

Time taken - 4 hours

NEXT IAS

MAIN TEST SERIES 2024 (SLT)

(To be filled by candidate)

TEST CODE : SLT004

TEST NO. : 04

(Please write test code printed on Question Paper)

Name of Candidate: Chiranshu Taneja Mobile No.

Roll No.: MT24SLTON 011 Start Time End Time

Date of Examination: 11/9/2024 Medium : English Hindi

Q.No.	Maximum Marks	Marks Obtained
1	10	
2	10	
3	10	
4	10	
5	10	
6	10	
7	10	
8	10	
9	10	
10	10	
TOTAL MARKS - 100		

Q.No.	Maximum Marks	Marks Obtained
11	15	
12	15	
13	15	
14	15	
15	15	
16	15	
17	15	
18	15	
19	15	
20	15	
TOTAL MARKS - 150		

GRAND TOTAL : /250

EVAL CODE: EVAL DATE:

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

- Immediately on receipt of the QCA booklet, please check that this QCA booklet does not have any misprint or torn or missing pages or items, etc. If so, get it replaced by a fresh QCA booklet.
- Candidates must mention all relevant details like Name, Email, Roll No, Mobile, etc. in the space allocated.
- Candidate is expected to attempt all 20 questions within the given timeline.
- Answers must be written in the medium authorized at the time of admission.
- Candidates must write answers for the specific question under the respective question itself. Any answer written outside the space allotted may not be given credit.
- Please write neatly. Avoid illegible writing.
- Do not write/mark irrelevant matters in the QCAB.

सामान्य निर्देश

- QCA पुस्तिका प्राप्त होने पर कृपया तुरंत जांच लें कि इस QCA पुस्तिका में कोई पृष्ठ या सामग्री आदि गलत छपी हुई या फटी हुई या गायब तो नहीं हैं। यदि ऐसा है, तो इसे एक नई QCA पुस्तिका से बदल लें।
- अभ्यर्थियों को सभी प्रासंगिक विवरण जैसे नाम, ईमेल, रोल नंबर, मोबाइल नंबर आदि का आवंटित स्थान पर उल्लेख करना होगा।
- अभ्यर्थियों से अपेक्षा की जाती है कि वह आवंटित समय-सीमा के भीतर ही सभी 20 प्रश्नों के उत्तर-लेखन का प्रयास करें।
- प्रत्येक उत्तर, प्रवेश के समय चुनी गयी भाषा के माध्यम में हो लिखे जाने चाहिए।
- अभ्यर्थियों को विशिष्ट प्रश्न के उत्तर संबंधित प्रश्न के नीचे ही लिखने होंगे। आवंटित स्थान के बाहर लिखे गए किसी भी उत्तर को क्रेडिट नहीं दिया जाएगा।
- कृपया साफ-सुथरा लिखें। अपठनीय लेखन से बचें।
- QCAB में अप्रासंगिक तथ्यों को न लिखें / न ही चिह्नित करें।

REMARKS:

MACRO COMMENTS

The Purpose of evaluation@nextias.com is to provide constructive suggestions on 'How to improve Answer Writing and thereby score better marks.

STRENGTHS OF THE CANDIDATE

AREAS OF IMPROVEMENT

IMPROVEMENT SUGGESTIONS

- Q.1 नागरिक समाज संगठनों और सरकारी संस्थाओं के मध्य साझेदारी भारत के विकास लक्ष्यों में किस प्रकार योगदान देती है? (150 शब्द, 10 अंक)
How do partnerships between Civil Society Organizations and Government entities contribute to India's development goals? (10 marks, 150 words)

The roles of civil society organisations (CSOs) and government entities have been complementary in the Indian development journey.

How the partnership contributes to development?

1) Community awareness: Success of any government scheme depends on how communities-at-large perceive it

eg) Nasha-Mukt-Bharat Abhiyan: CSOs have helped government departments

2) Behavioural Change: CSOs are a reflection of society as well as a means to change society.

eg) Swachh Bharat Abhiyan: CSOs helped in achievement of ODF in villages by 2019

- 3) Watchdog: CSOs ensure that government entities are not misusing their power
- ↳ Project 39A NGO helps poor on pro bono basis in legal cases against government
- 4) Combating corruption: CSOs spearheaded the RTI and IAC 2011 movement.
- 5) Identification of beneficiaries: Government entities often rely on CSOs while identifying beneficiaries or conducting survey for assessing welfare schemes
- 6) Mainstreaming: Partnership between government and CSOs has helped in bringing extremists, insurgents and militants back to mainstream ↳ in Dandakaranya, North East and Kashmir region

Therefore, the partnerships are crucial and must be strengthened as envisaged in sustainable development goal (SDG-17)

Q.2

भारतीय सिविल सेवकों में आजीवन सीखने की संस्कृति विकसित करने के महत्व पर चर्चा करें। मिशन कर्मयोगी ने इस उद्देश्य में किस प्रकार योगदान दिया है? उदाहरणों के साथ स्पष्ट करें।
(150 शब्द, 10 अंक)

Discuss the importance of cultivating a culture of life-long learning among Indian civil servants. How has Mission Karmyogi contributed to this objective? Illustrate with examples.
(10 marks, 150 words)

Life-long learning involves regular update, unlearning and relearning of new skills and technologies as one gets older. It holds paramount importance in case of civil servants

Why culture of life long learning is necessary?

