nishtha
The Civil Services Society of Hansraj College
निष्ठा धृति सत्यम

NISHCHAY

NEWSLETTER

Echoes of Earth: Exploring Our Environmental Legacy

NISHCHAY TEAM

Editors-in-chief

Ashwamegh Singh
President

Rahul
Vice-President

B. Taraka Ratna
Senior Advisor

Chandrashekhar Hiremath
Joint Secretary

Layout Designers

Atharva Sharma
Technical Head

Priyanka Choudhary
Technical Head

Vineet Kakkad
Technical Head

Layout Editors

Abhijeet Kumar
Technical Sub-Head

Blossom Nidhi
Technical Sub-Head

Sachin Chauhan
Technical Sub-Head

Ayush Kumar Singh

Md. Kamran

Monika Kumari

Content Editors

Saloni Bharti
Editorial Head

Sahil Singh
Editorial Head

Parth Kamboj
Editorial Head

Proof Readers
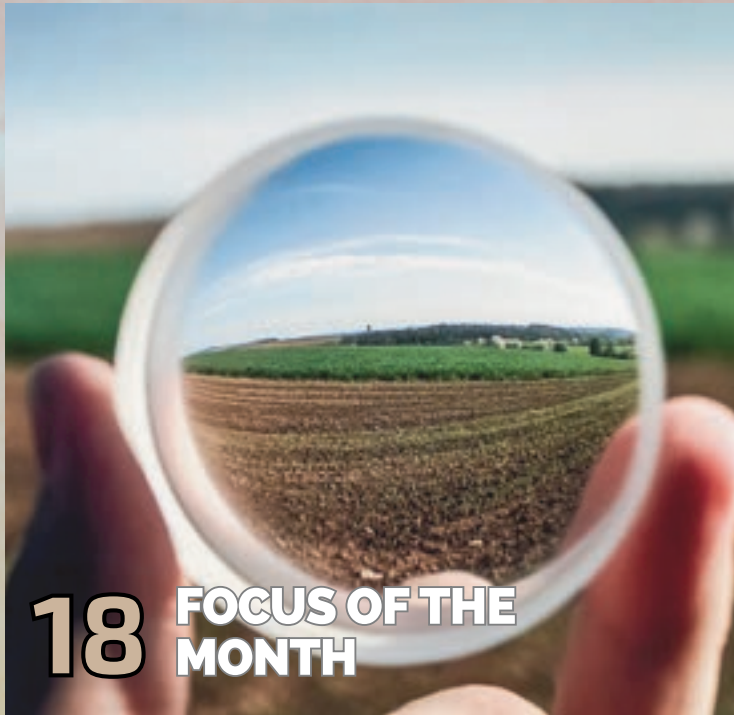
Kapil Singh Yadav
Treasurer

Content Writers

Shatakshi Shukla
Organizing Head

Prince Malik
Organizing Head

Amiya Dixit
Organizing Head

Divyesh
Deepak
Theerdha Rajesh
Abhimanyu
Ashish
Netresh
Ratnika
Vishwajeet

CONTENTS

18 FOCUS OF THE MONTH

10 BLUE ECONOMY

14 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

From the Principal's Desk

प्रिय पाठकों,

निष्ठा- द सिविल सर्विसेज सोसाइटी ऑफ हंसराज कॉलेज के मासिक समाचार पत्र "निश्चय" के नवीनतम संस्करण के प्रक्षेपण पर मैं संपादक मंडल और सभी सदस्यों को हार्दिक बधाई देती हूं। निष्ठा द्वारा नियमित रूप से आयोजित किए जाने वाले विभिन्न कार्यक्रमों और वक्ता सत्रों से मैं वास्तव में प्रसन्न हूं। निष्ठा ने उम्मीदवारों की आकांक्षाओं और उनकी सहायता करने के लिए हर संभव प्रयास किया है। मासिक समाचार पत्र सबसे प्रतिष्ठित यूपीएससी-सीएसई के सभी महत्वपूर्ण कार्यक्षेत्रों को संरेखित करने की प्रतिबद्धता और एकमात्र उद्देश्य को दर्शाता है। सरकारी नीतियों के व्यावहारिक विश्लेषण से लेकर सिविल सेवकों के प्रेरक प्रोफाइल तक, आपके लेख उस कठोर और विचारशील विचारों को प्रदर्शित करते हैं जिसे हम हंसराज कॉलेज में बढ़ावा देने का प्रयास करते हैं और निष्ठा सोसाइटी के माध्यम से राष्ट्र निर्माण हेतु कुशल प्रशासकों की स्वर्णिम पीढ़ी के निर्माण हेतु हंसराज कॉलेज प्रतिबद्ध है।

मैं इस न्यूज़लेटर को फलीभूत करने के लिए सभी योगदानकर्ताओं की कड़ी मेहनत और समर्पण के लिए हार्दिक प्रशंसा करना चाहती हूँ। आपके अथक प्रयास हमारे कॉलेज समुदाय की ताकत और जीवंतता की गवाही देते हैं।

हंसराज के अमृत काल में सिविल सेवकों की अगली पीढ़ी को पोषित करने के लिए समर्पित सोसाइटी के रूप में, मुझे विश्वास है कि आप आने वाले वर्षों में अपनी उपलब्धियों पर हमें गौरवान्वित करना जारी रखेंगे। स्टूडेंट्स की भलाई के लिए आपकी लगन और प्रतिबद्धता वास्तव में प्रेरणादायक है। मुझे संदेह नहीं है कि आप अपने चुने हुए क्षेत्र में सार्थक प्रभाव डालेंगे।

एक बार फिर, मैं आपको इस उत्कृष्ट समाचार पत्र को लॉन्च करने के लिए बधाई देती हूँ, और मैं हमारे कॉलेज समुदाय के सभी सदस्यों को इसके द्वारा उठाए गए प्रासंगिक मुद्दों को पढ़ने और संलग्न करने के लिए प्रोत्साहित करती हूँ।

प्रो.(डॉ) रमा
प्राचार्या, हंसराज कॉलेज

From the Convenor's Desk

प्रिय पाठकों,

निष्ठा सोसाइटी मासिक पत्रिका " निश्चय" के ग्यारहवें संस्करण के प्रकाशन पर संपादकीय मंडल को हार्दिक बधाई। प्रति द्विमासिक प्रकाशित होने वाली यह पत्रिका प्रशासनिक सेवा के परीक्षा की तैयारी कर रहे अभ्यर्थियों के लिए पूरक की भूमिका निभाती है। इस प्रतिष्ठित परीक्षा के पाठ्यक्रम के महत्वपूर्ण विषयों पर बेहद सरल भाषा और रचनात्मकतापूर्ण लेख पाठकों के समक्ष परोसा गया है। पत्रिका में सामान्य अध्ययन तथा ज्वलनशील सामयिक घटनाओं का बहुआयामी दृष्टिकोण से विश्लेषण प्रस्तुत किया गया है। इंटरनेट पर मौजूद स्रोतों के बहुमार के बीच यह पत्रिका अपने विषय सामग्री के सार्थकता और प्रामाणिकता के मापदंड पर खरा उतरती है।

इस पत्रिका के विषय वस्तु के चयन, प्रूफ और उनके संपादन के दृष्टि से संपादक मंडल, तकनीकी विभाग और सभी सदस्यों ने जो श्रमसाध्य कार्य किया है वह अभिनंदनीय है। कॉलेज की प्राचार्या प्रो. रमा ने हमेशा की तरह इस बार भी समुचित मार्गदर्शन और सानिध्य से इस अंक को अंतिम रूप देने में बड़ी भूमिका निभाई है और हंसराज के अमृत काल में अनेक ज्ञानवर्धक गतिविधियों के प्रोत्साहन के लिए प्राचार्या महोदया का विशेष धन्यवाद। प्राचार्या प्रो. रमा मैम के कुशल नेतृत्व में हंसराज कॉलेज राष्ट्र निर्माण हेतु कुशल प्रशासकों के निमार्ण हेतु प्रतिबद्ध है|
आशा है कि "निश्चय" का यह अंक आपको पसंद आएगा और आपके परीक्षा-उन्मुख ज्ञान को नया आयाम प्रदान करेगा।
धन्यवाद

प्रो.(डॉ) प्रभांशु ओझा
संयोजक, निष्ठा सोसायटी

From the President's Desk

Dear readers,

I am filled with gratification and ecstasy to announce the launch of our next edition of the monthly newsletter-Nishchay. This endeavour is dedicated to nurturing and inspiring fervent individuals and proffering them valuable insights across a range of pivotal topics shaping the vibrant tapestry of the coveted Civil Services Examination.

