



MAINS ANSWER WRITING CONSOLIDATION

August 2025



C-171/2,
Block-A,
Sector-15,
Noida



641, Mukherjee Nagar,
Opp. Signature
View Apartment,
New Delhi



21,
Pusa Road,
Karol Bagh
New Delhi



Tashkent Marg,
Civil Lines,
Prayagraj,
Uttar Pradesh



Tonk Road,
Vasundhra Colony,
Jaipur,
Rajasthan



Burlington Arcade Mall,
Burlington Chauraha,
Vidhan Sabha Marg,
Lucknow



12, Main AB Road,
Bhawar Kuan,
Indore,
Madhya Pradesh

E-mail : care@groupdrishti.in

Phone: +91-87501-87501

CONTENTS

General Studies Paper-1	3
✦ History	3
✦ Geography	5
✦ Indian Heritage and Culture	9
✦ Indian Society	11
General Studies Paper-2	14
✦ Polity and Governance	14
✦ International Relations	18
✦ Social Justice	22
General Studies Paper-3	24
✦ Economy	24
✦ Biodiversity and Environment	26
✦ Agriculture	29
✦ Internal Security	30
✦ Disaster Management	32
General Studies Paper-4	35
✦ Theoretical Question	35
✦ Case Study	42
Essay	50

Prepare with DrishtiIAS

UPSC
Mains
Test Series
2025



UPSC
Classroom
Courses



IAS Current
Affairs Module
Course



Drishti
Learning
App



GENERAL STUDIES PAPER-1

History

- Trace the evolution of tribal and peasant movements in colonial India between 1850 and 1947. Evaluate their role in shaping nationalist politics. (150 words)

Approach:

- Introduce the answer by briefing about India's tribal and peasant movements between 1850 and 1947.
- Highlight the Evolution of Tribal and Peasant Movements with key developments
- Delve into the Role of these movements in Shaping Nationalist Politics
- Conclude with a relevant quote.

Introduction:

Between 1850 and 1947, India's tribal and peasant communities waged persistent struggles against colonial domination. Their resistance went beyond the demand for political freedom, centering on the protection of 'Jal, Jangal, Jameen' (water, forests, and land), which were integral not only to their survival and livelihood but also to their cultural identity and social cohesion

Body:

Evolution of Tribal and Peasant Movements (1850-1947)

- Phase I: Early Uprisings (1850-1900)**
 - This period was characterized by spontaneous and localized uprisings, primarily driven by immediate grievances against colonial policies.
 - Tribal Movements:** Early tribal movements, such as the **Santhal Hool (1855-56)** and the **Munda Ulgulan (1899-1900)** led by **Birsa Munda**, were direct responses to the **encroachment of moneylenders, landlords (dikus), and the colonial state's Forest Acts.**
 - The movements were primarily focused on regaining lost autonomy and land rights.
 - Peasant Movements:** Peasant uprisings like the **Deccan Riots (1875)** and the **Pabna Agrarian League (1873-76)** were primarily against high rents, usurious interest rates, and the eviction of tenants.

- These movements, though localized, showed a growing awareness of the exploitative nature of the colonial land revenue system and its intermediaries.

- Phase II: Consolidation and Ideological Shift (1900-1930)**

- As the 20th century began, the movements started to become more organized, moving beyond purely spontaneous resistance.
- Rise of Kisan Sabhas:** The formation of **Kisan Sabhas and other peasant organizations**, particularly in regions like Awadh and Bihar, marked a shift towards a more structured form of protest.
- Leaders like **Baba Ramchandra organized tenants against high rents and forced labor (begar).**

- Tribal Integration:** While tribal movements continued to fight for their distinct identities, there was an increasing realization of their shared struggle with the broader peasantry.

- The **Rampa Rebellion (1922)** led by **Alluri Sitarama Raju**, for instance, combined tribal grievances with a broader anti-British agenda, drawing inspiration from **Gandhi's Non-Cooperation Movement.**

- Phase III: Integration with National Movement (1930-1947)**

- This final phase saw the direct integration of peasant and tribal movements with the mainstream nationalist struggle.
- The **Bardoli Satyagraha (1928)** led by **Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel**, and **Nagpur Jungle Satyagraha of 1930** are prime examples of this phase.

Role in Shaping Nationalist Politics

- Broadening the Social Base:** They helped to transform the nationalist movement from an elite-driven struggle to a mass movement, with participation from diverse social strata.

Prepare with DrishtiIAS

UPSC
Mains
Test Series
2025



UPSC
Classroom
Courses



IAS Current
Affairs Module
Course



Drishti
Learning
App



- **Articulating a Deeper Anti-Imperialism:** While the early nationalist movement often focused on constitutional reforms, the peasant and tribal movements highlighted the **economic exploitation inherent in colonial rule**.
 - ◆ This gave the nationalist struggle a more profound **anti-imperialist and anti-feudal character**.
- **Influencing Nationalist Programs:** The constant pressure from these movements forced the Indian National Congress to adopt more radical agrarian agendas.
 - ◆ The **Karachi Resolution (1931)**, which called for a **living wage, free primary education, and a reduction in land revenue**, directly reflected the demands of the peasant and tribal struggles.
- **Mobilizing the Masses for Satyagraha:** The methods of resistance developed in these movements, such as **boycotts, non-payment of taxes, and mass mobilization**, were effectively utilized and integrated into the Gandhian-led national movements like the **Non-Cooperation and Civil Disobedience Movements**.

Conclusion:

By the time India stood at the brink of freedom in 1947, **tribal and peasant movements** ensured that independence was not **merely political, but also a fight for dignity, land, and livelihood**. As **Mahatma Gandhi** said- **"The soul of India lives in its villages."** It was in those villages and forest hamlets that the true spirit of resistance was born and nurtured.

2. The emergence of the Mauryan Empire was not merely a political consolidation but also a cultural and intellectual watershed. Discuss. (150 words)

Approach :

- Briefly introduce the Mauryan Empire as the first pan-Indian empire.
- Discuss that the Mauryan Empire was not merely a political consolidation but also a cultural and intellectual watershed.
- Provide suitable examples.
- Conclude with the legacy and current relevance of the empire.

Introduction :

The **Mauryan Empire** (321 BCE), founded by **Chandragupta Maurya** with the guidance of **Kautilya**, was the first **pan-Indian political unification**. Stretching from the **Himalayas to peninsular India**, it established a strong **centralized administration**. However, its significance lies in being a **cultural and intellectual watershed** in Indian history.

Body :

Political Consolidation:

- Chandragupta defeated the **Nandas** and expanded into territories vacated by **Alexander's forces**.
- Under **Bindusara** and **Ashoka**, the empire reached its zenith.
- **Megasthenes' Indica** and **Kautilya's Arthashastra** describe its **bureaucracy, taxation, and spy system**.
- Yet, Mauryan achievements extended beyond political control.

Cultural and Intellectual Watershed

- Philosophical and Ethical Innovations:
- **Arthashastra**: codified **statecraft, economics, and diplomacy**.
- **Ashoka's Dhamma**: after the **Kalinga War**, emphasized **non-violence, tolerance, and welfare** → new model of kingship based on **moral authority**.

Promotion of Buddhism and Jainism:

- **Buddhism** transformed into a **world religion** under Ashoka.
 - ◆ **The Third Buddhist Council** (Pataliputra) codified doctrines.
 - ◆ Missions to **Sri Lanka, Central Asia, Southeast Asia** spread Indian philosophy.
- **Cultural Integration through Edicts**
 - ◆ **Ashokan edicts** in **Prakrit, Greek, Aramaic** → **linguistic inclusivity**.
 - ◆ First example of **state communication** based on **ethical values**.
- **Art and Architecture**
 - ◆ **Pillar edicts, Sarnath Lion Capital** → blend of **Persian and Indian styles**.

Prepare with DrishtiIAS

UPSC
Mains
Test Series
2025



UPSC
Classroom
Courses



IAS Current
Affairs Module
Course



Drishti
Learning
App



◆ **Stupas** (Sanchi, Bharhut) → flourishing of **Buddhist architecture**.

◆ **Barabar Hills rock-cut caves** → royal patronage to ascetics.

● Ethical Statecraft and Welfare

◆ Establishment of **hospitals, dharmashalas, and ban on animal sacrifice**.

◆ Concept of **Chakravartin** (universal ruler guided by **dharma**).

Conclusion:

The **Mauryan Empire** left behind a **template of governance, cultural unity, and ethical politics** that influenced later empires like the **Guptas and Mughals**. Its **global outreach through Buddhism** shaped Asian civilizations. In **contemporary times, Ashoka's Lion Capital** serves as **India's national emblem**, symbolizing the **enduring legacy of Mauryan ideals**.

Geography

3. "The oceans play a critical role in the Earth's climate system." Examine the influence of ocean currents and phenomena like El Niño on Indian weather patterns. (250 words)

Approach :

- Briefly introduce the role of oceans in Earth's climate system.
- Examine the influence of ocean currents and phenomena like El Niño on Indian weather patterns.
- Conclude with a suitable way forward.

Introduction :

Oceans cover over **70% of the Earth's surface** and act as massive reservoirs of heat and moisture. Through large-scale circulations such as ocean currents and complex climate

phenomena like **El Niño** and the **La Niña**, and the **Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD)** significantly influence the Earth's climate system, including the **Indian monsoon**, cyclones, and rainfall distribution.

Body :

Role of Oceans in the Earth's Climate System:

- **Storing and transporting solar energy** through surface and deep currents.
- Regulating atmospheric temperatures via **latent heat transfer**.
- Influencing **wind patterns and cloud formation**, which in turn affect precipitation and pressure belts.
- This complex **ocean-atmosphere interaction** defines regional climates, including that of the Indian subcontinent.

Influence of Ocean Currents on Indian Weather

- **Warm currents** (e.g., **Agulhas Current**) near the equator increase **evaporation**, feeding the monsoon system with moisture.
- **Cold currents** (e.g., **West Australian Current**) suppress rainfall by reducing evaporation.
- The **Somali Current**, unique for its seasonal reversal, influences **Arabian Sea upwelling** and marks the **onset of the southwest monsoon**.
- The **Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD)** affects rainfall intensity:
 - ◆ **Positive IOD**: Warmer western Indian Ocean leads to enhanced rainfall over India.
 - ◆ **Negative IOD**: Cooler western Indian Ocean suppresses monsoon activity.
 - ◆ **Example**: In 2019, despite a weak El Niño, a strong positive IOD helped deliver a near-normal monsoon in India.

Prepare with DrishtiIAS

UPSC
Mains
Test Series
2025



UPSC
Classroom
Courses

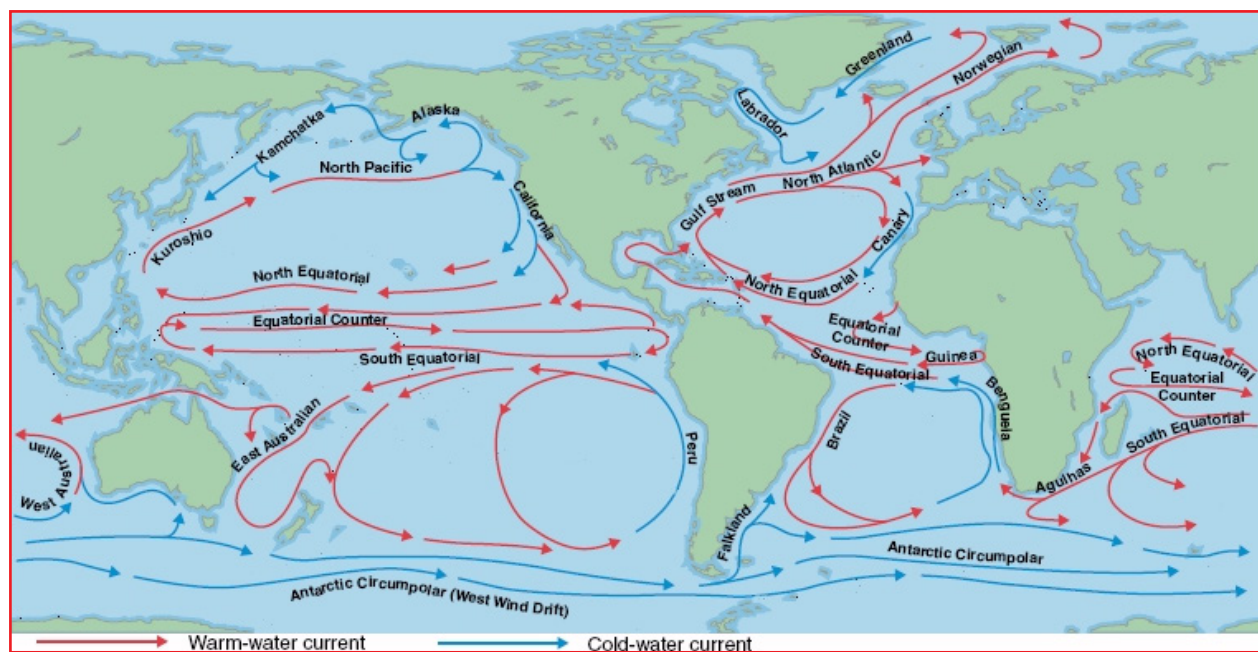


IAS Current
Affairs Module
Course



Drishti
Learning
App

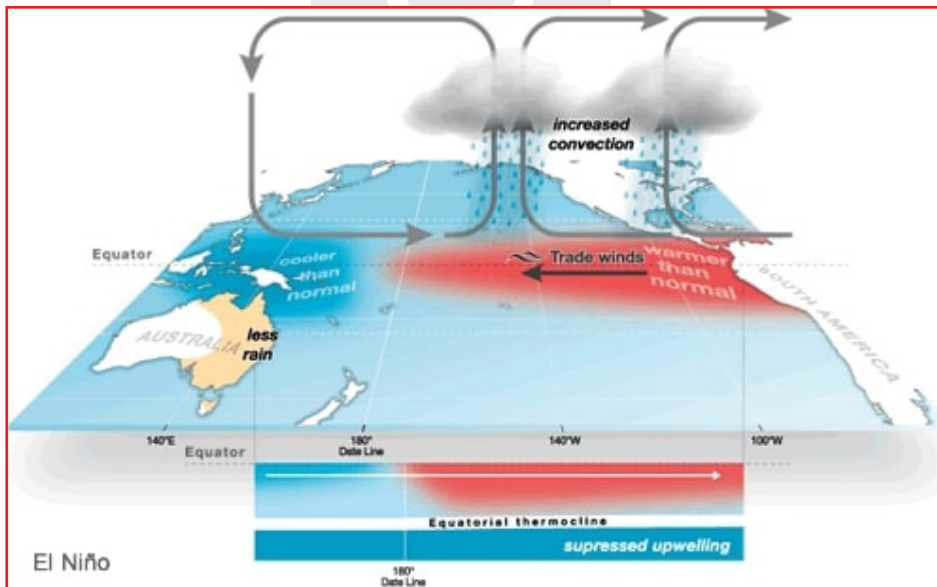




El Niño, La Niña and Their Impact on India

El Niño:

- El Niño is a climate pattern that describes the unusual warming of surface waters in the eastern tropical Pacific Ocean.
- It is the “**warm phase**” of a larger phenomenon called the El Niño-Southern Oscillation (ENSO).



Prepare with DrishtiIAS

UPSC
Mains
Test Series
2025



SCAN ME

UPSC
Classroom
Courses



SCAN ME

IAS Current
Affairs Module
Course



SCAN ME

Drishti
Learning
App



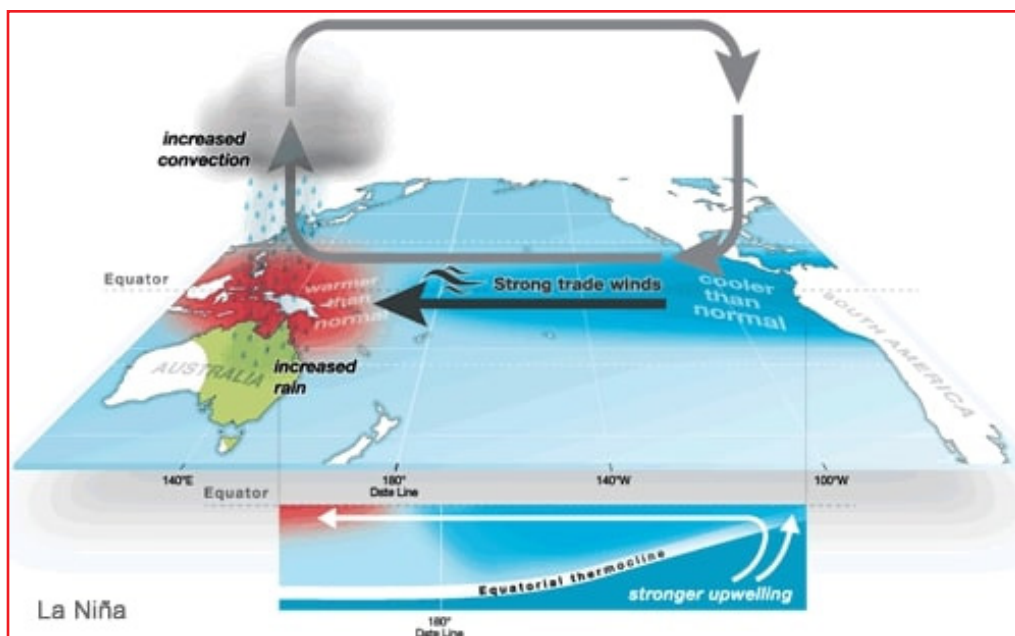
SCAN ME



- El Niño involves oceanic and atmospheric phenomena with the **appearance of warm currents off the coast of Peru** in the Eastern Pacific, which **weakens the trade winds** and the **Walker Circulation**. This reduces the moisture-laden winds reaching India.
- In India, El Niño generally **tends to weaken the monsoon**, resulting in drier-than-average conditions and reduced rainfall. This can lead to droughts, water shortages, and agricultural losses.
- The **2015 El Niño led to a monsoon deficit of 14%**, causing widespread agricultural distress.

La Niña

- La Nina, the **“cool phase”** of ENSO, is a pattern that describes the unusual cooling of the tropical eastern Pacific.
- In the La Niña phase, **trade winds strengthen**, pushing larger volumes of water toward the western Pacific, leading to cooler temperatures in the eastern Pacific.
- It results in **above-normal rainfall**, which can lead to floods in some regions while benefiting water reservoirs and agriculture in others.
- The most recent La Nina phase lasted from 2020 to 2023.



Conclusion:

Oceans are integral to the global and regional climate systems. For India, ocean currents and ENSO-related events play a decisive role in determining **monsoon strength, agricultural output, and disaster preparedness**. Strengthening **ocean monitoring systems**, such as **ARGO floats** and real-time satellite data, and enhancing **monsoon forecasting models** are crucial for climate resilience and sustainable development.

Prepare with DrishtiIAS

UPSC
Mains
Test Series
2025



UPSC
Classroom
Courses



IAS Current
Affairs Module
Course



Drishti
Learning
App



4. "India's water crisis is less about scarcity and more about mismanagement." Critically analyse this statement with reference to unsustainable agricultural practices, inequitable urban consumption, and recurring interstate river disputes. (250 words)

Approach :

- Briefly introduce the extent and nature of India's water crisis.
- Discuss how the crisis deepens due to mismanagement in agriculture, inequitable urban consumption, and recurring interstate disputes.
- Suggest measures to address this issue.
- Conclude it with a suitable way forward.

Introduction:

India supports **18% of the world's population** with only **4% of global freshwater resources**. Reports such as the **NITI Aayog Composite Water Management Index (2019)** has shown that nearly 600 million people are facing high to extreme water stress in India. While geographical scarcity exists, the crisis deepens due to mismanagement in agriculture, inequitable urban consumption, and recurring interstate disputes, making governance failures the central concern.

Body :

Nature of India's Water Crisis

- **Current Status of Availability:**
 - ◆ The average annual per capita water availability in India has declined from 1,816 cubic meters in 2001 to 1,545 cubic meters based on the 2011 census.
 - ◆ Projections by the Central Water Commission indicate further decreases to 1,434 cubic meters by 2025 and 1,219 cubic meters by 2050.
- **Groundwater depletion:** India extracts **over 250 cubic km annually**, the highest in the world, with **70% of aquifers projected to be critical by 2030**.
- **Monsoon dependency:** Over **80% of rainfall occurs in 4 months**, causing seasonal stress.
- **Water Quality Concerns :** According to the **NITI Aayog Report on Water Crisis (2019)**, nearly **70% of India's water is contaminated**.

- **Regional disparity:** Water abundance in the north-east vs. scarcity in arid regions like Rajasthan.

Unsustainable Agricultural Practices

- **Inefficient irrigation:** As per Central Water Commission, agriculture consumes about 78% of India's water resources, often inefficiently.
- **Water-intensive crops:** The shift to water-intensive crops and outdated irrigation practices contribute to water stress.
 - ◆ Sugarcane in drought-prone Maharashtra and paddy in Punjab consume disproportionate water.
- **Over-extraction:** Free/subsidized electricity and assured MSP procurement encourage groundwater exploitation in Punjab and Haryana.

Inequitable Urban Consumption

- **Population Growth and Urbanization:** Rising population and rapid urbanization have amplified groundwater demand for drinking water, sanitation, and industrial use.
 - ◆ Between 2016 and 2023, India's population increased from 1.29 billion to 1.45 billion, and urban migration has stressed city aquifers.
- **Distribution losses:** Nearly **35–40% of water is lost in urban supply systems** due to leakages.
- **Inequity:** Gated colonies in Delhi or Bengaluru may get **300–400 litres per capita daily**, while slum dwellers survive on **less than 50 LPCD**.
- **Unregulated extraction:** Industries and households exploit groundwater without oversight.
- **Neglect of recycling:** Only **30% of wastewater is treated**, leaving huge potential untapped.

Recurring Interstate River Disputes

- **The Cauvery conflict** between Karnataka and Tamil Nadu shows how seasonal flows trigger political contestation.
- **The Krishna-Godavari dispute** between Andhra Pradesh and Telangana highlights basin-level tensions.
- **The Ravi-Beas dispute** (Punjab-Haryana) reflects long-standing stalemates.

Prepare with DrishtiIAS

UPSC
Mains
Test Series
2025



UPSC
Classroom
Courses



IAS Current
Affairs Module
Course



Drishti
Learning
App



Way Forward

- **Agriculture:** Diversify crops, reform MSP, promote **micro-irrigation** (drip, sprinkler).
- **Urban reforms:** Universal rainwater harvesting, greywater reuse, pricing water to discourage waste.
- **River disputes:** Strengthen **river basin authorities**; adopt cooperative federalism and technology-based allocation.
- **Community initiatives:** Revival of traditional harvesting systems (stepwells, tanks).
- **Policy shift:** Implement the **National Water Policy (2021 draft)** which emphasizes **Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM)**, demand-side management, and participatory irrigation.
- **Adopt the "One Water Approach"** : Treating all water sources—surface water, groundwater, rainwater, treated wastewater—as a **single interconnected resource** for sustainable use.
- **River Interlinking:** Explore interlinking projects selectively to balance regional water availability, ensuring ecological safeguards and equitable distribution.

Conclusion:

India's water crisis is driven less by **scarcity** and more by **inefficient management, inequitable use, and weak governance**. Addressing these challenges requires reforms in **agriculture, urban water systems, and interstate river management**. Aligning policies with **SDG-6 – ensuring sustainable water and sanitation for all** will be key to securing India's water future.

Indian Heritage and Culture

5. The architectural heritage of India embodies the spirit of syncretism. Discuss with reference to Indo-Islamic and colonial architecture. (150 words)

Approach :

- Briefly introduce the heritage of architectural syncretism in India.
- Discuss with reference to Indo-Islamic and colonial architecture.
- Conclude with its contemporary relevance.

