

UPSC-CSE MAINS (2023)-MODEL ANSWER

Q.1. INDEPENDENCE JUDICIAL

CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS

- Article 124
- Article 214 and 215
- Article 50
- Article 121 and 211
- Article 125 and 221

PREREQUISITE FOR DEMOCRACY

- Rule of Law
- Protection of Rights
- Promotes Fair Trials
- Promotes transparency
- Conflict Resolution

Q.2. FREE LEGAL AID

ENTITLEMENT

- SC/ST
- Women and Children
- Victims of Natural Disasters
- Individuals in Custody
- Low Income Group

ROLE OF NALSA

- Legal Literacy and Awareness
- ADR Mechanisms
- Legal Aid Clinics
- Training Lawyers
- Policy Formulation

Q.3. URBAN LOCAL BODIES

FUNCTIONAL RELUCTANCE

- Decentralization
- Manpower
- Bureaucratic Control
- Role in City Planning
- Limited Jurisdiction

FINANCIAL RELUCTANCE

- Financial Discrepancies
- Property Tax Reforms
- Bond Markets
- User Charges
- GST Compensation

Q.5. ROLE OF PRESIDING OFFICERS OF STATE LEGISLATURES

MAINTAINING ORDER

- Enforcing Rules and Procedures
- Maintaining Decorum
- Control over Proceedings
- Preventing Disruptions

ENSURING IMPARTIALITY

- Fair Allocation of Time
- Neutrality
- Guidance on Legislative Matters
- Allowing Diverse Opinions

Q.6. HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT IN INDIA

CURRENT SCENARIO

- Education Quality
- Skill Mismatch
- Teacher Training
- Nutrition
- Digital Divide

MEASURES TO ADDRESS THE INADEQUACY

- Project-Based Learning
- Industry-Academia Collaboration
- Telemedicine
- Community Kitchens

Q.7. COMPETITION COMMISSION OF INDIA

ROLE

- Advisory Role
- Market Studies
- Capacity Building
- Consumer Welfare
- Dispute Resolution

RECENT DECISIONS

- Amazon and Flipkart
- Automobile Sector
- Telecom Sector
- Real Estate Sector
- Investigative Role

Q.8. E-GOVERNANCE

EFFECTIVENESS

- One-Stop Portals
- Paperless Transactions
- Online Taxation
- Telemedicine
- Speedy in nature

TRANSPARENCY

- Real-Time Information
- Public Procurement
- RTI Online
- Open Data Initiatives

ACCOUNTABILITY

- Grievance Redressal Platforms
- Digital Attendance
- Social Audits
- Monitoring and Evaluation

Q.9. SCO

VIRUS OF CONFLICT

- Border Disputes
- Economic Disparities
- Policy Changes
- Democracy vs. Authoritarianism
- Human Rights Issues
- Resource Allocation

INDIA'S ROLE IN MITIGATING PROBLEMS

- High-level engagements
- Conflict resolution
- Trade and Investment
- Infrastructure Development
- Counter-terrorism
- Cultural Exchanges

Q.10. INDIAN DIASPORA

ECONOMIC BENEFITS

- Remittances
- Investments
- Technology Transfer
- Educational Institutions
- Market Expansion
- Promoting Indian Art and Craft

POLITICAL BENEFITS

- Bilateral Relations
- Representation in International Forums
- Policy Inputs
- Cultural Diplomacy
- Lobbying
- Diaspora Diplomacy

Q.11. INDIAN CONSTITUTION

LIVING INSTRUMENT

- Preamble
- Fundamental Rights
- Judicial Review
- Flexible Amendment Procedure
- Advisory Jurisdiction
- Emergency Provisions

NEEDS OF A PROGRESSIVE SOCIETY

- Right to Privacy (Art21)
- Right to Education
- Decriminalization of Homosexuality
- Economic Reforms
- Right against Sexual Harassment

EXPANDING HORIZONS

- Right to Clean Environment
- Right to Livelihood
- Right to Information
- Right to Die with Dignity
- Right to Internet

Q.12. GENDER JUSTICE

CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS

- Preamble
- Article 14
- Article 15(1)
- Article 15(3)
- Article 16
- Article 21

CASE LAWS

- Vishaka vs State of Rajasthan (1997)
- Joseph Shine vs Union of India (2018)
- Marital Rape
- Independent Thought vs Union of India (2017)

Q.13. REDUCED USAGES OF ARTICLE 356

LEGAL FACTORS

- Judicial Pronouncements
- Doctrine of Constitutional Mandate
- Guideline Establishment
- Recommendations of Sarkaria Commission
- Punchhi Commission Recommendations

POLITICAL FACTORS

- Coalition Politics
- Public Perception and Media
- Regional Party Strength
- Political Maturity
- International Image

Q.14. CIVIL SOCIETY GROUPS ROLE

WOMEN'S EFFECTIVE PARTICIPATION AND REPRESENTATION

- Sensitization Programs
- Leadership Training
- Policy Advocacy
- Research and Documentation
- Grassroot Mobilization

CHALLENGES

- Patriarchal Society
- Low Representation
- Lack of support system
- Safety Concerns
- Resource Constraints

WAY FORWARD

- Mentorship Programs
- Financial Grants
- Capacity Building Workshops
- Research and Data Compilation
- Networking Platforms

Q.15. THE 101ST CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT ACT

SIGNIFICANCE

- Unified Tax Regime
- Simplified Tax Compliance
- Boost to the Economy
- Enhanced Supply Chain Efficiencies
- Promotion of Digital India

SPIRIT OF FEDERALISM

- Representation of All States
- Dispute Resolution Mechanism
- Revenue Sharing
- Consensus in Decision-making
- Strengthening Cooperative Federalism

SPIRIT OF INDIAN FEDERALISM

- Complex Tax Structure
- Technological Challenges
- Compliance Burden on SMEs
- Center-State Discrepancies
- Inflationary Pressures

Q.16. PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE SYSTEM

STRUCTURE

- Standing Committees
- Ad Hoc Committees
- Departmentally Related Standing Committees
- Financial Committees

ROLE IN FINANCIAL COMMITTEES

- Scrutiny of Government Expenditure
- Expert Consultations
- Cross-Party Deliberations
- Focused Discussions
- Feedback and Recommendations
- Policy Analysis

Q.17. DEVELOPMENT AND WELFARE SCHEMES

ARGUMENT

- Focused Approach
- Resource Allocation
- Potential for Misuse
- Creation of Dependency
- Geographical Disparities

COUNTER ARGUMENT

- Social Justice
- Economic Equity
- Health and Wellbeing
- Educational Equity
- Infrastructure Development

Q.18. SKILL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES

SUCCESS OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT

- Recognition of Informal Skills
- Industry-Specific Training
- International Collaborations
- Skill Universities
- Skill India Mission
- NSDC Partnerships

EDUCATION AND SKILL DEVELOPMENT

- Foundation for Skill Development
- Literacy and Numeracy Skills
- Soft Skills Development
- Research and Development
- Job Readiness
- Entrepreneurship

WAY FORWARD

- Increase employability
- Continuous Upgradation
- Lifelong Learning
- Inclusive Approach
- Industry 4.0
- Regional Skill Development Centres

Q.19. NATO AND INDIA

BENEFITS

- Security Cooperation
- Economic Stability
- Climate Change
- Healthcare
- Education
- Democratic Values

CHALLENGES

- Russia Relations
- Economic Pressures
- Technology Transfer Restrictions
- Resource Allocation
- Sovereignty Concerns

Q.20. INTERNATIONAL MARITIME ORGANISATION

PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT

- MARPOL Convention
- Ballast Water Management
- Antifouling Systems
- Recycling of Ships
- Oil Pollution Preparedness

MARITIME SAFETY AND SECURITY

- SOLAS Convention
- Piracy and Armed Robbery
- Maritime Security
- Seafarer's Rights
- Legal Framework

UPSC CSE - Mains 2024

Question Booklet

GS- II

Q1. "Constitutionally guaranteed judicial independence is a prerequisite of democracy." Comment. 10M

Q2. Who are entitled to receive free legal aid? Assess the role of the National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) in rendering free legal aid in India. 10M

Q3. "The states in India seem reluctant to empower urban local bodies both functionally as well as financially." Comment. 10M

Q4. Compare and contrast the British and Indian approaches to Parliamentary sovereignty. 10M

Q5. Discuss the role of Presiding Officers of state legislatures in maintaining order and impartiality in conducting legislative work and in facilitating best democratic practices. 10M

Q6. The crucial aspect of the development process has been the inadequate attention paid to Human Resource Development in India. Suggest measures that can address this inadequacy. 10M

Q7. Discuss the role of the Competition Commission of India in containing the abuse of dominant position by the Multi-National Corporations in India. Refer to the recent decisions. 10M

Q8. E-governance, as a critical tool of governance, has ushered in effectiveness, transparency and accountability in governments. What inadequacies hamper the enhancement of these features? 10M

Q9. 'Virus of Conflict is affecting the functioning of the SCO'. In the light of the above statement, point out the role of India in mitigating the problems. 10M

Q10. The Indian diaspora has scaled new heights in the West. Describe its economic and political benefits for India. 10M

Q11. The Constitution of India is a living instrument with capabilities of enormous dynamism. It is a constitution made for a progressive society." Illustrate with special reference to the expanding horizons of the right to life and personal liberty. 15M

Q12. Explain the constitutional perspectives of Gender Justice with the help of relevant Constitutional Provisions and case laws. 15M

Q13. Account for the legal and political factors responsible for the reduced frequency of using Article 356 by the Union Governments since mid-1990s. 15M

Q14. Discuss the contribution of civil society groups for women's effective and meaningful participation and representation in state legislatures in India. 15M

Q15. Explain the significance of the 101st Constitutional Amendment Act. To what extent does it reflect the accommodative spirit of federalism? 15M

Q16. Explain the structure of the Parliamentary Committee system. How far have the financial committees helped in the institutionalisation of Indian Parliament? 15M

Q17. "Development and welfare schemes for the vulnerable, by its nature, are discriminatory in approach." Do you agree? Give reasons for your answer. 15M

Q18. Skill development programmes have succeeded in increasing human resources supply to various sectors. In the context of the statement analyse the linkages between education, skill and employment. 15M

Q19. 'The expansion and strengthening of NATO and a stronger US-Europe strategic partnership works well for India. What is your opinion about this statement? Give reasons and examples to support your answer. 15M

Q20. 'Sea is an important Component of the Cosmos'. Discuss in the light of the above statement the role of the IMO (International Maritime Organisation) in protecting the environment and enhancing maritime safety and security. 15M

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Model Answers

GS- II

Q.1 "Constitutionally guaranteed judicial independence is a prerequisite of democracy." Comment.

How to approach the question

Introduction

- Write about Constitutionally guaranteed judicial independence briefly

Body

- Write the different Constitutionally Guaranteed provisions Judicial Independence
- Write how constitutionally guaranteed judicial independence is a prerequisite of democracy
- Write suitable way ahead in this regard

Conclusion

- Give appropriate conclusion in this regard

Introduction

Constitutionally guaranteed judicial independence refers to the autonomy and impartiality of the judiciary system, which ensures that it operates without interference from other government branches or any external forces. Article 50 of the Constitution ensures complete independence of the judiciary and frees it from executive control. This **framework ensures the protection of human rights, the rule of law, and a checks-and-balances system**, which are foundational elements of a democratic society.

Body

Constitutional Provisions/Articles Related to Independent Judiciary in India

- **Article 124 (Appointment of Supreme Court Judges):** It deals with the establishment and constitution of the Supreme Court. It outlines the process of appointment of judges, ensuring that they are **selected based on merit and qualifications**, thereby maintaining judicial independence.
- **Article 214 and 215 (High Courts in States):** It governs the establishment and powers of High Courts in states. Like the Supreme Court, the appointment and functioning of High Court judges are **designed to be independent**.
- **Article 50 (Separation of Judiciary from Executive) :** This article explicitly mandates the separation of the judiciary from the executive, fortifying its independence. The **Kesavananda Bharati case** emphasized the importance of this separation as a part of the basic structure doctrine.
- **Article 121 and 211 (Restriction on Legislative Discussion):** It prohibits the Legislature from discussing the conduct of judges, thereby **protecting judicial independence**.
- **Article 125 and 221 (Salaries and Allowances):** These articles ensure that the salaries and allowances of judges **cannot be altered to their disadvantage** after their appointment, guarding them against financial manipulation.
- **Article 32 and 226 (Power of Judicial Review):** It gives the Supreme Court and High Courts the power of judicial review. Eg: **the Supreme Court's decision to strike down the NJAC Act in 2015** which was designed to replace the collegium system, thereby reaffirming the independence of the judiciary.

- **Security of Tenure for Judges:** Judges of the High Courts and the Supreme Court enjoy security of tenure until the age of retirement, which is 62 and 65 respectively under **Articles 124 and 217**. It **safeguards judges from arbitrary removal**, allowing them to adjudicate without fear or favour.

Constitutionally Guaranteed Judicial Independence as a Prerequisite of Democracy

- **Rule of Law:** For a democracy to function, laws must be interpreted and applied uniformly. The **Keshavananda Bharati vs. State of Kerala case** in India stands as a testament which held that the basic structure of the Constitution cannot be diluted by legislative amendments.
- **Protection of Rights:** The judiciary's independence safeguards citizens' fundamental rights. The **Habeas Corpus case during the Emergency in India** showcased the significance of judicial independence for upholding individual rights against unchecked executive power.
- **Promotes Fair Trials:** The **Nirbhaya case in India** saw the judiciary ensuring a fair trial even amidst massive public outcry, upholding the principle that everyone deserves a fair trial.
- **Promotes transparency:** Judicial independence helps to promote transparency in the legal system, as judges are free to make decisions without fear of retribution or interference.
- **Encourages accountability:** When the judiciary is independent, it can hold those in power accountable for their actions and ensure that they are subject to the same laws as everyone else. Ex. NJAC case.
- **Conflict Resolution:** The judiciary plays a critical role in resolving disputes. The **Ayodhya Verdict**, delivered by the Supreme Court, resolved a decades-long communal conflict through a well-reasoned judgment.
- **Judicial Review:** Judiciary's role in reviewing laws is critical. The Supreme Court's decision to **decriminalize Section 377**, which discriminated against LGBTQ+ individuals, exemplifies the judiciary's role in upholding constitutional morality.
- **Public Faith:** An independent judiciary, by its judgments and actions, ensures public trust. The **Right to Privacy judgment** is a prime example, where the judiciary aligned with evolving global norms, securing citizens' faith in democratic principles.

