Labour Mobility in India:

**Benefits**
- The resulting remittance flows increase household spending in the receiving regions and further the economic development of less-developed regions.
- Labour migration creates additional demand for goods and services in the destination regions.
- It can prevent wage inflation: if it is easier for labourers to enter a particular industry, the supply of labour will increase for a given demand, which will prevent excess wage inflation.

**Labour Mobility in India**

**Introduction**
- Labour or worker mobility is the geographical and occupational movement of workers.
- It is an important factor of production which affects growth and production.
- Historically, migration of people for work and education accompanies the structural transformation of economies, and has paved the way for the release of "surplus labour" from relatively low-productive agricultural activities to sectors enjoying higher productivity.

**Internal migration is a consequence of unequal regional development.**
- High-levels of migration: This is evident from Census data which says about 10.3 million people migrated in interstate migration between 2011-2016.
- Workforce migration is observed as movement from less affluent states to more affluent states.
- The largest immigration was at Delhi region, which accounted for more than half of migration in 2015-16, while Uttar Pradesh and Bihar taken together account for half of total out-migrants.
- Migrant flow between the states are lower than flows within states. In labour migration geographic distance appears to be an obstacle than the linguistic and cultural variables considered to be.
- Rewards (in the form of prospective income and employment opportunities) have become greater than the costs and risks that migration entails.
- Although permanent male migration is exceptionally low in India, women have always moved to a different village when they marry.
- Seasonal migration in India has been increasing over time.

**Way Forward**
- Impediments to mobility are divided into personal and systemic impediments.
- Personal impediments include physical location, and physical and mental ability.
- The systemic impediments include educational opportunities as well as various laws and political constrictions.
- National and regional differences in the qualifications necessary for different jobs.
- A lack of standards for skills and qualifications.
- Discrimination based on origin: i.e., son of the soil doctrine.
- Discrimination based on social class.

**Impediments to worker mobility**
- Inadequate infrastructure and housing to accommodate fast-moving changes in labour demand.
- Internal political borders impede the flow of people. This is reflected in the fact that, labour migrant flows within states are much greater than inter-state flows.
- The limitation of the temporary migration is that it will not fill the large number of jobs in which there is firm-specific learning and where firms will want to set permanent wage contracts.
Introduction

Restrict the use of privilege to proceedings of the legislature and not to the individual member. Any member who is falsely accused of any impropriety can use the defamation route through courts.

Parliament and Legislative Assemblies should pass laws to codify privilege.

Both the Parliament and State Legislatures have a duty to look carefully before making any law so that it doesn’t harm other rights.

It is also the duty of the members to properly use these privileges and not misuse them and protect the general interest of nation and public at large.

Australia passed the Parliamentary Privileges Act in 1987. Courts should revisit the earlier judgments and find the right balance between fundamental rights of citizens and privilege of the legislature.

Power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely. For this not to happen under the privileges granted, the public and the other governing body should always be on vigil.

The Press Commission has often taken up the issue of codification of privileges.

National Commission to Review the Working of the Constitution in its report in 2002, suggested that privileges be “defined and delimited.”

Solution

Parliamentary Privileges

The idea of privilege emerged in England as Parliament started to protect itself from excesses by the monarch.

It established several rights and privileges including the freedom of members of Parliament to freely speak and vote in Parliament (including its committees).

The Karnataka Legislative Assembly has found two journalists guilty of breach of its privilege and sentenced them to jail.

This case once again raises the question of what should constitute privilege of the legislative bodies.

The Indian Constitution specifies the powers and privileges of Parliament in Article 105 and those of State legislatures in Article 194.

The Articles were passed on the assurance that they were a temporary measure.

They provide freedom of speech in Parliament subject to other provisions of the Constitution and standing orders of the House.

Give immunity for all speeches and votes in Parliament from judicial scrutiny.

Allow Parliament (and State legislatures) to codify the privileges, and until then, have the same privileges as the British Parliament had in 1950.

Till now, Parliament and State legislatures have not passed any law to codify their privileges.

The power of privilege has been used against journalists in several instances and as a substitute for legal proceedings.

In 2003, the Tamil Nadu assembly Speaker directed the arrest of five journalists of The Hindu newspaper for publishing articles and an editorial that were critical of the AIADMK government.

All persons have a right to trial by a competent, independent and impartial tribunal.

Breach of privilege laws allow politicians to become judges in their own cause, raising concerns of conflict of interest and violating basic fair trial guarantees.

The last person to be imprisoned by the British Parliament was in 1880. In India however, this power has been frequently resorted to.

This is seen as an encroachment on press freedom – a fundamental right guaranteed under Article 19(1)(a).

Legislatures have been reluctant, as once privileges are codified they will be subject to judicial scrutiny.

Recommendations for Codification of Privileges

The question of privilege
The NUA is a landmark vision document that calls for a paradigm shift in addressing urban issues, rooted in concerns of sustainability. “Sustainability” and “inclusivity” are the core principles of the NUA.

NUA requires that countries involve municipal, state and federal governments to form a basic framework for implementation of urban reforms.

Both the NUA and SCM guidelines pay close attention to infrastructure and services such as solid waste management, compact urban planning and energy resources.

Paying attention to the aspects of resilience and local governance outlined in the NUA can ensure that Indian cities respond to more than just competitive sub-federalism.

Smart cities cannot be a solution to urban crisis happening in India. It needs understanding of problem rationally through data collected systematically.

If Chicago city is taken as an example, Array of Sensors are installed on streets for people to download raw data on air quality, pedestrian movement and standing water.

Similarly India also shall develop transport, waste management data for improving urban governance based on evidence. When one has limited funds, an easier and speedier route is to take five big cities or 10 small ones at a time, and transform them comprehensively.

Building of these cities cannot come only with government spending. The funding has to happen through private sector’s involvement.

Since the smart cities programme aims at affordable housing and modern transportation, government has to facilitate smoother land acquisition with appropriate rehabilitation and resettlement.

We see cutting of trees for widening of roads and highways. Care has to be taken to protect the environment while making cities smart.

Citizen participation is important right from policy inputs, implementation and execution because citizens are the ultimate beneficiaries of smart cities.

Smart cities development requires smart leadership which has to come from all the three tiers of the government.

Clearly, there is a lot of low-hanging fruit on the road to smartness, and a nimble policy approach can tap this quickly.

The plan should recognize that the vibrant life of cities depends on variety and enabling environments, rather than a mere technology-led vision.

Pollution-free commons, walkability and easy mobility, with a base of reliable civic services, is the smart way to go.

With urbanization gaining prominence in the global policy discourse, it is important to focus on local governance.

The New Urban Agenda (NUA) and SCM

"Smart city" is a city equipped with basic infrastructure to give a decent quality of life, a clean and sustainable environment through application of some smart solutions.

It includes basic infrastructure like adequate water supply, electricity supply, sustainable sanitation and solid waste management, efficient urban mobility, affordable housing and ensuring robust IT connectivity and e-governance.

Introduction

After three years of the announcement, 80 cities have been selected, but with little to show in urban transformation.

There are a few cities that have taken the task seriously. Pune has begun by raising funds through the issuance of municipal ‘smart city’ bonds.

Bhubaneswar has launched a railway multi-modal hub, a hi-tech transport signal system and urban knowledge centre.

The New Delhi Municipal Corporation has started implementation of mini-sewage plants, wi-fi activated ‘smart street’ lights and city surveillance systems through a command and control centre.

But, most cities are still struggling at a primary planning stage, and financial closure to projects is still a long way off.

More importantly private investment – has hardly been identified and defined.

Way Forward

Smart cities function as specific purpose vehicles diverged from regular urban governance structures. It can create islands of development rather than an inclusive all round development of the city.

State and local governments lack fine-grained data or the capability to analyse them in order to understand the evolving needs of their communities.

Although India’s Smart Cities Mission has identified more than 20 priority areas, interventions by the respective agencies are weak.

There is an inadequate emphasis on the functioning of urban local bodies.

The Area Based Development approach – development of a sewage system somewhere, or a web of roads in another city – will cover just about three per cent of the urban areas associated with these smart cities.

Concerns / Challenges

Urban local bodies lack both technical and human capacity and professionalism.

Conclusion
Introduction

The current round of farmers’ agitations indicates that India’s agrarian sector is in distress.

Low growth, poor earnings, disproportionately high suicides have signalled that something is wrong with the rural sector in India.

Unpredictable weather cycle and low agricultural output

There is always a sharp fall in price when surplus is generated. Government objective to keep inflation under control has aggravated farm distress.

India has accessibly dependent on MSP to drive crop planning by farmers. MSP is restricted only to few crops.

Agricultural marketing has not developed on pan India basis.

Growth in rural lending has decreased and indeed most of the rural lending is indirect rather than direct.

Input costs have increased while income is decreasing.

Degradation of soil, decreasing water resources and increased use of pesticides are making agriculture unsustainable and non remunerative.

Inequality in landholdings as shown starkly in land ownership.

Lack of proper storage facility particularly for horticultural crops.

A strike by farmers in Maharashtra on demands of loan waivers, minimum support price for agricultural produce and writing off of electricity bills has lead to disruption of day to day life.

Way Forward

It exposes rot in Indian farming sector.

Whenever a bumper crops come, prices of agricultural products drop dramatically pushing farmers for distress sale. Ongoing farm crisis can be attributed to this sharp fall in prices.

Concerns / Challenges

Indian agriculture is monsoon dependent. The poor monsoon causes severe agrarian distress as seen in the last 2 years.

In India post-harvest losses in food and food grains are around 40-50%.

Agricultural growth has been, on average, lower than that in non-agriculture, including industry.

The rate of decline of the population dependent on agriculture has been discouragingly low since employment outside of agriculture has not been growing fast enough.

The monopoly of traders over local agricultural markets bars farmers from selling directly to consumers. This kills any chance of farmers getting a fair price.

Fiscal conservatism has adversely affected public investment in irrigation, drainage and flood control.

Liberalised imports of agricultural commodities including foodgrains and cotton have damped domestic prices.

In good harvest years, neither are MSP increased to ensure a floor price that covers costs and offers a remunerative return, nor is enough procured to ensure that even the MSP offered serves as a floor for market prices.

Trade liberalisation, deregulation and a greater role for market forces have not benefited the farmer, who is trapped in a persisting crisis.

Informal loans from moneylenders are extremely expensive and exploitative.

National Commission on Farmers (NCF)’s Swaminathan Commission Report aimed at working out a system for food and nutrition security, sustainability in the farming system, enhancing quality and cost competitiveness of farm commodities

It recommended that the MSP should be set at a level that equals 150 percent of costs.

The Commission observed that farmers needed to have an assured access to and control over rightful basic resources like land, water, bioreources, credit and insurance, technology and knowledge management, and markets.

Agriculture must be implemented in the concurrent list from the state list — hence putting it as a matter of concern for both the Union and the states.

Distribution of ceiling-surplus and waste lands

prevention of diversion of prime agricultural land and forest to corporate sector for non-agricultural use

Ensure grazing rights are provided and seasonal access is allowed in forests to tribals and pastoralists.

Establish a National Land Use Advisory Service to connect land usage decisions with ecological, meteorological and marketing factors.

Reforms to provide farmers with “sustained and equitable” access to water for irrigation.

Rainwater harvesting, water level recharging by mandatory aquifers.

Substantial increase in public investment in agriculture-related infrastructure particularly in irrigation, drainage, land development, water conservation, research development and road connectivity etc.

Providing affordable health insurance at primary healthcare centres in villages

Restructuring of microfinance policies that may serve as a sort of livelihood finance

Covering all crops by crop insurance

Strengthen agricultural insurance, reforming agricultural marketing and introduction of model contract farming act.

Integration of markets is very critical. Farmers shall be given freedom to sell.

Labour and land reforms need to be revised to increase farm productivity and also to decrease dependence on agriculture.

Making agriculture affordable by decreasing costs of inputs – if agriculture becomes ecologically sensitive and sustainable, it also becomes common.

Management of surface and ground water need to be radically reformed. Colonial common law code that gave a right to land owner to exploit underground water need to be revised.

Diversification of livelihood opportunities such as livestock and fisheries. Crop diversification also need to be encouraged and Government shall procure millets and pulses.

Credit and crop insurance shall be increased to 85% of small and marginal farmers.

Investments shall be raised in to Agro processing industry

Farmers producers organisation need to be encouraged to benefit farmers from market participation. Policy reform in agriculture is need of the hour.

Have strong civil society participation in agricultural policy formulation and to keep communication open with farmers and farming communities.

Proper decentralised storage facility for better access to farmers and prevent the wastage of food grains.

India and Russia have signed an agreement for cooperation in the development of 25 integrated Agro irradiation centres which is a step in the right direction.
Parliament has to meet for minimum mandated number of days. National Commission to review the working of the Constitution (NCRWC) recommended that it shall be 120 and 100 days respectively for Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha.

The Parliament is the central institution of our democracy that makes laws, holds the central government accountable and allocates financial resources through the budgetary process.

In recent years there has been debate about decline of Parliament, falling standards of debate, deterioration in the conduct and quality of Members, poor levels of participation etc.

Strengthening of Parliament requires an understanding of its institutional design, processes and the issues that need to be addressed.