- ↳ Technological Advancement: As internet and AI have transformed governance, it is crucial for civil servants to remain updated
- ↳ Societal norms: Our society has liberalised and globalised, leading to changing in social structures and values.
- ↳ New challenges: As we witness cyber security threat and rising polarisation, civil servants must learn how to address these vulnerabilities

↳ Future ready: To combat climate change and help achieve 'Viksit Bharat' by 2047

Mission Karmayogi

Launched in 2020 under National Civil Services Capacity Building Programme, this has contributed in the following way:

- 1) iGOT platform for online learning of new skills
- 2) Capacity Building Commission setup
- 3) Seminars being organised on use of AI in governance
- 4) Workshops held for imparting knowledge on tackling disasters and climate change
- 5) Promotion of use of social media for grievance redressal

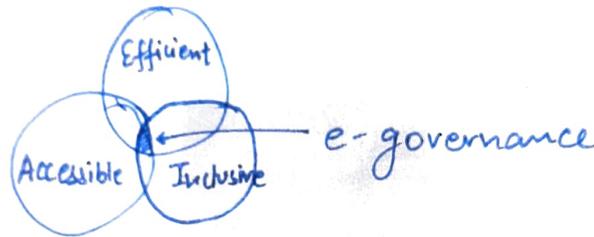
Mission Karmayogi will go a long way in transforming our Weberian bureaucracy on the lines of Singapore

Q.3

ई-शासन केवल दक्षता के संबंध में नहीं है; यह प्रत्येक नागरिक के लिए शासन व्यवस्था को सुलभ और समावेशी बनाने के संबंध में है। व्याख्या करें।
(150 शब्द, 10 अंक)

E-governance is not just about efficiency; it's about making governance accessible and inclusive for every citizen. Explain.
(10 marks, 150 words)

E-governance refers to use of information and communication technologies (ICT) in public service delivery and government administration.



Role of e-Governance in ensuring:

▷ Efficiency

(a) Prevents misuse of resources

(b) Better efficacy of service delivery

↳ Aadhar-linked PDS

(c) Tackles unnecessary delays

↳ dashboards to track progress on schemes/projects

2) Accessibility

(a) Far-off villagers don't have to come to district headquarters

eg door-step delivery in Delhi

(b) Online grievance redressal has ensured that everyone can file complaints

eg CPGRAMS portal

3) Inclusivity

(a) Poor have right to information as much as others do.

(b) Accessible Disabled-friendly websites to ensure those with vision-disabilities aren't left behind

(c) Providing equal opportunity to everyone

eg COWIN portal - vaccine slot booking

Thus, e-governance is as much about making service delivery ^{inclusive} accessible and government accessible, as it is about making administration efficient.

Q.4 अत्यधिक गरीबी को कम करने में भारत की प्रगति को देखते हुए, क्या देश को वर्तमान सामाजिक-आर्थिक वास्तविकताओं को बेहतर ढंग से दर्शाने के लिए अपनी गरीबी रेखा को फिर से परिभाषित करने पर विचार करना चाहिए? गरीबी रेखा को फिर से परिभाषित करने से जुड़े संभावित लाभों और चुनौतियों पर चर्चा करें। (150 शब्द, 10 अंक)

Given India's strides in reducing extreme poverty, should the country consider redefining its poverty line to better reflect the current socio-economic realities? Discuss the potential benefits and challenges associated with redefinition of the poverty line. (10 marks, 150 words)

The current official poverty estimates (21.9%) are based on Tendulkar Committee (2004)

recommendations, which is based on criteria that is outdated considering present circumstances

India must reconsider redefining poverty line:

- 1) Access to quality education is now widely accepted as a human right. Present poverty line doesn't take this into consideration.
- 2) Ubiquitous use of internet makes its access an essential parameter to measure poverty.
- 3) While India has made tremendous progress on combating hunger, ~~mal~~ ^{widespread} malnutrition remains our Aichelles' Heel. Need to include it.
- 4) Poverty is exacerbated by unexpected

health emergencies with prevalent lack of
affordable insurance. This too must be
considered.

Potential benefits of redefining

- 1) Targeted delivery of welfare schemes
- 2) Ensure justice to disadvantaged groups
- 3) Achievement of SDG 2030 targets

Challenges posed by redefinition

- ▷ Regional variance across states
- ⇒ Politically difficult to accept

However, the benefits outweigh the
challenges. UNDP's multidimensional
poverty index and its use by NITI Aayog
shows that 138 million people exited
poverty between 2015-16 to 2020-21.

This shows that India has made
strides but to achieve SDG goal of
no poverty, India must redefine the poverty
line

- Q.5 103वें संवैधानिक संशोधन के निहितार्थों का आकलन करें, जिसने भारत में सामाजिक न्याय के सिद्धांत पर आर्थिक रूप से कमजोर वर्गों (ईडब्ल्यूएस) के लिए दस प्रतिशत आरक्षण की शुरुआत की है। (उत्तर 150 शब्दों में दें) 10 अंक
- Assess the implications of the 103rd Constitutional Amendment, which introduced a ten per cent reservation for Economically Weaker Sections (EWS), on the principle of social justice in India.
- (10 marks, 150 words)

The 103rd Constitutional Amendment
was brought out in 2019 due to rising
demand for affirmative action for the
poor within unreserved category.

Implications of 10% EWS reservations

Positive implications on social justice

- 1) Unprivileged sections can now access
quality education in premier education
institutions
- 2) Provides a medium of social mobility
for the poor in unreserved section,
through govt. jobs
- 3) Urban poor often faces social hurdles
and economic barriers, irrespective of
the caste. EWS reservation helps

address the issue

4) When EWS sections will get into administration, they will be able to better understand and formulate effective welfare schemes

Negative Implications

1) It was criticized for debaring reserved categories from accessing ~~the~~ 10% quota even if they are poor.

2) Critics argue that constitution makers never envisaged affirmative action based on purely economic criteria.

