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GENERAL STUDIES (TEST CODE : 1835)

Name of Candidate	VIBHORE MENDIRATTA		
Medium Eng./Hindi	English	Registration Number	1267413
Center		Date	

INDEX TABLE

Q. No.	Maximum Marks	Marks Obtained
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16	15	
17	15	
18	15	
19	15	
20	15	

Total Marks Obtained:

Remarks:

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Do furnish the appropriate details in the answer sheet (viz. Name, Registration Number and Test Code).
2. There are **TWENTY** questions printed in **ENGLISH**
3. All questions are compulsory.
4. The number of marks carried by a question/part is indicated against it.
5. Answers must be written in the medium authorized in the Admission Certificate, which must be stated clearly on the cover of this Question-Cum-Answer (QCA) Booklet in the space provided. No marks will be given for answers written in medium other than the authorized one.
6. Word limit in questions, if specified, should be adhered to.
7. Any page or portion of the page left blank in the Question-Cum-Answer Booklet must be clearly struck off.

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Delhi- 110009

EVALUATION INDICATORS

1. Contextual Competence
2. Content Competence
3. Language Competence
4. Introduction Competence
5. Structure - Presentation Competence
6. Conclusion Competence

Overall Macro Comments / feedback / suggestions on Answer Booklet:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

All the Best

1. The withdrawal of general consent to the CBI by certain state governments in India threatens the spirit of cooperative federalism in India. Discuss.
(150 words) 10

Recently West Bengal informed Centre that it has withdrawn the general consent to CBI, ^{Some} Other states like Maharashtra had already taken such actions.

Threatens cooperative federalism

- 1) leads to confrontation of centre and state.

[eg]: West Bengal - Centre case now in SC.

- 2) Sets ~~too~~ wrong precedent.

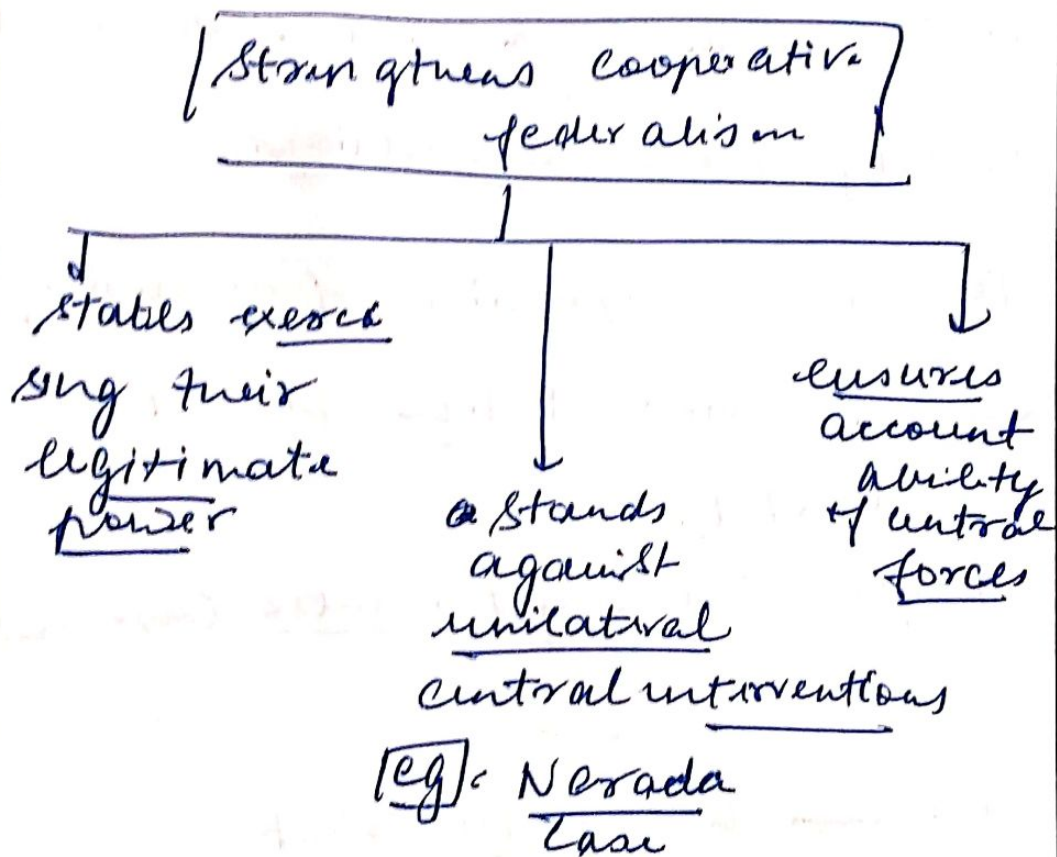
- 3) breakdown of intelligence and cooperation between police

forces of state and centre

[eg]: Recent NIA report.

4) Threat to future collaborative
initiatives like NATGRID.

5) Accusations over governance
[eg]: West Bengal elections and
COVID

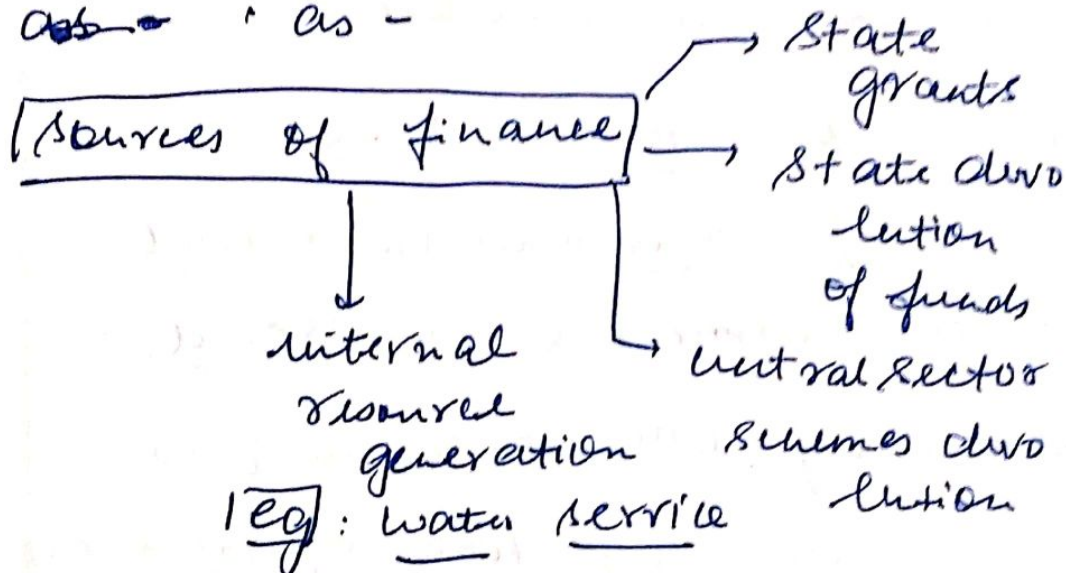


To further the federalism there
is need to develop principles and
cases where agencies like CBI can
intervene. ~~IF~~ ISC (Article 263) is
the opt medium to be revived.

