1) **Introduction**
   - 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.

2) **India’s Progress**
   - 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.
   - **Health**
     a. India has prioritised strengthening health systems as a non-negotiable strategy towards achieving SDGs.
     b. Synergising collaboration with BRICS countries especially through the 'BRICS Framework for Collaboration on Strategic Projects in Health'.
     c. National Health Policy, 2017 adopted by India is aligned with the SDG-3 targets.
     d. National Health Mission (NHM) to achieve the SDG-3.
     e. Universal Immunisation Programme (UIP) and Mission Indradhanush aimed at expanding coverage by reaching the unreached.
     f. India has made significant progress on basic health indicators like Infant Mortality Rate (IMR), Maternal Mortality Rate (MMR), institutional deliveries and vaccination coverage.
   - **Climate Action**
     a. Promoting green initiatives like investments in renewable energy, allowing corporates to issue Masala Bonds, green bonds, etc.
     b. Ratifying Paris Deal and Active participation in Kigali Agreement.
   - **Energy**
     a. 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**
     a. Improving ease of doing business, promoting Start-Ups and India is moving up in Global Competitiveness Index with 39th position.

3) **Drawbacks**
   - 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.

4) **Concerns / Challenges**
- Rising trend of nationalism and protectionism impede the implementation of the goals
- Industrialised 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 are 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.

5) **Way Forward**
- World leaders need to strengthen their joint efforts to realise 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.

6) **Conclusion**
- 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.