Introduction:

India's **architectural heritage** reflects its **rich cultural layers** and embodies the **spirit of syncretism**—a **harmonious fusion of diverse traditions**. The **Indo-Islamic** and **colonial styles** showcase **mutual adaptation** and **civilizational respect**, making architecture a symbol of **unity in diversity**.

Body :

Indo-Islamic Architecture: A Fusion of Forms

- The advent of Islamic rule in India brought Persian and Central Asian architectural traditions, which creatively merged with existing Hindu and Buddhist forms.
- This gave rise to a distinctive **Indo-Islamic architectural style** that incorporated:
 - ◆ **Islamic features** such as domes, arches, minarets, and calligraphy
 - ◆ **Indian elements** like corbelled arches, lotus motifs, chhatris, and ornate carvings
- These structures symbolize not cultural conquest, but **coexistence**, where Islamic rulers patronized local artisans and adapted regional aesthetics.
- **Key examples:**
 - ◆ **Qutb Minar Complex (Delhi):** Built using materials from pre-existing Hindu and Jain temples, the mosque reflects Islamic design fused with indigenous craftsmanship.
 - ◆ **Humayun's Tomb (Delhi):** Combines Persian double-dome structure with Indian chhatris.
 - ◆ **Fatehpur Sikri (Uttar Pradesh):** Akbar's capital integrates Gujarati, Rajasthani, and Persian styles—Diwan-i-Khas and Buland Darwaza reflect this synthesis.
 - ◆ **Gol Gumbaz (Bijapur):** A massive dome of Persian influence, executed with local Deccani materials and structural techniques.

Colonial Architecture: Blending Empire with Empire

- The British colonial period saw the introduction of European architectural forms like **Gothic, Baroque, and Neoclassical**, which were adapted to Indian conditions.

Prepare with DrishtiIAS

UPSC
Mains
Test Series
2025



UPSC
Classroom
Courses



IAS Current
Affairs Module
Course



Drishti
Learning
App



- The **Indo-Saracenic style** especially reflected a conscious blend of Indian and European elements.
- These buildings exhibit the **dialogue between colonizers and the colonized**, resulting in a shared architectural legacy.
- **Notable examples:**
 - ◆ **Victoria Memorial (Kolkata):** A European-style building with Mughal domes, Islamic arches, and local marble.
 - ◆ **Gateway of India (Mumbai):** Combines elements of Hindu temple design and Indo-Islamic arches within a European layout.
 - ◆ **Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus (Mumbai):** A Victorian Gothic Revival building infused with Indian stone carvings and planning.
 - ◆ **Lutyens' Delhi:** Integrates classical British planning with Indian features like domes, jaalis, and open courtyards.

Conclusion:

The inclusion of monuments like the **Qutub Minar, Red Fort, and Victorian-Gothic ensemble of Mumbai as UNESCO World Heritage Sites** underscores their enduring **cultural value and global relevance**. In a time of rising cultural fragmentation, preserving such sites reinforces India's commitment to **pluralism, shared heritage, and intercultural dialogue** on the world stage.

6. "Persian literary culture in India was a bridge, not a boundary." Examine with reference to medieval socio-political contexts. (150 words)

Approach :

- Begin by contextualizing the rise of Persian as a cultural and administrative language in medieval India.
- Discuss the Persian as a Bridge in Socio-Political Context.
- Highlight some elements of the Persian language as boundaries.
- Conclude with the enduring legacy of

Introduction:

With the Delhi Sultanate and later the Mughals, Persian became the language of administration, literature, and

culture in India. Rather than dividing, it created a synthesis between rulers and subjects, Sufism and Bhakti, Sanskrit and vernaculars.

Body :

Persian as a Bridge in Medieval India

● Administrative Bridge

- ◆ Persian acted as a **link between diverse ruling elites**—Turks, Afghans, Persians, and Indian Muslims—creating a common bureaucratic framework.
- ◆ Revenue records, farmans, and legal documents were preserved in Persian, making it the **unifying language of governance**.

● Literary and Intellectual Bridge:

- ◆ **Amir Khusrau** exemplified Indo-Persian synthesis. His Persian works drew on Indian imagery, while his Hindavi verses carried Persian aesthetics.
- ◆ Akbar's court sponsored **translations of Sanskrit classics into Persian**:
 - *Mahabharata* as *Razmnama*
 - *Ramayana* as *Ramnamah*
 - *Upanishads* as *Sirr-i-Akbar* (translated later under Dara Shikoh).
- ◆ These works brought Indian philosophy and epics into the Persian cosmopolitan world, widening intellectual horizons.

● Cultural and Religious Bridge:

- ◆ **Sufis** used Persian to express spiritual ideas of love, equality, and divine unity. Works like Nizamuddin Auliya's discourses (*Fawa'id-ul-Fuad*) reached both elites and commoners.
- ◆ Sufi metaphors resonated with **Bhakti traditions**, where poets like Kabir and Guru Nanak echoed similar themes of devotion beyond orthodoxy.
- ◆ Persian literary culture thus became a medium for **interfaith dialogue and shared spirituality**.

● Linguistic and Social Bridge:

- ◆ The interaction of Persian with local dialects gave rise to **Rekhta (early Urdu)**, a blend of Persian, Arabic, and Indian vernaculars. This became the language of poetry, Sufism, and later mass culture.

Prepare with DrishtiIAS

UPSC
Mains
Test Series
2025



UPSC
Classroom
Courses



IAS Current
Affairs Module
Course



Drishti
Learning
App



- ◆ Persian vocabulary enriched Indian languages like Hindi, Punjabi, and Bengali, embedding itself in everyday speech (words like *duniya*, *kitab*, *insaan*).
- ◆ Urban centers such as **Delhi, Agra, and Lahore** became cosmopolitan hubs where Persian served as a shared cultural medium across communities.

Persian Elements of Boundary

- Persian was often an **elite language**, inaccessible to peasants and rural masses who continued to rely on vernaculars.
- Its dominance in court sometimes marginalized **Sanskrit scholars**, who had to adapt or seek patronage elsewhere.
- Thus, Persian occasionally symbolized **courtly exclusivity and social hierarchy**.

Conclusion:

Despite elitist aspects, Persian acted as a **cultural mediator**, enabling **Indo-Persian literature**, **vernacular growth**, and **Bhakti-Sufi convergence**. It was a **bridge between civilizations, faiths, and languages**, central to India's composite culture.

Indian Society

7. "Globalisation exports goods and imports values." Critically evaluate the impact of global cultural flows on India's family systems and traditional value structures. (250 words)

Approach:

- Introduce the answer by briefing about Globalisation that how it exports goods and imports values
- Delve into the Impact of Globalisation on Family Systems and on Traditional Value Structures
- Highlight the counterarguments that Globalisation has not completely overridden traditional Indian values
- Conclude suitably.

Introduction:

Globalisation is not merely the movement of goods, it is the migration of ideas, norms, and cultures across

borders. In India, this phenomenon has catalyzed a **transformation in family structures, traditional hierarchies, and intergenerational relationships**.

Body:

Impact of Globalisation on Family Systems:

- **Shift from Joint to Nuclear Families:** Economic opportunities, especially in the IT and service sectors, have fueled **rural-to-urban migration and international migration**.
 - ◆ The rise of individual aspirations for privacy and autonomy has also weakened the traditional hold of the family elder.
- **Changing Authority Patterns:** The traditional patriarchal structure, where the oldest male member held absolute authority, is eroding.
 - ◆ The **financial independence of younger generations, including women**, has led to a more **egalitarian and democratic** family setup.
 - ◆ Decisions regarding children's education, career choices, and marriages are now often made collectively.
- **Altered Status of Women:** Globalization has provided women with greater access to education and employment, leading to their increased economic independence.
 - ◆ This has empowered them to challenge traditional gender roles and participate as equal partners in decision-making.
 - ◆ The concept of a **"dual-career family"** is now **common**, changing the division of labor and power dynamics within the household.

Impact on Traditional Value Structures

- **Individualism vs. Collectivism:** A core tenet of global culture is **individualism**, which emphasizes personal freedom, choice, and self-expression.
 - ◆ This contrasts sharply with the traditional Indian ethos of **collectivism**, where the family or community's interests often take precedence.
- **Marriage and Relationships:** The traditional institution of arranged marriage is being reconfigured.

Prepare with DrishtiIAS

UPSC
Mains
Test Series
2025



UPSC
Classroom
Courses



IAS Current
Affairs Module
Course



Drishti
Learning
App



- ◆ While family approval remains important, young people now have more agency in choosing their life partners.
- ◆ Furthermore, global concepts like **live-in relationships** and the increased social acceptance of divorce and single-parent households challenge the traditional sanctity of marriage as an unbreakable, lifelong bond.

While global cultural flows have undeniably influenced Indian society, they have not completely overridden traditional Indian values, as evidenced by:

- **Cultural Hybridization:** Instead of a wholesale replacement, what is often happening is **glocalization**—the adaptation of global ideas to local contexts.
 - ◆ For example, while **fast-food chains like McDonald's have entered the Indian market**, they have adapted their menus to include vegetarian options and local spices (**McDonaldization**).
 - ◆ Similarly, **many young Indians may adopt Western fashion and music** but continue to participate in traditional festivals and rituals.
- **Revival of Indigenous Practices:** In recent years, there has been a resurgence in promoting Indian cultural practices, such as **yoga, Ayurveda, and traditional Indian cuisines**, not only within India but also globally.
 - ◆ This indicates that globalisation is not always a one-way process, but can also lead to a revitalisation of local cultural practices in the face of Western dominance.
- **A "Global Indian" Identity:** The cultural flows have led to the emergence of a new, global Indian identity that is a synthesis of the local and the global.
 - ◆ This individual is often comfortable navigating multiple cultural spaces—**fluent in English, proficient in technology, yet deeply connected to their cultural roots**. This represents **an evolution, not an extinction, of Indian values**.

Conclusion:

India's cultural landscape is not facing erosion but is undergoing a transformative synthesis of tradition and modernity. **Globalisation**, while introducing new **ideas, lifestyles, and value systems**, presents an opportunity

to selectively integrate progressive influences without compromising core Indian values.

8. Has the 'gig economy' truly empowered the youth in India, or has it created a new class of precarious workers without social security? Analyze with suitable examples. (250 words)

Approach:

- Introduce the answer by briefing about the status of Gig Economy in India
- Give arguments to how Gig Economy is Empowering India's Youth
- Delve into how Gig Economy is Creating Precarious Workers
- Suggest measures for Turning Precarity into Empowerment
- Conclude suitably.

Introduction:

The gig economy, driven by digital platforms such as **Zomato, Swiggy and Uber** has emerged as a major employment generator in India. NITI Aayog projects gig workers to rise from **7.7 million in 2020 to 23.5 million by 2029-30**.

Body:

Gig Economy- Empowering India's Youth

- **Job Creation and Flexibility:** Provides short-term employment in a scenario of formal sector stagnation.
 - ◆ For example, delivery workers during festive seasons reported a **40–50% rise in earnings** (Swiggy, Blinkit 2023).
 - ◆ Moreover, some workers use platforms like Rapido after their regular **9-to-5 jobs** to supplement household income, **reflecting the gig economy's role as a secondary safety net for extra earnings**.
- **Bridge from Informal to Semi-Formal Work:** Migrant workers from agriculture and construction now find structured income opportunities.
 - ◆ E.g., **Ola and Uber absorbed thousands of underemployed youth** into urban mobility.
- **Digital Transformation and Economic Growth:** Boosts digital literacy, payment adoption, and e-commerce penetration.

Prepare with DrishtiIAS

UPSC
Mains
Test Series
2025



UPSC
Classroom
Courses



IAS Current
Affairs Module
Course



Drishti
Learning
App



◆ Platforms also contribute to **tax revenues through GST and e-Shram integration**.

- **Inclusivity and Women's Participation:** Around **28% of gig workers are women**, many opting for flexible home-based services.
- **Cultivating Entrepreneurship:** Gig platforms label workers as **"independent contractors,"** fostering an entrepreneurial mindset.

Gig Economy-Creating Precarious Workers

- **Lack of Social Security:** Over **90% of gig workers lack savings or health insurance** (NITI Aayog 2024).
 - ◆ Classified as "independent contractors," they remain excluded from pensions, paid leave, or provident funds.
- **Low and Unstable Wages:** Fair Work India (2023) reports average earnings of ₹15,000–20,000/month—below minimum standards for 10+ hour workdays.
- **Exploitation and Unsafe Work Conditions:** The "Prisoners on Wheels" report: **78% of delivery workers work over 10 hours daily**, risking road accidents due to tight delivery deadlines.
- **Absence of Legal Protection:** The **2020 Code on Social Security** recognizes gig workers but does not ensure minimum wages or working-hour regulations.
- **Algorithmic Control and Arbitrary Deactivation:** In a survey, around **83% of cab drivers and 87% of delivery personnel** have faced account deactivations without due process.
 - ◆ Workers often face harassment from customers with no grievance redressal mechanisms.
- **Bleak Future Prospects:** Without retirement savings, gig workers risk sliding into **"new-age precariat"**—informalized workers in a digital guise.

Turning Precarity into Empowerment

- **Comprehensive Legal Framework:** India needs a dedicated **National Gig and Platform Workers' Law** ensuring rights similar to formal workers.
 - ◆ Provisions should include **minimum wage guarantees, standard working hours, accident insurance, and protection from arbitrary deactivation**.

- **Portable Social Security:** Gig workers frequently shift across multiple platforms (Swiggy, Blinkit, Ola), making **platform-specific benefits ineffective**.

◆ A **portable social security account linked to Aadhaar/e-Shram portal** can ensure continuity of benefits like health, pension, and provident fund.

◆ The **Union Budget 2025–26 proposal** to extend social security to gig workers through contributory models (platforms, state, and workers sharing costs) is a step in this direction.

- **Skill Development Pathways:** Most gig work today is concentrated in **low-value tasks** (delivery, driving), with limited growth prospects.

◆ Linking gig platforms with **Skill India, PM Kaushal Vikas Yojana, and digital skilling programs** can help youth move into higher-value freelancing (AI services, coding, design, financial consultancy).

- **Grievance Redressal Mechanisms:** Platforms must establish **independent grievance cells**, accessible through multilingual apps, ensuring resolution of wage disputes, harassment, and deactivation cases.

◆ An **ombudsman system under state labor departments** could monitor disputes and enforce accountability.

- **Learning from State-Level Initiatives:** **Rajasthan's Platform-Based Gig Workers Act (2023)** created India's first welfare board for gig workers, ensuring social security funds and grievance systems.

◆ Replicating these models nationally can provide region-specific solutions, especially for urban delivery workers, rural platform workers, and women gig workers.

Conclusion:

For the gig economy to empower rather than exploit, India must focus on the **3Gs- Guarantee of fair wages and social security, Growth through skilling and upward mobility, and Grievance redressal for dignity at work**. Only then can gig workers evolve from digital labourers to drivers of India's economic transformation.



Prepare with DrishtiIAS

UPSC
Mains
Test Series
2025



UPSC
Classroom
Courses



IAS Current
Affairs Module
Course



Drishti
Learning
App



GENERAL STUDIES PAPER-2

Polity and Governance

9. Critically assess the constitutional validity and contemporary relevance of inserting 'Socialist' and 'Secular' into the Preamble through the 42nd Amendment. (150 words)

Approach :

- Briefly explain the 42nd Amendment (1976) and its addition of 'Socialist' and 'Secular' to the Preamble.
- Discuss the constitutional validity and contemporary relevance of inserting these terms into the Preamble.
- Highlight the criticism in this context.
- Conclude with a suitable way forward.

Introduction:

The **Preamble** of the Indian Constitution is its moral compass, embodying the vision of the Constituent Assembly. The **42nd Constitutional Amendment (1976)**, enacted during the Emergency, inserted the words "**Socialist**" and "**Secular**" to explicitly affirm the state's commitment to welfare and religious neutrality. This raises debates on both constitutional validity and contemporary relevance.

Body :

Constitutional Validity

- **Inherently Secular and Socialist Constitution:** Even before the **42nd Amendment (1976)**, secularism and socialism were implicit in various provisions.
 - ◆ **Fundamental Rights: Articles 14, 15, 16, 25–28** protect religious freedom and prohibit discrimination.
 - ◆ **Directive Principles (Part IV):** Reflect socialist goals such as equitable distribution of wealth, social justice, and state welfare.
- **Judicial Endorsement:**
 - ◆ **Kesavananda Bharati v. State of Kerala (1973)** — secularism and socialism held as part of the **basic structure**, beyond Parliament's amending power.
 - ◆ **S. R. Bommai v. Union of India (1994)** — secularism reaffirmed as a **basic feature** of Indian democracy.

- ◆ **Minerva Mills v. Union of India (1980)** — socialist objectives in DPSPs are fundamental to the Constitution
- ◆ **Balram Singh v. Union of India (2024)** — Supreme Court dismissed petitions challenging the insertion of "**socialist**" and "**secular**" into the Preamble, upholding their **validity and alignment with the Constitution**.

Contemporary Relevance

- **Socialist:** It signified the state's **commitment to reducing inequality** and ensuring **distributive justice** through a **mixed economy model**.
 - ◆ It anchors the state's duty to reduce inequality, reflected in schemes like **MGNREGA**, **Right to Education**, and **Ayushman Bharat**.
- **Secular:** it reaffirmed the principle of **equal respect for all religions**, ensuring that the **state maintains neutrality in religious matters** without endorsing any faith.
 - ◆ The Indian Constitution allows the state to **intervene in religious affairs** to eliminate discrimination and uphold **fundamental rights**.
 - ◆ **Examples include:**
 - **Abolition of untouchability** under **Article 17**.
 - **Reforms in temple entry** and religious practices to ensure **equality**.
 - **Invalidation of Triple Talaq** through the **Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Marriage) Act, 2019**.

Criticisms

- **Ambiguity in "Socialist":** Economic liberalisation since 1991 and emphasis on market efficiency dilute the classical socialist ethos.
- **Western Imposition:** Viewed as **Western constructs** alien to the **Indian ethos**.
- **Procedural Concern:** Preamble as **guiding soul** (26 Nov 1949) — **retrospective amendment** undermines its sanctity.

Prepare with DrishtiIAS

UPSC
Mains
Test Series
2025



UPSC
Classroom
Courses



IAS Current
Affairs Module
Course



Drishti
Learning
App



- **Instrumental misuse:** Preamble ideals are sometimes invoked for political rhetoric rather than policy depth.
 - ◆ **Political mobilisation** on religious lines, selective enforcement of laws, and communal violence test the ideal.

Conclusion :

The 1976 insertion of '**Socialist**' and '**Secular**' is **constitutionally valid** and **morally significant**, but its strength lies in **realising it through action** — clarifying **socialist goals**, strengthening **institutions**, promoting **pluralism**, and ensuring **judicial balance** to uphold the Constitution's **seamless web of unity, democracy, and social justice**.

10. Examine the constitutional role of the Vice President of India. Assess how effectively this office contributes to upholding and promoting federalism in the Indian political system. (150 words)

Approach:

- Start with a brief introduction to the office of the Vice President of India.
- Examine the constitutional role of the Vice President of India.
- Assess how effectively this office contributes to upholding and promoting federalism.
- Conclude with a suitable way forward.

Introduction:

The Vice President of India, established under **Articles 63–71**, is the second highest constitutional authority. Although the office has limited executive authority, its importance lies in being the **ex-officio Chairman of Rajya Sabha**, the chamber that embodies India's federal character. Thus, the Vice President's role directly influences the functioning of federal democracy.

Body :

Constitutional Role

- **Election and Position** – Elected by both Houses of Parliament (Article 66), reflecting parliamentary consensus. Functions as **Acting President** in case of vacancy (Article 65).
- **Chairman of Rajya Sabha** – Regulates debates, maintains order, interprets rules, and exercises a **casting vote** in a tie (Article 100).

- **Referral to Committees:** The Chairman plays an administrative role by referring bills, motions, and resolutions to parliamentary committees for detailed consideration.
- **In Case of Presidential Vacancy:** When the Vice President acts as or discharges the functions of the President, they temporarily stop performing duties as Chairman.

Contribution to Federalism

- **Guardian of State Representation** – By presiding over Rajya Sabha, the Vice President ensures the **voice of states** in legislation, especially in constitutional amendments (e.g., passage of GST Act, 2016).
- **Neutral Arbiter** – Expected to rise above partisanship to balance the Union's dominance with state interests.
- **Continuity of Governance** – Acting President role provides stability in the federal framework during emergencies.

Limitations and Challenges

- **Partisan Allegiances** – Vice Presidents are often political veterans, which raises doubts about neutrality.
 - ◆ In **Kihoto Hollohan (1992)**, the Supreme Court upheld the Chairman's disqualification power but subjected it to judicial review, underscoring that neutrality cannot always be presumed.
- **Limited Federal Influence** – Unlike the President or Governors, the Vice President has no direct role in Centre–State relations; impact is procedural rather than substantive.
- **Dependence on Personality** – The effectiveness of this office relies on the stature and impartiality of the incumbent rather than constitutional design.
- **Rajya Sabha's Declining Space** – Frequent disruptions reduce opportunities for meaningful federal dialogue.

Conclusion:

The Vice President, as **Chairperson of the Rajya Sabha**, upholds the chamber's role as a forum of **federal balance and deliberation**. As **Subhash Kashyap** reminds us, the **Rajya Sabha** must act as a "**mature revising chamber**," safeguarding against **majoritarian impulses**. Strengthening the **impartiality of the Chair** and fostering **constructive debate** will ensure that the office continues to safeguard **cooperative federalism** and deepen India's **democratic fabric**.

Prepare with DrishtiIAS

UPSC
Mains
Test Series
2025



UPSC
Classroom
Courses



IAS Current
Affairs Module
Course



Drishti
Learning
App



11. "Judicial independence and judicial accountability are two sides of the same coin." Analyse the challenges in maintaining this balance in India. (150 words)

Approach :

- Briefly introduce the concept of judicial independence and judicial accountability.
- Discuss the need for judicial independence and judicial accountability.
- Highlight the challenges in balancing judicial independence and judicial accountability.
- Conclude with a suitable way forward.

Introduction:

Judicial **independence** ensures that **judges** decide **cases** free from **political, social, or economic pressures**, while judicial **accountability** ensures they remain **answerable** to the **Constitution** and **public trust**. Both are **indispensable** for the **rule of law**. The **challenge** in **India** lies in protecting **independence** without allowing **opacity**, and enforcing **accountability** without **political interference**.

Body :

Need for Judicial Independence

- **Constitutional Safeguards:** Articles 50, 124–147, and 214–231 insulate the judiciary from executive interference.
- **Landmark Judgments:**
 - ◆ *Kesavananda Bharati v. State of Kerala (1973)* → judicial review and independence made part of the **Basic Structure**.
 - ◆ *S.P. Gupta v. Union of India (1981)* → stressed independence in appointments and transfers.
- **Public Confidence:** Judicial independence ensures the **protection of Fundamental Rights**, e.g., *Maneka Gandhi v. Union of India (1978)* expanded the scope of **Article 21 (Right to Life & Liberty)**.

Need for Judicial Accountability

- Prevents arbitrariness in a system where judges enjoy wide powers.
- **PIL misuse** and judicial overreach underline the need for self-restraint.

- **Instances of Misconduct:** Justice V. Ramaswami (1990s impeachment attempt) showed the difficulty of disciplining judges.
- **Public Expectations:** As per a Transparency International survey, confidence in the judiciary declines when accountability appears weak.

