

## VAJIRAM &amp; RAVI

SURE SHOT MAINS REHEARSAL 2025

<b>General Studies</b> <b>FULL LENGTH TEST</b> <b>(GS - 2)</b> <b>Test Code - VR1052510</b>	<b>Evaluator Code:</b> <b>Date of Assignment:</b> <b>CQ:</b>
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<b>NAME:</b>	<u>Ayush Senual</u>	<b>Time allowed: 3 Hours</b>
<b>STUDENT ID.:</b>		<b>Email:</b>
<b>UPSC ROLL NO.:</b>	<u>1410458</u>	<b>Submission Date:</b>
<b>MOBILE NO.:</b>		<u>9/Aug/2025</u>

QUESTION PAPER SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS

**Please read each of the following instructions carefully before attempting questions:**

There are **TWENTY** questions printed in **ENGLISH**.

All the questions are compulsory.

The number of marks carried by a question/ part is indicated against it. Word limit in questions, wherever specified, should be adhered to. Any page or portion of the page left blank in the Question-cum-Answer Booklet must be clearly struck off.

Q No.	Marks	Q No.	Marks	Q No.	Marks
Q1	/10	Q8	/10	Q15	/15
Q2	/10	Q9	/10	Q16	/15
Q3	/10	Q10	/10	Q17	/15
Q4	/10	Q11	/15	Q18	/15
Q5	/10	Q12	/15	Q19	/15
Q6	/10	Q13	/15	Q20	/15
Q7	/10	Q14	/15	<b>Total</b>	<b>/250</b>

**Instructions:-**

- Legible Scanning:** Exercise due diligence in scanning your scripts for clear legibility
- Submissions** marred by poor scanning, notably those with illegible sections or blackened pages due to improper scanning, risk being excluded from the evaluation process.
- Non-Adherence Consequences:** Failure to comply with the aforementioned instructions may lead to the disqualification of your submission.

**For Student Only**

<b>Start Time -</b> <u>4:00 pm</u>	<b>End Time -</b>
<b>Mode of Examination</b> <u>online</u>	<b>Online</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Offline</b> <input type="checkbox"/>

Receiving date -

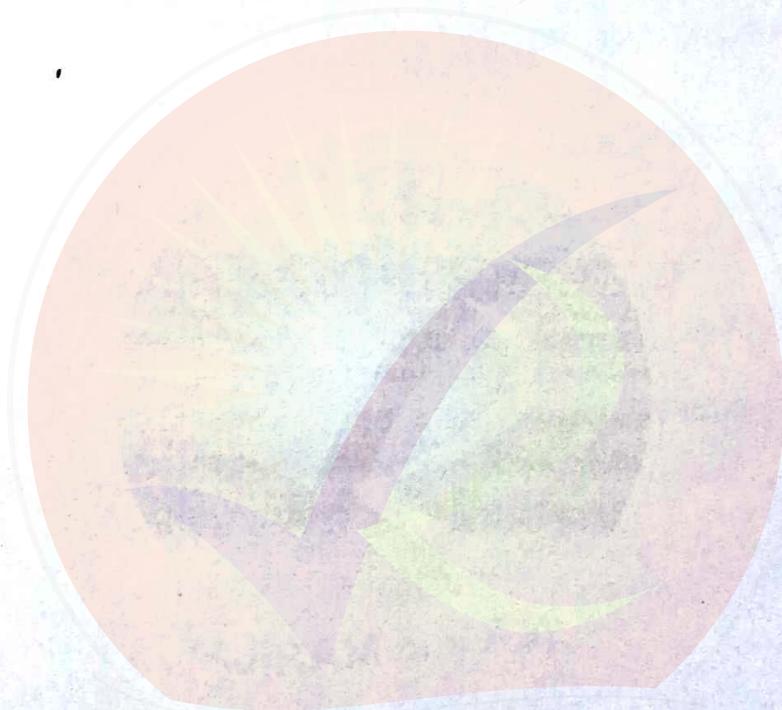
Dispatch date -

**Evaluator/Reviewer Suggestions**



👍 😊 All the Best 😊 👍

**Evaluator/Reviewer Suggestions**



**VAJIRAM & RAVI**

👤 😊 All the Best 😊 👤

(Answer questions in NOT MORE than the word limit specified for each in the parenthesis. Content of the answer is more important than its length.)

1. Ordinary laws and constitutional amendments are subject to different tests of judicial validity. In light of this distinction, examine, whether the Basic Structure doctrine should be applied uniformly to both. (10 marks, 150 words)

Ordinary laws are checked for judicial correctness under article 13 while constitutional amendment Acts under article 368 are checked for Basic structure (Keshavnanda Bharti case) 1973.

Uniform application of Basic structure

→ overcomes ambiguities with respect different application of judicial oversight.

→ Ensures stronger judicial oversight in preserving democratic ethos eg rule of law, secularism.

→ Prevents parliament from bypassing

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Judicial oversight over meddling with  
constitutional principles

However there are certain challenges associated

- 1) Judicial overreach over regular legislative competence creating deadlocks.
- 2) In contrast to judicial pronouncements - Keshavnanda case (1973), Munshi Mills case where Basic structure principle is against amending powers.
- 3) Blurs distinction between legislative and constituent powers.  
Supremacy in Raj Narain case have highlighted the distinction, however I.R. Coelho case proposed Judicial review and application of BS over laws under Schedule 9. The separation is very much bedrock of the separation of power since in itself is Basic structure.

