
Insights Secure - 2015

General Studies Paper - 2

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[THE UNDERCOVER GROUP]

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Topic: *Role of women and women's organization (GS2)*

Q) The Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995 and the Declaration and Platform for Action set the global standard for promoting women's issues. What were these standards? Critically discuss new challenges that have emerged in past twenty years since the Declaration and Platform for Action with respect to empowerment of women around the world. (200 Words)

The Hindu

Ans:

The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, approved in September 1995 at the Fourth World Conference on Women, is a global pledge to attaining equality, development and peace for women worldwide.

The Platform for action requires immediate action by all to generate a just, humane and peaceful world based on fundamental freedoms and human rights. It reaffirms women rights as inalienable part of universal human rights, while calling upon governments to take actions in this regard by developing strategies or national plans of action to implement the Platform locally.

In the years since the Declaration, new challenges have emerged:

- rising sexual assaults against under-16 women and non-recognition of domestic violence as a crime
- gender violence in conflict-prone zones
- lower work participation rates among women
- high maternal mortality rates and prenatal selection tests particularly in South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa
- a minuscule representation in political decision-making processes

However, there are few bright spots as well that need to be up-scaled.

-Governments today realize the need of increasing focus on engendering of development as well as seeking participation of men in gender equality initiatives. Initiatives such as HeForShe and MenEngage by UN Women need to be scaled to

attain realistic outcomes

-There needs to be broader community realization regarding role of women, complemented by promoting leadership and political participation among women, improving gender parity in school enrollments and welfare programs focused on women's uplift and participation.

General Studies - 2

Topic: *Appointment to various Constitutional posts, powers, functions and responsibilities of various Constitutional Bodies.*

Q) The institution of the governor has been sidelined in the administering of tribal areas despite clear constitutional guidelines to the contrary. In the light of some of recent related events, critically comment on the statement. (200 Words)

EPW

Ans:

The Constitution of India, through Article 244, has mandated the Governor of a State with wide-ranging powers for the administration of tribal areas under the Fifth and Sixth Schedule.

The governors of the 9 states which contain Scheduled Areas, are required to make an annual report to the President regarding the administration of the Scheduled Areas of his respective state, on whose basis the Union can direct the state to execute developmental measures for such areas.

However, the feasibility of this arrangement has been questioned by the people, mainly due to the fact that the office of a governor is not an elected one and hence, he is not responsible for the well-being of the people in the Scheduled Areas. That they are widely considered as agents of the political party which occupies the Centre, further erodes their accountability.

Few recent events, such as the inaction of AP's governor against bauxite mining in tribal areas, and that of Odisha's governor against the setting up of a steel-unit by POSCO in Odisha and of bauxite mining in Niyamgiri, and the petition against the ceding of administrative power by the governor to the CM of Chhattisgarh in *Munshi vs State of Chhattisgarh* are cases in point.

The need of the hour is to sensitize State governors towards the requirements of the scheduled tribes and ensure that their appointments and later decisions are not based on political considerations. Involving the TACs of the Scheduled areas in the

governor' appointment can be an option. Also, the governor should be appointed to head the TACs instead of the State CM to ensure greater accountability from them.

General Studies - 2

Topic: *Bilateral, regional and global groupings and agreements involving India and/or affecting India's interests*

Q) If one looks at ongoing mega-regional trade agreements that are being negotiated around the world, it is apparent that India is left behind from becoming part of new interconnected global trade and investment environment. In this regard, examine why is it important for India to be part of these agreements and how it can do so. (200 Words)

Business Standard

Ans:

With tardy progress in WTO, mega regional trade agreements have emerged as an alternative. They differ from multilateral negotiations as they are discriminatory, i.e. the terms of trade are only available to member countries.

India is not a part of major trade agreement currently happening like Trans Pacific Partnership. With regional trade looking more likely to increase with the recent stalemate in WTO, it is imperative for India to participate.

