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Weekly Current Affairs Compilations

A holistic magazine for UPSC Prelims, Mains and Interview Preparation

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- e. Sociology
- f. Philosophy

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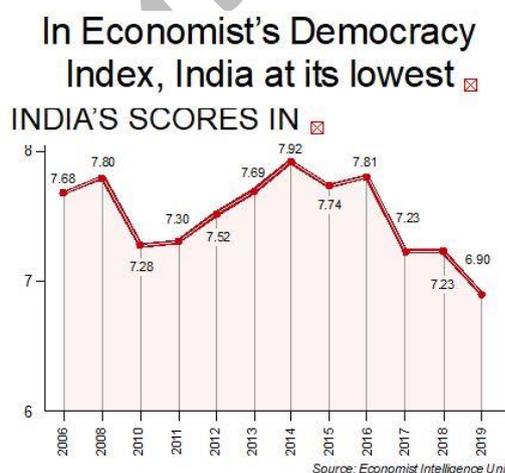
MODEL ANSWER

1. Non State Actors

PRELIMS and MAINS TOPICS

Topic 1. DEMOCRACY INDEX

- Primary cause of “*democratic regression*” to “*an erosion of civil liberties in country*”.
- India’s overall score fell from **7.23 to 6.9** on a scale of 0-10 within a year (2018-19) - lowest since 2006.
- The report, “**A year of democratic setbacks and popular protest**”, was done by **The Economist Intelligence Unit** - research and analysis division of The Economist Group, which is sister company to The Economist newspaper.
- India falls 10 ranks in Democracy Index**
 - India was graded in
 - ELECTORAL PROCESS and PLURALISM (8.67),
 - GOVERNMENT FUNCTIONING (6.79),
 - POLITICAL PARTICIPATION (6.67),
 - POLITICAL CULTURE (5.63) and
 - CIVIL LIBERTIES (6.76).
- The average global score also recorded its worst value ever, down from 5.48 in 2018 to **5.44**, driven by a sharp regression in Latin America and Sub-Saharan Africa, a lesser one in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, and by stagnation in the remaining regions that were covered.
- The report records how global democracy fared, analyzing **165 independent states and 2 territories**.
- In Asia and Australasia region, India ranks **eighth**, behind Taiwan and Timor-Leste.
- The report talks about repeal of both Article 370 and Article 35A and how ahead of the move, “government deployed a large number of troops in J&K, imposed various other security measures and placed local leaders under house arrest, including those with pro-India credentials.”*
- “The government also restricted Internet access in State,”. It says NRC exercise in Assam excluded 1.9 million people from final list, and that “vast majority of people excluded from NRC are Muslims.”*
- While ruling BJP says that most of the people excluded from the list are immigrants from Bangladesh, the government of that country “denies this”.
- On CAA, report says, “*The new citizenship law has enraged the large Muslim population, stoked communal tensions and generated large protests in major cities.*”
- Index categorizes India under “**flawed democracies**”, **countries that hold free and fair elections and where basic civil liberties are respected, but have significant weaknesses in aspects of democracy, such as problems in governance, an underdeveloped political culture and low levels of political participation.**
- According to report, there are only 22 “**full democracies**” as compared to 54 “**authoritarian regimes**” and as many “**flawed democracies**” that include the U.S.
- The report describes year in Asia as one filled with “**drama and tumult**,” with **Hong Kong** being epicentre of protest in continent.



Liberty in jeopardy

Of all the five categories that make up the Economist Intelligence Unit’s Democracy Index, India’s civil liberties index fell the most

Index	Value in 2019	Change from 2018
Democracy	6.90	-0.33
Electoral pluralism	8.67	-0.5
Government	6.79	0
Political participation	6.67	-0.55
Political culture	5.63	0
Civil liberties	6.76	-0.59

Democracy in retreat

At rank 51, India dropped 10 places in 2019 from 2018 in the Economist Intelligence Unit's Democracy Index, a measure of the state of democracy. In the last six years, among 167 countries India saw the second-highest decline in civil liberties. While the democratic index improved between '08 and '14, it worsened between '14 and '19. By **Vignesh Radhakrishnan & Sravya C**

Latest position | The overall democracy index is a combination of five categories. Each is graded on a scale of 1 (worst) to 10 (best). The table shows India's index value in 2019 and the number of countries that rank better or worse than India. Countries that have the same index value as India were ignored

Index	Value	Nations better than India	Nations worse than India
Overall democracy	6.90	50	116
1. Electoral pluralism	8.67	64	102
2. Governance	6.79	39	123
3. Political participation	6.67	26	119
4. Political culture	5.63	57	80
5. Civil liberties	6.76	69	94

2014 vs 2019 | The table shows the change in index values between 2014 and 2019. For instance, the civil liberties index decreased by 2.65 points in 2019 from 2014. In the period, 164 countries saw lower degradation of civil liberties than India. In other words, their values did not decrease beyond 2.65 points. Only Nicaragua saw a higher degradation of civil liberties in this period (-2.94 points)

Index	Change since '14	Nations better than India	Nations worse than India
Overall democracy	-1.02	157	8
1. Electoral pluralism	-0.91	133	29
2. Governance	-0.35	102	54
3. Political participation	-0.55	128	26
4. Political culture	-0.62	128	27
5. Civil liberties	-2.65	163	1

3. Two time periods | The table compares the change in India's index values between 2008-2014 and 2014-2019. For instance, the overall democracy index of India increased by 0.12 points between 2008 and 2014 only to decrease by 1.02 points between 2014 and 2019. Except the governance index, all the other categories saw an increase between 2008 and 2014. All the categories saw a decrease between 2014 and 2019

Index	2008 to 2014	2014 to 2019
Overall democracy	+0.12	-1.02
Electoral pluralism	0	-0.91
Governance	-1.07	-0.35
Political participation	+1.66	-0.55
Political culture	0	-0.62
Civil liberties	0	-2.65

- Civil liberties include freedom of the press, freedom to protest, unrestricted access to the Internet, an independent judiciary, religious tolerance, equal treatment of all citizens and basic security.
- Political culture refers to popular support for democracy, a strong tradition of separation of religion and State, etc.
- Political participation takes into consideration voter turnout, share of women parliamentarians, etc.
- Governance refers to influence of elected representatives in determining government policy, supremacy of the legislature etc.
- Pluralism refers to free and fair elections, universal adult suffrage, equal campaigning opportunities, etc.

SELECTED COUNTRIES, 2019

Country	Score	Rank
Norway	9.87	1
Iceland	9.58	2
Sweden	9.39	3
New Zealand	9.26	4
Germany	8.68	13
UK	8.52	14
France	8.12	20
United States	7.96	25
Israel	7.86	28
India	6.90	51
Brazil	6.86	52
Sri Lanka	6.27	69
Bangladesh	5.88	80
Nepal	5.28	92
Pakistan	4.25	108
Myanmar	3.55	122
Russia	3.11	134

BREAKUP OF INDIA'S SCORE

Electoral process and pluralism	8.67
Functioning of government	6.79
Political participation	6.67
Political culture	5.63
Civil liberties	6.76

India's final score, which is the average of its **6.90** is the average of its

Topic 2. ANDHRA PRADESH

1. Andhra Pradesh Assembly passed **The Andhra Pradesh Decentralisation and Equal Development of All Regions Bill, 2020**, paving the way for three capitals for the state.

- **Amaravati** will now be legislative capital
- **Visakhapatnam** will be the executive capital
- **Kurnool** the judicial capital.

2. Rationale for three capitals

- AP government says it is against building one mega capital while neglecting other parts of the state. "We do not want to develop one area utilising all our available financial resources while other areas suffer due to lack of funds,". The government has given several reasons for its "decentralised development" project.
- **Historically recommended**: According to the government, decentralisation was the central theme in recommendations of all major committees that were set up to suggest a suitable location for the capital of Andhra Pradesh. Finance and Legislative Affairs Minister B Rajendranath said it had been agreed in the November 16, 1937 **Sri Bagh Pact** (between leaders of coastal Andhra and Rayalaseema) that two university centres should be established in Waltair (Visakhapatnam) and Anantapur in Rayalaseema, and that the High Court and Metropolis should be in the coastal districts and Rayalaseema respectively.
- In December 2010, the Justice B N Srikrishna Committee, set up to look into the demand for a Telangana state, said Rayalaseema and North Coastal Andhra were economically the most backward, and the "concentration of development efforts in Hyderabad is the key reason for demand of separate states".
- In August 2014, K Sivaramakrishnan Committee appointed to identify locations for new capital of AP said state should see decentralised development and that one mega capital city was not desirable.
- G N Rao Committee: A Committee constituted by YSRCP government under former IAS officer G N Rao, in its December 2019 report, recommended three capitals for balanced growth, and four regional commissionerates along lines of Karnataka.
- BCG recommendation: The government sought an opinion from the global management consulting firm Boston Consultancy Group, which on January 3, 2020, recommended that Visakhapatnam should be the seat of the Governor, Chief Minister, and all government departments, and a High Court Bench, and have provisions for a Legislative Assembly for use in an emergency; Vijayawada/Amaravati should have the Assembly and a High Court Bench; Kurnool should have the High Court and tribunals.
- High-powered Committee: A high-power Committee appointed by the government to study the recommendations of the G N Rao Committee and the BCG suggested that the state should be demarcated into zones with separate zonal planning and development boards in order to ensure inclusive development, and that infrastructure projects focussed Rayalaseema and North Coastal Andhra should be prioritised.

3. Major practical problems

- The government argues that Assembly meets only after gaps of several months, and government Ministers, officers, and staff can simply go to Amaravati when required. However, coordinating between seats of legislature and executive in separate cities will be easier said than done, and with government offering no specifics of a plan, officers and common people alike fear a **logistics nightmare**.
- The distances in Andhra Pradesh are not inconsiderable. Executive capital Visakhapatnam is 700 km from judicial capital Kurnool, and 400 km from legislative capital Amaravati. The Amaravati-Kurnool distance is 370 km. **The time and costs of travel will be significant.**

- The AP Police are headquartered in Mangalagiri, 14 km from Vijayawada, and senior IPS officers who may be required to visit Secretariat will have to travel 400 km to Visakhapatnam. Likewise, government officers who may have to appear in High Court will have to travel 700 km to Kurnool, which does not have an airport.
- **All officers and Ministerial staff who may have to be at hand to brief Ministers when the Assembly is in session, will probably have to stay put in Amaravati, leaving behind their other responsibilities in Visakhapatnam.**

4. Infrastructure requirements

- There are no plans to construct new buildings in Visakhapatnam. Municipal Administration and Urban Development Minister Botsa Satyanarayana has said there is enough vacant government office space available in the city.
- Sources said government buildings on Hill 1 and 2 at Rushikonda IT Special Economic Zone have space to house the Secretariat and offices of the heads of departments. The government is considering allotting plots of government land at subsidised rates to over 14,000 state employees who are likely to move from Vijayawada and Guntur to Visakhapatnam.

5. Jagan Mohan vs Naidu

- After the creation of Telangana, truncated Andhra Pradesh pinned its hopes on N Chandrababu Naidu, who is credited with transforming sleepy Hyderabad into a global Information Technology hub during the time he was Chief Minister from 1995 to 2004. After the TDP swept the 2014 elections with help from its then ally BJP, Naidu focussed on building a world class capital in Amaravati. Through an innovative land pooling scheme, 33,000 acres of fertile land were taken from 29 villages, with landowners being promised developed, highly valuable plots in return, apart from monetary compensation per acre per year.
- However, due to lack of funds and support from the Centre, Naidu could not build his dream capital; he did, however, build a plug-and-play Interim Government Complex, a temporary High Court building, and a permanent Legislative Complex; and commissioned several bungalows and apartments for lawmakers, judges, and officers.
- Naidu's bitter rival Jagan Mohan Reddy, however, scrapped the project. There is widespread feeling in Andhra Pradesh that the three-capitals plan is essentially intended to deny Naidu credit for building a signature capital after his own style.



