

General Studies GS3 - SECTIONAL TEST - 8 SCIENCE & TECH + ENVIRONMENT + DM Test Code - VR1223308	Evaluator Code: Date of Assignment: CQ:
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NAME:	PRINCE SETHI	Time allowed: 3 Hours
STUDENT. ID.:	2 1 V R 3 8 S 3 7	Email:
UPSC ROLL NO.:	0 8 4 5 1 2 0	Submission Date:
MOBILE NO.:		4 August 2025

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	Total	/250

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

Start Time -	5 : 00 PM	End Time -	8 : 07 PM
Mode of Examination	ONLINE	Online	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
		Offline	<input type="checkbox"/>

Receiving date -

Dispatch date -

Parameters		Good	Average	Needs Improvement
Conceptual Understanding				
Understanding Demand of Question				
Structure	Introduction			
	Body			
	Conclusion			
Presentation-Illustrations, flowcharts, diagrams, etc.				
Language and Handwriting				
No. of Questions Attempted				
Adherence to Word Limit: Yes/No				

Mentor's Feedback



Evaluator/Reviewer Suggestions



👍 😊 All the Best 😊 👍

Evaluator/Reviewer Suggestions



👍 😊 All the Best 😊 👍

Q/1

1

Carbon farming refers to net-neutral farming or 'carbon-negative' farming practices to ensure sustainable & climate-resilient agriculture.

Role in Sustainable Agriculture

1) Carbon-neutral farming - preventing green house gas emissions.

eg) Agriculture is responsible for 20-25% carbon emissions and, methane, nitrous emissions

2) Promote carbon-sequestration to make agriculture net-negative.

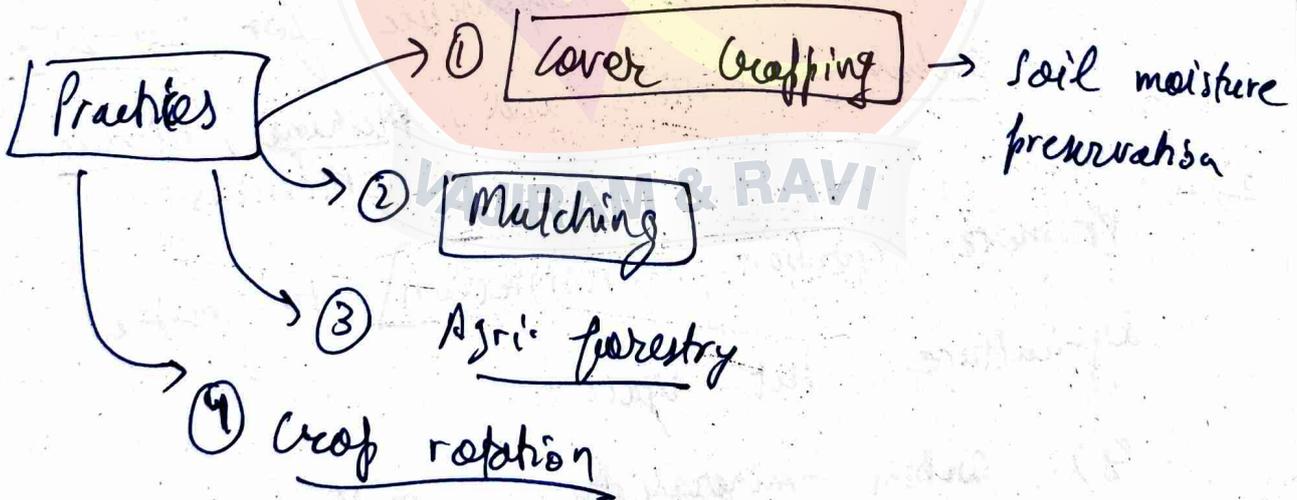
eg) Carbon-mineralization method by spreading carbonate & phosphate on field.

Role in ~~Sustainable~~ Climate Mitigation

(2)

- 1) Carbon storage and sequestration
- 2) Agri-forestry to promote soil conservation
- 3) Sustainable water use and preservation of soil moisture

4) Climate resilient yields & productivity
e.g) Rice yields expected to decline ~20% by 2050 (WFP & FAO)



Thus, Carbon farming must be adopted under Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana to promote SDG-2 - zero hunger.

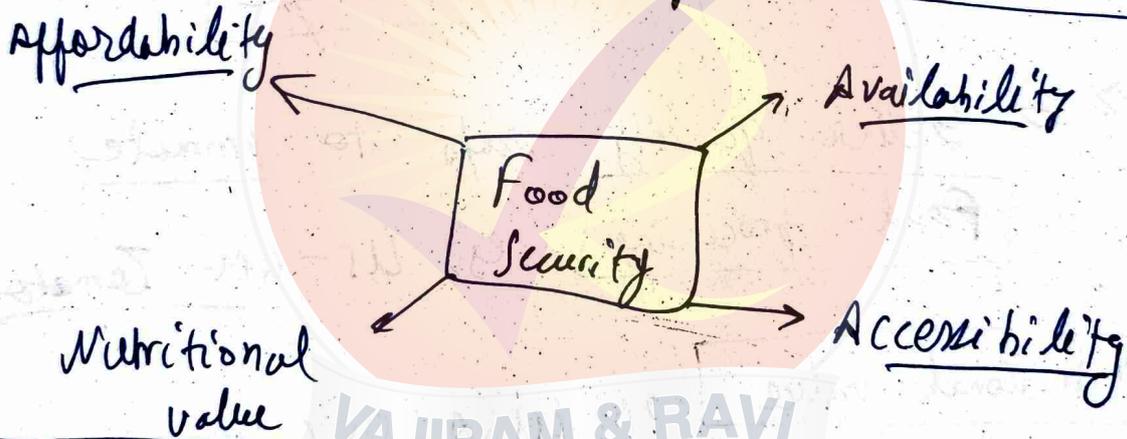
3

Q2

The branch of Biotechnology responsible for ensuring food security is "yellow"

Biotechnology, - to genetically enhance nutritional content of crops.

Several ways to help promote food security



A) Affordability → (a) Genetically enhanced

crops to reduce cost of production

eg) pest-resistant crops eg) Bt Brinjal

⇒ Reduce [Pesticide costs].

B) Availability → ① Improving crop yields

eg) HYV Pulses (~~about~~ Atma nirbharta in Pulses)
Budget 2025.

② Shorter life cycle crops

eg) Kamala Rice Variety of ICAR.

C) Accessibility → ① Improving shelf-life

of crops → reduce wastage

→ ② Better quality crops to promote

Food processing eg) US-GM-Tomato

D) Nutritional value → ① PUSA DST III Rice
with enhanced vitamin A content.

Way Forward → ① Promoting HYV millets

↳ ② Fast track clearance through GEAC

are some measure which can promote
"technology for people" approach.

(5)

Q3

Community level conservation refers to active public participation in protection, rehabilitation and improvement of population of endangered species.

Role of Community-led Conservation

(A) Awareness generation eg) Diclofenac ban
awareness to protect vultures in UP.

