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Edited by **- N.N. Ojha**

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YEAR BOOK 2022

Book Code: 085

Edition – 2022

Price: ₹350/-

ISBN: 978-81-955729-3-9

Publisher

Chronicle Publications Pvt.Ltd.

Contact Details

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Print Edition Sales : Mob. 9953007630, circulation@chronicleindia.in

Technical Support : Mob. 9953007634, Email Id: it@chronicleindia.in

Advertisement: Mob. 9953007627, advt@chronicleindia.in

Subscription : Mob. 9953007629, Subscription@chronicleindia.in

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All disputes are subject to Delhi Jurisdiction only. **Printer:** SK Enterprises, Mundka Udhyog Nagar, Industrial Area, New Delhi-110041

About the Book

The 20th edition of Chronicle Year Book 2022 is third in the series of its new approach on content.

We introduced a new concept of Year Book in 2019 that was widely accepted by readers.

The idea was to equip the readers to address the changing nature of questions in different examinations. Now-a-days, rather than facts & figures based questions we face analytical questions. This book, with in-depth analysis of current issues, makes the reader know about the finer points of the issue, its implications and govt. policies and interventions towards the same.

The book comprehensively analyses 100 Current Issues (2021-22) that have bearings on the world, countries, societies, and also on individuals. They are discussed under different themes like - **Economic Issues; Policy, Administrative and Governance Issues; Constitutional Issues; Issues related to Social Development; New Technological Developments; Environmental Issues; Issues related to National Interest & Security; Issues related to Foreign Policy & International Events; Human Values & Ethical Issues; Art, Culture & Heritage related Issues**.

Also, the Book incorporates Recent Developments (happenings in various fields), Government Intervention (Plan/Policy/Schemes) to address those developments, UN Charter (UN provision related to that issue), Proposals and Initiatives (Various Reports/Index released and Commission/Committee constituted), National & International Organisations, Constitutional Provisions (Acts/Amendments/Bills, Judgments), etc.

The schemes/Plans/Policies are further categorized under different heads like - **Social Development; Neoteric Indian Polity; Democratic Decentralization; National Security; Science & Technology; Environment; Indian Economy; History & Culture; International Events & Bilateral Relations; Key Highlights of Union Budget 2022-23 & Economic Survey 2021-22; and India at a Glance**.

This book is written under the guidance of Mr. N. N. Ojha (Editor, Civil Services Chronicle) with contribution from 'Chronicle Editorial Team'.

Hope, this book will guide you in a better way to achieve your academic goals.

CONTENTS

100 ISSUES OF CURRENT AFFAIRS

The people of India are faced with many National and Local challenges that affect their lives directly and otherwise. These challenges require that the country is equipped with advanced knowledge; people are empowered with information, state is accountable and judiciary is responsive. A new India requires renewed vigour and robustness.

ECONOMIC ISSUES 02-14

1. Need To Foster Economic Democracy 2
2. Palm Oil Farming: Benefits & Associated Risks 4
3. Allowing Corporates In Banking: Benefits & Challenges 5
4. Social Entrepreneurship: A New Paradigm In The Field Of Development 6
5. Women Entrepreneurship In India: Possibilities & Challenges 7
6. Development Of Semiconductor Ecosystem In India 8
7. Central Bank Digital Currency 8
8. Fintech: Key Components, Possibilities & Challenges 9
9. Bad Bank: Will It Resolve The Npa Crisis? 10
10. The Challenge Of Informality In The Indian Economy 11
11. Relevance Of Msp During The Changing Agricultural Policy 12
12. Poverty & Inequality: The Collateral Damage By Pandemic 14

POLICY, ADMINISTRATIVE AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES 15-29

13. Lateral Entry In Administration: Path To Efficiency & Productivity In Bureaucracy 15
14. Har Ghar Jal: An Ambitious Program 16
15. Information Technology Rules, 2021: Regulation Vs. Freedom Of Expression 16
16. Federalism In Times Of The Pandemic 17
17. Draft E-Commerce Rules: Consumer Protection In The Age Of Digital Commerce 18
18. Reforms In Cooperative Societies 19
19. The Future Of Public Health After The Pandemic 21
20. Governance 4.0: Need In Times Of Emerging Challenges 22
21. Linking Aadhar With Voter's Id Card: Implications & Challenges 23
22. New Education Policy: Opportunities & Challenges 24
23. Election Commission Of India: From The Lens Of Transparency & Credibility 25
24. Use Of Digital Technology In Judicial System: Benefits & Challenges 26
25. National Tribunals Commission: An Effort To Streamline Quasi-Judicial Institutions 27
26. Electoral Bonds: Tool For Transparency Or Opacity? 28

CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUES 30-37

27. Role Of Governor In A Federal Setup: A Critical Analysis 30
28. Sedition Law: A Threat To Indian Democracy 31
29. Tenth Schedule: Need Of A Review 32
30. Uniform Civil Code: Issues Of Identity And Citizenship 33
31. Right To Government Aid: An Analysis From The Perspective Of Fundamental Rights 34
32. One Nation One Election: Cost, Viability & Federalism 35
33. All India Judicial Service: Debate Of Federalism Vs. Institutional Reform 36
34. 105Th Constitutional Amendment: Powers Of States With Respect To Reservation 37

ISSUES RELATED TO SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT .. 38-49

35. Mental Health In The Time Of Pandemic 38
36. Food Fortification For Nutritional Security: Benefits & Risks 39
37. National Family Health Survey 5 40
38. Role Of Media In Promoting Social Harmony 41
39. Raising Legal Age Of Marriage 42
40. Demands For Caste Based Census 43
41. Effects Of Pandemic On Women Labour Force Participation 43
42. Rising Drug Abuse In India 44
43. Inter-Religious Marriage & Individual Rights 45
44. Rising Child Marriages During The Pandemic 46
45. Marital Rape: Legal Provisions & Socio-Emotional Aspects 47
46. Challenge Of Digital Divide In The Changing Landscape Of Education 48
47. Human Trafficking 48

NEW TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENTS 50-61

48. Geospatial Technology: Application, Significance, & Challenges 50
49. Deep Ocean Mission: Targets & Challenges 51
50. Deep Fake: Emerging Challenge To Cyber Security 52
51. 5G Technology: India's Preparedness 53
52. Metaverse: Technology Of The Future 54
53. Science, Technology And Innovation Policy 2020: A Critical Analysis 55
54. Chandrayaan-3: Importance & Challenges 56
55. Patent System In Pharmaceuticals: Challenges To Affordable Healthcare 57
56. Blockchain Technology 58
57. Role Of Digital Technology In Healthcare 59
58. Role Of Innovation In Building A Strong India: Initiatives & Challenges 60

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES 61-73

59. Hydrogen As A Fuel: Importance & Challenges 61
60. Cop26 Glasgow Declaration: Critical Analysis 63
61. Air Pollution In India: A Complex Issue 64
62. Plastic Waste Management: Challenges & Alternatives 65
63. Electric Vehicles: Future Of Sustainable Transportation 66
64. Long-Term Strategy Of India To Deal With Climate Change 68
65. Environmental Crisis In Himalayan States 69
66. Carbon Neutrality Target Of India: Strategy & Challenges 70
67. Challenge Of Managing Biomedical Waste Generated During The Pandemic 71
68. Challenges Of Energy Transition In India 72

ISSUES RELATED TO NATIONAL INTEREST & SECURITY 73-84

69. Hate Speech: Threat To India's Unity 74
70. Rise Of Pro-Isis Propaganda In South Asia & Its Implications For India 74

71. Karbi Anglong Peace Accord: Expectations & Concerns 75
72. National Cyber Security Strategy Of India 76
73. Refugee Policy Of India: Security Vs. Human Rights 77
74. Extended Jurisdiction Of Bsf & Its Implications.....78
75. Pegasus Surveillance: National Security And Privacy Related Issues & Challenges.....79
76. Project 75 (I): Importance For India's Maritime Security 80
77. Unlawful Activities Prevention Act: National Security Vs. Constitutional Rights 81
78. Inter-State Border Disputes In North East India & Its Spillover Effects 82
79. India At Tokyo Olympics: An Analysis.....84