Challenges in Balancing Independence and Accountability

- **Opaque Collegium System:** SC's *Second Judges Case (1993)* and *Third Judges Case (1998)* created a judge-led appointments process ensuring independence but criticized for lack of transparency.
- **NJAC Verdict (2015):** SC struck down the National Judicial Appointments Commission citing violation of judicial independence, but this revived concerns about accountability.
- **Impeachment Mechanism:** Cumbersome and rarely effective.
- **Judicial Overreach:** Interventions in policy decisions raise accountability concerns and blur separation of powers. (Liquor Ban on Highways, 2017)
- **Post-retirement Appointments:** Judges taking posts in commissions or politics soon after retirement raise doubts about impartiality.
- **Pendency of Cases:** With over **5 crore cases pending** (2024 data, NJDG), accountability to citizens through timely justice is questioned.
- **External Pressures:** Media trials and political commentary can erode independence.

Way Forward

- **Transparent Appointment System:** Reform collegium with wider consultation and record-based reasoning without diluting independence.
- **Judicial Standards and Accountability Bill:** Revisit provisions for complaint redressal and asset declaration.
- **Internal Ethics Mechanisms:** Strengthen in-house disciplinary procedures with periodic review.
- **Digitalisation & Case Management:** Speed up justice delivery to enhance accountability. (e-Courts, NJDG for pendency tracking)

Prepare with DrishtiIAS

UPSC
Mains
Test Series
2025



UPSC
Classroom
Courses



IAS Current
Affairs Module
Course



Drishti
Learning
App



- **Cooling-off Period:** Mandate for post-retirement posts to preserve impartiality.
- **Balance of Powers:** Legislature and executive must respect judicial space while judiciary practices self-restraint.

Conclusion:

As former CJI D.Y. Chandrachud observed, “True judicial independence is not a shield to protect wrongdoing, but an instrument to secure the fulfilment of constitutional values.” In essence, a **judiciary that balances independence with accountability** not only **safeguards the Constitution** but also **reinforces the ethical foundations of India’s democracy**.

12. “As the chief legal advisor to the Union, the Attorney General of India safeguards the government’s adherence to law.” Critically examine the constitutional status, powers, and limitations of this office. (150 words)

Approach

- Briefly define the Attorney General (AGI) position and its constitutional status.
- Functions, Powers and Role as the advisor to the Government.
- Conclude suitably.

Introduction

The **Attorney General of India (AGI)**, provided under **Article 76 of the Constitution**, is the highest law officer of the country. However, questions about the office’s independence and functional limitations invite critical scrutiny.

Body:

- **Constitutional Status:**
 - ◆ **Constitutional Position:** Article 76 establishes the AGI as a constitutional authority, unlike the **Solicitor General or Additional Solicitors General who are statutory**.
 - ◆ **Qualifications:** Must be qualified to be appointed a judge of the Supreme Court.
 - ◆ **Tenure:** Holds office during the **pleasure of the President**, no fixed tenure is prescribed.
 - ◆ **Not a Member of Cabinet:** Unlike the Attorney General in some countries (e.g., USA, UK), the AGI is not a minister but has certain privileges of participation in Parliament.

Powers:

- ◆ **Legal Advisor to Government:** Advises the Union on legal matters referred to by the President (Art. 76(2)).
- ◆ **Court Representation:** Appears on behalf of the Union in the **Supreme Court and High Courts**.
- ◆ **Parliamentary Role:** Enjoys the **right of audience in Parliament**, though without voting rights (Art. 88).
- ◆ **Miscellaneous:** To represent the GoI in any reference made by the President to the Supreme Court under **Article 143** (Power of the President to consult the Supreme Court) of the Constitution.

Limitations:

- ◆ **No Executive Authority:** Cannot participate in Cabinet decision-making.
- ◆ **Dependent on Government Reference:** Cannot take up legal matters suo motu.
- ◆ **No Fixed Tenure or Removal Process:** Complete dependence on the executive undermines independence.
- ◆ **Advisory Nature:** Government may choose to ignore advice, weakening efficacy.
- ◆ **No fixed tenure or constitutional safeguards,** holds office during the President’s pleasure.
- ◆ **Restrictions on Professional Conduct:** He should **not advise or hold a brief** in cases where he is called to advise or represent the Government of India.
 - He should **not defend accused persons** in criminal prosecutions without prior permission of the Government of India.

Critical Examination

- **Conflict Between Role and Practice:** While the AGI’s constitutional mandate is to **uphold the rule of law**, in practice, the office often functions as the **government’s chief defender** in courts, thereby limiting its role as an impartial guardian of legality.
- **Private Practice & Conflict of Interest:** The provision allowing AGI to engage in private practice increases the risk of **conflict of interest** and dilutes public confidence in the independence of the office.

Prepare with DrishtiIAS

UPSC
Mains
Test Series
2025



UPSC
Classroom
Courses



IAS Current
Affairs Module
Course



Drishti
Learning
App



- **Comparative Perspective:** In India, the model prioritizes **executive trust over institutional independence**, with no fixed tenure or security of office.

◆ In contrast, the **UK Attorney General** is bound by the principle that the **ultimate client is the law itself, not the government**, ensuring greater institutional independence and accountability.

Strengthening the Institutional Role of the Attorney General :

- **Ensuring Security of Tenure and Independence:** Granting a **fixed tenure along with constitutional safeguards** can insulate the AGI from executive pressure and strengthen autonomy.
- **Regulating Private Practice:** Restricting or carefully supervising private legal work would reduce conflicts of interest and enable the AGI to devote full attention to constitutional duties.
- **Clear Separation of Roles:** The **advisory function (legal guardian of the Constitution)** and the **advocacy role (representing government in litigation)** should be better delineated, possibly through a **stronger Solicitor General system**.
- **Code of Conduct and Ethical Guidelines:** Adopting a framework **similar to the UK Law Officers' Convention**, where primacy is given to law and the Constitution over executive loyalty, would strengthen credibility.
 - ◆ India can also learn from comparative models (UK, Canada, CAG in India) for greater autonomy.

Conclusion

The **Attorney General of India**, embodies a delicate balance between being the government's advocate and the Constitution's sentinel. As constitutional expert **Fali S. Nariman** believed the Attorney General's duty is to uphold the Constitution with **"unwavering fidelity,"** rather than just supporting the government of the day.

International Relations

13. "Small alliances, like silent anchors, stabilize regional multipolarity." Examine India-EFTA ties through the lens of strategic balancing in a multipolar world. (250 words)

Approach :

- Briefly introduce the India- EFTA (European Free Trade Association) Agreement.
- Discuss the key economic and strategic dimensions of this agreement .
- Highlight the key challenges related to India- EFTA Relations.
- Conclude with a suitable way forward.

Introduction:

The **European Free Trade Association (EFTA)**, comprising **Switzerland, Norway, Iceland, and Liechtenstein**, is a **small yet economically robust bloc**. India's **strategic balancing** focuses on cultivating **diverse economic and political relationships** to preserve **strategic autonomy** while avoiding **overdependence** on any single **power centre**. Though **modest in size**, EFTA's **high-tech economies** can serve as a **"silent anchor"** for India's **strategic and economic stability** in an increasingly **multipolar world**.



Body :

The Key Economic and Strategic Dimensions of this Agreement:

- **Strategic Investment Commitment:** EFTA will invest **USD 100 billion in India over 15 years — USD 50 billion in the first 10 years and another USD 50 billion in the next 5 years — to create 1 million jobs.**

Prepare with DrishtiIAS

UPSC
Mains
Test Series
2025



UPSC
Classroom
Courses



IAS Current
Affairs Module
Course



Drishti
Learning
App



- **Market Access & Tariff Concessions:**
 - ◆ EFTA offers **92.2% tariff lines**, covering **99.6%** of India's exports (*non-agricultural and processed agri-goods*).
 - ◆ India offers **82.7% tariff lines**, covering **95.3%** of EFTA exports, including **gold** (*no change in effective duty*).
 - ◆ **Indian rice** (*basmati and non-basmati*) to get **duty-free access** without reciprocity.
- **Safeguards & Exclusions:**
 - ◆ Sensitive sectors like **dairy, soya, coal**, and **PLI-linked sectors** are **excluded**.
 - ◆ **Sovereign wealth funds** are **exempted** from **FDI obligations**.
- **Services & Mobility:**
 - ◆ Supports **Indian services** in **IT, education, culture**, and **sports**.
 - ◆ Enables **Mutual Recognition Agreements (MRAs)** in **nursing, accountancy**, and **architecture**.
- **Legal Framework & IP Protection:**
 - ◆ India can **withdraw tariff concessions** if **investment targets** aren't met.
 - ◆ **Generic drug production** is **protected**; **evergreening of patents** addressed.

Key Challenges Related to India–EFTA Relations

- **Persistent Trade Deficit:** India has a **large trade deficit** with EFTA, mainly due to **gold imports** from **Switzerland**.
- **Data Exclusivity & Public Health:** EFTA's demand for **data exclusivity** in **pharma** could hinder India's **generic drug production**.
- **IPR Concerns under TEPA:** TEPA's **IPR provisions** may **weaken India's patent safeguards** by affecting **pre-grant opposition** and **local manufacturing requirements**.

Way Forward

- **Reduce trade deficit** via **value-added exports** and **diversified trade basket**.
- Leverage **EFTA expertise** in **clean tech, sustainability**, and **skills** for the **green transition**.
- Maintain **balanced IPR** to protect **innovation** and **public health**.

- **Build on India–EU FTA** to enhance **regulatory alignment**, tackle **Non-Tariff Barriers (NTBs)**, and boost **supply chain resilience**.

Conclusion:

As political scientist **Joseph Nye** notes, "*Power in the twenty-first century is less about control and more about connection.*" The **India–EFTA partnership**, though small in scale, acts as a **silent anchor** in the **multipolar order**, fostering **strategic balance**, **economic diversification**, and **technological cooperation** — provided that trade imbalances, IPR concerns, and public health safeguards are addressed with strategic foresight.

14. "Strategic autonomy is no longer about non-alignment but about multi-alignment." Discuss how India can champion the Global South agenda while deepening cooperation with Western nations. (250 words)

Approach :

- Define strategic autonomy and trace its evolution from non-alignment to multi-alignment.
- Describe India as the voice of the Global South.
- Discuss the deepening cooperation with the Western Nations.
- Highlight the challenges in balancing both sides.
- Conclude with suitable way forward.

Introduction:

Strategic autonomy, once synonymous with **Nehruvian non-alignment**, has evolved in the **21st century** into **multi-alignment**—a **pragmatic approach** where **India engages simultaneously** with **diverse power centers**. Today, **India seeks to balance leadership of the Global South** with **closer cooperation with Western partners** in **trade, defence, and technology**.

Body :

India as Voice of the Global South

- **Economic Growth and Trade Influence:**
 - ◆ India is a major player in **South-South trade** and **economic development**.
 - ◆ India's trade with the **Global South** has surged, with trade volumes with **Africa** increasing from **\$5 billion** in 2001 to **\$90 billion** in 2020.

Prepare with DrishtiIAS

UPSC
Mains
Test Series
2025



UPSC
Classroom
Courses



IAS Current
Affairs Module
Course



Drishti
Learning
App



- ◆ India was the seventh largest supplier of goods to Latin America with \$20.22 billion in 2024, showcasing its expanding economic partnerships.

● Climate Justice:

- ◆ Advocates “common but differentiated responsibilities” at COP summits.
- ◆ Pushes for climate finance and technology transfer.
- ◆ Example: **International Solar Alliance (ISA)**—uniting 110+ nations, mostly from the Global South.

● Development Partnerships:

- ◆ **India extended Lines of Credit worth \$32 bn** extended to over 160 countries (MEA data).
- ◆ Initiatives like **Vaccine Maitri**—supplied 250 million COVID-19 doses to 100+ countries.
- ◆ Focus on *capacity building*: ITEC program trains 14,000 professionals annually.

● Technological and Digital Innovation:

- ◆ India’s digital leap, through **Aadhaar** and **UPI**, has made it a global leader in digital public infrastructure.
- ◆ Its **financial inclusion model** via UPI has inspired **12+ countries** in the Global South to adopt similar systems.

● Institutional Reforms:

- ◆ Advocates for **UNSC expansion** to include developing countries.
- ◆ Promotes reforms in WTO to protect food security (e.g., India’s stand on MSP and public stockholding).
- ◆ Led the **Voice of Global South Summit (2023)**—bringing 125 nations together.

Deepening Ties with the West

● Trade & Economy:

- ◆ **EU-India FTA**: Negotiations restarted; expected to boost current **\$115 bn trade**.
- ◆ **India-U.S. Trade**: The **U.S.** remained India’s **largest trading partner** for the **fourth consecutive year** in **2024-25** with **bilateral trade** valued at **\$131.84 billion**.

- ◆ **India-UK FTA**: Agreed to expand market access and investments.

- ◆ **India-EFTA TEPA**: Concluded agreement with European Free Trade Association to deepen trade and economic ties.

● Defence Cooperation:

- ◆ **QUAD** partnership with U.S., Japan, Australia ensures Indo-Pacific security.
- ◆ Defence technology collaboration: GE engines co-production, BrahMos exports.
- ◆ Largest defence imports from Russia—but diversification with U.S., France, Israel underway.

● Technology & Innovation

- ◆ **India-U.S. Initiative on Critical & Emerging Technologies (iCET)** in AI, quantum, semiconductors.
- ◆ 5G rollout and collaborations in cybersecurity.
- ◆ Space cooperation: Artemis Accords, NASA-ISRO NISAR mission.

Challenges in Balancing Both Sides

- **Russia-Ukraine war**: West pushes for sanctions; India maintains neutrality citing energy security.
- **Trade disputes**: U.S. concerns over tariffs, digital sovereignty.
- **Climate pressure**: West pushes for net-zero by 2050, but India commits to 2070 considering development needs.
- **Geopolitical Tensions**: Aligning with QUAD while maintaining BRICS solidarity.

Way Forward:

- **Dual-track Diplomacy**: Institutionalize Voice of Global South as annual summit while sustaining QUAD/BRICS/IBSA.
- **Economic Diplomacy**: Prioritize South-South trade agreements; simultaneously negotiate FTAs with EU, UK.
- **Tech & Development**: Share digital public infrastructure (UPI, CoWIN model) with Global South; co-develop frontier tech with West.
- **Reformed Multilateralism**: Lead the campaign for UNSC, WTO, IMF reforms representing Global South aspirations.

Prepare with DrishtiIAS

UPSC
Mains
Test Series
2025



UPSC
Classroom
Courses



IAS Current
Affairs Module
Course



Drishti
Learning
App



Conclusion:

In navigating its **leadership role** in the **Global South** while maintaining **strategic engagement** with the **West**, India must **balance multiple global relationships** with finesse. As **External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar** aptly puts it, *"This is a time for us to engage **America**, manage **China**, cultivate **Europe**, reassure **Russia**, bring **Japan** into play, draw **neighbours** in, extend the **neighbourhood** and expand traditional constituencies of support."*

15. The India–Africa partnership seeks to balance historical solidarity with contemporary demands of digital, trade, and climate cooperation. Examine the opportunities and challenges in institutionalising this balance. (250 words)

Approach

- Give a concise account of India-Africa relationship history and future prospects.
- Write relevant institutions, historical solidarity, challenges, opportunities and way forward.
- Conclude accordingly

Introduction

India–Africa relations are deeply rooted in **shared struggles against colonialism**, the principles of **South–South cooperation**, and solidarity through forums like the **Non-Aligned Movement (NAM)**. Over time, this partnership has evolved into a **strategic, multidimensional relationship** encompassing trade, investment, digital cooperation, and climate action.

Body:

- **Historical Solidarity**
 - ◆ **Anti-colonial bonds:** Mahatma Gandhi began his political journey in South Africa, creating moral linkages in freedom struggles.
 - ◆ **Afro–Asian solidarity:** Bandung Conference (1955), NAM, and South–South cooperation symbolised resistance against colonialism and Cold War blocs.
 - ◆ **People-to-people ties:** A 2–3 million Indian diaspora across 46 African countries strengthens cultural affinity and India's soft power.

● **Digital Cooperation**

- ◆ **India's expertise in Digital Public Goods (UPI, Aadhaar, CoWIN, DigiLocker)** aligns with Africa's leapfrogging potential in ICT.
- ◆ **Examples:**
 - India's support to Rwanda's digital ID system.
 - Pan-African e-Network expanded into **e-VidyaBharati & e-ArogyaBharati** (tele-education & telemedicine).
 - **UPI launched in Namibia** for financial inclusion.

● **Trade and Investment Cooperation**

- ◆ **Economic complementarity:** Africa's resources + India's demand in energy, minerals, agriculture.
- ◆ **Trade:** \$98 billion in 2022–23, making India Africa's 3rd largest trading partner.
- ◆ **Investment:** \$70+ billion FDI, esp. in telecom (Bharti Airtel), agriculture, manufacturing.
- ◆ **Policy Support:** Duty-free tariff preference for 33 LDCs; pharma supplies (India provides 20% of Africa's generics).

● **Climate and Green Cooperation**

- **Shared vulnerabilities:** Droughts in Africa; floods and heatwaves in India.
- **International Solar Alliance (ISA):** 30+ African members; India committed \$2 billion for African solar projects.
 - ◆ **Examples:** Solar electrification projects in Mozambique and Uganda with Indian assistance.

Challenges:

- **Geopolitical Competition:** China's BRI offers quicker financing and visible infrastructure; India's initiatives lag in scale.
- **Institutional weakness:** India-Africa Forum Summit (IAFS) has not convened since 2015, no permanent mechanism unlike China's FOCAC.
- **Political instability:** Coups in **Mali, Niger, Sudan** disrupt ongoing projects.
- **Trade Barriers:** Logistics hurdles keep trade below potential.

Prepare with DrishtiIAS

UPSC
Mains
Test Series
2025



UPSC
Classroom
Courses



IAS Current
Affairs Module
Course



Drishti
Learning
App



- **Capacity Gaps:** Execution delays in LoC projects (e.g., railways in Ethiopia, sugar plants in Kenya) reduce India's credibility.

Way Forward

- **Institutionalize Dialogue Mechanism:** Regularize IAFS every 3 years with a permanent secretariat.
- **Strengthening Digital Partnership:** Launch an India–Africa Digital Fund to expand fintech and e-governance.
- **Enhancing Human Capital:** Expand ITEC, vocational training, and leverage diaspora networks.
- **Joint Advocacy for Multilateral Reforms:** Jointly push for UN reforms and equitable climate finance.

Conclusion:

“When two civilizations that once resisted domination walk together, they do not just reclaim history—they script the future of justice and equity in the global order.” By blending historical solidarity with modern pillars of digital, trade, and climate cooperation, India and Africa can together shape an equitable multipolar world order and rejuvenate South–South cooperation.

Social Justice

16. “The shadow of untouchability still lingers in the alleys of progress.” Analyze the challenges in enforcing laws against manual scavenging and evaluate the effectiveness of rehabilitation programs. (250 words)

Approach:

- Start with a brief introduction to the issue of manual scavenging in India.
- Analyze the challenges in enforcing laws against manual scavenging.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of rehabilitation programs.
- Conclude with a suitable way forward.

Introduction:

Although the Constitution abolished untouchability under **Article 17** and laws such as the **Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013** criminalize the practice, the persistence of **58,098 identified manual scavengers (2021)**—with **75% being women**—reflects the shadow of untouchability continues in new forms.

Body :

Challenges in Enforcing Laws Against Manual Scavenging

● Structural Challenges:

- ◆ **Caste-based stigma:** The practice is still linked to **Dalit communities**, making it hard to eradicate due to entrenched social hierarchies.
- ◆ **Dependence on informal systems:** Local bodies often rely on manual workers to clean septic tanks, drains, and sewers despite mechanization claims.
- ◆ **Weak monitoring mechanisms:** Implementation lies with municipalities, but oversight remains weak.

● Financial Constraints:

- ◆ **Insufficient allocation:** Budgetary provisions under schemes like the **Self-Employment Scheme for Rehabilitation of Manual Scavengers (SRMS)** are meagre.
- ◆ **Delayed compensation:** Despite Supreme Court directions in *Safai Karamchari Andolan v. Union of India (2014)* mandating ₹10 lakh compensation for sewer deaths, delays and under-reporting are rampant.

● Regulatory Weaknesses:

- ◆ **Under-reporting of cases:** Government data claims “zero manual scavengers” in many states, while NGOs like Safai Karamchari Andolan highlight thousands.
- ◆ **Accountability deficit:** Rare prosecution of officials or contractors responsible for engaging manual scavengers.
- ◆ **Fragmented policy framework:** Sanitation, labour, and social justice ministries overlap without clear responsibility.

Effectiveness of Rehabilitation Programs

● Success:

- ◆ **Legal framework (2013 Act)** has criminalized the practice, creating deterrence.

Prepare with DrishtiIAS

UPSC
Mains
Test Series
2025



UPSC
Classroom
Courses



IAS Current
Affairs Module
Course



Drishti
Learning
App



- ◆ **NAMASTE Scheme (2022) & Safaimitra Suraksha Challenge** encouraged mechanization, reducing direct human entry.
- ◆ **Technological innovations** like *Bandicoot Robot* and *Vacuum Trucks* have been deployed in several cities.
- ◆ **Skill training & livelihood schemes** like Swachhta Udyami Yojana (SUY), Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), and Self-Employment Scheme for Rehabilitation of Manual Scavengers (SRMS) enabled alternate employment.
- ◆ **Awareness campaigns (Rashtriya Garima Abhiyan)** reduced stigma and promoted dignity.
- ◆ **Institutional mechanisms** like the *National Commission for Safai Karamcharis* strengthened monitoring and grievance redressal.

● **Limitations:**

- ◆ **Poor coverage:** As per 2021 data, only about **58,000 manual scavengers identified**, while independent estimates are far higher.
- ◆ **Lack of livelihood diversification:** Many trained workers fail to secure sustainable jobs due to **social stigma** and lack of demand for their new skills.

- ◆ **Inadequate rehabilitation support:** Rehabilitation benefits often fail to translate into practice due to bureaucratic and administrative hurdles.

Way Forward

- **Technological substitution:** Scaling up **mechanised cleaning equipment** with accountability for ULBs.
- **Stringent enforcement:** Criminal liability for officials/contractors engaging manual scavengers.
- **Holistic rehabilitation:** Beyond skill training, ensure **social integration, credit support, and education** for families.
- **Awareness campaigns:** Change mindsets through **caste-sensitivity training** and community participation.
- **Independent monitoring:** Empower civil society and NHRC for effective oversight.

Conclusion:

As **Ambedkar** asserted, **“Political democracy cannot last unless there lies at the base of it social democracy.”** The persistence of manual scavenging indicates the limitations of **social democracy** despite legal safeguards. True progress demands not only **laws and schemes** but also **dignity, mechanisation, and social reform** to finally erase this inhuman practice.

Prepare with DrishtiIAS

UPSC
Mains
Test Series
2025



UPSC
Classroom
Courses



IAS Current
Affairs Module
Course



Drishti
Learning
App



GENERAL STUDIES PAPER-3

Economy

17. Analyze the structural, financial, and regulatory challenges in formalizing India's informal sector while preserving its employment generation potential. (250 words)

Approach :

- Briefly define the India's informal sector.
- Analyze the structural, financial, and regulatory challenges in formalizing India's informal sector
- Suggest measures for preserving its employment generation potential.
- Conclude with a suitable way forward.

Introduction:

Informal employment broadly refers to workers who are employed in jobs where they do not have access to social security benefits under existing labour legislations. According to **NITI Aayog (2021)**, nearly **90% of India's workforce** is employed in the informal sector, contributing almost **50% of GDP**. Formalizing India's large informal sector is vital for productivity, welfare, and revenue, but structural, financial, and regulatory hurdles make it risky for livelihoods if poorly executed.