Way Ahead

- **Judicial Reforms:** Overhauling the judiciary system to expedite case resolutions is essential. **Introducing AI-enabled systems** can facilitate quick case analyses and help in categorizing and prioritizing them based on urgency and other criteria, **thereby reducing pendency**.
- **Legal Literacy:** Developing **online platforms and community radio programs** for legal literacy can be a vital step. Moreover, incorporating legal education in school curriculums from a young age can foster a generation that is conscious of their rights and duties.
- **Technology Integration:** Leveraging **blockchain technology** for transparency in government transactions and procurement processes can be a futuristic approach to curb corruption and foster trust in governmental operations.
- **Inclusive Policy Making:** **Crowdsourcing policy suggestions** through online platforms can be an innovative approach to involve citizens from diverse backgrounds in the policymaking process, encouraging a democratic spirit of participation and inclusivity.
- **Responsible Citizenship:** Promoting responsible citizenship through national programs that **encourage critical thinking, empathy, and understanding of diverse perspectives** can foster a society where democratic values are deeply ingrained in every individual.

Conclusion

Moving forward, it is imperative to work on strengthening the judiciary while promoting other democratic tenets to forge a society rooted in justice, equality, and the collective good. It is through **the**

collective responsibility and active participation of all stakeholders that a resilient and vibrant democracy can be achieved.

Other Essential Elements Which are a Prerequisite of Democracy

- **Free and Fair Elections:** Democracy hinges on the people's ability to choose their leaders through free and fair elections. In India, **the Election Commission** ensures the smooth functioning of electoral processes, as seen in the massive logistical exercise of the 2019 General Elections.
- **Educated Electorate:** An educated electorate can make informed choices, vital for the proper functioning of a democracy. Various initiatives like **the Right to Education Act** aim to foster an educated populace.
- **Media Freedom:** A free media is the fourth pillar of democracy, providing the public with unbiased information. The role of media in uncovering scams, such as the **Adarsh Housing Society scam**, underlines its essential function in a democratic setup.
- **Civil Liberties:** The safeguarding of civil liberties, as embodied in the **Fundamental Rights outlined in the Indian Constitution**, is central to a democratic society, ensuring individuals' freedom and equality.
- **Economic Equality:** Efforts like the implementation of schemes **such as MGNREGA** aim to reduce economic disparities, offering a level playing field for all citizens and promoting democratic participation.
- **Inclusive Policies:** The Government of India has **introduced several inclusive policies, including reservations** for historically marginalized communities, aiming to uplift them and ensure equitable representation in various spheres.
- **Accountable Leadership:** Leadership accountability is pivotal in democracy. The **introduction of the Goods and Services Tax (GST)**, for instance, underwent intense scrutiny and debates in the Parliament, showcasing democratic accountability in action.
- **Decentralization of Power:** **The 73rd and 74th constitutional amendments** were revolutionary in decentralizing power, providing a framework for local self-governance, thereby promoting grassroots democracy and participation.

Q.2 Who are entitled to receive free legal aid? Assess the role of the National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) in rendering free legal aid in India.

How to approach the question

Introduction

- Write about free legal aid and NALSA briefly

Body

- Write Entitlement to Free Legal Aid
- Write the role of the National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) in rendering free legal aid in India
- Write issues faced by NALSA
- Write suitable way ahead in this regard

Conclusion

- Give appropriate conclusion in this regard

Introduction

Free legal aid is a provision granted to ensure that individuals, regardless of their economic or social status, can access justice. Article 39A of the Indian constitution provides Equal justice and free legal aid. In India, the **National Legal Services Authority (NALSA)** is mandated to provide free and competent legal services to the weaker sections of society, as per the **Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987**.

Body

Entitlement to Free Legal Aid in India

- **SC/ST:** Constitution has always emphasized the upliftment of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, **recognizing them as historically marginalized communities**. By entitling them to free legal aid, it ensures that they can contest injustices without worrying about the financial implications.
- **Women and Children:** Women and children often find themselves **at a disadvantageous position in many socio-legal contexts**. Offering them free legal aid not only fortifies their legal standing but also signals a nation's commitment to protecting its most vulnerable.
- **Victims of Natural Disasters:** Calamities such as floods, droughts, and earthquakes can lead to a sudden change in socio-economic statuses. By providing victims of **such tragedies with free legal aid**, the state ensures that they can reclaim their rights, property, or any other legal redress.
- **Individuals in Custody:** Being in custody often restricts an individual's access to resources. By providing **free legal aid to detainees, especially juveniles**, India upholds the principle of a fair trial, ensuring that one's economic status isn't a barrier to justice.
- **Persons with Disabilities:** Their unique challenges make it crucial **to offer them a level playing ground in the legal arena**. By extending free legal aid, India ensures their rights and dignities are preserved.
- **Low Income Group:** Economic inequalities should not translate into unequal access to justice. By providing free legal aid to those **below a certain income threshold**, the system guarantees that justice is not a luxury but a right.
- **Victims of Trafficking:** Human trafficking is a grave violation of human rights. By extending free legal aid to its victims, the system ensures **they get a fair chance to reclaim their lives and seek justice** against their oppressors.
- **Industrial Workmen:** Industrial disputes, often involving powerful corporate entities, can be intimidating for individual workmen. By ensuring free legal aid, **their rights are protected against potential exploitation**.
- **Senior Citizens:** With age often comes vulnerability. Certain states recognizing this have extended free legal aid to senior citizens, ensuring they can seek justice without being burdened by legal fees.
- **Victims of Ethnic Violence:** **Ethnic and communal violence** can have devastating impacts on individuals and communities. By providing them with free legal aid, the state ensures that they can seek redress and reconciliation, a step towards restoring normalcy.

Role of NALSA

- **Legal Literacy and Awareness:** NALSA actively initiates legal literacy programs, notably deploying **the "Legal Aid Clubs" in schools** to foster a culture of legality from a young age.
- **ADR Mechanisms:** Promoting the Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) mechanisms, including Lok Adalat's, which have significantly reclogged the judiciary. For instance, **the "National Lok Adalat" held across the country in 2015 resolved around 1.25 crore cases**.

- **Legal Aid Clinics:** NALSA has established Legal Aid Clinics in rural and remote areas. These clinics, often **run by law students under the guidance of experienced lawyers**, bring justice to the doorsteps of people in the remotest corners of the country.
- **Training Lawyers:** It undertakes the training of panel lawyers to ensure they offer competent and professional services. The "**NALSA (Free and Competent Legal Services) Regulations, 2010**" is a step towards standardizing the quality of legal aid providers.
- **Policy Formulation:** NALSA works tirelessly in policy formulation, **coming up with several schemes to provide free legal aid** to different sections of the society including women, SC/ST, and persons with disabilities, among others.
- **Legal Aid Counsels:** Appointing legal aid counsels in various courts to **offer free legal services** has ensured that many get representation in court, irrespective of their economic status.
- **Legal Assistance to Prison Inmates:** Notably, NALSA has been reaching out to prison inmates, with legal aid clinics being **established in jails, helping in reducing under-trial population** significantly by facilitating bail and plea bargain.
- **Community Outreach:** NALSA has initiated community outreach programs targeting marginalized groups, **including awareness camps in rural areas** to help people understand their legal rights and remedies available.
- **Legal Research:** By engaging in legal research, NALSA has been constantly working towards the betterment of legal aid services, **understanding the dynamically changing needs** and adapting its strategies accordingly.

Issues faced by NALSA

- **Insufficient Funds:** NALSA has repeatedly faced the challenge of limited funds which restrain its capabilities to undertake larger programs. Eg: **the allocation of funds for legal aid services is far less than what is required**, limiting the outreach of these crucial services.
- **Quality of Legal Aid:** There have been reports which brought forward the question of the quality of services offered by the panel lawyers. It's imperative to note instances where **due to the lack of proper training and remuneration, lawyers sometimes provide sub-par legal aid**.
- **Awareness:** Despite NALSA's efforts, a substantial part of the population remains unaware of the free legal services available.
- **Bureaucratic Hurdles:** NALSA often encounters delays in executing its programs due to bureaucratic hurdles in coordinating with other governmental bodies. The **slow pace of approvals and clearances** has sometimes resulted in missed opportunities and delays in justice delivery.

Way Ahead

- **Increasing Budget Allocation:** It is imperative to increase budget allocations to NALSA to enhance its functioning and ensure that **more individuals can avail of free legal aid**.
- **Strengthening Infrastructure:** There is a dire need to **improve the infrastructure of the existing legal aid clinics**. Inclusion of modern facilities and technology can significantly uplift the standard of services provided.
- **Digital Outreach:** Given the digital era, leveraging digital platforms could remarkably amplify the reach of NALSA. **Online workshops, webinars, and social media campaigns** can be potent tools in enhancing outreach and awareness, as seen in other governmental initiatives.
- **Training:** Continuous training and workshops for legal aid counsellors are essential. This could be achieved by **collaborating with renowned law institutions and universities** for regular training programs, enhancing the quality of legal aid provided.

- **Law School Engagements:** Engaging law school students actively in legal aid services not only gives them **practical exposure but also fosters a sense of social responsibility**, nurturing a generation of socially conscious lawyers.
- **Focused Campaigns:** Initiating focused awareness campaigns, specifically targeting **rural and remote areas using regional languages and local influencers**, could work wonders in increasing the reach of NALSA's services.
- **Streamlining Processes:** It is essential to streamline processes to bypass bureaucratic hurdles, **possibly through a digital transformation, fostering efficiency in operations**, and ensuring that legal aid reaches the beneficiaries promptly and effectively.

Conclusion

Free legal aid is a cornerstone in ensuring justice for all and the efforts by NALSA, despite facing certain hurdles, have been commendable in reaching out to marginalized sections of society. Going ahead, it is **incumbent upon the society and the system to work synergically to remove impediments and foster a culture of justice that is truly inclusive.**

Q.3 "The states in India seem reluctant to empower urban local bodies both functionally as well as financially." Comment.

How to approach the question

Introduction

- Write about urban local bodies (ULBs) in India briefly

Body

- Write how the states in India seem reluctant to empower urban local bodies functionally
- Write how the states in India seem reluctant to empower urban local bodies financially
- Write suitable way ahead in this regard

Conclusion

- Give appropriate conclusion in this regard

Introduction

Urban Local Bodies (ULBs), encompassing Municipalities and Municipal Corporations, were envisaged as the administrative units responsible for ensuring proper governance in urban areas, deriving their mandate from **the 74th Constitutional Amendment Act, 1992**. This amendment aimed to strengthen local self-governance in cities and towns.

Body

Reluctance to Empower ULBs Functionally

- **Decentralization:** Despite provisions in the 74th amendment, decentralization remains a tall order. **States have been hesitant in delegating substantial powers to ULBs**, therefore impeding grassroots democracy.
- **Manpower:** ULBs face a dearth of skilled manpower across states, hampering functional efficacy. For instance, in many smaller cities and towns, **there is a scarcity of qualified personnel to manage intricate urban planning needs**, leading to mismanagement and chaos.

- **Bureaucratic Control:** In numerous states, bureaucrats retain substantial control over ULBs. It fosters a lack of initiative and creativity in local governance solutions, **evidenced in cities like Lucknow**, where bureaucrat-led committees often override local decisions.
- **Role in City Planning:** Although ULBs are supposed to spearhead city planning, they are often confined to marginal roles. **In Bengaluru, for example, many vital city planning initiatives are undertaken by state agencies**, bypassing the municipal corporation.
- **Lack of Autonomy in Service Delivery:** Services such as water supply and waste management predominantly remain under state government control. **In cities like Delhi, the multiplicity of authorities has resulted in fragmented governance**, impacting service delivery adversely.
- **Limited Jurisdiction:** Many ULBs have confined jurisdiction, not encapsulating several pivotal urban development sectors. **In Hyderabad, for instance, several peri-urban areas are not under the ULB**, resulting in unplanned and haphazard development.
- **Solid Waste Management:** Taking the case of Mumbai, the ULB has limited control over the comprehensive management of solid waste. Due to this limitation, **issues like the Deonar dumping ground crisis erupted**, marking a significant failure in managing urban waste.

Reluctance to Empower ULBs Financially

- **Dependence on State and Central Grants:** A significant number of ULBs are financially dependent on state and central grants. For instance, the **municipalities majorly rely on funds from the state**, thereby experiencing financial crunches in the absence of regular grants.
- **Financial Discrepancies:** ULBs across states face financial discrepancies and mismanagement, which often lead to allegations of financial irregularities amounting to crores. Eg: **Recent corruption case of the Municipal Corporation of Gurugram (2022)**.
- **States have not been setting up their State Finance Commissions:** Very few states established separate state finance commission. Also, as per Finance commission report there is issues in functioning of this body as well.
- **Property Tax Reforms:** Many states hesitate to hand over the reins of property tax reforms to ULBs, thereby limiting their financial autonomy. E.g.: **in Karnataka, ULBs have limited control over determining the property tax rates**.
- **Bond Markets:** Despite the success stories like **the Pune Municipal Corporation** raising funds through bond markets, many states have not proactively encouraged other ULBs to tap into this financial resource, limiting their avenues for capital acquisition for developmental projects.
- **User Charges:** States often show hesitancy in allowing ULBs to rationalize user charges for the services they provide. For instance, in many cities, the **pricing for utilities like water and sewage has remained unchanged** for years, affecting the revenue streams of ULBs negatively.
- **Public-Private Partnerships (PPP):** While the PPP model has seen successful implementation in projects **like the Hyderabad Metro**, there is a broader reluctance in promoting ULBs to adopt this financial model for urban development, inhibiting innovative financial solutions.
- **GST Compensation:** The ongoing tussles over GST compensation have added financial strain to ULBs. Post-GST implementation, **many ULBs faced a reduction in their revenue as their share of taxes got significantly affected**, imposing a dire need for compensation to maintain financial health.

Way Ahead

- **Strengthening Institutional Capacity:** Initiatives could include establishing learning and development centres with a focus on urban governance, **fostering collaboration with**

international urban development organizations to learn and incorporate best practices globally.

