



Debate Around Education as a 'State Subject'

For Prelims: [Unified District Information System For Education \(UDISE\)](#), [National Education Policy 2020](#), [National Programme on Technology Enhanced Learning](#), [PRAGYATA](#), [PM SHRI Schools](#), [National Family Health Survey-5](#), [United Nations Children's Fund \(UNICEF\)](#), [Artificial Intelligence](#).

For Mains: Features of [National Education Policy 2020](#), [Major Issues Related to the Education Sector in India](#), [Government Initiatives Related to Educational Reforms](#)

[Source: TH](#)

Why in News?

Recently, controversies surrounding exams like [NEET-UG](#) and [UGC-NET](#) have reignited the debate on whether **education** should be **transferred back to the state list**.

What is the Status of Education System in India?

▪ History:

- The '**Gurukul**' was a type of education system in ancient India with **shishya (students) living with the guru** in the same house.
- [Nalanda](#), possessing the world's oldest university system, drew students globally to Indian knowledge traditions.
- **British Government** brought **various reforms** in the education system through [Macaulay Committee](#) recommendations, [Woods' Despatch](#), Hunter Commission Report, and Indian University Act, 1904 which had a profound impact on society.

▪ Current Status of Education in India:

- The **gender gap in literacy** in India began narrowing in 1991, with an accelerated pace of improvement. However, the current female literacy rate (65.46%-Census 2011) in India still significantly lags behind the global average of 87%, as reported by [UNESCO](#) in 2015.
- Furthermore, India's **overall literacy rate of 74.04%** is below the world average of 86.3%. A significant number of states in India fall within the average range, just slightly above the national literacy level.

▪ Different Legal and Constitutional Provisions:

◦ Legal Provisions:

- The government has implemented the [Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan \(SSA\)](#) as part of the [Right to Education \(RTE\) Act, 2009](#) for primary level (6-14 years).
- At the secondary level (age group 14-18), the government has extended the SSA to secondary education through the [Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan](#).
- Higher education, encompassing undergraduate (UG), postgraduate (PG), and MPhil/PhD levels, is addressed by the government through the [Rashtriya](#)

[Uchhattar Shiksha Abhiyan \(RUSA\)](#) to meet the requirements of higher education.

- All these schemes have been subsumed under the umbrella scheme of **Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan**.

◦ **Constitutional Provisions:**

- Initially, [Article 45](#) of the [DPSP](#) aimed to provide free and compulsory education for children up to 14 years, later amended to include early childhood care, and eventually **made a fundamental right**([Article 21A](#)) through the [86th Constitutional Amendment Act of 2002](#) due to unfulfilled objectives.
- **Entry 64 and 65 of the Union List** in the **Schedule 7** of the constitution lists Institutions for scientific or technical education financed by the Government of India, professional, vocational or technical training etc.

▪ **Education as a 'State' Subject:**

- The **Government of India Act, 1935**, created a **federal structure**, placing education under the **provincial list**.
- In post-independence India, education remained a state subject.
- However, during the **emergency**, the [Swaran Singh Committee](#) recommended moving education to the concurrent list, implemented through the [42nd constitutional amendment](#) in 1976.
- The [44th constitutional amendment](#) was an attempt to correct the changes to a certain extent.

Government Initiatives Related to Educational Reforms

- [National Education Policy, 2020](#)
- [National Programme on Technology Enhanced Learning](#)
- [Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan](#)
- [PRAGYATA](#)
- [Mid-Day Meal Scheme](#)
- [Beti Bachao Beti Padhao](#)
- [PM SHRI Schools](#)

International Practices to Govern Education System

- **United States:** State and local governments set educational standards, while the federal department focuses on financial aid and equal access.
- **Canada:** Education is managed by the provinces.
- **Germany:** Legislative powers for education rest with the Länder (states).
- **South Africa:** Two national departments govern education, with provincial departments handling local implementation.
- **Finland's Model of Governance:** **Unlike many countries, Finland doesn't rely on standardized tests. The system emphasises collaboration among schools, teachers, and students, fostering a supportive learning environment.**

Why Should Education be on the State List?

- **Original Constitution Design:** Education was initially placed on the State List by the framers of the Constitution, recognising that **local governments are better equipped** to handle educational needs.