ISSUES RELATED TO FOREIGN POLICY & INTERNATIONAL EVENTS 85-96

80. India-Russia Relations In A Changing World Order 85
81. India's Soft Power 86
82. The Indo-Pacific Region: A New Theatre Of Global Diplomacy 87
83. Us Withdrawal From Afghanistan: Options For India 88
84. Outer Space: A New Platform For Global Diplomacy.....89
85. India Taiwan Relations: Opportunities & Challenges.....90
86. India-Myanmar Relations: Impacts On India After The Military Coup.....91
87. Nord Stream Pipeline 92
88. India China Relations In Changing World Order 93
89. 75 Years Of Uno: Relevance, Challenges & Reforms.....94
90. India-Uae Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement...95

HUMAN VALUES & ETHICAL ISSUES 96-100

91. Animal Organ Transplantation: Ethical Concerns.....97
92. Role Of Emotional Intelligence In Administration In Times Of Adversity & Social Unrest.....97
93. Value Of Integrity In Corporate Governance In The Age Of Growing Economic Inequality.....98
94. Importance Of Value Of Impartiality In Administration.....99
95. Importance Of Human Values During Adversity.....100

ART, CULTURE & HERITAGE RELATED ISSUES 100-104

96. Jallianwala Bagh Massacre: A Symbol Of Colonial Cruelty.....101
97. Sabarmati Ashrama: The Symbol Of Satyagraha.....101
98. Subramania Bharati: The Pinnacle Of Tamil Literature 102
99. Bengal School Of Art: Features & Role In Promoting And Inculcating Indian Nationalism.....103
100. 100 Years Of Malabar Rebellion.....104

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

SOCIAL JUSTICE & EMPOWERMENT..... 106-116

- National Fund to Control Drug Abuse
- All India Survey on Domestic Workers
- Main Bhi Digitial Initiative
- Decade of Healthy Aging (2020-2030)
- Inclusiveness and Accessibility Index
- National Policy for Persons with Disabilities
- National Action Plan for Drug Demand Reduction (2018-2023)
- SAGE – Seniorcare Aging Growth Engine
- SACRED – Senior Able Citizens for Re-Employment in Dignity
- Integrated Program for Older Persons
- Inclusive India Initiative
- Sugamya Bharat Abhiyan/ Accessible India Campaign
- Pradhan Mantri Adarsh Gram Yojana (PMAGY)
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- United Nations Decade of Healthy Ageing (2021-2030)
- LASI – Longitudinal Ageing Study of India
- World Drug Report 2021
- World Inequality Report 2022
- Idate Commission
- Rehabilitation Council of India (RCI)
- National Commission for Safai Karamcharis
- Ensuring Social and Economic Justice
- Transgender Protection of Rights Act, 2019
- Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016
- Persons in Destitution (Protection, Care and Rehabilitation) Model Bill, 2016
- Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (Amendment) Act, 2021
- Navtej Johar Case, 2018

MINORITIES 116-121

- Minorities Rights Day 2021
- PM's 15-Point Program for the Welfare of Minorities
- Pradhan Mantri Jan Vikas Karyakram
- Upgrading the Skills and Training in Traditional Arts/Crafts for Development (USTTAD)
- Nai Manzil
- Learn and Earn (Seekho Aur Kamao)
- Nai Roshni
- Declaration on the Rights of Persons belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities (United Nations)
- Over Represented Religious Minorities in Indian Prisons
- Sachar Committee
- Constitutional Safeguards for Minorities

LAW & JUSTICE..... 121-128

- National Judicial Infrastructure Authority
- Police Reforms in India
- 50% Representation for Women in the Judiciary
- World Justice Project - Rule of Law Index, 2021
- Pre-Legislative Consultation Policy
- Legal Information Management & Briefing System (LIMBS)
- Tele-Law Initiative partnered with the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY)
- E-Courts Integrated Mission Mode Project
- National Mission for Justice Delivery and Legal Reforms
- PRS Legislative Report on Pendency of cases in India
- 21st Law Commission Report
- National Legal Services Authority (NALSA)
- The New Delhi International Arbitration Centre Act, 2019
- The Tribunals Reforms Act, 2021
- The Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (Amendment) Act, 2021

WOMEN & CHILD DEVELOPMENT..... 129-139

- POSHAN Maah 2021
- Global Gender Gap Report, 2021
- India Newborn Action Plan (INAP)
- Mission Poshan 2.0 Scheme
- Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS)
- SWADHAR Greh (A Scheme for Women in Difficult Circumstances)
- UJJAWALA
- UN Convention on Elimination on all Forms of Discrimination against Women
- UN Convention on Child Rights
- UNFPA- State of World Population Report- My Body is My Own
- Women in Prison - Statistics
- Pam Rajput Committee
- Central Adoption Resource Authority (CARA)
- UN Women
- The Assisted Reproductive Technology (Regulation) Act, 2020
- Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013
- The Medical Termination of Pregnancy (Amendment) Act, 2020
- The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Amendment Act, 2021
- The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (Amendment) Act, 2019

POVERTY & HUNGER..... 139-144

- National Scheme for PM Poshan Shakti Nirman
- Global Hunger Index, 2021
- NITI AYOG Multi-dimensional Poverty Index
- Global Multidimensional Poverty Index 2021
- National Nutrition Policy
- Antodaya Anna Yojana
- Universal Declaration on the Eradication of Hunger and Malnutrition
- Oxfam – The Inequality Virus
- Suresh Tendulkar Committee, 2005
- Rangrajan Committee, 2012
- National Food Security Act, 2013
- PUCL Case, 2001

EDUCATION, SKILLS AND HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT..... 144-155

- Vidya Pravesh Scheme
- PM Kaushal Vikas Yojana 2020-21
- Human Development Index 2020
- National Institution Ranking Framework (NIRF)
- Five-year Vision Plan – 'Education Quality Upgradation and Inclusion Programme (EQUIP)'
- National Education Policy, 2020
- NIPUN Bharat Initiative
- NISHTHA – National Initiative for School Heads' and Teachers' Holistic Advancement
- Samagra Shiksha Scheme 2.0
- Digital Gender Atlas for Advancing Girls' Education in India
- Study Webs of Active Learning for Young Aspiring Minds (SWAYAM)
- Shala Gunvatta (ShaGun) Portal
- UDAAN- Giving Wings to Girls
- DIKSHA (Digital Infrastructure for Knowledge Sharing) Portal
- Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat Programme
- Scheme for Higher Education Youth for Apprenticeship and Skills (SHREYAS)
- STARS Scheme (Scheme for Translational and Advanced Research in Science)
- Impactful Policy Research in Social Sciences (IMPRESS)
- Global Initiative of Academic Networks (GIAN)
- Impacting Research Innovation and Technology (IMPRINT) India
- 16th Annual Status of Education Report (ASER)
- All India Survey on Higher Education
- 2021 State of Education Report for India: No teacher No class
- TSR Subramanian Committee
- Justice Verma Commission on Teacher Education
- Report of the Committee to Advise on 'Renovation and Rejuvenation of Higher Education' (Prof. Yashpal Committee Report)
- All India Council of Technical Education (AICTE)
- University Grants Commission (UGC)
- United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)
- RTE (Amendment) Act, 2019

HEALTH 156-163

- Bachelor of Unani Medicine and Surgery Course
- MusQan Initiative
- E Sanjeevani
- Regulatory Body for Health in India
- State Health Index of NITI Aayog
- Global Health Security Index
- Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana
- PM ABHIM - Pradhan Mantri Ayushman Bharat Health Infrastructure Mission
- PM Swasthya Suraksha Nidhi
- Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission
- Principles for the Protection of Persons with Mental Illness and the Improvement of Mental Health Care
- Health Insurance for India's Missing Middle – NITI Ayog
- Healthcare Equity in Urban India Report
- National Medical Commission
- World Health Organization (WHO)
- The National Commission for Allied and Healthcare Professions Act, 2020
- Bandhua Mukti Morcha Case (1997)

TRIBAL DEVELOPMENT..... 164-168

- Tribes India Aadi Mahotsav
- Janjatiya Gaurav Diwas
- Minor Forest Produce in MSP
- TRIFOOD Scheme
- "Friends of Tribes" Initiative
- Van Dhan Yojana
- Vanbandhu Kalyan Yojana
- Mungekar Committee Report (2005)
- TRIFED (Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India Limited)
- Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006

