

UPSC Civils Daily Mains Question 01st July - 2021

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Israel–UAE normalization agreement officially called the Abraham Accords Peace Agreement is a historic breakthrough in Arab-Israel relations. What is the geo-political significance of the deal? Examine the implications of the deal particularly to India.

The Abraham Accords are a joint statement between Israel, the United Arab Emirates, and the United States. According to the Accord, UAE and Israel would establish formal diplomatic relations and in exchange, Israel would suspend its plans to annex parts of the occupied West Bank.

Geo-political significance of the deal

- It encourages gulf and Arab nations to start agreements with Israel. It signifies a strategic advantage over Iran and access to better technology including biotech, healthcare, and defense and cyber surveillance. It might also prompt other Gulf and Arab nations to start engagement with Israel.
- Jordanian Israeli treaty came after Israel agreed to the formation of the Palestinian Authority in the West Bank and Gaza.
- It allows US to pivot away from Trump's Peace to Prosperity plan for resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Implications for India:

- Diplomatic: In general, the Israel-Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) eases India's diplomatic balancing act on the Palestinian issue.
- Strategic: A new arena of the proxy war between Iran and Israel cannot be ruled out, particularly in Shia pockets.
 - India would have to be on its guard to monitor and even pre-empt any threat to its interests in the Gulf.
- Economic fallout:
 - Currently, India is the preferred source of manpower, food products, pharmaceuticals, gem and jewelry; light engineering items, etc. in the gulf. But Israel can become a tough competitor to India.
 - Israel has niche strengths in defense, security and surveillance equipment, arid farming, solar power, horticultural products, high-tech, gem and jewelry, and pharmaceuticals.
 - Israel has the potential to supply skilled and semi-skilled manpower to the GCC states, particularly from the Arabic speaking Sephardim and Mizrahim ethnicities.
 - Israel is known as the start-up nation and its stakeholders could easily fit in the various duty-free incubators in the UAE.

UPSC Civils Daily Mains Question 05th July - 2021

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De-Criminalisation of politics is needed to bring back the glory of Indian Democratic System. In this context discuss the reasons for criminalisation of politics and mention some landmark judgements pertaining to criminalization of politics.

Solution:

Introduction: Here Introduction should be simple and direct, just define what is criminalization of politics with some supporting data from any institution or organization. Criminalization of Politics means that the criminals entering the politics and contesting elections and even getting elected to the Parliament and state legislature.

The recent report by the Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR) has highlighted the urgency of the issue. The report stated that:

- 46% of elected MPs of Lok Sabha have different kinds of criminal cases pending against them including minor offences like "Unlawful assembly" and "Defamation".

- 24% of MPs in the present Lok Sabha the cases were of a very serious in nature such as crimes against women and kidnapping.

Body: the body should be what question demands you to write; here in this case you should state what the reasons for criminalization of politics are and some landmark judgements related to criminalization of politics

Reasons why criminalization of politics still persist in India:

- Lack of political will:

- o Representation of the People Act, 1951, deals with disqualification of candidates against whom charges have been framed in court for serious offences. Therefore, in order to curb criminalization of politics, Parliament needs to bring an amendment in the Act

- Vote Bank:

- o The political parties and independent candidates have astronomical expenditure for vote buying and other illegitimate purposes through these criminals.

- Denial of Justice and Rule of Law:

- o Toothless laws against convicted criminals standing for elections further encourage this process. Under current law, only people who have been convicted at least on two counts be debarred from becoming candidates. This leaves the field open for charge sheeted criminals, many of whom are habitual offenders.

- o Constitution does not specify what disqualifies an individual from contesting in an election to a legislature.

- o It is the Representation of People Act which specifies what can disqualify an individual from contesting an election. The law does not bar individuals who have criminal cases pending against them from contesting elections

- Lack of good governance:
 - o The root of the problem lies in the country's poor governance capacity.

- Lack of Choices:
 - o Sometimes voters are left with no options, as all competing candidates have criminal records.

- Scarcity of state capacity:
 - o The scarcity of state capacity is the reason for the public preferring 'strongmen' who can employ the required pulls and triggers to get things done. Criminality, far from deterring voters, encourages them because it signals that the candidate is capable of fulfilling his promises and securing the interests of the constituency. No political party is free of this problem.

- o Use of muscle power along with money power is a weapon used by all political parties to maximize electoral gains.

- o With cases dragging in courts for years, a disqualification based on conviction becomes ineffective. Low conviction rates in such cases compounds the problem; voters don't mind electing candidates facing criminal cases. Voter behavior then emboldens political parties to give tickets to such candidates who can win an election on their ticket etc.

Recently, the Supreme Court agreed to examine a proposition made by the Election Commission of India (ECI) to ask political parties to not give the ticket to those with criminal antecedents.

Over the years, the Supreme Court has passed many judgements that sought to curb criminalisation of politics, but the extent of the problem has not been eliminated.

Landmark Judgments to decriminalize the politics:

- o Upcoming Bihar elections in October 2020, will be the first election where the Supreme Court's decision (given in February 2020) that requires political parties to publish the entire criminal history of their candidates for elections along with the reasons to field such suspected criminals, will be implemented.

- o This judgement also requires such information mandatorily be published in a local and national newspaper as well as the parties' social media handles.

- o While the judgment may have far-reaching consequences for curbing criminalisation of politics, yet still a lot has to be done to make a cleaner electoral process in India.

- o The Supreme Court in Public Interest Foundation vs. Union of India, 2018 had directed political parties to publish online the pending criminal cases of their candidates.

- o The Supreme Court concluded that rapid criminalisation of politics cannot be arrested by merely disqualifying tainted legislators but should begin by "cleansing" the political parties.

- o It suggested that Parliament frame a law that makes it obligatory for political parties to remove leaders charged with "heinous and grievous" crimes like rape, murder and kidnapping and refuse ticket to offenders in both Parliamentary and Assembly polls.

o In 2017, it asked the Centre to frame a scheme to appoint special courts to exclusively try cases against politicians, and for political parties to publicise pending criminal cases faced by their candidates in 2018.

o In 2013, the Supreme Court in the case Lily Thomas vs. Union of India ruled that a sitting MP and MLA convicted of a jail term of two years or more would lose their seat in the legislature immediately.

o Further, Section 8(4) of the Representation of the People Act 1951, which allowed elected representatives three months to appeal their conviction, was declared unconstitutional.

o The Supreme Court held that, if a lower court has convicted an individual, he cannot contest an election unless a higher court has overturned his conviction. Simply filing an appeal against the judgment of the lower court is not enough.

o The Supreme Court in People's Union for Civil Liberties vs. Union of India, 2013 ruled that voters should have the option of "None of the above (NOTA)" on the Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) to ensure the option for those who don't find any candidate suitable.

o The Supreme Court directed the Election Commission to bring the issue of election-related 'freebies' under the ambit of the Code of Conduct.

Conclusion:

There are several judicial pronouncements and legislations to curb the criminal's entry into politics but the lacunae still exists in their implementation. Only enhanced awareness and increased democratic participation could create the right conditions for the decriminalisation of politics

Additional notes regarding:

Effect of Criminalisation of Politics

o Against the Principle of Free and Fair Election: Using money and muscle power in elections, limits the choice of voters to elect a suitable candidate. Also, it is against the ethos of free and fair election which is the bedrock of a democracy.

o Affecting Good Governance: The major problem is that the law-breakers become law-makers, this affects the efficacy of the democratic process in delivering good governance. These unhealthy tendencies in the democratic system reflect a poor image of the nature of India's state institutions and the quality of its elected representatives.

o Affecting Integrity of Public Servants: It also leads to increased circulation of black money during and after elections, which in turn increases corruption in society and affects the working of public servants.

o Causes Social Disharmony: It introduces a culture of violence in society and sets a bad precedent for the youth to follow and reduces people's faith in democracy as a system of governance.

Challenges:

o Election Commission has limited powers to legislate on such laws.

- o Public opinion too is not firm on the issue.

- o A survey found that opinion was divided when people were asked whether they would vote for an honest candidate who may not get their work done, or a tainted candidate who could get their work done. While political parties raise concern about candidates with a tainted background contesting elections, none of them come forward to set an example for others when it is time to act.

- o In the present criminal justice system it takes years, probably decades, to complete the trial against a politician. Those with political influence have taken full advantage by delaying hearings, obtaining repeated adjournments and filing innumerable interlocutory petitions to stall any progress. They also engage in corruption and infect the bureaucracy and the police.

Way Forward

- o State Funding of Election: Various committees (Dinesh Goswami, Inderjeet Committee) on the electoral reforms have recommended for state funding of elections. State funding of elections will curb use of black money to a large extent and thereby will have a significant impact on limiting criminalization of politics.

- o Strengthening of Election Commission: Election Commission can register a political party but cannot deregister it. Regulating the affairs of a political party is essential for a cleaner electoral process. Therefore, it is imperative to strengthen the election commission.

- o Behavioural Change: Until the citizens realise that people who bribe them for votes cannot be trusted and it will be to their ultimate disadvantage, the efforts to curb criminalisation of politics will have limited impact. Thus, voters also need to be vigilant about misuse of money, gifts and other inducements during elections. Further, seeing a behavioral change amongst voters, political parties will be forced to field candidates with a clean background.

- o Law panel report bats for using the time of the framing of charges to initiate disqualification as an appropriate measure to curb the criminalization of politics.

- o Political parties should themselves refuse tickets to the tainted.

- o The RPA Act should be amended to debar persons against whom cases of a heinous nature are pending from contesting elections.

- o Bringing greater transparency in campaign financing is going to make it less attractive for political parties to involve gangsters. The Election Commission of India (ECI) should have the power to audit the financial accounts of political parties, or political parties' finances should be brought under the right to information (RTI) law

- o Broader governance will have to improve for voters to reduce the reliance on criminal politicians.

- o Fast-track courts are necessary because politicians are able to delay the judicial process and serve for decades before prosecution.

o The Election Commission must take adequate measures to break the nexus between the criminals and the politicians. The forms prescribed by the Election Commission for candidates disclosing their convictions, cases pending in courts and so on in their nomination papers is a step in the right direction if it applied properly.

o Addressing the entire value chain of the electoral system will be the key to solving the puzzle of minimizing criminal elements from getting elected to our legislatures. This process would involve sensitizing the electorate about the role and responsibility of the elected representatives.

UPSC Civils Daily Mains Question 04th July - 2021

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Indian Electoral System is grappling with certain issues which have eroded the trust of many people in this country. At this juncture we need more innovative reforms to ensure internal democracy and financial accountability in political parties. Comment.

Introduction:

A free, fair and unbiased electoral process along with greater citizen participation is fundamental to safeguarding the values of a democracy. True democracy can function only when elections to the offices of power are held in a free and fair manner.

It is generally accepted that while the first three general elections were held in a free and fair manner, a plummeting of standards started during the fourth general elections in 1967. Many consider the electoral system in the country as the basis of political corruption.

