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COMPILATION OF QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

GENERAL STUDIES PAPER - 3

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Topic: Social empowerment; Salient features of Indian society

1. “The Shah Bano case was a milestone in the Muslim women’s search for justice and the beginning of the political battle over personal law.” Critically comment. (200 Words)

The Shah Bano Begum case upheld a muslim woman's unrestricted right to maintenance under provisions of the CrPC on par with women belonging to other religions. Not only did the SC go against the conventionally accepted Shariah Law [Civil Law for Muslim], it also observed that the Government must move towards a Uniform Civil Code.

Achievements of the Shah Bano Case

1. Muslim Women are not as educated and self dependent like the rest of the Woman. Education is denied to them and they are not allowed to work either, hence post divorce the need for maintenance only becomes greater in them. The judgement reiterated it.
2. The judgment definitely mainstreamed the discourse on the pitiful condition of Indian women.
3. While, the judgement was concerned with the rights of muslim women in particular, it strengthen women's movements of all hues fighting for justice and equality.
4. It triggered introspection in many other personal laws.
5. Case highlighted the need for the enactment of the Uniform Civil Code, as propounded under A. 44 of the Constitution.

However, in spite of its progressive tone and best intent, it began a political battle over personal law. Under pressure from Muslim leaders, government enacted the retrograde Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Divorce) Act, 1986. Diluting the Supreme Court judgment, the act allowed maintenance to a divorced woman only during the period of iddat, or till 90 days after the divorce, according to the provisions of Islamic law. This was seen as a means of appeasement and vote bank politics by section among the Hindus. As a consequence, the debate over UCC has become divisive and communally charged.

However, hope has been kept alive by SC with its progressive judgments in cases of Daniel Latifi in 2001, Iqbal Bano in 2007, Shabana Bano in 2009 and the latest one of Shamina Farooqui in 2015 where it upheld the shah bano judgement. Govt has to show greater political will to enable consensus building on Universal civil code to enable taking into account of diverse views on an emotionally charged issue.

2. The rapid growth of population and its growing needs has meant that per capita availability of fresh water has declined sharply over the past 50 years in India. Critically discuss the magnitude of water crisis in India, its causes and remedies. (200 Words)

Despite being endowed with some of the greatest rivers, India is facing water shortage which is bound to increase in future. The problem can be assessed by its effects like:

1. Most of the cultivated land in India is still dependent upon rainfall and do not have suitable means of alternative irrigation. This has a direct impact on RBI's monetary policy
2. Lack of access to drinking water is responsible for many preventable deaths like diarrhoea in children.
3. Interstate and Intrastate litigations and bickering exists over water sharing. For example Kaveri river dispute
4. Groundwater level has been reducing and the indiscriminate extraction of ground water continues unabated.
5. Rivers continue to remain polluted despite multiple commitments of the government. Ganga, Yamuna have remained unclean. Powai lake has been declared unfit for drinking. Algal blooms are common.

The reasons for such a grim situation are:

1. Lack of proper irrigation facilities like canals and simultaneous subsidising of water pumps which extract ground water indiscriminately.
2. Little action taken to detoxify rivers and lakes which are sources of freshwater.
3. Erratic monsoon and population explosion coupled with migration and lack of timely steps taken to check the problem.
4. Lack of adequate treatment facilities for supplying water and pricing issues.
5. The water usability index of Indian rivers is lower than expected.
6. Industries like coal based power plants are huge consumers of water cooling and rotating turbines.
7. Prevalence of water intensive crops water deficit areas.

Remedies:

1. Community based rainwater harvesting, aquifer mapping and groundwater extraction. The governments can supply information and monitor levels.
2. Check dams can be built to enhance soil moisture as well.
3. community led initiatives and rain water harvesting like Jauhar in Rajasthan by " Waterman" Rajendra Singh and Ralegan Siddhi village in Maharashtra.
4. Sensitization and awareness amongst people for judicious use of water and avoid wastage.
5. Building canal networks to supply water from surplus zone to deficit zone.

6. Treatment of industrial effluents before going to rivers and strict implementation and monitoring of river water pollution.
7. Increased participation of NGOs and subsidising water treatment facilities. Use of methods like UV treatment for short distance supply and chlorination for long distance supply.
8. Shift towards renewable energy sources like solar, etc. to cut down usage of water by coal fire plants.
9. National Water Policy 2012 aims to establish a regulator, prioritize water allocation as per nature of needs, treat water as an economic good for conservation, encourage water management techniques.

[Some useful data:

1. As per the study of national commission for women It is estimated that the women spent 8 to 12 hours per day in arranging water in the water depleted areas.
2. The per capita availability of fresh water has decreased from 3000 cubic metres to 1123 cubic metres in past 50 years.
3. Out of 632 districts surveyed, only 59 has safe drinking water.
4. In last 7 years, ground water has receded by more than 50%.]

3. According to a recent release by Census 2011, Indians are now getting married at a higher age than a decade ago and a decline in fertility has also been observed. Discuss the causes and consequences of this trend. (200 Words)

Census data shows that mean age for marriage has increased 18.3 to 19.3 years for female and 22.6 to 23.3 years for males, fertility had declined [from 2.5 to 2.2] for all age groups in the last decade.

Causes for higher age of marriage:

1. Increased focus on Higher Education which takes greater time
2. More career oriented both Women and Men.
3. Women Having facility of egg freeze (oocyte cryopreservation), in order to delay the Pregnancy till they get stabilised in jobs
4. People Moving to other Institutions Like Live- In and then later to marriages. People prefer ascertaining compatibility before marriage.
5. Globalisation has also affected the family and relationship
6. Child marriage act and efforts of NGOs to stop early marriage.