Number of days Parliament is in session is decreasing. In 1960’s it was for an average of 120 days in a year and in 2016, it is only 70 days.

On one side complexity of legislative work is increasing but time spent is decreasing.

In comparison, British House of Commons has met for an average of 150 days a year and US House of Representatives for 140 days.

Odisha has already shown the way, mandating a minimum of 60 days for the State Assembly to sit.

Parliamentary legislation is often criticised for being hastily drafted and being rushed through Parliament in an ad hoc and haphazard manner.

In 2008, for instance, 16 Bills were passed with less than 20 minutes of debate.

Private member bills are not getting due attention and debate. To date, only 14 private member bills have been passed.

There are many instruments like anti defection law, whip issued by the political parties that are acting as hindrances for free speech of MPs.

Most of the MPs have limited or no research support. So, expert advice is missing.

Parliament’s Library and reference, research, documentation and information service (LARRDIS) is understaffed and no funds are allocated for parliamentarians to hire necessary research support.

Parliamentary debates, which once focussed on national and critical issues, are now more about local problems.

Political power continues to be male dominated. The Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha have not seen women MPs cross the 12% mark.

In 2012, India ranked 20th from the bottom in terms of representation of women in Parliament.

Political representation by women candidates continues to be subdued, with no significant rise in the number of women MLAs in recent Assembly elections.

Individual voting record of MPs remains unknown. With no voting record maintained of each MP, it is difficult to distinguish their individual progressive or conservative nature.
India – Japan civil nuclear deal was passed. Areva, GE, Westinghouse are close to bankruptcy and their Japanese investors like Toshiba, Hitachi and Mitsubishi are also not doing good.

After, Fukushima nuclear disaster world has become cautious of nuclear reactors.

Germany once a committed nuclear champion has decided to pull out of nuclear energy altogether by 2022.

Availability of cheaper alternatives like solar, wind energy and shale oil have decreased dependency on nuclear energy.

Government is giving a strong push to the indigenous nuclear industry; This is the first time that 10 reactors of 700 MW each have been approved in one go.

With manufacturing orders to domestic industry, it will be a major step towards strengthening India’s credentials as a major nuclear manufacturing powerhouse.

This is going to provide a big fillip to the Make in India programme and also reduce India’s dependence on imports for nuclear fuel and reactors.

The indigenous push will also eschew the problems related to nuclear liability law that the foreign reactor builders persistently complain about.

For a large nuclear power capacity to be built in a country like India, it is very important to have major components made within the country. Otherwise economics will be not so good.

India’s collaborations with the international community, particularly the strong scientific cooperation is important.

Self-reliance and to create internal capacities in India is important as stated by Homi Jehangir Bhabha.

It is important to see that the Indian industry participation is strong, and they also make necessary investments, training of personnel, so that the economy can move ahead.

Strict regulation guidelines for checking and measuring radiation level regularly.

Promoting private or PSU companies to use nuclear waste for electricity generation so that unnecessary disposal can be minimized.

Nuclear power is the fourth-largest source of electricity in India after thermal, hydroelectric and renewable sources of electricity.

As of 2016, India has 22 nuclear reactors in operation in 8 nuclear power plants, having an installed capacity of 6780 MW.

Nuclear power remains an important part of our strategy to minimise carbon emissions in the long run.

As a clean energy source, nuclear is best suited to gradually replace coal.

Lack of cheaper storage options for solar and wind energy.

This is essential to fulfil Paris climate agreement as well as maintain high rates of economic growth.

From a long-term perspective India needs nuclear power. This is because we are short of oil, gas and even coal. More than 70 per cent of petroleum products, 40 per cent of gas and 20 per cent of coal consumption are based on imports.

From a long-term perspective, renewable energy is inevitable and nuclear option should be retained as an insurance.

India’s potential for hydro power is unevenly distributed across months. The generation from run-of-the river plants during the lean month may be as low as 10 per cent of generation during the peak month.

Having some nuclear power helps diversify the system and adds to energy security.

If we can install the nuclear plants without delay and within budget, they are economically attractive.

If India has to grow at 7 to 8 per cent, energy security plays an important role and nuclear energy adds to it.

Nuclear energy as a preferable option is changing and global mood is against it.

Comparative costs of nuclear production are high. As solar energy costs are decreasing, this difference is increasing further.

Capital investment to job generation is very high for nuclear energy.

If cost benefit analysis is announced, Non conventional sources like solar energy have less capital requirement and capital becomes productive quite soon. It is not the case with nuclear energy. Delays make costs to escalate further.

Disposal of radioactive material and danger of nuclear accidents makes it further prohibitive.

Risks and costs of nuclear energy are overwhelmingly borne by the poor. There is always lot of resistance from local communities against reactors.

Beyond the risks associated with radioactive wastes, the threat of nuclear weapons looms large.

Nuclear energy uses Uranium which is a scarce resource and is not found in many countries. Once all extracted, the nuclear plants will not be of any use.
Allowing the executive to determine appointment, reappointment and removal of members might affect the independent functioning of Tribunal.

The essential question is whether the doctrine of separation of powers has been violated.

The appointment and removal by the government could pose a conflict of interest

This might lead to overburdening the tribunals with more cases than it could handle.

There are arguments that Competition Appellate Tribunal (Compat) is specialized and deals with complex matters. Dissolving Compat and merging with the NCLT could defeat the focus of competition law in India.

Merging COMPAT with NCLT can also lead to overburdening the latter with more cases than it could handle.

The new Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code has designated NCLT as the adjudicating authority for corporates cases which could add extra burden.

Increasing control of the Centre over tribunals will be contrary to 2014 Supreme Court order that held appointments to appellate tribunals must be free of executive interference.

Parliament has given its power to the executive regarding the functioning of tribunals (since bill passed as money bill).

India has a number of tribunals to look into appeals made from orders of specific regulators or sectors. Hence post merging, the Centre will have to ensure specialisation.

High courts that deal with all matters have dedicated benches. Similarly in tribunals too, specific cases can be dealt by respective benches.

Senior people from diverse backgrounds, can be appointed to deal with varied industry matters.

Uniformity in administrative rules will help in streamlining the functioning of these quasi-judicial bodies and ensure that vacancies aren't kept pending for long.

The government must ensure the independence of the tribunal – a requirement that is part of the basic structure of the constitution.

The government has merged several powerful administrative tribunals and assumed powers to appoint and remove their chiefs, triggering fears that the move will undermine the authority and independence of these quasi-judicial institutions.

Tribunals were added in the Constitution by Constitution (Forty-second Amendment) Act, 1976 as Part XIV-A, which has only two articles viz. 323-A and 323-B.

While article 323-A deals with Administrative Tribunals; article 323-B deals with tribunals for other matters.

The ‘tribunals’ are not courts of normal jurisdiction, but they have very specific and predefined work area.

Finance Bill, 2017, being passed as a money bill includes attempt to rationalise the functioning of multiple tribunals.

As a result, what used to be 26 tribunals are now down to 19.

The rationalisation has raised questions about the independence of these adjudicatory bodies.

The qualifications, tenure, conditions of service, removal and emoluments of the chairpersons and members of these tribunals will all be under the control of the Centre.

Reducing the number of tribunals will speed up dispute resolution and curb wasteful expenditure.

Rationalising tribunals would lead to efficiency.

It will ensure uniform service conditions

Since few tribunals have lesser pending cases, there are chances that the excess bandwidths could be used in few cases.

May prevent overlap e.g. Competition Appellate Tribunal (Compat) will be merged with the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal. Since both deal with similar matters, it will particularly help in cases where a single transaction is overseen by both. E.g. Idea-Vodafone merger.
Introduction

Major opposition to GM crops can be stated as a trust deficit and sense of precaution.

Lack of transparency in the regulatory process and conflict of interest are the major reasons.

In India, organizations that are trying to commercialize GM crops are themselves involved in testing their safety through field trials. Data is also secretive.

Concerns regarding loss of food biodiversity if corporate food varieties begin to flood the markets.

The pesticide industry's efforts to influence policymakers and regulators have obstructed reforms globally. Their business model aims only at making profit.

Concerns / Challenges

The government must take decisions on GM technologies on the basis of scientific evidence.

Need to start cultivating an environment of openness and transparency to allay genuine fears.

The government should adopt a participatory approach to bring together all stakeholders to develop regulatory protocols that restore trust in the process.

There is a significant uncertainty over their safety, so precautionary principle is that country shall wait till a broader scientific consensus is achieved.

Need for better policy, pricing and to rationalize the input costs.

GEAC needs to be a transparent body; it should put it in the public domain that on what grounds it has approved GM mustard.

There has to be strong liability laws if there are any environmental hazards or if something goes wrong in future.

Arguments against GM Crops

Agriculture is a state subject therefore, it is important for the Centre to take into consideration the views of State Governments as well.

GM crops can cause long term consequences on human health. Ex: categorisation of glyphosate by the World Health Organization as a “probable carcinogen”

GMOs are self-replicating organisms and causes genetic contamination of the environment which cannot be reversed.

Its impact on health of the people, environment, soil, groundwater or food chain is not known yet.

The seed stock will also be contaminated at the molecular level.

It makes the farmers susceptible to the practices of MNCs and can raise the cost of cultivation and put them in debt trap.

Regulation is not effective and conflict of interest is present, as field trials and safety data generated by the company has commercial interest.

The lack of transparency in the regulatory process further amplifies apprehensions. For ex refusal of GEAC to publicly release the safety testing data.

Recently BT cotton crop loss faced by farmer due to pest attack by the same pest it was designed to resist. So farmers are now switching back to non BT crop.

Arguments for GM Crops

GMOs can address challenges of food security. Biotechnology, around the world, has helped farmers grow 311.8 million tonnes more food in the last 15 years.

The spectacular success of BT cotton: two billion hectares of biotech crops have been planted in 28 countries since 1996.

Just as the adoption of BT cotton ensured that India transitioned into a cotton-exporting country, switching to high-yield oilseeds engineered specially for India’s semi-arid zones can help India reduce its dependence on imports.

At $10 billion annually, edible oil is India’s third-biggest import item after crude oil and gold.

If a farmer produces one tonne of oil, he also produces an equal quantity of cake, a by-product that is a protein-rich feed for animals. When we import vegetable oils, we are denied a large quantity of oilseed cake.

Farmers can also be benefitted from higher yields and income.

They can decrease the use of pesticides and herbicides and can protect the environment.

People around the world have been consuming products of biotech crops for more than 20 years.

GM crops can be engineered to withstand weather fluctuations and extremes.

GM crops can cause long term consequences on human health. Ex: categorisation of glyphosate by the World Health Organization as a “probable carcinogen”

GMOs are self-replicating organisms and causes genetic contamination of the environment which cannot be reversed.

Its impact on health of the people, environment, soil, groundwater or food chain is not known yet.

The seed stock will also be contaminated at the molecular level.

It makes the farmers susceptible to the practices of MNCs and can raise the cost of cultivation and put them in debt trap.

Regulation is not effective and conflict of interest is present, as field trials and safety data generated by the company has commercial interest.

The lack of transparency in the regulatory process further amplifies apprehensions. For ex refusal of GEAC to publicly release the safety testing data.

Recently BT cotton crop loss faced by farmer due to pest attack by the same pest it was designed to resist. So farmers are now switching back to non BT crop.
**Introduction**

Disinvestment is defined as the action of an organisation (or government) selling or liquidating an asset or subsidiary. It is also referred to as ‘divestment’.

Disinvestment of a percentage of shares owned by the Government in public undertakings emerged as a policy option in the wake of economic liberalisation and structural reforms launched in 1991.

**Objectives of Disinvestment**

- Injecting market discipline in PSUs’ decision-making
- Revival of loss-making public enterprises
- Generation of additional resource needs for containing the fiscal deficit and capital expenditure
- To fund growth
- To encourage wider share of ownership
- To depoliticise non-essential services
- To raise funds for technological upgradation, modernization and expansion of PSUs
- Improving the structure of incentives and accountability of PSUs in India
- Financing the increasing fiscal deficit
- Financing large-scale infrastructure development, defense, education, healthcare etc.
- For investing in the economy to encourage spending
- Brings about greater efficiencies for the economy and markets as a whole
- Bring relief to consumers by way of more choices and better quality of products and services, e.g. Telecom sector

**Way Forward**

- The Cabinet recently approved the disinvestment plan for Air India and its five subsidiaries.
- Experts welcomed the government’s decision. Every year’s delay has only cost taxpayers and eroded its market value
- The healthy growth of private airlines like Indigo has meant that a privatised Air India will operate in a competitive environment.
- To ensure that commercially unviable airports remain operational, the government can provide subsidy to any airline willing to service such airports, especially those of strategic importance.
- It is time that divestment is not seen as an option to cover for short-term fiscal gains; instead, it should be part of a strategic plan to improve the production of goods and services in India.