Body:

There are multiple issues plaguing the electoral process in India. Some of the most prominent ones are mentioned below.

o Money Power

o In every constituency, candidates have to spend crores of rupees for campaigning, publicity, etc. Most candidates far exceed the permissible limit of expenses.

o Muscle Power

o In certain parts of the country, there are widespread reports of illegal incidents during polling such as the use of violence, intimidation, booth capturing, etc.

o Criminalisation of Politics and Politicization of Criminals

o Criminals enter into politics and ensure that money and muscle power wins them elections, so that the cases against them are not proceeded with. Political parties are also happy as long as they have winnable

candidates. Political parties field criminals in elections for funds and in return provide them with political patronage and protection.

o Misuse of Government Machinery

o There is a general opinion that the party in power uses government machinery such as using government vehicles for canvassing, advertisements at the cost of the exchequer, disbursements out of the discretionary funds at the disposal of the ministers, and other such means to improve the chances of their candidates winning.

o Non-serious Independent candidates

o Serious candidates float non-serious candidates in elections to cut a good portion of the votes that would otherwise have gone to rival candidates.

o Casteism

o There are cases of certain caste groups lending strong support to particular political parties. Thus, political parties make offers to win over different caste groups, and caste groups also try to pressurize parties to offer tickets for their members' elections. Voting on caste lines is prevalent in the country and this is a serious blotch on democracy and equality. This also creates rifts in the country.

o Communalism

o Communal polarization poses a serious threat to the Indian political ethos of pluralism, parliamentarianism, secularism and federalism. Read more about Communalism in the linked article.

o Lack of Moral Values in Politics

o The political corruption in India has led to politics becoming a business. People enter the political arena for making money and retaining their money and power. There are very few leaders who enter politics to make a difference in the lives of their people. The Gandhian values of service and sacrifice are missing from the Indian political scene.

Electoral Reforms earlier i.e. Pre-2000

o Lowering of Voting Age: The 61st Amendment Act to the Constitution reduced the minimum age for voting from 21 to 18 years.

o Deputation to Election Commission: All personnel working in preparing, revising and correcting the electoral rolls for elections shall be considered to be on deputation to the EC for the period of such employment, and they shall be superintended by the EC.

o Increase in the number of proposers and the security deposit: The number of electors required to sign as proposers in the nomination papers for elections to the Rajya Sabha and the State Legislative Councils

has been raised to 10% of the electors of the constituency or ten such electors, whichever is less chiefly to prevent frivolous candidates. The security deposit has also been hiked to prevent non-serious candidates.

- o Electronic Voting Machine (EVMs): First introduced in 1998 during the state elections of Delhi, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan, EVMs are used widely now as they are fool-proof, efficient and a better option in terms of the environment.

- o Disqualification on conviction for violating the National Honours Act, 1971: This shall lead to disqualification of the person for 6 years from contesting to the Parliament and the state legislatures.

- o Restriction on contesting from more than 2 constituencies: A candidate cannot contest from more than 2 constituencies.

- o Death of a contesting candidate: Previously, the election was countermanded on the death of a contesting candidate. In the future, no election will be countermanded on the death of a contesting candidate. If the deceased candidate, however, was set up by a recognized national or state party, then the party concerned will be given an option to nominate another candidate within 7 days of the issue of a notice to that effect to the party concerned by the Election Commission.

- o It is prohibited by law to go to near a polling booth with bearing arms. This is punishable by imprisonment for up to 2 years.

- o On poll days, employees of organisations get a paid holiday and violation of this is punishable by a fine.

- o Prohibition on sale of liquor: No liquor or other intoxicants shall be sold or given or distributed at any shop, eating place, or any other place, whether private or public, within a polling area during the period of 48 hours ending with the hour fixed for the conclusion of poll.

- o Time limit for bye-elections: Bye-elections to any House of Parliament or a State Legislature will now be held within six months of the occurrence of the vacancy in that House.

- o The period of campaigning has been reduced.

Recent Electoral Reforms i.e. Post 2000

- o Ceiling on election expenditure: At present, there is no limit on the amount a political party can spend in an election or on a candidate. But, the Commission has put a cap on individual candidates' spending. For the Lok Sabha elections, it is Rs. 50 – 70 lakh (depending on the state they are contesting the Lok Sabha seat from), and Rs. 20 – 28 lakh for an assembly election.

- o Restriction on exit polls: The EC issued a statement before the 2019 Lok Sabha elections saying that exit poll results could be broadcast only after the final phase of the elections were over. This was done to avoid prospective voters being misguided or prejudiced in any manner.

o Voting through postal ballot: In 2013, the EC decided to expand the ambit of postal ballot voting in the country. Previously, only Indian staff in missions abroad and defence personnel in a limited way, could vote via postal ballots. Now, there are 6 categories of voters who can use the postal ballot: service voters; special voters; wives of service voters and special voters; voters subjected to preventive detention; voters on election duty and Notified voters.

o Awareness Creation: The government decided to observe January 25th as 'National Voters Day' to mark the EC's founding day.

o Political parties need to report any contribution in excess of Rs 20000 to the EC for claiming income tax benefit.

o Declaring of criminal antecedents, assets, etc. by the candidates is required and declaring false information in the affidavit is now an electoral offence punishable with imprisonment up to 6 months or fine or both.

Conclusion:

There is a need for political will to bring in reforms, so that democracy in India is not only procedural but also substantive in nature. From a flawed democracy India must become a thriving democracy. Free and Fair elections cannot happen if political outcomes are determined by the money and muscle of candidates or by class, caste and gender distinctions. This discourages genuine candidates from contesting, and winning elections. Election Commission must be strengthened and its role must be enhanced to achieve the objective of free and fair elections.

UPSC Civils Daily Mains Question 03rd July - 2021

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The Union government has decided to suspend operation of MPLADS for next two financial years to address the financial crisis arising due to Covid-19. Discuss the possible effects of this step.

Issue in the news:

Local Area Development Scheme, also called 'Sansad Nidhi Yojana' has been suspended for two years (2020-2022) in the wake of the COVID-19 crisis. The funds under MPLADS will be directed to the Consolidated Fund of India. Sum of Rs. 79000 crores are expected to be garnered by suspending the Local Area Development Scheme.

Introduction:

The Members of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme (MPLADS) was launched in December, 1993, to provide a mechanism for the Members of Parliament to recommend works of developmental nature for

creation of durable community assets and for provision of basic facilities including community infrastructure, based on locally felt needs. The MPLADS is a Central Sector Scheme which is fully funded by Government of India. The annual MPLADS fund entitlement per MP constituency is Rs. 5 crore.

Objective of MPLADS:

o To enable MPs to recommend works of developmental nature with emphasis on the creation of durable community assets based on the locally felt needs to be taken up in their Constituencies.

o Lok Sabha Members can recommend works within their constituencies and elected Members of Rajya Sabha can recommend works within the State they are elected from.

o Nominated Members of both the Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha can recommend works anywhere in the country.

o To create durable assets of national priorities viz. drinking water, primary education, public health, sanitation and roads, etc.

o Recommendation by the MPs should be done annually with works costing at least 15 percent of the MPLADS entitlement for areas inhabited by Scheduled Caste population and 7.5 percent for areas inhabited by the ST population.

Guidelines on MPLADS:

In June 2016, the government came up with MP Local Area Development Scheme Guidelines. A few important details from these guidelines are mentioned below:

The guidelines mentioned to use the MPLAD funds for the implementation of the following:

- Swachh Bharat Mission

- Accessible India Campaign

- Water Conservation using rainwater harvesting systems

- Sansad Adarsh Gram Yojana

MPLADS funds could be converged with MNREGS and Khelo India Schemes for the formation of durable assets

Benefits of suspension of MPLAD:

o The cancellation of MPLADS for two years, on the other hand, is a welcome move. In financial terms, there are savings of nearly ₹4,000 crore per year.

o In the short run, during the times of COVID-19 pandemic, MPLADS funds could have been used for procurement of such supplies that will help in fighting against the disease.

- o While this is not insignificant, the larger benefit is that this will help Members of Parliament focus on their roles as national legislators.
- o As the financial audit of MPLADS is done by the CAG and further examined by the Public Accounts Committee consisting of Members of Parliament, it adds another layer of conflict.
- o The NCRWC recommended immediate discontinuation of the MPLAD scheme on the grounds that it was inconsistent with the spirit of federalism and distribution of powers between the centre and the state.
- o The 2nd ARC report on Ethics in Governance took a firm stand against the scheme arguing that it seriously erodes the notion of separation of powers, as the legislator directly becomes the executive.

Possible effects of the suspension of MPLADS:

- o Will adversely impact grass-root level work: MPLADS is meant to execute development work in the constituency, suspending it is a huge disservice to the constituents and will undermine the role and functions of MP.
- o Impact efforts at state and local level: As there is enough evidence that covid-19 is best fought at the state and local level, the step will take away expenditure to meet unique requirements of an area.
- o Against federalism: As the decision is taken unilaterally by the central government without considering the development needs of the States facing covid-19 outbreak.
- o Contrary to popular perception, MPLAD funds cannot be spent at the discretion of an MP in any manner he/she wants. There is a set of guidelines mandating the utilization of the funds. These diktats are updated regularly and are available on the website of the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation.

Conclusion:

MPLADS is a very nimble and effective scalpel of targeted micro-level intervention. In the months and days ahead, when distress — medical and economic — will haunt the countryside, these discretionary interventions will help save lives. Despite above concerns, the decision will showcase a right signal and gesture of accountability as the government is readying to announce a second round of financial stimulus to deal with the covid-19 pandemic.

UPSC Civils Daily Mains Question 02nd July - 2021

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Recently Japan has initiated a supply chain resilience initiative (SCRI) with India and Australia. What is SCRI? What is the need for it?

In light of the COVID-19 crisis and the recent global-scale changes in the economic and technological landscape the necessity and potential to enhance the resiliency of supply chains in the Indo-Pacific region came into limelight. Supply chain resilience is an approach that helps a country to ensure that it has diversified its supply risk across a clutch of supplying nations instead of being dependent on just one or a few. SCRI is an approach that helps a country to ensure that it has diversified its supply risk across a clutch of supplying nations instead of being dependent on just one or a few.

SCRI

- The initiative aims to reduce the dependency on a single nation (at present China).
- SCRI is a direct response to individual companies and economies concerned about Chinese political behavior and the disruption that could lead to the supply chain.

Objective of SCRI

- To attract foreign direct investment to turn the Indo-Pacific into an “economic powerhouse”.
- To build a mutually complementary relationship among partner countries.
- To work out a plan to build on the existential supply chain network. Japan and India, for example, have an India-Japan competitiveness partnership dealing with locating the Japanese companies in India.

Need for SCRI

- If supply chains are heavily dependent on supplies from one country, the impact on importing nations could be crippling if that source stops production for involuntary reasons, or even as a conscious measure of economic coercion.
- US-China trade tension could threaten globalization as a whole and have a major impact on countries like India, Japan and Australia which are heavily reliant on international trade.
- SCRI can work with Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) to build stronger supply and manufacturing chains that are protected from external shocks and influences.

India needs to enhance self-reliance against China, so that it could build resilience into the economy's supply networks. Economic measures are of real value in this regard.

UPSC Civils Daily Mains Question 06th July - 2021

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Privileges of Parliament do not place a Member of Parliament on a footing different from that of an ordinary citizen in the matter of the application of laws, unless there are good and sufficient reasons in the interest of Parliament itself to do so. Do you agree?

A simple definition of privilege is that it is an exceptional right or exemption. In its legal sense it means an exemption from some duty, burden, attendance or liability to which others are subject. In Parliamentary language, however, the term applies to certain rights and immunities enjoyed by each House of Parliament collectively, and by members of each House individually without which they cannot discharge their functions.

The object of Parliamentary privileges is to safeguard the freedom, the authority and the dignity of Parliament. Privileges are necessary for the proper exercise of the functions entrusted to Parliament by the Constitution. They are enjoyed by individual members, because the House cannot perform its functions without unimpeded use of the service of its members, and by each House collectively for the protection of its member and the vindication of its own authority and dignity.

