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GENERAL STUDIES (TEST CODE : 1021)

Name of Candidate	Saumya Sharma		
Medium Hindi/Eng.	English	Registration Number	95371
Center	Old Rajinder Nagar	Date	15 July '17

INDEX TABLE

Q. No.	Maximum Marks	Marks Obtained
1	12.5	
2	12.5	
3	12.5	
4	12.5	
5	12.5	
6	12.5	
7	12.5	
8	12.5	
9	12.5	
10	12.5	
11	12.5	
12	12.5	
13	12.5	
14	12.5	
15	12.5	
16	12.5	
17	12.5	
18	12.5	
19	12.5	
20	12.5	

Total Marks Obtained:

Remarks:

Signature of Examiner

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Do furnish the appropriate details in the answer sheet (viz. Name, Registration Number and Test Code).
2. There are TWENTY questions printed in ENGLISH.
3. All questions are compulsory.
4. The number of marks carried by a question/part is indicated against it.
5. Answers must be written in the medium authorized in the Admission Certificate, which must be stated clearly on the cover of this Question-Cum-Answer (QCA) Booklet in the space provided. No marks will be given for answers written in medium other than the authorized one.
6. Word limit in questions, if specified, should be adhered to.
7. Any page or portion of the page left blank in the Question-Cum-Answer Booklet must be clearly struck off.

75, 3rd Floor, Old Rajinder Nagar Market, Near Axis Bank, New Delhi – 110060

103, 1st Floor, B/1-2, Ansal Building, Behind UCO Bank, Dr. Mukherjee Nagar, Delhi – 110009

EVALUATION INDICATORS

1. Alignment Competence
2. Context Competence
3. Content Competence
4. Language Competence
5. Introduction Competence
6. Structure - Presentation Competence
7. Conclusion Competence

Overall Macro Comments / feedback / suggestions on Answer Booklet:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

Answer all the questions in NOT MORE THAN 200 WORDS each. Content of the answers is more important than its length. All questions carry equal marks.

12.5X20=250

1. Identify the key objectives of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012. Also highlight the challenges in its implementation.

- The POCSO Act, 2012 is a much needed legislation targeting the dastardly act of child sexual abuse, which often goes unreported.
- It applies to all persons below the age of 18 years.
- It outlaws:
 - Penetrative assault
 - Sexual harassment
 - Non-penetrative assault
 - Child pornography
- It gives child friendly procedures regarding evidence collection.
- It makes it a duty to report an offence if known.

Challenges in implementation :-

① Conflict with rape law
- As per IPC, rape is presumed
if committed with a girl
below 16 years of age. Read with
POSCO, it gives flazy protection
for girls in 16-18 year age group.

② Social attitudes

- Victims scared to report
- Usually perpetrator is a family acquaintance, which make the parents doubt the child.

③ Shielding child from police process

- Even where the parents know, they might not report if and retaliate through other means to save the child the hassle of being party to court proceedings

Way forward:

- The initiative of e Posco box is good as it ensures a forum to file complaints while ensuring confidentiality.
- Awareness generation :-
Need to tell parents that process and procedure is child friendly.

2. Discuss how the design of MGNREGA program makes it more successful than other rural development programmes.

- The MGNREGA i.e. Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee program, launched in 2005 has been hailed as a groundbreaker and a trendsetter in the developing world.
- Its features are:
 - 100 days of employment guaranteed through express recognition and conferment of the right to work
 - Creation of durable assets that will boost capital development in the region.
 - Absence of contractors, minimal use of machines, and focus on manual work - skill generation
 - Focus on women - certain percentage of workers to be women.
 - Guarantee: In case, the government fails to provide work it has to provide wages to the beneficiary for the amount of days lost.

- Before NREGA, we had other programmes such as National Development Programme, Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana, and others. However, the issues were:-

- ① No right to work, so no redress available in case of government failing to provide work.
- ② Over involvement of contractors
- ③ Lack of awareness
- ④ Bureaucratization - leading to lesser work being actually sanctioned.

As mentioned above, the NREGA largely cures these defects.

- Presently, with the advent of ICT in governance, NREGA has been made more transparent through the use of Direct Benefit Transfer to transfer wages.

