NOTE: Please remember that following ‘answers’ are NOT ‘model answers’. They are NOT synopsis too if we go by definition of the term. What we are providing is content that both meets demand of the question and at the same time gives you extra points in the form of background information.
Table of Contents
Indian culture will cover the salient aspects of Art Forms, Literature and Architecture from ancient to modern times................................................................. 8

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Art and culture are reflected to a far greater extent than political</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>history in the epigraphic sources. Discuss. (250 words)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How relevant is mythology for children now a days? What values do</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stories aim to inculcate in children? Explain. (250 words)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“The case of Dholivira from the Indus valley civilisation presents a</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>perfect analogy as to how climate change can increase future drought</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>risk”, Comment. (250 words)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why India being a country which prides itself on enjoying unity in</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>diversity planning for a common script? Will a common script like</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bharati bring down communication barriers in the country? Analyse.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(250 words)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Throw light on the impact of Jainism and its teachings on the</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>composite culture of Indian Society (250 words)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluate the impact of Central Asian contacts in moulding socio-</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cultural, political and economic life of ancient Indian society.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(250 words)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present the philosophies of ‘Din-i-Ialhi’ and ‘Sulhi-i Kul’ that</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>embodied Akbar’s administration. How far do you think the present</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>day communal tensions can be addressed through such inclusive</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>religious practices? Explain. (250 words)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discuss the heritage of the India’s ancient developments in the</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>field of Science and Technology. (250 words)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trace the Socio-economic life of the regional kingdoms in Medieval</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India. (250 words)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discuss the significance of the findings of Nagardhan excavations</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in understanding the Vakataka dynasty. (250 words)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modern Indian history from about the middle of the eighteenth century</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>until the present- significant events, personalities, issues.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discuss the contributions of Ashfaqullah Khan in the Indian freedom</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>struggle with special focus on his contributions to Hindustan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socialist Republican Association. (250 words)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who was Tanaaji Malusare? Discuss the significant role played by</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>him in the Battle of Singhagad? (250 words)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Freedom Struggle – its various stages and important contributors</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/contributions from different parts of the country.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discuss in detail the contributions of Savitribai Phule on women’s</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>education and establishing equality in India. (250 words)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-independence consolidation and reorganization within the country.</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unifying post-partition India and princely states under one</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>administration was perhaps the most important task facing the</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>political leadership. Explain. (250 words)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History of the world will include events from 18th century such as</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>industrial revolution, world wars, redrawal of national boundaries,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>colonization, decolonization. .............................................</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Auschwitz was and is, still the center of Holocaust history”,</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discuss. (250 words)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Youtube: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCpoccbCX9GElwaile4HljwA
Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/insightsonindia
Salient features of Indian Society, Diversity of India................................................................. 43

The idea of India is being consistently challenged by narrow ideologies in recent times in our society. Analyse the causative factors for this phenomenon as well discuss the impact of such a situation and suggest measures to tackle the same. (250 words) ......................................................... 43

Deliberate upon the need and significance of preserving India’s linguistic diversity. Also comment upon the measures required for the same. (250 words) ................................................................. 44

What do you understand by social Mobility? Discuss the Concerns and challenges highlighted for India by the recently released Global Social Mobility Report. (250 words) .................................................. 46

The Global Inequality Crisis between the rich and the poor, men and women mainly owes to a flawed and sexist economic system. Do you agree? Critically examine. (250 words) ............. 48

Inhuman practices in the name of religion in the country are a cause of worry in the country, the recent step taken by the govt. of Karnataka; by adopting anti-superstition law is a step in the right direction. Discuss the underlying factors responsible for the prevalence of such practices and suggest solutions to address the same. (250 words) .................................................. 51

Role of women and women’s organization .............................................................................. 54

Lack of a conversation in the mainstream about Women issues, specifically related to health is a sign of sexism and ageism. Analyse. (250 words) ................................................................. 54

Population and associated issues, poverty and developmental issues........................................ 56

Critically examine whether growing population is the cause of poverty or poverty is the main cause of population increase in India. (250 words) ................................................................. 56

India requires an integrated housing development strategy for the rural context. Elucidate. (250 words) ...................................................................................................................... 58

“Moved and dogged out of their original habitats, Bru community are now largely internally-displaced refugees”, Critically examine the internal displacement crisis of the community and comment on the efforts made by government of India so far to protect them. (250 words) ...... 60

Social empowerment, communalism, regionalism & secularism. .............................................. 62

No country can realize its full potential without the equal participation of women and men. Achieving gender equality is not only the right thing to do but the key to a country’s growth and development. Elaborate in the backdrop of recently released “Women, Business and the Law 2020” report. (250 words) ................................................................. 62

How does India Socialism contrast with Socialism embraced by the Communist countries? Discuss the idea of Democratic socialism. (250 words) ................................................................. 65

The share of the elderly in the population is expected to increase to 20 per cent of the population by 2050. Thus to ensure a life of dignity, social security and safety, enabling them to actively participate in economic development and the process of nation building is an absolute necessity. Discuss. (250 words) ...................................................................................................................... 67

Salient features of world’s physical geography. ........................................................................... 71

What is a complex volcano? Discuss the salient features with suitable illustrations. (250 words) ...................................................................................................................... 71
Distribution of key natural resources across the world (including South Asia and the Indian subcontinent); factors responsible for the location of primary, secondary, and tertiary sector industries in various parts of the world (including India)............................................................................................................................................ 72

Discuss in detail the key landforms formed due to groundwater. (250 words)................................. 72
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  AIR 1, CSIR 2015
- Prabhat Singh
  AIR 4, CSIR 2015

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  AIR 41, CSIR 2016
- Shriram Sivaloganathan
  AIR 52, CSIR 2016
- Santosh M
  AIR 61, CSIR 2016

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- Amol Dandekar
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CSAT – 10) and a sure shot in MAINS
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Indian culture will cover the salient aspects of Art Forms, Literature and Architecture from ancient to modern times.

Art and culture are reflected to a far greater extent than political history in the epigraphic sources. Discuss.(250 words)

_The Hindu_

**Why this question:**
In a significant find, the Epigraphy Branch of the Archaeological Survey of India has discovered the earliest epigraphic evidence so far for the Saptamatrika cult. It is also the earliest Sanskrit inscription to have been discovered in South India as on date. Thus the question.

**Key demand of the question:**
Discuss in detail the significance of epigraphy in bringing out the value of art and culture of a region; explain in what way they reflect far greater depths of art and culture.

**Directive:**
_Discuss_ – This is an all-encompassing directive – you have to debate on paper by going through the details of the issues concerned by examining each one of them. You have to give reasons for both for and against arguments.

**Structure of the answer:**

_Introduction:_
Explain briefly what epigraphy implies.

_Body:_
Discuss that Epigraphy implies the study of inscriptions. Beginning from the age of Harappan civilization a number of inscriptions have been discovered belonging to different periods of early Indian history. These inscriptions throw light on the politico-administrative, socio-cultural and religious life of the people. Explain then the history reflected by the epigraphic sources; political history, art and culture etc. Justify its significance.

**Conclusion:**
Thus art and culture as well as political life are reflected well in the epigraphic sources. At the same time, they must be complemented and supplemented by literary sources and other evidence to create a better picture of the early Indian Historical Tradition.

**Introduction:**
Epigraphy, the study of written matter recorded on hard or durable material. Beginning from the age of Harappan civilization a number of inscriptions have been discovered belonging to different periods of early Indian history. These inscriptions throw light on the politico-administrative, socio-cultural and religious life of the people. Generally, any historical information is acknowledged as true blue when it is substantiated by an epigraphical record. So too in the study of the history of literature and language, epigraphy has a vital role to play.

_Body:_

In a significant find, the Epigraphy Branch of the Archaeological Survey of India has discovered the earliest epigraphic evidence so far for the Saptamatrika cult. It is also the earliest Sanskrit inscription to have been discovered in South India as on date.

**Political History as reflected in Epigraphic sources:**
- The edicts of great sovereign king Ashoka Maurya, have played a very important role in the construction of Indian history. The gist of Ashoka’s edicts is what he calls dharma which refers to a code of morals which he believed to be the teachings of Buddha.

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• The Prayaga prashasti inscription gives us an exhaustive account of political career of Samudragupta and the kingdoms conquered by him.
• Inscriptions throw light on politico-administrative institutions and practices. Ex. Ashokan inscriptions contain the designations and the responsibilities of various officers.
• In an inscription of the Vijayanagara king Bukka, we are told that the emperor settled the disputes between a Vaishnava seer and a Jain teacher by making them agree to be friends and raise no points of dispute.
• Inscriptions also throw light on other social customs. For example, the Brahmadeyam inscription refers to the sati committed by the queen of Rajendra Chola.
• The inscriptions also contain the details of wars and battles - ex. Aihole inscription of Ravikirti indicates the defeat of Harsha by Pulakesi II.

Art and Culture as reflected in Epigraphic Sources:
• The earliest reference to dance is found in an inscription from Jogimara cave (Second century B.C.) It mentions a Sutanuka, a temple dancer and her lover Devadatta, a sculptor from.
• The inscriptions help in understanding the language and the script of the age. For instance, the Ashokan inscriptions inform that Prakrit was the common language and Brahmi the most common script.
• The objects used for writing inscriptions help in understanding the material culture of the age. Ex. Harappan people used steatite. Mauryans used stone and copper plate inscriptions.
• Inscriptions also help in understanding the social and cultural life of the ancient age. Ex. Eran inscription (510A.D) provides the first written record of Sati. Many inscriptions contain details of the donations and land grants to temples, monasteries and men of education and learning.
• Inscriptions throw light on the religious life as well. Ex. Mora inscription throws light on Bhagvatism.
• Ancient Indians developed cultural and trades contacts with south-east Asian countries like Java, Sumatra, Cambodia and Borneo. A large number of inscriptions found in these places which are very much akin to Indian epigraphs in respect of their language and script reflect the expansion of Indian culture in these countries.

Conclusion:
Epigraphy is a sine qua non for constructing the political and cultural history of ancient India. At the same time, they must be complemented and supplemented by literary sources and other evidence to create a better picture of the early Indian Historical Tradition.

How relevant is mythology for children now a days? What values do stories aim to inculcate in children? Explain. (250 words)

**Indian Express**

**Why this question:**
The article highlights the significance of storytelling and Mythology to Children and the benefits they carry in imparting values to children.

**Key demand of the question:**
Discuss the significance of storytelling and Mythology to Children in detail.

**Directive:**
Explain – Clarify the topic by giving a detailed account as to how and why it occurred, or what is the particular context. You must be defining key terms where ever appropriate, and substantiate with relevant associated facts.

**Structure of the answer:**
Introduction:
Explain that stories help connect Children to reality.

Body:
Discuss in detail the benefits of Mythology and storytelling.
Explain how it justifies the fact that children can’t be given direct sermon.
Explain how they help build values in children.
Use examples to justify.

Conclusion:
Conclude with importance of it.

Introduction:
India has a rich history and tradition of oral song and storytelling. This took many forms: Simple stories (like Panchatantra), Folktales (like Jataka Tales), Songs, Mythological tales and Epics (like Mahabharat and Ramayan), Bhajans, Slokas, Satsangs, Janapada songs, Couplets etc. The spoken word has been, and still is, the most frequently used and most important mode of communication; even in these days of texting and emails.

Body:
Significance of mythology and story-telling for children:

- It teaches them about our culture:
  - Mythology is an important part of any culture. It plays a large role in the rituals followed in society, and in the way your community thinks and functions.
  - In a world where our morals and values are challenged every day, a good grounding and understanding of what made us who we are can help our children stay strong.

- It teaches them about good and evil:
  - The true essence of the stories is not just fictional characters with many heads and hands winning, but really about one conquering their own inner demons.
  - All the villains in our mythology are representations of undesirable traits we sometimes develop.
  - For example, Hiranyakashipu represents ego and Bhasmasur represents lust, and so on. If children read such subjects from a young age, they will not only learn about good and bad traits, but also how one can conquer them.

- It unlocks their imagination:
  - A simple Google search will reveal many reasons why it’s important for a child to develop a healthy imagination.
  - It is important in all areas, whether for artistic pursuits or academic ones like problem-solving.
  - Look at Indian mythology and you will find it is replete with stories that require a young mind to stretch and imagine seemingly inconceivable situations and characters.

- It encourages curiosity:
Some may say curiosity killed the cat, but when it comes to children, curiosity awakens the intellect.

Many good educators believe curiosity is a significant and common trait in all students who excel in any form of academics or sport. The reason is simple – curiosity leads to exploration which leads to development and ultimately mastery.

Created great occasions where people could socialise and fostered a strong feeling of community

- **It teaches them to respect women:**
  - Our mythology is nothing if not an ode to feminism.
  - Read any of our stories and you will find powerful women who take their own decisions and aren’t dependent on men.
  - Whether young boys or girls, it is important to expose them to powerful women figures and teach them that women should not be disrespected simply because of their sex.
  - While school and colleges provide the necessary formal education, we can help our children develop their personality and values by reading mythology.

- **Other importance:**
  - Positively impacts language development including Vocabulary, Grammar and Pronunciation
  - Helps enhance memory and instil the importance of values like discipline and regular practice
  - Helps develop an appreciation and understanding of art forms like Music, Literature, Poetry, Dance and Drama
  - Fosters a stronger sense of cultural identity and an understanding of our rich heritage

**Conclusion:**
The storytelling plays an important role in early childhood and formative years. Such a rich tradition has lasting and wide-ranging benefits on early childhood development. It has many benefits for children in their formative years as it inculcates values and also improves child’s verbal proficiency. But unfortunately, this art of oral storytelling is slowly getting lost due to various forces of modernity. There is a need for utilization of the ICT to further spread the art of story-telling.

“The case of Dholivira from the Indus valley civilisation presents a perfect analogy as to how climate change can increase future drought risk”, Comment.(250 words)

**Economic Times**

**Why this question:**
The Harappan Civilization which is also known as Indus Valley civilization is believed to be the oldest civilization in the world. Over the years, many archaeologists tried to understand the cause of its decline and collapse in 2nd century BC. The question aims to ascertain the learning from the civilisation in the aspects of climate change.

**Key demand of the question:**
The answer must discuss the case of Dholivira and in what way we the future generations can learn about the effects of climate change.
Directive:

Comment—here we have to express our knowledge and understanding of the issue and form an overall opinion thereupon.

Structure of the answer:

Introduction:
Highlight the significance of the civilisation in short.

Body:
A recent study conducted by the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Kharagpur reveals that the decline of Harappan city Dholavira was caused by drying up of river like Saraswati river and Meghalayan drought.
Discuss in what way the drought could be related to climate change aspects of that time.
Draw an analogy of how the past experiences can prove to be lessons to our future generations.

Conclusion:
Conclude with what needs to be done to mitigate and arrest climate change.

Introduction:

The Indus Valley Civilization (IVC) was a Bronze Age civilization (3300-1300 BCE; mature period 2600-1900 BCE) extending from what today is northeast Afghanistan to Pakistan and northwest India. Along with Ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia it was one of three early civilizations of the Old World, and of the three the most widespread. It flourished in the basins of the Indus River, one of the major rivers of Asia, and the Ghaggar-Hakra River, which once coursed through northwest India and eastern Pakistan. At its peak, the Indus Civilization may have had a population of over five million. Inhabitants of the ancient Indus river valley developed new techniques in handicraft (carnelian products, seal carving) and metallurgy (copper, bronze, lead, and tin).

Body:

Findings of the research:

- A recent study conducted by the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Kharagpur reveals that the decline of Harappan city Dholavira was caused by drying up of river like Saraswati river and Meghalayan drought.
- These researchers have for the first time connected the decline of Harappan city Dholavira to the disappearance of a Himalayan snow-fed river which once flowed in the Rann of Kutch.
- They have been able to connect the dots between the growth and decline of the Dholavira, located in the Rann with this river which resembles the Himalayan river Saraswati.
- They dated archaeological remains from all the stages and also inferred climate shifts through time which led to the rise and fall of the Harappan city.

Droughts are among the most expensive weather-related disasters in the world (pdf), affecting ecosystems, agriculture and human society. The scale of the impacts underlines how important it is to understand droughts and how their likelihood and severity can be made worse by climate change. More than 44 per cent of India’s areas were under various degrees of drought conditions.
(abnormally dry to exceptionally dry) as of June 10, 2019 — that is nearly 11 percentage point over a year ago, according to the Drought Early Warning System (DEWS).

**Climate change and drought risk:**

- According to a Pew Research Center survey, droughts have been drier and lasting longer in recent years thanks in part to climate change.
- Many regions in the Middle East, Asia, and Africa are also experiencing higher air temperatures, drier air, and more severe or frequent droughts.
- While droughts can have different causes depending on the area of the world and other natural factors, the majority of scientists have started to link more intense droughts to climate change.
- That’s because as more greenhouse gas emissions are released into the air, causing air temperatures to increase, more moisture evaporates from land and lakes, rivers, and other bodies of water.
- Warmer temperatures also increase evaporation in plant soils, which affects plant life and can reduce rainfall even more. And when rainfall does come to drought-stricken areas, the drier soils it hits are less able to absorb the water, increasing the likelihood of flooding – a lose-lose situation.

**Way forward:**

- Minimising susceptibility to climate change requires drastically extending irrigation via efficient drip and sprinkler technologies realising “more crop for every drop”.
- Replacing untargeted subsidies in power and fertiliser by direct income support.
- More broadly, the cereal-centricity of policy needs to be reviewed
- Diversifying the crops is an effective way to adapt its food-production systems to the growing influence of climate change, improve nutrition, reduce agricultural water demand and at the same time reduce energy demand
- leadership programs for regional and rural communities and developing better drought indicators,
- The government is implementing the National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC) which has eight missions in the specific areas of solar energy, energy efficiency, water, agriculture, Himalayan eco-system, sustainable habitat, green India and strategic knowledge on climate change.

**Conclusion:**

Researchers highlight that the weather situation may get worse in coming years, with more uneven distributions of precipitation during the monsoon season compounded by rising temperatures which would adversely impact the yields of major crops.