2. Stating the sources of finance for local self-governments in India, suggest ways to strengthen their financial position. (150 words) 10

Articles 243 P to 243 ZC, provide for urban local bodies and 243 to 243D for panchayats

ARC2 has pointed their sources as -



Moreover municipalities can also collect taxes like property tax and undertake loans through bonds etc.

Recently RRI's 'State of local finance' report has highlighted lack

of funds with 2nd especially owing to expenditure due to COVID -

Strengthening the financial position

ARC-2, 15th Finance Commission ^(FC) and RBI has recommended -

- 1) Sharing of greater taxes
[eg]: Scandinavian model where income tax is shared.
 - 2) Redrawing 11th, 12th schedule → necessary devolution of finances for certain sectors (15th FC)
 - 3) More flexibility in central sector schemes
 - 4) Providing training to semi-literate members for efficient collection (ARC-2)
 - 5) National auditing of accounts (15th FC)
- The above steps are needed to realize the DPSP 40.

3. Cabinet Committees play an important role in reinstating collective responsibility and principle of homogeneity of the Executive in the Indian Parliamentary system. Elucidate. (150 words) 10

Cabinet committees are extra
constitutional devices to enhance
the quality of decision making
by executive. - They are -

- 1) involve both cabinet and non-
cabinet members.
- 2) constituted by PM as per his
convenience

[Eg]: cabinet committee on
economic affairs (CCEA)

[Role] → Reinstating collective
responsibility and homogeneity

- 1) Allow collective deliberation
by ministers
↳ reaching a consensus

2) Help in taking decisions by multiple members rather than by single person.

[eg]: LCEA appointing board of governors of RBI

3) integration across various sectors of policies

[eg]: PM coordinates by being head of most committees like political etc.

4) Provides effective decision making and discussion platform as compared to bulky Council of ministers

5) Provide flexibility to ministers

- members
- duration
- rules of meeting

6) Secretariat to support research for data driven decisions.

hence ad-hoc committees offer an alter

4. There is a need to overhaul the public procurement and project management (PPPM) framework of India for faster, efficient and transparent execution of government projects. [Comment] (150 words) 10

Recently Ministry of Finance has released new procurement guidelines highlighting the issues of current framework of procurement and management.

[Need]

- 1) Non transparent and collusive dealings in procurements
- 2) Preference to least cost method → quality suffers
- 3) contractual capability → mostly end up in litigations.
- 4) Regulatory bodies like AAI have Conflict of interest as being service providers and regulator.
- 5) Lack of human touch

for quality management

- 6) low participation of small
indigenous players

Way forward

- 1) Shifting to quality based framework
work.
- 2) Rating system for service
providers.
- 3) Increased use of online teaching
eg: Gen can be extended
- 4) use of technologies like drone to
aid in monitoring.
- 5) Integrity pacts to provide
transparency (ARL2)
- 6) mediation for contractual fallouts

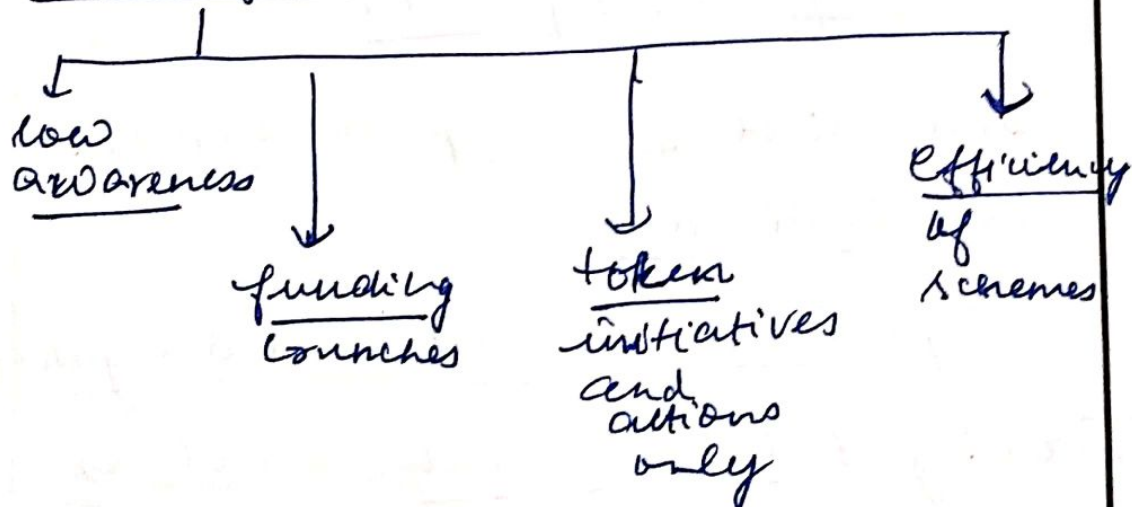
The above steps can help in
betuxing ~~PPPM~~ PPPM in India and
enhance public services.

5. Adequate measures are required to overcome the challenges and vulnerabilities associated with undertaking social accountability initiatives and institutionalising them. Elaborate. (150 words) 10

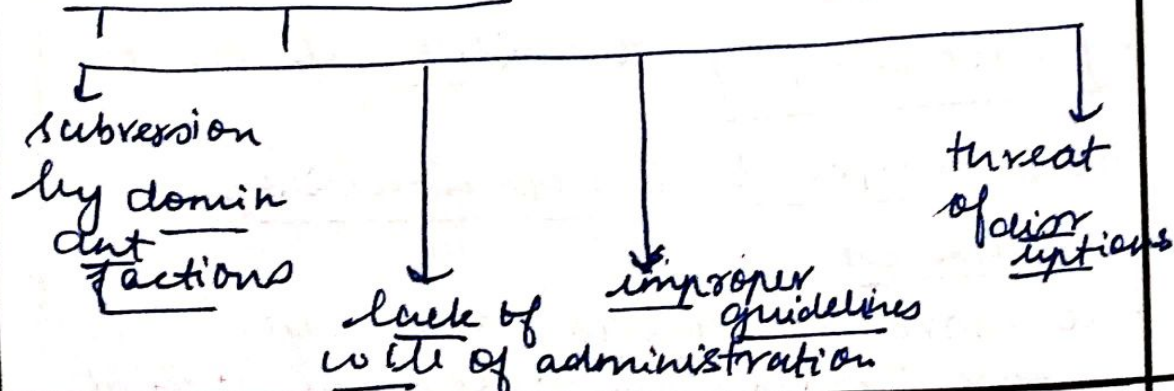
Social accountability initiatives refer to mechanisms that ensure direct accountability by society vertically over government

[eg]: Social audit in MGNREGS.