NEOTERIC INDIAN POLITY

ELECTORAL SYSTEM..... 170-174

- Haryana Clears Bill on Right to Recall Panchayat Member
- Educational Qualification for Local Bodies
- e-EPIC

- SVEEP
- Electoral Bond Scheme
- The Representation of People Act, 1950
- The Representation of People Act, 1951
- Rambabu Singh Thakur vs. Sunil Arora, 2020
- Public Interest Foundation vs. Union of India, 2018
- Subramanian Swamy vs. Election Commission of India, 2013
- Lily Thomas vs. the Union of India, 2005

FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS 175-176

- Access to Internet is a Fundamental Right
- Right to Dignity
- Char Dham Project
- Passive Euthanasia

CO-OPERATIVE FEDERALISM..... 176-182

- Project SATH-E
- Development Support Services for States and Union Territories
- Sustainable Development in the Indian Himalayan Region
- Task Force on Agriculture Development
- NITI Aayog's Second Delta Ranking of the Aspirational Districts
- Composite Water Management Index 2.0
- GST Compensation
- Creation of Union Ministry of Cooperation
- One Nation, One Exam (NEET)
- Citizenship Amendment Bill
- Rajamannar Committee
- Sarkaria Commission
- Inter-State-Council
- Centre-State Relations
- S.R. Bommai vs. Union of India, 1994

PANCHAYATI RAJ & RURAL DEVELOPMENT..... 182-189

- National Panchayat Awards (2021)
- e-Gram Swaraj
- SKOCH Challenger Award
- SVAMITVA Scheme
- Gram Panchayat Development Plan (GPDP)/Sabki Yojana Sabka Vikas (People's Plan Campaign) - 2021
- Gram Swaraj Abhiyaan
- Shyama Prasad Mukherjee Rurban Mission
- Neeranchal – World Bank Assisted Watershed Management Programme
- Deen Dayal Antyodaya Yojana – National Rural Livelihood Mission
- Panchayat Empowerment and Accountability Incentive Scheme
- Digital Land Record Modernization Programme
- Dr. L.M. Singhvi Committee, 1986
- P.K. Thungon Committee, 1989
- National Institute of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj (NIRD)
- Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act, 2013

URBAN AFFAIRS & ADMINISTRATION..... 189-196

- Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) Reform
- Transport4All
- EatSmart Cities Challenge
- Ease of Living Index and Municipal Performance Index
- Urban Governance Index (UGI)
- National Transit Oriented Development Policy (2017)
- PM SVANidhi
- Global Housing Technology Challenge (GHTC)
- Smart Cities
- Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT)
- Report on Urban Statistics (2019)
- NIUA (National Institute of Urban Affairs)
- Building Materials and Technology Promotion Council (BMTPC)
- Draft Model Tenancy Act, 2019
- The Real Estate Act, 2016

CITIZENSHIP..... 196-200

- Sri Lankan Tamils seeking Indian Citizenship
- Indians giving up their Citizenship
- Ramnath Goenka Award
- Articles related to Citizenship
- Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), 2019

NGOS..... 200-205

- 'Prior Reference Category'
- FCRA Registration of 6,000 NGOs Lapses
- National Policy on the Voluntary Sector (2007)
- NGO-DARPAN
- e-Samvad
- Award of Special Incentive (ASI) to NGOs for improvement of Infrastructure
- National Cancer Control Program-Voluntary Organizations Scheme
- Association for Voluntary Agencies for Rural Development (AVARD)
- Council for Advancement of People's Action and Rural Technology
- The Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Amendment Act, 2020
- Indian Social Action Forum vs. Union of India

SELF HELP GROUPS (SHGS) 205-209

- Son Chiraiya
- Collaboration between Odisha and WFP
- Saras Collection
- Rs. 1,000 crore transferred to Bank Accounts of Self-Help Groups
- Hike in Collateral Free Loans to SHGs
- Self Help Group-Bank Linkage Programme
- Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana – National Rural Livelihoods Mission
- Livelihood and Enterprise Development Programmes (LEDPs)
- Scheme for promotion of Women SHGs in Backward & LWE Districts of India
- "Self Help Groups (SHGs) in India: A Study on Quality and Sustainability" (2012)
- S.K. Kalia Committee
- National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD)

CONSTITUTIONAL & NON-CONSTITUTIONAL BODIES 209-214

- Finance Commission
- Union Public Service Commission
- Comptroller & Auditor General of India (CAG)
- National Commission for Scheduled Castes & Scheduled Tribes
- National Commission for Backward Classes
- GST COUNCIL
- Planning Commission
- NITI Aayog
- National Human Rights Commission (NHRC)
- Central Vigilance Commission
- Central Information Commission/State Information Commission

NOTED JUDICIAL VERDICTS..... 214-217

- MAJOR VERDICTS BY SUPREME COURT OF INDIA

NATIONAL SECURITY

INTERNAL SECURITY..... 219-224

- Greater Tipraland
- Ban on the Hurriyat Conference
- Safe Cities Index (SCI) 2021
- Global Peace Index 2021
- SMART Policing Index
- SAMADHAN
- Crime and Criminals Tracking Network and Systems (CCTNS) Project
- Prison Statistics India
- Crime in India Report 2020
- National Investigation Agency (NIA)
- National Security Council (NSC)
- Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Amendment Act, 2019
- National Investigation Agency (Amendment) Act, 2019

EXTERNAL SECURITY 224-230

- Operation Sard Hawa
- Indigenous Armoured Engineer Reconnaissance Vehicles
- Chief of Defence Staff (CDS)
- Initiatives Related to Border Management
- Ayushman CAPF
- India's New Vision for Maritime Security
- India's Nuclear Security Approach
- Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy adopted by the UN General Assembly in September, 2006
- India's Nuclear Security

DEFENCE & SECURITY..... 231-236

- 22nd President's Standard Award
- India-Israel Defence Cooperation
- India Africa Defence Dialogue
- Global Firepower Index
- Government Defence Integrity Index (GDI)
- Defence Procurement Policy
- Defence Acquisition Procedure (DAP), 2020
- Innovations for Defence Excellence (iDEX)
- Border Area Development Programme (BADP)
- Shekatkar Committee
- V. Ramagopal Rao Committee
- Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (IDSA)
- The Essential Defence Services Act, 2021
- Special Protection Group (Amendment) Act, 2019
- Arms (Amendment) Act, 2019

CYBER SECURITY 236-242

- cOcOn 2021
- 2nd CCTNS Hackathon and Cyber Challenge
- Pegasus
- Global Cybersecurity Index 2020
- Sectoral Cyber Security Drills – FinEx-2020 and TransEx-2020
- Gamified Platform for Cyber Security
- Cyber Swachhta Kendra
- Cyber Surakshit Bharat
- Central Monitoring System (CMS)
- DRDO NETRA
- National Information Security Assurance Programme (NISAP)
- Digital Sky Platform
- Crime in India 2020
- 2021 Norton cyber–Safety Insights Report
- Global Cybersecurity Outlook 2022
- Joint Parliamentary Committee on the Personal Data Protection Bill, 2019
- National Critical Information Infrastructure Protection Centre
- Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C)
- Personal Data Protection Bill, 2019

SOCIAL MEDIA 243-245

- Government's warning on Fake News
- WhatsApp sues the Indian Government
- Facebook Data Leak 2021
- Social Media for Youth and Civic Engagement in India, 2019
- Inter-Ministerial Committee (Rajiv Gauba Committee)

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

NEW DEVELOPMENTS & DAY-TO-DAY SCIENCE..... 247-250

- Quantum Cryptography
- New Nutrient Rich Crop & Vegetable Varieties
- Whitest Paint
- Vajra Kavach
- "Unique" Face Recognition Technology
- Guar Gum Chitosan Composite Film
- Hydrogel from discarded Corneas
- Ubreathe Life
- NeoBolt
- Ultra Violet – C Disinfection Technology
- Grime Eating Bacteria
- Global Innovation Index 2021
- CSIR Jigyasa Programme
- Virtual Science Lab
- Tech NEEV@75
- Mentorship Programme
- "Innovations for You"
- Intel Unnati Program
- CSIR
- Science and Engineering Research Board (SERB)