Body :

Structural Challenges

- **Fragmented firm structure:**
 - ◆ Predominantly micro and nano firms with low capital intensity and thin margins resist the fixed costs of compliance; many operate on subcontracting chains that complicate direct regulation.
 - ◆ Units are dispersed and poorly documented, making it hard to bring them into platforms like **e-Shram**, which has registered 29 crore workers but still excludes many.
- **Heterogeneity of activities:**
 - ◆ The informal sector spans street vending, construction, home-based manufacturing,

domestic work and platform gigs — a single policy instrument cannot suit all.

- **Low Productivity and Skill Gaps:**

- ◆ Informal workers often lack training, making transition into formal enterprises difficult.
- ◆ As per **Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) 2022–23**, over **60% of informal workers** are engaged in low-skilled occupations.

- **Digital Divide:**

- ◆ Reliance on digital portals for registration and compliance excludes those lacking access to smartphones or internet literacy.

Financial Challenges

- **Credit Constraints:**

- ◆ Informal enterprises depend on moneylenders; formal banking penetration is shallow. Despite **MUDRA Yojana (2015)** disbursing over ₹19 lakh crore, many borrowers remain stuck in small-ticket loans.

- **Cost of Compliance**

- ◆ Filing GST returns or maintaining digital accounts is costly for micro-entrepreneurs.
- ◆ A 2020 **World Bank report** found that compliance costs often exceed potential benefits for micro units.

- **Fear of Tax Burden**

- ◆ Many workers fear that formalization will increase taxation without proportionate benefits like pensions or healthcare.

- **Social Security Funding**

- ◆ Extending EPFO or ESIC benefits strains both the exchequer and small firms, leading some to avoid registration.

Regulatory Challenges

- **Multiplicity of Laws**

- ◆ Despite codification into four Labour Codes (2020), overlaps in state-level rules create confusion.

Prepare with DrishtiIAS

UPSC
Mains
Test Series
2025



UPSC
Classroom
Courses



IAS Current
Affairs Module
Course



Drishti
Learning
App



- **Bureaucratic Hurdles**
 - ◆ Lengthy registration and licensing discourage small units from entering the formal fold.
- **Weak Enforcement**
 - ◆ Informal workers remain outside legal protection due to poor monitoring.
 - ◆ The **Unorganised Workers' Social Security Act, 2008** has seen limited success.
- **Worker Protection vs. Employer Viability**
 - ◆ Rigid labour regulations may deter micro enterprises, leading them to remain informal to cut compliance costs.

Government Initiatives for Formalization of the Informal Sector in India

- **Udyam Registration** – formal identity for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs).
- **Goods and Services Tax (GST), 2017** – incentivizes registration via tax credits.
- **Pradhan Mantri Rojgar Protsahan Yojana (PMRPY)** – government pays Employees' Provident Fund (EPF) share for new hires.
- **e-Shram Portal** – national database of unorganized workers.
- **Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Maandhan (PM-SYM)** – pension for informal workers.
- **Pradhan Mantri Street Vendor's Atmanirbhar Nidhi (PM SVANidhi)** – loans to street vendors.
- **Micro Units Development and Refinance Agency (MUDRA) Yojana** – collateral-free loans.
- **Labour Codes (2019–20)** – consolidated, simplified regulatory framework.

Formalization While Preserving Employment Potential

- **Phased and Incentive-Based Formalization** – Tax breaks, credit access, and simplified GST slabs for micro businesses.
- **Skill Development** – Tailored programs under PMKVY to upgrade informal workers' skills.
- **Digital Platforms with Outreach** – Strengthening e-Shram with benefit portability across states.
- **Cluster-Based Models** – MSME clusters can reduce compliance costs. Example: Tirupur textile cluster adopted simplified norms and mechanization.

- **Learning from Abroad** – Brazil's **SIMPLES law** simplified taxes for micro firms, boosting compliance without harming jobs.

Conclusion:

Formalizing India's informal sector is not just a legal exercise but a socio-economic transformation. As **Amartya Sen** argued, **development must enhance both freedom and security**—formalization should therefore provide dignity and protection without eroding employment potential. A calibrated, inclusive, and incentive-driven approach remains the way forward.

18. "Care work is the invisible scaffolding of the economy." How can recognising and integrating care work reshape labour markets and raise the female Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR)? (150 words)

Approach :

- Define care work and its economic invisibility.
- Explain how recognising care work is crucial for inclusive labour markets.
- Conclude with a suitable way forward.

Introduction:

Care work—both unpaid (household chores, child-rearing, elder care) and paid (domestic workers, caregivers, nurses)—forms the hidden backbone of economies. Yet, it remains undervalued and invisible in labour statistics. In India, women spend **299 minutes daily** on unpaid care compared to men's **97 minutes (NSSO Time Use Survey, 2019)**. This imbalance directly affects the **Female Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR)**, which is only **41.7% in 2023-24 (PLFS)**.

Body:

Care Work as Invisible Scaffolding

- **Economic invisibility:** Excluded from GDP despite being a significant contributor to human capital formation.
 - ◆ According to the **ILO (2018)**, women perform **76.2% of unpaid care work worldwide**, contributing nearly **\$10 trillion annually** if monetised.

Prepare with DrishtiIAS

UPSC
Mains
Test Series
2025



UPSC
Classroom
Courses



IAS Current
Affairs Module
Course



Drishti
Learning
App



- **Foundation of productivity:** Enables male-dominated formal workforce participation by sustaining households.
 - ◆ As per the **McKinsey Global Institute** report, reducing women's unpaid work and ensuring equitable participation could add \$770 billion to India's GDP by 2025.
- **Gendered dimension:** Perceived as "natural" women's duty, reinforcing stereotypes and limiting their labour market entry.
 - ◆ The **ILO estimates the care economy could generate 475 million jobs by 2030** globally.

Recognition Care Work Can Reshape Labour Markets

- **Creating Formal Care Economy Jobs:**
 - ◆ Expansion of **childcare, elderly care, and healthcare** sectors.
 - ◆ Expansion of **Anganwadis, crèches, and community childcare** under **ICDS and National Creche Scheme**.
- **Redistribution of Care Work:**
 - ◆ Encouraging **paternity leave** and flexible work policies can redistribute unpaid care responsibilities.
 - ◆ **Example: Sweden's shared parental leave** improved gender equality in workplaces.
- **Raising Female LFPR:**
 - ◆ Access to affordable childcare frees women for formal employment.
 - Expansion of tax rebates for caregiving expenses and incentives for corporates to provide **workplace crèches** (already mandated under the **Maternity Benefit Act, 2017**).
 - ◆ Social security for domestic workers integrates informal caregivers into labour markets.
 - Schemes like the **e-Shram portal** and **Domestic Workers Welfare Boards** can extend pensions, insurance, and minimum wages.

- ◆ **Nordic countries** provide universal childcare, boosting LFPR to **70%+ for women**.

- **Skill Development & Professionalisation:**

- ◆ Training programmes for caregivers, nurses, and domestic helpers under the **Skill India Mission**.
- ◆ Global demand for caregivers, especially in ageing societies like **Japan and Europe**, can open migration opportunities for Indian women.

Conclusion:

As Nobel laureate Amartya Sen observed, "**Gender inequality** is a pervasive factor that operates in many different ways and through a variety of social and economic institutions." Thus, recognising **care work** is not an act of charity but a matter of **economic justice** and **gender justice**. By **integrating care** into **labour markets**, India can enhance **female LFPR** and unlock its **demographic dividend**.

Biodiversity and Environment

19. "A river's purity is the first casualty of unchecked progress." Discuss the challenges in implementing effective wastewater treatment to curb river pollution in India. (150 words)

Approach :

- Briefly introduce the issue of river pollution in India amid unchecked economic progress.
- Discuss the nature of river pollution in India.
- Highlight the challenges in implementing effective wastewater treatment.
- Conclude with a suitable way forward.

Introduction:

In the race for rapid **economic development**, India's rivers have increasingly borne the brunt of **urban sprawl, industrial expansion, and neglect of environmental safeguards**. As per a **CPCB study (2018)**, **13% of 351 river stretches** were **severely polluted** and **17% were moderately polluted** across **323 rivers**. Despite several **government interventions**, the challenge of **effective wastewater treatment** persists due to multiple **systemic issues**.

Prepare with DrishtiIAS

UPSC
Mains
Test Series
2025



UPSC
Classroom
Courses



IAS Current
Affairs Module
Course



Drishti
Learning
App



Body :**Understanding the Nature of River Pollution in India**

- Rivers in India are polluted by a mix of **domestic sewage, industrial effluents, solid waste, and agricultural runoff**. The primary cause is **untreated wastewater**.
- India treats only **28%** of the total **sewage** generated from **urban centres**. (CPCB 2021)
- Out of the **72,368 million litres per day (MLD)** of sewage produced in urban centres, the actual **treatment** is only **20,236 MLD** (CPCB 2021).
- Major rivers like the **Ganga and Yamuna** are among the most polluted, with several stretches having **Biochemical Oxygen Demand (BOD)** levels far above safe limits.

Challenges in Implementing Effective Wastewater Treatment

- **Industrial Pollution:** Industries like **textiles, tanneries, and chemicals** discharge **toxic effluents** (e.g., **lead, mercury, arsenic**) into rivers such as the **Ganga (Kanpur), Yamuna (Delhi), and Damodar (Jharkhand)**.
 - ◆ Many factories **bypass or misuse Effluent Treatment Plants (ETPs)**, often **diluting waste** to falsely meet **regulatory norms**.
- **Inadequate Infrastructure:**
 - ◆ Many cities lack adequate **Sewage Treatment Plants (STPs)** or have outdated facilities.
 - ◆ **Example:** In 2023, over **60% of STPs** in the **National Capital** failed to meet key pollution parameters despite being mandated by the **NGT** to revive the **Yamuna River**.
- **Financial and Resource Constraints:**
 - ◆ High capital investment is needed for constructing and operating STPs.
 - ◆ Municipalities often face **budgetary limitations**, affecting the sustainability of such infrastructure.
- **Urban-Rural Divide:**
 - ◆ Wastewater management is highly **urban-centric**, while **rural areas**, where rivers often originate, lack even basic sewage systems.

- ◆ As of 2022, only 75% of rural Indian households had basic sanitation access (latrines or toilets).

● **Institutional Fragmentation:**

- ◆ Multiple agencies — **CPCB, SPCBs, Urban Local Bodies** — operate with **overlapping mandates**, leading to poor coordination.

● **Public Apathy and Low Awareness:**

- ◆ Citizens are often unaware of the consequences of wastewater pollution.
- ◆ Lack of community-based monitoring results in the **absence of grassroots accountability**.

Way Forward● **Short-Term Measures:**

- ◆ Mandatory linking of sewage pipelines with all new and existing housing.
- ◆ Enhanced **Monitoring, Reporting, and Verification (MRV)** mechanisms by SPCBs.
- ◆ Promotion of **Public-Private Partnerships (PPP)** in setting up STPs.

● **Long-Term Strategies:**

- ◆ **Integrated River Basin Management** with ecological planning.
- ◆ Community-led initiatives like **"Nadi Mitra"** programs.
- ◆ Incentivizing **decentralized, eco-friendly technologies**.
 - **Alappuzha, Kerala**, adopted **decentralized waste treatment** and was praised by **UNEP** as a model for **sustainable sanitation**.
- ◆ Ensuring strict compliance through the **"Polluter Pays Principle"**.

Conclusion:

Schemes like **Namami Gange, AMRUT, and Swachh Bharat Mission** have improved **sewage treatment and sanitation infrastructure**. Building on these successes, India must focus on **scaling proven models**, enforcing **strict compliance**, and promoting **decentralized wastewater solutions** to protect its rivers sustainably.

Prepare with DrishtiIAS

UPSC
Mains
Test Series
2025



UPSC
Classroom
Courses



IAS Current
Affairs Module
Course



Drishti
Learning
App



20. Climate justice and carbon markets have gained prominence in international negotiations. Critically evaluate India's position on these concepts and their relevance for equitable sustainable development. (250 words)

Approach :

- Briefly introduce the concepts of climate justice and carbon markets.
- Critically evaluate India's position on these concepts.
- Discuss their relevance for equitable sustainable development.
- Provide conclusion linked with SDG Goals.

Introduction:

Climate justice and carbon markets have become pivotal issues in global climate negotiations. Climate justice emphasizes fairness in addressing climate change, acknowledging the historical responsibility of developed nations. Carbon markets, on the other hand, focus on trading emission reductions, enabling cost-effective mitigation. For India, both concepts are central in balancing development imperatives with environmental obligations.

Body :

India's Position on Climate Justice

- **Principle of CBDR-RC (Common but Differentiated Responsibilities and Respective Capabilities):** India consistently argues that developed nations, with their historical emissions, must take the lead in mitigation. This stance aligns with equity and justice.
- **Right to Development:** India emphasizes that climate policies must not obstruct poverty alleviation, industrialization, and energy access for its population.
- **Equity in Global Carbon Space:** India advocates for a fair share in the remaining carbon budget, highlighting per capita emissions that remain significantly lower than global averages.
 - ◆ India's per capita CO₂ emissions (2022) stood at **1.9 tonnes**, compared to the US (14.4 tonnes) and China (8.5 tonnes).
- **Judicial Endorsement:** The Supreme Court in *M.C. Mehta v. Kamal Nath (1997)* and subsequent rulings

reinforced the principle of intergenerational equity, echoing India's climate justice approach.

India's Approach to Carbon Markets

- **Supportive yet Cautious:** India participates in carbon markets under the Paris Agreement but stresses that they must be equitable, transparent, and supportive of sustainable development.
- **Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) Experience:** India was one of the largest beneficiaries of the Kyoto Protocol's CDM, hosting over **1500 projects**, which generated employment, technology transfer, and foreign investment.
- **New Carbon Credit Trading Scheme (2023):** India launched a domestic framework to promote carbon trading, aligned with its Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs).
- **Concerns:**
 - ◆ Risk of "green colonialism," where developed nations offload their responsibility by purchasing cheap credits from the Global South.
 - ◆ Fear of market manipulation and lack of equitable benefit-sharing.

Relevance for Equitable Sustainable Development

- **Addressing Inequalities:** Climate justice ensures that low-income communities and vulnerable nations are not disproportionately burdened.
- **Employment and Green Growth:** Carbon markets can generate green jobs in renewable energy, afforestation, and energy efficiency.
- **Financial Resources:** Effective carbon trading can mobilize climate finance for India's transition towards renewables and resilient infrastructure.
- **Energy Transition Goals:** India aims for **500 GW of renewable energy capacity by 2030**, and carbon markets could facilitate the financial and technological resources needed.

Conclusion:

India's stance reflects a **balancing act**—protecting developmental rights while participating in global mitigation efforts. This approach supports **SDG 13 (Climate Action)**, **SDG 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy)**, **SDG 10 (Reduced**

Prepare with DrishtiIAS

UPSC
Mains
Test Series
2025



UPSC
Classroom
Courses



IAS Current
Affairs Module
Course



Drishti
Learning
App



Inequalities), and **SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth)**, linking **environmental responsibility** with **sustainable and inclusive growth**.

Agriculture

21. How far can carbon farming and regenerative agriculture provide India with both climate resilience and export competitiveness? Discuss. (150 words)

Approach:

- Introduce the answer by briefing about the significance of carbon farming and regenerative agriculture for India
- Delve into their Role in Enhancing Climate Resilience and Enhancing Export Competitiveness
- Highlight Challenges and Limitations along with measures for Scalable Transformation
- Conclude suitably.

Introduction

India, as an agrarian economy, faces the twin challenge of **climate vulnerability** and the need to **enhance farm incomes through global competitiveness**. In this context, **carbon farming** (generating carbon credits by adopting climate-smart practices) and **regenerative agriculture** (restoring soil health and ecosystem services) are being promoted as pathways that could

Body:

Role in Enhancing Climate Resilience

- **Soil Health Improvement:** Enhances **organic carbon**, **reduces erosion**, and **improves drought/flood tolerance**.
- **Lower Input Dependence:** Reduces reliance on chemical fertilizers and pesticides → lowers vulnerability to input price shocks.
- **Biodiversity Gains:** Promotes **crop diversification**, **agroforestry**, and **natural pest regulation**.
- **Water Security:** Improved soil moisture retention helps in drought-prone regions like Bundelkhand or Marathwada.

- **Climate Mitigation:** Contributes to India's **NDC target** of creating a carbon sink of 2.5–3 billion tonnes of CO₂ equivalent by 2030.

Role in Enhancing Export Competitiveness

- **Rising Global Demand:** EU's **Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM)** and demand for **sustainably produced agri-goods** create market incentives.
- **Carbon Credits Market:** Farmers can monetize climate-positive practices by trading credits in voluntary/global carbon markets.
- **Premium Branding:** "Carbon-neutral" or "sustainably farmed" labels enhance India's agro-exports like tea, coffee, spices, and basmati rice.
- **Comparative Advantage:** Large smallholder base offers scope for aggregation through **FPOs** and cooperatives.

Challenges and Limitations

- **Measurement and Verification:** Lack of **reliable MRV (Monitoring, Reporting, Verification)** frameworks for carbon credits.
- **High Transition Costs:** Farmers may face yield uncertainty during **shift from conventional to regenerative practices**.
- **Awareness and Equity Concerns:** Limited farmer knowledge of carbon markets and certification processes.
 - ◆ Small farmers may be left out if **only large farms access carbon markets**.

- **Export Barriers:** Compliance with stringent sustainability standards (**like EU's Green Deal**) may be difficult for fragmented Indian agriculture.

Towards Scalable Transformation:

- **Institutional Support:** Establish a **National Carbon Farming Mission** with robust MRV protocols.
- **Capacity Building:** Use **Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs)** and **FPOs** to train farmers in regenerative techniques.
- **Incentives:** Link **MSP/PM-KISAN/insurance** benefits with adoption of regenerative practices.
- **Market Access:** Facilitate carbon credit trading platforms and support certification for export markets.

Prepare with DrishtiIAS

UPSC
Mains
Test Series
2025



UPSC
Classroom
Courses



IAS Current
Affairs Module
Course



Drishti
Learning
App



- **International Partnerships:** Collaborate with EU, FAO, and private sector for knowledge sharing and finance.

Conclusion:

Carbon farming and regenerative agriculture offer a synergistic pathway for India to achieve climate resilience in agriculture while also boosting export competitiveness in a sustainability-conscious global market along with achieving SDG 2, 12, 13, and 15.

Internal Security

22. "Narco-terrorism is the silent war on youth." Analyze how narco-terrorism affects India's demographic dividend. Suggest preventive and rehabilitative measures to shield the young population from this menace. (250 words)

Approach:

- Begin by defining narco-terrorism.
- Analyze how narco-terrorism affects India's demographic dividend.
- Suggest preventive and rehabilitative measures to shield the young population from this menace.
- Conclude with a suitable way forward.

Introduction:

Narco-terrorism refers to the nexus between drug trafficking and terrorist activities, where proceeds from narcotics fund extremist networks. In India, its impact is particularly severe on the youth, undermining the demographic dividend—defined by UNFPA as the potential economic growth from a large working-age population. With 65% of India's population below 35 years, narco-terrorism not only weakens health and productivity but also poses grave national security threats.

Body:

Narco-Terrorism in India

- **Geostrategic Vulnerabilities:**
 - ◆ The Golden Crescent (Afghanistan-Pakistan-Iran) and the Golden Triangle (Myanmar-Laos-Thailand) make India highly vulnerable.
 - ◆ Punjab, Manipur, Assam, and coastal states face inflows of synthetic drugs.

Funding Terrorism:

- ◆ The narcotics trade sustains terror outfits like the Taliban, ISI-backed groups, and insurgent groups in the Northeast.
- ◆ UNODC notes that drug trafficking globally generates \$320 billion annually, part of which fuels terrorism.

Youth as Soft Targets:

- ◆ Increasing urban stress, unemployment, and peer pressure expose youth to drugs.
- ◆ The number of Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) cases registered increased nearly 70% from 2012 to 2022.

Impact on India's Demographic Dividend

Health Crisis:

- ◆ India has 1 crore+ drug addicts (AIIMS 2019 survey).
- ◆ Rising cases of HIV, Hepatitis, and mental disorders reduce the healthy workforce pool.

Economic Losses:

- ◆ Loss of productivity, absenteeism, and healthcare burden.
- ◆ World Bank estimates drug abuse leads to GDP losses of up to 2% annually in developing nations.

Social Disruption:

- ◆ Drug abuse fuels crime, domestic violence, and juvenile delinquency.
- ◆ Weakens family structures and community trust.

National Security Threat:

- ◆ Narco-money strengthens terror infrastructure, weakening law and order.
- ◆ Drug routes overlap with arms smuggling, threatening internal security.

Preventive Measures

Strengthening Border Management:

- ◆ Smart fencing, surveillance drones, and joint task forces with neighbouring countries.
- ◆ Regional cooperation under the SAARC Drug Offences Monitoring Desk.

Prepare with DrishtiIAS

UPSC
Mains
Test Series
2025



UPSC
Classroom
Courses



IAS Current
Affairs Module
Course



Drishti
Learning
App



● Strict Law Enforcement:

- ◆ Full implementation of the **NDPS Act, 1985**, with fast-track courts.
- ◆ Cracking down on the darknet and cryptocurrency-based drug trade.

● Education and Awareness

- ◆ Curriculum-based sensitization on drug abuse.
- ◆ Social media campaigns involving influencers, similar to “Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyan.”

Rehabilitative Measures

● Community-Centric De-addiction Programs:

- ◆ Accessible rehab centres, especially in high-risk states like Punjab.
- ◆ Involvement of NGOs and faith-based organisations.

● Skill Development and Employment Generation:

- ◆ Providing constructive alternatives for youth through **Skill India** and start-up incentives.

● Psychological and Social Support:

- ◆ Counseling in schools, workplaces, and communities.
- ◆ Promoting empathy-based approaches instead of the criminalization of addicts.

Ethical and Policy Dimensions

- **Right to Health:** Recognizing addiction as a disease, not a crime.
- **Youth as Human Capital:** Protecting them ensures justice to future generations.
- **Probity in Governance:** Plugging corruption in law enforcement agencies is critical.

Conclusion:

Narco-terrorism erodes India's demographic dividend while empowering extremist forces. As urged by the **Standing Committee on Social Justice (2019)** and the **National Policy on NDPS (2012)**, expanding de-addiction, awareness, and rehabilitation must be prioritised. A drug-free youth is India's strongest pillar of security and progress.

23. “Borders today are as much digital as they are physical.”

Analyze India's vulnerabilities to cyber intrusions and digital espionage. Suggest an integrated cyber defense and digital sovereignty strategy. (250 words)

Approach:

- **Intro:** Define the problem - borders are now digital as well as physical. You may quote a recent cyberattack, or highlight how cyberspace has become a “fifth domain of warfare” (after land, air, sea, space).
- **Body:** Mention India's Vulnerabilities cyber to intrusions and digital espionage. Suggest Integrated Cyber Defense & Digital Sovereignty Strategy
- **Conclusion:** Stress that digital sovereignty = territorial sovereignty and Call for a holistic, multi-stakeholder strategy.

Introduction

Borders today are increasingly digital as much as physical. With over 800 million internet users, India's growing digital ecosystem is both a strength and a vulnerability. Importantly, cyberspace has now emerged as the ‘**fifth domain of warfare**’—after land, sea, air, and space—where hostile actors can disrupt economies, target critical infrastructure, and compromise sovereignty without crossing physical borders.

