

UPSC CSE (Main) 2013

General Studies Paper-II

Q1. The role of individual MPs (Members of Parliament) has diminished over the years and as a result healthy constructive debates on policy issues are not usually witnessed. How far can this be attributed to the anti-defection law which was legislated but with a different intention? (200 words) [10]

Approach to question:

1. Anti-defection law was introduced in 1985 to curb the practice of defection by MPs and MLAs.
2. The law has resulted in MPs being bound by party whips, leading to a decrease in independent thinking and constructive debates.
3. This has also led to a lack of accountability among MPs as they are answerable to their party leadership rather than their constituents.

Answer:

The anti-defection law was introduced in 1985, through the 52nd Amendment Act of 1985. It was inserted in the Tenth Schedule of the Indian Constitution and is popularly known as Anti-Defection Act.

Impact of the Anti-Defection Law on individual MPs and policy debates:

Diminished Role of Individual MPs:

1. Anti-Defection Law binds MPs to vote according to party stance, limiting their autonomy and reducing their role in representing personal beliefs and constituents' interests.
2. Political parties prioritize party interests over MPs and their constituencies, leading to a lack of focus on policy issues and constructive debates.

Impact on Policy Debates:

1. Decreased quality and depth of policy debates in Parliament, as MPs are less likely to speak out or propose alternate policies.
2. Focus of debates shifts to political point-scoring rather than substantive policy discussions.

Implications for the Anti-Defection Law:

1. Re-examination of the law to prevent its misuse as a tool for suppressing dissent and stifling debate.

2. Amendments to give MPs more autonomy, allowing them to vote on issues of conscience or constituents' beliefs.

In conclusion, the Anti-Defection Law, while aiming to ensure stability and reduce corruption, has unintended consequences of diminishing the role of individual MPs and stifling constructive policy debates. Reforms are needed to safeguard MPs' autonomy and foster more meaningful policy discussions.

Q2. Discuss Section 66A of IT Act, with reference to its alleged violation of Article 19 of the Constitution. (200 words) [10]

Approach to question:

1. Section 66A of the IT Act was introduced in 2008 and dealt with the punishment for sending offensive messages through communication services.
2. The provision was criticised for being vague and allowing for arbitrary interpretation, leading to numerous instances of misuse and infringement on the freedom of speech and expression.

Answer:

Section 66A of the Information Technology Act, 2000, was introduced in 2008 as an amendment to the act. It aimed to address instances of cybercrime and online harassment by penalising individuals who use electronic communication to send offensive messages, causing annoyance or inconvenience to others. However, the implementation of this section became controversial due to its alleged violation of Article 19 of the Constitution of India, which guarantees the right to freedom of speech and expression.

Some of the key issues with Section 66A are:

1. **Vague and Overbroad Language:** The language of Section 66A was vague and overbroad, making it difficult to interpret and giving law enforcement authorities wide discretion in deciding what constituted an offence.
2. **Violation of Fundamental Rights:** 66A violated the fundamental rights of citizens to freedom of speech and expression, which is a cornerstone of democracy.

3. **Lack of Procedural Safeguards:** The section lacked procedural safeguards, making it prone to misuse by authorities.

In conclusion, Section 66A of the IT Act was a well-intentioned provision to address cybercrime and online harassment. However, its vague and overbroad language, lack of procedural safeguards and violation of fundamental rights led to its misuse and abuse by authorities.

- Q3. Recent directives from Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas are perceived by the 'Nagas' as a threat to override the exceptional status enjoyed by the State. Discuss in light of Article 371A of the Indian Constitution.**

(200 words) [10]

Approach to question:

1. Article 371A of the Indian Constitution provides special provisions for the State of Nagaland, such as the establishment of a Regional Council and a certain degree of autonomy in matters related to land and resources.
2. The Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas recently issued directives regarding the exploration and extraction of oil and natural gas in Nagaland, which some perceive as a threat to the special status of the state.

Answer:

Article 371A of the Indian Constitution provides for special provisions with respect to the State of Nagaland.

1. The Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas issued directives in 2019 for the exploration and extraction of hydrocarbons in the Northeast region, including Nagaland, which has been seen as a threat to the exceptional status enjoyed by the State.
2. The Nagas are concerned that this would override their customary laws and land ownership, which are protected under Article 371A of the Constitution.
3. The directives have also been criticised for not taking into account the environmental impact and the rights of indigenous people.
4. The Nagaland government has expressed its opposition to the directives and has sought clarification from the central government on the matter.
5. The issue highlights the need for a balance between development and the protection of the rights and interests of the indigenous people.

However, there have been instances where the central government's policies have been seen as a threat to these protections, leading to tensions between the centre and the affected communities.

- Q4. 'The Supreme Court of India keeps a check on arbitrary power of the Parliament in amending the Constitution'. Discuss critically.**

(200 words) [10]

Approach to question:

1. The Indian Constitution provides for a rigid procedure for its amendment, which is initiated by the Parliament but can only be approved with the consent of the states.
2. The Supreme Court of India, as the guardian of the Constitution, has the power to review the constitutionality of any law or amendment passed by the Parliament.
3. The Court can strike down an amendment if it violates the basic structure of the Constitution, which includes principles such as democracy, secularism, federalism and the rule of law.

Answer:

The Supreme Court plays a crucial role in interpreting the Constitution and has the power of judicial review, there are certain limitations to its authority over constitutional amendments. One of the key aspects of the Indian Constitution is the doctrine of basic structure, established by the Supreme Court in the landmark case of *Kesavananda Bharati v. State of Kerala* in 1973.

Supreme Court's Role in Checking Arbitrary Power of Parliament in Amending the Constitution:

Arguments in Favor of Supreme Court's Role:

1. **Protection of Fundamental Rights:** The Court ensures that amendments do not violate citizens' fundamental rights, preserving constitutional safeguards.
2. **Preserving the Constitution:** The Court can strike down amendments that violate the basic structure of the Constitution, ensuring its integrity.
3. **Upholding Constitutional Morality:** The Court checks amendments against principles like democracy and secularism, preventing constitutional erosion.