Importance for India:

1. It will allow India to a large market and thus is concomitant with our Make in India policy.
2. India's niche sectors like IT, pharmaceuticals are world class and will gain a bigger market.
3. Such regional trade blocks can provide the milieu for cooperation in other areas like security, or political cooperation.

Negative implications:

1. Such trade deals often included clauses which were rejected in WTO, like more stringent Intellectual property norms, which are more likely to benefit developed countries.
2. As the case of FTAs, without concrete reforms at home to boost manufacturing, these regional agreements may provide an influx of imports rather than exports.

Steps that can be taken by India:

1. Shore up India's manufacturing sector and develop niche areas with world class quality.
2. Leverage outward FDI to enhance competitiveness by its strategic use.
3. Reforms and modernize standards and streamline procedures, making it easy for

inward FDI.

4. Increase rank in 'ease of doing business index', and increase awareness of intellectual property.

4. Increase bilateral participation as a step towards multi member trade fora.

General Studies - 2

Topic: *India and its neighborhood- relations.*

Q) Year 2000 was pivotal in the relationship between India and Russia. Examine why and also throw light on how relationship between two countries has evolved since then. (200 Words)

Article: <http://www.frontline.in/the-nation/like-days-of-yore/article6715678.ece?homepage=true>

Ans:

India soviet union relations have been booming since 1955s when soviet PM khrushchev supported India's sovereignty over disputed territory of kashmir and Portuguese coastal enclaves in India. The relationship was at peak in 1971 when soviet union helped India in Bangladesh liberation war by countering USA tactically.

But after collapse of soviet union in 90s ,Year 2000 became a momentous time when both the countries agreed for India-Russia annual summit held alternatively in their capitals. They signed strategic partnership. This provided a fixed platform for bilateral dialogues, diplomatic treaties, investment in energy, security and technology etc.

Since commencing of the annual bilateral summit, both countries have experienced boost up in diplomatic, security in terms of border and energy, and trade relations. Some of the major sector where relation evolved are:

1) Energy security: Partnership in Arctic, siberia and sakhalin oil and gas fields, along with Kudankulam nuclear power plant in Tamil Nadu.

2) Defence: Air superiority fighters like Sukhoi 30 mki, MIG29 and MIG29k, attack, anti submarine and transport helicopters, Nuclear submarine INS chakra, Aircraft carrier INS vikramaditya and many destroyers. Joint R&D, manufacturing of Brahmos missile, 5th generation fighter plane etc

3) Space: joint Research and development in space technology like Chandrayaan 2, Glonass, cryogenic engines etc

4) Economic cooperation: cooperation in BRICS bank, Trade facilitation, relaxed Visa norms etc have resulted in steep increase in bilateral trade.

5)Diplomatic:Continuous support for India's permanent seat in UN security council,Issue of Kashmir,India's support for Russia in Crimea and against sanctions by west,support in matters of middle east etc

Thus year 2000 was a pivot in India-Russia relationship which enabled both countries to enhance mutual cooperation in various sectors.

General Studies - 2

Topic: *Bilateral, regional and global groupings and agreements involving India and/or affecting India's interests*

Q) Will you support if the government invokes the Section 69A of the Information Technology Act and directs internet service providers to implement this section? Justify. (200 Words)

Article: <http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/governments-move-to-block-32-websites-draws-flak/article6743606.ece>

Ans: Section 69A of the IT Act has been one of the controversial amendment to the IT Act 2000. This gives the govt authority to block access to any web content it finds is against the national security and against social harmony.

there have been instances of this act being invoked for certain posts on social media on politicians that led to arrests as well. Though the Act itself may not do much harm but such arbitrary and politically motivated instances of invoking them can be real threats to the freedom of speech in article 19.

The anti-national element have changed their mode of operations. as can be seen in recent events , social media and certain other websites are being used in recruiting and influencing youth into terror activities or incite hatred and lead to communal violence. Cyber terrorism is on the rise as well. Such misuse of technology or open platform can not be defended as freedom of speech as article 19 itself is not absolute right but comes with certain limitations as mentioned in the constitution.