**Why India being a country which prides itself on enjoying unity in diversity planning for a common script? Will a common script like Bharati bring down communication barriers in the country? Analyse.(250 words)**

*The Hindu*

**Why this question:**

The question aims to ascertain the prospects and significance of having a common script like Bharati for Indian languages.

**Key demand of the question:**

The answer must discuss the both opportunities obstacles posed by such an idea of having a common script and explain in what way it can bring down all the communication barriers.
Directive:
Analyze – When asked to analyse, you have to examine methodically the structure or nature of the topic by separating it into component parts and present them as a whole in a summary.

Structure of the answer:
Introduction:
Briefly explain the significance of Bharati script.

Body:
First discuss the basic details about Bharati – it is a unified script for nine Indian languages which is being proposed as a common script for India.

Scripts included: The scripts that have been integrated include Devnagari, Bengali, Gurmukhi, Gujarati, Oriya, Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam and Tamil. English and Urdu have not been integrated so far as they have a very different phonetic organization.

Explain the need for it – The Roman script is used as a common script for many European languages (English, French, German, Italian etc.), which facilitates communication across nations that speak and write those languages.

Likewise a common script for the entire country is hoped to bring down many communication barriers in India.

Conclusion:
Draw a comparison with other countries and highlight the importance of a common script.

Introduction:
Bharati is a unified script for nine Indian languages which is being proposed as a common script for India. It has been developed by team of researchers from IIT-Madras headed by Professor V. Srinivasa Chakravarthy. The scripts that have been integrated include Devnagari, Bengali, Gurmukhi, Gujarati, Oriya, Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam and Tamil. English and Urdu have not been integrated so far as they have a very different phonetic organisation. Now, going a step further, developed a method for reading documents in Bharati script using a multi-lingual optical character recognition (OCR) scheme.

Body:

Need for a common script:

- The Roman script is used as a common script for many European languages (English, French, German, Italian etc.), which facilitates communication across nations that speak and write those languages.
- The scripts of Indian languages pose a problem for such a character recognition because the vowel and consonant-modifier components are attached to the main consonant part. This difficulty is removed in the Bharati script which can be easily read.
- A common script for the entire country is hoped to bring down many communication barriers in India.

Three tiered structure:

- The ease in design comes about because the Bharati characters are made up of three tiers stacked vertically.
- The consonant at the root of the letter is placed in the centre and the modifiers are in the top and bottom tiers.
- Currently, the team has developed a universal finger-spelling language for the nine Indian languages.
As of now, they are working on a system that can help people sign documents using a finger-spelling method, and future plans include developing a new Braille system with the Bharati script.

Challenges for Bharti script:

- India’s startling linguistic diversity shows itself in many forms: in oral traditions, through the literature, in the film industries, etc.
- But the most visible marker of our linguistic identities is, of course, our scripts.
- The next question is how something like Bharati would work in India’s rapidly growing language space online.
- A 2017 study by Google and KPMG, the consulting group, predicted that 90% of the 326 million Indians estimated to come online for the first time between 2016 and 2021 will be accessing web-pages in an Indian language.

Conclusion:

Scripts are used primarily for their cultural value, and not for the utilitarian purpose of mass-learning, leave alone digitisation. So no matter how well-made Bharati is, it will need to overcome a significant level of inertia before India’s massive population becomes familiar with it. While Team Bharati’s initiative is interesting as an intellectual exercise, there are significant issues that need to be addressed before it becomes a viable alternative to, say, modified Latin.

Throw light on the impact of Jainism and its teachings on the composite culture of Indian Society (250 words)

Class XI NCERT Medieval history

Why this question:
The question seeks to examine the principles and basic tenets of Jainism and the teachings that reflect in today’s Indian society owing to the impact of Jainism.

Key demand of the question:
The answer must discuss the impact of the teachings of Jainism in general on our society right from the beginning through our freedom struggle, social life, polity etc.

Structure of the answer:

Introduction:
Jainism played an important role in Indian Culture. Its impact on society was reflected not only in Indian society but also in national movement and constitution making and many other aspects of day to day life.

Body:
In detail discuss Jain teachings and ideologies as reflected in different aspects of our society- principle of Ahimsa that reflected in the freedom struggle, principles of Secularism, non-violence, position of women, equity etc. Bring out the articles in our Indian constitution that reflect these tenets and confirm the significance of the teachings of the school.

Conclusion:
Conclude by reasserting the importance of Jainism and the need to acknowledge and preserve the religion to ensure its contributions to the composite culture of the country.

Introduction:
Jainism, one of the three major religions of early India, has been continuously practised since around the middle of the first millennium BC. Jainism had given a severe jolt to the Vedic religion. It brought...
changes in the religious atmosphere of India. By its contribution it enriched the Indian Culture. It cast its shadow over many aspects of Indian Culture.

Body:

Impacts of Jainism and its teachings on the composite culture of Indian Society:

- **Growth of Language and Literature:**
  - Jainism influenced Indian language and literature. Vardhman Mahavir preached in ‘Ardha-Magadhi’ language, the language of the common man.
  - The people knowing ‘Magadhi’ and ‘Soruaseni’ could easily follow the preaching’s of Mahavir. In due course of time the Jaina Canonical texts were written in Prakrit language.
  - Thus, the vernacular and regional languages were enriched by Jainism.
  - Further, the Jaina texts like ‘Anga’, ‘Upanga’, ‘Kalpasutra’, ‘Archarangasutra’, ‘Uttaradhyayanasutra’ etc. were also written in Sanskrit. Thus, the literature also grew due to the rise of Jainism.

- **Principle of Non-Violence:**
  - Mahavira Jaina was the embodiment of peace. He was the preacher of non-violence.
  - He rejected the Vedic rituals and taught to be kind and humane to the animals.
  - Further, he emphasized that both living and non-living beings have life and they get pain.
  - His concept of non-violence largely influenced the course of Indian history.
  - Even a great leader like Mahatma Gandhi followed the principle of non-violence and became successful by ousting the British from India.

- **Influence on Politics:**
  - Jainism influenced the Indians politics too. It cast its influence over many rulers.
  - The great Chandragupta Maurya became the famous Chadramuni coming under the spell of Jainism.
  - The mighty emperor Mahameghavahana Aira Kharavela became an ardent devotee of Mahavira Jaina.
  - Examples can be multiplied. By following the principle of non-violence the kings became kind hearted and tolerant. This was a lasting impact of Jainism on Indian politics.

- **Growth of Trading Community:**
  - Jainism contributed a lot for the growth of trading community.
  - At first, Jainism became popular among the traders and merchants. It fostered brotherhood among them which gave rise to guild system in future.
  - The merchants became rich and got a special position in the society.
Owing to their wealth and fame they came closer to ruling class.
The cooperation between them brought stability in the society.

**Creation of Healthy Society:**
- Jainism went a long way in creating a healthy society.
- Mahavir preached against the caste system. With the end of caste system in society the grip of the higher caste over the lower cast ended.
- The lower class people were not to be exploited by the higher caste people.
- The bitterness between the two antagonistic sections of the society melted away. This gave rise to a healthy society which influenced the course of Indian history.

**Growth of Charitable Institutions:**
- Jainism helped a lot in the growth of charitable institutions. Its influenced on the kings and other people was abiding.
- The kings created many caves for the dwelling of the sages of different castes. They also distributed foods and clothes to the people.
- With the gradual march of time other rich people followed this practice. They created charitable institutions to serve the people.
- Thus, social welfare was largely attained due to the growth of charitable institutions.

**Growth of Art and Architecture:**
- Jainism helped a lot in the growth of Art and Architecture.
- The kings patronized Jainism. So many Jaina unages and the images of Jaina Tirthankara were found in many parts of India.
- The image of Bahuvalin in Shravanavelgola in Karnataka (known as Gomateswara) is the highest Jaina image ever craved in India.
- The Jaina images found in Mathura, Bundelkhand, Northern Madhya Pradesh, Orissa and Benares are important Jaina Art remains in India.
- The cave art of Udayagiri in Bhubaneswar, Madhya Pradesh, Ellora and Maharashtra are unique examples of Jaina art.
- The Dilwara Jaina temple at Mount Abu of Rajasthan is a dream in marble. Thus, Jainism helped in the growth of art and architecture in India.

**Literature:**
- Jainism has also rendered valuable contribution to the growth of vernacular literature.
- While the Buddhist and the Brahmans preached in Pali and Sanskrit, the Jains preached in the language of the people.
- Most of the Jain literature was written in Prakriti.
- Large literature was produced in the vernacular language also.
For example, Mahavira preached in a mixed dialect called Ardha Magadhi so that people of the area could understand his teachings.

- The Jains also influenced the Kanarese literature in the South. It may be noted here that certain Jain works were also produced in Sanskrit language.

**New Touch of Life:**

- Jainism gave a new touch to life.
- It criticized the Vedic religion and the pre-dominance of Brahmanism.
- Thus, the people turned away their attention from the unnecessary ritualistic practices. They led a very simple and normal life.
- This influences the society a lot and moulded its character in future.

**Conclusion:**

In fact, Jainism went a long way in influencing the Indian culture. Mahavir Jaina raised voice against Brahmanism. His simple life and teachings brought him closer to the mess. In due course of time, Jainism received royal patronage and flourished inside the country. In the field of art and architecture, society, religion, Jainism left indelible marks.

**Evaluate the impact of Central Asian contacts in moulding socio-cultural, political and economic life of ancient Indian society. (250 words)**

**INFlibNet**

**Why this question:**

*The question is to examine the impact of central Asian contacts on the Indian society.*

**Key demand of the question:**

*The answer must discuss the impact of central Asian contacts, their impact and effect on the Indian society from past to present.*

**Directive:**

*Evaluate – When you are asked to evaluate, you have to pass a sound judgement about the truth of the given statement in the question or the topic based on evidences. You have to appraise the worth of the statement in question. There is scope for forming a personal opinion here.*

**Structure of the answer:**

**Introduction:**

Briefly explain that Central Asian contacts led to the fusion of native culture with foreign culture which had impacts in all spheres of life such as moulding socio-cultural, political and economic lives.

**Body:**

In detail explain the impact of various features that affected our culture – Art, literature, architecture, pottery, Societal tensions and religion etc.

Discuss the political impact – the idea of Feudalism, kinship, clans etc. Then explain the impact on economic life – New trade routes, introduction of gold coins, agriculture etc.

**Conclusion:**

With the entry of the foreigners intimate contacts were established between Central Asia and India. These foreign elements were later Indianized and thus enriching the native culture and society in myriad ways.

**Introduction:**

Indian society is living proof of the doctrine that culture is the attribute of a land and its people. Assimilation and synthesis have been the process of Indian civilization. Relations between India and...
Central Asia are ancient and civilisational. India has been connected closely with Central Asia through the Silk Route from circa 3rd century BC till 15th century AD when the sea route from Europe to India was discovered. This made the land journey unviable because it was more risky, longer in duration, more expensive and volumes of cargo that could be carried by sea-faring vessels were much larger than by caravans over the land route.

Body:

Impact on Economy

Agriculture and Trade

- The coming of the Central Asian people established intimate contacts between Central Asia and India. India received a great fund of gold from the Altai mountains in Central Asia.
- Gold may also have been received by it through trade with the Roman empire.
- The Kushans controlled the Silk Route, which started from China and passed through their empire in Central Asia and Afghanistan to Iran, and western Asia which formed part of the Roman empire in the eastern Mediterranean zone.
- This route was a source of substantial income for the Kushans, and they built a large prosperous empire on the strength of the tolls levied from traders.
- It is significant that the Kushans were the first rulers in India to issue gold coins on a wide scale. The Kushans also promoted agriculture.
- The earliest archaeological traces of large-scale irrigation in Pakistan, Afghanistan, and western Central Asia date to the Kushan period.

Impact on Polity

- The Shakas and the Kushanas propagated the idea of the divine origin of kingship. The Kushan kings were called sons of god.
- The Kushans introduced the satrap system of government in India.
- The whole empire was divided into several satrapies and each satrapy was governed by a satrap.
- The hereditary dual rule which includes two kings ruling in the same empire at the same time was introduced.
- The practice of military governorship was also introduced by the Greeks.
- The governors appointed by the Greeks were called Strategos. These were important to maintain the newly conquered areas.

Better Cavalry:

- The Shakas and Kushans added new ingredients to Indian culture and enriched it immensely.
- They settled in India for good and completely identified themselves with its culture.
- As they did not have their own script, written language, or any organized religion, they adopted these components of culture from India and became an integral part of Indian society to which they contributed considerably.
- They introduced better cavalry and the use of the riding horse on a large scale.
• They popularized the use of reins and saddles, which appear in the Buddhist sculpture of the second and third centuries AD.

• The Shakas and the Kushans were excellent horsemen.

• Their passion for horsemanship is shown by numerous equestrian terracotta figures of Kushan times discovered from Bagram in Afghanistan.

• Some of these foreign horsemen were heavily armoured and fought with spears and lances.

• Presumably they also used some form of toe stirrup made of rope which facilitated their movements.

• The Shakas and Kushans introduced the turban, tunic, trousers, and heavy long coat.

Impact on Socio-Cultural life:

• The Origin of Mahayana Buddhism:
  ▪ Indian religions underwent changes in post-Maurya times partly due to a great leap in trade and artisanal activity and partly due to the large influx of people from Central Asia.
  ▪ Buddhism was especially affected.
  ▪ The monks and nuns could not afford to lose the cash donations from the growing body of traders and artisans concentrated in towns.
  ▪ Large numbers of coins are found in the monastic areas of Nagarjunakonda in AP. Also, the Buddhists welcomed foreigners who were non-vegetarians.
  ▪ This new form of Buddhism came to be called Mahayana or the Great Vehicle.
  ▪ In the old puritan Buddhism, certain things associated with the Buddha were worshipped as his symbols.
  ▪ These were replaced with his images at the time when the Christian era began.

• Religious Developments:
  ▪ Some rulers and others from Central Asia adopted Vaishnavism, which means the worship of Vishnu, the god of protection and preservation.
  ▪ The Greek ambassador called Heliodorus set up a pillar in honour of Vasudeva at Besnagar near Vidisa (headquarters of Vidisa district) in MP around the middle of the second century BC.
  ▪ A few other rulers adopted Buddhism.
  ▪ The famous Greek ruler Menander became a Buddhist. The questions and the answers that he exchanged with the Buddhist teacher Nagasena, also called Nagarjuna, is a good source for the intellectual history of the post-Maurya period.
  ▪ The Kushan rulers worshipped both Shiva and the Buddha, and the images of these two gods appeared on the Kushan coins.

• Structures and Pottery:
The Shaka-Kushan phase saw a distinct advance in building activities. Excavations have revealed several layers of construction, sometimes over half a dozen, at various sites in north India.

In them we find the use of burnt bricks for flooring and tiles for both flooring and roofing.

However, the use of tiles may not have been adopted from outside. The period also saw the construction of brick-walls.

The characteristic pottery is red ware, both plain and polished, with medium to fine fabric. The distinctive pots are sprinklers and spouted channels.

They remind us of red pottery with thin fabric found in the same period in Kushan layers in Central Asia.

Red pottery techniques were widely known in Central Asia and are to be found even in regions such as Farghana which lay on the peripheries of the Kushan cultural zone.

- **Gandhara and Mathura Schools of Art:**

  The foreign princes became enthusiastic patrons of Indian art and literature, and displayed the zeal characteristic of new converts.

  The Kushan empire brought together masons and other artisans trained in different schools and countries.

  This gave rise to several schools of art: Central Asian, Gandhara, and Mathura. Pieces of sculpture from Central Asia show a synthesis of both local and Indian elements influenced by Buddhism.

  Indian craftsmen came into contact with the Central Asians, Greeks, and Romans, especially in the north-western frontier of India in Gandhara.

  This gave rise to a new form of art in which images of the Buddha were made in the Graeco-Roman style, and his hair fashioned in the Graeco-Roman style.

  The influence of Gandhara art also spread to Mathura, which was primarily a centre of indigenous art.

  Mathura produced beautiful images of the Buddha, but it is also famous for the headless erect statue of Kanishka whose name is inscribed at its lower end. It also produced several stone images of Vardhamana Mahavira.

  During the same period, beautiful works of art were created at several places south of the Vindhyas.

  Wonderful Buddhist caves were constructed out of rock in Maharashtra. In AP, Nagarjunakonda and Amaravati became great centres of Buddhist art, and stories associated with the Buddha were portrayed on numerous panels.

- **Literature**

  The Sanskrit literature was patronized by foreign princes.
### Conclusion:

Thus the invasion and contact of central Asian princes impacted India in several spheres such as pottery, cavalry, literature, science and technology, religion and polity.

Present the philosophies of ‘Din-i-Ilahi’ and ‘Sulh-i Kul’ that embodied Akbar’s administration. How far do you think the present day communal tensions can be addressed through such inclusive religious practices? Explain. (250 words)

**History of Medieval India class XI NCERT**

**Why this question:**
The question is from the static portions of GS paper I, and it aims to analyse the Philosophies of ‘Din-i-Ilahi’ and ‘Sulh-i Kul’ and its relevance as of today.

**Key demand of the question:**
Discuss in detail the Philosophies of ‘Din-i-Ilahi’ and ‘Sulh-i Kul’ and suggest their relevance to the society as of today.

**Directive:**
*Explain* – Clarify the topic by giving a detailed account as to how and why it occurred, or what is the particular context. You must be defining key terms where ever appropriate, and substantiate with relevant associated facts.

**Structure of the answer:**

**Introduction:**
Akbar, ruler of most of South Asia in the 16th and early 17th century, rejected bigotry and made unprecedented moves to help non-Muslims feel at peace in his Mughal empire.