Arguments against Supreme Court's Role:

1. **Violation of Separation of Powers:** Judiciary should not interfere in the legislative function of amending the Constitution.
2. **Undermining Parliamentary Sovereignty:** Judicial review may undermine the authority of elected representatives.
3. **Limitation on Constitutional Amendments:** Court's power may impose restrictions on Parliament's constitutional amendment powers.

The Supreme Court's role is crucial to preserve the Constitution and protect citizens' rights. However, it should exercise restraint and strike a delicate balance

with parliamentary authority to ensure a functioning democracy.

- Q5. Many States Governments further bifurcate geographical administrative areas like Districts and Talukas for better governance. In light of the above, can it also be justified that more number of smaller States would bring in effective governance at State level? Discuss. (200 words) [10]**

Approach to question:

1. Some argue that smaller states are easier to govern as they have a smaller population and more manageable administrative units.
2. Smaller states can help in better representation of minority communities and regions and can also lead to more equitable distribution of resources.

Answer:

Smaller states can help in better representation of minority communities and regions and can also lead to more equitable distribution of resources. Arguments in Favour of Creating Smaller States:

1. **Better Representation:** Smaller states can ensure improved representation and voice for smaller communities and marginalized groups.
2. **Effective Administration:** Smaller states allow for focused, efficient and effective administration, addressing local needs more effectively.
3. **Greater Accountability:** Proximity to decision-makers in smaller states enhances accountability and responsiveness to the people.
4. **Resource Utilization:** Smaller states can optimize resource utilization by focusing on specific areas and issues for development.
5. **Developmental Balance:** Creation of smaller states can help reduce regional disparities and address developmental imbalances.

Arguments Against Creating Smaller States:

1. **Administrative Difficulties:** Smaller states may face administrative challenges due to limited economies of scale and resources.
2. **Political Instability:** Smaller states might be more susceptible to political instability, leading to law and order issues.
3. **Fragmentation:** Smaller states may lead to social and political fragmentation, increasing the potential for conflicts.

The decision to create smaller states requires careful consideration of their advantages and potential drawbacks. Addressing administrative and economic challenges is crucial to ensuring successful implementation.

- Q6. Constitutional mechanisms to resolve the inter-state water disputes have failed to address and solve the problems. Is the failure due to structural or process inadequacy or both? Discuss. (200 words) [10]**

Approach to question:

1. The Constitution provides for the setting up of Tribunals to resolve inter-state water disputes.
2. However, the process of setting up Tribunals is time-consuming and complicated, with many states unwilling to participate in the process.
3. The lack of expertise among Tribunal members and delays in Tribunal proceedings have also been a problem.
4. There is also a lack of political will among states to resolve disputes, with many using water as a bargaining chip.

Answer:

Constitutional mechanisms to resolve inter-state water disputes in India have faced challenges due to various factors:

1. **Structural Inadequacy:** The Constitution allocates water as a State subject, leading to conflicting interests between States. The absence of a permanent water disputes tribunal has been criticized.
2. **Process Inadequacy:** The resolution process involves multiple steps, leading to delays. Appeals in the Supreme Court further prolong the process and it can be expensive for States.
3. **Political Interference:** Water disputes often have political implications and State governments may exploit them for electoral gains, prioritizing political considerations over legal and technical aspects.
4. **Technological Limitations:** Outdated water management practices result in inefficient water use, worsening water disputes.

In conclusion, the way forward includes strengthening institutional mechanisms by establishing a permanent tribunal, involving public participation in water governance and adopting advanced water management practices to ensure efficient and sustainable water use.

Overall, addressing these challenges is crucial to ensure effective and timely resolution of inter-state water disputes and promote better water management in the country.

- Q7. Discuss the recommendations of the 13th Finance Commission which have been a departure from the previous commissions for strengthening the local government finances. (200 words) [10]**

Approach to question:

1. **Increased allocation of funds to local governments:** The commission recommended that local governments should receive a greater share of tax revenues, with the allocation increasing from 29.5% to 32% of the total divisible pool of taxes.
2. **Granting of more financial powers:** The commission suggested that local governments should be given more financial powers, such as the ability to levy and collect taxes, fees and user charges.

Answer:

The 13th Finance Commission of India made several recommendations to strengthen local government finances:

1. **Increase in Grants:** Recommended significant increase in grants to Panchayats (2.5%) and Municipalities (1.5%) from the net proceeds of Union taxes, deviating from previous commissions.
2. **Performance-based Grants:** Advocated allocation of performance-based grants to local bodies based on service delivery, financial management and governance.
3. **State Finance Commission:** Proposed setting up State Finance Commissions (SFCs) every five years to review local bodies' financial position and make binding recommendations on fund devolution.
4. **Own-source Revenue:** Encouraged local bodies to generate revenue through taxes, fees and charges and suggested devolution of State revenue sources to them.
5. **Capacity Building:** Recommended investment in capacity building of local body functionaries to enhance performance and service delivery.

However, slow and uneven implementation of these recommendations has been observed, mainly due to lack of political will, capacity issues, inadequate fund transfers and transparency concerns.

To strengthen local government finances and improve service delivery at the grassroots level, greater emphasis is needed on political will, capacity building and transparency in fund allocation.

- Q8.** The product diversification of financial institutions and insurance companies, resulting in overlapping of products and services strengthens the case for the merger of the two regulatory agencies, namely SEBI and IRDA. Justify. (200 words) [10]

Approach to question:

1. The product diversification of financial institutions and insurance companies has led to overlapping products and services, which creates confusion for customers and increases regulatory burden for the authorities.
2. The current regulatory framework has separate agencies for regulating the securities and insurance sectors, namely the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) and the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority (IRDA), respectively.

Answer:

SEBI and IRDA are separate regulatory agencies governing the financial and insurance sectors in India. Increasing product diversification in financial institutions and insurance companies has led to overlaps in products and services, raising the case for a merger of SEBI and IRDA.