(B) Protection of species

↳ safeguarding ~~ecosystem~~ ecosystem

↳ safeguarding eggs of vulnerable species

eg) olive-ridley turtles egg collection & protection from Gahir matha beach.

6

(C) Joint management of forests

Under ~~the~~ Forest Conservation Act - JFM

(D) Ecosystem improvement and 'safe-space'
development eg) 'Garuda' protection

In Assam - ~~is~~ by women SHG.

(E) Prevention of Illegal wildlife trade

eg) Rhino protection in Pobitora WLS
through Community Policing

Thus, by community participation, capacity building and joint forest management we can safeguard our pristine Biodiversity hot-spots.

(7)

Q4

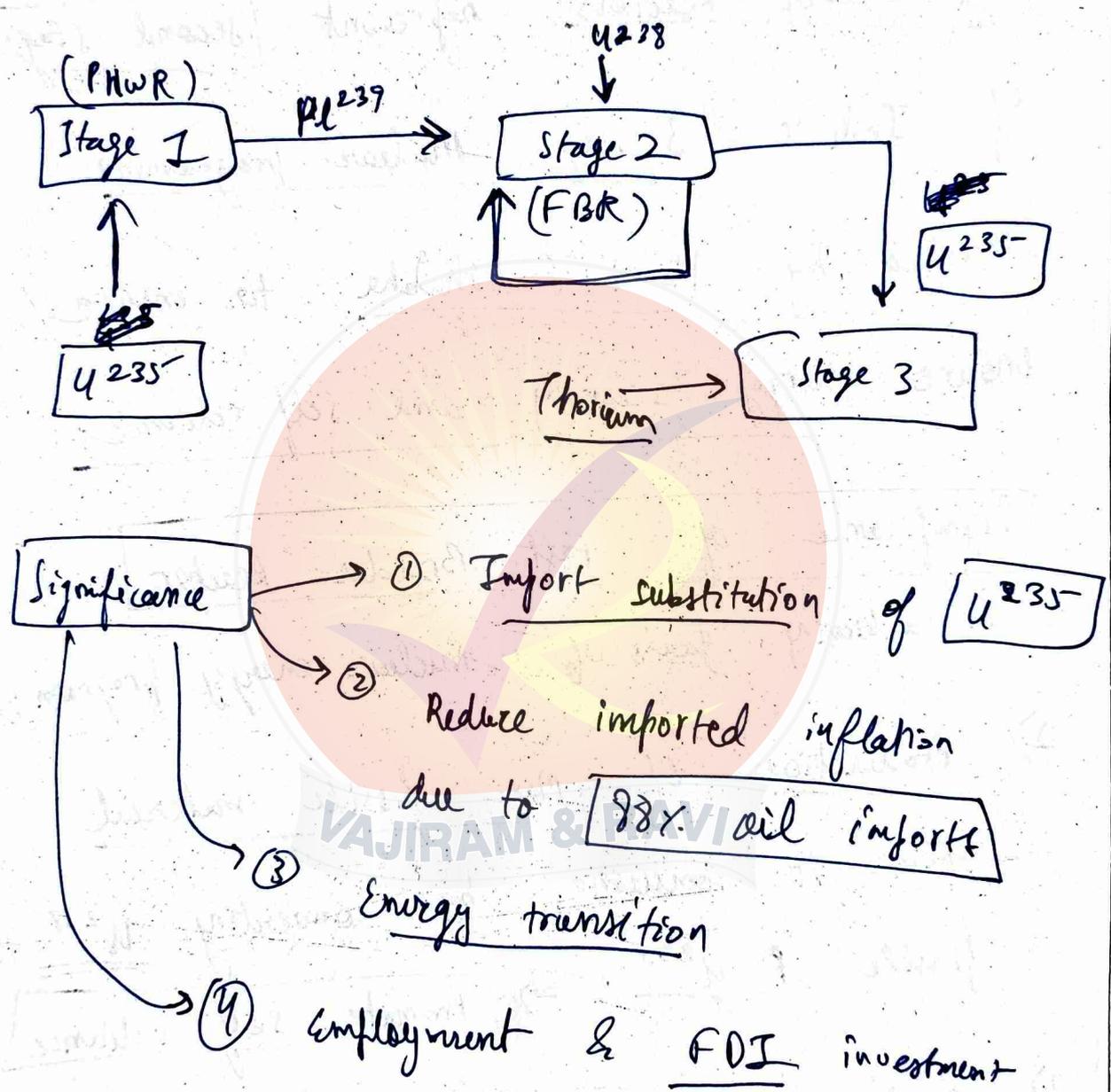
Fast-Breeder Reactors represent second stage of India's 3-stage Nuclear programme developed by Homi J. Bhabha to ensure insure energy security and self reliance.

Significance of Fast Breeder Reactor

in achieving goals of Nuclear energy program:-

- 1) Production of more fissile material than it consume by converting U^{238} to fissile U^{235} . \Rightarrow Promote self reliance
- 2) Utilization of waste plutonium 239 from first stage of Pressurized heavy water reactor \Rightarrow Promote waste reduction

3) Promote energy security through off-grid deployment in remote areas.



Thus, by amending Indian Civil Nuclear Liability Act, we can foster more private sector participation.

(9)

Q5

India Green Hydrogen Mission aims to produce 5 MMT of Green H₂ by 2030 to promote net-zero economy by 2070 & achieving Pancharan goals.

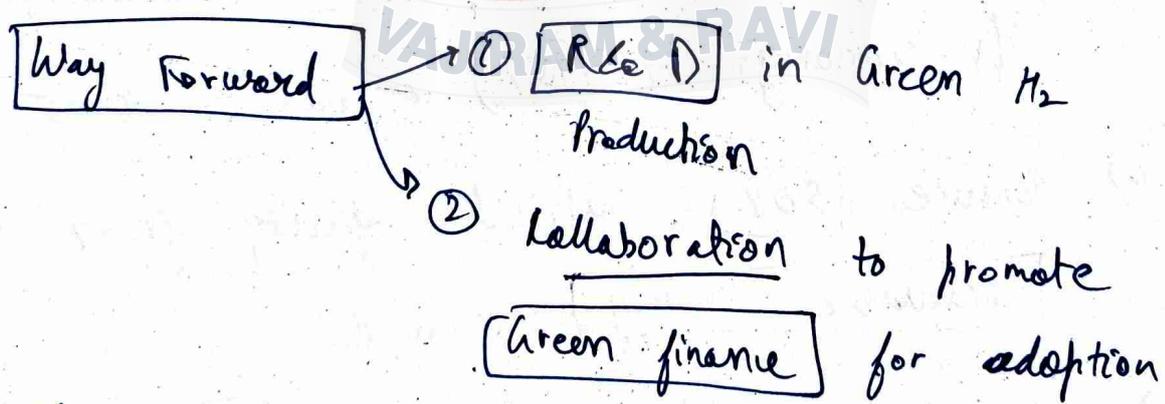
Significance towards Climate Goals.

