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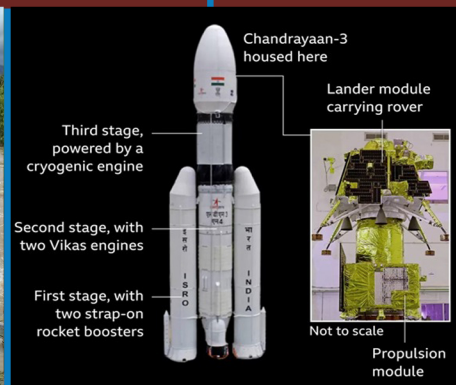
WILD FIRES - HOW THEY START—AND HOW TO STOP THEM



BRICS Summit: India's multi-alignment, new members to join



Monsoon on steroids: Climate change amplifies India's deluge



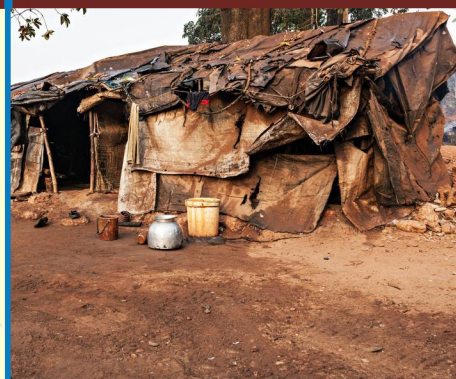
Chandrayaan-3 Mission: India's Quest for Lunar Exploration



Raids on Suspected Maoists



Women's Reservation Bill- a vote for Political presence in an unequal Social fabric



Consumption-based poverty estimates and its relevance



Action against Khalistan separatists

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Director's Message

Dear Aspirants,

The BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) bloc met for its annual leader's summit in Johannesburg, South Africa on August 22–24, 2023. The highlight of the fifteenth summit was the agreement to admit six new member countries: Argentina, Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, who will officially join the group in January 2024.

The BRICS alliance, constituting 41 percent of the global population, 24 percent of the global GDP, and 16 percent of global trade, has recently undergone a significant transformation. The decision by BRICS leaders to expand its membership from five to eleven reflects a strategic initiative to modernize and invigorate the grouping, causing reverberations in the global geopolitical landscape. According to the Johannesburg declaration, effective January 1, 2024, the newly admitted six countries will attain full membership status within BRICS.

This expansion is underpinned by a consensus on guiding principles, standards, criteria, and procedures, although the intricate details remain veiled. India played a pivotal role in shaping these criteria, aiming to integrate strategic partners into the group. Notably, India's strategic affiliations with Saudi Arabia, UAE, Iran, and Egypt underscore its proactive role in this expansion, transforming BRICS into a group of eleven members, surpassing the size of organizations like ASEAN and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation.

While over 40 countries have expressed interest in joining BRICS, the addition of these six new members sends a powerful signal advocating for a multipolar global order, challenging the existing post-World War II paradigm and providing growing countries in the global south with a counterforce to Western institutions.

BRICS, as articulated by its founding members, does not position itself as an "anti-West" alliance; rather, it seeks effective engagement with various global powers, including Western nations. The interest expressed by France in fostering active engagement with BRICS underscores its potential as a platform for broad international cooperation transcending geopolitical boundaries.

Argentina's inclusion, despite initial reluctance from Brazil, signifies its growing importance in the global arena, bolstered by a substantial GDP and robust economic ties with China. Ethiopia, as the second most populous nation in Africa with impressive economic growth rates, and Egypt, commanding a crucial geo-strategic location with 12% of global trade passing through the Suez Canal, add unique significance to BRICS.

The inclusion of Saudi Arabia, UAE, and Iran from Asia introduces a diverse array of geopolitical affiliations. While Saudi Arabia and the UAE maintain staunch support for the United States, Iran has increasingly aligned itself with China in recent years, driven by economic imperatives. This inclusion addresses the absence of Muslim-majority countries within BRICS.

While this expansion opens new avenues for BRICS, it also introduces potential challenges. The group's cohesive potential may face limitations due to varying geopolitical interests among member countries. Experts suggest that Russia, as the host of the next BRICS summit in 2024, views the expanded grouping as an opportunity to underscore its global relevance, particularly in the face of diplomatic isolation resulting from Western sanctions. The success of BRICS with its expanded membership hinges on its ability to navigate the intricacies arising from diversity and strike a delicate balance of power, particularly among key players like China and Russia within the alliance.

Best wishes.

Yours sincerely,



K Rajendra Kumar IPS (Retd)

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1. NATIONAL

1.1 Chandrayaan-3 Mission: India's Quest for Lunar Exploration

Introduction:

- Chandrayaan-3 is the third mission in the Chandrayaan series, India's ambitious lunar exploration program initiated by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO). This mission is a testament to India's growing prowess in space technology and its commitment to advancing scientific research.
- The success of the mission makes Chandrayaan-3, the world's first mission to soft-land near the lunar South Pole and India, fourth country to soft-land on the moon.

Background

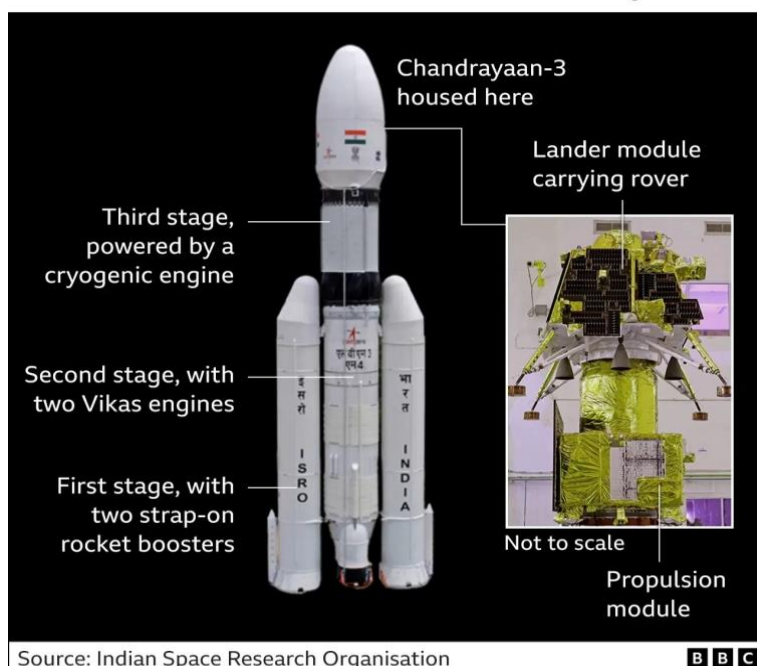
- The Chandrayaan series began with Chandrayaan-1 in 2008, which marked India's entry into lunar exploration.
- Chandrayaan-2 followed in 2019, comprising an orbiter, lander (Vikram), and rover (Pragyan). Unfortunately, Vikram crash-landed on the lunar surface, but the orbiter continues to provide valuable data.

Chandrayaan-3 Mission Objectives:

The primary objectives of Chandrayaan-3 include:

- **Soft Landing on the Moon:** Chandrayaan-3 aims to achieve a successful soft landing on the lunar surface, rectifying the setback of Chandrayaan-2's lander.
- **Scientific Exploration:** Once on the Moon, Chandrayaan-3 will conduct scientific experiments to enhance our understanding of the lunar environment, geology, and mineral composition.
- **Technology Demonstration:** It will serve as a platform to demonstrate India's technological capabilities, especially in lunar landing and rover operations.

The LVM3 launch rocket and Chandrayaan-3



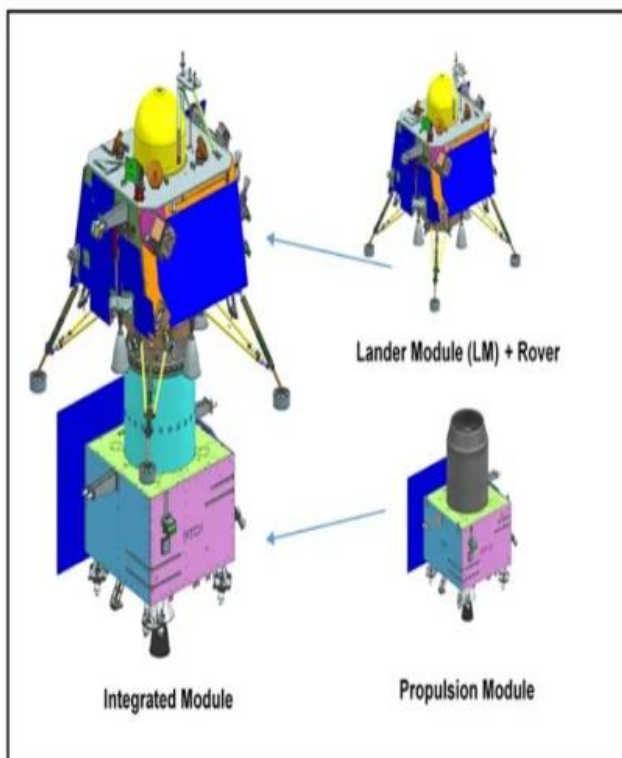
Launch Vehicle:

- LVM3 launch vehicle is used for Chandrayaan 3. LVM3 is the new launch vehicle of ISRO with the capability to place the modules into the GTO (Geosynchronous Transfer Orbit) in a cost-effective manner.
- It is a three-stage launch vehicle with two solid strap stages and one core liquid stage.

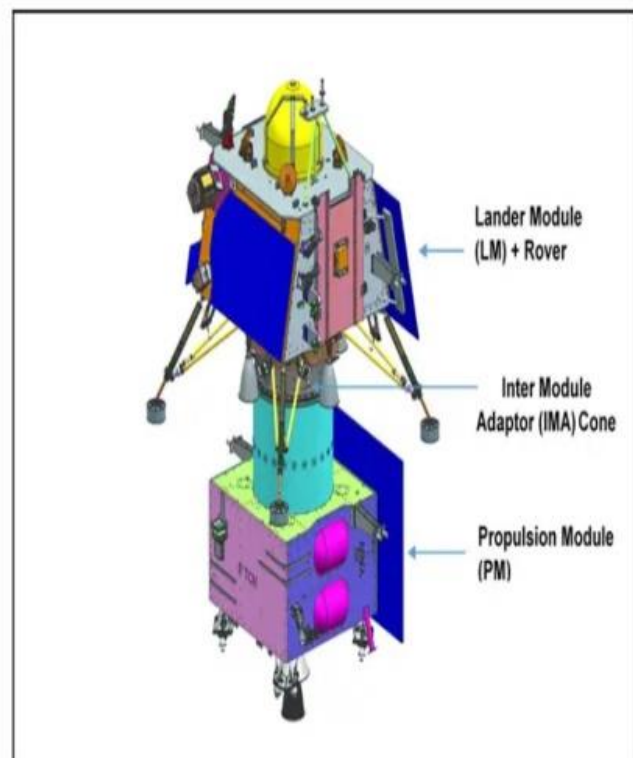
Modules of the Mission:

- The Chandrayaan-3 Mission consists of two modules - The propulsion module (PM) and the Lander module (LM).
- The main function of Propulsion Module (PM) is to carry the lander Module (LM) from launch vehicle injection till final lunar 100 km circular polar orbit, where the LM separates from PM.
- The total mass of both the modules is 3900 kg (Propulsion Module-2148 kg, and Lander Module-1752 kg, including Rover-26 kg).

Three dimensional views of Chandrayaan-3 modules are provided below:



Chandrayaan-3 - Elements



Chandrayaan-3 - Integrated Module

Sl. No	Lander Payloads	Objectives	
1.	Radio Anatomy of Moon Bound Hypersensitive ionosphere and Atmosphere (RAMBHA)	Langmuir probe (LP)	To measure the near surface plasma (ions and electrons) density and its changes with time
2.	Chandra's Surface Thermo physical Experiment (ChaSTE)	To carry out the measurements of thermal properties of lunar surface near polar region.	
3.	Instrument for Lunar Seismic Activity (ILSA)	To measure seismicity around the landing site and delineating the structure of the lunar crust and mantle.	
4.	LASER Retroreflector Array (LRA)	It is a passive experiment to understand the dynamics of Moon system.	

Sl. No	Rover Payloads	Objectives	
1.	LASER Induced Breakdown Spectroscopy (LIBS)	Qualitative and quantitative elemental analysis & To derive the chemical Composition and infer mineralogical composition to further our understanding of Lunar-surface.	
2.	Alpha Particle X-ray Spectrometer (APXS)	To determine the elemental composition (Mg, Al, Si, K, Ca, Ti, Fe) of Lunar soil and rocks around the lunar landing site.	

Sl. No	Propulsion Module Payload	Objectives	
1.	Spectro-polarimetry of HAbitable Planet Earth (SHAPE)	Future discoveries of smaller planets in reflected light would allow us to probe into variety of Exo-planets which would qualify for habitability (or for presence of life).	

- **Slingshot Manoeuvre** - The Chandrayaan-3, like Chandrayaan-2, will take a rather long interesting route to the Moon.
- It will circle the Earth 5-6 times, then sling off to the Moon.
- This manoeuvre uses Earth's gravity to impart velocity to the spacecraft thereby reducing the fuel used.
- This reduces the need to carry enormous amount of fuel thereby reducing the heaviness of the rocket.
- **Lunar Orbit** - The module enters lunar orbit and the reverse will happen.

- Loop-by-loop the spacecraft will get closer to the moon until it reaches a circular path 100 km above the moon's surface before the lander separates.

- **On the Moon** - The lander will soft land at a specified lunar site (lunar South Pole) and deploy the rover.



- The rover will explore the lunar terrain for 14 Earth days (1 lunar day) and will carry out in-situ chemical analysis of the lunar surface.

1.2 Draft National policy on Official Statistics

Why in news:

- Recently, the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MosPI) had unveiled the revised draft national policy on official statistics. It emphasized the utilization of big data analytics, artificial intelligence (AI), and machine learning (ML) to create and disseminate economic and social statistics.

Key features of the draft Policy:

- The policy aligns with the UN Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics (UNFPOS) adopted by India in 2016, which advocate for a high level of independence in national statistical systems and layout 10 guiding principles for official statistics.
- **Core Official Statistics:** Key statistical products, such as GDP, price indices, SDGs, etc., are to be designed as core statistics. A list of core statistics has been prepared for eight domains.
- **Time bound data:** It will provide reliable, timely and credible social and economic statistics to assist decision-making within and outside the Government.

- The integrated data system, optimization of administrative statistics, and innovation in surveys will be created to reduce the burden on respondents and continuous augmentation quality of official statistics.
- **Unified data system:** It will establish a unified data system for consistent data collection and dissemination.
- **Phased Approach:** The policy outlines a phased approach to implementation, including short, medium, and long-term strategies
- **Mandatory collection:** The collection will be made mandatory for all levels of government and shall be released periodically.
- It also aims for training programs and capacity building to enhance statistical skills.

1.3 RBI launches web portal for searching unclaimed deposits

Why in News:

- The Reserve Bank of India has launched the UDGAM (Unclaimed Deposits - Gateway to Access information) portal to enable people to claim and search unclaimed deposits.
- **AIM:** It will aid users to identify their unclaimed deposits/ accounts and enable them to either claim the deposit amount or make their deposit accounts operative at their respective banks.

Key features of the portal:

- **Main Function:** The portal's main function is to assist users in identifying information about their unclaimed deposits or accounts. Additionally, it guides them through the process of claiming these funds or reactivating dormant accounts with their respective banks.
- **Collab:** The UDGAM portal is the result of collaboration among different entities, including the Reserve Bank Information Technology Pvt. Ltd. (ReBIT), Indian Financial Technology & Allied Services (IFTAS), and participating banks. These organizations have combined their efforts to develop and launch the portal for the benefit of users.
- In its initial phase, the UDGAM portal provides access to information related to unclaimed deposits from a selection of seven banks. Users can use the portal to retrieve details about their unclaimed funds held within these specific banks.