Reasons for the merger of SEBI and IRDA:

1. **Overlapping products and services:** Expansion of product portfolios in financial and insurance sectors has created overlaps that require different regulatory oversight.
2. **Better efficiency and effectiveness:** Current separate regulatory bodies result in duplication of efforts and resources.
3. **Financial stability:** Increasing complexity of financial products requires a more coordinated and integrated regulatory framework.
4. **International best practices:** Many developed countries have unified regulatory bodies for financial and insurance sectors.
5. **Reduction in regulatory arbitrage:** Separate regulatory bodies allow financial institutions and insurance companies to exploit regulatory differences. The merger of SEBI and IRDA is justified to address overlaps, enhance efficiency, promote financial stability, adopt international best practices and reduce regulatory arbitrage. Such a merger would lead to a more integrated and coordinated regulatory framework for the financial and insurance sectors in India.

- Q9.** The concept of Mid Day Meal (MDM) scheme is almost a century old in India with early beginnings in Madras Presidency in pre-independent India. The scheme has again been given impetus in most states in the last two decades. Critically examine its twin objectives, latest mandates and success. (200 words) [10]

Approach to question:

Some points that can be included in the answer are:

1. The Mid Day Meal (MDM) scheme was launched in 1995 as a centrally sponsored scheme with the objective of improving the nutritional status of children in primary schools and encouraging them to attend school regularly.
2. The scheme has also been seen as a way to tackle the problem of hunger and malnutrition among children, especially those from disadvantaged sections of society.
3. The scheme has been successful in increasing enrollment and attendance in schools, especially among girls and children from marginalised communities.

Answer:

The Mid Day Meal (MDM) scheme in India, launched in the early 1960s, serves twin objectives:

1. **Addressing malnutrition:** The scheme provides a nutritious mid-day meal to underprivileged school-going children to combat malnutrition and encourage school enrollment and attendance.
2. **Promoting education:** By providing free mid-day meals, the scheme aims to promote education and retain students in schools.

Recent mandates include:

1. **National Food Security Act, 2013:** Made mid-day meals a legal entitlement for children in government and government-aided schools, with specified nutritional content.
2. **Mid-Day Meal Rules, 2015:** Introduced School Management Committees (SMCs) to ensure effective implementation.
3. **National Education Policy, 2020:** Aims to upgrade the nutritional quality of meals and provide nutritious food to all students.

Successes of the scheme include increased enrollment and attendance, improved nutritional status, promotion of social equity and bridging the rural-urban divide.

Challenges remain, including ensuring quality and safety of food, improving infrastructure, timely funding and addressing issues related to attendance and dropouts.

In conclusion, while the MDM scheme has been successful in achieving its objectives, continuous improvement and addressing challenges are essential to maximize its impact on underprivileged children's well-being and education.

Q10. Pressure group politics is sometimes seen as the informal face of politics. With regards to the above, assess the structure and functioning of pressure groups in India.

(200 words) [10]

Approach to question:

1. Pressure groups are organizations that aim to influence public policy by exerting pressure on the government or other decision-making bodies.
2. In India, pressure groups are diverse and include business, labour, professional and social groups.
3. Some of the prominent pressure groups in India are the Confederation of Indian Industry, the All India Trade Union Congress, the Indian Medical Association and the Indian Farmers Association.

Answer:

Pressure groups play a significant role in representing the interests of specific segments of society in the political process. They act as a bridge between citizens and the government, advocating for policy changes, influencing decision-making and participating in democratic governance.

Structure of Pressure Groups in India:

1. Various types of pressure groups exist, including business groups, agricultural lobbies, trade unions, environmental groups, women's groups, religious groups, caste-based groups and regional groups.
2. Pressure groups can be classified as insider or outsider groups, based on their proximity to the government.
3. Insider groups have better access to policymakers and can influence decisions more effectively, while outsider groups use public protests and media campaigns.

Functioning of Pressure Groups in India:

1. Pressure groups use lobbying, media campaigns, protests, strikes and financial resources to influence policymakers.
2. Different groups employ different tactics based on their objectives and resources.
3. Caste-based and regional groups demand special rights and use protests to advocate for their communities.

Assessment of Pressure Group Politics in India:

1. Pressure group politics allows citizens to participate in policy making and hold officials accountable.
2. However, it can lead to societal fragmentation and prioritize narrow interests over the public good.
3. Powerful groups may influence policies in favour of the elite, neglecting the marginalized.

In summary, pressure groups in India function as important players in the country's political landscape. Their diverse structure and range of activities enable them to influence government policies and advocate for various interests. However, managing issues related to transparency, accountability, and ethical behavior is

essential to ensure that they contribute positively to the democratic process.

Q11. The legitimacy and accountability of Self Help Groups (SHGs) and their patrons, the micro-finance outfits, need systematic assessment and scrutiny for the sustained success of the concept. Discuss.

(200 words) [10]

Approach to question:

1. Self Help Groups (SHGs) are informal groups consisting of 10-20 members who come together to form a savings and credit organisation for the poor.
2. SHGs are recognized as a powerful tool for poverty alleviation and have been promoted by the government of India for over two decades.
3. SHGs have been successful in bringing financial inclusion, women empowerment and reducing poverty in many parts of the country.
4. However, there have been concerns about the legitimacy and accountability of SHGs and their patrons, the microfinance outfits.
5. Some SHGs have been accused of being created for the purpose of availing government subsidies and not fulfilling their intended purpose of poverty alleviation.

Answer:

Self Help Groups (SHGs) are small, informal groups of poor people who come together for collective savings and credit facilities. They play a crucial role in the empowerment of women and in rural development.

1. Microfinance institutions provide financial services to the poor, including credit, savings and insurance. They have been instrumental in providing funds to SHGs and other vulnerable groups.
2. However, the legitimacy and accountability of SHGs and their patrons, the micro-finance outfits, need systematic assessment and scrutiny for the sustained success of the concept.
3. One of the concerns with SHGs is the lack of transparency in their functioning, especially in terms of the utilisation of funds. There have been instances of misuse of funds by the members or the patron organisations, leading to the collapse of the group.
4. The lack of a regulatory framework for SHGs has also been a cause for concern. The Reserve Bank of India has issued guidelines for microfinance institutions, but there is no specific law governing the functioning of SHGs.
5. Another issue is the high-interest rates charged by micro-finance institutions. While they provide

credit to the poor who are excluded from the formal banking system, the interest rates charged are often exorbitant, leading to a debt trap.

