



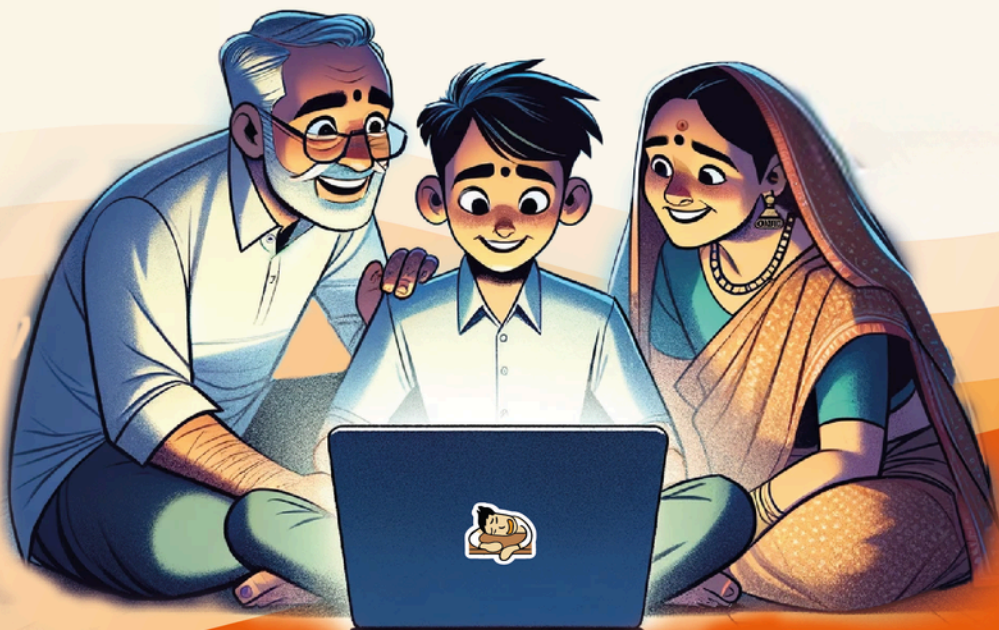
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2021

General Studies Paper 1



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Transform Your Preparation into Your Success Strategy

✗ "I solve PYQs but still struggle in mock exam"

Your Problem: You're treating PYQs like MCQs - solving for the sake of solving without strategic analysis.

Strategic Solution: After solving each question, spend 10 minutes analyzing: What was the examiner testing? Which keywords were crucial? How can I improve my answer structure? Create a "mistakes point list" to track recurring weaknesses.



"I can't finish questions within time limits"

Your Problem: You know the content but struggle with time management and answer structuring under pressure.

Time-Bound Practice: Set strict timers - 7 minutes for 10-mark questions, 12 minutes for 15-mark questions. Practice writing concise, impactful answers. Use bullet points and subheadings to save time while maintaining clarity.



"My answers lack depth and examples"

Your Problem: Your answers are generic and don't stand out among thousands of similar responses.

Content Enhancement: For each PYQ, create a "example bank" - collect 2-3 specific case studies, data points, or contemporary examples. Practice weaving these naturally into your answers to demonstrate comprehensive understanding.



"I don't know which topics to prioritize"

Your Problem: Without pattern analysis, you're studying everything equally instead of focusing on high-weightage areas.

Smart Analysis: Create a frequency chart of topics from last 7 years. Identify recurring themes and question patterns. Allocate 60% of your time to high-frequency topics, 40% to emerging trends. Also Sleepy Classes has a video on complete pattern analysis of UPSC mains.

⚠ Critical Mistake to Avoid

Don't just read solved answers and move on. The real learning happens when YOU attempt the question first, then compare with model answers to identify gaps.



Remember: PYQs are your blueprint, not just practice material

Every question tells you exactly what UPSC expects. Use this collection to decode the examiner's mindset, not just to test your knowledge. Your success lies in understanding the 'why' behind each question.

FREE - GS Mains PYQs Discussion

Date	Day	Topic	Year
02 June 2025	Monday	General Studies Paper 1	2024
03 June 2025	Tuesday	General Studies Paper 2	2024
04 June 2025	Wednesday	General Studies Paper 3	2024
05 June 2025	Thursday	General Studies Paper 4	2024
15 June 2025	Sunday	General Studies Paper 1 to 4	2023
22 June 2025	Sunday	General Studies Paper 1 to 4	2022
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History

1. Evaluate the nature of the Bhakti Movement and its contribution to Indian culture.

Introduction

- The Bhakti Movement (7th–17th centuries CE) was a transformative socio-religious-philosophical revolution that reshaped India's spiritual and cultural landscape. Originating as a response to orthodox Hinduism and social hierarchies, it emphasized *personal devotion (bhakti)* to a deity as the path to salvation, transcending sectarian divides and fostering inclusivity. Its pan-Indian reach, regional diversity, and syncretic ethos made it a cornerstone of medieval Indian renaissance.

Nature of the Bhakti Movement

- The Bhakti Movement, originating in **South India** with the **Alvars and Nayanars**, soon spread to the North, where saints like **Kabir, Mirabai, and Guru Nanak** became prominent figures. It can be broadly categorized into two streams:

Stream	Key Features	Prominent Saints
Nirguna Bhakti	Worship of a formless God, rejecting idol worship	Kabir, Guru Nanak
Saguna Bhakti	Worship of a personal God with attributes (e.g., Vishnu, Shiva)	Mirabai, Tulsidas, Ramanuja

Feature	Description
Personal Devotion	Shifted focus from complex Vedic rituals and asceticism towards loving devotion and surrender to a chosen deity (Saguna Bhakti) or the formless Absolute (Nirguna Bhakti).
Rejection of Complex Rituals and Social Hierarchies	It criticized empty ritualism, excessive asceticism, and superficial displays of religiosity, emphasizing inner purity, ethical conduct, and genuine love for God. It democratized spirituality, declaring salvation open to all – regardless of caste, gender, or social status . Saints like Ravidas (cobbler), Kabir (weaver), Chokhamela (Mahar), and women like Meerabai and Akka Mahadevi challenged Brahmanical hegemony.

Feature	Description
Devotional Practices	Bhakti centered on practices such as chanting (Nama Smaran), singing hymns (Kirtan), and communal worship (Satsang), fostering collective spirituality .
Use of Vernacular Languages	Promoted teachings in regional languages, making them accessible to the masses. Medium : Bhajans, Kirtans, Vachanas (Kannada), Abhangs (Marathi) .
Spiritual Syncretism	The movement blended elements of Hinduism, Islam , and other regional beliefs, evident in figures like Guru Nanak and Kabir , who integrated teachings from both religions.

Contribution of Bhakti Movement to Indian Culture

- The Bhakti Movement's impact on Indian culture was vast, influencing religious practices, social structures, and various art forms like literature, music etc.

Contribution	Description	Examples
Socio Religious Reform	Democratized religion, Challenged the caste and gender hierarchies, advocating for inclusivity, social harmony and social equality. The egalitarian message of Bhakti encouraged social reformers like Raja Ram Mohan Roy and Swami Vivekananda to further challenge orthodoxy in the modern period, paving the way for greater social equality.	Teachings of Kabir, Guru Nanak, Sant Tukaram rejected untouchability. Mirabai, Akka Mahadevi were prominent female bhakti saints, who challenged patriarchal societal norms.
Religious Syncretism	Fostered Hindu-Muslim unity through shared devotional practices, Encouraged tolerance and unity among different faiths.	Kabir's verses blending Hindu and Islamic ideas, Sufi-Bhakti dialogue, Guru Nanak's Naam Simran.
Vernacular Literature	Popularized regional languages, fostering linguistic pride and identity.	Tamil hymns by Alvars (Nalayira Divyaprabandham) and Nayanars (Tevaram), Tulsidas' Ramcharitmanas (Hindi), Tukaram's Abhangs (Marathi), Basava's Vachanas (Kannada).

Cultural Enrichment	Enriched Indian literature, music, dance and arts with devotional themes	Works of Tulsidas, Surdas, Mirabai, Bhajans/Kirtans evolved into classical traditions (e.g., Hindustani/Carnatic music, Qawwali). Visual Arts: Inspired Pahari /Rajasthani miniatures (Krishna themes), temple architecture (Vitthala Temple, Pandharpur).
Philosophical Enrichment	It offered compelling alternatives to Advaita Vedanta and ritualistic Mimamsa.	Ramanuja (Vishishtadvaita), Madhva (Dvaita), and Vallabha (Shuddhadvaita) provided sophisticated theological frameworks for Saguna Bhakti. Nirguna Bhakti presented a radical monistic/mystical path.
Ethical Foundation	Core Bhakti values like compassion, humility, truthfulness, selfless service, and detachment from materialism permeated society, influencing ethical codes and social conduct.	Teachings of Guru Nanak (Vand Chhakna), Kabir etc.

Conclusion

- The Bhakti Movement was not merely a religious upheaval; it was a transformative cultural renaissance. Its emphasis on personal devotion, social equality, vernacular expression, and ethical living reshaped the religious, social, and cultural landscape of India. By challenging orthodoxy, empowering the marginalized, enriching languages and arts, and fostering a syncretic ethos, it laid crucial groundwork for India's pluralistic culture and continues to resonate in contemporary society, literature, music, and social thought. Its legacy remains vital for understanding the evolution of Indian identity and the enduring power of devotional faith.