Constitutional Provisions

- Each House of the Indian Parliament collectively and its members individually enjoy certain powers, privileges and immunities which are considered essential for them to discharge their functions and duties effectively without any let or hindrance.
- Some privileges are specified in the Constitution itself and some of them are specified in certain statutes and the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha, others are at present based on the precedents and conventions which have grown in this country, in terms of the provisions of the Constitution, until defined by Parliament by Law.
- Article 105 of the Constitution of India which provides for powers, privileges and immunities of the Houses of Parliament and of the members and Committees.
- The corresponding provisions relating to the powers, privileges and immunities of the Houses of State Legislatures and of members and Committees thereof are contained in Article 194 of the Constitution which is in identical terms to those in Article 105 relating to Parliament.

Some of the more important privileges of each House of Parliament and of its members and Committee are as follows:—

- (i) Freedom of speech in Parliament [Article 105(1) of the Constitution];
- (ii) Immunity to a member from any proceedings in any court in respect of anything said or any vote given by him in Parliament or any Committees thereof [Article 105(2) of the Constitution];
- (iii) Immunity to a person from proceedings of any court in respect of the publication by or under the authority of either House of Parliament of any report, paper, votes, or proceedings [Article 105(2) of the Constitution];
- (iv) Prohibition on the courts to inquire into proceedings of Parliament (Article 122 of the Constitution);
- (v) Immunity to a person from any proceedings, civil or Criminal, in any court in respect of the publication in a newspaper or a substantially true report of the proceedings of either House of Parliament unless the publication is provided to have been made with malice. This immunity is also available in relation to reports or matters broadcast by means of wireless- telegraphy (Article 361A);
- (vi) Exemption of members from liability to serve as juror;
- (vii) Prohibition of disclosure of the proceedings or decision of a secret sitting of the House;
- (viii) Rights of the House to receive immediate information of the arrests, detention, convictions, imprisonment and release of a member (Rules 229 and 230 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha, Ninth edition);
- (ix) Prohibition of arrest and services of legal process within the precincts of the House without obtaining

the permission of the Speaker (Rules 232 and 233 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha Ninth Edition);

(x) Members or officers of the House cannot give evidence or produce documents in courts of law, relating to the proceedings of the House without the permission of the House. (First Report of Committee of Privileges of Second Lok Sabha, adopted by Lok Sabha on 13 September, 1957);

(xi) Members or officers of the House cannot attend as a witness before the other House or a Committee thereof or before a House of State Legislature or a Committee thereof without the permission of the House and they cannot be compelled to do so without their consent (Sixth Report of Committee of Privileges of Second Lok Sabha, adopted by Lok Sabha on 17th December, 1958);

(xii) All Parliamentary Committees are empowered to send for persons, papers and records relevant for the purpose of the enquiry by a Committee.....A witness may be summoned by a Parliamentary Committee who may be required to produce such documents as are required for the use of a Committee (Rules 269 and 270 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha);

(xiii) A Parliamentary Committee may administer oath or affirmation to a witness examined before it (Rule 272 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha);

(xiv) The evidence tendered before a Parliamentary Committee and its report and proceedings cannot be disclosed or published by anyone until these have been laid on the Table of the House (Rule 275 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha).

Note: You need not mention all of the above. Mention only few important provisions.

Misuse of Parliamentary Privileges

- There is no conclusive legislation to define privileges and resultantly, the punishments for the breach are also not definite.
- In most of the cases media houses are restricted from publishing debates, proceedings, commentaries and even opinions.
- And it is obvious that the government in power would label any publication for breach of privilege if it finds it distasteful.
- This clearly shows the arbitrariness with which the press is punished for doing its work which it is legally entitled to do under Art. 19(1)(a).
- It is an established fact that the legislative privileges have done more harm than good as the politicians have abused this power to seek protection from the offences of bribery, defamation, etc. for a long time.
- The current state of affairs would not reach a resolve until a codified law is in place which would define the privileges, what would constitute their breach and what would be the consequences of such breach.

Therefore, it is the need of the hour that if government want to maintain the dignity of the democracy then it should make appropriate changes in the parliamentary privileges because nobody can be superior to the general public.

UPSC Civils Daily Mains Question 07th July - 2021

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Federalism in the modern age is a principle of reconciliation between two divergent tendencies, the widening range of common interests and the need for local autonomy. Examine this statement with respect to India.

Federalism implies the sharing of constituent and political power, that is, the power to govern at two levels but there may be local governments also within a state. Every federal system requires division of powers between the Union and State Governments and both are independent in their own sphere and not subordinate to one another. To avoid the chaos and conflict between the two competing jurisdictions, the power has been divided between the centre and the States and division of power is one of the most important features of the federal constitutions.

Federalism in Indian perspective:

- In a country like India the importance of federalism is vital because different people from different background and culture live together. Neither it would be possible for a single government to make laws for the whole country nor is it desirable in the interest of the people with varied cultures, language and diverse backgrounds.
- So, the Central government may make laws for the whole and any part of territory of India and the respective State governments may make and implement the laws according to social, economic and
- Till 1935, we had unitary system in India, the Government of India Act, 1935 envisaged the federal scheme and first time introduced the federal concept in India and made legal use of the word 'Federation', even though, the process of decentralisation and devolution of power had started since the earlier Government of India Act, 1919.
- Indian federal system is not a result of any treaty or agreement amongst the constituent units/states.
- In India, unitary system of government was converted into a federal one by giving certain powers and responsibilities to the states under the constitution.
- The framers of the Indian constitution aimed at establishing a federal system in India in view of the social diversities and the vast size of the country.
- The constitution of India enumerates various items of legislation in three lists:
 - ? Union List, Concurrent List and State List in the VII Schedule of the Constitution.
 - ? The three legislative lists respectively enumerated the powers vested in the Parliament, the state legislature and to both of them concurrently.
 - ? However, if a matter was not covered by any of the three Lists that would be treated as a residuary power of the Parliament.
 - ? The independent judiciary plays an important role as final interpreter of the Constitution in federal structure and uphold the constitutional values.
- In *Keshavanada Bharti v. State of Kerala*, Sikri C.J. and other judges of the full bench considered the federal character of the constitution as a basic feature of our constitution.
- In *S.R. Bommai v. Union of India*, a nine judge bench has clearly enunciated that Indian Constitution is federal.
- In *Kuldip Nayar v. Union of India*, the Parliament in 2003 amended the Representative of People Act, 1951 wherein it deleted the requirement of "domicile" in the State concerned for getting elected to the Council of States.
 - ? The issue in this case was: Whether 2003 amendment Act violated the principle of Federalism, a basic structure of the constitution?
 - ? The petitioner contended that the impugned amendment to section 3 of the Representative of People Act 1951 offended the principle of federalism.
 - ? The court rejected the petitioner's contention and held
- In *UCO Bank v. Dipak Debbarma*, the court has made several observations on the federal character of our constitution and the need to maintain the federal balance which has been envisaged in our constitution to prevent any usurpation of power either by the centre or the states.

? This judgment reflects that even there is doctrine of federal supremacy but it does not mean that state have no autonomy.

? The state is supreme within their allotted sphere and centre has no authority to transgress the limits. If centre will do so, the court has to interpret the entries by giving widest possible interpretation to each entry.

Indian constitution has all the features of federal constitution, the centre and states are independent to make laws in their respective field assigned by the constitution. However, the centre has supremacy in certain situations that is also mentioned in the Constitution itself. If either government tries to transgress the limits an independent judiciary plays an important role as the apex court is considered the protector and guarantor of the Constitution. The concept of federalism in India keeps changing since the commencement of the Constitution. With the change in the political system i.e. from dominance of one-party rule to the era of coalition government. Following the rise of regional parties and fragile coalition governments, the federation has to grow more flexible and conciliatory, particularly in its financial aspects.

UPSC Civils Daily Mains Question 08th July - 2021

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Discuss how online dispute resolution can aid as an alternative method for addressing the issue of pendency of cases in our judicial system.

The pendency of over 40 million cases in our judicial system remains a focal point for reform and reduction. Nearly a third of these have been pending for three to 30 years due to resource-dwindling litigation, case adjudication and difficulty in consensus resolution.

Online Dispute Resolution (ODR) has been defined to mean utilizing information technology to carry out alternative dispute resolution. ODR is a means of dispute settlement whether through conciliation or arbitration, which implies the use of online technologies to facilitate the resolution of disputes between parties. The information management and communication tools in ODR may apply to all or part of the proceedings, and also have an impact on the methods by which the disputes are being solved.

Significance of online dispute resolution

- ODR has significantly large-scale potential for innovation. For instance, the feedback rating system in e-commerce, where parties to a transaction criticise or praise each other has incentivised developing a reputation for scaling activity through smooth transactions.
- ODR has the potential to raise equity, fairness, access in the dispute resolution ecosystem in India.
- Supply-side capabilities could also be enhanced through a relatively large and competent services pool for adjudication and representation.

- ODR has the potential to be an effective alternative that utilises technology to bridge barriers and access in resolution.
- Through facilitating low cost, remote, technology-augmented, linguistically- friendly, amicable and incentivised dispute avoidance, containment and resolution while adhering to principles of natural justice, ODR could be the post-pandemic disruption that enhances justice delivery to all.

Disputes resolution is a tricky affair for all stakeholders including courts, government, companies, individuals, international organizations, etc. To reduce the hardships of such disputes, countries should adopt a model code of conduct that was incorporated in their respective domestic laws. Measures should be taken to face the upcoming challenges. If measures towards the same are not taken, then ODR proceedings in India may only be limited to theories redundant and unused.

UPSC Civils Daily Mains Question 09th July - 2021

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Discuss the structural and practical limitations that hamper the work of human rights commissions.

NHRC of India is an independent statutory body established in 1993 as per provisions of Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993, later amended in 2006. The NHRC is an embodiment of India's concern for the promotion and protection of human rights. Section 2(1)(d) of the PHRA defines Human Rights as the rights relating to life, liberty, equality and dignity of the individual guaranteed by the Constitution or embodied in the International Covenants and enforceable by courts in India.

Structural limitation

Outright rejection of a recommendation:

Governments often ignore the recommendation completely or furnish a long bureaucratic discourse on how compliance with the recommendation is not in the public interest (read governmental interest).

Partial compliance:

An example of this is a failure to release the full amount of compensation. Another example is to take action on only one recommendation when there were actually dual recommendations, such as to pay compensation and take disciplinary action.

Delayed compliance:

While recommendations usually obligate governments to take action within 4-6 weeks, compliance is rare within the stipulated time and sometimes action is so delayed that it becomes meaningless.

Time – bar:

Under the Act, human rights commissions cannot investigate an event if the complaint was made more than one year after the incident. Therefore, a large number of genuine grievances go unaddressed.

Bar on violations by Armed Forces:

State human rights commissions cannot call for information from the national government, which means that they are implicitly denied the power to investigate armed forces under national control. Even the powers of the National Human Rights Commission relating to violations of human rights by the armed forces have been restricted to simply seeking a report from the Government, (without being allowed to summons witnesses), and then issuing recommendations.

Practical limitations

Non-filling of vacancies:

- Most human rights commissions are functioning with less than the prescribed five Members. This limits the capacity of commissions to deal promptly with complaints, especially as all are facing successive increases in the number of complaints.

Non-availability of funds:

- Scarcity of resources – or rather, resources not being used for human rights related functions – is another big problem.
- Large chunks of the budget of commissions go in office expenses and in maintaining their members, leaving disproportionately small amounts for other crucial areas such as research and rights awareness programmes.

Too many complaints:

- A common problem faced by most human rights commissions is that they are deluged with complaints. State human rights commissions too, are finding it difficult to address the increasing number of complaints.

Bureaucratic style of functioning:

- As human rights commissions primarily draw their staff from government departments – either on deputation or reemployment after retirement – the internal atmosphere is usually just like any other government office.
- Strict hierarchies are maintained, which often makes it difficult for complainants to obtain documents or information about the status of their case. The presence of security guards, armies of peons and office attendants creates barriers for ordinary people to personally meet officials in regard to their complaint.