- 1) Promote clean energy production free of CO₂e. → Reduce Carbon intensity of economy by 45% compared to 2005
- 2) Ensure 50% installed capacity from Renewable energy (Green H₂)
- 3) Promote EVs based on fuel cells as suggested by Tarun Kapoor Committee

4) Reduction in Pollution and Black/ Brown carbon emissions (tail pipe VOCs)

Significance towards Energy Transition

- 1) Align with 'phase down' as promised in COP28.
- 2) Promote energy security & self reliance in clean energy
- 3) ~~At~~ Energy transition is hard to abate sectors - long-haul trucks & aviation



Thus, by R&D & infrastructure development in pipeline & EV, we can promote energy transition.

(11)

Q6
Mining sector in India is growing by average CAGR of 4%. However, environmental & human costs make current mining practices unsustainable in long run.

Environmental impacts of mining

- 1) Pollution of Rivers eg) Acid mine drainage
- 2) Heavy metal contamination of ground water
- 3) Deforestation & land-use change
- 4) loss of fertile soil 5) loss of Biodiversity

Health Impacts

- 1) Black lungs disease → Coal mining
- 2) Silicosis → lung cancer in Asbestos mines.

(12)

3) Development defects in fetus due to heavy metal pollution

4) Cancer in uranium mining areas 4) Jaduguda

Measures to promote sustainable mining

Environmental

- 1) Environmental impact assessment
- 2) Green technologies to reduce emissions
- 3) Water circularity to prevent scarcity
- 4) CAMPA donations → reforestation

Health & Social

- 1) Health impact Assessment
- 2) regular Medical Check-ups.
- 3) Zero-waste discharge
- 4) Pollutant sensors through RFID & IoT

Thus, by above measures we can ensure

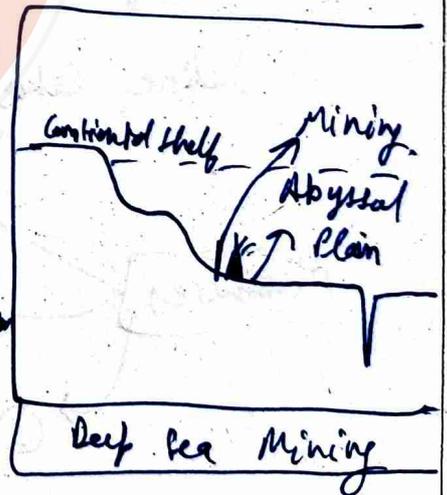
SDG-3 Good health for all & SDG-15 protection of life on land.

Q.7

With the discovery of Poly metallic Modules, Poly metallic Sulphides & Cobalt-rich crusts in Indian ocean & South China sea, world is witnessing new 'Mineral Rush' for deep-sea minerals.

⇒ Deep Sea Mining refers to mining in the Abyssal Plains area of ocean

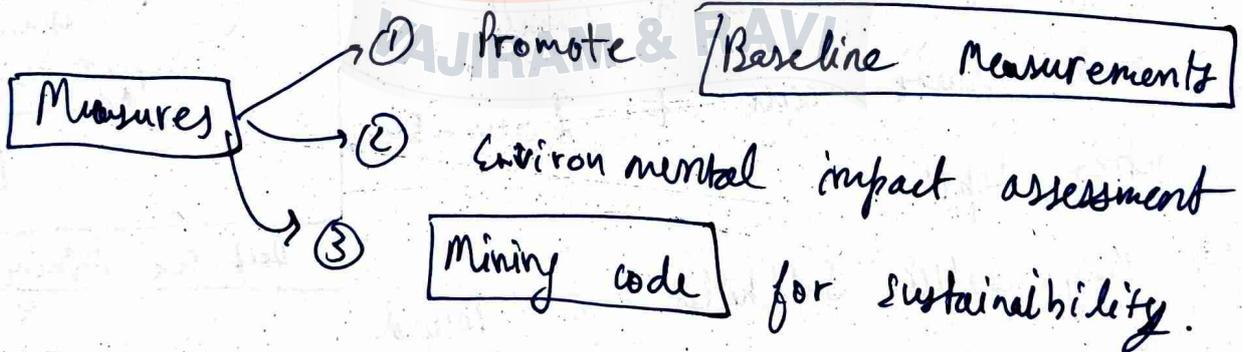
⇒ Poly metallic modules & Cobalt rich crusts occur at 2000-5000 metres depth.



⇒ Poly metallic Sulphides are found near hydro thermal vents in deep seas.

Long-Term changes to sea-bed ecosystem

- 1) Disruption of 'Dark-oxygen' production near metal nodules due to electric voltage.
- 2) Displacement of Benthic species (e.g.) echinoderms & Annelida worms (e.g.) ~~flatworms~~ ribbon worm.
- 3) Changes in salinity of deep sea → making it unfit for sensitive species.
- 4) Disrupt Breeding & Migration cycles of species.
- 5) Disruption of unique - under-sea - saline lakes.



Thus, India collaborate with ISA to promote sustainable deep sea mining through Matsya - Matsya 6000 project.

Q8

Deep fakes are AI generated Images through complex Convolutional Neural Network processing of images & super-imposition of computer generated Imagery, posing significant challenges to our perception of truth.

Challenges posed by deep fakes.

- 1) Close to real imagery → illusion of truth
- 2) Utilization in cyber crimes eg) Voiceovers
Phishing
- 3) Rumours provocation → riots
eg) Pune Riots, 2025 - August
- 4) Increase in trust - issues disrupting social capital.

5) Blackmailing & Extortion eg) AI generated pornography of Archita Phukan.

6) Haves' & Have nots — leading to rise in inequalities among small & large corporates. eg) Hollywood Movies CGI

However, there are ~~are~~ some positive impacts

- ① Special education for differently abled
- ② Artistic development eg) hindi.
- ③ Virtual Reality development
- ④ Awareness generation campaigns

Thus, by regulating the use of deepfakes and CGI by 'sand-box' approach, we can ensure positive utilization of this tech.

99

Tropical Rainforests are alias for coral reefs which although covering 1% of ocean floors host 25% of marine species, much like high species richness of tropical rain forests.

Licious threats to Tropical Rain forest of Ocean

Anthropogenic

- 1) Ocean pollution of Plastic
- 2) Eutrophication
↳ "Coral Smothering"
- 3) Ocean warming due to anthropogenic CO₂ emissions
- 4) Bottom Trawling
↳ explosive fishing

Natural

- 1) Marine Heatwaves
- ↳ Great Barrier Reef
- 2) Coral Disease outbreak
- ↳ White Band disease in Carribean Corals.
- 3) Sea-level Changes
- 4) El-Nino & La Nina
↳ ocean warming

Measures to Rejuvenates Corals

- 1) Bio-rock Technology \Rightarrow Artificial Reef generation
- 2) Sound-wave promoted Coral breeding
 - a) Coral reef Acoustics promoting breeding in lab.
- 3) Calcification of Corals through Geo-engineering
- 4) Marine Conservation Parks under Kunming ~~Montreal~~ Biodiversity framework - 30x30
- 5) International Collaboration on R&D & protection
 - a) Coral Triangle

Thus, by adopting holistic approach we can achieve SDH 14 - Life below water.

Q10

As per UNISDR, disaster resilience refers to enhancement in "capacity to cope", reduction of vulnerabilities and exposure to disaster.