However, the Supreme Court dismissed these arguments while upholding the constitutionality of EWS Reservation in

Jankit ^{Abhiyan} Andolan vs Union of India 2023

EWS Reservation will go a long way in furthering our efforts to achieve an egalitarian society (Art 39(c))

- Q.6 भारत में कल्याणकारी योजनाओं का ध्यान "कल्याण" से अति-निर्भरता की ओर स्थानांतरित हो रहा है। इसके आलोक में, क्या आप इस बात से सहमत हैं कि कल्याणकारी योजनाओं ने भारत में "मुफ्त की संस्कृति" को जन्म दिया है, जिससे गरीबी और भूख उन्मूलन से ध्यान भटक गया है? (150 शब्द, 10 अंक)
- The focus of welfare schemes in India is shifting from "well-being" towards "over-dependency". In light of this, do you agree that welfare schemes have inculcated a "freebies culture" in India leading to a divergence of focus from poverty and hunger alleviation?

(10 marks, 150 words)

Indian State is expected to work for the welfare of disadvantaged sections as espoused in Directive Principles (Art 38)

However, in recent years, the 'freebie' nature of welfare schemes has come under criticism.

↳ Over-dependency: Schemes like monthly

disbursement to women are said to have shifted the focus from women empowerment

↳ Unsustainable: Free electricity schemes are economically unfeasible for ^{already} cash-stripped discoms as

↳ Environmental damage: Free unlimited water access is said to have encouraged

its misuse.

↳ Shift of focus from skilling the youth to unemployment allowance will hamper poverty alleviation

However, not every welfare scheme is harmful or deserves criticism. For example

↳ POSHAN scheme is meant to combat rampant malnutrition

↳ Free Bus Ride for Women has encouraged more women to opt for public transport and save money.

↳ PM-KISAN : ₹ 6000 to farmers, every year, has helped them buy new inputs and also face adversities caused by climate change.

Thus, it is crucial to understand the intention and the impact of welfare schemes before criticising them while also being mindful of economic feasibility and sustainability

Q.7

प्रमुख पश्चिमी देशों के साथ गहरे होते राजनीतिक मतभेदों का वैश्विक शासन व्यवस्था और अंतर्राष्ट्रीय सहयोग पर पड़ने वाले प्रभाव का मूल्यांकन करें। वैश्विक मंच पर अपने राष्ट्रीय हितों को आगे बढ़ाने के लिए भारत को इन मतभेदों से किस प्रकार निपटना चाहिए? (150 शब्द, 10 अंक)

Evaluate the impact of the deepening political divisions within the major Western States on global governance and international cooperation. How should India navigate these divisions to advance its national interests on the global stage? (10 marks, 150 words)

A deeply divided West, a rising China and a resurgent Russia has led to concerns being raised about globalisation's future and nature of international cooperation.

Impact on Global Governance

- ↳ Non-functioning institutions \rightarrow divisions amongst the West has prevented UN from taking a serious call on stopping Israel-Hamas conflict
- ↳ Rise of ^{pluri}~~multi~~ lateral fora: \rightarrow France, after being removed from AUKUS alliance, started a trilateral with India and UAE
- ↳ Stagnant reforms: Despite several calls, UN system has still not reformed \rightarrow divisions being US and Germany in UNSC

Impact of on International Cooperation

- ↳ Lack of consensus on AI: Europe wants to strictly regulate but US is following hands-off approach.
- ↳ Minimal efforts on climate finance: Resistance by some western nations has stalled the urgent transitions to green energy in the developing world.

How should India navigate?

- ↳ Act as consensus builder as was shown during G20 Delhi Declaration
- ↳ Bring Global South together on climate issues \Rightarrow CoP 26: coal phase 'down' and not phase 'out'
- ↳ Foster good relations with everyone
 \Rightarrow Disaster diplomacy with Turkey.

India must preserve its strategic autonomy while seeking omni-alignment to advance its national interests

- Q.8 भारत की आर्कटिक नीति उसके व्यापक विदेश नीति के उद्देश्यों के साथ किस प्रकार संरेखित है? आर्कटिक परिषद के साथ भारत द्वारा किए गए सहयोगों और समझौतों पर व्यापक रूप से चर्चा करें। (150 शब्द, 10 अंक)
- How does India's Arctic Policy align with its broader foreign policy objectives? Broadly discuss the collaborations and agreements India is involved in with the Arctic Council. (10 marks, 150 words)

Indian Government launched its Arctic Policy in 2022, which comes nearly a century after India became a signatory to the Svalbard treaty.

Arctic Policy and Foreign Policy - Alignment

- 1) Arctic Policy intends to project India as a rising scientific power on the global stage
- 2) It promotes research on the North Sea Route and its potential economic, environment-al and strategic implications.
- 3) Climate Change is adversely affecting the Himalayas. Indian researches can learn the potential impact on third pole from arctic melting
- 4) It fosters global cooperation with Arctic countries. Indian foreign policy

is already seeking better relations with Scandinavian nations and closer ties with Russia

Collaborations and Agreements with Arctic Council

- 1) India is having an all-year-presence at its Arctic research station (Ind Arc) since 2023 to conduct research with Arctic council
- 2) Deep space research is being carried out in the relatively light-pollution-free night sky in collaboration with Finland.
- 3) Indian researchers are taking part in the council's undergoing studies on permafrost melting and atlantification.
- 4) Indian agro-scientists have maintained a seed vault in Norway's Svalbard.