**Importance**

- Process of disinvestment is not favoured socially as it is against the interest of socially disadvantageous people.
- Political pressure from left and opposition
- Loss making units don’t attract investment so easily.
- Over the years, the policy of divestment has increasingly become a tool to raise resources to cover the fiscal deficit with little focus on market discipline or strategic objective.
- Sometimes the emergence of private monopolies, consumer welfare will be reduced.
- It is argued that mere change of ownership, from public to private, does not ensure higher efficiency and productivity
- It may lead to retrenchment of workers who will be deprived of the means of their livelihood.
- Private sector, governed as they are by profit motive, has a tendency to use capital-intensive techniques which will worsen unemployment problem in India.
- Fiscal 2016-17 is the seventh year in a row where the government is not meeting the disinvestment target fixed in the Budget.
Crop damage, animal deaths, loss of human life, and injuries to people and wildlife.

Farmers suffer loss of livestock and crop losses.

When the bread winner of the family is killed or injured, the burden of the family passes on to women and children.

A study in North-East found that when men were killed or injured, it led to increased debts and poverty.

We only wake up to conflict when humans are attacked or killed.

Construction of physical barriers such as barbed wire fence, solar power electric fence, bio fencing using cactus to prevent entry of animals in crop fields.

Increase water availability in the forests through check-dams, nala bunding and water tanks so that the number of animals straying out of forest will be controlled.

Monoculture of species like teak should be avoided in forests. Instead mixed plantations of miscellaneous, bamboo and fruit species can be considered.

The fragmentation of wildlife habitat should be avoided and proper care should be taken so that the connectivity through wildlife corridors is not disturbed.

Wide reach of LPG connections to the villages who frequently go to the forest areas to fetch fuel wood. CSR spending could be utilised here.

Villagers and households in heavy risk areas should be educated on preventing and mitigating conflicts.

Crops like sugarcane, banana, bajra should not be allowed to be grown near forest areas.

Ex-gratia compensation should be paid promptly to the victims of wildlife attack.

Relocation/Rehabilitation of problematic and disadvantaged wild animal to suitable habitat or be kept in a zoo or rescue centres.

Developing risk maps by integrating geographic and landscape factors for better conflict management efforts.

Developing regional level conservation policies as there were lot of reserve level differences and need for implementing locally relevant conservation strategies.

Man-animal conflicts are common in various parts of the country.

In India, wild elephants probably kill far more people than tiger, leopard or lion.

Damage to agricultural crops and property, killing of livestock and human beings are some of the worst forms of man-animal conflict.

Depleting forest cover, encroachment in forested areas and the human settlements have come close to the forest areas.

Excess mining, dams construction and heavy traffic movement in forested area causes animal attacks on humans.

Construction in forested areas affects the habitat of animals which cause man-animal conflict.

Depletion of the natural prey base, changing crop patterns, suitability of man modified habitats to wild animals, presence of stray dogs and cattle in forest fringe areas.

Lack of buffer zone between wildlife and human settlement.

Increased disturbance due to collection of fuel wood, fodder, water etc. from the forests has also increased the incidences of man-animal conflict.

It is observed that people have to go deeper and deeper, year by year for fetching firewood and other forest produce. This has increased the number of incidences of man-animal conflict.

Infestation of wildlife habitat by the invasive exotic weeds. As a result, herbivores come out of forest area and cause depredation of agricultural crops on the fringes.

Livestock grazing in forests leads to human-wildlife conflict. At the same time it is having disastrous impact on wild herbivore populations as they have to compete with livestock for their food source.

Government report that over 400 people killed in man-animal conflict in 2016-17

Leopard attacks on humans are regularly reported only in India and leopards kill more humans in India than all other carnivores.

Tigers are known as man eaters and Sundarbans is the best example.

Death due to Snake bites are more in India.

Elephant attack occurs in villages of Kerala and other parts of India.
Naxalism is considered to be one of the biggest internal security threats India faces.

Naxal violence is related to the intensity of the feeling of people of their deprivation and their commitment to take revenge against those who are believed to be responsible for such danial.

Currently, the main supporters of the movement are marginalised groups of India including Dalits and Adivasi/s, who believe they have been neglected by the government.

The presence of Naxals in the country reveals the loopholes in the law and order of the country which has failed to curb the menace.

Nature and apathy of the political system towards tribes remained one of the most important factors that led to such uprisings

Inability of political authority in India to provide avenues for structural uplift to the deprived sections of society in the affected areas.

Lack of political participation by the tribal community

poverty and economic inequality and underdevelopment in the naxal affected regions.

Entry of mining companies in tribal lands and forests, posing threat to the livelihood of the tribals.

Indigenous tribal population deprived of their lands, uprooted from their traditional source of livelihood.

The benefits of the resource exploitation are not passed on the tribals.

Environmental degradation in the form of destruction of land and water resources due to mining and industrial activites

lack of basic facilities like education, freedom, sanitation and food.

The socially backward tribes form the major support base for Naxalities because of inequality, illiteracy and lack of opportunities.

Lack of a common plan across the states

Lack of coordination between state police and Central forces.

Inadequate training and combat capability of forces in Maoism affected states.

Lack of institutionalized intelligence sharing between states and regions.

Naxalities are well versed with terrain which gives them a substantial upper hand in armed struggle.
Under Article 21, every person has the Right to Life which has been guaranteed by the Constitution.

Crimes are as much about social failures as individual responsibility. By capital punishment, society is ignoring its role in crime perpetuation and simplifying crime prevention.

Judicial system is not properly geared to identify rarest of rare cases and most of the cases are being acquitted at appeal process.

Weaker and marginalized sections are succumbing to these punishments in most cases. Broken legal aid system, use of torture etc can cause administering of death penalty in an unfair manner.

In 2016, National Law University released its Death Penalty Research Project found that a disproportionate percentage of the convicts (80%) were poor, backward castes or from the minorities and their inability to negotiate the justice system.

Objective of Justice shall be to reform not to retribute.

State cannot take away sanctity of life.

There is no empirical evidence to prove that tough punishments will reduce crime in society.

Across the world countries are moving away from death penalty and India stands out if it continues.

India may not be able to forge criminal exchange agreements due to death penalty in its law.

As death sentence is irrevocable - an innocent person can also be wrongly executed.

Death sentence violates international human rights laws.

The ambiguousness in the application of “rarest of the rare” criteria is a serious concern.

Law Commission report said death penalty was arbitrarily imposed and disproportionately used against socially and economically marginalised people.

It reflects structural concerns which disempowers the marginalised.

Alienation experienced by prisoners through lack of awareness of proceedings increased as cases rise in the appellate system.

Capital punishment also called as death penalty is the execution of an offender sentenced to death after conviction by a court of law.

The debate on whether to abolish the death penalty or not, has been raging in India and in several other countries for decades.

The issue involves human rights, social justice, legal justice, right to live, social deterrence, ethics and morality.

The state’s authority is both questioned and established after the execution of a capital punishment.

Tougher punishments act as a deterrent for others to commit the same.

Crimes we are witnessing like horrific attacks on women, young girls, and boys continue even 70 years after India’s independence.

This cannot be addressed by simple punishments.

The attacks on our security personnel are increasing due to different extremist forces. Such killings must be visited with Capital Punishment.

What may be relevant to other countries may not hold true in India, which faces a far greater threat at all times and has to fight it on its own.

It is the responsibility of the state to protect the interests of the society and reiterate the society’s faith in system of justice.

If the criminal is kept in prison for life, the state would end up being a caretaker of the person who took law into his own hands.

Around the world, 58 countries still practice awarding the capital punishment.

102 countries do not award capital punishment for any crime, i.e. total abolition.

According to the reports of Amnesty International China, Iraq, and Iran have awarded highest number of death penalties in the recent years.

In Europe, the death sentence has been almost abolished completely, except The Republic of Belarus retaining it.

Supreme Court of India in Bachan Singh vs state of Punjab case held that death penalty shall be awarded in rarest of the rare cases alone.

In 2015, India’s Law Commission submitted a report calling for abolition of the death penalty for all but terrorism-related offences and “waging war” against the state.

In November 2012, India upheld its stance on capital punishment by voting against the UN General Assembly draft resolution seeking to end the institution of capital punishment globally.
Introduction

Challenges include capture, storage, analysis, search, sharing, transfer, updating and information privacy.

Cyber security: recent ransomware attacks have uncovered the vulnerability of even the developed countries towards hacking.

Validation and verification is yet another issue. False figures and facts and then formulating the policies would create more problems.

Ethics of Big Data analytics is an area of major debate. The issues range from Anonymization of data to what data should be collected and what use it should be put to.

Infrastructure in India for efficient data collection and management is lacking

Potential drain of economic wealth of a nation. Financial rewards of big data are enjoyed by the MNCs located in USA.

Big data is a term for data sets that are so large or complex that traditional data processing application software is inadequate to deal with them.

Almost 90% of the world’s data today was generated during the past two years.

Almost 90% of the world’s data today was generated during the past two years.

‘Big data’ refers to the use of predictive analytics, user behavior analytics, or certain other advanced data analytics methods that extract value from data.

Big data can be understood as the consolidation and centralization of public data inputs from various spheres of activities like commercial, consumer based, census, or even Aadhar controlled personal information.

Concerns / Challenges

Good Governance

Big data with the government is a huge boon for governance.

Consumer habits can be studied and policies can be framed which would then be in line with the need of the hour.

Patterns of investment, savings and expenditure can be revisited with changing time and government can instil such changes in its policies.

Security of the state can be further enhanced by access to larger data.

Transforming government programmes and empowering citizens to improving transparency and enabling the participation of all stakeholders.

Geo-tagging in MGNREGA can help analyse the effectiveness of the policy geographically and bring in required changes.

The Digital India and Smart Cities initiatives of the government also include efforts to utilise data to design, plan, implement, manage, and govern programmes.

Tackling Antibiotic Resistance

Tackling the superbug problem requires massive data collection and analysis.

Big data can provide insightful information about unregulated sale of A&Is without prescription

The data generated can be used for developing statistical models to show the relationship between antibiotic consumption and associated resistance.

Big Data Analytics

Infrastructure for efficient data collection and management must be strengthened.

Build R&D activities in Big Data Science technology at our academic and research institutions for better understanding.

Training for individuals on how to protect their privacy and for organisations and government officials to put in place strict firewalls, data backup and secure erasure procedures.

Start-ups can develop technology that enables users to control who gets access to the data about their behaviour patterns in the digital world.

Government can encourage establishment of data centres so that data remain within the country.

Encouraging formation of native internet giants like how China has done.

Evolve appropriate policies to counter the side effects of the Digital Plan, and avoid unforeseen eColonisation of India.

Active engagement of policy makers and researchers with the processed data is crucial to bring in cross-sectoral transformation.

Importance

Massive amounts of data generated by cities can be used to improve infrastructure and transport systems as Singapore has done.

Cell phone data can help direct relief efforts in the aftermath of a natural disaster.

Power-usage data can be analysed to optimize energy grids and plant power generation

Discoms in India are already using data from last-mile sensors to implement measures for cutting down aggregated technical and commercial losses.

The use of information technology, open source data, and proper governance will help in improving human development indices.

Crop-related ground data helps crop insurance companies for accurate assessment of risk and speedy settlement of claims.
State governments still try to retain control over Local Governments.

Performance of women still tends to be patchy as they are not allowed to build political constituency by re-contesting for the second time.

Political reservation without fundamental changes in education and social norms is going to have limited impact.

Constitution does not clearly assign the functions or sources of finance, but leaves it entirely to the discretion of the States.

Most States have not complied with the requirement of having to appoint gram sabhas, ward committees, district planning committees and metropolitan planning committees.

Financial instability, frequent administrative reshuffles, inadequate human resources, high budget variance, poor track record of generating and releasing data are the main factors that hamper India’s urban progress.

40 per cent of municipal posts are vacant in most States.

The poor expertise at municipality level also discourages private investors.

Property tax potential remains unexploited across ULBs. 2016-17 Economic Survey has shown that Bengaluru and Jaipur collect only 5-20% of their property tax potential.

World Economic Forum advocates reforms in land acquisition and dispute resolution will help attract private participation in government schemes like Smart Cities and AMRUT.

It is important to have clarity in the assignment of functions and the local governments should have clear and independent sources of finance.

There is a need for change in mindsets to empower local governance and networks of small enterprises.

Empowering urban local bodies and providing them with resources is a key requirement for tackling urbanization challenges in India.

Enough attention and encouragement to NGOs and voluntary organisations in order to utilize their existing potential to maximum extent.

Geo-code projects at the local level and figure out where the money is being spent.

Municipalities must use the latest satellite-based techniques to map urban properties to realise the untapped potential for property tax.

The Gram Sabha should be encouraged to invite members of higher level panchayats, legislature and even the Parliament to participate in their meetings and articulate their needs in the presence of the invitees.

Local bodies that are entrusted with responsibilities, empowered with resources and encumbered by accountability can become effective vehicles for competitive federalism.

Introduction

Concerns / Challenges

Mahatma Gandhi, once stated, “Independence must begin at the bottom... it follows, therefore, that every village has to be self-sustained and capable of managing its affairs...”

73rd and 74th Constitutional amendments were made to energise the local bodies in rural and urban areas to make them the institutions of self-government.

Decentralisation involves the shifting of fiscal, political and administrative responsibilities from higher to lower levels of government.

Empowering Local Bodies

Empowering local bodies key to better urbanisation: World Economic Forum

Top down approach to planning and implementation of policies since independence has not yielded any significant result. So local bodies can solve the problems at their roots.

