combination of government initiatives and private sector capabilities can create a robust cybersecurity ecosystem. The focus should be on **creating an enabling environment that promotes collaboration while addressing legitimate concerns** about national security and data protection.





## GENERAL STUDIES PAPER-4

### Theoretical Question

27. "Ethical leadership often requires making difficult decisions that may be unpopular in the short term but beneficial in the long run." Discuss this statement with relevant examples. (150 words)

#### Approach:

- Introduce the answer by mentioning the significance of ethical leadership justifying the given statement
- Give key arguments related to Balancing Short-Term Challenges with Long-Term Societal Gains
- Conclude suitably.

#### Introduction:

**Ethical leadership** is a cornerstone of **good governance and responsible management in both public and private sectors**. It involves making decisions based on moral principles, fairness, and the greater good, even when these choices may not be immediately popular or advantageous.

#### Body:

#### Ethical Leadership: Balancing Short-Term Challenges with Long-Term Societal Gains:

- **Prioritizing Long-Term Benefits Over Short-Term Gains:** Ethical leaders make decisions focused on long-term growth, despite short-term disruptions.
  - ◆ The **1991 economic liberalization under Dr. Manmohan Singh** was initially unpopular but opened India to global markets, fostering long-term economic growth.
- **Promoting Equality and Social Justice** Ethical leadership challenges cultural norms to advance fairness and equality.
  - ◆ The **abolition of Triple Talaq in 2019** faced opposition from conservative groups, but protected Muslim women's rights, promoting gender justice and constitutional equality.
- **Environmental Responsibility for Future Generations:** Ethical decisions may inconvenience industries in the short term but ensure environmental sustainability.
  - ◆ The **2022 ban on single-use plastics** faced industry resistance, but is vital for reducing pollution and safeguarding ecosystems.
- **National Security and Territorial Integrity:** Leaders may take politically risky decisions that ensure national security and unity.

- ◆ **Indira Gandhi's integration of Sikkim in 1975** faced international criticism but secured India's strategic interests and contributed to the region's development.
- **Reforming Entrenched Systems for Long-Term Efficiency:** Ethical decisions often require reforming longstanding systems for greater fairness and efficiency.
  - ◆ The **Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) of 2016**, despite initial resistance from defaulters and banks, has enhanced credit discipline and led to quicker resolutions of stressed assets.
- **Protecting Public Health Against Industry Opposition:** Ethical leadership involves decisions that protect public welfare, even when they face opposition from powerful lobbies.
  - ◆ The **implementation of pictorial warnings on tobacco products**, despite strong resistance from the tobacco industry, aims to reduce smoking-related diseases and protect future generations.

#### Conclusion:

Ethical leadership that prioritizes long-term benefits over short-term popularity is **crucial for sustainable progress and development in India**. While such decisions may face initial resistance, they often lead to more significant positive outcomes for society as a whole.

28. "The commercialization of traditional knowledge raises questions about intellectual property rights and cultural preservation." Analyze the ethical considerations in protecting indigenous knowledge systems while promoting scientific progress. (150 words)

#### Approach:

- Introduce the answer by mentioning complex ethical dilemma posed by commercialization of traditional knowledge
- Give key ethical considerations in protecting indigenous knowledge systems in India
- Conclude in a balanced manner.

#### Introduction:

The **commercialization of traditional knowledge**, often passed down through generations within indigenous communities, presents a complex ethical dilemma. While it offers **opportunities for economic development and scientific advancement**, it also raises concerns about intellectual property rights and cultural preservation.

**Body:****Ethical Considerations in Protecting Indigenous Knowledge Systems in India:**

- **Bioprospecting and Biopiracy Concerns:** Bioprospecting can turn into biopiracy if indigenous knowledge and resources are exploited without consent.
  - ◆ In **1997**, RiceTec Inc. was granted a patent on **basmati rice lines** in the U.S., leading to a legal battle by India to protect its traditional rice varieties.
- **Traditional Knowledge and Climate Change Adaptation:** Utilizing indigenous knowledge in climate change adaptation **must be done ethically**, ensuring proper recognition and benefit-sharing with local communities.
  - ◆ The **Khasi community** in Meghalaya has built **living root bridges for centuries**.
  - ◆ These structures are now being studied for sustainable infrastructure development, especially in flood-prone areas, raising concerns about **crediting the community**.
- **Genetic Resource Management and Benefit-Sharing:** Using genetic resources linked to indigenous knowledge necessitates **fair compensation and benefit-sharing**.
  - ◆ In the case of the **neem tree**, multiple patents were filed on neem-based products, leading to a legal battle that culminated in the **European Patent Office** revoking a U.S. patent, **affirming the traditional knowledge of Indian farmers**.
- **Digital Documentation and Knowledge Databases:** Digital repositories help protect traditional knowledge but pose challenges regarding access and control.
  - ◆ **India's Traditional Knowledge Digital Library (TKDL)** holds ample knowledge on traditional medicine.
  - ◆ While it has prevented the misappropriation of knowledge, questions remain about **who controls access and how the database should be governed**.
- **Intergenerational Knowledge Transfer vs. Formal Education:** Formal education systems often erode the transmission of traditional knowledge, creating generational gaps.
  - ◆ In the **Toda community** of the **Nilgiris**, youth engagement with traditional ecological knowledge has declined due to modern education and urbanization, threatening the continuity of cultural practices.

- **Medicinal Plant Conservation and Sustainable Use:** Commercialization of traditional medicines can lead to overexploitation of valuable plant resources.
  - ◆ The **overharvesting of Himalayan yew, used in cancer treatment**, led to conservation efforts that now focus on sustainable harvesting and cultivation in collaboration with local communities.
- **Historical Misrepresentation in Commercialization:** Commercializing traditional cultural elements can result in misrepresentation and loss of historical significance.
  - ◆ The **misuse of Hitler's image** in Indian branding highlights how misappropriation in commercialization can cause **harm when historical elements are trivialized or misrepresented**.

**Conclusion:**

Commercializing indigenous knowledge can be ethical if it respects **cultural rights, fosters partnerships, and ensures fair benefits**. Governments, corporations, and researchers should work together to create a legal framework, involve **indigenous communities, and promote cultural preservation**. This approach can balance **economic development with cultural preservation**.

29. Discuss the ethical implications of social media on individual privacy and public accountability. (150 words)

**Approach:**

- Introduce the answer by highlighting how Social media is increasing getting woven in our lives
- Give ethical implications of social media on individual privacy and public accountability separately.
- Conclude suitably.

**Introduction:**

**Social media platforms** have become an integral part of modern life, **offering numerous benefits such as communication, information sharing, and entertainment**. However, their rapid growth and widespread adoption have also raised serious ethical concerns related to individual privacy and public accountability.