SPACE 251-257

- GISAT-1 Launch Failed
- Coronal Mass Ejections Identification in Inner Solar Corona
- Devasthal Optical Telescope (DOT)
- Sounding Rockets
- In-Orbit Space Debris Monitoring and Tracking System
- CMS- 01
- ASTROSAT
- Second Rocket Launch Pad of India
- A Policy Framework for Satellite Communication in India
- India's Space Diplomacy
- Indian International Science Festival (IISF -2021)
- UNispace Nano-satellite Assembly and Training by ISRO (UNNATI)
- Outer Space Treaty
- Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)

- Antrix Corporation Limited (ACL)
- New Space India Limited (NSIL)
- Indian National Space Promotion and Authorization Center
- Indian Space Association (ISpA)

DEFENCE 257-261

- Indrajaal
- Isothermal Forging
- Arjun Main Battle Tank (MBT) (Mk1a)
- Hypersonic Missiles
- Submarines, Ships and other Vessels
- Aircrafts, Fighter Jets and others
- Issues in India's Defence Modernisation

HEALTH & DISEASES 261-266

- COVAXIN
- HGCO19
- ZyCoV-D COVID-19 Vaccine Description
- Monkey B Virus
- CoWIN Portal
- 6BIO
- National Strategic Plan for Tuberculosis Elimination
- National Policy for Rare Diseases 2021
- Universal Immunisation Programme
- Mission Indradhanush (MI)
- Intensified Mission Indradhanush (IMI) 3.0
- National Vector Borne Disease Control Programme (NVBDCP)
- National Leprosy Eradication Programme (NLEP)
- The National Tuberculosis Elimination Programme (NTEP)
- Global Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of NCDs 2013-2020
- India: Health of the Nation's States
- Global Tuberculosis Report 2021
- World health statistics report
- NCD Alliance
- HIV & AIDS (Prevention & Control) Act, 2017

BIOTECHNOLOGY 267-271

- Garbh-Ini
- SWADESH
- IndiGau chip
- "MANAV: Human Atlas Initiative"
- Biosurfactant
- Global Bio India 2021
- Ind-CEPI
- National Biotechnology Development Strategy 2021-2025
- National Intellectual Property Rights Policy 2016
- Atal Jai Anusandhan Biotech Mission
- BioPharma Mission
- Biotech KISAN Programme
- SAHAJ
- Biotech Science Clusters
- Indian BioEconomy Report (IBER)
- Department of Biotechnology (DBT)
- Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC)
- DNA Technology (Use and Application) Regulation Bill - 2019

NANOTECHNOLOGY 271-273

- Guidelines for Evaluation of Nano- based Agri-input and food products
- Gold Nanoparticles (GNPs)
- Nanomicelles
- NanoSniffer
- Nano Science and Technology Initiative (NSTI)
- ICONSAT
- NNetRA
- Institute of Nano Science and Technology

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE 274-278

- AI Pe Charcha
- AI Prosecutor
- Noise Removal from Astronomical Data
- Mayflower 400
- Artificial Intelligence (AI) for Agriculture Hackathon
- 'AI Game Changers' Program
- Government AI Readiness Index 2021
- National Strategy for Artificial Intelligence
- AI for All
- INDIAai
- CURIE-Artificial Intelligence (AI) Facility
- RAISE 2020
- Global Partnership on Artificial Intelligence
- Committee on Leveraging AI for identifying National Missions in Key Sectors
- Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC)

IT SECTOR 278-284

- India-Japan MoU
- 5G Technology
- Phase-3 of National Supercomputing Mission
- National Policy on Information Technology 2012
- National Policy on Electronics 2019
- National Policy on Software Products 2019
- Public Cloud Policy
- TIDE 2.0 Scheme
- FutureSkills PRIME
- Digital India Programme
- Ericsson Mobility Report
- National Informatics Centre (NIC)
- National Institute of Electronics & Information Technology
- Education and Research Network (ERNET)

ENVIRONMENT

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT 286-290

- Gross Environment Product
- NCAVES India Forum 2021
- United Nations Food Systems Summit, 2021
- India's Largest Floating Solar Power Project
- SDG India Index and Dashboard
- Sustainable Development Index 2021
- Sustainable Development Framework (2018-2022)
- Green Skill Development Programme (GSDP)
- Sustainable Development Goals
- Sustainable Development Report, 2021
- Shailesh Nayak Committee
- Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS)
- High Level Political Forum (HLPF) on Sustainable Development
- Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) Notifications, 2018

BIODIVERSITY 291-299

- Coelacanth

- National Gene Bank
- Super Year for Biodiversity
- Vulture Action Plan 2020-25
- 13th COP on Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals
- Global CA|TS recognition for Good Tiger Conservation
- National Marine Turtle Action Plan
- National Wildlife Action Plan (NWAP)
- National Biodiversity Targets of India
- Indian Rhino Vision
- Conference of the Parties (CoP) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)
- Global Biodiversity Outlook Report – 5
- Fourth All India Tiger Estimation
- Madhav Gadgil Committee (Western Ghats Ecology Expert Panel)
- Kasturirangan Committee
- National Biodiversity Authority (NBA)
- National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA)
- Wildlife Crime Control Bureau
- Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS)
- The Biological Diversity (Amendment) Bill, 2021

FOREST RESOURCES OF INDIA..... 300-304

- UNESCO World Heritage Forests
- Degrading Amazon Rainforests
- National Forest Policy, 1988
- Nagar Van Scheme
- Compensatory Afforestation Fund
- India State of Forest Report
- Forest Survey of India (FSI)
- National Afforestation and Eco-development Board (NAEB)
- Indian Forest Amendment Act, 2017

POLLUTION..... 304-308

- Microplastics in Cuddalore Beach
- India's first Smog Tower
- Tarballs
- Forum for Decarbonising Transport
- National Air Quality Index
- Comprehensive Environmental Pollution Index
- Breathe India Action Plan
- TSR Subramanian Committee on Environmental Laws, 2014
- MC Mehta Case (1989)
- Damodar Rao Case (1987)
- Samir Mehta Case (2016)

CLIMATE CHANGE & ENVIRONMENT..... 308-314

- Ratification of Kigali Amendment to Montreal Protocol
- Melting of Arctic Ice
- Black Carbon and Melting of Glaciers
- Environmental Performance Index, 2020
- Climate Change Performance Index, 2022
- National Action Plan on Climate Change
- India's Intended Nationally Determined Contributions
- National Mission for Green India
- PARIVESH Portal
- United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
- State of Cities Climate Finance Report 2021
- National Climate Vulnerability Assessment Report
- Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)
- United Nations Environment Program (UNEP)
- International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)

RIVERS & WATER RESOURCES..... 315-318

- Jal Shakti Abhiyan: Catch the Rain Campaign
- Ganga Connect Exhibition
- Ganga Utsav 2021
- Composite Water Management Index 2019
- Atal Bhujal Yojana
- Mihir Shah Committee
- Central Water Commission (CWC)
- National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG)

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT..... 319-322

- Rise in e-Waste Generation
- Waste-Wise Cities
- Swachh Survekshan 2022
- E-Waste (Management and Handling) Rules, 2016
- Solid Waste Management Rules, 2016
- Biomedical Waste Management Rules, 2016

DISASTER MANAGEMENT..... 323-326

- World Congress on Disaster Management
- Integrated Flood Warning System in Mumbai
- Apda Mitras
- National Disaster Risk Index
- National Disaster Management Plan, 2019
- Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction
- National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA)
- The United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR)

INDIAN ECONOMY

FINANCIAL INCLUSION..... 328-331

- Seven Years of PM Jan Dhan Yojana
- India Post Payment Bank Customer-base crosses 5 Crore
- DaKPay
- Financial Inclusion Index (FI Index)
- National Strategy for Financial Inclusion (2019-24)
- Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY)
- Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA)
- National Centre for Financial Education
- General Insurance (Business) Amendment Act 2021

BANKING & FINANCAL MARKETS 331-337

- The InFinity Forum
- Neobanks
- e-RUPI
- RBI Grants Licence to Unity Small Finance Bank
- PCA Framework for NBFCs
- Monetary Policy Committee Meeting-February 2022
- BSE SENSEX
- NIFTY 50
- Retail Direct Scheme
- Integrated Ombudsman Scheme
- Steering Committee on Financial Technology (Fintech)
- Urjit Patel Committee on Inflation
- Banking Regulation Act, 1949
- The International Financial Services Centers Authority Act, 2019
- The Banking Regulation (Amendment) Act, 2020
- The DICGC (Amendment) Act, 2021