In a world that is constantly evolving, the significance of staying informed and connected cannot be overstated; thus this novel initiative is designed to harmonize all the crucial aspects of the prestigious UPSC-CSE, emphasizing both the foundational elements of the exam syllabus & ever-changing current affairs.

We firmly believe that this newsletter will serve as a source of motivation, catalyst of collective progress, and repository of knowledge that enlightens us with the latest developments around the globe along with the static portion.

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to each one of you for your unwavering support, and we hope you enjoy this meticulously crafted newsletter.

Sincerely,
Ashwamegh Singh
President
Nishtha - The Civil Services Society of Hansraj College

hrcnishtha.org

/hansrajnishtha

NISHCHAY

INTRO

India boasts one of the world's most biodiverse environments. It is a tapestry of beauty and breathtaking complexities. India displays its incredible and varied environmental diversity, ranging from deep and productive rainforests in the south to the lofty and majestic Himalayas in the north. Being a land of contrasts, it is home to a myriad of unique species found nowhere else on Earth. Under the theme – Echoes of Earth: Exploring Our Environmental Legacy, the newsletter thus examines this legacy of India's distinct ecology and its varied ecosystem.

One echo of this legacy is the concept of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, a Sanskrit phrase translating to "the world is one family." This philosophy underscores the interconnectedness of all living things. It urges them to live together in harmony and have a profound respect for nature and mother earth. However, this rich environment faces significant threats. Rapid industrialization and urbanisation have led to air and water pollution. These have, in turn, caused great threats to natural habitats. The struggle to balance human needs with environmental preservation is a constant undercurrent in India's history. India's environmental legacy is a call to action. It's a reminder of both the beauty and fragility of our planet. Today, these echoes compel us to listen and act. India's rich environmental heritage is not just a source of natural beauty but also the foundation of its economy and well-being. By nurturing its environment, India can secure a vibrant future not only for itself but for the planet as a whole.

THE IMPACT OF CLIMATE CHANGE ON WILDLIFE: ADAPTING CONSERVATION STRATEGIES FOR A CHANGING WORLD

The condition that we experience now is an 'emergency', not just climate change anymore, waiting on the threshold. However, even in this crisis, humans assume that they're the sole entity being influenced by and can influence the natural conditions. This anthropocentric stance, long-rooted, has been reinforced by the industrial and scientific revolution, giving humans profound access to make changes in nature. And the rapid urbanisation further pushed nature to the peripheries, which were seen as distant spaces. And the 'wild' was a new idea, being seen as 'ferocious' and 'uncivilised' against the civilised urban humans. Therefore, to understand the recent condition, the plight of different realities, and the way out is to see the historical development of how we have come to this situation and the way crises are being seen.

With voyages of discovery, enclosure, and land grab, natural resources are turned into commodities. Wildlife was a menace with human footprints all around, seeking control and devising ways to capitalise on it. Scholars like Crutzen define it as a new geological epoch, the 'Anthropocene'. He argued that over the past 300 years, human activities have become an increasingly significant force affecting the evolution of the earth's system in its geological, hydrological, bio-geochemical, and atmospheric realms.

Meanwhile, Donna Haraway and Joson Moore described it as 'Capitalocene', to address the pressing issue of a handful of minds controlling the will of the entire planet, with deprived humans and animals on the margins. While they are inflicted with the repercussions of changes made by these powerful and wealthy, they do not contest the environment. Capitalocene has the potential to dissolve symbolic boundaries between humans and non-humans grounded in neo-Marxist economics. It shines light on the extent to which capitalism works because it organises work as a multispecies process, a process in which most of the unpaid work is observed, in the case of non-humans, the wild.

Climate change affects wildlife in various ways, disrupting ecosystems and altering natural habitats. Rising temperatures force many species to migrate to higher latitudes or elevations in search of suitable climates, leading to changes in species distributions and potentially causing competition with native species. Furthermore, changes in precipitation patterns can affect food availability and reproductive cycles, impacting population dynamics. Extreme weather events, such as hurricanes, droughts, and wildfires, also pose immediate threats to wildlife populations. These events can destroy habitats, fragment landscapes, and lead to direct mortality among species. Additionally, ocean acidification and coral bleaching threaten marine biodiversity, impacting the intricate balance of marine ecosystems.

"
Which journal mentions 'species facing adverse impacts due to climate change' ?

1. Business standard
2. Down to earth
3. Nature climate change
4. International journal of climatology
"

"
What percentage of the mammal population is affected by changing climate as per 'nature climate change' report ?

1. 23%
2. 36%
3. 88%
4. 47%
"

To address the challenges posed by climate change, conservationists must adapt their strategies to promote resilience and protect biodiversity effectively, besides scaling down the consumption pattern. Some key adaptation strategies include the following:

- Habitat Restoration and Connectivity: Conservation efforts should focus on restoring degraded habitats and creating corridors to facilitate species movement and adaptation.

- Climate-Informed Planning: This includes prioritizing conservation efforts in regions expected to experience the greatest impacts and ensuring the resilience of ecosystems to future changes.

- Species Monitoring and Management: Regular monitoring of wildlife populations is essential to track changes in distribution, abundance, and behaviour.

Who popularised the term 'capitalocene' in academic discourse?

1. E.M. Woods
2. Karl Marx & Friedrich engels
3. Jason Moore & Donna Haraway
4. Madhav Gadgil & Ramchandra Guha

- Community Engagement and Education: Engaging local communities in conservation efforts is critical for promoting sustainable practices and building resilience to climate change. Education programmes can raise awareness about the importance of biodiversity conservation and empower communities to participate in conservation initiatives.

- Policy and Advocacy: Conservation organisations should advocate for policies that promote sustainable land use, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and support conservation funding and research.

The right of these subalterns is to live a just and equal life. "The right to influence and command the processes by which nature-society relationships are made, transformed, and disrupted is increasingly becoming a key element of the struggle against capitalism everywhere." Our right to access nature for social needs is challenging the neoliberal drive of privatising the commons. Against "environmental racism", the United Nations International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Part II, Article 6, states that "every human being has the inherent right to life. This right shall be protected by law. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his life".

Climate change poses significant challenges to wildlife conservation, requiring adaptive strategies to safeguard biodiversity effectively. By integrating climate change considerations into conservation planning and management, prioritising habitat restoration and connectivity, and engaging stakeholders in collaborative efforts, conservationists can mitigate the impacts of climate change on wildlife and promote a sustainable future for generations to come. A safe and just society for all, humans and non-humans, is the right of all and the responsibility of one with the privilege to ensure it.

Who coined the term Anthropocene?

1. Niaomi Klein
2. John Berger
3. Linda Kalof
4. Paul Crutzen

Which of the following terms stand for human centeredness ?

1. Anthropocentric
2. Anthropomorphic
3. Zoocentric
4. Homocentric

THE EVOLUTION OF CIVIL SERVICES IN INDIA: FROM COLONIAL LEGACY TO MODERN GOVERNANCE

The history of India's public services is fascinating, spanning from its colonial origins, formed by British administrative methods, to the multifarious issues they face in the modern period. The Indian Civil Service has its roots in the British colonial era. In 1858, the British East India Company established the Indian Civil Service (ICS) and the Imperial Police (IP) to streamline administration across the vast continent. These early services primarily served British interests, focusing on the maintenance of law and order, revenue collection, and administrative control. This colonial legacy marks the beginning of their behaviour and exemplary public behaviour. The Indian Civil Service (ICS), officially known as the Imperial Civil Service, was the highest civil service of the British Empire in India during British rule from 1858 to 1947. Its members governed more than 300 million people in the provinces of British India and were ultimately responsible for the supervision of all government activities in the 250 districts of British India. They were appointed under Section 32 of the Government of India Act 1858, implemented by the British Parliament.

The beginning of independence in 1947 brought about a substantial shift in the functioning of civil services. The formation of the Indian Administrative Service (IAS), the Indian Police Service (IPS), and other affiliated services revalued its mission, aligning it with the goals of nation-building, socioeconomic growth, and the welfare of Indians.