Topic 3. Republic Day

1. 26 January 1950 was day India's Constitution came into effect and country became a republic. The day- 26 January- was chosen for a particular reason, as it marked a key event in the struggle for India's freedom from British rule.

2. Why was 26 January chosen to be India's Republic Day?

- a. In 1929, Lahore hosted Indian National Congress session, in which Jawaharlal Nehru was president. At the time, Nehru and Subhash Chandra Bose were together working to oppose those in Congress party who were satisfied with 'dominion status', wherein the British monarch would continue to be the head of government.
- b. On December 31, 1929, Nehru hoisted tricolour on the banks of Ravi river and demanded "Poorna Swaraj" or complete self-rule, and date set for independence was January 26, 1930.
- c. The day was then celebrated as **Poorna Swaraj day** for next 17 years. On January 26, 1930, Congress passed Poorna Swaraj resolution or the Declaration of Independence.

3. Text of the Poorna Swaraj Resolution

THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE – PLEDGE TAKEN BY PEOPLE IN LAHORE AT THE SESSION OF THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS ON JANUARY 26, 1930

We believe that it is the inalienable right of the Indian people, as of any other people, to have freedom and to enjoy the fruits of their toil and have the necessities of life, so that they may have full opportunities of growth. We believe also that if any government deprives a people of these rights and oppresses them the people have a further right to alter it or to abolish it. The British Government in India has not only deprived the Indian people of their freedom but has based itself on the exploitation of the masses, and has ruined India economically, politically, culturally, and spiritually. We believe, therefore, that India must sever the British connection and attain Purna Swaraj, or complete independence.

We hold it to be a crime against man and God to submit any longer to a rule that has caused this fourfold disaster to our country. We recognise, however, that the most effective way of gaining our freedom is through nonviolence. We will therefore prepare ourselves by withdrawing, so far as we can, all voluntary association from the British Government, and will prepare for civil disobedience, including nonpayment of taxes. We are convinced that if we can but withdraw our voluntary held and stop payment of taxes without doing violence, even under provocation, the end of this inhuman rule is assured. We therefore hereby solemnly resolve to carry out the Congress instructions issued from time to time for the purpose of establishing Purna Swaraj.

4. Poorna Swaraj Day becomes Republic Day
5. When India became independent in 1947, the day set by British was August 15– chosen to coincide with second anniversary of day when Japanese forces submitted to allied powers after Second World War. The historian Ramachandra Guha notes, "freedom finally came on a day that resonated with imperial pride rather than nationalist sentiment."
6. Thus, when the Constitution of India was adopted on 26th November 1949, many considered it necessary to celebrate the document on a day associated with national pride.
7. The Poorna Swaraj day was best option- January 26. It has since been celebrated as the country's Republic Day.

Topic 4. OBC sub-categorization panel

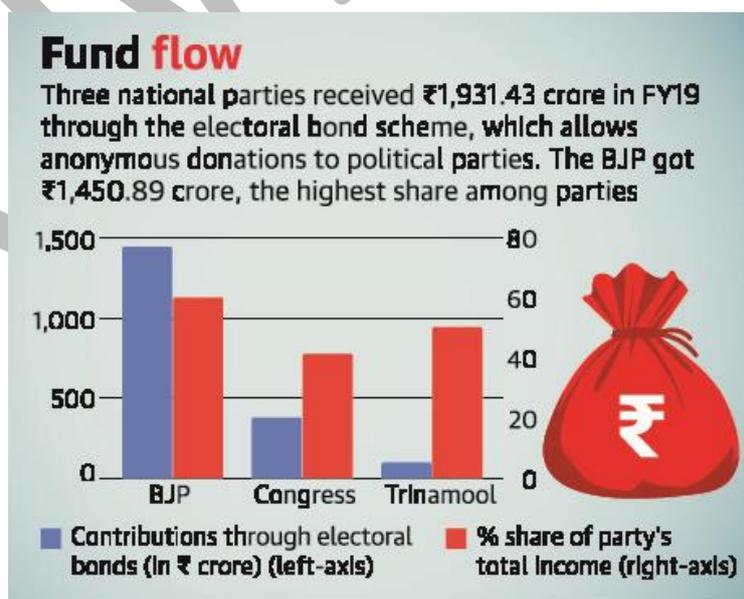
1. Union Cabinet approved a six-month extension in tenure of commission to examine sub-categorisation of Other Backward Classes (OBC), which was appointed in 2017 with an initial time frame of 12 weeks.
2. The Cabinet also approved an addition to the commission's terms of reference.
 - a. The commission will now also **"study the various entries in the Central list of OBCs and recommend correction of any repetitions, ambiguities, inconsistencies and errors of spelling or transcription,"** a statement said.
3. **OBJECTIVE:**
 - a. The commission has been appointed to look into existing list of OBCs and categorise castes that have not benefited from reservation in government jobs and education.
 - b. It is also expected to give its recommendations to ensure that these marginalised communities get the benefits of various schemes.
4. The commission is headed by the **G. Rohini**, former Chief Justice of the Delhi High Court.
5. "The commission has come to the view that it would require some more time to submit its report since the repetitions, ambiguities, inconsistencies and errors of spelling or transcription, etc., appearing in the existing Central list of OBCs need to be cleared. Hence the commission has sought extension of its term by six months, that is up to **July 31, 2020** and also addition in its existing terms of reference," a government statement said.

Topic 5. Code of conduct for Ministers

1. A five-judge Constitution Bench of Supreme Court said **possibility of enforceability ought to be explored if a new code of conduct is framed for Ministers at the Centre and in States.**
2. The Bench, led by Justice Arun Mishra, is examining whether "greater restrictions" should be imposed on Ministers' right to free speech. "If we ask the government to frame a code of conduct, it is necessary and desirable to make it enforceable," Justice Mishra told senior lawyer Kaleeswaram Raj, appearing for Joseph Shine, one of the petitioners.
3. The issue, which was referred to a **Constitution Bench** in April 2017, was based on a petition filed by family members of the Bulandshahr rape case victim, who were enraged by then Uttar Pradesh Minister Azam Khan's statement that case was part of a conspiracy against Akhilesh Yadav government.
4. Mr. Raj said government and legislature should be asked by court to formulate a **"voluntary code of conduct with respect to the personal and public lives of Ministers and to publish it after finalising the same based on due deliberations"**.

Topic 6. ELECTORAL BOND SCHEME

1. Chief Justice of India (CJI) orally made it clear that if the Supreme Court had found it unnecessary to stay the electoral bonds scheme earlier, it might not stay the scheme even now.
2. The comments came on a fervent plea by advocates Prashant Bhushan and Shadan Farasat that new facts had come up indicating that the scheme was being frequently opened to allow funds to fill the coffers of the ruling party.
3. **EC, RBI overruled**
 - a. Mr. Bhushan said the scheme would be opened again now, with the Delhi election scheduled on February 8. ***Instead of opening the scheme exclusively for the Lok Sabha election, as envisaged, it had become a mechanism to funnel benami funds to fuel political parties.***
 - b. Both the Election Commission (EC) and the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) had strongly objected to the scheme and raised the red flag against it.
 - c. Mr. Farasat said over ₹6,000 crore had been drawn in through the scheme recently. They sought a stay on the scheme.
 - d. On April 12 last, the court passed an interim order directing political parties to provide complete information to EC in sealed covers on every single donor and contribution received by them till date through electoral bonds. However, it did not stay operation of the scheme.
 - e. "If matter has been argued for stay and it was not granted, we will also not grant it," CJI said.
 - f. Mr. Bhushan reiterated that the court should consider the scheme with a new eye as many novel and disturbing facts had come to the fore since April 12.
 - g. The court initially gave 4 weeks to EC to file a reply to plea for a stay. However, Mr. Bhushan argued that it would be too late by then as Delhi election was due on February 8. SC then asked EC to file its reply in a fortnight.
 - h. The April 12 interim order was meant to ensure that balance was not tilted in anybody's favour before general election in May 2019. The court then ordered political parties to provide EC with "detailed particulars of donors as against each bond; amount of each such bond and full particulars of the credit received against each bond."
4. **SC declines to stay poll bond scheme**
 - a. This included the particulars of the bank account to which the amount has been credited and the date of each credit.
 - b. Mr. Bhushan, representing petitioner NGO, Association of Democratic Reforms, argued that 95% of the payments through electoral bonds till date had been routed to BJP. The ECI submitted that lion's share of contributions via electoral bonds had gone to the ruling party.
 - c. The government has justified the scheme as an experiment to eradicate black money. It claimed that the impact of the EBS would be known only after the 2019 Lok Sabha poll. It should meanwhile be allowed a free hand to execute its policy and the court should not pass any orders in the matter for the present.
 - d. The government's position is in stark contrast to the ECI's stand. The ECI has expressed reservations about the transparency in political funding. It submitted to the court that the electoral bonds legalised anonymity of donors and the parties receiving contributions. It maintained that the right to vote also meant the right to make an informed choice. It said that knowing the candidate was only "half the exercise".
 - e. The voters should also know the source of funding of political parties who prop up these candidates.



SOURCE: ASSOCIATION FOR DEMOCRATIC REFORMS

Topic 7.

MANIPUR TRIBES

1. Umbrella organisations of two tribes have called a truce in Manipur after almost four decades of violence and uneasy existence.
2. The conflict between **Nagas** and **Kukis** in 1993 had claimed more than 230 lives and displaced 1,00,000, mostly Kukis.
3. The working committee of Naga National Political Groups (NNPGs) and Kuki National Organisation (KNO) have signed a declaration to settle contentious issues and inter-community differences peacefully.
4. The NNPGs, which has been in talks with New Delhi since 2017, comprises National Socialist Council of Nagaland (Unification), NSCN (Reformation), NSCN (Khango), Naga National Council and 2 of its factions and Federal Government of Nagaland.
5. The **KNO which is seeking a territorial council in Manipur**, is the umbrella body of 17 militant outfits now engaged in peace talks with the Centre.
6. A joint statement issued by NNPGs convener N. Kitovi Zhimomi and KNO president P.S. Haokip said the two sides signed the declaration after a meeting in Imphal, Manipur's capital, on January 10.

Topic 8.

IRRAWADDY DOLPHINS

1. Odisha Forest Department officials, wildlife experts and researchers on sighted 146 endangered **Irrawaddy dolphins** in Chilika Lake, which boasts of highest single lagoon population of aquatic mammal in world.
2. The dolphin census was simultaneously taken up in Chilika and off Odisha coast. The Chilika Development Authority (CDA) is elated as the direct sighting of 146 dolphins meant that its population in the lake would stabilise well above 150. According to last year's census, the Irrawaddy dolphin population in Chilika was 151.
3. 'Direct sighting'
4. "The direct sighting of 146 dolphins only corroborates the estimate of the CDA, which does counting of dolphins round the year using hydrophones. Our estimated population range is 133-172," said Susanta Nanda, Chief Executive Officer, CDA.
5. **His confidence stemmed from the fact that dolphins were colonising new areas, which had been freed from encroachments by prawn farming gherries.**
6. "We have noticed dolphin movements in new areas in the central and southern sectors, more specifically in the areas near Kalijai and Rambha. These areas were made free from encroachments," said Mr. Nanda. He expressed hopes that the population is likely to increase in the next couple of years as there are enough signs of dolphins migrating from the Satpada side to other areas.
7. According to hydrophone monitoring carried out round the year in Chilika, the highest number of Irrawaddy dolphins (20-25) was moving around Rajhans, followed by the Magarmukh and Malatikuda areas.

Topic 9.