2. Politicisation of the Vice President's role as Rajya Sabha chair raises concerns over impartiality. Elucidate its implications for parliamentary democracy. (10 marks, 150 words)

Vice President of India  
 is the ex-officio chairman of Rajya Sabha  
 (under Article 64) responsible for holding  
impartial proceedings, maintaining democratic  
decorum and ensure peaceful passage of Bills

However, politicisation of post holds various  
 concerns

a) Impairing neutrality - hampering the  
 very root of parliamentary democracy.

b) Frequent disruption - leading to  
 unproductive work, walkouts, shouting, shogun  
 shouting. e.g. PRS legislative research 17th  
 Lok Sabha 45% of time  
 was unproductive.

c) Hasty passage of Bills - without proper discussion and debate. ex As per ADR reports only ~10% Bills subject to parliamentary committee deliberations.

d) Partisan appointments to key positions leads to demoralising opposition.

e) Decline in Institutional credibility  
Reduces public confidence in parliament.

Vice President's post is that of dignity and ethics. The recommendations of Rajya Sabha Rules committee, Justice Malimath committee and NCRWC have explicitly mentioned codification of conduct rules for presiding officers to impart impartiality.

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3. Regulating religious endowments without undermining the right to manage religious affairs poses a dilemma. Discuss how regulatory oversight can be balanced with the protection of religious rights.  
(10 marks, 150 words)

Way Act (Amendment) 2002  
puts forward varied challenges with respect  
to religious endowments managing religious  
affairs

Balancing the fundamental rights under Article  
28-30 and freedom of religious endowments

- Maintain the principles of secularism  
- equal distance model (Sarva Dharma  
Sambhara)
- Managing autonomy of religious endowment  
to regulate their affairs.
- Oversight to maintain democratic  
functioning of these institutions. (Reasonable restrictions)
- Maintenance of public order and ensuring  
communal undertones.

## Balancing regulatory oversight

1) light touch approach in some areas  
eg audits, administrative rules.

2) clear legal frameworks - Mahf Act,  
Hindu religious and charitable endowment  
acts to have precise guidelines for dispute  
resolution

3) Judicial review to see regular legal  
scrutiny do not overcome constitutional  
ideals.

4) community participation and constructive  
dialogue among stakeholders.

Mahf Amendment controversy  
needs a balanced approach to maintain  
neutrality in administrative boards and  
maintaining constitutional morality eg  
Article 26-30.

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4. The New Criminal Laws marks a shift from colonial control to contemporary justice. Discuss how these reforms reflect India's constitutional vision and societal needs in the 21st century.  
(10 marks, 150 words)

The three new criminal laws - Bhartiya Nyaya Sanhita, Bhartiya Nagarika Suraksha Sanhita, Bhartiya Shahsra Adhikarnijam replaced the colonial era - IPC, CrPc and Evidence Act 1872.

New criminal laws reflecting constitutional vision

- Justice, liberty, equality - Victim centric, reformative and upholds due process of law
- Fair compliance :- electronic evidence, protecting individual dignity
- DPSP - in consonance with marginalised groups, women, children

→ Social Justice - provides for community work as light touch punishment.

In consonance with societal needs of 21st century

→ Speedy Justice - time bound investigation, and trial to reduce pending undertrial (65% of jail occupants undertrials).

→ Technology integration - mandatory use of electronic based evidence, e-FIR, forensic

→ Women empowerment - strict penalties for sexual offences

→ witness protection ensuring timely justice

→ Restorative justice - community service

→ clear definition of terrorism and organised crime. New criminal laws meet the imperative of modern times. The need is regular tearing.

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5. Urban Local Bodies have become dependent on grants rather than being fiscally autonomous. Examine the challenges in the fiscal empowerment of ULBs and its impact on urban governance. (10 marks, 150 words)

Urban local bodies are constituted under 74th CAA 1992 as constitutional bodies. Despite the status, it still faces the brunt of 3Ps - Finance, functions and functionaries.