If human rights commissions are to truly protect and promote human rights in India, changes must be made to enable them to become more effective institutions.

UPSC Civils Daily Mains Question 10th July - 2021

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In the backdrop of a number of bills having been passed without much scrutiny in the parliament, examine the necessity of Parliamentary standing committees. Do you think they are not able to realize their expected potential?

Primary role of Parliament is deliberation, discussion and reconsideration, the hallmarks of any democratic institution. As the Parliament need technical expertise to understand such matters better deliberates on matters that are complex, Parliamentary Committees help with this by providing a forum where Members can engage with domain experts and government officials during the course of their study.

Necessity of Parliamentary standing committees

- Committee reports are usually exhaustive and provide authentic information on matters related to governance.
- Bills that are referred to committees are returned to the House with significant value addition. Parliament is not bound by the recommendations of committees.
- Standing committees form an integral part of Parliament's role in the debate. They discuss laws and policies by analysing them in-depth. They are composed of members from both Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha.
- Additionally, standing committees provide a platform for MPs to track government expenditure, scrutinise policies and bills and seek expert advice.
- Due to the untelevised nature of committee meetings, they are also used as a forum for consensus-building among parties for controversial issues or contentious pieces of legislation.
- The committees perform their functions without the cloud of political positioning and populist opinion.
- These committees allow the views of diverse stakeholders.

Backdrops in Parliamentary committees and suggestions:

- As the Parliamentary committees don't have dedicated subject-wise research support available, the knowledge gap is partially bridged by expert testimony from government and other stakeholders.

- So, their work could be made more effective if the committees had full-time, sector-specific research staff.
- The national commission to review the working of the Constitution has recommended that in order to strengthen the committee system, research support should be made available to them.
- Currently, the rules of Parliament don't require every bill to be referred to a parliamentary committee for scrutiny. While this allows the government greater flexibility and the ability to speed up legislative business, it comes at the cost of ineffective scrutiny by the highest law-making body.
- Mandatory scrutiny of all bills by parliamentary committees would ensure better planning of legislative business.

There is a need to strengthen the parliamentary committees rather than bypassing them for the betterment of the parliamentary democracy.

UPSC Civils Daily Mains Question 14th July - 2021

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Do you think that constitutional makers made a mistake by making DPSP non-justiciable as it is affecting social and economic justice?

The Directive Principles of State Policy of India (DPSP) are the guidelines or the principles given to the federal institutes governing the State of India, to be kept in mind while framing laws and policies. These provisions are not enforceable by any court, but the principles therein laid down are nevertheless fundamental in the governance of the country and it shall be the duty of the state to apply these principles in making laws.

While Fundamental Rights aim for the political welfare of the citizens; the DPSP aims to institute social and economic welfare for its citizens. However, unlike Fundamental Rights, DPSP has been made non-justiciable. This has led to some constitutional experts opining that DPSP are just pious superfluities and compared them to 'a cheque payable only when the resources of the bank permit'.

- This non-justifiable nature of the DPSP has affected the cause of social and economic justice in the country since:
 1. Political rights without meaningful social and economic rights do not lead to increase in either the standard or the quality of life of citizens in a country. Ex: Human Development Index of India is less compared to other developing and developed countries.

2. In spite of Fundamental rights provided to citizens of India; there still remains widespread gender disparity, social inequalities, income inequality in India etc
3. In spite of positive public consensus on certain DPSP and required economic strength in the government; there has been no adequate implementation of the same on it because of lack of political will. Ex: Passing women reservation in the Parliament which could bring down gender disparity in the country
4. Making them justiciable would have reduced the legal conflicts which arose due to conflict between Fundamental Rights and DPSP. This could have accelerated the reform agenda of the government. Ex: Land reforms
5. By making certain issues such as 'Uniform Civil Code' non-justiciable, constitutional makers failed to wield the whole of India into one single nation.

However, it would be unfair to assume the above position in its totality since:

1. DPSP have acted as a moral obligation on parties ever since the independence in guiding them in crucial policymaking.
 2. Several laws have been passed by the government to implement some of the DPSP. Ex: Equal remuneration Act, MGNREGA (to provide livelihood), Ayushman Bharat etc
 3. Even the judiciary has opined that the constitution of India is based on the balance between Fundamental Rights and DPSP; thereby giving special emphasis to DPSP in certain cases.
4. By making certain issues such as 'Uniform Civil Code' as non-justiciable, constitutional makers avoided a possible threat to social fabric of the Indian society in the initial years.

Just because DPSP are not justiciable doesn't mean they are superfluous. Their importance has been always interpreted by Court, opposition parties and civil society organizations to keep a check on the government and make them accountable for establishing a welfare state.

UPSC Civils Daily Mains Question 13th July - 2021

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Despite the provision to draft a federal Constitution, the Government of India Act 1935 fell short of an actual federal Constitution. Critically analyse.

It was the longest act enacted by the British Parliament at that time. According to this act, India would become a federation if 50% of Indian states decided to join it. They would then have a large number of representatives in the two houses of the central legislature. However, the provisions with regards to the federation were not implemented. The act made no reference even to granting dominion status, much less independence, to India.

Federal features in GOI 1935

- All India Federation: It provided for the establishment of an All India Federation consisting of the British India Provinces and other Indian states. The States were absolutely free to join or not to join the proposed Federation. The rulers of Indian states never gave their consent and thus, the Federation envisaged by the Act never came into being.
- Provincial Autonomy: One redeeming feature of the new Act was that it marked the beginning of the provincial autonomy. The Act divided legislative powers between the provincial and central legislatures and within their defined sphere the provinces were autonomous units of administration. The Ministers were not absolutely free in matters running their departments. The Governors continued to possess a set of overriding powers.
- Setting up of a federal legislature: Bicameralism was introduced. The Federal Legislature was to consist of two houses. It envisaged setting up a council of states and federal assembly, with reservations in the Council of states for minorities, women and depressed classes.
- Distribution of Legislative Power: The act made a three-fold division of powers between the Centre and the Provinces- federal list, provincial list and concurrent list. The subjects which were of all-India interest and demanded uniform treatment were put in the federal list.
- Setting up of a federal court: A Federal court was also envisaged to be set up under this act so the provisions of the act could be interpreted in case of any disputes. The Federal Court established by this Act has three kinds of jurisdictions i.e. Original, Appellate and Advisory. The court had exclusive original jurisdiction in any dispute between the Federation and its units.

Non federal features on GOI 1935

- Discretionary powers: The new act armed the governors and governor-general with tremendous discretionary powers and thus reduced provincial autonomy on paper. In a way the Act made the Governors so powerful that they could play the dictator if they liked. The Governors and the Governor-General continued to have the last word in the preparation of budget and allocation of funds to various departments.
- Legislation regarding provincial list: The Federal Legislature had the power to legislate with respect to the subjects enumerated in the Provincial List if a proclamation of emergency was made by the governor-general.
- Defective federation: The proposed formation of the Federation was also fundamentally defective. Entry into the federation was compulsory for the Provinces but voluntary for the Princely States. There was a lot of difference in regard to population, area, political importance and status between the provinces and the States. Whereas the British Provinces were partly autonomous units, the States were still under the autocratic rule of the Princes.
- Residuary powers: The allocation of residuary powers was unique. It was not vested in either of the legislatures, central or provincial. But the Governor-General was empowered to authorise, either the Federal or the Provincial Legislature to enact a law with respect to any residuary matter.

Government of India Act 1935, however, had introduced several features which later formed the nucleus of our Constitution.

UPSC Civils Daily Mains Question 12th July - 2021

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What are the functions of Central Vigilance Commission (CVC)? Critically analyse the powers of CVC.

Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) is an apex Indian governmental body created in 1964. CVC was set up based on the recommendations of the Committee on Prevention of Corruption, headed by Shri K. Santhanam, to advise and guide Central Government agencies in the field of vigilance. The CVC is an independent body, free of control from any executive authority and it is NOT controlled by any ministry or department. The CVC is NOT an investigating agency. The CVC may have the investigation done through the CBI or Chief Vigilance Officers (CVO) in government offices.

Importance of CVC

- It has led to smooth appointment of important officers at various posts in the past.
- It has taken noteworthy action in the past against senior officials, senior personnel and even many politicians.
- It organises vigilance week every year to create awareness against the menace of Corruption.
- It acts as a civil court and can act "Suo Moto"
- The independence of CVC is maintained as it is recruited by an Independent committee consisting of PM, Home Minister, Leader of Opposition etc.

Limitation of the CVC

- CVC is treated as an advisory body only as Central Government Departments are free to either accept or reject CVC's advice in corruption cases.
- The Commission has no jurisdiction over private individuals and organisations of the State Governments.
- The CVC is left with no power to register criminal case.
- The CVC cannot direct the CBI to initiate inquiries against any officer of the level of Joint Secretary and above. Hence, CVC neither has the resources nor the power to take action on complaints of corruption.
- Appointments to CVC are indirectly under the control of Govt of India. Although, the leader of the Opposition in Lok Sabha is a member of the committee that selects the CVC Members – the committee just considers the candidates that are put up before it, and these candidates are decided by the Government.
- CVC is a very small set up with a sanctioned staff strength of 299, which is supposed to check corruption in more than 1500 central government departments and ministries.

Corruption is one issue that needs effective institutions to tackle the same, the demand of new institutions like Lokpal is on the rise due to the failure of the existing organization like the CVC. The powers of the CVC with respect to its mandate, the financial independence, increase in the implementation of otherwise the just advisory role of the CVC needs to be tackled.

IAS Academy UPSC Civils Daily Mains

Question 15th July -2021

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Assess the effectiveness of the institutional architecture of Indian federalism in settling inter- state disputes.

In a constitutional set-up based on the federal principles, sovereignty is divided between the federation and the units. Division of sovereignty implies the creation of boundaries, and this is bound to raise disputes especially in a country like India, which is characterized by a diversity of culture, language, heritage and customs.

On numerous occasions disputes between two or more states have arisen and led to unwarranted situations. The most long-standing and contentious inter-state issue has been the sharing of river waters. Due to increase in demand for water, a number of interstate disputes over sharing river waters have surfaced. For example, Cauvery water dispute between upstream state (Karnataka) and downstream state (Tamil Nadu), Krishna water dispute between Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka etc.

Further, many boundary issues have cropped up between the states as well. For example, Karnataka and Maharashtra's claim over Belgaum, tensions between Assam and Meghalaya related to Assam Reorganization Act of 1971 etc. Additionally, there have been violent agitations in some states over migrants and job seekers from other states. This has increased bitterness between the states even further which tends to weaken the roots of healthy federalism.

Existing institutional architecture of India federalism in settling inter-state disputes

- **Article 131** confers upon the Supreme Court of India exclusive jurisdiction to deal with disputes between two or more States.
- Using **Article 262**, Parliament enacted the Interstate River Water Disputes Act, 1956 (IRWD Act) for adjudication of any dispute with respect to the use, distribution or control of the waters of, in any inter-State river or river valley.
- Further, under **Article 136 {Special Leave Petition}**, Supreme Court, in its discretion, may grant special leave to appeal from any judgment, decree, determination, sentence or order in any cause or matter passed or made by any court or tribunal in the territory of India. It has been used to resolve the grievances of the states.

- Other institutional setup in this regard are **Inter-State Council** set up under Article 263, **Zonal Councils** to discuss matters of common concerns to states in each zone and **Finance Commission** providing frame work for the distribution of taxes between different states.