- **Phased roll out:** The coverage of the portal will gradually expand to encompass a larger number of banks over time. This expansion will occur in stages. The search feature for unclaimed deposits within the remaining banks will be incorporated into the portal in a phased manner. The goal is to have this functionality added for all banks by October 15, 2023.
- Initially, users would be able to access the details of their unclaimed deposits in respect of seven banks – State Bank of India, Punjab National Bank, Central Bank of India, Dhanlaxmi Bank, South Indian Bank, DBS Bank India and Citibank.

1.4 Women's Reservation Bill- a vote for Political presence in an unequal Social fabric

- 'Politics of Presence', a groundbreaking work by Anne Phillips, has been a widely debated topic across democracies. The idea behind 'Politics of Presence' is that for a fair representation of disadvantaged groups, it is important that their presence in the elected assembly is secured. The Women's Reservation Bill or Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam passed by the Parliament on 20th September 2023 (128th constitutional amendment bill) reflects this idea of Politics of Presence. Currently there are just 82 women members in the Lok Sabha, which accounts for approximately 15% of the total strength of the House. Similarly, in Rajya Sabha too, women comprise only 14% of the total strength. The situation is even worse in State Legislative Assemblies, where women make up just 9% of the total number of members on an average. Women have been clearly historically underrepresented in India. To pave a path for more women representatives, this bill will reserve one third of the seats for women in Lok Sabha, State Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Assembly of National Capital Territory of Delhi. Thus, this bill aims to correct the historical marginalization of women through their representation in the decision making process, so that their issues are articulated appropriately and targeted policies can be implemented for their betterment.
- It was an effort of 27 years, amidst continuous opposition, that led to the fruition of this bill. Behind the passing of what is being referred to as a historical bill, is a culmination of efforts of several women, politicians and activists such as Pramila Dandavate who gave a vision to the Women's Reservation Bill and brought it to the Parliament.

Genesis of Women's Reservation Bill

- The inception of the idea of Women's Reservation Bill can be traced back to May 1989, when Rajiv Gandhi introduced the Constitution Amendment Bill to provide one third reservation for women in rural and urban local bodies. The bill was successfully passed in Lok Sabha but failed to pass in Rajya Sabha in September 1989. Later in 1992 and 1993, the constitution amendment bill (73rd and 74th) was reintroduced by the then prime minister P.V. Narasimha Rao, which reserved 33% of seats and chairperson post for women in rural and urban local bodies. The bill was successfully passed in both the houses of the Parliament. Thus women got reservation for the first time in local political bodies.
- On September 12 1996, under HD Deve Gowda's government, the Women's Reservation Bill was introduced for the first time in Parliament, as the 81st Constitution Amendment Bill. Soon after the bill failed to gain support in Lok Sabha, it was referred to a joint parliamentary committee chaired by CPI MP Geeta Mukherjee, which presented its report to Lok Sabha on December 9, 1996. However, the bill lapsed with the dissolution of Lok Sabha.
- Two years later on June 26, 1998 the bill was reintroduced by the Atal Bihari Vajpayee led NDA government, in the 12th Lok Sabha as the 84th constitution amendment bill. This time too the bill lapsed because of the dissolution of the Lok Sabha as the government was reduced to a minority. Subsequently, the bill was reintroduced in 1999, 2002, 2003 under the Vajpayee government but failed to gather consensus.
- In 2004, Manmohan Singh led UPA-1 government included the bill in its common minimum programme. Finally on May 6 2008, the bill was introduced in the Rajya Sabha to prevent it from lapsing again. It was later referred to the standing committee on Law and Justice, which presented its report on 17 December, 2009. It got the approval of the Union cabinet in February 2010 and was finally passed in Rajya Sabha on March 9, 2010. However the bill was never taken up for consideration in the Lok Sabha and eventually lapsed in 2014 with the dissolution of the Lok Sabha. Nine years later on 20th September 2023, the Women's Reservation Bill was finally passed as the 128th constitutional amendment, under the Narendra Modi led NDA government, in both the houses of Parliament.

The provisions of the Bill state that:

- (1) In the Lower House of the Parliament, 33% seats will be reserved for women (Article 330A). Additionally, the bill also provides one third reservation for women on the seats reserved for

SCs/STs. Both these provisions are to be followed on a rotational basis for different constituencies of States and Union Territories.

(2) In the State Legislative Assembly, the bill introduces article 332A that mandates reservation of seats for women in the State Legislative Assembly. In addition to this, one third of the reserved seats for SCs/STs shall be allocated to women and one third of the seats filled through direct elections to the Legislative Assemblies shall also be reserved for women.

(3) A new clause is added to Article 239AA. As per this new Article 239AA(2)(b), the Women's Reservation Bill passed by Parliament shall be applicable to NCT Delhi.

The commencement of this new bill shall happen only after the next census is done, which is scheduled for 2026. Furthermore, based on the census, delimitation of the constituencies will be undertaken to reserve the seats for women. The seats reserved for women will be rotated after each delimitation. The reservation will be provided for a period of 15 years.

Reservations- a stepping stone toward gender parity

- The momentous passing of the Women's Reservation Bill signifies the materialization of a struggle of not just 27 years but also the thousands of years of oppression that women had to go through. The Indian constitution, with its commencement, gave equal rights and opportunities to women, however giving equal rights and opportunities was not enough to correct the systemic injustices that women had to face in a patriarchal society. Women don't only face the burden of the hierarchy of their gender but are sufferers of intersectionality of struggles caused by their caste, class, ethnicity, religion and region. They are often denied access to education, health, employment, resources and political participation. Women with different backgrounds have different needs and aspirations that cannot be adequately represented by their male counterparts or a handful of women from different milieu. In this regard, being the largest democracy in the world, the proportion of women representation in Indian Parliament is really concerning. According to the latest UN data on women representation, countries like Rwanda (61%), Cuba (53%), Pakistan (20.5%), Mexico (50%), Bangladesh (21%), have much more representation of women than India (15%). India as a Nation has always valued diversity, thus the Women's Reservation Bill is a positive step towards ensuring that diversity of women, having different backgrounds, can come forward to represent their communities and therefore strengthen Indian democracy by making Parliament more representative. Since there will be more women representatives in Parliament, women's issues can be articulated better and this would eventually

lead to formulation of more gender sensitive policies. Gender sensitive policies would ensure redressal of more specific grievances faced by women and lead to their amelioration. Furthermore, as vibrant is the Indian democracy with the existence of multiple and diverse political parties, this bill will ensure that the intra party composition is also democratized with more women members joining the political parties. The essence of a democracy lies in the deliberative power of its people, this bill will thus encourage more and more women to participate in public discussions and voice their opinions.

Devil lies in the detail- a slippery slope for Women's Reservation Bill

- The triumph of the 27 year long struggle of women to get the bill passed can only be assessed through its successful implementation. However, the implementation of this bill is contingent on the delimitation exercise, which can only be done after the next census is conducted, which is most likely to happen only by 2026. The delimitation exercise is a contentious issue for Indian States because as per Article 81(2)(a) the number of seats in Lok Sabha for State should be in proportion to its population. Similarly, Article 170 concerns the State Legislative Assembly, for designating constituencies based on the size of its population. One primary concern that the delimitation provision causes is the resurfacing of the age old 'North vs South' debate. Southern States such as Tamilnadu and others have successfully controlled their population by effective population control measures, whereas Northern States in general and Uttar Pradesh and Bihar in particular have failed to do so. This causes two major concerns- firstly, if the delimitation is done on the basis of the current population then it can cause under-representation of South Indian States and give undue advantages to North Indian States. This is an area of concern for Women's Reservation because the bill has not provided any provision for Intra-State representation of women. Seats will be allocated on a rotational basis and each rotation will only be done after every delimitation exercise. And the delimitation commission takes approximately 4-5 years to present its report after the commencement of the exercise, which hangs the status of Women's Reservation mid-air during this time period. Secondly, if the delimitation exercise is prolonged or delayed due to any reason then it would be a setback for the concrete materialization of the Women's Reservation Bill.
- Moreover, the bill only gives sub category reservations to SC and ST women, while neglecting OBC who comprise a large section of population. The primary aim of this bill is to ensure social justice, to women, against the intersectionality of struggles that they face. But denying sub category reservation for a large section of OBC women would mean that they are

underrepresented not just by the virtue of their proportion in the population but also their position in the hierarchy of caste system. The bill also doesn't specify any provision for women from religious minorities. Therefore, this bill can only be more objective when brought in conjunction with social justice to all women, irrespective of the multitude of identities that they carry.

- Embracing Justice- Re-imagining women empowerment beyond Political boundaries
- There is no doubt that this landmark bill is going to play a pivotal role for social, political, economical and cultural amelioration of Women in our country. Any policy, provision or regulations made in a political community are aimed at delivering justice to its people, especially those who are historically oppressed and marginalized and so does this bill. However, justice is only delivered when these policies include oppressed people from every walk of life, irrespective of their caste, class, religion, ethnicity and most importantly when it is timely implemented to bring positive results. The Women's Reservation Bill is contingent on delimitation and does not include sub category reservation for OBC women and women from religious minority communities. The constitutional aperture is conspicuous in these provisions of the bill and is going to determine the future of historical struggle that women had to go through to get the bill passed. As the famous saying goes, "Justice delayed is Justice denied", this leaves us in a conundrum of reasoning out, if the Women's Reservation Bill has the power to transform women's concrete reality or is it just empty rhetoric.

2. INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

2.1 Islamic State Operatives Arrested

- Mohammad Shahnawaz, Mohammad Arshad Warsi and Mohammad Rizwan Arshad were arrested for taking oaths of allegiance to the Islamic State and undertaking preparations to commit terrorism.
- Shahnawaz and Arshad Warsi belong to Jharkhand, while Rizwan Arshad is a native of Azamgarh, Uttar Pradesh.
- All three are highly educated with technical degrees from prestigious colleges and intended to use their technical knowledge and skills for terrorist activities.
- Shahnawaz is a graduate in mining from National Institute of Technology, Nagpur. Along with formal engineering education, he extensively read extremist literature and became indoctrinated. He intended to apply knowledge of explosive materials and techniques gained from his mining degree for bomb-making.
- While staying in Delhi for competitive examination preparation, Shahnawaz extensively heard propaganda material of Hizb-ut-Tahrir, a global Jihadi organisation that works with the aim of establishing a world Caliphate. He also followed social media content of channels belonging to and related to the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS).
- Mohammad Arshad Warsi studied mechanical engineering at Aligarh Muslim University and was pursuing PhD in Islamic principles and management in Jamia Milia Islamia.
- Mohammad Rizwan Arshad is a maulana by profession. It was he who administered the bayaa or oath to Shahnawaz and Arshad Warsi.
- During interrogations, the arrested have revealed that they were planning an attack that could create an impact similar to the 26/11 terror attacks in Mumbai. The targets of these planned attacks would have been Hindu temples and offices of Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) and Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), organisations widely perceived to be having a Hindu orientation.
- Shahnawaz told investigators he had experimented with trial explosions in five locations – Nuh, Mewat, Delhi, Lucknow and Rudraprayag. He scouted fifteen locations including RSS offices in Ahmedabad, Surat and Baroda.

- In press comments, intelligence sources have disclosed the activities and motives of Shahnawaz in the following words: “Shahnawaz is a seasoned terrorist. In recent months, he conducted reconnaissance missions across North India. His responsibility was to identify suitable locations for establishing training camps within India. The recruitment process was to be carried out by his handlers”.
- Some individuals closely related to the arrested are absconding.
- The arrests come in the backdrop of extensive polarisation following the beheading of Kanhaiyalal Teli in June 2022 and the murder of Umesh Kolhe for alleged blasphemy. In September 2022, the Union government proscribed the Popular Front of India (PFI) and declared it a terrorist organisation. However, different sections of the ideological-political spectrum have attempted to create false equivalences in a bid to distort established facts about the terroristic methods and anti-national objectives of the PFI, contributing to the already charged-up environment.
- Cyber-radicalisation has become the established method of functioning for the beleaguered ISIS, which last controlled any territory in 2017 and has since reverted back to operating as a purely terrorist organisation, organising explosions, suicide bombings and targeted attacks directly mainly at civilian targets and jail-breaks to free their captured operatives. Social media such as X, Facebook, Youtube and instant messaging applications such as Whatsapp, Telegram and Discord are extensively used by ISIS operatives to influence and indoctrinate young, impressionable and educated Muslim youths throughout the world to carry out either lone-wolf attacks or organise small, secretive cells of the type pioneered by the al-Qaeda.
- Advanced technologies, particularly anonymous communication and digital payments platforms, are being exploited by terrorist organisations for indoctrination, recruitment and funding. In February, the National Investigation Agency (NIA) arrested Mohammad Mohsin Ahmed, a first year engineering student, for using his crypto currency account on bitcoin exchange platform Wazir X and raising funds from at least 20 entities.
- In October 2022, following a conference organised by the United Nations Security Council Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC), the Delhi Declaration was issued that called for taking all possible measures to counter the use of new and emerging technologies for terrorist purposes. It highlighted the credible threat resulting from the coming together of terrorism and new and emerging technologies, with the result of terrorism having become more diffuse and threatening.

2.2 China deterrence: Ex top Indian military officials' visit to Taiwan

- Three former chiefs of the three services visited Taiwan to attend the Ketaglan Forum 2023 event on 8 August. Among the Indian attendees were General Manoj Naravane, ex Army chief; Admiral Karambir Singh, ex Navy chief; and RKS Bhadoria, ex Air Chief Marshal.
- The event was organised by the Taiwanese Foreign Ministry. The opening note was made by Taiwanese President Tsai Ing Wen.
- The theme of the 2023 event was Indo-Pacific Security Dialogue.
- In her opening note, President Tsai stated that the regional priority is the maintenance of a rules-based order and only such a course could ensure peace, stability and prosperity in the region. In comments pointed towards the CPC, she compared the democratic character of the Taiwanese state with the authoritarian character of the CPC and held this latter characteristic responsible for the recent spurt of expansionism.
- Admiral Karambir Singh stated any conflict over Taiwan will have enormous economic and political impact across the globe and the world is not prepared to absorb such a shock in the present scenario. He further stated that India has adopted a multi-alignment policy to “stay above the power divide”, which is crucial to prevent complete polarisation.
- Former Japanese Prime Minister Taro Aso was also among the attendees to the high-profile event. In his comments, he said, “I believe that now is the time for Japan, Taiwan, the United States and other like-minded countries to be prepared to put into action very strong deterrence. It’s the resolve to fight and showing the will to do so as a form of deterrence.” The defence of Taiwan has emerged as a strong security imperative for Japan, where it is felt that an attack on Taiwan would serve as a prelude to wider military aggression in the East Asian and Pacific region. Chinese expansionism has become the primary focus of Japanese security, as Japan seeks to change its pacific constitution that has been in place since World War II to prepare adequate deterrence.
- The attendance of three prominent former military leaders from India has naturally set off speculation that India’s Foreign Ministry and security establishment gave consent for them to attend. Prominent defence journal Indian Defence Review has rejected such speculation, calling official consent “unlikely because Taiwan has been inviting former service chiefs, other defence officials and scholars from India for security dialogues and forums since the past several years.

This time, three former service chiefs were probably invited together because changed dynamics of the region and China's aggressive moves over the Taiwan Straits and periodic exercises and live firing drills around Taiwan.”