This transition aligned with the goals of a newly independent country determined to shape its own fate. The Charter Act of 1973 protected civil servants' rights. According to its regulations, any vacancy in an Indian civil office must be filled from among the civil servants of the company belonging to the Presidency in which such vacancies arose. Lord Wellesley founded the College of Fort William in Calcutta in 1800 for the purpose of educating young recruits for the Civil Service. The Charter Act of 1833 suggested implementing a competitive exam, and the Charter Act of 1856 mandated that all Civil Service recruits be chosen by way of a competitive exam. A committee known as the Macaulay Committee was established to advise on the measures to be adopted by the Act of 1853. The Indian Civil Service Act of 1861 stipulated that anyone, Indian or European, could be appointed to any of the positions listed in the schedule attached to the Act, provided that they had lived in India for at least seven years.

> **In which year was the Indian Civil Services founded?**
> a.1858
> b.1842
> c.1853
> d.1947

Aitchison Commission was tasked with a plan for admitting Indians to every branch of public service. The Islington Commission of 1912 observed that only 5% of civil servants were Indians. The Government of India Act, 1919, suggested categorising the service into three groups: All India, Provincial, and Subordinate. Finally, the Government of India Act, 1935, introduced provincial autonomy under responsible Indian ministers.

> **Who founded the College of Fort William in Calcutta?**
> a) Lord Macaulay
> b) Lord Cornwallis
> c) Lord Wellesley
> d) Lord Hastings

> **Which committee was established to advise on the measures to be adopted by the Act of 1853?**
> a) Hartog Committee
> b) Macaulay Committee
> c) Hunter Committee
> d) Muddiman Committee

The current modern civil service was created after the partition of India in 1947. Sardar Patel opined that the civil service should strengthen cohesion and national unity. The values of honesty, impartiality, and merit remain the guiding principles of public administration in India. From the early 2000s, especially in the Indian media, Indian civil servants were colloquially regularly referred to as "babus" (as in "babus rule"), while the Indian bureaucracy was referred to as "babudom." The Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances, and Pensions is unofficially considered the "Ministry of Civil Services."

The evolving ethos of the Indian Civil Service emphasised values such as impartiality, integrity, and unwavering commitment to public service. The basic principles underlying the value of public service are accountability, transparency, fairness, impartiality, and respect for the rule of law. These principles help to ensure that civil servants act with integrity and adhere to ethical standards in their behaviour and decision-making. It is of concern that the image of the public servant, once the greatest asset of public administration, has been eroded by abuses and inefficiencies. Civil service reform is essential to restoring the faith and trust of the people. Despite their noble beginnings, today's Indian civil service faces many challenges every day. Over time, allegations of corruption and political interference tarnished their reputation.
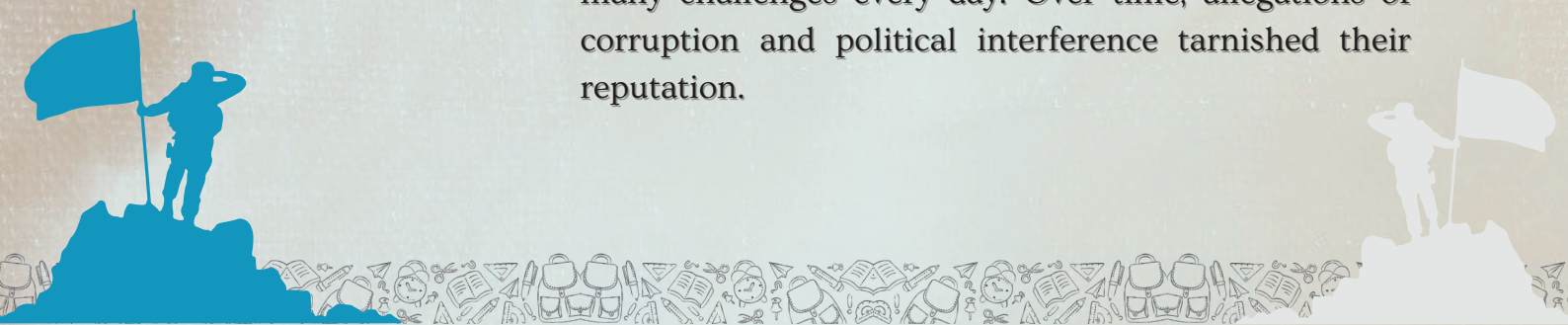
Despite many challenges, the Indian Civil Service has achieved success on several fronts. From rural development to urban planning, from ensuring access to clean water to starting space exploration, they have played a key role in the country's progress.

India's economic growth, improved international image, efforts to maintain internal security, fight cross-border terrorism, and promote friendly international relations through diplomatic policy are testimony to the dedication and hard work of public servants.

Indian civil services have come a long way from their colonial roots. Their purpose and ethos reflect the evolving aspirations of a nation that values public service and law enforcement. While the current challenges and gaps in service delivery pose considerable obstacles, the principles of honesty, impartiality, commitment to the common good, and the spirit of a "karma yogi" remain vital. As India progresses, the Indian Civil Service must draw inspiration from its rich historical and philosophical heritage, including the teachings of the ancient schools of wisdom, to meet today's challenges and work for the betterment of our nation.

1)Which Ministry is unofficially regarded as the Ministry of Civil Services ?

a)Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment
b)Ministry of Urban Development
c)Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions
Ministry of Human Resource Development

1)The members of the Imperial Civil Services were appointed under which Section of the Government of India Act , 1853 ?

a)Section 23
b)Section 32
c)Section 22
d)Section 34

BLUE ECONOMY: BALANCING ECONOMIC GROWTH WITH OCEAN CONSERVATION

The concept of the blue economy holds immense potential for driving economic growth, promoting environmental conservation, and advancing social progress. Through the sustainable utilisation of ocean resources, we can create job opportunities, foster innovation, and build resilient communities. However, this vision demands that we confront several critical environmental challenges, ranging from overfishing to pollution and climate change. It is imperative that we take bold steps to promote sustainable practices, improve marine conservation, and strike a balance between economic growth and environmental stewardship. By doing so, we can unlock the full potential of the blue economy and pave the way for a brighter future for ourselves and the planet.

The blue economy provides abundant economic opportunities based on the sustainable use of marine resources. Fisheries and aquaculture industries offer livelihoods for millions of people worldwide, and technological advancements improve productivity and efficiency.

In addition, marine biotechnology holds great promise for the production of pharmaceuticals, cosmetics, and food. Renewable energy sources, such as offshore wind, tidal, and wave power, offer profitable alternatives to fossil fuels, promoting innovation and reducing carbon emissions. Moreover, maritime transport plays a vital role in global trade, promoting economic growth and connecting distant markets.

Tourism is another significant aspect of the blue economy and thrives on coastal attractions such as beaches, coral reefs, and marine wildlife. Sustainable tourism practices ensure the preservation of natural habitats while generating revenue and employment. To unlock the blue economy's full potential while mitigating its environmental impact, governments, businesses, and communities must work together. Responsible stewardship and strategic investments can help drive inclusive and sustainable economic growth, benefiting present and future generations alike.

The blue economy, which includes all economic activities related to the oceans and marine resources, is facing significant environmental challenges. These challenges threaten the sustainability of ocean resources and the well-being of marine ecosystems. Overfishing, primarily driven by the increasing demand for seafood, depletes fish stocks and disrupts marine food webs. Habitat destruction, including coastal development and bottom trawling, undermines the resilience of critical ecosystems like coral reefs and mangroves. Pollution from land-based sources, such as plastic waste and agricultural runoff, poses a severe threat to marine life and ecosystems. Ocean acidification, caused by the absorption of excess carbon dioxide, harms shellfish and coral reefs, jeopardising biodiversity and fisheries. Climate change exacerbates these challenges, leading to rising sea levels, ocean warming, and extreme weather events. These environmental stressors degrade marine ecosystems and also undermine the economic viability of blue-economy industries.