- **Fiscal Autonomy:** Introduce legislative amendments allowing ULBs to identify and leverage new avenues for revenue generation, **such as implementing localized environmental taxes or encouraging local entrepreneurial ventures** through favourable tax regimes.
- **Enhance revenue collection:** Urban local bodies can focus on improving tax collection efficiency and expanding the tax base. This can be achieved through better tax administration, leveraging technology for tax assessment and collection, and implementing effective property tax reforms
- **Public Participation:** To foster a more inclusive governance model, public participation should be encouraged through innovative platforms **such as mobile applications where locals can provide feedback and suggestions**, or even partake in community budgeting.
- **Explore innovative financing mechanisms:** Urban local bodies can explore innovative financing mechanisms such as municipal bonds, impact bonds, and land value capture to raise funds for infrastructure projects
- **Implement user charges:** Introducing user charges for services such as water supply, solid waste management, parking, etc., can help generate revenue to cover operational costs and invest in infrastructure development.
- **Partnerships with Academic Institutions:** This could involve **setting up think tanks or research cells** that focus on urban planning and development, offering fresh and academically sound perspectives for urban governance, thereby encouraging evidence-based policymaking.
- **Technology Integration:** Initiatives could range from developing AI-based systems to manage utilities more efficiently to **utilizing blockchain for ensuring transparency in tender processes and contracts**, thus heralding a new age of technological governance.
- **Public-Private Partnerships:** Creating a facilitative environment for public-private partnerships should be a priority. **ULBs could set up specialized cells to foster and manage these partnerships**, encouraging innovation and efficiency in urban development projects.

Conclusion

The **vision of decentralized urban governance, as outlined in the 74th Constitutional Amendment Act, remains partially fulfilled** due to the states' reluctance to transfer both functional and financial powers to ULBs fully. Addressing this gap is crucial **to foster self-reliant, efficient, and responsive urban local bodies**, paving the way for sustainable and inclusive urban development in India.

Q.4 Compare and contrast the British and Indian approaches to Parliamentary sovereignty.

How to approach the question

Introduction

- Write about Parliamentary sovereignty briefly

Body

- Write differences between the British and Indian approaches to Parliamentary sovereignty
- Write similarities between the British and Indian approaches to Parliamentary sovereignty

Conclusion

- Give appropriate conclusion in this regard

Introduction

Parliamentary sovereignty refers to the supreme legal authority vested in the parliament, empowering it to enact, amend, and repeal laws, superseding any other government institution. While derived from the British colonial legacy, **the Indian and British approaches to parliamentary sovereignty have evolved distinctly** due to the diverse constitutional provisions and judicial interpretations.

Body

Differences between the British and Indian approaches to Parliamentary sovereignty

Aspect	British Approach	Indian Approach
Constitutional Foundation	The UK has an uncodified constitution , which implies that parliamentary sovereignty is more flexible and is based on conventions and judicial precedents.	India has a codified constitution that clearly delineates the powers of parliament, thereby providing a structured approach to parliamentary sovereignty.
Judicial Review	The UK parliament is sovereign , and theoretically, its decisions cannot be overridden or reviewed by the judiciary.	In India, Constitution supremacy is preferred over parliamentary sovereignty. The Indian judiciary has the power to review parliamentary decisions and even strike down laws passed by the parliament if found unconstitutional, marking a limit on parliamentary sovereignty .
Federal Structure	The UK has a unitary system where the sovereignty of parliament is indivisible and centralized.	India has a federal structure with a division of powers between the central and state legislations, with a bicameral parliament, which implies a shared sovereignty that is more complex and nuanced.
Amendment of Constitution	The UK parliament can alter any law , including constitutional principles without any special procedure, as it does not have a written constitution	In India, amendment to the constitution involves a more rigid process , requiring a special majority and, in some cases, ratification by a majority of the state legislatures, indicating a restriction on the sovereignty of the parliament to amend the constitution at will. Also, Basic structure of constitution cannot be amended as per Keshavananda Bharati Case.
Individual Rights	The UK has not adopted a formalized system of protecting individual rights through a	India has a comprehensive list of fundamental rights embedded in its constitution, which cannot be

	constitutional document. It relies heavily on common law and statutes passed by parliament.	overridden by parliamentary laws. The judiciary here has a robust role in protecting these rights, sometimes even against parliamentary enactments
Emergency Powers	The UK parliament possesses wide-ranging powers to enact laws during emergencies without much constitutional restriction , attributing to its uncodified constitution.	In India, although the parliament has expansive powers during emergencies, these are constitutionally regulated to protect federal structure and individual rights , with a clear demarcation of powers and responsibilities,

Similarities between the British and Indian approaches to Parliamentary sovereignty

- **Supreme Legislative Body:** In both the UK and India, the parliament holds the supreme position in legislative matters. The UK Parliament has passed landmark legislations like **the Brexit bill**, while the Indian Parliament has been instrumental in passing **the GST Bill**.
- **Accountability of the Executive:** The executive branch in both nations is answerable to the Parliament. Eg: **Prime Minister's Questions (PMQs) in the UK** and in **India, ministers are regularly questioned** by members on the floor of the house.
- **Legislative Processes:** Both nations have rigorous processes for law-making. Eg: The **Anti-defection Law in India** went through thorough scrutiny and debates before being added to the constitution. Similarly, the **UK's Investigatory Powers Act** was debated extensively in Parliament.
- **Financial Control:** Both **parliaments oversee the national budget** and economic policies. Eg: In India, the Union Budget is presented annually in the Lok Sabha. In the UK, the Chancellor of the Exchequer presents the budget in the House of Commons.
- Both systems recognize the principle of **separation of powers**, where the judiciary is independent of the legislature and executive
- **Privilege Motion:** In both countries, this **motion is a powerful tool for MPs**. Eg: In 2018, privilege motions were moved in India against the then Defence Minister over the Rafale deal. In the UK, similar motions have been raised over issues of misleading the parliament.
- **The role of the monarch:** in both systems is largely ceremonial, with limited powers to veto legislation or dissolve parliament.
- **Committee System:** Committees play a crucial role in detailed analysis of issues. Eg: The **Public Accounts Committee** in both the UK and India oversees government expenditures to ensure they are lawful and efficient.
- **Question Hour:** This is an essential tool for the opposition and other MPs to seek answers. Eg: **In India, during the 2020 monsoon session**, issues ranging from the COVID-19 pandemic to border tensions were raised. The UK sees similar rigorous question hours.
- **Adjournment Motion:** It's a tool to discuss urgent matters. Eg: In India, adjournment motions have been raised regarding issues like the **Delhi riots**. In the UK, such motions were raised during emergencies like the **2008 financial crisis**.

Conclusion

Overall, while the British and Indian parliaments share a democratic foundation and function based on representing the will of the people with a structured legislative process, they **differ fundamentally in their approach to parliamentary sovereignty**, rooted in their constitutional setups.

Q.5 Discuss the role of Presiding Officers of state legislatures in maintaining order and impartiality in conducting legislative work and in facilitating best democratic practices.

How to approach the question

Introduction

- Write about Presiding Officers of state legislatures briefly

Body

- Write the role of Presiding Officers of state legislatures in maintaining order
- Write the role of Presiding Officers of state legislatures ensuring impartiality in conducting legislative work
- Write the role of Presiding Officers of state legislatures in facilitating best democratic practices

Conclusion

- Give appropriate conclusion in this regard

Introduction

Article 178 of the Constitution of India allows all states and union territories for the appointment of a speaker. Presiding Officers of state legislatures are fundamental in steering the direction of legislative proceedings, ensuring a balanced, orderly, and impartial environment that facilitates democratic practices. They are entrusted with the **duty of overseeing the conduct of members while abiding by the rules of the house.**

Body

Role of Presiding Officers of state legislatures in Maintaining Order

- **Enforcing Rules and Procedures:** Presiding officers play a decisive role in enforcing the rules and procedures diligently: In 2018, **Karnataka assembly speaker showed remarkable skill in overseeing a high-stakes floor test**, sticking to procedures.
- **Maintaining Decorum:** Ensuring the house runs smoothly while upholding the dignity of the house is crucial. Eg: In various instances, **the Odisha assembly speaker has taken steps to maintain decorum by issuing advisories** for members to adhere to the rules of the house.
- **Control over Proceedings:** They maintain control over proceedings, effectively managing discussions and debates. Eg: Tamil Nadu assembly speaker has displayed control over proceedings, **ensuring that debates remain orderly and issues are discussed comprehensively.**
- **Preventing Disruptions:** Presiding officers hold the responsibility of preventing disruptions and ensuring a smooth session. Eg: In the Madhya Pradesh assembly, various presiding officers over the years have **employed mechanisms to curtail disruptions and maintain order.**

Role of Presiding Officers of state legislatures ensuring Impartiality in Conducting Legislative Work

- **Fair Allocation of Time:** Presiding officers ensure fairness by allotting adequate time to different parties for discussions. Eg: In the Maharashtra assembly, time allocation for discussions has often been seen to be managed judiciously to accommodate diverse viewpoints.
- **Neutrality:** Maintaining neutrality and not favouring any side is vital in their role. Eg: During contentious debates, speakers in the Bihar assembly have **showcased neutrality, offering equal opportunities to all parties** to express their views.
- **Guidance on Legislative Matters:** They offer impartial guidance on legislative matters and disputes. Eg: **In the Uttar Pradesh assembly, speakers have historically provided rulings** that abide by legislative norms, setting a precedent for unbiased governance.
- **Allowing Diverse Opinions:** Facilitating a platform where diverse opinions are expressed forms an essential part of their role. Eg: **In Kerala, presiding officers have encouraged members to voice diverse perspectives**, fostering a rich and inclusive discussion environment.

Role of Presiding Officers of state legislatures in Facilitating Best Democratic Practices

- **Promoting Inclusive Discussions:** Ensuring that discussions are inclusive and represent a variety of perspectives. Eg: In assemblies like West Bengal, **efforts have been made to incorporate varied perspectives**, promoting inclusivity in debates.
- **Encouraging Research-Based Discussions:** Facilitating discussions grounded in thorough research to enhance the quality of debates. Eg: **In Punjab assembly, initiatives to foster research-based discussions** by encouraging legislators to delve deep into the subjects at hand.
- **Training and Development:** Facilitating training sessions for members to grasp parliamentary procedures better. Eg: **Workshops and seminars have been arranged in various assemblies**, including Rajasthan, to help members understand the nuances of legislative proceedings.
- **Transparency:** Enhancing transparency in the working of the legislative assembly. Eg: Many assemblies, including Himachal Pradesh, have adopted measures to increase transparency **through live telecasts and documentation of sessions**, thus inviting public scrutiny and awareness.

Conclusion

Thus, presiding officers stand as a pillar of democratic functionality, assuring that the legislative process is conducted with order, impartiality, and adherence to the best democratic practices. The endeavour should be to **continue fortifying this role with greater responsibility and diligence to serve the evolving democratic norms and practices.**

Q.6 The crucial aspect of the development process has been the inadequate attention paid to Human Resource Development in India. Suggest measures that can address this inadequacy.

How to approach the question

Introduction

- Write about the importance of Human Resource Development briefly

Body

- Write about the current scenario of Human Resource Development in India
- Write the measures that can address this inadequacy

Conclusion

- Give appropriate conclusion in this regard

Introduction

Human Resource Development (HRD) refers to the systematic approach to nurturing and fostering the talents, competencies, and skills of individuals, thereby contributing to national development.

Unfortunately, **India has faced persistent challenges in ensuring optimal HRD**, which is crucial to capitalize on its substantial demographic dividend. The rapid economic growth of the past decade has ensured India a place among the top 5 movers on GDP growth, but the country ranks a low 132 among on the HDI.

Body

Current Scenario of Human Resource Development in India

- **Education Quality:** The **ASER report** has been pivotal in illuminating the deficiencies in the learning outcomes especially in government schools. It has constantly highlighted a dearth of necessary infrastructural facilities and underlined the lack of comprehension abilities among students. A study by the Azim Premji Foundation showed that almost 60 percent of school children in India cannot access online learning opportunities.
- **Skill Mismatch:** Various industry reports have expressed concerns over the **30% portion of Indian graduates being unemployable**, mainly due to the lack of industry-relevant skills.
- **Teacher Training:** The education sector has faced setbacks with instances **such as the B.Ed degree scams**, spotlighting the urgency to establish stringent norms and standards for teacher training to ensure quality education is imparted to students.
- **Healthcare Infrastructure:** The **National Family Health Survey** depicts discernible gaps in the healthcare infrastructure, pinpointing the need for robust systems especially in rural areas to ensure accessibility to primary healthcare facilities for all.
- **Nutrition:** **Despite initiatives like the POSHAN Abhiyan** aimed at reducing malnutrition, the ground reality remains grim with many parts of the country still grappling with malnutrition issues, indicating a need for stronger implementation and broader outreach. In the 2022 Global Hunger Index, India ranks 107th out of the 121 countries
- **Digital Divide:** The **COVID-19 pandemic** starkly highlighted the digital divide with many students, particularly from economically weaker backgrounds, unable to access online education due to a lack of necessary digital tools and connectivity.
- **Lack of Vocational Training:** Despite positive steps **like the Skill India initiative**, the nation faces a pronounced gap in the availability and accessibility of vocational training.

Measures to Address the Inadequacy

- **Project-Based Learning:** **Finland's education system** is a notable example where project-based learning has been implemented successfully, fostering a culture of creativity and critical thinking among students. India could borrow cues from such models to nurture a problem-solving approach.
- **Industry-Academia Collaboration:** The **collaboration between IIT Madras and various industries** is a testament to the potential of symbiotic relationships between academia and industry, where theoretical learning meets practical demands, enhancing employability prospects.
- **Continuous Professional Development:** **Singapore** has an integrated system for continuous teacher training and development. India could take a leaf from this, encouraging teachers to engage in lifelong learning and adapt to evolving educational landscapes.
- **Telemedicine:** The successful implementation of telemedicine in states **like Kerala during the COVID-19 pandemic** demonstrated how technology can be utilized to bridge healthcare gaps, presenting a viable model for other states to emulate.

- **Community Kitchens:** The **Amma Unavagam initiative in Tamil Nadu** is a stellar example where community kitchens have been utilized to address malnutrition while also supporting local farmers.
- **Incubation Centres:** The success stories coming from incubation centres **like those at IIT Bombay** signify the potential of fostering innovation at the educational institutional level, thus promoting research and development.
- **Mobile Education Units:** Initiatives such as **the digital bus project in Maharashtra** have showcased the efficacy of mobile education units in bridging the digital divide and promoting digital literacy.
- **Mentorship Programs:** Mentorship programs **like those initiated by organizations such as the WISE (Women in Science and Engineering)** in various countries could serve as an exemplary model to foster gender equality in the academic and professional spheres.
- **Skill Festivals:** Countries **like Germany** have showcased the efficacy of promoting vocational training through festivals and fairs, where individuals get a platform to exhibit their vocational skills and learn about diverse career avenues.

The Ministry of Education (MoE) in India also has various schemes for human resource development.