- China opposed the participation of ex-Indian officials on the basis that it appeared to refute the One China Principle. Responding to the presence of ex Indian military officials, the Chinese foreign ministry said, “China is firmly opposed to any official exchanges of any form and the signing of any agreement of official nature between Taiwan and any country having diplomatic relations with China. The Indian side should earnestly abide by the One-China principle and handle the Taiwan question prudently and properly.”
- According to the One China Principle, which forms China's diplomatic bedrock, there is only one sovereign state that is to be recognised as China: People's Republic of China (PRC); the ruling Communist Party of China (CPC) is the legitimate government of the sovereign Chinese nation-state; and Taiwan is an inalienable part of China.
- The One China Principle was adopted as the basis of American-Chinese diplomatic relations when, under the presidency of Richard Nixon, the USA decided to normalise relations with China. Other countries have followed in adopting the same approach.
- However, in the wake of Chinese aggression in East Asia and the Himalayas, the validity and strategic prudence of maintaining the One China Principle has increasingly come under question. Increasing diplomatic exchanges, visits by leaders and shared strategic interests in deterring China have coalesced together in creating a situation which some describe as “One China principle but two China action”. For instance, the visit by the ruling American Democratic Party leader Nancy Pelosi in 2022 was widely seen as a refutation of the One China principle.
- India has not established diplomatic relations with Taiwan. An informal association by the name of India-Taipei Association was founded by India in Taiwan in 1995, while Taiwan founded the Taipei Economic and Cultural Centre in India. In 2012, India green-lighted the opening of a branch office of the Centre at Chennai.
- Trade and investments form the backbone of the India-Taiwan relationship. In 2018, a bilateral investment agreement was signed. In 2022, bilateral trade amounted to US \$ 8.5 billion, and India stood as the 17th largest trade partner of Taiwan. More than 100 Taiwanese companies operate in India, in fields spanning information and communication technology, medical

devices, automobile components, machinery, steels, electronics, construction, engineering and financial services.

- Foxconn, Apple's largest supplier, has a manufacturing facility in Tamil Nadu. It is also setting up another iPhone production factory in Karnataka that is expected to start delivering new batches of devices from mid 2024. Further, Foxconn is currently negotiating with Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company (TSMC) and Japan's TMH Group for a joint venture technology partnership that can see the setting up of semiconductor production units in India.

2.3 BRICS Summit: India's multi-alignment, new members to join

- BRICS is a multi-state organisation comprising of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa. Originally formed in 2006 by Brazil, Russia, India and China (BRIC) in 2006, it attained its current composition with

the addition of South Africa in 2010. It was founded with the idea of bringing together large countries with emerging economies that were believed to be on path of becoming future super-powers. The 15th BRICS Summit.



- The 15th BRICS leaders' summit was held in Johannesburg, South Africa, between 22 and 24 August 2023.
- The main point to emerge from the 15th leaders' summit was the agreement to admit six new members: Argentina, Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Saudi Arabia and UAE. These six countries are slated to join the grouping officially in January 2024.
- The addition of six new countries is being widely seen as an indication of emerging multipolarity in the global order. The joining of economic power-houses Saudi Arabia, an oil-rich regional superpower looking to diversify its economy and cut down reliance on oil, and UAE, a

pioneer in mobilising the trends of globalisation to build a modern global economy, reveal the existing inadequacies of the international institutional order that have been unable to provide the impetus and work as an engine to propel growing economies. With the addition of Argentina, two of South America's largest countries (Brazil) will now be part of an organisation that promotes the idea of multi-polarity and seeks to shift the emphasis away from Western-led development.

- The expansion of BRICS to BRICS+ is also seen as a potential widening of international discourse from market liberalism and 'democracy vs authoritarianism' to food security, health security, multi-lateral preparedness to address future health crises like global pandemics, technology access and inclusive development. While the countries that will now make up BRICS+ differ widely when compared by their economic and political criteria, they have common interests in diversifying their economies away from a Western pole and making mutual investment pathways to provide an economic anchor and stave off unilateral attempts to vitiate the economies of emerging countries due to political motives.
- De-dollarisation, or the reduction of dependency on the dollar as the currency of international trade and exchange, has emerged as a key issue for BRICS. While America has profited enormously from the adoption of the dollar as the international currency, it has exposed countries to multiple challenges and threats emerging from domestic political and economic considerations by Americans, domestic financial crises in America and the use of dollar reserves stored by countries in American assets as a political weapon. In this respect, two recent cases have served as warnings to countries: the first is the withholding of Afghan assets amounting to US \$ 10 billion from the Taliban and the second is the freezing of Russian assets amounting US \$ 600 billion after Russia's invasion of Ukraine. While the political wisdom behind these decisions might or might not be supported, the key issue that has emerged here is the fear among countries that the US can withhold or freeze their assets in case political differences emerge.
- Another important strategic implication arising out of the desire in non-Western countries to join the BRICS is the proof regarding discontent about Western global leadership. Gunther Maihold, a strategic expert at the German Institute for International and Security Affairs in Germany, wrote in his article that the BRICS+ nations might not be able to "agree on a common position, but can create a consensus on what they oppose", namely, sanctions and protectionist measures. He draws the conclusion that, "Meaningful narratives about old forms of order have become fragile and are losing their binding effect. New horizons of possibility are seized in anticipation

of new options for action, pointing clearly to the urgent need to reorder international relations to overcome the self-referentiality of the West.”

- In the Western capitals, there is a tendency to see the BRICS as an instrument of Chinese global influence expansion and the Russian attempt to revive its old power and influence. However, the new composition and joining of such nations as Saudi Arabia that have been and continue to have a pronounced pro-Western orientation shows that the Western-led world order does not necessarily correspond to the needs and necessities of even friendly non-Western countries.

2.4 India to assist Maldives for free, open Indian Ocean

- The Indian Ocean region has emerged as a key strategic area in the shaping of the emerging world order. It is one of the busiest maritime traffic zones and can be seen as a highway between the East and the West.
- Bordering Africa, Middle East, India, Australia and South-East Asia, the Indian Ocean's importance lies in being one of the main sea zones of Asia.
- India has adopted a strategy of engagement with island nations in the Indian Ocean. The importance of such nations is that they offer strategic bases for trade and military purposes.
- Maldives is an island off India's western coast. It is viewed as an important strategic point in the Indian Ocean.
- Terrorism, transnational crime and drug trafficking have emerged as shared concerns and driven the diplomatic relationship between India and Maldives.
- In August, India announced it will give 24 naval vehicles and 1 naval boat to Maldives to enhance its patrolling capacity. In addition, technical assistance and training of Maldives'



security force would also be provided. India also announced financial and technical assistance for the setting up of police facilities in 61 islands.

- Infrastructure development is another significant area in India's assistance to Maldives. Some of the key areas in which India has pledged to help Maldives are cyber security, housing and disaster management.
- Indian Minister of External Affairs S Jaishankar inaugurated the National College for Policing and Law on 27 May 2022 in the presence of President of Maldives Ibrahim Mohammad Solih. Built by NBCC, it was built by a grant made by India to the tune of US \$ 33 million.
- Maldives has emerged as a key point for competition between two regional powers – India and China.

2.5 Italy, the sole European signatory to BRI, seeks exit

- In 2019, during a visit by Chinese President Xi Jinping to Rome, Italy became the first European and G7 country to join China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).
- Under the five-year agreement, Chinese banks and companies provided finances and technical assistance for building power plants, railways, construction of highways, ports, telecommunication facilities, fibre-optics facilities and smart cities.
- Italy has not yet officially announced withdrawal from BRI, though reports suggest its political leadership is close to making up its mind about exiting.
- Reports suggest the new Italian government headed by Georgia Meloni began to re-examine its membership due to the lack of benefits and a larger strategic reassessment of China following the pandemic and the public opinion about China's hegemonic intentions.
- Chinese investments in Italy dropped from US \$ 650 million in 2019 to US \$ 33 million in 2021.



- After a meeting with US President Joe Biden, the joint statement said Italy and the US “are committed to strengthen bilateral and multilateral consultations on the opportunities and challenges posed by the People’s Republic of China” and emphasised “the vital importance of maintaining peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait”.
- Europeans increasingly view China as a rival, a threat and a competitor. European Commission President Ursula van der Leyen has argued that, “The Chinese Communist Party’s clear goal is a systemic change of the international order with China at its centre.” This indicates a very significant shift from the optimism and friendly lens through which much of Europe viewed China a decade ago in the aftermath of the 2008 financial crisis.
- East European countries are displaying a similar attitude as the 17+1 Mechanism continues to decline in importance.
- Italy’s realignment away from China has been further exhibited in President Meloni’s unambiguous support for Ukraine in the context of the war.
- Italy’s proposed withdrawal from the BRI is being seen internationally as yet another blow to the BRI, which is being increasingly perceived as a tool used by China to exploit the economic and financial distress of countries, impose steep terms combined with hidden conditions and leading to mounting debts and financial destabilisation of recipient countries. Sri Lanka’s crippling financial crisis of 2022 was perceived as the negative outcome of Chinese debt diplomacy.

2.6 Coup in Gabon

- On 26 August, elections were held in the African country of Gabon. Its long- time president Ali Omar Ondimba was declared victorious.
- On 30 August, the Gabonese army organised a coup and overthrew President Ondimba, bringing to an end 56 years of rule by the Ondimba family.
- The coup in Gabon is the 8th coup in central and western Africa in the recent past.
- Minutes after Ali Bongo Ondimba’s victory was announced, top military personnel appeared on national television and, speaking on behalf of Committee for the Transition and Restoration of Institutions, claimed long- term irresponsible and unpredictable governance had led to “a continuous degradation of social cohesion, risking pushing the country into chaos”. President

Bongo and his eldest son Nouredin Bongo Valentin were arrested and placed under house detention. Borders were closed with immediate effect.

- Brice Oligui, commander of the Republican Guard, was named as the interim president.

- News of the coup was greeted with public celebrations on the streets of capital Libreville.

- Since political independence in 1967, Gabon has been ruled by the Ondimba family – Omar Ondimbo from 1967 to 2016 and his son Ali Bongo Ondimbo from 2009 to 2023.



- Allegations of corruption, concentration of power and wealth and nepotism have been made against the president and ruling family.

- In the 2016 election, 95.5% votes out a turnout of 99.9% were recorded in favour of Ali Bongo Ondimbo. The figures are highly improbable and observers all over the world viewed the result and statistics with a high degree of scepticism.

- Large-scale abuse of political power has been a fixture of the rule by the Ondimbas, exhibited in wholesale changes to the Constitution and electoral rules including removal of presidential term limits, arbitrary modifications in the timings of elections and changes in voting system to disfavour opposition parties.

- Gabon is a major oil-producing country and member of OPEC.

- However, disparity in wealth is a serious structural issue, with one-third of Gabon's population living below the poverty line and a high unemployment rate.

- In 2022, Gabon was ranked 136/180 by Transparency International in the perceptions of corruption survey.

- Apart from structural issues, one of the main reasons for the coup is being seen as part of a wider wave of anti-French sentiments, particularly among armies, in the former French colonial region.

- In contrast to domestic reactions, regional and international reactions have been largely negative. The African Union Commission condemned the coup and suspended Gabon's membership on 31 August. The Economic Community of Western African States likewise condemned the coup and suspended Gabon's membership on 5 September. The European Union's foreign policy division called it "a big issue for Europe" and said the coup would increase instability in Africa. The UN Secretary-General condemned the coup as an unconstitutional method to solve electoral crisis in Gabon.

3. ECONOMY

3.1 BHARAT 6G ALLIANCE

Why in news:

- The Bharat 6G Alliance (B6GA) has been formed as a collaborative platform involving public and private companies, academia, research institutions, and standards development organizations.

Aim:

- The alliance aims to foster international collaboration, forge coalitions with global 6G alliances, and drive the design, development, and deployment of 6G technologies in India.

Key features of B6GA:

- To enable India to become a leading global supplier of intellectual property, products and solutions of affordable 5G and 6G and other future telecom solutions.
- To deploy 6G technologies to act as a powerful force multiplier for India by 2030.
- To understand the business and societal needs of 6G beyond technology requirements.
- To develop recommendations for Bharat 6G Vision implementation readiness in India.

About Bharat 6G alliance:

- It is a collaborative platform which aims to achieve universal and affordable connectivity, promote indigenous technology, and establish India as a global leader in the telecom sector.
- This platform consist of public and private companies, academia, research institutions, and standards development organizations, aims to lead the development and deployment of 6G technology in India.
- It will forge coalitions and synergies with other 6G Global Alliances, fostering international collaboration and knowledge exchange.
- Funding for 6G technology projects: To support the advancement of 6G technology, the government has allocated a grant of 240.51 crores through the Telecom Technology Development Fund scheme.

What is Telecom Technology Development Fund (TTDF)?

- Launched in: 2022
- To fund R&D in rural-specific communication technology applications and form synergies among academia, start-ups, research institutes, and the industry to build and develop the telecom ecosystem.
- To promote technology ownership and indigenous manufacturing, create a culture of technology co-innovation, reduce imports, boost export opportunities, and create Intellectual Property.
- **Funding:** 5% of annual collections from the Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) will be available for the TTDF Scheme.

3.2 Corporate Debt Market Development Fund (CDMDF) Scheme

Why in News:

- Recently, the Union government has approved a scheme providing complete guarantee cover for debt raised by the Corporate Debt Market Development Fund (CDMDF), a backstop facility for investment-grade corporate debt.

About Corporate Debt Market Development Fund (CDMDF)

- **Regulator:** Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)
- It is a backstop facility designed to provide support during stressed market conditions by purchasing investment-grade corporate debt securities.
- **Corpus:** Rs 3000 crore will be created by contributions from the fixed income schemes of mutual funds and asset management companies.
- **Eligible Securities:** CDMDF will have the authority to purchase only listed corporate debt securities with a residual maturity of up to five years.
- **Exclusion Criteria:** The fund will exclude from acquiring unlisted, below-investment-grade, or defaulted debt securities.
- **Fair Pricing Mechanism:** CDMDF buys securities at a fair price after considering liquidity risk, interest rate risk, and credit risk. Thus, ensuring transparency and market stability.

- **Subscription and Contribution:** The units of CDMDF shall be subscribed by AMCs and specified debt oriented mutual fund schemes, that is, open-ended debt-oriented mutual fund schemes, excluding overnight funds and gilt funds and including conservative hybrid funds
- **Tenure:** CDMDF will be launched as a closed-ended scheme with an initial tenure of 15 years (extendable). The Department of Economic Affairs (DEA), in consultation with SEBI, can look at an extension.

Key benefits

- **As a lender of last resort:** To mutual funds and enable them to meet redemptions in extraordinary times when there is little or no secondary market liquidity in the corporate bond market.
- It is aimed to provide stability to the market in times of market dislocation.
- If markets remain orderly, there would be no need to lever the fund through the government guarantee. Mutual funds now have a contingent fund that can step in, in the absence of other buyers and provide relief in extreme market situations.
- SEBI is trying to protect investors in debt funds by asking the mutual fund asset management companies to create a fund that can act as a backstop in such emergencies.

Challenges:

- **Scope for discretion:** Given the ambiguity, the proposed framework leaves a wide discretion for SEBI to intervene.
- **Constitutional challenge:** Lack of objective criteria for identification of a market dislocation may result in a constitutional challenge on the intelligible differentia, especially in cases where volatility in a widely held security of large corporates may trigger a domino effect on the debt markets at large since in such cases, the dislocation arises from a one/few players but results in a cascading effect.
- **Inflation and suppression of market rates:** Steps taken during periods of market dislocation resulted in longer periods of suppression of the market rates, which later resulted in higher inflation.

- Moral Hazards: Despite all precautions being taken, some MFs that invest predominantly in high-risk low quality debt instruments (especially those issued by highly leveraged large corporate issuers) may grow accustomed to this safety valve.

Way Forward

- Debt mutual funds must remember at all times that there is a difference between investing and lending. Mutual funds are not banks and shouldn't try to function as one.
- Formulation of an objective stress matrix based on separate weightage ascribed to each stress indicator.
- There is a need for regulatory sandbox prior to the framework coming into effect.