Challenges



Vulnerabilities



[eg]: RTI being used for unnee-
essary demands slows down
the and hampers governance

Measures (ARCs)

- 1) Adequate training and involvement
of local people

[eg]: People's Plan Campaign

- 2) use of technology

[eg]: NREGA SDFT

- 3) Dedicated funding to sustain
the initiatives.

[eg]: Citizen's report card Bangalore

- 4) Training Public servants to act as
facilitators.

- 5) Synchronizing traditional and
new vertical accountability
measures.

The above measures are required
for "minimum governance measures"

6. In view of the recent Parliamentary Standing Committee report, discuss the issues faced by the National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST) and suggest measures that can be adopted to strengthen it. (150 words) 10

The recent Parliamentary Standing Committee report has highlighted that NCST has become 'toothless tiger'

[Issues]

- 1) Poor funding and infrastructure
↓
Dependence on M.T.A for this regard
- 2) Not using suo moto powers
[eg]: Niyamgiri case
- 3) Not taking necessary welfare interventions
[eg]: Recent FCA, 1980 amendment not challenged by NCST despite opposition letters
- 4) Low rate of disposing cases

5) Overlap with Other agencies

[eg]: NHRC.

Measures

The Parliamentary standing committee and ARC-2 have recommended —

1) Coordination between various agencies

[eg]: Creating common database under NHRC.

2) Dedicated time in Parliament for discussion of its reports.

3) Proactive vigilance → reduce the violations against ST's by active steps.

4) More autonomy in funding

5) Filling vacancies.

To ensure APSP46 is followed the above steps are necessary to transf

7. While the Mid-Day Meal scheme was aimed at fulfilling the nutritional needs of students, it is far behind in achieving this objective. Discuss. Also, suggest remedial measures in this context. (150 words) 10

Recent GI report shows that wasting continues to be around 17% in India and stunting at 34%.

Far behind objective

- 1) excessive dependence on wheat-rice only (less diversification)
- 2) less resilience [eg]: was almost suspended during COVID-
- 3) Reports highlighting corruption in scheme.
- 4) caste issues with cooks [eg]: UK Uttarakhand
incidents
- 5) Quality concerns.

Government steps

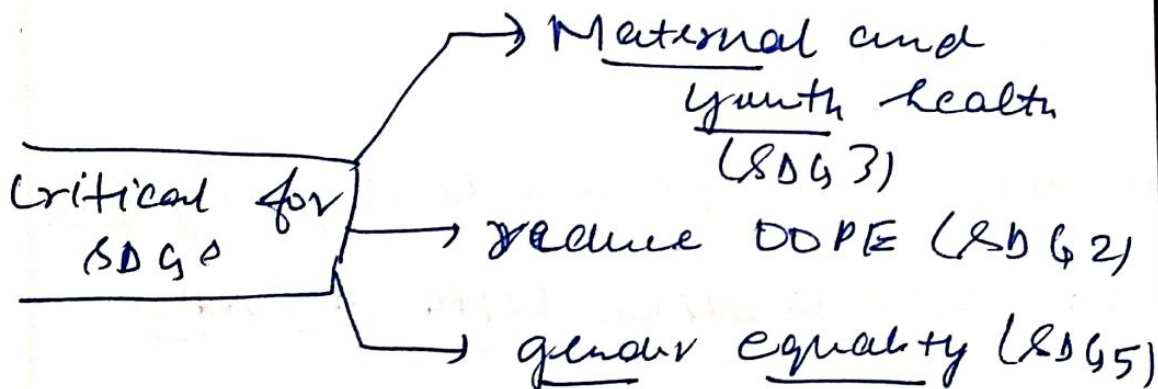
- 1) Fortification of rice
- 2) Revamping to PM Poshan Scheme with focus on nutrition over providing meals.

Remedial measures

- 1) Diversification of products
eg: Eggs in Tamil Nadu
 - 2) Mandatory social audits (more than current prescribed 20%)
 - 3) Nodal officer under MLCs to oversee the scheme.
 - 4) ~~Seg~~ Synchronising with other schemes like Poshan Abhiyan
 - 5) Forming FPO's to supply food
- India needs commitment to above steps to achieve the goals of SDG 2

8. Sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) remain critical for the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In this context, discuss the impediments in the fulfilment of SRHR in India. Also, mention the steps that can be taken in this regard. (150 words) 10

According to WFP Gender gap report 2021, only 81 women take independent decisions regarding their sexual rights in marriage



Impediments

- 1) unmet contraceptive needs
(NFHR-5 → 101)
- 2) high focus on women sterilization (NFHR-5)
- 3) low accessibility to facilities
eg: critical efficiency of

Specialists in rural areas

4) Attitude of society especially related to adolescent sexual health

5) Lack of awareness among women and children.

6) continued discrimination of trans genders.

[Steps]

1) Awareness programmes [Cg]: by NCD in coordination with AASHA

2) Specialists in rural areas → Mobile van units can be used.

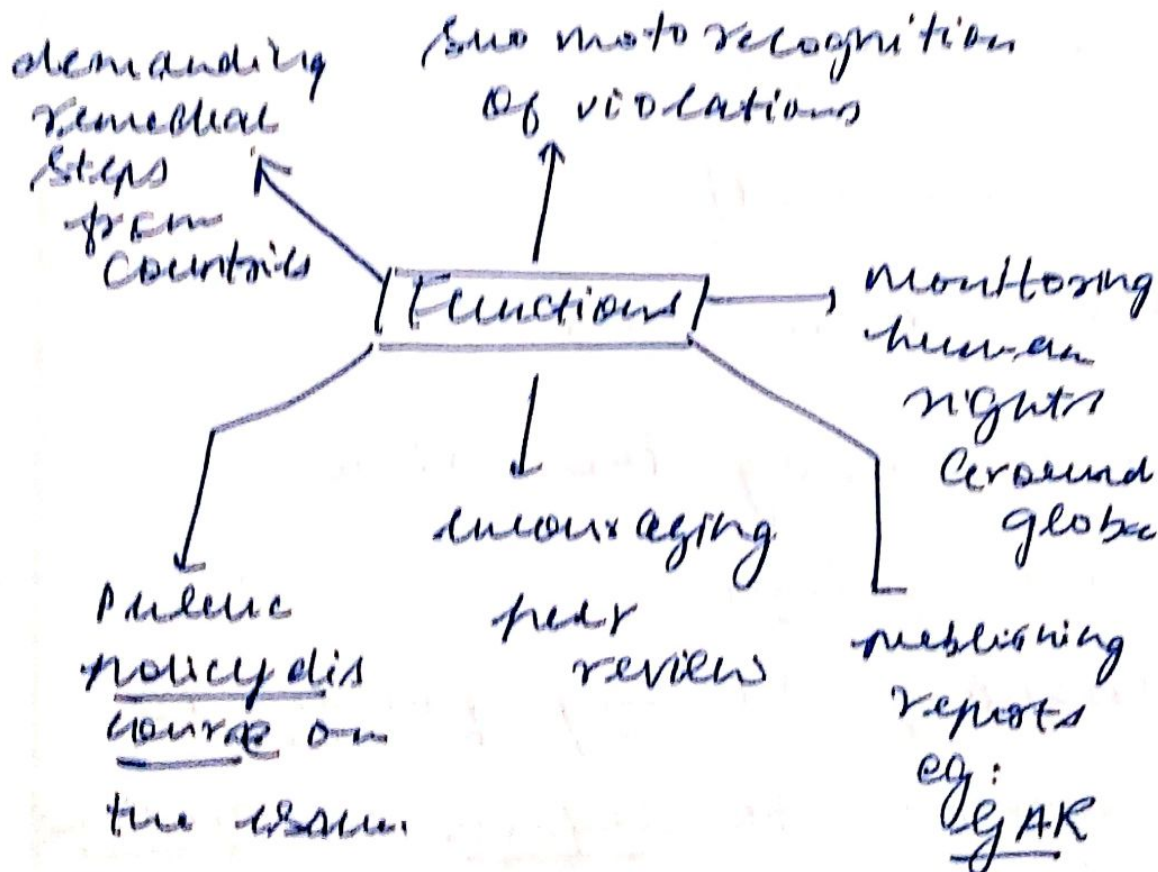
3) Focussing on meeting contraceptive demands