TAXATION 337-340

- Global Minimum Corporate Tax
- MOU between MCA and CBIC
- Tax Information Network (TIN)
- e-TDS and e-TCS
- Sabka Vishwas (Legacy Dispute Resolution) Scheme, 2019
- Raja Chelliah Committee
- Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (erstwhile Central Board of Excise and Customs)
- Direct Tax Vivad Se Vishwas Act, 2020
- Taxation Laws (Amendment) Act 2021

AGRICULTURE & ALLIED SECTORS 340-352

- Digital Agristack
- Agriculture Export Facilitation Centre
- World Agri-Tourism Day
- IndiGau
- Harit Dhara
- Krishi Udan 2.0 Scheme
- Guarex
- Agriculture Export Policy 2018
- National Agroforestry Policy
- National Fisheries Policy, 2020
- National Mission on Edible Oils - Oil Palm (NMEO-OP)
- PM-KISAN Scheme Samman Nidhi
- Operation GREENS
- National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture
- National Agriculture Market (eNAM)
- Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana - RAFTAAR
- Restructured National Bamboo Mission
- Animal Husbandry Infrastructure Development Fund (AHIDF)
- Rashtriya Kamdhenu Aayog
- National Programme for Bovine Breeding and Dairy Development
- Rashtriya Gokul Mission (RGM)
- Matsya Sampada Yojana
- India AgriFood Startup – Investment Report
- Ashok Dalwai Committee
- National Commission on Farmers (M. S. Swaminathan Report)
- Commission for Agricultural Costs & Prices (CACP)
- Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR)
- Model Agricultural Produce and Livestock Contract Farming and Services (Promotion and Facilitation) Act, 2017
- National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (Amendment) Act, 2017

INDUSTRY 352-361

- Transfer of Air India
- Foreign Direct Investment in LIC
- Start-up India Innovation Week
- LogiXtics
- UbharteSitaare Fund
- Business Expectation Index (BEI)
- India Innovation Index
- Logistics Performance Index
- Public Sector Enterprise (PSE) Policy
- National E-Commerce Policy
- Remission of Duties and Taxes on Export Products (RODTEP) Scheme
- Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Schemes
- PM Mega Integrated Textiles Region and Apparel Park (PM MITRA)
- Reforms in FDI Policy Framework
- Start-ups Exempted from Angel tax
- Service Exports from India Scheme (SEIS)
- NIRVIK Scheme: To Ease Lending Process
- Ease of Doing Business Report
- World Investment Report
- Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Report
- Baba Kalyani Committee
- Surjit Bhalla Committee on Indian Trade
- The Trade Unions (Amendment) Bill, 2019

INFRASTRUCTURE..... 361-383

- Gati Shakti National Master Plan
- National Monetisation Pipeline
- National Infrastructure Pipeline
- New 'BH' Number Series for Vehicles
- Liberalized FTO Policy to support growth of Indian Aviation Industry
- FASTag made Mandatory
- ASEAN India High Level Conference
- Logistics Ease Across Different States Index
- State Energy Efficiency Index (SSEI)
- National Electric Mobility Mission Plan 2020
- National Railways Plan 2020
- Vehicle Scrappage Policy 2021
- Metro Rail Policy 2017
- National Civil Aviation Policy (NCAP), 2016
- National Wind-Solar Hybrid Policy, 2018
- New Hydroelectricity Policy
- Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana-lll (PMGSY-III)
- Setu Bharatam
- Bharatmala Programme
- FAME India
- Smart Freight Operation Optimization & Real Time Information (SFOORTI)
- Dedicated Freight Corridors (DFC)
- Privatization of Railways
- Sagarmala
- Jal Marg Vikas Project (JMVP)
- NABH (NextGen Airports for Bharat) Nirman
- Ujwal Discom Assurance Yojana (UDAY)
- Street Lighting National Programme
- Pradhan Mantri Sahaj Bijli Har Ghar Yojana (SAUBHAGYA)
- Jawaharlal Nehru National Solar Mission (JNNSM)
- Scheme for Development of Solar Parks and Ultra Mega Power Projects
- Development of Solar Cities Scheme
- Kisan Urja Suraksha Evam Utthaan Mahaabhiyan (KUSUM) Scheme
- National Biogas and Manure Management Programme
- National Mission on Transformative Mobility and Battery Storage
- Global Mobility Report, 2019
- Future of the Rail Report, 2019
- 'Renewables Integration in India 2021'
- Anil Kakodkar Committee, 2011
- Sam Pitroda Committee, 2012
- Bibek Debroy Committee, 2015
- Naresh Chandra Committee on the Civil Aviation Sector
- Dedicated Freight Corridor Corporation of India (DFCCIL)
- Solar Energy Corporation of India (SECI)
- International Solar Alliance (ISA)
- United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)
- The Recycling of Ships Act, 2019

- National Waterways Act, 2016
- National Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) Traffic Management Policy Framework
- New Renewable Energy Act, 2015
- Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Act, 2019
- The Aircraft (Amendment) Act, 2020

MINERAL & ENERGY RESOURCES..... 384-395

- District Management Fund
- Lakshya Bharat Portal
- Oil Bonds
- Mission Samudrayan
- National Mineral Policy, 2019
- Hydrocarbon Exploration and Licensing Policy (HELP)/ Open Acreage Licensing Policy (OALP)
- Hydrocarbon Vision, 2030 (For North-East India)
- National Policy on Biofuels
- Pradhan Mantri Khanij Kshetra Kalyan Yojana (PMKKKY)
- Pratyaksh Hanstantrit Labh (PAHAL)
- Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY)
- Pradhan Mantri LPG Panchayat Scheme
- Pradhan Mantri JI-VAN (Jaiv Indhan- Vatavaran Anukool Fasal Awashesh Nivaran) Yojana
- Sustainable Alternative towards Affordable Transportation (SATAT) Initiative
- E-CPMP (Electronic Coal Projects Monitoring Portal)
- UTTAM (Unlocking Transparency by Third Party Assessment of Mined Coal) App
- PRAKASH (Power Rail Koyla Availability through Supply Harmony) Portal
- World Energy Investment Report, 2021
- India Energy Outlook 2021
- Shah Commission
- International Seabed Authority (ISA)
- Coal India Limited
- International Energy Agency (IEA)
- Mineral Conservation and Development Rules, 2017
- The Coal Mines (Special Provisions) Act, 2015
- Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Amendment Act 2021
- Mineral Conservation and Development (Amendment) Rules 2021

HISTORY & CULTURE

PERSONALITIES.....397

- Abanindranath Tagore
- Raja Mahendra Pratap Singh
- Mahakavi Subramania Bharti
- Rani Kamlapati
- Sri Aurobindo Ghosh

CRAFTS.....398

- Monpa Handmade Paper Revived
- Kaavi Art of Goa

PAINTINGS.....398

- GI Tag to Karuppur Kalamkari Paintings & Kallakurichi Wood Carvings

ARCHITECTURE.....398

- Reclining Buddha
- Ancient Vishnu Temple Discovered in Northwest Pakistan
- Nataraja Statue

IMPORTANT DAYS & FESTIVALS.....399

- Durga Puja included in UNESCO's Intangible Heritage List

RELIGION.....399

- Saroop of Guru Granth Sahib
- Sarna Religion of Jharkhand

LITERATURE.....400

- Hindi Translation of 'Tolkappiyam'

HERITAGE CITIES.....400

- Srinagar joins UNESCO Network of Creative Cities
- Gwalior, Orchha in UNESCO World Heritage Cities List
- Pochampally: One of UN's Best Tourism Villages
- New Indian Sites in UNESCO World Heritage List

IMPORTANT EVENTS.....401

- Battle of Saragarhi
- Chauri Chaura Episode: Centenary Year

MISCELLANEOUS.....402

- Shankhalipi Script
- Copper Plate Inscriptions found at Srisailam Temple
- Pallava Era Hero Stone