In such instances govt can definitely make use of the section 69A of IT act and direct ISPs to remove contents from public access. or in cases of non-compliance this can be punishable as well but this being a very powerful tool, any instance of invoking this act needs to be done after sufficient consultation with all the stakeholders. The motive of restricting the contents or punishing publisher should not be political but only of a matter concerning public safety,national security etc.

The policy makers and security analysts need to analyse in details the repercussions of any public ban. Alternatives like removing particular contents from the site by sending notices to ISPs and site owners need to try as well rather than full ban on the site especially in open source sites where anyone can post contents. Banning such sites like the 'Sourceforge' may not be the most ideal move as such sites are used for many positive purposes as well.

Nevertheless the thin line of balance between the freedom of speech and this controversial section 69A should be maintained before any such instances of invoking and implementing.

Topic: *Effect of policies and politics of developed and developing countries on India's interests, Indian diaspora (GS2)*

Q) Write a critical note on The Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act (FATCA)? Examine why Indian financial institutions have been asked to register with the US' Internal Revenue Service (IRS). (200 Words)

Article: http://www.business-standard.com/article/finance/10-things-you-need-to-know-about-fatca-115010100383_1.html
http://www.business-standard.com/article/companies/financial-institutions-rush-to-meet-fatca-deadline-115010100185_1.html

Ans:

Fatca is an American anti tax evasion act. It makes it mandatory for foreign financial institutions to provide information about clients who could be subject to American tax laws, and failure to do so will result in a 30% withholding tax in all payments from the US.

This required registering with the US's Internal Revenue Service through a web based platform. Since Indian companies too have substantial dealing with the US, despite the absence of an Intergovernmental agreement, they have been asked to comply.

Earlier, tax information was shared on "request", which was both slow and easy for tax evasion.

Problems with FATCA:

1. The extra territoriality of FATCA has been subject to criticism.
2. It imposes additional costs it imposes on companies which require segregating of American and non American accounts, along with other compliance standards like payment details etc.

Advantage of FATCA:

It may bring in a new global standard and increased emphasis on tax evasion. This is already been done as FATCA may be subsumed in another scheme by OECD which is supported by India. Such global standards may lower costs for tax compliance for companies.

Thus, countering tax evasion is a global concern but mutually agreed set of standards are required which do not place additional burden on institutions.

General Studies – 2

Topic: *Issues relating to development and management of Social Sector/Services relating to Health*

Q) “The quality of health services in urban and rural India, in both the public and private sectors, continues to be abysmal, as millions of patients travel to access health services elsewhere.” Critically comment. (200 Words)

The Hindu

Ans:

India as a country is trying to make it visible at global level with its efforts in development, investment etc but unfortunately we are also visible on globe with wrong reasons of health sector issues like Chhattisgarh tragedy, HIV drugs unavailability, TB again booming and many more like this. We have lot of examples of very bad quality of health services

- 1) HIV drugs and HIV kits shortage despite India being the manufacturer of it.
- 2) Sterilization deaths in many places and no punishment to anyone due to nexus.
- 3) Increasing crisis of Malaria, Dengue in many states.
- 4) TB crisis again booming.
- 5) More than half of our population is still dependent on private sector for health services which loots them many times.

On top of it India spends only 1% of GDP on health care services which is a dismal low number compared to other countries like China, US.

Also, now health care budget cuts are done to keep check on fiscal deficit which will again make the conditions worse.

We need to get our basics right and learn from our past mistakes and not repeat them in future.

We need to do following things:

- 1) We know lot of our problems are due to continued neglect, a lack of focus on prevention and insufficient investment in health, or a focus on addressing diseases i.e., the social determinants of health. We need to focus on it.
- 2) We need to learn from other areas of the world like Gaza and Africa where things got worsened due to neglect of basic things.
- 3) We need to provide sufficient nutrition, safe habitation, better air quality, sanitation, health-seeking behaviours, safety, and reduced conflict.
- 4) Government need to increase its budget and not cut it.