**Body:**
Discuss in detail the Philosophies of ‘Din-i-Ilahi’ and ‘Sulh-i Kul’-

*Din-i-Ilahi:*
The quest of Akbar culminated in the Tauhid-i-ilahi (the divine monotheism) or Din-i-Ilahi, the word Din was applied decades later. In 1582, this religious doctrine which combined mysticism, philosophy and nature worship was

Propounded by Akbar which recognized no prophets. Akbar declared himself the spiritual guide of his subjects. His religion Tauhid-i-Ilahi favored peace and tolerance.

Then discuss the elements in detail.

*Din-i-Ilahi was an eclectic doctrine that contained elements from very diverse fields. It overthrew almost every ceremonial rule whether Islam or Muslim, but took the good ideas from the Brahmins as well as from the missionaries and adopted “Sun” as a symbol of the worship of the creator. He started a new Ilahi era.*

Then discuss the relevance of the two concepts to today’s society.

**Conclusion:**
Conclude with importance of such secular and tolerant policies.

**Introduction:**
Akbar’s religious policy of harmony, reconciliation, and synthesis among all the religions did not develop all of a sudden. He was a pious Muslim but after marrying Jodha Bai of Amber, he abolished pilgrim tax. In 1562, he abolished jiziya. Akbar took a deep personal interest in religious matters. He founded an academy, the Ibadat Khana, “the House of Worship,” in 1575, where representatives of all major faiths could meet to discuss questions of theology. Listening to these debates, Akbar

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concluded that no single religion captured the whole truth and that they instead should be combined.

**Body:**

**Din-i-Illahi**

- The “Divine Faith” in Persian, was an elite eclectic religious movement, which never numbered more than 19 adherents, formulated by the Mughal emperor Akbar in the late 16th century AD.
- The Din-i Ilâhî was essentially an ethical system, prohibiting such sins as lust, sensuality, slander, and pride and enjoining the virtues of piety, prudence, abstinence, and kindness.
- Some of the important principles of Din-i-Illahi were:
  - God is great. He is One.
  - Akbar is His apostle or representative.
  - Every adherent of this faith should be willing to give away property, life, religion and honour to the emperor.
  - Every member should take an oath of doing good to everybody.
  - No member should have blind faith.
  - The followers of this faith should not approve of child marriage as well as old marriage.
  - All should show respect to all religions.
  - Whenever the followers of this faith meet, one should say: Allah-Hu-Akbar (God is great) and in reply the other should say Jalla-Jallah – hu (God is beautiful and merciful).
  - As far as possible, the followers of this religion should not eat meat.
- The soul was encouraged to purify itself through yearning for God (a tenet of Sufism, Islamic mysticism), celibacy was condoned (as in Catholicism), and the slaughter of animals was forbidden (as in Jainism).
- There were no sacred scriptures or a priestly hierarchy in the Din-i Ilâhî. In its ritual, it borrowed heavily from Zoroastrianism, making light (Sun and fire) an object of divine worship and reciting, as in Hinduism, the 1,000 Sanskrit names of the Sun.

**Sulh-i-Kul:**

- Sulh-i Kul is an Arabic term literally meaning “peace with all,” “universal peace,” or “absolute peace,” “drawn from a Sufi mystic principle.
- As applied by Akbar, it described a peaceful and harmonious relationship among different religions. In keeping with efforts to mesh the diverse populations of his realm, Akbar proposed unity and peace among all human beings –sulh-i kul.
- The concept implies not just tolerance, but also the sorts of balance, civility, respect, and compromise required to maintain harmony among a diverse population

**Relevance in today’s world:**
Today the religion and caste systems are dividing our society adversely. Instead of having several religions in our country, why not our country adopts one religion – Din-i Ilahi so that Hindu, Islam, Christian, Sikh…. everyone in the country would follow the same religion.

Din-i Ilahi can be promoted so that in near future India becomes a country of single, unified, tolerant religion where no religion can ever admonish the other.

No majoritarianism or minority appeasement will ever occur in politics and the religion would go totally irrelevant to politicians.

In the field of inter-faith dialogue, tolerance plays an important role in constructive interactions, so the concept of sulh-i kulh as great potential relevance to discussions of intercultural dialogue specifically, and cultural diversity more generally.

Sulh-i kul was invented to describe universal peace, specifically with regard to interfaith tolerance and equal treatment for all, regardless of religious beliefs.

Given continuing religious conflicts matched to the reality of cultural pluralism, it seems useful to resurrect this historic term as a modern tool.

The concept also has potential for discussions of such concrete contexts as managing a multicultural workforce

Conclusion:

According to Dr. Tara Chand, his religion was the product of the synthetic effect of the Vedanta and Sufism of the age.

Discuss the heritage of the India’s ancient developments in the field of Science and Technology.(250 words)

Reference: Ancient India by R S Sharma class XI NCERT

Why this question:
The question is based on the contributions of ancient India to science and technology and its significance and relevance even in today’s times.

Key demand of the question:
The answer must discuss the contributions of Ancient India to science and technology of the past and even to the present.

Directive:
Discuss – This is an all-encompassing directive – you have to debate on paper by going through the details of the issues concerned by examining each one of them. You have to give reasons for both for and against arguments.

Structure of the answer:
Introduction:
Briefly explain India’s ancient caliber of development in science.

Body:
Explain that one of the oldest civilizations in the world, the Indian civilization has a strong tradition of science and technology. Ancient India was a land of sages and seers as well as a land of scholars and scientists. Research has shown that from making the best steel in the world to teaching the world to count, India was actively contributing to the field of science and technology centuries long before modern laboratories were set up.

Many theories and techniques discovered by the ancient Indians have created and strengthened the fundamentals of modern science and technology. While some of these groundbreaking contributions have been acknowledged, some are still unknown to most.

Quote examples of scientists, researchers etc.

Conclusion:
Conclude with significance and relevance of such discoveries and inventions even in today’s times.
Introduction:
India is one of the oldest civilizations in the world that has a strong tradition of science and technology. Ancient India was a land of sages and seers as well as a land of scholars and scientists. Research has shown that from making the best steel in the world to teaching the world to count, India was actively contributing to the field of science and technology centuries long before modern laboratories were set up. Many theories and techniques discovered by the ancient Indians have created and strengthened the fundamentals of modern science and technology. While some of these ground-breaking contributions have been acknowledged, some are still unknown to most.

Body:
contributions made by ancient Indians to the world of science and technology:

- **The Idea of Zero:**
  - Mathematician Aryabhata was the first person to create a symbol for zero and it was through his efforts that mathematical operations like addition and subtraction started using the digit, zero.
  - The concept of zero and its integration into the place-value system also enabled one to write numbers, no matter how large, by using only ten symbols.

- **The Decimal System:**
  - India gave the ingenious method of expressing all numbers by means of ten symbols – the decimal system.
  - In this system, each symbol received a value of position as well as an absolute value.
  - Due to the simplicity of the decimal notation, which facilitated calculation, this system made the uses of arithmetic in practical inventions much faster and easier.

- **Numeral Notations:**
  - Indians, as early as 500 BCE, had devised a system of different symbols for every number from one to nine.
  - This notation system was adopted by the Arabs who called it the hind numerals.
  - Centuries later, this notation system was adopted by the western world who called them the Arabic numerals as it reached them through the Arab traders.

- **Fibonacci Numbers:**
  - The Fibonacci numbers and their sequence first appear in Indian mathematics as mātrāmeru, mentioned by Pingala in connection with the Sanskrit tradition of prosody.
  - Later on, the methods for the formation of these numbers were given by mathematicians Virahanka, Gopala and Hemacandra, much before the Italian mathematician Fibonacci introduced the fascinating sequence to Western European mathematics.

- **Binary Numbers:**
  - Binary numbers are the basic language in which computer programs are written.
• Binary basically refers to a set of two numbers, 1 and 0, the combinations of which are called bits and bytes.

• The binary number system was first described by the Vedic scholar Pingala, in his book Chandahśāstra, which is the earliest known Sanskrit treatise on prosody (the study of poetic metres and verse)

• Ruler Measurements:
  • Excavations at Harappans sites have yielded rulers or linear measures made from ivory and shell.
  • Marked out in minute subdivisions with amazing accuracy, the calibrations correspond closely with the hasta increments of 1 3/8 inches, traditionally used in the ancient architecture of South India.
  • Ancient bricks found at the excavation sites have dimensions that correspond to the units on these rulers.

• A Theory of Atom:
  • One of the notable scientists of the ancient India was Kanad who is said to have devised the atomic theory centuries before John Dalton was born.
  • He speculated the existence of anu or a small indestructible particles, much like an atom. He also stated that anu can have two states — absolute rest and a state of motion.
  • He further held that atoms of same substance combined with each other in a specific and synchronized manner to produce dvyanuka (diatomic molecules) and tryanuka (triatomic molecules).

• The Heliocentric Theory:
  • Mathematicians of ancient India often applied their mathematical knowledge to make accurate astronomical predictions.
  • The most significant among them was Aryabhatta whose book, Aryabhatiya, represented the pinnacle of astronomical knowledge at the time.
  • He correctly propounded that the Earth is round, rotates on its own axis and revolves around the Sun i.e the heliocentric theory.
  • He also made predictions about the solar and lunar eclipses, duration of the day as well as the distance between the Earth and the Moon.

• Wootz Steel:
  • A pioneering steel alloy matrix developed in India, Wootz steel is a crucible steel characterized by a pattern of bands that was known in the ancient world by many different names such as Ukku, Hindwani and Seric Iron.
  • Produced by the Tamils of the Chera Dynasty, the finest steel of the ancient world was made by heating black magnetite ore in the presence of carbon in a sealed clay crucible kept inside a charcoal furnace.

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Smelting of Zinc:
- India was the first to smelt zinc by the distillation process, an advanced technique derived from a long experience of ancient alchemy.
- Zawar in the Tiri valley of Rajasthan is the world’s first known ancient zinc smelting site.
- The distillation technique of zinc production goes back to the 12th Century AD and is an important contribution of India to the world of science.

Plastic Surgery:
- Written by Sushruta in 6th Century BC, Sushruta Samhita is considered to be one of the most comprehensive textbooks on ancient surgery.
- The text mentions various illnesses, plants, preparations and cures along with complex techniques of plastic surgery.
- The Sushruta Samhita’s most well-known contribution to plastic surgery is the reconstruction of the nose, known also as rhinoplasty.

Ayurveda:
- Long before the birth of Hippocrates, Charaka authored a foundational text, Charakasamhita, on the ancient science of Ayurveda.
- Referred to as the Father of Indian Medicine, Charaka was the first physician to present the concept of digestion, metabolism and immunity in his book.
- Charaka’s ancient manual on preventive medicine remained a standard work on the subject for two millennia and was translated into many foreign languages, including Arabic and Latin.

Iron-Cased Rockets:
- The first iron-cased rockets were developed in the 1780s by Tipu Sultan of Mysore who successfully used these rockets against the larger forces of the British East India Company during the Anglo-Mysore Wars.
- He crafted long iron tubes, filled them with gunpowder and fastened them to bamboo poles to create the predecessor of the modern rocket.
- With a range of about 2 km, these rockets were the best in the world at that time and caused as much fear and confusion as damage.
- Due to them, the British suffered one of their worst ever defeats in India at the hands of Tipu.

Conclusion:
Indian heritage is one of the richest and oldest among the world. From the time of ancient India, scientific and technological developments were done. Many famous mathematicians from India contributed a lot in the development of theories that we still use and applied in majority of fields. Indian civilization has a long recorded history of scientific culture that goes back to more than 5000 years. Indian heritage has been known for its various developments like gemstone therapy, ayurvedic medicine, physics, farming, literature and many more.
Trace the Socio-economic life of the regional kingdoms in Medieval India. (250 words)

Reference: Class XI NCERT Medieval India by Satish Sharma, Class XI NCERT Ancient India by Satish Sharma

Why this question:
The question is straightforward from the portions of GS paper I and there isn’t much to deliberate.

Key demand of the question:
The answer must discuss the Socio-economic life of the regional kingdoms in Ancient India in detail.

Structure of the answer:
Introduction:
Briefly explain the Kingdoms that ruled India and parts of it.

Body:
The body of the answer should discuss the aspects of social and economic life in the various kingdoms that existed during the times.

Discuss the Main Characteristics of Medieval India age.

Social Development:
With the coming of Muslims, the people of different places and different faiths were mixed with the Indian people.
The Society was divided into higher, middle and lower classes.
The Bhakti and Sufi movements influenced the social-religious life of the people.
The Worship of one God, Bhajans and Prayers became popular.

Economic Development in Medieval India:
Agriculture was well developed.
The Major share of agriculture yield was enjoyed by kings and landlords.
Jagir system was prevalent.
The Middlemen controlled the sale of products.

Conclusion:
Conclude by reasserting significance of the life in Medieval India and emphasis on the fact that characteristics from the past are still alive in today’s India.

Introduction:
The Medieval Period of Indian History comprises a long period, spanning from 6th century i.e. after the fall of the Gupta Empire to the 18th century, i.e the beginning of colonial domination. The nature of state in the early medieval period is marked by the presence of a large number of regional and local powers, in the absence of a paramount power in the country. The “Middle” period lasted for about 1500 years and ended in the 13th century, with the rise of the Delhi Sultanate, founded in 1206, and the end of the Later Cholas.

Body:
The Kingdoms that ruled in medieval India:

- **Chola dynasty**: It was one of the longest ruling powers in south India. Initially they rose in power of the state of Tamil at the 2nd century BC in time of Indian ancient history and they were able to maintain their control until the 13th century.

- **The Chalukya Dynasty**: The Chalukya Dynasties were in power of Indian medieval history from the reign of 600 to 1200 AD in the state of Deccan. They ruled the kingdom from a number of capital city. Western Chalukyas ruled from Badami.

- **Pallava Dynasty**: Pallavas were a powerful Dynasties of Andhra Pradesh in Indian medieval history in the end of 500 AD. They ruled from its capital placed at Pallavapuri, for disturbance of
natural power they moved it to Kanchipuram and established a more strong empire by the founder of Pallavas Dynasty Simha Vishnu

- **Pala Dynasty:** After death of the great king Shashanka, north India became a land of end. In the meantime at 750 AD king Gopala established the Pala Dynasty and rescued the state of north India, Bihar and West Bengal.

- **The Rajputs:** The Rajput period was an era of chivalry and feudalism. The Rajputs weakened each other by constant fighting. This allowed the foreigners (Turks) to embark on victorious campaigns using duplicity and deceit wherever military strength failed against Rajputs.

- **Vijayanagar Empire:** Vijayanagar city have a great historical value in India. Vijayanagar Empire was established by two brothers Harihara and Bukka in the middle of 13th century.

- **Delhi Sultanate:** A number of Delhi Sultanates were in power from 1210 AD to 1526 AD. It was founded after Muhammad Ghori established the Delhi Sultanate by defeating Prithviraj (Rajput king) in the battle of 2nd Tarain in 1192 AD.

- **The Mughals:** Babur (reign – 1526 to 1530 AD), the founder of the Mughal Empire in India, was the descendant of as Changez Khan. Ousted by his cousins, he came to India and defeated Ibrahim, the last Lodi Sultan in 1526 at the First Battle of Panipat.

- **The Marathas Maratha Empire:** The Marathas rose in power by demise of Muslim power in India. They were initially in the service of Bijapur sultans in the western Deccan which was under siege by the Mughals Empire.

**The Social, Economic and Culture Life of Medieval India:**

**Social Development:**
- With the coming of Muslims, the people of different places and different faiths were mixed with the Indian people.
- The Society was divided into higher, middle and lower classes.
- The Bhakti and Sufi movements influenced the social-religious life of the people.
- The Worship of one God, Bhajans and Prayers became popular.

**Economic Development in Medieval India:**
- Agriculture was well developed.
- The Major share of agriculture yield was enjoyed by kings and landlords.
- Jagir system was prevalent.
- The Middlemen controlled the sale of products.

**Culture Development in Medieval India:**
- The Sanskrit Language was perfected
- Shad Darshanas were compiled.
- The Sanskrit Books like Ramayana, Mahabharata, and Panchatantra were translated into many languages during Akbar’s reign.
- Quran was translated into Persian Language.
- Kings Encouraged Music and So Instrumental Music was also developed.
- Amir Khusrau, Baz Bahadur, and his wife Rupamathi were famous Musicians.
- A new art Known as Indo-Islamic art was born.

**Conclusion:**

The nature of state in the early medieval period is marked by the presence of a large number of regional and local powers, in the absence of a paramount power in the country. However, this
period witnessed the presence of formidable political entities, often characterized by certain historians as ‘regional imperial kingdoms’.

Discuss the significance of the findings of Nagardhan excavations in understanding the Vakataka dynasty. (250 words)

Reference: Indian Express

Why this question:
At Nagardhan near Nagpur, recent excavations have brought new clarity on the life, religious affiliations and trade practices of the Vakataka dynasty, which ruled parts of Central and South India centuries ago. Thus the question.

Key demand of the question:
The answer must discuss the significance of the findings of Nagardhan excavations in understanding the Vakataka dynasty.

Directive:
Discuss – This is an all-encompassing directive – you have to debate on paper by going through the details of the issues concerned by examining each one of them. You have to give reasons for both for and against arguments.

Structure of the answer:
Introduction:
Briefly explain the existence of Vakataka dynasty.

Body:
Recent archaeological excavations at Nagardhan in Ramtek taluka, near Nagpur, have provided concrete evidence on the life, religious affiliations and trade practices of the Vakataka dynasty that ruled parts of Central and South India between the third and fifth centuries. After a 1,500 year-old sealing was excavated for the first time, a new study in Numismatic Digest has tried to understand the Vakataka rule under Queen Prabhavatigupta.

Vakataka dynasty:
- Ruled parts of Central and South India between the third and fifth centuries.
- Rule extended from the southern edges of Malwa and Gujarat in the north to the Tungabhadra River in the south as well as from the Arabian Sea in the west to the edges of Chhattisgarh in the east.
- They were the most important successors of the Satavahanas in the Deccan and contemporaneous with the Guptas in northern India.
- They were Shaivite rulers.
- Nagardhan served as a capital of the Vakataka kingdom.
- The elephant god was a commonly worshipped deity in those times.
Animal rearing was one of the main occupations. Remains of seven species of domestic animals — cattle, goat, sheep, pig, cat, horse and fowl — have been traced.