India's Vulnerabilities

- **Critical Infrastructure:** Increasing digitization of power, transport, and financial networks has created systemic vulnerabilities. For instance, a 2023 Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT) report highlighted a malware attack on a Ministry and a massive DDOS attack on critical infrastructure in India.
- **Defense & Government Data Breaches:** Cyber espionage has targeted sensitive defense research and communication. Past incidents of malware infiltration in DRDO and the 2019 Kudankulam nuclear plant cyberattack demonstrate strategic risks.
- **Dependence on Foreign Technology:** India relies heavily on imported semiconductors, telecom hardware, and undersea cables, exposing it to

Prepare with DrishtiIAS

UPSC
Mains
Test Series
2025



UPSC
Classroom
Courses



IAS Current
Affairs Module
Course



Drishti
Learning
App



embedded malware and backdoors. Concerns around Huawei's participation in 5G trials exemplify this dependence.

- **Private Sector Weakness:** Many MSMEs and even strategic firms lack robust cybersecurity. The 2021 ransomware attack on SpiceJet operations showed vulnerabilities in aviation.

◆ A 2025 report based on Proofpoint's data indicates that 99% of Indian firms reported material data loss in 2024, the highest globally.

- **Finance Sector:** The Economic Survey 2024-25 said banks were the most affected by cybersecurity incidents with reports indicating that almost one-fifth of all reported cyber incidents involve financial institutions.
- **Human Factor:** Low cyber awareness increases susceptibility to phishing and social engineering. CERT-In recorded over 14 lakh incidents in 2021, many linked to user negligence.

Integrated Cyber Defense & Digital Sovereignty Strategy

- **Institutional Strengthening:** Empower NCIIPC and operationalize the long-pending National Cyber Security Strategy 2020 with updated legal frameworks. CERT-In already plays a key role but requires wider reach.
- **Indigenous Technological Capabilities:** Promote chip manufacturing (ISM), indigenous OS (BharOS), cloud (C-DAC's Meghdoot), and 5G/6G ecosystems. The India Semiconductor Mission (2021) aims to reduce foreign dependence.
- **Public-Private Partnership:** Establish sector-specific CERTs, conduct mandatory audits, and foster joint R&D. Infosys and Wipro already collaborate with CERT-In on threat intelligence.
- **Capacity Building:** Set up dedicated cyber academies, strengthen AI-based cyber forensics, and integrate cyber literacy in education. National Forensic Science University trains cyber specialists.

- **Global Cooperation:** Collaborate with partners like the US, Israel, and QUAD members for intelligence sharing and norm-setting. India-US Cyber Dialogue and Indo-Israel cyber partnerships illustrate such cooperation.
- **Citizen Awareness:** Promote cyber hygiene campaigns for safe digital practices. RBI's "RBI Kehta Hai" campaign raised awareness on secure transactions.

Conclusion

India's digital sovereignty is as vital as its territorial sovereignty. A holistic strategy—rooted in indigenous technology, resilient institutions, public-private cooperation, and global partnerships—will enable India to safeguard its cyber frontiers and secure its national interests in the digital age.

Disaster Management

- 24.** Critically analyze how climate change is altering the frequency and intensity of cloudbursts in India. Assess the preparedness of India's disaster management framework to address cloudburst events. (250 words)

Approach:

- Provide a definition of cloudbursts.
- Analyze how climate change is altering the frequency and intensity of cloudbursts in India.
- Assess the preparedness of India's disaster management framework.
- Conclude with a suitable way forward.

Introduction:

According to the **India Meteorological Department (IMD)**, a **cloudburst** is defined as **rainfall exceeding 100 mm per hour**, accompanied by **strong winds** and **lightning**, occurring over an area of **20 to 30 sq. km**. These events are most common in **mountainous regions**, particularly the **Himalayas**. In recent years, their **frequency and intensity have increased**, largely due to **climate change** and rising **atmospheric instability**.

Prepare with DrishtiIAS

UPSC
Mains
Test Series
2025



UPSC
Classroom
Courses

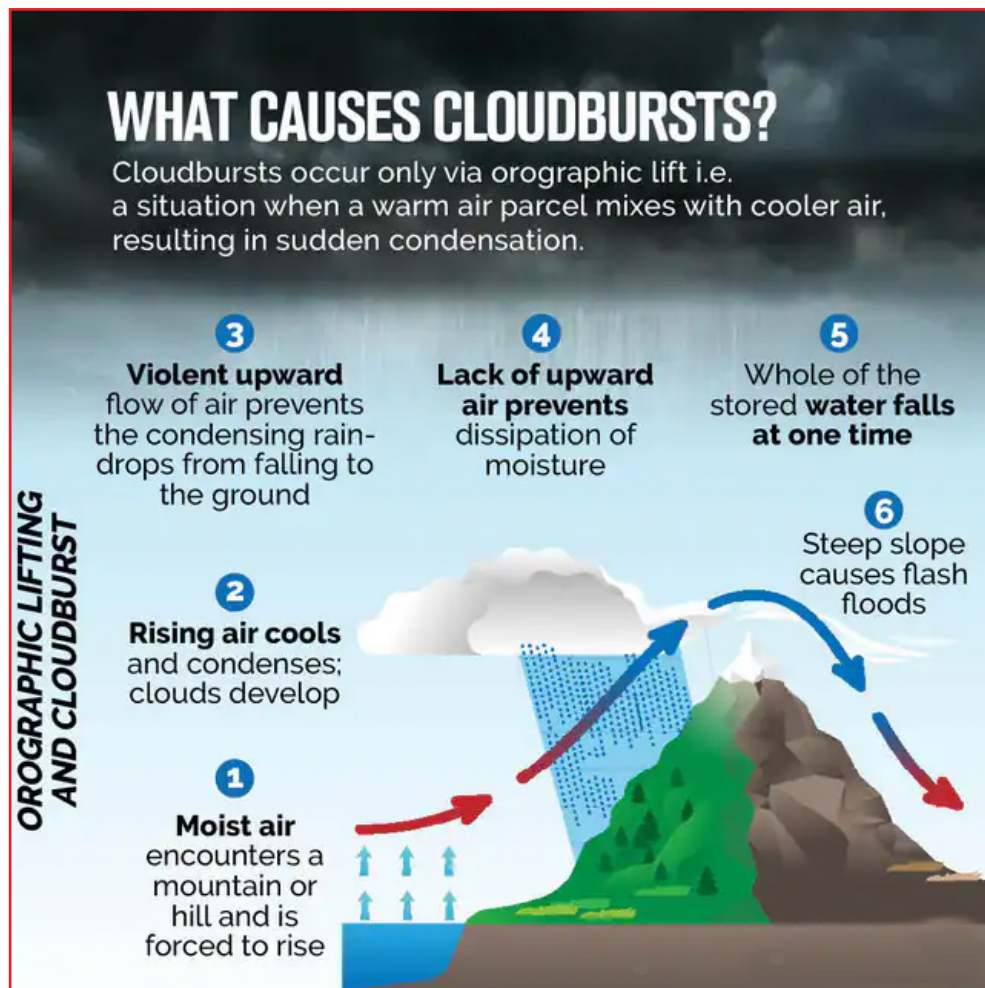


IAS Current
Affairs Module
Course



Drishti
Learning
App



**Body :****Impact of Climate Change on Cloudbursts**

- **Increased Frequency and Intensity:**

- ◆ Due to rising **global temperatures**, the atmosphere can hold more moisture, increasing the probability of intense short-duration rainfall events.
- ◆ The **Clausius-Clapeyron relationship** suggests a 7% increase in moisture per 1°C rise, fueling the intensity of cloudbursts.
- ◆ Recent years have witnessed an alarming rise in such events:
 - **Uttarakhand** witnessed cloudbursts in **Chamoli** and **Rudraprayag (2023)**, followed by a **severe event in Uttarkashi (August 2025)**.
 - **Himachal Pradesh** saw cloudbursts in **Kullu** and **Mandi**, triggering flash floods in 2022 and 2023.

Prepare with DrishtiIAS

UPSC
Mains
Test Series
2025



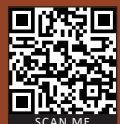
UPSC
Classroom
Courses



IAS Current
Affairs Module
Course



Drishti
Learning
App



- **Changing Geographical Patterns:**

- ◆ While earlier confined to **Himalayan states**, localized cloudbursts are now increasingly reported in **non-traditional areas** such as Maharashtra, Telangana, and Kerala.

- **Scientific Evidence:**

- ◆ Reports from **IMD, IPCC (AR6), and CPCB** suggest a direct correlation between rising temperatures and **extreme weather events** in India.
- ◆ The IPCC notes that South Asia, including India, will experience more frequent and severe **intense rainfall events** as climate change accelerates.

Preparedness of India's Disaster Management Framework

- **Strengths:**

- ◆ **NDMA Guidelines (2010)** specifically address cloudbursts and suggest early warning systems, hazard mapping, and community preparedness.
- ◆ The **IMD's Doppler Radar Network** and satellite-based monitoring help track severe weather conditions, albeit with limitations.
- ◆ **National Disaster Response Force (NDRF)** and **State Disaster Response Forces (SDRFs)** are active in post-disaster rescue and relief operations.
- ◆ Initiatives like **Aapda Mitra** focus on training community volunteers in disaster-prone regions.

- **Gaps and Challenges:**

- ◆ **Forecasting Limitations:** Cloudbursts are hyper-local events, and current weather models lack sufficient spatial resolution for precise predictions.

- ◆ **Inadequate Infrastructure:** Many hilly and remote areas lack **real-time weather stations** and **automated sensors** for rainfall intensity.
- ◆ **Land Use Mismanagement:** Unregulated construction in ecologically sensitive zones exacerbates the impact of cloudbursts, as seen in **Joshimath** and **Kedarnath**.
- ◆ **Weak Community Preparedness:** Local populations often remain unaware or untrained in emergency response, increasing casualties during such events.

Way Forward

- **Upgrade forecasting systems** using AI and machine learning for better prediction and dissemination.
- Establish more **automated weather stations** and **real-time alert systems** in cloudburst-prone zones.
- Enforce **land use regulations** and promote **climate-resilient infrastructure** in hill regions.
- Integrate **climate change adaptation strategies** into **State Disaster Management Plans (SDMPs)**.
- Strengthen **community-based disaster preparedness** through regular drills, training, and awareness programs.

Conclusion:

The **JC Pant Committee** recommended transforming **India's approach to disaster management** from a **reactive** model to a **comprehensive, proactive, and holistic system**. Combining **technology, governance, and community participation** will be key to managing such extreme weather events in a climate-uncertain future.



Prepare with DrishtiIAS

UPSC
Mains
Test Series
2025



UPSC
Classroom
Courses



IAS Current
Affairs Module
Course



Drishti
Learning
App



GENERAL STUDIES PAPER-4

Theoretical Question

25. "A public servant should be politically neutral but not morally indifferent." Justify this statement with examples. (150 words)

Approach :

- Start with a crisp explanation of political neutrality and moral indifference.
- Discuss the significance of political neutrality and moral sensitivity.
- Highlight the dangers of moral indifference.
- Conclude with a suitable way forward.

Introduction:

A **public servant** plays a crucial role in maintaining the integrity of democratic governance. While **political neutrality** ensures that decisions are not influenced by partisan considerations, **moral sensitivity** ensures that such decisions align with principles of **justice, fairness, and human dignity**. Being neutral in political matters is essential for administrative objectivity, but **moral indifference** can lead to inhumane, unjust, or ethically questionable outcomes.

Body :

Political Neutrality: Political neutrality refers to **impartiality** in public decision-making, regardless of which party is in power.

- It ensures **continuity** in governance despite political changes.
- It builds **public trust** by preventing bias toward any political ideology.
- It upholds **constitutional supremacy** over party agendas.
- **Example:** During elections, district magistrates ensure the **Model Code of Conduct** is applied equally to all parties, showing neutrality while enforcing the law.

Moral Sensitivity: While political neutrality prevents bias, **moral sensitivity** prevents the erosion of **human values** in administration.

- It requires **empathy, ethical judgment**, and a **commitment to public welfare**.
- It prevents the "I was just following orders" mindset that can justify **injustice**.
- **Example:** A bureaucrat refusing to clear a polluting industry's clearance despite political pressure, citing **environmental sustainability** and **public health concerns**.

The Danger of Moral Indifference: Moral indifference can lead to **dehumanized governance**, where rules are applied mechanically without regard for consequences.

- **Historical Example:** Blind compliance with discriminatory laws in colonial India worsened public suffering.
- **Contemporary Example:** Denying welfare benefits to vulnerable groups due to minor documentation errors without exploring compassionate alternatives.

Balancing Neutrality and Morality:

- **Separate political influence from decision-making** to protect democratic fairness.
- **Incorporate ethical reasoning** to ensure decisions benefit citizens and uphold justice.
- Follow the **Constitution as the guiding moral compass** rather than political dictates.
 - ◆ **Example:** During communal tensions, an officer must act against instigators from all communities (**neutrality**) but also provide special protection to vulnerable groups (**moral duty**).

Conclusion:

A public servant's legitimacy rests on **political impartiality** guided by **moral responsibility**. Neutrality ensures fairness, while morality ensures justice. True governance lies in serving the **Constitution, especially the ideals of Article 14, the Directive Principles, and Civil Services Conduct Rules**, without bias, yet with **compassion and ethical conviction**.

Prepare with DrishtiIAS

UPSC
Mains
Test Series
2025



UPSC
Classroom
Courses



IAS Current
Affairs Module
Course



Drishti
Learning
App



26. "Integrity without knowledge is useless and knowledge without integrity is dreadful." Examine how the balance between ethical integrity and professional competence is vital in public service. (150 words)

Approach :

- Define ethical integrity and professional competence in the context of public service.
- Discuss the importance of these values in public service.
- Discuss the dangers of integrity without competence.
- Highlight the need to balance ethical integrity and professional competence.
- Conclude with a suitable way forward.

Introduction:

Public service demands not only **technical expertise** but also **moral uprightness**. Ethical integrity ensures actions are guided by **public interest and values**, while professional competence ensures **efficient, effective, and lawful execution** of responsibilities. An imbalance between the two can lead to **either inefficiency or misuse of skills**.

Body :

Ethical Integrity:

- Ethical integrity in public service means adherence to **honesty, fairness, transparency, and accountability** even in difficult circumstances.
- **Example: Lal Bahadur Shastri**, as Railway Minister, resigned accepting moral responsibility for a train accident, showing **ethical accountability** beyond legal obligation.

Professional Competence :

- Competence is the **knowledge, skills, and experience** needed to perform duties effectively.
- **Example: E. Sreedharan**, the "Metro Man of India," combined project management expertise with ethical leadership to deliver projects on time with minimal cost overruns.

Need for Balance in Public Service

- **Integrity without competence:** Without competence, integrity alone may result in **delays, poor policy execution, and loss of public trust**.

- **Competence without integrity:** Without integrity, competence risks being used for **corruption, favoritism, and abuse of power**.
- Thus, **integrity guides 'what should be done', and competence ensures 'how it should be done'.**

Application in Governance

- **Policy Implementation:** Implementing welfare schemes like MGNREGA requires **knowledge of operational guidelines** and **ethical use of funds**.
- **Crisis Management:** In disaster relief, **integrity** ensures fair distribution of aid, while **competence** ensures quick logistical arrangements.
- **Technology Use:** A digitally competent officer can curb corruption in public distribution systems, but without integrity, technology can be misused for data manipulation.

Conclusion :

Public service is a **blend of moral strength and technical skill**. In **Aristotle's virtue ethics**, excellence lies in the balance of moral virtue and practical wisdom. Thus, an ideal public servant is one who **acts rightly and knows how to act rightly** — making governance both **just and effective**.

27. Examine the concept of 'moral injury' and its implications for professionals in law enforcement and administrative services. (150 words)

Approach:

- Briefly introduce the concept of moral injury.
- Discuss its implications for professionals in law enforcement and administrative services.
- Conclude with a suitable way forward.

Introduction:

Moral injury is the psychological, emotional, or ethical harm experienced when individuals act against, or witness violations of, their deeply held moral values. Initially studied in military contexts, the concept is highly relevant for **law enforcement and administrative services**, where officers often face dilemmas between personal ethics, institutional directives, and public expectations.

Prepare with DrishtiIAS

UPSC
Mains
Test Series
2025



UPSC
Classroom
Courses



IAS Current
Affairs Module
Course



Drishti
Learning
App



Body :**Concept of Moral Injury**

- Moral injury arises from the **disjunction between ethical beliefs and professional actions or constraints**.
 - ◆ **For example**, a police officer compelled to register a politically motivated FIR against innocent citizens, or a civil servant implementing a controversial land acquisition despite adverse effects on marginalized communities, may experience guilt, shame, or disillusionment.
- Unlike occupational stress, moral injury erodes **ethical identity**, impacting both professional and personal functioning.

Implications for Law Enforcement

- **Psychological impact:** Officers may develop guilt, shame, or PTSD-like symptoms when forced to compromise ethics.
- **Ethical erosion:** Repeated moral compromises can lead to the normalization of corruption or coercive behavior.
- **Public trust deficit:** Demoralized officers may adopt cynical approaches, weakening community confidence.
- **Example:** Police officers who allow, witness, or are pressured to participate in communal riots often suffer long-term moral and psychological distress due to human rights violations.

Implications for Administrative Services

- **Conflict of conscience:** Officers may struggle between political directives and constitutional obligations.
- **Reduced morale and integrity:** Ethical compromises demotivate officers and impact service quality.
- **Governance deficit:** Decision paralysis or unethical compliance can erode public trust.
- **Example:** A district collector forced to favor specific contractors despite transparent rules may experience moral distress, affecting long-term governance effectiveness.

Way Forward

- **Ethical training and sensitization:** Embed moral reasoning, empathy, and values-based decision-making.

- **Support systems:** Counselling, peer support, and mentorship help process ethical dilemmas.
- **Whistle-blower protection and grievance redressal:** Provide safe avenues to resist unethical directives.
- **Leadership and institutional reforms:** Foster ethical culture, ensure accountability, and shield officers from undue pressure.
- **Example:** Ethics cells and Internal Complaints Committees in government departments help mitigate moral injury by offering structured support.

Conclusion:

Addressing **moral injury** requires officers to act according to Kantian **moral duty**, upholding universal **ethical principles**, while embracing the public service **ethos of integrity, impartiality, and accountability** to maintain both personal **conscience** and citizen **trust**.

28. "Ethics in public administration operates at the intersection of personal virtue, professional integrity, and societal responsibility". Discuss. (150 words)

Approach:

- Define ethics in public administration.
- Explain the three dimensions: personal virtue, professional integrity, and societal responsibility.
- Show interconnections and how they affect governance and service delivery.
- Include examples from Indian administrative practices, policies, or case studies.
- Conclude with relevance for modern public administration.

Introduction:

Ethics in public administration guides the behavior, decisions, and governance of public servants. It operates at the intersection of **personal virtue, professional integrity, and societal responsibility**, ensuring accountability, trust, and legitimacy in democratic governance.

Body:**Personal Virtue**

- **Personal virtue** forms the foundation of ethical public service.

Prepare with DrishtiIAS

UPSC
Mains
Test Series
2025



UPSC
Classroom
Courses



IAS Current
Affairs Module
Course



Drishti
Learning
App



- It encompasses qualities like **honesty, courage, empathy, and self-discipline**.
- Individual morality shapes day-to-day decision-making and sets the tone for organizational behavior.
 - ◆ For instance, an officer refusing to accept a bribe or resisting political pressure demonstrates **personal integrity**, which influences colleagues and promotes an ethical organizational culture.
- Without personal virtue, other ethical dimensions may weaken, leading to compromised governance.

Professional Integrity

- Involves **adherence to rules, transparency, accountability, and impartiality**.
- Ensures **objective decision-making** and **procedural propriety** under pressure.
 - ◆ Example: Implementation of **Right to Information (RTI)** promotes **transparency** and **citizen empowerment**.
- Bridges **personal ethics** with **societal responsibility**, ensuring fair administration.

Societal Responsibility

- Extends ethics to **serving public interest, social justice, and marginalized groups**.
- Requires equitable **policy implementation** and **citizen-focused service delivery**.
 - ◆ Example: **MGNREGA** ensures rural livelihood security and reflects societal responsibility.
- Without this dimension, ethical behavior may become **symbolic or self-serving**.

Interconnection

- **Personal virtue** underpins **professional integrity**, which enables **societal responsibility**.
- Weakness in any dimension can undermine **ethical governance**.
- Example: Corruption at the individual level erodes **public trust** and reduces the impact of social programs.

Conclusion:

Ethics in public administration requires a holistic approach, integrating **personal virtue, professional integrity, and societal responsibility**. Upholding these,

guided by Aristotle's **virtue ethics**, where officers cultivate **virtue, courage, and practical wisdom**, and embracing the public service **ethos** of **integrity, impartiality, and accountability**, ensures **transparent, citizen-centric, and equitable governance**.

29. "Trustworthiness ensures credibility, fortitude ensures continuity." Critically evaluate this statement with illustrations from public administration. (150 words)

Approach :

- Briefly introduce the virtues of trustworthiness and fortitude.
- Discuss trustworthiness as a source of credibility.
- Discuss fortitude as a guarantee of continuity.
- Critically assess their limitations.
- Conclude suitably.

Introduction :

Trustworthiness reflects integrity, honesty, and reliability, which earn credibility for governance systems. **Fortitude** represents moral courage, resilience, and perseverance, which ensure continuity of ethical practices despite political, social, or institutional challenges. Together, these qualities strengthen the moral foundation of public service.

Body :

Trustworthiness as a Source of Credibility

- Trustworthiness builds credibility because citizens depend on institutions that act with honesty and transparency.
- A trustworthy administrator or institution earns legitimacy, which is vital in a democracy.
 - ◆ Example: **Lal Bahadur Shastri's** trustworthiness during the food crisis of 1965 inspired credibility among citizens through the slogan "*Jai Jawan, Jai Kisan*."
- Without trustworthiness, governance suffers from cynicism, corruption, and declining public confidence.

Fortitude as a Guarantee of Continuity

- Fortitude is the capacity to remain steadfast in ethical decision-making despite opposition or adversity.

Prepare with DrishtiIAS

UPSC
Mains
Test Series
2025



UPSC
Classroom
Courses



IAS Current
Affairs Module
Course



Drishti
Learning
App



- Administrators often face pressures from vested interests, political superiors, or even public anger.
- Fortitude allows them to uphold values and sustain long-term reforms.

- **Examples:**

- ◆ **Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel:** He showed fortitude in integrating over 500 princely states into the Indian Union, ensuring continuity of the newly independent nation
- ◆ **E. Sreedharan (Delhi Metro):** He demonstrated fortitude in executing the Metro project free of corruption and undue political interference, ensuring continuity of high standards.
- ◆ **The Right to Information Act** reflects institutional fortitude, enabling continuity in transparency reforms despite resistance.

- Fortitude ensures that governance does not collapse under external pressure but stays aligned to ethical principles.

Critical Evaluation

- **Trustworthiness alone is insufficient:** Competence and efficiency are also necessary for credibility. A well-meaning but ineffective administrator may not inspire public confidence.
- **Fortitude without adaptability:** Excessive rigidity may hinder flexibility and pragmatic decision-making. Resilience should not translate into stubbornness.
- **Need for complementary values:** Empathy, accountability, impartiality, and efficiency are equally significant for effective public administration.

Conclusion:

Trustworthiness and **fortitude** are interdependent virtues that reinforce **ethical governance**. Yet, for governance to be truly **holistic**, these must be complemented by **competence**, **empathy**, and **accountability**. As **virtue ethics** emphasizes, **character** is the foundation of **moral action**—**trust** arises from **truth**, **courage** sustains **continuity**, and together they shape a **virtuous public service**.