Despite all its success, the NREGA falters in some aspects

- ① Poor quality of assets created
- ② Guarantee not being upheld in many cases.
- ③ No value addition - the poor remain poor
- ④ NREGA wages lower than min. wages

Way ahead:

- ① Use of Skill India Mission - integrating it with NREGA to ensure skilled workforce
 - ② Use of geotagging and remote sensing to monitor the quality of assets.
 - ③ Creation of assets that a community actually needs - example - Toilets under Swach Bharat Mission.
- With these, the NREGA will do full justice to its ideals.

3. Self-employment of the poor has been an important objective of the anti-poverty programmes and SHGs have played a significant role in this. Elucidate with examples. Also discuss the problems which plague the model of SHG micro-finance in India.

While poverty reduction is a major plank of the government's policy, poverty cannot be eliminated by simple programmes. There is a need to make the population self reliant and efficient so as to be able to take to self employment.

However, self employment among the poor suffers from the foll. issues:-

- ① Lack of bargaining power
 - Inability to access marketplace on equal terms; fear of big players
- ② Lack of social security
 - Makes the poor hesitant to take risk.
- ③ Seasonal self employment
 - Alternate between agricultural work & self employment. Eg:

Rikshaw Pullers.

This is where Self Help Groups play a major role.

- The first SHG was tried as an experiment between women and NABARD in the late 1980s

- The reason for its success:

- ① Collectivisation, increasing bargaining power

- ② Providing a social security net

- ③ Special role played in women and specifically widow empowerment.

Eg: Lijjat Papad is a SHG.

- ④ Easier financing

Bank → SHG → Member

MFI → SHG → Member.

Yet, despite the success, SHGs micro financing model has its share of problems too:

① Micro Finance Institutions, which proliferate in rural areas with low bank coverage, charge usurious interest rates.

- The problem is so bad that some states have had to pass legislation to curb this menace.

② MFI model promotes social pressure in case of non repayment of loan, leading to suicides.

③ lack of mobility
- Hierarchies exist even within an SHG, making it difficult for small/weaker players to seek redressal.

The values of equality (of interest rates and within group) and fraternity as given in our preamble if followed will ensure success of the SHG-MFI model.

4. Give an account of the issues that arise due to short tenure of civil servants in India. Critically discuss the move of setting up a Civil Services Board in order to address this problem.

The issue of creation of a Civil Services Board has been amply dealt with ~~the~~ by the Admin Reforms Commission.

The issues:

- ① Most policy interventions require a long term planning, with monitoring by same person.
- ② Yet due to frequent transfers on account of change in govt. or promotion, most policies are planned and monitored by many individuals.
- ③ This brings discontinuity in vision, which is a reason why most of our policy measures are ad-hoc in nature, and piecemeal.

④ Adding to the woes is the lack of culture of maintaining records and personal observation diaries, which means a new officer has to start from scratch.

The suggestions:

- ① It is therefore suggested that civil servants, especially those in key posts, should be given a sufficiently long tenure of 4-5 years.
- ② Posts should not be provided just before retirement, but instead when there is enough time for the appointee to execute & design ~~them~~ policies.
- ③ This appointment to key posts is being sought to

be done by the creation
of a Civil Services Board.

Way forward:

The idea is good, yet, any
action must ensure

- The board is transparent.
- Appointments are not based
on negotiation / extraneous
considerations.
- Appointment of the members
of the Board itself is made
with due regard to principles
of natural justice.

This will ensure reduction of
policy paralysis on account of
short tenure.

5. India's health system is one of the most privatised in the world, poorly regulated and accessible only to those with income levels well above the average. Comment.

India is set to have the world's youngest population by 2020.

In order to reap the benefits of its demographic dividend, investing in health and education is paramount.

Yet, India spends less than 2% of its GDP in the Budget on health.

Issues in the Govt Sector :

① The present system of healthcare in India is:

(District level) District Hospital (3rd healthcare)

(Block level) Block Hospital (2nd healthcare)

(A group of villages) Primary Health Center (1st healthcare)

(At every village) Sub-Centre [Nurse and auxiliary mid wife]

The first point of contact is the sub center poorly staffed with

ASHA or other paramedical workers. ASHA workers are overburdened, with the 2016-17 budget transferring a large set of responsibilities on them [manning one stop Mahila Shakti Kendra as well]

The patient almost always is referred to the PHC, which takes time and may result in deaths.