Disaster Risk = Hazard X Exposure X Vulnerability

- Sendai Framework

Consequences of damage to Critical Infrastructure

- 1) Disruption of critical services → lower connectivity
- 2) Food insecurity → damage to storage infrastructure
- 3) Health → epidemics due to vector Borne disease
- 4) Disruption of hospitals, & schools
↳ retard sustainable development goals SDG-3 & 4.

Significance of Building Disaster Resilient Infrastructure

- (A) **Hazard Risk** Reduction :- 1) Resilience to natural disasters eg) Smart Cities → Flood management
- 2) **BIS** & ISIRI Codes → Resilience to Earthquake

- (B) **Exposure** :- 1) Highways reinforcement in mountainous regions ⇒ landslide prevention.
- 2) Monitoring & Early warning Infrastructure

(eg) INCOIS, ISRO Atlases

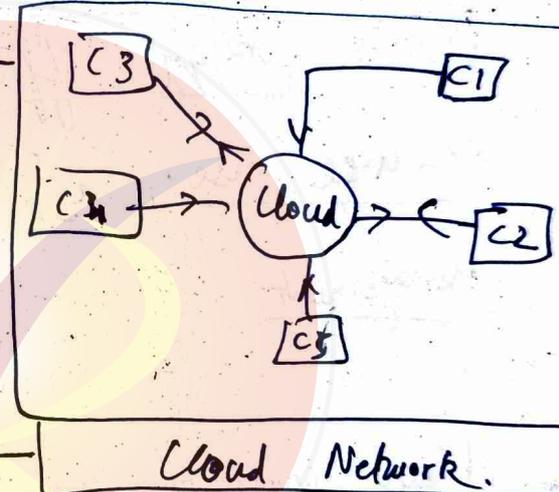
- (C) **Vulnerability**
- 1) Storm shelters → Protection to Tsunami & cyclone.
- 2) **Hansbosche Dunes** → Netherlands - wave Breaks -

Thus, we should focus on NDMA guidelines, & nature based solution to promote disaster risk resilience

Q11

Cloud computing refers to storage of data, processing and transmission through centralized cloud based network.

Use of cloud computing in homes for automation and device control :-



- 1) Centralized connection of digital devices.
- 2) Interconnected control
 - a) Controlling AC, TV with mobile.
- 3) Seamless & hassle free-experience
 - a) Lacking of Name → Start car & AC in car
- 4) Promote efficiency and enhance technology

expense.

Benefits of Cloud computing & Automation

- 1) Promote Internet of Things (IoT) to enhance user-experience
- 2) Promote energy efficiency & minimize resource use.
 - 3) Automatic home power management
- 3) Cloud computing ensure easy accessibility of large processing power for rent reducing inequalities.
- 4) Save storage expenditure & hardware related to computing
- 5) Promote Robotics integration at homes.
- 6) Boost further research.

7) Promote upstream & downstream industries
& service providers.

Challenges of Cloud Computing at Home

- 1) Risk of Privacy Breach → Snooping
- 2) Intentional Sabotages eg) Automatic Home locking, Car Sabotage
- 3) Surveillance Risk & Stalking
- 4) Breach of Cloud database → data theft.

Thus, we need to promote Cyber-Security
through Crishan Rai Committee recommendation
on cyber forensics & indigenous
Capacity development.

India spend only 0.7% of GDP on research & development against 2.6% of China leading 'fund starved' research and uncoordinated research.

Major Challenges Facing India's R&D

- (A) Scale Issues :-
- 1) Siloed research in universities
 - 2) Majorly large firms participate
↳ leave behind MSMEs
 - 3) Lack of National level research labs

(B) Coordination Issues

- 1) lack of Industry - Academia - Government

Participation.

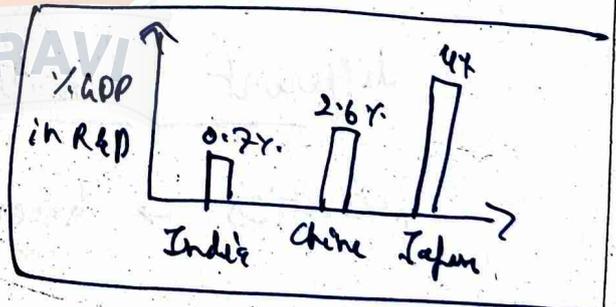
2) Lack of coordination among different IITs & ~~an~~ between IITs & State Universities.

3) Lack of government led research promotion aligned with national priorities (unlike China)

Investment Issues

1) only 0.7% investment on Research

2) Fund Starved State Universities.



3) Lack of Private Investment \rightarrow only 11% expenditure of Private in R&D (Economic Survey 2025)

Reforms to Make Indian R&D Competitive

- 1) Private participation through NSF
- 2) Involve Schools in R&D through Atal Tinkering Labs.
- 3) Promote Tax-breaks and lower regulatory burden for FDI in R&D
- 4) Targetting ~~to~~ 0-1% increase per year in R&D through budgeting.
- 5) National Science Commission to align different universities towards National priorities → Green tech, Biotech & Space Tech.

At last, promoting entrepreneurship in STEM through Stand up India can promote scale & competition in R&D.

Gaganyaan Mission is set to be India's first Crewed space-flight mission which will enhance India's capabilities towards future Missions like Bharatiya Antariksha Station (BAS)

Primary Objectives of Gaganyaan Mission

- 1) First, crewed flight by 2027.
- 2) Development of Human-rated spacecraft
GSLV-3 - HR
- 3) Development of indigenous cryogenic engine
- 4) Development of reusable launch vehicle
- 5) Training of crew for space missions.

6) Development indigenous private sector through INSPACE to reduce ISRO's burden

Impacts on India's space exploration

- 1) Boost India's goal of manned flight to moon.
- 2) ~~Develop~~ Promote Microgravity research and its impact on humans.
- 3) Promote indigenous space sub-systems & launch vehicles.

Impact on Space & Scientific Capabilities

- 1) Boost further development of Bharatiya Antariksha Station
- 2) Development of reusable & rockets reducing costs
- 3) Entrance Private sector & startups with

Space technologies

- 4) Promote India as launch service to ISS
- 5) Promote upstream & downstream services
 - 4) subsystems & tourism respectively