Causes for decline of TFR:

1. Spread of education and desire for better quality of life
2. Easy access to safe and effective contraceptive techniques and dilution of social stigma over use of same
3. Govt programmes, spreading awareness with campaigns like chota pariwar, sukhi parivar
4. Legislations like child marriage. Late marriages have led to decrease in TFR.

5. The high costs for child care and education

Consequences of both:

1. Better education and enhanced quality of life. It is both a cause and consequence
2. Higher productivity in work life
3. Increasing age of marriage has led to more reasonable decision making in conjugal discourse. Married couple would be emotionally matured.
4. It's good for coming generation as the parents are mature enough to shape the future of their children's in right direction
5. Population growth stabilising
6. Due to late marriages (not too late), MMR and IMR are declining.
7. Demographic transition
8. Gender equality will be achieved.
9. Parents have more time to work and earn, increasing spending power, creating demand which stimulates production and jobs
10. Possible decrease in child sex ratio

Topic: Poverty and developmental issues; social empowerment

4. Do you think Adivasis in India have been unfairly treated and are victims of development agenda of governments and corporate world? Critically comment. (200 Words)

Adivasis have remained historically backward sections both socially and economically. They were exploited and suppressed during British and despite many Constitutional and legislative measures, today also they remain excluded from the mainstream.

The govt has been taking away the forest land for establishment of the industries, dams and urbanization without the consent of the tribals. **Mines and minerals (development and regulation)** amendment act 2015 has been enacted. It has no provisions for consent or even consultation of gram sabhas which would be affected by mining operations. They have the right to compensation. But the rules specify that if they don't agree to the mining plan or to the amount of compensation, the state govt shall order the occupier to allow the licensee to enter upon the said land and carry out such operations as may be necessary

Lakhs of adivasi families have been displaced, turned into migrants or daily contract labourers in the mines that have destroyed their forests, lands and water. Out of the 60 million displaced people, Adivasis form more than 40% of the same. They get no proper rehabilitation as well. Further, even the Government has abdicated its responsibility of providing access to basic resources [education, health, nutrition etc] to tribal areas.

Though, reservations and government measures like **PESA and FRA** have led to upliftment of adivasis, the impact has been close to negligible and most of the legislations to protect their right have been only paper tigers. In spite of SC intervention

in case of Vedanta mining project, govt and corporates are keen on mining even if it means forced eviction of tribals.

There is no dispute that a country's mineral wealth should be mined and used for development. However, predominant understanding of "development" have privileged profit in the case of mining, over the more sustainable and equitable use of minerals in partnership with local communities.

Way forward:

1. State govts should be made to obtain permissions from owners and occupiers of land for major minerals, and consult with gram sabhas in 5th and 6th schedule areas for minor minerals.
2. It should be mandated that all clearances (forest and environemnt) under forest conservation act and wildlife protection act should be taken before a lease was given.
3. Tribal cooperatives should be made eligible for grant of license of minor minerals in 5th and 6th schedule areas.

Economic development is important. But it should not attempt to bypass gram sabhas and environmental norms in the name of speedy clearances and ease of doing business.

Topic: Modern Indian history from about the middle of the eighteenth century until the present- significant events, personalities, issues

5. Critically assess the legacy of Babasaheb Ambedkar, especially in the context of the efforts by mainstream political parties to appropriate him. (200 Words)

1. He was among one of the delegates at 1st Round Table Conference and raised voice for separate representation of the depressed classes. Communal award and Poona Pact were outcomes whereby he succeeded in getting separate electorates for the depressed class.
2. He was chairman of the Drafting Committee in the Constituent Assembly. Having great knowledge of all the existing constitutions, this barrister succeeded in making the lengthiest Constitution of the world. He was known for his forceful and convincing aruments in the floor. He ensured that a free India is not just a political democracy but a social democracy. The shining ideals of Fundamental Rights is the best example.
3. Post indepenedece, he was at the centre of Hindu Code Bill and he favoured egalitarianism. He advocated for womens' equality.

4. He converted to Buddhism with his followers to clearly express his disapproval of casteism.

The current events of appropriating his legacies by various Political Parties seem to more guided by vested political interests [vote-bank] rather than conviction in his legacy. Though, this has led to building of memorials, institutions, roads etc. in his name, they remain symbolic and peripheral. The true legacy can only be realized by implementation of Indian Constitution and its values both in letter and spirit and, building of an Indian society which has no place for discrimination [especially against Dalits] and cherishes ideas of equality, liberty and fraternity.

Topic: Post-independence consolidation and reorganization within the country

6. Despite having negative influence on all aspects of India's national life, the British also left behind few positive developments for India to consolidate and build a new nation state upon these developments. Critically examine the positive legacy of the British and their impact on post - Independent India. (200 Words)

British came as traders and became colonial masters. Their strategy to exploit India put many negative effects on us like draining of wealth, end of indigeneous industries, communalization and ultimately partition. But as is the case in any interaction between two civilizations, the British had contributed positively to India in some ways and it cannot be said with certainty whether all of them were aimed towards development of India.