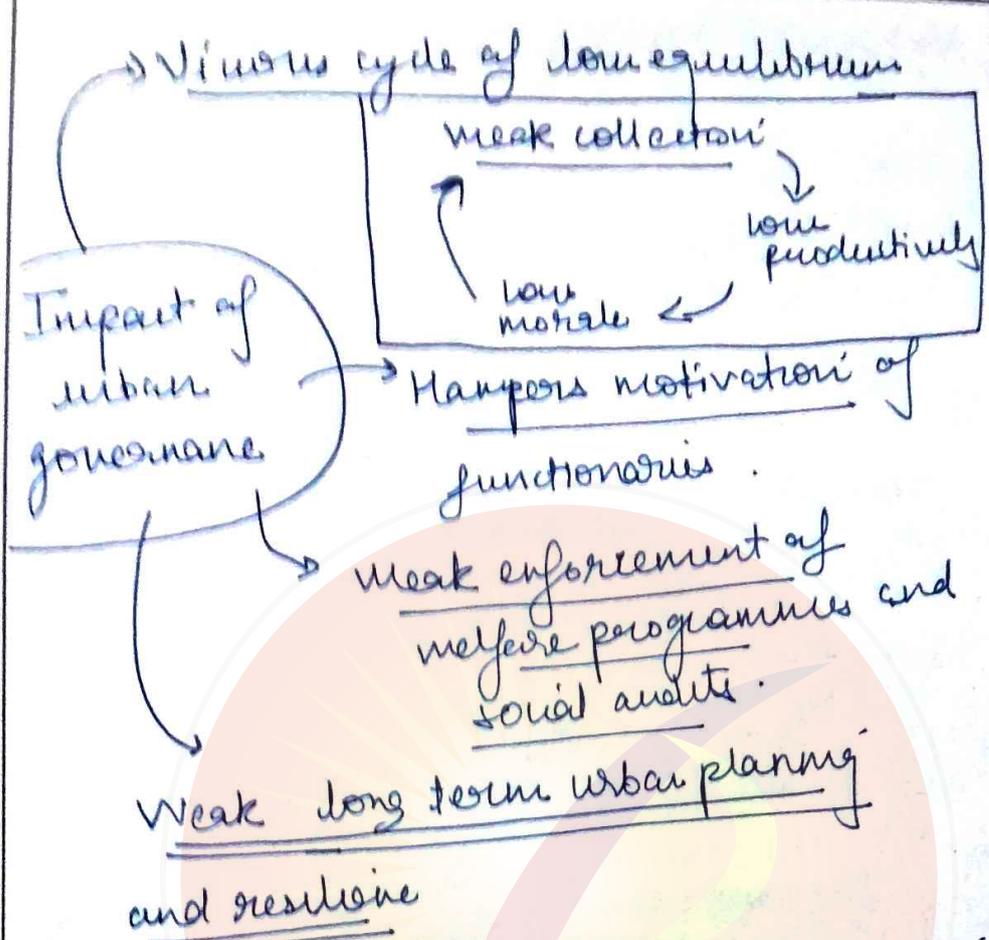
Challenges of fiscal empowerment

- ↳ Low devolution of taxation powers - in many states only few of 18 C12th (scheduled) functions devolved.

- ↳ Financial paralysis due to bureaucratic apathy and presence of parastatals.

- ↳ Institutional mismatch - weak capacity to generate and collect revenues
- ↳ low integration of Technology

- ↳ hampers timely collection
- ↳ Delayed establishment of state financial commission and late recommendations



The grassroot institutions are bedrock of participatory governance. Their financial stability is imperative. As recommended by 2nd ARC to strengthen SFCs and High powered expert committee on Urban Infrastructure (2011)'s municipal bonds are viable options.

Section	
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6. Given the prolonged and unresolved nature of Inter-State river water disputes, do you think the current tribunal-based mechanism has outlived its utility? Substantiate your view with relevant examples  
(10 marks, 150 words)

Interstate water disputes  
are adjudicated under Article 262  
and Inter state river dispute Act 1956.

However river disputes such as Camery  
and Ravi-Baer remains prolonged.

Argument that it outlived its utility

1) Delay in constitution - Camery  
Tribunal took 16 years to give  
award.

2) Prolonged litigation - Krishna  
dispute still in supreme court post  
award.

3) Weak enforcement mechanism for  
awards with no monitoring  
of compliance

1) Political interference delaying award  
 Mahanadi award still stalled due to centre's disapproval.

2) Inability to take into account climate change affecting variability of flow

Nonetheless it still holds relevance

Impartial mechanism without executive interference

taking into account hydrology, ecology, engineering

Expert consultations

by taking stakeholders approval.

Protects federal spirit

have resolved disputes like Krishna and Narmada

The process need recalibration

as proposed by Punchi commission - permanent tribunals and law commission (2017) - permanent secretariat with multiple benches and fixed tenure < 6 years.

Introduction	
Conclusion	
Representation	
Signature	

"Operating in the informal grey zone, gig workers are increasingly facing conditions akin to modern bonded labour." Examine this statement in the context of evolving employment trends in India. (10 marks, 150 words)

Gig economy or platform based economy is growing at CAGR rate of 30% every year (NASSCOM 2024), which refers to quick commerce and trends of freelancing.

Evolving employment trends and challenges

a) Informalisation of workforce -

90% of workforce informal (PLFS, 2023)

b) Weak insurance coverage - No

social security with lack of provident funds, pension or health insurance of Swiggy, Blinkit.

1) Algorithm controls which determines their work time, speed of delivery, daily targets and remuneration reducing their autonomy.

2) Low earning and high risk - To maintain competition, quick delivery platforms pay less and put gig workers at risk

3) Lack of legal protection - slow oversight and implementation despite coverage under social security code.