**Body:****Ethical Implications of Social Media:**

- **Individual Privacy**
  - ◆ **Data Breaches and Identity Theft:** The increasing number of data breaches on social media platforms has led to the exposure of **sensitive personal information, making individuals vulnerable to identity theft, financial fraud, and other harms**.



- In 2018, the **CBI (Central Bureau of Investigation)** filed a case against **Cambridge Analytica** for illegally harvesting and misusing the personal data of **5.62 lakh Indian Facebook users**.
- ◆ **Algorithmic Bias:** The algorithms used by social media platforms can **perpetuate biases**, leading to the amplification of certain viewpoints and the suppression of others.
  - This can have a negative impact on individual privacy and freedom of expression.
  - During the 2019 Indian general elections, research by the BBC found that **Twitter's algorithm tended to amplify more polarizing political content**.
- ◆ **Surveillance Capitalism:** The business model of many social media platforms is based on **"surveillance capitalism,"** where user data is monetized through targeted advertising.
  - This raises concerns about the extent to which individuals are being surveilled and exploited for commercial gain.
- ◆ **Deepfakes and Misinformation:** The spread of **deep fakes, manipulated videos or images** that can be used to spread misinformation or harm individuals' reputations, is another ethical concern associated with social media.
  - Bollywood Actors like **Aamir Khan and Ranveer Singh** have both been the subject of deepfakes during the **2024 Indian election**.
- **Public Accountability**
  - ◆ **Political Manipulation:** Social media platforms have been accused of enabling foreign interference in elections and the spread of political misinformation.
    - This raises questions about the **role of social media companies in ensuring the integrity of democratic processes**.
  - ◆ **Online Harassment and Cyberbullying:** Social media can be a breeding ground for **online harassment and cyberbullying**, leading to negative mental health outcomes for individuals and communities.
    - **Platforms act as third-party agents**, shielding themselves from any accountability.
  - ◆ **Government Overreach:** Governments may use social media platforms to monitor citizens, suppress dissent, and spread propaganda.

- **Russia** is being alleged to increasingly turn to American social media stars to covertly influence voters ahead of the **2024 USA Presidential Elections**.
- This raises concerns about the potential for government overreach and the erosion of democratic values.
- ◆ **Lack of Content Moderation:** Social media platforms often struggle to effectively moderate harmful content. The controversy surrounding **Twitter Content Moderation Policies**, as raised by the **European Union**, highlights the gravity of the issue.

### Conclusion:

The ethical implications of social media are complex and multifaceted. While these platforms **offer numerous benefits**, they also pose significant risks to individual privacy and public accountability. Addressing these concerns requires a **collaborative effort involving social media companies, governments, and individuals** and steadfast implementation of **Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021**.

30. Discuss the concept of ethical blindness and its potential impact on public service delivery. How can organizations foster ethical awareness to prevent such blindness? (150 words)

### Approach:

- Introduce the answer by defining ethical blindness
- Give Potential Impacts of Ethical Blindness on Public Service Delivery
- Suggest Ways to Foster Ethical Awareness to Prevent Ethical Blindness
- Conclude suitably.

### Introduction:

**Ethical blindness** refers to a state of mind where individuals or organizations **fail to recognize or acknowledge ethical dilemmas or moral lapses**. This phenomenon can have significant consequences for public service delivery, as it can lead to **corruption, inefficiency, and a loss of public trust**.

### Body:

#### Potential Impacts of Ethical Blindness on

#### Public Service Delivery:

- **Corruption and Inefficiency:** When individuals or organizations are ethically blind, they may be more susceptible to engaging in corrupt practices, **such as bribery, embezzlement, and nepotism**.

- ◆ This can lead to a **decline in the quality of public services**, as resources are mismanaged and priorities are distorted.
- **Loss of Public Trust:** Ethical blindness can erode public trust in government institutions and public servants.
  - ◆ When people perceive that those in positions of power are **not acting ethically**, they may become **disillusioned and disengaged from the political process**.
- **Negative Social and Economic Consequences:** Ethical blindness can have negative social and economic consequences, as it can lead to inequality, poverty, and social unrest.
  - ◆ For example, **corruption in the healthcare sector can result in inadequate access to medical care** for vulnerable populations, while corruption in the education sector can hinder educational opportunities for children.

#### Fostering Ethical Awareness to Prevent Ethical Blindness

To prevent ethical blindness and ensure that public service delivery is grounded in ethical principles, organizations can take several steps:

- **Ethical Training and Education:** Providing employees with training on **ethical principles, values, and decision-making** can help them develop a strong ethical compass.
  - ◆ This training should be ongoing and tailored to the specific needs of the organization.
- **Ethical Leadership:** Ethical leadership is essential for creating a culture of integrity and accountability.
  - ◆ **Leaders should model ethical behavior** and set clear expectations for ethical conduct among their employees.
- **Ethical Codes and Policies:** Developing and implementing **clear ethical codes and policies** can provide guidance for employees in navigating ethical dilemmas.
  - ◆ These codes should be regularly reviewed and updated to reflect changes in the organization and its environment.
- **Ethical Reporting Mechanisms:** Establishing **anonymous reporting mechanisms can encourage employees** to report unethical behavior without fear of retaliation.
  - ◆ These mechanisms should be accessible and transparent, and investigations should be conducted promptly and fairly.

- **Ethical Audits and Assessments:** Regular ethical audits and assessments can help organizations identify and address potential ethical risks.
  - ◆ These audits **should be conducted by independent third parties** to ensure objectivity and credibility.
- **Ethical Reflection and Discussion:** Creating opportunities for employees to engage in ethical reflection and discussion can foster a culture of ethical awareness and accountability.
  - ◆ This can be done through **workshops, seminars, or informal discussions**.

#### Conclusion:

By implementing these strategies, **organizations can foster a culture of ethical awareness and prevent ethical blindness from undermining public service delivery**. When public servants are committed to ethical principles and act with integrity, they can earn the trust and respect of the public and contribute to a more just and equitable society.

31. The principle of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' is deeply rooted in Indian philosophy. Examine its relevance and ethical implications in shaping India's foreign policy in an era of increasing global polarization. (150 words)

#### Approach:

- Introduce by highlighting the meaning of the phrase Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam
- Delve into Relevance and Ethical Implications of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' in India's Foreign Policy
- Conclude suitably.

#### Introduction:

The phrase 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' is derived from the ancient Indian text like **Mahopanishad**, " encapsulates a **holistic worldview emphasizing interconnectedness, mutual respect, and collective well-being**.

- As global polarization intensifies, this principle gains heightened relevance, shaping India's foreign policy framework in promoting cooperation, peace, and sustainable development on the international stage.