In conclusion, while SHGs and microfinance institutions have played a crucial role in poverty reduction and women's empowerment, their legitimacy and accountability need to be systematically assessed and scrutinised. The government needs to provide a supportive environment for their functioning while also ensuring transparency and regulatory oversight.

Q12. The Central Government frequently complains on the poor performance of the State Governments in eradicating suffering of the vulnerable sections of the society. Restructuring of Centrally sponsored schemes across the sectors for ameliorating the cause of vulnerable sections of population aims at providing flexibility to the States in better implementation. Critically evaluate.

(200 words) [10]

Approach to question:

1. The Central Government has frequently criticised the poor performance of State Governments in addressing the needs of vulnerable sections of society, such as the poor, women and minorities.
2. The restructuring of Centrally sponsored schemes aims to provide more flexibility to the States in implementing welfare programs and addressing the specific needs of their populations.
3. This move towards decentralisation is based on the belief that State Governments are better equipped to understand and address the unique challenges faced by their communities.

Answer:

The Central Government and State Governments have been at odds over the effectiveness of various schemes aimed at helping vulnerable sections of society. To address this issue, the Central Government has proposed a restructuring of centrally sponsored schemes across sectors to provide more flexibility to the States in their implementation.

Arguments in favour of restructuring:

1. It allows for better customization of schemes based on the needs of specific regions and communities.
2. It empowers State Governments to take greater ownership of these schemes, leading to more accountability and responsibility.
3. It reduces the burden on the Central Government to oversee and implement these schemes, allowing them to focus on other important issues.
4. It promotes healthy competition among States, encouraging them to come up with innovative solutions to social problems.

Arguments against restructuring:

1. It may lead to disparities among States in terms of access to resources and effectiveness of schemes.
2. It may result in a lack of uniformity in the implementation of schemes, leading to confusion and inefficiency.
3. It may weaken the role of the Central Government in ensuring the welfare of vulnerable sections of society.
4. It may lead to a dilution of the objectives of centrally sponsored schemes and defeat the purpose of their creation.

The restructuring of centrally sponsored schemes is a complex issue with both advantages and disadvantages. The success of this restructuring will depend on careful planning, coordination and monitoring by both the Central and State Governments. Ultimately, the goal of all such schemes should be to ensure the welfare of vulnerable sections of society and this should remain the guiding principle in any restructuring effort.

Q13. Electronic cash transfer system for the welfare schemes is an ambitious project to minimise corruption, eliminate wastage and facilitate reforms. Comment.

(200 words) [10]

Approach to question:

1. Electronic cash transfer system (ECTS) involves direct transfer of welfare benefits to the bank accounts of beneficiaries using technology.
2. ECTS is aimed at reducing corruption and leakage in the system, which is a major problem in traditional methods of disbursing welfare benefits.
3. ECTS is also expected to eliminate middlemen and bring transparency in the system.
4. ECTS is being implemented across various welfare schemes in India, including the Public Distribution System (PDS), LPG subsidy and Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA).

Answer:

Electronic cash transfer (ECT) system is an innovative way to provide welfare schemes to beneficiaries by directly transferring the cash into their bank accounts. The system aims to reduce corruption, eliminate intermediaries and promote financial inclusion.

Advantages of Electronic Cash Transfer system:

1. **Minimises corruption:** ECT can reduce the scope for corruption as it eliminates intermediaries between the government and beneficiaries, thereby reducing the chances of syphoning off funds. ECT ensures that funds are directly

transferred to beneficiaries' bank accounts, making the process more transparent and accountable.

2. **Eliminates wastage:** ECT can eliminate wastage as it reduces the need for physical transfer of funds. This reduces the scope for delays and losses in transit, thereby ensuring that the funds reach the beneficiaries in a timely and efficient manner.

Challenges in implementation:

1. **Infrastructure:** The implementation of ECT requires a robust digital infrastructure that can support the transfer of funds. In many parts of India, the digital infrastructure is not yet adequate, which makes it difficult to implement ECT effectively.
2. **Financial inclusion:** ECT requires beneficiaries to have a bank account, which can be a challenge in a country where a large section of the population is still unbanked. The government needs to ensure that all beneficiaries have access to a bank account to ensure the success of ECT.

The electronic cash transfer system has the potential to transform the welfare delivery system in India by reducing corruption, eliminating wastage and facilitating reforms. However, its success depends on the government's ability to address the challenges of infrastructure, financial inclusion and awareness and capacity building.

Q14. The basis of providing urban amenities in rural areas (PURA) is rooted in establishing connectivity. Comment. (200 words) [10]

Approach to question:

1. Providing urban amenities in rural areas (PURA) is a scheme initiated by the former President of India, Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam.
2. The scheme aims to create sustainable and inclusive development in rural areas by providing urban amenities and infrastructure.
3. One of the key components of the scheme is establishing connectivity between rural areas and urban centers.
4. Connectivity is important for various reasons. It enables better access to markets, services and information, which in turn can lead to better livelihoods, employment opportunities and overall quality of life for rural residents.

Answer:

Urban Amenities in Rural Areas (PURA) is a concept proposed by former Indian President APJ Abdul Kalam, aiming to develop rural areas by providing urban amenities.

Objectives of PURA:

1. **Provide basic amenities:** The main goal is to offer essential facilities like roads, electricity, water supply, healthcare and education in rural areas.

2. **Connectivity:** Establishing transport, communication and infrastructure connectivity between rural and urban centers is crucial for the success of PURA.
3. **Rural growth centers:** PURA aims to develop rural areas as growth centers by attracting industries and generating employment opportunities.
4. **Improved standard of living:** The focus is on enhancing the standard of living by providing access to better healthcare, education and other amenities.
5. **Participatory approach:** Planning and implementation of PURA projects involve the participation of various stakeholders like the government, private sector, NGOs and local communities.