Our Government needs to understand that a developing country like India needs to spend on health care and so that they can better use their very good demographic dividend. Provide basic facilities. We always need to remember, prevention is always better than cure.

Topic: Government policies and interventions for development in various sectors and issues arising out of their design and implementation; Welfare schemes for vulnerable sections of the population by the Centre and States and the performance of these schemes

Q) Write a note on the Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana (PMKSY). Do you think it is better to integrate this scheme with MGNREGA as proposed by the Prime Minister? Justify. (150 Words)

Article: <http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/modi-for-merging-job-and-irrigation-schemes/article6740323.ece>

Ans: In India only around 45 % area is irrigated. To ensure the irrigation benefit to every farmer in Union Budget a new scheme was launched: Pradhanmantri Krishi Sinchayi Yojna. Under this scheme:

- Provide assured irrigation to mitigate risk to the farmer since bulk of the farm lands are rainfed and depend on monsoon. A sum of Rs.1, 000 crores is being set aside.
- Government aims to provide Soil Health Card to farmers to know the production capability of soil & its suitability for various crops.
- At macro level, river interlinking project is to taken up with an approach of comprehensive mapping & identification of water bodies.
- Satellite imagery and 3D photography could be used to guide villages to best possible sources of irrigation.

To fast tracking this scheme, it is to be integrated with NREGA. NREGA had been used for creation and augmentation of irrigation assets. The scale up and restructuring of this project will improve water use efficiency in irrigation schemes, as well as foster immediate rural employment.

As per findings of recent report of NSSO, farmers have to depend on other sources of income to sustain their livelihood; it is best suited that they get the benefit of irrigation scheme along with jobs from MNREGA. It is seen that MNREGA employed women than men, women employment can also be uplifted in rural areas.

General Studies - 2

Topic: Effect of policies and politics of developed and developing countries on India's interests

Q) India is planning to sign an inter-government agreement (IGA) with the US on the Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act (Fatca). But this has given raise to some concerns with regard to US policy on the issue at home. Examine why India wants to sign this agreement and its implications. (200 Words)

Business Standard

Ans:

Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act (FATCA) which aims to avoid tax evasion was enacted by American Government in 2010 under which American government signs inter-governmental agreement (IGA) with other countries.

The signatory country has to share information about American citizen and its companies who is investing in the signatory country. Fine of 30% of the tax evaded will be on the signatory country which has not shared information.
India Signed FATCA in April,2014.

Implications of FATCA-

- It will be binding on the signatory countries to share information which will help in containing tax evasion.
- It will help in controlling money laundering.

Concerns-

- Indian tax system don't have any provision of taxing Indian citizens (i.e. NRI) who are living and investing abroad unlike American tax system. Thus, if information is shared it will not be of much use except avoid money laundering
- 30% liability on withholding information is too high, Indian institutions have to build such system which can furnish timely information to avoid being panelised.
- There is lack of reciprocity from US counterpart
- There is a lack of symmetry in reporting standards of both the countries

Indeed, FATCA will be beneficial for both the countries in controlling money laundering but before going forward with the agreement, Indian government should strengthen its tax structure system and build infrastructure thorough which information can be shared timely

Topic: *Bilateral, regional and global groupings and agreements involving India and/or affecting India's interests (GS2)*

Q) Critically examine why the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) is important for USA. Also examine how India will get benefited if the TPP is finalized and implemented. (200 Words)

Business Standard

Ans:

Trans Pacific Partnership is a mega regional trade agreement, between twelve countries in the Asia Pacific region, including the US. It has been negotiated in secrecy, with the draft still restricted to public access.

Importance for the USA:

1. The scaling up of intellectual property rights will benefit the US corporations immensely, like music, movies, pharmaceuticals etc.
2. The increased standards can erode the cost competitiveness of its competitors.
3. It will be an alternative to the WTO talks which had recently been blocked by India.
4. The US can make inroads in the economies of Asia, which has thus far been dominated by China.