India's prominent role in the Arctic is highlighted by its observer status in the council. Need to deepen the collaboration and strengthen the partnership

Q.9

QUAD, AUKUS, I2U2 आदि जैसे नए क्षेत्रीय और बहुपक्षीय समझौतों के आगमन के साथ, गुट निरपेक्ष आन्दोलन (NAM), दावोस और G77 जैसे संगठनों द्वारा प्रतिनिधित्व की जाने वाली पुरानी वैश्विक व्यवस्था अपनी प्रासंगिकता खो रही है। चर्चा कीजिए।
(150 शब्द, 10 अंक)

With the advent of new regional and multilateral agreements like QUAD, AUKUS, I2U2 etc the old world order represented by organizations like NAM, Davos, and G77 is losing its relevance. Discuss.
(10 marks, 150 words)

Cold War saw the rise of Non-aligned movement in Global South, G77 grouping in the UN and World Economic Forum's Davos Summit dominating the global economic narrative

However, the dawn of the 21st century and the rise of China, with advent of digital revolution and threats of climate change and pandemics, the global order has undergone massive transformation

New multilateral and regional groups like QUAD highlight the deteriorating trust in the UN system and rising perception of Chinese threat. On the other hand, Middle East is rapidly integrating

with the West (Europe) and the East (Asia), having realised that geo-economics is more crucial than oil-dependent geopolitics. This has led to birth of groupings like I2U2 (India, Israel, UAE and United States).

The shift from unipolar world, post Cold war to present-day multipolarity has led to weakening of the old UNSC system. This has sprang up new alliances like the AUKUS. The world is witnessing this massive change from offshoring during post-cold-war globalisation to onshoring and friendshoring.

However, the principle behind NAM is still evident in Indian foreign policy. Its emphasis on strategic autonomy and focus on Global South despite uncertainties and changes, shows that while the order might change, principles remain the same.

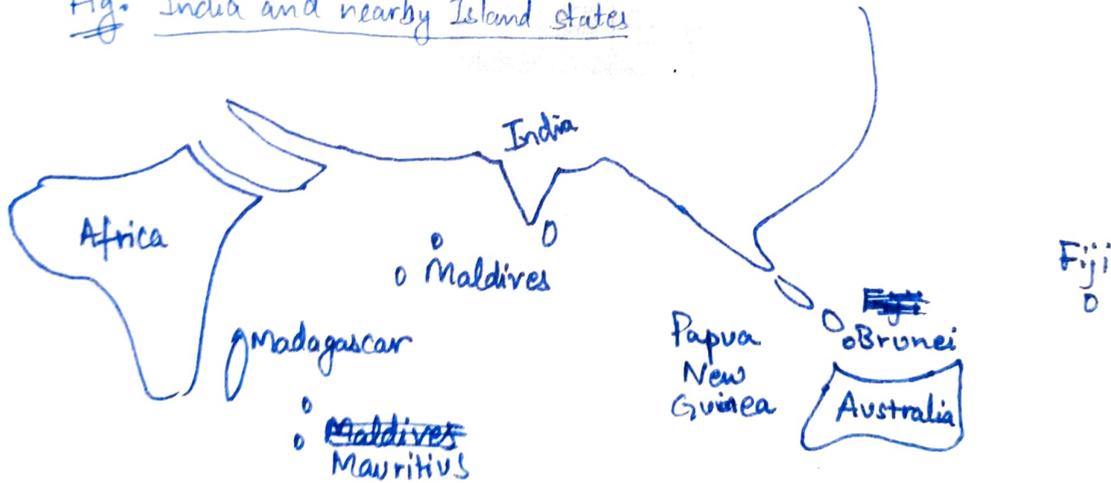
Q.10 दक्षिण प्रशांत से अफ्रीकी तट तक के द्वीपीय राज्य और क्षेत्र भारत के बदलते रणनीतिक भूगोल में नए केंद्र बन गए हैं। इस संदर्भ में, भारत के लिए इन द्वीपीय राज्यों के महत्व पर प्रकाश डालें और इन राज्यों के साथ संबंधों को मजबूत करने के लिए भारत द्वारा की गई पहलों पर भी प्रकाश डालें। (150 शब्द, 10 अंक)

The island states and territories from the South Pacific to the African coast have become new nodes in India's changing strategic geography. In this context, highlight the importance of these island states for India and also throw light upon the initiatives taken by India to strengthen ties with these states. (10 marks, 150 words)

India's foreign policy has shifted its ^{side} focus from major powers of the world to ^{include} smaller nations which are geographically located at strategic positions.

Importance of these island states

Fig. India and nearby Island states



1) Trade Routes \rightarrow Papua New Guinea and Brunei lie on maritime trade routes near Malacca Strait. $>80\%$ Indian trade through Indian Ocean

- 2) Counter Chinese dominance [eg] Maldives, Sri Lanka
- 3) Security perspective [eg] recent red sea crisis highlighted importance of west Indian Ocean states.
- 4) Enhance Indian Sphere of Influence through cultural ties [eg] Fiji

Indian initiatives to strengthen ties

- 1) FIPIC: Forum for India-Pacific Islands Cooperation
- 2) Disaster diplomacy: Acting as first responding, providing humanitarian assistance
- 3) Trade agreements: recently with Brunei and Papua New Guinea
- 4) Defence Projects: Maldives and Mauritius (Agalega)

India has taken appreciable steps to provide a filip to its relationship with island states.

Q.11

सतत विकास लक्ष्यों (SDGs) की प्राप्ति के लिए क्षेत्रीय संदर्भ और स्थानीय परिस्थितियों पर विचार करना आवश्यक है। इस कथन के आलोक में जमीनी स्तर पर विकास और सतत विकास को आगे बढ़ाने के लिए उत्प्रेरक के रूप में पंचायतों की भूमिका का परीक्षण करें।
Achievement of Sustainable Development Goals requires consideration of regional context and local situations. In light of this statement examine the role of Panchayats as catalysts for grassroot development and advancing sustainable development. (15 marks, 250 words)

The constitutional backing provided to Panchayats through Article 40 and 72nd Constitution -al amendment 1992 highlights their importance in socio-economic development and sustainable growth.