Rural/agricultural crisis is becoming louder, with suicides of farmers in many parts of the country.

Farmers have been hurt by centralized decision making. This is reflected in APMC Acts of states. The decision making for agricultural issues must be devolved to local governments.

To address generation of jobs and livelihoods. Local bodies have better knowledge of local economy, sectors of job opportunity, skill level of youth, their requirements etc.

The mitigation and adaptation strategies for environmental crisis have to be implemented locally through social forestry, rainwater harvesting etc.

The famous Chipko movement in Himalayan states and Appiko Movement in Karnataka are legendary examples of local communities engagements with environment protection.

Irrigation through the centralized planning of the dams and canal for agriculture have failed to serve needs of the farmers. The local ponds, kunds, ground tanks etc. need to be restored.

Strengthened and responsive local bodies are necessary to ensure effective health and education programmes.
Mangroves are trees or large shrubs which are salt-tolerant and grow in intertidal zones in tropical and subtropical regions. Mangrove restoration has been used as an ecosystem-based disaster risk reduction and adaptation measure, particularly following the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami.

Diversity of mangrove roots and their position gives mangroves an important role as habitats for numerous species. Mangroves also act as refuges for corals from ocean acidification.

Mangroves filter and trap sediment from run-off and river water before it reaches adjacent ecosystems. They reduce the turbidity of the water and allowing essential light to reach ecosystems.

Mangroves are among the most carbon-rich forests in the tropics. They help in carbon sequestration. Conservation and restoration of mangroves can therefore contribute significantly to climate change mitigation.

Their ability to trap organic sediment and thus store carbon, they are referred to as ‘blue carbon’ sinks. Shoreline protection based on mangrove tree and root structures in reducing erosion.

Food resources for animals such as migratory birds and fish. Visual amenity where selected mangrove trees provide shoreline beautification.

Rapidly increasing development has put numerous direct and indirect pressures on coastal ecosystems.

Climate Change is likely to further intensify the loss of biodiversity. With increases in extreme weather events, sea-level rise, warming of the sea surface temperatures and ocean acidification, social, economic and environmental problems will be faced by the people of India.

Human activities, including conversion to aquaculture, coastal development, overexploitation of timber and pollution, have been the primary causes of mangrove loss.

Mangroves are destroyed through deforestation, erosion, burial by sediment and uprooting by high winds. High levels of salinity, heavy metals and chlorine.

Deforestation in these systems releases a disproportionate amount of carbon into the atmosphere as the carbon protected by mangroves is released.

Lack of education and awareness regarding the importance of mangroves, and ignorance of rules and regulations regarding conservation of mangroves.

The poverty of the local inhabitants, which forces them to depend on mangroves for their fuelwood, timber and fodder requirements.

Difficulties of protection because of the scattered geographic distribution of mangroves.
Cutting out the supplies through more sanctions and throttling the supply of essential items to North Korea.

The US closer defence ties with Japan and South Korea, has been pressing for more military intervention that can act as deterrence for further proliferation of weapons by North Korea.

US deployment of the THAAD (Terminal High Altitude Area Defense) anti-ballistic missile defence system in South Korea.

Trump’s recent actions in Syria and Afghanistan seem to be signalling stern message to North Korea.

International isolation indeed has hardened the position of North Korean leaders. It has brought only hardships to the people of North Korea.

Isolation and sanctions against North Korea has made Kim regime more paranoid on the west. Recent death of an American student Otto Warmbier is an example of this.

Deterrence and sanctions won’t produce a lasting solution.

USA must hold direct negotiations with North Korea by assuring help for its development, providing it energy security, food security etc. A sense of insecurity should be eliminated.

The U.S. will need to provide assurances relating to regime acceptance and a gradual normalisation of relations.

The way forward is to engage in talks and South Korea president Moon Jae-in has also expressed his willingness for the same.

China is also important stake holder in case of North Korea. Help of China would catalyse the peace process.

Removal of THAAD missile from South Korea will ease the situation for both North Korea and China.

The United Nations should try to aware North Korea of its humanitarian needs towards its citizens. It should help North Korea to enhance its economy and maximize its trade to gain its trust.

Creation of a customized developmental plan by UN for North Korea to address its problems of food security, poverty, economic problems etc.

Incentivise trade agreements with neighbouring countries to reduce its negative balance of trade, opening up its economy, increased people-to-people contacts, cultural contacts, etc.

North Korea has remained isolated from the international community, with its governmental, economic and other operations veiled in secrecy.

Despite sanctions and warnings from the UN and other nations, North Korea has continued to engage in creation of nuclear weapons.

Constant provocations by North Korea towards other nations especially the US by conducting nuclear tests has made dealing with it all the more difficult.

USA – North Korea relations suffered due to lack of policy consistency.

Bill Clinton Government intimated talks with North Korea and eased restrictions.

Later, Bush administration had included North Korea in axis of evil, cancelled direct talks and annulled the 1994 agreement.

North Korea in retaliation pulled out from NPT and initiated nuclear development provoking a fresh crisis.

China and Russia initiated six party talks in 2004. Later they collapsed and North Korea did its nuclear test in 2006.

Then onwards North Korea made a steady nuclear progress.

North Korea has recently tested an intercontinental ballistic missile that can hit Alaska in United States of America.

It is a clear indication that USA warnings to North Korea are not having any impact.

Stick and sanction policy with a reliance on China is not working against North Korea.

By 2019, North Korea will be able to develop long-range missiles that can reach the U.S. mainland.

The priority of North Korea is to protect its regime and have an acceptance for the same by the global community.

Though China has evolved as a guarantor, it has its own stakes with USA.

So, Kim Jong-un of North Korea sees that nuclear capability is only the ultimate guarantee to protect his regime.
Union Home Ministry have developed a model prison Manual 2016 in alignment with UN resolutions.

Prisons should have a reformative approach rather than retributive one. Basic human rights of the prisoner should be protected and be given another chance to live a meaningful life.

Fill up vacancies and augment the staff strength across criminal justice wings.

Financial assistance to NGOs working for the rehabilitation of prisoners and community-based alternatives to imprisonment for offenders convicted for relatively minor offences.

Qualified health professionals — independent of the prison administration — are essential to provide services to inmates.

Prison and Jail Overcrowding Commission: Should meet regularly and dispose of any prison related issue.

Ensuring Accountability of Police - any crime like custodial violence must be fast tracked within specified time period through Independent investigation Agency

Inculcation of scientific method of investigation in Police force and curtailing the practice of third degree torture

Strict Implementation of DK Basu case guidelines as well as NHRC guidelines by States.

The Supreme Court ordered the Centre and the States to install CCTV cameras in all the prisons in the country. Regular monitoring and functioning is required

The women prisoners should be treated more generously and allowed to meet their children frequently.

The prison legislation should make provision for remedy of compensation to prisoner who are wrongfully detained or suffer injuries to negligent acts of the prison personnel.

In the words of Nelson Mandela, "a nation should not be judged by how it treats its highest citizens, but its lowest ones".

Prisons in India, and their administration, is a state subject covered by item 4 under the State List in the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution of India. But they have been in general overlooked and ill maintained.

Prison reform is necessary to ensure that human rights of prisoners are protected and their prospects for social reintegration are increased.

Prisons are not isolated from the society and prison health is public health. It is important to provide adequate health facilities.

For protecting the rights of inmates with mental health-care needs.

Most recent statistics reveal that over 67 percent of the prisoners are undertrials and may continue to be held in overcrowded prisons for years. This makes them one of the weakest sections of society.

Overcrowding of prisons, under trials, custodial violence all are the gross violations of human rights.

Prisoners health conditions deteriorate in prisons which are overcrowded, where nutrition is poor, sanitation inadequate and access to fresh air and exercise often unavailable.

Prison staffs are also vulnerable to most of the diseases of which prisoners are at risk.

Imprisonment disproportionately affects individuals and families living in poverty.

When a member of a family is imprisoned, the disruption of the family structure affects relationships between spouses, as well as between parents and children.

When released, often with no prospects for employment, former prisoners are generally subject to socio-economic exclusion.

According to the NCRB 1.2% of the prisoners have mental illness and they are being ill treated and discriminated and deprived of their right of good health.

Poverty: Many prisoners are unable to execute bail bonds or provide sureties.

Little public scrutiny in jails provides the possibility of violation of basic rights.

Most of the installed CCTV cameras are not functioning in prisons.
Electric vehicles today make up only 0.2% of all light duty vehicles in the world. Affordability of e-vehicles (EVs) and the range they can cover on a single battery charge is a critical challenge. Sustainability of making millions of batteries that must be recycled is another concern.

India does not have enough lithium reserves for manufacturing lithium-ion batteries. Putting up charging infrastructure across the country is essential. Analysts say India’s plans to make EVs more cost-effective and popular will be difficult to implement.

India has the potential to become the top country in the manufacturing of e-vehicles. Making electric two-wheelers and public transport buses attractive through tax incentives is feasible, since these can be charged more easily and used for short trips within cities. Indian automobile companies should aim to manufacture e-vehicles on a large scale to help India become an “electric vehicle nation” by 2032.

Acquiring lithium fields in Bolivia, Australia, Chile could become as important as buying oil fields as India needs raw material to make batteries for electric vehicles. Solar power generated during day needs to be stored in batteries. Storage capability of EV batteries could help with grid balancing, complementing the centre’s push for solar power.

CNG-electric hybrid buses can be introduced as feeder buses to Metro stations and airports. It is essential that a network of charging stations be developed for smooth operation of electric vehicles. Work places in tech parks, Public bus depots, and Multiplexes are the potential places where charging points could be installed. In Bangalore, some malls have charging points in parking lots.

However, technologically advanced recharging points are needed for high speed charging. Globally the concept of ‘Mobility on Demand’ is becoming popular in smart cities where a fleet of lightweight electric vehicles are placed at charging stations throughout the city and these can be used by commuters. Such niche vehicles should also be part of the Indian smart city planning.

Safety standards and procedures should be clearly defined for charging and battery handling. Corporates could invest in charging stations as Corporate Social Responsibility compliances.

Electric vehicles are the future of India’s transportation system and could save billions of dollars in fuel cost while also reducing pollution, a report released by NITI Aayog said.

The sales of all plug-in vehicles rose 40%, worldwide, in the first quarter of 2017 over the same quarter in 2016. The International Energy Agency says in its Global EV Outlook Report 2017 that the year-on-year growth was 50%.

Electric vehicle sales in India rose 37.5% to 22,000 units in fiscal 2016 from 16,000 in fiscal 2015. Tesla, with its goal to mass-market electric cars that are efficient on range, and offer a minimum of 340 km on one charge, while also scoring high on design. India’s first electric mass transport project was launched in Nagpur recently.

Adoption of electric and shared vehicles could help country save Rs 350 billion in diesel and petrol along with cutting down as much as 1 gigatonne (GT) of carbon emissions by 2030.

Electric vehicles operating cost per kilometre driven is lower and it contributes to cutting city pollution.

The government is coming up with an electric vehicle policy which will cover both light and commercial vehicles like cars and buses. NITI Aayog report recommended fiscal incentives to electric vehicle manufacturers and discouraging privately-owned petrol- and diesel-fuelled vehicles.

The government wants to see 8 million electric and hybrid vehicles on the roads by 2020 under the National Electric Mobility Mission Plan 2020 and Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of Electric Vehicles in India (FAME India Scheme).

It has been offering subsidies on electric and hybrid vehicles of up to Rs 29,000 for bikes and Rs 1.38 lakh for cars under FAME India Scheme. The government is also exploring a strategy to task a company with buying EVs in bulk and then leasing them to companies such as taxi aggregators, in an attempt to bring down the cost of such vehicles.

Implementation of smart cities would also boost the growth of electric vehicles.
India’s monuments form an irreplaceable archive of our civilisational heritage.

Our pride in our heritage has always been surplus while caring for that heritage suffers a huge deficit.

Just like tigers have disappeared across large parts of the habitats, so have several of India’s protected monuments.

It has invaluable potential to contribute to our knowledge of not just history and the arts, but also science and technology.

Historic cities are examples of sustainable development. They demonstrate complex connections of man with nature.

They act as significant constituent in the identity of cities.

Protected monuments, from the Taj Mahal to the monuments of Mahabalipuram, have a designated prohibited area — at least a 100-m radius — to protect them, where no new construction is allowed.

The government has approved changes to the AMASR Act, 1958 to allow “public works” near these structures.

Lack of basic manpower in the form of monument attendants. In 2010, the Archeological Survey of India (ASI) stated that its staff strength did not permit the deployment of even a single person on full-time basis at more than 2,500 of its monuments.

Illegal occupation in the prohibited zone around monuments and nexus between them and politicians.

Penal provisions in the AMASR Act for endangering ancient monuments are not stringent enough to provide deterrence.

Another common problem observed in India is spitting and inscribing names/messages on these masterpieces.

Ever-increasing pressure of population and unplanned urbanization has started impacting the monuments.

Attitude of ordinary people who are destroying historical monuments, who are ignorant of their significance and what they represent in terms of India’s cultural heritage.

The air and water pollution pose a threat to the foundation, stones of such structures as observed in the case of Taj Mahal.

Development along with the lowest adverse impact on the cultural heritage and environment should be the aim of government.