- ② lack of bedding in hospitals
- ③ curative; and not preventive - The focus is usually to act once the person is sick and not prior to it.
- ④ Government doctors illegally continuing with private practice, due to low pay
- ⑤ Hygiene problems - hospitals are breeding grounds of disease

⑥ Safety issues : Recent fire at AMRI in Kolkata.

⑦ Initiatives like PM Rashtriya Swasthya Mission - creation of tertiary AIIMS like centers
 ↳ only buildings, no doctors
 ↳ excess government control in appointments

This state of affairs ensures that healthcare in government hospitals is unsatisfactory and patients are either pushed to the private sector [where affordable] or wallow in apathy.

Positive initiatives :-

- ① Jan aushadhi stores
 - ② Delhi Govt's announcement regarding free surgeries for all
 - ③ Rationalising price of stents.
- Yet, we need a broad long term policy instead of a price meet approach.

6. Keeping in mind the importance of NGOs in India's development process it is imperative that adequate legal and regulatory mechanisms should be in place. Discuss in the context of recent developments.

Recently, the Home Ministry cancelled the licenses of a large number of NGOs. This led to a furor that NGOs are being targeted.

NGOs play an important role in development. Examples:

① Environment issues: Narmada Bachao Andolan

② RTI : Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan

③ legal aid : Public Union of Civil Liberties (PUCL)

→ NGOs pressurize government into enacting beneficial policy.

→ Concerns:

① Being said that NGOs are promoting vested interests and thwarting development.

② That NGOs are receiving foreign donations from sources undisclosed and many are shell organisations.

Need for Regulation① Present Regulation:

- Under the RTI, NGOs receiving substantial government funding are under a duty to disclose.
- Prevention of Corruption Act:
Applies to NGOs with foreign funding
- Foreign Contribution Regulation Act
Enacted to regulate foreign funding, it makes it easier for political parties to access funding than
- NGO's I Tax Act: NGOs have tax exemption

② Need for change:

- Transparency
The cancellation of licenses is done in an opaque manner without following principles of natural justice. The report should be open to all.
- licensing
Presently, NGOs are granted

licenses for a 5 year period. This can be increased.

→ Disclosure and Accountability

- As the ARC has recommended, NGOs should disclose annual reports and accounts as they are in the public domain

Way ahead :

Perhaps it is time to prepare a NGO centric law, consolidating and reforming all enactments that apply.

This should be done by consulting all stakeholders to ensure the vibrant role of NGOs remains intact, plurality of opinions remains intact and NGOs are allowed the space to dissent without fear of license cancellation.

7. While on one hand, there has been proliferation of use of digital technology, on the other hand, resulting digital dividends have not been forthcoming. Analyse.

Proliferation of Digital Technology

- e Governance - Virtual Reality
- e Healthcare - GPS
- Online shopping - UPI, Mobile Wallets
- Online grievance redressal
- High tech gadgets being developed every day.

The 21st century world is truly in the grip of digital technology, which has made our lives easier, simpler and better.

Unfortunately, the digital dividends have not been forthcoming.

① General Populace

- Only the educated, mostly urban class citizens are fully harnessing its potential.

- Despite there being 1.2 Billion mobile connections in India [TRAI statistics], the proliferation of

mobile internet is not even a
fraction of this.

- Mental Block: Adults are unwilling to learn, even where they have the resources.

② Businesses and private sector

- Not all have been readily accepting,
- Clash between online stores and brick and mortar stores [seen as conflicting & not complementary]
- No uniformity

③ Government

- E governance is at its peak.
- Yet, no uniformity between websites of different departments.
- Example of Andhra's Core Dashboard needs to be made famous.

Solutions to realise its full potential (dividend): -

1. Data Security.
- Need for data security policy to allay privacy fears.
2. Use of blockchain technology in governance.
3. Proliferation of Meghraj, Digi locker by awareness generation.
4. Uniformity → Incentivising all hospitals, pt establishments to shift to digital tech.
5. Easy interface → To help anyone understand.
6. ICT in Education
- SWAYAM MOOCs,
Other online courses,
- online assessments from a young age to ensure a digitally responsible and aware future generation.