India is not a member of TPP, so implementation of TPP can erode India of some of its export markets, and lead to pushing of new IPR laws in the WTO which India has thus far objected to.

If India becomes a part of TPP, then,

1. India will have new markets for its exports, only if manufacturing becomes more competitive and other niche areas like pharmaceuticals move up the value chain by investing in research and development. Otherwise, it can be a disaster for India as the new IP laws can curb generic drugs sector.
2. India can find allies and move closer to the US as a hedge against China.

Ultimately, the costs involved are too great. The initiatives which India opposed in the WTO are included in the TPP. Unless India itself becomes a net exporter of Intellectual property products, there need to be several modifications in TPP for India to join.

Topic: *Development processes and the development industry- the role of NGOs (GS2)*

Q) Recently the government stopped foreign funding of few NGOs working in India accusing them of affecting development processes in India. Critically discuss the role of NGOs in development processes. Also comment if the government's decision is correct. (200 Words)

The Hindu

Ans:

Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) are neither a part of govt nor they work for profit or indulge in any sort of business. The NGOs work for human rights, environmental cause, for under privileged sections of society etc. India has around 2 million NGOs (2009). The NGOs are part of democratic society.

NGOs work for development process. They will lodge a PIL for some section of society for their rights to be recognized. Ex: Naz foundation works for LGBT community. Some of the NGOs work for protection of environment, by awareness campaigns how a non-planned project can prove to be hazardous to environment and ecosystem.

Some NGOs work for ensuring transparency and accountability of govt projects. For all these works the funds are either private or come from abroad.

We cannot say all the NGOs are working for social welfare. They may be working for personal benefits or intended to hamper progress of nation. So by keeping all these things recently Ministry of home affairs(MHA) has stipulated restriction on foreign funding of NGOs.

It is not justified to clamp down any NGO for just accusing it of being anti-development. NGOs also need public support to achieve their goals. If govt is clamping an NGO which has huge public support means indirectly govt is not working for the people. So there must be an authority to look after NGOs registration, funding, working etc. And based on report of such organized authority govt must take decisions impartially

Topic: *mechanisms, laws, institutions and Bodies constituted for the protection and betterment of vulnerable sections.(GS2)*

Q) Recently he Supreme Court ruled that conducting a caste-based census is against the law. Examine why. Also comment on suggestions made by some scholars that caste bases census is necessary for ensuring social justice to the scheduled caste members. (200 Words)

Frontline

Ans:

Recently SC ruled that conducting census mainly to find out the population of a particular cast is illegal. It was in backdrop of Madras high court order which had granted permission to conduct Cast based census (CBC).

CBC has the potential for social strife. For the first time it was conducted in 1931 and later on leaders of independent India decided to do away with it in order to build casteless society. Categorizing people on basis of cast would hamper on equal sharing of resource. As of now our census is limited to gathering information about the SCs and STs in the country and no other caste is included in it.

Advocates of CBC suggest that such census is necessary to fully implement social justice, to find out more about communities which are backward educationally, economically and in other respects in order to formulate inclusive developmental policy.

As there is increase in the population of SC/ST/OBC after 1931, the percentage of reservation fixed on the basis of population in the year 1931 has to be proportionately increased by conducting caste-wise census by the government in the interest of the weaker sections of society .

Though it is true that in India we cannot do away with the caste, CBC would unnecessarily facilitate social-engineering and caste based politics

Topic: *Welfare schemes for vulnerable sections of the population by the Centre and States and the performance of these schemes; Issues relating to development and management of Social Sector/Services relating to Health,GS2*

Q) According to the Union Health and Family Welfare Ministry, 14,132 habitations in 19 States contain fluoride above the permissible levels. Critically examine the risks involved and steps taken by the government to address the issue. (150 Words)

[The Hindu](#)

Ans:

World Health Organization prescribes fluoride limit in water is 1.5 mg/lit, above this, fluoride content is harmful for health. However, Fluoride is an essential part in the development of tooth and bones, but excessiveness can have detrimental side effects.