30. "True gender equality in public service is achieved not only when women enter the system, but when the system itself adapts to their needs without compromising standards of probity." Examine the challenges women officers encounter in administration and suggest reforms to enhance their efficiency and uphold probity. (150 words)

Approach :

- Briefly introduce the need for true gender equality in public services.
- Examine the challenges women officers encounter in administration.
- Suggest reforms to enhance their efficiency and uphold probity
- Conclude with a suitable way forward.

Introduction:

Gender equality in public service is not merely about numerical representation but about creating enabling systems. True equality is achieved when the administrative framework adapts to the specific needs of women, ensuring they perform efficiently while upholding **probity, impartiality, and integrity**.

Body :

Challenges Faced by Women Officers

- **Structural Barriers:**

- ◆ Limited gender-sensitive HR policies.
- ◆ Rigid transfer policies, lack of childcare support, and absence of gender-friendly infrastructure create practical hurdles.
- ◆ **For example**, women IPS officers often face challenges in remote postings without adequate housing or medical facilities.

- **Workplace Biases and Stereotyping:**

- ◆ Women officers are often stereotyped as being more suited to "soft" departments like health, education, or social welfare, while being overlooked for law enforcement, finance, or infrastructure portfolios.

Prepare with DrishtiIAS

UPSC
Mains
Test Series
2025



UPSC
Classroom
Courses



IAS Current
Affairs Module
Course



Drishti
Learning
App



- ◆ **Kiran Bedi's** posting in Tihar Jail illustrated how women administrators can excel even in so-called "tough" domains.

- **Operational and Field Challenges:**

- ◆ Safety concerns in Naxal-affected areas or conflict zones.
- ◆ Example: **Rema Rajeshwari, IPS**, worked in Telangana's cybercrime and anti-human trafficking units, highlighting the need for systemic safety measures.

- **Professional Challenges:**

- ◆ Women officers were sometimes pressured to "adjust" to male-dominated networks.
- ◆ Limited mentorship and fewer women in senior leadership roles hinder career progression.
- ◆ Representation of women in the higher echelons of the IAS and IPS remains disproportionately low despite decades of service entry.

- **Work-Life Balance:**

- ◆ Dual responsibility of administration and domestic care.
- ◆ Many women officers have highlighted during Parliamentary Committee reviews the lack of institutional childcare support in postings.

Impact on Probity

- Avoiding tough postings due to safety or family constraints may affect impartiality in cadre distribution.
- Social pressure to compromise independence reduces integrity.
- Overburden reduces efficiency, indirectly impacting service delivery.

Reforms to Enhance Efficiency and Uphold Probity

- **Policy and Structural Reforms**

- ◆ Flexible working hours, childcare support, and equal access to field postings.
- ◆ Example: Kerala government's **gender budgeting** initiatives provide a replicable model for gender-sensitive policy frameworks.

- **Workplace Culture:**

- ◆ Gender-sensitisation modules in training at **LBSNAA and police academies**.

- ◆ Strict enforcement of the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace Act, 2013.

- **Operational Support:**

- ◆ Safe housing and sanitation facilities in remote areas.
- ◆ Example: **Navjot Khosa, IAS**, worked in cyclone-prone Kerala with proper safety and logistical support, proving women officers can handle crisis leadership effectively.

- **Ethical Reinforcement**

- ◆ Integrate gender justice in civil services' codes of ethics.
- ◆ Promote mentorship programs led by senior women officers like **Aruna Sundararajan, IAS**, who mentored cadres in digital governance.

- **Societal Measures**

- ◆ Promote paternity leave and shared caregiving.
- ◆ Public recognition of successful women administrators to change stereotypes.

Conclusion:

As **UN Women** rightly affirms, "**Gender equality is not an option, but an imperative.**" For public administration, this means moving beyond **token representation** to ensure **empowered participation** of women. **Women administrators**, when given equitable opportunities, strengthen the **inclusivity, efficiency, and ethical fabric of governance**.

31. Jainism emphasized *Syadvada* (doctrine of conditional predication) and *Anekantavada* (doctrine of multiplicity of viewpoints). Examine their relevance in strengthening democratic discourse and tolerance in a plural society. (150 words)

Approach:

- Introduce the answer by briefing about Jain philosophy of *Syadvada* and *Anekantavada*
- Delve into their Relevance in Strengthening Democratic Discourse and Strengthening Tolerance in a Plural Society
- Conclude suitably.

Prepare with DrishtiIAS

UPSC
Mains
Test Series
2025



UPSC
Classroom
Courses



IAS Current
Affairs Module
Course



Drishti
Learning
App



Introduction:

Jain philosophy, through **Syadvada (conditional truth: all views are context-bound)**, and **Anekantavada (non-absolutism: reality has multiple facets)** emphasizes **intellectual humility and respect for diverse perspectives**.

- These doctrines provide a strong philosophical foundation for fostering democratic discourse and tolerance in a plural society.

Body:**Relevance in Strengthening Democratic Discourse:**

- **Encouraging Dialogue and Deliberation**
 - ◆ Anekantavada fosters acceptance of diverse viewpoints, which is the foundation of **parliamentary debates**, federal negotiations, and policy deliberations.
 - ◆ **Example:** Debates on **Uniform Civil Code, farm laws, or environmental policy** require multi-perspective consideration.
- **Curbing Polarization and Dogmatism**
 - ◆ Syadvada tempers absolutist claims and promotes compromise.
 - ◆ In an era of **ideological polarization**, it nurtures a culture of listening and respecting differences.
 - ◆ It challenges the **"my way or the highway"** mentality, promoting a more nuanced understanding of complex issues like economic policies, social reforms, or national security.
- **Promoting Consensus-Building**
 - ◆ By acknowledging the validity of multiple perspectives, decision-making can balance competing interests.
 - ◆ **Example:** **GST reforms involved reconciling diverse state interests** through cooperative federalism.
- **Ensuring Minority Voices and Inclusivity**
 - ◆ Anekantavada encourages respect for marginalized voices, ensuring pluralism in society.

- ◆ **Example:** Affirmative action policies are defended not as negation of merit but as **recognition of social realities**.

Relevance in Strengthening Tolerance in a Plural Society

- **Cultural and Religious Harmony**
 - ◆ Encourages recognition of different faiths and philosophies as partial expressions of truth.
 - ◆ **Example:** India's model of secularism is not about exclusion but about **Sarva Dharma Sambhava (equal respect to all religions)**.
- **Social Cohesion Amid Diversity**
 - ◆ Helps manage India's diversity of language, caste, and ethnicity by rejecting absolutism and embracing multiplicity.
- **Promoting Empathy and Humility:**
 - ◆ The very act of acknowledging that one's own viewpoint is only partially correct instills humility and empathy.
 - ◆ This is a crucial virtue for a functioning plural society. It allows individuals to see the world from another person's shoes, recognizing the legitimacy of their struggles and beliefs.

Limitations and Challenges

- **Risk of Relativism:** Excessive emphasis on multiple perspectives may lead to moral or ethical relativism, weakening firm stances on justice, rights, or governance.
- **Decision-Making Paralysis:** Over-analyzing every viewpoint (Syadvada) can slow down policy-making or lead to indecisiveness in urgent situations.

Conclusion

As **"True strength of a society lies not in uniformity of thought, but in the harmony of diverse perspectives."** The Jain doctrines of **Anekantavada and Syadvada** embody **intellectual humility, openness, and tolerance**- principles that resonate with the spirit of India's democracy and pluralism. While they cannot substitute for firm constitutional commitments, they provide a philosophical foundation for dialogue, inclusivity, and peaceful coexistence in a plural society.

Prepare with DrishtiIAS

UPSC
Mains
Test Series
2025



UPSC
Classroom
Courses



IAS Current
Affairs Module
Course



Drishti
Learning
App



32. Sun Tzu remarked, "The supreme art of war is to subdue the enemy without fighting." How far is this applicable in current international relations? (150 words)

Approach:

- Introduce the answer by briefing about the quote
- Delve into the Applicability of Sun Tzu's remark on Art of War in Modern International Relations
- Conclude suitably.

Introduction:

Sun Tzu's dictum from *The Art of War* emphasizes **strategy, diplomacy, and influence over direct confrontation**.

- In contemporary international relations, where full-scale wars are costly and destabilizing, the principle of achieving objectives without direct military engagement has become increasingly relevant.

Body:

Applicability of Sun Tzu's remark on Art of War in Modern International Relations:

- **Strategic Diplomacy for Conflict Management:**
 - ◆ **Multilateral Institutions:** United Nations, WTO, and G20 forums enable states to shape global norms without war.
 - ◆ **Coalition Building:** Alliances such as NATO, Quad, or SCO allow countries to project power collectively, deterring conflict.
 - ◆ **Strategic Signaling:** India's outreach after the Pahalgam attack (**All Party delegation led by Member of Parliament Shashi Tharoor**), leading to formal condemnation in the **Tianjin Declaration**, reflects effective diplomatic signaling over military retaliation.
 - ◆ **Water Diplomacy:** India has strategically used the **Indus Waters Treaty** as leverage, **announcing it would be held "in abeyance"** until Pakistan takes verifiable action against cross-border terrorism.
 - This demonstrates non-military pressure through transboundary water agreements.
- **Economic Leverage as a Non-Military Tool**
 - ◆ **Sanctions and Trade Measures:** Economic sanctions against countries like **Russia (post-**

Ukraine invasion) and Iran demonstrate pressure without direct combat.

- ◆ **Trade and Aid Diplomacy:** Countries use trade agreements, development aid, and infrastructure investments (e.g., **China's Belt and Road Initiative**) to expand influence.
- ◆ **Investment & Supply Chains:** Control over strategic sectors (like **semiconductors, rare earths**) enables influence without force.

● Strategic Deterrence

- ◆ **Nuclear and Advanced Military Capabilities:** The threat of retaliation prevents **wars from escalating**, countries achieve objectives indirectly through deterrence rather than direct fighting.
- ◆ **Precision in Applying Force:** Recent **airstrikes in Pakistan following the Pahalgam attack**, exemplified a calibrated use of force-targeting non-state actors to punish terrorism while signaling India's resolve, without triggering a full-scale war.

● Information and Cyber Strategies

- ◆ **Cyber Warfare & Disinformation:** Nations increasingly use cyberattacks, surveillance, and disinformation campaigns to weaken adversaries without conventional warfare.
 - **Russia's alleged use of cyber-attacks and disinformation during the 2016 US election** is a prime example.

Conclusion:

While direct wars still occur, nations achieve objectives through economic, technological, and soft power instruments, reflecting the art of subduing the opponent without fighting. As in Sun Tzu's vision, **"To win one hundred victories in one hundred battles is not the acme of skill. To subdue the enemy without fighting is the acme of skill."**

Case Study

33. You are posted as the General Manager of a large public sector manufacturing unit. Recently, tensions have escalated between the management and the workers' union. The union has raised demands regarding increased wages, better safety standards, and permanent absorption of contractual workers.

Prepare with DrishtiIAS

UPSC
Mains
Test Series
2025



UPSC
Classroom
Courses



IAS Current
Affairs Module
Course



Drishti
Learning
App



While some of their demands are legitimate and align with labour welfare norms, others may have a severe impact on the company's financial health. Moreover, you discover that a few influential union leaders are instigating workers to go on an indefinite strike, even though negotiations are still ongoing.

Meanwhile, a group of junior employees approaches you confidentially, expressing concern that the aggressive approach of the union may harm their career prospects and lead to a prolonged factory shutdown. At the same time, pressure mounts from the Ministry to avoid disruptions and meet production targets crucial for national supply chains.

In the midst of this, a senior union leader offers to de-escalate the situation in exchange for personal favors, such as awarding contracts to firms linked to him and ensuring his relatives receive preferential treatment in job promotions.

You are expected to submit a report to the Ministry suggesting a path forward that ensures industrial peace, protects workers' rights, and prevents unethical compromises.

- Identify and discuss the ethical issues involved in this case.
- How would you balance worker welfare with organizational sustainability and public interest?

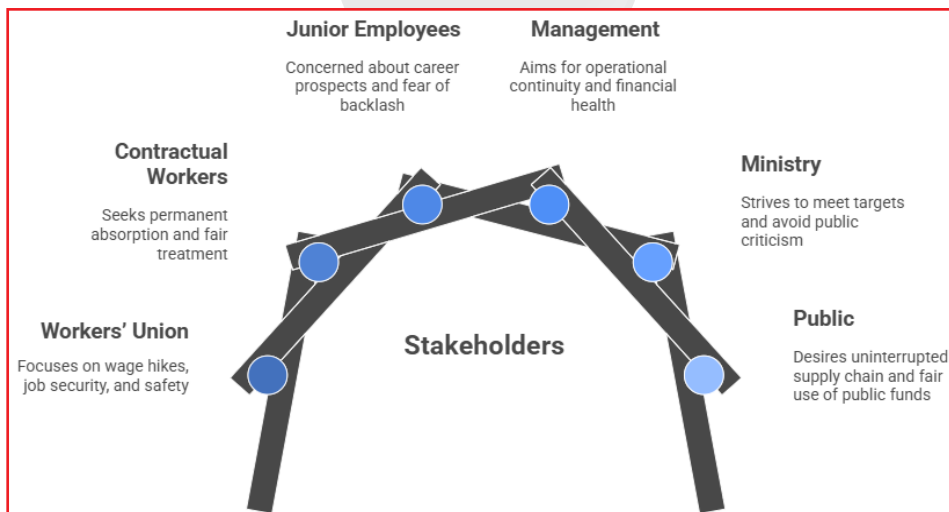
- How should you respond to the offer made by the union leader? What mechanisms should be used to ensure transparency and accountability?
- What ethical values and principles of public administration should guide your conduct?

Approach :

- Briefly describe the situation to establish context.
- Identify and discuss the ethical issues involved in this case.
- Provide a multi-pronged ethical strategy to balance worker welfare with organizational sustainability and public interest.
- Discuss the ethical response to the Union Leader's Offer and suggest mechanisms to ensure transparency and accountability.
- Mention the ethical values and principles of public administration that should guide your conduct.

Introduction:

As the General Manager of a public sector manufacturing unit, I face a complex situation involving legitimate labour unrest over welfare demands, unethical behavior by a senior union leader, pressure from the Ministry for production continuity, and concerns from junior employees over prolonged conflict. The challenge lies in reconciling competing interests ethically while ensuring industrial harmony.



Prepare with DrishtiIAS

UPSC
Mains
Test Series
2025



UPSC
Classroom
Courses



IAS Current
Affairs Module
Course



Drishti
Learning
App



Body :**A. Ethical Issues Involved**

- **Conflict of Interest and Corruption:** The offer of personal favors by a union leader in exchange for de-escalating protests is a case of quid pro quo, violating integrity and probity in public service.
- **Fairness and Equity:** Permanent absorption of contractual workers and wage revision raise questions of fairness versus financial prudence.
- **Pressure from Stakeholders:** Balancing conflicting expectations—from workers, junior staff, management, and the Ministry—poses pressure to ethical neutrality.
- **Transparency and Trust:** The aggressive tactics by union leaders undermine mutual trust, while the concerns of junior employees raise issues of voice and representation.

B. Balancing Worker Welfare with Organizational Sustainability and Public Interest

- **Assess Demands Objectively:**
 - ◆ A three-tier evaluation of demands:
 - *Legitimate and feasible* (e.g., improved safety standards).
 - *Ethically valid but financially challenging* (e.g., permanent absorption of contract workers).
 - *Unsustainable or unfair* (e.g., disproportionate wage hike demands).
 - ◆ Utilize cost-benefit analysis, benchmarking with industry standards, and consultation with labour law experts.
- **Open and Inclusive Dialogue:**
 - ◆ Establish a **tripartite negotiation mechanism** involving the union, junior staff representatives, and management.
 - ◆ Ensure that the negotiation process is **recorded and minuted** to maintain transparency.
- **Worker Welfare with Financial Discipline:**
 - ◆ Explore **phased implementation** of feasible demands (e.g., gradual wage revisions or skill-based promotions).

- ◆ Invest in **long-term welfare**—training, upskilling, and better working conditions—aligned with both employee welfare and productivity.

- **Protect Public Interest:**

- ◆ Ensure **minimum operational continuity** to meet national supply commitments using voluntary workforce or alternate arrangements.
- ◆ Propose **temporary MoUs or arbitration** to defer strikes while negotiations continue.

C. Response to the Unethical Offer

- **Immediate Rejection:** Firmly refuse the offer, emphasizing adherence to ethical conduct and zero tolerance for corruption.
- **Document and Report:** Record the incident confidentially and report it to the internal vigilance department and the Ministry.
- **Initiate Disciplinary Inquiry:** Seek appropriate legal and disciplinary action against the involved union leader to uphold the rule of law.

Mechanisms for Transparency and Accountability

- **Constitute a Grievance Redressal Committee** with representation from all worker categories and an independent observer.
- Use **external mediators** or industrial tribunals for impartial settlement of complex demands.
- Mandate **public disclosure** of agreements, timelines, and audit trails of resource allocation.
- Deploy **digital dashboards** for real-time updates on negotiations and implementation progress.

D. Ethical Values and Principles to Uphold

- **Integrity:** Reject any personal benefit that compromises public trust.
- **Impartiality:** Treat all stakeholders—senior union leaders, junior staff, contract workers—with fairness.
- **Accountability:** Ensure decision-making is open to scrutiny by higher authorities and the public.
- **Empathy and Responsiveness:** Listen to the concerns of vulnerable junior employees.
- **Rule of Law:** Uphold labour laws, anti-corruption frameworks, and administrative ethics.

Prepare with DrishtiIASUPSC
Mains
Test Series
2025UPSC
Classroom
CoursesIAS Current
Affairs Module
CourseDrishti
Learning
App

Conclusion :

As Immanuel Kant rightly said, *“Act only according to that maxim whereby you can at the same time will that it should become a universal law.”* This principle of **duty-bound ethics** must guide my conduct, ensuring decisions are morally sound, universally applicable, and rooted in integrity.

34. You are posted as the Commissioner of the Municipal Corporation in a major North Indian city located along the Yamuna River. The river is the city's lifeline, providing water for domestic, industrial, and agricultural needs. Over the years, however, the Yamuna has become heavily polluted due to untreated sewage, industrial effluents, and religious offerings. A recent National Green Tribunal report has criticised your corporation for failing to meet sewage treatment targets and for allowing illegal industrial discharges.

On assuming office, you discover that several textile and dyeing units are secretly releasing untreated waste into the river at night. Many sewage treatment plants under your jurisdiction are either non-functional or operating far below capacity, partly due to corruption in maintenance contracts. Religious organisations continue to immerse idols and floral offerings into the river, citing cultural tradition, and have mobilised public sentiment against any restrictions.

Environmental activists are running a campaign that is gaining national attention, while the local media have started linking rising cases of skin ailments and loss of aquatic life directly to the state of the river. Political leaders, however, advise you to go slow on enforcement until after the upcoming elections, warning that strict action against industries or religious groups may provoke unrest. Meanwhile, the government has directed you to prepare a detailed action plan for river rejuvenation.

- A. Identify and discuss the ethical issues involved in this case.
- B. How would you balance environmental duty with political and cultural pressures?
- C. How would you ensure accountability in industrial compliance and transparency in sewage treatment operations?

- D. Suggest key measures for sustainable river management and state the ethical values that should guide you. (250 words)

Approach :

- Briefly describe the situation to establish context.
- Identify and discuss the ethical issues involved in this case.
- Discuss the steps to balance environmental duty with political and cultural pressures.
- Highlight the mechanisms to ensure accountability in industrial compliance and transparency in sewage treatment operations.
- Suggest key measures for sustainable river management and state the guiding ethical values.
- Conclude with a suitable way forward.

Introduction:

The **Yamuna River** is the **lifeline** of the city, sustaining **domestic, agricultural, and industrial** needs while holding immense **cultural significance**. Its **severe pollution**, caused by **untreated sewage, industrial effluents, and unregulated religious offerings**, presents a **complex ethical and administrative challenge**.

Body:**A. Ethical Issues Involved**

- **Environmental Ethics** – Duty to protect the river's ecological health for current and future generations (*intergenerational equity*).
- **Public Health Responsibility** – Rising skin ailments and ecological degradation demand adherence to the principle of *non-maleficence*.
- **Integrity & Anti-Corruption** – Mismanagement and corruption in sewage treatment operations undermine public trust.
- **Rule of Law vs. Political Pressure** – Upholding environmental laws despite electoral considerations.
- **Cultural Sensitivity vs. Sustainability** – Need to respect traditions while preventing ecological harm.
- **Transparency & Accountability** – Obligation to disclose environmental data to citizens truthfully.

Prepare with DrishtiIAS

UPSC
Mains
Test Series
2025



UPSC
Classroom
Courses



IAS Current
Affairs Module
Course



Drishti
Learning
App



B. Balancing Environmental Duty with Political & Cultural Pressures

- **Stakeholder Engagement** – Collaborate with religious leaders to promote eco-friendly rituals such as biodegradable idols and designated immersion tanks.
- **Phased Enforcement** – Gradually tighten industrial compliance to avoid sudden economic shocks, providing subsidies for effluent treatment upgrades.
- **Political Navigation** – Present data linking pollution control to public health improvement, framing it as a governance success before elections.
- **Public Awareness** – Link river rejuvenation to cultural pride through campaigns, making environmental protection a shared community value.

C. Ensuring Accountability and Transparency

- **Industrial Compliance:**
 - ◆ Install GPS-enabled flow meters and CCTV at discharge points.
 - ◆ Conduct surprise night inspections with Pollution Control Board and NGOs.
 - ◆ Publicly name and penalise violators to deter further breaches.
- **Sewage Treatment Operations:**
 - ◆ Mandate third-party technical audits for Sewage Treatment Plants (STPs).
 - ◆ Launch a real-time public dashboard of STP capacity and performance.
 - ◆ Cancel corrupt contracts and award new tenders via transparent e-procurement.

D. Key Measures for Sustainable River Management

Short-Term

- Repair and maximise use of existing STPs.
- Crack down on illegal industrial discharge.
- Provide alternative facilities for idol immersion.

Medium-Term

- Upgrade STPs with advanced treatment technologies.
- Enforce zero-liquid discharge norms for industries.
- Involve resident welfare associations and local NGOs in river monitoring.

Long-Term

- Restore riverfront ecology through wetlands and green buffer zones.

- Integrate river health indicators into city planning and environmental impact assessments.
- Institutionalise continuous environmental education in schools and communities.

Ethical Values to Guide Action

- **Integrity** – Resist corruption and political interference.
- **Accountability** – Transparent performance reporting.
- **Environmental Stewardship** – Safeguard natural resources as trustees.
- **Empathy** – Respect cultural traditions while guiding them towards sustainability.
- **Courage** – Take decisive action despite political pressure.
- **Justice** – Ensure polluters bear the cost of remediation.

Conclusion:

Aldo Leopold, father of **environmental ethics**, said, “A thing is right when it preserves the integrity, stability, and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it tends otherwise.” The **Yamuna** is part of this community, and its **preservation** is an **ethical necessity**. My actions — from **industrial regulation** to **cultural adaptation** — will strengthen its **ecological integrity** and foster **community stewardship**.

35. You are posted as the District Magistrate in a prominent pilgrimage town in North India that attracts lakhs of devotees every year during a major festival. On the main day of the event, a tragic stampede occurs near the entry gates of the temple complex, leading to the death of over 50 devotees and injuring hundreds. Preliminary reports indicate that poor crowd management, inadequate barricading, and negligence in traffic diversion contributed to the chaos.

Eyewitnesses reveal that local vendors had illegally encroached upon key passageways, while influential religious organisations resisted stricter crowd-control measures citing “devotee inconvenience.” Political leaders had also pressured the administration to allow maximum entry, as restrictions would upset religious sentiments before elections.