INTERNATIONAL EVENTS & BILATERAL RELATIONS

INDIA'S NEIGHBOURHOOD..... 404-408

- Line of Credit
- Joint Working Group on Fisheries
- Sri Lanka Pushed India out of East Terminal Project
- Shahtoot Dam
- Delhi Regional Security Dialogue on Afghanistan
- India's stance on UNSC Resolution 2615
- Humanitarian Support: India supplied Corona Vaccine
- India-Bangladesh Summit
- Indian PM's Bangladesh Visit
- India and Pakistan Exchange Lists of Nuclear Installations
- Permanent Indus Commission
- Greater Male Connectivity Project (GMCP)
- India backs Maldives's candidature for UNGA President
- Project DANTAK
- China Opens Sea-Road-Rail Link to Indian Ocean
- China's New Border Law: Signals for India

INDIAN OCEAN REGION..... 408-410

- Indian Ocean Region: Defence Minister's Conclave

- 8th Edition of Indian Ocean Dialogue
- Maritime India Summit 2021

BILATERAL & MULTILATERAL RELATIONS 410-414

- Energy Panel Meeting
- High-Level Dialogue (HLD) on Trade and Investment
- Indo-Korean Friendship Park
- India-Poland Treaty on Mutual Legal Assistance
- Bilateral Innovation Agreement (BIA)
- 2+2 Dialogue
- India-Mauritius CECPA
- MoC on Skilled Workers
- 5th Joint Meeting of the India-Japan Act East Forum
- Climate Action and Finance Mobilisation Dialogue (CAFMD)
- US President Lifted Ban on H1-B Visa
- India-United States Trade Policy Forum

MULTILATERAL FORUMS.....414-416

- Quad Leaders' Summit
- New Quadrilateral Economic Forum
- 16th East Asia Summit
- 18th India-ASEAN Summit

ORGANIZATIONS.....416-426

- BRICS Counter-Terrorism Strategy
- BRICS Foreign Ministers' Meeting
- BRICS Agriculture Ministers Meeting
- BRICS Science & Technology Ministers Meeting
- G20 Summit 2021
- G 20 Agriculture Ministers' Meeting
- AUKUS Grouping
- ADB Governors' Seminar on "Cooperation for a Resilient Future"
- 31st Formal Meeting of North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
- India completes its tenure as Chair of the Governing Body of ILO
- SCO Meet 2021
- SCO Defence Ministers' Meeting
- RATS SCO Seminar on Securing Cyberspace
- Arctic Council Meeting
- 42nd Session of Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO)
- 41st Annual Summit of Gulf Cooperation Council
- 17th BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting
- India Begins its Tenure as Non-permanent Member of UNSC
- India assumes Presidency of UNSC
- India at the 76th Session of the United Nations General Assembly
- New Chief of WTO
- US Seeks to Rejoin UN Human Right Council
- UNHRC Resolution on Israel Human Right Violation on Palestine
- At UNHRC, Grave Concerns raised over Xinjiang
- OPEC+ agrees to withdraw Production Cuts
- G7 Foreign Ministers Summit
- G7 Summit 2021

TREATIES.....426-428

- New Atlantic Charter
- Antarctic Treaty
- Russia Withdraws from Open Skies Treaty
- About Open Skies Treaty
- Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons Enters into Force

WORLD ISSUES.....428-432

- New Peace Deal between Armenia and Azerbaijan
- First Summit for Democracy
- Sydney Dialogue
- Global Gateway Plan
- Blockage of Suez Canal
- The Heart of Asia-Istanbul Process
- South China Sea Dispute
- UN's Myanmar Resolution
- UNSC Resolution addresses Key Concerns on Afghanistan
- UNSC adopts Presidential Statement and Resolution on Peacekeeping
- OIC's Humanitarian Trust Fund for Afghanistan

ESSENCE OF UNION BUDGET 2022-23 & ECONOMIC SURVEY 2021-22

KEY HIGHLIGHTS OF UNION BUDGET 2022-23..... 434-438

- PM GatiShakti
- Inclusive Development
- Productivity Enhancement & Investment, Sunrise opportunities, Energy Transition, and Climate Action.
- Financing of Investments

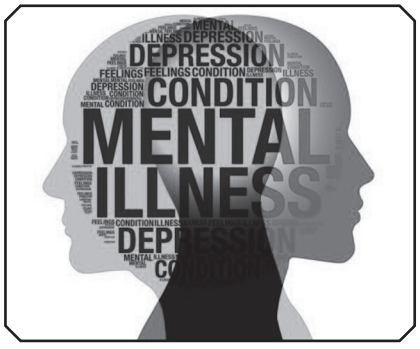
ECONOMIC SURVEY 2021-22..... 439-448

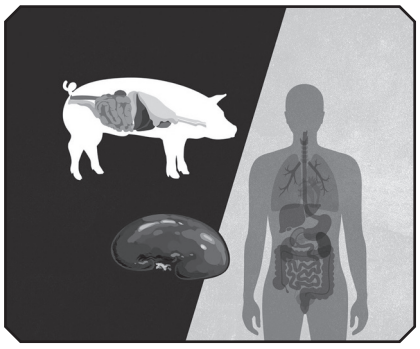
- State of the Economy
- Fiscal Developments
- External Sectors
- Monetary Management and Financial Intermediation
- Prices and Inflation
- Sustainable Development and Climate Change
- Agriculture and Food Management
- Industry and Infrastructure
- Services
- Social Infrastructure and Employment

INDIA AT A GLANCE

- National Symbols
- Geography
- Political Profile
- Indian Economy
- Demographic Profile

100 ISSUES OF CURRENT AFFAIRS





In the 21st century, India is envisioned to become a game changer as it seeks to proactively contribute to solve not only social but economic problems at the domestic as well as global level.

Dealing effectively with constitutional, policy, administrative and governance issues will promote socio-economic development and provide equality, justice and liberty to all without any discrimination. Scientific developments have been able to disperse from the lab to the field. Such a leap has been facilitated by adopting technological advancements such as Artificial Intelligence, Digital Innovations, prudent Environmental policies; and by ensuring Social Integration & Harmony; Building a Strong Institutional India; and a Proactive Diplomacy.

Concurrently, India faces many challenges ranging across diverse areas such as economy, environment, society, technology and in international affairs, the timely and credible solution of which would require rapid growth and developmental with a focus on sustainability and equity.

Moreover, to ensure harmonious sharing of the fruits of development, society needs strong institutions which can safeguard the rights of weaker and marginalised sections of society. Ever increasing trust deficit in public institutions and persistent tussle of institutional autonomy vs. public interest, can cast aspersion over the credibility of institutions and participatory democratic process.

Therefore, institutional reform along with progressive legislation is imperative to usher in social integration, infuse scientific outlook and establish lasting peace and harmony in India.

ECONOMIC ISSUES

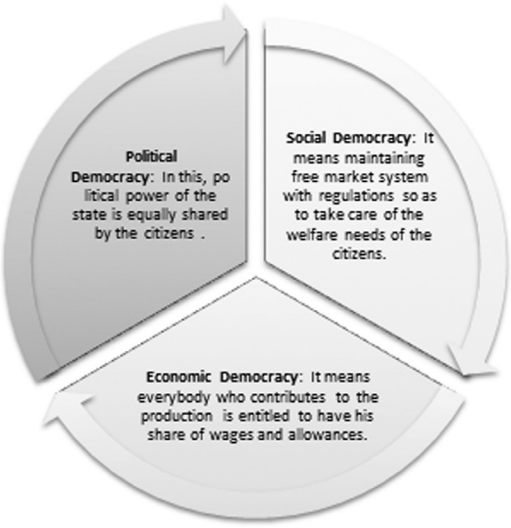
Since Independence, India has achieved tremendous growth in terms of income, wealth, and standards of living. Since 1980s, the nominal GDP has increased by more than 16 times from $0.189 trillion to $3.1 trillion. There has been a structural shift in the economy with Agriculture contributing to just 20% of the Gross Value Added (GVA) whereas Services contributing to nearly 53% of GVA in 2021.

During the Pandemic, Agriculture has been a bright spot in maintaining the resilience of the economy, ensuring food and nutritional security for the country. India is world's largest sourcing destination for the IT industry, employing 4.5 million people. The country is at the forefront of a fintech revolution, led by the banking and insurance industry. New technological developments such as digital currencies, blockchain and 5G will give a new lease of life to the service and manufacturing sector. Social and Women Entrepreneurship are going to shape new paradigms of development.