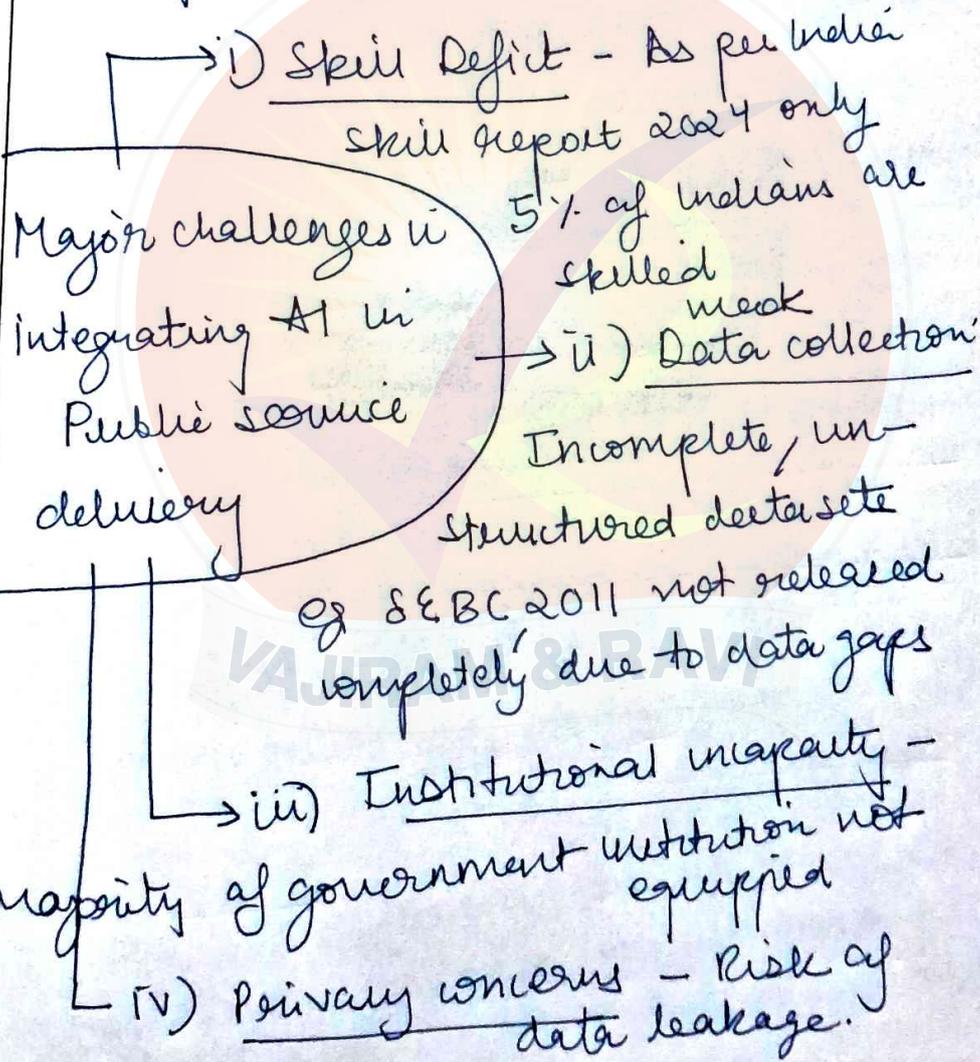
Implication } form of digital feudalism  
                  } weakened collective bargaining  
                  } increased income insecurity and informalisation.

Implement Code on Social Security 2020, encourage platform worker union (Uber's Drivers Association) and create minimum wage standards.

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8. Highlight the major challenges India faces in integrating Artificial Intelligence into public service delivery. Suggest a roadmap to address them.  
(10 marks, 150 words)

AI is the reality of modern times capable of performing predictive analysis, automated decision making and personalised service delivery



→ Regulatory sandbox to ensure innovation environment.

→ i) skill development - Implement schemes like skill india, kaushal yojana in full spirit

Road to achieve AI integration

ii) Data infrastructures - well equipped data centres with interoperable government data sets

iii) AI training for bureaucrats through programmes like i-GOT, russin karmiyogi

iv) ethical frameworks - implement

AI ethics to maintain data integrity

v) legal safeguards and effective grievance redressal mechanism

Niti Aayog AI strategy encompass AI for All / focus on user centric model. India's open sources like ONDC, COWIN are essential workers.

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9. Analyze the role of the US-India COMPACT initiative within the larger Indo-Pacific strategic framework and assess its impact on regional power dynamics." (10 marks, 150 words)

The USA - India COMPACT (Catalyzing opportunities for military partnership, Accelerated commerce and Technology) is a strategic alliance across varied domains - defense, trade, space, energy.

COMPACT :- Relevance over Indo-Pacific framework

1) Assertive defense collaboration -  
with intelligence sharing, co-production, co-development clause. Like Javelin, anti-tank, steyker infantry combat vehicle.

- 1) Maritime security and autonomous surveillance — through Autonomous system industry Alliance (ASIA)
- 2) Strategic posture through nationed Indo-USA alliance against China aggression
- 3) Advance technology & innovation — through TRUST model across quantum, superconductors enhancing surveillance capability.

→ Re-risking China's reliance for critical minerals

Impact on regional power dynamic

Supply chain diversification

Strengthen India strategic posture and image of net security provider

Ripple effect over QUAD, IIPC. Regional countries aligning with India naturally

COMPACT in way forward

of India-USA dynamic relationship. NSAR Partner and collaboration in nuclear technologies changes regional dynamics

10. 'Disengaging from regional groupings only creates vacuums for adversarial actors.' In the context of India's role in the SCO, critically examine this statement. (10 marks, 150 words)

Shanghai cooperation  
organisation (SCO) is vital for India's  
regional cooperation, economic dimension  
and countering terrorism.