> 1.   A key strategy recommended to achieve balance between economic growth and ocean conservation is:
>
> a)Expanding offshore oil and gas extraction
> b)Promoting ecosystem-based management
> c)Reducing marine protected areas
> Increasing plastic pollution
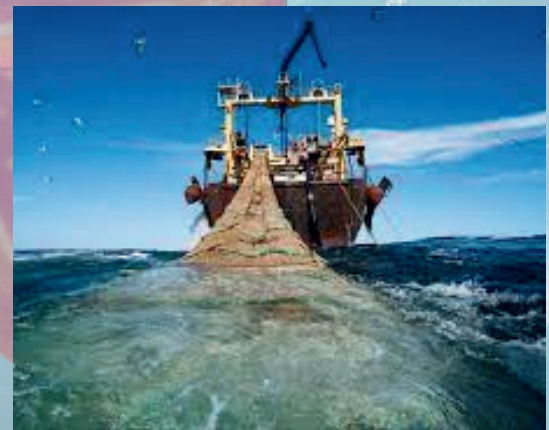
> The Palau National Marine Sanctuary protects what percentage of its exclusive economic zone from commercial fishing?
>
> a)20%
> b)50%
> c) 80%
> d)100%
> L

Recent reports have highlighted the critical need for strategies that strike a balance between economic growth and ocean conservation. The reports suggest that ecosystem-based management approaches, which take into account the interconnectedness of marine ecosystems, are key to achieving this balance. Moreover, the reports stress the importance of enhancing marine protected areas (MPAs) to preserve biodiversity and restore habitats. To achieve this, they recommend setting ambitious targets for MPA expansion and improving their governance. In addition, investments in research and innovation are deemed crucial for developing sustainable technologies and practices across industries such as fisheries, aquaculture, and renewable energy. By doing so, we can ensure that these industries do not harm the ocean's health and instead promote sustainability. Furthermore, the reports emphasise the need for stakeholder engagement and collaboration to achieve holistic solutions. This approach involves inclusive decision-making processes that involve governments, industries, scientists, and local communities. By integrating diverse perspectives and knowledge systems, it is possible to design policies and initiatives that promote sustainable development and safeguard ocean health. The reports suggest that achieving a balance between economic prosperity and environmental conservation is possible. By implementing ecosystem-based management approaches, enhancing marine protected areas, investing in sustainable technologies, and fostering stakeholder engagement and collaboration, we can ensure a sustainable future for our oceans.

Case studies of successful blue economy initiatives.

1. The Seychelles: The Seychelles' Blue Economy Strategic Framework and Roadmap prioritize sustainable fisheries management, marine spatial planning, and ecotourism development. Their innovative debt-for-nature swap, in collaboration with the Nature Conservancy, safeguards marine habitats while reducing national debt.

2. Norway: Norway's aquaculture industry is a global leader, focusing on sustainable salmon farming practices and technological innovation. Strict regulations ensure environmental protection, while investments in research support continuous improvement.

3. Palau: Palau's creation of one of the world's largest marine sanctuaries, the Palau National Marine Sanctuary, protects 80% of its exclusive economic zone from commercial fishing, promoting marine biodiversity and sustainable tourism.

As we draw our discussion to a close, it is worth emphasising the vast potential of the Blue Economy in promoting sustainable economic growth and environmental preservation. By embracing cutting-edge technologies, fostering cross-sector partnerships, and promoting responsible governance practices, we can effectively unlock the economic benefits of our oceans while also safeguarding their health and biodiversity for future generations. Striking a harmonious balance between economic expansion and ocean conservation is not merely desirable but a critical imperative for ensuring the long-term well-being of our planet and all its inhabitants.
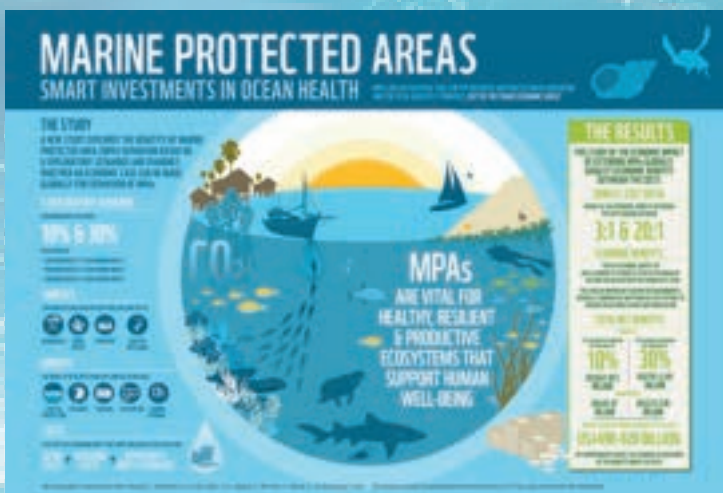
> **The Seychelles' blue economy approach includes which of the following innovative financing mechanisms?**
>
> a)   Debt-for-nature swap
> b) Carbon credits
> c) Public-private partnerships
> d) Ecotourism revenue

UNDERSTANDING THE UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGS): A FRAMEWORK FOR GLOBAL TRANSFORMATION

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a visionary set of global objectives crafted to tackle the interconnected challenges facing our world, which range from poverty and hunger to climate change and inequality. These goals were established in 2015 as part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and represented a shared commitment by nations worldwide to build a more prosperous, equitable, and sustainable future for all. The importance of the SDGs in global development efforts cannot be overstated.

They provide a comprehensive framework for aligning actions and resources towards common objectives, fostering collaboration and partnership across borders and sectors. By setting clear targets and indicators, the SDGs empower governments, businesses, civil society organisations, and individuals to track progress and hold themselves accountable for collective action. Moreover, the SDGs recognise the interconnectedness of social, economic, and environmental challenges. It also emphasises the need for integrated and holistic approaches to development.

The roots of the SDGs can be traced back to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). These were established in 2000 to address pressing development issues such as poverty, hunger, and disease.

Building on the lessons learned from the MDGs, the SDGs have emerged as a more comprehensive and ambitious framework for sustainable development. The process of crafting the SDGs was inclusive and participatory, which involved consultations with governments, civil society organisations, businesses, and ordinary citizens around the world. The United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, also known as Rio+20, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 2012, played a significant role in shaping the SDGs. During the conference, world leaders reaffirmed their commitment to sustainable development and agreed to establish a process to develop a set of universal sustainable development goals.

The 17 SDGs and their 169 targets represent a holistic vision for sustainable development, thus covering a wide range of interconnected issues.

They encompass goals such as ending poverty and hunger, promoting gender equality, ensuring access to clean water and sanitation, fostering sustainable cities and communities, and combating climate change.

> **Which of the following is not one of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted by the United Nations?**
> a) Gender Equality
> b) decent work and economic growth
> c) Sustainable consumption and production
> d) Global Peace and Security

> **Which SDG aims to end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture?**
> a) SDG1: No poverty
> b) SDG2: Zero Hunger
> C) SDG3: Good Health and Well-Being
> d) SDG4: Quality Education

> **Which SDG focuses on ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all?**
> a) SDG4: Quality Education
> b) SDG5: Gender Equality
> c) SDG6: Clean Water and Sanitation
> d) SDG7: Affordable and Clean Energy

> **Which of the following is not a sustainable development goal set to be achieved by 2030?**
> a) Space Research
> b) Zero Hunger
> c) Good health and well-being
> d) All of the above

> **The three pillars of sustainable development are:**
> a) Social, environmental, equality
> b) Social, environmental, and economic
> c) Cultural, Environmental, and Equality
> d) All of the above

Each goal is accompanied by specific targets and indicators and provides a roadmap for measuring progress and holding stakeholders accountable for their commitments.

The SDGs recognise that poverty is not just about a lack of income but encompasses multiple dimensions. These include access to education, healthcare, clean water, and sanitation.

SDG 1, "No Poverty," aims to eradicate poverty in all its forms and dimensions by ensuring social protection systems, access to basic services, and sustainable livelihoods. Secondly, the SDGs recognise that inequality undermines social cohesion, hampers economic growth, and perpetuates poverty. SDG 10, "Reduced Inequalities," calls for reducing income inequality within and among countries, promoting social inclusion, and ensuring equal opportunities for all. Thirdly, climate change poses one of the most pressing challenges of our time, threatening ecosystems, livelihoods, and human well-being. SDG 13, "Climate Action," calls for urgent and ambitious action to combat climate change and its impacts. This includes reducing greenhouse gas emissions, building resilience to climate-related hazards, and mobilising resources to support adaptation and mitigation efforts.

In achieving these Sustainable Development Goals, we must recognise that it's not a task for governments alone. While governments play a crucial role in setting policies and providing resources, we must also harness the power of civil society and the innovation of the private sector. These include NGOs, community organisations, and activists, which serve as vital forces for advocacy, accountability, and grassroot action. They amplify the voices of marginalised communities, hold governments and businesses accountable, and drive positive change at the local and global levels. Businesses, too, have a critical role to play. Through sustainable business practices, innovation, and investment in communities, businesses can contribute to economic growth, poverty reduction, and environmental sustainability.

While the Sustainable Development Goals represent an ambitious vision for a better world, it's understandable that some may view them as overly ambitious or unrealistic. Implementing the SDGs at the national and local levels presents significant challenges. One major challenge is the lack of coordination and coherence among different sectors and levels of government. Often, there is a disconnect between national policies and local realities. Thus, it is difficult to translate global goals into actionable plans at the grassroot level. Another challenge is the insufficient resources and capacity, particularly in developing countries, to effectively implement the SDGs. Many countries face limited funding, inadequate infrastructure, and a lack of technical expertise, hindering their ability to make meaningful progress towards their goals.