#### Body:

##### Relevance and Ethical Implications of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' in India's Foreign Policy:

- **Universal Brotherhood and Global Cooperation:** The principle of '**Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam**' (**the world is one family**) emphasizes universal brotherhood, which ethically obligates India to promote global cooperation.
  - ◆ This principle challenges the **notion of narrow national interests and encourages a more inclusive approach to foreign policy**.

- ◆ **Example:** India's Covid-19 vaccine diplomacy, where it supplied vaccines to numerous countries under the **"Vaccine Maitri" initiative**, exemplifies this ethical stance.
- **Conflict Resolution and Peaceful Coexistence:** The concept promotes **peaceful coexistence and non-violent conflict resolution**, which is particularly relevant in an era of increasing polarization.
  - ◆ **Example:** India's stance on the **Russia-Ukraine conflict**, where it has maintained **diplomatic relations with both sides while calling for peaceful dialogue**, reflects this principle.
    - India's **abstention from UN votes condemning Russia**, while **simultaneously providing humanitarian aid to Ukraine**, demonstrates an attempt to balance relationships and promote peace.
- **Cultural Diplomacy and Soft Power:** 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' encourages the use of cultural diplomacy and soft power as **ethical alternatives to hard power in international relations**.
  - ◆ **Example:** The promotion of **International Day of Yoga by India** at the United Nations is a manifestation of this principle.
- **Environmental Stewardship:** The principle extends the idea of family to include the **natural world**, implying an ethical responsibility towards global environmental issues.
  - ◆ **Example:** India's leadership in the **International Solar Alliance** and its Panchamrit commitment demonstrate this ethical stance.
    - By taking a proactive role in combating climate change, India acknowledges its **responsibility to the global 'family'**.
- **Humanitarian Aid and Disaster Relief:** The principle ethically compels India to **provide humanitarian assistance and disaster relief beyond its borders**.
  - ◆ **Example:** India's swift response to the **Nepal earthquake in 2015** and its assistance to **Sri Lanka during its economic crisis in 2022** exemplify this ethical approach.
- **Economic Cooperation and Development:** 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' ethically supports inclusive economic policies that consider the development needs of other nations, particularly less developed ones.
  - ◆ **Example:** India's role as **Voice of Global South reflects this principle**. These partnerships focus on mutual benefit rather than exploitative relationships.

### Conclusion:

While **'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam'** provides a strong ethical foundation for India's foreign policy, its application in an era of **increasing global polarization presents numerous ethical challenges**. Balancing this inclusive, cooperative principle with the realities of national interests and global power dynamics requires careful ethical consideration.

32. Probity and integrity are often used interchangeably in public service discourse. Examine the subtle differences between these concepts and their implications for ethical governance. **(150 words)**

### Approach:

- Introduce by defining probity and integrity
- Give differences between Probity and Integrity in Public Service and its implications
- Conclude in a balanced manner.

### Introduction:

In **public service**, probity and integrity are fundamental values, often mentioned together but with distinct meanings.

- While both aim to **uphold ethical governance**, probity emphasizes **strict adherence to transparency and accountability in processes**, whereas integrity focuses on an **individual's moral commitment to honesty and ethical behavior**, even when not regulated.

### Body:

#### Probity and Integrity in Public Service:

- **Scope and Application:**
  - ◆ **Probity:** Primarily concerned with **processes and institutional conduct**. It ensures that systems operate in a transparent and accountable manner.
  - ◆ **Integrity:** Focuses on the **individual's moral and ethical framework**, ensuring they do not deviate from righteous behavior, irrespective of external pressure or legal loopholes.
  - ◆ **Example:** Probity may involve **publishing the details of contracts and tenders to ensure transparency**, while integrity would **compel an official to refuse bribes and avoid corruption**, even when the process allows opportunities for personal gain.
- **Preventive vs. Personal Moral Conduct:**
  - ◆ **Probity:** Acts as a **preventive measure**, ensuring that public institutions follow ethical procedures and prevent misconduct.

- ◆ **Integrity:** Is more **personal and intrinsic**, demanding that public officials act ethically out of their own moral commitment, even in ambiguous situations.
- ◆ **Example:** The **Right to Information (RTI)** Act in India is a tool to promote probity in governance by allowing citizens to access government records.
  - On the other hand, an **official declining a personal favor offered by a contractor**, despite knowing they would not be caught, exemplifies integrity.
- **Public Accountability vs. Personal Accountability:**
  - ◆ **Probity:** Ensures public accountability by upholding **clear, observable standards** of conduct and preventing misconduct.
  - ◆ **Integrity:** Deals with personal accountability, ensuring an individual consistently behaves ethically, regardless of whether their actions are observable or regulated.
  - ◆ **Example:** Probity is evident in the **transparent conduct of audits in government programs like MGNREGA**.
    - Integrity would be exemplified by a district officer **who does not misrepresent data for personal gain**, even in situations where scrutiny is minimal.
- **Short-Term vs. Long-Term Ethical Impact:**
  - ◆ **Probity:** May have immediate implications, like **restoring public trust through transparency and accountability** in government operations.
  - ◆ **Integrity:** Has long-term implications for ethical governance, fostering a culture of moral responsibility that promotes sustained ethical behavior in public administration.
  - ◆ **Example:** In the **2010 Commonwealth Games corruption case**, transparency in auditing the irregularities was an example of probity.
    - The lasting impact of an officer maintaining integrity in preventing similar misappropriations in future events **shows the long-term benefits of integrity**.
- **Systemic vs. Personal Ethical Governance:**
  - ◆ **Probity:** Can be institutionalized through **laws, rules, and procedures** that promote fairness and transparency in public dealings.

- ◆ **Integrity: Cannot be entirely institutionalized** but must be cultivated in individuals through ethical training and personal moral commitment.
- ◆ **Example:** The **Central Vigilance Commission (CVC)** ensures probity by institutionalizing mechanisms to prevent corruption and enforce accountability in public offices.
  - The personal integrity of an officer like **E. Sreedharan, known for his ethical conduct** during his leadership of the **Delhi Metro project**, demonstrates how individual commitment to **moral principles is essential**, even within systems that promote transparency.

### Conclusion:

While probity and integrity **both contribute to ethical governance, their implications differ**. Probity ensures that governance systems operate transparently, but **integrity ensures that individuals within the system consistently follow ethical norms**. Together, they form the **bedrock of trust between citizens and the government**, ensuring accountability, fairness, and moral leadership in public service.

- 33.** "Tolerance without compassion can lead to indifference." Examine this statement in the context of civil servants' responsibility towards weaker sections of society. (150 words)

### Approach:

- Introduce the answer by justifying the statement
- Give Role of Civil Servants Towards Weaker Sections of Society
- Highlight the Importance of Compassion in Governance
- Give Consequences of Indifference
- Suggest way forward for Promoting Compassionate Governance
- Conclude in a balanced manner.

