




## Be Mains Ready

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**Q.** Discuss the ways in which the Indian diaspora can play a constructive role in India's growth story. (150 words)

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### Approach

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- Define diaspora
- Enumerate how diaspora can play important role in any nation's growth
- Conclude in a positive way

### Answer

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The Diaspora encompasses a group of people who can either trace their origins to India or who are Indian citizens living abroad, either temporarily or permanently. It includes Non-Resident Indians (NRIs), Persons of Indian Origin (PIOs) and Overseas Citizens of India (OCI).

- One of the greatest benefits of engaging with the about 18-million-strong Indian diaspora has been in terms of remittances. Remittances make an invaluable contribution by aiding in socio-economic development, poverty reduction and changes in consumption behavior in rural areas.
- Diaspora's motives to invest in India are in contrast to non-diaspora FDI. Their investments are long-lasting as many of them wish to establish a long-term base in India.
- Diaspora acts as 'agents of change' facilitating and enhancing investment, accelerating industrial development, and boosting international trade and tourism.
- A less tangible but important advantage in having a large immigrant group is "diaspora diplomacy" and they act as "bridge-builders" between their home and adopted countries.

- The Diaspora can also help in promoting India as a healthcare destination. They can effectively contribute to the expansion and growth of the pharmaceutical industry.
- Education and Culture are the other two areas where Diaspora can play an important role in strengthening linkages between India and countries of their residence. They can play a major role in revamping the education sector and the establishment of world-class institutions in the country.
- Indian Diaspora has been eager to donate generously for worthy development causes in India. Major Diaspora organizations and forums are actively involved in the promotion of education, health care, rural development, microfinancing, etc.
- There is a large reservoir of highly trained experts and scientists in knowledge-based industries, who can play an important part in developing India as an R & D center.

About 18 million strong Indian Diaspora plays an important factor in the bilateral relationship with the countries where they have a significant presence. They are the most important tool for India's soft power diplomacy. Overseas Indians act as our unofficial ambassadors. The diaspora can provide the requisite strategic impulse, which makes it all the more important to unlock their potential. In nutshell, the destinies of India and its Diaspora are intertwined. It is in the interest of both India and her Diaspora to develop a mutually beneficial relationship.