1. They introduced the system of judiciary, supreme court and Criminal Procedure Code and Indian Penal code. Our modern judiciary is dependent on these statutes and the framework. In fact many nationalists of independence era used to be lawyers.
2. Introduced bureaucracy and competitive exams for entrance with age limits. By 1947, many Indians had entered the covenanted Indian Civil Services and the structure was retained. Even today it is the steel frame of administration. The system of file, noting, drafting and Official Secrets Act are existing today. They however focused on revenue collection and maintenance of law and order but not welfare.
3. Introduced modern Western education since Woods despatch. It introduced sciences and arts as subjects of study in a nation where religious texts held primacy. Engineering colleges and medical institutes were established. This was however done so as to have a class of Indians who were Indians in colour and blood but Englishmen in their tastes, ideals and morals so that they can man lower level posts in British administration.
4. Many social ills were taken and reformed although much contribution was by Indian reformists. Examples are Sati, widow remarriage, etc.

5. Introduced railways, telegraph and postal system. This was mainly to undersell Indian goods in India and enable better reach of British goods.
6. We borrowed the idea of parliamentary democracy, legislative sovereignty and other features from their Westminster model. But during British, Indian participation was limited in legislatures due to limited franchise.
7. Introduction of modern financial institutions of banking and life insurance. - were largely based on foreign capital, though gradually Indian capital also made its way.
8. Census, training and maintenance of a well disciplined army, income tax, etc. are some other contributions.

Thus the development that occurred in India was to a very major extent result of political struggle against colonialism, rather than colonialism itself.

7. What were the basic goals that India set to achieve soon after its independence from the British? Critically evaluate India's achievement in fulfilling these goals. (200 Words)

Partitioned and marred by the brutalities of the consequent riots, India had a lot on its plate, so as to build the post independent nation. Various issues existed like poverty, illiteracy, diseases, casteism, communalism, no indigenous industries, gender gap, mass unemployment and lack of civil and political rights to the people

Some of the tasks to be immediately looked upon, included:

1. To maintain the country's unity after the communal riots of 1947 which had instilled fear in the hearts of the minorities, regarding their security in the Hindu majority nation.
2. To build the tools of development, i.e. industries and agricultural sector, so as to enable social and economic transformation of the country.
3. Building a secular society, against the vast religious, linguistic and ethnic diversity in the nation, to facilitate effective cooperation in the development process.
4. To build a democratic and civil libertarian society among an illiterate people, by giving them a sense of inclusion in the political structure, by introducing the system of universal adult franchise.
5. Economic and political transformation processes were to be accompanied by the process of social transformation too, by eliminating the caste and gender differences, and simultaneously raising the standard of living of the citizens.

But most of such goals can still be seen as only partially fulfilled

1. India has a large expanse of gender disparity, due to the dominant patriarchal structure of the society. India ranks 114 out of 142 countries in gender inequality index
2. Communal riots time and again serve as a blot on the country's secular credentials
3. Colonial mind set from our institutions is yet to be sent out.

4. There is concentration of power in higher authorities.
5. The poor rich divide is expanding. Poverty and indebtedness causing farmer suicides.
6. Curbs on freedom of expression becoming routine affair.

With greater political will, rapid and sustainable economic and social transformation is an achievable goal. India needs to strive towards it taking pride in its journey so far.

8. How did the national movement influence foreign policy and political norms of the post Independent India? Critically discuss. (200 Words)

Contribution to the political trends:

1. Polity based on representative democracy and full range of civil liberties and Popular sovereignty formed the basis of INM which later became the very essence of Indian Political Thinking
2. The practice of Non-violence helped in forming the basic temper with which Indian political system was to function in future i.e discussion, debate and persuasion backed by public opinion and tolerance towards political opponents
3. INM opposed all kind of inequalities and discrimination based on caste, colour, gender, etc, including evils of untouchability and helped create an egalitarian atmosphere which not only helped in securing reservation for SC/STs in constituent assembly but their overall upliftment.
4. Secularism was a very basic tenet on which INM worked which later became the pillar of the Indian polity, society and culture

Contribution in foreign policy:

1. India- against colonialism. India expedited the independence of Indonesia from the dutch.
2. India- against racism. India supported for the cause of racial equality in south Africa
3. India- for independence in foreign policy - India stood independent even during cold war era. It took cooperation from other NAM countries. India took independent stand on international issues based upon its discretion but not upon compulsion. (korean and egypt crisis)
4. India- for social justice and international peace. NAM promoted peace in international arena. and Panchasheel promoted peace with neighbourhood. India has been sending its peace keeping troops to UN. No first use is our nuclear policy.
5. India- for ethics in international setting at various levels.- liberation of bangladesh, financial assistance to comparatively less developed nations

9. How did the task of unifying post - Partition India and princely states take place? Give a critical account. (200 Words)

The lapse of British paramountcy over the princely states posed a big challenge to integrity of the nation soon to be independent. This coupled with communal carnage and partition needed to be handled deftly. Sardar Patel, ably assisted by V.P. Menon, took the challenge head on.

There were more than 550 princely states that recognised British suzerainty and legally became independent with the passage of Indian Independence Act. They could join Dominions of India or Pakistan or remain sovereign within the Commonwealth, as they wished. Many decided to join India due to its secular character and people's mood and also due to assurance, convincing, cajoling and coercion by the duo but many states nourished dreams of independence.

On the eve of independence, three states namely Jammu and Kashmir, Hyderabad and Junagadh were independent with Junagadh and Hyderabad wishing to join Pakistan. Strict action and army interference forced their accession. Initially all states were to sign Instrument of Accession whereby they surrendered Defense, Foreign Affairs and Communications to the government of India. Later they signed supplementary treaties and were formally merged into states to very closely resemble India as we know today.