Some of these schemes include the Samagra Shiksha Scheme to provide quality education in Madrasas, the Mid-Day Meal Scheme, the National Achievement Survey (NAS), and Infrastructure Development in Minority Institutes (IDMI).

Conclusion

Overall, to foster a vibrant and dynamic workforce, India must adopt a multi-faceted approach to human resource development. This **involves nurturing talent right from the grassroots level through robust educational reforms, fostering skill development** through well-structured programs, and creating a supportive ecosystem for research and innovation.

Q7. Discuss the role of the Competition Commission of India in containing the abuse of dominant position by the Multi-National Corporations in India. Refer to the recent decisions.

How to approach the question

Introduction

- Write about the Competition Commission of India briefly

Body

- Write about the role of the CCI in containing the abuse of dominant position by the Multi-National Corporations in India
- Write the recent decisions illustrating CCI's role

Conclusion

- Give appropriate conclusion in this regard

Introduction

The **Competition Commission of India (CCI)** was established as a statutory body to enforce the **Competition Act of 2002**, ensuring fair competition in the market by preventing practices that have an adverse effect on competition in India. Its role becomes vital in **mitigating and regulating the abuse of dominant positions by Multi-National Corporations operating in India.**

Body

Role of CCI in Containing the Abuse of Dominant Position with Relevant Examples

- **Advisory Role:** Leveraging its expertise, CCI advises the government on competition policy frameworks. It **advocated for policy amendments regarding competitive neutrality**, ensuring a level playing field for both governmental and private enterprises.
- **Market Studies:** The Commission periodically undertakes detailed market studies to understand the prevalent conditions and designs its regulations accordingly. Eg: **CCI examined the burgeoning e-commerce sector in India** to pinpoint competition issues.
- **Capacity Building:** CCI recognizes the necessity of capacity building for its personnel. It often **collaborates with international competition bodies like the U.S. Federal Trade Commission** for workshops, thereby elevating its approach towards handling complex issues with global insights.
- **Consumer Welfare:** In its pursuit to shield consumers from inflated prices and compromised quality, **CCI penalized cement companies for forming cartels that drove prices artificially high**. This proactive measure protected consumers from unwarranted financial strain.
- **Dispute Resolution:** CCI has facilitated resolution in **disputes concerning film releases and unfair tactics** employed by cinema halls, thus ensuring that the entertainment sector adheres to principled business practices, maintaining a balance in the industry.
- **Collaboration with Other Agencies:** To enhance its efficacy, **CCI collaborates globally with institutions like the European Commission**, nurturing a learning ecosystem that aids in combating anti-competitive practices holistically, drawing from a rich repository of global experiences.
- **Public Awareness:** Through **initiatives like “Competition Advocacy and Awareness,”** CCI extends its reach to stakeholders across sectors, imparting knowledge on competition laws and the merits of fair market practices.

Recent Decisions Illustrating CCI's Role

- **Amazon and Flipkart:** It launched a probe into the **alleged anti-competitive agreements between e-commerce giants Amazon and Flipkart, and smartphone brands**. The focal point here was the exclusive launch of mobile phones on these platforms.
- **Automobile Sector:** CCI embarked on investigations into the practices of several automobile manufacturers, scrutinizing their control over the spare parts and services market, **a notable case being that against Hyundai Motor India**.
- **Telecom Sector:** The telecom sector also came under **CCI's scrutiny with a special focus on mergers and acquisitions**, aiming to prevent monopolistic tendencies and to foster a competitive environment, safeguarding the consumer interests in terms of pricing and service quality.
- **Real Estate Sector:** The commission delved into the real estate sector, investigating companies over anti-competitive practices. Cases **such as those involving DLF** have highlighted the need for a level playing field and protecting the interests of homebuyers.
- **Digital Payment Platforms:** CCI's intervention with **platforms such as Google Pay and Paytm** coming under scrutiny to ensure fair competition and to foster a landscape where various players can operate without undue restrictions, promoting trust in digital transactions

- **Investigative Role:** CCI has a well-structured system for investigating allegations of anti-competitive behaviors. For instance, **in 2019, it launched an investigation into Google for allegedly abusing** its dominant position in the mobile operating system and relevant markets.
- **Regulatory Oversight:** CCI maintains the competition spirit in corporate mergers and acquisitions. Eg: **its inspection of the merger deal between Zomato and Uber Eats**, evaluating its repercussions on the competition within the online food delivery sector.

Conclusion

The Competition Commission of India has played a pivotal role in fostering a competitive market environment in India by diligently working to curb abuses of dominant positions by Multi-National Corporations. **The continuous vigilance of the CCI is crucial in the dynamically evolving market landscape to foster sustainable economic development in India.**

Q.8 e-governance, as a critical tool of governance, has ushered in effectiveness, transparency and accountability in governments. What inadequacies hamper the enhancement of these features?

How to approach the question

Introduction

- Write about e-governance briefly

Body

- Write how e-governance has ushered in effectiveness, transparency and accountability in governments
- Write inadequacies hampering the enhancement of these features
- Write suitable way ahead in this regard

Conclusion

- Give appropriate conclusion in this regard

Introduction

E-governance refers to the application of **information and communication technology (ICT)** to deliver government services, exchange information, conduct transactions between government-to-customer (**G2C**), government-to-business (**G2B**), government-to-government (**G2G**), as well as back-office processes and interactions within the entire government framework.

Body

E-Governance Ushered in Effectiveness, Transparency, and Accountability in Governments in the following ways

Effectiveness

- **One-Stop Portals:** Comprehensive platforms **like the UMANG app, which are offering over 1200 services**, diminish the hassle of visiting multiple websites or offices, thereby enhancing the citizen-government interaction and streamlining procedures.
- **Paperless Transactions:** The **e-office initiative** has fostered an environment where a substantial number of governmental transactions are conducted peerlessly. It conserves resources and significantly reduces the time typically lost in manual handling, thereby enhancing efficiency.

- **Speedy in nature:** Reduces time delay in implementing or providing information .Eg. E.Seva of Andhra Pradesh Government
- **Online Taxation:** Digital platforms facilitating e-filing of taxes have simplified the taxation process manifold. **Websites like the Income Tax India e-filing site** have reduced paperwork, improved accuracy, and allowed for quicker processing of tax returns.
- **Telemedicine:** Through platforms **like e-Sanjeevani** supporting remote consultations and digital prescriptions, citizens in remote areas can access healthcare services more effectively, demonstrating a significant step towards equitable healthcare.

Transparency

- **Real-Time Information:** It has enabled the deployment of platforms **such as "MERIT India,"** which offers real-time insights into the electricity market, ensuring transparency in power management through an open dissemination of data, fostering an environment of trust and reliability.
- **Public Procurement:** The **Government e-Marketplace (GeM) in India** has revolutionized public procurement by offering a transparent platform for government departments and vendors, minimizing corruption and ensuring fair market practices.
- **RTI Online:** The **digitization of the Right to Information (RTI) application process** has fostered greater transparency, enabling citizens to easily access information and encouraging open dialogue between the government and its constituents.
- **Open Data Initiatives:** Open data platforms grant public access to various government datasets, encouraging **data-driven decision-making** and fostering a transparent government system.

Accountability

- **Grievance Redressal Platforms:** Digital platforms **like CPGRAMS** have been pivotal in ensuring governmental accountability, offering a structured system for lodging and monitoring complaints, enhancing the responsiveness of the administration to public grievances.
- **Digital Attendance:** Implementing systems like **the Aadhaar Enabled Biometric Attendance System (AEBAS)** has fostered a culture of accountability, ensuring punctuality and regular attendance of government employees, which is crucial for operational efficiency.
- **Social Audits:** The advent of e-governance has facilitated social audits, a participatory process where community members collaboratively evaluate government programs and schemes, **holding authorities accountable for their actions.**
- **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Tools such as **PRAGATI** work towards a centralized monitoring of essential programs and projects, holding agencies accountable, and ensuring timely implementation.

Inadequacies Hampering E-governance Development

- **Digital Divide;** As per India development review Access to the internet through any kind of device was found to be far better in urban India at 44 percent than in rural areas at 17 percent.
- **Cybersecurity Concerns:** The increasing number of cyber-attacks, including high-profile cases **such as the 2021 Air India data breach affecting 4.5 million customers globally,** casts doubt on the security measures protecting sensitive data in e-governance platforms.
- **Privacy Concerns:** The large-scale collection of personal data through platforms **like Aadhar has ignited debates on potential privacy violations,** spotlighted in various Supreme Court hearings, emphasizing the necessity for robust data protection laws.

- **Complex User Interface:** Some platforms suffer from user-unfriendly designs, creating hurdles for users, especially the elderly. The **initial version of the Aarogya Setu app faced criticism** for its complex interface before updates were implemented to enhance usability.
- **Limited Interoperability:** These systems frequently demonstrate limited interoperability, **constraining the fluid exchange of information between different governmental platforms**. It slows down processes and requiring users to submit the same data on multiple platforms.
- **Inefficient Backend Administration:** These platforms are marred by outdated backend administrative processes, diminishing the pace and efficiency of services. Eg: **manual entry of data in some government offices creates a bottleneck** in the quick dispensation of services.
- **Low infrastructure connectivity:** mobile tower connectivity, especially in Naxal districts is very poor.
- **Language Barrier:** The limited availability of e-governance services in vernacular languages restricts usability, **particularly amongst non-English speaking individuals**.

Way Ahead in this regard

- **Digital Literacy:** Need to promote digital literacy through innovative grassroots campaigns that utilize local knowledge hubs **such as "Panchayat Bhavans"**. Also, **introducing digital literacy as a compulsory subject in school curricula** can equip the next generation with digital skills.
- **Cybersecurity Measures:** Enhancing the trust in e-governance platforms involves crafting a multi-tier cybersecurity framework. **Creating a national cybersecurity hotline** could be a step forward in providing immediate assistance in cases of cyber threats or frauds.
- **Infrastructure Development:** Bridging the digital divide necessitates infrastructure development inclusive of **establishing community internet centres in rural areas**, facilitated by renewable energy solutions to counter power instability.
- **Multilingual Platforms:** To reach the diverse linguistic demographic of India, it is imperative to develop **e-governance platforms that are multilingual and include voice-assisted services** to aid those who are unable to read, fostering inclusivity and accessibility.
- **Backend Digitization:** Using **AI and machine learning can automate routine tasks**, thus elevating the efficiency and speed of service delivery. **Blockchain technology could further enhance transparency** and reduce errors in these processes.
- **User-Friendly Interfaces:** Innovating e-governance platforms with intuitive and user-friendly interfaces, **facilitated with video tutorials and 24/7 helpline services** can ensure that users from all age groups can navigate the platforms with ease.
- **Interoperable Systems:** Need to facilitate a smooth, secure, and seamless data exchange. For this, **creating a universal digital ID for citizens** could be a ground-breaking step in this direction, simplifying interactions with various governmental platforms.
- **Quick Redressal Mechanisms:** To foster trust in e-governance, it is pivotal to establish quick redressal mechanisms that **utilize AI to promptly identify and sort grievances**, alongside establishing dedicated fast-track redressal channels for urgent issues.
- **Training Programs:** Regular **training programs coupled with hands-on workshops** should be designed for government personnel to keep them abreast with the evolving digital landscape and enhance their efficiency in service delivery.

Conclusion

E-governance has indeed revolutionized the functioning of governments, the journey is far from over. Addressing the existing inadequacies and forging a way ahead with innovative, inclusive, and secure strategies can further deepen the impact of e-governance, **creating a governance model that is truly by the people, for the people, and of the people**.

Q.9 'Virus of Conflict is affecting the functioning of the SCO'. In the light of the above statement, point out the role of India in mitigating the problems.

How to approach the question

Introduction

- Write about the SCO' briefly

Body

- Write how Virus of Conflict is affecting the functioning of the SCO
- Write about the role of India in mitigating the problems

Conclusion

- Give appropriate conclusion in this regard

Introduction

The **Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), 2001** stands as a pivotal entity fostering regional stability and cooperation across member nations, **entailing economic, military, and cultural collaborations**. SCO shoulders the critical role of harmonizing relations and nurturing collaborative initiatives amidst a diverse set of ideologies, economic standings, and geopolitical narratives. In 2017, at the historic summit in Astana, *India*, and Pakistan officially *joined SCO* as full-fledged members.

Body

Virus of Conflict is affecting the functioning of the SCO in the following ways

- **Border Disputes:** The historical canvas of the SCO is painted with severe discord emanating from long-standing border disputes. For instance, **the Indo-Pak disagreement over the Kashmir region** has been a flashpoint for decades.
- **Economic Disparities:** Economic philosophies within the SCO witness significant disparities. Eg: **Russia endorsing a socialist-oriented economy**, starkly different from **China's controlled market economy**.
- **Policy Changes:** Changing geopolitical dynamics have led to fluid alliances within the SCO, demanding a balanced approach to policy formulation. Eg: **India's growing closeness to the US and other western nations**.
- **Democracy vs. Authoritarianism:** The SCO presents a melange of governance styles, with **India's vibrant democracy** standing in contrast to **authoritarian setups seen in nations like China** which often seeds ideological clashes.
- **Human Rights Issues:** Human rights issues are a source of friction within the SCO. Instances such as the **global concern over human rights situations in Xinjiang, China**, demand a tactful approach to sustain cooperation among member nations.
- **Resource Allocation:** Conflicts also arise from disagreements over resource allocation, **such as water disputes seen in Central Asian countries**, emphasizing the need for adept negotiation to foster equitable resource distribution and maintain peace within the SCO umbrella.

India's Role in Mitigating Problems

- **High-level engagements:** For instance, **India gave the health acronym** ('H' for Health-care cooperation, 'E' for Economic cooperation, 'A' for Alternate Energy, 'L' for Literature and Culture 'T' for Terrorism free society, 'H' for Humanitarian Cooperation) for strengthening the SCO cooperation.

- **Conflict resolution:** Beyond high-level meets, India can **leverage its historical non-aligned stance to mediate conflicts and disputes within the SCO** ambit, promoting peace and stability through diplomatic channels and continuous dialogue.
- **Trade and Investment:** India has been forging economic ties, encouraging partnerships through various forums **such as the SCO Business Conclave and Investment Forum**. It can further strengthen these ties by initiating more bilateral trade agreements.
- **Infrastructure Development:** India's involvement in significant regional projects **like the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC)** showcases its keenness in fostering economic harmony through infrastructure development, aiding in economic integration of the SCO members.
- **Joint Military Exercises:** India's commitment to regional security is evident through its participation in joint military drills **like the Peace Mission exercises**, which highlight its collaborative approach in ensuring stability and peace in the region.
- **Counter-terrorism:** In the **SCO's Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS)**, India has been instrumental in sharing intelligence and coordinating efforts to combat terrorism, showcasing its staunch stand against terror outfits and its emphasis on regional security.
- **Cultural Exchanges:** India has been at the forefront of promoting cultural ties, often through platforms **like the SCO Cultural Festival**, highlighting its rich cultural tapestry and fostering understanding and unity among member nations through cultural diplomacy.
- **Educational Collaborations:** To enhance humanitarian bonds, India can upscale its educational outreach by **offering more scholarships to students from SCO nations** and initiating academic exchange programs, thereby nurturing intellectual bonds among the youth of SCO nations.