2. Trace the rise and growth of socio-religious reform movements with special reference to Young Bengal and Brahmo Samaj. Introduction

- The early 19th century witnessed the rise of socio-religious reform movements in India, driven by colonial encounter, exposure to Western ideas (rationalism, liberalism, humanism), and a desire to revitalize indigenous society by purging regressive practices (Untouchability, Sati System, Child Marriage etc.). These movements aimed to reconcile tradition with modernity, combat social evils, and define a new Indian identity. Key movements like the Young Bengal Movement and Brahmo Samaj spearheaded this cultural and intellectual transformation.

Rise and Growth of Socio-Religious Reform Movements

Aspect	Young Bengal	Brahmo Samaj
Origins	Initiated in the 1820s by Henry Louis Vivian Derozio, a teacher at Hindu College in Calcutta, the Young Bengal movement consisted of a group of radical students inspired by Enlightenment ideals.	Founded in 1828 by Raja Ram Mohan Roy, the Brahmo Samaj was a more organized movement focused on reforming Hindu society and religion.
Key Ideas	The movement emphasized rationalism, scientific and critical thinking, freedom of thought. It encouraged the youth to question conservative and orthodox Hindu practices, advocating for social equality and rejecting superstition.	The Brahmo Samaj promoted monotheism, rejected idolatry, and opposed the rigid caste system. It emphasized moral values, human dignity, and social reform, including the abolition of Sati and child marriage and improving women's status in society.
Methods of Growth	Young Bengal's ideas spread primarily through intellectual debates and discussions among students, challenging established norms and encouraging a spirit of inquiry.	The Brahmo Samaj grew through organized efforts such as establishing branches, conducting regular meetings, publishing literature, and engaging in social work. It attracted followers across different regions, expanding its influence.
Challenges and Decline	Its excessive radicalism, detachment from Indian masses, and Derozio's early death (1831) limited its organizational growth.	The Brahmo Samaj faced resistance from orthodox Hindus (Radhakanta Deb and his Dharm Sabha) and internal divisions, particularly between the Adi Brahmo Samaj

	and long-term impact. It faded by the 1840s.	(led by Debendranath Tagore) and the Bharatvarshiya Brahmo Samaj (led by Keshab Chandra Sen). Keshub's later "eclectic" phase and the Cooch Behar marriage controversy caused another split (Sadharan Brahmo Samaj, 1878).
Impact	Though the movement was short-lived and primarily limited to intellectual circles, it ignited a spirit of reform and critical thinking among the youth of Bengal. It set the stage for future movements by encouraging questioning of traditional practices.	• Intellectual Foundation: Provided a rational, ethical framework for Hinduism, challenging superstition and priestly dominance. • Pioneering Social Reform: Directly influenced legislation (Abolition of Sati, 1829; Widow Remarriage Act, 1856) and championed women's rights and education.
Impact		• National Awakening: Fostered a spirit of critical inquiry, self-respect, and modernity, laying groundwork for the Indian Renaissance and later nationalist thought. Promoted vernacular and English education (e.g., Hindu College). • Religious Universalism: Encouraged inter-faith dialogue and a universalist outlook.

Conclusion

- The rise and growth of the Young Bengal movement and the Brahmo Samaj were crucial in **challenging regressive practices and promoting progressive ideas** in Indian society. While the Young Bengal movement sparked **intellectual awakening**, the Brahmo Samaj provided a **more structured and enduring framework** for socio-religious reform, significantly influencing the trajectory of **India's modernization efforts**.

3. Assess the main administrative issues and socio-cultural problems in the integration process of Indian Princely States. Introduction

- The integration of **over 500 princely states**, covering around **40 percent of the area and around 28% of population** in pre-Independent India, into the Indian Union post-independence was a monumental challenge for the newly-formed government. Each state had its own rulers, policies, and administrative systems, creating a **fragmented political landscape**. This process involved not only political negotiation but also significant administrative and **socio-cultural challenges**. The Indian government tackled these complexities through strategic diplomacy, military action, and social negotiations.

Main Administrative Issues in the integration process of Indian Princely States:

Sovereignty and Legitimacy Conflicts:

- **Lapse of British Paramountcy:** The **Indian Independence Act of 1947** (based on the Mountbatten Plan) provided for the lapse of paramountcy of the British Crown over the Indian states. Many of the rulers saw the departure of the British as the ideal moment to **declare autonomy and announce their independent statehood** on the world map.
- **Signing of Instruments of Accession:** The instruments of accession executed by the rulers, provided for the accession of states to the Dominion of India (or Pakistan) on three subjects, namely, **defence, external affairs and communications**.
- **Power and Prestige:** Princely states were not comfortable with the idea of giving away their power and prestige. **Examples - Travancore, Junagarh, Hyderabad, Kashmir.**
- **Issues with Border States:** Jinnah offered "**blank cheque**" incentives (autonomy, arms, privileges) to sway border Princely States **like Jodhpur and Jaisalmer to join Pakistan**, exploiting their geographic and economic vulnerability.
- The challenge was **to convince or, in some cases, compel** these rulers to join the Indian Union while preserving their titles and privileges, a process that required **deft negotiation** by leaders like Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. In some cases, **military intervention** was necessary to integrate princely states. The most notable example is the integration of Hyderabad, where the Nizam's refusal to join India led to **Operation Polo in 1948**, a military action that ended Hyderabad's autonomy and led to its incorporation into India.

Disparities in size and administration:

- Princely state of J&K was over 84 000 sq. miles while Junagarh had just 60 sq. miles. Hyderabad with over 80000 sq. miles owned an army, railway, and postage of its own.

- The princely states had their own systems of governance, independent from British control, and often lacked centralized authority. Many of them had **different administrative structures, tax systems, legal codes, and revenue collection methods**. Integrating such a fragmented political structure into a unified Indian administrative framework was a monumental task. For instance, **Hyderabad had its own police force, currency, and a separate railway system**. The Indian government had to **standardize administrative systems, laws, and policies** to ensure coherence across the newly-formed nation.

Geographical Fragmentation:

- For e.g **Baroda State**, ruled by the Gaekwad dynasty, consisted of several disjointed tracts spread across present-day Gujarat.
- The '**Attachment Scheme**' and subsequent administrative reforms merged many small princely states, estates, and thanas into larger administrative units. Baroda was a major beneficiary, absorbing smaller states and territories to create more contiguous governance units.
- In the Punjab region, eight princely states (including Patiala, Jind, Kapurthala, and others) were merged to form **PEPSU in 1948**.

Economic Disparities Among Princely States

- Princely states were not uniformly developed. For example, **Hyderabad was the largest and one of the richest princely states**, with significant resources and revenue, while others, like **Bhopal and Jammu & Kashmir**
- **r, were economically backward**. The integration process had to address the issue of unequal development, with the Indian government having to invest in infrastructure, education, and healthcare to bring these regions on par with the rest of the country.

Resource Integration:

- Issue: Control over finances, railways, postal services, and military units (e.g., Jodhpur's potential arms sale to Pakistan).
- Outcome: States Department negotiated the surrender of defence and communication assets to the Centre.

Main Socio-Cultural problems in the integration of Indian Princely States:

Communal Tensions: Many of the Muslims (e.g. Junagarh, Hyderabad) rulers were inclined towards Pakistan.

- **Hyderabad:** It was the largest and richest of all princely states, covering a large portion of the Deccan plateau. **Nizam Mir Usman Ali** was presiding over a largely Hindu population in the princely state. He was very clear on his demand for **an independent state** and blatantly refused to join the Indian dominion. **Military intervention, Operation Polo in 1948**, ended Hyderabad's autonomy and led to its incorporation into India.

- **Junagadh:** The princely state was situated on the southwestern end of Gujarat, also did not accede to the Indian union by August 15, 1947. It contained a large Hindu population ruled by the **Nawab Muhammad Mahabat Khanji III**. On September 15, 1947, Nawab Mahabat Khanji **chose to accede to Pakistan** ignoring Mountbatten's views, arguing that Junagadh adjoined Pakistan by sea. Nawab's decision to accede to Pakistan was opposed by the majority Hindu population, leading to **widespread protests**, followed by **military intervention** by Indian State and Junagadh's accession to India.

Ethnic and Cultural Diversity:

- Many princely states had multi-ethnic and multi-religious populations, leading to tensions during integration.
- In **Kashmir**, the majority Muslim population preferred joining Pakistan, while the Hindu ruler, Maharaja Hari Singh, initially sought independence.
- There was cultural difference **between Telugu-speaking parts of Hyderabad and Urdu-speaking and Marathi speaking regions**.