8. The public policy requirements of the 21st century demand a bureaucracy less generalist in nature. Analyse in the context of Indian civil services.

Generalist bureaucracy refers to the present system of top governance in India comprising of IAS, IPS. This is in contrast with specialist civil service comprising Indian Eco. Service, Indian Forest Service.

Challenges of the 21st century:-

① Urbanisation

→ Problems range from architecture, transport, health, education, waste management.

→ A general vast experience probably will be insufficient to deal with the problems

② Proliferation of Technology

→ Cyber attacks, cyber fraud, identity theft, cyber wars.

→ These again require a niche experience and education to provide solutions in time with the times.

③ Changing role of State

→ Unlike older times, the state now has to work hand in hand with private players.

These, *inter alia*, have given rise to the call for specialist bureaucracy.

① Revolving Door Policy :-

- By allowing private sector talent to enter government service with easy exit [contract employment]

② Lateral Hiring :-

- The recent PMO proposal to have top private honchos roped in for mid level joint secretary positions, and be retained.

Issues:

• The revolving door policy may lead to leakage of sensitive info.

- Very few will be willing to leave their well paying private sector jobs

Way Ahead:

- Need to frame a policy with all stakeholders.
- Not all services will require these lateral hires. It should be only for the services which have a degree of specialisation.
- Shuffling within the services [intra service]. For example, the post of TRAI chairman can be given to an IAS officer with experience in the field.
- Bridging technical specialists to assist the generalist posts
Eg: Andhra Pradesh government recently hired Indian School of Business graduates to work with District Collectors.

9. Explain how the National Digital Library (NDL) can bring a fundamental shift in the paradigm of education and research. Also highlight the challenges that need to be addressed to make NDL self-sustainable.

National Digital Library, being set up under the Digital India Mission will truly usher in e-Kranti in education.

Features :

- ① Thousands of titles, for free
- ② Accessible to all
↳ Special screenreader access for those with visual disability
- ③ Cuts down costs of maintaining physical libraries in thousands of cities, ^{and schools,} instead only require a gadget and an internet connection
- ④ Cuts down costs of maintaining librarians and other staff

⑤ In collaboration with SWAN and MOOCs, will result in education reaching all corners of the country with internet access.

⑥ Environment Friendly - less paper usage

Challenges :-

① Ensuring internet access
through Bharat Net.

- Use of Facebook's Aquila or Google Loon can be had to increasing coverage.

② Digital Literacy

- Need to teach beneficiaries on how to operate and use the internet and connected devices.

③ Attitude Change

- Most people still

prefer to study and read using paper books as they find the experience of digital tech. not as fulfilling.

④ Provision of tablets & gadgets to students

If these challenges are addressed, it will certainly lead to a fundamental paradigm shift in education.

10. Census 2011 observed that there has been a significant increase in urban homeless households in the period between 2001 and 2011. What are homeless households? Highlighting the challenges faced by them, discuss the causes for increase in such households. Suggest various measures to rehabilitate these households.

• Homeless households :

- The NSSO defines a household as a family of 5 or more, essentially consisting of Mother, Father and children -

- This 'household' need not necessarily live in a home.

- with lack of resources and capacity, households live under flyovers, in tarpaulin tents, and some just sleep on the footpaths.

• Reasons for increase [2001-2011]

-> Poor job avenues in villages and city dream as popular indiscipline.

-> Increasing stress on agricultural land and chronic unemployment

• Challenges faced :

-> Harassment by government workers and citizens alike.

- Unemployment
- Lack of education (both adults & children)
- No access to healthcare
- No identity registration, documentation
- Hygiene - diseases like cholera.
- Vulnerability.
- Lack of social security
- Falling in the web of Begging Mafia.

• Measures for rehabilitation :-

- ① Construction of homeless shelters (all season, as presently we have winter shelters)
- ② Ensuring Aadhar registration
 - ↳ Linking to Bank Account
 - ↳ Access to PDS
 - ↳ Access to DBT
- ③ Creation of a policy encompassing
 - ↳ Registration of workers in Skill India mission
 - ↳ Registration in NREGA
 - ↳ Education for their children

including portability of education
from one school to another

↳ Provision of healthcare

↳ Imparting of soft skills

↳ Enrolment in various PM

Bima Yojanas

Such a wide reaching policy
will ensure transition of
homeless urban households into
urban economy assets by
providing them requisite
skills and resources to live
a productive life.