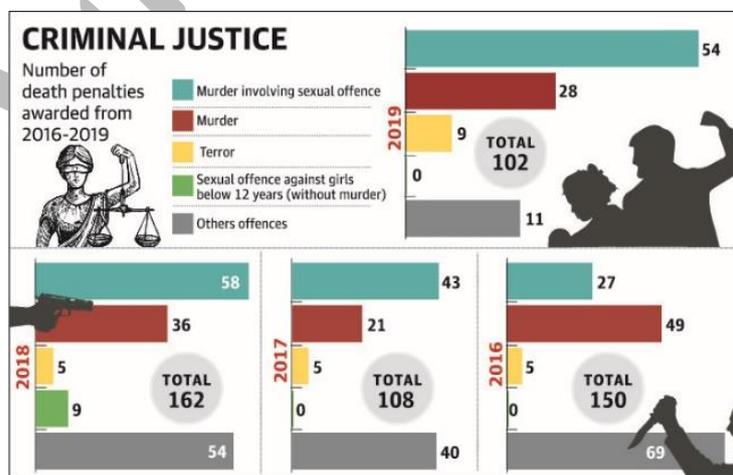
SMOG TOWER

1. The Supreme Court has agreed with Delhi government's proposal to install a **smog tower** at Connaught Place within three months even as it passed a slew of directions to reduce air pollution.
2. "Let smog tower at Connaught Place be completed by Delhi government as proposed in their reply affidavit," Bench ordered.

Topic 10.

Death sentence

1. 4th edition of '*The Death Penalty in India: Annual Statistics*' published by Project 39A of NLU-Delhi said number of death sentences awarded for murders involving sexual offences in 2019 was at highest in 4 years.
2. **Cases and convictions**
 - a. The trial courts in India imposed 102 death sentences in 2019, a significant drop from 162 death sentences in 2018. However, % of sexual offences in these cases increased from 41.35 (67 out of 162) in 2018 to 52.94 in 2019 (54 out of 102 sentences). This trend was also seen at High Courts where 65.38% (17 out of 26) cases of confirmations of death sentences involved sexual offences along with murder, highest in four years.
 - b. The Supreme Court in 2019 dealt with 27 capital punishment cases, highest number since 2001, primarily under former Chief Justice Ranjan Gogoi's tenure.
 - c. The report said that this can be linked to priority given to such cases by Chief Justice Gogoi. The Supreme Court last year confirmed the death penalty of seven cases out of which four were of murder involving sexual offences. It commuted a total of 17 cases of death penalty.
 - d. The report stated that there were widespread discussions on capital punishment in 2019 involving sexual offences against women and children.
3. **POCSO Act amendment**
 - a. It observed that the amendment to The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, introducing stringent mandatory minimum punishments and death penalty for penetrative sexual assault on children was a major development in this direction.
 - b. Additionally, in response to the public outcry following a brutal gang-rape and murder in Hyderabad, the Andhra Pradesh amended the Indian Penal Code to introduce the death penalty for rape.
 - c. "National debates and legislative trends, as well as data on administration of death penalty in this report, indicate that the issue of sexual violence against women and children is now at the heart of the debate on capital punishment in India," the report said.
 - d. It added that the "rampancy and impunity of sexual violence and the fractures within the criminal justice system perpetuating this cycle has led to a public outcry for harsher punishments".
 - e. There was also a corresponding increase in death warrants issued last year, six against one in 2018, with all warrants eventually stayed by the courts, the report stated.
 - f. "All warrants that were issued indicate a lack of compliance with the guidelines issued in the case of Shabnam vs. Union of India, which requires that a warrant for execution not be issued until reasonable time for exhausting all remedies under the law has lapsed and specifies procedures to be followed in issuing such warrant," Project 39A report stated.



SOURCE: PROJECT 39A'S DEATH PENALTY IN INDIA ANNUAL STATISTICS REPORT 2019

Topic 11.

CORONAVIRUS

1. On December 31, 2019, China informed the World Health Organization (WHO) of a cluster of cases of pneumonia of an unknown cause in Wuhan City in Hubei province. A few patients in Wuhan had been suffering from respiratory illnesses such as pneumonia since early December. Besides providing care, Chinese public health officials began carrying out environmental assessments at the wholesale market and trying to identify the microbe causing the outbreak.
2. **How was the virus identified as a coronavirus?**
 - a. On January 9, 2020, WHO issued a statement saying Chinese researchers have made “preliminary determination” of the virus as a novel coronavirus in a person with pneumonia. They were able to determine the virus by sequencing the genome using an isolate taken from an infected patient. WHO tweeted: “Preliminary identification of a novel virus in a short period of time is a notable achievement and demonstrates China’s increased capacity to manage new outbreaks.”
 - b. Public health experts are yet to identify the source of the new virus.
3. **What are coronaviruses?**
 - a. Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses with some causing less severe common cold to more severe diseases such as severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) and Middle East respiratory syndrome (MERS). While the SARS coronavirus is thought to be an animal virus from an as-yet-uncertain animal reservoir, perhaps bats, that spread to other animals (civet cats) and first infected humans in the Guangdong province of southern China in 2002, the MERS coronavirus was passed on from dromedary camels to humans in Saudi Arabia in 2012.
4. **Has China shared the genome sequence data?**
 - a. On January 11, China shared the whole genome sequence data with WHO and submitted them to the Global Initiative on Sharing All Influenza Data (GISAID) platform to allow researchers across the world to access the data. Sharing the data with GISAID will help other countries to quickly identify the virus, provide care, and also develop specific diagnostic kits, drugs and even vaccines. Since January 11, five more genome sequences have been submitted to GISAID.
5. **How many have been infected?**
 - a. Using the genomic test kit, China was able to accurately identify that only 41 of the 59 suspected cases have been infected. On January 17, four more cases were reported by the Wuhan health department. According to WHO, the clinical signs and symptoms of the patients are mainly fever and fatigue, accompanied by dry cough, with a few experiencing difficulty in breathing. Chest radiographs showed fluid in both lungs.
 - b. As of January 17, two people had died.
6. **Has the virus been able to spread among humans?**
 - a. WHO has said 763 people, including medical staff, who have come in close contact with patients infected with the novel coronavirus, have been identified for close monitoring. Based on preliminary epidemiological investigation, most of the patients had come in close contact with animals or frequently visited a wholesale seafood market (which authorities in Wuhan said was the centre of the outbreak and closed since January 1).
 - b. But in the case of the Japanese man who had travelled to Wuhan and found to be infected with the new virus, the transmission does not seem to be from animals as the person did not visit the Huanan seafood market.
 - c. According to WHO, the fact that certain cases do not seem linked with the seafood market would mean that the possibility of “limited human-to-human transmission cannot be excluded”.
7. **Has the virus been seen in people outside China?**
 - a. On January 8, a 61-year-old woman who had travelled from Wuhan to Thailand was hospitalised and mild pneumonia was diagnosed. Thermal surveillance at the one of the airports in Bangkok detected the febrile illness of the traveller. Subsequent testing confirmed

that the woman, a Chinese national, was that country's first imported case of a 'novel' coronavirus infection. She had not visited the Wuhan seafood market but instead another market where freshly slaughtered animal are sold. A second case was seen in Thailand on Friday, January 17 in a 74-year-old Chinese woman who travelled from Wuhan. On January 16, Japan reported a case of a man in his 30s who was infected with the new coronavirus. He has been discharged from hospital.

8. Are there any travel restrictions to China?

- a. India has issued a travel advisory asking citizens to follow certain precautionary measures while visiting China. "WHO advises against the application of any travel or trade restrictions on China based on the information currently available". It does not recommend that travellers take any specific measures either. However, WHO provides general tips to reduce the risk of infection such as washing hands with soap and water, covering one's nose and mouth while sneezing and coughing, avoiding contact with anyone who has cold or flu-like symptoms, thoroughly cooking meat and eggs, and avoid making unprotected contact with wild or farm animals.

Threat widens

China has reported a sharp rise in the number of people infected with a new coronavirus as millions begin travelling ahead of the country's Lunar New Year holiday



- The pathogen is a new strain of coronavirus — a large family of viruses that can cause diseases ranging from the common cold to the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), which killed hundreds in China between 2002 and 2003

Experts say the current virus strain was

80% genetically identical to SARS

CORONAVIRUS HAS SPREAD FROM CHINA TO AT LEAST FIVE OTHER COUNTRIES



Known cases

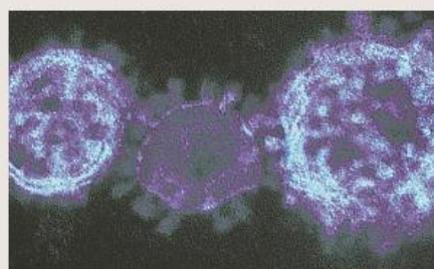
- China's National Health Commission has confirmed

17 deaths and **470** cases by the end of January 22.

- Cases have so far been confirmed in Thailand, Japan, Taiwan, South Korea and the U.S. All the cases involved people who had recently been in Wuhan

Where did it originate?

- Chinese health authorities are still trying to



An electron microscope image of the Middle East respiratory coronavirus. • GRAPHIC NEWS

determine the origin of the virus, which they say came from a market in Wuhan, where wildlife was traded illegally

Human-to-human transmission

- There is also evidence of respiratory transmission of the virus from patient to patient

- Most of the 15 medical workers who were infected

caught it from an infected patient undergoing brain surgery

How deadly is the virus?

- Compared to SARS, the symptoms appear to be less aggressive, and experts say the death toll is still relatively low

- Experts say the fact that the virus seems milder in the majority of people is "paradoxically more worrying" as it allows people to travel further before their symptoms are detected

Counter-measure

- There is no vaccine for the new virus, which is mutating. Symptoms include fever and cough

- Companies across China are handing out masks and warning staff to avoid Wuhan

Topic 12.

STAGFLATION

1. The rise in retail price inflation to a nearly six-year high of 7.35% in December has led to increasing worries that the Indian economy may be headed towards stagflation. The current rise in retail inflation has been attributed mainly to the rise in the prices of vegetables such as onions. Still, the steady rise in wider inflation figures over the last few months amidst falling economic growth has led to fears of stagflation. Notably, former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh writing in The Hindu in November had warned about the imminent risk of stagflation facing the economy.
2. **What is stagflation?**
 - a. **Stagflation is an economic scenario where an economy faces both high inflation and low growth (and high unemployment) at the same time.** The Indian economy has now faced six consecutive quarters of slowing growth since 2018. Economic growth in the second quarter ending September, the most recent quarter for which data is available, was just 4.5%. For the whole year, growth is expected to be around 5%. Most economists have blamed the slowdown on the lack of sufficient consumer demand for goods and services. In fact, insufficient demand was cited as the primary reason behind the low price inflation that was prevalent in the economy until recently. Subsequently, the government and many analysts prodded the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to cut interest rates in order to boost demand. This led to significant friction between the government and the RBI that led to the exit of several top-ranking officials (including the RBI's former Governor) from the central bank. Eventually, the RBI under Governor Shaktikanta Das obliged by cutting its benchmark interest rate, the repo rate, five times in 2019.
 - b. The expectation among analysts was that these interest rate cuts would spur demand and boost the economy. In the second half of 2019, prices of goods began to rise at a faster pace on the back of the RBI's rate cuts. But the growth rate of the economy continued to fall significantly. This combination of rising prices and falling growth has led many to believe that India may be sliding into stagflation. Perhaps the only thing right now that stops many from concluding that the economy is in full-fledged stagflation is the fact that core inflation, which excludes items such as vegetables whose prices are too volatile, remains within the RBI's targeted range.
3. **Can economists explain stagflation?**
 - a. The conventional view among economists is that there is an inverse relationship between economic growth and inflation. The idea was first proposed by New Zealand economist William Phillips, after whom the "Phillips Curve" is named, based on statistical studies of inflation and unemployment. It later gained widespread acceptance among mainstream economists. The inverse relationship between inflation and unemployment was seen as a confirmation of the hypothesis that inflation helps the economy function at its full potential. The logic behind the belief is that, at least in the short term, inflation (by boosting nominal wages but not real wages) can trick workers in an economy to accept lower real wages. Without inflation, it is argued, workers would be unwilling to accept these lower real wages, which in turn would lead to higher unemployment and decreased output in the economy. At the same time, economists argue that an inflation rate beyond a certain level, at which point labour and other resources in the economy are fully employed, will have no employment or growth benefits. Accordingly, policymakers are often advised to maintain a certain inflation rate to ensure that unemployment is kept to a minimum and the economy is operating at full capacity. The simultaneous presence of high inflation and low economic growth under stagflation, however, challenges the conventional view that inflation helps an economy operate at full capacity. It was the stagflation in the United States in the 1970s, caused by rising oil prices after the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries cut supplies abruptly, which first led many to question the validity of the Phillips Curve.
4. **Why is stagflation a problem?**
 - a. Economists who believe that the current slowdown is due to the lack of sufficient consumer demand prescribe greater spending by the government and the central bank to resuscitate the economy. But stagflation essentially ties the hands of the government and the central bank from taking such countercyclical policy steps. With retail inflation now well above the RBI's targeted range of 2-6%, the central bank is unlikely to assist the economy any time soon by cutting its benchmark interest rate. If the central bank decides to inject fresh money into the economy either by cutting its benchmark interest rate or other unconventional means, it could lead to a further rise in prices and make things worse. A similar rise in inflation could result if the government engages in deficit spending that is funded by the RBI. All this is considered to be bad news at a time when the economy, with significant unemployed resources, is

not functioning at its full capacity. Stagflation can also be politically costly to the ruling government. On the one hand, the slowdown in growth could affect peoples' incomes. On the other, higher inflation could cause a reduction in people's standard of living as they can afford fewer things.