The effectiveness of the institutional architecture of India federalism in settling inter-state disputes:

There are nine separate tribunals to adjudicate water disputes. Four of the tribunals took 10 to 28 years to deliver their awards. Currently, there is no definite time frame to adjudicate disputes and as a result, most inter-state river water disputes continue to linger on.

- Inter-State Council has had just 12 meetings since it was set up in 1990. There was a gap of a decade between the 10th meeting in 2006 and the 11th meeting in 2016, and the council met again in November 2017. Further, the Council does not have the power to investigate issues and there is no compulsion on the government of the day to accept the outcomes of the meetings.
- Even the meetings of Zonal Councils have been sporadic which reduces their utility as an action-oriented dispute resolution platform.
- Most of the institutional architecture of Indian federalism is focused on relations between the Union government and the states, and there is far less space to settle inter-state frictions.

Recently, the Union Cabinet approved Inter-State River Water Disputes (Amendment) Bill, 2019 wherein timely and expeditious resolution of inter-state river disputes would be ensured by a single tribunal. Even NITI Aayog's Governing Council has been used as a

platform to discuss policies as well as address inter-state disputes. Recently, a state's Chief Minister called for greater inter-state cooperation to effectively tackle cross-border crimes.

Further, there is an institutional gap in the Indian union right now, which needs to be filled before inter-state frictions get out of control. The Centre would have to play the role of friend, philosopher and guide to the States in facilitating the growth process. It should take the initiative of re-energizing the Constitutionally-approved institutional mechanisms such as the Inter-State Council, so that States get a platform to voice their concerns even more regularly.

IAS Academy UPSC Civils Daily Mains

Question 16th July -2021

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Do you think India should adopt the US type of Presidential system?

Modern democratic governments are classified into parliamentary and presidential on the basis of the nature of relations between the executive and the legislative organs of the government. The parliamentary system of government is the one in which the executive is responsible to the legislature for its policies and acts. This type of model is prevalent in Britain, Canada, India and Japan. The presidential system of government on the other hand is one in which the executive is not responsible to the legislature for its policies and acts, and is constitutionally independent of the legislature in respect of its term of office. USA, Brazil and Russia are examples of this type of model of government.

Need for a shift from Parliamentary to Presidential system:

- The disgraceful political shenanigans the nation has witnessed, most recently in Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan, and the horse-trading of MLAs to switch allegiances for power and pelf, are not merely an occasion for breast-beating about morality in politics or the opportunism of the cash-rich ruling party.
- For 25 years till 2014, our system has also produced coalition governments which have been obliged to focus more on politics than on policy or performance. It has forced governments to concentrate less on governing than on staying in office, and obliged them to cater to the lowest common denominator of their coalitions, since withdrawal of support can bring governments down. The parliamentary system has distorted the voting preferences of an electorate that knows which individuals it wants but not necessarily which parties or policies.
- Besides, India's many challenges require political arrangements that permit decisive action, whereas ours increasingly promote drift and indecision.
- We must have a system of government whose leaders can focus on governance rather than on staying in power. Our parliamentary system has created a unique breed of legislator, largely unqualified to legislate, who has sought election only in order to wield executive power.
- It has produced governments dependent on a fickle legislative majority, who are therefore obliged to focus more on politics than on policy or performance.
- It has distorted the voting preferences of an electorate that knows which individuals it wants to vote for but not necessarily which parties.
- It has spawned parties that are shifting alliances of selfish individual interests, not vehicles of coherent sets of ideas.

- It has forced governments to concentrate less on governing than on staying in office, and obliged them to cater to the lowest common denominator of their coalitions.
- The parliamentary system has failed us.
- Pluralist democracy is India's greatest strength, but its current manner of operation is the source of our major weaknesses.

Should India adopt the Presidential system?

- A presidential system centralizes power in one individual unlike the parliamentary system, where the Prime Minister is the first among equals. The surrender to the authority of one individual, as in the presidential system, is dangerous for democracy.
- The over-centralization of power in one individual is something we have to guard against.
- Those who argue in favor of a presidential system often state that the safeguards and checks are in place: that a powerful President can be stalled by a powerful legislature.
- But if the legislature is dominated by the same party to which the President belongs, a charismatic President or a "strong President" may prevent any move from the legislature.
- On the other hand, if the legislature is dominated by a party opposed to the President's party and decides to checkmate him, it could lead to a stalemate in governance because both the President and the legislature would have democratic legitimacy.
- A diverse country like India cannot function without consensus-building. This "winner takes it all" approach, which is a necessary consequence of the presidential system, is likely to lead to a situation where the views of an individual can ride roughshod over the interests of different segments.
- Thus India is performing well on the scale of the Parliamentary system and needs to strengthen it.

Conclusion: India's constitutional makers adopted the Parliamentary system due to factors like familiarity of the system, preference to more responsibility; need to avoid Legislative-Executive conflict and nature of Indian society. These factors still stand relevant at present for Indian polity. In fact, the matter of whether to change the Presidential system was considered in detail by the Swaran Singh Committee appointed by the congress government in 1975. The committee opined that the parliamentary system has been doing well and there is no need to replace it with the Presidential system.

IAS Academy UPSC Civils Daily Mains

Question 17th July -2021

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Strategies in tackling the COVID-19 crisis must include local governments being equipped and fiscally empowered. Elaborate

The pandemic has put enormous pressure on local governments to respond and minimize the effects it may have on citizens. Apart from the regular responsibilities, municipalities had to intensify their work in assisting the most vulnerable citizens and engage in direct communication to prevent the pandemic from spreading. On the one hand, municipalities had to react quickly in disinfecting and cleaning the streets and residential apartments. On the other hand, they had to also keep up with other areas of the municipal mandates, such as waste collection and other services.

Concerns in local financing

- There is no clarity in the assignment of functions, functionaries and financial responsibilities to local governments
- In States such as Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Jharkhand, local tax collection at the panchayat level is next to nil.
- Inadequate grants from the finance commission.
- Un skilled staff to effectively collect the taxes levied
- Corruption by the legislative authorities result in the decline of transparency in distributing funds to various projects.
- Building health infrastructure and disease control strategies at the local level find no mention in the five tranches of the packages announced by the Union Finance Minister.

Steps to fiscally empower local bodies

- Financial devolution should be transparent as it increases accountability to people so performance can be realized as direct contact with people.
- Issues like lack of expertise to plan development priorities and use resources optimally have to be solved with proper mechanisms.
- In the context of the crisis under way, all grants must be untied for freely evolving proper COVID-19 containment strategies locally.
- Creating a separate tax domain for local governments, by amending the Constitution, is not practicable. However, States should ensure that the law gives sufficient powers to the local bodies regarding taxes that are more appropriately collected at local levels.

- Introduction of the new simplified and transparent system of taxation would definitely improve the collection efficiency.

As covid-19 has shown us the critical need for the equipment and empowerment of the local governments, the process to strengthen local bodies should come to reality.

IAS Academy UPSC Civils Daily Mains

Question 18th July -2021

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Though Democracy protects the best interests of the people, regardless of their race, gender, sexuality, religion or political opinion there are many issues in a democratic form of governance. Examine. Also discuss how these issues can be resolved in a country like India.

Democracy means rule by the people to ensure that every citizen takes part in the decision-making process either directly or indirectly through elected representatives. India is the largest democracy in the world. In the last more than 6 decades it has worked successfully well to some extent. But in modern India it has to face many challenges that need to be tackled in order to ensure true democracy.

Challenges in a democratic form of governance

- A critical study of the nature of Indian politics indicates that national integration is under threat owing to various factors mainly, the role of caste, regionalism, or demand for creation of small states. Communalism, reservation, politics of language, the problem of minorities, backward classes, violence, political opportunism, socio-cultural conflicts, terrorism are glaring problems posing a big threat invariably haunting the spirit of democracy.
- In recent years, there have been quite some serious contemplation and debates about the decline of Parliament's authority and its disengagements, in resolving, pervasive inequalities within society on the basis of caste, class, and gender thus limiting representation of citizens and the credibility of the judicial system.
- The values of democracy, civil liberties, secularism, equality of all citizens irrespective of religion, caste, region or gender notwithstanding, are often targeted by communal forces at different levels.
- Judicial system is presently mired in multiple administrative and functional implications- both externally and internally and thus causing a massive and alarming threat to its credibility and utility to the nation.
- Regionalism has posed a serious threat to national unity and its integrity.

Precautions to strengthen democratic governance

- People should be guided to choose their true representatives. They should not be influenced by anyone in this respect.
- People should not allow communalism, separatism, casteism, terrorism, etc to raise their heads. They are a threat to democracy.

- The electorate should be imparted with the knowledge of political consciousness. They should be made fully aware of their rights and privileges through organising programmes such as conferences, seminars, workshops, symposia etc.
- The Directive Principles of State Policies must necessarily make justiciable rights just like fundamental rights of part III of the Indian Constitution.

The main focus of political reforms should be on ways to strengthen democratic practice. Any proposal for political reforms should think not only about what is a good solution but also about who will **18. India's response to the COVID-19 pandemic has shifted the balance of its federal structure. Do you agree? If so illustrate with examples.**

India's constitution lays out a detailed scheme for the separation of powers between the centre and the states, albeit with a unitary bias. The constitutionally mandated Finance Commission recommends the division of revenues between the centre and the states, with the centre traditionally retaining a significant majority of the pool. But the specific contours of this relationship have changed over time — for example, with the introduction of the Goods and Services Tax.

The pandemic has enabled the central government to implement far-reaching reforms in areas, such as agriculture, traditionally considered to be the domain of states. This exercise by the central government is indicative of its willingness to take advantage of a global crisis and use the levers of federal power to implement significant reforms. It also indicates that, contrary to conventional wisdom, the constitutional structure of India's federalism is less relevant to the actual relationship between India's national and state governments.

The pandemic and its economic impact on state governments has presented the central government with another opportunity to alter this balance to its advantage.

- The initial stages of the COVID-19 response highlighted the unitary tilt in the Indian federal structure. The central government implemented a national lockdown using its powers under a central disaster management law, and its Ministry of Home Affairs issued extensive guidelines to states for controlling the pandemic. This law empowers the central government to commandeer state and local authorities if necessary. State governments acquiesced even though they have independent powers under a more specific law, the Epidemic Diseases Act, 1897.
- In doing so, states ceded considerable decision-making power and political capital to the central government.

- Subsequent phases of the lockdown have seen their autonomy restored, but Indian states now have less functional power relative to the centre. Since the national lockdown required shutting down almost all economic activity, there was a drastic reduction in revenue for state governments. Even prior to the lockdown, many states in India had already breached — or came close to breaching — their mandated fiscal deficit limits. The lockdown has further increased their financial dependence on the centre.
- This erosion of political and financial capital has enabled the centre to benefit at the expense of states.
- India's finance minister announced a series of reforms to facilitate India's post-lockdown economic recovery. Many of these measures impinge on the autonomy of state governments and have only been accepted due to the unprecedented situation presented by the pandemic.
- One such measure has been a conditional increase in the borrowing limit for states. The central government enhanced the borrowing limit of state governments from 3 percent to 5 percent of their gross state domestic product. But only the first 0.5 percent of this increase is unconditional — a further 1 percent will be permitted only if the borrowing is linked to specific reforms such as debt sustainability, job creation, power sector reforms and urban development. A final 0.5 percent will be permitted only if states achieve key milestones in these areas.
- Reforms in the agricultural sector impinge even more on state autonomy. Agriculture is a state matter in India, and states tend to oppose even modest reforms suggested by the central government. The recent reforms completely dismantle the long-standing agricultural marketing system, which monopolised trade in agriculture within states and prevented the growth of a more efficient agricultural marketing system. Ordinances passed by the central government side-step the powers of states in this regard. Instead, the central government has pointed to other constitutional entries to justify its own powers to legislate on this subject.
- Both measures — the increase in borrowing limits and the agricultural reforms — are examples of the centre using the pandemic as an opportunity to address long-standing governance issues in many Indian states. In doing so, it has recognised that the pandemic has created unique financial and political vulnerabilities in state governments. This has increased the likelihood of them acquiescing to the governance priorities of the centre.