The rock-cut Buddhist viharas and chaityas of Ajanta Caves (a UNESCO World Heritage Site) were built under the patronage of Vakataka emperor, Harishena.

Key findings:

- An oval-shaped sealing has been traced. It belongs to the period when Prabhavatigupta was the queen of the Vakataka dynasty.
- It bears her name in the Brahmi script, along with the depiction of a conch.
- The presence of the conch, scholars say, is a sign of the Vaishnava affiliation that the Guptas held.
- A copper plate issued by Queen Prabhavatigupta has also been found. It starts with a genealogy of the Guptas, mentioning the Queen’s grandfather Samudragupta and her father Chandragupta II.
- Since the Vakataka people traded with Iran and beyond through the Mediterranean Sea, scholars suggest that these sealings could have been used as an official royal permission issued from the capital city. Besides, these were used on documents that sought mandatory royal permissions.

Queen Prabhavatigupta:

- The Vakataka rulers were known to have forged several matrimonial alliances with other dynasties of their times. One of the key alliances was with Prabhavatigupta of the mighty Gupta dynasty, which was then ruling north India.
- After marrying Vakataka king Rudrasena II, Prabhavatigupta enjoyed the position of Chief Queen.
- Scholars say Queen Prabhavatigupta was among a handful of women rulers in India to have reigned over any kingdom during ancient times. Also, there had been no evidence so far of any successor female ruler within the Vakataka dynasty, the researchers suggest.
- She ruled for about 10 years until her son Pravarasena II
- She had a pivotal role in propagation of Vaishnava practices in the Vidarbha region of Maharashtra.

Significance of the findings:

- Very little was known about the Vakatakas, the Shaivite rulers of Central India between the third and fifth centuries.
- All that was known about the dynasty, believed to hail from the Vidarbha region, was largely through some literature and copperplates.
- There were assumptions that the excavated site of Nagardhan is the same as Nandhivardhan, the capital city of the eastern branch of the Vakatakas.
- It was after archaeological evidence from here that Nagardhan was understood to have served as a capital of the Vakataka kingdom.
- Scholars say archaeologists who had previously excavated the site had not done detailed documentation; thus an archaeological exploration was needed.
- The scholars have traced archaeological evidence revealing the dynasty’s religious affiliations — the types of houses and palaces of the rulers, coins and sealings circulated during their reign, and their trade practices.

Conclusion:
Although the Vakatakas replaced the Satavahanas, it does not seem that they continued their coin-minting tradition. As of today, no Vakataka coins have ever been identified.

Modern Indian history from about the middle of the eighteenth century until the present—significant events, personalities, issues.

Discuss the contributions of Ashfaqullah Khan in the Indian freedom struggle with special focus on his contributions to Hindustan Socialist Republican Association. (250 words)

*Indian Express*

**Why this question:**
The article discusses in detail the contributions of Ashfaqullah Khan as Recently, Uttar Pradesh government has announced that it will build a 121-acre zoo named after Ashfaqullah Khan.

**Key demand of the question:**
Discuss in detail the contributions of Ashfaqullah Khan in the Indian freedom struggle.

**Directive:**
**Discuss** – This is an all-encompassing directive – you have to debate on paper by going through the details of the issues concerned by examining each one of them. You have to give reasons for both for and against arguments.

**Structure of the answer:**
**Introduction:**
Start with dew key facts related to Ashfaqullah Khan.

**Body:**
Comment on the aspects such as –
Ashfaqulla Khan (1900 – 1927) was a freedom fighter in the Indian independence movement. He was born in Shahjahanpur, Uttar Pradesh. In 1920, Mahatma Gandhi had launched his Non-cooperation movement against the British rule in India.

But after the Chauri Chaura incident in 1922, Mahatma Gandhi decided to withdraw the call for this movement.

At that point, many young people including Ashfaqullah Khan became revolutionaries and turned to organisations like Hindustan Socialist Republican Association.

Discuss his contributions to Kakori case.

**Conclusion:**
Conclude with significance of such a heroic personality.

**Introduction:**
Khan was born on October 22, 1900, in Shahjahanpur, Uttar Pradesh. He grew up at a time when Mahatma Gandhi had launched the non-cooperation movement and urged Indians not to pay taxes to the government or co-operate with the British. He was a freedom fighter who, along with Ram Prasad Bismil, was sentenced to death for the Kakori train robbery, commonly referred to as the Kakori conspiracy of 1925.

**Body:**
Ashfaqullah Khan and the Hindustan Socialist Republican Association:
In the mid-1920s, Khan and Bismil went on to found the Hindustan Socialist Republican Association (HSRA), with the aim of winning freedom for the country through an armed revolution.

HSRA published its manifesto titled “The Revolutionary” in 1925.

According to the manifesto, the immediate object of the revolutionary party in the domain of politics is to establish a federal Republic of United State of India by an organized and armed revolution.

The final constitution of this Republic shall be framed and declared at a time when the representatives of India shall have the power to carry out their decision. The basic principles of this Republic will be universal suffrage and abolition of all system which make the exploitation of man by man possible.

For example, the railways and other means of transportation and communication, the mines and other kinds of very great industries such as the manufacture of steel and ships all these shall be nationalised.

According to the manifesto, The Indian revolutionaries are neither terrorists nor anarchists. They never aim at spreading anarchy in the land and therefore they can never properly be called anarchists. Terrorism is never their object and they cannot be called terrorists.

They do not believe that terrorism alone can bring independence and they do not want terrorism for terrorism’s sake although they may at times resort to this method as a very effective means of retaliation

Contributions of Ashfaqullah Khan in the Indian freedom struggle:

In August 1925, an armed robbery took place on board the Kakori Express which was going from Shahjahanpur to Lucknow.

It was carrying money that had been collected at various railway stations and was to be deposited in Lucknow.

In this planned robbery, carried out to fund the activities of the HSRA, Bismil, Khan and over 10 other revolutionaries stopped the train and fled with the cash they found in it.

Within a month of the robbery, many members of the HSRA were arrested.

While some people were arrested and then detained, Swaran Singh, Ram Prasad Bismil, Ashfaqullah Khan, Rajendra Lahiri and Roshan Singh were awarded death sentences.

Conclusion:

Ashfaq was a devout Muslim and together with 'Bismil' had the common objective of a free and united India. Their common objective united them even more than before. They both sacrificed their lives for India on December 17, 1927 but in different jails.

Who was Tanaaji Malusare? Discuss the significant role played by him in the Battle of Singhagad? (250 words)

Indian Express

Why this question:
A Bollywood movie was released recently based on Subedar Taanaji Malusare. Thus the context of the question.

Key demand of the question:
The answer must discuss details of who was Subedar Taanaji Malusare and his contributions to the battle of Singhagad and its outcomes.

Directive:
Discus**s** – This is an all-encompassing directive – you have to debate on paper by going through the details of the issues concerned by examining each one of them. You have to give reasons for both for and against arguments.

**Structure of the answer:**

**Introduction:**
Briefly explain who Tanaaji Malusare was.

**Body:**
He was a Maratha military leader and a close aide of Chhatrapati Shivaji. Hailing from the Malusare clan, Taanaji is popularly remembered for the Battle of Singhagad that took place in the year 1670.

In the battle, Taanaji fought against Udaybhan Rathore, a formidable Rajput warrior, who was put in charge of Fort Kandhana (later named Singhagad) by Jai Singh. Then discuss the significant contributions to Battle of Singhagad. Highlight the outcomes of the battle.

**Conclusion:**
Conclude with importance of such warriors in history.

**Introduction**

Tanaji Malusare is known for his role in the Battle of Sinhagad (1670), which he fought under the Maratha flag against the Mughals, losing his life in the campaign. Tanaji Malusare was a Subedar in the army of Chhatrapati Shivaji and was also one of his good compatriots. He belonged to the Malusare clan and fought various battles alongside Chhatrapati Shivaji.

The original memorial of legendary warrior Tanaji Malusare had been found in the Sinhagad Fort (Lion's Fort), 36 km from Pune, during the restoration work in 2019.

**Body**

- **Importance of the Sinhagad fort**

  Of all the forts surrendered to Jay Singh the most important was doubtless Sinhagad (Kondhana), for it was looked upon as the capital of the western regions and a key in the hands of those who had to govern them. Purandar ranked next to it. That is why Jay Singh had insisted that Sinhagad should be the first to be handed over by Shivaji personally. He who possessed Sinhagad was the master of Poona, was the popular belief.

- **Context of the Battle**

  - In 1665, due to the Treaty of Purandar, Shivaji had to give the Kondhana Fort (later called Sinhagad) to the Mughals.
  
  - Kondhana, located near Pune, was the heaviest fortification and was a strategically placed fort.
  
  - After the treaty of Purandar, the Rajput, Arab and Pathan troops were to protect the fort on behalf of the Mughals. The most capable commander among them was Uday Bhan Rathore. He was a fort-keeper and was appointed by the Mughal army chief Jai Singh.
  
  - As part of the treaty, Shivaji had agreed to visit Agra to meet the Mughal emperor Aurangzeb, which he did in 1666. Here, Shivaji was placed under house arrest, but was able to make a daring escape back to Maharashtra. Upon his return, Shivaji began to recapture the forts ceded to the Mughals under the treaty.
To retake Kondhana (Sinhagad), the Marathas deputed Tanaji Malusare, a trusted general of Shivaji, and his brother Suryaji.

Role of Tanaji in Battle of Sinhagad

- In the early hours of February 4, 1670, Tanaji with around 300 soldiers successfully captured the fort. It was a treacherous task.
- The fort could not be taken by any other means than by the brave soldiers scaling the walls by means of rope-ladders stealthily walking in and opening the main gates, through which the storming party could rush in.
  - Sinhagad is the only fort not vulnerable to artillery; there is no room where guns could be brought into position for a bombardment of it.
  - All the sides are steep, upon one of which a narrow path now leads to the main gate for communication with the outside world.
- A large number headed by Suryaji remained concealed near the main gate.
- Tanaji himself with his selected followers scaled the walls by means of an iguana and opened the gates by putting to the sword the few sentries that came out to oppose him.
- A sanguinary action ensued in which both sides lost heavily including their leaders Tanaji and Uday Bhan. The fort was captured and a huge bonfire announced the result to Shivaji at Rajgad.
- Despite the victory, Shivaji was deeply hurt by the loss of his most capable commander and friend and famously said – “Gad ala pan Sinha gela.” (“The fort has come, but the lion is gone.”)

Conclusion

Shivaji, who is known to have grieved Tanaji’s loss heavily, had the fort Kondhana renamed ‘Sinhagad’ in the general’s honour (‘Sinh’ meaning ‘lion’). A bard named Tulsidas was commissioned to write a ‘powada’ (ballad) for Tanaji, and this literary work continues to be popular in Maharashtra.

The Freedom Struggle – its various stages and important contributors /contributions from different parts of the country.
Discuss in detail the contributions of Savitribai Phule on women’s education and establishing equality in India.(250 words)

Indian Express

Why this question:
The article captures Savitribai Phule’s impact on women’s education in India

Key demand of the question:
Discuss in detail the contributions of Savitribai Phule to Indian education system and upliftment of women in the society.

Directive:
Discuss – This is an all-encompassing directive – you have to debate on paper by going through the details of the issues concerned by examining each one of them. You have to give reasons for both for and against arguments.

Structure of the answer:
Introduction:
Start by highlighting Who was Savitribai Phule? Importance of her work.

Body:
Savitribai was a pioneer who is remembered for advocating big changes in caste-based Indian society too. Born on January 3, 1831 in Naigaon Maharashtra, Savitribai played an important role in improving women’s rights in India during British rule. She worked for the upliftment of women in terms of education.
Discuss key aspects of her work.

Explain why she was claimed to be a crusader of gender justice.

Conclusion:
Conclude by reasserting her contributions in the greater development of the society.

Introduction:

Savitribai Phule, the social reformer who is considered to be one of India’s first modern feminists, was born on January 3, 1831. Among her accomplishments, she is especially remembered for being India’s first female teacher who worked for the upliftment of women and untouchables in the field of education and literacy.

Body:

Contributions to women’s education:

- In the 19th century, public education was limited and there were only a few missionary schools which were “open to all”.
- During this time, Jyotiba, at the age of 21, and Savitri, 17, opened a school for women in 1848. It was the country’s first school for women started by Indians.
- She also took teacher’s training course at an institute run by an American missionary in Ahmednagar and in Pune’s Normal School.
- She then started teaching girls in Pune’s Maharwada.
- By the end of 1851, the Phules were running three schools in Pune with around 150 girl students.
- In the 1850s, the Phules initiated two educational trusts viz. the Native Female School, Pune and The Society for Promoting the Education of Mahars, Mangs and etc., which came to have many schools under them.
- She published Kavya Phule in 1854 and Bavan Kashi Subodh Ratnakar in 1892.
- In her poem, ‘Go, Get Education’, she urged the oppressed communities to get an education and break free from the chains of oppression.

Contributions to establishing equality:

- In 1852, Savitribai started the Mahila Seva Mandal to raise awareness about women’s rights.
- Savitribai called for a women’s gathering where members from all castes were welcome and everybody was expected to sit on the same mattress.
- She simultaneously campaigned against child marriage, while supporting widow remarriage.
- In 1863, they started a home for the prevention of infanticide in their own house, for the safety of pregnant, exploited Brahman widows and to nurture their children. It was called “Balhatya Pratibandhak Griha”.
- After Jyotiba’s death in 1890, Savitribai carried forward the work of the organization Satya Shodhak Samaj and also chaired the annual session held at Saswad in 1893.
• She initiated the first Satyashodhak marriage—a marriage without a dowry, Brahmin priests or Brahminical rituals in 1873. Her adopted son, Yashwant, too, had a Satyashodhak inter-caste marriage.

Conclusion:

Her achievements were diverse and numerous, but they had a singular effect—posing a brave and pioneering challenge to the caste system and patriarchy. In her honour, University of Pune was renamed Savitribai Phule University in 2014.

Because of the role Phule played in the field of women’s education, she is also considered to be one of the “crusaders of gender justice,” as one paper published in the International Journal of Innovative Social Science & Humanities Research has said.

Post-independence consolidation and reorganization within the country.

Unifying post-partition India and princely states under one administration was perhaps the most important task facing the political leadership. Explain. (250 words)

Post independence India – Bipin Chandra

Why this question:
The question is direct and from the sections of GS Paper I and aims to discuss the significance of political leadership at the time of integrating post-independent India.

Key demand of the question:
Discuss the significance of political leadership at the time of integrating post-independent India in detail.

Directive:

Explain – Clarify the topic by giving a detailed account as to how and why it occurred, or what is the particular context. You must be defining key terms where ever appropriate, and substantiate with relevant associated facts.

Structure of the answer:

Introduction:
Brief upon the Condition of the India at the time of independence.

Body:
Nearly half of the Indian territory was ruled by princely states under British Paramountcy. These were protected against internal as well as external aggression by the British. Discuss why integration was the need of the hour.

Explain the significance of unification of the country – Territorial continuity, Demand for modernization, Internal Security etc.

Discuss the contributions of various political leaders and thus the importance therefore.

Conclusion:
Conclude with significance of single continuous territory and reassert the key role played by the political leaders then.

Introduction:
The post-independence period was marred with violence and displacement followed by the partition, the issue of integration of the princely states and re-drawal of internal boundaries based on languages were some of the immediate challenges faced by India post-independence. To maintain the democratic aspirations of the newly formed nation state, the government took several steps.
Body:

Challenges to the unification and integration of India:

- **Accommodating the diversity of Indian society** by taking into account the regional aspirations of the people, balancing between the rights of different regions and linguistic groups to retain their own culture.
- **Formation of the states** was not just a matter of administrative divisions. The boundaries had to be drawn in a way so that the linguistic and cultural plurality of the country could be reflected without affecting the unity of the nation. E.g.- the Vishalandhra movement caused great unrest and violence in the Telugu-speaking region.
- **Ethnic tension in North Eastern states**: Over 635 tribal groups in the region with distinct language and culture along with its relative isolation from the rest of the mainland, resulted into social-political disturbances and unrest for a few years.
- The isolation of the region, its complex social character and its backwardness compared to other parts of the country have all resulted in the complicated set of demands from different states of the North-East.
- The vast international border and weak communication between the North-East and the rest of India further added to the delicate nature of politics there. First Nagaland and then Mizoram witnessed strong movements demanding separation from India.
- **Developing democratic practices** in accordance with the Constitution by ensuring the development and wellbeing of the entire society and not only of some sections.
- Partition had deepened the communal tension in the country and it was important to assure the minority communities of their equal protection of rights to avoid further communal divisions within the nation.
- The discontent among these communities could destabilise the newly formed political system.
- **Integration of as many as 565 Princely states** after independence. These states became legally independent and were free to join either India or Pakistan or remain independent. However, this decision was left not to the people but to the princely rulers of these states.
- The integration of these states was important for the unification of the country.

Measures taken:

- Under the **State Reorganisation Act 1956**, states were divided based on the linguistic and cultural differences between them. This ensured the united social life without losing the distinctiveness of the numerous cultures that constituted it.
- The **cooperative federalism** enshrined in the constitution (Schedule VII) empowered the regional identity, aspirations and provided autonomy to the states to solve their specific regional problems.
- At different points of time the Central Government created Meghalaya, Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh out of Assam. Tripura and Manipur were upgraded into States too.
- Autonomous Councils were created to satisfy the smaller groups within the states without breaking the states down.
- **Constitutional safeguards for marginalised and minorities**: The adoption of the constitution of India highlighted the country’s strong beliefs in equality, liberty and secularism (reflected especially in the Fundamental Rights), assuring the marginalised sections of equality and justice.
- **Articles 29 and 30** specifically protect the cultural and linguistic rights of the minorities.
The leaders of independent India, especially Sardar Patel, negotiated with the rulers of princely states firmly but diplomatically bringing most of them into the Indian Union through the instrument of accession.