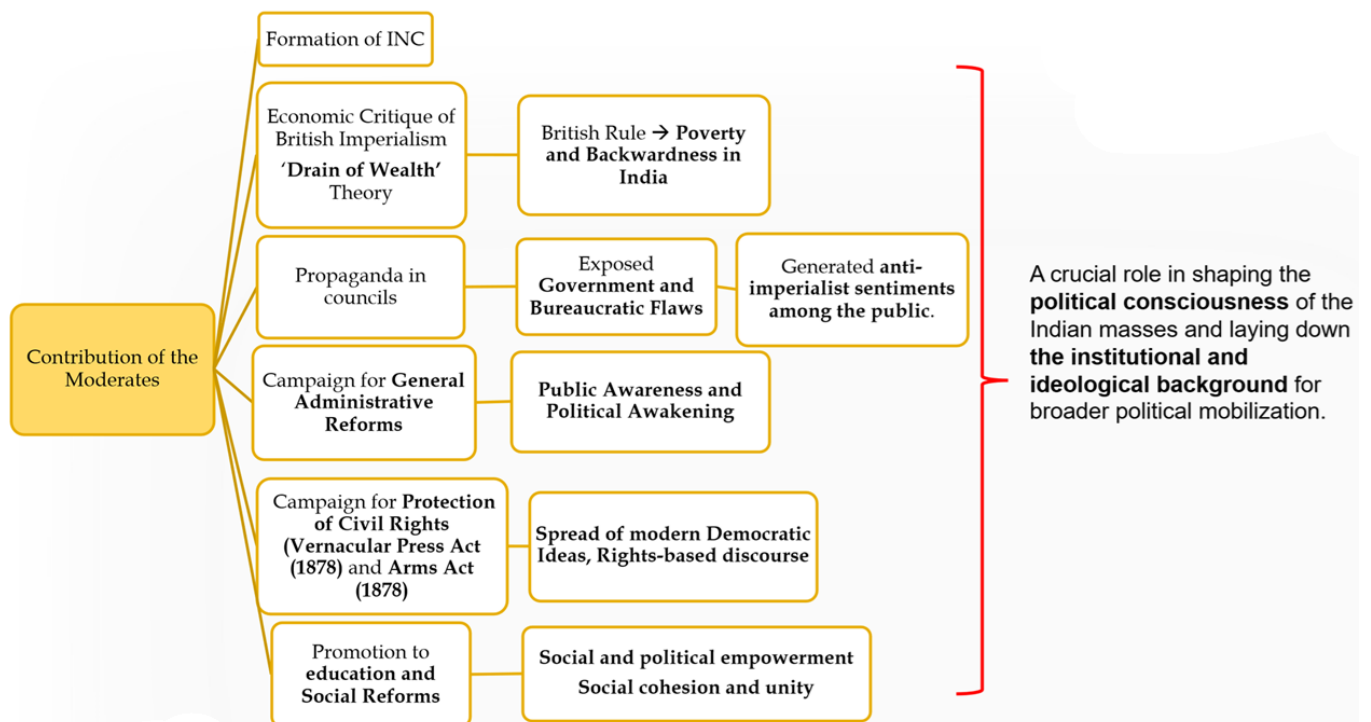
Methods of Integrations of Princely states

- **Merger:** combining smaller states e.g. PEPSU, Saurashtra
- **Democratization:** i.e. establishing a popular leader as head using election
- **Constitutionalization:** Effective from 1950, the Constitution of India classified the constituent units of India into 4 categories – Part A, B, C and D states
- **Reorganization:** In 1956, the States Reorganisation Act reorganised the former British provinces and princely states on the basis of language
- The integration of the Indian Princely States was a highly complex process that involved addressing a range of **administrative, political, legal, and socio-cultural challenges**. The role of the **Indian government**, led by **Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel**, in effectively addressing these issues through **diplomacy, legal mechanisms, and, where necessary, military intervention**, was pivotal. Ultimately, the successful integration of the princely states played a crucial role in the formation of a **unified Indian nation-state**.

4. To what extent did the role of moderates prepare a base for the wider freedom movement? Comment

Introduction

- The Indian freedom struggle, a multifaceted and prolonged movement, saw the involvement of leaders from different ideological backgrounds. The moderates, who led the Indian National Congress (INC) in its early years, played a crucial role in laying the institutional and ideological foundation for the later, more radical freedom movements. Though the moderate phase was often characterized by constitutional demands and a belief in gradual reforms, it contributed significantly to India's nationalist awakening, setting the stage for the larger, mass-based movements that would follow.



Contribution of Moderates:

1. Leadership and Organizational Base: Indian National Congress

- The formation of the **Indian National Congress (INC)** in 1885 marked the beginning of organized political activity in India. Led by figures like **A.O. Hume**, **Dadabhai Naoroji**, and **Gopal Krishna Gokhale**, the INC sought reforms within the British colonial framework through dialogue, petitions, and peaceful negotiations. The moderates established the INC as a unified platform for discussing grievances and raising demands for Indian participation in governance.

- While initially focusing on modest reforms like increased Indian representation in legislative councils, the INC **provided the foundation for future political mobilization and the rise of national politics**. This institutionalization of political activity was critical for the later, more radical movements in India's freedom struggle.

2. Ideological Base:

Economic Critique and Awareness/ Economic Nationalism:

- The moderates played a critical role in raising **economic consciousness** regarding the exploitation of India under British colonial rule. Leaders like **Dadabhai Naoroji** and **R.C. Dutt** highlighted the economic consequences of British rule, particularly the **drain of wealth theory**. Naoroji's argument that India's resources were being siphoned off to Britain was a crucial turning point in Indian economic thought. His work *Poverty and Un-British Rule in India* laid bare the economic exploitation that had led to widespread poverty in India.
- This economic critique was instrumental in **creating a sense of unity among various sections of Indian society**, particularly the burgeoning Indian middle class, which would later play a significant role in the nationalist movement. This intellectual foundation would later be built upon by leaders of the **Swadeshi Movement** and the **Non-Cooperation Movement**, both of which focused on economic self-reliance and the boycott of British goods.
- **Political Vision: Swaraj as Goal:** Popularized "self-governance" within the Empire (Naoroji's 1906 address), paving the way for *Purna Swaraj*.
- **Political Awakening and Civil Rights Advocacy:**
- **Constitutional Agitation:** Petitions, legislative council debates, and commissions (e.g., **Welby Commission**, 1895) educated Indians on rights and governance.
- **Press & Public Opinion:** Newspapers like *The Hindu* (founded 1878) and *Amrita Bazar Patrika* (1868) disseminated anti-colonial ideas, creating an informed electorate.
- **Campaign for Civil Liberties:** Challenged **repressive laws** like **Vernacular Press Act (1878)** and **Arms Act (1878)**, defending freedom of expression and rights to self-defense, advocated **judicial equality** (Ilbert Bill agitation, 1883) thus, creating India's first **rights-based discourse**, establishing dissent as legitimate and fostering civic consciousness.

3. Political Awakening and Civil Rights Advocacy:

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4. Promotion of Education and Social Reforms: Engines of Unity and Nationalism

- Moderate leaders recognized the importance of education and social reforms in empowering the Indian populace and fostering national consciousness.
- **Promotion of Education:** Leaders like **Gopal Krishna Gokhale** emphasized the importance of education as a tool for **social and economic empowerment**. They advocated for the **expansion of educational opportunities for Indians and the establishment of institutions such as universities and technical schools**. Through their advocacy and educational efforts, moderate leaders contributed to the **spread of political awareness and consciousness among the Indian populace**. They helped in building a **sense of national identity and unity among diverse communities**.
- **Social Reforms:** Moderates also championed various social reforms aimed at eradicating social evils such as child marriage, caste discrimination, and untouchability. They worked towards promoting social cohesion and unity among different communities, fostering collective Indian identity transcending caste/region.
- **5. Inspiration for Future Leaders:** The work of moderate leaders inspired future generations of nationalist leaders who would adopt more radical methods in the struggle for independence. **Leaders like Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru were influenced by the principles and strategies of the moderates.**

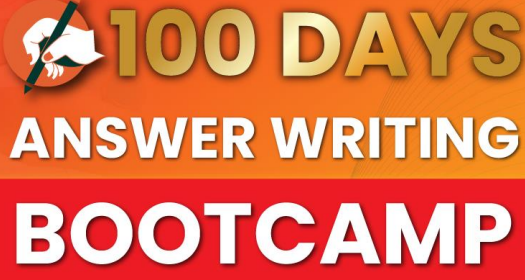
Criticisms and Limitations:

While the moderates made significant contributions to the freedom movement, their approach also faced criticism for its limitations and shortcomings.

- **Limited Concessions:** Critics argued that the moderates' focus on incremental reforms and dialogue with the British government often resulted in limited concessions and failed to address the root causes of colonial exploitation and oppression.
- **Over-reliance on British Goodwill:** The moderates' belief in the British willingness to grant reforms proved to be misplaced. The British response to moderate demands was often **dismissive (1892 Councils Act)**, leading to growing disillusionment among the Indian public.
- **Elitist Orientation:** Some critics accused the moderates of having an elitist orientation, with their efforts **primarily benefiting the educated middle class rather than the masses**. They were criticized for being disconnected from the struggles of the rural poor and marginalized communities (Peasants, Labour Class).
- **Social Conservatism:** Avoided radical caste reform to preserve unity, alienating Dalits.
- **Passive Role** for the masses

Conclusion: Architects of the National Consciousness

- The Moderates **profoundly prepared the base** for the freedom struggle. Their advocacy for civil rights, education, and social reform fostered a **unified, rights-conscious Indian identity**, while their economic critique and cultural revivalism laid the ideological groundwork. Though limited by elite tactics, they transformed anti-colonial resistance from regional grievances into a **coherent national project**. As *Bipan Chandra* noted *“The Period from 1858 – 1905 was the seed time of Indian Nationalism and the early nationalists sowed the seeds well and deep”*. Their legacy endures in India’s constitutional commitment to rights, secularism, and social justice – proving their role as the indispensable **first architects of modern India**.



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5. Bring out the constructive programmes of Mahatma Gandhi during Non-Cooperation Movement and Civil Disobedience Movement.

Introduction

- Mahatma Gandhi, during both the **Non-Cooperation Movement** (1920-22) and the **Civil Disobedience Movement** (1930-34), sought to **unite the masses** and transform the struggle for independence into a mass movement rooted in **self-reliance and socio-economic change**. Beyond protests and non-violent resistance, Gandhi emphasized **constructive programmes** that aimed at the rejuvenation of Indian society and the promotion of self-sufficiency. These programmes were integral to the larger strategy of **non-violent resistance** and the goal of achieving **swaraj** (self-rule).