Role of Panchayats as catalysts for grassroot development

- 1) Panchayats provide a platform for representation to local communities
- 2) The formation of development plan by Panchayats addresses grassroots problems
- 3) They act as a forum for grievance redressal for the common citizen.
- 4) Reservation for women and disadvantaged

sections helps nurture future leaders who understand issues faced by marginalized.

- 5) It has led to deepening of democratic decentralisation in India.
- 6) PESA Act 1996, which extended Panchayats to tribal areas, empowered Gram Sabhas to take decisions on land transfer, mining lease etc.

All these highlight how Panchayats have contributed to development of all. But they have also advanced sustainable development:

- 1) Giving Panchayats the authority to look after public health and education has helped furthering SDG goals 3 and 4.
- 2) Gram Sabhas act as a forum to raise local issues and voice concerns against unsustainable development. \rightarrow many tribal areas have opposed mining

- 3) Panchayats led by women and disadvantaged sections help bring inclusive development which is essential for sustainability.
- 4) Social audits by Panchayats has reduced corruption and misuse of public funds
eg → MGNREGA funds are now being used for sustainable assets like pond, check dam etc
- 5) Involvement of local communities in the development journey has helped tackle the ill-conceived priorities of top-down approach

Strengthening of Panchayati Raj Institutions

is necessary for Indian development to be sustainable and for achievement of SDG goal 16 (strong institutions).

Q.12

भारत की उच्च शिक्षा प्रणाली को वैश्विक मानकों के अनुरूप बनाने के लिए महत्वपूर्ण सुधारों की आवश्यकता है। नई शिक्षा नीति (एनईपी) 2020 का लक्ष्य इन चुनौतियों का समाधान करना किस प्रकार है, और भारत अपनी उच्च शिक्षा प्रणाली को बढ़ावा देने के लिए अंतरराष्ट्रीय प्रथाओं से क्या सबक सीख सकता है? चर्चा कीजिए।

(250 शब्द, 15 अंक)

India's higher education system needs significant reforms to align with global standards. How does the New Education Policy (NEP) 2020 aim to address these challenges, and what lessons can India learn from international practices to enhance its higher education system? Discuss.

(15 marks, 250 words)

The new National Education Policy (NEP)

launched in 2020, based on the Kasturirangan committee recommendations, has set in motion far-reaching reforms in Indian higher education.

Challenges faced by Indian higher education

- 1) Low Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) \approx 28%
- 2) High drop-out rates
- 3) Wide academia-industry mismatch
- 4) Lack of cutting-edge research
- 5) Poor state of vocational training
- 6) Outdated curriculum and
- 7) Rigid entry-exit rules.

Candidates must write on this margin

How NEP addresses these challenges?

- 1) Target GER of 50% by 2035
- 2) Award of certificates of diploma or degree to those exiting before completion.
- 3) National Research Foundation setup to promote and fund research.
- 4) Funding of state-of-the-art laboratories
- 5) Academic bank of credits, in line with global practices, to provide flexibility
- 6) Multidisciplinary courses are being launched, while also making available liberal arts courses in technical institutes
eg IIT Bombay liberal arts program
- 7) Updated curriculum with universities given autonomy on administrative matters
- 8) Foreign universities allowed to open campus in India

Lessons from international practices

- 1) USA: Universities get most of their funds through collaboration with industries
- 2) China: highly subsidized higher education so as to provide affordable education to all
- 3) Australia: Semester-exchange programs with foreign universities, thus providing them global outreach
- 4) Germany: State-funded research labs
- 5) Japan: specialized programmes on robotics, AI, blockchain technology launched.

NEP 2020 is an appreciable step in the right direction. It should be implemented on war-footing so as to reap our demographic dividend.

Q.13

सूचना का अधिकार (आरटीआई) अधिनियम को भारतीय शासन में पारदर्शिता और जवाबदेही की तलाश में परिवर्तनकारी प्रभाव के लिए सराहा जाता है। हालाँकि, बहुआयामी चुनौतियाँ और प्रणालीगत सीमाएँ इसके प्रभावी कार्यान्वयन में बाधा डालती हैं। चर्चा कीजिए। साथ ही इसके प्रभावी क्रियान्वयन के लिए उपाय भी सुझाइये। (250 शब्द, 15 अंक)

The Right to Information (RTI) Act is hailed for its transformative impact on the quest for transparency and accountability in Indian governance. However, multifaceted challenges and systemic limitations impede its effective implementation. Discuss. Also, suggest measures for its effective implementation. (15 marks, 250 words)

Right to Information Act was brought in 2005 to bring transparency in the administration and for furthering the attainment of rights guaranteed by Article 19 of the Constitution.

How RTI transformed Indian Governance?

- ↳ Citizens could now get to know where public funds are being used.
- ↳ Officials became accountable directly to the public for delays in resolution of their complaints.
- ↳ It curbed corruption by bringing in transparency.

However, systemic limitations impede its effective implementation:

- ↳ Public information officer (PIO) is given several exemptions under the act to not disclose information
- ↳ Appeals to First Appellate Authority (FAA) and Information Commission is time-taking and expensive process
- ↳ Several investigative security agencies and the judiciary is not under its purview.
- ↳ Since PIO is also an employee of the government department, (s)he is often overburdened leading to delays in disclosures.
- ↳ Arbitrary refusals, under Section 8 of the Act, to disclose information, goes against the very purpose of the act.

Measures for effective implementation

- ↳ Voluntary disclosures by all departments on regular basis
- ↳ Rationalize the exemptions under the act
- ↳ PIO can be an independent employee, whose main job would be to address RTI queries
- ↳ Time limits for disclosures must be reduced
- ↳ Capacity building of PIO officials
- ↳ Community awareness about their right to information.
- ↳ Bring judiciary's administrative role under the ambit of RTI.