In addition to its other effects, the pandemic may have consolidated a new phase of federal relations, where states increasingly accept the reform priorities of the centre in a manner not seen in a generation.

Implement it and how it will be implemented.

IAS Academy UPSC Civils Daily Mains

Question 19th July -2021

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India's response to the COVID-19 pandemic has shifted the balance of its federal structure. Do you agree? If so illustrate with examples.

India's constitution lays out a detailed scheme for the separation of powers between the centre and the states, albeit with a unitary bias. The constitutionally mandated Finance Commission recommends the division of revenues between the centre and the states, with the centre traditionally retaining a significant majority of the pool. But the specific contours of this relationship have changed over time — for example, with the introduction of the Goods and Services Tax.

The pandemic has enabled the central government to implement far-reaching reforms in areas, such as agriculture, traditionally considered to be the domain of states. This exercise by the central government is indicative of its willingness to take advantage of a global crisis and use the levers of federal power to implement significant reforms. It also indicates that, contrary to conventional wisdom, the constitutional structure of India's federalism is less relevant to the actual relationship between India's national and state governments.

The pandemic and its economic impact on state governments has presented the central government with another opportunity to alter this balance to its advantage.

- The initial stages of the COVID-19 response highlighted the unitary tilt in the Indian federal structure. The central government implemented a national lockdown using its powers under a central disaster management law, and its Ministry of Home Affairs issued extensive guidelines to states for controlling the pandemic. This law empowers the central government to commandeer state and local authorities if necessary. State governments acquiesced even though they have independent powers under a more specific law, the Epidemic Diseases Act, 1897.
- In doing so, states ceded considerable decision-making power and political capital to the central government.
- Subsequent phases of the lockdown have seen their autonomy restored, but Indian states now have less functional power relative to the centre. Since the national lockdown required shutting down almost all economic activity, there was a drastic

reduction in revenue for state governments. Even prior to the lockdown, many states in India had already breached — or came close to breaching — their mandated fiscal deficit limits. The lockdown has further increased their financial dependence on the centre.

- This erosion of political and financial capital has enabled the centre to benefit at the expense of states.
- India's finance minister announced a series of reforms to facilitate India's post-lockdown economic recovery. Many of these measures impinge on the autonomy of state governments and have only been accepted due to the unprecedented situation presented by the pandemic.
- One such measure has been a conditional increase in the borrowing limit for states. The central government enhanced the borrowing limit of state governments from 3 percent to 5 percent of their gross state domestic product. But only the first 0.5 percent of this increase is unconditional — a further 1 percent will be permitted only if the borrowing is linked to specific reforms such as debt sustainability, job creation, power sector reforms and urban development. A final 0.5 percent will be permitted only if states achieve key milestones in these areas.
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In addition to its other effects, the pandemic may have consolidated a new phase of federal relations, where states increasingly accept the reform priorities of the centre in a manner not seen in a generation.

IAS Academy UPSC Civils Daily Mains

Question 20th July -2021

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Democracy and dissent go hand in hand, but then the demonstrations expressing dissent have to be in designated places alone. Examine the statement in the light of the recent Shaheen Bagh judgement.

Though people have the right to protest it shouldn't affect the public places or it shouldn't cause any inconvenience to the people around them as those people who are not part of that demonstration have the right to life.

Right to Protest

- The right to protest is the manifestation of the right to freedom of assembly, the right to freedom of association, and the right to freedom of speech.
- The Constitution of India provides the right of freedom, given in Article 19 with the view of guaranteeing individual rights that were considered vital by the framers of the constitution.
- The Right to protest peacefully is enshrined in Article 19(1) (a) guarantees the freedom of speech and expression; Article 19(1) (b) assures citizens the right to assemble peaceably and without arms.

Article 19(2) imposes reasonable restrictions on the right to assemble peaceably and without arms.

The Supreme Court has found the indefinite "occupation" of a public road by the Shaheen Bagh protestors unacceptable.

- The court said the protest, considered an iconic dissent mounted by mothers, children and senior citizens of Shaheen Bagh against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, became inconvenient to commuters.
- The judgment upheld the right to peaceful protest against the law but made it unequivocally clear that public ways and public spaces cannot be occupied, and that too indefinitely.
- The present case was not even one of the protests taking place in an undesignated area but was a blockage of a public way which caused grave inconvenience to commuters. Fundamental rights do not live in isolation. The right of the protester has to be balanced with the right of the commuter. They have to co-exist in mutual respect. The court held it was entirely the responsibility of the administration to prevent encroachments in public spaces.

IAS Academy UPSC Civils Daily Mains

Question 21st July -2021

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The Press was the chief instrument for carrying out the main political tasks during the India's freedom struggle. Discuss. Also mention British actions to curb efforts of the press. (250 words)

Indian press began to spread its roots in the 1870s. During 1870 to 1918 powerful newspapers emerged during these years under distinguished and fearless journalists. Both the English and vernacular press started by prominent Indian leaders acted as catalysts to the freedom struggle. The British were kept troubled by the national awakening caused by the press.

Note: you can mention names and editors of newspapers – for example — the Hindu and Swadesamitran under the editorship of G. Subramaniya Iyer, Kesari and Mahratta under B.G. Tilak, Bengalee under Surendranath Banerjea, Amrita Bazar Patrika under Sisir Kumar Ghosh and Motilal Ghosh, Sudharak under G.K. Gokhale, Indian Mirror under N.N. Sen, Voice of India under Dadabhai Naoroji, Hindustani and Advocate under G.P. Varma and Tribune and Akhbar-i-Am in Punjab, Indu Prakash, Dnyan Prakash, Kal and Gujarati in Bombay, and Som Prakash, Banganivasi, and Sadharani in Bengal.

Role of press in freedom struggle

- The Press was the chief instrument for carrying out the main political tasks i.e. political propaganda, education, and formation and propagation of nationalist ideology to arouse, train, mobilize and consolidate nationalist public opinion.
- Even the work of the National Congress was accomplished during these years largely through the Press.
- The resolutions it took and the proceedings of its meetings were propagated through newspapers. Nearly all the major political controversies of the day were conducted through the Press.
- Interestingly and naturally, nearly one-third of the founding members of the INC in 1885 were journalists.
- In fact, almost all the major political leaders in India either owned a newspaper or were contributing their writings to one or the other.
- The circulation was not confined only to cities or large towns. Newspapers used to reach remote villages. A reader would then read them to the others who, most probably, were not able to read.

- Gradually the trend of libraries started all over the country. A single newspaper would be made the center of a local 'library'. The main assets used to be a table, a bench or two or a charpoy.
- Every piece of news or editorial comment would be read or heard and discussed thoroughly.
- The newspapers were started to be considered as political educator and reading or discussing them became a form of political participation.
- Newspapers were not published with business intentions but as a national or public service. They were patronized and financed by rich, aware philanthropists.
- It played the role of an institution of opposition for the Government

British actions to curb efforts of press

- Since 1870 **Section 124A** of the Indian Penal Code stated that 'whoever attempts to excite feelings of disaffection of the Government established by law in British India' was to be punished with transportation for life or with imprisonment upto three years or for any term.
- Indian journalists used tricks to stay outside the Section 124A. They would publish anti-imperialist extracts from London-based socialist and Irish newspapers or letters from radical British citizens. Indian (British) Government could not discriminate against the Indians in taking action against them without punishing the offending Britishers too.
- The **Vernacular Press Act of 1878**, against Indian language newspapers, was passed at a single sitting of the Imperial Legislative Council.
- The Act ordered the confiscation of the printing press, paper and other materials of a newspaper if the Government believed that it was publishing instigative materials and had flouted any warning from the government.
- Nationalist public bodies and the Press campaigned against this Act. Eventually, it had to be repealed in 1881 by Lord Ripon.

One of the most prominent journalists, activists and Congressman was Bal Gangadhar Tilak. He owned two newspapers, one in Marathi called Kesari and another in English called Mahratta. His growing agitation accumulated many leaders and led many movements. That is why he started to be called Lokamanya Tilak. These activities led to his arrest and trial. But Indian Press did not let its role get diminished.

IAS Academy UPSC Civils Daily Mains

Question 22nd July -2021

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Christian missionaries have a sense of superiority of European Civilization and this coloured their approach towards people of other cultures and faiths. In this light, explain the positive outcomes and negative impacts of missionary activities in India.

Since the 1500s, European Catholic and Protestant **missionaries** have been active in **India**. In 1900–1914, churches in other countries, especially the United States, sponsored **missions**. It is widely believed that St. Thomas, the disciple of Jesus, first introduced the Christian faith to India nearly two thousand years ago. The subcontinent would not experience the influence of Christianity, however, until the much later arrival of the Europeans.

Positive outcome of missionary activities in India

- Gandhiji held the view that the work of Missionaries quickened the task of Hindu reformers to set down our own house in order. The missionaries' zeal to convert Hindus and the realization that they were specially targeting the sections which had been trodden down, lent an urgency to the determination of reformers to work for the uplift and integration of these sections into the rest of the Hindu society. One example to this effect was that Missionaries took up the cause of leprosy elimination. The work they undertook set the example, which was later followed on by others in India.
- Generations of young man and women received modern education, many of whom were endowed with the ideals of service and uprightness and rectitude because of the educational institutions maintained by these missionary societies. Lakhs of people were saved and restored to normal health by hospitals set up by the Church-affiliated organizations, namely the Missionaries, The Christian Medical College at Vellore stands as a distinct example of which.
- The standards of living of the tribal was raised and they were able to carve out a living with the aid of the Missionaries.
- Educational Reforms imbibed in the Missionaries a unifying spirit in the Indians and they came together to fight for the cause as a united nation.

Negative impact of missionary activities in India

- Where the Missionaries educated the Indians their shortcomings, they completely destroyed the self-confidence and the self-respect of the natives. On such instance of which is reflected when Swami Vivekananda mote, "The child is taken to school and the first thing he learns is that his father is a fool, the second thing that his grandfather is a lunatic, the third thing that all his teachers are hypocrites, the fourth that all his sacred books are a mass of lies. By the time he reaches sixteen, he is a mass of negation, lifeless and boneless."
- The mass conversion led to degradation of Indian Culture and a conflict between the classes themselves originated.
- The educational inequalities made the so-educated Indians contempt the fellow Indian and the following quote by Charles Trevelyan is an illustration to prove that. "A generation is

growing up which repudiates idols. A young Hindu, who had received a liberal English education, was forced by his family to attend the shrine of Kali upon which he took off his cap to Madam Kali: made her a low bow and hoped her lady ship was well

It was Buddha in the fifth century B.C. who made the first major contribution to individualism in the Indian society by advocating religion-based on individual experience which Dumont has called as the emergence of outwardly individual. For the second time in Indian history, another major contribution to individualism, both religious and social, was made by the Protestant Christian missionaries through their educational institutions which exposed the minds of the emerging new elites to the influence of powerful theories of liberty and equality.

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IAS Academy UPSC Civils Daily Mains

Question 23rd July -2021

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During the first half of 18th Century, Bengal was the only mine of silver left in the Mughal Empire. Highlight the important factors for such development. Bengal including the present West Bengal in India and almost the whole of Bangladesh was their chest province of Mughal India. The **Mughal invasion of Bengal** was an invasion of the Sultanate of Bengal, then ruled by the Afghan Karrani dynasty, by the Mughal Empire in 1572–1576. After a series of intense battles, the Mughals eventually defeated the Sultanate of Bengal in the Battle of Raj Mahal in 1576, and annexed the region into their empire as the province of Bengal. Bengal was the only bright spot where prosperity prevailed and which “was the only mine of silver left in the Mughal Empire.”