Best way to preserve historical monuments and artifacts is to turn them into sources of employment and revenue generation.

India should learn from Taiwan and enact a national mission to reclaim, restore and preserve our historical heritage on a war footing.

The investment made will give back 10 times in revenue if monuments are managed properly.

More and more companies can take up the restoration and preservation works of these sites as part of their CSR.

It is the responsibility of the civil society to transfer the very precious heritage to the next generation.

Apart from chemical and structural restoration, thought must be placed to protect them from natural hazards (earthquake, tsunami, floods etc.)

Let’s Keep India Beautiful and preserve the monuments unitedly!

To prevent monuments from defacement and displacement as they are vulnerable to human interference.

To prevent encroachments by government agencies and individuals.

The 2013 report of CAG noted that of the 1,885 monuments, 546 of them were encroached.

The construction methods and tools may cause great loss to structurally weak monuments due to vibrations and particulate pollutants.

To offer public a better transport and communication facilities.

It is argued that the establishment of commercial structures around the monuments could generate the resources for the ASI which could be used in better protection of the monument itself.

To provide public works and projects essential to public.

Allowing public works in the vicinity of a protected monument will defeat the very purpose of the AMASR Act and will be a violation of Article 48 of the Constitution.

There are possibilities that the Ministry of Culture would act as facilitator of projects rather than offering protection to the monuments.

The Beauty and Aesthetic looks of the monuments would suffer due to the rise in structures in the immediate vicinity of the monuments.

Hamper the tourism of the ancient monuments as tourist may avoid crowded and noisy monuments.

This would give impetus to the encroachment on unprotected and vulnerable monuments.
US - North Korea Relations

US action in recent time

Introduction
North Korea has remained isolated from the international community, with its governmental, economic and other operations veiled in secrecy.

Concerns / Challenges
US deployment of the THAAD (Terminal High Altitude Area Defense) anti-ballistic missile defence system in South Korea.

North Korea has continued to engage in creation of nuclear weapons.

Trump’s recent actions in Syria and Afghanistan seem to be signalling stern message to North Korea.

Constant provocations by North Korea towards other nations especially the US by conducting nuclear tests has made dealing with it all the more difficult.

USA - North Korea relations suffered due to lack of policy consistency.

Bill Clinton Government intimated talks with North Korea and eased restrictions.

Later, Bush administration had included North Korea in axis of evil, cancelled direct talks and annulled the 1994 agreement.

North Korea in retaliation pulled out from NPT and initiated nuclear development provoking a fresh crisis.

China and Russia intimated six party talks in 2004. Later they collapsed and North Korea did its nuclear test in 2006.

Then onwards North Korea made a steady nuclear progress.

Way Forward

Why US is worried about North Korea?

Deterrence and sanctions won’t produce a lasting solution.

USA must hold direct negotiations with North Korea by assuring help for its development, providing it energy security, food security etc. A sense of insecurity should be eliminated.

The U.S. will need to provide assurances relating to regime acceptance and a gradual normalisation of relations.

The way forward is to engage in talks and South Korea president Moon Jae-in has also expressed his willingness for the same.

Removal of THAAD missile from South Korea will ease the situation for both North Korea and China.

The United Nations should try to aware North Korea of its humanitarian needs towards its citizens. It should help North Korea to enhance its economy and maximize its trade to gain its trust.

Creation of a customized developmental plan by UN for North Korea to address its problems of food security, poverty, economic problems etc.

Incentivise trade agreements with neighbouring countries to reduce its negative balance of trade, opening up its economy, increased people-to-people contacts, cultural contacts, etc.

Reaction from North Korea

North Korea has recently tested an intercontinental ballistic missile that can hit Alaska in United States of America.

It is a clear indication that USA warnings to North Korea are not having any impact.

Stick and sanction policy with a reliance on China is not working against North Korea.

By 2019, North Korea will be able to develop long-range missiles that can reach the U.S. mainland.

The priority of North Korea is to protect its regime and have an acceptance for the same by the global community.

Though China has evolved as a guarantor, it has its own stakes with USA.

So, Kim Jong-un of North Korea sees that nuclear capability is only the ultimate guarantee to protect his regime.
Despite various steps taken over the last 5 decades, the trend of increasing damage and devastation caused by floods pose challenge to Government and people. Agencies which should be working together to keep the floods in check, have operated along different lines. States do not take the problem seriously since the constitution does not mention flood management under union, state or concurrent list. Earlier floods were mainly a rural problem. Now floods hit urban areas and last for months. The coverage of rain-gauge stations in hilly areas is still inadequate. Wild animals tend to move to high grounds at the time of floods. Many animals are not killed by nature but by the opportunistic killing of those, mainly for their meat.

Causes for annual floods are well-known. It's now time to put lessons from research on the rivers into practice. In view of climate change and varying precipitation and river flow patterns, the embankments and reservoirs must be designed to accommodate worst case scenarios. The centre must play a more proactive role in flood control. Long term planning as opposed to short term solutions is the key. Works related to watershed management should be prioritised. Advance town planning and yearly preparations should be done to mitigate the effects of urban planning. Discouraging creation of valuable assets / settlement of people in the areas subject to frequent flooding. Facilitating timely evacuation of people and shifting of their moveable property to safer grounds by having advanced warning of incoming floods. The Centre-states mechanism needs to be further strengthen with focus on greater coordination. Improvement of river channels and surface drainage and most importantly checking erosion of land on river banks. Cleaning of drains and rivulets near the cities should be accorded top priority. The tree plantation drives at all levels are steps in the right direction.

Floods have been recurrent phenomenon in many parts of India causing loss of lives and public property and bringing misery to the people. One hundred and thirty million people living in low-lying coastal areas in India, Pakistan and Bangladesh are at high risk of being displaced by the end of the century due to floods, a report has said. The approach to flood management need to have a look to have an integrated strategy for policy and management related to floods. The floods are caused by the cloud bursts and runoff of heavy rainfall during the monsoon. Accumulation of silt and sand with no clearing operations taking place for years. As a result the water carrying capacity of the rivers is drastically reduced, resulting in floods. e.g. Jhelum flooding Deforestation of hill slopes results in the water level suddenly rising and causing floods. Rivers like Brahmaputra changes course frequently and it's virtually impossible to contain the river. Lack of proper drainage systems in residential areas or unchecked civil development. Migration has caused immense pressure on land and the failure of the civic authorities in checking encroachment of land. In hilly areas, unregulated construction on hills, failure of embankments to check water flow and extreme rainfall aggravates the flood problem. Mining loosens the soil and contributes to the rise of the river bed.

Floods cause extremely large number of fatalities due to extremely high population density and often un-enforced development standards. Cause large amounts of damage to people's lives, property and crucial infrastructure. According to a recent study, by 2050 Mumbai, Chennai, Surat and Kolkata will be among 13 of the top 20 cities in the Asia-Pacific region to face huge losses due to annual flooding. The floods along with impact of climate change would severely affect the future growth, reversing current development gains and degrading the quality of life. Devastating floods in Kaziranga impact animals lives as the floods disrupt their habitat.
**Introduction**

- **Lack of Awareness & Understanding.** It undermines the authority of banks and financial institutions on the financial system.
- **Bitcoin prevents any government and financial institution from acting as a trusted third party to facilitate transactions.**
- **There is still no legal framework protecting the rights of users of these technologies or overseeing the institutions that use them.**
- **Bitcoin has volatility mainly due to limited amount of coins and the demand for them increases day by day.**
- **Bitcoins have been banned in several countries on grounds that these currencies could be used for money laundering, terror funding and drug trafficking.**
- **It's very much still an experimental currency and is a high-risk environment for consumers and investors at the moment.**
- **Problems such as losses arising out of hacking, no sources of customer recourse and the general financial volatility surrounding Bitcoins.**
- **Only a miniscule number of goods and service providers accept payment in Bitcoins currently. Therefore, a person cannot expect to buy his daily necessities like vegetables, milk, or pay his mobile bill, etc. in Bitcoins.**
- **It is virtually impossible for illiterate people to recognize a bitcoin.**
- **Banning will give a message that all related activities are illegal and will disincentivise those interested in taking speculative risks.**
- **It will impede tax collection on gains made in such activities.**
- **The government is considering the introduction of a regulatory regime for Bitcoins, that would enable the levy of GST on their sale.**
- **In many western countries, Bitcoins are treated as property and capital gains tax is imposed on it. India should also treat it as property and impose capital gains tax.**
- **Implementing strict KYC norms and eliminating secrecy of transactions.**
- **Encourage the development of a supervision ecosystem (that tracks legal activities and may also assist in tracking illegal activities).**
- **Bring their trading under the oversight of SEBI.**
- **A more realistic scenario in future could be both bitcoins and fiat money are used side by side, with bitcoins used mainly to pay people or businesses who can accept bitcoins, and fiat money used to pay for basic goods and services.**

**Disadvantages**

- **Bitcoin is a digital currency system that enables participants to create and transfer bitcoins using a blockchain which are the rails upon which the bitcoins are created and transferred.**
- **Bitcoin is a peer-to-peer currency. Peer-to-peer means that no central authority issues new money or tracks transactions. These tasks are managed collectively by the network.**
- **Bitcoin prices in the last one year have only headed north. In the last five months since January 2017, the value of BTC has doubled in absolute value compared to the dollar.**

**Advantages**

- **People no longer have to rely upon the bankers who have been handling their money for generations to make a transaction. So transferring funds becomes easy.**
- **Fundamentally changes the financial services industry – by dropping the cost and complexity of financial transactions, making the world’s unbanked a viable new market.**
- **Bitcoins could reduce banks’ infrastructure costs by15 – 20 billion dollars per annum by 2022.**
- **Bitcoin transactions cannot be reversed, do not carry with them personal information, and are secure, merchants are protected from potential losses that might occur from fraud.**
- **The Bitcoin software is completely open source and anybody can review the code.**
- **Transaction cost is very little, especially compared to other payment networks.**
- **Bitcoin is changing finance the same way the web changed publishing.**
- **Bitcoin being a digital code is infinitely more durable than paper currency, unless someone shuts down the entire internet.**
- **Since bitcoins are created by crypto-currency mathematical algorithm, they are much harder to counterfeit than paper currency.**

**Way Forward**

**Is Banning of Bitcoins a good idea?**

**Government Response**
India and Israel are natural partners.
Prime Minister Narendra Modi is the first Indian Prime Minister visiting Israel after formally establishing relations with the country 26 years back.
This has a clear shift in Indian policy towards west Asia.
This is a marriage really made in heaven and we are implementing it here on Earth, declared Israel’s Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

India and Israel relations are steadily growing and have many synergies and complementarities.

India and Israel are natural partners.
Prime Minister Narendra Modi is the first Indian Prime Minister visiting Israel after formally establishing relations with the country 26 years back.
This has a clear shift in Indian policy towards west Asia.

Defence

Today Israel is third largest defence supplier to India and accounts for over 40% of Israel’s defence exports.
They range from Barack missiles to powerful Phalcon radar on AWACS (Airborne Warning and Control System).

Israel backs India’s defence against terror and also completely understood India’s nuclear tests in 1998.
Mumbai attack in 2008 paved a way to creation of a joint working group to fight against terrorism.

National security and counter-terrorism

India is adopting hi-tech anti-infiltration systems and innovative tactics from Israel to safeguard its western and eastern borders.

India - Israel Relations

Recent PM visit to Israel

The outcome is an impressive joint statement which elevates the relationship to a ‘strategic partnership’.
The joint statement talked about defence cooperation in the context of “joint development” of defence products, including transfer of technology from Israel, with a special emphasis on the ‘Make in India’ initiative.

Defence along with transfer of defence technology will help India.
India can leverage its space technologies to Israel for its developmental purposes where India enjoys upper hand.

An integrated approach involving government to government, government to business and business to business interactions between Indians and Israeli agencies.

Recently, the Delhi Government had roped in the Israeli firm to clean up an eight km stretch of the Yamuna. India can scale up the role of Israeli firms in cleaning up other rivers.

India could well take a cue from how Israel maintains stringent external and internal security, allowing Israeli settlements right up to the border of conflict zones.
India could adopt the three-layered Israeli strategy that goes beyond security to build a cyber system that is robust, resilient and has strong defence capabilities.

India and Israel are natural partners.
Prime Minister Narendra Modi is the first Indian Prime Minister visiting Israel after formally establishing relations with the country 26 years back.
This has a clear shift in Indian policy towards west Asia.

National security and counter-terrorism

Today Israel is third largest defence supplier to India and accounts for over 40% of Israel’s defence exports.
They range from Barack missiles to powerful Phalcon radar on AWACS (Airborne Warning and Control System).

Israel backs India’s defence against terror and also completely understood India’s nuclear tests in 1998.
Mumbai attack in 2008 paved a way to creation of a joint working group to fight against terrorism.

Israel has become one of the foremost technology superpowers in areas such as rainwater harvesting, use of oceanic water and using that for irrigation in the most dry land.

Way Forward

Reasons Indie-Israel relations are important

Israel has mastered water conservation techniques and India can learn from it.
It helps India to face its water stressed condition.

India can leverage its space technologies to Israel for its developmental purposes where India enjoys upper hand.

An integrated approach involving government to government, government to business and business to business interactions between Indians and Israeli agencies.