Disengaging with SCO creates a strategic  
vacuum giving leeway to -

- a) strengthening Pakistan and China  
cooperation of CPEC.
- b) Impact constructive dialogue  
mechanism that could hampers cooperation
- c) limited economic gains with central  
Asia eg TAPI pipeline, source of  
critical mineral  
(Kazakhstan)
- d) Overpowering India's infrastructure  
projects INSEC by BR1

## Imperatives for India's engagement

- 1) Countering China's influence - Balances India's narratives and China-Pakistan nexus.
- 2) Regional security - countering terrorism through cooperation (RATS)
- 3) Regional energy security and infrastructure project.  
eg INSTC, IMEC, TAPI pipeline
- 4) Strategic presence - Active engagement with Eurasian geopolitics

Engagement does not mean endorsement, it means influence.  
Hence being active engaged in SAARC does not hamper India's strategic vacuum but builds regional cooperation and counters adversarial actions.

Introduction	
Conclusion	
Opinion	
Signature	

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11. "In the digital economy, regulatory authorities play a crucial role in curbing abuse of dominance and ensuring fair competition." Analyse the effectiveness of statutory regulators like the Competition Commission of India (CCI) in addressing anti-competitive practices in emerging technology markets. (15 marks, 250 words)

Competition Commission of India was established through 2002 Act as a statutory body to counter predatory practices, overcoming monopolistic tendencies and ensuring fair competition.

→ Swift proactive measures

Effectiveness with respect to digital markets

with respect 2025 case on Amazon and Flipkart favoring certain section of sellers create unfair disadvantage to them.

→ Overcoming unfair practices

ex Facebook, whatsapp with respect

to data sharing

→ Hampering equal participation

ex Google and Playstore unfair means to some apps.

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Allegations of favouritism

↳ Regulatory frameworks eg

Retetermination of cost of production  
regulation 2025 to overcome deep discounting and predatory pricing by e-commerce surging, etc.

↳ Technical expertise through proactive consultations leading to specialisation

↳ Measure of CCI have led to regulatory compliance and answers among public and investors.

However there are certain challenges

o) limitation on manpower and resources

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- o) Slow investigative procedures.
- o) Lack of regulatory enforcement mechanism
- o) Jurisdictional challenges to deal with multinational technical giants  
eg Data encryption case of whatsapp still under haul.
- o) Vacancies on key post delays timely implementation.

The need of hour is to give quasi-judicial stature to CCI with continuous capacity building measures strengthening international cooperation to overcome cross border digital competition issue.

Introduction

Body

Conclusion

Presentation

Marks:

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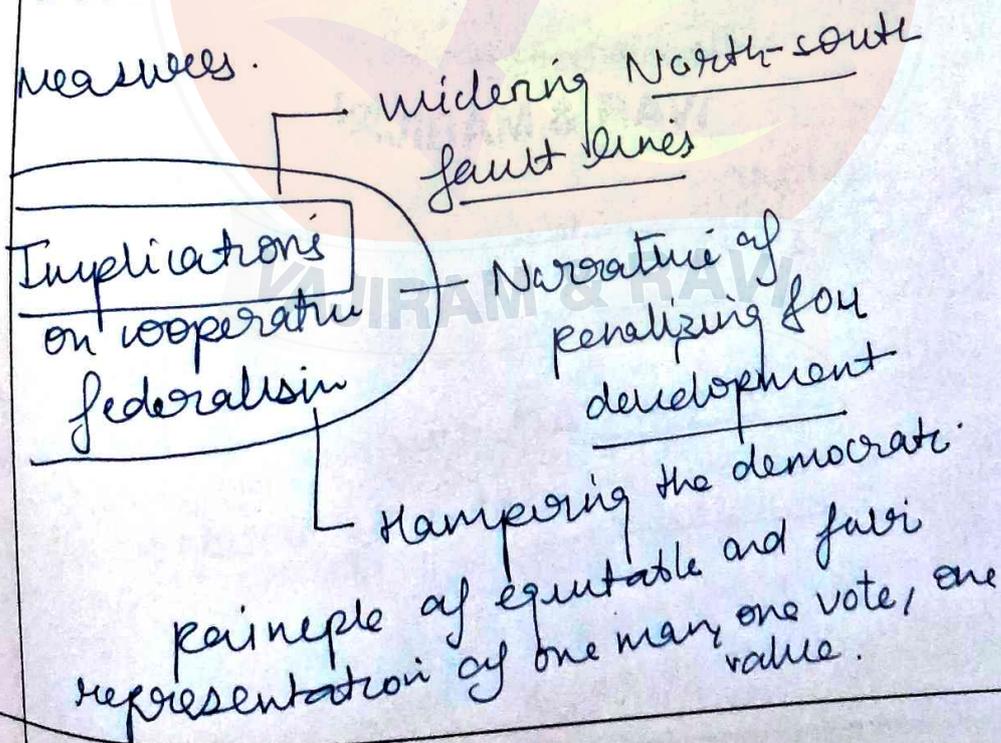
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12. "The asymmetry of population growth across states has created a fault line in Indian federalism." Discuss the implications of post-2026 delimitation on cooperative federalism and regional political representation.

(15 marks, 250 words)

Delimitation exercise  
is a statutory mode of reconstituting representative politics as per population dynamics.

However the 2026 exercise has raised several objections with respect to unfair representation to southern states due to their population control measures.