3.3 Consumption-based poverty estimates and its relevance

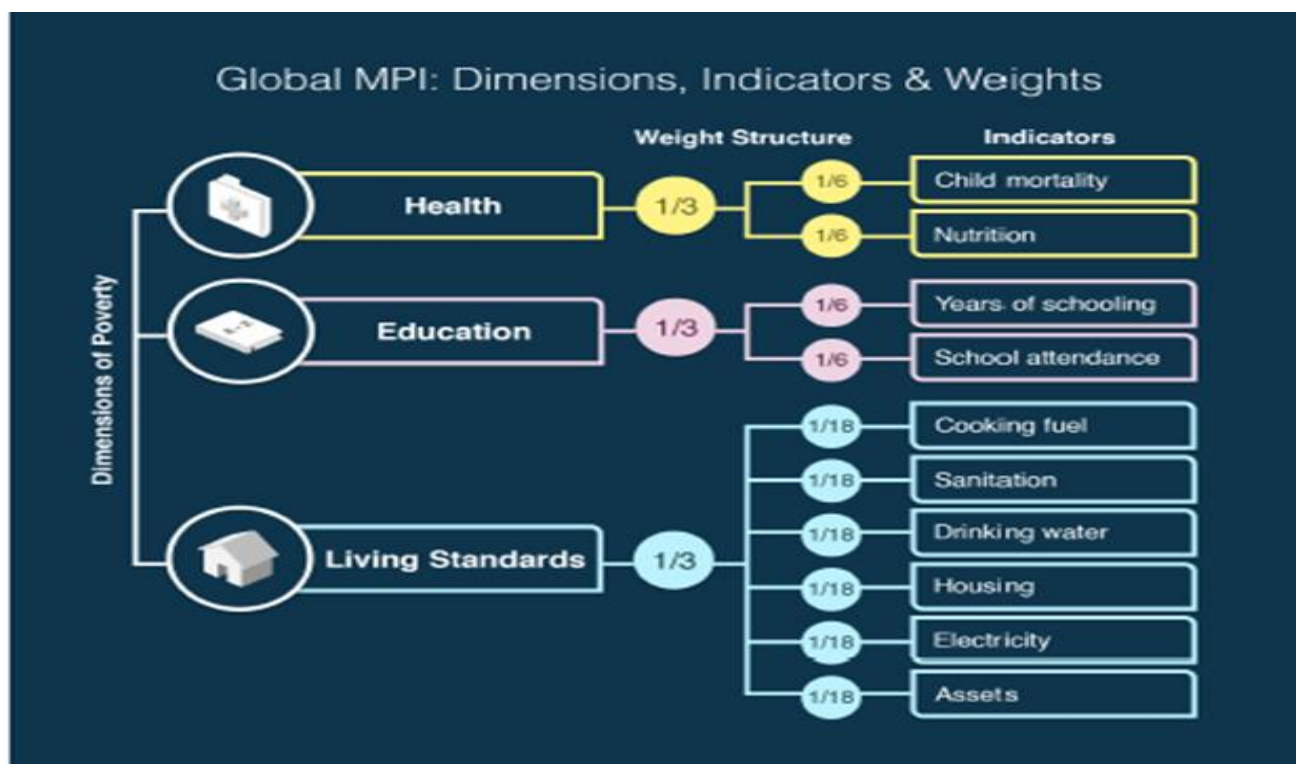
Why in News:

A recent report by NITI Aayog on multidimensional poverty suggests a decline in the percentage of the poor in India from 25% in 2015-16 to 15% in 2019-21, lifting around 135 million people out of poverty during this period.

Consumption-Based Poverty Estimates:

- Poverty can be defined as a condition in which an individual or household lacks the financial resources to afford a basic minimum standard of living.
- Consumption measures what families are able to purchase in terms of food, housing, transportation, and other goods and services.
- Consumption does a better job of capturing the material circumstances of individuals and families. is a more reliable indicator of deprivation.
- Changes in consumption-based poverty measures are more consistent with other indicators of long-run changes such as improvements in housing and mortality.
- However, while multidimensional poverty indices are valuable, they should not replace the importance of consumption based poverty estimates derived from the National Sample Survey (NSS).

Multidimensional Poverty Indices:



Comparison of Results

- The Global Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) 2018 lauds India's progress in reducing multidimensional poverty, stating that the number of poor people in India fell by more than 271 million within a decade.
- This achievement aligns with consumption-based poverty estimates using the Tendulkar and Rangarajan Committee methodologies, showing a reduction of 137 million and 92 million respectively over specific periods.

Importance of Consumption-Based Poverty Estimates

- Consumption-based poverty estimates are relevant and should not be substituted by multidimensional poverty indices.
- While the capabilities approach emphasizes dimensions beyond income or consumption, these non-income dimensions are not strictly linked to the consumption basket used to define poverty lines.
- The use of multiple indicators for multidimensional poverty measures raises concerns about measurability, aggregation, and data availability.

Limitations of Multidimensional Indices

- Aggregating multiple dimensions of poverty poses challenges. Indicators such as child mortality and access to safe drinking water cannot be readily aggregated due to their independence.
- Ensuring data consistency across multiple indicators within households is difficult.
- The concept of multidimensional poverty is not opposed, but converting multiple dimensions into a single index is problematic.

Views on Poverty Measurement

- Scholars have differing views on poverty measurement.
- Some argue that viewing public services as another dimension of poverty alongside consumption is beneficial.
- However, they are critical of multidimensional indices that arbitrarily combine various dimensions into a single index.
- The Human Development Index is cited as an example of such arbitrary weighting.

Need for Accurate Data

- Official data on consumer expenditure beyond 2011-12 is lacking, making it challenging to compare trends with multidimensional poverty indices.
- The differences between National Accounts Statistics (NAS) and NSS consumption estimates need attention.
- The National Statistical Office should explore ways to improve data collection methods and accuracy.

Way Forward

- While multidimensional poverty indices offer insights into various aspects of poverty, they should not replace consumption-based poverty estimates derived from comprehensive surveys like NSS.
- The accuracy and relevance of consumption-based estimates remain vital for understanding the extent of poverty in India.
- Addressing data inconsistencies and ensuring accuracy is key to producing meaningful poverty estimates.

3.4 UREA GOLD FERTILIZER

Why in News:

Recently, the Prime Minister of India officially launched ‘Urea Gold’ fertilizer.

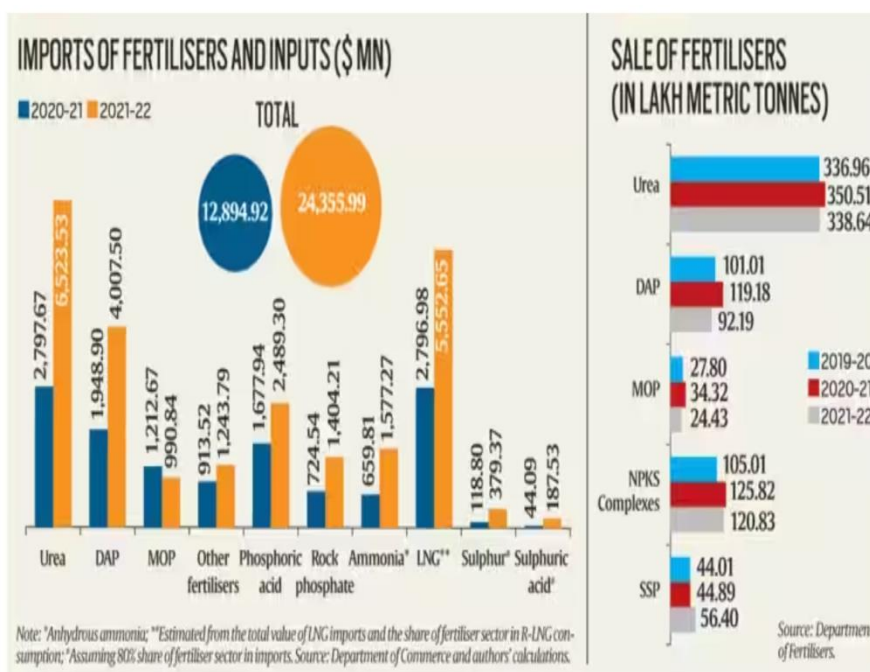
About Urea Gold:

- It was developed by the state-owned Rashtriya Chemicals and Fertilizers Ltd (RCF).
- It is urea fortified with Sulphur.
- Normal urea contains 46% of a single plant nutrient: Nitrogen or N. Urea Gold has 37% N plus 17% Sulphur or S.

Fertilizer use in

India:

- **Fertilizers:** Any material of natural or synthetic origin mixed with soil or applied to plant tissues to provide plant nutrients is fertilizer.
- Some synthetic fertilizers are urea, Di-ammonium phosphate (DAP) and Muriate of Potash.



Credits: Indian Express

- India is the 2nd largest consumer of Urea fertilizers after China.
- India also ranks 2nd in the production of nitrogenous fertilizers and 3rd in phosphatic fertilizers.
- Potash requirement is met through imports

Way Forward:

- A futuristic approach involves self-sufficiency through domestic production, balanced nutrient management, and efficient distribution networks.

- The climate crisis and its potential impact on agricultural production may also disrupt the estimated fertilizer demand in the future.
- Promoting sustainable agricultural practices to ensure long-term fertilizer security and agricultural sustainability is key.

What is Neem-coated urea?

- Urea is a commonly used nitrogen-based fertilizer that provides essential nutrients to plants to promote healthy growth.
- Neem-coated urea is a specialized form of urea fertilizer that has been coated with neem oil.

Benefits:

- The neem coating on urea slows down the release of nitrogen into the soil. This controlled release helps reduce nitrogen leaching and volatilization, leading to improved nitrogen use efficiency by plants.
- It would bring down the quantity of urea per acre and consequent reduction in input cost to farmers.
- The emission of nitrous oxide is also brought down significantly.

3.5 Geographical Indication (GI) tag to Mithila Makhana

Why in news:

The Union government has awarded the Geographical Indication (GI) tag to Mithila Makhana.

About Mithila Makhana or Makhan:

- Mithila Makhana — which, as indicated by its name, is cultivated in the Mithila region of Bihar and some parts of Nepal



— is the fifth product from Bihar which has received the GI tag.

- It is a special variety of aquatic fox nut cultivated in the Mithila region of Bihar and Nepal.
- Makhana is the one of the three prestigious cultural identities of Mithila. Pan, Makhan and Machh (fish) are the three prestigious cultural identities of Mithila.
- In Mithila, Makhana is also termed as Makhan. It is also very famous in the Kojagara festival of Maithil Brahmins celebrated for newly married couples.
- Health Benefits: Makhana contains protein and fiber, along with micronutrients like calcium, magnesium, iron, and phosphorus. It can help overcome insomnia and arthritis, and improve cognitive functions.

Other GI Tags in Bihar:

1. Bhagalpur's Jardalu Mango
2. Katarni Dhaan (rice)
3. Nawada's Maghai Paan
4. Muzaffarpur's Shahi Litchi

What is a geographical indication?

- A geographical indication (GI) is a sign used on products that have a specific geographical origin and possess qualities or a reputation that are due to that origin. In order to function as a GI, a sign must identify a product as originating in a given place.
- Once a product gets this tag, any person or company cannot sell a similar item under that name.
- This tag is valid for a period of 10 years following which it can be renewed.
- This tag is issued by the Geographical Indication Registry under the Department of Industry Promotion and Internal Trade, Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

3.6 GREAT SCHEME

Why in news:

The Union Ministry of Textiles released the guidelines of the GREAT scheme.

About:

- Grant for Research and Entrepreneurship across Aspiring Innovators in Technical Textiles (GREAT) Scheme focuses on supporting individuals and companies to translate prototypes to technologies & products, including commercialisation.
- **Nodal Ministry:** Ministry of Textile
- Aim is to provide impetus for the development of the technical textiles startup ecosystem in India, especially in niche sub-segments such as biodegradable and sustainable textiles, high-performance and specialty fibers, and smart textiles.
- The GREAT Guidelines provides thrust in Technical Textiles' application areas including Agro-textiles, Building-textiles, Geo-textiles, Home-textiles, Medical-textiles, Mobile-textiles, Packaging- textiles, Protective-textiles among others.

Highlights of the scheme:

- Grant-in-aid of up to Rs.50 lakh for up to a period of 18 months will be provided.
- The textile ministry will additionally provide 10 percent of the total grant-in-aid to incubators.
- Only a minimum of 10 per cent contribution has to be made by the incubatee.
- All of this is being done by incubators like IITs, NITs, Textiles Research Associations, and Centres of Excellence.
- The scheme will be commensurate with the National Technical Textiles Mission (NTTM)
- The textiles ministry has also given a nod to 26 institutes for upgrading their laboratory infrastructure and training of trainers in the application areas of technical textiles.

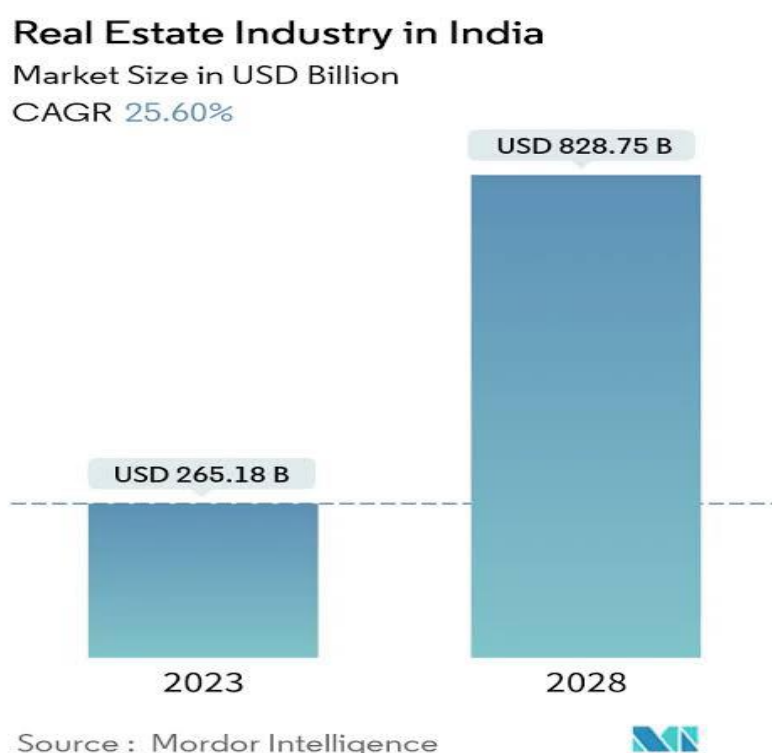
3.7 Reforms in Real Estate Sector

Why in news:

Amitabh Kant committee was constituted in 2023 to examine stalled real estate projects and to recommend ways to complete the stalled projects.

The key findings of the report:

- The committee was formed to find quantitative analysis and to find the location of legacy stalled projects.
- The committee's report cited the Indian Banks' Association (IBA) as estimating that 4.12 lakh dwelling units of Rs.4.08 lakh crore were "stressed" and about 2.40 lakh (44%) of these were in the National Capital Region.
- Main reason for the stress in these projects was the "lack of financial viability", which had led to cost overruns and time delays.



Credits: Mordor intelligence

Recommendations of the committee:

- **Mandatory registration-** All projects with the following criteria must be registered with State Real Estate Regulatory Authority (RERA). Where the land is over 500 square meters or the number of apartments to be constructed are more than 8.
- **De-link grant of registration:** The committee advocated to de-link the grant of registration or sub-lease by the land authorities to the homebuyers from the recovery of dues from developers.
- **No objection certificates-** RERAs should identify projects where no-objection and completion certificates have not been issued. It should accelerate the process to grant certificates, irrespective of the developers paying their dues to the authorities.

- **Rehabilitation package-** It is the role of the State governments to set up a rehabilitation package to get the stalled projects run again.

Conditions:

- The developers should commit to completing the projects in 3 years.
- It includes Zero Period for 2 years starting with the onset of COVID pandemic.
- Developers would be allowed to get a co-developer on board to complete the work.
- **Project viability:** All the stakeholders (developers, financiers, land authorities etc.,) would have to take a haircut or accept less than what is due to them.
- **Partial surrender policy:** The developers can give back some of the unused lands to the authority in exchange for a waiver on the dues for that land.
- **Outstanding payments:** The RERA can directly collect these outstanding payments from homebuyers, bypassing the builders.
- **Occupancy:** It suggests that occupancy or possession of substantially completed projects should be granted within the next 30 days.
- **Financial support:** Bring stalled projects under the purview of priority sector financing.
- **Last resort:** Judicial interventions, like the use of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, should be the last resort.