Recently, the Delhi Government had roped in the Israeli firm to clean up an eight km stretch of the Yamuna. India can scale up the role of Israeli firms in cleaning up other rivers.

India could well take a cue from how Israel maintains stringent external and internal security, allowing Israeli settlements right up to the border of conflict zones.
India could adopt the three-layered Israeli strategy that goes beyond security to build a cyber system that is robust, resilient and has strong defence capabilities.

Commercial trade

Commercial relations between the diamond traders in Gujarat and Israel grew from $200 million to nearly $5 billion with gems and jewellery accounting for nearly 40%.
Science and technology, agriculture, biotech and space emerged as new areas of cooperation.

Tourism

Tourism provided an impetus to people-to-people relations.
India emerged as the preferred destination for young Israelis wanting to unwind after their compulsory military service and Hebrew signage in Varanasi, Manali and Goa.

Start-ups

Israel today boasts of nearly 4,500 start-ups and 140 incubators/accelerators.
In a recent study, NASSCOM and Accenture estimated that cooperation with Indian start-ups has the potential to generate $5 billion within five years.

Human resource

Israel will be benefited from large pool of skilled Indian engineers and doctors as Mr. Netanyahu’s quoted “Indian talent and Israeli technology equals India-Israel ties for tomorrow.”
In a large developing country like India, there are numerous gaps left by the government in the development process. These are the gaps that civil societies try to fill in modern India.

Supplementing the government effort to provide health care to citizens, and by raising awareness in society about issues like child and maternal malnutrition.

A number of NGO's like Childline India Foundation, World Vision, Arambh India have played important role in raising awareness on child sexual abuse.

In the last 20 years, a very large number of NGOs in India have been active in the area of environmental protection.

The NGOs have often been helped by the judiciary whenever the government of the day has proved unresponsive.

Civil society can influence policy and project formulation through membership of committees and submission of memoranda.

Civil society organisations and their donors are being labelled and targeted. Funds are frozen, intelligence reports are selectively released to paint NGOs in a poor light, and their activities are placed on a watch list.

In November 2016, the Union Ministry of Home Affairs rejected the licence renewal applications of 25 NGO.

In many instances, NGOs such as Greenpeace have been projected as being anti-national.

A strong and vigilant civil society can be a check on corruption and form the basis for countervailing action.

Legislation on the lines of the US False Claims Act should be enacted, providing for citizens and civil society groups to seek legal relief against fraudulent claims against the government.

A free media has a crucial role in the prevention, monitoring and control of corruption.

Use of ICT in systems of governance in order to ensure wider participation of civil society groups and the private sector in the decision making process of governance.

Voter education, electoral reforms and periodical highlighting of the performance (or non-performance) of elected representatives should be high priority items in civil society's agenda.

The state must respect the articulation of the politics of voice and not just the politics of the vote.

A democratic state needs a democratic civil society and a democratic civil society also needs a democratic state. They mutually reinforce each other.

Civil society is the set of civic rights, including primarily everyone's right to participate in Public life.

Civil society forms the backbone of democracy.

Democracy does not just revolve around what happens once in five years (elections) but how rights of the citizens are protected and are allowed to hold power holders accountable.

Civil society derives its strength from the Gandhian tradition of volunteerism, but today, it expresses itself in many different forms of activism.

Civil society refers to formal as well as informal entities and includes the private sector, the media, NGOs, professional associations and informal groups of people from different walks of life.

The focus on civil society dates back to the 1980s, when political scientists began to speak of a 'crisis of representation'.

Citizens across the world had shifted from political parties and trade unions, to 'newer' modes: social movements, informal citizen groups and non-governmental organisations.

In India, by the late 1970s, the decline of all institutions gave rise to several mass-based political movements and grassroots activism.

The anti-caste movement, the struggle for gender justice, the movement for civil liberties, for a sound environment, and against mega development projects that have displaced thousands of poor tribals and hill dwellers, the movement against child labour, for the right to information, for shelter, for primary education, and for food security have mobilised in civil society.

The filing of Public Interest Litigations and the judicial activism played a role in strengthening of civil society.

Citizens have the right to scrutinise the work of their representatives.

To publicise acts such as infringement of civil liberties and failure of governments to provide a reasonable standard of life for the citizens.

Article 19 of the constitution provides for the democratic right to protest as part of the freedom of expression.

The right to participate in an activity should not be restricted to politics and elections alone.

Without this right, democracy becomes an illusion.

So civil society cannot be conceptualised independent of the state.

Watchdog — against violation of human rights and governing deficiencies.

Advocate — of the weaker sections' point of view.

Agitator — on behalf of aggrieved citizens.

Educator — of citizens on their rights, entitlements and responsibilities and the government about the pulse of the people.

Service provider — to areas and people not reached by official efforts or as government's agent.

Mobiliser — of public opinion for or against a programme or policy.

The ways include: Right to Information Act, Consumer Protection Act, Citizens Charters, Whistleblower protection, e-governance, Democratic Decentralisation, Public Interest Litigation, etc.
Bihar Bettiah district and Thane district of Pune have employed mothers as quality monitors of mid-day meal food served and it has produced good results. This should be replicated in the rest of the country.

Seeking the help of corporates is an easy way out—opening the door to a system of contractors.

Community monitoring, social audits, decentralised grievance redress systems, public display of information on beneficiaries and menus, etc. to reduce corruption and increase accountability in MDM.

Teachers should not be assigned the responsibility of implementation of Mid-Day Meal scheme as it can hamper the teaching-learning process.

Cooks should be well paid, so that they work with interest and commitment.

There should be proper provision of LPG, kitchen and store room for Mid-Day Meal preparation.

Mandatory reporting of MDM data regularly by the state to the centre with a view to curtail irregularities.

Ensure timely transfer of funds and good grains to schools.

The quality of food grains and cooked meal must be checked regularly and all complaints regarding the quality must be solved urgently.

Aadhaar would eliminate the proxy enrolment and provide benefits of the scheme to deserving children in a seamless manner.

It might affect the children who are supposedly double enrolled—i.e., attending private schools, while registered in government school.

Since there are children without an Aadhaar card, it implies limiting children to access MDMs, rather than improve access.

It does not affect the irregularities in supply, poor hygiene, and irregular nutritional content of meals.

States like Uttar Pradesh and Mizoram have only 26% students enrolled under Aadhaar, with Nagaland having 15% enrolment.

The Midday Meal Scheme is a school meal programme of the Government of India designed to improve the nutritional status of school-age children nationwide.

Under the Convention on the Rights of the Child, to which India is a party, India has committed to provide "adequate nutritious foods" for children.

The main objective of the Mid-Day Meal Scheme is to attain the goal of universalization of primary education.

Most countries, advanced as well as developing, have some sort of school meal programme.

Promise the participation of the child in school especially the disadvantaged sections (especially girls, Dalits and Adivasis).

Reduce classroom hunger, promote better learning and facilitate the healthy growth of a child.

Lead to better enrolment and retention in schools.

The increase has been more rapid with respect to girls and children belonging to SC/ST categories.

Promotes good eating habits like washing ones hands, finishing ones food, etc.

Fosters social and gender equality as all children get the same food and must eat together and boosting female attendance in school.

Provides nutritional support to children in drought affected areas during summer vacation.

Caste based discrimination continues to occur in the serving of food.

Implementation issues, including irregularity, corruption, hygiene, inadequate nutritional content, etc.

Despite the success of the program, child hunger as a problem persists in India.

In some schools food was prepared by using wood which gave bad smell to food and also polluted the environment.

Teachers themselves cooking take away their core duties of teaching.

Some schools did not have proper kitchen and store room facilities for Mid-Day Meal preparation.

The number of students in most of the Govt. primary schools in rural areas is meagre, so the effectiveness of this scheme is at stake.

There are instances where children come to school only for food, leaving soon after it is served, thus not meeting their educational requirements.
Rising trend of nationalism and protectionism impede the implementation of the goals

Industrialized countries are not serving as role models

Many of the richest countries are nowhere near achieving the global policy objectives but also deteriorate the implementation process for poorer countries because of negative spillover effects.

One of the greatest obstacles to achieving the global goals is poor performances regarding sustainable consumption and production.

Lack of credible data will be a major roadblock for India in achieving the global goals.

The Government of India has cut back on spending for the social sector. As per available statistics, India currently has only 5% of the funds required to implement the SDGs.

World leaders need to strengthen their joint efforts to realize the 17 global goals.

Politicians, businesses and society altogether must urgently intensify their efforts and commit themselves to this agenda.

All countries must take up the goals as part of their national development strategies, and ensure that they take responsibility for their impact on the rest of the world.

With combined and sustained efforts at the national and global levels, it will be possible to eradicate poverty and ensure a prosperous world for all.

A strategy to address the lack of credible data could be a complete decentralization of the data collection process.

The Government of India should promote and incentivize funding from corporate, business, and other for-profit entities as a crucial source for funding the SDGs.

Making development efforts participatory and inclusive is an indispensable aspect for sustainable development.

Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources.

State governments need to be mobilized to both understand and own the SDG targets, and engage in implementation accordingly.

Constitute a Parliamentary Forum on SDGs which can be tasked with providing direction, oversight and monitoring to the implementation process.

Achieving the SDGs in a country as diverse as India will definitely be a Herculean task, but not unachievable.

We need to clearly identify priorities, have locally relevant and people-centric development policies, and build strong partnerships.

The government also needs to have a focused plan for tracking and evaluating impact and scaling up successful interventions.

The SDGs are a direction and a vision for India to ensure prosperity and growth—both social and economic.

Adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 2015, the 17 SDGs, with their 169 targets, depict a plan of action to balance the three dimensions of sustainable development—economic, social, and environmental—by the year 2030.

This agreement marks an important milestone in putting our world on an inclusive and sustainable course.

India was one of the 193 United Nations member states to adopt the SDGs and commit itself as a stakeholder to meet the 2030 agenda for sustainable development.

NITI Aayog is the national body primarily responsible for implementing the SDGs in India.

India has played an important role in shaping the SDGs and the country’s national development goals are mirrored in the SDGs.

In 2017 sustainable development goals index, India ranked 116 of 157 countries.

The SDG Index ranks countries based on their performance across the 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

India has prioritised strengthening health systems as a non-negotiable strategy towards achieving SDGs.

Synergising collaboration with BRICS countries especially through the ‘BRICS Framework for Collaboration on Strategic Projects in Health’.

National Health Policy, 2017 adopted by India is aligned with the SDG-3 targets.

Health

Universal Immunisation Programme (UIP) and Mission Indradhanush aimed at expanding coverage by reaching the unreached

India has made significant progress on basic health indicators like Infant Mortality Rate (IMR), Maternal Mortality Rate (MMR), institutional deliveries and vaccination coverage.

Promoting green initiatives like investments in renewable energy, allowing corporates to issue Masala Bonds, green bonds, etc.

Ratifying Paris Deal and Active participation in Kigali Agreement.

Energy

Presently India is 4th largest in wind power capacity. Rapid increase in Solar energy production and decrease in the cost of unit solar power.

Industry

Improving ease of doing business. Promoting Start-Ups and India is moving up in Global Competitiveness Index with 39th position.

62.4% of the total health expenditure is still out of pocket, putting a huge burden on the poor and the middle class.

High number of farmers committing suicide.

Mandatory linkage with Aadhaar is excluding the most-needy in interior tribal areas.

22% of population is under poverty and can reverse the progress achieved.

Gender Equality is still a work in progress as women continue to face problems in access to education, employment, etc.

Contaminated water, polluted and unhygienic environment are major reasons for health issues.
Despite intensive development programmes, the achievements have not been able to keep pace with the needs of the growing population.

The economic survey 2016-17 highlighted lack of population dynamics taken into account by policymakers where welfare spending in India suffers from misallocation.

In India, population growth is also coming from the dangerous competition for power and strength. There is an increased push for greater conception to raise the numbers. Here women get victimized.

There is vast disparities in consumption between the rich (and usually low-fertility) and the poor (and high-fertility) populations.

Population aging poses challenges to Indian society in the form of a rising burden of noncommunicable diseases, a vulnerable female-heavy older population, a changing family structure, and a lack of a social safety net.

The per capita production of foodgrains has been only marginal because of the high growth rate of the population.

The housing shortage has also been increasing over the years.

Unemployment and underemployment reflects the inability of the employment market to absorb the large labour force.

Any developmental planning shall take the population change into consideration.

Women need the right to make their own childbearing decisions and to have the information and services to make these decisions wisely.

Developmental investments in areas of Health, education etc. must be increased.

Good governance - effective citizen input, well-functioning institutions, respect for the rule of law and low level of corruption

Efficient infrastructure - reliable roads, railways, telecommunications, water supply, sanitation, and agricultural needs

Prudent fiscal and macroeconomic management - policies that keep inflation reasonable, promote inclusive economic growth, avoid severe trade imbalances

Migraion

Resource Distribution

The challenges of moving into new communities that speak different languages and have different cultures need to be understood and addressed.

The socio-economic implications of young people heading south, leaving the children and elderly behind, need to be analysed.

Along with the migrants, the issues of the locals must also be appreciated.