RTI has brought a silent revolution in Indian governance and must be strength-ened to achieve its objectives of a transparent administration with an informed citizenry

Role of private sector in rural areas

- It can bring near diagnostic labs thereby preventing travel and migration
- While public sector faces dearth of capital, private sector can invest in mobile ambulances ensuring last-mile reach

Role of public sector in urban areas

- Pollution and unplanned urbanization is root cause of many health problems
- Public sector can help reduce the excessive out-of-pocket expenditure (OOPE = 47%)
- Secondary and tertiary healthcare is very expensive in private sector.
All MS like institutions are necessary in every region

Role of private sector in urban areas

- Public sector cannot spend much on treatment of rare diseases. Private sector can play a big role here.
 - New surgical treatments, which aren't available in public healthcare, due to lack of capital, can be made accessible and affordable.
 - They must uphold the hippocratic oath and not seek exorbitant profits
- (eg) WHO report - Caesarean deliveries should be <20%. but private hospitals - 50%

It is crucial for both sectors to come together to achieve health equity. Ayushman Bharat Scheme is a testament of their complementary role.

Q.15 भारत में बाल अधिकारों और कल्याण पर पोक्सो (POCSO) अधिनियम के क्या निहितार्थ हैं? बाल संरक्षण के लिए भारत के विधिक ढांचे को परिवर्तित करने में POCSO अधिनियम की भूमिका का विश्लेषण करें।

(250 शब्द, 15 अंक)

What are the implications of the POCSO Act on the rights and welfare of children in India? Analyze the role of the POCSO Act in transforming India's legal framework for child protection. (15 marks, 250 words)

Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act was enacted in 2012 amidst rising demand for a children specific legislation which takes into consideration their vulnerability and sensitivity

Implications of POCSO Act

- 1) It was a great step for attainment of rights mentioned under Art 39(f)
- 2) Children face sexual abuse, often from someone known (>90% cases - Kailash Satyarthi). This prevented them from raising their voice
- 3) POCSO has ensured that children's vulnerability is addressed by setting

Up of special courts and police teams.

4) The proof of burden has been shifted from the victim/children to accused.

This is crucial because children often don't have evidences of the crime.

5) A very wide definition of sexual abuse is used which ensures that children are protected from all forms of sexual offences

6) Making child sexual abuse a cognizable offence without anticipatory bail ensures that the child is not facing threats

Rde of POCSO in transforming legal framework

1) POCSO has been a crucial legislation in Indian legal evolution of rights.

2) It transformed the legal framework from just being a means to

to punish the criminal to protection
of the vulnerable sections of society

3) Most earlier legislations were aimed at protection of girl child.

This was first gender-neutral legislation for children.

4) Provisions of the act, which call for setting up of special arrangements to ensure children mental health is not affected, is revolutionary

The act has been a bulwark against the prevalent child sexual abuse and has been able to ensure, to a great extent, that children grow up in safe, congenial environments

Q.16

ग्रामीण क्षेत्रों की तुलना में शहरी क्षेत्रों में स्वयं सहायता समूहों (एसएचजी) को मिलने वाली अनूठी चुनौतियों और अवसरों पर चर्चा कीजिए, और शहरी गरीबी से निपटने के लिए सूक्ष्म ऋण को किस प्रकार अनुकूलित किया जा सकता है।

(250 शब्द, 15 अंक)

Discuss the unique challenges and opportunities Self Help Groups (SHGs) encounter in urban areas compared to rural ones, and how can microfinance be adapted to tackle urban poverty.

(15 marks, 250 words)

Self-help groups (SHGs) are groups of 10-20 members who come together to pool their resources and savings so as to get access to better credit and financial services and use collective effort for manufacturing.

SHGs are mostly concentrated in rural areas in India ~~but~~ because they encounter unique challenges in urban areas:

- 1) Trust: SHGs in rural areas have members ~~living~~ living nearby, whose socio-economic conditions are similar, thereby creating trust. That might not be the case in urban settings.
- 2) Access to formal financial institutions obviates the need for such SHGs.
- 3) Lack of government support since the

NABARD led SHG-bank linkage program is concentrated in rural areas.

Nonetheless, urban SHGs do offer

opportunities to their members:

1) Migrant labour may face difficulty in getting access to bank services directly.

SHGs can step in here

2) Rural SHGs can often engage informal economic activities, providing the members a source of income \rightarrow making masks, bags.

Similarly we can have SHGs making garments or running community kitchens

3) They can pool their resources to group insurance

4) Help the government in poverty alleviation programmes \rightarrow loans given to street vendors, if given to their SHGs, can help them start bigger business together

How ^{can} microfinance be adapted to tackle urban poverty?

- 1) Starting a similar SHG-bank linkage programme especially for urban areas
- 2) Link urban SHGs with urban cooperatives to create synergies between the two
- 3) Government should promote formation of such SHGs so as to train them and give them skills collectively, which are specific to urban areas.
- 4) Government welfare scheme targeting malnutrition can have last-mile delivery through such SHGs.
- 5) Need to ensure that the microfinance is used for productive assets

The push to rural SHGs has helped create a dense network of such groups. A similar push is required in urban areas to ensure that urban poverty alleviation programmes get success

Q.17

अमेरिका और भारत के मध्य राजनयिक संबंधों के सन्दर्भ में मानवाधिकार संबंधी मुद्दों और लोकतांत्रिक मूल्यों के प्रभाव का परीक्षण करें। इन चिंताओं ने द्विपक्षीय संबंधों को किस प्रकार प्रभावित किया है तथा इन मुद्दों से उत्पन्न तनाव को कम करने के लिए क्या किया जा सकता है? (250 शब्द, 15 अंक)

Examine the influence of human rights issues and democratic values on the diplomatic relationship between the U.S. and India. How have these concerns affected bilateral engagements and what can be done to mitigate tensions arising from these issues? (15 marks, 250 words)

For the past few decades, relationship between US and India has strengthened and acquired depth at unprecedented speed. But human rights issues raised by US from time to time and claims of 'backsliding' of democracy in India have remained an irritant

Influence of human rights issues

- ↳ US throughout 1990s and early 2000s tried to intervene in Kashmir conflict
- ↳ During recent protests (farmers 2020, CAA 2019), US criticized India

Influence of democratic values

- ↳ Democracy remains a core binding value
- ↳ It has deepened the relationship between Civil societies of the two nations
(through track-2 diplomacy)

How concerns about human rights and democratic backsliding have affected the relationship?