4) dedicated funding.

SRHR form basic component of SDGs and hence should be ensured for

9. State the functions of the United Nations Human Rights Council. Also, discuss the issues faced by the Council in the promotion and protection of human rights around the globe. (150 words) 10

UN Human Rights Council
(UN HRC) is a body under the
UN system dedicated to
ensuring upholding of human
rights by countries.



Issues

- 1) closed system of elections →

Questions of transparency

- 2) Funding crunch
- 3) Recommendations only advisory
with no implementation powers
- 4) Accusations of Bias
[eg]: Favouring China
- 5) Countries like USA, Israel left the council.

Way forward

- 1) Open election system
- 2) Strengthening the review mechanism
- 3) Granting binding powers to UNHRC to enforce the decisions.
Moreover countries should leave geopolitics aside while their discourse at UNHRC.

10. West Asia is an important strategic region for India with profound geo-political and geo-economic significance. Discuss. (150 words) 10

West Asia comprises of
the countries surrounding
majorly the Persian Gulf as
well as Israel, Jordan etc.

Important Strategic region for India

1)

Geopolitical

→ countering the
Chinese influence

→ terrorism and
security issues

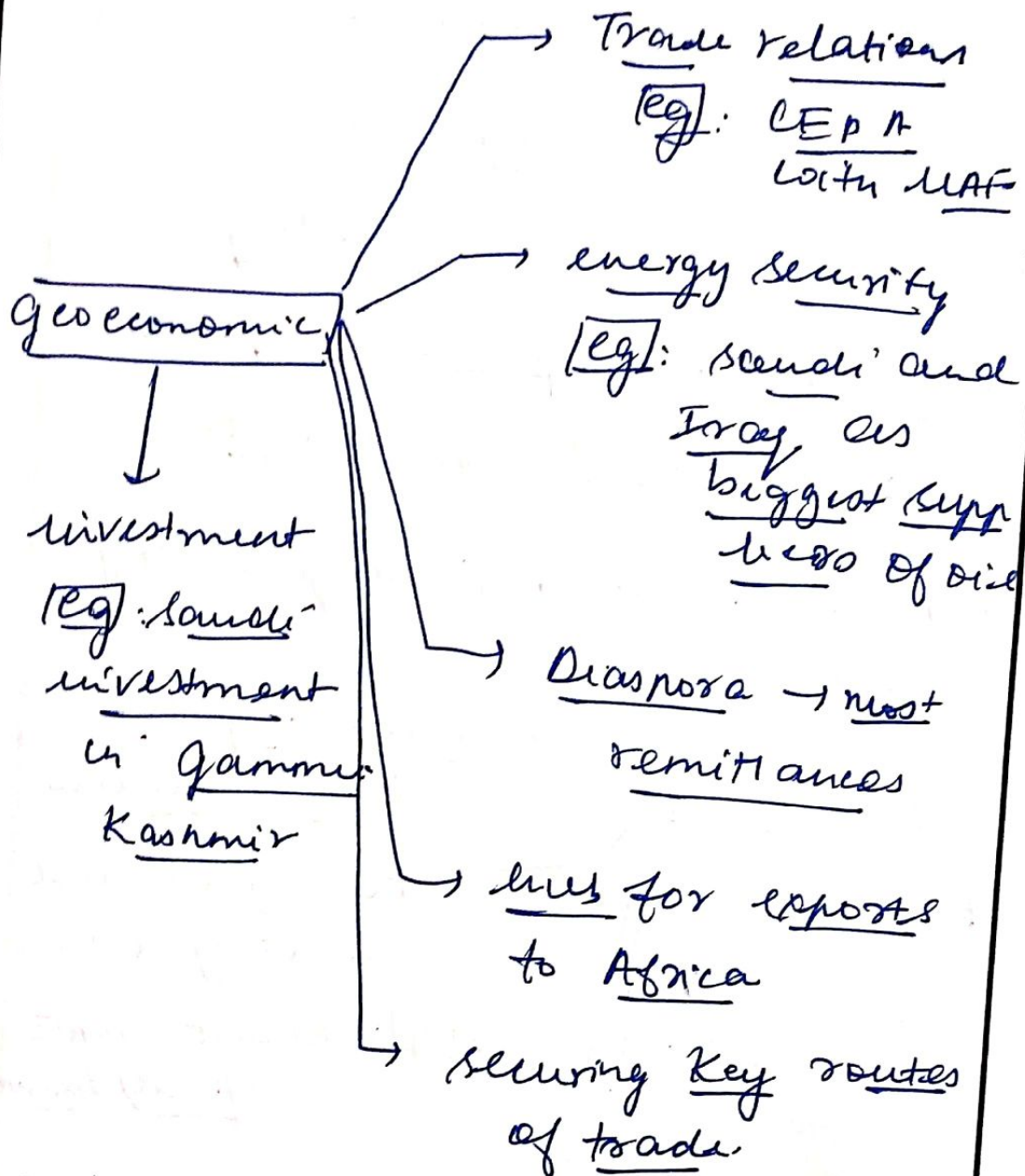
[eg]: Recent UAE
refinery blast

→ groupings and
partnerships

[eg]: Recent I2O2

→ Indo Pacific Oper
ness

[eg]: India → support



Hence India needs to enhance ties in the region in deh phenated manner. and prevent domestic fallouts like recent Nupur Sharma remarks to have strong influence in the region.

11. Disenfranchising prisoners desecrates a cherished value in a democracy i.e. 'right to vote', which should be guarded earnestly. Discuss in the light of The Representation of The People Act, 1951. (250 words) 15

The 2013 Supreme Court judgy current prohibited right to contest election vote for political prisoners as they are denied right to vote.