12 States in India (Northern States) continue to have total fertility rates (TFR) above 2.1 children per woman. This leads to changes in the population structure.

The youthful people from north are migrating towards ageing States.

The socio-economic implications of young people heading south, leaving the children and elderly behind, need to be analysed.

There is a need to understand migration flows, so that projections can be made regarding changing need for housing and infrastructure, health care and utilities, education and skills.

States need to work together to provide portability of identity proof and entitlements, as well as build support systems for families left behind.

India urgently needs to take cognisance of the divergent demographic transition trends.
Climate-proofing sustainable development efforts are important. Current efforts should remain relevant in the face of future climate impacts. Adaptation programmes ought to be designed so that challenges faced by people living in poverty are recognised and reduced.

Ex: A district with severe nutritional deficiency along with drought from climate change, then the focus ought to be on improving local food access and managing water efficiently to prepare for future water shortages.

Similarly, sanitation and housing ought to be improved in future flooding areas and use appropriate design strategies that are resilient to water-logging.

Improved governance, including an active civil society and open, transparent, and accountable policy and decision-making processes.

Mainstreaming climate issues into all national, sub-national, and sectoral planning processes.

Empowerment of communities so that they can participate in assessments and feed in their knowledge to provide useful climate-poverty information.

Vulnerability assessments that fully address the different shades and causes of poverty.

Access to good quality information about the impacts of climate change. This is key for effective poverty reduction strategies.

Increasing the resilience of livelihoods and infrastructure as a key component of an effective poverty reduction strategy.

2016 State of Food and Agriculture report states that without “widespread adoption of sustainable land, water, fisheries and forestry practices, global poverty cannot be eradicated”.

Carbon pricing, for example, help lower emissions and can create a revenue stream from that can be used to help the poor offset any rise in fuel or energy prices.

Phasing out fossil fuel subsidies can also help lower emissions and free up government spending for more targeted support for the poor.

Measuring poverty through its different dimensions would help policymakers figure out which aspects of poverty expose the poor and exacerbate their vulnerability to climate change.

Through such a process, India could also serve as a standard for other poor and developing countries that are beginning to think about inclusive “climate proofed development”.

Today agriculture holds the key to solving the two greatest challenges facing humanity: eradicating poverty, and maintaining the stable climatic corridor.

---

Introduction

Climate change hits the poorest people the hardest, those living in vulnerable areas with the fewest resources to help them adapt or recover quickly from shocks.

Up to 122 million more people worldwide could be living in extreme poverty by 2030 as a result of climate change and its impacts on small-scale farmers’ incomes, a major UN report warned.

Often the dimensions that are considered to assess poverty include living standards, assets, health, income, consumption and status in their societies.

But the measures such as nutrition, quality houses, access to energy services and drinking water, level of education, jobs, and social conditions such as caste all become relevant when one tries to understand the different manifestations of poverty.

MPI (Multidimensional Poverty Index), developed by the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI) looks at the dimensions of education, health and standard of living giving them all equal weightage.

MPI help us to estimate not only how many people are poor, but also the quality and depth of their poverty.

Planning Commission estimated poverty in India to be at 22% of the population in 2011-12.

Whereas, MPI for India calculated using India Human Development Survey data of 2011-12, estimates that 41% of the people were multi-dimensionally poor.

---

Dimensions of poverty

Unpredictable weather

Food Security

Economy

How future Climate change will affect the poor?

Climate change impacts will result in the affect of climate variability and climate change. The poorest are the most affected by severe droughts that lead to food shortages and higher food prices.

These will harmfully affect the poorest and further deteriorate the quality of their lives.

Numerous studies have shown that the poor suffer the worst effects from climate variability and climate change.

The countries with the fewest resources are likely to bear the greatest burden of climate change in terms of investment and the economy. Example, El Niño affecting agriculture and fisheries.

As the impacts of climate change worsen, it will become harder to eliminate poverty. That leaves a narrow window for ending extreme poverty.

Climate change will further reduce access to drinking water and negatively affect the health of poor people in many countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

Climate variability and climate change impacts can prevent us from reaching and maintaining the SDG targets.

Conclusion
Mass campaigns against corruption in India have raised public awareness but failed to sustain. Anna hazare movement, jay prakash movement are significant examples for this.

Corruption is not conceptualised soundly and is presented in overly simplified moral terms. India needs a more empirical analysis.

liberalization has ushered in corruption in a much greater variety of forms and the vestiges of the licence raj still remain.

Crony-capitalism has eroded the credibility of many institutions that were created with the intention of serving the interest of masses. For eg Flawed allocation of coal mines, 2G spectrum scandal etc.

Lack of proper data on corruption and the black economy.

Anti-corruption institutions are full of political interference and many officials are themselves facing the corruption charges.

Lack of institutional transparency is the major issue in India’s political system.

CBI was called as "Caged Parrot" by the Supreme Court indicating CBI’s lack of autonomy to work effectively.

The Lokpal Act was passed in 2014 but the appointment of a Lokpal has not been done yet.

India’s anti-corruption institutions have been facing a growing shortage of human resources.

In the book "Why Scams Are Here to Stay: Understanding Political Corruption in India", it is mentioned that without radical changes to India’s political economy it will not be possible to prevent and eliminate corruption.

Institutional change and enhancement of India’s regulatory capacity.

Need for accurate, theoretically sound and empirically backed analysis for bringing radical changes to political economy to curb the menace of corruption.

Need for trust in citizens and simplified government procedures are also important for reducing corruption in essential services.

Strengthening anti-corruption institutions and supporting infrastructure would help in the reduction of corruption.

Tough anti-corruption measures as put by Hong Kong and Singapore.

The state can better focus on social programmes with cleaner, more transparent marketplace, with more friendly business environment.

Corruption involves misuse of sovereign power for personal gain.

The reforms of 1991 which deregulated the economy, ended license-Raj system, liberalized the economy did not make any difference.

In fact corruption has gone up manifold with overall 28 scams being exposed since the year 2000.

Corruption depends on three factors: values cherished by people at the individual level, values cherished by society, and the system of governance.

Socio-economically and politically, India is a very different country from the one Myrdal encountered during the decade he researched and wrote Asian Drama (1968).

Since 1990 the levels of financial flows, and along with them corruption and black money flows, have risen.

Corruption has shifted from the licence, quota permit Raj to sectors such as construction, utilities, and other infrastructure, including real estate.

Futures trading, "speculative" market mechanisms and "non-transparent financial instruments" all contribute to corruption.

In a survey released by Transparency International, among 16 countries of the Asia-Pacific region, India has the highest bribery rate of 89%.

Crony capitalism (business-politician nexus) due to involvement of private sector in development processes. Precious resources of country were given to business entities.

With the opening of economy, the standards of living become higher and now people don't mind paying small bribe for expediting their work.

Often bureaucrats exercise discretionary powers in the absence of rules which often leads to corruption," says Nobel Laureate economist Amartya Sen.

After LPG, our society has become increasingly materialistic. Thus, there is erosion of ethical values from both the society and the public institutions.

LPG reforms resulted in higher inflationary trends, so people involve in corrupt practices to maintain their standard of living.

The economy which is chiefly natural resources-based — a run by few powerful individuals with hardly any institutions to ensure accountability and transparency.

Corruption has far-reaching economic consequences: opportunities are lost, innovation is deferred, and entrepreneurialism and investment are aborted.

Corruption hinder productivity and economic growth.

Worsens income inequality and affects poor people the most.
The width and depth of field experience which the civil services provide is not available with outside talent.

External talent cannot bridge the gap between policymaking and ground level implementation than the career civil servants.

Private sector who ran Air India, Indian Airlines and Vayudoot proved to be failures.

Performance is vitally influenced by the enabling environment and the best managerial capability cannot deliver results in an adverse operating environment.

Interests and motivation vary from person to person. Therefore, short term entry of officers through lateral entry might lead to corrupt practices.

Large-scale lateral induction would amount to a vote of no-confidence in the government personnel management system.

The best talent can be attracted only if there is reasonable assurance of reaching top level managerial positions.

It is difficult to assess the performance of a secretary to the government due to complex nature of the job. So it would be difficult to measure the performance of lateral entrants.

Discretion on lateral entry may pave the way to charges of being “politically motivated”, which may degrade the system.

A good managerial system encourages and nurtures talent from within instead of seeking to induct leadership from outside.

The remedy lies not through lateral induction but through more rigorous performance appraisal and improved personnel management.

India’s civil services need reform like insulation from political pressure and career paths linked to specialization

The government can consider lateral entry to head certain pre-identified mission-mode projects and public-sector entities where private-sector expertise actually matters. It should be a mix up of both private sector and civil servants.

A credible statutory agency like UPSC or an autonomous agency like the Bank Board Bureau, established to hire heads of public-sector banks, should be entrusted with the responsibility of recruitment.

Liberalised norms that allow civil servants to work outside government with multilateral agencies, nonprofits and corporations for short periods so that they get exposure to market practices and fresh ideas.

There has been much sound about the need for induction of talent from outside into senior positions in the Government of India at the level of joint secretary and above.

Department of Personnel & Training (DoPT) has been asked to prepare a proposition on lateral entry into civil services that deal with economy and infrastructure.

The 21st century economy need specialized skills and knowledge for policy-making and administration.

The first ARC had pointed out the need for specialization

The present system of frequent and arbitrary transfers hinder gaining of the relevant experience by incumbent officers

Domain experts have been brought from outside the services to head various committees and organizations like Nandan Nilekani, Montek Singh Ahluwalia, Vijay Kelkar, Anind Subramanian and Raghuram Rajan.

Both the Niti Aayog and the Planning Commission had allowed for lateral entry. Jharkhand is also experimenting with it as well.

There is a need for a shift from the uniformity of centrally planned economic policy to the diverse demands of competitive federalism.

Thus there is a need to make way for talent pool outside the government.

There is a need for lateral entry to make central administration more open and less dominated by political appointees.

Outside talent from the private sector is more likely to be target-oriented, which will improve the performance of the government.

Lateral entry has been adopted by Australia, Belgium, New Zealand, the UK, the Netherlands and the US.

When civil servants are made to compete with outside talent, the lethargic attitude will diminish and induce competition within the system.

More competition will encourage career civil servants to develop expertise

In 2005, the second Administrative Reforms Commission (ARC) recommended lateral entry at both the Central and state levels.

Surinder Nath Committee in 2003 and Hota Committee in 2004.

The ARC recommended a paradigm shift from a career-based to a post-based approach to senior government jobs.

The ARC highlights that performance appraisals may be adopted from the armed forces, which could aid in weeding out non-performers.

In the armed forces, only 3 per cent of officers make it to the grade of brigadier and above — and promotions are based entirely on merit, which fuels excellence.
Introduction

India is home to 70 per cent of global tiger population. Therefore, the country has an important role to play in tiger conservation.

Need for Tiger Conservation

Tiger is a symbol of our National Pride

The aesthetic, ethical and cultural value of tigers are the critical factors for saving tigers.

Tigers are called “umbrella” species. By saving them, we save everything beneath their ecological umbrella - including the world’s last great forests.

The presence of tigers in the forest is an indicator of the well being of the ecosystem.

They prevent over-grazing by limiting herbivore numbers and maintain ecological integrity.

Tigers attracting tourists, which provide incomes for local communities.

A healthy tiger population lives in large forests – which are nothing but the natural sinks of Carbon.

Tiger Conservation In India

Habitat loss and poaching continue to pose a threat to the animal’s survival.

Tiger parts are used in traditional Chinese medicines. Tiger skin is used for decorative and medicinal purposes.

Habitat degradation by human beings and other natural factors (such as fires and floods).

The loss of habitat resulted in the reduction of their prey species.

The Ken-Betwa River interlinking project would have greater impact on Panna Tiger Reserve

Way Forward

Government is slow to adopt good science for conservation purposes as stated by Ullas Karanth, an expert on tigers.

Lack of access to data.

Researchers from non-governmental institutions such as the National Centre for Biological Sciences and the Indian Institute of Science face difficulties to get permissions (to visit parts of forest) for research.

Tiger conservation effort is losing steam due to excessive Bureaucratization.

Fight against poaching is not efficient in all parts of the country. In eastern India it is almost ineffective.

Concems / Challenges

Tiger conservation involves attempts to prevent the animal from becoming extinct and preserving its natural habitat.

India is home to 70 per cent of global tiger population. Therefore, the country has an important role to play in tiger conservation.

Efforts being made to save tigers

Indra is a member to Global Tiger Forum which is the only inter-governmental body for tiger conservation.

Financial and technical help is provided to the State Governments under Project Tiger and Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats.

Monitoring system for Tigers’ Intensive Protection and Ecological Status (M-STiPES) for effective field patrolling and monitoring.

To control the Trans-boundary illegal trade in wildlife and conservation, India signed a bilateral understanding with Nepal.

For the conservation of tigers in Sunderbans region, India has signed a protocol with Bangladesh.

Tiger conservation / protection is a collective responsibility between the Centre, tiger States and country citizens.

The tiger survey must be shifted from the government to scientists and researcher institutions.

Foster awareness about tiger conservation through discussions, exhibitions and local campaigns.

Interact with local schools for mainstreaming conservation as an important curricular/ extra curricular activity

Say ‘NO’ to tiger trade by refusing to buy tiger parts and items prepared from tiger derivatives.