### Introduction:

The statement "Tolerance without compassion can lead to indifference" underscores a **critical aspect of human interaction, particularly in the context of civil servants' responsibilities** towards weaker sections of society.

- While tolerance is essential for fostering a harmonious and inclusive society, it is insufficient without the accompanying quality of compassion

**Body:****Role of Civil Servants Towards Weaker Sections of Society:**

- **Policy Implementation:** Civil servants are responsible for executing welfare programs like **MGNREGA**, which guarantees 100 days of wage employment to rural households.
- **Enforcement of Rights:** They must ensure the enforcement of laws protecting marginalized groups, such as the **Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015**, which seeks to protect children in difficult circumstances.
- **Resource Allocation:** Civil servants are tasked with fair distribution of resources, such as the **Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY)**, which aims to provide affordable housing to the poor section.
  - ◆ In this program, civil servants work to ensure that the most vulnerable communities receive housing benefits.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation:** They must monitor the effectiveness of government programs. For example, in the **National Health Mission and especially Ayushman Bharat Yojana**, civil servants assess healthcare delivery to ensure that marginalized groups, like **tribal populations, have access to essential health services.**

**Importance of Compassion in Governance:**

- **Empathy in Decision-Making:** Compassionate civil servants consider socio-economic conditions. For instance, during the **Covid-19 lockdown**, many state officials initiated relief measures, such as **food distribution to migrant workers stranded in cities**, demonstrating empathy beyond mere tolerance of their struggles.
- **Engaging with Communities:** They actively involve communities in decision-making. For example, the **participatory approach in the Swachh Bharat Mission** engaged local communities to identify sanitation needs, ensuring that the programs address specific local challenges.
- **Addressing Specific Needs:** Compassion enables civil servants to tailor programs for marginalized groups. For instance, the **Beti Bachao Beti Padhao scheme** focuses on improving the sex ratio and promoting education for girls, addressing gender-specific challenges faced by families in rural areas.
- **Fostering Inclusivity:** Compassionate governance promotes inclusivity, as seen in the implementation of the **Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016**,

where civil servants worked with disability rights activists to ensure provisions for accessibility and equal opportunities.

- **Promoting Dignity:** By treating weaker sections with respect, civil servants foster dignity. For example, **during the implementation of the midday meal scheme**, officials ensured that all children, regardless of caste or background, received meals, promoting a sense of community and belonging.

**Consequences of Indifference**

- **Worsening Inequalities:** Indifference can exacerbate existing inequalities. For example, **if civil servants overlook the plight of marginalized farmers** during a drought, the lack of intervention can lead to increased poverty and farmer suicides.
- **Decreased Participation:** When marginalized communities feel ignored, their engagement diminishes. For instance, the **low turnout of marginalized communities in elections** often stems from feelings of disenfranchisement and neglect by civil servants.
- **Social Unrest:** Indifference can lead to social unrest, as seen in the protests against the **Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA)**, where marginalized groups felt targeted and ignored by the government, leading to widespread protests across the country.
- **Failure of Programs:** Without compassion, welfare programs may fail. The **National Food Security Act** faced challenges in implementation due to bureaucratic indifference, leading to instances where eligible families did not receive their entitlements, further entrenching hunger and poverty.

**Promoting Compassionate Governance**

- **Sensitivity Training:** Implement training programs focused on **social issues** as a part of **Mission Karmayogi**.
- **Community Engagement Initiatives:** Develop mandatory platforms for dialogue, such as the **'Jan Sunwai' (public hearings)** where citizens can present their grievances directly to civil servants, fostering responsiveness. These initiatives have helped resolve local issues effectively.
- **Feedback Mechanisms:** Establish feedback systems allowing marginalized groups to voice concerns. The **'Grievance Redressal Mechanism'** under the **National Rural Livelihood Mission** enables beneficiaries to report issues directly to officials, promoting accountability.

- **Collaborative Partnerships:** Encourage partnerships with NGOs. For example, the collaboration between the government and organizations like **Goonj** helps facilitate the distribution of resources to marginalized communities, leveraging local insights for effective implementation.

#### Conclusion:

Tolerance without compassion is an insufficient foundation for effective governance and social justice. Civil servants must **not only accept diversity but also actively seek to understand and address the needs of marginalized groups**. By fostering a culture of compassion and empathy, civil servants can help to create a more equitable and inclusive society for all.

34. "Family remains the first school of ethics, but its role is increasingly being challenged by other social institutions." Examine the changing dynamics of moral education in contemporary society. (150 words)

#### Approach:

- Introduce the answer by highlighting the historical role of family as first school of ethics and changing dynamics
- Delve into the Rise of Other Social Institutions
- Give Factors Contributing to the Changing Dynamics of Moral Education
- Conclude suitably.

#### Introduction:

For centuries, the family has been the **primary source of moral guidance and socialization**. Parents are typically the first to introduce children to ethical principles, teaching them about **right and wrong, compassion, honesty, and respect**. However, in contemporary society, the role of the family in moral education is increasingly being challenged by **other social institutions**.

#### Body:

##### The Rise of Other Social Institutions

- **Schools:** Schools play a crucial role in moral education by teaching students about **ethics, citizenship, and social responsibility**.
- **Peer Groups:** Peer groups can have a powerful influence on the moral development of young people.
  - ◆ **Children and adolescents often look to their peers for guidance and approval**, and their values may be shaped by the norms and expectations of their social group.

- **Media:** The media, including **television, movies, and social media**, expose children to a wide range of moral dilemmas and ethical issues.

- ◆ While the media can be a valuable source of information and education, it can also **reinforce harmful stereotypes and promote negative behaviors**.

#### Factors Contributing to the Changing Dynamics of Moral Education

Several factors have contributed to the increasing influence of social institutions on moral education:

- **Globalization and Cultural Diversity:** The growing **interconnectedness of societies has led to greater exposure to different cultures and values**. This can make it challenging for families to provide a consistent moral framework for their children.
- **Changes in Family Structure:** The **decline of traditional family structures**, such as the nuclear family, has led to a decrease in the amount of time children spend with their parents.
  - ◆ This can reduce the opportunity for parents to transmit their values to their children.
- **The Rise of Consumer Culture:** The emphasis on **consumerism and material success** can undermine traditional values such as **altruism, generosity, and community spirit**.
- **Technological Advancements:** The widespread use of technology, particularly social media, has **changed the way children interact with each other** and the world around them. This can have both positive and negative implications for moral development.

#### Conclusion:

Family and social institutions can **work together to promote moral education**. Families can provide a **foundation for moral development**, while social institutions can offer complementary opportunities for learning and growth. By fostering a **collaborative approach**, we can help to ensure that young people develop the ethical values and character traits necessary for a just and compassionate society.