However, the entire process had certain issues:

1. Privy purse were guaranteed constitutionally to the princes in lieu of their surrender of power, villages, land and railways networks. While its burden was not much on the Indian exchequer, it was abolished by legislative action. This is sought as a betrayal of trust reposed by Sardar Patel.
2. Certain issues like Kashmir were taken to United Nations even after Kashmir had signed Instrument of Accession to India. So it was then an internal security issue and involvement of UN is regretted even today. Article 370 has always been debatable.
3. While the choice to join whether India or Pakistan must have been of the king, popular mood of people was always prioritised. Also states chose or were forced to choose on religious lines.
4. Pakistan's army left no stone unturned in planning geostrategic warfare against India, like using Junagadh as a military post. Also it was accused of human rights violation in Balochistan and Kashmir. Similar situation happened in Hyderabad by Razakars.
5. But it was indeed a monumental achievement of Sardar Patel and Menon to stitch the political fabric of the nation.

10. Discuss the contribution of Moti Lal Nehru to the constitution development. (150 Words)

Motilal Nehru was one of the most prominent leaders of India's National Movement. A lawyer by profession, Nehru gave it up and became fully involved in India's National

Movement. He was an advocate of using constitutional means for gaining Independence and made seminal contributions to the development of Constitution.

He was the chairman of committee of All Parties Conference which prepared the famous "Nehru Report". The Indian Constitution had its genesis in this report and is heavily influenced by it. Most of its recommendations like Bill of Rights, Constitutional division and separation of Powers, Ideas of Secularism and Unified electorate, federal form of Government etc form the cardinal features of Indian Constitution and a number of them have been declared as basic features of constitution by the Supreme Court of India.

Formation of Swaraj party for constitutional work and keep political mood of people alive after termination of NCM. Nehru also demonstrated how legislatures could be innovatively used to enforce executing accountability through debates, discussions, questions etc. These practice have become a major essence of our parliamentary system. He advocated for woman empowerment

In this sense his contribution is immeasurable. So we can say that he was the pioneer of constitutional development in our country.

11. The language problem was the most divisive issue in the first twenty years of independent India, and it created the apprehension among many that the political and cultural unity of the country was in danger. How was it overcome? Critically examine. (200 Words)

Linguistic identity has been a strong force in the multilinguistic Indian society. The language issue in India manifested itself in two forms:

Dispute over Official Language

- Upon independence, it was decided that Hindi be adopted as the Central Government's official language (OL). This move was opposed by speakers of other languages, who feared that adoption of Hindi as the OL would place them at a disadvantage in the educational and economic spheres besides being a threat to their culture. This group advocated the retention of English as the OL.
- However, this suggestion was unacceptable to the proponents of Hindi, who saw English as a symbol of imperialism. While the constitutional makers recognised the fact that Hindi was spoken by the majority and played an instrumental role during the national struggle, they could not ignore the interests of other linguistic groups.
- Therefore, a compromise was arrived at - both Hindi and English would be used as official languages till 1965, after which Hindi would become the sole OL. The idea was to ease the transition of the use of Hindi by promotion of Hindi education. But the spread of education was too slow to make an impact and ultimately the Official Language Act was amended in 1965 to adopt bilingualism indefinitely.

Linguistic reorganisation of States

- The demand for reorganisation of States on linguistic lines arose immediately after independence. The national leadership was opposed to such reorganisation as it was thought that the same would undermine national unity and integrity.
- As a consequence, the Dhar Commission and the JVP committee, both rejected language as the basis for reorganisation. The demand only intensified especially in the Telugu speaking regions of Madras State, where agitation was led by one Potti Sriramulu. His death after a 56 day hunger strike forced the government to create the first linguistic state - Andhra.
- This was followed by the appointment of the State Reorganisation Commission to examine the question holistically. The commission broadly accepted language as the basis of reorganisation and this was followed by a massive reorganisation exercise.

Topic: changes in critical geographical features (including water-bodies and ice-caps) and the effects of such changes.

12. Depleting groundwater levels is said to be the biggest threat to rural livelihoods and food security in India. Critically examine the causes of groundwater depletion, its effects and remedies to halt its further depletion. (200 Words)

Causes of ground water depletion:

1. Power subsidies given by govts to farmers to extract ground water.
2. Erratic rainfall
3. Growing of more cash crops which are water intensive
4. Faulty cropping practice. Growing of water intensive crops like sugarcane, paddy in water scarce regions like Punjab and Haryana due to availability of power subsidies. But Water-plenty regions of eastern india does not grow such water intensive crops much due to poor availability of power.
5. Water harvesting mechanisms not implemented strictly
6. Less focus on R and D to produce crops which can sustain with less water.
7. Deforestation.
8. Subsidies to farmers for extraction equipments.
9. With decreasing groundwater level, the farmers resorted to buting expensive deepwater extraction equipments. This worsened the crisis apart from leaving the farmers in debt.

Effects:

1. Less water for irrigation, affecting food security. Can cause food inflation. Affects monetary policy. And affect livelihood of farmers.
2. Decreases water availability for domestic use

3. Pollution of ground water with arsenic, fluorine etc. Resulting health problems due to consumption of crops grown in this water. Saline and alkaline soils
4. Livestock, fisheries all affected.