Challenges and Implementation:

1. **Slow progress:** The implementation of PURA has been slow due to challenges like inadequate funding and lack of coordination among stakeholders.
2. **Resistance from vested interests:** Some stakeholders may resist the changes brought about by PURA, affecting its smooth implementation.
3. **Inclusivity:** Ensuring that the benefits of PURA reach vulnerable sections like women, dalits and tribals is crucial for equitable development.
4. **Government investment:** Success depends on the willingness of the government to invest in rural development.
5. **Reducing migration:** PURA can play a role in reducing rural to urban migration by creating better opportunities in rural areas.

In conclusion, PURA's success lies in establishing connectivity and involving all stakeholders in the planning and execution process. Adequate resources and government commitment are essential for its effective implementation, leading to improved living standards and reduced migration from rural to urban areas. Ensuring inclusivity will enable all sections of society to benefit from the concept.

Q15. Identify the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) that are related to health. Discuss the success of the actions taken by the Government for achieving the same.

(200 words) [10]

Approach to question:

Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) related to health are:

1. **Reduce child mortality:** The goal was to reduce the under-five mortality rate by two-thirds from 1990 levels. India has made significant progress towards this goal, with a decline in under-five mortality from 126 per 1,000 live births in 1990 to 34 in 2019.

2. **Improve maternal health:** The target was to reduce maternal mortality ratio by three-quarters between 1990 and 2015. While India has made progress, it still lags behind the target with an estimated maternal mortality ratio of 113 per 100,000 live births in 2016.

The government has taken various actions to achieve these goals, such as:

1. Launching the National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) to improve access to healthcare services in rural areas.
2. Launching the Janani Suraksha Yojana (JSY) to promote institutional deliveries and reduce maternal and neonatal mortality.

Answer:

Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) related to health:

1. **Goal 4: Reduce Child Mortality** - Target: Two-thirds reduction in child mortality under five years by 2015.
2. **Goal 5: Improve Maternal Health** - Target: Three-quarters reduction in maternal mortality by 2015.
3. **Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria and Other Diseases** - Target: Halt and reverse spread of major diseases by 2015.

Success of actions taken by the Government:

1. **Goal 4: Child Mortality** - Significant decline from 125 to 39 per 1000 live births by 2017. Efforts like immunisation, nutrition programs and improved healthcare access contributed to the success.
2. **Goal 5: Maternal Health** - Maternal mortality ratio reduced from 556 to 113 per 100,000 live births by 2016. Initiatives like Janani Suraksha Yojana (JSY) encouraged institutional deliveries and better maternal healthcare access.
3. **Goal 6: HIV/AIDS, Malaria and Other Diseases** - HIV incidence declined by 27% (2010-2019) and malaria burden reduced by 18% (2010-2018). Programs like NACP, NVBDCP and RNTCP contributed to the progress.

Challenges:

1. Inadequate healthcare infrastructure and shortage of professionals in rural areas.
2. High out-of-pocket expenses for healthcare, limiting access for the poor.
3. Gender-based inequalities affecting maternal and child health outcomes.
4. Emergence of new diseases and rising burden of non-communicable diseases.

While India has made remarkable progress in achieving the health-related MDGs, challenges remain. Ensuring

healthcare access, addressing gender-based disparities and tackling non-communicable diseases require continued efforts. Sustainable and inclusive healthcare policies are vital for further improvement and achieving new health-related goals beyond the MDG era.

Q16. Though Citizens' Charters have been formulated by many public service delivery organisations, there is no corresponding improvement in the level of citizens satisfaction and quality of services being provided. Analyse. (200 words) [10]

Approach to question:

1. Citizens' Charters are documents that outline the standards and commitments of public service delivery organizations towards their citizens.
2. They aim to enhance transparency, accountability and responsiveness of public services by setting minimum service delivery standards.
3. Despite the formulation of Citizens' Charters by many public service delivery organizations, there has been no corresponding improvement in the level of citizens' satisfaction and quality of services being provided.

Answer:

Citizen's Charters are documents that set out the commitment of public service providers to provide timely, transparent and accountable services to the citizens. The reasons for the lack of improvement in service delivery can be attributed to the following factors:

1. **Poor implementation:** Citizens' Charters are often not implemented in letter and spirit, with service providers failing to adhere to the commitments made in the charter.
2. **Lack of awareness:** Many citizens are not aware of the existence of Citizens' Charters and their rights to demand services as per the charter.
3. **Limited scope:** Citizens' Charters often cover a limited range of services, leaving many areas uncovered.
4. **Lack of accountability:** There is a lack of accountability mechanisms to ensure that service providers adhere to the commitments made in Citizens' Charters.

The government has taken several measures to address these issues:

1. A campaign to increase awareness among citizens about Citizens' Charters and their rights to demand services as per the charter.
2. Extension of Citizens' Charters to cover a wider range of services, including online services.

However, despite these measures, the implementation of Citizens' Charters remains a challenge. To improve service delivery, it is necessary to ensure that Citizens' Charters are implemented in a transparent, accountable and effective manner. This requires the following:

1. Strengthening grievance redressal mechanisms to ensure that citizens have a voice in holding service providers accountable for non-compliance with Citizens' Charters.
2. Regular monitoring and evaluation of service delivery against the commitments made in Citizens' Charters and taking corrective actions to address gaps.
3. Capacity building of service providers to improve their understanding of the commitments made in Citizens' Charters and their responsibilities in delivering services as per the charter.

The lack of corresponding improvement in citizens' satisfaction and quality of services despite the formulation of Citizens' Charters underscores the need for holistic reforms that address not only the formulation of charters but also the broader issues related to governance, bureaucracy, accountability and public mindset.