#### Case Study

35. Rajiv is a Senior Engineer at a prestigious government research laboratory, overseeing the development of cutting-edge satellite technology for improved weather forecasting and disaster prediction. As project lead, he's



responsible for selecting components and materials. While reviewing supplier proposals, Rajiv notices his sister’s struggling startup has submitted a competitive bid with innovative solutions that could enhance the satellite’s performance.

Rajiv is aware that awarding the contract to his sister’s company could save it from bankruptcy, but it might also raise questions of nepotism and compromise the selection process’s integrity. The laboratory management fully trusts Rajiv and would support his decision. He now faces a dilemma between his professional obligations and his desire to help his sister’s business, knowing that his choice could have significant implications for the project’s success, his personal relationships, and the ethical standards of government contracting.

1. Who are the stakeholders involved in this situation?
2. What are the ethical dilemmas involved in this case?
3. What should be the course of action for Rajiv to resolve this issue?

**Introduction:**

**Rajiv**, a senior engineer in charge of satellite technology development, faces an ethical dilemma between awarding a contract to his sister’s struggling startup, which could enhance the project but raise concerns of nepotism. He must balance his **professional duties, personal relationships, and the integrity of government contracting.**

**Body:**

1. Who are the stakeholders involved in this situation?

Stakeholder	Interest/Role in the Situation
<b>Rajiv (Senior Engineer)</b>	Balancing professional integrity with personal loyalty; tasked with making an ethical decision on the contract.
<b>Sister’s Startup</b>	A struggling company that could benefit from the contract, ensuring its survival but facing potential nepotism claims.
<b>Research Laboratory</b>	Relies on Rajiv to ensure a transparent, fair selection process for high-quality satellite components.
<b>Government (Funding Agency)</b>	Seeks efficient, unbiased use of taxpayer money and adherence to ethical guidelines in public procurement.
<b>Other Suppliers</b>	Competing for the contract, expecting a fair evaluation based on merit and innovation.

<b>Project Team/ Colleagues</b>	Interested in maintaining the integrity of the project and ensuring successful outcomes without conflicts of interest.
<b>Public/Taxpayers</b>	Expect ethical use of public resources, transparency in government contracts, and the success of the satellite project.
<b>Rajiv’s Family</b>	May have personal expectations from Rajiv to support the sister’s startup, impacting his family dynamics.
<b>End Users (e.g., Disaster Relief Teams, Citizens)</b>	Rely on the satellite for accurate weather forecasting and disaster prediction, with lives and property at stake.

2. What are the ethical dilemmas involved in this case?

- **Conflict of Interest vs. Professional Duty:** Rajiv faces a classic conflict of interest situation where his **personal relationship (sister’s company)** conflicts with his professional responsibilities.
  - ◆ The ethical principle of **impartiality in decision-making is at stake.** Rajiv must balance his duty to make objective decisions for the public good against the potential benefits to his family.
- **Nepotism vs. Merit-Based Selection** The dilemma of nepotism arises as **Rajiv considers favoring his sister’s company.**
  - ◆ This conflicts with the **ethical principle of fairness and the merit-based selection** process typically expected in government contracting.
  - ◆ Rajiv must weigh the ethical implications of potentially compromising the integrity of the selection process against the innovative solutions offered by his sister’s company.
- **Transparency vs. Confidentiality** Rajiv faces a **dilemma regarding transparency.** The ethical principle of **openness in government processes** suggests he should disclose his relationship with one of the bidders.
  - ◆ However, this conflicts with the **need to maintain confidentiality in the bidding process** and could potentially disadvantage his sister’s company unfairly.
- **Utilitarian Ethics vs. Deontological Ethics** From a utilitarian perspective, Rajiv might **justify selecting his sister’s company** if it truly offers the best solution, potentially leading to better weather forecasting and disaster prediction (**greatest good for the greatest number**).



- ◆ However, deontological ethics would **emphasize the importance of following rules and duties regardless of consequences**, suggesting Rajiv should recuse himself from the decision.
  - **Personal Loyalty vs. Professional Integrity** Rajiv's loyalty to his sister and desire to help her business conflicts with his professional integrity and commitment to his role.
    - ◆ This pits the **virtue of familial loyalty against the ethical principle of maintaining professional standards** and avoiding even the appearance of impropriety in government work.
  - **Short-term Benefit vs. Long-term Consequences** The dilemma of short-term thinking versus long-term consequences is evident.
    - ◆ While awarding the contract to his sister's company **might solve immediate problems** (saving the company from bankruptcy, potentially getting innovative technology), it could have long-term **negative consequences for Rajiv's career, the laboratory's reputation**, and public trust in government contracting processes.
  - **Ethical Egoism vs. Social Responsibility** Rajiv might consider **ethical egoism, prioritizing his own interests** (helping his sister, potentially benefiting from her success) against his broader social responsibility as a public servant.
    - ◆ This dilemma **pits personal gain against the ethical obligation** to serve the public interest without bias.
3. What should be the course of action for Rajiv to resolve this issue?
- **Immediate Disclosure**
    - ◆ Rajiv should immediately **disclose the conflict of interest to his superiors** and the laboratory's ethics officer.
    - ◆ He should provide a **detailed written statement** outlining his relationship with the bidding company and his role in the selection process.
    - ◆ This upholds the principles of transparency and integrity in government contracting.
  - **Recusal from Decision-Making Process**
    - ◆ Rajiv should **voluntarily recuse himself from the supplier selection process** for this particular contract.
  - ◆ He should request that an **independent panel or another senior engineer** take over the evaluation of bids, including his sister's company's proposal.
  - ◆ This action maintains the integrity of the selection process and avoids any appearance of impropriety.
  - **Establish an Independent Evaluation Process**
    - ◆ Recommend the **formation of an unbiased committee to evaluate all bids**, including his sister's company's proposal.
    - ◆ Suggest implementing a **blind review process where company identities are concealed** during initial evaluations to ensure fairness.
    - ◆ This ensures that all bids are judged solely on their merits and technical capabilities.
  - **Provide Technical Expertise Without Influence**
    - ◆ Offer to serve as a **technical advisor to the new selection committee**, but only if requested and with clear boundaries.
    - ◆ Any input should be **limited to objective technical assessments** without any recommendations for supplier selection.
    - ◆ This allows the project to benefit from Rajiv's expertise while maintaining ethical standards.
  - **Document All Actions and Communications**
    - ◆ Maintain a **detailed record of all actions taken, communications made, and decisions reached** regarding this situation.
    - ◆ This documentation provides transparency and can serve as evidence of ethical conduct if questions arise later.
  - **Explore Alternative Support to Sister's Startup:** Since Rajiv is concerned about his sister's business too, he could explore alternative ways to support her, such as providing **advice, networking, or seeking funding from other sources**.
    - ◆ These options would avoid any conflicts of interest and ensure that the selection process remains fair and impartial.