Your internal inquiry shows lapses at multiple levels: police and civic officials ignored standard operating procedures for crowd control, corruption was involved in issuing special entry passes for VIPs, and emergency

Prepare with DrishtiIAS

UPSC
Mains
Test Series
2025



UPSC
Classroom
Courses



IAS Current
Affairs Module
Course



Drishti
Learning
App



medical response was delayed due to poor coordination between the health department and local NGOs.

The media has labelled the incident a “man-made disaster,” while families of victims demand accountability and justice. An inquiry commission is to be set up, and you are tasked with preparing a comprehensive report and action plan to prevent such tragedies in the future.

- A. Identify and discuss the ethical issues involved in this case.
- B. How would you balance religious sentiments, political pressure, and your responsibility to ensure public safety?
- C. How would you ensure accountability among officials and fairness to victims?
- D. Suggest key measures for long-term prevention of stampedes and state the ethical values that should guide you. (250 words)

Approach :

- Briefly describe the situation to establish context.
- Identify and discuss the ethical issues involved in this case.
- Discuss the steps to balance religious sentiments, political pressure, and public safety.
- Highlight the mechanisms to ensure accountability among officials and fairness to victims.
- Suggest key measures for long-term prevention of stampedes and state the ethical values that should guide you.
- Conclude with a suitable way forward.

Introduction:

The tragic stampede during a major pilgrimage highlights how **administrative negligence**, **political interference**, and **disregard for safety norms** can convert **faith into disaster**. It is a **man-made tragedy** involving **ethical lapses** at multiple levels, demanding **accountability**, **justice for victims**, and **systemic reforms**.

Body:

A. Ethical Issues Involved

- **Negligence of Duty** – Police and civic officials ignored Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) on crowd management.

- **Corruption** – VIP passes issued illegally compromised fairness and equality.
- **Conflict of Values** – Political and religious pressure undermined administrative impartiality.
- **Violation of Human Dignity** – Inadequate medical response denied victims timely care.
- **Encroachment & Public Inconvenience** – Vendors, allowed due to negligence, blocked critical pathways.
- **Transparency and Accountability Deficit** – Failure to enforce responsibility before and after the incident.

B. Balancing Religious Sentiments, Political Pressure, and Public Safety

- **Primacy of Safety:** Right to life (Article 21) must override political expediency or religious convenience.
- **Respectful Dialogue:** Religious leaders can be engaged through persuasion, explaining that effective crowd control is in devotees’ best interest.
- **Rule of Law over Political Pressure:** Political leaders must be reminded that accountability for violations will rest with the administration.
- **Emotional Intelligence:** Decisions communicated with empathy reduce resistance.
 - ◆ **Example:** setting up waiting halls, live telecasts, and staggered entry to maintain faith while ensuring safety.

C. Ensuring Accountability and Fairness

- **Accountability of Officials:**
 - ◆ Fix responsibility for negligence through impartial inquiry.
 - ◆ Initiate disciplinary action, including suspension, if SOP violations or corruption are proven.
- **Fairness to Victims:**
 - ◆ Immediate compensation and free medical care.
 - ◆ Counselling for families and rehabilitation for dependents.
 - ◆ Transparent grievance redressal, avoiding bureaucratic delays.
- **Public Communication:**
 - ◆ Transparent reporting to the media and public to maintain trust.

Prepare with DrishtiIAS

UPSC
Mains
Test Series
2025



UPSC
Classroom
Courses



IAS Current
Affairs Module
Course



Drishti
Learning
App



D. Long-term Preventive Measures & Ethical Values**Preventive Measures:**

- **Strict SOP Implementation:** Demarcated entry/exit points, proper barricading, and traffic diversion.
- **Technology Integration:** CCTV, drones, AI-based crowd density alerts.
- **Capacity Regulation:** Pre-registration, e-passes, and staggered timings.
- **Volunteer & Police Training:** Crowd psychology, emergency drills, disaster management.
- **Inter-agency Coordination:** Joint command centre with health, police, fire, NGOs.
- **Independent Audits:** Safety audits before every festival, accountability reports after.

Guiding Ethical Values:

- **Integrity** – resisting corruption and undue influence.
- **Accountability** – fixing responsibility for lapses.
- **Compassion** – humane treatment of victims.
- **Courage of Conviction** – standing firm against political/religious pressure.
- **Justice & Fairness** – equal treatment for all devotees.
- **Public Service Orientation** – prioritising citizens' safety above all.

Conclusion:

Guided by **Kant's deontological ethics**, which emphasises duty and respect for human dignity, public officials must act not out of convenience or pressure but from the moral obligation to protect life. Thus, governance must embody both **administrative efficiency and ethical responsibility**, ensuring that religious fervour never overshadows the **right to safety and justice**.

36. You are posted as the District Magistrate (DM) in a mineral-rich tribal district of central India. The district is home to significant reserves of iron ore, bauxite, and coal, making it a hub of mining activities. However, in recent years, illegal mining has become rampant, causing severe environmental degradation—forests are being cleared without permission, rivers are turning toxic due to slurry discharge, and agricultural land is becoming infertile.

Local communities, especially tribal groups, depend on forests and rivers for their livelihood. They are now losing access to clean water, forest produce, and fertile soil,

creating discontent. Civil society organisations have documented cases where labourers, including women and even minors, are forced to work in unsafe conditions without proper safety gear. Frequent accidents, respiratory diseases, and lack of compensation for injuries have worsened the humanitarian crisis.

At the same time, mining activities bring employment and revenue to the region. Thousands of families depend on mining-related jobs, and shutting down operations abruptly could lead to unemployment and unrest. Local political leaders, some with direct business interests, exert pressure on you to adopt a "soft approach" towards the mining companies. Several lower-level officials in the mining and police departments are allegedly complicit, receiving bribes to overlook violations.

The judiciary, acting on petitions from NGOs, has now directed the district administration to submit a comprehensive plan to curb illegal mining. The media has been running campaigns questioning the administration's inaction, putting your office under public scrutiny. However, taking strict action may invite political backlash, threats, and economic disruption.

- Identify the major ethical issues involved in this case.
- How would you balance economic interests, political pressures, and your duty towards environmental protection and labour welfare?
- What measures would you take to ensure accountability and transparency in the administration to curb corruption in this case?
- State the ethical values that should guide you. (250 words)

Approach :

- Briefly describe the situation to establish context.
- Identify and discuss the ethical issues involved.
- Suggest steps to balance economic interests, political pressures, and environmental duty.
- Highlight mechanisms to ensure accountability and transparency.
- Suggest sustainable measures for mining governance.
- State guiding ethical values.
- Conclude with a value-based closure.

Prepare with DrishtiIAS

UPSC
Mains
Test Series
2025



UPSC
Classroom
Courses



IAS Current
Affairs Module
Course



Drishti
Learning
App



Introduction:

As District Magistrate of a mineral-rich tribal district, I face an ethical dilemma between safeguarding the environment and livelihoods versus yielding to political and institutional pressures. The challenge lies in balancing **ecological sustainability, social justice, and economic needs** while upholding **rule of law and administrative integrity**.

Body :**A. Ethical Issues Involved**

- **Conflict between Development and Environmental ethics:** Rampant deforestation, river pollution, and soil degradation violating principles of sustainability and intergenerational equity.
- **Human rights Violations of the Miners:** Unsafe working conditions, child labour, lack of compensation, and exploitation of vulnerable tribal groups.
- **Integrity vs. Corruption:** Officials' collusion with miners through bribery undermining rule of law.
- **Political Pressure vs. Neutrality:** Pressure from leaders to adopt a "soft approach," testing administrative objectivity.
- **Ensuring Public Trust:** Media scrutiny and NGO petitions demand transparency and responsiveness from administration.

B. Balancing Economic Interests, Political Pressures, and Duties

- **Phased Enforcement for Fair Economic Transition:** Regularise legal mining while **gradually curbing illegal practices to prevent sudden unemployment**, demonstrating prudence and fairness.
- **Generating Alternative Livelihoods:** Skill development programs, MGNREGA works, and eco-tourism initiatives reduce reliance on illegal mining, promoting distributive justice, economic rights, and human dignity of vulnerable communities.
- **Ethical Political Navigation and Stakeholder Awareness:** Present data on health and ecological costs to convince stakeholders; frame strict regulation as a long-term governance success.

- **Inclusive Community Participation and Procedural Justice:** Involving tribal councils, NGOs, and local communities in decision-making upholds participatory governance, fairness, and trust, ensuring legitimacy and respect for the rights of affected groups.

C. Ensuring Accountability & Transparency

- **Digital Monitoring:** Use of technology like GPS-enabled transport permits, installing CCTV at mining sites, and drone surveillance to curb malpractices.
- **Independent Audits:** Periodic third-party inspections of mining operations and labour conditions to ensure fairness and objectivity.
- **Public reporting:** Creating an online dashboard listing mining leases, violations, and penalties for grievance redressal.
- **Anti-corruption mechanisms:** Providing Whistle-blower protection, ensuring strict departmental inquiries, and rotation of compromised officials to curb corruption.

D. Ethical Values to Guide Action:

- **Integrity:** Resisting corruption and undue influence.
- **Justice:** Protecting tribal rights and ensuring fair compensation.
- **Environmental stewardship:** Preserving forests, water, and soil.
- **Empathy:** Safeguarding vulnerable communities and labourers.
- **Courage:** Taking tough decisions despite political pressure.
- **Accountability:** Transparent decision-making to build public trust.

Conclusion:

As Mahatma Gandhi said, *"The Earth provides enough to satisfy every man's need, but not every man's greed."* Tackling **illegal mining** is thus an **ethical necessity** to balance **development with sustainability**, protect **tribal livelihoods**, and uphold **justice for future generations**.

**Prepare with DrishtiIAS**

UPSC
Mains
Test Series
2025



UPSC
Classroom
Courses



IAS Current
Affairs Module
Course



Drishti
Learning
App



ESSAY

37. Happiness is a how, not a what; a talent, not an object.
(1200 words)

Introduction:

In the 1940s, **psychiatrist Viktor Frankl**, imprisoned in **Nazi concentration camps**, witnessed **unimaginable horrors**. Stripped of his **possessions, identity**, and even his **family**, he observed that some inmates still found **moments of peace** by sharing a crust of bread, comforting another, or simply **contemplating a sunrise** beyond the barbed wire. Frankl later wrote, *"Everything can be taken from a man but one thing: the last of human freedoms — to choose one's **attitude** in any given set of circumstances."* Despite the darkness, some chose **hope over despair**. This reveals a profound truth — **happiness** is not about **what** we have, but **how** we live and respond. It is not an **object**, but a cultivated **inner capacity** — a **talent**.

Body :

Understanding the Topic

Keywords:

- **Happiness:** A subjective state of well-being and contentment.
- **How, not a what:** Focuses on the *means/process*, not the *end or possession*.
- **Talent, not an object:** Suggests happiness is a *developable capacity or skill*, not a *material thing*.

Philosophical Perspective

Eastern Thoughts:

- **Buddhism:** Happiness arises from detachment, mindfulness, and the Eightfold Path.
- **Bhagavad Gita:** Emphasizes 'Nishkama Karma' — doing duty without expecting fruits.
- **Jainism and Yoga Philosophy:** Stress on mental discipline, moderation, and inner peace.

Western Thoughts:

- **Aristotle's Eudaimonia:** True happiness is found in virtue and the actualization of human potential.
- **Stoicism (Epictetus, Marcus Aurelius):** Happiness is achieved by controlling one's response to external events.

- **Immanuel Kant:** Morality and happiness lie in intention and duty, not in consequences.

Psychological and Scientific Understanding

- **Positive Psychology (Martin Seligman):** PERMA model — Positive emotion, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, Accomplishment.
- **Hedonic vs Eudaimonic Happiness:** Pleasure vs purpose.
- **Neuroscience Insight:** Dopamine from fleeting pleasure vs serotonin from sustained well-being.
- **Flow State (Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi):** Happiness comes from deep immersion in meaningful activity.

Happiness: Not a Product, But a Process

- **Consumerism vs Contentment:** Constant chasing of goods leads to adaptation and dissatisfaction (hedonic treadmill).
- **Social Comparison Trap:** Relative deprivation affects subjective happiness.
- **Experiences over Objects:** Studies show experiences (travel, learning) yield more lasting happiness than material purchases.

Talent of Being Happy: Building Inner Strength

- **Resilience:** Ability to bounce back from adversity.
- **Mindfulness and Meditation:** Awareness of the present moment without judgment.
- **Gratitude Practice:** Daily acknowledgement of positive aspects fosters joy.
- **Self-Compassion:** Being kind to oneself during failures.
- **Emotional Intelligence:** Managing one's emotions effectively enhances satisfaction.

Real-Life Examples:

- **Nelson Mandela:** Found meaning even in decades of imprisonment.
- **Helen Keller:** Found joy despite sensory limitations through purpose and learning.
- **Ordinary people in crisis (e.g., Kerala floods volunteers):** Derived happiness from helping others.

Prepare with DrishtiIAS

UPSC
Mains
Test Series
2025



UPSC
Classroom
Courses



IAS Current
Affairs Module
Course



Drishti
Learning
App



Contemporary Challenges to Happiness

- **Digital Age Distractions:** Social media leads to dopamine-driven satisfaction but erodes long-term contentment.
- **Workplace Stress and Burnout:** Overwork undermines well-being.
- **Urban Isolation:** Fragmented lifestyles reduce social bonds.

Way Forward: Cultivating Happiness as a Life Skill

- **Interpersonal Relationships:** Happiness increases when shared (empathy, love, bonding).
- **Service to Others:** Altruism, community service, and ethical living foster deeper happiness.
- **Social Capital:** Societies with trust, cohesion, and justice rank high in happiness indices (e.g., Nordic countries).
- **Curriculum Integration:** Life skills, mindfulness, and moral education.
- **Corporate Responsibility:** Employee wellness, meaningful work culture.
- **Public Health Approach:** Access to mental healthcare and community engagement programs.
 - ◆ Gross National Happiness (Bhutan)-centric growth.
 - ◆ India's Wellbeing Budgeting Initiatives (e.g., Aspirational Districts, National Mental Health Programme).

Conclusion:

Happiness is neither a **possession** to be acquired nor a **destination** to be reached; it is a **way of being** that is **lived, practiced, and cultivated** every day. As **Mahatma Gandhi** rightly said, *"Happiness is when what you think, what you say, and what you do are in harmony,"* reminding us that **inner alignment**, not **material accumulation**, is the true source of joy. In a world facing rising **stress, disconnection**, and **consumerism**, there is a pressing need to redefine success through the lens of **well-being, virtue, and purpose**.

38. In automating convenience, we have outsourced our conscience. (1200 words)

Introduction:

In 2017, a tragic incident in Jharkhand drew national attention: an 11-year-old girl, Santoshi Kumari, reportedly

died of starvation because her family's **ration card was not linked to Aadhaar**, and the automated Public Distribution System (PDS) had denied them food for months. The biometric-based system was introduced for **efficiency and transparency**, but it left no room for human discretion when technical mismatches occurred. No official intervened, no accountability followed — the machine had simply "followed rules." This heart-wrenching case reveals a deeper truth: in our drive to automate public services for **convenience**, we risk **outsourcing moral responsibility** to systems incapable of **compassion**.

The statement *"In automating convenience, we have outsourced our conscience"* invites a critical reflection on how **technological solutions**, when devoid of **human oversight**, can lead to the erosion of **ethical engagement**.

Body :

Understanding the Key Terms:

- **"Automating convenience":** Increasing reliance on technology (AI, algorithms, digital systems) to make life easier.
- **"Outsourced our conscience":** Delegating moral responsibility and ethical thinking to machines, systems, or protocols.

Evolution of Automation and Convenience

- **Brief history:** Industrial Revolution → Digital Revolution → AI era.
- **Examples:**
 - ◆ Home automation, self-driving cars, smart assistants.
 - ◆ Algorithms in hiring, policing, and content curation.
- **Benefits:** Time-saving, reduced human effort, and precision.

The Erosion of Conscience

- **Delegated decisions:** Machines now decide what we read, buy, or even who gets a loan or job.
 - ◆ This reliance transforms conscience from a guiding force to a background process- present but passive.
- **Surveillance Capitalism:** Tech giants commodify personal data by tracking user behavior to predict and manipulate choices—not for public good, but for profit.

Prepare with DrishtiIAS

UPSC
Mains
Test Series
2025



UPSC
Classroom
Courses



IAS Current
Affairs Module
Course



Drishti
Learning
App



- **Ethical disengagement:** Algorithms prioritize profit or speed, not values.
 - ◆ Example: Social media platforms amplify hate speech for engagement.
- **Lack of human accountability:**
 - ◆ AI in warfare (e.g., autonomous drones)
 - ◆ AI in judicial decisions (e.g., COMPAS system in the U.S.)
- **Impact:** Automation often removes the “human moment” where conscience would otherwise intervene.

Real-World Illustrations

- **Healthcare:**
 - ◆ AI diagnosing patients — but who is responsible for a misdiagnosis?
- **Warfare and Surveillance:**
 - ◆ Drones are conducting airstrikes without human verification.
 - ◆ Facial recognition systems are leading to biased arrests.
- **Daily Life & Social Media:**
 - ◆ Newsfeeds are determined by algorithms, reinforcing echo chambers.
 - ◆ Automated customer service is denying essential services.
- In each of these, **efficiency trumps empathy**, and **convenience replaces critical thinking**.

Philosophical and Ethical Reflections

- **Immanuel Kant:** Emphasized the moral imperative of treating humans as ends, not means — automation often violates this.
- **Hannah Arendt:** “Banality of evil” — when people stop questioning and simply follow systems.
- **Gandhian Thought:** Human conscience and moral restraint are essential for societal harmony.

Way Forward

- **Reclaim moral agency:** Use tech as a tool, not a substitute for judgment (**Techno-moral Responsibility**).
- **Policy and regulation:** Mandate ethical guidelines for AI deployment.

- **Ethical literacy:** Integrate moral reasoning in STEM education.
- **Civic responsibility:** Demand accountability from tech creators and users alike.
- **Not anti-technology**, but pro-ethical innovation.
 - ◆ Examples of ethical AI frameworks (e.g., EU AI Act, UNESCO’s AI Ethics guidelines).
- Emphasize **human-in-the-loop systems**: combining automation with human oversight.
 - ◆ Krishna acts as the “ethical algorithm” in the Mahabharata — intervening not based on cold logic but on yukti (wisdom), bhava (intent), and dharma (righteousness).
- Suggest ethical audits, algorithm transparency, and moral education for developers.

Conclusion:

The march of technology has undeniably transformed human life, offering **unprecedented ease, speed, and precision**. As we continue to automate decision-making in governance, justice, welfare, and even warfare, it becomes evident that we are at risk of replacing **human empathy with mechanical indifference trading Comfort at the Cost of Character**. Automation without accountability creates systems that may function efficiently but lack **compassion, context, and moral reflection**.

It is essential, therefore, to build a future where **technology is guided by ethics**, not isolated from it. The **human conscience** must remain central, steering innovation toward **inclusion, dignity, and justice**. As Mahatma Gandhi profoundly said,

“There is more to life than increasing its speed.”

39. Live as if you were to die tomorrow. Learn as if you were to live forever. (1200 words)

Quotes to Enrich Your Essay:

- ◆ **Albert Einstein:** “Once you stop learning, you start dying.”
- ◆ **Steve Jobs:** “Your work is going to fill a large part of your life, and the only way to be truly satisfied is to do what you believe is great work. And the only way to do great work is to love what you do.”
- ◆ **Seneca:** “While we are postponing, life speeds by.”

Prepare with DrishtiIAS

UPSC
Mains
Test Series
2025



UPSC
Classroom
Courses



IAS Current
Affairs Module
Course



Drishti
Learning
App



● Theoretical and Philosophical Dimensions:

- ◆ **Carpe Diem vs. Long-term Growth:** The quote urges one to embrace the transient nature of life, urging the reader to seize the moment while also placing immense value on learning.

- It is the balance between living fully in the present while preparing for the future that defines wisdom.

- ◆ **Philosophical Reflection on Mortality:** The recognition that life is fleeting often propels individuals toward growth, learning, and self-actualization.

- Philosophy, especially **Stoicism**, teaches that **one's attitude toward mortality** can shape a life of virtue and knowledge.

- ◆ **Lifelong Learning:** The concept that learning doesn't end with age or circumstance but continues throughout life can be linked to theories of personal development and intellectual humility.

● Psychological and Cognitive Insights:

- ◆ **Motivation Theory: Self-determination theory and growth mindset** suggest that intrinsic motivation to learn leads to personal growth, and recognizing life's impermanence makes individuals more likely to take risks and embrace opportunities for learning.

- ◆ **Existential Psychology:** Existentialists argue that **our awareness of death compels us to create meaning through actions and decisions**, pushing us toward constant self-improvement.

● Historical and Contemporary Examples:

- ◆ **Leonardo da Vinci:** As a polymath, Da Vinci demonstrated the importance of **both living in the moment (through his art and inventions)** and seeking perpetual knowledge. His notebooks reveal a mind that never ceased exploring.

- ◆ **Steve Jobs:** His approach to business and innovation reflected his drive to learn continuously while pushing forward ideas that had an immense impact on the world.

- ◆ **Impact of Learning on Personal Development:** In today's fast-paced world, learning should be seen as a lifelong commitment that keeps individuals relevant, adaptive, and fulfilled.

- The internet has revolutionized the ability to learn and access knowledge, making it easier to "learn forever" through online resources and courses.

40. We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act but a habit. (1200 words)

● Quotes to Enrich Your Essay:

- ◆ **Will Durant:** "We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit." **(the quote in question)**

- ◆ **Confucius:** "The superior man is modest in his speech but exceeds in his actions."

● Theoretical and Philosophical Dimensions:

- ◆ **Habit and Character Development: Aristotle's concept of "ethos"** implies that repeated actions form a person's character.

- **Excellence**, according to him, is not a one-off achievement but a consistent practice.

- ◆ **Philosophical Underpinning:** The notion that excellence is a habit connects to virtue ethics, which teaches that good habits shape one's moral character.

- **Repetition leads to mastery**, whether in skill development, ethical behavior, or wisdom.

- ◆ **Self-Discipline and Willpower:** The emphasis on repetition connects to modern theories of self-control, where overcoming short-term gratification in favor of long-term goals is central to personal success.

● Psychological and Cognitive Insights:

- ◆ **Cognitive Behavioral Theory (CBT):** CBT posits that **habits shape thought patterns**.

- Excellence isn't just about performing actions but about cultivating a mindset that fosters positive behaviors.

Prepare with DrishtiIAS

UPSC
Mains
Test Series
2025



UPSC
Classroom
Courses



IAS Current
Affairs Module
Course



Drishti
Learning
App



◆ **Habit Formation:** Psychology indicates that it takes **roughly 21 days to form a new habit**.

- Once ingrained, these habits become a part of our identity, and our repeated actions determine our trajectory.

● **Historical and Contemporary Examples:**

◆ **Michael Phelps:** The most decorated Olympian with 28 medals, trained relentlessly, even on holidays, **turning swimming into a daily habit that drove his unmatched success**.

◆ **Mahatma Gandhi:** Gandhi's life is a testimony to the power of consistent non-violence and truth.

- His actions were the product of deeply ingrained habits, making excellence in his philosophy a daily effort.

● **Contemporary Implications:**

◆ **Importance in Career and Skill Development:** In a competitive world, individuals who focus on consistent small improvements become experts in their fields.

- Developing habits like **reading, practicing, or networking** daily leads to a superior level of competence.

◆ **Health and Fitness:** The shift toward wellness emphasizes that health isn't about drastic changes, **but repeated, sustainable habits in diet, exercise, and mental well-being**.