- **42nd Amendment Impact:** The **unilateral shift** of education to the Concurrent List during the Emergency **undermined the federal structure**.
 - Allowing states to have exclusive control over education would **restore the balance** of power envisioned by the framers of the Constitution.
- **State-Specific Policies:** States can **tailor their educational policies** to their unique **cultural, linguistic, and socio-economic contexts**. This ensures that education is relevant and responsive to the needs of the local population and can be crucial **for improving literacy rates** and educational outcomes.
 - For example under **Article 350A** endeavour should be made to provide **primary education in the mother tongue**.
- **Divergent Policies:** The central government's policies, such as the **National Education Policy (NEP)** and **National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET)**, often conflict with state policies, leading to **inefficiencies and disenfranchisement**.
- **Resource Allocation:** States that invest significantly in their **educational infrastructure** should have the **authority to regulate** and benefit from their investments without interference from the central government.
 - The Ministry of Education's 2022 report indicates that states bear the majority of educational expenditure (85%).
- **Merit Determination:** Centralized entrance exams like NEET **do not necessarily reflect the merit or potential** of students from diverse educational backgrounds.
 - States should have the flexibility to design admission criteria that better assess and foster student potential.
 - The **Tamil Nadu Admission in Professional Educational Institutions Act 2006**, upheld by the Madras **High Court** and the **Supreme Court**, supports the argument that common entrance exams do not determine merit.
 - In the case of **Neil Aurelio Nunes and others Vs Union of India and others**, the Supreme Court observed that marks are not the determining factor of merit.
- **Issue of Accountability:** If the significant institutes are brought under the ambit of the state, it would result in **better accountability of the state with respect to quality education**.

Why Education Should Not be on the State List?

- **Poor Status of Primary Education:** As per the **ASER 2023 Report**, most rural kids of 14-18 can't do Class 3 math while over 25% can't read. This reflects the poor governance of education in the states.
- **National Integration and Mobility:** The **Kothari Commission (1964-66)** emphasized the importance of a **common educational framework** across states to **foster national integration** and cultural exchange.
 - A concurrent list allows the Centre to set core national standards while states can adapt them to local contexts, **promoting both unity and diversity**.
- **Ensuring Minimum Standards and Equity:** The **Right to Education Act (RTE), 2009**, guarantees a **minimum level of education** across India.
 - Keeping education concurrent allows the Centre to monitor implementation, ensuring disadvantaged sections have access to quality education irrespective of their state.
- **Standardisation of Skills and Employability:** Reports by **FICCI (Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry)** highlight the need for a standardised national curriculum to ensure graduates have the skills required by a pan-India job market.
 - A concurrent list facilitates this by establishing a common framework while allowing states to tailor vocational training.
- **Regulation of National Institutions and Accreditation:** Keeping education concurrent allows the Centre to maintain oversight and ensure quality standards in these institutions, **which cater to students from across the country**.
- **Addressing National Concerns and Emergencies:** The **National Education Policy (NEP) 2020** outlines strategies for areas of national importance like **digital literacy** and **artificial intelligence**.
 - New national challenges like **climate change** also require a unified educational approach.
 - A concurrent list allows the Centre to develop national curricula that address these emerging issues while accommodating state-specific concerns.

Way Forward

- **Collaborative Federalism:** Focus should be on a "**Collaborative Federalism**" approach as suggested by the **Kothari Commission (1964-66)**.
 - This ensures national minimum standards set by the Centre while allowing states flexibility in curriculum, language, and pedagogy.
- **Outcome-based Funding:** Implement **outcome-based funding** mechanisms as recommended by the **NITI Aayog in its Strategy for New India @ 75 document**.
 - This allocates resources based on learning outcomes, incentivizing states to improve educational quality.
- **Decentralized School Management:** Promote decentralised school management structures as envisioned in the Right to Education Act (RTE) 2009.
 - This empowers **School Management Committees (SMCs)** with community participation, fostering local ownership and responsiveness.
- **Teacher Training & Transfer Policy Reforms:** Advocate for reforms based on the recommendations of the **TSR Subramanian Committee Report (2009)**.
 - This includes **improved teacher training programs**, transparent transfer policies, and performance-based incentives to create a more motivated and effective teaching force.
- **Standardised National Assessment with State-Specific Benchmarks:** Develop a standardised national assessment framework alongside state-specific benchmarks, inspired by the practices of countries like Australia. This allows for **national comparisons** while **acknowledging regional diversities**.
- **Leveraging Technology for Equitable Access:** Implement strategies outlined in the Government of India's "**Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya National Mission on Teachers and Teaching**" (**PMMMNMTT**) to leverage technology for equitable access and quality education, particularly in remote areas.
- **National Curriculum Framework with State Adaptations:** Develop a **flexible National Curriculum Framework (NCF)** as suggested by the NCERT, allowing states to adapt it to their specific linguistic and cultural contexts. This ensures a balance between national goals and state needs.