### Conclusion:

By following the above steps, Rajiv can navigate this ethical dilemma **while upholding professional integrity, ensuring a fair selection process, and maintaining transparency in government contracting**. This approach balances his professional responsibilities with ethical considerations and protects both his reputation and that of the laboratory.



36. Dr. Sharma, a senior scientist at a renowned biotechnology company, leads a research team developing a drug to treat a rapidly spreading variant of a new viral infectious disease. With cases increasing worldwide and in India, there's immense pressure on Dr. Sharma's team to expedite the drug trials. The company seeks to capitalize on the significant market potential and gain a first-mover advantage.

During a team meeting, senior members propose shortcuts to accelerate the clinical trials and secure quick approvals. These include manipulating data to exclude negative outcomes and selectively report positive results, bypassing informed consent procedures, and using patented compounds from a rival company instead of developing their own. Dr. Sharma feels uncomfortable with these shortcuts but realizes that meeting the targets is impossible without employing such means. She now faces a difficult decision that pits scientific integrity and patient safety against market pressures and the urgent need for a treatment.

1. Who are the stakeholders involved in this situation?
2. What are the ethical dilemmas faced by Dr. Sharma?
3. What course of action should Dr. Sharma take in this scenario?

#### Introduction:

**Dr. Sharma**, a senior scientist, is leading a team developing a drug for a rapidly spreading viral disease. Facing immense pressure to **expedite trials and secure approvals**, her colleagues propose unethical shortcuts, including data manipulation and bypassing informed consent.

- Dr. Sharma is conflicted **between maintaining scientific integrity and meeting urgent market demands for the treatment**. She must decide whether to prioritize ethics or give in to business pressures.

#### Body:

1. Who are the stakeholders involved in this situation?

Stakeholders	Role/Interest in the Situation
<b>Dr. Sharma (Senior Scientist)</b>	Faces an ethical dilemma between maintaining scientific integrity and succumbing to pressure to expedite drug development.
<b>Research Team</b>	Pressuring Dr. Sharma to take unethical shortcuts to meet deadlines, driven by both professional achievement and market advantage.
<b>Biotechnology Company</b>	Aims to capitalize on the drug's potential, seeking quick market approval and first-mover advantage to boost profits.

<b>Patients (Worldwide and in India)</b>	Rely on the development of a safe and effective drug, vulnerable to risks if trials are manipulated or data misrepresented.
<b>Regulatory Bodies</b>	Tasked with ensuring the safety, efficacy, and ethical standards of drug trials, responsible for protecting public health.
<b>Rival Biotechnology Company</b>	Holds patents on compounds proposed for unauthorized use, has intellectual property rights at stake.
<b>Scientific Community</b>	Relies on the integrity of research and data, as any manipulation undermines public trust in scientific advancements.
<b>Healthcare Providers</b>	Responsible for administering treatments, potentially put in a compromising position if drug safety is compromised.
<b>Investors/ Shareholders</b>	Interested in the company's financial success, potentially encouraging shortcuts to expedite the drug's release.
<b>Global Public Health Authorities</b>	Focused on addressing the pandemic with safe and effective treatments, relying on truthful reporting from biotech companies.

2. What are the ethical dilemmas faced by Dr. Sharma?

- **Scientific integrity vs. Expedited Results:** Dr. Sharma must choose between maintaining scientific rigor and integrity or taking shortcuts to accelerate the drug development process.
  - ◆ **Manipulating data and selectively reporting results** violates fundamental principles of scientific research and could lead to unreliable or even dangerous outcomes.
- **Patient Safety vs. Rapid Drug Deployment:** There's a tension between ensuring thorough safety testing and getting a potentially life-saving drug to market quickly.
  - ◆ **Bypassing informed consent procedures** denies patients their **right to make informed decisions** about their treatment and participation in trials.
- **Professional Ethics vs. Organizational Pressure:** As a scientist, Dr. Sharma has a **responsibility to uphold ethical standards in research**. However, she's under pressure from her organization to meet targets and deadlines.

- ◆ This creates a conflict between her professional integrity and her role as an employee and team leader.
- **Intellectual property rights vs. Expediency:** The proposal to use a rival company's patented compounds raises issues of intellectual property theft and unfair competition.
  - ◆ This presents a **dilemma between respecting legal and ethical boundaries** in research and achieving faster results.
- 3. What course of action should Dr. Sharma take in this scenario?
- **Refuse Unethical Shortcuts:** Dr. Sharma should firmly reject any proposals to **manipulate data, selectively report results, or bypass informed consent procedures.**
  - ◆ These actions are fundamentally unethical and could harm patients.
- **Explore Ethical Ways to Expedite the Process:** Collaborate with regulatory bodies to establish an **accelerated review process for urgent treatments**, without compromising on safety standards.
  - ◆ **Increase resources allocated to the project**, such as hiring more researchers or expanding lab capacity.
  - ◆ Implement **parallel processing of different research phases** where possible and safe to do so.
- **Prioritize Transparency:** Commit to **full disclosure of all trial results**, both positive and negative. This maintains scientific integrity and public trust.
- **Leverage Technology:** Recommend implementing advanced AI and data analytics tools to optimize research and clinical trials.
  - ◆ These technologies can **automate data collection, enhance predictive modeling, and identify trends**, ultimately accelerating the research process.
  - ◆ By utilizing machine learning algorithms, the team can efficiently analyze vast datasets, ensuring timely insights while maintaining rigorous quality standards.
- **Respect Intellectual Property Rights:** Abandon any plans to use patented compounds from rival companies without permission.
  - ◆ Instead, explore legal collaboration or **licensing agreements if those compounds are crucial.**

- **Communicate clearly with stakeholders:** Explain to company leadership the ethical issues at stake and the potential long-term consequences of taking shortcuts.
  - ◆ Emphasize that maintaining integrity is **crucial for the company's reputation and long-term success.**
- **Whistleblowing:** If pressures from the company become unbearable, Dr. Sharma should **consider whistleblower protections to safeguard against potential retaliation.**
  - ◆ Seeking advice from external ethics committees or legal counsel can provide valuable guidance and support.
  - ◆ This step ensures that **ethical standards are upheld and allows Dr. Sharma to report any unethical practices** or safety concerns without compromising their career or integrity.
- **Focus on Patient Safety and Consent:** Ensure all trial participants are **fully informed and have given proper consent.** Implement robust safety monitoring protocols.

#### Conclusion:

By following the above approach, Dr. Sharma can **balance the urgent need for a treatment with ethical considerations, scientific integrity, and long-term thinking.** This course of action aims to expedite the research process ethically, without compromising on patient safety or scientific standards. It will **not just affect this single case but could set a precedent for how her team and company handle future ethical issues.** This approach also protects Dr. Sharma's professional integrity, the company's reputation, and ultimately **serves the public interest by ensuring the development of a safe and effective treatment.**

37. Priya, a dedicated IPS officer known for her integrity, is appointed as the Superintendent of Police in a district with a high crime rate and significant political interference. Despite facing frequent transfers, she uncovers evidence of the local MLA's involvement in a human trafficking ring. The MLA has strong ties with the state's Home Minister, complicating her efforts to act without political pressure.