5. What is the way out?

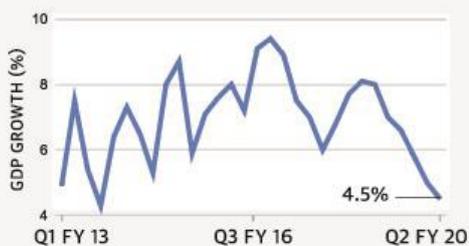
- Economists are divided along ideological lines on what needs to be done for an economy to recover from stagflation. Some economists suggest that policymakers should stop worrying about inflation and instead focus exclusively on boosting aggregate demand in the economy. India's nominal GDP growth, a measure of the overall level of spending in the economy, is expected to hit a 42-year low of 7.5% this year. They consider the RBI's target of keeping inflation from rising above 6% as an arbitrary one and believe that the central bank should further ease its policy stance and the government should spend more on infrastructure and other sectors to boost the economy.
- Another point raised by these economists is that inflation on the broader level, as measured by the core inflation figures, remains within the RBI's target range. Core inflation in December was at 3.7%. So greater spending by the government and the RBI will not cause inflation levels to run out of control, they argue. Others, however, are more cautious about advocating a big-spending approach to rescue the economy from stagflation. They point to the fact that monetary easing in the last one year has only raised prices without leading to higher growth rates. So injecting further liquidity into the economy may only stoke higher inflation without boosting economic growth.
- Some economists even see the severe drop in consumer demand simply as a symptom rather than as the primary cause behind the current slowdown. According to this view, it is natural for spending to drop after the end of a credit-fuelled boom. India's growth rate, it is worth noting, was boosted by the availability of easy credit over the last decade, or even longer. Further credit expansion by the central bank and debt-fuelled government spending, these economists argue, will not lead to genuine and sustainable economic growth but only to another unsustainable boom followed by a bust. So they instead advocate supply-side reforms to bring about genuine economic growth.

A fresh crisis?

With India's GDP growth the slowest in nearly six years and consumer inflation at a five-year-high, economists fear possible stagflation. A look at key economic parameters

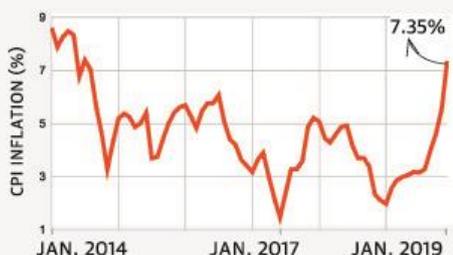
SIX-YEAR SLUMP

India's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) grew at 4.5% in the July to September quarter of FY 2019-20



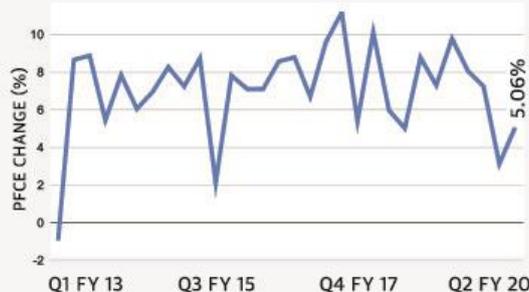
HIGH ON PRICES

India's retail inflation rate at 7.35% in December 2019 hit a 65-month high, going past the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI's) comfort-level of 6%



DEMAND WORRIES

Private Final Consumption Expenditure (PFCE), which reflects consumption, grew marginally in the July-September quarter due to the festival season. However, the growth was not as robust as seen in some of the previous quarters



RATE CUTS

The RBI kept the repo rate (rate at which the central bank lends to other banks) unchanged at 5.15% in December 2019. The graph shows the change in repo rate in 2019



Topic 13.

EASTERN GHATS

1. ***The broken hill-ranges of the Eastern Ghats, spread across Odisha, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu, are home to unique ecosystems.*** Though it has over 450 endemic plant species, the region remains one of the most exploited and degraded ecosystems of India.
2. **THREATS**
 - a. With intensifying agricultural practices,
 - b. urbanization and
 - c. pressures from mining and deforestation, ***the precious habitat of endemic and rare, endangered and threatened (RET) species could be reduced, even leading to species loss.***
3. The study team looked at available plant species data and identified 22 endemic species recorded from over 250 locations and 28 RET species recorded from nearly 800 locations in the Eastern Ghats. They then studied the soil, land use, anthropogenic activities and climate changes in these areas. They used simulations to predict how the area will change by 2050 and 2070.
4. The results published in Environmental Monitoring and Assessment show that by 2050 the total human population in the Eastern Ghats region is expected to reach 2.6 million, raising pressure from anthropogenic activities. ***There will be a demand for land for food, road and other activities leading to encroachments and threat to the habitats of endemic and RET species.***
5. “Ecotourism with regulatory guidelines is a positive way to educate and promote conservation. The highly threatening human activities in the Eastern Ghats area are mining, urbanisation /settlements, dam construction, firewood collection and agricultural expansion,”.
6. The endemic species were found to be distributed in the core areas of the forests - ***Kalahandi, Mahendragiri, Nallamalai-Seshachalam, Kolli and Kalrayan hill forests.*** On the other hand, the rare, endangered and threatened species were distributed not only in the core areas but also in the periphery of the forests, thus taking a greater hit from anthropogenic disturbances.
7. The mean temperature and rainfall were all crucial for the plant species and simulations showed that the temperature is likely to increase by 1.8 degree Celsius by 2050 to 1.98 degree Celsius by 2070. The rainfall is also projected to increase by 113 millimetre by 2050 and 160 millimetre by 2070.
8. **Climate change effect**
 - a. The team adds that the **regional or local climate change** (warming) has led to frequent prolonged non-rainy days, increased number of days with maximum and minimum temperatures resulting in **loss of soil moisture and soil degradation**. These factors have also contributed to the occurrence of **frequent forest fires, eliminating regeneration of the less-frequent endemic species in the forest.**
 - b. Studies from across the globe have shown that the **tropics are losing more plant biodiversity than other regions**, stressing the need for urgent conservation strategies. The team adds that more studies and setting up species inventories to identify and record species can help on conservation efforts.
 - c. “It is of utmost importance that biodiversity conservation initiatives of Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change of Government of India and State forest departments focus on the Eastern Ghats to protect declining habitats of endemic and RET species. The boundaries of national parks and sanctuaries should be redefined based on the richness of endemic and RET species,”.

Topic 14.

BRU REFUGEES

1. Twenty-three years after ethnic clashes in Mizoram forced 37,000 people of the Bru (or Reang) community to flee their homes to neighbouring Tripura, an agreement has been signed to allow them to remain permanently in the latter state.
2. The agreement among the Bru leaders and the governments of India, Tripura, and Mizoram, signed in New Delhi on January 16, gives the Bru the choice of living in either state. In several ways, the agreement has redefined the way in which internal displacement is treated in India.
3. **What is in the Bru agreement?**
 - a. All Bru currently living in temporary relief camps in Tripura will be settled in the state, if they want to stay on. The Bru who returned to Mizoram in the eight phases of repatriation since 2009, cannot, however, come back to Tripura.
 - b. To ascertain the numbers of those who will be settled, a fresh survey and physical verification of Bru families living in relief camps will be carried out. The Centre will implement a special development project for the resettled Bru; this will be in addition to the Rs 600 crore fund announced for the process, including benefits for the migrants.
 - c. Each resettled family will get 0.03 acre (1.5 ganda) of land for building a home, Rs 1.5 lakh as housing assistance, and Rs 4 lakh as a one-time cash benefit for sustenance. They will also receive a monthly allowance of Rs 5,000, and free rations for two years from the date of resettlement.
 - d. All cash assistance will be through Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT), and the state government will expedite the opening of bank accounts and the issuance of Aadhaar, permanent residence certificates, ST certificates, and voter identity cards to the beneficiaries.
4. **When will the Bru resettlement take place?**
 - a. Physical verification to identify beneficiaries will be carried out within 15 days of the signing of the deal. The land for resettlement will be identified within 60 days, and the land for allotment will be identified within 150 days.
 - b. The beneficiaries will get housing assistance, but the state government will build their homes and hand over possession. They will be moved to resettlement locations in four clusters, paving the way for the closure of the temporary camps within 180 days of the signing of the agreement. All dwelling houses will be constructed and payments completed within 270 days. Tripura Chief Minister Biplab Kumar Deb has said he hopes to wrap up the process even sooner — in six months.
5. **Where will the Bru be resettled?**
 - a. Revenue experts reckon 162 acres will be required. Chief Minister Deb has said that the effort will be to choose khash or government land, but since Tripura is a small state (only 10,491 sq km), his government would explore the possibility of diverting forest lands, even reserve forest areas if necessary, to grant the new entitlements.
 - b. Diverting forest land for human settlements will, however, need clearance from the Union Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF), which is likely to take at least three months. Deb has said that the central government has promised to provide funds, if needed, to acquire forest land or government land.
6. **In what condition are the migrants now?**
 - a. The Bru or Reang are a community indigenous to Northeast India, living mostly in Tripura, Mizoram, and Assam. In Tripura, they are recognised as a Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group (PVTG). Over two decades ago, they were targeted by the Young Mizo Association (YMA), Mizo Zirwai Pawl (MZP), and a few ethnic social organisations of Mizoram who demanded that the Bru be excluded from electoral rolls in the state. In October 1997, following ethnic clashes, nearly 37,000 Bru fled Mizoram's Mamit, Kolasib, and Lunglei districts to Tripura, where they were sheltered in relief camps. Since then, over 5,000 have returned to Mizoram in nine phases of repatriation, while 32,000 people from 5,400 families still live in six relief camps in North Tripura.
 - b. Under a relief package announced by the Centre, a daily ration of 600 g rice was provided to every adult Bru migrant and 300 g to every minor. Some salt too, was given to each family. Every adult received a daily cash dole of Rs 5; every minor Rs 2.50. Meagre allocations were made from time to time for essentials such as soap, slippers, and mosquito nets.
 - c. Most migrants sold a part of their rice and used the money to buy supplies, including medicines. They depended on the wild for vegetables, and some of them have been practising slash-and-burn (jhum) cultivation in the forests.
 - d. They live in makeshift bamboo thatched huts, without permanent power supply and safe drinking water, with no access to proper healthcare services or schools.

Topic 15.