4. GEOGRAPHY

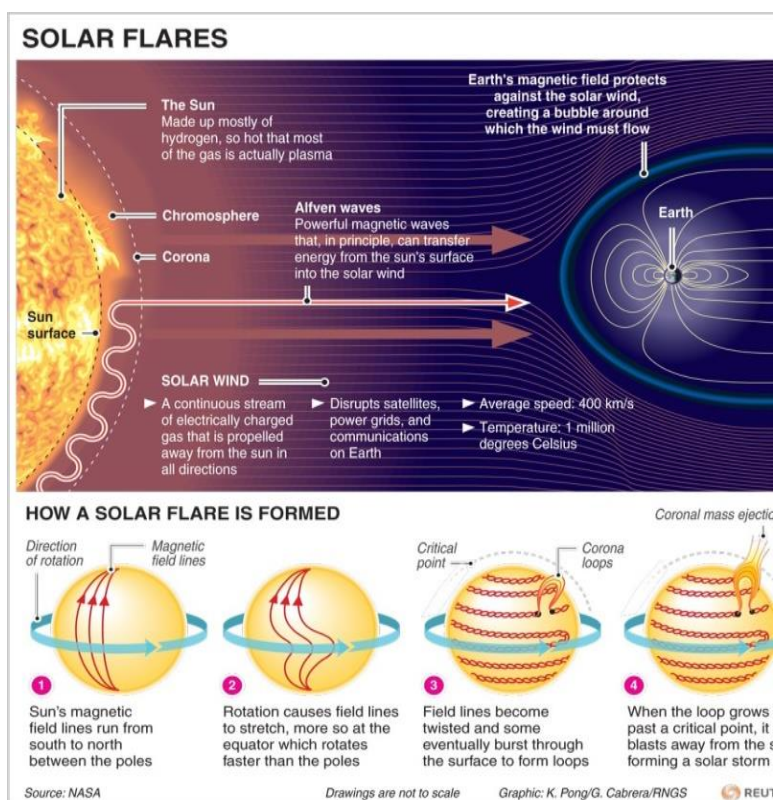
4.1 X-CLASS SOLAR FLARE

Why in news:

Recently, a powerful solar flare, classified as an “X-class” flare, hit Earth, causing an eruption of X-ray and ultraviolet radiation.

X-Class solar flares:

- The biggest flares are known as "X-class flares" based on a classification system that divides solar flares according to their strength.
- The smallest ones are A-class (near background levels), followed by B, C, M and X. Similar to the Richter scale for earthquakes, each letter represents a 10-fold increase in energy output. So an X is ten times an M and 100 times a C. Within each letter class there is a finer scale from 1 to 9.



Effect of this Solar flare:

- The flare resulted in a radio blackout for about an hour in parts of southeast Asia, Australia, and New Zealand due to the ionization of the upper atmosphere.
- This event follows a series of strong solar activities, including coronal holes and eruptions, which even led to the appearance of the Northern Lights as far south as Arizona.
- The Sun has already produced three moderate “M-class” flares in the past day, and there is a forecast for more M-class flares in the coming days, with a slight chance of another X-class flare.

4.2 Monsoon on steroids: Climate change amplifies India's deluge

Why in News:

Telangana witnessed monsoon fury recording over 60cm of rainfall and it witness that Climate change is real. As extreme weather events become the new normal, it is high time we acknowledge the urgency of the situation and take immediate action to mitigate the consequences. The recent monsoon spell in India, with its unprecedented rainfall, flash floods, and landslides, serves as a grim reminder of the impact of climate change on our lives.

What is Climate change?

- Climate change is the significant variation of average weather conditions becoming, for example, warmer, wetter, or drier over several decades or longer. It is the longer-term trend that differentiates climate change from natural weather variability.
- Human activity leads to changes in the atmospheric composition either directly (via emissions of gases or particles) or indirectly (via atmospheric chemistry).
- Figure 4 shows the Radiative Forcing and Effective Radiative Forcing (ERF), by concentration change, between 1750 and 2011, with associated uncertainty range.

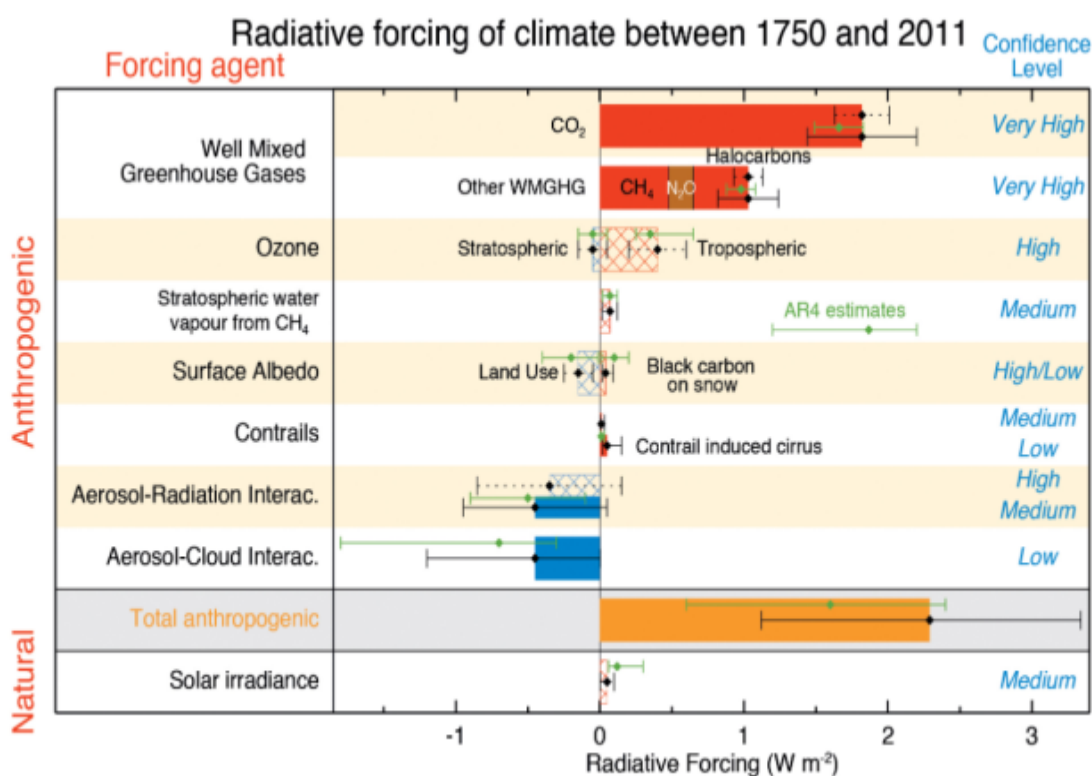


Figure 4. Radiative Forcing (RF) and Effective Radiative Forcing (ERF) of climate change during the Industrial Era, 1750-2011. Solid bars are ERF, hatched bars

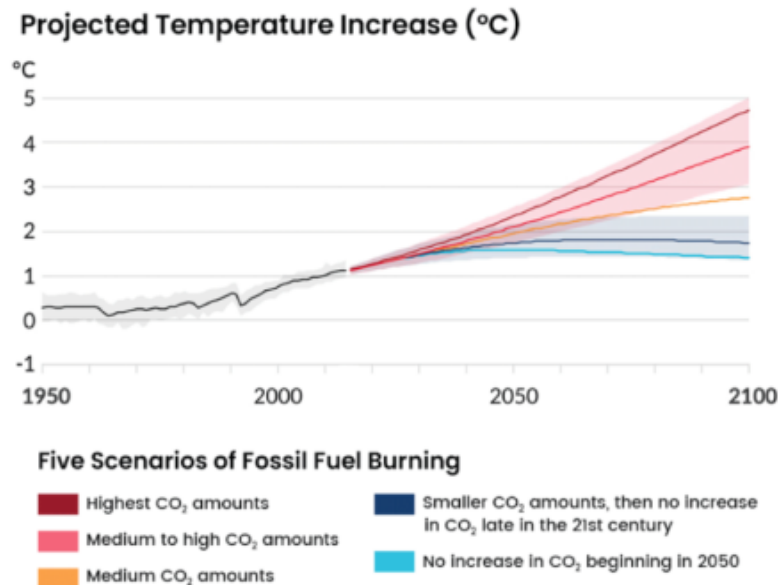


Figure 8. The amount of climate change by the end of the century depends on decisions we make today. If we reduce CO₂ amounts to stop increasing after 2050, global average temperature will increase from 1-1.5°C, and this is considered a best case scenario (blue line in graph). If we don't reduce CO₂ and the amounts continue to increase, the worst case scenario warming will be 4.5-5°C (red line in graph). Source, *IPCC Working Group I, 2021*.

Consequences of global warming:

- Rising temperatures,
- Erratic rainfall patterns (changes in monsoon patterns).
- Increased frequency of extreme weather
- Increased the capacity of the air to hold moisture
- El Niño
- Wildfires
- Warmer phases in the North Atlantic Ocean, and abnormal warming in the Arabian Sea.
- According to Meteorologists and climate scientists the current spell of heavy rains to a combination of factors, including the alignment of weather systems and changes in monsoon patterns.
- The ongoing spell of extremely heavy rains is due to the alignment of three weather systems (Temperature, amount and form of airborne moisture, cloudiness, and strength of wind). However, global warming-led changes in monsoon patterns have made a difference.
 - a) Increased the capacity of the air to hold moisture for a longer time:

- There has been a constant rise in both land and sea temperatures, which has increased the capacity of the air to hold moisture for a longer time leading to heavier and prolonged rainfall.
- The consequences are devastating, with floods and landslides wreaking havoc in various parts of the country. Thus, the role of climate change in the increasing extreme weather events in India has been strengthening with each passing year.
- The impact of climate change on Indian monsoons is not just the monsoon season that is affected; the effects of global warming extend to atmospheric and oceanic phenomena, further exacerbating the implications of climate change.

b) Regional changes in Monsoon pattern:

According to the Ministry of Earth Sciences, monsoonal rainfall is projected to become more intense in the future, affecting larger areas due to increased atmospheric moisture content. The frequency of localized heavy rain occurrences has already significantly increased over central India. Greenhouse gas emissions, aerosols, atmospheric stability, and urbanization all play a role in these changes.

- Human activities have influenced these changes in regional climate. The continuous rise in global surface and ocean temperatures has led to increased evaporation, amplifying the rainfall in the Indo-Gangetic plains. The relentless moisture feed from the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian Sea fuels the weather systems, resulting in extreme weather events.

Other Global factors:

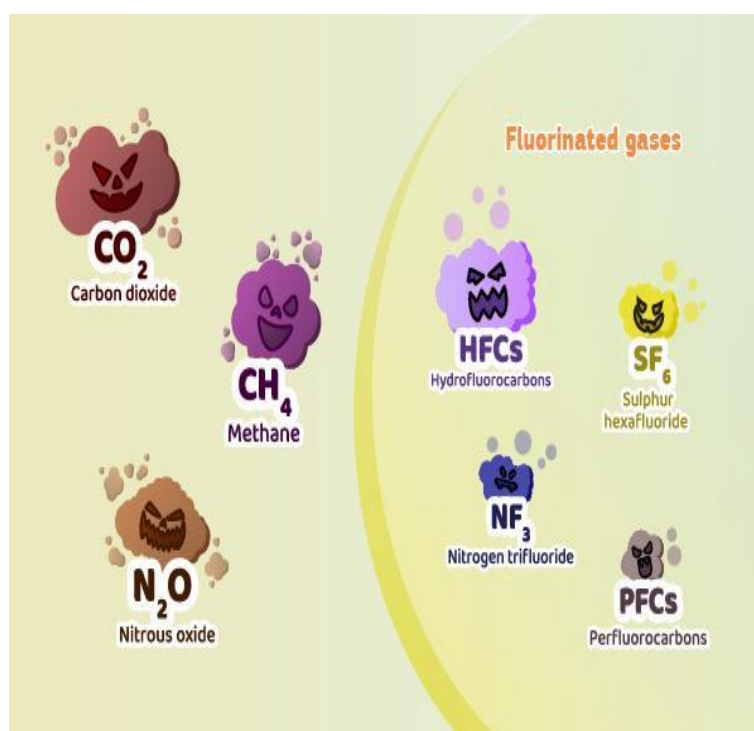
Arctic amplification

- The Arctic is heating four times faster than the rest of the planet.
- Polar amplification happens when changes to the earth's atmosphere led to a larger difference in temperature near the north and south poles than to the rest of the world.
- These changes are more pronounced at the northern latitudes and are known as the Arctic amplification.
- The Eurasian part of the Arctic is seven times faster than the global average.
- Arctic surface air temperature has increased by more than double the global average over the last two decades as per a 'Special Report on the Ocean and Cryosphere in a Changing Climate' in 2019 by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).

- Impact the changing Arctic can have on the monsoons in the Indian subcontinent
- The alarming rate of polar ice melt is affecting atmospheric circulation patterns, impacting the weather in mid-latitude and tropical regions.
- The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has already warned about the surge in extreme weather events due to global warming.
- India is projected to experience a 20 percent increase in extreme rainfall events, leading to floods, depressions, and more frequent cyclonic events. As temperatures rise, compound extreme events, previously rare, will become more common.

Causes of climate change:

- Burning fossil fuels, cutting down forests and farming livestock are increasingly influencing the climate and the earth's temperature.
- This adds enormous amounts of greenhouse gases to those naturally occurring in the atmosphere, increasing the greenhouse effect and global warming
- 2011-2020 was the warmest decade recorded, with global average temperature reaching 1.1°C above pre-industrial levels in 2019
- An increase of 2°C compared to the temperature in pre-industrial times is associated with serious negative impacts on to the natural environment and human health and wellbeing, including a much higher risk that dangerous and possibly catastrophic changes in the global environment will occur.
- For this reason, the international community has recognised the need to keep warming well below 2°C and pursue efforts to limit it to 1.5°C.
- Many of these greenhouse gases occur naturally, but human



activities are increasing the concentrations of some of them in the atmosphere, in particular:

- Carbon dioxide (CO₂)
 - Methane
 - Nitrous oxide
 - Fluorinated gases
- CO₂ produced by human activities is the largest contributor to global warming. By 2020, its concentration in the atmosphere had risen to 48% above its pre-industrial level (before 1750).
- Methane is a more powerful greenhouse gas than CO₂, but has a shorter atmospheric lifetime. Nitrous oxide, like CO₂, is a long-lived greenhouse gas that accumulates in the atmosphere over decades to centuries. Non-greenhouse gas pollutants, including aerosols like soot, have different warming and cooling effects and are also associated with other issues such as poor air quality.



- Burning coal, oil and gas produces carbon dioxide and nitrous oxide.
- Cutting down forests (deforestation). Trees help to regulate the climate by absorbing CO₂ from the atmosphere. When they are cut down, that beneficial effect is lost and the carbon stored in the trees is released into the atmosphere, adding to the greenhouse effect.
- Increasing livestock farming. Cows and sheep produce large amounts of methane when they digest their food.

- Fertilisers containing nitrogen produce nitrous oxide emissions.

Fluorinated gases

- Fluorinated gases ('F-gases') are very powerful greenhouse gases found in everyday products such as refrigerators or air conditioning.
- They are emitted from equipment and products that use these gases. Such emissions have a very strong warming effect, up to 23 000 times greater than CO₂.

Actions taken at the global level:

EU Action

- Through the European Green Deal, the EU is committed to becoming climate-neutral by 2050 while leaving no one behind.
- The European Climate Law writes into law the goal set out in the European Green Deal for Europe's economy and society to become climate-neutral by 2050. The law also sets the intermediate target of reducing net greenhouse gas emissions by at least 55% by 2030, compared to 1990 levels.
- Climate neutrality by 2050 means achieving net zero greenhouse gas emissions for EU countries, mainly by cutting emissions, investing in green technologies and protecting the natural environment.
- The law aims to ensure that all EU policies contribute to this goal and that all sectors of the economy and society play their part.

India's Actions

- India with more than 17% of the global population has contributed only about 4% of the global cumulative greenhouse gas emissions between 1850 and 2019.
- India is a Party to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, its Kyoto Protocol, and the Paris Agreement.
- Under the Paris Agreement in 2015, India submitted its Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) balancing the concerns and priorities of climate change, sustainable development including poverty eradication, and economic growth of the country.