Conclusion:

The newly formed democracy in India came to terms with differences in society on several different lines and accepted the plurality of ideas and diverse ways of life. The challenges are still posed by the differences in the contemporary socio-political system of the country. These are reflected in continuing communal tension and intolerance towards the minorities and marginalised and also imperative in statehood demands.

History of the world will include events from 18th century such as industrial revolution, world wars, redrawal of national boundaries, colonization, decolonization.

“Auschwitz was and is, still the center of Holocaust history”, Discuss. (250 words)

Reference: Indian Express

Why this question:
On January 27 this year, survivors of the Holocaust and international heads of state marked the 75th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz. Thus the context of the question.

Key demand of the question:
The answer must discuss the reasons for ‘Auschwitz’ being called the centre of Holocaust history.

Directive:
Discuss – This is an all-encompassing directive – you have to debate on paper by going through the details of the issues concerned by examining each one of them. You have to give reasons for both for and against arguments.

Structure of the answer:
Introduction:
Briefly explain that in many ways, Auschwitz has become the center of Holocaust history and research and serves as a reminder of the horrors of the Holocaust.

Body:
In detail explain the history associated with – Auschwitz.
Discuss the horrors of 2nd world war that took place at Auschwitz.
Explain the factors that led to liberation of Auschwitz, discuss what occurred at the liberation.
Highlight as to what makes the place unique even today.

Conclusion:
The camps at Auschwitz have become an important reminder of the horrors of the Holocaust and in 1947 the government of Poland made the site a state memorial. In 1979, UNESCO added the Auschwitz memorial to its list of UNESCO World Heritage Sites.

Introduction:

Recently on January 27th survivors of the Holocaust and international heads of state marked the 75th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz. During the Second World War, the government of Nazi Germany killed approximately 17 million people across Europe in half a dozen camps specifically designated for killings. Of these seven killing centers, the camp at Auschwitz, perhaps the most well-known, was the largest in size.
Body:

**Importance of January 27th:**

- During the final stages of the Second World War, months before the fall of Nazi Germany, Nazi officials began forcibly moving prisoners between the camps spread across Europe.
- Called ‘Death Marches’, this forcible displacement on foot over long distances in the bitter cold, with little to no food resulted in many deaths.
- Some researchers believe that prisoners were moved from camps to prevent the liberation of prisoners held inside these camps and to also remove evidence of crimes against humanity perpetrated by Nazi officials.
- Prisoners who were very ill and disabled were left to die in the abandoned camps.

**Liberation of Auschwitz:**

As 1944 came to a close and the defeat of Nazi Germany by the Allied forces seemed certain, the Auschwitz commandants began destroying evidence of the horror that had taken place there. Buildings were torn down, blown up or set on fire, and records were destroyed.

In January 1945, as the Soviet army entered Krakow, the Germans ordered that Auschwitz be abandoned. Before the end of the month, in what came to be known as the Auschwitz death marches, an estimated 60,000 detainees, accompanied by Nazi guards, departed the camp and were forced to march to the Polish towns of Gliwice or Wodzislaw, some 30 miles away. Countless prisoners died during this process; those who made it to the sites were sent on trains to concentration camps in Germany.

When the Soviet army entered Auschwitz on January 27, they found approximately 7,600 sick or emaciated detainees who had been left behind barbed wire. The liberators also discovered mounds of corpses, hundreds of thousands of pieces of clothing and pairs of shoes and seven tons of human hair that had been shaved from detainees before their liquidation. According to some estimates, between 1.1 million to 1.5 million people, the vast majority of them Jews, died at Auschwitz during its years of operation. An estimated 70,000 to 80,000 Poles perished at the camp, along with 19,000 to 20,000 Romas and smaller numbers of Soviet prisoners of war and other individuals.

**Rescue of Auschwitz:**

- Allied forces advanced from the West while soldiers belonging to the Red Army of the Soviet Union began entering concentration camps and killing centers across Europe, liberating survivors.
- The first camp that the Red Army soldiers liberated was the Majdanek camp in Poland in July 1944.
- The Army entered Auschwitz on January 27, 1945, finding hundreds of sick, starving and exhausted prisoners, who had somehow survived.
- In 2005, the UN-designated January 27 as the International Holocaust Remembrance Day.

**Significance:**
• Historical records show that despite attempts by Nazi officials to obliterate prisoners, particularly those at Auschwitz, there were survivors who lived to provide testimony against Nazi officials.

• Several factors set Auschwitz apart from other camps across Europe.

• The camp at Auschwitz had originally been built to hold Polish political prisoners but by March 1942, it became one of the main centres for the Nazi’s Final Solution to the Jewish Question.

Results:

• Trials were held against Nazi officers and people who worked inside the camps in various capacities and perpetrated crimes against humanity in the camps of Auschwitz and elsewhere in Europe.

• These individuals included both men and women, many who escaped accountability for their crimes after the fall of Nazi Germany.

• To evade justice, many SS officers changed their identities and escaped to other parts of Europe, the US and to other parts of the world.

Conclusion:

The camps at Auschwitz have become an important reminder of the horrors of the Holocaust and in 1947 the government of Poland made the site a state memorial. In 1979, UNESCO added the Auschwitz memorial to its list of UNESCO World Heritage Sites.
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Salient features of Indian Society, Diversity of India.
The idea of India is being consistently challenged by narrow ideologies in recent times in our society. Analyse the causative factors for this phenomenon as well discuss the impact of such a situation and suggest measures to tackle the same.(250 words)

Why this question:
The article captures in what way the substantive versions of these ideas have been evoked in the popular upsurge across the country today.

Key demand of the question:
Bring out the trajectory of the democracy in the country. Explain how the idea of democracy has evolved over a period.

Directive:
Analyze – When asked to analyse, you have to examine methodically the structure or nature of the topic by separating it into component parts and present them as a whole in a summary.
Discuss – This is an all-encompassing directive – you have to debate on paper by going through the details of the issues concerned by examining each one of them. You have to give reasons for both for and against arguments.

Structure of the answer:
Introduction:
Explain first what you understand by the Idea of India.
Body:
Discuss the recent happenings that have been challenging the idea of India.
Explain the reasons that have led to such phenomenon. Use hints from the article and list down the factors responsible.
Explain how we go about retrieving ideas of democracy and nation authentic to our context.
Conclusion:
Conclude that while this popular upsurge does not give us a full-blown ideal of democracy that we wish to be and the image of the nation it recasts, the indicators are all there to see. There is a surplus in the ideas of nation and democracy that formal rules of law and modes of representation can never exhaust, and one cannot trump the former by invoking the latter.

Introduction:
India is the largest democratic country in the world. Democracy is defined as a government of the people, by the people and for the people. The idea of India as a nation implied the assumption that it would invariably be a democracy — i.e., India realising itself or constituting itself as a nation will necessarily do so as a democracy.

Body:
The causative factors for India being challenged constantly by narrow ideologies:

- The Gandhians laid stress on Swaraj but this idea, while not being not opposed to democracy, did not directly connote self-rule of the citizen-community.
- The socialists and communists who were interested in the idea of democracy, and uncoupling it from the idea of nation, tended to lay stress on the economic prerequisites and redistribution of power to realise the former.
- There were some thinkers such as V.D. Savarkar who argued that the idea of nation took shape in India in the epochal past, but they dwelt little on democracy.
- Some Islamic scholars such as Maulana Maududi introduced concepts such as “theo-democracy”, i.e., the mode of self-rule where believers ordain their common affairs.
There were those who thought through the lens of caste, examples being E.V. Ramaswami Naicker, K.M. Panikkar and B.R. Ambedkar and also Adivasi leaders such as Jaipal Singh, who argued that the idea of nation has to be profoundly rethought in India.

There are certain measures that the current government has embraced in the name of constitutional rectitude have reopened new fissures within the Indian body polity.

One of the most ominous expressions of the Bharatiya Janata Party’s version of the nation is found in the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019, or the CAA, 2019 and the National Register of Citizens, allegedly on the anvil but officially denied in the face of widespread resistance.

Way forward:

- Universal literacy i.e. education for all, poverty alleviation, elimination of gender discrimination, removal of regional imbalances, administrative and judicial reforms and sustained economic, social and environmental development.
- People must exercise their right to vote, participate in democracy and contribute towards the development of the country.
- Democracy cannot survive without both citizens’ participation and politicians’ accountability.
- The promises of democracy can only be realised through collective action in civil society.
- The state must respect the articulation of the politics of voice and not just the politics of the vote.

Conclusion:

India urgently needs to wrest and reclaim the democratic principles, anchoring it in a new vocabulary that redeems its credibility. Our collective ability to do so will determine whether India will reclaim itself or stay firm on its current path toward a re-imagination of its foundations.

Deliberate upon the need and significance of preserving India’s linguistic diversity. Also comment upon the measures required for the same. (250 words)

_The Hindu_

_Why this question:_
The article provides for a detailed commentary of the case for including Tulu in the Eighth Schedule. Thus the context of the question.

_Key demand of the question:_
The answer must discuss the importance of preserving India’s linguistic diversity and elaborate upon the steps required to be taken in this direction.

_Directive:_

**Deliberate** – Clarify the topic by giving a detailed account as to how and why it occurred, or what is the particular context. You must be defining key terms where ever appropriate, and substantiate with relevant associated facts.

**Comment**– here we have to express our knowledge and understanding of the issue and form an overall opinion thereupon.

_Structure of the answer:_

**Introduction:**
Briefly explain what linguistic diversity is. Discuss the constitutional provisions available in this aspect.

**Body:**
In detail comment upon the Need and importance of preserving linguistic diversity – Cultural Identity, Cultural Diversity, glimpse of our past etc. Discuss the Government efforts in this direction in terms of statutes, provisions in the constitution, technological measures etc.
Explain the measures needed.

Conclusion:
In recent years the language diversity is under threat as speakers of diverse languages are becoming rare and major languages are adopted after abandoning the mother tongues. The problem needs to be addressed at societal level, in which the communities have to take part in conservation of language diversity that is part of cultural wealth.

Introduction:

India is one of unique countries in the world that has the legacy of diversity of languages. The Constitution of India has recognised 22 official languages. Multilingualism is the way of life in India as people in different parts of the country speak more than one language from their birth and learns additional languages during their life time.

Though officially there are 122 languages, Peoples Linguistic Survey of India has identified 780 languages, of which 50 are extinct in past five decades

Body:

Need and Significance to preserve India’s linguistic diversity:

- Ecological diversity.
- Cultural diversity through oral traditions, stories, songs, poetry, and rituals passed down from generation to generation.
- Languages express identity
- Languages are repositories of history
- Language contribute to the sum of human knowledge
- Languages are interesting in themselves
- improved cognitive abilities in children when they are taught in their mother tongue in primary school

Provisions that safeguard the wealth of Indian languages:

- In addition to these scheduled and classical languages, The Constitution of India has included the clause to protect minority languages as a fundamental right. It states “Any section of the citizens residing in the territory of India or any part of thereof having a distinct language, script or culture of its own shall have the right to conserve the same.”
- The language policy of India provides guarantee to protect the linguistic minorities. Under the Constitution, provision is made for appointment of Special Officer for linguistic minority with the sole responsibilities of safeguarding the interest of language spoken by the minority groups.
- In the post-independence era, Central Institute of Indian Languages (CIIL), based in Mysore was assigned to carry out an in-depth survey of languages.
- In 1991 the Census of India listed 1576 mother tongues’ with separate grammatical structures and 1796 speech varieties that is classified as other mother tongues’.
- Another unique feature of India is the concept of protecting the interest of children to get basic education in their mother tongue. The Constitution provides “it shall be the endeavour of every State and of every local authority within the state to provide adequate facilities for instruction in the mother tongue at the primary stage of education to children belonging to linguistic minority groups”. Thus, even before the United Nations declared the International Mother Language Day (February 21) the founders of the Indian Constitution gave top priority to teaching in mother tongues’, enabling the child to develop its full potential.
In 1956 reorganisation of states in India was carried out with linguistic boundaries that had its own script. Sardar Vallabh Bhai Patel, the then home minister played key role in formation and amalgamation of states based on linguistic attributes.

The language policy of India has been pluralistic, giving priority to the use of mother tongue in administration, education and other fields of mass communication. The Language Bureau of Ministry of Human Resource Development is set up to implement and monitor the language policy.

According to UNESCO, Internationalised Domain Names (IDNs) can help to foster the growth of local languages online by allowing Internet users to use non-Latin scripts to access domain names.

The internet can be used to raise awareness about the issues of language extinction and language preservation.

**Conclusion:**

Linguistic diversity has been a critical aspect of the multiculturalism that has been the defining characteristic of India through the ages. Diversity is undoubtedly strength of our democracy. The cultural bonds need to be strengthened through enhanced and continuous mutual interaction between people of varied regions. This encourages reciprocity and secures an enriched value system of unity amongst people of different States.

**What do you understand by social Mobility? Discuss the Concerns and challenges highlighted for India by the recently released Global Social Mobility Report. (250 words)**

*Indian Express*

**Why this question:**
The World Economic Forum has come out with its first-ever Global Social Mobility Report, which has ranked India a lowly 76 out of the 82 countries profiled. Thus the context of the question.

**Key demand of the question:**
The answer must discuss the concept of social Mobility in general and Discuss the Concerns and challenges highlighted for India by the recently released Global Social Mobility Report in detail and suggest what needs to be done to address these challenges.

**Directive:**
Discuss – This is an all-encompassing directive – you have to debate on paper by going through the details of the issues concerned by examining each one of them. You have to give reasons for both for and against arguments.

**Structure of the answer:**
**Introduction:**
Briefly define what you understand by Social Mobility.

**Body:**
In detail explain the following aspects –
Social Mobility can be understood as the movement in personal circumstances either “upwards” or “downwards” of an individual in relation to those of their parents.
Discuss the key features of it. Explain why is it important and why does it matter?
Explain that Social mobility has become the pressing issue of modern life, and as the index highlights, while major improvements have been made in some areas, notably extreme poverty, in others, the situation is deteriorating.
Discuss the importance of Global Social Mobility Index, point at the facts brought out by the index with respect to India’s performance.
Explain what the causes of concern are and what way they can be addressed.

**Conclusion:**
Conclude that India has way to go to achieve better and stable social mobility.
Introduction:
Social Mobility can be understood as the movement in personal circumstances either “upwards” or “downwards” of an individual in relation to those of their parents. In absolute terms, it is the ability of a child to experience a better life than their parents. On the other hand, relative social mobility is an assessment of the impact of socio-economic background on an individual’s outcomes in life. It can be measured against a number of outcomes ranging from health to educational achievement and income. World Economic Forum has come out with its first-ever Global Social Mobility Report.

Body:

Performance of India:
- The report has ranked India a lowly 76 out of the 82 countries profiled.
- It lists India among the five countries that stand to gain the most from a better social mobility score.
- It ranks 41st in lifelong learning and 53rd in working conditions.
- The Areas of improvement for India include social protection (76th) and fair wage distribution (79th).

Concerns and challenges highlighted for India:
- Inequalities are measured in income terms, which has been found inadequate.
- As the report states, “many situations exist where, despite high levels of absolute income mobility, relative social mobility remains low.
- For example, in economies such as China and India, economic growth can lift entire populations upward in terms of absolute income, but an individual’s status in society relative to others remains the same.
- The notion of relative social mobility is more closely related to the social and economic status of an individual relative to their parents.
- In a country with a society with perfect relative mobility, a child born in a low-income family would have as much chance to earn a high income as a child born to parents who earn a high income.
- The concept of social mobility is much broader than just looking at income inequality. It encompasses several concerns such as:
  - **Intra-generational mobility**: The ability for an individual to move between socio-economic classes within their own lifetime.
  - **Intergenerational mobility**: The ability for a family group to move up or down the socio-economic ladder across the span of one or more generations.
  - **Absolute income mobility**: The ability for an individual to earn, in real terms, as much as or more than their parents at the same age.
  - **Absolute educational mobility**: The ability for an individual to attain higher education levels than their parents.
  - **Relative income mobility**: How much of an individual’s income is determined by their parents’ income.
Relative educational mobility: How much of an individual’s educational attainment is determined by their parents’ educational attainment.

Way forward:

▪ Creating a new financing model for social mobility: improving tax progressivity on personal income, policies that address wealth concentration and broadly re-balancing the sources of taxation can support the social mobility agenda.
▪ Most importantly though, the mix of public spending and policy incentives must change to put greater emphasis on the factors of social spending.
▪ More support for education and lifelong learning: targeted at improvements in the availability, quality and distribution of education programmes as well as a new agenda for promoting skills development throughout an individual’s working life.
▪ This includes a new approach to jointly financing such efforts between the public and private sector.
▪ Developing a new social protection contract: this would offer holistic protection to all workers irrespective of their employment status, particularly in a context of technological change and industry transitions, requiring greater support for job transitions in the coming decade.

The Global Inequality Crisis between the rich and the poor, men and women mainly owes to a flawed and sexist economic system, Do you agree? Critically examine. (250 words)

Reference: Indian Express

Why this question:
The article provides a detailed analysis as to what extent the flawed and sexist economic system in the country has led to inequality in terms of economic status and gender.

Key demand of the question:
The answer must discuss the

Directive:
Critically examine – When asked to ‘Examine’, we have to look into the topic (content words) in detail, inspect it, investigate it and establish the key facts and issues related to the topic in question. While doing so we should explain why these facts and issues are important and their implications. When ‘critically’ is suffixed or prefixed to a directive, one needs to look at the good and bad of the topic and give a fair judgment.

Structure of the answer:
Introduction:
Briefly explain the existing inequality globally between the rich-poor, Men-women. Quote data to substantiate better.

Body:
According to the recently released Oxfam report -This great divide in income inequality is based on a flawed and sexist economic system which has accumulated vast wealth and power into the hands of a rich few, in part by exploiting the labour of women and girls, and systematically violating their rights.

Discuss how wide the gap between the richest and the rest is.