Remedies:

1. Stricter rain water harvesting, watershed management, building recharge tanks for groundwater recharge
2. Correct cropping practices – water intensive crops to be grown in water surplus eastern region rather than in NW
3. Rationalise power subsidy to agri sector. Feeder segregation in rural areas so that electricity for agri sector can be controlled as done in gujarat
4. R and D on crops that use less water. National mission for sustainable agriculture
5. Afforestation
6. Revival of traditional water bodies
7. Sprinkler and drip irrigation
8. Create awareness about importance of conservation of ground water
9. Using solar based groundwater extraction equipments and allowing sale of surplus power to the electricity grid. Incentivising farmers to sell extra power rather than using it to extract ground water.

13. A recent study has analysed that the Climate change could drive to extinction as many as one in six animal and plant species. Critically examine how climate change would affect plants and animals. (200 Words)

Effects on animals:

1. Melting arctic ice removes hunting ground from polar bears. Recently, some polar bear clusters are moving to the Canadian archipelago which is retaining the arctic ice longer.
2. Warmer water temperatures will cause fish population to decline as many species like salmon, trout require cold water to survive. Also, with melting of fish, krills will die, which are the main food for fish.
3. CC results in increase in sea surface temperature. This will lead coral bleaching leading to a collapse of these ecosystems which sustain huge numbers of fish. Also,
4. Turtles, seals lay their eggs in sea beaches. They may be under threat due to rising sea levels
5. CC can altered food availability for migratory species. These birds arrive on schedule to find their food sources, insects, seeds, flowering plants, have hatched or bloomed too early or not at all. This results in change of migratory and behavioural pattern of such birds.
6. Rising temperature can causes animals to shift to a higher altitudes, thus affecting the distribution of species. Species which cannot quickly adapt to the changes on account this shift perish. E.g. the American Pika.

7. Birds will lay eggs earlier in the year than usual or mammals will come out of hibernation sooner etc.
8. Ocean acidification: will weaken the shells of shell bearing marine creatures; directly threatening such marine species.

Effect on plants:

1. Increased forest fires.
2. Increased invasion by alien species may occur.
3. Plant genetic composition may change in response to the pressure of climate change.
4. Certain plant species which are endemic to the Arctic and coastal region will be completely destroyed.
5. Some plants wheat will no longer viable in tropics. They will shift northwards
6. Rising sea level and changes in salinity could decimate mangrove forests, leaving many species without a habitat. Eg- Sagar Island in the Sundarbans ecosystem is under threat due to rising sea levels. These forests are home to a large variety of species too.
7. Insect population will rise due to climate change which will cause diseases in the fruits and trees.

An unabated climate change will wreak havoc on our planet's bio-diversity; eventually affecting mankind.

Topic: urbanization, their problems and their remedies.

14. Critically analyse the objectives and design of recently launched Smart Cities Mission and the Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT). Do you think such schemes will be effective in addressing fundamental problems of urbanization? Comment. (200 Words)

Smart cities:

1. Are those cities which have smart/intelligent physical, social, institutional and economic infrastructure while ensuring centrality of citizens in a sustainable manner. It focuses on: solid waste management, water management, public transport, green energy, e-health, e-literacy, traffic lights, electricity supply etc controlled through IT.
2. It will be implemented through area based approach which includes – retrofitting, redevelopment, pan-city initiative and development of new cities.
3. SPV will be set up for their implementation. PPP model will be used for mobilising private investment.

AMRUT (Atal mission for rejuvenation and urban transformation)

1. It is the new avatar of JNNURM and focuses on – water supply, sewerage, storm-water drains, transport, development of green spaces and parks. 10 % of budget

allocation will be given to states/UTs as incentive based on achievement of reforms during previous year.

2. In a significant departure, states will have more flexibility as centre will not appraise individual projects.
3. It will lay the foundation to enable the cities to eventually grow into smart cities. It will be implemented at 500 locations.

Critical analysis:

Projects will face challenges like – presence of large slums, limited scope of expanding roads and bridges in the midst of cities, data intrusion and hackin, displacement of population and land acquisition problems. No mention of increase in floor space index in cities. There is no mention of earthquake resistant design of buildings in smart city concept. Problems of Urban Sprawl, Urban Crimes find no mention in the above two schemes.

But, existing cities are unable to bear extra load of migrants and by 2050, 70 % of world population will be in cities. It also offers opportunity for faster growth as they such cities become magnets for investments. Experts say, it can generate employment for at least 2,00,000 people per city and usher in unprecedented economic growth.

15. Rapid urbanization has brought urban water supply in India under increasing pressure. Critically discuss the magnitude of the problem, its causes and consequences. (200 Words)

Magnitude of the problem:

70 % of india's urban population is not connected to water-supplying govt agencies. India's biggest citie shave found it difficult to meet the minimum norm of 135 liters per capita daily recommended by the union govt. Given that urban population will become 70 % by 2050 according to UN, problem of scarcity and poor quality water is only going to increase.

Causes of the problem:

1. Mis-pricing of water. This has meant that better-off residents have accessed to subsidised water. The usually flat pricing structures mean that those using more water avail more subsidies.
2. Political interference in urban water administration has led to no effort to rationalise water tariffs. There has been under-recovery of costs, with municipal bodies having little funds to modernise or expand water networks.
3. Households with dysfunctional meters are allowed to continue receiving water at cheap rates. They have no incentive to install new meters, striking a blow to the municipal finances.
4. Limited finances of municipal bodies force them to rely on dilapidated network of decades-old pipelines which has high leakage rates.
5. Changing urban lifestyle leading to more water consumption

6. No penalties for failure to build water harvesting structures.
7. Piecemeal approach to sewerage treatment and water recycling
8. Indiscriminate waste dumping on land leads to ground water pollution
9. Factories have no incentive to invest in green technologies or to treat waste before dumping to rivers.