After being battered by the Covid Pandemic, the Indian economy is on a sustained recovery path. But issues of rising inequality and informality may lessen the potential of economic recovery, which calls for advocating the idea of Economic Democracy. Increasing the pace of reforms would require building resilient infrastructures, strengthening channels demand and supply, reducing inequalities and empowering the marginalized.

NEED TO FOSTER ECONOMIC DEMOCRACY

According to the World Inequality Report 2022, India stands out as a "poor and very unequal country, with an affluent elite", where the top 10% holds 57% of the total national income, including 22% held by the top 1%, while the bottom 50% holds just 13% in 2021. This highlights that a country that has won political democracy after years of struggle for independence is still far behind in arena of economic democracy.



Economic Democracy

It refers to a system where people share ownership over the resources in their communities and participate equally in deciding how they are used. It is based on principles and values of solidarity, cooperation, democracy, and sustainability and not just on profit and pure self-interest. It means real partnership and shared power, control, and benefit of the resources of everyday use.

- At a time when one per cent of the world's population owns half its wealth, economic democracy may seem like a remote ideal. But pressure to make it real is mounting in most democratic societies.

Goals of Economic Democracy

The main goal of economic democracy is to align market forces with the core aspiration of democracy – which Mahatma Gandhi aptly expressed through the term *Sarvodaya* – the well-being of all. The goals inspiring economic democracy are-

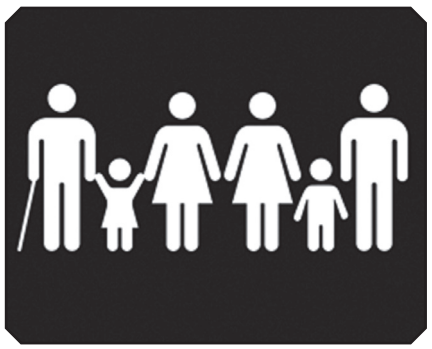
- Opportunity for all.
- Eradication of corruption and other means by which some gain unfair advantage over others. So, losses should not be socialized while profits are privatized.
- Transparency and accountability in the functioning of both the government and industry.
- Emphasis on legal structures to recognise and protect property rights, especially of the poor.
- Public-private partnership to ensure financial services, health care, education and energy for all.

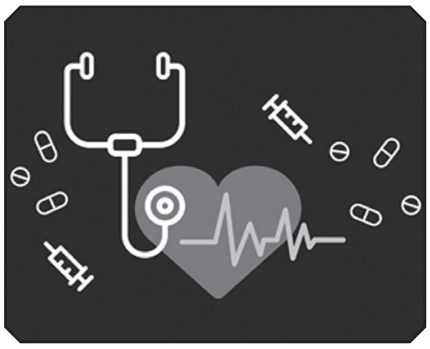
Advantages of Economic Democracy

Proliferation of economic democracy yields following advantages:-

- It provides a powerful impulse to political democracy;
- It seeks to wrest power from capitalists and empower common people;
- It means a stop to exploitation and degrading alienated labour and leads to an increase of labour incomes and productivity;

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT





Social development can be defined as improving the well-being and welfare of each and every individual in the society, without discriminating on the basis of race, caste, religion, gender and ethnicity, enabling them to reach their true potential. Social development attains significance in the fact that well-being and success of a society is linked to the well-being of each and every citizen. In India, social development can be ensured by improving housing, health and nutrition, education and training, employment and working conditions, social security, social stability and social welfare of the citizens. The State, with its social policy and planning ensures enhancements in the standard of living and quality of life of the people, especially the weaker sections. On the other hand, private organizations and civil society also play a key role in fulfilling the objectives of Social development.

In India, 'Rule of Law' and democracy enables the citizen to achieve its full potential. The Preamble to the Constitution seeks social, economic and political justice to ensure equality to its citizens. The Directive Principles of State Policy (DPSPs) direct that all the men, women and citizens should have the right to an adequate means of livelihood, the functioning of the economic system should prevent concentration of wealth and asks the state to make some effective provisions for securing the right to work, etc. and in cases of unemployment, old age, disablement. It is the duty of the state to raise the level of nutrition and the standard of living of its people. Law is also an important instrument of the state that enables it to ensure social development. Special provisions for women, children, elderly, SCs, STs, and weaker sections are provided by the Law. This structure forms the basis of social development programs and policies initiated by the government.

SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT

According to the United Nations, social justice can be defined as the fair and compassionate distribution of the fruits of economic growth to all the citizens without any discrimination on the basis of race, caste, gender, religion, place of birth, etc. Social justice involves access to resources, equitable distribution of resources, recognising diversity, ensuring participation of all and respecting the fundamental human rights. For ensuing social justice and empowerment, state shall ensure that each and every citizen has access to all resources and opportunities, especially historically marginalised and deprived communities.

According to Socio Economic Caste Census, 2011, India consists of 2.68 crore Person with Disabilities (PwDs), 10.4 crore elderly, 27.1 crore victims of drug abuse, etc. Special policy directives are required to ensure social justice for these communities. The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment was created in 1988 for implementing various programmes/schemes for social, educational and economic development of the marginalised. The Ministry of Women and Child Development and the Ministry of Minority Affairs were created in 2006 and 2008 respectively.

Due to extensive programs and policies of these ministries there has been considerable improvement in the conditions of the Women, Children, SCs, STs, Transgender persons, and Senior Citizens. Programs like Jan Dhan Yojana, Atal Pension Yojana, Jan Aushadhi Yojana, Kaushal Vikas Yojana, Garima Greh, etc. have significantly improved the social development metrics of these sections, yet India is far from achieving high levels of human development and empowerment.

Challenges faced by these communities cannot be easily empathized with, and hence people from these sections must be included in policy making. Policy measures centered on changing mindsets, making infrastructures friendly and ensuring universal social security must be framed. These policies must have quantifiable targets and there should be proper performance audit to ensure its effectiveness.

Recent Developments

National Fund to Control Drug Abuse

To carry out de addiction programs, the Union Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment has recommended the use of National Fund to Control Drug Abuse apart from policing activities.

What is National Fund to Control Drug Abuse?

- The Central Government constituted National Fund for Control of Drug Abuse (NFCDA) in 1989 using powers under section 7- A of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985. **It is administered by Department of Revenue.** It had a nominal corpus of Rs. 23 crore.
- The funds can be utilized for the following purposes -
  (i) Combating illicit traffic in narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances or controlled substances and controlling abuse of Narcotic drugs.
  (ii) It can be used to identify, treat and rehabilitate addicts as well as educate public against drug abuse.

All India Survey on Domestic Workers

The **Union Ministry of Labor and Employment** has launched country's first All India Survey on Domestic Workers.

Objectives

The Survey has been launched to estimate-

- the number and proportion of domestic workers at National and State level;
- the percentage distribution of domestic workers with respect to Live-in/Live-out, formal/ Informal Employment, Migrant/Non-Migrant status; and their wages and other socio-economic characteristics.

Scope of Survey

- It includes all the States and Union Territories with 742 districts.
- At the all-India level, a total number of 12766 First Stage Units (FSUs) i.e., 6190 villages and 6576 UFS blocks will be covered in the survey. 1,50,000 Households i.e., the Ultimate Stage Units (USU) will be covered.

Significance of the Survey

- Domestic workers constitute a significant portion of total employment in the informal sector but there is a dearth of data on the magnitude and prevailing employment conditions. Thus, it will ensure a data driven and evidence based policy making for the domestic workers.

Main Bhi Digitial Initiative

The Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs and Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology jointly launched 'Main Bhi Digital 3.0' initiative from September 9 to November 30, 2021.

Aim: Digital Inclusion of Street Vendors

- The initiative aims to complement the efforts of Lending Institutions (LIs) in adoption of digital transactions by the PM SVANidhi beneficiaries. An Integrated IT Platform has been developed for implementation of this scheme.

- Under the scheme, Lending Institutions will issue a durable QR Code & Unified Payments Interface (UPI) ID at the time of loan disbursement and train the beneficiaries in conduct of digital transactions. It will aid in digital inclusion of street vendors.

Decade of Healthy Aging (2020-2030)

The Ministry of Health & Family Welfare launched the Decade of Healthy Ageing (2020-2030) in India on International Day for Older Persons (1st October, 2020). The campaign aims at mainstreaming issues related to the elderly and for deliberating upon ways to ensure better and effective delivery of services to them.