Explain that globally, extreme poverty rates are 4% higher for women than men; this gap rises to 22% during women’s peak productive and reproductive ages; that is, 122 women aged 25-34 for every 100 men of the same age group live in extremely poor households, largely due to childcare responsibilities.

Take hints from the article and elucidate.

Suggest what needs to be done to address the issue.
Conclusion:
Conclude with urgency to change the situation and doing away of the inequality.

Introduction:
A report published recently by Oxfam, the international nonprofit focused on the alleviation of global poverty, underlined what has been said repeatedly by governments, research organizations and a range of multilateral bodies over the past decade or more — that economic inequality, as the report said, “is out of control”, with extremes of wealth existing alongside great poverty.

“This great divide”, the Oxfam report said, “is based on a flawed and sexist economic system” which has “accumulated vast wealth and power into the hands of a rich few, in part by exploiting the labour of women and girls, and systematically violating their rights”.

Body:
The gap between the richest and the rest:

- **2,153 individuals**, the number of billionnaires in the world in 2019, have more wealth among them than 4.6 billion people.
- **22 of the world’s richest men** have a combined wealth that is more than the wealth of all the women of Africa.
- The world’s richest 1% have more than twice as much wealth as **6.9 billion people**.
- If everyone sat on their wealth piled up in $100 notes, most people would be sitting on the floor; a middle-class person in a rich country would be at the height of a chair; and the world’s two richest men would be sitting in outer space.
- **If you saved $10,000 (about Rs 7.1 lakh)** every day since the building of the pyramids in Egypt (about 4,500 years ago) you would have one-fifth the average fortune of the 5 richest billionaires.
- An additional 0.5% tax on the wealth of the richest 1% over the next 10 years can create 117 million jobs in education, health and elderly care, etc.
- From 2011 to 2017, average wages in G7 countries grew 3%, while dividends to wealthy shareholders increased by 31%.

The gap between the women and men:

- Globally, extreme poverty rates are 4% higher for women than men; this gap rises to 22% during women’s peak productive and reproductive ages; that is, 122 women aged 25-34 for every 100 men of the same age group live in extremely poor households, largely due to childcare responsibilities.
- $10.8 trillion is the estimated minimum annual monetary value of the unpaid care work by women aged 15 and above globally — this is three times the size of the world’s tech industry.
- Women do 12.5 billion hours of unpaid care work every day, equivalent to 1.5 billion people working 8 hours a day with no remuneration.
- Globally, 42% of working age women are outside the paid labour force, compared with 6% of men, due to unpaid care responsibilities.
- **80% of the estimated 67 million domestic workers** worldwide are women. An estimated 90% of domestic workers have no access to social security such as maternity protection and benefits.
- **Worldwide, girls aged 5-9 and 10-14 spend on average 30% and 50% more** of their time respectively on unpaid care work than boys of similar ages.
Reasons for Huge Inequality

- **Historical Causes:** Imperialism is one of the major causes of the inequality among the developed and developing nations. The imperialist countries looted the other countries to generate wealth for themselves.
- **Cultural Causes:** Due to cultural reasons where people of different race and class were seen differently and hence, given less opportunities. In the same way, women were not given opportunities who forms 50% of the population.
- **Geographical Causes:** One of the reasons of inequality is geographical reasons where few regions have more natural resources which help in economic terms. Some areas with better weather also help work conditions more than the extreme weather places.
- **Political Causes:** The ultra-rich who buy the government bonds are able to influence government policies for themselves. Political divide and Imperialism in previous centuries which brought class and divided people in such a way that supported deep inequality
- **Economic Causes:** a) Powerful management set their own compensation b) The already rich has money and the money works through investment which is way faster than a labor working somewhere. Even when the rich sleeps, his money works 24*7
- **Environmental Causes:** Through industrial revolution, the developed countries polluted the whole world and now they are working towards cleaner environment. This forces the other countries to follow the norm but they are still not able to handle technologies of the renewable energy. Thus, this keeps them confused in a way.
- **Anthropological Causes:** The way society has developed over time, the poor society is different from the modern one and it takes time to develop with the same rate as the rich ones. Gender inequality has been a reason for economic inequality as well.

Flawed and sexist economic system:

- The report details how the world’s existing economic system serves the richest among us while undervaluing work such as caregiving—which is disproportionately performed by females—and emphasizes the need for global governments to pursue bold actions to address inequality.
- This great divide is based on a flawed and sexist economic system that values the wealth of the privileged few, mostly men, more than the billions of hours of the most essential work – the unpaid and underpaid care work done primarily by women and girls around the world
- **Tending to others, cooking, cleaning, fetching water and firewood are essential daily tasks for the wellbeing of societies, communities and the functioning of the economy.**
- The heavy and unequal responsibility of care work perpetuates gender and economic inequalities.
- **Our broken economies are lining the pockets of billionaires and big business at the expense of ordinary men and women**
- This broken economic model has accumulated vast wealth and power into the hands of a rich few, in part by exploiting the labor of women and girls, and systematically violating their rights.
- If multinationals and the super-rich do not pay their fair share of taxes, governments cannot invest in access to education, healthcare, and decent pensions, or take measures to mitigate and adapt to the climate crisis.
- The impact is even greater for developing countries, as they rely more on corporate taxes. Furthermore, the tax burden is shifted to the poorest, usually through taxes regressive to consumption, such as value-added tax (VAT).

Way forward:
Governments around the world must act now to build a human economy that is feminist and values what truly matters to society, rather than fuelling an endless pursuit of profit and wealth.

- Invest in national care systems to address the disproportionate responsibility for care work done by women and girls.
- End extreme wealth to end extreme poverty.
- Legislate to protect the rights of all carers and secure living wages for paid care workers.
- Ensure that carers have influence on decision-making processes.
- Challenge harmful norms and sexist beliefs.
- Value care work in business policies and practices.

**Conclusion:**

It is incumbent on all of us to make a clear commitment to the issue of international taxation, no longer considering it as a technical issue to be discussed behind closed doors. We must work collectively to put the interests of the majority of citizens above the often-unreasonable profits of a small group of shareholders.

Inhuman practices in the name of religion in the country are a cause of worry in the country, the recent step taken by the govt. of Karnataka; by adopting anti-superstition law is a step in the right direction. Discuss the underlying factors responsible for the prevalence of such practices and suggest solutions to address the same. (250 words)

**Reference:** Indian Express

**Why this question:**

A controversial anti-superstition law in Karnataka, the Karnataka Prevention and Eradication of Inhuman Evil Practices and Black Magic Act, 2017, has been formally notified by the government, thus the context of the question.

**Key demand of the question:**

One has to emphasize on the fact that a law to prevent exploitation in the name of religion is necessary for a country so diverse in religions and cultures.

**Directive:**

**Discuss** – This is an all-encompassing directive – you have to debate on paper by going through the details of the issues concerned by examining each one of them. You have to give reasons for both for and against arguments.

**Structure of the answer:**

**Introduction:**

Start by explaining what superstitions are.

**Body:**

Comment on the aspects of the prevailing culture about religious practices, superstitions etc. in the country.

Then move on to discuss the factors responsible for prevalence of such beliefs and existence of such rituals.

Discuss the importance of steps taken by the government of Karnataka.

Suggest more such solutions to cure the issue.

**Conclusion:**

Conclude with way forward.

**Introduction:**

A controversial anti-superstition law in Karnataka has formally been notified by the current government. It is called the Karnataka Prevention and Eradication of Inhuman Evil Practices and Black Magic Act, 2017.
Body:

Superstitions:

Superstitions is followed by people who are weak or not rational. To some extent this approach is valid because even in a modern society people still consider it a bad omen when someone sneezes and you are about to go out, people approach godmen for remedies of problems etc.

There have been many inhuman practices in the name of religion. For example, in Maharashtra, there were several cases where people murdered or brutally injured others and held them responsible for some deaths in their families, merely on suspicion.

But totally blaming people who follow superstitions as weak hearted is an incomplete attempt to understand the whole. In aboriginal communities people still believe in magical beliefs. It is not to be forgotten that studies show that the tribes of Nicobar were fast enough to go to the higher reaches of the island to escape tsunami when modern society was so adversely affected.

Also superstition could be based on fact in olden days but the same logic is not valid with changes in the society. For instance many elders in the family believe cutting nails after sunset is bad. In olden days this was prohibited because then electricity was not available and it would be difficult to cut nails as some injury can be caused too but when it is seen in the modern approach the same logic does not hold anymore.

Why Superstition is prevalent in India?

- In India many people link religion with superstitions. Many believe age old beliefs as the truth without necessary rational outlook.
- When some scientists and well educated person believes in superstitions it gives legitimacy to the people to follow it.
- Also in India still many are uneducated. The development and fostering of scientific temper is neglected entirely in Indian education system where reasoning is put behind.
- Moreover people tend to look for godmen to get their problems solved especially in rural areas where adequate public health infrastructure is unavailable.
- Sometimes people who are facing problems and have personal issues etc are superstitious as they want faster resolutions.
- Even hard-core cynics can occasionally fall prey to superstitions like, if the stakes are high and the effort implemented is low, many rational people say they don’t believe, but they also don’t want to take a chance.
- People prefer to take the safer route believing in superstitions in order to avoid any adversity, harm or injury. This is the reason why most superstitions are associated with fear of some harm that may strike the person if he or she does or fails to do a particular thing.

Importance of steps taken by the government of Karnataka

- The act aims to bring social awakening and awareness in society and create a healthy and safe social environment.
- Considered similar to the one in Maharashtra, the Act has ‘savings’ and ‘schedule’ categories, which classify practices that could be tolerated and those that need to be controlled or prohibited.
- The notification said nothing in the Act shall apply with respect to the forms of worship mentioned under the heading ‘savings’.

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These include practices like ‘pradakshina’, yatras, ‘parikramas’ performed at religious places, among other normal practices.

It also includes advice with regard to ‘Vastu Shastra’, advice by ‘jyothishya’ and other astrologers.

Practices included under the ‘schedule’ for prohibition are — performing any inhuman, evil act and black magic in search of precious things, bounty and hidden treasures

Other practices listed under 16 points for prohibition are facilitating any person to roll over leaves of leftover food by other people in public or religious places or similar practices that violate human dignity; subjecting women to inhuman and humiliating practices like parading them naked in the name of worship or otherwise, such as “betthale seve”.

Also, forcing any person to carry out evil practices such as the killing of an animal by biting its neck and coercing any person or persons to perform ‘firewalk’ at the time of ‘jatras’ (temple/village fest) and religious festivals have also been included, it added.

During the passage of the bill, certain amendments sought were made part of the bill, and the practice of ‘mudradharane’ by Madhwa Brahmans was exempted.

As per this practice, ‘mudras’ (seals) usually made of gold or copper are heated on coal fire and stamped on the body.

‘Vashikarana’, practiced in occult science as an act of subjugation or advertising about it in the name of treatment has been banned under the Act

Superstitious practices, including black magic, are punishable under the Act for up to seven years and a maximum fine of Rs 50,000 can be imposed.

The act also aims to bring social awakening and awareness in society and create a healthy and safe social environment, and also calls for the appointment of vigilance officers to oversee the implementation of the law.

The bill bans the following:

**Evils against backward castes:** Made Snana, a temple ritual in which people roll over plantain leaves with leftovers of food eaten by Brahmins or urulu seve, where devotees roll around the place of worship were abolished as it hurts an individual’s dignity

**Menstrual taboo:** The practice involves segregation of women during their menstrual cycle as they are considered to be unclean or impure. Alienation of pregnant women in society has also been abolished with this law.

**Medicinal superstitions:** It is now banned to seek treatment through black magic when bitten by a scorpion, snake or dog. They should seek medical treatment instead. Also, now people cannot claim to perform surgery using fingers or change the sex of foetus in a woman’s womb.

**Parading naked women:** Women cannot be forced to parade around naked in the name of goddess worship. This inhuman and humiliating practice against women is called ‘betthale seve’.

**Self-inflicted injury:** The practices that involve self-inflicted injuries, like hook-swinging are now outlawed. Hook-swinging involves a volunteer being pierced with hooks and then being suspended from a height.

**Evils against children:** The practice of throwing children off from heights or branding them with heated objects, in the name of curing them, is now banned.

**Exploiting one’s fear of ghosts:** One cannot create panic in people’s minds by claiming and creating the illusion of summoning a ghost or an evil spirit

**Walking on fire:** People cannot be coerced to walk on fire and harm themselves during the time of religious festivals, also known as jatras.

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Telegram: https://t.me/insightsIASips
Youtube: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCpoccbCX9GEIwale4HLjwA
Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/insightsonindia
• **Animal sacrifice**: The practice of sacrificing animals or causing them harm in the name of ritual or tradition, has also been banned.

**Way forward:**

Secular temptations and anxieties of money and power in the modern world explain better perhaps the rise in need-based rituals for placating deities than inner tendencies within religion. Lacking access to proper health care and poverty will also make victims fall to such methods.

- If the executive is serious about curbing such practices, active implementation and enforcement of existing laws need to be made more effective. Studies in criminology have already established that certainty of punishment curbs the rate of crime and not the type or the quantum of punishment.
- The enforcement machinery needs a major overhaul to make criminal justice more accessible.
- Moral resources for replacing unacceptable practices are explored within tradition.

**Conclusion:**

Inhuman practices in the name of religion in the country are a cause of worry. In Maharashtra, there were several cases where people murdered or brutally injured others and held them responsible for some deaths in their families, merely on suspicion. So, a law to prevent exploitation in the name of religion is necessary.

**Role of women and women’s organization**

Lack of a conversation in the mainstream about Women issues, specifically related to health is a sign of sexism and ageism. Analyse. (250 words)

*Indian Express*

**Why this question:**

The article discusses in detail the case of UK, wherein According to Wellbeing of Women Survey, 2016, one in four women in the UK considered leaving their jobs due to menopausal symptoms.

**Key demand of the question:**

One must explain the importance of women issues and the significance of having open conversations with respect to the problems of women openly in the society.

**Directive:**

**Analyze –** When asked to analyse, you have to examine methodically the structure or nature of the topic by separating it into component parts and present them as a whole in a summary.

**Structure of the answer:**

**Introduction:**

Start with current day issues of women that require open debate.

**Body:**

Take hints from the article and discuss a case study.

Discuss the Indian case as to what are the causes for which women issues have always been in the back seat.

Explain what needs to be done to overcome such challenges.

Discuss the need for innovative solutions to such problems.

**Conclusion:**

Conclude with way forward.

**Introduction**
In Beed district, where the daily wage for female farmers is Rs. 250, women are having hysterectomies in their twenties. The news made headlines as “Indian women going womb-less” to boost productivity. It was found that many women were unaware of the impact of removal of uterus at young age but were coerced by families (in some case doctors), so that they would not miss work during menstruation.

This incident highlights that there is hardly any conversation regarding crucial health issues of women in the mainstream.

Body

- **Lack of conversation regarding women issues**

  - **Menstrual hygiene**: Often adolescent girls, especially in rural India are unaware of the various hygiene to be maintained during menstruation. Menstrual cycle and conversation regarding it, is still a major taboo around the country.
    - This prevents sensitization amongst people regarding menstruation. It also often leads to not discussing problems related to menstrual hygiene and other infections regarding the same.
    - Access to sanitary napkins in remote areas is abysmal, leading usage of unsanitary clothes.

  - **Access to Contraception**: India has the highest number of women, nearly 31 million with an "unmet need" for contraception, according to RAND survey research. This is due to lack of sex education at schools and the understanding of various contracections available for use.
    - Family planning is still very low amongst married couples in India. Combined with early marriage, women often are unaware of birth spacing, thus causing serious health complications.
    - Eg: 53.2% of non-pregnant women and 50.4% of pregnant women were found to be anaemic in 2016, as per the NFHS.

  - **Reproductive Choices**

    - According to UNICEF India and World Bank data, India counts among the highest number of maternal deaths worldwide. India witnesses 45,000 maternal deaths every year, coming to an average of one maternal death every 12 minutes.

    - **Unsafe abortions** are the third leading cause of maternal deaths in India. Researches have shown that half the pregnancies in India are unintended and about a third result in abortion. Only 22% of abortions are done through public or private health facilities.

    - The silence around unsafe abortion leads to deaths of women and hides important problems that lie at the intersection of these concerns, such as the formidable barriers for adolescent girls to access reproductive health services, including abortion services.
- **Post-Partum issues:** After childbirth, many women experience fatigue and discomfort, such as perineal pain and uterine contractions. However, many do not seek medical care as there is low awareness regarding this.
  - Postpartum Depression is also a serious issue in women post child birth. But only a handful of women understand and seek help.

- **Menopausal issues:**
  - According to Wellbeing of Women Survey, 2016, one in four women in the UK considered leaving their jobs due to menopausal symptoms. Not surprising, given the extreme physical and psychological shifts women experience during this phase.
  - According to another study by The New York Times, 60 per cent of women are likely to experience menopause-related cognitive impairment.
  - Unfortunately, menopause conversation are nil, even more so in the Indian setting. This prevents women from accessing the healthcare and consultation advice to minimize the drudgery.

The severe lack of conversation on something that affects half the global population at some point in their lives, shows that it is due to a lethal concoction of sexism and ageism. The world, designed by men, for men, is by default programmed to make less of women’s issues, especially that of ageing women.

- **Impact on women**
  - The lack of a mainstream dialogue on any of the above issues compounds the problem — it results in women not even recognising the symptoms and thus suffering in silence.
  - Many of these issues often lead to women quitting from labour force or undergoing unscrupulous procedures. India has seen a decrease in the labour force participation rate of women at 23.3% from 27%.
  - Issues such as menopause is being recognised as an emerging health crisis in India, and we will soon have a silent epidemic affecting a reasonably large chunk of our workforce.

Population and associated issues, poverty and developmental issues.

Critically examine whether growing population is the cause of poverty or poverty is the mains cause of population increase in India. (250 words)

**Live Mint**

**Why this question:**
The question is from the static portions of the GS paper I.

**Key demand of the question:**
Discuss in detail the causes of growing population and the causes of poverty and in what way the two are interrelated.