Challenges

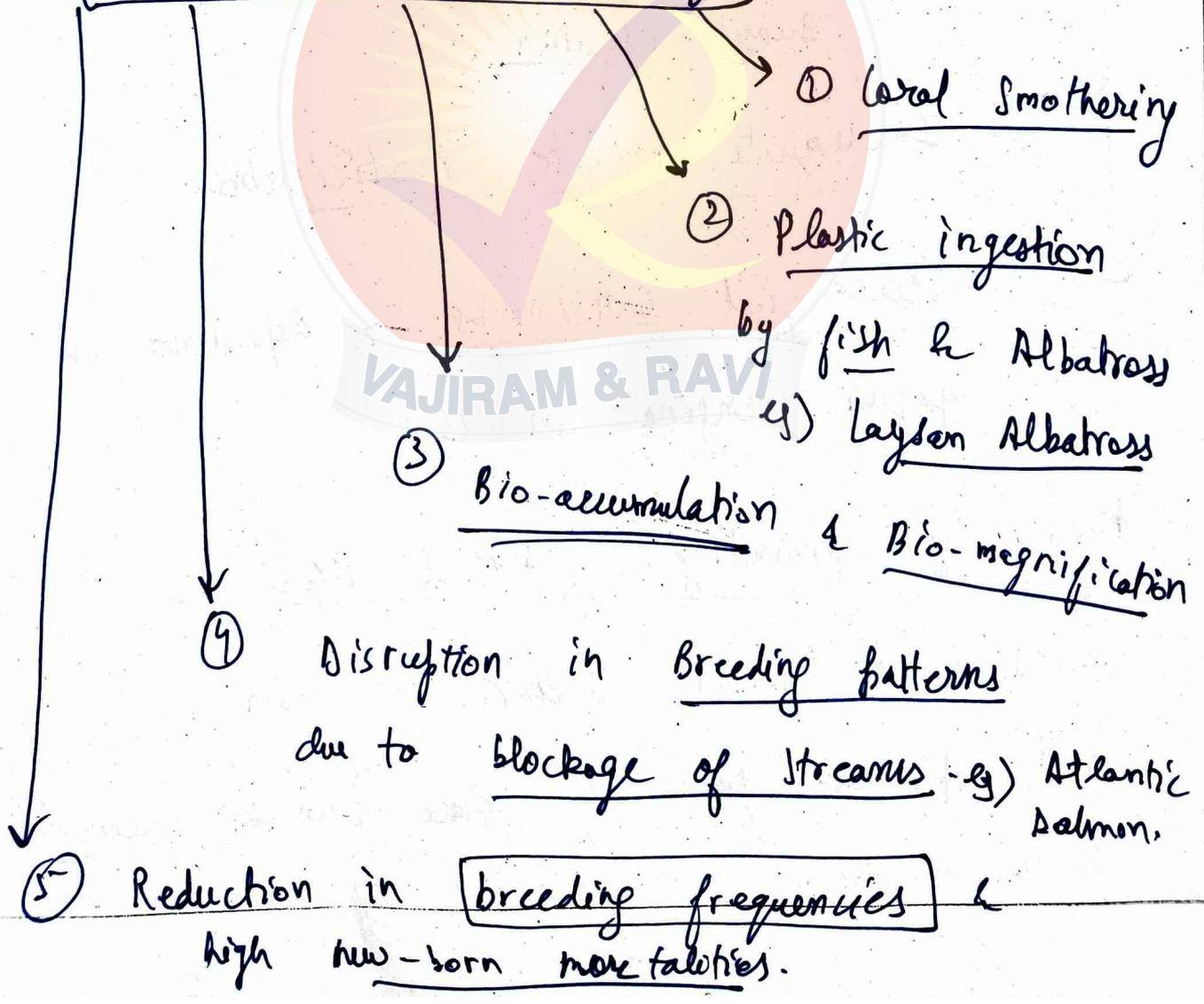
- ① High Initial Cost
 - ↳ ② lack of adequate Funding, low Budget allocation.
- ↳ ③ Inadequate Private Participation
- ↳ ④ Technological Bottlenecks → dependence on orgogenic engine on US.

Thus, by promoting targeted R&D & incentivizing private sector we can speed up our goal of ~~space~~ - human crewed space mission.

14

Recently scientists in Japan found Micro-plastics in Placenta & human brain raising concerns over marine plastic pollution threats on bio-diversity & coastal ecosystems.

Threat to Bio diversity



5) Reduction in breeding frequencies & high new-born mortality.

Impact on Coastal Communities

- 1) loss of beach aesthetics & tourism
economy erosion eg) Juhu Beach.
- 2) loss of livelihoods & rise in poverty risk
→ Reverse SDG-1 - zero poverty.
- 3) Threat to food security → collapse of
fish stocks → Reverse SDG-2 - Zero Hunger
- 4) Human health vulnerability due to
micro plastic accumulation → Renal failure

Mitigation Measures to reduce Micro plastic pollution

- 1) Trap plastics from sewage pipe through
nets (Australia)
- 2) Bio-plastics development → IIT Roorkee

3) Ban on Single Use Plastics under Indian Plastic waste management Rules.

4) Extended Producer Responsibility

International Measures

2) Direct → Global Plastic Treaty Negotiations

⇒ India's demand on Comprehensive ban.

↳ Basel Norms on transboundary waste transportation (indirect)

Thus, by global collaboration & SDG-17

'Partnerships', we can collectively address marine plastic pollution through behaviour change & technology.

Q15

Lancet Report 2020 reported 8.8 million premature deaths due to Air pollution in ~~2021~~ 2019-2020 highlighting grave concern of air pollution for health & environment.

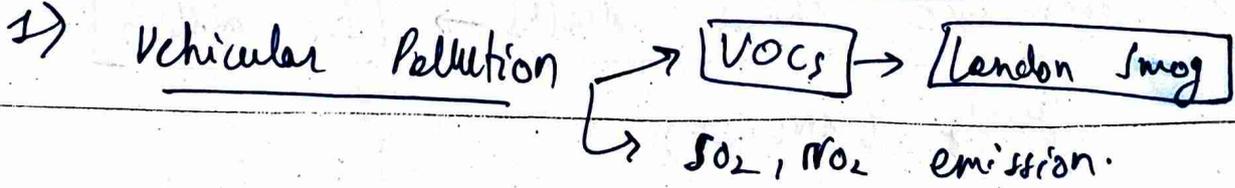
Critical Problem for Public Health

- ① Asthma cases
- ② Loss of Lung capacity & Cancer

Problem for environment

- ① Premature loss of leaves of plants
- ② Reduction in Pollinators (UK study)
- ③ River Acidification (Acid Rains)

Causes of Urban Air Pollution



2) Indoor Air Pollution → Paint, Varnish & wooden upholstery

3) Open waste incineration & Waste to Energy plants

4) Landfill pollution emissions → CO, NO₂ etc

5) Nearby stubble burning

Natural Causes → 'Bowl effect' of Delhi

↳ Temperature Inversion



Consequences of Air Pollution:-

1) Loss of DALYs in urban areas.
(10 years less in Delhi)