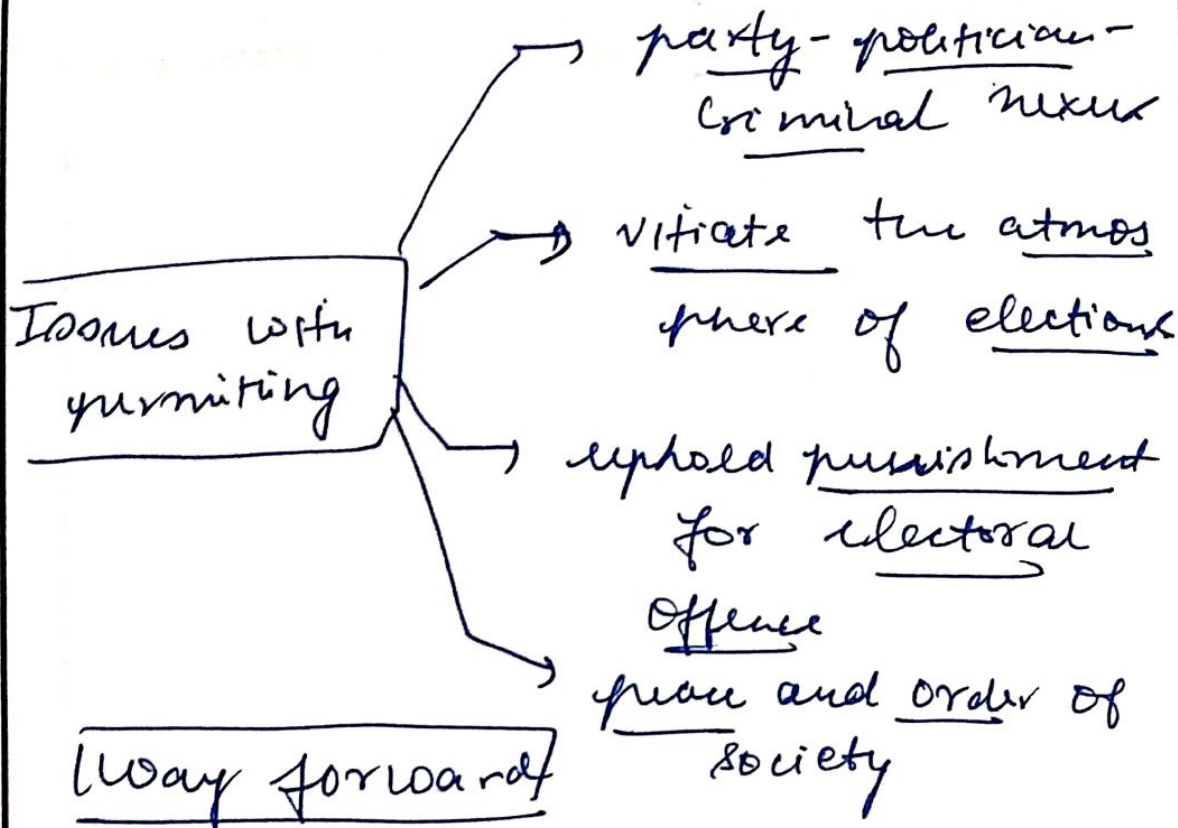
The prohibition does however over turned by an amendment to RPA, 1951 stating that right to vote summaris safeguarded inspite of being in police detention since the voter's name remains on electoral list.

Still the RPA explicitly also prohibits voting by political prisoners though their name on electoral list is present.

[Issues] → [Desecrates right to vote]
1) Legal Fundamental right as per Article

326 is taken away.

- 2) Against the principles of Political justice
- 3) Issue of undertrial → many denied of voting rights of guilt being established.
- 4) 2013 judgement and subsequent amendment → contradictory as allows 'right to stand up in elections'
- 5) Not proportionate to vulnerable sections like SLST's.
↳ more represented as political prisoners.
- 6) can become source of four ways
↳ i.e. putting behind locks to stop exercising mandate.



- 1) Undertrials may be allowed voting by postal ballots.
 - 2) Special trained officers to allow prisoners to exercise (right to vote)
- Thus the right to vote needs to be balanced with peace, security and public order of elections.

13. Objections to [domicile-based reservation] In private sector jobs on the grounds of constitutional equality and freedom are misplaced. Critically discuss. (250 words) 15

Recently Haryana put forward its intention of 75% private reservation. implementation. This has been challenged in the court Supreme court.

Justification

- 1) Rectifying role of Public sector
 Only employs 35mn out of 460mn
 Provide educational-employment justice in private sector
 (DPSP 46)
- 2) Upholds mandate of welfare state
 (DPSP 38) for underemployed group
- 3) Deal with rising unemployment

(7.11. in April 2022)

- 4) Guard local jobs from migrants for local population.

Violation of Constitutional Equality and freedom

- 5) As per Article 16, ~~only~~ Parliament is allowed / empowered to make laws granting no domicile condition for employment

How against Constitutional Equality and freedom

- 1) States not allowed to make the provision as per Article 16
- 2) Violation of Article 14
- 3) Precedent set by Supreme Court
[eg]: The up act of allowing only State women in police was

Struck down

- 4) violates Constitutional mandate of India being 'one market without barriers' (Article 307)
- 5) Against right to Freedom of Profession under Article 19.

Hence such a step by State could have future effects of acting as precedent and deterring labour mobility.

Thus the objections are not mispl aced and SC should strike down the act of Chhattisgarh government

14. There have been arguments that sedition law is an attack on the very foundation of India's liberal democratic principles, as enshrined in the Constitution. Do you agree? (250 words) 15

Recently the Supreme Court has put sedition laws applica-
tion into abeyance for its
use being against the values of
liberty in democracy

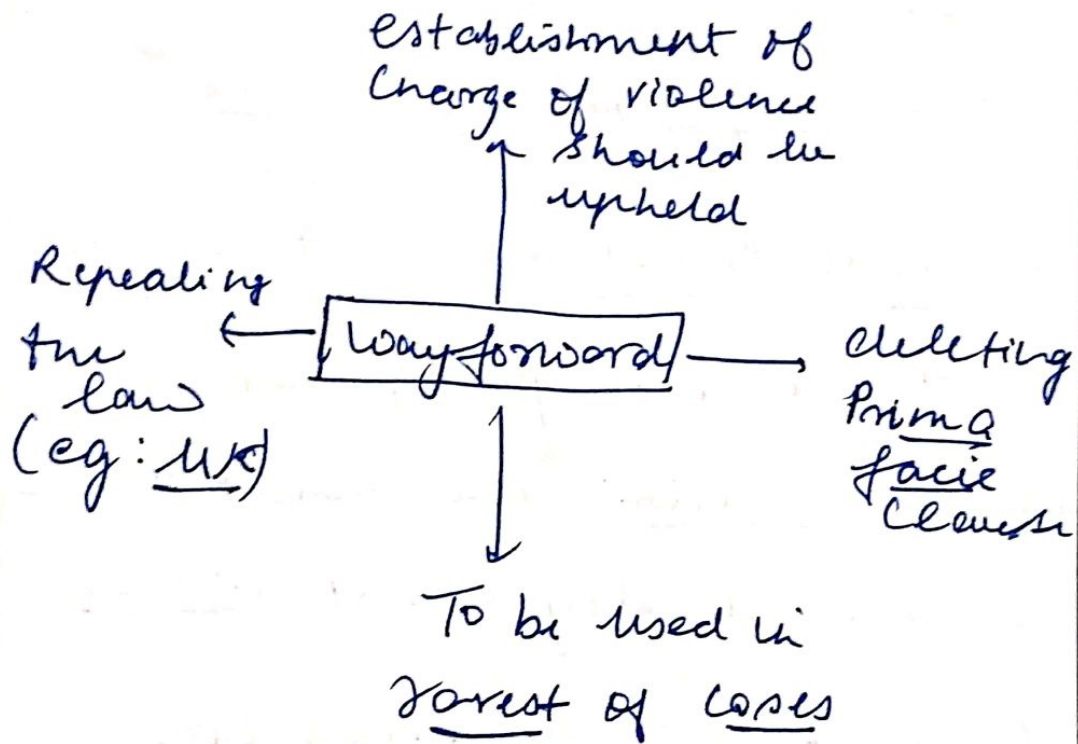
The sedition law is written
as Section 124A under the
IPC.