**Directive:**
Critical examine – When asked to ‘Examine’, we have to look into the topic (content words) in detail, inspect it, investigate it and establish the key facts and issues related to the topic in question. While doing so we should explain why these facts and issues are important and their implications. When ‘critically’ is suffixed or prefixed to a directive, one needs to look at the good and bad of the topic and give a fair judgment.
Structure of the answer:

Introduction:
Highlight the fact that Poor countries tend to have a high population growth and high population growth rate can lead to poverty. Both these phenomena are visible in India leading to a vicious cycle.

Body:
Discuss first the basic aspects of population, causes of population growth and its impact. Explain in what way rapidly growing population can exacerbate poverty. A high population increases the pressure on resources as they can support only a small number of people. It strains the ability of the government to provide for every citizen. It increases the competition for a limited number of jobs. Poverty on the other hand can also lead to an increase in population. Poor people tend to have more children so as to put them to work and support them economically. Poor also have lower access to education and healthcare and are not able to do family planning properly.

Conclusion:
Conclude with what needs to be done to overcome the situation and cure the issue.

Introduction:
The UN Human Rights Council has defined poverty as “a human condition characterized by the sustained or chronic deprivation of the resources, capabilities, choices, security and power necessary for the enjoyment of an adequate standard of living and other civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights”. This argument of whether poverty is the causal effect or the resultant effect of overpopulation is one which has plagued economists for many years. Some have argued that the relationship is circular and each impacts the other.

Body:
Poverty and population growth are said to be interrelated and the impacts of a growing population on the carrying capacity of the environment is continually highlighted. As a result, regions experiencing high levels of both poverty and population growth are often the least developed countries (LDC) of the world.

Population growth leading to poverty:
- Some believe that high fertility causes poverty and that lower fertility is the key to reducing poverty.
- At the end of the 18th century, Thomas Malthus and his followers argued that high fertility and poverty went hand in hand. Malthus himself, focusing on the impoverishing effects of scarce land and rising food prices, urged couples not to marry and have children unless they could afford to support them.
- Population growth is said to be largely driven by two key components. Dasgupta (1995) broadly describes these components as, having children as ends and having children as assets.
- As high population below poverty line add to high level of illiteracy, poor health care facilities and poor access to financial resources.
- Increase in the population results in more family expenses.
- Unemployment rate increases pushing families to poverty.
- The increased levels of population place a greater strain on the carrying capacity of land; as a result, placing strain on economies in the LDC’s to achieve a higher rate of agricultural growth as well as obtain high standards of living (Pearce and Warford, 1993; World Bank, 1984).
In Africa, poverty is said to result primarily from a fast growth in population and low levels of agricultural yield.

In Asia, similarly poverty is said to be largely created by high population growth rates and density combined with large landlessness (UNDP, 1998).

Increased pressure of satisfying the expanded family needs creates stress on the bread winner resulting in health related issues sometimes to the extreme of fatal. This would push the family to poverty.

Hence high population growth affects the per capita income and makes per capita income even lower.

In a study conducted by Sachs et al. (1997, cited in Hakkert, 2007) it was revealed that in Asia, high levels of population growth is one of the factors that gives rise to increased levels of inequality and that the ability to escape poverty becomes increasingly difficult as the size of families increase.

**Poverty leading to Population growth:**

- Poverty encourages the families to reproduce more with the expectation that the number of members in the family is directly proportional to the working force of the family resulting in more income for the family.
- Poverty discourages families from sending their children to schools resulting in increased illiteracy.
- Due to this people remain uneducated on the ways of controlling birth rate using modern medical techniques.
- Further, illiteracy stops one from thinking the consequences of high population in the family.
- Poverty pushes families to get their female children married at a very young age which gives rise to early and increased re-production.

**Measures needed:**

- Access to sexual and reproductive health, including family planning, can affect population dynamics through voluntary fertility reduction and reductions in infant and maternal mortality.
- Improved reproductive health also helps individuals, particularly young women, break out of intergenerational cycles of poverty.
- When women and couples are empowered to plan whether and when to have children, women are better enabled to complete their education; women’s autonomy within their households is increased; and their earning power is improved.
- This strengthens their economic security and well-being and that of their families. Cumulatively, this contributes to development progress and poverty reduction.

**Conclusion:**

Overall, it is a vicious cycle in which large part of population is trapped. Efforts to combat the ‘vicious circle’ of poverty, rising population growth and associated environmental degradation are said to require multidisciplinary policies in all sectors. These policies need to be carefully established taking account of the need to achieving sustainable development if the resourced that are available for future generations are to be preserve.

India requires an integrated housing development strategy for the rural context

Elucidate.(250 words)

_The Hindu_
Why this question:
The article narrates a detailed analysis of Provision of Urban Amenities to Rural Areas (PURA) concept that is aimed at development of rural areas.

Key demand of the question:
Discuss in detail how the rural development aspects of the country require an integrated housing strategy.

Directive:
Elucidate – Give a detailed account as to how and why it occurred, or what is the particular context. You must be defining key terms where ever appropriate, and substantiate with relevant associated facts.

Structure of the answer:
Introduction:
State some facts highlighting the scenario of Indian rural areas and the level of development therein.

Body:
In brief discuss the underlying concept of PURA. Explain how it proves to be the framework to mitigate the country’s socioeconomic problems and create a common development platform for rural and urban areas. Discuss the growing need for an integrated approach to resolve the rural development issues and address the challenges. Take hints from the article and discuss the associated pros and cons.

Conclusion:
Conclude with way forward, suggest that If India is to have a real chance to minimize the housing development divide, it requires an integrated housing development strategy for the rural context, to be implemented in “mission mode”.

Introduction:
Housing in rural areas is one sector that has consistently suffered from the lack of meaningful market interventions, including supply of developed land and financing for housing. This is not to say that India never pursued effective poverty alleviation measures, but that the interventions it carried out have hardly worked in minimising urban-rural divides.

Body:

Provision of Urban Amenities to Rural Areas (PURA):

- Notwithstanding growing disparities of material status in India, there is a framework to mitigate the country’s socioeconomic problems and create a common development platform for rural and urban areas.

- The realisation of PURA’s transformative potential depends on public policies that recognise that its design goes beyond the mere creation of economic infrastructure and employment opportunities in rural areas.

- It also aims to develop social infrastructure.

- Challenges faced in Rural housing development strategy:

  - The incompatibilities in supply and demand, millions of Indians dwell in unsecured housing.
  - This was largely driven by shortages in the supply of housing and a lack of redevelopment of collapsible or dilapidated units.
  - Officially, the incidence of this form of housing-related poverty is in the order of 25.85 million (82% in rural areas and 18% in urban).
Menial occupation workers and low-income earners have been facing these forms of poverty the most.

Need for integrated housing development strategy in rural areas:

- Dilapidated units have contributed towards a high level of housing amenities deprivation, especially because they cannot safely be connected with electricity or solar energy, latrines, and drinking water, owing to associated structural risks.
- This scenario has resulted in multiple deprivations of 45% of rural families without electricity, biogas and LPG; over 69% without household latrines; and over 82% of families without treated water for drinking at household levels.
- Thus, the composite deprivation is in the order of over 58%.
- However, the regional picture depicts two contrasting scenarios of lower and higher levels, respectively, in 19 and nine independent States.
- The lower range of deprivations is at 20.68-52.65% and higher range at 60.19-74.81%.
- These results only speak to the priority in the political agenda, the exhibition of political will, and the economics of resource allocation in the administration of anti-poverty policies.
- In such a scenario there have been higher rates of internal migration both due to dissatisfaction with housing arrangements and the prospect of better housing elsewhere.

Way forward:

- Development interventions must focus on rural and urban areas with due consideration for new construction and redevelopment of existing, life-threatening units.
- If India is to have a real chance to minimise the housing development divide, it requires an integrated housing development strategy for the rural context, to be implemented in “mission mode”. Such a mission should have, first, a definite time frame.
- Second, it requires political will as expressed in party election manifestos. There must also be accountability in terms of implementing such a mission agenda on a continuous basis, with social audits at multiple levels of governance.
- Third, a realistic resource allocation is required given the cost of redevelopment and new housing units besides other development costs of drinking water supply, household latrines, energy, and drainage connectivity.
- Fourth, penetration of the market, including the cooperative sector for the supply of critical inputs such as land and finances, is the need of the hour.
- Public-private-partnership projects should be encouraged on public or government-owned lands, with fiscal and other incentives. Land owners should be encouraged to develop incentive-based affordable housing projects.
- Last, the people facing housing poverty must be made partners. Micro finance and self-help groups could be roped in to this end.

“Moved and dogged out of their original habitats, Bru community are now largely internally-displaced refugees”, Critically examine the internal displacement crisis of the community and comment on the efforts made by government of India so far to protect them. (250 words)

Indian Express

Why this question:
The centre has signed a historic pact for permanent solution of Bru refugees’ issue. Thus the question aims to examine the internal displacement crisis of the community and the efforts made by the government so far.

**Key demand of the question:**
The answer must discuss the historical background of the displacement crisis, causes and the consequences of the issue. One has to detail upon the efforts taken by the government in this direction from past to present and in what way the recent agreement is a different one.

**Directive:**
**Critically examine** – When asked to ‘Examine’, we have to look into the topic (content words) in detail, inspect it, investigate it and establish the key facts and issues related to the topic in question. While doing so we should explain why these facts and issues are important and their implications. When ‘critically’ is suffixed or prefixed to a directive, one needs to look at the good and bad of the topic and give a fair judgment.

**Comment** – here we have to express our knowledge and understanding of the issue and form an overall opinion thereupon.

**Structure of the answer:**

**Introduction:**
Briefly explain the historical background of the issue.

**Body:**
In detail explain who are they – The Brus, also referred to as the Reangs, and are spread across the northeastern states of Tripura, Assam, Manipur, and Mizoram. In Tripura, they are recognized as a Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group. In Mizoram, they have been targeted by groups that do not consider them indigenous to the state.

Discuss what the issue is.

Trace the efforts made by the government from past to present, explain in what way the recent agreement is different from the approaches taken in the past.

**Conclusion:**
Conclude on a positive note highlighting India’s approach for refugees.

**Introduction:**
A *quadripartite agreement* in New Delhi, allowed some 35,000 Bru tribal people, who were displaced from Mizoram and are living in Tripura as refugees since 1997, to settle permanently in Tripura. The Centre, State governments of Tripura and Mizoram, and representatives of Bru organisations signed the agreement in the presence of Union Home Minister that promises to end their 23-year-old internal displacement crisis.

**Body:**

The internal displacement crisis:

- A bout of ethnic violence forced thousands of people from the Bru tribe to leave their homes in Mizoram.
- The displaced Bru people from Mizoram have been living in various camps in Tripura since 1997.
- In 1997, the murder of a Mizo forest guard at the Dampa Tiger Reserve in Mizoram’s Mamit district allegedly by Bru militants led to a violent backlash against the community, forcing several thousand people to flee to neighbouring Tripura.
- The Bru militancy was a reactionary movement against Mizo nationalist groups who had demanded in the mid-1990s that the Brus be left out of the state’s electoral rolls, contending that the tribe was not indigenous to Mizoram.

**Efforts made by the government from past to present:**

Telegram: https://t.me/insightsIASTips

Youtube: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCpoccbCX9GEIwaile4HLjwA

Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/insightsonindia
Successive state and central governments had thus far stressed b, even though the enduring fear of ethnic violence remained a fundamental roadblock.

The two other “durable solutions” for refugees and displaced persons suggested by the UN Refugee Agency — local integration or assimilation, and resettlement — were never explored.

Apart from their own Kaubru tongue, the Bru speak both Kokborok and Bangla, the two most widely spoken languages of the tribal and non-tribal communities of Tripura, and have an easy connection with the state.

Their long stay in Tripura, albeit in exile and in terrible conditions, has also acquainted them very well with the state’s socio-political ecology.

**Highlights of the agreement:**

- Under the agreement, the centre has announced a package of Rs. 600 crore under this agreement.
- As per the agreement the Bru tribes would be given land to reside in Tripura.
- A fixed deposit of Rs. 4 lakh will be given to each family as an amount of government aid. They will be able to withdraw this amount after two years.
- Each of the displaced families will be given 40×30 sq ft residential plots.
- Apart from them, each family will be given Rs. 5,000 cash per month for two years.
- The agreement highlights that each displaced family will also be given free ration for two years and aid of Rs. 1.5 lakh to build their houses.

**Conclusion:**

The Bru-Reang refugees will benefit from numerous development schemes in the state. Seeking to put an end to the 23-year-old Bru-Reang refugee crisis, a quadripartite agreement was signed among the Centre, state governments of Tripura and Mizoram and Bru-Reang representatives to facilitate permanent settlement of Bru refugees in Tripura. The displaced Brus, who returned to Mizoram have already begun demanding a package equivalent to one, those who stayed behind in the Tripura relief camp would be getting.

**Social empowerment, communalism, regionalism & secularism.**

No country can realize its full potential without the equal participation of women and men. Achieving gender equality is not only the right thing to do but the key to a country’s growth and development. Elaborate in the backdrop of recently released “Women, Business and the Law 2020” report. (250 words)

World Bank

Why this question:

A woman, Business and the Law 2020, the sixth edition in a series, has been released recently.

**Key demand of the question:**

Discuss in detail the importance of gender equality for the overall growth and development of the country. One has to explain the relevance of the facts established by the report and justify answer.

**Directive:**

Elaborate – Give a detailed account as to how and why it occurred, or what is the particular context. You must be defining key terms where ever appropriate, and substantiate with relevant associated facts.

**Structure of the answer:**

Introduction:
Start with the facts pointed by the report- Women, Business and the Law (WBL) is a World Bank Group project collecting unique data on the laws and regulations that restrict women’s economic opportunities.

**Body:**
First discuss why a country should focus on gender equality. Comment on the aspects brought out by the report, such as the index analyzes laws and regulations affecting women’s economic inclusion in 190 economies. Explain the importance of factors such as Mobility, Workplace, Pay, Marriage, Parenthood, Entrepreneurship, Assets, and Pension and their essence to Women. Discuss the performance of India with examples if possible.

**Conclusion:**
Conclude with way forward.

**Introduction**
Gender equality is when women and men enjoy the same rights and opportunities across all sectors of society, including economic participation and decision-making, and when the different behaviours, aspirations and needs of women and men are equally valued and favoured.

Women, Business and the Law (WBL) 2020 report, measures how laws and regulations affect women’s economic opportunity in 190 economies. The global average score in 2019 is 75.2, up from 73.9 in 2017 but the overall pace of reform has been slow. According to the report, women still have just three-fourths the legal rights of men. Middle East and North Africa remains the region with the lowest average score.

**Body**

**India’s Score**
- India has taken the top spot in the South Asian region in the World Bank’s Women, Business and Law (WBL) Index 2020. The country gained 4 per cent year-on-year with a score of 74.4 out of 100.
- While scoring 100 in the indicators of mobility, workplace and marriage, India scored poorly with respect to pay (25).
- Compared to other BRICS countries, India’s score was second-to-last.

**Why a country must focus on Gender Equality?**
- Gender equality is a fundamental and inviolable human right and women’s and girls’ empowerment is essential to expand economic growth, promote social development.
- India could boost its growth by **1.5 percentage points to 9 percent** per year if around 50% of women could join the work force.
- To enable women to participate fully in society and contribute to the health and prosperity of the society.
- Equality at work goes hand in hand with gender equality in society.
  - Economically empowered women boost demand, have healthier and better-educated children, and raise human development levels.
• Enabling her to lead a life of dignity.
• Preventing their socio-economic exploitation and lowering violence against women.
  ▪ The crimes against women rose from 3,793 per million in 2016 to 3,886 per million in 2017, as per NCRB Report
• It is estimated that companies with three or more women in senior management functions score higher in all dimensions of organizational performance.

Findings of WBL 2020 Report
• Laws matter for women’s economic inclusion.
• Eight countries this year achieved a perfect score – Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Iceland, Latvia, Luxembourg, and Sweden.
• Canada joined the group by reforming parental leave.
• Reforms related to the indicator of Parenthood were the most popular, with 16 countries implementing some change to their maternity, paternity or parental leave policies.
  ▪ Reforms are urgently needed in the area of Parenthood, which scored just 53.8 on average.
• In Africa, countries updated old laws from the 1950s and 1960s, and new labor codes were adopted in countries transitioning out of conflict.

India’s position on gender equality
• Education enrollment:
  ▪ With the enactment of Right to Education Act in 2009, girl child enrollment in primary school is nearly cent percent.
  ▪ Furthermore, secondary school enrollment is at 80.9% in 2015-16 from 76.4% in 2013-14. This is mainly due to better sanitation in schools under Swachh Bharat.
• Women centric development
  ▪ Ujjwala Scheme has provided LPG gas connection to 8 crore women, giving them respite from drudgery of indoor pollution and mortality.
  ▪ Nutrition based programmes targeting women such as POSHAN, Laqshya (Labour room Quality improvement Initiative) and institutional deliveries has decreased MMR to 122 per lakh (26.9% reduction from 2013)
• Entrepreneurship
  ▪ Women SHG’s are given loans of upto 1 Lakh under the MUDRA scheme.
  ▪ NITI Aayog has created Women Entrepreneurship Portal wherein it has handholding programme for women.
• Women and science
Women-centric programmes under the Knowledge Involvement in Research Advancement through Nurturing (KIRAN) initiative.

‘Women Scientists Program’ provides fellowship to women who have had a break in the career to pursue research in science and engineering.

- **Reproductive health**
  - Maternity Benefit Act has increased the maternity leave to 26 weeks.
  - Pradhan Mantri Matritva Yojana provides cash transfer to women at certain intervals during their pregnancy.

**Conclusion**

SDG Goal 5 aims to eliminate all forms of discrimination and violence against women in the public and private spheres and to undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources and access to ownership of property.

Gender equality is a human right which entitles all persons irrespective of their gender to live with dignity and with freedom. Gender equality is also a precondition for development and reducing of poverty. Gender shouldn’t be an unreasonable determining factor curbing the potential of women.