Governments must prioritize the SDGs in their policymaking and budget allocations, ensuring that resources are allocated effectively and equitably. Additionally, it's crucial to engage all stakeholders, including civil society organisations, local communities, and the private sector, in the implementation process. Empowering women and marginalised groups, addressing inequalities, and promoting good governance are also critical for sustainable development.

The journey towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals is not merely a matter of policy or economics; it is a testament to our shared humanity and our collective aspirations for a better world. We must harness the power of our governments, civil society, and businesses, working together in solidarity and partnership. We must ensure that no one is left behind, that the most vulnerable among us are uplifted, and that the voices of future generations are heard.
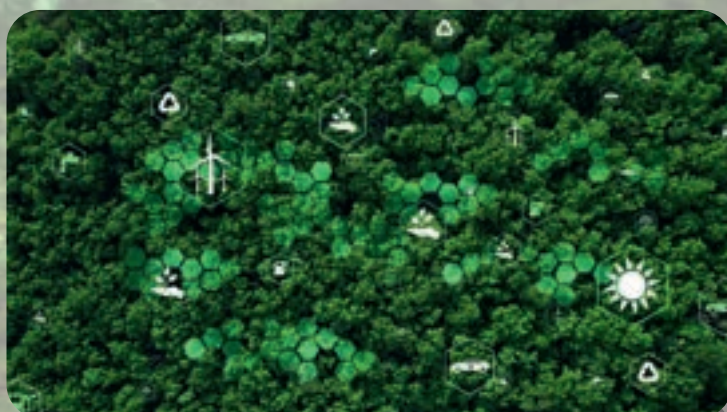
TOP PERFORMERS

Yet again, Nishtha is enthralled by the efforts of our dear members, who have made us all proud of their commendable contribution towards society's growth. At Nishtha, we are of the firm belief that dedication and hard work should never go unappreciated.Hence, it is with immense happiness and pride that we announce the achievers of March/April 2024.

Creative Wing

Priyanshi

Technical Wing

Misha Kumari

PR & Spons. Wing

Akshita Kaushik

Editorial Wing

Shradha

Organizing Wing

Shubham

We extend our heartfelt congratulations to our members. Your dedication and diligence are what keep society going. You are the heart and soul of Nishtha.

As we come to the end of this session, may your dedication and zeal act as driving fuel for other members to strive harder and contribute towards our society. Let your determination and commitment inspire them to do even better.

We once again admire and applaud your fervour and passion for Nishtha. We hope that you continue with your hard work and be a beacon of inspiration to others.

1) IndiGo Wins 'Airline of the Year' Award

IndiGo, the Indian airline, earned the prestigious 'Airline of the Year' award at the 2024 Air Transport Awards in Ekali, Greece. It notably achieved milestones such as carrying 100 million passengers in 2023 and operating 2,000 flights in a single day. The awards, hosted by Hermes- Air Transport Organisation and Air Transport News, aimed to honour aviation sector contributions. Dr. Venkataramani Sumantran chairs the company.

2) India jumps 14 ranks on the UNDP Gender Inequality Index

India has made big strides in reducing gender inequality, according to UNDP's latest report. Compared to last year, India has jumped 14 spots on the Gender Inequality Index. In 2022, India ranked 108th out of 193 countries, improving from 122nd place in 2021. This shows India's ongoing efforts to boost economic growth and enhance citizens' lives, especially concerning gender equality.

3) Esteemed Personalities Conferred with India's Highest Civilian Honour

President Droupadi Murmu bestowed the prestigious Bharat Ratna, India's highest civilian award, upon five eminent individuals. Four were recognized posthumously, including former Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao, former Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Chaudhary Charan Singh, agricultural scientist M.S. Swaminathan, and former Bihar Chief Minister Karpoori Thakur. The fifth honoree was L.K. Advani, the co-founder of the Bharatiya Janata Party and a distinguished social worker.

4) Geographical Indication Tags Awarded to Over 60 Unique Indian Products

Across the nation, 60 products were awarded the Geographical Indication (GI) tag, recognising their distinct regional origins and cultural heritage. This roster included Assam's Chokuwa Rice, Tezpur Litchi, and Muga silk, as well as Jammu and Kashmir's renowned saffron, Odisha's Rasgulla, and Goa's Khola chilli, among 19 other traditional items.

5) Mr. Gyanesh Kumar and Dr. Sukhbir Singh Sandhu are appointed as new Election Commissioners, Mr. Arun Goel resigns.

On March 15, 2024, retired Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officers Mr. Gyanesh Kumar and Dr. Sukhbir Singh Sandhu assumed their roles as the new Election Commissioners (ECs) at the Election Commission of India (ECI). They belong to the 1988 batch from Kerala and Uttarakhand cadre respectively. Their appointments followed the retirement of Mr. Anup Chandra Pandey and the resignation of Mr. Arun Goel.

6) India's first green hydrogen plant in the stainless steel sector was inaugurated by Union Minister Scindia in Haryana.

Union Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia, Ministry of Steel, virtually inaugurated India's first green hydrogen plant in the Stainless Steel Sector at Jindal Stainless Limited (JSL) in Hisar, Haryana. Established in collaboration with Hygenico Green Energies Private Limited, it's the world's first off-grid Green Hydrogen plant for stainless steel and the first with rooftop and floating solar capabilities.

7) UN Adopts Historic Resolution on Artificial Intelligence

On March 24, 2024, the United Nations General Assembly unanimously approved the inaugural global resolution on Artificial Intelligence (AI). Sponsored by the United States and co-sponsored by 123 nations, including Russia, China, and Cuba, the resolution seeks to guarantee equitable access to AI benefits, uphold human rights, and establish safety, security, and trustworthiness standards for this transformative technology on a global scale

8) PM Modi was honoured with Bhutan's 'Order of the Druk Gyalpo'

Prime Minister Narendra Modi undertook a 2-day state visit to Bhutan amidst ongoing border resolution talks between Bhutan and China, and Beijing's diplomatic overtures to Bhutan. During the visit, India pledged to double its aid to Bhutan for the 13th five-year plan, increasing it from Rs 5000 crore to Rs 10000 crore. This reinforced India's commitment to supporting Bhutan's development endeavours.

CSAT

Boat and Stream

Introduction:-
Number, ranking, and time sequence tests are based on an arrangement of characters/persons/objects in a particular order based on specific parameters.

Formulas:-
1.   The speed of the boat in still water= x km/hr
2.   The speed of current/ stream= y km/hr
3.   The speed of the boat in the direction of the stream (downstream) = D = (x+y)
4.   The speed of the boat in the opposite direction of the stream (upstream) = U = (x-y)
5.   The speed of the boat= if x>y
$$x= (D+U)/2$$
if y>x
$$y= (D-U)/2$$
6.   Time is taken to cover 'd1' km downstream and 'd2' km upstream with the speed of the boat being x km/hr and the speed of the stream being y km/hr.
$$T= d1/(x+y) + d2/(x-y)$$
7.   The average speed of the swimmer/boat who/that covers a certain distance and returns to the starting point.
Speed of the boat= x km/hr
Speed of the current= y km/hr

$$= (x+y)*(x-y) \div x \text{ km/hr}$$

8.   If a swimmer or a boat covers x distance in 'A' hours downstream and covers the same distance in 'B' upstream, then
Speed of swimmer/boat = x/2 (1/A + 1/B) km/hr
Speed of stream= x/2 (1/A - 1/B) km/hr

9.   If a swimmer or a boat takes equal time to travel A km downstream and B km upstream then
Speed= A+B/A-B

10. If a boat travels an equal distance 'A' upstream as well as downstream in 'T' hours then,
$$T = A/(x+y) + A/(x-y)$$

CSAT

Practice Questions

- A boat takes 19 hours to travel downstream from point A to Point B and comes back to Point C midway between A and B. If the velocity of the stream is 4 km/hr and the speed of the boat in still water is 12 km/hr, what is the distance between A and B?
  A. 160 km   B. 172 km   C. 200 km   D. 220 km

- The speed of a boat in still water is 8 km/hr and the speed of the stream is 1.5 km/hr. A man rows to a place at a distance of 61.75 km and comes back to the starting point. The total time taken by him?
  A. 6 hrs   B. 8 hrs   C. 16 hrs   D. 22 hrs