The important factors responsible for Bengal being a bright spot during 18th century:

Good Government

- Bengal had been lucky during the period in its rulers. MurshidQuli Khan, who was appointed the Diwan of Bengal in 1700, remained at the helm of affairs till his death in 1727. Then his son-in-law Shuja governed the province for fourteen years.
- Later, Alivardi Khan seized the reins of office and ruled till 1756. All the three were strong and competent administrators and under them Bengal greatly prospered.

Besides good government, Bengal also enjoyed certain other advantages.

Tranquility in Bengal:

- While the rest of India was distracted by fratricidal wars, Maratha invasions and Jat uprisings and northern India was devastated by the invasions of Nadir Shah and Ahmad Shah Abdali, Bengal on the whole, remained tranquil. As a result, trade, commerce, industries and agriculture- all prospered.

Growth of foreign trade

- During this period there was phenomenal growth of foreign trade. During the first half of 18th century from 1706 to 1756, Bengal received in return for its exports nearly six and a half crore rupees worth of bullion and about Rs. 2.3 crores of merchandise. Decca alone exported nearly thirty lakh rupees worth of cloth to Asian countries. Qasim Bazar produced two and a half million pound of silk. The Murshidabad customs office registered an output of silk worth seventy lakh of rupees. Fifty thousand maunds of sugar and also considerable amount of jute were

exported. There were a number of other commodities which were exported from Bengal viz., saltpetre, opium, indigo etc

- Foreign trade stimulated industry and added to the prosperity of the country.

Growth of Urbanism

- Bengal goods were in great demand in East and West Asian countries, in Africa and in Europe. The Dutch, the English and the French had a number of settlements and factories in different parts of Bengal. Progress in trade, industry and agriculture stimulated the growth of urban centers and banking, which is illustrated by the rise of the Jagath se the i.e., world bankers.
- Hughli, which was the most important port of Bengal, grew into a great center of culture
- The population of Calcutta rose from 15000 in 1704 to a lakh in 1750 and Decca and Murshidabad became populous cities.

But behind the face of facade of glittering affluence there lay a dilapidated structure. The wealth of the nawab and of his oppressive oligarchs was extracted out of the toil and misery of the impoverished peasants and wretched artisans. The upstart rulers and their long-suffering subjects were bound together by mere ropes of sand.

IAS Academy UPSC Civils Daily Mains

Question 24th July -2021

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Moderates provided a significant ground work and awakened another generation of nationalists who continued to demand for their rights. Critically explain.

- Moderates are the early leaders of the congress between the time period of 1885-1905. The leaders of this time period included Dadabhai Naoroji, Womesh Chandra Bonnerjee, G Subramanya Aiyer, Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Sir Surendranath Banerjee who were staunch believers in liberalism and moderate politics.
- Other moderate leaders included Rash Behari Ghosh, R C Dutt, M G Ranade, Pherozeshah Mehta, P R Naidu, Madan Mohan Malaviya, Ananda Charlu, S Subramanialyer and William Wedderburn.

Success of Moderates:

1. Indian Councils Act of 1892 was the first achievement of the INC. This Act increased the size of the legislative councils and also increased the proportion of non-officials in them.
2. They were able to sow the seeds of nationalism in the people.
3. They popularised ideals like democracy, liberty and equality.
4. They exposed many draining economic policies of the British.
5. Leaders like Gopal Krishna Gokhale and M G Ranade were social reformers too and opposed child marriage and imposed widowhood.
6. On the request of the Moderates in 1886, Lord Dufferin appointed Aitchison Committee on Indian Civil Services. The upper age limit was increased to 22 years on the recommendation of the committee.
7. On the request of moderates, the Calcutta University Act of 1902 and Calcutta Municipal Corporation Act of 1902, which curbed the autonomy of the local bodies were revoked in 1904 by Lord Curzon.
8. The most important achievement of the moderates was their economic critique of colonialism, called the Drain Theory that exposed the exploitative nature of colonialism.

Failures of Moderates:

1. They restricted the social base of the Congress to the elites.
2. They failed to understand the clash of interests between colonialism and nationalism.
3. Their major failure was that they could not stop the partition of Bengal from taking place which was done much against the public will.

Thus, Moderates provided a significant ground work and awakened another generation of nationalists who continued to demand for their rights.

UPSC Civils Daily Mains Question 25th July - 2021

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Revolt of 1857 not only challenged the British rule in India but also ushered a new phase of British administration and attitude in India. Discuss.

The Revolt of 1857 began with a mutiny of the sepoys or the Indian soldiers of the East India Company's army and soon engulfed wide regions and people. Within a month of capture of Delhi, the Revolt spread to different parts of the country: Kanpur, Lucknow, Benares, Allahabad, Bareilly, Jagdishpur and Jhansi. The rebel activity was marked by intense anti-British feelings and the administration was invariably toppled. In the absence of any leaders from their own ranks, the insurgents turned to the traditional leaders of Indian society — the territorial aristocrats and feudal chiefs who had suffered at the hands of the British. Thus, came from Kanpur Nana Sahib, from Bareilly Khan Bahadur, from Bihar Kunwar Singh, from Jhansi Lakshmi bai to name among few. The Revolt was not confined to these major centres. It had embraced almost every cantonment in the Bengal and a few in Bombay.

The tremendous sweep and breadth of the Revolt was matched by its depth. Everywhere in Northern and Central India, the mutiny of the sepoys was followed by popular revolts of the civilian population. After the sepoys had destroyed British authority, the common people rose up in arms.

What differentiated the revolt of 1857 from earlier uprisings was that unlike the preceding mutinies and revolts which were limited to small areas within a town or at most few districts the revolt of 1857 escalated to an unprecedented degree and participation was wider. With this the British were made to realise that all was not under their control in British India. Unexpected as it was it managed to shake the British.

However British control was re-established with new phase of British administration and attitude in India. Following points list them

- The Indian army was thoroughly reorganized. It had a higher proportion of Europeans in it and they were to be responsible for manning the artillery and the field.
- The importance of having Native States as allies was realised during the revolt. Had more Native States allied with the rebels then the British suzerainty would have faced a real threat. Under the November Declaration, proclamation of the earlier treaties of the English East India Company with the Princes were affirmed. Reorganisation of the relations between the Crown and the Native Princes, served to widen the gulf

between the people of British India and those of the Princely States which ensured that people of princely states remained aloof in their participation in Freedom movement.

- Revolt of 1857 also led to a permanent rift between the British and the Indians. It made the British wary of Indians and led to entrenchment of a belief among the 'colonial masters' that Indians could never be trusted. White racism became the dominant credo of British rule in India. In contrast to the promise of Indian participation in administration of India made in the Proclamation of 1858, Indians continued to be discriminated. The glaring racism was brought to the fore during the Ilbert Bill controversy of 1883.
- The post-revolt period saw the British actively pursuing the policy of 'divide and rule' towards the general populace. Two opposite policies were at work. While on one hand, India was being brought under a unified system of administration and governance, on the other hand, for political necessity, India's diversity was being highlighted in order to depict the claims and needs of different sections as divergent. The British believed that the Revolt was instigated primarily by the Muslims when the sepoys hailed the Mughal Emperor, Bahadur Shah II as the Emperor of Hindustan.
- Moreover, the English were the direct successors of the Mughal rule, which lent credence to the belief of the Muslim instigated revolt. Consequently, the British adopted a conservative attitude towards the Muslims for almost a decade after the revolt. It was only under the Governor-Generalship of Lord Mayo with the publication of Sir William Hunter's book *The Indian Musalmans* which addressed the grievance of the Muslims of Bengal and their backward status in comparison to the Hindus, that the British Government undertook some measures to alleviate the conditions of the Muslims.
- The book presented the loss of Muslims as the gain of the Hindus. Later his work and belief led to the growth of Muslim separatism and widened the fault lines between the two communities. Hereafter the concept of *divide et impera* (divide and rule) became the hallmark of British policy towards India. The British adopted the policy of encouraging one group over another according to their administrative needs. This pitting of one group against another was not confined to religious communities, but also included regional and caste differences.
- The British Raj from 1858 onwards maintained almost despotic control over its Indian territories through the steel frame of its bureaucratic organization.
- The Government of India had actively encouraged modern education after 1833. But this favourable official attitude towards the educated Indian soon changed when some of them had begun to use the recently acquired modern knowledge to analyse the imperialistic character of British rule and to put forward demands for Indian participation in administration.
- As a part of the policy of alliance with the conservative classes, the British abandoned their previous policy of helping the social reformers. They believed that their measures of social reform, such as the abolition of the custom of Sati and permission

to widows to remarry, had been a major cause of the Revolt of 1857. They therefore gradually began to side with orthodox opinion and stopped their support to the reformers.

IAS Academy UPSC Civils Daily Mains

Question 26th July -2021

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The closing decade of the 19th century and early years of the 20th century witnessed the emergence of new and younger group within the Indian National Congress, which was critical of the ideology and methods of old leadership. In this context, mention the causes for emergence of new group. (150 words)

The new and younger group within the INC emerged during the late 19th century and early 20th century were extremist. These "angry young men" advocated the adoption of Swaraj as the goal of the Congress to be achieved by more self-reliant and independent methods. The new group came to be called the Extremist party in contrast to the older one, which began to be referred to as the Moderate party.

- By the starting of the 20th century, Indian politics had come under influence and dominance of extremists. Though from the last few years of the 19th century, extremists came into existence, it was only after the partition of Bengal that they gained popularity.
- From 1905 onwards, the moderate leaders rapidly lost their influence over the National Congress. Gradually, over the years, the trend of militant nationalism (also known as Extremism) grew in the country. Extremism on the Indian national scene did not spring up all of a sudden in the first decade of the twentieth century. In fact, it had been growing slowly since the revolt of 1857, but was invisible. The nationalist ideas behind the revolt of 1857, according to the extremists, were Swadharma and Swaraj.

Causes of Extremism

1. The refusal to meet the political and economic demands by the government and its repressive measures against the growing national movement shook the faith of an increasing number of Indians in the ideology and technique of liberal nationalism. Leadership of moderates had failed to deliver any fruit to India and so young nationalist leaders started to acquire dominant position gradually.
2. Act of 1892 dissatisfied the congress leaders and so they choose to resort to legal and nationalist policies for their demands.
3. Now they recognized the true nature of the British rule which moderates failed to and had belief in its being just.
4. Education gave them a new vision and they got inspiration from India history. Western thinkers also influenced them.

5. Increasing westernization of India by British led them to think that they will destroy Indian traditions, customs and culture and so they grew against British.
6. **Lord Curzon's reactionary policy** was also responsible for the growth of extremism. He spoke derogatorily of Indian character in general which hurt pride of Indians. At Calcutta University Convocation, he said, "Undoubtedly truth took a high place in the codes of the west before it had been similarly honored in the East." The Calcutta Corporation Act, Official Secret Act, Indian University Act of 1904 created great resentment in India. The Delhi Durbar held in 1903 when India had not fully recovered from famine of 1899-1900 was interpreted as a "a pompous pageant to a starving population".
7. Much more was the dissatisfaction with achievements of moderates which paved a way to extremists in Indian politics.
8. The rise of the extremism in the national movement was a reaction against the attempts of the Western reformists to reconstruct India in the image of the West. They were greatly influenced by the growth and development of spiritual nationalism in India.
9. Contemporary International influences: Abyssinia's repulsion of Italian Army in 1896, and Japan's victory over Russia in 1905 broke the spell of European invincibility. Nationalistic movements in Egypt, Persia, Turkey and Russia also influenced extremism, also humiliating treatment of Indians in British colonies like South Africa helped extremism.
10. Partition of Bengal was one of the most important reasons of emergence of extremism.
11. Most of the limitations of moderates were cause of birth of extremism.