Drishti Mains Question:

Q. Critically analyse the implications of shifting 'education' from the Concurrent List to the State List.

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Question (PYQ)

Prelims

Q. Which of the following provisions of the Constitution does India have a bearing on Education? (2012)

1. Directive Principles of State Policy
2. Rural and Urban Local Bodies
3. Fifth Schedule
4. Sixth Schedule
5. Seventh Schedule

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 3, 4 and 5 only
- (c) 1, 2 and 5 only
- (d) 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5

Ans: (d)

Mains

Q. Discuss the main objectives of Population Education and point out the measures to achieve them in India in detail. **(2021)**

Q. How have digital initiatives in India contributed to the functioning of the education system in the country? Elaborate on your answer. **(2020)**

India's Crude Oil Imports Surge from Russia

Source: BL

- India witnessed a significant rise in **crude oil imports from Russia in June 2024**, reaching 1.97 million barrels per day (mbpd), the highest since July 2023.
- This increase, up by nearly **15% month-on-month and 2% annually**, was driven by reduced **Russian crude cargoes to China**, redirecting more barrels towards India.
- Both public sector giants like **Indian Oil Corporation (IOCL), Bharat Petroleum Corporation (BPCL)**, Hindustan Petroleum Corporation (HPCL), and private refiners like Reliance Industries (RIL) saw substantial imports, with private refiners importing a record 871,200 barrels per day.
- Concurrently, imports from traditional suppliers in **West Asia, particularly Iraq (India's second largest supplier) and Saudi Arabia**, declined significantly. Iraq's shipments fell by 20% month-on-month, while Saudi Arabia's dropped by 36%, influenced by higher official selling prices.
- In contrast, crude oil imports from the US to India continued to rise, signalling shifting global supply dynamics amidst refinery disruptions in Europe.

Read more: [Indian Oil Market Outlook to 2030: IEA](#), [Red Sea Disruptions and India's Oil Import Dynamics](#)

Zinc's Role in Enhancing Legume Crop Health and Yield

Source: DTE

Researchers in France and Denmark, have unveiled a discovery regarding **zinc's critical role in legume crops**. The study reveals that **zinc facilitates nitrogen fixation in legumes, essential for ammonia production and plant nutrition**.

- This micronutrient also acts as a secondary signal, managed by the **transcription factor Fixation Under Nitrate (FUN)**, which regulates nitrogen fixation efficiency under varying environmental conditions.
- The findings highlight zinc's ability to **optimize nitrogen availability in soils, potentially boosting crop yields** and reducing dependency on synthetic fertilizers.
- This insight opens avenues for enhancing agricultural sustainability amidst climate challenges.

Read more: [Technology in Indian Agriculture](#)

Nine Years of Digital India Initiative

For Prelims: [Digital India initiatives](#), [living standards](#), [fostering transparency](#), [E-governance](#), [economic growth](#), [Common Service Centres](#), [IT skills](#), [Digital Literacy](#), [IT Act of 2000](#).

For Mains: Challenges, Initiatives of Digital India Initiatives.

[Source: PIB](#)

Why in News?

Recently, the Prime Minister emphasised the substantial impact of [Digital India initiatives](#), marking its successful **nine-year journey**. He characterised Digital India as a symbol of **national empowerment**, elevating [living standards and fostering transparency](#).

What is the Digital India Initiative?