Creating opportunities for young people to take up a career in wildlife is also a very conducive method of saving the animals.

Research and monitoring activities is a crucial element in tiger conservation.

Timely infrastructural support to State Forest Departments to enhance their protection capabilities.

Promoting sustainable livelihoods, reducing forest dependence and strengthening local support for conservation.

‘Project Tiger’ in 1972

The National Tiger Conservation Authority is constituted for escalating tiger conservation.

In-principle approval has been accorded for creation of New tiger reserves at Ratapani Tiger Reserve (Madhya Pradesh), Sunabeda Tiger Reserve (Odisha), and Guru Ghodas (Chhattisgarh).

Rajaji National Park (Uttarakhand), Orang National Park (Assam) & Kamlang Wildlife Sanctuary (Arunachal Pradesh) have been declared as 48th, 49th & 50th Tiger Reserves.


NGOs such as Trade Records Analysis of Flora and Fauna in Commerce (TRAFFIC) assist member states with the implementation of CITES.

For the conservation of tigers in Sunderbans region, India has signed a protocol with Bangladesh.

Tiger conservation / protection is a collective responsibility between the Centre, tiger States and country citizens.

The tiger survey must be shifted from the government to scientists and researcher institutions.

Foster awareness about tiger conservation through discussions, exhibitions and local campaigns.

Interact with local schools for mainstreaming conservation as an important curricular/ extra curricular activity

Say ‘NO’ to tiger trade by refusing to buy tiger parts and items prepared from tiger derivatives.

Creating opportunities for young people to take up a career in wildlife is also a very conducive method of saving the animals.

Research and monitoring activities is a crucial element in tiger conservation.

Timely infrastructural support to State Forest Departments to enhance their protection capabilities.

Promoting sustainable livelihoods, reducing forest dependence and strengthening local support for conservation.
The stigma and discrimination makes it difficult for former or liberated manual scavengers to secure alternate livelihoods.

People could once again return to manual scavenging in the absence of other opportunities to support their families.

Lack of budget support for rehabilitation and High allocation in the past has not meant effective utilisation.

It is difficult to bring those responsible for the situation to book.

Government’s failure to respond to the country-wide campaign, Bhim Yatra 2015-16, to create awareness among those engaged in manual scavenging.

Lack of safety gadgets and systematic medical check-up

Shortage of sanitary inspectors in the urban local bodies

Poor response under Self Employment Scheme for Rehabilitation of Manual Scavengers, showing either reluctance or lack of confidence among them.

Safai Karmachari Andolan (SKA) - a national movement for total eradication of manual scavenging.

Association for Rural and Urban Needy (ARUN) based in Hyderabad works for the enforcement of the national ban on manual scavenging.

JANVIKAS focusing on manual scavenging

We need to strike at the root cause — caste prejudice as Raja Ram Mohan Roy said that change should come from society itself.

Ensure discrimination-free, secure and alternate livelihoods by providing skill development and livelihoods training to women

Create a favourable environment through community awareness and sensitization of local administration.

Build the capacity of the community to promote rehabilitation efforts and self-reliance and also build leadership in the community with a particular focus on Dalit women

Requires a comprehensive approach that moves beyond expanding income generation or providing loans, to secure the future of the next generation of liberated manual scavengers.

Need to demolish and rebuild old facilities lacking sanitation

Raising the confidence level among those engaged in manual cleaning is vital

Need for political will to eradicate this inhuman practice.

Improving educational status among the children of the scavenging community

Manual scavenging refers to the practice of manually cleaning, carrying, disposing or handling in any manner, human excreta from dry latrines and sewers.

Manual scavengers are amongst the poorest and most disadvantaged communities in India.

Despite technological advancements and increasing sensitively to human rights, manual scavenging persists in India.

Gandhi and Ambedkar were both the propounders of elimination of this evil practice

It goes against the spirit of articles 15, 21, 38 and 42 of the constitution.

Manual scavenging persists mainly because of the continued presence of insanitary latrines

It is strongly connected to the caste system

Lack of support by society to eliminate this most inhuman profession.

Lack of education and humanity which is missing in many parts of India.

Data show the manual scavengers reluctance to take up self-employment.

Community mindset — Many communities still regard the inclusion of a sanitary toilet as ritual

Victims of violence, untouchability and discrimination in everyday life.

No voice in development sector

No political, economic or social assertion by the community.

Lack of leadership in the community-always led by others.

Eliminating insanitary latrines through demolition and conversion into sanitary latrines

Developing a comprehensive rehabilitation package for manual scavengers

In 1993, India banned the employment of people as manual scavengers.

In 2013 Manual Scavengers Act was passed which seeks to reinforce this ban by prohibiting manual scavenging in all forms

National Commission for Safai Karamcharis to safeguard the interests and rights of Safai Karamcharis.
### Domestic Workers in India

**Laws for Domestic Workers**

- India has only two laws. The Unorganised Workers’ Social Security Act, 2008, (UWSSA) and the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013.
- Neither of these recognises domestic helps as rights-bearing workers.
- The draft National Policy for Domestic Workers calls for promoting awareness of domestic work as a legitimate labour market activity.

**Problems faced by Domestic Workers**

- Domestic worker is a person who is employed in any household on a temporary or permanent basis to do the household work.
- In the decade after liberalisation, there was a nearly 120% rise in the number of domestic workers in India.
- Women constitute over two-thirds of the workforce in this unorganised sector.
- According to estimates by the International Labour Organisation (ILO), there are at least four million domestic servants in India.
- India’s domestic workers are overworked, underpaid and abused.
- Cases of torture, beatings, sexual assault, and incarceration.
- Poor bargaining power, with no provision for weekly holidays, maternity leave and health benefits.
- If anything is missing in the house, they are the first to be accused with threats, physical violence, police interrogation, conviction, and even dismissal.
- Domestic workers are commonly referred to as servants and maids which has resulted in their feelings of insecurity and inferiority.
- Most of these are from vulnerable communities — Adivasis, Dalits or landless OBCs.
- Most of them are migrant workers and an overwhelming number are women.
- Many resort to domestic work because of decline of employment opportunities in the agriculture and manufacturing sectors.
- The work has no reputation and generally considered as a menial work in exchange of some amount.

**Way Forward**

- Amend existing labour laws to ensure that domestic workers enjoy all the labour rights that other workers enjoy.
- Recognition of domestic workers as workers.
- Decent working conditions, including specified working hours, leave, paid holidays, protection against harassment, social security and access to benefits.
- Ensuring progressive policy and legislation while enabling better enforcement of existing legislations.
- The domestic workers should be given daily and weekly rest hours and their payment must meet the minimum wage requirement.
- States must take protective measures against violence against domestic workers.
- Policymakers, legislative bodies and people need to recognize the existence of an employment relationship in domestic work.

**Present Status**

- Domestic work as an economic activity is too vast and employs too many to remain unregulated.
- Neither the Maternity Benefits Act nor the Minimum Wages Act or any other labour laws apply to domestic work.
- Domestic workers can be hired and fired at will. The employer has no legally binding obligations.
- Organising domestic workers has been a huge challenge as the work place is inaccessible and multiple.
- As a result, the demand for the better wages or working conditions through an organized union has been weak.
- India is a signatory to the ILO’s 189th convention, known as the Convention on Domestic Workers; but has not ratified it yet.
- Little progress has been made in passing Domestic Workers Welfare and Social Security Act, 2010 Bill.
The police are the first responders in any event of crime, backbone of our intelligence, investigation and anti-corruption agencies.

Evidence-based policing was a movement launched in the U.S and the U.K.

Evidence based policing refers to an improved decision making and action on the basis of real time data and analytics.

It is critical in prediction and prevention of crime.

Evidence based policing is gaining credibility day by day – Indian police force must be exposed to it

Identifying hotspots of crime, monitoring patterns of behavior of individuals and level of citizen participation are crucial to predict and prevent crime.

It seeks to raise awareness and increase the application of scientific testing, targeting and tracking of police resources

Have knowledge about what tactics and strategies work best to fight crime so that they can make good decisions while carrying out investigations.

Crime analysis in everyday policing so that police can become more effective in addressing the specific crime, disorder, and traffic problems they face.

EBP work based on statistics, changing practices and measuring the success of those changes with risk-adjusted outcomes.

One strategy is identifying ‘hot spots’ of crime and spotting problematic individuals in a community.

Lack of effective means to collect and analyse the intelligence data.

Deteriorating quality of state investigation departments.

Many apex organizations continue to have huge vacancies.

Lack of coordination within the police departments.

Political interference.

The long working hours as well as the isolation of police force from the public. There are instances of policemen living in sub-human conditions.

Outdated arms and equipment.

For an average policeman there is lack of knowledge about Indian Penal Code, Code of Criminal Procedure and Indian Evidence Act

He/ she do not get a chance to develop and refresh his professional skills in service.

Lack of investment in basic infrastructure and human resources in policing.

Cyber-crimes pose a serious threat.

Maoist insurgency, militancy in the Northeast and separatist elements in J&K.
Paid news is a grave election malpractice and is not recognized as an offence by Representation of Peoples Act. In many cases, money spent on paid news is not represented in elections expenditure and is a punishable offence.

There has been a lot of discussion on paid news including a parliamentary standing committee report on the subject, yet there is no consensus on how to deal with the problem. Exiting regulatory set-up dealing with paid news is inadequate.

Universally profit-maximizing entities will act to increase returns rather than look at social externalities.

It is a reminder for the amendment of RPA Act, 1951. A legal framework in which electoral issues are expeditiously adjudicated must also be put in place if election law is to be enforced in both letter and spirit.

Define what constitutes political news, so that Press Council of India can adopt appropriate guidelines.

Periodic review of the editor/journalist autonomy and wage conditions.

Financial accounts of the media houses should be subject to examination, especially the revenue source for a suspected paid news case.

Regulator(s) should have the power to take strong action against offenders and should not include media owners/interested parties as members.

Transparent and unbiased policy for distribution of advertisements by the central and state governments, with provisions for scrutiny.

Conduct study to evaluate the mechanism adopted by other countries to tackle the problem of paid news.

Naming and shaming of media houses involved in paid news.

In India, a more alert citizenry can make a difference by bringing the problem of paid news to the public domain.

The Press Council of India (PCI) defines paid news as any news or analysis appearing in print or electronic media for consideration in cash or kind.

This type of news is typically sponsored by politicians, businessmen, and celebrities in order to improve their public image or accomplish political goals.

The Election Commission of India has detected hundreds of cases where politicians paid newspapers or TV channels to carry favourable reports.

Corporatisation of media

Owners having themselves the editorial roles.

Decline in autonomy of editors/journalists due to emergence of contract system and poor wage levels of journalists

Lack of restriction on ownership across media segments or between content and distribution could give rise to monopolistic practices.

Affects people’s rational thinking and opinion which gets reflected in their voting patterns.

Undermines free and fair elections, which distort the working of the democracy.

Richer candidates who could pay for their publicity has a clear advantage.

The win of capitalism or financial capacity over morals, principles, ethics, and ideologies enshrined in the constitution.

Publishing the candidates views as news items and bringing out negative news items against rival candidates during the elections.

The Indian media plays the role of constructive opposition in the Parliament as well as in various Legislative Assemblies of the states.

Journalists are, by and large, honoured and accepted as the moral guide in the Indian society.

For democratic India, the media continues to be acclaimed as the fourth important pillar after the judiciary, parliament and bureaucratic set-up.

Its role as a protector of public interest and enforcer of accountability.
A self-help group (SHG) is a village-based financial intermediary committee normally consist of 10–20 local women or men. When the formal financial system fails to help the needy, then small groups volunteer to cater to the needs of the financially weak by collecting, saving and lending the money on a micro scale.

SHGs have gained wide recognition in most developing countries in Asia where their presence is quite pervasive.

It all started with the Garmin Bank of Bangladesh, it is a people bank formed by the poor to provide easy loans for themselves.

Thousands of the poor and the marginalized population in Bangladesh are building their lives, their families and their society through Self-help groups.

The Bank-SHG Linkage Programme was started at the initiative of NABARD in 1992 to link the unorganised sector with the formal banking sector.

To make the people of below poverty line self-reliant
To increase their income, standard of living and status in society
To reap the advantage of socialism
It is considered as a means to empowerment.

Women’s savings positively affect the incidence and the security of poverty.

To save small amount of money regularly
To have collective decision making

To provide collateral free loans with terms decided by the group at the market driven rates.

Enabling members to become self reliant and self dependent
Enhancing the social status of members by virtue of being members of the group
Developing and enhancing the decision making capacity of members
Promoting literacy and increasing general awareness among members

SHG Bank Linkage Programme (SHG BLP), the initiative of Financial Inclusion by NABARD completed 25 years

The SHG Bank Linkage Programme has helped poor women source collateral-free loans totalling Rs 61,000 crore from the banking system.

SHG-bank linkage programme has become an excellent model for rural poverty alleviation and women empowerment.

SHGs have taken up income generating activities and focused on asset creation which gives them regular income.

NABARD has empowered women SHGs to take up integrated farming to increase the family income

Research shows that women’s groups participatory learning and action has shown reduction in maternal mortality and neonatal mortality.