GLOBAL SOCIAL MOBILITY INDEX

'India ranks 76th on global Social Mobility Index'

India has been ranked low at 76th place out of 82 countries on a new Social Mobility Index compiled by the World Economic Forum (WEF), while Denmark has topped the charts

10% Increase in social mobility required across the world to benefit social cohesion and boost the world's economies by nearly 5 per cent by 2030

INDIA'S RANKING IN VARIOUS PARAMETERS:

41st in lifelong learning
53rd in working conditions
76th in social protection
79th in fair wage distribution

FIVE KEY DIMENSIONS, DISTRIBUTED OVER 10 PILLARS, USED FOR MEASURING COUNTRIES:

■ Health
■ Education (access, quality and equity)
■ Technology
■ Work (opportunities, wages, conditions)
■ Protections and institutions (social protection and inclusive institutions)

INDIA COULD GAIN FROM BETTER SOCIAL MOBILITY:

India is among the five nations that stand to gain the most from a better social mobility score that seeks to measure parameters necessary for creating societies where every person has the same opportunity to fulfil his potential in life irrespective of socioeconomic background



TOP FIVE NATIONS THAT WOULD GAIN MOST FROM INCREASES IN SOCIAL MOBILITY

■ China ■ United States ■ India ■ Japan ■ Germany

TOP FIVE NATIONS THAT HAVE PUT IN PLACE RIGHT CONDITIONS TO FOSTER SOCIAL MOBILITY

■ Denmark ■ Norway ■ Finland ■ Sweden ■ Iceland

Source: WEF/PTI

Table 1: WEF's Global Social Mobility Rankings

Country	Rank (out of 82)
Denmark	1
Germany	11
United Kingdom	21
United States	27
Russia	39
China	45
Saudi Arabia	52
Brazil	60
India	76
Pakistan	79

1. **World Economic Forum**, which organises well-known annual gathering of the world's most influential business and political decision-makers in the ski-resort of Davos (Switzerland), has come out with its first-ever Global Social Mobility Report, which has ranked India a lowly 72 out of 82 countries profiled.
2. According to report, Nordic economies such as Denmark and Finland top the social mobility rankings while countries like India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and South Africa languish at the bottom (see Table 1).
3. **What is the context for this report?**
 - a. Notwithstanding fast global growth, inequalities have been growing across the world. The rise of inequality has not only created massive social unrest but also adversely affected the global consensus on the kind of economic policies that countries follow.
 - b. A good example of this is the rise of trade protectionism across world over the past few years. Be it United States or the United Kingdom, two of the most fervent advocates of globalization and trade openness, several countries have started looking inwards in the hope that greater trade protectionism will help allay the fears and apprehensions of domestic workers.
4. **What is social mobility?**
 - a. Typically, inequalities are measured in income terms. And this measure 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".
 - b. The report states: "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".
 - c. Thus, the concept of social mobility is much broader than just looking at income inequality. It encompasses several concerns such as:
 - i. **Intragenerational mobility:** The ability for an individual to move between socio-economic classes within their own lifetime.
 - ii. **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.
 - iii. **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.
 - iv. **Absolute educational mobility:** The ability for an individual to attain higher education levels than their parents.
 - v. **Relative income mobility:** How much of an individual's income is determined by their parents' income.

- vi. **Relative educational mobility:** How much of an individual's educational attainment is determined by their parents' educational attainment.

5. Why does social mobility matter?

- a. Research has shown that in high-income countries, since the 1990s, there is stagnation at both the bottom and the top end of the income distribution—a phenomenon which social mobility experts describe as 'sticky floors' and 'sticky ceilings'. In other words, how far an individual can move up in the society determines a lot whether one is closer to the income "floor" (or poor) or "ceiling" (or rich). For instance, in Denmark or Finland (which rank highest in social mobility index), if Person A's parent earns 100% more than Person Z, it is estimated that the impact on Person A's future income is around 15%, but in the US the impact is far more – about 50%– and in China, the impact is even more – roughly 60%.
- b. Social mobility levels, then, can help us understand both the speed – that is, how long it takes for individuals at the bottom of the scale to catch up with those at the top – and the intensity – that is, how many steps it takes for an individual to move up the ladder in a given period – of social mobility. As shown in Table 2, it would take a whopping 7 generations for someone born in a low-income family in India to approach mean income level; in Denmark, it would only take 2 generations.

Table 2: Income Mobility Across Generations

Country	Number of generations required by a poor family member to achieve mean income level
Denmark	2
United States / United Kingdom	5
Germany / France	6
India / China	7
Brazil / South Africa	9

6. Research also shows that countries with high levels of relative social mobility—such as Finland, Norway or Denmark— exhibit lower levels of income inequality.
7. Conversely, countries with low relative social mobility—such as India, South Africa or Brazil—also exhibit high levels of economic inequality.
8. That's why it matters for countries like India to increase social mobility.

9. So, how is social mobility calculated?

- a. The WEF's Global Social Mobility Index assesses the 82 economies on "10 pillars" spread across the following five key dimensions of social mobility:
 - i. **Health;**
 - ii. **Education (access, quality and equity, lifelong learning);**
 - iii. **Technology;**
 - iv. **Work (opportunities, wages, conditions);**
 - v. **Protection and Institutions (social protection and inclusive institutions).**

10. How did India perform on each of the 10 pillars of social mobility?

- a. India's overall ranking is a poor 76 out of the 82 countries considered. Thus it should not come as any surprise that India ranks lowly in individual parameters as well.

Table 3 below provides the detailed breakup.

Table 3: Where India ranks on the 10 Pillars of Social Mobility	
Parameter	Rank (out of 82 countries)
Health	73
Access to Education	66
Quality and Equity in Education	77
Lifelong learning	41
Access to Technology	73
Work Opportunities	75
Fair Wage Distribution	79
Working Conditions	53
Social Protection	76
Inclusive Institutions	67

Topic 16.

POVERTY

1. A report published by Oxfam, international nonprofit focused on alleviation of global poverty, underlined what has been said repeatedly by governments, research organizations and a range of multilateral bodies over past decade or more — that ***economic inequality “is out of control”, with extremes of wealth existing alongside great poverty.***
2. ***“This great divide” “is based on a flawed and sexist economic system”*** which has ***“accumulated vast wealth and power into hands of a rich few, in part by exploiting labour of women and girls, and systematically violating their rights”.***
3. The report, titled **Time to Care: Unpaid and Underpaid Care Work and the Global Inequality Crisis**, released ahead of 50th Annual Meeting of World Economic Forum (WEF) beginning in Davos said that ***India’s richest 1% hold more than 4 times wealth held by 953 million who make up for bottom 70% of country’s population.***
4. Some snapshots from the report:

How wide is the gap between the richest and the rest?

- i. 2,153 individuals, the number of billionaires in the world in 2019, have more wealth among them than 4.6 billion people.
- ii. 22 of the world’s richest men have a combined wealth that is more than the wealth of all the women of Africa.
- iii. The world’s richest 1% have more than twice as much wealth as 6.9 billion people.
- iv. 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.
- v. 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.
- vi. 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.
- vii. From 2011 to 2017, average wages in G7 countries grew 3%, while dividends to wealthy shareholders increased by 31%.

How badly off are girls and women as compared to men?

- i. 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.
- ii. \$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.
- iii. 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.
- iv. Globally, 42% of working age women are outside the paid labour force, compared with 6% of men, due to unpaid care responsibilities.
- v. 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.
- vi. 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.

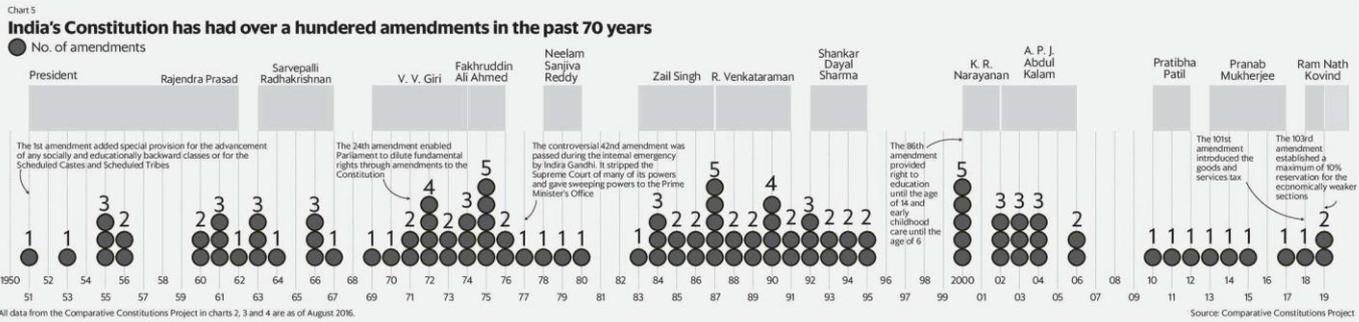
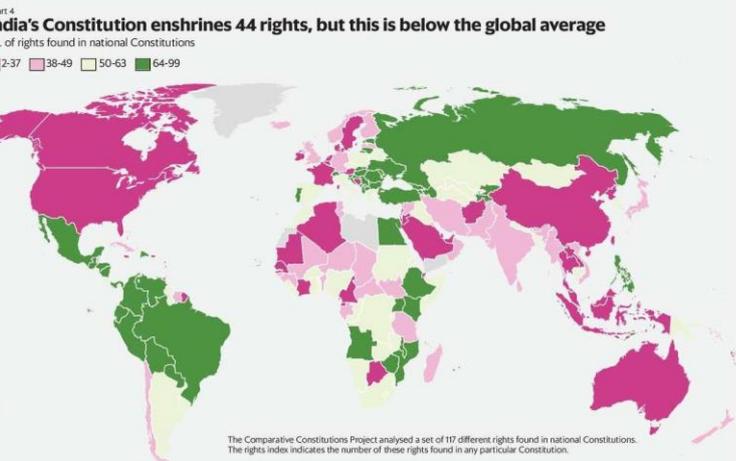
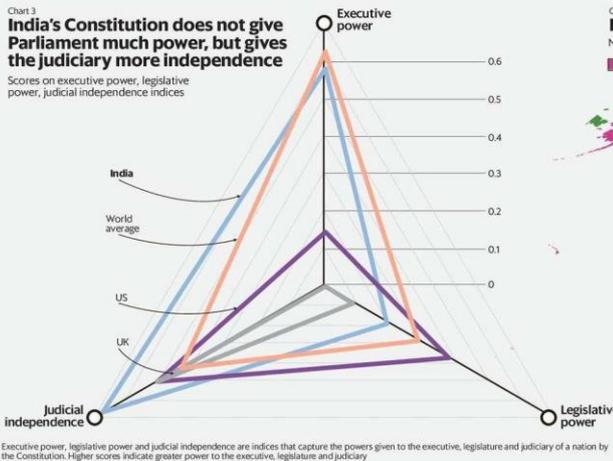
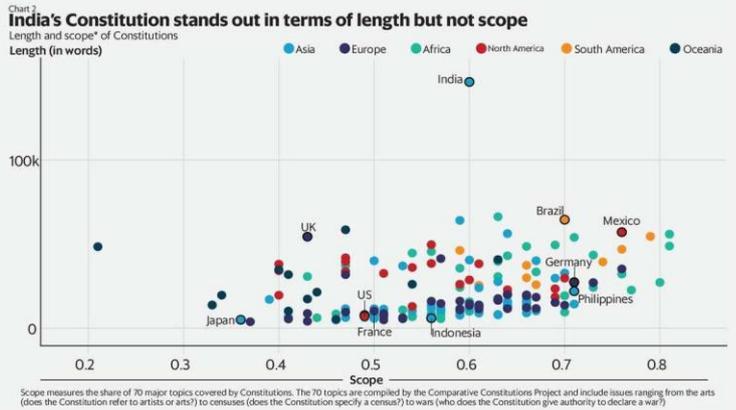
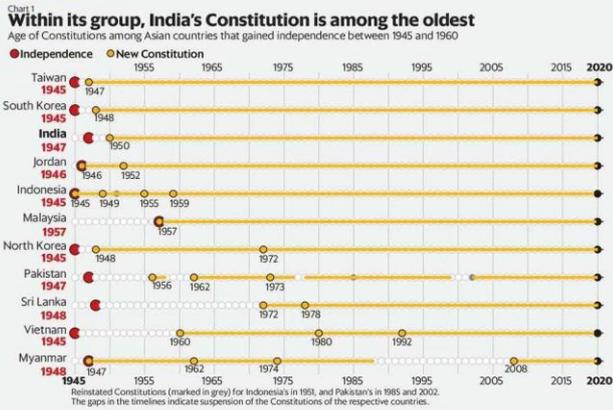
Topic 17. INDIAN CONSTITUTION