Attack on the foundations

- 1) Colonial in nature
[eg]: Was used to arrest Bal
Gangadhar Tilak and Maratime
Gandhi
- 2) used to curb dissent → against
Article 19 of Constitution.
[eg]: GNU case

- 3) low conviction rate (only around 3%)
- 4) undermines cooperative federalism
[eg]: Accused by states like West Bengal of biased use
- 5) Judicial Precedent not followed
↳ Kedarnath judgement in which Sedition was meant to be established by act of violence.
- 6) Stringent bail conditions (ie Prima facie clause)
↳ violates rights of accused
- 7) Arbitrary use
[eg]: Against film director of Lakshadweep.

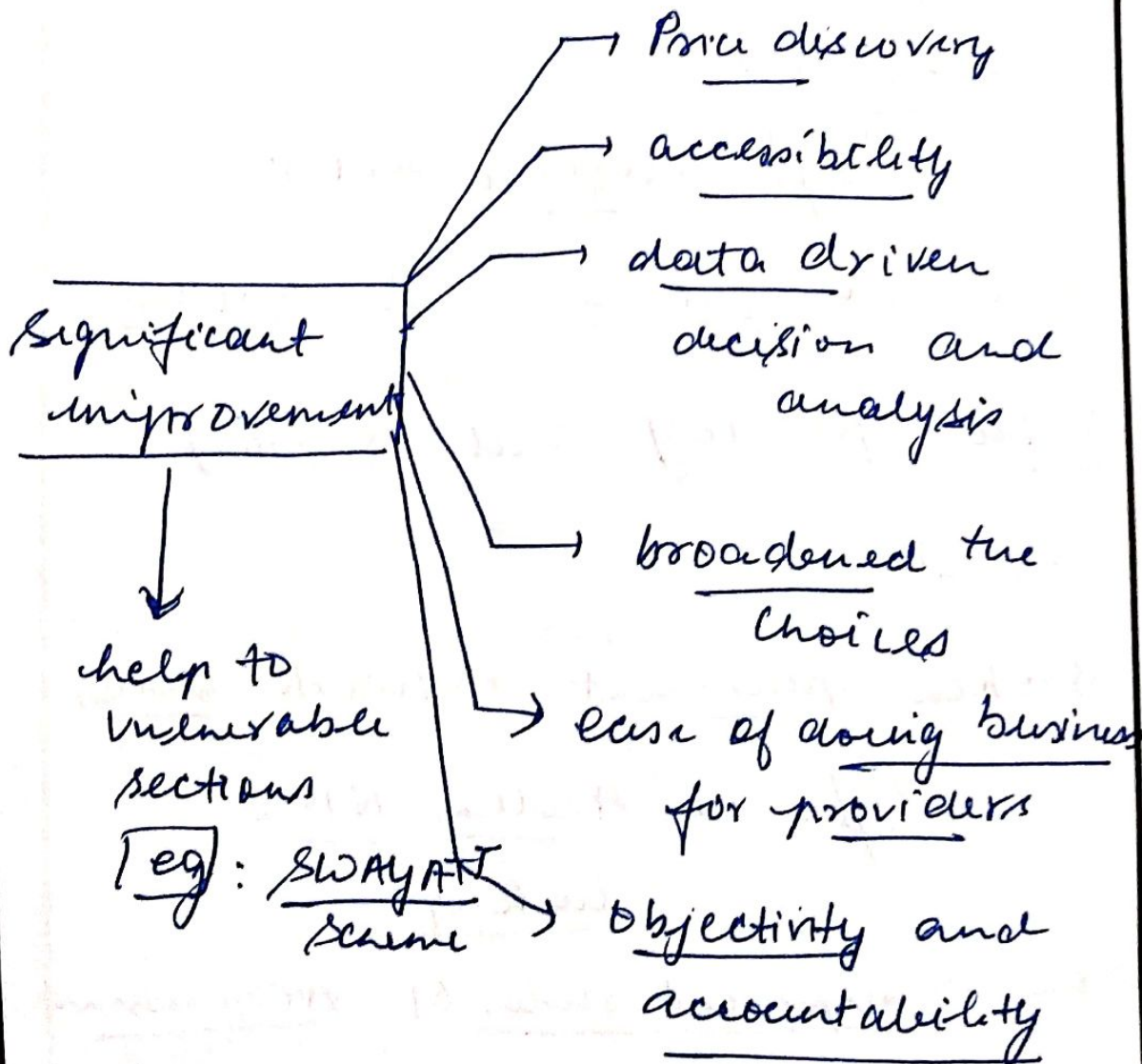
Hence the law has been used to attack the rights and liberties



Hence the Supreme Court should take actions as per its standards of proportionality set by Pithuswamy. Sedition law should only be used objectively or be repealed.

15. Despite Government e-Marketplace facing certain challenges, it has brought about a significant improvement in the procurement of goods and services by various government agencies. Discuss. (250 words) 15

Government e Marketplace (GeM) is a digital platform to facilitate online procurement of goods and services by government transparently.



Challenges

- 1) Digital divide in country
(eg only 63% penetration in rural India)
- 2) Not being regularly used by all the agencies.
- 3) Presence of parallel offline mechanisms.
(eg): defence sector
- 4) Technical glitches and shutdowns
- 5) Data privacy and security issues
- 6) Broken payment network issues
(eg): Aadhar NPCI linkage
- 7) Non transparent rules of procurement

Way forward

- 1) Innovation in online public procurement
↳ can start a separate challenge under Atal innovation mission.
 - 2) minimum Quota for government agencies to procure from Gens
 - 3) online publishing of rules and guidelines of procurement.
- Also initiatives like Swayam should be expanded to allow more players to come on the platform.