▪ About:

- Digital India, was launched on **1st July 2015 by the Indian Government**.
- This program builds upon earlier [e-governance](#) efforts that began in the **mid-1990s** but lacked cohesion and interactivity.

▪ Objective:

- **Narrowing the Digital Divide:** The initiative works to lessen the disparity between tech-savvy individuals and those with limited digital access.
- **Promoting Digital Participation:** It strives to ensure equitable access to [digital technology](#) benefits for all citizens, encompassing areas like education, healthcare, and government services.
- **Stimulating Economic Development:** By tapping into technological advancements and innovative solutions, Digital India aims to drive [economic growth](#) across the country.
- **Elevating Living Standards:** The program seeks to enhance citizens' overall quality of life through the strategic application of technology in various aspects of daily living.

▪ Nine Pillars of Digital India Initiative:

- **Broadband Highways:** Focus on building extensive **high-speed broadband networks** nationwide to boost connectivity and digital empowerment.
- **Universal Access to Mobile Connectivity:** Extend mobile coverage to remote areas, enabling all citizens to engage with mobile services and participate in the digital economy.
- **Public Internet Access Programme:** Establish [Common Service Centres](#) in underserved areas to provide affordable internet access, addressing the digital divide and promoting digital literacy.
- **E-Governance, Utilize Technology to Streamline Government Services:** Improving accessibility, efficiency, and transparency while enhancing citizen engagement.
- **E-Kranti:** Platforms such as **MyGov.in** facilitate the electronic delivery of government services to citizens, prioritizing accessibility and operational efficiency.
- **Information for All:** Digitise government records for online accessibility and promote **open data initiatives to fuel innovation and development**.
- **Electronics Manufacturing:** Encourage local electronics manufacturing to reduce **imports, create jobs, and support digital economic growth** through manufacturing clusters and investment incentives.
- **Information Technology (IT) for Jobs:** Enhance youth [IT skills to meet growing industry demands](#) through programs like [Digital Literacy Mission](#) and [Skill India](#), focusing on skill enhancement and IT sector employment.
- **Early Harvest Programs:** Include specific projects addressing immediate digital needs,

such as online access to school certificates, **digital attendance**, and **Wi-Fi in public spaces**.

Nine Pillars of Digital India



What are the Various Digital India Initiatives Taken for Digital India?

- **Aadhaar**: A biometric identification system that assigns unique **12-digit identity numbers** to residents.
- **BharatNet**: A project aimed at providing high-speed broadband connectivity to villages, **enabling digital services in rural areas**.
- **Startup India**: An initiative to promote entrepreneurship and support startups through incentives, funding, and mentoring.
- **e-NAM**: An online trading platform that connects agricultural markets, facilitating efficient sale of produce.
- **Digital Locker**: A cloud-based platform for securely storing and accessing important documents digitally.
- **BHIM UPI**: A digital payment system that enables secure peer-to-peer transactions using smartphones.
- **eSign Framework**: Allows online signing of documents using digital signatures.
- **MyGov**: A citizen engagement platform that facilitates participation in governance and policy discussions.
- **e-Hospital**: Digitised hospital services, including online registration and access to health records.
- **SWAYAM**
- **UMANG App**
- **Smart Cities Mission**
- **Digital India Act (DIA), 2023**: The proposed act aims to replace the outdated **IT Act of 2000**, adapting to India's growing internet user base, technological advancements, and new digital challenges. The DIA provides guidelines for responsible adoption of emerging technologies like AI and blockchain, encouraging innovation while maintaining ethical standards.

What are the Challenges and Way Forward Concerning Digital India?

Challenges	Way Forward
▪ Digital Divide : As of 2021, India's	▪ Bridging the Digital