Conclusion

Despite the 'Virus of Conflict' permeating the SCO, India leverages its diplomatic prowess and collaborative spirit to work towards a peaceful and cooperative regional environment. By nurturing a dialogue of understanding and fostering collaborative initiatives, **India stands as a beacon of stability, steering the SCO towards a path of harmonized and prosperous coexistence.**

Q.10 The Indian diaspora has scaled new heights in the West. Describe its economic and political benefits for India.

How to approach the question

Introduction

- Write about Indian diaspora in the West briefly

Body

- Write how the Indian diaspora has scaled new heights in the West
- Write its economic benefits for India
- Write its political benefits for India.

Conclusion

- Give appropriate conclusion in this regard

Introduction

The count of the Indian diaspora has increased 10% from 15.9 million in 2015, making it the largest in the world, according to the UN's International Migrant Stock. The **Indian diaspora in the West** becoming an influential community in several countries, **notably the US, the UK, and Canada**. The

diaspora not only showcases Indian culture but also contributes meaningfully to the societies they reside in, all while maintaining a strong bond with their Indian roots.

Body

Indian Diaspora has Scaled New Heights in the West as can be seen in these ways

- **Prominent Positions in Government:** Indian-origin politicians have been making headlines with their appointments to high offices. Eg: **Kamala Harris's election as the Vice President of the US and Rishi Sunak as the UK's Prime Minister** underscore the rising influence of the diaspora.
- **Leaders in Tech Industry:** The Silicon Valley and tech giants worldwide have witnessed the leadership prowess of Indian-origin individuals. Eg: **Sundar Pichai steering Google and Satya Nadella at the helm of Microsoft** shows Indian talent leading global technological innovation.
- **Entrepreneurship:** Entrepreneurs like **Indra Nooyi, the former CEO of PepsiCo**, have made an indelible mark on the global business landscape. Similarly, **Rajat Gupta's tenure as the Managing Director of McKinsey & Company** highlights the business acumen of the Indian diaspora.
- **Scientific Contributions:** **Dr. Venki Ramakrishnan**, a Nobel laureate in Chemistry and the President of the Royal Society in the UK, stands as a testament to the scientific achievements of the Indian diaspora.
- **Media Representation:** **Fareed Zakaria**, a prominent journalist and the host of CNN's **Fareed Zakaria GPS**, and **Dr. Sanjay Gupta**, CNN's Chief Medical Correspondent, highlight the Indian diaspora's influence in shaping global narratives through media.
- **Literary Contributions:** Writers like **Jhumpa Lahiri**, with her Pulitzer Prize-winning collection "Interpreter of Maladies", have showcased the richness of Indian storytelling on the global stage.

Economic Benefits for India

- **Remittances:** The Indian diaspora has consistently been a significant contributor of remittances globally. Recently, **India received more than \$100 billion in remittances**, with a considerable chunk coming from the diaspora in Western nations.
- **Investments:** NRI and PIO entrepreneurs like **Vinod Khosla and Rakesh Gangwal** have made substantial investments in Indian startups and businesses, providing a substantial boost to the Indian economy.
- **Technology Transfer:** Notable figures such as **Sundar Pichai and Satya Nadella** have facilitated technology transfers and collaborative innovations with Indian institutions, leveraging their positions in tech giants like Google and Microsoft.
- **Educational Institutions:** Individuals like **Shiv Nadar** have played a pivotal role in enhancing the educational landscape in India, founding institutions like **the Shiv Nadar University** that aims to offer world-class education in India.
- **Market Expansion:** Diaspora personalities like **Indra Nooyi, during her tenure as PepsiCo's CEO**, worked towards expanding the global market for Indian products, bringing an assortment of Indian flavors to the global forefront.
- **Promoting Indian Art and Craft:** Individuals in the diaspora actively promote Indian art and craft. Eg: **the UK-based "The Singh Twins"** have been instrumental in showcasing Indian art forms in the international arena, offering a substantial platform for local artisans.

Political Benefits for India

- **Bilateral Relations:** It has been instrumental in strengthening bilateral relations with countries like the US and Canada. Prominent personalities like **Nikki Haley and Kamala Harris** have helped foster better understanding and cooperation between India and their respective countries.
- **Representation in International Forums:** Individuals like **Gita Gopinath, the first woman Chief Economist of the IMF**, play pivotal roles in international forums, thereby offering India a substantial voice on global platforms.
- **Policy Inputs:** The diaspora often provides crucial inputs in policy formulations in host countries. For instance, **Indian-origin lawmakers in the UK** have been vocal about India's positions on various international issues, including supporting India's stand on global platforms.
- **Cultural Diplomacy:** The diaspora aids in cultural diplomacy through the celebration of Indian festivals abroad, thus **promoting Indian heritage and enhancing India's global image**.
- **Lobbying:** The diaspora has engaged in lobbying activities, influencing policies in Favor of India. Organizations like **the US India Political Action Committee (USINPAC)** have been quite active in this regard.
- **Diaspora Diplomacy:** India has utilized diaspora diplomacy strategically to foster goodwill and stronger ties with host nations, partly facilitated through the **annual Pravasi Bharatiya Divas event**.

Conclusion

The Indian diaspora in the West has ascended to remarkable heights, proving beneficial for India both economically and politically. Their achievements and contributions have not only elevated the community's stature but have also **turned into a bridge, fostering stronger relations between India and the world**, weaving a narrative of success, integration, and cultural harmony.

Q.11 The Constitution of India is a living instrument with capabilities of enormous dynamism. It is a constitution made for a progressive society." Illustrate with special reference to the expanding horizons of the right to life and personal liberty.

How to approach the question

Introduction

- Write what is meant by "a living instrument" in the context of the Constitution

Body

- Write about the Constitution of India as a living instrument with capabilities of enormous dynamism
- Write how the Indian Constitution Adapts to the Evolving Needs of a Progressive Society
- Write about the expanding horizons of the right to life and personal liberty in India

Conclusion

- Give appropriate conclusion in this regard

Introduction

In the realm of jurisprudence, a **"living instrument"** denotes a legal text capable of **adapting to the changing circumstances and norms of society** to remain relevant and effective. Part-xx Article 368 (1) of the Constitution of India grants constituent power to make formal amendments and empowers Parliament to amend the Constitution by way of addition, variation or repeal of any provision.

The Constitution of India, framed with foresight by the architects of modern India, embodies this principle perfectly, with its provisions demonstrating the capabilities of enormous dynamism.

Body

The Constitution of India as a living instrument with capabilities of enormous dynamism

- **Preamble:** It underwent an amendment in 1976 during the **42nd Constitutional Amendment to incorporate the words 'Secular' and 'Socialist'**. It was a reaffirmation of the commitment of the Indian state towards a secular ethos and its objective to promote a welfare state.
- **Fundamental Rights:** They have witnessed expansion through innovative judicial interpretations. Eg: **Maneka Gandhi vs. Union of India case** held the right to life and personal liberty under Article 21 to include a myriad of other rights, emphasizing its vast and encompassing nature.
- **Judicial Review:** Landmark judgments, such as the **Kesavananda Bharati vs. State of Kerala case**, reiterated the judiciary's power to review and nullify any amendments infringing on the basic structure of the Constitution, thereby ensuring its foundational principles remain unaltered.
- **Flexible Amendment Procedure:** The **101st amendment brought about the GST** aimed at streamlining India's tax structure, eliminating the cascading effect of taxes and facilitating a unified market, which is a testimony to the constitution's foresight and receptiveness to evolving economic realities.
- **Advisory Jurisdiction:** In 2004, the President sought the **Supreme Court's opinion on the constitutional validity of the Bihar Assembly's dissolution** – a perfect example of the dynamic interplay between the Executive and the Judiciary.
- **Emergency Provisions:** The **44th Amendment**, post the 1975-77 Emergency, introduced safeguards to prevent potential misuse of emergency provisions, underlining the Constitution's capability to introspect and evolve.

Ways in which Indian Constitution Adapts to the Evolving Needs of a Progressive Society

- **Right to Privacy (Art21):** The Supreme Court in the **Justice K.S. Puttaswamy (Retd.) vs Union of India case** held that the right to privacy is protected as a fundamental constitutional right, adapting to modern concerns surrounding privacy in the digital age.
- **Right to Education:** The **86th amendment in 2002, inserting Article 21A**, affirmed the right to education for all children between the ages of 6 and 14, representing a significant step towards educational inclusivity.
- **Decriminalization of Homosexuality:** The **2018 judgment in the Navtej Singh Johar vs Union of India case** decriminalized homosexuality, an exemplary adaptation to evolving human rights standards, promoting a more inclusive society.
- **Economic Reforms:** The economic liberalization, privatization, and globalization (**LPG reforms initiated in 1991**) opened up the Indian economy, inviting foreign investments and fueling economic growth, showcasing the government's readiness to adopt policies for a progressive society.
- **Right against Sexual Harassment:** The **Vishaka guidelines**, set forth in **Vishaka vs State of Rajasthan (1997)**, framed the sexual harassment at workplace prevention norms, illustrating the proactive role of judiciary in safeguarding personal liberties.

Expanding Horizons of the Right to Life and Personal Liberty

- **Right to Clean Environment:** The Supreme Court, in the **M.C. Mehta vs Union of India case (1988)**, emphasized the right to a wholesome environment as an integral part of the right to life, promoting sustainable development and conservation.
- **Right to Livelihood:** The case of **Olga Tellis vs Bombay Municipal Corporation (1985)** saw the apex court holding that the right to livelihood was encompassed under the right to life, ensuring an individual's dignity and means of living are protected.
- **Right to Information:** The enactment of the **RTI Act in 2005** facilitates transparency and empowers citizens by allowing them to access information held by public authorities, fostering a more inclusive and democratic society.
- **Right to Die with Dignity:** The court in **Aruna Ramchandra Shanbaug vs Union of India (2011)** recognized the right to die with dignity, permitting passive euthanasia under stringent guidelines, marking a significant evolution in the understanding of the right to life.
- **Right to Internet:** In **Anuradha Bhasin vs Union of India (2019)**, the Supreme Court recognized the right to access the internet as a fundamental right, underlining the necessity to adapt the constitutional rights to contemporary realities.

Conclusion

The **Constitution of India manifests as a dynamic, living document, amenable to the requisite changes** catering to the evolving society. The continuous expansive judicial interpretations, especially in safeguarding the right to life and personal liberty, bear testimony to its vibrant and living nature, **securing a dignified life for every citizen in a progressive society.**

Q12. Explain the constitutional perspectives of Gender Justice with the help of relevant Constitutional Provisions and case laws.

How to approach the question

Introduction

- Write about Gender Justice in the constitutional context

Body

- Write about the constitutional Provisions promoting Gender Justice
- Write about the case laws promoting Gender Justice

Conclusion

- Give appropriate conclusion in this regard

Introduction

In the constitutional framework, **gender justice** refers to the protection and promotion of equal rights and opportunities for all individuals, **irrespective of their gender**. It encompasses mechanisms to curtail gender-based discrimination ensuring fairness in laws, policies, and practices. The **Indian Constitution**, designed to encourage a just and equitable society, entails **various provisions for gender justice**.

Body

Constitutional Provisions Promoting Gender Justice

- **Preamble:** It inherently includes gender justice, advocating for a society where all **genders enjoy equal status and opportunities**, thus laying down a vision of gender equality which is embedded in the essence of the Indian constitution.

- **Article 14:** It guarantees that every citizen, **irrespective of their gender, is equal before the law and is entitled to equal protection**, thereby fostering a climate of gender justice through legal means.
- **Article 15(1):** This provision serves as a **shield against discrimination based on religion, race, caste, sex, or place of birth**. It ensures that individuals are not subjected to discriminatory practices based on their gender, paving the way for a society that respects gender justice.
- **Article 15(3):** Recognizing the historical disadvantage that women and children have faced, this **provision empowers the state to make special arrangements for women and children**. It aims at improving female literacy rates, enhancing women's representation in the workforce, and securing their interests.
- **Article 16:** It encompasses an all-encompassing approach to **secure equal livelihood opportunities for all citizens**, promoting gender balance and discouraging gender-based discriminations in job appointments and promotions.
- **Article 21 :** No person shall be deprived of his life or personal liberty except according to procedure established by law.” This fundamental right is available to every person respecting dignity of all gender.
- **Article 39(a):** The state is obligated to ensure that **men and women have the right to an adequate means of livelihood**. It reflects the constitutional commitment to foster a society where men and women can work side by side, enjoying equal opportunities and benefits.
- **Article 39(d):** By mandating **equal pay for equal work for both men and women**, this provision takes a significant step towards establishing gender parity in the workforce, working against the entrenched gender pay gap and fostering a culture of equality.
- **Article 42:** This article directs the state to **ensure just and humane working conditions and maternity relief**, thereby recognizing the unique biological role of women and securing their rights in the workplace.
- **Article 51A(e):** Instilling a moral duty amongst citizens to **renounce practices derogatory to the dignity of women**, this provision is a clarion call for societal change to eradicate gender biases and to foster respect and dignity for women.
- **Article 243D(3):** This article reserves not less than **one-third of the total seats for women in every Panchayat**, thus facilitating the active involvement of women in local governance and decision-making processes, and crafting a pathway for their empowered future.

Case Laws Promoting Gender Justice

- **Vishaka vs State of Rajasthan (1997):** It not only defined sexual harassment but also outlined the procedural guidelines to address such complaints, paving the way for the later **enactment of the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition, and Redressal) Act in 2013**.
- **Joseph Shine vs Union of India (2018):** It **abolished the antiquated law that considered adultery as a criminal offense**, essentially viewing women as the property of their husbands. Thus, it advanced gender justice by affirming the autonomy and equal rights of women in marriage.
- **Voluntary Health Association of Punjab vs Union of India (2013):** This case directed the government to **enforce stringent measures to curb** the deep-rooted issue of gender discrimination, reflecting in practices such as **sex selection and female foeticide**.
- **Marital Rape:** In a landmark decision, the Supreme Court ruled that marital rape constitutes a form of rape under the Medical Termination of Pregnancy (MTP) Act. The judgment was made in a ruling where the Supreme Court was interpreting the Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act

and the regulations to end discrimination against married and unmarried women by permitting abortions up to 24 weeks of pregnancy.