16. A reformed system of recruitment, training and evaluation needs to be put in place to take forward the development of a highly efficient and accountable civil service. (Discuss in the context of India.) (250 words) 15

Currently, India faces 23:1 of shortage of IAS officers at centre. This can be accounted to poor recruitment and training policies of centre.

Committees like AKCZ, Kota Commi tee etc. have also put forward suggestions for reform^{ing} training, recruitment and evalua
tion

1) [Issues with current system]

1) Recruitment (AKCZ)

1.1) Address delayed and late entry

[eg]: In Singapore directly

Don't write anything in this margin

picked from colleges.

1.2) NOT focused for specific jobs

[eg]: UK → open office for such jobs.

1.3) No assessment of demand across departments and various levels.

2) Training (ARC2)

2.1) Foundational course → too general lacking specialization.

2.2) Lack of mid career training

3) Evaluation (ARC2)

3.1) No 360° evaluation

3.2) Evaluation not systematic ally used in subsequent promotions, postings effectively.

Government steps → has launched

Karmyogi mission

→ started lateral entry

Reforms

ARC 2 recommends the following

- 1) Following best practices globally for recruitment and training
eg: Russia → separate institutions and courses
- 2) 20+ lateral entry
- 3) mandatory mid career training and evaluations. at 10 yrs etc of service.
- 4) voluntary retirement of inefficient workers.
- 5) Promotion of civil servants to write research papers.
- 6) job demand - Role profiling and specialization.

The above recommendations need to

be taken to

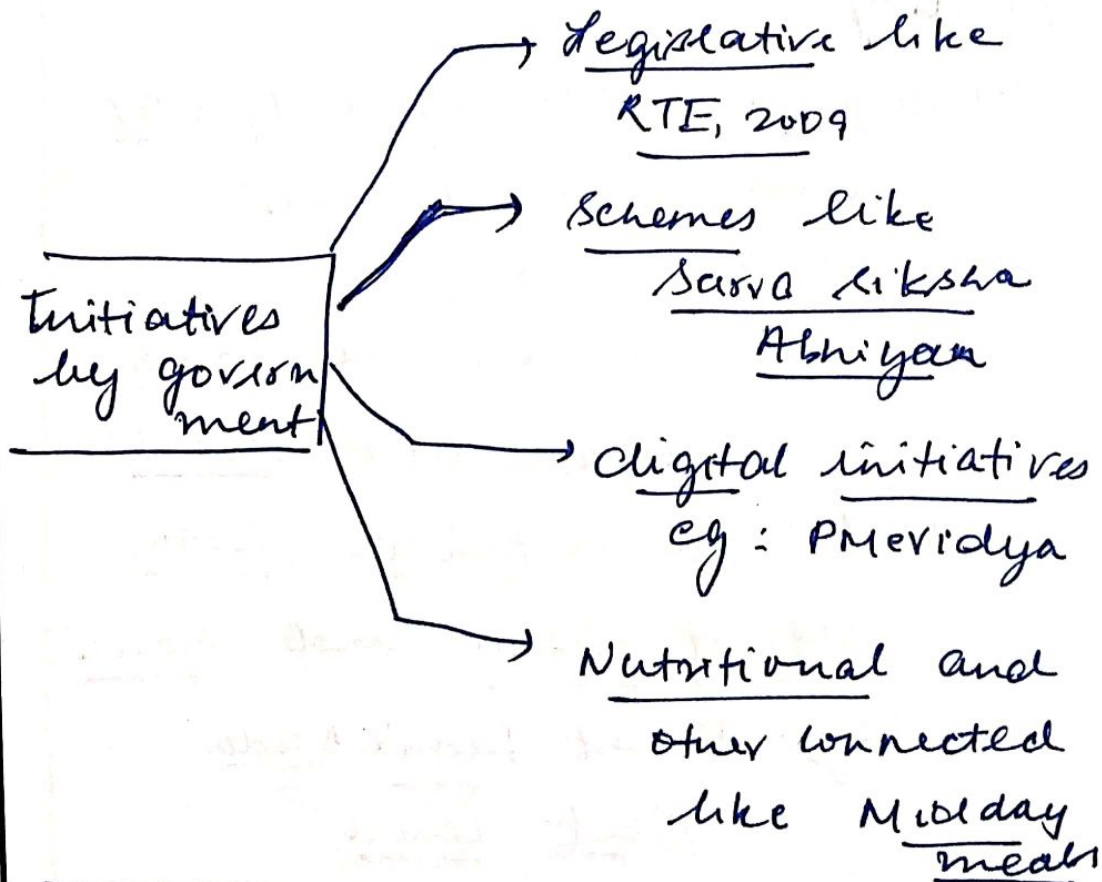
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17. Despite initiatives taken by the Indian government to achieve critical goals in the education sector, major interventions are required to tackle learning poverty as well as the persisting inequalities. Discuss. (250 words) 15

According to NITI 3 year action agenda, the Indian education system has neglected the learning outcomes with >50% of class 5 students failing to attain foundational literacy.



Requisment

- 1) Tackle learning poverty (NITI 3 year

Agenda

- 1.1) Input discussed schemes
- 1.2) More critical situation in
public schools leading to
their 'hollowing out'
- 1.3) Teacher absenteeisms
- 1.4) Rote learning → lack of
capability development

2) Inequality

- 2.1) Digital divide (eg: only 65%
access in rural areas)
- 2.2) Regional issues
(eg): no access in border
areas like Ladakh.
- 2.3) Private vs Public sector
infrastructure and services
(eg): Recent Tamil Nadu
Wet issue

Interventions

NITI Aayog 3 year agenda has

recommended the following-

- 1) Outcome focussed approach and incentives.
- 2) Local governments to collaborate with Private schools for their services [eg]: through vouchers.
- 3) 'Hub' and 'Spoke' model for universities and schools
- 4) Enacting RTE provisions [eg]: 25% reservations.
Also NEP, 2020 has recommended
- 1) Framework for foundational Numeracy and Literacy (FLN) by ~~age~~ class 3
- 2) Balvatikas ^{etc.} ~~and~~ to rope in out of school children especially of vulnerable sections.
Government needs to expedite schemes like NIPUN for SDG 3.

18. In light of the burgeoning burden of both communicable and non-communicable diseases, there is a need to revamp the public health surveillance system in India. Discuss. (250 words) 15

India currently accounts for highest heart attack deaths in world. Also more than 70% of new infections are zoonotic.

Hence there is a need to revamp the public health surveillance system in India to detect the emerging burden

[Need]

- 1) currently underfinanced
[eg]: Poor utilisation of IDSP during COVID
- 2) lower reach especially to back ward areas like Maoist dominated districts.

- 3) poor infrastructure
- 4) lack of adequate use of
emerging technologies like AI,
ML etc
- 5) excessive centralization
↳ low control with ground
workers and local govt
ments
- 6) disjointed
[eg]: Differential working of
animal - water - health depart
ments.

[Revamping]

- 1) Adopting digital surveillance
[eg]: Recent ABKIM mission.
- 2) Promoting collaboration between
different sectors.