- ↳ India has always maintained that US need not interfere in its internal matters
- ↳ Criticism of internet shutdown in Kashmir post 2019 abrogation by US led to India's assertion that it does not need 'lecturing'
- ↳ While defense relationship has deepened and there is bipartisan acceptance on India's importance in US, certain groups have reignited the debate on human rights frequently
- ↳ India's concerns after the January 6 Capitol Riots was a reflection of India's assertion that it too can criticize US on such issues
- ↳ Despite these political criticisms, the strategic and economic partnership has only deepened ~~leg~~ new initiatives on emerging critical technologies, space etc

Measures to mitigate the tensions

- ↳ Multi-track diplomacy to make US aware of India's difficult security situation in a volatile neighbourhood
- ↳ Appreciation of differences in the arrangement of democratic setup in the two countries
- ↳ Sending political delegations and observers during elections
- ↳ Avoiding unnecessary political criticism

India's prioritisation of national interests and exercise of its strategic autonomy is bound to encounter criticism from competitive powers. But it is in the interest of both US and India to work together to uphold democratic world order

Q.18

द्वैश्विक उन्नति के बावजूद दक्षिण एशिया में भारत के समक्ष आने वाली भू-राजनीतिक चुनौतियों का परीक्षण करें। भारत अपने क्षेत्रीय नेतृत्व को मजबूत करने के लिए इन चुनौतियों का सामना किस प्रकार कर सकता है?

(250 शब्द, 15 अंक)

Examine the geopolitical challenges India faces in South Asia despite its global rise. How can India navigate these challenges to strengthen its regional leadership? (15 marks, 250 words)

Since its independence, India has encountered challenges in South Asia because of Pakistan's proxy war. India's global rise has not been able to tackle these neighbourhood issues.

Geopolitical challenges that confront India

- 1) China - Pakistan bonhomie has ensured that Pakistan remains a significant player despite its crumbling economy.
- 2) Chinese dominance: Through its Belt and Road Initiative, China has tried to seek dominance in Bangladesh and Sri Lanka.
- 3) Porous borders has allowed illegal immigrants from Bangladesh and insurgents in North East - Myanmar region to pose

threat to India's security.

- 4) Border issues: Issue of Kalapani with Nepal and fishing rights with Sri Lanka have remained irritants despite India's global rise.
- 5) Climate Change and Disasters pose threat to the entire region
- 6) Political volatility: Recent events in Bangladesh (2024), Pakistan (2023), Sri Lanka (Economic crisis 2022) and Myanmar (coup 2021) has prevented India from establishing strong stable relations

How can India navigate these challenges

- 1) Need enhanced focus on Indian Ocean for India to emerge as Net Security Provider in the region
- 2) Countering Chinese dominance requires

Western support and India must actively promote joint initiatives

eg) Sri Lanka bailout - India + Paris Club

3) Promote trade as India's trade with entire SAARC is currently less than its trade with Singapore. Need to strengthen economic relationship with Bhutan, Nepal, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka.

4) Act as regional stabilizer and promote peace and human rights in Afghanistan

5) Maintain working relationship with Myanmar Tadmadaw while encouraging talks on democracy and Rohingya Issue

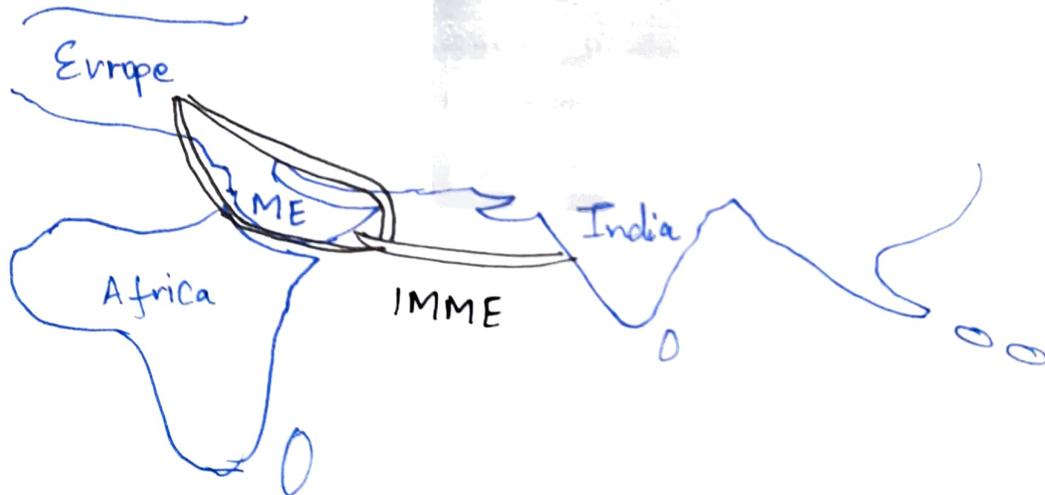
6) Prioritize national interests in its relationship in China, where trade is highly imbalanced

India needs to do more to emerge as leader of South Asia and a regional security provider

- Q.19 विश्व, विशेषकर पश्चिम के साथ भारत के संपर्क (कनेक्टिविटी) के लिए हाल ही में परिकल्पित भारत-मध्य पूर्व-यूरोप गलियारे के महत्व पर प्रकाश डालें। क्या आपको लगता है कि हाल के दिनों में भारत की विदेश नीति में परिवहन और ऊर्जा पहल को प्राथमिकता दी गई है? (250 शब्द, 15 अंक)

Highlight the significance of the recently envisaged India-Middle East-Europe corridor for India's connectivity with the world, especially the West. Do you think, in recent times, transport and energy initiatives have taken precedence in India's foreign policy? (15 marks, 250 words)

The G20 Summit held in 2023 saw many significant initiatives, ^{with} one being IMEE Corridor (India-Middle East-Europe), inaugurated to improve the connectivity between India and Europe.