1. In the recent student-led protests, the Indian Constitution has been a recurring theme. Protesters are loudly reading out the preamble of the Constitution in defiance because they believe that fundamental Constitutional principles are being weakened by the ruling government. This is not the first time that there have been existential fears about India's Constitution. But so far, it has endured, nearly 70 years after it first came into effect on 26 January 1950.
2. The longevity of India's Constitution is remarkable, especially when compared with the global experience of national Constitutions. In their 2009 book, *The Endurance of National Constitutions*, American scholars Zachary Elkins, Tom Ginsburg and James Melton show that, on an average, Constitutions have lasted only 17 years since 1789. Within this, Constitutions in the post-colonial countries, which gained independence after World War II, have been particularly fragile. Pakistan, for example, has had three different Constitutions and large periods of rule without any Constitution. **Among the 12 Asian countries that gained independence soon after World War II and drafted Constitutions, only three Constitutions have survived—India's, Taiwan's and South Korea's** (chart 1).
3. Scholars attribute the Indian Constitution's endurance to its design and the care with which it was crafted. Starting before independence in 1946, an elected constituent assembly of nearly 300 members spent four years debating and defining every aspect of the Constitution—from the idea of India itself to the finer intricacies of federalism. The final product reflected these lengthy deliberations. **India's Constitution is a 146,385-word tome, longer than most novels and comfortably longer than any other Constitution in the world**, according to data from the Comparative Constitutions Project (CCP), an international non-profit database on global Constitutions (chart 2).
4. Despite its length, India's Constitution is not the most comprehensive in the world. All Constitutions establish the principles and framework for governance—but they can vary in depth and breadth. Almost all Constitutions, for instance, mention the military or armed forces, but fewer Constitutions refer to artists or the arts. According to CCP, there are 70 major topics that Constitutions around the world typically cover. No Constitution covers all 70 topics, but some Constitutions come close. The Constitutions of Kenya and Zimbabwe, for instance, cover more than 80% of these topics. **India's Constitution is sparser (covering 60% of topics), but in line with the global average in coverage (58%).**
5. **A central function of the Constitution is to separate and delegate between the three branches of governance: legislature, executive and judiciary.** The way Constitutions do this ultimately defines a country's politics, society and even economics. For instance, in a 2004 study, economists Torsten Persson and Guido Tabellini found that Constitutional rules which establish a parliamentary form of democracy tend to be associated with better economic performance and better growth-promoting policies compared to Constitutions which establish presidential systems.
6. In India, the choice between a parliamentary system and presidential system was debated by the constituent assembly. In his book, *India After Gandhi: The History of the World's Largest Democracy*, historian Ramachandra Guha suggests that the framers believed that given its diversity, the country needed a strong government. They felt only a parliamentary system could provide this. So, based largely on the UK parliament, **India adopted a system where the elected legislature is responsible for enacting laws, the executive serves as the administrative head of the government, and an independent judiciary is responsible for upholding laws.**
7. Many other countries share similar systems, but the amount of power held in each branch can vary significantly. To quantify these differences, CCP has generated composite measures of legislative power, executive power and judicial independence for 190 countries based on their Constitutions. According to this analysis, India's legislature, for instance, has less power than Pakistan's and the US's, but more power than the UK's. **Taken together, India's legislature has less power than the average across the 190 countries, but its executive has more power and judiciary has greater independence than global averages** (chart 3).
8. Another basic purpose of any Constitution is the rights it enshrines for citizens. For this, the Indian framers drew inspiration from myriad influences, including the American and French Constitutions. But where the American Constitution grants 35 rights, **the Indian Constitution grants 44**, as per CCP data. This, though, is still less than the global average of 50 rights (chart 4).
9. A few of these Constitutional rights, such as the right to education, only came after Constitutional amendments. **This flexibility in amending the Constitution is considered to be one of the biggest factors for the Indian Constitution's endurance.** Since its inception, the Indian Constitution has been amended 103 times, with the

most recent amendment coming in August 2019 (the reorganization of Jammu and Kashmir). In contrast, the American Constitution was last amended in 1992 for only the 27th time (chart 5).

10. India's Constitutional flexibility was a deliberate strategy by the framers, who were cognizant of both the nascent trust with Constitutional ideas in the country and the deep cleavages in Indian society, according to researchers. The Supreme Court's ruling in famous Kesavananda Bharati case, which held that basic doctrine of the Constitution cannot be altered has, however, ring-fenced the extent of flexibility the Constitution provides.
11. In final analysis, Indian Constitution's resilience could be explained by its ability to **embody a principle of accommodation**, suggest Elkins, Ginsburg and Melton of The Endurance of National Constitutions. "It is Constitutional alchemy when groups with conflicting agendas believe they are better off with existing rules than in overturning them, and therein lies key to India's Constitutional endurance," write Elkins, Ginsburg and Melton.

MINT GRAPHITI



Topic 18. EMERGING MARKETS

- India's position slipped among key emerging markets in December, latest update of Mint's Emerging Markets Tracker shows. India ranked **fifth among 10 markets** considered by tracker last month, behind China, Brazil, Indonesia and Philippines. It was at third position in November, behind Philippines and China.
- Mint's Emerging Markets Tracker, launched four months ago to **track seven high-frequency indicators across 10 large emerging markets**, helps us make sense of India's relative position in the emerging markets league tables. The seven indicators considered in Mint's Emerging Markets Tracker encompass both real activity indicators (such as **PMI manufacturing and real gross domestic product or GDP growth**) as well as financial metrics (such as **exchange rate movements and changes in stock market capitalization**). The final rankings are based on a composite score, which gives equal weight to each of the seven indicators. (See chart)
- Slowing growth, rising inflation, and a relatively muted stock market performance** contributed in large part to the fall in India's rankings in December.
- India's officially recorded growth figure of 4.5% in the September-ended quarter places it among the better performers in the emerging markets club but it is certainly not among the best growth performers. China, Indonesia, and the Philippines recorded higher gross domestic product (GDP) growth than India over the same period while Malaysia's growth nearly matched India's.
- India's policymakers have long blamed the global slowdown for the country's growth woes but now, other economies are growing faster, and India seems to be responsible for the International Monetary Fund's (IMF's) cutbacks in growth projections for the coming years in its latest report on global economic outlook (bit.ly/2ujnBoa).
- India's manufacturing activity, as recorded by the purchasing managers' index (PMI), however, continues to be strong, and country continues to remain one of the few economies where the PMI score suggests an expansion in manufacturing activity.
- The selection of the emerging markets in Mint's tracker is based on the IMF's classification of emerging and developing economies. The 10 markets selected were the largest economies in this group for which consistent and comparable time series data were available.
- The latest spike in India's consumer inflation numbers makes it second-worst emerging market in this group, just behind Turkey. If inflation continues to flare up, this could impact India's macro-economic stability and its attractiveness among emerging markets in months ahead. The spurt in inflation comes amid a slump in demand, indicating inefficiencies caused by structural bottlenecks in economy.
- The lack of structural reforms and India's lurch towards protectionism has meant that India's export growth remains lacklustre even while China is able to grow its exports amid a trade war directed against it. Several other peers fared worse than India in export performance but this is partly driven by a base effect, as some of these economies had witnessed considerable export growth in year-ago period.
- India's financial market indicators were relatively subdued in December. The rupee remained relatively weak and country's stock market capitalization rose less than most peers as foreign investors largely stayed away from Indian markets.

MINT EMERGING MARKETS TRACKER

Mint's Emerging Markets tracker provides a summary of economic activity across 10 large emerging markets based on seven high-frequency indicators. In December, while China topped the list, Turkey came in last, based on a composite score of all indicators. India came in at No. 5 (with a composite index score of 57.2), just behind the Philippines (57.5).



Topic 19. MGNREGS

1. Calls for ramping up Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) are growing louder ahead of upcoming budget, with rural distress deepening across India and private consumption growing anaemically. Proponents of MGNREGS believe that it may be only ammunition in government's arsenal to **fight rural poverty**. Critics, though, have labelled the scheme as **leaky, wasteful, and simply ineffective**.
2. Data on key metrics such as wages, inflation, and consumption suggest that truth lies somewhere in between. **While MGNREGS can provide income security to its beneficiaries, its overall impact on the rural economy will be limited unless it is implemented with greater resources and greater care.**
3. One of the immediate effects of MGNREGS should be on wages. In theory, MGNREGS should boost wages by directly providing paid employment to rural households and by providing greater competition for rural wage-earning activities. There is some evidence that this has happened but the extent has been fairly modest. One 2015 study estimated that the introduction of MGNREGS was associated with a 4.7% increase in rural private sector wages
4. One reason for the modest effects could be the low level of MGNREGS wages. At the national level, after adjusting for inflation, there is a sustained and significant difference between average rural wages and MGNREGS wages. Rural wages have largely been nearly double of MGNREGS wages over the last decade. MGNREGS wages are also below the minimum wage in 23 states. (Charts 1a & 1b)
5. Though a national programme, responsibility of implementing MGNREGS lies with states. Even in states where MGNREGS has been implemented intensely, there has been no major gain in real rural wage growth.
6. The rough proxy for implementation intensity is the number of person-days per job-card holder, which reflects the total employment under the scheme. **Tamil Nadu, Chhattisgarh, Kerala, and Andhra Pradesh** have outperformed other states on this score, but have not experienced a major rise in real rural wage growth. **Assam, Gujarat, Maharashtra and Bihar** have underperformed in implementation but have seen similar wage growth as better performers.
7. The programme is being throttled by a reduction in budget and in real wages
8. Currently, MGNREGS spending is approximately **0.3% of GDP** and has steadily declined over the years. In second term of United Progressive Alliance, budget allocations towards MGNREGS accounted for 2.5% of overall government spending on average. This has fallen to 2.3% of overall spend under the current National Democratic Alliance government.
9. **A common criticism of MGNREGS is that the money it injects into rural economies fuels rural inflation.** However, data and research suggest that may not be true. Comparing rural inflation levels with spending on MGNREGS does not show any association.
10. A 2014 Reserve Bank of India study on MGNREGS found no significant impact on inflation. According to study, other factors such as **hikes in minimum support price have been bigger drivers of rural food inflation.** (Chart 2)
11. Ultimately, the core goal of MGNREGS is to serve as a **safety net by raising consumption and reducing poverty**. Given the different factors involved, the extent to which MGNREGS does this is difficult to measure. At first glance, the data suggests no real pattern between rural consumption and MGNREGS. Between 2011-12 and 2017-18, according to data from the National Sample Survey, rural consumption fell across India irrespective of the level of MGNREGS implementation. There is no real correlation between poverty reduction at the state level and MGNREGS either. (Chart 3)
12. Yet, studies have shown that MGNREGS can have a positive impact on key rural outcomes. For instance, one national study found that MGNREGS has created valuable public goods, which have augmented rural incomes. Another national study found that, **even after deficiencies in implementation, MGNREGS may have improved nutrition outcomes.**
13. Even consumption has been shown to improve if MGNREGS is implemented well. A 2018 study of a better-implemented version of MGNREGS in Andhra Pradesh, where there was significantly less

leakage or payment delays, estimated that MGNREGS increased households' earnings by 13% and decreased poverty by 17% MGNREGS can smoothen food consumption of the rural poor by providing them with an alternate source of income during the agricultural lean season.

14. Implementation issues, such as delayed payments, have hurt the programme's effectiveness for years. According to the government's own MGNREGS portal, more than 30% of all wage requests are pending since October 2019.
15. ***"The delays in payments have been huge. If people have worked, but not got their wages, it is unlikely to increase consumption in the short run,"***
16. MGNREGS may never address structural weaknesses in the economy but with greater funding and better implementation it could provide some much-needed respite to rural India.