Consequences:

1. Poor health indicators. Water borne disease like diarrhoea etc
2. Growing inter-state water disputes. Eg- Haryana-delhi over Yamuna
3. Affects the poor urban slum dwellers the most, while the rich can afford water cans
4. Poor health of working population due to water pollution may drive away investments from the city.
5. Cartelization and monopolization by private tankers who are using illegal borings and are not regulated or checked for quality.
6. Encouragement to vote bank politics on water issues.

The way forward is to revamp the billing profile, regulate private tankers and introduce prepaid water supply to households to keep track of actual demand.

Topic: Important Geophysical phenomena and their effects

16. "It should be a policy objective to monsoon-proof the economy, not so much because of the share of agriculture in gross domestic product (GDP), which is below 15 per cent, but because of the high proportion of people who are potentially vulnerable to monsoon failure." Critically examine the policy implications of linkages between rainfall and economic outcomes for India. (200 Words)

Impact in economy:

1. Inflation – More than 60 % area is rain fed. Thus reduction in food production leads to food inflation.
2. Lower industrial growth - agri raw materials are used in many industries like sugar, textiles etc. Low agri production will reduce the growth of these industries which not just provide employment to millions but also earn forex through export.
3. Migration – Loss of crops leads to distress migration among farmers to already crowded cities leading more slums and more pollution and congestion.

4. Rural economy slow down – due to reduction if rural demand (due to less income). This will have its share in the slowdown of overall economy.

How to monsoon proof economy?

1. Crop insurance
2. Diversification of agriculture – sericulture, animal rearing which are less dependent on rain.
3. Irrigation infrastructure
4. Better farming methods and developing crop varieties which can grow in water scarce conditions ie climate resilient agriculture.

17. With suitable examples, write a note on the impact of earthquakes on the geography of an affected region. (200 Words)

Earthquakes can be disastrous to humans as well as the environment. They have immediate i.e. primary and secondary effects causing much destruction the effects on the geography of a region includes

1. Surface faulting – displacement of rocks along faults
2. Subsidence: the earth's surface subsides or moves down in comparison to previous or sea level Ex : seen at many places in japan after 2011 tohoku earthquake
3. Tectonic uplift.
4. Shifting of landmasses – Sumatra shifting due to the earthquake of 2004
5. Liquefaction : when soils with a high water content are violently shaken they lose their mechanical strength and behave like a fluid and so buildings can literally sink. Ex: 2011 Japan earthquake
6. Avalanches : avalanche is a rapid flow of snow down a sloping surface.occurred in the himalayan region during the recent Nepal Earthquake
7. Landslides - earthquakes often cause landslides, especially in steep river valleys and areas of weak rocks.
8. Tsunami - an earthquake on the sea floor or close to the coast may cause huge waves. Ex : tsunami of 2004
9. Change in course of rivers : generally occurs due to tectonic upliftment or subsidense Ex: change in course of Mississippi river following the Madrid earthquake
10. Changes in the ocean, like formation of islands or submerging of existing islands due to earthquakes. (Formation of Islands in the Banda Aceh region of Indonesia)

[height of mountains may also decrease. Mount everest height lowered by few cm]

Topic: Post-independence consolidation and reorganization within the country**18. What approaches were tried and tested to address various issues related to tribes of India soon after independence? In your opinion, were these approaches successful in addressing tribal issues effectively? Critically discuss. (200 Words)**

Tribals were mostly in isolation although British policies had some impact like Christian missionaries, indebtedness, agriculture and no more absolute rights over forests. So after 1947, we could have either left tribals in isolation and in their own pristine environment in nature's lap or brought them into mainstream society at a sudden. Rather we adopted a mix of both and proceeded to integrate them successively by various measures:

1. Constitutional protection for their land, culture, customs, language and manners. For this 6th schedule mentions formation of autonomous district councils which can exercise legislative, executive and judicial functions on limited scope. Tribal advisory councils in 5th schedule areas also give certain autonomy to tribals. Also Governors have been empowered to amend laws for better applicability in their regard.
2. Appointment of National Commission of SCs and STs which see the safeguards and implementation of schemes for tribes and backwards.
3. Prevention of Atrocities on SCs and STs act which aims at protecting these people from encroachments and excesses of upper castes and non-tribals
4. Reservation in legislature, government jobs and educational institutions for their welfare and promotion.
5. Creation of separate states on language issues like Nagaland, Mizoram from Assam due to protests against enforcement of Assamese language
6. Empowering and continuing army with special powers for safeguarding people in these areas from armed insurgencies.
7. Forests act, Wildlife preservation act, etc. have recognised tribals' rights to their lands and forests. Supreme Court judgements have upheld tribals' rights to sharing wealth arising out of their land.
8. Scholarship, hostel, special schools, ambulance, hospitals, jobs in ST dominated areas.
9. Tribal subplan to increase level of development in tribal areas.

So far we have contained secessionist demands and provided for various states in the North East. But yet sporadic skirmishes and violence with local people and allegations of misconduct on army do happen. There is growth if Left wing

extremism and cross border infiltrations and havens. Also there is an increased encroachment of tribal areas for industrial activities like mining, etc. They continue to live on the margins and are not fully integrated with the mainland.