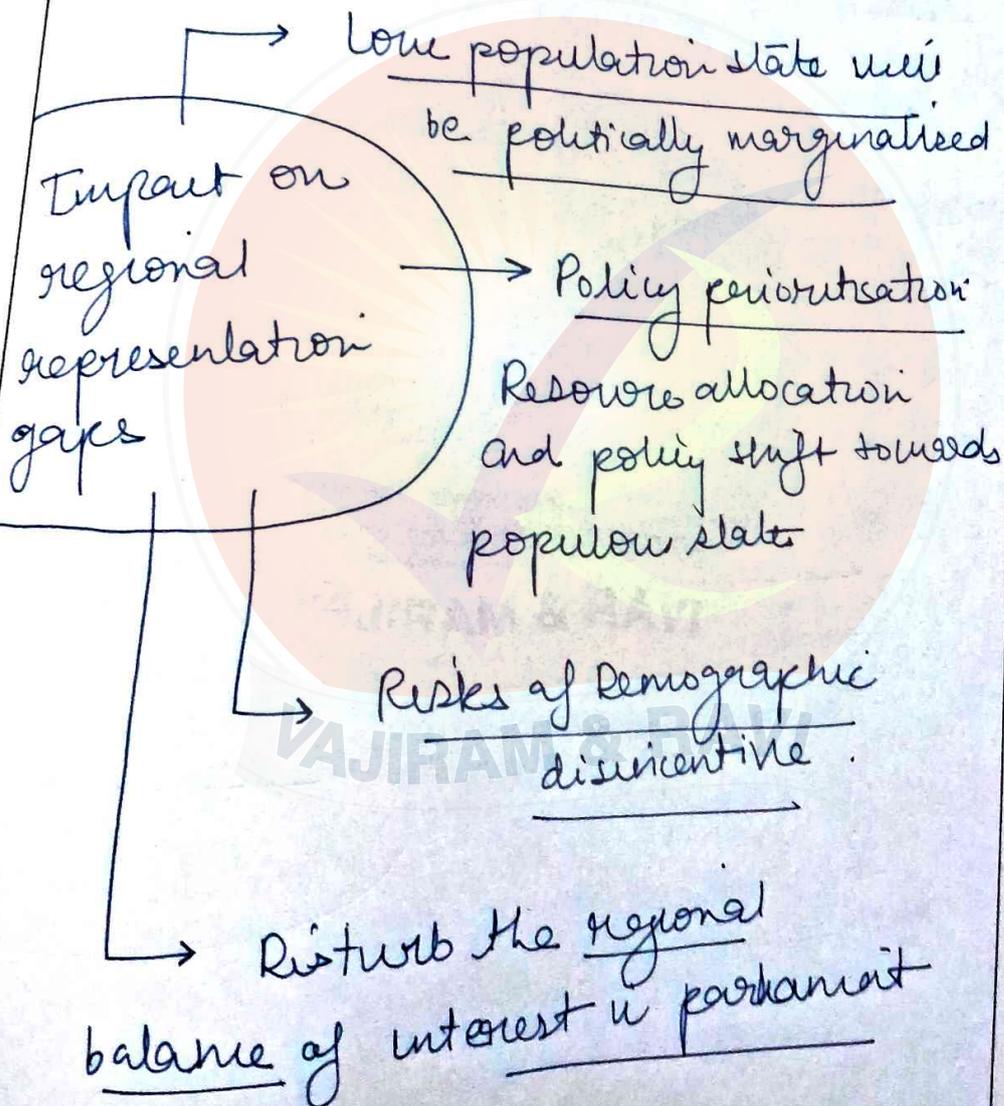
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↳ Reduced voice for low growth states

↳ shift in political power with higher population states gaining more seats.



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The need of now is to have a recalibrated approach towards the delimitation exercise by giving equal balance to population and incentivise proactive development measures to ensure balance the cooperative federalism and maintain fiscal federal equilibrium.

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Introduction

Body

Conclusion

Presentation

Remarks:

13. The Mediation Act, 2023 marks a significant step towards institutionalising alternative dispute resolution in India. Critically analyse its potential to reform India's overburdened justice delivery system. (15 marks, 250 words)

### Mediation Act 2023

was a landmark legislation giving  
impetus to mediation to provide for  
amiable, transparent and swift  
dispute resolution mechanism.

Potential to deal with overburdened  
Justice delivery system

a) overcoming the imperative of trial  
Accessibility

swift / Amicable  affordability

b) legal framework to ADR thus  
enforcing its relevance

- c) overcoming judicial overload by settlement of disputes pre-trial
- d) NATGRID ~ 5 crore pending cases & across judiciary.
- d) Inclusivity - recognizes community mediation for grassroots conflict resolution.
- e) Time bound process - within 180 days (extendable by 60 days)
- f) Relevant in family affairs, land disputes etc.
- g) Aims with India's goal of ease of doing business by empowering stakeholders to easy redressal mechanism

→ Lack of trained mediators hampers effective implementation

However there are certain challenges associated

→ Lack of awareness among litigants and general public

→ Complexities in dealing with cross border jurisdiction  
Despite signing of Singapore convention

→ Mandatory mediation provision hampers speedy trial if parties are unwilling

→ Exclusion of areas such as tax, criminal issues limits scope.

However the act is the necessary step to decongest judiciary backlog and promote a culture of collaborative dispute resolution.