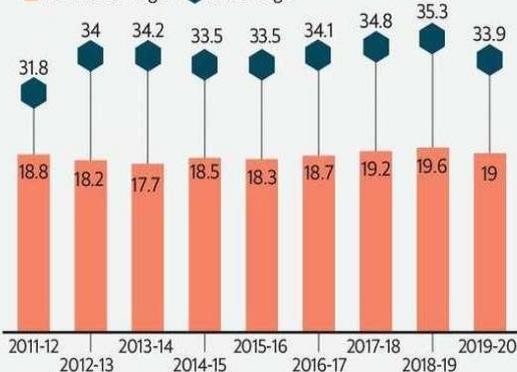
MINT GRAPHITI

Chart 1a

Gap between rural and MGNREGS wages has remained consistently large

Average real daily wages (in ₹)

MGNREGS wage Rural wage



Wages have been adjusted for inflation using Consumer Price Index for rural labourers (CPI-RL). The values for 2019-20 are based on average of monthly data till October

Chart 2

Spending on MGNREGS is declining

Spending on MGNREGS as a % of total government expenditure and y-o-y growth (in %) in CPI-Rural Labourers index

Spending on MGNREGS as % of total government expenditure
Y-o-y growth (in %) in CPI-RL

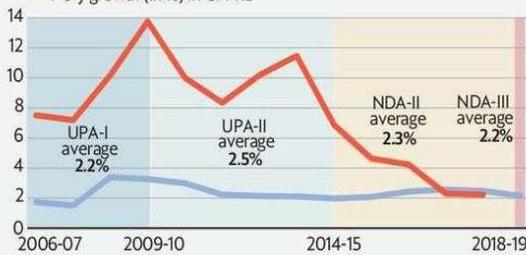


Chart 1b

MGNREGS wages are not only significantly below rural wages, but also below the minimum wage in most states

Average daily wage in 2018-19 MGNREGS wage Minimum wage Rural wage



The analysis considers the top 20 states by rural population. MGNREGS data on Telangana and rural wage data of Uttarakhand, Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh are not available.

Chart 3

Even states that have generated more MGNREGS employment have not seen a significant reduction in poverty

Average employment generated under MGNREGS between 2011-12 and 2017-18 and change in poverty levels over the same period. Size of bubbles corresponds to state rural population in 2011

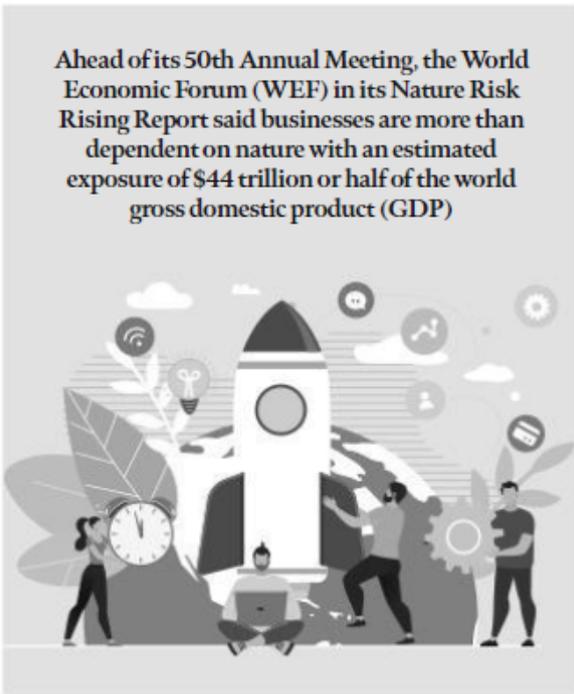
Change in poverty ratio (in % points)



Poverty reduction calculations are based on data from NSS 2017-18 and NSS 2011-12 consumption surveys. Refer to our story, 'India's rural poverty has shot up', published in December 2019 for more details. Person-days per job-card holders refer to the average over 2011-12 to 2017-18. The analysis is based on the top 20 states by rural population as of 2011. Andhra Pradesh and Telangana have been excluded from the analysis due to unavailability of consistent data for both parameters.

Source: NSO, MGNREGS MIS, Lok Sabha questions, Budget documents, Mint calculations, CMIE

‘Half of world economy dependent on nature’



Ahead of its 50th Annual Meeting, the World Economic Forum (WEF) in its Nature Risk Rising Report said businesses are more than dependent on nature with an estimated exposure of \$44 trillion or half of the world gross domestic product (GDP)

25%

Share of world's assessed plant and animal species that are threatened by human actions, with a million species facing extinction, many within decades

TOP THREE ECONOMIES WITH HIGHEST ABSOLUTE AMOUNTS OF GDP IN NATURE-DEPENDENT SECTORS:
 China: \$2.7 TRILLION
 European Union: \$2.4 TRILLION
 United States: \$2.1 TRILLION

\$44 tn

Economic value generation – over half the world's total GDP – which is moderately or highly dependent on nature and its services and,

as a result, exposed to risks from nature loss

\$13 tn

Economic value generated by industries which are highly dependent on nature, i.e. 15 per cent of global GDP

\$31 tn

Economic value generated by industries which are moderately dependent on nature, i.e. 37 per cent of global GDP

THREE LARGEST INDUSTRIES DEPENDENT ON NATURE:

Construction: \$4 TN
 Agriculture: \$2.5 TN
 Food & beverages: \$1.4 TN

Source: WEF/PTI

‘Global unemployment may rise by around 2.5 mn’

Global unemployment is projected to increase by around 2.5 million in 2020 and almost half a billion people are working fewer paid hours than they would like or lack adequate access to paid work, the ‘World Employment and Social Outlook: Trends 2020’ (WESO) report by the UN's International Labour Organization report said



>470 MILLION:
 Total number of people worldwide who are affected due to unemployment

>630 MILLION:
 Number of workers affected by working poverty – defined as earning less than \$3.20 per day in purchasing power parity – or one in five of the global working population.



188 MILLION: Number of people who are unemployed around the world

120 MILLION: Number of people who have either given up actively searching for work or otherwise lack access to the labour market.

165 MILLION: Number of people who do not have enough paid work

267 MILLION: Number of young people aged 15-24 who are not in employment, education or training, with many more enduring substandard working condition

NOT ENOUGH JOBS BEING CREATED: Global unemployment has been roughly stable for last nine years but slowing global economic growth means that, as the global labour force increases, not enough new jobs are being generated to absorb new entrants to the labour market

MODERATE OR EXTREME POVERTY SET TO RISE: Moderate or extreme working poverty is likely to edge up in 2020-21 in developing countries, increasing the obstacles to achieving Sustainable Development Goal 1 on eradicating poverty everywhere by 2030

Source: ILO/PTI

Regional power play

The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation's (SCO) annual Heads of Government Council meeting will be hosted by India later this year. Here is a brief look at the organisation

■ **Current SCO members:** India, China, Pakistan, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan

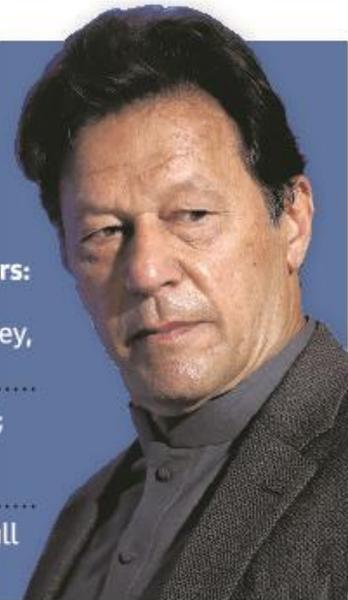
■ **Founded on** June 15, 2001

● **Observer states:** Afghanistan, Belarus, Iran and Mongolia

● **SCO permanent bodies:** Secretariat - Beijing; and Executive Committee of the Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS) - Tashkent

● **8-9 June 2017:** India and Pakistan became full SCO members at the Astana summit

● **SCO dialogue partners:** Azerbaijan, Armenia, Cambodia, Nepal, Turkey, Sri Lanka



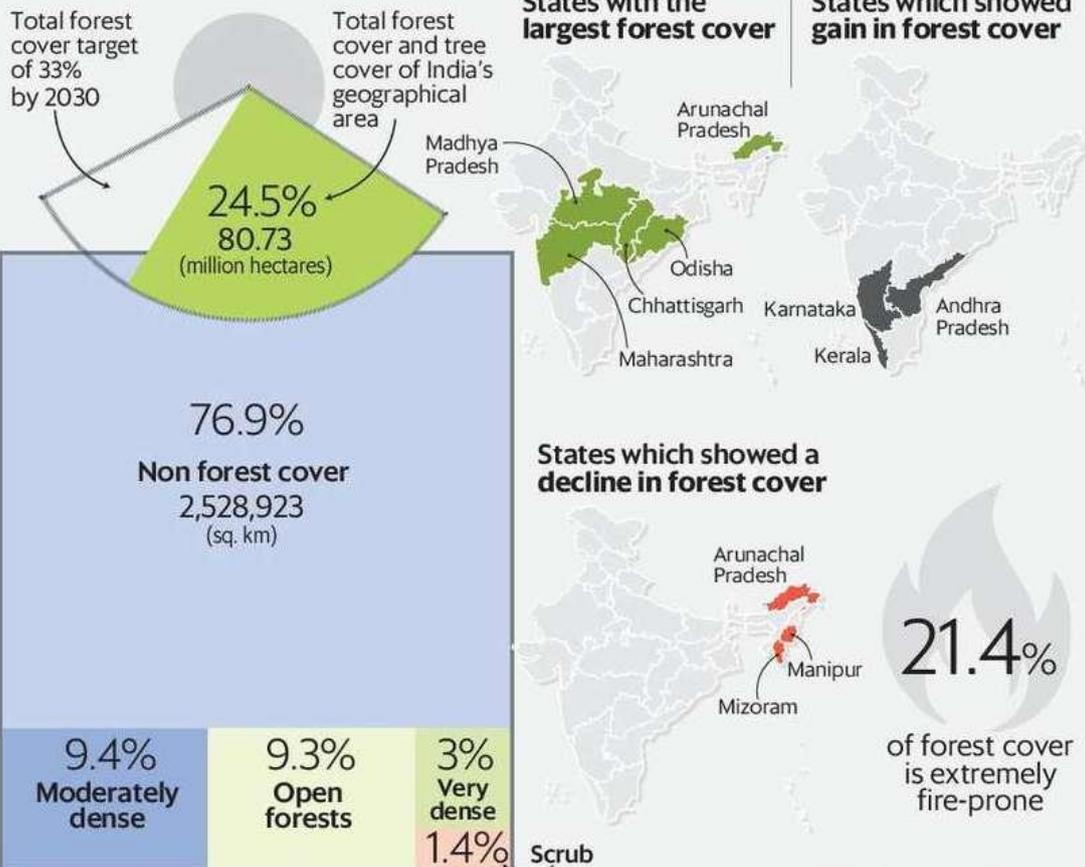
Imran Khan has not been invited to India after he assumed office as Pakistan PM in 2018

FACT 3

FOREST

Greening India

India's total forest and tree cover now stands at 80.73 million hectares—roughly 24.5% of its geographical area, but still far from the eventual 2030 target of 33% that India has committed to.