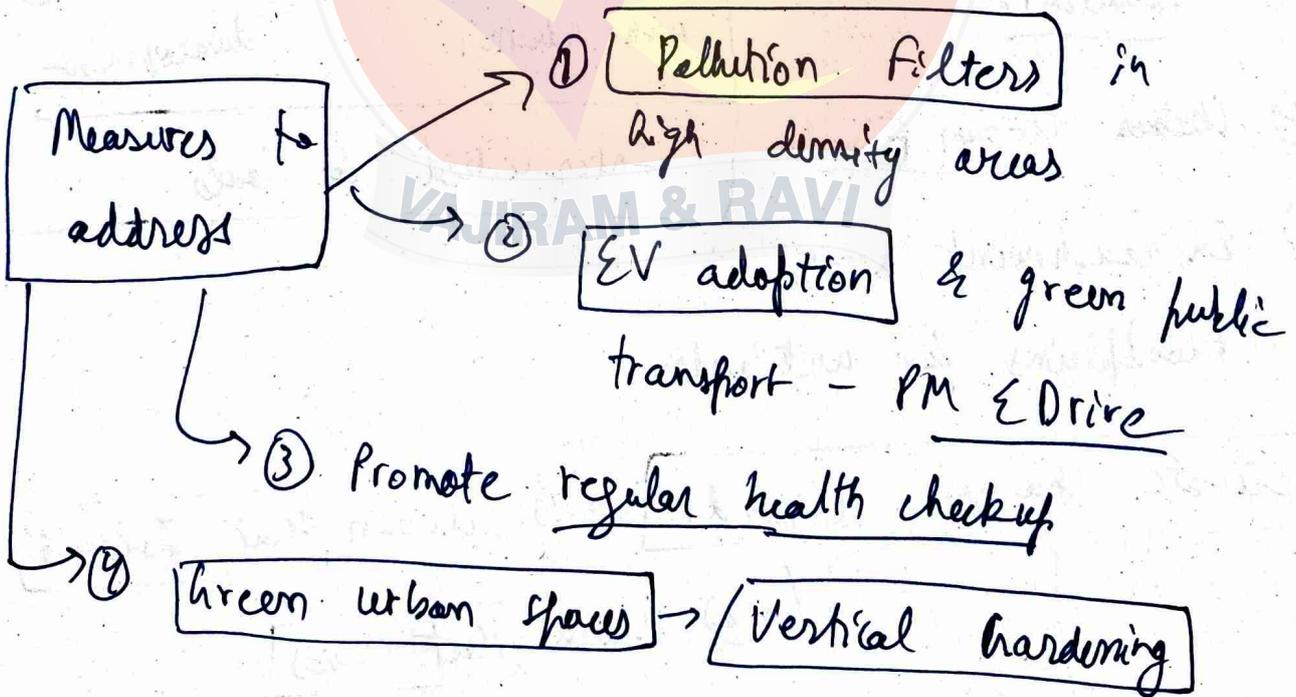
2) Premature child deaths → 17 million yearly (UNICEF)

3) Environmental Impact → loss of pollinators & primary productivity in plants

4) Social Impact → Rise in inequalities

g) Open slum houses → more vulnerable

5) Impact on Women & children

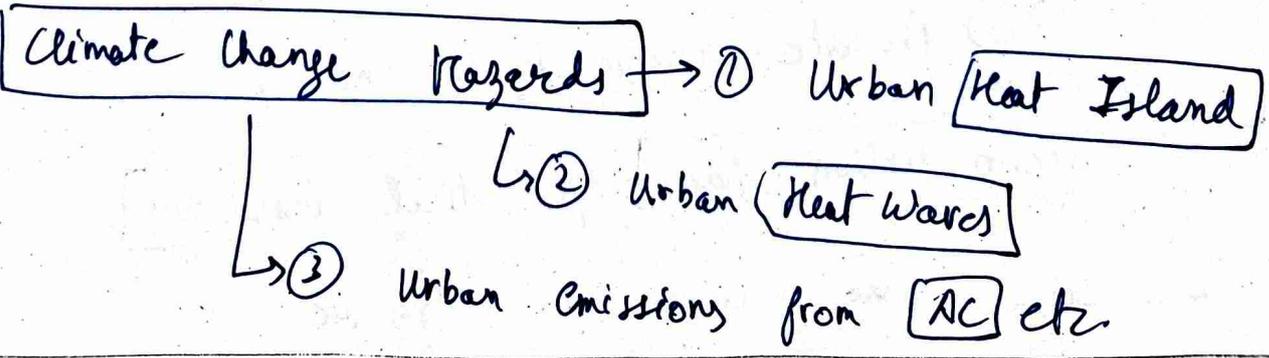
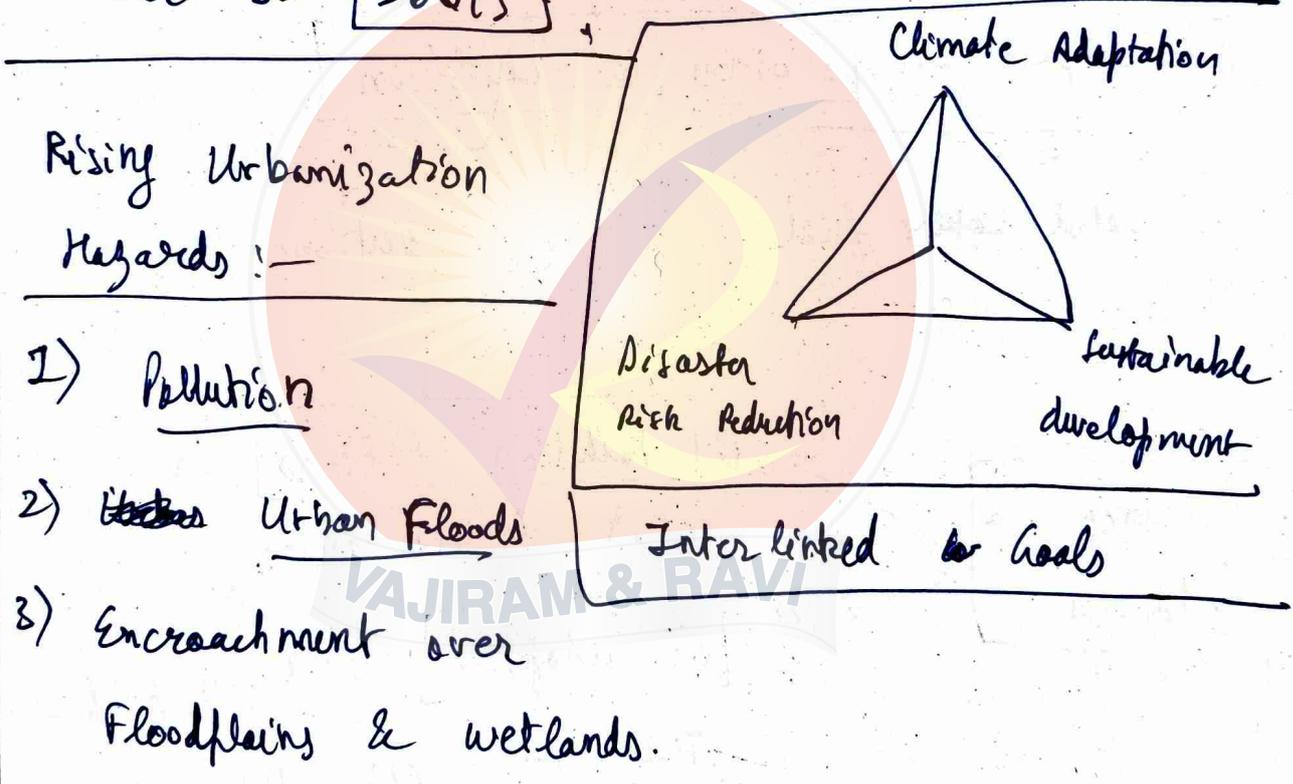


are some ~~new~~ measures to promote

Smart cities & pollution free cities.