- **Independent Thought vs Union of India (2017):** This significant ruling **criminalized sexual intercourse with a minor wife below 18 years**, extending protection to young girls from marital rape and showcasing the judiciary's commitment to safeguarding the rights and dignity of women.
- **Anuj Garg vs Hotel Association of India (2008):** It **annulled the law that prohibited women from working in premises where liquor was served**, representing a move towards establishing gender equality in various employment sectors and rejecting patriarchal norms that restricted women's career choices.

Conclusion

Going ahead, it is pivotal to continue this trajectory to foster a society where gender is not a basis for discrimination, and gender justice is upheld in the truest sense. It reflects an **ongoing commitment to constructing a society founded on equality, unhampered by gender biases**, where every individual can live with dignity and freedom.

Q13. Account for the legal and political factors responsible for the reduced frequency of using Article 356 by the Union Governments since mid-1990s.

How to approach the question

Introduction

- Write about Article 356 of the Indian Constitution briefly

Body

- Write legal factors responsible for the reduced frequency of using Article 356 by the Union Governments since mid-1990s
- Write political factors responsible for the reduced frequency of using Article 356 by the Union Governments since mid-1990s

Conclusion

- Give appropriate conclusion in this regard

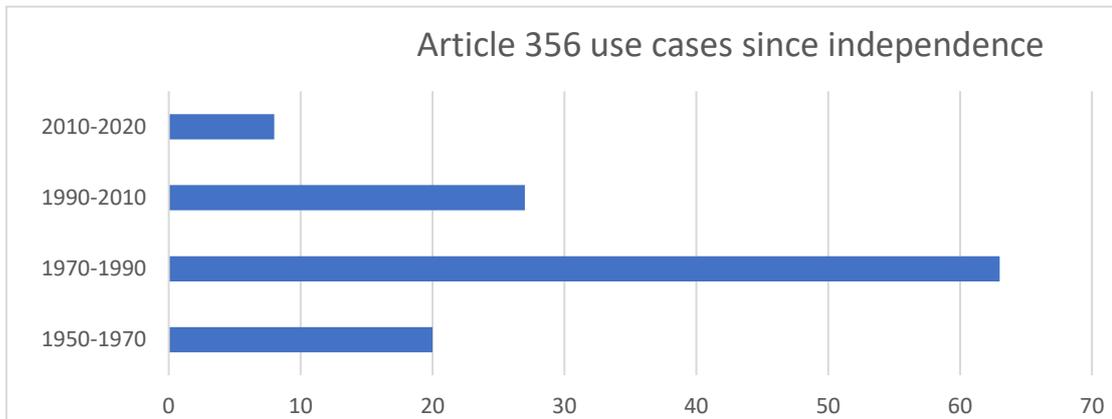
Introduction

Article 356 of the Indian Constitution empowers the President to suspend state government and impose direct central rule in a state **if he/she is satisfied that the constitutional machinery has failed in that state**. It is also called **President's Rule or State Emergency**. Though it was frequently invoked initially, since the mid-1990s, there has been a noticeable decline in its usage.

Body

Legal Factors responsible for the reduced frequency of using Article 356

Judicial Pronouncements: The **S.R. Bommai case (1994)** stands as a cornerstone in structuring the application of Article 356. As it laid down that the power of the President to dissolve a state. Article 356 use:



- Legislative assembly is subject to **judicial review**.
- **Doctrine of Constitutional Mandate:** Over the years, the courts have emphasized the federal structure, **advocating for autonomous state governance** while respecting the doctrine of constitutional mandate, encouraging a more circumscribed application of Article 356.
- **Guideline Establishment:** Through various rulings, including the guidelines set forth in the **Bommai case**, the courts have delineated the **proper circumstances and procedures** for the invocation of Article 356, creating a legal pathway that encourages judicious use of this provision.
- **Recommendations of Sarkaria Commission:** The Commission recommended a **restricted and judicious application of Article 356** to reinforce cooperative federalism, emphasizing the importance of maintaining a harmonious relationship between the centre and the states.
- **Punchhi Commission Recommendations:** This Commission further **stressed the need for restraint in employing Article 356**, proposing recommendations to nurture harmonious centre-state relations and promoting democratic governance.
- **President's Role:** The **role of the President in assessing the ground realities** has become more judicial due to the scrutiny increased post the Bommai case, fostering a more considered approach before recommending the application of Article 356.

Political Factors responsible for the reduced frequency of using Article 356

- **Coalition Politics:** The emergence of coalition politics has **nurtured collaborative governance**, reduced the impulsive application of Article 356 and promoted political harmony.
- **Public Perception and Media:** Media scrutiny and an **informed public opinion have emerged as substantial deterrents** against the arbitrary usage of Article 356, holding the government accountable and fostering democratic principles.
- **Regional Party Strength:** The rise in the strength and influence of regional parties has **cultivated a balanced power dynamic**, thereby reducing the inclination of the central government to invoke Article 356 unnecessarily.
- **Political Maturity:** India has witnessed an **evolution towards a more mature political environment**, where stability and governance take precedence over power struggles, encouraging adherence to constitutional norms.
- **International Image:** The **desire to maintain a democratic image internationally** has influenced the Union governments to adhere to constitutional norms and principles, avoiding unnecessary invocation of Article 356.

Conclusion

Thus, over the years, the **prudent legal interventions coupled with the evolved political climate** have been instrumental in reducing the frequency of invoking Article 356, fostering a harmonious and balanced governance structure. This **showcases a mature and evolving democracy that is working progressively towards fulfilling the envisioned ideals of its constitution.**

Q14. Discuss the contribution of civil society groups for women's effective and meaningful participation and representation in state legislatures in India.

How to approach the question

Introduction

- Write about civil society groups and significance of women in state legislatures briefly

Body

- Write about the contribution of these groups for women's effective and meaningful participation and representation in state legislatures
- Write challenges faced in this regard
- Write suitable way forward

Conclusion

- Give appropriate conclusion in this regard

Introduction

Civil society groups are non-governmental organizations and institutions that represent the interests and will of citizens. In the context of India, they have **played a pivotal role in encouraging women's representation in state legislatures**, which is vital for a balanced and inclusive democracy that truly represents the diverse populace of the nation.

No state has more than 20% women representation in its Assembly. Chhattisgarh has the highest representation with 18% women MLAs, while Himachal Pradesh has just one-woman MLA and Mizoram has none. Both men and women have more than 75% attendance in Lok Sabha

Body

Contribution of Civil Society Groups for Women's Effective Participation and Representation

- **Sensitization Programs: Organizations such as "Jagori" and "Swayam"** have consistently worked on sensitizing the populace about women's rights and nurturing women's participation in politics through numerous awareness programs.
- **Leadership Training: The "Women's Political Empowerment Program" executed by the Institute of Social Sciences (ISS)** stands as a monumental initiative, empowering over 15,000 women in Panchayati Raj Institutions and grooming them for greater roles in state legislatures.
- **They have also provided training and support to women candidates:** helping them to develop the skills and knowledge needed to run successful campaigns. Ex. Swayam worked for giving training about political rights .
- **Policy Advocacy: Institutions like the "Centre for Social Research"** have championed policy changes, prominently advocating for the Women's Reservation Bill, which aims to reserve seats for women in legislatures.

- **Research and Documentation:** Entities like "PRIDE India" have been industrious in documenting relevant data and propagating research-backed advocacies for women's rights and representation in politics.
- **Grassroot Mobilization:** SEWA (Self Employed Women's Association) has undertaken extensive efforts in mobilizing women at the grassroots, setting a robust foundation for nurturing women leaders for state legislatures.

Challenges

- **Patriarchal Society:** Deep-rooted patriarchal norms in states like Haryana have historically impeded women's active participation, demonstrating a glaring gender disparity in legislative representation.
- **Low Representation:** Women constitute only 10% of the total members of state legislative assemblies (MLAs) in India, which is far below the global average of 25.5%.
- **Lack of support system:** Women's representation in state legislatures is not only a matter of quantity but also of quality. Studies have shown that women MLAs face various constraints such as lack of experience, training, mentoring, networking, information, and autonomy.
- **Safety Concerns:** A report by Amnesty International found that women politicians in India face sexist abuse, rape threats, and death threats on social media platforms like Twitter. Moreover, women politicians also face physical attacks and intimidation during election campaigns and rallies.
- **Resource Constraints:** According to data from the Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR), in the 2019 Lok Sabha elections, women candidates received only 9% of the total funds declared by political parties.

Way Forward

- **Mentorship Programs:** Taking a leaf from "Women2Women" international leadership program, India could foster mentorship programs where established women leaders guide aspiring young females, sharing insights and experiences, and helping them to navigate the political landscape.
- **Financial Grants:** Encourage corporate sectors to contribute towards women's political campaigns, taking inspiration from the 'Facebook's SheLeads initiative,' which provided grants and mentorship to women-led businesses.
- **Capacity Building Workshops:** Leverage the expertise of organizations like the "National Commission for Women" which has previously organized capacity-building workshops, to foster a culture of learning and skill enhancement for aspiring women politicians.
- **Research and Data Compilation:** Organizations like "Women in Politics: India" have been tracking women's representation in Indian politics. Such platforms can be further leveraged to compile data and create comprehensive reports to aid policy recommendations.
- **Networking Platforms:** Building on examples like the "Women's Political Network" in Montenegro, India can foster platforms encouraging international collaboration and the sharing of best practices for fostering women's participation in politics.
- **Legislative Reforms:** Drawing inspiration from Rwanda, which leads in women representation in the legislature due to affirmative action, India could look towards revisiting policies and introducing reforms to ensure a mandated representation of women in state legislatures.

Conclusion

Overall, the contributions of civil society groups have initiated a positive change, albeit there is a considerable journey ahead. Enhancing educational interventions, ensuring safety, and promoting financial backing are critical paths to forge a future where women are not just spectators but active participants and leaders in the democratic processes.

Q15. Explain the significance of the 101st Constitutional Amendment Act. To what extent does it reflect the accommodative spirit of federalism?

How to approach the question

Introduction

- Write about the 101st Constitutional Amendment Act briefly

Body

- Write the significance of the 101st Constitutional Amendment Act
- Write how it reflects the accommodative spirit of federalism
- Write issues faced in this regard
- Write suitable way forward

Conclusion

- Give appropriate conclusion in this regard

Introduction

The **101st Constitutional Amendment Act** paved the way for the introduction of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) in India, replacing a plethora of central and state taxes, thereby aiming to create a unified tax regime. It is instrumental in reflecting the accommodative spirit of Indian federalism, **fostering cooperation and consensus between the central and state governments.**

Body

Significance of the 101st Constitutional Amendment Act

- **Unified Tax Regime:** It introduced a harmonized taxation system that aimed to avoid the cascading effect of taxes, a prevalent issue under the previous VAT system. This transformation led to the **integration of several central and state taxes into a single tax regime.**
- **Simplified Tax Compliance:** The taxpayers now had to adhere to a standardized process across the country, a relief particularly for service providers **like telecom companies and banks which operate across multiple states** and earlier had to comply with different state laws.
- **Boost to the Economy:** By streamlining the taxation process, the Act has fostered economic growth. For instance, the **World Bank noted an improved business environment in India** in its subsequent reports post the implementation of GST.
- **Enhanced Supply Chain Efficiencies:** The unified market facilitated by GST has significantly enhanced efficiency by **removing bottlenecks at state borders, saving time, and reducing transportation costs**, giving a significant boost to sectors like logistics and e-commerce.
- **Promotion of Digital India:** The amendment promoted digital governance **through the introduction of the GST Network (GSTN)**, which digitized the entire tax administration system. The GSTN not only facilitated the easier filing of taxes but also promoted transparency and reduced human discretion, supporting the larger objective of a Digital India.

Reflecting the Accommodative Spirit of Federalism

- **Representation of All States:** The GST Council (Article 279A (1)) is emblematic of the accommodative spirit of federalism, involving representatives from all states in its composition. It ensures that the distinct and diverse interests of different regions are taken into account while framing policies.
- **Dispute Resolution Mechanism:** This mechanism is designed to mediate conflicts between the central and state governments. Eg: **the resolution of disputes pertaining to the compensation to states during the COVID-19 pandemic**, highlighting the system's functionality.
- **Revenue Sharing:** The consensus-based revenue-sharing agreement under the GST law echoes federal cooperation. **States like Tamil Nadu, which were initially apprehensive** about potential revenue losses, **received a GST compensation of about ₹40,000 crore** during the transition period.
- **Consensus in Decision-making:** The GST Council has promoted consensus in decision-making where states actively engage in collaborative policymaking. Eg: **the council's decision to reduce tax rates on several essential COVID-19 supplies**.
- **Strengthening Cooperative Federalism:** GST Council represents the cooperative federalism spirit, where both central and state governments come together to take key policy decisions. Eg: **the rationalization of tax rates on several items over the years**, taking suggestions of different states.

Issues in Highlighting the Accommodative Spirit of Indian Federalism

- **Complex Tax Structure:** The introduction of GST brought about a **multi-tiered tax slab system**, criticized for its complexity and hindering the ease of business to a certain extent. Critics argue that a simpler tax structure would be more conducive to compliance.
- **Technological Challenges:** The initial phase of GST implementation witnessed glitches and difficulties in the GST Network (GSTN), affecting the smooth transition to the new tax regime. Eg: **Various businesses encountered challenges in filing returns**.
- **Compliance Burden on SMEs:** Small and medium enterprises faced increased compliance burdens due to complex return filing processes under GST. The **frequent changes in tax rates and rules** have also been a source of confusion for many businesses.
-
- **Center-State Discrepancies:** Incidents where states raised concerns over the central government's policies relating to GST pointed to potential discord in the federal structure. Eg: **disputes over delayed compensation payments to the states** creating a trust deficit and friction.
- **Inflationary Pressures:** Its implementation initially led to inflationary pressures, with a **noticeable increase in the prices of certain goods and services**. While it was expected to be a transitory effect, it did raise concerns among the consumers and required nuanced handling to stabilize prices.

Way Forward

- **Simplification of Tax Slabs:** Rationalizing the tax slabs could streamline the process and facilitate easier compliance. **Experts often refer to the GST regimes of other countries like Malaysia**, which has a simpler tax structure, suggesting India could take cues from these systems.