A senior journalist offers Priya additional incriminating information and proposes publishing an exposé if she confirms the investigation. He hints that it could boost her career and secure a prestigious posting. However,



Priya is wary of potential professional retaliation, the journalist's motives, and the risk of compromising the investigation by leaking details prematurely. She faces a dilemma between taking bold action or protecting the integrity of the investigation.

1. What are the stakeholders involved in the situation?
2. What are the ethical dilemmas in front of Priya?
3. As a principled police officer, what options are available to Priya in this situation, and which course of action would be the most appropriate?

#### Introduction:

Priya, an IPS officer, discovers the **local MLA's involvement** in a human trafficking ring amid political interference. A journalist offers incriminating evidence, suggesting an exposé could enhance her career. However, Priya is concerned about potential retaliation, the journalist's intentions, and jeopardizing the investigation. She faces a critical dilemma between **acting decisively and safeguarding the investigation's integrity**.

#### Body:

1. What are the stakeholders involved in the situation?

Stakeholder	Role/Interest
<b>Priya (IPS Officer)</b>	Upholding the law and integrity, facing political pressure and potential retaliation.
<b>Local MLA</b>	Alleged leader of the human trafficking ring, concerned about maintaining power and influence.
<b>State Home Minister</b>	Political ally of the MLA, interested in protecting political ties and authority.
<b>Senior Journalist</b>	Seeks to expose corruption, may have personal motives for boosting Priya's career.
<b>Victims of Human Trafficking</b>	Directly affected by the crime; reliant on law enforcement for protection and justice.
<b>Local Community</b>	Affected by crime rates; interested in safety and governance free from corruption.
<b>Police Department</b>	Institutional reputation at stake; balancing investigative integrity with political pressures.

<b>Media Organizations</b>	Potential to publish the story; interest in publicizing corruption for accountability.
<b>Political Opponents</b>	May exploit the situation for political gain; interested in undermining the MLA and Home Minister.

2. What are the ethical dilemmas in front of Priya?
  - **Public Interest vs. Professional Ethics:** On one hand, publishing the exposé could **serve the public interest by exposing human trafficking** and holding the MLA accountable.
    - ◆ On the other hand, **Priya must consider whether cooperating with the journalist may violate her professional ethics**, as it could risk the integrity of the investigation and expose sensitive information.
  - **Loyalty to the Law vs. Political Pressure:** Priya is bound to **uphold the law and ensure justice is served**.
    - ◆ However, the political connections of the MLA and the Home Minister create a **significant barrier to her efforts**.
    - ◆ This dilemma forces her to navigate the conflict between her duty as a police officer and the potential repercussions of defying powerful political figures.
  - **Integrity vs. Career Advancement:** Prospect of career advancement is tempting for Priya through the journalist's exposé.
    - ◆ This raises the **ethical question of whether she should prioritize her professional growth** or uphold her integrity by avoiding any actions that could compromise her values or the investigation.
  - **Confidentiality vs. Transparency:** The journalist's offer to publish incriminating information introduces a tension between **the need for confidentiality in ongoing investigations** and the call for transparency in governance.
  - **Utilitarian Approach vs. Deontological Ethics:** Priya faces the dilemma of whether to act based on a utilitarian perspective—**where the end justifies the means**—by collaborating with the journalist for a greater good, or to adhere strictly to deontological ethics, **where the rightness of her actions is based on following the law** and her professional duties.
  - **Trustworthiness vs. Manipulation:** The journalist's offer raises questions about **trustworthiness**. Priya must discern whether the journalist genuinely seeks justice or has ulterior motives, **complicating her ability to decide how to proceed without being manipulated**.

3. As a principled police officer, what options are available to Priya in this situation, and which course of action would be the most appropriate?

#### Options Available to Priya:

- **Conduct a Thorough Investigation Internally:**

- ◆ **Action:** Priya can focus on **gathering evidence through established police procedures**, maintaining the integrity of the investigation without prematurely involving external parties.
- ◆ **Implication:** This approach **preserves the confidentiality and robustness of the evidence against the MLA** while minimizing external pressures. However, it may take time and could be thwarted by political interference.

- **Engage with the Journalist Cautiously:**

- ◆ **Action:** Priya could meet with the journalist to gauge the validity of the information provided and understand the journalist's motives while ensuring no sensitive details are leaked.
- ◆ **Implication:** This could **help her leverage public interest to apply pressure on the political establishment**. However, it carries the risk of compromising the investigation if handled improperly.

- **Seek Legal and Institutional Support:**

- ◆ **Action:** Priya can consult legal advisors or senior officials **within the police department or the judiciary** to explore avenues for protecting her investigation from political interference.
- ◆ **Implication:** This route may provide her with **institutional backing**, offering protection against retaliation while reinforcing her legal stance. However, it may take time to mobilize support.

- **Report the Findings to Anti-Corruption Bodies:**

- ◆ **Action:** If evidence is substantial, Priya can **approach an anti-corruption agency or a judicial authority**, bypassing local political structures to ensure an independent investigation.
- ◆ **Implication:** This approach could safeguard her from political backlash and hold the MLA accountable. Yet, it **may also provoke retaliation from political allies, complicating her position**.

#### Course of Action:

#### Conduct a Thorough Investigation Internally, While Cautiously Engaging with the Journalist.

- Conducting a thorough internal investigation allows Priya to maintain the integrity and confidentiality of the evidence.

- ◆ She should work **meticulously to gather comprehensive evidence against the MLA while documenting all findings and ensuring proper procedures are followed**. This strengthens her case against potential political interference.

- Simultaneously, cautiously engaging with the journalist can **provide valuable insights into the broader implications of her findings**.

- ◆ She should establish **clear boundaries, ensuring no sensitive information is disclosed**. By doing so, Priya can leverage the journalist's reach while safeguarding the investigation.

- Furthermore, Priya should consider **seeking legal advice and exploring options** for institutional support, which can offer her additional layers of protection and resources to counter any potential political backlash.

- ◆ This holistic approach balances **integrity, transparency, and effective law enforcement**, ensuring that her actions align with her principles while aiming for justice.

#### Conclusion:

Priya should concentrate on **conducting thorough investigations and collaborating with trusted colleagues**, while also seeking legal guidance to address political challenges. By fostering **transparency and accountability** in her department, she can enhance her standing and effectively work towards **dismantling the human trafficking network**, all while upholding her professional integrity.