11. What is the criteria for a village being recognized as electrified? Examine the challenges present in rural electrification in India. Elaborate upon some of the recent initiatives of the government with a special emphasis on Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Gram Jyoti Yojana.

The government has set the target of 100% electrification of villages under DDUGJY.

However, a village is considered electrified if only 10% of the total households have electricity.

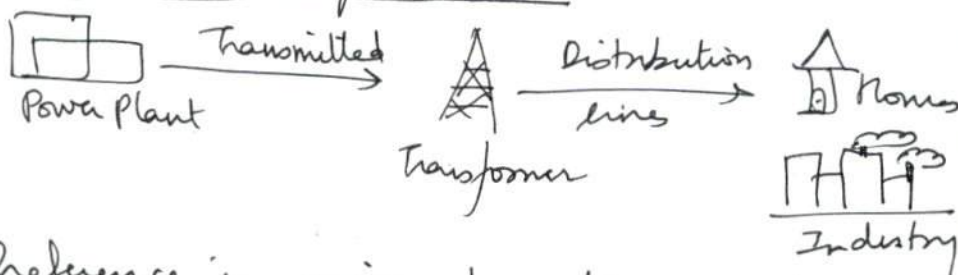
Which means, 90% of the households of an electrified village are leading their life as before.

Challenges of rural electrification:

- Inter class and caste disparities
 - Electricity usually reaches homes of the already well off.
- Electricity theft
 - Where an overhead wire passes, people tend to 'cut' electricity from it illegally.
- Lack of renewable energy proliferation.
 - Solar lamps and panels

can be made more popular.

- Distribution problems.



Preference is given to the industries over houses, while homes reel under incessant power cuts.

To cure these problems, the government has launched several initiatives:

① DDUG JY.

- Under this, 50% of homes electrified have to be SC/ST homes. This ensures parity.

② UDAY scheme

- Revival of power discoms, to ensure power.

③ International Solar Alliance

- led by India, to ensure renewable proliferation.

④ Solar, wind, tidal energy potential

being harnessed, with govt.
planning 175 GW Renewable
Energy by 2022



- ⑤ linking renewable grid with non renewable one → to ensure ensured supply through renewable & non renewable means.
- ⑥ Encouraging off grid power generation by households and industry through private renewable energy.

All these initiatives will ensure equity in electricity, and there is not far when even the other 90% of electrified villages have access to electricity.

12. While the Right to Education (RTE) Act was based on noble intentions, implementation of many of its provisions remain ridden with problems. Discuss.

The decisions of the Supreme Court in TMA Pai Foundation case and Unnikrishnan case led widespread demand of education, especially private primary education to be made a right.

The Constitution was amended and the DPSP of primary education was given the status of a Fundamental Right under Art 21A. Further, a fundamental duty was added under Article 51A making parents duty bound to educate their children.

This led to enactment of Right to Education Act, 2009 which was notified in 2014.

The Act provides for free and compulsory primary education

for children between 6-14 years.

It also provides for Economically Weaker Section category in top private schools.

The Act has been a success, in so far as the Gross Enrolment Ratio in primary education is now 116%.

Yet, the intention of the Act was to provide educated children, and not just enrolled children.

Challenges:-

• The PISA survey of OECD ranked Indian education as the second worst, better only than Kyrgyzstan.

• Pratham's ASER [Annual Survey of Education Report] ^{shows} ~~provides~~ that 75% Class III, 50% Class I and 25% Class VIII students

cannot read a Class II text.

→ Quality of teachers is poor.

↳ Art 171 of Constitution
ensures politicisation of teachers
↳ Teacher absenteeism, vacancies

→ No detention policy

↳ No ^{concrete} information on its
efficacy.

→ s.7 of RTE Act: Provision of funds
to schools → No timely progress
Conclusion :-

→ While efforts like Padhe Bharat
Badhe Bharat are hopeful,
the need of the hour is a
massive overhaul of the
education system.