<p>internet penetration rate was about 47%, leaving over half the population without access. Rural areas lag particularly behind, with only 32% rural internet penetration compared to 67% in urban areas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> While BharatNet has made progress, only about 1.7 lakh out of 2.5 lakh gram panchayats were connected by optical fiber as of 2021, indicating infrastructure gaps in rural areas. 	<p>Divide: Implement initiatives like the PM-WANI scheme to establish public Wi-Fi networks, targeting 2 million hotspots by 2024.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invest in 5G infrastructure, aiming for 40% population coverage by 2025.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digital Literacy: Low digital literacy remains a hurdle. A 2021 report by IAMAI Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI) Kantar, revealed that only 34% of India's population is considered digitally literate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhancing Digital Literacy: Scale up the Pradhan Mantri Gramin Digital Saksharta Abhiyan (PMGDISHA) to reach its target of training 60 million rural households by 2023 Integrate digital literacy programs in school curricula, aiming to increase the digitally literate population from 34% to 50% by 2025.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cybersecurity And Data Privacy Concerns: According to CERT-In, India faced over 1.1 million cybersecurity incidents in 2020. The India Digital Personal Data Protection Act 2023 (DPDPA) is a landmark legislation that aims to safeguard the privacy of individuals in the digital age 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthening Cybersecurity: <p>Implement the National Cyber Security Strategy, targeting a 50% reduction in cybercrime incidents by 2026 through strong legislation and robust privacy mechanisms.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> E-Governance Challenges: While e-governance initiatives have improved, issues like digital identity verification and service delivery in remote areas persist. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhancing e-Governance: Implement a unified digital identity system for all government services by 2024. Increase the number of services available through the UMANG app from 1,251 to 2,500 by 2025.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Skills Gap: The NASSCOM FutureSkills report suggests that 20% of Indian tech professionals lack the relevant digital skills needed for future jobs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Addressing the Skills Gap: Focus on a national digital skills program, aiming to upskill professionals in emerging technologies. According to a private survey report, India will need 30 million digitally skilled professionals by 2026.

Drishti Mains Questions:

Examine the Digital India initiatives, including the challenges they face and the corresponding measures required to address these challenges effectively.

Prelims

Q. Consider the following: (2022)

1. Aarogya Setu
2. CoWIN
3. DigiLocker
4. DIKSHA

Which of the above are built on top of open-source digital platforms?

- (a) 1 and 2 only
(b) 2, 3 and 4 only
(c) 1, 3 and 4 only
(d) 1, 2, 3 and 4

Ans: (d)

Mains

Q. "The emergence of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (Digital Revolution) has initiated e-Governance as an integral part of government". Discuss. (2020)

Abhay Mudra in Buddhism

For Prelims: Origin of Buddhism, Mudras, Principles of Buddhism, Sandalwood

For Mains: Significance of Buddhism, Indian Literature, Spread of Buddhism in Ancient India.

[Source: IE](#)

Why in News?

Recently, the [leader of opposition](#) while delivering his speech in [Parliament](#) used the symbolic image of Lord Shiva and the '**Abhay Mudra**' to criticise the government's assault on the idea of India, the Constitution, and those who resisted these attacks.

Leader of Opposition (LoP) in LS

- LoP is a **Member of Parliament (MP)** who is **leader of the largest opposition party** having **not less than one-tenth seats of the total strength of the Lok Sabha (LS)**.
- He will be a member of crucial committees such as [Public Accounts](#) (Chairman), [Public Undertakings](#), [Estimates](#) and also a member of several [Joint Parliamentary Committees](#).
- He is entitled to be a member of various selection committees responsible for appointing heads of statutory bodies like the [Central Vigilance Commission](#), the [Central Information Commission](#), the [CBI](#), the [NHRC](#), and the [Lokpal](#).
- He provides **constructive criticism of the government policies** and to provide an alternative government.
- The leader of Opposition in both the Houses were accorded **statutory recognition** under

- the **Salaries and Allowances of Leader of Opposition in Parliament Act, 1977** and are entitled to the salary, allowances and other facilities equivalent to that of a **cabinet minister**.
- The office of the leader of the opposition is **not mentioned in the Constitution**.

What is Abhay Mudra?