- **Technological Upgrades:** Enhancements in the GSTN system over time, focusing on a glitch-free technological infrastructure, could facilitate smoother operations. **Periodic system upgrades based on feedback** from end-users should be a continuous process.
- **Strengthening Dispute Resolution Mechanism:** Establishing a more **robust dispute resolution mechanism**, taking cues from past disputes, is essential. It would foster a harmonious centre-state relationship, paving the way for a more cohesive policy implementation process.
- **Capacity Building:** Implement **training and workshops for stakeholders to efficiently handle GST processes** by taking inspiration from successful initiatives in various states. This would ensure a smoother adaptation process for the businesses to the changing tax environment.
- **Consumer Awareness and Protection:** Lessons can be drawn from **the early phase of GST implementation**, where active communication and awareness campaigns helped in stabilizing prices and preventing undue price hikes.

Conclusion

Envisioning a future that leverages the principles of the 101st Constitutional Amendment Act can potentially nurture a cooperative federalism spirit. It is pivotal to address the existing concerns to truly harness the accommodative potential of this historical amendment in the legislative framework of India, **forging a path of harmonious and constructive federal relationships.**

Q16. Explain the structure of the Parliamentary Committee system. How far have the financial committees helped in the institutionalisation of Indian Parliament?

How to approach the question

Introduction

- Write about the Parliamentary Committee system briefly

Body

- Write the structure of the Parliamentary Committee system
- Write how the financial committees helped in the institutionalisation of Indian Parliament
- Write issues faced in this regard
- Write suitable way forward

Conclusion

- Give appropriate conclusion in this regard

Introduction

The **Parliamentary Committee system** is an essential mechanism in the legislative functioning of Indian democracy. It comprises various committees that are **broadly categorized as Standing and Ad Hoc Committees**, each playing a pivotal role in the detailed investigation and analysis of legislative proposals, budgets, and other government activities.

Body

Structure of the Parliamentary Committee System

- **Standing Committees:** These are permanent committees, set up each year to work continuously on the range of matters allocated to them. For instance, **the Public Accounts Committee (PAC)** reviews the annual audit reports of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG).
- **Ad Hoc Committees:** Formed to address specific issues, these committees exist for a limited period. A recent example is the Joint Parliamentary Committee formed to scrutinize the **Personal Data Protection Bill, 2019**.
- **Departmentally Related Standing Committees (DRSCs):** These committees are tasked with scrutinizing the **demands for grants of various ministries**. They play a critical role in examining bills and government policies related to respective ministries.
- **Financial Committees:** Such as **Estimates Committee and PAC**, they delve deep into financial matters presenting detailed reports and helping in the effective oversight of government expenditure.

The Role of Financial Committees in the Institutionalisation of the Indian Parliament

- **Scrutiny of Government Expenditure:** Committees such as labour laws and land acquisition publicly play a crucial role in scrutinizing government expenditures. Eg: the **PAC's report on the 2G spectrum allocation** brought significant irregularities to light, ensuring accountability.
- **Expert Consultations:** The financial committees frequently consult experts to deepen their understanding of intricate matters. Eg: **during the formulation of the GST Bill**, various economists and industry experts were consulted to ensure a comprehensive and feasible tax system.
- **Cross-Party Deliberations:** These platforms allow for cross-party deliberations, promoting a cooperative approach. The consensus-building during the **discussions on the GST Bill in the Rajya Sabha** standing committee, where members from different parties came together, is a testament to this.
- **Accountability and Transparency:** The various reports presented by committees have facilitated accountability and transparency in governmental actions. Eg: the detailed report by **the PAC on the controversial Rafale deal** showcased the commitment to maintaining transparency.
- **Focused Discussions:** Committees enable focused discussions providing an avenue for detailed exploration of issues. The in-depth deliberations on the intricacies of the **Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (2016) in the Joint Parliamentary Committee** are an example of this.
- **Feedback and Recommendations:** They often incorporate feedback from various stakeholders in their recommendations, such as the inputs from various industry stakeholders during the deliberations on **the Companies Amendment Bill, 2020**.
- **Policy Analysis:** Committees **such as the Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister (EAC-PM)** have offered nuanced insights on economic matters. Notably, it recommended several measures during the economic slowdown, helping steer policy directions to revive growth.

Issues Faced in the Institutionalisation of the Indian Parliament

- **Insufficient Time:** Committees sometimes have limited time to scrutinize complex bills meticulously. Eg: **the Farm Bills of 2020** were quickly pushed through the parliament, raising concerns among various stakeholders regarding the insufficient time granted for detailed scrutiny.
- **Limited Expert Consultation:** This was evident in the **discussions pertaining to the Citizenship Amendment Act**, where a broader spectrum of perspectives could have been

garnered through more exhaustive consultations with legal experts and civil society organizations.

- **Non-binding Recommendations:** As the recommendations of the committees are advisory, and not binding. Eg: **During the discussion on the Land Acquisition Bill**, many critical suggestions put forth by the committees were not incorporated in the final draft.
- **Political Partisanship:** Committees sometimes exhibit political partisanship, potentially affecting the neutrality of the reports. Eg: This has been observed in differing conclusions reached by various committees on crucial issues **such as the Rafale deal**.
- **Underutilized:** Committees have sometimes been underutilized, failing to leverage their capacity to delve deeply into complex issues. The **limited engagement with the Parliamentary Committee on Subordinate Legislation** for scrutinizing delegated legislation, is an example of this.
- **Lack of Technical Expertise:** Committee members may lack the requisite technical expertise for scrutinizing certain bills. This was notably **evident during the scrutiny of technological bills**, where deeper insights from tech experts could have significantly enriched the discussions.
- **Bypassing Committees:** For instance, many bills in the recent years have been passed without committee scrutiny, **like the Aadhaar amendment bill**, foregoing an essential step in legislative diligence and prudence.

Way Forward

- **Enhancing Timelines:** It could have facilitated a more nuanced scrutiny of legislation such as the Farmers' Bills of 2020, **allowing for detailed analysis and feedback collection** from various stakeholders including agricultural experts and farmer unions to foster a more comprehensive understanding.
- **Mandatory referring of Bills to Committees (NCRCW):** Making it a standard procedure to refer bills to relevant committees before passing should be institutionalized to guarantee that **every legislation undergoes meticulous scrutiny**.
- **Public Accessibility:** For instance, making the reports on key reforms **such as labour laws and land acquisition publicly** available would enable informed public discourse and a greater understanding of legislative nuances.
- **Regular Training for Members:** Introducing systematic training sessions for members, possibly in collaboration with reputed institutions **like the Bureau of Parliamentary Studies and Training (BPST)**, could enhance the effectiveness of committees in scrutinizing bills.
- **Strengthening the Follow-Up Mechanism:** A more structured follow-up mechanism should be established to ensure that the recommendations of committees are actively considered in parliamentary debates, leveraging **learnings from the effectiveness of such follow-ups in the UK**.
- **Utilizing Committees to the Fullest:** Utilizing committees optimally, **akin to how the Estimates Committee** has been utilized to scrutinize governmental financial proposals in detail, should be a standard approach to ensure a comprehensive review of all significant legislative and policy proposals.

Conclusion

The **Parliamentary Committee system remains a cornerstone in enhancing the efficiency, accountability, and inclusivity** of the legislative process. However, it is imperative to address the existing challenges to further institutionalize their role. Implementing the suggested way forward would

ensure a **more robust, transparent, and accountable system that upholds the democratic ethos** of the Indian Parliament.

Q17. "Development and welfare schemes for the vulnerable, by its nature, are discriminatory in approach." Do you agree? Give reasons for your answer.

How to approach the question

Introduction

- Write about the development and welfare schemes for the vulnerable briefly

Body

- Write how development and welfare schemes for the vulnerable are discriminatory in approach
- Write various counter arguments given against this view
- Write suitable way forward

Conclusion

- Give appropriate conclusion in this regard

Introduction

Development and welfare schemes are essential tools to bring about socio-economic development and uplift the underprivileged sections of society. **While they are implemented with good intentions, they can sometimes be perceived as discriminatory.** At the same time, these schemes are often seen as necessary interventions to bridge existing gaps in society.

Welfare schemes of Vulnerable

Women:

- Saubhagya
- Matruvandana Yojana
- DBT for nutrition
- Free legal aid

SC/ST/Minorities:

- USTAAD
- Skill India
- Ayushman Bharat
- Model Ekalavya School

Other

- PDS
- MGNREGA
- SKILL india
- Start up India
- DAY NRLM

Body

Development and Welfare Schemes as Discriminatory

- **Focused Approach:** A significant criticism that often surfaces is centred on **reservation policies** that extend to education and government jobs. These policies have often faced backlash because non-reserved categories view them as **discriminatory, pointing towards a dilution of meritocracy.**
- **Resource Allocation:** Welfare initiatives **such as MGNREGA** have been pivotal in providing employment opportunities in rural areas. However, a critical viewpoint highlights the potential neglect of the urban poor as the scheme is predominantly targeted at the rural populace.
- **Potential for Misuse:** As can be **seen in the case of the PDS system**, envisioned to provide essential commodities to the economically weaker sections of the society. But, it faced challenges like corruption and leakages, where grains are sometimes diverted to the open market.
- **Creation of Dependency:** Schemes that **offer free electricity or water supply for farmers** have faced criticism for fostering a dependency culture. These policies, instead of empowering the farmers to be self-reliant, dissuading them from adopting sustainable and efficient resource usage practices.
- **Geographical Disparities:** Some schemes tend to focus more on particular geographical regions **like the Prime Minister's Development Initiative for North East Region (PM-DevINE)**, creating a perception of discrimination in other regions that do not receive similar attention.

Counter-arguments: Necessity for Targeted Approaches in development and welfare schemes

- **Social Justice:** These welfare schemes aim to help disadvantaged section in society **Eg: Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao scheme** aims to address gender imbalances and promote the education and wellbeing of girl children, working towards a more equitable society.
- **Economic Equity:** For instance, **the Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana** has been pivotal in fostering financial inclusion by bringing numerous people under the formal banking sector, thus promoting economic equity.
- **Health and Wellbeing:** It is evident in schemes **like Ayushman Bharat scheme** that seeks to provide substantial health coverage to the poor and vulnerable, ensuring they have access to necessary healthcare facilities.
- **Educational Equity:** As being done under schemes **like the Mid Day Meal scheme** not only promotes education among children from disadvantaged sections but also ensures nutrition, leveraging education to fight malnutrition.
- **Infrastructure Development:** As seen in **the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana** aims at connecting rural areas with the urban cities through a network of roads, facilitating easier access to economic opportunities for rural populations.
- **Tribal empowerment:**
VAN DHAN YOJANA providing economic assistance and good market avenues for forest products.
- **Protecting culture and traditions:** Schemes like **USTAAD** providing assistance for handicraft making industry among minority community.

Way Ahead

- **Technology for Transparency:** Implement technologies **like blockchain** for transparent and accountable systems, **reflecting Estonia's digital governance model**, which uses technology to reduce bureaucracy and enhance transparency in government operations.

- **Multi-Sectoral Collaborations:** Establish collaborations between various sectors, similar to the **partnership between the Indian government and NGOs like Pratham** in the education sector, pooling resources and expertise for more substantial positive outcomes.
- **Feedback Loops:** Create mechanisms like the **“MyGov” platform**, encouraging citizens to provide feedback on various government initiatives, promoting transparency and inclusivity in governance.
- **Effective use of CITIZEN CHARTER:** For redressal grievances and feedback mechanism can improve implementation of reduce discriminate nature of scheme..
- **Decentralization:** Encourage decentralized policy formulation, **resembling the Panchayati Raj system**, where local governments have a say in the tailored development of regional schemes, fostering enhanced efficacy and localized solutions.
- **Entrepreneurship and Innovation:** Foster entrepreneurship and innovation through initiatives **similar to the Startup India program**, offering financial support, and mentorship, nurturing a culture of self-sufficiency and economic growth.
- **Sustainable Development:** Integrate sustainable approaches into welfare schemes. For instance, adopting practices from Bhutan, which prioritizes **Gross National Happiness over GDP**, focusing significantly on environmental conservation and sustainable development.

Conclusion

Going ahead, while addressing the criticisms of being potentially discriminatory, it is equally vital to appreciate the necessity of targeted interventions to foster inclusivity and equity. The way forward lies in **adopting a collaborative, technologically adept, and transparent approach to nurture a society where development is both inclusive and sustainable.**

Q.18 Skill development programmes have succeeded in increasing human resources supply to various sectors. In the context of the statement analyse the linkages between education, skill and employment.

How to approach the question

Introduction

- Write about linkages between education, skill and employment briefly

Body

- Write about the success of Skill development programmes in increasing human resources supply
- Write about the linkages between education and skill development
- Write about the linkages between skill development and employment
- Write suitable way forward

Conclusion

- Give appropriate conclusion in this regard

Introduction

In the rapidly evolving global economic landscape, the **trio of education, skill development, and employment form a symbiotic relationship** that facilitates sustained growth and development. Education forms the base, skill development shapes the abilities further, and together they forge pathways to gainful employment.

Body

Success of Skill Development Programmes in India

- **Recognition of Informal Skills:** Through initiatives such as the **Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)**, individuals with skills acquired through informal channels can gain formal recognition, enhancing their employability.
- **Industry-Specific Training: Sector Skill Councils (SSCs)**, autonomous bodies under the National Skill Development Corporation, have played a crucial role by **developing National Occupational Standards** ensuring the alignment of training programs with industry needs.
- **International Collaborations:** India has fostered collaborations with nations such as **Germany and Japan**. These collaborations have opened avenues for skill transfer, enhancing the quality of training imparted to the Indian workforce and facilitating overseas employment opportunities.
- **Skill Universities:** The emergence of institutions like the **Delhi Skill and Entrepreneurship University** reflects the growing emphasis on skill development. They offer a blend of academic and vocational education, equipping students with the skills necessary for various industries.
- **Skill India Mission:** Launched in 2015, this mission **aims to train over one crore youth annually**, focusing on the market-driven approach to create a pool of skilled professionals ready to meet the dynamic demands of various industries.
- **NSDC Partnerships:** The **National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC)** has formed **alliances with tech giants like Google**, offering digital skill training, which is instrumental in bridging the digital divide and fostering a digitally literate workforce.
- **Women Empowerment:** Through schemes like “**Nari Shakti**,” the government aims to foster skill development among women, enhancing their participation in the workforce and promoting gender equality in various sectors by offering women-centric skill development programs.
- **Minority Empowerment:** **Nai Manzil, USTAAD and MANAS** providing opportunity to conserve tradition and skills form enhancing productivity.
- **State-Level Initiatives:** For instance, in **Kerala**, programs like **Additional Skill Acquisition Program (ASAP)** focus on improving the employability of students through skill development training, thus fostering a climate of self-employment and entrepreneurship at the regional level.