10/15
6

As per Sendai Framework, Climate Change and disaster management are interlinked must be incorporated into development goals under SDGs



Leveraging Smart Cities Mission to Mainstream Climate Resilience

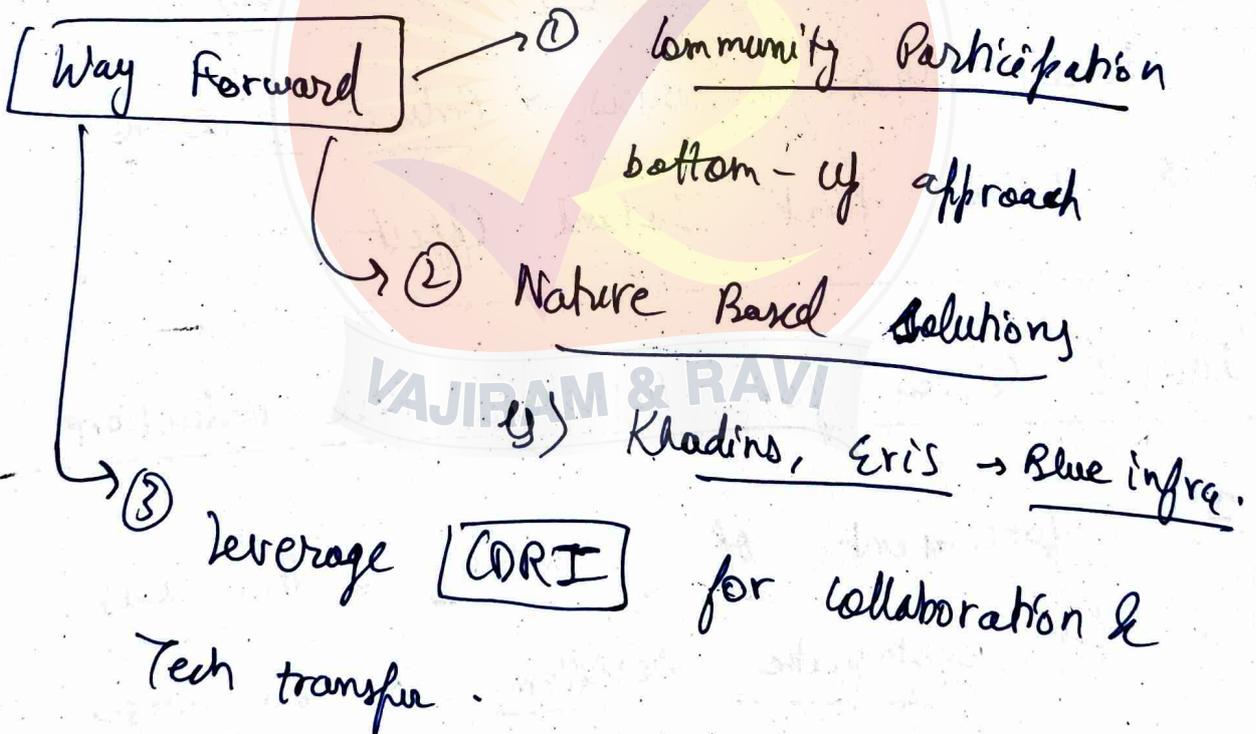
- 1) Development of Passive Cooling Buildings
- 2) Promote Green-Blue-Infrastructure
- 3) Vertical Garden, green corridors
- 3) Urban Green Mobility es) EV cars &
Green Hydrogen Buses → Reduce emissions
 & Urban Heat Island Effect

SMART Cities for Disaster Risk Reductions

- 1) Enforcement of URICA & BIS codes
for Earthquake resilience & low energy
consumption
- 2) maintenance & ~~up~~ upgrade Storm drains
& sewage system (Dhar Judge Committee)

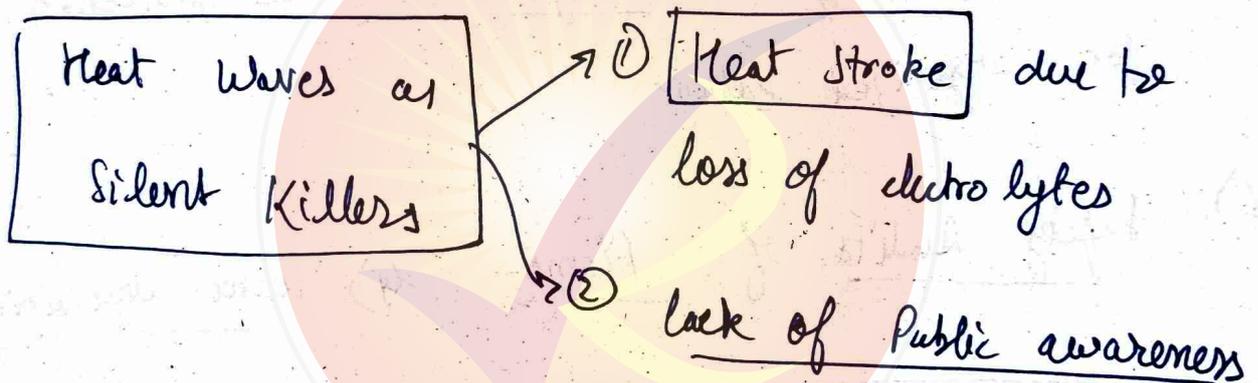
3) Sponge Cities development to prevent urban flooding (Singapore model)

4) Integrated Governance like Gati Shakti between different departments eg) Health, Fire, Police, Administration



Thus, by collaboration, governance & technology development we can promote resilient smart cities.

Heatwaves refers to 4-6.5°C higher temperature than long-term average when current temperature reaches above 40°C on plains & 30°C on mountains.



Heat Action Plans & Significance

- 1) Development of Early warning systems.
- 2) Public awareness campaigns & social media awareness drives.
- 3) Development of Resilience strategies.

g) Incident response plans

- 4) Structural Measures → doctors training
 - ↳ enhancing hospital capacity & beds
 - ↳ water-points & shadow-zones.

5) Regulation of working hours & protection for organized labour

6) safety audits of firms - 4) water availability

- Deficiencies → ① Not 'notified' disaster under NDMA
- ↳ ② state expenditure limited to 10% under SDRF allocation

Other measures to promote resilience

1) Amend NDMA to make heat waves notified disaster.

(4)

- 2) Understanding Disaster Better through national centre for research
- 3) Integrated ~~governance~~ governance & interagency coordination
g) Police - DDMA & NDRF
- 4) Non-structural Measures → Heat safety Bye laws
- 5) Structural Measures → development of water - points & community centres.
- 6) Climate - change Adaption → Machine learning model to predict heat wave & last mile dissemination.

~~the~~ ~~to~~ These measures can promote effective Heat wave management as for PM 10 point programme.