Movement	Economic	Social	Political
Non-Cooperation (1920-1922)	• Khadi & Swadeshi: Symbolised economic decolonisation. Hand-spinning (charkha) provided rural employment and boycotted British textiles. Established decentralised production networks. • Village Industries: Revived cottage industries (handicrafts, pottery) to reduce poverty and foster local economies.	• Abolition of Untouchability • National schools and colleges were set up where students were trained in a non-colonial ideological framework. Examples: Kashi Vidyapeeth, Jamia Milia Islamia. • Ashrams, where young men and women worked among tribals and lower castes and popularised use of khadi and charkha.	Hindu – Muslim unity.
Civil Disobedience (1930-1934)	• Salt Satyagraha (1930): Defied salt laws through Dandi March; transformed salt-	• Harijan Welfare: Founded Harijan Sevak Sangh (1932); fasted for Dalit rights	Village Reconstruction Gandhi emphasized village reconstruction as key to achieving

	making into a mass symbol of self-reliance and defiance.	(Poona Pact, 1932), securing joint electorates.	true independence. He believed that India's economic self-sufficiency and social reform could only be realized by empowering rural India. The programme focused on improving sanitation, healthcare, agriculture, and local governance. Gandhi aimed to decentralize power, reduce dependence on urban centers, and foster a self-reliant economy rooted in village self-governance.
Civil Disobedience (1930-1934)	Promotion of Khadi. This programme aimed at reducing India's economic dependence on Britain and encouraged self-sufficiency. Khadi, in particular, became a symbol of both resistance and national pride, with millions across India participating in its production.	Tribal Integration: Advocated against exploitative land laws and forced labour; included tribal communities in nationalist discourse.	

Strategic Significance and Limitations

Contributions:

- **Dual Resistance:** CP sustained momentum *during* repression (e.g., post-NCM suspension) and created **parallel institutions** (Khadi boards, national schools).
- **Mass Mobilisation:** Empowered marginalised groups (women, Dalits, peasants) as stakeholders in *Swaraj*.
- **Ethical Framework:** Linked freedom with social justice ("*Independence must begin at the bottom*").

Limitations:

- **Urban Apathy:** Middle-class participation remained sporadic; Khadi failed to replace industrial textiles.
- **Social Barriers:** Deep-rooted casteism resisted anti-untouchability drives (e.g., temple-entry campaigns faced backlash).
- **Economic Gaps:** Village industries could not fully offset colonial economic structures.

Conclusion

- Gandhi's constructive programs played a crucial role in maintaining the momentum of the freedom struggle, broadening its social base, and preparing the masses for continued resistance. These initiatives laid the foundation for a more inclusive and resilient national movement, significantly contributing to India's path to independence.

Introduction

- The period between the two World Wars, spanning from the end of World War I in 1918 to the beginning of World War II in 1939, witnessed a multitude of challenges to the democratic state system. The aftermath of the First World War left the world grappling with political, economic, and social upheavals, creating an environment in which democratic institutions faced severe challenges.



A serious challenge to the democratic state system between the two World Wars

Impact of the Treaty of Versailles

- The Treaty of Versailles (1919), which ended World War I, significantly destabilized democratic systems, particularly in Germany. The **treaty imposed harsh reparations, territorial losses, and a "war guilt" clause**, fostering widespread resentment. The **Weimar Republic**, Germany's new democratic government, struggled to establish legitimacy amid economic hardship and political fragmentation. **Public disillusionment** with democracy grew as it appeared incapable of addressing these grievances, creating an environment ripe for **extremist movements like Nazism**.

Economic Crises and Their Consequences

- The interwar period was marked by severe economic challenges that weakened democratic systems. The **hyperinflation crisis in Germany during the early 1920s** eroded public confidence in the Weimar Republic. The **Great Depression of 1929** exacerbated global economic distress, causing mass unemployment and poverty.

- Hyperinflation and Economic Instability: In the aftermath of World War I, several European nations faced hyperinflation and economic instability. Democratic governments, often slow to respond, lost credibility, while authoritarian regimes projected decisiveness and stability, appealing to desperate populations.
- Example: The Weimar Republic in Germany faced hyperinflation in the early 1920s, leading to social unrest and political polarization, ultimately paving the way for the demise of democracy in the country.
- **The Great Depression:** The Great Depression, which began with the **stock market crash in 1929**, had profound economic repercussions globally. The economic downturn led to widespread unemployment, poverty, and social unrest, creating an environment conducive to the rise of authoritarian ideologies. **Example: In Germany, the economic hardships of the Great Depression fueled public discontent and contributed to the rise of Adolf Hitler and the Nazi Party, leading to the erosion of democratic institutions.**

Political Instability

Rise of Authoritarian Regimes

- **Fascism in Italy**
 - In Italy, post-war economic distress and the perceived "mutilated victory" fueled dissatisfaction with the liberal government. Unemployment, strikes, and social unrest exposed the weaknesses of Italy's democratic system. Benito Mussolini's Fascist Party capitalized on this discontent, promising national rejuvenation. **The 1922 March on Rome marked the collapse of Italian democracy and the establishment of a fascist dictatorship.**
- **Authoritarianism in Europe**
 - Across Europe, democratic systems faced similar threats. In Spain, economic instability and social divisions led to the **Spanish Civil War (1936–1939)**, culminating in **Francisco Franco's dictatorship**. In Eastern Europe, countries like **Poland, Hungary, and Yugoslavia** saw **democratic governments give way to authoritarian regimes** due to ethnic tensions, economic struggles, and weak democratic traditions. The Soviet Union's rise under Stalin further challenged democracy by promoting communism as an alternative to liberal governance.
 - **Weaknesses of Democratic Systems:** The weaknesses of democratic systems, including political fragmentation, coalition governments, and a lack of decisiveness, became apparent during this period. These vulnerabilities allowed authoritarian leaders to exploit power vacuums and undermine democratic norms. **Example: The frequent changes in government and coalition politics in the Weimar Republic highlighted the challenges of governance in a democratic system during times of crisis.**

Nationalism and Totalitarianism

- **Rise of Nationalism:** Nationalistic fervour intensified between the wars, with nations seeking to assert their identities and interests. While nationalism itself is not inherently incompatible with democracy, **extreme forms of nationalist ideologies contributed to the erosion of democratic values.** Example: The aggressive nationalism and expansionist policies pursued by fascist regimes in Italy and Germany undermined the principles of international cooperation and peaceful diplomacy.
- **Totalitarian Ideologies:** Totalitarian ideologies, characterized by authoritarian control over all aspects of public and private life, gained traction during this period. These ideologies posed a direct challenge to democratic ideals of individual freedoms, pluralism, and political diversity. Example: The totalitarian regimes of Mussolini, Hitler, and Stalin exemplify the extreme concentration of power, suppression of dissent, and disregard for democratic principles that emerged between the wars.

Failure of League of Nations:

- The League of Nations, established after World War I to promote international cooperation and prevent future conflicts, faced significant challenges. The League's inability to address aggression by expansionist powers weakened its credibility and highlighted the limitations of collective security. Example: The League's failure to effectively respond to acts of aggression, such as the **invasion of Abyssinia by Italy in 1935**, underscored the challenges in maintaining a peaceful international order through diplomatic means.

Intellectual and Popular Disillusionment

- Intellectuals and the general public began to question the efficacy and moral foundations of liberal democracy during the interwar years. The intellectual critique of **liberal democracy** argued that it was weak, corrupt, and incapable of dealing with modern mass societies or the economic crisis.

Resilience Amidst Crisis

- Despite the challenges, **democracy** survived in some key nations:
- **United Kingdom:** While facing economic hardship and challenges like appeasement, the UK maintained its parliamentary system.
- **Scandinavia:** Countries like **Sweden** and **Norway** proved resilient through **social democracy**, implementing effective welfare responses to the Depression.
- **USA:** After the Depression, **FDR's New Deal** strengthened American democracy by expanding the role of the state and solidifying democratic institutions.
- **Czechoslovakia:** Despite external pressures and the **Munich Agreement (1938)**, Czechoslovakia remained a functioning democracy for most of the interwar period.

Conclusion

- The interwar period presented a significant challenge to democracy globally. **Economic collapse, the rise of totalitarian ideologies, institutional fragility, and widespread disillusionment** eroded the foundation of democratic governance. While totalitarian regimes in **Italy, Germany, and the Soviet Union** sought to replace democracy with centralized authoritarianism, **some democracies managed to survive and eventually thrive**. This era serves as a powerful historical lesson about the **vulnerabilities of democratic systems** when confronted with deep economic crises, ideological extremism, and weak institutions.

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Geography

7. How do the melting of the Arctic ice and glaciers of the Antarctic differently affect the weather patterns and human activities on the Earth? Explain.

Introduction

- The polar regions play a crucial role in regulating Earth's climate. The accelerated melting of Arctic Sea ice and Antarctic glaciers due to global warming is emerging as a significant concern, with far-reaching implications for weather systems and human activities across the globe.

Arctic :

- Ice-Albedo Feedback:
 - In recent decades, the warming in the Arctic has been much faster than in the rest of the world, a phenomenon known as Arctic amplification.
 - Melting ice exposes darker surfaces, increasing solar absorption and accelerating further melting.
- Permafrost Melting : As the Arctic warms, permafrost thaws and begins to break down, releasing methane—a potent greenhouse gas. This methane release intensifies global warming, creating a feedback loop that accelerates further permafrost thaw and climate change.
- Impact on Sea Level and Coastal Communities : Freshwater from ice melting (Greenland) adds to ocean water volume, posing coastal risks.
- Weakening of AMOC: Arctic amplification can weaken the Atlantic Meridional Overturning Circulation (AMOC) which disrupts the ocean's thermohaline circulation, impacting global climate patterns.
- Oceanic Change : Warmer oceans melt sea ice from below. Less ice cover increases solar absorption, further warming the region. Example – Atlantification
- Threat to Biodiversity : Rapid warming due to Arctic amplification may disrupt habitats and food chains, putting immense pressure on native species.
- Impact on Human Activities: Retreating ice opens new shipping routes (Northwest Passage) and opportunities for resource extraction and tourism, raising environmental concerns.
- Community Migration : Climate change is causing some Inuit communities to move because it's affecting their hunting routes and living areas.