- In August 2022, India updated its NDC according to which India has an enhanced target to reduce the emissions intensity of its GDP by 45 percent by 2030 from the 2005 level, achieving about 50 percent cumulative electric power installed capacity from non-fossil fuel-based energy resources by 2030.
- Further, in November 2022, India submitted its Long-Term Low-Carbon Development Strategy.
- India's long-term strategy rests on seven key transitions to low-carbon development pathways.
- One of these transitions will focus on promoting Adaptation in Urban Design, Energy and Material-Efficiency in Buildings, and Sustainable Urbanisation.
- National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) has issued several disaster specific guidelines for managing extreme weather-related disasters such as cyclones, floods and heat wave.

4.3 Preparing India for Urban Acceleration

In news

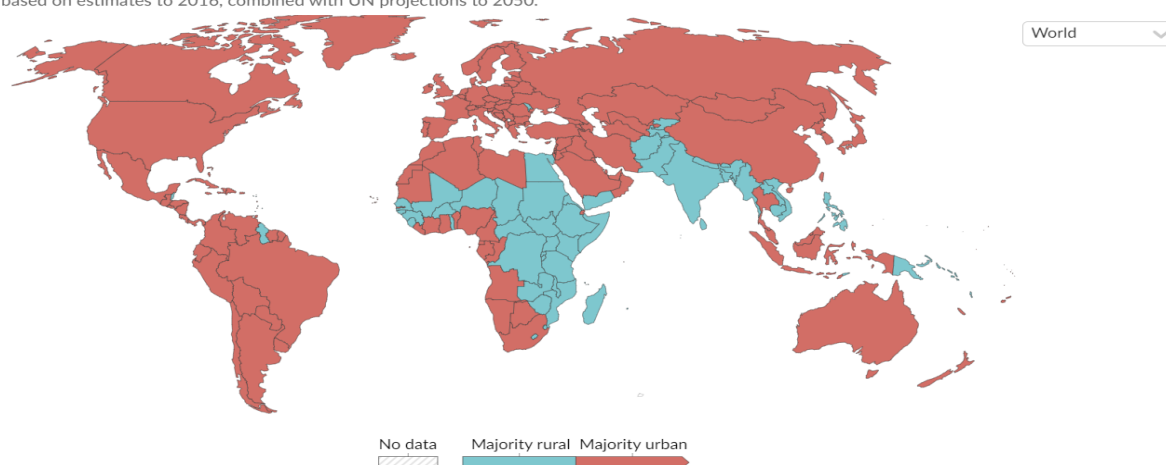
Recently, Government of India has estimated that over 60 crore people would be residing in urban India by 2030.

- 40% of population will reside in urban cities by 2030
- There are two essential questions for India on World Population Day 2023(11th July) how fast will India urbanise, and how will Indian cities provide a decent quality of life for their citizens?

Do more people live in urban or rural areas?, 2023

Share of the population which live in urban versus rural areas. Here, 'majority urban' indicates more than 50 percent of the population live in urban centres; 'majority rural' indicates less than 50 percent. Urban populations are defined based on the definition of urban areas by national statistical offices. This is based on estimates to 2016, combined with UN projections to 2050.

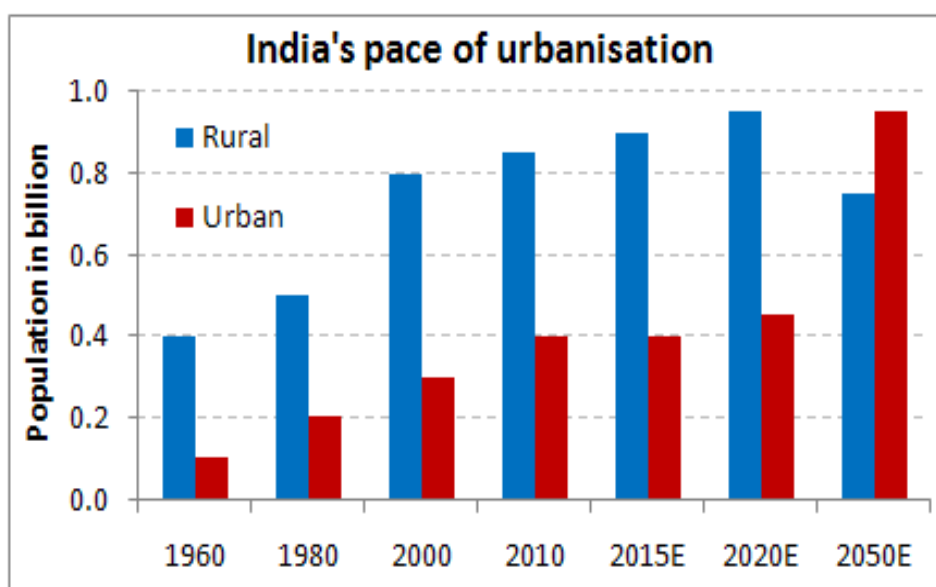
Our World
in Data



Source: OWID based on UN World Urbanization Prospects (2018) & Historical Sources (see Sources tab)
OurWorldInData.org/urbanization • CC BY

Why India heading toward urban acceleration?

- Urbanization is the increasing proportion of people living in urban areas, resulting in the growth of cities
- India's urban areas make a major contribution to the country's economy and host a growing share of the population. As a result urban centers have expanded rapidly as increasing numbers migrate to cities in search of economic opportunity.
- Hence accompanying India's rapid economic growth will be a fundamental shift in terms of a massive urban transformation, possibly the largest national urban transformation of the 21st century.



Effect of Urbanization:

Positive Effects of Urbanization:

- Improved standards of living
- Quality educational and medical facilities
- Creation of employment opportunities
- Technological and infrastructural advancements
- Improved transportation and communication

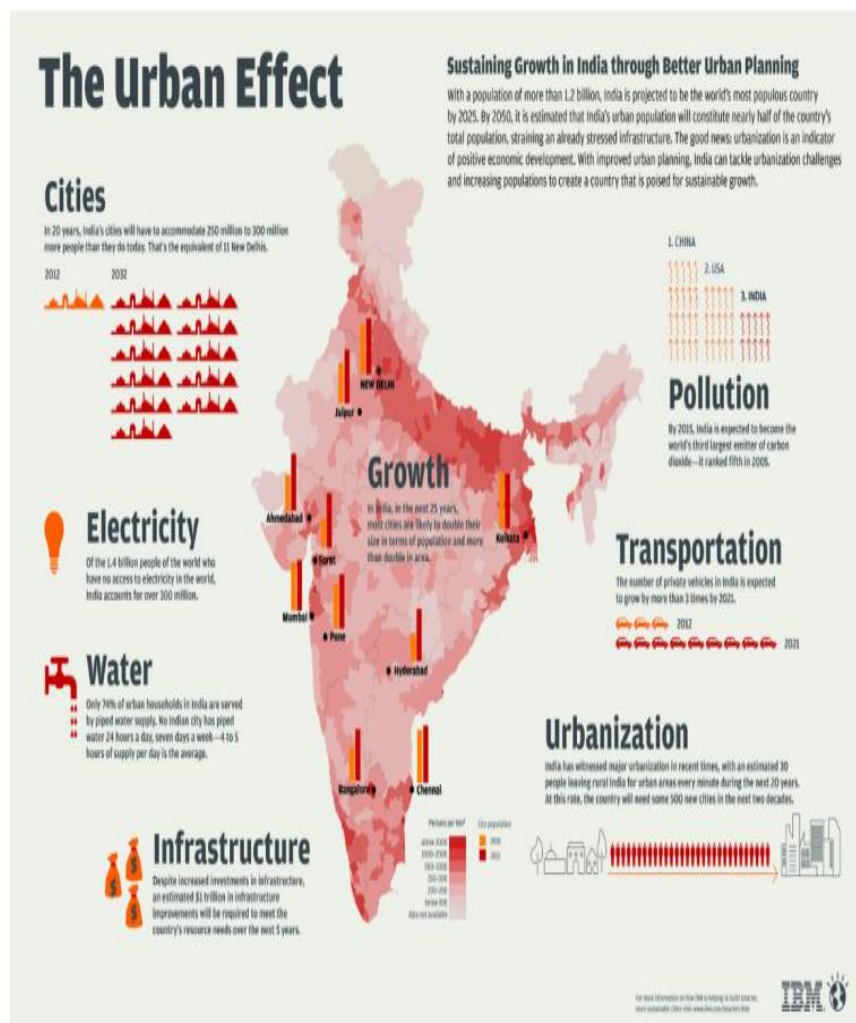
Negative effects of urbanisation:

- Unemployment

- Population increase causes housing problems.
- Overcrowding
- Development of Slums
- Water and Sanitation Problems
- Poor Health and Spread of Diseases
- Traffic Congestion
- Urban Crime

Issues related to urbanization in India:

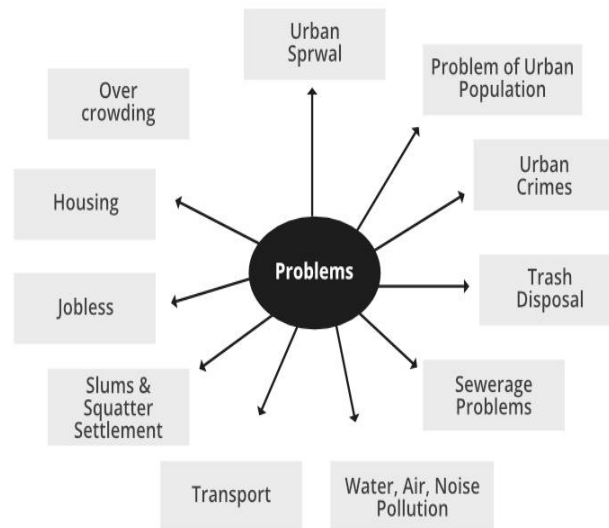
- The World Bank estimates that nearly USD 840 billion would be needed for investment in urban India to meet the growing demands of the population, and USD 55 billion would be required annually.
- Lack of Adequate Funding for Infrastructure and Housing Projects
- Lack of Coordination between Different Levels of Government
- Lack of Participation from Private Sector Investors
- Environmental Degradation
- Urban development can magnify the risk of environmental hazards such as flash flooding.
- Large volumes of uncollected waste create multiple health hazards.



- Concentrated energy use leads to greater air pollution with significant impact on human health.

Solutions

- Combat poverty by promoting economic development and job creation.
- Involve local community in local government.
- Reduce air pollution by upgrading energy use and alternative transport systems.
- Create private-public partnerships to provide services such as waste disposal and housing.
- Plant trees and incorporate the care of city green spaces as a key element in urban planning.



5. DISASTER MANAGEMENT

5.1 WILDFIRES HOW THEY START—AND HOW TO STOP THEM.

WHY IN NEWS:

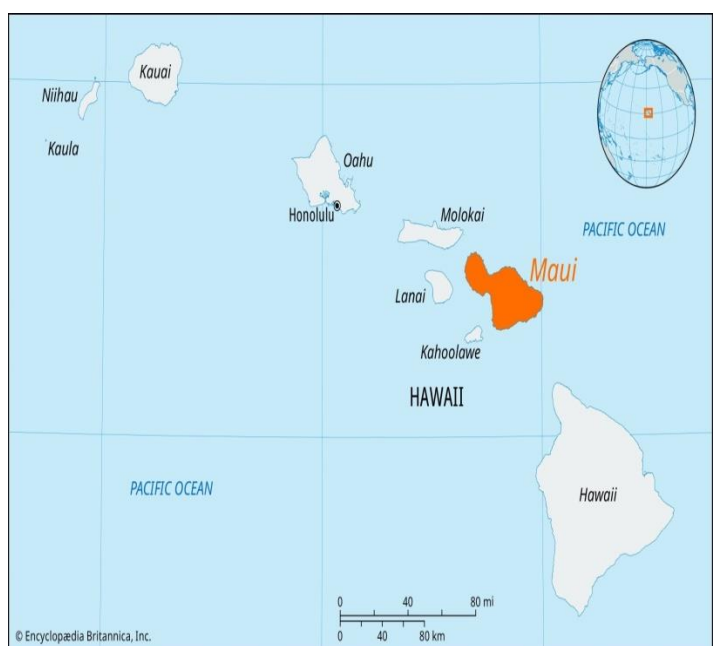
- In the past two decades, the number of Americans at risk of experiencing a wildfire has doubled. Wildfires can move shockingly fast, Here's how they start and how to stop them.



- In the wake of Maui's deadly wildfires—where many died, and a historic town once known as the capital of Hawaii's monarchy was destroyed—residents and tourists are reeling from the damage.

MAUI ISLAND:

- It is an island in the Central Pacific, part of the Hawaiian archipelago.
- The fires that burned through the island were worsened by intense winds from a nearby hurricane and drought conditions.
- Destruction caused by wildfires in the United States has significantly increased in the last two decades.
- Some experts have also said invasive grasses not native to the island created more flammable conditions that fed the fire's flames.
- Hawaii is not historically known for wildfires, but—like many parts of the world—is seeing more intense fires



because of climate change and mismanaged land.

- Wildfires can burn millions of acres of land at shockingly fast speeds, consuming everything in their paths.
- At the same time, black carbon and other pollutants generated from wildfires can contaminate water sources, speed up glacier melt, trigger landslides and turn rainforests into carbon sinks.
- In 2015, the largest wildfire season recorded in U.S. history burned more than 10 million acres of land.
- Because much of the U.S. is expected to get hotter and drier with climate change, wildfire risk is generally expected to rise.
- At the same time, as the population in the United States rises and people increasingly move into rural and wilderness areas, more homes and other structures are likely to be placed in harm's way.
- That's why it's critical to understand how wildfires get started, how to stop them, and what to do when they occur.

HOW WILDFIRES START:

- Though they are classified by the Environmental Protection Agency as natural disasters, only 10 to 15 percent of wildfires occur on their own in nature.
- The other 85 to 90 percent result from human causes, including
- Natural or man-made, three conditions must be present for a wildfire to burn: fuel, oxygen, and a heat source.
 - Unattended camp and debris fires
 - Discarded cigarettes
 - Arson.

NATURALLY OCCURRING WILDFIRES:

- It can spark during dry weather and droughts.
- In these conditions, normally green vegetation becomes bone-dry, flammable fuel; strong winds spread fire quickly; and warm temperatures encourage combustion.

- With these ingredients, the only thing missing is a spark—in the form of lightning, arson, a downed power line, or a burning campfire or cigarette—to wreak havoc.

FIRE TRIANGLE:

- Three conditions must be present for a wildfire to burn: fuel, oxygen, and a heat source.
- Fuel is any flammable material surrounding a fire, including trees, grasses, brush, and even homes. The greater an area's fuel load, the more intense the fire is likely to be. The most wildfire-prone state is California, which lost 2,569,386 acres of land to 7,396 wildfires in 2021.
- Air supplies the oxygen a fire needs to burn. California wildfires are often made worse by the hot, dry Santa Ana winds, which can carry a spark for miles. In Hawaii, Hurricane Dorian's winds helped feed the flames burning on Maui.
- Heat sources help spark the wildfire and bring fuel to temperatures hot enough to ignite. Lightning, burning campfires or cigarettes, and even the sun can all provide sufficient heat to spark a wildfire.
- Violent infernos are most common in the western states, where heat, drought, and frequent thunderstorms create ripe conditions. Wildfires also occur around the world and in most of the 50 states.

HOW THEY ARE STOPPED

- Fire-fighters battle blazes by depriving them of one or more of the fire triangle fundamentals.
- To douse existing fires with water and spray fire retardants.
- To clear vegetation from the land around a fire to contain and eventually starve it of fuel. The resulting tracts of land are called firebreaks.
- It employ controlled burning, creating backfires, to stop a wildfire.



BENEFITS OF WILDFIRES

- Although they can be dangerous to humans, naturally occurring wildfires play an integral role in nature.
- By burning dead or decaying matter, they can return otherwise trapped nutrients to the soil.
- They also act as a disinfectant, removing disease-ridden plants and harmful insects from an ecosystem.