- **Mudras: Mudras are hand gestures that are used in Indian dance, yoga, and meditation practices to convey certain meanings and emotions.**
 - They are believed to **facilitate the flow of prana or vital energy** in the body and can have **therapeutic benefits**.
 - In Indian classical dance forms, mudras are used to **convey emotions, themes, and stories**.
 - In yoga **and meditation practices, it helps in concentration, relaxation, and the cultivation of certain qualities**.
 - While there are a large number of esoteric mudras, over time Buddhist art has retained only 5 of them for the representations of the Buddha- **DharmaChakra Mudra, Bhumisparsha Mudra, Varada Mudra, Dhyana Mudra and Abhay Mudra**.
- **Abhay Mudra: It is a hand gesture commonly depicted in Buddhist and Hindu iconography, representing the "gesture of fearlessness".**
 - It is typically formed with the **palm of the right hand facing outward** at shoulder height, with the **fingers pointing upwards**.
 - **Origin: It is associated with the Lord Buddha immediately after he attained enlightenment, portraying a sense of the security, serenity, and compassion that derive from enlightenment**.
 - The mudra represents the moment when the **Buddha tamed a mad elephant**, illustrating his ability to grant fearlessness to his followers.
 - **Association with Other Religions: The Abhaya Mudra is also found in the iconography of other religious traditions, including Christianity and Jainism.**

What are Other Types of Mudras in Buddhism?

- **DharmaChakra Mudra:** In this the hands are held in front of the chest with the thumb and index finger of each hand forming a circle. The remaining three fingers of the hand are extended upwards, **representing the Three Jewels of Buddhism: the Buddha, the Dharma (his teachings), and the Sangha (the community of practitioners)**. The **circle made by the thumb and index finger represents the wheel of the Dharma**.
 - It symbolises the pivotal moment when **Buddha preached his first sermon** after enlightenment, signifying the **initiation of teaching the Dharma**.
 - This mudra represents the **constant cycle of birth, death, and rebirth**, and the **Buddha's teachings as the means to break free from this cycle**.
- **Bhumisparsha Mudra:** This mudra involves touching the ground with the fingertips of the right hand, while the left hand rests on the lap.
 - It represents the moment of the **Buddha's enlightenment**, and the gesture symbolises the **earth witnessing** his attainment of enlightenment.
 - It is in this posture that **Shakyamuni overcomes the obstructions of Mara** while meditating on truth.
- **Varada Mudra:** In this mudra, the right hand is extended downwards, with the palm facing outwards.
 - The 5 extended fingers in this mudra symbolise the five perfections: **generosity, morality, patience, effort, and meditative concentration**.
- **Dhyana Mudra:** In this mudra, the hands are placed on the lap, with the right hand on top of the left, and the thumbs touching held at a level above the stomach or thighs.
 - This mudra symbolises **meditation, concentration, and inner peace**.
- **Anjali Mudra:** This is the most common mudra used in Buddhism, and it involves pressing the palms together in front of the chest, with the fingers pointing upwards.
 - It represents **respect, greeting, and gratitude**.

- It is a hand gesture, very similar to **Namaskara or Namaste**.
- **Vitarka Mudra:** This mudra is also known as the "teaching mudra" or "gesture of discussion," and it involves holding the **right hand up, with the thumb and index finger touching to form a circle**.
 - It represents the **transmission of knowledge** and the communication of the Buddha's teachings.
- **Uttarabodhi Mudra:** In this the hands are held in front of the chest with the fingers of the left hand pointing upward and the fingers of the right hand pointing downward. The thumbs are then placed together in the centre, creating a triangle shape.
 - This mudra represents the **union of wisdom and compassion**, the **balance of masculine and feminine** energies, and the attainment of enlightenment through the integration of all aspects of thyself.
- **Karana Mudra:** In this the left hand is brought up to the heart, palm facing forward. The index and little fingers point straight upward. while the other three fingers are curled towards the palm.
 - This gesture is often seen in depictions of the Buddha or bodhisattvas, as a symbol of **protection and dispelling of negativity (evil)**. The index finger is said to represent the energy of wisdom and the ability to overcome obstacles.
- **Jnana Mudra:** In this, the index finger and thumb are brought together to form a circle, while the other three fingers are extended outwards.
 - This gesture represents the **unity of individual consciousness with the universal consciousness** and the connection between the practitioner and the teachings of the Buddha.
- **Tarjani Mudra:** In this, the index finger is extended upward, while the other fingers are curled towards the palm. Tarjani Mudra, also known as the "**threatening gesture**".
 - It is used as a **symbol of warning or protection against evil** forces or harmful influences





Bhumisparsha Mudra

Touching the earth as Gautama did, to invoke the earth as witness to the truth of his words.