Value Addition

- **Jetstreams :** As the Arctic warms, the temperature difference between the polar region and lower latitudes decreases. This reduced temperature gradient affects the jet streams.

- **Polar Vortex** : Several studies have shown that **Warmer Arctic can weaken the polar vortex**, causing it to shift southward, which pushes cold air masses further south than usual, leading to unusually cold in lower latitudes.
- Shifts in the jet stream and weakening of the polar vortex **can trigger extreme weather events, including intense heatwaves and sudden cold snaps.**

Relevant Examples:

- Atlantification - The Barents Sea is undergoing rapid ocean warming with less sea ice and increased Atlantic inflow a process referred to as Atlantification.
- Arctic Amplification - Trends such as Arctic sea ice decline, reduced snow cover, evapotranspiration patterns, and other weather anomalies have caused the Arctic to heat up faster than other parts of the globe, in what is known as the Arctic amplification.
- Northern Sea Route - Global warming is causing the Arctic ice to melt, which is opening up new opportunities for the Northern Sea Route (NSR).
- Polar Vortex Split in 2021 leading to record breaking cold temperatures in North America.

Antarctica:

- **Global Sea Level Rise** : By 2100, net ice loss from Antarctica alone is expected to add about 11 cm (5 in) to global sea level rise.
- **Ice Shelves**: Many glaciers have retreated and ice shelves that formerly fringed the Peninsula have been observed to retreat in recent years and some have collapsed completely.
- **Antarctic Circumpolar Current** is warming more rapidly than the global ocean as a whole.
- **Thermohaline Circulation** : Freshwater from melting glaciers can weaken the thermohaline circulation, altering global ocean currents and climate patterns.
- **Threat to Biodiversity** : Warming in the Antarctic Peninsula may lead to shift in ecological balance across the region.
- **Impact on Human Activities**: Direct human activity is limited due to harsh conditions. However, rising sea levels threaten coastal regions globally with flooding and erosion.

Examples:

- In late May 2024, a large iceberg broke off from Antarctica's Brunt Ice Shelf, the most recent in a series of notable icebergs.
- A **long-term decline in the abundance of Antarctic krill in the SW Atlantic** sector of the Southern Ocean may be associated with reduced sea ice cover.
- **Greening of Antarctica** : The **retreat of perennial snow and ice in Antarctica** is contributing to the greening of the region, **marked by increased growth of mosses.** This reflects subtle yet important ecological shifts driven by rising temperatures.

Conclusion

- Understanding these distinct consequences is crucial for addressing the challenges posed by climate change and developing adaptive strategies for vulnerable regions. The interconnectedness of polar ice melt and its repercussions on global weather and human societies underscores the urgency of mitigating climate change and promoting sustainable practices on a planetary scale.

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8. Discuss the multi-dimensional implications of uneven distribution of mineral oil in the world.

Introduction

- The uneven distribution of mineral oil globally has led to disparities in economic development, geopolitical power, and energy security. This imbalance shapes international relations, triggers conflicts, and impacts environmental and social outcomes worldwide.

The multi-dimensional implications of the uneven distribution of mineral oil:

Economic Implications

- Resource-rich countries benefit economically: Nations like Saudi Arabia & UAE derive significant revenue from oil exports, enabling them to invest in infrastructure & social welfare.
- Global Economic Inequality: Countries with abundant oil reserves often witness economic windfalls through export revenues, while oil-deficient nations face trade imbalances and energy insecurity. This resource disparity reinforces global economic inequalities.
- Regional Income Disparities – Countries with resources in the same region are wealthier- Saudi Arabia, UAE etc as compared to West Asian counterparts Syria, Jordan.
- Resource curse: Additionally, Oil-rich countries often face the "resource curse," where heavy reliance on mineral oil revenues hinders economic diversification, weakens institutions, and affects long-term development. Additionally, the strategic nature of mineral oil can attract external interests, increasing the risk of geopolitical tensions and competition over control of such regions.
- Supply chain disruptions – Russia-Ukraine war led to an increase in prices of several commodities including fertilizers, food products, and oil and gas.
- Cartelization and Price Discrimination – OPEC's pricing strategies, such as the "Asian Premium," lead to higher oil prices for Asian countries, reflecting the unequal bargaining power between producers and consumers.
- Widening Trade deficits : When mineral oil resources are unevenly distributed, countries that rely on imports often face rising import bills. This can reduce their foreign exchange reserves and widen trade deficits, affecting their overall economic stability.

Geopolitical Implications

- Strategic leverage: Control over mineral oil enhances a nation's geopolitical influence, often serving as a tool for strategic bargaining and a source of tensions among nations.
- Regional Conflict - Resource-rich regions often become focal points for geopolitical rivalries, potentially leading to conflicts over control and access. - Heglig Crisis & Chaco War

- Market manipulation and Trade Wars - The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) - coalition of oil-producing nations holds considerable sway over global oil prices, affecting the economies of oil-importing countries.

Environmental Sustainability

- The uneven distribution of oil intensifies environmental challenges – producer regions face issues like oil spills and ecosystem damage, while import-dependent nations contend with rising carbon emissions and prolonged reliance on fossil fuels.
- **Global governance challenges:** Differing energy priorities complicate climate negotiations, carbon pricing mechanisms, and sustainable development targets.
- The uneven distribution of oil resources highlights the urgent need for a global transition towards renewable energy to ensure environmental sustainability.

Social and Cultural Dimensions

- **Migration based Economies** - UAE, Kuwait has large number of Asian diaspora as employment opportunities open up .
- **Welfare Trade-Offs** : Increased import costs directly limit the government's ability to spend on welfare of the state.

Technological and Innovation Implications

- Oil-rich nations tend to invest heavily in oil-related technologies, including extraction methods and refining processes. The shift to clean energy and the decarbonization of global industry could be delayed by vested interests in the oil economy
- Conversely, oil-importing nations may be compelled to invest in research and development for renewable energy sources and energy-efficient technologies.
- Influence on Global Innovation Pathways: The uneven distribution of mineral oil thus becomes a driving force in shaping the global technological landscape, influencing the direction of innovation in the energy sector.
- Conclusion
- The uneven distribution of mineral oil has created structural asymmetries in the global system, shaping economic dependencies, strategic alliances, and environmental externalities. Addressing these challenges requires a balanced approach – ensuring energy security while accelerating the global transition towards equitable and sustainable energy alternatives.

Conclusion

- The uneven distribution of mineral oil has created structural asymmetries in the global system, shaping economic dependencies, strategic alliances, and environmental externalities. Addressing these challenges requires a balanced approach – ensuring energy security while accelerating the global transition towards equitable and sustainable energy alternatives.

9. Despite India being one of the countries of the Gondwanaland, its mining industry contributes much less to its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in percentage. Discuss

Introduction

- India, despite being a part of the ancient Gondwanaland and endowed with rich mineral resources, sees a relatively low contribution of mining to its GDP. In contrast, other Gondwanaland countries like Australia and South Africa derive a significantly higher share of their GDPs. This contrast raises important questions about India's mining potential, policy bottlenecks, and economic strategy in harnessing its natural endowments.

Reasons for Low Contribution of Mining to GDP:

- Mineral Quality** : While India has sizeable reserves of coal and iron ore, the **average grade and quality often fall short** of global standards, particularly when compared to countries like Australia and South Africa. This affects both the **efficiency and profitability** of the sector.

Reasons for Low Contribution of Mining to GDP: Uneven Distribution of Minerals:

India's mineral wealth is concentrated in a few regions, while much of the country remains resource-deficient. This **geographical concentration limits the mining sector's ability to contribute significantly to the national GDP**, as economic gains are confined to specific areas, and large-scale, balanced industrial development remains restricted.

- Complex Regulatory Framework**: India's mining industry operates within a complex regulatory framework, involving numerous permits, licenses, and clearances at various levels of governance.
- Example**
 - The mining sector in India faces significantly higher levies compared to other mining regions.
- As per Economic Survey 2023-24**
- Challenges in the Coal sector**
 - Procedural complexities in acquiring forestry and environmental clearances, land acquisition, and possession need to be taken care of for the timely development of mining projects.
- Environmental and Social Concerns**: Minerals are largely found in forested tribal areas, leading to a conflict between mineral exploitation, tribal welfare, and environmental conservation in a welfare-oriented democratic setup.
- Outdated Technology**: Outdated mining technology is evident in many instances across the country.
- For example, **As per Economic Survey 2023-24**
 - Challenges in the Coal sector
 - Technological difficulties due to the limited availability of modern mining equipment from Indigenous manufacturers



- Monopoly of PSUs: The mining sector faces inefficiencies and underutilization of assets due to the dominance of public sector undertakings – for instance, Coal India's monopoly in the coal sector.
- Dependency on Imports: India's dependence on imports for certain minerals is exemplified by the case of coal. Despite having substantial coal reserves, India imports coal to meet the growing demand, impacting the direct contribution of the mining sector to the GDP.
- Global Commodity Prices: The global prices of commodities significantly impact the economic viability of mining projects.
- Market Demand: The demand for minerals is closely tied to economic growth and industrial activities. During periods of economic slowdown, the demand for minerals decreases. For instance, the decline in industrial activities during the COVID-19 pandemic led to reduced demand for minerals, affecting the mining sector's contribution to the GDP.
- Diversity of Economic Sectors: India's economy is diverse, with agriculture, manufacturing, and services all playing key roles. The rapid rise of the IT and knowledge-based industries has especially driven growth, marking a shift towards a high-tech, service-oriented economy.