Risks involved-

1. Tooth decay and bone distortion
2. Excessive saliva and Abdominal pain
3. Health hazards will lead into handicaps, which affect human capital
4. The dependency will increase

Steps taken by the Government:-

-
1. National Program for Prevention and Control of Fluorosis in 2008-09, under this programme government started awareness and mitigation. Later on it was included in NRHM scheme.
 2. Clean Water: - Around 65% population in our country could not get clean water. Contaminated water is the prime source of adversity faced by victim. While government, stressing on clean water in every area, but due to geographical and structural factor spread of the scheme is still not fully achieved
 3. Help of Non Governmental Organization:- NGO performs a prime role of awareness any complex information in remote and inaccessible area .Villagers easily cope with with NGO volunteers to get help

Topic: *Important aspects of governance, transparency and accountability (GS2)*

Q) What are the essences of effective governance? Critically comment on India's record in providing effective and transparent governance to its citizens post - liberalization period. (200 Words)

The Hindu

Ans:

The essence of effective governance is making an impact of the lives of the people through effective utilization of government services, policies and regulation of the private sector through transparent procedures for optimum impact.

India's record:

1. Immediately after liberalization, in the 1991-2001 period, the GDP broke away from the "Indian growth rate" and increased substantially.

The private sector came in and reduced costs, introduced new technology and provided a better standard of living.

But effective governance was not delivered. It was an era of jobless growth. The government procedures were still opaque and had the pre liberalization flavour. Collusion between the market and administration leads to embezzlement of funds for individual gains.

2. In the 2000s, the need for inclusive governance came to the fore after an era of jobless growth. New developmental models were adopted like the rights approach, increased funding for social schemes, right to information act etc.

Some have been successful, esp. the Right to Information act, and that lifted the veil on the collusion between private sector and the government in a series of scams.

But old institutions and inadequate reforms continues to plague the Indian system, with systematic corruption, and lack of transparency the main culprits.

3. ICT enabled governance tools have had a substantial impact in providing effective governance, transparent procedures and bringing the public space to the virtual world.

But lack of internet penetration and lack of regionalization of the internet content deprives the masses of their right to the internet.

Thus, India's track record for effective governance has been flailing but slowly picking up. It needs a critical boost and a series of reforms to make it run along the right path.

Topic: *mechanisms, laws, institutions and Bodies constituted for the protection and betterment of these vulnerable sections.*

Q) Critically discuss the need for making the right to health a fundamental right in India. (200 Words)

The Hindu

WHO

Down to Earth

Ans:

The Right to Health envisages provision of timely and appropriate healthcare along with underlying determinants of health, like adequate sanitation, nutrition, healthy occupations, environment, and access to health information.

Reasons for making health a fundamental right:

1. Health is the basic determinant of the capacity of a person. A healthy individual is more productive and contributed more to the nation.
2. Timely provision of healthcare and health education will ensure focus on preventive care rather than curative care.
3. It will ensure that out of pocket expenditure on health does not drive a person to poverty.

Reasons against making health a fundamental right:

1. Right to health assumes unlimited resources. The fact that we have failed to achieve the 2% GDP spending on health as proposed by the 2002 National Health Policy shows us the reality.
2. With such severe lack of resources, a fundamental right to health can cause severe implementation problems.
3. Health-care is not the only determinant of health. Other social services also play a big part. Making health a fundamental right can divert funding from such services.
4. The logistical and financial constraints make right to health unfeasible.