19. Do you think linguistic reorganisation of Indian states post-independence was a sound policy? What arguments were put forth to support or oppose this policy? Critically comment. (200 Words)

Arguments for linguistic organisation:

1. It is promised by INC prior to independence and also suggested by SRC-1.
2. Administration becomes easier (rulers and the ruled will have same lingua franca). States can have their own official languages and official works could be carried on more efficiently to the lowest level.
3. Helps for strengthening cultural identity
4. Education can be given in preferred language or mother tongue and this will boost thinking ability and analysis, as is also scientifically proven. Mass Literacy is possible through mother tongue
5. No mentioning of language not to be a criteria for re organisation in constitution.

Arguments against linguistic organisation (Dhar and JVP committees)

1. The situation was fragile after the independence with so many demands for secession for center to consider this
2. Regionalism sometimes compromises national interest for narrow interest.
3. Due consideration must also be given to other factors like administrative and economic weightage.
4. Minority languages becomes more vulnerable.

States' reorganization did not, resolve all the problems relating to linguistic conflicts. Disputes over boundaries between different states, linguistic minorities and economic issues such as sharing of waters, and power and surplus food still persist. Linguistic chauvinism also finds occasional expression. But the reorganization has removed a major factor affecting cohesion of the country. It has not in any way affected the federal character and working of the Union. Centre wields its full authority and states cooperate in the same. With the help of popular language as tool, it has ensured outreach and participation of the masses in politics and administration thereby strengthening the state. India succeeded by accommodating diversities (here lingual) as a strength within its national

policy framework (USSR failed to integrate Yugoslavia because linguistic and ethnic diversities were suppressed)

20. Critically comment on the immediate and long-term consequences of the decision to implement recommendations made by Mandal Commission on 7th August 1990. (200 Words)

The decision to implement the recommendations of Mandal Commission was taken by V.P. Singh government which implied that reservation in government jobs and educational institutes could be given on the basis of caste.

The short term consequence of such a decision was widespread nationwide agitation against the policy which was considered anti-merit and a part of vote bank politics.

Subsequently with the ruling of Supreme Court granting reservation on caste basis constitutional sanction, certain long term consequences emerged which were both positive and negative. It positively resulted in the emancipation of socially and educationally backward sections of society (OBCs) by increasing their representation in government jobs and educational institutes. The biggest negative fallout of such a policy was politicization of caste for garnering votes by different political parties, the recent Jat reservation issue which was nullified by Supreme Court is a case in point.

Also it led to entrenchment and institutionalisation of caste as an important determinant in India's socio-political structure and thus impacting every aspect of life, which is inherently against equality and creates fissures in society.

Thus Mandal Commission decision had chequered outcomes, although reservation is based on principle of positive discrimination and affirmative action, its misuse has diluted its utility.

Topic: Salient features of Indian society; communalism, secularism

21. The annual Report for 2015 of the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) places India in a group of 30 countries that meet "a systematic, ongoing and egregious" standard for failing to protect religious freedoms. Do you agree with this assessment? Critically comment. (200 Words)

Recent report of USCIRF places India in a group of 30 countries for failing to protect religious freedoms. The report selectively uses recent facts like Ghar Wapasi, attacks on minorities etc. while ignoring the years of calm and peace and, complexity of Indian Society. It ignores the secular character of the

constitution and the protection given to the minorities in the constitution and subsequent statutory enactments. It also ignores the culture of tolerance which is strongly embedded in Indian tradition.

Also, US society also suffered serious deficiencies like slavery and racism. India never had these. US had to go through a civil war and centuries later rights of the blacks were recognised. On the other hand, being the cradle of 4 religions Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism and accepted others generously, India has been best example of Unity in Diversity. While many youths from US were attracted by the ISIS propaganda, not many Indian Muslims joined ISIS ranks.

Though the report may be an intrusion in India's internal affairs and faulted for its methodological and isolationist approach, India should not ignore the larger concerns of communal harmony. Recent events [Ghar Wapasi, forced conversions etc] do cause some anxiety and concern and, need to be addressed with strong political will.

Topic: Salient features of INDIAN SOCIETY; social empowerment

22. Looking at recent incidents, open violence against women continues unabated in India. In your opinion, which factors are responsible for this disturbing trend? As a common man, how will you address this issue. (200 Words)

The recent incident of throwing off two women from a bus by its conductor in the presence of 15 other co-passengers points to the apathy of Indian citizens towards the persisting discrimination and oppression of women in our society. There are many other incidents in which women are molested, harassed, sexually-exploited in the presence of large number of people, for example track records of khap panchayat. (also, instances in Assam where people took videos of girl being molested rather than extending a helping hand). Even when state provided with large number of laws to provide equality and security to women, open violence against women goes unabated.

Major reasons for this disturbing trend are:

1. Patriarchal values still have high regard in our society
2. Cowardliness and self-interested nature of public.
3. Less-effective state laws. For example accepting marital rape as personal affairs
4. Delayed prosecution and conviction.
5. Discouraging of filing of Complaints of Women Violence by Society itself

As a person, I will do the following thing:

1. Ensuring that values of Gender equality are followed in letter and spirit in my personal space - Home, Close friends, relatives etc.
2. Initiating discussions on issue of Women violence whenever presented with an opportunity to do so.
3. Ensuring that in case I happen to witness instance of Women violence, I extend every possible help to ensure justice for victim. If someone is being beaten up on the streets, then I would start calling nearby people and try to stop it. Then, help the victim get to the nearby police station and/or hospital.
4. Support and spread the government policies of anti-dowry, girls child education, domestic violence, female infanticide etc. I ll take the help of social media platforms as well.

Thus, I'll try to follow what Tagore often quoted - "Change needs to begin with one".

Topic: urbanization, their problems and their remedies.