38. Priya Singh is an IAS officer serving as District Collector in a politically sensitive district. During a severe pandemic outbreak, her district receives a limited supply of life-saving vaccines. The official guidelines mandate prioritizing healthcare workers and elderly citizens for vaccination.

However, the local MLA, who belongs to the ruling party, demands that 40% of vaccines be diverted to his constituency for "priority distribution." He threatens to file false corruption charges against Priya if she doesn't comply. Additionally, Priya's spouse works as the MLA's personal secretary, placing her in a challenging personal situation as the MLA has been threatening her husband's job.

The dilemma intensifies when she discovers that the MLA plans to use these vaccines for political gain by distributing them only to his party workers and supporters, potentially denying access to more vulnerable citizens in other areas.

1. Identify the stakeholders involved.
2. Discuss the ethical issues involved in this case.
3. What options are available to Priya and how should she navigate the situation?

**Introduction:**

**Priya Singh**, an IAS officer serving as District Collector, faces pressure from a local MLA to divert 40% of limited vaccines for his political supporters during a pandemic. He threatens her with **false corruption charges if she refuses**, complicating her situation as her spouse is the MLA's personal secretary. Priya discovers that the MLA's plan endangers vulnerable citizens in other areas, **creating a conflict between ethical governance and personal pressures**.

**Body:**

**1. Identify the stakeholders involved.**

Stakeholder	Role and Interest
<b>Priya Singh, IAS Officer</b>	District Collector responsible for ensuring fair vaccine distribution.
<b>Healthcare Workers and Elderly Citizens</b>	Priority recipients of the vaccine as per official guidelines.
<b>Local MLA and His Constituency</b>	Demands vaccine diversion for political advantage, potentially compromising equitable distribution.
<b>Government and Health Authorities</b>	Set guidelines and policies to ensure fair vaccine distribution across all vulnerable groups.
<b>Priya's Spouse</b>	MLA's personal secretary, adding a personal conflict to Priya's decision-making.
<b>General Public in the District</b>	Includes citizens who may be vulnerable but outside the MLA's constituency.

**2. Ethical issues involved in this case.**

- **Abuse of Power V/s Ethical Governance:** The MLA's demand to divert vaccines for political gain exemplifies **an abuse of authority, undermining public welfare**.
  - ◆ In contrast, Priya's duty to uphold ethical governance requires her to prioritize the needs of the community over personal interests.

- **Personal Loyalty V/s Professional Duty:** Priya's connection to the MLA through her spouse creates **pressure to comply with his demands**, complicating her ethical stance.
  - ◆ However, **her professional duty as an IAS officer** necessitates impartiality and commitment to public service, even at personal risk.
- **Equitable Distribution V/s Political Gain:** The ethical imperative is to distribute vaccines based on need, ensuring vulnerable populations are prioritized.
  - ◆ Conversely, the MLA's intent to favor his supporters **threatens equitable access**, highlighting the conflict between political loyalty and public health.
- **Whistleblowing V/s Personal Safety:** Reporting the MLA's unethical demands aligns with **Priya's moral obligation** to protect public health and expose corruption.
  - ◆ However, this **choice poses significant risks to her career** and personal safety, creating a difficult ethical dilemma.
- **Moral Responsibility V/s Risk to Career:** Priya faces a moral responsibility to ensure that vaccines reach vulnerable populations during a crisis.
  - ◆ However, taking a stand against the MLA could **jeopardize her career**, emphasizing the challenge of prioritizing ethics in the face of personal consequences.
- 3. What options are available to Priya and how should she navigate the situation?

**Option 1: Comply with the MLA's Demand**

- **Pros:** Avoids **potential personal and professional harm**, such as false allegations and impact on her spouse's employment.
- **Cons:** Compromises her **integrity and accountability**, violates official guidelines, and risks public health by prioritizing political interests over vulnerable populations.

**Option 2: Firmly Uphold the Guidelines and Refuse MLA's Demand**

- **Pros:** Demonstrates **adherence to duty, ethical integrity**, and ensures equitable vaccine distribution as per health priorities.
- **Cons:** Potential **backlash from the MLA**, including **false charges and possible pressure on her spouse**, which could create personal stress and professional obstacles.



**Option 3: Report the Matter to Higher Authorities**

- **Pros:** Involves superiors in addressing undue political pressure, **ensuring transparency and reducing the risk of direct confrontation with the MLA.** It could also shift accountability to a higher level.
- **Cons:** Risk of escalation if the MLA exerts further political influence; may strain relationships within the administration and with her spouse.

**Option 4: Engage in Dialogue with the MLA to Reach a Compromise**

- **Pros:** May **ease tension by potentially agreeing to a smaller vaccine allocation** for the MLA's constituency without deviating excessively from guidelines.
- **Cons:** **May still compromise public health goals and ethical standards,** and could establish a precedent of yielding to political pressure.

**Recommended Course of Action to Navigate the Situation:**

- **Primary Action: Uphold Vaccine Distribution Guidelines (Option 2)**  
Priya should strictly follow government guidelines for fair vaccine distribution, prioritizing the most vulnerable. This reinforces her role and integrity as a District Collector, ensuring impartiality and discouraging political interference.
- **Secondary Action: Notify Higher Authorities (Option 3)**  
Documenting the MLA's demands and escalating the

issue to senior officials ensures transparency, secures institutional backing, and addresses political pressures through formal channels.

- **Implement Transparent Monitoring for Vaccine Distribution**  
Priya can establish public tracking of vaccine distribution to deter political manipulation and reinforce public trust in fair, need-based allocation.
- **Proactively Communicate with Key Stakeholders**  
By engaging healthcare leaders and community influencers, Priya can strengthen support for ethical distribution, reducing the MLA's influence through community alignment.
- **Engage in Open Dialogue with Her Spouse**  
Priya should communicate with her husband to balance her ethical duty with their personal circumstances, helping him understand the importance of her decision amidst political pressures.

**Conclusion:**

By adopting this **pragmatic approach**, Priya can **navigate the political pressures while upholding ethical standards and ensuring public welfare.** This strategy allows for the accommodation of the MLA's political interests without compromising the integrity of vaccine distribution. Ultimately, it **fosters cooperation among stakeholders, enhances public trust, and reinforces the principles of good governance,** benefiting both the community and the political landscape.





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**ESSAY**

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39. The walls we build today become the bridges of tomorrow.
40. The frontiers of innovation are mapped by the compass of imagination.
41. A tree grows not just by reaching upward, but by deepening its roots.
42. Change whispers in the winds long before it shouts in the storm.
43. To stand still is to move backwards.
44. A mountain peak is shaped by both the climb and the erosion.
45. To live is to suffer, to survive is to find meaning in the suffering.
46. The true meaning of life is to plant trees under whose shade you do not expect to sit.