- Under the campaign, many activities will be undertaken throughout the year, aimed at mainstreaming issues related to elderly. It is an opportunity to bring together governments, civil society, etc. for ten years of concerted action to improve the lives of older people.

Index

Inclusiveness and Accessibility Index

It was launched in **2016** by **Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment** in collaboration with Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI) and Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs.

- It measures inclusiveness and accessibility of PwDs across different kind of organizations. It aims at assessing the current stage of inclusiveness and accessibility of PwDs in an organization and also acts as a guide for taking progressive steps to increase support, inclusiveness and accessibility towards persons/employees with disabilities.

Policy

National Policy for Persons with Disabilities

It was brought in **2006** with the objective of recognizing that Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) are valuable human resources for the country and it seeks to create an environment that provides PwDs equal opportunities, protection of their rights and full participation in society.

Significant Features of the Policy

- **Prevention of Disabilities:** It calls for programme for prevention of diseases, which result in disability and the creation of awareness regarding measures to be taken for prevention of disabilities during the period of pregnancy and thereafter to be intensified and their coverage expanded.
- **Rehabilitation Measures:** It calls for physical, educational and economic rehabilitation of PwDs.
- **Women with Disabilities:** Special programmes will be developed for education, employment and providing of other rehabilitation services to women with disabilities keeping in view their special needs.
- **Children with Disabilities:** They were considered as the most Vulnerable Group and require special attention.
- **Barrier Free Environment:** It calls for eliminating hurdles and creating a disabled friendly environment (Physical infrastructure).
- **Issue of Disability Certificates:** The Government must ensure that the persons with disabilities obtain the disability certificates without any difficulty in the shortest possible time by adoption of simple, transparent and client-friendly procedures.
- **Other briefs include –** ensuring social security, promoting participation of NGOs, promoting research and collecting regular data on status of PwDs.
- **Right of Person with Disability Act, 2016** was enacted on the above principles.

National Policy for Senior Citizens (2011)

It overrides National Policy for Older Persons, 1999. The reason for new policy on elderly include - demographic explosion among the elderly, changing economy and social milieu, advancement in medical research, science and technology spur and high levels of destitution among the elderly poor.

Focus Area of the Policy

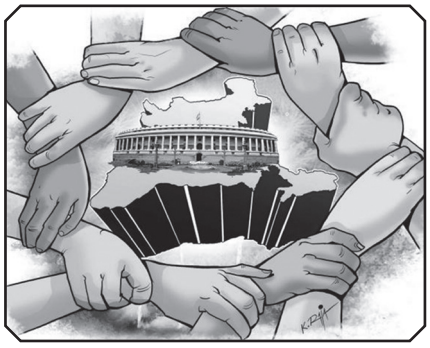
- Mainstreaming senior citizens, especially older women, and bringing their concerns into the national development debate with priority to implement mechanisms already set by governments.
- Promoting the concept of **"Ageing in Place"** or ageing in own home, housing, income security and homecare services, old age pension and access to healthcare insurance schemes and other programmes and services to facilitate and sustain dignity in old age.
- It recognizes that care of senior citizens has to be vested with the family which would partner the community, government and the private sector.
- It also aimed at protecting them from abuse and exploitation so that the quality of their lives improves.
- Being a signatory to the **Madrid Plan of Action** and **Barrier Free Framework** it worked towards an inclusive, barrier-free and age-friendly society.
- Emphasis on long term savings instruments and credit activities was given to reach both rural and urban areas.
- Employment in income generating activities after superannuation was encouraged, etc. Schemes like Integrated Programme for Senior Citizens, **Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pensions**, and **Vayoshrestha Samman** are running on the above principles of the policy.

Plan

National Action Plan for Drug Demand Reduction (2018-2023)

It is drafted by the **Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment** to address the problem of drug and substance abuse in the country.

NEOTERIC INDIAN POLITY



A polity is a political entity such as a group of people with a collective identity, who are organized by some form of institutionalized social relations having the capacity to mobilize resources for economic and social development. A functional, efficient and effective political structure of a country takes it to the shores of development.

Polity as a discipline includes a wide range of topics such as the development of the Constitution, Citizenship, Fundamental Rights, Directive Principles, the Executive, the Legislature, Judiciary, Local Government, Election system, etc.

India is a sovereign socialist secular democratic republic which assures justice, liberty, equality and fraternity to its citizens. The Constitution of India provides for a parliamentary form of government, both at Center and states due to familiarity with the system, more preference to responsibility than stability, to avoid legislative-executive conflicts and heterogeneous nature of Indian polity. Further, keeping in mind the vast geographical extent and its socio-cultural diversity, the framers of Indian Constitution adopted federal system of government.

The understanding of some of the recent developments in Indian Polity such as Elections in various states in 2022; emerging role of NGOs and SHGs in governance, expanding scope of fundamental rights; introduction of amendments in Citizenship Act, 1955; several protests on the issue of National Population Register and National Register of Citizens, etc. is necessary for holistically comprehending Indian Polity.

ELECTORAL SYSTEM

'The ballot is stronger than the bullet.' ***Abraham Lincoln***

The electoral system is a political device through which the modern states create a sense of involvement and participation amongst their citizens and associate themselves in the formation of a genuine representative government. The credibility of any democracy depends upon its ability to conduct free and fair elections. After India attained Independence in August 1947, the first General Elections to the Lok Sabha and Vidhan Sabhas were held between October, 1951 and March, 1952 with universal adult suffrage.

Recent Developments

Haryana Clears Bill on Right to Recall Panchayat Member

The Haryana Assembly on 6th November 2021 passed the Haryana Panchayati Raj (Second Amendment) Bill, 2020.

Major Provisions of the Bill

1. **Right to Recall:** The Bill provides the right to recall members of Panchayati Raj institutions. The Bill allows the recall of village sarpanches and members of the block-level panchayat samitis and district-level zila parishads if they fail to perform.
   - To recall a sarpanch and members of the two bodies, 50% members of a ward or gram sabha have to give in writing that they want to initiate proceedings. This will be followed by a secret ballot, in which their recall will require two-third members voting against them.
2. **Reservation to Women:** The Bill has provision of 50% reservation to women in these rural bodies.
3. **Reservation to "more disadvantaged":** The Bill also proposes 8% reservation to the "more disadvantaged" among the Backward Classes.

Pros & Cons of 'Right to Recall'

Right to Recall is a right which vests the electorate with the power to remove the elected officials before the expiry of their usual terms.

Pros

- Builds an effective, responsive and participatory democracy
- Enhances democratic accountability of the governing in Panchayati Raj
- Leads to citizen empowerment and increase citizens' trust and satisfaction with their representatives
- It provides for continuous accountability, so that voters need not wait until the next election to rid themselves of an incompetent, dishonest, unresponsive, or irresponsible public official
- The recall offers a safety-valve mechanism for intense feelings. Right to recall can serve as an alternative to actions such as popular protests.

Examples of effective use of 'Right to Recall'

In 2002, voters of extremely poor Anuppur -- and in 2003, voters of extremely rich California -- successfully exercised the right to recall an elected representative for non-performance.

Cons

- Citizens are often not properly equipped to judge their representatives' policy choices.
- Frequent recalls might then lead to polarization and mutual hatred between opposing parties, provoking "spirals of ever more vitriolic recall campaigns" and disincentivizing loyal opposition.
- If citizens keep recalling representatives without seeing any improvement, they might end up losing faith in elections (and recalls).

Educational Qualification for Local Bodies

Rajasthan government has scrapped the minimum educational qualification criteria for candidates contesting local body elections.

This reverses the amendments introduced by the previous government in 2015 which required candidates contesting the Zila Parishad and Panchayat Samiti elections to have passed Class 10 and those contesting Sarpanch elections to have passed Class 8.

Further, it disallowed those without functional toilets in their home to contest. Following this, Haryana also introduced similar restrictions for contesting local body elections.

Supreme Court's Ruling

- In December 2015, a two-judge Bench of the Supreme Court in Rajbala v. State of Haryana upheld the validity of the amendments to the Haryana Panchayati Raj Act.
- The court held that prescription of educational qualification was justifiable for better administration and did not violate the Right to equality enshrined in the Constitution.