23. In your opinion, how can our cities guarantee acceptable standards of public service delivery and good governance to 400 million Indians today and 800 million Indians by 2050? Analyse. (200 Words)

1. The Municipal Corporations should be equipped with a high level body of experts in urban designing, environment safety and public governance to find optimal ways resource utilisation.
2. Municipal bonds can be issued to generate more revenue along with PPPP infrastructure to build roads, traffic signals, parks.
3. E-Governance to bring in accountability, transparency and efficiency. ICT enabled redressal mechanism
4. CCTV camera's in all public transport system to ensure women safety and give impetus to public transport.
5. Scientifically managed solid waste disposal mechanism and pollution boards to facilitate cleaner surroundings in growing awareness of susceptibility of cities to growing pollution levels
6. Emphasis on service delivery mechanisms e.g. Citizen charters, Sevottam and promoting e-governance.

7. Water and Sewage: This is a critical concept, ground water level in Indian Cities are depleting fast. In California, excess ground water usage have led to imminent desertification. Their Mayor have ordered water cuts by industry and people. India should take a lesson and save itself from this type of disaster.
8. Disaster resistant infrastructure and establish proactive disaster management institutions.
9. Better law and order management by providing ethics based training to the officers so that rights of vulnerable section of society can be protected. Use of community policing to build trust with public.
10. Improving distribution and communication systems like PDS, metro and road connectivity.
11. Providing unhindered access to electricity, water, gas and other utilities throughout the city limits.
12. Land, spatial planning and urban design should include participation of all stakeholders including grass root institutions and civil society organisations.

24. Critically evaluate performance of the past schemes that aimed at transforming Indian cities into more livable spaces. Do you think new schemes which are in the pipeline would address inadequacies of past schemes? Examine. (200 Words)

Urbanization or urban rejuvenation has been a key target area for successive governments given the wave of migration and recognition of cities as engines of growth. Various projects have been launched for improving the urban infrastructure with varying degrees of success:

1. JNNURM - Launched in 2005 till 2014, it focusses on providing technical assistance to cities in areas like transport, solid waste management and accommodation. Rapid Bus transit systems are one of the most visible success. But mostly due to sporadic gains made in scattered cities, the overall impact of the project is not as visible. JNNURM helped in transport in some cities while in housing in some others. So a holistic development was not seen and consequently results were not effective as well.
2. Rajiv Awas Yojana: It focusses on urban poor and aims to make India slum free by 2022. It provides for affordable houses free of cost.
3. Rajiv Rinn Yojana to address the housing needs of the EWS/LIG segments through enhanced credit flow has helped marginal strata of society.

4. National Urban Livelihood Mission (NULM) envisage mobilisation of urban poor household into thrift and credit-based SHG.
5. Integrated Low Cost Sanitation scheme aims at conversion of individual dry latrines into pour flush latrines.
6. National Policy on Urban Street Vending, 2009 &
7. National Urban Housing & Habitat Policy, 2007 has envisaged sustainable mechanism for the development of cities.

Problems in previous planning -lack of proper regional planning, highly centralized, lack of local participation, overlapping of task among numerous civic bodies, lack of fund and most imp. inefficient utilization of our Municipalities

New schemes like smart cities project and AMRUT aims to spend about 2 lakh crore in a span of 5 yrs. Both the schemes are designed to give state govts more say in making cities more smarter and liveable. Central govt will scrutinize the proposals of state govts in regard to make a specific city smart city. Giving more say to state govt in turning city is a welcome point both from federal perspective and local level participation perspective. But ULBs need to be made indispensable partners in this plan. Capacity building of them must be done. It also needs to be ensured that these plans should work synergistically with Schemes like Swatch Bharat mission. More power needs to be given to Mayors and the blue print of the plan before implementation needs to be put in public domain for wider approval. With greater central financial aid and focus on PPP models, greater foreign cooperation, IT, awareness, competition based selection of cities, these schemes certainly are a step in the right direction.

Topic: Secularism

25. How has the Supreme Court of India defined and interpreted secularism in its various judgements? Critically analyse. (200 Words)

Our Constitution provides no explicit meaning of "Secularism" and it was only with the 42nd amendment that the word "Secular" was introduced to the preamble of the constitution. However, SC in its capacity as the guardian and final interpreter of the Constitution has continued to evolve the meaning of the "Secularism".

According to Supreme Court, Indian Secularism is distinct from Western conception and based on values of tolerance and equal respect for all communities. Indian conception is based on the philosophy of "Sarva Dharma Sambhava". It means that State has no religion and shall treat all religions and religious groups equally. A step forward, it has also declared Secularism as the basic feature of Indian constitution in the famous Bommai Judgement.

However, the definition still remains unclear especially w.r.t. the notion of "equal distance". Moreover, the SC has also deliberately avoided critical questions of secularism especially in the Babri Masjid Case, when it was most needed. Also, SC has failed to distinguish between the distinct concepts of "Hindutva" and "Hinduism". The 'Hindutva' judgements defined 'Hindutva' and 'Hinduism' as a 'way of life' and thus not applicable as 'religion' strictly. These have been referred to a higher bench. These interpretations and ambiguity has been used by Communal forces to whip up anti-minority sentiments and promote cultural nationalism.

In the most recent judgement on this issue, the Supreme Court held that notwithstanding Muslim Personal Law allowing a man to have four wives, Service conduct rules requiring dissolution of one marriage before another was done had to be followed.

Thus, there is a need for clarification in the definition of 'Secularism'