The sooner it is done by increasing
budgetary outlays and incorporating
ICT, the better it will be
for our demographic dividend.

13. Critically examining the key provisions of The Surrogacy (Regulation) Bill 2016, discuss whether a complete ban on commercial surrogacy is justified.

→ Surrogacy refers to the act of carrying a child of another by a female → essentially, using the womb of another woman.

→ The Surrogacy Regulation Bill, 2016

① Bans all consideration for surrogacy [i.e. no commercial surrogacy]

② only a married woman who already has a child can be a surrogate for altruistic reasons

③ only INDIAN HETEROSEXUAL married couples, married for 5 years can opt for it.

Point ③ above has resulted in a lot of debate too. The present discussion will be whether ban on commercial surrogacy is justified :-

Yes, it is Justified :-

① Exploitation of poor women

in the name of womb renting

② No limit on how many times a woman can be a surrogate, leading to ~~commercial~~ ^{health} problems.

③ Rejecting child.

- Instances have been reported wherein couples abandon the child if born with physical deformities / other complications, and no regulation of what happens next.

④ Disparance in bargaining power in doctors

No, banning is not justified :-

① Agency of the surrogate mother.

- A poor woman has full right on how she wants to use her body. She should be trusted to know when she can stop being a surrogate

② Hope for childless couples, or those who want a child but cannot.

③ Regulate it, instead of
banning it → will turn
India into a medical hub.

Conclusion:

- The ethics of surrogacy is debatable. Yet; it is a fact that surrogacy has brought light in the life of many.
- The total ban on commercial surrogacy might disadvantage couples who cannot find an altruistic surrogate.
- What could be done is to allow commercial surrogacy only in case of genuine need. ~~to~~ Allowing consideration to be given will ensure better pregnancy care also. The genuine need can be determined by a panel of doctors.
- Any such decision should be taken in a democratic manner.

14. It is often strongly suggested that scarce government resources should be redirected in favour of primary education rather than higher education. In this context, analyse whether curtailing public spending in higher education would help in achieving the principle of equity.

In India, the Gross Enrolment Ratio in primary education is 116%.

Shockingly, it drops to around 20% in higher education.

The Statistics themselves show that curtailing expenditure in an already shrinking higher education sector will be detrimental.

In favour of curtailing expenditure:-

- Most students are in primary education, funds should be allocated to ensure outcome based, solid primary education.
- Only if a child is educated properly at the primary level can it pursue education at a higher level.
- Higher education funds provide for a fraction, most of whom settle in other countries.

Against curtailing expenditure :-

- our higher edu. insts. have paucity of seats, leading to even 90% scoring students to take admission in private sector colleges.
- Funds are needed to bolster RnD, as is being pioneered by IISER and IISc.

Conclusion:

- There can be no extreme position here. The need is to look broadly at the need to push for demographic dividend realisation.
- This can only be done if adequate funds are provided in primary, middle and higher level. There needs to be progression to ensure that our population does not

stagnate with an 8th pass
qualification, courtesy the no
detention policy.

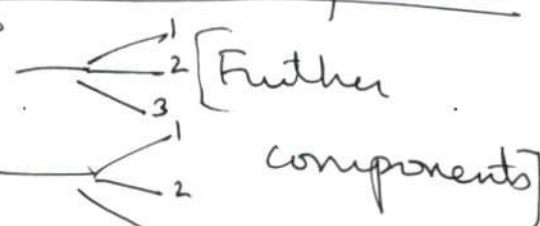
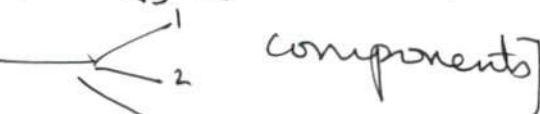
- Any funding of higher education needs to also take into account the market demand and employability based education to ensure proper returns on the funds pumped in.
- Any funding of either primary or higher edu should not be to the detriment of the other.

15. Accessibility is the key to inclusion and equal access for people with disabilities. Analyse. Also discuss the objectives and components of the Sugamya Bharat Abhiyan with a special emphasis on inclusiveness and accessibility index.