[eg]: one health approach

3) Decentralized approach

[eg]: The data of POSTMAN app
should be visible to ASHA -
Anganwadi workers.

4) Roping in private sector to
invest in public health services
allance

5) Global collaboration

[eg]: WHO's new biohub

6) Strengthening the lab infrastructure

↳ more standard labs
like NIV to be setup across
the country.

The steps are needed to ensure
the aims of "Watch Bharat -
Swastha Bharat"

19. The repercussions of the ongoing economic crisis in Sri Lanka extend beyond its borders. Discuss with specific reference to India. Also, mention the steps that India has taken to assist Sri Lanka tide over the crisis.

(250 words) 15

Sri Lanka is currently going through Balance of Payment (BOP) crisis with lower than required forex reserves to meet its ~~export~~^{import} demands.

Repercussions beyond border

- 1) "Becoming a geopolitical Centre of play" - Sri Lankan President
- 2) Security and safety of Indian Ocean region.

[eg]: ~~The~~ China to use its debt trap policy in case Sri Lanka falters like Hambantota port.

- 3) political turmoil

[eg]: ~~But~~ Tamil issue with
current protests can get
fuelled due to their depriv
ation

4) Western influence in the region
with loans from IMF, World
bank.

5) Security issues → hotbed for trou
ble radical groups like LTTE.

6) Hamper Sri Lanka India cooperati
on at groupings like BIMSTEC
because of Sri Lanka's instability

7) economic impacts on Indian proj
ects in Sri Lanka eg:-

[eg]: Trincomalee oil farm

Trincomalee Steps

India has recently provided

to the tune of USD ~~3.5 bn~~ 3.5 bn
and to Sri Lanka through -

- 1) lines of credit
- 2) deferring payments of loans
- 3) currency swaps.
- 4) grants of oil, food etc.

Also India has helped Sri Lanka
to negotiate with other players
and countries to come in its
aid [eg]: IMF

Still India needs to take more
proactive steps like engaging
with like minded countries for
[eg]: Japan to help Sri Lanka. This
would be in line with 'SAGAR'
doctrine

20. India is a reliable partner in the Indian Ocean Region and can take on the role of being the net security provider in the region. Discuss. (250 words) 15

Recent Aid given by India to Sri Lanka (to the tune of USD 3.5 bn) and its earlier initiatives like Vaccine Maitri point that India can take on the role of being a credible partner in the Indian Ocean region.

Reliable partner

- 1) Record of help in times of need

[eg]: Malé Water crisis 2004

- 2) Investments to empower the regional countries

[eg]: community development programmes in Afghanistan

3/ Intent → SAGAR doctrine

2/ formation of groupings like
Indoai Ocean Naval Symposium
(IONS) for stakeholder and
collaborative approach.

[Role of Net security provider]

1) can provide infrastructure
[eg]: Radar network across
malaysia, Myanmar.

2) Burgeoning defence industry
[eg]: Brahmos sale

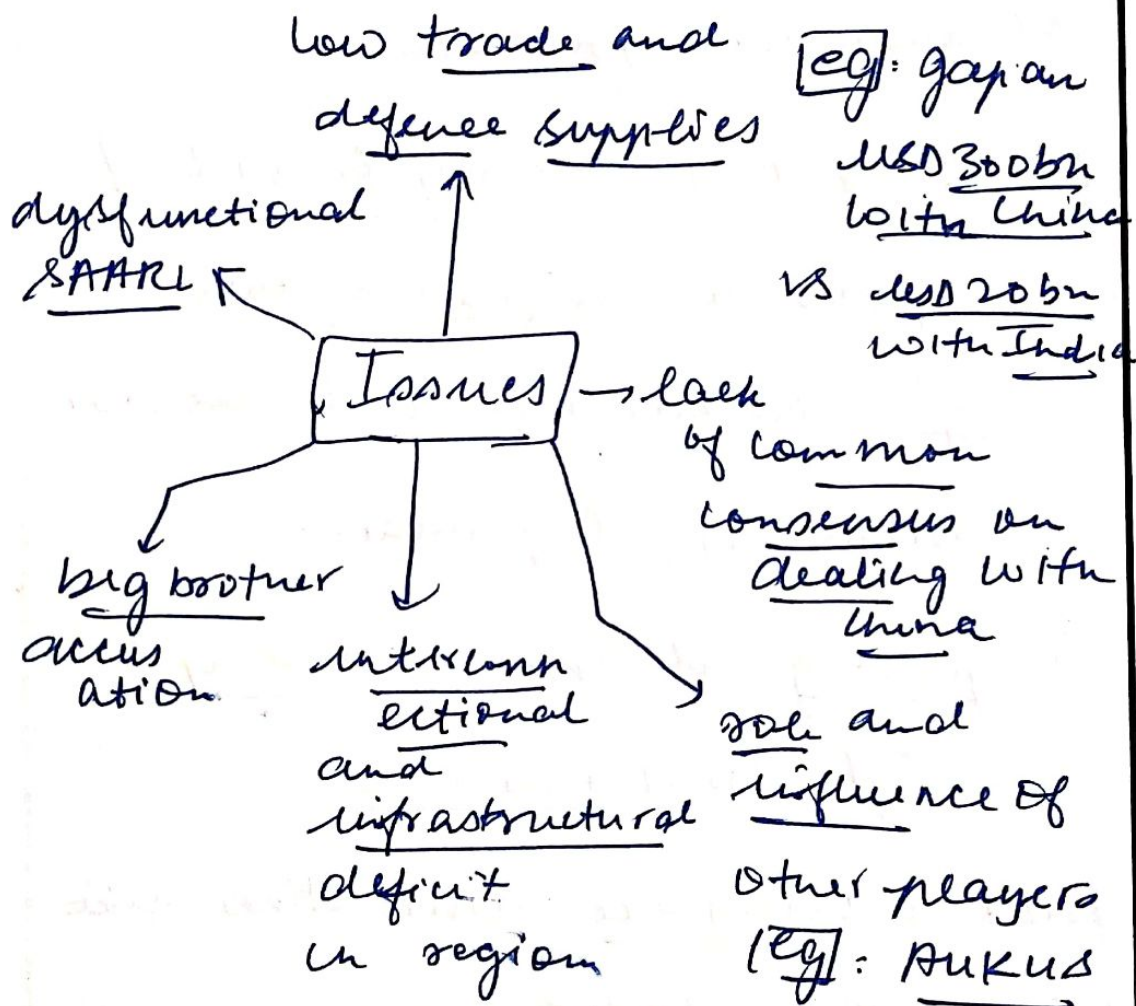
3) Joint intelligence initiatives like
IFC-IDK of India

4) Proactive approach to tackling
threats

[eg]: White Shipping agreements

with Japan, France to tackling
privacy

5) counterweight to China in the
region.



Hence India still needs a more
proactive approach. The recent out
reach to Vietnam should be
replicated to countries like South
Korea.