14. The efficacy of Joint Parliamentary Committees (JPCs) in ensuring governmental accountability is often compromised by political considerations and their limited coercive powers, which undermine their ability to affect substantive change. Critically analyse this assertion, considering both institutional constraints and the broader political landscape. (15 marks, 250 words)

Joint Parliamentary  
Committees are institutional tools to  
(JPC)  
ensure political accountability and ensure  
effectiveness of parliamentary democracy  
eg Investigative role in Bofors scandal,  
2G scam etc.

Institutional constraints undermining  
efficiency

a) Political considerations detouring  
objective assessment and non-partisan  
evaluation especially during  
weak opposition.

b) limited coercive powers to ensure

attendance and active participation of ministers.

1) Advisory role - Non-recommendatory nature reduces their effective role as the findings often sidelined by executive.

2) Delays due to vacancies and lack of advisal appointment

3) Weak expertise consultants members specialised reports findings.

Constraints under political landscape

1) Majoritarian dominance makes JPC as mere executive appendage.

2) Strong opposition imperative for effective functioning eg. Harshad Mehta scam

1) Declining frequency of establishments  
due to political negligence reduces  
their relevance.

The need of  
honours is to

- giving statutory backing
- independent authority  
to recommend names  
of members
- make the recommendation  
compliance enforceable by making  
strict non-adherence legislation
- mandatory tabling of reports  
before parliament
- have a strict code of conduct rules  
and internal ethics committee to  
suppress apologetic behaviour.

JPC are wings of  
executive transparency, accountability  
mechanism to ensure parliamentary ethics  
are intact.

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15. "Non-state actors have emerged as indispensable partners in India's governance ecosystem." Examine this statement with suitable examples.

(15 marks, 250 words)

Non-state actors like NGOs,  
civil society organisations (CSO), pressure  
groups are bridge of communication  
between state and common citizens of  
Mazdoor, Kisan Sangathan, Amnesty  
International.

As indispensable partner in India governance  
ecosystem

a) Interest articulation at ground level

eg India against corruption campaign  
led to passing of Lokpal Act.

b) Democratic reforms - organisations  
like Association of Democratic Reforms  
People Union for Civil  
Liberty

eg Supreme court judgement on ADR V/S  
001 2024

making electoral bonds unconstitutional

c) Adequate research for opinion  
making and mobilisation of PRS legislative  
research on communalisation of politics.

d) Environmental concerns of Role of  
Centre of Environment research.

e) Educational outcomes of AER  
report of PRATHAM leading to  
reforms on foundational literacy and  
numeracy.

f) Efficient service delivery and rehabilitate  
members of Redcross during COVID  
pandemic, Uttarakhand World Burst  
2025.

Hence there are certain challenges associated -

- a) International influence on national narratives of Toolkit used by various NGOs / CSO during CAA protest.
- b) Financial irregularities and non-transparency amended led to Foreign Contribution Regulation Act to make it more stringent.
- c) Developmental delays have led to financial and administrative burden of Kerala protest.
- d) Administrative irregularities and non-compliance led to many closure by authorities of Amnesty International office used.
- e) Urban bias sideline rural narrative. Non-state actors are lack of articulation and communication. Effective proposal that would balance the independence & light touch brought

16. Mission Karmayogi seeks to shift India's civil services from a rule-based to a role-based system. Explain its design and likely challenges in transforming India's conservative bureaucratic culture. (15 marks, 250 words)

Mission Karmayogi is a 2020 programme of capacity building of civil servants aiming to transform them with competencies to tackle modern day challenges.

Mission Karmayogi: National programme on civil services capacity building (NPCCCB)

- a) More focus on job training to impart practicality of real life challenges of crisis handling, disaster management.
- b) Digital evaluation through iqot platform

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- c) Competency framework to align requirement for each role leading to targeted training
- d) Capacity building commission to institutionalise and standardise training content and mentorship.
- e) Annual / Periodic assessment - to evaluate performance across multiple dimensions → Digital skills, persuasion and communication skills etc.

## Challenges associated

- a) Cultural resistance - rigid seniority and hierarchical structure on job training detours

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b) Institutional inertia - Decade old  
process and silo-based functioning  
hinder reform adoption.

c) Digital divide - various access  
access moving posting and tedium schedule  
for online learning

d) Measurement/quantification of  
competence deters objective assessment

e) Political and administrative buy in  
effective implementation requires  
consensus from both political leaders and  
senior bureaucrats.

Mission Karanyogi thus  
serves a medium of Bureaucratic performance  
evaluation, making it more retro  
centric and suitable for New  
India

17. Despite the enactment of the IT Rules, 2021, digital platforms continue to host harmful and misleading content. Analyze the gaps in the current regulatory framework and suggest measures for more effective control over social media and OTT platforms.

(15 marks, 250 words)

Information technology (Intermediary guidelines and digital media ethics rule) 2021 aims to impart regulatory foresight to overcome obscene, harmful content and curb any form of misinformation.

However, there are certain regulatory gaps

- a) Enforcement deficit due to lack of technical expertise and self-regulatory mechanism
- b) Lack of radical approach by media platform - delayed appointment

of officers

3) Jurisdictional challenges - due to  
cross border establishments of Netflix,  
Amazon prime complicating content takedown

4) Ambiguities in definitions of 'misleading  
'content' or 'harmful' would have political

ramifications

5) Algorithmic opacity with respect to  
models integrated that echo harmful  
content

6) Delayed compliance and slow removal  
of harmful content.