Value Addition: Way Forward:

- Streamline regulatory procedures to reduce project delays and investor uncertainty.
- Rationalize taxation and royalty structures to improve financial viability.
- Promote adoption of modern and sustainable mining technologies.
- Encourage greater private sector participation to improve efficiency and competitiveness.
- Ensure environmentally responsible mining with community participation and fair rehabilitation.
- Strengthen infrastructure in mineral-rich regions to support value addition and better connectivity.
- Improve geological exploration and data sharing to identify untapped reserves.
- Develop downstream industries to integrate mining into broader economic growth.

Conclusion:

- For India to harness its mineral wealth effectively, the focus must shift towards simplifying regulations, adopting modern technology, ensuring ecological balance, and promoting private participation. A strategic and sustainable approach can transform mining into a key driver of inclusive economic growth.

10. What are the environmental implications of the reclamation of the water bodies into urban land use? Explain with examples.

Introduction

- The rapid expansion of urban areas has led to the large-scale reclamation of water bodies such as lakes, wetlands, and riverbeds to accommodate infrastructure. While this supports immediate developmental goals, it has long-term adverse environmental implications.

Environmental Implications

- **Disruption of Ecosystems:** Wetlands, lakes, and rivers often support diverse flora and fauna that are **adapted to specific hydrological conditions**. Reclaiming water bodies for urban development can lead to the **disruption of delicate aquatic ecosystems**.
- **Urban Flooding:** Reclaimed water bodies can no longer absorb rainwater, leading to waterlogging and flash floods.
- **Groundwater Depletion:** Wetlands and lakes recharge groundwater; their loss reduces infiltration and lowers the water table.
- **Water Pollution:** Water bodies naturally have the ability of buffering out contaminants. Their encroachment disrupts this function, leading to the accumulation of toxic elements like arsenic, copper, and chromium in the groundwater.
- **Urban Heat Island Effect:** Water bodies help regulate microclimates by absorbing heat and maintaining moisture. **When replaced by concrete and asphalt, they intensify the Urban Heat Island effect—where urban areas become significantly hotter than their rural surroundings—leading to more frequent and severe heatwaves.**
- **Impact on carbon sequestration:** The reclamation of water bodies for urban use contributes to climate change by reducing the ability of natural ecosystems to sequester carbon. **Wetlands, for example, are effective carbon sinks, and their destruction during reclamation releases stored carbon into the atmosphere**
- **Disruption of Natural Drainage Systems:** Altering water **bodies disturbs the natural hydrology, affecting river flow and increasing erosion risks.**
- **Coastal Regions :** Water reclamation in coastal areas is a major driver of wetland loss and degradation. It also aggravates earthquake impacts by increasing the risks of **soil liquefaction and land subsidence.**

Example:

- Bengaluru's vanishing lakes have contributed to the city's declining groundwater levels.
- Delhi's Yamuna floodplains are 75% encroached, threatening the river's ecology and the city's groundwater recharge.
- One of the reasons Guwahati's recurring flash floods are also due to the encroachment of its natural drains and wetlands. Rapid urbanisation has choked rivers and beels, reducing the city's capacity to absorb rainwater.

- The East Kolkata Wetlands absorb a significant amount of carbon from wastewater, preventing it from entering the atmosphere. However, ongoing encroachment threatens this natural carbon sink, undermining its role in climate regulation.
- The shrinking East Kolkata Wetlands has impacted migratory bird populations and local fisheries.

Conclusion

- Reclamation of water bodies for urban use leads to severe ecological loss. Protecting them is essential for climate resilience and sustainable urban growth.



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11. Mention the global occurrence of volcanic eruptions in 2021 and their impact on regional environment. Discuss

Introduction

- Volcanic eruptions have profound and multifaceted impacts on the regional environment, both immediate and long-term.

Global occurrence of volcanic eruptions

Volcano	Location
La Soufrière	St. Vincent and the Grenadines
Mount Nyiragongo	Democratic Republic of Congo
Fagradalsfjall	Iceland
Semeru	Indonesia
Hunga Tonga-Hunga Ha'apai	Tonga
Taal	Philippines

Impact on regional environment

- Volcanic eruptions release ash particles and gases into the atmosphere, impacting air quality and reducing visibility in the surrounding regions.
- Large volcanic eruptions can release significant amounts of sulfur dioxide into the stratosphere, leading to the formation of sulfate aerosols. These aerosols can reflect sunlight, causing a cooling effect on the Earth's surface.
- Eruptions can also emit gases like hydrogen sulfide which can have detrimental impact on surrounding air and ecosystem.
- Volcanic eruptions can also trigger earthquakes in the area.
- Moreover, volcanic ash may contaminate freshwater sources, affecting both drinking water quality and aquatic life.
- Ashfall from volcanic eruptions can have detrimental effects on agriculture by damaging crops and soil fertility.
- The deposition of volcanic ash, rich in minerals, can be beneficial in the long term but poses immediate challenges for farming.
- In ecologically sensitive areas, such eruptions can destabilize entire ecosystems, altering vegetation, soil composition, and wildlife patterns.

Value Addition :

- For instance, the 2021 La Soufrière eruption in St. Vincent blanketed nearby regions in ash, forced people to evacuate their homes.
- Cumbre vieja destroyed bananan plantations.

Conclusion

- Thus, while volcanic eruptions are natural processes, their regional environmental impacts are complex – ranging from health hazards to ecosystem damage – requiring robust early warning and mitigation mechanisms.

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12. Briefly mention the alignment of major mountain ranges of the world and explain their impact on local weather conditions, with examples.

Introduction

- Mountain ranges, through their alignment and elevation, significantly influence local and regional weather patterns by acting as barriers to wind and moisture, modifying temperature, and affecting precipitation.

<u>Major Mountain Ranges</u>	<u>Alignment</u>
Himalayas	These are <u>aligned in a west-east direction</u> running across the boundaries of Indo-Eurasian Tectonic plates.
Western Ghats	The <u>Western Ghats are aligned in a north-south direction</u> across the western coast of the Indian peninsula.
Andes	The <u>Andes are aligned in a north-south</u> direction running parallel to the Pacific coast of South America.
Rockies	The <u>Rockies are aligned in a north-south</u> direction running across the western coast of the North American continent.
Alps	The Alps are aligned in a west to east direction cutting across 8 alpine countries like France, Switzerland and Italy.
Atlas	The Atlas Mountain range stretches through Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia in a <u>South West to North East direction in Africa</u> .

The Impact of Mountain Ranges on Local Weather Conditions

- Orographic Precipitation:** Mountains act as barriers to air masses, forcing moist air to rise and cool, leading to precipitation on the windward side and drier conditions (rain shadow) on the leeward side. **Example: Himalayas Orographic Effect:** Traps monsoonal moisture, causing heavy rainfall in northeastern India
- Desert Formation:** The rain shadow zone of the mountain ranges remains dry and eventually might be converted into desert like condition.



- **Example:**
 - One of the reasons of Formation of Gobi Desert in the Central Asian region is caused due to the presence of the Himalayas.
 - Andes prevent moist Pacific winds from reaching Atacama Desert, making it one of the driest places on Earth.
- **Local winds:** These mountain ranges can lead to formation of local winds by changing the direction of the winds. **Example:** Chinook (local wind) is formed when the Westerlies get struck with the Rockies Mountain and flow downwards as a warm ice eater local wind.
- **Wind Patterns:** Mountains alter wind patterns, leading to local wind systems that influence moisture and temperature distribution. **Example:** The Alps affect local winds, causing precipitation on the windward side and warm, dry foehn winds on the leeward side.
- **Microclimates:** Mountains create diverse microclimates due to slope orientation, elevation, and proximity to water bodies.

OR

Himalayas:

- Prevent cold Central Asian winds from entering the Indian subcontinent, keeping winters milder.
- **Orographic Effect:** Trap monsoonal moisture, causing heavy rainfall in northeastern India
- **Desert Formation:** Obstruct moisture from reaching Central Asia, contributing to the formation of the Gobi Desert.

Alps:

- **Local winds :** Create *foehn* winds—warm, dry winds descending on the leeward side, impacting agriculture .
- **Andes :**
- **Rain Shadow Effect:** Block moist Pacific winds, creating the Atacama Desert—one of the driest places on Earth.
- **Rockies:**
- Changes in elevation lead to variations in temperature and precipitation, creating distinct weather patterns and ecosystems .
- Local winds : These mountain ranges can lead to formation of local winds by changing the direction of the winds. **Example:** Chinook (local wind) is formed when the Westerlies get struck with the Rockies Mountain and flow downwards as a warm ice eater local wind.

Value Addition

Western Ghats :

- Orographic Rainfall: Intercept southwest monsoon winds, leading to heavy rainfall on the windward side (e.g., Kerala, Karnataka).

- Rain Shadow: Eastern leeward side (e.g., Tamil Nadu) remains dry.

Conclusion

- Thus, the alignment and location of mountain ranges are critical in shaping the climatic character of surrounding regions, influencing agriculture, settlement patterns, and biodiversity.

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13. Differentiate the causes of landslides in the Himalayan region and the Western Ghats.