Right to health should ensure provision of proper health care, with accountability mechanism and properly defined outcomes. But, as of now, severe resource constraints inhibit us from making this right enforceable by the judiciary, even though we must strive to do so

Topic: *Issues related to direct and indirect farm subsidies and minimum support prices*

Q) The latest data from the National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO) has shown that farmers remain poor despite government interventions. Critically examine its findings on farm incomes and suggest what should be government's priority - boosting farm income or farm production? Explain why. (200 Words)

Business Standard

Ans:

The small and marginal farmers of India are still one of the poorest and most vulnerable section of Indian society.

The recent survey of NSSO strengthens this belief with the following findings:

- 1).this section has one of the lowest income in society with majority of income coming from non-farm sources like daily wage and animal husbandry.
- 2).most of the farmers are indebted with majority in agriculturally advanced areas and that too at hands of non institutional credit providers.
- 3).government policies of MSP, crop insurance, credit facilities , technical advice falls short either due to lack of awareness ,lack of penetration or lack of control.
- 4).The benefits of market inflation of food products do not reach to farmers.
- 5).The prices of agricultural inputs are increasing but the production is still low due to insufficient irrigation facilities.

The case of Indian agricultural community is a special one, neither increase in agricultural productivity alone and nor agricultural income alone can benefit them rather there is a need to strike a balance between these two as:

- 1).Increase in agricultural productivity may provide more income but the expenditure is bound to increase with it thus leaving the condition same.
- 2).increase in agricultural income alone by increasing the MSP or providing subsidies will again bring down the agricultural growth rate.

Thus the need is to increase the productivity by bringing rain-fed area under irrigation by public spending at the same time ensuring the flow of market benefit to the producer by proper control over intermediaries.

Topic: Issues relating to development and management of Social Sector/Services relating to Health

Q) Critically analyse the important provisions of the draft National Health Policy 2015 that was unveiled recently by the union government. (200 Words)

The Hindu

Ans:

Provisions of National Health Policy 2015

1. It envisages increasing the spending on healthcare to 2.5 % of GDP in the next five year.

This is still below the required funding to fill the gaps in the current deteriorating healthcare system. But given that fact that we are still to achieve the 2% target set up the 2002 National policy on health, this is a realistic step.

2. It makes denial of healthcare judiciable.

Even though this is a welcome step, but without improving access to healthcare service, and improving quality and quantity of healthcare, poor healthcare is the same as denial.

Also, given the backlog of cases in the judiciary, this further adds a burden.

3. Explore the creation of a health cess on lines of education cess.

This might be a possible source of revenue, but as the education cess shows, it is far from adequate.

4. Universal access to free drugs, diagnostics in hospitals

Even so, the national programmes cover only 10% of the ailments. Over 75% of the non-communicable diseases are outside the purview and only limited communicable diseases are covered.

5. Involving the elected local bodies in participating in district and sub district health institutions.

Right to health is a welcome step, but without ramping up the support infrastructure, achieving it can be nonviable.

TOPIC: Linkages between development and spread of extremism; Role of external (and internal) state and non-state actors in creating challenges to internal security.

Q) "...the state is so weak in Northeast India that it has given up the monopoly of organized violence to non-state actors, especially to those that have signed ceasefires." With reference to continued violent extremism in some parts of North East and the Union government's response to these developments, critically comment on government's policy vis a vis insurgents and suggest what should be its policy to deal with such extremism in the region. (200 Words)

Main Article:<http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-opinion/where-armed-insurgents-roam-about-freely/article6740289.ece>

Ans:

Despite signing numerous peace accords the insurgent groups carry out organized violence in the fragile North East of India. Ethnic clashes and cultural insecurity combined with geographical features favorable towards a militant activity have all fed into the increasing insurgency. Few lacunae in the policy centered around north east are:

a) Ineffective Ceasefire Agreements: Although the Government has signed ceasefire agreements with the militant groups, the disarmament norms are flouted of these by the militants due to ineffective monitoring of the ceasefire camps, stronger militant groups and little opposition by the locals due to fear.

b) Blame Game: The leakages in implementation of welfare programs and poor working of developmental programs with insurgency are shown as a reason which does not let development take place by both sides and it creates a vicious cycle.

c) Reactionary Policy: The Governments have been more reactions to the actions of the militants, rather than a well-planned and strategized action against insurgency.