IAS Academy UPSC Civils Daily Mains

Question 27th July -2021

[Leave a Comment](#) / [Daily Mains Questions](#) / By

From Struggle for Swaraj to Atmanirbhar Bharat, the legacy of the Tilak is carried forward. Examine.

Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak was perhaps the first political leader in modern India to appreciate the importance of identity issues. He realised that these could be a tool to make inroads in the minds of an otherwise docile society. Once that was done, people could be motivated to join the struggle for independence, which explains Tilak's clarion call for swaraj and *swadeshi*.

Legacy of Tilak

- Striving for self-dependence, in Tilak's strategy, was the stepping-stone for Independence. Tilak wanted to inculcate both collective thinking as well as action.
- For the cultivation of an enlightened mind, he used the media in the form of two newspapers, *Kesari* and *Maratha*, and national education through Deccan Education Society, an institute he established.
- His formula for preparing the ground for political activism through culture, education and media was so powerful that later on Mahatma Gandhi, Babasaheb Ambedkar and others adopted this path.
- Tilak belonged to the rare category of philosopher-politician. His ideas of swaraj and *swadeshi* were anchored in making every Indian conscious of the insults and injustice meted out by the British.
- He prepared a fertile ground for swaraj through his home-rule movement. He was clear on the aim of the home rule movement. The tone and tenor of his demand were strategically conciliatory.
- Tilak almost had a blueprint of a post-Independence India in mind. For him, swa-raj was also liked to *swa-bhasha* and *swa-bhusha*, i.e. mother tongue and indigenous attire.
- Perhaps, he was the first national leader who envisioned the formation of linguistic states.
- His idea of *Swaraj* was not confined to political freedom. He was conscious of the need for cultural and economic independence too.
- Swadeshi was the other important cause espoused by Tilak. Both Lala Lajpat Rai and Bipin Chandra Pal joined him in popularising the call of swadeshi nationally, which saw the emergence of the famous triumvirate of those days, popularly known as Lal, Bal and Pal.

- However, his *swadeshi* was not just about boycotting British goods. Although he used the tools of boycott and bonfire of British goods to provide a window for popular participation, his larger objective was promoting indigenous entrepreneurship.

Reviving the spirit of economic nationalism for indigenously manufactured goods and striving for social integration through culture are the features of Tilak's strategy and they continue to be relevant even today.

IAS Academy UPSC Civils Daily Mains

Question 28th July -2021

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Marathas failed to fill the vacuum created by the disintegration of Mughal Empire in the eighteenth century. Explain

The Mughal Empire, in the beginning of 18th century, started declining as the central authority became weak after Aurangzeb's death (1707). As Marathas were the most powerful regional kingdom, they tried to gain control over the erstwhile Mughal territories.

Through their repeated attacks on the declining Mughal Empire they further weakened it but failed to build an all India Empire:

Weaknesses of strong leaders

- The Marathas had many leaders of immense abilities but none of them could create a unified empire. For example, Bajji Rao contained Nizam's power in Deccan. He transformed the kingdom of Maharashtra into an empire expanding to north. But, failed to lay firm foundations of an empire.

Internal Problem

- Maratha sardars lacked unity and outlook for founding an all-India empire. Maratha confederacies joined opposing factions at Poona and intrigued with the enemies of the Maratha Empire. Nobles were even less disciplined than Mughal nobles.
- When the central authority tried to control the sardars, they joined hands with enemies.
- British divided mutually warring Maratha sardars through clever diplomacy and then overpowered them in separate battles during the second Maratha War (1803-05) and the Third Maratha War (1816-19).
- **Socio- economic policy**
- System of assignment of chauth and sardeshmukhi enabled the Peshwas to increase their personal power through patronage. This was a major weakness of the Maratha Empire as it made Maratha sardars strong, autonomous, and jealous of the central power.
- New territories were conquered and occupied but little attention was paid to their administration. Rulers were mainly interested in raising revenue from peasantry.
- Unlike Mughals, they failed to give sound administration to people outside Maharashtra.

- Maratha sardars did not try to develop a new economy. They failed to encourage science and technology or to develop trade and industry.
- **Third Battle of Panipat**

Their earlier behaviour and political ambitions had antagonized all northern powers so they did not get any support and got defeated in Panipat from Abdali and allies. This was a disaster for them as they lost the cream of their army and their political prestige suffered a big blow.

They could not inspire the Indian people with any higher degree of loyalty than the Mughals had succeeded in doing. Their dominion, too, depended on force and force alone. Most of all, their defeat gave an opportunity to the English East India Company to consolidate its power in Bengal and south India and paved the way for rise of the British power in India.

IAS Academy UPSC Civils Daily Mains

Question 29th July -2021

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To check the unity among Indians and to divide the nationalists into different groups, British introduced the Morley Minto reforms. Do you agree?

The Swadeshi movement demonstrated a shift from earlier approach to freedom struggle by bringing elements of extremism, passive resistance and wider participation including that of women. To check this growing nationalism and to give some concessions to the constitutionalists' demands, British government brought Morley-Minto reforms of 1909.

Important features:

- The number of elected members in imperial legislative council and provincial legislative council were increased.
- The powers of legislatures were enlarged.
- Separate electorate system was introduced for Muslims.

These reforms were not aimed towards democratizing Indian administration, as made clear by Lord Morley, but to create social and political divisions in India.

The purpose that it served Political and social division

- The legislative reforms were made to placate moderates who were mostly against the extremists' methods of freedom struggle.
- The separate electorate system was to check Hindu-Muslim unity and appease small section of Muslim elite.
- The whole idea of reforms was to win over the Muslims and the moderates' nationalist opinion and rally them against the rising tide of militant nationalism.

Impact

The reforms had immediate as well as long term impact on development of unity and nationalism in India:

- The divide between moderates and extremists further widened which got restored only after the Lucknow pact.
- The British utilised this divide to isolate and suppress the extremist leaders. Main leaders like Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Aurobindo Ghosh were arrested and jailed.

- The separate electorate system proved extremely harmful, which checked the progress of India's unification, became the potent factor in the growth of communalism, encouraged separatist tendencies and prevented people from concentrating on economic and political problems. It laid the foundation of communal politics.

IAS Academy UPSC Civils Daily Mains

Question 30th July -2021

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No two persons could probably differ so much as Gandhi and Tagore. The surprising thing is that both of these men with so much in common and drawing inspiration from the same wells of wisdom and thought and culture, should differ from each other so greatly. Discuss (250 words)

Gandhi and Tagore started writing to each other back in 1915, until Tagore's death in 1941. They were in constant correspondence, sending letters and telegrams to each other, in which they'd express agreements as well as disagreements—often undercutting each other. One was a political leader, the other was a poet. The best part to note, however, is the quality of debate between these two great minds almost a century ago, confronting questions of India's future and the freedom movement.

Instances of contradictory views between Gandhi and Tagore

There is a popular perception that Tagore and Gandhi were great friends who seldom disagreed on issues concerning India. Tagore, who admired Gandhi as a political leader, was critical of some of Gandhi's strategies.

- In the aftermath of the 1934 earthquake in Bihar, for instance, Gandhi stated that the prevalence of untouchability caused the calamity—it was divine intervention. Tagore, in response, penned a scathing letter to Gandhi, in which he expressed his "painful surprise" at Gandhi's "unscientific view of things".
- In the fourth Congress session in Calcutta
- Gandhi asked Tagore if it was possible to hold the session in Hindi or Urdu. Tagore said that it wasn't possible, adding that English was the only language of communication that was possible for people who were coming from different states, including Madras.
- There was a discussion on burning the foreign cloth. Tagore was, of course, furious and argued that people would be naked and would have nothing to hide their skin with. Gandhi in response said that the Indian people should wear clothes that were theirs—which belonged to (the land). So he wanted to empower the Indian people to make their own cloth and be self-reliant.
- Mahatma Gandhi in his book "Hind-Swaraj" criticized both the moderate and extremist nationalists of the Indian National Congress as he believed that both their methods were insufficient to give a unique identity to a uniquely Indian-form of nationalism.

- Tagore believed that nationalism was just another term for the appropriation of wealth and territory of other countries and that it would violate the basic ideals of humanity.
- Mahatma Gandhi advocated that the role of a 'lingua franca' (common language between speakers whose native languages are different.) will play a crucial role in fostering nationalism in a country that has different languages and dialect groups.
- Whereas, Rabindranath Tagore believed that contemporary nationalism will eventually take a violent form and thus it was necessary to arrive at an alternative.

Even though they differed, Tagore had strikingly issued a statement in defence of Gandhi, from Santiniketan, on February 6, 1934, well before his statement was published in the Harijan. He forcefully argued that "To malign a life so truly dedicated as his because of occasional differences of opinion seems to be carrying public ingratitude to the point of meanness. I have often disagreed with him in public and even quite recently have criticised his belief that the recent earthquake devastation in Bihar is a divine chastisement, for the sin of untouchability but I have enough regard for the sincerity of his religious convictions and his abiding love for the poor as to hold his differences of opinion with me with respect."

IAS Academy UPSC Civils Daily Mains

Question 31st July -2021

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Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan is the most influential scholar, philosopher and leader of Modern India. Discuss. (250 words)

Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan was a philosopher, a great teacher, a scholar par-excellence, a creative genius, a great humanist, a spiritualist, a man of vision, a man of mission, a man of principles, an idealist, an orator with gift of the gab, an original thinker, an eminent author and then the role of the Executive Head of India are few outlines of this personality. He was one of the greatest educationists in India.

Radhakrishnan influential works

- Radhakrishnan is counted amongst India's best and most influential scholars of comparative religion and philosophy. His defense of Hinduism against "uninformed Western criticism" has been highly influential, both in India and the Western world. He is credited to have made Hinduism more readily accessible for the Western audience.
- He won the Templeton Prize in 1975, for promoting the notion of "a universal reality of God that embraced love and wisdom for all people". He donated all the award money to Oxford University
- Through his innumerable visits to various parts of the world, through his good-will missions, lectures, and interpretations of the spirit of Hinduism, Radhakrishnan has inspired enormous friendship for his country.
- It gained popularity throughout the western world. In his age of mental unrest and desires and cravings, his writings give inspiration to people to find the new gamut of life and get peace.
- He was the torch-bearer of the Indian education. His contribution to the field of education, philosophy, religion, culture, science etc. was immemorial.
- Radhakrishnan defines education as the instrument for social, economic and cultural change. For social and national integration, for increasing productively, education should be properly utilized.
- The importance of education is not only in knowledge and skill, but it is to help us to live with others.
- According to him education should not merely give us some techniques so that we lead successful lives, but should also help us discover "lasting values".
- To Radhakrishnan any form of life, where we have significance and social value, is moral.

- Radhakrishnan defines art as form knowledge, a disclosure of the deeper reality of things, and an imitation of inner reality.
- According to Dr. Radhakrishnan, Philosophy is a discipline that includes logic, ethics, aesthetics, social philosophy and metaphysics. Metaphysics which is concerned with the ultimate nature of things is comprised of two main fields, ontology and epistemology.

Changes have been unprecedented and so large-scale and so fast. All his university education reforms have been overtaken by new demands, new responses. Even we can't have much help from Radhakrishnan's vast corpus of writings, much education content as such.