Introduction

- Landslides are mass movements of rock, debris, or earth down a slope and are triggered by a combination of natural and anthropogenic factors. **In India, the Himalayan region and the Western Ghats are two major landslide-prone zones, but the factors differ causing landslides due to distinct geological, climatic, and human-induced conditions.**
- **Causes of Landslides in the Himalayan Region**
- **Tectonic Activity:** The Himalayas are seismically active due to the ongoing collision between the Indian and Eurasian plates. Frequent earthquakes destabilize slopes and act as direct triggers for landslides.
- **Topography:** The steep terrain of the Himalayas, with high relief and unstable slopes, contributes to landslides.
- **Geological Structure:** Presence of weak rock formations such the Himalayan geology makes slopes susceptible to landslides.
- **Glacial Activities:** Melting glaciers can weaken slopes by loosening debris, leading to debris flows.
- **Monsoonal Rainfall:** Heavy monsoonal rains and sudden cloudbursts lead to rapid slope saturation, reducing soil cohesion and triggering sudden and large-scale landslides.”
- **Climate Change:** Shifting monsoon patterns, with the monsoon trough positioned north of its normal path, along with more frequent western disturbances, are causing anomalously heavy rainfall in the western Himalayas, particularly in Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand – intensifying landslide risk.
- **Deforestation and Human Activities:** “Unscientific road construction, large hydroelectric projects, and rapid urban expansion disturb fragile slopes and increase vulnerability to landslides, especially in seismically active zones.”
- **Example:**
 - Unseasonal and extreme rainfall in Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand during recent years has been linked to climate variability leading to landslides .
 - The 2013 Kedarnath tragedy involved cloudburst-induced landslides and flash floods.

Causes of Landslides in the Western Ghats.

- **Climate and Rainfall:** The region receives prolonged and intense southwest monsoon rainfall, which gradually saturates the soil. This reduces friction and triggers slope failure, particularly in lateritic and clayey soils.
- **Slope -** Any slope above 20° is vulnerable to slipping during heavy rain- **Idduki District Landslide**

- Landslides are often triggered by unregulated quarrying, construction of roads and buildings on unstable slopes, and slope modification for plantations and tourism infrastructure. These activities disturb the natural slope stability, making the terrain vulnerable during intense monsoon rains.”
- Anthropogenic activities have given rise to anomalous slopes and due to gravitational pull and rain, the overlaying material comes down. In the Western Ghats, if you have continuous rainfall for a couple of days, the soil gets soggy, leading to landslides.
- **Soil Erosion: Certain Regions** - soil has a high content of sand, which absorbs more water, takes a loose form, and is at risk of slipping down
- **Faults and Lineaments**: Although geologically older and more stable, the Western Ghats also have zones with hidden faults and lineaments that weaken slope resistance over time, making them vulnerable during heavy rainfall episodes.
- Examples :
- 2024 Wayanad landslides :
- **Intense and prolonged monsoon rainfall** leading to rapid soil saturation and slope failure.
- **Unregulated land-use changes** like deforestation, quarrying, and expansion of plantations and tourism infrastructure destabilized natural slopes.

Value Addition -

Idduku Landslide – Study by Kerala Disaster Management Authority

- High intensity rainfall triggers the slope by saturating the overburden and slope materials thereby causing landslides.
- These areas are covered by very thick layer of overburden material (mainly composed of clay rich lateritic soil). Also, the underlying rocks are highly weathered gneissic rocks. The Lateritic soil with higher clay content has high water retention capacity and less water draining capacity; thereby developing high water pressure in the slope material.
- Reactivation of the paleo-landslide zones. Most of the paleo-landslides were left unprotected.
- **Note** - the Gadgil report on the Western Ghats, released in 2011, classed most of Idukki and Wayanad districts as category 1 under eco-sensitive zones. In other words, they were the most vulnerable, where forest land is not to be used for agriculture or non-forest activities.

Conclusion

- Effective landslide management demands region-specific strategies that respect local geography, climate patterns, and ecological limits. Without such tailored interventions, both natural triggers and human actions will continue to turn these fragile landscapes into disaster zones.

Indian Society and Social Issues

14. Why is India considered as a sub-continent? Elaborate your answer.

Introduction:

- A subcontinent is a large, distinguishable part of a continent with unique identity.
- India is referred to as a *subcontinent* due to its distinct geographical, cultural, historical, and geological features.

Body:

- Geographical Features
- **Vast Size:** ~3.29 million sq. km, 7th largest in the world.
- **Diverse Landscapes:** Himalayas, Indo-Gangetic plains, Thar desert, coastal plains, tropical forests.
- **Distinctive Geological Features:** Deccan Plateau, Himalayan range, tectonic uniqueness (Indian Plate).

Cultural Diversity

- **Multilingual Society:** 22 scheduled languages, 1369 rationalized mother tongues (Census 2011).
- **Religious Pluralism:** Hinduism (79.8%), Islam (14.2%), Christianity, Sikhism, Buddhism, Jainism.
- **Cultural Heritage:** Classical dances, regional art, cuisine, music, festivals, traditions.

Other Factors

- **Political Identity:** Largest democracy, secular, socialist republic with independent institutions.
- **Population:** Most populous country (surpassed China in 2023).
-

Conclusion:

- India's classification as a subcontinent reflects its geographical scale, cultural multiplicity, historical depth, and political significance.
- The term "subcontinent" encapsulates the **diversity and complexity** of India and surrounding regions.

15. Examine the uniqueness of tribal knowledge system when compared with mainstream knowledge and cultural systems.

Introduction

- Tribal knowledge system is the treasure of knowledge of indigenous people around the world preserving distinct understanding of their cultural experiences.
- Comparison of Tribal Knowledge system with Mainstream Knowledge system
 - Simplicity – Johad water harvesting in Rajasthan
 - Cost Effective – Bamboo drip irrigation in North East
 - Ecological awareness and proximity to nature – Andaman tribals knowledge about tsunami 2004
 - Environment Friendly
 - Traditional medicine systems – Devdhar tree oil used for treatment of animals
 - Holistic Approach
 - Bottom Up as compared to top down approach
 - Mode of Transfer is different
 - Egalitarian approach

Cosmology and Worldview

- **Spiritual Connection to Nature:** Nature seen as sacred and interconnected (e.g., Native American reverence for nature).
- **Cyclical and Harmonious Worldview:** Time and life viewed as cyclical, not linear (e.g., Maori seasonal harmony).
- **Ancestral Wisdom and Respect:** Emphasis on ancestral knowledge (e.g., Dogon people's oral astronomy traditions).

Ecological Wisdom and Sustainable Practices

- **Holistic Approach to Ecology:** Humans as part of ecosystems, not above them (e.g., Kayapo agroforestry in the Amazon).
- **Traditional Ecological Knowledge:** Deep knowledge of environment through cultural practices (e.g., San people's tracking skills).
- **Interconnectedness with the Land:** Spiritual and ecological ties to land (e.g., Aboriginal custodianship of nature).

Oral Traditions and Cultural Transmission

- **Oral Narratives and Storytelling:** Knowledge passed orally, not through written records (e.g., Inuit survival stories).
- **Community-Centric Learning:** Learning shared collectively (e.g., Maasai rituals for cultural transmission).

- **Dynamic and Living Traditions:** Knowledge adapts while retaining core values (e.g., Navajo combining tradition and tech).

Community Dynamics and Social Structures

- **Communal Decision-Making:** Decisions made through consensus (e.g., Iroquois participatory democracy).
- **Interconnected Community Roles:** Roles linked to collective well-being (e.g., Pueblo shared farming and ceremonies).
- **Relationship-Centric Social Structures:** Prioritize interconnectedness and mutual care (e.g., Ubuntu philosophy in Africa).



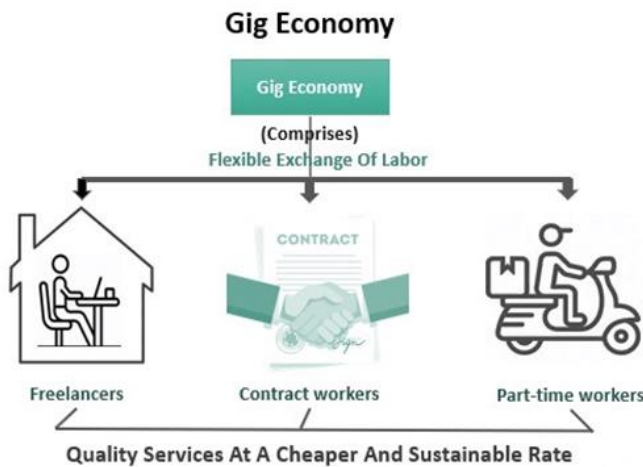
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16. Examine the role of 'Gig Economy' in the process of empowerment of women in India.



Projected Gross Volume of the Gig Economy

The Gig Economy is projected to grow to **\$455 B by year-end 2023** in Gross Volume Transactions.



- The **gig economy**, characterized by **short-term, flexible employment opportunities**, has emerged as a **transformative force in the global labor market**. In India, the gig economy has witnessed significant growth, and its role in the empowerment of women is a notable aspect of this evolution

Six Major Impacts :

Flexibility and Work Life Integration

- According to NITI Aayog, digital gig platforms (e.g., home-cleaning, beauty services) enable women to balance work and household responsibilities by offering **flexible hours**
- IndiaSpend (2021) noted that these platforms allow women to **choose their preferred working hours** and earn, particularly while handling caregiving duties

Earnings but No Security

- Gig work is unregulated, and most workers lack minimum wage protections, social security, or paid leave

Precarity & Drop-off

- NITI Aayog highlights that many women exit gig roles when their household needs change due to the insecurity and lack of upward mobility.
- A *World Economic Forum-ORF* study found **35% of women avoided gig work** due to uncertain income and job unpredictability .