The Policy of the Governments should be on the following lines to deal with Insurgency:

a) Clear focus on Development, including health, education, transportation, communication, employment. Involving the local people in the process of development would help raise local opposition to the militancy.

b) A common Law enforcement agency for north east India to help maintain border and insurgent activities. The porous border with Myanmar has been used to shelter smugglers and poor connectivity harms progressive measure by the government which should be checked.

c) Connecting remote areas through rail and road and streamlining developmental initiatives with skill development will benefit local and bring economic progress.

d) Disarming the militants in phases and ensuring rehabilitation and check the arms in camps through periodic observations.

India's embrace of North east will help realize the true potential of the area bringing it to the forefront of the national progress. The Look east policy is dependent on using north east as a spring board.

Topic: *Issues related to direct and indirect farm subsidies and minimum support prices; Major crops cropping patterns in various parts of the country(GS2)*

Q) Recently the Agriculture ministry of the Union government proposed an import duty of ten per cent on gram and also removing export ban on pulsed and edible oils. Examine why. Also comment if measures like these are productive in the long term. (150 Words)

Business Standard

Ans:

Recent decision of government to impose 10% import duty on gram and remove export restrictions on all type of pulses and edible oils, is taken in the wake of falling pulse prices which are below MSP in many areas. Falling pulse prices may have adverse effect on our farmers.

Effect of raising import duty:

When import duty is raised, imports become costlier. Subsequently imports decrease, which will ultimately lead to increase in local prices and in turn benefit farmers.

Effect of removing export ban:

If restrictions on export are removed, it will lead to increased demand and subsequent price rise. This will also benefit farmers.

Also reduced import and increased export will lead to reduced CAD which will strengthen rupee.

But this step will also increase inflation. After a long time when WPI has become 0 and retail inflation is sub five, RBI is planning to reduce interest rates to push growth of economy. It may further postpone this rate cut.

Also these measures are not productive in long term because when prices depend on harvest in a season. If after some time prices in local market rise, government will

have to again change its policies to contain inflation. As a long term measure, government should address infrastructural and supply chain constraints.

Topic: *Various Security forces and agencies and their mandate GS2*

Q) “Leaving the current state of affairs to the outmoded colonial position of the CRPF Act makes it an unjust, arbitrary, unfair and discretionary process subject to bias and misuse.” In the light of accusations of mistreating CRPF forces, critically comment on the statement. (200 Words)

The Hindu

Ans:

CRPF (Central Reserve Police Force), the largest Central Armed Police Force, is fighting valiantly insurgents in Kashmir, Left wing extremism affected areas. Despite such immense contributions, no step has been taken to give CRPF personnel respite from anachronistic CRPF Act, 1949.

1. Relic of colonialism- Still many provisions of Crown’s Representative Police Force Law, 1939 has been retained in the post independence CRPF act.
2. Unaltered CrPC Provisions- Though CrPC act of 1898 was amended in 1973, such amendments didn’t reflect in the upgraded police force act.
3. Travesty of Justice- Still the judicial power is vested in the executives, who might not be familiar with the legal nitty gritty.
4. Judiciary Executive Separation- Such system of in house judicial action contravenes the principle articulated in Art 50, i.e necessary separation of judiciary from executive.
5. Deprivation from FRs- It also ultra vires Art.14 (which ensures equality before law & equal protection of law), Art. 21(Right to Life).

Thus. revising the CRPF Act to make it in sync with the present time is the need of the hour. Following steps can be taken to ensure it:

1. Replacing CrPC, 1898 provisions in the CRPF Act with the amended ones.
2. A special court can be constituted in line with BSF Security Force Court.
3. Legal practices adopted by Naval force, Indian Army, Air force ,can be emulated.
4. Recruitment of executives lettered in law.



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