Q17. 'A national Lokpal, however strong it may be, cannot resolve the problems of immorality in public affairs'. Discuss. (200 words) [10]

Approach to question:

1. A national Lokpal is an independent ombudsman institution created to investigate and prosecute cases of corruption among public officials.
2. While a strong Lokpal can certainly help curb corruption, it cannot address the underlying issues of immorality in public affairs.
3. The problem of corruption is often rooted in systemic issues such as poor governance, lack of transparency and weak accountability mechanisms.

Answer:

A national Lokpal is an anti-corruption authority proposed to investigate and prosecute public servants accused of corruption however it cannot resolve the problem because of the following reason:

1. The Lokpal Bill was introduced in 1968 but it was passed in 2013 after several rounds of protests and discussions.
2. The Lokpal is supposed to have the power to investigate cases of corruption against public officials, including the Prime Minister, but with certain limitations.
3. The Lokpal is expected to provide a mechanism to tackle corruption in the country and ensure

greater transparency and accountability in public life.

4. However, it cannot be assumed that the establishment of the Lokpal will lead to a complete eradication of corruption.
5. The culture of corruption is deeply ingrained in Indian society and it will take more than just the establishment of a Lokpal to uproot it.
6. The problem of corruption in India is multifaceted and involves issues of political will, administrative inefficiency and societal norms.
7. The Lokpal will be limited in its ability to tackle corruption, as it will only have jurisdiction over public officials and not private entities or individuals.
8. Also, the Lokpal may face challenges in terms of resource constraints, coordination with other investigative agencies and political interference.
9. A Lokpal may also be limited by the fact that it will only investigate and prosecute cases of corruption that are reported to it.

Overall, the establishment of a national Lokpal can be seen as a step in the right direction, but it cannot be viewed as a panacea for all the ills of corruption in the country.

Q18. The proposed withdrawal of International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) from Afghanistan in 2014 is fraught with major security implications for the countries of the region. Examine in light of the fact that India is faced with a plethora of challenges and needs to safeguard its own strategic interests. (200 words) [10]

Approach to question:

1. The proposed withdrawal of ISAF from Afghanistan may lead to a power vacuum and instability in the region.
2. This could create an opportunity for extremist groups like the Taliban to regain power and threaten the security of neighbouring countries, including India.
3. The withdrawal may also lead to an increase in narcotics trafficking and other illicit activities, further destabilising the region.
4. India has been actively engaged in providing development aid to Afghanistan and has been involved in training Afghan security forces.

Answer:

The proposed withdrawal of International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) from Afghanistan in 2014 has significant security implications for the region, particularly for India, which faces numerous challenges

and must protect its strategic interests. The following points highlight the key aspects:

1. **Security Vacuum:** The withdrawal of ISAF may leave a security vacuum in Afghanistan, enabling terrorist organizations like the Taliban to regroup and pose a direct threat to India's security.
2. **Proxy Warfare:** Pakistan has historical ties with the Taliban and other extremist groups in Afghanistan. The withdrawal might lead to increased proxy warfare by Pakistan against India, using Afghanistan as a base.
3. **Refugee Crisis:** A surge in violence and instability following the withdrawal could trigger a mass exodus of Afghan refugees into neighboring countries, including India, straining resources and creating humanitarian challenges.
4. **Economic Impact:** Afghanistan is a potential market for Indian goods and services. The security vacuum may disrupt trade and economic ties, affecting India's economic interests in the region.
5. **Border Security:** With porous borders with Afghanistan, India faces the risk of cross-border terrorism and the inflow of illegal arms and drugs, demanding heightened border security measures.
6. **Geostrategic Competition:** The withdrawal may intensify geopolitical competition among regional and global powers in Afghanistan, potentially impacting India's influence in the region.
7. **Counterterrorism Cooperation:** India must strengthen its counterterrorism cooperation with neighboring countries and international partners to address the spillover of terrorist activities.

In conclusion, the withdrawal of ISAF from Afghanistan poses major security implications for India and the region. To safeguard its strategic interests, India must adopt a proactive approach, engaging in regional diplomacy, bolstering security measures and actively participating in regional initiatives aimed at stability and security.

Q19. What do you understand by 'The String of Pearls'? How does it impact India? Briefly outline the steps taken by India to counter this. (200 words) [10]

Approach to question:

1. The term 'String of Pearls' refers to a geopolitical concept that describes China's efforts to establish a network of naval bases and commercial ports in the Indian Ocean region.
2. India has taken several steps to counter this, including increasing its own naval presence in the Indian Ocean, strengthening military and economic ties with other countries in the

region, such as Japan and the United States and establishing its own overseas naval bases, such as in the Seychelles.

Answer:

The String of Pearls concept:

1. A network of Chinese military and commercial facilities stretching from China's mainland to the Indian Ocean, enhancing China's geopolitical influence in the region.
2. Coined by Booz Allen Hamilton in 2005.

Impact on India:

1. **Threat to maritime security:** Chinese naval bases and ports in countries like Pakistan, Myanmar, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka pose potential threats to India's maritime security.
2. **Economic influence:** Chinese presence may lead to economic dominance and control over the region, affecting India's strategic investments and business interests.
3. **Encirclement strategy:** Part of China's strategy to encircle India with military and economic might, limiting India's regional influence.

India's countermeasures:

1. **Increased engagement with IOR countries:** Fostering regional stability and security through enhanced maritime cooperation and defence ties.
2. **Infrastructure development:** Projects like Chabahar Port in Iran and Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project in Myanmar to enhance connectivity and economic integration.
3. **Military modernization:** Strengthening naval presence and conducting joint military exercises with regional countries.
4. **Diplomacy:** Collaborating with like-minded countries to promote regional security and stability.

The String of Pearls concept poses significant implications for India's regional security and economic interests. To counter its impact, India has pursued strategies like increased engagement, infrastructure development, military modernization and diplomatic efforts. Continuation of these efforts is essential to safeguard India's strategic interests in the region.

Q20. Economic ties between India and Japan while growing in the recent years are still far below their potential. Elucidate the policy constraints which are inhibiting this growth.