- In a stream running at 2 km/hr, a motorboat goes 6 km upstream and back again to the starting point in 33 minutes. Find the speed of the motorboat in still water.
  A. 8 km/hr   B. 12 km/hr   C. 18 km/hr   D. 22 km/hr

- If a man rows at the rate of 5 km/hr in still water and his rate against the current is 3.5 km/hr. then the man's rate along the current is:
  A. 5 km/hr   B. 6 km/hr   C. 6.5 km/hr   D. 7.5 km/hr

- A man can row 18 km/hr in still water. It takes him thrice as long to row up as to row down the river. Find the rate of the stream.
  A. 3 km/hr   B. 6 km/hr   C. 9 km/hr   D. 12 km/hr

- A man's downstream speed is 7 km/hr and the speed of the current is 1 km/hr, the upstream speed of the man is–
  A. 2 km/hr   B. 3 km/hr   C. 5 km/hr   D. 7 km/hr

- A boat travels with a speed of 10 km/hr in still water. If the speed of the stream is 3 km/hr then find the time taken by boat to travel 52 km downstream.
  A. 2 hrs   B. 4 hrs   C. 6 hrs   D. 9 hrs

- A man takes 3 hours 45 minutes to row a boat 22.5 km downstream of a river and 2 hours 30 minutes to cover a distance of 10 km upstream. Find the speed of the river current in km/hr.
  A. 1 km/hrB. 2 km/hr   C. 3 km/hr   D. 4 km/hr

A STORY TO INSPIRE

SAMITA SABHARWAL, IAS

Smita Sabharwal is a trailblazing bureaucrat who is redefining administrative excellence. She is an IAS officer from the Telangana cadre whose career is characterised by integrity, innovation, and a commitment to positive change. IAS Smita Sabharwal's journey into the Indian Administrative Service (IAS) commenced in 2001, when she secured an impressive All India Rank of 4 in the UPSC Civil Services Examination. She graduated in commerce from St. Francis College for Women, Hyderabad.

Sabharwal's first independent charge was as the Sub Collector, Madanapally, Chittoor, where she excelled in land revenue management and district administration. Wherever Sabharwal was posted, she showed unwavering dedication and exceptional leadership. She showcased her innovative and result-oriented approach as a municipal commissioner in Warangal, where she introduced the "Fund Your City" scheme, where many public utilities such as traffic junctions, foot-overbridges, bus stops, and parks were created with a Public-Private Partnership (PPP). Smita Sabharwal's approachable and compassionate nature has earned her the endearing title of 'People's Officer.' Her willingness to listen to the concerns of the common people and take immediate action sets her apart as a Civil Servant.

Sabharwal's most remarkable work was when she took charge as the District Collector in Karimnagar district, where she made significant contributions in the health and education sectors. She promoted the health initiative to improve institutional delivery in the public sector, popularly known as Ammalalana, which was started and successfully implemented in the district. It became a role model for many health initiatives all around the country, and it helped improve 'high-risk pregnancy management targeting, IMR, and MMR', which helped in improving safe and healthy deliveries along with decreasing the maternal mortality rate (MMR) and infant mortality rate (IMR).

23

SAMITA SABHARWAL, IAS

Smita Sabharwal has received numerous accolades and awards for her exemplary service, from being recognised as the 'Young Global Leader' by the World Economic Forum to receiving the 'Best All-Round Woman IAS Officer' award for her contribution towards women's empowerment, education, and rural development.

Smita Sabharwal has showcased remarkable dedication and hard work towards serving her country through the arena of Civil Services. As the 'People's Officer', she has contributed a lot to the betterment of society and won the trust and respect of the people in her administrative area. She continues to inspire countless individuals to strive for excellence and contribute meaningfully to the nation's progress.

24

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENTS

'Manthan'

Under the name of Manthan, Nishtha conducted a group discussion on April 22, 2024.This is a new initiative of the society that covers the themes of UPSC-CSE through group discussions based on the NCERTS. The students from different wings of society participated in the discussion on the topic of reforms in the Indian education system and shared their opinions. They talked about the New Education Policy 2020's provisions. They expressed their opinions and talked about the benefits and drawbacks of the same. Thus, this project offers a chance to improve reasoning skills and participate in a lively discussion of ideas.

'प्रतिस्पर्धा' - A scholarship test

A scholarship test (**प्रतिस्पर्धा**) was held on April 12, 2024 by Nishtha, in collaboration with Vision IAS, as a component of their monthly test series "Aakalan." Multiple-choice questions were given to the students to give them the experience of the first phase i.e. Prelims stage of the coveted UPSC CSE. Additionally, they were given essay subjects to write about, which allowed them to experience the Mains stage of the exam . The test was taken by 100 to 200 students, demonstrating their fervent desire and dedication to a career in the civil service. Aspirants benefit from this Nishtha Monthly Test series by evaluating their abilities, enhancing time management, and creating a network of support.

उत्कृष्ट

The society conducted **उत्कृष्ट**, a skill-based competition, as part of Confluence '24, the annual fest of Hansraj College. In addition to putting students' specific talents to the test, the tournament promoted critical thinking. Through enjoyable and aptitude-oriented games, it proved to be a happy diversion from the demanding UPSC-CSE preparation regimen while also fostering a healthy sense of competition among participants.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENTS

'**अतुल्य**'

Nishtha: The Civil Services Society of Hansraj College is proud to announce the successful culmination of our flagship event, Atulya. Day 1 of Atulya transpired with the speaker session of Dr.Sidharth Arora, a distinguished Supreme Court lawyer and an Unacademy educator who, with his words of wisdom and knowledge, enlightened the audience on the prestigious UPSC CSE. The session was followed by the alumni interaction and felicitation of the achievers of UPSC-CSE-2023. Our honorable alumni, Mr. Shivansh Rathee, AIR-63; Mr. Kuldeep Patel, AIR-181; Ms. Aastha Jindal, AIR-240; and Mr. Praduman Kumar, AIR-941, were presented with the esteemed Mahatma Hansraj Gaurav Samman by our principal, Prof. (Dr.) Rama ma'am. The achievers recounted their journey to clearing the UPSC-CSE and motivated the students by sharing their insightful preparation strategies. The last event of the day was the speaker session with Mr.Ravi Kumar Sihag,IAS, AIR-18, UPSC-CSE 2021, wherein Sir elaborated on the detailed strategy for facing the examination with confidence and zeal. He shared valuable insights, tips, and tricks to crack the examination. The culmination of Atulya Day 1 left the audience in awe of these inspiring personalities. This alluring event was highly fruitful for all the aspiring civil servants.

'ABHIGYAAN'

We are heartedly delighted to announce the accomplished culmination of the Day-2 of our Flagship Event **अतुल्य**, with our last segment, Annual Lecture Series **अभिज्ञान**, on May 7th, 2024. Our Chief Guest Speaker Dr. S. Jaishankar, Union Minister of External Affairs, shed light on India's remarkable journey towards "Viksit Bharat"- growth and development, outlining a compelling vision for the nation in 2047. During the interactive session, students had the opportunity to engage with the minister on various topics, particularly on navigating bureaucracy and realizing the Indian dream. Sir's presence left a lasting impression, instilling a sense of optimism and pride in India's potential to achieve greatness on the world stage.

Job Number One

India stands at a pivotal crossroads in its economic trajectory, with challenges and opportunities intertwined as it grapples with the imperative of job creation. The recent announcement of Meta's data centre in Chennai, though bringing a glimmer of hope with a few dozen job openings, underscores the stark reality: the need for meaningful employment opportunities remains acute in the country with a burgeoning working-age population. At the heart of India's economic narrative lies a fundamental shift in strategy from the conventional path of industrialization to one focused on services. This pivot, driven by the rise of outsourcing and technology-enabled services, has indeed yielded significant employment, particularly in the IT sector, which employs over 5 million people. However, the recent contraction in the IT sector and the looming threat of automation pose significant challenges to this model.

The following imperative aspects were included:

• Diversification of Service Exports: Expanding Global Capability Centres (GCCs) could boost employment, with an expected rise from 1.6 million to 4.5 million jobs by 2030.

• Support for Tech Startups: While facing setbacks, startups in AI, SaaS, and greentech will pay to India's strengths. Founders must prioritise sustainable growth and talent development.

• Green Transition: India's ambitious renewable energy

targets could create 50 million "green economy" jobs, a significant employment opportunity.

• Revitalising Manufacturing: Focusing on small and medium manufacturers and leveraging digital infrastructure can drive job creation and reduce the reliance on automation. The focus shouldn't be merely on big industries.