Linkages between Education and Skill Development

- **Foundation for Skill Development:** For instance, the foundational knowledge acquired in subjects like **mathematics and science at school levels** lays the groundwork for specialized skill development in fields such as **engineering and technology** in later stages of education.
- **Literacy and Numeracy Skills:** Education systems across the globe focuses on imparting basic literacy and numeracy skills. **UNESCO's Literacy Initiative for Empowerment (LIFE 2006-2015)** was one such initiative aimed at promoting literacy and numeracy globally.
- **Soft Skills Development:** Educational institutions play a critical role in nurturing soft skills such as **communication, teamwork, and problem-solving** through group activities and project-based learning.
- **Research and Development:** Higher educational institutions, such as **IITs in India**, facilitate R&D through dedicated centres which foster innovation and skill development, leading to advancements in various fields and creation of skilled professionals.

Linkages between Skill Development and Employment

- **Job Readiness:** For instance, **Google's Career Certificates program** offers job-ready skills for high-demand fields, helping aspirants to kick-start their careers in fields like IT support and data analytics.
- **Entrepreneurship:** Encouraging entrepreneurship is a focal point of skill training programs. **Platforms like the Startup India initiative** foster entrepreneurial spirit by providing business knowledge and necessary skills, aiding budding entrepreneurs in establishing their ventures.
- **Upgradation of Skills:** Various initiatives focus on upskilling the existing workforce for better employment prospects. **LinkedIn, for instance, offers a range of courses for professionals** to upgrade their skills and stay relevant in the rapidly evolving job market.
- **Remote Work Skills:** The recent pandemic has accentuated the need for remote work skills. **Coursera, Udemy, and other online platforms** offer courses on remote working tools and communication skills, preparing individuals for the new normal in the employment landscape.
- **Reskilling:** Many firms are focusing on reskilling employees to adapt to changing job roles. **Amazon's Upskilling 2025 pledge** is a notable initiative in this regard, where they have committed to upskill 100,000 employees in the USA to help them move into more advanced roles.
- **Industry-Specific Skills:** Developing industry-specific skills through targeted training programs is common. Eg: **Cisco Networking Academy** provides industry-specific training in networking, cybersecurity, and programming to equip individuals with skills sought by IT industries globally.
- **Productivity:** Enhanced skills directly correlate with increased productivity. Various corporate training programs, **such as those offered by Dale Carnegie**, focus on skill development to enhance productivity in organizational settings.

Way Forward

- **Increase employability:** By adding **Industry – Education institutes collaborations**, increased practical courses in curriculum. Recent **NEP** added this feature for more skill development among youth.
- **Continuous Upgradation:** To stay relevant in a rapidly changing global landscape, it is essential to periodically update the skill training curricula. Eg: **integrate Artificial Intelligence to analyse market trends and dynamically update** the curriculum to include emerging skills.
- **Lifelong Learning:** Promoting lifelong learning should be a focal point. Online platforms **like Coursera and edX** can offer micro-credentials and nano-degrees, allowing individuals to continually upgrade their skill set throughout their careers, fostering a culture of continuous learning.
- **Digital Platforms: Virtual Reality (VR) and Augmented Reality (AR)** can be used to simulate real-world scenarios for hands-on training, providing a rich, immersive learning environment that goes beyond traditional classroom training.
- **Regional Skill Development Centres:** They can tailor training programs to the local industries' needs. For example, **a skill centre in a region known for handicrafts can offer courses in modern design techniques**, helping local artisans to innovate and compete globally.
- **Inclusive Approach:** Skill development initiatives should be inclusive, **catering to diverse groups including the differently-abled**. Implementing specialized training programs that leverage the unique abilities of diverse groups can create more inclusive
- **Industry 4.0:** Preparing for Industry 4.0 involves adapting to automation and data exchange trends. Programs should focus on training individuals in **emerging fields like Internet of Things (IoT) and robotics**, ensuring readiness for the future industrial landscape.

- **Feedback and Reviews:** Incorporating feedback loops for continuous improvement is crucial. By setting up **online portals for trainees and employers to provide feedback**, which can be analysed using AI tools to generate actionable insights for improving the training programs.

Conclusion

Overall, the efforts in nurturing education, fostering skill development, and facilitating employment avenues have sewn a rich tapestry of opportunities and growth in India. A sustained **focus on evolving and responsive skill development programs integrating global best practices and continuous innovation** will be the keystones in crafting a future where every individual can leverage their fullest potential.

Q19. 'The expansion and strengthening of NATO and a stronger US-Europe strategic partnership works well for India. What is your opinion about this statement? Give reasons and examples to support your answer.

How to approach the question

Introduction

- Write about strengthening of NATO and a stronger US-Europe strategic partnership briefly

Body

- Write how it will benefit India
- Write challenges posed by these developments for India
- Write suitable way forward

Conclusion

- Give appropriate conclusion in this regard

Introduction

The **North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), 1949** by the **North Atlantic Treaty**. It was initially established as a political and military alliance to foster collective security, has been undergoing expansion and strengthening over the past few years. **Simultaneously, the US and Europe** have been working on fortifying their strategic partnership.

Body

Benefits for India

- **Security Cooperation:** With NATO's expertise in counter-terrorism strategies, India can better secure its borders. For instance, **intelligence sharing on movements and strategies of terrorist groups** can be a crucial step towards enhanced national security.
- **Economic Stability:** A more stable US-Europe relationship can foster global economic stability, indirectly benefiting India. For instance, **the recent US-EU trade and technology council meeting** could potentially lead to improved economic policies and global economic stability.
- **Technological Advancements:** Collaboration with NATO allies can aid India in developing sophisticated defence technology, **similar to the acquisition of Rafale fighter jets from France, a NATO member.**

- **Climate Change:** India can leverage collaborations such as the US-EU partnership on the **Global Methane Pledge** to work towards its climate goals more efficiently.
- **Healthcare:** The COVID-19 pandemic showcased the importance of global collaborations. India can enhance its healthcare infrastructure with collaborative initiatives **like vaccine developments and knowledge sharing with NATO countries**.
- **Education:** Collaborations with universities in the US and Europe for student and faculty exchange programs can be intensified. The **Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degrees** is a well-known program that Indian students can increasingly benefit from.
- **Democratic Values:** India, being the world's largest democracy, can foster a closer alliance with democracies in the US and Europe, championing democratic values globally, **as seen in the recent Quad summit** where democratic nations collaborated on various issues.
- **Energy Security:** Initiatives **like the US-EU Energy Council** can be platforms where India can collaborate to secure its energy needs and work on renewable energy technologies, potentially tapping into the nuclear energy agreements like the US-India nuclear agreement.

Challenges for India

- **Russia Relations:** India's procurement of the **S-400 missile defence system** from Russia has already drawn concerns from NATO allies, potentially affecting India's relations with NATO countries while straining its historical ties with Russia.
- **Economic Pressures:** There could be pressures to comply with **economic sanctions imposed by NATO allies on other countries**, which might affect India's economic relations and trade agreements with those nations, as seen in the Iran oil trade disruptions.
- **Technology Transfer Restrictions:** India's attempts to acquire modern technology can be hampered due to restrictions imposed by NATO countries, affecting collaborative projects **such as the Fifth Generation Fighter Aircraft (FGFA) with Russia**.
- **Resource Allocation:** Aligning with NATO defence initiatives might compel India to increase its defence spending substantially, which **could divert funds from critical domestic programs such as health and education**.
- **Sovereignty Concerns:** Navigating partnerships with stronger NATO alliances may sometimes **come at the cost of compromising on strategic decisions independently**, thus posing a challenge to India's policy of maintaining sovereign decision-making in international relations.

Way Forward

- **Balanced Diplomacy:** Leveraging platforms **like the Quad**, where India maintains a cooperative strategy with the US while sustaining good relations with Russia, can serve as a blueprint for balanced diplomacy, ensuring that India doesn't compromise on its strategic autonomy.
- **Bilateral Engagements:** India's engagement in bilateral dialogues, **such as the India-France Strategic Dialogue** could be key in manoeuvring the complex geopolitics with a strengthened NATO and US-Europe partnership.
- **Self-Reliance:** The '**Aatmanirbhar Bharat**' initiative should be promoted further to foster self-reliance in various sectors including defence, reducing the dependency on NATO countries and avoiding potential pressures and sanctions.
- **Multilateral Platforms:** India should leverage platforms **like the United Nations** to voice its concerns and perspectives, thereby fostering cooperation and understanding on global issues without succumbing to the pressures of powerful alliances.

- **Educational Exchanges:** Programs such as the Erasmus+ program can be beneficial in enhancing educational exchanges, fostering understanding, and cooperation between India and European nations, further helping in building strong relations.
- **Healthcare Cooperation:** Leveraging platforms like the Global Health Security Agenda can foster healthcare cooperation, facilitating a collaborative approach to dealing with global health challenges effectively, ensuring readiness and response to health emergencies.
- **Climate Initiatives:** India can take a proactive role in global climate initiatives like the Paris Agreement, collaborating closely with US-Europe alliances to work towards a sustainable future and mitigating the impacts of climate change effectively.

Conclusion

Taking a **multi-faceted approach towards the changing global dynamics**, India should focus on fostering relations that are mutually beneficial while safeguarding its national interest, **utilizing a strategy grounded on cooperation, collaboration, and strategic autonomy.**

Q.20 'Sea is an important Component of the Cosmos'. Discuss in the light of the above statement the role of the IMO (International Maritime Organisation) in protecting the environment and enhancing maritime safety and security.

How to approach the question

Introduction

- Write pivotal role of sea and introduce about IMO briefly

Body

- Write about the role of the IMO in protecting the environment
- Write about the role of the IMO in enhancing maritime safety and security
- Write suitable way forward

Conclusion

- Give appropriate conclusion in this regard

Introduction

The sea, encompassing around **70% of the Earth's surface**, is an essential component of the cosmos, rich in biodiversity and a crucial facilitator of global trade and commerce. In this context, the International Maritime Organisation (IMO), As a specialized agency of the United Nations, IMO is the global standard-setting authority for the safety, security and environmental performance of international shipping. **Its main role is to create a regulatory framework for the shipping industry that is fair and effective, universally adopted and universally implemented major focus on prevention of marine and atmospheric pollution by ships.**

India joined the IMO in 1959.

The IMO currently lists India as among the 10 states with the 'largest interest in international seaborne trade'.

Body

Role of IMO in Protecting the Environment

- **MARPOL Convention:** This convention led by the IMO outlines the necessity to **curb various types of pollution**, including oil spills and air pollution, thereby helping to maintain the marine ecology and protecting sea life from harmful pollutants.
- **Ballast Water Management:** The IMO instituted the Ballast Water Management Convention to govern the control and management of ballast water in ships, aiming to **prevent the spread of invasive aquatic species** which can cause havoc in new environments.
- **Antifouling Systems:** The IMO enforces the **International Convention on the Control of Harmful Anti-fouling Systems** on Ships to mitigate the negative environmental effects arising from the use of harmful anti-fouling paints, protecting marine life from toxic exposures.
- **Recycling of Ships:** The **Hong Kong International Convention** led by the IMO sets standards for ship recycling, aiming to ensure that ships, when being recycled at the end of their operational lives, do not pose any unnecessary risks to human health, safety, and the environment.
- **Oil Pollution Preparedness:** Through the **Oil Pollution Preparedness, Response and Co-operation (OPRC) Convention**, the IMO works to build a global system for identifying and responding to oil pollution incidents, thus helping to mitigate the adverse effects of oil spills.

Role of IMO in Enhancing Maritime Safety and Security

- **SOLAS Convention:** Through the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS), it **dictates the minimum safety standards in the construction, equipment, and operation of merchant ships**, thereby ensuring the protection of life and property at sea.
- **Piracy and Armed Robbery:** The IMO has been proactive in countering piracy and armed robbery against ships **through various resolutions and action plans**, working alongside governments and international organizations.
- **Maritime Security:** IMO enhances maritime security **through the International Ship and Port Facility Security (ISPS) Code**, which prescribes responsibilities to governments, shipping companies, shipboard personnel, and port facility personnel to detect threats and take preventive measures.
- **Seafarer's Rights:** IMO safeguards seafarer's rights through **the Maritime Labour Convention (MLC)**, which sets out seafarers' rights to decent conditions of work on a wide range of subjects and aims to be globally applicable, readily updatable, and uniformly implemented.
- **Marine Casualty Investigation:** IMO encourages transparent and impartial marine casualty investigations. The objective is to **prevent future marine accidents** by learning from the mishaps and not to attribute liability and blame.
- **Legal Framework:** Developing a comprehensive legal framework that ensures compensation for damages resulting from oil spills is another pivotal role of IMO. The **International Convention on Civil Liability for Oil Pollution Damage (CLC)** has been crucial in this endeavour.
- **Safety Management:** IMO furthers safety management through **the International Safety Management (ISM) Code**, which provides an international standard for the safe management and operation of ships and for pollution prevention.

Way Forward

- **Policy Harmonization:** Developing a global framework that encourages **countries to align their national policies with international standards** can be a substantial step forward, offering a united front in tackling maritime challenges.

- **Sustainable Technologies:** The IMO should foster an environment that encourages the adoption of sustainable technologies in the maritime sector. Eg: **using AI to optimize routes, adopting cleaner fuels**, and encouraging the research and development of zero-emission vessels.
- **Collaborative Research:** A platform could be established to facilitate knowledge sharing and joint research initiatives to address maritime challenges. It could **foster innovation through hackathons and innovation labs**, encouraging bright minds globally to contribute their ideas.
- **Digitalization:** Digitalization should be embraced fully, fostering safer and more efficient maritime operations. Encouraging the **development of digital twins for ports and vessels** could offer remarkable strides in operational efficiency and safety.
- **Decarbonization:** Decarbonizing the maritime industry should be a priority. The IMO could encourage this through **incentives for green shipping initiatives** and fostering the development of carbon capture and storage technologies specific to maritime operations.
- **Public Awareness:** Amplifying public awareness regarding maritime safety and environmental concerns is crucial. Engaging with communities through **interactive mediums like documentaries and webinars** can foster a culture of responsibility and awareness.

Conclusion

The sea, an indispensable component of the cosmos, continues to be a focal point of global economic activities and environmental sustainability. The IMO, by further fortifying its strategies with proactive measures and global cooperation can **pave the way for a safer, secure, and environmentally sound maritime future**, harmonizing the critical relationship between the sea and the cosmos.