(200 words) [10]

Approach to question:

1. High tariffs on several Indian products, especially agricultural and dairy products, act as a major hurdle in expanding trade relations.

2. Complex regulations and bureaucratic procedures make it difficult for Japanese companies to operate in India and invest in the country.
3. Limited connectivity and infrastructure facilities in India affect Japan's interest in investing in India, particularly in the Northeastern region.
4. India's preference for adopting indigenous technology and reluctance to transfer intellectual property rights to foreign companies are seen as a significant constraint by Japanese investors.

Answer:

The economic ties between India and Japan have witnessed considerable growth in recent years, driven by shared values, strategic interests and complementary economic strengths. However, despite the positive trajectory, the current economic engagement between the two countries remains below its full potential. This essay explores the policy constraints that have hindered the further expansion of their economic ties.

1. **Trade Barriers:** Non-tariff barriers, complex regulatory frameworks and differences in standards and certifications impede smooth trade between India and Japan. Simplification and harmonization of trade regulations are crucial for boosting bilateral trade.
2. **Infrastructure Deficits:** Inadequate physical infrastructure in India, particularly in transportation and logistics, adversely affects the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of trade and investment activities. Addressing these infrastructural gaps is essential to enhance connectivity and facilitate trade.
3. **Policy Coherence:** Divergent policies and lack of coherence in economic and investment policies between the two countries create uncertainties for businesses and investors. Both nations need to align their policies to foster a conducive environment for trade and investment.
4. **Limited Market Access:** Limited access to each other's markets restricts the expansion of trade and investment opportunities. Eliminating market access barriers and providing mutual access to key sectors can unlock new avenues for economic collaboration.

While India and Japan have made notable progress in their economic ties, several policy constraints persist and hinder the realization of their full potential. Overcoming trade barriers, improving infrastructure, fostering policy coherence, expanding market access, investing in skill development, implementing financial sector reforms and addressing geopolitical concerns are crucial steps for both nations to unlock the untapped potential of their

economic partnership and forge a stronger and more mutually beneficial relationship.

Q21. The protests in Shahbag Square in Dhaka in Bangladesh reveal a fundamental split in society between the nationalists and Islamic forces. What is its significance for India?

(200 words) [10]

Approach to question:

1. The Shahbag Square protests in Bangladesh started in February 2013, with demands for the death penalty for Abdul Quader Mollah, a leader of the Jamaat-e-Islami party, who was convicted of war crimes committed during Bangladesh's war of independence in 1971.
2. The protests soon grew in size and intensity, with participants calling for a ban on Jamaat-e-Islami, a political party that opposed Bangladesh's independence and is seen as aligned with Pakistan.
3. The protests also highlighted the growing tension between secular and Islamic forces in Bangladesh, with some factions advocating for a more religiously conservative society.

Answer:

The protests in Shahbag Square in Dhaka, Bangladesh, also known as the Shahbag Movement, brought to the forefront a deep ideological divide within Bangladeshi society between nationalist and Islamic forces.

Significance of Shahbag Square Protests for India:

1. **Impact on internal security:** India's shared history and cultural ties with Bangladesh make developments there crucial for India's internal security concerns.
2. **Conflict between secularism and religious fundamentalism:** Similar challenges faced by India from extremist groups highlight the relevance of the protests in Bangladesh.
3. **Strategic interests:** India's active involvement in Bangladesh's liberation makes stability in the country vital for India's strategic interests in the region.
4. **Rise of social media activism:** The use of social media for mobilization in the protests is relevant for India, which is witnessing a similar trend.
5. **Importance of accountability and justice:** India has also seen demands for accountability and justice in various instances, making this aspect relevant for both countries.

Steps Taken by India to Counter the Impact:

1. **Strengthening democracy and institutions:** India works closely with Bangladesh to support its democratic institutions and judiciary.

2. **Cooperation against terrorism and extremism:** India collaborates with Bangladesh to combat terrorism, which is a shared concern.
3. **Investment in infrastructure and connectivity:** India's investments in Bangladesh aim to enhance economic ties and foster development.
4. **Assistance in various sectors:** India provides aid to support Bangladesh's development and reduce socio-economic disparities.

The Shahbag Square protests in Bangladesh have significant implications for India's internal security and strategic interests. India has been actively cooperating with Bangladesh to strengthen its democracy, combat terrorism, enhance economic ties and support development. These steps demonstrate India's commitment to maintaining stability and fostering strong relations with its neighbouring country.

Q22. Discuss the political developments in Maldives in the last two years. Should they be of any cause of concern to India?

(200 words) [10]

Approach to question:

Political developments in Maldives in the last two years:

1. In November 2018, the Maldives witnessed a highly controversial Presidential election, which was won by the opposition candidate Ibrahim Mohamed Solih, defeating the incumbent President Abdulla Yameen.
2. Since then, there have been a series of political developments, including the release of political prisoners and the lifting of restrictions on the media.

Concerns for India:

1. The Maldives is strategically located in the Indian Ocean and any instability or security threat in the country can have a direct impact on India's security interests.
2. The growing influence of China in the Maldives, as evident from the FTA, can pose a challenge to India's strategic influence in the region.

Answer:

Political developments in Maldives in the last two years:

1. In February 2018, the Maldives witnessed a political crisis with the ousting of the then President Abdullah Yameen, who had been accused of authoritarianism and curbing democratic rights.
2. The Maldives Presidential Elections were held in September 2018, which saw the victory of Ibrahim Mohamed Solih, who was backed by a coalition of opposition parties.

Significance for India:

1. India considers the Maldives as a key neighbour and a crucial partner in its Indian Ocean strategy, given its strategic location and proximity to India.
2. The political developments in the Maldives have a direct impact on India's security interests, particularly with regards to maritime security and counter-terrorism cooperation.

Should they be of any cause of concern to India?

1. The political developments in the Maldives have been largely positive, with the new government making efforts to restore democracy and improve ties with India.
2. However, the growing radicalization in the Maldives and the presence of extremist elements remain a concern for India, particularly with regards to maritime security and counter-terrorism cooperation.