The country's transition towards a greener economy offers a remarkable chance to blend economic progress with environmental care. Ambitious initiatives to expand renewable energy capacity provide fertile ground for creating jobs, with the World Economic Forum forecasting millions of new positions in the green sector.

Employment in agriculture sector peaked in 2006
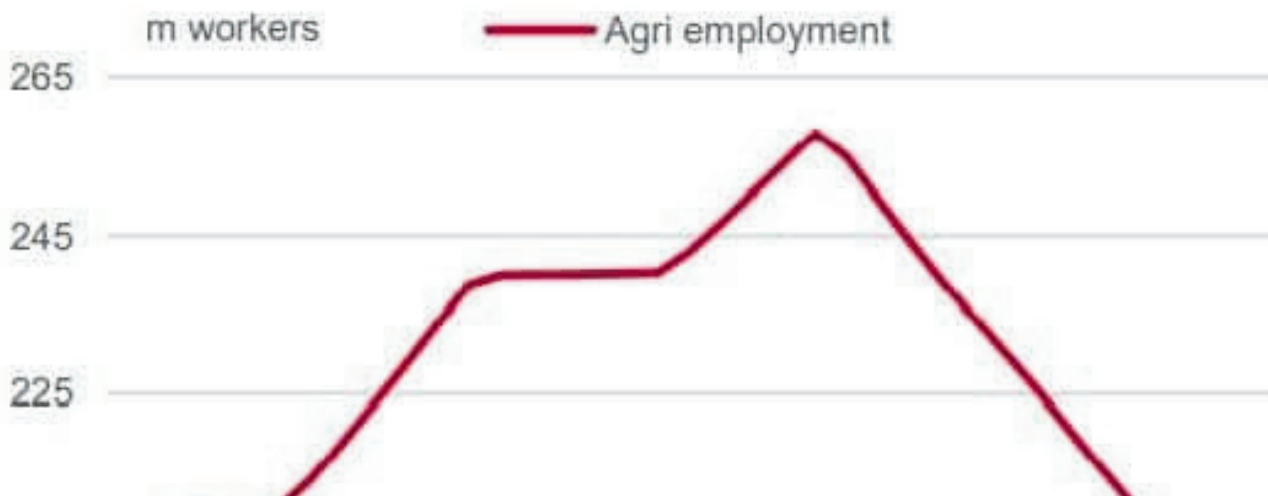
Simultaneously, India shouldn't overlook its manufacturing industry. While the allure of flagship projects like iPhone and Tesla manufacturing is strong, equal emphasis should be placed on nurturing small and medium-sized manufacturers. By utilizing digital infrastructure, these enterprises can be empowered, gaining access to credit, resources, and markets. As we navigate these challenging times, the responsibility lies squarely on the government to prioritise job creation. Education, skill-building, and job readiness must form the core of policy-making, accompanied by tax incentives and regulatory adjustments to encourage employers.

In conclusion, addressing India's employment challenge requires a multi-faceted approach that encompasses investments in education, skill-building, and job-preparedness, alongside targeted interventions in high-end services, tech startups, renewable energy, and manufacturing. As India charts its course towards economic recovery and sustainable growth, job creation must remain at the forefront of policymaking efforts to ensure inclusive and equitable development for all its citizens.

A Battle to Save Ladakh, and All of humanity

In an editorial titled "A Battle to Save Ladakh, and All of Humanity," published on April 12, 2024, in the Hindu, the editor draws attention to the precarious situation of Ladakh due to the effects of global warming. It highlights the 21-day climate fast undertaken by Sonam Wangchuk, a climate activist and Ramon Magsaysay award winner, in Leh & Ladakh, on March 6, 2024.

Ladakh, located between India's neighbouring countries, Pakistan and China, is home to 97% of indigenous tribes and relies heavily on agriculture and animal husbandry for employment. The Himalayan region is prone to devastating impacts of climate change, including floods, droughts, landslides, greenhouse gases, and other pollutants. The Himalayan glaciers, also known as the Third Pole, are at risk of melting due to global warming, affecting both inhabitants and those living downstream. The National Mission for Sustaining the Himalayan Ecosystem (NMSHE) was launched under the National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC) in 2008. Its primary objective was to develop the capacity to scientifically assess the vulnerability of the Himalayan region to climate change and to continuously evaluate the health status of the Himalayan ecosystem.

However, since Ladakh became a Union Territory, several mega-infrastructure projects have been launched at a rapid pace, including the construction of bridges, widening of roads, tunnels, railway lines, mega-solar projects, a state-of-the-art airport terminal, and wayside amenities to boost tourism. The Border Roads Organisation (BRO) and the National Highways and Infrastructure Development   Ltd.

(NHIDCL) have initiated many of these projects, which are all vulnerable to climate change-related disasters.

Despite past disasters in the mountains and warnings from climate change activists, the government bodies authorising and executing these projects at such a fast pace are not paying attention. Since 2010, there have been several catastrophes in the Himalayan region, resulting in the loss of lives and livelihoods.

For instance, in 2013, a cloudburst led to flash floods at Kedarnath, claiming 6,000 lives and wiping out several settlements.

Furthermore, in January 2023, a disaster struck Joshimath when water gushed down a lower slope of the mountain, submerging parts of the town. When disaster strikes, the human cost of environmental destruction is unfortunately borne by destitute migrant workers in ongoing projects, as well as by inhabitants, tourists, and pilgrims. Climate change activists have been frustrated by their recommendations falling on deaf ears, despite approaching courts and expert committees. Little due diligence, including risk assessment, safety measures, and geological and seismic analysis, goes into any of the multi-crore mega-projects in the mountains.

The Himalayan environment and its biodiversity are crucial for the survival of our planet, and we cannot afford to put them at risk in the name of development. Wangchuk's fight for the preservation of Ladakh's delicate ecosystem is not just a local issue, but a global one. It is a battle for the protection of our planet and the future of humanity. Let us stand with our ecosystem and take action to safeguard our environment for generations to come.

Urban Poverty Persists Amid Economic Growth

The India Employment Report (IER) 2024 paints a concerning picture of the state of employment and wages in urban India, particularly for the urban poor residing in slums. Despite the country's impressive 5.4% average real economic growth from 2015–16 to 2022–23, the report reveals a worrying divergence in outcomes between rural and urban areas.

While the IER highlights higher average monthly earnings in urban centres, with a 76% premium for the self-employed, 44% for regular workers, and 22% for casual labourers compared to rural areas in 2022. A closer examination of slum communities in Kolkata tells a different story. The survey was conducted by a team in 37 slums of Kolkata found that the average monthly income decreased by 5% in real terms from ₹4,900 in 2012 to ₹4,655 in 2019. This decline was most severe for those in construction and related work (51%), petty businesses (32%), and government jobs (32%), indicating a concerning erosion of economic opportunities for the urban poor.

Notably, the study found that inequality has decreased within the slums, not due to upward mobility, but rather a general downfall in earnings that has brought everyone down. This paints a bleak picture, where the urban poor are trapped in a cycle of poverty despite the country's impressive macroeconomic performance. The coexistence of higher unemployment and wages in urban areas, as highlighted by IER 2024, requires further investigation to understand its implications for the well-being of the urban poor.

Contrary to the national trend of rising self-employment and female workforce participation in urban areas, the Kolkata slums tell a grimmer tale. The share of employment in skilled and semi-skilled labour declined by 6%, and in private organisations by 3% between 2012 and 2019, while the share of petty businesses increased by 9%. Furthermore, the overall percentage of women in the workforce declined by 3% during this period, in contrast to the 1.6% increase in urban areas reported by the IER 2024. This suggests that the urban poor, particularly women, are being left behind in broader economic progress.

These findings raise critical questions about the trickle-down impact of economic growth and the efficacy of policies aimed at urban development. If the rising tide is not lifting all boats, then it is time for policymakers to re-examine their approach and ensure that the benefits of progress are more equitably distributed.

Targeted interventions to create decent, well-paying jobs in slum communities, along with improved access to affordable housing, healthcare, and education, must be prioritized. Only then can we hope to fulfil the promise of inclusive urban development and break the stubborn persistence of poverty in India's cities. The divergent trends between rural and urban areas, as well as the disparities within urban centres, demand a more holistic and nuanced approach to economic and social policymaking.