- Most people with disabilities are unable to lead to productive lives due to attitudes that surround them.
- The physical & mental barriers are such that they are not even given a chance to succeed.
- Therefore, the key to inclusion is access. Access to public spaces, access to education, access to employment.
- The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 in tune with the previous PWD Act, 1995 makes it a duty on the 'appropriate government' to provide access.
- The UN's Incheon Strategy and Convention on Disability also

reiterate the same.

- In consonance with Juganya Bharat Abhiyan, the government has taken many steps to ensure inclusion :-

- ① Inclusive & Accessibility Index
comprising
- a) Inclusive ness 
 - b) Accessibility 

Organisations are rated on this. Each sub component carries equal weightage. This provides a good barometer to judge how inclusive an organisation is.

- ② Making 50% of -
- railway stations
 - government TV programmes
 - public buildings in capital cities
 - public transport
- Accessible.

- ③ ADIP Yojana
- Distribution of prosthetics, hearing aids to disabled

persons through government PSU
ALIMCo.

- ④ National Digital Library
- In consultation with
DAISY foundation, to provide
screen reader technology
and access to books in
digital form.
- ⑤ 5% Reservation in government
jobs and educational
institutes
- ⑥ Awareness and myth busting
workshops.

Way ahead:

- Need to increase ~~acc~~ accessibility
parameters to 100%.
- More representation to disabled
in politics.

16. The Olympic Task Force constituted to prepare an action plan for the next three Olympic Games is a step in the right direction. Comment. Also highlight other initiatives required to augment India's performance in the sporting arena internationally.

India's performance in olympics remains dismal year after year. Reasons being:

- ① Parents do not want to push their children in sports as there is no employment guarantee once a player passes youth.
- ② Lack of facilities for sports.
Eg: Dipe Karmakar and Abhinav Bindra's success was largely due to self efforts.
- ③ Corruption is rife.

Therefore, having an Olympic Task Force for next 3 games, i.e. next 12 years is a step in the right direction:-

- ① Planning with direction.
Abhinav Bindra's leadership will be helpful.

- ② Training children early on, as is being done in US & China
- ③ Selection of students who are naturally endowed with good sporting abilities.
- ④ Proper supply of funds - long term effort will ensure it is not done in an ad hoc manner, less red tape.

Other initiatives required:-

a) Need to have a policy in place for a long term employment for olympic players. Present system of giving cash prizes by governments could be substituted by providing govt. jobs in case of good performance.

b) Need to push for women's cricket. India's women cricket

team is doing very well, yet lackadaisical treatment. Similarly, women's hockey should also be given treatment at par with men's hockey.

c). Removing discrimination

- Presently, award prizes for women tournaments are less than half of what men tournaments get. Policy should provide for realisation of Article 14 right to equality.

These reforms, along with the Olympic Task force will ensure India's soft power increases in the field of sports other than cricket.

17. Recent judgment of the Supreme Court, amending the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005 has invoked varied responses. Highlighting the amendment, critically examine its likely impact on the application of the law.

- The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005

was enacted to protect women from the scourge of violence in their homes, which they rarely bring to light.

- It makes domestic violence a non cognizable, non bailable offence and provides for punishment upto 7 years imprisonment.

- Recently in 2017 the Supreme Court read down the provisions of the Act to hold that from now, a woman can accuse another woman and even a minor for causing domestic violence.

Positive Impact :

- Violence can be caused by anyone
- Many a times mother in laws and sister in laws are party to torture
- They may also instigate minors children to abuse / hit the victim which makes it even worse.

Negative Impact :-

- It is yet another instance of an overbroad interpretation being given by the Supreme Court.
- It can now be used (misused) by the mother in law / sister in law to fame the victim instead, leading to multiplicity of proceedings.
- Minors, with little understanding of the situation and who are essentially acting as per orders, will be embroiled in legal trouble without regard to principles of Juvenile Justice Act.

Conclusion:-

- The wide interpretation given by the Supreme Court can lead to unpleasant consequences, making it difficult to know who the actual victim is.
- The Parliament should take suitable steps urgently to clarify the scope of application of the law to ensure it is not misused.

18. In spite of its usefulness as a tool of transparency and accountability, the RTI Act needs to be amended as it is being widely misused, especially to blackmail public functionaries. Critically examine.