Suggested measures

o) Public digital literacy to promote

critical thinking and awareness against  
misinformation

b) Statutory backing of self regulation

by OTT platform will ensure enforceability

c) Cross border data cooperation through  
mutual legal assistance treaties (MLAT)

d) Clearer legal definition to overcome  
ambiguities

e) Strengthen enforcement mechanism  
through constant monitoring.

IT Rules 2021 are  
step in right direction, however, it  
requires policy around edges to ensure  
a balanced approach towards regulatory  
compliance and media freedom.

18. To what extent does the affordability and accessibility of the internet in India reshape the rural-urban governance divide? Illustrate with examples.  
(15 marks, 250 words)

India has around 881 million internet users (TRAI, 2023) with affordable data programme (₹10/GB) with expanding 4G/5G coverage.

This has narrowed down the governance divide between urban and rural through

- a) Enhanced service delivery eg UMANG platform, DigiLocker, JAM A/c enhances access to pensions, certificates without physical visits
- b) Digital inclusion - 80 crore Jan Dhan Accounts.

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- Administrative reforms - e-Panchayat broadcasting panchayat proceeding
- Digitalisation expansion of BharatNet covering 8-3 lakh panchayats for e-governance measures.
- Access to information of PM Kati Shakti portal and Meri Sadak app empowers rural citizens to monitor infrastructure projects.
- Capacity building and Skill Development online training for ASHA workers and farmers via Kishan Vigyan Kendras (KVK) bridging knowledge gaps.

Bureaucratic apathy - Despite DBT  
claims - many leakages persist  
Digital divide - only 23% of  
rural household have access to

internet

However there are  
certain limitations

infrastructure  
deficit - weak

enrollment of

4G/5G networks

Digital literacy gaps -

especially among females and elders.

Information risks -

leading to polarisation of mob lynching  
incidents in Nagpur.

internet meets the vision of Vikshit  
Bharat and Digital India. However

Strong political will and regular  
third party independent audit are  
mandatory need.

19. The New Washington Consensus is reshaping the contours of international cooperation. Discuss how this framework will influence India's foreign policy, particularly in relation to its strategic partnerships and regional security.  
(15 marks, 250 words)

The New Washington Consensus marks a paradigm shift towards a more state led economic model and welfare mechanism to ensure economic security and strategic autonomy.

Impact on India's foreign policy

a) Strategic partnerships

i) Possible realignment with  
multitude of international partners to  
secure national interests.

ii) Deepening engagement with west

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especially USA in domains like  
critical technology, space, defense  
with focus on national security eg  
ICET, COMPACT.

iii) Negotiation on multilateral  
platform for domestic concerns  
eg WTO's agriculture/fisheries subsidies  
debate.

iv) Focus on strategic autonomy ensuring  
effective safety nets and implementation  
of capacity building measures.

v) Possible retaliatory tariffs ex -

USA - India tariff war with Trump  
imposing a 50% tariff on all imports.

b) Effect on regional security

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- i) more collaborative efforts with regional partners amid rising protectionism in west.
- ii) Multidomain partnerships cross-cutting various domains - economic, cultural, infrastructural etc.
- iii) Impetus to global south to advocate for various forms of justice - climate justice
- iv) Rise to dedollarisation leading to currency swap forms of exchanges eg BRIC's NDB, ASEAN's ADB.

The new Washington census may give rise to protectionist tendencies as seen in Trump's MAGA narrative, however it encompasses targeted approach to meet national priorities while keeping strategic autonomy intact.

20. Discuss how the interplay of 'cooperation and competition' shapes the trajectory of India-China relations in the 21st century. Substantiate with recent examples.  
(15 marks, 250 words)

India - China have a complex landscape of geopolitical cooperation. As mentioned by PM Modi - India - China relationship is deep engrained in history and cultural ethos. However the relationship is a constant paradox.

## Facets of cooperation

- ) Flourishing trade - \$118.4 Billion (2023-24)
- ) Strategic imports in India of PV modules, electronics, pharmaceutical equipment etc.
- ) Global convergence over globalsouth narrative

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1) Impetus to common but differentiated responsibilities across platforms for climate justice (COP 21, 28, 29).

2) Collaboration over regional platforms  
- BRICS; RIC, SCO, G20.

## Facets of competition

1) Border skirmishes - 2020 Galwan valley standoff, Rokhram 2017  
Perpetuates trust deficit.

2) Challenging territorial integrity by claiming Arunachal Pradesh as south Tibet.

3) Hydrological battle - Building large dams over upper riparian reaches of Yarlung Tsangpo & Brahmaputra) violating water MoUs.

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(Don't write anything in this part)

1) Maritime competition - string of pearls strategy + naval diplomacy with neighbours

2) Trade imbalances with heavy imports with India compromised India's leverage

3) Cooperation with Pakistan (CPEC) and constant veto at UNSC preventing India's attempt to blacklist terrorists

4) Rebt diplomacy in India's neighborhood eg Hambantota, Kyaukpadaung (Myanmar) challenging India's maritime space

This India-China relationship is a tight rope diplomatic challenge which requires nimble well calibrated approach. Galwan standoff showcased the relevance of constant dialogue as imperative to sustain.

Space for Rough Work



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