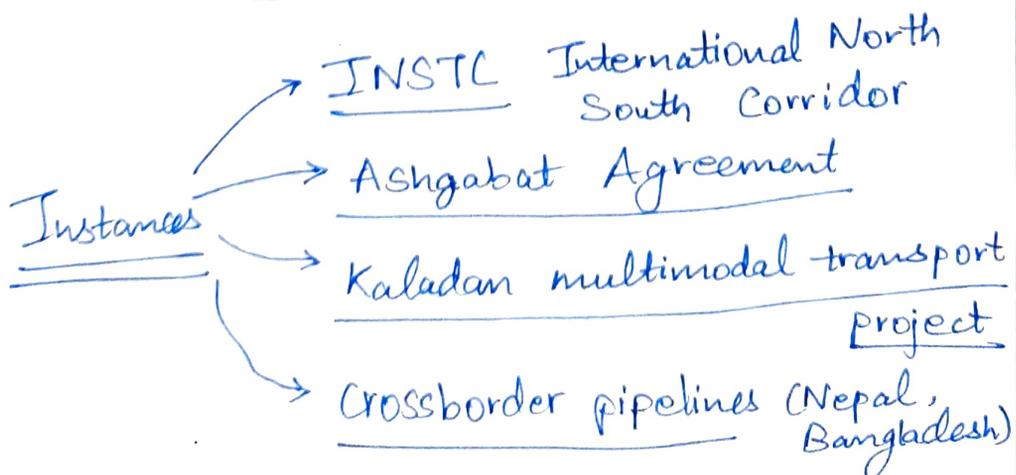


Significance

- ⇒ India-EU FTA which is under negotiation will get a boost by this connectivity project

- 2) Increasing India - Middle East ^{energy} trade in recent years, has encouraged the demand for better connectivity
- 3) India - Europe relationship is going to be one of the most consequential in upcoming trade. Both are leaders in AI, Quantum computing and space
- 4) Logistics improvement can enhance India's exports and tackle persistent Current account deficit.

Transport and Energy Initiatives taking precedences



Reasons behind rising interest :

- 1) Geoeconomics ~~is~~ is going to play a crucial role in foreign policy decisions
- 2) Energy security has become important with current demand rising at fast pace
- 3) Connectivity projects are essential to improve trade and people-to-people ties.
- 4) Enhanced focus on cross-border infrastructure to build closer ties

Transport and energy initiatives indeed are becoming a important cornerstone of Indian foreign policy due to their strategic implications.

Q.20 राजनीतिक रूप से विवादास्पद मुद्दों में हालिया वृद्धि के बावजूद, भारत-कनाडा द्विपक्षीय संबंध लोकतंत्र, बहुलवाद, आर्थिक जुड़ाव के विस्तार और लंबे समय से चले आ रहे लोगों से लोगों के संबंधों के साझा मूल्यों के लिए प्रतिबद्ध हैं। भारत-कनाडा संबंध के महत्वपूर्ण स्तंभों पर प्रकाश डालते हुए, भारत और कनाडा के मध्य सहयोग और सहभागिता के संभावित क्षेत्रों पर चर्चा करें। (250 शब्द, 15 अंक)

Despite the recent rise in politically contentious issues, the India-Canada bilateral relationship has remained committed to shared values of democracy, pluralism, expanding economic engagement and long-standing people-to-people ties. Highlighting the significant pillars of the India-Canada relationship, discuss the potential areas of cooperation and collaboration between India and Canada. (15 marks, 250 words)

India - Canada relationship stands on common values of democracy and the large Indian diaspora presence in Canada.

Despite separatist elements gaining prominence and political criticism of farmer protests by Canada, India has maintained its strategic ties.

Pillars of the relationship

- 1) Post independence relationship was rooted in scientific and technological support by Canada to Indian nuclear programme.
- 2) Huge Indian diaspora makes

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both nations crucial for each other

- 3) Indian import of fertilizers over the past decade has deepened the economic partnership.
- 4) Both countries supported each other's efforts as part of Northern Alliance in Central Afghanistan
- 5) Environment diplomacy led by Indira Gandhi and Pierre Trudeau since 1970s has been a factor that brought both nations together on international fora.
- 6) Closer ties of India with Canada have been catalyzed by relationship of both nations with US.

Potential Areas of Cooperation and Collaboration

- 1) Canada is a leading power on Quantum computing. With India's

recent Quantum Mission launch, the relationship gains significance.

- 2) Foreign Direct Investment: Indian diaspora in Canada must be incentivized to invest back in India
- 3) Academic research: India should promote semester exchange programs with Canada to counter brain drain
- 4) Tourism: Canada can be used as a template for promoting tourism. Indian diaspora and Canadians can be encouraged through easy e-Visas and better air connectivity.
- 5) Canada's cold storage expertise can be used to promote fisheries in India
- 6) Indian railways can help Canada make its rail network carbon-neutral

India and Canada share a historic relationship which must be strengthened despite intermittent irritants.