URBAN WATER CRISIS

Bengaluru is having a really bad water problem— the worst it had faced in many years. Last year's weak monsoon made things worse. This problem is made worse by the uncontrolled growth of cities and the fact that the groundwater is running out. Chennai has also had water shortages recently. Many other Indian cities are in similar trouble, showing that water supply isn't often thought about when cities are planned.

It's also concerning that many people in Indian cities don't have access to clean drinking water. Last month, the Pey Jal Survekshan found that only 10% of Indian cities meet drinking water standards. The water quality gets worse as it travels through pipes. Old pipes release harmful chemicals, sediments build up, and germs grow. This is a problem in many places, not just in India. In India, it's worse because pipes often leak, and they are often near sewage lines.

In the past twenty years, companies selling water purifiers and packaged drinking water have taken advantage of this problem. Many households now buy water in big 20-litre jars, even though they have access to piped water. According to a recent study, 38% of households in Kolkata and 70% of households in Chennai buy water jars regularly. The packaged drinking water model has become popular. It involves treating water locally and delivering it without using pipes. This system is reliable because it has its own water source, usually groundwater, and a well-established process of production and delivery.

According to the standards of the Central Public Health and Environmental Engineering Organisation—the technical wing of the Union Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs that sets norms for water supply and sanitation—Indian cities need 135 litres of water per person each day. But most of this water doesn't need to be treated to drinking water standards because people only use a small portion for drinking and cooking. Treating huge amounts of water to drinking standards and sending it through pipes might not be safe and it needs to be reconsidered. Because fixing and maintaining pipe networks is costly, we should separate drinking water from water for other uses.
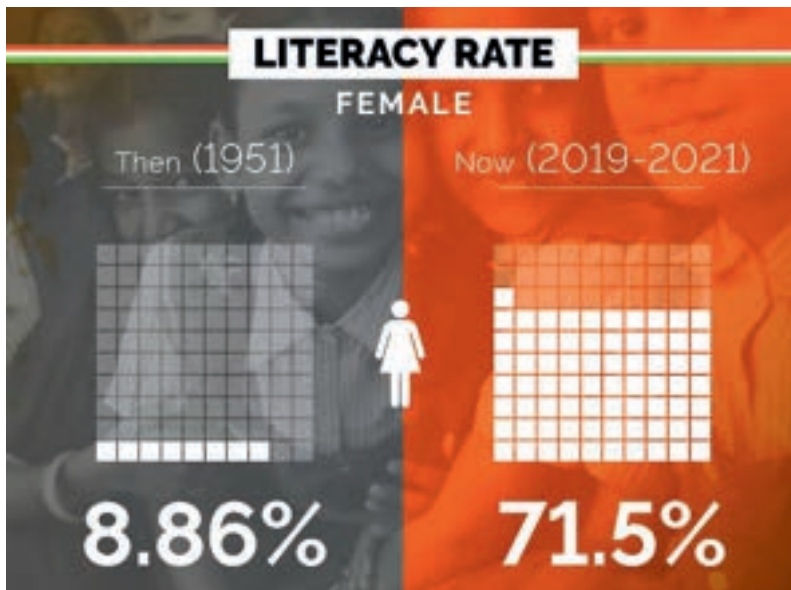
The decentralised treatment and non-pipe delivery model used by the packaged drinking water industry seems promising. Bengaluru is trying out water ATMs as a solution to its water crisis. Some other cities, like Delhi, are also trying similar initiatives. But there are problems too. Not everyone can afford water from private companies. Also, the World Health Organization is worried that the method used by these companies to purify water removes important minerals.

While decentralised water treatment and delivery are good ideas, we should also think about better technologies. We need more experiments to find affordable and suitable ways to provide water, including new technology. The piped water supply evolved over time because of technological and institutional improvements. It's time to explore new ways to provide water that solves quality problems. Decentralised treatment and non-pipe delivery are worth trying out.

Quiz

Q1. Out of the following, who is recently appointed as the Chairperson of Lokpal?
(A) Ajay Manikrao Khanwilkar
(B) Pradip Kumar Mohanty
(C) Pinaki Chandra Ghose
(D) None of the above

Q2. Samudra Laksamana is a bilateral Maritime Exercise between India and which country?
(A) Malaysia
(B) Sri Lanka
(C) Indonesia
(D) Maldives

Q3. In which city is India's first underwater transportation tunnel inaugurated?
(A) Haridwar
(B) Indore
(C) Kolkata
(D) Ranchi

Q4. What is the name of India's first AI teacher?
(A) Educationer
(B) Optrix
(C) Enseigner
(D) Iris

Q5. Recently, which city has got a Geographical Tag for its Silver Filigree work?
(A) Surat
(B) Cuttack
(C) Lucknow
(D) Kolkata

Q6. What is another name for H5N1, a highly pathogenic virus?
(A) Bird Flu
(B) CoronaVirus
(C) Monkeypox
(D) Hepatitis – B

Q7. On which date is the centenary of Vaikom Satyagraha celebrated?
(A) 30th March
(B) 2nd April
(C) 4th April
(D) 8th April

Q8. Which country has signed the JETCO protocol with India?
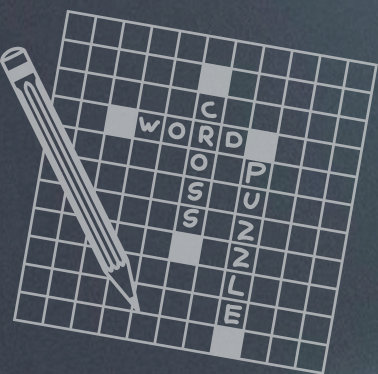(A) Brazil
(B) Dominican Republic
(C) Ecuador
(D) Argentina

Answers

1 : D	5 : A
2 : C	6 : B
3 : A	7 : C
4 : B	8 : A

Crossword

1. Author of Mauryan India description - Indica
2. Dancing girl was made of this metal
3. A type of inflation with the combination of slow economic growth, high unemployment, and a high rate of inflation
4. The confrontation of USSR and USA in the Bay of Bengal is called - diplomacy
5. Most destructive surface seismic waves
6. A type of El Nino that affects central Pacific ocean
7. Tropical species known as marine rainforests
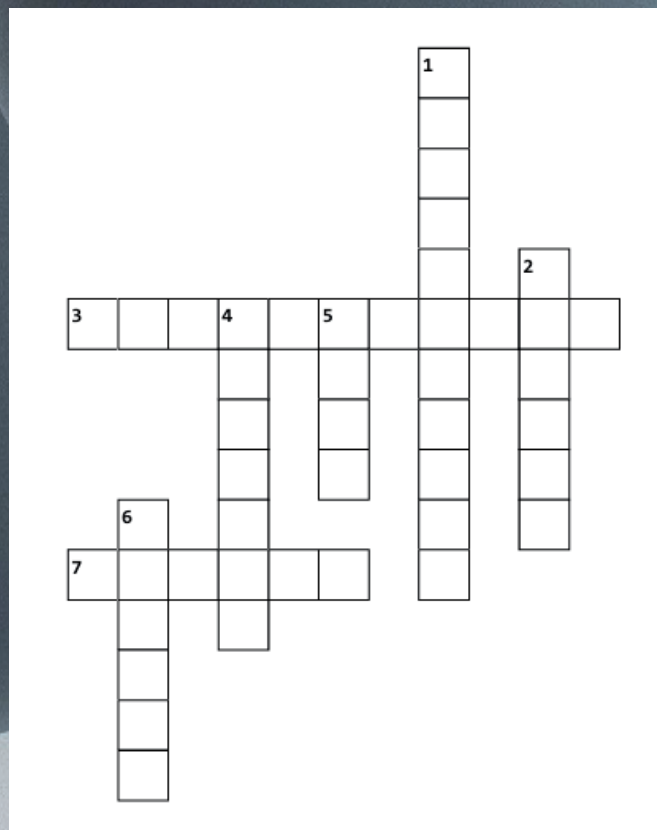
M A N L J H U T F N L B T I
O S L I T T A K V W G I Q I
N J E G V V L U C I N E K R
V I S C H I O R U Q U U Q S
Q K B A B B O N A T A L E W
K V P A N E T T O N E I F K
V I U N A S T R I N N E V E
I H R E G A L I V E U Z G J
Y A N G E L O J R A N T S X
S T E L L A Y X B N A S T C
E L F O F F B I S C O T T I
B P I A L B E R O G A H I X
O K D G H I R L A N D A S K
A I P V Q K D K F R E N N A

nishtha

The Civil Services Society of Hansraj College

निष्ठा धृति सत्यम

NISHTHA

THE CIVIL SERVICES SOCIETY OF HANSRAJ COLLGE