Varada Mudra

Fulfilment of all wishes; the gesture of charity.



Dhyana

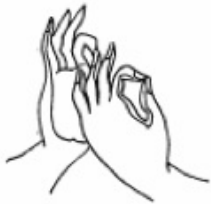
Mudra

The gesture of absolute balance, of meditation. The hands are relaxed in the lap, and the tips of the thumbs and fingers touch each other. When depicted with a begging bowl this is a sign of the head of an order.



Abhaya Mudra

Gesture of reassurance, blessing, and protection. "Do not fear."



Dharmachakra Mudra

The gesture of teaching usually interpreted as turning the Wheel of Law. The hands are held level with the heart, the thumbs and index fingers form circles.



Vitarka Mudra

Intellectual argument, discussion. The circle formed by the thumb and index finger is the sign of the Wheel of Law.



Tarjani

Mudra

Threat, warning. The extended index finger is pointed at the opponent.



Namaskara Mudra

Gesture of greeting, prayer, and adoration. Buddhas no longer make this gesture because they do not have to show devotion to anything.



Jnana Mudra

Teaching. The hand is held at chest level and the thumb and index finger again form the Wheel of Law.



Karana Mudra

Gesture with which demons are expelled.



Ksepama Mudra

Two hands together in the gesture of 'sprinkling' the nectar of immortality.



Uttarabodhi Mudra

Two hands placed together above the head with the index fingers together and the other fingers intertwined. The gesture of supreme enlightenment.

GAUTAM BUDDHA

Believed to be 8th of the 10 incarnations of Lord Vishnu (Dashavatar)



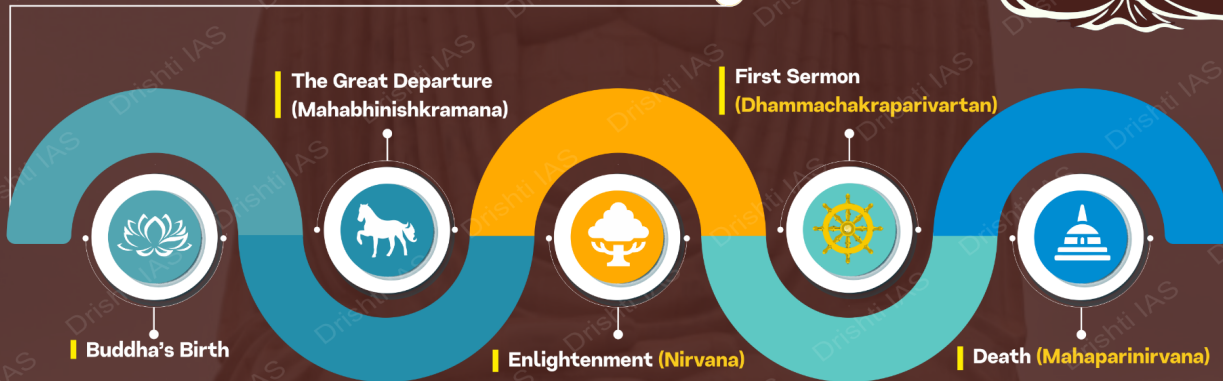
BIRTH

- Born as Siddhartha (563 BC)
- Birthplace - **Lumbini** (Nepal) near **Kapilavastu**

PARENTS

- Father - elected ruler of Kapilvastu; headed **Shakya republican clan**
- Mother - princess from **Koshalan dynasty**

IMPORTANT EVENTS



Buddha referred to himself as **Tathagata** (one who has thus come/gone) and has been addressed as **Bhagavat** (in Buddhist texts)

CONTEMPORARIES

- Vardhaman Mahavira
- Bimbisara
- Ajatshatru

OTHER IMPORTANT PLACES ASSOCIATED WITH BUDDHA

- Bodh Gaya** (Enlightenment) (named Buddha after attaining enlightenment)
- Sarnath** (first sermon)
- Vaishali** (last sermon)
- Kushinagara** (death place (487 BC))