◆ **Technology and Innovation:** Tech giants such as **Bill Gates and Elon Musk** emphasize discipline and the importance of repetitive hard work in achieving excellence in the tech industry.

41. The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice.

Introduction:

In **1965**, during the peak of the **Civil Rights Movement** in the **United States**, **Martin Luther King Jr.** addressed a crowd in **Montgomery**. People who had suffered centuries of **slavery, racial discrimination, and humiliation** stood weary but hopeful. King reminded them with timeless words: *"The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice."*

His message was not of instant triumph, but of **patient faith** — that **history**, though slow, inevitably bends towards what is **right and just**.

This profound insight is not confined to one nation's struggle. From **India's independence movement** to the **dismantling of apartheid** in **South Africa**, and even the ongoing quest for **climate justice** and **gender justice**, **history** reminds us that while **injustice** often appears **entrenched**, **humanity's conscience** and **perseverance** steadily bend the arc towards **justice**.

Body:

Philosophical and Ethical Foundations

- **Moral Universe** → refers to the collective conscience of humanity.
- **Justice** → ultimate moral goal, as seen in Plato's *Republic*, Aristotle's *Justice as virtue*, and Rawls' *Justice as fairness*.
- **Ethical dimension:** Virtue ethics (justice as cardinal virtue), Utilitarianism (justice promotes maximum happiness), Gandhian ethics (ahimsa as path to justice).

Historical Illustrations of the Arc Bending to Justice

- **Abolition of Slavery** → Though it persisted for centuries, the world moved towards abolition.
- **Decolonization** → India's independence, African liberation, showing justice delayed but ultimately achieved.
- **Civil Rights Movement (USA)** → MLK himself as an example of the arc bending toward racial justice.
- **Fall of Apartheid in South Africa** → Mandela's leadership in aligning the moral universe with justice.

Indian Context

- **Freedom Struggle** → from 1857 to 1947, demonstrating moral resilience. Gandhi's *satyagraha* showed patience and moral conviction.
- **Social Justice** → abolition of untouchability (Article 17), reservations for Scheduled Castes/Tribes, women's empowerment.
- **Judicial interventions** → Kesavananda Bharati (Basic Structure), decriminalization of Section 377 (LGBTQ+ rights), Right to Privacy.

Prepare with DrishtiIAS

UPSC
Mains
Test Series
2025



UPSC
Classroom
Courses



IAS Current
Affairs Module
Course



Drishti
Learning
App



- **Grassroots justice movements** → Chipko, Narmada Bachao Andolan, RTI movement.

Contemporary Global Relevance

- **Climate Justice** → Global South demanding equity in climate negotiations, though slow, shows an arc bending toward environmental justice.
- **Gender Justice** → #MeToo movement, increasing representation of women.
- **Digital Justice** → debates on privacy, AI ethics, data protection.
- **International Law** → ICC, UN declarations, though slow, bring hope for human rights justice globally.

Counter-Arguments (The Arc is Not Always Smooth)

- **Delays in Justice** → "Justice delayed is justice denied."
- **Rise of authoritarianism** → suppression of freedoms in some nations.
- **Economic inequality** → growing divide despite moral progress.
- **Climate change injustice** → wealthy nations continue exploitation.

Role of Institutions and Human Agency

- **Democratic institutions** → legislatures, judiciary, media uphold justice.
- **Civil society & movements** → pressure governments to align policies with justice.
- **Global frameworks** → UN, WTO reforms, Paris Agreement.
- **Individual responsibility** → ethics in personal conduct and leadership.

Way Forward

- Justice requires **patience, persistence, and collective action**.
- Need to strengthen the **rule of law, democracy, and human rights institutions**.
- Use of **technology for justice** → e-courts, digital inclusion.
- Promote **global solidarity** → South-South cooperation, equitable development.
- Build a culture of **ethical leadership** where justice becomes a lived value.

Conclusion:

Justice is not merely a promise of the past but the **compass of humanity's future**. The arc of the moral universe may be long, but its bending depends on our collective will to nurture truth, compassion, and equality. For nations like India, with its civilizational ethos of "**Satyameva Jayate**" and constitutional pledge of justice for all, the challenge is to transform moral vision into living reality — in governance, society, and global leadership.

If humanity can align its scientific progress with ethical responsibility, its economic growth with social equity, and its political power with universal dignity, then the arc will not only bend toward justice but also illuminate a **just, inclusive, and sustainable future** for generations to come.

42. The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing.

Introduction :

In **1930s Germany**, as **Hitler** rose to power, most **ordinary citizens** — **teachers, workers, lawyers, even clergy** — chose **silence**, believing **politics** was not their concern. Their **inaction** gave space for **tyranny** to grow, leading to one of history's **darkest chapters**. **Edmund Burke's** timeless words — "*The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing*" — capture this truth with **piercing clarity**. **Evil** rarely succeeds because of its strength alone; it thrives when **apathy, fear, or indifference** paralyse those who know what is **right**.

This idea resonates across **ages**: whether in **colonial India, apartheid South Africa**, or modern struggles against **corruption, injustice and climate crisis**, the lesson remains the same — **silence** in the face of **wrong** is itself a form of **complicity**.

Body :

Philosophical and Ethical Foundations

- **Moral philosophy:**
 - ◆ **Aristotle:** virtue requires action, not passivity.
 - ◆ **Kant:** duty to act in accordance with moral law.
 - ◆ **Gandhi:** Non-cooperation with evil is as much a duty as cooperation with good.

Prepare with DrishtiIAS

UPSC
Mains
Test Series
2025



UPSC
Classroom
Courses



IAS Current
Affairs Module
Course



Drishti
Learning
App



Historical Illustrations

- **Rise of Hitler and Nazism:** The indifference of the global community allowed atrocities to grow.
- **Apartheid in South Africa :** persisted because the majority remained silent until global and local resistance intensified.
- **Civil Rights Movement in the US:** Silence allowed racism to continue, but protests, Martin Luther King Jr.'s leadership, and legal victories broke it and brought change.
- **Indian Freedom Struggle:** Gandhi mobilized ordinary citizens, breaking the silence of a colonized population.

Indian Context

- **Social reformers** like Raja Ram Mohan Roy and Ambedkar acted against entrenched evils like sati, untouchability, and caste discrimination.
- **Constitutional ethos:** Directive Principles, Fundamental Duties — urging citizens to actively work for justice.
- **Public apathy** in modern India: corruption, communal violence, and environmental degradation thrive when citizens remain passive.
- **Example:** Nirbhaya case protests (2012) — collective action vs silence.

Contemporary Global Relevance

- **Climate change:** Inaction of leaders and public complacency allows ecological destruction.
- **Digital misinformation and hate speech** thrive when responsible voices remain silent.
- **War and humanitarian crises:** e.g., global silence during the Rwandan genocide, current conflicts.
- **Gender inequality** and harassment: silence perpetuates discrimination.

Counter-Arguments & Nuance

- Sometimes **silence is strategic:** diplomacy, negotiation, or Gandhian non-violent resistance.
- Not all evils can be tackled by individuals — it requires systemic action.
- Distinguish between **responsible silence** (to reflect or prevent escalation) and **complicit silence** (that enables evil).

Role of Institutions and Individuals

- **Institutions:** the judiciary, media, and civil society must prevent the normalization of evil.
- **Citizens:** vigilance, activism, whistleblowing, voting responsibly.
- **Leaders:** ethical leadership, moral courage to speak truth to power.

Way Forward

- Cultivating **moral courage** in education and civic life.
- Strengthening **accountability mechanisms**.
- Encouraging **participatory democracy**, active citizenship.
- Promoting **whistleblower protection**, RTI, and **transparency** to empower good individuals.

Conclusion:

Evil triumphs not by its strength but through the **silence, fear, and apathy** of the **righteous**. As **Hannah Arendt** observed, “*Most evil is done by people who never make up their minds to be good or evil.*” The future of **justice, freedom, and human dignity** depends on **active citizenship** and **moral courage**. When **good men and women act**, the arc of **history** bends firmly toward **justice and hope**.

43. The truth will set you free, but first it will make you miserable. (1200 words)

Introduction:

In **1994**, **South Africa** was transitioning from decades of **apartheid** to **democracy**. To heal the nation, **Nelson Mandela** and **Desmond Tutu** spearheaded the **Truth and Reconciliation Commission**. **Victims** and **perpetrators** alike were called to **testify** openly about the **atrocities** committed.

The hearings were deeply **painful**—**survivors** relived **trauma**, and perpetrators faced **public shame**. Yet, this **bitter confrontation** with **truth** became the foundation for **forgiveness** and **reconciliation**. The nation realised that only by enduring the **misery of truth** could it hope to achieve **freedom** from the cycles of **hatred** and **vengeance**.

Body :

Philosophical Dimension

- **Socrates:** Advocated “unexamined life is not worth living” — truth-seeking caused his death, but his ideas liberated thought.

Prepare with DrishtiIAS

UPSC
Mains
Test Series
2025



UPSC
Classroom
Courses



IAS Current
Affairs Module
Course



Drishti
Learning
App



- **Nietzsche** Spoke of “the burden of truth,” requiring courage to endure uncomfortable realities.
- **Gandhi’s Satya (Truth):** His insistence on truth in public life caused suffering (miserable for British rulers and even his followers), but ultimately liberated India.

Psychological & Individual Dimension

- **Personal growth** requires confronting harsh truths (e.g., addiction recovery, failure in exams). Pain comes first, but acceptance leads to freedom from denial.
- **Cognitive dissonance:** People resist truth because it clashes with comfort zones, but acceptance brings peace of mind.
 - ◆ **Example:** Victims of trauma (abuse, corruption scandals) face misery in acknowledging reality, yet healing begins only after the truth is confronted.

Social & Ethical Dimension

- **Social Reform:** Raja Ram Mohan Roy fought against sati — initial resistance and misery for orthodox groups, but society was freed from a regressive practice.
- **Whistleblowing:** Edward Snowden and Julian Assange revealed uncomfortable truths; misery for states but advanced debates on freedom and privacy.
- **Justice:** Courts rely on truth; though painful for perpetrators and sometimes victims, truth enables reconciliation. (South Africa’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission).

Political Dimension

- Leaders who hide behind propaganda may sustain illusions briefly, but truth eventually emerges (e.g., Vietnam War, Watergate scandal).
- India’s **RTI Act:** Exposed uncomfortable truths about governance, initially resisted by bureaucracy, but empowered citizens.
 - ◆ **Example:** Emergency (1975–77) — the truth of authoritarianism was bitter, but acknowledging it ensured the restoration of democracy.

Scientific & Technological Dimension

- Scientific truths often cause initial discomfort (Darwin’s theory challenged religious beliefs). But once accepted, they freed mankind from ignorance.

- **Climate Change:** A bitter truth resisted by vested interests, but acknowledging it is essential for survival.

Contemporary Global Dimension

- **COVID-19 pandemic:** The Truth of unprepared health systems was miserable, but facing it accelerated reforms and vaccine development.
- **Gender Equality:** Bitter truths about patriarchy cause discomfort, but reforms bring social liberation.
- **AI & Technology:** The Truth of job disruptions is painful, but acceptance drives re-skilling and innovation.

Counter Perspective

- Sometimes, truth can destabilize societies (e.g., communal tensions when historical truths are politicized).
- Therefore, truth must be coupled with **prudence, compassion, and responsibility** in disclosure.

Conclusion:

Truth is not merely a philosophical ideal but the **bedrock of freedom, justice, and moral progress**. While its revelation may initially cause **discomfort and resistance**, it eventually **purifies, liberates, and strengthens** both individuals and societies. A nation that dares to confront uncomfortable truths is one that charts the course toward **authentic democracy, ethical governance, and inclusive development**.

As inscribed at the heart of our national ethos, “*Satyamev Jayate*” — *Truth Alone Triumphs* — reminds us that enduring freedom lies not in escaping misery, but in **embracing truth as the ultimate emancipator**.

44. The purpose of life is to find your gift. The meaning of life is to give it away. (1200 words)

Introduction:

When **Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam** was working on the SLV-3 mission in the 1970s, the first launch failed. The entire nation was disappointed, and Kalam himself felt broken. But his mentor, **Satish Dhawan**, publicly took the blame and shielded the young scientist. Later, when the mission succeeded, Dhawan gave full credit to Kalam. That moment ignited in Kalam not only the drive to excel in science—his **gift**—but also the determination to dedicate it selflessly to the service of the nation. His scientific brilliance culminated not just in missiles and space technology but in his role as the “**People’s President**,” inspiring millions of youth.

Prepare with DrishtiIAS

UPSC
Mains
Test Series
2025



UPSC
Classroom
Courses



IAS Current
Affairs Module
Course



Drishti
Learning
App



This story reflects the idea that the **purpose of life lies in discovering one's talent or gift**—for Kalam, his scientific acumen. But the **meaning of life emerges when that gift is given away selflessly**, empowering others and contributing to the collective good. Just as Picasso observed, **“The meaning of life is to find your gift. The purpose of life is to give it away.”**

Body:

Philosophical Dimensions

- **Greek Philosophy:** Aristotle's idea of *Eudaimonia* (flourishing through virtues).
- **Indian Philosophy:** Concept of *Dharma* and *Nishkama Karma* in Bhagavad Gita — true meaning of life lies in selfless service.
- **Existentialist View:** Viktor Frankl — finding meaning through purpose and service to others.
- **Gandhi:** “The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others.”

Spiritual and Religious Dimensions

- **Christianity:** Parable of talents — gifts must be used in the service of others.
- **Buddhism:** Compassion (*Karunā*) is considered a **core purpose of life** and an essential virtue for liberation.
- **Hinduism:** *Seva* and *Lokasangraha* (welfare of all).
- **Sufi and Bhakti traditions in India:** Sharing love and devotion as life's meaning.

Psychological Perspective

- **Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs:** Self-actualisation is discovering one's gift; self-transcendence is giving it away.
- **Positive Psychology:** Personal strengths (creativity, empathy, leadership) gain meaning only when shared.
- **Emotional Intelligence in leadership:** Channelising personal talents for the welfare of the community.

Sociological and Ethical Dimensions

- Society thrives when individuals contribute their unique abilities.
- **Social contract theory:** Individuals owe part of themselves to the community.
- **Virtue ethics:** Character is built when talents are exercised for the collective good.
- **Ubuntu philosophy (Africa):** “I am because we are.”

Historical and Contemporary Illustrations

- **Mahatma Gandhi:** Found his gift in *truth and non-violence*; gave it away as India's freedom struggle.
- **B. R. Ambedkar:** His intellect was his gift; he gave it away through Constitution-making.
- **Steve Jobs:** Gift of innovation, gave it away by transforming technology for global society.
- **Ordinary Citizens:** Teachers, nurses, volunteers during COVID-19 — embody the meaning of giving.

Contemporary Relevance

- In an age of **consumerism and individualism**, discovering personal talents without social sharing leads to emptiness.
- **Knowledge economy:** Innovation has meaning only when accessible (open-source movement).
- **Climate change:** Sustainability demands giving back to Earth.
- **Globalisation:** An interconnected world needs talent to be shared beyond borders.

Counter-View and Balance

- Some argue life's purpose is personal happiness, not social responsibility.
- But without sharing, personal happiness is incomplete — it becomes selfish hedonism.
- True fulfillment lies in a balance between self-care and self-giving.

Way Forward

- Education must help students discover their unique gifts.
- Social institutions must encourage service and community responsibility.
- Policies promoting volunteering, social entrepreneurship, and philanthropy.
- Cultivating empathy, ethics, and compassion in public life.

Conclusion:

The **purpose of life** is not exhausted in the **search for one's gift**, but in the **sharing of that gift** for the greater good. As Tagore reminds us, “I slept and dreamt that life was joy. I awoke and saw that life was service. I acted and

Prepare with DrishtiIAS

UPSC
Mains
Test Series
2025



UPSC
Classroom
Courses



IAS Current
Affairs Module
Course



Drishti
Learning
App



behold, service was joy." When talents are **aligned with compassion**, they become instruments of **justice, harmony, and collective progress**. Humanity advances not through isolated achievements but through **shared contributions**.

45. Our greatest glory is not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall. (1200 words)

Introduction:

In 1969, after years of effort, ISRO's first experimental rocket launch from Thumba failed within seconds. For a newly independent nation struggling with poverty, this was a moment of despair. Yet, under the leadership of visionaries like **Dr. Vikram Sarabhai and later Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam**, these failures became stepping stones to success, culminating in India's reputation today as a global space power.

This journey illustrates a profound truth: **setbacks are not the end of the road; they are catalysts for resilience and eventual glory**. The essence of life and progress lies not in an illusion of perfection but in the courage to rise stronger after every fall.

Body:

● Philosophical Dimension

- ◆ **Aristotle: Defined virtue as the ability to act rightly amid adversity**—greatness comes from habituated resilience, not error-free living.
- ◆ **John Stuart Mill:** In his defense of liberty, argued that confronting errors strengthens truth; thus, failure sharpens moral and intellectual growth.
- ◆ **Sri Aurobindo:** Spoke of evolution as a journey of ascent through trials, where each fall is part of a larger spiritual progress.

● Psychological & Individual Dimension

- ◆ **Albert Bandura's self-efficacy theory:** Confidence is built through overcoming challenges rather than avoiding them.
- ◆ **Victor Frankl (Holocaust survivor):** Emphasised that meaning arises not from comfort but from how we endure suffering and rise beyond it. **Example:** Aspirants preparing for competitive exams often face repeated failures; yet resilience transforms setbacks into stepping stones.

● Social & Ethical Dimension

- ◆ **Jyotiba Phule and Savitribai Phule:** Faced humiliation while advocating women's education, but their persistence laid the foundation for modern social justice.
- ◆ **Martin Luther King Jr.:** Jailed and vilified, yet his resilience fueled the American civil rights movement.
- ◆ **Ethical progress in society emerges** when individuals and groups endure short-term defeats but rise with stronger conviction.

● Political Dimension

- ◆ **Nelson Mandela:** Spent 27 years in prison; **his rise thereafter unified South Africa and dismantled apartheid**.
- ◆ **Indian democracy:** Faced the **"fall" of Emergency (1975–77)**, but rebounded with people's mandate restoring constitutional freedoms.
- ◆ **Post-partition India:** Amidst refugee crises and economic collapse, India rose to establish democratic institutions and a stable polity.

● Scientific & Technological Dimension

- ◆ **Marie Curie:** Faced repeated experimental failures, gender bias, and poverty, yet her perseverance won two Nobel Prizes.
- ◆ **Wright Brothers:** **Dozens of failed attempts preceded** the invention of powered flight, revolutionizing transport.

● Contemporary & Global Dimension

- ◆ **Covid-19 pandemic:** Nations failed initially, but resilience through collaboration produced vaccines in record time.
- ◆ **Climate change:** Humanity faltered in stewardship of nature, but renewable technologies and international agreements represent attempts to rise.

● Counter-Perspective

- ◆ **Mahatma Buddha:** Taught the Middle Path—**unnecessary suffering should be avoided**; glory is not in falling recklessly but in mindful perseverance.

Prepare with DrishtiIAS

UPSC
Mains
Test Series
2025



UPSC
Classroom
Courses



IAS Current
Affairs Module
Course



Drishti
Learning
App



- ◆ Certain failures (**nuclear accidents, genocides, financial crashes**) cause irreversible harm; foresight and prudence are essential.
- ◆ Hence, while rising after falls is noble, **responsible action to minimize avoidable falls** is equally important.

Conclusion:

Resilience is the **defining mark of greatness—whether of an individual confronting personal struggles, a society advancing reforms, or a nation rising from crises.** To stumble is human, but to rise again is transformative. India's history itself reflects this: from colonial subjugation to freedom, from poverty to progress, from failures in science to global recognition. As **A.P.J. Abdul Kalam** reminded the youth, **“If you fail, never give up because F.A.I.L. means ‘First Attempt In Learning’.”** True glory, therefore, lies not in being untouched by defeat, but in having the courage to transform every fall into a higher ascent.

46. Satisfaction lies in the effort, not in the attainment. Full effort is full victory. (1200 words)

Introduction:

In 1931, while addressing students in London, **Mahatma Gandhi** remarked that **“Satisfaction lies in the effort, not in the attainment. Full effort is full victory.”** For him, the journey of **Satyagraha** was not measured by immediate results but by the purity of means and tireless effort toward truth. **History proved him right—India's independence was not achieved in a single campaign but through decades of sustained effort, sacrifice, and resilience.** The statement highlights that true success is not merely about outcomes, which may or may not be in our control, but about the integrity, consistency, and wholeheartedness of our efforts.

● Philosophical Dimension

- ◆ **Immanuel Kant:** Moral worth lies in the intention and duty, not in the consequence—aligns with effort over attainment.
- ◆ **Bhagavad Gita:** **“Karmanye vadhikaraste ma phaleshu kadachana”** — one is entitled to action, not to the fruits.

- ◆ **Swami Vivekananda:** Emphasized relentless effort and service as victory itself, regardless of outcomes.

● Psychological & Individual Dimension

- ◆ **Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan):** Motivation and satisfaction come from intrinsic effort, not extrinsic rewards.
- ◆ **Abraham Maslow:** Self-actualization arises from pursuing growth and effortful striving, not merely external attainment.
- ◆ **Other Examples:** A student preparing for exams may fail initially, but the discipline and effort bring self-confidence and inner satisfaction.

● Social & Ethical Dimension

- ◆ **Jyotiba Phule and Savitribai Phule:** They faced hostility but found fulfillment in their untiring efforts for education.
- ◆ **Mother Teresa:** She did not “end” poverty, but found victory in her ceaseless service.
- ◆ **Ethics of Effort:** Society progresses when people focus on duty-driven effort rather than immediate reward.

● Political Dimension

- ◆ **Mahatma Gandhi:** His struggles often led to setbacks (e.g., **suspension of Non-Cooperation**), yet the moral victory lay in the purity of effort.
- ◆ **Democracy in India:** Elections may bring alternating winners and losers, but the collective effort to uphold democratic institutions is the real triumph.

● Scientific & Technological Dimension

- ◆ **Marie Curie:** Her painstaking experiments often failed, but the effort itself advanced science.
- ◆ **Research Culture:** Scientific pursuit values rigorous effort and experimentation more than immediate discovery.

● Contemporary & Global Dimension

- ◆ **Climate change action:** Immediate results are slow, but every effort—tree planting, renewable energy, global negotiations—counts as progress.

Prepare with DrishtiIAS

UPSC
Mains
Test Series
2025



UPSC
Classroom
Courses



IAS Current
Affairs Module
Course



Drishti
Learning
App



- ◆ **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):** May not all be attained by 2030, but the effort itself strengthens global cooperation.

- **Counter-Perspective**

- ◆ Outcomes cannot be ignored: Soldiers' effort is noble, but without strategic results, nations may suffer.
- ◆ In governance, efficiency demands measurable results—effort alone cannot justify resource use.
- ◆ Hence, while effort is a moral and personal victory, **attainment is still necessary in certain pragmatic contexts.**

Conclusion:

True satisfaction flows not from fleeting achievements but from the integrity of effort. Attainments are often beyond our control, shaped by circumstances, chance, and time. But effort—honest, full, and wholehearted—remains in our hands, shaping both our character and our destiny. As **A.P.J. Abdul Kalam** reminded the youth: *"Dreams transform into thoughts, and thoughts into action."* Even if dreams are not fully attained, the striving itself is transformative. Thus, **full effort is indeed full victory**, for it dignifies both success and failure and ensures that the journey itself is as meaningful as the destination.



Prepare with DrishtiIAS

UPSC
Mains
Test Series
2025



UPSC
Classroom
Courses



IAS Current
Affairs Module
Course



Drishti
Learning
App