Q18

India's NDMA guidelines deal with Chemical, Biological, Radiological & Nuclear (CBRN)

disasters to ensure hazard risk vulnerability reduction & efficient disaster management

Effectiveness of India's Institutional Mechanisms

1) AERB → Provide safety regulations.
↳ safety audits of nuclear plants
↳ Independent analysis of safety performance

2) Legal — Civil Nuclear Liability Framework
→ Technology developers accountable for disasters.
→ compensation mechanisms for victims.

→ Producers responsibility for management of disaster and prevention

Deficiencies in Institutional Framework

- 1) Allegation of lack of independence of AERB as regulator.
- 2) Surface-level checks and audits by AERB.
- 3) Conflict of Interest as AERB & nuclear power plants are government entities.
- 4) Excessive liability burden on producers for nuclear disaster.

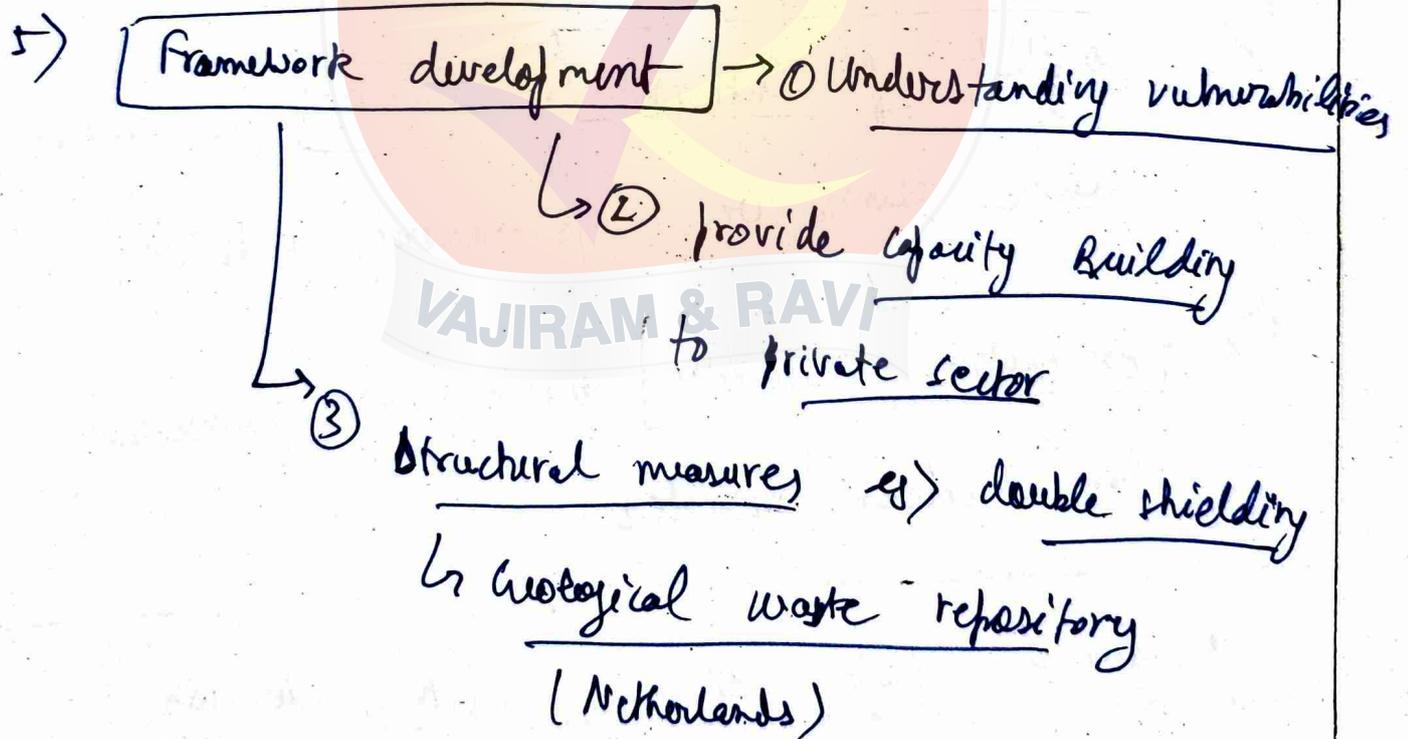
Measures for disaster Risk Reduction

- 1) Expert & Independent Regulator for Nuclear sector safety

2) Third-party safety audits by independent firms appointed by AERB along with CAQ.

3) Liability Sharing between Government & private entity (Ukraine).

4) Regular safety checks by Intra-company vigilance.



Thus by above measures, we can address

'Not in my backyard phenomenon' & Attract FDI.

Wearable Technology refers to smart watches, portable health monitors etc, which provide medical information about personal health. for example Apple, Samsung Smart watch.

Wearable Technology Reshaping Personalized Medicines

- 1) Targeted Intervention as per personal health statistics.
- 2) Enhance information into patient lifestyle and medical history
- 3) Precision Medicine & effective monitoring
- 4) Promote Personal lifestyle intervention

(46)

over drug dosages. \rightarrow promoting sustainability

5) opportunities for data analysis & early warnings through AI models.

Challenges posed by such technology to public health infrastructure

1) Cyber vulnerability - 4) Personal data Breaches

2) Targeted Advertisement through personal data misuse & sale.

3) Create new digital divide between poor & rich - 'haves & have nots'

4) Inadequate doctor & nurse training on digital technologies.

5) Fiscal Burden on government on database

(47)

management & security infrastructure.

Measures to sustainably Integrate wearable
Technology to public infrastructure

1) Convergence between schemes eg)
Ayushman - Bharat and Digital Public
Infrastructure.

2) One-Health approach → Community-level
disease surveillance

3) Training & capacity Building of doctors.

4) Integrate with e-Sanjeevani

5) Encrypted Storage (National Quantum
Mission)

These measures ensure
Sustainable & Smart Healthcare infrastructure

Recently government of India launched Bio ES policy to promote Biotechnology integration into several sectors to promote 3 Trillion economy development in Biotech sector & replicate success of IT boom.

Key Features of Bio ES Policy

- 1) Promotion of Employment
 - Training & skill development
 - R&D & high skill jobs.
- 2) Economy → Promotion of exports and biotechnological products
- 3) Environmental conservation ~~gray~~ through

'Grey Biotechnology'

Alignment with 3-Trillion Economy

- 1) Promotion of Health and medicines.
 → 'Red' Biotechnology → CAR T-cell therapy
- 2) Encourage Agricultural development through Green Biotechnology → HYV seeds, pest resistant crops.
- 3) Climate Resilient Economy → Promotion of dry land & arid agriculture (Drought resilient varieties) under Brown Biotechnology.
- 4) Promotion of efforts & Aquaculture development & disease resilience (Blue-Biotech)
- 5) Environment conservation → Grey Biotech

eg) Oil Zaffer Bacteria genetic engineering

Major challenges in Implementation

- 1) Low R&D investment eg) 0.7% of GDP
- 2) lack of University level research
↳ concentration in private sector
- 3) Inadequate Regulatory ease of doing business → eg) Multiplicity of licences.
- 4) Lack of Trade treaties allowing GMOs
- 5) Public apprehension and threat of loss of gene diversity.

By promoting Industry - academia linkage, we can promote 3 trillion economy in Biotech sector.