Digital Divide & Limited Reach

- Gender disparities in digital access limit women's participation — **only ~28% of gig workers are women**, largely concentrated in offline urban sectors.



- Rural women especially face barriers in accessing location-based or digital platforms due to infrastructure constraints .

Safety Concerns:

- Reports indicate widespread **gender harassment**, with women facing discrimination, violence, and safety threats on the job.
- Without **gender-sensitive policies**, women are forced to compromise – some platforms even limited female delivery workers' operating hours to **pre-evening shifts** .

Empowerment and Collective Voice :

- The **first-ever digital strike by female gig workers** on Diwali 2024 – led by GIPSWU – demonstrated the power of collective action to demand better wages, rights, and recognition.
- Yet, the **lack of formal organisation and social protection** remains a major barrier to sustained empowerment

Way forward:

- Inclusive design
- Gender sensitization
- Social Protection Frameworks
- Skill and Digital Access Programs

17. What are the main socio-economic implications arising out of the development of IT industries in major cities of India?

1. Employment Generation

- Massive job creation in urban centers such as Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Pune, Chennai, and Gurugram.
- **Data:** As per NASSCOM (2023), the Indian IT sector employs over **5.4 million** people directly.
- **Example:** Bengaluru alone accounts for **over 1.5 million** IT jobs, earning it the nickname *Silicon Valley of India*.

Urbanization and Real Estate Boom

- Rapid urban expansion and infrastructure development in IT hubs.
- **Example:** In Hyderabad, the HITEC City region saw land prices rise by **300–400%** from 2005 to 2020.
- **Implication:** Emergence of IT corridors leads to urban sprawl, housing demand, and rise in property prices

Rise in Per Capita Income

- IT sector contributes significantly to the **growth of the urban middle class**.
- **Data:** Cities like Bengaluru and Hyderabad have **per capita incomes 2–3 times** higher than the national average.
- **Example:** Karnataka's per capita income (₹3.01 lakh, 2023) is above the national average (₹1.72 lakh).

Regional Economic Disparities

- Growth concentrated in Tier-1 cities, leading to imbalanced regional development.
- **Implication:** States like Bihar, Odisha, and parts of the Northeast remain relatively untouched by the IT boom.
- **Example:** Over 80% of IT exports come from just six major cities.

Urbanization and Real Estate Boom

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Growth of Ancillary Industries

- IT boom stimulates **growth in sectors** like real estate, retail, food services, transport, education, and tourism.

- **Example:** Rise of co-working spaces, private cab aggregators (like Ola/Uber), and food delivery (like Swiggy/Zomato) in IT hubs.
- **Data:** Bengaluru's start-up ecosystem is valued at **\$60 billion+** (Invest India, 2023).

Infrastructural Strain and Urban Challenges

- Overcrowding, traffic congestion, pollution, and rising cost of living in IT cities.
- **Example:** Bengaluru faces **average traffic delays of 40–50 minutes** daily (TomTom Traffic Index, 2023).
- **Implication:** Quality of urban life declines; civic amenities under pressure.

Women's Workforce Participation

- IT sector has significantly increased **female participation** in the workforce.
- **Data:** ~35% of India's IT workforce is female (NASSCOM 2023).
- **Example:** Companies like TCS and Infosys have women-friendly HR policies, maternity benefits, and leadership development programs.

Rise of Global Integration and Cosmopolitan Culture

- Cities become global IT outsourcing hubs, fostering a cosmopolitan work culture.
- **Example:** Hyderabad and Bengaluru host tech giants like Google, Amazon, Microsoft, Infosys, TCS, Accenture.
- **Impact:** Greater global exposure, cultural diversity, and modern lifestyle adoption in metros. Modern IT workplaces emphasize merit, skills, and performance, reducing the relevance of caste in recruitment and promotion.

Example: Companies like Infosys, TCS, and Wipro follow corporate diversity and inclusion policies that focus on equal opportunity.

Implication: In urban IT hubs, individuals from marginalized castes find greater upward mobility and social integration, though subtle biases may persist informally.

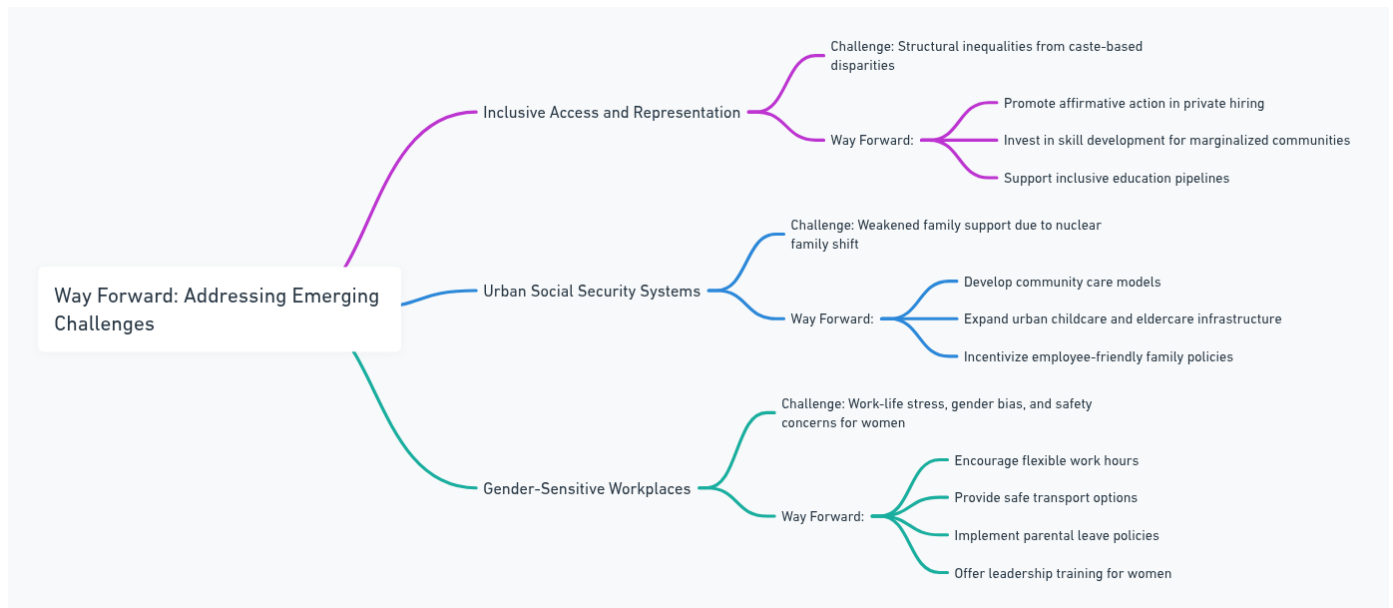
Impact on the Family System – Rise of Nuclear Families

- Migration to IT hubs leads to the **breakdown of joint families**, especially among young professionals.
- **Example:** In cities like Bengaluru, Hyderabad, and Pune, over **60% of IT professionals live in nuclear households** (Census and NSSO data).
- **Implication:** Shift in family structure leads to **greater individual autonomy**, but also **increased work-life stress** and **reduced elder care**.

Shift in Educational Preferences

- Surge in demand for **engineering, computer science, and business courses**.
- **Data:** India produces **~1.5 million engineers annually**, with IT being the primary recruiter.

- **Example:** IITs, NITs, and private universities increasingly focus on IT-related programs to meet industry demand.



18. Discuss the main objectives of Population Education and point out the measures to achieve them in India in detail.

Body:

- Need for Electoral Reforms : (Flow chart)
- Electoral Funding transparency
- Criminalisation of Politics
- MCC violations
- Enforcement of RPA
- Election commission related reforms
- Voter identification

Introduction:

- Over 1.43 billion (UNFPA 2023) most populous country in the world. Population Education becomes essential.

Objectives of Population Education

- Understand how **family size can be controlled** for improving quality of life.
- Analyze the **impact of population trends** on social, cultural, economic, and political life.
- Promote the idea that a small family size enhances living standards.
- Understand the **effects of medical advancements** on reducing death rates and causing population imbalance.

Measures to Achieve objectives - Policy initiatives + Promotion of contraceptive+NGO and community involvement + Adolescent and Youth Programs - Special focus on educating adolescents through initiatives like Adolescent Reproductive and Sexual Health (ARSH) and School Health Programs.+ online modules, mobile apps, and videos + Mass Media Campaigns and IEC (Information, Education, Communication)

- Government agencies like the **Ministry of Health and Family Welfare** run **awareness campaigns** through television, radio, print media, and social media.

19. What is Cryptocurrency? How does it affect global society? Has it been affecting Indian society also?

Introduction:

- Cryptocurrency is a digital or virtual currency using cryptography and based on blockchain technology.
- First introduced with Bitcoin in 2009, cryptocurrencies operate on decentralized networks, independent of central banks..

Body:

- Impact on global society: Economic Integration + Decentralisation+Sovereignty and policy+Volatility and Macroeconomic Risk +Speculation and Wealth +Crime and illicit use + Digital Inequality
- Impact on Indian Society: Regulatory uncertainty + New Economic Opportunities+Remittance efficiency + youth Speculation culture+Cybersecurity risks

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20. How does Indian society maintain continuity in traditional social values? Enumerate the changes taking place in it.

Continuity and Change framework of Indian Society

Introduction:

- Indian Society is marked by deep rooted civilisational heritage that continues to influence social values.

Body:

- Family system (position of elderly) + Marriage as sacrament + Religiosity + Caste Continuity + Harmony and Tolerance

Changes:

- Urbanisation + Women's Empowerment + Education + Technology + Inter Caste Marriage

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