Source: India State of the Forest Report 2019

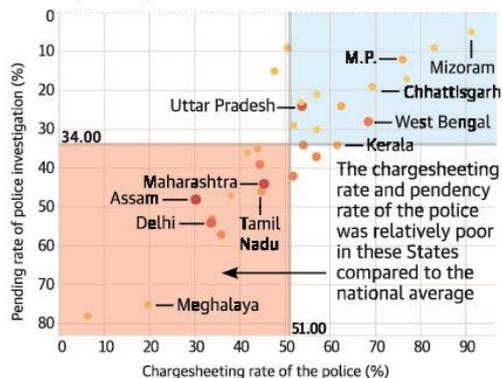
AHMED DAZA ULLAH/MINT

FACT 4 WOMEN

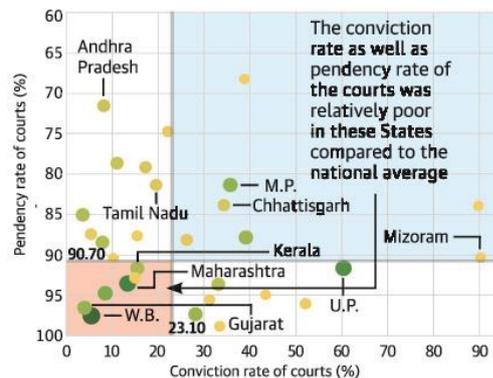
How States dealt with crimes against women

When dealing with cases of crimes against women, the case disposal rate of the police remained poor in 2018 and that of the courts worsened (refer to Data Point "Crime and punishment" published on January 14). When the same parameters were used to compare States, Maharashtra underperformed on both, while Mizoram topped the charts. Among the big States, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh performed well on both parameters. By **Vignesh Radhakrishnan**

1. Case disposal rate of the police | In 12 States, both the chargesheeting rate (chargesheets filed / new cases filed in that year as well as those carried-over from previous years) and pendency rate (cases pending investigation at the end of the year / total cases) were poor. The bigger and darker the circle, the higher the number of cases pending investigation at the end of 2018



2. Case disposal rate of the courts | In 6 States, both the conviction rate (Cases where convictions took place / new cases completed that year as well as those carried-over) and pendency rate (cases pending court trial at the end of the year / total cases) were poor. The bigger and darker the circle, the higher the number of cases pending in courts at the end of 2018



The best and the worst | The performance of Mizoram, M.P. & Chhattisgarh was better than the national average in both graphs. Among large States, Maharashtra fared poorly in both graphs. This is worrying as more cases are piling up

Parameter	Maharashtra	Mizoram	Madhya Pradesh	Chhattisgarh
% cases pending police investigation	44	5.4	12	19.2
% cases which were chargesheeted	45.3	91.2	76	69.3
Cases pending investigation	24,915	16	4,108	1,925
% cases pending trial	93.5	90.3	81.3	83.8
% conviction rate	13.2	90.2	35.6	34.2
Cases pending trial	1,92,200	580	85,063	23,317

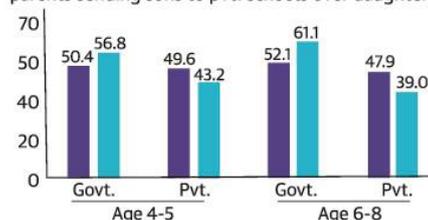
Gender disparity in early education

Students in private schools performed better in various tasks than those enrolled in government schools and anganwadis, according to the Annual Status of Education Report (Rural) 2019, which surveyed* children aged between 4 and 8. This disparity affected girls from poorer households the most as parents who faced fund shortage preferred to invest in their sons by enrolling them in private schools. By **Srravya C & Sumant Sen**

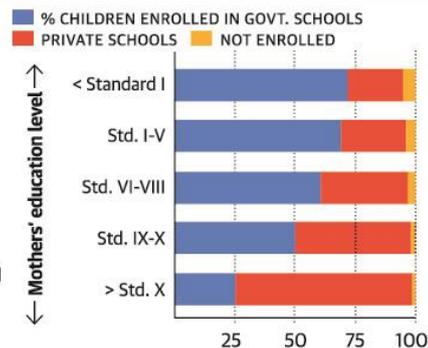
1. Government vs. private schools
Five-year-old students in private schools exhibited better cognitive, numerical & language capabilities than those in government schools and anganwadis. Figures show % students who completed a task

Tasks	Govt. pre-school	Pvt. LKG/UKG
Cognitive tasks		
Sorting	77.5	87.2
Pattern recognition	43.4	49.9
Language tasks		
Picture description	63.7	76.6
Listening comprehension	23.5	40.4
Numerical tasks		
Counting objects	36.8	57.6
Relative comparison	53.8	71.2

2. Gender bias | Boys were more likely to get enrolled in private schools than girls. In the 6-8 age group, 47.9% of boys were in pvt. schools compared to 39% of girls. Shortage of funds led to parents sending sons to pvt. schools over daughters



3. Poor and worse
Among girls, those from poorer households were more likely to get enrolled in govt. schools. The graph shows that the more educated the mothers (generally from richer households^), the more they preferred pvt. schools, perceived to be of 'better quality'



4. Girls at a disadvantage | Thus, more girl children from poorer households end up in govt. schools where students perform poorer than those in private schools. This reflected in their capabilities. Table shows % of students who "did not respond" to a task. While 11.9% of boys aged 4 could not recognise patterns, 16.3% girls could not do so

Tasks	Aged 4		Aged 5		Aged 6	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
Pattern recognition	11.9	16.3	6.9	8.8	5.3	6.8
Picture description	14.9	17	8.4	9.9	6.4	8.3
Number recognition	22.8	25.5	12.6	13.9	6.1	7.9
Listening comprehension	38.1	43.8	23.3	28	14.5	17.8
1-digit addition	40.1	44.9	27.3	30.5	17.4	20
1-digit subtraction	42.9	46.3	30.3	33.5	20.2	23.1

*Survey covered 36,930 children across 26 districts in 24 States between Sept. & Nov. 2019 | ^ According to National Family Health Survey 4

FACT 5

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

'India needs \$2.64 tn investment to meet SDGs by 2030'

To meet the United Nations' sustainable development goals (SDGs), India needs a \$2.64 trillion investment, according to the Standard Chartered SDG Investment Map

\$2,633.9 BILLION OR \$2.64 TRILLION: Total investment that India needs to make by 2030 to meet SDGs, split into:



\$1,558.8
billion for
clean
energy



\$505.5
billion for
transport
infrastructure



\$377.4
billion for
digital
access



\$192.2
billion for clean
water and
sanitation

\$10 trillion
Investment
opportunity for
private sector in
emerging markets
as a whole

\$1.124 TRILLION:
Investment opportunity
for private sector players in
India SDGs, which account
for over 10 per cent of the
total \$9.668-trillion
opportunity for private
investors across all
emerging markets

\$701.5 BILLION:
Investment opportunity
for private sector in the
country is investment in
achieving and maintaining
universal access to
electricity, which is the
seventh SDG

\$1.12 TRILLION: Potential investment
opportunity for the private sector in the total
\$2.64 trillion of investment needed; split into:

- \$701.5 billion for clean energy
- \$226.5 billion for digital access
- \$176.9 billion for transport infrastructure
- \$19.2 billion for clean water and sanitation

**THREE INFRASTRUCTURE-FOCUSED
GOALS WHERE PRIVATE SECTOR
CAN CONTRIBUTE MOST BETWEEN
NOW AND 2030:**

- SDG 6: Clean water and sanitation
- SDG 7: Affordable and clean energy
- SDG 9: Industry, innovation and infrastructure

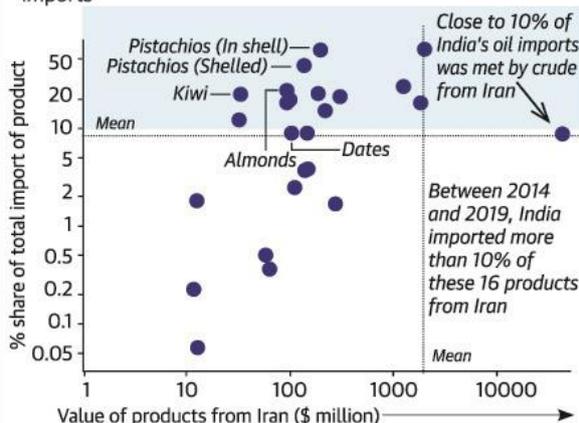
Source: Standard Chartered/PTI

FACT 6 US - IRAN

Whither Iran-India trade?

Rising tensions between Iran and the U.S. may affect India-Iran trade, which has grown in recent years despite sanctions against the West Asian country. Specifically, imports of methanol, pistachios, crude oil, and exports of varieties of tea, rice and synthetic fibres may get affected if severe sanctions are imposed. By **The Hindu Data Team**

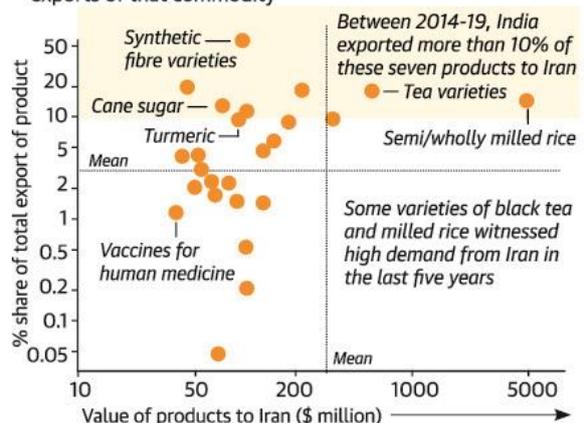
1. India's imports from Iran | The graph shows India's imports from Iran in \$ million for various products and their % share of total imports between 2014 and 2019. For instance, India imported \$34 million worth kiwi fruits from Iran in this period, which formed 21.6% of India's total kiwi imports



3. Import history | In the time periods mentioned in the table, imports from Iran formed about 2-3% of India's total imports in terms of product value. After a peak in 2004-2009, it has stagnated since

Period	\$ million	%
2014-2019	50,377.44	2.3
2009-2014	58,160.84	2.78
2004-2009	32,051.6	3.2
1999-2004	2,109.63	0.72
1996-1999	1,967.14	1.6

2. India's exports to Iran | The graph shows India's exports to Iran in \$ million for various products and their % share of total exports between 2014 and 2019. For instance, India exported \$95 million worth synthetic fibre variety (acrylic or modacrylic), which formed 55% of India's total exports of that commodity



4. Export history | In the same period, exports to Iran formed 1% of India's total exports in terms of product value. Like imports, export growth has also stagnated in the last 10 years

Period	\$ million	%
2014-2019	15,499.6	1.05
2009-2014	15,079.8	1.12
2004-2009	8,344.2	1.26
1999-2004	2,204.9	0.91
1996-1999	525.8	0.52

Source: Ministry of Commerce and Industry

MODEL ANSWER

Q 1. "In contrast to state agencies, non-state actors have certain characteristics that make them better suited to developmental activities." **Critically Analyse.**
[12.5 Marks, 200 words]

a. UNDERSTANDING KEYWORDS

- State Agencies
- Non-State Actors

b. WAY OF WRITING (STRUCTURE)

- Critically Analyze
 - Close examine both [+/-] the aspects with evidence
 - Balanced conclusion

c. ANSWER

Introduction

- Non state actors are individual, or institution not connected with state, they may be either civil society (NGOs, Pressure Groups, Interest Groups, SHGs etc.), Religious organization, Political parties or private players having significant social, political and economic influence on state.
- While state agencies are organization connected with state i.e. government

Body

Sr No	Non -state actors	Characteristics	How it helps in development activities?
1	Civil society	Wide Representation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Inculcating broader outlook
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Civil society• Political parties• Religious institution	Connect with ground or grassroot level	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Helps in understanding actual demand/needs of population• understanding the roadblocks in development
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Civil society• Political parties• Religious institution	Work for less privilege section of society	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Helps in gaining trust of people• Easily accessible to people
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Civil society• Political parties	Involve people in decision making	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• People get real picture of what institutions are doing for them and give them a sense of ownership
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Civil society	Provide quality goods at subsidized rates	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase their geographical and social reach
6	Private players	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Commitment and Professional in their conduct• Value for money	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gain trust• Prediction in their policy or behavior

Conclusion

- If non state actors become powerful then the power and authority of state will diminish exponentially and may even threaten state.
- State should work alongside non state agencies to deliver goods and services to population.
- State should also learn best practices of non-state actors and improve their service delivery and connect with citizens.