ACCORDING TO UNEP:

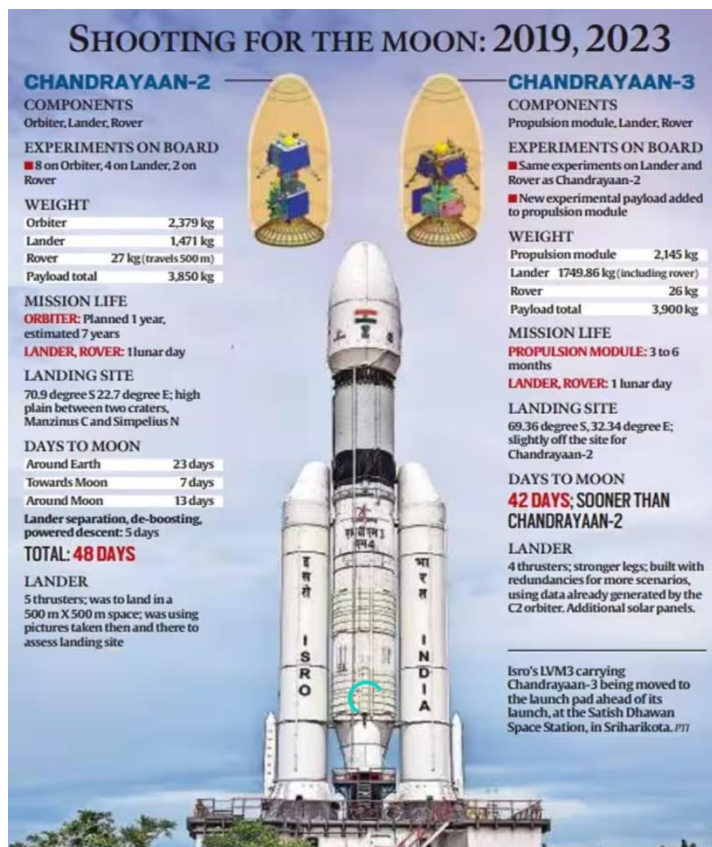
- Wildfires are projected to rise by 50 per cent by the end of the century due to the climate crisis and changes in land use, according to a report published by the UN Environment Programme (UNEP).
- According to UNEP, we need to invest more in fire risk reduction, work with local communities, and strengthen global commitment to fight climate change also need to Governments are urged to adopt a so-called “Fire Ready Formula”, which calls for two thirds of spending to be devoted to planning, prevention, preparedness and recovery – and one third for response.
- The study found that even the Arctic and other regions previously unaffected by wildfires face elevated risk.

6. SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

6.1 Chandrayaan - 2 & 3 - Comparison

Discoveries made by Chandrayaan-3 so far:

- Two major discoveries made by Chandrayaan-3 so far since it has landed on the lunar surface.
- Presence of Sulphur and oxygen-Laser-Induced Breakdown Spectroscopy (LIBS) instrument onboard 'Pragyan' rover of Chandrayaan-3 has 'unambiguously confirmed' the presence of sulphur in the lunar surface near south pole. Other elements like Aluminum (Al),
- Calcium (Ca), Iron (Fe), Chromium (Cr), Titanium (Ti), Manganese (Mn), Silicon (Si), and Oxygen (O) are also detected.
- Lunar temperature variation: Chandrayaan 3 has measured the soil temperature of the moon and revealed some interesting findings. The temperature ranges from minus 10 degree celsius to around 70 degree-celsius. While minus 10-degree was recorded at 80 mm under the ground 60-degree temperature was recorded at around 20 mm above the ground.



Significance of the Chandrayaan 3 Mission:

1. **Future lunar exploration:** The Mission can play a vital role in India's quest to establish a human presence on the moon.
The collaboration with JAXA (Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency) for their Lunar Polar Exploration mission (LUPEX) or Chandrayaan-4, etc., will be benefited by the success of this Mission.
2. **Advancing space education:** It can serve as an inspiration for the scientific community as well as future generations of space enthusiasts.

3. **Lunar Surface Exploration:** Chandrayaan-3's lander and rover are studying rocks and soil to understand moon history, possibly revealing asteroid impacts that caused surface changes. Focusing on the moon's south pole, Chandrayaan-3 aims to find minerals, underground features, and water, promising fresh insights into moon geology and resources.
4. **Boosting private investment:** India's field-tech sector is on investors' radars with historic growth of private rocket launches and satellite deployments by 2022. The accomplishment of the Chandrayaan trio should drive investor confidence higher and attract more private investment in aerospace technology projects.
5. **Job creation:** India's booming aerospace technology sector has already created hundreds of jobs. Successful lunar missions and subsequent programs are poised to create additional high-tech business opportunities, both directly and indirectly.
6. **Nurturing startups:** It could attract joint ventures and business opportunities for Indian companies and startups to develop and develop space systems for the global market.
7. **Strengthening international reputation:** Successful completion of Chandrayaan-3 will make India the fourth country to land on the moon, earn global recognition and lead to the cost-effective adoption of spacecraft manufactured by Indian companies and proof of its reliability.

Conclusion:

Chandrayaan-3 represents India's unwavering commitment to lunar exploration and scientific discovery. With a strong foundation laid by Chandrayaan-1 and Chandrayaan-2, this mission seeks to overcome past setbacks and pave the way for future lunar exploration endeavors.

6.2 SAGAR SAMPARK

Why in news:

Ministry of Ports, Shipping, and Waterways (MoPSW) has launched the ‘SAGAR SAMPARK’ Differential Global Navigation Satellite System (DGNSS) to strengthen the maritime sector in India.

Differential Global Navigation Satellite System:

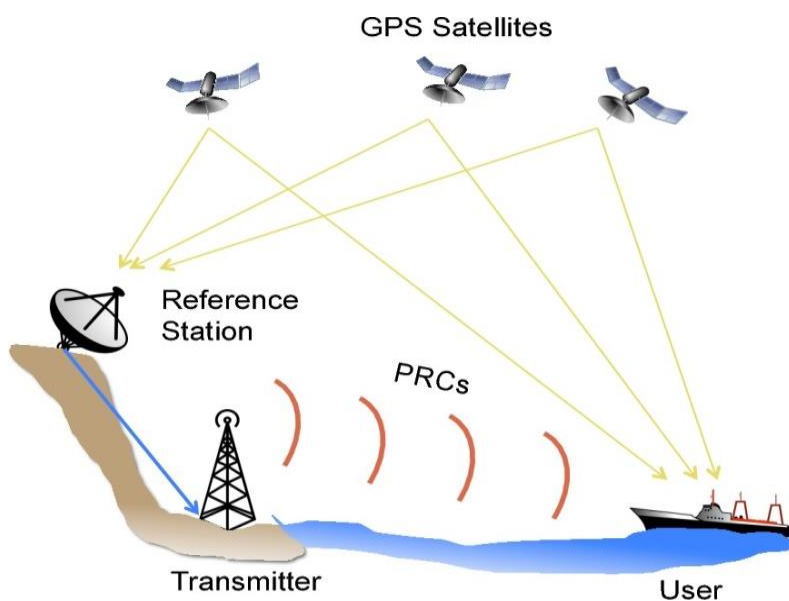
- DGNSS is a technology that helps make GPS and other satellite navigation systems more accurate. The major GPS system includes GPS (USA), GLONASS (Russia), Galileo (Europe), BeiDou (China), NAVIC (India)

Working of DGNSS:

- It works by using reference stations on the ground that send correction signals to GPS receivers. These correction signals help the receivers to correct any errors or inaccuracies in the satellite signals they receive.

Advantages:

- The implementation of DGNSS has improved GPS error correction accuracy from 5 to 10 meters to less than 5 meters for 100 Nautical Miles from the Indian coastlines.
- It will also enhance the capabilities of the Directorate General of Lighthouses and Lightships (DGLL) (under MoPSW) in providing radio aids to marine navigation along the Indian coast.
- Fulfilment of international navigation obligations of the International Maritime Organisation (IMO), Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) and International Association of Marine Aids to Navigation and Lighthouse Authorities (IALA).



Significance:

- The significance of DGNSS lies in its ability to provide more precise positioning information, and safe navigation, reduce the risk of accidents in port and harbour areas, and fulfil international navigation obligations.

7. INTERNAL SECURITY

7.1 Raids on Suspected Maoists

- The National Investigation Agency (NIA) raided 62 locations in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana on 2 October in coordinated searches at the residences and work-places of lawyers, activists and professors suspected of being involved in activities of proscribed Maoist groups.
- 53 out of 62 locations are in Andhra Pradesh while the rest are in Telangana.
- The raids relate to the investigation into the Munchingiputtu CPI (Maoist) conspiracy case, which involved distribution of Maoist literature and movement of Maoists in a village in Alluri Sitharamaraju district.
- Suspects belong to prominent organisations such as Indian Association of Peoples' Lawyers (APL), Pragatisheela Karmika Samakya (PKS), Civil Liberties Committee (CLC), Committee for the Release of Political Prisoners (CRPP), Revolutionary Writers' Association (RWA) and Human Rights Forum (HRF).
- The nexus between over-the-surface political groups, civil society organisations and proscribed terrorists organisations professing Maoist beliefs was unearthed in a major way in the Elgar Parishad case.
- Maoism is a variant of Communist ideology that advocates a distinct methodology for precipitating revolutions adjusted for unique conditions in largely agrarian Asian countries. It is named after Mao Tse Tung, the Chinese Communist leader who played a pivotal role in establishing a one-party Communist state in China in 1949.
- The distinct revolutionary ideology is centred around the strategy of encirclement, wherein Communist militia raised in the countryside surround power-centres in big cities and impose a siege-like situation, resulting in the overthrow of the existing state and the establishment of a proletarian state. The strategy draws from the historical experience of Mao Tse Tung and the Communist Party of China, which, after getting decimated in government-led purges in the mid 1920s, retreated to the countryside, regrouped, began fresh recruitments and undertook what is dubbed by scholars as the Long March, ultimately resulting in overthrow of the Chinese Republican government and the establishment of the Communist State.

- The advent of Communism in China produced a great wave of enthusiasm in its neighbourhood and throughout Asia as China became the first major Asian country to have a Chinese government. The roots of Maoism in India lie in this period, when Maoist slogans such as “Chairman Mao is our Chairman” became popular. In 1967, Communists inspired by the Maoist model undertook the Naxalbari uprisings that spread through a large area in North Bengal and the adjacent part in Bihar.
- Indian Maoists have tried to recreate what they call an Indian Yunnan, referring to the original location from which Mao-led Chinese Communists started their long march that led them to power.

7.2 Action against Khalistan separatists

- The National Investigation Agency (NIA) confiscated property belonging to prominent Khalistani separatists as part of the Indian government’s response to the explosion of anti-India violent activities being conducted by Khalistani elements in India and abroad. The action was undertaken by activating provisions of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA).
- The proscribed group Sikhs for Justice (SFJ) has received attention for its role in organising subversive events in Canada and the US, as well as for playing a role in the violence that targeted the Red Fort on Republic Day 2021. The group initially attracted scrutiny for exhorting the commission of violent acts during the farmers’ protests in the national capital.
- Property registered in the name of SFJ’s founder Gurpatwant Singh Pannu has been confiscated by the NIA. NIA sources reported cumulatively 5.7 acres of land including a portion of a construction in one of the properties were confiscated in Amritsar and Chandigarh.
- Pannu was designated as an “Individual Terrorist” in 2019 for issuing threats to diplomats and Indian government officials and functionaries. In 2021, a non-bailable arrest warrant was issued in his name. Recently, in the aftermath of the assassination of Hardeep Singh Nijjar, he warned Hindus in Canada to leave the country for supporting India and acting as India’s agents in Canada.
- NIA in its press releases said, “SFJ is misusing cyberspace to radicalise gullible youth and instigate them to undertake terrorist crimes and activities. Pannu is exhorting Punjab-based

gangsters and youth over social media to fight for the cause of an independent Khalistan, challenging the sovereignty, integrity and security of the country.”

- Assassinated Canada-based Khalistani separatist Hardeep Singh Nijjar’s property has in his native village in Punjab has also been confiscated at the orders of a special CBI court under provisions of UAPA.

8. ETHICS

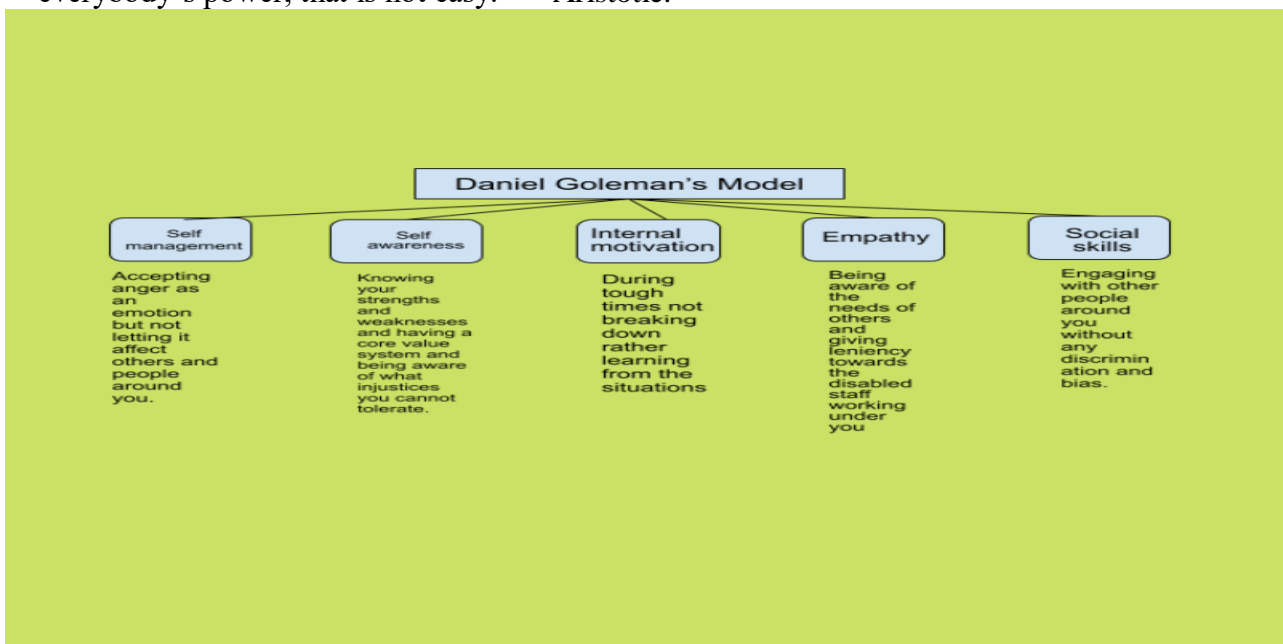
8.1 Emotional Intelligence

It is the ability of a person to manage, access, and control one's own emotions as well as others.

- Emotion Intelligence has been defined by Peter Salovey and John Mayor as the ability to monitor one’s own emotions and others’ emotions to discriminate between the different emotions and label them appropriately and use them to guide critical thinking and behaviour. The amount and level of emotional intelligence in a person are known as the emotional quotient.



- "Anybody can become angry, that is easy; but to be angry with the right person, and to the right degree, and at the right time, and for the right purpose, and in the right way, that is not within everybody’s power, that is not easy." —Aristotle.



- "What really matters for success, character, happiness and lifelong achievements is a definite set of emotional skills – your EQ not just purely cognitive abilities that are measured by conventional IQ tests." —Daniel Goleman
- Daniel Goleman developed the five components of emotional intelligence at work in the 1990s.

Goleman's Model:

They are

1. Self-awareness
2. Self-regulation
3. Motivation
4. Empathy and
5. Social skills.

Self-awareness

- It is the ability to identify one's emotions and emotional triggers; to accurately assess our feelings at any given time; and to take decisions according to one's preferences. Being aware of your feelings helps you understand how others might perceive your emotions and also make easy to understand how you are viewed by your co-workers, clients, or higher authority. It consists in making a realistic assessment of our capabilities. Leading life with self-confidence. People with high emotional self-awareness can reflect on their: Mood, Strengths, weaknesses and wants. Self-awareness regarding EI manifests itself in decision-making and ethics. It also provides people with an ethical framework to apply to future decisions and actions.