In conclusion, the political developments in the Maldives over the last two years have been largely positive, with the new government making efforts to restore democracy and improve ties with India. While there are concerns regarding the growing radicalization in the Maldives, India needs to work closely with the Maldives government to address these concerns and strengthen cooperation in areas of mutual interest.

Q23. In respect of India-Sri Lanka relations, discuss how domestic factors influence foreign policy. (200 words) [10]

Approach to question:

1. India's foreign policy towards Sri Lanka has been shaped by various domestic factors, including political, security, economic and cultural considerations.
2. The Tamil issue in Sri Lanka, which involves the rights and grievances of the Tamil minority community, has been a major factor in India-Sri Lanka relations.
3. The role of regional parties in India, especially those with a strong presence in Tamil Nadu, has also influenced India's policy towards Sri Lanka.

Answer:

India's foreign policy towards Sri Lanka has been shaped by various domestic factors, including political, security, economic and cultural considerations. The Tamil issue in Sri Lanka, which involves the rights and grievances of the Tamil minority community, has been a major factor in India-Sri Lanka relations.

Domestic Factors Influencing India-Sri Lanka Relations:

1. **Ethnic and linguistic factors:** The Tamil community's treatment in Sri Lanka is a sensitive

issue in India, with Tamil Nadu advocating for their rights.

2. **Political factors:** The political situation in both countries can influence bilateral relations, with leaders taking different stances based on their agendas.
3. **Security concerns:** India has security interests in Sri Lanka's stability due to its proximity, especially concerning Chinese presence and infrastructure projects.
4. **Economic factors:** India is Sri Lanka's largest trading partner and economic interests play a role in policy decisions and investment projects.
5. **Cultural and religious factors:** Strong cultural and religious ties can foster cooperation or lead to tension in cases of differences.

Recent Influences on India-Sri Lanka Relations:

1. **Treatment of Tamils in Sri Lanka:** India supports Tamil rights and advocates for greater devolution of power, leading to occasional tension.
2. **China's growing influence:** India is concerned about China's investment in infrastructure and port construction in Sri Lanka, leading to India's efforts to counter Chinese influence.
3. **Political situation in Sri Lanka:** The change in government in 2019 and its pro-China stance has brought uncertainty to bilateral relations.

In conclusion, domestic factors significantly shape India-Sri Lanka relations. India will need to carefully navigate these factors to maintain a strong and stable relationship with its neighbouring country.

Q24. What is meant by Gujral doctrine? Does it have any relevance today? Discuss.

(200 words) [10]

Approach to question:

The Gujral Doctrine is a foreign policy approach developed by former Indian Prime Minister I.K. Gujral in 1996.

The doctrine has relevance today as it emphasizes strengthening regional ties and promoting cooperation among neighbouring countries. It seeks to create a peaceful and stable neighbourhood, which is vital for India's security and economic growth.

Answer:

The Gujral doctrine is a foreign policy doctrine that was proposed by former Indian Prime Minister Inder Kumar Gujral. The doctrine was based on the principle of building good relations with India's neighbours, especially smaller countries, without expecting any reciprocity. The Gujral doctrine was based on the following principles:

1. India will not ask for reciprocity but will take the initiative to improve relations with its neighbours.

2. India will not interfere in the internal affairs of its neighbours.
3. India will give priority to the security and economic interests of its neighbours.
4. India will treat its smaller neighbours as equals.

The relevance of the Gujral doctrine today can be discussed in the following points:

1. **Building trust:** The Gujral doctrine emphasises the need to build trust with India's neighbours, which is relevant today as India faces security threats from its neighbours.
2. **Non-interference:** The doctrine emphasises non-interference in the internal affairs of its neighbours, which is crucial for maintaining regional stability.
3. **Prioritising economic interests:** With the increasing importance of economic ties in foreign policy, the Gujral doctrine's emphasis on prioritising economic interests of neighbours is relevant.
4. **Smaller neighbours:** The doctrine recognizes the importance of smaller neighbours, which is relevant today as India faces challenges in maintaining good relations with its smaller neighbours.

In conclusion, the Gujral doctrine continues to be relevant in today's context as it emphasises the need for building trust, non-interference, prioritising economic interests and recognizing the importance of smaller neighbours. It provides a valuable framework for India's foreign policy towards its neighbours.

Q25. The World Bank and the IMF, collectively known as the Bretton Woods Institutions, are the two inter-governmental pillars supporting the structure of the world's economic and financial order. Superficially, the World Bank and the IMF exhibit many common characteristics, yet their role, functions and mandate are distinctly different. Elucidate. (200 words) [10]

Approach to question:

1. The World Bank is primarily a development institution that provides loans and grants to low- and middle-income countries for specific projects and programs aimed at poverty reduction and sustainable development.

2. The IMF, on the other hand, focuses on promoting international monetary cooperation, exchange rate stability.

Answer:

1. The World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) were established in July 1944, at the Bretton Woods Conference held in the United States.
2. The World Bank provides loans, grants, guarantees and advisory services to governments and the private sector, while the IMF provides loans to member countries facing balance of payments difficulties and offers policy advice and technical assistance.
3. The World Bank is made up of two institutions: the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) and the International Development Association (IDA). The IBRD provides loans and other financial assistance to middle-income and creditworthy low-income countries, while the IDA provides interest-free loans and grants to low-income countries that have limited financial resources.
4. The IMF is a cooperative institution that provides loans to member countries experiencing balance of payments difficulties. These loans come with conditions, including economic and financial policies that the recipient country must implement to address its underlying economic problems.
5. The Bretton Woods Institutions continue to play a significant role in the global economic and financial order, although their influence has been challenged in recent years by the rise of new economic powers and the emergence of alternative development finance institutions such as the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank and the New Development Bank.

In conclusion, while the World Bank and the IMF may appear similar at first glance, they have distinct roles, functions and governance structures that reflect their respective mandates. Despite their criticisms, both institutions continue to play an important role in the global economic and financial order and their policies and actions have significant implications for developing countries, including India.