- The Right to Information Act, 2005 was a gamechanger in Indian polity hitherto marked by secrecy, courtesy:

↳ oath of secrecy taken by

MPs

↳ Official Secrets Act, 1923

providing for non-disclosure.

- The Act provides for

- *Suo moto* disclosure
- Response by Public Info. Officer (PIO) within 30 days, failing which an appeal lies.

- It is now being said that the Act is a tool for blackmail.

① Vexatious applications filed for frivolous reasons waste the time and resource of public functionaries.

② Some RTI activists file

applications as a hobby, just to know, even when there is no reason to ask.

- ③ Some officers are threatened by the RTI route, making them believe that there is a scam happening under their nose which they ~~can~~ ^{do} not know about. This blackmailing affects the working of honest officers who get in a neck-on-the-line situation.

Yet, the Act itself provides safeguards.

- As per s.8 of the Act, ^{under} the heads given, information need not be disclosed [national security] etc.
- The PIO can refuse an application if the information is already in the public domain.
- The fee paid by onerous method of Demand Draft itself

acts as a disincentive to filing
venacious applications

Way forward:

It is unanimous that the RTI has done more good than harm. Any amendment should be done only after properly weighing pros and cons. Unless a significant threat of blackmail is detected, it should not be amended as that will destroy the culture of transparency.

Yet, the interest of honest officers needs to be protected while allowing activists to cull out the corrupt officers through RTI.

19. The transgender community has been among one of the most marginalized communities in India. Discuss. How does the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Bill 2016 seek to protect transgenders from discrimination and address the problems faced by them?

The transgender community is one of the most visible, yet one of the most ridiculed and discriminated in India.

The Supreme Court in its NALSA v. UOI judgment made a breakthrough by recognising transgenders as the third gender.

To give effect, the Transgender Persons Bill 2016, introduced as a private bill was passed by the Parliament. It seeks to

- ① Provide reservations to transgenders in education & employment
- ② Recognising their 3rd gender

- ③ Focus on healthcare, especially HIV AIDS prevention
- ④ Providing them with a life of dignity.

- Tamil Nadu is foremost in providing acceptance to transgenders. Eg: lakshmi, the first transgender TV Host of India hails from TN.

- With the Act, it is hoped that transgenders will be able to lead a respectful, meaningful life.

- However, for this to happen, the legislation is not enough. There is need to change attitudes of

- a) Transgenders about themselves
- Transgenders need to make full use of the progressive provisions of the law &

gain employment, rather than
sing, dance to extort money
to earn a living

b) of the other two genders
regarding transgenders.

- The provisions of the Act will
ensure that parents do not
give up their transgender
child for adoption but
instead see a hopeful and
bright future for their
children.

20. Though the Forest Rights Act 2006 tries to undo the historic injustice done to the forest dweller and tribals, it has been argued that it is being misused. Critically analyse.

The Forest Rights Act, 2006 is the first legislation to explicitly recognise the rights of tribals over their land.

It ^{a)} empowers tribals, ^{b)} recognises them as land holders, gives them right over minor forest produce.

- It also gives tribals a say in development works being carried out in the forest:—

The best example is the effort of Nyngiri hills Kondia tribe in successfully erecting Vedanta.

~~Despite all~~

- Along with the Vanbandhu Kalyan Yojana, it grants tribals means to live respectably, and also an opportunity to assimilate in the mainstream.

through scholarships.

Yet, it is said to be misused :-

- ① It focus more on land consolidation, leading to some tribals excluding others
- ② We still have forest land being diverted for non-forest purposes.
↳ The Compensatory Afforestation Act to compensate for diversion's efficacy is yet to be seen.
→ Acquisition under land Acquisition Act under 'public purpose' is also easy of forest land.
- ③ Tribals still do not have any say over major forest produce.
- ④ Naxalites are being granted forest rights through tribals,

providing them territory for
left Wing Extremism activities

⑤ Conservation of forests has not
actually resulted.

→ Way forward :-

Tribal rights is a sensitive topic
that needs to be dealt with
care.

Any misuse of its provisions
needs to be dealt with
strictly without clamping
down on the rights of innocent
tribals.