Self-regulation

- It is the ability to control and adjust your emotions to create a positive effect. Through this you do not hinder the task at your hand. It implies sincerity of purpose and the willingness to delay gratification of tempting immediate pleasures
- The main benefit of emotional intelligence in the workplace is able to understand nonverbal cues. Through this you can adjust your behavior, make good decisions and become a respected leader. This helps you better achieve your professional goals. It means that one is able to bounce back quickly from emotional stress.

Motivation

- It strengthens and encourages our drives towards self-improvement. It makes us persevere even in hard times. The urge and desire to do something, and it relates to emotional intelligence because your desire can promote different feelings towards something.

Empathy

- The ability to identify and understand the feelings of another person. It enables one to look at things from the perspective of others. It implies readiness to have rapport and adapt to diverse groups of people. Understanding the feelings of others allows you to handle workplace situations more effectively.

Social skills

- These are the tools used to communicate and interact with other people and behaving smoothly with people. These consist in the ability to handle emotions in relationships and to promote cooperation and teamwork.
- Emotion Intelligence is essential to recognize that the discipline of an organization has been broadly influenced in the initial stages of its growth. The current discipline of organization accords primacy to the values of equality, justice, humanism, human rights, gender equality, and compassion.
- An organization focuses on administrative ethics in its broader manifestation. No responsibility of the organization is more fundamental than the responsibility of the organization is more fundamental than the responsibility of maintaining the higher standards of **ethical behavior**.
- For balancing of work and smooth running of the organization managerial ethics is very important. In this managerial ethics, emotional intelligence is vital to improving a positive work environment. It refers mainly to personal intelligence that helps in the wellbeing with people and can make one's life prudently.

The expression 'emotional intelligence' may seem a contradiction in terms.

- Emotional Intelligence (EI) or Emotional Quotient (EQ) is the ability to understand, and identify emotions effectively, both their personal and that of others.

- It is a common belief that people with a high EQ make better leaders. These people have the ability to understand and connect with those around them and also can think laterally and solve problems easily.

Personal Skills or Competences	Social Skills or Competences
<i>How we manage ourselves</i>	<i>How we handle relationships with others</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Self-awareness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Emotional awareness ▶ Accurate self-assessment ▶ Self-confidence ▶ Self-regulation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Self-control ▶ Trustworthiness ▶ Conscientiousness ▶ Adaptability ▶ Innovation ▶ Motivation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Achievement drive ▶ Commitment ▶ Initiative ▶ Optimism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Empathy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Understanding others ▶ Developing others ▶ Service orientation ▶ Leveraging diversity ▶ Political awareness ▶ Social Skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Influence ▶ Communication ▶ Conflict management ▶ Leadership ▶ Change catalyst ▶ Building bonds ▶ Collaboration and cooperation ▶ Team capabilities

- Emotional intelligence in the workplace can provide significant benefits and further develop your career, along with creating better relationships and promoting a positive work environment.
- It can help to improve interpersonal relationships, both personally and professionally. There in turn include reasoning ability, problem-solving ability, and ability to perceive relationships between things and ability to store and retrieve information. These skills are mathematical, logical, linguistic, spatial visualization, kinaesthetic genius, musical, inter-personal intelligence and intrapersonal intelligence.

Difference between EQ and IQ

Difference between EQ & IQ?	
Intelligence Quotient(IQ) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Measures cognitive intelligence – your ability to learn\skilled use of reason. ▪ Doesn't change, fixed at birth. ▪ Neo cortex or top portion of the brain. ▪ Gets you through school. 	Emotional Intelligence Quotient(EQ) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Measures emotional intelligence- your ability to use emotions & cognitive skills. ▪ Flexible skill, can be learned. ▪ Limbic system portion of the brain. ▪ Gets you through life.

- It is nothing but interpersonal intelligence that helps to understand other people, motivate them, how they work, and how to work cooperatively with them. Successful people are all likely to be individuals with high degrees of interpersonal intelligence. They effectively operate in their life.

Howard Gardener

- He emphasized that one must and should understand the motives and habits of work of others. One must always focus on self-understanding for one's productive and happy life.

Psychologist Thorndike

- EI regarded social intelligence as one of the aspects of emotional intelligence. It is the ability to understand others and to act wisely in human relations.

Emotional intelligence map 25 competencies divided into 5 dimensions.



1. Self-awareness

- Emotional awareness,
- Accurate self-assessment
- Self-confidence

2. Self-management

- Self control

- Trustworthiness
- Conscientiousness
- Adaptability
- Innovation

3. Motivation

- Achievement drive
- Commitment
- Initiative
- Optimism

4. Empathy

- Understand others
- Developing others
- Service orientation
- Leveraging diversity
- Political awareness

5. Social skills

- Influence
- Communication
- Conflict management
- Leadership
- Change catalyst
- Building bonds
- Collaboration and cooperation
- Team capabilities.

Emotional Intelligence at the workplace:

- Due to globalization and the widespread of business, in recent years, emotional intelligence has become an important element and also a major topic in management studies.
- Both globalization and Information Technology have radically transformed the operating environment of business.
- The hierarchical system and managerial models of earlier day are replaced with emotional intelligence because work is done cooperatively in a team.
- These teams are make-up of knowledge people and skilled workers. Along with emotional intelligence, managers inculcate constructive criticism.
- Managers fail to clearly indicate specifically how to improve any piece of work produced by subordinates. They criticize the work in general terms without indicating any line of improvement, and launch personal attacks on subordinates, riced with malicious comments. Such behavior creates among subordinates' confusion, resentment and a tendency to avoid work and contact with the manager. They have to be virtuosos in interpersonal skills.
- Harry Levinson mentions that the work done by subordinates should be criticized constructively based on the factors of specificity, providing solutions, face-to-face contact, and empathy.
- The skill sets which public servants require fall into three distinct, though not rigid, categories. In some situations, they have to rely on social skills. They need to show personal commitment in implementing welfare programmes for the deprived groups.

The Structure of Emotional Competence

a) Personal competence

i) Self-competence

1. Emotional self-awareness
2. Accurate self-assessment
3. Self confidence

b) Emotional competence

i) Self-management

1. Emotional self-control
2. Transparency
3. Adaptability
4. Achievement orientation
5. Initiative
6. Optimism

ii) Social competence

1. Empathy
2. Organizational awareness
3. Service orientation

c) Structural competence

iii) Cooperative competence

1. Developing others
2. Inspirational leadership
3. Change catalyst
4. Influence
5. Conflict management
6. Team work
7. Collaboration

- Emotional intelligence never stops growing. Because as a human being we are involved in social or organizational matters. Studies said that a person with a high sense of emotional intelligence tend to succeed and excel in different areas in life. If you become emotionally literate label your feeling rather than others.

How to improve EI

	Self	Others
Awareness	Who am I and what are my potential areas of development.	How can I transcend my perspective so that I can understand and value others?
Actions	How can I self-regulate my emotions so I can be right and effective.	How do I build teams and create constructive work relationship?

Why emotional intelligence is important:

1. Physical health –

- If you're unable to manage your stress levels, it can lead to serious health problems. Uncontrolled stress can raise blood pressure, suppress the immune system, increase the risk of heart attack and stroke, contribute to infertility, and speed up the aging process.

2. Mental health –

- Emotional intelligence can help you navigate the social complexities of the workplace, lead and motivate others, and excel in your career. In fact many organizations now view emotional intelligence as being as important as technical ability and require EQ testing before recruiting them.

Benefits of Emotional Intelligence in the workplace:

1. Regardless of obstacles that arise, one can work towards the organization's goal.
2. To understand their own emotions and those of their colleagues, EI inculcate greater motivation among staff.
3. Healthy communication that produces common goals across the business.
4. When it comes to the job at hand, the workforce having a positive outlook.
5. Positive relationships and deeper connections between employees.
6. Employees can respond to change effectively and handle any additional stress it brings.

7. Improved efficiencies with empathetic staff making decisions based on what is best for everyone involved.
8. Good career progression; likely to excel in leadership positions.

Importance of EI in Civil Services:

Today civil servants face numerous problems in the work environment. Such as:

1. Increasing Regional, economic and digital divide.
2. Widespread application of IT.
3. Demand for improved governance.
4. Issues getting politicized easily.
5. Political pressure and rampant corruption.
6. Decentralization of governance to grassroots level thereby increasing responsibilities.
7. Issues of globalization, migration, terrorism, cyber crimes, information technology, social media etc.

Why a civil servant should adapt EI for:

1. Targeting public policies better acquaintance with the nature of problems in society and their possible solutions.
2. Motivating subordinates towards a particular goal.
3. Stress management.
4. To take new things, take risks and face new challenges without fear.
5. In finding innovative solutions to different problems.
6. For decision making.
7. For better communication.
8. For maintaining balance in life.

9. On personal front, EI makes one more flexible, empathetic and clear in expression.



EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Mains topic: Ethics, values and integrity Previous Year Question on EI

1. What are the main components of emotional intelligence (EI)? Can they be learned?
Discuss.(2020)
2. “Emotional Intelligence is the ability to make your emotions work for you instead of against you”. Do you agree with this view? Discuss. (2019).
3. How will you apply emotional intelligence in administrative practices? (2017).
4. What is ‘emotional intelligence’ and how can it be developed in people? How does it help an individual in making ethical decisions? (2014)

CURRENT AFFAIRS MCQ'S FOR THE MONTH OF AUGUST 2023

1. Which of the following is/are the possible impacts of the devaluation of a currency in a country?

- 1) It may help in combating inflation.
- 2) It may lead to an increase in aggregate demand for domestically produced goods.
- 3) It may lead to an improvement in the current account balance.

Select the correct answer using the code given below.

- a) 1 only
- b) 1 and 3 only
- c) 2 and 3 only
- d) 1, 2 and 3

2. Which of the following is/are correct regarding the National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal?

- 1) It enables citizens to report cybercrimes online through the portal.
- 2) It connects the law enforcement agencies of different States, districts and police stations for dealing with cybercrimes.
- 3) It is an initiative of the Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India.

Select the correct answer using the code given below.

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) 1 and 3 only
- d) 1, 2 and 3

3. Consider the following statements with respect to 'World Investment Report 2023'

- 1) FDI inflows were higher in developed countries compared with those in developing economies
- 2) Much of the growth in international investment in renewable energy has been concentrated in developing countries
- 3) It is released by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development.

How many of the statement(s) given above are correct

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 and 3 only

- c) 3 only
- d) None

4. With reference to 'Geocoding', consider the following statements:

- 1) It converts an address or description of a location into geographic coordinates.
- 2) It has been introduced to prevent fraud in schemes like MGNREGA

Which one of the following is correct in respect of the above statements?

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both
- d) None

5. Who is the longest serving Chief Minister of any Indian State?

- a) Pawan Kumar Chamling
- b) Jyoti Basu
- c) Lal Thanhawla
- d) Manik Sarkar

6. What is the retirement age of judges in the Supreme Court and High Courts respectively?

- a) 60 & 62
- b) 65 & 62
- c) 65 & 65
- d) 65 & 63

7. In the context of Indian economy, consider the following types of bank deposits:

- 1) Current account deposits
- 2) Fixed deposits
- 3) Recurring deposits

Which of the deposits given above is/are types of demand deposits?

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 and 3 only
- c) 2 only
- d) 1 and 3 only

8. Which of the following is an example of "Pigovian Tax"?
- Tax on Diesel
 - Education Cess
 - Value Added Tax (VAT)
 - Compulsory contribution for disaster relief
9. With reference to 'Scheme for Capacity Building in Textiles Sector (SAMARTH) scheme', consider the following statements
- It is a demand-driven and placement-oriented umbrella skilling programme
 - The scheme is implemented through NGOs/ Societies/ Trusts having placement tie up with the textile industry.
- Which of the following statements are correct?
- 1 only
 - 2 only
 - 1 and 2
 - None
10. What is the main objective of the Amrit Bharat Station Scheme?
- To modernize railway stations across India
 - To improve the passenger amenities at railway stations
 - To create a more sustainable and environmentally friendly railway network
 - All of the above
11. The Asia-Pacific Trade Agreement (APTA) is a major trade agreement signed by India. Which of the following countries is not a part of APTA?
- Lao PDR
 - Mongolia
 - Myanmar
 - South Korea
12. Arrange the following countries by the date of their formation, from the earliest to the latest:
- East Timor, Serbia and Montenegro, Kosovo, South Sudan
 - East Timor, Kosovo, Serbia and Montenegro, South Sudan

- c) Serbia and Montenegro, East Timor, Kosovo, South Sudan
- d) Kosovo, East Timor, Serbia and Montenegro, South Sudan

13. Which of the following statement is correct regarding the Adaptation Research Alliance (ARA).

- a) It is a global coalition responding to the urgent challenges faced by vulnerable communities from climate change.
- b) It is an alliance to address human-animal conflict.
- c) It is an alliance formed at COP 26, UNFCCC, to protect mangroves in coastal regions of world.
- d) It is a coalition to address forest fires in vulnerable regions.

14. Consider the following statements with respect to Recycling of ships in India:

- 1) 98% of the recycling in India takes place at Vizag port.
- 2) Ship recycling in India is regulated under Recycling of Ship Act, 2019.
- 3) Global shipyard ship market is currently dominated by the shipyards in China, Singapore and East Asian countries.

How many of the above statements is/are correct?

Select the correct code.

- a) Only one
- b) Only two
- c) All three
- d) None

15. Consider the following statements with respect to Animal Welfare Board of India

- 1) It is a statutory advisory body constituted under Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 that promotes animal welfare in the country.
- 2) Prime Minister is the chairperson of the Board.
- 3) The board provides statutory authority to Project Tiger so that compliance of its directives become legal.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

Select the correct code.

- a) 1 and 3 only
- b) 2 and 3 only

- c) 3 only
- d) 1, 2 and 3

16. Which of the following food or Agri residues are used as a feedstock for textiles industry?

- 1) Bamboo
- 2) Corn husk
- 3) Aloe vera
- 4) Sugarcane
- 5) Milk
- 6) Fish scales

Select the correct code.

Select the correct code.

- a) 1, 2, 3 and 5 only
- b) 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 only
- c) 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 only
- d) All of the above

17. Consider the following statements :

- 1) India's merchandise exports have been decreasing since the last four quarters .
- 2) A country's export demand may decline if its domestic currency is strong enough to make its goods and services substantially more expensive.

Which one of the following is correct in respect of the above statements?

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) 1 and 2
- d) None

18. Consider the following statements about Energy Transition Index 2023

- 1) The index is released by the UN Environment Programme (UNEP).
- 2) India it is the only major economy with energy transition momentum accelerating across all dimensions.
- 3) For the first time, India ranked in the top 5 of the Energy transition index.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

- a) Only one

- b) Only two
- c) All Three
- d) None

19. Which of the following are eligible to participate in the Liquidity Adjustment Facility (LAF) auctions?

- 1) Private Scheduled Commercial Banks
- 2) Foreign Scheduled Commercial Banks
- 3) Regional Rural Banks
- 4) Primary Dealers
- 5) NBFCs

Select the correct answer using the code given below.

- a) 1, 2 and 3 only
- b) 1, 3 and 5 only
- c) 2, 3 and 4 only
- d) 1, 2, 4 and 5 only

20. Consider the following statements regarding foreign exchange reserves of India:

- 1) The components of foreign exchange reserves in India include Gold and foreign currency assets only.
- 2) An increase in foreign exchange reserves usually has an inflationary effect on the economy.

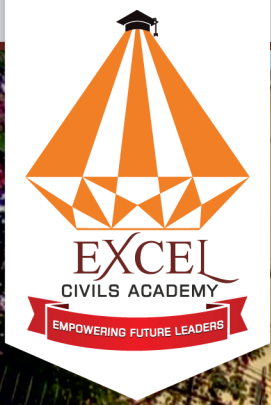
Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2

KEYS

1. C	2. D	3. C	4. A	5. A
6. B	7. A	8. A	9. B	10. D
11. C	12. A	13. A	14. A	15. C
16. D	17. B	18. A	19. D	20. B

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