How does India Socialism contrast with Socialism embraced by the Communist countries? Discuss the idea of Democratic socialism. (250 words)

*Indian Polity* by Lakshmikant

**Why this question:**
The question tries to point out the idea of socialism that is different from the socialism adopted by the other world countries.

**Key demand of the question:**
Discuss in detail the idea of Indian socialism in contrast with socialism of the west and other communist countries of the world.

**Directive:**
Discuss – This is an all-encompassing directive – you have to debate on paper by going through the details of the issues concerned by examining each one of them. You have to give reasons for both for and against arguments.

**Structure of the answer:**

*Introduction:*
Start with general idea of Socialism.

*Body:*
Discuss first the idea of socialism in communist countries- In Socialism espoused by Communist countries, system of production is owned by the people collectively through their government. There are no private landlords and factory owners and all business is conducted by the State and all profits go to the state treasury i.e. industries are operated not with a view to profit by sale to other people, but for the direct service of those whom the authority or association represents.

Then move on to present the idea of Indian Democratic socialism. Features like – Socialism Combined with Modernism: “Democratic Socialism” and the “mixed economy’ demanded equality of opportunities for all and it was the basic theme. Nehru’s vision of a technologically progressive India was also inspired by a socially inspired process of integrating the technology with the modern methods of agriculture and production.

Inclusive Socialism: India also imbibed core socialism spirit through planned economic development, initiation of land reforms, labour laws, progressive taxation, expansion of education and health and rapid expansion of the
Discuss the concept of Democratic socialism.

**Conclusion:**
Conclude with significance of Indian flavor of Socialism.

**Introduction:**

Socialism is a range of economic and social systems characterised by social ownership and democratic control of the means of production as well as the political theories and movements associated with them. Broadly, it's a political and economic system under which the means of production are owned by the community as a whole, with government ensuring the equitable distribution of wealth.

**Body:**

**Indian Socialism:**

However, despite aiming for the same goals, India adopted socialism which drew inspiration from Gandhi and Nehru rather than Marxian socialism. Whereas Gandhian socialism was based on satya, ahimsa, trusteeship and decentralisation and Nehru's socialism was a liberal and a type of fabianist socialism, Marxian socialism emphasised on class wars and the dictatorship of the proletariat.

India in its modified socialist pursuit relied on three pillars of development strategy–

- planning for rapid industrial and agricultural growth which was not under the absolute control of State.
- a public sector to develop strategic industries, which was to progressively become a self-sustained profit-making sector.
- a mixed economy - Mixed economy was preferred earlier due to lack of adequate resources, but the private sector was to work under a broad framework of planning.

It differed from core socialism as it went for a mixed economy rather than complete government control, the public sector had hold on only core industries, industrialists participated in planning (Bombay Plan), emphasis was on industrialisation along with agriculture and the aim was to make the public sector a profit-generating sector rather than being just a welfare tool for income redistribution.

However, India also imbibed core socialism spirit through planned economic development, initiation of land reforms, labor laws, progressive taxation, expansion of education and health and rapid expansion of the public sector.

**Communist Socialism:**

- Communism, sometimes referred to as revolutionary socialism, also originated as a reaction to the Industrial Revolution, and came to be defined by Marx's theories—taken to their extreme end.
- In fact, Marxists often refer to socialism as the first, necessary phase on the way from capitalism to communism.
- Marx and Engels themselves didn’t consistently or clearly differentiate communism from socialism, which helped ensure lasting confusion between the two terms.
- Under communism, there is no such thing as private property.
- All property is communally owned, and each person receives a portion based on what they need.
- A strong central government—the state—controls all aspects of economic production, and provides citizens with their basic necessities, including food, housing, medical care and education.
- In communism, a violent revolution in which the workers rise up against the middle and upper classes is seen as an inevitable part of achieving a pure communist state.

**Democratic Socialism:**

- Democratic socialists believe that both the economy and society should be run democratically—to meet public needs, not to make profits for a few.
- To achieve a more just society, many structures of our government and economy must be radically transformed through greater economic and social democracy so that ordinary citizens can participate in the many decisions that affect our lives.
- Democratic socialists do not want to create an all-powerful government bureaucracy. But we do not want big corporate bureaucracies to control our society either. Rather, we believe that social and economic decisions should be made by those whom they most affect.
- Democratic socialists favor as much decentralization as possible. While the large concentrations of capital in industries such as energy and steel may necessitate some form of state ownership, many consumer-goods industries might be best run as cooperatives.
- Democratic socialists have long rejected the belief that the whole economy should be centrally planned. While we believe that democratic planning can shape major social investments like mass transit, housing, and energy, market mechanisms are needed to determine the demand for many consumer goods.

**Conclusion:**

Despite its contributions to Indian economy and society through welfare policies, cooperative societies, planned growth, land reforms etc., socialism in India is yet to achieve all its intended objectives.

Consequently, while retaining socialism as a principal constitutional value, as declared in Preamble, Fundamental Rights and DPSP, India didn’t shy away from approaching a more liberal economy and means of distributive justice when needed. It smoothly transitioned to LPG reforms in the 1990s, opened its sectors and markets to global opportunities and competition, to continue its growth story keeping up with the changing times and needs.

The share of the elderly in the population is expected to increase to 20 per cent of the population by 2050. Thus to ensure a life of dignity, social security and safety, enabling them to actively participate in economic development and the process of nation building is an absolute necessity. Discuss.(250 words)

*Reference: Economic Times*

**Why this question:**
The question pertains to the importance of involving the elderly in the process of nation building and ensuring their due participation in economic development.

**Key demand of the question:**
The answer must discuss the relevance of the elderly population to the demographics of a population and the need to have them involved in the process of economic development and nation building.

**Directive:**

Telegram: https://t.me/insightsIAStips

Youtube: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCpocbcx9GElwaile4HljwA

Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/insightsonindia
Discuss – This is an all-encompassing directive – you have to debate on paper by going through the details of the issues concerned by examining each one of them. You have to give reasons for both for and against arguments.

Structure of the answer:

Introduction:
Briefly start with key facts/data showing the increase in the elderly population.

Body:
Explain that equipping people in earlier age cohorts will help them remain in good health and involved in the community throughout the ageing process. Discuss how ageing is irreversible and inevitable. Explain that stronger partnerships between civil society, community and families are necessary to complement the actions taken by Governments in this regard. Discuss aspects like – The Madrid International Plan of Action adopted at the Second World Assembly on Ageing in 2002 offered a bold new agenda for handling the issue of ageing in the 21st-century. It focused on three priority areas: older persons and development; advancing health and well-being into old age; and ensuring enabling and supportive environments.

Conclusion:
Conclude with the significant contributions that aged people can make to the society.

Introduction:
The percentage of the senior citizens in India’s population has been growing at an increasing rate in recent years and the trend is likely to continue, First Secretary in India’s Permanent Mission to the UN.

According to the State of World Population 2019 report by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), released. India’s population in 2019 stood at 1.36 billion, growing from 942.2 million in 1994 and six per cent of India’s population was of the age 65 and above.

Body:
Problems of elderly population in India:
Isolation and loneliness among the elderly is rising.
- Nearly half the elderly felt sad and neglected, 36 per cent felt they were a burden to the family.

Rise in age-related chronic illness:
- Heart disease, cancer, diabetes, and other chronic diseases will cause more death and illness worldwide than infectious or parasitic diseases over the next few years.
- In developed nations, this shift has already happened. Dementia and Alzheimer’s disease are expected to almost double every 20 years, as life expectancy increases.

Special challenges for less developed nations:
- Poorer countries will carry the double burden of caring for older people with chronic diseases, as well as dealing with continued high rates of infectious diseases.

Increasing need for long-term care:
- The number of sick and frail elderly needing affordable nursing homes or assisted living centers will likely increase.
Rise in the Health care costs:

- As older people stop working and their health care needs increase, governments could be overwhelmed by unprecedented costs.
- While there may be cause for optimism about population aging in some countries, the Pew survey reveals that residents of countries such as Japan, Italy, and Russia are the least confident about achieving an adequate standard of living in old age.

Elderly women issues:

- They face life time of gender-based discrimination. The gendered nature of ageing is such that universally, women tend to live longer than men.
- In the advanced age of 80 years and above, widowhood dominates the status of women with 71 per cent of women and only 29 per cent of men having lost their spouse.
- Social mores inhibit women from re-marrying, resulting in an increased likelihood of women ending up alone.
- The life of a widow is riddled with stringent moral codes, with integral rights relinquished and liberties circumvented.
- Social bias often results in unjust allocation of resources, neglect, abuse, exploitation, and gender-based violence, lack of access to basic services and prevention of ownership of assets.
- Ageing women are more likely to get excluded from social security schemes due to lower literacy and awareness levels.

Ageing individual is expected to need health care for a longer period of time than previous generations but elderly care for a shorter period of time

Ageing is irreversible and inevitable:

- The share of older persons, those aged 60 years or above, in India’s population is projected to increase to nearly 20 per cent in 2050
- Equipping people in earlier age cohorts will help them remain in good health and involved in the community throughout the ageing process.
- The share of population over the age of 60 is projected to increase from 8 per cent to nearly 20 per cent in 2050
- Fulfilling needs for services and social protection for senior citizens, protection of their rights and enabling them to contribute in the development process are priorities for India

Madrid International Plan of Action:

- The 2030 Agenda also recognizes the importance of realizing their full potential and their contribution for inclusive development
- It focused on three priority areas: older persons and development; advancing health and well-being into old age; and ensuring enabling and supportive environments.

Measures in place in India to improve quality of life of older persons and protect their rights
Recently launched the world’s largest healthcare programme “National Health Protection Scheme”.

- The National Old Age Pension Scheme and a subsidized food distribution programme provide income and nutritional security to older persons in poverty.
- The Continuing Education and Adult Education programmes in India extend literacy, vocational and quality of life training options, with special focus on reducing gender gap in literacy and post-literacy capacity building.
- The National Policy on Senior Citizens envisages state support for financial and food security, health care, shelter and protection against exploitation.
- The National Council of Senior Citizens is the highest advisory body for policymaking on the entire gamut of issues related to elderly.

Way forward:

- We need timely action based on the existing global framework and ensure that action should not fall behind this demographic trend. Increased investments, political will and addressing gaps in data and statistics are key to concerted response.
- We must better equip people in earlier age cohorts, so that they remain in good physical and mental health and continue their involvement in family and community throughout the ageing process.
- Stronger partnerships between civil society, community and families are necessary to complement the actions taken by Governments in this regard, she added.
- Issues of poverty, migration, urbanization, ruralisation and feminisation compound the complexity of this emerging phenomenon. Public policy must respond to this burgeoning need and mainstream action into developmental planning.
- Gender and social concerns of elderly, particularly elderly women, must be integrated at the policy level.
- The elderly, especially women, should be represented in decision making.
- Increasing social/widow pension and its universalization is critical for expanding the extent and reach of benefits.
- Government must proactively work on lifestyle modification, non-communicable disease management, vision and hearing problem management and accessible health care through Ayushman Bharat.

Conclusion:

The elderly should be seen as a blessing, not a burden. The elderly are becoming the fastest growing, but underutilized resource available to humanity. Rather than putting them aside, physically (and mentally), to be cared for separately, they should be integrated into the lives of communities where they can make a substantial contribution to improving social conditions. The benefits of turning the ‘problem’ of the elderly into a ‘solution’ for other social problems is being demonstrated in several countries.
What is a complex volcano? Discuss the salient features with suitable illustrations.(250 words)

BBC

Why this question:
In the Philippines, a volcano called Taal on the island of Luzon, 50 km from Manila, erupted on January 12, spewing lava on the ground, and ash and smoke into the sky. Thus the question.

Key demand of the question:
The answer must discuss the concept of complex volcano and the silent features of it.

Directive:
Discuss — This is an all-encompassing directive — you have to debate on paper by going through the details of the issues concerned by examining each one of them. You have to give reasons for both for and against arguments.

Structure of the answer:
Introduction:
Briefly define volcano in general and suggest the types.

Body:
In detail explain the concept of complex volcanoes.

A complex volcano, also called a compound volcano, is defined as one that consists of a complex of two or more vents, or a volcano that has an associated volcanic dome, either in its crater or on its flanks. Examples include Vesuvius, besides Taal.

Discuss that the Taal volcano does not rise from the ground as a distinct, singular dome but consists of multiple stratovolcanoes (volcanoes susceptible to explosive eruptions), conical hills and craters of all shapes and sizes. Taal has 47 craters and four maars (a broad shallow crater).

Describe the key features of such volcanoes. Explain the landforms created by it. Use suitable diagrams wherever possible to illustrate better.

Conclusion:
Conclude with importance of such phenomena in the evolution of landforms on Earth.

Introduction:
A complex volcano, also called a compound volcano, is defined as one that consists of a complex of two or more vents, or a volcano that has an associated volcanic dome, either in its crater or on its flanks. Examples include Vesuvius, besides Taal. The Taal volcano in the Philippines does not rise from the ground as a distinct, singular dome but consists of multiple stratovolcanoes, conical hills and craters of all shapes and sizes.

Body:
Taal’s closeness to Manila puts lives at stake. The volcano is currently at alert level 4, which means that a “hazardous eruption” could be imminent within a few hours to a few days. Hazardous eruptions are characterised by intense unrest, continuing seismic swarms and low-frequency earthquakes. Because the country is situated at the boundaries of two tectonic plates — the Philippines Sea Plate and the Eurasian plate — it is particularly susceptible to earthquakes and volcanism.

Salient features of complex volcano:

- Just like the name, they are made from stratified deposits of both sticky lava droppings together with fragmental solids.
- These solids erupts form the earth’s interior and flows through the strata into the earth surface.
Majority of these complex volcanoes are multifarious structures constructed by manifold eruptions from high-level meeting and margin vents.

Complex volcanoes only focus on eruption modifications, resulting to overlapping constructions.

Numerous composite volcanoes contain a crater at the top, which contains a fundamental vent or a gathered cluster of vents.

Lavas can either flow over breaks in the depression wall or issue from cracks on the edges of the cone. Lava cools and solidified in the crevices, forming dikes like ribs, which significantly reinforce the cone to be compact.

Once this lava cools below one degree, it forms these magnificent features.

The important characteristic of a composite volcano is a channel system over which magma from a basin deep in the Earth’s shell upsurges to the surface.

The volcano is assembled up by the accretion of solid exploded through the channel and rises in scope as lava, cinders, residue and others materials are added to its inclines.

Conclusion:

These volcanoes are commonly experience in USA especially Mt. St. Helens and Mt. Shasta, Italy, Philippines, Japan Ecuador, and Canada.

Distribution of key natural resources across the world (including South Asia and the Indian subcontinent); factors responsible for the location of primary, secondary, and tertiary sector industries in various parts of the world (including India)

Discuss in detail the key landforms formed due to groundwater. (250 words)

Physical geography by Savindra Singh

Why this question:
6 people were killed and 10 are believed to be missing after a bus and some pedestrians were swallowed by a sinkhole in China’s Xining city on January 13, 2020.

Key demand of the question:
The answer must discuss the erosional and depositional landforms of groundwater.

Directive:
Discuss – This is an all-encompassing directive – you have to debate on paper by going through the details of the issues concerned by examining each one of them. You have to give reasons for both for and against arguments.

Structure of the answer:

Introduction:
Briefly explain the significance of landforms formed by the action of water.

Body:
In detail explain what actions the groundwater performs.
Define groundwater- The part of rain or snow-melt water which accumulates in the rocks after seeping through the surface is called underground water or simply groundwater.

Explain the features like; Sinkholes and caves are erosional landforms formed due to the action of ground water.

Then move onto explain depositional landforms of groundwater.

Discuss with diagrams the karst landforms associated with groundwater.

Conclusion:
Conclude with significance of such action of ground water in creation of landforms.
The part of rain or snow-melt water which accumulates in the rocks after seeping through the surface is called underground water or simply groundwater.

**Body**

**Erosional Landforms due to Groundwater**

*Sinkholes* and *caves* are erosional landforms formed due to the action of ground water.

![Figure 4.20 Karst features](image)

**Sinkholes**

A sinkhole is an opening more or less circular at the top and funnel-shaped towards the bottom.

- Small to medium sized rounded to sub-rounded shallow depressions called swallow holes form on the surface of rocks like limestone by the action of the solution.

- **Solution sink**: When a sinkhole is formed solely through the process of solution, it is called a solution sink.

- **collapse sink**: Sometimes a sinkhole starts its formation through the solution process but later collapses due to the presence of some caves or hollow beneath it and becomes a bigger sinkhole. These types are called as **collapse sinks**. The term Doline is also used.
  - Solution sinks are more common than collapse sinks.

- **Uvalas**: When several sink holes join together to form valley of sinks, they are called as Uvala

**Caves**

- In the areas where there are alternative beds of rocks (non-soluble) with limestone or dolomite in between or in areas where limestone are dense, massive and occurring as thick beds, cave formation is prominent.

- Caves normally have an opening through which cave streams are discharged.
• Caves having an opening at both the ends are called tunnels.

Depositional Landforms

A region with a large stretch of limestone is called a Karst Region. Groundwater and limestone together make a spectacular landform inside the caverns like the stalactites, stalagmites and pillars.

• Stalactites, Stalagmites and Pillars

They are formed when the calcium carbonates dissolved in groundwater get deposited once the water evaporates. These structures are commonly found in limestone caves.

- **Stalactites** are calcium carbonate deposits hanging as icicles while **Stalagmites** are calcium carbonate deposits which rise up from the floor.
- When a stalactite and stalagmite happened to join together, it gives rise to **pillars** or **columns** of different diameters.

![Development of stalactites and stalagmites in a cave](image)

Conclusion

Groundwater dissolves minerals, carries the ions in solution, and then deposits them. Groundwater erodes rock beneath the ground surface, especially carbonate rock. The landforms by groundwater take a long time to form, due to repeated action of water and region specific parameters.