BUDDHISM



Drishti IAS



ORIGIN

- 6th century BC, based on the teachings of Gautam Buddha

MAIN FEATURES

- Essence** - Attainment of enlightenment (Nibbana)
- Supreme Deity** - None

PRINCIPLES

- Avoid the extremes; follow Madhyam Marg (middle path)
- Individualistic component (everyone is responsible for their own happiness)
- 4 Noble Truths:
 - Dukkha (suffering)
 - Samudya (cause of suffering)
 - Nirodha (suffering could be ended)
 - Atthanga Magga (8-fold path to achieve this)
- 8-Fold Path:
 - Right - view, intention, speech, action, livelihood, mindfulness, effort and concentration

BUDDHISM REJECTS

- Authenticity of Vedas
- Concept of soul (atman) (unlike Jainism)

MAJOR BUDDHIST TEXTS

- Sutta Pitaka** (main teachings of Buddha - Dhamma)
- Vinaya Pitaka** (rules of conduct for monks/nuns)
- Abhidhamma Pitaka** (philosophical analysis)
- Other imp texts - **Divyavadana, Dipavamsa, Mahavamsa, Milind Panha**

Budhha's teachings were rehearsed, authenticated & divided in 3 Pitakas at the 1st Buddhist Council

These teachings were written down c. 25 BC in Pali

4 BUDDHIST COUNCILS

Buddhist Council	Patron	Venue	Chairman	Year
First	Ajatashatru	Rajgriha	Mahakashyapa	483 BC
Second	Kalashoka	Vaishali	Sabbakami	383 BC
Third	Ashoka	Patliputra	Mogaliputra	250 BC
Fourth	Kanishka	Kundalban (Kashmir)	Vasumitra	72 AD

Drishti Mains Question:

Buddhism has had a profound impact on Indian society and culture. Discuss the social and ethical teachings of Buddhism and their contribution to the development of Indian civilization.

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Question (PYQ)

Q. Lord Buddha's image is sometimes shown with the hand gesture called 'Bhumisparsha Mudra'. It symbolizes (2012)

- (a) Buddha's calling of the Earth to watch over Mara and to prevent Mara from disturbing his meditation
- (b) Buddha's calling of the Earth to witness his purity and chastity despite the temptations of Mara
- (c) Buddha's reminder to his followers that they all arise from the Earth and finally dissolve into the Earth, and thus this life is transitory
- (d) Both the statements (a) and (b) are correct in this context

Ans: (b)

Q. With reference to the religious history of India, consider the following statements: (2020)

1. Sthaviravadins belong to Mahayana Buddhism.
2. Lokottaravadin sect was an offshoot of Mahasanghika sect of Buddhism.
3. The deification of Buddha by Mahasanghikas fostered the Mahayana Buddhism.

Q. Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

Ans: (b)

Q. With reference to the religious history of India, consider the following statements: (2016)

1. The concept of Bodhisattva is central to Hinayana sect of Buddhism.
2. Bodhisattva is a compassionate one on his way to enlightenment.
3. Bodhisattva delays achieving his own salvation to help all sentient beings on their path to it.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 2 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

Ans: (b)

Q. Which one of the following describes best the concept of Nirvana in Buddhism? (2013)

- (a) The extinction of the flame of desire
- (b) The complete annihilation of self
- (c) A state of bliss and rest
- (d) A mental stage beyond all comprehension

Ans: (a)

Q. Consider the following: (2019)

1. Deification of the Buddha
2. Treading the path of Bodhisattvas
3. Image worship and rituals

Which of the above is/are the feature/features of Mahayana Buddhism?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 1 and 2 only
- (c) 2 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

Ans: (d)

Q. Why did Buddhism start declining in India in the early medieval times? (2010)

1. Buddha was by that time considered as one of the incarnations of Vishnu and thus became a part of Vaishnavism.
2. The invading tribes from Central Asia till the time of last Gupta king adopted Hinduism and persecuted Buddhists.
3. The Kings of Gupta dynasty were strongly opposed to Buddhism.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 1 and 3 only
- (c) 2 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

Ans: (a)

Mains

Q. Pala period is the most significant phase in the history of Buddhism in India. Enumerate. (2020)

Q. Early Buddhist Stupa-art, while depicting folk motifs and narratives successfully expounds Buddhist ideals. Elucidate (2016)

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